



Your details

Mrs

Title

First name

Amanda

Last name

Lewin

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

Your story

On the evening of the 18th December, my husband and I were aware of an orange sky and flames on the distant horizon, directly behind our property. We contacted the local Rfs captain via our next door neighbour, and was told that the fire that could be seen was a tactical burn being conducted by the RFS, and that the situation was under control. As midnight approached, the flames died down, and could no longer be seen. The next morning, with catastrophic fire danger predicted, smoke could be seen building directly to the west of our property. Within the hour, it was evident that 2 fire fronts had reignited from the previous evening's tactical burn, and were merging in the direction of our home. With barely enough time to gather our four children and dogs in the vehicles, the fire front bore down on Us. Our home burnt to

the ground.

We had no emergency fire warning, no siren, no police, Rfs or fire and rescue presence. There were no fire retardant planes, water bombing aircraft. No one. We were completely alone. The Green Wattle Creek fire did NOT burn down our home, the RFS tactical burn from the previous night did. The fire went on to destroy our village, many other homes, and resulted in the deaths of 2 volunteer fire fighters.

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 RFS tactical burn undertaken and left inadequately managed.

An apparently large fuel load in the neighbouring conservation area, as a result of no back burning operations being performed for around 20 years, according to the neighbours.

Catastrophic weather conditions, with wind and temperatures to exceed normal conditions on the day of the fire 19th December 2019.

1.2 Preparation and planning

We had a bushfire survival plan. The fires near me app. Attended shed meetings for advice regarding local fires situation. We cut fence lines and allowed a bulldozer to cut a fire break through the middle of our property to allow for backburning operations to take place at the RFS' appointment. No such operation took place. We had raked, cleared, installed fire hoses, and had a fire fighting trailer with pump and water for firefighting purposes. All in preparation for the Green Wattle Creek Fire, that didn't eventuate, because the RFS tactical burn WAS the fire.

1.4 Any other matters

The complete avoidance of the parties at fault to acknowledge their mistakes is beyond belief. People's homes, including ours, pets, livestock, property, possessions, heirlooms, all lost. The lives of two brave men, also lost. The general public should be aware of the gross mismanagement that led to these horrific circumstances.

Whilst we are eternally grateful to have our lives, I will never forget the fear in the eyes of my children as we left our home for the last time.

Supporting documents or images

Attach files

- 048384B7-275F-4311-953C-840BDB871DCD.jpeg
 - 43378F26-5C50-4F6D-91C4-200B9BFB9C2B.jpeg
 - 4CC16D20-DF3A-4FE5-9DBA-117C5EC06D43.jpeg
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