

STATE FIRE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SFMC pass on their sincere thanks to past members Adrian Pyrke and Tony Gee who recently retired, along with welcoming on board John Atkinson who will take on representation from the Tasmania Farmers and Graziers Association.

Fuel Reduction Burning Program over a period of four years.

The program will be administered over three Ministerial portfolios. The Minister for Environment, Parks and Heritage (Matthew Groom) has ultimate responsibility for program delivery and will administer the funding for the program. Implementation for the program also crosses into the portfolios of the Minister for Resources (Paul Harriss) and Minister for Police and Emergency Management (Rene Hidding). Peter Mooney (General Manager of the Parks and Wildlife Service) is the project manager and Sandy Whight, Manager of the State Fire Management Council Unit is the project officer with responsibilities for the day to day operational implementation of the program.

The Fuel Reduction Unit has been formed to ensure a centralised and dedicated approach to carrying out the work of the program. The role of the Fuel Reduction Unit is to coordinate and implement the fuel reduction burning program. The FRU will comprise of existing Tasmania Fire Service and State Fire Management Council staff, with additional personnel engaged to coordinate all aspects of the burning including planning and preparation, community liaison, and working with private landowners to conduct burns on high priority properties.

FUEL REDUCTION UNIT FORMED

The Government's newly announced Fuel Reduction Burning Program will be delivered by a Fuel Reduction Unit which has been established within the Tasmania Fire Service.

The Fuel Reduction Program is a tenure-blind, risk based program to manage vegetation fuel loads that pose the greatest bushfire risk to the Tasmanian community. The tenure blind approach means that fuels will be treated on the basis of the risk that they pose, regardless of whether the fuel is on land that is under public or private ownership.

The establishment of a Fuel Reduction Unit was part of the Liberal Government's election commitment to significantly increase fuel reduction burning in order to reduce the risk of bushfire to life and property in Tasmania. \$28.5 million has been committed towards the implementation of the



New SFMC Chair appointed

A new chair has been appointed to the Council by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Ian Sauer is a Pipers River cattle farmer and long-time volunteer firefighter with extensive experience in land management. He has previously chaired the Tamar NRM and the National Gorse Taskforce.

Ian's experience gives him great insight into the threat that bushfires pose to life and property and of the need to act to prevent loss. As Chair of the State Fire Management Council, Ian is also a spokesman for the new Fuel Reduction Burning Program, and is already working to connect the State Fire Management Council with land managers and the wider community to deliver a state-wide fuel reduction program.

In addition to the FRU, current resources and expertise within the Tasmania Fire Service, the Parks and Wildlife Service and Forestry Tasmania will be made available in a coordinated way to implement the program.

Priorities identified in the Fire Protection Plans prepared by Tasmania's ten Fire Management Area Committees will inform the priorities for the Fuel Reduction Burning Program.

Additional resources including private sector contractors, seasonal fire crews and volunteer fire brigade crews will also be utilised to conduct planned burns under the program.

Tasmania is the first State or Territory to initiate a tenure-blind, whole of state fuel reduction burning program. Mitigation activities will be undertaken using a multi-agency approach and it is expected that the capacity to conduct fuel reduction burning will increase over time as the program progresses past the initial planning phase.

Fire Management Area Committees

PRIORITY LOCATIONS FOR BUSHFIRE MITIGATION ACTIVITIES IN TASMANIA

Following completion of Fire Protection Plans for each of the ten Fire Management Areas in October 2014, a list was made of the locations identified in each plan as being of high priority for mitigation

activities. A total of 111 localities were identified across Tasmania, including the Bass Strait islands

Mitigation activities may include:

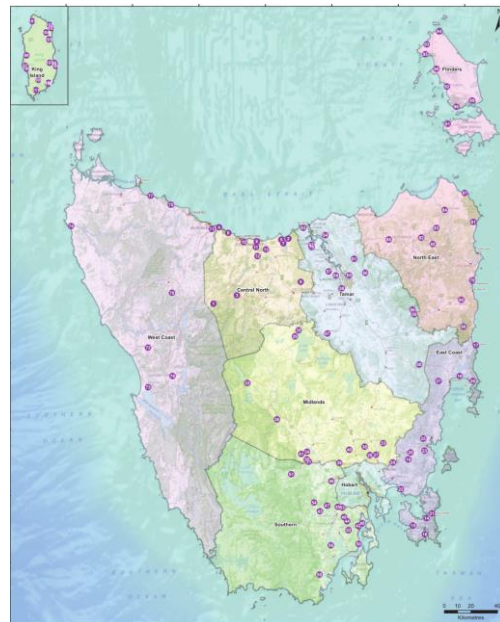
- Fuel reduction burning
- Fire trail and fire break construction/maintenance
- Mechanical fuel reduction through slashing, trittering and mulching
- Community education
- Other prescribed activities specific to community needs

WHAT WAS DISCOVERED IN THE FIRE PROTECTION PLANS?

Executive Summaries have been prepared for each of the Fire Protection Plans and are now available on the SFMC website <http://www.sfmc.tas.gov.au/>

The summaries contain a quick rundown of the key findings for each fire management area and a description of the bushfire threat, special issues and risk assessment results. They also list communities at high risk from bushfire and areas of potential strategic importance for mitigation activities within each fire management area.

As 2014 ends, SFMC is planning for a bigger and bolder future which will see a continued increase in fuel reduction burning and other mitigation activities coordinated by the new Fuel Reduction Unit to help reduce bushfire risk to communities.



A map showing the location of areas identified for Mitigation activities within the Fire Protection Plans is shown above.

The numbers on the map are for identification purposes only and do not represent a ranking system.

Red Hot Tips

Red Hot Tips is a program that works with landholders to improve their knowledge and skill to enable them to safely and effectively conduct planned burning on their properties. The project provides landholders with tools, information and training about planned burning.

Round 2 have had 9 site visits completed by subcontractors for development of fire management plans (FMPs) with the remaining 12 due by the end of December 2014.

The project team aims to complete the remaining 3 case study burns from Round 1 along with Round 2 case study burns in autumn 2015, depending on suitable weather conditions.