

Media Statement

5 March 2026

Statement on media reporting of cultural fire

Cultural fire isn't Aboriginal people doing DEECA's fuel reduction burns.

But that's exactly what media reporting this week is trying to trick the public into thinking: that cultural fire is a direct and costly duplicate of what the CFA does.

It's disingenuous, it's inaccurate, and we won't stand for it.

Cultural fire is healing.

It's the right fire, applied at the right time, for the right reasons: enriching the soil, germinating seeds, balancing biodiversity, helping animals find food, welcoming strangers safely onto Country, and more.

It's healing Country, and healing communities.

It's the direct and unbroken continuation of how Country was managed for tens of thousands of years – how Traditional Owners want to continue to manage Country; and how they are, within a social, fiscal and regulatory environment that works against them.

Cultural fire has the indirect and welcome benefit of reducing fuel loads, which reduces risk to life and property from bushfires. It can, and does, help protect people against bushfire risk.

If we had more cultural fire, we'd be healing sick Country, reducing the grave risks communities face during bushfire season, and revitalising an ancient cultural practice.

Where click-chasing media attempts to distort reality through dodgy accounting and deliberate misunderstanding, we're clear: cultural fire is a gift Traditional Owners offer Victoria, and continuing to support the practice and growth of cultural fire is the best way forward, for everyone.

– ENDS –

About the Federation

The Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations is the Victorian state-wide body that convenes and advocates for the rights of Traditional Owners while progressing wider social, economic, environmental and cultural objectives. It was established in 2013 by Traditional Owner Corporations – inclusive and representative family group-governed organisations with cultural authority to speak for Country and community – who recognised they could be stronger together in advancing shared interests in policy, economic opportunity and caring for Country.

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