

Submission No.327



From: Joe Lopez [saints@pnc.com.au]
Sent: Sunday, 18 May 2003 11:20 AM
To: Committee, Bushfires (REPS)
Subject: Select Committee on the Australian Bushfires

I have lived in the Blue Mountains NSW since 1940. There were severe fires from time to time, severe in their effects on residents, when the area was less populated.

As the population grew the Bush Fire Brigades were formed. The burn offs and hazard reduction systems were so effective that fires impacting on homes were many years apart.

In the last twelve years the almost cessation of hazard reduction has contributed very significantly to the greater frequency of bush fires which impacted on homes, to the degree that severe fires are almost yearly.

There is no longer the security in knowing that, having had a bush fire, there would not be another for four or six years. Now the mismanagement of the scrub means we are fortunate to go two years without an impacting bush fire.

The recommendations of coronial inquiry 1994 sank into the sand and were lost.

The warnings of the Parliamentary inquiry after the 2001 - 2002 fires were not heeded.

You will understand if I do not expect much more from this Federal Parliamentary inquiry. The States have done nothing following the 2003 fires in NSW and Victoria.

Joe Lopez