



**PREPARING**  
**for**  
**FIRE DANGER DAYS**

***A GUIDE***  
***for***  
***LOCAL GOVERNMENT***  
***in***  
***SOUTH AUSTRALIA***

**September 2010**

**Document Version Control**

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## 1. PREFACE

As a result of consultation with Councils, the previous discussion paper *Workforce Guidelines for Local Government During Emergency Events, January 2010* has been substantially amended to focus on issues solely related to fire danger days having a fire danger index of severe or above.

The term “fire danger day/s” (FDD) in this document means those days that are declared to have a fire danger index of severe, extreme, or catastrophic. This approach has been adopted to focus on the need for adequate and appropriate bushfire management planning to occur for all three of the high end fire danger day indices, not just catastrophic fire danger days (CFDD).

The Guide seeks to highlight a range of matters that Local Government will need to address to effectively manage these fire danger days.

Whilst this Guide now concentrates on a single hazard, i.e. bushfire, much of the discussion contained within it is transferable to an “all hazards” approach.

The document construct has been altered to reflect the approach recommended by the new risk management standard ISO 31000 because the management of bushfire danger days is essentially about managing risk.

Accordingly this document will be supported by a tool kit developed by the LGA Mutual Liability Scheme designed to assist Councils to prepare and implement risk management processes based on ISO 31000 principles that will:

- a) Complement existing risk management frameworks, and
- b) Ensure each Council has developed internal processes that effectively respond to Fire Danger Days

A brief consideration of the recommendations from the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission that are applicable to the Local Government context in South Australia has been included.

## 2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following Councils, organisations and committees have assisted in the development of this guide by providing comment or advice.

### Councils

District Council of Mount Barker  
City of Onkaparinga  
City of Mitcham  
Adelaide Hills Council  
City of Salisbury  
City of Marion  
City of Burnside  
Campbelltown City Council  
DC of Mount Remarkable  
Port Lincoln City Council  
DC of Renmark Paringa  
DC Kangaroo Island  
DC of Karoonda East Murray

### Organisations

SA Country Fire Service  
SA State Emergency Service  
Local Government Risk Services - Risk Management  
Local Government Association Mutual Liability Scheme  
Local Government Association Workers Compensation Scheme

### LGA Emergency Management Group

Council representatives from:

Campbelltown City Council  
City of Playford  
Adelaide City Council  
Town of Gawler  
City of Mitcham  
Alexandrina Council

### Consultant

John Salter of EPCB Risk Management Services

### **3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The National Systems Approach to Community Warnings centred on a revised fire danger index and awareness phrase which has required Councils to review and assess their management of fire danger days.

Six principles are suggested to form the basis for the management of these days.

They are:

1. Communication will be open, focused, relevant and transparent
2. Protection of employees and volunteers will be paramount
3. Local Government will strive to maintain agreed essential services
4. Human and cultural factors will be taken into account
5. Decisions will be made within a sound decision making process at the local level
6. There will be ongoing collaboration with the Country Fire Service

The only sector approach that can be consistently applied is a risk management one that takes account of uncertainty, the nature of that uncertainty, and how it can be addressed.

To achieve this, a six step implementation framework is proposed, consisting of:

1. Communication strategies for the community
2. Communication strategies for the organisation
3. Development of work place procedures for FDD's
4. Identification of essential services
5. Mapping of Critical Infrastructure
6. Expansion of the Safer Places concept

The integration of Council emergency management and business continuity planning is seen as being pivotal to arriving at a coordinated action plan that will advise and inform the community of the actions it should take and the services that will be provided by Council on Fire Danger Days.

### **4. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this document is to support Councils develop a framework of processes and plans for the management of fire danger days that will enable the provision of essential services on those days.

### **5. SCOPE**

This Guide deals with the management of fire danger days and the delivery of Council services on those days. It is about planning before an event occurs and recognises that during an event the management of the response to the event is the responsibility of the Control Agency, the Country Fire Service.

It also recognises that fire danger days are invariably linked to extreme heat events that will impact on planning strategies.

There is recognition that an integral part of the planning process is about managing staff and ensuring that they are safe in the environment within which they are working.

## 6. BACKGROUND

### 6.1 National Systems Approach

The Interim Report of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission recommended that new options for fire danger indices and fire danger ratings be explored. As a result of these recommendations a National Bushfire Taskforce was established to develop a National Systems Approach to Community Warnings.



Outcomes from this Taskforce were:

- a National Framework for Scaled Advice and Warnings to the Community, and
- the New National Phrase – **Prepare.Act.Survive.**

The systems approach incorporates four elements:

- Preparing the community
- Situational awareness
- Message construction and dissemination
- Appropriate action taken

This approach also recognises that no agency has the resources required to defend and protect every property during a major emergency event and that communities will need to be prepared to accept some level of responsibility and to work with agencies for their own safety.

It also introduced the concept of catastrophic fire danger days. These days occur when the fire danger index exceeds 100. House construction standards do not go beyond a Fire Danger Index of 100, which required the recognition that well prepared, constructed and actively defended homes may not be safe during a such a fire.

The introduction of this concept has seriously challenged the stay and defend policy hence communities need to develop strategies to deal with this issue.

The new bushfire ready message is:

#### **Prepare**

Preparing to leave early is the safest option for your survival.

#### **Act**

Fires can threaten suddenly and without warning. Be prepared to act without receiving any emergency warning.

#### **Survive**

Your survival and safety depends on the decisions you make. The safest place during a fire is away from a fire.

Coupled with this are the three levels of State alert messages:

**Advice** – a fire has started – no immediate danger

**Watch and Act** – heightened level of threat – start taking action

**Warning** – danger there will be an impact – act immediately

## 6.2 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission (2009)

The 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission investigated the causes and responses to the bushfires which swept through parts of Victoria in late January and February 2009.

The South Australian Government's Bushfire Task Force has examined the sixty seven recommendations from the Royal Commission and has identified Local Government as having an interest in a number of the recommendations. The following table is a summary of the recommendations that are related to Local Government.

2009 VBRC RECOMMENDATIONS APPLICABLE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SA			
Rec. No.	Victorian Issue	SA Response	Relevance to this Guide
1	Role of warnings, timely advice, local solutions & options known to communities	Affirms the Prepare.Act. Survive strategy	Yes
2	Community education and awareness	Importance recognised by CFS and LGA	Yes
3	Planning for individual communities, identification of vulnerable people	BMC's will be responsible for this planning	Yes
4	Community refuges	Development of the safer place concept is being undertaken by the CFS in consultation with Councils	Yes
30 & 31	Management of hazardous trees in proximity to power lines	Utility responsibility but Councils have an interest	Yes
37, 38 & 39	Mapping of high bushfire risk areas and development in bushfire prone areas	Mapping and appropriate development controls are being considered by SA Government	No
46	Retreat and resettlement	Under review by the State Government - cost implications	No
53	Bushfire risk assessment of properties when sold	Under review by the State Government	No
62	Bushfire risk assessment and management of road reserves	For consideration by BMC's	Yes
BMC = Bushfire Management Committee			

One of the key issues identified by Councils during the consultation process with the LGA for the preparation of this Guide was the need for accurate and timely communication both before and during an emergency event.

Notably this issue is identified by the Commissioners who state "...the fire agencies needed a change in mindset to recognise that the most effective way of protecting communities would not be through fire suppression (which would probably prove ineffective) but by giving much more prominence to timely and accurate warnings. The tragic outcome of the fires brought this need for change in priorities into sharp focus." (p.82).

## 7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROLE IN BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT

The South Australian Country Fire Service (CFS) is the *hazard leader* and *control agency* for bushfires but Councils also have a significant role in bushfire management as defined in the Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005, which is to:

- assess the extent of bushfire hazards within their Council areas
- provide advice and information to bushfire management committees, and
- provide advice to owners of property about bushfire prevention and management.

Additionally Councils are required to adopt adequate fire prevention measures on land they have the care control and management of and are required to inspect land belonging to private landowners who have a responsibility to take reasonable measures to:

- prevent or inhibit the outbreak of fire on land ; and
- prevent or inhibit the spread of fire through the land; and
- protect property on land from fire; and
- minimise the threat to human life from fire on the land.

Councils have a compliance role to ensure that private landowners meet these requirements, and also have a role to play under the Development Act, 1993

- in land use planning in accordance with the Minister’s Code – *Undertaking development in bushfire prone areas*, and

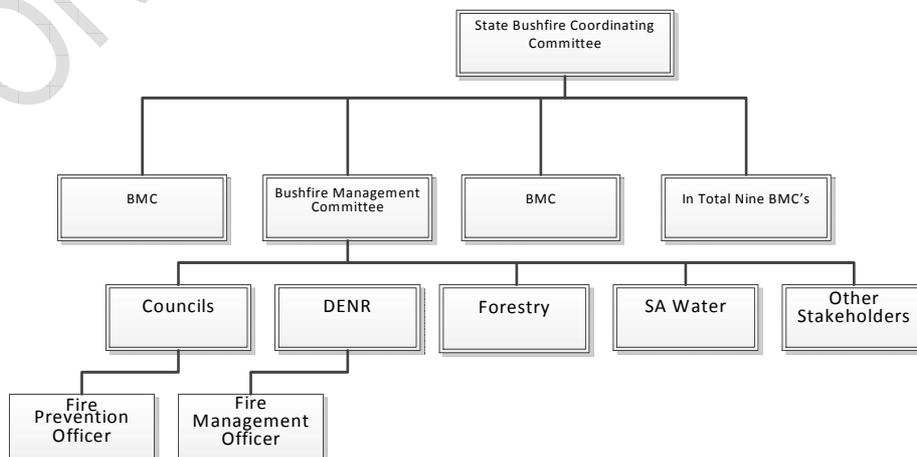
Under the Emergency Management Act, 2004 in

- making available appropriately negotiated resources at the response phase of an emergency, and
- partnering with other agencies such as the Department of Families and Communities in coordinating community recovery efforts after a bushfire disaster.

A Council is expressly given the function of taking “measures to protect its area from natural and other hazards and to mitigate the effects of such hazards” under section 7(d) of the Local Government Act 1999.

## 8. STATE BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The diagram below depicts the bushfire management framework for South Australia.



The Fire and Emergency Services Act (2005) requires the State Bushfire Coordinating Committee (SBCC) to divide the State into Bushfire Management Areas (BMA) for the purpose of achieving the objectives of the Act. Each BMA must have a Bushfire Management Committee (BMC) which must prepare and maintain a Bushfire Management Plan for the area.

The SACFS is responsible for the executive administration of each BMC.

## 9. IMPLICATIONS OF FIRE DANGER DAYS

A Fire Danger Day is a potential risk condition – not a realised risk condition (where the hazard has become an event i.e. a bushfire). The idea of invoking significant pre-emptive action across whole communities on the basis that “if there was to be a fire of a certain type in these conditions, is likely to have extreme (indeed catastrophic) impact” is likely to erode the confidence of the community in the veracity of both these particular advices and indeed, warnings in general (as they also call for protective behaviour to be undertaken).

When a FDD is declared, it can be reasonably assumed that sections of the community will not leave the area until such time as a bushfire eventuates and they accept that the threat is real. For example it is unrealistic to assume that a township will evacuate because of a catastrophic fire danger declaration, if that town is not deemed to be a bushfire safer precinct.

Councils in conjunction with the State Hazard Leader (CFS) should develop appropriate frameworks/plans/methodologies to manage this situation.

Councils also need to be clear about what services they can and should provide to the community on fire danger days. This will be informed by the integration of business continuity planning and emergency management planning.

Planning should be undertaken before any fire danger days are declared and should include:

- Communication strategies to the community
- Identification of essential Council services that can/cannot be safely provided.
- Exploration of issues of a commercial district closing (or not closing) because of a fire day declaration.
- Identification of places that can be deemed “safer precincts” and “last resort refuges”

The approach for a FDD is different to a day when there is an actual fire – though Councils should establish arrangements that can smoothly transition to address an actual fire.

A procedure to trigger an emergency event committee (an internal administrative committee) meeting to implement fire danger day arrangements should be agreed by each Council. An appropriate trigger to activate the Committee might be the FDD declaration which for a CFDD is likely to occur after 4.00pm on the day prior to the CFDD declaration. A lower fire danger day declaration may in some circumstance be used as the trigger to activate the committee.

## 10. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ISSUES

The following table summarises the issues that have been raised through a Local Government sector wide consultation process.

<b>COMMUNITY</b>		
	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Safer Places	What happens in commercial areas that aren't in a Bushfire Safer Precinct? (BSP)	Going early is simplistic and not practical – “the stay or go” policy is more directed to individual households – not the impact on communities of mass voluntary evacuation
Management of the community	Directed evacuation or personal choice	Control agency has responsibility – directed evacuation not State choice
Leadership	Community is looking to CFS and LG	CFS is the Hazard Leader and Control Agency for Bushfire Management SES is the Hazard Leader for Extreme Weather Councils have a direct role in bushfire management as specified in F&ES Act S105C
Demographic & topographical complexity of Council Areas	Varies considerably between Councils and within Councils	Poses different response to Catastrophic declarations Some Councils have metro and rural areas and large recreational parks or open pasture/crops as opposed to bushland Population density a consideration
Aged Care & community services	How to manage on fire danger days	Aged care centres, nursing homes, hospitals, volunteers, retirement villages, HAAC services
		Aged and Community Services have developed a document: Bush Fire Risk Management Plan: Basic Guidelines for Community Care Providers
		Cultural diversity considerations eg language difficulties
Land/building ownership	Retirement villages, child care etc	Owner operated or landlord lease relationship Lessees should be required to have bushfire management plans
<b>SERVICES</b>		
Essential services	Safety of employees Community expectations of services that will be provided	What services and at what fire danger level do they close? Need a matrix.
Recreation parks	Danger of opening	Close them
Garbage collection services	Fire ignition	From vehicle From garbage in vehicle
	Road access	Garbage trucks not being able to negotiate in an expedient manner and hindering community evacuation
Contractors	Continuing to work in areas of catastrophic fire danger	What limitations can Council place on them? Penalty provisions of contracts?

Outside work activities	Various LG functions	In rural areas or high fire risk areas all outside activities should stop
Permits	For lighting fires in the open	All permits should be revoked on catastrophic fire danger days
<b>OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH &amp; SAFETY</b>		
LG Staff OH&S	Working should be optional	Staff do not want to be present in high fire danger areas Health & safety of employees is a priority
Volunteers	A resolute group that should be managed with caution	Same OH&S policy applies as for employees
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>		
With community & stakeholders	Need a consistent message Expectations of community is that it will be accurate and timely	Expectations of the community is that safe places will be nominated and provided by some one?
With employees	Clear and concise	Need well publicized procedures that are authorised and implemented by senior managers
With employees working from home	The prepare, act & survive policy should still apply at the personal level.	From the Council perspective leave implications need to be addressed
Catastrophic vs. Extreme & Severe FDI	The emphasis has focused on catastrophic	Severe & extreme require similar planning

## 11. UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUIDE

From the consultation process that occurred with Councils the following six principles emerged as the basis for the Guide:

### 11.1 Communication.

Will be open, focused, transparent and relevant.

### 11.2 Employees and Volunteers

All reasonable consideration and protection will be given to:

- employees and volunteers
- the employees and volunteers family and
- the employees and volunteers property

### 11.3 Delivery of Essential Services

Local Government will strive to maintain the delivery of agreed essential services to meet the needs of the community.

This assumes a set of criteria has been developed with the community to filter the services needed under the circumstances of fire danger days .

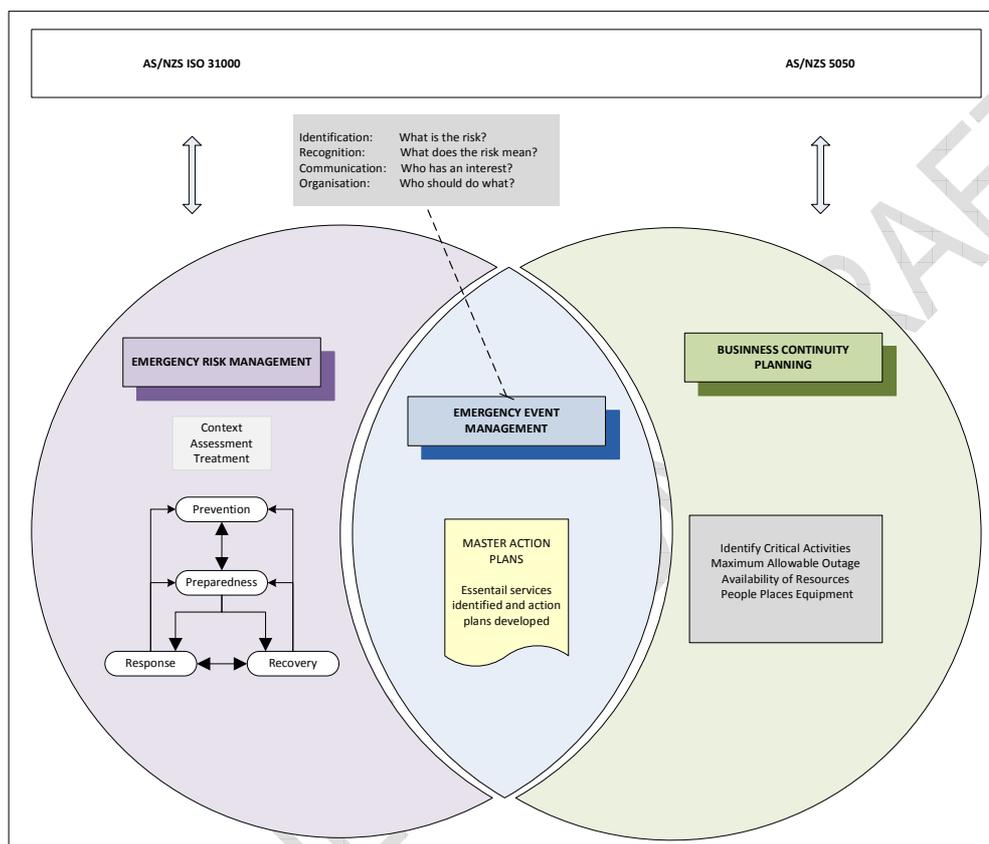
### 11.4 Human and Cultural Factors.

When making critical decisions human and cultural factors which reflect the community context e.g. ethnicity, disabled persons, the socially disadvantaged and the frail aged will be taken into account.

## 11.5 Sound decision making

That decisions will be undertaken within a sound decision making process which gives due weight to existing local conditions and changing circumstances by Council having an effective emergency event management framework and capability – one which integrates business continuity and emergency management.

A suggested model is depicted below;



The framework needs to adjust and adapt to fit the demands of the changing physical environment on the day. This requires a dynamic approach characterised by four primary decision points<sup>1</sup> around:

- what is the risk (detection and identification),
- what does the risk mean (recognition and interpretation),
- who has an interest (communication to multiple stakeholders), and
- who should do what (organisation of a collaborative system).

## 11.6 Collaboration with the Country Fire Service

A collaborative and consultative approach with the Hazard Leader (CFS) should be maintained. This will be effectively achieved by active participation at the Bushfire Management Committee level when such committees are established.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Professor Louise K. Comfort, Crisis Management in Hindsight: Cognition, Communication, Coordination, and Control in Public Administration Review, Volume 67 Issue s1 Page 189-197, December 2007  
DME 57714

## 12. IMPLEMENTING RISK MANAGEMENT

The following six steps are suggested to develop a process framework or decision pathway for Councils when refining their approach to managing Fire Danger Days.

### 12.1 Community Communication Strategy

Each Council should develop a community communication strategy for fire danger days.

Communication should occur before, as a function of planning, and during as a function of response.

For a communication strategy to be effective, both those at risk and those responsible for managing the risk must work in concert to a previously communicated and agreed action plan.

Whilst Councils are not the lead agency in planning or response they should ensure that the messages they communicate to their community re-enforces those of the hazard leader (CFS) and Control Agency (CFS) in bushfire management.

An effective communication strategy should provide the key outcomes of awareness and preparedness and should use multiple channels or means to reach the people at risk such as Council's website, brochures, events, mobile phones, radio etc.

Councils should particularly work with relevant agencies and organisations which have an interest in or a responsibility related to vulnerable people.

The focus of the communication strategy on a fire danger days should be to advise the community of:

- which services will continue to be provided
- which services will not be provided, and
- where people can access information on the risk of fires, such as the CFS incident webpage, ABC Radio etc.

### 12.2 Organisational Communication Strategy

This strategy will reflect the community approach but have an employee and organisational focus.

In considering the appropriate response to a FDD forecast or a bushfire, and communicating appropriate and relevant directions to staff, a number of factors need to be considered:

- the nature of the threat — time, scope and proximity
- administration centre/depot preparedness and location
- current works activities
- the likely impact of relocating employees
- capacity to relocate employees prior to the day
- availability of suitable and safe alternative work places
- availability of transport and road access
- safety to travel
- defensibility of the Council building/depot and possible support from the CFS

The nature of an emergency event is an important factor in deciding to relocate or remain on site, based on time (the bushfire may be immediate or impending) as well as scope (the fire may be site specific, local or widespread).

The location of the Council administration building/depot (rural or metropolitan) is also a factor for consideration, as well as knowing whether the building is in a bushfire safer place. Councils should in consultation with the LGA Mutual Liability Scheme develop a risk management procedure for fire danger days and specifically for severe, extreme and

catastrophic days the focus of which should be staff safety and the effective communication of Council policy and procedures during these threat conditions.

### 12.3 Work Place Procedures

- Daily monitoring of CFS announcements on regional fire danger ratings to establish the next day rating applicable to the council area
- Where a Severe, Extreme or Catastrophic rating has been declared for the Council area, or part thereof, convene an emergency event management meeting and schedule a next day start of work briefing of staff to identify and assess the risk and impact that a fire might have on the Council operations and in particular its workforce.
- Ensure mobile phones and radio communication back up for employees working in fire danger areas are operational.
- Enact the six step framework as it applies to employees and operation and maintenance of essential services.
- Monitor CFS incident reports throughout the day and assess the impact that an outbreak of fire may have on the Council area.
- Incident reports are available at:  
[http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/news\\_media/current\\_incidents.jsp](http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/news_media/current_incidents.jsp) and updated at five minutes intervals

The FDI will inform the actions that your Council may need to take in preparing for fire danger days. A responsible person in the Council should be assigned to regularly monitor weather reports at least daily for advance preparations, and more frequently during periods of high bushfire danger.

### 12.4 Identification of Essential Services

The demographic, topographic and vegetative complexity and variation across Councils and within Councils precludes an “across the board” policy for the identification and provision (or not) of essential services on fire danger days. Advance planning by Councils will be critical to protecting employees' health, limiting negative economic impacts and ensuring the continued delivery of essential services to the community.

Councils will need to review their operations on fire danger days in this context to determine which services they should maintain.

Emergency management planning should have identified high fire risk areas within the Council area and associated vulnerabilities and developed strategies to treat those risks.

Council's Business Continuity Plan should form the basis of what key services should be considered to be maintained on FDD's to ensure community viability.

In determining the services to be retained the following three issues need to be addressed:

- the likely risk of harm to a member of the public by failure to provide a service
- the likely risk of liability if a service is not provided, and
- the obligations and rights to direct employees on FDD's

Identified safer settlements and bushfire safer precincts, (see 12.6) will assist in Councils assessment of what may be alternative places for Council staff to be located or from which specific essential services can be provided or maintained. Consideration could also be given to support all non essential work activities in these areas.

The services that are provided on fire danger days may be dependent on the fire danger rating (legislative restrictions on the use of certain equipment) and the availability of staff who may be absent and have chosen to implement their personnel bushfire plans should they live

in high fire danger areas. These resource implications will need to be integrated into a matrix indicating the fire danger rating against the services that will be provided to the community.

### **12.5 Map Critical Infrastructure**

In the spatial context for each community the geography or layout of “critical infrastructure” is different. The network of critical infrastructure required to support Council services should be overlaid on a map of the local community (this does not require sophisticated technology – a clear plastic sheet and marking pen will suffice) .

This vulnerability overlay should inform consideration of what should and can become the area which needs to be protected to ensure Council service continuity.

Mapping critical infrastructure in this manner will also inform Council of the areas that staff may need to service and guide development of appropriate strategies to manage risks specific to these identified areas. An example would be the identification and assessment of fire risk along a particular key access road.

### **12.6 "Safer Places" and "Last Resort Refuges"**

Councils should continue to assist with the identification of bushfire safer precincts and last resort refuges with the Hazard Leader (CFS). The CFS is developing an assessment tool that will be used to delineate these safer places.

Safer places will have lower bushfire fuel levels in proximity to them and be sufficiently distant from continuous bushland or forest to afford some protection from radiant heat. Safe access and egress to these places will also be an important parameter for their determination.

“Buffering” of these safer places may be a function of several factors - distance from the hazard; configuration against hazard impact; arrangements for active defence. “Buffering” is about what is practical and therefore consideration of “what is possible under the circumstances” within your community context is central.

This provides a basis to go to the hazard leader to discuss protection arrangements, seek advice, feedback and validation. Ideally to reach an agreed position of endorsement and support assured by an “active defence plan”.

## **13. FIRE DANGER DAY IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK.**

The practice of Risk Management has been developing over time. It is now generally accepted that the adoption of consistent processes within a comprehensive Risk Management framework helps to ensure that risk is identified and managed effectively, efficiently and coherently across an organisation. The risk management process is intended to become part of, and not separate from, normal business practices. In particular, Risk Management should be embedded into the policy development, business and strategic planning, change management & business continuity requirements of an organisation.

Within the Local Government sector of South Australia, Councils have for some time been managing risk within an existing and coordinated framework. This existing framework does not intend to prescribe a management system to Council, but rather to assist Councils in the integration of risk management methodologies into its overall management system.

It therefore follows that any response to Fire Danger Days should be managed through the adaptation of components of the existing framework to the specific needs of Council. Councils are well placed to understand their local context and the implications for not only themselves but their community in time of Fire Danger Days. It is within this context that Council can examine the implications of service delivery and community leadership which are intrinsically linked to the local government profile in South Australia. It is important to note that planning for Fire Danger Days within the Council context is not about planning for the emergency response phase, but planning internally and with the community as to what

impacts the Fire Danger Days and the various ratings will have on Councils ability to provide its normal service levels.

Given that the impact of Fire Danger Days may be a disruption to services levels it is appropriate that Council review their process against the recently released Australia Standard for managing disruption related risk.

The relationship between the principles for managing risk, the framework in which it occurs and the risk management process described in AS/NZS 5050 Business Continuity - Managing Disruption related risk is shown in Figure 1.

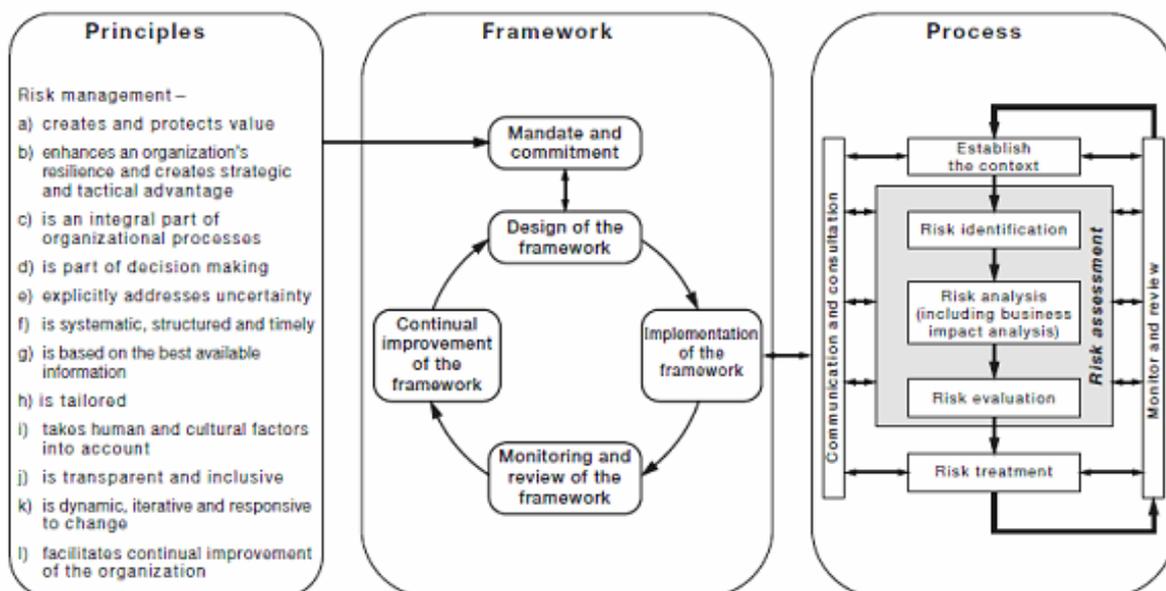


Figure 1 (in AS/NZS 5050)

The process of assessing and treating disruption-related risk can in itself contribute to or improve the adaptive capacity of Council (i.e. resilience). This can occur through:

- Identifying and increasing awareness of the potential for service disruption
- developing capacities to enable operating in a non-standard mode
- to maintain a strong focus on critical activities of Council
- to ensure interoperability between different levels of planning undertaken by Council, e.g. extreme heat policy, emergency management arrangement & business continuity

If Councils existing management practices and processes include components of risk management or if Council has already adopted a formal risk management process for particular types of risk or situations, then these should be critically reviewed and assessed to be used to develop appropriate response mechanisms to Fire Danger Days occurring within their Local Government Area.

With the release of the International Standard AS NZS ISO 31000:2009 *Risk Management* , & AS NZS ISO 5050:2010 *Business Continuity - Managing Disruption related risk* there is now additional guidance for Councils in developing an integrated approach to managing risk. These standards encourages Councils to adopt a systematic approach to the identification and management of risk and identifies a number of sequential steps.

#### Phase One

- Confirm existing risk management processes are sufficiently embedded to facilitate development of a response to Fire Danger Days.
- Confirm the Context & mandate / commitment requirements of Council.
- Identify and confirm with stakeholders business functions & activities of Council that may be impacted at each level of the fire danger warnings.

#### Phase Two

- Undertake a detailed analysis of each function and their associated processes and interdependencies to identify the disruption impacts.
- Identify existing controls. This will involve undertaking a review of the current arrangements including preparedness, existing strategies, plans, processes, resources and capabilities.

#### Phase Three

Develop as required :

- Work-arounds including rescheduling or alternative processes.
- Redundant capacity.
- Outsourcing options.
- Supporting plans and arrangements.

Additional activities that may be undertaken in concert with each phase include.

Phase One	Phase Two	Phase Three
FDD Context Statement	Risks (Community & Council)	FDD Notification – Declaration Process
Process Limitations	Risk Analysis & Evaluation	Roles and Responsibilities EMT
Integration with existing Emergency Management Planning	Overview of Business Function Criticality	Notification
Management Framework	Communication with Stakeholders	Assessment
Stakeholder Identification		Declaration
Risk Evaluation Criteria		Control Centre
Communication Strategy		Media Protocols
Community & Environmental Description		
Overview of Council area		

## 14. CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS

Contractual obligations that Councils have with service providers should be reviewed to accommodate any need for rescheduling of provision of services in areas that a catastrophic fire danger rating applies. Consideration might also be given to the merits of rescheduling relevant services on an extreme fire rating day. The importance of rescheduling services on extreme fire danger rating days to some extent will depend on local circumstances and the general fire risk of localities

## **15. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SAFETY & WELFARE CONSIDERATIONS**

LG employers will have OHSW implications and obligations as employers as well as those of building owners and occupiers, which will affect not only their employees but also others such as volunteers and contractors engaged on their sites and/or activities. And of course, there are the users of their services and facilities including the general public in and around their facilities whose health and safety will need to be considered.

There are industrial relations matters that must be addressed as identified in relation to alternative working arrangements, general leave entitlements, and special emergency leave, and release of employees to implement their (personal) bushfire action plan. All of these may have OHSW implications for the employer that must be considered in turn.

Employers remain duty bound to monitor and manage the OHSW risks that may confront their employees when acting in their role as employee, either in their normal roles or in other roles they may be deployed to at discretion or direction of their employer. This requires the establishment of systems to as much as reasonably practicable ensure staff (plus volunteers, contractors, etc) are free from harm in their work roles and work environment. This covers Council buildings, equipment and activities.

LG employers may need to consider the need for a “working in fire danger conditions” OHSW policy or procedure (or similar), however this need should be addressed in conjunction with CFS as that organization should already have such considerations within their OHSW documentation. It would not be recommended for LG employers to seek to apply the current LGAWCS “Inclement Weather” policy/procedure (as adapted at each Council) as this was not designed for this use. (This document is currently under review with a new version due to issue within the next two months, subject to completion of necessary consultation processes.)

## **16. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

### **16.1 Alternative Working Arrangements**

Councils may encourage or, if necessary, direct employees to use alternative working arrangements, including working from home or at another premise or to work alternative hours. Such arrangements can be put in place either to enable business continuity or to assist the employee in dealing with a particular situation relating to an event or the heightened risk of an imminent event (e.g. where employees are asked to leave a locality that is designated as being of ‘catastrophic’ fire risk).

Employees may also be directed to perform the functions of another role or additional or different functions to those of their substantive role, including at another location, at different times, with varied reporting arrangements etc.

The Chief Executive remains responsible for the health, safety and welfare of an employee who is issued with a managerial direction to work for the benefit of another (private or public sector) organisation. This also includes obligations associated with the *Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1986*.

## **16.2 General Leave Entitlements**

This section should be read in conjunction with the LG Employees Award, SA Municipal Officers Award and any Enterprise Bargain Agreement that Council has with its employees.

Employees may need to access paid leave as a result of an emergency or impending emergency.

Types of paid leave that are applicable and available in such circumstances include:

- use of flexitime credits
- sick leave
- carer's leave (which is an allowance against sick leave credit), or
- special leave with pay or without pay.

Councils may (if not already) establish a policy, delegated to the Chief Executive to grant special leave (with or without pay) for the purpose of responding to a fire danger situation or to recover following an event. Any request would be considered on a case-by-case basis, and granted at the discretion of the Chief Executive.

## **16.3 Special Emergency Leave**

Councils might also establish a policy for provision of special emergency leave for employees to access in exceptional circumstances which might be approved by the Chief Executive. It is strongly recommended that any special emergency leave be reserved for application only in exceptional circumstances associated with an emergency which is recognised by the emergency event management committee.

Special emergency leave would be a discretionary allowance available in addition to an employee's annual or cumulative entitlement and would only be available once sick, carer's and/or special leave entitlements have been exhausted.

Special emergency leave should be capped per employee regardless of the purpose for which it is required. The grant of such leave should not accrue beyond the period of a recognised emergency.

The number of days of special emergency leave granted should be based on an assessment of an employee's personal circumstances and the impact and duration of the recognised emergency. Assessments should be made on an individual basis.

## **16.4 Release of Employees to Implement Their Bushfire Action Plan**

On fire danger days of "extreme" or "catastrophic" employees may be granted leave to attend to personal responsibilities associated with preparing for a bushfire emergency.

It is important to note, however, that employees are not encouraged to attempt to defend their property in a locality that has been declared to be within a 'catastrophic' fire danger rating area.

## 17. DEFINITIONS

Business Continuity Management	Business Continuity Management provides the availability of processes and resources in order to ensure the continued achievement of critical objectives.
Control agency	The agency that shall exercise control over the emergency response for specific emergency incidents as specified in the State Emergency Management Plan.
Emergency Event Management	The process by which an organization deals with a major unpredictable event that threatens to harm the organization, its stakeholders, or the general public.
Emergency	<p>The commonly accepted definition of an emergency (in an emergency management context) is: <i>events, actual or imminent, which endanger or threaten to endanger life, property or the environment, and which requires a significant and coordinated response.</i></p> <p>The State Emergency Management Act 2004 defines an emergency as: an event (whether occurring in the State, outside the State or in and outside the State) that causes, or threatens to cause—</p> <p>(a) the death of, or injury or other damage to the health of, any person; or</p> <p>(b) the destruction of, or damage to, any property; or</p> <p>(c) a disruption to essential services or to services usually enjoyed by the community; or</p> <p>(d) harm to the environment, or to flora or fauna;</p> <p><i>The threat may be imminent, for example: declaration of a “catastrophic” fire danger rating day, extreme heat advice, flood warning, storm advice.</i></p>
Emergency Risk Management	A systematic process that produces a range of measures that contribute to the well being of communities and the environment.
Essential services	In the broadest context, <i>the Essential Services Act 1981</i> , defines essential service as a service (whether provided by a public or private undertaking) without which the safety, health or welfare of the community or a section of the community would be endangered or seriously prejudiced.
Fire danger index	The Fire Danger Index is a combination of temperature, relative humidity, wind speed, vegetation and drought factors. Based on the temperature (°C), <i>T</i> , wind speed (km h <sup>-1</sup> ), <i>v</i> , relative humidity (%), <i>RH</i> , and a component representing fuel availability called the Drought Factor, <i>DF</i> .
Fire danger rating	The Fire Danger Rating is issued by the Bureau of Meteorology after 4pm the day before and is available at <a href="http://www.bom.gov.au">www.bom.gov.au</a> .
Hazard	A source of potential harm or a situation with a potential to cause loss
Hazard leader	A Hazard Leader is the agency which, because of its legislative responsibility or specialised knowledge, expertise and resources undertakes a leadership role for planning emergency management activities pertaining to the prevention of, preparedness for, response to and recovery from a specific hazard. The role is to lead a multi-agency approach to planning for the identified hazard. Each Hazard Leader is required to provide an oversight role to the total planning of all agencies relative to their particular hazard. The Hazard Leader for Bushfire is the SACFS

<p>SAFEST</p>  <p>LEAST SAFE</p>	<p><b>SAFER SETTLEMENT</b></p>	<p>Adelaide Metropolitan area and urban precincts of rural cities.</p>	<p>Suitable for use during forecast bad fire weather or during bushfire.</p>
	<p><b>BUSHFIRE SAFER PRECINCT</b></p>	<p>Outer suburbs and rural settlements.</p>	<p>Suitable for use during forecast bad fire weather or during bushfire. May be subject to spark and ember attack and smoke.</p>
	<p><b>LAST RESORT REFUGES</b></p>	<p>Ovals, buildings in rural areas.</p>	<p>Not suitable for extended use and may provide only limited protection during bushfire.</p>
<p>Safer settlement</p>	<p>A Safer Settlement is a place of relative safety and may be considered as a place for people to stay in, or relocate to if their plan is to leave their home on a bad fire day. CFS recommends that if you intend to relocate to a Safer Settlement you should do so early in the day. Last minute decisions to relocate in the face of fire are highly dangerous. A Safer Settlement is relatively safe from bushfire because;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It is an area of low bushfire fuel levels.</li> <li>▪ It is sufficiently distant from continuous bush land or forest to eliminate the risk of spark and ember attack in all but the most intense bushfire activity.</li> <li>▪ Bushfires are unlikely to travel into the area due to substantial buffers of; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Established gardens and lawns. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Road networks and other zero fuel areas.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Access emergency, health and other community services is available.</li> </ul>		
<p>Bushfire safer precinct</p>	<p>A Bushfire Safer Precinct is considered to be a place of first resort for people who have decided that they will leave early on a bad fire day. A Bushfire Safer Precinct is a place of relative safety and may be considered as a place for people to stay in, or relocate to if their plan is to leave their home on a bad fire day. A Bushfire Safer Precinct is relatively safe from bushfire because;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is located in an area of generally low levels of bushfire fuel.</li> <li>• It is sufficiently distant from continuous bush land or forest to reduce the risk of spark and ember attack.</li> <li>• Bushfire travel will be interrupted by; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Established gardens and lawns.</li> <li>▪ Road networks and other zero fuel areas.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There is likely to be access to emergency, health and other community services.</li> </ul>		
<p>Last Resort Refuges</p>	<p>A Last Resort Refuge is a space or building which could be used as a place of last resort for individuals to access and remain in during the passage of fire through their neighbourhood. A Last Resort Refuge is intended to provide a place of relative safety during a bushfire, but does not guarantee the survival of those who assemble there, and should only be accessed when a personal Bushfire Survival Plan cannot be implemented or has failed.</p>		
<p>Risk</p>	<p>In the emergency management context, risk is the likelihood of harmful consequences occurring.</p>		

## 18. REFERENCES/RESOURCES

*Fair Work Act 1994*

*Local Government Act 1999*

*Emergency Management Act 2004*

*Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005*

*OHS&W Act 1986 and OHS&W Regulations 1995*

SA CFS Website at <http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/home.jsp>

and in particular for organisations:

[http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/community\\_information/organisations.jsp](http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/community_information/organisations.jsp)

SA SES website at

[http://www.ses.sa.gov.au/site/community\\_safety/heatwave\\_information.jsp](http://www.ses.sa.gov.au/site/community_safety/heatwave_information.jsp)

AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 Risk management – Principles and guidelines

AS/NZS 5050:2010 Business continuity—Managing disruption-related risk

HB 436:2004 Risk Management Guidelines Companion to AS/NZS 436:2004

National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines Exposure Draft O.C August 2009

Victorian Bushfire (Feb 2009) Royal Commission at

<http://www.vic.gov.au/2009-victorian-bushfires-royal-commission>

Victorian Government Department of Health, Aged care services, Residential aged care services bushfire ready resource

[http://www.health.vic.gov.au/bushfire/health\\_comm/aged\\_care.htm](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/bushfire/health_comm/aged_care.htm)

Workforce Guidelines for Large Scale Emergencies and Disasters, Government of South Australia 2010

Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council, A national systems approach to community warnings September 2009. <http://www.afac.com.au>

19. APPENDIX A - FIRE DANGER INDEX	
Fire Danger Rating	Recommended Action and Potential Fire Behaviour and Impact
<b>CATASTROPHIC FDI 100+</b>	<p><b>ACTION: For your survival, leaving early is the best option.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires will be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving. Flames will be higher than roof tops. Thousands of embers will be blown around. Spot fires will move quickly and come from many directions, up to 20 km ahead of the fire.</li> <li>There is a very high likelihood that people in the path of the fire will die or be injured. Thousands of homes and businesses will be destroyed.</li> <li>House construction standards do not go beyond a Fire Danger Index of 100. Well prepared, constructed and actively defended homes may not be safe during a fire.</li> <li>Do not expect a fire truck.</li> </ul>
<b>EXTREME FDI 75 - 99</b>	<p><b>ACTION: Leaving early is the safest option for survival.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires will be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving. Flames will be higher than roof tops. Thousands of embers will be blown around. Spot fires will move quickly and come from many directions, up to 6 km ahead of the fire.</li> <li>There is a likelihood that people in the path of the fire will die or be injured. Hundreds of homes will be destroyed.</li> <li>Only well prepared, well constructed and actively defended houses are likely to offer safety during a fire.</li> <li>Do not expect a fire truck.</li> </ul>
<b>SEVERE FDI 50 - 74</b>	<p><b>ACTION: Leaving early is the safest option for survival. Only stay if you and your home are well prepared and you can actively defend it during a fire.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires will be uncontrollable and move quickly. Flames may be higher than roof tops. Expect embers to be blown around. Spot fires may occur up to 4 km ahead of the fire.</li> <li>There is a chance people may die or be injured. Some homes and businesses will be destroyed.</li> <li>Well prepared and actively defended houses can offer safety during a fire.</li> <li>Do not expect a fire truck.</li> </ul>
<b>VERY HIGH FDI 25 - 49</b>	<p><b>ACTION: Only stay if you and your home are well prepared and you can actively defend it.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires can be difficult to control. Flames may burn into the tree tops. Expect embers to be blown around. Spot fires may occur up to 2 km ahead of the fire.</li> <li>There is a low chance people may die or be injured. Some homes and businesses may be damaged or destroyed.</li> <li>Well prepared and actively defended houses can offer safety during a fire.</li> </ul>
<b>HIGH FDI 12 - 24</b>	<p><b>ACTION: Know where to get more information and monitor the situation for any changes.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires can be controlled. Expect embers to be blown ahead of the fire. Spot fires can occur close to the main fire.</li> <li>Loss of life is highly unlikely and damage to property will be limited.</li> <li>Well prepared and actively defended houses can offer safety during a fire.</li> </ul>
<b>LOW - MODERATE FDI 0 - 11</b>	<p><b>ACTION: Know where to get more information and monitor the situation for any changes.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fires can be easily controlled.</li> <li>Little to no risk to life or property.</li> </ul>

## 20. APPENDIX B - EXTREME WEATHER DECLARATION (heat event)

The State Emergency Service (SES) is the Hazard Leader for Extreme Weather under the State Emergency Management arrangements. A whole of government Extreme Heat Plan which ensures a coordinated approach to increasing community preparedness, awareness and response to extreme heat events has been prepared.

Key aspects of the Plan are available at:

[http://www.ses.sa.gov.au/site/community\\_safety/heatwave\\_information/extreme\\_heat\\_plan.jsp](http://www.ses.sa.gov.au/site/community_safety/heatwave_information/extreme_heat_plan.jsp)

The trigger for providing advice to the public about the risk of an extreme heat event commences with the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) temperature predictions.

The Extreme Heat Plan includes trigger points for various actions that are based on a formula using the average daily temperature (ADT). The average daily temperature is calculated by dividing the total of the maximum day and the minimum overnight temperature by two.

The messages are issued as follows:

1. Extreme Heat Advice issued at:  
ADT  $\geq$  25°C (i.e. average of 30°C and 20°C), for three or more consecutive days
2. Extreme Heat Watch issued at:  
ADT  $\geq$  28°C (average of 35°C and 21°C) for three or more consecutive days
3. Extreme Heat Warning issued at:  
ADT  $\geq$  32°C (average of 40°C and 24°C) for three or more consecutive day

A number of Acts envisage a possible role for Local Government in extreme heat planning: Local Government Act 1999, Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare Act 1986, Public and Environmental Health Act 1987 and the Emergency Management Act 2004 through the State Emergency Management Plan.

When considering their role in extreme heat planning Councils should manage their participation to an extent that is reasonable within their circumstances.

The primary role of Local Government should be to promote community awareness and education about the dangers of heat stress and the measures that can be adopted to mitigate the effect. This includes reinforcement of the health messages promoted by appropriate Government agencies such as the SASES and the Department of Health.

Councils should complement and support existing HACC and Red Cross programs but not be a provider of a duplicate service. Council operated services such as aged care and early childhood services should be resourced where appropriate to reduce the impacts of extreme heat.

Councils may choose to assist the public by making community facilities such as community centres, libraries, theatres, halls, swimming centres and sports stadiums available during extreme heat events. In doing so Councils should recognise that there maybe significant cost and risk issues involved.

Any decision should carefully consider the logistics associated with management of the facilities such as staffing, security, medical assistance, public liability, infrastructure and air-conditioning, maintenance, cleaning, catering, amenities and hygiene etc

Councils should refer to the LGA Extreme Heat Guide For Local Government at [www.lga.sa.gov.au](http://www.lga.sa.gov.au) for further information. Circular Number 5.5

## 21. APPENDIX C - INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

### 1 Extreme Heat Policy (for employees)

Councils have adopted their own Extreme Heat Policy which aims to prevent health safety and welfare problems arising from workers' exposure to high seasonal heat levels at work. This occurs predominantly in summer months and affects mostly outdoor workers.

### 2 Heat Level Measurement

A satisfactory practical compromise measure of seasonal hot conditions is provided by the (ordinary) dry-bulb thermometer temperature reading. Other environmental factors which contribute to the thermal discomfort and heat stress include radiant heat, humidity and air speed. Definite rules cannot be made based on dry bulb thermometer readings alone.

However the following may be taken as guidance for action in outdoor heat situations. Where extreme unusual conditions are encountered, such as working in a trench or dressed in plastic spray suit, the guidelines will need to be interpreted accordingly.

### 3 Protection Procedures

Measures to be taken include:

- Changing the rate of work (e.g. take longer to do the job)
- Provide lighter, alternative work;
- Use of shade cloths;
- Provision of constant supplies of cool drinking water;
- Alternative hours of work;
- Provision of hats and light clothing;
- Changing the work location.

### 4 Rest Breaks

Where the temperature exceeds 35° C, workers should be allowed to take regular paid work breaks to allow their bodies to recover some degree of thermal equilibrium. Rest breaks should be introduced and modified to suit local conditions and meet individual requirements.

*As the basis for negotiation of agreed procedures:*

When the dry bulb temperature reaches 35° C, paid rest break of 15 minutes in the hour should be allowed, taken in the last 15 minutes in the hour.

At 40° C workers should be on stand by on full pay and may retire to their rest room or common room. However, it should be noted the stand by periods can also impose a workload and must not be regarded as non-work.

Award or EBA entitled breaks shall constitute all or any part of the agreed breaks and are not in addition to them.

<b>22. APPENDIX D - WORK FORCE ISSUES</b>	
<p>Guidelines on the best way to manage workforce issues specific to emergency events on fire danger days are summarised below. Wherever practicable, the normal management practices and conditions of employment apply in relation to absences during a recognised emergency. Unless employees are on approved leave or absence they are required to continue to attend work.</p>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Variation</b>
<b>Caring responsibilities</b>	
<p>Carer's leave in the event of school or childcare centre closures due to Catastrophic Fire Danger Day declaration</p>	<p>An employee who is absent due to caring for their child(ren) because of the closure of a school or childcare centre may apply for personal carer's leave and/or special leave with pay entitlements.</p> <p>Emergency leave may be granted once carer and special leave entitlements are exhausted.</p> <p>When requested, an employee must provide evidence of or a statutory declaration in relation to the closure of the school or childcare centre.</p>
<b>Other duties</b>	
<p>Directing an employee to perform the functions of another role</p>	<p>Chief executives may direct an employee to perform the functions of another role or additional or different functions to those of their substantive role, including at another location, at different times, with varied reporting arrangements etc, but any such direction must be lawful and reasonable.</p>
<b>Alternate workplaces</b>	
<p>Direction to leave the workplace because of closure of workplace.</p>	<p>If a workplace is closed or the workforce reduced as a preventative measure or for other health and safety reasons, an employee may be directed to work from another location or remain absent from the workplace. Employees directed to remain absent from the workplace are required to remain available for work and remain contactable by management. If an employee remains available for work, a Council must continue to pay them their ordinary salary (including allowances and projected shift roster) while they remain subject to such directions.</p>
<p>Direction to undertake alternative working arrangements</p>	<p>Employees may be encouraged or directed to use alternative working arrangements where appropriate, such as working from home when appropriate or working alternative hours</p>
<b>Non attendance at the workplace</b>	
<p>Employee refusing to attend work</p>	<p>An employee who unreasonably refuses to attend work will be deemed to be absent without authority and advised that they may be liable to disciplinary action or are at risk of being deemed as having abandoned employment.</p>

Implementing personal bushfire plan on a declared “extreme” or ‘catastrophic” fire day	
Employee implementing personal bushfire plan	<p>Employees may request paid leave, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing a bushfire plan in the event the employee’s residence is in a location subject to a catastrophic fire rating or bushfire emergency</li> <li>• Assisting immediate family members to implement a bushfire plan in a location subject to a catastrophic fire rating or bushfire emergency</li> <li>• Dealing with consequences of a bushfire emergency including attending to personal illness, family illness or property damage.</li> </ul> <p>Standard types of paid leave that may be available include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sick leave</li> <li>• carer’s leave</li> </ul>
Employee implementing personal bushfire plan	<p>Employees may request leave without pay to implement a bushfire plan in the event that the employee’s residence is in a location subject to a catastrophic fire danger rating or bushfire emergency</p>

### 23. APPENDIX E - EXTREME HEAT

The person in charge of a work site/job shall, subject to the provisions of the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act and any relevant Enterprise Bargaining Agreements, be the person responsible for deciding if and when work is to cease owing to the potential for heat stress. Where work ceases for such reason, employees shall hold themselves available for duty until otherwise discharged by the responsible person.

This section does not derogate in any way from an employee’s obligation under Section 21(1) of the Act to “take reasonable care to protect the employee’s own health and safety at work”.

Issue	Variation
<b>Carer responsibilities</b>	
Carer’s leave	An employee who is absent due to caring for a member of their immediate family or household may apply for carer’s leave and/or special leave and/or sick leave with pay entitlements during an extreme heat event.
<b>Other duties</b>	
Directing an employee to perform the functions of another role	Chief executives may direct an employee to perform the functions of another role or additional or different functions to those of their substantive role, including at another location, at different times, with varied reporting arrangements etc, but any such direction must be lawful and reasonable.
<b>Alternate workplaces</b>	
Direction to leave the workplace because of closure of workplace.	If a workplace is closed or the workforce reduced as a preventative measure or for other health and safety reasons, an employee may be directed to work from another location or remain absent from the workplace. Employees directed to remain absent from the

	workplace are required to remain available for work and remain contactable by management. If an employee remains available for work, a Council must continue to pay them their ordinary salary (including allowances and projected shift roster) while they remain subject to such directions.
Direction to undertake alternative working arrangements	Employees may be encouraged or directed to use alternative working arrangements where appropriate, such as working from home when appropriate or working alternative hours
Non attendance at the workplace	
Employee refusing to attend work	An employee who unreasonably refuses to attend work will be deemed to be absent without authority and advised that they may be liable to disciplinary action or are at risk of being deemed as having abandoned employment.

<b>24. APPENDIX F - BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING</b>	
Employee contact details and arrangements	<p>Workforce business continuity plans should ensure that all employee contact details, including information on next-of-kin, are current and easily accessed by authorised employees.</p> <p>As employees authorised to access such records may be absent due to illness/hazard, 'back up' arrangements should be in place. The storage of employee information must be secure, have fail safe mechanisms in place and information must be used only in accordance with industrial relations policy of Council.</p>
Payment of salaries and wages	Continued remuneration of employees during an emergency event is essential. Arrangements should be in place to cover key payroll personnel who may be absent because of the impact of the emergency.
Employee responsibilities	Employees whose principal place of residence is in an area under threat from a hazard (e.g. an area at risk of bushfire) should be prepared for emergency situations by developing appropriate plans. Employees must ensure that all employee details, including next of kin, are current.
Establishing critical employee numbers	<p>In planning for emergency events Councils should determine which employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are required to ensure the maintenance of their business unit's critical services (or undertake critical services in other areas)</li> <li>• provide non-essential but desirable services</li> <li>• can provide services to critical areas within the Council (or the wider community).</li> </ul> <p>Where it is determined that the business unit does not have sufficient employees to maintain the provision of critical services alternative arrangements must be made, e.g. assignment of employees from other (non-critical) areas.</p>

<b>25. APPENDIX G - EXAMPLE ESSENTIAL SERVICES</b>		
The activities list below is indicative of some of the core services Councils provide and is intended as a guide to prompt consideration of issues likely to be encountered during fire danger days within and across Council localities.		
<b>Essential Services</b>	<b>Non Essential Services</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Aged care		Bushfire response planning required by the service provider. Relocation of clients issues
Child care		Bushfire response planning required by the service provider. Closure of services considerations
Sewerage (CWMS)		Contingency planning Protection of infrastructure Public health considerations if service disrupted
Water supply		Contingency planning – on site storage, Maintaining supply in emergency events Infrastructure protection
	Road works – Construction	Reschedule unless associated with emergency access requirements
	Maintenance	Reschedule. Consideration of ceasing all services related to use of machinery in fire risk locations.
Roads		For specific key access & egress routes Possible road closures and signage
	Parks & Gardens Vegetation management Road side verges	All machinery needs to comply with Fire and Emergency Services Regulations. Reschedule. Consideration of ceasing all services related to use of machinery in fire risk locations
	Waste management Landfill Station	Is operation necessary? Closure of services considerations
	Waste management Collection	Review contract obligations to facilitate services at rescheduled times. Consider fire risk and dangers in comparison to impact of uncollected waste. Note requirement to collect waste weekly in metropolitan area
	Community Transport	Bushfire response planning required by the service provider. What impact will withdrawal of service have on residents who have become dependent on it?
	General Inspection Environmental Health	Reschedule
	Libraries & Recreation Centres	Review service levels in light of Bushfire Safer Precincts. Closure of services considerations

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