

NATURE CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF NSW Inc.

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Mr Stuart Ellis,
Chair, Inquiry into Bushfire Mitigation and Management
Council of Australian Government
coagbushfireinquiry@pmc.gov.au

Dear Mr Ellis,

RE: NCC Submission to the COAG Inquiry into Bushfire Mitigation and Management

Please find enclosed, for your consideration, the Nature Conservation Council of NSW's (NCC) formal submission to the COAG Inquiry into Bushfire Mitigation and Management. We apologise for the delay.

The NCC is the State's peak environmental organisation with over 130 member groups, and individual supporters from across the state. NCC works closely with local communities and businesses, co-ordinates action groups across the state and advises the key decision-makers at a local, state and national level to protect and promote the NSW environment.

The NCC has been actively promoting public and professional education and awareness strategies for more effective bushfire risk management since 1984. The NCC has held conferences, seminars, workshops and produced a number of publications such as newsletters, proceedings, guidelines during this period.

The aims of the NCC Bushfire Program are to:

- communicate information on the environmental requirements of bush fire legislation
- provide community education on cost effective and ecologically sound fire management
- encourage public participation in the bush fire risk management planning process
- influence government policy in regards to bush fire management
- provide mechanisms for feedback to NCC on bush fire issues

The NCC holds free workshops for the public in regional areas to discuss bush fire issues and biennial conferences to promote inter stakeholder communication. We also now coordinate professional level forums and school visits. These events enable us to facilitate dialogue and cooperation between stakeholders at local and regional levels, to promote ecologically sustainable bushfire management strategies, and to collect information on key bushfire challenges and responses.

The Nature Conservation Council has a statutory right to nominate representatives for Bushfire Management Committees (BFMCs) under the *Rural Fires Act 1997* and the *NSW Fire Brigades Act 1989* (as amended in 1998).

At present there are 70 NCC representatives sitting on Bushfire Management Committees. These committees prepare draft Bush Fire Management Plans. The NCC also has representatives on the state level Bushfire Coordinating Committees and the Rural Fire Service Advisory Committee.

We believe that these experiences and activities provide the NCC with a unique insight into bushfire management in NSW. It is these experiences that we have drawn on in the development of this submission.

We would be pleased to provide further information on request.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robt Palle". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Chair