

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION > BUSHFIRE-READY NEIGHBOURHOODS NEWSLETTER



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Community Bushfire-Ready Challenge TASMANIA



This past spring and summer, the Tasmania Fire Service's Community Development & Education team took the opportunity to trial a new program called the Community Bushfire-Ready Challenge. The pilot took place in three current Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhood communities, Tullah, Strahan and Bakers Beach up in the North West.

This new initiative aimed to bundle bushfire planning with preparedness information and education into an overall, hands-on experience for individuals and households to participate in. The pilot program was facilitated and powered by the Tasmania Fire Service (TFS), but importantly it was hosted by the Rubicon Fire Brigade, Strahan Fire Brigade and Tullah Progress Association, enabling each to take leadership in engaging and inspiring their community members to get bushfire-ready.

During the 3-5 week program, participants registered to become involved in hosted workshops and weekly 'challenges' that covered key aspects to becoming bushfire-ready, such as getting to know your bushfire risk, creating a bushfire plan and preparing property. With each stream of information accompanied by tips, tricks and advice, the participants were not only able to learn what it takes to be ready for bushfire, but were able to engage with local brigade crews and put it all into practice ahead of a hot Tassie summer.

The pilot has been considered a success following its first implementation, which saw 17 households registered across each community. With a target of 5 for each program run, it was excellent to see this number exceeded. The pilot also received positive feedback, with one anonymous participant stating, "I thought the overall process was great – a weekly challenge followed up with the two workshops. It kept your interest going and I started to look forward to the weekly emails and challenges."

We are excited to announce that following this pilot, the program is now ready to be rolled out in a state-wide capacity. The Community Bushfire-Ready Challenge, Tasmania is coming to you this Spring, meaning your household can take on the challenge, no matter where you live in the state! This is your opportunity to come on a journey with the Bushfire Ready Neighbourhoods team and not only educate yourself on how to be planned and prepared for bushfire, but take action! The more challenges you complete, the more rewards you will have a chance to receive. To find out more about the Community Bushfire-Ready Challenge Tasmania, and to register please visit <https://www.bushfirereadyneighbourhoods.tas.gov.au> Take It On, Be Prepared.

Join the challenge today.
Let us help you get planned
and prepared for bushfire!



**COMPLETE YOUR
BUSHFIRE PLAN**

Take on weekly challenges to help
you stay safe in bushfire season.
There are a range of rewards
that you could win!



**PREPARE YOUR
PROPERTY**



**KEEP YOUR
FAMILY SAFE**



TAKE IT ON, BE PREPARED

Scan the QR code
to learn more



www.bushfirereadyneighbourhoods.tas.gov.au/challenge



Tasmania Fire Service

fire.tas.gov.au/brn

Our Community Development Officers

David Cleaver (Dave)

Community Development Officer – North

Having started with BRN in 2014 and now almost in my 10th year with Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods, I've seen many changes in TFS and BRN in this time.



I've had the pleasure of working with over 20 volunteer brigades, almost 30 communities and hundreds of volunteers in this time, and continue to learn new things every year.

Now we're moving into Round 5 so I'm looking forward to continuing to work with volunteers and communities across the Northern Region.

Emalisa White

Community Development Officer – South

I'm the new Community Development Officer for the Southern Region, and am working with a dynamic team in the Community Development and Education Unit at Tasmania Fire Service.



I am excited to step into the meaningful work of the Bushfire Ready Neighbourhoods Program

and am looking forward to working with communities to understand their needs and support them in becoming bushfire adapted.

I love the outdoors. On the weekends you will probably find me hiking, climbing and kayaking. My professional background is in festivals and events, the arts sector, and most recently in local government. I'm excited to start my journey with the TFS.

James Jennings

Community Development Officer – North West

I am relatively new to the TFS having started in January 2022, but absolutely enjoying the challenge. Having spent over 10 years working in the sporting world helping community, I now feel incredibly privileged to be a part of the BRN program as we look to grow and evolve into the next chapter!



There's no better time than now to keep leading innovation to help inspire behaviour change for bushfire preparedness, and I am excited to play a big role in this. When Hollywood runs out of ideas, I think the BRN program is up for some screen time – it'll be a witty narrative for self-discovery as our community leaders uncover what it takes within themselves to inspire their people to become bushfire resilient – Oh, and I think I'd have to be played by Ryan Reynolds, obviously...

Red Hot Tips program

About the Program

Are you a farmer or landowner responsible for managing land 40 hectares or greater in Tasmania?

Are you keen to grow your knowledge of planned burning and how to reduce bushfire risk to your land? Then the Red Hot Tips Program is for you.

The program is free and strongly focuses on collaboration. Our Program Facilitators work with communities, individual or groups of farmers and landholders to support them to actively reduce their bushfire risk.

The Red Hot Tips Program is a 'one stop service' offering practical bushfire management advice to farmers and landholders responsible for large tracts of land in rural areas of Tasmania. One of the main program objectives is to help landholders, or groups of landholders, take appropriate and informed action to manage their bushfire risk.

Our facilitators visit you on your property and can assist in providing:

- practical advice on effective bushfire management planning
- guidance on developing burn plans
- opportunities for private and public landholders to work together
- training and mentoring
- assistance identifying resources needed for planned burning
- advice on alternative options to planned burning to reduce bushfire risk
- access to helpful resources.

Since the program inception in 2020 the program has 180 registered properties, has completed 308 burn activities covering approx. 4,690 ha and has conducted 12 workshops throughout Tasmania.

If you think the Red Hot Tips Program could benefit you and your property please don't hesitate to contact us. Our facilitators are flexible and can come to you when it best suits you, be it weekends or evenings.

phone 0417 635 164 or 0459 908 539

email redhottips@fire.tas.gov.au

website <https://www.sfmc.tas.gov.au/RedHotTips>





Some of the assembled TFS appliances

Weymouth community

Weymouth is a beautiful coastal town about 45 minutes from Launceston. Nestled on the banks of the Pipers River and Nowland Bay in Bass Strait and was the site for a large exercise recently.

Weymouth has an extremely active Progress Association who, with the assistance of selected members from Weymouth Fire Brigade, over the last few years have developed, refined and tested their Community Emergency Plan.

Weymouth community participated in Round 2 of Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods almost 6 years ago and with support from Weymouth Fire Brigade and Weymouth Progress Association, have remained an active community participating in bushfire planning and preparedness events every year.

Following a Volunteer Engagement workshop, members from Weymouth Fire Brigade formed a partnership with the Progress Association to begin work on the Weymouth Community Plan. They gathered feedback and information from community members, bushfire data from TFS and Parks and Wildlife and soon the plan was in draft. Very quickly the plan became a reality and was accepted by all the parties as a realistic plan which supported community by providing guidance and advice and was considered to be sustainable.

In April 2022, planning began with a small group to develop a community-wide Evacuation Exercise to test the validity of the plan. By 6 November the exercise was off and running with partner agencies, SES, TFS, Tamar Sea Rescue, Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods and Weymouth Progress Association.

Over 20 agency appliances were in attendance and over 50 volunteers from brigades from George Town, Weymouth, Pipers River, Pipers Brook, Lilydale, Karoola, Dilston, George



The famous Hoses and Ladders Game from Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods in foreground with gathered Volunteers taking the exercise briefing

Town SES and Tamar Sea Rescue. Over 60 Weymouth shack owners and residents took part.

Residents were able to discuss their Bushfire Planning with the BRN team, grab a sausage from Weymouth Progress Association and inspect the array of vehicles and appliances assembled at the Weymouth Recreation Ground.

The event was very successful and demonstrates what can be achieved when community groups, TFS and partner agencies and residents all work together towards a common goal and understanding shared responsibility and the importance of regular bushfire planning and preparedness activities.

We all learnt lessons from the exercise and have applied the outcomes to update the Weymouth Community Plan thanks to the hard work of members from Weymouth Fire Brigade and Weymouth Progress Association.

If you'd like more information about the Weymouth Community Plan, visit the Association's website or join this hard working group of volunteers.



West Coast Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods Roadshow

The TFS's Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods (BRN) program prides itself on immersing itself into the community to strengthen the notion that when it comes to bushfire 'we all play a part'. With a recent inaugural West Coast BRN Roadshow in January, it was no different. The Community Development & Education team engaged with local residents to help them understand what it means to be accountable for themselves, as well as to help neighbours, and altogether

to become more resilient communities. The new concept, put together by Community Development Officers following stakeholder engagement, aims to help the BRN program stay in the spotlight and bring positive engagement to bushfire preparedness.

Following a successful bushfire-ready workshop that visited Queenstown in November 2022, the roadshow initiative was put together in collaboration with West Coast Council and Rosebery-Tullah, Zeehan and Strahan fire brigades. Operational staff and representatives from the TFS Volunteer Strategy & Support unit and from the Red Hot Tips program also joined in, giving each community crucial and interesting information to help them get prepared. It was a great example of an aligned and collaborative approach from TFS and the community.

Across four workshops held, including the original event in Queenstown during November, over 85 community members took part. The basis of each workshop was to get residents thinking, and make sure everyone was able to begin getting pen to paper in starting a bushfire plan, as well as taking the time to discuss property preparedness. Ultimately, the workshops were designed to provide an interactive experience, promoting discussion, questions and critical reflection as community members worked together to increase the West Coast community's resilience to bushfire.

The West Coast BRN Roadshow received excellent feedback from attendees in a follow-up evaluation, with all responses stating that the experience either met or exceeded expectations, and that they would recommend the event to others. An anonymous participant also shared:

"This workshop challenged my bushfire risk management thinking and a good reminder of some things I had forgotten. Thank you to Tasmania Fire Service for being proactive and providing this opportunity for our Community."



James Jennings, North West Community Development Officer speaks with Queenstown residents about bushfire preparedness during a BRN workshop conducted in November



Rosebery Workshop

The true test will come to those who were involved. They now have the important challenge of firstly put everything into action, and of then providing strong advocacy in their community to motivate friends, family and the neighbourhood to become bushfire-ready.

A special thankyou to Rosebery-Tullah Fire Brigade, Zeehan Fire Brigade, Strahan Fire Brigade and the West Coast Council for their participation and support during the Roadshow.



BRN Future Directions

Following 3 years of implementation, Round 4 of the Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods program has now officially closed as of March 2023.

Starting in 2020, the Community Development team has engaged leading community stakeholders, including brigades, user groups and key individuals, with the aim of building resilience and capacity in bushfire prevention and preparedness in Tasmanian communities most at risk of bushfire.

Together we have made efforts to develop sustainable methods to promote a 'shared responsibility' approach to bushfire preparedness by recognising that individuals, communities and the Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) all play a part. This saw a variety of initiatives, roles and responsibilities emerge within communities to establish building blocks in making this happen. At the conclusion of a round, we hope to ensure that sustainable systems are in place to unite and inspire community leaders and individuals to continue practising and developing bushfire-ready behaviours without TFS's direct support.

So what happens now?

The TFS Community Development team will now enter a review of Round 4 and an initiation period for the next implementation of the BRN program, Round 5.

Throughout this next period, we will conduct detailed evaluations on the success of Round 4, as well as assessments for criteria to develop a list of new BRN target communities. Round 5 will begin shortly after our evaluation period for Round 4.

Karoola community

Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods will be undertaking community bushfire planning events for members of the Karoola community around the Brown Mountain Road, Lalla Road and Karoola Road area in the coming months.

This area is in the Lilydale Fire Brigade response area, and the brigade will support community members and BRN with community events.

This is a limited access area with some narrow roads and heavy vegetation on both sides of the road, making travel during bushfires difficult and dangerous. The terrain is steep in many areas, which can influence fire behaviour.

We encourage everyone to participate in community bushfire preparedness and planning events in your area to help with your safety. Understanding fire behaviour can help you prepare

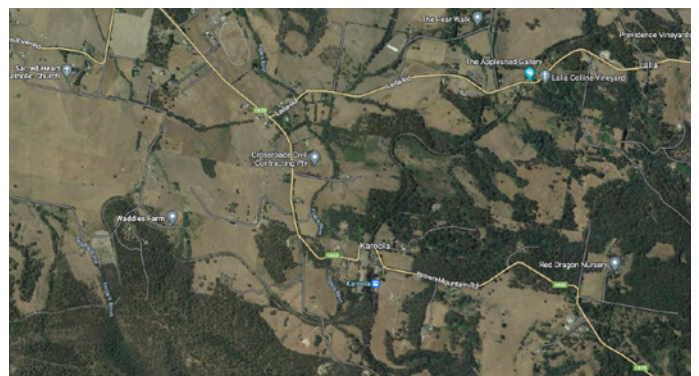
Can Round 4 communities still be a part of BRN in Round 5?

Round 4 communities may be retained into the next round should evidence support this. However, if a community is not selected, it supports the notion that bushfire resilience and capacity has improved and the TFS is comfortable that appropriate systems are in place for this to continue and develop. Additionally, please note that should a community not be included in Round 5, this does not mark the end of TFS's support. All communities are welcome to contact relevant TFS Community Development Officers and provide updates, ask questions, or gain advice as we will still provide reactive services to assist. For individuals or groups who are not involved with your local fire brigade, it is strongly encouraged that you approach your local Brigade Chief or Brigade Community Engagement Officer first.

What's next?

Local Community Development Officers will be reaching out to all stakeholder groups directly concerned to ensure any questions can be answered. However, for now the TFS team is collecting relevant information to assist development of the next round, as well as close the current one. Once more information becomes available regarding Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods, we will communicate with all relevant stakeholders.

On behalf of the TFS Community Development Team working with the Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods program, we want to say a huge THANKYOU to everyone involved in Round 4. The role you play in leading, serving and supporting your individual community to be bushfire-ready is absolutely critical to the success of the Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods Program. You make up the key building blocks that allow your people to keep safe, prepared and resilient to bushfire, and we trust that the journey we have been on together has positioned you to effectively continue efforts into the future. Your service to your community is greatly appreciated.



your property and develop a robust bushfire plan with the support of firefighters and BRN staff.

For more information regarding the Karoola Community Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods events:

Email david.cleaver@fire.tas.gov.au



Fire danger ratings – know the changes, they could save your life!

As the land continues to dry out through autumn, now is the time to prepare for bushfires and make plans to stay safe.

The Tasmania Fire Service would like to remind everyone to get to know the new Australian Fire Danger Rating System. The ratings describe the potential level of danger a community could face should a bushfire start. The fire danger ratings are updated late each afternoon for the following four days on the Tasmania Fire Service website

www.fire.tas.gov.au

Do you know what the ratings mean?

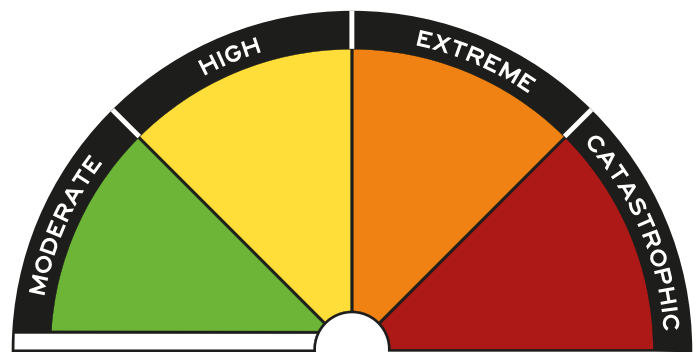
- No rating (White section under Moderate)**
On days of minimal risk, no rating will be issued.
- Moderate (Green) – Plan and prepare**
Most fires can be controlled under these conditions.
- High (Yellow) – Be ready to act**
Fires that start can be dangerous.
- Extreme (Orange) – Take action now to protect your life and property**
Fires will spread quickly and be extremely dangerous.
- Catastrophic (Red) – For your survival, leave bushfire risk areas**
If a fire starts and takes hold, lives are likely to be lost.

What to do

1. Stay up to date with the ratings for your weather district on the Tasmania Fire Service website www.fire.tas.gov.au or the Bureau of Meteorology website (www.bom.gov.au)
2. Know the changes, they could save your life.
3. Ensure your bushfire plan is up to date.
Go to: www.fire.tas.gov.au



Check the fire danger rating forecast on the Tasmania Fire Service website www.fire.tas.gov.au



New District Map

Check the new district map where you can CLICK on your area to display the fire danger rating. You can also enter your location in a search bar. Try it here: www.fire.tas.gov.au/fire-danger-rating/summary/

Fire Permit Period

Tasmania is in a statewide declared Fire Permit Period. It is important that everyone continues to follow the Fire Permit requirements and Total Fire Ban declarations made by the Tasmania Fire Service.

If there is a fire call 000. Go to TasALERT for current fire incidents and warnings <https://alert.tas.gov.au/>

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