STATE FIRE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

Cover photo: Credit Debra Pope
Bradley Williams (Red Hot Tips Facilitator), Robert Downie and Noel White participating in a Red Hot Tips demonstration burn at Copping.

Contents

Report from the Chair

In what has been one of the most disruptive years we have all encountered, the perverse outcome is that we have been able to achieve much more than initially planned.

This has occurred through the smart use of technology, maintaining strategic focus, having a 'can do' attitude and the enormous effort of the SFMC staff, Debra Pope and Hannah Matthews, who pull it all together.

I would also like to recognise Adrian Pyrke, who is developing the Bushfire Risk Management Framework. Adrian's expertise, dedication and experience have been an enormous asset to SFMC.

Several focus areas of action for 2019-20 have been:
- The SFMC submission to the Royal Commission into the National Natural Disaster Arrangements,
- The submission to the Fire Service Act Review,
- The coordination of the industry led, Machinery Operations Working Group, including the review of the Machinery Operations Guidelines, and
- The development of the Bushfire Risk Management Framework and the subsequent development of interim Bushfire Risk Management Plans (BRMPs).

One of the most significant achievements has been the reinstatement of the Red Hot Tips program, with funding announced by Government in March 2020. The development of the program, recruitment and communication commenced in April, along with landholder registrations. 2020-21 will be an exciting time for this program.

On behalf of the SFMC members, I would like to thank all the Fire Management Area Committees (FMACs) for their valued community and industry contribution, and for supporting the Bushfire Risk Management Planning Project during development and implementation.

I would like to sincerely thank Minister Shelton, and his office, for being so engaged and supporting SFMC initiatives. I would also like to recognise the SFMC members, without their dedication and commitment the SFMC would not have the influence, stakeholder relationships, and strategic focus it is renowned for.

Thank you

Ian Sauer
Chair, State Fire Management Council

About Us

The SFMC is an independently chaired body, established under Section 14 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 in Tasmania;

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 2020 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 (Deputy Chief, Bruce Byatt);

• 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 Tasmanian Forest Products Association (vacant); and

• a person nominated by the Local Government Association of Tasmania (Melanie Kelly).

Our Members

As of 30 June 2020

Ian Sauer was appointed as independent Chair of SFMC in October 2014.

Ian is a dry-land sheep and cattle producer from Pipers Brook in northern Tasmania. He brings over 35 years' experience in agriculture, natural resource management, policy formulation, project development, management, and community development.

Ian is also a long serving volunteer firefighter with the Pipers Brook Brigade and has represented community groups at the Local, State and National policy level, as well as being a representative on several National and State committees and boards.

Ian is also the Chair of the Red Hot Tips Advisory Group and is a member of the Fuel Reduction Program Steering Committee.

Chris Arnol was appointed Chief Officer and Chief Executive Officer of Tasmania Fire Service on 21 March 2016.

Over his 40-year career Chris has worked in three emergency service organisations. He has extensive interstate and overseas operational experience and holds a Master's Degree in Public Management (Flinders University), is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Member of the Institute of Fire Engineers (by examination).

Chris is also on the Board of the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC), Chairs the National Aviation Firefighting Centre and represents Tasmania on the Australia and New Zealand Emergency Management Committee.

Bruce Byatt

Bruce is a second generation firefighter who began his career in January 1977 with the Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade and has served with Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, the Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service, and the Country Fire Authority Victoria. Bruce now serves Tasmania Fire Service as the Deputy Chief Officer.

His career to date embraces working in five jurisdictions across Australia and serving as Deputy Chief Officer in the last three roles, providing a unique insight into the Australian fire industry.

John Atkinson

John is the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA) representative on the SFMC.

He is mixed-enterprise farmer from the Northern Midlands with 20 years' volunteering as a firefighter and officer with the Barton Fire Brigade. John worked in the offshore oil and gas industry for 18 years as a commercial diver and supervisor and shares his experience of risk management and project planning.

With a strong interest in sustainable land management, he sat on the initial Steering Committee of the Red Hot Tips program and is now a member of the Red Hot Tips Advisory Group. He continues to work with natural resource management organisations, including the Landcare Members' Council.

Steve Whiteley represents Sustainable Timber Tasmania. He has more than 30 years' experience in managing public production forest assets and operations.

With a solid reputation for achieving results and adaptive leadership, Steve became CEO of Sustainable Timber Tasmania in 2013. He has successfully steered the business into a solid financial footing and is leading business improvement under a sustainability-centric business model.

Steve is a Director of the Australian Forest Products Association and the Tasmanian Forests and Forests Products Network. He is a graduate of both the Oxford Advanced Management and Leadership Program and the Australian Institute for Company Directors. He holds a Bachelor of Forest Science from the University of Melbourne.

Steve contributed to the 2019 AFAC Review on the 2018-19 bushfires and is on the Fuel Reduction Steering Committee. Steve is also Chair of the SFMC Research Coordination Committee.

Suzette Weeding represents Sustainable Timber Tasmania on the SFMC.

Suzette is a detail-oriented, environmental and forest management executive with over 18 years' experience in the Australian forest industry. She has demonstrated leadership in environmental management, strategic planning, environmental compliance, and environmental certification.

Suzette is an advocate of both the Australian Forestry Standard Certification Scheme (AFCS) and is a director for the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). Suzette is also the deputy chair of the Forest Education Foundation.

She has a Bachelor of Science in Zoology and Botany from the University of Tasmania.

Melanie Kelly is the Manager of Natural Resources at the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council on the Tasmanian east coast and represents the Local Government of Tasmania (LGAT) on SFMC.

Melanie is a trained forester and has broad working experiences in the natural resource management sector.

Over the last 20-plus years Melanie has worked in both a paid and voluntary capacity in both Victoria and Tasmania. Her experience in fire management ranges from working in the Emergency Control Centre for the State Government in Victoria to her involvement with the local volunteer brigade Mayfield, near Little Swanport.

Jason Jacobi is Deputy Secretary of the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service.

He has over 30 years' experience in National park and forest management, including operating his own consultancy business; as a manager in local government; and as a senior executive managing parks and forests across Queensland.

Mark Bryce is the Director of Landscape Programs with the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service.

He has had a broad range of experience in fire management and has included roles from firefighting, incident control to fire management policy development.

Resignations 2019-20

 Jye Hill represented the Forest Industry Association of Tasmania (FIAT) on SFMC until December 2019.

Jye has over 14 years' experience in the forest industry. Jye was the Forest Resource Team Leader at Norske Skog before commencing as Assistant Manager, Fire Management with Sustainable Timber Tasmania in 2019.

Jye is experienced in fire management, training delivery and design and is the Chair of the Southern Fire Management Area Committee.

Executive support to the SFMC and associated FMACs is provided by TFS and coordinated through the SFMC Executive Officer, Debra Pope.

Our Structure

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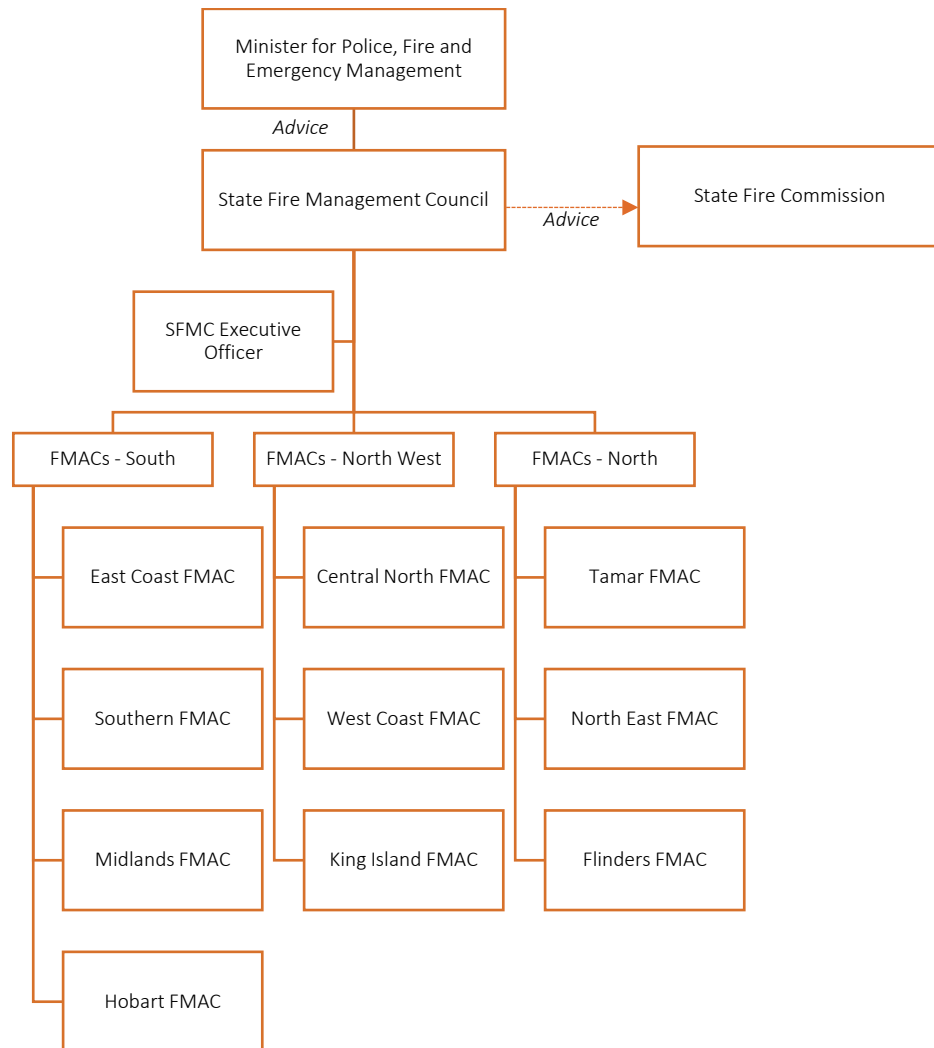
Strategic Direction Framework

The Strategic Direction Framework guides the SFMC priorities and activities through to 2022.

Our priorities	Our strategies are to	What we will achieve	What will deliver to achieve our outcomes
Research and Innovation	Support and promote bushfire research and innovation	A coordinated and sustainable approach to research across private and public sectors in Tasmania Applied and relevant research and innovation is adopted and valued across Tasmania	Coordinate the adoption of research findings and recommendations Collaborate with stakeholders to identify applied research priorities and gaps in Tasmania Facilitate action to support bushfire research and innovation in Tasmania
Policy	Provide evidence based public policy advice and information	Research and innovation underpin policy development Stakeholders have opportunity to inform policy development	Develop and implement a policy framework to support vegetation fire management in Tasmania
Community Capacity and Awareness	Build community capacity and awareness to support bushfire resilient communities	Increased community awareness of bushfire risk and shared responsibility Increased community participation in effective mitigation activities Programs and community information support collaboration across private and public sector	Identify stakeholders and capacity gaps Identify existing programs and initiatives across private and public sector
Communication and Collaboration	Build and support public and private sector partnerships and collaboration	Communications enhance and develop stakeholder relationships Actively engage with stakeholders Engagement is planned and inclusive	Develop and maintain existing stakeholder relationships
Vegetation Fire Management Planning	Enable strategic, effective and collaborative vegetation fire management planning in Tasmania	National standards and tools are adopted to support planning and mitigation activities Planning reflects community and environmental priorities and values Bushfire risks are identified, prioritised and mitigation treatments are implemented Engaged and effective Fire Management Area Committees	Monitor effectiveness of FMACs at local and state level Monitor stakeholder inputs into FMACs Develop and implement a Fire Protection Planning Framework and tools Monitor progress and success of bushfire mitigation activities against Fire Protection Plans Maximise influence in land use planning
Governance	Facilitate efficient and effective governance and resource management	Delivery of SFMC strategic priorities Accountable and transparent decision making and reporting SFMC is legislatively compliant Engaged and active members	Develop SFMC Annual Report Develop SFMC Reporting Framework

Fire Management Area Committees

The SFMC aims to coordinate the investment in bushfire risk management across all of Tasmania. It is important that efforts are coordinated because landowners and organisations do not have direct control over all the factors that contribute to their individual bushfire risk, nor can they operate independently of their neighbours in managing their bushfire risk. Therefore, the community must act together, which involves cooperation, coordination, and planning.

Under the guidance of SFMC, 10 Fire Management Area Committees (FMACs) aim to coordinate the activities associated with managing bushfire risk within their area. To achieve this, FMACs are required to produce fire protection plans under Section 20 of the *Fire Service Act 1979.*

FMAC Purpose

FMACs provide a platform for a consistent, comprehensive and cooperative approach to strategic planning in relation to fire protection and fuel management. This is 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* FMACs have the following functions:

a) to co-ordinate fire management activities within its FMA, including:
    i)   community education and information; and
    ii) fuel management;

b) to identify and assess community bushfire risks in its FMA 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 FMA 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 Graziers Association, relevant utility companies, and other large key land managers in the FMA.

Fire Management Areas

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 FMAC.
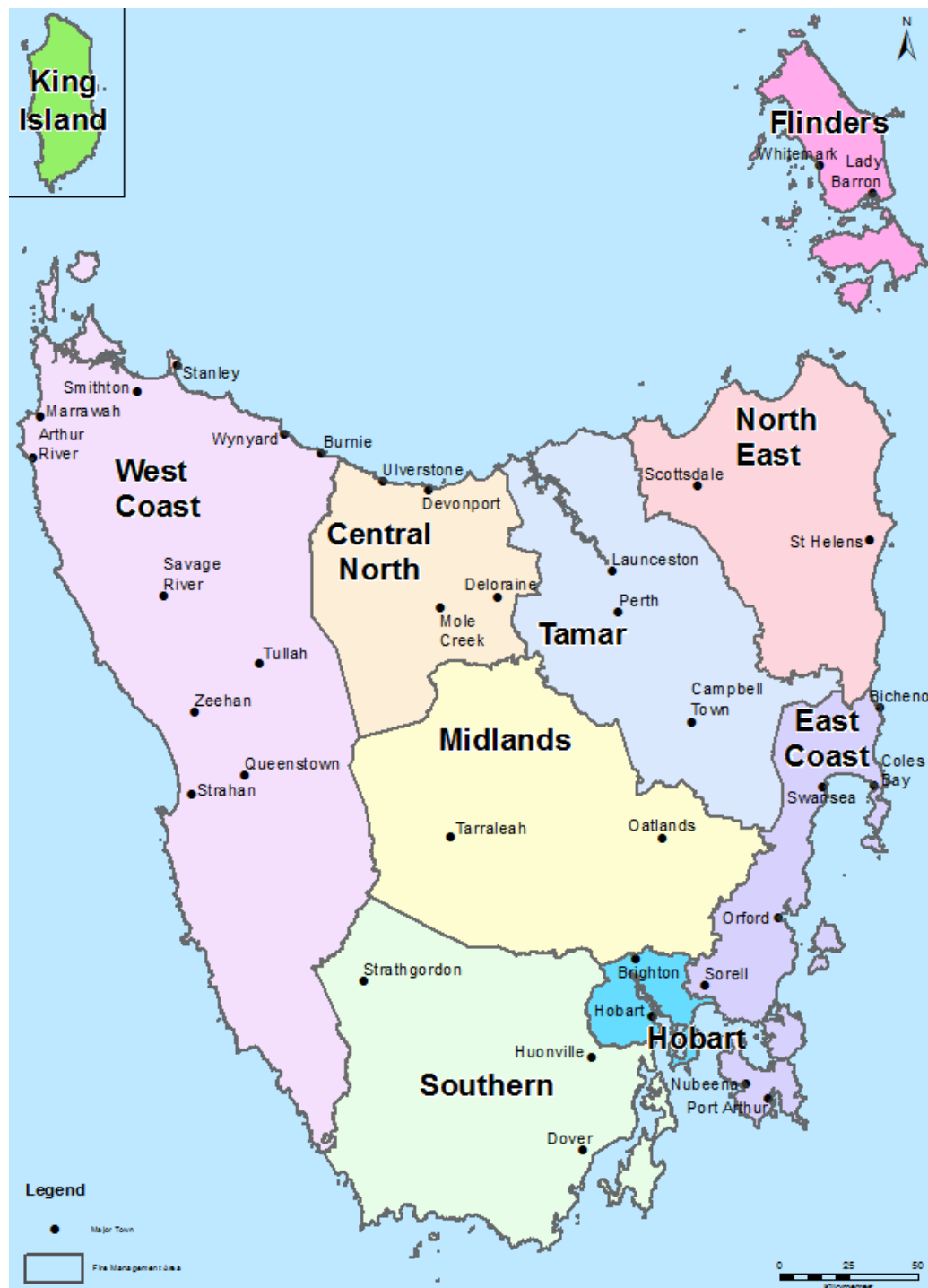
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Strategy

Support and promote bushfire research and innovation.

Outcomes

- A coordinated and sustainable approach to research across private and public sectors in Tasmania.
- Applied and relevant research and innovation is adopted and valued across Tasmania.

Key strategic initiatives

- Coordinate the adoption of research findings and recommendations.
- Collaborate with stakeholders to identify applied research priorities and gaps in Tasmania.
- Facilitate action to support bushfire research and innovation in Tasmania.

Achievements

The first phase of the SFMC Research Coordination Project was completed in September 2019.

The project supported by Hannah Lloyd-Deely, Graduate with the Bushfire Risk Unit, identified current vegetation fire management research and innovation projects being conducted Australia-wide.

This broad scope extended to related themes, not limited to; fire ecology, smoke taint, climate change, communicating bushfire risk, land use planning, community bushfire resilience, local fire conditions, fire weather and vegetation types.

Extensive stakeholder input contributed to the comprehensive environmental scan. A stakeholder forum was planned for early 2020, but due to COVID-19 was postponed. This forum will be held in 2021 and will help to inform a list of end-user research priorities for Tasmania.

POLICY

Strategy

Provide evidence based public policy advice and information.

Outcomes

- Research and innovation underpin policy development.
- Stakeholders have opportunity to inform policy development.

Key strategic initiatives

- Develop and implement a policy framework to support vegetation fire management in Tasmania.

Achievements

The SFMC facilitated stakeholder opportunities to inform policy and legislative review, and developed submissions to several significant reviews during 2019-20 including:

- The Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements,
- The Fire Service Act Review, and
- State Fire Protection Plan.

The SFMC also maintain awareness and provide input into several other State and National initiatives, during 2019-20 these included:

- Monitoring and input into the Australian Fire Danger Rating System Project,
- Consultation on the Tasmanian Disaster Resilience Strategy; and
- Consultation informing the State Emergency Management Committee Strategic Directions.

Policy Framework

In June 2020, the SFMC hosted a policy workshop to inform the future policy development priorities for SFMC. It was identified that the greatest areas of influence were through the Tasmanian Vegetation Fire Management Policy and associated policy, procedure, and guidelines; all of which support FMACs achieve collaborative vegetation fire management.

In addition, it was identified that the SFMC has responsibility to develop tools and resources to support best practice policy implementation and has a role to play in consultation with stakeholders who own or manage land, and who have direct responsibility for mitigation activities that can reduce bushfire risk.

As an advisory body to the Minister, the SFMC also has a role to raise issues, engage and influence areas of policy development outside of the SFMC scope, and be a trusted voice to present stakeholder concerns.

Machinery Operations Working Group

In January 2020, the SFMC assumed the coordination of the industry led Machinery Operations Working Group.

The group was established in 2016 after landholders and machinery operators identified a gap with systems concerning the operation of machinery during days of Total Fire Ban. The group was instrumental in developing a proposal based on self-regulation to address issues. Subsequently the Machinery Operation Guideline was jointly developed between industry and Tasmania Fire Service.

The group provides a forum for communication and collaboration between key stakeholders, offering opportunity for input into policy and systems that support safe machinery operations in dry vegetation.

During the first half of 2020 the group developed a Terms of Reference and reviewed membership, commenced review of the Machinery Operations Guideline, and identified improvements with monitoring weather using Bureau of Meteorology weather stations.

COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND AWARENESS

Strategy

Build community capacity and awareness to support bushfire resilient communities.

Outcomes

- Increased community awareness of bushfire risk and shared responsibility.
- Increased community participation in effective mitigation activities.
- Programs and community information support collaboration across private and public sector.

Key strategic initiatives

- Identify stakeholders and capacity gaps.
- Identify existing programs and initiatives across private and public sector.

Achievements

Red Hot Tips

In March 2020, the State Government announced funding for a key SFMC initiative, the Red Hot Tips program.

Red Hot Tips educates, engages and supports farmers and landholders to actively manage their bushfire risk; encouraging collaborative vegetation fire management and ecological sustainability across the landscape.

The primary audience for Red Hot Tips is farmers and landholders who manage large tracts of land in rural areas of Tasmania.

Red Hot Tips provides a central point of contact, 'a one stop service', for landholders on matters relating to bushfire risk, including:

- On-ground, practical advice on effective bushfire management planning, including obtaining appropriate permits, developing burn plans and property management plans;

- Opportunities for private and public landholders to work together to plan for, and undertake, vegetation fire management activities;

- Training and mentoring, including planned burning demonstrations;

- Assistance identifying resources required for planned burning; and

- Advice on alternative fuel reduction treatments and access to helpful resources.

The SFMC has strategic oversight of the program through the Red Hot Tips Advisory Group, comprising of stakeholders with specific knowledge and skills in land management, bushfire management and rural engagement. The Group is chaired by the SFMC Chair, Mr Ian Sauer.

In May 2020, the enhanced program was formally announced in conjunction with an online exhibit at *Agfest 2020 in the cloud*. Recruitment for a coordinator and three facilitators commenced in May 2020, along with branding, marketing, communication, and the Red Hot Tips webpage.

Gill Basnett (Red Hot Tips Coordinator), Sarah Jacobson (Red Hot Tips Advisory Group),
David Fulford and Brad Williams (Red Hot Tips Facilitators)

COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

Objectives

Build and support public and private sector partnerships and collaboration.

Outcomes

- Communications enhance and develop stakeholder relationships.
- Actively engage with stakeholders.
- Engagement is planned and inclusive.

Key strategic initiatives

- Develop and maintain existing stakeholder relationships.

Achievements

SFMC Network Events

The SFMC hosted another successful Network Event in September 2019 in Launceston.

SFMC Network Events foster relationships and promote knowledge sharing and collaboration between public and private sectors involved in vegetation fire management.

The event, open to SFMC stakeholders, was facilitated by an expert panel. The panel consisted of representatives from

Stakeholders attending the SFMC Network Event in Launceston

Tasmania Fire Service, Parks and Wildlife Service, Tasmanian Land Conservancy, Hobart City Council, Norske Skog and was hosted by Adrian Pyrke, Project Officer with State Fire Management Council.

The panel focussed on 'Bushfire Risk" and discussed how bushfire risk is identified and discussed different treatment actions that can assist in managing risk. The SFMC received very positive feedback on this event.

Stakeholder Communication

Two newsletters were published during 2019-20, with an additional two SFMC email updates on specific topics.

Newsletters provide key messages from SFMC meetings, project updates, consultation opportunities, links to relevant research and publications and upcoming events.

VEGETATION FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Strategy

Enable strategic, effective and collaborative vegetation fire management planning in Tasmania.

Outcomes

- National standards and tools are adopted to support planning and mitigation activities.
- Planning reflects community and environmental priorities and values.
- Bushfire risks are identified, prioritised and mitigation treatments are implemented.
- Engaged and effective FMACs.

Key strategic initiatives

- Monitor effectiveness of FMACs at local and state level.
- Monitor stakeholder inputs into FMACs.
- Develop and implement a Fire Protection Planning Framework and tools.
- Monitor progress and success of bushfire mitigation activities against Fire Protection Plans.
- Maximise influence in land use planning.

Achievements

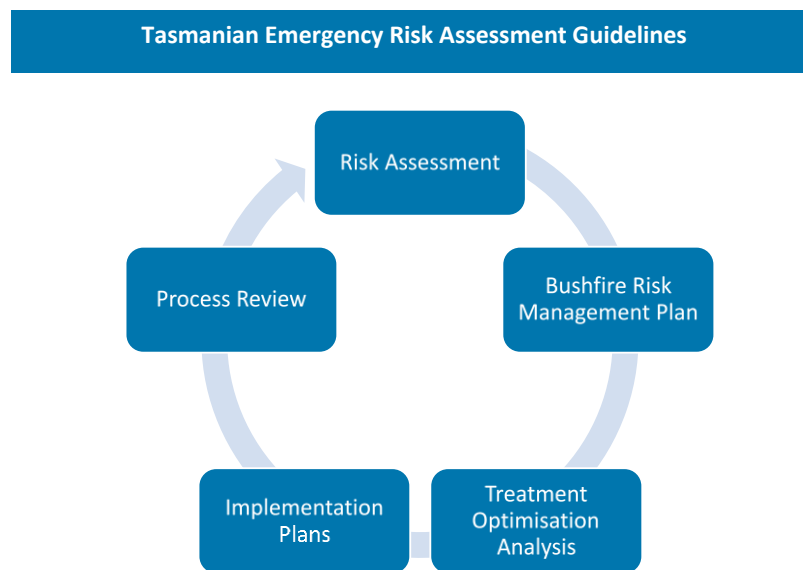### Bushfire Protection Planning Project

The Bushfire Protection Planning project, which commenced in September 2018, continued into the second year and outputs started to take shape. One objective of the project is:

> *To develop a risk management framework and guidelines, and adapt a tool to the Tasmanian bushfire context to assist with the development of FMA risk assessments using methodology outlined in the Tasmanian Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (TERAG)*

Draft *Bushfire Risk Management Planning Guidelines* were written following a process of consultation with two working groups who provided expert and stakeholder input.

These guidelines specify how the TERAG are to be applied, in the context of bushfire risk assessments undertaken by the FMACs. The new guidelines are a technical reference document for the FMACs outlining the process and steps involved in the risk assessment.

The framework, which is included in the guidelines, is detailed below:

Tasmanian Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines

- Risk Assessment
- Bushfire Risk Management Plan
- Treatment Optimisation Analysis
- Implementation Plans
- Process Review

A well-attended network event held in Launceston in September 2019 aimed to explain bushfire risk and help develop a better understanding of how bushfire risk is assessed and managed. At the event, the risk assessment process developed for FMACs was used as an illustration, including presentation of how the fire spread modelling contributes to the quantification of likelihood.

The FMACs convened meetings in November and December 2019 where they developed interim Bushfire Risk Management Plans (BRMPs) utilising the new template. These interim plans provided an opportunity to test the new format and although no risk register was included, the plans are much briefer than the former fire protection plans and focus on the treatment plan.

The process for the risk assessment evolved significantly from original concepts to adequately accommodate the complexity of data and the associated analyses, although the fundamental basis of the TERAG is retained. In the risk assessment, the consequence and likelihood are calculated for clusters of mapped assets, based on scenarios of large bushfire. There were four major categories of assets included: human settlement areas, production forests, natural values and Hydro infrastructure.

A tool, called the TERAG Bushfire Tool, was developed for presentation of the risk register. The tool makes calculations to automatically generate the risk and priority scores based on the TERAG, as well as generating versions of the risk register and treatment plan ready for insertion into the BRMPs.

By June 2020, the first draft risk register was prepared, indicating the priorities based on risk for the clustered assets. This output was the culmination of a substantial amount of development and analyses undertaken by the staff of the TFS Bushfire Risk Unit.

The 10 BRMPs identify priorities for the treatment of bushfire risk in each of the Fire Management Areas.

Bushfire Risk Management Plans

BRMPs identify priorities for the treatment of bushfire risk in the FMA. BRMPs are developed by FMACs as required under sections 18 and 20 of the *Fire Service Act 1979*.

'Fire protection plan' is the statutory name under the *Fire Service Act 1979*, however, for clarity and consistency with the objectives of the guidelines and contemporary terminology, the term 'Bushfire Risk Management Plan' is used.

The plans aim to coordinate and influence the treatment of bushfire risk in the FMA. The plans are strategic and do not include all details of bushfire risk treatments, however, identify which organisations or individuals are responsible for implementing them.

The new look BRMPs were approved by the SFMC in May 2020. These plans are available on sfmc.tas.gov.au/committees

Fire Management Area Committees

West Coast Fire Management Area Committee

The West Coast FMA covers just over 1.9 million ha and has an estimated residential population of 44 550 people (ABS 2016). Vegetation in the West Coast FMA is well adapted to fire with the region experiencing a relatively high frequency of fast moving bushfires which burn out large areas of the FMA. Whilst the West Coast FMA contains a significant percentage of low flammability vegetation types it also contains a higher percentage of highly flammable vegetation in the form of button grass moorland, sedge land, rush land and peatland as well as scrub and heathland.

Reducing fuel loads in strategic locations has the potential to modify fire behaviour and reduce impacts from bushfires. Areas of potential strategic importance for bushfire risk mitigation within the West Coast FMA were identified and are shown below. These areas were identified through a process that utilised and combined local knowledge and computer modelling. FMAC members with specific bushfire expertise and knowledge across the area contributed to the identification of both the communities at risk and the broader strategic areas for potential mitigation activities.

The following areas were identified as having potential strategic importance for the West Coast FMA:

Treatment Area/Asset	Risk	Responsible Agency
Highly flammable vegetation communities surrounding Zeehan, in particular Gorse	Residential houses from highly flammable vegetation – largely gorse infestation	West Coast Council, PWS and TFS.
Communities from Black River to Rocky Cape	Shack Communities	Circular Head Council, PWS and TFS
Waratah Human Settlement Area	Waratah Township	Waratah Wynyard Council, Forico, PWS and TFS
Strahan Human Settlement Area	Strahan Township	West Coast Council, STT, PWS and TFS
Sisters Beach Human Settlement Area	Sisters Beach and Boat Harbour Township Threatened Ecosystems and associated individual plant and animal species	Waratah Wynyard Council, PWS and TFS
Burnie Human Settlement Area and surrounding communities	Burnie Township and surrounding communities Threatened Ecosystems and associated individual plant and animal species	Burnie City Council, PWS, STT and TFS
Queenstown Human Settlement Area	Queenstown Township	West Coast Council, PWS and TFS
TWWHA	Threatened Ecosystems and associated individual plant and animal species	PWS, TFS and STT
Critical Communication, power, water and transport Infrastructure	State-wide value for protection of communication networks, electricity, water supply and industry.	TasNetworks, Hydro, Telstra, Service TAS, TasWater

The West Coast BRMP is available sfmc.tas.gov.au/committee/west-coast

Hobart Fire Management Area Committee

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; firstly, 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 Hobart 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 months of the year. Due to this the length of the bushfire season can range from October through to April in areas of lower rainfall and from December to March in areas of higher rainfall and wetter vegetation types.

The following areas were identified as having potential strategic importance for Hobart FMA:
- The Wellington Range, particularly the eastern slopes of Kunanyi/Mount Wellington
- The Meehan Range from Quoin Ridge to Lauderdale, particularly the Mount Rumney/Mount Canopus area
- Mount Faulkner
- Government Hills
- Goat Hills
- Mount Dromedary
- The Mount Nelson/Tolmans Hill/The Lea areas
- The Ridgeway and Summerleas Road areas
- The Albion Heights and Bonnet Hill areas.

The Hobart BRMP is available sfmc.tas.gov.au/committee/hobart

Tamar Fire Management Area Committee

The Tamar FMA is located on the north coast of Tasmania and encompasses Launceston City, the Tamar River Estuary and the Northern Midlands plains. The FMA covers 859 086 ha and is a mixture of lands with high conservation value or lands with a high agricultural value. The region is dominated by agricultural and pastoral activities, particularly meat production, wool production, apples, berries and viticulture, with the Tamar Valley being one of Tasmania's leading wine producing areas. Tourism, manufacturing and mineral exploration are also important industries for the region.

Areas that the FMAC have considered to be a priority for treatment are the East and West Tamar ridges (either side of the Tamar Estuary). These ridges have the potential to lead fires into the major population centres or impact minor communities.

The Tamar BRMP is available sfmc.tas.gov.au/committee/tamar

Flinders Fire Management Area Committee

The Flinders FMA consists of an area of approximately 206 046 ha, extending approximately 10 kilometres from Wilson Promontory in Victoria to the North East tip of the Tasmanian mainland. An archipelago of 52 islands, the largest Island is Flinders Island, followed by Cape Barren Island/Truwana and Clarke Island. More than half of the Flinders FMA is private freehold land tenure.

There is a mix of vegetation within the Flinders FMA which ranges from heaths, scrub and dry woodlands through to dry sclerophyll forest interposed with wet sclerophyll forest gullies and remnant rainforest on Mt Strzelecki and the Darling Range.

The two highest priority risk areas identified by the Flinders FMAC are Mt Tanner and the Darling Range. Fuel reduction is identified as a treatment for these areas including fuel breaks and fuel reduction burning.

The Flinders BRMP is available sfmc.tas.gov.au/committee/flinders

Southern Fire Management Area Committee

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 major vegetation types within the Southern FMA are; Wet Eucalypt forest, Moorland species, Rainforest and Dry Eucalypt forest.

The Southern FMA contains some of the wettest and driest locations in Tasmania, because of this the length of the bushfire season can vary considerably with drier locations having bushfire seasons that run from October to April while areas of higher rainfall and wetter vegetation types limited to the period December to March. The majority (84%) of the Southern FMA has been untouched by fire since records began.

The following communities were identified during the strategic assessment process as being at high risk and as having priority for mitigation actions:
- Pelverata
- Lucaston
- Grove
- Oyster Cove
- Nicholls Rivulet
- Glendevie
- Middleton
- Maydena
- Margate/Snug
- Kingston.

The Southern BRMP is available sfmc.tas.gov.au/committee/southern

Central North Fire Management Area Committee

The Central North FMA is located on the north coast of Tasmania. Encompassing an area of 540 464 ha, the area 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).

The FMAC together with computer simulation modelling have identified areas considered to be high priority for treatment, these areas are:
- Don Reserve (west of Devonport)
- Cradle Valley (including Pencil Pine)
- Rubicon (Bakers Beach area)
- Heybridge
- Lorinna (South of Mt Roland)
- Squeaking Point
- Dooleys Hill (Latrobe).

The Central North BRMP is available sfmc.tas.gov.au/committee/central-north

North East Fire Management Area Committee

The North East FMA covers a total area of 681 193 ha. This FMA encompasses the local government areas of Dorset and Break O'Day. With an estimated residential population of 12 884, the major community centres include Scottsdale, Bridport, St Helens, St Marys, Fingal and Scamander. This population increases due to visitation to attractions such as mountain bike trails, golf courses and national parks, as well as to coastal areas during summer.

Agriculture, forestry/plantations, and fishing are the predominant industries in this FMA. The vegetation consists of open sclerophyll woodlands in lowlands, heath complexes on coastal plains, wet and dry sclerophyll forest inland and some rain forest and alpine and sub alpine complexes on the upper slopes of the elevated terrain. High productivity button grass is also present.

The North East FMA have identified areas at highest risk of bushfire. These priority areas include strategic areas such as Mt Stronach, Mallison's Creek, Mt Pearson and Avenue River Catchment, as well townships/communities such as Ansons Bay.

The North East BRMP is available sfmc.tas.gov.au/committee/north-east

Midlands Fire Management Area Committee

The Midlands FMA is approximately 1 059 000 ha in size and covers two local government areas, being Central Highlands and Southern Midlands. Throughout the Midlands FMA, the population is low and dispersed, which correlates with the major land uses, particularly the large proportion of land used for agriculture, forestry and conservation. The landscape includes very large, almost continuous bands of dry eucalypt forest.

The Midlands FMAC has reviewed the results of computer modelling to identify the following areas at highest risk of bushfire:

- Towns and larger communities within the FMA, including; Campania, Derwent Bridge, Upper Derwent Valley, Ellendale/Fentonbury, Brandum/Doctors Pt/Breona, Miena, Wayatinah and Huntingdon Tier/Harry Walker Tier.
- Broader strategic areas including East Bagdad/Quoin Mt/Native Corners, Western Tiers alpine areas, Mt Field alpine areas, Gravely Ridge/Brown Mt and Dromedary.

The Midlands BRMP is available sfmc.tas.gov.au/committee/midlands

East Coast Fire Management Area Committee

The East Coast FMA covers the whole of the local government areas of Tasman, Sorell and Glamorgan-Spring Bay. The East Coast FMA comprises an area of 393 000 ha, along the east coast of Tasmania, from the Tasman Peninsula in the south to Bicheno in the north.

In the Tasman and Glamorgan-Spring Bay Local Government Areas, the population is low and dispersed, which correlates with the major land uses, particularly the large proportion of land used for agriculture, forestry and conservation. The landscape of the East Coast FMA includes an almost continuous band of dry eucalypt forest stretching almost the entire length of the FMA. This could see a major fire impact a large proportion of the FMA under serious fire weather conditions.

The East Coast FMAC has reviewed the results of computer modelling to identify the following areas at highest risk of bushfire:

- Towns and larger communities within the FMA, including; Coles Bay, Bicheno, Dolphin Sands, Triabunna, Orford, Dunalley, Nubeena and Port Arthur.
- Broader areas including Nugent/Orielton/Forcett, Tasman and Forestier Peninsulas, and the Buckland Military Training Area.

The East Coast BRMP is available sfmc.tas.gov.au/committee/east-coast

King Island Fire Management Area Committee

The King Island FMA covers all of King Island, an area of 110 975 ha located at the western entrance of the Bass Strait, midway between Victoria and mainland Tasmania. Fire has been utilised for clearing of vegetation for establishing a successful agricultural industry on the island. As such, it has been estimated that approximately 70% of the land mass has been modified for agricultural purposes and resulted in the elimination of most rainforest and wet forest plant and animal communities of the Island.

The organic soils (otherwise referred to as 'Peat') underlying the pastures on King Island contribute significantly to the high productivity of the island and are likely to be at least hundreds if not thousands of years old. Peat or organic leaf matter in soils has both a high economic and environmental value but can also be an issue for extinguishment following bushfires. Where swamps have been drained for agricultural purposes or dry out during drought years, peat if exposed to fire can be burnt away and totally and permanently destroyed. Bushfire poses a risk to peat deposits on King Island.

Reducing fuel loads in strategic locations has the potential to modify fire behaviour and reduce impacts from bushfires. Areas of potential strategic importance for bushfire risk mitigation within the King Island FMA were identified and are shown below. These areas were identified through a process that utilised and combined local knowledge and computer modelling. FMAC members with specific fire expertise and knowledge across the area contributed to the identification of both the communities at risk and the broader strategic areas for potential mitigation activities.

The following areas were identified as having potential strategic importance for the King Island FMA:

Treatment area/Asset	Risk	Responsible Agency
Currie Human Settlement Area	Residential houses from highly flammable vegetation the community	King Island Council, PWS and TFS
Grassy Human Settlement Area	Residential houses from highly flammable vegetation the community Critical Port Infrastructure in close proximity to flammable vegetation	King Island Council, PWS and TFS
Naracoopa Human Settlement Area	Residential houses from highly flammable vegetation the community	King Island Council, PWS and TFS
Colliers Swamp	Threatened Ecosystems and associated individual plant and animal species	PWS
Nook Swamp and Lavinia wetlands	Threatened Ecosystems and associated individual plant and animal species	PWS
Pegarah Plantation	Threatened Ecosystems and associated individual plant and animal species Economic loss from potential harvest material	STT
Critical Communication, power, water and transport infrastructure	Loss of communication, power and water supply to the King Island community	Hydro Tasmania, Telstra, King Island Council, TasWater and TAS Ports
Existing Strategic fire trails.	King Island community and natural values	King Island Council, PWS, STT and TFS

The King Island BRMP is available sfmc.tas.gov.au/committee/king-island

GOVERNANCE

Strategy

Facilitate efficient and effective governance and resource management

Outcomes

- Delivery of SFMC strategic priorities.
- Accountable and transparent decision making and reporting.
- SFMC is legislatively compliant.
- Engaged and active members.

Key strategic initiatives

- Develop SFMC Annual Report
- Develop SFMC Reporting Framework

Achievements

Effective Membership

An annual membership audit was conducted of SFMC and FMACs to ensure legislative compliance and the maintenance of a broad and effective membership.

The Forest Industries Association of Tasmania (FIAT) was dissolved and replaced by the newly formed peak body, the Tasmanian Forest Products Association (TFPA), who represents all the major growers and processors who are part of Tasmanian's sustainable forest products industry n native forestry and plantation, softwood and hardwood. The SFMC membership was updated to reflect this change.

Reporting

The SFMC has a legislative responsibility to report regularly to the Minister and provide advice to the State Fire Commission (the Commission). SFMC provides regular advice to the Minister on a range of issues relating to vegetation fire management.

Reports were provided to the Commission quarterly along with an annual update for inclusion in the Commission' Annual Report.

This stand-alone Annual Report was developed and is distributed to stakeholders, highlighting the accomplishments of the SFMC each financial year.
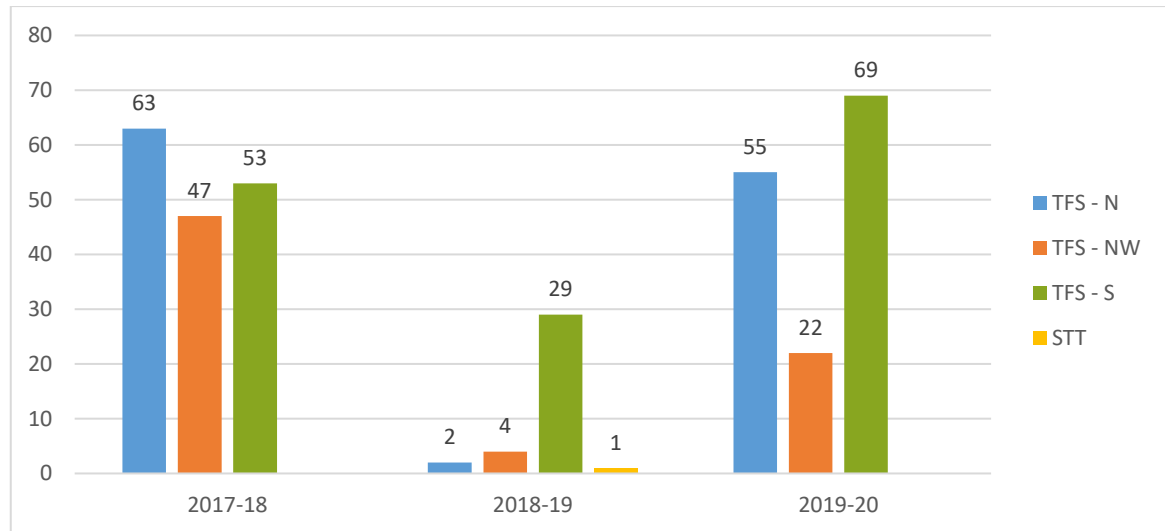
Fire Permit Officers

The SFMC has a legislative responsibility to appoint Fire Permit Officers under Section 65 of the *Fire Service Act 1979*.
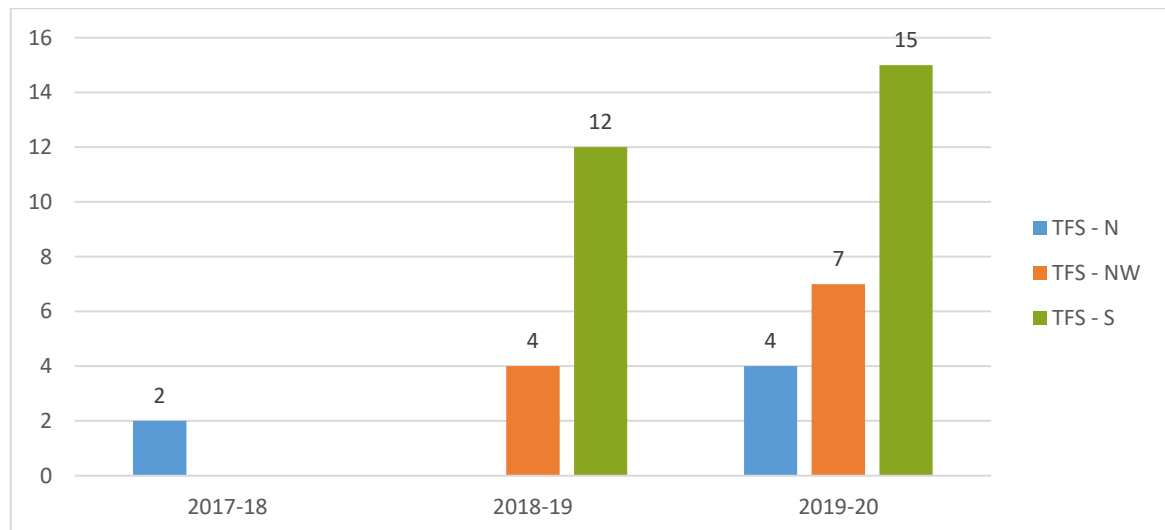
During 2019-20 SFMC:

- Appointed 146 Fire Permit Officers; and
- Rescinded 26 Fire Permit Officers.

Permit Officer Appointments 2019-20

Permit Officer Rescindments 2019-20

Appendix

AFAC	Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council
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 and Graziers Association
TFS	Tasmania Fire Service
the Act	*Fire Service Act 1979*
the Commission	State Fire Commission