

The HighFire Risk Project

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Judge upholds one ACT bushfire report challenge

Posted Wed Apr 8, 2009 3:35pm AEST
Updated Wed Apr 8, 2009 4:39pm AEST

The ACT Chief Justice has dismissed an application to strike out adverse statements about four senior emergency staff involved in the 2003 Canberra fires, with the exception of one comment.

Four senior emergency services staff Peter Lucas-Smith, Mike Castle, Tony Graham and Rick McRae challenged 41 comments Coroner Maria Doogan made about them in the scathing report handed down in 2006.

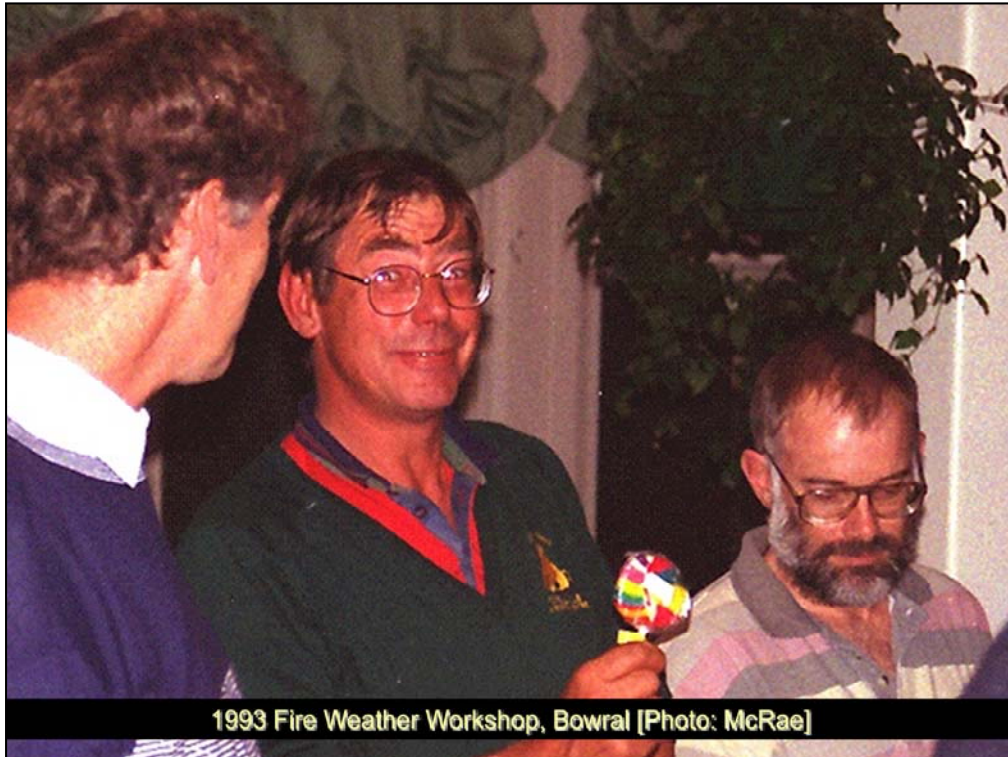
Today in the ACT Supreme Court, Chief Justice Terence Higgins found that the Coroner was entitled to make all the comments, with the exception of one.

He ruled that the assertion that the plaintiffs "knew" that fire "would burn into Canberra" overstated the evidence to an impermissible degree.

Justice Higgins found that it was open for the plaintiffs and others to have perceived it to be a risk that they perceived it to be.

Chief Justice Terence Higgins found the Coroner's comments did not fully acknowledge the good the plaintiffs did. (ABC News: File photo)

With the media, perspective is all important... [Source: unknown]



1993 Fire Weather Workshop, Bowral [Photo: McRae]

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Mistakes made in assessing bushfire risk

By Jane Cowan

Posted Tue Feb 9, 2010 10:46am AEDT

Updated Tue Feb 9, 2010 11:57am AEDT

The Royal Commission into Black Saturday has heard that if authorities had properly mapped Victoria's bushfire risk, all of Marysville would probably have been recognised in planning schemes as being in danger.

The CFA's Director of Community Safety, Lisa Sturzenegger told the commission that research predating Black Saturday showed bushfires claimed 85 per cent of homes within 100 metres of thick vegetation.



ex postfacto commentary... [Source: ABC News on-line]

She said the mapping of Victoria's fire hazards was

Shortcomings of current bushfire risk management practices in and around the high-country

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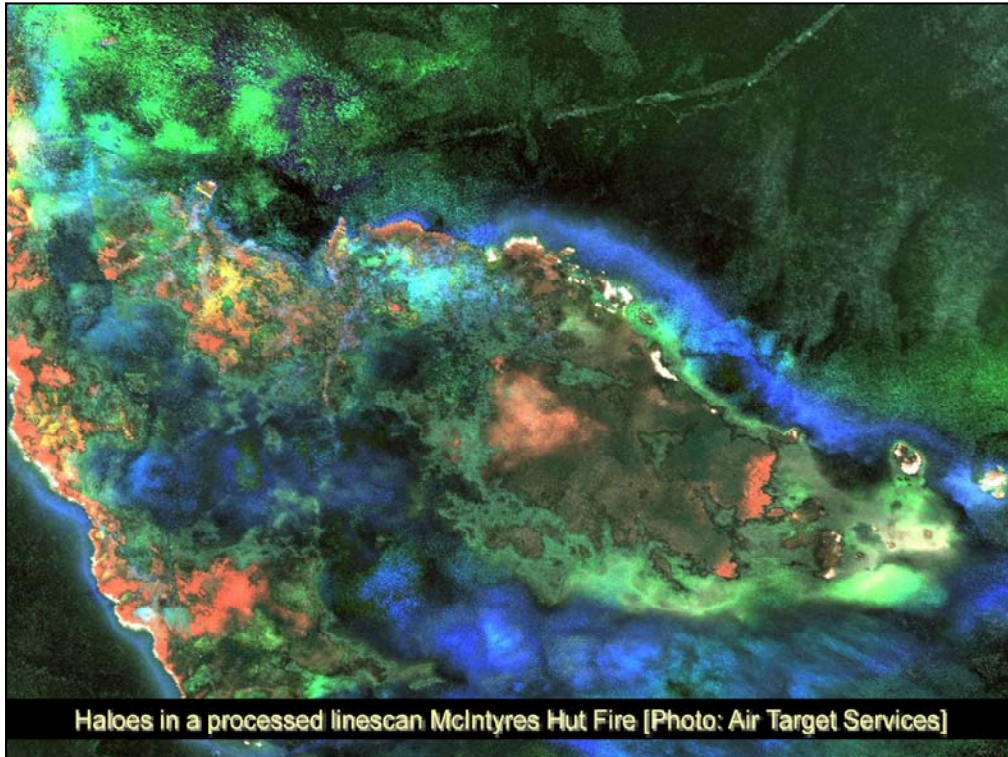
A fuel reduction burn, Brindabella Valley [Photo: McRae]

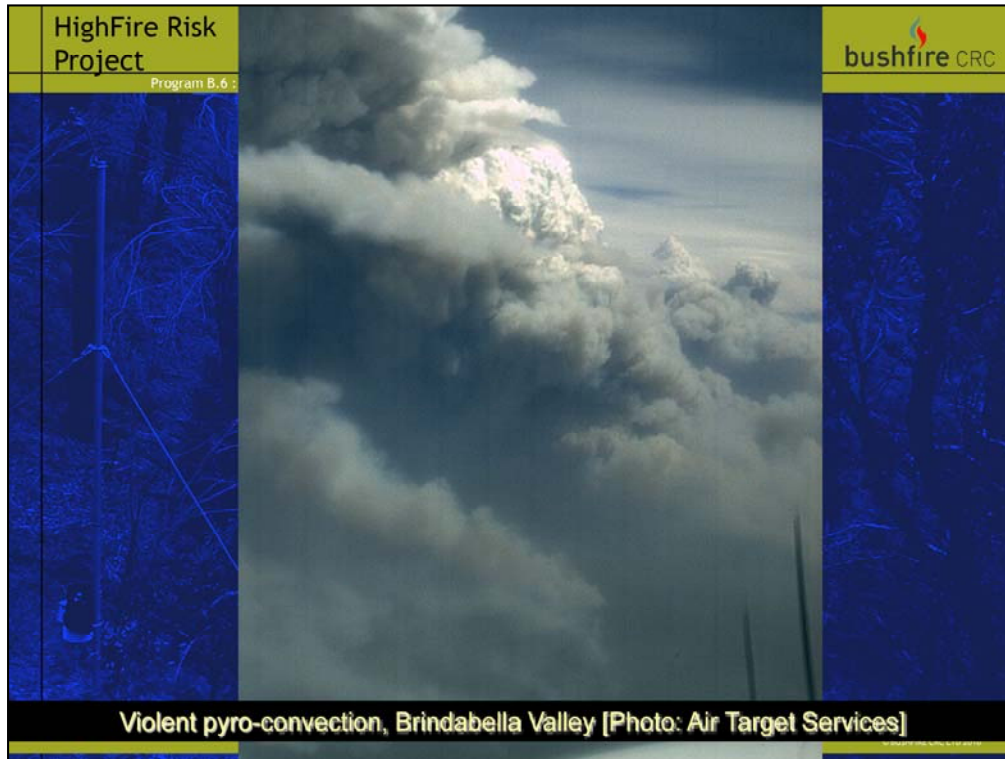


Destroyed house, Duffy [Photo: CSIRO]



Fire on a knoll, Tuggeranong Hill [Photo: McRae]





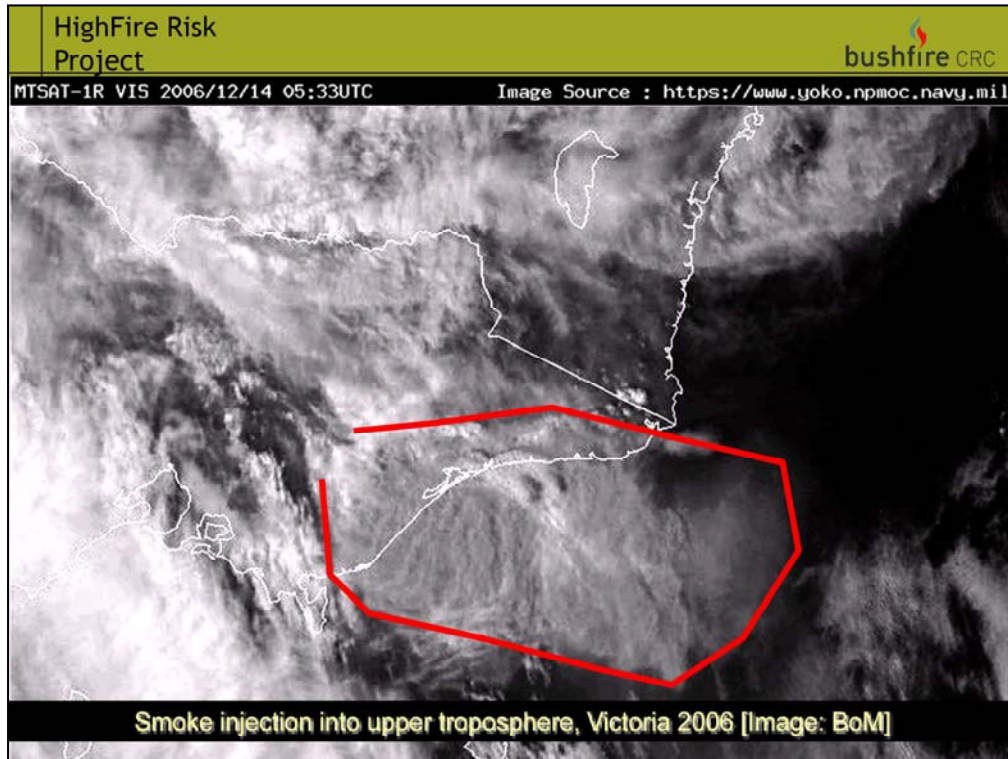




Fire in undulating terrain, Molonglo River [Photo: McRae]



Fire in rugged terrain, Tinderry Ranges [Photo: Forbes, ACTESA]

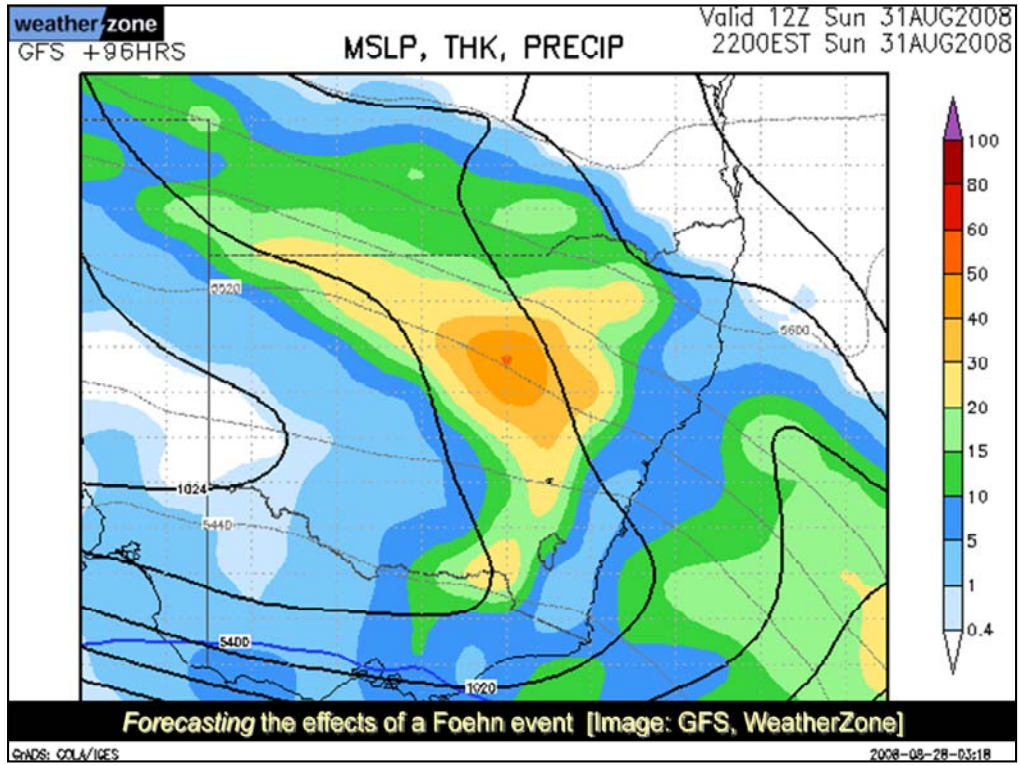


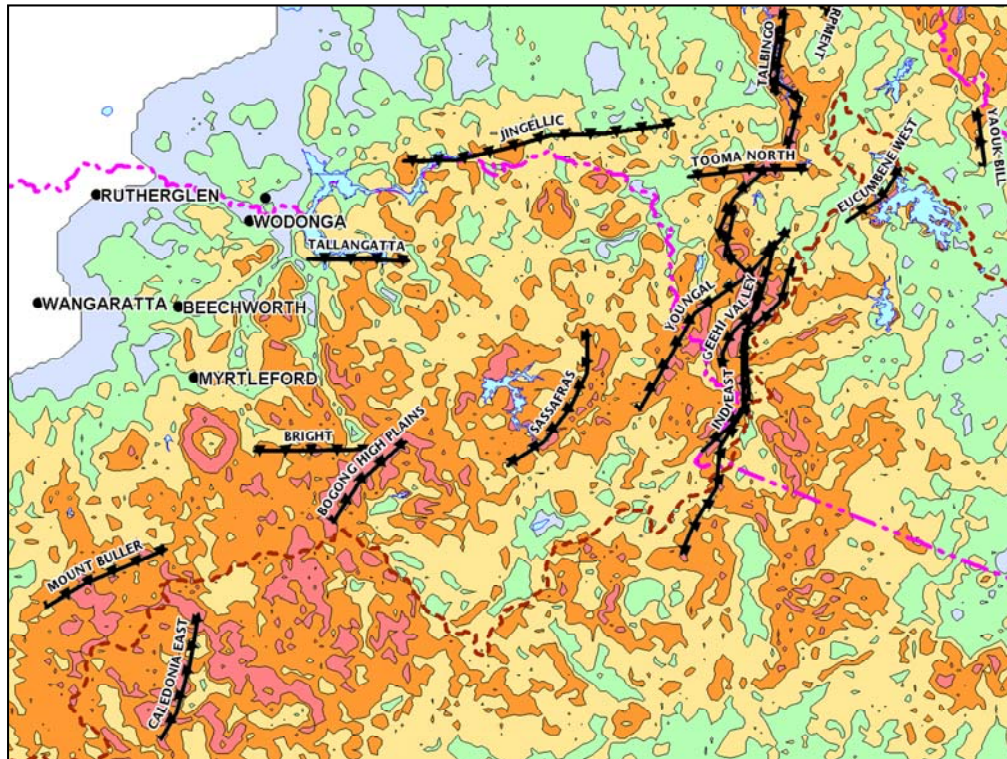
- **The new fire triangle?**

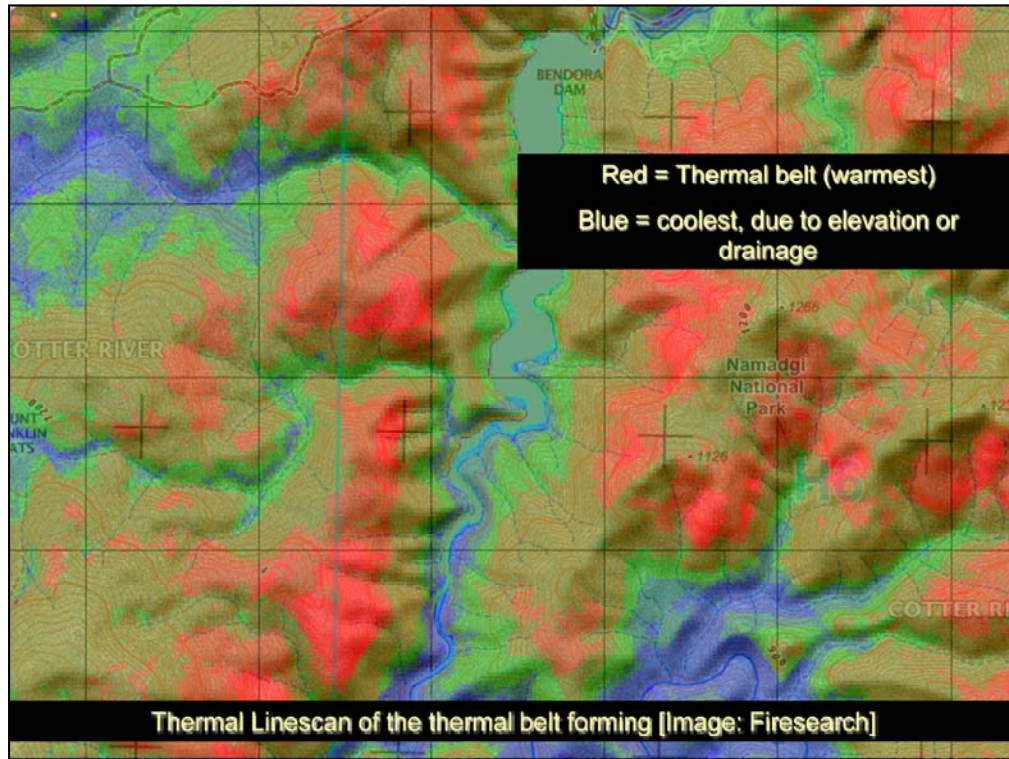




Channelling, Tinderrys Fire [Photo: Forbes, ACTESA]









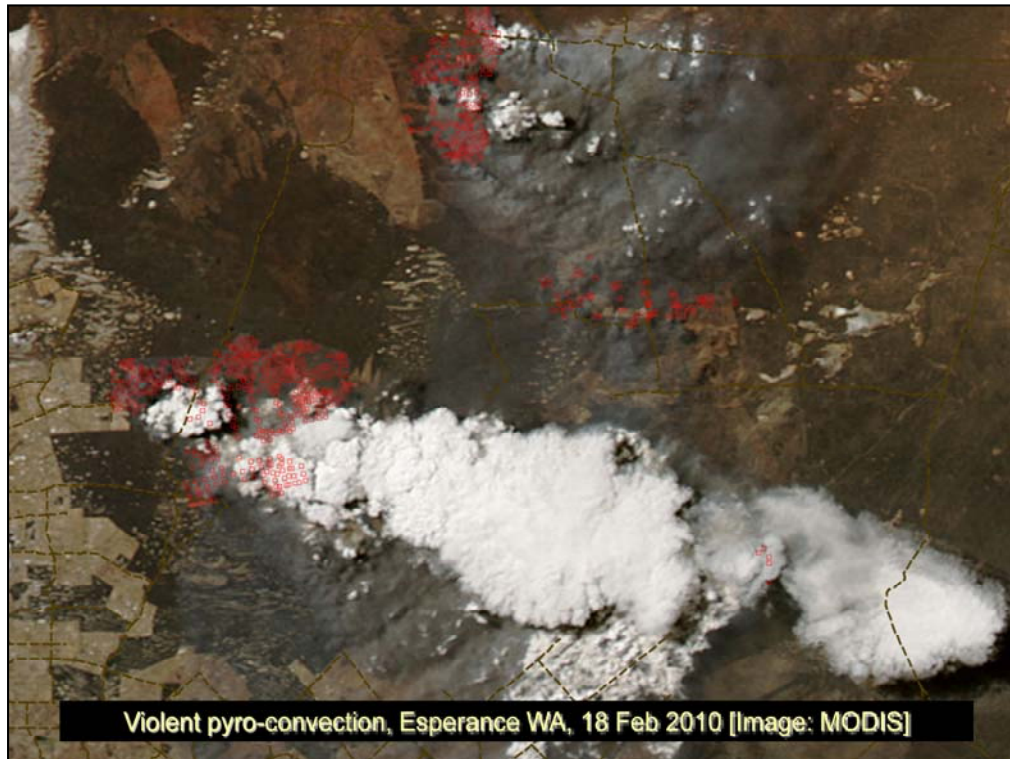
Complex lee-slope wind flow, Mt Taylor [Photo: McRae]



Effects of low-level jet on plume [Photo: Lannon Harley]



Backburning during a subsidence inversion





Fire storm, St Andrews [Image: Jim Baruta]



Eruptive fire spread, Mt Franklin [Photo: Stephen Wilkes]



1. There are different scales of fire

- Small
- Medium
- Large
- Very large
- Plume-driven

2. There are a number of species of fire

- Flat terrain
- Undulating terrain
- Rugged terrain

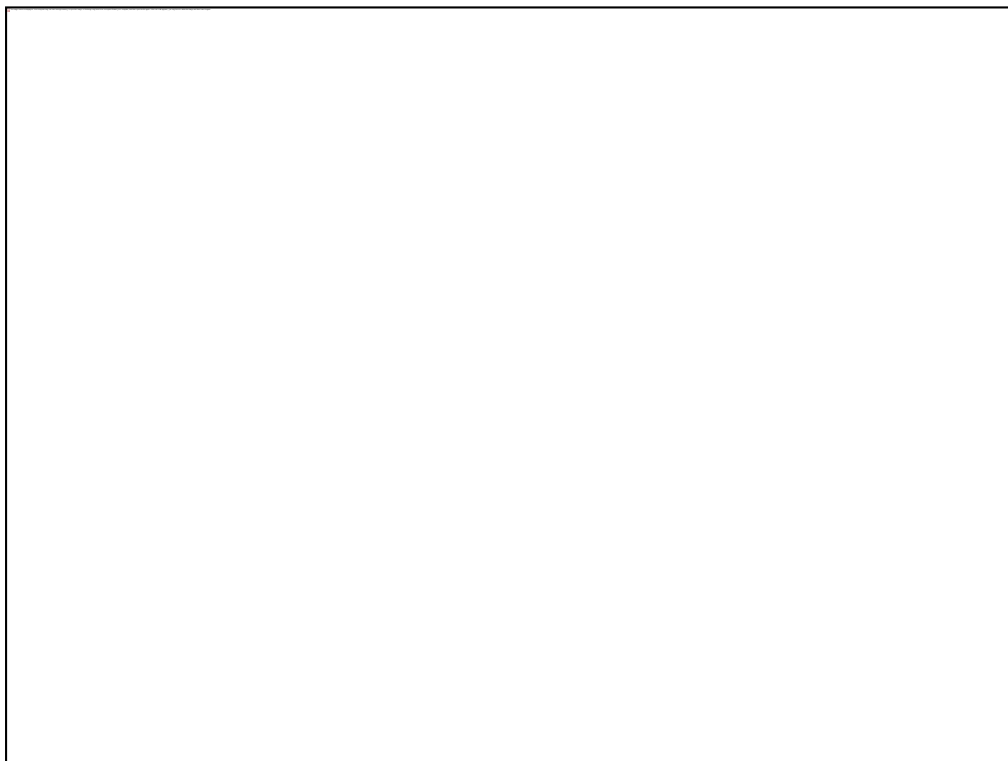
3. Escalated fires are not suppressed within rugged terrain

4. The effects of vertical air movement in rugged terrain.

5. Plume-driven fires arise from deep flaming which arises from:

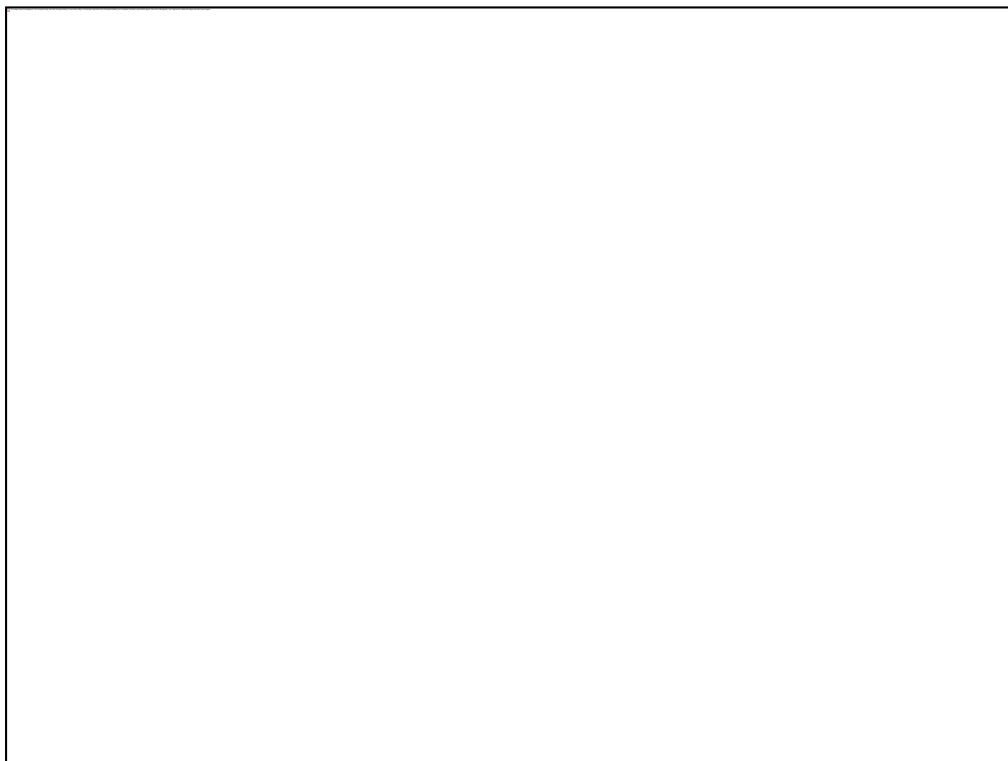
- Strong winds
- Wind changes
- Forced channelling

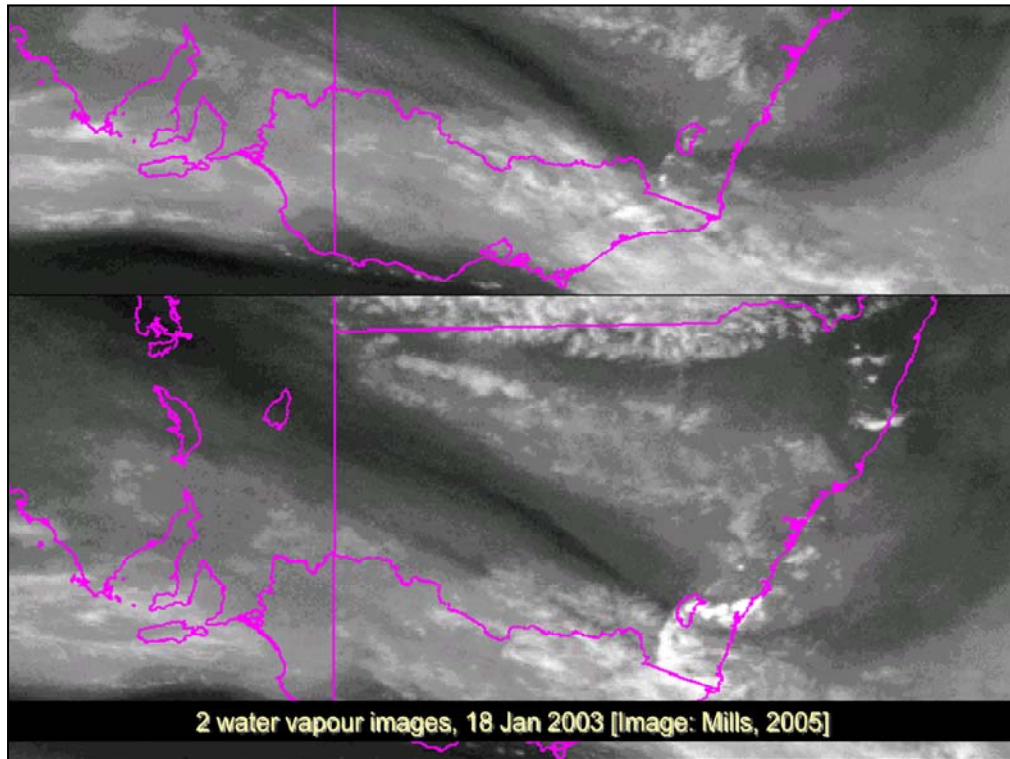
6. Plume-driven fires cause most losses.



$$FDI = 7 * \frac{WSp}{FMC}$$

$$FMC = \frac{7}{DF} * \left(10 - \left(\frac{T - RH}{4} \right) \right)$$







Mt Gingera fire's early stages [Photo: McRae]



Bendora Fire, 16 Jan 2003 [Photo: Lannon Harley]

