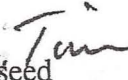


**THE HON IAN MACFARLANE MP****MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY**PO BOX 6022  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

15 AUG 2014

MC14-002406

Mr Tim Malseed  
Short Cut Road  
ELTHAM VIC 3095Dear Mr Malseed 

Thank you for your letter of 23 July 2014 concerning the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation's (CSIRO) paper titled "Anatomy of a catastrophic wildfire: the Black Saturday Kilmore East fire in Victoria, Australia".

I agree that **information on bushfire statistics should be clear and should not confuse readers.** The version of the paper which you enclosed with your letter is a draft and it is possible to confuse references to maximum rate of spread figures with average rates of spread in this document. Readers were referred to the final version at the top of the first page of the draft. The final version is more clear about the figures. The final definitive version of this manuscript was published in *Forest Ecology and Management* and is available at [www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0378112712001223](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0378112712001223).

In the final published version of the paper, the hourly data chart in the paper includes average rates of spread, not the maximum rate of spread. With an average rate of fire spread of  $153 \text{ m min}^{-1}$  (around 9 km/hour) some parts of the fire would have been moving faster and some slower.

It is also important to read the hourly data chart in the context of the text around it. This rate of spread relates to the main fire front and the paper goes on to explain that the main fire axis was elongated by multiple new ignitions from medium and long range spotting. It states that at 17:00 substantial areas remained unburnt behind the leading edge of the fire but in a broad sense, considering fire spread at the landscape scale, **the fire spread 24 km in an hour.**

Thank you for raising your concerns with me. I hope that this letter has clarified the issue.

Yours sincerely

Ian Macfarlane