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I am making this submission as	General public
Submission type	Personal
Organisation making the submission (if applicable)	
Your position in the organisation (if applicable)	
Consent to make submission public	Public
Your story	<p>I watched in horror as NSW and other states burned. The intensity, geographical area, losses of human life, animal life, forests, livelihoods etc are just that - horrific.</p> <p>We are in a vicious cycle - climate change is contributing significantly to worse and more frequent bushfires, which are in turn drastically impacting on climate change.</p>
1.1 Causes and contributing factors	<p>It appears that the major contributing factors to the bushfires were the dryness of undergrowth due to the un-precedented drought leading up to the fires, the extreme temperatures, which are starting earlier each year, and the low rainfall. The early high temperatures are making burn-offs difficult to do and control,</p> <p>It also appears that there is a blame game between state and federal politicians. The fires had become dire before the Prime Minister was prepared to cancel his holiday and take control.</p>

Our ever-increasing temperatures, which have now been shown scientifically to be a direct result of the burning of fossil fuels are undoubtedly one of the major factors in the destructive nature of these fires, never encountered before in Australia.

1.2 Preparation and planning

There was little small-scale preparation that could have been done to avert the fires. If we are going to avoid this as a yearly catastrophe, we need to take super-urgent action on climate change. So far, the temperature of the world since the early 1900's has only risen by around 1 degree Celsius. We are now told that if no action is taken to curb climate change, we are facing a 3-4 degree rise in the next few decades. That is too late. We must limit the rise in temperature even just to maintain the new-normal status quo. This will require a bi-partisan co-operation of the like that we are now seeing with the COVID pandemic.

1.3 Response to bushfires

Our major response must be to limit the rise in temperature that the world is now experiencing, otherwise we have no hope of containing the resulting fires.

The Bushfire Inquiry should therefore recommend increased efforts to reduce greenhouse emissions and demonstrate to the rest of the world that we should all want to reduce the risk of major economic damage and threats to our future from global warming, including droughts and bushfires.

Reduce the risk by making all developments bushfire resistant

As well as doing what we can to make all new developments bushfire resistant, we should evaluate need to evaluate the potential of new technology to spot bushfires and have equipment on standby to put them out before they get out of control.

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Satellites can routinely detect fires the size of an urban house site (32 metres x 32 metres). In good conditions, fires a tenth of this size can be detected. A feasibility study should therefore be conducted to determine the potential savings (including savings in greenhouse emissions and health costs of exposure to bushfire smoke) from using satellite and other technology to detect fires and extinguish them before they get out of control.

Reduce the risk by providing adequate resources for fire fighting and prevention

1.4 Any other matters

Global overheating increases the frequency of bushfires; more frequent bushfires increase global warming. For example, Guido van der Werf, who helps maintain the Global Fire Emissions Database, said the 2019-20 fires in New South Wales and Victoria emitted around 400 million tons of CO₂-eq, "pushing country-level estimates for all of 2019 to a new record in the satellite era" of about 900 million tons. The UK Meteorological Office states that the Australian fires could account for 1 to 2 percent of the acceleration in the growth of the global concentration of carbon dioxide in the planet's atmosphere in

2020.

Health Costs of Bushfire Smoke – 417 premature deaths,
Eastern Australia, 2019-20

In March 2020, the Medical Journal of Australia reported that exposure to smoke from the unprecedented bushfires in Eastern Australia caused an estimated 417 premature deaths, including 219 in NSW. The smoke also caused an estimated 3151 hospital admissions respectively for cardiovascular and respiratory ailments and 1305 visits to hospital emergency departments for asthma:

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.5694/mja2.50545>

The costs of all the above health problems, as well as other direct and indirect costs could amount to more than \$100 billion:
<https://theconversation.com/with-costs-approaching-100-billion-the-fires-are-australias-costliest-natural-disaster-129433>

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