

Submission Number: NND.001.00247

Submission Of: Tarome Rural Fire Brigade

Your Details

Email address:

Phone:

Preferred means of contact: Email

What is your submission based on? I am making this submission based on my professional knowledge, qualifications or experience or on behalf of a group or organisation

What is your area of professional expertise? protecting agricultural production and the related businesses

If you are lodging your submission on behalf of a group or organisation, what is the name of the group or organisation? Tarome Rural Fire Brigade

Your Submission

In your experience, what areas of the bushfire emergency response worked well?

- * Local people and local knowledge with extensive experience
- * Liaising closely with [REDACTED] Regional Manager RFSQ, [REDACTED] Area Director RFSQ and Scenic Rim Regional Council Mayor Cr. Greg Christensen
- * [REDACTED] Area Director RFSQ immediately supplying heavy machinery for urgent and essential fire breaks
- * Air Attack was substantial and highly effective
- * All RFSQ resources.

In your experience, what areas of the bushfire emergency response didn't work well?

- * the edict of no fire on the ground i.e. no back burning. It is impossible to contain a fire of this size without a back burn
- * [REDACTED] was ordered to stop from completing a back burn which effectively sent a second fire at us in Tarome
- * Crews from other areas were held up in staging at Boonah ICC for too long. They should be sent directly to the local fire shed of the fire ground. Crews lost too much time at staging and arrived often with only a few hours left before having to retire.
- * Someone from ICC with no local knowledge dictating a sector boundary, overruling the Local First Officer and then shifted a crew from the fire line which caused a major out break on the fire.
- * Staging should insure that new crews from other areas arrive with in daylight unless they have worked that fire in an earlier shift and are aware of the fire ground
- * Urban Units should not assume they have authority over Rural crews in their local rural areas

In your experience, what needs to change to improve arrangements for preparation, mitigation, response and recovery coordination for national natural disaster arrangements in Australia?

- * Identify risk areas and reduce fuel loads prior to fire season
- * Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service & Partnerships.... QPWSFuel reduction burns must be carried out in a better window of opportunity i.e. after rain when timber and habitat is damp allowing easier control of fire
- * Owners of high risk areas, be they Gov. or private landowners should be forced to reduce the risk to others in the community
- * QPWS under the guise of protection of native flora and fauna are building fuel loads which in reality is destroying what they think they are protecting
- * QPWS has a burning regime which is not conducive to our local seasons here in SEQ. They try to burn in winter which is dry and destroys habitat. This also should be done after rain as the graziers do for protection of the pastures.
- * QPWS had a fuel load that was so enormous and no fire break preparation, that there was no possibility of stopping the fire in their area. It was not until the fire was in the grazed and managed country that we put a stop to the fire..... photos attached of the difference where Parks land was incinerated and the grazed land recovered quickly...see green grass

Is there anything else you would like to tell the Royal Commission?

- * QPWS must reconsider their burning calendar and truly protect the flora, fauna and habitat
- * QPWS are ineffective, even negligent in their land management
- * Local knowledge must be held at the forefront of the attack on fire and fuel load. Our local people effectively shut down a fire which had been battled for a full month AND a second one sent to us when the previously mentioned back burn was foolishly stopped.

Do you agree to your submission being published? Yes I agree to my submission being published in my name

Supporting material provided:

Aftermath.jpg

Parks v Grazing Photo 1.jpg

Submission Vege Management 2020 Tarome Brigade.docx



Attention: the Chairman, Mr Ted O'Brien MP.

Submission Inquiry into the efficacy of past and current vegetation and land management policy, practice and legislation and their effect on the intensity and frequency of bushfires and subsequent risk to property, life and the environment

20February, 2020

From TAROME RURAL FIRE BRIGADE MEMBERS

TAROME. Qld. 4309

Tarome Rural Fire Brigade was one of the many Brigades who fought the huge bushfires in SEQ in October and November 2019.

As a mountain country Rural Fire Brigade we have a lot of experience fighting fires in rough terrain. Many of our brigade members are cattlemen that use fire as a fuel reduction tool and a pasture and regrowth management tool.

The extremely large fuel load in the National Park where the fires came from in November, is the reason these fires were larger than anything we have ever experienced. We dealt with both the north eastern flank of the Swanfels Fire and the very eastern end of our other fire was originally the Glenrock fire. The tinder dry conditions were also a hindrance. National Parks land burnt so severely it looked like a bomb went off. Vegetation, habitat and wildlife were destroyed.

The fire in Parks land was far too savage for us to control due to the fuel load. It was not until it reached the grazed lands adjoining that we were able to finally control and extinguish this fire.

The severity of the burn in National Parks suggests it will take many years to grow back. Even now the grazing lands have recovered but parks land still has no growth and hundreds probably thousands of trees burnt to death.

In this region we have many state owned lands that have had no fuel reduction carried out for many years and are another disaster waiting to happen.

It is essential that these fuel loads are reduced before the next fire season. There is only a small window of opportunity for hazard reduction burns and these can easily be missed. The threat to neighbours and community cannot be ignored. Parks winter burn/fuel reduction is not suited to the Queensland spring/summer rainfall pattern and therefore they have missed reducing their fuel load. Their winter burns also bear the threat of winter westerly winds.

Burning immediately after rain which cattlemen have done for some generations has a cool fast fire which will not take out timber/habitat. A light winter grazing would do far less harm to the park vegetation and wildlife than a hot winter fire.

We ask the committee to recommend that QPWS review their winter burning strategies. Note if there is no winter rain, which is very unreliable in Qld, to then look at a spring or summer burn after rain.



