



Your details

Mrs

Title

First name

jennifer

Last name

bowe OAM

Submission details

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 a President of a local community group, a volunteer at others, and was a volunteer at Evacuation centres in December, January and February 2020.

Locally the national plans broke down at local level.

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

A major study on fire risk in this time needs to be funded, with indigenous and international input, so that emergency services have an important reference source for future planning. Once fires reach critical mass, individuals in trucks have limited impact. It is clear that the resources available are insufficient for this type of event.

1.2 Preparation and planning

Nationally, there needs to be an automatic trigger when an event risks reaching given dimensions that the military services equipment and manpower are brought in. Military transport vehicles need to be fitted so that fire suppression equipment can be added in times of need. An internal process in the military to ensure rapid response is required.

1.3 Response to bushfires

Local community resources were wasted and part of the response needs to include a large storage facility for community donations. Existing web based information services were a major step forward, but created uncertainty at a local level as individuals were using this to determine risks to their property. Emergency services need to be improved with budget support for communication at a local level.

Locally home losses were relatively small, while sheds, fences and outbuildings loss were much larger. Loss of tools, shovels and mowers etc creates a mental health issue as owners are then unable to make repairs to their own property.

The management and staff at Mittagong RSL were brilliant, and must have suffered a major financial impost. A trained local emergency coordinator based in councils may be worthwhile.

Emergency evacuation processes were sufficient, but staff often poorly trained. Local knowledge of who is doing what was poor, however many individuals do not take the opportunity to learn until the fence is on fire, and then look for someone else to blame.

1.4 Any other matters

Local fire brigades appear well equipped for anything short of catastrophic events.

Supporting documents or images
