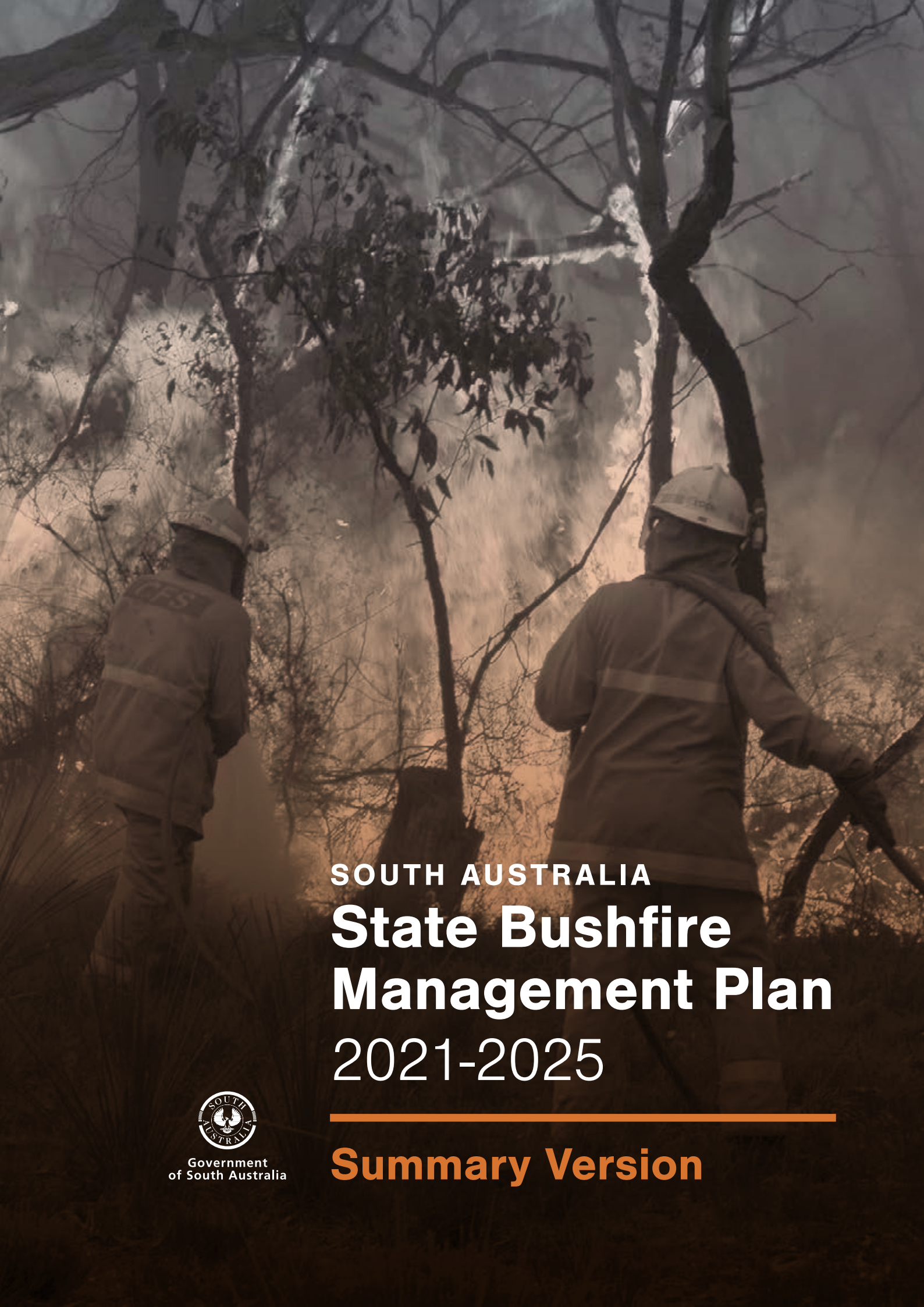

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

State Bushfire Management Plan 2021-2025

Summary Version

Government of South Australia

SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S STATE BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021-2025

Vision

Communities, individuals and agencies working together to deliver coordinated management of bushfire risk in South Australia.

Mission

To build a safer, better prepared and more bushfire resilient South Australia, by facilitating coordination of bushfire risk management arrangements through developing and reinforcing successful partnerships among fire, land management and allied agencies together with representative organisations; and by engaging and sharing responsibility with the community.

Please note that this is a summary version of South Australia's State Bushfire Management Plan 2021-2025 (Public Consultation Version, March 2021). For further information please refer to the complete version of the Plan.

PURPOSE AND INTRODUCTION

This State Bushfire Management Plan (the SBMP) has been prepared by the State Bushfire Coordination Committee (SBCC) for South Australia in accordance with the requirements of the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005* (SA) ('the FES Act').

Role of the State Bushfire Coordination Committe

The SBCC is a State-level South Australian Government Committee made up of representatives and nominees of fire and land management and allied agencies and representative organisations[1], with executive support provided by the South Australian Country Fire Service (SACFS), as listed below:

- SA Country Fire Service - Representative
- SA Metropolitan Fire Service - Representative
- Department for Environment and Water - Representative
- SA Water - Representative
- Forestry SA - Representative
- Native Vegetation Council - Nominee
- Local Government Association - Nominee
- Outback Communities Authority - Nominee
- SA Police - Representative
- Department for Infrastructure and Transport - Representative
- SA Power Networks - Representative
- Department of Primary Industries and Regions - Representative
- Attorney-Generals' Department – Planning and Land Use Services - Representative
- Bureau of Meteorology - Nominee
- CFS Volunteers Association - Nominee
- Primary Producers SA - Nominee
- Conservation Council SA - Nominee.

The SBCC is tasked under the *FES Act* (s.71A) with the following functions:

- **Coordination** and integration among fire and land managers, allied agencies and representative organisations to manage bushfire risk.

  'Coordination' in this context is focused on enabling and facilitating partnerships among individuals and organisations with responsibilities for bushfire management – promoting shared responsibility. The SBCC cannot direct agencies to undertake activities or adopt policy. Instead, the Committee brings together key stakeholders in bushfire management at a State level to share information and encourage collaboration in a formal setting. Bushfire Management Committees also have this function at a regional level throughout the State.

- **Oversight, guidance and assurance** at a state level regarding bushfire management and of Bushfire Management Committee (BMC) processes and activities, including the preparation and implementation of Bushfire Management Area Plans (BMAPs) for all areas of the State at risk from bushfire.

  The SBCC has the direct responsibility for:

  - *the development and implementation of the SBMP,*
  - *the development of standards governing the development and implementation of BMAPs as an integral part of the SBMP, and*
  - *overseeing the implementation of the SBMP, and reporting to the Minister on any failure or delay in this process.*

  The SBCC is required to report annually through the Minister to the Parliament on its activities.

- **Promoting public awareness** of bushfire risk and management, and bringing the community with us on the journey to build understanding of risk and resilience.

  Community engagement in bushfire management occurs through the Bushfire Management Area Planning process, which occurs under the auspices of the SBCC and BMCs. While the SBCC may convene public forums, it will generally delegate activities supporting public awareness of bushfire risk and management to the Hazard Leader, the South Australian Country Fire Service (SACFS). However, it is the role of all agencies with responsibilities for aspects of bushfire management to promote public awareness of bushfire risk within their area of responsibility.

Bushfire management in South Australia is governed through a two-tiered structure established under the *FES Act*: at the State level through the SBCC, and across nine Bushfire Management Areas through Bushfire Management Committees (BMCs). Both levels of Committees include representatives of fire and land management and allied agencies and representative organisations.

[1] *'Allied agencies'* – agencies that do not necessarily have direct land management responsibilities but have responsibilities to manage bushfire risk; *'Representative organisations'* – organisations with an identified interest in bushfire management who do not have regulatory responsibilities for the implementation or oversight of bushfire management activities.

The Plan sets out:

- Legislation and governance arrangements for bushfire management in South Australia;
- The context for bushfire risk in the State and the initial scope for a state-level bushfire risk assessment, focusing on existential risks, and the relationship between these high-level strategic risks and landscape risk;
- Coordination actions treating bushfire risk across the PPRR spectrum;
- Reporting and Review processes for the SBCC against the SBMP; and
- Includes the Bushfire Management Area Plan Handbook as part of the Plan itself, reflecting the requirement of s.73(4)(c).

The actions in this Plan are divided into two groups, being:

- 'SBCC Actions' – these are actions that are the direct responsibility of the SBCC to coordinate.

  It is envisaged that annual works plans will be developed to support implementation of the SBCC Actions.

- 'Coordination Actions' – these include existing and ongoing actions, as well as new actions resulting from the Government's Response to the *Independent Review*, or other reforms, being undertaken by SBCC Members, allied agencies and representative organisations.

  It is important to note that the SBCC has no authority to direct the implementation of these coordination actions, but it does have a function in supporting their coordination through encouraging information sharing and collaboration among the agencies responsible for their delivery.

Objectives and SBCC Actions

The following objectives for the SBMP are derived from ss.71A and 73 of the *FES Act*.
The SBCC Actions set out in this Plan, and summarised below, are aligned with these objectives.

Objective	SBCC Actions
To identify major bushfire risks in the State	1.1 During the life of this Plan, best available data and information on key existential risks to South Australia associated with bushfire will be consolidated and analysed to provide a state-level bushfire risk assessment.
To set out strategies for coordination and integration of bushfire management	2.1 Early in the life of this Plan, the SBCC will undertake a review of governance procedures and practices for the SBCC and BMCs. 2.2 During the life of this Plan, the SBCC will undertake a review of the structure and composition of the SBCC and BMCs including, but not limited to, consideration of Indigenous Australian and forestry industry representation; and the relationship with the Fire Prevention Strategic Alliance (FPSA) and the Heads of Agencies group (currently comprised of SACFS, DEW, SAW and FSA). 2.3 During the life of this Plan, an assurance and reporting framework for the SBCC and BMCs will be developed to ensure that legislative requirements are being met. 2.4 Early the life of this Plan, explore the relationship between the SBCC and State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC), and between the SBMP and the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP). This will include addressing the appropriate location of the Rural Fire Hazard Leader Plan. 2.5 During the life of this Plan, the SBCC will identify data gaps and support improved data utilisation to inform State and BMC-level bushfire risk assessments.
To outline principles applying to hazard reduction	3.1 During the life of this Plan, the SBCC will clearly identify environmental approvals processes - including regulation, policy and impact assessment - for hazard reduction activities on all tenures, as part of a wider review of SBCC and BMC governance arrangements, and review of the BMAP Handbook.
To set out standards for BMAPs	4.1 During the life of this Plan, the BMAP Handbook will be reviewed and redeveloped, including review of the risk management process to ensure consistency with ISO 31000 Risk Management (2018), and inclusion of processes for consolidating other agency and organisation plans into BMAPs where they meet this risk management standard. This review will include identification of processes to determine levels of risk acceptance and tolerance, and application of risk treatments.

Objective	SBCC Actions
To set out standards for BMAPs	4.2 During the life of this Plan, commence development of BMAP 2.0, incorporating: • a full review and redevelopment of the BMAP Handbook (incorporating the *Fire Management Zone Standard* and the *Standard for the Risk Assessment of Environmental Assets*), including: - consistent plan template and risk management process (ISO 31000: 2018); - environmental approvals and assessment processes (noting that the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) is currently reviewing the Ecological Fire Management Guidelines); - environmental assets as integral to the planning process along with other classes of asset; - provision for the assessment and integration of land management and other agency plans that address bushfire risk; - critical infrastructure protection planning; - integration of risk treatment standards, including zoning, firebreaks, access tracks and codes of practice; - redevelopment of risk assessment and management tools, including incorporation of a treatment reporting system to support the alignment of monitoring and reporting on treatment implementation with ISO 31000 (2018); - set out the processes for community and stakeholder engagement in the planning process.
To set out standards for BMAPs	• BMAP implementation support, including: - Development of a Code of Practice for Private Land Fuel Management (including a consistent approach to notices issued under s.105F of the *FES Act*); - Improved communications regarding hazard reduction approvals processing; - Expanded joint Department for Environment and Water (DEW) / SACFS programme to support Burning on Private Lands. 4.3 As part of the BMAP Handbook review, address the integration of the assessment and management of Bushfire Safer Places and Last Resort Refuges within BMAPs
To promote public awareness of bushfire management	5.1 Maintenance and periodic review of the SACFS state-wide community disaster resilience engagement programme to promote public awareness of and preparedness for the threat of bushfire, together with promotion of bushfire awareness and risk management by SBCC Member agencies and organisations within their area of activity and operation.

Priorities for bushfire risk management

The SBMP priorities for bushfire risk management reflect:

- Primacy of life protection (focusing on community and firefighter safety);
- Protection of all classes of asset at risk from bushfire, namely: human settlement, economic, social value (cultural) and environmental assets;
- Well informed and prepared Government agencies, organisations, businesses and communities;
- Timely transition to recovery operations.

Strategic Alignment

The SBMP seeks to support and align with the following:

- *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005* (SA)
- *Emergency Management Act 2004* (SA)
- State Emergency Management Plan
- State Emergency Management Committee Strategic Plan 2017-2022
- Independent Review into South Australia's 2019-20 Bushfire Season
- To Create a Safer and More Bushfire Resilient South Australia: Government of South Australia's response to the Independent Review into South Australia's 2019-2020 Bushfire Season
- Climate Change Action Plan 2021-2025
- Stronger Together – South Australia's Disaster Resilience Strategy 2019-2024
- National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework 2018
- The First National Action Plan – To Implement the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework 2020
- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

Reporting and Review

As the first Plan of its type, in addition to annual review following the annual reporting process, there will be a mid-term (two year) review of this four year plan. The mid-term review will consider progress against the Plan's objectives, and identify areas for improvement.

Coordination Actions – Prevention

SBCC Members undertake a range of activities supporting bushfire prevention. The following activities will continue, together with new activities as mandated by the Government's Response to the *Independent Review* or other new activities, as noted in the table below. (Note that where the actions are mandated in the Government's Response to the *Independent Review*, these are annotated as '(Government's Response Action #)'). Support agencies are indicated in brackets following the lead agency/agencies.

Activity	Actions	Description/Linkages	Lead (Support) Agency/Organisation
Arson prevention and management	Operation NOMAD	Ongoing delivery of Operation NOMAD	SAPOL
High Risk Activities	Provide additional public education on high risk activities during periods of high fire danger	(Government's Response Action 22) *What can I do/What can't I do?* *Why risk it?*	SACFS, (SAPOL, Local government)
		Primary producer awareness and practice initiatives such as codes of practice for harvesting.	(PPSA/PIRSA)
Planning and Development Assessment Reforms	*PDI Act* Reforms	*South Australia's planning system covering the entire state* (Plan SA) (see Attachment 3 to this Plan for further information on the reform process)	AGD-PLUS
Development assessment in areas of potential bushfire hazard risk (as identified in spatial layers contained in the Planning and Design Code i.e. Hazard Overlays)	*Planning Development & Infrastructure Act 2016*	Updates to the Planning and Design Code including hazard overlays as part of future Code Amendments will be aligned with high level objectives of the State Planning Policies including SPP 15: Natural Hazards - To build the resilience of communities, development and infrastructure from the adverse impacts of national hazards.	AGD-PLUS, (SACFS)
Issuing of Permits to Burn	Issuing of Permits to Burn during the Fire Danger Season, by Authorised Officers	All fires in the open during the Fire Danger Season need to be in accordance with a *Permit to Burn*.	Local Government, SACFS
Hazard reduction compliance	Annual inspections and compliance notifications issued under *FES Act* s.105F	Note that development of a Code of Practice for Private Land Fuel Management, as mandated by the Government's Response to the *Independent Review* (Government's Response Action 17) will include common standards for s.105F notices.	Local government, (SACFS)
Native Vegetation Approvals Process Communication	Communication and information provision regarding native vegetation clearance processes	Provision of information relating to *native vegetation clearance approvals* processes for fuel hazard reduction (Government's Response Action 15) internally within agencies as well as to the community	SACFS, (Local government, SAMFS, NVC)

Activity	Actions	Description/Linkages	Lead (Support) Agency/Organisation
Public Land Management Communication	Communication and information provision regarding the role of public land management in hazard reduction	Communicate limit of responsibilities of public land managers	SACFS, (DEW, SAW, FSA, Local government)
Hazard (fuel) reduction – public land	Prescribed burning	DEW, FSA and SAW prescribed burning programmes	DEW, SAW, FSA, (SACFS, Local government)
Hazard (fuel) reduction – private land	Prescribed burning	DEW/SACFS Burning on Private Land Programme	SACFS (Public land managers, Local government, private landholders)
Hazard (fuel) reduction	Non-burn Fuel management – public land	Treatments may include slashing, mulching, clearing, thinning, grazing and earthworks to reduce the overall fuel hazard. They may be used as an individual treatment or in conjunction with prescribed burning.	Public land managers
Hazard (fuel) reduction	Non-burn Fuel management – private land	Treatments may include *slashing, mulching, clearing, thinning, grazing* and earthworks to reduce the overall fuel hazard. They may be used as an individual treatment or in conjunction with prescribed burning. Note: Native vegetation clearance approvals may be required.	Private landholders
Identify and prioritise critical infrastructure protection	Inclusion of critical infrastructure in bushfire risk management planning	Prioritise asset protection to support strategic infrastructure in mitigation and response planning. (Government's Response Action 29)	SACFS, SAPOL, (Critical infrastructure managers)

Coordination Actions – Preparedness

SBCC Members undertake a range of activities supporting bushfire preparedness. The following activities will continue, together with new activities as mandated by the Government's Response to the *Independent Review* or other new activities, as noted in the table below. (Note that where the actions are mandated in the Government's Response to the *Independent Review*, these are annotated as '(Government's Response Action #)'). Support agencies are indicated in brackets following the lead agency/agencies.

Activity	Actions	Description/Linkages	Lead (Support) Agency/Organisation
Evacuation Planning	Improve preparation and planning of suitable routes to designated locations of reduced risk	In accordance with the *SEMP* *AIDR Evacuation Handbook*	SAPOL/SA Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM), (SACFS/DIT/Local Government)
Operational Response Planning	Preparation of detailed pre-incident plans to assist before, during and after emergencies	Regional Operations Management Plans; Group Operations Management Plans (for SACFS) Operations and business continuity plans (All agencies)	SACFS, (All agencies)
		PIRSA Emergency Management Plan and the Adverse Events Recovery Framework.	(PIRSA)
Bushfire Survival Planning	Develop plans to support individual and household response to bushfire emergencies	*SACFS Bushfire Survival Plan template*	Households and individuals, (SACFS)
		Promotion of rural property preparedness	(PIRSA)
Business Continuity Planning	Develop plans to support maintenance of business operations with minimal disruption, including insurance arrangements	*Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Workbook*	Businesses, (Department for Innovation and Skills (DIS))
	Prioritise asset protection to support strategic infrastructure in mitigation and reponse planning	(Government's Response Action 29)	SACFS/SAPOL
Establish Fire Danger Season Dates	BMCs provide advice on Fire Danger Season date to the CO, SACFS	Requirement under s.78(2) *FES Act*	SACFS, (BMCs)
Seasonal Outlooks	Quarterly Seasonal Outlooks (March, June, September, December)	SACFS provides quarterly submissions to AFAC Predictive Services Operations Group for consolidation into a national seasonal outlook	SACFS, (BoM, AFAC, DEW)

Activity	Actions	Description/Linkages	Lead (Support) Agency/Organisation
Incident Management Capability	Maintenance of pre-formed Level 3 Incident Management Teams (IMTs)	Per SACFS Doctrine and in accordance with AIIMS	SACFS, (SAMFS, SES, SAPOL, DEW, SAW, FSA, Other government agencies, industry and private landholders)
Resource Sharing/ Coordinated firefighting	Coordinated response to bushfire emergencies throughout the state	SEMP Control Agency arrangements, MOUs between agencies, MAAs	SACFS, SAMFS, (DEW, ForestrySA, SA Water)
	Maintain and enhance cross-border firefighting arrangements	Progress policy and operational coordination and harmonisation across jurisdictions	SACFS, (GTFA, PIRSA, CFA, NSWRFS)
Firefighting resources	Maintenance of sufficient fit for purpose resources to meet response requirements	Gazetted Fire Districts, SACFS Risk and Capability Framework	SACFS, SAMFS, DEW, (Forestry SA)
	Improved integration of Farm Fire Units into South Australia's bushfire-fighting operations	(Government's Response Action 47)	SACFS, (GPSA, Primary Producer Organisations)
Training and development	Appropriately trained and skilled personnel	*National Units of competency* *AFAC Standards*	SACFS, SAMFS, DEW, Forestry SA
		PIRSA maintains significant emergency management and recovery capability that can be applied to all hazards	(PIRSA)
Identification of Relief and Recovery Centres	Suitable venues or locations pre-identified across the state	The Local Government Functional Support Group (LGFSG) and the Emergency Relief Functional Support Group (ERFSG) have been working on a Joint Operating Guideline (JOG) setting out the purpose, scope and arrangements for the establishment of *Emergency Relief Centres* during major emergencies.	Housing SA, (Zone Emergency Management Committees (ZEMC), Local government, SAPOL)
Peri-Urban Response Planning	Review principles for deploying fire and rescue services in peri-urban areas	(Government's Response Action 40)	SAMFS, (SACFS)
Promotion of Insurance Cover	Educate the community to improve levels of under- and non-insurance	(Government's Response Action 24)	SACFS, (Insurance industry)

Coordination Actions – Response

SBCC Members undertake a range of activities supporting bushfire response. The following activities will continue, together with new activities as mandated by the Government's Response to the *Independent Review* or other new activities, as noted in the table below. (Note that where the actions are mandated in the Government's Response to the *Independent Review*, these are annotated as '(Government's Response Action #)'). Support agencies are indicated in (brackets) following the lead agency/agencies.

Activity	Actions	Description/Linkages	Lead Agency/ Organisation
Public Information and Warnings	Timely and accurate warnings and information as per established national frameworks	As per agency doctrine National Warnings Framework (AFAC)	SACFS, SAMFS, SAPOL
	Cross system emergency alert platform to promulgate timely community access to information before, during and after incidents	The *Alert SA website* provides key public safety and emergency information sources from a wide range of emergency and essential service agencies, government and community partners.	(SAFECOM)
Activation of Relief	Timely activation of relief centres and support for communities impacted by bushfire	SEMP – overarching; ZEST at the local level	Housing SA, (Local Government)
		PIRSA provides significant relief support to regional communities including animal welfare relief and wellbeing support through the Family and Business Support Program	(PIRSA)
Fire Cause Investigation	Investigate fires against established criteria	As per agency doctrine	SAPOL, (SACFS, SAMFS)
Smoke management	Provision of public information regarding potential smoke impacts	Smoke modelling and damage assessment to predict potential impacts of bushfire events on communities and primary industries	BoM, (SACFS, PIRSA, SA Health)
Fire Weather Forecasts and Fire Danger Ratings	Forecasting and monitoring of fire weather conditions across the State, and declaration of fire bans	In accordance with national standards Note introduction of new *AFDRS*	BoM, SACFS
Total Fire Bans	Declarations issued to restrict high risk activities on days when fires are likely to spread rapidly and be difficult to control.	Pursuant to s.80 of the *FES Act*	BoM, SACFS
Industry Brigade Coordination	Incorporate Industry Brigades into IMTs	(Government's Response Action 62)	SACFS, (Industry brigades)

Coordination Actions – Recovery

SBCC Members, allied agencies and non-government organisations undertake a range of activities supporting bushfire recovery. The following activities will continue, together with new activities as mandated by the Government's Response to the *Independent Review* or other new activities, as noted in the table below. (Note that where the actions are mandated in the Government's Response to the *Independent Review*, these are annotated as '(Government's Response Action #)'). Support agencies and organisations are indicated in brackets following the lead agency/agencies.

Activity	Actions	Description/Linkages	Lead Agency/Organisation
Recovery Management	Management of recovery following a bushfire incident to improve and enhance conditions in an affected community	In accordance with the *SEMP v1.2* (2019)	DPC, (Communities, Businesses, Non-government organisations and volunteers, Local Government, State Government agencies, Australian Government agencies)
		PIRSA Adverse Events Recovery Framework and Bushfire Recovery Programs	(PIRSA)
Recovery Planning – Community Involvement	Ensure the community is involved in emergency and recovery planning and in debriefs to record their experiences and help prepare for future disasters	Government's Response Action 69	DPC, (Communities)
		PIRSA works with primary industries in emergency and recovery planning	(PIRSA)
Recovery Planning – Forestry Industry	Industry resource planning undertaken to support timely and effective recovery	For the plantation forestry sector see: *Guidelines for salvage harvest, storage and processing of plantation-grown logs affected by fire*	Private Forestry Sector
Damage Assessment	Timely activation of damage assessment during incidents	Damage Assessment Capability Plan (under the SEMP)	SAPOL
	Complete a comprehensive impact assessment to guide recovery needs	PIRSA undertakes an Agriculture Impact Assessment	SAPOL, (PIRSA)
	Undertake natural values impact assessments including habitat and wildlife affected	*South Australian Wildlife and Habitat Bushfire Recovery Framework*	DEW

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