



Tuesday 25 February 2020

Australians identify lack of hazard reduction as the main reason for bushfires

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) has noted the results of a Newspoll published in the Australian this week which found a majority of those surveyed believed insufficient hazard reduction was the main reason for the severity of the summer bushfires.

The Newspoll, published on Monday, asked the question: “Which do you think was the main cause of the severity of the recent bushfires?”

Of the over 1500 people polled, 56 per cent cited inadequate hazard reduction.

AFPA Chief Executive Officer Ross Hampton said the Newspoll shows the community clearly understands Australia must do more to reduce bushfire risk, and that should take a whole-of-landscape approach which incorporates mechanical fuel reduction to complement hazard reduction burns.

“This fire season has shown that the multiple approaches by multiple land managers and agencies when it comes to fuel load reduction isn’t working,” he said.

“In many fire prone countries the use of Mechanical Fuel Reduction alongside hazard reduction burns has proven highly effective in keeping communities safe and helping preserve forests areas.”

“The terms of reference for the Royal Commission into the bushfires include ‘preparedness and resilience responsibilities, which includes land management and hazard reduction measures’.

“We are urging the commission to investigate Mechanical Fuel Reduction as part of its review. Now the results of this Newspoll show Australians understand that reducing fuel loads in our forests is a priority.”

“AFPA recently released a report, [Using Fire and Machines to Better Fire-Proof Our Country Towns](#), which makes the case for mechanical fuel reduction, showing its effectiveness overseas, and providing examples where it could have reduced bushfire risk in Australia.”

ENDS

Media Contact:

Campbell Cooney

AFPA Senior Communications Manager

(m) 0497 497 005 (e) campbell.cooney@ausfpa.com.au