

**INQUIRY INTO HEALTH IMPACTS OF EXPOSURE TO
POOR LEVELS OF AIR QUALITY RESULTING FROM
BUSHFIRES AND DROUGHT**

Name: Name suppressed
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Partially
Confidential

I am allergic to smoke and dust. I am old. I have allergic asthma and the recent period of bushfires resulting in the unprecedented amount of smoke and grit and red dust floating over my house in Melbourne had serious effects on me. I was sick every day and night, I couldn't breathe well. I struggled. I had to increase the dosage of my medicines and puffers. I blocked all the windows with masking tape and towels. It did not work very well. I felt like I was being held siege in my own home I was very scared because my asthma was bad. I tried to buy an air purifier but they were sold out. Masks were useless. I had to stay home day after day for the entire time the city of Melbourne was impacted with smoke. I could not go walking or shopping, and if someone came to my house I had to open the door rapidly and close it again quickly in order to prevent the smoke entering my house even more. After a few days though there was also smoke inside my house no matter how hard I tried to block it. I know it was bad for those in the fire regions, but for me it was an absolute nightmare .

I had no support during that time except to go to the doctor. But that meant going outside into the smoke itself. During that period there was no support. I had to religiously follow the weather through an EPA app, which sometimes didn't work.

I don't know what can be done to prevent bushfires - but I have never ever experienced such pollution from smoke and dust in entire my life before.

I feel that because the States manage their own fire safety and firefighters that that presents a problem and I would prefer that the Federal Government coordinated our fire security. I also think that burn offs at appropriate and safe times of the year should be organised more strategically. I know we have droughts, however the indigenous people long before white man arrived in this country already had a successful method of burnoffs. What happened to that knowledge? I also have read that people in country towns were not allowed to do burnoffs near their property which often resulted in property loss. I don't know why this occurs - I know that burnoffs need to be controlled by experts, but I wonder who makes the laws that prevent them burning off near country towns in order to save properties.