

August 17<sup>th</sup> 2009



## **VICTORIAN LANDS ALLIANCE**

### **Media Release**

# **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: INTERIM REPORT DOES NOT ADDRESS BUSHFIRE THREAT**

The release of the Bushfires Royal Commission Interim Report has focussed the need for decisive action on preventing a repeat of last summer's tragedy said public land management advocacy group, the Victorian Lands Alliance [VLA] at the closed briefing given by the Treasurer today.

"It is clear from evidence given by many of the witnesses to the commission that not enough attention has been given to bushfire prevention" said Max Rheese, secretary of the VLA.

"There will be no comfort for people living in fire risk areas from today's briefing as few of the issues raised addressed protective measures using increased fuel reduction burning, controlled cattle grazing or selective timber harvesting."

The government will respond in detail to the Interim Report by the end of the month. The 2009 Budget papers show that \$1 billion has been spent on fire suppression and recovery this year, while the Treasurer advised the briefing that \$50 million had been committed to fire prevention measures in this year's budget.

"Today's briefing was disappointing in view of the level of concern expressed by many rural residents who have attended Alliance No Fuel No Fire meetings around Victoria in the last four months. Given that the Treasurer today stated, the upcoming fire season has "The potential for worse conditions than last fire season" and that "Protection of human life is paramount", Victorians are entitled to be reassured that the government will heed the major recommendation of its own parliamentary inquiry to treble fuel reduction burning. No such announcement has been made to date and Victoria is only 72 days away from the next bushfire season" said Mr Rheese.

– ENDS –

Contact: Max Rheese 03 5762 4456

[www.landsalliance.org](http://www.landsalliance.org)

The Victorian Lands Alliance is a coalition of member based recreational and commercial users of public land representing over 40,000 Victorians. The primary objective of the Alliance is to initiate public policy which is consistent with the ideals of its member organisations to improve the management of public land.

This policy will ensure active management and sustainable multiple-use of public land that balances the needs of the environment and the community.