

Your details

Submission details

I am making this submission as

A member of the general public

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

Your story

Hello bush fire committee,

I am a resident of Goulburn where we were badly impacted by the bush fire smoke for a month or so from late November to early January. It was the worst I have experienced and made my partner particularly ill and bed bound. I do not know if there were toxins in the smoke that blanked Goulburn, but the conditions made it hard to breathe and was impossible to escape.

My submission is the response by the state and Commonwealth governments, in my view, being slow to get going and lacked any real co-ordination until the fires were near on over.

One area I feels needs addressing is better and more straight forward approval to allow the military to be called in straight away to help protect property and maintain security. There were insufficient Police to maintain security and

the armed services could have helped on the ground to provide better protection for all affected in the bush fire areas.

There seems to be a long, political process, of getting the military involved in protecting the community in times of trouble. My view is Police Commissioner and other state authorities should be able to call upon the armed services for help in deploying soldiers in maintaining law and order and give general assistance, if it is considered proper. The Lindt cafe siege was a good example of where the specialist military personnel should have been used to end the terrorist siege to save the lives.

As to the toxic smoke experienced in Goulburn, I feel it might be the fire retardants used along with the amount of plastic rubbish that ends up in the bush, adding to the chemicals released when the fire burns. More needs to be done to address the amount of plastic rubbish literally everywhere one looks across the landscape.

In summing up, to get the Military involved quickly and look at the impact of smoke and what is being burnt, such as plastics and the chemical retardants used to put fires out.

I hope my ideas can be considered for better outcomes in the future.

Kind regards.

Terms of Reference (optional)

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

1.1 Causes and contributing factors

The cause, in my view, was beyond planning given the dry conditions and the amount of material in bush land. As to contributing factors, for me, it was the poisons in the smoke, more than likely plastic rubbish being burnt adding to this toxic mix blanketing towns such as Goulburn, impacting greatly on air quality.

1.2 Preparation and planning

There needs to be an easy and straight forward approval process to get help from the military by state authorities. To have the approval process in place to allow the Police Commissioner and other state authorities to get better assistance to protect the community promptly.

1.3 Response to bushfires

The fire fighters did a great job risking themselves against something far greater than what they could stop, no matter what resources were available to assist them on this occasion. I commend the fire fighters and their efforts against great odds to achieve what they did against such extreme fires. I do not think there is much more the fire fighters could have done in the circumstances, and are greatly appreciated by me.

Supporting documents or images
