

Australian Capital Territory

# Emergencies (Bushfire Council Members) Appointment 2017 (No 1)

Disallowable instrument DI2017–233

made under the

Emergencies Act 2004, s 129 (Bushfire council members)

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

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The ACT Bushfire Council, established under section 127 of the *Emergencies Act 2004*, has the function of advising the Minister about matters relating to bushfires.

Under section 129 (1) of the *Emergencies Act 2004* the Minister must appoint members of the ACT Bushfire Council. Under section 129 (2) the Minister must try to ensure that people with particular skills, interests and experience are among the members appointed. The appointments are made according to these requirements.

The instrument appoints Sarah Ryan as the Chairperson of the ACT Bushfire Council. The appointments commence on 1 October 2017 and expire on 30 September 2021.

The instrument appoints Natarsha Carney as the Deputy Chairperson of the ACT Bushfire Council. The appointments commence on 1 October 2017 and expire on 30 September 2021.

The instrument appoints Bhiamie Eckford-Williamson, Jeremy Watson, Kylie Coe, Margaret Moreton, Cathy Parsons, Mick George, Steve Angus, Tony Bartlett, Marion Leiba and David Snell, as Members of the ACT Bushfire Council. The appointments commence on 1 October 2017 and expire on 30 September 2021.

**Sarah Ryan** has an understanding of the ACT Government planning processes, public sector governance and natural resource management, encompassing professional experience in agriculture ecology and regional Natural Resource Management. Dr Ryan was the foundation chair of the ACT Natural Resource Management Council (NRMC) and has served for over eight years on the NRMC. Dr Ryan has previously served on a number of ministerially appointed advisory bodies including NRMC, Canberra Institute of Technology and Public Education.

**Natarsha Carney** has been a member of the NSW Rural Fire Service for over five years and holds a Certificate II in Public Safety and is specialised in Aerial Fire-fighting. Ms Carney holds a Bachelor of Marine Science and Management (UNE), Masters in Environmental Science (UNE) and Graduate Certificate in Public Administration (UC). Ms Carney is an Aboriginal woman from the Wiradjuri nation

and has undertaken courses in Indigenous land management and fire management regimes for the purposes of both biodiversity and natural regeneration. She has been involved in mentoring programs for young Indigenous people. Ms Carney was involved with a study undertaken by the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Council into fire fighter safety and sleep patterns while on deployment and is currently employed at the Australian Federal Department for Agriculture and Water Resources.

**Bhiamie Eckford-Williamson** is an Aboriginal man from the Euahlayi peoples of north-western NSW and south-western Queensland. He has an extensive career researching and supporting Indigenous land management initiatives throughout various parts of Australia. He has worked closely with Aboriginal Ranger groups researching and supporting fire initiatives. He has worked with Parks and Conservation Services to design and implement the ACT Aboriginal Fire Management Framework. Mr Eckford-Williamson holds a Bachelor of Arts and Masters of Indigenous Governance.

**Jeremy Watson** has extensive experience as a land manager within the ACT through the ACT Rural Fire Service and ACT Parks and Conservation Services. Mr Watson currently works with Defence delivering a wide range of land management programs. He played a major role in developing the statement of works and other documents, considering the full portfolio of land management activities across almost every ecosystem type in Australia. Mr Watson has a Bachelor of Applied Science in Parks Recreation and Heritage.

**Kylie Coe** brings 20 years of experience in local government in the planning and environmental management areas. This has involved strategic planning, development control, environmental compliance and policy writing. She has been involved in various aspects of major fire events as a volunteer. Ms Coe has tertiary qualifications in environmental management, which give her the skills and attributes to be a valuable member of the ACT Bushfire Council.

**Margaret Moreton** brings a strong focus to supporting community resilience in the face of increasingly frequent and intense natural disasters across Australia. Ms Moreton has a strong commitment to improving outcomes for individuals, families and communities across Australia. She has excellent skills and experience in community engagement and capacity building, disaster recovery, learning and development, change management and working with stakeholders to ensure that policies and programs deliver outcomes ‘on the ground’. Ms Moreton was awarded a PhD that was based on an extensive study of communities across Eastern Australia to identify the key factors that contribute to community recovery after natural disasters.

**Cathy Parsons** holds a postgraduate qualification in urban and regional planning. She was most recently CEO of Green Globe Asia Pacific, a business offering environmental certification to tourism operations worldwide. Prior to that she worked as a Senior Executive for the Commonwealth and ACT Governments for over 15 years, responsible for dealing with a range of environmental, tourism and cultural issues. During that time she was head of the parks and land management functions for the ACT and chaired the ACT Bushfire Council. Cathy is currently an independent consultant providing urban planning policy advice to a range of organisations.

**Mick George** has a Bachelor of Science and a professional background in forestry and natural resource management. Mr Mick George is a NSW rural property owner, volunteer member of the Gungahlin Brigade of the ACT Rural Fire Service, and is an advanced firefighter specialised in remote area fire-fighting. Mr George has previously been involved with a number of Australian Government international climate change programs and one of these intersected with prescribed burning and indigenous customary burning practices. Mr George has previously been involved with national policy forums developing national bushfire policy whilst working in the Department of Agriculture.

**Steve Angus** was born and bred in Canberra and has been a member of the ACT Rural Fire Service (ACTRFS) for 30 years. Mr Angus has been recommended by the ACT Rural Landholders' Association (RLA) due to his experience with the ACTRFS, his status as an ACT rural lessee and a member of the RLA. Steve has been actively engaged with the Southern Volunteer Brigade since first joining up in 1986. He is currently the Captain of that brigade, and has served in that capacity since 2012. Prior to his position as Captain, Steve held the position of Deputy Captain actively from 1990. Steve has also been active in the local rural industry for the majority of his life, and purchased a property in the Naas Valley in 1999. Steve's local knowledge, practical approach and understanding of local issues, in particular as relates to the rural community, blend effectively with his significant bushfire management experience. These qualities combine thoroughly qualifying Stephen as a valuable contributor to bushfire management across the ACT.

**Tony Bartlett** has worked in forestry and natural resources management for more than 40 years, in Victoria, Nepal, Vanuatu, and the ACT and with the Australian Government. He has extensive experience in the management of native forests and plantations as well as in forest fire management. He was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal in 2006 and has been a firefighter since 1973. He has been a Regional Fire Protection Officer in eastern Victoria, a Deputy Chief Fire Control Officer in the ACT and he is an experienced Level 3 Incident Controller. From 1999 to mid 2005, he was the Director of ACT Forests and in that role he had significant leadership roles in the 2001 and 2003 bushfires. He has co-authored a number of articles on mega-fires and fire management in plantations.

**Marion Leiba** has a B.Sc degree from University of Tasmania and M.Sc and PhD degrees from University of Hawaii. In the 1970s, she studied volcanoes in New Zealand and worked at the University of the West Indies in Trinidad. She worked for Geoscience Australia for 20 years and now works as a Disaster Risk Scientist consultant involved in multi-hazard risk assessments. She has been a member of the ACT Bushfire Council since 2008 and is a Member of the Community Education Unit of the ACT State Emergency Service. Her personal involvement with bushfires is from living in a fire-affected suburb of Hobart at the time of the 1967 bushfires, and her involvement with Mt Stromlo Observatory before and immediately after it was partly destroyed by the 2003 Canberra bushfires.

**David Snell** has a diverse background in law, policy and public administration in the private and government sectors. He was involved in a number of key organisational and governance reforms, including the establishment of the ACT Emergency Services

Agency and the creation of the ACT Planning and Land Authority and Land Development Agency. He brings a comprehensive understanding of the ACT's planning and land management laws and administration. Mr Snell has a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Economics.

Sarah Ryan, Natarsha Carney, Bhiemie Eckford-Williamson, Jeremy Watson, Kylie Coe, Margaret Moreton, Cathy Parsons, Mick George, Steve Angus, Tony Bartlett, Marion Leiba and David Snell are not public servants as defined under the *Legislation Act 2001*.

The Standing Committee on Justice and Community Safety has been consulted on the appointments as required under the provisions of the *Legislation Act 2001*. The Committee advised that it had no concerns with the appointments.