

# Australian reviews and inquiries into the natural disasters of the 2019–20 summer

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Following the extensive bushfires in the 2019–20 summer, Australia has established a number of reviews and inquiries at the national, state and territory levels. Most of these reports will be published in the months ahead.

The list detailing the current reviews and the URL link to reports are provided in three sections:

- previous reviews and inquiries into Australian bushfires
- selected analyses of the 2019–20 summer bushfire season (Table 1)
- government-led reviews and inquiries (Table 2).

## Previous reviews and inquiries into Australian bushfires

- Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre: Disaster Inquiries Database 2019 provides an extensive collation and analysis of over 300 reviews and inquiries of bushfires in Australia. At: [www.bnhcrc.com.au/news/2019/inquiries-housed-database](http://www.bnhcrc.com.au/news/2019/inquiries-housed-database).
- Cole L, Dovers S, Eburn M & Gough M2017, *Major post-event inquiries and reviews: review of recommendations*. At: [www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/bnh-4392](http://www.bnhcrc.com.au/publications/biblio/bnh-4392). This provides a structured review and analysis of recommendations from previous Reviews / Inquiries of bushfires in the Australia.
- Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements 2020, Background Paper: Australian inquiries and reports concerning natural disasters. At: <https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2020-05/apo-nid303949.pdf>.
- NSW Rural Fire Service Library, Bush Fire Post Event Reviews and Inquiries. At: <http://nswrfs.intersearch.com.au/cgi-bin/koha/opac-showpage.pl?pageid=Bush+Fire+Post+Event+Reviews>.
- Forrest Fire Management Victoria, Previous Reviews and Inquiries. At: [www.ffm.vic.gov.au/history-and-incidents/reviews-and-inquiries](http://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/history-and-incidents/reviews-and-inquiries).
- Australian Government, Senate Committees. Previous bushfire inquiries. At: [www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Former\\_Committees/agric/completed\\_inquiries/2008-10/bushfires/report/c02](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Former_Committees/agric/completed_inquiries/2008-10/bushfires/report/c02).

Table 1: Selected analyses of the 2019–20 summer season.

Jurisdiction	Review body	Report title	Numbers of recommendations
Nil	Peer-reviewed journal paper	• Filkov AI, Ngo N, Matthews S, Telfer S & Penman FD 2020, <i>Impact of Australia's catastrophic 2019/20 bushfire season on communities and environment. Retrospective analysis and current trends</i> , <i>Journal of Safety Science and Resilience</i> , vol. 1, issue 1, September 2020, pp.44–56. At: <a href="http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666449620300098">www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666449620300098</a> .	Nil
Nil	Peer-reviewed journal paper	• Arriagada NB, Palmer AJ, Bowman DMJS, Morgan GS, Jalaludin BB & Johnston FH 2020, <i>Unprecedented smoke-related health burden associated with the 2019–20 bushfires in eastern Australia</i> , <i>Medical Journal of Australia</i> , published online: 23 March 2020. doi: 10.5694/mja2.50545	Nil
New South Wales	Climate Council of Australia	• Hughes L, Steffen W, Mullins G, Dean A, Weisbrot E & Rice M 2020, <i>Summer of Crisis</i> , <i>Climate Council of Australia Limited</i> . At: <a href="http://www.climatecouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Crisis-Summer-Report-200311.pdf">www.climatecouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Crisis-Summer-Report-200311.pdf</a> .	34-page review
New South Wales	Grattan Institute	• Duckett S, Mackey W & Stobart A 2020, <i>The health effects of the 2019–20 bushfires</i> <i>Submission to the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements</i> . Grattan Institute. At: <a href="https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Grattan-Institute-submission-to-Royal-Commission.pdf">https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Grattan-Institute-submission-to-Royal-Commission.pdf</a> .	18-page review

Table 2: Government-led reviews and inquiries into the 2019–20 summer bushfire season.

Jurisdiction	Review body	Report title	Numbers of recommendations
National	Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royal Commission website (<a href="https://naturaldisaster.royalcommission.gov.au/">https://naturaldisaster.royalcommission.gov.au/</a>).</li> <li>• Royal Commission Interim Observations (<a href="https://naturaldisaster.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/interim-observations-1">https://naturaldisaster.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/interim-observations-1</a>).</li> <li>• No recommendations, released 31 August 2020.</li> <li>• Draft propositions by Counsel Assisting, released 3 September 2020 (<a href="https://naturaldisaster.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/draft-propositions">https://naturaldisaster.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/draft-propositions</a>).</li> <li>• Final report expected 28 October 2020.</li> </ul>	Five background papers Four issues papers Submissions available online
National	Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lessons to be learned in relation to the Australian bushfire season 2019–20</i>. At: <a href="http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Finance_and_Public_Administration/BushfireRecovery">www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Finance_and_Public_Administration/BushfireRecovery</a>.</li> <li>• Submissions and public hearings closed.</li> <li>• Report scheduled by the last sitting day of the Parliament in 2021.</li> </ul>	Submissions and public hearings available online
Queensland	Inspector-General Emergency Management, Queensland	• <i>Queensland Bushfires Review 2019–20, Report 2: 2019–20</i> . Released 20 February 2020. At: <a href="http://www.igem.qld.gov.au/queensland-bushfires-review-2019-20">www.igem.qld.gov.au/queensland-bushfires-review-2019-20</a> .	72-page review of progress on recommendations from the 2018 bushfires in Queensland
New South Wales	Independent, State Government appointed	• Owens D, O’Kane M, <i>Final Report NSW Bushfire Inquiry</i> . Released 13 July 2020. At: <a href="http://www.nsw.gov.au/nsw-government/projects-and-initiatives/nsw-bushfire-inquiry">www.nsw.gov.au/nsw-government/projects-and-initiatives/nsw-bushfire-inquiry</a> .	460-page review with 76 recommendations
Australian Capital Territory	Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety  Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Review of ACT emergency services responses to the 2019–20 bushfire season</i>. At: <a href="http://www.parliament.act.gov.au/parliamentary-business/in-committees/committees/standing-committees-current-assembly/standing-committee-on-justice-and-community-safety/review-of-act-emergency-services-responses-to-the-2019-20-bushfire-season#tab1537116-2id">www.parliament.act.gov.au/parliamentary-business/in-committees/committees/standing-committees-current-assembly/standing-committee-on-justice-and-community-safety/review-of-act-emergency-services-responses-to-the-2019-20-bushfire-season#tab1537116-2id</a>.</li> <li>• Scheduled to report during 2020.</li> </ul>	Submissions closed Hearings completed
Australian Capital Territory	Independent external consultants, Synergy Group	• <i>ACT Emergency Services Agency Operational Review of the Bushfire Season 2019/20</i> . At: ACT Emergency Services Agency Operational Review of the Bushfire Season 2019/20. Released 20 August 2020. At: <a href="http://www.esa.act.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/ACT%20Emergency%20Services%20Agency%20Operational%20Review%20of%20the%20Bushfire%20Season%202019-20.PDF">www.esa.act.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/ACT%20Emergency%20Services%20Agency%20Operational%20Review%20of%20the%20Bushfire%20Season%202019-20.PDF</a> .	121-page review with 31 recommendations
Australian Capital Territory	Internal	• Johnson R 2020, <i>Report to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services on ACT Government coordination and response during the 2019–20 Bushfire Season</i> . Released 20 August 2020. At: <a href="https://esa.act.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/Report%20on%20ACT%20Gov%20Coord%20%20Response%20during%202019-20%20Bushfire%20Season.pdf">https://esa.act.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-08/Report%20on%20ACT%20Gov%20Coord%20%20Response%20during%202019-20%20Bushfire%20Season.pdf</a> .	38-page review with 4 recommendations
Victoria	Inspector-General Emergency Management, Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent Inquiry 2019–2020 Victorian Fire Season. At: <a href="http://www.igem.vic.gov.au/vicfires-inquiry">www.igem.vic.gov.au/vicfires-inquiry</a>.</li> <li>• <i>Inquiry into the 2019–20 Victorian fire season Phase 1 Community and sector preparedness for and response to the 2019–20 fire season</i>. At: <a href="http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/file_uploads/Inquiry_into_the_2019-20_Victorian_Fire_Season_wqcRWCNG.pdf">www.parliament.vic.gov.au/file_uploads/Inquiry_into_the_2019-20_Victorian_Fire_Season_wqcRWCNG.pdf</a>.</li> <li>• Phase 2 Report ‘Relief and Recovery’ due mid 2021.</li> </ul>	376-page review with 17 recommendations
South Australia	Government of South Australia	• <i>Independent Review into South Australia's 2019–20 Bushfire Season</i> . Released June 2020. At: <a href="https://safecom-files.s3.amazonaws.com/current/docs/Independent%2520Review%2520into%2520SA%2527s%25202019-20%2520Bushfire%2520Season%2520-%2520Web%2520Upload.pdf">https://safecom-files.s3.amazonaws.com/current/docs/Independent%2520Review%2520into%2520SA%2527s%25202019-20%2520Bushfire%2520Season%2520-%2520Web%2520Upload.pdf</a> .	168-page review with 15 recommendations