

**Annexure 1. Checklist prepared for consideration by all levels of governments, oppositions, agencies and the community in Eastern Australia to better consider the impacts, costs and risks of inadequate fire mitigation measures and consequent ongoing major bushfires and also the need for further reviews, audits, considerations and budget financial assessment.**

*Legend:*

*Note 1. Assessment issue achievement score out of 10 or whatever the scorer decides. 0 is nil performance/ high bushfire risk approach, up to 10 high performance/ low bushfire risk approach. Comment can also be added to outline the allocated score.*

*Note 2. Potential action/s required to assist in rectifying an issue.*

*Note 3. The Natural Disaster Funding Arrangements report, from the Productivity Commission notes: "Government investment in mitigation is insignificant compared to post-disaster expenditure. For example, Australian Government mitigation spending was only 3 per cent of what it spent post-disaster in recent years. Mitigation expenditure by state governments is likely to be higher, but information on this expenditure is not comprehensive. Overall, the clear impression is one of insufficient investment in mitigation."*

<https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/disaster-funding/report/disaster-funding-volume1.pdf>

*Note 4. Refer research at:*

<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.adg1213>

<b>Assessment issue</b>	<b>Issue achievement score. Note 1 (0 to 10)</b>	<b>Potential action/s required. Note 2</b>
Are there adequate rates of prescribed burning on state owned, lease and freehold forests across forested landscapes? Are there areas/ groups with low rates of prescribed burning in forests, including freehold and leasehold areas? Do prescribed burning programs break the connectedness of fuels >6 years old? Note: Low intensity prescribed burning programs across forested landscapes of the order of 1 % of forested area per year are not going to produce resilient landscapes. In WA, long term data over 60 years has highlighted where considerably higher areas of prescribed burning are achieved (up to 8 %), wildfire areas reduced.		
Are fuel loads and strata at safe levels across forested landscapes, based on sound documentation and not based on long period fire intervals? Is forested and grassland fuel information available to the public? Are intense bushfires and consequent regrowth adequately addressed in fuel load management?		
Is there excessive legislation, rules and barriers in relation to low intensity burning in forested areas?		
Are prescribed fire intervals too long and allow fuel build up and eucalypt decline to progress?		
Are forests across landscapes resilient to bushfires, and allow for low intensity fire and thinning across landscapes?		
Is eucalypt decline increasing, are forests closing up and understories becoming denser and wildfire risks increasing?		
Is the focus on bushfire suppression, with prescribed burning at inadequate levels?		
Have bushfire suppression, quick attack and backburning practices and skills declined over the last 20 plus years?		
Are costs of bushfire insurance high and increasing, with affordability declining and people cancelling insurance?		

Is the level of spending on bushfire mitigation adequate to reduce bushfire risk, note only 3 % of federal bushfire funding is spent on mitigation? Note 3.		
Are the current costs of major bushfire disasters and control excessive, including the costs of large aircraft fleets?		
Has the financial and human impact of megafires being considered combined with consequent changed rainfall patterns and consequent floods in the years after major bushfires, refer research by John Fasullo (Note 4)? This is a double whammy of impacts and costs that hasn't been considered before.		
Are there class action/ legal action risks in the next set of bushfires and for future bushfires and can these be identified? How can potential class action/ legal action risks be reduced?		
Are their economic advantages in undertaking prescribed burning? In Australia, as noted in <a href="https://www.preventionweb.net/media/82890/download">https://www.preventionweb.net/media/82890/download</a> , <i>“one dollar spent on mitigation can save at least two dollars in recovery costs. Committing additional mitigation funding makes economic sense”</i> . In the USA, a robust preparedness programming is essential to reducing the costs of wildland fires as noted in <a href="https://www.fs.fed.us/about-agency/budget-performance">https://www.fs.fed.us/about-agency/budget-performance</a> They note that forest Service analysis has demonstrated that for every \$1.00 that is reduced in preparedness funding, there is an increase of \$1.70 in suppression costs.		
Are there regular performance audits by auditor general's departments in relation to fire mitigation across forested lands, including state, local government, freehold and lease lands?		
Is government working adequately with the insurance industry and farmers, foresters etc to reduce bushfire risks, impacts and costs?		
Are current bushfire community safety arrangements adequate in order to reduce bushfire risks and impacts on communities?		
Is community involvement in bushfire fighting, protection and mitigation at adequate levels to maximise community bushfire safety? Are options such as fare adapted communities in the US feasible in Australia?		
Are critical infrastructure and plantations/ orchards/ vineyards receiving adequate levels of protection via mitigation treatments?		
Is fire fighter safety in heavy fuel load forests and along access tracks considered at safe levels?		
Is alliancing and cooperation in regards to bushfire management at adequate levels to reduce bushfire risks and impacts?		
Is bushfire access across forested landscapes adequate, safe and maintained?		
Are there ongoing losses of expertise, skills and machinery in regards to bushfire fighting in forested landscapes, including closures of native harvesting?		
Are bushfire learning and sharing approaches adequate in regards to bushfire mitigation?		
Have inquiries/ commissions been effective in addressing key issues from major bushfires, especially in regards to fire		

mitigation? Have recognised bushfire experts with on the ground expertise been key members of such inquiries?		
Has key advice from concerned members of the public and experienced retired fire managers been consistently ignored in relation to the importance of prescribed burning?		
Has on the ground fire mitigation changed since the last major bushfire (2019/ 20) to adequate levels with resilient landscapes?		
Are local government bushfire management plan risk assessments adequate to effectively reduce bushfire risks to communities and landscapes?		
Do forest/ conservation area management plans adequately address forest health, prescribed burning and bushfires across landscapes?		
Is lock up and leave conservation management approaches impacting on future bushfire risks?		
Are current research and funding programs adequate in regards to prescribed burning and mitigation?		
Are all the social, environmental impacts of intense bushfires considered and addressed in designing sound fire mitigation to reduce bushfire risks?		
Is biodiversity suffering with a lack of low intensity fire in the landscape, taking into account habitat components of pre-European times, and also suffering from intense bushfires? Will this continue with current fire mitigation approaches?		