

## Local agencies fire roles and responsibilities this summer in and around YCA

The Dandenong Ranges and the Yarra Valley are located in one of the most fire prone regions in Victoria. Therefore an integrated approach to fire risk management has been developed from long experience and considerable expertise across National, State and Local agencies. The specific role of many of these agencies follows with links to relevant websites that detail specific fire plans and advice for the development of individual resident fire plans and preparation.

Also included is a brief description of the longer term Yellingbo Conservation Area (YCA) bushfire risk assessment and management project.



### Emergency Management Victoria

Emergency Management Victoria is working towards an all hazards, all agencies approach to emergency mitigation planning, allowing for a more strategic and integrated approach to fire management planning, ultimately reducing the occurrence and impact of fire and other emergencies across the state.

Fire management planning currently occurs at state, regional and municipal levels. It involves bringing together a range of agencies and organisations to discuss, plan and manage fire with the community. The resulting strategies and plans address fire prevention, preparedness, response and recovery, as well as the environmental and cultural uses of fire.

The Eastern Metropolitan Region strategic fire management plan dictates activities in and around the Yellingbo Conservation Area and addresses fire preparedness, response and recovery as well environmental and cultural uses of fire. Municipal fire management plans developed at a local level draw on the state direction and regional strategy to develop practical plans.

The VicEmergency website and App are the primary source of information for the Victorian public to access information on Fire and Flood warnings as well as information on emergency events such as fires, storms, power outages, hazardous material and traffic incidents on a real time Google Map display.

To Visit VicEmergency, go to [www.emergency.vic.gov.au](http://www.emergency.vic.gov.au)

To Download the VicEmergency App go to the [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play](#)

For more information Visit: [www.emv.vic.gov.au](http://www.emv.vic.gov.au)

Safer Together is a new approach to reducing the risk of bushfire in Victoria - See more at: [www.delwp.vic.gov.au/safer-together](http://www.delwp.vic.gov.au/safer-together)

## Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee Yarra Ranges

The Yarra Ranges is one of the highest risk locations for bushfire in the world. Due to this fact it is imperative that Council and emergency management agencies have the appropriate structures and systems in place to plan, prevent, prepare, respond and recover from emergency events.

The MFMPCC has formed a sub committee to review the Municipal Fire Management Plan 2011- 2014 Action Plan.

This sub committee is called the Municipal Fire Management Plan Review Committee and consists of a member from each of the following organisations:

- DELWP
- CFA
- Victoria Police
- Yarra Ranges Council

This group is responsible for monitoring and ensuring the Action Plan is completed in a timely manner and will make variations were required.

There is a range of information on the Committee's page of the Yarra Ranges Council's website including meeting minutes, Action Plan Spreadsheet and the Yarra Ranges Annual Fire Readiness program.

For more information Visit: [Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee - Yarra Ranges](#)

## CFA

CFA (Country Fire Authority) is a volunteer and community based fire and emergency services organisation that helps protect 3.3 million Victorians, and more than one million homes and properties across the state.

We are wholly committed to the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery phases of emergency situations, providing a diverse range of risk reduction, fire suppression and incident management services to minimise the impact of fires and other emergencies on Victorian communities.

In regards to Planned Burns or Fuel Management Treatments in the local area, CFA have a number of treatment plans ready to implement in the approved and appropriate weather conditions. Planned burns will be communicated to the local residents prior to ignition.

Local CFA brigades do support DELWP and Parks Victoria in conducting planned burns/fuel management treatments on public land and this will be re-enforced with the State Government's Safer Together strategy.

CFA provide a variety of information and assistance to community members, including:

- Community awareness, education and safety programs
- Fire prevention and planning
- Sustainable Fire Management
- Fire safety input planning for major community risks
- Land use planning advice
- Technical services including building code-related inspections, post incident analysis and fire investigation.

## Planned Burn Information

CFA have Planned Burn information available on their website: <http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/about/planned-burns/> or if a resident has a specific question, please contact the District 13 Office on 8739 1300 and ask to talk to the Vegetation Management Officer.

## My CFA

CFA request that residents/community members register for a MyCFA account ([www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/my-cfa/](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/my-cfa/)) to be notified of activities and events occurring in their local area. Activities and events may include Brigade Open Days, Street Corner Meetings, Festivals and Bushfire Planning Workshops. Local Fire Brigades have information (and/or contacts) available to provide to local community members on bushfire planning, fuel management treatments and warnings or other specific information.

## FireReady App

The FireReady app has been replaced with the VicEmergency app and is designed to run better and have more alerts.

To Download the VicEmergency App go to the [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play](#)

## Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) (DELWP)

Forest Fire Management Victoria's purpose is to protect people, property and the environment by reducing the risk and impact of major bushfires on Victoria's parks, forests and other public land. Our new approach to bushfire fuel management is about doing more to reduce this risk, and being more effective in how we do it. We do this by reducing fuel loads – the shrubs, bark and leaf litter that fuel bushfires – through planned burning and other activities, like slashing, mowing and creating fuel breaks. We also maintain water points and look out points in Victoria's beautiful forests and parks.

Within the Yellingbo Investigation Area, DELWP (in partnership with other agencies) will continue to implement a range of bushfire mitigation activities in the area. This includes:

- Fuel reduction burning and other fuel management activities in key areas in and around the broader Yellingbo Investigation Area. This has taken place over many years and areas targeted include Dandenong Ranges National Park, Yellingbo Nature Conservation Reserve, Warramate Hills Nature Conservation Reserve, Mt Toolebewong, Yarra State Forest, Yarra Ranges National Park, Kurth Kiln Regional Park and Wright Forest.
- Fire access track maintenance and improvement within the Yellingbo Investigation Area.
- Safer Together, a whole-of-Victorian Government policy that combines strong community partnerships with the latest science and information to more effectively target our actions to reduce bushfire risk.
- Collaborating with communities and agencies, including the CFA, to develop township fire plans which examine options to manage bushfire risk on both public and private land.

DELWP lead Fire Operations Plan identifies public land areas for fuel treatment, including burning and slashing. For more information on the plan or to discuss concerns please contact the DELWP office at Powelltown on 5965 9901.

For more information visit: <http://delwp.vic.gov.au/ffmvic>

Find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FFMVic/?fref=ts>

## Parks Victoria

As part of managing Victoria's parks and reserves, Parks Victoria supports the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) to prepare for, fight and recover from bushfires on public land.

We work year round to prepare parks and reserves to reduce the potential impact of fire through planned burning and other fuel reduction. The \$21 million Melbourne Fire and Emergency Program is improving the fire preparedness of our urban and fringe parklands.

Fire is a natural part of the Australian environment. With lightning and indigenous burning practices having shaped our ecosystems over tens of thousands of years, many of our plants are reliant on bushfire to regenerate and maintain their health. In line with this, Parks Victoria also uses planned ecological burning to support and develop biodiversity values in our parks.

Many recent bushfires have burnt large sections of our national parks and forests. Parks Victoria works to rebuild and reopen bushfire affected areas and support the natural environment in its recovery.

Around 70 percent of Parks Victoria staff are trained in specific firefighting roles. Each summer, many rangers and office staff are deployed to fight fires in parks and forests across the state.

For more information Visit: [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/park-management/bushfire-management](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/park-management/bushfire-management)

### Melbourne Fire & Emergency Program (MFEP)

The Melbourne Fire and Emergency Program works with the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP) to deliver fire prevention works across greater Melbourne from the Mornington Peninsula to the Dandenong Ranges, Lower Yarra Valley and west to Melbourne's grassland reserves and the Werribee River.

The Melbourne area fire prevention works map is an interactive online map that allows you to type in an address and view fire prevention works taking place near that location. By using the map layers and legend, you can also see the fire history and where there are planned burns.



For more information about MFEP and to view and download maps of fire preparedness works in individual parks visit: [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/park-management/bushfire-management/mfep](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/park-management/bushfire-management/mfep)

### Melbourne Water

The responsible fire agency for public land is DELWP. Under the CFA Act MW is responsible for fire risk management on its private and vested lands. MW owns pipe tracks in the Yellingbo area it has no vested lands in this area. MW discharges its responsibility for fire risk management by slashing these pipe tracks.

For more Information visit: [www.melbournewater.com.au](http://www.melbournewater.com.au)

## Vic Forests

In addition to our primary role of forest management - harvesting and regenerating allocated areas of Victorian native forest - VicForests also plays a supporting role fire management across the State.

Wildfire is a significant threat to the State of Victoria's communities and forests and VicForests is committed to the suppression of wildfire in order to protect communities, assets and environmental and cultural values including valuable timber resources.

VicForests staff undertake a broad range of fire roles including operational fire-fighting, incident management and support roles such as logistics and information, and plant and aircraft support.

In addition to this VicForests Contractors regularly provide plant equipment such as bulldozers, excavators and skidders at blazes across the State.

VicForests is part of the Networked Emergency Organisation (NEO) which also includes the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Parks Victoria (PV) and Melbourne Water (MW).

The NEO provides over 2,500 full time staff for fire roles and about 700 seasonal Project Fire-fighters during summer months.

As well as contributing to wildfire suppression, VicForests also support DELWP with fuel reduction burns throughout the year, with the aim of reducing the risk of wildfire spreading out of containable areas.

For more information visit: <http://www.vicforests.com.au/fire-management-1/fire-management>

## Shire of Yarra Ranges

### Fire Readiness Plan

In addition to the programs in the Fire Readiness Plan Yarra Ranges Council (YRC) have added an additional number of roads to our annual slashing program. And constantly adding other sites..

YRC's fuel management program assesses all roads (a total of 1650 roads) to see what works need to be completed to reduce overall fire risk. This work continues year round.

This program is quite extensive and involves a preliminary tree assessment that is passed onto our trees team for further assessment and a general vegetation assessment. This work has resulted in significant fuel reduction across the landscape involving extensive removal of the elevated fuel layer and many additions to our annual slashing programs. This started in 2012 as an extension of previous programs.

YRC Managed Reserves are also assessed and works undertaken. The reserves and other Council allotments are prioritised with reference to the VFRR, ensuring those in high risk areas are prioritised for risk management.

Yarra Ranges Council manages roadsides with a team of contractors. Three large scale contractors in Roadside and reserve slashing, this involves about 10 tractor slasher combinations. An additional 10 contractors are engaged to undertake mostly hand brush cutting in our bushland reserves. These activities occur between October and February.

In addition two full time staff, one Side arm slasher and one box slasher work full time on fire management throughout the fire season. We also utilise our 3 members of Councils bushland crew in the fire preparation period to assist with grass slashing and brush cutting in our bushland reserves.

Yarra Ranges Council works closely with DELWP, CFA. Eastern Landscape Risk management team, Kalready (Kalorma) Project, Monbulk APZ project both with consultant Steve Pascoe for EMV.

The Bushlands team indoor staff of five also get involved in fuel reduction programs and planned burns that occur in their area of responsibility.

## Fire Refuge Sites

We have works to maintain the Vegetation adjacent to NSP's to comply with the Australian Standard. Fire Refuges such as the New Millgrove Fire Refuge that was sited close to forest and this site was approved by fire ecologists from CSIRO is also managed to comply.

## Responding to Customer Requests

Residents/customers are able to lodge Customer requests at any time for fire related issues these are attended to promptly in particular in fire season. In the majority of cases these are not dealt with as a one off, but rather added to our annual programs.

Nearly 85 additional roads have been added to the annual program in the last 3 years and other sites have increased from around 50 to nearly 140 as a result of proactive assessments and customer requests.

## Emergency Management Team

Councils Emergency Management team manage a number of other programs including the annual inspections of private property by the MFPO's. Four staff in this area are involved in fire management activities with two staff dedicated to this region throughout the fire danger period. A pool of contractors are available to undertake compulsory clearances as required.

The Emergency Management Team also implement maintenance programs for fire related infrastructure as detailed in the Annual Fire Readiness Plan this includes fire access roads and installation and maintenance of water supply tanks.

The emergency Management Team are also actively involved in Township protection plans as mentioned.

Councils Environment team conduct environmental assessments as part of Councils involvement in planned burn activities and township protection programs such as the "Kalready" and Monbulk programs.

For more information visit: [www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Property-services/Fire-emergencies](http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Property-services/Fire-emergencies)

## VicRoads

The state's arterial roads carry freight vehicles, cars, trams, buses, motorcycles, bicycles and pedestrians, and the roadside areas need to be managed to facilitate safe and efficient transport for all of these modes of transport. It is also recognised that roadside areas can provide significant visual and functional amenity for local residents, as well as containing significant cultural and environmental areas for all Victorians. The management of vegetation in roadside areas can play a key role in minimising bushfire risk, both in the choice of species grown or retained, and in the programming of work such as grass cutting and vegetation removal.

In some cases, the management of roadside vegetation plays a role in Victoria's Integrated Fire Management Planning process. It is essential that roadside management complements the fire management process and responds appropriately to its requirements. This involves a co-operative approach between Government agencies to ensure that fire management is strategic, effective and targeted.

For more information visit: [www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/about-vicroads/our-strategy/vicroads-roadside-management-strategy](http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/about-vicroads/our-strategy/vicroads-roadside-management-strategy)

## Yellingbo Conservation Area Bushfire Risk Assessment And Management Project Proposal

DELWP, along with our partners in bushfire management including Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water, Yarra Ranges Shire and the CFA, agree that bushfire management is a critical part of planning for the new Conservation Area. It is clear from our community consultation so far that we won't be able to engage portions of the community in the park planning process until they are satisfied that we have a credible process to address bushfire risk and to incorporate risk management measures into the park design and management.

The purpose of this project is to develop a bushfire risk management strategy for the Yellingbo Conservation Area to ensure that bushfire risk is not increased in or near the Yellingbo investigation area as a result of creating the park. Bushfire risk management strategies identified as part of this process will inform the design of the Conservation Area and its ongoing management.

The project will work with the community to identify the highest priority community assets and the appropriate risk management measures (including vegetation buffer zones, access points, water points and other risk management measures) that can be put in place to protect these community assets.

Led by an independent facilitator with technical advice from fire management experts, Dr Justin Leonard and Dr Kevin Tolhurst, the process will commence working with the Don Valley community in relation to Haining Farm.

The objective is to develop a bushfire risk management plan for the Yellingbo Investigation Area. This part of the process will be led by DELWP in partnership with Parks Victoria.

This plan will inform the design of the conservation area and the ongoing management of the conservation area once it is under Parks Victoria management from the end of 2018 onwards.

DELWP will undertake another round of community consultation once the draft plan is finalised. The Final plan will require endorsement from the relevant Municipal Emergency Management Committees.

The final bushfire risk management plan will be approved by DELWP as the body with legislative responsibility for bushfire management on public land and Parks Victoria as the ongoing land manager for the conservation area.



\*Information sourced from requests from Agency representatives as well as Agency websites.

\* This information may be updated or added to in future.