

Submission Number: NND.001.00915

Submission Of: Nroman Green

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? Clarence Valley (A)

Your Submission

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

See Below

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

See Below

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

See Below

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

SUBMISSION TO BUSHFIRE INQUIRY

To whom it may concern

When we consider fire, it is made up of three components. It needs all three of these components to exist. If any one of these components is absent, the remaining two cannot sustain fire.

The three components are:-

Oxygen

Heat

Fuel

Everyday examples of extinguishing fire by removing one of these components are:-

Removing oxygen cover a small fire in a kitchen with a fire blanket

Removing heat wet down a campfire until the fire is out

Removing fuel turn off the gas on the BBQ

When we look at bushfires like we have experienced during the last several months we discover that to:-

Remove oxygen can't cover the fire ground with a blanket.

Remove heat impossible to convey sufficient water to the fire ground to remove heat.

Remove fuel this is the only effective method to control large fires.

So, let's elaborate on this point.

In most cases, the fuel cannot be removed at the time the fire is approaching.

To satisfactorily remove fuel, it needs to be done long before the fire approaches.

In this latest fire season, the fires have occurred mainly where arsonist, lightning or careless conduct of fire e.g., cigarette butts, campfires not fully extinguished, escape from backyard incineration, etc. has been involved.

These fires have spread, on bad condition days of wind and high temperatures, for many kilometres at a speed and intensity of great concern.

These fires have continued on, taking lives, human and animal, destroying dwellings, outbuildings, sheds, bridges, road signage and ruining millions of trees.

These fires have continued on, in some cases only stopping at the ocean.

So how do we take back control of the fires?

This can only be done by taking control of the amount of fuel.

If there was minimal fuel in our forest areas and by forest I mean areas of land which basically have a complete tree canopy (irrespective of who owns or controls it), these fires would not have been able to accumulate heat and embers and ferocity which has been characteristic of the fires which have occurred this season. With this ferocity, they have progressed through forests and into more open or cleared areas, spotting kilometres ahead of the actual ground fire.

So, we need to control the amount of fuel so we can control the intensity of the fire.

A lot of this forested land has poor access.

The simplest method to remove excess build up of fuel and combustible matter is to have regular controllable burn-offs.

How is this done?

Establish a dirt break, clear of leaves, logs, grass, sticks, etc. (in a reasonably accessible location) around the area of forest which is to be burnt-off.

Only burn-off when the conditions are suitable:-

In the winter months

When the breeze is favourable

Burn-offs need to occur on about a three year cycle. This enables the fire to be a "cool" fire, which means wild life is not destroyed and trees are not scorched to death. Crown fires would be a thing of the past.

People who have constructed dwellings of forested areas need to be compelled to clear the fuel back from their dwellings. In many cases, photos of houses which have been lost, reveal that there was standing bush adjacent to the premises that were destroyed. The "don't burn anything" notion which we have all been encouraged to adopt has backfired to a monumental extent. While nothing has been burnt, the layers of fuel have accumulated year by year until this season, which has been a period of less than average rainfall.

Arsonists have seen this as an ideal playground. Arsonists don't have to do their own research on when to light, because the media announces which days are the ones for them. Lightning strikes are more likely to cause a fire where there is copious fuel.

A neighbour of mine has a saying:

This year's fire is next year's fire break.

If our forested land had a regime of controlled burn-offs, if a fire did start in unfavourable conditions it would only burn until it hit the next sections where there had been a recent burn-off.

Problem solved.

All the aid, donations, government grants, charity etc. to fire victims and communities is "shutting the gate after the horse has bolted".

We need to shut the gate before the horse bolts.

If we systematically reduce the fuel in the forested areas by burn-offs we won't need to be plagued by the unpredictability of fires every summer season.

We won't need all the expensive water bombing aircraft, the enormous workforce of volunteers trying to extinguish the fires; we won't have the huge loss of houses and the expense to rebuild, the huge loss of wild life which cannot survive in the heat of these ferocious fires, the needless scorching of millions of trees, and huge infrastructure loss,--power lines, bridges etc.

It would be far more beneficial if the volunteers were used to help carry out controlled burn-offs during the winter months when conditions are more favourable.

In conclusion

Fire intensity can be controlled by controlling the fuel load.

Fuel load can be controlled by regular burn-offs in the cooler months, ie cool fires where

Humans control the fire, not, fires controlling the humans.

Norman Green,

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
Mobile: [Redacted]
Email: [Redacted]

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