

# **“mass murder”**

**AND THE COVERUPS**

**FOREWORD  
PHIL CHENEY  
AND  
DAVID PACKHAM**

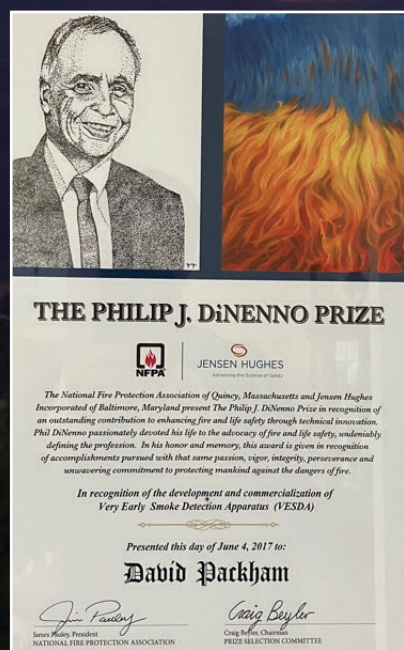
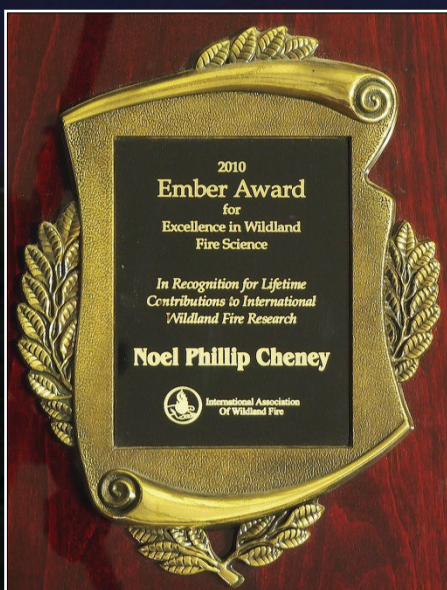
**TIM MALSEED**

**EXTREME BUSHFIRES IN AUSTRALIA**



*"Ignitions, from lightning, arson or accident, will continue to occur on hot, dry windy days. Destruction and loss of life will only be minimised if ... governments take actions to manage the fire environment ... as did Australia's original environmental stewards. Otherwise the destruction of our natural environment will continue and people die horrible deaths: surely the very definition of manslaughter by negligence. We recommend this book ... to appropriately warn our governments about what we hope to avoid; this rush to "mass murder".*

**Foreword by Australia's preeminent extreme bushfire experts,  
Phil Cheney, 2010 Ember Award, USA  
and David Packham, 2017 The Phillip J. DiNenno Prize USA**



Cover art by Nancy Malseed, Untitled Mono Print

# Publishing Submission

## Skyhorse Publishing

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## Cover letter

1 September 2023

Dear Editor

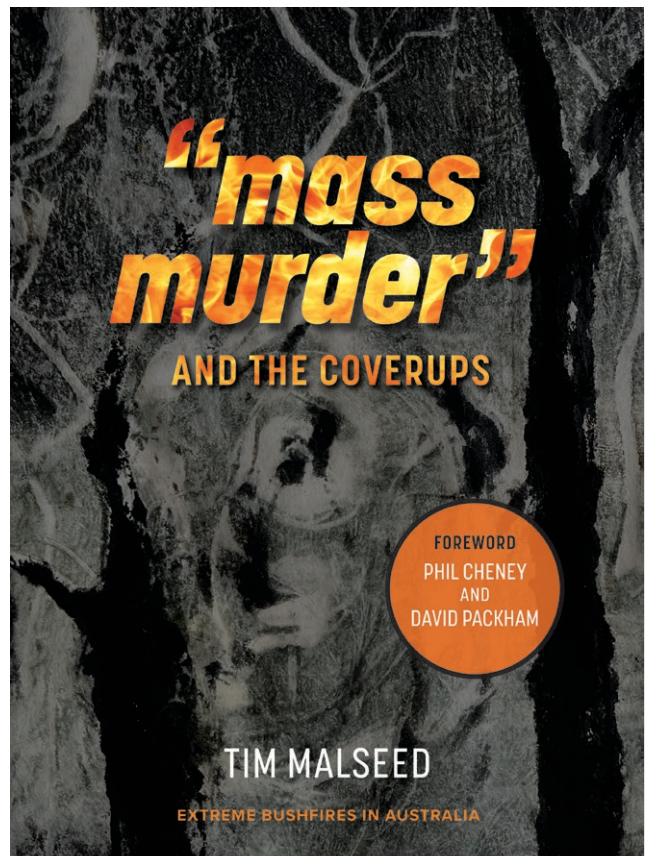
Would you consider publishing my book about extreme bushfires (wildfires) in your category of *'Politics, History and General Non-fiction'*. Your web site requests: *Cover letter, Synopsis, Annotated chapter, Market research, Curriculum vitae and Sample chapters.*

Australia has the most intense extreme bushfires, because of forests and suburbs packed with 'explosive' eucalyptus trees and a hot dry climate. However, the failures and solutions explained in this book, are universal.

After seeing a media interview with your proprietor, Mr Lyons, my research of your firm indicated to me, *"mass murder"* and *the coverups* would be complementary to your books. Skyhorse Publishing is therefore my first choice of publisher.

Yours sincerely

**Tim Malseed**  
Author



## ***“mass murder” and the coverups***

# Synopsis

Tim Malseed

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**“Mass murder”**, declared the Prime Minister, as more victims were uncovered.

On February 7, 2009, Australia’s catastrophic bushfires killed 173 people and traumatised about 10,000 others. This day became known as Black Saturday. Clearly, a Prime Minister blaming arsonists for mass murder was a bombshell accusation and appropriately made front page headlines internationally. Strangely, Australia’s media buried it. Why?

This book tells the riveting story. Surely, only a ‘puppeteer’ could have manipulated such powerful others, in order to suppress a prime ministerial accusation of this magnitude? Who was actually responsible for the Black Saturday Fires? How long had the outcome, we had voluntarily provided to the government six years earlier in 2003, been building? How did the perpetrators cover-up their crimes, not once, but twice?

Fuel became the book’s main character. For those who knew about the fires’ unspoken cause, the Prime Minister’s accusation was too close to the actual truth. It had to be shut down, because in bushfire science, fuel has a widely misunderstood definition. It is not the forest. It refers to completely dry forest litter, leaves, grass, bark and twigs of less than six millimetres in diameter. When amassed, loosely clumped and ignited on hot windy days, it turns eucalyptus forests into raging infernos. Remove the fuel, as Australia’s Aborigines did and the forests became safe. Our government seemingly rejected invaluable Aboriginal fire’s cultural legacy. This wilful rejection even extended to the government’s official Inquiries and the expertise of many of their top scientists.

The search for a missing number started this book’s puzzle. A single missing number in a government research paper, built through the first chapters to be a force so powerful that the government had to concede we were right and changed the nation’s entire bushfire warning system. With the focus on fuel continuing, the link between the government’s failure to prescribe burn and their apparent criminal negligence was clarified. Indeed, we accused them of ‘involuntary manslaughter through negligence’, the first of a litany. A powerful ally then joined us. A nationally distributed newspaper, provided us with a second example of apparent official negligence - a government supervised arson infrastructure.

So why did the suspected puppeteer convince Australia’s propaganda media to censor the Prime Minister? Ten years after *Black Saturday*, we discovered the last piece of this incriminating puzzle. The government not only set the fires with their unmitigated fuels, but they also lit the fires, with the knowingly unsafe powerlines they supervised.



As a legal necessity, we took our belief of incriminating evidence of government crimes to the Police and Coroner, the latter's letter copied to the Prime Minister, Opposition Leader, all federal cabinet Ministers, state premiers, opposition leaders and many others. It was boldly headed **"Mass murder"**. To our surprise two contradictory responses came from the *Australian Government Attorney-General's Department*, the nation's top law office. Indeed, the responses suggested to us, the government had no credible answer, which led to Chapter 21, headed, *"mass murder" the government blinked*. The government had written too many revealing responses to us. We believe they were floundering with nowhere credible left to go.

We had built a careful government paper trail, all pointing towards negligence, and a lack of legal accountability. Being experienced political campaigners, we began where many finished, prioritising the paper trail of legally valid evidence. Fuel continued to build. Despite promises to the contrary, the sparking powerlines remained. In future, thousands would die, according to Mr Packham's 2009 death toll 'risk estimate' presented on prime time national television. This was preceded by four separate statements, that unmitigated fuel was the cause. For that future crime, this book limits the government's plausible deniability about known cause and effect. Unless they rectify the problem, the public verdict will be *"Guilty"*.

This book proves the maxim, 'fact is stranger than fiction', whether it's *'Catch up for a coffee'*, about reluctantly hosting Australia's top, bushfire public servant, or the government's leading bushfire scientist publicly accusing them of being *'sneaky buggers'*. Or could it be our third most important adviser being co-opted as the Prime Minister's adviser; or our solitary demand for a *Federal Royal Commission*, incredibly happening without question? However, overwhelming those unusual events, was something the second and more blatant government cover-up in 2020, exposed.

***"It is estimated that nearly 3 billion animals were killed or displaced by the bushfires ..."***

This astronomical official number of deaths barely raised a whimper from Australia's virtue signaling 'Green' ruling elites. Judged by the world's most fundamental conservation measure, net biodiversity values, the ruling elites failed to show any care for an estimated 3 billion animals killed. For us, this proved the Liberal and Labor Parties 'Green' credentials on net biodiversity values, were a fraud.

This book evolved from a campaign conclusion report. But, as we climbed out of the lonely trenches and got some elevation, our team wanted more. Following an early edit, our internationally awarded bushfire experts agreed to write a Foreword. The momentum became unstoppable. The book's title, chapters and sub-headings named themselves. *"mass murder" and the cover-ups* evolved into more than a campaign report. It became the 'knock on the door', the government and their faceless puppeteers hoped would never arrive. It is also a political thriller.



## **"mass murder" and the coverups**

# Annotated chapter outline

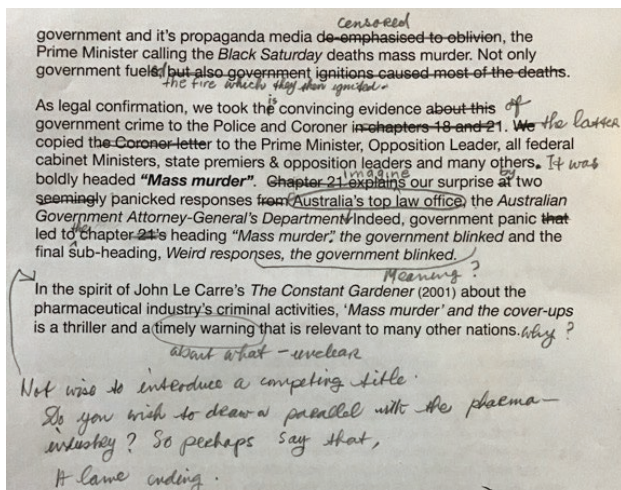
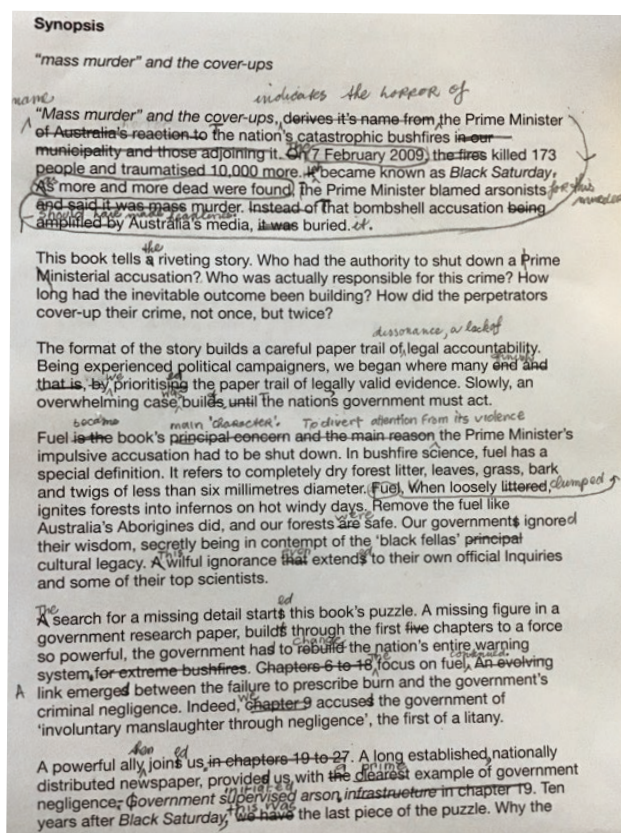
Tim Malseed

Extreme bushfires kill; and traumatise survivors. While politicians fabricate these deaths and trauma are due to natural disasters, they revealed their true beliefs by being paranoid about anyone who implied they were responsible. As a defensive mechanism, our letter drafts deleted anything that enabled their cognitive distortion experts - their spin doctors - to manipulate our words into a credible attack. After all, the government had responded in a paranoid way to the mildest reform motions, put by our elected representative, at official meetings (2009 to 2012). The government's false accusations culminated in a failed prosecution of us, for a jail-able crime, so we predicted we would last no longer than two years before they were successful and we were discredited.

Now, 14 years later, we believe that outcome was avoided by the editing of others. I temporarily lost objectivity writing intense early drafts, but June, a retired secondary school principal, English teacher and our original extreme bushfire campaigner, did many of these remorseless edits; about ten of them on the *Synopsis* (See June's edit No.6).

Typically, it takes time to 'clear my head' and imagine myself as a government spin doctor, assigned to find a reason to discredit the current draft. When there were no 'slip-ups' left, we would send the letter. These professional letters mostly brought political responses, that served our main purpose. They allowed further dialogue. We then continued to carefully build information about fires, which the government could not deny knowing. This reduced their plausible deniability about future deaths.

We survived as campaigners and prevented potential government crimes caused by their failed bushfire warnings. Our effective editing process facilitated that survival. We trust this explanation is an acceptable alternative for an 'annotated chapter'.



June's edit No.6 of Synopsis



***“mass murder” and the coverups***

# Market analysis, including competitive research

Tim Malseed

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This book is not easy to categorise. While it exposes apparent government crimes, it is not the usual memoir, nor allegations of victim or whistleblower. A stranger to me suffered government persecution with false accusations. I offered to help and because it was so wrong, I stayed. This book is about the latter part of my assistance.

There are many good books that expose aspects of failed governance, but we tried to address wrong by writing directly to those who were paying for the failures; Australia's Prime Ministers. It was not a surprise to us, their 'half hearted' delegation to others, turned into a revolving door of Ministers, none of whom accepted final responsibility. In the course of 29 letters over six years, our efforts initiated a nationwide reform of extreme bushfire warnings and evolved to prompting a *Federal Royal Commission*, that we believe exposed the virtue signaling 'Green' elites as a fraud.

This book was intended to keep our estate safe from future extreme bushfires, but I now believe *mass murder and the coverups* has a wider appeal. During the book's writing, all cause mortality rates jumped in many countries, casting doubt on the governance of the Covid 'vaccine'. These doubts seem to have increased public skepticism of government flaws, making our story more mainstream. The public appetite is whetted for a well-documented case of government negligence, that demands official accountability. Also, there has been extensive international media coverage of the US Maui wildfires of August 2023, a contemporary example of the rural/urban fires, this book provides thoroughly researched political and scientific explanations for.

Finally the emerging influence of the new media on book sales is now well established. Bannon's War Room, Citisen Free Press, The Liberty Daily, The Gateway Pundit, Revolver News, Breitbart, Richardson Post in Australia and many others, regularly report on failed governance issues, that the propaganda media censor.



## ***“mass murder” and the coverups***

# Curriculum vitae

Tim Malseed

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### **Preamble**

Leading a national, political campaign with highly qualified volunteers requires abilities, unlikely to be explained by conventional CVs. My abilities, evolved in a wide mix of industry and campaign work places, which taught me to rely on team work, mutual respect and creative solutions to, at times, impossible problems. I like Harvard’s explanation of this ability, which they call ‘emotional intelligence’:

*“In a nutshell, emotional intelligence refers to the ability to identify and regulate our own emotions, to recognise the emotions of other people and feel empathy toward them, and to use these abilities to communicate effectively and build healthy, productive relationships with others”* (Harvard Health Publishing, Harvard Medical School).

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>2023 to 2021</b> | Researched and wrote <i>“mass murder”and the cover-ups</i> , about our team’s 2014 to 2021 extreme bushfire campaign against the Australian government.  |
| <b>2021 to 2014</b> | Led a volunteer team who researched and wrote 29 evidence-based letters to three Prime Ministers about their government’s apparent negligence with extreme bushfires. With expert pro bono advice, we campaigned the government to mitigate the ecological destruction and human deaths caused by extreme bushfires.   |
| <b>2013</b>         | Published <i>Bushfire Death Trap - The Eltham Gateway</i> with David Packham. A bushfire risk analysis for the Eltham locality, the paper was reviewed by independent experts, including a future Prime Ministerial advisor, who wrote: <i>“... a landmark publication in Australian bushfire literature”</i> .  |
| <b>2014 to 2009</b> | Intervened in the government persecution of a Municipal Councillor who exposed apparent government negligence prior to the <i>Black Saturday Fires</i> . It was so wrong, I stayed. A series of false accusations against the Councillor, made by a seemingly guilty government, culminated in a criminal legal writ against us. The Judge found in our favour and ordered the government to pay our considerable costs. |
| <b>2008 to 2006</b> | Plan <i>‘Nancy Malseed, a Retrospective’</i> , my mother, early ‘role model’ and landscape painter. After her death, Regional Galleries requested a touring exhibition.  |
| <b>2005 to 2003</b> | Project and media management, of a coastal housing development overlooking one of Australia’s highest value seascapes, at Cape Bridgewater.  |
| <b>2004 to 2001</b> | Early Australian Wind-farm Media Consultancy, to remedy a biased media campaign by those who wanted ‘renewable energy’, but not in their backyards.  |
| <b>2000</b>         | Media Consultancy to resolve hostile media bias at Port Fairy. I conducted a media campaign, to break an alliance of a ‘special interest group’ and the media, who had seemingly captured local government planning.   |

- 1999** Published my early warning to Australia about Rupert Murdoch's media bias (fake news) and blatant government manipulation (*Murdoch, Packer, bias and your ABC*, Tim Malseed, *The Age*, 13 October 1999). In 2011/12 the UK's *Leveson Inquiry* came to a similar conclusion. I believe Murdoch's *Fox News* 2020 Presidential Election coverage, validated both of the above, about the real Mr Murdoch.
- 1998 to 1997** By using my building quantity surveying skills, I developed a weighted system to measure election coverage in my local Murdoch-owned newspaper. In what I believe was perverse confirmation of the accuracy of my system, *News Ltd* sued me for defamation. The 17-month legal battle was presented by Mark Dreyfus, the future Australian Attorney-General. This *Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation* (SLAPP) halted, after Australia's Free Speech Committee intervened, resulting in a phone inquiry to *News Ltd*, from the *British Broadcasting Corporation*.
- 1996 to 1995** In the long 1996 Federal Election Campaign, I addressed extreme newspaper bias. My measuring system, under development, led to an unexpected home visit by the Liberal Party's local Federal election campaign Chairman, his Director and Candidate, asking me for help. My full-time pro-bono effort reduced the extreme pro-Labor media bias in *News Ltd*'s local newspaper, increased the pro-Liberal component three-fold, and impacted the targeted polling booths measurably.
- 1994** As evidence of my 'dynamic team' building ability, my renovated Cape Bridgewater house achieved a builder's highest distinction. It was published on the front cover of *Home Beautiful*, Australia's top-selling home magazine.
- 1991** Settled a violent Union dispute at my daily laps pool, by organising a swimmer activist group. Wrote an open letter to the *Chief Commissioner of Police*, accusing him of being allied to the violent Building Union concerned. Response? Silence. Joined the Liberal Party to advance my media ethics reform agenda.
- 1990** *Home Beautiful*, Australia's top-selling home magazine, nominated one of my houses as the most impressive ever. In a special report wherein the Editor asked the photographers: "*Of the hundreds of houses you see every year, which one impressed you the most?*" *Home Beautiful*'s head photographer, Gary Chwanetz nominated my 1977 McCullagh House.
- 1976** Started building one-off architect-designed homes for demanding clients.
- 1975 to 1963** Carpenter on 'top end', one-off, architect-designed homes, landscape gardener, abalone diver, waterside worker, farm manager, heavy equipment operator, jackaroo, builders labourer and quarry worker. Joined the Labor Party.
- 1969** Successfully organised my first team, a group of abalone divers, to campaign against the government for commercial fishery sustainability. I established the political influence, a strategic newspaper article can command. This prompted the government to impose an appropriate management regime to prevent the valuable shellfish from extinction, as seen in many other parts of the world.
- 1969 to 1965** Built, without prior experience, my Cape Bridgewater house, from heavy, reclaimed basalt, stone blocks, overlooking one of Australia's highest value seascapes.
- 1960** From farm, to boarding school at Wesley College in the State capital city, Melbourne. A transition from a rural, to a metropolitan education.



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| <b>2 Australian disaster grants No 2</b>                            | (09/11/14 No.37)   |
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**Epilogue:** Aborigines made Australia

# FOREWORD

Phil Cheney, 2010 Ember Award (USA)

David Packham, 2017 The Phillip J. Di Nenno Prize (USA)

Most people have little to no experience with bushfires. However, anyone who has lit a campfire knows:

- 1. Moist and green fuel does not ignite and has to be dried before it will burn;**
- 2. Dry fine woody or grassy material (fuel) is easy to ignite and can be used to ignite larger material;**
- 3. Fine loosely-compacted fuel burns rapidly with high flames but not for long;**
- 4. Larger pieces of fuel burn for longer;**
- 5. Large logs may stay alight for up to an hour.**

This is the basic fire behaviour that applies to campfire and bushfire alike - one is static, the other is moving. One doesn't need to be expert in the First Law of Thermodynamics to understand that the chemical reaction we call fire requires fuel. This provides the energy that will impact on our lives, infrastructure and environment.

The difficulty in understanding fire behaviour starts because the process of combustion is chaotic and interacts with a turbulent environment. The factors that determine how bushfires behave are highly variable in three spatial dimensions and vary with time. The topography only changes slowly over aeons but the orientation of the topography in relation to the sun and the wind impacts both the fuel and its flammability daily. The weather can vary widely in time and space; conditions thousands of metres above the ground can impact how a fire behaves. The amount and structure of the fuel is highly variable in space but also changes over months and years.

With all this variation and turbulent flow created by the energy released from heavy fuel it is easier to hit the Dimorphos asteroid 11 million kilometres away with an accuracy of +/-17 metres than it is to predict the position of a high-intensity bushfire, but bushfire science assisted answers can help a lot.

The scale of the energy released by a bushfire is enormous, and ranges from 30 to 150,000 kilowatts per metre (kW/m) of the fire perimeter. That is from 40 to 200,000 horse power for every metre of fire edge. Without experience these figures are beyond the comprehension of most people.

A 30 kilowatt per metre prescribed burn in a dry forest, is a trickling surface fire with flames less than 50cm.



An estimated 30 kilowatts per metre prescribed burn (Bushfire Front)



A 300 kilowatt per metre prescribed fire with 1 metre flames.



**An estimated 300 kilowatts per metre prescribed burn**

A 3,000 kilowatt per metre bushfire is around the limit of suppression by any means.



**An estimated 3,000 kilowatts per metre bushfire**



**An estimated 10,000 kilowatt per metre crown fire**



**Above 10,000 kilowatts per metre extreme bushfires**

While a 10,000 kilowatt per metre fire is a crown fire spreading at one kilometre per hour (km/h), extreme bushfires above 10,000 kilowatts per metre are difficult to measure and photograph. The photo above, with Canberra in the foreground, we estimate is 85,000 kilowatts per metre, in the mid-range of 10,000 to 150,000 kilowatts per metre. The take home message is that we can only suppress fires that are about 3% of the energy released by a disaster conflagration, photographed above.

The topographic environment may well be changing but there is nothing that man can do about it anytime soon. We can't change the weather but what we can do is manage the fuel. We can reduce the total load available for combustion thus reducing the available energy. This reduces the scale of the turbulence and smooths out some of the extreme erratic behaviour making fire spread prediction more accurate. We can change the structure of the fuel bed reducing the height of flames and in eucalypt forests stop the tree crown from burning and adding more energy to the system; we can change the compaction of the fuel bed thus changing the duration of the heat release and achieve specific objectives for the environment.

### **Managing fuel is the only thing we can do**

The behaviour and impact of fire on the landscape has been understood by indigenous Australians for millennia. They needed fire. Not only for ceremonies and cooking but also for food and to protect themselves. They burnt frequently, throughout the year and maintained the fuels in the grasslands, savannahs and dry forests at a low level that created the beautiful, safe, open environment that welcomed the Europeans in 1788.

It soon became obvious that frequent native burning was incompatible with the European concepts of property, cropping and urbanisation. Burning was maintained in a modified fashion by graziers but was totally incompatible with the European practice of forestry. The establishment of State forests in the early 1900s introduced a policy of total fire exclusion.

However, foresters familiar with fire realised that fire needed to be used and that it needed to be quantified. In 1936 W.R. Wallace published fire hazard results from the West Australian Forest Department. Alan King of CSIRO documented the observations of early explorers. In 1952 Alan McArthur witnessed the Mangoplah fire which burnt 330,000 hectares (ha), mostly in a single day. He could appreciate the impact that indigenous burning had on preventing vast areas of the country being burnt by continuous high-intensity fire during periods of extreme fire weather.



Western Australia's Forest Department appreciated the need to reduce fuels by burning around settlements. Because widespread burning in forests was rejected by most in the forestry profession much of the burning in Western Australia had been limited to relatively narrow firebreaks. It was McArthur's iconic photograph of the collapse of a full-scale crown fire at a 2-year-old fuel reduced area surrounding Dwellingup during the extensive wildfires of 1961 that convinced many that fuel reduction by prescribed burning was essential to protect forests and forestry settlements. Even so, the spectacle of approaching flames burning through the tops of the forest is so overwhelming that its collapse at a recently burnt area is, for some, an epiphany needed to convert them from ardent critics to champions of prescribed burning.



**Photo 1. Reduction of fire intensity (A.G. McArthur)**

The McArthur aerial photo showed where a crown fire burnt into a 2-year old fuel-reduced firebreak on the outskirts of Dwellingup, January 1961. This helped to protect Dwellingup but did not stop the fire which threw firebrands across the town into heavy fuels that quickly developed into crown fires.

McArthur pioneered empirical field fire research to document the behaviour, rate of spread and intensity of fire in dry forest and grassland. He developed a general prescribed burning guide to predict the speed and intensity of fires in dry forests to safely reduce fuel loads and minimise any damage that reduced the quality of timber products. George Peet of the WA Forests Department carried out similar research and developed a burning guide specifically for the northern Jarrah forest.

Sixty-four years ago the wonderful fire experiments on Black Mountain near Canberra, by Alan McArthur, allowed us all to gain an understanding of how bushfires worked. In 1964 in Gippsland Victoria a 800 hectare forest burn turned into an 80,000 hectare wildfire due to a weather forecast mis-communication. Despite the efforts of very good forest fire-fighters it was demonstrated that no human force could control and corral the "Red Beast". The consensus was that fuel reduction was the only solution. That conclusion is as strong today as it was then.

It soon became apparent that under mild conditions ground crews could not light up and burn areas that were large enough to reduce bushfire spread under severe summer conditions. George Peet sought the help of David Packham and the CSIRO Bushfire Research Group to develop a safe incendiary to be delivered from the air. Together they developed the instruments and aerial techniques to light individual fires that would burn slowly under mild conditions and coalesce late in the day and reduce fuel over thousands of hectares in a single day.

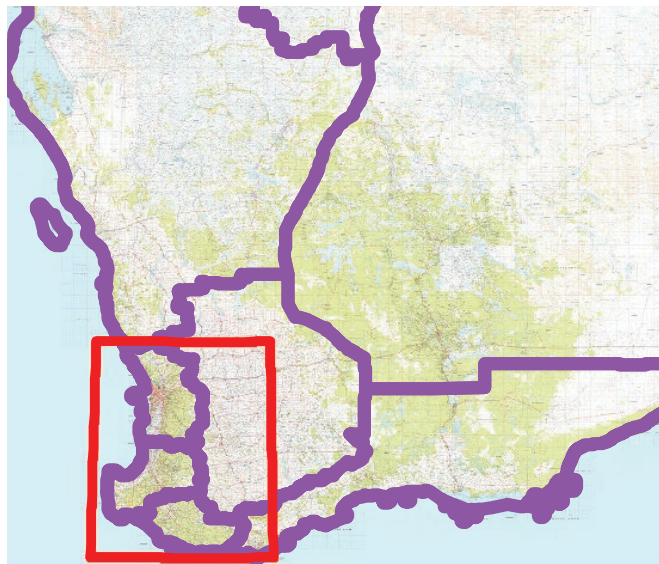
Within three years (1961 to 1964) operational prescribed burning of large areas was in place across the northern Jarrah Forest. In 1967 we (Cheney and Packham et-al) demonstrated that aerial ignition could be used in the mountainous terrain west of Canberra and in the forests in the mountains of the south coast of NSW. By the end of the 1960s, aerial prescribed burning to reduce hazardous fuel loads was operational in most States of Australia.

The extensive programme of large-scale prescribed burning undertaken in south-western forests of Western Australia since 1961 has provided excellent data to determine whether different levels of annual burning has an impact on the area of wildfires occurring in subsequent years. An investigation undertaken by experienced fire researcher and fire manager Rick Sneeuwjagt found that a very strong correlation ( $R^2=0.77$ ) exists between the mean annual area of prescribed burning achieved over 5 years and the mean annual area of wildfires in subsequent 5 years. These data demonstrate the effectiveness of prescribed burning beyond any reasonable doubt. If you prescribe burn 15% of the forest estate (a rotation of 6-7 years for any particular area) then the resulting average annual area of the estate burnt by wildfire is .05%. If 8% is prescribed burnt (a rotation of 12 years) then 0.5% is burnt by wildfire; if 5% is prescribed burnt (a rotation of 20 years), 1.5% burnt by wildfire results, and if only 1% is prescribed burnt (a rotation of 100 years) then 4.5% of the Forest estate was burnt by wildfire.

Although the expert panel on fire behaviour for the 2009 Royal Commission in Victoria recommended a target of 8% of the burnable forest in Victoria be prescribed burnt each year the Commission recommended 5%. None of the Eastern States have been able to come anywhere near, this politically reduced target. Victoria, with the biggest fire threat in Australia, languishes at less than one per cent.

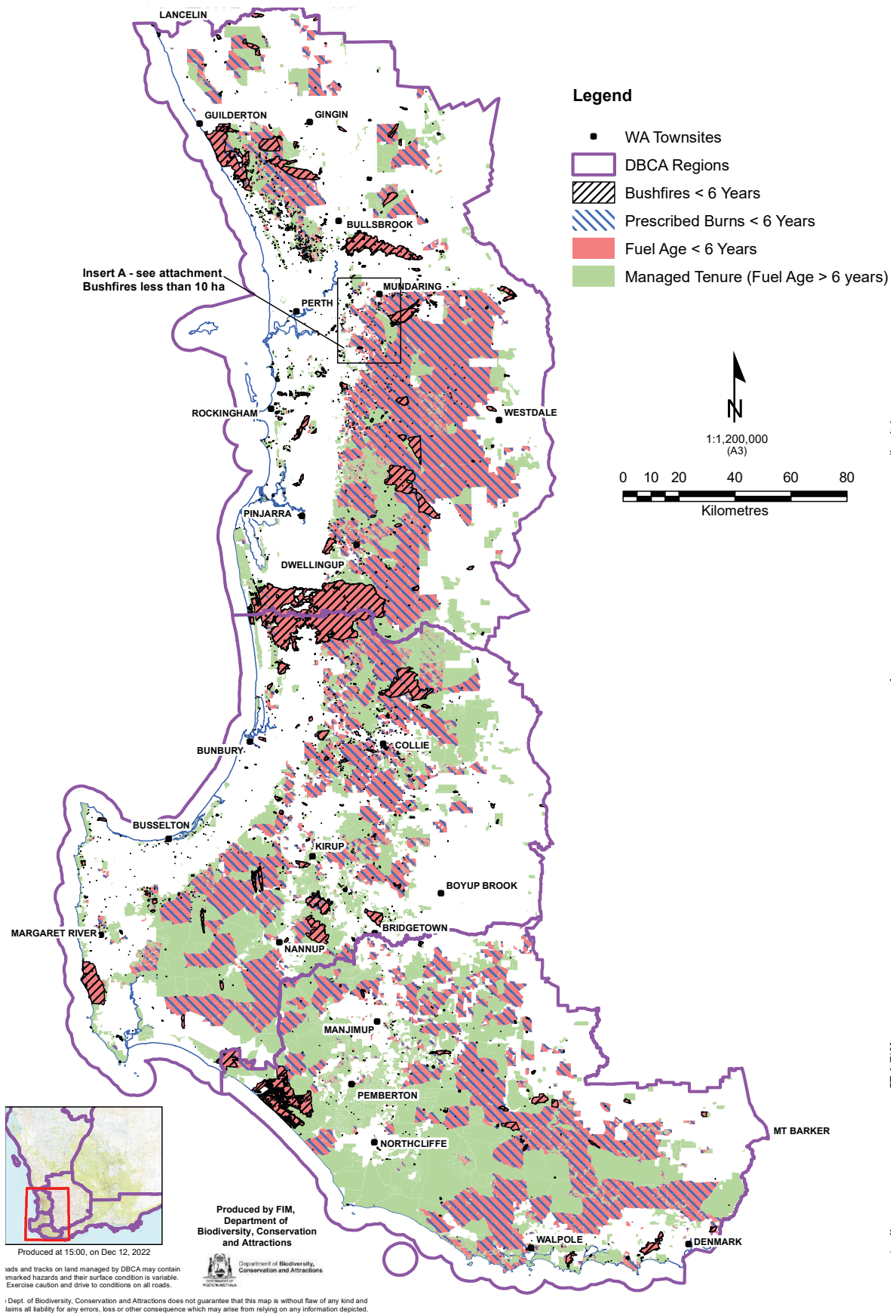
The development and application of prescribe burning in Western Australia to the scale required to have a significant impact on wildfires under severe conditions didn't just happen but evolved because of:

- Policy, political and funding support from the State government and bureaucracies;
- Acceptance and support from Local governments and the rural community who were already well aware of the need to burn to protect themselves;
- The appointment of a succession of young scientists to study fire behaviour and develop prescribed burning guides for all of the important WA forest fuel types, using similar methods developed by McArthur and Peet;
- An organisational arrangement and culture that saw all of the Forests Department rural staff (from Senior Forester to Office Receptionist) taking an active role in bushfire management, including fuel reduction burning and wildfire suppression;
- Documentation of the training, capability and experience of all staff in bushfire management that enabled them to be appointed to the appropriate suppression tasks regardless of their seniority or formal position in the department; and,
- Management of forest land for multiple purposes including timber production, water resources, habitat requirements of specific animals and birds and recreation.

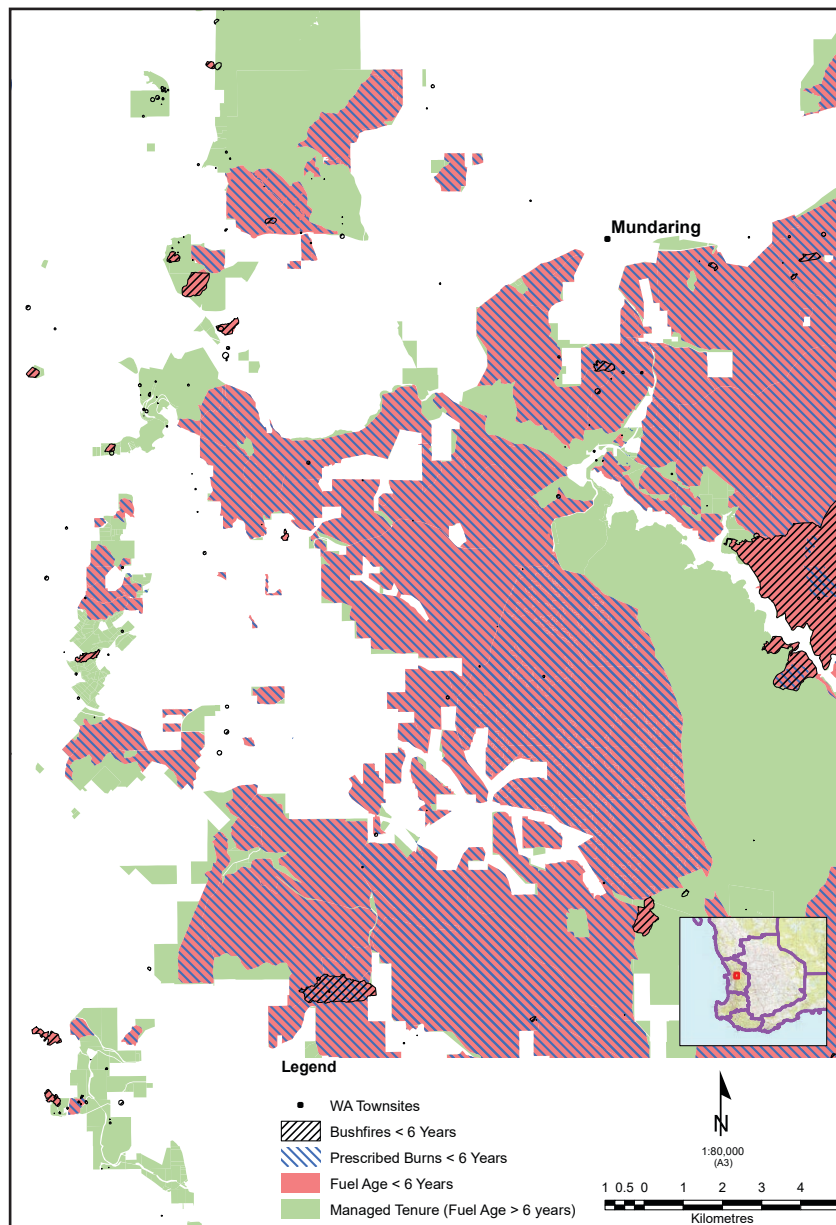


**Map 1: WA maps produced on Dec 12, 2002**





Map 2: WA Prescribed Burns compared to Bushfires 2015/16 - 2021/22



**Map 3: Bushfires less than 10 ha**

The extent of prescribed burning for fuel management is shown above on map 2 of fuel ages for the 2015/16 - 2021/22 period (West Australian Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions). The colours illustrate the age of the fuel between one and 5+ years. The aim of the department was to burn 8% of the forest estate, on average, each year. Some areas are burned more often and some less often, depending on a range of factors and risk assessment.

Western Australia also faced a decline in prescribed burning which lead to increasing fuel loads and in 2016 a lightning strike in long-unburned area in the Lane Pool Reserve defied initial attack and developed into the Waroona-Yarloop fire which decimated the township of Yarloop on the coastal plain. Although facing constraints with decreasing manpower and a broad portfolio the Department of Biodiversity, Environment and Attractions have maintained fuel loads of <6 year-old over 43% of the managed estate (Map 2). This fraction includes both wildfires and prescribed fire and approximates an annual prescribed burn of 8%.



Since the mid-1980s all State governments have progressively withdrawn money and manpower from their land management agencies. Responsibility for fire suppression has largely been transferred to the Emergency Service agencies who have no responsibility for land management and little interest in reducing fuel loads. The culture has become increasingly income centric. Forestry has been either transferred to private enterprise or run by government corporations whose aim is to make money from the operations rather than to manage the forests with multiple objectives for the public good.

Local government agencies have been largely imbued with the view that green is good and fire is bad without recognising the dire consequences for the total environment. Thus, like the forests, fuel loads have built-up in the parks, gardens and green belts of the outer suburbs of the ever-expanding cities. This has resulted in fuel loads in many suburban areas being greater than the landscape around them as was evidenced by the pattern of house destruction in Australia's Capital City, Canberra in 2003. This was fuelled by the intensity of fire within the suburbs and totally independent of the fire intensity in the grasslands surrounding them.

The house destruction in Canberra was part of a three million hectare bushfire that impacted The Australian Capital Territory and the States of New South Wales and Victoria in 2003. In response, the Australian Parliament's House of Representatives conducted an inquiry titled '*A Nation Charred*' (The Victorian government forbade any employee from giving evidence). The 413 page Report was thorough, accurate and honest. It was ignored and overshadowed by a failed Senate inquiry and Victorian Government inquiry, that we believe were cover-ups.

In frustration, a Victorian group of experienced foresters, fire volunteers, farmers and bushfire scientists, under the inspired leadership of a former Federal member of parliament, established The Stretton Group, named after Mr Justice Stretton, a famous 1939 Royal Commissioner on such matters. The Stretton Group sought a legal opinion on the Victorian Government inquiry, from a highly distinguished barrister, Mr Alan Myers QC. On 15 July 2004 we received his four page deliberation, which is a seminal legal Opinion about government failure with extreme bushfire mismanagement.

With little or nothing learnt by governments, from the 2003 bushfires, Australia suffered further catastrophic bushfires in 2005/6, 2006/7 (1.2 million hectares) and 2009 (430,000 hectares and 173 deaths).

Having devoted the best part of 60 years of our lives to understanding bushfire behaviour and fire management, writing this forward for Tim Malseed has been a bitter pill. Despite the local and international awards for our work, we have failed to convince Australian governments about the need to manage fuels to enable efficient fire suppression and create a safer and healthier environment. But we are not alone: the same is true for Mediterranean Europe and also western America, the richest and most powerful country in the world. Despite all our equipment and technological advances, our capacity to suppress forest fires world-wide is only 2% of the maximum intensity of disaster conflagrations.

Ignitions, from lightning, arson or accident, will continue to occur on hot, dry windy days. Destruction and loss of life will only be minimised if the public, the local State and Federal governments take actions to manage the fire environment of their forests, countryside, local parks and backyards, as did Australia's original environmental stewards. Otherwise the destruction of our natural environment will continue and people die horrible deaths: surely the very definition of manslaughter by negligence.

We recommend this book, which chronicles the actions that have been taken by Firestick Estate over more than a decade, to appropriately warn our governments about what we hope to avoid; this rush to "*mass murder*".

**Phil Cheney** PSM, BSc (For.) and **David Packham** OAM, MAppSci

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A photograph of a kangaroo in a landscape that appears to be the aftermath of a bushfire. The ground is covered in ash and charred vegetation. In the background, many trees are bare and skeletal, with a thick layer of smoke or mist hanging in the air. The lighting is warm and golden, suggesting the sun is low in the sky. The kangaroo is in the foreground, looking towards the camera.

governments were the  
*“terrorists within our nation”*

(South Australian Premier, Mike Rann  
*The Dominion Post* 10 February 2009)





“Mass murder”, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. “terrorists within our nation”, South Australian Premier Mike Rann

## PREFACE

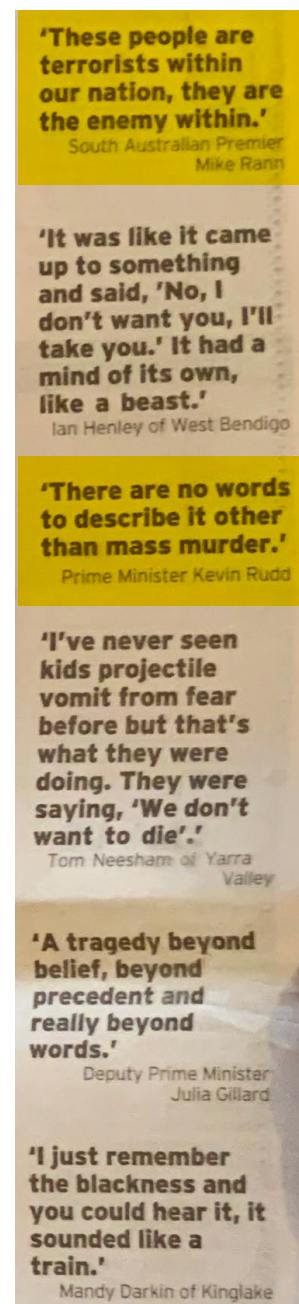
### AUSTRALIAN MEDIA COVER-UP

The day after the *Black Saturday Fires*, on Sunday 8 February 2009, the Prime Minister of Australia called many of the deaths “mass murder”. While this accusation was reported by Australia’s propaganda media, it was given a low priority and in the view of Firestick Estate Inc, effectively covered-up (**Propaganda: dissemination of ideas, information, or rumour for the purpose of injuring or helping an institution, a cause, or a person.** Macquarie).

We conclude the Prime Minister’s accusation, publicly endorsed by his Attorney General and the South Australian Premier, was covered-up because the propaganda media secretly believed successive governments, and by extension themselves, were the perpetrators of the death toll. Indeed, that governments were the “terrorists within our nation”, as SA Premier Mike Rann publicly described the accused.

### FOREIGN MEDIA DID NOT COVER-UP

Foreign media did not cover-up the Australian Prime Minister’s accusation. The United States of America’s CNN, the United Kingdom’s *The Guardian* and New Zealand’s *The Dominion Post*, professionally reported this exceptionally high level accusation, with the appropriate respect for the Office of an Australian Prime Minister. For example, *The Dominion Post* reported the extraordinary story with a front page banner headline, whole of page one with more referred to on other pages. Meanwhile, in the south- eastern fire disaster State of Victoria, the two metropolitan newspapers, the *Herald Sun* and *The Age*, reported the story in a seemingly embarrassed way, by burying it in small font surrounded by ‘war like’ headlines, action photos and sub headings on the details of the disaster. During research for this book (prompted by “... then prime minister Kevin Rudd spoke of “mass murder” Sunday Age 3 July 2011), we found it difficult to find the story at all, suggesting to us a systemic action in Australia to shut the government’s “mass murder” narrative down.



## The government was the perpetrator

For a couple of days, it seems the shock of the 2009 *Black Saturday Fires* upset the normal relationship between the government and its propaganda media. For instance, it appears to us the propaganda media's most senior people knew what this Labor Party Prime Minister did not know, that if "mass murder" applied, it was the government who was the perpetrator, in terms of ignition, fuel and failed warnings.

The government failed to properly supervise power lines they had been officially warned about after *Ash Wednesday*. It was these power lines that ignited the fires that killed 159 of the 173 deaths (Chapter 19 **Government supervised arson infrastructure**). Once alight, the fuel governments had steadfastly refused to mitigate despite being advised to do so by their own inquiries, 'exploded' into an unimaginable fury that caused the mostly unwarned mass deaths.

## Thanks

We thank our exceptionally committed core team and wider circle of advisers. We especially thank world renowned extreme bushfire experts Mr Cheney and Mr Packham for their *Foreword*, explanation of fire behaviour and their focus on Western Australia's proper governance of bushfire. Finally, thanks to an inspired cartoonist, Chris Rule. In our opinion his cartoon explains the propaganda media's rejection of the Prime Minister's "mass murder" accusation of 8 February 2009.



Chris Rule, *The Weekly Times* 12 December 2018



# INTRODUCTION

The perfect bunker  
for the perpetrators of  
extreme bushfires.

Australia's 'Fire Safe', earth shelter, Parliament House Canberra

## CRIMINAL NEGLIGENCE

Firestick Estate Inc believes many deaths caused by banning the effective COVID-19 therapeutic drug, Ivermectin, was government criminal negligence (*Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care, Therapeutic Goods Administration*, 10 September 2021). Over two years earlier we wrote to Australia's Prime Minister about another life threatening risk with extreme bushfire fuel ("**... millions of tonnes of fuel ready to explode ...**" 22 February 2019). We warned the Prime Minister about government criminal negligence that causes preventable deaths from extreme bushfires:

*"With respect, you must demand strategically conducted prescribed burning ... and you will not have to live in fear of going to jail, for the crime implicit in your use of the word negligent"* (Chapter 19 **Government supervised arson infrastructures**).

It appears our widely distributed letter to the highest level's of government could not be officially rebutted. Although we have received 14 'top level' government responses on related matters since then, not one of those letters denies the: "*... crime implicit in your use of the word negligent*".

|   |  |
|---|--|
| the Premier and his Chief Health Officer Brett Sutton withheld genomic data showing 99 per cent of the current COVID-19 | Freedom of Information requests for maps of the fuel loads in each of the states bushfire zones. |
|---|--|

Comparing COVID-19 and bushfire negligence, by *The Weekly Times* 26 August 2020

# No talk leads to no trust

WE need to be able to trust our political leaders.

Even the most cynical among us needs to believe Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews and his team will do all they can to keep us safe and secure.

That means our leaders being transparent and open with the public on the hows and whys of critical decisions.

But that's not happening.

In 2018 *The Weekly Times* exposed the fire risk in our most populous East Central fire zone had reached the same levels as those in the lead-up to Black Saturday.

Massive regrowth had not been subject to adequate fuel reduction burns, pushing the residual risk for the zone to 80 per cent.

We followed up with Freedom of Information requests for maps of the fuel loads in each of the states bushfire zones.

But then after months of delays and deferrals Mr Andrews and his ministers came out with the laughable excuse that the maps would not be made public, for fear they could fall into the hands of arsonists.

Now we find the government agency responsible for curbing fuel loads has quietly upped the risk levels it has to maintain, after struggling to meet lower targets.

Where was the consultation with the communities living in these zones?

What are the implications?

There is nothing to be heard from the Premier or the bureaucrats' city towers.

Then there's the revelation the Premier and his Chief Health Officer Brett Sutton withheld genomic data showing 99 per cent of the current COVID-19

cases in Victoria can be traced back to the botched quarantine of two Melbourne hotels.

Again no transparency. The reason? No transparency equals no accountability.

*The Weekly Times* 26/09/20

## Comparing bushfire and COVID-19 negligence

We believe the government's failure to mitigate extreme bushfires and properly manage COVID-19, were first compared publicly by Australia's leading rural newspaper, *The Weekly Times*. In an *Opinion* article about fire risk, the newspaper compared the two subjects on the grounds of a lack of government transparency about bushfire fuel loads and their withholding:

*"... genomic data showing 99 per cent of the current COVID-19 cases in Victoria can be traced back to the botched quarantine of two Melbourne hotels"*  
**(No talk leads to no trust** *The Weekly Times Opinion* 26 August 2020).

## Negligence that began in Canberra 2003

In our opinion, government extreme bushfire negligence etc did not start with COVID-19 in 2020 or even the *Black Saturday Fires* in 2009. We believe it became apparent with the response to a firestorm which impacted Australia's Capital City, Canberra, in 2003 (Chapter 12 **Whistleblower bombshell**). Indeed, the Canberra firestorm was part of a larger inter-State and Territory extreme bushfire conflagration, about which one of Australia's top barristers expressed a legally educated criticism at the time (Chapter 16 **Devastating barrister's opinion of the government**). We believe the government's response to this clear 2003 warning, was negligence, which precipitated the deaths of over 200 people in the 2009 *Black Saturday Fires* and killed or displaced 3 billion animals in the 2019/20 *Black Summer Fires*.


## The point of this book

This book and the paper trail it references, is intended to remove the government's 'plausible deniability' about the cause and effect of mass deaths in extreme bushfires (Chapter 7 **Government plausible deniability shattered**). The point is to present our paper trail in a way that encourages the equal application of the law, to both the people and Government, with extreme bushfires. We found this fairness missing from the 2009 *Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission* and other official deliberations.

Specifically, this book is about 29 letters to Australia's Prime Ministers and others, with courtesy copies to many government VIPs and their propaganda media, sent from 2014 to 2021. That period is the latter part of a longer campaign initiated by others, starting four years before the 2003 Canberra firestorm and picked up by us after *Black Saturday* in 2009 (Chapter 16 **We started informing our elected representatives 24 years ago**).

Each letter has its own chapter in which we detail the background, significant media items, responses etc. At the end of the 29 Chapters, we have also included in date order, our letters, attachments, and government responses.





*“Police (the government) ignored strong evidence that the bushfire that razed Marysville on Black Saturday may have been sparked by electrical faults, and instead pursued for two and a half years the theory of a lone arsonist, which they dumped without explanation last week ... But despite the evidence of electrical faults, within a week of the fire police (the government) claimed that arson was the cause. Politicians including then prime minister Kevin Rudd spoke of “mass murder”. (**Police ignored evidence as they chased arson theory**, The Sunday Age 3 July 2011, page 1 & 8).*



*“The worst case scenario is that thousands of lives are lost because of the gridlock situation”*

(ABC Television News, 20 March 2013)







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# Do or die!

**"Plan now for extreme bushfire or face disaster," authors plead**

The author's country newspaper explains *elthamsdeathtrap* in 3 short words

## CHAPTER 1

✉ 02/11/14 No. 27

### DO OR DIE

Letter 1 is the first of 29 letters written to the Prime Ministers of Australia and others, between 2014 and 2021. This letter is about the spread (speed) of extreme bushfires, on which bushfire warnings are based. It is copied to the State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers, all Opposition Leaders and others.

#### A flash of publicity

The first letter was sent over 18 months after '*Do or die*' was published. Mr Packham co-authored a Paper with us, which attracted a flash of publicity and rare government media responses. Those responses did not refute one word of our 100 page Paper (*Bushfire Death Trap - The Eltham Gateway* including additional documents, Packham & Malseed, 13 March 2013).

#### Top billing in one day's 'News'

Two weeks after we published '*elthamsdeathtrap*', the State of Victoria's prime evening television news bulletin gave 'top billing' to our Paper. Subsequently, it appeared to us the story had been 'shut down'. Mr Packham was interviewed in the city and your author interviewed in two local fuel laden bush parks and at home, located between these 'explosive' bushfire sites. I gave *elthamsdeathtrap*'s crucial 'risk estimate':

#### STEVE ROBERTSON

A CAPE Bridgewater homeowner, who also lives in the north-eastern Melbourne suburb of Eltham, has charged that governments have not done enough thorough planning for catastrophic bushfires.

Tim Malseed has co-authored a new booklet with Monash University professor and bushfire expert David Packham called *Bushfire Death Trap - The Eltham Gateway*. Although the booklet deals largely with the threat to Eltham, which is set in hilly, heavily wooded terrain, Mr Malseed said many of the same principles applied to the Portland area.

"It's fortunate that the recent Kentbruck fire here was fairly low-level and the conditions were not conducive to a catastrophic fire," he said.

"If there had been an extended drought and the winds and fuel load were right, the fire could have spread south and eventually east, creating a disaster for Portland."

He was in Eltham when the Black Saturday bushfires struck in 2009. He and his wife were ready to defend their property, which would have been threatened had the wind not changed when it did.

"If the East Kilmore fire (of 2009) was replicated in this area, it would have started from Kentbruck and moved south in a narrow, cigar-shaped band down to Cape Nelson," he said. "From there, with a wind change it would have moved north-east on a broad front, reaching almost to Heywood and Narrawong."

"The trauma, loss of life and environmental damage would be overwhelming for the Portland district."

He charged that bushfire authorities have not planned for even one mega-fire, let alone a series of massive blazes across the length of Victoria.

"We saw this on Black Saturday and communications and resources were just overwhelmed," he said. "In the most intense fires, you have no chance of survival outdoors. Breathe in and, in one second, your lungs are burned from the inside and you die of shock."

He said firefighting agencies needed to have an extreme bushfire expert to advise them on what to do. He also said most of the planning

was for bushfire response when there should be equal attention paid to bushfire mitigation and prevention.

He wants laws changed to make it easier to clear up fuel from parklands, and give more encouragement to follow the "10/30" rule, clearing trees to 10 metres and groundcover to 30 metres away from homes in fire-prone areas.

"As individuals, we've taken measures to protect our own homes in Eltham and here at Cape Bridgewater," he said. "When I replaced the roof on our house at the cape, I discovered a small trailer load of tinder-dry straw, which would have exploded in flames in the event of a cinder attack. So, we cleaned that out and replaced all wood with aluminium, stone and glass, sealed every crack and left no exposed window timber anywhere."

He said he and his wife also have protective clothing, boots and helmets ready to wear when they go outside after a major fire has passed through.

"It's not quite what the firefighters use, but it's much better than exposed skin."

In their book, the authors make a series of urgent recommendations to the Victorian government, including requiring the Minister for Planning to add bushfire mitigation to his duties. They also want an extreme bushfire risk analysis including fuel reduction, more action to get rid of flammable trees overhanging power lines, another look at the 'leave early' policy, and creating a format for communities to do their own small scale prescribed burning.

"I think it's like government telling police they're only allowed to catch petty criminals but not murderers," he said. "The focus is on small fires when we should be planning for something much, much bigger."



**District forecast**

**Today: su**



*“The worst case scenario is that thousands of lives are lost because of the gridlock situation”*(**ABC Television News** Tim Malseed, 7:00pm, 20 March 2013).

Directly following the television interviews, two top government officers responded to ‘elthamsdeath trap’ on television and radio. Despite this publicity, the ‘Paper’s’ most important premise; that Australia now faced a ‘risk estimate’ of thousands of deaths from extreme bushfires was still not addressed by the government. It seemed they were covering-up Mr Packham’s new paradigm ‘risk estimate’ from 2009. Neither the State owned Australian Broadcasting Corporation, nor the rest of Australia’s metropolitan and national propaganda media (‘big media’ ) followed-up on the story.



Mr Packham’s interview



The author’s interview



### Landmark publication in Australian literature

On 5 April 2013, two weeks after the television interview, there were two articles published about ‘elthamsdeathtrap’. We believe the first showed great tabloid skills (***Do or die*** *Portland Observer* 5 April 2013) and the second was a glowing endorsement from a long established ‘cutting edge’ journal, *Quadrant Online*. It was written by the *President of Forest Fire Victoria*, Athol Hodgson, and Roger Underwood from Western Australia (who became one of our advisers and after that, an adviser to the Prime Minister of Australia). The esteemed authors wrote:

*“We regard it (‘elthamsdeathtrap’) as a landmark publication in Australian bushfire literature”* (***Death by fire and culpable neglect*** *Quadrant Online*, 5 April 2013).

## Warnings, a starting point for a larger problem

Letter 1 was sent nearly six years after one *Black Saturday Fire* had spread 24 kilometres in a single hour, impacting unwarned residential areas. By 2014, the *Royal Commission* was finished and the Supreme Court class actions were finally winding up (Chapter 25 ***We observed Mr Packham's testimony***). At this point, it seemed the government was 'hell bent' on exposing people to further mass killing extreme bushfires. We believe successive governments were just pretending to address extreme bushfire risk. To counter this, we needed one undeniable example of the government's failure.

## A complete bombshell number missing

Over a year after '*elthamsdeathtrap*', we found our undeniable example of the government's failure, with a crucial missing number in a government research paper on *Black Saturday's Kilmore East Fire* (***Anatomy of a catastrophic wildfire: The Black Saturday Kilmore East fire in Victoria, Australia*** 2012, Cruz et-al). After clarifying details with Mr Packham, the Paper's authors and their Federal Minister (involving eleven emails and letters between 12 July and 15 August 2014), we concluded the crucial number was 24. That is the fire had spread 24 kilometres in one hour.

Put simply, the chaotic fire storm spread, with jumps and pauses through ember dispersal and fire catchup, 24 kilometres averaged over an hour. This figure was an absolute bombshell. We believe the government based their warnings on a figure closer to 3 kilometres per hour for the *Black Saturday's Kilmore East Fire* on 7 February 2009. If correct, we consider this was criminally negligent. Three kilometres per hour was superseded by precedent (1983's ***Ash Wednesday***), science (**Phil Cheney** et-als 2003 Canberra 'firestorm' research) and by credible advice from the actual fire ground prior to almost all the deaths (**Rod Holland's**, 2009 *Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission* testimony, 3 May 2010 page 19, 255).



The consequences of government criminal negligence

## Government knows it is negligent

In our opinion, the highest levels of government know the 'death trap' combination of extreme bushfires and gridlocked roads, because of the official video, *Don't Wait and See*. In 2012, the government released this warning video for our local area, the north east rural/urban interface of Melbourne, Victoria's Capital City. While in our opinion the video understated the risk, it warned our only two escape bridges would block in a panic evacuation.

However, we believe the video was effectively suppressed, with apparently no discernible effect on subsequent government bushfire risk policy (***Don't Wait and See***, *The Australian Government Attorney-General's Department* et-al video, 2012).



Produced by Manningham City Council  
with financial support from  
the Australian Government Attorney General's Department  
and the Office of Emergency Services Commissioner (Victoria).

***Don't Wait and See, 2012, seemingly suppressed government warning video***

### Research for letter 1 to the Prime Minister

After additional work on the *Kilmore East Fire's* paper, advised by Mr Packham, we decided that the time at which people were dying in an extreme bushfire rather than an academic construct, determined the basis of fire spread. When presented with our 'victims' perspective' on this matter, the *Federal Minister for Industry*, responsible for the CSIRO which had done the definitive research, appeared to agreed with us and duly authorised the 24 number. Minister Macfarlane wrote:

*"Dear Tim, Thank you for your letter of 23 July 2014 concerning the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation's (CSIRO) ... (2012) ... paper titled "Anatomy of a catastrophic wildfire: the Black Saturday Kilmore East fire in Victoria, Australia (2012). I agree that information on bushfire statistics should be clear and should not confuse readers ... the fire spread 24 km in an hour" (The Hon Ian Macfarlane MP, Minister for Industry, 15 August 2014).*

A month later, the Victorian government's *Emergency Management Commissioner* also responded to our question on the highest measured rate of extreme bushfire spread. While quoting the same research paper, he chose a lower number, despite evidence to the contrary. His letter stated:

*"Dear Ms Clarkson, A further detailed study of the Kilmore fire was published in 2012. (Anatomy of a catastrophic wildfire: the Black Saturday Kilmore East fire in Victoria, Australia), was referenced at the bottom of the Commissioner's letter ... made the following observations ... the fire speed increased to 9km/h - the fastest it would get ..." (Victorian Emergency Management Commissioner, 10 September 2014).*



**Mr Packham, Professor Gammage, Secretary Clarkson and the author in a park ready to 'explode'**

### Further advice before writing letter 1

On 2 October 2014, four weeks before writing Letter 1 to the Prime Minister, we had two internationally-renowned experts check our local community's bushfire risk level. Their expertise covered different aspects of Australia's extreme bushfire problem. We needed to quantify our concerns, that Australia's extreme bushfires were the worst in the world and our neighbourhood could be at the top of the list, because of the river barrier gridlock problem. Indeed, as already indicated, it was so bad even the government had confirmed our hopeless dilemma with their under-promoted warning video, that the government's propaganda media seemed to ignore (*Don't Wait and See*, 2012).

### David Packham

Mr Packham is known in all bushfire circles, as a readily available 'human encyclopaedia' on all things bushfire. Three days after the *Black Saturday Fires*, speaking on national television, he alone provided focused leadership for a shocked nation, whose government, were seemingly obsessed with propaganda media control. Mr Packham announced to the nation, the new paradigm 'risk estimate' that was facing Australia due to the government's unmitigated extreme bushfire fuel.

### Bill Gammage

Professor Gammage is the most awarded author in Australia's history for his 2011 epic book; *The Biggest Estate on Earth - How Aborigines Made Australia*. His book made clear Australian Aborigines' cool burning prevented the extreme bushfires we now experience, while fertilising and sweetening the soil (Foreword, see photo one, 30 kilowatts per metre prescribed burn). This is the same precious soil, built over the millennia, that extreme bushfires now sterilise in the hundreds of millions of tonnes. This is the soil that is the foundation of existence and takes a thousand years to regenerate in the rocky Australian Alps, our nation's 'Amazon Basin. An experienced writer, Professor Gammage took 13 years researching and writing his book on Aborigines and fire. He earned the respect of everyone for his great work on the interdependence of fire, soil and plants throughout Australian history.

### Packham and Gammage advice

Professor Gammage and Mr Packham's survey of our neighbourhood confirmed our concerns. We were at high risk of extreme bushfire and it was getting worse. Indeed, deliberately and knowingly made worse by the government's unchecked, naturally-seeded saplings, inappropriate old and new plantings and fire exclusion policies. To compound the government's extreme bushfire risk negligence, endless truck loads of extreme bushfire fuel, tree mulch, were being distributed in the suburbs, apparently, without Government care about the deaths this alone will cause.



The author, Bill Gammage and David Packham inspect Elthams deathtrap



## Many lives will be at grievous risk

The subject of our first letter to the Prime Minister was *Australian Disaster Grants*, because those grants were legislated federally. Without that subject, our complaint about warnings would have been a State government responsibility. We had moved on from the State government because they had failed to address our issues since the earliest part of our intense campaigning began in 2009. Letter 1 began with disaster grants and morphed into warnings. It stated:

*"In regard to your national responsibility for Australian disaster grants, would you please write to the Victorian Government and reiterate your Minister's informed statement that the maximum hourly rate of spread of extreme bushfire is '... 24 km in an hour' ... Many Victorian lives will be at grievous risk if the Victorian Government's apparent misinformation is left uncorrected."*

Letter 1 to the Liberal Party of Australia's Prime Minister, ***Australian disaster grants*** (2 November 2014, No.27), received six electronic acknowledgements and three responses; Premiers of Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. The Victorian Minister gave a full two page explanation, concluding with: *"Thank you for raising this matter with me"*.



The future for our suburbs as officially planned, demonstrated in Maui, USA



Murdoch newspaper. Malseed counted column inches, multiplied them by advertising rates for that particular page and so on. He produced charts and diagrams and sent them to the news editor of the paper, with copies to Lachlan Murdoch, who runs this part of his father's empire;

The Murdoch and ABC cases are extraordinary, suggesting as they do an obsessive urge by two media organisations to control what is said about them, when the whole purpose of their existence is to print and broadcast news which, by definition, is something that someone somewhere doesn't want to be known, or said. Free Speech Victoria

## Lessons we have learnt

### 1. Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation (SLAPP)

The SLAPP in time article was given to me by my son, from one of his friends university course work notes. It prompted me to recall a difficult learning period, from which I'd had to move on to 'pay the bills'. It was my first experience with the 'real world' application of the law. On reflection, without prior experience I had survived a serious defamation writ from a multinational media conglomerate. But by suing me, I believe News Ltd perversely validated my system of measuring media bias (fake news). This boosted my credibility enough for me to become a paid consultant in media matters. The 1997 movie 'Wag the dog' had been screened and victims of the propaganda media were beginning to fight back.

This first lesson in the 'real world' application of the law - when your opponent is powerful and you are not - involved the harnessing and micromanagement of a top legal team, who had opposing political views. This was a crucial tactic, to guard against the legal 'old boy' networks. My barrister was Mark Dreyfus, who later became the Australian Government Attorney-General.

### 2. You instruct, I advise

Prior to our 2011/12 'Conflict of Interest' trial (the final part of the government's 2009 to 2012 persecution of us), the best advice we received from our lawyer, was about our responsibility as clients. He told us "You instruct, I advise". When we asked for clarification, he told us he was not our psychologist, but an expensive lawyer with enormous back-up within his national law firm.

**TERRY LANE**  
PROBING THE MOST SERIOUS RESTRICTION  
ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH

## A SLAPP in time

**Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation is Australia's preferred way of dealing with social critics and has become the most serious threat to free speech**

TPA = TRADE PRACTICES ACT.

Alan Gray is a greenie. He loves forests and wants to keep them as God created them. In April 1999, he planned to publish a book called *Forest Friendly Building Timbers*, a consumer guide to timbers and timber substitutes that are strong, useful and not taken from old-growth.

Tim Malseed is an office holder in a suburban branch of the Liberal Party, the Australian equivalent of the Tories. Malseed reckoned that the local free newspaper in his area had a Labor bias. An engineer, and no stranger to statistical analysis, he bought a book on media content analysis and set out to check the bias of the *Diamond Valley News*, a Murdoch newspaper. Malseed counted column inches, multiplied them by advertising rates for that particular page and so on. He produced charts and diagrams and sent them to the news editor of the paper, with copies to Lachlan Murdoch, who runs this part of his father's empire; Senator Richard Alston, the minister for communications; the chairman of the Press Council; and some other perfectly appropriate recipients. What did the news editor of the *Diamond Valley News* do with this information? She sued for defamation.

The Murdoch and ABC cases are extraordinary, suggesting as they do an obsessive urge by two media organisations to control what is said about them, when the whole purpose of their existence is to print and broadcast news which, by definition, is something that someone somewhere doesn't want to be known, or said. Free Speech Victoria believes that the defamation, racial vilification and trade practices laws

Terry Lane is a broadcaster, writer and president of Free Speech Victoria

INDEX ON CENSORSHIP 4 2000 129

Index on censorship, April 2000



Despite our plea, we were coming to the conclusion the Prime Minister had no more power to initiate change, than other politicians. He appeared to us, to be like a puppet, whose strings are pulled by others. Others who were hiding from public view and didn't care about extreme bushfire catastrophes because they were hidden and thus protected from accountability.

### Puppets: under review

Letter 26's last paragraph provided evidence there was a 'policy team' operating out of public view. Were they the real power, the 'faceless men', instructing the politicians we have been told about for the last 50 years? We told the Prime Minister and the many other political VIP recipients:

*"... Opposition Leader **Anthony Albanese** has twice sought Labor Party Policy advice "... forwarded your email through to our policy team for their review"*  
(**firestickestate.com** Letters No.653 of 14 May 2020, and 681 of 30 June 2020).

With the Labor Party leader openly referring to 'our policy team', we wondered if he was admitting parliament was just for show and the real work of making laws was done by 'faceless men'? It was consistent with our belief that politicians were their Political Party's puppets; under review. We found Mr Albanese's written admission unusual, given the politicians alone are the faces on the advertising signs (the 900 by 600 millimetre election signs called core-flutes, that you see everywhere during elections). Elected politicians, not our policy team or 'faceless men', are the names on the 'how to vote cards', to whom we the people are officially forced to chose, or pay a fine. It seemed to us, the Opposition Leader (elected Prime Minister, May 2022) was breaching trust towards the voters, by effectively admitting that he had to wait for others to 'pull his strings'.

### I'm just a spruiker

The first time I was confronted with the notion of a political puppet, was with a face to face meeting with a State Minister. In answer to my question about the 'timing' of his promised response to my request, he replied, *"Tim, I fire the bullets, others make them. I'll get back to you"*. But perhaps more 'telling' and some time later, a former high profile Federal Minister, later Liberal Party of Australia officer, began his speech to a group of party supporters with: *"I'm just a spruiker"*. This candour was appreciated by the 'politically educated' audience, because we all knew this was more than humility, it was the truth (Just to be clear, we understand, Chatham House Rules, a confidentiality custom, ensures the name, but not the content is confidential).



Letter 22 received 21 electronic acknowledgements and 1 response; The Prime Minister, through a 2 page letter from the Minister for Agriculture, wrote: *"...appreciates the time you have taken to bring this matter to his attention...Thank you for bringing your concerns to the Australian Government's attention"*.

## Net biodiversity values up in smoke

In 2013, six years before “... 3 billion animals were killed ...”, two Victorian government Ministers and the *Emergency Management Commissioner* addressed our extreme bushfire risk Paper, elthamsdeathtrap after it was prominently featured on television. The three of them failed to dispute anything or comment on the issue of animal deaths in extreme bushfires. Our 2013 paper explained:

*“The Green dominated Victorian Government’s net biodiversity values continue to go up in smoke. Meanwhile Western Australia has undertaken 50 years of careful macro management of extreme bushfire fuel, protecting the soil, small animals and without a single loss of human life” (Bushfire Death Trap-The Eltham Gateway 2013 Malseed and Packham).*

But, despite the highest level of government, reading this expert advice about the unacceptable risk of unmitigated fuel to animals, six years later “... 3 billion animals were killed ...”. When officially published by the August 2020 *Federal Royal Commission’s Interim Observations*, the shocking scale of these animal deaths, barely raised a whimper from the government, opposition and their propaganda media. We believe the **Australian government** were now exposed as frauds on the worlds most fundamental conservation measure, nett biodiversity values.



*Smokescreen, The Weekly Times 26 August 2020, “the concealment of the truth” (Macquarie)*

## Smokescreen: the government’s plausible deniability destroyed

The first of *The Weekly Times* four ‘blockbuster’ articles was in December 2018 (**Fire risk back to black**), followed by the second in January 2019 (**Fire wire failure**), then the third in October 2019 (**Fuel loads hit extreme**) and now the fourth in August 2020 (**Smokescreen**).

In our opinion *The Weekly Times* article *Smokescreen*, reinforced earlier articles (Chapter 18 **The propaganda busters**) and made the government’s shameful 11 year coverup unsustainable. We believe, Australia’s leading rural newspaper had informed itself about the government’s apparent negligence that led to death and devastation. It seemed the four prominent, well researched and unchallenged articles, destroyed the government’s plausible deniability about apparent criminal negligence for future mass deaths from extreme bushfires.

But the uplifting aspect of *Smokescreen*, nearly two years after the first article, was it left us with no doubt about the newspaper’s intention. We believe *The Weekly Times* had decided to put the interests of its readership, the Australian people, above those of the government. Indeed, to renounce any hint of government propaganda on extreme bushfires, and replace it with professional journalism.