



**STATE FIRE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18**

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Cover photo: Warren Frey

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Report from the Chair

The last 12 months can be characterised by change consolidation and stakeholder engagement. It seems to have been much busier than previous years, with the second half of 2017-18 devoted to updating our strategic plan. The State Fire Management Council's (SFMC) strategic approach is focused around six themes that have been developed, not just by the SFMC, but by the general communication and stakeholders who interact with the Council.

One of the main roles of the SFMC is to support the 10 Fire Management Area Committees (FMACs). The FMACs are responsible for developing Fire Protection Plans which prioritise the bushfire risk for each Fire Management Area (FMA), these plans then inform the State's strategic fuel reduction burning program.

FMAC membership comprises those who have a responsibility for land management in the FMA. FMAC members perform their role voluntarily and demonstrate a real commitment and dedication to mitigating bushfire risk within their communities.

Over the past 12 months we have been working with FMACs to bring efficiency and consistency to the role and functions of the Committees. We have also commenced work on developing a framework and tools to support FMACs in preparing bushfire risk assessments in a consistent and more effective way. Adrian Pyrke has been appointed as the Project Officer to manage this project, and he brings a considerable amount of experience and knowledge to this important project.

On behalf of SFMC members, I would like to thank all of the FMAC members and stakeholder organisations for their generous contribution they have made, not only this year but on a continuing basis.

The SFMC has made a conscious effort to be relevant and accessible and is committed to providing an opportunity for stakeholders to interact with members of the SFMC. We have been deliberate in our action to have a much more open door policy, by hosting field days, providing opportunity for community involvement in planning and policy formulation workshops and organising networking events that coincide with our meetings. We have also been holding our meetings in regional areas, away from Hobart, to ensure that we are more accessible to the community.

These strategies of encouraging community involvement achieve two important outcomes. Firstly, we get very good ground-truthed advice and interaction which helps us develop informed and relevant advice to the Minister. In the second place, it allows us to extend the reach of education programs which enhances the capacity of those living in rural areas to implement mitigation strategies and gain an understanding, and appreciation of and increase their confidence to manage their own vegetation with planned burning.

I am pleased to report that the SFMC is frequently asked to give advice on issues surrounding vegetation fire management and bushfire risk and I am sure this because we are seen as a credible body. It also clearly shows the calibre and quality of the SFMC, the members of which who give their time, experience and expertise to ensure that the advice is of the highest calibre. SFMC will continue to provide advice to the Minister and provide opportunities for him to interact with SFMC members over the coming years, complementing our strategic plan.

My sincere thanks go to all of the SFMC members for their contribution. I would also like to single out Debra Pope for special mention. As the Executive Officer for Council, Debra's dedication and perseverance in making sure that everything is completed in a timely and professional manner cannot go without comment.

Next year the SFMC will continue to deliver its strategic agenda items, clearly 2018-19 will be just as busy, however I am confident that SFMC will be delivering measurable outcomes that will contribute to making Tasmania a safer place to live when it comes to bushfire risk.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ian Sauer', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ian Sauer
Chair, State Fire Management Council

About Us

The State Fire Management Council (SFMC) is an independently chaired body, established under Section 15 of the *Fire Service Act 1979* (the Act).

Our Mission

To enhance the efficient management of bushfire related risk in Tasmania in order to protect life, property and significant community values.

Our Role

Under Section 15 of *the Act* the SFMC has the following functions:

- a) To develop a State vegetation fire management policy to be used as the basis for all fire management planning;
- b) To advise and report regularly to the Minister on such matters relating to the administration of the Act, as it applies to vegetation fire management, as referred to it by the Minister and on such matters concerning vegetation fire management as, in the opinion of the Council, should be brought to the attention of the Minister;
- c) To advise the State Fire Commission (the Commission) on such matters relating to the prevention and extinguishment of vegetation fires as are referred to it by the Commission or land managers and on such other matters as, in the opinion of the Council, should be brought to the attention of the Commission;
- d) To perform such other functions relating to the prevention or extinguishment of vegetation fires as the Minister may direct;
- e) To provide an annual report to the Minister on its activities, for inclusion in the annual report of the Commission.

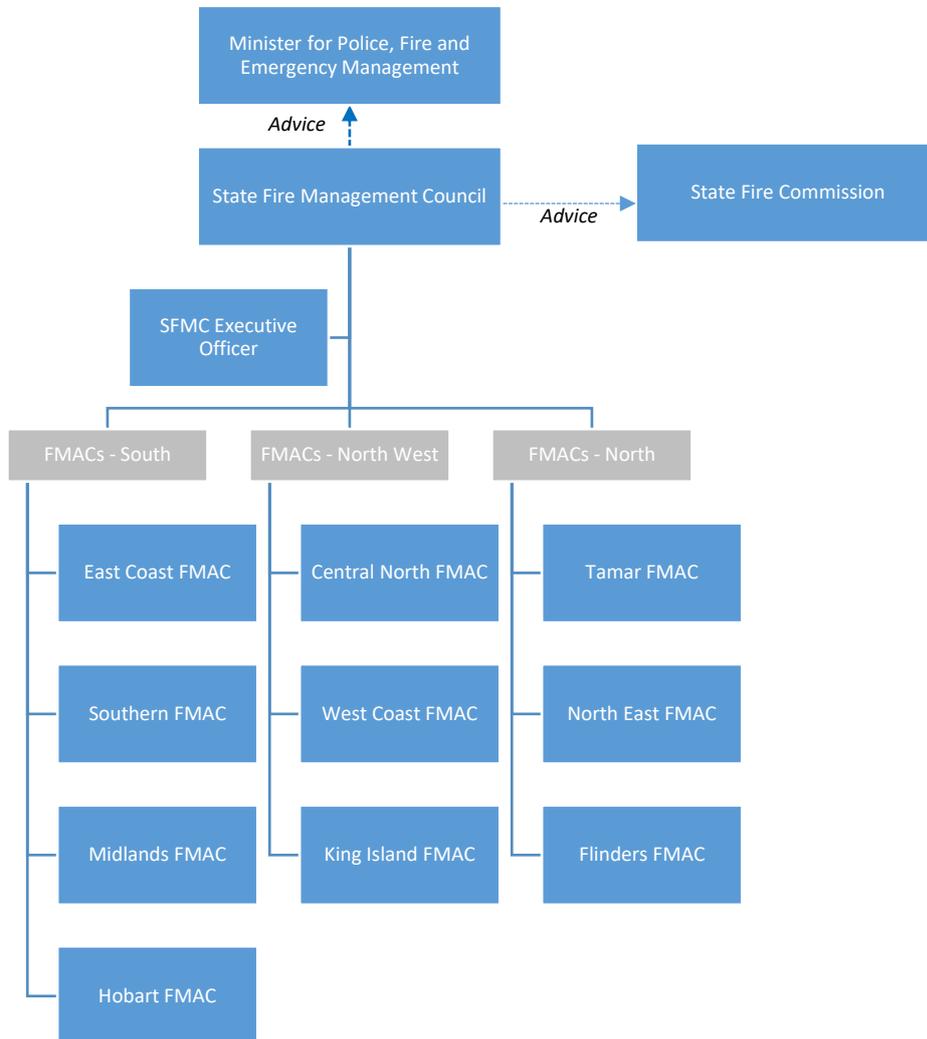
Our Members

Council membership is specified under Section 14 of the Act, as of 30 June 2018 membership consisted of:

- a person nominated by the Minister (Chair, Ian Sauer);
- the Chief Officer of Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) (Chris Arnol);
- a nominee of the Chief Officer (Acting Deputy Chief, Jeremy Smith);
- the chief executive officer of the Forestry corporation (Steve Whiteley);
- a nominee of the chief executive officer of the Forestry corporation (General Manager Forest Management, Suzette Weeding);
- the Director of National Parks and Wildlife (General Manager – Deputy Secretary, Jason Jacobi);
- a nominee of the Director of National Parks and Wildlife (Director Operations, Mark Bryce);
- a person nominated by the Tasmanian Farmers' and Graziers' Association (John Atkinson);
- a person nominated by the Forest Industries Association of Tasmania (vacant); and
- a person nominated by the Local Government Association of Tasmania (Melanie Kelly).

Executive support to the SFMC and associated Fire Management Area Committees is provided by TFS and coordinated through the SFMC Executive Officer, Debra Pope.

Our Structure



SFMC Strategic Direction Framework

The Strategic Direction Framework identifies six themes which guide the Council's activities.

SFMC Theme	Objectives	Outcomes
THEME 1 Understand, Communicate and Manage Risk	1.1 Identify and manage risks that impact on program outcomes and stakeholder relationships 1.2 Understand and communicate information regarding risk assessment and program limitations to the Minister and stakeholders 1.3 Promote consistency in the way fire is managed in Tasmania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk identification and management capability, including an understanding of vegetation fire risk and risk management options • Shared risk management understanding and responsibility with stakeholders • Effective communication and engagement processes • Management of risk within a climate change context
THEME 2 Advance Fire Management Area Committees	2.1 Support the further development and maturation of Fire Management Area Committees 2.2 Promote and support minimum standards and consistent and common approaches by all Fire Management Area Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed standards and consistency across all Fire Management Area Committees • Advancement in functionality and performance
THEME 3 Foster and Maintain Effective Relationships	3.1 Identify and further develop existing relationships with key stakeholders and the community 3.2 Establish new relationships with relevant stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong commitment and engagement with stakeholders • Shared responsibility and commitment by land managers and the community • Connection with all relevant stakeholders
THEME 4 Build Community Capacity	4.1 Educate the community regarding bushfire risks in Tasmania 4.2 Increase community understanding and acceptance of vegetation management practices which address bushfire risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed and competent community actions and activity
THEME 5 Continually Improve SFMC Capability, Governance and Organisational Culture	5.1 Further increase the capacity and capability of the State Fire Management Council 5.2 Actively monitor and address any loss of capability 5.3 Embed 'best practice' governance principles and practices in the culture and operations of the Council 5.4 Further develop evidence based and informed decision making processes of the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to measure and analyse performance of the State Fire Management Council • Effective accountable results • Access to additional expertise
THEME 6 Measure Performance and Effectiveness	6.1 Determine and measure program goals and priorities 6.2 Monitor, evaluate and report on program outputs and outcomes (including post fuel reduction burns and implementation of program initiatives). 6.3 Measure community acceptance and understanding of fuel reduction activities and other program initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity to measure and analyse performance of initiatives and programs

Fire Management Area Committees

The SFMC oversees and supports the 10 Fire Management Area Committees (FMACs) within Tasmania. The primary role of a FMAC is to prepare a Fire Protection Plan (FPP) for their Fire Management Area (FMA).

FMACs identify and assess community bushfire risks in their FMA and prioritise strategic works in response to those risks, including areas for strategic fuel reduction burning.

FMACs are appointed under Section 18(1) of the Act, and they report to the SFMC.

FMAC Purpose

To provide a platform for a consistent, comprehensive and cooperative approach to strategic planning in relation to fire protection and fuel management. This will be achieved through the provision of a vital link between the local brigades, local government, land managers (both private and public), a representative of other groups or organisations as may be appropriate or identified and approved by the SFMC.

FMAC Role

Under Section 20 of the *Fire Service Act 1979* Fire Management Area Committees (FMACs) have the following functions:

- a) to co-ordinate fire management activities within its Fire Management Area (FMA), including:
 - i) community education and information; and
 - ii) fuel management;
- b) to identify and assess community bushfire risks in its Fire Management Area and to prioritise strategic works in response to those risks;
- c) to submit to the Council, on or before 30 September of each year, a fire protection plan for its Fire Management Area for the next 12 months commencing on 1 October;
- d) to ensure that its fire protection plan is consistent with:
 - i) the State fire protection plan developed pursuant to section 8(1)(d); and
 - ii) the State vegetation fire management policy developed pursuant to section 15(1)(a); and
 - iii) such instructions or guidelines as the Council may from time to time issue to the Committee regarding the fire protection plan;
- e) to advise the Council on such matters relating to fire management and the Committee's other functions as the Council may refer to the Committee;
- f) to advise the Council on such matters concerning fire management as, in the opinion of the Committee, should be brought to the Council's attention;
- g) to perform such other functions relating to the prevention or mitigation of vegetation fires as the Council may direct.

FMAC Membership

FMAC membership is defined under Section 18 of the *Fire Service Act 1979*.

FMACs usually consist of representatives from TFS (career and volunteer), Local Government, Sustainable Timber Tasmania (STT), Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS), Wellington Park Trust (if included in the FMA), Tasmanian Farmers and Grazier's Association, relevant utility companies, and other large key land managers in the FMA.

Fire Protection Plans

The objective of the Fire Protection Plan (FPP) is to effectively manage bushfire related risk within the FMA in order to protect people, assets and other things valuable to the community.

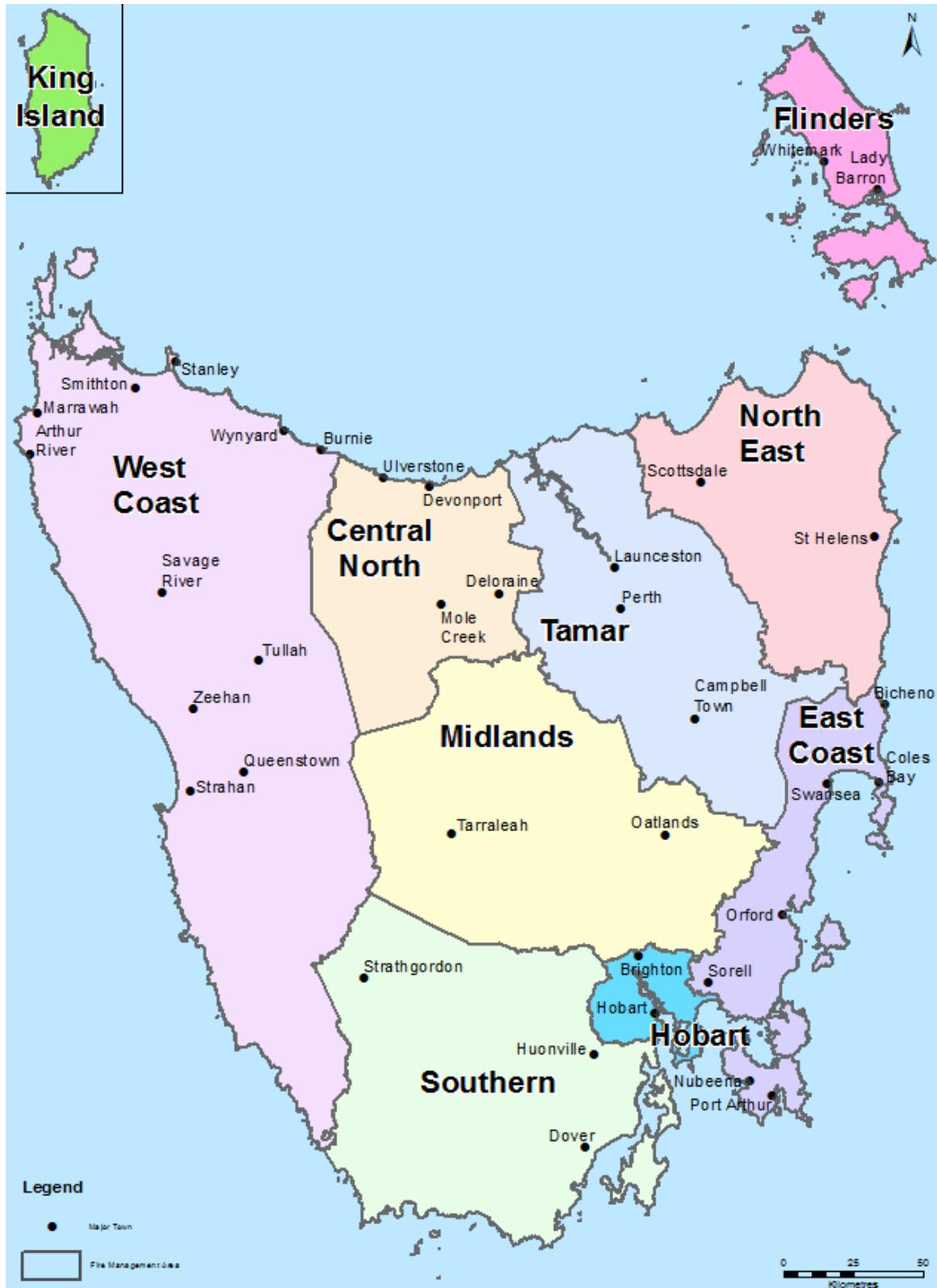
In preparing the FPP, a tenure blind approach to strategic fuel management is taken to identify and prioritise bushfire risks in the landscape. These plans are reviewed annually and strategically identify work that can be done to mitigate identified bushfire risk, including areas for strategic fuel reduction burning.

The management of bushfire related risk is not the sole responsibility of any one land manager or agency. It is a shared responsibility of the whole community. The tenure blind approach to bushfire risk mitigation planning as undertaken by FMACs creates opportunities for collaboration between public and private land managers and owners and promotes the development of a centrally coordinated bushfire risk mitigation program.

FPPs can be viewed at www.sfmc.tas.gov.au.

Fire Management Areas (FMAs)

There are 10 Fire Management Areas (FMAs) in Tasmania with boundaries based on bushfire risk and topography, largely aligning to local government boundaries. Each of these FMAs is supported by a Fire Management Area Committee (FMAC).



West Coast Fire Management Area

The West Coast FMA covers just over 1.9 million hectares and has an estimated residential population of 44,550 people. The FMA extends westwards from the township of Heybridge on Tasmania's north-west coast to Cape Grim on the West Coast southwards as far as Davey Head. The FMA encompasses Robbins Island, Hunter Island and Three Hummock Island in Bass Strait.

A substantial proportion of the FMA is formally reserved with larger reserves including part of Cradle Mountain Lake St Clair National Park, Franklin – Gordon Wild Rivers National Park, the South West Conservation Area (which all form part of the Western Tasmania World Heritage Area) and Savage River National Park in the north of the planning area.

Vegetation in the FMA is well adapted to fire and in recent times the area has experienced a high frequency of fast moving bushfires which have burnt out large areas of the area. While the FMA contains a significant percentage of low flammability vegetation types it also contains even larger amounts of highly flammable vegetation in the form of button-grass moorland, sedgeland, rushland and peatland as well as scrub and heathland.

Approximately 85% of land within the West Coast FMA is public land and 15% is private/freehold land. The majority (62%) is PWS managed land.

Hobart Fire Management Area

The Hobart FMA is approximately 110,000 ha in size. It includes the local government areas of Hobart, Glenorchy, Clarence, Brighton and parts of Kingborough, Huon Valley and Derwent Valley.

The Hobart FMA has two very distinct geographical features. In the first place the area is bisected by the River Derwent, and secondly the Wellington Range borders many Hobart suburbs to the west, creating a long urban/bush interface.

Tasmania's most extreme fire weather events often occur within, and in areas adjacent to, the FMA. Rainfall varies considerably over the area (1600mm per year on the summit of Mt Wellington to less than 500mm per year at the Hobart Airport) resulting in a highly variable bushfire season with some areas being able to sustain fire for many month of the year.

Within the Hobart FMA approximately 65% of land is private/freehold, 14% is the Wellington Park, 6% is managed by PWS and 4% by Local Government. There a number of other smaller land managers that make the remaining 10%, notably Carlton and United Brewery.

Tamar Fire Management Area

The Tamar FMA is located in the north of Tasmania and encompasses Launceston City and the Tamar River estuary. The FMA covers a total area of 859,086 ha with an estimated population of 128,000.

The area is dominated by agricultural and pastoral activities, particularly meat production, apples, berries and viticulture, with the Tamar Valley being one of Tasmania's leading wine producing areas.

Within the Tamar FMA approximately 28% is public land and 72% is private/freehold land.

Flinders Fire Management Area

The Flinders FMA covers an area of approximately 206,046 hectares which includes the whole Flinders local government area and encompasses all the islands of the Furneaux Group. The Furneaux Island Group is an archipelago of approximately 50 islands located in Bass Strait between mainland Australia and Tasmania. The largest island is Flinders Island followed by Cape Barren and Clarke Island.

The Furneaux Islands have an estimated resident population of 784.

Approximately 63% of land within the Flinders FMA is private/freehold land and 37% is public land with the PWS being the main public land manager.

Southern Fire Management Area

The Southern FMA is approximately 1,037,000 ha in size and covers three local government areas (Derwent Valley, Kingborough and Huon Valley).

Much of the area is uninhabited and forms part of the South West National Park. The majority of the population are concentrated in the southern settlements of Hobart, the Huon Valley and along the D'Entrecasteaux Channel. Significant populations are located around New Norfolk with smaller populations located in the Tyenna Valley.

Within the FMA approximately 14% of land is private/freehold, 73% is public/crown land and 11% is STT managed land.

North East Fire Management Area

The North East FMA is approximately 681,193 ha in size and encompasses two local government areas (Dorset and Break O' Day). The FMA covers an area bounded by the coast to the north and extending in a south easterly direction from the mouth of the Pipers Brook to just below the mouth of the Douglas River on the east coast of Tasmania.

The permanent population of the FMA is estimated to be around 13,500, although this number increases markedly during the summer period though influx of tourists and absentee landowners.

Within the FMA approximately 65% is public land and 35% is private/freehold land. A significant proportion (25%) is STT managed land.

King Island Fire Management Area

The King Island FMA covers the whole of King Island, an area of 110,975 ha. King Island has an estimated residential population of 1585 people.

King Island lies at the western entrance to the Bass Strait, midway between the state of Victoria and mainland Tasmania in the path of the "Roaring Forties", a strong prevailing westerly wind that reaches over 100km per hour. The island is generally quite flat, with the highest point being 168m above sea level at Gentle Annie in the south east of the Island.

Approximately 20% of the King Island FMA is public land and 80% is private/freehold land. The management of fire risk on private land is a significant challenge for the King Island FMA.

Midlands Fire Management Area

The Midlands FMA is approximately 1,059,000 ha in size and covers two local government areas (Central Highlands and Southern Midlands). Approximately 8,000 people live within the Midlands FMA, predominately around the south east corner, closest to the outer settlements of Hobart. The Midlands FMA also contains smaller isolated communities located in the Upper Derwent Valley and Central Highlands.

Shack communities are present around a number of Highland lakes, with the population in these communities being seasonally variable.

Within the Midlands FMA approximately 52% of land is private/freehold, 26% is public/crown land 12% is STT managed land.

East Coast Fire Management Area

The East Coast FMA is approximately 393,000 ha in size and covers three local government areas (Glamorgan-Spring Bay, Sorell and Tasman). Geographically it follows the coastline from the Tasman Peninsular in the South to Bicheno in the North.

The majority of the population within the FMA are located around the south east corner, closest to the outer settlements of Hobart. The FMA also contains smaller coastal communities spread along the coast line. The East Coast is a popular tourist destination which results in a large influx of visitors particularly during the summer months.

Within the East Coast FMA approximately 55% of land is private/freehold, 30% is public/crown land 10% is STT managed land.

Central North Fire Management Area

The Central North FMA is located in central northern Tasmania and covers an area of 550,464 ha. The FMA extends westwards along the north coast from Badger Head to Heybridge. The southern part of the FMA extends westward from Golden Valley to the middle of Walls of Jerusalem National Park.

The Central North FMA has an estimated residential population of 82,000 people.

The FMA contains a mix of fertile agricultural land, wineries, dispersed rural communities and large areas of national park (including Mole Creek Karst caves and The Walls of Jerusalem National Park which is part of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area).

40% of Tasmania's vegetable crop is produced in the Mersey/Forth valley area in the central northern part of the FMA. Significant built infrastructure assets in the region include Origin Energy's LPG Operation at Devonport and the Alinta natural gas pipeline offtake at Westbury. Critical infrastructure within the FMA includes radio communications towers at Kelcey Tier, Mt Claude and Dazzler Range and the Orica storage facilities at Heybridge and Dulverton.

Approximately 58% of land is public land and 42% is private/freehold land. The management of fire risk on private land presents a considerable challenge for the Central North FMA.

THEME 1

Understand, communicate and manage risk

Objectives

- 1.1 Identify and manage risks that impact on program outcomes and stakeholder relationships.
- 1.2 Understand and communicate information regarding risk assessment and program limitations to the Minister and stakeholders.
- 1.3 Promote consistency in the way fire is managed in Tasmania.

Outcomes

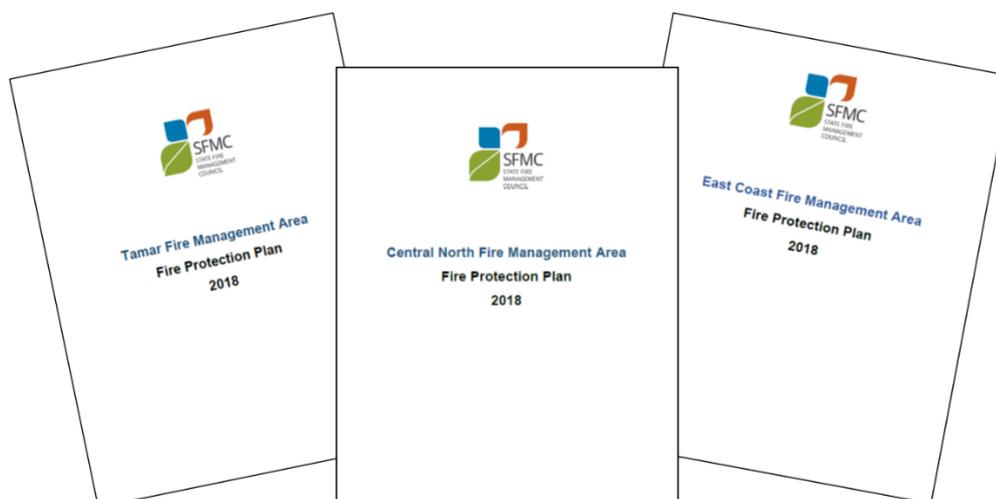
- Risk identification and management capability, including an understanding of vegetation fire risk and risk management options.
- Shared risk management understanding and responsibility with stakeholders.
- Effective communication and engagement processes.
- Management of risk within a climate change context.

Achievements

Fire Protection Plans

Fire Protection Plans (FPPs) identify and prioritise bushfire risk in the landscape and strategically identify work that can be undertaken to mitigate that risk. These plans are fundamental to the identification of priority areas for the implementation of the whole-of-government Fuel Reduction Program and TFS community development programs.

The 10 Fire Protection Plans, and supporting Executive Summaries developed by FMACs for 2018 were approved by SFMC early 2018 and are available on www.sfmc@fire.tas.gov.au.



2018 Fire Protection Plans



Tasmanian Vegetation Fire Management Policy

The SFMC has a legislated function to develop a State vegetation fire management policy, which is to be used as the basis for all fire management planning in Tasmania.

The initial policy was developed in 2009 and was prepared entirely within the SFMC in response to a number of bushfire inquiries and audit reports. The policy met the needs of the fire agencies represented the SFMC, but had little visibility to, or buy-in from a broader range of stakeholders.

In 2016 the Council commenced an extensive review, and an ambitious approach was taken to have stakeholders actively participate in the development of a new policy. The process involved the participation of in excess of 190 stakeholders over at a number of policy development and consultation stages, including a key workshop structured to define scope of the policy. A highly diverse group of participants attended this workshop representing often highly divergent views. Participants included fire agencies, conservation activists, forest industry representatives, public health officials, farmers, scientists and traditional landowners.

The *Whole Systems Theory* was applied in workshop to develop principles and strategies that now constitute the Policy. The opportunity for all participants to interact resulted in a highly engaged stakeholder community that had ownership of the resultant Policy.

The new policy was approved by the Minister in early 2017 and is available at <http://www.sfmc.tas.gov.au/publications-resources>.



Tasmanian Vegetation Fire Management Policy

The purpose of the Policy is to enable the safe and effective conduct of vegetation fire management activities on public and private land across Tasmania to achieve a range of community, cultural, agricultural, silvicultural and environmental objectives.



The Principles and Strategies by which vegetation fire management will occur in Tasmania:

Principles

All stakeholders acknowledge and accept that:

- P-1** Bushfire occurs and will continue to occur in the Tasmanian landscape.
- P-2** Bushfire can be a threat, not only to people and response agencies, but also to the landscape, Aboriginal and other Tasmanian cultural heritage and the Tasmanian economy.
- P-3** A risk management approach will be applied to vegetation fire management in Tasmania.
- P-4** The paramount priority is to protect human life.
- P-5** Other priorities reflect identified community values including the protection of assets, infrastructure, cultural, historical, ecological and environmental values. The order of priority for these other values will be determined in each case using a risk-based approach.
- P-6** Bushfire does not recognise tenure. Consequently, all land owners, occupiers and managers have a responsibility to work cooperatively to manage risk.
- P-7** Fire can be used as an effective tool for vegetation fire management, risk mitigation, ecological management, silvicultural burning and as part of Aboriginal cultural practices.

Strategies

All stakeholders agree that:

- S-1** Bushfire risk will be assessed and, where appropriate, managed by actions to reduce the risk of bushfire occurring and/or to reduce the intensity and impact of bushfires when they do occur.
- S-2** In a bushfire emergency, all stakeholders will unite in their efforts to protect human life and to protect other values.

Vegetation fire management activities will:

- S-3** Aim to achieve outcomes identified by a science-based, risk management approach.
- S-4** Apply across tenures and jurisdictions and will take a landscape approach.

Organisations conducting vegetation fire management activities will:

- S-5** Share responsibility by involving stakeholders in planning and decision-making processes.
- S-6** Ensure that communities play an active role in fuel management and are engaged, educated, and supported to contribute to effective bushfire management activities.
- S-7** Actively engage with and consider the values of affected stakeholders.

Decisions about vegetation fire management will:

- S-8** Be process-based and undertaken in good faith.
- S-9** Apply a risk-based approach in accordance with *AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 Risk Management Principles and Guidelines*, *National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (NERAG)* and *Tasmanian Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (TERAG)*.
- S-10** Be informed by evidence, research and contemporary practices to promote adaptability and continuous improvement.
- S-11** Seek to preserve and/or strike a balance between identified community values.

All stakeholders in vegetation fire management activities will:

- S-12** Collaborate and cooperate, including by appropriate sharing of information and resources.
- S-13** Act in good faith.

Responsibility

- R-1** The organisation conducting a vegetation fire management activity is responsible for ensuring that the Principles and Strategies are applied and for determining how to apply the Principles and Strategies in the context of the activity.

www.sfmc.tas.gov.au



THEME 2

Advance Fire Management Area Committees

Objectives

- 2.1 Support the further development and maturation of Fire Management Area Committees
- 2.2 Promote and support minimum standards and consistent and common approaches by all Fire Management Area Committees

Outcomes

- Agreed standards and consistency across all Fire Management Area Committees
- Advancement in functionality and performance

Achievements

Annual FMAC Chairs' Forum

The annual FMAC Chairs' Forum was held in Launceston on 2 November 2017. FMAC representatives from around the State, SFMC members and subject matter experts met and shared their knowledge and experiences from the past year.

SFMC Chair, Ian Sauer provided an update on SFMC initiatives and FMAC representatives highlighted their achievements and outline their challenges for the year. Other topics covered included the planning framework, the Fire Service Act Review, grants and funding opportunities, relative bushfire risk and TFS community development programs.

FMAC Terms of Reference

The Statewide FMAC Forum provided an opportunity for members to collaborate and discuss the role and responsibilities of FMACs.

A draft Terms of Reference was developed as a result of the forum. The revised Terms of Reference will support a number of improvements, realigning the focus of the Committees to concentrate on the key functions of:

- identifying strategic bushfire priorities,
- bushfire protection planning,
- collaboration and coordination,
- and other relevant functions including the provision of advice to the SFMC.

The SFMC will continue to work with FMACs during 2018-19 to improve governance, capability and support.

Bushfire Protection Plan Project

FMACs are legislatively required to produce FPPs. These plans were initially introduced in 2014 and reviewed annually, with the intention to carry out a major review once they had been in operation for five years.

As a result of feedback from FMACs and stakeholders, the SFMC initiated a project to, not only review the FPPs, but to investigate ways to improve the overall risk assessment framework and support tools.

The SFMC successfully applied for funding from the Natural Disaster Resilience Grants Program and has subsequently employed a Project Officer. The Project Officer commenced mid-2018.

The objectives of the Bushfire Protection Planning Project are:

- Develop a risk management framework and guidelines, and adapt a tool to the Tasmanian bushfire context to assist with the development of Fire Management Area risk assessments using methodology outlined in the Tasmanian Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (TERAG).
- Facilitate workshops with Fire Management Area Committees and subject matter experts to undertake consistent bushfire risk assessments and develop fire protection plans.
- Collate and review risk treatment options identified through fire protection plans, facilitate their prioritisation at the state level and report the findings to the State Fire Management Council.
- Develop a framework for the ongoing review of fire protection plans.
- Collate and/or develop educational tools to support the fire protection planning process.

THEME 3

Foster and maintain effective relationships

Objectives

- 3.1 Identify and further develop existing relationships with key stakeholders and the community
- 3.2 Establish new relationships with relevant stakeholders

Outcomes

- Strong commitment and engagement with stakeholders
- Shared responsibility and commitment by land managers and the community
- Connection with all relevant stakeholders

Achievements

Stakeholder Engagement

During 2017-18, the SFMC continued the development of a comprehensive stakeholder register. The register assists in identifying key groups to participate in consultation, preferred engagement strategies, subject matter experts and promotion of events.

The SFMC values the importance of listening and learning from stakeholders. Early in 2017, Wine Tasmania gave a presentation to the SFMC on smoke taint in grapes. Through this presentation, it was agreed to support communication and discussion of issues associated with smoke with all land managers. Wine Tasmania is, and will continue to, work closely with the Fuel Reduction Program to manage this risk.

Network Events

The SFMC is committed to supporting stakeholders to collaborate, share knowledge and learn about bushfire risk and vegetation fire management in Tasmania.

During 2017-18, over 60 people attended Network Events hosted by the SFMC. These events foster networks and promote knowledge sharing and collaboration between both the public and private sectors involved in vegetation fire management in Tasmania.

'What happens after the fire?' was presented by Dr Stephen Bresnehan from the Fuel Reduction Program. This event was held at the Southern Midlands Council Chambers in Oatlands. The event focused on the ecological recovery after fuel reduction burning, the differences between planned burning and bushfire, the benefits and risk of burning, how different vegetation respond to burning and weed management.

The second event *'Bushfire research'* was presented by Sandra Whight, Director of the TFS Community Fire Safety Division in Hobart. Sandra emphasised the importance of research, discussed current research occurring around Australia, identifying research initiatives and findings and methods to access research opportunities, grants and funding.



Participants at the SFMC Network Event held at Southern Midlands Council Chambers in Oatlands

THEME 4

Build community capacity

Objectives

- 4.1 Educate the community regarding bushfire risks in Tasmania
- 4.2 Increase community understanding and acceptance of vegetation management practices which address bushfire risk

Outcomes

- Informed and competent community actions and activity

Achievements

Red Hot Tips

The SFMC is committed to supporting community education and extension programs. The *Red Hot Tips* capacity building program is aimed at improving the skill of private rural landholders to manage bushfire risk on their property, with a particular focus on planned burning.

The third round of the program concluded in May 2017. In April 2018, a consultation workshop was held with stakeholders at Campbell Town. The workshop reviewed program outcomes and considered future options for the development of a sustainable, cost effective program. It was evident that there is a need for the program to continue and SFMC will commit to this program further next financial year.



Participants at the Planned Burning Field Day, learning from Dr Stephen Bresnehan



Planned Burning Field Day

In collaboration with the Fuel Reduction Program and Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association, the SFMC hosted a Planned Burning Field Day at a private property at Wattle Hill in Southern Tasmania on 27 July 2017.

The Field Day provided an opportunity for farmers and landholders to learn how to manage their bushfire risk, with a focus on the tools and techniques required to plan a fuel reduction burn.

The day included local guest speakers reflecting on their experience during the Dunalley bushfires in 2013, a theory component based on the Red Hot Tips program learning outcomes and a practical field walk.



A number of State Government departments, rural suppliers, representatives of local industry and community groups assisted in making the event a huge success, with over 130 people attending, including over 70 private landholders.



Adam Hall (TFS Volunteer Brigade Chief), Holly Rowlands (WFI), Peter Skillern (TFGA), Jason Thornbury (local farmer) and Karen Bailey (Biosecurity Tasmania) talking about their personal experiences during the Dunalley bushfires

THEME 5

Continually improve SFMC capability, governance and organisational culture

Objectives

- 5.1 Further increase the capacity and capability of the State Fire Management Council
- 5.2 Actively monitor and address any loss of capability
- 5.3 Embed 'best practice' governance principles and practices in the culture and operations of the Council
- 5.4 Further develop evidence based and informed decision making processes of the Council

Outcomes

- Capacity to measure and analyse performance of the State Fire Management Council
- Effective accountable results
- Access to additional expertise

Achievements

Fire Permit System Review

In 2017 TFS, in conjunction with the SFMC, commenced a comprehensive review of the Fire Permit System in Tasmania. The SFMC was represented on the Fire Permit System Review Steering Committee and was involved in the consultation process along with FMAC representatives and other key stakeholders.

The review revealed both a strong appetite for change to a more user focused system, including the use of technology and simplifying administrative systems, along with a need to reform the Fire Permit System to ensure that it is effective.

The SFMC endorsed the 18 recommendations presented in the final report completed in early 2018 and is supportive of a project to now implement the recommendations.

Fire Service Act Review

The SFMC has participated in a number of consultative sessions to provide input into the Fire Service Act Review, in particular as it pertains to the future role of the SFMC.

The SFMC endorses the Review and sees it as an opportunity to make lasting changes to the effectiveness and efficiency of emergency services in Tasmania.

SFMC Strategic Directions

In March 2018 SFMC members and key stakeholders participated in a strategic planning day to review the SFMC Strategic Directions Framework, which will be implemented for the 2018-19 financial year.

The SFMC identified key themes which will focus on research and innovation, policy, community capacity and awareness, communication and collaboration and vegetation fire management planning.

Members also investigated how SFMC do business, and identified efficiencies to become more effective in completing and reporting on strategic objectives. The future role of SFMC was also explored with outcomes informing the SFMC submission to the Fire Service Act Review.

Effective Membership

A membership audit was conducted of SFMC and FMACs to ensure legislative compliance and the maintenance of a broad and effective membership. As a result a number of additional members were appointed to FMACs to ensure appropriate representation of stakeholders across FMAs.

Supporting Research

SFMC collaborated with the University of Tasmania (UTAS) in coordinating an end-user workshop to identify research priorities and opportunities to establish a UTAS transdisciplinary fire research hub in Tasmania.

SFMC and FMAC members participated in the workshop and SFMC has given in-principle support to this project.

THEME 6

Measure performance and effectiveness

Objectives

- 6.1 Determine and measure program goals and priorities
- 6.2 Monitor, evaluate and report on program outputs and outcomes (including post fuel reduction burns and implementation of program initiatives)
- 6.3 Measure community acceptance and understanding of fuel reduction activities and other program initiatives

Outcomes

- Capacity to measure and analyse performance of initiatives and programs

Achievements

SFMC has a legislative responsibility to report regularly to the Minister and provide advice to the State Fire Commission (the Commission). SFMC provide coordinated annual and quarterly advice to the Minister, along with additional updates as required. Reports are also provided to the Commission for information and inclusion in the Commission' Annual Report.

The Fuel Reduction Program reports to SFMC quarterly and provides advice on the community understanding and awareness of bushfire risk and mitigation.

Positive community perception continues to grow within 1 in 6 Tasmanians familiar with the Fuel Reduction Program. Furthermore, 60% of the population recognises bushfire risk reduction is a fundamental outcome of the Program and identifies prescribed burning as the most effective method to achieve this reduction in risk.

50% of Tasmanians still perceive that there is a medium to high bushfire risk in their neighbourhood and that this encourages more participation in mitigation activities, with twice the number of respondents having direct involvement with a planned burn.

Appendix

DPIPWE	Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment
FMA	Fire Management Area
FMAC	Fire Management Area Committee
FPP	Fire Protection Plan
PWS	Parks and Wildlife Service
SFMC	State Fire Management Council
STT	Sustainable Timber Tasmania
TFGA	Tasmanian Farmers Graziers Association
TFS	Tasmania Fire Service
the Act	<i>Fire Service Act 1979</i>
the Commission	State Fire Commission

