Capes Zone Response

i – Zone (Interface)
o – Zone (Outer zone)
Operational Protocols

2013/2016
Document History

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Endorsed by:

DPaW Principal Operations Officer

DFES Assistant Commissioner Country
Introduction

The South West Capes area broadly encompasses the City of Busselton and the Shire of Augusta Margaret River. The Capes area is characterized by a heterogeneous mixture of land tenures, landforms, vegetative cover, fuel types and urban development. This situation, combined with insufficient progress of bushfire mitigation programs has generally resulted in significant areas carrying high fuel loadings, often associated with poor strategic fire access making contemporary fire management complex and difficult.

The heightened bushfire potential in the Capes increases the reliance on effective fire suppression during the summer months. It is recognized that fire suppression is the result of both the timely detection of fire and the application of an aggressive initial attack on the fire. Given the spatial distribution of suppression forces and the array of fire combat agencies operating in the area, an agreed automated response across agencies is pivotal to provide effective suppression during the early stages of fire development.

Capes High Risk Bushfire Area

Special response zones designated as I-Zone (interface) and O-Zone (outer zone) have been established along the Capes District for the following reasons:-

- A bushfire will potentially cause a high threat to life and property. It has a significant Rural/Urban Interface.

- Diverse vegetation complexes, high fuel loadings in proximity to built up areas, lack of readily available firefighting water, undulating topography, poor access, extensive Karst systems limiting the use of heavy earthmoving machinery and areas of poor mobile phone reception limit the effectiveness of emergency response resources.

- To ensure a rapid, aggressive and coordinated interagency response from ground and aerial based suppression resources is required to minimise the likelihood of significant loss of life and major damage to property in a vulnerable area.
Operational Times

- I-Zone / O-Zone turnout protocols operate for the entire Prohibited Burning Period.
- Indicative operational period for automatic response is 1st December to 31st March – 0800hrs till 1800hrs
- Operational periods can be suspended for specified periods after consultation & agreement between DPaW, DFES, LGA (DPaW District Manager Blackwood, DFES District Officer Capes and Chief Bushfire Control Officer (CBFCO) Shire of Augusta Margaret River/CBFCO City of Busselton) as representatives to coordinate consultation.
- May be invoked outside of the Prohibited Burning Period if unfavourable fire conditions exist. This will be done through consultation and agreement between DPaW, DFES, LGA (DPaW District Manager Blackwood, DFES District Officer Capes and CBFCO Shire of Augusta Margaret River/CBFCO City of Busselton) as representatives to coordinate consultation.
- Aerial suppression resources available daily from 0600 to 1800 during the contracted period (subject to operational contingencies).
  - 2 x 214B Helitaks available 0800 to 1800 from the 15th of Dec to 31st March 2014
  - 2 x fixed wing available 0600 to 1800 from 1st December 2013

Supervisor Communication Centre (SCC)

Capes Zone Response arrangements apply to all Grass/Scrub/Bushfires within Operational Times - The SCC may use discretion when mobilising to other types of fires however input from local knowledge will take priority.

i-Zone Response

Responses to calls to bush fires in an i-Zone area are to be an automatic multi-agency turnout, and should comprise of at least:

- One appliance from the relevant Local Government Bush Fire Brigades (Mobilisation as per normal procedures through Group-call / 000 agreement);
- One appliance from the nearest available Fire & Rescue Service station (FRS component can be a Dual Registered Brigade);
- One appliance and 1 staff member from the DPaW;
- One staff member from DFES (RDC to mobilise); and
- Two Helitaks and 2 fixed wing fire bombers (DPaW Blackwood District DO to mobilise through State Operations Air Desk - ph: 9414 7970 fax 9414 7859).
**o-Zone Response**

Responses to calls to bush fires in an o-Zone area are to be an automatic multiagency turnout, and should comprise of at least:

- One appliance from the relevant Local Government Bush Fire Brigades (Mobilisation as per normal procedures through Group-call);
- One appliance from the DPaW; and
- 2 x fixed wing fire bombers (DPaW Blackwood District DO to mobilise through State Operations Air Desk – ph: 9414 7970 fax 9414 7859)

**First Arriving Officer**

Upon arrival of the first appliance, the first arriving officer shall;

- Complete a size-up
- Confirm resourcing requirements through sitrep (PAFTACS)
  - FRS – through DFES Comcen or DFES Regional Duty Coordinator
  - BFS – through DFES Comcen or DFES Regional Duty Coordinator
  - DPaW – through DPaW District Duty Officer
- Establish an Operations Point
- Establish a Command Channel
- Establish a Ground Controller and delegate IMT Functions if necessary

**Command & Control**

The basis for operational management is Westplan Fire and SEMP 4.1 – Operational Management.

In addition, the following principles applying to bushfire response:

The agency that is best placed in terms of location, resources and expertise is to deal with bushfire incident.

Initial control of incidents will be tenure based. That is, a fire on DPaW tenure will be managed by DPaW; LG tenure will be managed by the CBFCO or his delegate. If required, transfer of control can be achieved under Sections 45A and 45 of the BF Act or appointing an Authorised Person under Section 13 of the BFA where required.

Fires in a gazetted fire district will be managed by a DFES officer or delegate such as a VFRS crew leader.

A fire which has potential to impact on an urban settlement or meets other key triggers as detailed in Westplan Fire will fall under the control of an ‘Authorised Person’ appointed by DFES irrespective of incident level.

As soon as practicable after a fire has been declared Level 2 or 3, the IMT should be based at one of the Incident Control Centres located within the local government area (Margaret River SES ICC / Busselton SES ICC).
Responsibilities

DFES COMCEN will ensure that:
- Reports of fire are interrogated with permit burns during Restricted Burn Period
- Crews are notified of Land Tenure
- Mobilise pre-determined resources according to i-Zone/o-Zone mobilisation
  - FRS – Group-call, pager, SMS (FRS can include Dual Registered Brigades)
  - BFS – LGA Group-call, SMS
  - DPaW – DPaW Blackwood District Duty Officer (DPaW DO will mobilise all Fire Bombers depending on Zone through State Operations Air Desk ph 9414 7970 fax 9414 7859)
- The DFES Regional Duty Coordinator is notified

DFES Regional Duty Coordinator will ensure that:
- Contact is made with the I/C to determine if IMT support is required. Operations Point and Command Channel will be confirmed ASAP
- DFES Comcen is notified of resourcing requirements if I/C is unable to contact Comcen
- DPaW Blackwood Duty Officer is contacted to establish communications link
- A DFES staff member is mobilised

DPaW Blackwood Duty Officer will ensure:
- DFES Comcen is immediately notified of all calls within the Response Zones
- Mobilise DPaW resources – minimum 1 appliance and fire bombers (oZone fixed wing/iZone both). Fire Bombers and Air Attack Supervisor should be advised Ground Controller Channel will be 198. If in the northern part of the Cape and communications is poor, consider changing to Channel 640
- Mobilise DPaW staff member
- Contact is made with the DFES Regional Duty Coordinator. Operations Point and Command Channel will be confirmed ASAP

LGA CBFCO or representative will ensure that:
- DFES Comcen is immediately notified of all calls within the Response Zones
- Contact is made with the DFES Regional Duty Coordinator. Operations Point and Command Channel will be confirmed ASAP

Notes:
1. Fixed wing and Helitak bomber turnout is only available during the contracted period and is subject to availability.
## Communications

Communications within i-Zones/o-Zones will follow the default Communications Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Command Channels</th>
<th>Zone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Augusta, Margaret River, Busselton Gazetted Fire District</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunsborough Gazetted Fire District</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witchcliffe, Wallcliffe, Cowaramup Gazetted Fire District</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yallingup Gazetted Fire District</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPaW Busselton/Yallingup/Dunsborough</td>
<td>606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPaW Augusta/Margaret River</td>
<td>629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGA (BFS) Busselton</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGA (BFS) Augusta/Margaret River</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Operations – Primary Channel</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Operations (northern part of Cape)</td>
<td>640</td>
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</tbody>
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