

**Submission Number: NND.001.00840**

**Submission Of: Susan Carey**

### 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? Bega Valley (A)

### Your Submission

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

What worked well was the mobile phone warnings beforehand and the telephone call to my house getting me out of bed in time to get out or be prepared to stay and defend. Here in QUAAMA we were fortunate to have such a wonderful RFS team (if somewhat inadequate in size and trucks available). They protected the residents of the village brilliantly.

The ABC coverage and constant updating of what was happening was absolutely fantastic and the Rural ABC radio giving 15 minute updates when things were really needing our attention was essential!!! BLESSED ABC!!!!

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

What didn't work well in QUAAMA was not enough firefighters to defend the village and had to make a choice to save the people by harbouring them in the fire shed when they really needed to have enough fire fighters to defend the town. There was absolutely no way I could have stayed to defend my house in the village with the demands on the RFS in QUAAMA that night.

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

It is obvious that a whole new strategy is needed to control burn the surrounding forests year round. The fuel on the ground in the extreme conditions made it impossible to hold back the fire front and its power fueled by the amount of dry fuel on the forest floor. There needs to be a nationwide recruitment drive for volunteers (preferably under 50 years of age!!)

It should be part of Defense Force training to know how to fight fires in Australia and defend our people from natural disasters. They are fantastic at coming in afterwards for clean up but we have a wonderful resource in the Forces who could have Fire Fighting training as part of their basic skills.

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

I am very concerned that the Bushfires are going to slip out of the public memory bank very fast now that the Covid 19 is so front and centre of the news continuously.

There needs to be constant reminders in all the Media of what happened this Summer and what we can expect to experience constantly in Australia now that the Climate change is here to stay and the temperatures dangerously climbing ever higher each year! The threat of fire is now a constant in the lives of ALL Rural areas and does not need to disappear into oblivion because of some other sensational event!

KEEP THE GOVERNMENTS ALERT TO THE THREATS OF FUTURE BUSH FIRES. OUR WHOLE CONTINENT WAS AT RISK THIS SUMMER!

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