



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

ANDREW FISHER BUILDING
ONE NATIONAL CIRCUIT
BARTON

Reference: MC16-024203

Belinda Clarkson
Firestick Estate Inc.
4 Felicia Rise
DIAMOND CREEK VIC 3089

Dear Ms Clarkson

Thank you for your letter dated 1 March 2016 to the Prime Minister, the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, on the maximum passage of bushfire over an hour. I have been asked to reply on the Prime Minister's behalf.

As the former Minister for Industry and former Victorian Minister for Police and Emergency Services have previously advised, a fire's rate of spread will vary depending on weather conditions, terrain and fuel load and type. States and Territories, which have primary responsibility for preparedness and warning systems, develop and issue bushfire warnings based on several factors – not just the rate of spread of a fire – including availability of firefighting resources, road closures, the size and composition of nearby communities, and their own professional experience and expertise.

The Commonwealth works closely with states and territories to ensure that Australian communities are prepared for the threat of serious bushfires through programs such as the Commonwealth National Bushfire Mitigation Program. In August 2015, the Minister for Justice, the Hon Michael Keenan MP, committed \$2.7 million to Victoria as part of this program. The Victorian Government matched this contribution, ensuring \$5.4 million is committed to bushfire mitigation across the state over the next three years.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alexandra Caples'.

Alexandra Caples
Senior Advisor, Crisis Management
National Security Division

18 March 2016