OFFICE OF BUSHFIRE RISK MANAGEMENT (OBRM) UPDATE
June 2018

I am pleased to provide you with the latest OBRM update. It is an exciting time in OBRM’s evolution with the Minister for Emergency Services, the Hon Fran Logan MLA announcing the establishment of a Rural Fire Division (RFD) of which OBRM will be a key component. This is a very positive development, uniting key functions within DFES that focus on the management of bushfire risk including land-use planning, bushfire risk management planning, and bushfire research and training through a Bushfire Centre of Excellence. This will enable some stronger collaboration and an integrated agency approach.

I am also pleased to take the reins of Director OBRM from Murray Carter and excited to be working alongside collaborative and effective teams within the RFD. OBRM will continue to focus on the state level strategic approach to managing bushfire risk. Key focus areas in the coming twelve months will be continued collaboration across all tiers of government, strengthening the assurance program for planned burning and enhancing the efficient and effective management of bushfire related risk. I am enthused by the body of work that OBRM has ahead of it and the engagement this work requires. The next update will highlight this work.

Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Relevance</th>
<th>Next step</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018 edition of Map of Bushfire Prone Areas (Edition 4)</td>
<td>Identifies bush fire prone areas and triggers further assessment prior to development</td>
<td>Released 2018 Map 1 June 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review of Guidelines for developing a Bushfire Risk Management Plan</td>
<td>Under review to simplify and better integrate with the Emergency Management Framework</td>
<td>Consultation May to July 2018</td>
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<td>WA Case Study for a Decision Support System</td>
<td>Development of a DSS to support investment decisions for mitigating bushfire, coastal inundation and earthquake. Focus in SW from Gingin to Augusta and east to Albany. State and local government will be involved.</td>
<td>State government stakeholders meeting September 2018 to discuss LG scenarios for 2018/19</td>
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2018 Edition of the Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas

The fourth edition of the Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas (the Map) was released on 1 June 2018. This year there were only minor changes across 38 local governments. We’d like to thank local governments for their participation in this review and acknowledge the strong support from local government over the past three years.

Review of the Bushfire Risk Management Plan (BRM Plan) Guidelines

OBRM initiated a significant review of the Guidelines for Preparing a Bushfire Risk Management Plan in 2017. The draft is currently undergoing the first of several phases of consultation. The
plan has focused on a simplification of the current methodology and enhanced integration through the Emergency Management Framework and local and district committee structures.

**Local Government Permit to Burn Review Project**

OBRM has finalised the review of the local government ‘Permit to Burn’. The Stakeholder Reference Group did a marvellous job availing their time and liaising with their volunteer and professional network to enable the review. Following the review, a web based system has been developed to enable each local government to design their own template permit to burn. Local governments being able to reflect local circumstances was a primary objective of the project. A secondary objective was the ability to better track permits. Each permit now has a unique identifier. Local Governments can now design and print their permits annually. Local government can access the service through their WALGA subscription page. A handy tutorial has also been developed to assist local governments. In the first six weeks, 60 local governments had requested access to design their own permits. Local Governments interested in accessing the product should contact the WALGA Communications Team at communications@walga.asn.au.

**Funding**

The Minister for Emergency Services, the Hon Fran Logan MLA announced an additional round to Mitigation Activity Funding (MAF) available to regional local governments who have an OBRM endorsed Bushfire Risk Management Plan. As of 12 June 2018, 19 local governments have OBRM endorsed plans. The funding round closes 4pm Monday 25 June 2018. Details regarding the MAF can be found at: [https://www.oem.wa.gov.au/funding/mitigation-activity-fund](https://www.oem.wa.gov.au/funding/mitigation-activity-fund)

**OBRM Planned Burning Assurance Program**

In March 2018, the Kimberley Land Council (KLC) became the first non-government organisation to formally engage in the OBRM Assurance Program for planned burning. The KLC are key players in the Kimberley and work extensively with Traditional Owners to use fire to manage biodiversity, protect environmental, cultural and community assets and farm carbon. The benefits being realised by enhanced fire management to remote communities in the Kimberley is notable. The KLC’s involvement in the Assurance Program will facilitate more ‘right way’ fire and achieve better outcomes of planned burning objectives and enhance the management of bushfire related risk. Overtime, it may also incentivise other organisations to become involved.

**Staff Movements**

The creation of a RFD has provided an opportunity for some OBRM staff to challenge themselves in different roles. Murray Carter is leading the Division as the Executive Director of the RFD, Samantha Kennedy has taken a role as the Manager of the Office of the Executive Director and Kendall Winter is transitioning across to support Sam and Murray in the administration of the Office of the Executive Director. Great opportunities for them and we wish them well.

OBRM will be welcoming Paul Simpson as the Principal Policy Officer and look forward to adding his experience, expertise, critical and pragmatic thinking to OBRM’s existing skills and experience base. Paul has spent the last nine years managing the Legal and Legislation team within DFES. OBRM will have a series of positions arising out of the restructure and so I look forward to introducing them to you in coming updates.

**TIM McNAUGHT**

**DIRECTOR OBRM**

12 June 2018