

Subject: Submission to Extreme Weather Inquiry

This is a copy of a letter that I sent to most MP's some time ago.

Thank God we have a break from the appalling heat of the past three weeks – I don't think it will last but it is most welcome.

The temperature today is about 28 degrees and it is RAINING; it is fairly local but with hope it will spread. I feel so sorry for those who have died and the hundred or so who have lost their homes. The sights have been horrible with people who have stayed trying to save their homes making a dash for the river to survive. An area half the size of England has been burned out and there are still nearly a hundred fires still burning – about a dozen are out of control.

It is very sad to see the hundreds of cattle and sheep that have been lost and more so to see kangaroos bounding through burning bush – their feet scorching, trying to find a river or somewhere safe. Untold numbers of wild animals have died and the numbers will never be known.

It is refreshing to the soul to see an exhausted, fire blackened fireman kneeling on the burnt ground dribbling water into a burnt animal's mouth – the trust in the eyes of the suffering animal a sight to see; and the animal rescuers who search the thousands of burnt acres to find animals who are still alive and get them to shelters for treatment.

I am disappointed with the government and the CSIRO in particular. Several years ago I wrote to every politician that I had in my address book at that time and in particular to the CSIRO (The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation). I suggested that every house built in a bush area should have either a swimming pool or a large water tank as a water storage area. There should be a small diesel engine with a water pump to pump water up the side of the house and across the ridge, or on either side above the gutters. In an emergency water could be sprayed over the roof. I even designed the system, pump size, pipe size and spray hole sizes. My letter was completely ignored. I went further and suggested that these homes should be built out of non flammable material. It is obviously ridiculous to build a timber house that is surrounded by trees, again I was ignored. These are probably not unique ideas and I can't imagine why it is not done. This and many other suggestions were in my book, 'Lethal Legacy' which I wrote some time ago - and sent a copy to many politicians.

Disasters do bring out the best and the worst in people – we have those mentioned above and then we have the rat-bags who deliberately light fires regardless of the consequences – I do hope they are caught and that their punishment is severe.

Regards,

Tom Edwards

