

Your details

Title

Ms

First name

Joslyn

Last name

van der Moolen

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

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

Since fires spotted 12 kilometres in Australia's hottest driest summer due to Climate Change increasing overall temperatures by two degrees, in NSW in the summer of 2019/2020, need to focus on quick response to put out fires in remote areas and asset protection rather than controlled burn quotas.

1.2 Preparation and planning

Asset Protection re Local Defence Measures to Build Community Fire Resilience

1. Councils to have free organic waste for residents at key fire times.
2. Fund RFS Facilitation Officers to provide free home audits to prepare for the fire season (ie don't stock firewood over summer or near house/clear roofs/retrofit buildings ie sparkproof house to withstand ember attack, metal flyscreens etc).
3. Review and implement asset protection zones around residential areas working in conjunction with national parks, council and landcare (see Controlled Burns).
4. Demountable Sat Comms at Fire Stations (co-located with Community Refuge).
5. Fire fighting boat housed in coastal lakeside boatshed to patrol and fight lakeside and headland fires.
6. Provide locals with basic firefighting training.
7. Community buyin for residential firefighting equipment including backpack sprayers.
8. Fill all vacant NPWS fire fighting positions immediately and reinstate staff losses to NPWS (Murramarang National Park management).
9. Community Refuge in designated safe space with boat access for evacuation potential (perhaps Cookies Beach near the boat ramp) to cater for holiday crowds. Offgrid power Tesla Battery/wind etc and comms capable. Could be roofed space if building too expensive.
10. Have portable mobile fire fighting stations in the fire season located in strategic areas.

Controlled Burns*

11. Plan strategic controlled mosaic burns that focus on asset protection zones around residential areas rather than meeting remote area burn quotas.
12. Incorporate landcare manual removal of dry fuel load such as sticks in tree forks, piles of sticks around trees and weeds as well as slashing and brushcutting rather than burning which can escape.
13. Controlled burns to incorporate mosaic burning that leaves unburnt patches that wildlife can retreat to and allow flora that is not fire resistant to survive. See two day course for land owners
<https://www.nature.org.au/healthy-ecosystems/hotspots-project/> 14 Feb 2020
14. Local land managers (landcare groups etc) to have regular interaction with the fire control section of land management agencies (Forestry, NP, Councils) to ensure regular inspection and maintenance of fire tracks including trimming back growth, removing fallen trees, filling in potholes to ensure emergency vehicle access every fire season.

1.3 Response to bushfires

Wider Region and Quick Response

15. Fund fire prevention services and fire fighting aircraft and equipment from the defence budget as fires remain a real and present danger to regional Australians. Arial firefighting to focus on early intervention.

See ALP Plan for \$80 million for national fleet of aircraft and dedicated smokejumper units.

https://www.billshorten.com.au/_labor_s_national_fire_fighting_fleet_sunday_17_March_2019

1.4 Any other matters

16. End native forest and complete transition to plantation forestry as logging as this dries out forest and increases fuel load (65% of treetop left on forest floor) and the window to do controlled burns is narrowing and creates an acceptable escaped fire risk to the neighboring environment and the community. Reduce fuel load by sourcing firewood from the treetops of native trees left on the forest floor rather than delivering firewood by logging truck to the woodyard (interim measure till native forest logging ceases).

17. SA only allows campfires in the colder months - no campfires for the entire fire season in other states (controversial!).

REFERENCES

The devastating impact on biodiversity of logging particularly post 2019/2020 fires is documented in the Environmental Justice Australia No Longer Tenable Bushfires and Regional Forest Agreements Report March 2020 by Margaret Blakers and Brendan Sykes.

Professor Lindenmayer advocates a cessation of the current “selective timber harvesting”.

<https://theconversation.com/logging-is-due-to-start-in-fire-ravaged-forests-this-week-its-the-last-thing-our-wildlife-needs-132347>

Supporting documents or images