



MEDIA RELEASE

Nine LGAs to start Bush Fire Danger Period one month early

22 August 2017

The NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) today announced nine Local Government Areas (LGAs) will commence the Bush Fire Danger Period (BFDP) one month early due to prevailing dry conditions.

NSW RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said the Warrumbungle, Gilgandra, Mid-Western Regional Council, Port Macquarie – Hastings, Mid-Coast, Bathurst, Oberon, Lithgow and Blue Mountains LGAs will start the BFDP on Friday 1 September 2017.

These nine LGAs will be in addition to the 19 LGAs and six LGAs that permanently commence the BFDP on 1 September and 1 August respectively, because of local climatic conditions.

The state's remaining 95 LGAs will enter the statutory BFDP on Sunday 1 October, 2017.

Anyone wishing to light a fire during the BFDP must obtain a permit from their local Fire Control Centre.

“Permits ensure that fire is used safely and to minimise the danger to landholders, their property and the community,” Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

“While hazard reductions are an important part of preparations, landholders need to be extremely careful as warmer conditions mean fire can spread quickly and suddenly.

“Never leave a fire unattended and, if a fire does escape, make sure you call Triple Zero (000) immediately so that emergency services can respond and minimise the damage.”

Commissioner Fitzsimmons urged homeowners to prepare for the upcoming fire season, noting warmer than average temperatures and below average rainfall are forecast for the coming months.

“Last week we saw a hint of the conditions the upcoming season may bring, with firefighters responding to 612 bush/grass fires that burnt 21,239 hectares, including three Watch and Act fires that threatened homes in Kempsey, Port Macquarie and Port Stephens,” Commissioner Fitzsimmons said.

“Firefighters have been busy undertaking hazard reductions in the lead up to the bush fire season and it is equally as important that residents play their part by preparing their property, which includes removing flammable materials from yards, clearing leaves from gutters and checking hose lengths.

“It is also important to make or update your Bush Fire Survival Plan and have a conversation with your family to ensure everyone knows what they will do and where they will go in the event that they are threatened by a bush fire.”

To check the Fire Danger Ratings for your area or to download a Bush Fire Survival Plan, go to www.rfs.nsw.gov.au or contact your local Fire Control Centre.