



Royal Commission
into National Natural
Disaster Arrangements

Submission Cover Sheet

This cover sheet has been prepared by the Commission's public contact team to accompany a submission.

Person completing cover sheet

1. **Staff member name** [REDACTED]
2. **Date completed** 26.03.2020
3. **This cover sheet has been completed based on:**
 - details contained in the submission
 - a phone call with the person making the submission
 - an email from the person making the submission
 - Other (provide details) -

Submission details

4. **Full name** [REDACTED]
5. **Email**
6. **Telephone**
7. **Preferred method of contact**
8. **Is the submission based on:**
 - primarily based on their personal situation.
 - primarily based on their professional knowledge, qualifications or experience, or on behalf of a group or organisation
9. **If the person is making the submission on behalf of a group or organisation, what is the name of the group or organisation:**

If the submission based on personal experience:

10. **What was their personal situation in relation to the 2019-20 Bushfires? Choose all that apply.**
 - were not living in an area affected by bushfire
 - were in an area affected by bushfires but was not evacuated, and didn't suffer personal or financial loss
 - lived in an area affected by bushfires and was evacuated, but didn't suffer personal or financial loss
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- lived in an area affected by bushfires and was evacuated, and I suffered personal or financial loss
- part of the emergency response as a fire fighter on the ground
- part of the emergency response as an aerial fire fighter
- part of the emergency response as health professional
- part of the emergency response as an Australian Defence Force member
- part of the emergency response as a Commonwealth or State government employee
- assisted the emergency response as a community support volunteer
- assisted the emergency recovery (i.e. after the fire event) as a community support volunteer
- Other

11. Where does the person live:

Local Government Area	Choose an item.
Town name	Catalina
Post code	2536

If the submission is based on professional experience

12. What is your area of expertise? Please choose all that apply.

- Emergency/disaster response and/or management
- Environment/land management
- Land use, planning, building standards
- Impacts of changes in climatic conditions
- Wildlife conservation
- Traditional land and fire management practices of Indigenous Australians
- Community welfare
- Other

All submissions

13. Does the person agree to their submission being published?

- Yes, agree to the submission being published in their name
 - Yes, agree to the submission being published anonymously
 - No, does not agree to the submission being published
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1/03/2020

National Disaster Royal Commission

Dear Commissioners

For several months, October onwards of 2019 and part of the early beginning of 2020 we lived with smoke generated by fires that began in the bush, Forestry and National Parks in the Clyde Mountain area. When that fire began serious attempts to extinguish it weren't made. It was let burn. Burning years of accumulated fuel loads on the forest and national parks floors. Forestry tracks and likely fire trails were blocked to keep people out of the areas. National Parks were similar. Those bush access tracks were once open and vehicle accessible. But governments over time closed them off, in attempts to improve Governments Budget bottom lines. Financial management by governments of Government Agency's, Forestry, National Parks, Roads and Maritime Services budgets no longer being able to provide the funds necessary to employ on the ground people equipped with the machinery to properly manage, the publics assets, forests, national parks, highway corridors, electricity corridors and even local roads and water infrastructures.

The national government in cases of emergency's needs the power and ability to take more control in matters of state and national importance. The recent catastrophic fire disaster is evidence the state government in the case of NSW in our area were incapable of properly managing what was occurring and watched it burn. Even our local member advocated that rural bush living should be supported.

Planning and Development (living) rules need to be reassessed including access in rural and regional areas, (roads and bridges). Wooden bridges need to be phased out and replaced with something more substantial.

The evacuation centres in the Eurobodalla Shire were a mess incapable of properly accommodating those who needed them. They were a disaster themselves. Electricity was off for eleven days in our area, which meant No access to money fuel and food.

Electronic banking, information, communication was zero. Phone towers damaged no phone. That all meant we were unable to get messages for some time. Mobile Phone charging was by car outside.

We also had water issues restrictions etc. because the shires water storages are inadequate. Most of the water running down the shires rivers flows into the ocean as does around 92% of reuseale recycled water.

The council message was don't use the water systems, to in essence, defend your property. Desk top management of disasters is not the answer, at all. Incidentally as I write this there's still fires burning in the Eurobodalla Shire area.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]