



Standard Operating Procedure



Department of
Sustainability
and Environment

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J3.04

Safety Officer

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| Scope | This Standard Operating Procedure applies to all CFA and DSE members engaged in integrated responses to bushfire. |
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| Definitions | <p>The following definitions apply to this Standard Operating Procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Field Safety Advisor: An advisor to the Sector or Division Commander on all aspects of potential and current safety and risk management issues present at the sector or division. ▪ Incident Management Team (IMT): The group of incident management personnel comprising the Incident Controller, and the personnel they appoint to be responsible for the functions of Operations, Public Information, Planning and Logistics. ▪ Incident Personnel: All personnel assigned to a role in the AILMS structure, those they supervise, and those authorised to act in support or to operate on the fire ground. ▪ Multi-agency incident: A situation that occurs when more than one agency, eg. DSE and CFA, have suppression responsibilities or when both agencies' areas of responsibility are threatened or included within the operational area of a fire incident. ▪ Safety Officer: The Safety Officer reports to the Incident Controller on all aspects of potential and current safety and risk management issues identified at the incident. ▪ SMEACS: A briefing format incorporating: Situation, Mission, Execution, Administration and Logistics, Command and Communications, Safety and Questions. |
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| Objective | To define the deployment and role of Safety Officers to enhance the management of safety at bushfires. |
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| Procedure | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In relation to preformed IMTs, Regional Controllers are responsible for ensuring that the Safety Officer position is filled as required by Joint SOP 2.03 – <i>Incident Management Team – Readiness Arrangements</i>. Incident Controllers for Level 3 incidents are |
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responsible for ensuring that the function is carried out within their IMT in accordance with this Joint SOP. The person appointed as Safety Officer must not have other responsibilities within the IMT while the incident remains at Level 3.

2. Appointment of a designated Safety Officer at Level 1 and 2 multi-agency incidents remains at the discretion of the Incident Controller. At such incidents, the Safety Officer role may be allocated to a person performing other functions, but not to the Operations Officer.
3. The Incident Controller may appoint an assistant to the Safety Officer as required.
4. Personnel undertaking welfare, medical or OHS reporting tasks report through the Logistics Officer, but should communicate closely with the Safety Officer.
5. The Safety Officer is responsible for:
 - 5.1 Monitoring the development and implementation of the Incident Action Plan, considering:
 - 5.1.1 Risks to the health, safety and welfare of Incident Personnel; and
 - 5.1.2 Measures to eliminate, prevent or mitigate risks.
 - 5.2 Supporting the IMT to ensure that the relevant safety components are incorporated into SMEACS briefings delivered to all Incident Personnel;
 - 5.3 Assisting the Incident Controller in the provision of the safety briefings and advice;
 - 5.4 Assisting with the conduct of risk assessments for the incident and assists with the development of risk controls and mitigation measures;
 - 5.5 Assisting with monitoring of the effectiveness of incident communications and information flow;
 - 5.6 Assisting with monitoring the health, safety and welfare of personnel;
 - 5.7 Advising the Incident Controller on all aspects of potential and current safety and risk management issues identified at the incident;
 - 5.8 Reviewing the operational aspects of the medical plan for the incident; and
 - 5.9 Maintaining a log book.
6. Safety Officers cannot veto an operational decision, but must raise any operational issues identified with the appropriate role.

7. To undertake the Safety Officer role:

7.1 At a Level 3 multi-agency incident:

7.1.1 A DSE (including PV & DPI) officer must be qualified under the Fire Training Management System as a Level 2 Incident Controller or Level 2 Operations Officer or higher, or Level 2 Planning Officer or higher, or Level 3 Situation Officer, or of equivalent skill designated by the Chief Fire Officer.

7.1.2 A CFA volunteer or staff member must be endorsed as a Level 2 Incident Controller or Operations Officer or higher, or of equivalent skill designated by the Chief Officer.

7.2 At Level 1 and 2 multi-agency incidents:

7.2.1 A DSE (including PV & DPI) officer must be qualified under the Fire Training Management System as a Level 1 Incident Controller or higher, or of equivalent skill designated by the Chief Fire Officer to undertake the Safety Officer role at multi-agency incidents.

7.2.2 A CFA volunteer or staff member must be qualified as Crew Leader or above, or of equivalent skill designated by the Chief Officer to undertake the Safety Officer role at multi-agency incidents.

8. The Safety Officer must ensure that any OH&S incidents, including near misses, that they become aware of are reported according to the established agency systems.

9. The Safety Officer must provide a report to the Incident Controller summarising issues that have been identified and actions taken during the shift or tour. The Safety Officer should participate in any incident debrief or performance improvement forum.

10. Field Safety Advisors

Note: CFA SOPs provide for the appointment of Field Safety Advisors. It is possible that Field Safety Advisors may be in place at a multi-agency incident. The following is provided for information. Refer to CFA SOP's for details regarding appointment and operation of Field Safety Advisors.

10.1 Field Safety Advisors report through the chain of command. Depending on the circumstances of the particular incident, the Incident Controller should determine which field commander the Field Safety Advisor will report to.

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10.2 The Field Safety Advisor is responsible for:

- 10.2.1 Monitoring and reports on operational activities;
- 10.2.2 Monitoring the use of safe working practices, including appropriate Protective Equipment and Personal Protective Clothing;
- 10.2.3 Correcting any unsafe work practices observed, through the appropriate commander;
- 10.2.4 Keeping the Safety Officer advised of any issues identified; and
- 10.2.5 Maintaining a log book.

10.3 Field Safety Advisors cannot veto an operational decision, but must raise any operational safety issues identified with the appropriate commander or supervisor.

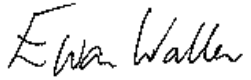


Relevant agency Safety Protocols

- Safety of personnel tasked to an incident and protection of members of the community are the identified priorities for fire control.

Relevant agency Environmental Protocols

- Nil.

| Related Documents | Other Links and References | SOPs |
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| Emergency Management Act 1986 | Joint Agency - Incident Management Team Tool Box | J2.04 - Local Knowledge J3.06 - Briefings |
| Fire Services Commissioners Act 2010 | | |
| State Emergency Response Plan October 2010 (EMMV Part 3) | | |
| State Command and Control Arrangements for Bushfire in Victoria August 2011 | | |
| Safety Officer Checklist | | |
| Field Safety Advisor Checklist | | |

| Approved by: | Date: |
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| Ewan Waller Chief Fire Officer DSE |  14 Sept 2011 |
| Euan Ferguson Chief Officer CFA |  14 Sept 2011 |
| Craig Lapsley Fire Services Commissioner |  14 Sept 2011 |

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| Date to be reviewed: |
| 14 Sept 2014 |
| Date to cease: |
| N/A |