

Date	Time	Location	Speakers	Subject	Comments
7/02/2014	11am	SCC	Craig Lapsley (FSC) Andrea Peace (BoM) Paul Holman (AV)	Provide an overview of the fire and weather conditions predicted for the weekend.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone should have a plan</li> <li>This weekend conditions will be the worst of the year</li> <li>We are concerned about conditions and rely heavily on all Victorians to have a plan</li> <li>Two weeks of dry weather sees the whole state available to burn</li> </ul>
8/02/2014	4.30pm	SCC	Craig Lapsley (FSC)	Overview of fire conditions ahead of a weekend of extreme fire danger.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sunday will be the worst fire conditions Vic has experienced since 2009 due to extended heat</li> <li>Extreme FDR in six districts</li> <li>Fires will be fast and intense</li> <li>Don't start a fire</li> <li>Have a plan – refresh it and make sure it suits your needs</li> <li>If you intend to leave, leave early, know where you're going and taking</li> <li>Already fires going Gippsland including between Moe and Morwell and Goongerah</li> <li>Parks Vic, DEPI, CFA, MFB working extensively together</li> <li>We are in serious position in Victoria and it won't go away</li> <li>High overnight temperatures mean fires could run into the night</li> <li>Firefighters are on high alert in preparation for the weekend</li> </ul>
9/02/2014	3.30pm	SCC	Craig Lapsley (FSC) Ken Lay (VicPol)	To provide an update of the fire situation for Victoria.	<p><b>Craig Lapsley:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>37 going fire</li> <li>143 warnings issued</li> <li>Dynamic environment with fires in outer metro and Gippsland</li> <li>Towns and properties are still under threat</li> <li>As the wind change moves through it is so strong aircraft can't fly</li> <li>During the wind change fires will continue to move</li> <li>Any impact is significant on the Victorian community</li> <li>This is the most serious fire day we've had in the state in five years</li> <li>As predicted fires have been intense and fast moving with limited time to warn communities</li> <li>Tomorrow while the fire danger will decrease there is still potential for fires to do damage</li> </ul> <p><b>Ken Lay:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Today and the coming days will be very difficult for emergency services</li> <li>Jayco Herald Sun tour cancelled its last day</li> <li>There are a number of significant road closures across the state</li> <li>Today has been a very difficult day but we still have a few more in front of us.</li> </ul>
10/02/2014	11.30am	ICC - Traralgon	Gippsland Regional Control Team Latrobe Valley Power Industry	Following the press conference there will be an opportunity for media crews to visit the incident ground at Morwell under escort.	
10/02/2014	2.30pm	SCC	Craig Lapsley (FSC) Ken Lay (VicPol)	To provide an update of the fire situation for Victoria.	<p><b>Craig Lapsley:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are three fires of significant – the key one is the fire burning in the Hazelwood open cut mine and paper mill, it is not threatening lives but has the potential to impact critical infrastructure</li> <li>Resources have been moved to deal with this fire</li> <li>Kilmore fire and Snowy River complex are the other two</li> </ul> <p><b>Ken Lay:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yesterday was a challenging day</li> <li>200 grass and scrub fires reported, VicPol are looking at 12 of those with undetermined source of ignition</li> <li>Sufficient evidence they are more than likely deliberately lit</li> <li>Anyone who witnesses suspicious action please call 000</li> </ul>
11/02/2014	2.30pm	SCC	Craig Lapsley (FSC) Ken Lay (VicPol)	To provide an update of the fire situation for Victoria.	<p><b>Craig Lapsley:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The efforts of all emergency services has been great, firefighters have been able to suppress and chase fires.</li> <li>Significant aircraft operations</li> <li>Morwell open cut is still burning, but some level of difficulty to suppress</li> <li>It is putting significant smoke over Morwell and health messaging is important for the community</li> <li>Reports of people ringing 000 thinking there is a fire due to widespread smoke.</li> <li>Reflect on fires of Sunday – there are many lessons</li> <li>But must reflect on the saves</li> <li>There were over 200 fires on Saturday</li> <li>Hot weather will move back into the state in the next few days</li> </ul> <p><b>Ken Lay:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great work by firefighters but still a long way to go</li> <li>34 houses have been destroyed since Feb 7, another 20 unconfirmed</li> <li>These numbers are likely to increase</li> <li>Asks the community to be patient with road blocks, the primacy of life is the key driver</li> </ul>
12/02/2014	3.30pm	SCC	Craig Lapsley (FSC)	Provide an update on Victoria's fire situation including reported firefighter illness at the Hazelwood Coal Mine fire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant smoke across Victoria</li> <li>A number of Kilmore residents are returning – area must be safe</li> <li>In Morwell overnight higher levels of CO in the smoke</li> <li>A number of firefighters needed medical treatment on scene and in some cases attended hospitals</li> <li>Safety is first – we won't allow firefighters to operate in unsafe areas</li> </ul>
14/02/2014	11am	SCC	Federal Justice Minister Kim Wells Craig Lapsley (FSC)	Announce funding assistance for those affected by fires has been expanded to 12 local government areas	<p><b>Craig Lapsley:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Still key focus on East Gippsland</li> <li>Some communities feeling forgotten, but that is not the case</li> <li>Communities north of Orbost are significant communities</li> <li>Fires are expected to burn for some time, without significant rain it will continue</li> <li>Hazelwood open cut fire is slow progress – 3km front but doesn't impact on production of power</li> <li>Significant management in fire and the community</li> <li>Dept health and EPA will message health and smoke</li> <li>Kilmore is now UC and it's about reconnecting families and neighbours</li> <li>These people have all had a very traumatic experience</li> <li>Information is very important at this time</li> </ul>
14/02/2014		ICC - Traralgon	Andrew Zammit (ICC) Elizabeth Radcliffe (AV)		
17/02/2014	2.45pm	ICC - Traralgon	Andrew Zammit (ICC) Paul James (AV)	An update on the current fire situation and associated health messaging with the LaTrobe Valley mine fires.	
19/02/2014	3.30pm	Kernot Hall, Morwell	Dr Rosemary Lester (CHO) John Merritt (EPA) Craig Lapsley (FSC)		<p><b>Rosemary Lester:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working very closely with EPA to give appropriate health advice</li> <li>Health advice is that vulnerable groups at risk from the smoke should avoid physical activity, stay inside</li> <li>Anyone with symptoms should speak to nurse on call, GP or ring 000 for an ambulance</li> <li>Have given advice that if possible vulnerable people take a break out of smoky conditions – stay with friend or relative</li> <li>Dept of Ed working to relocate children out of smoky conditions</li> <li>A community respite centre will be opened this afternoon</li> <li>Haven't seen any significant increase in presentations for respiratory conditions</li> </ul> <p><b>John Merritt:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are aware of community concern</li> <li>Since Tuesday of last week, temporary air station in Morwell east has been set up</li> <li>Today installed mobile air quality laboratory behind the bowling club</li> <li>Allows a direct link to online and upload in real time</li> </ul> <p><b>Craig Lapsley:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Showing map of hotspots from the 11th Feb to a week later</li> <li>Fire suppression strategies have been successful</li> <li>However, still significant heat in the open cut which is a hazard</li> <li>Smouldering and generating carbon monoxide so firefighters are on short shifts with extensive monitoring</li> <li>Fire is attacked with water, and expert panel is peer reviewing the strategy</li> <li>Looking at other wetting agents to penetrate brown coal</li> <li>It's a complex environment</li> <li>Some temperatures in the pit are over 150 Celsius</li> <li>Our task now is how to engage with the community</li> <li>Information needs to go to letterboxes and all other possible means – internet, social media, meetings on the street,</li> <li>Communication will be an ongoing commitment</li> <li>At least another 10-14 days in there, however if it's deep seated it could be longer</li> <li>Even if we have it controlled there is still a lot of work to be done</li> </ul>
24/02/2014			Craig Lapsley (FSC) Sharon Gibson (LCC) John Mitchell (LCC) John Merritt (EPA) Dr Rosemary Lester (CHO) Carmel Flynn (DHS)		<p><b>Craig Lapsley:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11 days in but have reduced the fire by half</li> </ul> <p><b>Mayor of Latrobe City:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council committed to making sure daily reports sent out to community</li> <li>We hear business and community concerns and what they want to know about</li> <li>25,000 face masks available</li> </ul> <p><b>John Mitchell:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council is extensively involved in providing support services</li> <li>Conscious that people want information – council is involved with FSC and his team to get information out there</li> <li>Understand there is a problem with the business community and want to work with them</li> </ul>

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				<p><b>John Merritt:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 air monitoring stations in the valley</li> <li>• MFB also deployed 13 CO monitors around Morwell</li> <li>• Been using data to update community</li> <li>• Seen trends we've seen before to give community alerts</li> <li>• Significant team of EPA staff on the ground in Morwell</li> <li>• EPA is working alongside community engagement CFA is undertaking</li> <li>• Will do weekly sampling of ash</li> </ul> <p><b>Rosemary Lester:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We understand there are health concerns and we are taking these very seriously</li> <li>• We don't expect and long term health impacts</li> <li>• If we do need to put out a strong health warning then we will</li> <li>• The concern is the short term health affects – if you are in an at risk group, it is a good idea to take a break from the smoke if you can.</li> <li>• Able to go to the community respite centre and take a break</li> <li>• Also assessment centre in Morwell for basic health assessment</li> <li>• 143 people been through</li> </ul> <p><b>Carmel Flynn:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging people to visit the respite centre in Moe</li> <li>• Can also access information</li> <li>• If people can't attend respite centre but need assistant getting respite contact DHS on the hotline to make an appointment to see an Officer</li> </ul> <p><b>Craig Lapsley:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morwell community has been very clear it needs support.</li> <li>• This fire is all about smoke, there are no flames</li> <li>• People need to take heed of messages and also be a good neighbour, check in on people</li> <li>• This is not going away soon</li> <li>• We've already said there is the potential to run for 14 days and could extend passed that</li> <li>• The issues are complex</li> <li>• Putting water in means we have to pump water out</li> <li>• Engineers are needed to fight the fire</li> <li>• People in Morwell will not see the operation</li> <li>• Mine company has been part of the process from day one but they still have to run a mine</li> <li>• They have been pumping water out</li> <li>• They have increased infrastructure and pumping capability</li> <li>• They are working closely with us to do their part of the operation</li> <li>• We've considered evacuation as the worst case scenario plan</li> <li>• On the first weekend there was a spike that indicated we needed enhanced warnings, not an evacuation but shelter in place.</li> <li>• We will not evacuate Morwell lightly, we will do it in a very calculated way</li> <li>• We haven't yet gone close to the trigger for evacuation</li> <li>• To questions about volunteers not wanting to come back, it's difficult to see progress so can be quite de-motivating to want to come back</li> <li>• It is a very difficult job and monitoring firefighters safety is essential</li> <li>• No more firefighters have been sent to hospital</li> <li>• Resourcing is a constant issue, especially with East Gippsland still burning</li> <li>• That's why we've brought in firefighters and IMT from other states</li> <li>• Not all firefighters can operate in this environment – must have BA and aerial appliance qualifications</li> </ul>
25/02/2014		VicPol HQ	Ken Lay (VicPol) Craig Lapsley (FSC) John Merritt (EPA)	Police seek public assistance in relation to the Hazelwood Open Cut Mine fire.
26/02/2014	12pm	ICC - Traralgon	Dr Rosemary Lester (CHO) John Merritt (EPA) Craig Lapsley (FSC)	<p>An update on the current operational and health situation from the Hazelwood open cut mine fire.</p> <p><b>Craig Lapsley:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Still fires burning in East Gippsland</li> <li>• Hazelwood is still burning and yesterday was a day of significance</li> <li>• Not a lot gained, but knew weather conditions would put on pressure</li> <li>• Great job to hold it</li> <li>• Lists all firefighters involves</li> <li>• Yesterday challenged with a grassfire that came out of the mine and threatened the mine, a very significant sign and great save</li> <li>• Strike teams were moved in preparation for the weather</li> <li>• This morning visited health assessment centre at Morwell, community members are very pleased to have this service</li> <li>• Residents want to know what's happening</li> <li>• One important thing to know is there is a number to ring to book a meeting about how to be relocated away from Morwell</li> <li>• Journo asks how long until the fire will be out, Craig says it's important to look at the success so far</li> <li>• Over 50 percent of the fire has been extinguished</li> <li>• If everything goes right, it's 10-14 days if we get the success rate of what we've had</li> <li>• However we have high winds and temperatures coming in next week</li> <li>• We're working with the community, we want this fire out</li> <li>• It's got the potential to be months but our focus is to get 14 days</li> <li>• I haven't seen yet any trigger that has put it into anything that requires an evacuation</li> <li>• Yes we have a plan but we always do worst case planning</li> <li>• We've got to be careful we don't scare this community</li> <li>• Someone asks about compensation, Craig says no answer at this point but says people need to be supported in leaving Morwell but call</li> <li>• Everyone has a different set of circumstances</li> <li>• Why are the mine owners hiding? This is an emergency run by fire.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rosemary Lester:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing to have quite poor air quality in Morwell</li> <li>• Working closely with EPA talking constantly about what it means for people's health</li> <li>• Our focus us getting information to the people of Morwell</li> <li>• Concentrating on short term health effects</li> <li>• Community health assessment centre is available for residents</li> <li>• I must stress although smoke and ash is distressing and annoying to live through, we're concerned about what we can't see which is the carbon monoxide</li> <li>• EPA is monitoring and we haven't seen levels rise to anything of concern</li> <li>• On the firefight CO risk is different to the rest of Morwell</li> <li>• There is an evacuation plan and have talked about CO levels as a trigger</li> <li>• But not just a single spike, it's a spike over a period of time before thinking about evacuation</li> <li>• Monitoring small particle pollution closely and talking to national and international experts</li> <li>• Hundreds of people protesting to say they have not been given enough info – Rosemary says messages have been going out everyday through variety of way.</li> <li>• Advice now is still short term exposure and no evidence of long term effects</li> <li>• Journo says advice is contradictory – Rosemary says we're asking people to take a break from the smoke and use the respite centre bec</li> <li>• 600 people coming to rally, asks if Rosemary is coming along</li> <li>• I have no problem being in Melbourne, I'm not one of the at risk, but I do understand people who have lived through this are upset and di</li> <li>• Journo says union rep said paramedic had stroke – was not aware of that and would be matter for individual's doctor and OH&amp;S staff at</li> <li>• At the firefront, CO is a concern – constant monitoring and wearing BA. Duty of the employer to ensure they are protected</li> </ul>
27/02/2014	12.30pm	ICC - Traralgon	Council rep – mayor? Dr Rosemary Lester (CHO) John Haynes (IC) Mandy Cameron (Latrobe Hosp) Paul James (AV)	<p>An update on the current operational and health situation from the Hazelwood open cut mine fire.</p> <p><b>Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We understand people are really concerned about their health.</li> <li>• For people to get respite – free buses to Folk Festival at Boolara and a bus service to the respite centre</li> </ul> <p><b>John Haynes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Given out some maps which show hot spots and progress</li> <li>• Still have extensive fire on northern and southern batters</li> <li>• Concentrating on northern batter to minimise smoke and ash over Morwell</li> <li>• Strategy is CAFS to suppress ash and smoke in northern batters and then secure it with aerial appliances</li> <li>• Main issue is that it's weather driven and have been days of strong northerlies and south west change</li> <li>• Frustrating that we contain something and the wind then takes it out again</li> <li>• We need good weather and good resources to put this out</li> <li>• Working closely with mine and have put reticulated water in for us</li> <li>• It's a balancing act – safety of firefighters with CO in mine, 2 hour rotation and health monitoring, yesterday numerous hours out of the mine due to weather and make sure minimise smoke for Morwell and Latrobe Valley</li> <li>• Also balancing water issues in the mine, we have to move a lot of water out of the mine</li> <li>• If there's more water in the mine the integrity of the mine becomes fragile</li> <li>• We've got some strong easterly winds tomorrow which take the smoke away from Morwell but will put pressure on the fire</li> <li>• When we know weather is coming we put strategies in place</li> <li>• Fire services from virtually across the country are working with the mine</li> </ul>

				<p><b>Rosemary Lester:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Toady health assessment centre was expanded</li> <li>Being well patronised and people coming in for basic health checks and health information</li> <li>We remain concerned about level of smoke – they have been very high and remain very high</li> <li>It's a concern for people's health and we know this level can have immediate health affects</li> <li>Vulnerable groups should stay out of smoke as much as possible</li> <li>This is a community response effort – take time to check on people</li> <li>Recommending everyone take a break from smoke if they can, respite centre is available for that</li> <li>Seeking further advice on health affects and if we need to make further recommendations we will do that</li> <li>Health of Morwell is my priority</li> </ul> <p><b>Paul James:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our community response is still being well maintained and helping to maintain health assessment centre</li> <li>Also providing support at mine for firefighters</li> </ul> <p><b>Mandy Cameron:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To date the impact to emergency department and hospital has been minimal</li> <li>Presentations over the last week only about 5 more presentations a day that we would have had over the Feb period in 2013</li> <li>Number of cardiac and reparatory presentations are less than last year</li> <li>Believe this is due to the assessment centre</li> <li>Only 5 referrals from the assessment centre</li> <li>Seen a number of firefighters and they have been monitored and sent home</li> <li>No admissions to hospital that are related to the fire</li> </ul>
28/02/2014	1pm	ICC - Traralgon	Dr Rosemary Lester (CHO) Ken Lay (VicPol) Craig Lapsley (FSC)	<p>An update on the current operational and health situation from the Hazelwood open cut mine fire, including recommendation to relocate for vulnerable groups</p> <p><b>Craig Lapsley:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Now in it's third week</li> <li>First weeks have has some successes but this week has been challenging</li> <li>We believe if everything goes well the best case scenario is another 10 days to a position where the fire isn't putting up significant smoke or ash</li> <li>However, next week the fourth week there are two days that bring wind, dry conditions and heat – that worries us in that we may not be successful in fire suppression</li> <li>The fire may increase in size and reduce our suppression activities</li> <li>We have advised the CHO that this will be a going fire for at least ten days and continue putting smoke and ash over Morwell</li> <li>Never struck anything quite like this – 2006 was a different fire and we were successful in weeks</li> <li>This is causing a different set of circumstances which is why we're revisiting the extinguishment strategy</li> <li>The challenge going forward is about water – what goes in must go out</li> <li>We have engineers working with us to ensure we understand it</li> <li>Maintain water is the best weapon to put this fire out with foams</li> <li>Will work out whether we have to use excavation</li> <li>There's been no movement that would compromise the mine however we need to maintain the vigilant approach</li> <li>If something was to move not only does it compromise the mine, but firefighter safety</li> <li>Flooding the mine is not an option because infrastructure would need to be taken out and it would take months or years</li> <li>We know this is frustrating, we're very mindful of that</li> </ul> <p><b>Rosemary Lester:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The health of the people of Morwell has been our first priority through all of this</li> <li>We said we would reissue our advice if we needed to</li> <li>Because Lapsley has said this fire will continue for at least another 10 days so I'm advising that people in at risk groups (over 65, children under school age, pregnant women, anyone with existing heart or lung condition) should temporarily relocate outside the area</li> <li>Must stress this is precautionary only</li> <li>No significant increase in the danger today</li> <li>People should think about how they might relocated and speak to DHS who will help with an individual plan</li> <li>Fortunately not seeing serious impacts on health</li> <li>But we do know the longer vulnerable people spend in fine particles is an increased risk to them</li> <li>This is not an evacuation, it's an advice for temporary relocation</li> <li>Advice to everyone else is to take temporary breaks and stay inside</li> <li>Our advice up until now has been to take temporary breaks but now we know exposure is likely to continue now is the time to recommend relocation</li> <li>We've been taking advice, looking at data and working with EPA and we believe now is the right time</li> <li>Journo says FSC said two days ago would continue, Rosemary says now is the appropriate time to increase advice</li> </ul>