bushfire CRC

PROGRAM C: COMMUNITY SELF-SUFFICIENCY FOR FIRE SAFETY

# COMMUNITY EDUCATION, AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS FOR BUSHFIRE: AN INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF PRACTICES ACROSS AUSTRALIA


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# Community education, awareness and engagement programs for bushfire: an initial assessment of practices across Australia.

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## Introduction

This paper is intended to provide an initial assessment of current practices across Australia in relation to programs for improving community safety in bushfires. Community education, awareness and engagement programs are interventions intended to increase people's perception of their risk of bushfire and to generate changes in behaviour to reduce their bushfire risk. The programs take many forms reflecting differences in individual and community needs, priorities and capacities as well as the diverse range of issues being addressed such as correcting mistaken beliefs about bushfire risks, increasing levels of preparedness and warning people when there is an immediate fire threat in a way that supports effective action without causing either undue alarm or minimising the potential danger. The diversity of programs also reflects differences in the resources available for fire agencies to develop programs and implement them in different locations.

### *Scope*

The focus of this study is the community education, awareness and engagement programs for bushfire delivered by fire agencies across Australian states and territories.

Other activities, particularly local fire management planning, also contribute to improved community safety in bushfires, and may influence and be influenced by the programs that are the focus of this study. For example, local planning processes can provide information that informs the targeting of community education and engagement programs to high risk households and communities while community groups developed through community engagement programs may be factored into fire management plans if they provide mechanisms for disseminating warnings in a local area or provide a reliable source of local information during a fire.

There are different local fire management planning structures and processes in different areas, for example committees with responsibilities for municipal fire management planning, municipal disaster recovery and municipal fire prevention have been identified. Agencies other than fire agencies are also involved in delivering bushfire related programs and services. Community development programs to support recovery from a major fire are often provided by relevant state government departments (eg Department of Human Services) in partnership with local governments and service delivery agencies.

The roles and geographic areas covered by rural and metropolitan fire agencies vary between states and territories and may overlap. Rural fire agencies are also concerned with broader community fire safety issues, for example, promoting smoke alarms to reduce structural fires. This paper focuses on the bushfire related community education, engagement and awareness programs provided by rural fire agencies. These programs mainly focus on prevention and preparedness measures that inform individual and community action both prior to the fire season and in response to an imminent fire threat. There are also programs and activities that focus on providing timely and accurate information to communities when there is a fire and supporting communities during recovery from a fire.

### *Method*

A database of existing bushfire community awareness, education and engagement programs has been developed.[1] The database draws on information gathered through interviews and workshops with fire agency personnel, reviews of fire agency documents and a search of fire agency websites. Further information about some of the programs has been gathered through attending community meetings. It has also been possible to draw on a current review of community awareness, education and engagement programs for natural hazards in Australia.[2]

[1] See Appendix 1: Interim database of community education, awareness and engagement programs.
[2] The study, titled "A national review of community education, awareness and engagement programs designed to enhance community safety' is being conducted by CIRCLE at RMIT University for the National Community Safety Work Group of the Australian Emergency Management Committee.

About sixty distinct programs have been identified so far, while not yet an exhaustive list the programs identified make up a comprehensive sample of current approaches to community safety in bushfires. The database is very much evolving through a process of data collection and ratification from the agencies responsible for the particular programs. It represents a snapshot of current practices in a rapidly changing and emerging area of community safety.

The body of this paper provides descriptions of the types of programs that have been identified and examples thereof. Programs have been classified under eleven overarching types of program and activity. While this helps to highlight key distinctions between programs it is important to recognise that in many cases there is a considerable amount of overlap between them.

## Program Types

### Media Campaigns

Fire agencies in all Australian states and territories utilise media campaigns as a major component in the suite of activities and programs for bushfire community safety. Media campaigns provide an outlet to get information to a large audience in a practical and timely manner. A wide range and all forms of media are utilised. This includes television commercials, radio commercials and phone-ins, as well as press advertising and feature articles in local and regional newspapers.

Examples include the multi-agency Fire Ready Victoria campaign (FRV), Operation Fire Shield run by New South Wales Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS), and Queensland Fire and Rescue Services' (QFRS) Bushfire Prepared Communities. FRV is an example of a multi-agency strategy that encompasses a significant media component. The principle agencies involved are the Country Fire Authority (CFA), the Department of Sustainability and the Environment (DSE) and the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFB). The FRV media campaign is phased to reflect the fire season in Victoria. The initial phase commences in November with key safety messages and information that encourages residents to participate in other programs and activities and to get information from the agency websites and dedicated hotline, the Victorian Bushfire Information Line (VBIL). In this phase, local and regional press are predominantly used to disseminate information. The second phase, which runs from January to March, more specifically targets residents in high bushfire risk areas and promotes ways to access up to date information during bushfires. At this point major newspapers are utilised, along with television and radio commercials. A national bushfire awareness television commercial was developed in 2006 and has been utilised across Australia over the past two years.

There are also more specifically targeted campaigns that exist, for instance the Bushfire Ready Dry Season Campaign run by Fire and Emergency Services Authority (FESA) in Western Australia. This campaign is specifically targeted at the remoter areas of the state.

The main outcomes that agencies expect from a well organised and targeted media campaign are a raised awareness and acceptance of the bushfire risk particularly amongst members of the general public with limited prior experience or knowledge and living in high bushfire risk areas. This is seen as a necessary pre-cursor for residents living in fire-prone areas to find out more locally specific information and undertake preparedness activities. This might include motivating residents to attend a local meeting, request an information pack from their local fire agency or explore a fire agency website. The ubiquitous nature of most forms of media result in the messages being disseminated to people outside fire-prone areas. However, this has the benefit of exposing more people to the key messages and making them aware of the need to be mindful when visiting fire-prone areas during the bushfire season.

There are questions as to the effectiveness of the media campaign approach and a lack of evidence to determine how much attention people pay to the media they are exposed to. It is

difficult to determine whether interest generated by the media is sustained after the campaign finishes. There is a high cost to this approach to community education and awareness, particularly in terms of developing commercials and getting air-time on commercial networks. Therefore, while this type of media campaign has the potential to get bushfire awareness information to a wide audience, the impact is diluted compared to more engaging and targeted approaches to public education. The link between increased information and taking action to reduce risks is not well understood which raises further questions about the cost effectiveness of mass media campaigns as compared with other approaches.

**Warnings**

Warnings encompass both general fire danger warnings and specific warnings that relate to a current fire. General warnings include information about Total Fire Bans on high fire danger days. This information, based on the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) fire danger ratings, is distributed through newspapers, radio, television and fire agency websites. Another form of a general warning that is more localised are the fire warning ratings displayed on roadside signs across rural Australia.

In recent years several agencies have signed agreements with ABC local radio to act as the official emergency services broadcaster. This memorandum of understanding commits ABC local radio stations to interrupting broadcasts to provide the latest advice, warnings and information about bushfires as it is received from the fire agencies. The flow of accurate and reliable information to residents during a bushfire is essential to enable them to put their household plans into action. Thus a vital element of media campaigns is making people aware of where they will find this information on the radio, on agency websites and through information hotlines. An example of a hotline is the Victorian Bushfire Information Line, a dedicated 1800 number that connects through to the DSE/CFA call centre in Ballarat. During fires residents can find out current information on the situation in their local area and get advice about what their options are. People can also use the service to ask general preparedness related questions which can often be answered by the operators using an extensive questions and answers database that has been developed. Some issues have been raised about the capacity of hotlines to deal with the increased demands during major fires. Accuracy and timeliness of the information available to the general public is a vital if this approach is going to be effective.

Various other forms of warning system have been used such as the Standard Emergency Warning signal (SEWS). This is a national signal designed to alert the public via radio, television and public address systems that an announcement about an emergency that has potential to harm them is about to be made. However, this system has not been implemented with any level of consistency during bushfires. The potential of a system known as the Community Warning and Information System (CIWS) is currently being determined. Trials of CIWS took place in 2005 in several locations in Victoria. This emergency warning system utilises an automated phone calling system which delivers information designed to help the household respond appropriately during an emergency. Both SEWS and CIWS are multi-hazard warning systems. Warning systems can also operate at a very local level, for instance the Ferny Creek Fire Alert Siren in the Dandenong Ranges, Victoria. This was a community driven early warning system requested by locals after the Dandenong Ranges Fire in 1997.

Community liaisons in Incident Management Teams (IMT) are a more recent attempt by fire agencies, notably the CFA and NSW RFS, to provide a greater level of timely and accurate information to communities endangered by a firefront by bridging the gap between the community and IMT. Liaison Officers are chosen based on their local knowledge of the area and provide a conduit between the incident management team and the community. The transfer of accurate and understandable information and warnings to the general public is

extremely important for enabling households to make informed and safe decisions during an incident.

**Printed Publications**

There is a great deal of literature produced by the fire agencies that covers a wide range of bushfire awareness and education topics. The majority of this information is available in the form of booklets, brochures and leaflets that are widely distributed by fire agencies at public events and on request from the general public. The information is also increasingly available for download from the respective agency websites (see the interactive publications section below). Publications are normally produced at an agency level and distributed through the regions but in some cases localised brochures are also produced, under the overall branding of the agency. For instance, in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales, the Mount Wilson/ Mount Riverview RFS brigades developed a modified version of the FireWise brochure to address specific local issues in its content.

The information ranges from small leaflets on a specific issue related to bushfire, for example fire retardant garden plants, through to larger stand alone publications. Examples of the latter include QFRS' Bushfire Prepared Communities brochure, CFA's Living in the Bush workbook, Tasmanian Fire Services' (TFS) Prepare to Survive booklet and the South Australian Country Fire Services' (CFS) Bushfire Action Plan guide. This type of publication is specifically designed to encourage households to develop a bushfire plan. The emphasis is on households reading and discussing the information together and making certain decisions about whether they will stay and defend during a bushfire or leave early and, as a result, undertake preparedness activities. Checklists and spaces to write down household information are often provided in the booklet. Indeed, the CFS provided a pencil with their recent bushfire action plan guide under the slogan: "to survive a bushfire, you're going to need one of these". Thus the emphasis is very much on making a written plan about preparedness activities around the property such as vegetation management and equipment purchase. Information is also provided about what to expect during a bushfire and attempts to dispel common misconceptions about fire behaviour.

Sometimes packages of information are put together in the form of kits for easy distribution of a range of bushfire related information. This might include information pertaining to total fire ban days as well as copies of the bushfire planning brochure and so on. Further types of printed material are also produced which help to reinforce specific messages, for instance fridge magnets with the details of bushfire hotlines. This material adds additional levels of reinforcement for key messages and also adds further links to other forms of bushfire education material.

Intended outcomes appear to be increased knowledge and understanding about making a decision to stay and defend or leave early, possible preparedness activities and what to expect during a fire. A heavy onus is placed on residents to take the information away, learn more about what their options are and then adopt an appropriate plan. While a publication such as the Living in the Bush workbook may provide a self-motivated household with the information they need, this approach will not be sufficient for everyone. It requires a great deal of careful planning, consideration and time. The presumption of this approach is that people do act on the information. However, it is a very passive form of adult learning, which often suffers in the unavoidable competition with other day-to-day demands on people's time. There appear to be increasing efforts from fire agencies to target this information more specifically reflecting that the appeal of printed publications is not necessarily in tune with the requirements of households.

**Interactive Publications**

The limitations of printed forms of publication have resulted in the adoption of alternative forms of accessing bushfire preparedness information. Websites are becoming a greater

source of the publications which saves printing costs for fire agencies but also reflects the growing trend of people wishing to find information online. While this has clear advantages for many it can isolate residents without access to high speed broadband, increasing the importance of agencies being able to target vulnerable communities to avoid alienation. Agency websites offer the potential to add interactive features to the brochures. However, they also rely on well designed sites that make it easy for people to access the information they desire. Web-based information is also taking a more prominent role in providing information to communities during bushfires.

Increasingly brochures are being supplemented with more interactive forms of publication, including DVDs (e.g. TFS' Bushfire – Prepare to Survive and FESA's Be Prepared) and CD ROMs (e.g. CFA's Living in the Bush) and website content. This reflects the ongoing desire amongst fire agencies to broaden their engagement with the community. CFA's Living in the Bush CD-ROM has been available since 2004, offering an interactive guide to bushfire survival planning. The content on the CD-ROM is very similar to the Living in the Bush publication but also includes video footage of bushfires.

More recently the TFS launched their Bushfire – Prepare to Survive DVD, a 23 minute DVD designed to help households to prepare themselves and their properties for bushfires. The DVD was widely distributed to households across Tasmania living in high risk areas and promoted with a media campaign. Copies were also available at libraries and post offices to reach as wide an audience as possible. Pre-campaign research was utilised to determine what people would find most helpful and how best to utilise the video footage. A DVD format was chosen due to scepticism about the effectiveness of printed publications in reaching the target audience and leading to desired changes. In contrast, DVDs have become widely accessible and provide the possibility of adding a lot more sensory input that TFS believes is more likely to encourage households to plan to stay and defend or leave early and undertake necessary preparedness activities.

The TFS have utilised negative imagery and sounds, such as the dangers of leaving at the last minute and the sound of the firefront approaching a property, as well as positive video footage of households undertaking preparedness activities. Therefore, sensory input is seen as a key causal process in convincing viewers that there are real dangers of being under prepared but that there are positive steps that each household can take. As the imagery is more evocative than written descriptions it is anticipated that it will be more effective at making people take heed of the advice. The key messages appear to be reinforced more regularly than in the print format of the Prepare to Survive program and this is seen as another key causal process. Finally, the use of a fire fighter as the presenter brings credibility to the DVD which is also believed to be an important factor in the initial positive anecdotal feedback about the DVD.

Work is currently underway to evaluate the effectiveness of the DVD both in terms of reaching the target audience and leading to desired outcomes. In essence, the DVD evolved out of concerns that people were not receptive enough to brochures and thus an alternative form of engagement was needed; a response to a changing way people want to receive information, particularly amongst younger generations. The information on the DVD is also available as a download from the website and in this format can be viewed on mobile phones and digital media players. In a way the DVD could be viewed as bridging the gap between providing passive information to the public about bushfire education and the more intensive bushfire programs that involve direct contact between brigades and the community. However, the effectiveness of this virtual engagement compared to actual one-on-one contact is yet to be explored. The TFS DVD approach has definitely generated interest amongst other fire agencies around Australia about this approach.

## Local Brigade Activity

Many local brigades deliver community awareness messages whenever there is an opportunity to interact with the community. This may take the form of displays or presentations at schools, fêtes and other community events. Brigades in some states have dedicated mobile education units, for examples NSW RFS and CFA in Victoria. This is another important way to get the information and key messages to high risk communities and also represent the ongoing diffusion of bushfire safety messages to the community. Schools-based bushfire education is often part of a broader fire program which covers issues such as evacuation during a house fire and the importance of smoke alarms. Local brigades see such opportunities to speak to children as a valuable way to get messages and information to their parents. Education packs are another type of schools-based program, again with a more general fire approach. Examples of this include FESA's Fire Inside Out and the Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Services' (NT FRS) soon to be initiated Remote Communities Education program.

## Street and Community Meetings

Meetings make up a large component of program delivery for many agencies across Australia. There are various types of meetings that take place related to bushfire awareness, education and engagement. Firstly, there are street and community meetings with a preparedness focus. These are commonly held in the build-up to, and at the start of, the bushfire season. Secondly there are community meetings delivered during a bushfire incident, called community briefings to distinguish them from the preparedness meetings. Thirdly there are post-fire community briefings that take place in the aftermath of an event. The two forms of community briefing are discussed in the next section of the paper.

Street and community meetings are utilised, to varying degrees, by almost every fire agency across Australia. They are typically scripted presentations to communities in high bushfire risk areas with the expected outcome of increasing awareness and understanding of the risk and encouraging residents to undertake a range of preparedness activities around their property. Examples of established programs include FireWise meetings in New South Wales, FRV meetings in Victoria (formerly known as Bushfire Blitz) and Community FireSafe meetings in South Australia. Facilitators are trained to deliver the meetings. In most states the facilitators are volunteers who are often already members of their local brigade. A notable exception to this is in Victoria where the CFA employs paid facilitators. However, the local brigade tends to be represented at most meetings and is often on hand to answer questions. Visuals, such as posters, maps and personal protective clothing, are often utilised by the facilitators to enhance the learning experience, and publications are available for interested residents to take away.

A street corner meeting, as the name suggests, takes place on a street and targets local residents with specific information about the bushfire risk in their neighbourhood, as well as more general fire preparedness information. However, there are contexts where this format is not practical, particularly in more remote areas where properties are sparsely situated. In places like this a more general meeting point is used, such as a community hall. While the content of the two types of meeting are similar, community meetings are generally considered to be less effective at conveying locally specific information and consequently at encouraging households to undertake specific preparedness activities on their properties. The nature of the venue and the larger number of attendees can also result in a more didactic environment less conducive to learning. Street corner meetings provide similar information but in a locally specific environment making it easier for residents to envisage the dangers they might face and the benefits of preparedness activities such as vegetation management around their property. The meeting size tends to be smaller which encourages more interaction between households and the presenter as well as between neighbours. The influence and encouragement of neighbours is also seen as a possible causal process in people taking steps towards planning and preparedness.

The effectiveness of street meetings has been explored in a number of reports that have helped to highlight the outcomes which are likely to be achieved from such a program and some of the limitations of the approach. An evaluation of Street FireWise meetings in run by the Blue Mountains RFS, New South Wales, identified that there were particular contexts in which the program was more successful. [3] The "middle" region of the Blue Mountains was identified as the most suited to the street meeting format due to a combination of factors. These included the small and medium sized nature of the settlements, local volunteer brigades with active community education teams and communities with strong local ties as well as a degree of bushfire awareness. This range of factors were the most conducive to desired outcomes such as people developing bushfire plans and undertaking preparedness activities around their properties. The work also highlighted the importance of recent fire experience as a contextual factor and peer influence as a key causal process in enabling these outcomes to be achieved. The study also raised the issue of program adaptations of the traditional street and community format. Street meetings had been modified by some local RFS brigades in the Blue Mountains to include a cooperative hazard reduction component. The preparedness element of the program was still a major part of the meeting but it was done in the context of encouraging local residents to participate in organised hazard reduction burns. This proved successful in combining the traditional meeting format with a specific associated area of need, in this case fuel reduction concerns in the local communities.

Over the past few years fire agencies have looked at ways to increase the effectiveness of street and community meetings. The targeting of meetings at high risk communities is becoming increasingly sophisticated and often involves the utilisation of GIS technology. This approach uses fire risk maps and data on property location to classify areas at most risk. Concentrating meetings in these areas provides a clear rationale for the program implementation. This is often done by fire agencies at a district or regional level.

**Community Briefings During and After a Fire**

As mentioned in the previous section, community briefings are held either during a bushfire incident or post-fire in the form of community debriefs. Community briefings held during an incident are a relatively new approach which came to prominence during the 2002/2003 bushfire season in Victoria. Meetings were arranged at short notice to provide an update on the current situation, information about the likely threat faced by the community, the options available to residents and where to get further information. These meetings are a multi-agency approach, in the case of Victoria involving CFA, DSE, local government and other relevant agencies. Community briefings have been run along similar lines in other states, for instance Tasmania, and have continued to be used by the CFA during the 2006/07 fire season. Large numbers of meetings have been held in Victoria prompting a considerable amount of interest amongst the media and public at large. In the period between the 19$^{th}$ and 29$^{th}$ of January 2006, over 100 community briefings were held in Victoria attracting more the 15000 people. This clearly demonstrates the scale of this approach compared to street and community meetings.

At the briefings operational staff from fire agencies provide up-to-date information about the current fire situation. Often this involves showing maps of recent fire spread, weather related information and maps showing fuel loads in the local area. Attendees are given an appraisal of the likely threat to their community and what options are open to them. The stay and defend or leave early message is reinforced and practical recommendations about what households can do is also put forward including information about local fire refuges, evacuation centres and recovery services. In addition, sources of further information are highlighted and where possible questions answered. The briefings have a role in preparation, planning and response to the bushfire threat.

[3] Gilbert, J. (2005) *An Evaluation of the Street FireWise Community Education Program in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales*. Melbourne: Bushfire CRC and CIRCLE, RMIT University.

Evaluative work on community briefings is at an early stage but anecdotal evidence has been largely positive. They appear to be effective at getting residents who desire more information together at short notice. They are designed to minimise the level of uncertainty amongst the general public about what they need to be doing and what they can realistically expect. They also help to increase the level of transparency about what the emergency services are doing and bridge the gap between information flow at the incident management level and information at the ground level. The desire amongst threatened communities is for timely, reliable and realistic information. Hearing it from people working closely with the Incident Management Team adds to the credibility of the information. It also appears to be the case that people may well be more receptive to the information related to bushfire preparedness if the risk is real and imminent. Therefore, this approach can be used to motivate them into taking action to mitigate their fire risk.

Community debriefs also occur after bushfires in some areas. These tend to be multi-agency in approach as well but the fire agencies take on more of a support role in the provision of services during the recovery phase. There are several examples of meetings taking place with communities at a local street level after major fires. A good example of this is debriefings, run by the Blue Mountains RFS, which were held with communities in the vicinity of Woodford after fires in 2002. These were run and organised at a local brigade level and were successful at leading to longer-term engagement with communities in this area.

**Community Groups with Preparedness Focus**

Two broad categories of community group have been identified in the context of bushfire awareness, education and engagement programs. These are community groups with a preparedness focus and community groups with a predominant response focus (discussed in the next section). Both these types of community group are longer-term engagement programs which require a larger level of commitment from residents.

Preparedness groups are designed to equip a group of neighbours with the knowledge they require to prepare their properties for bushfire and devise strategies about how to protect themselves in a way that suits them best. Examples include Community Fireguard (CFG) in Victoria, Community FireSafe Groups in South Australia, Community FireWise Groups in New South Wales and Bushfire Ready Action Groups (BRAG) in Western Australia. The process for group development involves a trained facilitator providing a series of workshops with the residents to help them all understand more about the bushfire risk and the options available to them. The intention is that once a group has been established and the facilitator has taken them through the core program the group will become fairly self sufficient in carrying out preparation activities and helping to raise awareness in the wider community.

The ways in which the preparedness group concept has evolved amongst different agencies varies considerably. Some, such as Community Fireguard, have maintained the approach of delivering the core program and assisting community groups to become self sufficient. While other programs, in particular BRAG, have evolved into a more adaptable program format. In this case the outcomes of groups are less defined and instead facilitators help the group identify what they wish to achieve and how to go about it. The BRAG program appears to place a heavy emphasis on developing partnerships both between the community and fire services, and between BRAG groups. In order for this flexible, partnership approach to be effective it is vital that facilitators have a range of skills that enable them to identify the needs of a particular group and empower them to take ownership and a sense of joint purpose in the program. This is where targeting is extremely important in order to maximise the potential of this approach.

A further example of a community group with a preparedness focus is FiReady Groups, a more locally based initiative run by Wollongong City Council, NSW RFS and NSW Fire Brigades (NSW FB). This program encourages interface communities in the Wollongong

area to assist with long-term fuel management of Asset Protection Zones. This approach combines encouraging members of the locality to participate in regular land management activities with the more traditional bushfire preparedness and planning information.

**Community Groups with Predominant Response Focus**

A further type of community group based program is the NSW Fire Brigades' Community Fire Units (CFUs). This is a well established program in New South Wales which started in 1994 and has been implemented in the Australian Capital Territory following the Canberra fires in 2003. While the program does involve a preparedness element it is differentiated from programs such as Community Fireguard by having a response focus predominantly. CFUs are not an operational wing of the NSW Fire Brigade; rather they provide a group of neighbours with the necessary skills and equipment to protect their own properties before, during and after a bushfire. If their local area is threatened the unit is activated to provide a first line of defence until fire crews arrive. The program has proved extremely popular with communities in high bushfire risk areas of New South Wales, especially in interface areas. There are more than 300 units in the state and over 5000 residents involved.

Members of CFUs are in effect a type of volunteer but with a place specific role during a bushfire event. In the majority of cases CFUs are set up at the request of local communities who wish to be able to effectively defend their properties, at least until brigades arrive. After applying for a unit the potential members go through a training course that teaches them about fire behaviour and what to expect during a fire. The course also includes more general preparedness education, similar in content to other forms of community group. A final element of the training is teaching the residents how to handle and operate fire pumps and undertake mop up operations. This gives the CFU volunteers the necessary skills and knowledge to cope with and actively defend against ember attack in the immediate vicinity of their properties, put out spot fires and patrol their properties after the firefront passes.

The intended outcomes of CFUs have similarities to other forms of community based groups. Increasing awareness, understanding and capacity to deal with the risk faced by residents in bushfire prone areas is an example of this. However, there appear to be some additional intended outcomes which seek to increase the level of community involvement in dealing with the bushfire risk and reflect the difficulties faced by fire services during a major bushfire in dealing with the threat without the support of communities. The fact that in most cases group formation is the result of a request from a community highlights the importance of a local champion in the neighbourhood to bring people together. Success of a unit is also highly dependent on volunteers committing a considerable amount of time to the program.

**Community Development Based Approach**

Community development is embedded in a number of the program types discussed in previous sections, in particular community groups. However community development is also an important element of programs designed to support recovery after major fires. Typically these are not programs that are instigated or delivered by fire agencies although they do play a role in the overall partnership approach. The state government in Victoria provided funding in the aftermath of the 2006/2007 fire season to employ Community Development Officers in six fire affected municipalities. Their role was to engage with households and encourage them to access recovery services. Empowerment of affected communities is clearly an intended outcome of such an approach.

An underpinning principle of the community development approach is that it should be community-driven development, in which local people provide leadership in project initiation and implementation. Following the Eyre Peninsula fire in South Australia in 2005 the CFS have embarked on the development of an approach to community safety that more closely resembles this model. This evolving program is not a scripted and didactic approach but rather relies upon the Community Education Officer, a member of the community, mobilising

local people to work cooperatively to achieve community safety outcomes. While the difference between community partnership and community control may appear subtle, it is a fundamental principle for community development that a community group is empowered and drives the process.

### On-on-One Consultations

As with the community development section, one-on-one consultations with households are a feature of programs that are discussed in other sections of the paper. For instance, in some cases street meetings are followed up with visits from the facilitator or a local brigade member to a household who has requested advice about a specific issue on their property. The advantages of this type of approach include the benefits of being about to address particular questions and areas of concern about bushfire preparedness that individuals and households may have. This level of engagement also tends to be more empowering and is likely to lead to desired behavioural change. It is also a very flexible approach that does not rely on a didactic, scripted presentation of information but instead responds to individual needs. However, the obvious drawback is that this is an extremely resource intensive approach and relies heavily on willing community safety staff and volunteers to get to a small proportion in high bushfire risk areas. Therefore it is only a viable strategy at a very local level. The VBIL and other such bushfire information lines also provide an outlet for one-on-one consultations when providing information in response to specific individual concerns.

## Conclusion

In compiling the database of existing community awareness, education and engagement programs for bushfire it soon became apparent that a wide range of types of initiative exist. Each type of initiative carries with it certain expectations about what the program is supposed to achieve and how the program works. The strategies used by fire agencies across Australia have a lot of similarities but also a lot of differences, which often reflect the differences in the bushfire threat around Australia. Where there are similarities it has often been the case that programs developed by one agency that have had a level of success are then replicated by other fire agencies and modified to the new context. The range of programs form a continuum with large scale media campaigns and warning systems at one end, through information dissemination with an increasing focus on interactive media, through a range of different meeting strategies targeted at either preparedness or during fire events, and finally through to various forms of community group based programs often with a community development component and interactions at individual household level. At the same time there is considerable overlap in this continuum with programs often not neatly fitting in any one category. A complex pattern emerges both when looking at current practices at a state and territory level or from a national perspective.

There is also a range of other multi-agency approaches that are multi-purpose, multi-site and multi-provider, often incorporating elements of various program types and other activities. These often seem to emerge out of a specific issue or need that brings together a range of interested parties. The Hall's Gap Community Safety Project is an example of this multi-agency approach brought about by concern over access and egress to and from Hall's Gap during a major bushfire. This issue brought together a array of collaborators including Parks Victoria, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (now DSE), the police, CFA, local government in the Northern Grampians and the Hall's Gap Tourist and Business Association. The result of this collaboration was a research project that identified strategies and treatments including bushfire information tools for the tourism industry and residents, as well as an annual clean up weekend.

Another example of a multi-agency program is the Hotspots Fire Project, a pilot project in rural communities which seeks to improve the management of fire as a tool for conserving biodiversity in New South Wales. It is a partnership approach between the NSW Nature

Conservation Council, NSW RFS, the Environmental Trust and landholders. Hotspots encourages communities to attend a series of workshops focused on fire management planning and fire ecology to identify ways to achieve a mixture of desired outcomes. A further example is the South East Queensland Fire and Biodiversity Consortium. This is a collaborative group including QFRS, many local government agencies, the Wildlife Service, Queensland Parks and Griffith University. The consortium consults on a range of issues related to fire management and natural disaster mitigation, facilitates research through Griffith University and communicates with the public through bushfire forums and land owners workshops. Therefore, these examples highlight a growing trend of multi-agency partnerships, focusing on particular bushfire related issues in one or more specific communities that are made up of range of program elements.

Community education, awareness and engagement programs seek to deliver a wide range of outcomes for households, neighbourhoods, communities and agencies. The range of programs delivered reflects both the variety of desired outcomes and the needs and capacities of communities to achieve these outcomes. Many of these outcomes are referred to in the descriptions of programs in this paper. A synthesis of the values, principles and desired outcomes of community safety programs for bushfire has provided a more comprehensive list[4]:

- Acceptance and understanding of the bushfire risk
- Households making an informed decision to stay and defend or leave early
- Households plan to prepare, stay and defend, or leave early
- Effective agency/community interaction in planning and preparing for bushfire
- Effective agency/community communication during a bushfire
- Increased ownership and responsibility for bushfire safety
- Strengthening and development of neighbourhood and community partnerships
- Improved agency/community and inter-agency co-ordination and understanding of responsibilities

It is clear that a range of programs are needed to meet these outcomes, with some focusing primarily on individual and householder change, such as the interactive publications and street meetings, whilst others place a greater emphasis on community participation. Examples of this include community groups and other community development initiatives. Viewing the programs in this way draws a clear distinction between the two ends of the spectrum, programs with the broad aim of bringing about change at an individual and household level and programs with a focus on community participation and ownership. The primary focus of many of the programs is delivering the first three outcomes in the list. The other five outcomes can be seen as either causal processes that help to achieve and sustain the primary outcomes, or higher level preparedness outcomes in their own right. Increasingly it appears that fire agencies are taking the latter approach with a stronger focus on community ownership and partnerships. At the same time there appears to be a growing recognition that bushfire focused programs should be considered alongside other community development activities in order to deliver broader level community sustainability. This is exemplified by some Landcare groups in Victoria becoming involved in the Community Fireguard program and a range of other evolving synergistic developments.

A combination of these individual and community level outcomes, combined with regulatory procedures, such as the development and enforcement of building codes, in addition to policy level and agency initiated mitigation activities, contribute to determining what most agencies see as the ultimate level outcomes: fewer lives and properties lost in bushfire and thus improved community safety.

[4] Elsworth et al. (2007) The Community Safety Approach to Bushfire in Australia: Values, Principles and Desired Outcomes.

## Acknowledgments

With thanks to Gerald Elsworth, Kaye Stevens, Helen Goodman and Alan Rhodes for their feedback and suggestions. Thanks also to the fire agencies across Australia who have assisted in the collection of information about programs.

## Appendix One – Interim Database of Community Education, Awareness and Engagement Programs

Based on information collated as of June '07 – the development of the database is ongoing and is not yet definitive.

| State | Agency | Overall Branding *(where applicable)* | Type of program | Program Name | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Vic | CFA & DSE | Fire Ready Victoria | Media Campaign | Media Campaign | Phase 1 (Nov - mid Jan) increase community awareness of key safety messages and encourage residents to attend program activities and/or seek out further information by contacting the VBIL or the CFA Website, bushfire safety features in local and regional press; ABC radio phone-in day. Phase 2 (early Jan - mid March) target residents and tourists in high bushfire risk areas and promote the VBIL and how to access up to date information and advice during bushfires, press advertising in major daily newspapers, radio campaign and links into national TV Campaign. |
| Vic | CFA | Fire Ready Victoria | Interactive publication | *Living in the Bush* | CD-Rom designed to provide information for people living in the bush to decide whether to prepare, stay and defend or prepare and go early. Guides the development of a bushfire survival plan that can be saved on the computer &/or printed. CD-ROM - Sections are: 1. Are you at risk?, 2. preparing yourself and your property for bushfire, 3. What to do during a bushfire?, 4. Further information, 5. Bushfire Survival Plan |
| Vic | CFA | Fire Ready Victoria | Printed publication | *Living in the Bush* | Workbook designed to provide information for people living in the bush to decide whether to prepare, stay and defend or prepare and go early. Guides the development of a bushfire survival plan. Workbook that covers: 1. Are you at risk?, 2. preparing yourself and your property for bushfire, 3. What to do during a bushfire?, 4. Further information, 5. Bushfire Survival Plan |
| Vic | CFA | Fire Ready Victoria | Street and community meeting | Community Meeting | One and a half hour interactive meeting located at a community venue or hall in areas where the population density is not suited to other activities. Focus is on basic bushfire behaviour, personal safety, house survival and recognition of local risk, with emphasis on promoting residents' involvement in Community Fireguard groups. Resources (eg Living in the Bush CD ROM and workbook) distributed through meetings |
| Vic | CFA | Fire Ready Victoria | Street and community meeting | Street Corner Meeting | One and a half hour interactive meeting focussing upon local hazards. The meetings are conducted on street corners where people can learn about the bushfire risk in their local environment, house survival and practical local intervention. Street corner meetings focus on local hazards and suit residents who have not previously attended a CFA program, or those who wish to increase their understanding of bushfire behaviour and risk. Resources (eg Living in the Bush CD ROM and workbook) distributed through meeting |

| State | Agency | Overall Branding *(where applicable)* | Type of program | Program Name | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Vic | CFA | Fire Ready Victoria | Community group - preparedness | *Community Fireguard* | Facilitated community development program. Encourages residents to work together to improve bushfire safety. Groups are formed when residents of a local area choose to participate in the program. Ideally, the groups are small, made up of neighbours or residents living in a shared bushfire risk environment. by working together with support from CFA (paid facilitators), groups can develop strategies, which are simple and effective. By becoming involved in a Community Fireguard group, residents are able to develop strategies for themselves - strategies which work because they have local ownership and support. Groups make decisions about the best way to protect themselves in a way that fits their lifestyle, environment, physical capabilities, finances and experience. Core program (normally 4/5 meetings over 12 months), then maintenance activities as requested by group. A range of information resources also provided to groups and post incident updates where a group has been affected by a fire. Program resources include a CFG Facilitators handbook. |
| Vic | CFA & DSE | | Community briefing - during and after fire | Community Briefings | Run in response to a imminent risk of a bushfire impacting on a community. Can be set up with a little as 4 hours notice. Meeting addresses current situation (using maps, weather reports) likely threat faced by community, options open to community, where to get further information. Involves Community liaison and operational staff from CFA and DSE and other relevant agencies (eg local government). Meetings repeated until fire threat is over. |
| Vic | CFA & DSE | Fire Ready Victoria | Mixed | DSE Community Education Activities | Series of community education activities about DSE fire prevention and protection activities, including the prescribed burning program. Includes displays, shows, guided walks, pantomimes, school activities, marketing to publicise DSE as a source of information, media campaigns (as funding permits). Prescribed burning information targeted to residents in areas close to land that DSE manages and where prescribed burning is planned. |
| Vic | CFA & DSE | Fire Ready Victoria | Telephone information | Victoria Bushfire Information Line | DSE and CFA managed Customer Call Centre provides bushfire information to individual callers. Information provided includes: Incident updates on current fires and advice on appropriate actions to take during a bushfire, Community meeting information, Emergency relief centre locations, Recovery information, Total Fire bans and Fire Restrictions information, Fuel reduction burns and community consultation information. VBIL is normally staffed between 8 am and 8 pm and staffing hours increase when significant fires occur. Access for hearing impaired callers is available via a TTY 1800 number and the service can also be emailed. Recorded information is also provided and information packs can be mailed out. |

| State | Agency | Overall Branding *(where applicable)* | Type of program | Program Name | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Vic | CFA | | Local Brigade Activities | Mixed | Brigades In Schools, Mobile Education Units, Fired Up English, Juvenile Fire Awareness and Intervention Program, Junior Volunteers. All have a link to bushfire community safety, but more indirect. |
| Vic | OESC | | Warning | Community Warning and Information System (CIWS) TRIAL | Trial of an emergency warning system designed provide communities with better information which can be used to respond appropriately and safely to the emergency. Utilises an automated telephone calling system to deliver information to households. Trials conducted in specific locations in Victoria, if effective may be introduced on a wider scale. |
| Vic | Local Committee - reps from various agencies | | Warning | Ferny Creek Fire Alert Siren | Bushfire warning siren in Ferny Creek, a local area in the Dandenong Mountains established after a 1997 bushfire in the Dandenongs. |
| Vic | Local Committee - reps from various agencies | | Specific Issue Partnership | Halls Gap Community Saftey Project | Multi-agency approach brought about by concern over access and egress to and from Hall's Gap during a major bushfire. Strategies and treatments including bushfire information tools for the tourism industry and residents, as well as an annual clean up weekend. |
| NSW | RFS | FireWise | Media Campaign | Operation Fire Shield | Public awareness campaign that promotes the need for people in bushfire prone areas to prepare their family and property and to report bushfire hazards to the RFS. Involves television advertising and news media promotion supported by RFS Firewise community education programs and hazard inspection system. |
| NSW | RFS | FireWise | Community group - preparedness | Community FireWise Groups | This is a coordinated program where residents can become involved with fire safety in their community. Trained facilitators help to set up and maintain Community FireWise Groups. |
| NSW | RFS | FireWise | Street and community meeting | Community Meetings | Interactive meeting located at a community venue or hall in areas where the population density is not suited to other activities. Focus is on basic bushfire behaviour, personal safety, house survival and recognition of local risk, with emphasis on promoting residents' involvement in Community Fireguard groups. |
| NSW | RFS | FireWise | Street and community meeting | Street Meetings (e.g. Street FireWise) | Interactive meeting focussing upon local hazards. The meetings are conducted on street corners where people can learn about the bushfire risk in their local environment, house survival and practical local intervention. Street corner meetings focus on local hazards and suit residents who have not previously attended a CFA program or those who wish to increase their understanding of bushfire behaviour and risk. |

| State | Agency | Overall Branding *(where applicable)* | Type of program | Program Name | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NSW | RFS | FireWise | Community briefing - during and after | Community Briefings | Run in response to a imminent risk of a bushfire impacting on a community. Can be set up with a little as 4 hours notice. Meeting addresses current situation (using maps, weather reports) likely threat faced by community, options open to community, where to get further information. Involves Community liaison and operational staff from RFS and NSW FB and other relevant agencies (eg local government). Meetings repeated until fire threat is over. |
| NSW | RFS | FireWise | Local Brigade Activities | Mixed | Static Water Supply Marking System, Blue Hydrant Markers, Mobile Education Units, Presentations at community events, Cadet Volunteer Program, Fireguard For Kids, Open days at Brigade stations, visiting individual properties. |
| NSW | NSW FB | | Community group - response | Community Fire Units | Volunteer resident groups (6 -12 members) who receive basic fire fighting training and equipment to undertake property protection during a bushfire until emergency services can get there. Education component also includes bush care and bushfire behaviour, safe 'housekeeping' and gardening practices, planning and preparing for bushfires, operating and handling fire fighting equipment, mop up operations. Training: 20 hours of learning how to use fire fighting equipment effectively, ongoing training and yearly competition to hone volunteers' skills. FireNews publication. Fire fighting equipment: pumps, hoses & protective clothing. |
| NSW | Nature Conservation Council NSW, RFS and others | Hotspots Fire Project | Specific Issue Partnership | Hotspots Fire Project | Improve the management of fire as a tool for conserving biodiversity in NSW; improve landholders' understanding and knowledge of the role of fire and ability to manage fire for healthy landscapes; improve the capacity of communities to work together to manage fire. (Partnership approach including NSW NCC, Environmental Trust & NSW RFS). Involves talking to people in the regions about their needs, values & issues; compiling user-friendly case studies, manuals & landholder booklets; running interactive workshops & field trips on fire ecology & fire management planning; involving stakeholders & partners; educating people in the community; reviewing the ecological literature; developing fire management planning & monitoring guidelines. |
| NSW | Wollongong City Council, RFS, NSW FB | FiReady | Community Group - preparedness | FiReady Groups | Each FIREADY group is supported by Bushfire Community Education and Liaison Officers from Council who co-ordinates the activities of the group, provide materials and equipment, and carry out training and education for group members. Program focus is on Asset Protection Zones (APZ), firstly establishing, and then maintaining through setting up community groups to assist with long-term fuel management. Initial street meeting arranged to outline APZ project and discuss bushfire concerns. The FIREADY program provides support, training, safety equipment and other resources for community members to carryout ongoing bushfire fuel management works within the APZ. NSW RFS present to advise communities on how to prepare their properties prior to the bushfire season. |

| State | Agency | Overall Branding *(where applicable)* | Type of program | Program Name | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ACT | ACT RFS | | Media Campaign | | Currently under review |
| ACT | ACT RFS | | Printed publication | Bushfires and the Bush Capital | Provides information about preparing for and coping with bushfires. Initially issued as a Canberra Times supplement in October 2004 and is an on-line publication that can be downloaded. |
| ACT | ACT RFS | | Street and community meeting | Bush FireWise | A community based education and awareness program that encourages residents to reduce fire hazards around their homes and streets |
| ACT | ACT RFS | | Community group - response | Community Fire Units (along the same model as NSW Fire Brigade) | Volunteer resident groups who receive basic fire fighting training and equipment to undertake property protection during a bushfire. Education component also includes bush care and bushfire behaviour, safe 'housekeeping' and gardening practices, planning and preparing for bushfires, operating and handling fire fighting equipment, mop up operations. Fire fighting equipment: pumps, hoses & protective clothing. Training: 20 hours of learning how to use fire fighting equipment effectively, ongoing training and yearly competition to hone volunteers' skills. FireNews publication |
| SA | CFS | Community Fire Safe | Media campaign | It's Your Responsibility - Plan to Survive | Community Awareness Campaign - TV commercial (until mid 2006). multi-faceted campaign drawing attention to: the new Bushfire Information and Warning System, be prepared and make a bushfire action plan, decide now whether to stay and defend your property of go to a safer location on high fire risk days. Clear your property, and gutters, service farm and fire equipment and ensure that adequate firebreaks are in place. |
| SA | CFS | Community Fire Safe | Printed publication | Media / signage / booklets | Prepare Your Bushfire Action Plan brochure |
| SA | CFS | Community Fire Safe | Community group - preparedness | Community FireSafe Groups | The Community Fire Safe program is designed to assist residents living in high bushfire threat areas by forming community action groups. Community Fire Safe groups develop action plans and community strategies that reduce the bushfire threat and increase the community's preparedness. |
| SA | CFS | Community Fire Safe | Street and community meeting | Bushfire Blitz | Informative and interactive 45 minute presentations that focus on the areas bushfire risk, bushfire behaviour and how to protect your house and property, personal safety and bushfire action planning |

| State | Agency | Overall Branding *(where applicable)* | Type of program | Program Name | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SA | CFS | Community Fire Safe | Street and community meeting | Bushfire Awareness meetings | Meetings start with a sausage sizzle followed by a 30 minute presentation on personal experience of the Wangary fire, then a discussion about community bushfire preparedness. Meeting is held at a hall and runs for 2.5 hours |
| SA | CFS | Community Fire Safe | Community Development | | Community education officer supports the formation of local groups in the Lower Eyre Peninsula, community driven approach - initiated after fires in 2005. |
| SA | CFS | Community Fire Safe | Local Brigade Activity | | Field Days, Workshops, Local Brigade presence in the community reinforcing formal community education programs |
| Tas | TFS | Prepare to Survive | Media campaign | Prepare to Survive | Mass media campaign promoting launch of DVD |
| Tas | TFS | Prepare to Survive | Interactive publication | Prepare to Survive DVD | DVD designed to help households to prepare themselves and their properties for bushfires. Widely distributed in high risk areas and promoted via media campaign, can be downloaded from website. Presented by a fire fighter, includes imagery and sounds of an approaching bushfire. Shows risks if leaving at the last minute and the value of undertaking preparedness measures. Key messages are reinforced during the 23 minute DVD. |
| Tas | TFS | Prepare to Survive | Printed publication | Prepare to Survive booklet and others | Prepare to survive booklet. Other publications include: Advice to householders when a bushfire threatens, After the fire, Bushfire Development Guidelines, Farming Communities - Cooperation between TFS and farming communities, Fire retardant garden plants for the urban fringe and rural areas, Fuel reduction burning plan |
| Tas | TFS | | Community briefing - during and after fire | Community Briefings | Run in response to a imminent risk of a bushfire impacting on a community. Meeting addresses current situation, likely threat faced by community, options open to community, where to get further information. |
| WA | FESA | | Media campaign | Bushfire Ready Dry Season Campaign | Annual, media-driven campaign aimed at raising bushfire safety awareness in the Pilbara and Kimberley regions (May-Dec). Urges residents and pastoralists to develop and implement fire prevention, preparation and response plans. Brochures provide information and checklists for residents to work through. Program also targets tourists with a specific brochure for people travelling in this period (available from tourist bureaus, roadhouses etc.) |
| WA | FESA | | Interactive publication | Be Prepared' DVD | Be Prepared…your guide to preparing your property for the bushfire season |

| State | Agency | Overall Branding *(where applicable)* | Type of program | Program Name | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WA | FESA | | Printed publication | Prepare - Stay and Defend or Go Early | Bushfire Stay or Go Kit, 3 brochures: (i) Making the Decision: Should I Stay or Should I Go? (ii) Prepare: Stay and Defend, (iii) Prepare: Go early. Other publications include: Dry Season Fire Safety Brochure, Homeowner's Bushfire Survival Manual, Managing Smoke from Planned Burning Brochure, Bushfires in Northern Australia brochure (tourist) |
| WA | FESA | | Printed publication | Farming Communities | Farm Fire Safety brochure, Harvest Fire Prevention Daily Checklist, Guidelines for Operating Private Equipment at Fires brochure |
| WA | FESA | | Community group - preparedness | Bushfire Ready Action Groups (BRAG) | Flexible program with self-governed groups, components include: (i) Bush fire awareness and preparedness training. (ii) Making plans to care for the elderly, disabled or other less able-bodied people in the street in the event of fire. (iii) Nominating a safe house in the street for others to shelter in. (iv) Developing a network with your neighbours to improve the chances of receiving adequate warning of fire. (v) Organising tours to familiarise neighbours with each others' fire fighting equipment. (vi) Developing and undertaking passive and active fire prevention strategies to protect life and property from bush fire. (vii) Bush fire survival training in the event you are in your home, in a car or on foot during a bush fire incident. |
| WA | FESA | | School education | Fire Inside Out | Program targeting primary students, Education pack (book, CD, video) |
| WA | FESA | | School education | Fire Safety Education Centre | Provides opportunities for pre-school and primary school children to learn about a wide range of aspects of fire both in and outside the home. Good and bad uses of fire are demonstrated, 'clever camp' display activities. Video on fire prevention. |
| WA | FESA | | Community development | Aboriginal Communities | Consultation and responses to specific issues in Aboriginal communities |
| Qld | QFRS | Bushfire Prepared Communities | Media campaign | *"Don't Welcome Bushfire In Your Home"* | Media campaign including television campaign, promotes DVD and video |
| Qld | QFRS | Bushfire Prepared Communities | Printed publication | Prepare and defend or go early program | Brochure with self-assessment checklists for becoming a bushfire prepared community. Camping and Bushfire Sense Brochure, Bushfire Safety and Survival Brochure, Hazard Reduction Burning, Benefits and Implications Brochure, Protecting Your Home From Bushfire Attack Brochure, Notes for Landholders |

| State | Agency | Overall Branding *(where applicable)* | Type of program | Program Name | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Qld | QFRS | Bushfire Prepared Communities | Street and Community meeting | *"Don't Welcome Bushfire In Your Home"* | Session 1 of a series of 3 sessions targeting 'iZones' (rural/urban interface zones defined as 'areas where human population and flammable vegetation meet') and areas of high fire risk. Session 1: is an informal session covering at risk areas, how houses burn, notification of threat, personal survival, bushfire behaviour and preparation for combating a fire or evacuating. for areas with more than 30 and less than 2,000 residents (if more than 2000 residents other information distribution methods suggested). |
| Qld | QFRS | Bushfire Prepared Communities | Community group - preparedness | *"Don't Welcome Bushfire In Your Home"* | Sessions 2 & 3 of a series of 3 sessions targeting 'iZones' (rural/urban interface zones defined as 'areas where human population and flammable vegetation meet') and areas of high fire risk where there are less than 30 residents. Sessions 1 as described above. Session 2: residential fire safety, First Aid, Storage of flammables/ LPG, Phone Trees, Street walk, Session 3: Review of previous sessions, Identification of area facilitator/contact, fuel management plan and organising working bees to assist those requiring assistance, Identification of members who require assistance during a fire, Identification of 'safe' houses for use as shelters during the passing of a bushfire, Developing a bushfire plan and opportunities for supporting each other during a fire, Review and distribution of Telephone Tree details. |
| Qld | Multi agency | | Community development | Bushfire Smart Communities (Pine Rivers) | Multi-agency (QFRS, Pine Rivers Shire Council, The South East Queensland Fire and Biodiversity Consortium, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services, Griffith University, DOTAR) community education program. Designed to train volunteers to deliver community education in their own communities. Aiming to encourage local community self-determination with the aid of financial incentives for local brigade delivery. Use of GIS to target communities. |
| Qld | Multi agency | | Specific Issue Partnership | Southeast Queensland Fire and Biodiversity Consortium | A collaborative group of like-minded people working together towards a balanced view to fire management in the landscape (most LGAs in SEQ, QFRS, Wildlife Service, Griffith University, Qld Parks). High level consultation on issues including fire management strategies and natural disaster mitigation, facilitation of research through association with Griffith University, and public communication via bushfire forums and landowner workshops. |
| NT | NT FRS | | Printed publication | Bushfire Prepared Communities Brochure | Brochure (based on QFRS information). |
| NT | NT FRS | | Printed publication (also interactive publication) | Remote Communities Education Program | In development, schools based, includes general fire education, educational resource pack to include book, DVD & CD |

| State | Agency | Overall Branding *(where applicable)* | Type of program | Program Name | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NT | Bushfire Coucil NT | | Specific Issue Partnership | Indigenous Awareness Program | Land management approach concerned with Indigenous Communities |
| National | EMA (lead agency) | | Media campaign | Bushfire Awareness Campaign | Television campaign- with overarching message complimenting state and territories programs |
| National | BoM | | Media campaign | Fire Danger Warnings | Fire danger ratings for potential grassland and forest fires, determined by BoM. Information displayed in newspapers, on radio and television and on roadside signs across Australia. Designed to control the general public's use of fire during the bushfire season in order to lessen the potential for fire outbreaks. |