



Service Standard 4.1.7

Bush Fire Risk Mitigation and Resilience Support Program

Version	1.0
SOPs	Nil
Policy Owner	Deputy Commissioner Field Operations
Policy Contact	Director Area Operations
Approval Date	27 January 2026
Next Review	27 January 2031

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The RFS may provide funding to assist public land managers to undertake mitigation works or other projects that increase the resilience of NSW communities to bush fires. The mechanism for distributing such funding is the Bush Fire Risk Mitigation and Resilience Support Program.
- 1.2. This Service Standard outlines the operation and administration of the Bush Fire Risk Mitigation and Resilience Support Program, to ensure that funding is distributed fairly and effectively to provide maximum benefit to the community.

2. Policy

- 2.1. All land managers, both public and private, are obliged under Section 63 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* (the Act) to undertake certain actions to prevent the occurrence and minimise the spread of bush fires on land under their control.
- 2.2. While every land manager is expected to commit its own resources to meeting these obligations, the RFS provides funding through the RFS Bush Fire Risk Mitigation and Resilience Support Program (the Program) to supplement the resources of public land managers, in order to achieve mitigation activities which are clearly in the public interest.
- 2.3. Funding for the Program may be derived from the RFS budget or from other State and Commonwealth initiatives directed at bush fire risk mitigation and resilience. The amount available each year is determined by the Minister for Emergency Services in consultation with the RFS Commissioner.
- 2.4. The operation of the Program and distribution of the funds are at the discretion of the RFS Commissioner. As Chair of the Bush Fire Coordinating Committee the Commissioner has approved BFCC Policy 1/2011: *Allocation Principles for Funding of Bush Fire Mitigation Works* to provide advice on the principles and matters that should be taken into consideration by the RFS in deciding how Program funds are allocated.

- 2.5. The RFS is responsible for implementing the principles of BFCC Policy 1/2011 and reporting back to the BFCC members.
- 2.6. In accordance with the BFCC principles, funding for works identified in Bush Fire Risk Management Plans (BFRMPs), Annual Works Plans (AWPs) and Fire Access and Fire Trail (FAFT) Plans will be prioritised.

Applications and eligibility criteria

- 2.7. The RFS will produce and publish an Application Guide annually as an authoritative source of information for funding applicants and other stakeholders. The Application Guide will be made available on the RFS public website.
- 2.8. Funding applications can only be submitted by the organisations listed in the Application Guide for that year. These will generally be either public land managers (Councils and State Government agencies or corporations) or fire services (Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW Rural Fire Service).
- 2.9. Full details of the works that will be accepted for funding are published annually in the Application Guide. In general, applications for funding will be accepted for the following:
 - Hazard reduction activities
 - Fire trail works
 - Community resilience projects.
- 2.10. Applications must be submitted online via the Guardian system.
- 2.11. Where an activity crosses multiple tenures, one organisation must sponsor the entire work as the applicant for funding.
- 2.12. An applicant must not submit an application unless it realistically expects to complete the works by the end of the financial year in which the funding is allocated.

Annual priorities and assessment criteria

- 2.13. Each year the Deputy Commissioner Field Operations will determine the annual priorities for that year, to ensure works that are most important for the protection of the community receive priority funding.
- 2.14. All applications will be assessed against both the criteria published in the Application Guide for that year and the annual priorities determined by the Deputy Commissioner Field Operations.

Assessment process and notification of outcome

- 2.15. Where the total value of applications received in a financial year exceeds the available funding, applications will be selected in priority order until the nominal budget allocation is met.
- 2.16. Application outcomes will be published online via the Guardian system.

Funding agreements for organisations other than the RFS

- 2.17. On confirmation of approval, an organisation seeking funding will be asked to enter into a funding agreement with the RFS. The Commissioner has authorised the Deputy Commissioner Field Operations to execute funding agreements on behalf of the RFS as the Funding Provider.
- 2.18. Through the funding agreement the organisation seeking funds commits to making every effort to complete the works identified in the Works Approval Schedule provided by the RFS, and to providing progress reporting as requested by the RFS.
- 2.19. Disbursement of funds is conditional on the organisation meeting the terms of the funding agreement.
- 2.20. The process for disbursement of funds from the Program will be outlined in the funding agreement.

Funding assistance for RFS Districts and business units

- 2.21. Where the applicant is an RFS District or business unit the funding agreement is an internal arrangement managed by Field Operations.
- 2.22. On confirmation of approval an RFS District or business unit will receive email notification outlining the terms of the funding arrangement and actions required.
- 2.23. Disbursement of funds to an RFS District or business unit is conditional on the terms of the funding arrangement being met.

Priority funding requests for urgent hazard reduction burns

- 2.24. Where opportunities arise to complete urgent hazard reduction burning that was not identified in the main funding round, an application for priority approval may be submitted at any time. These applications will be assessed on an individual basis.

Disbursement of funds

- 2.25. Payments will be approved by an RFS officer with the appropriate level of financial delegation as specified in P4.1.1 Financial Delegations – Appendix 2, F7: “Authority to commit, incur or approve expenditure on the natural disaster resilience program and bush fire mitigation program”.

Roles and responsibilities

Bush Fire Management Committees (BFMCs)

- Prepare Bush Fire Risk Management Plans (BFRMPs), Annual Works Plans (AWPs) and Fire Access and Fire Trail (FAFT) Plans to identify the works that are required for protection of the community and assets.

Deputy Commissioner Field Operations

- Maintain oversight of Program governance framework and monitor delivery of the Program
- Determine annual funding priorities
- Execute funding agreements on behalf of the RFS.

Field Operations

- Coordinate and administer the Program, including:
 - Preparing and distributing the Application Guide for each funding round
 - Reviewing and assessing applications for funding, and providing recommendations to the delegated approver/s
 - Maintaining communication and information flow to funding applicants and recipients
 - Administering claims for reimbursement by funding recipients, and
 - Maintaining Program records and providing reporting as required.

Funding recipients

- Make all reasonable efforts to complete works in accordance with the funding agreement
- Give notice to the RFS via Field Operations of any significant actual or anticipated delay in completing the funded works.

Complaints handling and review

- 2.26. In the first instance queries or complaints should be directed to Field Operations.
- 2.27. Further complaints in relation to any aspect of the RFS administration of the Program can be made using the online complaints form on the RFS website and will be dealt with in accordance with Policy P7.1.2 *Public Complaints Management*.

Conflicts of interest

- 2.28. All RFS members involved in the Program must declare any potential, actual, or perceived conflict of interest that arises at any stage of the funding application, assessment or administration stages.
- 2.29. Conflicts of interest will be managed according to RFS Service Standard 1.1.35 Conflicts of Interest.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. For the purpose of this policy document the following definitions apply:
- Guardian system:** the multi-agency, spatial bush fire risk information system and online platform which supports the planning, preparation, implementation and reporting of all bush fire mitigation activities in NSW by all agencies
 - Works:** activities undertaken to mitigate bush fire risk or increase community resilience.

4. Document control

Release history

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1.0	27 January 2026	Initial release Repeals and replaces Policy 1.1.13 Fire Mitigation Funding Program v1.0

Approved by

Name	Position	Date
Trent Curtin	Commissioner	27 Jan 2026

Related documents

Document name
BFCC Policy 1/2011 – Allocation Principles for Funding of Bush Fire Mitigation Works
Bush Fire Risk Mitigation and Resilience Grant Program – Application Guide (annual)
P4.1.1 Financial Delegations
P7.1.2 Public Complaints Management
Service Standard 1.1.35 Conflicts of Interest