



18 August 2003

Mr. Dick Adams, M.H.R.,
Member for Lyons,
53b Main Road,
PERTH TAS. 7300

Dear Mr. Adams,

Select Committee into recent Bushfires in Australia

I am a current Volunteer Firefighter with some 38 years of service. I have held all positions within the Ouse Rural Fire Brigade, including a period as Brigade Chief. I am currently a District Permit Officer.

I would like to make a submission to your Committee.

I believe there needs to be recognition of the valuable resource the Community has in the people who work on the properties. They are the first personnel able to respond to a fire outbreak with their firefighting equipment and plant, before a Volunteer Brigade gets to their Station, collects their truck and personnel, and get to wherever the fire is - usually some time and distance away. That farm, and neighbouring farm resources, should be able to fight that fire immediately, without prejudice, instead of being told not to help because they are not covered by fire brigade insurance.

There does need to be minimal training requirements for minimal insurance cover. A system must be established where we would have fires controlled more quickly and of shorter duration by stopping them becoming bigger, and consequently more dangerous and expensive to extinguish. The quicker that more resources with local knowledge of the area can be put on the fireground, the better the result.

Thank you for this opportunity to put forward these views. If you would like any further information, I would be happy to be of any further assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Lyndley Chopping