

TOWONG SHIRE

Municipal Fire Management Plan 2025 - 2028



OFFICIAL



Acknowledgment of Country

The Towong Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Owners of this land and its Elders, past and present and is committed to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to achieve safer and more resilient communities.



Acknowledgements

The Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee acknowledges the member agencies and individuals for the work and commitment in developing this plan, along with the use of the photographs in this publication.

Approval

The Municipal Fire Management Plan (MFMP) has been prepared by the Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMP) and was assured by the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) on the ___ / ___ / ___ and approved by the Regional Emergency Management Committee on the ___ / ___ / ___



Authorisation

This MFMP was adopted as the first iteration of the Towong Shire Council MFMP. This Strategy was endorsed through a formal motion by the Towong Shire Council MEMPC at their meeting on _____ 2024.

Signed: [Signature] Date: 28/11/2024 Strategy endorsed by:
Commander Corryong and Tallangatta Groups
Country Fire Authority
Chair - Towong Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee

Signed: [Signature] Date: 28/11/2024 Strategy endorsed by:
District Manager - Upper Murray
Forest Fire Management Victoria
Deputy Chair - Towong Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee

Signed: [Signature] Date: 28-11-2024 Strategy endorsed by:
Group Officer (Tallangatta)
Country Fire Authority *on behalf for MAF Wood*

Signed: [Signature] Date: 28-11-2024 Strategy endorsed by:
Group Officer (Corryong)
Country Fire Authority

Signed: [Signature] Date: 5/12/2024 Strategy endorsed by:
Municipal Fire Prevention Officer / Strategic Emergency Management Co-ordinator
Towong Shire Council

Signed: [Signature] Date: 2/12/2024 Strategy endorsed by:
District Forester Shelley
HVP Shelley Plantations

Signed: [Signature] Date: 5/12/2024 Strategy endorsed by MEMPC:
Chair, Towong MEMPC



Version Control

Version number	Date of issue	Author(s)	Description of Change
Version 1.0	March 2024	D Jenson	Initial Draft – derived from the statewide Development & Guidance Template, Buloke and Cardinia MFMP's, Indigo Shire Municipal Fire Management Strategy.
Version 2.0	November 2024	Towong MFMPC	Committee review of draft and content for endorsement.

Review

Content of this strategy will be reviewed annually, at the completion of the summer season, as part of the Towong Shire MFMPC. Organisations delegated with responsibilities in this strategy are required to notify the Committee's Executive Officer of any changes in details.

Amendments are produced and distributed by the Committee Administrative Officer as required.

The document is due for review in 2028.



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Foreword

The Towong Shire Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMP) is responsible for providing a strategic and integrated approach to fire management within the Towong Shire. This task forms part of a broader state and regional framework established under the Emergency Management Act (2013 and 1986) and is supported by the State Fire Management Planning Committee and the Hume Regional Strategic Fire Management Planning Committee (Hume RSFMPC).

A key responsibility of the Towong Shire MFMP is the development of the Municipal Fire Management Plan (MFMP) on behalf of the Towong Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC). While the management of all types of fires is important, this plan has focused on bushfire in the first instance and aligns with the *Hume Bushfire Management Strategy 2020*, which describes how regional authorities, local government, fire agencies and other relevant organizations can work together to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from bushfire events affecting the Towong Shire.

This plan is a sub-plan to the Towong Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP).

The life of this plan is for three years and it is envisaged that future updates of this plan will include planning for other types for fire. Furthermore, it is important to note that this plan recognizes, but does not duplicate, the extensive work already being undertaken in fire management across the municipality. This document is essentially a plan for improving integration of this existing work and developing improved methods for working together.

I join with the members of the Towong Shire MFMP in commending this document to you. We see the development and implementation of this plan as important step in the ongoing journey to securing a safer, more resilient community, healthier environment and a prosperous economy for our municipality.

Trevor Ebbels
Commander Corryong and Tallangatta Groups
Country Fire Authority

Chair - Towong Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee

November 2024





Introduction

Fire and emergency events impose significant social, environmental and economic costs on Victoria.

Challenges such as the impact of climate change, the increasing occurrence of major fires, population and residential growth all increase the need for a coordinated and collaborative approach to strategic fire management planning.

Victoria has emergency management arrangements that require and encourage agencies to work collaboratively alongside state and local government, community and business before, during and after emergencies.

Towong Shire Council, the agencies and services that support the municipality must be focussed on adapting to future challenges including fire-related challenges.

The Towong Shire Municipal Fire Management Plan aims to support this and achieve a consistent, effective risk-based approach for fire management planning. This will be enhanced through collaboration, information sharing and the building of collective knowledge.

Many organisations undertake treatment activities in the municipality in an effort to reduce fire related risks.

No single action or treatment will effectively manage fire risk. It takes a partnership approach that relies on the participation of all relevant agencies as well as community to undertake their responsibilities in the municipality.

Community understanding of individual, family and neighbourhood risks, and participation in risk management planning and response is integral. How communities prepare themselves, their homes and their families, and work with their neighbours, is crucial.

It is important to understand and plan for these challenges to ensure that Council, emergency services, agencies, business and the community are adequately prepared to respond to the likely risks.



This Plan

The Municipal Fire Management Plan (MFMP) is prepared and maintained as a sub-plan to the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) to ensure that the linkages across fire prevention, preparedness, response and recovery programs are consistent and holistic.

The Towong Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) can be viewed online:

[Towong Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan](#)

This plan has been developed in line with the:

- Emergency Management Act 2018 which provides the authority under which Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committees (MEMPC) operate.
- Ministerial Guidelines for Preparing State, Regional and Municipal Emergency Management Plans
- State Fire Management Planning Guidance to Regional and Municipal Fire Management Planning Committees.

This Plan is risk informed, having regard for the social, economic, built and natural environment aspects of fire, and functions as a guide for participants involved in fire management planning activities. The Plan also contains appropriate reference to other applications of fire, including ecological and cultural.

This Plan does not intend to override or contradict local government or individual agency plans, or legislated responsibilities of any individual agency. It is designed to complement and enhance planning undertaken at a Regional and State level within emergency management arrangements.

The period of this Plan is 3 years.

Municipal Fire Management Committee Vision and Purpose

The Towong Shire Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMP) has the following vision and purpose.

Vision

To manage the risk of fire to all life, property, cultural, environmental and agricultural assets within the Towong Shire for a fire-ready, safer, and resilient community.

Purpose of the Plan

To guide committee members in integrated fire management planning activities, reduce risks to communities



and increase awareness of community regarding their own responsibilities.

Towong Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee

The functions of the Towong MFMPC are:

- Be responsible for the preparation and review of the relevant MFMP
- Ensure that its MFMP is consistent with the state emergency management plan and the relevant MEMPC and/or Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP)
- Provide reports of recommendation to the MEMPC in relation to any matter that affects, or may affect, emergency management planning in the municipality
- Provide a forum for fire and land management agencies, industry and community to collaborate in support of fire risk reduction programs
- Share information with the MEMPC and other MFMPC's to assist effective fire management planning
- Collaborate (having regard to the Guidelines) with any other MFMPC that the MEMPC considers appropriate in relation to emergency management planning, including preparing MFMPs
- Perform any other function conferred on the MFMPC by the MEMPC, or any other act

Principles

The principles of the Towong MFMPC are:

Collaboration:

Of agencies in developing and implementing shared and coordinated fire management planning and preparedness activities that reduce risks to community

Accountability:

In supporting effective committee direction and action including reviewing, monitoring and reporting

Community focus:

That supports community resilience and provides communities with the opportunity to actively participate in fire management planning and activities

Better understanding:

Of fire risks to guide the collective activities and actions of committee members, agencies and community



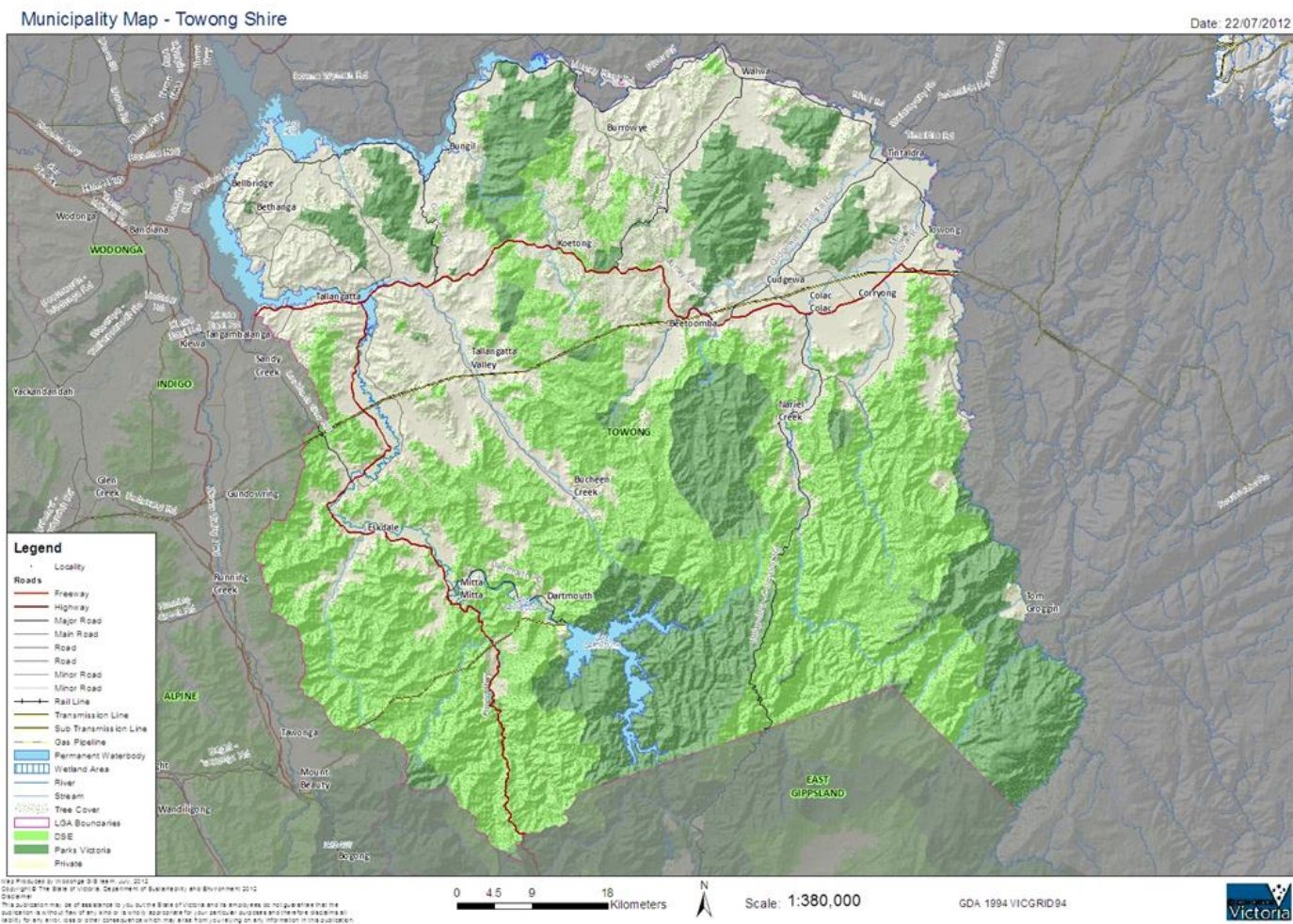
Part 1

Towong Shire Context and Fire Risk

Environmental scan

Towong Shire is located approximately 400km from Melbourne on the NSW border in the far north east of the state of Victoria. The Murray River forms the northern boundary of the municipality.

The Shire covers one of the state's largest local government land areas of 6635 square kms of which 75 per cent is public land. The majority of the public land is forested with significant proportions being in national or state parks including Burroway-Pine Mountain National Park, Alpine National Park, Mt Lawson State Park, Mt Granya State Park, Jarvis Creek Regional Park and the Wabba Wilderness Park.



It adjoins the following municipalities:

Victoria	New South Wales
Wodonga City Council	Greater Hume Shire
Indigo Shire Council	Snowy Valleys Council
Alpine Shire Council	
East Gippsland Shire Council	

The Shire has a history of consistent and lengthy fire seasons due to its climate, topography, and environment. Additionally, the nature and lifestyle of Towong Shire communities create a range of risks associated with the occurrence of fire in the environment. This plan has been prepared by the joint efforts of emergency services and land managers to reduce the risk posed by fire to life and property.

Further environmental scanning and associated information, is located in:
[Towong Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan](#)

Linkages to Agency Plans and Processes

- **Country Fire Authority (Joint Fuel Management Program)**
<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/about-us/what-we-do/planned-burns>
- **Hancock Victorian Plantations**
<https://www.hvp.com.au/hvp-forest-management/hvp-fire-management/>
- **Forest Fire Management Victoria (Joint Fuel Management Program)**
<https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/bushfire-fuel-and-risk-management/joint-fuel-management-program>

Municipality Risk Rating - CERA

The Victorian State Emergency Service (VICSES) program of Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA) is used to identify, mitigate and reduce risks within the community. CERA has determined the bushfire risk and structure fire risk within the Towong Shire as follows:

Bushfire/Grassfire Risk Rating	Fire – Structural/Residential fire	Date of last assessment
High	Medium	2023

Municipality Risk Rating – VFFR-R

The Victorian Fire Risk Register – Residential (VFRR-R) is a systematic process that identifies assets at risk from structure fire, assesses the level of residual risk to those assets and records the risk mitigation treatments currently in place.



History of Significant Fire

Bushfires are a regular occurrence within Towong Shire and throughout its history the municipality has been directly and indirectly impacted by a number of major fires which include the 1939 Black Friday Fires, 1952 fires and 1983 Ash Wednesday Fires.

On December 30 2019, the Upper Murray was faced with one of its biggest natural disasters ever as wildfire engulfed the region. The fire started in New South Wales on 26 December near Walwa and burned into mid-January. Almost 600 properties were impacted, with:

- 82 dwellings destroyed
- hundreds of properties and buildings lost
- kilometres of fencing ruined
- nearly 6,000 livestock killed or missing.

The fires ultimately burnt through more than 380,000 hectares of land.

The majority of fires within the Shire are caused by lightning however there has been a steady increase in the detection of un-attended campfires along with a small number of suspected/arson ignitions.

Further details on the history of emergencies in the Towong Shire is located in [Towong Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan](#)

Major Fire Hazards

Given Towong Shire's landscape and demographics, the following hazards were determined by the Committee to be of greatest risk to the community.

- Bushfire/Grassfire
- Fire – Structural/Residential fire

The descriptions in the next section provide a snapshot of the hazard, consequences, relevant agencies, mitigation activities or programs in place and community actions. Mitigation actions are guided by a broad range of programs, plans and documents. Some of these plans can be found in Appendix 2, along with reference to some of the response plans in place.

The list of mitigation and programs used in the Hazard section is representative, not exhaustive.

Insights into Major Fire Risks

Hazard	Bushfire / Grassfire
Description	<p>Bushfire/Grassfire is assessed as a significant risk in Victoria's State-level emergency risk assessment, Emergency Risks in Victoria, published in 2020.</p> <p>Bushfires/Grassfires can start for many reasons, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accidents such as mishandled campfires or barbecues • Malicious activity such as arson • Infrastructure incidents such as sparks from electricity lines or rail transport • Natural phenomena such as lightning <p>Hot, dry and windy weather are ideal conditions for bushfires to start and spread. The topography found in the Towong Shire, can also play a significant role in establishing local weather conditions that may not reflect those occurring elsewhere in the area.</p>
Consequences	<p>Consequences of bushfires/grassfires are potentially significant and varied including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human (loss of life, serious injury, respiratory impacts) • Environmental impacts (loss of vegetation, biodiversity, cultural values) • Built form (damage to onsite and neighbouring property and infrastructure) • Economic (business interruptions, loss of tourism, assets and livestock)
Relevant agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) ○ Agriculture Victoria (AgVic) • Parks Victoria (PV) • Country Fire Authority (CFA) • Hancock Victorian Plantations (HVP) • Victoria Police • Towong Shire Council



<p>What is being done</p>	<p>Bushfire mitigation strategies, controls and assessments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bushfire Management Strategy 2020 (Hume Region) • <u>Victorian Fire Risk Register</u> • Land use planning controls: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Bushfire Management Overlay</u> ○ <u>Bushfire Risk Engagement Areas</u> <p>Programs and plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Fuel Management Program (FFMVic & CFA) • Roadside fuel management • Safer Together Programs • Fire Infrastructure Grant Scheme • Total Fire Ban and Fire Danger Period requirements • Agency operational plans including local CFA plans • Evacuation and Traffic Management guidelines <p>Community Safety Engagement Programs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Safety Education programs (CFA) • Advertising and Social Media campaigns • Community engagement and awareness <p>For further detail, refer to the Bushfire / Grassfire table within Part 3 of this document.</p>
<p>What community members can do</p>	<p>A well thought out bushfire survival plan can help if you live or holiday in high-risk bushfire areas of Victoria.</p> <p>Know what to do if a fire starts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor conditions outside. Make sure you're connected to all emergency information sources • Follow all directions from emergency services • Act early, even if you haven't received a warning. Plan to leave high risk bushfire areas early on high fire danger days <p>Prepare through the <u>Bushfire Prepare Program</u> or CFA's <u>Community Fireguard</u> program, available for residents in high-risk bush or grass fire areas. These are designed to help you:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plan for a range of scenarios 2. Make informed decisions when it counts 3. Maintain a fire smart house and garden 4. Work together with your community to reduce everyone's bushfire risk <p>Further information on how to prepare for bushfires www.cfa.vic.gov.au</p>



Hazard	Fire – Structural/Residential fire
Description	<p>Structural/Residential fire is a fire that may impact the structural components of various types of residential, commercial or industrial buildings. It is a separate category of fire to bushfire although structures may be lost during bushfires and it may require the use of entirely different techniques to extinguish when compared to bushfire. Structural fire is confined predominantly to the more settled, urban and industrial areas of the shire although agricultural fires, such as haystack fires and machinery fires, may also have an impact on structures in the farming areas.</p> <p>On average there are 3,000 house fires each year in Victoria, and a majority of these are preventable. Common reasons for structural/residential fires include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unattended cooking • Electrical faults • Improper use of electrical items including overloading power boards and/or leaving appliances on surfaces that can burn • Cigarettes, candles, incense, and oil burners left unattended • Storage of combustible materials
Consequences	<p>Consequences of structural/residential fires are potentially significant and varied including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human (loss of life, serious injury, displacement from home) • Built form (damage to property and neighbouring property) • Environmental impacts (damage to local vegetation, run off into waterways) • Services disruption (e.g., aged care facilities, medical services) • Economic (business interruptions, loss of tourism)
Relevant agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country Fire Authority (CFA) • Towong Shire Council • Victoria Police • Victorian Building Authority (VBA) • Office of Housing (DFFH)
What is being done	<p>Structure fire mitigation strategies, controls and assessments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u><i>Victorian Fire Risk Register</i></u> • Land use planning controls: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u><i>Bushfire Management Overlay</i></u> ○ <u><i>Bushfire Risk Engagement Areas</i></u> <p>Programs and plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency operational plans including local CFA plans • Evacuation and Traffic Management guidelines



	<p>Community Safety Engagement Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Safety Education programs (CFA) • Advertising campaigns • Community engagement and awareness <p>For further detail, refer to the Structural / Residential Fire table within Part 3 of this document.</p>
<p>What community members can do</p>	<p>Once a fire starts it can spread rapidly putting you and your loved ones at risk. How you can protect yourself, your family and your home:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a working smoke alarm and test it regularly • Look out for fire hazards in the home • Have a home fire escape plan and practice it regularly • If a fire occurs in your home, get out, stay out and call Triple Zero (000) • Report residential hoarding to your local Council • Clean up and around the property and ensure equipment including barbeques are in good working order • Ensure children are educated on fire safety <p>The added dangers associated with evacuating a building mean it is critical to plan for and to know how to respond quickly and safely if there is a fire or other emergency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively practice building evacuation drills and assist building managers by monitoring any damage to building safety equipment. • Ensure that all exits and paths of travel to exits are kept readily accessible and clear of obstructions • Store combustible materials appropriately <p>For more information on safety in apartments and the home visit www.frv.vic.gov.au or www.cfa.vic.gov.au</p>



Part 2

Municipal Fire Management Planning

Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMP)

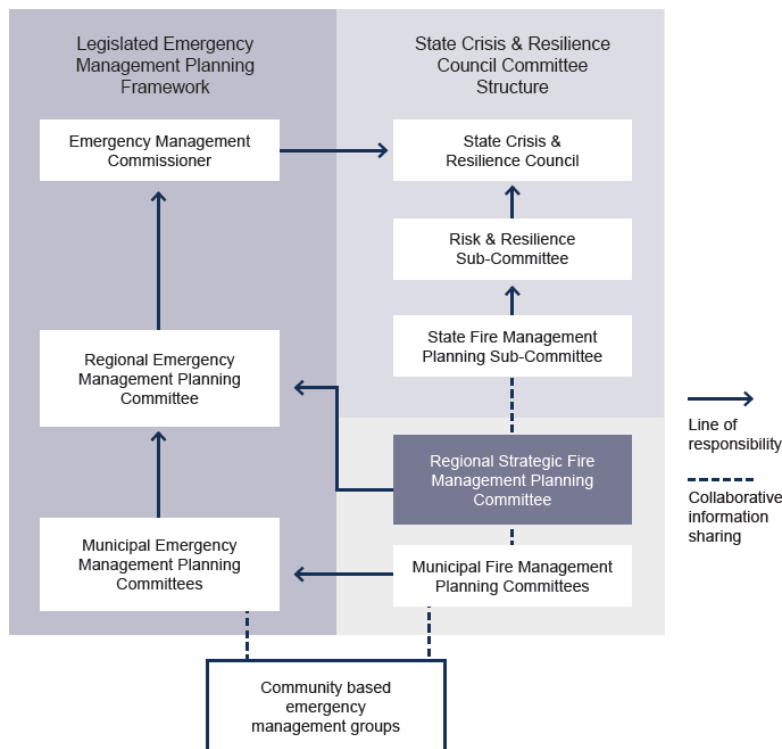
In 2018 the Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act amended the Emergency Management Act 2013 to provide greater cohesion through new integrated arrangements for emergency management planning in Victoria at the state, regional and municipal levels.

The principal focus of the amendments is on efficiency and effectiveness, interoperability and integration, the local needs of communities, promoting community resilience and the importance of collaborative emergency management planning.

Section 59 of the Emergency Management Act 2018 provides the authority under which Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committees (MEMPC) operate as a multi-agency collaboration whose members bring organisation, industry and personal expertise to the task of emergency management planning.

Under this legislation, municipal fire management planning committees are sub-committees of the respective municipal emergency management planning committee. The Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMP) informs the MEMPC of emerging risks and changes in the municipality that may require attention.

Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee members work together to achieve a consistent, effective risk-based approach for fire management planning.






Figure 1 An overview of the State's emergency management and planning committee structure.

Committee membership

- Country Fire Authority
 - District 24
 - Corryong Group
 - Tallangatta Group
- DEECA / Forrest Fire Management Victoria
- Towong Shire Council
- Hancock Victorian Plantations (HVP)

Community and Fire Planning

There is a limit to the capacity of agencies and our planning to effectively mitigate all risk. It is important that everyone who lives, works and visits the area considers the risks and works to build resilience at the individual, family, business, neighbourhood and community level, understanding that managing the risk of fire is a shared responsibility.

More resilient communities:

- Are mindful of the risks that may impact them and their vulnerabilities
- Use their abilities, experience and resources to prepare for, and manage the consequences of emergencies; and
- Work together to support each other and emergency service organisations before, during and after emergencies

The Municipal Fire Management Committee and its member agencies have a role to play in supporting communities to build knowledge, capability, capacity and ultimately resilience. The more the Committee can guide community to support each other in mitigating risks, preparing for, responding to and recovering from fires the greater opportunity for a more resilient community.


Victoria's emergency management planning arrangements allow communities to undertake their own localised planning and connect their plans into Victoria's emergency management planning framework.

Examples of groups undertaking activities in reducing community fire risks include Neighbourhood Houses, Community Fireguard Groups and organisations that support community relief.

Support from Council can be made available for groups that may wish to explore developing a community level plan that assists in building community preparedness and resilience to emergencies.

Plan Assurance and Approval

Under the planning arrangements, the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee is responsible for assuring any of its sub-plans, of which this Plan is one.



This Plan has been prepared in accordance with the EM Act 2018 and State Fire Management Planning Guidance to Regional and Municipal Fire Management Planning Committees.

This Plan comes into effect when it is published and remains in effect until superseded by an approved and published update.

To ensure the Fire Management Plan provides for a current integrated, coordinated and comprehensive approach to effective fire management planning, it is to be reviewed at least every three years.

Suggested Information source for assurance and approval process:

- A. Guidelines for preparing State, Regional and Municipal Emergency Management Plans
- B. Guidance to Regional and Municipal Fire Management Planning Committees
- C. Victorian Preparedness Framework
- D. Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management
- E. Assurance Framework for Emergency Management
- F. National Emergency Risk Management Guidelines
- G. Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA)



Part 3

Towong Shire Fire Risk Reduction Strategies & Activities

Annual Agency Reporting

Agencies that are responsible for prevention and / or preparedness activities must report to the committee annually.

The report must contain actions which have been completed in the previous 12 months. The report must be written so that it can be tabled, and the committee can assess all the actions as a collective approach to risk reduction.

Risk Reduction Strategies and Activities

Risk reduction activities from agencies must have deliverable outcomes that can be quantified and be able to demonstrate a reduction in risk.

Bushfire / Grassfire

Activity	Outcomes / Description	Frequency	Responsible Agency
Education			
Safer Together	State Government bushfire risk management funding.	Funding dependant.	CFA FFMVic Towong Shire Council
Engagement			
Safer Together	State Government bushfire risk management funding.	Funding dependant.	CFA FFMVic Towong Shire Council
Total Fire Ban / High Fire Danger	Targeted visitation by CFA and FFMVic staff in high visitation camping areas prior to, and during, periods of high fire danger and / or Total Fire Bans.	As required	CFA FFMVic
Property Advice Visit Service (PAVS)	The Property Advice Visit Service (PAVS) is designed to support brigades visiting at risk community members at their home. Brigades can use local knowledge and CFA mapping data to identify households with the highest bushfire risk.	Variable. Based on seasonal conditions and supported by VFRR.	CFA
Community events	Presence at community events, e.g., local, or regional festival or market, exhibition or Council activity	Variable. On request.	CFA FFMVic
Farm Fire Safety Program	Practical fire safety information for managers of cropping farms and agricultural workers in the grain industry.	Variable. On request.	CFA


Brigade or Local Activities	Engagement activity that does not fit into one of the activities in this table. This can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outreach activities • on-request engagement with community members via phone, email or in-person at a property, business, or CFA location. • Direct engagement with businesses, tourists, visitors. 	Variable. On request.	CFA
Indirect Engagement	Unattended displays in high-traffic locations such as libraries, shopping centres and staffless visitor centres.	Variable. On request	CFA FFMVic Towong Shire Council
Community Fireguard Groups	Community Fireguard Groups were developed through the acknowledgement that on high fire risk days, suppression capabilities are limited, and CFA cannot protect every property. On such days, the key to community safety is the preparedness and response of those who may become threatened. It is the decisions that people make leading up to a high-risk day, on a high-risk day or when a fire threatens that are critical to their survival.	Annual. Ongoing	CFA
Social Media	Posts on social media educating on fuel management, bushfire risk, campfire safety, property preparedness and protection.	Annual	CFA FFMVic Towong Shire Council
Compliance			
Towong Shire Council Enforcement	Council has a role in ensuring that private landholders appropriately manage their land. Council officers inspect properties within the municipality to assess the potential risk of a bushfire and where necessary may issue a fire prevention notice.	Annual	Towong Shire Council
Bushfire Management Overlay	Planning referral for new subdivisions, structures applies conditions for access, water supply, standards, works and vegetation management	As required	Towong Shire Council
Total Fire Ban (TFB) Patrols	Undertake TFB Patrols at key visitor sites to ensure legislative compliance with campfire regulations and forest closures.	As required	FFMVic
Mitigation			
Safer Together	State Government bushfire risk management funding.	Funding dependant.	CFA FFMVic Towong Shire Council

Plantation Fire Protection Measures & Fuel Management	Routine fire protection activities such as ensuring vehicle networks are open and fuel management activities such as fire break slashing.	Annual.	HVP
Electric Line Clearance	As required by Energy Safe Victoria's electrical line clearance guidelines to ensure protection of assets and minimise ignition potential.	Annual.	AusNet
Joint Fuel Management Program (JFMP)	State-wide program that manages fuel on public and private land over a rolling three years. The program integrates a risk-focused bushfire management approach.	Annual.	FFMVic CFA
Roadside Fuel Management	Management of fuel on roadsides based on road classifications. (Refer to relevant agency Road Management Strategy)	Annual.	Towong Shire Council CFA Regional Roads Victoria (RRV)
Preparedness			
Safer Together Funding	State Government bushfire risk management funding.	Funding dependant.	CFA FFMVic Towong Shire Council
Local Information & Advice	An online source of information for the community. An important tool to emphasis the shared responsibility between community, fire services and local government.	As required	CFA
Bushfire Place of Last Resort	May provide some protection from direct flame and heat from fire but does not guarantee safety. CFA undertake assessment on behalf of Towong Shire Council.	Annual review process	CFA Towong Shire Council Committees of Management
Roadside Fuel Management	Management of fuel on roads based on road classifications. (Refer to relevant agency Road Management Strategy)	Annual	Towong Shire Council CFA RRV
Local Response Plans (LRP)	Produced from the local brigade, group, CFA district, other emergency services and the municipality to enhance initial bushfire operational planning, preparedness, and response.	3 Yearly	CFA
Response			
Water Point Maintenance	Maintenance of Water Points across HVP Plantation Tenure and Public Land	Annual. Routine and reactive maintenance as required.	HVP FFMVic Towong Shire Council CFA Brigades
Emergency Water Supply	Maintenance and testing to ensure operational and	Annual.	FFMVic

Tanks (Benambra Corryong Road)	meets agency requirements. Ensure tank is full by 31 October each year.	Routine and reactive maintenance as required.	CFA
Remote Water Supply (Dunstan's Heli-dip)	Maintenance and testing to ensure operational and meets agency requirements by 31 October each year.	Annual. Routine and reactive maintenance as required.	FFMVic
Fire Access Roads	Ensure that the designated fire access roads on private land are kept in a trafficable condition suitable for access by fire brigade tankers. (Appendix 3 contains a list of Fire Access Roads)	Annual. Routine and reactive maintenance as required.	CFA Private landowners (Subject to funding)
Priority Access Roads	Ensure cleared of all low overhanging obstructions less than 5m above the road pavement and dangerous trees/limbs need to be removed. A 3m minimum width fine fuel reduced area on both sides of the road must abut a clear travelled path that has a 6m minimum width. (Appendix 4 contains a list of Priority Access Roads)	Annual. Routine and reactive maintenance as required.	Towong Shire Council FFMVic RRV
Strategic access road network	Ensure that the strategic access road network on public land is kept in a trafficable condition suitable for access by fire fighting appliances and heavy machinery.	Annual. Routine and reactive maintenance as required.	FFMVic
Strategic Fuel Breaks	Ensure that the strategic fuel breaks on public land and tracks are kept in a trafficable condition suitable for access by fire brigade tankers.	Annual. Routine and reactive maintenance as required.	FFMVic

Fire – Structural/Residential fire

Activity	Outcomes	Frequency	Responsible Agency
Education			
Fire Safe Kids	A presentation on basic fire safety for primary schools and early learning centres – usually one school session induration, delivered by CFA members.	As required	CFA
Brigade Social Media	Posts on social media educating on the risks associated with the use of driers, heaters, risks within the home.	Annual	CFA
Local Media	Publications in local media educating on the risks associated with the use of driers, heaters, risks within the home.	Annual	CFA
Engagement			
CFA Home or Structure Fire Safety Program	Practical session on home fire safety, targeted towards older people.	As required.	CFA
CFA Home Fire Safety Program (Early Fire Safe)	Practical session for parents and carers on home fire safety and prevention of burn and scald injuries in children.	As required.	CFA
Variable Messaging Boards	Variable Messaging Boards displaying community messaging within Towong to advise community of high fire danger, targeted messaging such as camping, smoke alarm checks etc.	Annual	CFA Brigades Towong Shire Council
Compliance			
Municipal Building Surveyor Inspections	Towong Shire Council is responsible for the enforcement of the maintenance provisions of the Regulations.	As required	Towong Shire Council
Essential Safety Measures Compliance	Towong Shire Council has responsibility under the Building Act 1993 for the enforcement of building safety within the municipality.	As required	Towong Shire Council
Dangerous Goods Inspections	Inspections at facilities, workplaces, storage where dangerous goods are stored, transported and managed.	As required.	CFA



Fire Safety Inspections	Inspections undertaken as per legislative requirements.	As required.	CFA
Fire Equipment Maintenance (FEM) Inspections	Inspections and maintenance undertaken as per legislative requirements.	6 Monthly	CFA Brigades
Preparedness			
Fire Safety Skills and Warden Information Session	Building Managers and owners sessions to convey the importance of fire safety, firefighting and warden roles.	As required	CFA
Adopt a Fire Hydrant Program	Program for buildings which have Fire Hydrants near their premises to keep it clear	Ongoing	CFA
Structural Fire Pre-Incident Plans	Individuals site and building plans / information to aid firefighting operations and to protect life and property.	As required	CFA
Response			
Water Point (WP) Maintenance	Maintenance of Water Points across HVP Tenure and Public Land	Annual. Routine and reactive maintenance as required.	HVP FFMVic Towong Shire Council North East Water



Part 4

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review Process



Monitoring, evaluation, and review process

This Plan will be reviewed every three years to ensure it is current, integrated, coordinated and comprehensive.

The Plan will be periodically updated to reflect the current status of identified risks as well as to reflect emerging risks and any strategies required to address them.

As well as having a standing agenda item at municipal fire management planning meetings, the Committee will periodically report to the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee on the Actions, and the Tasks identified against them.

Additionally, the Towong MFMPC supports the State's commitment to a culture of continuous improvement. This approach is outlined in the Emergency Management Victoria 2015 EM-LEARN Framework and is acquitted through:

- Sharing lessons, including positive actions, to sustain and identify areas of improvement
- Encouraging learning from both assurance activities and contemporary good practice
- Recognising that identifying and implementing sustainable solutions takes time, resources and opportunity

For more information:

Lessons management framework (EM- LEARN)

[Lessons management framework \(EM-LEARN\) | Emergency Management Victoria \(emv.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/lessons-management-framework)



Appendices

Appendix 1 - Acronyms

This section contains acronyms that are used throughout this plan.

AgVic	Agriculture Victoria
CERA	Community Emergency Risk Assessment
CFA	Country Fire Authority
CRWM	Combustible Recyclable and Waste Material
DEECA	Department of Environment, Energy & Climate Action (VIC)
EMC	Emergency Management Commissioner
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
FFMVic	Forest Fire Management Victoria
FRV	Fire Rescue Victoria
HVP	Hancock Victoria Plantations
LGA	Local Government Area
MEMPC	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
MFMP	Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee
NECMA	North East Catchment Management Authority
PV	Parks Victoria
RRV	Regional Roads Victoria
VBA	Victorian Building Authority
VicPol	Victoria Police

Appendix 2 - Support Material

Support material	Author	Location/link
Emergency Management Act 2013	Issued by the Victorian Government	http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/ema2013190/
Guidelines for Preparing State, Regional and Municipal Emergency Management Plans	Issued by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services	https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/how-we-help/emergency-management-planning/planning-guidelines
Lessons management framework (EM- LEARN)	EMV	https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/how-we-help/reviews-and-lessons-management/lessons-management-framework-em-learn
Guidance to Regional and Municipal Fire Management Planning Committees	EMV	Guidance to Regional and Municipal Fire Management Planning Committees
MEMPC and sub-plan assurance template	EMV	https://files.emv.vic.gov.au/2021-05/Statement%20of%20Assurance%20advisory%20material%20EMP%20or%20MEMP%20sub%20plan_0.pdf
Victorian Preparedness Framework	EMV	Victorian Preparedness Framework
Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management	EMV	Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management
Assurance Framework for Emergency Management	EMV	Assurance Framework for Emergency Management
National Emergency Risk Management Guidelines	EMV	National Emergency Risk Management Guidelines
Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA)	State Emergency Service Victoria	Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA)
Hume Strategic Bushfire Management	DEECA (Safer Together)	https://www.safertogether.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0023/493520/DELWPO152pt4_BushfireManagementStrategies_2020_Hume_v5_web.pdf
Regional Emergency Management Plans and sub-plans	Emergency Management Victoria	https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/emergency-management-planning/remps
State Emergency Management Plan	EMV	https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/semv
Resilient Recovery Strategy	EMV	https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/how-we-help/resilient-recovery-strategy
Past bushfires - chronology	DEECA (FFMVic)	https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/history-and-incidents/past-bushfires
Major Incidents Report	Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience	https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/major-incidents-report/



Appendix 3 – Fire Access Roads

CFA brigades, in conjunction with the private landowners, shall ensure that the designated fire access roads and tracks are kept in a trafficable condition suitable for access by fire brigade tankers.

The required works include:

- (a) Removal of windfall timber
- (b) Maintain horizontal and vertical clearances
- (c) Maintenance of the road/track surface.

Fire access roads have been identified as:

- Ambrose Fire Tail
- Eighty Acres Track
- Flagstaff Fire Trail
- Low Grade Track
- Leys Fire Trail
- McCormacks Gap Track
- Mt Alfred Track
- Mt Charlie Track
- Pine Mountain Track
- Pooleys Track
- Schintlers Track
- Talgarno Fire Trail
- Wermatong Track
- Mitchells Track (Bethanga).



Appendix 4 – Priority Access Roads

Priority access roads must be cleared of all low overhanging obstructions less than 5m above the road pavement and dangerous trees/limbs need to be removed. A 3m minimum width fine fuel reduced area on both sides of the road must abut a clear travelled path that has a 6m minimum width.

These roads must be inspected annually by the controlling road authority and maintained prior to the fire danger period.

Priority access roads have been identified as:

- Back Thowgla Road
- Benambra Corryong Road (Colac Colac to Nariel)
- Bluff Falls Road (as far as the National Park)
- Cudgewa North Road (as far as the National Park)
- Dartmouth Road
- Guy's Forest Road (Murray River Road to Burrowye)
- Lockharts Gap Road
- Murray Valley Highway (Darbyshire to Shelley)
- Omeo Highway (2km south of the Murray Valley Highway to Fernvale, Bullhead Creek to 2km south of Yabba Road, Tallandoon to Mitta Mitta)
- Sandy Creek Road (as far as the National Park)
- Shelley Walwa Road (Murray River Road to Plantations)
- Tallangatta Creek Road (1.5km at Wyeboo)
- Murray River Road
- Talgarno Gap Road
- Thowgla Road (Thowgla to Nariel Gap Road)
- Upper Murray Road (full length of seal)
- Yabba Road
- Georges Creek Road



Diagrams of typical works on roads

NOTE: The following diagrams show the optimum desirable situation. It must be noted that this may not be achievable or practical in all situations. It should also be noted that to lessen the risk of erosion, spraying should not be used in drainage lines.

