

2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission - community consultation on recommendations - Woodend area.

Dear all,

My colleague John Williams and I have been engaged by the Department of Justice to help facilitate a program of community consultation across Victoria to inform the State Government's final decision making in relation to the recommendations of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission.

As you may be aware, the Commission's final report and recommendations were provided to Government on 31 July 2010 and on 2 August 2010, the Government released its interim response and announced in principle support for 59 of the Commission's 67 recommendations.

However, the Government has asked for further community input on eight of the recommendations to inform its final decision making. Some of these recommendations relate to subjects such as:

- The provision of refuges and neighbourhood safe places
- Requirements and policies around evacuations
- Management of power lines
- Acquisitions of properties in unacceptably high bushfire risk areas
- Fuel reduction – how to scale up and implement a program to reach an annual target of at least 5% of public land across the State.

The objective of the exercise is to gather community input into how these recommendations could be applied in a local context and to better understand local community perspectives. We recognise there are strongly held views about these issues and we will be listening very carefully to the views expressed and ensuring they are properly reflected in our reporting back to Government.

To this end, John and I will be facilitating a community meeting in **Woodend on Monday 9 August 2010 at the Woodend Community Centre from 6.30pm – 8.30pm.**

We intend to conduct this meeting in a workshop type environment concentrating on the key themes listed above and we want everyone to have a say on these issues as well as express any other views on any of the Commission's recommendations.

A copy of the Commission's report and recommendations can be found at:
<http://www.royalcommission.vic.gov.au/Commission-Reports/Final-Report>

At the end of the community engagement exercise, we will be providing this information gleaned from communities directly back to the Government to inform their final response to the Commission report, which I understand will be finalised in the near future to allow it to be factored into planning for the forthcoming bushfire season.

There will also be a range of officers from different government departments and agencies in attendance to assist with the consultation.

If you are unable to make this meeting at Woodend, John and I will also be at **Daylesford on the afternoon of Saturday 7 August 2010 between 2-4pm** at the Daylesford Inn, 2891 Ballan Road, Daylesford.

Alternatively, if you can't make it to any of the sessions, please drop me an email to let me know your thoughts.

The tight timeframes on this consultation means that we weren't able to get an ad in the local papers to promote the meetings so I am resorting to various other means to spread the word around the Woodend/Macedon area.

Please feel free to circulate this email throughout your networks.

Kind regards.

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