

Submission Number: NND.001.00723

Submission Of:

Your Details

Email address:

Phone:

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? East Gippsland (S)

Your Submission

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

Before and during the bushfire, we were kept informed and the Incident Control Centre did an amazing job of coordination in unprecedented circumstances. The fire was unpredictable and did not behave as expected. You couldn't fault the response to the fire by emergency services. The day after the fire impacted our place, we went to the Relief Centre and found it very supportive. We were provided with immediate funds that did not require any bureaucracy to tie us over the first couple of weeks. Our community, Sarsfield, provided significant support for those who had been affected. All our support came from local organizations and volunteers who came from other places.

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

After the fire, apart from local organizations, support was very slow in coming through from the people who had raised so much money. I'm not sure how much has been distributed at this stage. The immediate support was provided by individuals and volunteers, not by the big organizations like Red Cross.

The cleanup by Grocon has been very frustrating with a lack of information being made available to those affected and an inability to contact anyone. Even at this stage (end of April) we still don't know when it will be done, how much has already been done etc.

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

There was very little that could have been done to prepare for this fire. We have had three years of drought and the bush was incredibly dry. It was predictable that if a fire started, it would be virtually uncontrollable.

So far the recovery has been difficult, mainly because a lack of communication and transparency. If we were kept informed about recovery plans, particularly about the work of Grocon, people would feel more relaxed about the recovery situation.

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

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