



UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITIES PROJECT

THURINGOWA PERI-URBAN RESIDENTS AND BUSHFIRE

→ DO PEOPLE WHO OWN OR RENT THEIR HOMES HAVE DIFFERENT VALUES, KNOWLEDGE, PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS?

This bulletin summarises results from the Thuringowa Bushfire Survey 2005, which randomly sampled residents living outside the Thuringowa metropolitan area, within the jurisdiction of a Rural Fire Brigade Group (RFB). The survey response rate was 28%, with 263 surveys returned. Bulletin No. 6 provides the background to the Thuringowa Bushfire Survey, and this bulletin.

→ OWNERS AND RENTERS

The majority of residents owned their house (90%), with or without a mortgage. Residents renting their house were a minority (10%), and under-represented according to data from the 2001 Census. Therefore caution should be taken when interpreting the following results relating to owners and renters.

→ PROPERTY AND LOCATION VALUES

Both residents who owned their home or rented their home similarly valued the peace and quiet, space, and trees and bushland afforded by their property and location. Although there were no significant differences, owners may value trees and bushland more than renters, and renters may value the small community more than owners (see figure 1). Most owners and renters similarly moved to their current property for the rural lifestyle.

→ PERCEPTION OF THE BUSHFIRE HAZARD

Owners and renters tended to perceive the bushfire hazard similarly (see figure 2). Both groups were equally concerned about the bushfire hazard in their locality, and it was an important consideration to both groups when they were deciding to purchase or rent their current property. They also similarly rated the hazard of bushfire in their locality as moderate to high, and to their house as moderate to low.

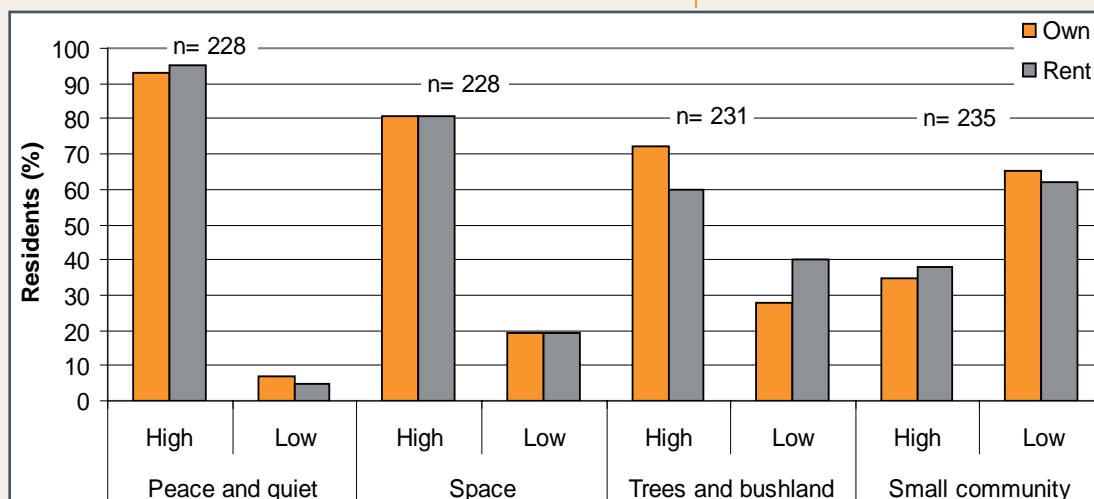


FIGURE 1. PROPERTY FEATURES VALUED BY OWNERS AND RENTERS

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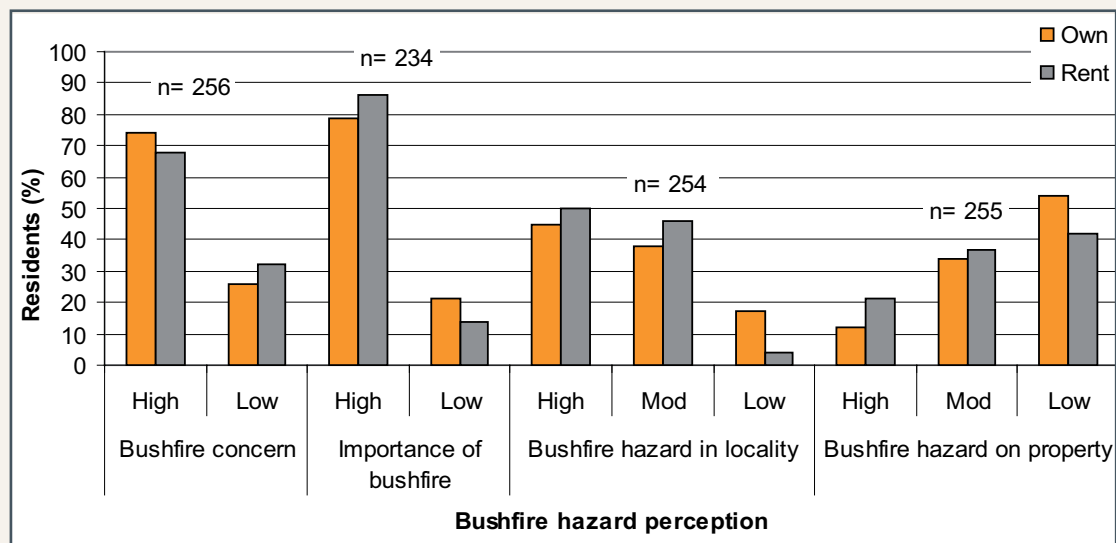


FIGURE 2. OWNERS' AND RENTERS' PERCEPTION OF THE BUSHFIRE HAZARD.

→ KNOWLEDGE, PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF SERVICE PROVIDERS

Owners' and renters' knowledge and perceptions of service providers were very similar (see Bulletin No. 9). However, there were some differences in expectations of responsibility for maintaining RFB access to properties; although a majority did state that it is the property owner's responsibility, particularly owners, renters were more likely to expect the RFB to take responsibility. Renters may also have an expectation that it is the property owner's responsibility to remove rubbish from public areas, although, overall, most residents indicated that it is the council's responsibility. A majority of both groups similarly expected property owners to take responsibility for maintaining firebreaks around properties and clearing overgrown properties, and the local council for clearing overgrown bushland and creek beds.

→ INSURANCE

Owners were more likely to have insurance on their property which includes loss from natural hazards. Renters were more likely to not have insurance or not know about their insurance status. For those who did have insurance, a majority of owners agreed that their insurance adequately covers any potential loss from natural hazards. Renters equally agreed or disagreed that their insurance is adequate, or did not know about the adequacy of their insurance. Overall, residents with a lower bushfire risk perception were more likely to think that their insurance is adequate.