

**Submission Text:** This submission reflects my experience as a 25-year resident of Fawcett in the Murrindindi Shire and my direct involvement during and after the January 2026 bushfires. It outlines observations from the day of the fire, including evacuation decisions, the role of local warning systems, and the efforts of the Koriella CFA brigade operating with ageing equipment under extreme conditions.

The submission also highlights the importance of community-led recovery, the emotional impact of losing generational homes and landscapes, challenges caused by underinsurance, and administrative barriers faced when dealing with utilities and recovery systems.

Practical recommendations are provided to improve rural firefighting resources, communication systems, recovery coordination and post-disaster administrative processes.

These observations come from within the Longwood fire footprint and reflect the lived experience of residents directly affected by the fires.