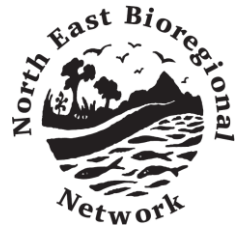


## REVIEW OF FIRE SERVICE ACT

6/9/18



The North East Bioregional Network (NEBN) wishes to make a representation regarding the above.

NEBN is a community based not for profit nature conservation organisation that is focused on the protection, maintenance and ecological restoration of biodiversity in the north east and east coast of Tasmania.

Our members include people who have extensive experience in fire management, fire ecology and on ground fire management. Our ecological restoration project at Skyline Tier for example has used ecological burns as part of the restoration process.

We acknowledge and respect the difficult and dangerous work the fire service and associated agencies undertake to protect life and property.

We have a number of concerns about fire management and its potential impact on biodiversity values. Its concerning that the Review makes virtually no reference to the environment or impact on biodiversity. Some of these issues may fall outside the scope of this Review.

### **Independent membership of fire committees.**

At present there doesn't appear to be any scope or interest in including members from community environment groups on fire committees at State or Local levels (we have attached a recent letter which rejected a request we made for NEBN to be a representative) Our view is that independent conservation representatives who have expertise in fore management are necessary to balance the current dominance of committees with Government agencies

### **LUPA Act/Planning**

Fire management is not exempt from the Break O Day Planning Scheme wherever it could potentially impact on Biodiversity values. To our knowledge none of the authorities that carry out burning in the Break O Day municipality including TFS/PWS etc have ever sought or been granted a permit in Break O Day for fire management activities. We support fire management being a discretionary use under LUPA where there is potential for impacts on biodiversity and also in some cases referral to the EPBC Act when fires are of a large scale and in sensitive locations inhabited by listed threatened species. We do not support the proposed new Statewide Planning Scheme making

advice on issues such as BAL an Acceptable Solution under the Scheme. All information provided by “accredited persons” should be a Performance Criteria ie discretionary so that the community can scrutinise and if necessary object to expert reports.

We also believe that the TFS should actively lobby to ensure that new subdivisions /development is as far as possible directed away from fire prone areas.

### **Other issues**

- **The intervals, intensity and scale of fire management are not always consistent with maintaining biodiversity values. The Fuel Reduction Burn Units quota of 60,000ha per year is not ecologically sustainable.**
- **Ecologically sustainable fire management requires a site specific approach rather than basing assessments on desktop surveys for natural values and needs to take into account ecological condition and characteristics of each site rather than just broad classifications based on time since last fire or whether particular vegetation communities or species are common or “well reserved”.**
- **Impacts of bulldozed fire breaks on the environment. Can cause erosion, create vectors for weeds and diseases such as Phytophthora, create access for rubbish dumping and wood cutting if not closed off/rehabilitated , lack of resources for post burn rehabilitation/weed management etc, hygiene...machinery not cleaned before or after operations**
- **Use of public money to burn native forests to protect tree plantations (mainly owned by international corporations) from fire**
- **Use of PFAS fire suppressant foam which is the subject of widespread investigations across Australia. Is PFAS being injected into peat fires to put them out?**

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