364 words

PHOTO: WHEN WILL YOU LISTEN: President of the Mountain Cattlemen’s Association of Victoria, Bruce McCormack, says there has been 240 Government Inquiries into the bushfire problem and still no real answers.

240 Inquiries and not 1 answer

PRESIDENT of the Mountain Cattlemen’s Association of Victoria (MCAV), Bruce McCormack, is warning the Victorian Government to take swift action ahead of the 20-21 bushfire season following yet another inconclusive Royal Commission.

Findings were released last month from the Governments Royal Commission into the National Natural Disaster Arrangements (Bushfire Royal Commission), with Mr McCormack labelling the 600-page document a waste of time and money.

“The report seemingly has lots to say, but in effect says very little,” Mr McCormack said.

“It pays very little attention to how fires start and what makes them burn, instead offering information on identifying fire problems – blind Freddy knows what the problems are; there is too much fuel on the ground and not enough being done about it.

“We didn’t need the Royal Commission to identify this – we needed them to provide practical, on-the-ground solutions that will help tackle the problem.”

Mr McCormack said the Inquiry was one of 240 similar investigations undertaken by the Government – with very little improvement in the situation.

“It is just the same old problem being repeated, time and time again,” he said.

“The MCAV made detailed submissions to the Inquiry, calling for increased fuel reduction burns, a return of grazing to the High Country and that the decisions made on how best to attack the fuel problems should come from those who live and work in the bush, not those who sit behind a desk.”

The Inquiry received evidence from more than 270 witnesses, almost 80,000 pages of information and more than 1,750 public submissions.

However, Mr McCormack said the recommendations coming out of the report deal with what needs to be done, rather than how to go about it.

“From those who live and work in the bush to those that visit it for recreation, we deserve better than this,” he said.

“The flora and fauna, the weekend visitor, the logger, the cattlemen, the backpacker – they all want to see our magnificent Australian bush; the question becomes, how much longer will it be there for us to enjoy if we continue to do nothing?”

To read more about the Mountain Cattlemen’s Association of Victoria visit [www.mcav.com.au](http://www.mcav.com.au)