



## District Information Pack

### Riverina

The Riverina Zone is located in the South West of New South Wales. The area is 1,218,263 hectares (12,182 km<sup>2</sup>).

The population of the Riverina is approximately 77,000 people. Major population centres are Wagga Wagga, Junee, Coolamon, Ganmain, Ardlethan, The Rock and Lockhart. Another 18 urban and village centres are distributed throughout the area.

The Department of Defence has two nationally significant defence installations within the Riverina Zone. The Kapooka Military Area and Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Wagga.

The area has on average 200 bush fires per year, of which on average 2 can be considered to be major fires. The Riverina has an extensive history of wind driven grass fires most notable the 2006 Jail Break Inn Fire which burnt 25,000 hectares in a single afternoon.

The main sources of ignition in the Riverina Zone area are:

- lightning, particularly from late spring and summer storms
- machinery, particularly agricultural machinery involved in harvesting and haymaking
- escapes from legal burning off
- incendiarism has been identified as the ignition cause of some bush fires
- accidental ignition

### 1.1. Contact Information

District Office Address:	288 Fernleigh Road Wagga Wagga NSW2650
District Office Phone:	02 5958 6500
After Hours Contact:	Via State Operations on 02 8741 5400
A PSN Radio Channel:	138 RVRNA A
B PSN Radio Channel:	238 RVRNA B
PMR Channel:	2236 RVRNA P – Primary Dispatch Channel
ESO Conversion Chart:	Please see file in folder for relevant conversion information
Fire Weather Forecast Area:	Eastern Riverina
Local Government Area:	Coolamon, Junee, Lockhart, Wagga Wagga

## 1.2. Topography

The Riverina Zone is at the eastern end of the Riverina region where the slopes of the Great Dividing Range flatten and form the Riverina plain. The City of Wagga Wagga straddles the Murrumbidgee River, one of the great rivers of the Murray-Darling Basin.

The area is approximately 90% undulating country with the most significant geographical feature and area of topographic change occurring in the Ellerslie Range south of Tarcutta NSW. Other significant geographical features include Mount Ulandra, Mount Burngoogie, Galore Hill and The Rock.

## 1.3. Vegetation

The Riverina Zone comprises 93% grasslands (cleared) and 7% forest which includes large areas of pine plantations situated in the southernmost part of the Zone around Humula NSW.

Grasslands typically begin to cure towards late October and are generally fully cured by the end of December. The fuel loading in grasslands areas are subject to variation based on land management practices (grazing and harvesting) and rainfall received during the growing season. Fuel loads in grasslands areas can exceed 6 t/ha

Forested areas within the Zone are comprised predominately of Western Slopes Dry Sclerophyll Forest, Grassy Woodlands, Semi-arid Woodlands and Inland Riverine Forests. Surface and near surface fuel loads can fluctuate between 10 and 15 t/ha dependant on vegetation type.

## 1.4. Climate

The typical / average climate in the Riverina Zone area is temperate, with warm to hot dry summers and cool winters. Rainfall is predominantly autumn and winter, and the bush fire season generally runs from October to March.

Prevailing weather conditions associated with the bush fire season in the Riverina Zone area are North Westerly winds accompanied by high daytime temperatures and low relative humidity with dry summer storms potentially producing lightning.

## 1.5. Average Weather Data

**Summary of major climate statistics recorded at Wagga Wagga AMO recorded by the BoM (last updated 25 July 2024)**

Element (Mean)	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Max Temp (°C)	21.7	25.9	29.5	31.9	31.0	27.8	22.6	17.4	13.9	12.8	14.6	17.8
Min Temp (°C)	7.9	11.0	14.0	16.5	16.4	13.5	9.2	5.9	3.7	2.8	3.5	5.1
Rainfall (mm)	56.5	49.4	46.2	42.2	39.4	46.5	40.3	50.3	50.3	53.1	50.5	48.6
3pm Temp (°C)	20.2	24.3	27.8	30.1	29.3	26.5	21.6	16.6	13.2	12.0	13.7	16.7
3pm wind (km/h)	15.9	17.3	17.7	16.3	13.8	13.2	12.4	11.6	10.7	11.8	14.3	15.2
3pm RH (%)	46	36	30	29	33	35	43	56	64	65	59	54

**Summary of major climate statistics recorded at Junee Treatment Works recorded by the BoM (last updated 24 July 2024)**

Element (Mean)	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Max Temp (°C)	22.7	27.0	30.8	32.4	31.6	28.4	22.8	17.9	13.9	13.2	15.1	18.9
Min Temp (°C)	7.4	10.2	13.5	15.5	15.6	12.9	8.6	5.5	3.3	2.3	3.2	5.0
Rainfall (mm)	50.8	45.3	41.2	40.9	37.0	41.4	41.0	42.7	49.6	46.8	46.6	43.9
3pm Temp (°C)	Data not available											
3pm wind (km/h)												
3pm RH (%)												

## 1.6. Known Radio Comms Blackspots

Nil reported

## 1.7. Hazards

### 1.7.1. Transportation

Critical transportation assets include:

- Hume Highway (connecting Sydney and Melbourne)
- Sturt Highway (connecting Sydney, Adelaide and Perth)
- Newell Highway (connecting Brisbane and Melbourne)
- Olympic Highway (connecting multiple regional NSW communities)
- Main Southern Rail (connecting Sydney and Melbourne)
- Junee-Griffith Branch Line
- Riverina Intermodal Freight and Logistics (RiFL) Hub

### 1.7.2. Agriculture

In 2018–19, the gross value of agricultural production in the Riverina region was \$2.5 billion, which was 21 per cent of the total gross value of agricultural production in New South Wales (\$11.7 billion).

The Riverina Zone has a diverse agricultural sector. The most important commodities in the region based on the gross value of agricultural production is grain followed by livestock production.

### 1.7.3. Defence

Regarded as one of Australia's major Defence Force establishments, Wagga Wagga is home to the Army Recruit Training Centre Kapooka and Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Wagga. Servicemen and women from the Army, Air Force and Navy are all based in the city.

Kapooka Military Area (KMA) is situated immediately west of Wagga Wagga and covers an area of 1,900 hectares; approximately 80% of KMA is bushfire prone. KMA is currently undergoing a 10 year redevelopment program at \$960 million.

KMA is considered by the Bush Fire Management Committee to be the highest at risk asset within the Bush Fire Risk Management Plan.

### 1.7.4. Energy

The Uranquinty Power Station is a 640-megawatt (860,000 hp) natural gas-fired power station located in Uranquinty, New South Wales, Australia, comprising four Siemens V94.2 gas turbines. It is the second largest gas-fired power station in New South Wales, and is used during peak loads.

The Riverina Zone has a number of active and several planned solar farms situated within the zone. There are currently 4 active solar farms within the zone, 3 situated in the Bomen Industrial area and 1 at Marinna NSW.

### 1.7.5. Aviation

Wagga Wagga Airport, is located adjacent to RAAF Base Wagga. The airfield is an operational base, but is leased by the Wagga Wagga City Council on a 30-year lease from the Australian Department of Defence, with RAAF Base Wagga being a ground training base. The airfield is still used by military aircraft, mostly transport aircraft transporting freight or passengers.

Wagga Wagga Airport is considered to be the busiest regional airport in New South Wales, with over 140 flights between Wagga Wagga, Sydney and Melbourne each week, carrying approximately 225,000 passengers annually.

Regional Express maintains its fleet of Saab 340 passenger and freight aircraft at Wagga Wagga Airport.

### 1.7.6. Special Fire Protection Facilities

The Riverina Zone has numerous special fire protection facilities spread across 25 communities. The major population centres are Wagga Wagga, Junee, Coolamon, Ganmain, Ardlethan, The Rock and Lockhart. Another 18 urban and village centres are distributed throughout the zone.

Each major population centre within the zone has a hospital (or health centre) and residential aged care facilities. The majority of the villages within the zone have primary schools and other childcare facilities.

Charles Sturt University (CSU) maintains a campus in Wagga Wagga with multiple dormitory styled accommodation facilities located on campus.

## 1.8. Land Management Authorities

Land Manager	% of Area
National Parks & Wildlife Service	0.67
Forestry Corporation NSW	1.14
Crown Lands	2.71
Local Government	5.0
Commonwealth	0.24
Private & Other	90.2

For more specific data on the Riverina Zone, please follow the link to the Riverina Bush Fire Risk Management Plan [here](#).

*Note: This link will only work with internet coverage.*

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For further information regarding the Riverina District Information pack, please contact the Operational Improvement team via **email at** [operational.improvement@rfs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:operational.improvement@rfs.nsw.gov.au)

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