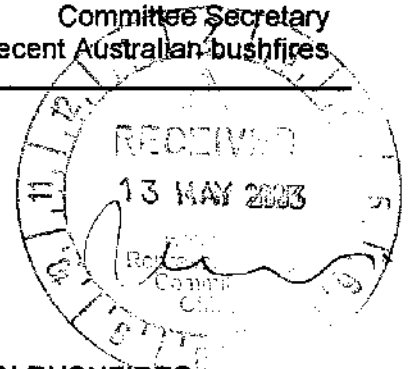


Committee Secretary  
House Select Committee on the recent Australian bushfires

Submitted by: John Lyons

Date 02/05/2003

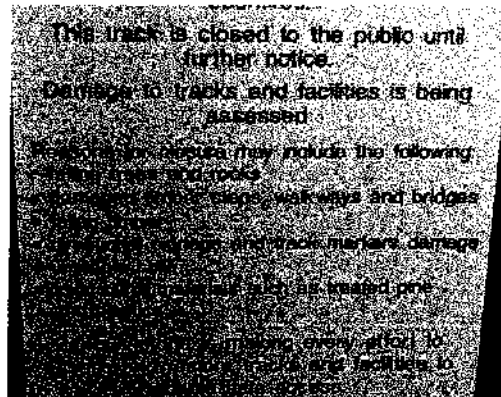


**INQUIRY INTO THE RECENT AUSTRALIAN BUSHFIRES**

Dear Sir / Madam,

My submission relates to the impact of the fire on the local communities (item 2a) and includes the effects of legal liability and insurance cover (item 2i).

Now, some three months after the fires went out, Parks is still preventing access to Mount Bogong. The explanation for this is shown on the signs.



It appears that Parks will not open the mountain until they can guarantee "safe access". Unfortunately, this will be difficult to achieve, if not impossible.

Climbing Mount Bogong has always included an element of danger, particularly in winter. It represents a physical and mental challenge. The examples of dangers given on the closure sign do not represent problems for the sort of bush walkers attracted to this wilderness mountain.

Some people have ignored the closures and have climbed to the top. They have reported that there are no unusual dangers.

It is a sad situation when a government department takes over management of public land, and then denies access to the public because an event results in a perceived increase in risk. Undoubtedly this is connected to a concern about their liability. While this is understandable, some other solution should be found. Barring access to Mount Bogong until it is "safe" is not acceptable.

This closure is reducing the pleasure of locals and the attraction of the area to tourists.

*John Lyons*