



BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Thursday 20th of March 2025 – General Meeting – 5.30pm

Derek Fletcher Training Room, Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade / State Emergency Service,
20 Raymond Road, Walliston

1. OPENING OF MEETING

Chairperson – Cr. John Giardina opens the meeting at 1730hrs and welcomed present attendees,

2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Attending Members:

- Cr. John Giardina – City of Kalamunda, Councillor – South-East Ward
- Mike Ward – Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, City of Kalamunda
- Natalie Smailes – Captain, Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade
- Tony Moiler AFSM – Captain, Kalamunda Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service
- Paul Postma – DO South-East, Department of Fire and Emergency Services
- John Idland – Fire Control Officer, Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade

City Staff:

- Michael Hall – Senior Fire Mitigation Officer, City of Kalamunda
- Freya Ayliffe – Manager Community Health & Safety, City of Kalamunda (via Teams)

Ex- Officio Members: Nil

Visitors:

- Brodie Selby – DBCA – District Fire Coordinator
- Jayden Flint – 2nd Lieutenant, Kalamunda Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service

Apologies:

- Steve Lake – Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- Anthony Vuleta – Chief Executive Officer, City of Kalamunda
- Tim Parry – Coordinator Community Safety, City of Kalamunda
- Cr. Geoff Stallard – City of Kalamunda, Councillor –South-East Ward
- Warwick Martindale – Local Manager State Emergency Service

Minutes:

- Andrew Haselden – Fire Control Officer, Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade,

3. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Moved: John Idland

Seconded: Tony Moiler

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4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

4.1. Kalamunda VBFB Sale of Mazda Support Vehicle. –

Tim Parry advises that the disposal of the Mazda support vehicle is with the City's Fleet manager, preparing for disposal. Mike Ward, through the Chair, requests that this is escalated within the City as the vehicle has been sitting in the yard for over 12 months. CEO Anthony Vuleta inquires as to where the profits from the sale will go. Mike Ward advises that post auction/disposal, any profits are to be returned to the Kalamunda volunteer bushfire brigade, as the vehicle was donated and made operational by Brigade volunteers and community donations of time and materials. Mike Ward notes that the Mazda is currently a City asset from a service, licencing and insurance perspective.

March 2025 - Action Item discussed, "Disposal to be followed up through the City's fleet manager." Mike Ward advises that the vehicle has been sold at auction and the funds have been received by the Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade (Total of \$5,850). Mike Ward notes that the City are unlikely to allocate funds back to the Brigade in the future where plant is received as a donation but maintained by the City. The City will seek to recoup the costs associated with the support and maintenance of this kind of asset in future from any sales profit made. **Item Closed.**

4.2. Presumptive Cancer Claims

Mike Hall advised that 12 cancers are covered by the presumptive cancer legislation and that a previous brigade member has made a claim with LGIS (Through the City). This volunteer has had to prove all the incidents that he attended that may have been of a hazardous nature. This meant going back through old brigade attendance records to provide evidence.

June 24 Update – *Sean Winter advises that he and Mike Ward have met with a private investigator, working for the City's insurance agent, to provide detailed evidence of the members service and exposure to hazardous incidents. Sean Winter asserts that it is a ridiculous expectation that volunteers need to go through this process. Sean Winter advises that he has personally committed over sixty hours of his own time to this process so far which has taken valuable capacity away from the Brigade's operations and his role as the Brigade's Captain.*

CR. Giardina asks what can be done by the City to assist with the process in the future. Sean Winter suggests that the City should look at the insurance providers and their processes. CR. Giardina will arrange for the person within the City responsible for workers compensation insurance to attend the next meeting,

Sean Winter asks P Postma whether the presumptive legislation is the same as with DFES brigades. Paul Postma notes that this is not the case due to the presumptive nature of hazardous fires attended by Fire and Rescue fire fighters which differs from bush fires. Paul Postma proposes that the City's Insurance and OSH teams need to speak through WALGA regarding the local government response to these incidents. Paul

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Postma notes that the City's volunteers are classified as City employees from a workers compensation perspective.

Mike Ward agrees that the process is labour intensive, however in his opinion the insurers are only doing their due diligence as part of the claim process. CR. Giardina asks how this can be progressed and whether there are preordained cases that would progress this. Tony Moiler advises that the Local Government volunteers must provide more evidence of their exposure to hazardous incidents to access compensation, with the legislation being the sticking point for claims.

Sean Winter advises that for KVFBF their records are robust although most Brigades would not have this much evidence to support a claim. Tony Moiler agrees.

Sean Winter would like to see a position where the Brigade would be able provide its members with assure that if they get a cancer nominated within the legislation throughout or post their volunteerism, that they are covered. Mike Ward notes that to progress this there needs to be a legislative change.

John Idland notes that the City should have an employee to manage claims processes, it was further noted that the records should be held by both DFES and the City. Sean Winter advises that the current records that are being reviewed are the Brigade's copies of DFES documentation completed by the Brigade, that are held on station.

Mike Hall advises that DFES records system does not adequality represent the hazardous nature of several fires attended. As an example, the Parkerville fire was recoded as "Bushfire" where there were 57 houses and many other structures and vehicles lost by fire.

Tony Moiler further notes that the workers compensation system should also cover post-traumatic stress disorder, which is not currently covered under the legislation for volunteers.

October 2024

Tim Parry provides an update on the current presumptive cancer legislation to BFAC, noting the following,

The Cook Government has increased the current list of cancers covered under the presumptive cancer legislation from 12 to 20. This legislation covers career and volunteer fire and rescue fighters. Additional cancer types included in the updated presumptive cover provide additional support for female fire fighters, targeting ovarian and cervical cancers.

Tony Moiler advises that the coverage is applied to fire and rescue volunteers but is not presumptive for volunteer bush fire fighters. Tony Moiler advises that workers compensation coverage for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) does not cover volunteers at all and is only applicable to career firefighters. Tony advises that the Presidents from the volunteer associations have met to discuss

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PTSD coverage further with a view to lobby the Government for action.

Anthony Vuleta discusses the City raising a motion at a WALGA zone meeting for action across a broader cross section of the Government. Paul Postma notes that WALGA are generally well informed however it would carry weight for this matter to be raised by the City.

CR Giardina proposes to Anthony Vuleta, that the Councillors representing the City to WALGA should have a strategy session to advocate for the volunteer bush fire brigades. Anthony Vuleta agrees and suggests that the respective Councillors meet with members of the volunteer bush fire brigades to discuss the concerns firsthand. Tony Moiler agrees with this proposal.

Andrew Haselden notes that in the last BFAC meeting, Sean Winter advised that the City and the volunteer bush fire brigades need to ensure that records of volunteer's exposed to "Hazardous Fires" (As defined in the Workers Compensation and Injury Management Act 2023, {Part 1, Division 3, s. 11}) are readily available on request to provide proof to insurers of their exposure to this nominated hazard. For volunteer bushfire brigades, proof is required that the volunteer "attends Hazardous Fires at a rate at least equivalent to the rate of 5 hazardous fires per year". (Extract of the Act is attached as Appendix 1.).

Paul Postma notes that the IRS system through DFES should capture the detail of members attending incidents. Steve Lake notes that IRS can miss this level of detail where the incident is classified as a Bushfire. Many bushfires involve the destruction of man-made materials, non-organic refuse or rubbish which is not readily captured through the IRS reports issued.

Mike Ward advises that there is a hazardous incident reporting system that has been implemented by the volunteer bush fire brigades and these records should be duplicated from the brigades to both DFES and the City to ensure that they are replicated.

March 2025 – Review of October's action items,

- **City of Kalamunda to propose that WALGA representatives from the Council meet with the Kalamunda volunteers to discuss presumptive workers compensation cover.** The City of Kalamunda has spoken to WALGA and invited their representatives to join the next Kalamunda BFAC, CR. Giardina asked if the BFAC committee would welcome this. The consensus was yes.

Action Item - Freya Ayliffe to arrange an invitation to WALGA to attend the next BFAC AGM in June.

- **Natalie Smailes to review and confirm that hazardous fire attendance reporting process has been implemented ahead of the fire season.** Natalie Smailes confirms that this reporting process is in place – **Item Closed.**

Note: This Item 4.2 will be closed and re-opened as a new agenda item in June 2025.

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4.3. Pickering Brook Volunteer Station Committee update,

June 2024 - John Idland provides an update, noting that the Pickering Brook working group has visited four local fire stations and have had multiple meetings to plan the proposed Pickering Brook station's layout and required facilities. This planning process has been conducted on a realistic basis. The Brigade has recruited 12 new members over the past 12 months who live within the Pickering Brook operational area. Two vehicles have been rebranded as Pickering Brook vehicles and are being turned out to incidents within the area. John Idland notes that the City are still working on the proposal and while the project may be delayed, the brigade will be ready to progress the project.

John Giardina notes that there is money allocated to progress the detailed design and planning within the budget and while not yet approved the project is proceeding.

Paul Postma notes that Mike Ward has been working hard in the background working with the region and with DFES to progress this project. Sean Winter notes that over fifty percent of the fires this season have been within the Pickering Brook catchment.

Tony Moiler asks whether the working group is looking at clean/dirty area separation in the facility. John Idland advises that this is one of the design criteria being looked at in the planning of the station to ensure hygiene standards.

CR. Stallard asks whether the Brigades of the new stations visited, were happy with the results. John Idland notes that the standard for the Roleystone-Karragullen station was the pinnacle of the designs however notes that this level of construction is not realistic within the City with a cost of around 5.5 million dollars. CR. Stallard asks whether the planning allows for future expansion such as allowing for an oversized engine bay for future vehicles. It was noted that the current station proposal is designed to accommodate up to four vehicles. Cr. Giardina advises that \$200,000 has been put forward as part of the City's 24/25 budget for the detailed design and development for the station, project planning etc. CR. Stallard notes that State level funding will likely come from advocacy around and post the next State elections.

October 2024 Update -

John Idland advises that there has been no movement from the volunteer bush fire brigades as they await further progression of the project through the City. Tim Parry advises that the project is currently being managed by City staff with a new City project manager to be appointed shortly to take over the project. It is noted that a flora consultant has been appointed to undertake a review of the site in October. The City will liaise with the Pickering Brook volunteer bush fire brigade working group to further the detailed planning shortly.

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March 2025 Update –

Freya Ayliffe notes that the City is lobbying for funding for the Pickering Brook Station. The design and planning are progressing.

Mike Ward notes that the Kalamunda Brigade members met with Mia Davies from the Nationals and himself to discuss the station. Mike Ward notes that there is an interest from the main political parties in supporting this initiative.

CR. Giardina notes that Steve Lake is arranging a meeting with Matt Moran, the Liberal candidate for Bullwinkel. CR. Giardina queries if any state election promises are likely to be honoured. Mike Ward notes that with the Labor Party winning the election, the funding promised by the Liberal Party will not likely progress.

4.4. City Volunteer Awards Dinner,

June 24 – *Sean Winter asks whether the city will reinstate the biannual City awards dinner where the SES, KVFRS and KVFBF are hosted by the City. Question taken on notice. Cr. Giardina to discuss with the Council.*

October 2024 Update – The proposal for the City to host a volunteer awards dinner is to be presented as a budget item in the next financial year for Council consideration.

March 2024 Update – Mike Ward notes that Freya Ayliffe has put this funding request forward for the City's approval in the next financial year budget. Tony Moiler queries whether this funding will cover all volunteers (BFB, VFRS and SES) in the City of Kalamunda. Mike Ward notes that the funding request is focused on supporting the Bush Fire Brigade only. CR. Giardina notes that the first pass of budgets is being reviewed.

Natalie Smailes queries whether the original proposal as recorded in June 2024 was flagged with the City (Per above note). Mike Ward understands that the City did not have available funding for a function for all three services. The budget request has been put forward for the City's brigade (BFB only). Freya Ayliffe notes that the City's view is that DFES should fund the SES and VFRS functions.

CR. Giardina asks whether DFES are likely to provide funding in part or whole for a Bush Fire Brigade dinner. Paul Postma notes that DFES provide an annual dinner for all brigades, where a small number of members from each brigade across the state are invited. This event is also where the annual Murray Lang Bush Fire Service Award is presented.

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4.5. Brigade Finances,

Submission by Steve Lake – Via Email

BACKGROUND - The Local Government Grants Scheme (LGGs) provides an operating grant for the City of Kalamunda's Bush Fire Brigades. This grant is raised from the Emergency Services Levy.

The Brigade has been used as an intermediary to purchase on-demand items, or items of lower value from suppliers. The Brigade will complete the purchase, and the City will reimburse the Brigade.

CURRENT SITUATION - Following the pandemic and inflationary pressures, it has become unsustainable for the Brigade to operate in this way. The City of Kalamunda needs to provide for on-demand purchases for LGGs-eligible items.

For incidents that are managed by the City of Kalamunda, meals for volunteers working on the fireground are provided by the LGGs operating budget. This is because volunteers are taken away from their families at short notice for long periods of time and have no way to plan for or source meals for themselves. It is a longstanding and accepted practice, and it is in the City of Kalamunda Brigade General Instructions to provide meals for firefighters.

This kind of item cannot be planned in advance, and we need to purchase food from available outlets at the time it's required. This is usually handled by local businesses wherever possible. Last week, for example, meals were sourced at a cost of approximately \$24 for each of the volunteers working to bring a fire under control in Carmel/Lesmurdie. At a cost of \$960, it's unreasonable to ask the Brigade to cover this cost. It needs to be able to be purchased by the City of Kalamunda

Furthermore, there are several suppliers that provide low-value items and subscriptions that are LGGs eligible. Because of the administrative overhead required, it is not feasible to purchase these items through the City of Kalamunda purchasing process. The Brigade has been paying for these items, then seeking reimbursement. This additional step is an unnecessary burden for volunteers, and we seek the City of Kalamunda's assistance on this matter.

RECOMMENDATION

I am aware of the concerns that Council may have with providing a credit card and share the community's concerns on perceptions that credit cards may have with financial management. These concerns can be alleviated with the following measures:

- Monthly acquittal, approved by a City of Kalamunda manager or director as required
- Items purchased using the card must be pertaining to LGGs accounts pertaining to the BFB, SES, or the Community Safety sundry account.
- Items purchased must be LGGs eligible.

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- The card has a monthly limit of \$2,500

MOTION

The CEO to investigate the possibilities of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer / Community Emergency Services Manager and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer being issued a credit card, with the abovementioned controls in place (and any others that may be deemed suitable by City officers).

Steve Lake discusses his submission to BFAC and raises the above motion, which is seconded Mike Ward. The motion is discussed and carried unanimously.

Action Item – CEO Anthony Vuleta to action the carried motion.

March 2025 – Update

The credit card has been signed off by the City's Finance team and it should be provided to the CESM next week. Item Closed.

5. CORRESPONDENCE IN/OUT

- 5.1.** Email sent to Michael Pasotti on behalf of BFAC passing on BFAC's thanks for Michael's efforts over his years of involvement with BFAC.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

6.1. Bush Fire Local Law update – Request for BFAC Endorsement (Freya Ayliffe)

Freya Ayliffe tables the City's draft Bush Fire Local Law for BFAC's review/comment and notes that it is intended to the April OCM for Council to support and for the local law to be advertised for public comment.

Mike Ward discussed the proposed Local Laws, noting also that the proposal was to keep the document high level and to not delve into too much detail.

Mike Ward proposed that the BFAC Members review and revert with comments to the Secretary for compilation for the Bush Fire Advisory Committee. Mike Ward advises that this will allow for a concise group of comments to be provided back to the City. Action Item – Andrew Haselden to seek comments from BFAC prior to the 22nd of April's OCM.

6.2. Letter from the City – Passing of Life Member Simon Bell

Natalie Smailes requests through the Chair that the City provides a letter of condolence to Simon Bell's widow, following his death earlier this month. Simon the Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade in 2002 and gave nearly 23 years of dedicated service to our community and the Bushfire Services in

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WA. During his time with the City, he attended 609 fire calls, and he served in several roles, including firefighter, Crew Leader, Trainer Assessor, and Hazard Reduction Officer. Simon was awarded the Mark Loohuy's Memorial award for Firefighter of the Year in 2006, which is the highest honour awarded by the Brigade. He received several long service medals, including the DFES 5, 10, 15 & 20yr Bush Fire Service medallions & clasps and was bestowed with a brigade Life Membership in 2017, after 15 years of dedicated service.

Simon was an excellent firefighter, and an absolute asset to the City of Kalamunda. He was a hard worker, and was dedicated in any activity he was involved in. He was highly reliable, a stickler for detail, could be counted on to do what was needed with no short cuts.

Simon should be remembered for his long service to the community and all the good things he achieved as a member of our brigade. The Brigade's members will remember him for his dry sense of humour, his quiet competence, and his wealth of knowledge and experience.

Action Item – Freya Ayliffe to action through the City.

7. AGENCY UPDATE

7.1. Department of Fire and Emergency Services – District Officer South-East - Paul Postma

Paul Postma advises that overall, normal fire risk conditions are expected for all WA during the Autumn outlook period.

Continuing from the summer trend, large areas of southern WA are experiencing rainfall deficiencies that have compounded since spring 2023. Combined with higher fuel loads across the scarp due to extended drought conditions from the past few years indicates that firefighters may still be responding to fires in the lead up to winter. The deficit moisture levels in the soil may in turn impact when fuel reduction prescribed burning activities may start. Without significant rainfall may result in a shorter duration in which to undertake prescribed burning activities.

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Fire Incident Response since for Kalamunda and Pickering Brook BFBs since July 2024.

Incident Turnout Report

No. of Incidents

This report shows the number of Incidents turned out to in any capacity. It does not count multiple turnouts to the same Incident. HAZMAT incidents are included, but not displayed. Note: Bushfire (lge) is a fire greater than 1 hectare

Dates: 01/07/2024 to 20/03/2025	2024/2025	Total
PICKERING BROOK BFB		
False Call - Good Intent	10	10
Fire - Bushfire (lge)	4	4
Fire - Bushfire (sml)	7	7
Fire - Other/Rubbish/Vehicle	6	6
Fire - Structure	1	1
Total:	28	28

EXTERNAL USE APPROVED
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 Report produced by the OIS Branch of the Department of Fire & Emergency Services (WA)
 Contact: reports@dfes.wa.gov.au

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Dates: 01/07/2024 to 20/03/2025	2024/2025	Total
KALAMUNDA BFB		
EVENT - Not an Incident	2	2
False Call - Good Intent	20	20
Fire - Bushfire (lge)	16	16
Fire - Bushfire (sml)	16	16
Fire - Other/Rubbish/Vehicle	9	9
Fire - Structure	1	1
Rescue & Medical	1	1
Total:	65	65

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Crews from Kalamunda and Pickering Brook BFBs have been very active supporting DFES and other Local Governments with multiple deployments to Chittering, Dongara, Cervantes, Gingin, Northam, Serpentine Jarrahdale, Rockingham and Skeleton Rock in the Goldfields.

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Paul Postma acknowledges the efforts of Kalamunda staff member Michael Hall, Michael deployed to Grampians Fire in Victoria and feedback from team leader was extremely positive. Paul also notes the support from both Mike Ward and Mike Hall in their work at the Tonkin Hwy Incident.

7.2. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions – DBCA – District Fire Coordinator – Brodie Selby

Brodie Selby introduces himself and provides a recap of the Perth Hills district managed by DCBA (Perth Hills - Julimar to Murray River, crossing approx. 19 local governments). With work centres in Jarrahdale, Dwellingup and Mundaring. Their fire mitigation team operates 17 fire appliances across the district.

Brodie Selby notes that it has been a quiet season and DPAW Perth Hills have been busy outside of their own patch with only 70 fires within the district this season. Perth Hills has had a productive fire break program over the season, especially in Mundaring and Kalamunda. DPAW are close to commencing their Autumn burn program, with a probable start in mid to late April. This will most likely start further East than Kalamunda. DPAW has approximately sixty-six burns in the programme, with a mix across the district. Brodie Selby notes that the aim is to complete about a third of the planned burns in this year and notes that burns in the Kalamunda area are likely to commence in late autumn and spring this year.

John Idland queries whether the scarp face will be burnt in this period. Brodie Selby notes that this area needs to be prioritised however there is a limited window where burning this face can be actioned.

7.3. City of Kalamunda Community Emergency Manager – Mike Ward

Mike Ward notes that restricted burning will be in place from the 1st of April, no running fire will be approved until such time that significant rain is received.

LGGs funding is being finalised for the next year, this will include new refrigerated air conditioning for the front of house areas to replace the dilapidated evaporated system. New lockers have also been applied for which will provide better off gassing of carcinogens from fire fighting PPE. The SES and BFB are applying for funding to replace the projector within the shared training room

Pickering Brook station is estimated to cost 5.3 million dollars, with 3.2 million dollars being applied through the LGGs again this year. The City is also applying for the mitigation fund for the City's fire mitigation project. Mike Hall confirms that a total of \$140,000 dollars, spread over a three year period has been applied for through DFES for mitigation works throughout the City.

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Letter from the City to the Minister regarding the Pickering Brook 1.4 firefighting appliance, and its belated replacement was sent and a response received and reviewed. CR. Giardina reviews the response from the Minister. DFES had advised the City that they were going to undertake a full assessment of the serviceability of the Pickering Brook 1.4, however as the city has undertaken an independent review, DFES will use this report for its review of the vehicle's condition.

8. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting, Thursday the 19th of June 2025 (AGM), 2025, 1730hrs, Derek Fletcher Training Room, Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade / State Emergency Service, 20 Raymond Road, Walliston.

Future Meetings for 2025 –

- Thursday the 9th of October 2025 (GM),

9. CLOSURE

9.1. Meeting closed at 1807 hrs.

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BUSH FIRES ACT 1954

City of Kalamunda

BUSH FIRE BRIGADES LOCAL LAW 2025

Under the powers conferred by the Bush Fires Act 1954 and under all other powers enabling it, the Council of the City of Kalamunda resolved on **XX MONTH 2025** to make the following local law.

PART 1—PRELIMINARY**1.1 Citation and application**

This local law may be cited as the City of Kalamunda Bush Fire Brigades Local Law **2025** and applies throughout the district. It is made in accordance with Subdivision 2 of Division 2 of Part 3 of the Local Government Act 1995.

1.2 Commencement

This local law will come into operation 14 days after the day on which it is published in the *Government Gazette*.

1.3 Repeal provisions

The Municipality of the Shire of Kalamunda Establishment, Maintenance and Equipment of Bush Fire Brigades, published in the *Government Gazette*, **Number 1602 dated 12 April 1991**, is repealed.

1.4 Interpretation

(1) In this local law, unless the context otherwise requires—

Act means the Bush Fires Act 1954;

Brigade area means the area described in clause 2.2(1)(b);

Bush Fire Brigade, or **Brigade**, means a bush fire brigade established by the Local Government under clause 2.1 and registered in a register kept pursuant to section 41 of the Act;

Bush Fire Brigade Member, or **Brigade Member**, in relation to a Brigade, means a member of the Bush Fire Brigade, who may be—

- (a) an Elected Officer of the Brigade;
- (b) a Bush Fire Control Officer of the Brigade; or
- (c) another member of the Brigade;

Bush Fire Brigade Officer or Elected Officer, in relation to a Brigade, means each of the Captain, First Lieutenant, Second Lieutenant and any other Lieutenant—

- (a) appointed by the Local Government under clause 2.2(1)(c); or
- (b) elected by the Brigade Members under clause 2.2(4);

Chief Bush Fire Control Officer means the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer appointed by the Local Government;

Chief Executive Officer means the Chief Executive Officer of the Local Government;

Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer means the Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer appointed by the Local Government;

District means the district of the Local Government;

Local Government means the City of Kalamunda;

Normal brigade activities is defined in section 35A of the Act; and

Regulations means regulations made under the Act.

(2) In this local law, unless the context otherwise requires, a reference to—

- (a) a Captain;
- (b) a First Lieutenant;
- (c) a Second Lieutenant; or
- (d) any additional Lieutenant;

means a person holding that position in a Bush Fire Brigade.

PART 2—BUSH FIRE BRIGADES

2.1 Establishment of Bush Fire Brigades

(1) The Local Government may establish a bush fire brigade for the purpose of carrying out normal brigade activities.

(2) A bush fire brigade is established on the date of the Local Government’s decision under clause 2.1(1).

2.2 Name and Officers of Bush Fire Brigades

- (1) On establishing a Bush Fire Brigade under clause 2.1(1), the Local Government is to—
- (a) give a name to the Bush Fire Brigade;
 - (b) specify the brigade area in which the Bush Fire Brigade is primarily responsible for carrying out the normal brigade activities; and
 - (c) appoint, in relation to the Bush Fire Brigade—
 - (i) a Captain;
 - (ii) Bush Fire Control Officers;
 - (iii) a First Lieutenant;
 - (iv) a Second Lieutenant; and
 - (v) additional Lieutenants if the Local Government considers it necessary.
- (2) A person appointed to a position under clause 2.2(1)(c) (except to a position of Bush Fire Control Officer) is taken to be a Brigade Member.
- (3) The term of office of a person appointed to an Elected Officer position under clause 2.2(1)(c) ends—
- (a) at the completion of the first annual general meeting of the Bush Fire Brigade;
 - (b) when the person resigns from that position; or
 - (c) when the appointment, or the person’s Bush Fire Brigade membership, is terminated under this local law, whichever occurs first.
- (4) At the first and each subsequent annual general meeting of a Brigade, the Brigade Members are to elect, from among the Brigade Members, persons to fill each of the Elected Officer positions of the Brigade.
- (5) If the position of an Elected Officer of a Bush Fire Brigade becomes vacant at any time other than at the completion of an annual general meeting of the Brigade, then a special meeting of the Brigade may be held at which the Brigade Members may vote for a replacement Brigade Member to fill the position until the next annual general meeting of the Bush Fire Brigade.

PART 3—DISSOLUTION OF BUSH FIRE BRIGADES

3.1 Cancellation of registration

- (1) In accordance with section 41(3) of the Act, the Local Government may cancel the registration of a Bush Fire Brigade if it is of the opinion that the Bush Fire Brigade is not

complying with the Act or this local law or is not achieving the objectives for which it was established.

(2) Upon a Bush Fire Brigade's dissolution, the equipment, assets and funds of the Brigade must be placed under the control of the Local Government and dealt with in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995*.

3.2 New arrangement after dissolution

If the Local Government cancels the registration of a Bush Fire Brigade, the Local Government is to make alternative arrangements in respect of the Brigade Area.

PART 4—ORGANISATION AND MAINTENANCE OF BUSH FIRE BRIGADES

4.1 Local Government responsible for structure

The Local Government is to ensure that there is an appropriate structure through which the organisation of Bush Fire Brigades is maintained.

4.2 Managerial role of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Subject to any directions by the Local Government, the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer has primary managerial responsibility for the organisation and maintenance of Bush Fire Brigades.

4.3 Functions of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

(1) The functions of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer are—

- (a) where a Bush Fire Control Officer position becomes vacant, to advise the Chief Executive Officer of the vacancy as soon as practicable;
- (b) to nominate to the Chief Executive Officer suitably qualified persons for appointment by the Local Government as Bush Fire Control Officers;
- (c) to report to the Chief Executive Officer not later than 30 April each year, for consideration and appropriate provision being made in the next Local Government budget, the status of a Bush Fire Brigade's—
 - (i) training and readiness;
 - (ii) protective clothing;
 - (iii) equipment; and
 - (iv) vehicles and appliances;
- (d) to provide leadership to Bush Fire Brigades;
- (e) to monitor Bush Fire Brigades' resourcing, equipment (including protective clothing) and training levels and report thereon with

recommendations at least once a year to the Local Government or as directed by the Chief Executive Officer;

(f) to liaise with the Local Government concerning fire prevention/suppression matters generally and directions to be issued by the Local Government to Bush Fire Control Officers; and

(g) to ensure that Bush Fire Brigades are registered and that the lists of Brigade Members are maintained.

(2) The Chief Bush Fire Control Officer or the Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer may attend as a non-voting representative of the Local Government at any meeting of a Bush Fire Brigade.

4.4 Equipment and maintenance of Bush Fire Brigades

The maintenance, replacement and upkeep of all Bush Fire Brigade protective clothing, equipment and appliances is to be the responsibility of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, in consultation with the Local Government.

4.5 Functions of Captain and other Elected Officers

(1) The functions of the Captain of a Bush Fire Brigade are to—

(a) provide leadership to the Bush Fire Brigade;

(b) monitor the Bush Fire Brigade’s resourcing, equipment and training levels;

(c) liaise with the Local Government concerning—

(i) fire prevention or fire suppression matters generally;

(ii) directions to be issued by the Local Government to the Brigade’s Bush Fire Control Officers, including those who issue permits to burn; and

(iii) the Brigade’s Bush Fire Brigade Officers;

(d) ensure that a list of the Bush Fire Brigade’s Members is maintained;

(e) report annually to the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer the office bearers of the Bush Fire Brigade in accordance with the Regulations; and

(f) arrange for normal brigade activities as authorised by the Act or by the Local Government.

(2) The functions of other Bush Fire Brigade Officers of a Brigade are to support the Captain of the Brigade in their role.

PART 5—ADMINISTRATION OF BUSH FIRE BRIGADES

5.1 Local Government appointments

- (1) The Local Government may appoint, and may suspend or terminate the appointment of, persons to the positions of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, the Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Bush Fire Control Officers.
- (2) A decision to suspend or terminate a person’s appointment to a position under clause 5.1(1) must be made in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.
- (3) A person’s appointment to a position under clause 5.1(1) ends—
 - (a) if the appointment is for a fixed term—on the expiry of that term;
 - (b) if the person dies—on the date of their death;
 - (c) if a person gives written notice of resignation—on the date, as specified in the written notice, that the resignation is to take effect or, if no date is specified, on the date that the written notice is given to the Chief Executive Officer; or
 - (d) if the appointment is terminated by the Local Government—on the date that written notice of the termination is given to the person, whichever occurs first.

5.2 Membership of a Bush Fire Brigade

- (1) A person wishing to be a Bush Fire Brigade Member may make an application for membership to the Captain of the Bush Fire Brigade.
- (2) An application for membership of a Bush Fire Brigade—
 - (a) is to be assessed by the Captain of the Bush Fire Brigade who is to make a recommendation to the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer; and
 - (b) is to be determined by the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer who is to accept or reject the application.
- (3) A person whose membership application is accepted is to be appointed as a Brigade Member of a Bush Fire Brigade.
- (4) A person’s membership of a Bush Fire Brigade under this clause 5.2 ends—
 - (a) if the person dies—on the date of their death;
 - (b) if a person gives the Captain of the Bush Fire Brigade written notice of resignation—on the date, as specified in the written notice, that the resignation is to take effect or, if no date is specified, on the date that the written notice is given to the Captain; or
 - (c) if the appointment is terminated by the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer—on the date that the written notice of the termination is given to the person, whichever occurs first.

(5) Subject to clause 5.2(7), the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer may suspend or terminate the membership of a Brigade Member appointed under clause 5.2(3) (other than a Brigade Member appointed by the Local Government to a position described in clause 5.1(1)) if, in the opinion of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, the Brigade Member is unfit to serve as a member of the Bush Fire Brigade.

(6) A decision to suspend or terminate a person's membership of a Bush Fire Brigade under clause 5.2(5) must be made in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.

(7) If the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer has a conflict of interest in considering and determining whether a person's membership should be suspended or terminated—

(a) the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer must refer the matter to the Chief Executive Officer; and

(b) the Chief Executive Officer is to consider and determine the matter.

(8) At the end of the period of suspension imposed under clause 5.2(5) or 5.2(7), the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (or, if clause 5.2(7) applies, the Chief Executive Officer) must—

(a) extend the period of suspension;

(b) terminate the membership; or

(c) confirm the continuation of the membership.

5.3 Meetings of Bush Fire Brigades

(1) A Brigade may hold ordinary meetings on such days and at such times and places, as the Brigade considers appropriate.

(2) A Brigade should hold at least 6 ordinary meetings each year.

(3) A Brigade must hold an annual general meeting each year in the month of **June**.

(4) At the annual general meeting, the Brigade is to—

(a) elect Bush Fire Brigade Officers;

(b) receive the Captain's annual report;

(c) receive the Elected Officers' annual report; and

(d) adopt the annual financial statements of the Brigade.

(5) Notice of the annual general meeting and any ordinary meeting must be given to all Brigade Members at least 7 days before the commencement of the meeting.

(6) A Brigade may hold a special meeting to allow the membership to deal with a specific motion or business.

(7) A notice of a special meeting must be given at least 48 hours before the commencement of the meeting.

(8) The purpose of the special meeting must be included in the notice of meeting.

PART 6—GENERAL

6.1 Consideration in the Local Government budget

In addition to funding made available through emergency services grants, the Local Government may provide further funding depending on the assessment of budget priorities for the year in question in accordance with Part 6 of the Local Government Act 1995.



Seasonal Bushfire Outlook

Autumn | 2025



KEY: ■ Increased risk of fire

Figure 1 Seasonal Bushfire Outlook Autumn 2025. Areas are based on the interim biogeographic regionalisation for Australia and other geographical features.

Increased risk of fire is the likelihood of an increased number of significant bushfires occurring in the outlook period compared to average.

Overview

The Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for autumn 2025 identifies a heightened risk of fire for patchy areas between Perth and Carnarvon in WA, and stretching across most of the Australian mainland's southern coastline to southwest Gippsland in Victoria.

From August 2024 to January 2025, very much below average rainfall fell across much of the southern coastline of Australia. Rainfall patterns were average to above average across much of the remaining parts of WA and coastal Queensland.

In that same August to January period, mean temperatures for Australia were generally well above average with large areas recorded their warmest period on record. The area-averaged temperature for Australia was the highest on record since records began in 1910.

Looking ahead, an increased chance of above average rainfall has been forecast for parts of northwest Australia over autumn, while there is an increased chance of below average rainfall being forecast for parts of the northeast.

Temperatures are very likely to be above average across most areas, with an increased chance of unusually high maximum temperatures for most of Australia south of the tropics. There is an increased chance of unusually high minimum temperatures nationwide.

Communities are encouraged to be vigilant and stay alert this autumn, even in areas of Australia that show a normal risk of fire this season. Under the right fuel and weather conditions destructive fires can occur during normal bushfire seasons across Australia.

The Seasonal Bushfire Outlook combines expert analysis of bushfire fuels, past rainfall and temperature, and climate outlooks prepared by the Bureau of Meteorology.

About the Outlook

Fire management is a year-round process. The Seasonal Bushfire Outlook reflects the priorities in each state and territory for the coming months given the expected climate conditions. It identifies areas of increased risk of fire so communities are aware and primed to take appropriate action. It is not intended as a prediction of where and when bushfires will occur.

Fire risk can vary greatly, even at the smaller scale, between bordering states and territories. Each state and territory's assessment takes into account different land use types and vegetation types. This is influenced by different forecasts for temperature and rainfall over these regions. It should be noted that forecasting for longer time periods can be less accurate as the atmospheric system is dynamic; the more time passes, the less certain forecasters can be of its state.

A significant bushfire is defined as being of such size, complexity, duration or other impact that requires resources (from both a pre-emptive management and suppression capability) beyond the region in which fires originate. Increased bushfire risk depends on many factors including weather and climate, fuel amount and availability, recent fire and disturbance history, natural and human barriers, and how quickly and effectively firefighting resources are able to suppress fires in an area.

AFAC is the National Council for fire and emergency services, supporting the sector to create safer, more resilient communities. AFAC drives national consistency through collaboration, innovation and partnerships. It delivers enhanced capability by developing doctrine and supporting operations.

Jurisdictional bushfire outlook summaries



New South Wales



Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in New South Wales

Summary

- The rainfall forecast for early autumn is expected to maintain generally normal fire potential across most of NSW.
- Parts of northern and western NSW have high grass fuel loads and are currently drier than usual. These areas will remain at risk of difficult-to-control fires until they receive significant rainfall.

For further information see: rfs.nsw.gov.au

NSW experienced varied rainfall throughout spring, leading to increased grass and crop growth in some areas. Summer also saw mixed rainfall, with the northeast receiving high totals. However, a drier period in early summer led to several fires in eastern and northern NSW over the Christmas and New Year period.

Meanwhile, parts of the northwest slopes and far western NSW continue to receive below-average rainfall, leaving them drier than usual for this time of year.

Above-average rainfall is forecast for early to mid-autumn, which should generally maintain normal fire potential across most of NSW but may hinder prescribed burning efforts.

Autumn temperatures are expected to be higher than normal, increasing the risk that areas receiving little rainfall may remain dry or become drier. The northwest slopes (around Tamworth) and far western NSW currently have above-average grass fuel loads and are drier than usual. If these areas continue to miss out on rainfall, they could face challenging fire conditions.

Additionally, grasses west of the Great Dividing Range are dry (cured). Until these areas receive sufficient rainfall to support new grass growth, they could remain at risk for fast-moving, intense grass fires. ■

Australian Capital Territory



Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in Australian Capital Territory

Summary

- There is a normal risk of bushfire expected for the ACT this autumn.
- The long-range outlook for autumn forecasts warmer than usual conditions with above average rainfall somewhat likely.
- Fire agencies and land managers will continue to implement mitigation activities during autumn where conditions allow.

For further information see: esa.act.gov.au

The ACT experienced above average rainfall in summer after dry conditions in winter and spring 2024. The rainfall has allowed continued grassland fuel growth. Despite increased fuel loads, the ACT can expect a normal risk of bushfires during autumn.

The long range outlook for autumn in the ACT forecasts above average, even unusually warm, day- and night-time temperatures. Above average rainfall is somewhat likely, but unusually wet weather is not likely.

If below average rainfall is received in the first part of autumn, with the increased fuel loads and warm conditions, there could be more risk of bush and grass fires.

To manage bushfire risk, fire agencies and land managers will continue to implement mitigation activities, including prescribed burns, physical removal, and grass slashing or grazing, throughout the season. ACT residents can keep track of planned and ongoing prescribed burns through the ACT Emergency Services Agency and ACT Parks and Conservation Service websites or the Hazards Near Me NSW app.

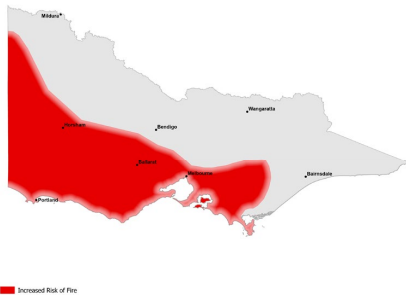
It is important for community members to continue to be emergency ready by maintaining the preparedness of their properties and creating or updating their survival plans. For information on how to prepare for bushfires, visit esa.act.gov.au.

By staying informed and prepared we can collectively work towards minimising the impact of potential bushfires. Let's prioritise safety and ensure a proactive approach to safeguarding our community and environment. ■

Jurisdictional bushfire outlook summaries (cont.)



Victoria



Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in Victoria

Summary

- An increased risk of fire is indicated for the western and central parts of Victoria as well as south and west Gippsland during early autumn.
- Fire authorities will continue to monitor conditions for any changes in fire risk.

For further information see: emergency.vic.gov.au

Severe rainfall deficits over the last 12-to-24-month period have affected much of western and central parts of Victoria, where increased fuel availability in forests and heathlands has resulted in significant fires across the Grampians and the Little Desert. Central parts of Victoria and southeast Gippsland have shown a strong drying signal over the past year, resulting in increased vegetation drying.

Recent rainfall patterns have continued to follow the long-term drying trend, with January rainfall totals ranging from 50-100mm in the far east and less than 10mm in the far west. Most of southwest Victoria has experienced well below-average precipitation, while the remainder of Victoria has received average rainfall for January

While the outlook has a higher chance of warmer maximum temperatures, the rainfall outlook does not indicate a wetter or drier signal in the forecast. As a result, an extended drying pattern may translate to continued increases in fuel availability in the west and central parts of the state. Without significant rainfall, the flammability of fuels in forests, woodlands and heathlands will remain high with elevated potential for fires to start and spread into early autumn. As a result, most of western and central parts of Victoria, along with south and west Gippsland, are identified as areas of increased risk during the early autumn outlook period.

Elsewhere across the state, the fire risk potential is assessed to be normal, noting that, at any time, areas dominated by dry or cured vegetation can support fast running fires under the onset of hot, dry and windy weather conditions. Landscape conditions will be monitored to identify any significant changes to fire risk.

The autumn break is likely to start slightly later than usual, which may delay the emergence of planned burning in some parts of the state while raising opportunities elsewhere to target areas that are not usually available for burning under autumn conditions. ■

Tasmania



Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in Tasmania

Summary

- Normal bushfire risk is expected for autumn.
- Grassland curing is well advanced across the state. Dry forests are available to burn in the east and parts of the west.
- An early commencement for planned burning is expected in the east and north of the state.

For further information see: fire.tas.gov.au

Tasmania experienced relatively quiet fire conditions during December and January as mild temperatures and moderate rainfalls generally slowed landscape drying and grassland curing across the island. There was not sufficient rain to recharge the underlying deep soil dryness in western Tasmania which has persisted for several years.

A short drying spell in late January increased the availability of wet and moist forest fuels as well as organic soils. A significant fire in the Snug Tiers in late January was followed by over 20 lighting ignitions on the West Coast in early February. The Western Complex of fires became a significant interagency campaign and is likely to require management for many weeks.

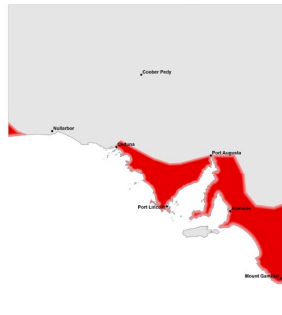
As summer ends, grassland curing is well advanced across the state and on the Bass Strait islands. Dry forests are fully available to burn in the eastern half of the state and to a lesser extent in the west. As a result, landscape connectivity is high in the east and along the northern coastal strip.

Autumn is unlikely to provide significant recharge of the underlying deep layer soil moisture and the peat in western Tasmania but there may be sufficient rainfall to moisten the upper soil layer which will assist fire suppression of any remaining going fires. An early commencement for planned burning is expected in the east and north of the state. ■

Jurisdictional bushfire outlook summaries (cont.)



South Australia



Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in South Australia

Summary

- SA enters autumn with below average rainfall across a majority of the state
- The forecast warm dry conditions create potential for a prolonged period of higher fire risk, extending well into autumn.
- There is a slightly elevated fire risk across the southern coastal parts of the state and the far northwest.

For further information see: cfs.sa.gov.au

After a very dry start to January, SA enters autumn with below average rainfall across a majority of the state, particularly western parts of Kangaroo Island, Mid North and Eastern Eyre Peninsula. Rain deficiencies are expected to abate as autumn progresses.

There is a very high likelihood of well above average temperatures continuing, especially in the southeast of the state.

Autumn rain is forecast to exceed averages in central and northern areas of the state, while the Upper Eyre, Mount Lofty Ranges and Yorke Peninsula are expected to receive below average rainfall.

The forecast warm dry conditions create potential for a prolonged period of higher fire risk, extending well into autumn, with a slightly elevated fire risk across the southern coastal parts of the state and the far northwest.

With the forecasted dry period extending into autumn, South Australians will need to remain vigilant, continue to maintain their properties, monitor the fire risks throughout their district and be prepared to enact their bushfire survival plan well into autumn. ■

Western Australia



Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in Western Australia

Summary

- Severe moisture deficits have increased fire risk in the Mallee, Esperance Plains, and Mardabilla Bioregions.
- Significant grass fuels and forecast warmer conditions have increased fire risk in the Nullarbor Bioregion.
- Moisture stress has increased fire risk in the southeastern part of Southwest Land Division, Lesueur Sandplains, and northern Swan Coastal Plain Bioregions.

For further information see: dfes.wa.gov.au

An average fire risk is expected for the Pilbara, Central Interior, and northern Kimberley due to broadly above-average root-zone soil moisture and forecast above-average rainfall for autumn. Moist conditions may limit early prescribed burning opportunities in northern parts of the Kimberley. However, in southern parts of the Kimberley with below-average root-zone soil moisture, fire risk may increase in woody fuels and spinifex due to higher flammability, while grazing and reduced growth are expected to mitigate fire risk for tussock grass fuels.

Increased fire risk is unlikely across inland areas of Midwest-Gascoyne due to recent and forecasted average to above-average rainfall and broadly average soil moisture. However, in the Geraldton Sandplains, Yalgoo, and southern Carnarvon bioregions, higher fuel availability and forecasted high temperatures may elevate fire risk in grassy woodlands. Moisture deficits in the Lesueur Sandplains and the northern Swan Coastal Plain contribute to increased fire risk.

The Nullarbor Bioregion faces an increased fire risk due to the persistence of significant grass fuel loads following the previous March floods. In addition, average to below-average rainfall and soil moisture deficits over the past six months, along with forecast warmer conditions, and a low probability of exceeding average rainfall contribute to the increased fire risk.

In the Mallee, Esperance Plains and Mardabilla (East Coolgardie) Bioregions, severe root-zone moisture deficits, combined with forecasted warmer conditions and a low likelihood of exceeding average rainfall, are expected to increase fire risk. Moisture deficits extend into the southeastern part of the Southwest Land Division, where increased flammability of moisture stressed woody vegetation has increased fire risk. ■



Jurisdictional bushfire outlook summaries (cont.)

Queensland



Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in Queensland

Summary

- Normal levels of bushfire risk across Queensland for Autumn.
- Significant rainfalls in northern Queensland will produce grass growth across large areas.
- Current weather conditions provide clear opportunity for early season hazard reduction burning.

For further information see: fire.qld.gov.au

There are significant tracts of grasslands across Queensland, most of which have received record rains in late summer. This will contribute to above average grass growth and fuel accumulation in areas where there may have been limited fuel previously. In areas of the South East Coast, Wide Bay, Burnett, Darling Downs and Granite Belt regions, this rainfall was predominately been in early summer. Due to fast growth rates fuelled by above average temperatures, the grass remains green but has developed a large thatch layer of dry material which may help to fuel grass fires as conditions continue to dry out in these districts. This means it is important to closely monitor local conditions.

Recent record rain in northern Queensland means most fuel is unavailable for burning this autumn. However, these conditions may present opportunities to conduct hazard reduction burning in country that may have not been possible due to the risk, particularly in large scale landscapes away from major metropolitan centres.

In southern Queensland, conditions are favorable for mitigation to be undertaken during autumn. Rainfall seen across much of the state in summer may present opportunities for hazard reduction burning which may not have been possible in previous years.

Forested areas of the state remain wet and the risk of fire in these locations is significantly reduced during the outlook period, however there may be some opportunities for hazard mitigation burning for the forest areas of the state. Fire agencies will continue to work with landholders and Indigenous land management groups to ensure planning is coordinated during this critical mitigation period across the state. A more in-depth understanding of future risk areas for the 2025 fire season will be possible once the full extent of the late summer rainfall events is known. ■

Northern Territory



Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in Northern Territory

Summary

- The NT has a normal risk of bushfire for the outlook period.
- If a dry spell occurs, there is a risk of fires spreading in all areas with available fuel in central Australia.
- Higher fuel loads are concentrated southwest of Alice Springs, including the southern Tanami and Macdonnell regions.
- Landholders across the Territory are strongly encouraged to prepare their properties for ongoing fire risk.

For further information see pfes.nt.gov.au or [Bushfires NT](#)

Minimum temperatures across the Territory are expected to remain above median, with rainfall in the Barkly and Alice Springs Fire Management Zones ranging from average to slightly above average.

Soil moisture is forecast to be above average in the Savanna, southern Arnhem, Vernon Arafura, the western Tanami and eastern Barkly districts. Fuel curing in central Australia is between 75-90%, with fire dangers easing to moderate. Available fuels are mainly found in areas with low grazing pressure that have remained unburned for more than 12 months, due to cumulative rainfall and rapid regrowth of surface fuels, including buffel grass. Higher fuel loads are concentrated southwest of Alice Springs, in the Macdonnell and southern Tanami regions.

If a dry spell occurs in the forecast period, there is a risk of wildfires spreading across all areas with available fuel in Alice Springs and Barkly regions. However, the frequency and scale of these events are unlikely to lead to back-to-back campaign fires throughout the forecast period.

Conditions in April and May may be more favourable for bushfire mitigation burning across all regions in the NT. The monsoon's late arrival this year may disrupt burn programs in the Top End.

Landholders across NT are strongly encouraged to prepare their properties for ongoing fire risk, ensuring that fire management plans are up-to-date and all firefighting equipment is in working condition. In central Australia, fire activity is recurring, even in areas previously affected by last year's fires, so it's essential to monitor grass regrowth and perform regular maintenance. ■

Recent climate conditions

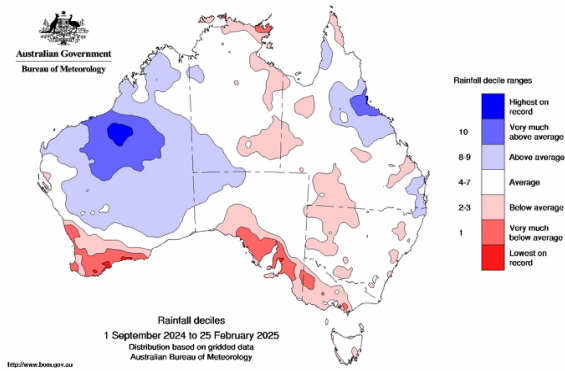


Figure 2a Spring–summer to date (1 September 2024 to 25 February 2025) rainfall deciles relative to all years since 1900.

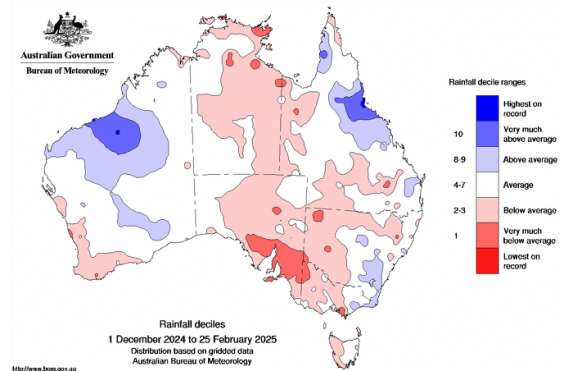


Figure 2b Summer to date (1 December 2024 to 25 February 2025) rainfall deciles relative to all years since 1900.

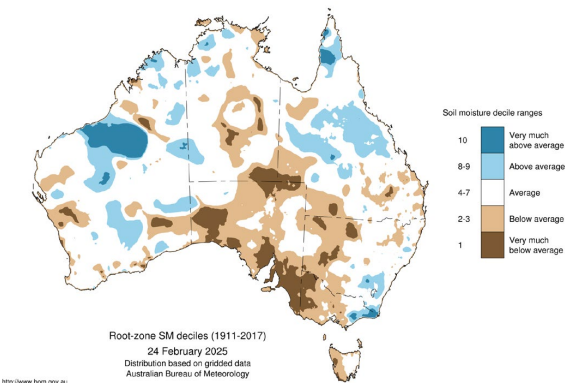


Figure 3 Latest root zone soil moisture (top 100 cm) deciles, at 24 February, relative to average soil moisture on this date for all years between 1911 and 2017.

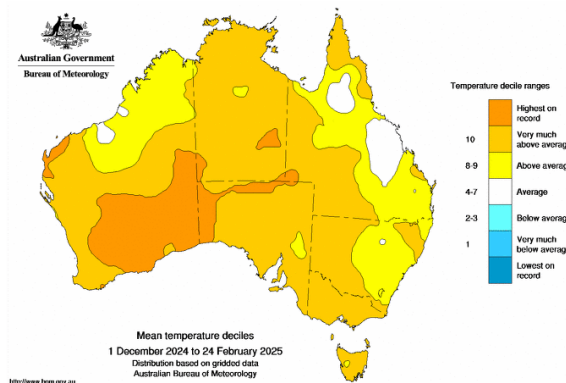


Figure 4 Summer to date (1 December 2024 to 24 February) mean temperature deciles relative to all years since 1910.

The risk of grass fires and bushfires in Australia is dependent on many factors, including the amount and type of fuel (vegetation), and the dryness of the fuel. Fuel conditions are influenced by recent rainfall, temperatures, and soil moisture.

Rainfall for the six-month period from September 2024 to February 2025 was below to very much below average¹ over the southern mainland, from the southwest of WA to southern SA and the west and south of Victoria (Figure 2a) with serious or severe rainfall deficiencies (rainfall totals in the lowest 5% or 10% of periods, respectively, since 1900) persisting in these regions. Below average rainfall was also seen over some inland parts of the mainland's east and north.

Rainfall was above to very much above average for most of northern and central WA, extending into central Australia. Above average rainfall was also observed over the central Queensland coast and the far northern NSW coast to the southeastern Queensland coast.

Summer to date rainfall has been average to below average for much of the country with the main exceptions being WA's northern Pilbara and Queensland's central coast where Tropical Cyclone Zelia and a deep tropical low, respectively, brought heavy falls in late January and early February (Figure 2b).

Areas northeast of Port Hedland and around Townsville have exceeded their highest monthly totals on record for the month of February. Drier than average conditions have persisted in the south, while a delayed onset to the monsoon has contributed to drier than average conditions over the NT.

Soil moisture as at 24 February 2025 is below average for this time of year across much of SA, extending into central Australia, western NSW, and western and central Victoria (Figure 3). Soil moisture is above to very much above average for eastern Victoria, southeastern NSW, much of northern and central Queensland, and parts of northern and central WA.

The mean temperature for 2024–25 summer to date has been very much above average for most of Australia with some western and central areas in Australia on track to see their warmest summer on record. Maximum and minimum temperatures have also been above to very much above average for most of Australia, although maximum temperatures were close to average over WA's northern Pilbara and Queensland's central coast, where heavy rainfall events occurred (see earlier section on rainfall).

Long-range forecasts



The Bureau of Meteorology's long-range forecasts are based on global dynamical modelling of the oceans, atmosphere, land surfaces and sea ice. The model simulates the evolution in the state of the atmosphere and oceans for coming months. It implicitly captures climate indicators including the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), as well as long-term trends due to climate change.

For March to May 2025 (Figure 5) there is an increased chance of above average¹ rainfall for the northern Kimberley and parts of the Top End of the NT. There is an increased chance of below average rainfall for most of central and northern Queensland, extending into central Australia. For most other parts of Australia, there is no strong signal suggesting above or below average rainfall over the forecast period.

For central and northern Queensland, the likelihood of below average rainfall is greater in March than in April or May, with rainfall in April and May more likely to be within the typical range for those months.

Both maximum (Figure 6) and minimum temperatures during March to May are very likely (greater than 80% chance) to be above average across most states and territories. There is an increased chance of unusually high maximum temperatures across much of Australia, with the highest chances in Tasmania, southern Victoria, west of the Pilbara, and the southern half of Queensland extending into northern NSW and central Australia, where the likelihood is at least 3.5–4 times the usual chance. The chance of unusually high minimum temperatures is 3–4 times the usual chance for most of Australia, and greater than 4 times the usual chance for parts of WA, the far tropical north, and eastern Australia.

For March, below average soil moisture is forecast for much of Australia (Figure 7). Above average soil moisture is forecast for interior parts of the mainland's west. In May, average soil moisture is likely for most of the country, except for parts of the Top End of the NT, where soil moisture is likely to be above average, and southern and interior parts Australia, where soil moisture is likely to be below average.

The Bureau's long-range forecasts are updated regularly and are prepared for seasonal, monthly, fortnightly and weekly periods. In addition to forecasts on rainfall and temperature, they include forecasts on the Indian Ocean Dipole and El Niño–Southern Oscillation. The Bureau's long-range forecasts are published at www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead and <https://awo.bom.gov.au/>

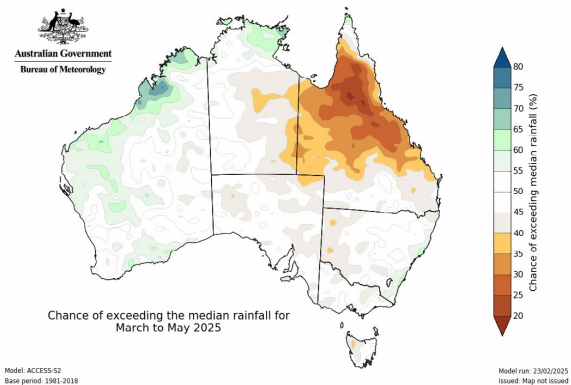


Figure 5 March to May 2025 chance of above median rainfall.

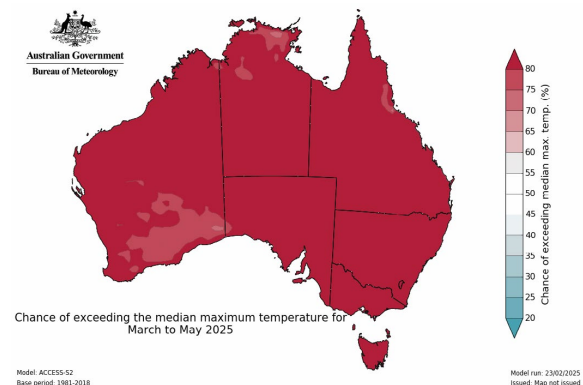


Figure 6 March to May 2025 chance of above median maximum temperatures.

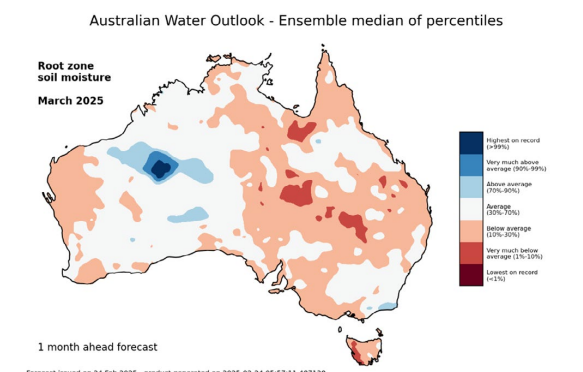


Figure 7 March 2025 soil moisture outlook.

1. The term 'average' is used throughout the text to denote either mean or median. The method used for a particular variable is stated in the relevant figure.

Climate influences



Waters around most of the Australian coastline are warmer than average, particularly along the western and southern coasts, contributing to increased atmospheric moisture and energy that may influence the intensity and frequency of weather systems. Sea surface temperatures (SSTs) in the Australian region during January 2025 were the warmest on record for all Januaries since records began in 1900. Additionally, the January SST anomaly was the equal highest positive anomaly on record for any month.

The Madden-Julian Oscillation contributed to enhanced tropical activity in the Australian region in early to mid-December and again in late January and early February. This season's monsoon onset was the latest since records began in 1957–58, and it coincided with an active MJO over the Australian region.

The El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is neutral, despite changes in sea surface temperature patterns during 2024 that were consistent with a developing La Niña. Since late December, the tropical Pacific has become more La Niña-like, with signs of interactions between oceanic and atmospheric indices. However, these interactions have not been consistently sustained and do not meet the Bureau's La Niña criteria. Model forecasts indicate ENSO is likely to return to a more neutral ENSO state by the end of autumn and persist at neutral levels through to at least the middle of 2025.

The Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is neutral. The IOD typically has little association with Australian climate from December to April.

Australia's climate has warmed by 1.55 ± 0.23 °C between 1910 and 2024. This warming is consistent with global trends, with the degree of warming similar to the global average for land areas.

The background global warming trend means Australia will experience ongoing changes to its weather and climate, including:

- more heat extremes, and fewer cold extremes
- reduced average cool season (April to October) rainfall over the southern half of the continent
- more intense heavy rainfall events, even in regions where average rainfall has decreased
- a longer fire season, with more dangerous fire weather days.

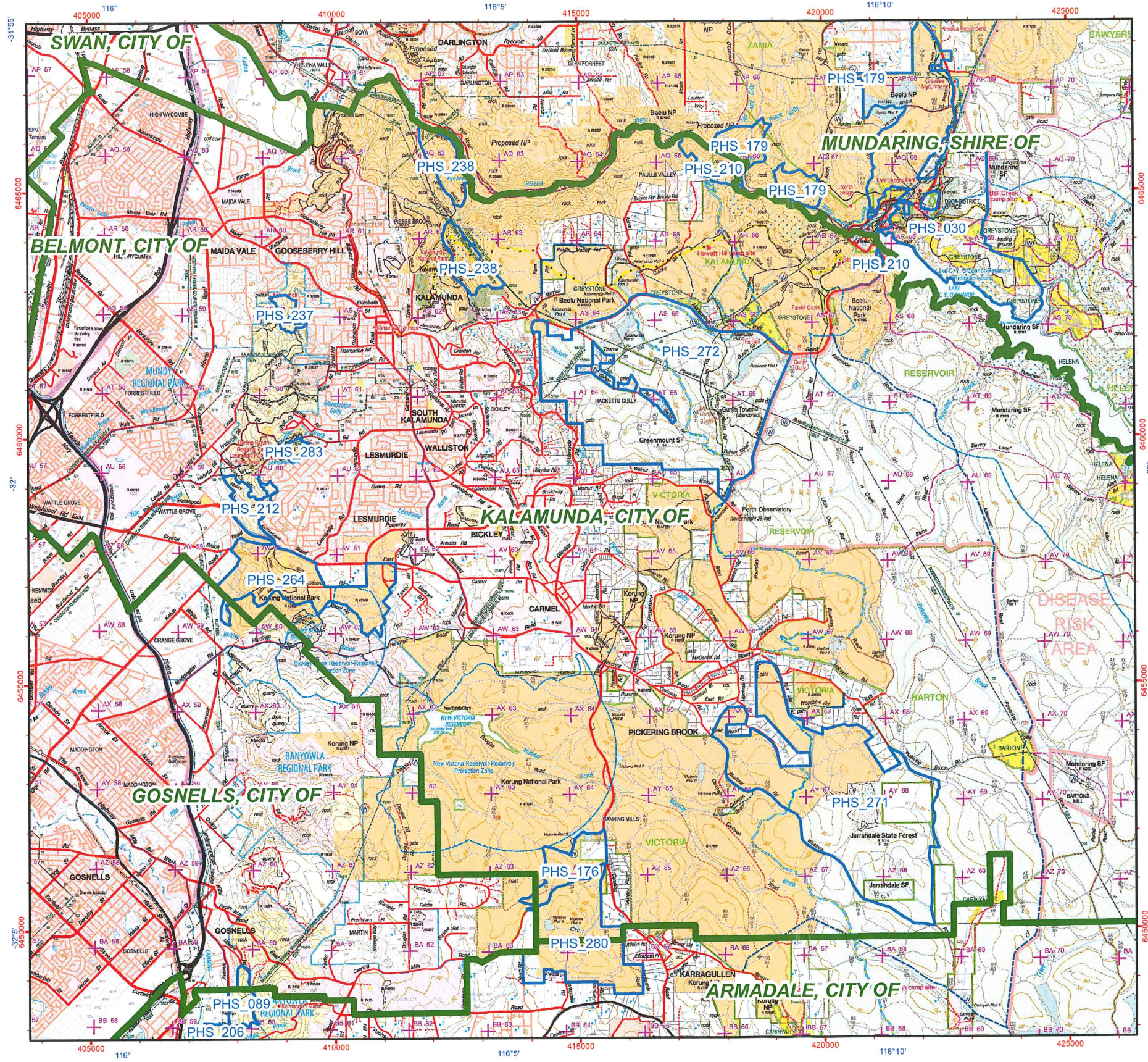
Further information

For further information about climate forecasts and conditions, please visit the following pages

- bom.gov.au/climate/ahead
- bom.gov.au/weather-services/fire-weather-centre/fire-weather-services
- www.bom.gov.au/climate/about/australian-climate-influences.shtml

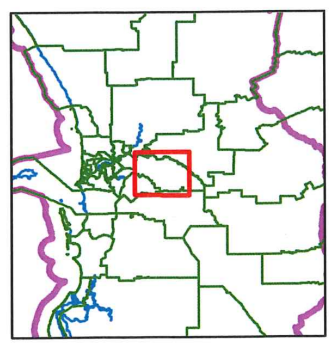
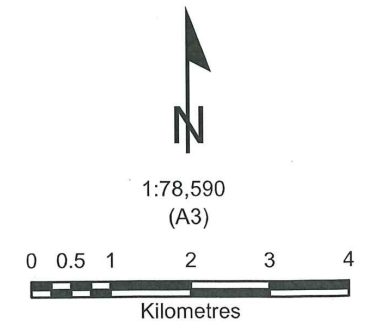
This Seasonal Outlook was developed by AFAC, the Bureau of Meteorology, Queensland Fire Department, NSW Rural Fire Service, ACT Emergency Services Agency, ACT Parks and Conservation Service, Country Fire Authority, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action VIC, Tasmania Fire Service, SA Country Fire Service, Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions WA, and Bushfires NT.





Perth Hills BoP - City of Kalamunda

- Legend**
- Local Govt. Authorities (LGA)
 - 2025 Burn Options Program



Produced by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions



Produced at 10:28am, on Mar 20, 2025

Graticule shown at 5 minutes intervals
 Grid shown at 5000 metre intervals

Roads and tracks on land managed by DBCA may contain unmarked hazards and their surface condition is variable. Exercise caution and drive to conditions on all roads.

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