

Your details

Miss

Title

First name

Beck

Last name

Beverley

Submission details

I am making this submission as

A resident in a bushfire-affected area

Submission type

I am submitting on behalf of my organisation

Organisation making the submission (if applicable)

Out of the Ashes

Your position in the organisation (if applicable)

President

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

On the day of the fires along with my family we fought to save our livestock and property. we lost 85% of our property including machinery and livestock. As an answer to the fires myself and a friend filled my ute up with food and water and drove to literally every property that had been impacted by the fire. for most people we were the very first people they had seen since that day. their were no food, water, infrastructure, phone or internet including communication services and power for almost 3 weeks. every day i printed out the necessary information and hand

delivered it to those people. We were still actively on fire for those ensuing weeks. the cost on fuel and my vehicle as it had gone places it was not built for made it break down and fall apart constantly. visiting everyone i knew people were barely holding on so set about hosting a benefit night that was put on for those free of cost that were impacted by the fires. we raised money for fencing and fodder and provided many the first opportunity to see each other post fire.

after this i was approached and asked whether i would set up a recovery pantry/hub which i did and continue to operate without the backing of anyone and run on \$0 budget. I provide food, water, shelter and clothing as well as cook meals for those who have lost everything.

i also advocate and fill out forms including grant submissions and have organised services and supports for those within the community.

I work night and day and hunt down resources and donations from across the country.

I have had no end of difficulty with the council appointed Recovery coordinator who is not doing their job nor helping the community as they are appointed to do. instead they send out a newsletter that has not changed for some time every fortnight. the irony is to people who are living still in tents with no reception or infrastructure some 6 months on. Most have never met her and know that they will get assistance when they come to me. I have lobbied MPs and continue to try and advocate for a community that was forgotten and devalued. we never recieved the help the south coast did and we had greater loss than most of that area. the system has let us down and how more people didnt loose their life is beyond me.

we live in an area that has no infrastrctre and no communication. prior to the fires and is not good enough and still nothing has been done to change this.

many almost lost their livesd due to this. they never recieved the warning systems or the evacuation messages. so were taken completely by suprise.

and had no ability to call for help for emergency services and some had the fires turn up and then leave them literally for dead. we never had the army come and help and we are still yet to be cleaned up. we still have not had any of this happen and it is now 6 months on.

we had our recovery coordinator tell people last week living in tents that they really werent struggling that much and they were fine.

we are a rural community who those lost most of their fencing infrastructure. so therefore have had to replace it. to date putting it in ourselves my family have spent over \$60 000.

the recovery coordinator said fences were a luxury. if we dont have fences we cannot protect our stock and no stock means we dont make a living.

i am disgusted in the lack of understanding and empathy that has occurred so far.

doing what i do, i stepped up as no one else had and the community were and still are in need.

i have in my role of providing this service been the target of small minded bullies who feel that they are 'owed'.

but i have met some amazing people and built lasting friendships. we still need all the assistance we can get.

as part of my fire experience i witnessed animals being burnt alive and needing to be destroyed and the huge toll it has taken on all of us.

we still are desperate for the help accross the community, most still have no water or power or even sanitation.

once person felt like they were being treated like wild dogs and that they were being treated less than human.

a lot of us cant go through much more and are being treated and living like we are in a 3rd world country yet we are in a 1st world nation.

the constant fighting with insurance companies and retelling your story time and time again are triggers that dont allow us to move on.

their needs to be a better information system so that instead of having to be retraumatised over and over that this data is kept centrally and that we have a case worker who applies for grants and other things automatically for us and who ensure that other agencies are held accountable and at the moment this is not the case at all.

we went through catastrophic fire then 2 floods that took whatever remained after the fires and now the carona virus has stripped us of all the help we started to finally get (which wasnt much) and again we were told we didnt matter and to hurry up and wait.

this is just retrauma and retrauma

i have begged and i have sold whatever shred of self respect i have left to get assistance for my community it has been rough and takes a toll on me completely when their is no assistance and continually being told no

Terms of Reference (optional)

The Inquiry welcomes submissions that address the particular matters identified in its [Terms of Reference](#).

Supporting documents or images
