



Newsletter

for Fire Management Area Committees

Issue 010 | April 2020

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It's been awhile since our last newsletter, and things have certainly changed. It is a weird world we are living in at the moment, and let's hope that it returns to normality sooner rather than later. In the meantime, I think it is important that we keep the wheels turning as much as possible and progress where we can, even if it means doing things in different ways.

Firstly, I would like to see everyone support and encourage landholders to take advantage of the cooler weather and conduct fuel reduction burning where safe to do so. It is important that we all take responsibility to reduce fuel loads in Tasmania, to lessen the impact bushfires will have on our State during summer. This is even more important this year due to the strain already placed on our emergency services in dealing with the COVID-19 response.

In this newsletter you will find a project update on the Bushfire Protection Plan Project from Adrian Pyrke. This project has recently hit some significant milestones and we are eager to see Fire Management Area Committees (FMACs) ongoing commitment to this project. Our aim remains that we will have the new Bushfire Risk Management Plans in place by the end of 2020.

We also have an update from the State Fire Management Council (SFMC). The biggest news from the Council is that Minister Shelton has announced some funding to support the new look Red Hot Tips Program. We have started work on position descriptions and program branding, and are aiming to have the Coordinator position advertised by June at the latest. There will also be an additional three regional facilitators to support this program, which will be advertised in the second half of the year. We are all very excited about this announcement and can't wait for the program to commence.

We are definitely changing the way we work; with video conferencing, working from home arrangements and e-learning, but Deb, Adrian and Hannah are all still available on email or phone if required, so please don't hesitate to contact them if you need too.

Stay safe and enjoy your Easter break.

Ian Sauer, Chair SFMC



SFMC Key Messages

- **Fire Management Area Committee Membership;** a number of new members have been appointed to Committees as a result of a membership audit.
- **Red Hot Tips;** funding has been secured for the new look Red Hot Tips Program. The new look Program aims to educate, engage and support farmers and landholders to actively manage their bushfire risk; encouraging collaborative vegetation fire management and ecological sustainability across the landscape.
- **Machinery Operations Working Group;** SFMC Chair Ian Sauer is now also chairing the Machinery Operations Working Group and Deb Pope is providing executive support. The Group provides a forum for communication and collaboration between key stakeholders, offering opportunity for input into policy and systems that support safe machinery operations in dry vegetation.
- **Research Coordination;** An environmental scan on research in Tasmania has been completed. The scan identified a significant number of research projects being undertaken that directly impact on Tasmania. A stakeholder research forum will be held when face to face engagement allows, to identify end-user research priorities in Tasmania.
- **Fire Permit Officers;** 141 recommendations approved by Council; included appointments and rescindments.

State Fire Management Council Membership Update

- **Sustainable Timber Tasmania;** Suzette Weeding has been re-appointed to SFMC for a three-year term.
- **Forest Industries Association of Tasmania** Jye Hill resigned from Norske Skog, and as a result also the FIAT representative on SFMC. We thank Jye for his commitment to SFMC and wish him well in his new position at Sustainable Timber Tasmania (STT).

Jye will continue to Chair the Southern FMAC in his new role as STT representative on the Committee.

Farewell to Sandy Whight

For those that are unaware, Sandy Whight has resigned from Tasmania Fire Service to take on a new role with the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM), based in Hobart.

Sandy has made a significant contribution to SFMC, growing the capabilities of the Council and implementing the change of role and strategic direction in 2013, making the Council and FMACs what they are today. Sandy was also pivotal in the establishment of the whole-of-government Fuel Reduction Program.

Sandy's new role, as General Manager Support Services with the BOM, is an exciting opportunity for her. Sandy will be part of developing and growing a new capability for the BOM, and enabling even closer engagement and collaboration with the emergency management sector.

We wish Sandy all the best in her new role, and we are sure SFMC will call on her expertise in the future.... maybe a perfect opportunity for a network event?

Useful Links

Fire Australia Magazine

[Issue one](#) of 2020 is now available.

Update: Bushfire Protection Planning Project

Project aim: to provide a consistent framework, tools, education and support for FMACs to undertake bushfire risk assessments and develop fire protection plans.

Despite the changed work and community situation we are now all living with, the team at the TFS Bushfire Risk Unit (BRU) have been and will continue to develop the risk assessment process which will guide priorities for the FMACs' Bushfire Risk Management Plans (BRMPs).

The FMAC meetings held over November and December 2019, as well as working group meetings held in February 2020, have made important contributions along the journey of designing the risk assessment and BRMPs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically changed the way we work, restricting our ability to attend meetings and may have changed our work priorities. The FMACs continue to have, however, a very important role in the process of mitigating bushfire risk in Tasmania.

SFMC wishes to support FMACs continuing to develop BRMPs this year. The ways that we collaborate to do this will of course have to be modified.

It had already become apparent, prior to the pandemic, that the risk assessment needed a devolved model where risk analysis is undertaken prior to FMAC meetings and distributed online. The current gathering restrictions mean that it will be necessary to conduct all FMAC business online: the risk assessment training, risk analyses, treatment planning and FMAC meetings. The SFMC is well placed to support this new way of doing things.

The team at the BRU now have the core data prepared for the FMAC risk registers: human settlement areas, production forests and natural values. These mapped data have been grouped into bushfire scenario impact areas, consequence levels assigned and likelihood level calculated with the Phoenix fire simulation modelling. There are more steps to come to finalise the risk registers, but they are now taking clear shape and provide a preliminary look at risk priorities.

It is important for SFMC to understand how well FMAC members are placed to continue participation in 2020 and plan accordingly. For this reason, **SFMC requests that all FMAC members participate in a short online survey. FMAC members will receive an email with a link to the survey within the next few weeks.** Printed copies of the survey can be mailed if requested.

The key stages remaining of the project (timeframes will be determined by the outcome of the survey to FMAC members):

- Online risk assessment training is undertaken by FMAC members
- Risk Registers are completed and reviewed by FMAC members
- Treatment Plans are prepared by FMAC members and consolidated by BRU Planners
- FMAC meetings held (video conference if necessary) to review and finalise Risk Registers and Treatment Plans
- Bushfire Risk Management Plans prepared for all FMACs and submitted to SFMC for approval.

What's New

Australian Seasonal Bushfire Outlook: April 2020

Fire management is a year-round process and the [Australian Seasonal Bushfire Outlook: April 2020](#) reflects the priorities in each state and territory over the next three months. It takes into account the impacts of the 2019-20 bushfire season and the weather conditions expected in coming months.



bushfire&natural
HAZARDSCRC

The Australian Seasonal Bushfire Outlook: April 2020 is used by fire authorities to make strategic decisions such as resource planning and prescribed fire management to reduce the negative impacts of bushfire.

Risk Ready Website

The Tasmanian Government has launched a new feature on its TasAlert webpage. [RiskReady](#) allows people to easily and quickly determine whether a property is likely to be exposed to a range of natural hazards. It identifies:

- Bushfire-Prone Areas (where the overlay has been published for that Local Government Area); and
- Bushfire Impact Areas (areas that may be impacted by smoke and embers but are not subject to planning or building requirements).

Risk Ready provides a simpler way of accessing the bushfire-prone areas overlay for the general public. As new overlays are published they will appear on both Risk Ready and the LIST.

Training and Development



4 June 2020

Bureau of Meteorology Webinar: Winter 2020 climate and water update

Get an in depth analysis of recent conditions, as well as the temperature, rainfall and streamflow outlook for spring. Ask our experts all your climate and water questions to help make decisions for the months ahead.

Register [here](#) or go to www.bom.gov.au/webinars/

Available Now - Centre for Excellence for Prescribed Burning: Dr Kevin Tolhurst presents on setting 'objectives'

*Dr Kevin Tolhurst - "I have had cause on many occasions to try and work with **"objectives"** set for prescribed burning operations, wildfire control, bushfire risk management and corporate operations.*

If we do not have well-structured objectives then we will not be able to effectively brief crews, explain to the public and media what it is we are trying to achieve, know when the objective will not be met and we need to change our strategy or tactics, and we will not be able to effectively learn from our experiences."

<https://youtu.be/AOL8YfjM3io>



2020 Calendar of Events

JUNE

- 11** SFMC Meeting, online
Agenda Papers due 28 May 2020

JUNE - NOVEMBER

Online Risk Assessment Training
All FMAC Members required to participate

Risk Registers are completed and reviewed by FMACs members

Treatment Plans are prepared by FMAC members and consolidated by BRU Planners

FMAC Meetings to be held to review and finalise Risk Register and Treatment Plans
Video conference meetings if necessary

Bushfire Risk Management Plans are prepared for all FMACs and submitted to SFMC for approval

SEPTEMBER

- 16** SFMC Meeting, Launceston
Agenda Papers due 2 September 2020
- SFMC Network Event, Launceston
Topic to be confirmed
- 17** Tentative: Pre-bushfire Season Briefing, Launceston

NOVEMBER

- 27** SFMC Meeting, Hobart
Agenda Papers due 13 November 2020

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