

## Your details

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## Submission details

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### I am making this submission as

A resident in a bushfire-affected area

### Submission type

I am making a personal submission

### Consent to make submission public

I would like this submission to remain anonymous

## Share your experience or tell your story

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### Your story

- In the last months of 2019 we watched fires in surrounding bushlands increase in size and threaten and burn through neighbouring coastal towns. This sent alarm bells as it was spring – it was early in the traditional fire season – and pushing through residential areas.
- During this time there was constant smoke haze which was at first alarming but somehow as the months went by, became the new normal. In retrospect this negatively me physically and psychologically.
- Dec. 31st 2019 woke to very hot dry wind and knew immediately there was going to be fires. Throughout the morning I did what I could to prepare our home, got multiple phone calls from friends in high risk areas needing refuge. Roughly 8 families arrived at our home that morning. We found 2 other houses for them to also use over the coming days.
- Over the next month of January I evacuated with my family to Wollongong but felt guilt and frustration at being away from my community and mother and sister at this time. So returned alone to Moruya. The rest of the month is a blur the order of events is hard for me to list. But I do remember a lot of house preparation, listening to the radio,

checking Fires Near Me, town meetings, offering and receiving help, poor sleep due to anxiety, a lot of coffee, and eventually a fire in late January which burnt right up to our fenceline on two boundaries of our property. I experienced relief after this happened, knowing that I didn't have to wait in anxiety any more wondering when the next fire might hit.

- Roughly two weeks after this, rains came which turned the rivers to sludge. Which in turn, turned our coast line to milky brown lifeless looking liquid. As a surfer and free diver I took interest and looked underwater post fires – the sea bottom was heavily coated in a crème coloured sludge and there appeared to be very little fish life or invertebrate life present. This has slowly cleared over the next two months.

- I'm a teacher at the local high school – the fires didn't allow me to have the much needed rest and recharge that summer holidays usually affords. I therefor started work in 2020, extremely tired with regular headaches and a lack of drive or passion.

- In reflection on this summer – climate change needs to be addressed asap to slow and hopefully stop the very quick change to our weather patterns which I believe led to this crazy fire season.

## **Terms of Reference (optional)**

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The Inquiry welcomes submissions that address the particular matters identified in its [Terms of Reference](#).

## **Supporting documents or images**

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