

**Minister for Infrastructure**  
**Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management**

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**17 AUG 2016**

Ms Belinda Clarkson  
Secretary  
Firestick Estate  
4 Felicia Rise  
Diamond Creek VIC 3089

Dear Ms Clarkson

**ACCOUNTABILITY FOR EXTREME BUSHFIRE DEATHS**

I refer to your letter of 4 August 2016 to the Prime Minister and copied to the Premier concerning accountability for extreme bushfire deaths. The Premier has requested me to respond on his behalf.

The Tasmanian Government takes its responsibilities for preparedness and bushfire mitigation very seriously, particularly following the 2009 Black Saturday fires and the Tasmanian bushfires of January 2013.

Following on from the 2009 Victorian Fires and the report of the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, through the State Fire Management Council, a risk analysis of bushfires in Tasmania was undertaken in a tenure blind manner. This report made recommendations regarding the treatment of bushfire risk for the whole state.

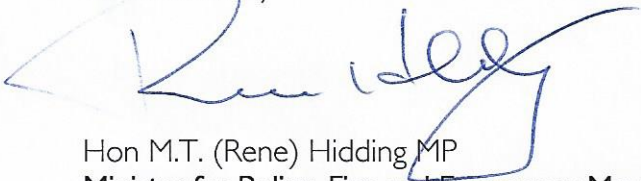
Building on this report a whole-of-government fuel reduction program commenced in July 2014, implementing a program of bushfire mitigation activities in areas of highest risk. The program does not pursue a percentage-area target, but instead is devoted to putting resources where risk is highest. This is informed by risk modelling and community input through ten Fire Management Area Committees covering the entire state.

A key element of the program is identifying and treating risk regardless of tenure, including working with the owners of private bushland who in many cases do not have the knowledge and resources to manage their bushfire risk. The program works in conjunction with the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service, Forestry Tasmania and some local governments, including the conduct of fuel reduction burns by multi-agency teams.

This program also works in parallel with other bushfire resilience programs such as Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods (<http://www.bushfirereadyneighbourhoods.tas.gov.au/>), the Red Hot Tips program (<http://www.sfmc.tas.gov.au/red-hot-tips>) and Community Protection Planning (<http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/Show?pageId=colCommunityProtection>).

I trust this provides you with greater detail about the programs this Government is implementing to proactively mitigate bushfire risk and maximise community preparedness and resilience throughout Tasmania.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rene Hidding', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Hon M.T. (Rene) Hidding MP  
Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management