



SENATE RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT REFERENCES COMMITTEE

Over the course of the submission period for the inquiry into *Red Imported Fire Ants in Australia*, the committee received approximately the committee received approximately 584 submissions from a campaign run by the Invasive Species Council.

It was agreed by the committee that five (5) sample form letters, available below, would be published as examples.

The committee thanks all participants for their contribution to the inquiry.

Example 1

Dear Committee Secretary,

Please accept this submission to the Senate's inquiry into Red Imported Fire Ants.

As an Australian I am very concerned about the spread of fire ants in Australia and want our governments to do everything possible to eradicate them.

The federal, state and territory governments should invest enough now to fully eradicate fire ants and avoid huge costs later.

- Governments should not be worried about overinvesting in success. This could be Australia's last chance to be a fire ant free country and previous efforts have all been insufficient.
- Funding should take into account the society-wide impacts of fire ants, including their effects on human health, worker safety, social amenity and sports and construction and trade - not just agricultural and environmental impacts.
- Any requests by the national program for increased funding to achieve eradication should be promptly agreed to by governments so that delay doesn't risk failure.
- Community education and surveillance should be ramped up to ensure all fire ant nests are found.

Kind Regards,

Example 2

I am making a plea, that more should be done to stop and eradicate this invasive species.

These ants can devastate our native species and change our lifestyle.

Please do your utmost to stop the spread and eradicate.

Many thanks

Example 3

I understand that the Senate is holding an inquiry into the spread of Red Imported Fire Ants and I am writing to express my support for whatever measures the Federal Government can take to prevent this spread as far as possible.

As an active bush regenerator, one of my greatest passions is our native habitat and fauna. We have seen what damage fire ants have done in other countries and we must try and avoid that happening in Australia. We must invest in eradication to avoid the inevitably significant costs down the track if we don't, let alone the 'psychic' cost of people's fear of outside if they start running rampant in backyards.

It's dreadful that fire ants have entered the country already, but it would be a positive step if governments and citizens across the country could together ward off this great human and environmental threat. This will take money, resources, and time. I hope the Senate Inquiry will make speedy recommendations to progress the required actions.

Your sincerely,

Example 4

To the Senate committee on Imported Fire Ants in Australia.

I live in rural North QLD and over my 66 years I have seen many species, either imported through ignorance or accident. Mentioned below are a few that come to mind –

Wild Pigs

Prickly Pear

Rabbits

Foxes

Cane Toads

Indian Minor birds

Papaya Fruit fly

Exotic weeds carried in farming machinery

Aquatic weeds, snails etc

There are many, many more introduced species that are of concern but I have personally experienced the pain and inconvenience of being attacked by a nest of Fire Ants in Texas USA in the late 1970's.

The pain was unbearable and I was thankful at the time that Australia was free of these exotic pests that had made everyday life so difficult for the areas that were infested. I have been watching how the QLD Government approached the task of eliminating the Fire Ant infestations when they first emerged in southern QLD and my late husband was a spray helicopter pilot who was involved in the spraying operations to remove the infestations.

Unfortunately the program was poorly managed with funding being sporadic. As a nation we cannot stop funding the vital task of eliminating as many of the evasive species that decimate our land, cause the death of our small native species, degrade our natural habitats, National Parks, sporting grounds, schools, home gardens, farming country etc.

We have been fortunate to live on an island and we only have a short time to control these invading species so our Governments must make the decision to allocate enough funding to eliminate entirely the Fire Ant populations in QLD and Northern NSW before Fire Ant elimination just become another program that failed all current and future Australians. Please don't accept that we can't eliminate Fire Ants!

Yours Sincerely,

Example 5

Dear Committee Secretary, Please accept this submission to the Senate's inquiry into Red Imported Fire Ants. As an Australian I am very concerned about the spread of fire ants in Australia and want our governments to do everything possible to eradicate them.

I'm 12 years old, And I don't want my future to be blocked by a wall of fire. These ants are terrible fast spreading ecosystem runners that no one wants in there country. if you look at places like usa and parts of china you don't instantly fall in love with there fire ants, do you want to have to put heaps of insecticide on the grass just to sit down and have a picnic?, to see all our favourite animals crippling as the ants take there homes? If we do nothing this could be worse than when foxes and cats were introduced. The future of Australia is not to be waiting away under a sea of fire ants.

I'm truely concerned about all our animals and our ants, these ants are very dominant and will surely plummet biodiversity in Australia. I hate the fact that this is our future that is on the line we won't be able to stop for a rest on a bush walk, camp on anything but concrete and build houses in depressing little slabs, just to protect ourselves from the ants. Can't you see that there is no option to ignore the problem if you let the ants free it's will ruin the farming industry and damage the resource dependant economy?

We need every Australian citizen to be aware of the impacts of the fire ants because I bet that a devastating percent of Australians have no idea of the implications that fire ants carry with them. Half my friends didn't even know there were fire ants in Australia. when you guys say that you need more funding more people will help. I know it's hard to get money when there's no donations but if the donations stop coming in you need to find another way to get money I know it's hard but i know it's worth it. I even wrote a poem about it.

A shipping of wood,
meant for good,
slips through the barrier,
A Fire ant
a hitchhiker,
a lodger,
now a permanent resident,
850,000 hectares of fire,
scorching to the edge of tweed shire,
threatening nature as we know it,
Come on, government, let's show it.
Wings sprout from the monsters,
crossing the land,
government needs a hand,
pest control,
poisons the earth,
kills all animals except the ants,
now they have gotten out of hand,
lock up the doors,
shut off the yards,
say bye to the animals on the floor,
say bye to the rails,
say bye to the frogs,
say bye to the freedom of your cats and dogs

say bye to bilbies,
bandis,
noddys,
geckos,
insects,
hear the ghosts echos,
Australia lets lock up borders,
being extra careful for something out o' order
a creature waiting for this distraction,
to commence its final action,

Kind regards,