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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>After November 2019 we were alerted to high fire risk, and our village has only one way in or out, effectively trapping us in a fire. NYE evacuated to town towards the fire danger, everything was closed even shops. Nowhere indoors to shelter from terrible smoke and red sky /black skies/ash. We went to hanging rock at 7am but hundreds sitting outdoors in 40 plus degrees of heat and wind unbearably hot. When fires hit Batemans Bay we witnessed fires in industrial estates, housing which caused whole town to panic and head for the heads or the beach, by far the worse place to go,no toilets, no shelter, no food or drink. We headed for a local Soldiers club after leaving the evacuation centre at 0730hrs, We had to wait until staff eventually allowed us in,safe place we felt, and about 70-80 people joined us. When fire came it was pitch black, no power no drinks or toilets working. Communication was poor, radio only link with batteries. Fires near me app not working to update risks, no advice when to return home? On 9th Jan we evacuated to Nowra as advised and</p>

looters were active in village, worrying us. When we reached Nowra we had spent 20 hrs in a car ,exhausted and then paid for a hotel. The fires were worse there, masks on shops closed, no food or drink etc. We were in fear for our lives and wished we had stopped home,with a plan to jump into the hotel pool if needed, terrifying. As a 71 yr old with health issues the expense of travel, eating out, hotels took its toll,so stressed for many weeks, sleepless nights. On return to our home we saw the destruction, so many homes lost here, business hard for locals

1.1 Causes and contributing factors

Fuel loads very visible before fires started, still there, Benandarah Forest Princes Highway, due to logging . Not enough back burning perhaps? Dry conditions due to drought

1.2 Preparation and planning

have a fire plan however mobile emergency Notifications very few considering the dangers

1.3 Response to bushfires

Services wonderful but limited in rural settings, volunteers mainly, face to face RFS meeting was helpful

1.4 Any other matters

Impacted people were receiving assistance but we were all impacted financially with little support for us pensioners, could not pay for hotel without credit card, no cash for petrol and no Eptos in power cuts either

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