

Bushfire Planning Procedure

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Purpose

This procedure describes the decisions and arrangements made at the University to eliminate or reduce, as far as reasonably practicable, the risks to people, the environment and property arising from bushfires.

Scope

This procedure applies to all University premises, all University activities, and all members of the University community unless specifically indicated. It recognizes that the various premises of FedUni face different fire risks and some have special requirements or community obligations.

Legislative Context

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Emergency Management Act 1986 (Vic)
- CFA Act 1958 (Vic)
- Rural Fires Act 1997 (NSW)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)
- Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (Qld)

- Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 (Queensland 18 June 2021)
- Building Fire Safety Regulations 2008 (Qld June 2022)

Definitions

A complete list of definitions relevant to this procedure is contained within the [Health and Safety Management Procedure](#).

Actions

1. Reducing and managing bushfire risks

	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	STEPS
A.	Reducing bushfire risks on University premises as far as reasonably practicable	Director, Property and Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement annual programs of bushfire prevention activities around University buildings and grounds other than Nanya Research Station (e.g. fire restrictions compliance, building inspections for areas vulnerable to ember attacks, vegetation management, gutter guarding, etc.). 2. Liaise with relevant government agencies and neighbours to ensure neighbouring land is managed to not pose a threat to University premises. 3. Regularly report to the University Health and Safety Policy Committee on bushfire prevention activities.
		Project Officer - Nanya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and maintain a Bushfire Management Plan for the Nanya Research Station that covers the objectives, strategies and operational aspects of bushfire management. 2. Submit the Plan and subsequent updates to the Head - Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

		All members of the University community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Observe applicable Fire Restrictions and Total Fire Bans. 2. Consider the risk of bushfire in any Hazard Identification, RiskAssessment and Control (HIRAC) review they conduct for relevant University activities, including work-related travel and off-campus activities.
B.	If a 'Code Red' Day is declared in advance in the Central fire district of Victoria	Crisis Management Team Leader	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement the decision to close the Mt Helen campus on that day. 2. Cancel any activity planned for that day on the Mt Helen campus unless: 3. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is deemed essential^(see Note 1); or • it can be relocated to a safe location. <p>Note 1: Essential Activities and Essential Staff</p> <p>Senior Managers must identify the activities that need to continue in their portfolio at the Mt Helen Campus on 'Code Red' days due to overriding practical, legal, contractual or other reasons (essential activities).</p> <p>In consultation with the relevant staff, Senior Managers must identify by name, job title and Institute/Directorate/College/Centre the individual members of staff in their portfolio who are required to report on the Mt Helen Campus to allow essential activities to continue (essential staff). In doing so, Senior Managers must fulfil their legal obligations toward staff, especially as specified under OHS legislation.</p> <p>The list of essential activities and essential staff must be submitted to the Crisis Management Team (CMT) and the Mt Helen Campus</p>

			<p>Warden. The CMT/Campus Warden may refuse to grant any activity or staff member the "essential" status.</p> <p>After approval by the CMT and the Mt Helen Campus Warden, each Senior Manager must inform the relevant staff of their essential status and expectations regarding work attendance on 'Code Red' days.</p>
C.	If a 'Code Red' Day is declared in advance in any fire district other than the Central district of Victoria	Crisis Management Team Leader	1. Consult with the Crisis Management Team (CMT) and the relevant Campus Wardens as soon as practicable after the announcement of a 'Code Red' day in a fire district where University premises are located. The CMT must decide on the appropriate course of action for these premises, in particular in relation to restricting, modifying or cancelling University activities.
		Executive Deans/Directors or Heads of Campus	<p>1. Review the need to restrict, modify or cancel any University activity (including any work-related travel and off-campus activity) that is under your control and is planned to take place within the district(s) affected by the 'Code Red'. In doing so, refer to any review conducted under the Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Control (HIRAC) Procedure and to applicable Fire Restrictions and Total Fire Bans.</p> <p>2. Consider that some staff may not be able to report to work.</p>
D.	On days of 'Extreme Fire Danger'	Executive Deans/Directors or Heads of Campus	1. Review the need to restrict, modify or cancel any University activity (including any work-related travel and off-campus activity) under your control. In doing so, refer to any review conducted under the Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment

			<p>and Control (HIRAC) Procedure and to applicable Fire Restrictions and Total Fire Bans.</p> <p>2. Consider that some staff may not be able to report to work.</p>
D.	Managing evacuations from buildings or from entire University premises	Campus Wardens, or Area Wardens for smaller premises or locations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In liaison with the Crisis Management Team (if practicable) and Emergency Services determine when evacuations are required. 2. As far as practicable, initiate evacuations early (i.e. long before the fire physically impacts on the campus) and in accordance with your training and the Incident and Emergency Management Procedure. 3. Stage evacuations building by building to avoid traffic difficulties. Set priorities for individual buildings on the basis of fire threat (e.g. residential units close to bushland) and characteristics of occupants (e.g. childcare centre). 4. Carefully consider evacuation routes in liaison with Emergency Services.
E.	Dealing with a bushfire impacting on University premises	Campus Wardens, or Area Wardens for smaller premises or locations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Irrespective of the declared fire danger level, a bushfire may impact on a campus of the University or any other location where members of the University community are present. In such circumstances, monitor the situation, using all means available such as visual inspections and patrols, local ABC radio, Vic Emergency website, Fire Rescue Victoria/ Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, Facebook and Twitter sites, etc. 2. Deal with ember attacks and spot fires strictly in accordance with the general

			<p>emergency instructions in the Incident and Emergency Management Procedure.</p> <p>3. As outlined above, early and orderly evacuations are critical, but circumstances may prevent them. In this case, consider the option of having occupants of the buildings most threatened retreat to the building(s) least threatened owing to their location, design and construction.</p> <p>4. Then, concentrate your efforts on protecting those buildings from the threat.</p>
F.	Reducing the risks arising from bushfires in off-campus University activities as far as reasonably practicable	Any University employee planning or supervising off-campus University activities	<p>1. Consider the risk of bushfires as part of the review you must conduct under the Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Control Procedure.</p> <p>2. If this risk applies, include in the planning and supervision of these activities the necessary measures to eliminate or reduce the risks to people, the environment and property arising from bushfires. These measures must include strict compliance with applicable Fire Restrictions and Total Fire Bans.</p>
		Executive Deans/Directors and Head of Campus	<p>1. On the announcement of a forthcoming 'Code Red' or 'Extreme Fire Danger' day in a relevant fire district, review the need to restrict, modify or cancel any University activity under your control that is planned to take place away from University campuses and premises, including excursions, fieldwork and road travel. In doing so, refer to the relevant HIRAC Review and to applicable Fire Restrictions and Total Fire Bans.</p>

G.	Managing communications to the University Community in relation to bushfires and bushfire risk	CMT Leader	1. Ensure that decisions regarding bushfire planning are communicated in a timely way to all members of the University community.
		Director - People and Culture	1. Develop and implement a communication strategy for staff.
		Chief Learner Experience Officer	1. Develop and implement a communication strategy for students.
		Executive Deans/Directors	1. Develop and implement communication strategies for stakeholders other than staff and students (e.g. contractors, customers, tenants, etc.).
H.	Managing requests from Emergency Services or Municipal Authorities for accommodation or other services for firefighters or evacuees.	CMT Leader /Heads of Campus/ Executive Deans/Directors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement communication strategies for all relevant members of the University community. 2. Re-task designated staff to liaise with relevant agencies. 3. Review activities to avoid affecting Emergency Services requirements. 4. Record all associated costs so reimbursement can be sought from agencies. 5. At Gippsland Campus, before the commencement of each fire season: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set aside a minimum number of beds which are available for evacuees, and advise Latrobe City Municipal Recovery Manager; and • ensure there is a supply of linen (separate to normal stock), toiletry and breakfast packs in stock in preparation for evacuees. 6. At the Gippsland campus, upon being formally requested to provide accommodation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • designate available beds, with appropriate access routes identified, maps

			<p>circulated, and temporary signs put in place; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish notification protocols and time lines for use of beds in consultation with municipal emergency management staff and service contractors.
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Supporting Documents

- [Operations Governance Policy](#)
- [Health and Safety Management Procedure](#)
- [Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Control Procedure](#)
- [Incident and Emergency Management Procedure](#)
- Crisis Management Plan (restricted circulation)
- [Records Management Procedure](#)

Responsibility

- The Chief Operating Officer, as the Approval Authority, is responsible for monitoring the implementation, outcomes and scheduled review of this procedure.
- The Head - Health, Safety and Wellbeing, as the Document Owner, is responsible for maintaining the content of this procedure as delegated by the approval Authority.

Promulgation

The [Bushfire Planning Procedure](#) will be communicated throughout the University community in the form of an Announcement Notice via FedNews website and on the 'Recently Approved Documents' page on the 'Policies, Procedures and Forms @ the University' website.

Implementation

The [Bushfire Planning Procedure](#) will be implemented throughout the University in the form of an Announcement Notice via FedNews website and on the 'Recently Approved Documents' page on the 'Policies, Procedures and Forms @ the University' website.

Records Management

The following must be captured in the records management system of the University, in accordance with the [Records Management Procedure](#):

- decisions and communications made in relation to Code Red days,
- annual programs of bushfire prevention activities, and
- bushfire management plans for the Nanya Research Station.