



**House of Representatives Standing Committee on
Health and Ageing**

Public Roundtable on Burn Injury Prevention

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Parliament House, Canberra**

Submission on behalf of the Julian Burton Burns Trust

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INTRODUCTION

The Julian Burton Burns Trust is Australia's leading social enterprise committed to prevention, care and research associated with burn injury. Based in South Australia, we coordinate national projects and programs and are endorsed by the Australian and New Zealand Burns Association (ANZBA).

This submission addresses the terms of reference in regard to 'ways to prevent or minimise burn injury and the associated health system costs' through outlining the prevention, care and research projects and programs the Julian Burton Burns Trust is currently facilitating, funding or supporting.

Australian statistics indicate that those at highest risk of suffering a preventable burn injury are those in the 0-5 age group, the 12-25 year age group (mostly males) and the elderly. Aboriginal people are more likely to suffer a serious burn injury in comparison to non-Aboriginal people with a much higher incidence if they are living in remote areas. People living in lower socio-economic areas are also at a higher risk of suffering a severe burn injury.

Social and Financial Statistics of Severe Burn Injury in Australia

Burn injury:

- is one of the **top 3 causes of accidental death** in children under five years of age
- is the **third most common** injury suffered by Australians every year
- projected cost to the Australian Government is **\$2.6 billion per year** in health care
- is **25 percent more likely to occur in remote Indigenous communities** than in metropolitan areas

Evaluation of prevention initiatives needs to be conducted using consistent and thorough statistics. The ANZBA hospital burn units in every major state of Australia collect a range of statistics; however these cannot be used on a national level due to a difference in standardising data collection criteria and procedures. The Bi-National Burn Registry (Bi-NBR) is a burns clinical quality registry which will; ensure accurate data recording across Australia on the epidemiology of burns, monitor health care performance, provide an opportunity to benchmark quality of care and measure long term outcomes for burn survivors. The Bi-NBR is currently being developed and trialled through Monash University and the Alfred Hospital and will provide hospitals and agencies such as the Julian Burton Burns Trust with national data for comparison and information to target programs to high risk demographics and locations.

Through working with community and health partners, we know that the majority of burn injuries are preventable through implementing changes to behaviour (eg flammable liquids and fire), accessibility (eg fireworks) or changing legislation (eg labelling of clothing). The Julian Burton Burns Trust currently has a number of prevention and education programs and projects which are ready to be implemented on a national level. It is through these, combined with a collaborative approach with state based hospitals and legislative changes, that we anticipate a reduction of burn injuries.

OVERVIEW OF THE JULIAN BURTON BURNS TRUST

The Julian Burton Burns Trust was founded by Julian Burton OAM in March 2003 after suffering life threatening burn injuries in the 2002 Bali bombings. Our strategic vision is to be Australia's leading social enterprise committed to prevention, care and research associated with burn injury.

The Julian Burton Burns Trust's Patron is the late Mr Victor Smorgon AC, founder of the Victor Smorgon Group. Chairman of the Board of Directors is Erik Metanomski.

Other **Board Members** are:

Peter Edwards	Managing Director	Victor Smorgon Group, Melbourne
Prof Peter Maitz AM	Director, Burn Unit	Concord Hospital, Sydney
Matthew Bickford- Smith	Managing Director	Laynon Asset Management, Sydney
David Pourre	General Manager, QLD	NAB Private Wealth, Brisbane
Frank Lancione	Principal Partner	Piper Alderman Lawyers, Adelaide

Our projects and programs include:

Prevention	Care	Research
BurnSafe Schools Program (SA)	Patient Vehicle Service (SA & VIC)	ANZBA Bi-National Burns Registry (Australia & New Zealand)
Community Awareness Campaigns (SA, VIC, NT, QLD & NSW)	Community & Family Support (SA & VIC)	Funded specialised treatment and treatment equipment (SA, VIC, NT & NSW)
Aboriginal BurnSafe Program (SA)	Burn Support Network Group (SA)	
	Graduate Diploma of Nursing Science (Burn Nursing) Scholarships (National)	

Funding for our operations, community projects and programs comes from a variety of sources but mainly through corporate sponsorships, philanthropic trusts and foundations, small grants and fundraising.

The Julian Burton Burns Trust’s commitment to Australian communities is to minimise the impact of burn injury by raising burns awareness (prevention) and education (first aid and harm minimisation). Our aim is to work closely with aligned organisations to provide prevention and education across Australia through schools, community groups and the media to target high risk groups and communities.

JULIAN BURTON BURNS TRUST’S BURN PREVENTION PROGRAMS

BurnSafe Schools Program

The aim of the BurnSafe Schools Program is to prevent burn injury through education of burn prevention strategies and through raising awareness of the long term physical, psychological and psychosocial aspects of burn injury. In targeting Primary Schools we are educating young people before they reach the high risk taking age (starting at approximately age 10) teaching practical ways to avoid a serious burn injury. Burns first aid education is also taught, enabling students to provide quick and effective burn treatment to minimise an injury.

The program has been designed by teachers for Primary School aged children (ages 5–13) and utilises puppets and song for younger children and a DVD interview with a young burns survivor for discussion with older students. Sessions are scenario based, participatory and are facilitated with small groups to increase learning and retention of learning. Key concepts focus on keeping selves and others safe and students practice their learning throughout the sessions. Students are encouraged to share their learning at home with parents and grandparents and are provided with an educational bag to assist with this.

BurnSafe is currently being facilitated in South Australian high risk communities as identified through South Australian hospital burn unit statistics.

Outcomes of the BurnSafe program (commenced in 2008) include:

- over 14,000 students and their parents have participated in BurnSafe small group education sessions
- participating students have shown an 85% retention rate of their learning
- up to 75% of students changed their behaviour or made a burn hazard safer at home
- many schools have changed practices around the serving of hot canteen food as a result of students increased awareness

Feedback from Teachers, Principals, students and parents has been outstanding.

“I just wanted to thank you on behalf of myself and my Year 7 class for the informative and relevant program that you are offering to schools. We really appreciate you taking the time to come to our school yesterday. I thought your presentation was excellent and know that my students gained valuable and life-saving information from your presentation.”

Teacher, Blakeview Primary School 2009

Our target reach for the BurnSafe schools' program over the next three years with our current funding model is to:

- educate 30,000 primary school students on burns awareness, prevention and first aid education
- educate in excess of 30,000 parents through school education sessions and the distribution of the BurnSafe education bags

Aboriginal Remote Communities Program

During 2009, the BurnSafe Aboriginal Remote Communities program was piloted in regional and remote Aboriginal schools and communities and in collaboration with Burns SA. Eight Aboriginal regional/remote communities participated. The response to the program was extremely positive with 80% of schools inviting us to return for follow up sessions.

"Sessions were superb, engaging and inclusive... very useful session which was put in context for 'the Lands'"

Deputy Principal, Marree Aboriginal School

Learning from the above pilot has been used to initiate *FireSafe*; a collaborative program currently being developed by the Julian Burton Burns Trust and the South Australian Fire and Emergency Commission. Its aim is to lower the excessive burn injury and structural fire statistics in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands through local engagement, training and employment.

Community Awareness

Burn injury trends have been identified through hospital burn unit statistics at a state level. Through Community Service Announcements and partnerships with local media, we have reached approximately 1.7 million people with prevention messages regarding cooking, fire and vehicle radiator burns. We are currently working with the ANZBA National Prevention Team to develop and implement a national community awareness strategy using the initial data analysed from the Bi-NBR. This will include education through television, radio, news print and other mediums to disseminate prevention and first aid messages.

Research and Evaluation

To date, programs and projects have been developed and facilitated as a response to local statistics and trends and evaluation of the programs' effectiveness has been difficult to ascertain.

The Bi-NBR, developed and coordinated through Monash University and partially funded by the Burns Trust is crucial to any national prevention or evaluation strategy. It is anticipated that by 2011, all burn units across Australia will supply data on critical aspects of burn injuries: burn mechanism, treatment given, length of hospital stay, out-patient care etc which will advise our future prevention strategies and programs.

JULIAN BURTON BURNS TRUST RECOMMENDATIONS

As Australia's leading social enterprise committed to reducing burn injury, and in support of our community and hospital based partners we recommend government support for the following:

1. a collaborative approach with state based hospital burn units, government and not-for-profit agencies to develop and implement **national burn injury prevention & education** community awareness campaigns
2. **national schools' prevention programs** targeting primary and secondary students
3. **compulsory first aid education** to be conducted in high schools as a component of the curriculum (suggested year level - year 10)
4. prevention programs which provide education and training for **disadvantaged and marginal groups**, including parents of young children, the elderly and Indigenous groups building capacity of individuals and communities
5. burn management **education for remote and regional medical teams** especially in Aboriginal communities
6. **mechanism to collect consistent data** (Bi-NBR) from around Australia to support best practice treatment and ongoing care for burns patients and that will direct resources for education and prevention and provide the data necessary for evaluation of programs, projects and care practices.