

Empowering Communities at Risk – a new Paradigm for Bushfire Safety

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Tasmania Fire Service



Who is at risk from bushfires?

- People living within a bush or forest environment
- People living on the urban fringe within 200 metres of an area of bush

Ignition mechanisms

- air borne embers



- direct flame contact
- radiant heat

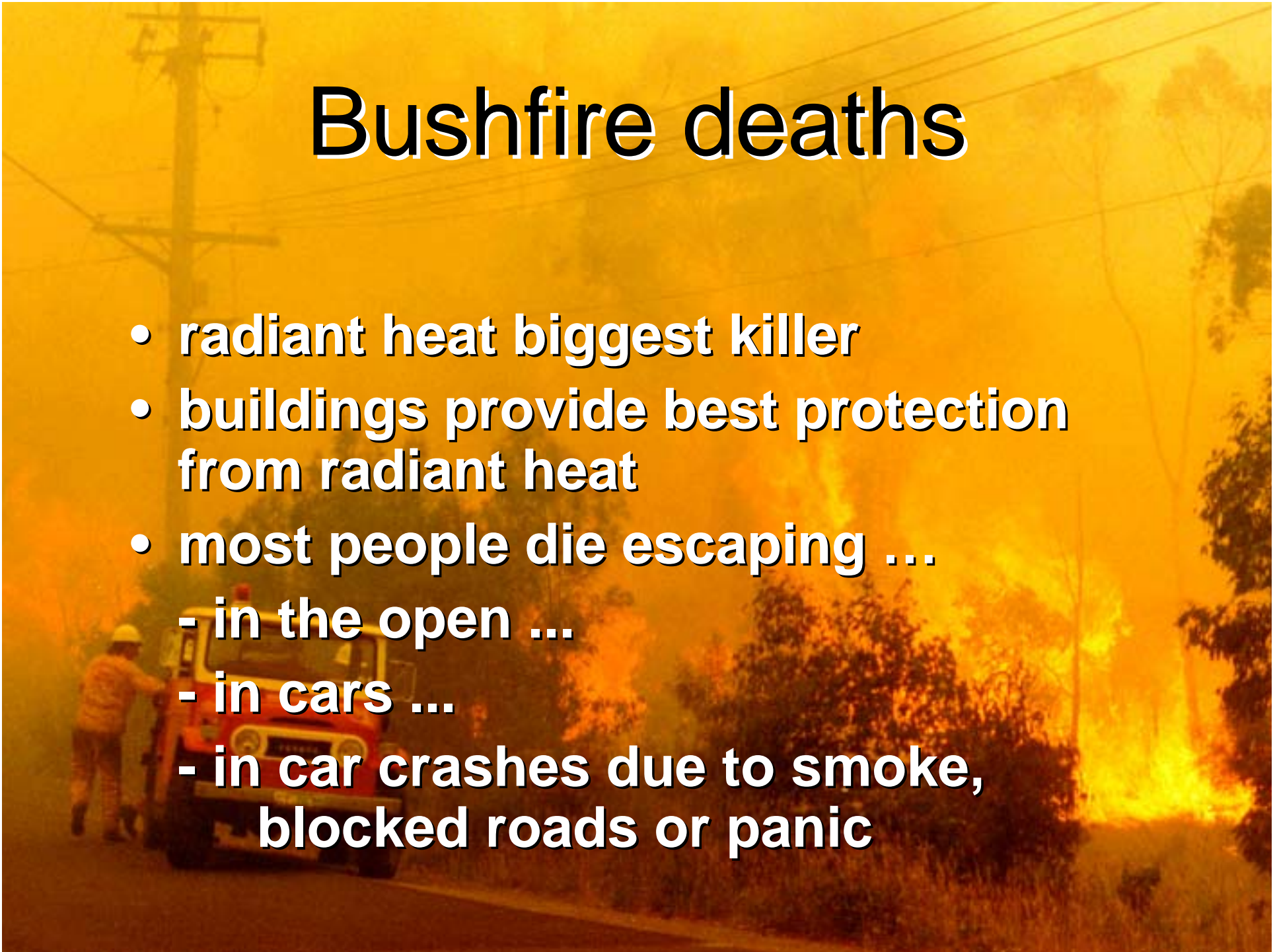


- majority of houses lost are unoccupied
- most surviving houses are protected by people
- houses provide protection for people



Bushfire deaths

- **radiant heat biggest killer**
- **buildings provide best protection from radiant heat**
- **most people die escaping ...**
 - **in the open ...**
 - **in cars ...**
 - **in car crashes due to smoke, blocked roads or panic**

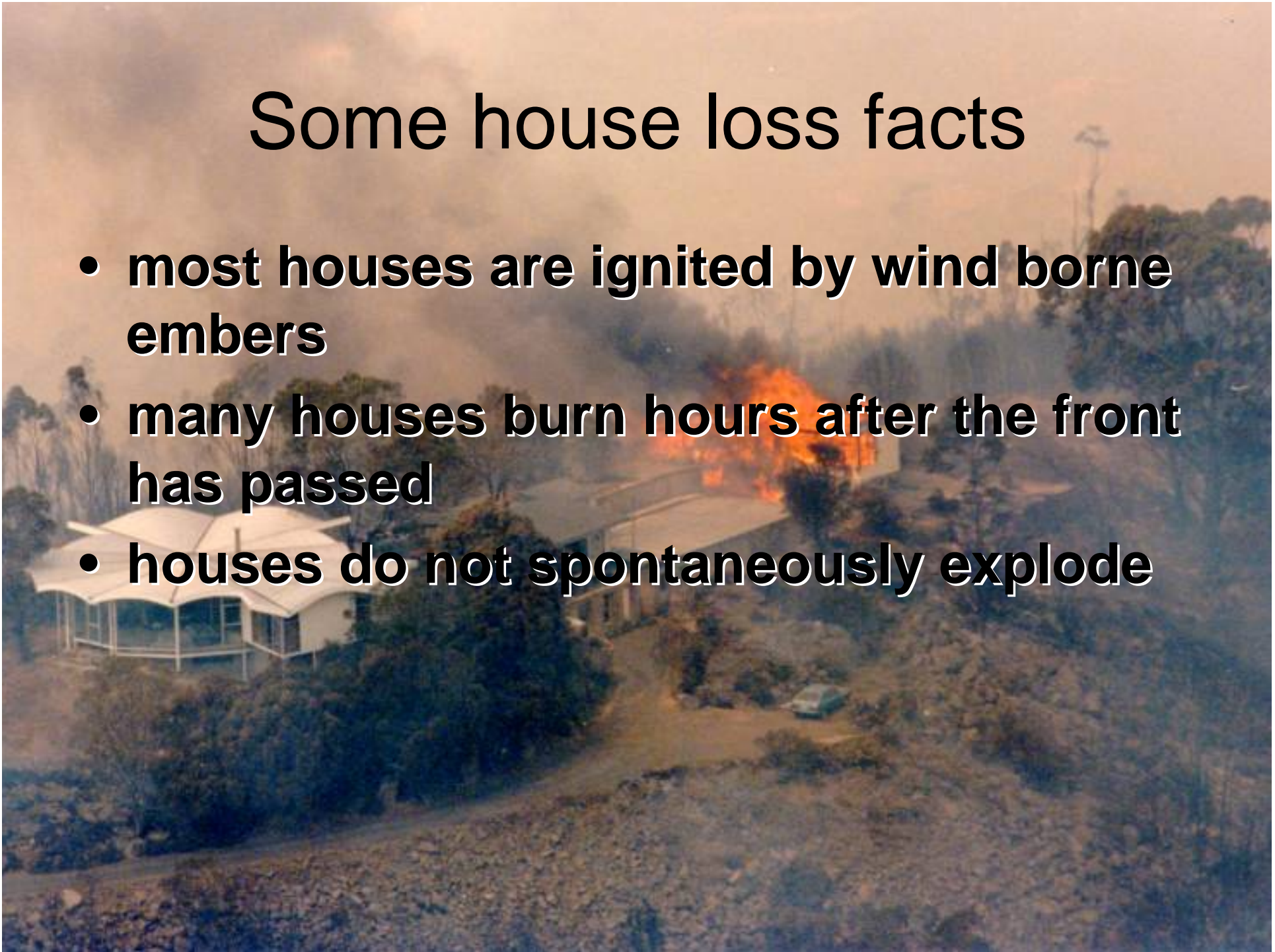


Australian fire agencies advocate...

where adequate fire protection measures have been taken, able bodied people should remain with their houses when threatened by bushfires.

Some house loss facts

- **most houses are ignited by wind borne embers**
- **many houses burn hours after the front has passed**
- **houses do not spontaneously explode**



**Houses protect people
&
people protect houses**



Preparation is essential

- remove, modify or reduce fuels
- create defensible space around buildings

An aerial photograph of a residential property. The property features a large, light-colored house with a gabled roof and a smaller, white shed with a gabled roof. A paved driveway leads from the road to the house. The property is surrounded by dense green forest. A dirt road curves around the property. The text "Defendable space is vital..." is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font at the top of the image.

**Defendable space is
vital...**

**for the safety of residents
and firefighters**







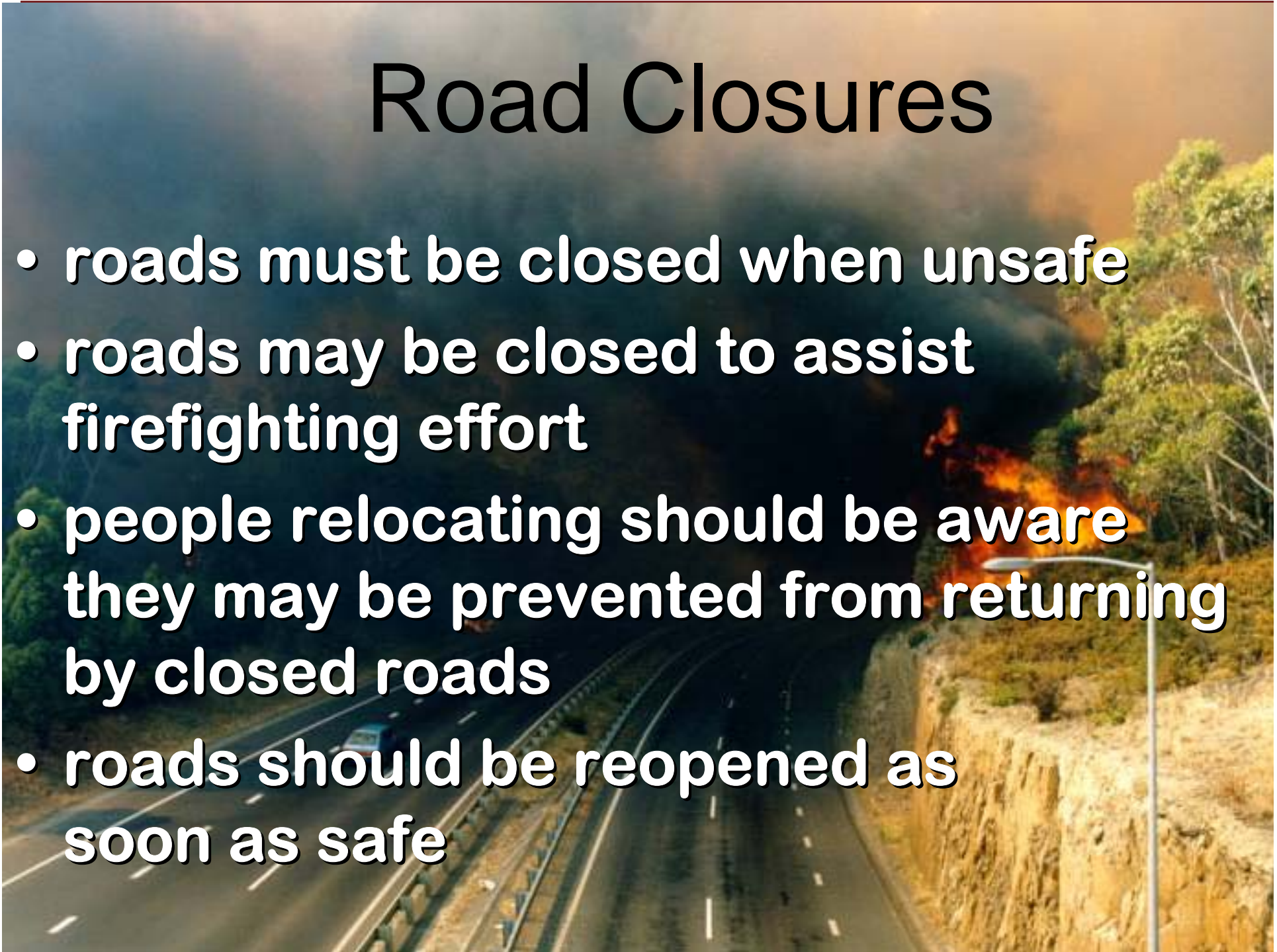
- Houses can be vulnerable to ember attack for hours before and after the arrival of the main fire front.
- Householders are encouraged to maintain vigilance by patrolling around their properties to extinguish ember started fires.

Under extreme fire conditions many houses can face ember attack simultaneously.

Householder participation in dealing with ember started fires enables more effective use of fire service resources.

Road Closures

- roads must be closed when unsafe
- roads may be closed to assist firefighting effort
- people relocating should be aware they may be prevented from returning by closed roads
- roads should be reopened as soon as safe



An aerial photograph of a residential area during a large fire. The scene is dominated by thick, orange-brown smoke that fills the sky and obscures much of the landscape. In the center, a large building is engulfed in flames, with bright orange fire visible. To the right, another structure is also on fire. The surrounding area consists of trees and other buildings, all partially hidden by the dense smoke. The overall atmosphere is one of chaos and danger.

Confusion reigns!

Residents and firefighters need accurate and current information



Current Fire and Weather Situation

To check the current weather situation, follow this link to the Bureau of Meteorology weather forecast for Tasmania
<http://www.bom.gov.au/weather/tas/>

STATEWIDE SITUATION REPORT Friday 27 January 2003, 1000 hours

Incident # 88578 Broadmarsh/Brighton Fires Status: Going

Bluff Division: Fire broke through containment lines on western edge and is burning freely towards Tanina Bluff, Platform Peak and Braslins Road.

Millvale Division: The fire spotted across containment lines up to Dougalls Hill.

Pegasus Division: Crews patrolling.

Fire behaviour has become more erratic due to drop in relative humidity. Fires burning in steep, inaccessible area. Due to predicted severe fire weather, crews will be concentrating on structural protection.

Incident # 88713 Saddleback Plantation, Mathinna Status: Going

TFS remote area team from Launceston attended yesterday. Based on current fire activity and predicted weather conditions, efforts will be concentrated on southern and western flanks.

The fire is only 1.5 km from tree line on Mt Saddleback, WSW of the fire. Spotting distance is estimated to be 80 km. Mathinna is approx 10km downwind of the fire. The last 5 km between the fire and Mathinna is through cut over and mature pine plantation.

Incident # 88738 Hylands Road, Murdunna Status: Going

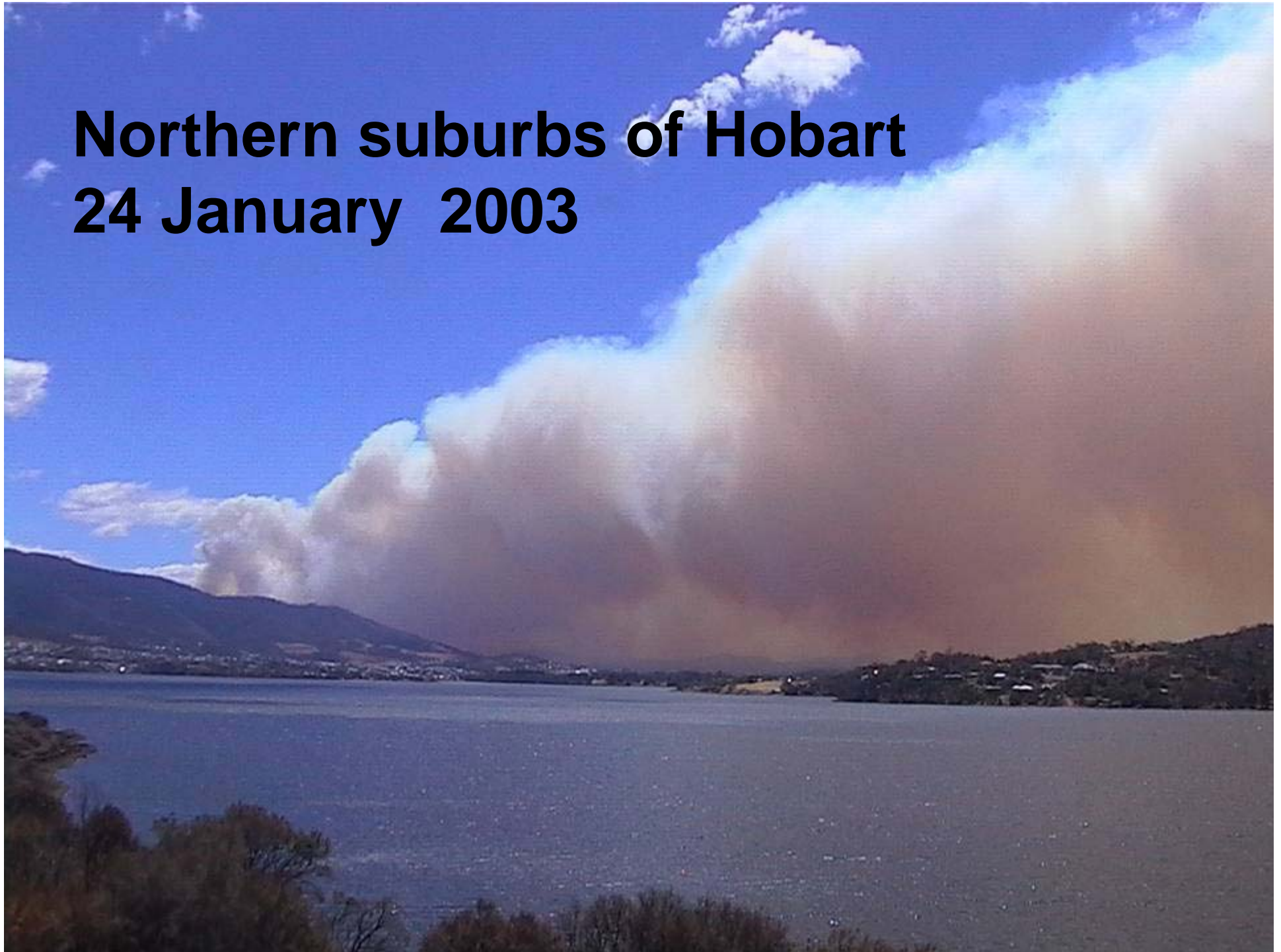
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current fire restrictions: no permits required Call 000 in case of emergency

Northern suburbs of Hobart

24 January 2003





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WHY WARNE IS QUITTING BACK PAGE

Fire chief warns of horror weekend



BLACK DAY: The shed is destroyed and the paddocks are a charred mess... but mercifully this house near Edenside survived this week's fires. Picture: TONY PALMER

STAY HOME

By ELLEN WYNNETT
Chief Reporter

FIREFIGHTERS have urged people to cancel their Australia Day long-weekend plans and prepare their homes for a potential firestorm.

Tasmania Fire Services district officer Ken Burns said the threat posed by fires already burning around Hobart was serious.

"We are not being alarmist. This is real."

"If we get the weather

which has been forecast for Friday and Saturday, we will have an extremely difficult time."

In an unprecedented move, State Emergency Services staff today will start door-knocking hundreds of homes in Hobart's southern suburbs and the Southern Midlands.

Residents will be asked to take immediate action to prepare their homes for a fire emergency.

The move comes as emergency services gear up for at least two days of extreme fire danger.

The Bureau of Meteorology predicts the tempera-

ture will begin to climb tomorrow, reaching the high 20s or low 30s in Hobart and Southern Tasmania.

By Saturday, it should reach 30°C in Hobart and 32°C at Hobart Airport, Oran and Buxley Park.

With major fires already burning at Brindmarsh and

Brighton north of Hobart, and Ulveridge in the Derwent Valley, firefighters are preparing for the worst.

Mr Burns said the Broadmarsh fire had covered 22km since it broke out on Monday and destroyed more than 1400ha.

"We have got a major fire burning on the city's fringe," he said.

"We worked on it today but I can't say it was a day of consolidation, because we didn't consolidate much."

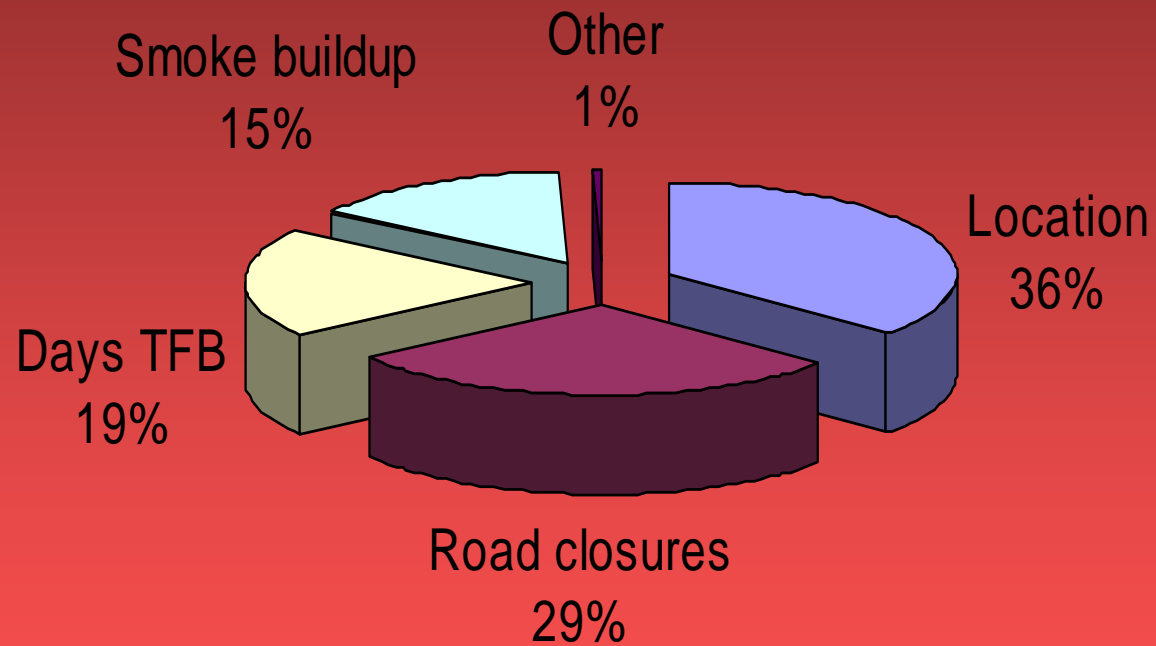
"If I said 5 per cent of that



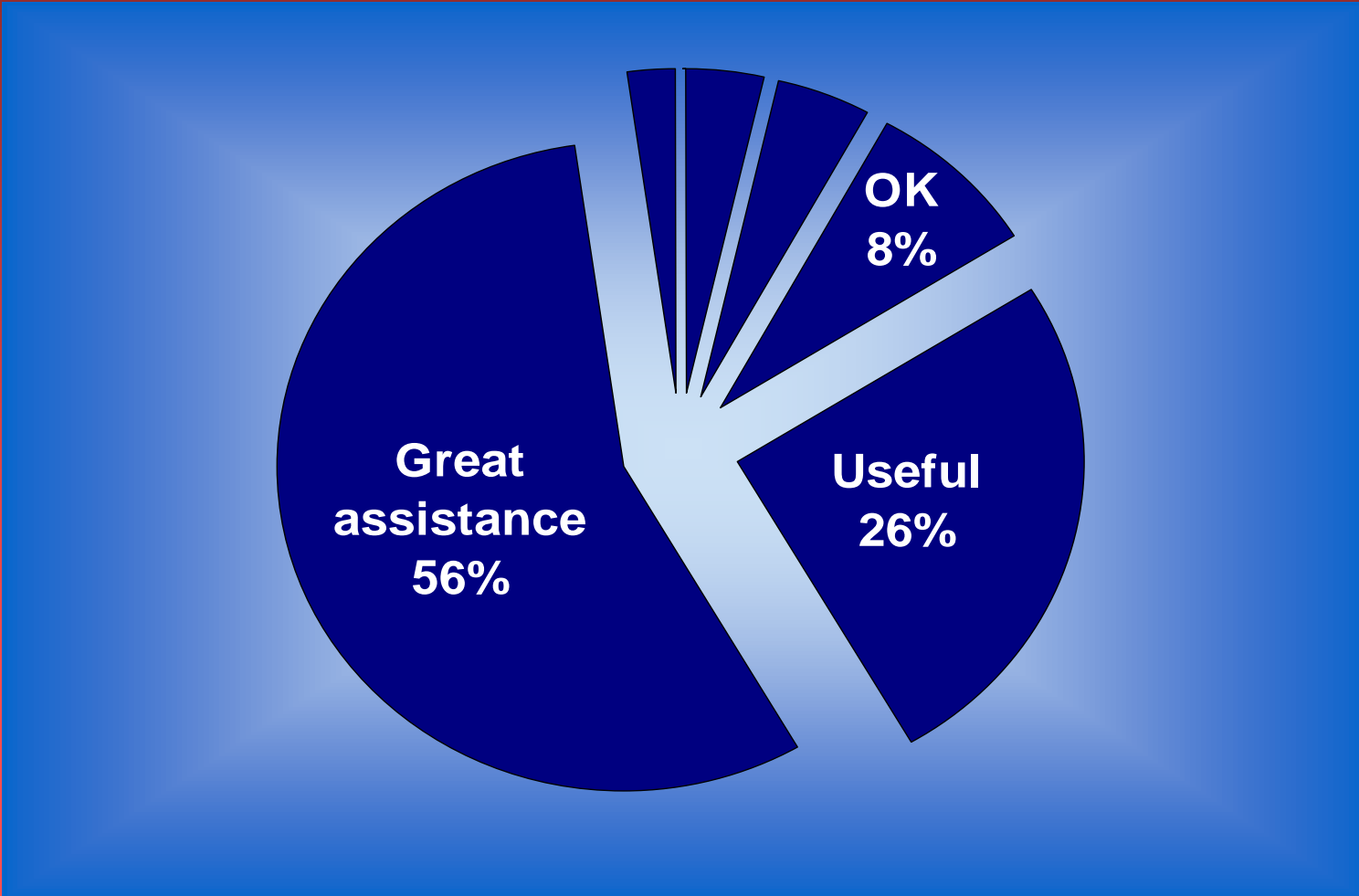
The Mercury yesterday
ARSON REWARD DOUBLED: Page 3

DOB IN A FIREBUG **PHONE: 1800 005 555**

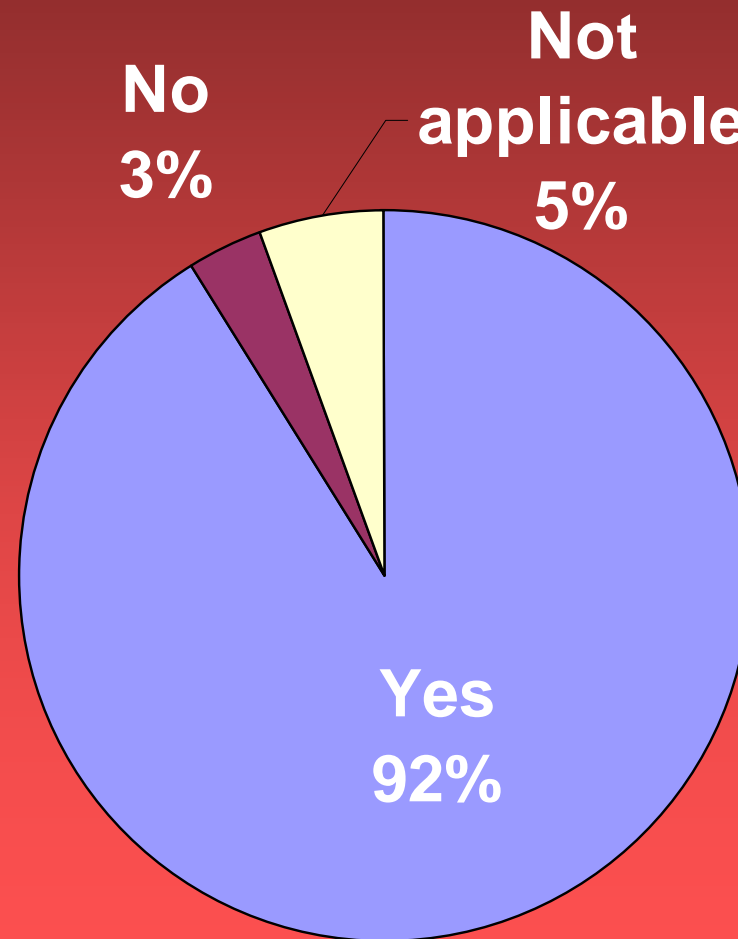
What fire information did you find useful?



Did the information assist in the preparation of your home?



Did you stay with your home?



**Our challenge is to empower
at-risk communities**

**through education
and communication**



Why do people
get on roofs?







Create a partnership between
Fire Service and Community

Thank you

Questions?