Policy P6.1.3
Environmental Assessment for Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Works

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1. Purpose

1.1 This policy outlines the NSW Rural Fire Service’s (“RFS”) requirements for environmental assessment of bush fire hazard reduction works, including:

(a) assessing and determining whether Bushfire Hazard Reduction Certificates (“HRCs”) may be issued for bush fire hazard reduction works; and

(b) preparing Reviews of Environmental Factors (“REFs”) for the purpose of assessing and determining bush fire hazard reduction proposals under Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (“EP&A Act”).

2. Policy

2.1 The RFS shall:

(a) in cases where the relevant function(s) has/have been conferred by the council to the RFS under the Rural Fire District Service Agreement, assess and determine in accordance with SOP P6.1.3-1 whether HRCs may be issued for bush fire hazard reduction works proposed for private land, or other land not covered by a certifying authority, when:

(i) an application is received from the owner or occupier of the land. This type of HRC is issued under s100F of the Rural Fires Act 1997 (“RF Act”);

(ii) the RFS issues a notice (under s66 of the RF Act) in accordance with SS 4.2.6 Bush Fire Hazard Complaints. This type of HRC is issued under s100G of the RF Act;

(iii) the RFS carries out works (under s70 of the RF Act). This type of HRC is issued under s100G of the RF Act;

(b) assess and determine in accordance with SOP P6.1.3-1 whether HRCs may be issued for bush fire hazard reduction works proposed for private land, or a public authority, when:

(i) the RFS carries out works (under s73 of the RF Act). This type of HRC is issued under s100G of the RF Act;
(c) undertake an REF in accordance with the EP&A Act and SOP P6.1.3-2 where a HRC cannot be issued but an environmental approval is required:

(i) for the purpose of the RFS serving a notice or carrying out works under s66, 70 or 73 of the RF Act; or

(ii) as a result of the RFS seeking to undertake a prescribed burn on privately owned land for the purpose of bush fire hazard reduction (in accordance with SS 3.1.6 Fireground Procedures).

(d) register details of all environmental assessments that the RFS undertakes (including HRCs and REFs) for hazard reduction proposals on BRIMS;

(e) maintain a sufficient number of suitably qualified and trained Certificate Issuing Officers (CIO) in accordance with the Requirements for Attainment of NSW RFS Certificate Issuing Officer Competency and Authorities; and

(f) monitor and review the effectiveness of the HRC and REF process and CIO conduct to identify opportunities for improvement.

3. Links

- SOP P6.1.3-1 Hazard Reduction Certificates, including:
  - Hazard Reduction Certificate Assessment Guidelines
  - Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Certificate Application Form
  - Hazard Reduction Certificate Assessment Form
  - Requirements for Attainment of NSW RFS Certificate Issuing Officer Competency and Authorities

- SOP P6.1.3-2 Review of Environmental Factors (REF):
  - REF Application Form
  - REF Template
  - REF Assessment Guidelines
  - REF Approval Letter Template
  - REF Approval Form Template

- Rural Fires Act, 1997,

- The Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code including:
  - Threatened Species Hazard Reduction List
  - Conditions for Hazard Reduction and Aboriginal Heritage
  - Guidelines for Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Works Affecting Heritage Items (under preparation)

- The following RFS Community Education documents:
  - Application Instructions for a Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Certificate
  - Before You Light that Fire
  - Standards for Asset Protection Zones
  - Standards for Low Intensity Hazard Reduction Burning,
  - Standards for Pile Burning
  - Standards for Windrow Burning

- SS 4.2.2 Permits to Burn
- SS 4.2.3 Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Notices,
- SS 4.2.6 Bush Fire Hazard Complaints,
4. Who is responsible for implementing the Policy?

Executive Director Community Safety

5. Amendments

- Clause 2.1(c) September 2007
- SOP P6.1.3-1 (reformatted – no content change) September 2007
  - New clause 2.1
- SOP P6.1.3-2 (new SOP) September 2007