

RISK MANAGEMENT

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

The FRNSW [Risk management policy](#) is published on the [Administration Policies page](#) of the Intranet.

The policy describes the accountabilities, structures and processes for managing risk within FRNSW.

Key points of the policy include:

- Each FRNSW Directorate is required to maintain a directorate risk register and to report all risks with a current risk rating of high or above to the Deputy Commissioner or Deputy Chief Executive.
- FRNSW Governance Branch will maintain a strategic risk register that records risks with a current risk rating of high or above.
- Risk will be a standing item on the Finance and Performance Committee and Executive Leadership Team agenda and adjustments to the strategic risk register will be made on the advice of these committees.

Guidelines to support the *Risk management policy* will be issued in the near future.

When managing risks at incidents firefighters should continue to be guided by the [Operational risk management](#) on page 55 and the [Dynamic risk assessment manual](#) (see [page 56](#)).

Contact Officer: Assistant Director Governance, (02) 9265 3957

File Reference: FRN12/395

Commissioner's Orders 2012/28

See also the [Occupational health and safety risk assessment policy](#) on page 137.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Community education

Fire and Rescue NSW's community education programs target at risk groups such as, but not limited to:

- culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- school children
- the elderly
- Aboriginal communities
- people who are drug- or alcohol-dependent

and are provided free of charge.

Firefighters are encouraged to participate in community education activities. Information on the range of risk treatment programs is available on the [Community Safety](#) site on the Intranet.

Note: Fire station staff are not authorised to deliver formal, practical training to the public. All requests for training, or other services for which Fire and Rescue NSW charges, must be referred to Commercial Safety Training Services, in accordance with the instruction on [Commercial Safety Training Services](#) on page 202.

Community education activities are coordinated by the Community Safety Advisors, who should be the first point of contact for requests for Fire and Rescue NSW involvement.

Contact Officer: Community Safety Advisors, (02) 9742 7400

File Reference: CHO/01629

In Orders 2004/3, with amendments

Commercial Safety Training Services

1 Introduction

Fire and Rescue NSW's Commercial Safety Training Services (ComSafe) unit provides a range of professional workplace safety and fire and emergency management training courses to organisations in NSW, interstate and overseas. ComSafe charges for these courses at a competitive rate and surpluses from ComSafe activities are channelled back into Fire and Rescue NSW training development and community risk management programs.

2 Training courses available

ComSafe's training courses are designed to assist organisations to meet their obligations under occupational health and safety legislation. Available training courses include:

- fire prevention
- first attack firefighting
- workplace evacuation
- hazardous material spillage control
- fire team training
- breathing apparatus
- confined spaces, and
- customised courses to meet clients' specific needs.

3 Requests for training

All requests for training from members of the public or external organisations must be referred to ComSafe. Station staff are not authorised to conduct formal, practical training of members of the public.

If ComSafe determines that the enquirer does not need formal training but is instead eligible for a community education program, the enquiry will be referred to the Community Safety Advisor for action.

4 Contact details

ComSafe's business hours are 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday to Thursday and 8:30 am to 4:00 pm Friday. Contact details are as follows:

ComSafe Training Services
Fire and Rescue NSW
Amarina Avenue
Locked Bag 13
GREENACRE NSW 2190

Ph: (02) 9742 7417
or Freecall 1800 SURVIVE (78 78 48)
Firenet: 7417
Fax: (02) 9742 7388
E-mail: comsafe@fire.nsw.gov.au

Contact Officer: Manager ComSafe, (02) 9318 4358

File Reference: CHO/06342

*In Orders 2004/3, as amended by
In Orders 2007/17, with amendments*

Fire safety talks

Station Commanders are authorised to conduct informative fire safety talks. Community Safety Advisors will liaise with stations to arrange a suitable date, time, station and platoon to attend. The theme of the fire safety lecture parallels that already in use for school children and groups that visit fire stations.

An instruction guide and information leaflet has been distributed to all fire stations. The talk should take approximately 15-30 minutes to deliver and it is expected that even with discussion which may take place in association with the talk, total time of involvement should not exceed one hour.

As a support to the Brigade giving the instruction, unusual or difficult questions asked by persons in attendance may immediately be referred by telephone to the Community Safety Advisor, Duty Commander or Zone Commander.

Although the task will be well within the capabilities of Station Commanders it is understandable that there will be those members to whom this presentation will not come easy. Community Safety Advisors should be sensitive to the difficulties which may arise in this area. However, it is expected that with assistance from the Community Safety Advisor confidence and expertise will be gained, so that eventually all stations will be confident to carry out this duty.

Where possible, stations which are committed to the fire safety instruction will be taken off line for minor calls, but will respond to life and property threatening incidents. Communication Centre personnel are to use their discretion in respect of responding stations committed to public education.

Community Safety Advisors will be required to ensure that adjoining stations are not simultaneously committed to instruction sessions and that the number of stations involved at any given time does not adversely affect efficient operation of that or adjoining fire districts.

In Orders 1989/29, with amendments

Intervention and Fire Awareness Program

Fires set by children can have serious physical and economic consequences and are a serious problem facing Fire and Rescue NSW and the community. Research shows that early intervention is effective in preventing the behaviour from continuing into adulthood, at which point the behaviour generally becomes chronic.

All enquiries regarding juveniles and fire lighting are to be referred in the first instance to the Community Safety Advisor for Children and Youth Services on the telephone number below. Callers should be advised that this telephone number may be diverted and that they should leave contact details so their call can be returned.

For further information about the program see the [Community Safety](#) site on the Intranet.

Contact Officers: Community Safety Advisor, Children and Youth Services, (02) 9742 7400

File Reference: CHO/04809

In Orders 2002/13, with amendments

Youth Justice Conferences

1 Memorandum of Understanding

There is Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Fire and Rescue NSW and the Department of Juvenile Justice on Youth Justice Conferences.

Under the MOU the Department of Juvenile Justice will notify Fire and Rescue NSW of Youth Justice Conferences for fire-related offences. Fire and Rescue NSW will provide a representative to attend each such conference whenever possible.

A copy of the MOU is available on the Community Risk section of the [Intranet](#).

2 Attendance at Youth Justice Conferences

Attendance at Department of Juvenile Justice Youth Justice Conferences by Fire and Rescue NSW firefighters is voluntary.

Invitations to attend Youth Justice Conferences are sent to the Community Safety Advisor, Children and Youth Services, who liaises with Zone Commanders and Duty Commanders to coordinate attendances.

Participation in the Conferences is first offered to permanent firefighters who attended the incident. If no permanent firefighters who attended the incident can participate, the offer is extended to retained firefighters who attended the incident. If no permanent or retained firefighters who attended the incident can participate, permanent firefighters attached to the station that attended the incident are invited to participate. If they decline, retained firefighters attached to the station that attended the incident are invited to participate.

If the Conference is held at a location remote from where the incident occurred, firefighters attached to stations in the immediate area will be invited to participate in accordance with the above protocol.

Firefighters receiving requests direct from the Department of Juvenile Justice to attend a Youth Justice Conference should forward the request to the Community Safety Advisor, Children and Youth Services, for action.

3 Guidelines

A set of guidelines on Youth Justice Conferences has been produced to reflect the MOU and provide information to assist firefighters. They are available on the [Intranet](#).

Contact Officer: Community Safety Advisor, Children and Youth Services, (02) 9742 7400 or
0409 129 647

File Reference: CHO/06698 *In Orders 2006/13, with amendments*

Sale of and/or endorsement of fire safety products

Fire and Rescue NSW does not endorse any *particular brand* of smoke alarm or any other fire safety equipment.

Endorsement of smoke alarms is a generic endorsement - ie smoke alarms generally, and even then such detectors must be on a list supplied by Scientific Service Laboratories as satisfying their criteria.

Permanent or Volunteer Brigades' social clubs are not permitted to sell or install fire safety equipment to raise revenue for social or other activities. This activity may lead purchasers to infer Fire and Rescue NSW endorsement of particular products. As stated in above, Fire and Rescue NSW does not endorse products.

In Orders 1993/3, with amendments

Child finding stickers or decals

Fire and Rescue NSW does not endorse the concept of 'Child Finding' stickers or decals being attached to the external windows of children's bedrooms.

The concept is that a reflective sticker or decal, if attached to the external window of a child's bedroom, would give emergency personnel, in particular firefighters, a visual indication of the location of children in that dwelling prior to entry.

This raises the following concerns:

1. The sticker would provide immediate visual reference to the location of a child's bedroom to ill-intentioned persons, even if they had never been in that street or suburb.
2. There is no guarantee that a child would be in that bedroom at the time of an incident.
3. Firefighters would be influenced to depart from their training in search pattern procedures which may put additional lives at risk.

The concept is not new, nor are the concerns which are shared by Fire and Rescue NSW, child protection agencies and parents.

Fire and Rescue NSW does not endorse any brand or product.

Any member approached by a person, company or organisation requesting endorsement of a product or concept is to refer that person, company or organisation to the Manager Structural Fire Safety.

In Orders 1995/6, with amendments

Domestic smoke alarms policy

1 Introduction

Under Clause 146A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, and Division 7A of Part 9 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*, smoke alarms are required in all buildings in NSW where people sleep. The smoke alarms must meet the requirements of Australian Standard AS 3786, *Smoke alarms*. These provisions came into effect on 1 May 2006.

The legislation provides for a minimum level of protection. Fire and Rescue NSW supports this legislation and recommends that owners and occupants consider higher levels of protection than the minimum requirements.

2 Background

This policy is based on current knowledge about smoke alarm performance. This is the subject of ongoing research. The basis of much of this research is the US National Institute of Standards' research into the performance of home smoke alarms, available at <http://smokealarm.nist.gov/>. This policy may change following further research into the performance of smoke alarms in the Australian environment.

3 Scope and application

A smoke alarm is a device that contains both a means of detecting smoke and a device for sounding an alarm. A domestic smoke alarm is one manufactured principally for use in the home.

This policy applies to domestic smoke alarms installed in residential accommodation. Residential accommodation includes buildings defined by the *Building Code of Australia* as Class 1a or Class 1b buildings, sole occupancy units in Class 2, 3, 4 or 9a buildings, and temporary accommodation, such as tents, boats and caravans.

4 Types of alarms

There are two main types of domestic smoke alarms available in the market: photoelectric and ionisation. The alarms work in different ways to detect smoke. Both types are capable of meeting Australian Standard AS 3786.

Photoelectric alarms appear to provide a faster warning than ionisation alarms in most circumstances, and there is little appreciable difference in performance during flaming fires.

To maximise the opportunity for early warning in all fire scenarios, Fire and Rescue NSW recommends the installation of photoelectric alarms, hard wired and interconnected, in all residential accommodation. If only installing one alarm, it should be a photoelectric alarm.

In paths of travel between sleeping areas and exits to the open air or to common corridors, photoelectric alarms should be installed.

5 Minimum requirements

From 1 May 2006 all residential accommodation in NSW is required by law to have at least one working smoke alarm per floor.

All smoke alarms installed in residential accommodation in NSW must meet the requirements of Australian Standard AS 3786.

6 Location of smoke alarms

If only one smoke alarm per floor is installed, Fire and Rescue NSW recommends that this be a photoelectric smoke alarm installed between the sleeping area and the living area.

In addition to the minimum legislative requirement of at least one smoke alarm per floor, Fire and Rescue NSW recommends the installation of smoke alarms in the following locations:

Building type	Smoke alarm locations
Single dwellings (Class 1a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outside all sleeping areas • inside all bedrooms if the occupant/s sleep with the door closed • in all paths of travel between sleeping areas and exits to the open air
Buildings containing two or more separate dwellings (Class 2 and Class 4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outside all sleeping areas • inside all bedrooms if the occupant/s sleep with the door closed • in all paths of travel between sleeping areas and exits to common corridors
Multi-level dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (in addition to the above) in the path of travel between each level

Where there is a passageway leading to the bedrooms, install the alarm at the end closer to the living area and before the first bedroom door.

Where the bedroom doors are closed, additional smoke alarms should be installed in the bedrooms, interconnected where possible to the alarms in the passageway and other parts of the dwelling.

If there is no passageway, and the bedrooms open directly from the living area, install the alarm outside each bedroom 900 mm from the doorway. For additional protection, also install alarms in each bedroom.

If there are bedrooms at both ends of the house, where possible, install interconnected alarms in the passageways to each of these areas.

Where there are two or more storeys, smoke alarms must be installed on each level and interconnected if possible.

Near kitchens and bathrooms, install photoelectric alarms. Research indicates that photoelectric alarms are less likely to produce false alarms than ionisation alarms in these areas.

Consider the effects of **air conditioners, heaters, fans and other temperature control devices**. Do not install smoke alarms where these devices will compromise their effectiveness.

Note: Features which facilitate smoke spread, such as ducted air conditioning systems, may require the installation of additional, interconnected smoke alarms.

7 Power supply

Fire and Rescue NSW recommends that smoke alarms installed in permanent residential accommodation should be hard wired to the mains power supply. Hard wired smoke alarms must be installed by a licensed electrician in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Smoke alarms that rely solely on power supplied by a removable 9 volt battery provide protection only if the battery is properly installed and regularly replaced. Research indicates that failure to properly install or replace a smoke alarm battery is a frequent cause of smoke alarm failure. Fire and Rescue NSW therefore recommends installing hard wired smoke alarms wherever possible.

8 Interconnection

Fire and Rescue NSW recommends the interconnection of hard wired smoke alarms. Interconnection ensures that, regardless of where a fire starts, all smoke alarms in the dwelling will sound.

If the occupants sleep with the doors closed, interconnected smoke alarms are strongly recommended. Children's bedrooms should have a smoke alarm interconnected to the parent's bedroom alarm, as children sleep more soundly than adults.

9 Domestic sprinklers

The presence of a domestic sprinkler system in a dwelling does not reduce the need for installation of smoke alarms in accordance with this policy. Fire and Rescue NSW strongly recommends the installation of domestic sprinklers as well as smoke alarms.

10 Temporary accommodation

In temporary accommodation, such as tents, boats and caravans, smoke alarms should be installed in all sleeping areas. Where 240 volt power is unavailable or impractical, use battery powered smoke alarms.

11 Smoke alarms for the deaf and hearing impaired

Smoke alarms with sensory stimulation devices other than standard audible devices should be installed in accommodation occupied by the deaf or hearing impaired.

12 Escape plans

Most adults with normal hearing will be woken by a smoke alarm, but children under 16, elderly people and people with hearing impairments may not. All families should develop and practice a home fire escape plan. Adults will need to wake children and help them to escape the fire.

13 Maintenance

Smoke alarms should be maintained in accordance with Australian Standard AS 1851.

14 Life expectancy

Smoke alarms should be replaced when the service life date is reached (usually 10 years) or when the alarm ceases to operate correctly. The service life date should be clearly indicated on the base of each smoke alarm.

15 Disposal

Ionisation smoke alarms should be disposed of in accordance with the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency's guidelines on [Radioactivity in domestic smoke alarms](#). In most cases ionisation smoke alarms in quantities of less than ten may be disposed of in domestic waste. Larger quantities must be treated as radioactive waste and disposed of in accordance with local regulations.

Photoelectric alarms in any quantity may be disposed of in domestic waste.

16 Further information

For further, more detailed, information on domestic smoke alarms, see the [smoke alarm information](#) on Fire and Rescue NSW's Internet site.

Contact Officer: Assistant Director Community Risk, (02) 9742 7127

File Reference: CHO/00713 and DRM/POL/000077 In Orders 2007/14, with amendments

Answering enquiries about smoke alarm legislation

1 Introduction

On 1 May 2006 became mandatory under the [Building Legislation Amendment \(Smoke Alarms\) Act 2005](#) for all NSW residents to have at least one working smoke alarm installed in their homes.

The exact details of the types of smoke alarms to be installed, where they should be installed and how they should be maintained are covered in the [Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment \(Smoke Alarms\) Regulation 2006](#).

2 Information about the smoke alarm legislation

We have put information about the legislation and the installation of appropriate smoke alarms on our [Internet site](#). All staff are encouraged to make themselves familiar with this information as we get a lot of enquiries about it.

3 What to do if you receive an enquiry

If you receive an enquiry from the public about the smoke alarms legislation, ask whether the enquirer has access to the Internet.

If they have access to the Internet refer them to our Internet site at www.fire.nsw.gov.au where there is a link to the information on Smoke Alarms on the home page.

If they do not have access to the Internet, print the following pages from our Internet site and send them to the enquirer with a signed and dated copy of our standard [smoke alarms letter](#) which is available on Station Portal. The body of the letter is not to be altered.

<http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/page.php?id=80&homepage>

<http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/page.php?id=441>

<http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/page.php?id=589>

<http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/page.php?id=442>

<http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/page.php?id=443>

<http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/page.php?id=444>

<http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/page.php?id=439>

<http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/page.php?id=445>

4 Further information

If the enquirer needs more information, transfer them to the Community Safety Directorate on extension 7400 or ask them to ring our smoke alarm hotline on 1800 151 614.

Contact Officer: Assistant Director Community and Corporate Risk Management, (02) 9742 7127
File Reference: DRM/POL/000077 *In Orders 2006/6, with amendments*

Smoke Alarm and Battery Replacement (SABRE) Program

The [*Smoke Alarm and Battery Replacement \(SABRE\) Program Facilitator Guide for Firefighters*](#) is available on the Administration and other policies page of the Intranet.

The Facilitator Guide:

- has been updated to include electrical safety guidelines
- gives detailed information on planning a SABRE program in your station area
- gives instructions for firefighters participating in the SABRE program on installing battery operated residential smoke alarms and replacing their batteries.

Contact Officer: Director Community Risk, (02) 9742 7156
File Reference: NFB/09674 *Commissioner's Orders 2013/7, with amendments*

WATER SUPPLY

Hydrant inspections

1 Purpose

The purpose of hydrant inspections is to:

- ensure that hydrants work when needed
- notify water authorities of problems with hydrants, and
- familiarise crews with hydrants in their area.

2 Inspection schedules

Station Commanders should manage hydrant inspection schedules and aim to have all hydrants in their station area inspected once every 12 months. Inspections may be more frequent if necessary.

Duty Commanders should check the adequacy and frequency of hydrant inspections and records during station visits.

2.1 10/14 stations

At stations staffed by permanent firefighters working the 10/14 roster, the station area should be divided into four approximately equal areas and each platoon allocated the responsibility for hydrant inspections in one of these areas.

Each platoon should average one inspection every eight calendar days, inspecting approximately 12 hydrants on each occasion.

2.2 Other stations

At stations with retained or mixed staffing and stations working other than the 10/14 roster, the Station Commander/s should liaise with the Duty Commander to organise inspection schedules.

3 Inspection procedure

During hydrant inspections the following checks are to be made:

- The hydrant indicator plate is in reasonable condition and properly placed.
- The hydrant and cover plate are clear of dirt, grass and other debris.
- The hydrant appears to be in proper workable condition.

Note: All staff conducting hydrant inspections must follow Standard Operational Guideline 13.2, [Safe work on roads](#).

4 Fault reporting

Where action by the water authority is required, the relevant reporting procedure for the particular water authority covering your area should be followed.

After a reasonable time, crews should check the condition of hydrants reported faulty. If faults remain uncorrected, refer the issue to your Duty Commander.

If a major deficiency in the water supply is found report the details immediately through your chain of command to your Zone Commander.

5 Record keeping

Hydrant record cards should be compiled from the Hydrant Map Books (see [page 213](#)) and used to manage the inspection process.

Hydrant inspections should be recorded on [CARS](#) and in the Station Register.

Contact Officer: Community Safety Advisor, (02) 9949 1613

File Reference: CHO/03564

In Orders 2007/16

Reporting hydrant faults to Sydney Water

When faults are found with Sydney Water hydrants record the details on the [Hydrant fault reporting form \(Sydney Water\)](#) (available on Station Portal), and fax the form to Sydney Water's Contact Centre Team Leader on (02) 9600 8931.

The fault reporting form requires faults to be given a priority rating. The relevant priority ratings for Fire and Rescue NSW, 4, 3 and 2, reflect the system used by Sydney Water maintenance crews. Using the guide below, allocate a priority rating to each hydrant fault reported.

Priority	Description
4	Faulty hydrants servicing Class 3 buildings (boarding houses, backpackers, etc); Class 9 buildings (health care, aged care, hospitals educational facilities, etc) and other buildings with a high life risk. Also, faulty hydrants serving a required booster fitting.
3	Two or more faulty hydrants located close together compromising effective hydrant coverage. Also, faulty hydrants in cul-de-sacs or serving properties on the urban/bushland interface
2	A single faulty hydrant where the surrounding hydrants are available for firefighting

On receipt of the faxed form Sydney Water will allocate a job reference number to each fault and:

- forward the details to a maintenance crew for action, and
- fax the form back to the reporting station within 48 hours with the addition of the job reference number.

The reporting station should check the condition of hydrants reported faulty after a reasonable time. The progress of hydrant repairs can be checked by telephoning Sydney Water on 132 090 and referring to the appropriate Job Reference Number.

If the fault has not been corrected refer the issue to your Duty Commander.

Contact Officer: Community Safety Advisor, (02) 9949 1613

File Reference: CHO/03564

In Orders 2007/16, with amendments

Hydrant map books

1 Introduction

A hydrant map book has been issued to all Greater Sydney Metropolitan stations and relevant senior officers and specialist areas. The hydrant maps are also available on the [Intranet](#).

2 Scope

The hydrant map book provides a colour coded ready reference guide to the location of street hydrants and water mains as well as information relating to the diameter of water mains.

3 Purpose

The book is to be stowed on pumping appliances and other vehicles as identified, for use as an operational and tactical aid to an array of activities. This book may assist firefighting, hazardous materials operations, hazard reduction activities and similar situations by indicating the extent of reticulated water systems, together with the variance in the capacity of local reticulated water supplies.

There may be some minor variations encountered, however the hydrant map books are as accurate as possible given the available data, and will be updated as necessary.

Note: The information in the hydrant map book is provided strictly for use by Fire and Rescue NSW personnel only, and in undertaking Fire and Rescue NSW functions only. Hydrant map books must not be used for any other purpose.

4 Supply information

Replacement or additional hydrant map books are available through [ESCAT](#).

*Contact Officers: Assistant Director Operational Logistics, (02) 9742 7136, or Supply Officer,
(02) 9742 7443*

File Reference: CHO/07338 In Orders 2006/1, with amendments

Hydrant covers

Normally, heavy duty covers are used in the inner city areas for screw-down hydrants, but in suburban high class concrete roads heavy covers can also be placed over spring (ball) hydrants instead of the usual hinged lid boxes.

Consequently, in order that undue delays will not occur when it is necessary to get to work at fires with hydrants, members are not to assume that heavy boxes are only used for screw down fittings but that the type of road surface is the deciding factor.

In Orders 1967/27

Changes in design of hydrant boxes which enclose some in-ground hydrants have had the effect of reducing the size of the entry point for the hydrant bar, or in some instances the entry point is not provided.

As a result firefighters may experience some difficulty when attempting to open the hydrant boxes using the current issue hydrant bar.

While the problem is being addressed by Fire and Rescue NSW, in consultation with Sydney Water, station personnel are advised to make themselves aware of the location of any of the new style hydrant boxes in their area.

Should difficulty be experienced in opening any new style hydrant box, the Station Commander is to inform his/her Duty Commander who will then advise the Equipment Development Officer of the hydrant's location.

In Orders 1996/28, with amendments

Ball valve hydrants fitted to asbestos water mains

Fire and Rescue NSW's attention has been drawn to a design modification of a certain type of ball valve hydrant fitting for asbestos water mains which may cause some difficulty in making a standpipe connection.

The particular hydrant is likely to be encountered in areas outside the jurisdiction of Sydney Water and may be found to have protruding locking bolts which may cause obstruction to the standpipe swivel lugs.

Care should therefore be taken during hydrant inspection exercises of asbestos mains to ensure that standpipe connections can be properly made.

If defects of the nature described are evident the local water supply authority should be requested to have the fault rectified by replacing oversize bolts.

Pending this action being taken a standpipe connection can be effectively made if care is taken to position the standpipe swivel lug on the hydrant lug side of the protruding bolt prior to engaging the two lugs in a locked position.

In Orders 1973/30, with amendments

Pressure tests

It has been brought to notice that Station Commanders, particularly in country areas, are being approached by representatives from firms in their area, requesting Fire and Rescue NSW to carry out hydrant pressure tests on street mains.

Some officers have acceded to this type of request, and submitted details of the hydrant tests to the firms concerned, without in the first instance obtaining permission from a more senior officer.

This practice is to cease immediately and if any such request is referred, the person making the request is to be informed that it is not Fire and Rescue NSW's practice to supply this service.

In Orders 1980/37, with amendments

AREA RISK MANAGEMENT

Pre incident planning

1 Policy

Pre incident planning (PIP) is a tool firefighters can use to protect themselves and the community by gathering and compiling information about high risk occupancies that will assist them to reduce the impact of emergency incidents that may occur.

The PIP process is part of Zone resource planning. The process is used by station crews and zone managers to agree on strategies to mitigate the risks identified in their areas.

A minimum of four new PIPs a year must be completed by each platoon at a 10/14 station. Retained brigades must complete a minimum of four new PIPs a year.

2 PIP database

Pre incident planning is managed using the [PIP Database](#) which is available on the Intranet Home Page and Station Portal.

Pre incident plans stored in the PIP Database can be:

- printed out and stored on fire appliances for use at incidents
- accessed by Incident Management Team members from their laptops
- linked to FireCAD so that turnout printouts show if there is a PIP for the address.

3 Identifying hazards

Station Commanders are responsible for identifying the significant hazards in their area.

This should be considered in firstly in broad terms, rather than by individual risk, eg aged care facilities may be a hazard category within the station area, an individual nursing home is a risk with that hazard category.

Examples of hazard categories include:

- commercial buildings
- industrial complexes or buildings
- storage facilities
- transport infrastructure
- educational facilities
- health care facilities
- aged care facilities

4 Prioritising the hazards

The Zone management team and the Station Commanders must consult and agree on a priority list of hazards and individual risks to be reviewed during the year.

Note: Existing paper based PIPs be should reviewed and considered for entry into the PIP Database.

Station Commanders at permanent stations are to prioritise and divide the agreed list amongst platoons. Station Commanders of Retained Brigades are to discuss their list with the Deputy Captain and the crew.

5 Data collection

The Station Commander is responsible for contacting the building owner/manager and making an appointment to develop a PIP for their site. Data collection should be done in consultation with the manager or occupier to ensure the information is accurate.

Download and print the *ePIP data collection form* from the [PIP Database](#). During the site visit, use the form to gather the data needed for the PIP.

6 Ownership of PIPs

The officer or firefighter who logs into the PIP Database and creates the new PIP becomes its author and controls the PIP until it is approved. Its ownership may then be transferred to another officer by using the Change owner option in the history field. The history field automatically notes all amendments, changes of ownership and approvals associated with the PIP.

7 Risks and precautions

When the PIP is created a number of generic risks and precautions fields will self populate. These risks and precautions relate to firefighter safety. The author of the PIP may add other risks and precautions specific to the site.

8 Attachments

Additional information such as photos, plans or GIS images may be attached to PIPs in the Database. There is a link to the instructions on adding images to PIPs on the PIP main window.

There is no requirement to collect and add this additional information, but adding an image may avoid the need for a longer written explanation ('a picture tells a thousand words').

9 Approval process

When the PIP is complete the author marks the PIP ready for approval. An email can then be forwarded to your Duty Commander (cc to the Zone Commander), identifying the PIP number and requesting approval.

Duty Commanders and Zone Commanders have the authority to approve PIPs. To approve the PIP:

- log into the PIP database
- search by PIP number (or by station, zone and platoon)

Note: the PIP will be displayed in the 'awaiting approval' list

- review the data collected
- if necessary, validate the data with the author
- approve the PIP using the 'mark approved' link in the history field
- contact the author and tell them that their PIP has been approved and can be printed and stored on the pumper.

10 Notifying other stations of new or revised PIPs

When creating the PIP the author must select stations to review the PIP. Normally this will be the adjoining stations, however hazmat, aerial and rescue stations may be selected for particular risks. Once approved, the new PIP will appear on the approved list for the stations identified.

To find the PIPs flagged for review by your station, search on your station's name using 'notified' in the drop down menu as a restriction.

11 Reviewing PIPs

PIPs are automatically transferred to the 'awaiting review' list 12 months after approval.

Station Commanders are responsible for reviewing this list monthly. To find the review list for your station search the PIP Database using 'owner' in the drop down menu as a restriction. Any PIP awaiting review will appear on the awaiting review list.

Depending on the risk, another site visit may be required or a telephone call to the owner or manager to confirm the data previously collected is still valid.

Following the review the PIP will again require approval, in accordance with the procedure above.

12 Help with PIPs

A number of links have been created in the system to provide assistance with PIPs. For any particular assistance contact your Duty Commander.

Contact Officer: Area Commander Metropolitan West, (02) 9621 6398

File Reference: NFB/03265

In Orders 2008/25

Fire station readiness contingency plans

1 Background

Following the impact of a major natural or technological disaster, Fire and Rescue NSW's capability to respond in a coordinated way may be severely impaired. Depending on the location and nature of the event, it may not be appropriate or possible for firefighters to respond and deal with incidents in accordance with normal Standard Operational Guidelines (SOGs) and other operational policy and procedures.

SOG 19.1, [*Disaster planning and response*](#), provides guidance on measures to be implemented when normal communication systems and other infrastructure are disabled by a disaster event. The SOG also requires each fire station to develop and maintain its own operational readiness contingency plan for implementation immediately following a major disaster, until coordinated command and control measures can be established.

2 Scope

Fire Station Readiness Contingency Plans detail the:

- initial actions to be undertaken at the fire station immediately following the impact of a major emergency event
- process for reconnaissance and assessment of damage and victims by undertaking a drive through of your local area

- arrangements to establish emergency communications with the next level of command and other emergency services operating in the area, and
- response arrangements and mode of operations to be implemented until further assistance arrives and coordinated command and control measures can be established.

3 Developing the plan

Zone Commanders are to ensure that each fire station develops and maintains adequate Fire Station Readiness Contingency Plans. These plans are to be compiled by each Station Commander and must be reviewed and updated at least annually.

[Guidelines](#) and a [template](#) to assist Station Commanders to compile their Fire Station Readiness Contingency Plans are available in the filing cabinet on [Station Portal](#). The template must be downloaded and all sections of the plan completed. The plan must then be sent to the Zone Commander for approval.

Copies of the final version of the plan must be held in the:

- Pre-incident plan folder on the station pumper
- Station Commander's office
- Zone Commander and Duty Commander's vehicles, and
- Zone office.

4 Implementing the plan

Fire Station Readiness Contingency Plans must be implemented in the initial period following the impact of a major disaster event. The procedures detailed in the plan and SOG 19.1 are to be followed until coordinated command and control measures are established by either the Major Incident Coordination Centre, or through local or district emergency management arrangements.

Station Commanders must also be aware that the onset of a major disaster - and therefore the need to implement the Fire Station Readiness Contingency Plan - may not be immediately obvious. The failure of communications and other infrastructure may not be accompanied by a clear signal and any doubts about the availability of these systems should be tested locally as soon as possible, before implementing the plan.

The completion of the Fire Station Readiness Contingency Plan will count as one of the four Pre-incident Plans required to be completed by each Platoon at a permanently crewed station or each Retained brigade per year.

5 Security

Fire Station Readiness Contingency Plans are classified FRNSW-in-Confidence. The information held in Fire Station Readiness Contingency Plans is not to be made available to the members of the public or the media without the permission of the Commissioner.

Contact Officer: Metropolitan Business Continuity Manager (02) 9622 8071

File Reference: CHO/07905

In Orders 2010/20, with amendments

Reporting fire safety concerns

1 What is a fire safety concern or risk?

A fire safety concern can be any circumstance where installed fire safety measures have not been maintained or where a readily identifiable fire risk exists. For example:

- required exit doors locked in places of public entertainment such as night clubs, hotels and theatres
- exit signs not illuminated or no emergency power supply or battery back up
- final exit doors from fire stairs locked
- paths of travel to required exits blocked
- brigade boosters inaccessible
- excessive storage of combustible materials, and
- housekeeping issues such as the excessive and poor storage of pallets, paper, cardboard or other flammable materials.

2 Building owners' responsibilities

Under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and Regulations*, building owners are required to maintain the installed fire safety measures of their buildings. These measures include both passive and active fire safety measures. An example of a passive fire safety measure would be a fire rated door, while active fire safety measures would include items such as sprinklers, hydrants and hose reels.

If a building owner fails to meet their legislated responsibilities, they have committed an offence or a fire safety breach.

3 How to report a fire safety concern

Personnel may become aware of fire safety concerns:

- in the course of daily duties such as pre incident planning, brigade exercises or hydrant inspections
- from a report by a member of the public, or
- at an incident.

3.1 Fire safety concerns at incidents

If you identify a fire safety concern at an incident notify the Incident Controller.

The Incident Controller will contact the Communication Centre to notify the Manager Structural Fire Safety or the on-call authorised Fire Safety Officer.

Make a record of the nature of the fire safety concern and the action taken in the AIRS report and your Incident Notebook.

3.2 Fire safety concerns identified at other times

If you identify a fire safety concern during normal duties, or if one is reported by a member of the public:

- record the details in the Occurrence Book
- complete the [Fire Safety Concerns Reporting Form](#) which is available on the Intranet in the filing cabinet in Station Portal, and
- send the form to the Structural Fire Safety Unit by electronic mail or fax.

Note: If the matter is urgent, such as locked fire exits in a night club or hotel, and it is outside normal business hours, contact your Communication Centre and have them notify the Manager Structural Fire Safety or the on-call authorised Fire Safety Officer.

4 Who will investigate the fire safety concern?

Fire and Rescue NSW has a number of officers authorised under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* to investigate fire safety concerns. Depending on their knowledge and experience these officers are authorised by the Structural Fire Safety Unit as either 118L A or 118L B card holders.

These officers are authorised to write a variety of orders that range from requiring building owners to reinstate, restore, repair or maintain an installed fire safety measure to the evacuation of the premises.

The Structural Fire Safety Unit will assign authorised officers to investigate and report on all fire safety concerns.

Contact Officer: Manager Structural Fire Safety, (02) 9742 7412

File Reference: FSD/POL/134476

In Orders 2004/24, with amendments

Fireworks

1 Who issues fireworks licences?

WorkCover NSW is responsible for issuing fireworks licences and authorising displays. Under [Clause 15](#) of the *Explosives Regulation 2005* licences are required for the purchase, possession, and/or use of fireworks for authorised displays. A [register of fireworks displays](#) approved by WorkCover NSW is available on their website.

Fireworks displays may only be held where the applicant can demonstrate a good and sufficient reason, such as organised public displays held by a community or private organisation, or for technical or theatrical purposes. Private displays at domestic premises are not considered good and sufficient reason. Local councils may impose conditions on fireworks displays.

2 Notification of Fire and Rescue NSW

The licence holder must notify the local fire brigade in writing at least two working days before the display of the intention to hold a display and the time and duration of the display.

3 Risk assessment

When a brigade receives notification that a fireworks display is to be held, the Station Commander should arrange an operational risk assessment of the site. This assessment would take into account issues such as exposures, vehicular access and available water resources deal with any outbreak of fire. Any concerns that local crews may have should be directed to the WorkCover Hazardous Activities Hotline on (02) 4321 5499 or the WorkCover Assistance Service on 131 050, and the Duty Commander must be advised.

4 Total fire bans

The use of fireworks during Total Fire Bans is covered by Schedule 3, Fireworks, of gazetted Total Fire Bans issued under Section 99 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*:

SCHEDULE 3 - Fireworks

Fireworks lit and maintained as part of an organised public display, provided that:

- (a) *the person in charge of the display ('the responsible person') holds a current "Display Fireworks Permit - General Permit" or a "Pyrotechnicians Licence" issued by WorkCover NSW;*
- (b) *the responsible person complies with the requirements of the WorkCover NSW publication "Fireworks Displays (DG 108)";*
- (c) *approval to use of the land on which the fireworks display is to be held has been obtained in writing:*
 - (i) *from the local authority for the area in which the land is located, if the land is controlled or managed by a local authority; or*
 - (ii) *in any other case, from the owner or occupier of the land on which site the display will be held;*
- (d) *all fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material is extinguished at the conclusion of the display and prior to the responsible person leaving the site;*

- (e) *the display is conducted in a manner, which minimises the likelihood that fire, sparks or burning or incandescent material will impact on the land surrounding the display causing a fire;*
- (f) *precautions are taken to prevent the escape of fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material from the surrounding area;*
- (g) *the responsible person must notify, during business hours, not less than forty eight hours prior to the commencement of the fireworks display:*
- (i) *the NSW Rural Fire Service Zone or District Manager for that District if the place where the display is to be held is within a rural fire district; or*
- (ii) *the Officer In Charge of the nearest Fire and Rescue NSW fire station if the place where the display is to be held is within a fire district*
- and comply with any direction or additional condition which may be imposed by that Officer, which may include a direction that the fireworks not be lit.*

When a brigade receives notification that a fireworks display is to be held during a Total Fire Ban, or during a time when a Total Fire Ban may be issued, the operational risk assessment of the site (see section 3 above) must take the bushfire risk into account. The Station Commander should liaise with local Rural Fire Service brigades where applicable.

For advice on approving fireworks displays during Total Fire Bans, contact your Duty Commander or the Bushland Urban Interface Section on (02) 9742 7346.

A formal written reply must be provided by the Station Commander to the responsible person. A template for Total Fire Ban exemption letters, including fireworks, is available in Word. A [standard letter](#) is also available on Station Portal.

A copy of the completed letter must be kept at the station for seven years. Copies must also be faxed for information to:

- the Rural Fire Service Manager Operations, Policy and Standards on (02) 8741 5550
- your Communication Centre, and
- your Duty Commander

An entry must also be made in the CARS system.

5 Complaints

Community complaints about fireworks should be referred to the Police or WorkCover.

6 Further information

Further information on fireworks can be found on the WorkCover website at <http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/FAQs/Industry/Fireworks>.

Contact Officer: Manager Structural Fire Safety, (02) 9742 7410, or Manager Bushland Urban Interface Section, (02) 9742 7348

File Reference: FSD/POL/127398 and CHO/01357 In Orders 2007/1, with amendments

Fire Services Joint Standing Committee Act 1998

The object of this Act is to establish a committee, with equal representation from Fire and Rescue NSW and the NSW Rural Fire Service, to be known as the Fire Services Joint Standing Committee. The Committee has the following functions:

1. to develop and submit to the Minister strategic plans for the delivery of comprehensive, balanced and coordinated urban and rural fire services at the interface of fire district boundaries and rural fire district boundaries;
2. to review periodically the boundaries of fire districts and rural fire districts and, if it considers it appropriate, to make recommendations to the Minister concerning those boundaries;
3. to develop and submit to the Minister implementation strategies to minimise duplication and maximise compatibility between the services of Fire and Rescue NSW and the services of the NSW Rural Fire Service, with particular reference to the following areas:
 - infrastructure planning,
 - training activities,
 - community education programs,
 - equipment design;
4. to report to the Minister on any matter referred to the Committee by the Minister, and if it considers it appropriate, to make recommendations to the Minister concerning the matter; and
5. such other functions as are conferred or imposed on the Committee by this Act or any other Act.

The provision of legislative backing for the Committee (previously the Joint Fire Services Standing Committee), reflects the determination of the government that both fire services will deliver emergency service to the community in a positive and complementary way. Fire and Rescue NSW is committed to extending the commonsense joint approach that prevails at incident scenes to all activities affecting joint service delivery, including planning, training, community education and equipment design.

Contact Officer: Commissioner's Chief of Staff, (02) 9265 2678

File Reference: CHO/03075

In Orders 1998/17, with amendments

Extensions to fire district boundaries

In order to keep Fire and Rescue NSW's fire district boundaries abreast of any building development that occurs, the boundaries are to be regularly appraised and updated as necessary.

Zone Commanders are to closely oversight fire district boundaries in their respective areas. They are to report annually in writing to their Director on 30 June that fire district boundaries in their areas of responsibility are up to date with existing building development, or that certain towns or districts require amendment. The report should indicate what action has been taken by the reporting officer to this end.

In Orders 1980/47, with amendments

Officers responsible for preparing submissions for extension to Fire and Rescue NSW boundaries are to liaise with Fire Control Officers as necessary in order to ensure:

- Councils are made aware of pending extensions to Fire and Rescue NSW areas, and
- the submissions by operational officers do not include areas of bushland, and are confined to building development on made roads serviced by an adequate water reticulation system.

In Orders 1983/28, with amendments

Guidelines for preparing proposals for varying fire district boundaries and report templates are available on the [Intranet](#) under Specialised Operations.

Note: for information on preparing Mutual Aid Agreements see [page 23](#).

BUSH FIRE RISK MANAGEMENT

Bush Fire Management Committees

The *Rural Fires Act 1997* has been amended by the *Fire Services Legislation Amendment Act 1998* which received assent on 3 June 1998. Section 50(1) of the *Rural Fires Act* was amended by the insertion of:

(1A) The Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee must constitute a Bush Fire Management Committee for the area of a local authority for which a fire district is constituted if there is a reasonable risk of bush fires in that area.

As Fire and Rescue NSW is the agency responsible for fire suppression within fire districts, its officers provide executive support to the new Bush Fire Management Committees where established, and co-ordinate the committees' activities; in particular, the preparation of bushfire management plans.

Bush Fire Management Committees (BFMCs) operate in Rural Fire Service (RFS) areas, and are now also established within Fire and Rescue NSW Fire Districts in the following Council areas:

Bankstown/Hurstville	Mosman/North Sydney
Hunters Hill	Newcastle
Lane Cove	Ryde
Manly	Willoughby

BFMCs are made up of representatives from local councils, land management authorities and conservation groups. Zone Commanders for these areas are the executive officers for the BFMCs.

Each BFMC is tasked to develop two sets of plans - a bushfire plan of operations, and a bushfire risk management plan. Bushfire risk management plans, using a risk management approach, will determine appropriate mitigation strategies, including strategic prescribed hazard reduction burns, land clearing, and public education. These strategies will take into account life and property protection, as well as environmental considerations such as threatened species, critical habitats and vegetation types, in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

Each BFMC will approve the implementation of risk management strategies (other than Council-approved pile burns). Therefore identified areas of bushfire risk will be submitted to the BFMC via the Zone Commander as well as the Bushland Urban Interface Section. Hazard identification and approved hazard reduction burns within Fire and Rescue NSW Fire Districts will be undertaken by local stations in consultation with the Bushland Urban Interface Section.

Station Commanders are responsible for identifying areas of bushfire risk in their station area and submitting these to their Zone Commanders.

Zone Commanders are responsible for developing bushfire risk management plans for Fire and Rescue NSW areas and submitting these to the BFMCs. When the plans are approved, the hazard reductions are then coordinated by the Bushland Urban Interface Section, and undertaken by the local station.

Contact Officer: Manager Bushland Urban Interface, (02) 9742 7348

File Reference: CHO/03075

In Orders 1998/17, with amendments

Community Fire Units

Policies

Community Fire Unit (CFU) policies govern CFU development, resourcing, training, and operations, and give instruction and guidance on issues relating to CFU members.

All staff working with CFU members or undertaking activities relating to the CFU Program must be familiar with and follow CFU policies.

CFU Policies are available under [CFU](#) on Station Portal

Contact Officer: Deputy Manager Community Fire Units, (02) 9142 7339

File Reference: NFB/04939

In Orders 2009/20, with amendments

Breaches of Rural Fires Act

Officers-in-Charge of Brigades are instructed to pass on to the local Police particulars of any contravention of the provisions of the *Rural Fires Act* observed while they are engaged in the course of their Fire and Rescue NSW duties.

In Orders 1965/7, with amendments

Hazard reduction - pile burns

1 Policy

Pile burns are conducted for ecological or regeneration purposes or to reduce the threat of a bushfire to life or property.

Previously, Fire and Rescue NSW has provided a service of facilitating pile burning to Councils, some other large land managers (such as the National Parks and Wildlife Service), bush care groups working in conjunction with significant land managers, and private landowners, provided that the burns are within Environmental Protection Guidelines.

Fire and Rescue NSW has reviewed its role in facilitating pile burns and will no longer conduct pile burns on behalf of private landowners unless requested by a Council or Government agency.

If a private landholder requests Fire and Rescue NSW to conduct a pile burn, they are to be advised that alternative methods of disposal of the dead vegetation should be sought (eg physical removal).

Pile burns can still be facilitated for Councils, some other large land managers (such as the National Parks and Wildlife Service), and for bush care groups working with significant land managers provided the following requirements are met:

2 Pile burn approvals

Before a pile burn is conducted the requesting organisation must have:

- a current Bushfire Hazard Reduction Certificate, issued either by the Rural Fire Service or Local Council, (Note: Bushfire Hazard Reduction Certificates are valid for 12 months), or
- written authority from the Office of Environment and Heritage, or
- written approval from the local Bushfire Management Committee.

The councils that issue Bushfire Hazard Reduction Certificates are:

Bankstown	Ku-Ring-Gai	Parramatta
Blue Mountains	Lane Cove	Ryde
Hurstville	Manly	Willoughby
Hunters Hill	Mosman	Newcastle
Kogarah	North Sydney	

This list is subject to change. If there is any doubt please contact the Bushland Urban Interface Section.

3 Pile burn construction

- 3.1 Material that is to be burnt *must only be vegetation from the vicinity*, not household or building material such as plastics, wooden pallets or cardboard boxes.
- 3.2 Construct long and wide piles rather than excessively high piles. A good size for piles is 0.5 metres high and 2 metres wide or long; maximum height should not exceed 1.5 metres. Piles that are too big produce too much heat which means that only seeds near the cooler edges survive and germinate.
- 3.3 No soft weeds such as tradescantia, grasses, chick weed, etc, should be added to a pile burn. These are most effectively disposed of by composting.
- 3.4 Weeds such as lantana, privet, coils of morning glory, olive and other woody weeds are suitable. All noxious weeds must be treated as per the Noxious Weeds Codes, which the agency requesting the burn should observe and implement.
- 3.5 Logs, dead sticks, etc, should not be added to piles - instead these should be laid on the ground to prevent erosion and provide habitat for micro fauna.
- 3.6 Locate piles away from overhanging branches that may ignite.
- 3.7 Locate piles away from overhanging power lines or telephone cables.
- 3.8 Locate piles away from large dead logs, whether standing or on the ground.
- 3.9 Locate piles away from trees, cliffs, rock outcrops, etc.
- 3.10 If practical, place vegetation in an area where it will receive direct sunlight to allow the pile to dry out.
- 3.11 Immediately prior to lighting piles they should be disturbed to scare away lizards, snakes, etc, which may be taking refuge beneath the pile.

4 General requirements

Before conducting a pile burn the Officer-in-Charge must:

- check with the Duty Commander or Zone Commander to ensure that the appliance can be taken off line
- ensure the pile burn can be contained and controlled

- be confident that it will not cause an air pollution problem by producing excessive amounts of smoke
- check if a no burn day has been declared
- check if a total fire ban is in force; and
- check the expected weather conditions.

Contact Officer: Manager Bushland Urban Interface Section, (02) 9742 7348

File Reference: CHO/01712

In Orders 2005/20, with amendments

General bush fire danger period

The general bush fire danger period for NSW is from 1 October until 31 March. Depending on local fire conditions, some areas may extend or alter the legislated bush fire danger period.

Permits to burn

Under [Section 87](#) of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*, people who want to light fires for clearing land or burning fire breaks during a bush fire danger period must obtain a permit. Guidelines for issuing permits are given on [page 241](#). For additional advice contact the Bushland Section on (02) 9742 7346.

Restrictions in force during the bush fire danger period

The following clauses of the *Rural Fires Regulation 2008* apply during bush fire danger periods:

25 *Lighting of fires for cooking etc*

A person must not light a fire in the open to cook, heat or prepare meals or to boil water or for any like purpose unless the fire is lit at a site surrounded by ground that is clear of all combustible matter for a distance of at least 2 metres.

Maximum penalty: 20 penalty units

26 *Burning garbage and refuse*

(1) *A person must not light a fire to destroy garbage or refuse at a waste depot unless the fire is lit at a site surrounded by ground that is clear of all combustible matter for a distance of at least 30 metres.*

Maximum penalty: 20 penalty units

(2) *A person must not light a fire to destroy household garbage or refuse or to destroy an animal carcass, otherwise than at a waste depot, unless the fire is lit:*

(a) *in an incinerator designed to prevent the escape of sparks and burning material, or*

(b) *in accordance with the conditions set out in a permit issued by the appropriate authority,*

and, in any case, unless the fire is lit at a site surrounded by ground that is clear of all combustible matter for a distance of at least 5 metres.

Maximum penalty: 20 penalty units.

- (3) *Nothing in subclause (1) or (2) affects the operation of any law that prohibits or regulates the lighting of fires.*

27 *Lighting fires to produce charcoal etc*

- (1) *A person must not light a fire for or in connection with:*

- (a) *charcoal production, or*
(b) *the distillation of eucalyptus or other oils,*

unless the fire is lit at a site surrounded by ground that is clear of all combustible matter for a distance of at least 30 metres.

Maximum penalty: 20 penalty units.

- (2) *A person must not light a fire to burn waste products resulting from the activities referred to in subclause (1) unless:*

- (a) *all conditions set out in a permit obtained from the appropriate authority for the area are complied with, and*
(b) *the fire is lit at least 30 metres from the site of any other fire lit in connection with the distillation of eucalyptus or other oils.*

Maximum penalty: 20 penalty units

- (3) *In this clause, a reference to ‘combustible matter’ does not include a reference to any timber to be reduced to charcoal, any charcoal so produced, any material used for the distillation of eucalyptus or other oils or any building or fence.*

28 *Offence to light, use or carry tobacco product*

- (1) *A person must not, without lawful authority:*

- (a) *light any tobacco product, match or other material, or*
(b) *use or carry any lighted tobacco product, match or other material,*

within 15 metres of any stack of grain, hay, corn or straw or any standing crop, dry grass or stubble field.

Maximum penalty: 50 penalty units.

- (2) *A person must not, without lawful authority, leave or deposit a lighted tobacco product, match or any incandescent material on any land, or on any bridge, wharf, pontoon or similar structure.*

Maximum penalty: 50 penalty units.

Contact Officer: Manager Bushfire, (02) 9742 7348
File Reference: NFB/02379

Commissioner’s Orders 2012/21

Total fire bans

Under [Section 99](#) of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*, the Minister for Police and Emergency Services may prohibit the lighting, maintenance or use of fires in the open air in a particular area or in the whole of NSW.

The Minister also has the power to grant exemptions for certain classes of fires and set conditions for their use. The exemptions that will usually be given by the Minister are as listed in Schedules 1 to 18 below, but these exemptions may be varied.

Schedule 1 - Fire fighting activities

Fire lit, maintained or used for the purpose of suppressing or controlling any existing bush fire; or for urgent repairs and/or maintenance of any firefighting or associated plant or equipment; or to provide food and refreshments for fire fighting personnel where such fire is lit, maintained or used under the direction of the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service, any officer of Fire and Rescue NSW, any officer authorised by the State Forests of New South Wales, any officer authorised by the Director General of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, or any NSW Rural Fire Service Deputy Captain, Captain, Deputy Group Captain, Group Captain or Officer of the rank of Inspector or above, appointed pursuant to the provisions of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* (NSW).

Schedule 2 - Emergency operations

Fire lit, maintained or used in association with any cutting, welding and/or grinding apparatus used by an emergency services organisation within the meaning of the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* (NSW) for the purpose of any emergency operations provided that, as far as is practicable:

- a. the fire is lit and maintained in a manner which will prevent the escape of fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material from the site of the emergency; and
- b. adequate fire fighting equipment is provided at the site of the emergency to prevent the escape or spread of the fire.

Schedule 3 - Fireworks

Fireworks lit and maintained as part of an organised public display, provided that:

- a. the person in charge of the display ('the responsible person') holds a current "*Display Fireworks Permit - General Permit*" or a "*Pyrotechnicians Licence*" issued by WorkCover NSW;
- b. the responsible person complies with the requirements of the WorkCover NSW publication "*Fireworks Displays (DG 108)*";
- c. approval to use of the land on which the fireworks display is to be held has been obtained in writing:
 - (i) from the local authority for the area in which the land is located, if the land is controlled or managed by a local authority; or
 - (ii) in any other case, from the owner or occupier of the land on which site the display will be held;

- d. all fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material is extinguished at the conclusion of the display and prior to the responsible person leaving the site;
- e. the display is conducted in a manner, which minimises the likelihood that fire, sparks or burning or incandescent material will impact on the land surrounding the display causing a fire;
- f. precautions are taken to prevent the escape of fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material from the surrounding area;
- g. the responsible person must notify, during business hours, not less than forty eight hours prior to the commencement of the fireworks display:
 - (i) the NSW Rural Fire Service Zone or District Manager for that District if the place where the display is to be held is within a rural fire district; or
 - (ii) the Officer In Charge of the nearest Fire and Rescue NSW fire station if the place where the display is to be held is within a fire district

and comply with any direction or additional condition which may be imposed by that Officer, which may include a direction that the fireworks not be lit.

Note: For procedures for managing notifications of fireworks displays, see the instruction on [Fireworks](#) on page 221.

Schedule 4 - Religious/sacred ceremonies

Fire lit, maintained or used as part of a religious or sacred ceremony, including candles lit or maintained as part of a “Carols by Candlelight” celebration, provided that:

- a. approval to use of the land on which the ceremony or celebration is to be held has been obtained in writing from:
 - (i) the local authority for the area in which the land is located, if the land is controlled or managed by a local authority; or
 - (ii) in any other case, the owner or occupier of the land on which site the ceremony or celebration will be held;
- b. the ceremony or celebration is held on an open area of land so that any naked flame is surrounded by ground that is clear of all combustible material for a distance of at least 20 metres;
- c. each fire or flame is constantly under the direct control or supervision of a responsible adult person;
- d. each fire or flame is extinguished at the conclusion of the ceremony or celebration and prior to the person having control or supervision of the fire or flame leaving the site;
- e. the person who obtained the consent of the local authority or the owner or occupier of the land to conduct the ceremony or celebration must ensure that all necessary steps are taken to prevent the escape of fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material from the site; and

- f. the person who obtained the consent of the local authority or the owner or occupier of the land to conduct the ceremony or celebration must, not less than six hours prior to the commencement of the ceremony or celebration, notify:
- (i) the NSW Rural Fire Service Zone or District Manager for that district, If the place where the ceremony or celebration is to be held is within a rural fire district; or
 - (ii) the Officer in Charge of the nearest Fire and Rescue NSW fire station if the place where the ceremony or celebration is to be held is within a fire district
- and comply with any direction or additional condition which may be imposed by that officer which may include a direction that the fire or candles not to be lit.

Note: Procedures for managing notifications of religious/sacred ceremonies are given in the instruction on [Exemptions under Schedules 4, 9, 14 and 16](#) on page 237.

Schedule 5 - Services and utilities - essential repairs/maintenance

Fire lit, maintained or used by, or under the authority of, a provider of energy, telecommunications, water, transport or waste removal/disposal services, in connection with the urgent and essential:

- a. repairs; or
- b. maintenance

of facilities or equipment required for the continuation of the supply or provision of power, light, heat, cooling, refrigeration, communication, water, transport or sewerage provided that:

- a. the fire is lit and maintained in a manner which will prevent the escape of fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material from the site of the works;
- b. adequate fire fighting equipment is provided at the site of the works to prevent the escape or spread of the fire.

Schedule 6 - Disposal of waste/putrescent material

Fire lit, maintained or used by a public authority as defined in the dictionary of the Rural Fires Act 1997 (NSW), for the disposal of waste or putrescent material likely to cause a health hazard provided that the fire is lit in a properly constructed incinerator designed to prevent the escape of fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material therefrom.

Schedule 7 - Sugar cane harvesting

Fire lit, maintained or used between the hours of 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. Australian Eastern Standard Summer Time for a purpose associated with the harvesting of sugar cane provided that:

- a. the fire is lit and maintained in a manner which will prevent the escape of fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material from the area of cane which is to be harvested; and,
- b. adequate fire fighting equipment is provided at the site of the fire to prevent the escape or spread of the fire,
- c. the fire is under the direct control of a responsible adult person, present at all times until it is fully extinguished.

- d. the person who lights the fire has complied with the requirements of section 87 of the Rural Fires Act, 1997.

Schedule 8 - Bitumen roadworks

Fire lit or maintained or used for the purpose of heating bitumen in tankers, sprayers, storage units, mobile asphalt plants, mobile asphalt pavers and pavement recycling machines for road repair and construction works provided that:

- a. the fire is lit and maintained in a manner which will prevent the escape of fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material from the equipment; and
- b. adequate fire fighting equipment is provided at the site of the works to prevent the escape or spread of the fire.

Schedule 9 - Disposal of diseased animal carcasses

Fire lit or maintained or used for the purposes of disposal of diseased sheep, cattle, chicken or other deceased stock carcasses provided that:

- a. the fire is lit and maintained in a manner which will prevent the escape of fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material from the site of the fire;
- b. adequate fire fighting equipment is provided at the site of the fire to prevent the escape or spread of the fire;
- c. the site of the fire is surrounded by ground that is clear of all combustible material for a distance of at least 30 metres;
- d. a responsible adult person is present at the site of the fire at all times while it is burning; and
- e. prior to lighting such a fire, the person in charge of the operation must notify;
 - (i) the NSW Rural Fire Service Zone or District Manager for that district if the place where the fire is to be lit is within a rural fire district; or
 - (ii) the Officer in Charge of the nearest Fire and Rescue NSW fire station if the place where the fire is to be lit is within a fire district

and comply with any direction or additional condition which may be imposed by that officer which may include a direction that the fire not be lit.

Note: Procedures for managing notifications of disposal of diseased animal carcasses are given in the instruction on [Exemptions under Schedules 4, 9, 14 and 16](#) on page 237.

Schedule 10 - Bee hive “smokers”

Fire lit and maintained in a metal canister, known as a “bee hive smoker” used by apiarists to produce smoke for use in connection with the management of bees and bee hives, provided that:

- a. the canister is a commercially available “bee hive smoker” designed to prevent the escape of sparks or incandescent or burning material;

- b. the fuel for the canister is lit inside a building or vehicle by a responsible adult person and the canister is sealed prior to leaving the building or vehicle and being taken to the hives;
- c. fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material is not permitted to escape from the canister in the open air;
- d. the canister is not to be left unattended while it is alight;
- e. the fuel is totally extinguished inside a building or vehicle by the responsible adult person at the completion of use.

Schedule 11 - Electric or gas barbeques

1. Fire lit, maintained or used for the purpose of food preparation on an electric appliance provided that:
 - a. the appliance is under the direct control of a responsible adult person, present at all times while it is operating;
 - b. no combustible material of any kind is allowed within two metres of the appliance while it is operating;
2. Fire lit, maintained or used for the purpose of food preparation on a gas fired appliance provided that:
 - a. the appliance is under the direct control of a responsible adult person, present at all times while it is operating;
 - b. no combustible material of any kind is allowed within two metres of the appliance while it is operating;
 - c. a system of applying an adequate stream of water to the appliance and its surrounds is available for immediate and continuous use; and
 - (i) the appliance is located on land on which is erected a permanent private dwelling and is not more than twenty metres from that dwelling; or
 - (ii) where the appliance is not on land on which is erected a permanent private dwelling, both the appliance and the land on which it is located have been approved for the purpose by:
 - the council of the area or:
 - if the land is acquired or reserved under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service; or
 - if the land is within a state forest, State Forests of NSW.

Schedule 12 - Charcoal production

Fire lit, maintained or used in accordance with Regulation 27(1)(a) of the Rural Fires Regulation 2008 (NSW), for the production of charcoal (but not for the destruction of waste arising therefrom) provided that:

- a. the fire is lit and maintained in a manner which will prevent the escape of fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material from the site of the works; and
- b. adequate fire fighting equipment is provided at the site of the works to prevent the escape or spread of the fire.

Schedule 13 - Mining operations

Fire lit, maintained or used in association with the cutting, welding and/or grinding apparatus used for the purpose of the urgent and essential maintenance and repair of mining equipment provided that:

- a. the cutting, welding and/or grinding apparatus is used in a manner which will prevent the escape of fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material from the site of the works; and
- b. adequate fire fighting equipment is provided at the site of the works to prevent the escape or spread of the fire.

Schedule 14 - Building construction/demolition - urgent and essential

Fire lit, maintained or used in association with welding, cutting and grinding work undertaken in the course of urgent and essential construction or demolition of buildings provided that:

- a. the fire is lit and maintained in a manner which will prevent the escape of fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material from the site of the works;
- b. adequate fire fighting equipment is provided at the site of the works to prevent the escape or spread of the fire; and
- c. if the work is to be carried out above the normal ground or floor level the area below the works must be totally free of combustible material and any fire, spark or incandescent material must be prevented from falling to that area.
- d. prior to lighting the fire, the person in charge of the work must notify:
 - (i) the NSW Rural Fire Service Zone or District Manager for that district, If the site of the work is within a rural fire district; or
 - (ii) the Officer in Charge of the nearest Fire and Rescue NSW fire station if the site of the work is within a fire district

and comply with any direction or additional condition which may be imposed by that officer which may include a direction that the fire not to be lit.

Note: Procedures for managing notifications of building construction/demolition are given in the instruction on [Exemptions under Schedules 4, 9, 14 and 16](#) on page 237.

Schedule 15 - Exhaust stacks for gas exploration, collection, drainage, refining facilities, oil refineries and steel works

Fire lit, maintained or used to dispose of gaseous exhaust emitted through a chimney in connection with the exploration, collection, drainage, refining, manufacture or purification of gas, oil, or metal provided that: the fire is lit and maintained in a manner which will prevent the escape of fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material from the site of the exploration, collection, drainage, refinery or manufacturing facility.

Schedule 16 - Hot air balloons

Fire lit, maintained or used in order to conduct commercial hot air balloon flying operations provided that:

- a. not more than twelve hours prior to lighting such a fire the pilot must notify:
 - (i) the NSW Rural Fire Service State Operations Centre on 1800 049 933 of the proposed flight; and
 - (ii) the NSW Rural Fire Service Zone or District Manager for each rural fire district on the proposed flight path; and
 - (iii) the Fire and Rescue NSW Officer in Charge of the nearest Fire and Rescue NSW fire station if the launch site is within the Fire and Rescue NSW fire district;

and comply with any direction or additional condition, which may be, imposed by the RFS or Fire and Rescue NSW, which may include a direction that the fire is not to be lit. The contact details for the RFS Zone or District Manager may be obtained from the State Operations Centre on 1800 679 737 and the contact details for Fire and Rescue NSW may be obtained from the Fire and Rescue NSW Communications Centre on 1800 422 281;

- b. at the time the balloon is launched:
 - (i) the ambient air temperature is less than 30 degrees Celsius; and
 - (ii) the average wind speed measured at ground level is less than 20 kilometres per hour;
- c. the take off site is clear of all combustible material within a 3 metre radius of the balloon burner;
- d. the balloon has landed and all burners and pilot lights are extinguished by no later than 2 hours after sunrise;
- e. any sighting of smoke or fire observed from the air is immediately reported to the Fire and Rescue NSW via the Telstra "Triple Zero" emergency system;
- f. the fire is lit and maintained in a manner which will prevent the escape of fire, sparks or incandescent or burning material from the balloon; and
- g. adequate fire fighting equipment is carried in the balloon and by the ground/retrieval party to prevent the escape or spread of the fire.

Note: Procedures for managing notifications relating to hot air balloons are given in the instruction on [Exemptions under Schedules 4, 9, 14 and 16](#) on page 237.

Schedule 17 - Olympic cauldron

Fire lit and maintained by the Sydney Olympic Park Authority in the "Olympic Cauldron" erected at Sydney Olympic Park.

Schedule 18 - Any other fire approved by NSW RFS Commissioner

Any fire, the lighting or maintenance of which is approved in writing by the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service, provided that the person who lights or maintains the fire complies with any conditions imposed by the Commissioner in relation to that fire.

Note: Procedures for consultations between Fire and Rescue NSW and the Rural Fire Service on exemptions under Schedule 18 are given in the instruction on [Exemptions under Schedule 18](#) on page 238.

Contact Officer: Manager Bushfire, (02) 9742 7348

File Reference: NFB/02379

Commissioner's Orders 2012/21

Total Fire Ban exemptions

Exemptions under Schedule 3

For exemptions under Schedule 3, *Fireworks*, see the instruction on [Fireworks](#) on page 221.

Exemptions under Schedules 4, 9, 14 and 16

1 Background

Under [Section 99](#) of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*, the Minister for Emergency Services may exempt individuals, companies and authorities from a Total Fire Ban declaration. The list of scheduled exemptions is given in the instruction on [Total fire bans](#) on page 230.

Schedule 4, *Religious/sacred ceremonies* ([page 231](#)), Schedule 9, *Disposal of diseased animal carcasses* ([page 233](#)), Schedule 14, *Building construction/demolition - urgent and essential* ([page 235](#)), and Schedule 16, *Hot air balloons* ([page 236](#)), require notification of the local fire service and give the fire service the power to impose directions and conditions on the activity, including a direction that the fire not be lit.

If the activity is in a Fire and Rescue NSW Fire District, the officer in charge of the nearest Fire and Rescue NSW fire station will be notified.

2 What to do if you receive a notification

If you receive a notification of an activity under Schedules 4, 9, 14 or 16, a formal written reply must be provided by the Station Commander to the responsible person, the person in charge or the pilot.

The Station Commander must arrange an operational risk assessment of the site or activity. This assessment would take into account issues such as bushfire risk, exposures, vehicular access and available water resources deal with any outbreak of fire. The Station Commander should liaise with local Rural Fire Service brigades where applicable.

The reply must specify any direction or additional condition that the Fire and Rescue NSW officer in charge imposes, which may include a direction that the activity must not go ahead.

A template for Total Fire Ban exemption letters, covering all Schedules, is available in Word. [Standard letters](#) for each Schedule are also available on Station Portal.

3 Notifications

When you issue a letter, copies should be faxed for information to:

- the Rural Fire Service Manager Operations, Policy and Standards on (02) 8741 5550
- your Communication Centre, and
- your Duty Commander.

A copy of the letter should be kept at the station for seven years. An entry must also be made in CARS.

4 Further information or advice

For further information or advice, contact your Duty Commander or the Bushland Urban Interface Section on (02) 9742 7346.

Contact Officer: Manager Bushland Urban Interface Section, (02) 9742 7348

File Reference: CHO/01357 In Orders 2007/1 and 2007/6, with amendments

Exemptions under Schedule 18

1 Background

Under [Section 99](#) of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*, the Minister for Emergency Services may exempt individuals, companies and authorities from a Total Fire Ban declaration. The list of scheduled exemptions is given in the instruction on [Total fire bans](#) on page 230.

Schedule 18 ([page 237](#)) allows the Commissioner of the Rural Fire Service to exempt activities not covered by the other schedules. The procedure for consultation between the Rural Fire Service and Fire and Rescue NSW on exemption requests is given below.

2 Submission of requests

Members of the public who approach Fire and Rescue NSW to enquire about Total Fire Ban exemptions are to be referred to the Rural Fire Service.

Requests for Total Fire Ban exemptions should be in writing, addressed to the Commissioner Rural Fire Service and marked for the attention of the Manager Operations, Policy and Standards, Locked Mail Bag 17, Granville NSW 2124.

3 Initial processing

When a request is received, the Rural Fire Service (RFS) Operations Officer (Operations, Policy and Standards) will:

- 3.1 Ensure that the request is reasonable and not covered by any other scheduled exemption.
- 3.2 If it is covered by another scheduled exemption, send a letter to the applicant indicating in which schedule it is covered and any conditions with which they must comply, including notification of the local District/Team/Zone Office or Fire and Rescue NSW Station where applicable.
- 3.3 Ensure the request gives clear detail of the activity, where it will take place and the timeframe. Any detail not apparent should be confirmed with the applicant.

- 3.4 Determine where the activity will take place, and contact the local District/Team/Zone Manager to determine if the area concerned is located in a Rural Fire District or a Fire and Rescue NSW Fire District.
- 3.5 If the area is in a Fire and Rescue NSW Fire District, the exemption request will be sent to Fire and Rescue NSW for a recommendation on approval or rejection. This will be done by sending a fax to the Fire and Rescue NSW Response Coordinator, followed up with a confirmation phone call.

4 Review by Fire and Rescue NSW

- 4.1 When an exemption request is received from RFS, the Response Coordinator will fax it to the Zone Commander for the area.
- 4.2 The Zone Commander will consult with the Duty Commander and local Fire Station on the recommendation, taking into account:
 - the type of activity proposed
 - current and forecast weather
 - type of vegetation/configuration and curing of fuel
 - terrain
 - access
 - nearest fire fighting resources, and
 - any special conditions to be imposed.

Note: The area should be inspected if necessary.

- 4.3 The Zone Commander will fax a recommendation to the Response Coordinator who will fax it to the RFS Manager Operations, Policy and Standards for approval or rejection of the request.
- 4.4 The RFS Manager Operations, Policy and Standards will fax a copy of the approval or rejection letter to the Response Coordinator who will fax it to the Zone Commander, Duty Commander and Fire Station for information.

5 Section 44 Incident Controllers

In the event of an exemption request being received in areas where there is a declared Section 44 bushfire, the Section 44 Incident Controller must be consulted on Total Fire Ban exemption requests by the RFS District/Team/Zone Manager or the Fire and Rescue NSW Zone Commander for the area.

The Incident Controller or delegated officer should review the request using the criteria given above and provide their recommendation to the RFS Manager or Zone Commander.

The Incident Controller will be sent a fax of the approval or rejection letter.

Contact Officer: Manager Bushland Urban Interface Section, (02) 9742 7348

File Reference: CHO/01357

In Orders 2006/28, with amendments

Bushfire evacuation guidelines for home owners

1. People electing to remain with their homes need to be confident they are in properly prepared homes, which need to be regularly assessed, and are generally defined as follows:
 - ground fuels cleared away from the house,
 - gutters cleared,
 - roofing firmly fixed and eaves boxed,
 - firebreaks prepared (where appropriate),
 - metal screens or shutters installed and underfloor areas enclosed,
 - vents into roof space screened,
 - combustible items removed from around the house,
 - branches over hanging the house or outbuildings are removed,
 - LPG cylinders vented away from the house,
 - hoses long enough to reach all sides of the house,
 - where it could be likely that water pressures may be insufficient, a portable pump may be required, and
 - buckets and static water (eg a bathtub) available.
2. The greater the slope the greater the separation distance from bushland and standard of housekeeping required.
3. The presence of smooth barked trees is an asset rather than a liability provided that the ground below them is cleared and they are not within close proximity of the house.
4. People electing to remain with their homes also need to be dressed safely. Safe clothing includes the following:
 - leather boots or shoes with thick soles,
 - trousers and long socks made of natural fibre (wool or cotton),
 - long sleeve shirts or drill overalls, made of natural fibre,
 - gloves, hat, goggles and face mask, and
 - undergarments that are made of natural fibre.
5. Those staying within the home must be prepared for the stress caused by the noise and general confusion generated by the fire as it approaches and passes.

6. They will need to have adequate water and equipment (eg ladders, garden hoses, buckets, mops, rakes, shovels, etc) with which to put out embers and small spot fires around the house after the main fire has passed.

Contact Officer: Manager Bushland Urban Interface Section, (02) 9742 7348

File Reference: CHO/01330

In Orders 2000/20, with amendments

See also [Evacuation during bushfires](#) on page 118.

Fire permits

1 Introduction

This instruction covers the issuing of fire permits for lighting fires in Fire and Rescue NSW Fire Districts under the *Rural Fires Act 1997*.

2 Who can issue a permit?

Permits to light fires in Fire and Rescue NSW Fire Districts can only be issued by Fire and Rescue NSW.

Permits may be issued by the Station Commander (Officer in Charge) of the station responsible for the area where the fire is to be lit, or an officer in the chain of command above the Station Commander. Any officer authorised by the Zone Management Team may also issue permits.

Permits to light fires in Rural Fire Service (RFS) Fire Districts can only be issued by the RFS.

Note: Local councils can no longer issue permits.

3 Who has to have a permit?

Anyone who lights a fire:

- that is likely to be dangerous to any building at any time of year, or
- for the purpose of land clearance or for burning a fire break during a bush fire danger period,

has to have a permit.

Exception: Public authorities (such as local councils or government departments) do not need to have a permit.

4 What approvals do you need to see before issuing a permit?

The applicant is responsible for getting the required environmental approvals before applying for a permit.

Note: a [guide for issuing permits](#) is available on the Intranet.

4.1 Hazard reduction burns

Before issuing a permit for a hazard reduction burn the issuing officer must sight a bushfire hazard reduction certificate.

Note: See the instruction on [Bushfire hazard reduction certificates](#) on page 245 for more information on this.

4.2 Other burning activities

In cases where burning is not for the purpose of hazard reduction, other environmental approvals may be required, as summarised in the table below:

Burning activity	Type of environmental approval required	Who issues the approval
Pile burn for purposes other than hazard reduction.	Control of burning approval	Local Council/ NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
Bonfire	Control of burning approval	Local Council/NSW Office of Environment and Heritage*
Burning of windrows	DA, Control of burning approval	Local Council/NSW Office of Environment and Heritage*
Agricultural burning of material such as stubble, sugar cane, orchard pruning or diseased crops	Not required	
Burning in an incinerator	Control of burning approval	Local Council/NSW Office of Environment and Heritage*
Burning domestic waste	Control of burning approval (not permitted in some areas)	Local Council/NSW Office of Environment and Heritage*
Burning to demolish a building or other building materials	Control of burning approval (not permitted in some areas)	Local Council/NSW Office of Environment and Heritage*
Burning to destroy sawmill waste material	DA, Control of burning approval	Local Council/NSW Office of Environment and Heritage*
Lighting fires to produce charcoal	Control of burning approval	Local Council/NSW Office of Environment and Heritage*
Burning animals that have died or have died due to disease	Not required	
Camp fire for cooking or heating	Not required	
Burning of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tyres (except for the purpose of giving firefighting instruction) • coated wire • paint containers and residues • solvent containers and residues • treated timber 	Prohibited	
Burning to clear native vegetation	Approval under the <i>Native Vegetation Act 2003</i>	Department of Natural Resources/Local Council

*These approvals are only required in areas listed in the schedules in the [Protection of the Environment Operations \(Clean Air\) Regulation 2002](#).

Note: The *Rural Fires Act* Section 89 states that a fire permit must not be issued unless:

- a. a bush fire hazard reduction certificate has been issued, or
- b. any approval, consent or authority required for the purpose under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* or any other law has been given.

5 What else should you consider before issuing a permit?

It is your responsibility as the permit issuing officer to ensure the safety of the fire and that you impose the appropriate conditions. In most cases, this will require an inspection of the site.

Before issuing a permit, you must be sure that the fire:

- is consistent with the relevant bushfire management plan;
- can be contained and controlled within the specified area;
- will not contain toxic materials, such as rubber tyres, plastics, and paint; and,
- will not cause an air pollution problem by producing excessive amounts of smoke.

You must also check:

- whether an appropriate authority (either the Commissioner of the RFS or the Fire and Rescue NSW Commissioner) has issued a notice banning the issue of permits because of the seriousness of the bush fire danger in the area;
- whether a no burn day has been declared;
- whether a total fire ban is in force; and
- the expected weather conditions.

You should also consider how many permits have been issued for burning for a particular period, as a large number of hazard reduction burns happening at the same time may increase the risks.

6 How long does a permit last?

A permit lasts for a maximum of 21 days, but you can specify a shorter period on the permit.

7 How can you cancel or suspend a permit?

You can cancel or suspend a permit at any time.

To cancel or suspend a permit you must give the holder of the permit notice in writing, unless you are of the opinion that weather conditions are conducive to the outbreak or spread of a bushfire, in which case you can tell them orally.

Permits are automatically suspended during:

- total fire bans; and
- no burn days.

Unless a permit has expired, it may be used after the lifting of a total fire ban or no burn notice.

8 Who do you have to notify?

If you issue a permit to light a fire on land that is within 8 km (or any other distance specified in a bush fire management plan applying to the land) of:

- National Parks and Wildlife Service land; or
- Forests NSW,

within 24 hours you must notify an officer of the National Parks and Wildlife Service or Forests NSW responsible for the land.

You are encouraged to notify any other agency that might be affected by the permit.

Note: When an issuing officer issues a permit, a copy must be immediately faxed to the Zone Office for recording in the Bushfire Risk Information Management System (BRIMS).

9 Where do you get permit forms?

Permits forms in pads of 50 can be obtained by forwarding a Local Purchase Order in accordance with the instructions in [ESCAT](#). A copy is also available on the [Intranet](#) under Specialised Operations, Rescue/Bushfire Section.

10 Advice and information

For further advice and information on issuing fire permits, contact the Bushland Urban Interface Section on (02) 9742 7346 and ask for a Bushfire Officer.

Contact Officer: Manager Bushland Urban Interface Section, (02) 9742 7348

File Reference: CHO/04319

In Orders 2003/20, with amendments

Bushfire hazard reduction certificates

1 The Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code

The *Bush fire environmental assessment code for asset protection and strategic fire advantage zones* commenced on 1 July 2003. The Code makes it easier to do the environmental assessment needed for hazard reduction work by streamlining the process of assessing compliance with all the environmental legislation concerned.

The Code is a step by step assessment process used by the Rural Fire Service (RFS), council and land management agency staff to do environmental assessments for hazard reduction activities on private or council land and issue a Bushfire Hazard Reduction Certificate. Land management agencies, such as National Parks, Forests NSW and local government, can use the Code to assess their own hazard reduction activities.

2 Bushfire Hazard Reduction Certificates

Under the Code, private landholders now apply to the Rural Fire Service (RFS) or local Council for a Bushfire Hazard Reduction Certificate using an application form downloaded from the RFS website or obtained from their local RFS Fire Control Centre. The application should be processed within seven days unless further information or negotiation is required.

The certificate gives approval to undertake hazard reduction by mechanical methods or burning. It is valid for 12 months and may contain conditions to protect the environment.

Note: If burning is the chosen method of hazard reduction, a permit to burn is still required during Bush Fire Danger Periods, or if the burn is likely to endanger a building (see the instruction on [Fire permits](#) on page 241).

3 Who issues Certificates?

The RFS issues Bushfire Hazard Reduction Certificates for most of the State. Local Councils are the issuing body for the following areas:

Bankstown	Hurstville	Ryde
Blue Mountains	Lane Cove	Rockdale
Kogarah	Manly	Willoughby
Ku-ring-gai	Mosman	
Hunters Hill	Newcastle	

4 Circumstances where certificates do not apply

Bushfire Hazard Reduction Certificates can only be issued for hazard reduction work consistent with local Bushfire Risk Management Plans and on land mapped as a bushfire hazard. If there is no District Bushfire Management Committee, eg in areas such as Marrickville, Parramatta, Holroyd or most inner city areas, a certificate cannot be issued.

These Council areas must use the existing arrangements under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

Certificates cannot be issued:

- if the land is excluded from the Code. Significant environmental areas such as wetlands and rainforests are not covered by the Code. Because of their sensitivity a full environmental assessment is required.

- if the Code does not apply to the land. If the land is not declared bushfire prone or there are not identified existing assets to be protected an alternative approval process is required.
- if the work is not covered by the Code. If the work is not specifically for hazard reduction, already has existing approvals (eg lawn mowing) or does not require environmental approval (agricultural activities) a certificate will not be issued.

5 Further information

For further information on the *Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code* and Bushfire Hazard Reduction Certificates, see the Rural Fire Service's website at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au or contact the Bushland Urban Interface Section on (02) 9742 7346 and ask for a Bushfire Officer.

Contact Officer: Manager Bushland Urban Interface Section, (02) 9742 7348

File Reference: CHO/04319 *In Orders 2003/20, with amendments*

Bushfire Fuel Reduction Works Request eForm and User Guide

The [Bushfire Fuel Reduction Works Request eForm](#) is used by Land Managers to request hazard reduction works and to give permission for FRNSW to enter land to carry out the required activities. The proper use of the eForm also enables the capture of information on hazard reduction works conducted by FRNSW. Guidance on how to use the eForm is provided in the [User Guide for FRNSW Bushfire Fuel Reduction Works Request eForm](#).

The *Bushfire Fuel Reduction Works Request eForm* and the *User Guide for FRNSW Bushfire Fuel Reduction Works Request eForm* are available on the Bushland Urban Interface (BUI) Section [Hazard Reduction](#) intranet page. BUI Section can be contacted for any further guidance or assistance in using the *Bushfire Fuel Reduction Works Request eForm*.

Contact Officer: Manager Bushland Urban Interface Section, (02) 9742 7348

File Reference: CHO/03454 *Commissioner's Orders 2012/7, with amendments*

CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT

Security policy

1 Introduction

The purpose of Fire and Rescue NSW is to reduce the impact of emergency incidents on the community of NSW. If Fire and Rescue NSW services are disrupted by malicious, criminal or politically motivated damage to physical resources, personnel, information or information technology and telecommunications services, the community may suffer. Additionally, Fire and Rescue NSW is committed to providing a safe working environment for its employees.

Fire and Rescue NSW must therefore protect its functions, personnel and resources from harm to ensure that it can function effectively and to maintain public confidence.

2 Risk management

Fire and Rescue NSW uses risk management to identify, assess and treat security risks, in accordance with the *Risk management policy* (see [page 201](#)).

Security measures can be expensive to implement and excessive measures may impact on Fire and Rescue NSW's ability to respond to incidents or perform other functions effectively. The risk of a security breach must be weighed against the need to maintain response capability. Security measures must be appropriate to the identified risk.

Security does not mean secrecy. Fire and Rescue NSW is committed to the principle of freedom of information and is accountable to the Government and to the NSW community for its actions. Security decisions must be formulated on a sound factual, financial, lawful and ethical basis.

3 Legislative requirements

Fire and Rescue NSW staff must be aware that there are many laws that protect government functions and resources. Staff members who compromise Fire and Rescue NSW security may be subject to internal disciplinary action or may be subject to criminal or civil charges. Staff should also be aware that security breaches by outside individuals or organisations may lead to charges and that there will be requirements for reporting and the collection of evidence.

NSW legislation relevant to Fire and Rescue NSW security includes:

- Crimes Act 1900 and Regulations
- Electronic Transactions Act 2000
- Evidence Act 1995 and Regulations
- Fire Brigades Act 1989 and Regulation
- Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and Regulations
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 and Regulations
- Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002 and Regulations
- Public Finance and Audit Act 1983 and Regulations
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998
- State Records Act 1998 and Regulations

Commonwealth legislation includes:

- Crimes Act and Regulations
- Evidence Act 1995 and Regulations
- Income Tax Assessment Act and Regulations

Social Security Act 1991 and Regulations
Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act 1979

4 Roles and responsibilities

Executive management is responsible for implementing and maintaining security policies and procedures within the areas under their control and within the organisation in general.

Managers and commanders are responsible for security of personnel, premises, resources and functions under their control. They are responsible for identifying and reporting risks and breaches and ensuring that effective measures are taken. They must ensure that their staff are aware of, understand and comply with security policies and procedures that relate to their functions.

All staff are responsible for making themselves aware of security policies and procedures and for being aware of their security responsibilities. Staff must take reasonable care for their own security and the security of others.

5 Security alerts

The policy on [Security alerts](#) on page 68 details responsibilities and procedures which Fire and Rescue NSW will implement in response to security alerts issued by the Federal Attorney General's Department under the *National Counter-Terrorism Plan*.

Fire and Rescue NSW is always on low level security alert unless a higher level has been announced.

6 Physical security

Fire and Rescue NSW will maintain a safe and secure working environment for its employees and for visitors to its premises. Resources will be held in a suitably secure environment or be subject to suitable security measures when used outside Fire and Rescue NSW premises.

Fire and Rescue NSW also has responsibility for security when it has control of an incident ground. Procedures are in place and must be followed to secure incident grounds and to ensure that premises are handed back to a responsible person at the termination of an incident.

7 Information security

Information resources, including information technology and telecommunications systems, must be protected from compromise and misuse, especially loss, damage, corruption or disclosure, whether deliberate or accidental.

Fire and Rescue NSW relies on information and communication to carry out its functions. It also holds information of value to individuals and other organisations. Fire and Rescue NSW will identify and protect valuable information resources.

Note: for more information on information security see the [Information security policy](#).

8 Personnel security

The security of Fire and Rescue NSW relies on the integrity and honesty of its staff. Fire and Rescue NSW recruitment procedures ensure that employees are suitable for their functions and meet high standards of integrity and honesty.

It is the responsibility of all staff to be aware of and comply with security measures and to report breaches of security. It is the responsibility of managers and commanders to ensure that security risks are identified and managed.

9 Outsourcing and contracting

When outsourcing a function or employing consultants or contractors, Fire and Rescue NSW will ensure that appropriate security measures are incorporated into contracts and that contracted service providers are fully aware of the security policy and guidelines. Fire and Rescue NSW will ensure that the contractor undertakes appropriate security precautions when handling official information or performing Fire and Rescue NSW functions.

10 Investigations

Breaches of security must be reported to the Professional Standards and Conduct Officer.

Fire and Rescue NSW will investigate breaches of security promptly and with sensitivity. The investigations will attempt to identify causes, minimise adverse consequences and recommend actions that will ensure similar incidents do not happen again.

11 Further information

For further information about security risk management contact the Director Logistics Support.

Contact Officer: Director Logistics Support, (02) 9742 7450

File Reference: CHO/07666

In Orders 2003/25, with amendments

Reporting threats to security

1 Scope

This instruction gives the procedures staff must follow if they receive information which is offensive or threatening to the safety or security of Fire and Rescue NSW, other government agencies or the community.

This instruction should be read in conjunction with Safety Bulletin 2001/16, [Suspicious mail and packages](#). Operational personnel should also be familiar with the Standard Operational Guidelines 8.1, [Bombs](#), 8.7 to 8.12 on *Terrorist incidents* and 10.15, [Chemical, biological and radiological incidents](#).

2 Get as many details as possible

If you receive a threatening or offensive telephone call, you should try to obtain as many details as possible from the caller.

A [Bomb threat and threatening/offensive telephone calls incident report](#) has been posted on the Intranet. It can be found in the filing cabinet in Station Portal. This report takes you step by step through the details you should try and collect.

Tip: Print off a copy of the report and keep it where you can get to it easily if you receive a threatening telephone call.

Try to keep the caller on line for as long as possible, while taking the steps in section 3 below to trace the call. Follow the notification processes in section 6 below.

3 Tracing a telephone call

If you have a Nortel Networks telephone, activate the Call Trace function by:

- pressing **Shift**, then
- pressing **CallTrace**

Use another phone to call the Telstra Unwelcome Calls number 1800 805 996 to report the call and have it traced. When talking to Telstra Unwelcome Calls, give your main switchboard number and then your extension number.

If you do not have a Nortel Networks telephone, do not hang up. Use another phone to call the Police on Triple Zero.

4 Threatening or suspicious mail or packages

If you receive a threatening or offensive message by post, keep the message and its envelope or wrapping and seal it in an envelope. Follow the notification processes below.

If you receive mail or packages that you suspect may contain hazardous materials, follow the procedures in [Safety Bulletin 2001/16](#).

5 Threatening emails

Do not delete the email or forward it on to anyone else. Follow the notification procedures below.

6 Who to notify

If the threat is ...	Notify ...
A direct threat of violence against a person or place	1. the Police on Triple Zero
A clear threat of politically motivated violence or terrorism	2. the relevant Fire and Rescue NSW Communication Centre
	3. your commander/manager
A non-specific threat to a person or place	1. your local Police station
	2. the relevant Fire and Rescue NSW Communication Centre
	3. your commander/manager

The Response Coordinator will notify the Assistant Director General, Counter Terrorism and Disaster Recovery, in the Department of Premier and Cabinet on (02) 9228 5091 and appropriate Fire and Rescue NSW senior officers.

7 Implementing emergency procedures

If there is a direct threat to your workplace, implement emergency procedures if necessary.

Contact Officer: *Manager Counter Terrorism and Aviation, (02) 9265 2766*

File Reference: *CHO/07128*

In Orders 2004/20, with amendments

Fire and Rescue NSW identification cards

1 Introduction

Fire and Rescue NSW employees may need to produce evidence that they are employees of Fire and Rescue NSW in a number of circumstances, for example:

- when accessing Fire and Rescue NSW workplaces or services
- to identify themselves to representatives of the Police or other emergency services when working with them at incidents or visiting their premises, or
- to identify themselves to members of the public when acting in their capacity as Fire and Rescue NSW employees.

To provide proof of identity, and to reduce the risks to Fire and Rescue NSW's safety, security and reputation from someone impersonating a Fire and Rescue NSW employee, Fire and Rescue NSW is issuing photo identification cards that include a signature box to employees.

2 Application

This policy applies to all employees, members of the NSWFB Band, temporary employees, contractors, consultants and visitors.

3 Responsibility

You must sign your photo identification card in the card's signature box as soon as you receive it.

You are responsible for the security of your card. It must not be given to another person for any purpose.

You must immediately report lost or damaged cards to your commander/supervisor.

4 Carrying Fire and Rescue NSW identification cards

You must carry your photo identification card at all times while at work.

In Orders 2003/7, *Security alerts* (see [page 68](#)), states:

All Fire and Rescue NSW personnel, contractors, consultants and visitors must have identification with them at all times while in a Fire and Rescue NSW workplace. Failure to produce identification when requested will be considered to be a breach of security and may result in the person's removal.

If you have not been issued with an identification card, or have lost or forgotten your card, the person in charge of the workplace may require you to satisfy them of your identity by other means, eg a driver licence.

5 Displaying Fire and Rescue NSW identification cards

Certain Fire and Rescue NSW premises have been identified as having special security risks. All persons entering those premises are required to wear and display Fire and Rescue NSW identification at all times while they are on those premises.

The sites to which this instruction applies, but may not be restricted to, are:

- Head Office, 227 Elizabeth Street, Sydney
- the Operational Capability/Training Complex, Alexandria, and
- the Logistics Support Complex, Greenacre.

At these locations temporary Fire and Rescue NSW identification cards are provided for temporary employees, contractors, consultants and visitors.

The Manager Professional Standards and Conduct is the responsible officer for security matters at Head Office. The Human Resource Managers are responsible for security at the Alexandria and Greenacre complexes.

During higher level security alerts, or where specific security requirements have been identified, you may be required to wear Fire and Rescue NSW photo identification at other Fire and Rescue NSW premises or workplaces. This may include the requirement to obtain and display special security clearance.

6 Inappropriate use of Fire and Rescue NSW identification

The inappropriate use of Fire and Rescue NSW identification is subversive of discipline and may bring discredit on Fire and Rescue NSW.

The use of Fire and Rescue NSW identification to obtain personal benefits is corrupt conduct.

Any inappropriate use of Fire and Rescue NSW identification will be reported to the Manager Professional Standards and Conduct and may result in disciplinary proceedings being initiated against the offending employee.

The inappropriate use of Fire and Rescue NSW identification by any person who is not a Fire and Rescue NSW employee or by a person who has no authority to use Fire and Rescue NSW identification must be reported to the Manager Professional Standards and Conduct who may report the matter to the Police and/or the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

7 Administration of identification cards

Identification cards are administered by the:

Identification Card Coordinator	Telephone (02) 4353 2351
Zone Office, North 7	Fax (02) 4352 2794
Fire and Rescue NSW	
Suite 1, Wyong Village	
WYONG NSW 2254	

8 Process for issue or replacement of identification cards

The initial issue of Fire and Rescue NSW identification cards will be coordinated by the Identification Card Coordinator.

Requests for replacement cards must be by a memorandum which states the reason a replacement card is required, ie lost, stolen or damaged, together with the details on how the card was lost, stolen or damaged.

8.1 Firefighters

Step	Action	Who is responsible
1	Submit a memorandum to your Station Commander/Supervisor	The Officer or Firefighter requesting a replacement card
2	Forward memorandum to Duty Commander/Supervisor	Station Commander/Supervisor
3	Forward memorandum to Human Resources Manager	Duty Commander/Supervisor
4	Attach copy of memorandum to personal file and forward original memorandum to Identification Card Coordinator	Retained Firefighters - Human Resources Manager Permanent Firefighters - Operational Personnel Section, Head Office
5	Issue replacement identification card	Identification Card Coordinator

8.2 Administration and trades staff

Step	Action	Who is responsible
1	Submit a memorandum to your Supervisor	The staff member who is requesting a replacement card
2	Forward memorandum to Senior Employee Services Officer at Head Office	Supervisor
3	Attach copy of memorandum to personal file and forward original memorandum to Identification Card Coordinator	Senior Employee Services Officer
4	Issue replacement identification card	Identification Card Coordinator

8.3 Band

Step	Action	Who is responsible
1	Submit a memorandum to the Bandmaster	The Band Member
2	Forward memorandum to Identification Card Coordinator	Band Secretary
3	Attach copy of memorandum to personal file and forward original memorandum to Identification Card Coordinator	Band Secretary
4	Issue replacement identification card	Identification Card Coordinator

9 Returning identification cards

When a person who has been issued a Fire and Rescue NSW identification card leaves the employment of, or ceases their association with, Fire and Rescue NSW, that person must surrender their Fire and Rescue NSW identification to their Station Commander/Supervisor.

Station Commanders/Supervisors are to ensure that the surrendered card is returned to the Identification Card Coordinator for destruction.

The Identification Card Coordinator will forward a notation to the employee's personal file that the identification card has been destroyed.

Contact Officer: Manager Counter-Terrorism and Aviation, (02) 9265 2766

File Reference: CHO/07128 and CHO/00955 In Orders 2003/25, with amendments

Identification wallet

1 Introduction

A leather identification wallet (ID wallet) has been issued to all personnel. The wallet holds the Fire and Rescue NSW identification card and a metal badge, and personal items.

2 Issue policy

The wallet and badge are issued to all operational officers and firefighters.

Administration and Trades personnel are not automatically issued with wallets and badges. However, if the nature of their position and work requires identification, they can be purchased with approval from their managers.

3 Use of ID cards and wallets

Use of the ID cards and wallets should comply with the [Code of conduct](#) on page 361.

The Fire and Rescue NSW logo is registered under the *Trademarks Act 1995* to the Crown in right of the state of NSW as the heraldic symbol of Fire and Rescue NSW. The logo cannot be used for an unauthorised or inappropriate purpose. No person or organisation can use the logo for any purpose without the written permission of the Commissioner.

With the issue of individual identification items, such as identification cards, the security of the ID wallet and its contents becomes the responsibility of the individual. Any loss should be immediately reported to the Station Commander or Manager. Request for the re-issue of wallets, badges or ID cards should be accompanied by a report detailing the circumstances of the loss of the previously issued item/s. Authorisation for the issue of new wallets and badges is restricted to the rank of Inspector and above.

Upon resignation, retirement, or termination of employment the Fire and Rescue NSW badge is to be removed from the wallet and returned to the officer in charge of the station, department or unit who in turn will forward the item/s to their HR Manager.

4 Supply information

Wallets and badges can be ordered by Local Purchase Order or through [ESCAT](#), using the supply information in ESCAT.

Contact Officers: Equipment Development Officer, (02) 9742 7174, or Supply Officer (02) 9742 7443

File Reference: SUP/00695 In Orders 2004/14, with amendments