



Title	Mrs
First name	Jane
Last name	I'Ons
I am making this submission as	Resident
Submission type	Personal
Organisation making the submission (if applicable)	
Your position in the organisation (if applicable)	
Consent to make submission public	Public
Your story	February and September 2019 bushfires near to our property located 5 kms north of Tenterfield. The February fire received little publicity, perhaps being in a cross border area (NSW, QLD) that contributed to the problems. I made a submission to the NSW Govt following a public meeting in town that revealed details of the appalling situation that unfolded. Apparently started by a Telstra vehicle in a paddock with long, dry grass. Extensive damage due in part to poor communications and ignoring valuable local knowledge. RFS has learned from this episode but more needs to be done urgently as fires must be dealt with from local bases using local experienced people. Children playing outside with matches surrounded by dry African lovegrass (Eragrostis curvula) started the September fire that came within 300m of us. The air power summonsed was extraordinary and effective along with the local and other fireys.

1.1 Causes and contributing factors

New diesel vehicles with hot exhausts in areas with long, dry grass.
Lack of education/awareness of the dangers of living in certain areas.
Lack of adequate water on local properties (dams, tanks) due to prolonged drought.

1.2 Preparation and planning

National Parks and State Forests - quickly assess with local knowledge for future events and act now. Install dams, firebreaks, improve access tracks/roads, reduce fuel loads. Current laws and practices need urgent updating followed by appropriate training and funding to get ready for next summer. Living in the bush - clear vegetation, water supply, sprinklers, access - the list is extensive. If not adequately prepared do not expect others, usually volunteers, to put their lives on the line. Incredibly stressful for them.

1.3 Response to bushfires

Local governments adequately funded and equipped to provide ongoing maintenance eg. slashing of road verges, removal of dead trees. Establish water points for emergencies. Educate newcomers to the dangers of summer in our area - lovegrass, power lines
Establish RFS HQ in Tenterfield with appropriate equipment, communications and local staff - experienced and knowledgeable.
Reimburse landholders for water stolen from private dams by fire fighting services.

1.4 Any other matters

Same co-ordinate and datum system to be used across all services. All vehicles (RFS, SES, National Parks and police) and planes to have satellite trackers so that their locations can be determined from multiple locations.
Look overseas for best practice - paid, highly trained, appropriate and effective staff.
Funding/grants for dams and water tanks, infrastructure on farms.
Rolling educational community messages prior to summer. Local education campaigns - schools, local radio, real estate agencies.
Reduce Christmas/New Year holidays nation-wide. Ensure adequate staffing levels during these times. Lengthen winter break.
Nation-wide co-ordination and collaboration - grass roots to satellite imagery.
Compulsory reading - The Stretton Royal Commission. Lessons not learned, acted upon. Shame, shame, shame.

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