

AT LEAST SIX DIE, 170 HOMES BURN IN BUSHFIRES Millions Damage

Sydney, Sat: First comprehensive reports coming through from the bushfire-blackened areas of the State show that at least 6 lost their lives, 170 homes were destroyed and millions of pounds damage done in yesterday's blazes.

Area which suffered worst was that around the south coast town of Bega where 4 lost their lives and 16 homes were destroyed.

Fires on the south coast have been sweeping 100 miles from Bateman's Bay to the Victorian border and 40 miles inland.

Communications have ended at Milton and reports are coming from motorists passing through devastated towns.

On the nearby tablelands light rain began falling late today and it is hoped the rain will increase and spread to the bushfire area.

Strong southerly winds today renewed the threat of outbreaks and fire-fighters are keeping anxious watch on the glowing debris.

Ten towns in the Riverina are still in danger and all available men are attempting to hold the fires.

In the Riverina yesterday 2 men lost their lives and damage estimated at £1,000,000 was caused.

Heavy spasmodic showers at Canberra this afternoon lessened the fire risk in the dry outback areas.

Rail services have been halted in the Riverina.

During the night smoke from numerous fires blan-

ketted Sydney and because of the haze Kingsford Smith airport was closed for 3 hours.

At Towong, 36 miles from Walwa, the postmaster said "If the wind gets any stronger the whole of this Murray area will go."

Fire started at Holbrook 35 miles away in NSW, yesterday.

It spread down to the banks of the Murray late yesterday, jumped into Victoria.

Dr. Bluett, of Walwa, narrowly escaped death when his car was surrounded by flames and destroyed.

Mr. and Mrs. C. McKimmie escaped by driving their car through the flames, which swept their property and destroyed their homestead.