

**PARKERVILLE, STONEVILLE AND MT HELENA BUSHFIRE — REVIEW**

*Statement by Minister for Emergency Services*

**MR J.M. FRANCIS (Jandakot — Minister for Emergency Services)** [9.09 am]: I rise to present to the house the “Parkerville Stoneville Mt Helena Bushfire Review June 2014”. The fire occurred on Sunday, 12 January 2014 at approximately 11.00 am after a power pole on a Granite Road property fell, causing sparking and ignition of vegetation. The fire escalated rapidly and destroyed 57 houses and had a broader significant effect on those communities.

During the incident, 211 appliances and more than 500 associated firefighting personnel were deployed in suppression activities. During the fire, the aviation services of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the Department of Parks and Wildlife achieved a peak of operational activity not previously experienced by either agency as they dropped 1.6 million litres of water on the fire. There were 1 368 people registered as evacuees with the Department for Child Protection and Family Support.

The fire was contained by mid-evening on 12 January and progressively extinguished over ensuing days, but only declared fully blacked out on the morning of 1 February, 21 days after ignition.

The review was conducted under the auspices of the State Emergency Management Committee, which is the state’s peak emergency management body, by a team comprising representatives of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the SEMC secretariat, an independent consultant and independent peer reviewers from the New South Wales Rural Fire Service and the South Australian Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources. The review incorporated DFES’s normal major incident review process. The intent of this review was to understand the aspects of the event that worked well and should be built on, and to highlight any issues that can be improved upon. Six terms of reference were used, which covered areas such as response effectiveness, effectiveness of the relevant legislation, current policies in relation to emergency management in Western Australia and proposed improvements arising from the review and any other factors to improve effectiveness of emergency prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

It is very reassuring to see that the review found that many aspects of pre, during and post fire actions worked well and it is clear these actions were built on previous learnings from reviews of previous incidents, improvements to operational firefighting doctrine, preparedness and updates to relevant state emergency management plans and policies.

[See paper 1701.]