



Inquiry into the 2026 Summer Fires across Victoria

submission from

Protect Our Farms Incorporated



Practical Emergency Management

Volunteer Recognition

Protection of Regional Livelihoods

OUR FARMS
YOUR FOOD AND FIBRE

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INQUIRY INTO THE 2026 SUMMER FIRES ACROSS VICTORIA.

This submission paper is the culmination of the Protect Our Farms Incorporated, draft August 2025 “Practical Emergency Management Paper” with significant updates following this summer’s recent fires and an endeavour to reflect the Terms of Reference of this Inquiry.

Protect Our Farms Incorporated. (POF’s)

POF’s is a not-for-profit community organisation that was formed in 2024 to protect the rights and provide a voice for Farmers and Rural Communities in Mitchell Shire. Over the past 18 months it has significantly expanded to encompass a wider area of Central Victoria. It currently represents approximately 200 members. Our members are willing to meet with the Environment and Planning Committee to further address our submission.

This submission has been prepared by POF’s members to highlight key concerns and opportunities to improve Victoria’s Emergency Management systems. It reflects the lived experiences of people and rural communities, and the crucial role Volunteers of all descriptions play in protecting their own and other communities. **The real stakeholders in emergencies are the communities impacted and, in many cases, they are voiceless in the planning and preparation for emergencies. It is critical that this issue be fully addressed.**

POINT 1. The preparation and planning by government, emergency services agencies and the community ahead of the fire season, including management of public and private land and roadsides.

POF’s regards the current and previous Fire Seasons preparation and planning as totally inadequate as the aftermath can testify. When assessing this outcome, we need to directly focus on the system and bureaucracy that brought us to this point.

POF’s is convinced the whole system needs re-evaluation and urgent change. **The whole Emergency Management organisation is very multi layered and bureaucratic. It is a top-down approach that leaves little space for real community input.**

Emergency Management Committees are usually composed entirely of agencies and council representatives who show little interest in change or open and frank conversations.

The CFA representatives for instance rarely raise issues such as Tanker Fleet replacement, Volunteer Numbers or Forest and Public Land fuel loads. (This was one member’s experience when involved with the Mitchell Shire Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee.) These issues are critical if communities are to be properly protected. This is also reflected in the numerous approaches by various groups and individuals to State Government and responsible Ministers. In many cases they were not interested and ignored meeting requests. (Member experience.)

Refer Attachment 1.

Supporting Volunteers.

This is the real crux of preparation and planning. Volunteers are the backbone of the rural emergency response. Recruitment procedures must encourage and support Volunteers in practical ways. Systems must be user friendly to the Volunteer, not the other way around. Currently there is a shortfall of approximately 10,000 Volunteers from the previous entity, (roughly 25%) and there is also an age demographic that is extremely concerning.

POF's oppose the current 30 plus year replacement cycle for CFA Fire Tankers which shows a lack of respect and ignores the duty of care for all Volunteers. We support a 20-year replacement cycle.

Refer Attachments 2 and 3.

Strategic Reserve. Private Units/Tankers and associates.

Victoria has an abundance of privately owned firefighting Tankers and Utes with "Slip Ons". These will respond quickly to any sign of smoke or fire report and are often first on the fire ground. It is common sense that the quicker a fire can be attacked, the better the chance of early containment.

These resources have been constantly downplayed and actively discouraged particularly over the last decade by established Emergency Management Agencies – particularly the CFA in outer Metropolitan areas.

POF's advocate for the recognition and incorporation of semi-trained personnel, particularly farmers and contractors into a formal reserve force during significant emergencies and supporting them. How this is achieved we will leave to the experts, but the amount of time, cost of resources and the unique skills and local knowledge that these Volunteers bring to the fire ground should be recognised, measured and utilised. This exercise needs to be carried out at a local Brigades level, especially fire impacted Brigades. This alone will speak to their value.

Please note additional information in Attachment 5.

Roadblocks continue to be a hindrance to private units. Refer Attachment 9 from 2014 Mickleham fire.

CFA Fire reporting procedures and format must change to accurately reflect the involvement of private units and tankers, equipment and community volunteers on the fire ground.

Volunteers remain the most cost-effective element in fire suppression in rural and regional Victoria and the State Government needs to acknowledge and recognise this.

Farmers and rural residents invest heavily in their own firefighting equipment to protect themselves, their neighbours and their communities. POF's have numerous members funding their own firefighting tankers and Slip Ons.

As an example, a farming member maintains a former CFA Tanker – Initial purchase **\$28,000**. Additional quick fill pump **\$4,500**. Registration Vic Roads **\$565**. Insurance **\$500**. Ongoing maintenance costs per year **\$1000-\$2000**. Another member is currently replacing the 2,000 litre tank on their tanker at a cost of approximately **\$4,000** and this does not include the time and cost of removing the old metal tank. Farm Ute or trailer Slip On firefighting units can cost from **\$3,000 to \$7,000**. This does not include any upgrades in equipment. Vehicle and fuel costs must also be considered.

Please refer to Attachment 7.

We would also draw your attention to the Farm Firefighting Vehicle Conditional Registration operating in NSW.

Please refer to Attachment 8.

Fuel Reduction and Fire Prevention Standards.

Longwood Fire – “The biggest concern during the fire and also in its wake, continues to be the sheer volume of roadside vegetation. Particularly along the Hume Freeway. The intensity of the blaze, due to high fuel loading, led to the fire jumping the Hume Fwy towards Longwood as it was completely uncontrollable.”

Anyone who travels the roads of Victoria will recognise Fuel Reduction Standards are completely inadequate especially on the major arterials and other roads managed by the Department of Transport and Planning (formerly VIC ROADS). At a local government level there is enormous variation with roadside vegetation management and fuel hazards removal.

Fuel management within rural township zones needs legislative change to allow communities and volunteers to conduct appropriate fire prevention works.

Residents who do not comply with a Fire Hazard Removal notice at Municipal level face a fine of approximately \$1700, and the work is carried out by a Council contractor at the residents expense. POF's advocate for a **Common Standard for Fuel Reduction and Fire Prevention works across Victoria. Government departments and agencies must be held to the same standards expected of the private sector.** Compliance within the intent of current legislation must be enforced. The roadsides and public lands of Victoria show that this is currently not happening. There must be significant improvement in fire prevention and mitigation practices on all Government managed land. There are many examples of small towns with creeks, native corridors, roads etc that would funnel a fire into that town because the relevant council, catchment authority, government department have not conducted the appropriate fuel reduction and fire prevention works.

With the cessation of logging in native/old growth forests POF's have huge concerns regarding Fuel Loads, Forest Access Roads/Tracks and the proper management of our Forests in general.

Community safety should be the overarching goal even at the expense of environmental goals. The balance needs to shift.

Longwood Fire – “The lack of access to paddocks from the Hume is a key contributing factor to the size and eventual scale of the blaze. First responders had to travel significant distances to gain access to the fire's point of origin, which allowed the fire to build momentum and become uncontrollable. Regular access points along the Hume Fwy would aid first responders in combating any future fires that start on the roadside.”

Wire rope barriers and other road accident mitigation devices need considerable reviewing and appropriate re-engineering. Breaks in these barriers must be easily identifiable and well-spaced to allow access for fuel reduction, fire control and mitigation works. There must be closer spacing of crossovers to enable the prompt turnaround of traffic in any emergency. It should be noted that 18 lives were lost on the Geelong Road on the 8/1/1969.

Our wildlife also needs an escape route when they are trapped in these long barrier corridors especially the solid metal structures.

The current widespread practice of designating “Significant Roadside Vegetation” areas is creating corridors of built-up fuel loads. This requires urgent review. Currently these areas are creating a threat to adjoining landholders and the native wildlife present.

Refer Attachment 1, 3 and 6.

POINT 2. The causes and circumstances of the bushfires, including climate change and the adequacy of the Government's climate policies and actions, forecasts, warnings and public education on bushfire threats.

POF's recognises that the Fire Triangle still exists – Fuel Load, Weather, Ignition. These three elements are the critical components. They vary over time, but major fires appear to be more frequent and are more intense. A changing and variable climate is recognised as a major factor at all levels of government.

Whilst governments acknowledge this, and it translates to all their correspondence and documents, it does not however relate to their on-ground, works and mitigation measures.

In regard to the Longwood fires, there have been multiple issues raised by members.

It was noted – this fire commenced on the roads side. Roadside safety barriers were the real inhibitor to early control, as was the unmanaged and extremely heavy fuel loads behind these barriers. The lack of adequate and well-spaced access points to this vegetation, along with the lack of adequately and reasonably spaced crossovers made control virtually impossible. We have heard second-hand similar conditions applied to the commencement of the Harcourt fire.

Refer Attachment 1.

POF's calls for responsible fuel load management, and access to vegetation corridors on all major arterial roads in Victoria.

POF's call for a review of the Australian Standards currently in place for inspection and trimming of trees and vegetation impinging on Road Envelopes across Victoria. In many cases, instead of a costly trimming process over multiple years, it would be far better, less dangerous and less expensive for communities if these trees were removed. The significant number of trees down and resources and personnel required to clear on catastrophic days needs to be studied and addressed.

The one bright spot is that weather forecasts, warnings and public education on bushfire threats has improved greatly.

POINT 3. Funding, equipment and appliances for the Country Fire Authority (CFA), Fire Rescue Victoria and Forest Fire Management Victoria, and recruitment and retention of CFA volunteers.

POF's strongly oppose the so called Emergency Services and Volunteer Fund. The so called "Levy". Only a small fraction of the funds raised will support Emergency Service Volunteers. We regard this as a cynical exercise in Cost Shifting, with the additional burden of a new Tax disproportionately focused on Farmers and the Business Community. **It is a fundamental responsibility of Government to protect all citizens** and much of the so-called Emergency Services that were originally funded through normal Budget processes have been switched to this so-called Levy. We say, **"SCRAP THE TAX."**

We call on this Inquiry to recognise that there has been huge wastage of taxpayer dollars right across the board, from the failed Commonwealth Games bid, to current overruns and wastage on major projects. If only a small portion of this was redirected to Emergency Services in Victoria, we would be happy.

As stated previously, we oppose the current 30 years plus replacement cycle for CFA Tankers, and we are pushing for the phased introduction of a 20-year replacement cycle for all CFA Tankers.

It would be valuable to communities if retired CFA tankers could be retained at a discounted price, when purchased for firefighting purposes.

We fully support the SES in their goals regarding funding and Vehicle Replacement Guidelines.

We are extremely concerned with the current CFA Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Practices, as these impact all Victorians. Currently the whole system is overly bureaucratic and is not “user friendly”. This may work for paid management, but it absolutely does not work for Volunteers. Once again this reflects the top-down approach, where the people and Volunteers that should be the main priority and focus, have little to no say. The entire system needs to be simplified.

Refer Attachments 1, 2 and 3.

POF’s calls on the State Government to implement a statewide Emergency Services, (both CFA and SES) recruitment strategy, that acknowledges and emphasises the importance of Volunteers to this State. It could be incorporated in the current “leave early” messaging.

POINT 4. The emergency responses to control and contain the fires, including adequacy of resources and communications.

Longwood Fire – “The failure of the CFA digital radio network had a significant impact. Multiple dead spots and entire sections of the fireground that could not effectively communicate with Dispatch. As a result we had to use UHF radios to maintain effective control and communication between both private and CFA appliances. Even if the digital radio network was working, brigades lack the number of portable/mobile radios required to maintain effective communication”.

We have been told this is not an isolated occurrence, CFA radios having failed at the Natimuk fire.

Refer Attachments 1, 2 and 4 where this is fully addressed.

POINT 5. Resilience of critical services and infrastructure such as electricity, water and telecommunications during and after the fires.

Clearly the resilience of critical services and infrastructure was inadequate, with telecommunications infrastructure, eg. Mount Alexander (Harcourt fire) failing on a huge scale.

POF’s calls on responsible authorities to implement wider vegetation buffer zones around critical infrastructure. This also includes Fire Towers and Telecommunications infrastructure. At a State Government planning level, we recommend that multiple access and egress points be implemented for all subdivisions above a certain lot or physical area size.

Buffer Zoning, Risk Mitigation and specific Vegetation selection practices need to be given far greater emphasis across the entire State, but especially in the Rural and Urban interface areas. Implementation must be strategic and tactical for the desired results.

Refer Attachments 1, 4 and 5.

POINT 6. The impact on the community, business and agriculture and efforts to aid in recovery.

Every high intensity bushfire will have numerous negative impacts, and they can extend far beyond the impacted communities. Mental health issues, ongoing employment lost, community infrastructure gone as well as a host of other unforeseen ongoing problems continue and arise long after the grass has turned green.

Longwood Fire – “All of the recovery efforts that were organised by the local community were extremely effective in the early stages of recovery. The support of local State Member Annabelle Cleeland cannot be understated, as she was able to open and then streamline many of the avenues of recovery. The disappointing aspect of recovery was also relating to government. The time it took to expand disaster relief funds to include ALL affected was particularly disappointing.”

Refer Attachment 1.

These are definitely areas that require close attention. Bureaucratic processes should be fast-tracked in any emergency.

The euthanising and burial of injured livestock, the feeding and relocation of surviving livestock, requires prompt decision making and allocation of assistance, not held back by bureaucratic red tape as has occurred.

The mental health toll rises exponentially the longer it takes to address these issues.

In regard to the Ruffy/Highlands area, farmers played a significant role in clearing roads etc quickly and safely. This enabled fodder to be quickly supplied to impacted farmers and healthy livestock to exit the area for agistment.

Animal Welfare needs, and this includes native wildlife, should be given much higher priority. It is intrinsically linked to mental health outcomes for all who deal with animals in the aftermath of a fire.

The current Fire Risk Matrix used to determine asset protection needs to better reflect and understand all the assets existing in a rural community landscape. For example, a farmer's greatest assets are the livestock, pasture, buildings, fencing etc on the property. Lose all of these and their livelihood is gone. **It should be compulsory for all major infrastructure to have their own fire plan, conduct fire prevention works and have onsite firefighting resources. This would allow more CFA Tankers to be deployed to the fire ground or for pre-emptive fire controls.**

One of the main factors aiding recovery, is that those impacted have adequate Insurance coverage. We see this as a critical area, that requires attention by far more than just the Insurance Sector. The Federal seat of Nichols has been identified in a recent Government Report as becoming uninsurable in coming decades owing to changing climatic conditions. This includes both fires and floods. New Zealand has a National Insurance Policy that caters for earthquakes, where everyone contributes.

We recommend consideration be given to a form of Hybrid National Natural Disasters Insurance Policy.

POINT 7. The impact on the environment, including native wildlife, and any measures to better protect native forests, including technology for early detection and firefighting in remote locations.

The environmental impacts are extremely well known and are devastating for all concerned, whether they be humans or the fauna and flora of impacted landscapes.

Refer Attachment 4.

The importance of reducing fuel loads and having adequate fire prevention and mitigation measures in place is vital.

Refer Attachments 1 and 4.

In regard to the introduction of new technologies in Fire Detection, POF's feels that the best outcomes would be achieved if Emergency Services and responsible agencies concentrated on **upgrading the existing system of suitably located Fire Towers and fully utilised existing staff, with their many years of experience, on a proper mentoring and training programme for new and/or inexperienced potential Fire Tower Operators.**

We understand the importance of pursuing new technologies, but it is our understanding and experience that there is currently no **reliable** early fire detection technology in existence. Funding is extremely limited and the focus should be on fire towers, firefighting equipment, volunteers and appropriate aircraft.

Refer Attachment 4.

POINT 8. The impacts of climate change on the natural environment, which has resulted in more frequent and intense bushfires occurring in Victoria.

POF's feels that we have adequately covered these issues in our previous responses. However, it is worth noting that European settlement has contributed to a monoculture of highly flammable and fire resilient native species, and consideration needs to be given to introduce a more significant network of fire breaks or corridors of other species that will slow down or retard a fire's progress as part of an approach to adaptation.

POINT 9. The prevalence and impact of misinformation leading into and during the fire season.

POINT 10. The interjurisdictional support into and out of Victoria leading into and during the fire season, including interstate and international deployments, Commonwealth support and relief efforts.

It should be noted that there are limitations to Aircraft support, both fixed wing and rotary during catastrophic Fire weather.

1. Weather conditions. Catastrophic Fire Weather usually relates to extreme and variable winds, wind shear and other factors that can play havoc with all aircraft, (eg. Large tanker lost during Tumut fires) but especially the smaller aircraft. Nearly all grounded.
2. Most aircraft are not equipped or authorised for nighttime firefighting operations. Therefore, it is critical that Volunteers are given the resources they require from all levels of Government.

POINT 11. Lessons from and progress on the implementation of recommendations from previous inquiries, reports and Royal Commissions.

In the aftermath of the February 9th and 10th 2014, MICKLEHAM to HIGH CAMP fire, a group of local Kilmore/High Camp farmers and CFA volunteers met with Craig Lapsley the then FIRE SERVICES COMMISSIONER.

A subsequent paper was produced entitled "POST SEASON OPERATIONS REVIEW FIRE DANGER PERIOD 2013/14 released in August 2014.

Our reading of the 2014 Kilmore/High Camp and CFA volunteers submission would indicate there has been little change for the better.

Please refer to Attachment 9.

Protect Our Farms Incorporated submission includes 9 attachments.

Attachment 1. John Brodie: 2026 Longwood Fire Account

Attachment 2. Brendan Kelly: Pyalong CFA Captain Report

Attachment 3. Lyndon Arnel: Tooborac Firefighting Experience

Attachment 4. Member Compilation: Environment, Wildlife & Fire Detection

Attachment 5. Significant Fire Events in Victorian History

Attachment 6. Extract: CFA Act 1958, Section 43

Attachment 7. Private Firefighting Unit Costs

Attachment 8. NSW Farm Firefighting Vehicle Conditional Registration

Attachment 9. 2014 Mickleham Fire: Feedback to Fire Services Commissioner

CONTRIBUTORS FROM PROTECT OUR FARMS INC.

Bill Chisholm – President POF Inc./small farmer. Over 50 years CFA volunteer. Lancefield CFA – Secretary and 2nd Lieutenant. Current Nulla Vale CFA member. National Medal and CFA Service medal. Past Mitchell Shire Councillor/12 years on Mitchell Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) including a number of years as Chair.

Therese Ryan – Secretary POF Inc./Farmer at Pyalong and Knowsley/Pyalong CFA and community volunteer. Immediate and extended family of numerous generational CFA volunteers and farmers operating multiple private tankers and Slip Ons.

John Brodie – Farmer, Longwood. Joined Longwood CFA 2018. Current Lieutenant, as well as VFBV and Euroa Group Delegate. Currently serving as VFBV State Councillor District 22 and sitting on the VFBV State Executive.
Refer Attachment 1.

Brendan Kelly – Farmer/Pyalong. Current Pyalong Brigade CFA Captain – 11 years. Previously 12 years as a Lieutenant. Joined the CFA in 1987. Generational CFA volunteer.
Refer Attachment 2.

Lyndon Arnel – Farmer, Tooborac. Extensive firefighting experience in both Army and Aviation.
Refer Attachment 3.

Julie Ann Ashley – Willowmavin resident. 3 years in the Army Reserve. Corporate and Multinational experience in public relations and marketing.

Nancy Hiscock – Farmer at Kilmore and Pyalong/community volunteer. Immediate and extended family of numerous generational CFA volunteers and farmers operating multiple private tankers and Slip Ons. Input into Attachment 9.

Numerous Protect Our Farms members and other individuals, well versed in CFA operations and rural enterprises have made valuable contributions to this submission.

Attachment 1

John Brodie: 2026 Longwood Fire Account

In relation to the inquiry into the 2026 Longwood Fire.

- Throughout the fire no issues were found pertaining to the maintenance of all CFA vehicles. Appliances are always maintained to an exceptionally high standard through the scheduled maintenance program and this showed in their fireground performance. The District Mechanical Officers are to be commended for their tireless support of volunteers, both in normal times and during disasters.
- The biggest concern during the fire and also in its wake, continues to be the sheer volume of roadside vegetation. Particularly along the Hume Freeway. It was the fire in the median strip of the Hume Fwy that begun about 2am on Thursday Jan 8th that held the biggest threat to the township of Longwood. The intensity of the blaze, due to high fuel loading, led to the fire jumping the Hume Fwy towards Longwood as it was completely uncontrollable.
- The lack of access to paddocks from the Hume is a key contributing factor to the size and eventual scale of the blaze. First responders had to travel significant distances to gain access to the fire's point of origin, which allowed the fire to build momentum and become uncontrollable. Regular access points along the Hume Fwy would aid first responders in combating any future fires that start on the roadside.
- The imposition by CFA hierarchy of almost impossible conditions on the Longwood Town Burn Plan prevented the burn from going ahead in the weeks prior to the Longwood Fire. Not only did this increase the danger and threat to the town, but it also placed extra stress on those residents fighting the fire. They were not afforded the peace of mind that if the blaze headed for the town, or indeed another fire had started to the North of the Town, that some preventative measures were in place to protect lives and property. The potential impact to lives and property is not the only consideration, as the mental health of residents suffered as a result of the strain placed upon them by the red tape that prevented the Town Protection Burn.
- The failure of the CFA digital radio network had a significant impact. Multiple dead spots and entire sections of the fireground that could not effectively communicate with Dispatch. As a result we had to use UHF radios to maintain effective control and communication between both private and CFA appliances. Even if the digital radio network was working, brigades lack the number of portable/mobile radios required to maintain effective communication.
- In the Strathbogie catchment resources such as a localised "Big Fill" appliance would help to immediately establish fast water resupply in the initial stages of a fire. An effective way to ensure firefighters are given every chance to contain fires in the early stages.
- The devastation to houses, farms and community is hard to effectively quantify. The negative impact on the Longwood community is undoubtedly a combination of mental, physical, emotional and financial. Particularly the financial aspect in the time volunteers gave up to fight the fire. It would seem that more effective use of the available strike teams may have been able to ease that burden and allow a more timely return to work for locals. Strike teams, it seemed, were often sent home as there was "nothing to do". However even the simple act of patrolling the many kilometers of fire edge would have given locals, particularly the many farmers, the peace of mind to go and tend to their livelihoods. As they often felt the need to patrol and ensure there were no outbreaks, even in areas already deemed to be "under control".
- All of the recovery efforts that were organized by the local community were extremely effective in the early stages of recovery. The support of local State Member Annabelle Cleeland cannot be understated, as she was able to open and then streamline many of the avenues of recovery. The disappointing aspect of recovery was also relating to government. The time it

ATTACHMENT 1

took to expand disaster relief funds to include ALL those effective was particularly disappointing.

John Brodie, 27.

Mixed sheep and crop farmer, Longwood.

Been involved around CFA my whole life, officially joined Longwood Brigade in 2018.

Current lieutenant at Longwood, as well as VFBV and Euroa Group delegate.

Currently serving as VFBV State Councilor District 22, also sitting on the VFBV State Executive.

Remained on the frontline of the Longwood fire for the entire duration of the blaze.

Attachment 2

Brendan Kelly: Pyalong CFA Captain Report



BRENDAN KELLY – Farmer, Pyalong.

Pyalong CFA Brigade Captain.

12 years as a Lieutenant of Pyalong CFA Brigade.

11 years as Captain.

Joined the CFA in 1987.

Father, Pat Kelly, was Captain of Pyalong for 22 years, with well over 60 years service to his local Brigade.

Membership of the local CFA has been part of my family history growing up.

Over the years there have been many changes, **particularly in the last 25 years.**

Larger fires are run from a Command Point nowhere near the actual fireground.

The Incident Control Centre (ICC), while it may be of some purpose – weather data, appliance locations and movements etc. – is ineffective when tucked away from the fireground.

They have no real feel for the conditions on the fireground.

- **No wind in their face, smoke in their eyes.**
- **No local knowledge or a severe lack of it.**
- **An unwillingness to make a decision.**

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE LONGWOOD FIRE.

- The first night of the Longwood fire, we sent a crew as part of a Strike Team for a night shift. They returned the following morning exhausted – they had a busy night. They had plenty of work allocated to them and felt they had made a significant contribution.
- We sent our truck with a crew for most of the first weekend of the fire.
- Saturday night shift crew drove from Seymour to Euroa, did some work and were then directed to travel to Yea. At approximately 3 am Sunday morning they received communication that they might be sent home soon as there was NO FURTHER WORK to be done. They were then directed to Highlands for the remainder of the shift.
- **Resources.**

Trucks, portable Mobile Phone Towses, Generators placed outside the fireground area and not immediately deployed into where they were desperately needed.

- **Farmers and Communities** left to fend for themselves as the fire front approached.

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE TRAWOOL FIRE.

- Pyalong Tanker 2 was called as part of a Strike Team twice.
- First time we sent a crew of 3. Not much could be done as it was burning in thick bush.
- Second time we gathered in the Tallarook State Forest at the top of the fire and our Strike Team Leader met with the Forest firefighters to receive our tasks.
- What followed was map reading to gain an understanding of what it was they required us to do – which took approximately 25 minutes.

ATTACHMENT 2

- What would have been more instructive and easier, would be to go for quick 5 minute drive to see first hand what our tasks would be.
- A water tanker was placed nearby as there were no other water points available.
- The truck ran out of water and the Forest Firefighters had a change of shift.
- With no further water supply organised, we proceeded to come home – TASK NOT COMPLETED.

SUMMATION.

- As a firefighter on the fireground the absolute chaos and disorganisation is glaringly obvious.
- Trucks and volunteers gathered with no tasks given until well into their shift.
- Sector Commanders and Strike Team Leaders faced a lack of communication from ICC regarding tasks for trucks and volunteers.
- Sector Commanders, Strike Team Leaders and ICC personnel lacking in local knowledge.
- Volunteers deployed for a 12 hour shift were often only completing 4-5 hours work. Far too much time wasted waiting for deployment to the fireground.

PYALONG BRIGADE AND THE CFA.

- Pyalong has 19 active firefighters.
- To get and retain new recruits is extremely hard. Once they find out the arduous process to become an active firefighter, many of them drop off.
- Our age demographic is older – we are lacking younger volunteers.
- Many of our active firefighters are older and reluctant to participate in Strike Team Deployment due to the lack of organisation and general dysfunctional leadership of Strike Team Deployment.
- Our truck is due for renewal, but with inadequate funding from the State Government, it is hard to see that safety for our Volunteers will improve to an acceptable level for todays firefighting climate.
- We lack support from Region Commanders, as no Commander lasts more than 12 months, before they are moved onto other areas within the CFA/FRV.
- Our members feel the lack of respect from the current Victorian Government has them questioning their contribution to the CFA and Community Volunteerism.
- The ESVF Tax weighs heavily on our members. The paperwork and application for the Volunteer Rebate is difficult to understand to complete.

Attachment 3

Lyndon Arnel: Tooborac Firefighting Experience

Submission to Fire review

Lyndon Arnel 1555 Dairy Flat Road Tooborac 3522

Background experience with attending fires

Australian Army 1965-1973 Training in basic fire fighting Vehicle, Structures Grass and Bushfires

Aviation refueling 2001-2016 Trainer for aircraft refueling and airfield fuel depot maintenance and trainer 30+ regional airports including Lord Howe Is and Kangaroo Is

Engine running ("hot Refueling") Rotary wing (helicopters) Trainer and refueler on CFA RFS TasFire airbase operations

Since retiring and moving to Tooborac Victoria I decided to join the local CFA brigade.

I have found it is quite convoluted and annoying to say the least, The system is not user friendly and I found if I was a not able to complete the application in one sitting it would drop out losing all my inputs requiring to start all over again.

The result of trying so many times and reset passwords it eventually would not accept any attempt to log on.

I contacted CFA HQ in Melbourne by telephone; they were quite helpful but found the same problem. It was then arrange that I will need to travel to Bendigo Fire station to get then to complete my application. I am waiting on a discussion with the Bendigo staff to coordinate a meeting. Hopefully this will be resolved.

To fire issues on and near our farm

Our road Dairy Flat Road Tooborac is a Gravel /Clay/sand road in places single lane often with trees and embankments right up to both sides. The vegetation and regrowth in not maintained and has been signed by the shire as "significant vegetation" and must not be touched. This is the only access road we have and evacuation and use for heavy vehicles including the fire trucks is problematic

The regrowth and weeds on the roadside is now a serious fire hazard in the dry periods The condition of the road surface is full of corrugations or ruts that exacerbate the problem if an emergency happened

In conclusion our example is typical of the problem in the Mitchell shire regional roads and I would suggest in most if not all Victoria Shires

Lyndon Arnel

Attachment 4

Member Compilation: Environment, Wildlife & Fire Detection

POINT 7. The impact on the environment, including native wildlife, and any measures to better protect native forests, including technology for early detection and firefighting in remote locations.

Every high intensity bushfire will have a negative impact on both the environment and native animals. The ONLY way to reduce the environmental impact is with fuel reduction burning – recommended by the Royal Commission after Black Saturday and numerous times since the Stretton Inquiry following the 1939 fires.

As a result of what is known as the Dwellingup fire of 1961, Western Australia began a program of large-scale fuel reduction burning in their forests. They soon realised they were never going to be able to meet their burn targets by ground ignition, so they very successfully pioneered aerial ignitions, thereby enabling them to meet their fuel reduction targets.

Since 1961 WA has had 3 bushfire related deaths.

In the same timeframe there have been over 200 bushfire related deaths in the Eastern States – 173 deaths in one day, (Black Saturday 7/2/2009). If the 80km/hr north wind on that day had continued for a few more hours, instead of the gradual shift to the west within an hour after starting – the Kilmore East fire would have impacted the leafy eastern suburbs of Melbourne – Greensborough, Eltham, Diamond Creek etc. What would have been the death toll? All the native vegetated public land in those areas have a high fuel load!

The forests in WA have an average fire fuel load of around 4 tons per hectare.

In Victoria's forests the average fire fuel load is around 35 tons per hectare.

To reference David Packham OAM – world renowned bushfire scientist

40 degrees summer day/10% relative humidity/40kph winds/Forest Fire Index of 87.

An FDI of 87 is a bad day, but nothing like Black Saturday.

| | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| FUEL. | 4 t/ha | 8 t/ha | 30 t/ha Tons per Hectare |
| RATE OF SPREAD. | 0.42 | 0.83 | 2.98 Kilometres per Hour |
| FIRE INTENSITY. | 863 | 3450 | 48,520 Kilowatts per Metre |
| FLAME HEIGHT. | 4.5 metres | 10.7 m | 45.9 m / 150 feet |

A fire intensity of 3000 kilowatts per metre is the maximum that can be extinguished.

Crown fires begin at 10,000 kilowatts per metre.

Humans cannot survive a fire intensity of above 10,000 kilowatts per metre.

Technology for early Fire Detection.

Fire detection technology was trialled after the 2009 fires by the CSIRO fire research department. After 2 years of trials, the technology was found to be very ineffective. Another trial has been conducted recently into the feasibility of this technology, and as of April 2025, it was reported to be running at 2% efficiency – in other words it was not detecting 98% of fires.

Satellite technology will only detect a going fire under ideal conditions e.g no cloud cover, but it is useless for early detection, as it is only capable of detecting a fire in the landscape that has been burning for some time.

Forest Fire Detection is best done by the long-proven method of having a network of suitably located fire towers that should be operational when the FDI is 12 and above. An FDI of 12 is also the trigger for aircraft to be placed on standby.

The main cause of forest fires is lightning.

If a tree is struck by lightning, it can smoulder inside for up to 2 weeks before any smoke and flames can be visible. It is of utmost importance to have fire towers in operation after lightning, but unfortunately this is not always happening.

As for firefighting in **remote locations**, aircraft work okay when weather conditions are not too bad, but on bad days most aircraft, in particular small, fixed wing aircraft are grounded due to unsafe conditions.

Aircraft have their place as they can keep fires in remote locations relatively small until ground crews can be deployed. Aircraft alone are not able to extinguish bushfires.

Attachment 5

Significant Fire Events in Victorian History

This document was authored by Bill Chisholm in approximately 2023 for the purpose of engaging and informing politicians and certain members of Emergency Management organisations.

SIGNIFICANT FIRE EVENTS VICTORIA.

1/2/1851

Black Thursday 6/2/1851 huge fires across Victoria. The Kilmore and Macedon areas among many devastated. Probably about 12 people died but there could have been many others never recorded. Estimation of a million sheep dead. I would imagine the major responses would have been strengthening of community bonds, increasing use of burning off to create fire breaks and a realisation that beaters and green branches are of little value during a major fire event. Thus, the better use of back burning during these events would have come to the fore.

13/1/1939 Black Saturday

1939 Stretton Royal Commission identified the Forest Commission management of fuel loads as totally inadequate. He highlighted the importance of both prevention and suppression of fires. 71 people died during that event. Many of the Stretton Royal Commission findings were far reaching and took many years to implement.

1944.

Devastating 1944 fires led to the establishment of the CFA on 1st January 1945. Introduction of Council Proper Officer's soon after to enforce fuel reduction in and around communities. Increasing use of vehicles and motorised pumps in the fire fight.

14/1/1962

Sunday 14th January 1962. Dandenong Ranges on the urban fringe of Melbourne alight. In a report after the Dandenong fires recommendations included moving the emphasis of CFA headquarters away from clerical and administrative duties to operational duties. Formation of State Disaster Planning. Importance of fuel management was again highlighted. Increased focus on better radio communications within CFA.

8/1/1969

Exceptional weather conditions leading up to 8/1/1969 resulted in many fires. Fire speed reached an incredible 18km per hour. 5 people lost their lives. 135,000 ha farmland destroyed, much of the township of Streatham destroyed. Quarter of a million sheep and 4500 head of cattle dead. Justice Barber report, 68 fires, 57 of these rapidly controlled. In the Streatham fire 41 CFA tankers and 200 private units were involved. At the Cressy fire same day 62 CFA tankers and about 1,250 private units including Shire and Country Roads Board equipment, with milk tankers also in support. Justice Barber report settled the question of the role of power lines as a cause of fire. Also critical of fuel load management on roadsides. He stated "The lesson of 1977 is that financing of fire prevention should be among the very highest priorities."

16/2/1983 Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday 16/2/1983. 47 people died.

Fire destroyed over 2000 homes and other buildings, 8000 people homeless. Power lines were again involved as an ignition source. The contentious question of whether people should evacuate houses threatened by fire was raised. Study found some people were safer staying in houses, however orderly evacuation in good time was sometimes desirable.

All but one of the 47 people who died on Ash Wednesday died from injuries sustained shortly after the severe and prolonged wind change. The ferocious weather and drought conditions 15,000 CFA Volunteers in 400 units fought the fires. 14 Volunteer firefighters dead, 11 of them CFA members at Beaconsfield.

200 fires that day, only eight were classified as major.

Conditions remained as fierce at night as in daylight.

Fuel loads major issue dry fuel on forest floor in reserves and on roadsides. Criticism of the sensitivity of Councils to conservation lobby groups. Change from petrol to diesel pumps and vehicles. The need for increased co-ordination of all organisations involved with the emergency response.

2/12/1998

A 660ha predominantly Forest fire near Linton (Ballarat area) claimed the lives of 5 inexperienced firefighters from the Geelong West CFA Brigade. This led to major changes in many areas of the CFA including command structures, communications, equipment modifications but the big one being mandatory training (minimum skills) for all CFA firefighters.

Black Saturday 2009.

The three elements conspired once again on 7/2/2009. Extreme weather, adequate fuel loads and multiple ignition sources combined to give Victorians possibly the worst fire event in the State's history up to this time. 173 people lost their lives during this event (119 people as a result of the Kilmore East fire).

The Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission was established soon after the event headed by Hon. Bernard Teague with two fellow commissioners, they made 67 recommendations.

Major findings, everyone, the State, municipal Councils, household members and the broader community must accept greater responsibility for bushfire safety in the future.

The major focus was on how to reduce the risks and impacts of fire and minimise the loss of lives. The Stay or Go policy came in for particular attention and recommended that the low-risk option of leaving early be given new emphasis.

The current "Stay or Go" policy did not allow in variations in fire severity. Improved community education and the effectiveness of warnings and strategies for safe evacuation came in for detailed discussion. The commission also recognised the need for "neighbourhood Safer places". It also recommended major changes in the building code and enhanced planning regulations in regard to fire prone areas. Recognised that there were still major issues with power lines and much discussion around fuel reduction, and the greater use of prescribed burning. Roadsides again came in for particular attention, with the need for a broad range of roadside works to reduce bushfire risk. Highlighted the need to balance biodiversity with adequate risk mitigation.

Highlighted some deficiencies of leadership at various levels and put forward various methods to address these, and for the better co-ordination of agencies

Highlighted the need for better fire mapping and predictions.

Quicker aircraft dispatch system.

Recommended changes to the Fire Services Levy, moving from an insurance charge to a property charge.

The commission particularly recognised the contribution of volunteers and their families and also acknowledge the important role of private units.

Black Summer 2019/20

Drought conditions down much of the East coast of Australia, led to an extremely long and very damaging and unprecedented fire season. The fires started in Australia's hottest and driest year on record.

Over 24 million ha burnt. 33 people lost their lives.

3000 homes destroyed and over 3 million animals killed or displaced.

This all equated to the biggest environmental devastation in recent Australian History.

This led to the Federal "National Natural Disaster Arrangements" a royal commission headed by Mark Binskin AC. Some of the major recommendations included increased focus on co-ordination of resources at all levels of Government. Including response capabilities.

A new Australian fire danger rating system.

Additional focus on building codes and strategic land use planning.

Emphasis on increasing aerial firefighting resources and better co-ordination between jurisdictions. Better Relief and recovery planning and additional focus on evacuation planning.

National research and emerging technologies were also discussed.

Many thousands of volunteers and professional responders worked tirelessly.

Smoke blanketed much of Australia, including capital cities and contributed to hundreds of deaths.

Significant discussion centred around fuel reduction and in particular prescribed burning as a method of reducing bushfire impacts. The unprecedented impacts on both the environment and wildlife highlighted the point "that there is clear benefit in public land manager's improving the public's knowledge and understanding of fuel management.

It should be stressed at this point that the above are the exceptional events. CFA brigades and volunteers attend thousands of fires and incidents each year and even on catastrophic days usually extinguish the vast majority of fires in a timely manner. Time is a critical ingredient in most emergency events (more on this point later).

Why this History Lesson

We have just witnessed an horrific summer in the Northern Hemisphere in both Europe and North America. Victoria is one of the most fire prone regions of the world as the above History outlines. Victoria is prone to those exceptional days that can be catastrophic in terms of fire. The devastation caused in a very short time can be truly horrific. Scientists and recent experience all point to climatic conditions only getting worse. The full effects of Climate Change are becoming much more apparent.

But, as shown by the History above change and lessons have constantly evolved and methods for suppression and mitigation of fire have dramatically improved over the years. However, there are several dominant themes that are constant in relation to fire.

At the present time I and others feel that the CFA has lost its way in some respects.

They need reminding of where they have evolved from.

There are three main areas of concern raised here.

Volunteers.

Volunteers have been and are the backbone of the CFA and the SES in Victoria. The number of CFA volunteers has been in steady decline over the years, and this has increased substantially over recent times. There are numerous reasons for this. However, when the 2021/2022 CFA annual report states a figure of 52,000 volunteers, I have real concerns. Many of these people would definitely be non-operational and the figure we should be looking at is "the number of volunteer CFA operational firefighters in Victoria." The current structure of the CFA and Emergency Management has evolved into a large and bureaucratic organisation that seems more focused on itself than the volunteers who are its backbone. Currently there is a very ponderous and time-consuming

recruitment processes that is limiting the ability of the CFA to attract new volunteers. The original “minimum skills” program delivered on what was required to maintain volunteer numbers. Additional training can be phased in over time. The system needs to work for volunteers.

There have been limited training opportunities for rural volunteers in recent years. In things such as chainsaw courses, advanced driver training, first aid etc. Volunteer injury compensation is far below levels received by paid staff for equivalent injuries and is definitely not tailored towards the self-employed and farmers etc.

Volunteer numbers are particularly relevant in rural communities. Many smaller brigades need increased numbers of operational firefighters to have the ability for a sustained emergency event. Many of these brigades are in areas that are actually growing in population, but the new residents are unaware that they have an unrecognised responsibility to provide mutual protection and support for the community in which they live (there are many ways in which this can be delivered).

These small local brigades are critical in the early suppression of fires (time critical). Also, these brigades supply much of the surge capacity of the CFA in major emergency events. Therefore, a statewide, centralised Volunteer recruitment campaign is urgently required. Coupled with a new and streamlined volunteer induction process that is more volunteer friendly.

Now we come to the second point that is vey interrelated to the first,

Equipment.

The CFA tanker replacement program. Over the years there evolved a 20-year vehicle replacement cycle for CFA tankers. This has currently blown out to the now 30 years and above. Volunteers should not be expected to face these increasingly threatening emergency events in vehicles which because of their age are no longer really fit for purpose. We must ask the question, with the community supplying very significant funding through the Fire Services Levy, why is not a proper vehicle replacement program in place?

If the comeback maybe that we are looking at alternative methods of firefighting such as aircraft etc I would like to make the following points. There has been a long history of aircraft involvement in firefighting. From the 1929/30 fire season when the RAAF and the Forest Commission combined on a fire spotting project to the present day. Aircraft have made an increasingly major contribution to fire suppression although there are some serious limitations. Even on Black Saturday and during the 2019/20 fires a significant number of aircraft were grounded due to extreme weather conditions. The large Canadian crewed Air tanker lost at Tumut was apparently the result of not being aware of a changing weather front. Aircraft currently have extremely limited operational ability at night. Therefore, on ground teams are still critical.

Fuel loads.

Fuel loads that feed fires are still a major issue. In relation to towns and the rural/urban interface, instead of private individuals etc being a major concern, now significant fuel loads can be identified on land managed or controlled by Government departments or agencies.

There should be one common set of standards for fuel reduction expected from all. Currently this is not the case, although there is legislation in place, that particularly applies to private individuals enforced by councils. Government departments and agencies are controlled by different legislation that enables them to set their own standards. In many cases these standards are far below what is expected from individuals and the community.

The other major concern with fuel loads is what will happen with the rapid cessation of logging in old growth forests. How does the Government plan to manage these large assets from a fire

perspective. The logging Companies have been instrumental in supplying huge resources in terms of equipment (much of which is highly sophisticated and unique to the logging industry) and human expertise and specialised knowledge in major forest fire events? They supply money and resources for the upkeep of Forest roads and tracks which are critical to gaining timely access in the event of forest fires. The broader Community are entitled to know how our forests (and wildlife within) are to be safely managed and protected into the future. This will require significant resourcing in term of labour, equipment and especially funding. Nature is very fickle, and it only requires one lightning strike to cause enormous damage.

In summary we need to remember the lessons of History. There are many common themes dotted throughout this article.

At present we are unprepared and under resourced for the extremely dangerous weather conditions that we can expect into the future. The increasingly dangerous weather conditions will put many more Victorians at extreme risk, no matter where they live. All communities need to be far more resilient, better prepared and involved in their own destinies.

Black Summer 2019/20 demonstrated how emergency services can be completely overwhelmed by events, and many communities were thrown back on their own initiative and resources.

What is required is a whole of government and whole of community approach, where everyone works together to mitigate the effects of climate change. Governor Hunter urged Sydney colonists to do similar in the 1790's during an extremely hot summer, we have not yet fully heeded the message. The recent events in Hawaii only reinforce this and shows how critical it is to have a timely and well-prepared response to fire.

Attachment 6

Extract: CFA Act 1958, Section 43

EXTRACT.

CFA ACT 1958 SECTION 43.

Duties and powers of Councils and public authorities in relation to fire.

- (1) In the country are of Victoria it is the duty of every municipal council and public authority to take all practicable steps (including burning) to prevent the occurrence of fires on, and minimise the danger of the spread of fires on and from-
 - (a) Any land vested in it or under its control or management; and
 - (b) Any road under its care and management.
- (2) A municipal council or public authority may –
 - (a) Acquire any equipment;
 - (b) Do any thing;
 - (c) Expend from its funds any amount – that is necessary or expedient for the purpose of fulfilling its duty under sub-section (1).
- (3) If the cost of maintenance of a road is apportioned between municipal councils or public authorities or both the cost of fulfilling the duty imposed by sub-section (1) must be apportioned in the same manner.

Specifically in regards to Item (1) this is not happening.

Many Public Authorities and some Councils are completely ignoring this section of the Act, either through ignorance or the lack of funds, to achieve worthwhile outcomes.

The financial costs of this summers fires alone should trigger and proper rethink. In reference to John Brodie's Attachment 1 regarding Longwood town protection and the fuel loads on the Hume Highway – these are not isolated occurrences. The Calder Highway at Harcourt, similar built highways and major arterial roads right across the State need attention.

Rail corridors are the same. Have a look at the fuel load management south of Wallan Station.

Victorian Forests are a ticking time bomb.

POF feels confident that if you asked residents of any of the towns impacted by recent fires, they would identify that additional fire prevention works were and are needed for their communities.

Attachment 7

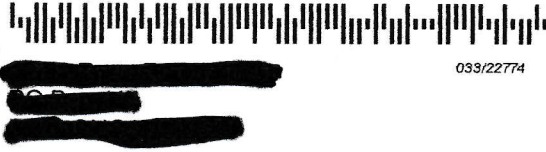
Private Firefighting Unit Costs

116 Powlett Street
Kilmore VIC 3764

Nutrien Ag Solutions Limited
ABN 73 008 743 217

www.nutrienagsolutions.com.au

DELIVERED TO:
Kilmore Retail Store
Nutrien Ag Solutions Limited
116 Powlett Street
KILMORE VIC 3764



Invoice Date: 19 Dec 2025 Invoice Number: 913786465
Sales Person: [Redacted] Customer PO Number: [Redacted]
Account Number: 70440972

Total Due: **\$ 4,204.99**

Enquiries about this invoice: T (03) 5782 1266 Due Date: **25 Jan 2026**

| Article Description | Issued Quantity | UoM | Unit Price (GST excl) | Total \$ (GST excl) | GST \$ | Total \$ (GST incl) |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| * SUMPTRANS 2000L SG | 1.0 | EA | \$3,822.72 | \$3,822.72 | \$382.27 | \$4,204.99 |
| | | | | \$3,822.72 | \$382.27 | \$4,204.99 |

* These items are taxable supplies.

All purchases of non-returnable containers which fall under the drumMUSTER scheme have a charge of 6.6 cents per litre/kilogram (GST inclusive) included in the price.

Total Due (incl GST): **\$ 4,204.99**

Due Date: **25 Jan 2026**

Invoice Number: 913786465

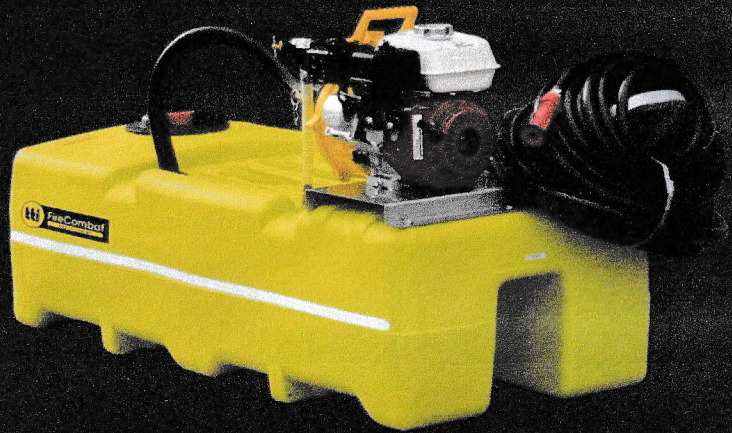
Customer PO Number

Replacement 2000 litre tank for private fire fighting tanker.

E-202743 P-03761 I-44447/70440972

FireCombat™

Portable Fire Fighter



- ◆ Honda GX160 Motor with 500L/min Davey Single Impeller 1½" Pump
- ◆ Pressure relief valve and bypass to protect pump;
- ◆ Camlock fittings and 6m quick fill kit for filling from external water source;
- ◆ 18m x 19mm Fire hose with adjustable nozzle

\$4,490*

400 Litres

**Honda GX160 with Davey Pump
1620 x 710 x 810mm (LWH)**

SKU: SF0400LZ

FireGuard™

Portable Fire Fighters

- ◆ Handy size fire fighter for rapid response to fire emergencies;
- ◆ GX50 Honda motor, 210L/min FF pump for fast & reliable flow;
- ◆ 18 metres of fire hose with twist action adjustable FF nozzle
- ◆ UV stabilised tank with 25-year warranty



220 Litres

\$2,980*

Honda GX50 with 210L/min Pump
925 x 710 x 810mm (LWH)

SKU: SF0220LZ



Steel Skid-Frame SKU: ASFD00220

\$720*



400 Litres

\$3,475*

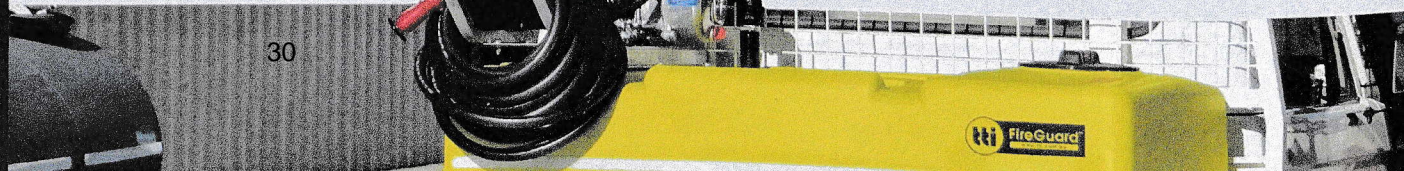
Honda GX50 with 210L/min Pump
1620 x 710 x 810mm (LWH)

SKU: SF0400LZS



★ Steel Skid-Frame SKU: ASFD00400A

\$880*



ireBoss™

Fire Fighting Unit

ing neat and sitting low, the TTI FireBoss™
fire fighting unit is always right behind you,
performing your fire duties.

ighting, tree watering, washdown, and more, the FireBoss™
UTV firefighter lives up to its name.

KEY FEATURES



Honda GX50
Motor with
210L/min Pump
for Fast and
Reliable Flow



Fully-Drainable
Tank Tie-Down
Provisions
& Integrated
Lifting Handles

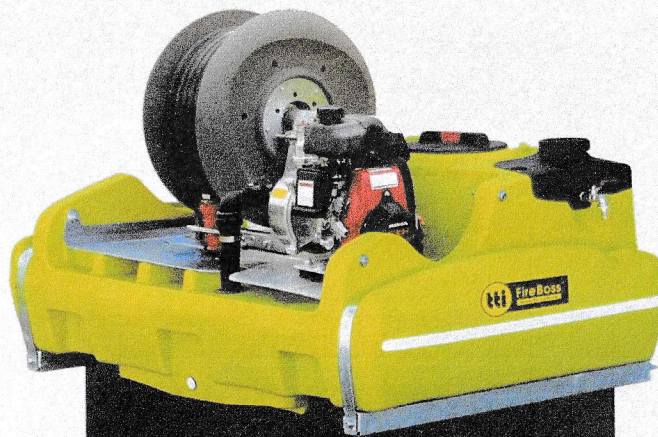


18m Hose Reel
with Adjustable
Nozzle



Galvanised
Forkable Steel
Frame

ATTACHMENT 7



300 Litres (Standard)

\$ 5,285*

Honda GX50 with 210L/min Pump
1000 x 1250 x 600mm (LWH)

SKU: PFD0300LZS

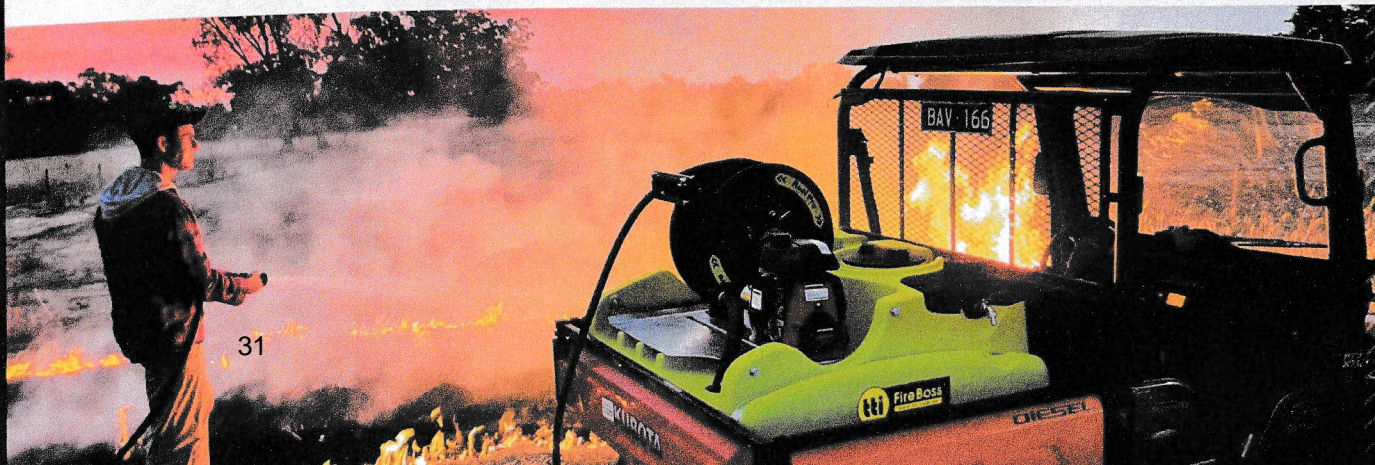


300 Litres (Compact)

\$ 5,285*

Honda GX50 with 210L/min Pump
870 x 1100 x 850mm (LWH)

SKU: PFD0300LZS



FireDefence™

Slip-On Fire Fighting Unit

ATTACHMENT 7

Heavy-Duty Fire Fighters

Ideal for Tray or Trailer Mounting

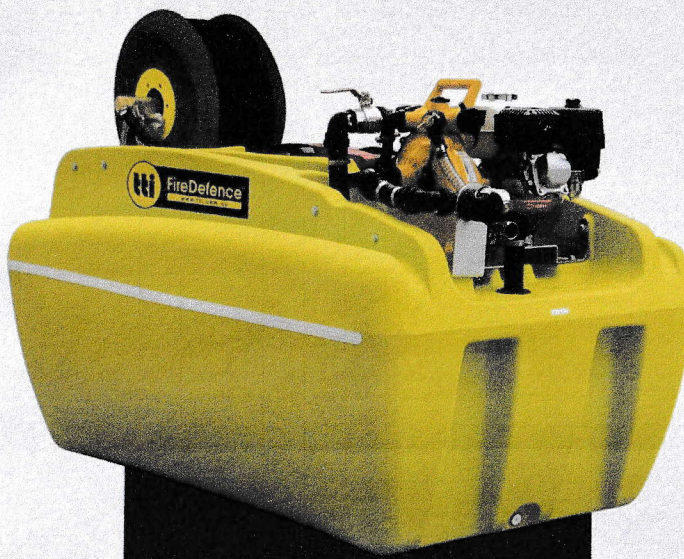


600 Litres

\$6,320*

1700 x 1000 x 990mm (LWH)

SKU: SFD0600LZ

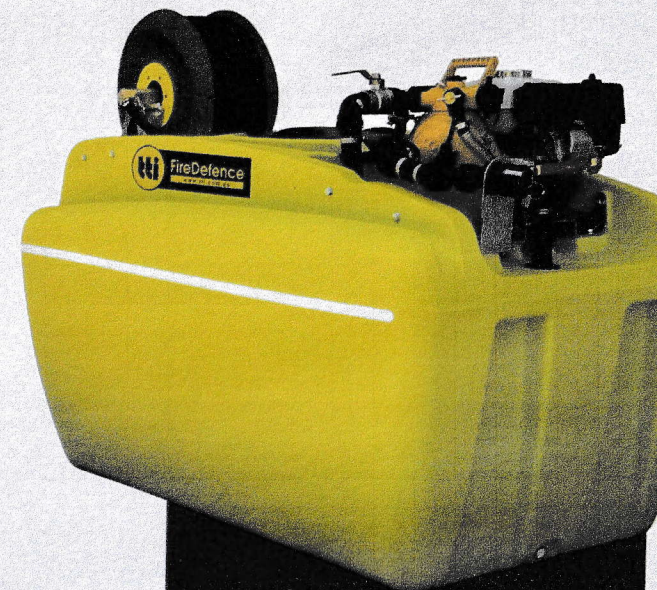


800 Litres

\$6,475*

1700 x 1000 x 1155mm (LWH)

SKU: SFD0800LZ



1000 Litres

\$6,725*

1700 x 1000 x 1320mm (LWH)

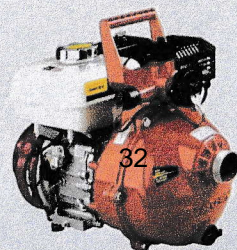
SKU: SFD1000LZ

UPGRADE OPTIONS



\$880*

Frame Upgrade
Forkliftable Steel Frame



\$451*

Pump Upgrade
Davey Twin Impeller Pump
SKU: ADD "T" TO END OF SKU



\$806*

Reel Upgrade
20m Spring Rewind Reel
SKU: ADD "S" TO END OF SKU



SCAN TO SEE THIS PRODUCT IN ACTION!



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Attachment 8

NSW Farm Firefighting Vehicle Conditional Registration

Farm Firefighting Vehicle

Conditional Registration Sheet

A privately-owned vehicle that is dedicated for firefighting (and remains specifically equipped and maintained in safe working condition) to prevent, fight, manage or contain fires.

Many rural landholders have dedicated firefighting vehicles to comply with their legal obligations under the NSW Rural Fires Act 1997 to prevent and contain fires on their land until responsibility is handed over to the NSW Rural Fire Service.



Picture - Representative image of a Farm Firefighting Vehicle

Requirements

- The driver must hold an appropriate Licence Class for the vehicle type
- Registered operator / owner to ensure driver is provided with & complies with vehicle sheet
- Travel in most compact safe form maintaining maximum visibility for driver
- Not exceed the manufacturer loading specifications during operation

Note: Vehicles used only to cross a road or road-related area to or from land used for primary production (which includes commercial mining or commercial timber-getting) are exempt from registration.

Registration codes

| Code | Description | Type |
|------|-----------------------|--|
| FFV | Fire Fighting Vehicle | Shape |
| FARM | Farm Vehicle | CTP insurance class - Conditional registration |
| TRLR | Trailer | |

Registration conditions

| Condition code | Conditions of Use |
|----------------|--|
| EQ8 | Vehicle must have permanently attached fire fighting equipment |
| GO90 | Inspection required |
| PA8 | Only be used in response to a fire emergency |
| TR8 | Operate only within permitted radius of garage address |

Guideline [▲]

TR8: Operation is restricted to NSW in relation to the Newell Highway (A39), for a garage address

- East of the A39, operate within a 50 km radius

- West of the A39, no radius restriction applies

Application: Only use Form 'Application for FFV Conditional Registration'

Inspection report: An inspection report may be required from a NSW Authorised Inspection Station

Shape code: All vehicles including trailers to use shape code FFV

Registration plate: All vehicles including trailers to use this plate type
'NSW - CONDITIONAL' 372 mm x 143 mm.

Green characters on white background.

Two plates are issued, except for a trailer which has one plate issued.

Format: 5 numbers, 1 letter (C, D, or E).

**Special Conditions Free text**

Free text field 1

Free text field 2

Attachment 9

2014 Mickleham Fire: Feedback to Fire Services Commissioner

POINTS TO RAISE WITH C. LAPSLEY (Fire Services Commissioner)
 RE: FIRES MICKLEHAM TO HIGHCAMP 9TH AND 10TH FEBRUARY 2014
 PREDOMINANTLY GRASS FIRE

1. MANAGEMENT OF FIRE BY CFA
2. ASSET PROTECTION
3. EXTERNAL CONTRACTORS
4. POLICE ROADBLOCKS (4 CATEGORIES)
5. PRIVATE UNITS
6. COMPENSATION

MANAGEMENT OF FIRE BY CFA There should have been plans in place to prepare for a second fire on the day. The fire needed to be managed from a centralised area within the fire area not 40 kms away. Paid CFA staff needed to replace local CFA members that were seconded to areas of management of the fire to allow their local knowledge to be used on the fire ground to manage the fire and assets. CFA hierarchy should have been guided by **local knowledge** to fight fire. The quality of information being forwarded to command could then be assessed with **local knowledge**. Communications again were a major issue radios were hopeless, UHF worked well and was the only source of common communication for a lot of CFA units and private units. Private units played a huge part in this fire as in a lot of areas they were the only ones available to fight fire. Phones and pagers became clogged with useless information Apps on phones gave out a lot of incorrect and unnecessary information. Strike teams were not allocated to fight the fire, in one instance trucks instructed to be at Wallan at 7 am to deploy and still sitting there at 11 am 60 in total. Work on fire ground always best carried out in early mornings or late evenings. All occupational health and safety briefings should be carried out ex fire season not at staging areas while the fire is burning out of control. They should only need to receive instruction on where they are to be allocated. All this while vast areas of the fire had no CFA trucks available to them when the fire was going on both days. Fire management headquarters had no idea where fire was and seemed to have no way of tracking where CFA units were located or allocated to be. There was an extreme lack of quick fill units set up which again was caused by lack of knowledge of the area and contributed to the fire growing rapidly as trucks ran out of water and took too long to travel to refill.

ASSET PROTECTION (Grass Fire Situation) - is best served by extinguishing the fire, this was not done on many fronts, CFA units seemed unprepared to leave roads and fight the fire in paddocks and even when requested to do so refused as their instructions were to stay on roads or asset protect. Roads and around houses were more dangerous places to be than in paddocks as at least they had been grazed. Physical assets would not need protecting if the fire was extinguished prior to reaching them. Helicopters played a useful tool in asset protection. They would also be useful extinguishing fire fronts in rough terrain where trucks can't go. Trucks need to work in conjunction with overhead support. The definition of assets needs to be revised, for farmers their grass in paddocks, fences, hay in paddocks, grain in silos, livestock, yards etc etc are all assets and we pay fire levy based on the value of our properties. There were huge losses of livestock and infrastructure in this fire on farms.

EXTERNAL CONTRACTORS (Including Bulldozer, Graders, Excavators, Bulk Water Trucks etc) There should be a state based register for all Earthmoving equipment approved for use by the CFA that can be accessed readily by CFA. Delays in calling for heavy equipment (no calls to one contractor till 7 p.m. on the first night) Contractors need to be advised as quickly as possible to have machinery accessible and fire ready as soon as a major threat is identified not several hours later. Pricing and other issues should be sorted out in the off season not when the fire is already raging. Water tankers were invaluable in fighting this fire especially those fitted with Truck driver operated water cannons and front bumper bar water sprays and all contractors should have suitable fittings on trucks to adapt to CFA and MFB fittings. Contractors assets also needed protection from the fire by CFA and in at least one instance CFA truck abandoned the contractor they were supposed to be protecting.

POLICE ROAD BLOCKS A better system required to operate at Road blocks Many CFA members in private units were turned back at roadblocks set up by Police even with CFA identifying cards and uniforms. CFA captains in their own private units were not permitted to enter fire grounds. Residents that lived in fire ground areas and chose to stay and fight fires with private units were forbidden from returning to fire ground when needing to get out for fuel and water. (Fortunately local knowledge allowed many to access the fire ground by back roads)

It has been suggested that Road signs at road blocks informing people that they enter at their own risk be displayed and that people needing to go through road blocks be issued with something that could be stuck on their vehicles to save them stopping everytime to explain who they are and where they are going and why. This could be in a booklet form with a tear off strip to be issued to residents with an identifying number that matches the identity of the person. These could be issued to police and used for all emergency situations involving road blocks.

ROAD BLOCKS (RESIDENTS) Many issues were created for landholders and residents by road blocks, if they left properties they were not allowed to return resulting in many residents being angry and frustrated. Even after spending time and explaining to police why they needed to get out and back in. Police still refused access on return. Food and medicine had to be exchanged at road blocks. Many residents so frustrated drove through road blocks.

ROAD BLOCKS (ANIMAL WELFARE)

Animal Welfare issues, were ignored by Police, livestock transports and DPI staff could not gain access to areas to assess what was required in the way of feed, water and euthanizing livestock. Ridiculous levels of red tape had to be gone through to get permission to enter fire area. (Remember this was predominantly a grass fire)

ROAD BLOCKS (EARTHMOVING CONTRACTORS) Contractors travelling to the fire were prevented in some cases from entering the fire area in their support vehicles usually utilities some having to resort to hitching a ride with CFA trucks. Contractors were refused entry for their vehicles to fuel up machinery and if they lived inside a road block area were even pursued by police and made leave the area. Contractors called to attend specific jobs by the CFA were then refused entry back to their homes when returning after carrying out hours and hours of work.

PRIVATE UNITS There must be a system put in place to be able to co-ordinate private units. If it had not been for private units the fire would have burned much further north and there would have been a lot more property loss. There were just no CFA units on the fire ground that could be utilized. **Local knowledge** provided private units with the know how to head off the fire and this knowledge could have been utilised by the CFA management team. It would be valuable to the community if old CFA units could be retained in the community for use as private units.

COMPENSATION – This one item caused as much controversy at the fire did. Residents that were supposedly evacuated because of the fire but were actually no where near the fire were given compensation for having to leave their homes and also if their electricity was off. It was on a per head basis. There was no checking that their stories were true. One CFA member just for interest sake went to see if it was true and was promptly handed a card for \$1000 even though he was not affected in any way. The CFA is now the beneficiary of that card.

The people who really suffered loss and those in the fire zone in most cases were not able to get out to where the centres were to claim the compensation because of the road blocks. CFA and private units that used their fuel and time and gave up work for days on end to fight the fire **all voluntary**. This needs to stop it is ridiculous to pay money to people who suffered no real loss.