

Bushfire Review Implementation Group: Stakeholder Briefing

2011 Perth Hills Bushfire Review

Information on recommendations which are complete can be found at <http://www.dpc.wa.gov.au/Publications/Pages/BushfireReviews.aspx>

or

<http://www.semc.wa.gov.au/publicationsandresources/Pages/BushfireReviewImplementationGroup.aspx>

The 1st table below lists those recommendations which are still in progress and overseen by the SEMC. The 2nd table shows the recommendations signed off by BRIG and monitored by the SEMC.

Many of the remaining recommendations are interrelated, and as such several current projects upon completion will fulfil more than one recommendation.

Table 1

Recommendation	Lead agency	Progress as at August 2014	Next Steps
<p>15. The Fire and Emergency Services Authority and local governments ensure that the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • measure and map fuel loads • maintain fuel load databases • draw up prescriptions for, and oversee controlled burns • are included as key competencies in any future recruitment of Chief Bushfire Control Officers (CBFCO) and Community and Emergency Services Managers (CESM). 	DFES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All current Community Emergency Services Managers have been trained to measure fuel loads, prepare burn prescriptions and have assisted local fire brigade volunteers with burning. • A Prescribed Burning Course has been developed and is scheduled to be piloted in September. • The Chief Bushfire Control Officers course will be enhanced. • A Volunteer Training Advisory Group will aid development of competencies and training for Community Based Fire Control Officers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DFES has developed a project plan to support the implementation of the remaining parts of recommendations 15 and 53. • Establish an agreement between DFES and DPaW for prescribed burning training delivery. • Completion of Bushfire Risk Management System end of November 2014.
<p>53. The Fire and Emergency Services Authority and local governments examine the current competencies of Chief Bushfire</p>	DFES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four LGs completed the pilot of the Bushfire Risk Management Plan (BRMP) process (Augusta-Margaret River, Nannup, Boyup Brook and Collie) 	

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<p><i>Control Officers (CBFCO) and Community Emergency Services Managers (CESM) or Community Fire Managers (CFM) and consider what further development is needed to ensure these staff are capable of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>measuring and mapping fuel loads</i> • <i>maintaining fuel load databases</i> • <i>drawing up prescriptions for, and overseeing controlled burns; and</i> • <i>building effective working relationships with all relevant stakeholders.</i> 		<p>in July 2014.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bushfire Risk Management System (BRMS) – a web-based tool that will support LGs and other state agencies in the development of a BRMP – is in development phase. • All bushfire mitigation works will be captured on the Bushfire Risk Management System (BRMS) database for future planning use. 	
<p><i>38. Local governments institute a comprehensive program to assess fuel loads and bushfire preparedness on private properties. The program should give reference to the creation and maintenance of a Building Protection Zone, in line with FESA guidelines.</i></p> <p><i>This program should be implemented and managed under the Bush Fires Act 1954 in a manner similar to the fire break inspection program.</i></p>	DFES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In June 2013, the Minister for Emergency Services wrote to local governments identified as falling within high risk bushfire zones to advise them that Government is development a Bushfire Risk Management Planning (BRMP) process to complete tenure blind assessments of bushfire risks. • The State Emergency Management Committee Secretariat consulted 43 local governments on the BRMP process. • A Premier’s Circular issued throughout government strongly promoted the value of Building Protection Zones (BPZs). • Four LGs completed the pilot of the BRMP process (Augusta-Margaret River, Nannup, Boyup Brook and Collie) in July 2014. 	<p><i>Resolutions 38, 21 and 33</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing fuel assessment and risk treatment programs will be developed in collaboration with local government and state agencies and other landholders, as resourcing allows. • The guidelines and templates may be amended following the BRMP local government pilots. • The BRMP project once complete, will progress the implementation of recommendations 38, 21 and 23. • DFES is developing post-pilot review to support an application for further funding to support the implementation of the remaining parts of recommendations 38, 21 and 23 through the BRMP process.
<p><i>21. The Fire and Emergency Services Authority, the Department of Environment and Conservation and local governments jointly develop a single, integrated system for</i></p>	DFES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Joint Mitigation Working Group has recommended that the current systems utilised by DFES, is appropriate to address this recommendation, though will require updating 	

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<p><i>fuel load assessment and management. The system should enable public access to allow members of the community to access information about the fuel load in a given locality.</i></p>		<p>and modification.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DFES has finalised draft functional requirements for an end to end integrated software system to support the BRMP process. • A standardised approach to developing an ISO 31000 compliant methodology for measuring and recording fuel loads is targeted. • Bushfire Risk Management System (BRMS) – a web-based tool that will support LGs and other state agencies in the development of a BRMP – is in development phase. 	
<p><i>23. The Interagency Bushfire Management committee develop and oversee a work program to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>conduct site specific assessments to assess current fuel loads</i> • <i>assess, analyse and prioritise bushfire risk on land within and adjacent to communities; and</i> • <i>develop a three year rolling mitigation works program with annual implementation and review.</i> <p><i>This work should commence independently of any decision on the most effective online integrated system. All data collected should be uploaded to the Shared Land Information Platform (SLIP).</i></p>	DFES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works programs by DFES staff and local government-based Community Emergency Services Managers is ongoing. This includes conducting mitigation works, inspections and mapping on a weekly basis throughout the Perth Hills area. • DFES has developed the Bushfire Risk Management System that utilises an ISO 31000 compliant methodology for measuring and recording bushfire risk and associated fuel loads. The BRMS supports an integrated approach that can assess, analyse and prioritise bushfire risk and support the implementation of treatments to address risk. The system will provide a state-wide picture of bushfire risk. 	
<p>47. Emergency Management Western Australia (EMWA) develop mechanisms to calculate the estimated total cost of a fire to the community.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This issue is being considered at a national level. In June 2013, Deloitte produced the report <i>Building our Nation's Resilience to Natural Disasters</i>, which considered the both historic and forecast costs of natural disasters. The Perth Hills Bushfire was one of the disasters taken into account. This paper was considered by the 	<p>The Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee has recommended that the Council of Australian Governments ask the Commonwealth Treasurer to commission a Productivity Commission review of the major contributions to, and benefits of disaster mitigation expenditure.</p>

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		Standing Council on Police and Emergency Management.	The Productivity Commission launched the inquiry into Natural Disaster Funding on 28 April 2014.
<i>48. The State Government move the responsibility for the management and distribution of the Emergency Services Levy (ESL) to the Department of Finance.</i>	DFES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department of Finance has reviewed papers from the report on Recommendation 48. The Department of Finance has also reviewed the 2006 report by the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee of the Parliament. <p>An initial meeting was held between Department of Finance and DFES representatives to understand the current application and approval process for grant applications lodged by local governments, with DFES, for funding allocations.</p>	Further discussions between relevant agencies will be held in respect of this recommendation.

Table 2

Recommendation	Lead agency	Progress as at August 2014	Next Steps
<i>3. The State Government transfer responsibility for declaring bushfire prone areas from local government to the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC). The Western Australian Planning Commission should urgently assess those areas that should be declared bushfire prone.</i>	Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bushfire-Prone Area Mapping Standard (DFES-Office of Bushfire Risk Management) published May 2014; Draft bushfire-prone area maps are scheduled to be available for the South-West in late 2014; On 8 May 2014, the Minister for Emergency Services entrusted the powers to designate bushfire-prone areas to the FES Commissioner. The DoP released the proposed bushfire regulations under the <i>Planning and Development Act 2005</i> on the Minister for Planning's behalf. The regulations will designate bushfire-prone areas through local planning schemes via reference to the new state maps; Consultation on the draft new State Planning Policy completed in July 2014 and the revised guidelines in August 2014. 	<p>Regulations to underpin new arrangements to be finalised following the close of public advertising on 31 October 2014. Government has made a commitment for the regulations to have effect from 1 May 2015.</p> <p>Policy review outcomes to be considered in detail in readiness for WAPC consideration in early 2015.</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of submissions on the State Planning Policy and revised guidelines has commenced August 2014. • Revisions to the policy and guidelines will also be informed by comments received on the proposed regulations. 	
<p>39. State and locals governments:</p> <p>a) recognise that regardless of future declarations of bushfire prone areas, the existing planning and building problems in the Perth Hills related to bushfire risk will persist;</p> <p>b) urge residents in these areas to retrofit their homes and evaporative air conditioners in compliance with AS 3959 - 2009;</p> <p>c) examine options to retrospectively bring these areas into compliance with Planning for Bushfire Protection Guidelines.</p>	Planning	<p>An Information Sheet on AS3959 has been developed and local governments have updated and increased community information;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Commerce has published Building for Better Protection Bushfire areas – a Homeowner’s Guide; • The Department of Commerce has written to the manufacturers of evaporative air conditioners and asked them to provide screens and information. This has been backed up by a request to other jurisdictions to make similar contact and for it to be coordinated by the Australian Building Codes Board; • The Department of Education installed ember screens on evaporative cooling units at schools listed on the Department’s Bushfire Zone register by the end of 2012; • The Building Commission of Western Australia has written to manufacturers of evaporative air conditioners to ask that they (1) ensure that new evaporative air conditioning units are sold to customers in bushfire prone areas with appropriate screens for protection against ember attack and (2) provide retrofitting options to customers seeking ember screens for their units; and • DFES, as part of its ongoing community engagement strategy is also promoting the retrofitting of building features to make buildings more bushfire resistant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further options for encouraging and facilitating the retrofitting of fire risk reduction features to existing land development and assets to be compliant with contemporary standards such as the AS3959 and the WAPC/DFES <i>Planning for Bushfire Protection</i> will be considered.

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<p>40. The State Government mandate that the title deeds for relevant properties be amended to indicate if the property is in a declared bushfire prone area.</p>	<p>Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landgate will include bushfire-prone areas in their Property Interest Report inquiries. • As of 1 November 2013, The Department of Commerce has advised licensed real estate agents that a prudent agent should purchase and provide copies of Property Interest (PI) Report to prospective buyers for all property sales in order to satisfy the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Agents and Sales Representatives 2011 (the Code). A copy of the PI report must be provided to all potential buyers who are considering making an offer. Once a bushfire-prone area database is developed, the information can be made available via Interest Enquiry. • The WAPC will introduce a model subdivision condition requiring a notification on title for lots in bushfire-prone areas, to alert prospective owners. This will not be retrospectively applied. 	