

Government Records

ria's Heritage

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MICHAEL GUNTER
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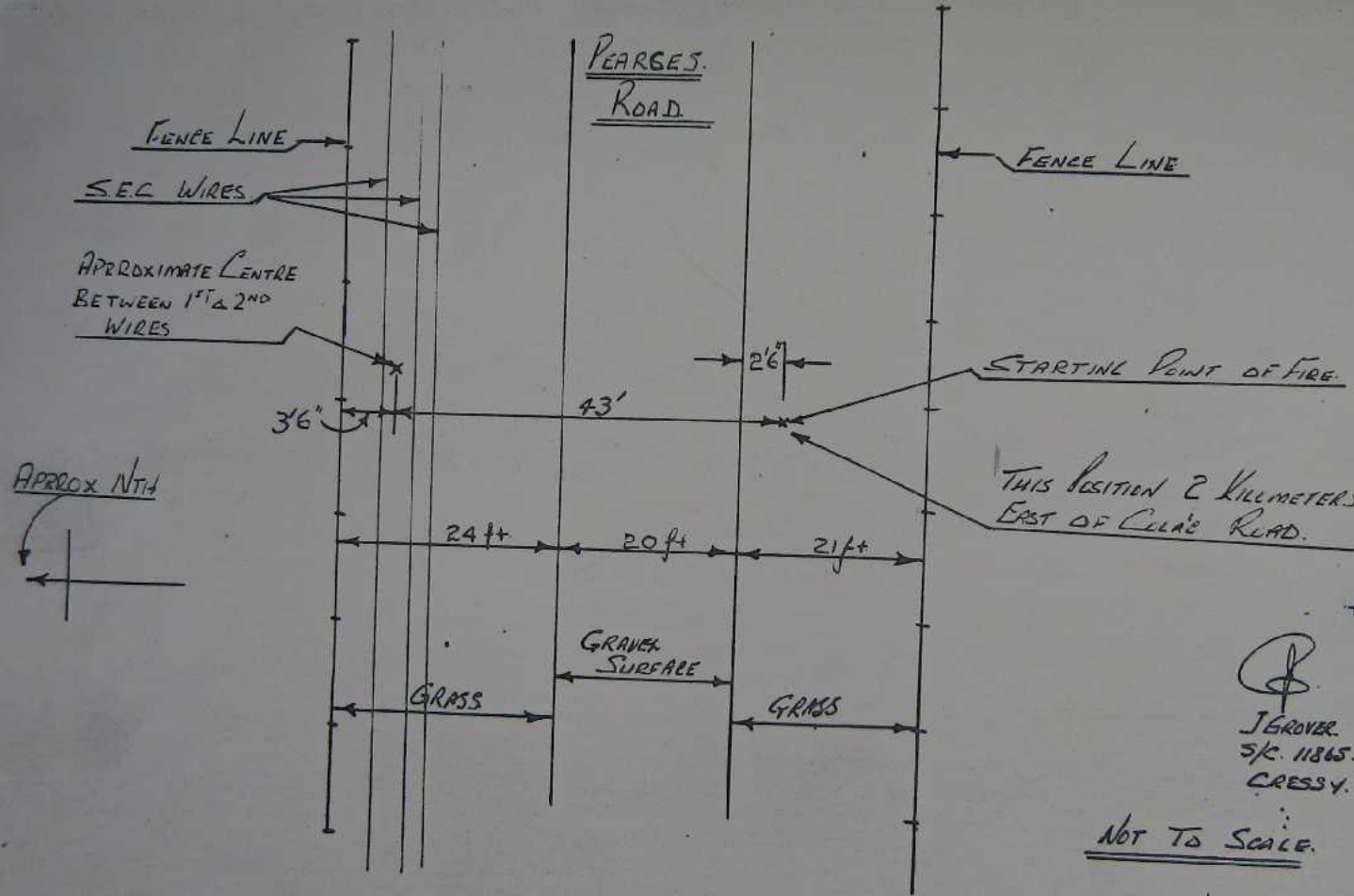
Beac - 65

20002

B.



STARTING POINT OF BEEAL FIRE ON 12-2-1977

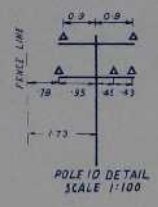
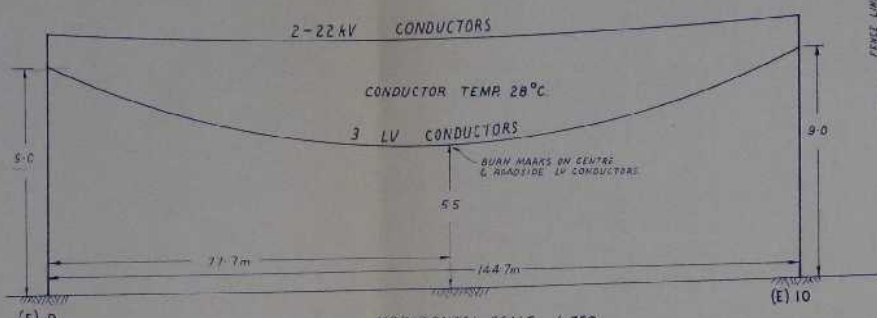
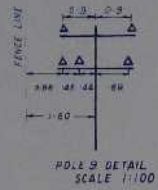
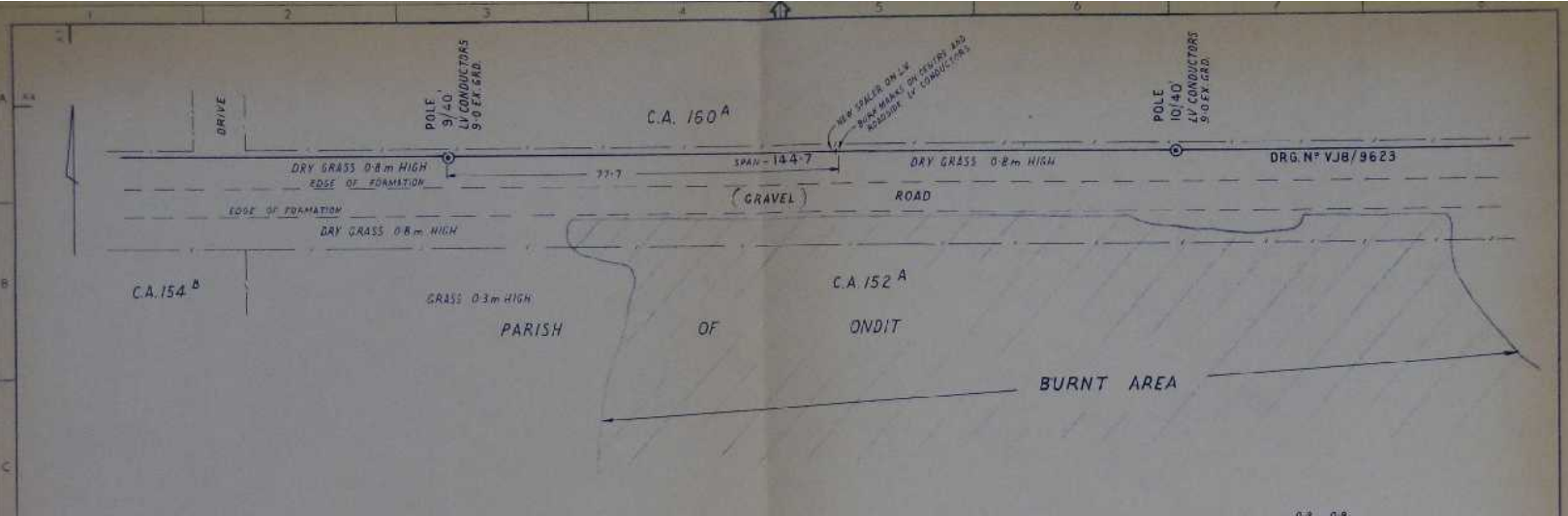


$$\begin{array}{r}
 45 \\
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 55
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$$\begin{array}{r}
 45 \\
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 155
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J GROVER
 S/C 11865
 CRESSY.

NOT TO SCALE.



HORIZONTAL SCALE 1:750
 VERTICAL SCALE 1:150
 SCALE OF METRES

SURVEYED BY G. KIRLEY
 G. LEWADWITSCH
 DATE OF SURVEY 11-3-77
 DED FILE N° 4253
 F.G. 805/44

DRAWN T.P. 16-3-77
 CHECKED G.K. 18-3-77
 G. Kirley 18/3/77 CHIEF DRAFTSMAN
 SURVEYOR
 G. Kirley 18-3-77 PRINCIPAL SURVEYOR

STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION OF VICTORIA
 DISTRIBUTION ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
 SCALE AS SHOWN
 DRG. N° VX6/286/3
 BEEAC FIRE - DETAIL NEAR POWER LINE
 C.A. 152^A
 PARISH OF ONDIT

REVISIONS				

I.S.O. SIZE A3 297 x 420 MM

Ph. 11
035

BOARD OF INQUIRY INTO THE OCCURRENCE
OF GUSH AND GRASS FIRES IN VICTORIA

ON 12/2/77

WEEING FIRE

IAN RICHARD LEE of Pierce's Road, Weaving in the State of Victoria
(Phone: 052 346350) states:-

On Saturday the 12th day of February 1977 at about 2 p.m. I was outside the front lawn on my property at the above address. As I figured around to face towards the east I saw smoke rising about half a mile away from my house to the east just off Pierce's Road to the south. I immediately got into my utility and drove to Craig's property across the road. Peter and Keith Craig were working in a paddock and I shouted to them that there was fire. Peter Craig got into my utility, bringing a knapsack with him.

We then drove east along Pierce's Road towards the Weaving Country Fire Authority Station. As we drove past where the fire was burning I noticed that the fire was about 30 to 40 yards south of the fence line and heading away from us in a southerly direction. The fire also appeared to be back-burning slowly towards the fence.

As we got to the Weaving Country Fire Authority Station I noticed that the fire truck was already being driven out of the station. I got out of my utility and into the fire truck and drove back to fight the fire.

At the time I first drove past the fire when going to the Weaving Country Fire Authority Station, I noticed that there was about 30 to 40 yards of grass inside the fence which had not been burnt.

There are power lines running along the north side of Pierce's Road parallel to the road. There are what I believe to be high voltage power lines at the top of the power poles and lower down there are three wires which service these properties including my property with low voltage power. The low voltage power lines are very slack between the poles.

On the day of the fire there was a very strong north wind blowing. The power at my property went off at about the time the fire started, and was re-instated later that day.

About four weeks after the fire, state Electricity Commission employees installed "spacers" between the lower three wires about midway between the poles. These "spacers" were installed right along the lower power line, the

*Elaine Aile
Reese*

BOARD OF INQUIRY INTO THE OCCURRENCE

OF BUSH AND GRASS FIRES IN VICTORIA

ON 12/2/77

BEAC FIRE

65

HARRY WHITE of Pierce's Road Weering in the State of Victoria (Phone: 052 346447) states:-

I own a property on the north side of Pierce's Road Weering. On Saturday the 12th day of February 1977, a fire started on the south side of Pierce's Road about 200 yards to the west of my house.

I was first advised of the fire by a passing motorist whom I now believe to have been Daryl Hirth. When I was notified of the fire I immediately went to the scene of the fire. When I arrived, the fire was burning about 200 yards south of the roadway. It was burning in approximately south south-easterly direction, fanned by a strong wind coming from about the north north-westerly direction.

I cannot say what time I was notified of the fire except that it was shortly after lunch time. I cannot say where the fire started as I immediately went to fight the east flank of the fire where it was burning.

I returned to my home later that day and ascertained that the power was off. On the following day, that is Sunday the 13th day of February 1977 I ascertained that the power had been re-connected to other properties on Pierce's Road serviced by the same power line as services my property. The State Electricity Commission was contacted on the afternoon of 13th February 1977 and notified that our power had not been re-instated. The power was re-instated on Monday 14th February 1977.

Power lines run along the north side of Pierce's Road parallel to the roadway. There are two wires at the top of the power poles and lower down there are three wires. These three wires service the properties along Pierce's Road including my property. The lower wires run from the power pole immediately at the front of my house to a power pole opposite Les's house which is to the west of my house.

On 12th February 1977 the lower three power lines were very slack. Within about two weeks after the fire, State Electricity Commission employees installed "spaces" between the lower three power lines. These spaces were installed about midway between each of the power poles.

On Tuesday 12th April, 1977 State Electricity Commission employees

BOARD OF INQUIRY INTO THE OCCURRENCE
OF BUSH AND GRASS FIRES IN VICTORIA

ON 12/2/77

BEAC FIRE

DAVID IAN HIRTH of Foxlow, Wayside Delivery Berrybank (Phone: 055 984250).

states:-

On Saturday the 12th day of February 1977 at about 1.45 p.m. I was at the Beac Rifle Range when a report was received of a fire which had started at Wallinduc. As I feared that the fire might endanger the property where I live, I decided to leave the Rifle Range and drive home.

As I was leaving the Rifle Range, I saw smoke which was obviously a lot closer than the fire which had been reported at Wallinduc. I decided to go to the scene of the fire which I could see from the Rifle Range. I drove west from the Rifle Range to the Cressy/Colac Road, north along the Cressy/Colac Road and then turned east into Pierce's Road.

As I drove along Pierce's Road, I saw that a fire was burning south of the roadway about 200 yards or 300 yards inside the boundary fence. I did not observe how close the fire had burnt to the boundary fence. I estimate that I would have arrived at the scene of the fire about 10 minutes after I left the Rifle Range.

As I was driving along Pierce's Road I noticed that there were sparks flying off the power lines which run along the north side of Pierce's Road parallel to the roadway. The power lines there consist of two lines at the top of the power pole and three lines lower down. The lower three wires were swinging in the wind and appeared to be hitting. I did not observe where the sparks were going. I stopped my car and spoke to a person I now believe to be Keith Craig who was standing on the side of the road. I established from him that he had not reported the fire.

As I was speaking to Keith Craig, my cousin Daryl Keith Hirth drove along Pierce's Road in a westerly direction. He stopped his car, got into my car, and we then drove towards the Weering Fire Shed. As we drove towards the fire shed, the fire truck passed us travelling west along Pierce's Road.

I then drove back to Daryl Hirth's car, dropped him off there, and then drove home. As I drove past the fire on this occasion, I noticed that the fire truck was in the paddock where the fire was burning and appeared to me to be

David I. Hirth

D. I. Hirth

going down the west flank of the fire. There were at that time a number of other persons present and fighting the fire.

Completed DATED the day of 1977.

SIGNED by the said DAVID IAN HIRTH

In the presence of:-

E. P. Heath

David I. Hirth

NK/cm
1/3/77

FIRE : BEEAC : 12 FEBRUARY 1977

On Monday 21 February 1977, in company with Reg James, Con E, DED; and Doug Lyons, DM Colec; I proceeded to Pierce's Road, approximately 7 km north-west of Beecac. I was informed that at about 2 pm on Saturday 12 February 1977 a fire occurred on the south side of the road opposite 2 bays of 1.v.v. conductors. A lady, Mrs White, who lives at the eastern end of the fire, reported that the fire had been caused by 1.v.v. conductors clashing.

An inspection of the 1.v.v. conductors between poles 9 and 10 of Barsin single phase 22 kv spur with 3-wire 1.v.v. subsidiary running east and west on the north side of the road revealed that the 1.v.v. conductors were very slightly out of sag. No evidence could be seen from the ground that 1.v.v. conductors had clashed, but Doug Lyons was checking by bucket of an EPV whether or not there was arcing on these conductors.

This fire covered an area of approximately 3000 acres and 4 homes were destroyed.

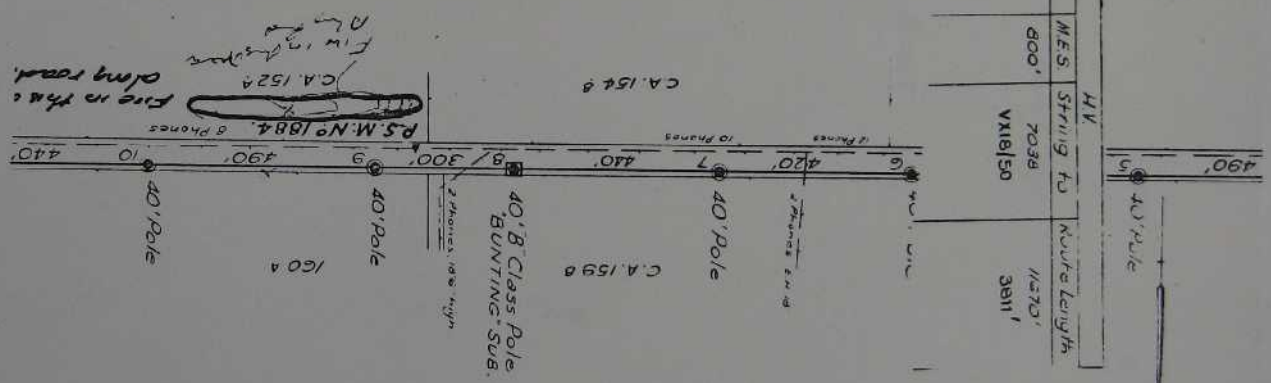
Attached is copy of route plan V06/9623, together with a rough sketch plan of the scene and photographs.

Mark
N KIRK

att

OF

Series	Conductor	MES	String to	Route Length
Tec-Pole 296 - Pole 10	2-1/2 Steel	800'	703B	11270'
Pole 2 (Bunnings Spur) - Pole 13	2-3/12 Steel		VX16150	3811'



PART OF DRAWING
 VUS/9623A
 BARSIM SPUR LINE
 BEEAC ZIKV.
 Scale 4 chains to 1 inch.

For Construction Details, see Drg. No 7023 Series.
 40' Pole

Series	Conductor	String to	Route Length
Pole 8 - Pole 12	2-0G43 SCA	OM1571	3300'
Pole 2 - Pole 13	2-0C43 SCA	OM1571	1050'
Pole 10 - Pole 14	2-01118 SCA	VX16137	290'

BEEAC FILE

8

300'

6 5'
9

490'

0

APPROXIMATE
START
IN FIRST

BURNT AREA

N
A

11

7-0-0-0-0

11/2/2000

dwb/cm
15 March 1977

NOTE FOR FILE

On Friday 11 March 1977, I spoke with Mr Graeme Potter, Assistant District Manager, Colac, who advised that on 22 February 1977 Brian Robertson, linesman "A" Grade, inspected the Garsim spur line by the aid of an elevating platform vehicle between poles 9 and 10 and found that there was evidence of clashing on the road side and neutral (centre) conductor at about mid-span. On the same day, spacers were installed on the conductors between each pole on the I.V. line from pole 4 to pole 12.



W BURTON

20 April 1977

BEFAC FIRE : 12 FEBRUARY 1977

Ex Jack Hill, Regional Manager, South Western Electricity Supply Region per telephone 19 April 1977.

Keith McCarney, District Manager, South Western Region called on Mrs White, Pierces Road, Beecac, and informed her that it was in relation to her telephone call of no supply on Sunday 13 February 1977.

Mrs White informed him that supply was restored about midday Monday. There had been a previous supply fault some time ago when a fuse blew and they were off supply for some time.

She mentioned that she had driven along Pierces Road before the fire and had not seen any sparking of conductors but they were being blown out almost to the roadway. Also that a man passing later saw conductors clashing.

Mrs White appeared to be seeking time of fire, etc. information from Keith so he did not talk to Mrs White further.

H Kirk