

RECEIVED

18 APR 2007

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL  
RESOURCES COMMITTEE

17th April, 2007

SUBMISSION

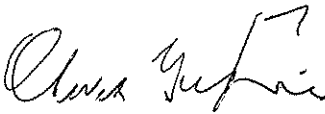
GRAMPIANS FIRES OF JANUARY 2006

NO. 002

Some observations made by O.G of the Mt Lubra fire event, its cause and subsequent action to control or extinguish, before the catastrophe which followed. My qualification can be summarised as follows.

I was personally involved in and observed the Grampians fire of Friday 13th January 1939. All major fires since then as a family member of the farm owners of "Thermopylae" at Mafeking. From 1977 to 1981 I represented the West riding (area almost all burnt in 2006) of the Shire of Ararat as a Councillor and Water Trust Trustee.

1. There is no dispute as to the cause of the Mt Lubra fire, it having begun during storms and lightning prior to Jan 20th 2006 - see Met Bureau records.
2. It is difficult to establish what action was taken by the responsible authority (D.S.E) following the lightning weather event - see report (published) by Geoff Evans of D.S.E (Incident controller).
3. That the fire got away is beyond question as is the ABC announcement prior, which advised listeners "That the public should not be alarmed as there was only one tree alight near Mt William" (see transcript)
4. Issues relating to forrest management, fire prevention and control, availability of water etc are best dealt with by an open, transparent and honest enquiry conducted by a Judge given that the Emergency Commission has yet to make a report (after 15 months) suggests that a full enquiry is unlikely to occur.



Oliver Guthrie