



## Your details

Mrs

Title

First name

Joy

Last name

Hafey

## Submission details

I am making this submission as

An academic/researcher

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 recognise that I live in a country that was shaped by fire and I recognise that as population pressures increase, more people will be building homes in inappropriate areas. In the Christmas/ New Year fires in the Wollondilly LGA, I was only marginally impacted by fire attack with embers flying approximately 3km. Fortunately the wind changed direction and we were saved, others were not so lucky.

## 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**

As population pressure increase, so too does the need for more land on which to build. For example building on the ridges in the Blue Mountains is akin to building ones house in a chimney. There must be consideration of where one is allowed to build and consideration of more stringent bushfire protection construction methods. State and local government authorities should regulate where dwellings can be built and to what level of bushfire attack, construction should occur eg only Flame Zone. Present Planning for Bushfire Protection offers inadequate protection regarding Asset Protection Zones in a fire storm .

### **1.2 Preparation and planning**

As a chronologically enhanced country person, I have experience bushfires on a regular basis. Prior to the 1970s a regular feature around country townships were fuel reduction burns, prior to the bushfire seasons.. While these fires undoubtedly had a negative impact on fauna and flora in the locality, they did reduce the fuel load and hence reduce the intensity of fire attack. Burning too frequently and with insufficient time between burns will result in the extinction of some obligate seeders. and other species. In recent times, a decrease in fuel reduction burns has occurred with devastating results eg Balmoral Village. There needs to be a balance, in fuel reduction in populated areas, and conserving fauna and flora. Survey work to identify threatened species could be undertaken prior to reduction burns , to protect species.

### **1.3 Response to bushfires**

Fuel reduction needs to occur prior to the bushfire season. Fuel reduction around dwellings and in the locality needs to occur. A fire management plan needs to be developed by each home occupier.  
A local evacuation plan needs to be developed by local and state authorities so that traffic can flow freely. When Tahmoor was evacuated it took one hour to travel five kilometers at one point.

### **1.4 Any other matters**

A chronology of bushfire events can be be found in the sediments of Thirlimers Lakes in the Wollondilly LGA. The timing and intensity of these fire events has been documented by a University of Wollongong student. Human records are inadequate when considering geological records. Climate change is real and one of the best ways to save our planet is to control population increase and to limit our footprint on this planet.

Without the dedication and efforts of our fire men and women, and all others, the carnage would have been far worse. Overall the response to this fire season was outstanding.

## **Supporting documents or images**

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