

August 10, 2004

Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories

Dear Committee

It is evident that the proof of the passion and love that residents have for Pierces Creek lies on the day of the fire. Many residents stayed and risked their own lives to protect our homes with no outside help.

These people consisted of Fathers, Mothers, Brothers, Husbands, Sons, Daughters, Grandparents and Friends.

We are all so thankful that the experience these people showed, they all survived. Had this fire been one of character, we would have many more, if not all homes standing today.

Pierces Creek we classed as our own. We were the people who cared for it and each other. There has never been any interest from anywhere or anyone to help care for Pierces Creek. Nerveless we managed to do this ourselves.

Now our future of returning with our Community lies in the hands of people that perhaps didn't know we existed. The fires have no doubt changed many parts of our lives; it is unfair to let it change our future.

My own children like many others, loved their home and possessions.

They at first acted very strong and brave, yet they were so saddened.

With the generosity of the public we were fortunate to buy some new clothing.

This became very difficult as both children only wanted Boots and work clothes.

They wanted to start building a new home. "It's ok Mum and Dad we'll build a better one."

It is very hard to help the children understand the complicated issues that surround the rebuilding of Pierces Creek. The highly publicised announcements that have been made throughout the papers and television have led the public to believe that our homes were being rebuilt; this is also again hard for the children to understand.

As much as I try to protect them from all the hurt it brings, I can't. My children think it's very simple 'if they won't build it we will.' My eldest doesn't want to ask for anything that costs money, afraid of the fact that it takes money to build a home.

It has been the long drawn-out complicated issues of the rebuilding process that have affected the children more than the hot burning fire that took away their home. I ask that there become some resolution for us and the community. Perhaps then I will be able to tell my children "Yes we are going home."

Natalie Meredith

