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Sent: Tuesday, 29 September 2020 3:47 PM
To: DJCS-IGEM-Contact (DJCS) <IGEM@igem.vic.gov.au>
Subject: fire history

From Des Edwards as part one of a submission to 2019-20 Victorian Fire Season.

Policy should be based on historical evidence like David Packman who has more than 50 years experience in professional bushfire research. He has been employed by the CSIRO, The Department of Defence, Monash University and Bureau of Meteorology, including being supervising meteorologist for rural fires at the bureau. He received an Order of Australia medal for his research. He lives in [REDACTED], Victoria. (hopefully I can email some of David Packman's findings).

I live in Marlo Victoria and at Fernbank previously. 1956 at Fernbank, fires went from Heyfield to Mallacoota and could have been stopped at/near to Fernbank. The fire on its way from Heyfield to Mallacoota was moving slowly through a 200 acre grassland surrounded by bush-land. It was just after daylight when normally there is no wind. Eight fire trucks were at the Glenaladale hall staging station.

One or two trucks could have stopped this fire travelling 200 odd km to Mallacoota, but as is the case now and 2014 fire at Fernbank, the supervisor from Melbourne with no local knowledge said no fire trucks must go into that area because he said it was a raging inferno! (completely false)

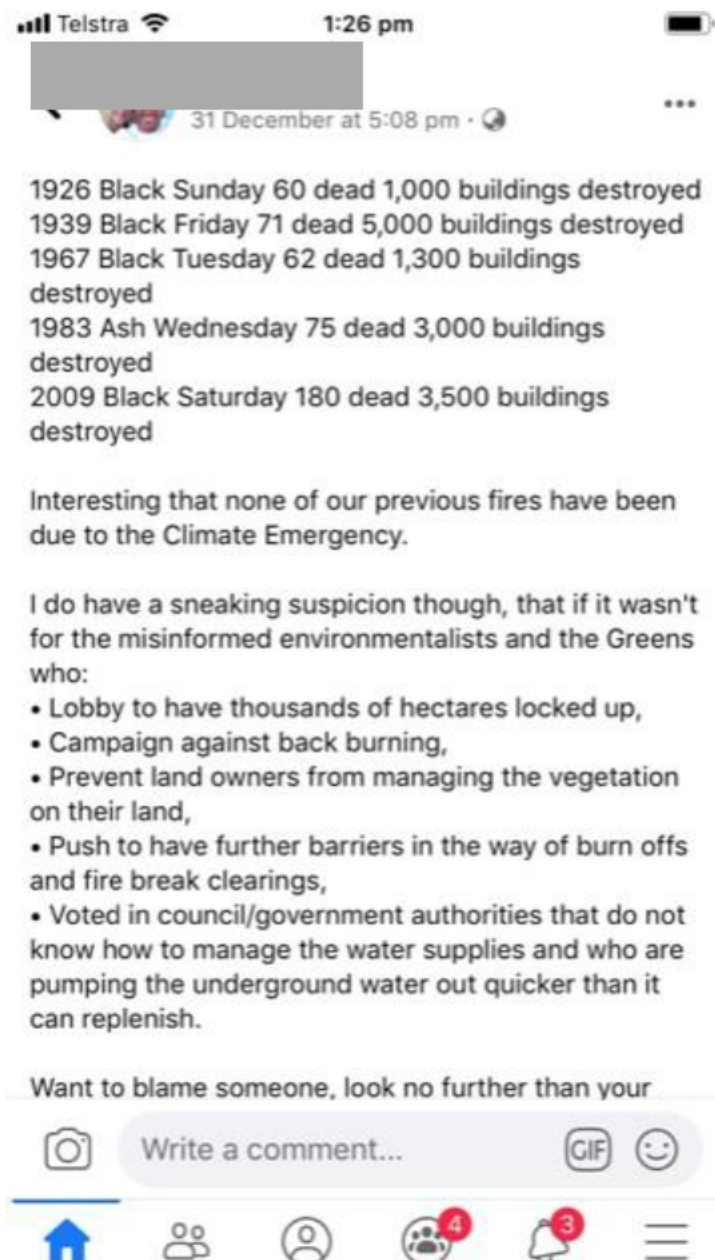
2014 Mt Ray fire (near Fernbank) was burning in the great dividing range for three weeks before it burnt my property at Fernbank, destroying fences, six houses and other fences and out buildings, This fire also was controlled by outsiders that have no local knowledge or refuse to take it onboard. They refused to tackle the fire on calm days with no wind, and just let it come out of the busload when there are high winds and hot weather

2019-20 Marlo fire, my address [REDACTED] Marlo, was 18 km away at Cape Conron, (the fire got to 12km from Marlo). Again, not controlled by locals, again refused to go into the bush land between Cape Conron and Bemm River on calm days. At Marlo we were told to leave three times, but only left once because we got inside messages from locals. Next to our home in Marlo there is a State Park which includes a swamp and bush-land. They do burn this area for fire protection, but on some occasions the green movement somehow get to pull strings and stop the burn off when it is deemed safe to burn.

When the fires were getting close to Marlo 2019-20, a local fire brigade member pulled strings to bowl over some trees near our property and around the Marlo State park. At this time they cleared trees and scrub along sections of the 18km road between Cape Conron & Marlo (This work was done as a one off thing. It is of

my opinion that all roads in rural areas should have one side of the road cleared to stop the spread of bushfires).

They also widened the side road to Point Recardo, where we have access to the ocean beach, and they put two or three other tracks into the ocean beach from the Marlo - Cape Conron road, for fire access, but lately they have closed them off, which concerns me coming into the bush fire season again. This important work should not be a one-off thing but done every bush fire season.



Part 2: This is the second submission from Des Edwards

Marlo 3888.

In today's local Snowy River mail shows again, (First submission) shows that Marlo township avoided a fire on December 30, 2019 with the help of local townsfolk. Local knowledge is most important, like the next extract from the Snowy River mail, dated September 23, written by David Packman, using his vast knowledge based on historical evidence.

My family have been in the East Gippsland for well over 100 years and have passed on vast amounts of knowledge regarding controlling fires and burning fire breaks at the right time of the year.

I have bought my own firefighting equipment (trailer with fire pump) to protect my property because when the fire front comes through the fire brigades have told us they will not attend, they will only protect assets.



Policy should be based on historical evidence: Packham

The Commonwealth should lead bushfire policy, which should be largely based on the frequent mild fire practised by Aboriginal people over tens of thousands of years, an award-winning Latrobe Valley expert has told the national bushfire inquiry.

David Packham, who lives in Traralgon, also urged the establishment of a small, economical but high-quality independent bushfire research institute.

Mr Packham has more than 50 years' experience in professional bushfire research. He has been employed by the CSIRO, the Department of Defence, Monash University and the Bureau of Meteorology, including being supervising meteorologist for rural fires at the bureau. He received an Order of Australia medal for his bushfire research.

Mr Packham said the Commonwealth had an important role in setting a standard for fuel management by a totally independent process.

"Through Defence Assets and overseen by Geophysics Australia,

the Commonwealth has the means to monitor and public report State compliance to the Standard," he said.

"This will hold the states to account for their repeated failure to achieve historically safe and healthy forests and will act as a guide for Commonwealth assistance in times of disaster.

"It is essential that fire agencies and radical conservation groups do not interfere with the process."

Mr Packham said he had made submissions to several bushfire inquiries and royal commissions.

"There is nothing new to say. It is very simple and has been proved beyond reasonable doubt that wildfires require hot dry windy weather, ignition and fuel," he said.

"This was well known by Australians for 60,000 years and only fuel is within human capability to control... Fuel reduction burning is the only effective path to making our bush healthy and safe again."

Mr Packham said the Victorian Government had refused to accept the necessity for mild fires, or the proof that fire must be used to ensure that our forests survive.

"The excuse for the malfeasance that caused the recent (summer) fires were actually the result of global warming is false on both theoretical

To claim these fires were "unprecedented" showed "ignorance or deliberate deception", Mr Packham said.

"This continuing environmental destruction must be stopped before Victoria is further strained mendicant through loss of urban and rural water, further power failure and the continuing of war on the forest industries," he said.

"The solution is to adopt and adapt the fire management policies and practices of Western Australia."

Mr Packham said the Earth's atmospheric temperature had increased by one degree over the past 100 years, which had yielded a calculated three per cent rise in fire rate of spread and fire intensity.

"The fuels however have increased to 10 times the Aboriginal managed level, with an increase in rate of spread of 10 times and 100 times in intensity, to account for 97 per cent of the current fire rate of spread and intensity," he said. "This is why we

are experiencing frequent fire disasters now."

In contrast, Aborigines had burnt the bush frequently and gently. Victor Stephenson, from Cape York, had described good burning as, "fire, like water, should trickle gently over the surface".

Mr Packham said research had come under the total control of the fire agencies who resist the resolution of the bushfire threat.

"The universities are constrained in their discipline-determined armoured bunkers dedicated to paper writing, computer models, conferences and submission writing rather than actually solving our bushfire problem," he said.

"A small, economical but very high quality, totally independent research institute is urgently required. It should take a multidisciplinary approach to bushfire research with an emphasis on real world experimentation and three streams of strategic threat analysis – fire behaviour to fuel measurement and fire forensics."

Written by timber industry reporter, Philip Hopkins.

“The excuse for the malfeasance that caused the recent (summer) fires were actually the result of global warming is false on both theoretical grounds and previous fire history.”
- David Packham

grounds and previous fire history," he said.

"These fires (2019-20) occurred in East Gippsland in what was a mild but average season with two or three days of 'blow-up' fire weather caused by two or three Rossby wave meteorological events." (Rossby waves, which naturally occur in the Earth's ocean and atmosphere, form as a result of the rotation of the planet.)