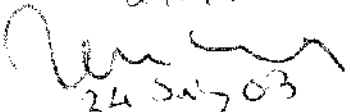


Sue JACK Submission to Federal Inquiry into 2003 Bush fires in Australia

Sue Jack  
Wodonga open forum  
24/7.  
  
24 May 03

A 150 acre Olive Grove, 10 acre vineyard, cattle and hay /silage make up our business.

5 Kilometres of adjoining National Park with half being a declared Reference area.

**Submission No.476**

### **The Problems**

Management of Parks and no consultation with adjoining land owners

Different connection for water. (Hume tankers came to our aid we had the water but different connection)

Human safety on roads. Watchbox Road trees meet over the top, acted as a funnel for fire, was of grave concern during the Fire one way in and out Hume safety not the Environment (see attached Indigo Shire Roadside Management Plan)

Private units did a fantastic job in stopping the fire from spreading, many spot fires caused from flying, burning leaves and bark started fires which were put out by these units.

NSW units did a great job in Indigo Valley when the fire roared out of the bush.

Farmers very isolated and concerned over the perception that private assets will be sacrificed (particularly fences) and the fire was not contained in the National Park due to no containment lines in the park.

National Parks and Crown Land (road frontages) are poor neighbour

### **Outcomes**

Clearance of 100 metre boundary on all Parks and Crown Land (Roadside 3 metres on crown side of fence)

All neighbours be responsible for half fence costs including crown roads this should assist land owners as responsible authorities may think twice about tree clearing and maintaining adjoining fence lines. ( see Weekly Times for the penalties farmers being forced into.)

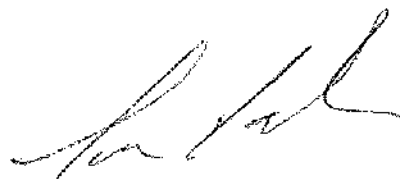
Local areas be assisted to co-ordinate their own fire plans.

Locals be on all committees for National Park Management Plans, roadside management Plans, etc

Catchment Management Committees who formulate the Native Re-vegetation Plan be looked at to ensure no conflicts of interest and more local farmer representative. The Shire representatives do not necessarily represent the rate payers views.

Landowners be allowed to clear their land for 130 metres to help with fire protection with being forced to have a covenant placed on their land or excessive tree replacements.

Attached - Indigo Shire Roadside Management Plan  
Indigo Shire Part Two of Submission to the inquiry



## COMPONENT #2 – INDIGO SHIRE COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The Indigo Shire Council has received a number of written submissions from the general public and has facilitated a community forum particularly to receive community comment for input to the Victorian State Government Bushfire Inquiry.

The following represents a collation of comments:

1. Not enough is done in fire prevention
2. More land is going into parks but not enough maintenance
3. Prior to European settlement burns were left to run through the forest, and the forest was therefore an 'open forest'
4. Fires are becoming harder to contain – we are our own worst enemies, less grazing, cleaning etc
5. DSE/CFA stood back and put in containment lines and let the fire burn thus destroying private fencing
6. Expected to insure fences, unable to obtain insurance
7. 1972 fire able to contain in forest (Barrumbogie)
8. 2003 fire not opportunistic in getting help
9. Very demanding to run a business and put out fires (given duration)
10. Greater containment lines in forest
11. Offered dozer to put line in forest – turned down 7 times
12. Machines were not fully utilised
13. Instated own line and held fire back
14. Submission to create a burn-off regime
15. Privately owned forestry is well kept by regular burn off
16. Forest does not represent a natural forest, full of debris
17. Land Conservation movement are not well informed in practical and actual experience, only theoretical
18. Six years time more timber fuel will create a more disastrous situation
19. CFA arranged for containment line to be put in and cleared out a gate, sprinkler system and fencing
20. Only allowed to clear 3m into park, some trees 120m tall and would fall over fence
21. Containment lines need to be strategically planned with access gates well in advance and with some planning
22. Have designated roads clear of vegetation for access/ to be included in strategy
23. Some roads have heavy vegetation
24. Reliant on electricity to power pumps, black wattle growing up into electricity lines.
25. Corridors for birds and wildlife has removed some safe havens/ refuge points
26. Black wattles are heavily vegetating, covers only access road
27. Watchbox road is a disgrace, trees meet at the top and hang over road.
28. There needs to be a balance

29. Use of private property to protect public land – not fair
30. State Government should pay half of costs on interface fencing
31. Focus on tourism nothing for farmers
32. Should have protected areas
33. Shire needs to be ?????????? oriented and less environmental orientated
34. 30-50m into the bush as a fire break, not on private land. 3m is all that is allowable.
35. Media was annoying, got in the way of the CFA. Some wore CFA uniform, tried to get on trucks.
36. Media blocked roads with vehicles
37. Seemed trouble with logistics – why wasn't the army used to set up mobile camp, etc
38. NSW firefighters did not have the same connection as CFA connection Council request to be fitted
39. Somebody would not allow unregistered kitchens to be used for catering
40. Can Council support the private firefighting units
41. Is there private advice/guidelines from Council on fire reduction burning
42. Council stops people in rural areas from managing/ preventing fires
43. Clarification is needed as to what properties can do to prevent risks/ burnoff/ buffer zone development
44. Chiltern/Beechworth Road has dense tree growth – where was it planned to stop the fire
45. Containment lines must be put in prior to fires, not left to when the fire is almost upon properties
46. Access in the park is needed and should be improved
47. A track was put in 12 years ago – is now overgrown and fenced off from grazing
48. Need to step back 20 years. Not as much roadside fire prevention undertaken now
49. People need to realize their own responsibility, insurance should reward good management
50. Very concerned with the effect of poor management on CFA Officers and recruitment
51. How long will assistance for drought continue, effects will be over a number of years
52. Education is needed on prevention
53. Road to block must be accessible