



# TERMS OF REFERENCE

## Fire Management Area Committees

For further information please contact:

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## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide understanding and clarity around the role, purpose and governance of Fire Management Area Committees (FMACs), including the responsibilities of members.

## 2. Background

The State Fire Management Council (SFMC), under Section 18 of the *Fire Service Act 1979 (the Act)*, establish FMACs for each Fire Management Area (FMA) of Tasmania.

There are 10 FMAs in Tasmania with boundaries based on bushfire risk and topography, largely aligning to local government boundaries (Appendix 1).

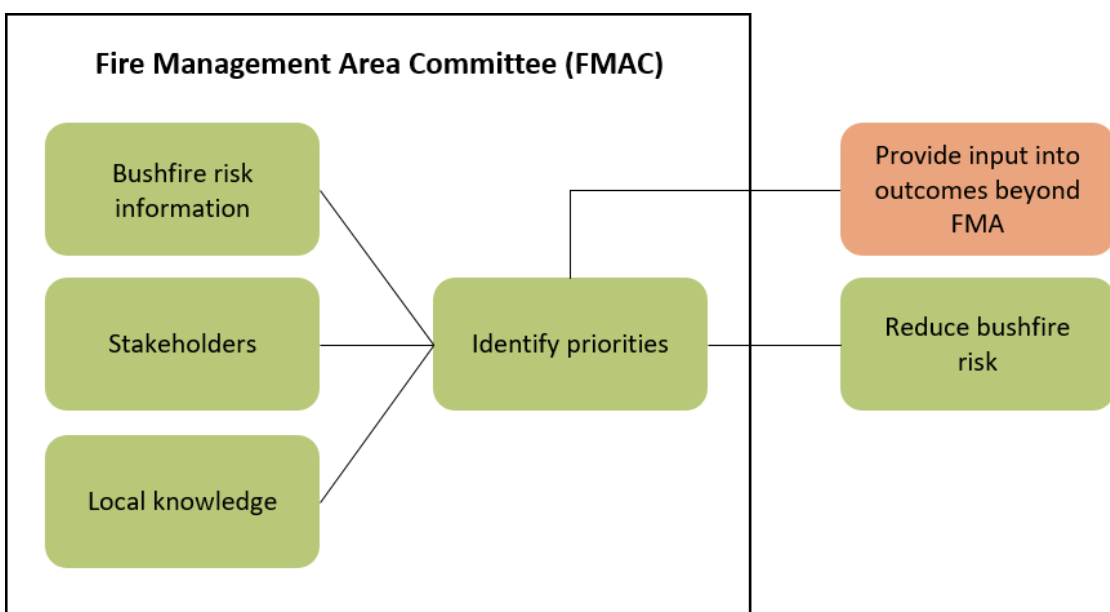
## 3. Purpose

FMACs provide a forum for effective bushfire risk management for FMAs through a consistent, comprehensive and collaborative approach.

FMACs:

- Provide a forum for communication and collaboration between key stakeholders in the FMA;
- Enable a holistic and consistent approach, incorporating local knowledge, to identify strategic priorities to reduce bushfire risk (See Figure 1);
- Coordinate efforts and facilitate resource sharing to implement the strategic risk reduction priorities;
- Link the local community and the SFMC through ‘ground-truthing’ the bushfire risk assessment and mitigation strategies; and
- Through their advisory function, provide input into decisions and outcomes beyond the Fire Management Area.

Figure 1. FMACs enable a holistic approach to bushfire risk reduction.



## 4. Appointment

FMACs are established under *the Act*.

FMA boundaries are declared by notice from the State Fire Management Council under Section 17 (1) of *the Act*.

All ten FMA boundaries were gazetted on 11 September 2013, boundaries are shown on the map in Appendix 1.

FMACs are responsible to the SFMC.

## 5. Responsibilities

The functions of FMACs are set out in [Part II Division 2](#) of *the Act*.

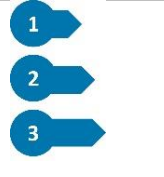



FMACs have four core functions, summarised in the *Table 1* below:

- Identification of strategic priorities;
- Fire protection planning;
- Collaboration; and
- Other functions.

These functions are explained in the following table.

A FMAC has power to do all things necessary or convenient to be done in connection with the performance of its functions.

Table 1. FMACs core functions.

<b>Identify strategic priorities</b>		
	<p><i>Elements</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and assess community bushfire risks</li> <li>• Prioritise strategic works in response to those risks</li> </ul>	<p><i>Key Measures of Success</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A consistent strategic bushfire risk methodology is used to identify and assess risks and prioritise strategic risk treatment options, in line with the TVFMP</li> </ul>
<b>Fire protection planning</b>		
	<p><i>Elements</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire Protection Plan (FPP) describes the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery arrangements for one or more hazards</li> <li>• Submit FPP to SFMC annually for the following 12 months</li> <li>• Ensure FPP is consistent with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>State Fire Protection Plan (SFPP)</i></li> <li>– TVFMP</li> <li>– SFMC instructions and/or guidelines</li> <li>– Other applicable management plans</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><i>Key Measures of Success</i></p> <p>The FPP is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submitted to SFMC by agreed date</li> <li>• Consistent with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>SFPP</i></li> <li>– <i>TVFMP</i></li> <li>– SFMC instructions and guidelines</li> <li>– Applicable management plans</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Effective to protect the community by reducing bushfire risk across multiple tenures. Bushfire risk reduction measures are tracked over time.</li> <li>• Used by stakeholders within the FMA to inform their vegetation fire management activities</li> <li>• Used by stakeholders to inform strategic bushfire mitigation activities and programs</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration</b>		
	<p><i>Elements</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate vegetation fire management activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Community education and information</li> <li>– Fuel management (<i>see 5.1 Collaboration – Stakeholder Engagement</i>)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><i>Key Measures of Success</i></p> <p>The FMAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forms effective relationships with, and facilitates relationship-building between, stakeholders in the FMA</li> <li>• Communicates effectively to inform, educate and receive information from stakeholders in the FMA</li> <li>• Ensures local knowledge is captured and informs the FPP, including identification of strategic priorities, planning and implementation</li> <li>• Coordinates stakeholders and facilitates resource sharing to implement vegetation fire management activities in accordance with the FPP</li> <li>• Ensures vegetation fire management activities are planned and conducted in accordance with the TVFMP Principles and Strategies</li> </ul>
<b>Other functions</b>		
	<p><i>Elements</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise SFMC on matters relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Fire management</li> <li>– The FMACs other functions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Comply with directions given by SFMC</li> </ul>	<p><i>Key Measures of Success</i></p> <p>The FMAC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complies with directions given by SFMC</li> <li>• Provides timely advice on matters referred by SFMC</li> <li>• Identifies and advises SFMC of community issues in the FMA</li> <li>• Provides advice to SFMC as appropriate on matters relating to the FMACs other functions.</li> <li>• Has an effective relationship with the SFMC and is responsive to feedback.</li> </ul>

## 5.1 Collaboration – Stakeholder Engagement

Collaboration underpins all of the FMACs functions.

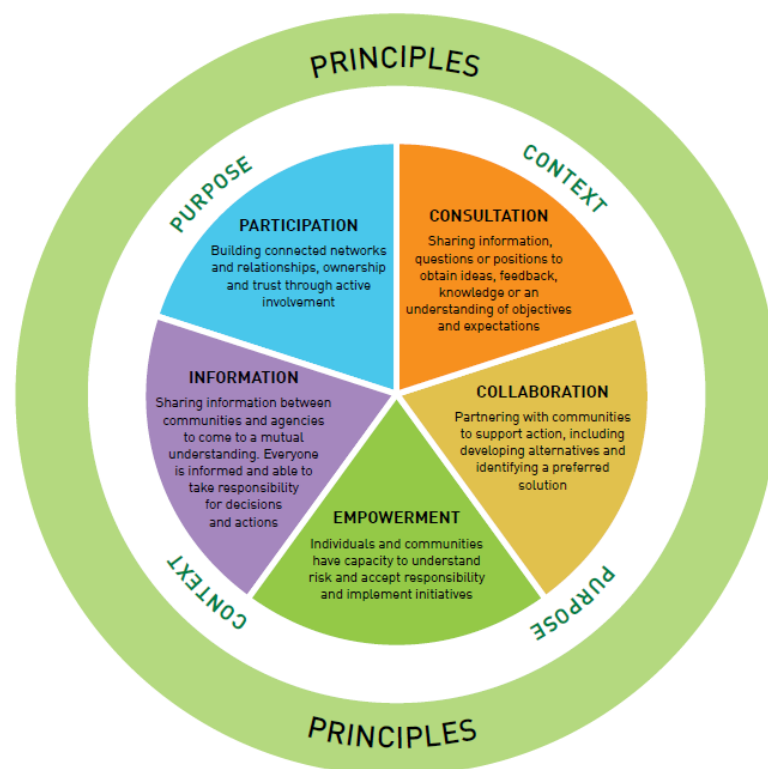
Collaboration facilitates and supports engagement, enabling stakeholders to jointly consider common challenges and generate solutions.

Collaboration is achieved by FMACs through the following activities.

- Facilitating community input into Fire Protection Plans (FPPs);
- Establishing common vegetation fire management priorities;
- Building relationships and community awareness;
- Sharing knowledge;
- Providing an avenue for the community to comment on bushfire risk and vegetation fire management;
- Communicating community concerns to the SFMC;
- Engaging with SFMC and Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) initiatives that support a bushfire ready community;
- Providing a point of coordination and cooperation for FMAC members;
- Identifying gaps in vegetation fire management;
- Facilitating resource sharing to enable effective mitigation activities, within and across FMACs;
- Identifying and addressing barriers to the implementation of mitigation activities.

*Figure 2: Community engagement Model for Emergency Management*

Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection – Handbook 6  
National Strategy for Disaster Resilience: Community Engagement Framework



## 6. Governance

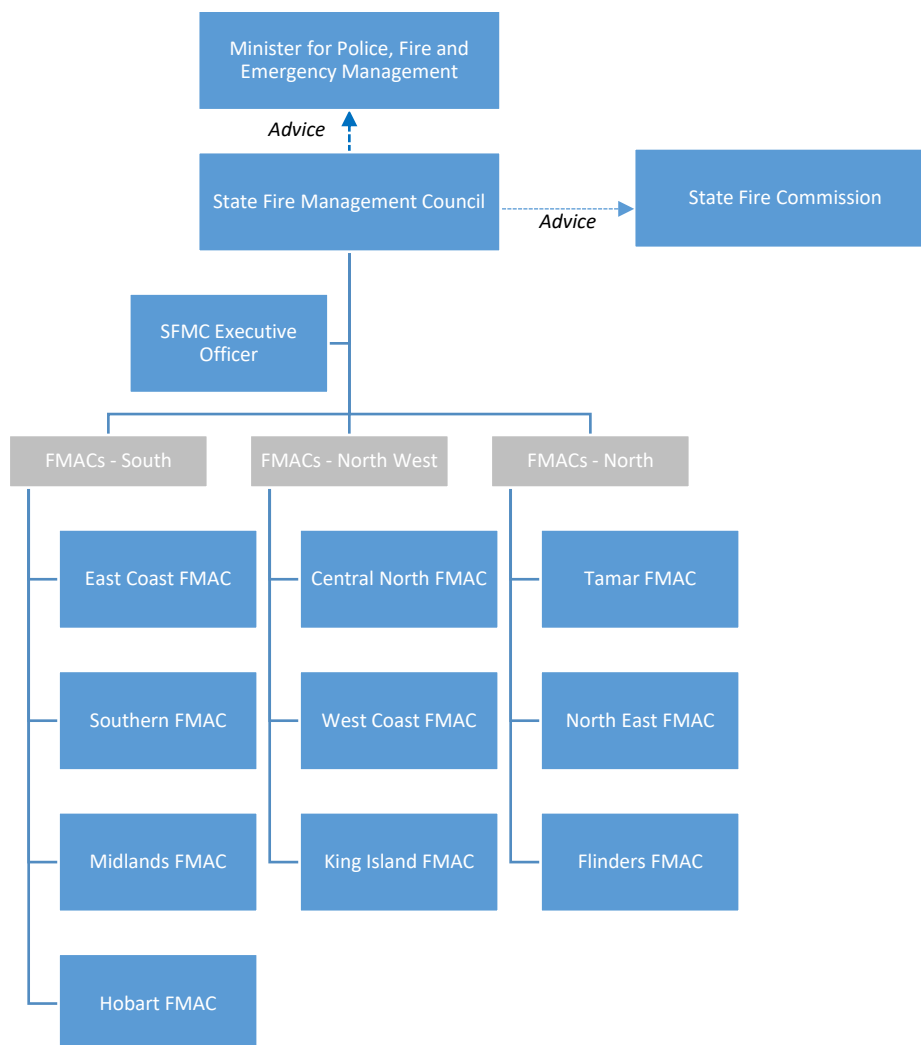
Each FMAC and its members are accountable to the SFMC. In relation to FMACs, the SFMC is in turn accountable to the State Fire Commission (SFC).

The SFMC may:

- Appoint (and remove) FMAC members;
- Issues instructions or guidelines regarding the FPP;
- Refer matters to the FMAC for advice ; and
- Give directions to a FMAC.

FMACs must comply with directions given by the SFMC.

*Figure 3: State Fire Management Council governance structure*





## 7. Membership

The membership of a FMAC should include an adequate range of stakeholder representatives to enable the committee to fulfil its purpose and perform its functions effectively.

Section 18 of *the Act* provides that membership of each FMAC must include:

- TFS Officer nominated by the Chief Officer;
- Local council representatives of each local council whose municipal area lies wholly or partly within the FMA or a person jointly nominated by those councils;
- Sustainable Timber Tasmania nominee if the FMA contains or borders State forest;
- Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment nominee if the FMA contains or is adjacent to any reserved land;
- a person jointly nominated by the Brigade Chiefs' of the brigades wholly or partly within the FMA;
- Wellington Park Management Trust nominee if the FMA includes any part of Wellington Park.

The above membership appointments may be approved by FMACs. Once approved the SFMC should be formally notified of the appointment.

The FMAC may request additional representatives based on the unique requirements of the FMA. SFMC will consider these requests on a case-by-case basis for approval.

Membership may include representatives from:

- Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association;
- TasWater;
- TasNetworks;
- Hydro
- Tasmanian Land Conservancy;
- Private Land Conservation Program
- Department of Defence; or
- Private forestry companies.

All nominees for FMACs must:

- Be directly responsible for vegetation management and/or critical infrastructure;
- Have authority to make decisions on behalf of the organisation they represent; and
- Have relevant skills, knowledge and experience.

Non-member subject matter experts may be requested to attend meetings to support specific agenda items as required.

## 8. Roles and responsibilities of Chair and Deputy Chair

The Chair will be elected by the members of the FMAC and approved by the SFMC. The term of the chair is for a maximum of three-years. Chairs are eligible, on nomination, for re-election for one additional term.

It is recommended that a Deputy Chair also be elected.

The FMAC Chair and Deputy Chair Statement of Duties applies to these roles.

## 9. Length of term

Members are appointed for a three-year term, with the option to renew if there are no other suitable representatives from the nominating body.

## 10. Induction

All new members will receive an induction from the FMAC Chair about the FMACs purpose and functions and their roles and responsibilities as a member.

All members must sign the Code of Conduct prior to formal appointment to the FMAC.

## 11. Quorum

The quorum of meetings is half of the total number of members, plus one. Members may attend via telephone or video link.

## 12. Proxies

When a member cannot attend a meeting, they can arrange for a proxy to attend in their place, who can appropriately represent and make decisions on behalf of their organisation.

Proxies should be nominated to the Chair prior to the meeting.

## 13. Procedural requirements

Under *the Act*, a FMAC may regulate its own procedure subject to a certain number of minimum requirements as detailed in Section 18. In addition to those minimum requirements these Terms of Reference contain mandatory directions from the SFMC to the FMAC about how it is to carry out its functions.

## 14. Minutes

Each FMAC must keep accurate minutes of its meetings.

All minutes, agendas and papers generated by the FMAC are to be forwarded to the SFMC after each meeting, for filing in the TFS records management system.

## 15. Meeting schedule

It is recommended that a minimum of two meetings be held annually and to include one meeting before and one meeting after each bushfire/planned burning season.

A meeting may be convened by the Chair or by any two members.

The annual meeting schedule for each FMAC will be agreed by the members at the last meeting of each calendar year. It must include a sufficient number of meetings to enable the FMAC to fulfil its responsibilities, in particular, the building of effective relationships between stakeholders.

Decisions may be made out of session by circular resolution. However, this does not alter the requirement for the FMAC to hold an adequate number of meetings.

## 16. Conduct of meetings

The Chair is responsible for ensuring that the agenda and papers for each meeting are circulated at least five working days prior to each meeting.

All members should:

- Read the meeting papers prior to the meeting;
- Participate constructively in discussion;
- Know and understand the responsibilities and role of the FMAC;
- Function as a team, working with others effectively;
- Behave in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

## 17. Declaration of interests

Any actual or potential conflicts of interest must be declared and recorded in the minutes at the commencement of each meeting.

Members are not permitted to be present for, or participate in discussion or voting about agenda items in which they have a conflict of interest.

## 18. Sub-groups

Sub-groups may be established for a fixed period of time to undertake specific projects. Such groups will work to terms of reference determined by the FMAC and are required to maintain appropriate confidentiality.

Sub-groups may also be formed to support local area bushfire planning and mitigation activities.

## 19. Member training and development

The SFMC provides member training sessions from time to time in matters relevant to the FMAC. All members are encouraged to attend these sessions.

FMACs are encouraged to identify any training needs they may have and to discuss these with the SFMC.

## 20. Other FMAC activities

In addition to the meeting schedule, the FMAC may schedule other activities that it considers are necessary or convenient to the performance of its functions, such as public information or education sessions, vegetation fire management workshops etc. Such events are not meetings of the FMAC.

## 21. Support

The SFMC has developed several templates and resources to assist FMACs to perform their function.

Additionally, the SFMC facilitates access to support from TFS. This support includes:

- Administrative support including preparation of meeting papers and records management;
- Assistance in preparing grant applications;
- Technical support for bushfire risk identification, risk assessment and bushfire protection planning; and
- May include other assistance from time to time.

Requests for assistance should be made by the Chair on behalf of the FMAC and directed to the Executive Officers, SFMC.

## 22. Review of Terms of Reference

These terms of reference are approved on 6 December 2018 and are to be review every three years.

## 23. Acronyms

<b>FMA</b>	Fire Management Area
<b>FMAC</b>	Fire Management Area Committee
<b>FPP</b>	Fire Protection Plan
<b>SFC</b>	State Fire Commission
<b>SFMC</b>	State Fire Management Council
<b>SFPP</b>	State Fire Protection Plan
<b>TFS</b>	Tasmania Fire Service
<b><i>the Act</i></b>	<i>Fire Service Act 1979</i>
<b>TVFMP</b>	Tasmanian Vegetation Fire Management Policy

## 24. Definitions

<b>Bushfire</b>	Unplanned vegetation fire. A generic term which includes, grass fires, forest fires and scrub fires both with and without a suppression objective.
<b>Bushfire risk</b>	Processes, occurrences or actions that increase the likelihood of fires occurring.
<b>Fuel</b>	Any material such as grass, leaf litter and live vegetation which can be ignited and sustains a fire. Fuel is usually measured in tonnes per hectare.
<b>Hazard</b>	A source of potential harm or a situation with potential to cause loss.
<b>Planning</b>	The collective and collaborative efforts by which agreements are reached and documented between people and organisations to meet their communities' vegetation fire management needs. It is a sequence of steps which details how the process will take place.
<b>Preparedness</b>	All activities undertaken in advance of the occurrence of an incident to decrease the impact, extent and severity of the incident and to ensure more effective response activities.
<b>Prevention</b>	All activities concerned with minimising the occurrence of incidents, particularly those of human origin.
<b>Recovery</b>	The coordinated process of supporting emergency affected communities in reconstruction of the physical infrastructure and restoration of emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing.
<b>Response</b>	Actions taken in anticipation of, during, and immediately after an incident to ensure that its effects are minimised, and that people affected are given immediate relief and support.
<b>Risk</b>	The exposure to the possibility of such things as economic or financial loss or gain, physical damage, injury or delay, as a consequence of pursuing a particular course of action. The concept of risk has two elements, i.e. the likelihood of something happening and the consequences if it happens. (AS4360).
<b>State Fire Commission (SFC)</b>	The State Fire Commission is the peak governing and policy group for the Tasmania Fire Service.
<b>State Fire Management Council (SFMC)</b>	Appointed under Section 14 of the <i>Fire Service Act 1979</i> with the responsibility of developing a State vegetation fire management policy to be used as the basis for all fire management planning. And, to provide advice to both the Minister and the State Fire Commission on matters relating to the prevention or mitigation of vegetation fires.
<b>Tasmania Fire Service (TFS)</b>	The operational arm of the State Fire Commission, established by the <i>Fire Service Act 1979</i> .
<b>Vegetation fire</b>	Covers all fire in vegetation, both planned and unplanned. Unplanned vegetation fire is more specifically known as bushfire.
<b>Vegetation fire management activity</b>	All activities that relate to the control, use and management of vegetation. Includes for agriculture/silvicultural purposes, cultural practice, weed management, bushfire mitigation, ecological management and bushfire suppression. It includes legislation, policy, procedure, planning and operational activities.

## 25. Appendix 1 – FMA Boundaries

