

Submission Number: NND.001.00669

Submission Of:

Your Details

Email address:

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Preferred means of contact: Email

What is your submission based on? I am making this submission based on my personal situation

What was your personal situation in relation to the 2019-20 Bushfires?

Where do you live? Bega Valley (A)

Your Submission

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

1. The fires near me app. Though it could have provided a bit more information about threats.
2. The road clearing after the Back a bushfire.
3. Quaama relief centre for essentials.
4. RFS and police rescue visits after the fire.
5. A member of Brogo RFS who gave us more information about the Badja fire by community email group.

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

My key area of concern is communication before, during and after the bushfire.

1. Yowrie valley has very little mobile phone coverage and is considered a black spot. Being on the edge of Wadbilliga national park and some of the first populated areas that the Badja fire hit, it is critical that there is appropriate mobile coverage. We couldn't even call our neighbours to check on them. If I didn't go and warn my neighbours, they might have been too late to leave their caravan.
2. We did not receive any emergency text messages before, during or after the firestorm. We relied on the FNM app and email messages from an RFS volunteer from another region to the south- Brogo.
3. While evacuated in Narooma, we did not have mobile phone coverage, so could not contact concerned friends and family or neighbours.

Other areas:

1. I was turned away from the Cobargo relief centre by the army reserve when I went to find drinking water, we did not have safe drinking water on the property.

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

1. We need to build additional mobile phone towers to cover the Yowrie and Galba mobile phone black spots. For safety and recovery of the economy in these areas.
2. Perhaps RFS officers could collect local details and give daily updates to people in their that local area.

3. Recovery efforts

-To help the economy bounce back, thought should be given to innovative uses of communal land, including remote workspaces with NBN connection.

- rebuilding Wandella Hall should be a priority.

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

The bushfires have left many in this area with mental health problems due to the terrifying nature of the disaster.

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