

**Submission Number: NND.001.01138**

**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 professional knowledge, qualifications or experience or on behalf of a group or organisation

What is your area of professional expertise?

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

**Your Submission**

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

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

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

Defence needs to be able to provide timely support during a fire (as well as afterwards)

Suggested Army support roles

Blackout after fire front has passed to prevent ember attack

Defend houses from ember attack after fire front has passed

Infrastructure protection

Extinguishing power poles, fences etc. after fire front has passed.

Road access protection

Patrol roads after fire front has passed extinguishing any burning trees that may fall across the road.

Any that cannot be extinguished should be felled – chainsaw, explosives, winches or heavy machinery.

Bulk water supply to other fire services for property protection firefighting

Cut control lines for back burning.

Back burn under supervision in low threat conditions,

Deepen containment lines in low threat conditions

Road reconnaissance to isolated communities on roads lined with dangerous trees.

Provide generators, water, refrigeration and fuel

Resourcing

A separate budget is required for these roles

Equipment would be

Current MAN 40M + purchase bushfire fighting modules to suit.

Current MAN 77 + purchase bulk water modules to suit

Legacy Unimogs with twist locks + purchase bush firefighting modules to suit.

Legacy 8 tonne trailers + purchase bulk water modules to suit

Unimogs and 8 tonne trailers are about to be disposed of. They should be held pending the outcome of this enquiry.

Some Unimogs could be fitted with cab protection to allow use on roads threatened by dangerous trees.

Naming of Fires

Once a fire has become a significant threat over a large area it should be renamed with a more "generic" locational name that can be readily recognised – eg Jamison Valley, Bega South or Royal National Park – the original name should be appended in brackets afterwards

All fire warnings on national media need the state and region (or nearest large town) added to the text. This applies particularly to information on ABC 24 hour news.

Provenance - all warnings or other information need to pass through the chain with the original date/time unaltered so that end users can

identify information that may no longer be current. This applies particularly to information on ABC 24 hour news

#### Public Information officer and AIIMS 2017

Under the Australasian Inter-service Incident management System there are a number of shortcomings in the outlined roles and responsibilities of the Public Information Officer.

There are no requirements regarding frequency of reports. Reports for a developing fire should be provided at least hourly to the public and media. Reports of breaking containment lines, crossing landmarks (e.g. rivers and highways) and threatening new settlements should be provided promptly.

There is no requirement for the Public Information Officer to provide direct contact phone numbers to local and national media.

The situation in some states where the incident controller must approve the release of information is a proven failure (see Canberra Bushfire Enquiry)

#### First Alert

An additional warning needs to be added.

At times of extreme or catastrophic fire danger after two (different) calls to bush or grass fire the following alert should be immediately issued through the SMS system from the nearest mobile (cell) tower.

“There are unconfirmed reports of a fire in your area. Please check outside and call 000 if you can provide more information.”

An example of why this is necessary is the Linksvie Road Fire (2013) (Springwood / Winmalee).

Here warnings reached many residents after the fire front had passed.

#### Hazard Reduction Burning.

Cannot remove fuel from the canopy hence will make little difference to the most severe fires.

Primary focus should be adjoining property, infrastructure and roads.

Secondary focus should be potential containment lines or potential control lines that could be used to back burn from.

The intensity of these burns needs to be kept low.

Hollow trees need to be protected by removing fuel from around them and extinguishing them if they catch alight.

A priority should be burning freeway median strips and power line easements.

#### NBN Resilience

Customer equipment needs backup power supply with 12V out for modem/router so it will operate when power fails.

South Australian risk management by shutting down power lines should be more widely considered.

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