

TERMS OF REFERENCE

2019/2020 BUSHFIRE REVIEW

Introduction

1. The extraordinary circumstances of this fire season necessitate broad inquiry and review. Following events that have recently been felt, not only in South Australia but across the nation, there is national focus on bushfire risk. The proposed review will be broad and cover twelve factors across Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery (PPRR) that all impact positively on reducing the impact of bushfire and keeping communities safer.

Discussion

2. A combination of drought conditions, catastrophic fire danger weather over several days, coupled with extended periods of severe and extreme fire danger periods as well as ignitions in remote and inaccessible areas all combined to create fire behaviour and conditions that made fires unstoppable and in many circumstances homes and assets un-defendable.
3. The volunteers of the South Australian Country Fire Service (CFS), supported by a range of personnel from many agencies conducted outstanding services to the South Australian Community to protect life and property in a time of greatest needs.
4. Tragically the lives of three people have been taken and whilst their deaths will be subject to coronial inquiry, any lesson learned from these recent fire events which can assist to avoid the reoccurrence of such loss should also be taken in to account.
5. The South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM) is established under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005* (the Act) to lead the governance, strategic and policy aspects of fire and emergency services. Under section 8 of the Act, 'functions and powers' SAFECOM is responsible, for monitoring performance and taking corrective action as well as ensuring emergency services regularly review and revise as necessary any plans, structures, systems targets and practices to address changing circumstances and to improve emergency services.
6. The scope of the review includes the relevant areas of SAFECOM, CFS, the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Services (MFS) and the South Australian State Emergency Services (SES), the scope will also cover State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP), emergency management communications and collaboration between other Government agencies such as the South Australian Police (SAPOL) and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC).
7. A number of areas and issues for review are set out under in this Terms of Reference, these include bushfire ignitions, firefighting operations by skilled and motivated personnel, effective firefighting operations with the necessary equipment and resources, and extinguishing bushfires when they occur.
8. The community and government's recovery from the effects of bushfires will not form part of the review, however Rapid Damage Assessment and the State's current arrangements of the transition from response to recovery will be examined.

Terms of Reference, Areas of focus

Prevention

1. Reducing Bushfire ignitions
 - Electricity Infrastructure;
 - Arson and Operation Nomad;
 - Machinery and power tools;
 - Lightning strikes and detection; and
 - Hazard Reduction

2. Community Preparation and resilience
 - Community Education and engagement;
 - Home and contents insurance'
 - Volunteer training, development, coordination, support and welfare; and
 - Farm firefighting units.

Preparation

3. State Bushfire Plan and State Bushfire Coordinating Committee
 - Developing a new state bushfire plan;
 - The role of the state bushfire committee; and
 - Developing policies and standards to reduce bushfire risk.

4. State Emergency Management Plan including Extreme Heat Planning
 - Review of emergency planning arrangements

5. State Development and Control planning
 - Bush fire zoning; and
 - Local government planning, roles in emergency management.

Response

6. Call taking and dispatch
 - 000 and dispatch of resources;
 - Preplanning of strike teams; and
 - Links to public information and warnings.

7. Equipment and resources
 - CFS/MFS appliances, communications and safety systems;
 - Technology such as Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL), mapping, line scanning;
 - Aviation resources including Large Aerial Tankers; and
 - Logistics arrangements such as Humanihuts and retardant.

8. Incident management and emergency coordination
 - Incident management teams and facilities;
 - Operational alignment of control agency and the State Coordinator;
 - Functions and coordination between the State Control Centre, State Emergency Centre, State Emergency Information Call Centre Capability (SEICCC) and the State Crisis Centre; and
 - Reporting to government.
9. Public Information and Warnings
 - Alert SA;
 - Information Management systems to support improved messaging; and
 - Coordination across Government messaging.
10. Interstate Deployments
 - Support to other states; and
 - Coordination of resource sharing arrangements.

Recovery

11. Rapid Damage Assessment,
 - Aerial surveillance and remote pilot aircraft; and
 - Messaging of damage impact.
12. Transitional arrangements to recovery
 - Australian Defence Force Support;
 - Commonwealth Assistance; and
 - Leadership and Coordination.