



Department of **Planning, Lands and Heritage**  
Department of **Fire & Emergency Services**  
Department of **Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety**



## Guidelines For Organisations Seeking To Become Accrediting Bodies in Western Australia

**LEVEL 1** Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) Assessor

**LEVEL 2** Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive

**LEVEL 3** Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Performance

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The Office of Bushfire Risk Management, an independent office within the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, also contributed to the development of these guidelines.

## NOTES

This document should be read in conjunction with the *State Planning Policy 3.7: Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* (SPP 3.7) and the *Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* (the Bushfire Guidelines), which explain in further detail the bushfire risk management activities undertaken by the three levels of professionals.

# PART 1 – OVERVIEW

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This document provides guidelines for organisations seeking recognition as an accrediting body in order to provide accreditation schemes for Level 1 Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) Assessors, Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioners – Prescriptive and/or Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioners – Performance (Figure 1). Under these guidelines, more than one organisation may seek this recognition.

For an organisation to attain recognition, it must be prepared to customise its accreditation scheme, including training and assessment, to be relevant to Western Australia, and the level(s) of accreditation as guided by the Western Australian Bushfire Accreditation Steering Committee (the Steering Committee).

Once an accrediting body is recognised by the State Government it will be able to accredit Bushfire Attack Level Assessors and Bushfire Planning Practitioners in accordance with the accreditation scheme's Western Australian handbook and these Guidelines. An accrediting body's accreditation scheme provides oversight of Level 1 BAL assessors and Level 2 and 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioners, ensuring that the development and building industry, decision-makers such as local government and the community can have confidence in a report or assessment by an accredited assessor / practitioner.

This document outlines the minimum training requirements, public and product liability insurance and professional conduct that needs to be adhered to by an accredited assessor / practitioner

The *State Planning Policy 3.7: Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* (SPP 3.7) and the *Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* (the Bushfire Guidelines) strongly recommend the

use of Accredited Level 1 BAL Assessors and 'Bushfire Planning Practitioners' to undertake BAL assessments in designated bushfire prone areas<sup>1</sup> where they are required<sup>2</sup>.

For the **planning process**, under the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Amendment Regulations 2015* (amendment regulations)<sup>3</sup>:

- all sites in areas designated as bushfire prone must have a BAL assessment as specified in Australian Standard AS 3959 *Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-Prone Areas* (AS 3959) prepared before commencing development of a habitable dwelling, except for single houses and ancillary dwellings on site areas less than 1,100m<sup>2</sup>. Alternatively, a BAL Contour Map which formed part of an approved subdivision may be used if it is deemed suitable by the decision-maker; and
- following on from the above, for those areas requiring a BAL assessment, where the BAL rating is BAL-40 or BAL-Flame Zone<sup>4</sup>, a development application will be required. SPP 3.7 and the Bushfire Guidelines strongly recommend a **Bushfire Planning Practitioner** prepare bushfire risk management measures included with the applications.

<sup>1</sup> An amendment to the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998* provides the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner with the power to make an order designating areas as bushfire-prone. The *Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas*, produced by the Office of Bushfire Risk Management, is available at [www.dfes.wa.gov.au/bushfireproneareas](http://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/bushfireproneareas)

<sup>2</sup> Special arrangements also exist in rural areas. Refer to the factsheet, *Building a house in a remote area* issued by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage.

<sup>3</sup> A four month transition period applies to areas that are newly designated bushfire prone before a BAL assessment is required under the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*. There is no transition period under *State Planning Policy 3.7: Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas*. If development approval is required (non R-code compliant dwelling) then the development within a designated bushfire prone area will require a BAL assessment and if the development is located in an area with a BAL rating of BAL-12.5 or above then the development approval should be accompanied with an assessment against the bushfire protection criteria.

<sup>4</sup> A BAL-40 rating – a much increased risk of ember attack and burning debris ignited by wind-borne embers, a likelihood of exposure to a high level of radiant heat and some likelihood of direct exposure to flames from the fire front. BAL-Flame Zone rating – where there is an extremely high risk of ember attack and burning debris ignited by wind-borne embers and a likelihood of exposure to an extreme level of radiant heat and direct exposure to flames from the fire front.

Where a local government's planning scheme has established special control areas relating to bushfires, its requirements will continue in addition to the above-mentioned requirements under the amendment regulations.

For the **building process**, a BAL assessment or a BAL Contour Map which formed part of an approved subdivision may form part of a building surveyor's assessment of bushfire risk for compliance with the bushfire construction requirements of the Building Code of Australia for certain residential buildings.

SPP 3.7 and the Bushfire Guidelines strongly recommend that accredited Bushfire Planning Practitioners prepare bushfire risk management measures including Hazard Level assessments, BAL Contour Maps, Bushfire Management Plans and BAL assessments for planning proposals and development applications<sup>5</sup>.

Under SPP 3.7:

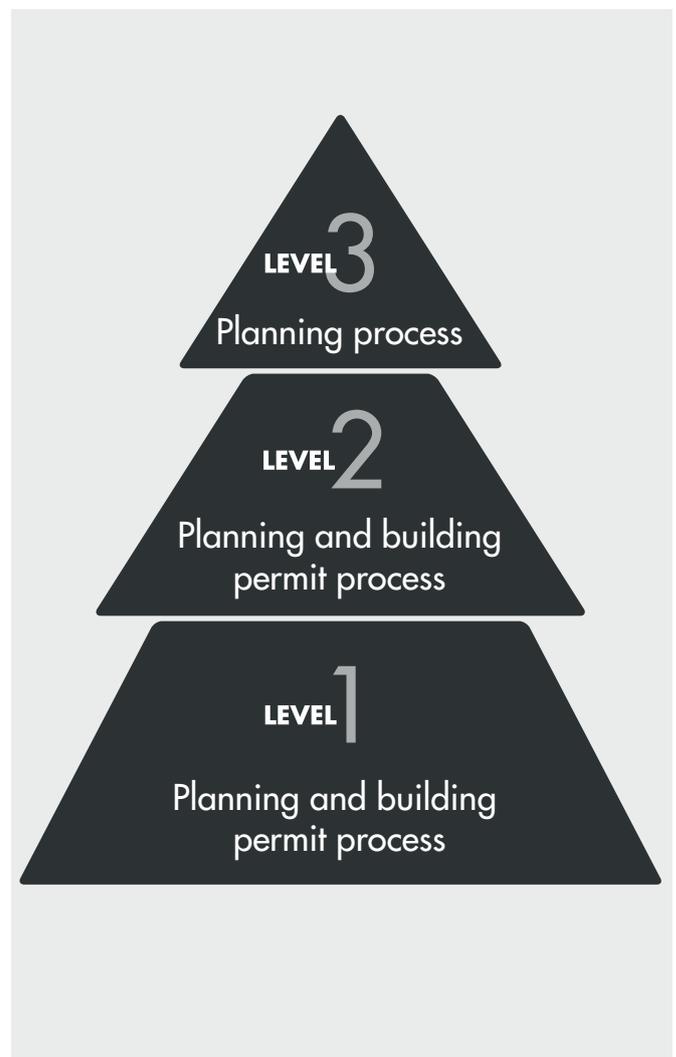
- a **Level 1 BAL Assessor** is defined as 'a person who holds Level 1 BAL Assessor accreditation in accordance with these guidelines; and
- a **Bushfire Planning Practitioner** is defined as a person who holds Level 2 or Level 3 accreditation in accordance with these guidelines.

The Building Commission division of the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (Building Commission) also recommends assessment of bushfire risk is undertaken by a person accredited at the appropriate level to undertake such work.

**Table 1** summarises the activities the three levels of practitioners should be accredited to undertake under an accreditation scheme. The levels of accreditation are similar to those contained within the Bushfire Planning and Design Accreditation Scheme operating in New South Wales and Victoria.

These guidelines establish that each level of accreditation is progressive. This means the requirements set in an accreditation scheme for the lower levels of accreditation need to be demonstrated in addition to the specific requirements for the actual level being sought.

Figure 1: Overview of accreditation – Progressive levels of accreditation



<sup>5</sup> Refer to the Glossary for further explanation on 'planning proposals' and 'development applications'

Table 1: Summary of Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 accreditation

LEVEL 1 BAL ASSESSOR	LEVEL 2 BUSHFIRE PLANNING PRACTITIONER – PRESCRIPTIVE	LEVEL 3 BUSHFIRE PLANNING PRACTITIONER – PERFORMANCE
ACCREDITATION		
<p>Accredited to provide services limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>determining the appropriate BAL using Method 1 (simplified method) of AS 3959 as referenced by the Building Code of Australia; and</li> <li>providing general advice on the design and construction requirements of AS 3959.</li> </ul>	<p>Accredited to provide services limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bushfire Hazard Level assessments for strategic planning proposals according to the Bushfire Guidelines;</li> <li>developing BAL Contour Maps where the lot layout is known for strategic planning proposals and subdivision applications according to the Bushfire Guidelines and relevant practice notes issued by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage and the Building Commission;</li> <li>application of bushfire protection criteria to develop acceptable solutions<sup>6</sup> for planning designs according to the Bushfire Guidelines;</li> <li>development of Bushfire Management Plans according to the Bushfire Guidelines excluding those for ‘vulnerable land use’, ‘high-risk land use’, ‘unavoidable development’ or ‘minor development’ in areas where BAL-40 or BAL-FZ applies<sup>7</sup>;</li> <li>provision of advice for planning proposals and development applications;</li> <li>the activities described for an Accredited Level 1 BAL Assessor, which includes determining the appropriate BAL using only Method 1 (simplified method) of AS 3959; and</li> <li>other limited activities prescribed in practice notes issued by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage from time to time.</li> </ul>	<p>Accredited to provide services limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>determining the appropriate BAL using Method 2 (detailed method) of AS 3959, as referenced by the Building Code of Australia;</li> <li>application of the bushfire protection criteria to develop designs that are outside of those specified in the acceptable solutions within the Bushfire Guidelines;</li> <li>development of Bushfire Management Plans for planning proposals and development applications that involve a ‘vulnerable land use’, ‘high-risk land use’, ‘unavoidable development’ or ‘minor development’ in areas where BAL-40 or BAL-FZ applies<sup>7</sup> in accordance with SPP 3.7 and the Bushfire Guidelines;</li> <li>development of Bushfire Management Plans and provision of advice for unavoidable development applications in accordance with SPP 3.7 and the Bushfire Guidelines;</li> <li>where required, provision of advice for Bushfire Risk Management Plans; and</li> <li>the activities described for a Level 1 BAL Assessor and Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive.</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> ‘Acceptable solution’ is a reference to solutions developed in accordance with the Bushfire Guidelines and should not be confused with ‘alternative solutions’ developed under the Building Code of Australia.

<sup>7</sup> Refer to the Glossary and SPP 3.7 for an explanation on ‘vulnerable land use’, ‘high-risk land use’, ‘unavoidable development’ and ‘minor development’.

## 2. BACKGROUND

In August 2011, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet released an independent review into bushfire risk management practices conducted by former Australian Federal Police Commissioner Mick Keelty. The report, *A Shared Responsibility: the Report of the Perth Hills Bushfire February 2011 Review* ('the Keelty Report'), contained 55 recommendations, five of which related to the planning and building portfolios. In August 2013, the then Department of Planning was asked by the State Government's Bushfire Review Implementation Group to lead the development of initiatives in response to the Keelty Report's recommendations 3, 4, 39, 40 and 42.

In March 2014, the State Government endorsed a package of reforms to address the land-use planning and building recommendations contained in the Keelty Report. The reforms include the development of a professional training and accreditation system for bushfire consultants to inform land use planning approvals and building permit processes.

The creation of a professional training and accreditation system:

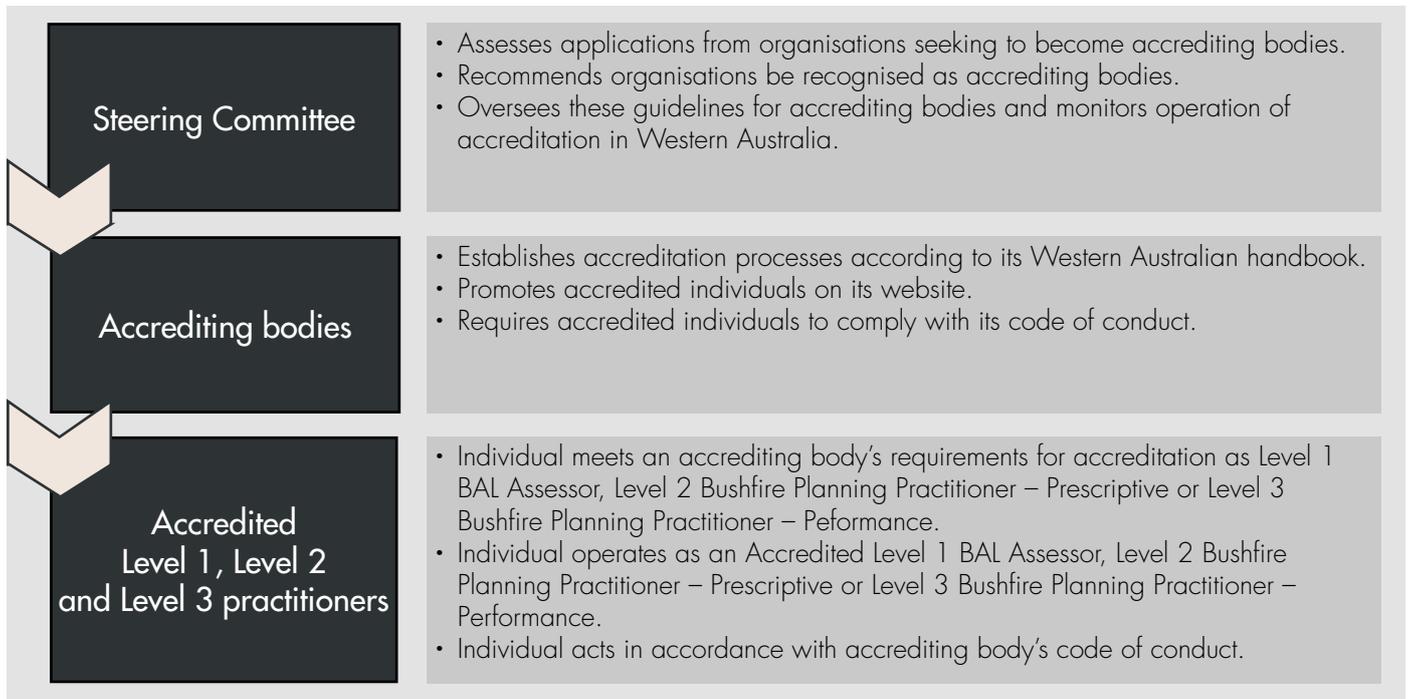
- enables effective, professional and consistent advice for land-use planning and building approval processes
- improves bushfire risk management measures being applied to land uses and development
- provides individuals with the professional standing and expertise to provide BAL assessments and bushfire planning and design consultancy services
- improves the safety of local communities and strengthen community resilience to bushfire events.

The Steering Committee has been established to oversee the training and accreditation system.

### 3. ACCREDITATION SYSTEM

The accreditation system established under these guideline is outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Accreditation roles in Western Australia established under these guidelines



#### 3.1 STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee comprises representatives from the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the Building Commission.

The role of the Steering Committee includes:

- assessing applications from organisations seeking to be recognised by the State Government as accrediting bodies
- overseeing these guidelines for accrediting bodies and accreditation schemes
- monitoring operation of accreditation in Western Australia.

#### 3.2 ACCREDITING BODIES

Organisations seeking to become an accrediting body must submit an application to the Steering Committee that includes a draft Western Australian handbook outlining how the proposed accreditation scheme will operate in Western Australia. This handbook will be reviewed by the Steering Committee for its suitability and consistency with these guidelines. Organisations that subsequently receive recognition as an accrediting body are responsible for the operation of the accreditation scheme, as outlined in their Western Australian handbook.

A proposed scheme should clearly demonstrate a process of accreditation and assessment in order for individuals to achieve the requirement competencies to become accredited. If applying to be an accrediting body for Level 1 BAL Assessors, the training provided should contain the competencies set out in Section 4.3.

Applications to the Steering Committee for recognition should address Section 3.2.2, Section 3.2.3 and the relevant sections for the proposed accreditation scheme.

Accrediting bodies will be able to oversee, in general terms, the quality and standard of accredited practitioners. Their accreditation schemes should maintain a fair and effective system of accreditation, quality assurance and compliance investigation of accredited practitioners.

### 3.2.1. RECOGNITION OF ACCREDITING BODIES

Where the Steering Committee is satisfied that the proposed accreditation scheme is consistent with these guidelines, the State Government will issue a statement on relevant agencies' websites recognising an accrediting body.

### 3.2.2 WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HANDBOOK

An application to become a recognised accrediting body should include a Western Australian specific handbook that outlines how the proposed accreditation scheme aligns with these guidelines.

The Western Australian handbook should outline:

- i. an application process for accreditation, listing required documentation and qualifications, including a process for portfolio submission, an interview process, fees and timeframes
- ii. where a Level 1 BAL Assessor training course is proposed, approval by a state or territory government training authority as a Registered Training Organisation to provide training and assessment services and registered with the Commonwealth Government's Australian Skills Quality Authority
- iii. a code of conduct or separate policy documents on acceptable levels of professional practice, disciplinary processes and ethical behaviour;
- iv. terms by which accreditation will be granted;
- v. an accreditation renewal process including procedures for appeals where renewal is not granted

- vi. requirements for individuals applying for accreditation to hold appropriate levels of public and product liability and professional indemnity insurance. This may be provided through the business entity that engages the applicant to provide the accredited services
- vii. audit process, such as a minimum audit every five years, supplemented by a more informal process in the interim, to ensure accredited people's skills and the application of these are appropriate. This process should include procedures for appeals against audit findings
- viii. continuing professional development (CPD) arrangements for accredited individuals
- ix. procedures for investigating and dealing with complaints, grievances, and breaches of any code of conduct or policy document required as part of an accreditation scheme.
- x. a mechanism to ensure that an accredited practitioner consents to the release of any report, documentation or communication (including material which may be contained within emails, text messages and other forms of communications which the practitioner has compiled or had input into) to the accrediting body, which is held by any government body, client or authority having jurisdiction, that was prepared, written or approved by them in relation to any services covered by the Accreditation Scheme. This mechanism be explicitly stated in an accrediting bodies handbook and accreditation application and renewal forms.

### 3.2.3 ACCREDITING BODY DETAILS

An application to become recognised as an accrediting body should also include the following **organisational details**:

- i. organisational structure including years of trade/operation
- ii. demonstration of a sound financial standing
- iii. demonstration of processes to ensure the proposed accreditation scheme will be operated by an organisation with integrity and due processes

- iv. a refresher training program for updating accredited professionals' knowledge of legislative, planning and technical developments
- v. procedures to assess trainers including the minimum standards and qualifications required
- vi. a CPD program for trainers
- vii. public liability insurance, professional indemnity insurance and workers' compensation
- viii. clear links to relevant approved education courses
- ix. a public register of accredited professionals located on the organisation's website. At a minimum, the register must include the practitioner's name, company, accreditation number, level of accreditation, accreditation expiry date and the location of the practitioner (for example, a nominated town or city). The register must allow a user to search a practitioner by name, business name, accreditation number or location
- x. a record keeping system for maintaining records of accreditation
- xi. where a Level 1 BAL Assessor training course is proposed, approval by a state or territory government training authority as a Registered Training Organisation to provide training and assessment services and registered with the Commonwealth Government's Australian Skills Quality Authority
- xii. where a Level 1 BAL Assessors is proposed, an outline of a training program in alignment with Section 4.3.

### 3.2.4 REPORTING ON ACCREDITATION

Accrediting bodies should provide to the Steering Committee:

- for the first financial year of operation as an accrediting body, monthly notification of:
  - number of individuals who have undertaken training
  - number of individuals who have been accredited and their professions
- from the second financial year of operation as an accrediting body, quarterly financial year reports of:
  - number of individuals who have undertaken training
  - number of individuals who have been accredited and their professions
- after three years of operation, annual summary audit reports outlining the number of individuals audited and the outcomes and informal audits undertaken.

### 3.3 ACCREDITED INDIVIDUALS

Accreditation is a formal acknowledgement that a BAL Assessor or bushfire consultant has met the conditions for accreditation established under an accreditation scheme and agreed to be bound by the conditions set out in its Western Australian handbook.

An individual may be accredited by one or more accrediting bodies recognised by the State Government as long as they meet the requirements of their accreditation schemes.

## PART 2 – BAL ASSESSORS

### 4. LEVEL 1 BAL ASSESSOR

Accreditation by an accrediting body as a Level 1 BAL Assessor recognises individuals who can determine a BAL using the simplified method, as outlined in AS 3959. The BAL may then be used to inform aspects of the planning and building approval processes.

Accredited Level 1 BAL Assessors should be accredited to provide services that are limited to:

- determining the appropriate BAL using Method 1 (simplified method) of AS 3959 as referenced by the Building Code of Australia
- providing general advice on the design and construction requirements of AS 3959.

Accreditation schemes should provide two pathways for individuals to become an Accredited Level 1 BAL Assessor, as outlined in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3: The two pathways for individuals to become an Accredited Level 1 BAL Assessor

<b>PATHWAY ONE – ACCREDITED LEVEL 1 BAL ASSESSOR – FULL ACCREDITATION</b>	<b>PATHWAY TWO – ACCREDITED LEVEL 1 BAL ASSESSOR – INTERIM PROVISIONS – TRAINED PRACTITIONERS</b>
Accreditation criteria: Section 4.1, i–viii	
	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual demonstrates they meet Section 4.1, items i–vii.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To meet Section 4.1, items iii, iv, v and viii, individual has completed the Level 1 BAL Assessor course as per Section 4.3.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To meet Section 4.1, item viii, individual has completed all or part of a Level 1 BAL Assessor course provided by an accrediting body as per Section 4.3.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual demonstrates they meet Section 4.1, items i and ii.</li> <li>• Individual has one year to acquire necessary experience to meet Section 4.1, items vi and vii.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full accreditation as a Level 1 BAL Assessor is attained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full accreditation as a Level 1 BAL Assessor is attained.</li> </ul>

## 4.1 PATHWAY ONE – FULL ACCREDITATION

An accrediting body's scheme for Accredited Level 1 BAL Assessors should contain the following requirements for individuals seeking full accreditation, which is Pathway One (**Figure 3**).

Each individual should:

- i. to abide by the accrediting body's code(s) or policies on acceptable levels of professional practice, disciplinary processes and ethical behaviour
- ii. hold appropriate levels of public and product liability insurance and professional indemnity insurance. The insurance cover may be provided through the business entity that engages the individual to provide Level 1 BAL Assessor services
- iii. demonstrate knowledge of the bushfire provisions within and the operation and hierarchy of the Western Australian state and local planning system
- iv. demonstrate knowledge of the interaction of the bushfire provisions outlined above under item iii with the Western Australian building legislation and linkages with statutory requirements of the Building Code of Australia
- v. demonstrate relevant knowledge of Western Australian bushfire policy, legislation and regulations
- vi. provide five BAL assessment reports completed during the previous two years
- vii. provide two referees in relation to the above-mentioned BAL assessment reports
- viii. successfully complete all or part of a Level 1 BAL Assessor course as determined by the accrediting body, in accordance with Section 4.3 and accreditation scheme.

An accrediting body should only formally accredit an individual where they meet these requirements and any others established in their Western Australian handbook submitted to the Steering Committee.

## 4.2 PATHWAY TWO - INTERIM PROVISIONS

### Pathway Two – Level 1 BAL Assessor – Interim Provisions

An accreditation scheme should provide for accreditation as a Level 1 BAL Assessor – Interim Provisions for individuals who have successfully completed a Level 1 BAL Assessor course (and can therefore meet Section 4.1, items iv, v and viii) but are unable to demonstrate the necessary experience in the preparation of BAL assessment reports (as required under items vi and vii in Section 4.1).

This provisional pathway should require individuals to:

- meet Section 4.1, items i–ii to attain interim accreditation
- meet all the guidelines for full accreditation as a Level 1 BAL Assessor, outlined in Section 4.1, within 12 months of course completion or their provisional accreditation lapses.

## 4.3 COMPETENCIES AND COURSES

### 4.3.1 COMPETENCIES

An accrediting body's Level 1 BAL Assessor training course should ensure it addresses the full set of competencies for Level 1 BAL Assessors outlined in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Competencies for Level 1 BAL Assessor courses

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
Elements 1–5	Level 1 BAL Assessor training should include the following performance criteria
1. Knowledge of the factors affecting bushfire behaviour and the models used to quantify bushfire behaviour.	1.1 Describe and explain the role of vegetation in influencing bushfire behaviour. 1.2 Describe and explain the effect of topography on bushfire behaviour. 1.3 Describe and explain the impact of weather and climate on determining bushfire behaviour. 1.4 Determining Western Australia’s Forest Fire Danger Index and Grassland Fire Danger Index using appropriate tools and techniques. 1.5 Have an understanding of the bushfire behaviour models used in AS 3959 and Western Australia to determine the impact of a bushfire on a building.
2. Knowledge of vegetation and its influence on determining bushfire attack levels.	2.1 Identify all vegetation types categorised in AS 3959 for Western Australia. 2.2 Assess and categorise vegetation in both homogenous and non-homogenous landscapes, particularly peri-urban areas.
3. The ability to conduct a site assessment and determine the Bushfire Attack Level for a site using the prescribed system.	3.1 Identify and describe all classified vegetation affecting the site in accordance with the requirements specified in Western Australia and AS 3959. 3.2 Identify and describe the exclusions that apply to the classification of vegetation in AS 3959. 3.3 Measure the appropriate slopes under the classified vegetation and distances between the classified vegetation and the proposed building. 3.4 Prepare a site plan that identifies the features used to assess and determine the BAL. 3.5 Determine the BAL for a site using the simplified procedure in AS 3959 and prepare a BAL assessment report using the information collected and recorded on the site plan.
4. Knowledge of the legislative and policy framework applicable to Western Australia that governs development on land subject to bushfire impact.	4.1 Identify and discuss the Western Australian legislative framework that governs the construction of new buildings or the alteration/extension of existing buildings on land subject to bushfire impact. 4.2 Demonstrate an awareness of the legislative and policy framework that governs the development and subdivision of land in areas subject to bushfire impact and identify how this may affect the determination of the BAL for new buildings or the alteration/extension of existing buildings.
5. Knowledge of the mechanisms for bushfire attack and an understanding of the construction requirements that can be applied to a building appropriate to the BAL to mitigate bushfire attack.	5.1 Discuss the relationship between bushfire attack and building performance. 5.2 Identify and discuss design and construction options to reduce the impact of bushfire on a building. 5.3 Identify and describe the general construction requirements of a range of building elements for each particular BAL in accordance with the requirements in Western Australia and the requirements specified in AS 3959. 5.4 Demonstrate an understanding of the application of shielding on the construction requirements as specified in AS 3959.

## PART 3 – BUSHFIRE PLANNING PRACTITIONERS

### 5. LEVEL 2 BUSHFIRE PLANNING PRACTITIONER – PRESCRIPTIVE

Accreditation by an accrediting body as a Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive recognises practitioners who can develop the following bushfire risk management measures for planning proposals and development applications in accordance with the SPP 3.7 and the Bushfire Guidelines and BALs and BAL Contour Maps for development and building applications.

Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive should be accredited to provide services limited to:

- Bushfire Hazard Level assessments<sup>8</sup> for strategic planning proposals according to the Bushfire Guidelines
- developing BAL Contour Maps where the lot layout is known for strategic planning proposals and subdivision applications according to the Bushfire Guidelines and relevant practice notes issued by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage and the Building Commission
- application of bushfire protection criteria to develop acceptable solutions<sup>9</sup> for planning designs according to the Bushfire Guidelines;
- development of Bushfire Management Plans according to the Bushfire Guidelines but **excluding** those for ‘vulnerable land use’, ‘high-risk land use’, ‘unavoidable development’ or ‘minor development in areas where BAL-40 and BAL-FZ applies’
- provision of advice for planning proposals and development applications
- the activities described for an Accredited Level 1 BAL Assessor, which includes determining the appropriate BAL using only Method 1 (simplified method) of AS 3959
- other limited activities prescribed in practice notes issued by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage from time to time.

<sup>8</sup> Refer to SPP 3.7 and the Bushfire Guidelines for definitions of Hazard Level assessments ‘vulnerable land use’, ‘high-risk land use’, ‘unavoidable development’ and ‘minor development’.

<sup>9</sup> ‘Acceptable solutions’ is a reference to solutions developed according to the Bushfire Guidelines and should not be confused with ‘alternative solutions’ developed under the Building Code of Australia.

Accreditation schemes should provide two pathways for individuals to become an Accredited Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive, as outlined in **Figure 4**, for people with qualifications that meet the competencies in Section 5.3 and people with relevant bushfire consultancy experience. Accreditation schemes should also provide for interim (provisional) accreditation in the pathway for people with relevant experience to enable them to undertake further education to address any identified competency gaps within a two year period. Where they fail to undertake the further education and thereby attain full accreditation, the accreditation should lapse after two years.

**Figure 4: Pathways for individuals to become an Accredited Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive**

<b>PATHWAY ONE ACCREDITED LEVEL 2 BUSHFIRE PLANNING PRACTITIONER – QUALIFIED PRACTITIONERS</b>	
Accreditation criteria: Section 5.1, i–xi	
	
• Before formal application and where required by an accrediting body, individual undertakes workshop on planning regulatory and policy framework to meet Section 5.1, iv–v.	
• Individual demonstrates they meet the competencies and knowledge requirements for Level 1 BAL Assessors – refer to Section 4.1. This includes undertaking, as determined by an accrediting body, all or part of Level 1 BAL Assessor course to meet Section 5.1, iv, v and xi.	
• Individual demonstrates they meet Section 5.1, items i–iii and vi–x, by providing evidence to the accrediting body.	
• Individual’s application is assessed by an accrediting body.	
• After the above, individual is able to attain full accreditation as a Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive.	
• The accrediting body should set certain requirements for maintaining accreditation such as attendance at professional development sessions.	

## PATHWAY TWO ACCREDITED LEVEL 2 BUSHFIRE PLANNING PRACTITIONER – EXPERIENCED PRACTITIONERS

Accreditation criteria: Section 5.1, i–xi



- Before formal application and where required by an accrediting body, individual undertakes workshop on planning regulatory and policy framework to meet Section 5.1, iv–v.
- Individual demonstrates they meet the competencies and knowledge requirements for Level 1 BAL Assessors – refer to Section 4.1. This includes undertaking, as determined by an accrediting body, all or part of Level 1 BAL Assessor course to meet Section 5.1, iv, v and xi.
- Individual demonstrates significant experience in the bushfire planning industry by providing evidence to the accrediting body and referees commensurate with Section 5.1, items iv–x. Individual also provides evidence to meet Section 5.1, items i–ii.
- Individual’s application is assessed by an accrediting body.
- After an assessment by the accrediting body, an individual may be required to provide further evidence and/or undertake specific units/subjects from a course and/or attend specific CPD sessions to address any gaps in the competencies in Section 5.3.
- The accrediting body should set certain requirements for maintaining accreditation such as attendance at professional development sessions.

- ii. hold appropriate levels of public and product liability insurance and professional indemnity insurance. The insurance cover may be provided through the business entity that engages the individual to provide Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner services
- iii. for those seeking accreditation through Pathway One, have been awarded a tertiary qualification that meets the competencies outlined under Section 5.3
- iv. demonstrate detailed knowledge of the regulatory framework applicable to all forms of development on bushfire prone land in Western Australia including an understanding of specific legislative clauses and the linkages between them
- v. demonstrate the ability to interpret and apply the bushfire risk management measures and acceptable solutions outlined in SPP 3.7 and the Bushfire Guidelines
- vi. demonstrate experience in developing and submitting Bushfire Management Plans and reports for development on bushfire prone land through the application of relevant policies and guidelines
- vii. demonstrate detailed knowledge of relevant bushfire and emergency management policy, legislation and regulations in Western Australia
- viii. demonstrate an understanding of anti-competitive behaviour specific to bushfire consultancy
- ix. provide two Bushfire Management Plans completed during the previous two years
- x. provide two referees in relation to the above-mentioned Bushfire Management Plans
- xi. successfully complete Level 1 BAL Assessor course requirements in accordance with an accreditation scheme and Section 4.3.2
- xii. accrediting body undertakes an assessment of their application to ensure their experience and knowledge is commensurate with the requirements set out in Section 4.3.

Accrediting bodies may determine that to assess individuals against criteria iv and v, they have to attend a workshop before commencing the application process for accreditation.

## 5.1 PATHWAY ONE – QUALIFIED PRACTITIONERS

An accrediting body’s scheme for accredited Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive should contain the following requirements for individuals seeking accreditation. Each individual should:

- i. to abide by the accrediting body’s code(s) or policies on acceptable levels of professional practice, disciplinary processes and ethical behaviour

An accrediting body should only formally accredit an individual where they meet these requirements and any others established in their Western Australian handbook approved by the Steering Committee.

## 5.2 PATHWAY TWO – EXPERIENCED PRACTITIONERS

Individuals seeking to become accredited as a Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive may come from diverse backgrounds, including bushfire consultants, urban planners, architects, urban designers, building surveyors, ecologists and other professionals.

An accreditation scheme should provide RPL as a pathway for accreditation as a Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive for individuals who can demonstrate significant experience in bushfire planning and design as set out in Section 5.1, but have not undertaken a tertiary qualification that contains all the competencies in Section 5.3.

Under this pathway, experienced practitioners provide evidence and attend an interview with the accrediting body to assess whether their experience and knowledge is commensurate with the requirements set out in Section 5.1 and competencies set out in Section 5.3 (**Table 3**), as well as the competencies of a Level 1 BAL assessor listed in **Table 2**.

This pathway should require that individuals:

- meet items i–ii and iv–xi in Section 5.1
- attend an interview with the accrediting body for an assessment of experience and knowledge
- where an applicant is unable to demonstrate in the interview that they can meet all the competencies under Section 5.3, the accrediting body should require the applicant:
  - provide additional evidence; or
  - complete specific units/subjects from a course or attend certain CPD sessions to address any identified gaps in the competencies in Section 5.3; and
- Where the individual agrees to undertake the further study or CPD sessions, they should be granted accreditation on an interim basis for two years. Where they fail to undertake the further education and thereby attain full accreditation, the accreditation should lapse after two years.

## 5.3 COMPETENCIES

An accreditation scheme's course pre-requisites for Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive should ensure individuals applying for accreditation via Pathway One have attained a tertiary qualification that contains the following competencies or, if seeking accreditation via Pathway Two, their knowledge and experience is commensurate with the competencies outlined in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Competencies for Level 2

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
Elements 1–5 described in Section 4.3.1 for Level 1 BAL Assessor.	A Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive must satisfy the elements and performance criteria required for a Level 1 BAL Assessor in addition to the following.
6. An understanding of the measures that can be used to support fire fighting activities during bushfires when planning developments in the rural urban interface.	<p>6.1 Identify the range of techniques and strategies typically used by fire services to protect assets and respond to bushfires.</p> <p>6.2 Identify access requirements for fire fighting vehicles and discuss vehicle limitations including manoeuvrability.</p> <p>6.3 Identify and describe water supply requirements for fire fighting including the equipment and systems required to gain access to various water supplies.</p> <p>6.4 Discuss how measures such as asset protection zones and their management, siting of building envelopes and subdivision layout and road (access) patterns can support fire fighting operations.</p> <p>6.5 Describe the role of hazard reduction and its management for reducing fuels.</p>
7. Knowledge of conceptual planning issues and constraints for bushfire prone areas and the relevant legislative and policy framework upon which this is founded.	<p>7.1 Identify and explain the building and planning legislation affecting development in bushfire prone areas.</p> <p>7.2 Identify and explain the conceptual planning issues for urban and rural development on land subject to bushfire impact.</p> <p>7.3 List the requirements for and explain the differences between the various layers of planning as it relates to federal, state and local governments.</p> <p>7.4 Identify the political, social and physical influences that shape towns and cities and reflect on the role of the community and the courts in influencing development outcomes.</p> <p>7.5 Discuss the concepts of environmental capacity, sustainability and the preservation of the natural and built environment and identify constraints to development.</p>
8. Knowledge of the mechanisms for bushfire attack and the bushfire resistant construction provisions that can be applied to a building appropriate to the BAL	<p>8.1 Discuss the relationship between bushfire attack and building performance.</p> <p>8.2 Describe the performance characteristics of a range of building materials when exposed to bushfire conditions.</p> <p>8.3 Identify and describe the requirements of each type of building element to satisfy the construction requirements for each particular BAL in accordance with the requirements in Western Australia and the requirements specified in AS 3959.</p> <p>8.4 Identify and describe the construction requirements for specific structures in accordance with the requirements in Western Australia and the requirements specified in AS 3959.</p> <p>8.5 Demonstrate an understanding of the application of shielding on the construction requirements as specified in AS 3959.</p> <p>8.6 Identify and explain the application and use of materials, elements of construction or systems that have been tested to AS 1530.8.</p> <p>8.7 Identify and discuss the use of different timber species and densities in accordance with AS 3959 and describe the factors that affect the performance of timbers when exposed to a bushfire environment.</p> <p>8.8 Prepare a report that a building or proposed building is consistent with the relevant bushfire construction provisions specified in AS 3959.</p>
9. Knowledge of the principles for siting and landscaping, recognising the potential impacts of a bushfire.	<p>9.1 Describe the role of landscaping in propagating bushfire in the urban interface environment.</p>

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
10. The ability to select the most appropriate combination of solutions for building in a bushfire prone area.	10.1 Describe the various design options available to improve building survivability during a bushfire utilising prescribed requirements of AS 3959. 10.2 Review the options available for construction of buildings so as to comply with the prescribed requirements of building legislation and the BCA, particularly with respect to the role of Australian Standards.
11. Design developments including subdivisions, new buildings or modifications to existing buildings in bushfire prone areas, aiming to minimise the risk to future developments and their occupants from bushfire and facilitate safe response to bushfires by emergency services.	11.1 Assess the extent of the bushfire risk to the site. 11.2 Design the subdivisions/property on land in bushfire prone areas to incorporate bushfire protection measures into the subdivision/property design through the application of prescriptive requirements. Designs are to have regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bushfire hazard</li> <li>• planning and building controls</li> <li>• the type of development proposed</li> <li>• constraints arising from the existing development pattern, community character and environment.</li> </ul> 11.3 Negotiate on subdivision patterns to achieve safer bushfire outcomes.
12. Submit design applications for subdivisions, new buildings or modifications to existing buildings in bushfire prone areas to eliminate or minimise risk to future and existing developments and their occupants from bushfire and facilitate safe response by emergency services by using and applying acceptable solutions as per the Bushfire Guidelines.	12.1 Communicate and negotiate with key parties involved in the application and approval process. 12.2 Write design applications in prescribed formats. 12.3 Oversee implementation of the bushfire protection measures into the construction of the development in accordance with the approved plans.

## 6. LEVEL 3 BUSHFIRE PLANNING PRACTITIONER – PERFORMANCE

Accreditation by an accrediting body as a Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Performance recognises practitioners who can develop the following bushfire risk management measures for planning proposals in accordance with SPP 3.7 and the Bushfire Guidelines and BALs for building and development applications.

Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Performance should be accredited to provide services that are limited to:

- determining the appropriate BAL using Method 2 (detailed method) of AS 3959, as referenced by the Building Code of Australia
- determining the appropriate BAL using alternative methodologies and approaches
- application of the bushfire protection criteria to develop designs that are outside of those specified in the acceptable solutions<sup>10</sup> within the Bushfire Guidelines
- development of Bushfire Management Plans for planning proposals and development applications that involve a ‘vulnerable land use’, ‘high-risk land use’, ‘unavoidable development’ or ‘minor development’ in accordance with SPP 3.7 and the Bushfire Guidelines<sup>11</sup>
- development of Bushfire Management Plans and provision of advice for ‘unavoidable development’ applications<sup>12</sup>
- where required, provision of advice for bushfire risk management plans
- the activities described for a Level 1 BAL Assessor and Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive.

Accreditation schemes should provide only one pathway for individuals to become an Accredited Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Performance, as outlined in **Figure 5**. This should require the completion of a suitable qualification that meets the competencies in Section 6.1.

<sup>10</sup> ‘Acceptable solutions’ is a reference to solutions developed according to the Bushfire Guidelines and should not be confused with ‘alternative solutions’ developed under the Building Code of Australia.

<sup>11&12</sup> Refer to SPP 3.7 for further details on ‘vulnerable land use’, ‘high-risk land use’, ‘unavoidable development’ and ‘minor development’.

Figure 5: Pathway for individuals to become an Accredited Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Performance

ACCREDITED LEVEL 3 BUSHFIRE PLANNING PRACTITIONER – PERFORMANCE	
PATHWAY	
Accreditation criteria: Section 6.1, i–xii	
	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual demonstrates they meet the competencies and knowledge requirements for Level 1 BAL Assessor and Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive.</li> <li>• This includes undertaking, as determined by an accrediting body, all or part of Level 1 BAL Assessor course to meet Section 6.1, xii and, where required by an accrediting body, undertaking a workshop on the planning regulatory and policy framework.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual demonstrates they meet items i-xi in Section 6.1 by providing evidence to the accrediting body.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual application is assessed by the accrediting body.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After the above, individual is able to attain full accreditation as a Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Performance.</li> </ul>	

### 6.1 PATHWAY

An accrediting body’s scheme for accredited Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Performance should contain the following conditions for individuals seeking accreditation. Each individual should:

- to abide by the accrediting body’s code(s) or policies on acceptable levels of professional practice, disciplinary processes and ethical behaviour
- hold appropriate levels of public and product liability insurance and professional indemnity insurance. The insurance cover may be provided through the business entity that engages the individual to provide Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Performance services
- have been awarded a tertiary qualification that meets the competencies outlined under Section 6.1

- iv. demonstrate detailed knowledge of the regulatory framework applicable to all forms of development on bushfire prone land in Western Australia including an understanding of specific legislative clauses and the linkages between them
- v. demonstrate the ability to interpret and apply the bushfire risk management measures outlined in SPP 3.7 and the Bushfire Guidelines
- vi. hold experience in developing and submitting Bushfire Management Plans and reports for development on bushfire prone land through the application of relevant policies and guidelines and the application of the bushfire protection criteria to develop designs that are outside of those specified in the acceptable solutions within the Bushfire Guidelines<sup>13</sup>
- vii. implement professional quality assurance processes
- viii. demonstrate an understanding of anti-competitive behaviour specific to bushfire consultancy
- ix. demonstrate high level written and oral communication skills
- x. provide two Bushfire Management Plans completed during the previous five years
- xi. provide two referees in relation to the above-mentioned Bushfire Management Plans
- xii. successfully complete, as determined by the accrediting body, all or part of a Level 1 BAL Assessor course provided by an accrediting body in accordance with Section 4.3.3 and, where required by the accrediting body, a workshop on the planning and regulatory and policy framework
- xiii. undertake an assessment of their application by the accrediting body.

An accrediting body should only formally accredit an individual where they meet the above conditions and any others established in their Western Australian handbook.

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<sup>13</sup> 'Acceptable solutions' should not be confused with 'alternative solutions' developed under the Building Code of Australia.

## 6.2 TERTIARY QUALIFICATIONS

An accreditation scheme's course pre-requisites for Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Performance should ensure that individuals applying for accreditation have attained a tertiary qualification that meets the competencies outlined in **Table 4**, as well as the competencies of a Level 1 BAL assessor listed in **Table 2**, and the competencies of a Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner which are listed in **Table 3**

**Table 4: Competencies for appropriate qualifications for Level 3**

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
Elements 1–12 described in Section 5.3 for Level 2.	A Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Performance must satisfy the elements and performance criteria for a Level 1 BAL Assessor and Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive in addition to the following.
13. The application of advanced models of bushfire behaviour and the effects on people, materials and the environment.	13.1 Demonstrate the application of Method 2 of AS 3959 to quantify bushfire behaviour for a range of vegetation types and identify the effects of bushfire on people, materials and the environment through the application of Method 2 of AS 3959. 13.2 Predict the intensity and flame characteristics of a bushfire. 13.3 Apply available models to describe bushfire behaviour and its impact on structures. 13.4 Describe the impacts of bushfire on species and communities of environmental significance and their fire thresholds. 13.5 Describe the impacts of fire on the environment and environmental services and management strategies to protect these values.
14. The ability to select the most appropriate combination of solutions for building in a bushfire prone area using alternative methods to the prescribed requirements.	14.1 Describe the various design options available to improve building survivability during a bushfire utilising an alternative solution approach to the requirements of SPP 3.7 and the Bushfire Guidelines. 14.2 Review the options available for construction of buildings so as to comply with the performance criteria prescribed in the Bushfire Guidelines without relying on the Acceptable Solutions.
15. The ability to utilise knowledge, measures and understanding of legislation in the planning of safe and cost effective development.	15.1 Analyse the links between development and environmental impacts and identify mechanisms to limit those impacts in planning for safe and cost effective developments. 15.2 Apply planning principles to make development in bushfire prone areas more sustainable and safer.
16. Knowledge of emergency risk management arrangements (legislation) and strategies and their applicability to bushfire emergencies.	16.1 Identify and describe the state legislation and policies that apply to emergency events in their own jurisdiction.
17. An understanding of the techniques that can be used to develop risk management strategies including the roles of community engagement and education planning.	17.1 Describe the process of developing risk management strategies and their applicability to bushfire planning. 17.2 Discuss the techniques that can be used to develop risk management strategies, including community engagement, monitoring and review.
18. The ability to develop risk management strategies for individual bushfire emergencies.	18.1 Predict the (qualitative) risk of an area arising from bushfire. 18.2 Apply appropriate guidelines, standards and codes to the development of a bushfire emergency plan for a site.

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
19. An understanding of the principles of performance based design.	19.1 Describe the principles of performance-based design as it applies to bushfire environment in a land use planning context.
20. A sound knowledge of the fire safety engineering process and techniques applicable.	20.1 Discuss the fire safety engineering process and techniques applicable to bushfires. 20.2 Identify and explain the concept of 'measures in combination' as it applies to development in bushfire provisions.
21. The ability to develop alternative approaches and solutions for planning and building in bushfire prone areas.	21.1 Apply the appropriate bushfire impact models to determine suitable scenarios, otherwise known as 'design fires' in which to assess performance against. 21.2 Create alternative approaches and solutions for planning and building in bushfire prone area.
22. Design and evaluate developments, including subdivisions, new buildings or modifications to existing buildings in bushfire prone areas aiming to minimise the risk to future developments and their occupants from bushfire and facilitate safe response to bushfires by emergency services using land use planning based alternative design solutions	22.1 Assess the extent of the bushfire risk to the site. 22.2 Design subdivisions/property on land subject to bushfire impact to incorporate bushfire protection measures into the subdivision/property design through the development of alternative design solutions to the prescribed requirements. Designs are to have regard to bushfire hazard, planning controls, the type of development proposed, and constraints arising from the existing development pattern, community character and environment. 22.3 Make expert judgements on the effectiveness of designs in relation to various relevant factors including water requirements, access to and within the site, the setback required between the development and the hazard, vegetation management requirements, location and feasibility, environmental impact and emergency planning. 22.4 Develop alternative design solutions that follow the processes established the International Fire Engineering Guidelines as appropriate. 22.5 Negotiate on subdivision patterns to achieve bushfire risk management and other outcomes.
23. Submit design applications for subdivisions, new buildings or modifications to existing buildings in bushfire prone areas to eliminate or minimise risk to future and existing developments and their occupants from bushfire and facilitate safe response by emergency services using land use planning based alternative design solutions.	23.1 Communicate and negotiate with key stakeholders involved in the application and approval process generally in accordance with the processes included in the International Fire Engineering Guidelines. 23.2 Write design applications using an appropriate format that clearly articulates, explains and justifies how the alternative design solution meets the relevant bushfire safety provisions.

## **7. ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS UNDER THE BUILDING CODE OF AUSTRALIA**

The Building Code of Australia is a performance based document that contains mandatory performance requirements that the construction of buildings must comply with under the *Building Act 2011*. Compliance with a Building Code of Australia performance requirement can be achieved through a deemed-to-satisfy solution (for example, compliance with AS 3959 for residential buildings in designated bushfire prone areas) or through the development of an alternative building solution. Under the *Building Act 2011*, it is the responsibility of the registered building surveyor who signs the relevant certificate of compliance to determine whether the building complies with the Building Code of Australia performance requirements.

Level 1 BAL Assessors, Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioners – Prescriptive and Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioners – Performance should be aware that accreditation under these guidelines does not provide the appropriate level of knowledge and experience to develop alternative building solutions for the purposes of compliance with the bushfire construction requirements of the Building Code of Australia.

Registered building surveyors who sign relevant certificates of compliance under the *Building Act 2011* should ensure that any alternative building solution for demonstrating compliance with the bushfire construction requirements of the Building Code of Australia has been developed by someone who holds suitable fire engineering qualifications and experience as determined by that building surveyor.

An accredited Level 1 BAL Assessor, Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive or Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Performance may be able to collaborate with a fire engineer in the development of an alternative building solution.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Acceptable solutions:** This is a reference to acceptable solutions developed according to the Bushfire Guidelines and should not be confused with alternative solutions developed under the Building Code of Australia.

**Accredited Level 1 BAL Assessors:** An individual accredited by an accrediting body to provide services as listed in section four of these Guidelines.

**Accredited Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive:** Individuals accredited by an accrediting body to provide services listed in section five of these Guidelines.

**Accredited Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Performance:** Individuals accredited by an accrediting body to provide services listed in section six of these Guidelines.

**Accrediting Body:** An organisation recognised by the State Government as an accrediting body in accordance with the *Guidelines for organisations seeking to become accrediting bodies in Western Australia: Level 1 Bushfire Attack Level Assessors, Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioners – Prescriptive and Level 3 Bushfire Planning and Design Practitioners – Performance* (that is this document).

**Accreditation Scheme:** An accrediting body's program for accrediting people, according to its Western Australian handbook.

**Accreditation:** Formal acknowledgement that the accreditation holder has met an accrediting body's requirements under an accreditation scheme for a Level 1 BAL Assessor, Level 1 BAL Assessor – Interim Provisions (A), Level 1 BAL Assessor – Interim Provisions (B), Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Prescriptive, or Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioner – Performance in accordance with the *Guidelines for organisations seeking to become accrediting bodies in Western Australia: Level 1 Bushfire Attack Level Assessors, Level 2 Bushfire Planning Practitioners and Level 3 Bushfire Planning and Design Practitioners* (i.e. this document) and they have agreed to be bound by the conditions of accreditation set out by an accrediting body.

**AS 3959:** Australian Standard AS 3959 *Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-Prone Areas*, as referenced by the Building Code of Australia.

**BAL Contour Map:** As defined in the Bushfire Guidelines, this is a scale map of the subject lot/s illustrating the potential radiant heat impacts and associated indicative BAL ratings in reference to any classified vegetation remaining within 100 metres of the assessment area after the development is complete. The intent of the BAL Contour Map is to identify land suitable for development based on the indicative BAL. The Bushfire Guidelines strongly recommend that BAL Contour Maps are prepared by accredited Bushfire Planning Practitioners.

**Bushfire Attack Level (BAL):** As set out in the Australian Standard AS 3959 *Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-Prone Areas*, as referenced by the Building Code of Australia.

**Bushfire Guidelines:** The Western Australian Planning Commission's *Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas*, available at [www.planning.wa.gov.au/bushfire](http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/bushfire)

**Bushfire Hazard Level assessment (BHL):** An assessment that provides a measure of the likely intensity of a bushfire and the likely level of bushfire attack on a site determined by categorising and mapping land as having a low, moderate or extreme BHL in accordance with the methodology set out in the Bushfire Guidelines. The Bushfire Guidelines strongly recommend that BAL Contour Maps are prepared by accredited Bushfire Planning Practitioners.

**Bushfire protection criteria:** A performance-based system of assessing bushfire risk management measures contained in the Bushfire Guidelines and applied to all strategic planning proposals, subdivisions and development applications.

**Bushfire prone area:** An area that is subject to, or likely to be subject to, bushfire attack<sup>14</sup>. An area that has been designated by the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner under Section 18P of the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998* as an area that is subject, or likely to be subject to bushfires. For the purposes of the *Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas*, a bushfire prone area includes both the bushfire prone vegetation and the bushfire prone buffer. Such areas are identified on the *Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas*.

**Decision-maker:** The decision-maker is defined as the Minister for Planning, the State Administrative Tribunal, the Western Australian Planning Commission, Development Assessment Panels, any other State decision-making authorities, and/or relevant local government and their delegates that make decisions regarding the application of the SPP 3.7.

**Development application:** Defined under SPP 3.7, this is an application for approval to carry out development or change a land use under either a local planning scheme or region planning scheme, this includes local development plans but excludes applications for single houses and ancillary dwellings on a lot or lots less than 1,100m<sup>2</sup>.

**Habitable building:** Under *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Amendment Regulations 2015*, 'habitable building' means a permanent or temporary structure on land that is fully or partially enclosed, has at least one wall and roof of solid material and is used for a purpose that involves the use of the interior of the structure by people for living, working, studying or being entertained.

**High-risk land use:** Defined under the SPP 3.7, this is a land use which may lead to the potential ignition, prolonged duration and/or increased intensity of a bushfire. Such uses may also expose the community, fire fighters and the surrounding environment to dangerous, uncontrolled substances during a bushfire event. Examples of what constitutes a high-risk land use are provided in the Bushfire Guidelines.

**Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas:** Prepared and administered by the Office of Bushfire Risk Management, this map identifies designated bushfire-prone areas across the State, as authorised by the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner.-

**Mapping Standard for Bush Fire Prone Areas:** Produced by the Office of Bushfire Risk Management, the *Mapping Standard for Bush Fire Prone Areas* identifies designated bushfire prone areas across the state, as authorised by the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner.

**Minor development:** Defined under the SPP 3.7, this refers to applications in residential built-out areas at a scale which may not require full compliance with the relevant policy measures. Classes of development considered under this definition, with the exclusion of applications for unavoidable development, are:

- single houses on an existing lot 1,100m<sup>2</sup> or greater;
- an ancillary dwelling on a lot of 1,100m<sup>2</sup> or greater; and
- change to a vulnerable land use in an existing residential development.

**Planning proposals:** Includes strategic planning proposals and subdivisions as defined under SPP 3.7.

**SPP 3.7:** The Western Australian Planning Commission's *State Planning Policy 3.7: Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas*, available online at [www.planning.wa.gov.au/bushfire](http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/bushfire)

**Steering Committee:** The Western Australian Bushfire Accreditation Steering Committee, consisting of representatives from the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the Building Commission. This committee oversees the accreditation initiative outlined in this document.

**Strategic planning proposal:** Any strategic-level planning proposal including: region scheme amendments; district structure plans; local planning strategies; local planning schemes and amendments; and structure plans and master plans – but does not include subdivision and development applications.

<sup>14</sup> Standards Australia 2009, Australian Standard AS 3959 *Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-Prone Areas*, Third Edition incorporating Amendment Nos 1, 2 and 3, SAI Global Limited under licence from Standards Australia Limited, Sydney, p. 9

**Unavoidable development:** Defined under the SPP 3.7, this is development that, in the opinion of the decision-maker, represents exceptional circumstances where full compliance with this policy would be unreasonable; no alternative location exists; it is not minor development; and it is not contrary to the public interest. Examples of what constitutes a vulnerable land use are provided in the Bushfire Guidelines.

**Vulnerable land use:** Defined under the SPP 3.7, as land use where persons may be less able to respond in a bushfire emergency. Examples of what constitutes a vulnerable land use are provided in the Bushfire Guidelines.