

**Legislative Council
Environment & Planning Standing Committee**



Inquiry into Fire Season Preparedness

**Presentation
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Emergency management in Victoria

Victoria's emergency management sector reform has focussed on achieving integrated arrangements through:

- a shared vision for 'safer and more resilient communities'
- enhanced interoperability between agencies
- greater collaboration across agencies and with communities
- shared responsibility for emergency management outcomes

CFA is a key partner in these arrangements for bushfire management

Safer Together sets out a new approach to reducing the risk of bushfires in Victoria, consistent with these reforms.



CFA

Protecting lives and property



CFA ACT

Section 14

- **Vests prevention and suppression of fires in country area of Victoria in CFA.**

Section 20

- **General duty of taking, superintending and enforcing all necessary steps for prevention and suppression of fires.**



CFA at a glance

CFA Brigades		1180
volunteer		1145
Integrated		35
Forest Industry		23
Coast Guard		17
Specialist		1
Total		1221
 <u>Members</u>		
Volunteers -	Operational	35,669
	Support	21,342
Staff -	Operational	1,026
	Support	929



Fire Season Preparedness

Critical facets of fire season preparedness for CFA include:

- **Briefing, exercising, testing response readiness**
- **Working with communities to enhance community and personal bushfire survival planning**
- **Contribute to fire prevention activities in communities**
- **Partnering with other agencies and local government**



Briefing, Exercising, Testing Response Readiness

Key Elements:

- Pre Season Update
- Audit of Region and District Readiness
- Training and Exercising
- Sector Partnership Arrangements and Planning



CFA Working with Communities to Enhance Community and Personal Bushfire Survival Planning

Some stats 2015/16:

Community Meetings	273 Meetings	11757 attendees
Bushfire Planning Workshops	92 Meetings	1388 attendees
Street Corner meetings	137 Meetings	3966 attendees
Public Awareness (Field Days etc)	624 Field Days	80165 attendees
Special Interest Groups	559 Meetings	15155 attendees
Home Fire Safety	328 Meetings	7443 attendees
Schools Education	729 lessons	17276 attendees
Mobile Education Unit	85 lessons	1754 attendees
Property Advice Service	3403 conversations	9485 door knocks
Special Interest Campaigns	493 campaigns	240993 total emails

Note: Not an exhaustive list of programs (indicative)



CFA Involvement in Fuel Management

- **CFA Act empowers Local Government to serve Fire Prevention Notices and Permits to Burn (S.41).**
- **CFA provides professional development to delegated Local Government officers.**
- **CFA community engagement / education programs reinforce need for fuel reduction / treatment on private land.**
- **A number of brigades undertake fuel reduction on behalf of or request of the land owner or manager.**
- **Seeking opportunities to work with Aboriginal people to undertake traditional burning activities**



Fire Prevention – Brigade Involvement

- **Fuel Management as an activity was a common feature of rural brigade activity.**
- **Current Vegetation Management Program introduced in 2010.**
- **350 active brigades, from a low of 70.**
- **Program has key partnerships with DELWP (Parks Vic), environmental organisations and Traditional Owners**



Annual average 2010 – 2016

- **Reduced fuel on 2000 – 5000 hectares of land**
- **Reduced fuel on 500 – 1,000 kilometres of linear reserve (roadsides)**
- **Support into DELWP Planned Burns.**



Strengthening our capability and capacity

- Enhance capability of agencies, local governments to plan, prepare and deliver risk-based fuel management.
- Vegetation Management Officers support brigades to obtain approvals / permits and consent to reduce fuel.
- Conduct burn camps that are hands on learning where participants conduct small burns under supervision to improve skill levels and reinforce formal training.
- Introduction of a Burn Controller (Burn OIC) course designed around members needs and availability.
- Introduction of resource coordinators who identify and mobilise individual volunteers to support larger CFA / DELWP burns.



Working together, community at the centre

- **Continuing to improve how we work together for a shared vision of 'safer, more resilient communities'.**
- **Active participation of community in mitigation.**
- **Empowered communities making and participating in decisions that impact their community.**



Cross-tenure fuel management

- **Support and encouragement for Local Government and private land owners to commit to fuel management and participate in a cooperative model with land and fire agencies.**
- **Creating the legislative and policy settings to enable and support private land owners to undertake fuel management**
- **Increased effectiveness of fuel management to reduce risk**
 - **through treatment of contiguous vegetation (tenure blind) and**
 - **strong focus on risk reduction for community assets**
- **CFA Planned Burning Pilot Project - Risk Landscape Coordinators partnering with DELWP/PV on cross tenure planned burning.**



- **INTERAGENCY APPROACH TO THE CONTROLS OF IGNITIONS**
- **FIRE DATA AND TRENDS SHARED BETWEEN AGENCIES**
 - **FIRE INCIDENT REPORTING**
 - **FIRE INVESTIGATIONS**
- **SUSPICIOUS FIRE MAPPING – “HOT SPOT”**
- **INTER-OPERABILITY**
 - **JOINT INVESTIGATIONS**
 - **JOINT TRAINING**
 - **FIRE DANGER PERIOD BRIEFINGS & PREPAREDNESS**
 - **CRIME STOPPERS – SUPPORT**
- **ARSON PREVENTION PROGRAMS, such as Juvenile intervention program**