



2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 20 April 2009

ROYAL COMMISSION HOLDS PRELIMINARY HEARING

The Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission held its preliminary directions hearing today to consider leave to appear applications.

“Leave to appear has primarily been given to those whose action is likely to be under scrutiny or be questioned by the Royal Commission”, said Commissioner Teague.

“We’ve talked to over 1200 community members in the last month to get a strong indication of the issues, now it is time to hear from those directly involved in planning and response”, said Commissioner Teague.

“Those not granted leave to appear need to know there are other ways to let the Commission know of its concerns”, said Commissioner Teague.

Submissions are the best way for individuals and organisations to provide the Commission with this information.

“We have received many submissions. We hope to receive many more”, said Commissioner Teague, “they are very important and every one is read and analysed carefully”.

Those who submit ‘compelling submissions’ may be given the opportunity to present evidence in a more formal setting.

Counsel Assisting noted that a refusal of a grant of leave does not mean a refusal to the giving of evidence, “It needs to be understood that where “leave to appear” is not granted to an individual this does not mean such person will be denied the opportunity of giving evidence.”

The Commission is seeking to obtain a cross-section of evidence from individuals who have been closely affected by the bushfires through submissions and public hearings.

The submissions and the public hearings build on the twenty-six community consultations that have been held throughout Victoria.

“The consultations have enabled us to hear many stories of heartbreak and distress. They have helped us to see what issues are most important to those most affected by the fires”, said Commissioner Teague.

A list of parties granted leave to appear are attached.

Further applications received today are being considered and will be confirmed later this week.

Attachment A -- Applicants granted unconditional and conditional leave to appear

Unconditional leave to appear

Note: Unconditional leave to appear gives the party permission to be legally represented during the entire hearing period

- Commonwealth Government of Australia
- State Government of Victoria (including Department of Sustainability and Environment, Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority, Country Fire Authority, Victoria Police, Department of Premier and Cabinet, and Department of Justice)
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- Alpine Shire Council
- Ararat Rural City Council
- Ballarat City Council
- Banyule City Council
- Bass Coast Shire Council
- Baw Baw Shire Council
- Bayside City Council
- Benalla Rural City Council
- Boroondara City Council
- Brimbank City Council
- Buloke Shire Council
- Campaspe Shire Council
- Cardinia Shire Council
- Casey City Council
- Central Goldfields Shire Council
- Colac Otway Shire Council
- Corangamite Shire Council
- Darebin City Council
- East Gippsland Shire Council
- Frankson City Council
- Gannawarra Shire Council
- Glen Eira City Council
- Glenelg Shire Council
- Golden Plains Shire Council
- Greater Bendigo City Council
- Greater Geelong City Council
- Greater Shepparton City Council
- Hepburn Shire Council
- Hindmarsh Shire Council
- Hobsons Bay City Council
- Horsham Rural City Council
- Hume City Council
- Indigo Shire Council

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- Kingston City Council
- Knox City Council
- Latrobe City Council
- Loddon Shire Council
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council
- Manningham City Council
- Mansfield Shire Council
- Maribyrnong City Council
- Maroondah City Council
- Melbourne City Council
- Melton Shire Council
- Mildura Rural City Council
- Mitchell Shire Council
- Moria Shire Council
- Monash City Council
- Moonee Valley City Council
- Moorabool Shire Council
- Moreland City Council
- Mornington Peninsula Shire Council
- Mount Alexander Shire Council
- Moyne Shire Council
- Murrindindi Shire Council
- Nillumbik Shire Council
- Northern Grampians Shire Council
- Port Phillip City Council
- Pyrenees Shire Council
- Queenscliffe Borough Council
- South Gippsland Shire Council
- Southern Grampians Shire Council
- Strathbogie Shire Council
- Surf Coast Shire Council
- Swan Hill Rural City Council
- Towong Shire Council
- Wangaratta Rural City Council
- Warrnambool City Council
- Wellington Shire Council
- West Wimmera Shire Council
- Whitehorse City Council
- Whittlesea City Council
- Wodonga City Council
- Wyndham City Council
- Yarra City Council
- Yarra Ranges Shire Council
- Yarriambiack Shire Council

Conditional leave to Appear

Note: Conditional leave to appear gives the party permission to be legally represented regarding specific matters pertaining to the terms of reference

- United Fire Fighters Union of Australia
- Australian Worker's Union
- Insurance Council of Australia
- Housing Industry Association
- Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria
- SP Australia Networks (Transmission) Ltd, SP Australia Networks (Distribution) Ltd and SP Australia Networks (Finance) Trust
- Police Association of Victoria
- Australian Broadcasting Corporation
- Australian Institute of Architects Victorian Chapter
- Telstra Corporation Limited
- ACE Radio Broadcasters Pty Ltd
- Master Builders Association
- Powecorp Australia Limited