

Title	Fire Management Policy	Version	4
Policy No.	P 2026/01	Effective date	23/02/2026

Acknowledgment of Country

Forestry Corporation of NSW acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we live and work, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

1. PURPOSE

Forestry Corporation of NSW (Forestry Corporation) manages a significant estate of native forests and plantations in NSW and is a statutory fire fighting authority under the *Rural Fires Act 1997*. Bushfires are a major and recurring threat to forest ecosystems, to people and communities living in or near forested landscapes, to Forestry Corporation business objectives, and to people and businesses whose livelihoods rely on forest and plantation resources.

Forestry Corporation has statutory obligations to manage fire. Accordingly, Forestry Corporation recognises the need for a risk-based approach to fire management which gives appropriate protection to the range of social, economic, cultural and environmental assets. The purpose of this policy is to outline Forestry Corporation's fire management principles to minimise unplanned fire impacts on the forest estate, its neighbours and communities and to effectively manage planned fire to reduce bushfire hazards and promote forest health.

2. BACKGROUND

The *Rural Fires Act* imposes responsibilities on Forestry Corporation as a public authority and owner and occupier of land. It also recognises Forestry Corporation as one of four statutory fire fighting authorities in NSW, a member of the NSW Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee (BFCC), and subjects Forestry Corporation to the coordinated fire management provisions of the *Rural Fires Act*.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to Forestry Corporation employees, contractors, other agency personnel carrying out fire management activities on Forestry Corporation owned or managed land. If an incident is declared under section 44 of the *Rural Fires Act*, this policy applies if and to the extent it is not inconsistent with applicable NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) policies and/or a direction from the NSW RFS Commissioner.

This policy also applies to Forestry Corporation employees carrying out fire management activities outside of Forestry Corporation owned or managed land unless it is inconsistent with direction from the NSW RFS Commissioner or another body appointed as the authority in control of the fire.

4. POLICY

Forestry Corporation has statutory obligations in relation to fire management under both the *Forestry Act 2012* and the *Rural Fires Act*. These Acts place responsibility on Forestry Corporation to:

- (a) Protect State forests from the damaging effects of bushfires (*Forestry Act* s 11(f));
- (b) prevent the occurrence of bushfires on, and minimise the danger of the spread of bushfires on or

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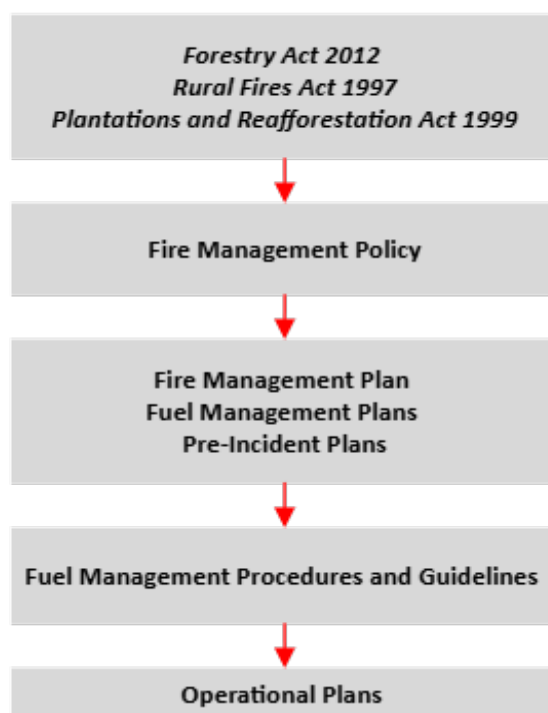
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from State forests and other lands managed by Forestry Corporation (*Rural Fires Act* s 63(1)); and
(c) protect life and property from fire (*Rural Fires Act* s 3(c)).

4.1. Fire management framework

Forestry Corporation plans for bushfire preparedness, prevention, response and recovery activities and provides instruction to staff engaged in fire management through training and documentation. Forestry Corporation's fire management framework is displayed below:

Forestry Corporation of NSW fire management framework



4.2. Fire management principles

Forestry Corporation maintains appropriate levels of fire management capabilities, including a highly trained workforce, to effectively discharge its responsibilities as a sustainable forest manager and statutory fire fighting authority.

All fire management activities are undertaken by Forestry Corporation in line with the following principles, individual roles and responsibilities are outlined in fire management procedures and guidelines.

- give highest priority to the protection of life and property and the safety of communities
- fire response has precedence over other work
- protect and minimise damage to Forestry Corporation assets
- comply with legal and other compliance obligations, including ecologically sustainable forest management (ESFM) in natural landscapes
- comply with BFCC policies and other NSW RFS operational protocols
- incorporate First Nations and western management practices and use fire as a tool to promote ecosystem health, diversity and resilience in native forests
- adopt innovative science and technology to improve bushfire preparedness, prevention, response and recovery
- undertake fire operations in line with the Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMS) and the Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS)

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- incorporate fire resilient design into forest management practices
- apply national competency standards in fire training for firefighting personnel and incident management roles and ensure firefighters and incident management personnel meet firefighter medical and fitness requirements
- all firefighting staff are provided with fit for purpose Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Personal Protective Clothing (PPC) and fire suppression equipment including firefighting vehicles
- collaborate with statutory bodies, other landowners and land managers, fire fighting authorities and the community to:
 - take a leading role (as one of four fire fighting authorities) in the BFCC and Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC) framework to contribute to successful coordinated firefighting in NSW
 - bring expertise, knowledge and data to design bush fire management plans as required under section 52 of the *Rural Fires Act*
 - implement programs for bushfire prevention, preparedness, response and recovery in line with bush fire management plans
 - participate and represent Forestry Corporation on the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC) National Council, participate in AFAC's Collaboration Model and adopt relevant AFAC doctrine and strategy.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Position	Responsibility
The Board and Executive Leadership Team (ELT)	▪ ensure Forestry Corporation has adequate resources to achieve fire management objectives
General Manager Governance and Assurance	▪ ensure Forestry Corporation maintains a fire management framework to support compliance with legislative and policy obligations and organisational objectives ▪ ensure Forestry Corporation actively participates in NSW coordinated firefighting arrangements and engages in national committees to influence fire management outcomes ▪ ensure Forestry Corporation progresses the adoption of innovation and technology to enhance fire management activities ▪ ensure Forestry Corporation implements those recommendations of public inquiries accepted by State government that relate to State forests
Senior Manager Fire and Natural Hazards	▪ lead a coordinated approach to fire management across Forestry Corporation to meet fire management obligations and objectives ▪ ensure appropriate and up to date fire management doctrine including policies, procedures and other documentation is in place ▪ ensure state-wide training for fire fighters and fire managers is undertaken and fit for purpose ▪ ensure PPE, PPC and firefighting equipment complies with the required standards and is fit for purpose
Senior Manager Country and Community	▪ develop the framework to facilitate First Nations cultural burning practices on State forest
Regional Managers	▪ protection of Forestry Corporation assets in their FPAs ▪ ensure staff in their reporting lines are aware of and comply with this policy ▪ ensure staff in their reporting lines are trained and competent in

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Position	Responsibility
	their fire management roles ▪ ensure BFMC representation ▪ support the delivery of First Nations techniques and practices in line with the framework
All staff	▪ comply with this policy and related plans and procedures when carrying out fire management activities ▪ undertake training as required ▪ safely induct contractors and other agency personnel in Forestry Corporation policies and procedures as required ▪ seek briefing from the relevant fire fighting authority/land manager when carrying out fire management activities on other land tenure
Contractors and other agency personnel	▪ comply with this policy when undertaking fire management activities on Forestry Corporation owned or managed estate

6. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Term	Definition
Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC)	An independent, member-based organisation that supports connected and capable emergency management in Australia and New Zealand.
Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMS)	A nationally adopted structure which formalises a coordinated approach to emergency incident management.
Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS)	A national system that provides ratings describing the potential level of danger should a bushfire start.
BFMC Bushfire Risk Management Plan (BFRMP)	A document which describes the level of bushfire risk across a BFMC area and sets out strategies to minimise and mitigate the risk over a five-year period.
BFMC Fire Access and Fire Trail (FAFT) plans	A document that provides a framework for identification, maintenance, certification and registration of fire trails for the purpose to prevent, fight, manage or contain bushfires.
BFMC Plans of Operation	A document that outlines the arrangements for effective and efficient co-ordinated fire fighting. For each fire district the plan identifies Incident Management Team (IMT) roles, operational readiness arrangements and key contacts, as well as information on any local arrangements or Pre-Incident Plans (PIP) in place.
Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee (BFCC)	A NSW statutory body established under the provisions of the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> , responsible for planning in relation to bushfire prevention and coordinated bushfire fighting in NSW.
Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC)	Groups of people with technical expertise, experience and local knowledge who work together locally for bush fire management purposes, and who can collaboratively determine bush fire management arrangements.
Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management (ESFM)	Forest management and use in accordance with the specific objectives and policies for ecologically sustainable development.
Fire Management Plan	Provides the strategic framework describing fire management objectives and the application of legislative, regulatory, policy and

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Term	Definition
	other requirements.
Fire Management Policy	Establishes Forestry Corporation's fire management principles.
Forest Protection Area (FPA) Fire Protection Area (FPA)	Pre-defined boundary under the control of a Regional Manager. Terminology is used interchangeably.
Fuel Management Plans	Define the principles and processes of fuel management in State forests and define preventative measures to minimise the risk of bushfires.
NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS)	Lead combat agency for bush fires in NSW.
Operational Plans	These plans for hazard reduction activities consider economic, social, environmental and cultural assets and prescribe management activities to achieve plan objectives.
Pre-incident plans (PIPs)	A document developed prior to the fire season commencement each year specific to each FPA, which establishes bushfire preparedness, detection and response arrangements.
Procedures	Guide staff with step-by-step instructions to undertake fire management activities in a consistent and compliant manner.

7. LEGISLATION AND OTHER COMPLIANCE OBLIGATIONS

- *Forestry Act 2012*
- Forestry Regulation 2022
- *Rural Fires Act 1997*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- Rural Fires Regulation 2022
- *Plantations and Reafforestation Act 1999*
- Plantations and Reafforestation (Code) Regulation 2001
- BFMC Bush Fire Risk Management Plans
- BFMC Plans of Operations
- BFMC Fire Access and Fire Trail plans

8. RELATED POLICIES

- [Forest Management Policy](#)
- [Critical Incident Management Policy](#)
- [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Training and Development Policy](#)
- [Fire Training Currency and Competency Policy](#)

9. RELATED DELEGATIONS

- [Financial and Administrative Delegations of Authority](#)
- Instrument of Appointments
- [Bushfire Readiness and Incident Coordination procedure](#)

10. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Fire Management Plan](#)
- [Forest Management Plan](#)
- Softwood Plantations Division and Hardwood Forests Division Fuel Management Plans
- Pre-incident plans
- Responsible Wood Standard (AS/NZS 4708:2021)

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11. REVISION HISTORY

Version	Author	Summary of changes	Approver	Approval date
4	Senior Manager Fire & Natural Hazards	Major review and update. Summary of main changes: ▪ Purpose expanded. ▪ Scope expanded. ▪ Principles expanded-several new principles added, existing principle modified. ▪ Responsibilities added. ▪ Fire management framework updated. ▪ Policy moved into new corporate template. ▪ Definitions added.	A/Chief Executive Officer	23/02/2026
3			Chief Executive Officer	1/05/2020

For previous document versions, refer to content manager

12. CONTACT OFFICER

Senior Manager Fire & Natural Hazards



Executive Endorsement

A/Chief Executive Officer