

COMMUNITY EDUCATION > BUSHFIRE READY NEWSLETTER



Issue 2 • March 2015

Helping Tasmanian communities to work together to prepare for bushfires.

Over the last few months the BRN team has seen a busy time state-wide. With 16 core communities being engaged with the program and more than 30 others actively engaged.

The theme for this edition is partnerships and collaboration.

In this edition:

- Website Update
- Bushfire Ready partners for people, their pets and livestock
- North/North West update
- Visitor Information Network Preparedness Project- Partnering with the tourism sector
- Bushfire Ready Neighbourhoods to be presented on the world stage
- Disaster Masterclass with Anne Leadbeater – Hobart
- Community Liaison- A key part of Incident Management

For more information on how to contact the team visit www.fire.tas.gov.au and click on the Bushfire Ready Neighbourhoods button on the home page.

Program staff include:



Peter Middleton
*Community Development
Coordinator*



Suzette Harrison
*North West/North Community
Development Officer*



Lesley King
*Southern Community
Development Officer*



David Cleaver
*Northern Community
Development Officer*



Website Update

Visit the new sub-section of the TFS website by visiting: www.fire.tas.gov.au and clicking on the Bushfire Ready Neighbourhoods button.

We are encouraging all TFS members to be familiar with the sub-section of the TFS website. In this edition we would like to highlight two areas of the website that are updated on a regular basis.

[Community Events](#) - View BRN events state-wide, contribute brigade community engagement events by contacting the team.

[News](#) - Program news and what is news in the bushfire and natural hazards preparedness space.

If your community is conducting bushfire education activities let us know as we would like to help promote through the website.



Tasmania Fire Service

www.fire.tas.gov.au

Bushfire Ready partners for people, their pets and livestock

Public policy issues such as climate change, social inclusion, reducing health inequalities, workforce participation, homelessness, literacy and numeracy and overcoming Indigenous disadvantage are difficult to address through the actions of a single government agency. In pursuing collaborative governance, the focus is to better integrate and coordinate government policy and service delivery to achieve common goals and respond to an identified high priority issue or need within the community. (Collaboration, a Tasmanian Government Approach, DPAC 2010).

Communities need an opportunity to meet and discuss issues with each other and with government to develop innovative solutions, share their experiences and their understanding around issues and develop empathy with competing stakeholders. (Tasmanian Government Framework for Community Engagement, DPAC December 2013).

The Tasmanian Government is committed to a culture of collaboration across government sectors and with community members. An excellent example of this is an informal partnership between the Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) Bushfire Ready Neighbourhoods (BRN) program, local volunteer fire brigades and the Department of Primary Industry, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) Biosecurity section.

DPIPWE's Biosecurity program for animals in bushfire planning includes community education of pre-incident emergency planning, incident response and recovery from a bushfire. This includes rural impact assessments when a fire has gone through a farming community.

Eileen Wronski Veterinary Officer South of DPIPWE and Lesley King Community Development Officer South of BRN have been pooling their knowledge and resources to assist pet and livestock owners how to best prepare for bushfires at rural bushfire ready events in Huonville, Kettering, Lower Longley, Leslie Vale and Pelverata.

This informal partnership of mutual and community benefit has developed through:

- Shared aims
- Promoting consistent messaging on bushfire safety
- Sharing resources, knowledge and anecdotal stories
- Flexibility to attend event after hours and on weekends



- Sharing network contact information
- Passing on referrals and enquiries, and
- Sharing links of programs and resources on government websites.

Eileen of DPIPWE explains “Working with TFS and other organisations to facilitate community education has been a fantastic opportunity for all involved. The Animal Health and Welfare Branch have been able to actively engage animal owners (stock and pets) in discussions to enable them to consider what to do with their animals before, during and after a bushfire.

Furthermore animal owners also are considering how to manage after a bushfire when resources may be scarce. In general it has been a wonderful opportunity to highlight the message that successful emergency planning and evacuation (when necessary) includes consideration of people, pets and livestock.

Eileen continues “By working with a number of organisations (government and volunteer) a sense of community and team work has been created. The various partners are able to engage and communicate between and within themselves about their roles in emergency planning and response. This is not just from a strategic government arrangement but right down to the grass roots people on the ground working together as a team.

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Bushfire Ready partners for people, their pets and livestock (continued)

Furthermore by attending neighbourhood bushfire ready functions in varied communities all presenters are themselves learning what to expect from other organisations and local people and their animals. All presenters are able to learn from a much broader perspective, and so share ideas, resources and experience in order to grow a confident and more resilient community.

Fact sheets and planning tips for livestock, animals and bushfire planning can be found at www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-biosecurity/animal-welfare/animals-and-bushfire/animals-and-bushfire-planning or contact your local vet or DPIPWE's Animal Health and Welfare branch on 03 6165 3263 or 1300 368 550 (local call) or email: AnimalWelfare.Enquiries@dpiipwe.tas.gov.au.

Lesley King



Are we in your Bushfire Survival Plan?

Have you made a plan for the welfare of your pets and livestock in the event of a bushfire in your district?

- Have you prepared low fire risk areas for your livestock?
- Is there a safe area or enclosure for your pets?
- Have you decided on a trigger for moving your animals?
- Have you organised an alternative location - outside the threatened district - where you could move your pets and/or livestock?
- Do all your pets and livestock have adequate identification if they are lost or injured during a bushfire?
- Are your pet cases, animal/stock crates, horse floats and loading ramps all in good order and ready to go?
- Is your property registered with DPIPWE - does it have a Property Identification Code or PIC number?

PLAN WELL ◀ PLAN NOW

www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au for further information or phone 03 6233 6875



A community service message brought to you by the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment Animal Biosecurity and Welfare



What's happening in the North and North West

Last year was a busy time rolling out Community Bushfire Forums across the areas of Strahan, Sisters Beach/Rocky Cape, Weejena, Golden Valley and Jackey's Marsh. These were information sharing events involving; District Officers Shane Batt, Paul Hill and Ian Cawthorn, Field Officer Tyron Clark, TasFire Equipment, representatives from Parks Eddie Staier and Ben Hill, Bill Walker Waratah-Wynyard Council and Vet Officer Sue Martin from DPIPWE. The aim was to empower community members through information and resources based on the shared responsibility message.

Bushfire Ready Neighbourhoods (BRN) has many aspects to its roll out in the identified communities including, but not limited to; forums, information sessions, property assessments/field days and the establishment of BRN Groups. One area has spontaneously produced a BRN Group as a result of the forum. At Jackey's Marsh 6 residents of the area have volunteered to get together to look at the broader community based issues and to



Jackey's Marsh Bushfire Ready Neighbourhoods Group

develop strategies to address them. Community issues are unique to each area but can involve things like lack of phone reception. **(continued next page)**



What's happening in the North and North West (continued)

Jackey's Marsh has problematic areas and was/is concerned about early warning in the event of a fire. A great example of collaboration in action is in the recent development of a phone tree for the area of Jackey's Marsh. Errol Gleeson, Tamar Group Officer for TFS has worked in partnership with resident Brian McGowan to pull together this phone tree for the community. This has been a timely process of door knocking to gather relevant information, collating all the numbers and details, plotting contacts on a map and finally generating a phone tree system. A recent meeting was held for Errol and Brian to show the phone tree to the BRN group and in due course there will be a trial of the phone contact system to identify its effectiveness and any gaps.

Bushfire Ready Neighbourhoods is all about equipping communities with the resources, information and support to become more bushfire ready. This does not happen in isolation. Collaboration with both internal and external stakeholders is critical to the successful moving forward of the bushfire safety message. We all play a part, and at this time I would like to give a special mention to the TFS volunteers like Errol Gleeson who so freely and willingly dedicates large time frames to help communities to be more prepared.

Suzette Harrison

Partnering with the tourism sector

Through research and following the 2013 Tasmanian bushfires a gap identified in the emergency management sector was the partnerships and collaboration between emergency management agencies and the tourism sector.

To address this need in 2014 the Tasmanian Visitor Information Network in partnership with the TFS BRN program and SES submitted a National Disaster Resilience Project application to gain funding to set up effective communications, resources, educational materials and support between the agencies and the Visitor Information Network.

The project was successful and has commenced with the following objectives:

- To build capacity to deliver bushfire and other emergency alerts, messages/warnings to visitors;
- To educate Visitor Centre staff on bushfire and other emergency messaging and alerts;
- To educate the visitor on bushfire and other natural hazards;
- To strengthen relationships between the fire and emergency services and the tourism industry to create a mutual appreciation of each other's role.

Key outputs currently being delivered include:

- Engage the TFS/SES to develop and produce a comprehensive VIC Emergency Preparedness Manual;
- Run information/training workshop sessions to educate staff based on the Manual content;



Trifold Bushfire and Flood brochures have been developed for accredited Visitor Information Centres state-wide.

- Conduct ongoing, regular seasonal briefings via the regularly scheduled quarterly regional VIC meetings in collaboration with the TFS/SES;
- Work with the TFS/SES to identify and develop information appropriate to the visitor market;
- Work with the TFS/SES to integrate the Tasmanian Visitor Information Network into the information communication channels related to any emergency situation.

Peter Middleton





Dulcote Bushfire Ready Property Assessments

Bushfire Ready Neighbourhoods to be presented on the world stage

Following winning the 2014 National Resilient Australia Award and presenting at the 2014 Australian Community Engagement and Fire Awareness Conference TFS BRN program coordinator Peter Middleton was invited to submit an abstract to present on the Bushfire Ready Neighbourhoods program at the International Association of Wildland Fire conference in Boise, Idaho, USA in April 2015.



International Association of Wildland Fire

The abstract was successful and due to the support from the Australian Fire and Emergency Services Authority Council (AFAC) Peter will be representing TFS and AFAC at this conference with a presentation and poster. The program would like to acknowledge AFACs contribution and support in making this possible.

This is great recognition for the program and we look forward to showing the world that Tasmania is leading the way in this space.

Stay tuned for an update in the next edition of this newsletter.

Disaster Masterclass with Anne Leadbeater – Hobart

Join Anne Leadbeater AM and a panel of highly experienced professionals in the field of Disaster Management as we explore the tools, strategies and processes being used to build resilient communities equipped to deal with natural disaster.

An in-depth session with Anne will be followed by a highly interactive panel session with professionals from the emergency services sector.



Thursday 30 April 2015

9.00am - 3.45pm

Terrace Room, Best Western Hobart, 156 Bathurst Street, Hobart

\$150.00 + GST members

\$200.00 + GST non-member



[To register and for further details click here.](#)

Anne Leadbeater is a sought after expert who has worked with Emergency Service Agencies and community groups following disasters. In this Masterclass Anne will share tools and techniques that assist in engaging with community's who are still recovering years after an event.

Six years on, the impacts and effects of the Black Saturday bushfires are still being felt locally, despite the rest of the world moving on. Recovery from natural disasters may be a part of our Australian experience, but how do we support communities to continue participating in the changes occurring around them when progress feels so slow and 'consultation fatigue' is an ever-present risk?

Anne Leadbeater has experienced, first-hand, living through a bushfire emergency.

As a resident of Kinglake, Victoria she defended her property against the devastating bushfires that many of her friends and family were significantly impacted by. After Black Saturday, Anne played a key role in the recovery efforts. Her experiences and her subsequent research Australia and New Zealand has led her to be the expert she is today.

During this Masterclass Anne will explore the challenges of long-term recovery and share principles and techniques to assist those working with recovering communities both in the immediate aftermath and many years after the event.

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Disaster Masterclass with Anne Leadbeater – Hobart (continued)

Emergency Services Panel

Experts from the emergency services sector including Community Development Officer (North/North West) Suzette Harrison will take part in a special panel session with a Q & A opportunity to follow. Don't miss this unique opportunity to hear the challenges faced by our emergency service providers as they address issues such as:

- How to build community awareness and emergency practices into people's lives that equip them and their local communities to respond in the face of natural disaster
- The challenge of leading engagement in this sector
- How communities can lead planning to be prepared and ready

TFS staff and brigade volunteers in the community conducting property assessments



South Hobart Bushfire Ready Property Assessments



Weejena Bushfire Ready Property Assessments



Community Liaison – A Key part of Incident Management

Lefroy Bushfire – March 2015



This was the scene on Lefroy Main Road on Wednesday 4th March when Community Development Officer (North) Dave Cleaver arrived at Lefroy to commence work as a Community Liaison Officer in the Public Information Section of the Incident Management Team (IMT).

Community Liaison, during emergencies is an essential role providing communities with support and information during an emergency. Research has shown that informed communities begin the recovery process sooner and achieve better outcomes.

The purpose of the Community Liaison Officer role during major bushfires is to work with stakeholders and affected communities and this can involve:

- Establishing a link between the IMT and affected communities;
- Managing and activating telephone trees;
- Organising and facilitating community meetings;
- Liaising with the community to obtain local knowledge;
- Production of community information;
- Logging issues raised by community members and obtaining responses.

Community liaison is a new area for TFS and the Bushfire Ready Neighbourhoods program in collaboration with State Operations and the TFS regions is working towards taking a state-wide approach to how we engage with communities during bushfires with the aim of aligning community liaison with our six operational priorities.

Peter Middleton & David Cleaver

Flinders Island



Bushfire Ready Community Forums and Bushfire Ready Workshops on Flinders Island



COMMUNITY EDUCATION > BUSHFIRE READY NEIGHBOURHOODS



Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department



Community Engagement Model for Emergency Management



Source: Handbook 6 - National Strategy for Disaster Resilience Community Engagement Framework

1800 000 699

www.fire.tas.gov.au

communityed@fire.tas.gov.au

