

## Your details

Mr

Title

First name

christopher

Last name

kirrage

## 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

I have attached a file that is a poem about bushfires. The causes and defence. I am now in my 80s and I write about what we did and how we did it. We never experienced fires to this degree. To prevent them is easy to do and common sense. With the undergrowth on the forest floor an Aboriginal would have staved to death. They never would have been able to see any animal to hunt them. I would very much like to speak to somebody prepared to listen. I have found none so far. This poem has been sent to the Prime Ministers Office, My rep in the representatives, and Pauline Hanson, who told me she only looks after Qld and Mark Latham One Nation member for nsw. down to local government, TV and radio. Not one reply or acknowledgement from any of them. They would have been quick to tell me if I was wrong. We used to weigh the ground fuel from a square yard and multiply to get the tons per acre. The amount of undergrowth, although I did not weigh any would have been 100 fold. So the

heat and embers. This fire had the most friendly possible weather. 3 consecutive southerlies to take out the southern front, followed by 4 days of north east winds, to deal with the northern front, before it even got to Milton Any other statement is pure untruth and embellishment. That should have completely contained that fire, with the very minimum of damage. Because I tell the truth, and can back it up with other ex firefighters, I know this will go no further. It is a criticism of ineptitude, and that gets me nowhere. This poem was written some time before the fire, so was sort of a prophecy.

## Terms of Reference (optional)

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

## Supporting documents or images

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### Attach files

- 2-02 Wildlife And Fires - Poetry.docx
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**DRIP TORCH-BACKBURN FROM FIRE TRAIL**



**1.2 MT HANDLE  
MCLEOD TOOL**



**KNAPSACK SPRAY**

### The True Story

There are few things that make me mad, bushfires are for one  
I come from an earlier time, big equipment we had none  
We would fight a fire with just three things, in general I should say  
A Drip-Torch to fight fire with fire, McLeod tool and Knapsack spray

We didn't have a tanker, used our own utes and cars  
We did most of our fighting, at night under the stars  
We might start a burn back, maybe a mile or two ahead  
Walk round with the Diesel Drip Torch, as before I said

I don't remember anytime, a building or life lost  
And when we were fire fighting, no one added up the cost  
Of course we got it easy, had no Westerlies or Heat  
In spite of what the experts say, we had records still not beat



The difference was in what we did, in Autumn, Winter through  
We had cool fires burning everywhere, no damage did they do  
We had ferns under the stately trees, Boronia, Brown and Pink  
So where have they all gone to now, nobody wants to think



Maiden Hair and Curly Cane, Fishbone and Dellabeta  
I used to sell them as a kid, I was a real go getter  
Pick them by the thousand, off to the States they'd go  
Then burn those ferny gullies, so next year's crop could grow



Eventually the shrubs increased, clustering together  
Then a hot fire needed, pick the right time and the weather  
It never got into the trees, fuel too close to the ground  
Rejuvenate the bushland, so new plants could abound

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Wallabies were everywhere, Black ones and the Red  
Native bees were busy too, with nectar and Bee Bread  
Could not go out into the bush, without a Lyrebird's call  
There were Koalas in Bangalays, but now there's bugger all

So now we have the Wombats, they were never here before  
They have moved in to fill the void, fires don't bother them at all  
They have their home deep in the ground, they only hear the roar  
After the fire they search for food, stop when they find some more

Now the only time they burn off, if they do at all  
Is always in the Spring Time, never in the Fall  
When are all the babies born, ah yes in the Spring  
So if I want to get upset, it is just one more thing

You can't destroy the big trees, without a fuel load on the ground  
The same goes for the wildlife, they were all safe and sound  
But now we have the National Parks, you didn't light a fire  
But if you do, I can promise you, Governmental ire

My Wife's Dad spent his whole life, working in the bush  
He was a sleeper cutter, which meant his luck he used to push  
He would have to fall the big trees, get an old Blitz wagon in  
Snig them all to one safe place, so splitting could begin

The roads he travelled weren't so good, though he thought they were beaut  
When I first saw him working, he drove an FC Holden Ute  
He could drive it through the bush, to the place he had to go  
There was no heavy undergrowth, hard to believe I know

So that was how it used to be, the bush a pleasant place  
With animals and birdlife, so was it just God's grace?  
Or was it as I said before, we really had fire beat  
And I can promise you one thing, we did have Westerlies and Heat

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So with Aircraft dropping water, and Tankers there to burn  
I know that it's a rotten pun, but with pencil it's my turn  
They hope that us old fellas, will be quiet or go away  
But I will always tell them, we could beat fires, 'In My Day'

Now when I see the skeletons, of huge trees against the sky  
I know it's just a waste of time, to ask a Polly why  
The animals are gone of course, dead or moved away  
It's too thick for a dog to bark in, where the babies used to play

Before the 2020 fire the undergrowth was similar to the image below  
The temperatures and ember generation would be incredible



The undergrowth has killed the ferns, Boronia by fire  
It isn't just that I am old, but it really gets my ire  
The way they blame near everything, the way it's heading now  
The biggest problem that they have, they don't know bloody how.

The forestry used aircraft, but they were to start a fire  
I told a fire controller that, then he called me a liar  
They would drop fire bombs on compartments, where no fire had been  
I have to say it did the job, to keep the bush pristine

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Is there a way to get it back? I wish I could be sure  
 First we have to deal with, growth on the forest floor  
 Hoping that the plants are there, and just biding their time  
 To take the opportunity, to be once more in their prime

Dasnt - is a word, Australian for dare not.  
 Polly - Short for Politician

This really turned out to be a prophecy. When the November fires arrived in NSW, that destroyed Millions or Billions of native wildlife. Thousands of homes and too many lives. All due to criminal mismanagement. This poem, written well before the fires, proves it.

EMERALD MEDAL IN CONTEST - "SAVE THE KOALAS"  
 EMERALD MEDAL IN CONTEST - "AUSTRALIAN BUSHFIRES"  
 INTERNATIONAL POETRY COMPETITIONS

National Parks is short for **National Parks and Wildlife  
 Destruction Service**

**Not So You Say? Some 15 years ago my Mate and I were fencing and building a cattle yard, on the Bowman property, Jerrawangla, NSW. Every day, from day one, two majestic Wedgetails were circling the area. After we had been there a couple of weeks, National Parks laid 1080 dog and fox baits. A few days later, right where I parked my work ute, a dead Eagle. Never saw the other one again. Had it not been for the God sent coincidence, in where the Eagle died, we never would have known, and thought they moved on. We reported the incident to the Nowra office of National Parks.**



We were told by a lady on the desk, that 1080 did not affect native animals, go away. Seriously, there was no way we could explain that the Eagle had eaten a fox or dog killed by the 1080, and was a secondary kill. Eagles are classed as tertiary consumers. The chance of this is denied by those in authority. The circumstantial evidence in this case, was far too high to deny.

I have seen similar situations in the past of the death of innocent carnivores after poison baits were laid. I still travel around Cattle Stations in the North. Friends and their young ones, from the 50s are still around, and they speak of the same situation after baiting with poisoned hearts, supplied by PP. It is not in their interest to stop, because of the cost of Dingoes killing calves, and they can even kill a full grown Cow. If the animal is bogged, the Dogs will eat the Vulva, and as much of the Vagina as they can reach. The Cow then has to be shot. Of this I have personal experience as a Stockman in Queensland in the 50s. It was part of my job to patrol natural watering places, when cattle were weak in the Dry. Pull them out and stand them up, to get them through to the Wet Season, when quality food was again available.

IT IS BLINDNESS OF THE SITUATION, IN THE CASE OF THE EAGLES  
AND NOW IN BUSH MAINTENANCE THAT BRINGS US TO THIS POINT.

A royal commission, with a do nothing later attitude, won't help either. The people to ask, and I am serious, are those that got it right in the past. Forget climate change in this instance. It has everything to do with the amount of low scrub fuel. The more tonnes per hectare of ground fuel, the hotter the fire. Then the higher and further the embers go. Because of the load there are considerably more embers. Ember attack in this case was the cause of the massive spread of the fire. There were only 2 excessively hot days, and they were not consecutive. We had the best possible fire fighting weather on the South Coast. 3 days of southerly winds, ample time to burn and kill the southern front. 4 days from the north east, also ample time to burn back and kill the northern front. All this before the fire had really got started. I know this because we had no disaster anything like this, when I was in the Brigade, and we had many days in the high 30s and howling hot westerlies.

**From what I have seen on TV, the use of aircraft is an expensive joke. I have seen water dropped far from the front and having no effect whatsoever. If it does hit the fire front, there would be an ember cloud that could travel any distance. Never seen an effective drop anywhere.**

**If am wrong, show me. Firemen spraying the tops of trees that have a 3 metre furnace at the bottom. It may just be for TV, but it looks ridiculous to us that know better.**