



**Steph Cooke**

Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience  
Minister for Flood Recovery

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Thursday, 1 September 2022

### **BUSH FIRE DANGER PERIOD BEGINS WITH NEW WARNING SYSTEM**

The official Bush Fire Danger Period starts today in 12 regions across NSW, as the new national Fire Danger Rating System takes effect across Australia.

Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience and Minister for Flood Recovery Steph Cooke said the upcoming bush fire season will be the first to incorporate the updated Fire Danger Rating System.

“The existing six ratings are being replaced with four – Moderate, High, Extreme and Catastrophic – so that the community can better understand the risks and make potentially life-saving decisions,” Ms Cooke said.

“The new system of ratings was developed using community research and updated fire behavior science, which until now, has remained unchanged for more than 50 years.

“Grass fires can move three times faster than bush fires and are our greatest threat this season, which is why all communities in regional and rural NSW should take the necessary steps to become familiar with the Fire Danger Rating System.”

The 12 regions commencing their Bush Fire Danger Period today are Clarence Valley, Coffs Coast, Far North Coast, Far South Coast, Hunter Valley, Liverpool Range, Lower North Coast, Mid Coast, New England, Northern Rivers, Northern Tablelands and Shoalhaven.

NSW Rural Fire Service Commissioner Rob Rogers said continuous, heavy rainfall across many parts of NSW has led to an increase in the growth of fuel loads.

“Over the coming weeks and months, we are particularly concerned about the likelihood of grass and crop fires as the State starts to dry out,” Commissioner Rogers said.

Fire and Rescue NSW Commissioner Paul Baxter urged residents to familiarise themselves with the new fire danger ratings system to protect the irreplaceable.

“Our main priority is to protect life. So please help us to help you and know what actions you will take if a bush fire does threaten your life and property this season,” Commissioner Baxter said.

National Parks and Wildlife Service Executive Director Naomi Stevens reminded residents to be aware of fire danger ratings especially if planning on bush walking or camping in national parks.

“It’s important to know the risk of where you live and also where you’re visiting, and be aware of any closures to parks on days of increased fire danger,” Ms Stevens said.

Forestry Corporation Chief Forester Ross Dickson said many people love to get out of the house and enjoy nature over the warmer months, like four wheel driving, walking dogs and taking picnics.

“Please take some time to plan ahead, be aware of the conditions especially as the weather warms up and remember during total fire bans no flames are allowed in the state’s forests,” Dr Dickson said.

Landholders who want to light a fire during the Bush Fire Danger Period are required to obtain a permit, in addition to notifying their local fire authority and neighbours 24 hours before lighting up.

Information about fire permits, required notifications and hazard reduction burning is available at: [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/BFDP](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/BFDP).

To make a bush fire survival plan, visit: [www.myfireplan.com.au](http://www.myfireplan.com.au).

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