

Catastrophic Bushfire Response Site Plan

Overview

This guideline provides practical advice in regards to managing a bushfire response during catastrophic fire days in which McLaren Flat Primary School responds in the event of an active bushfire impacting upon or threatening our site. The guide applies both during and outside of business hours.

Scope

This guideline applies to all staff, volunteers, students, visitors, sites and services located on site during a catastrophic fire day. It is in addition to the Site Emergency Management Plan.

The purpose of the Catastrophic Bushfire Response Site Plan is to:

- Complement the requirements and stipulations within the Bushfire Preparation Procedure and Bushfire Response Procedure 1.5 – Responding to fire danger ratings: CATASTROPHIC (Total Fire Ban)
- Establish clearly defined parameters and processes in relation to the enactment of bushfire related emergency management procedures
- Clearly outline the requirements and responsibilities of staff, volunteers, students, visitors and key personnel in the effective management of a bushfire during a catastrophic fire day.
- Ensure that all staff, volunteers and students are appropriately informed and able to respond during catastrophic fire days.

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1. Fire Danger Season – response requirements

South Australia's fire danger season generally commences on 1 November each year and concludes on 30 April the following year. Dates vary between fire ban districts and can also vary from year to year. The country Fire Service (CFS) is responsible for determining the official dates of fire danger season and communicating those dates to the state government and the community.

1.1 Catastrophic fire danger days in the Mount Lofty Fire District – declared in advance

All R1 and R2 schools and preschools in the affected fire ban district(S) are required to close. No persons are permitted on site, including contractors, hirers and non-departmental services.

All non-essential services and extra-curricular activities (eg out of hours school care (OSHC), school sports) scheduled to operate at R1 and R2 schools and preschools in the **Mount Lofty Fire District area** are cancelled.

School transport services (including bus and taxi services) scheduled to travel through the **Mount Lofty fire ban district** are cancelled *provided a R1 or R2 school or preschool exists in the **Mount Lofty fire ban district***.

R 3 and NR schools will remain open unless otherwise advised by the Security and Emergency Management (SEM) unit.

In instances where schools and preschools are unable to meet their '**duty of care**' requirements **due to authorised staff absences attributed to the 'catastrophic' fire danger day** (eg *enacting a Personal Bushfire Survival Plan*) an authority to close must be sought. The site leader must inform their education director of the reason for the staff absences, the impact on 'duty of care' requirements and the reason why alternate staffing arrangements or operating arrangements cannot be achieved. The education director must contact the SEM unit to obtain a closure authority from the Minister for Education (or approved delegate).

1.2 Catastrophic fire danger days in the Mount Lofty Fire District– declared on the relevant day

Although the CFS generally declares fire danger ratings on the day prior to the relevant day, it is occasionally possible for them to be declared or escalated on the relevant day. In these instances, the department's specific procedures for 'catastrophic' fire danger days change substantially.

All R1 and R2 schools and preschools in the affected **Mount Lofty fire ban district** will remain open unless otherwise directed by the SEM unit or an authorised representative of the emergency services.

All non-essential services and extra-curricular activities (eg OSHC, school sports) scheduled to operate at R1 and R2 schools and preschools in the **Mount Lofty fire ban district** are cancelled.

School transport services (including bus and taxi services) scheduled to travel through the **Mount Lofty fire ban district** remain operational.

R3 and NR schools will remain open unless otherwise advised by the SEM unit.

The SEM unit, in collaboration with the CFS and other relevant emergency management agencies, will undertake an assessment of the risks associated to schools and preschools in the **Mount Lofty fire ban district** remaining open. Where necessary, the SEM unit will seek authority for and coordinate any school closures, student relocations and any relevant tasks associated to school transport services.

2. Staff enacting Personal Bushfire Survival Plan

Staff members who enact their personal bushfire survival plan could impact on schools and preschools meeting their 'duty of care' requirements.

Site leaders should record the names of Staff members who have their own personal bush fire safety plan in Attachment A to this guideline.

3. Communication to Parents

Site leaders should implement the Parent SMS and Parent email from site as recommended in the DfE 'Emergency Notification Working for Site Leaders. **Attachment 2** has an extract for 'Extreme' – total fire ban day and 'Heads up' that tomorrow will likely be a catastrophic day.

4. Satellite Phones for Site Leaders

Satellite phones (iridium extreme) have been provided to all high to extreme bushfire risk rated sites. All site leaders that hold satellite phones are to familiarise themselves with the Satellite Phones Guide notes for Sites. This information provides clarity around the operation and purpose of the phone and should be read along with the Quick start guide and User manual.

The purpose of Satellite phones allow sites to provide important information to the Security and Emergency Management unit or emergency services following an emergency incident (e.g. bushfire 'burn over' or the completion of a severe storm).

They are used to make outgoing calls or receive incoming calls from the department or emergency services during an emergency or bushfire event.

Satellite phones are not for broadcasting messages to parents. The contact number for this phone must not be communicated to your parent community. As detailed in your annual parent community bushfire communication, the publication of the department emergency information hotline (1800 000 279) is the most appropriate number for parents to contact for information about services closures from Catastrophic Fire Danger Ratings or emergency events (including bushfires) impacting specific school communities. Sites can liaise with the Security and Emergency Management unit to assist with messages to parents about emergency incidents.

Satellite phones should not be removed from site unless during a whole-of-site evacuation.

Roles and responsibilities

Line manager

Provide advice and support to leaders and educators to advance quality teaching and learning and successful post-school pathways for every child and young person.

Employees

Comply with this guideline and any associated policies and procedures.

Attachments

Attachment A: Staff with personal bush fire safety plan

Attachment B: Communication to Parents

Attachment C: Catastrophic Bushfire Flowchart

Attachment D: List of R2 Schools in Noarlunga 4 Portfolio

Supporting information

Related legislation

Emergency Management Act 2004

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012

AS 3745-2010 Planning for Emergencies in Facilities

Related policy documents

Site Bushfire Preparation Procedure

Site Bushfire Response Procedure

Emergency Management Policy

Emergency Management Procedure

Ministerial Instrument of Delegation for School Closures

Camps and Excursions Procedure

Work Health Safety and Injury Management Policy

Injury, Reporting Procedure
Site Emergency Management Plan
Satellite Phones Guide Notes for Sites

Record history

February, 2020

Keywords

Catastrophic Bush Fire Response Site Plan

Contact

Business unit: Noarlunga 4
Email: ann.prime@sa.gov.au
Phone: 8207 7139

Attachment B

Communication to Parents

Major fire – via Skoolbag messaging App – email and text message notification.

Parent SMS from site	*SCHOOL ALERT* A fire is active near our school. Our bushfire response plan is in place. Children are safe. Do not attend. Info @ 1800 000 279
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'Extreme' – total fire ban day

Parent SMS from Site	*SCHOOL ALERT* Extreme fire danger rating has been declared for (Insert DATE). Review your bushfire plan. Check www.cfs.sa.gov.au regularly
Parent email from site	<p>Dear parent or caregiver</p> <p>An 'extreme' total fire ban has been declared for (insert date) for the Mount Lofty District which means that highly dangerous conditions are present.</p> <p>It also means that if a bushfire begins burning it will be very difficult to bring under control.</p> <p>Please consider if any additional arrangements need to be made to ensure your child is safe travelling to and from school in the extreme heat.</p> <p>Be ready to enact your family bushfire survival plan if weather positions change.</p> <p>For more information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Department for Education website www.education.sa.gov.au• Department for Education – Emergency Information Hotline on 1800 000 279• Department for Education Facebook page www.facebook.com/edu.sagov (a Facebook account is not needed to see this page) <p>General Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Country Fire Service www.cfs.sa.gov.au

FROM EMP:

Main Contacts

Josh Anderson – Principal – 0418458530 (work mobile) ~~0418142565 (personal)~~

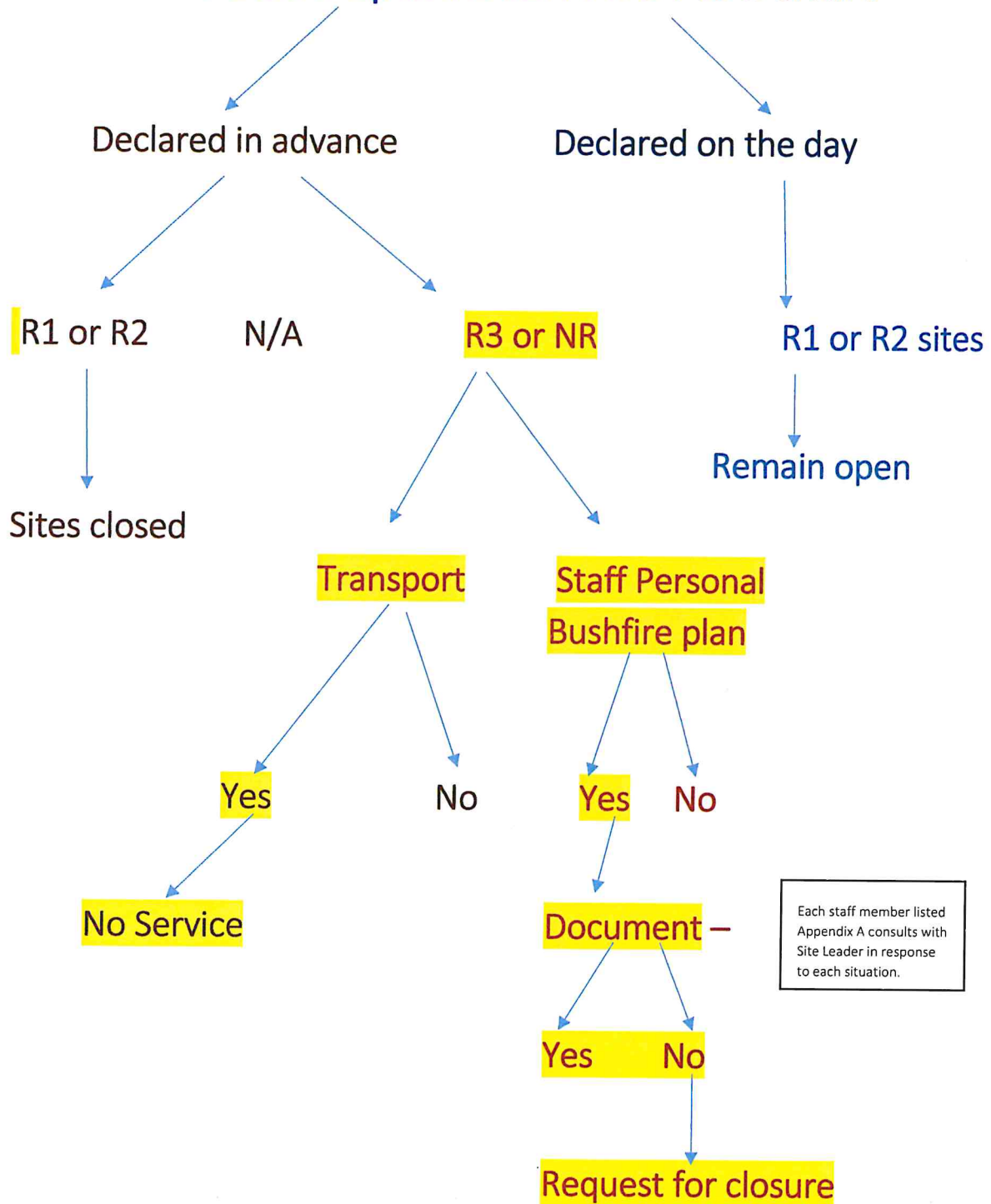
Jo Bell – Deputy Principal – 0438065254 (work mobile)

'Heads up' that tomorrow will likely be a catastrophic day

Parent SMS from site	SCHOOL ADVICE: Potential catastrophic fire rating tomorrow. Potential school closure and transport cancellation. SMS confirmation by XXX (site to determine timing, if appropriate)
Parent email from site	<p>Dear parent or caregiver</p> <p>It is likely that a 'catastrophic' fire danger rating will be declared for Mount Lofty District on (insert date).</p> <p>If this declaration is <i>made our site will be closed and</i> (if R1 or R2 site) all services operating from it will be cancelled. This includes any school transport which travels through the Mount Lofty Fire District.</p> <p>We will contact you to confirm the situation via phone/email/sms by Xpm (site to determine appropriate communication method and timing)</p> <p>In the meantime, please start to make arrangements for the appropriate care and supervision of your children for tomorrow (if required). Children should not be left alone at home during a 'catastrophic' fire danger day.</p> <p>For information on school, preschool or early childhood centre closures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department for Education website www.education.sa.gov.au • Department for Education – Emergency Information Hotline on 1800 000 279 • Department for Education Facebook page www.facebook.com/edu.sa.gov (a Facebook account is not needed to see this page) <p>General Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country Fire Service www.cfs.sa.gov.au

Attachment C

Catastrophic Bush Fire Flowchart



Each staff member listed Appendix A consults with Site Leader in response to each situation.

Attachment D

List of R2 Schools in Noarlunga 4 Portfolio

Clarendon Kindergarten

Clarendon Primary School

Eastern Fleurieu R-12 School – Ashbourne Campus

Kangarilla Primary School

Mount Compass Area School

Mount Compass Preschool Centre

Rapid Bay Primary School

Yankalilla Area School

Yankalilla Community Children’s Centre