Victorian Bushfire Handbook

Edition 3 – August 2013

FIRE SERVICES COMMISSIONER VICTORIA | CFA | MFB | Department of Environment and Primary Industries | SES | VICTORIA POLICE | HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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Introduction

This handbook summarises the operational management structures and systems used by CFA, DEPI and MFB (the Fire Agencies) for bushfire preparedness, readiness and response in Victoria. It reinforces agency specific procedures and common doctrine (e.g. State Command and Control Arrangements for Bushfire in Victoria).

This handbook supersedes the *Victorian Fire Agency Bushfire Handbook 2012–13* (Edn 2 dated September 2012). The change of title does not reflect any change in purpose or content but includes a broader range of emergency services in publication.

The content included in this Handbook was correct at the time of printing.

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide fire agency personnel with a convenient reference to the key fire agency structures and systems required to undertake effective and safe firefighting operations at bushfires in Victoria.

This handbook is an important reference for all those involved in managing bushfires in Victoria but is particularly relevant for those involved in incident management in the roles of Division Commander and above.

It is important to note that the Handbook is a subordinate document to the Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV), procedures produced by the Fire Services Commissioner and to all other agency procedures and manuals. At the time of printing the Handbook is consistent with these procedures and manuals however the overarching procedures and manuals remain the primary reference documents at all times.

Authorisation

This handbook has been approved on 14 August 2013 by the following:

Craig Lapsley Fire Services Commissioner	**Euan Ferguson** Chief Officer CFA	**Alan Goodwin** Chief Fire Officer DEPI	**Shane Wright** Chief Officer MFB
Trevor White Chief Officer Operations VicSES	**Shane Patton** Assistant Commissioner Victoria Police	**Carmel Flynn** Director, Health and Human Service Emergency Management	

Review Process

This document will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary. It remains in effect until terminated or modified in writing by the participating agencies. The current version is available on the Fire Services Commissioners website.

Strategic Control Priorities – State Controller's Intent

The State Controller is responsible for the overall control of the response to bushfires in Victoria. The role of the State Controller is to provide strategic leadership for the resolution of bushfire emergency(ies). In a large scale emergency this role would operate in the State Control Centre.

First response (also known as initial response or first attack) to fires and other emergencies will be fast, determined and thorough and will take precedence over normal agency activities.

The State Controller has developed a policy which provides clear direction to Regional Controllers and all Incident Controllers on the key strategic control priorities that must be considered and actioned during the management of any significant or complex fire. The policy underpins the planning and operational decisions made by agency Command and Control staff when managing fire.

The following strategic control priorities shall form the basis of the Incident Strategy and Incident Action Planning processes:

- **Protection and preservation of life is paramount.** This includes:

  - Safety of emergency services personnel; and

  - Safety of community members including vulnerable community members and visitors/tourists located within the incident area.

- **Issuing of community information and community warnings** detailing incident information that is timely, relevant and tailored to assist community members make informed decisions about their safety.

- **Protection of critical infrastructure and community assets** that supports community resilience.

- **Protection of residential property** as a place of primary residence.

- **Protection of assets supporting individual livelihoods and economic production** that supports individual and community financial sustainability.

- **Protection of environmental and conservation assets** that considers the cultural, biodiversity and social values of the environment.

The Incident Controller is responsible for operational decision making and is supported by the Regional Controller and State Controller.

The Incident Strategy and Incident Action Plan will consider the strategic, operational and tactical issues to be managed. This includes initial attack strategies, incident escalation including transfer of control, incident management structures, community impact and resourcing.

In the context of protecting human life as the paramount concern, early advice to communities is as critical as operations. The Incident Controller may need to vary the strategic control priorities in some circumstances. This shall be done in consultation with the Regional Controller and State Controller based on sound incident predictions and risk assessments.

To assist the Incident Management Team (IMT) and Emergency Management Team (EMT) achieve the strategic control priorities, the Incident Controller should be mindful of the following activities:

- Continuous situational awareness;

- Issuing community warnings and advice;

- Incident intelligence;

- Incident prediction;

- Dynamic risk assessment;

- Weather prognosis;

- Mapping;

- Resources;

- Incident management structure – Division (Field) Command, Incident, Regional and State control;

- Understanding community impact and consequences – discuss with EMT; and

- Communications – maintain two way communications with IMT, EMT and Regional/ State control.

The key to the success and safety of all is the preparedness of individuals and teams. It is critical that everyone involved in managing bushfires in Victoria – from Regional Controllers, to Incident Controllers, to Strike Team Leaders, to crew members – understand their responsibilities and take the necessary actions to prepare for the coming fire season. Such efforts in preparedness are an essential element of the shared responsibility for bushfire safety that exists between the fire services and emergency management agencies, State and local government, communities, households and individuals. All of us are team members that rely on each other.

Further Information:
- Fire Services Commissioner's Policy 001/2011 – Strategic Control Priorities – State Controller's Intent.

Agencies Working Together as One Integrated Team

The management of emergencies is a shared responsibility involving many organisations and people in the community. Although some organisations have specialist roles, emergency management is not something done by one single organisation or sector to or for the rest of the community.

The management task is to bring together, in an integrated organisational network, the resources of the many agencies and individuals, who can take appropriate and timely action to prevent, mitigate, respond to, and recover from emergencies.

Interoperability provides a mechanism for achieving better outcomes by allowing the fire services to effectively work together before, during and after a fire. It also provides a foundation for meaningful connections with the community and a wide range of partner organisations.

To achieve a cooperative response to fire and other emergencies, each agency must have an understanding of the systems, structure, resources, capabilities and statutory obligations of the other agencies. Interoperability maximises the capability of the agencies to work effectively and efficiently together to deliver seamless information, communications, and technology.

Our Purpose

A safer and more resilient community.

Our Vision

Fire and Emergency Services work with the community, government and business as one integrated and unified team.

Further Information:
* Fire Services Commissioner – 'Building New Foundations'.

Command and Control

Victorian Emergency Management Arrangements

The *Emergency Management Act* (1986) is the empowering legislation for Command, Control and Coordination of emergencies in Victoria. The EMMV contains policy and planning documents for emergency management and provides details about the roles different organisations play in the emergency management arrangements.

The State Emergency Response Plan (SERP, Part 3 of the EMMV) identifies the organisational arrangements for managing the response to emergencies within, or with the potential to affect, the State of Victoria. It applies to all agencies having roles or responsibilities in response to those emergencies, regardless of the scale of the emergency.

The SERP, in conjunction with the State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan, (Part 4 of the EMMV) sets the strategic framework for preparedness, planning and emergency operations in Victoria. The SERP is part of a broader emergency management framework and should be read in conjunction with the other parts of the EMMV (e.g. Part 9). The Fire Services Commissioner (FSC) and Fire Agency Chiefs have developed the Command and Control Arrangements for Bushfire to guide how the SERP is implemented.

Command and Control Arrangements for Bushfire in Victoria

Introduction

The FSC has issued the Command and Control Arrangements for Bushfire in Victoria to provide direction to agencies supporting the line-of-control during bushfires by:

- Clarifying who is accountable for the command and control of bushfire readiness and response;

- Outlining the process for escalating the control of a bushfire from the incident to the regional and state tiers of control; and

- Ensuring all agencies work together to support the line-of-control and provide an integrated and seamless approach to bushfire management.

The document contains information relating to bushfire management that is additional to the arrangements in the SERP (Part 3 of the EMMV).

Command and Control

Definitions

The Bushfire Arrangements apply only to Victoria and use the following definitions:

- **Area-of-Operations** is a geographic area defined to contain an incident or group of bushfires. The State Controller may define an Area-of-Operations distinct from a Region and appoint an Area-of-Operations Controller. Once appointed, the Area-of-Operations Controller will manage the Incident Management Teams and all incidents within the Area-of-Operations.

- **Bushfire** is an unplanned fire primarily in vegetation such as grass, forest and scrub.

- **Bushfire season** refers to the period from 1 October until 31 May each year unless otherwise determined by the Fire Services Commissioner.

- **Chain-of-command** refers to the organisational hierarchy of an agency. It is the identifiable line up and down the hierarchy from any individual to and from their supervisor and subordinates. The chain-of-command identifies people or positions at the most senior level of the organisation with accountability.

- **Chief Officer** refers collectively to the Chief Fire Officer of DEPI, the Chief Officer of CFA and the Chief Officer of MFB as the case requires.

- **Command** refers to the direction of personnel and resources of an agency in the performance of the organisation's role and tasks. Authority to command is established in legislation or by agreement within an agency. Command relates to agencies and operates vertically within an agency. Where there are agreed, pre-existing arrangements, a functional commander can direct personnel and resources of more than one agency in accordance with those arrangements.

- **Coordination** involves the bringing together of agencies and resources to ensure effective response to and recovery from emergencies. Victoria Police is the coordination agency for response and the Department of Human Services is the coordination agency for recovery.

- **Control** involves the overall direction of response activities in an emergency. Authority for control is established in legislation or in an emergency response plan, and carries with it the responsibility for tasking other agencies in accordance with the needs of the situation. Control relates to situations and operates horizontally across agencies.

- **Days of high fire risk** are identified by the State and Regional Controllers on the basis of forecast Fire Danger Ratings and consideration of a range of other factors which may elevate the likelihood or the consequences of a fire, for example active arson or a large number of campers in a fire prone area.

- **Fire Services Commissioner** (FSC) is an independent statutory officer, appointed by the Governor in Council reporting to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and the senior operational firefighter in Victoria. The responsibilities of the FSC include the overall control of response activities in relation to a major fire which is burning, or which may occur, or which has occurred in any area of the State. The FSC is the State Controller for bushfire. The FSC can appoint other people to help with the control of bushfire as per section 16 of the *Emergency Management Act 1986.*

- **First response** is the action of agency personnel who first attempt to combat a bushfire and provide rescue and immediate relief services.

- **In the field** refers to bushfire operations conducted outside of an Incident Control Centre facility.

- **Incident Controller** is the individual appointed to be accountable for the overall direction of response activities in a bushfire incident.

- **Line-of-control** refers to the connection between the Controllers at each tier of emergency management. The line-of-control for bushfire is Incident Controller, Regional Controller and State Controller and people are appointed to these positions throughout the bushfire season.

- **Major fire** means a large or complex fire (however caused) which:

  a) has the potential to cause or is causing loss of life and extensive damage to property, infrastructure or the environment; or

  b) has the potential to have or is having significant adverse consequences for the Victorian community or a part of the Victorian community; or

  c) requires the involvement of 2 or more fire services agencies to suppress the fire; or

  d) will, if not suppressed, burn for more than one day.

- **Preparedness** is the establishment of structures, development of systems and testing and evaluation by organisations and communities of their capacity to perform their allotted roles in an emergency.

- **Readiness** refers to the arrangements the fire services agencies make, during the fire season, for the active involvement of resources to respond to bushfire. Readiness levels will vary throughout the fire season in accordance with the level of bushfire risk in accordance with joint standard operating procedures and any other agreements between the FSC and/or the fire services agencies.

- **Recovery** is the assisting of people and communities affected by bushfires to achieve a proper and effective level of functioning.

Command and Control

- **Region** refers to one of the Victorian Government Regions:
  - Barwon South West;
  - Grampians;
  - Loddon Mallee;
  - Hume;
  - Gippsland;
  - Southern Metropolitan;
  - Eastern Metropolitan; and
  - Northern and Western Metropolitan.

- **Regional Controller** is the (rostered) person appointed by the FSC and acting on behalf of the FSC in each Region for the extent of the bushfire season to exercise control at the regional tier over bushfire readiness and response in the Region, irrespective of the jurisdiction.

- **Response** is the combating of bushfires and the provision of rescue and immediate relief services.

- **State Controller** is the senior operational person from the control agency who provides strategic leadership for the response to emergencies across Victoria. The FSC can appoint another person to the role of State Controller for a specified period in accordance with section 16 of the *Emergency Management Act 1986*.

- **State and Regional Agency Commanders** are the commanders of the fire services agencies at the state and regional tiers of management.

- **Tiers** are the three tiers used in Victoria for emergency management – incident, regional and state.

Principles of Bushfire Command and Control

Tiers of Management

Victoria uses a three-tiered approach for emergency management – incident, regional and state tiers of management. The following diagram shows the primary roles for coordination, control and command at each tier and key accountabilities.
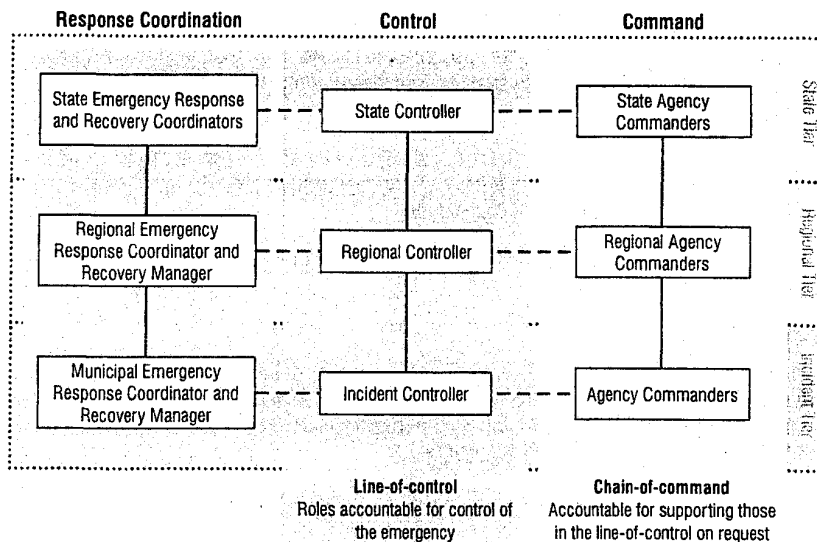
Figure 1 – Primary Roles for Coordination, Control and Command, with key accountabilities

Line-of-control

Control relates to situations and operates horizontally across agencies. Those appointed to the control function for bushfire are accountable for the control of the bushfires managed within their span of control. They provide direction to all other agencies responding to the emergency, at their respective tier.

The 'line-of-control' refers to the line of supervision for those appointed to perform the control function. The line-of-control for bushfire in Victoria is State Controller, Regional Controller and Incident Controller.

The purpose of the line-of-control for bushfire in Victoria is to ensure an operational, informational and evaluative connection between the controllers at each tier so that the Fire Services Commissioner (FSC), who has legislative accountability for the control of major fire and is the State Controller for bushfire, is assured that the needs of the community are being met.

Command and Control

Regional Controllers

For the extent of the bushfire season, the FSC approves the appointment of rostered Regional Controllers to take charge and provide strategic leadership for bushfire readiness and response in each Region.

During the bushfire season, both the FSC and Regional Controllers monitor all fires and their potential consequences but only actively manage fires with the potential to become major fires. This could be all fires on days of high fire risk.

Where bushfires occur outside the bushfire season, the FSC appoints Regional Controllers on a needs basis.

Incident Controllers

In first response, the fire services agencies normally appoint Incident Controllers to manage bushfires according to their jurisdictional responsibilities. In readiness for bushfire on days of high fire risk or for major bushfires, the State or Regional Controllers may appoint Incident Controllers, appointed regardless of their agency.

Because the control function operates horizontally across agencies, Incident Controllers must communicate with the commanders of all the other agencies responding to the bushfire, including the commanders of the own agency resources.

All Incident Controllers for bushfire in Victoria work within the line-of-control. This is regardless of whether they are the first responders to bushfires in the field or an Incident Controller managing a bushfire from an Incident Control Centre, following the transfer of control from a field Incident Controller.

Chain-of-command

The fire services agencies retain command of their own resources and maintain their chain-of-command throughout the bushfire season.

For bushfire management, the command structure of each fire services agency aligns with the state tiers of emergency management as follows:

- The Chief Officer is the State Agency Commander.

- Operational personnel under the command of a Chief Officer include personnel employed by the agency, engaged as volunteers or engaged through networked emergency organisation arrangements.

- Each Chief Officer appoints Regional Agency Commanders at the regional tier, where the agency holds jurisdiction, for the extent of the bushfire season.

During the bushfire season, agency commanders from the fire services agencies are responsible for monitoring the activities of the resources within their command, ensuring they are supporting the line-of-control.

<u>**Command and Control**</u>

Readiness and Response to Bushfire

Preparedness arrangements

Prior to the bushfire season, the FSC and the fire services agencies prepare an integrated suite of arrangements to help them fulfill their bushfire response responsibilities.

Local Mutual Aid Plans identify the preparedness arrangements undertaken by the fire services agencies in each region.

Readiness arrangements

During the bushfire season State and Regional Controllers, in consultation with State and Regional Agency Commanders, give direction regarding the level of resources required to be ready at particular times, provide an effective response to bushfire. Readiness arrangements involve establishing support for the line-of-control and could include:

- Preparing and staffing the State Control Centre, according to the direction of the State Controller;

- Preparing and staffing the Regional Control Centres, according to the direction of Regional Controllers or the State Controller;

- Positioning Incident Management Teams at designated Incident Control Centres (in accordance with SOP J2.03 – *Incident Management Teams – Readiness Arrangements*); and

- Positioning incident resources to ensure an effective initial response.

In general, the following situations relate to heightened levels of readiness:

- Regional Control Centre readiness arrangements will be elevated when:

  - the Fire Danger Rating in the region is severe or higher; or

  - the Regional Controller, in consultation with the State Controller, issues a direction;

- Both State Control Centre and Regional Control Centre readiness arrangements will be elevated when:

  - There is a Code Red Fire Danger Rating in one or more forecast districts; or

  - There is an Extreme Fire Danger Rating in three or more forecast districts; or

  - The State Controller issues a direction.

The fire services agencies will jointly ensure resources (personnel, equipment and facilities) are ready in accordance with the directions given by the State and Regional Controllers.

Command and Control

A guide to fire control responsibility in Victoria		
Responsibility	**Type of fire** (broad definition)	**Source**

Business as usual

| Agency controls response within its area of responsibility | Non-major fire CFA & DEPI – Level 1 or 2 MFB – 1–4 Alarm (GARS) | *CFA Act* 1958 *MFB Act* 1958 *Forests Act* 1958 |
| | All major fires CFA & DEPI – Level 3 MFB – 5th Alarm + (GARS) | Fire Services Commisioner delegations under *Emergency Management Act* 1986 |

Major fire

| Fire Services Commisioner determines if agency retains control or transfers control | Chief Officer must notify the Fire Services Commissioner   Except for | Fire Services Commisioner delegations under *Emergency Management Act* 1986 |

Major danger of fire (is burning, may or has occured)

| Fire Services Commisioner controls response | Major fire is burning, may occur or has occurred on a day:
- with a Code Red FDR in 1 or more forecast districts
- with an Extreme FDR in 3 or more forecast districts
- regardless of the FDR, the Fire Services Commissioner has determined the State control arrangements should be put in place
The Fire Services Commissioner assumes control under s. 16(2) of the *Emergency Management Act* 1986 or appoints another officer under s. 16(4) | *Emergency Management Act* 1986 |

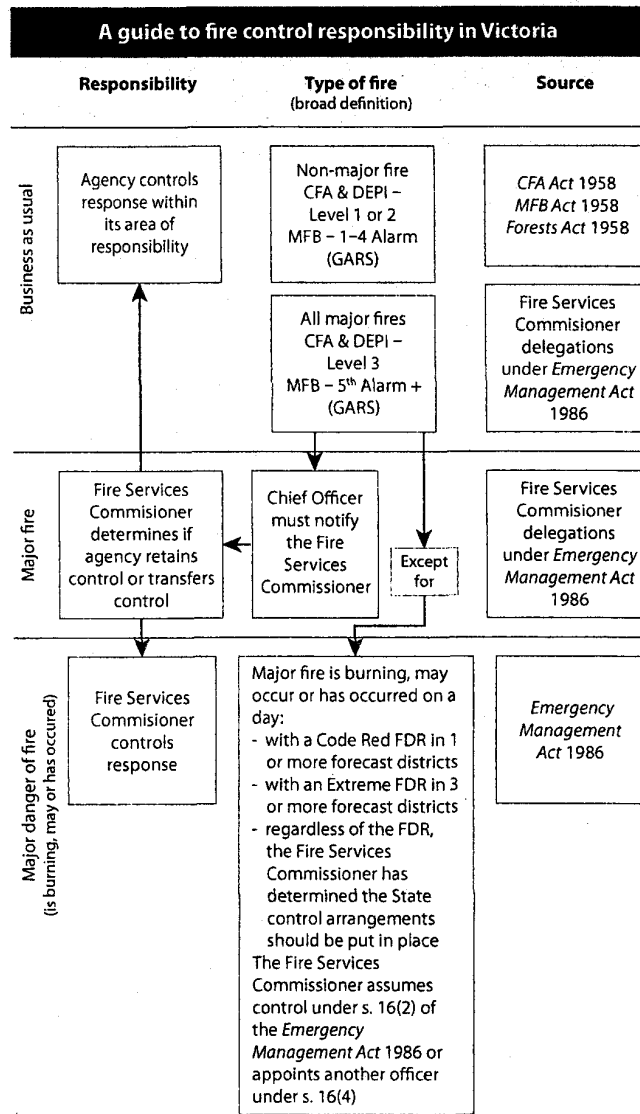**Figure 2** – *A Guide to Fire Control Responsibility in Victoria*

Response arrangements

The fire services agencies respond to the notification of bushfires according to their agency arrangements.

Each bushfire has only one Incident Controller, regardless of the number of agencies responding and all Incident Controllers work within the line-of-control.

Most fires are resolved in first response, with only a few fires needing escalation to higher levels of control.

The FSC Guidance Note 02/2012 – Transfer of Control explains the process for the first response Incident Controller to transfer control to an Incident Controller, supported by an Incident Management Team (IMT) and located in an Incident Control Centre to achieve a joined-up multi-agency approach.

The State and Regional Controllers monitor the potential of all bushfires within the State, through regular contact with Incident Controllers and Agency Commanders. They become actively involved in the management of all bushfires that are or have potential to become major fires.

Resource management

The Incident Controller is responsible for providing direction, across all agencies, to the resources responding to the bushfire and for requesting and releasing resources.

The Incident Controller should initially request local resources through agency commanders.

Where agencies are unable to provide sufficient resources from the local area, the Incident Controller should seek additional resources through the Regional Controller. The Regional Controller, in consultation with Regional Fire Agency Commanders, will prioritise resource deployment across the Region. This may include reallocating resources within their Region.

Where the Region is unable to supply the resources required, the Regional Controller will seek resources from the State Controller. The State Controller, in consultation with State Fire Agency Commanders, will prioritise resource deployment across the State and seek additional resources as required.

Support agency resources are sought through the process outlined in the SERP. This includes the sourcing of resources from other states, the Commonwealth and from overseas but excludes resources obtained through cross-border arrangemements.

Command and Control

Support for the Line-of-Control

Records management

Incident Controllers at each tier of control must have a process for recording their decisions and those made within Control Teams and Emergency Management Teams, and a process for maintaining and storing these records. This responsibility for this function should be allocated to the Executive Officer.

Support for the State Controller

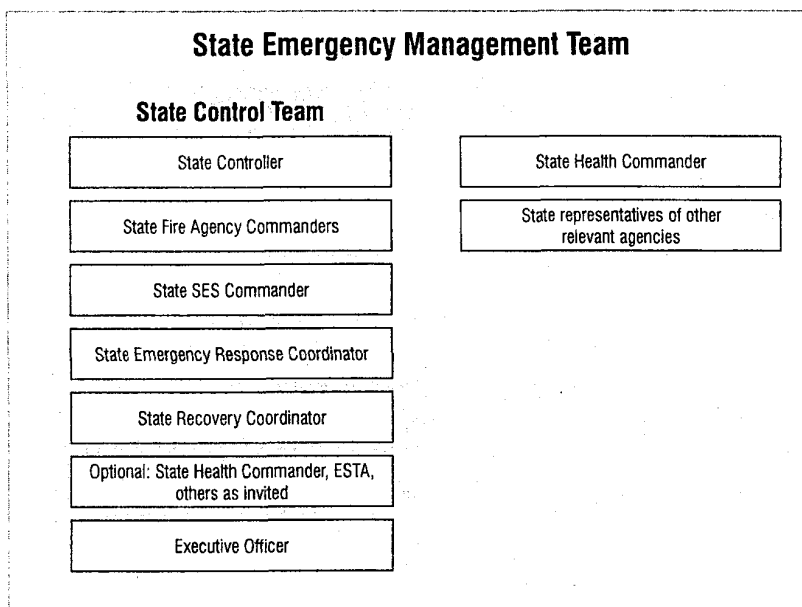Figure 3 below illustrates the composition of the teams supporting the State Controller.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│               State Emergency Management Team                         │
│                                                                       │
│     State Control Team                                                │
│   ┌──────────────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────────────┐     │
│   │     State Controller     │      │   State Health Commander  │     │
│   └──────────────────────────┘      └──────────────────────────┘     │
│   ┌──────────────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────────────┐     │
│   │ State Fire Agency        │      │ State representatives of   │     │
│   │ Commanders               │      │ other relevant agencies    │     │
│   └──────────────────────────┘      └──────────────────────────┘     │
│   ┌──────────────────────────┐                                       │
│   │  State SES Commander     │                                       │
│   └──────────────────────────┘                                       │
│   ┌──────────────────────────┐                                       │
│   │ State Emergency Response │                                       │
│   │ Coordinator              │                                       │
│   └──────────────────────────┘                                       │
│   ┌──────────────────────────┐                                       │
│   │ State Recovery Coordinator│                                      │
│   └──────────────────────────┘                                       │
│   ┌──────────────────────────┐                                       │
│   │ Optional: State Health   │                                       │
│   │ Commander, ESTA, others  │                                       │
│   │ as invited               │                                       │
│   └──────────────────────────┘                                       │
│   ┌──────────────────────────┐                                       │
│   │   Executive Officer      │                                       │
│   └──────────────────────────┘                                       │
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Figure 3 – *Teams that support the State Controller*

State Control Team

The State Controller may establish a State Control Team to provide advice on a strategic approach to bushfire readiness and response.

The State Control Team usually comprises:

- State Controller;

- State Fire Agency Commanders;

- State Emergency Service (SES) Commander;

- State Emergency Response Coordinator (or delegate); and

- State Recovery Coordinator.

An Executive Officer will provide support to the team. The State Controller may request other people to attend, for example the State Health Commander or the Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority (ESTA) representative.

Role

The State Control Team provides advice to the State Controller in the following areas:

- Readiness levels;

- Appointments to the line-of-control;

- Communication of warnings and information to the community;

- Operational and strategic risks and consequences, including those to life and property;

- Resourcing priorities;

- Provision of information and situation reports to other agencies and government;

- The need for interstate, Commonwealth and international support;

- Support for the functioning of the State Control Centre; and

- The functioning and operation of systems and technology to support incident management.

Command and Control

State Emergency Management Team (SEMT)

Whenever there is a multi-agency activation in readiness for or in response to an emergency with the potential for regional significance, the State Controller (or delegate) or the State Emergency Response Coordinator (or delegate) will initiate the SEMT, issue invitations and chair the SEMT meetings.

The SEMT provides the following function:

- To facilitate a discussion to enable agencies to develop a consistent situational awareness regarding the emergency(s);

- To identify and manage strategic risks and consequences; and

- To develop a State (Risk and Consequence) plan outlining the high level actions of all agencies.

Meetings are usually held at the SCC.

The SEMT has a similar agency composition to the Regional Emergency Management Team (REMT) except that the most senior person (or their delegate) in the agency at the state tier of emergency management represents the agency.

The SEMT usually comprises the government department or agency with coordination or portfolio responsibility for a functional area such as pre-hospital response, health (Regional Health Commander), water, transport or roads to represent those agencies within the function from a whole-of-region perspective. A representative of the Municipal Association of Victoria may represent affected municipal councils (but not all e.g. Melbourne City Council). A representative of Emergency Management Joint Public Information Committee (EMJPIC) usually attends. The chair may also invite other organisations, government agencies or individuals with specialist knowledge, including representatives of affected industry groups.

Prior to the meeting, the chair should distribute situation summaries. All agencies should plan a summary of their activities and related risks and issues, for the agency representative to present.

Support for the Regional Controller

Figure 4 below illustrates the composition of the teams supporting the Regional Controller.
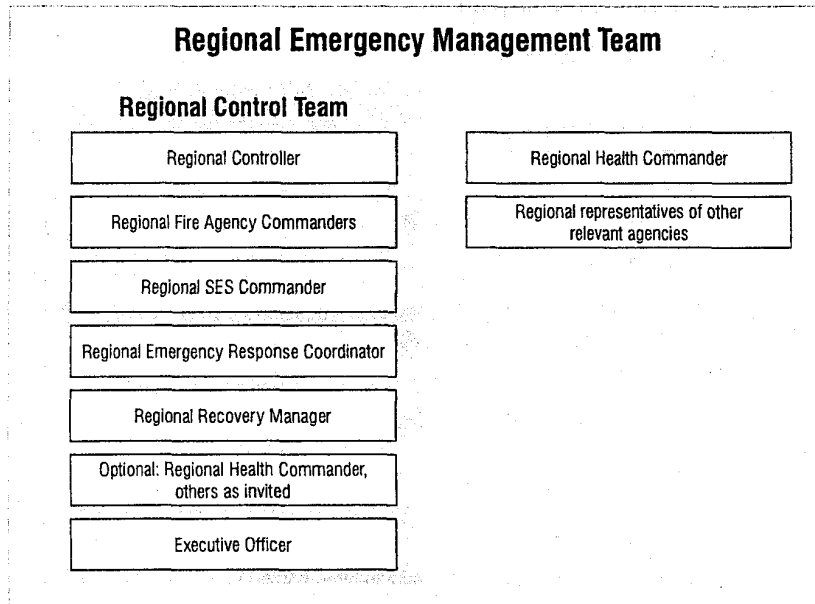

Figure 4 – Teams that support the Regional Controller

Note: *where an Area-of-Operations has been defined, the Area-of-Operations Controller is responsible for establishing support teams in the way that Regional Controllers are responsible for establishing regional tier support teams, as defined in this section.*

Command and Control

Regional Control Team

The Regional Controller may form a Regional Control Team to provide advice on a strategic approach to bushfire readiness and response.

The Regional Control Team usually comprises:

- Regional Controller;
- Regional Fire Agency Commanders;
- SES Regional Commander;
- Regional Emergency Response Coordinator (or delegate); and
- Regional Recovery Manager.

An Executive Officer will provide support to the team. The Regional Controller may request other people to attend, for example the Regional Health Commander.

Role

The role of the Regional Control Team is to provide advice to the Regional Controller in the following areas:

- Readiness levels;
- Appointments to the line-of-control;
- Communication of warnings and information to the community;
- Operational and strategic risks and consequences, including those to life and property;
- Resourcing priorities;
- Provision of information and situation reports to other agencies and government;
- The need for state support;
- Support for the functioning of the Regional Control Centre; and
- The functioning and operation of systems and technology to support incident management.

Regional Emergency Management Team (REMT)

Whenever there is a multi-agency activation in readiness for or in response to an emergency that has the potential for regional significance, the Regional Controller (or delegate) or Regional Emergency Response Coordinator (or delegate) will initiate the REMT, issue invitations and chair the REMT.

The role of the REMT is to:

- facilitate a discussion to enable agencies to develop a consistent situational awareness regarding the emergency(s) affecting the region;

- identify and manage risks and consequences;

- facilitate the achievement of the State Controller's Intent;

- develop a Regional Plan outlining the regional actions of all agencies; and

- to maintain a log and keep an audit trail.

Meetings are usually held at the RCC.

The REMT usually comprises the government departments or agencies with coordination or portfolio responsibility for a functional area such as pre-hospital response, health (Regional Health Commander), water transport or roads to represent those agencies within the function from a whole-of-region perspective. A senior representative of all affected municipal councils should attend. The REMT chair may also invite other organisations, government agencies or individuals with specialist knowledge, including representatives of affected industry groups.

Prior to the meeting, the chair should distribute situation summaries. All representatives should plan a summary of their activities and related risks and issues, for the agency or portfolio area, to present at the meeting.

Support for the Incident Controller

Incident Management Team

The Incident Controller may be supported by an Incident Management Team (IMT), which usually comprises individuals from the fire services agencies and other key support agencies. The IMT provides the Incident Controller with support for the public information, planning, operations and logistics functions.

The Incident Management Team works closely with the Incident Emergency Management Team, if one has been established.

Command and Control

Incident Emergency Management Team (IEMT)

The IEMT supports the Incident Controller in determining and implementing appropriate incident management strategies for the emergency. Although the IEMT facilitates a collaborative decision-making process, with the primary intent of unity and purpose of effort, the Incident Controller leads the team and retains control of the emergency.

When multiple agencies respond on-scene to an incident, the first contact between the Incident Controller and support agencies represents the formation of an IEMT. Where the control of the incident transfers to an ICC, the IEMT meets more formally either face to face or via video or teleconference.

The IEMT will usually comprise:

- Incident Controller;
- Support Agency Commanders (or their representatives);
- Health Commander (functional commander of supporting health agencies);
- Recovery Commander (if appointed) or the Recovery Coordinator or representative;
- Emergency Response Coordinator (Victoria Police) or representative; and
- other specialist people, such as representatives of affected local industry groups.

Where an emergency has the potential for impact on the community, the chair will notify and invite local government into the IEMT.

Part 7 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria details agency responsibilities during emergencies.

Further Information:
- AIIMS Manual – 3rd Edition (2011 revision).
- Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV).
- Emergency Management Team Arrangements 2013.
- FSC SOP 05/2011 – Control of Major Fires.
- Joint SOP J2.03 – *Incident Management Teams – Readiness Arrangements.*
- State Command and Control Arrangements for Bushfire in Victoria.

Emergency Management Locations
(Facilities that support the line of control)

Response agencies should provide appropriate physical and technical infrastructure to support those personnel appointed to roles within the command and control structure (e.g. Incident Controllers, Agency Commanders).

Any centre established for this purpose shall be named based on the function it supports, eg. a control centre, command centre, operations centre.

In addition, if intelligence (e.g. weather forecasts) suggests a serious emergency is imminent, consideration should be given to activation of these facilities to monitor impacts in the potentially affected area.

State Control Centre

The SCC is the State's primary control centre for management of emergencies, it is the hub of a network of 8 regional and 40 incident control centres.

In order to meet the State control priorities and objectives, the purpose of the State Control Centre is to provide a facility to support the State Controller to execute state control by:

1. ensuring the State Controller and State Control Team maintain appropriate situational awareness to support strategic decision making;

2. engaging with and providing information to key stakeholders and State Emergency Management Team;

3. ensuring readiness arrangements are in place;

4. ensuring control strategies and arrangements are appropriate;

5. ensuring incident progression is predicted;

6. ensuring information and community warnings are timely and appropriate;

7. prioritising the allocation of state and specialist resources; and

8. providing support to State, regional, incident control and agency personnel.

Emergency Management Locations (Facilities that support the line of control)

Regional Control Centres

Regional Control Centres (RCCs) are the predetermined location where the Regional Controller and various members of the Regional Control Team operate from for a particular Region. A RCC is a facility that enables the implementation of the Command and Control arrangements within a set Regional boundary or declared Area-of-Operations. It is essential that the RCC functionality is maintained at all times to ensure immediate capability to all control agencies, as well as all threats and hazards within the community.

The Regional Controller and other personnel that operate from the Regional Control Centre form part of the line of control and chain of command structures, with direct responsibility for all ICCs and operations identified within the Regional boundary. The Regional Controller reports directly to the State Controller.

Incident Control Centres

Incident Control Centres (ICCs) are the location where the Incident Controller and various members of the Incident Management Team (IMT) provide overall direction of response activities.

Each ICC should, where possible, be at a pre-defined place that allows an appropriate level of communication with personnel at incidents within its 'footprint'. ICC locations must be agreed by the agencies.

Each ICC must be well linked to neighbouring ICCs, local municipal & police coordination centres and fire agency infrastructure such as agency offices, airbases, staging areas, base camp, division command and operations points.

A Level 3 ICC is a facility used to accommodate an IMT during preparation for, or response to a large or complex (Level 3) incident. A Level 3 ICC must have all the facilities and services required to support the operation of a multi agency Incident Management Team managing a large or complex incident including those facilities required by support agencies.

Division Command Points

A Division Command Point (DCP) is a location where the person in the role of Division Commander is operating from. This could be a mobile point close to the fireground and might be where a field command vehicle (FCV) is located, or a building such as a Local Command Facility (LCF).

A LCF is an approved facility that may be used as a DCP if appropriate. A LCF has resources and facilities maintained to a level so it can be used as a DCP when required.

Municipal Emergency Coordination Centres (MECCs)

Municipal Emergency Coordination Centres are facilities where coordination of municipal resources used for emergency response and recovery operations take place. Municipalities will usually have a Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre activated ahead of, or in response to, a bushfire. The Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator (MERC), the Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO) and Municipal Recovery Officer (MRO) are often located at the Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre.

Some members in attendance at the Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre may also participate in the incident Emergency Management Team, but these are two separate functions.

Further Information:

- AIIMS Manual – 3rd Edition (2011 revision).

- CFA Chief Officer's SOP 9.27 – *Staging Area Management.*

- CFA District Operations Management Plans.

- DEPI Readiness and Response Plans.

- Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV).

- OESC Practice Note – MECCs.

- State Command and Control Arrangements for Bushfire in Victoria.

- State Control Centre Standard Operating Procedures.

Incident Management

Victorian fire and emergency management agencies manage all incidents in accordance with the Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS).

AIIMS has been specifically developed to be applied to the local level of emergency management, rather than the Region or State level.

AIIMS is used to manage actions on the incident ground and resolve the incident. AIIMS defines 'incident management' as "those processes, decisions and actions taken to resolve an emergency incident and to support recovery that will enable the community to return to normality" (AIIMS Manual, 4th edition, p.8).

While the specific structure of AIIMS is not implemented at the Region, State or National level, AIIMS is based on principles and underpinning concepts that are universal and can be applied to these levels of emergency management.

AIIMS Principles and Concepts

AIIMS is founded on five fundamental principles, which guide the application of the system, and against which the activities of incident management are tested.

The principles are:

1. **Flexibility**
    AIIMS must be adaptable to an all hazards-all agency environment. It must be able to respond to changes that occur with the evolution of an incident, both during escalation and resolution, and from a focus on response to a focus on community and agency recovery.

2. **Management by Objectives**
    A process of management where the Incident Controller, consulting as appropriate with the Incident Management Team and supporting agencies, determines the desired outcomes of the incident.

3. **Functional Management**
    The process of structuring an organisation into sections or units based on the type of work to be performed. AIIMS identifies a number of critical functions that must be undertaken to manage an emergency incident effectively.

4. **Span of Control**
   A principle that must be applied in both the structuring and staffing of an Incident Management Team. The concept relates to the number of groups or individuals that can be successfully supervised by one person.

5. **Unity of Command**
   There is one set of common objectives for all those involved in the response to an incident, leading to one consolidated plan for all responders. Each subordinate should report to only one superior.

There are a number of critical underpinning concepts that support the five principles of AIIMS. An understanding of these concepts is essential to the effective application of the System.

They are:

- **Adaptability and Scalability** – The size and structure of the Incident Management Team should reflect the size and complexity of the incident and the stage of the response and recovery.

- **Uniform Terminology** – If all agencies are to apply the System there needs to be agreed terminology and definitions, to enable effective communication between agencies and between members of Incident Management Teams.

- **Defined Management Structure** – In adopting a functional management model, there must be a clearly defined and agreed management structure that can be applied and understood by all.

- **Common Operating Picture** – A description of the shared and consistent understanding the Incident Management Team has of the incident, gathered from a variety of sources to support decision making.

- **Clearly Defined Roles and Responsibilities** – In defining the management structure, there must be a set of clearly defined and agreed responsibilities for all who are appointed to a role in that structure.

- **Clearly Defined Information Flows** – For a functional management structure to operate effectively it must be clear what reporting relationships exist, and how the sections and units within the structure communicate to ensure the development and maintenance of the Common Operating Picture.

AIIMS Structure

AIIMS provides a management structure where the Incident Controller holds overall responsibility for managing all activities to resolve the incident. The Incident Controller is also the leader of the Incident Management Team, in accordance with the principle of Unity of Command.

To manage an incident, the Incident Controller will establish a management structure designed to deliver the functions of control, planning, public information, operations, and logistics.

By delegating functions to others, the Incident Controller creates an Incident Management Team. Delegation is the assignment of functions and tasks to others, together with the necessary authority, freedom of action, and resources to complete the task. The person delegating retains accountability but is no longer responsible for undertaking the actual task.

When establishing an incident management structure, it is important to remember that the incident determines the size and nature of that structure! The structure should be adapted to the circumstances being dealt with, and reflect the complexity and scale of the incident.

AIIMS is made up of five functional areas:

Control – The Incident Controller shall have overall management of the incident and overall responsibility for the management of resources allocated to that incident. The Incident Controller is responsible for controlling the incident and ensuring that all incident management functions are undertaken.

Planning –The Planning function is responsible for preparing and delivering plans and strategies, maintaining a resource management system, and assembling, maintaining and providing incident information. The Planning Section **may** now include a **PILOT Intelligence Unit** (in addition to all current roles within the section). An Intelligence Unit undertakes the task of collecting and analysing information or data, which are recorded and disseminated as intelligence to support decision making and planning.The centrally coordinated pilot will allocate personnel trained in Intelligence to suitable incidents and request that the relevant Incident Controller establish an Intelligence Unit within the Planning Section to trial the role. Where an Intelligence unit is piloted, Regions will be involved in and informed of the process.

Public Information –The Public Information function is responsible for the preparation, coordination and dissemination of non-operational incident warnings and advice to potentially affected communities, the public, media, other agencies and incident personnel.

Operations – The Operations function is responsible for managing resources allocated to the Operations Section to resolve the incident. The Operations Section now also includes a **Plant Operations Unit**, which aligns with current fire agency practice in Victoria.

Logistics – The Logistics function is responsible for managing activities and resources necessary to provide logistical support during an incident. In major or long-term incidents with complex financial arrangements, the Incident Controller may elevate the Finance Unit to be a Section in its own right (in line with the principle of flexibility).

An example of the AIIMS structure established for a large incident is shown in Figure 5.
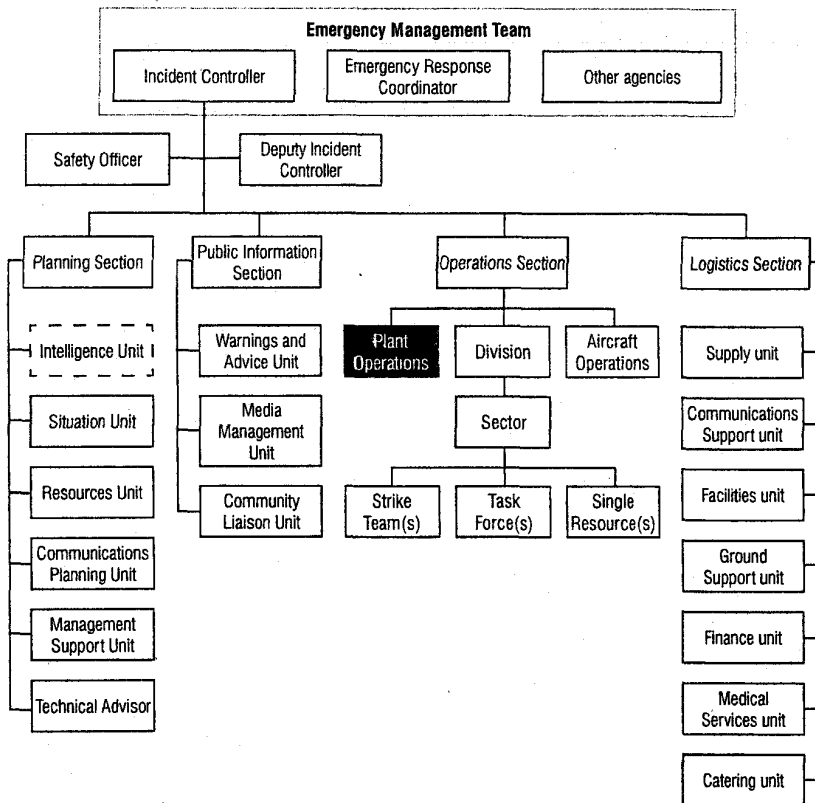

Figure 5 – AIIMS Structure, indicating the addition of the Plant Operations Unit and the pilot of the Intelligence Unit for Victorian Fire Services 2013–14

Incident Controller

The role of the Incident Controller is to provide leadership and management to resolve the incident at the incident site. The primary accountabilities of the Incident Controller include:

- Establishing and maintaining effective control (including EMT);

- Safety and welfare of personnel;

- Warnings and advice to the community;

- Predictive mapping;

- Development of plans including the identification of priorities and objectives;

- Resource coordination; and

- Building of a common operating picture (situational awareness).

Deputy Incident Controller

An individual/s may be nominated by the Incident Controller as a Deputy Incident Controller/s to support the Incident Controller in the management of the incident. A Deputy Incident Controller has responsibility for management of the incident within the parameters agreed to with the Incident Controller.

The Deputy Incident Controller may not alter the incident objectives in the Incident Action Plan. They may amend the incident strategies within the parameters provided by the Incident Controller. Where the Deputy Incident Controller does amend incident strategies, they must discuss the changes with the incoming IMT and Incident Controller at shift change over.

Operations Officer

An Operations Officer, if necessary, may be appointed by the Incident Controller and delegated with the authority to:

- Take responsibility for managing resources allocated to the Operations Section to resolve the incident;

- Manage all of the resources that have been allocated by the Incident Controller to resolve the incident;

- Establish and manage an operations section, if necessary, for large and complex incidents.

Division Commanders

A Division may be established in the early stages of an incident at the direction of the Incident Controller. The purpose of a Division is to provide operational leadership and span of control over a functional or geographic area of an incident. The Division Commander has responsibility to manage the incident within the span of the Division.

Typically a Division will be established when control is transferred from the fireground to an Incident Control Centre and the Division Commander will then manage fireground operations from a forward location. The process of transferring control (refer to transfer of control section) from the fireground to the Incident Control Centre can, if poorly handled, cause major confusion in the critical early stages of incident response. The use of the Division Commander role to provide a clear focus for fireground operations, whatever the size of the incident, will assist with transfer of control.

Accountability

The Division Commander:

- Will report direct to the Operations Officer or alternatively the Incident Controller (if the Operations Officer role has not been activated).

- Will be accountable to manage the implementation of the Incident Action Plan relating to their Division, and provide input to the Incident Action Planning process managed by the Incident Controller.

- Will have Sector Commanders reporting to them.

The Division Commander's role includes:

- Maintaining ongoing exchange of information with the Operations Officer on incident situation, progress towards the achievement of incident objectives and emerging risks and reporting when:

  - The Incident Action Plan is to be modified;

  - Additional resources are needed;

  - Surplus resources are available; and

  - Hazardous situations are present and significant events occur.

Incident Management

- Providing briefings/debriefings to Sector Commanders within the Division.

- Reviewing, allocating and modifying specific tasks in relation to their Division.

- Resolving identified logistics problems.

- Reporting to the Operations Officer.

- Observing safe work practices at the incident within the Division.

- Coordinating activities with adjacent Divisions.

- Maintaining a log of activities.

As an incident escalates the Incident Controller/Operations Officer may deploy additional staff to support the Division Commander in these functions.

Sector Commanders

Sector Commanders report to the Division Commander (or Operations Officer if a Division Commander is not appointed). Their tasks include:

- Implementation of their portion of the Incident Action Plan;

- The allocation of resources within their sector; and

- Reporting on incident situation, the progress of operations, emerging risks and the status of resources within the sector.

Sector Commanders will be advised of the incident objectives and strategy for their sector by the Operations Officer or their Division Commander (if appointed). The selection of actual tactics to implement the strategy will usually be determined by the Sector Commander. Tactics applied in one sector may, however, affect other sectors. Division Commanders (or the Operations Officer if a Division is not established) provide the continuity of tactical operations across Sectors. In doing this, all Division Commanders should maintain liaison with the Operations Officer.

Setting the Incident Objective

An objective is critical for the effective management of an incident. The objective should communicate clearly to all those involved what is to be achieved. A well-worded objective has meaning and provides direction for every person at an incident.

The Incident Controller has responsibility for the control of the incident and sets the objective. It will state what the Incident Controller wants done, when and why. The objectives must also be consistent with the strategic control priorities determined by the State Controller.

The objective may change with circumstances, there may be a different objective for each shift under escalating circumstances, and a static but relevant objective for a stable or de-escalating incident.

A good objective will include a statement of intent (what and why), a time parameter (when) and a space parameter (where).

Example of a good incident objective: *To protect residential buildings by containing the fire in the grassland as it emerges from the bush to the west of Bolton by 2000hrs today.*

Consistent with the above, management theory and practice suggests that an objective should be SMART:

- Specific;

- Measurable;

- Achievable;

- Relevant; and

- Timeframed.

At the end of each shift, it is desirable that the Incident Controller and Incident Management Team review progress against their stated objectives and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies implemented during the shift. This information can help an incoming shift to review and implement the new Incident Action Plan and agreed strategies.

Incident Management

Incident Action Planning

Incident Action Planning should be aligned with the State Controller's strategic control priorities.

For Level 1 incidents with low potential and low spread an appropriate Incident Action Plan may be developed through a mental appreciation and then communicated verbally. It should be recorded as a situation report/wordback with comment on control strategy; or a log book entry.

For all other Level 1, 2 or 3 incidents that are not expected to be contained within four hours of receiving the fire call an IAP Summary is to be documented within four hours of the incident being reported.

The Incident Shift Plan (ISP) is the component of the IAP relevant to fireground operations. The IAP Summary and ISP word templates are available on the IMT Tool Box, with an on-line module now available on Fireweb.

The relevant components of the IAP need to be communicated to personnel at the incident as well as up the structure to, Regional Controller/Area of Operations Controller (where appointed) and the State Controller. The descriptors of the different components of Incident Action Planning are shown in table 1.

Document	Content	Timeframe	Endorsement	Approval
Incident Action Plan (IAP) Summary	A concise IAP format. It summarises the incident situation, incident objective, strategies adopted, incident structure and communications plan, and is supported with a map. It may also include resources deployed and key information regarding administration, logistics, command and communication and safety.	Completed in first 4 hours (may be replaced by ISP or IAP as developed).	Planning Officer (Duty Officer if IMT not in place)	Incident Controller

Incident Action Plan (IAP)	The plan used to describe the incident objectives, strategies, structures, resources and other information relevant to the control of the incident. It includes an Incident Shift Plan and other relevant documentation.	Within the first shift and reviewed each shift. Key elements may not change for duration of event.	Planning Officer Logistics Officer Operations Officer Public Information Officer	Incident Controller
Incident Shift Plan (ISP)	The key components of the IAP that are essential for field operations. The documentation follows the SMEACS format, and is accompanied by maps and any other supporting documentation relevant to field operations (an interactive module is available on Fireweb).	Within the first shift and reviewed each shift.	Planning Officer with input from Logistics, Operations & Public Information Officer	Incident Controller

Table 1 – *Incident Action Planning Descriptors*

Incident Communications Planning

The Fire Agencies must ensure that Joint Default Communications Plans are prepared to cover their respective Districts before each fire season. Refer to JSOP 2.02 – *Incident Communication Plans.*

Joint Default Communications Plans are documented in all relevant Local Mutual Aid Plans in accordance with JSOP J2.01 – *Local Mutual Aid Plans.*

Joint Default Communications Plans must be implemented at each multi-agency incident, until the Incident Controller replaces it with a specific Incident Communications Plan, if required.

The Incident Controller must ensure the development, implementation and regular review of the integrated Incident Communications Plan as required. This plan must include relevant radio, telephone (including mobile phones) and facsimile links for all Incident Personnel.

An Incident Communications Plan must be incident-based, not agency-based.

The Incident Controller must ensure that the communications plan is conveyed to all incident personnel, and is conveyed in written form to all command personnel as soon as practicable.

Incident Management

Briefings

It is critical to provide regular, accurate and understandable instructions to subordinates and most importantly the firefighters on the fireground.

All briefings must be in the SMEACS format (Table 2) and must allow time for questions at the conclusion of the briefing.

Situation	• Current situation.
	• Details of incident.
	• Life and property at risk, including the location of relevant designated neighbourhood safer place or other places of shelter. See *www.cfa.vic.gov.au* for an up to date listing of locations.
	• Location.
	• Weather.
	• Resource deployment.
Mission	• What are we trying to achieve?
	• Incident objectives.
Execution	• How do we plan to achieve objectives?
	• Sectorisation.
	• Strategies.
	• Tactics.
	• Tasking.
	• Resource movement details.
	• Timings.
Administration	• Logistics of operation.
Command/ Communications	• Incident management structure.
	• Communications plan.
	• Radio channels.
	• Strategic telephone numbers.

Safety	• Weather.
	• Known/anticipated hazards.
	• Watchout scenarios.
	• Dress standards.
	• Tasking suited to personnel.
Questions	

Table 2 – *SMEACS Briefing Format*

The Incident Controller must ensure that all incident personnel are provided with appropriate briefings regarding safety-related matters, the incident situation, incident objective(s), relevant resource information and tasking and that appropriate information is efficiently communicated through the incident structure to incident personnel. This may be achieved through:

• Targeting briefings towards a specific audience, eg. Division Commanders, and then cascading the briefing down through the incident structure as appropriate; or

• Staggering the IMT and field changeovers to facilitate quality briefings.

As the situation changes and new information becomes available, updated briefings must be provided throughout the incident structure as practicable and appropriate. All incident personnel have a responsibility to ensure they are briefed before they commence their task.

Local Knowledge

Local knowledge has proven to be a vital element of effective management of emergency incidents. Whether it is the detail of an urban building, access to airports or history of previous bushfire paths, local knowledge has proven invaluable. Since it is often time-critical and very specific to the incident, it is generally not something agencies or local government can adequately record in management plans.

While there is no local knowledge unit as such within an IMT, individuals with local knowledge are always a valuable source of information. While most Level 1 IMTs will involve local response crews on the incident ground, larger IMTs may have travelled to the incident and may not be familiar with the geography, local residents, history or relevant experience. Within every IMT, there needs to be a source of local knowledge, either a local individual brought into the IMT specifically for that purpose or appointing a local responder to an IMT position where they can use that knowledge and answer questions from other members of the IMT. Local knowledge will assist IMTs in managing risk and consequences associated with the fire.

Ideally, those with local knowledge will be operating out of the Operations Section to assist those responding to operations on the incident ground. Their familiarity with the incident ground, and perhaps the type of incident or previous incidents, will also be of benefit to the Planning Section as it consider risks, options and likely courses of action. Regardless of where the individuals are located within the IMT, the Incident Controller needs to be satisfied that there is sufficient local knowledge in the IMT.

Incident Status – Bushfires

CFA and DEPI use common terms to define the status of a bushfire, however DEPI subdivide the statuses Controlled and Safe (see table 3 below).

Incident Status	Definition	DEPI subdivision	Definition
Going	Fire expanding in a certain direction or directions.		
Contained	The spread of the fire is halted.		
Controlled	The complete perimeter of a fire is secured and no breakaway is expected.	Under Control 1	The complete perimeter of the fire is secured, no breakaway is expected.
		Under Control 2	The complete perimeter of the fire is secured, and no breakaway is expected. Control line quality or depth is such that only patrol is required.
Safe	No further suppression action or patrols are necessary.	Safe	No further suppression action or patrols are necessary.
		Safe – False alarm	Mistaken or hoax report.
		Safe – Not found	The fire has not been located, and it is expected that no further action or patrol will be required.
		Safe – Overun	The fire has been overrun by another fire.

Table 3 – *CFA and DEPI Incident Status*

The fire agencies also have a range of incident status terminology for use in a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) environment. These wordbacks reflect incident status and are also linked to resource requirements.

Incident Status	Definition
Not Yet Under Control (CFA)\ Alarm level (MFB)	The fire or incident has the potential to spread or increase in difficulty. The appliances and personnel in attendance may or will not be sufficient.
Under Control (CFA & MFB)	The resources in attendance and en route are sufficient to contain the incident.
Stop (CFA & MFB)	The resources presently in attendance at the incident are sufficient. Resources that are en route are not required and may return to their own locations.

Table 4 – CFA and MFB CAD Incident Status

Bushfire Classification

Bushfires are classified in a range from Level 1 to Level 3.

- Level 1 – A small, simple fire (or group of fires) which is controlled with local resources (may include other agencies) with the Incident Controller probably undertaking more than one function. (e.g. Second shift unlikely to be required. Approximately 0-5 ha with no complex problems).

- Level 2 – is classified when an incident cannot be contained by the first attack of local resources and becomes more complex. A Level 2 incident is characterised by the need for:

  - The deployment of resources beyond initial response;

  - Sectorisation of the incident;

  - The establishment of functional sections due to the levels of complexity; or

  - A combination of the above (e.g. Expected that incident will be controlled within twenty-four hours. Approximately 5-20 ha (or much larger if there is little complexity or problem), or with some complexity and control problems).

- Level 3 – A large or complex fire where resources from a range of locations are involved. Normally, but not necessarily, will involve multiple agencies. (eg. Normally expected to exceed twenty-four hours). Level 3 incidents are characterised by degrees of complexity that may require the establishment of Divisions for effective management of the situation. These incidents will usually involve delegation of all functions.

Transfer of Control

Establishing effective control arrangements in the early stages of the incident is critical.
It is vital that the potential of the incident is recognised early. If there is potential the incident will not be contained by first attack, control should be transferred as early as possible to an Incident Controller in an ICC. This leaves operational control of the fireline with the Division Commander, working closely with the Operations Officer or the Incident Controller (if the Operations Officer role has not been activated).

Knowing when to transfer control is not easy. Using trigger points such as when a fire crosses a road can be a useful way to know when to transfer control. It may even be recognised en-route to the incident by observing the smoke column or before the incident starts in recognition of the severity of the day and expected fire behaviour.

In some cases, a staged transfer of responsibilities to an IMT in an ICC may be the most appropriate course of action.

Tasks such as issuing of community warnings and fire behaviour prediction are particularly important and best done from a suitably equipped and staffed ICC, particularly if the incident is likely to escalate beyond a Level 1 fire. In line with this, when there is a prepositioned IMT in place at an ICC with the capacity to issue warnings, then all warnings for that footprint will be issued from that IMT.

Key benefits of transferring control include:

- Focus on management of the fireground increasing the safety and efficiency of firefighters and equipment;

- Access to Warnings & Advice or Public Information Officers to issue community warnings and information;

- Access to predictive services (weather and fire behaviour);

- Resourcing from a large pool of multi agency resources, including plant and equipment and aircraft;

- Facilities to produce maps and Incident Shift Plans; and

- Logistical support to ensure crews are fed and accommodated.

Transfer of control needs to be formalised with a verbal handover from the fireground Incident Controller (who now becomes the Division Commander) to the Incident Controller in the ICC. This arrangement must then be clearly and promptly communicated to the fireground, IMT, Regional Control Team and State Control Team. The Regional Controller must closely monitor transfer of control to ensure it happens seamlessly.

The control agency must be determined before transfer of control can occur. This is commonly a CFA member on the fireground or the DEPI District Duty Officer. If agreement cannot be reached Joint SOP J3.01 – *Determining the Control Agency* sets out the process to resolve the control agency.

Potential Division Commanders can be identified in advance and be briefed along with prepositioned IMTs on weather, likely strategies, default communications plans and the structure of the prepositioned IMT.

The increasing demands of timely information flow and ensuring the best possible protection for firefighters and the community means control from the fireground is often not possible in an escalating incident. By transferring control early and taking on the role of Division Commander, the important tasks of coordinating field operations and providing critical information back to the IMT in the ICC can become the focus.
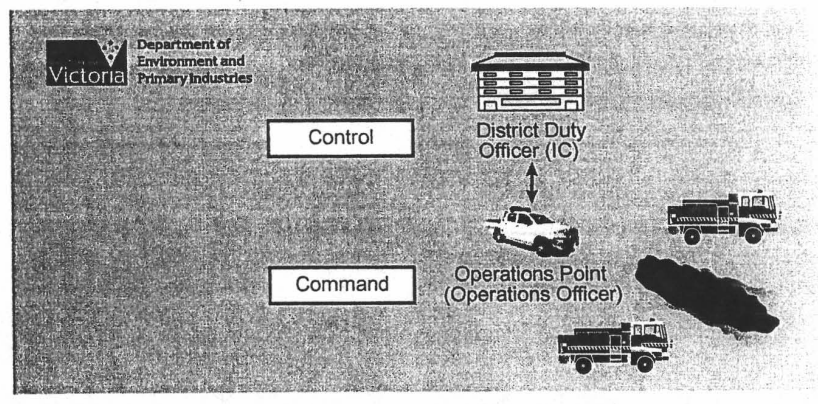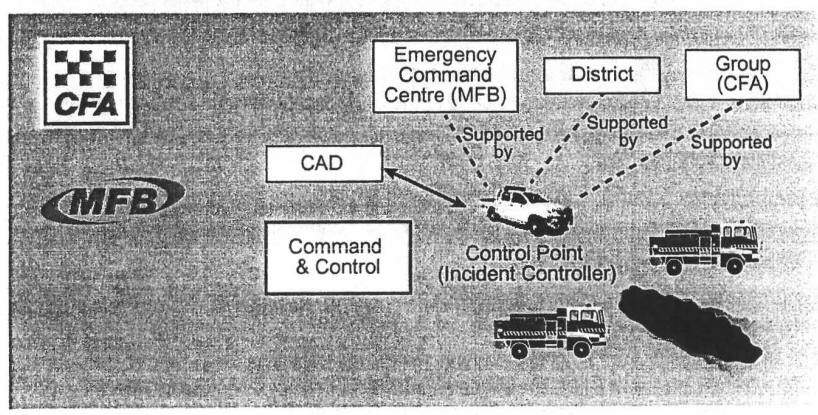
Joint Standard Operating Procedure JSOP 3.08 – *Appointment of the Incident Controller* provides for transfer of control between Incident Controllers.

The following diagram (Figure 6) summarises the transfer of control process.

Incident Management

Local Command and Control

Indicators for Transferring Control Functions

• The need to issue warnings and advice to the community
• Manage personnel across the fire ground and other resources including aircraft
• The production of fire prediction mapping
• The health and safety systems that need to be implemented
• The potential for the fire to escalate quickly and impact on people or community assets
• The potential for evacuation
• Is a multi agency fire

Major Fire
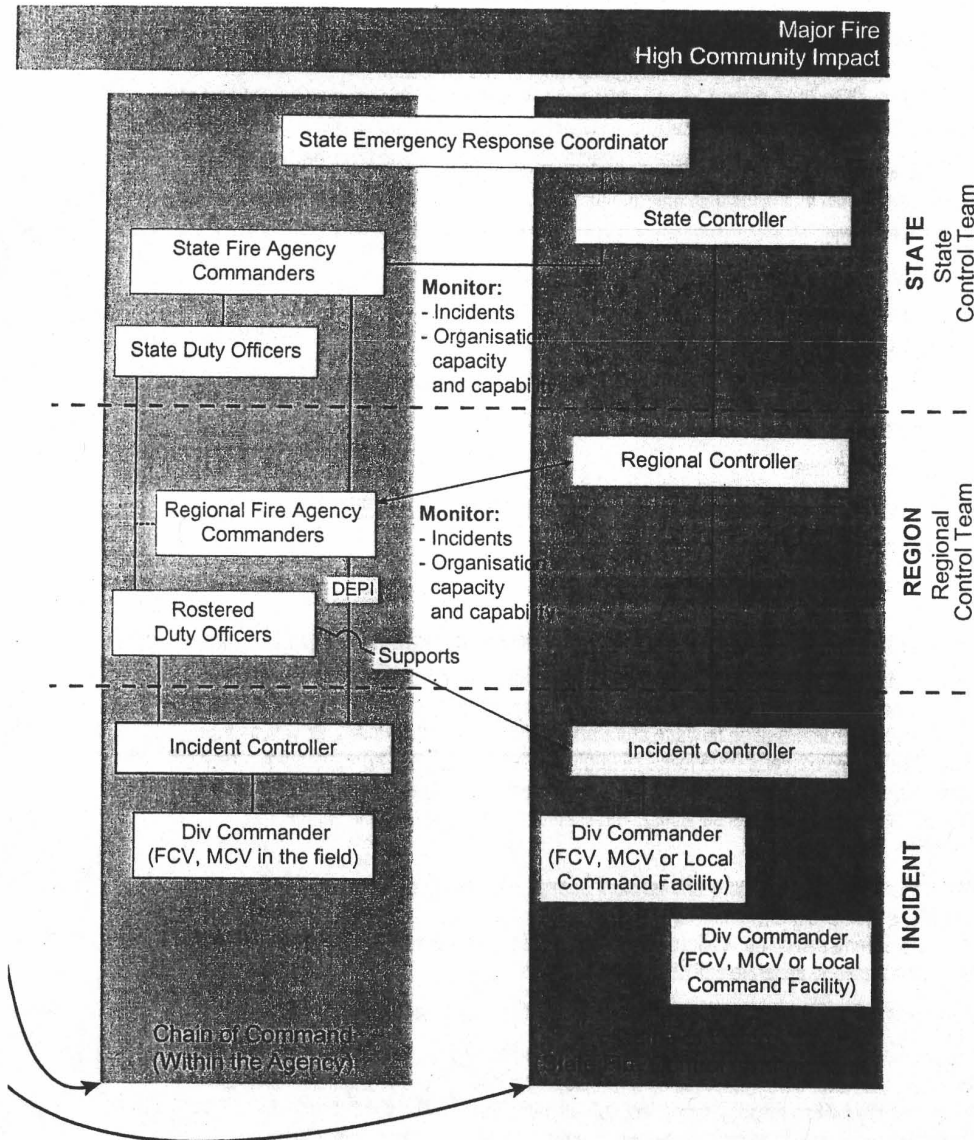High Community Impact

State Emergency Response Coordinator

State Controller

STATE
State Control Team

State Fire Agency Commanders

Monitor:
- Incidents
- Organisation capacity and capabi...

State Duty Officers

Regional Controller

Regional Fire Agency Commanders

Monitor:
- Incidents
- Organisation capacity and capabi...

REGION
Regional Control Team

DEPI

Rostered Duty Officers

Supports

Incident Controller

Incident Controller

Div Commander
(FCV, MCV in the field)

Div Commander
(FCV, MCV or Local Command Facility)

INCIDENT

Div Commander
(FCV, MCV or Local Command Facility)

Chain of Command
(Within the Agency)

Figure 6 – *Transfer of Control Process*

Situation Reporting (SITREPS)

Those in leadership positions on the fireground must provide frequent, concise situation reports up the reporting chain. Crew Leaders must recognise that this is an important part of their role, particularly when first attack is likely to fail, and/or fire suppression is difficult.

SITREPS are the tool to pass information on through the chain of command. The following information should be included as appropriate when providing situation reports:

- Incident name;
- Fireground/Division Command call sign;
- Location of incident;
- Potential of fire/incident;
- Advice to the IMT regarding any warnings that should be provided to the community;
- Fire status (type/size);
- Damage and loss;
- Fire behaviour (eg flame height and estimated forward rate of spread);
- Current control objective; and
- Additional help required.

Critical Information Flow During an Escalating or Major Incident

Incident Management Teams (IMTs) are a complex constellation of activity where much of the information flow needed for successful emergency management is generated, processed, and coordinated. Information flows to and from the fireground into the IMT, as well as from the IMT to the regional and state levels of control. In addition to the information flows required within the control agency functions, there is also a need to integrate with other stakeholders such as providers of medical services, critical infrastructure, the political sphere and the police.

AIIMS assists with the effective and efficient control of incidents by providing structures for communication and information flow. There are a variety of tools embedded within AIIMS that provide a common communications framework to enhance integration, including an Incident Action Plan used to generate and communicate intent.

Those on the fireground play a critical role in enabling others to support their needs.

The importance of rapid, accurate information flow from the fireground upwards is more important than ever before. In addition to providing the critical data for strategic decisions being made regarding resources and fire management, information coming from the fireground (especially the first arriving appliances) is required to determine what advice or warnings need to be communicated to the community.

Firefighters must recognise that while Air and Ground Observers provide valuable intelligence, particularly in large fires, the majority of information used for public messaging comes from situation reports (SITREPS) provided by firefighters on the ground. Therefore, SITREPS must paint a clear picture for Incident Controllers, Duty Officers and for VicFire. In addition to reporting the number of appliances that are needed, SITREPS should identify what private and community assets are at risk, or will be at risk in the next 30 minutes to an hour or more if first attack fails.

Staging Areas

A staging area is a location designated and used during an emergency for the assembly of control and support agency resources prior to deployment. It is managed by a Staging Area Manager.

Establishment of a Staging Area

The Incident Controller will consider establishing a staging area where more than ten resources are en-route to a fire or incident and/or the size or duration of the incident is likely to make effective control of incoming resources difficult.

A staging area should be established whenever a division command point is in place. Staging areas may be established:

- Separate from the division command point;
- At the division command point; or
- At any other location around the incident as required.

When determining the location of a staging area, the Incident Controller should consider the influence of changing fire or incident conditions on the safety of fire agency members (e.g. predicted wind change).

Fire Agency Access Through Traffic Management Points

Traffic Management Points (TMP) are set up to regulate the flow of traffic into an area where fire has occurred, is occurring or has the potential to occur.

The TMP system has five interdependent elements:

1. The interagency TMP vehicle stickers with two different categories of stickers:

   - **Private Firefighting Equipment:** Pastel Yellow Private Firefighting Equipment (PFFE) Stickers valid to 30 June 2015. This sticker facilitates access through TMPs for essential private equipment and contractors engaged prior to the season by CFA and DEPI.

   - **Temporary:** a fluorescent pink temporary vehicle sticker to allow short term (up to 14 days) access for people authorised at the time by the Incident Controller or delegate.

Incident Management

2. The interagency **"Traffic Management Points –
   Bushfire Information Card, September 2011"**
   – is being re-issued with no amendments.

3. The interagency **"Traffic Management Points CFA/
   DEPI Formal Identification Sheet, September 2011"**
   – is being re-issued with no amendments.

4. The interagency **"Guidelines for the Operation
   of Traffic Management Points During Bushfires,
   September 2011"** – is being re-issued with
   no amendments.

5. The Joint Standard Operating Procedure JSOP3.10 –
   Traffic Management During Bushfires.

These documents are available on the IMT Tool Box.

All DEPI/NEO vehicles with government (red) plates need
staff suitably attired in PPE (i.e. green overalls and helmets)
and displaying the vehicle sticker in the windscreen.
DEPI/NEO vehicles **without** red plates (eg. vehicles or
prime movers hired over the summer, and Melbourne
Water/VicForests vehicles) will need 'Private Firefighting
Equipment' stickers.

Victoria Police need to identify vehicle occupants as
Departmental staff. To assist, ensure Departmental PPC is worn.

*Figure 7 – Traffic Management
Point Vehicle Stickers*

Aircraft and Aviation

The State Aircraft Unit (SAU) provides specialist aviation resources for fire, non-fire
emergencies and land management.

The State Airdesk (SAD) is the service located within the SCC, supervised on a daily basis by
the rostered State Aircraft Coordinator to coordinate and where appropriate, dispatch State
aviation resources.

The SAD will only action requests for aircraft that are made by a person performing an
approved role as stated in the SAU Procedure (SAUP) AM 1.06 – *Obtaining Aircraft.*
This Procedure has been developed to provide specific requirements for obtaining aircraft for
fire or other Agency related incidents.

Aircraft deployments will be most efficient when approved personnel requesting aircraft
provide the following initial information:

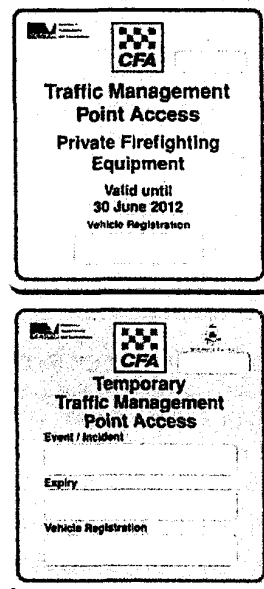• Location of the fire (i.e. distance and direction from closest town);

- Aircraft type and quantity required;
- Tasking of aircraft and equipment required;
- Simplex fireground channels and/or trunk radio numbers to be used; and
- AIIMS roles (Air Operations Unit) that are in place i.e. Air Attack Supervisor, Aircraft Officer.

MFB Response Capability

The MFB's core responsibility is the protection of people, assets and the environment within the Metropolitan District. By requesting resources through the SCC the MFB can assess their ability to assist agencies at any given time.

When the MFB receives a request for support, they can assist with the following emergency responses:

- Strike teams, consisting of firefighters with level 2 wildfire qualifications;
- Specialist task forces;
- Step up to CFA stations;
- Asset protection;
- Protection of NSPs, refuges and critical infrastructure;
- Consolidation of control lines on roadsides;
- Fill points;
- Blacking-out along hard standing surfaces; and
- Initial Impact Assessment (IIA).

Assistance can also be requested for the following Incident Management Support:

- Provision of Planning Officers, Division and Sector Commanders;
- Support to other IMT positions;
- Administration support (e.g. Geospatial Information Services); and
- Scientific services.

The MFB are unable to assist in the following activities:

- Driving off road or on dozer tracks;
- Cross-crewing;
- Separating strike teams;
- Back-burning;
- Tree-felling; and
- Class 'A' foam applications.

Incident Management

SES Capability

The State Emergency Service (SES) provides essential support to the fire agencies during fire operations. Whilst SES members are not trained in fire fighting roles SES is able to provide support with the following activities:

- Management and/or logistical support at staging areas.
- Provision of lighting and power.
- Staffing and support to fire service 'Incident Management Teams'.
- Chainsaw crews to clear fallen trees from access roads.
- Traffic Management Points (TMPs).
- Shoring or tarping of structures damaged by fire incidents.
- Initial Impact Assessment (IIA).
- Refilling of Water Bombing Aircraft.
- Operation of quickfill pumpsets.
- Transport of personnel, vehicles, food and equipment.

Requests for SES resources to assist with fire support activities are either via the normal arrangements for requesting additional incident resources (ESTA) at a L1 incident. If operations are under the command of a L2/L3 ICC, and in the absence of an Agency Commander, requests for SES support can be made via the Regional Duty Officer or via theState Resource Request System (SRRS).

Assistance to the Community

The Incident Controller may request the SES Commander to task SES members to assist with:

- the delivery of authorised community safety information and fire situation updates to fire affected communities; and
- safe early departure of residents and other persons requiring assistance such as, persons from hospitals, non-ambulant (that is, people who cannot walk without assistance) or elderly people, in fire threatened areas, where they choose to leave.

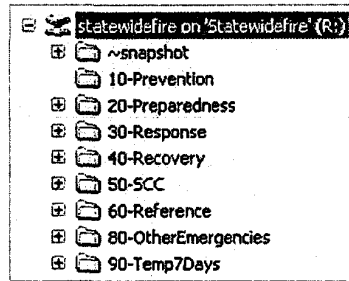Deployment of personal must be in line with the SES Standard Operating Procedure 017 – *Fire Support Operations.*

Emergency Management Drive Business Rules

CFA and DEPI have an agreement to use the Emergency Management drive (R drive) to enable personnel to create, share, manage and store non-application bound operational information.

Documents that should have a copy maintained on the 'R' drive include (but not limited to) completed ICS documentation such as:

- Incident Action Plans;
- Communication Plans;
- Options Analysis;
- Media Releases;
- Photos; and
- Completed/published maps.

statewidefire on 'Statewidefire' (R:)
- ~snapshot
- 10-Prevention
- 20-Preparedness
- 30-Response
- 40-Recovery
- 50-SCC
- 60-Reference
- 80-OtherEmergencies
- 90-Temp7Days

The R Drive is to be used for incident management purposes only. Agencies maintain separate drives for agency specific purposes (eg. X Drive for CFA and L Drive for DEPI). Access for other agenices such as MFB, SES, DHS and VicPol is available if requested and the infrastructure is established.

A 'Quick Reference Guide' is available at the top most level of the drive to provide specific guidance on usage and business rules for certain circumstances, particularly in relation to the 30-Response folder.

Emergency Management Web-Mail

Generic email accounts are available for State, Regional and Incident level incident management.

The generic account system utilises Microsoft Outlook Express, a web-based emailing system which is accessible to all agencies on all networks provided they have the appropriate log-in and password details. This allows agency personnel to access incident specific emails using the internet.

When using a generic emailing system it is critical to ensure that the appropriate mailboxes are monitored, and important emails followed up with a phone call to ensure information is not missed. Use the 'Subject' heading to identify the intended recipient(s) and the subject. Personal/agency email accounts are not to be used for emails relating to an incident.

The email addresses and their access details will be maintained on the IMT Tool Box.
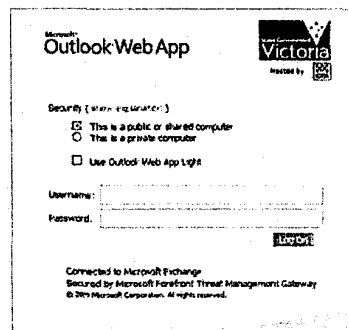
Incident Management

Resource Requesting

The multi-agency State Resource Request System (SRRS) is designed to make it easy for Resources Unit members at Incident, Regional and State level to submit, action and track requests for additional resources during major incidents and planned burning.

All Resources Unit personnel, as well as those involved in the dispatch of appliances, should ensure that they are familiar with the system, which can be accessed through the Resources tab on Fireweb, or by going to *http://resourcerequest* (Operational version) or *http://resourcerequesttraining* (Training version) on any networked CFA, DEPI, MFB or SES computer. On most networked computers, you should just be able to type 'resourcerequesttraining' into the browser address bar.

> ***Further Information:***
> - AIIMS Manual – 3rd Edition (2011 revision).
> - CFA Chief Officer's SOP 9.12 – *Incident Management Structure.*
> - CFA Fire and Emergency Management Checklists – Edition 1.
> - Fire Management Manual 8.1: Fire Suppression.
> - FSC Guidance Note 03/2012: Factors to Consider when Allocating Firefighting Aircraft.
> - Joint SOP J2.02 – *Incident Communications Plans.*
> - Joint SOP J2.04 – *Local Knowledge.*
> - Joint SOP J3.03 – *Incident Action Planning.*
> - Joint SOP J3.06 – *Briefings.*
> - Joint SOP J3.09 – *Resource Management.*
> - SAU – Aircraft Identification Chart for Firefighting Personnel.
> - SAUP AM 1.08 – *Preparedness Arrangements.*
> - State Command and Control Arrangements for Bushfire in Victoria.

Warnings and Advice

Fire Danger Ratings

Fire Danger Ratings are communicated to the public to inform them about the fire risk on any given day and the associated suggested actions (see Figure 8).

FIRE DANGER RATING	GRASSLAND FIRE DANGER INDEX	FOREST FIRE DANGER INDEX
CODE RED	150+	100+
	100 – 149	75 – 99
SEVERE	50 – 99	50 – 74
VERY HIGH	25 – 49	25 – 49
HIGH	12 – 24	12 – 24
LOW-MODERATE	0 – 11	0 – 11

Figure 8 – Fire Danger Indices

Fire Dangers Ratings for the Wimmera, Mallee and Northern Country weather districts (see figure 9) are forecast using the grassland Fire Danger Index triggers. Fire Danger Ratings for the remaining weather districts are forecast using the forest Fire Danger Index triggers. The community is presented with one Fire Danger Rating for each district.
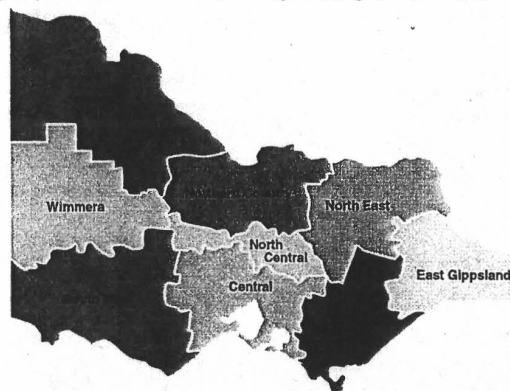

Figure 9 – Weather Forecast and Total Fire Ban Districts

The Fire Danger Rating descriptors (shown in Figure 10), for use both before and during a fire, is the basis for the One Source One Message (OSOM) templates for advice, watch and act and emergency warning messages which are included in the OSOM tool.

Warnings and Advice

STAY AWARE OF THE FIRE DANGER RATING AND KNOW WHAT TO DO.

The Fire Danger Rating predicts how a fire would behave if started, including how difficult it would be to put out.

The higher the rating, the more dangerous the conditions. The rating is your trigger to act, so to stay safe you need to stay aware of the Fire Danger Rating in your district.

FIRE DANGER RATING

During the fire season, the Fire Danger Rating will feature in weather forecasts, be broadcast on radio and TV, and appear in some newspapers.

It can also be found on the websites of CFA, Department of Sustainability and Environment and Bureau of Meteorology, by calling the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667 or via National Relay Service on 1800 555 677.

CODE RED

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?	WHAT SHOULD I DO?
› These are the worst conditions for a bush or grassfire.	› Leaving high-risk bushfire areas the night before or early in the day is your safest option – do not wait and see.
› Homes are not designed or constructed to withstand fires in these conditions.	› Avoid forested areas, thick bush or long, dry grass.
› The safest place to be is away from high- risk bushfire areas.	› Know your trigger – make a decision about: – when you will leave – where you will go – how you will get there – when you will return – what you will do if you cannot leave.

Warnings and Advice

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?	WHAT SHOULD I DO?
> Expect extremely hot, dry and windy conditions. > If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be uncontrollable, unpredictable and fast moving. Spot fires will start, move quickly and come from many directions. > Homes that are situated and constructed or modified to withstand a bushfire, that are well prepared and actively defended, may provide safety. > You must be physically and mentally prepared to defend in these conditions.	> Consider staying with your property only if you are prepared to the highest level. This means your home needs to be situated and constructed or modified to withstand a bushfire, you are well prepared and you can actively defend your home if a fire starts. > If you are not prepared to the highest level, leaving high-risk bushfire areas early in the day is your safest option. > Be aware of local conditions. Seek information by listening to ABC local radio, commercial and designated community radio stations, or watch Sky News TV, visit **cfa.vic.gov.au**, call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on **1800 240 667** or via National Relay Service on **1800 555 677**.
SEVERE > Expect hot, dry and possibly windy conditions. > If a fire starts and takes hold, it may be uncontrollable. > Well prepared homes that are actively defended can provide safety. > You must be physically and mentally prepared to defend in these conditions.	> Well-prepared homes that are actively defended can provide safety – check your Bushfire Survival Plan. > If you are not prepared, leaving bushfire-prone areas early in the day is your safest option. > Be aware of local conditions. Seek information by listening to ABC local radio, commercial and designated community radio stations, or watch Sky News TV, visit **cfa.vic.gov.au**, call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on **1800 240 667** or via National Relay Service on **1800 555 677**.
VERY HIGH HIGH LOW-MODERATE > If a fire starts, it can most likely be controlled in these conditions. > Be aware of how fires can start and minimise the risk. > Controlled burning off may occur in these conditions if it is safe – check to see if permits apply.	> Check your Bushfire Survival Plan. > Monitor conditions. > Action may be needed. > Leave if necessary.

Figure 10 – Fire Danger Rating Descriptors

Provision of Warnings to the Community

For the purpose of protecting life and property, dissemination of timely, relevant and tailored warnings and advice must be issued to potentially affected communities.

The Incident Controller (IC) is responsible for authorising all warning and advice messages prior to being communicated to the public. To assist the rapid communication of warnings and advice, the IC may authorise a Deputy IC or Public Information Officer (PIO) to authorise the release of warnings and advice to the community. No additional authorisation is required once the IC or delegate has authorised the information or warning.

Where an extreme and imminent threat to life exists and it is not practicable to obtain authorisation from the IC in the circumstances, warnings may be initiated by any response agency personnel. The IC must be advised as soon as possible.

Warnings Contingency Process

In rapidly developing incidents, or in the event that a Warnings and Advice officer cannot submit a message, the IC, or delegate, should request assistance from the Warnings and Advice Duty Officer at State level (24/7 backup to field based Warnings & Advice Officers)

Warnings Levels and Templates

The warnings and advice templates provide the IC and Public Information Section personnel the opportunity to include targeted information and specific actions for the communities affected.

Levels of Community Warnings and Advice

The following levels of warnings and advice are used for multiple hazards.
Examples are shown in table 5 below:

Advice	General information to keep you up-to-date with developments
Watch and Act	A fire is approaching you. Conditions are changing and you need to start taking action now to protect your life and your family.
Emergency Warning	You are in imminent danger and need to take action immediately. You will be impacted by fire.

Table 5 – Levels of Warnings and Advice

Additional warnings that may be issued are shown in table 6 below:

All Clear	Emergency activity in the area has subsided and is no longer a danger to you.
Recommendation to Evacuate	If time and conditions allow, a recommendation to evacuate an area may be issued. This will depend on a number of factors including: • Safety considerations • The location and type of emergency • Access routes and the local environment.

Table 6 – Additional warnings

All Clear Messages

An All Clear message is to be issued when incident activity in an area has subsided.
An 'all clear' message must be issued whenever a Watch and Act, Emergency Warning or Recommendation to Evacuate has been issued.

Message Templates Matrix – Reference Guide Only

The message templates matrix should be used as a guide only to assist ICs and the Public Information Section personnel in selecting appropriate template when issuing Warnings and Advice for bush/grassfire incidents. (This matrix is available within OSOM and on the IMT toolbox).

It is important to understand that the matrix is a reference guide only and should be used with consideration of all other factors that may influence the incident impact on the community.

Warnings and Advice

Warning Methods

There are numerous methods for providing information and warnings to the community, which include:

- One Source One Message (OSOM);

- Emergency Broadcasters (ABC radio, local radio, Sky News);

- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter);

- Really Simple Syndication (RSS) Feeds;

- CFA, DEPI, MFB Warnings & Incidents webpages;

- CFA FireReady App;

- Email distribution lists (local communities and EMTs);

- Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS);

- Telephone warnings - Emergency Alert (EA);

    - Billing address;

    - Location based;

- Victorian Bushfire Information Line (VBIL 1800 240 667); and

- Community meetings and door knocks.

Telephone Alerting

Feedback from the community and IMT personnel has identified confusion around the use of Emergency Alert (EA) and Emergency Warning terminology. As a result, Telephone Alerting has been adopted to help differentiate between the two.

Telephone Alerting is a way to communicate warnings to the community via the EA system. Incident controllers can authorise the use of EA to inform the community of any likely or actual emergency in a defined area. The EA system can be used to send warnings via voice messages (to landlines) and text messages (to mobile phones) within a defined area.

Currently, Telstra services receive telephone alerting to both the billing address and a mobile phone's location, and Optus and Vodafone services receive only billing address delivery. Optus and Vodafone have committed to enabling location-based delivery on 31 October, which will ensure that telephone alerting will have a more extensive reach to mobile phones.

Community Sirens

As part of the 2012–13 pilot, community alerting sirens are now activated in 39 communities across the state. A siren is triggered through OSOM with the issue of any Watch and Act, Emergency Warning or Recommendation to Evacuate, unless otherwise requested by the Incident Controller.

The siren will sound for 5 minutes to indicate that a significant emergency has been identified and the community should 'seek further information'.

Community Fire Refuges

A community fire refuge is a designated public building that can provide short-term shelter from the immediate life-threatening effects of a bushfire.

Victoria's Community Fire Refuges policy was released by the Fire Services Commissioner in October 2011 to deliver on a recommendation of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission.

Victoria is piloting three community fire refuges this year: at East Warburton and Ferny Creek in the Yarra Ranges Shire and at Blackwood, in the Moorabool Shire.

The pilot is testing the policy, practices and procedures for operation of these refuges, including community understanding and involvement.

Media Attendance at Incidents/Protocols

Working with the media

It is the intent that the fire agencies work in partnership with media agencies and media representatives during fire events, for the purpose of communicating critical community safety messages and newsworthy information, stories, interviews and images.

The control agency, through the incident controller is at all times responsible for the safety, health and welfare of all incident personnel, including firefighters, media representatives and other emergency services workers allowed to visit the incident.

Accreditation and identification of media

In order to work with fire agencies at bushfires, all media representatives must have:

- A current CFA and DEPI media accreditation card, issued only after media representatives have achieved accreditation.

- Fire agency approved personal protective clothing (PPC) and equipment, including CFA approved 'MEDIA' patches on the upper back, front left pocket and right sleeve of the equipment, all to be worn as directed during the time the media are on the fireground.

Warnings and Advice

Access

Media representatives wishing to attend an incident must contact the control agency and attain permission to enter the fireground. It is unacceptable for any person, including media representatives to access the fire ground without the approval of the Incident Controller.

The Incident Controller will grant permission to attend the incident, particularly the fire ground only if it has been deemed safe and practicable to do so, and if the media representatives have achieved all the minimum requirements for working with fire agencies at bushfires.

Upon deeming it safe and appropriate for media representatives to attend the incident, the control agency will articulate the specific conditions for that attendance on each occasion.

The control agency will refer the media representative to the Public Information Officer (Information Section Leader), who is responsible for the provision of timely, accurate, consistent and authorised information on behalf of the Incident Controller.

The Public Information Officer may appoint a Media Officer to work directly with media representatives.

The Media Officer will ensure that media representatives receive a safety briefing prior to entering the fire ground and that appropriate communication arrangements are in place.

Victoria Police officers may remove from the fire ground media representatives who are endangering their own lives or the lives of others.

While on the fire ground, media representatives must comply with any instruction provided to them by the Media Officer, Public Information Officer, Incident Controller or Victoria Police. This includes immediate departure from the fire ground, should this be deemed a necessary safety measure.

Non compliance

Media accreditation may be withdrawn and media representatives may be escorted from the fire ground and not permitted to return in instances where a media representative:

- has endangered their own safety, or the safety of others;

- fails to comply with instructions of the Media Officer, Public Information Officer, Incident Controller or any representative of the fire agencies or Victoria Police while on the fire ground;

- fails to depart immediately from the fire ground after instruction by the Media Officer, or any representative of the fire agencies, or Victoria Police;

- accesses any area beyond a Victoria Police Traffic Management Point without the permission of the Incident Controller or an escort by CFA or DEPI staff; and

- the Fire Agencies may formally advise WorkSafe of the incident if appropriate.

Evacuation

Definition of Evacuation

Evacuation is the planned relocation of people from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas to safer areas and eventual return. The purpose of an evacuation is to use distance to separate the people from the danger created by the emergency.

Evacuation is a risk management strategy that may be used as a means of mitigating the impact of an incident on public safety. However, to be affective, it must be correctly planned and executed. The process of evacuation is usually considered to include the return of the affected community.

The Evacuation Process

There are five stages in the evacuation process, focused on pre-warned evacuation and immediate evacuation.

1. Decision to evacuate.

2. Warning or recommendation to persons likely to be affected by an emergency.

3. Withdrawal of an affected community.

4. Sheltering of persons evacuated.

5. Return of affected persons.

A formal evacuation process does not prevent people in the community from making the decision to self evacuate in the appropriate circumstances.

Recommendation to Evacuate

The Incident Controller is responsible for authorising and issuing evacuation messages to the community (either a warning to affected people that they prepare to evacuate or a recommendation that they evacuate immediately). This decision, if time permits, should be made in consultation with Victoria Police, the Emergency Management Team and other expert advice where available.

A recommendation to evacuate should only be made when this is expected to offer a higher level of protection for members of the public than other options, and can be achieved without endangering response agency personnel.

In some urgent life threatening circumstances, and in an effort to preserve life, the decision to recommend evacuation may be made by any agency representative. In this circumstance the Incident Controller must be notified of the decision as soon as possible.

Warnings and Advice

Where the Incident Controller decides to recommend that people should evacuate, the Incident Controller must immediately communicate this decision to the Victoria Police Commander (for implementation), up the line of control and the agency chain of command, the IMT and to the fireground.

Roles and Responsibilities

The table below sets out the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the evacuation process.

Organisation/Role	Task
Control Agency (Incident Controller)	• Consider and recommend as appropriate evacuation in consultation with Victoria Police Evacuation Manager, Health Commander and other experts.
	• Issue warnings, recommendations to evacuate and provide situation updates and ongoing advice that may impact an evacuation (including the dissemination of public information).
	• Activate emergency relief services.
	• Maintain ongoing liaison with Victoria Police once the evacuation process has commenced.
Victoria Police (Evacuation Manager)	• Assist Incident Controller with the decision and warning stages if required.
	• Manage the withdrawal, shelter and return stages of the evacuation in consultation with the Incident Controller and Health Commander.
	• Source and manage resources to facilitate evacuation in consultation with control and support agencies.
	• Maintain ongoing liaison with Incident Controller for the duration of the evacuation.
	• Coordinate establishment and maintenance of traffic management points.
	• Authorise and action communication with the community regarding withdrawal, shelter and return in consultation with the Incident Controller.
	• Registration of evacuees (with Red Cross).

Organisation/Role	Task
Ambulance Victoria (Health Commander)	• Provide health and medical strategy advice to the Incident Controller and Evacuation Manager. • Manage the withdrawal and return of identified vulnerable people from health and aged care facilities. • Support the withdrawal and return of identified vulnerable people who have health related needs.
Support agencies	• Assist with the provision of resources to facilitate evacuation. • Provide support during the evacuation process, under the direction of Victoria Police.
Municipal councils	• Establish a Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC) as required. • Establish and manage relief centres as required. • Assist Victoria Police with management of traffic flow including provision of information regarding road availability, capacity and safety. • Assist VicRoads to maintain list of road closures (public information). With Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committees: • Develop and maintain Municipal Emergency Management Plans. • Assist CFA with the development of Community Information Guides (formally known as Township Protection Plans) for bushfires. • Assist SES with development of Flood Emergency Plans. • Identify and document within Municipal Emergency Management Plans facilities where vulnerable people are likely to be located. • Maintain within Municipal Emergency Management Plans a list of those services/agencies with awareness of vulnerable people within the community.

Warnings and Advice

Organisation/Role	Task
VicRoads	• Assist Victoria Police with management of traffic flow including provision of information regarding road availability, capacity and safety. • Maintain list of road closures (public information).
Country Fire Authority (CFA)	• Develop and maintain Community Information Guides (formally known as Township Protection Plans) for bushfires.
Australian Red Cross Victoria	• Registration of evacuees (with Victoria Police).
Department of Human Services	• Support municipal councils in provision of emergency relief.
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Association of Independent Schools of Victoria, Catholic Education Office	• Development and maintenance of plans to manage evacuation of educational facilities including schools, universities, child care centres, etc.

Table 7 – Evacuation Roles and Responsibilities

Vulnerable People

During a bushfire, special consideration needs to be given to the safety of vulnerable people in the community. In a bushfire, many people will have increased vulnerability for a range of reasons such as geographic isolation, caring for young children, physical impairment and limited capacity to understand warnings and make decisions.

Vulnerable people and those who care for them are likely to need more time, resources, support and assistance to evacuate safely.

It is particularly important for vulnerable people, and those who care for them, to prepare bushfire survival plans with a focus on leaving early. Resources are available to support this planning, such as the Red Cross Bushfires: preparing to leave early guide, available for free download from the CFA website (*www.cfa.vic.gov.au*) or by calling the VBIL on 1800 240 667.

Vulnerable Persons Registers

Vulnerable Persons Registers contain lists of consenting people living in the community who have been assessed as vulnerable because they:

*   are frail and/or physically or cognitively impaired and unable to comprehend warnings and directions and/or respond in an emergency situation; **and**

*   cannot identify personal or community support networks to help them in an emergency.

In their role as Evacuation Managers, Victoria Police can access these lists of identified vulnerable people so that the safety of these individuals can be considered in planning and responding to emergencies.

Being placed on a Vulnerable Persons Register does not guarantee safety or assisted evacuation in an emergency.

Further Information:
*   Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV).
*   Joint SOP 3.12 – *Evacuation During Bushfires.*
*   Joint SOP J4.01 – *Incident Warnings and Advice.*

Safety

Firefighting and other emergency activities are inherently dangerous and regardless of what systems or controls are put in place, firefighters will still face hazards. In order to maintain your safety and contribute to the safety of those around you, fireground hazards need to be identified, risks need to be assessed and decisions made according to what is occurring.

Personnel will make judgments based on their knowledge, skills, training and experience. At incidents the Incident Controller assisted by a Safety Officer or Field Safety Advisor, if appointed, also has responsibility to manage safety.

Individual firefighters who are working on the fireground may be confronted by changing situations and should continually monitor the environment to identify the hazards and assess the risks as they apply to the tasks they are carrying out.

Safety is the top priority. Safety needs to be a priority for you as much as anyone else.

There are two components to managing safety during an emergency. The first component is the Safe Person Approach. The second component deals with assessing risk using the Dynamic Risk Assessment (CFA, MFB) or Dynamic Assessment of Risk (DEPI) process.

Safe Person Approach

Everyone has a responsibility for safety. Under Safe Person Approach (SPA) organisations have a responsibility to make sure systems of work are in place which allows work to be undertaken safely and equally, personnel have a responsibility to ensure they work in accordance with agreed protocols. Each person has a responsibility for ensuring that their work practices do not result in an unacceptable level of risk to themselves or to others around them.

Responsibility for safety is empowered to every individual. You should report all incidents and near misses and raise safety issues with your supervisor at the earliest opportunity. Doing so may prevent someone from suffering serious injury or even death at some time in the future.

Remember: *ALWAYS follow safe work practices and challenge those who do not.*

Dynamic Risk Assessment (CFA/MFB)

Dynamic Risk Assessment (DRA) is a simple risk assessment process by which hazards are identified and judgments to control or eliminate risks are rated as:

*   Acceptable or unacceptable; and

*   In proportion to the benefits we hope to gain by our action.

This process can follow the steps listed below:

Step 1 – What is going on and what are the hazards?
Look around and observe what is happening. Note all hazards or circumstances that might lead to new hazards.

Step 2 – What do I plan to do?
Think carefully about what it is you intend doing. Consider what actions you will carry out.

Step 3 – What are the risks of what I plan to do?
Will your actions expose you to any of the hazards you have identified in step 1, and if so, what level of risk is involved? Assess the chosen tactics. Will your actions expose you, or others working with you, to an unacceptable level of risk?

Step 4 – What can I do to make it safer?
If your actions are likely to expose you, or others working around you to an unacceptable level of risk you must consider the introduction of higher level controls that are reasonably practicable. If you cannot reduce identified risks to an acceptable level you will need to change your planned actions.

Step 5 – What do I need to monitor?
Remain alert to what is happening around you. As the situation changes, re-evaluate your actions. Are there new hazards? Has the level of risk changed?
Go back to Step 1 and repeat the Dynamic Risk Assessment process.

Remember: *Dynamic Risk Assessment is not meant to be a complicated exercise but rather a basic process in which you identify risks and classify them based on the likelihood and consequences of their occurrence. Based on that classification, you then make decisions about your own actions.*

More detail is located in Agency processes.

Dynamic Assessment of Risk (DEPI)

This process is followed in DEPI. Assessing risk and implementing controls can prevent or minimise your chance of death, injury or illness. The process means you identify the hazards and assess the risk that hazard poses to your safety and the likelihood of it actually occurring. Assessing the risk associated with identified hazards should involve thinking about:

- The likelihood of harm occurring;
- How often you are exposed to a hazard;
- The possible consequences of exposure; and
- Whether there are regulations related to the hazard.

This process allows you to decide if the hazard has an acceptable level of risk, or if you need to do something to reduce the risk level.

On the fireground you will be required to constantly monitor the changing conditions and perform a dynamic assessment of the risk, utilising your knowledge and understanding of fireground hazards including, firefighter **WATCHOUTS** and **LACES**.

Safety First Approach

In line with the Fire Services Commissioner's strategic priorities the safety of firefighters and other emergency personnel must be given priority over all other fire suppression considerations and activities. When working within an incident, you must avoid putting yourself at risk. By adopting the Safe Person Approach and using the Dynamic Risk Assessment or Dynamic Assessment of Risk process you can minimise the risk of injury to self and others.

OHS Incident Card

The OHS Incident Report Card (salmon coloured) is used to record incidents, injuries, near misses and hazards at bushfires. The completed card is to be provided to the Logistics Officer, (or medical unit leader if in place). This does not replace the need to immediately communicate these incidents via the chain of command.

In addition to using these cards, personnel may be required to report OHS incidents via their own agency's reporting system.

LACES

LACES is an acronym for Lookouts, Awareness, Communication, Escape Routes, and Safety Zones. It is to be used as a guide to help mitigate the risks that firefighters face, including burnover and entrapment during bushfire and planned burning operations.

The process for implementing LACES is:

Lookouts	Fire crews shall LOOKOUT and ensure that they have a clear appreciation of current fire behaviour, location and size in relationship to crew location.
Awareness	Firefighters shall be aware of the impact of changes in fire behaviour including those resulting from variations to fuel, weather and topography and of other fireground hazards.
Communications	All fire crews shall follow the Communications Plan, communicate with your crew and surrounding crews to discuss and address safety issues.
Escape Routes	At least two escape routes should be agreed and made known to all relevant personnel. The suitability of an escape route should be continually reviewed to ensure it remains effective.
Safety Zones	Safety zones should be identified and made known to all relevant firefighters. Firefighters need to consider escape time and safety zone size requirements that will change as fire behaviour changes.

Table 8 – LACES

Safety

WATCHOUT

WATCHOUT is an acronym used to remind firefighters of potential dangers to their safety and to give advice on safe work practices. Understanding the meaning of the acronym will help you perform a more comprehensive risk assessment.

Weather – dominates fire behaviour, so keep informed.

Actions – must be based on current and expected fire behaviour.

Try out – at least two safe escape routes.

Communicate – with your supervisor, your crew and adjoining crews.

Hazards – beware of variations in fuels and steep slopes.

Observe – changes in wind speed and direction, temperature, humidity and cloud.

Understand – your instructions, make sure that you are understood.

Think – clearly, be alert and act decisively before your situation becomes critical.

You should familiarise yourself with your agency's current WATCHOUTs.

Firefighters watchout when:

- Building a control line downhill towards a fire;
- On a slope – rolling material can ignite fuel below you;
- The wind changes speed or direction;
- The weather gets hotter or drier;
- There are unburnt fuels between you and the fire;
- Terrain or vegetation impedes travel or visibility;
- In country you have not seen in daylight;
- You are unfamiliar with the weather and local fire behaviour;
- Frequent spot fires occur over your control line;
- You cannot see the main fire or communicate with anyone who can;
- Unclear instructions or tasks are given;
- You feel exhausted or want to take a nap near the fire;
- Attacking a fire or constructing a firecontrol line without a safe anchor point;
- Working alone with no communications link to crew members or supervisor;
- You are not fully informed about strategy, tactics and hazards;
- Safety zones and escape routes have not been identified;

Safety

- Fire not scouted or the potential of the fire has not been assessed; and
- Water levels are getting low.

Red Flag Warnings

A process for passing critical safety information to fire/incident suppression resources on which they can base decisions regarding strategy tactics and deployment.

A Red Flag Warning should be issued when there is, or is predicted to be, a significant risk to safety due to changed circumstances, including:

- Weather conditions;
- Fuel conditions;
- Fire behaviour;
- Equipment availability;
- Communications arrangements; and
- Access.

A Red Flag Warning for a specific incident may only be issued by the following personnel, in their area of responsibility:

- Sector Commander;
- Division Commander;
- Operations Officer;
- Incident Controller;
- State Controller, Regional Controller, Area of Operations Controller, State and Regional Agency Commanders, State Duty Officer, Operations Manager, and the rostered Area or District Duty Officer. (The personnel listed in the final dot point may advise the Incident Controller to issue a red flag warning.)

Red Flag Warnings can be conveyed by any means.

Red Flag Warnings, regardless of how they are conveyed, must be preceded by the words, "Red Flag Warning".

The message should be specific to the key audience (eg. the Eastern Division) to minimise radio congestion.

Safety

Personnel receiving a Red Flag Warning must:

- immediately acknowledge that they have received the warning;

- repeat back the relevant details of the message to demonstrate that they have understood the message;

- notify personnel under their command and supervision; and

- obtain an acknowledgement from personnel under their command and supervision.

Personnel should follow the process outlined in Figure 11:

Note: *Red Flag Warnings are not a directive to leave the fireground. Firefighters should consider local knowledge and situation when determining what action to take in response to the warning.*

Step 1: For example, if the Operations Officer initiates a Red Flag Warning, they issue it to Division Commanders. The Operations Officer then advises the Incident Controller.

Step 2: Division Commanders acknowledge receipt and repeat back the key points of the Warning to demonstrate understanding.

Step 3: Division Commanders issue the Red Flag Warning to Sector Commanders.

Step 4: Sector Commanders acknowledge receipt and repeat back the key points of the Warning to demonstrate understanding.

Step 5: Sector Commanders issue Warning to Strike Team/Task Force Leaders and any others they are supervising, who acknowledge receipt (Step 6), and issue the Warning to their crew members (Step 7), who acknowledge the Warning (Step 8).
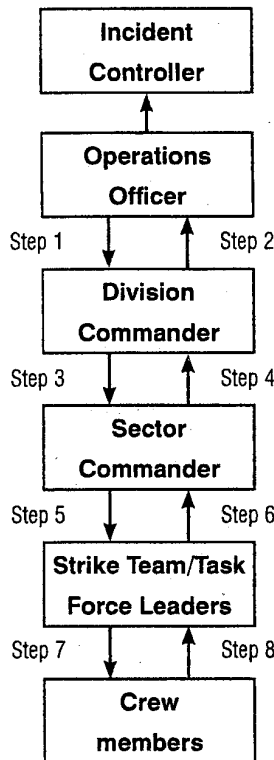
Figure 11 – Red Flag Warning dissemination and acknowledgement process

Fireground Information Update

The Fireground Information Update is to be used to distribute important and urgent fireground information. It is to become the vehicle for the planned distribution of key safety information to all firefighters on a routine basis, in a manner that they can predict and readily access. It may be a radio broadcast or printed copy and contains information about:

- weather conditions and forecast changes;

- key decisions about fireground sectorisation and control; and

- information about current backburning operations, for example, location, timing and Officer-in-Charge.

A Fireground Information Update **does not require an acknowledgment process,** thus allowing quick and comprehensive distribution of the information. It should be widely distributed to firefighters on the fireground.

Fatigue

Fatigue, in both its acute and cumulative forms, can present a real risk to safety and performance at bushfire incidents if not recognised and appropriately managed. The highest risks are to personal safety when associated with activities involving machinery and other equipment, and especially when driving motor vehicles after long shifts.

In addition to managing the fatigue of others within their sphere of influence, firefighters and incident management personnel must actively manage their own fatigue, particularly in relation to driving vehicles and equipment and machinery use.

Agency personnel should adhere to existing agency protocols related to fatigue management and report any observation of OHS incidents (including near-misses).

Hydration

It is important to remain hydrated, especially during periods of prolonged or intensive physical activity. Dehydration will occur if fluids and electrolytes lost through perspiration are not replaced. The use of an agency approved electrolyte drink/powder is important to maintaining good hydration levels. The recommended ratio of water to electrolytes is 2:1. Depending on workload you should be drinking up to 1200 ml of water and 600 ml of an agency approved electrolyte replacement drink/powder per hour. It is important that all personnel remain hydrated by maintaining their fluid intake during the shift.

Safety

Hazardous Trees

During fire operations, firefighters need to make decisions on locating fire control lines and treating hazardous trees. Priority trees for treatment will depend on the risk exposure to firefighters and others that need to enter the fire area and individual tree characteristics.

Prior to and during fire control line construction hazardous trees, or potentially hazardous trees either need to be removed or protected from being further weakened by fire. This is done using the hazardous tree marking system.

System currently being used to protect or remove 'potential hazardous' trees:

- A yellow cross (**X**) on trees to be **pushed over or felled** as part of fire control line construction or planned burn preparation.

- A yellow dot (•) on trees to be **protected** (hand raked or machine cleared around and/or fire suppressant applied) prior to the fire.

Note: *hazard tape is not used to identify the location of potential hazardous trees as hazard tape purpose is to warn others of a hazard and restrict access to those treating the hazard.*

Figure 12 – Tree marked with an X (felled during fireline construction)

Figure 13 – Tree marked with a • (protected from being further weakened by fire)

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Safety

System for assessing and marking 'Clear and Present Danger' trees:

- Ensure firefighters don't commence systematic mop-up until hazardous trees are assessed and treated.

- Where DEPI personnel consider the circumstances safe they may mark a 'Clear and Present Danger tree' in yellow with (**K**) for killer tree. CFA and MFB members are not to mark or approach the actual tree as CFA and MFB procedures and training do not support a skill set sufficient to determine if the tree is safe to approach.

- For both agencies, mark the nearest point on the fire control line with yellow and black hazard tape – 1 length of tape for one tree length from the control line and 2 lengths of tape for two tree lengths from the control line. If unsafe to mark the tree the crew leader should consider a presence is maintained on-site until the hazard can be removed, either by removal of the tree or excluding crews from the area.

- If it is unsafe to fall or push the tree, relocate the fire control line, at least 2 tree lengths from the hazardous tree, and block off access and/or establish traffic control to prevent firefighters entering the area.

Figure 14 – Mark 'Clear and Present Danger' trees with a 'K'

Figure 15 – Tie hazard tape on the edge of the fire control line – one piece of tape for a hazardous tree being within one tree length from the control line at that point, and two pieces of tape for a hazardous tree being within two tree lengths

Safety

Hazardous tree within
two tree lengths from
the control line

'Clear and Present Danger'
Trees – DEPI mark tree with
'K' if safe to do so.

Hazardous tree within
one tree length from
the control line

Tree within 2 tree
lengths of the
control line = 2
loops of tape

Tree within 1 tree
length of the
control line = 1
loop of tape

Control line

Mark nearest point on track
with yellow and black
hazard tape

Figure 16 – *Diagrammatic Explanation of 'Clear and Present Danger' Marking System*

Refer to publications *Guideline for fire control lines and management of hazardous trees (DSE/CFA 2011), Hazardous Tree Management Pictorial Guide (DSE 2011) and the Bushfire Firefighter Reference Manual (DSE/CFA 2011)* for more specific information on hazardous tree management and fire control line construction.

> **Further Information:**
>
> - *CFA/DSE Bushfire Firefighter Reference Manual.*
>
> - *DSE Fire Management Manual 8.1 Fire Suppression*
>
> - *DSE Pictorial Guide – Hazardous Trees Management.*
>
> - *DSE Video – Hazardous Trees Management.*
>
> - *SOP J8.01 – OHS Incident Response.*

Post Incident Actions

Fire Investigation

In the event of a fire being suspicious, the Incident Controller is to ensure the scene is preserved and request Victoria Police and a Fire Investigator to attend the scene. The Incident Controller should provide Victoria Police the details of why the fire is deemed suspicious.

After Action Reviews

Local debriefing using the After Action Review (AAR) process is a way to debrief your crews back at the Station, work centre or staging area at the end of a shift, tour of duty, fire or incident. By identifying and addressing the issues as soon as possible after an event, we are able to deal with them immediately while the details are still fresh in our minds.

The AAR is the primary tool for incorporating the actions or day's events into the learning cycle, helping us to improve our performance. An AAR:

- Provides practice for crew communication and for conflict resolution between team members.
- Provides a place to establish, emphasise and reinforce group norms.
- Provides a forum for determining the reasons for crew successes and failures.
- Assists in establishing a common crew perception of the events of the day.
- Is not a critique, the emphasis is on the issues NOT personalities.

An AAR can be completed in four simple steps:

1. What was planned?
   What were the goals and objectives?
   - Incident action plan;
   - Crew incident roles;
   - Other crew goals;
   - Individual goals;
   - Additional un-stated goals.
2. What really happened?
3. Why did it happen?
4. What can we do better for next time?

Formal Debriefs

Formal debriefs may be more structured and focus on issues beyond the capacity of the crew to resolve. As well as describing actions already taken to improve the situation they provide suggested improvements to be applied at local, District, Regional and State level.

Relief and Recovery

Transition from response to recovery

The decision relating to the timing of the transition of response to recovery coordination will be impacted by a number of key considerations, including:

- the nature of the hazard/threat and whether there is a risk of a recurring threat ;
- the extent of impact on communities, as this may determine if a prolonged transition period needs to be implemented;
- the extent of and known level of impact and needs associated with the incident;
- the considerations for the extent of emergency relief required by affected communities; and
- the considerations for the resources required for effective recovery arrangements.

The Incident Controller, the Emergency Response Coordinator and Emergency Recovery Coordinator (State and/or Regional/Local Government – Municipal Emergency Resource Officer/Municipal Recovery Manager) will determine the transition structure and handover requirement to fully establish the recovery coordination arrangements. In a prolonged campaign incident, a transition period will be established to allow sufficient time for briefing, resource planning and implementation of immediate recovery services.

A schedule of transition actions required is available in the document *An Agreement For Transition Of Coordination Arrangements From Response To Recovery,* which can be obtained from Department of Human Services (DHS) Regional and State Recovery Coordinators.

Emergency Relief and Recovery public information sources from Department of Human Services

The new Emergency Relief and Recovery Victoria website *www.recovery.vic.gov.au* is a single source of online information for public and local government areas on all relief and recovery matters, across all hazards. It can provide independent information on three concurrent major emergencies, plus archival information on previous emergencies. Replacing the Recovering from Floods website, the Emergency Relief and Recovery Victoria website is designed for mobile platforms (tablets) as well as desktop computers, and in late October 2013 there will be a mobile phone version.

The Victorian Emergency Recovery Information Line (1300 799 232) is a dedicated 24/7 hotline with surge capacity, to handle all relief and recovery queries (via scripts) and if established, queries can be transferred through to dedicated area centres.

Further Information:
- *After Action Review Form.*
- DHS – *An Agreement for Transition of Coordination Arrangements from Relief and Recovery.*

Further Information

Document	Location
After Action Review Form	IMT Tool Box > Post Incident
AIIMS Manual - 3rd Edition (2011 revision)	*AFAC web site: http://www.afac.com.au*
CFA Chief Officer's SOP 9.12 – *Incident Management Structure*	CFA Intranet
CFA Chief Officer's SOP 9.27 – *Staging Area Management*	CFA Intranet
CFA District Operations Management Plans	CFA Intranet and local Region
CFA/DSE Bushfire Reference Manual – LACES	CFA Intranet
CFA/MFB Joint Operational Activities Memorandum or Understanding	IMT Tool Box > Agreements and MoUs
CFA Fire and Emergency Management Checklists – Edition 1	CFA Intranet/Brigades Online > Fire & Emergencies > Manuals > Fire & Emergency Mgmt Checklists
DSE Pictorial Guide – Hazardous Trees Management	IMT Tool Box > Safety
DSE Video – Hazardous Trees Management	CFA Intranet/Brigades Online > Management & Admin > Projects > Completed Projects > Hazardous Trees
Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV)	OESC web site: *http://www.oesc.vic.gov.au*
Emergency Management Team Arrangements 2013	Fire Services Commissioner's web site: *http://www.firecommisioner.vic.gov.au*
Fire Services Commissioner – 'Building New Foundations'	Fire Services Commissioner's web site: *http://www.firecommisioner.vic.gov.au*

Further Information

Document	Location
Fire Services Commissioner's Policy	Fire Services Commissioner's web site: *http://www.firecommisioner.vic.gov.au*
Fire Services Commissioner's SOPs	IMT Tool Box > Agreements and MoUs
Joint SOPs	IMT Tool Box > Agreements and MoUs
OESC Practice Note – MECCs	OESC web site: *http://www.oesc.vic.gov.au*
State Command and Control Arrangements for Bushfire in Victoria	IMT Tool Box > Agreements and MoUs
State Control Centre Standard Operating Procedures	State Control Centre

SCC/RCC/ICC Locations

Location	Address	Contact
State Control Centre	Level 4, 8 Nicholson St East Melbourne 3002	Ph (03) 9032 3600
Barwon South West		
Regional Control Centre		
Geelong	36 Kilgour St, Geelong 3220	Ph (03) 5221 6667 Fax (03) 5222 3243
Incident Control Centres		
Casterton	147 Bahgallah Rd, Casterton 3311	Ph (03) 5554 2301 Fax (03) 5581 2151
Colac	83–85 Gellibrand St, Colac 3250	Ph (03) 5233 5533 Fax (03) 5231 3823
Geelong	61 Separation St, Geelong 3220	Ph (03) 5240 2742 Fax (03) 5277 3927
Hamilton	915 Mt Napier Rd, Hamilton 3300	Ph (03) 5551 4700 Fax (03) 5521 1636
Heywood	12 Murray St, Heywood 3304	Ph (03) 5527 0444 Fax (03) 5527 1809
Warrnambool	113 Raglan Pde, Warrnambool 3280	Ph (03) 5559 2500 Fax (03) 5562 7185

Further Information

Location	Address	Contact
Eastern Metropolitan		
Regional Control Centre		
Lilydale	18 - 22 Lakeview Dr, Lilydale 3140	Ph (03) 8739 1391 Fax (03) 8739 1382
Incident Control Centres		
Ferntree Gully	27/69 Acacia Rd, Ferntree Gully 3156	Ph (03) 9751 5700 Fax (03) 9751 5705
Woori Yallock	7–9 Symes Rd, Woori Yallock 3139	Ph (03) 5961 5917 Fax (03) 5964 7410
Gippsland		
Regional Control Centre		
Gippsland	Level 1, 181 Franklin St, Traralgon 3844	Ph (03) 5177 3240 Ph (03) 5177 3259 Ph (03) 5177 3260 Fax (03) 5176 5602
Incident Control Centres		
Bairnsdale	574 Main St, Bairnsdale 3875	Ph (03) 5152 0420 Fax (03) 5152 6865
Bendoc	2 Nichol St, Bendoc 3888	Ph (02) 6459 0508 Fax (02) 6459 0522
Cann River	Princes Highway, Cann River 3890	Ph (03) 5158 2154 Fax (03) 5158 6347
Ellinbank	1301 Hazeldean Rd, Ellinbank 3821	Ph (03) 5624 2222 Fax (03) 5624 2200
Erica	Thomson Valley Highway, Parkers Corner 3825	Ph (03) 5165 2222 Fax (03) 5165 3607
Heyfield	1 Firebrac Rd, Heyfield 3858	Ph (03) 5139 7777 Fax (03) 5139 7715

Location	Address	Contact
Leongatha	Level 1,14A McCartin St, Leongatha 3953	Ph (03) 5667 1100 Fax (03) 5662 2408
Noojee	McCarthys Spur Rd, Noojee 3833	Ph (03) 5624 8153 Fax (03) 5264 8130
Orbost	171 Nicholson St, Orbost 3888	Ph (03) 5161 1333 Fax (03) 5161 1300
Sale	Level 3, 64–66 Foster St, Sale 3853	Ph (03) 5149 1201 Fax (03) 5144 5493
Swifts Creek	McMillan Ave, Swifts Creek 3896	Ph (03) 5159 5150 Fax (03) 5159 5155
Traralgon	Level 2, 181 Franklin St, Traralgon 3844	Ph (03) 5177 3200 Fax (03) 5177 3295
Yarram	310 Commercial Rd, Yarram 3971	Ph (03) 5183 9118 Fax (03) 5183 9122
Grampians		
Regional Control Centre		
Wendouree	19 Learmonth Rd, Wendouree 3355	Ph (03) 5330 9130 Fax (03) 5339 1464
Incident Control Centres		
Ararat	Laby St, Ararat 3377	Ph (03) 5355 3060 Fax (03) 5352 7247
Ballarat	25 Vickers St, Sebastopol 3356	Ph (03) 5335 0700 Fax (03) 5335 0731
Horsham	110 Natimuk Rd, Horsham 3400	Ph (03) 5362 0720 Fax (03) 5381 0268

Further Information

Location	Address	Contact
Hume		
Regional Control Centre		
Hume	89 Sydney Rd, Benalla 3672	Ph (03) 5761 0724 Fax (03) 9562 7852
Incident Control Centres		
Alexandra	5 Binns MacRae Rd, Alexandra 3714	Ph (03) 5772 0200 Fax (03) 5772 2892
Corryong	2 Jardine St, Corryong 3707	Ph (02) 6076 3100 Fax (02) 6076 1348
Mansfield	128 Highett St, Mansfield 3722	Ph (03) 5733 1200 Fax (03) 5775 1063
Ovens	5338 Great Alpine Rd, Myrtleford 3736	Ph (03) 5731 1222 Fax (03)5731 1223
Seymour	39 McIntyre St, Seymour 3660	Ph (03) 5735 3300 Fax (03) 5735 3381
Shepparton	195–205 Numurkah Rd, Shepparton 3630	Ph (03) 5822 9900 Fax (03) 5833 2483
Tallangatta	34 Toowong St, Tallangatta 3700	Ph (02) 6071 5300 Fax (02) 6071 2889
Wangaratta	1 Ely St, Wangaratta 3677	Ph (03) 5720 2300 Fax (03) 5722 3021
Wodonga	83 McKoy St, Wodonga 3690	Ph (03) 6055 6400 Fax (03) 6024 3647

Location	Address	Contact
Loddon Mallee		
Regional Control Centre		
Bendigo	Shop 3 Valentines Walk, 58 Queen St, Bendigo 3550	Ph (03) 5438 1100 Fax (03) 5442 2246
Incident Control Centres		
Bendigo	Cnr Midland Highway & Taylor St, Epsom 3551	Ph (03) 5430 4644 Fax (03) 5430 9205
Gisborne	L2 Nexus Centre, 12–14 Prince St, Gisborne 3437	Ph (03) 5420 9200 Fax (03) 5420 9205
Mildura	Cnr 11th St & Koorlong Ave, Irymple 3498	Ph (03) 5051 4500 Fax (03) 5051 4523
Swan Hill	120 Curlewis St, Swan Hill 3585	Ph (03) 5036 2841 Fax (03) 5032 3745
Northern and Western Metropolitan		
Regional Control Centre		
Melton	251 High St, Melton 3337	Ph (03) 8746 1400 Fax (03) 8746 1480
Incident Control Centres		
Kangaroo Ground	Cnr Kangaroo Ground/St, Andrews Rd & Ness Lane, Kangaroo Ground 3097	Ph (03) 9712 0317 Fax (03) 9712 0415

Further Information

Location	Address	Contact
Southern Metropolitan		
Regional Control Centre		
Oakleigh	MFB Station 25 Rear 100 Atherton Road, Oakleigh 3166	Ph (03) 9665 4665 Fax (03) 9563 4201
Incident Control Centres		
Ferntree Gully (covering Pakenham ICC footprint)	27/69 Acacia Rd, Ferntree Gully 3156	Ph (03) 9751 5700 Fax (03) 9751 5705
Moorooduc	755 Derril Rd, Moorooduc 3933	Ph (03) 5971 8900 Fax (03) 5978 8634
Pakenham (closed)		