





Department of
Education



STAND-ALONE BUSHFIRE PLAN FOR MOORINE ROCK PRIMARY SCHOOL 2019-2020



Moorine Rock Primary School
STAND-ALONE BUSHFIRE PLAN

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**In the case of an EMERGENCY
Call 000**

INTRODUCTION

This Stand-alone Bushfire Plan is for Moorine Rock Primary School and has been developed to assist Principals and their staff prepare for a total fire ban, catastrophic fire danger rating, or a bushfire event. Sample messages to staff and parents are included in the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire*, as well as notices for the closure of the school.

The preparation of this Stand-alone Bushfire Plan should be developed in accordance with the *Emergency and Critical Incident Management Policy* and the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire* with input from local emergency management agencies.

The Moorine Rock Primary School has 19 students and 8 staff. The school is bordered by bush on three sides and the Great Eastern Highway/Moorine South Road.

Overview

General Information

This Stand-alone Bushfire Plan has been developed before 31 August each year after consultation with:

- families of students attending the school;
- members of the emergency services (for example, local fire brigades, Regional office of Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES));
- Local Government Local Emergency Management Committee and Local Government representatives; and
- other school sites.

This Stand-alone Bushfire Plan includes a checklist of required actions to prepare the school before the bushfire season as per the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire* (refer [Appendix A](#)).

This Stand-alone Bushfire Plan also outlines activities to be undertaken by staff and students at the different levels of a bushfire emergency including:

- on days of Total Fire Ban;
- days deemed Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating;
- when there is a fire in the local district;
- when a bushfire has the potential to, or is actually threatening the school; and
- during the period immediately after a bushfire has impacted on the school (known as the 'Recovery Phase').

Junior Room, is/are nominated as the **Safer Building Location** for the school. This building has been deemed and prepared for a bushfire emergency and will accommodate all persons normally at the school.

Schools located in bushfire prone areas need to incorporate key bushfire messages in their curriculum. Research shows that if students develop and undertake drills as part of the emergency planning, the message is more meaningful and transfers to the home environment. Additional benefits can be realised by taking activities home that need to be completed and returned. This can serve to increase families' level of awareness and preparedness in regard to bushfire survival plans or household preparedness assessments.

Communication Plans (including emergency contacts and a Telephone Call Tree) need to be in place for evacuation or planned closure. See [Appendix D](#) for a Communication Plan, [Appendix E](#) for Sample Emergency Response Contacts and [Appendix F](#) for a Sample Bushfire Response Telephone Call Tree.

IMPORTANT: This document contains samples and is designed as a guide only, with a view to achieving reporting consistency across the Department of Education (the Department). It is the responsibility of an individual school to ensure this document is completed with relevant local information.

If a suitable Safer Building Location cannot be identified on site, as detailed in the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire*, the school must identify relevant and appropriate off site locations. It is important that agreements and processes are put in place with the building owners and tested.

Distribution

The Principal must prepare and update the Stand-alone Bushfire Plan in readiness for the bushfire season and then upload through the Department's SharePoint system. Schools will receive a notification when this needs to occur.

The Principal or delegated officer will:

- review (and update where appropriate) the Stand-alone Bushfire Plan on an annual basis;
- publish an up-to-date copy of the school's Stand-alone Bushfire Plan on the school's website no later than 31 August of each year;
- ensure that all new staff members, relieving staff and visitors are briefed about the requirements of the Stand-alone Bushfire Plan during their site induction process;
- include bushfire season reminders and information in newsletters;
- update the School's Information Booklet in Term 1 each year, including detailed information about actions and procedures included in the Stand-alone Bushfire Plan; and
- provide all staff members with pre-bushfire season updates during Term 3 and ongoing information and instruction about the contents and requirements of the Stand-alone Bushfire Plan during Term 4 and Term 1 staff meetings.

The safety and wellbeing of students, staff and visitors is at all times the Department's main priority. Staff are not expected to fight bushfires.

Any bushfire advice received by the school from Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES), including local DFES regional office, Local fire brigades and Community Emergency Services Manager, Local Government, Local Government Local Emergency Management Committee, or external experts, is documented in the table below, identifying the date and source of the advice.

Date of Review	Reviewing Officer	Date Submitted	Next scheduled Review
24/7/2019	Sarah Perrett	1/8/2019	Feb 2020

COMMUNICATION

There are several levels of communication requirements at school level before, during and after bushfire events.

Preparing for Bushfire Season

- The Principal must ensure all students, staff (including relief) and parents are aware of the school's Stand-alone Bushfire Plan. A copy of the school's Stand-alone Bushfire Plan should be published on the school's website. Suggested draft text for the school newsletter is available in Appendix B6 of the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire*.
- The Principal should establish contact with different members of the local community, including emergency services, DFES, local volunteer fire brigades, Western Australia Police Force, Local Government Local Emergency Management Committee and Community Emergency Services Manager.
- The school has an effective working emergency warning or alert system, and emergency communication equipment is available and working and tested at least once before the commencement of the Bushfire Season.
- Schools have in place systems to account for students, staff and visitors in an emergency, such as class rolls (or equivalent) and visitor registers. Consideration should be in place for situations such as a loss of power affecting the ability to print from electronic sources.
- Schools need to identify more than one suitable off-site location, in case one site is in the area of the bushfire.
- Arrangements are in place in relation to school buses if appropriate (notification of contractors if pre-emptive closure is invoked; and the availability of buses if off-site evacuation is required).

Pre-emptive Closure

- The Department's Incident Controller (normally the Deputy Director General, Public Schools or delegated officer) will make the decision to close a school based on advice from emergency services and this will be relayed to the Principal via the Regional Executive Director.
- Residential and Agricultural Colleges will remain open on a Catastrophic Weather Warning day and have procedures in place to move into Safer Building Location or invoke off-site evacuation if safe to do so.
- The Principal is to notify staff and parents of closure using emergency contacts and the Telephone Call Tree. See the draft message to parents in Appendix B7 of the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire* advising of pre-emptive closure, being mindful of parents' level of literacy and understanding of English.
- All other necessary parties are advised, including, but not limited to, other schools that may have siblings at the school, community users of the school facilities (including before and after school care, or holiday programs, community kindergartens, on site contractors, Parents and Citizens Association and/or school council).
- If appropriate, bus contractors will be contacted to arrange for the evacuation of students to a designated area.
- Notice of Planned Temporary School Closure should be posted as per the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire*, both physically at the school and electronically on the website.

During Evacuation

- The school will contact the Regional Executive Director and the Department's Media Unit.
- The school will contact parents via phone or email, ensuring they have a mobile phone contact number for the school. It would be preferable that parents restrict calling the school at this time to emergency calls only.
- The school will notify bus contractors and other users of the school site.

NOTE: DFES uses the national Emergency Alert system to send community warning messages via mobile telephones in affected areas. It is important not to rely on receiving an alert. The school must still be prepared and have an action plan in case of an emergency.

It is important to remember that the Emergency Alert is just one way of receiving information during an emergency. Other ways the school can stay informed include:

- visiting the Emergency WA website www.emergency.wa.gov.au
- calling the DFES information line on 13 DFES (133337).
- listening to ABC radio, 6PR and other media news bulletins.
- following DFES on Twitter at www.twitter.com/dfes_wa

For more information on Emergency Alert, visit: www.emergencyalert.gov.au

The Principal communicates directly with Regional and Central Office personnel including any media communications. Staff should not comment directly to the media.

Reopening the School

- The Regional Executive Director is to advise the Principal when the school can re-open.
- Parents need to know when the school is re-opened. In the event of a pre-emptive closure details are contained in the sample messages (*Principal's Guide to Bushfire* advising of pre-emptive Closure – Appendix B7).
- The *Notice of Planned Temporary School Closure* should be physically removed from the school premises and website.
- All parties that were advised of closure (for example, bus contractors, Out of Hours users, community kindergartens, Parents and Citizens Association and/or school council) should be advised of reopening.

TYPES OF FIRE EVENT

In the event of a Total Fire Ban, catastrophic weather warning or a bushfire, the Stand-alone Bushfire Plan will be activated.

1. Total Fire Ban

In the event of a Total Fire Ban, the Stand-alone Bushfire Plan will be invoked (refer to *Principal's Guide to Bushfire* for all procedures). This means:

- no fires must be lit or used in the open air;
- all open fires for the purpose of cooking or camping are not allowed; and
- 'hot work' such as metal work, grinding, welding, soldering, gas cutting or similar is not allowed.

DFES advise that chainsaws, plant or grass trimmers or lawn mowers can be used during a Total Fire Ban in suburban or built up areas which are cleared of flammable material, but not in bushland or other areas where their use may cause a fire.

It is also necessary to ensure:

- the equipment or machinery is mechanically sound; and
- all reasonable precautions are taken to prevent a bushfire starting.

It is recommended postponing the activity altogether to minimise the risk of fire

Unless a Harvest and Vehicle Movement Ban has been implemented by the Local Government Authority, the school/college is able to harvest or move vehicles across paddocks for agricultural purposes. However, there may be local government authority requirements such as compliant fire-fighting equipment on hand and a required amount of water readily available for fire-fighting purposes.

Individuals could be fined up to \$25 000 or jailed for 12 months (or both) if the Total Fire Ban is ignored.

For information on activities that can or cannot be carried out during a Total Fire Ban visit <https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au/#totalfirebans>.
https://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/safetyinformation/fire/bushfire/BushfireFactsheets/DFES_BushfireFactsheet-Total_Fire_Bans.pdf.

If the information required is not available from the website, telephone the Total Fire Ban Information Line 1800 709 355.





This information is also available by visiting www.dfes.wa.gov.au and [Emergency WA website: www.emergency.wa.gov.au](http://www.emergency.wa.gov.au).



2. Catastrophic Fire Danger

The Catastrophic Fire Danger Index (FDR) has been added to the Australia-wide FDR system since the 2009 bushfires in Victoria. If a fire starts in catastrophic conditions, its impact potential includes death or injury to people and destruction of buildings.

Schools need to know what the Fire Danger Rating is for the area, and monitor local conditions and keep informed. Understanding the Fire Danger Rating categories and what they mean will help in making decisions about what to do if a bushfire starts.

The Fire Danger Rating is based on the forecast weather conditions and provides advice about the level of bushfire threat on a particular day.

Category	Fire Danger Index (FDR)	Action
 Catastrophic	100+	Schools on Bushfire Zone Register closed on instruction from Deputy Director General, Public Schools, through Regional Executive Director. School to invoke Communication Plan and cancel bus services. Appendix B (refer to the <i>Principal's Guide to Bushfire</i> for all procedures and sample messages).
 Extreme	75-99	Monitor Emergency WA & DFES websites Normal school operations (any fire that starts is likely to be so fierce that even a well prepared and well-constructed school may not survive a fire).
 Severe	50-74	Monitor Emergency WA & DFES website Normal school operations (The threat of a bushfire increases)
 Very High	32-49	Monitor Emergency WA & DFES website Normal school operations (The threat of a bushfire increases)

 High	12-31	Normal school operations <i>(The threat of a bushfire increases)</i>
 Low/Moderate	0-11	Normal school operations
<p><i>Guidance notes:</i> <i>At each rating the fire behaviour and potential impact will be different.</i> <i>Check the FDR for the area by visiting the following links:</i> https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au/#firedangerratings <i>Further information can be obtained at:</i> https://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/safetyinformation/fire/bushfire/pages/firedangerratings.aspx</p>		

2.1 Planned Pre-emptive Closure

Regional Executive Directors will contact principals of affected schools directly when a planned (pre-emptive) closure is to be invoked in a particular part of the State. The lead time for a planned closure varies depending on weather patterns, but every attempt is made to give principals as much notice as possible to prepare written documentation for parents. Schools should have Telephone Call Tree in place to provide this information at short notice or after hours.

Once advised of a pre-emptive closure, the school must inform the community that a closure is imminent. The Principal needs to send messages to parents and inform staff members when the closure is planned to occur and that the school is on standby. It may be that between declaration of the closure and the day of closure, weather conditions improve sufficiently to remove the need to close and the school can therefore stand down its Pre-emptive Closure Plans.

The Regional Executive Director will confirm with the Principal the final decision to close the school no later than **4:30 pm** the day before the planned closure. If weather conditions become less severe after **4:30 pm**, the closure goes ahead regardless in order to provide a level of certainty to parents.

DFES is the final authority on advice about which schools are in danger and the level of risk at the time. The Deputy Director General, Public Schools makes the final decision as to whether or not a planned closure of public schools is to proceed based on DFES's advice.

2.2 During a Planned Closure

In order to make informed decisions, the Principal must stay informed of the current fire danger rating and any fire activity by monitoring a range of information sources

Schools can stay informed by monitoring the following official sources:

- visiting the Emergency WA website www.emergency.wa.gov.au
- calling the DFES information line on 13 DFES (133337).
- listening to ABC radio, 6PR and other media news bulletins
- following DFES on Twitter at www.twitter.com/dfes_wa

2.3 Re-opening School

Parents need to know when the Catastrophic FDR has been downgraded and that it is therefore safe for their children to return to school after a planned closure. The sample messages to parents contains advice on how parents can monitor the situation. The school will need to put communication plans in place, such as placing a notice on the school website and providing a phone number for parents to call for information about the reopening of the school. Consideration needs to be given to how parents who do not have internet access or who have diverse needs (for example, multicultural, special needs) will be provided with information.

3. Bushfire

In the event of a bushfire threatening the school, the school will call 000. The Stand-alone Bushfire Plan will be invoked by way of the school siren (or hand-held siren).

3.1. Bushfire – Warnings

During a bushfire, emergency services provide as much information as possible through a number of different channels.

If the school is likely to be threatened by the fire, activate the *Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan* immediately.

Before a bushfire starts, Fire Danger Ratings can provide advice about the level of bushfire threat on a particular day and how difficult and dangerous conditions will be if a fire starts. They are based on weather conditions forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology.

During a bushfire, DFES and the Parks and Wildlife (P and W) Service of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions issue community alerts and warnings for bushfires that threaten lives and property. They are only issued once firefighters have arrived at the scene and determined that there is a threat or potential threat to the community.

The alert level changes to reflect the increasing risk to life.

DFES and Parks and Wildlife (P and W) Service of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions will issue the following four bushfire warnings.

3.1.1



means a fire has started but there is no known danger. This is general information to keep you informed and up to date with developments.

Turn on evaporative air conditioners and ensure roof vents are closed. Undertake regular checks and patrols of the school for bushfire activity, paying special attention to the evaporative air conditioners.

3.1.2



means there is a possible threat to lives and property. Conditions are changing, you need to leave the area or prepare to move students, staff and visitors to their pre-determined Safer Building Location and not an open area on the site or evacuate.

If an order to evacuate is directed by the Incident Controller, the evacuation order will be relayed via a variety of official sources such as the DFES website and Emergency WA website. It is paramount that schools gather information pertaining to fires from official sources in order to make an informed decision on whether to stay on-site or evacuate off-site.

3.1.3



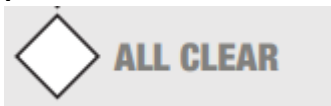
means you are in danger as your area will be impacted by fire. You need to take immediate action to survive.

You will be advised whether you can leave the area or if you must shelter where you are as the fire burns through your area. An emergency warning may be supported with a siren sound called the Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS). These factors should be reviewed on a regular basis as they may change at any time and without notice.

If an order to evacuate is directed by the Incident Controller, the evacuation order will be relayed via a variety of communications methods including the [Bushfire Warning system](#).

It is paramount that schools gather information pertaining to fires from official sources in order to make an informed decision on whether to stay on-site or evacuate off-site.

3.1.4



means the danger has passed and the fire is under control, but you need to remain vigilant in case the situation changes. It may still not be safe to return to school.

Further information in relation to Bushfire Warning System is available on the DFES Website and a video is available at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_H0D-38AGQ&feature=youtu.be

3.2. Bushfire – Act

3.2.1 Response when a bushfire starts and the school is open

3.2.1.1 Evacuation Procedure

School to evacuate off-site on advice from DFES

- All classes remain with their teachers and support staff.
- All other staff and visitors report to the administration building.
- Teachers account for each child and identify students and support staff with known respiratory conditions.
- Doors, roof vents and windows must be closed **and evaporative air coolers turned off**.
- Students and staff are to remain in classrooms unless directed otherwise by the fire warden.
- Fire wardens are designated to manage evacuation routes and liaise with staff.
- The Principal and fire wardens will control the response and must liaise with DFES or emergency services as soon as possible.
- Students and adults with known respiratory conditions will be identified and given special consideration.

Staging Area – identify and utilise an area where occupants and visitors are intended to gather in preparation for an evacuation.

Parent Access

Schools must have clear communication methods with parents. Parents must be advised **NOT** to pick up students and to monitor official communication channels for specific access information. Appendix D and Appendix E Communication Plan and Emergency Response Contact List must be completed with local content to ensure the school's individual communication requirements are detailed and used.

3.2.1.2 Safer Building Location Procedure – if evacuation is not possible

- All classes remain with their teachers and support staff until otherwise advised by Principal or delegated staff.
- School move to Safer Building Location ([Appendix C](#)) if the Principal cannot ascertain impact of a bushfire to school or on advice from DFES.
- Doors, roof vents and windows must be closed and **evaporative air coolers turned off**.
- Principal or delegated staff to monitor official communication channels to enable informed decisions to be made.
- All classes to remain within the designated Safer Building Location. See [Appendix C](#) for a sample safer location evacuation diagram.
- All other staff and visitors report to the administration building, before directed to the Safer Building Location.
- Teachers account for each child and identify students and support staff with known respiratory conditions.
- Fire wardens are designated to manage evacuation routes and liaise with staff.
- The Principal and fire wardens will control this response and must liaise with DFES or emergency services as soon as possible.
- Students and adults with known respiratory conditions will be identified and given special consideration.

Parent Access

Schools must have clear communication methods with parents. Parents must be advised **NOT** to pick up students and to monitor official communication channels for specific access information. Appendix D and Appendix E Communication Plan and Emergency Response Contact List must be completed with local content to ensure the school's individual communication requirements are detailed and used.

3.2.2 Response when a bushfire starts and the school is closed

If the Department's Incident Controller makes a decision on school closure-based advice from emergency services, the Regional Executive Director will inform the Principal of closure.

The Principal is to notify staff and parents of the closure using the Emergency Response Contact List (see [Appendix D](#) for a Sample Communication Plan).

The Department's Incident Controller will, in consultation with the Regional Executive Director, identify alternative accommodation of students and staff, if required. The Department's Media Unit will use media outlets to make public announcements of school closures, temporary alternative accommodation and contact number(s) for further information.

The Department's Incident Controller (in consultation with DFES) will inform the Regional Executive Director when the school can reopen, who will inform the Principal accordingly.

3.2.3 Recovery

The priorities for the school during recovery are:

- Health and safety of individuals;
- Social recovery; and
- Physical (structural) recovery.

General

- When possible, return to normal routine as soon as possible.
- Attend to staff and student welfare, considering counselling support.
- Provide information for families and the community of any impact (including if there is none) on the school and school routine following the bushfire.
- Undertake a check of any equipment or stock used and arrange for replacement/replenishment.
- Address any physical damage to the school, isolating areas if required and, if necessary, relocate to alternative accommodation. Contact the Department of Finance's Building Management and Works to commence repairs. The Department should be advised of any damage caused by the bushfire.

- Attend to security if necessary (Contact Manager, Security and Emergency Management at Central Office on 9264 4825).
- Manage administrative details including insurance.

Debrief

- What worked, what didn't?
- Was anything overlooked?
- What could be done better next time?
- Should any delegation be reassigned?
- If changes are made, incorporate them into the Stand-alone Bushfire Plan and advise the appropriate parties including staff and other authorities.
- Share the knowledge with other schools.
- Test the revised Stand-alone Bushfire Plan and procedures.

For further details and contacts refer to the Recovery Section of the *Emergency and Critical Incident Management Plan* and the *Principal's Guide to Bushfire*



