

From: [REDACTED]  
 To: [\[REDACTED\] - enquiries](#)  
 Cc: [REDACTED]  
 Subject: Royal Commission Submission BushFire Review  
 Date: Thursday, 30 April 2020 11:14:55 AM  
 Attachments: [pastedimage640.png](#)  
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[Aerial photo of relevant land.png](#)  
[Road-works-enquiry-form 55 Morris Rd Woodlands 2575.pdf](#)

Dear Royal Commission

I wish to make the following submission regarding the bushfire crisis of 2019/20.

SUBMISSION PREPARED 28 APRIL 2020 BY [REDACTED]

**Key Point:** Crown Lands has failed in its duty to keep property under its jurisdiction clean and fire ready. Furthermore in our dealings with Crown Land personnel we have found them unresponsive, superior and frankly incompetent. It is our belief that this culture and attitude has contributed to the bushfire crisis we have just experienced and if this culture does not change, we will see a repeat of the crisis in the future.

#### SUMMARY OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH LEAD ME TO MAKE THIS SUBMISSION

Our property – [REDACTED] borders a strip of crown land approx.. 4 metres wide and some 400m long. Then there is a public road and then state forest. See attached photograph with notations.

In Feb 2019 we had an excavator on the farm doing some fire mitigation and general cleaning up and we considered it an opportune time to clean up the regrowth, undergrowth and rotten wood along this strip of crown land. The strip of land in question may never have been cleaned up. It was matted in dead black wattle, car tires and the like as well as a thick layer of dead bark and vegetation. Apart from being an eye sore this land represented a very real risk to our property due to the density of the undergrowth and dead and rotting timber. Furthermore, at least 2 large trees have fallen over and are hanging precariously toward [REDACTED], supported only by neighbouring trees and these trees represent a significant danger to vehicles and pedestrians using the road.

On 21 Feb 2019 I contacted by telephone [REDACTED] Department of Industry - Crown Lands, Goulburn and told him the situation. I sent photos. He advised I needed to submit a minor clearing permit application. I did so and followed up the next day with a telephone call. I found him dismissive and unhelpful and was told all applications take at least 6 weeks to review. We never heard from him again despite additional follow up calls. *I attach a copy of our application form and original email and photographs below.*

During the bushfire season, this strip of land was of concern to us. It is a short distance from our sheds it would have been near impossible and dangerous to protect our property if a fire had gotten into this strip of land.

We were prepared to pay the contractors to clean up the land. In no way were we intending to remove living trees or any animal habitat. In fact, are part of the Land for Wildlife program and have declared our property a wildlife sanctuary. The eastern side of our property is a dedicated wildlife corridor. We are members of South Coast Wildlife Rescue and are actively involved in protecting and caring for wildlife with a particular involvement in wombats.

**The point I make is this:** Crown Land was disinterested and dismissive of our submission to protect our property and native wildlife from bushfire. A simple couple of hours of removing dead wood could have gone a long way to mitigate the fire danger. We can only assume our experience was not unique. We are disappointed at the attitude and lack of effectiveness of the Local Department of Crown Lands. If our experience is any kind of litmus no doubt this culture within the Crown Lands department contributed to the intensity of the 2019/20 bushfire crisis.

As local land owners we are keen to work with the relevant authorities to take responsible action to prepare for future bushfire seasons. However, we have found ourselves beholden to dismissive, superior, ineffectual government bureaucrats who don't respond to a simple request made through the correct channels.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]  
 28 April 2020

From: [REDACTED]  
 Sent: Friday, 22 February 2019 12:51 PM  
 To: [REDACTED]  
 Cc: [REDACTED]  
 Subject: Proposed Works - [REDACTED] NSW [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

As discussed with [REDACTED] please find attached a completed Road Works Enquiry form seeking permission to tidy up and mitigate fire risk on the section of [REDACTED] NSW [REDACTED] which runs adjacent to our southern boundary, some 407m. This area has not received any attention or basic maintenance for many years and is unkempt as the photos below show.





The image below is of the roadside between the property of our neighbour to the east and [REDACTED] which has been cleared. We are not proposing to clear as much vegetation as this.



We are seeking permission to:

- \*remove stumps, rotten and dead logs and fallen trees, either hung up in adjacent trees or on the ground

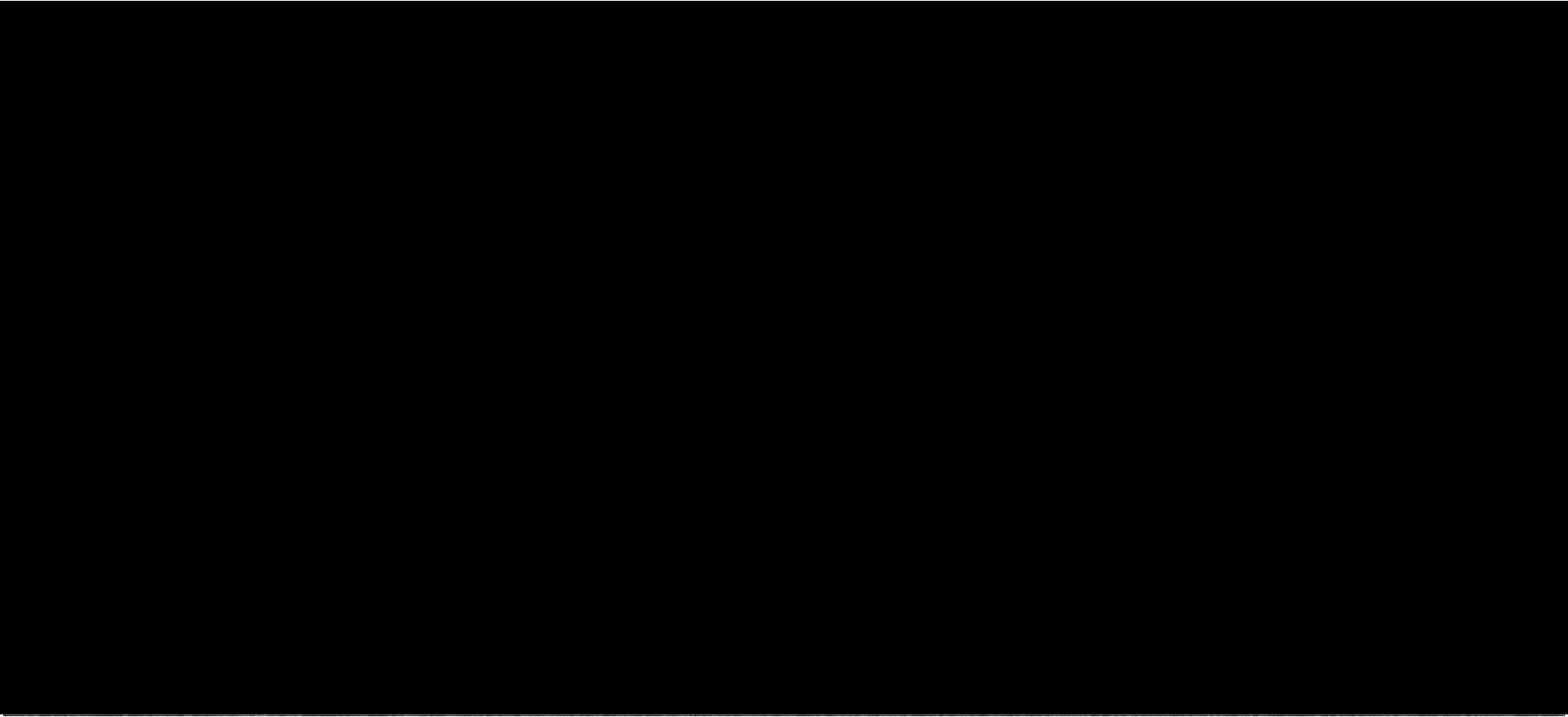
- \*clear understory of black wattle and small regrowth

- \*remove any dead trees which overhang our fence line and pose a danger to passers by as well as potentially damage the new boundary fence we propose to install.

I would be grateful for your early advice.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]





## Road works enquiry form

Use this form to make an enquiry about undertaking small-scale road works within a Crown road. The information provided will help the NSW Department of Industry (the department) determine whether road works is the most suitable option for the intended use of the road.

Before completing this form, please refer to the Administration of Crown Roads—Policy and Guidelines available on the department's website at [www.industry.nsw.gov.au/lands/access/roads](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/lands/access/roads)

### Contact us

For more information, please contact us at:

NSW Department of Industry—Lands & Water

PO Box 2155

DANGAR NSW 2309

Phone: 1300 886 235

Fax: 02 4925 3517

Email: [cl.enquiries@crowmland.nsw.gov.au](mailto:cl.enquiries@crowmland.nsw.gov.au)

Web: [www.industry.nsw.gov.au/lands](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/lands)

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### Privacy statement

The personal information you provide on this form is subject to the *Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act 1989*. It is being collected by NSW Department of Industry and will be used for purposes related to this application. NSW Department of Industry will not disclose your personal information to anybody else unless authorised by law. The provision of this information is voluntary or required to be supplied. If you choose not to provide the requested information we may not be able to process this application. You have the right to request access to, and correct details of, your personal information held by the department. Further information regarding privacy can be obtained from the NSW Department of Industry website at [www.industry.nsw.gov.au/legal/privacy](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/legal/privacy)



## Contact details

Table 1. Your details

Salutation	
Given name	
Family name	
Business name	
ABN/CAN	
Residential address	
Postal address	
Work telephone	
Home telephone	
Mobile	
Email address	

## Property use and details

Table 2. The property

Address of affected property serviced by the road	
Lot	
DP	
Locality	
Local government area	
Road is (tick appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/> within <input type="checkbox"/> adjacent <input type="checkbox"/> abutting <input type="checkbox"/> all <input type="checkbox"/> none
Use of property serviced by the road	
Use of properties adjoining the road	



## Tenures associated with this application (if any)

Table 3. Tenures

Enclosure permit no.	
Licence no.	
Lease no.	
Other tenure	

## Road location and site details

Table 4. Road site description

Address of property serviced by the road	
Lot	
DP	
Locality	
Local government area	
Road is (tick appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/> within <input type="checkbox"/> adjacent <input type="checkbox"/> abutting <input type="checkbox"/> all <input type="checkbox"/> none
Use of property serviced by the road	
Use of properties adjoining the road	
Road topography	<input type="checkbox"/> relatively flat <input type="checkbox"/> moderately sloped <input type="checkbox"/> steeply sloped
Vegetation type in road corridor	
Vegetation density	



## Summary of road work activity

Table 5. Proposed works on Crown road

<b>Proposed road works</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance of existing Crown road formation/access (unsealed) <input type="checkbox"/> Works to establish access along an unformed Crown road corridor
<b>If known, who will be undertaking the works?</b>	
<b>Description of the works</b>	Length: Width: Materials to be used: Any structures: