



MEDIA RELEASE

10/50 Vegetation Clearing Entitlement Code of Practice amendments

30 September 2014

The *10/50 Vegetation Clearing Entitlement* was created to provide people living near bushland with the ability to increase their level of protection against bush fires, following concerns raised by homeowners after devastating blazes destroyed more than 200 homes last year.

Introduced on 1 August 2014, the entitlement allowed property owners living within 350 metres of Category 1 and Category 2 Bush Fire Prone Land to remove trees within 10 metres of their home, as well as vegetation within 50 metres, without state or local approval, on their own land.

National research shows historically 99 per cent of homes destroyed by bush fires were located within 350 metres of bushland. It was for this reason that the entitlement area covers homes within 350 metres of Bush Fire Prone Land.

Since its introduction, a number of councils and community groups have raised concerns regarding the 350 metre entitlement area particularly on small parcels of land.

NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons today announced changes to the *10/50 Vegetation Clearing Entitlement*, which have been made following site inspections, an interim review of the Code of Practice and community feedback.

The changes are:

- The 10/50 entitlement area for Category 2 Bush Fire Prone Land is now 150 metres, reduced from 350 metres
- Councils will have the ability to reclassify smaller parcels of vegetation from Category 1 to Category 2 therefore reducing the entitlement area.

(Category 2 is areas where the vegetation poses a reduced fire risk.)

The NSW RFS has also brought forward the formal review of the 10/50 scheme to commence 1 October. This will provide communities across NSW the opportunity to provide comment and feedback. Details on where and how the community can provide its feedback can be found on the NSW RFS website.

“These changes address council and community concerns while maintaining an appropriate level of protection for properties and the community,” Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

The 10/50 online assessment tool at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au has been updated to reflect the changes.