

**Submission  
No 56**

## **INQUIRY INTO WAMBELONG FIRE**

**Name:** Mr Richard Stringer

**Date received:** 3/09/2014

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To The General purpose Standing Committee No 5

Wambelong Bushfire January 2013

Public Forum Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September at the Coonabarabran Town Hall

From 5.30pm – 7.00pm

From the Captain of Yaminbah Rural Fire Brigade Richard Stringer.

I would like the opportunity to supply some detail of events that took place over the lead up period and the fires that ignited due to suspected lightning strikes from Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2013. Listed below are matters of grave concern.

- a) No communication with local brigade Captains in relation to ex-stream weather conditions that were forecast.
- b) No notification of fires that had started in or near our brigade area, to our north.
- c) No request to have brigade members on stand-by
- d) Our opportunity for early response using local Brigades was lost
- e) Local brigades were not utilised to anywhere near our capability
- f) Radio communications was overwhelmed and inadequate
- g) Our leadership from Fire Control to Group Captain had failed us
- h) Chain of command was not effective
- i) Some local residents had received a mob phone tex message to evacuate their homes when the Yaminbah Brigade had no knowledge of this happening nor were their properties under any threat. This caused confusion and unnecessary fear.