

Mr Malcolm Turnbull  
Prime Minister  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

1 October 2015

Dear Prime Minister,

### **Australian disaster grants for extreme bushfires in Victoria**

Your Attorney-General has not responded to my letter of 20 January 2015, despite two letters from your office stating he would (9/2/15 and 14/5/15). In contrast, Premiers from all the bushfire prone States except Victoria, have responded (WA 18/12/14, NSW 5/2/15, SA 9/3/15, TAS 16/6/15 & NSW 14/9/15). Those responses indicate wide scale government concern, though they do not have Australian Government authority.

My unanswered letter relates to extreme bushfire warnings. The Australian Government states the maximum fire spread is 24 kilometres in an hour, while the Victorian Government states it is 9 kilometres in an hour. Roger Underwood, from Western Australia where a 50 year old prescribed burning program has resulted in nil deaths, enhanced forests and lower proportional costs, wrote Victoria's warning system *"...has the potential to lead to an even worse disaster than that experienced on Black Saturday"*. Dr Napthine, the former Liberal Premier of Victoria stated in parliament, that David Packham was *"...probably the most experienced and expert scientist in managing fires"*. David Packham has advised me *"The failure of the Victorian Government to accept the 24km/h estimate for community safety purposes will render the Victorian warning system ineffective"*.

To quickly understand the unacceptable risk this *"ineffective"* warning system creates, one can view your Attorney-General's video about two outer Melbourne bridges becoming death traps in a major bushfire. Titled *"Don't Wait and See"*, the short video demonstrates that your Government is aware of an impending disaster from major bushfire in Victoria. The video states *"...people will not be able to get out of this area if we are impacted by a major bushfire...another big fire...is long overdue...we mustn't fool ourselves that we live in suburbia, we do live in and around the bush..."*. Further, the video states *"...should we have a motor car collision occur anywhere on those two bridges, those 8,000 people or so trying to flee, are going to find it extremely hard...we have bush right up to the edges of the road...it just creates congestion"* ([www.elthamsdeathtrap.com](http://www.elthamsdeathtrap.com)).

As the Prime Minister of Australia obliged to make disaster grants, I respectfully suggest this impending disaster is your responsibility. As part of that responsibility would you please delegate your Attorney-General to reply to my letter of 20 January 2015.

Yours sincerely,



Belinda Clarkson

CC: **Opposition Leader:** Bill Shorten & selected Australian media

<b>State:</b>	<b>Leader:</b>	<b>Opposition Leaders:</b>
Australian Capital Territory	Chief Minister Andrew Barr	Jeremy Hanson
New South Wales	Premier Mike Baird	Luke Foley
Northern Territory	Chief Minister Adam Giles	Michael Gunner
South Australia	Premier Jay Weatherill	Steven Marshall
Tasmania	Premier Will Hodgman	Bryan Green
Queensland	Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk	Lawrence Springborg
Victoria	Premier Daniel Andrews	Matthew Guy
Western Australia	Premier Collin Barnett	Mark McGowan

Belinda Clarkson 4 Felicia Rise Diamond Creek, Victoria 3089  
Email: [pbclarkson@bigpond.com](mailto:pbclarkson@bigpond.com)