

SUBMISSION

*Building Commission*



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ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL  
RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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The Hon John Pandazopoulos MP  
Chair, Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
Level 8, 35 Spring Street,  
Melbourne, Vic 3000

Dear Mr Pandazopoulos,

**INQUIRY INTO IMPACT OF PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON  
BUSHFIRES IN VICTORIA**

I refer to your letter of 2 April 2007 seeking a submission from the Building Commission to the above Inquiry.

You are advised that although the Building Commission does not have any direct involvement in the matters listed in the terms of reference, we are responsible for building controls relating to the construction of residential buildings in bushfire-prone areas.

The provisions are triggered by regulation 804 in the Building Regulations 2006 which allow councils, after consultation with the chief (fire) officer, to determine areas as being designated bushfire-prone areas. Alternatively, councils may by means of their planning schemes, designate Wildfire Management Overlays (WMO). Once it has been established that a residential building is to be constructed on a site in a designated bushfire-prone area or a WMO, the construction of that building must comply with the Building Code of Australia (BCA). Although the BCA is a nationally adopted performance-based code, detailed specific deemed-to-satisfy requirements are set out in Australian Standard AS3959 – 1999 'Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone Areas'.

The level of construction required for a specific site in a designated bushfire-prone area depends on an assessment of the vegetation on and surrounding that site.

This is a brief snapshot of Victorian building controls relating to the construction of residential buildings in bushfire-prone areas. Should you wish to obtain further detail please contact Peter Nassau in this office on phone 9285 6446.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Norton'.

**Jeff Norton**  
Director Regulatory Development

