

A message from the Chair



Sandra Whight
CHAIR



As the year draws to a close, the State Fire Management Council extends warm wishes for a safe and joyful Christmas season. This time of year is an opportunity to reflect on the dedication, resilience, and collaboration shown across our fire management community. Together, we have worked tirelessly to protect lives, property, and the environment, and we thank every member, volunteer, and partner agency for their commitment.

The SFMC approved all annual updates to BRMPs and these documents will be available via SharePoint and the SFMC website. Your commitment to attending meetings, forums, and developing these Bushfire Risk Management Plans (BRMPs) and prioritising mitigation activities for your areas is genuinely valued.

The Red Hot Tips team is relying heavily on its extensive knowledge in vegetation management compliance and understanding of legislation to ensure that landowners get the right information and management recommendations every time. A focus on growing Community Group engagement with Red Hot Tips is greatly increasing attendance at both Planned Burn Workshops and Training/Mentoring burns.

Regardless of treatment, Red Hot Tips staff continue to focus on the message: What is the objective, and is it achievable and/or viable?

On behalf of the SFMC, I would like to thank all FMAC members for your continued support.

Best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season.

Wine Australia Smoke in Vineyards

<https://www.wineaustralia.com/news/media-releases/federal-grant-to-accelerate-rollout-of-smoke-sensor-innovation-for-the-wine-sector>



Thanks to funding from the Australian Government, Australian winegrape growers are set to benefit from commercialisation of an infield monitoring system that informs growers in real-time whether the smoke from a bushfire or controlled burns is likely to taint their winegrapes.

Exciting event in Hobart 2026

**8th INTERNATIONAL
FIRE BEHAVIOUR +
FUELS CONFERENCE**
Hobart, Tasmania
28 April-01 May, 2026

<https://firebehaviorandfuelsconference.com>

Other upcoming events

Fire Australia 2026, 5 - 7 May 2026
Melbourne, Victoria

Aerial Firefighting Series: Asia-Pacific
Conference & Exhibition - 22-23 July 2026
Gold Coast, Queensland

AFAC26 - 18-21 August 2026
Melbourne, Victoria



Hi, I'm Melanie and I work with the Fire & Biodiversity Team at City of Hobart. We are a team of land managers caring for 4600ha of bushland reserves, from the grassy woodlands of the Queens Domain to the towering forests of Kunanyi/Mt Wellington.

I've been working in land and fire management for 20 years across various organisations where, in addition to working with fire, some of my favourite roles have been training and mentoring young people entering the industry.

FMAC PROFILE Melanie Gent



My current role focusses on the planning and implementation of the City's bushfire mitigation programs. This includes leading our planning burning and burn crew, managing our large fuelbreak network, implementing landscape scale mechanical thinning works, delivering community bushfire education workshops, and partnering in bushfire research projects.

Problem solving and collaboration are two aspects of my work that I really enjoy.

Outside of work, I am an active unionist, currently serving as President of the Australian Services Union Victorian and Tasmanian Branch. I am also an avid musician and enjoying playing guitar, writing music and performing in bands with my friends. I love being out in nature, whether that's bushwalking, swimming at the beach or just enjoying some quiet time in the backyard.



Spread the word to contact one of our regional facilitators today to arrange a free property visit and discussion about your fire management needs.

Sam Tacey - Program Coordinator

0417 153 620 / sam.tacey@fire.tas.gov.au

Frank Bishop - South

0459 908 539 / frank.bishop@fire.tas.gov.au

Andrew Crowden - North / North West

0408 995 156 / andrew.crowden@fire.tas.gov.au

FMAC Movements Welcome to:

EAST COAST FMAC

Darren Smith - Glamorgan Spring Bay Council
(replacing Peter Porch)

Rick Birch - Brigade Chief - Runnymede Fire brigade
(replacing Robert Elliott)

KING ISLAND FMAC

Guy Kearnes - TasWater
(replacing Luke Graham)

Bryan Nicholson - King Island Council
(replacing Robyn Barwick)

Roger Clemons - TasFarmers
(replacing Rod Graham)

PRIVATE LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM (DNRET)

Christine Corbett - All Southern/Eastern FMACs

Steph Girschik - All Northern/North West FMACs



Fire-breathing clouds How intense wildfires can create their own deadly weather systems

Some wildfires are large enough and hot enough to create their own weather systems. Scientists estimate that tens to hundreds of storms created by these blazes occur around the world each year. The trend of increasingly severe fires, fuelled by climate change, means that the number is likely to grow.

These wildfire-born storms are becoming a growing part of fire seasons around the world with lasting impacts on **air quality**, weather and climate. They also make wildfires extremely hot and chaotic, wreaking havoc on firefighting strategies.

Burning vegetation heats the air near the ground, which then rises. Cooler air rushes in to fill the void left by the rising air, generating wind patterns. When the conditions are right, the wildfire's rapidly rising plumes of hot smoke and air cool to form a cloud, known as a pyrocumulonimbus or "pyroCBs". NASA scientists have referred to them as the "fire-breathing dragon of clouds".

If enough energy is released and the updraft intensifies, it creates a thunderstorm that is capable of producing downdrafts that spread the flames and dangerous lightning that can ignite new fires.

They can produce **dry storms** with lightning that strikes without bringing significant rain, making them particularly dangerous as there's no precipitation to help extinguish blazes sparked by the lightning strikes.

Eventually, this thunderstorm will begin to die, and what goes up must come down. Downdrafts created by the decaying storm can create erratic winds near the ground that spread the fire in ways that are difficult to predict.