



Your details

Ms

Title

First name

Catherine

Last name

Woof

Submission details

I am making this submission as

A business owner

Submission type

I am making a personal submission

Your position in the organisation (if applicable)

Owner of grazing property in affected area and partner of RFS member

Consent to make submission public

I give my consent for this submission to be made public

Share your experience or tell your story

Your story

My property is adjacent to a property owned by an absentee owner which until a year ago was unoccupied with deteriorating infrastructure including fire tracks. Much of the property is rough granite country. We were given unreliable information as to whom to contact in an emergency. For a number of years we had talked to the agent who had sold the property to a China based investor about our fears of a buildup of fuel on the place and the lack of occupancy.

My partner is a member of The Kentucky RFS and had been on call since September fighting fires, managing the farm and working full time when lightning from a dry storm started a fire on Birralea, the property in question in mid December.

Neighbours ourselves and the Bendemeer RFS attended. The

agent [REDACTED] of Tamworth and Chatswood Sydney did not attend at first or seem particularly concerned. The fire was a few hundred metres to the SW of our property with W and SW winds. It flared up 3 times more., diverting scarce Tamworth firefighting resources from the Comara fire near Bendemeer. The prior owner of [REDACTED] employed 8 to 10 people who lived on the property and had firefighting slippers and monitored the country after dry storms. We came to understand through talking to people around the district that there were quite a few problems with absentee owners and unmanaged country. Birralee aggregation is about 17000 acres to the west of us.

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Absentee foreign owner2. Lack of occupancy3. No responsible contact person for emergencies on the property4. High fuel burden due to lack of management5. No maintenance of fire tracks into rugged fire prone country so access dangerous
1.2 Preparation and planning	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. No contact person2. No person to check property after dry storms for evidence of lightning strike caused fire.3. No planning whatsoever.4. Reliance on adjacent threatened property owners to control fires using their own equipment and scarce water during a time of extreme fire threats.
1.3 Response to bushfires	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. No effort to monitor or control fires by owner or his agents2. Response was good from neighbours (except for the other two foreign owned properties [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who did not attend. It was all up to the smaller landholders).3. The situation meant other fires in the district had fewer units and people to respond.
1.4 Any other matters	Question: Do properties insured by overseas insurance companies pay a fire levy to help the RFS?

Supporting documents or images



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In previous email. I am sending this because I have an addendum to my previous email. See "other" section

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1.1 Causes and contributing factors

See previous email

1.2 Preparation and planning

See previous email

1.3 Response to bushfires

See previous email

1.4 Any other matters

Earlier this year we learned indirectly (although my property shares a boundary with the properties concerned) that extensive windfarms are proposed on neighbouring properties including the one referenced in my earlier emails. At a community meeting the company rep assured concerns that aerial firefighting would not be affected by the presence of 270+metre towers citing a grassfire event on a windfarm in Crookwell. This country is rugged granite country and I asked directly a helicopter pilot and two fixed wing pilots whether they would fight fires over windfarms even with the towers locked down. The pilots said no way would they do this. Helicopters and fixed wing firefighting were lifesavers in our district. Is there relevant data on this submitted to the inquiry?

Supporting documents or images
