

APPENDIX B – FIRE IN SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA: A SUMMARY

This appendix summarises the major fire events in New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory from December 1938 to December 2007.¹

Date	Location	Impact Summary
NEW SOUTH WALES		
December 1938 – January 1939	Dubbo, Lugarno, Snowy Mountains, Canberra	Deaths: 13 People rendered homeless: 1,000 Buildings: many houses ² Livestock: 10,000 Area burnt: 73,000 hectares ³
November 1951 – January 1952	Wagga Wagga and district, Pilliga	Deaths: 11 ⁴ Area burnt: more than 4 million hectares ⁵
December 1957 – 1958	Blue Mountains, Leura	Deaths: 4 ⁶ Buildings: 170 Area burnt: more than 2 million hectares ⁷
September 1968 – January 1969	South Coast	Deaths: 14 People rendered homeless: 600 Buildings: more than 200 Area burnt: more than 2 million hectares ⁸
December 1974 – January 1975	Bourke to Balranald, Cobar Shire, Moolah–Corinya—most of the Western Division	Deaths: 3 ⁹ Buildings: 50 Livestock: 50,000 Fencing: 10,170 kilometres Area burnt: 4.5 million hectares ¹⁰
December 1979 – February 1980	Mudgee, Warrindah and Sutherland Shires, Goulburn, South Coast	Deaths: 5 ¹¹ People rendered homeless: 50 Buildings: 14 Area burnt: more than 1 million hectares
1984 – 1985	Western Division	Deaths: 4 ¹² Livestock: 40,000 Area burnt: 3.5 million hectares
July 2002 – February 2003	81 local government areas in Greater Sydney, Hunter, North Coast, Northern Tablelands, North-west Slopes, North-west Plains, Central Tablelands, Southern Tablelands, Illawarra, South Coast	Deaths: 2 ¹³ Buildings: 86 houses ¹⁴ Livestock: 3,400 ¹⁵ Area burnt: 1.464 million hectares ¹⁶
SOUTH AUSTRALIA		
1957 – January 1958	Mt Gambier	Deaths: 8 Area burnt: 1,370 hectares (pine plantation)
1974 – 1975	North-west of state	Deaths: Nil Area burnt: 16 million hectares ¹⁷
February 1983 (including Ash Wednesday II)	Mt Osmond, Mt Gambier, South Barwon	Deaths: 28 Buildings: 333 Livestock: 250,000 Fencing: more than 10,000 kilometres Area burnt: more than 260,000 hectares
January 2005	Eyre Peninsula, Adelaide Hills	Deaths: 9 Buildings: 337 ¹⁸ Livestock: 47,000 Fencing: 6,304 kilometres ¹⁹ Area burnt: more than 145,000 hectares
December 2007	Kangaroo Island	Deaths: 1 Area burnt: 95,000 hectares

Date	Location	Impact Summary
TASMANIA		
December 1966 – February 1967 (including Black Tuesday 7 February 1967)	South-east, Hobart	Deaths: 62 People rendered homeless: 7,000 Buildings: approx. 4,000 Livestock: 60,000 sheep; 1,350 cattle; 600 pigs; 500 horses; 24,000 chickens Fencing: 5,400 kilometres Area burnt: 270,000 hectares ²⁰
February 1982	Launceston, Hobart, Broadmarsh	Deaths: 1 Buildings: 46 Livestock: 3,000 Area burnt: more than 40,000 hectares ²¹
November 2002 – March 2003	Including Flinders Island, northern fringe of Hobart	Deaths: Nil Buildings: 13 Livestock: several hundred ²² Area burnt: 52,000 hectares ²³
WESTERN AUSTRALIA		
January 1961 – March 1961	Dwellingup and south-west of state	Deaths: Nil Buildings: 160 Area burnt: 1.8 million hectares
1 April 1978	South-west of state	Deaths: 2 Buildings: 6 Livestock: 2,500 Area burnt: 31,500 hectares
15 December 1997	Perth and south-west of state	Deaths: 2 Buildings: 15 Livestock: over 10,000 Area burnt: 22,450 hectares
December 2007 – January 2008	Boorabbin National Park	Deaths: 3 Area burnt: 29,000 hectares
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY		
November 1938 – January 1939	Uriarra, Mt Franklin, Tidbinbilla, Cuppacumbalong, Booroomba, Lanyon	Deaths: 1 Livestock: 2,000 Fencing: 545 kilometres ²⁴ Area burnt: 30% of territory
December 1951 – February 1952	Molongolo valley, Mt Stromlo, Red Hill, Woden Valley, Tuggeranong, Mugga Hill	Deaths: 3 Buildings: 42 ²⁵ Livestock: 10,000 Fencing: several hundred kilometres Area burnt: 10,000 hectares ²⁶
March 1985	Mugga Lane, Red Hill, Mount Majura, Tharwa, Symonstown, Googong–Queanbeyan area	Deaths: 1 Livestock: 7,000 ²⁷ Area burnt: 10,000 hectares ²⁸
January 2003	Namadgi National Park, Uriarra, Pierces Creek and Stromlo settlements, Cotter, Corin, Tidbinbilla, Mt Stromlo, Duffy, Holder, Chapman, Kambah, Curtin, Lyons, Murrumbidgee valley, Coppins Crossing	Deaths: 4 Buildings: 581 Livestock: 4,185 Area burnt: approx. 160,000 hectares

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- 1 Unless otherwise indicated all statistics in this appendix are drawn from Exhibit 726 – Emergency Management Australia Disasters Database. See all at RSCH.041.001.0001
 - 2 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2336
 - 3 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2336
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 - 5 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2336
 - 6 The National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management recorded five deaths as a result of these fires: Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2336
 - 7 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2336
 - 8 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2336
 - 9 The National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management recorded six deaths as a result of these fires: Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2337
 - 10 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2337
 - 11 The National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management recorded 13 deaths as a result of these fires: Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2337
 - 12 The National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management recorded five deaths as a result of these fires: Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2337
 - 13 The National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management recorded three deaths as a result of these fires: Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2337
 - 14 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2337
 - 15 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2337
 - 16 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2337
 - 17 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2340
 - 18 Exhibit 726 – South Australian Country Fire Service – Bushfire History (RSCH.030.001.0388) at 0390
 - 19 Exhibit 726 – South Australian Country Fire Service – Bushfire History (RSCH.030.001.0388) at 0390
 - 20 Exhibit 726 – NSW Parliamentary Library Research Service – Bushfires – Briefing Paper No 5/02 (RSCH.016.001.1136) at 1145
 - 21 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2340
 - 22 Exhibit 160 – A Nation Charred: Report on the Inquiry into Bushfires (EXH.160.0001) at 0365
 - 23 Exhibit 160 – A Nation Charred: Report on the Inquiry into Bushfires (EXH.160.0001) at 0365
 - 24 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2337
 - 25 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2337
 - 26 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2337
 - 27 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2338
 - 28 Exhibit 726 – National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management (RSCH.004.003.1961) at 2338