

COUNTRY FIRE AUTHORITY

TELEPHONE: 20 2571

PLEASE QUOTE
JLA/MP.1187.



ALL CORRESPONDENCE MUST BE
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY
AND NOT TO INDIVIDUAL OFFICERS
BY NAME.

MILTON PARADE,
MALVERN, VIC. 3144

31st December, 1971.

Dear Sir,

The application by Odessa Promotions for permission to conduct a Pop Festival on the property of Mr. George Duncan of Diggers Rest, on the 29th, 30th and 31st January, 1972, has been investigated by the Chief Officer, apart from which the Chairman has discussed the matter with the Chief Secretary.

You seek advice from the Authority and recommendations concerning the proposal and I set out below the points which have been conveyed to the Chief Secretary and which should be made known to your Council before the Festival takes place.

These are -

- (a) There have been bad fires in this area.
- (b) During grass fires which have run for a few hours, we have lost at times 20,000 to 100,000 sheep and/or cattle.
- (c) Although these are people, intelligent and organised to some degree, the organisation could not be brought to the degree necessary for safety.
- (d) A similar happening at Rosebud on Boxing Day expected 5,000 but approximately 50,000 attended.
- (e) If a fire starts in the area and gets a "run on" there is nothing that can be done to protect these people and there could be casualties up into the four figures.
- (f) This could even occur during a fire with a packed bumper to bumper Calder Highway. Shades of Lara where there were only a few cars.

Bearing this in mind, the Chairman has decided that, whilst every possible precaution will be taken, it is our duty to warn everybody concerned, including the news media, that, should a running fire occur, there is nothing which can save many people who may be in its path. It is only when the brigades have brought the fire under control that any attempt may be made to prevent the inevitable panic engendered by smoke and heavy traffic and possibly loss of life or injury to the individuals in the area.

Apart from the above, it is essential that the provisions of the Country Fire Authority Act, sections 39 and 40 be strictly observed and that no fires are permitted except in accordance with the terms of the legislation.

As to the detailed preparations and precautions needed to minimise, as far as possible, the obvious danger arising from such a large concentration of people in a bad fire risk area, arrangements will be made by the Chief Officer to consult Mr. Fowler on site and

The Shire Secretary,
Shire of Bulla,
Municipal Offices,
Macedon Street,
SUNBURY. 3429.

Victoria.


advise him/

advise him as to what should be done.

I note from the proposal submitted by Odessa Promotions that they have arranged Public Risk cover to the extent of \$400,000 and would suggest that this could be totally inadequate in the event of any fire occurring involving the Festival.

Whilst the Authority is unable to prevent such a festival taking place, as mentioned above it is our duty to bring to your notice the dangers attendant on such a festival at the particular time of the year which, in Authority experience, has resulted in more Total Fire Ban days than any other particular period.

Yours faithfully,


J. L. Allen,
Secretary.