

FIRE UPDATE

ISSUE 29 FEBRUARY 2009

BUSHFIRE RESEARCH TASKFORCE

BUSHFIRE CRC RESEARCHERS ON THE FIREGROUND - VICTORIA 2009

A group of researchers from various state fire agencies and research organisations has been assembled by the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre to look at key issues arising out of the February 2009 Victorian bushfires.

The purpose of the research is to provide the Australian fire and land management agencies with an objective scientific analysis of the factors surrounding these series of fires. This knowledge will be shared across Australia and internationally and will assist with the Royal Commission and other investigations and inquiries.

The research is considering which fires were ordinary or extreme and which were extraordinary; that is, exhibiting fire behaviour outside known experience. Three research teams are looking at the impacts of a selected sample of fires in order to gain a broader understanding of all the fires.

The research teams are made up of people with a mix of expertise in building analysis, human behaviour, community education,

bushfire behaviour, fire weather, and fire investigation.

The Bushfire CRC has conducted similar research on behalf of fire and land management agencies after tragic fires in Canberra in 2003 and on the Eyre Peninsula in 2005.

Research teams are looking at the following areas:

1. Fire Behaviour

The focus is on strategic fire behaviour - how the fires moved across different landscapes, different vegetation, and under variable weather conditions.

2. Human Behaviour and Community Safety

This area will look into:

- Behaviour and decision making by residents
- Community responses to bushfire warnings messages
- The implications of these events on policy.

3. Building (Infrastructure) and Planning

Researchers are looking at:

- Patterns of loss and patterns of survival of buildings and structures
- The notion of defensible space
- Planning and building controls and their impact on patterns of building losses

In addition, integrated studies will be conducted across the three research areas.

A regular email newsletter will keep all interested parties up to date on the progress of the Taskforce. The newsletter will also be placed on the Bushfire CRC website.

For more information visit:
www.bushfirecrc.com

▼ BELOW: RESEARCHERS VISITED PLANTATIONS AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS AROUND KILMORE SHORTLY AFTER THE FIRES.



▼ BELOW: THE TASKFORCE INCLUDES SCIENTISTS FROM SEVERAL RESEARCH ORGANISATIONS AND FIRE MANAGERS FROM STATE FIRE AND LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCIES.

