

FIRE UPDATE

BUSHFIRE CRC NEWSLETTER DECEMBER/JANUARY 2012-13



◀ MP Gai Brodtmann presents Dr Richard Thornton with the Resilient Australia Award.

NATIONAL AWARD FOR BUSHFIRE CRC

The impact of the collective Bushfire CRC research program over the last decade has been recognised by a Highly Commended award in this year's national Resilient Australia Awards.

The program of research projects by the Bushfire CRC was in the Nationally Significant and Cross Jurisdictional Category of the awards, presented in Canberra on Thursday 6 December.

The award citation acknowledged that the Bushfire CRC work had led to many community benefits across Australia and New Zealand.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The call for abstracts for the 2013 Bushfire CRC and AFAC conference is now open, with abstracts to be submitted online by 15 February 2013. The theme of the conference, to be held in Melbourne from 2-5 September, is 'Shaping Tomorrow Together'. For more information visit afac2013.org

CEO of the Bushfire CRC, Gary Morgan, welcomed the award on behalf of all the partners. "This award is a welcome acknowledgement that collaborative fire research conducted on a national scale is an effective investment in the safety of our communities and the people that serve them.

"Fire is part of our past, present and future – both as a damaging force and as a vital component to healthy ecosystems. The Bushfire CRC exists so everyone can learn how to better live with fire – at home, at work and in the natural environment," Mr Morgan said.

AGM OUTCOMES

The members of the Bushfire CRC endorsed two new Directors of the Governing Board, Yvonne Snedden and Victorian Fire Services Commissioner Craig Lapsley, at the Annual General Meeting on 22 November.

Bushfire CRC Chairman Len Foster welcomed them both and the new CEO of AFAC Stuart Ellis, to the Board. The new appointments follow the retirements of Naomi Brown and Ewan Waller, and the resignation from the Board of Professor Mark Adams and Jo-Anne Block.

Mr Foster said: "On behalf of the stakeholders of the Bushfire CRC, I would like to thank Ms Brown, Mr Waller, Professor Adams and Ms Block for their dedication to advancing fire science and research in Australia and New Zealand."

The members endorsed the resolution that all Directors' terms be extended to June 2014.

CEO'S BLOG GARY MORGAN



As 2012 ends, most of our research projects are producing solid outputs in the final stages of their three year funding. By July 2013, Australian Government funding for national fire research will stop, but good financial management has left us with a budget to last well into 2014 to see that the research is properly taken up by all our partners. The challenge now is to find new money for new research.

We are still getting the full details on the recent Standing Council on Police and Emergency Management announcement to apply for a Disaster Resilience CRC. This bid would most likely be in the next round, which means after the long competitive process, winners would be announced in December 2013 and the first dollars would flow in July 2014. That leaves a full 12 months from the end of our CRC federal funding until new funding comes in, which by no means is ever guaranteed.

The Bushfire CRC is planning for a bigger and bolder future, with a broader funding base that would keep the momentum from the current research program going. We are talking with AFAC and the wider industry, universities and with other parts of the Federal Government on that.

I trust things will become clearer in the New Year. Either way, the Board is focused on what our partners have long wanted – an ongoing future for national fire research.

On behalf of the Board and the staff at your Bushfire CRC, thank you to all of you in the wider Bushfire CRC community for your superb efforts over the past year.

My very best wishes to you and your family for a happy Christmas and a safe and successful New Year.

Find the full blog at www.bushfirecrc.com/blog/gary-morgan



◀ Historians Tom Griffiths (centre) and Christine Hansen, launched their book, *Living with fire: People, nature and history in Steels Creek* to the Steels Creek community in late November with the support of the Bushfire CRC. The authors are pictured here with Victorian Fire Services Commissioner Craig Lapsley (left), Dr Richard Thornton and CFA Deputy Chief Officer Steve Warrington. Steels Creek was hit hard by the Victorian Black Saturday bushfires in 2009.

RESEARCH BLOG

RICHARD THORNTON



The year comes to a close with 2012 being one of the most rewarding for a long time.

We have continued to deliver great science of use to our end users. Our science metrics have improved out of sight over the last few years. We are now seeing the vast majority of our work appearing in high quality journals.

We got an extremely positive review from the CRC Program earlier this year, highlighting the work we are doing with our agencies. This review tested all aspects of the Bushfire CRC's business and found us to be in a sound position and delivering impacts for the industry. We have also probably run more media on the work of the Bushfire CRC than any other time since Black Saturday.

While we managed to get the Commonwealth to extend the Bushfire CRC's contract to July 2014, it came with no new money.

The Bushfire CRC is confident in being able to work through this and the Board is working hard on new business models to ensure that the research can continue. But one thing is clear, the best way to ensure our ongoing success is to focus on the delivery of our world class research and ensure that we work with our end users to ensure it is used and continues to demonstrate the impact.

I am sure that 2013, our tenth year, will see further successes for the Bushfire CRC and whatever we transition into.

RESEARCH WITH REAL IMPACT

An evaluation of research in Australian universities with the highest impact has placed projects with Bushfire CRC links at the very top of the scale.

The Group of Eight and the Australian Technology Network of universities have completed a trial to assess the impact of their research.

The report "Excellence in Innovation: Research Impacting Our Nation's Future – assessing the benefits" summarises the top 20 of such case studies, each of which received an "outstanding" or "very considerable" impact rating for social, environmental or economic impacts.

The three projects with Bushfire CRC links were:

- Bushfire Community Safety, RMIT University

- Savanna Burning, Emerging Carbon Economies and Indigenous Social and Economic Development, Charles Darwin University.
- Investment Framework for Environmental Resources (INFFER), University of Western Australia.

Gary Morgan, CEO of the Bushfire CRC, said the report showed that our researchers were using the best practice tools and methodologies in their projects. "This report reassures us that what we are doing is both of high quality and high impact. It also shows the impact of the CRC Program more broadly, with several CRCs referred to in high regard."

STUDENT BLOG **LYNDSAY WRIGHT**

We are mindful that there are many students who are not directly involved with the Bushfire CRC but whose areas of research are likely to be of significant interest to our stakeholders. We recognise these students may benefit from the exposure being affiliated with the Bushfire CRC would bring. In response, these students have the opportunity to become Bushfire CRC Associate Students. Full details of what an Associate Student is are available on the [website](#).

If you are aware of any students who may be interested in taking up this opportunity they should send me an [email](#) telling me a little about themselves and their area of research.

COMMUNICATIONS BLOG

DAVID BRUCE



The end of the year coincides with the release of three important publications of our fire research – each will be

distributed to partners in the New Year.

Firstly, the 101st *Fire Note* has just been released. This is a milestone for bushfire research in Australia with so many succinct briefing papers on the major research issues in fire. A special limited edition compilation

of all the *Fire Notes* has just been published in a book format.

Secondly, all 85 research posters from this year's annual conference in Perth have been compiled into a single publication. This is a great resource for getting your head quickly around everything that is going on in fire research.

Thirdly, the annual report is now out in a more readable format than what is submitted in a template to the CRC Program. If you want to know everything your Bushfire CRC has been up to in the last 12 months, this is the document you need.