



BUSH FIRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PLAN OF OPERATIONS FOR CO-ORDINATED FIRE-FIGHTING ARRANGEMENTS



RFS



DOCUMENT CONTROL

Release history

Version	Date	Author	Summary of changes
1.0	May 2023	NSW RFS State Operations	
1.1	Aug 2025	NSW RFS State Operations	BFCC Chair updated to Trent Curtin

Reviewed by

Agency	Name and Position	Date
NSW Rural Fire Service		
Fire and Rescue NSW		
National Parks and Wildlife Service		
Forestry Corporation NSW		
Local Council(s)		
Other members of the BFMC and other local agencies e.g. Department of Defence, Local Aboriginal Land Councils, Sydney Water etc		

Related documents

Document name	Version
Add any other relevant local level documents and related versions.	
Bush Fire Management Committee Handbook	
Joint Agency Fire Investigation in New South Wales	
Ignition Prevention Plan	
Bush Fire Risk Management Plan	
Bush Fire Coordinating Committee Policy	
Local Emergency Management Plan	
Community Protection Plan	
Pre-Incident Plan	
Fire Access and Fire Trail Plans	

BFMC PLAN OF OPERATIONS

FOR CO-ORDINATED FIRE FIGHTING ARRANGEMENTS



Signature

Trent Curtin, Commissioner, BFCC Chair

Approved by BFMC Chair on:

Endorsed by BFMC on:

AUTHORISATION

BFMC Name

BFMC Chair Name

AUTHORITY

This plan has been prepared by the Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC), and approved by the Bush Fire Coordinating Committee (BFCC).

This plan is authorised in accordance with the provisions of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*.

This plan details the coordinated firefighting arrangements in place for the Local Government Area(s) of and encompasses actions for each Fire Fighting Authority as well as members of the BFMC.

This plan will be distributed to all BFMC members, including the relevant Fire Fighting Authorities (NSW RFS, FRNSW, NPWS and FCNSW), relevant Government Agencies (NSW Police Force, Local Council) and Support Agencies / Organisations within the BFMC area that have an active interest or involvement in the execution of this Plan.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the BFMC Plan of Operations for Co-ordinated Fire Fighting Arrangements are:

- ▶ The protection of life, property and the environment from bush and grass fires.
- ▶ To undertake proactive planning, preparedness and prevention activities which shall mitigate the impact of bush and grass fires on the community.
- ▶ The provision of appropriate and adequate resourcing from all BFMC members to allow for a coordinated response to bush and grass fires.
- ▶ The coordination of communications and reporting to provide appropriate and timely alerts, warnings and safety messages to the public with a consistent multi-agency narrative.
- ▶ The facilitation of an early transition to recovery arrangements.
- ▶ Formalising the operational readiness activities to be undertaken by agencies should the prevailing conditions be conducive to the outbreak of a bush fire.
- ▶ Establishing the inter-agency response activities to be followed should a bush fire assume such proportions as to be incapable of suppression by the local authority.
- ▶ Adopting the principles of ecologically sustainable development in operational readiness, response and recovery activities.

BFMC PLAN OF OPERATIONS

FIRE CONTROL CENTRE

Primary

Alternate

EOC

RADIO – Refer to NSW RFS IMP 6.07.02 Liaison Channels

Dispatch A

Dispatch B

Tactical

Task

Strategic

Cross-border Communications

IMT Roles	Name	Agency	Phone	Email
Incident Controller				
Deputy Incident Controller				
Operations Officer				
Planning Officer				
Logistics Officer				
Public Information Officer				
Safety Officer				
Fire Behaviour Analyst				
Management Support Officer				
Division Commander				
Heavy Plant Supervisor				
Rural Liaison Officer				
Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer				
Aboriginal Community Field Liaison Officer				
Community Field Liaison Officer				
Local Knowledge Representative				
Air Operations Manager				
Air Observer				
Aircraft Officer				
Air Base Manager				
Air Attack Supervisor				
Fire Investigator				
Heavy Plant Manager				

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Planning Documentation

Name	Document Location	Owner
Bush Fire Risk Management Plan	Online	BFMC
Local Emergency Management Plan	Online	Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC)
BFMC Fire Access and Fire Trail Plan (FAFT)		
Agency Fire Management Plans (FMPs)		
Emergency Management Plan (EMP) and Incident Plans		
RFS Community Protection Plans		
BFMC Community Engagement Plan		
RFS Pre-Incident Plans (PIPs)		
BFMC Ignition Prevention Plan		

Supporting Documents and Policies

Any fire suppression techniques or activities for which prior authority from the land owner, occupier or land management agency is required shall be specified here.

[illegible]

Key BFMC Contacts

[illegible]

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Images and maps

This section shall be used to display an operational map displaying the BFMC area boundaries, Fire Control Centre location(s), critical infrastructure, main roads, primary towns / villages, National Parks and State Forests. Its purpose is to provide a visual snapshot to personnel not familiar with the area. Further requirements regarding mapping are identified on page 15 "Mapping".

BFMC PLAN OF OPERATIONS

OPERATIONAL READINESS

Additional, complementary actions may be included at the request of the BFMC including any actions identified as treatments in the Bush Fire Risk Management Plan. Insert hyperlinks where necessary and/or helpful.

REQUIREMENTS	MODERATE FDR	HIGH FDR	EXTREME FDR	CATASTROPHIC FDR
Fire Control Centre (FCC)	▶ FCC activated on an as needs basis.	▶ FCC business hours however consider extended operating hours in line with forecasted conditions.	▶ Consider opening FCC 0700 – 1900 hours with staggered start times.	▶ FCC activated on a 24 hours basis or until risk / fire activity reduces.
Multi Agency Incident Management Team (IMT)	▶ IMT activated on an as needs basis	▶ Pre-emptive Incident Controller identified and available to attend the FCC within one hour notice to assume control as required at forecast FBI 45 or higher. ▶ Pre-emptive team of five IMT personnel available attend the FCC within two hours' notice at forecast FBI 45 or higher.	▶ Incident Controller and a team of five IMT personnel in place within the FCC between 0700- 1900 hours. ▶ An additional pre-emptive team of five IMT personnel available to work in the FCC with two hours' notice and on standby for night shift.	▶ Incident Controller and an IMT consisting of all primary positions and others as required on duty within the FCC for day and night shifts. ▶ Additional IMT personnel available within two hours' notice.
Agency Liaison Officers (LO)	▶ Agency Liaison Officers briefed and activated as required. ▶ Agencies to advise the Executive Officer of their proposed actions and confirm contact details.	▶ Fire Fighting agency liaison officers to be considered in FCC between 1000 -1700 hours at forecast FBI 45. ▶ Pre-emptive Liaison Officers identified and available to attend the FCC within one hour notice – includes Rural Liaison Officer and Local Knowledge Representative at forecast FBI 45 or higher. ▶ Agencies to consider advising the Executive Officer of their proposed actions and confirm contact details at forecast FBI 45 or higher.	▶ Liaison Officers for all Fire Fighting Authorities, Rural Liaison Officer, Local Knowledge Representative, NSWPF and NSW Ambulance in place within the FCC between 0900 - 1900 hours or as agreed. ▶ Other agencies to advise the Executive Officer of their proposed actions and confirm contact details.	▶ All Liaison Officers in place in the FCC on a 24 hours basis until FDR risk reduces.
Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC)	▶ Fire Classification Group members briefed and activated as required.	▶ Fire Classification Group members briefed and activated as required.	▶ Confirm actions as specified in the Plan of Operations.	▶ Confirm actions as specified in Plan of Operations.
Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC)	▶ Local Emergency Operations Controller (LEOCON) and Chair LEMC briefed and activated as required.	▶ Local Emergency Operations Controller (LEOCON) and Chair LEMC briefed and activated as required. ▶ Incident Controller to brief the LEOCON and LEMC, and request consideration be given to the partial activation of the Local Emergency Operations Centre (LEOC) at forecast FBI 45 or higher.	▶ Incident Controller to brief the LEOCON and LEMC, and request activation of the LEOC.	▶ Incident Controller to brief the LEOCON and LEMC, and request activation of the LEOC.

BFMC PLAN OF OPERATIONS

OPERATIONAL READINESS

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REQUIREMENTS	MODERATE FDR	HIGH FDR	EXTREME FDR	CATASTROPHIC FDR
NSW RFS Initial Response (This represents the suggested weight of attack. This can be increased to reflect local arrangements.)	▶ Arrangements as outlined within the NSW RFS Fire Ground Standard Operating Procedure #3. ▶ Incident Controller to advise and confirm any additional support with NSW RFS State Operations Centre.	▶ Incident Controller to advise and confirm any additional support with NSW RFS State Operations Centre. ▶ Arrangements as outlined within the NSW RFS Fire Ground Standard Operating Procedure #3. ▶ Pre-Determined Dispatch (PDD) to be enacted in Primary Response Zones at forecast FBI 35 or higher. ▶ Consider standing up RAFT and RART teams to assist with early containment and or extinguishment of fires.	▶ Incident Controller to advise and confirm any additional support with NSW RFS State Operations Centre. ▶ Arrangements as outlined within the NSW RFS Fire Ground Standard Operating Procedure #3. ▶ Pre-Determined Dispatch (PDD) to enacted in Primary Response Zones.	▶ Incident Controller to advise and confirm any additional support with NSW RFS State Operations Centre. ▶ Arrangements as outlined within the NSW RFS Fire Ground Standard Operating Procedure #3 ▶ Pre-Determined Dispatch (PDD) to enacted in Primary Response Zones. ▶ Executive Officer to advise and confirm any additional support with NSW RFS State Operations Centre.
FRNSW Initial Response	▶ Normal response arrangements as per arrangements in the FRNSW Bush Fire Sub Plan unless a Total Fire Ban declaration is made within a Fire District.	▶ Normal Alarm Response Protocols (ARPs) or as per arrangements in the FRNSW Bush Fire Sub Plan for the Fire Districts affected by the FDR. ▶ FRNSW to consider advising the Executive Officer of arrangements being activated under Bush Fire Sub Plan. ▶ Executive Officer to consider advising and confirm any additional support with NSW RFS State Operations Centre.	▶ Normal ARPs or as per arrangements in the FRNSW Bushfire Sub Plan for the fire districts affected by the FDR. ▶ FRNSW to advise the Executive Officer of arrangements being activated under Bush Fire Sub Plan. ▶ Executive Officer to advise and confirm any additional support with NSW RFS State Operations Centre.	▶ Normal ARPs or as per arrangements in the FRNSW Bushfire Sub Plan for the fire districts affected by the FDR. ▶ FRNSW to advise the Executive Officer of arrangements being activated under Bush Fire Sub Plan. ▶ Executive Officer to advise and confirm any additional support with NSW RFS State Operations Centre.
NPWS Initial Response	▶ Work programs adjusted to reduce response times and ensure fire vehicles available. ▶ NPWS to undertake detection (fire towers, satellite and cameras) and observation as part of BFMC coordinated preparedness actions.	Arrangements as per Moderate plus: ▶ Consideration given to deploying staff to strategic locations to enable rapid response. ▶ Consider arrangements for rapid response of heavy plant and / or aircraft within National Parks at forecast FBI 45 or higher. ▶ Consider activities on NPWS-managed lands that may cause accidental ignition suspended at FBI 45 or higher. ▶ Consider implementing Park Fire bans ▶ Consider closing sections of national parks and reserves. ▶ Consider standing up RAFT and RART teams to assist with early containment and or extinguishment of fires	Arrangements as per High FDR plus: ▶ All fire units loaded and available for initial attack. ▶ Notify Fire Control Centre of crew availability and locations.	Arrangements as per Extreme FDR plus: ▶ Staff to work from local depots and prepared for immediate response. ▶ Heavy plant items loaded ready for transport if not already pre-deployed. ▶ Notify Fire Control Centre of crew availability and locations.

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OPERATIONAL READINESS

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REQUIREMENTS	MODERATE FDR	HIGH FDR	EXTREME FDR	CATASTROPHIC FDR
FCNSW Initial Response	▶ Fire Towers are resourced for early detection. ▶ Heavy Plant and additional local crews placed on standby arrangements.	Arrangements as per Moderate plus: ▶ All operations cease in the Softwood Plantations at FDI 30 and fire units strategically located. ▶ Consider Duty Officer and rostered IMT personnel identified with additional staff on standby at forecast FBI 45 or higher. ▶ Consider FCNSW contracted helicopter and pilot placed on standby. ▶ Consider notifying Fire Control Centre of crew availability and locations at FBI 45.	Arrangements as per High FDR plus: ▶ Additional Out of Area crews and resources identified for rapid deployment. ▶ Notify Fire Control Centre of crew availability and locations.	Arrangements as per Extreme FDR plus: ▶ Future strategic requirements identified for extended fire campaign. ▶ Notify Fire Control Centre of crew availability and locations.
Crew Resource Availability	▶ Responding agency to advise firefighting authorities of current bush or grass fire incidents, with information to be disseminated to Brigades / Units / Crews / Group Officers.	▶ Responding agency to advise firefighting authorities of current bush or grass fire incidents, with information to be disseminated to Brigades / Units / Crews / Group Officers. ▶ Normal Arrangements apply.	▶ Fire Agencies/Authorities to liaise with RFS state operations Controller before positioning resources Out of Area. ▶ Each fire authority / agency - Strike Teams identified and pre-positioning considered. ▶ Staging Areas for Strike Teams to be identified and recorded in ICON.	▶ Fire Agencies/Authorities to liaise with RFS State Operations Controller before positioning resources Out of Area. ▶ Fire fighting authorities to stand up resources in affected areas. ▶ Each fire authority / agency - Strike Teams identified, pre-positioned and recorded in ICON.
Section 44 (S44) declaration	▶ Nil action required unless fire activity warrants.	▶ Nil action required unless fire activity warrants.	▶ Prepare pre-emptive Section 44 documentation drafted by Executive Officer and submitted as appropriate.	▶ Pre-emptive Section 44 documentation drafted and submitted to State Operations.
Fire Detection	▶ Local fire towers to be resourced on request.	▶ Activate towers business hours at FBI 45. ▶ Consider local fire towers resourced at forecast FBI 35 or higher. ▶ Available surveillance aircraft identified and available through State Air Desk.	▶ Consider extended hours for fire tower resourcing at extreme and above ▶ Surveillance aircraft to be requested through State Air Desk. ▶ Reconnaissance personnel deployed to areas of concern by land owner / responsible firefighting authority. ▶ Patrols of local area to be initiated by land owner / responsible firefighting authority.	▶ Surveillance aircraft requested through State Air Desk. ▶ Reconnaissance personnel deployed to areas of concern by land owner / responsible firefighting authority.
Ignition Prevention and Fire Intelligence	▶ Consider implementing actions contained within Ignition Prevention Plan.	▶ Consider implementing actions contained within Ignition Prevention Plan.	▶ Ignition Prevention Plan implemented. ▶ Consider repositioning and activation of local resources for intelligence / reconnaissance activities. ▶ Consider the use of portable weather stations where applicable.	▶ Ignition Prevention Plan implemented. Preposition and activate local and State resources for intelligence / reconnaissance activities. ▶ Consider the use of portable weather stations where applicable.

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REQUIREMENTS	MODERATE FDR	HIGH FDR	EXTREME FDR	CATASTROPHIC FDR
Heavy Plant	▶ Ascertain heavy plant availability (council, contractors and land management agencies) with plant to be managed in the field as appropriate.	▶ Heavy Plant Manager identified.	▶ Heavy Plant Manager in FCC. ▶ Heavy Plant with a Heavy Plant Supervisor identified. ▶ Heavy Plant to only be put on standby where a S44 or pre-emptive S44 Declaration is in place.	▶ Heavy Plant Manager in FCC. ▶ Minimum one Heavy Plant strike teams, with one Heavy Plant Supervisor on standby.
Road Closures	▶ Roads closed locally if impacted by fire activity.	▶ Consider public road closures through NPWS and FCNSW tenured land, and other public lands.	▶ Consider public road closures through NPWS and FCNSW tenured land, and other public lands.	▶ Public road closures through NPWS and FCNSW tenured land, and other public lands, automatically in place in at risk areas.
Resilient Schools Program	▶ Consider implementing actions from the Resilient Schools Program.	▶ Consider implementing actions from the Resilient Schools Program.	▶ Resilient Schools Program implemented.	▶ Resilient Schools Program implemented.
Community Engagement and Public Liaison	▶ Incident information provided in accordance with normal arrangements.	▶ Incident information provided in accordance with normal arrangements.	▶ In conjunction with State Media, localised fire danger and incident information provided regularly. ▶ Activation of PIO at FCC and suitable support team identified.	▶ Fire danger information provided to local communities. ▶ Information on Going fires provided to local communities as a matter of urgency. ▶ Consider activation of PIO and support team at FCC.
Aircraft	▶ Executive Officer to confirm any aircraft standby locations with State Air Desk and advise agencies locally. ▶ Pre-determined Dispatch (PDD) aircraft are stood up within primary response zones. ▶ Note: aircraft are only available on PDD within the contract period. ▶ Consider RART activation.	▶ Districts with local airbase to be available to activate within 30 minutes at forecast FBI of 35 or higher. ▶ PDD aircraft are stood up at forecast FBI of 35 or higher within their primary response zone. ▶ Note: aircraft are only available on PDD within the contract period. ▶ Availability check and pre-position of NSW RFS Bushfire Search and Rescue capability at forecast FBI 45 or higher.	▶ Local air base staffed. ▶ Aircraft to be pre-positioned in consultation with State Air Desk. ▶ PDD Aircraft are stood up within their primary response zone. ▶ Note: aircraft are only available on PDD within the contract period. ▶ Pre-position NSW RFS Bushfire Search and Rescue capability.	▶ Local air base staffed. ▶ Aircraft to be pre-positioned in consultation with State Air Desk. ▶ PDD aircraft are stood up within their primary response zone. ▶ Note: aircraft are only available on PDD within the contract period. ▶ Pre-position NSW RFS Bushfire Search and Rescue capability.
Fire Permits	▶ Consider suspension of fire permits.	▶ Fire permits may be suspended at High FDR or above. Before suspending permits, consideration must be given to varying any suspensions that affect agricultural or critical economic activities.	▶ Fire permits to be suspended.	▶ Fire permits to be suspended.

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Multi Agency Coordination	Requirements	Actions Additional, complimentary actions may be included at the request of the BFMC	Owner
Access and Egress	Communities and Fire Fighting Authorities critically require appropriate access and egress prior to and during a bush fire. In addition, there is a requirement to ensure that the transport industry can still operate effectively to deliver essential freight when major motorways, highways and arterials are impacted by fire. Planning for access and egress is a shared responsibility between the firefighting agency and Local Emergency Management Committee and Fire Access/Fire Trails (FAFT), with the Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC), and recorded in the relevant Consequence Management Guide.	▶ The responsible Fire Fighting Agency, in consultation with NSW RFS State Operations Centre shall ensure that high-risk communities, where access and egress in the event of a fire will be or likely to be significantly affected, are warned to 'leave early' through its established planning processes. ▶ Public information plans for high risk communities with established triggers and messaging are to be developed, so that adequate warning can be provided. This should be done in consultation with the NSW RFS State Public Liaison Unit. ▶ The Incident Controller will consider evacuation orders, when reviewing forecast weather and / or fire spread predictions and actual fire behaviour in consultation with the NSW RFS State Operations Controller and Local Emergency Operations Controller. ▶ During an incident, BFMC Transport and / or Council representative is to rapidly identify road closures in the event of escalation and develop options for alternate routes.	Incident Controller
Additional Resource Assistance and Requests for Assistance (RFA) via State Assistance Plan	It is the responsibility of the Incident Controller to obtain assistance from fire and supporting agencies locally in the first instance. The IMT need to maintain situational awareness of their resource capability, including the option to bring in resources from other areas. Personnel or equipment tasked to a bush fire shall remain under the control of the Incident Controller, for the period that the personnel or equipment are provided.	▶ The Incident Controller will make requests for additional resources / support through agencies locally. ▶ Where resources are exhausted locally, requests for additional resources shall be sourced through the Major Incident Co-ordination (MIC) within the NSW RFS State Operations Centre.	Incident Controller
After Action Reviews (AAR)	The Incident Controller and Executive Officer shall ensure that a formal AAR is undertaken with all agencies involved: ▶ within 21 days of a multi-agency incident being declared out; and ▶ within 30 days of the end of the Bush Fire Danger Period (BFD) for their BFMC area. AARs are to be conducted in line with the NSW RFS After Action Review Facilitation Guide. If / where a S44 declaration has involved more than one BFMC area, a joint AAR shall be held, involving all BFMCs affected. AAR outcomes are to be shared with participating agencies and affected NSW RFS Brigades.	For BFMCs in a Rural Fire District, invitations shall be issued to those listed below following a Section 44 declaration: ▶ NSW RFS Commissioner and Deputy Commissioners ▶ NSW RFS Director State Operations, Manager Operational Response and Manager Operational Performance ▶ the S44 Incident Controller(s) and Deputy Incident Controllers (if a S44 declaration had been made) ▶ all BFMC members; and ▶ all other organisations / agencies who were involved in or supported the fire suppression effort. For BFMCs in a Fire District (and in addition to the above), invitations shall also be issued to: ▶ FRNSW Commissioner ▶ FRNSW Incident Management Command Structure; and ▶ FRNSW Specialist Sections. Every effort shall be made to select a date for the AAR that is suitable for as many participants as possible. Attendance is considered compulsory and only unavoidable absences shall be acceptable to the BFCC. Each agency is to be prepared to contribute to the AAR agenda. At the conclusion of the AAR, a report shall be prepared by the Executive Officer and endorsed by the BFMC Chair and provided to the NSW RFS Manager Operational Response and Manager Operational Performance. NSW RFS, FRNSW, FCNSW and NPWS shall also conduct internal AARs to ensure agency requirements are captured so that ongoing improvements to inter-agency coordination can be undertaken.	Incident Controller

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Multi Agency Coordination	Requirements	Actions Additional, complimentary actions may be included at the request of the BFMC	Owner
Briefings	Fire Fighting Authorities undertake briefings to assist in the coordinated management of large scale incidents, in line with training and established doctrine. The NSW Inquiry into the 2019 / 2020 Bush Fires determined it important to ensure all firefighters understand how local situational awareness reflects (or may not reflect) the broader scale situation presented by a large / extreme bush fire and the implications this may have on asset protection and fire suppression strategies.	RFS Districts have prepared information packages to be part of the Fire Fighter's Pocketbook App for all types of operating environments to improve out-of-area crews' understanding of the local terrain and fuels. These will be available for out-of-area crew members during a large scale incident. It is imperative that IMT also provide comprehensive briefings to all crews (including out of area) in person regarding local issues / operating procedures. This information is also to be captured and provided within the Incident Action Plan.	Fire Fighting Authorities
Communications Black Spots and Failure Redundancies	Maintaining communications throughout the course of an incident is critical. Work to ensure redundancies are in place should an incident be within a communication black spot, or should a communications failure take place, is the responsibility of the BFMC in conjunction with telecommunications authorities and critical infrastructure owners and operators.	To manage Communications Black Spots, the each Fire Fighting Authority shall clearly define where mobile telephone or radio coverage is impaired and ensure this information is provided to the IMT so that it can a) communicate known black spots to crews tasked to the fireground and b) establish radio communication work around and / or establish portable repeaters to provide appropriate coverage. This information is also to be provided and available in the FCC. Fire Fighting Authorities and support agencies are to escalate any potential telecommunications infrastructure failures to the Incident Controller as a priority, particularly where this failure would impact the ability to send alerts and warnings to the public.	BFMC Executive Officer Incident Controller
Communications Plan	All agencies are to use the radio channels allocated to them by their organisations. NSW RFS, FRNSW, NPWS, NSW SES, FCNSW and NSWA have common liaison radio channels for interagency communications. Fire ground communications between NSW RFS and NPWS appliances will be via VHF (Fire ground) radios, or PSN talk groups where applicable. Communication with FCNSW is managed through telephone, installed radios in FCCs and EOCs and sharing of portable radios. All NSW RFS FCCs have handheld radios which contain RFS PMR, GRN and Interagency liaison channels. These can be used issued to any agency which allows agencies to share common radio channels. Non-firefighting units on the fire ground will maintain communication through the use of an escort being a firefighting appliance or a communications unit which has established communication links with the FCC or EOC, or through the issue of a portable radio from the FCC. If not establish, establish a communications plan with Farm Fire Units which are in your area.	The firefighting agencies from each BFMC shall participate in an annual inter agency radio check to ensure interoperability between the agencies and resolve any identified issues prior to the start of the bush fire danger period. Where fires are burning or are likely to extend into areas with known communications issues, the Incident Controller (IC) is to liaise with RFS State Operations and RFS Communications team to establish temporary communication enhancements, in consultation with the relevant telecommunications authority.	All firefighting agencies BFMC Executive Officer

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Multi Agency Coordination	Requirements	Actions Additional, complimentary actions may be included at the request of the BFMC	Owner
Contemporary Requirements for Incident Controllers	S45A <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> allows for delegation of the functions conferred on the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service (Commissioner) under Part 3 Division 1 of the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i>. The Commissioner is therefore able to appoint an Incident Controller (IC) for all bush firefighting operations and bush fire prevention measures as per a declared area. In support of the First Response Arrangements, Incident Controllers are required to be appropriately trained, qualified and experienced in line with the Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMS) and with the appropriate bush and grass fire experience.	For Class 1 fires, a Fire Fighting Authority member who assumes control on a fire ground shall be / have: ▶ NSW RFS – Personnel assigned to roles fitting with their qualifications, skills and experience. ▶ FRNSW – The first FRNSW resource on scene, until relieved or replaced by a more senior FRNSW officer. ▶ NPWS – The first responding resource on scene unless relieved or replaced, qualified and experienced in Crew Leader. ▶ FCNSW – The first responding most senior fire fighter to take control unless relieved or replaced. Qualified and experienced in Crew Leader or Divisional Commander. For Class 2 fires, a Fire Fighting Authority member who has obtained the qualification / shall be: ▶ NSW RFS – Control a Level 2 Incident, or recognised as a practitioner, Level 2 Incident Controller, within the AFAC Emergency Management Professionalisation Scheme. ▶ FRNSW – A suitably qualified person will be appointed to control firefighting operations by FRNSW on the basis of a recommendation made by the BFMC Fire Classification Group who has suitable bush fire experience. ▶ NPWS – An Incident Controller appointed by the relevant fire service to control firefighting operations in consultation with the relevant BFMC Fire Classification Group. For NPWS, qualified and experienced in PUAOPE018A Control a Level 2 incident. ▶ FCNSW – An incident controller appointed by the relevant fire service to control firefighting operations in consultation with the relevant BFMC fire classification group. For FCNSW, qualified and experience in PUAOPE018A Control Level 2 Incidents. For Class 3 fires, a Fire Fighting Authority member who is: ▶ Working towards or has obtained the multi-agency Incident Control for Major Incidents (ICMI) qualification; and / or ▶ Note these qualifications guide NSW RFS Commissioner who will appoint an Incident Controller in accordance with S44 / S45 / S45A of the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> taking into account qualifications and familiarity with bush fire management and associated responsibilities.	Incident Controller NSW RFS Commissioner BFMC Executive Officer Fire Classification Group
Critical Infrastructure	The protection of critical infrastructure from the impact of bush and grass fires is essential. Ensuring that disruptions to industries such as energy, water and waste water, and communications are minimised and managed appropriately during an incident.	The BFMC shall engage with critical infrastructure owners and operators to: ▶ confirm a contact point during emergencies ▶ assist owners and operators manage their bush fire risk and establish a pre-incident plan; and ▶ develop trigger points for the activation of strategies to protect assets.	BFMC Executive Officer

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Multi Agency Coordination	Requirements	Actions Additional, complimentary actions may be included at the request of the BFMC	Owner
Discrete Aboriginal Communities	Discrete Aboriginal Communities require a multi agency approach towards emergency management that is guided by the principles of the NSW Governments Plan for Aboriginal Affairs – The OCHRE Plan (Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility, Empowerment). Discrete Aboriginal Communities should be consulted regarding preparedness and planning for coordinated fire arrangements is delivered locally; enabling self-determination and utilising community led solutions.	The Executive Officer shall ensure that an Aboriginal Community Field Liaison Officer, or a member of the Fire Fighting Authorities in a similar role, will engage with Discrete Aboriginal Communities to: ▶ Confirm a community contact point during emergencies. ▶ Assist the community to manage their bush fire risk in establishing an appropriate plan, such as a pre-incident plan, Community Protection Plan or other community led solution. ▶ Develop trigger points for the activation of strategies to protect the community; ▶ Develop localised messaging so that adequate warning can be provided to the community regarding the recommended actions they can consider undertaking.	Executive Officer Incident Controller
Duty to Notify	Any Fire Fighting Authority may initiate a first response to any reported fire on any land. The Fire Fighting Authority that makes the first response to a bush fire must notify the land owner or manager, and any other Fire Fighting Authority with responsibility for the area affected or likely to be threatened by the fire.	Where a Fire Fighting Authority is the Incident Controller, they shall provide the relevant Fire Service with an initial, verbal situation report (ITASC) as soon as is practicable: ▶ Incident ▶ Threats ▶ Action ▶ Support ▶ Command, Control and Communications Any fire suppression techniques or activities for which prior authority from the land owner, occupier or land management agency is required shall be specified in the plan. Following this, the Fire Fighting Authority shall document this information within ICON as a priority. Agencies to exercise their jurisdictional responsibilities unless the NSW RFS Commissioner takes charge of an incident.	Incident Controller and all Fire Fighting Authorities
Emergency Management Support	In line with the <i>State Emergency and Rescue Management (SERM) Act 1989</i>, Part 2 State Emergency Management, Division 3, Section 29 the Local Emergency Management Committee shall facilitate local level emergency management capability through inter-agency coordination, cooperation and information sharing arrangements in accordance with the Local Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN).	In line with the operational readiness arrangements, the Incident Controller, in consultation with the LEOCON and LEMC, shall request that an EOC be activated to coordinate emergency management support.	Incident Controller
Evacuations	Officers of the NSW RFS, FRNSW and NSWPF are provided powers in their respective legislation to evacuate or remove members of the public from areas of danger. The Incident Controller is responsible for the identification and planning of any broad scale evacuations during bush fires.	▶ The Incident Controller will determine any need for evacuation. ▶ The Incident Controller will request the LEOCON to coordinate the evacuation of any premises, facilities or areas as determined. ▶ The Incident Controller will ensure the NSW RFS State Operations Controller is aware of any decision to undertake evacuations.	Incident Controller
Fire Classification	There are three classes of fire: ▶ Class 1 – A bush fire under the control of the responsible Fire Fighting Authority, whether or not incidental / low level assistance is provided by other agencies. ▶ Class 2 – A bush fire which by necessity involves more than one agency and where the BFMC have appointed a person to take charge of fire- fighting operations. ▶ Class 3 – A major bush fire where an appointment has been made or is imminent by the NSW RFS Commissioner under the provisions of S44 of <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i>.	The NSW RFS Commissioner may take charge of bush fire-fighting operations anywhere in NSW if, in his / her opinion, certain conditions set out in section 44 of the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> are met. The Incident Controller for a Class 1 or 2 Fire is appointed by means of established standing arrangements through the appropriate Fire Service chain of command. The Incident Controller for a Class 3 Fire is directly appointed by the NSW RFS Commissioner where he / she has taken charge under the provisions of S44 of the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i>.	Incident Controller

BFMC PLAN OF OPERATIONS

Multi Agency Coordination	Requirements	Actions Additional, complimentary actions may be included at the request of the BFMC	Owner
Fire Investigation (FI)	Fire investigation is to be conducted by lawfully gathering information relating to fire origin and cause in order to meet the object and functions of the <i>Coroners Act 2009</i> and <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> , particularly as it relates to fire prevention and community education.	The Incident Controller shall ensure that fire investigators will liaise with land owners / managers whilst ensuring investigations are managed in accordance with the Inter-agency Fire Investigations Protocol.	Incident Controller NSW Police Force
Fire Permits	During the bushfire danger period, permits in NSW are issued for: ▶ burning of vegetation piles ▶ burning of deceased livestock (special permit provisions) ▶ hazard reduction ▶ sugar cane harvesting/agricultural ▶ land clearance or fire break ▶ burning of waste product from charcoal & eucalyptus distillation ▶ burning of garbage and refuse All year permits are issued in NSW for: ▶ fire activity in Fire and Rescue NSW districts ▶ fire activity which may endanger a building ▶ demolition of building and/or old building material ▶ destruction of saw mill waste If permits are suspended, the suspending authority will consult with stakeholders before reinstating permits.	▶ An authorised FRNSW officer will issue permits in FRNSW jurisdiction. ▶ An authorised NSW RFS officer will issue permits in Rural Fire districts.	
Ignition Prevention	The State Ignition Prevention Plan provides members of the NSW RFS, NSWPF, FRNSW, NPWS and FCNSW with strategies to be implemented, to prevent ignitions. There are two parts to the plan: ▶ Part 1: On days of specific Fire Danger Ratings; ▶ and Part 2: Relating to careless and illegal fires.	Actions contained within the State Ignition Prevention Plan will be implemented where Extreme FDR or above is forecast. In the first instance, agencies should implement their agreed activities without consultation.	Fire Fighting Authorities
Fire Control Centre (FCC)	Each BFMC shall ensure the identification of an appropriate Fire Control Centre (FCC) to manage all multi-agency incidents of Class 2 and Class 3 fires. The primary and alternate FCC locations and their selection criteria, consistent with the requirements of the Commissioner of the NSW RFS, are to be listed. Unless stated otherwise: ▶ in a rural fire district, NSW RFS Fire Control Centres shall be used for this purpose; and ▶ in a fire district, FRNSW Fire Control Centres shall be used for this purpose, with changes to these arrangements by exception.	The FCC shall be activated and assessed a minimum of 30 days prior to the start of the BFDPP commencement to ensure it contains the working infrastructure reasonably expected to be required for firefighting operations. Consideration shall be given by the Incident Controller and LEOCON to co-locating the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) with the FCC where facilities allow.	BFMC Executive Officer

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Incident Management Teams (IMT)	An IMT when initiated by the NSW RFS shall include representation from each Fire Fighting Authority involved in the incident where possible. Additional appropriate personnel may be tasked by the Incident Controller as necessitated by an incident's complexity. An IMT shall also include a person with local knowledge of the area who can assist in affecting suppression activities and an appropriate person to liaise with rural land holders / managers. Personnel or equipment assigned to an incident to remain under the control of the Incident Controller, for the period that the personnel or equipment are provided. Fire Fighting Authorities shall consult with the Incident Controller prior to withdrawing assigned personnel or equipment from the incident.	The Executive Officer of the BFMC is responsible for identifying qualified and experienced Incident Management Team members and for maintaining a record of their contact details. At a minimum, personnel shall be nominated for the following roles: ▶ Class 3 Incident Controllers ▶ Class 2 Incident Controllers ▶ Deputy Incident Controllers ▶ Air Operations Managers ▶ Divisional Commanders ▶ Fire Behavior Analysts ▶ Intelligence ▶ Local Knowledge Representatives ▶ Logistics ▶ Management Support ▶ Operations ▶ Planning ▶ Public Liaison ▶ Rural Liaison ▶ Safety Officers ▶ Air Attack Supervisors ▶ Aircraft Officers ▶ Air Base Managers ▶ Heavy Plant Managers ▶ Aboriginal Community Field Liaison ▶ Local Knowledge Representative	BFMC Executive Officer Incident Controller
ICON	All IMT and BFMC members are to ensure that they use ICON to record all operational information.	The Executive Officer shall ensure that all BFMC members have ICON access and are provided with training on how to utilise the application.	Incident Controller
Mapping	The BFMC Executive Officer shall ensure that a standard operational map is displayed in each Fire Control Centre. Access to NSW RFS spatial systems shall be made available to IMT members and BFMC representatives. Spatial information related to the Bush Fire Risk Management Plan including Focus Areas and Bush Fire Management Zones is made available to BFMC members via the BFMC Information Portal (BIP).	A standard Operations Map shall be produced for the BFMC area and contain: ▶ Assets of Intergenerational significance ▶ Towns and villages ▶ Bush fire prone land boundaries ▶ Cadastre ▶ Contours ▶ Drainage and water bodies ▶ EECs ▶ Historic and cultural heritage items ▶ Hydrant locations ▶ Local Government Area boundaries ▶ Roads ▶ National Parks and State Forest boundaries ▶ Neighbourhood Safer Places ▶ NSW RFS and FRNSW Fire Control Centres ▶ NSW RFS and FRNSW station locations and boundaries ▶ Threatened species locations	BFMC Executive Officer

BFMC PLAN OF OPERATIONS

Multi Agency Coordination	Requirements	Actions Additional, complimentary actions may be included at the request of the BFMC	Owner
Mapping <i>(continued)</i>		The following shall be maintained in NSW RFS spatial systems: ▶ Airbases, operational, airstrips, and helipad sites ▶ Bushfire prone land ▶ Communication blackspots ▶ Community fire unit locations ▶ Critical infrastructure (electrical, communication, gas, water) ▶ Crown land boundaries ▶ Department of defence bases ▶ Discrete aboriginal communities ▶ Education facilities ▶ Fire protection observation point ▶ Fire trails ▶ Firefighter hazard areas ▶ Health facilities ▶ High-risk recreation areas ▶ Local land services boundaries ▶ Neighbourhood safer places, evacuation and refuge areas ▶ Plantation areas ▶ Pre-identified staging areas, base camp locations ▶ Rail ▶ Vulnerable facilities	BFMC Executive Officer
Neighbourhood Safer Places (NSPs)	BFMCs are to ensure that there are an adequate number of NSPs within their area, whereby a building or an open space that may provide for improved protection of human life during the onset and passage of a bush fire. For remote bush fire prone areas that do not already have an indoor NSP, assess whether existing NSW RFS Stations can fulfil the NSP requirements.	The Executive Officer shall ensure engagement with NSP owners and operators takes place in order to confirm a contact point and access during emergencies. This information shall be made available to the FCC with issues regarding NSPs referred to the NSW RFS.	NSW RFS and BFMC
Pre Season Checklist	The Pre-Season Checklist exists as a prompt to ensure that BFMCs are prepared for the start of the BFD and includes a number of important tasks.	A Pre-Season Checklist shall be submitted for BFMC approval on the authorised template, annually by 01 September or in line with any decision to bring forward the Bush Fire Danger Period (BFD) by the NSW RFS Commissioner.	BFMC Executive Officer
Pre-Incident Planning	Each BFMC shall have in place a Pre-Incident Plan for the BFMC area (or multiple Pre-Incident Plans where the area a BFMC covers cannot be adequately addressed in a single plan) which provides an overview of the operating environments that crews, including out of area crews, may be responded into. This is in addition to the development of hazard specific Pre-Incident Plans. Pre-Incident Plans shall be prepared by the jurisdictional Fire Fighting Authority for each Focus Area where a pre-incident plan is listed as a treatment in a Bush Fire Risk Management Plan (BFRMP) or identified as a significant asset or area of concern, special purpose development, vulnerable community, cultural indigenous asset in the Bush Fire Risk Management Plan (BFRMP) or NSW RFS / FRNSW Mutual Aid Agreement. Pre-Incident Plans shall also be prepared for identified critical infrastructure, environmental and cultural assets in conjunction with their owner / operators. Pre-Incident Plans will also be prepared by the responsible land manager for any public land identified as posing a significant hazard to the community but which is not mitigated by the BFRMP for endorsement by the BFMC.	The Executive Officer is responsible for coordinating the development of Pre-Incident Plans for the BFMC to review and endorse. The Executive Officer shall establish a program for the ongoing completion of Pre-Incident Plans, and shall report on this as part of the Pre-Season Checklist. Pre Incident Plans shall be prepared on the authorised template and stored on any system approved by the NSW RFS Commissioner.	BFMC

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Multi Agency Coordination	Requirements	Actions Additional, complimentary actions may be included at the request of the BFMC	Owner
Providing Out of Area Assistance (OOA)	Where fire activity is occurring in another part of NSW (or other states and territories), or the FDR is significantly higher elsewhere than locally. Fire Fighting Authorities may be requested by NSW RFS to provide out of area assistance to address coordinated firefighting arrangements.	Fire Fighting Authorities shall assist in filling resource requests, while still maintaining an appropriate level of resources to provide protection in the BFMC area should an incident occur. The seeking or provision of any Out of Area resourcing is to be done in consultation with the NSW RFS State Operations Controller delegate e.g Major Incident Co-ordinator	Fire Fighting Authorities
Public Information, Alerts and Warnings	The dissemination of a warning to the community is a critical component of emergency management which is the responsibility of and facilitated by the NSW RFS for bush and grass fires. Where an incident is directly threatening or impacting a community, or is anticipated to do so, specific consideration shall be given to issuing public information or an official warning using media, Emergency Alert, the NSW RFS website, Fires Near Me app, and the Bush Fire Information Line.	There are a number of actions defined within the NSW RFS Warnings and Public Information Protocol (NSW Operational Protocol 1.1.5). For BFMC members, this includes ensuring timely information is provided to the Incident Controller to allow for the activation of warnings by the NSW RFS.	Incident Controller
Recovery	The NSW Recovery Plan outlines the strategic intent, responsibilities, authorities and the mechanisms for disaster recovery in NSW. The Recovery Plan, together with the Guidelines, allow for the development and implementation of a planned recovery following a natural disaster or other emergency. Not all bushfires requiring recovery actions will trigger SERM Act requirements for recovery. Therefore multi-agency coordination requirements and actions should be developed to enable rapid and integrated post-fire rehabilitation and fire recovery, particularly while any earthmoving major plant, aircraft and ground crews are assigned to the bushfire. This will see a cost-effective implementation planned and prioritised actions that help capture the outcomes and return communities to normality. A smooth and integrated transition from response to recovery is required and is to be encouraged. Depending on the scale of the bushfire, this might include engaging specialist post-fire assessors and preparing a Restoration and Rehabilitation Plan with the Planning Section to be approved by the incident controller well before the incident is declared 'out'. Actions might include rapid damage assessment, repairing or replacing assets and utilities, safely returning vulnerable residents to their homes, salvage operations, hazmat follow-up, wildlife rescue, erosion control on constructed containment lines, pest control, assessing hazardous trees, assessing damage to cultural heritage sites, tree felling, mapping fire boundaries and fire severity, replacing water, repairing fences, signage and fire management trails, removing rubbish, and temporary closure of areas to the public.	An Initial Impact Assessment to be completed by the LEOCON, in consultation with the Incident Controller. IMT members are to work with the LEOCON and its representatives as required to establish recovery arrangements. The NSW RFS will be responsible for undertaking Building Impact Assessments (BIA) as part of this process.	LEOCON
Response Protocol: BFMC and Jurisdictional Boundaries	Memorandums of Understanding are in place between BFMC areas and jurisdictional boundaries to ensure the effective management of bush and grass fires in the vicinity of BFMC boundaries.	Ensure that Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) are in place for all neighbouring BFMCs and along jurisdictional boundaries to allow for a dual response where appropriate or to specify an alternate response protocol.	BFMC Executive Officer

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Multi Agency Coordination	Requirements	Actions Additional, complimentary actions may be included at the request of the BFMC	Owner
Training and Exercising	Training and exercising is essential for each BFMC to ensure that agencies are confident and able to carry out their role as a member. This is to ensure the effective management of bush fire operations.	A minimum of one scenario based exercise is to be conducted annually prior to the commencement of the BFDP with: ▶ Fire Fighting Authorities with responsibilities in the BFMC area ▶ NSW Police Force; and ▶ NSW Ambulance. This annual exercise may be limited in scope or dispensed with altogether if a fire requiring a multi- agency response occurs in the area during the year that otherwise tests the capacity of the authorities to work together in accordance with the provisions of this plan. The decision not to undertake a pre-season exercise is to be done in consultation with the Director, State Operations. This shall be recorded on a BFMC Pre-Season Checklist which is to be recorded in SAP LSO.	BFMC Executive Officer
Vulnerable Facilities and Communities	Where it has been determined by the Incident Controller and LEOCON that a pre-emptive relocation or evacuation of a vulnerable facility, vulnerable community or closure of a public place is required, NSW Police Force may utilise powers prescribed under Section 60L and Section 61 of the <i>State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989</i> .	Engage with vulnerable facility owners and operators to: ▶ Confirm a contact point during emergencies. ▶ Assist owners and operators manage their bush fire risk and establish a pre-incident plan. ▶ Develop trigger points for the activation of strategies to protect assets. ▶ Vulnerable facilities register which is administered by Council through the LEMC, should be confirmed by the LEMO.	BFMC Executive Officer

GLOSSARY

Acronym	Meaning
ACFLO	Aboriginal Community Field Liaison Officer
AAR	After Action Review
AFDRS	Australian Fire Danger Rating System
ARP	Alarm Response Protocols
BFCC	Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee
BFIL	Bush Fire Information Line
BFMC	Bush Fire Management Committee
BIRS	Brigade Incident Reporting System
CAD	Computer Aided Dispatch
CASA	Civil Aviation Safety Authority
CFLO	Community Field Liaison Officer
EMP	Emergency Management Plan
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
FAFT	Fire Access and Fire Trail
FBI	Fire Behaviour Index
FCC	Fire Control Centre
FCNSW	Forestry Corporation of New South Wales
FDR	Fire Danger Rating
FMP	Fire Management Plan
FRNSW	Fire and Rescue NSW
FSJSC	Fire Services Joint Standing Committee
HSR	Health and Safety Representative
IC	Incident Controller

Acronym	Meaning
ICMI	Incident Control for Major Incidents
ICON	Incident Control On Line
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IMT	Incident Management Team
LEMC	Local Emergency Management Committee
LEOC	Local Emergency Operations Centre
LEOCON	Local Emergency Operations Controller
LGA	Local Government Area
LGLC	Local Government Liaison Committee
MDT	Mobile Data Terminal
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
NSP	Neighbourhood Safer Places
NSW RFS	NSW Rural Fire Service
NSW SES	NSW State Emergency Service
NSWA	NSW Ambulance
OpO	Operational Officer (Program)
PDD	Pre-Determined Dispatch
PIP	Pre-Incident Plan
PIO	Public Information Officer
RAFT	Remote Area Firefighting Team
RART	Rapid Aerial Response Team
RFA	Request For Assistance