North West Bushfire Patrol

Teacher Guide Years 4 – 6
Building Disaster Resilience in Young People
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Contacts
Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Emergency Services Complex
20 Stockton Bend
Cockburn Central, Perth WA 6164

For school-aged education enquiries:
Call: (08) 9395 9816
Email: educationandheritage@dfes.wa.gov.au

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
17 Dick Perry Avenue, KENSINGTON WA 6151,
Locked Bag 104, Bentley Delivery Centre

For Kimberley school-aged education enquiries:
Call: (08) 9168 4200
Email: kununurra@dbca.wa.gov.au
About This Program

North West Bushfire Patrol focuses on bushfire education within the Kimberley region. The program serves as a teaching resource for primary schools and fits within the Western Australian Curriculum. The resource takes into account the Kimberley region’s varied population, and all lessons are suitable to be used in both town and community schools.

The intended outcome of North West Bushfire Patrol is to raise students’ awareness of bushfire and its consequences, whilst further developing a range of skills to help them respond to bushfire when it occurs.

Human risk from disaster is on the rise globally and children are amongst the most vulnerable to disasters. The impact of disasters such as bushfire can be substantially reduced if the community is well prepared and equipped with the knowledge and skills of how to respond when a disaster occurs.

This program reflects an inquiry approach where students are directing their learning and applying it to their own location. The key outcomes include:

- Identifying safe and unsafe behaviour with fire
- Understanding that fire is a tool for responsible adults who hold the knowledge and skills to use it
- Identifying unsafe fire times and risk
- Developing personal behaviours and strategies for staying safe when there is a bushfire
- Understanding how to respond to a bushfire
- Understanding the impact of deliberately lit bushfires

Previous Experience with Fire

In most school communities there will be some families who have had a personal experience of bushfire. Teachers need to be aware of any student who may find the topic distressing and should take actions for the wellbeing of that child.

Children who have a Fascination with Fire

There are children who are fascinated by fire and who are already either lighting fires or endangering themselves by getting close to fire. DFES’ Juvenile & Family Fire Awareness (JAFFA) Program is available for these children and their families.

JAFFA is delivered by specially trained firefighters in the family home. It consists of an interview with the parent and child, and a specially adapted education session that assists the young person to understand the consequences of playing with fire. For more information about the JAFFA Program or to refer a child, please contact the JAFFA Coordinator on 9395 9488, email jaffa@dfes.wa.gov.au or go to www.dfes.wa.gov.au/jaffa.

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Outcomes

Disaster risk reduction education is about building students’ understanding of the causes, nature and effects of hazards while also developing a range of skills to help prevent and lessen the impact of a disaster.

DRR education has the following dimensions\(^2\):

- **Dimension 1:** Understanding the science and mechanisms of natural disasters – why they happen; how they develop; where they occur; their frequency; and their physical impacts.
- **Dimension 2:** Learning and practising safety measures and procedures.
- **Dimension 3:** Understanding risk and how hazards can become disasters.
- **Dimension 4:** Building community risk reduction capacity by identifying local hazards and developing plans to respond to them.
- **Dimension 5:** Building a culture of safety and resilience.

The intended disaster risk reduction outcomes for Year 4 - 6 are:

1. Students do not play with lighters and matches and tell adults immediately if they see lighters and matches in the reach of children.
2. Students seek help from an adult when there is an unsafe fire, even when they took part in lighting the fire.
3. Students do not light fires unsupervised and seek help from an adult when they see others being unsafe with fire.
4. Students know to call Triple Zero when there is an unsafe fire.
5. Students understand the causes and consequences of bushfire hazards.
6. Students are able to inform others of how weather can increase bushfire danger and create unsafe fire conditions.
7. Students learn how to read the Fire Danger Rating and inform others of the daily bushfire risk.
8. Students know to find warning information on the DFES website or local ABC radio during a bushfire, and to communicate these warnings to an adult.
9. Students develop a bushfire survival plan with their families.

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Using this Learning Program

This education resource has been written for teachers and provides lesson plans, videos, photographs, illustrations and worksheets for Years 4 - 6. The lessons are ideally delivered as a whole unit of work, so that students are better able to work towards achieving all disaster risk outcomes.

Before beginning any part of the program it is highly recommended that the students undertake the introduction activity (Critical Thinking and Reflection) which allows student to apply critical thinking skills to identify what they know and what they don’t know about bushfires in their local area. These ideas can be revisited throughout the learning process to help both the teacher and student to reflect on what they have learnt so far and what they still need to find out.

Whole of School and Community Approach

Research conducted around child-centred disaster risk reduction has repeatedly shown that multi-component whole-school initiatives involving the whole school community are more likely to increase disaster resilience outcomes than single-one off learning activities done in isolation.

A whole school approach includes all members of a school community, including teaching and non-teaching school staff members, parents and guardians, all students and the wider community. It involves providing students with interactive and engaging learning activities, ensuring all school staff and students are invited to be part of the learning process and building positive and respectful partnerships with families and the wider community.

For these reasons you will find within the modules the following activity suggestions which will help build a whole of school and community approach;

- Ways to help guide children to talk with parents about what they have learnt.
- Ideas on how students can engage the wider community during the learning process
- Child-parent interactive homework suggestions
- Activities which use the ‘kids teaching kids’ model so that those students learning about bushfires can teach other students.
- Ideas on how to have direct engagement with local emergency management staff

To encourage household and family involvement in the learning program, a Parent Information Sheet can be found in the appendix, which we encourage you to send home to parents and carers at the commencement of the learning process.
Arranging a Firefighter Visit

To organise a visit from local firefighters, contact your local DFES or Parks and Wildlife Service office. As most emergency services are provided by volunteers in the Kimberley region, it may not always be possible for a firefighter to visit your school.

The purpose of the firefighter visit is to reinforce the key messages of Northwest Bushfire Patrol. The visit is also an opportunity for your students to learn more about community helpers and find out what they do.

The firefighter visit is designed to be delivered to one class at a time. The effectiveness of the presentation relies on students being able to interact with the firefighter and is not suitable for a large audience.

The main role of most of the firefighters that come to your class is to fight fires. Whilst they may have some experience in working with young children, they will need your help to make sure their session goes well.

To ensure that all students benefit from this presentation, teachers are asked to take responsibility for their students’ behaviour. There is a possibility the firefighters are on duty and could be called away to an emergency during the presentation.

The firefighters might bring a fire truck and arrange for your students to look through the fire truck and see a firefighter in their breathing equipment. This may not be possible nor suitable for all lessons.

Your local Aboriginal ranger group may also be able to talk to students about fire management and their role fighting fires, and may be able to show students some of the equipment they use.

Knowing your Local Community

The Kimberley region is a vast area and the range of emergency services varies between larger towns and more remote regions. Volunteer organisations play a vital role in providing services to towns and communities throughout the Kimberley region. There is value in knowing your local area and what emergency services and volunteer organisations are available as this will influence how you teach certain parts of the program. The following organisations can be contacted for more information surrounding local services.
### Agency and Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</table>
| Department of Fire and Emergency Services   | • Broome  
| (DFES) regional offices                     | • Kununurra                           |
| Department of Biodiversity, Conservation    | • Kununurra  
| and Attractions offices and work centres    | • Broome  
|                                             | • Derby  
|                                             | • Fitzroy Crossing                     |
| Bushfire Brigades                           | • Broome  
|                                             | • Ivanhoe  
|                                             | • Packsaddle  
|                                             | • Crossing Falls                       |
| Volunteer Fire and Rescue Brigades          | • Broome  
|                                             | • Kununurra                           |
| Volunteer Fire and Emergency Services       | • Fitzroy Crossing                     |
|                                             | • Halls Creek                          |
|                                             | • Wyndham                              |
| State Emergency Services                    | • Kununurra  
|                                             | • Derby  
|                                             | • Broome                              |

### School Bushfire Emergency Plans

If your school is in or near a designated bushfire prone area, bushfires are a real risk to you and your students and your school buildings and grounds. It is strongly recommended that a stand-alone bushfire emergency plan is developed by all schools that sit in bushfire prone areas. You can find out if your school is at risk to bushfires by using the DFES map of Bushfire Prone Areas. Speak to your school management team about your schools bushfire emergency plan.

It would be highly valuable for you to organise and conduct school or classroom bushfire drills while undertaking this learning program. Make sure that students understand what a bushfire drill is and why it is important. Involve students in an activity where they reflect on how effective the drill was and how it could be improved.

### Household Bushfire Emergency Plans

DFES encourage all households in Bushfire Prone Areas to have a Bushfire Survival Plan. A plan will help families make important decisions like, when to go, which way to travel, where to go and what to take. A plan will give families the best chance of surviving a bushfire. It is important to highlight that leaving early is always the safest option.

Module Five (Responding to Bushfire) asks students to complete the My Family's Bushfire Survival Plan worksheet as a homework task. This is a particularly important component of the learning program as a bushfire plan will give families the best chance of surviving a bushfire. It is important to highlight that leaving early is always the safest option.
It is recognised that this activity may be difficult for some students where parents or guardians are unwilling or unable to participate. Instead encourage students to have a ‘5 minute fire chat’ with other classroom students to decide the following:

- When will they know to leave their home?
- Where will they go?
- Which way will they go?

The DFES Firechat website will help with this task.

**Additional Resources and Useful Weblinks**

- Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) [www.dfes.wa.gov.au](http://www.dfes.wa.gov.au)
- Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)

Appendix

An Introduction Activity to the Modules

Before beginning any part of the program it is highly recommended that students undertake the following introduction activity. This will allow students to apply critical thinking skills to identify what they know and what they don’t know about bushfires in their local area. These ideas can be revisited throughout the learning process to help both the teacher and students reflect on what they have learnt and what they still need to find out.

- Use the **North West Bushfires Photography** slideshow to prompt discussion and explore what students know and don’t know about bushfires in their region.
- Use the template below and work as a class to list all the things students know and don’t know about bushfires. Display this information in the classroom so it can be referred to throughout the learning process.
- Revisit the ideas after Module Two or Three to review students’ initial ideas. “Were the students correct about what they knew? Do they now know the answer to some of their questions? Consider a third questions, “what more do you want to know?”
- After Module Five use this tool again to reflect on what students have learnt and what they still need to learn.

**Critical thinking and learning template**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do we know about bushfire?</th>
<th>What don’t we know about bushfires?</th>
<th>What do we want to know about bushfires?</th>
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Parent Information Sheet

North West Bushfire Patrol

Dear Parent/Carer

This term, our class will learn about bushfires in the North West region of Western Australia. We will use North West Bushfire Patrol, a program developed by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) in collaboration with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.

North West Bushfire Patrol aims to increase your child’s understanding of bushfire and provide them with life-long skills to prevent, prepare and respond to bushfires in your area.

We encourage you to talk to your child about what they are learning in class and work as a family to complete any homework activities they may bring home. By completing the activities as a family, you will help reinforce your child’s learning and increase your family and home’s safety before and during the bushfire season.

You can find out more about how to prepare for bushfires as a family on the DFES website: https://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/firechat

Keep up to date with Bushfire Warnings in your area using EmergencyWA: https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au/

If you want to know more about what your child will be learning in class, you can download the full learning program from the DFES education page: https://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/schooleducation

We hope you and your child enjoy North West Bushfire Patrol and are well prepared for the bushfire season.

Best wishes
### Curriculum Links

#### HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION: Personal, social and community health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Strand</th>
<th>Content Descriptors</th>
<th>Module</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Earth’s surface changes over time as a result of natural processes and human activity</td>
<td>Impacts of Bushfires Fire Land Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>Earth and space sciences</td>
<td>• Living things depend of each other and the environment to survive</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>• Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them survive their environment</td>
<td>Impacts of Bushfires Fire Land Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>• Changes to materials can be reversible; or irreversible</td>
<td>Understanding Bushfire Impacts of Bushfires</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chemical Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>• The growth and survival of living things are affected by physical conditions of their environment</td>
<td>Impacts of Bushfires Fire Land Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Earth and Space Sciences</td>
<td>• Sudden geological changes and extreme weather events can affect Earth’s surface</td>
<td>Impacts of Bushfires Fire Land Management</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### SCIENCE: Science Understanding

<table>
<thead>
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*Note: Science as Human Endeavour and Science Inquiry Skills are consistent across all lessons*
### HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCE: Civics and Citizenship

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Strand</th>
<th>Content Descriptors</th>
<th>Module</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>Government and Society</td>
<td>• The purpose of government and some familiar services provided by local government</td>
<td>Fire Land Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>Roles, responsibility and participation</td>
<td>• How regulations and laws affect the lives of citizens</td>
<td>Understanding Bushfire</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Why people work in groups to achieve their aims and functions, and exercise influence, such as volunteers who work in a community group</td>
<td>Fire Land Management</td>
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<td>Understanding Bushfire</td>
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<td>Fire Land Management</td>
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### HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCE: Geography, Knowledge and Understanding

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Strand</th>
<th>Content Descriptors</th>
<th>Module</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The Earth’s environment can sustains all life</td>
<td>• The importance of environments to animals and people, and different views on how they can be protected</td>
<td>Impacts of Bushfires</td>
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<td>Fire Land Management</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Factors that shape the environmental characteristics of places</td>
<td>• The way people alter the environmental characteristics of Australian places</td>
<td>Understanding Bushfire</td>
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*Note: Humanities and Social Sciences skills are consistent across all lessons*

**Cross Curriculum Subjects**
- Mathematics: Measurement and Geometry, Statistics and Probability
- English: Creating Literature, Expressing and Developing Ideas, Interacting with Others, Creating Text

**General Capabilities**
- Literacy, Information and communication technology capability, Critical and creative thinking, Personal and social capability, Ethical understanding, Intercultural understanding

**Cross Curriculum Priorities**
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, Sustainability