

State Control Centre - Situation Report

0600 hours - Sunday, February 09, 2014



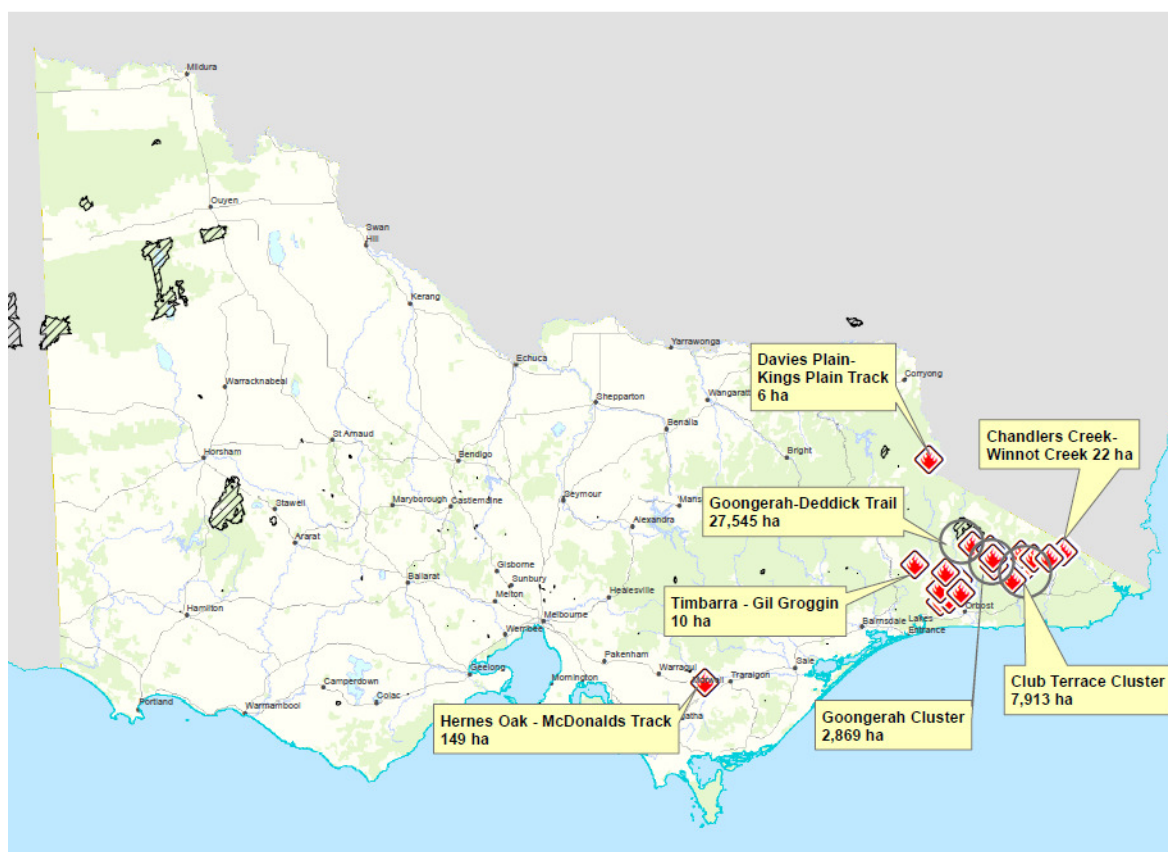
Purpose

This document provides an overview of activity (readiness and response) for the Victorian Emergency Services. The significant incidents listed are those that have political, economic, social and environmental impacts for the community, agencies and / or the state.

State Overview

- 25 going bushfires and grass/scrub fires as at 0530 hours
- A day of Total Fire Ban has been declared for the whole State of Victoria for today, Sunday 9 February 2014.
- Regional mutual support arrangements remain in place for IMTs and strike teams and task forces
- Personnel from New South Wales, Queensland and New Zealand are continuing to assist Victorian fire services across the state in fire-fighting, operational support and liaison roles.

State Map



Focus on Next 36 Hours due to Elevated Fire Danger

Fire Danger ratings for today are: **Extreme** for Northern Country, North Central, North East, Central, West & South Gippsland, East Gippsland, **Severe** for the Mallee and Wimmera, and **Very High** for South West districts.

Weather warnings:

A Fire Weather Warning has been issued for the Mallee, Wimmera, Northern Country, North Central, North East, Central, West and South Gippsland and East Gippsland forecast districts. Hot to very hot conditions with fresh to locally strong north to northwesterly winds ahead of a cold front rapidly crossing the State today and bringing with it a cooler, fresh to strong and gusty southwesterly change. The change is expected through central districts around midday, reaching eastern districts later in the afternoon.

A severe weather warning has been issued for damaging winds are expected in Central, North Central, North East and West & South Gippsland. Damaging winds averaging 55 to 70 km/h with peak gusts of 95 km/h are forecast over the North Central and Central districts during the morning also Alpine parts of the Northeast district. These winds will then extend to the West and South Gippsland forecast district around midday. Winds will be north to northwesterly at first then shift squally west to southwesterly from the west in the late morning and afternoon as the cold front moves through. Moderation will occur a few hours after the wind change.

Impact on going fires:

Ongoing fires in Gippsland present a major concern as hot and windy weather forecast for the next few days will cause issues for control of existing fires.

There is an elevated risk of fire today and many public events are occurring, please refer to the following website for more information: <http://www.visitvictoria.com/Events/Major-events>

Key Messages

Today will be the most significant fire danger day since 2009.

There will be a significant spike in fire weather intensity early today. This will include strong south-westerly winds. This weather is on top of prolonged heat and in combination with fires that are already burning, which significantly heightens the danger.

If a fire starts in these conditions and takes hold it will be fast moving, and become unpredictable and very difficult to control. Any fire will have the potential to run and do significant damage.

Current Warnings and Community Information

Calls to VBIL – 0600 hours sat to 0500hrs today	442	Notes:	Nil
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Current VICSES Warnings at 0600hrs	0
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Fire Agency Warnings from 0600 hours Saturday to 0500 hrs today			
Advice messages	24	Watch and Act messages	15
Emergency Warning messages	12	Emergency Alert messages	3
Recommendation to evacuate	2		
Community Meetings from 0600 hours Saturday to 0500 hrs today			
Planned	0	Conducted	0

Three relief centres are operating to support East Gippsland communities at Orbost, Cann River, and Delegate (NSW).

Significant Incidents

GIPPSLAND

ORBOST ICC

- 5 in IMT overnight
- Some road closures in place. Some access limited to residents, emergency & essential services only.

Lightning strikes through Gippsland started multiple new fires yesterday. Eight small fires between Orbost and Buchan are currently GOING, but held within containment lines. The GOING fires are:

- Orbost – Joe Creek
- Orbost – Long Point
- Orbost – Raymond Creek – Moorsford Road
- Orbost – Silvertop Track
- Orbost – Wombat Creek
- Orbost – Yalmy Rd
- Orbost – Stoney Creek
- (Orbost – Tara Range – Blackfellow Road – now contained)
- Combienbar – Hensleigh Creek Rd

Club Terrace Cluster

- **7,974 ha** combined **3 GOING** fires within this cluster: Goolengook River; Combienbar – Misery Spur; and Combienbar – Errinundra River
- Air surveillance and treatment of hot spots to continue. Monitoring using fire towers and aircraft.

Goongerah Cluster

- **2,735 ha** combined **4 GOING** fires within this cluster: Joys Creek; Mt Jersey; B A Creek; and Ellery Track
- There is currently an Emergency Warning in place for Goongerah and Martins Creek, relief centres are open and some roads are closed.
- Mt Jersey fire continues to burn out to control lines.
- For Joys Creek, B A Creek and Ellery Track fires crews direct attacking by building containment lines where possible. Fire activity within fire boundary. Containment is to roads, gully lines, dozer lines & existing tracks. Patrolling and blacking out of hot spots continues.

Goongerah – Deddick Trail (Previously Snowy River Cluster)

- **27,545 ha GOING**
- Now Includes Mt Gelantipy – Musk Creek
- SE corner and northern fire edge is active
- Prediction of possible joining up with Goongerah and Club Terrace clusters by 1700hours

Chandlers Creek – Winnot Creek

- **23 ha GOING**- 10KM NNE of Chandlers Creek
- Crews to continue consolidating edge and blacking out
- Numerous hazardous trees, crews treating trees as appropriate

Buldah– Mt Peterson

- **GOING**- 3 km west of Buldah
- Fire is tracked with hot spots in fire perimeter

BAIRNSDALE ICC

- 2 in IMT overnight

Timbarra – Gil Groggin

- **10 ha GOING**
- There is currently an Emergency Warning in place for Buchan, Buchan South and Sunny Point.
- Spotfires and ember attacks may impact the Buchan area from dawn today. The Bruthen - Buchan Road is likely to be closed at the intersection of Bruthen - Nowa Nowa Road when the fire impacts communities.
- Fire is in very steep, remote and inaccessible country. Fire is backing downhill, with some short distance spotting occurring.
- Will attempt water bombing this morning if suitable

Davies Plain – Kings Plain Track (being managed out of Swift's Creek)

- **6 ha GOING**

Buchan-Jacksons Crossing Track

- **28 ha GOING**- 12 km north east of Buchan
- Crews have burnt out western edge, slowly lighting east side. Estimate 750m of edge, of which 250m is completed.

TRARALGON ICC

- 4 in IMT overnight

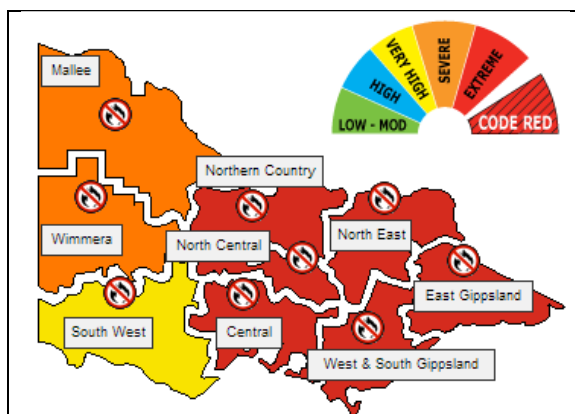
Hernes Oak - Mcdonalds Track

- **156 ha GOING**
- Fire is effectively contained, however status is maintained at going.
- Fire has been fully tracked, there are some trees burning high up in the SE corner
- Fire behaviour overnight has been quiet with some burning in stags and other fuels within the fire area.
- There is a Watch and Act in place.
- Local residences to the South and West of the fireground have been doorknocked overnight warning of the potential change in fire behaviour overnight.
- 16 people have registered with the Relief Centre opened in the Moe Town Hall.
- Traffic Management points are in place on Marrets Rd and McDonalds track.
- V/line train services have returned to normal.
- Possible closure of Strezlecki Highway and Princes freeway following the wind change, possible interruption to power supplies to South Gippsland and other parts of state due to fire in the area of the 550kva transmission lines.

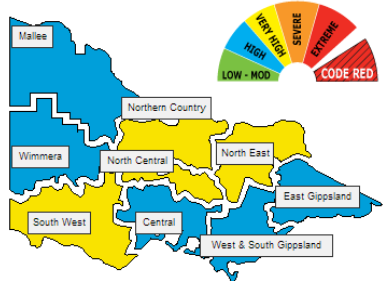
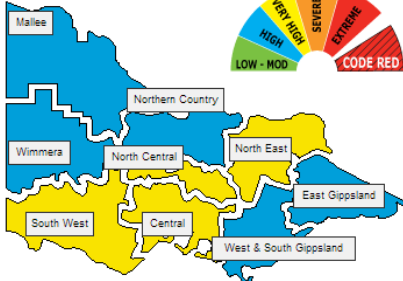
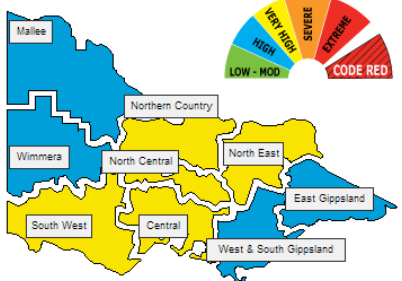
BARWON SOUTH WEST

- Gas leak in **Corio** – **SAFE**
- Leak was at a flange into the main natural gas feed line feeding greater Geelong.

Current Fire Danger Ratings



Fire Danger Rating and Weather Forecast

<p>Monday 10 February</p> 	<p>Tuesday 11 February</p> 	<p>Wednesday 12 February</p> 
<p>Fine and mainly sunny. Mild to warm in the south, warm to very warm inland. South to southeasterly winds, moderate to fresh in the south.</p>	<p>Fine and generally sunny. Very warm to hot in the north and west but milder in Gippsland and near the coast. Light to moderate southeasterly wind and fresh afternoon sea breezes.</p>	<p>Fine apart from isolated showers developing in the southwest during the afternoon. Warm to hot inland with light to moderate southeasterly winds but milder near the coast with afternoon seabreezes.</p>

Severe Weather Outlook (Issued Tuesdays and Fridays)

SEVERE WEATHER OUTLOOK

Issued Friday 7th February 2014



The purpose of the Severe Weather Outlook is to identify severe weather in the form of heavy rain leading to flooding and/or damaging wind gusts associated with low pressure systems. It is not intended to provide guidance on severe thunderstorms, which are best captured by the daily issued Severe Thunderstorm Chart.

DISTRICT	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Mallee					
Wimmera					
South West		⚡			
Northern Country					
North Central		☔			
Central		☔			
North East					
W & S Gippsland		☔			
East Gippsland					
Alpine Region		☔			

- Potential for 'low-end' severe weather event associated with rainfall leading to minor to moderate flooding and/or damaging wind gusts reaching 80-100 km/hr.
- Potential for 'high-end' severe weather event associated with rainfall leading to moderate to major flooding and/or damaging wind gusts reaching 110 km/hr+.
- Wind event
- Rain event (one drop ~ 20-50mm; two drops ~ 50-100mm; three drops ~ 100mm+)
- Riverine flooding event
- Thunderstorms forecast. Check the daily issued Thunderstorm Chart as to whether thunderstorms are likely to be severe.

Weather Situation

- Risk of thunderstorms today through Central, North Central, North East, West and South Gippsland and East Gippsland.
- A trough currently in the west of the State will move eastwards today and may generate afternoon thunderstorms in the districts listed above. Any storms that do develop are unlikely to turn severe due to limited middle level instability.
- This weekend is expected to be critical for fire weather with very hot conditions expected across the State on Saturday, little relief overnight with temperatures remaining in the mid-high 20's and then northerly winds strengthening ahead of a strong and gusty southwesterly wind change Sunday morning and afternoon.
- While northerly winds with gusts of 80-100km/hr are possible about the more elevated areas of the North Central, Central and West and South Gippsland (including the Alpine area), at this stage it is marginal as to whether a Severe Weather Warning will be required ahead of the change.
- Behind the change, wind gusts up to 50-70 km/hr are possible.
- No thunderstorms are expected with the change although there is a risk behind the change in the South West due to the movement of an upper level trough. It remains a small risk.
- No severe weather is expected in the first half of next week with conditions stabilising behind the trough.
- Expect temperatures to return to +40 degrees in the western and central parts by next Wednesday.

The Severe Weather Outlook is prepared Tuesday and Friday mornings based on the latest guidance from several global and local weather models. This information is prepared by the meteorologist in the State Control Centre to assist the State Emergency Service with preparedness and is not to be distributed without permission.



Occupational Health and Safety Considerations

Important safety considerations:

- Forecast high winds heightening the risk of trees and tree limbs falling on the fireground.
- IMT's are to ensure that:
 - hazardous tree stands are identified
 - weather or wind changes are constantly and frequently communicated to the fireground to enable firefighters/personnel to access safe areas in a timely manner
 - consideration is given to using air attack and heavy plant machinery which is fitted with 'fall on' and 'rollover' protection
 - safe fall back areas on the fireground are identified.

Workplace health and safety continues to be a priority and is reinforced with Incident and Regional Controllers and during daily briefings.

- Fatigue and heat related illness and exhaustion.
- Working around transmission lines.
- Increased insect activity and risk of bee stings due to increasing temperature.
- Smouldering logs, hazardous trees and checking for hotspots.
- Driving hazards.

SCC Arrangements for tomorrow

SCC Activation Level Tier 3 (Red)			
State Fire Controller	Craig Lapsley	CFA Agency Commander	Joe Buffone
Deputy State Controller (Rostered)	Alan Goodwin Peter Rau Euan Ferguson Trevor White	DEPI Agency Commander	Andrew Graystone
State SES Controller	Tim Wiebusch	MFB Agency Commander	David Youssef
SCC Duty Manager	Steve Riley	SES Agency Commander	Leanne Simpson

Authorisation

Signature:	Tony Murphy, Deputy State Controller
Time:	

NOTE: A signed copy of this document is retained at the State Control Centre.