

**Submission Number: NND.001.01306**

**Submission Of: Helen Taylor**

**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? Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional (A)

**Your Submission**

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

Appeared that the volunteers came together & co-operated with each other & with other agencies eg SES.

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

A lot of the time FNM app didnt give accurate info. It would have a fire out, when in fact it was still burning..

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

Controlled burn offs, allowing an occasional clean up within the forest & parks for branches that have come down on forest floors. The debris has been allowed to build up for far too long which was a major factor in the intensity of the fire which burnt down through Wadbilliga Nat Park thru Cobargo overnight. I have witnessed the build of fuel in this particular park over many years with my family owning property within the vicinity. My great uncle would run his cattle in there & regularly burn off to create a green pick for the cattle & to clear the land. Whilst the wildlife still survived. I witnessed those fires from a distance, but they NEVER got out of control as it was done on a regular basis some 30 - 40 years ago. Once the park was closed this was the demise of that land.

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

Yes get your heads out of the books, get out in the actual burnt parks to see for yourself, or better still visit the areas eg Deua nat park in the areas that miraculously didnt burn to see with your own eyes the build up of fuel on the forest floors. And then take a step back from the over educated and listen to the lay people who eat & breath the land bordering these areas & take on board what they are saying about the necessary burn offs, they learnt from their forebearers (not just the aboriginals but the white man as well who no doubt took on board what the indigenous people were continuing to do in the very early days of settlement). My great, great, great grandfather WD Tarlinton was the first white man to set foot & lay claim to land in the Cobargo area with the help of aboriginal trackers, hence they established a track down thru what is now known as the Deua & Wadbilliga Nat Parks. Some of my family had the timely opportunity of running/walking that actual track only just last Sept 2019, in the process of climbing over branches etc & getting many cuts from the bracken & debris that was on the forest floor. Even the native wildlife would have had trouble traversing thru the scrub as it was pre fires well & truly overgrown. The whole of the Australian eastern seaboard needs to be far better managed so that another catastrophe does not repeat history in another 20 / 30 years time, & our grandkids ask why we didnt get the job done now & continue to look after these areas. Please listen to the farmers who do care for the land, and not just the green activists that would have us all living in cities in high rises, not putting our footprint outside... my father is in his late 80's now & he has said for many years that once these parks catch fire they will nit be able to stop the fires. Sheer good luck that many, many more lives not lost especially in the Yowrie / Cobargo areas given that fire took off and travelled so far during the NIGHT when many would have been sleeping. Please have a conscience & dont leave this work undone for the next generation to try to have to deal with it. Get the job done & do what our taxes are paying for. I have no actual material to provide, only common sense & knowledge from what i have seen first hand. Thank you.

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