



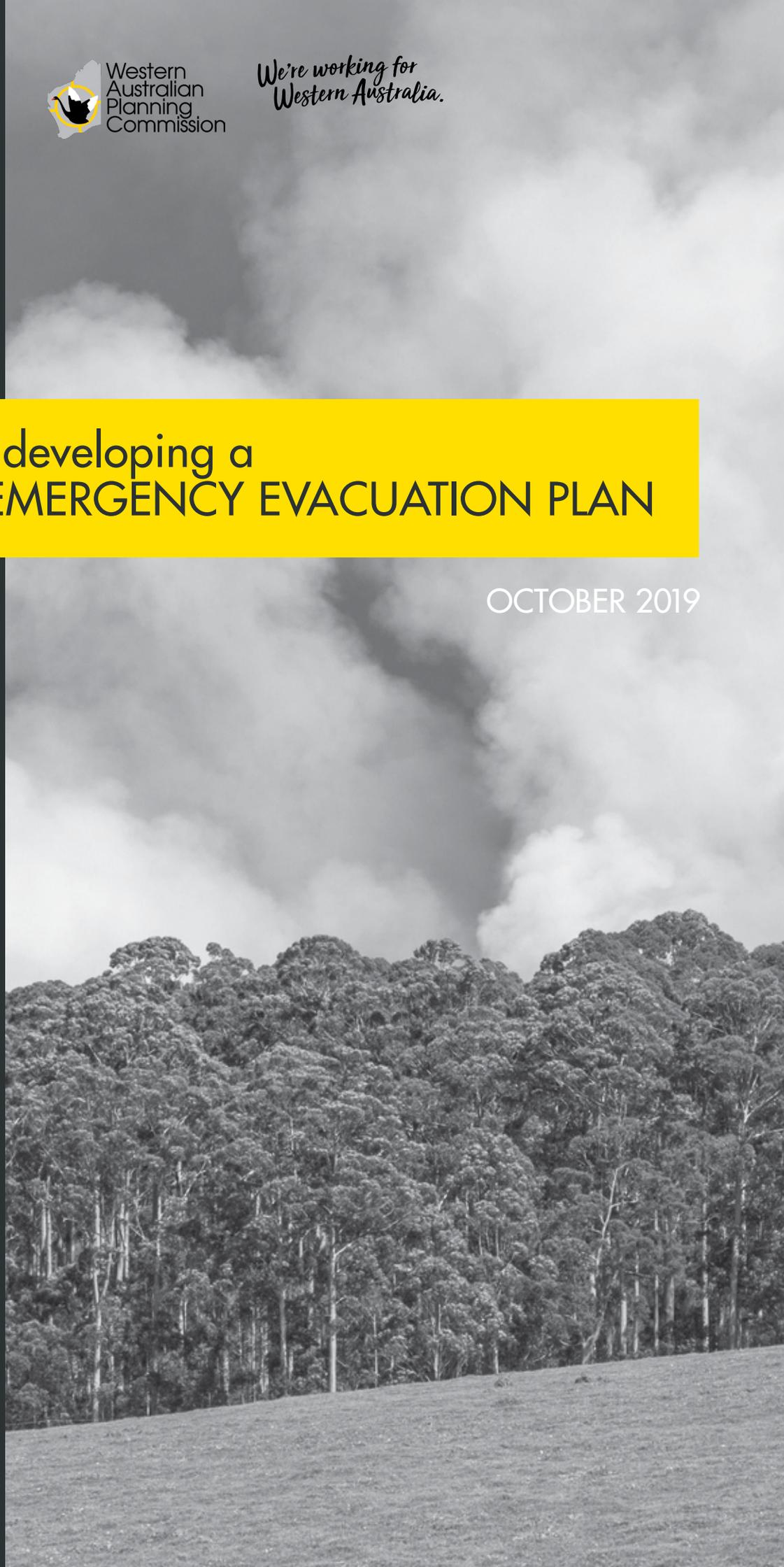
Department of Planning,
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A Guide to developing a BUSHFIRE EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

OCTOBER 2019



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RATIONALE

Bushfires are a part of the Australian environment. The number of people and property potentially affected by bushfire is increasing as the population grows and development encroaches further into bushland areas.

An Emergency Evacuation Plan will boost the preparedness of vulnerable land uses from bushfire attack by identifying the steps to be followed before, during and after a bushfire event for occupants and visitors. This guide aims to assist in developing and reviewing an existing Emergency Evacuation Plan by providing a six-step process of factors that need to be considered.

The process for emergency management in relation to bushfire is:

- preparedness
- response
- recovery
- review (for continuous improvement).

WHAT IS A VULNERABLE LAND USE?

Vulnerable land uses are those where people may be less able to respond in a bushfire emergency.

WHEN SHOULD AN EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN BE PREPARED?

Under policy measure 6.6.1 of *State Planning Policy 3.7: Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas*, an Emergency Evacuation Plan should accompany development applications for vulnerable land uses.

WHO SHOULD BE CONSULTED IN THE PREPARATION OF AN EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN?

It is recommended to provide a copy of an Emergency Evacuation Plan to the local fire service to assist in pre-incident planning, particularly in remote locations; however, the local fire service is not required to review or approve the Emergency Evacuation Plan.

Local emergency management committees and emergency management agencies should be consulted in identifying and endorsing potential sites for shelter-in-place. Shelter-in-place buildings should be registered with the local government. Local governments should ensure that Emergency Evacuation Plans are consistent with the local government's Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA).

TYPES OF VULNERABLE LAND USE	EXAMPLES
Land uses designed to accommodate occupants with reduced physical or mental ability such as the elderly, children (under 18 years of age) and the sick or injured.	Aged or assisted care, nursing home, education centre, child care centre, hospital, medical centre and rehabilitation centre.
Facilities that, due to building or functional design, offer limited access or the number of people may present evacuation challenges.	Corrective institution (prison) and detention centre.
Land uses that involve short-stay accommodation or visitation for people who are unaware of their surroundings and who would require assistance or direction in the event of a bushfire.	Bed and breakfast, caravan park and camping ground, holiday accommodation, serviced apartment (short-stay), tourist development and worker's accommodation.

WHAT IF AN EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN IS ALREADY IN PLACE?

Many facilities have procedures to ensure the safe movement of employees and occupants in the event of an evacuation.

These procedures are normally referred to as an Emergency Plan as outlined in the following Australian Standards (AS):

- *AS3745-2010 – Planning for emergencies in facilities*
- *AS4083-2010 – Planning for emergencies – Health care facilities.*

An Australian Standards-based Emergency Plan has employees and occupants evacuate buildings to an assembly point in the event of an emergency. However, in the case of a bushfire emergency, these procedures may not adequately address the safety of occupants and other related issues. For example, if the nominated assembly point is out in the open, people may be exposed to the heat and smoke created by the bushfire.

An Emergency Evacuation Plan should identify appropriate procedures for employees and occupants to follow in the event of a bushfire. It should contain the following minimum requirements:

- Name and address of facility
- Contact details (including phone number)
- Number of employees/occupants
- Number of occupants with support needs
- Whether the occupants are permanent or transient
- Whether there is a caretaker onsite
- Primary and secondary actions (evacuate and shelter-in-place)
- Location details of primary and secondary actions
- Procedures for primary and secondary actions
- Evacuation assembly point(s) and transport arrangements
- Roles and responsibilities of facility personnel and emergency services

- Action statements for before, during and after a bushfire
- Site layout
- Attachments will depend on the facility type and other factors and may include employee/occupant lists and parent/guardian/family member contact details
- Information about how to stay up to date with official warnings. For example, the Emergency WA website, Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) Facebook and Twitter accounts, 13 DFES information line and the local frequency for ABC Radio.

Launched on 1 September 2022, the Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) is a new, nationally consistent fire danger rating system that features four simplified rating levels to more accurately reflect fire danger conditions and provide you with clear and consistent messaging of what to do at each level. If your Emergency Evacuation Plan is prepared prior to the above date, you should review and revise the document to align with the new fire danger rating system.

SIX STEPS TO PRODUCE AN EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

Individuals preparing or reviewing an existing Emergency Evacuation Plan are to follow the following six-step process.

As each step is completed, it is recommended to record the details in a document that is readily accessible and updated as circumstances change. This document is to remain separate from the Emergency Evacuation Plan document.

The Emergency Evacuation Plan document outlines the emergency procedures for the facility in the event of a bushfire, while the documentation developed from the six-step process outlines the rationale for the emergency procedures.

Separating the two documents ensures that the Emergency Evacuation Plan remains concise and easy to understand by the end-user. The purpose of the Emergency Evacuation Plan is for occupants to easily identify what to do in the event of a bushfire emergency. The contents of an Emergency Evacuation Plan should follow the Emergency Evacuation Plan template.

The development of an Emergency Evacuation Plan should be consistent with the following Australian Standards (AS):

- *AS3745-2010 – Planning for emergencies in facilities*
- *AS4083-2010 – Planning for emergencies – Health care facilities.*

STEP 1 – ESTABLISH AN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM

An emergency management team is a group of people responsible for contributing to the development, documentation and review of an existing Emergency Evacuation Plan. The emergency management team shall consist of a bushfire planning practitioner and the owner/operator of the facility. The preparation and periodic review of the Emergency Evacuation Plan should be undertaken by an accredited bushfire planning practitioner. The owner/operator of the facility is responsible for ensuring the Emergency Evacuation Plan is implemented and to assist with the periodic review.

The role of the bushfire planning practitioner is to:

- establish and implement emergency plans and procedures
- formulate emergency procedures
- consult with the local government and local emergency services.

The role of the owner/operator after the Emergency Evacuation Plan has been initially developed is to:

- identify and assign duties and responsibilities to employees
- ensure employees and other occupants are educated and trained on emergency procedures
- ensure all occupants are aware of the emergency procedures for the site
- consult with the local government and local emergency services.

The emergency management team should regularly review the Emergency Evacuation Plan dependent on when circumstances may change (for example, there has been a change to the site, the surrounding road network or the bushfire hazard) to ensure it remains practical and current.

STEP 2 – IDENTIFY FACILITY DETAILS AND ANALYSE SITE AND LOCATION CHARACTERISTICS

Preparing an Emergency Evacuation Plan requires an understanding of how a bushfire may affect the site and the consequences for occupants. For a better understanding of the bushfire risk and impact in a particular area, the individual developing or reviewing the Emergency Evacuation Plan should consult with the local emergency services and the local government.

The characteristics of the site and its occupants must be identified, including:

- the contextual location of the site
- the type of facility (for example, aged care, child care, tourism development etc.)
- the occupancy characteristics (for example, number of occupants, age profile, disability, mobility and health considerations, vulnerability and communication constraints)
- the facility/site's vulnerability to bushfire (for example, construction standards, design features, access, firefighting water supply, proximity to hazard, landscaping)
- complementary bushfire protection strategies, proposed or existing (for example, alert systems, suppression systems, training, hazard management)
- availability of suitable on-site buildings that are away from the effects of a bushfire
- availability of suitable off-site location(s) (if evacuating) that cater to the needs of occupants
- availability of safe evacuation route(s), including time and space
- availability of evacuation transport.

STEP 3 – DETERMINE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EMERGENCY ACTIONS

In response to the bushfire threat, procedures for both evacuation and shelter-in-place as the primary and secondary actions are to be developed. This is to ensure that if for any reason the primary action is not achievable, the facility is not left without a procedure to follow. The decision needs to be based upon a good understanding of the location, occupants and the effects of bushfire as well as information contained in official warnings issued by emergency services.

Early evacuation should always be the primary action – you should never ‘wait and see what happens’. Sheltering-in-place and actively defending a building will take huge physical and mental effort for many hours before, during and after the fire and conditions will be unbearably hot. However, bushfires are very unpredictable and evacuation at the last minute ahead of a bushfire is dangerous due to smoke, noise, heat, flames, emergency vehicles and panic on the road. It is much safer to shelter-in-place than flee as the fire approaches. Sheltering-in-place during a bushfire should be a last option, when all other plans fail, and occupants are unable to leave due to there being insufficient time to evacuate early to a safer place well away from the fire; or emergency services advise, through official warnings, that sheltering-in-place is the safest option.

Early evacuation in response to an imminent bushfire threat may also be difficult for facilities in remote locations or facilities with people with morbidity issues. In these circumstances, sheltering-in-place may be considered as the safer action. For day-use facilities in remote locations, consideration should be given to closure of the facility on higher fire danger rating days.

The primary and secondary emergency actions should be clearly identified in the Emergency Evacuation Plan.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EVACUATION AND SHELTER-IN- PLACE?

Evacuation is the process of moving people from the site to another location off-site and some distance away from the effects of a bushfire. Evacuating requires an off-site location which is a building or site some distance away from the facility and from the effects of bushfire that is able to accommodate all occupants being evacuated.

Shelter-in-place is the process of relocating people to a designated location that is within the facility’s site and in close vicinity of where they occupy, but away from the effects of a bushfire. An example may be moving school children from less safe classrooms to a safer gymnasium on the same site. Sheltering-in-place requires a building within the site that is able to adequately accommodate all occupants and has adequate protection from the effects of bushfire



STEP 4 – ANALYSE REQUIREMENTS FOR EVACUATION AND SHELTER-IN-PLACE

IDENTIFY AN OFF-SITE LOCATION (FOR EVACUATION)

When identifying an off-site location, a number of factors will need to be considered, such as its location, transportation arrangements to the location, its size/capacity and the availability of a facility in the nearby area. Consult with the local government, local emergency management committee and/or the Department of Communities¹ when identifying an off-site location.

Depending on the extent of bushland areas around the facility, the location of a bushfire and the safest route from the property, there may be a need to identify two or three off-site locations and/or alternative safe routes

depending on direction of spread of the fire. Details of the off-site location(s) in an Emergency Evacuation Plan should include street name and suburb, map reference, location/building name, location/building contact number if applicable and the possible route to be taken.

The off-site locations for evacuation, and primary and secondary routes to the location, should be clearly identified in the Emergency Evacuation Plan and on a map attachment (further information of map attachment under Step 5).

The following questions will assist the individual developing or reviewing the Emergency Evacuation Plan to identify an off-site location. For an appropriate off-site location, the answers to the below questions should receive a 'yes'.

<p>If there are occupants with support needs that require a similar facility to support them, is the off-site location suitable?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>• Occupants with support needs are people with physical, intellectual, visual, or auditory disability or impairment, either temporary or permanent. It also includes aged persons and juveniles who are dependent on others for their care and wellbeing.</p>	
<p>Is the off-site location in an area away from the effects of a bushfire?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>• Have you considered locations such as community centres, clubs etc. as possible places to go?</p>	
<p>Are there amenities (toilets, food, water etc.) available at the off-site location? (if applicable)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>Can the off-site location accommodate the number of occupants?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>• Remember that other persons may wish to utilise the same facility as their shelter for evacuation. • Accommodation for more than one day may be required.</p>	
<p>Does the route to the off-site location require transporting through bushfire affected areas or areas that may be affected by an approaching bushfire?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>• Depending on the extent of the bushfire hazard around the site, the location of a bushfire and the safest route from the site, there may be a need to have two or three off-site locations.</p>	
<p>Has the owner of the off-site location advised that they are happy to accommodate occupants if evacuation from a bushfire emergency occurs?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>

¹ The Department of Communities determines the number and location of evacuation centres to be opened in consultation with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (the responsible/controlling agency for a bushfire emergency).

DETERMINING TRANSPORT TO AN OFF-SITE LOCATION (EVACUATION)

Part of planning an evacuation is how people are going to be transported to the designated off-site location.

Make arrangements with transport provider/s to have the appropriate vehicles available when required. Make a list of transport providers, contact names and phone numbers and how many vehicles will be available.

The details of the transport provider/s used such as contact name, phone numbers, estimated time for the transport provider/s to arrive and the estimated travelling time to the off-site location should be clearly identified in the Emergency Evacuation Plan.

Consider the following questions to assist planning transport arrangements.

Once an off-site location and transport arrangements have been identified, identify the estimated time it will take to coordinate occupants and travel to the off-site location.

The time it takes to coordinate and move occupants from the site to another location is the **MINIMUM** time required to evacuate safely. **TAKE THIS INTO CONSIDERATION AND EVACUATE EARLY.**

Do you have your own transport for all occupants?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If no , what transport provider will you use?
Are you going to use private vehicles?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If using private vehicles, will they be available when you need them and will there be drivers available?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If no , consider another mode of transport?
Will there be sufficient vehicles to transport all the occupants?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Have occupants with support needs been considered when determining transport types and necessary timing to evacuate?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is disabled transport required, and is this sufficient to move the number of occupants from the facility?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you require ambulances?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes , St John Ambulance Australia needs to be consulted. <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is a community bus available?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Will community buses be available when you need them and will drivers be available?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are other means of transport available?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you need any other type of special transport?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No



IDENTIFY AN ON-SITE BUILDING (SHELTERING-IN-PLACE)

An appropriate building is required when sheltering-in-place and should be a building within the site that is able to accommodate all occupants away from the effects of a bushfire. Sheltering-in-place can occur if the facility includes buildings that are away from the bushfire hazard and staff are willing to patrol the building to protect against ember attack and maintain situational awareness.

The designated on-site building should be clearly identified in the Emergency Evacuation Plan.

The following questions will assist the individual developing or reviewing the Emergency Evacuation Plan to identify an on-site building. For an appropriate building, the answers to the below questions should receive a 'yes'.

Is the property well maintained and kept free from a build-up of fuel and leaf litter in gutters and around buildings?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Standards for Asset Protection Zones in the <i>Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas</i>. 	
Is there a building on-site that is away from bushland and is unlikely to be impacted by bushfire?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the potential for any adjoining structures, vegetation or combustibles to ignite and impact on the building. For facilities where occupants are located in numerous buildings or rooms, it may be appropriate to remain in those rooms under supervision. 	
Is the building constructed in a manner that minimises bushfire attack with appropriate Asset Protection Zones?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To determine standards of construction, consult Australian Standard <i>AS3959 Construction for buildings in bushfire prone areas</i>. 	
Can the building accommodate the number of occupants and visitors?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there ease of accessibility to the building and is it easily identifiable?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there access to amenities (toilets, food, water etc) away from the effects of a bushfire?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

STEP 5 – DEVELOP PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

When moving people around due to a bushfire emergency, whether they are able bodied, disabled or unfamiliar with the area, there needs to be clear and concise procedures that outline actions to be taken at various stages of the emergency.

There are three key periods of bushfire attack to consider as an approaching bushfire impacts on properties over many hours:

1. **As the bushfire approaches:** This period can last from 30 minutes to several hours, dependent on the speed and intensity of the fire. Some embers may start to fall around the property, igniting spot fires. The more intense the fire, the earlier the ember attack will start.
2. **As the fire front impacts:** During this period, which can last from 10 minutes to over an hour, the property will be exposed to ember attack, radiant heat, and the fire front itself. Wind damage may expose parts of a building for embers to enter.
3. **After the fire front has passed:** For several hours after the fire front has passed, the property will be exposed to ongoing ember attack and spot fires.

PREPAREDNESS

There are a number of actions that can be undertaken just prior and during the bushfire season to increase the protection of your building from a bushfire. This includes simple measures such as maintaining an asset protection zone around the building, clearing gutters and implementing firebreaks. A local government may issue fire-break notices under the *Bush Fires Act 1954* that require landowners or occupiers of land to install and maintain firebreaks in accordance with the requirements prescribed. The local government should be contacted for specific firebreak requirements.

Actions should also be undertaken to ensure that staff and occupants are aware of emergency procedures and what to do in the event of a bushfire emergency.

Action statements must be written concisely, using plain language suitable for the end-user and be listed in a logical and sequential way so that the end-user can easily follow the process required. Repetition of tables and action statements in the Emergency Evacuation Plan should be avoided.

Refer to Appendix 1 for example actions to be undertaken just prior and during the bushfire season. These action statements should be included in the 'Preparedness' section of the Emergency Evacuation Plan template. Property owners can also consult with their local bushfire brigade for advice on how to best prepare and manage the fuel load on and around their property.

Individuals should refer to the [Homeowners Bushfire Survival Manual](#) and [Bushfire Preparation Toolkit](#) for further information regarding:

- Preparing an emergency kit
- What is bushfire protective clothing
- How to upkeep property to prepare for the bushfire season; and
- Actively defending a building if it is too late to evacuate.

AWARENESS AND PRE-EMPTIVE PROCEDURES

An Emergency Evacuation Plan may include pre-emptive procedures, such as closing a facility on days of heightened fire weather. Therefore, consideration must be given to the development of actions for when the fire danger rating is high, extreme, catastrophic, total fire bans or Bureau of Meteorology forecasts/warnings. The [Department of Fire and Emergency Services website](#) includes information regarding what each fire danger rating means and what individuals should do in response. Pre-emptive procedures should be included in the 'Awareness and Pre-emptive Procedures' section of the Emergency Evacuation Plan template.

Actions for how employees keep informed of fire danger ratings, total fire bans and official warnings by emergency services agencies should also be developed.

This may be through the Department of Fire and Emergency Services website, Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) website, dialling 1996 for Telstra Weather Services and/or local government fire danger rating signs. These should be included in the 'Awareness and Pre-emptive Procedures' section of the Emergency Evacuation Plan template. These actions should also include the frequency of when the action should occur. Ensure that the action statements are not too onerous for the responsible persons. For example, a visual assessment for fire and smoke in the area may only be required every 1-2 hours rather than every half an hour.

Refer to Appendix 3 for more information regarding how to respond to official bushfire warnings by emergency service agencies.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

TRIGGERS

The action statements under the 'Emergency Response' section to decide either to evacuate or shelter-in-place in the Emergency Evacuation Plan template should align with a trigger point. A trigger is a timeframe, scenario or some other factor that initiates an emergency procedure action. Factors to be considered in determining triggers include the decision to evacuate or shelter-in-place as this will influence the timeframe required for certain actions to be undertaken. For example, if the decision is to evacuate and transport is required, then a timeframe to move occupants would have to be established. This would be used as a trigger to ensure there is adequate time, well before a bushfire approaches, to evacuate people to an off-site location.

Triggers should incorporate emergency service official alert levels as issued by the relevant emergency services agency and the 'Watch and Act' or emergency warning alert from DFES or Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. Decisions to evacuate or shelter-in-place should be consistent with the State's emergency service official alert levels and the local emergency management planning set out in the LEMA. The actions and responsible persons for monitoring these triggers should also be outlined in the 'Awareness and Pre-emptive Procedures' section of the Emergency Evacuation Plan template.

Refer to Appendix 1 for example triggers which may initiate an emergency response action.

ACTIONS

Action statements outline the duties and actions required to be undertaken during a bushfire emergency. They state clearly who is to do what and when, such as who will call the evacuation, ensure all persons are accounted for, coordinating and arranging transport, and other requirements. They must be written concisely, using plain language suitable for the end-user and be listed in a logical and sequential way so that the end-user can easily follow the process required. Repetition of tables and action statements in the Emergency Evacuation Plan should be avoided.

The key considerations for inclusion in the emergency response action statements include:

- Communication, including:
 - procedures for warning and communication
 - procedures for communicating with service providers, off-site facilities and emergency services
 - procedures for contacting occupants' families during a bushfire emergency
 - communications equipment
 - communicating with non-English speaking visitors and residents
- Assembly points and evacuation routes to a designated off-site location(s)
- Routes and assembly to a designated building if sheltering-in-place
- Accounting for occupants during a bushfire emergency
- Control and coordination of occupants during a bushfire emergency
- Necessary actions in the event of loss of power or water, if sheltering-in-place
- Emergency response equipment

Refer to Appendix 1 for example procedures and actions to be undertaken when evacuating or sheltering-in-place during a bushfire emergency.

RECOVERY

It is important to not only develop a plan for how to prepare and respond to a bushfire emergency, but also what actions should be undertaken after a bushfire emergency has taken place and the bushfire front has passed. These actions and the responsible persons should be included in the 'Recovery' section of the Emergency Evacuation Plan.

Refer to Appendix 1 for example actions to be undertaken after a bushfire emergency has taken place.

SITE LAYOUT

A site layout and a separate map displaying the off-site location(s) and primary and secondary evacuation routes to the off-site location(s) should be developed. A site layout is a single sheet diagram of the site that shows the locations of buildings, assembly points and other items such as firefighting equipment. The following features are to be included in the site layout plan, where applicable:

- Site boundaries
- Internal roadways
- Buildings
- Locations of dangerous good and any other significant hazardous materials
- Emergency vehicular and pedestrian entrances and exits
- Assembly points (for evacuation) and address of off-site location(s)
- Location of on-site building (for sheltering-in-place)
- Fire services (for example, hydrants, boosters, sprinklers, hose reels, deluge valve stations)
- Town mains water supplies and/or on-site water tanks
- Location of electrical supply isolation points
- Location of gas supply locations and isolation valve points
- Indication of current location on the map (for example, "You are here").

The hard copy site layout and off-site location(s) map should be:

- A3 size
- Provided as an attachment to the Emergency Evacuation Plan
- Laminated or framed and posted in conspicuous locations throughout the facility (in each building)
- Be readily accessible by **ALL** occupants, visitors and emergency service personnel.

Refer to Appendix 2 for an example of a site layout.

STEP 6 – TRAINING AND EDUCATION ON EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

For the procedures of the Emergency Evacuation Plan to be followed in an orderly manner during an emergency, all employees must be trained to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to undertake the duties set out in the emergency procedures. It is also important that employees and occupants are thoroughly familiar with what is expected of them in the event of a bushfire.

The processes listed below outline how to inform employees and other occupants of the emergency procedures.

Employees

- Have a meeting and discuss procedures and who does what.

Other permanent/regular occupants

- Have a community meeting with occupants.
- Provide a site layout showing where the designated assembly point(s) and on-site building (for shelter-in-place) are.
- Provide a map of the off-site location(s) (for evacuation) and evacuation routes.

Temporary occupants

- Have information flyers available during the bushfire season outlining emergency management procedures and bushfire protection measures.
- Have a site layout with the designated assembly point(s) and on-site building (for shelter-in-place), and separate map of the off-site location(s) (for evacuation) posted in each room.

A responsible person/s of the facility such as the owner, operator or manager should ensure that delivery of education and training for employees and occupants occurs and to conduct annual exercises on these procedures.

The training should address the following:

- duties of employees as described in the Emergency Evacuation Plan
- procedures contained in the Emergency Evacuation Plan, including the decision to evacuate or shelter-in-place, evacuation routes and off-site location(s) and specific transportation arrangements
- responding to alarms and reports of a bushfire emergency
- communication during a bushfire emergency
- human behaviour during emergencies
- the performance of the building and its installations during a bushfire
- where to find official emergency information. For example, Emergency WA website, 13 DFES information line, local ABC Radio.

It is recommended that drills are practiced once prior to and during the bushfire season to ensure everyone understands their role in an emergency.

Critical drill exercises should include testing the arrangements and procedures for the:

- decision to evacuate or shelter-in-place
- location of the evacuation routes and off-site location(s)
- bushfire action statements, including who has responsibility for what
- transport and accommodation arrangements.

Actions for undertaking training and education should be included in the 'Preparedness' section of the Emergency Evacuation Plan template.

Refer to:

- AS3745-2010 – *Planning for emergencies in facilities.*



GLOSSARY

Assembly point	The designated place or places where people assemble during an evacuation.
Bushfire emergency	An emergency as a result from a bushfire.
Bushfire planning practitioner	A person who holds a Level Two or Level Three accreditation under the Western Australian Bushfire Accreditation Framework.
Emergency Evacuation Plan	The written documentation of the emergency arrangements for facility in response to a bushfire, generally made during the planning process. It consists of the preparedness, prevention and response activities and includes the agreed emergency roles, responsibilities, strategies, systems and arrangements.
Emergency	An event that arises internally, or from external sources, which may adversely affect the occupants or visitors in a facility, and which requires an immediate response.
Emergency management team	A group of people responsible for the development, documentation and review of an Emergency Evacuation Plan.
Evacuation	The orderly movement of people from a place of danger.
Facility	A building, structure or workplace that is, or may be, occupied by people (occupants).
Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA)	Arrangements for emergency management in the local government's district developed in accordance with section 41 of the <i>Emergency Management Act 2005</i> . It refers to the collection of all of the emergency management documentation, systems, processes, agreements and memorandums of understanding which affect the local government district.
Local emergency management committee	A group of people appointed by the local government, in accordance with section 28 of the <i>Emergency Management Act 2005</i> , and responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• advising and assisting the local government in ensuring that local emergency management arrangements are established for its district;• liaising with public authorities and other people in the development, review and testing of local emergency management arrangements; and• carrying out other emergency management activities as directed by the State Emergency Management Committee.
Occupant	A person attending a facility on a permanent or temporary basis, such as an employee, contractor, student or resident, but not a visitor.
Off-site location	A venue at another location, some distance away from the site that is able to accommodate all the people being evacuated. The place is not under threat from a bushfire.
Relocation	Movement of people to an alternate area.
Shelter-in-place	Procedures for a relevant situation where the safest course of action is to remain in a building or location on-site.
Support needs	People with physical, intellectual, visual, or auditory disabilities or impairments, either temporary or permanent who require support. It also includes aged persons and juveniles who are dependent on others for their care and well-being.

APPENDIX 1 – EXAMPLE TRIGGERS AND ACTIONS TO BE UNDERTAKEN BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER A BUSHFIRE EMERGENCY

The following are examples of triggers and actions to be undertaken before, during and after a bushfire emergency, which may be included in an Emergency Evacuation Plan. These are examples only and can be included or amended as appropriate to your facility. It is not necessary to include every example listed. You may identify additional action statements relevant to your facility. Ensure that actions included in the Emergency Evacuation Plan are not too challenging for occupants of the facility.

Triggers which may lead to necessary emergency response action statements

- ‘Advice’, ‘Watch and Act’ or ‘Emergency Warning’ alert from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services or Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.
- Direction to evacuate/shelter-in-place from an emergency service authority.
- Prevented from evacuation due to road closure or other hinderances.
- Fire in close proximity and considered too dangerous to leave.
- Smoke or fire has been identified in the area.
- Declaration of a Total Fire Ban by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services

Action statements just prior and during the bushfire season

- Review Emergency Evacuation Plan to ensure details, procedures and contact phone numbers are correct.
- Ensure employees and other occupants are informed and familiar with the procedures laid out in the Emergency Evacuation Plan.
- Place current version of site layout in facility in visible location(s).
- Ensure the nominated on-site building and off-site location and routes to both are still a safe option.
- Ensure the Emergency Evacuation Plan is up to date.
- Contact off-site location(s) for potential use during a bushfire emergency.
- Contact transport suppliers for potential use during a bushfire emergency.
- Ensure adequate levels of drinking water are available in the designated on-site building.
- Ensure any firefighting equipment (hoses etc.) is serviceable and available.
- Ensure no hazards are present (for example, rubbish piles) that could contribute to increased fire intensity.
- Ensure property access is kept clear and easily trafficable.
- Ensure first aid kits, fire extinguishers, emergency lighting and other emergency resources are current, serviceable and accessible.
- Ensure roof and gutters are free from leaf litter and debris.

- Ensure occupants have their essential items (for example, passports and medication) ready for evacuation.
- Ensure an emergency evacuation kit has been prepared and is easily accessible by staff.
- Get an understanding of the situation by consulting a range of information sources including local ABC radio, the Emergency WA website (emergency.wa.gov.au), DFES Facebook or Twitter, 13 DFES (13 33 37) information line and local emergency services.

Ongoing actions during the bushfire season

- Maintain asset protection zones around all buildings and ensure lawns and grassed areas are kept below 10 centimetres in height.
- Maintain compliance with the local government's annual firebreak and fuel load notice issued under section 33 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.
- Ensure defensible spaces around buildings and assembly points are maintained.
- Update contact details of the emergency management team and employees.

To maintain situational awareness and to be prepared for a possible bushfire approaching, employees may follow the procedure outlined below

- Maintain situational awareness through a range of information sources including local ABC radio, the Emergency WA website (emergency.wa.gov.au), DFES Facebook or Twitter, 13 DFES (13 33 37) information line and local emergency services.
- Look outside for any signs of smoke or fire in the area.
- Staff to carry two-way radio and spare battery and ensure that they are charged.
- Inform occupants of the fire situation.
- Ensure that the person in charge (such as the Chief Warden) has a mobile phone and is contactable.
- Advise the local government Chief Bushfire Control Officer or Community Emergency Services Manager that the centre is operating and that it will need to be advised early in the event of an evacuation being necessary.
- Make arrangements for transportation (for evacuation).

In the event of an approaching bushfire threatening the facility and the primary action to evacuate/shelter-in-place will take place, employees and other occupants of the facility may follow the procedure outlined below

EVACUATION

- The fire warden (or person responsible) is to advise DFES (include phone number) or '000' that the facility's occupants are evacuating (include how many people and where they are going).
- Arrange for vehicles to meet at designated assembly point for pick-up of occupants.
- Contact off-site location and inform them of pending arrival.
- Move all persons to the assembly point for evacuation.
- Ensure all persons are accounted for prior to departure (use listing of occupants).
- Ensure all site buildings have all doors and windows closed prior to leaving the site.
- At the designated off-site location, move all persons inside and ensure all persons are accounted for and safe.

- The fire warden (or person responsible) is to advise the local emergency service (include phone number) that all persons have been evacuated and are accounted for and safe at the designated off-site location.
- After all the occupants are accounted for and safe at the designated off-site location, nominated employees will commence contacting families affected.
- Maintain situational awareness through a range of information sources including local ABC radio, the Emergency WA website (emergency.wa.gov.au), DFES Facebook or Twitter, 13 DFES (13 33 37) information line and local emergency services.

SHELTER-IN-PLACE

- Designated fire warden will take control of the situation.
- Ensure all doors and windows close within the facility.
- Move all persons to the designated on-site building.
- Ensure all persons are accounted for (use listing of occupants and visitors register).
- The fire warden (or person responsible) is to call '000' for assistance and advise DFES (include phone number) that the facility's occupants are sheltering-in-place (include how many people and which building on-site).
- Prepare to actively defend the building, including readying hoses and other equipment.
- Maintain situational awareness through a range of information sources including local ABC radio, the Emergency WA website (emergency.wa.gov.au), DFES Facebook or Twitter, 13 DFES (13 33 37) information line and local emergency services.
- Two persons to make regular exterior visual inspection (wearing appropriate protection from bushfire) of the on-site building for embers and extinguish where possible (to action only if appropriate protective clothing is available).

ACTION STATEMENTS AFTER THE BUSHFIRE THREAT HAS PASSED AND THE AREA IS DEEMED SAFE BY EMERGENCY SERVICES

- Ensure the safety of all people and seek medical assistance for those requiring it.
- No person should re-enter any evacuated building until it is deemed safe to do so (this may be advised by emergency services and power/gas supply technicians).
- Follow the directions of emergency services personnel at all times.
- The fire warden (or person responsible) to arrange the movement of occupants back to the site and/or their separate accommodation.
- All occupants are to be accounted for on their return.
- Checking the Australian Red Cross 'Register, Find, Reunite' register.
- Inform the police/emergency service of the return of persons to the facility.
- Review the Emergency Evacuation Plan for effectiveness, make note of weaknesses and amend as necessary.

APPENDIX 2 – BUSHFIRE WARNINGS

During a bushfire, emergency services provide as much information as possible through different communication channels.

There are three levels of warning **ADVICE**, **WATCH AND ACT** and **EMERGENCY WARNING**. These change to reflect the increasing risk to life and the decreasing amount of time you have until the fire arrives.

If the facility is likely to be threatened by the fire, activate the emergency procedures immediately.

An **ADVICE** provides you with information that a fire has started, but there is no immediate threat to lives or homes. Be aware and keep up to date.

A **WATCH AND ACT** message tells you there is a possible threat to lives or homes. You need to leave or get ready to defend – do not wait and see. If the decision is to evacuate, and contact cannot be made with the Emergency Services, the responsible person should ensure the safe movement of occupants to a safer location off-site. Considerations should include the location of bushfire, ability to travel safely to the selected location and the safest route to get there. In some circumstances, it may not be safe to evacuate.

An **EMERGENCY WARNING** is the highest level of warning. You are in danger as your area will be impacted by fire. You need to take immediate action to survive. Listen carefully as you will be advised whether you can leave the area or if you must move to a safer location where you are as the fire burns throughout your area.

An emergency warning may be supported with a siren sound called the Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS). SEWS is a distinctive sound that is broadcast immediately prior to major emergency announcements on radio, television and other communication systems. The signal sounds like '**whoop, whoop, whoop**' and is broadcast for up to ten seconds before the broadcast of emergency information. SEWS tells people 'you need to listen - there is an emergency in your area and you need to take action now'. It is used like a siren and is strictly controlled for use by an authorised hazard management agency only.

The responsible person should contact Emergency Services to seek instructions as to whether to move occupants to their pre-determined safer on-site location or evacuate. If the decision is to evacuate, and contact cannot be made with the Emergency Services, the responsible person should ensure the safe movement of occupants to a safer location off-site. Considerations should include the location of bushfire, ability to travel safely to the selected location and the safest route to get there. In some circumstances, it may not be safe to evacuate.

TOTAL FIRE BAN

When a **TOTAL FIRE BAN** is declared, it prohibits the lighting of any fires in the open air and any other activities that may start a fire. For further details, refer to the [DFES website](#).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[Bushfire warnings](#)
[Bushfire risks and dangers](#)
[Travelling during a bushfire](#)