

**Submission
No 50**

**INQUIRY INTO PLANNING SYSTEM AND THE IMPACTS
OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND
COMMUNITIES**

Organisation: Bushfire Survivors for Climate Action

Date Received: 2 November 2023



Submission on the Inquiry into the Planning System and the Impacts of Climate Change on the Environment and Communities

2 November 2023

About Bushfire Survivors for Climate Action

Bushfire Survivors for Climate Action (BSCA) is a growing group of people who have been directly impacted by bushfires in Australia. We are a non-partisan, community organisation made up of bushfire survivors, firefighters and their families, working together to call on our leaders to take action to reduce emissions.

BSCA formed shortly after the Tathra and District fire in March 2018, and its founding members were all impacted by bushfires, including the Black Summer bushfires in 2019-20, Blue Mountains in 2013, Black Saturday in 2009 and Canberra in 2003.

As authors of this submission on behalf of Bushfire Survivors for Climate Action, we have lived experience of the impacts of climate change—through the loss of our homes and loved ones, the fracturing of our communities, and the destruction of our natural environment. We firmly believe that urgent and ambitious climate action by all levels of government is essential to protect the safety and future of all Australian communities and to reduce the impacts of climate change that we have already experienced first-hand.

www.bushfiresurvivors.org

Submitted to:

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/lodge-a-submission.aspx?pk=2987>

For further information on this submission, please contact:

Fiona Lee
Government Relations Advisor

With notice, a member of Bushfire Survivors for Climate Action could potentially make themselves available for the public hearings.

SUBMISSION

Bushfire Survivors for Climate Action (BSCA) is a growing group of people who have been directly impacted by bushfires in Australia. We are a non-partisan, community organisation made up of bushfire survivors, firefighters and their families, working together to call on our leaders to take action to reduce emissions.

As authors of this submission, we have lived experience of the impacts of climate change—through the loss of our homes and loved ones, the fracturing of our communities, and the destruction of our natural environment.

We commend the establishment of the parliamentary inquiry to examine the planning system and the impacts of climate change on the environment and communities and appreciate the opportunity to contribute our perspectives.

In this submission, we offer the following points that we believe should be considered in the inquiry:

- **First and foremost, we need urgent and ambitious climate action aligned with the latest science at all levels of government. It is essential to protect the safety and future of all Australian communities and to reduce the impacts of climate change that we have already experienced.**
- Provide financial support, incentives and resources for low-income households including renters and owners to make their homes more resilient to climate-related challenges by implementing adaptive measures. These measures could include insulation, sprinkler systems, fire-breaks, weatherproofing, the installation of fire-resistant materials, solar air-conditioning systems and solar and battery systems on the home to be ready for blackouts.
- Adequate powers and expertise should be provided to DPE to effectively assess the cumulative impacts of development, climate change, extreme weather events and biodiversity loss to ensure that communities and ecosystems are safe from harm.
- Local councils should regain the authority to reject inappropriate development rather than merely rubber-stamping them.
- The planning system should incorporate climate change projections in its assessment of new developments.
- We need to enhance advocacy and planning regulations to address the planting and protection of street trees, promote homes with effective

sun-shielding eaves, and account for the impact of longer periods of hot weather on solar passive heating and cooling design guidelines. It is crucial to update building designs to balance the entry of autumn, winter, and spring sunshine while preventing excessive heat during hotter seasons.

- Regulations are required that provide protections for domestic animals within homes or in contained yards. With the increasing risk of heat stress, especially when owners are at work and air conditioning is turned off, it is crucial to ensure measures are in place to protect the well-being and safety of domestic animals. These regulations should include guidelines for providing shade structures or natural shading options to mitigate the effects of excessive heat and ensure the welfare of pets and companion animals.

Yours sincerely,

Serena Joyner, CEO Bushfire Survivors for
Climate Action | Darug and Gundungurra
Country

Jo Dodds, President Bushfire Survivors for
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