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## **Media release**

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# **Bushfires highlight climate change negligence**

The raging bushfires across Victoria and Tasmania highlight the stubborn refusal of the Federal Government to take serious measures to address climate change, according to Australia Institute Executive Director Dr Clive Hamilton.

A report released today by the Institute concludes the frequency and intensity of bushfires in Australia will increase as a result of the adverse effects of climate change on weather conditions.

“CSIRO projections indicate that climate change will increase the frequency of very high and extreme fire danger days by 4-25 per cent by 2020 and 15-70 per cent by 2050 across south-east Australia”, said Dr Hamilton.

“What we are witnessing in Victoria very early this summer is likely to become more frequent as climate change produces weather conditions that increase the risk of fire.”

The author of the report, Christian Downie, said the imperative for immediate Government action to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions could not be over-emphasised.

“The failure of the Federal Government to seriously tackle global warming has left Australians exposed to a greater fire risk in the future,” he said.

“The Government can no longer afford to feign interest in climate change while Australians sweat out another fire season.

“The enormous costs of bushfires reinforces the message of the Stern Report which argued that the costs of doing nothing to address global warming are going to be much greater than the costs of reducing greenhouse gas emissions now.”

*The report may be read under “Latest Web Papers” on the Australia Institute’s website - [www.tai.org.au](http://www.tai.org.au).*