



## Your details

Ms

Title

First name

Cheryl

Last name

Hook

## Submission details

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 give my consent for this submission to be made public

## Share your experience or tell your story

Your story

I am the owner-occupier of a 42.17 hectare property located on the Northern Tablelands in NSW and have been so for the past 17 years.

The property is also bisected by an easement of (approximately) 90m, vested in the NSW Electricity Transmission Authority and carries the 132KW high tension electricity line between Armidale and Grafton.

The Bee's Nest fire originally ignited out towards Wongabilla to the west of the property due to a dry lightning strike. It burned north-east through Guy Fawkes National Park and adjoining farmlands.

I tracked the fire's progress on the 'Fires Near Me' app and evacuated my property on 6/9/2019 at 1600hrs within 40 minutes of the 'watch and wait' notification changing to 'evacuate'. The

official evacuation order was issued by the RFS later that evening.

I initially evacuated to Dorrigo showground which was unprepared. No one was there. Facilities locked up.

The fire then continued to burn eastwards back towards towards Bostobrick avoiding my property.

Then, on the 10/9/2019, the wind changed direction and blew the fire back towards my property. The wildfire ran up from a dry gully, across the easement under the high tension electricity line and completely destroyed my property on 11/9/2019.

70% of the property burned including all buildings, belongings, vehicles etc.

## Terms of Reference (optional)

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

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### 1.1 Causes and contributing factors

1. Severe drought conditions. Dam dry. All creeks dry.
2. Windy weather
3. Fuel load build up under electricity lines and fire trails

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### 1.2 Preparation and planning

1. One -stop shop/central hub for all federal, state and local agencies. Provide advice and linkage.
2. Clearly define where people should evacuate to and provide facilities that can be activated quickly.
3. Clear fuel load build up under electricity lines
4. Ensure timely communication of hazard to public and update frequently
5. Recruit, train and pay more RFS to support firefighting efforts
6. Fastrack applications for rebuilding, bring clarity to the procedure

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### 1.3 Response to bushfires

1. Form a professional, emergency bushfire response corps for each region, that will coordinate all activities and provide communication hub for the op and for the public
  2. Support the RFS volunteers with more funding, recruitment, training and equipment
  3. Ensure timely and frequent, accurate communications through reliable sources over a variety of platforms including public radio, television, electronic media
  4. Ensure communication towers are sufficient in number for fast and continuous mobile/internet coverage for region and provide protection for them from wildfire
  5. Conduct frequent slashing/mulching of firetrails, easements etc to provide adequate fire breaks.
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6. Upgrade showgrounds

7. One stop shop for ALL agencies. One person ONLY assigned to assist wildfire survivor in recovery. Streamline processes. Deliver information online and as hardcopy.

8. Fastrack applications for rebuilding, bring clarity to the procedure

## **Supporting documents or images**

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