

Tasmania Fire Service Public Information Officer Shannon Fox said the purpose of the water bombers was not to extinguish the fire, but rather as a precautionary measure to slow the spread of fire and assist ground crews in impending winds.

<http://www.theadvocate.com.au/story/3725577/bombers-tackle-fires/?cs=87>

Why don't TFS management want to put these fires out? What's their game?

TFS management were slow to respond to these fires in the first place and now it appears they want them to keep going. Were they lightning strikes or planned burns?

I am sure if these fires were lightning strikes, in any other state they would have been extinguished long ago.

People with heart and lung conditions, plus the young and elderly (and that is a large proportion of the population) have suffered this smoke long enough.

We only hear the sensational bits about people and properties being burnt at times like this, but the silent killer is the smoke.

According to health information more people will be injured or die a long and painful death as a result of the smoke than are actually burnt to death.

Our Health Department knows this, see <http://cleanairtas.com/departments/rti-health-13.2.14.pdf>

The ambient air quality readings have been many times over that which is considered acceptable. 25ug/m³ for PM_{2.5} and 50ug/m³ for PM₁₀ are the 24hour averaged limits and vulnerable groups can be made ill at levels below these standards.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) says "there is no safe level of fine particle pollution."

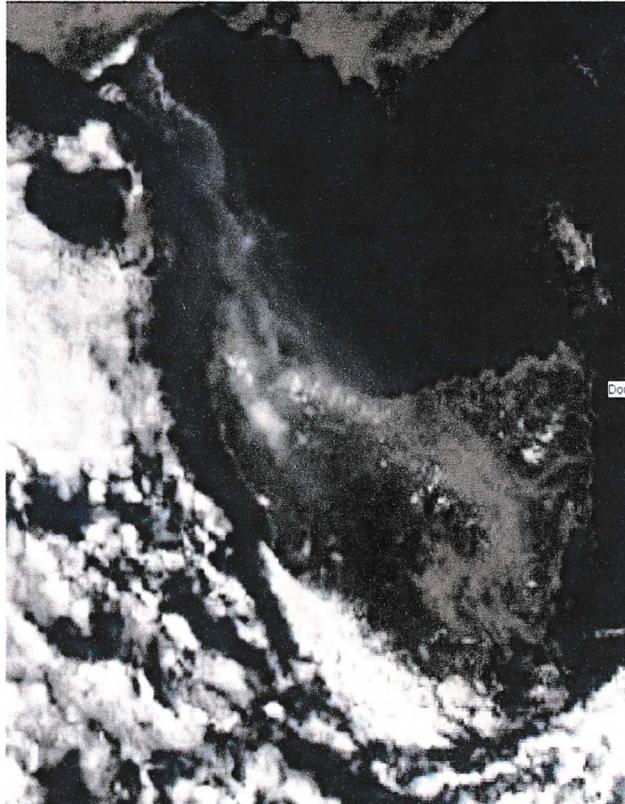
Areas of Tasmania have recently experienced the following particulate readings:

PM ₁₀ 151-200	A/Q Unhealthy	Everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should avoid prolonged outdoor exertion; everyone else, especially children, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion
201-300	Very Unhealthy	Health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should avoid all outdoor exertion; everyone else, especially children, should limit outdoor exertion.
300+	Hazardous	Health alert: everyone may experience more serious health effects	Everyone should avoid all outdoor exertion

Sheltering indoors as directed has given little protection when the readings have been constantly high. These burns started a month ago and here today we have readings still unacceptably high.

Dr Fay Johnston <http://www.utas.edu.au/profiles/staff/menzies/fay-johnston> from our own Menzies Research Institute and UTAS states -Protection indoors is hard to generalise as it varies with the type of house - for episodes of just a few hours it could be very helpful. For fine particles, indoor air will eventually equilibrate with outdoor air

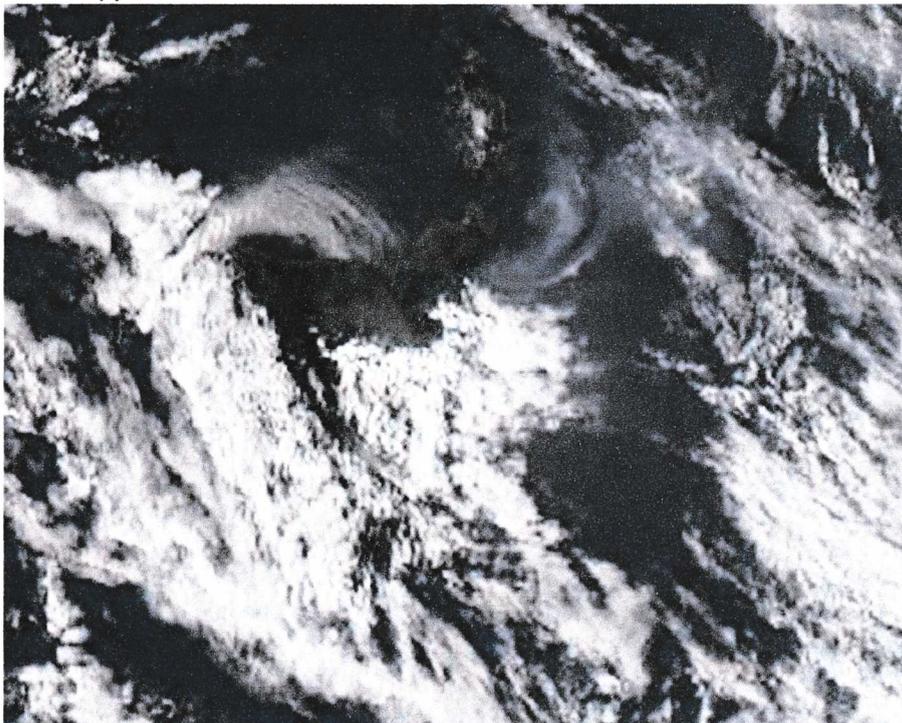
In this instance we are not just talking a few hours, we are talking days and weeks.



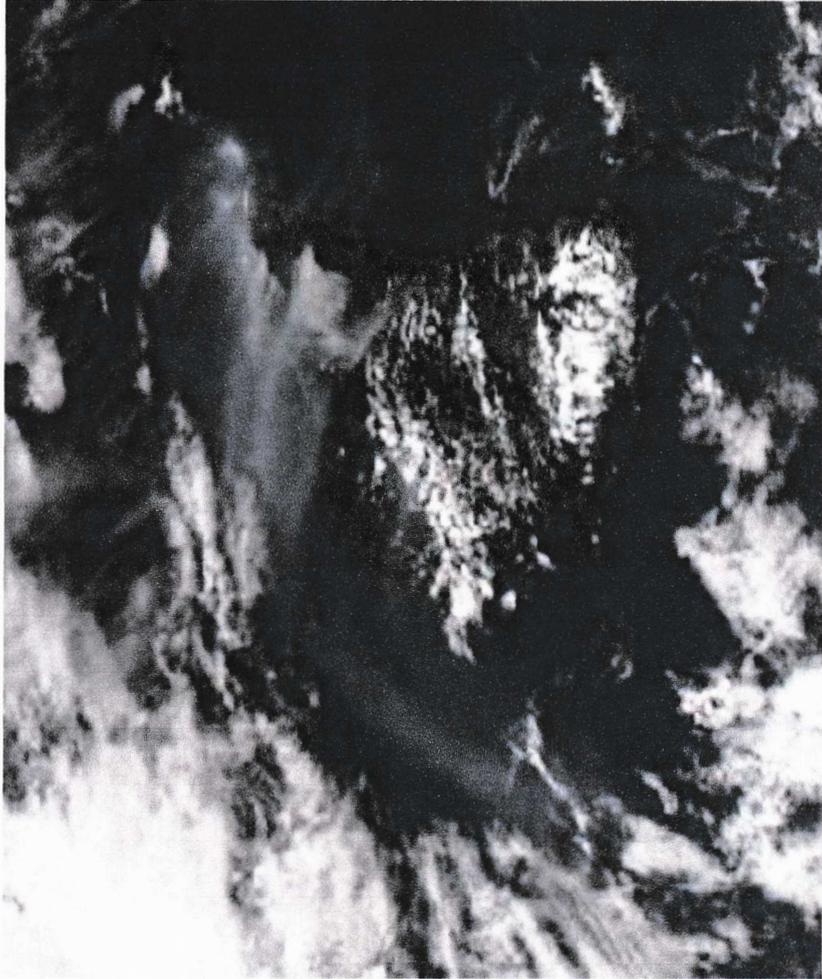
16/1/2016- BoM/Himawari satellite image <http://satview.bom.gov.au/> shows our smoke going to Victoria and across the north of Tas.

Then on the 26th <http://cleanairtas.com/photos/Melbourne-air-quality-drops-after-smoke-spreads-across-city-from-Tasmania-bushfires.pdf>

But Tasmania has copped the worst:



10/2/2016 – BoM satellite image shows thick smoke from the N/W burns being dumped in an arc on our north. Additional dense smoke can be seen moving in the east.



12/2/2016 - BoM satellite image shows smoke moving south and also across the state to the east
Many BoM screen shots and movies show the extent of the smoke, these are just a sample.
Our TFS and our Health Department have had full access to these images and websites and still the smoke goes on!
No consideration is being given to the health impacts these burns are having on our population
The airsheds are saturated and fire permits are still being issued.

This is what I woke up to again today 14.2.2016:



From Brady's Lookout, West Tamar Highway, looking N. towards Exeter. This is why there is a lookout because you get a good view! Visibility was down to about 1Km.



From Brady's Lookout looking S. towards Grindelwald which is blotted out on the hill a short distance away. Perhaps you cannot even see it.

Exeter EPA BLANKET air monitoring station was reading 189ug/m³ PM₁₀ and 161ug/m³ PM_{2.5} approximately half an hour before the photos were taken.

Devonport was reading 249/213 and West Ulverstone was reading 304/262

Emu River turned itself off at about 5am with a readings registered at 461/395

Below are the Visibility Reducing figures vs. Air Quality health figures from EPA Victoria:

Air quality category	Visibility
Low	More than 20 km
Moderate	10–20 km
Unhealthy – sensitive	5–10 km
Unhealthy – all	2–5 km
Very unhealthy – all	1.5–2 km
Hazardous (high) – all	1–1.5 km
Hazardous (extreme) – all	0.5–1 km

This environmental smoke we are being forced to breathe is classed as a known carcinogen to humans (Group 1, the highest level) by the World Health Organisation. It is up there with sulphur mustard or better known as mustard gas; asbestos, all forms; arsenic; silica dust; strontium-90, ionizing radiation, all types; neutron radiation; tobacco smoking or tobacco smoke 2nd hand, plus more.

Tasmania has some of Australia’s worst health figures that are associated with smoke.

And here is another thing for Tasmanian’s to consider now that we have the “National Home Doctor Service”

Most health-based studies only look at hospital admissions. As sick as you might be you are not even going to be counted if you get a doctor to your home or visit your GP or specialist with any of the many health problems associated with this smoke that is being allowed to continue.

Our Premier Will Hodgman has said there will be an inquiry into the fires. But, burning comes first!
<http://cleanairtas.com/departments/premier-commits-to-inquiry-on-fires.pdf>

We cannot just put our smoke into little boxes and say TFS or fuel-reduction smoke is OK.

The health effects of this smoke have been going on for so long it needs to form part of the inquiry. A long term health study must be agreed to as the latency period can be up to 20 years.

“...the purpose of the water bombers was not to extinguish the fire, but rather as a precautionary measure to slow the spread of fire....” And to create more smoke!