



ACT
Government



AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY RURAL FIRE SERVICE

FARM FIREWISE

INFORMATION BOOKLET

JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY DIRECTORATE
ACT EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCY

DATE 2022

*Cover – ACTRFS assisting
rural landholder with
agricultural burn to control
African Lovegrass*

INTRODUCTION

Bushfires are part of the Australian landscape and can have a huge impact on rural properties and businesses. There is a legal requirement for all rural landholders in the ACT's Bushfire Abatement Zone (the BAZ) to prepare and lodge a bushfire operational plan. This plan identifies and prioritises the assets for protection, prevention and mitigation plans and information on how the property can be accessed by firefighters in an emergency.

The ACT Government, through the ACT Rural Fire Service (ACTRFS) conducts a free Farm FireWise (FFW) program to aid rural landholders to prepare their bushfire operational plan and education on how to protect properties and assets from bushfire. FFW plans allow the ACTRFS to prepare incident action plans to minimise the impact of fire on rural enterprises and assist in recovery efforts and assists with the protection of the urban community.

LEGISLATION

Sections 120 and 121 of ACT Emergencies Act 2004 (the Act) specify the obligations of rural landowners, managers, and occupiers.

In summary, landholders must take all reasonable steps to prevent and inhibit the outbreak and spread of fire on their land and from their land. Reasonable steps must consider the amount and type of vegetation, other flammable material and climatic conditions, location, and proximity to other land.

If a person who is the owner or occupier of rural land becomes aware of an outbreak of uncontrolled fire on the land (or on unleased Commonwealth or territory land adjacent to the land), the person must—

- a) immediately take all reasonable steps to tell the commissioner, a member of the fire and rescue service or rural fire service, or a police officer, of the outbreak; and
Example – immediately telephoning 000 emergency about the outbreak
- b) if the outbreak is on the land owned or occupied by the person and it is not beyond the person's capacity to extinguish the fire—take all reasonable steps to extinguish it.

Section 78 (1(b)) of the Act, specifies the requirement for owners of an area of land in a bushfire abatement zone (refer to the map on page 7) to have a bushfire operational plan as identified under the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan. Subsection 5 (b) requires these plans to be reviewed every 5 years.

THE TEMPLATE

Central to the program is the identification of property access, asset protection zones, strategic fire advantage zones and asset protection priorities. Also provided through the process is key information of estimated fire behaviour for each property, dependant on the fire fuel, for each of the fire danger ratings. The FFW plan consists of a property map identifying fences, gates, fire trails, structures, asset protection and strategic fire advantage zones, water sources, access considerations (eg. gully erosion and water courses) and latest aerial imagery. It also consists of a Bushfire Operational Plan (BOP) which contains details of property contacts (including emergency contact), asset protection and strategic fire advantage zone works, access issues and details, asset protection priority, firefighting equipment and protection systems, hazardous materials and estimated fire behaviour under each fire danger rating. During the process of developing the BOP and map, you will be able to identify areas where you would like assistance from RFS to conduct agricultural, ecological or hazard reduction burns on your property. Having RFS Volunteers assist you with these burns helps enhance and develop skills of experienced and new fire fighters.

THE BUSHFIRE OPERATIONAL PLAN

Commercial In Confidence

Bushfire Operations Plan

Property Name
Property Address

PROPERTY OVERVIEW
FARM FIREWISE

Contact Details

Lessee Name:
Property Address:
Postal Address:
Contact Name (1):
Phone (1): Mobile (1):
Email:
Medical Condition Flag:

Emergency Contact Details

Contact Name:
Relationship:
Phone: Email:

Property Location

District:
RFS Brigade:
Area (Hectares):
In BAZ:
FFW ID:
Rural Lease BOP: Yes/No
UHF Channel:

Access / Egress

Notes on Access and Egress go here

Strategic Area

Notes on Mitigation Here

Asset Protection Area

Notes on Asset Protection Area go here

Fire Fighting Resources

Fire Fighting Equipment:
Notes on Fire Fighting Equipment go here

Specialised Fire Protection System installed: Yes/No

Hazardous Materials:
Notes on Hazardous Material go here

Estimated Fire Behaviour

Catastrophic	
Extreme	
High	
Moderate	

Asset Protection Priorities

Asset	Priority

Through completing the FARM FIREWISE bushfire management planning program, you have now completed the Bushfire Action Plan (BAP) or Bushfire Operational Plan (BOP) required.

When changes are made to the property that may alter any of the provided information, please assist us to keep our records accurate by contacting the ACT Rural Fire Service, allowing us to update and amend our files accordingly.

Thank you for participating in the FARM FIREWISE bushfire management planning.

I will complete/review my Emergency Survival Plan for the property.

I consent to this document being used by ESA for operational purposes.

Land Holdings

District	Division	Section	Block

Lessee Name _____

Signature _____

Lessee Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

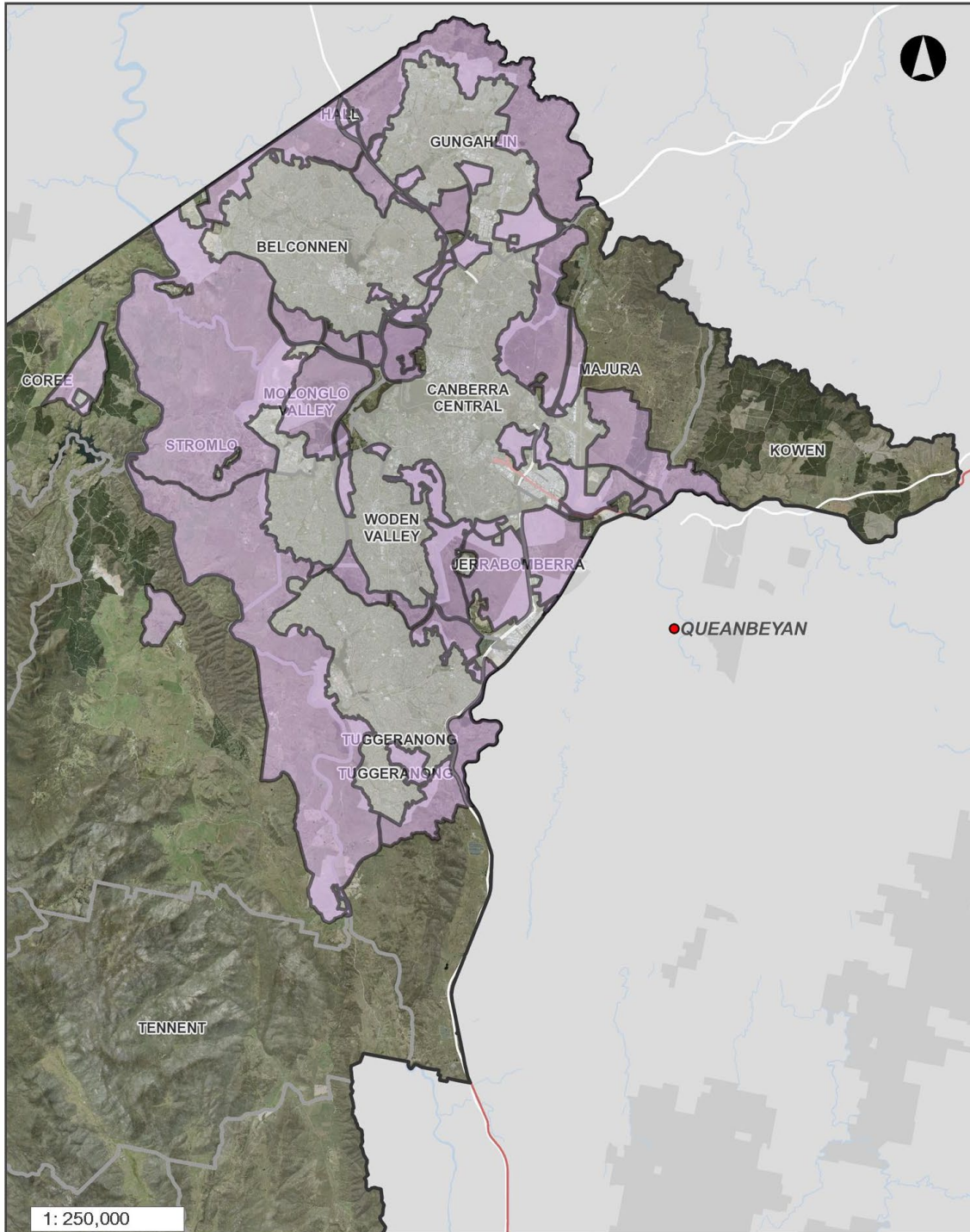
For and on behalf of ACT
Emergency Services Agency _____

Date _____

Report Status:
Next Review Date: DD/MM/YYYY



The Bushfire Abatement Zone **ACTmapi**



To find out if your property is in the bushfire abatement zone visit <https://actmapi.act.gov.au/> and click on the Bushfire Tab.

WHAT DOES THIS ACHIEVE FOR YOU AND THE RURAL FIRE SERVICE?

This assists ACTRFS and the Emergency Services Agency (ESA) appropriately respond to bushfires impacting on rural land and work with rural landholders to reduce the risk to themselves and the broader ACT community.

Rural landholders are also encouraged to develop and review their emergency survival plan, to ensure it is up to date and that they are familiar with it.



A view of the 2020 Orroral Fire burning within Namadgi National Park, taken from a Rural Property near Tharwa

CONDUCTING BURNS ON YOUR RURAL PROPERTY

Under section 123 of the Act, the owner of land may burn any material (including wood, straw, stubble, grass and herbage) on the land on any day outside the bushfire season if—

(a) the land around the material to be burnt is clear of flammable material for at least 5m in every direction; and

(b) at least 24 hours before burning the material, the owner has given notice of the intended burning to every occupier of land adjacent to the land where the material is to be burnt.

This does not apply during a declared Total Fire Ban or if you are located within the Built-up Area as declared under the Act. During the bushfire season you will need a Fire Permit issued by ACTRFS.

When undertaking a burn, we ask that landholders, managers and/or occupants, contact the ESA Communications Centre (ComCen) before lighting a burn and again once the burn is complete. If ACTRFS and ESA are unaware of your burn and we receive a 000 call, we are obligated to send firefighting appliances to investigate. You can contact ComCen 24/7 on 02 6200 4111.

For further detail on the FFW program, applying for a Fire Permit or assistance with burning on your property, please contact the Senior Rural Liaison Officer on (02) 6207 8609 or email rfs@actgov.au.



Large airtanker undertaking asset protection on a rural property during 2020 Orroral Fire



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