

Attachment 1. Other fire management economic reform opportunities across the spectrum of mitigation, prevention, suppression and recovery.

1. Implement prescribed burning programs across all land tenures to around 8 % of forested areas per annum in order to reduce bushfire areas, risks and associated costs and impacts. Coordinated programs need to be considered.
2. Utilise drones, small planes and helicopters for prescribed burning programs with teams on the ground, these are highly cost effective in terms of reducing fuel loads, improving forest health and improving forest resilience.
3. Review the amount of bushfire funding issued from the Federal government to the state fire services, when minimum prescribed burning targets are inadequate, not met by the states or small prescribed burning rates continue over long periods.
4. Establish and manage policy and systems for creation and maintenance of Australian resilient, low fuel and healthy landscapes, and consider the USA Bipartisan legislation, optimising forest health using prescribed burning and where required forest thinning opportunities.
5. Undertake an economic review the “lock up and leave it” approach to fire management in Australia that is contributing to high and explosive fuel loads.
6. Introduce federal and state government incentives and tax breaks for undertaking sound and preferably cooperative prescribed burning across landscapes and all tenures.
7. Review the range of cost effective opportunities as identified by Deloitte Access Economics (2013), “Building Our Nation’s Resilience to Natural Disasters” for the Australian Business Roundtable for Disaster Resilience and Safer Communities. They note that building more resilient housing in high risk bushfire areas generates a Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) of around 1.4; improved vegetation management (around houses) a BCR of around 1.3, and undergrounding electricity wires results in a BCR of up to 3.1.
8. Review key recommendations of the Menzies Centre report: including *Government funding should prioritise risk reduction which will reduce the need to spend on disaster recovery; Introduction of a National Bushfire Risk Rating (NBRR) system for all bushfire-prone communities, properties and structures; Introduction of a national approach to land use and building codes; Creation of an open access information platform comprising all data required for natural hazard management and Tax reform to improve affordability and increase uptake of insurance.*
9. Review opportunities to reduce insurance premiums, governments at all levels/ communities/ businesses working with the insurance industry on ways to achieve this.
10. Consider incentive approaches for city, town, home and garden bushfire hardening, reducing the risks of bushfire impacts.
11. Undertake federal and state biannual Auditor General audits of bushfire management, any suppression overfocus, prescribed burning management, prescribed burning targets, fuel loads, forest health, landscape resilience and fire fighter, community safety and financial management. A first step would be federal audits of each state.
12. Complete an independent Commonwealth/ all state review of the economic and social impacts, costs and missed opportunities associated with bureaucratic and regulatory bushfire requirements, rules and barriers that apply to bushfire management and prescribed burning. This review should include avoiding the huge combined bushfire impacts on communities, individuals, fire fighters, infrastructure, forest, fauna, water quality, waterways, fish, greenhouse gas generation, air quality and heritage sites by an experienced independent fire officer, the combination of all these impacts is huge in social, economic and environmental terms.