

Victoria's Bushfire Management Strategy

STATE GOVERNMENT
IMPLEMENTATION
PLAN 2024-27

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it.

We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom have ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partnering with Victorian Traditional Owners and Victoria's Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations.

© The State of Victoria Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action May 2024.



Creative Commons

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence, visit the Creative Commons website (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the State of Victoria as author. The licence does not apply to any images, photographs or branding, including the Victorian Coat of Arms, and the Victorian Government and Department logos.

Printed by smo
ISBN 978-1-76136-529-4 (pdf/online/MS word)

Disclaimer

This publication may be of assistance to you but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

Accessibility

To receive this document in an alternative format, phone the Customer Service Centre on 136 186, email customer.service@delwp.vic.gov.au, or contact National Relay Service on 133 677. Available at DEECA website (www.deeca.vic.gov.au).

Contents

Introduction	3
Victoria's Bushfire Management Strategy	3
Bushfire Strategy Victorian Government Implementation Plan	4
Annual refresh and 3-yearly review	4
Governance and reporting	5
Victoria's Bushfire Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework	5
Work currently underway	5
Implementation Plan 2024-27	11
Actions	12





Introduction

Victoria’s Bushfire Management Strategy

Victoria’s Bushfire Management Strategy (the Strategy) guides bushfire management across Victoria in the context of a changing climate, growing population, changing demographics, and Aboriginal self-determination and Treaty. The Strategy provides a shared vision for bushfire management in Victoria over 10 years. It outlines how fire agencies, communities,

relevant stakeholders and Traditional Owners can work together to achieve this vision, through the delivery of 7 long-term outcomes.

The Strategy supports the bushfire management sector’s pursuit of improved outcomes for bushfire risk management and effective response and recovery. It builds on previously established principles and enables us to direct resources and investment to where they will have the greatest impact.

Table 1: Bushfire Strategy vision, domains and outcomes

Vision: Victorians work together to manage bushfire risk for safer communities and healthy ecosystems in a changing climate

Strategy domains	Strategy outcomes
People and community safety	Communities are more resilient to the impacts of bushfires and bushfire management activities
Critical infrastructure and economic resilience	Business, industry and infrastructure are more resilient to the impacts of bushfires and bushfire management activities
Aboriginal self-determination in cultural fire and bushfire management	The sector supports and enables self-determination of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians in land and bushfire management
Ecosystem resilience and nature conservation	Fire regimes support healthy and resilient ecosystems and nature conservation in a changing climate
Informed decision-making, evidence-based approaches and tools	Victoria uses the best available science, innovation and knowledge to support evidence-based decisions
Working together, accountability and shared responsibility	The sector, land managers, communities and industry work together effectively and share responsibility for managing bushfire risk across public and private land
Enhanced capability and capacity	Victoria is supported and equipped with the skills, equipment, capability and systems to safely and effectively manage bushfire

Bushfire Strategy Victorian Government Implementation Plan

To support the State's delivery of the Strategy and drive accountability, the Victorian Government has developed the Bushfire Strategy Implementation Plan 2024-27 (the Implementation Plan). The Implementation Plan is a 3-year rolling plan, which is refreshed annually to strengthen delivery against the Strategy and align with Victoria's Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan (SAP).

The SAP 2022-25 is the emergency management sector's forward work plan. It outlines who will be doing what and by when to deliver on the emergency management sector's priorities. The SAP for 2022-25 explains what steps the emergency management sector will take to help make communities safer and better prepared for emergencies.

The Strategy and Implementation Plan are themselves actions within the SAP. DEECA will report on delivery of the Implementation Plan actions through regular SAP reporting.

The Implementation Plan outlines actions, agency responsibility and planned timeframes for delivery. Actions in the Implementation Plan will help Victorian Government agencies work towards the Strategy's outcomes and strategic directions, driving future improvements in bushfire management.

The Implementation Plan reflects currently funded projects and actions that the Victorian Government is delivering as it works towards the desired outcomes set out in the Strategy, including actions delivered in partnership between multiple government agencies, local government and non-government organisations. The Implementation Plan provides a cross-sector snapshot that enables us to analyse where the sector is investing efforts.

Annual refresh and 3-yearly review

The Implementation Plan will be refreshed annually, providing opportunities to strengthen delivery against the Strategy and to support planning and prioritisation of government investment, as well as maintain alignment to the SAP. A full review will be conducted every 3 years with input from the sector, community, industry and Traditional Owners. This will allow for continued innovation and prioritisation of new actions to deliver on the Strategy's vision.

This approach enables adaptability to emergency events, new insights generated by research, evaluation, and community feedback and the scheduled 5-year review of the Strategy. Annual review also supports the sector to respond flexibly to new Victorian Government priorities and budget availability.



Governance and reporting

Oversight of the Implementation Plan will occur through the Bushfire Risk Mitigation Committee (BRMC). The BRMC is the peak cross-sector governance body for bushfire risk mitigation and the formal mechanism for government agencies to collaborate, coordinate and work together effectively for the community in bushfire management. It includes representatives from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Change (DEECA), Parks Victoria, Country Fire Authority (CFA), Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV), Emergency Management Victoria (EMV), Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV).

The State Crisis and Resilience Council (SCRC) is the peak crisis and emergency management advisory body in Victoria responsible for providing emergency management policy and strategy advice to the Minister for Emergency Services and the Security and Emergency Management Committee of Cabinet (SEMC). The SCRC will have visibility of the Implementation Plan as part of regular reporting against the SAP.

Both the BRMC and SCRC have endorsed the initial Implementation Plan, and each will be asked to endorse future iterations as part of the 3-yearly review. This will ensure fire and emergency management sector agencies are accountable for delivery.

The Implementation Plan will be publicly available to support accountability and transparency.

Victoria's Bushfire Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework

In addition to the Implementation Plan, the Strategy is supported by Victoria's Bushfire Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework (the Framework). The Framework provides high-level guidance to support monitoring, evaluation and reporting (MER) on the delivery of the Strategy. This will enable the sector to demonstrate progress towards the Strategy's outcomes and inform evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement.

The Framework provides the foundation for a more detailed MER plan that will identify how the sector will lead MER. The MER plan will provide guidance for delivery and will be regularly reviewed to adapt to changing circumstances and new knowledge and information.

Periodic evaluation and reporting undertaken through implementation of the Framework will inform both annual reporting and the 5-yearly review of the Strategy's outcomes and strategic directions, with the first review commencing in December 2025.

Work currently underway

The Victorian Government has already made significant investments in bushfire risk management in Victoria and is committed to delivering continued improvement in the way we manage bushfire risk. These investments and commitments mean we are already actively working towards the outcomes identified in the Strategy. **Figure 1** gives a summary of the key Victorian Government commitments that contribute to the Strategy's outcomes and vision.

Figure 1: Key Victorian Government investments

WHAT WE'VE DONE

- **Established *Safer Together* as an ongoing program** – our state-wide, risk-based approach to fuel management
- **Invested a record \$517 million to protect Victoria from bushfire risk** – delivering important technology upgrades for firefighters and improved risk management across agencies to reduce the risk of bushfires in a changing climate
- **Established the \$200 million Powerline Replacement Fund**, part of the Powerline Bushfire Safety Program, to identify and remove the most dangerous bare-wire overhead powerlines in the state
- **Funded \$40 million for the Local Infrastructure Assistance Fund** to install backup diesel generators in residential facilities across Victoria to minimise power disruptions during days of high fire risk
- **Initiated the Emergency and Bushfire Recovery Program** responding to bushfires and severe weather impacts to Victoria's historic heritage sites, including more than 100 places impacted by the 2019-20 Black Summer fires, as well as more than 500 sites impacted by other emergencies
- **Recruitment of more than 600 new forest firefighters since 2020** – including both permanent forest fire operations officers and seasonal project firefighters to boost firefighting capacity over summer
- **A \$35 million investment in expanding and maintaining Victoria's strategic fuel breaks to deliver 1,447 kilometres of new or upgraded strategic fuel breaks across Victoria**
- **A \$59 million investment in aviation resources to support the state's emergency response capability, including bushfire, since 2020**
- **A \$21 million investment to establish the Office of Bushfire Risk Management (OBRM) to lead a coordinated approach to evidence-based bushfire risk management policy, practice, assurance and reporting across all public and private land in Victoria.**
- Delivered key actions in response to inquiries, including Victoria's Bushfire Management Strategy, Victoria's Bushfire Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework and expanded Victoria's Bushfire Risk Management Report
- Delivered **key recovery programs and actions** in response to the 2019-20 fires, including the clean-up of bushfire-affected properties across Victoria, roll out of grants to address recovery needs, establishment and facilitation of Community Recovery Committees to support communities to plan and lead their own recovery, and released the State Bushfire Recovery Framework and Implementation Plan to guide the coordination of recovery efforts.

WHAT WE'RE DOING

- **Delivering the Joint Fuel Management Program** – the state-wide program managing bushfire risk across all land tenures and agencies
- **Rapidly responding to bushfire ignitions** so fires are suppressed and impacts to community are minimised
- **Supporting other emergency response** including floods and storms
- **Supporting recovery from emergencies** to reduce the effects and consequences of the emergency and build the resilience of communities to adapt and recover
- **Regularly patrolling state forests, parks and reserves** to make sure people are adhering to campfire safety rules
- **Delivering community education through providing teaching and learning resources to support bushfire education for primary and secondary schools**
- **Maintaining the strategic road network to make sure communities can evacuate in case of bushfire and our firefighters have the access they need to respond to ignitions**
- **Partnering with Traditional Owners** to manage parks and reserves in a culturally sensitive and ecologically appropriate way
- **Maintain the strategic fuel break network** to protect communities and the environment from the impacts of bushfire and assist firefighters to manage and suppress fires
- **Administering the f-factor scheme** to reduce fire starts on electricity networks in Victoria, driving a targeted reduction in electricity network ignitions with the highest risk to human life and property
- **Delivering sector-wide integrated services** for strategic planning, mapping, monitoring and evaluation
- **Engaging with the community** to plan for and be prepared for bushfires
- **Providing specialist advice** for land use planning and development
- Continuously improving our **services for volunteers**

WHERE WE'RE GOING

- **Identifying and removing barriers to Traditional Owner cultural fire management** in partnership with Traditional Owners
- **Continually developing our volunteer model** to ensure it remains sustainable for the future
- **Developing new fuel management targets for FFMVic to reduce fuel-driven bushfire risk** to life and property and maintain ecosystem resilience
- **Continuously improving the strategic bushfire risk modelling framework**
- **Delivering grants across local government to build capability** of local government and enable localised, community-centred mitigation and management of bushfire risk
- **More than 50 additional actions to improve bushfire management across Victoria**, listed below

THE SYSTEM WE WORK IN

Victoria has an 'all hazards, all agencies' approach to emergency management and bushfire management is a key part of this. The Victorian Government is undertaking a significant work program to improve its emergency management capability outlined in the Emergency Management Strategic Roadmap and supported by the SAP, including:

- implementing the Emergency Management Operating Model Review
- improving cyber support for Victoria's critical infrastructure and essential services
- building our State Control Centre workforce
- building council capacity and capability for emergency management, and
- supporting our volunteers with the training and equipment they need to keep our communities safe.

In addition to this work and the key bushfire specific investments identified in **Figure 1**, the bushfire management sector already delivers an extensive and essential body of bushfire management activities year-round to strengthen community safety and resilience. This work is considered 'business as usual' by the sector. As this is conducted on an ongoing basis, it is not included in this document. Business-as-usual work spans the spectrum of mitigation, planning, preparedness, response and recovery. An overview of this work is captured below. Further detail can be found in the State Emergency Management Plan Bushfire Sub-Plan.



Mitigation and planning

The bushfire management sector is responsible for the delivery of a significant land and fuel management program. This includes managing a diverse public land estate of approximately 8 million hectares, as well as supporting fuel management activities and compliance on private land.

Mitigation and planning include development of the Joint Fuel Management Program (JFMP), a state-wide, multiple agency program to manage fuel on public and private land. It also involves the development of the Regional Bushfire Management Strategies, which consider the risk posed by bushfires on both public and private land, drawing on community values that need protection in each region.

The sector develops the JFMP and plans its delivery through collaborative strategic planning, mapping and risk assessment. It completes monitoring and evaluation following delivery to improve forest, fire and emergency management.

Fuel management is delivered through both the JFMP and within road and rail corridors, as part of the vegetation management and road maintenance program. Through both these programs, Victorian Government agencies work closely with local government in managing fuels across different land tenures.

The sector's fuel management work includes a range of activities, such as planned burning and mechanical activities. Planned burning means using controlled fire under carefully-monitored conditions to reduce fuels such as grass, leaves, bark, shrubs and fallen branches. Mechanical treatments can include activities like mowing, slashing and mulching. In addition to planned burning and mechanical activities, the sector also manages fuel through the construction and maintenance of strategic fuel breaks or control lines.

Throughout the planning and delivery cycle, agencies work in partnership with Traditional Owners to manage parks and reserves in a culturally-sensitive and ecologically-appropriate way. The sector also works in collaboration with Traditional Owners to train and upskill their staff and members to participate in a range of bushfire management activities. The skills and knowledge gained through this play an important role in building Traditional Owner capacity to deliver on their cultural burning programs.

The sector supports the community by delivering a range of community engagement programs to assist community to plan for bushfires, develop home bushfire plans, take action prior to the bushfire season and be prepared for when a bushfire occurs. It also provides specialist advice for land use planning and development, and compliance and education programs to support bushfire prevention. This work seeks to mitigate bushfire risk to future developments and provide advice on appropriate controls.

In addition to annual activities, Victoria delivers a 5-yearly Climate Science Report, synthesising the best available climate change science and its implications for Victoria.

Preparedness

Bushfire management sector agencies engage with key stakeholders, partners and communities to ensure fire agencies and our communities are prepared for bushfires. This includes providing guidance for preparedness, bushfire management, land use planning, delivering community education and working with other emergency agency partners.

Australian and international academics continuously conduct research that further improves our understanding of bushfire behaviour and how we can best prepare for bushfires. The sector builds on this through investment in partnerships with academia, including research and development of prevention programs to improve community safety and build community resilience.

The sector delivers community education through providing teaching and learning resources to support bushfire education for primary and secondary schools, as well as through broader community education campaigns. These campaigns are delivered in multiple languages to support people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Preparedness also means making sure the sector has the capability to respond to emergencies. Volunteer brigades and professional resources conduct a series of activities throughout the year to ensure they are ready to respond during bushfires. These activities include annual assessments of seasonal preparedness, ongoing maintenance of equipment, regular preparation of response plans, and the necessary training, support



and services for firefighters – including professionals and volunteers. Seasonal weather outlooks and near-term forecasts during the fire season are also used to enhance readiness – for example, a forecast high fire danger day would trigger additional resources being placed on standby.

Response and recovery

When bushfires occur, the sector is responsible for delivering prompt and effective response and recovery activities. This includes early detection of ignitions and rapid first attack with the aim of suppressing bushfires while they are small, as well as larger fires that may occur over a period of weeks or months.

The bushfire management workforce is also called upon to respond to emergencies other than bushfires, for example floods and storms. Sophisticated readiness, command, control, relief, and communication arrangements support the sector's emergency management response. After an emergency, the sector continues to provide recovery services to reduce the effects and consequences of the emergency and to build the resilience of communities to adapt and recover.

This includes continued delivery of long-term bushfire recovery activities following the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires, including hazardous tree treatment, repair and reinstatement of fire-damaged visitor assets and roads, and restoration of waterways and catchments. The sector captures learnings

from these programs, as well as other recovery programs following storms and floods, to inform the efficient and effective delivery of future bushfire recovery programs. Recovery activities consider future bushfire risk under climate change projections, with many rebuilt assets improved to increase resilience.

Safety initiatives are embedded in our strategies and work to promote safety and wellbeing of fire agencies' personnel and volunteers. As an example, the implementation of the Mixed Fleet Strategy by Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic) seeks to provide a fleet that is appropriate for work centre and district risk profiles, incorporating enhanced safety features for high-risk work environments. Innovations such as CFA's Crew Protection System initially developed for heavy tankers exemplify the application of research into practice and progressive installation across the fleet.

Bushfire response draws on professional resources within FFMVic and CFA, as well as more than 50,000 volunteers in operational and support roles across more than 1,100 CFA brigades. Fire agency staff and volunteers work together with local governments to actively support recovery operations.

In addition to bushfires, firefighting resources and personnel are called on to support response and recovery for other emergencies such as floods and storms. During major bushfire events, Victoria shares firefighting resources and personnel with other states, territories and countries.

Implementation Plan 2024-27

The actions documented below are currently funded and due for delivery between 2024 and 2027. Actions can relate to outcomes of multiple strategic directions and domains across the Strategy but are listed only against the primary domain.

The Implementation Plan documents activities that contribute to significant improvements in bushfire management. As outlined above, these actions are in addition to the sector's all hazards emergency management work and business-as-usual work, which all contribute to achieving the Strategy's outcomes.

The actions use the following abbreviations when referring to responsible agencies:

Abbreviation	Meaning
CFA	Country Fire Authority
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
DE	Department of Education
DPC	Department of Premier and Cabinet
DTF	Department of Treasury and Finance
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
ERV	Emergency Recovery Victoria
FRV	Fire Rescue Victoria
LGV	Local Government Victoria
MAV	Municipal Association of Victoria

Actions



1. PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

Outcome: Communities are more resilient to impacts of bushfires and bushfire management activities.

Protecting and preserving life is the sector’s highest priority. Community-centred approaches – in which the sector helps build the community’s bushfire management capacity by involving and consulting with local communities – are proven to reduce the impact of fire on communities. These approaches are informed by behavioural and social science, fuel management strategies and other innovative methods and programs that can positively influence behaviour change and build social capital, not only within communities, but across the sector.

Empowering communities with an understanding of bushfire risk and the tools

to take action to minimise those risks leads to reduced impacts and faster recovery.

The actions under this domain are led by DEECA and CFA, with support from other sector agencies. This includes councils and other local delivery partners. This domain includes actions designed to support a community-centred and place-based approach to managing bushfire risk, increasing community capability through practice-based learning and community education, grants to local government to support mitigation and additional training for operational staff.

Number	Action	Delivery date	Leads	Partners	The Strategy’s strategic directions	
1.a	Provide advice on new fuel management targets for FFMVic to manage fuel-driven bushfire risk to life and property	2024	DEECA	CFA	LGV	1.4
				FRV	EMV	5.1
				DTP	Parks Victoria	
				Councils	DTF	
				MAV	DPC	
1.b	In collaboration with the bushfire management sector, develop a roadmap to expand bushfire risk management performance targets across all agencies and tenures	2024	DEECA	CFA	LGV	1.3
				FRV	EMV	1.4
				DTP	Parks Victoria	5.2
				Councils	DTF	5.3
				MAV	DPC	6.1
					6.4	

Number	Action	Delivery date	Leads	Partners		
1.c	Implement the Community First Program – Deliver strategic and practice-based learning initiatives to strengthen the capabilities of agencies to collaborate and develop partnerships for community-centred engagement	June 2025	DEECA	EMV	FRV	1.1
			CFA	Parks Victoria	ERV MAV Melbourne Water	6.1
1.d	Implement the Community First Program – Manage delivery of a grants program and learning network to strengthen partnerships with local governments and enable them to deliver localised, community-centred projects to mitigate and manage bushfire risk	June 2025	DEECA	EMV	FRV	1.1
			CFA	Parks Victoria	ERV MAV Melbourne Water Councils	6.1
1.e	Implement the Community First Program – Deliver a research-informed, child-centred, multi-sector program to support curriculum-aligned delivery of participatory bushfire education in schools	June 2025	DEECA	EMV	FRV	1.1
			CFA	Parks Victoria	ERV MAV Melbourne Water	1.2 5.1 6.1
1.f	Implement the Community First Program – Facilitate community-centred and place-based bushfire management to enable enhanced community participation and partnership-building within and across communities and the sector to bring about change in the practices and behaviours of agencies and communities	June 2025	DEECA	EMV	FRV	1.1
			CFA	Parks Victoria	ERV MAV Melbourne Water Councils	6.1 6.5

Number	Action	Delivery date	Leads	Partners	The Strategy's strategic directions	
1.g	Implement the Community First Program – Develop innovative and experiential approaches to community risk engagement, integrating different forms of knowledge, scientific disciplines and community experience to reflect a range of narratives around bushfire risk and living with fire to bring about change in the practices and behaviours of agencies and communities	June 2025	DEECA CFA	EMV Parks Victoria DTP DE Councils	FRV ERV MAV Melbourne Water	1.1 5.3 6.1
1.h	Maintain the strategic fuel break network to protect communities and the environment from the impacts of bushfire and assist firefighters to manage and suppress fires	June 2024	DEECA	Parks Victoria Melbourne Water	DTP	1.3 1.4 2.1 2.3 2.4





2. CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Outcome: Business, industry and infrastructure are more resilient to the impacts of bushfires and bushfire management activities.

Like other cohorts of the community, Victoria’s businesses and industries play a critical role in preparing for and managing bushfires. Building the resilience of businesses and industry to bushfire generates significant flow-on benefits to local communities through improved economic stability. Although the strategic approach to people and community safety also applies to businesses and industries, supporting these groups requires consideration of additional factors. Victoria’s bushfire management must recognise and plan for the specific interests and priorities of business and industry groups.

The business and industry sectors include agricultural businesses such as farmers, viticulturalists, and apiarists; forestry businesses such as plantations; tourism operators and small business owners; and veterinary services.

The actions in this domain are led by the Victorian Government, in many cases in partnership with critical infrastructure owners and operators. This includes actions designed to support and protect communities and critical infrastructure as well as enhance sector, industry and infrastructure capability to manage bushfire risk.

Number	Action	Delivery date	Leads	Partners	The Strategy’s strategic directions
2.a	In collaboration with the water sector and other bushfire agencies, develop and implement resilience improvement initiatives that will enhance emergency risk identification, mitigation, response and recovery capability, to minimise disruption of essential water and wastewater services to Victorian communities during and after a bushfire event	June 2024	DEECA	Melbourne Water	2.1
				Parks Victoria	2.3
					2.4
2.b	Enhance climate-related hazard and bushfire risk assessment capabilities to inform water infrastructure planning, design and investment decisions	December 2026	DEECA	Water corporations	2.1
					2.3
					2.4
					5.1



Cultural burning in wetlands on Gunditjmarra Country



3. ABORIGINAL SELF-DETERMINATION IN CULTURAL FIRE AND BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT

Outcome: The sector supports and enables self-determination of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians in land and bushfire management.

Meaningfully delivering on the Victorian Government's commitment to advance Aboriginal self-determination includes providing Traditional Owners with access and authority to manage Country using cultural land management tools, including cultural fire.

The Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Fire Strategy articulates a long-term vision for reinvigorating cultural fire on Country and outlines 4 specific objectives. The Strategy recognises and supports these objectives, as well as adding a fifth strategic direction acknowledging that some Traditional Owners seek a greater role in areas of bushfire management that are of interest to them.

The sector is already working to remove barriers to Traditional Owner-led land and fire management in Victoria, but there is more that can be done. Actions outlined in this domain will be undertaken in close partnership with Victorian Traditional Owners to enact state-level reform, as well as to support Traditional Owner's objectives for cultural fire and management of Country. These actions include removing legislative barriers to cultural fire management, delivering operational and governance support and delivery of the Cultural Fire Grants Program.



**The
Strategy's
strategic
directions**

Number	Action	Delivery date	Leads	Partners	
3.a	Undertake a review to identify and make recommendations regarding legislative barriers to cultural fire management on public land, in partnership with Traditional Owners	Timeline for delivery to be determined in partnership with Traditional Owners	DEECA	Traditional Owners Councils	Parks Victoria 3.1 3.4
3.b	Provide operational support to Traditional Owner groups seeking to nominate, plan and gain approvals to deliver cultural burns on Country	June 2025	DEECA	Parks Victoria	3.1 3.5
3.c	Deliver the Cultural Fire Grants Program to support Traditional Owner groups to implement their cultural fire management priorities	June 2024	DEECA	Parks Victoria	3.1 3.5
3.d	Partner with Traditional Owners to develop a preferred approach for ongoing distribution of cultural fire funding	Timeline for delivery to be determined in partnership with Traditional Owners	DEECA	Traditional Owners	3.1 3.5



4. ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCE AND NATURE CONSERVATION

Outcome: Fire regimes support healthy and resilient ecosystems and nature conservation in a changing climate.

A changing climate means we need to continuously update our understanding of how ecosystems respond to the impacts of fires.

An increasing proportion of areas have been burnt multiple times since the year 2000, increasing the complexity of managing the impacts of fires on biodiversity and ecosystems. This changes the context in which fuel management needs to be planned and delivered.

The actions in this domain are led by DEECA with support from CFA and Parks Victoria and include delivery of the Fire Ecology Strategy Roadmap and expanding the guidance, evaluation and monitoring of ecosystem resilience outcomes within the fuel management program. This will build the capability and capacity of the fire ecology program, and ensure continuous improvement of data, metrics, policy and processes. This will further enable decision-making that leads to improved ecosystem resilience and nature conservation outcomes.

Number	Action	Delivery date	Leads	Partners	The Strategy's strategic directions	
4.a	Provide advice on new fuel management targets for FFMVic to maintain ecosystem resilience	2024	DEECA	CFA	LGV	4.1
				FRV	EMV	4.2
				DTP	Parks Victoria	4.3
				Councils	DTF	5.1
				MAV	DPC	
4.b	Deliver Fire Ecology Strategy Roadmap goal 1 – Provide clear and accountable leadership and coordination of the Forest and Fire Ecology Program through improved governance and collaboration	June 2025	DEECA	CFA	Parks Victoria	4.3

Number	Action	Delivery date	Leads	Partners		
4.c	Deliver Fire Ecology Strategy Roadmap goal 2 – Build the capabilities, capacity and representation of internal and external partners and stakeholders involved with the forest and fire ecology program	June 2025	DEECA	CFA	Parks Victoria	4.1
						7.2
4.d	Deliver Fire Ecology Strategy Roadmap goal 3 – Support Victoria's fire ecology program through the continual improvement of the data, metrics, processes and guidance for fire ecology modelling and decision support tools	June 2025	DEECA	CFA	Parks Victoria	4.1
4.e	Deliver Fire Ecology Strategy Roadmap goal 4 – Support continual improvements to relevant policy and guidance, including through alignment between strategic, operational, regional and state-wide planning contexts	June 2025	DEECA	CFA	Parks Victoria	4.1
						4.3
4.f	Deliver Fire Ecology Strategy Roadmap goal 5 – Improve the comprehensiveness and rigour of ecosystem resilience in the context of fire management by supporting research projects and better integrating contemporary science	June 2025	DEECA	CFA	Parks Victoria	4.1
						4.2
						4.3
4.g	Improve and expand the guidance, evaluation and monitoring of the fuel management program for ecosystem resilience outcomes	June 2025	DEECA	CFA	Parks Victoria	4.1
						4.3



5. INFORMED DECISION-MAKING, EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACHES AND TOOLS

Outcome: Victoria uses the best available science, innovation and knowledge to support evidence-based decisions.

Adapting to and reducing the impact of climate change on bushfire risk requires a strong and continuously improving foundation of knowledge, evidence and tools.

The sector’s current risk-based approach to managing bushfires informs all tiers of planning, from strategic to operational. The approach assesses the likelihood of fires starting and spreading and also considers the possible impacts of fires and fire response activities on human life, health and

wellbeing, communities, cultural heritage, the environment and critical infrastructure.

The actions in this domain are led by DEECA and the CFA with support from the entire sector. Together they ensure that sector delivery is based on the latest science, including bushfire-risk modelling, climate change and fire ecology. This means the sector can deliver contemporary targets and continue to prioritise the things that are most important to communities.

Number	Action	Delivery date	Leads	Partners	The Strategy’s strategic directions
5.a	Undertake research into continuous improvements of the strategic bushfire risk modelling framework, including implementation of enhancements delivered by the Risk 2.0 project and continuing research on understanding the cost effectiveness of bushfire management to reduce risk to multiple values in a changing climate	June 2025	DEECA	Parks Victoria	1.4
					5.1
					5.2
5.b	Undertake research on how agencies can better engage with communities, with an initial focus on climate change and vegetation management	June 2025	DEECA CFA	Parks Victoria	1.3
					1.4
					5.1
					5.3
					6.1

Number	Action	Delivery date	Leads	Partners	The Strategy's strategic directions
5.c	Undertake research into risk reduction strategies, models and approaches that optimise operations related to suppression effectiveness and vegetation management	June 2025	CFA DEECA	Parks Victoria	5.1
					5.2
					7.1
5.d	Undertake research into bushfire behaviour to improve prediction ability, including improvements to the collection, storage and analysis of bushfire behaviour and fuel data to develop models that improve predictions and risk modelling	June 2025	CFA DEECA	Parks Victoria	5.1
5.e	Deliver fire ecology research, including expanding the species post-fire response dataset to improve estimation of ecosystem resilience	June 2025	DEECA	CFA Parks Victoria	5.1
					4.1
5.f	Undertake research into climate change to ensure we are prepared for operations in the future, including understanding how climate change will influence bushfire fuels and what that means for resourcing	June 2025	CFA DEECA	Parks Victoria	1.4
					4.2
					5.1
					7.6
5.g	Exploring cross-agency, safer technologies for future firefighting and CFA tankers, as part of the Future Firefighting Technologies project	June 2025	DEECA CFA		5.1
					6.1
					7.5
					7.6

Number	Action	Delivery date	Leads	Partners	
5.h	Undertake research that informs prioritisation and resource allocation towards the actions that will effectively reduce bushfire risks and impacts to values, including the delivery of the Effectiveness of Bushfire Risk Reduction and Risk 2.0 projects	June 2025	CFA DEECA	Parks Victoria	5.1
					5.2
5.i	Undertake research to improve early warnings and community safety, including the Predictions in Public project	June 2025	CFA	DEECA	1.3
					5.1
5.j	Undertake research on predictability and patterns of landscape dryness, including understanding how drought indices link to fire behaviour, prediction of in-forest fuel moisture and the identification of when the landscape can burn	June 2025	CFA DEECA		5.1
5.k	Development of tools for operational fire risk decision support, including the development and evaluation of fire simulators, creation of fuel maps, the development of visualisation systems and the production of models predicting risk	June 2025	CFA DEECA	AFAC	4.1
					5.1
5.l	Research in fuel treatments and how they affect future fire outcomes, including evaluation of how fires interact with burns, roadside burning practices and assessment of fuel treatment outcomes	June 2025	CFA DEECA	Councils	4.1
					5.1



6. WORKING TOGETHER, ACCOUNTABILITY AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Outcome: The sector, land managers, communities and industry work together effectively and share responsibility for managing bushfire risk across public and private land.

As the climate changes and bushfire risk increases across the landscape, shared responsibility becomes more important – and all Victorians have a role to play to manage bushfire risk.

Over the past 5 years, the sector has progressively implemented the Safer Together program. This work has set new foundations for improved collaboration between agencies and with communities. It has guided the development of innovative engagement programs, joint agency planning activities, and seamless integration plans across public and private land.

The actions in this domain are designed to improve the way the sector works together and with communities – including 12 different state government agencies, 79 local councils and Victoria’s Traditional Owners – and how the sector is accountable to all Victorians.

This includes reviewing and updating governance arrangements to ensure that they are fit for purpose and consider the diverse views and needs of all Victorians, as well as ensuring the sector proactively communicates with community about bushfire risk. This will ensure how we operate as a sector is constantly evolving and supported to strengthen communities through collaboration and partnership.

Number	Action	Delivery date	Leads	Partners	The Strategy’s strategic directions	
6.a	Deliver a review of the multi-agency governance structure to strengthen how the bushfire management sector works together to manage bushfire risk across all public and private land in Victoria	October 2024	DEECA CFA	EMV Parks Victoria DTP FRV Councils	ERV LGV MAV Traditional Owners	6.1
6.b	Develop and implement a proactive communications strategy for how Victoria manages bushfire risk	2025	DEECA	CFA FRV DTP Councils	MAV LGV EMV Parks Victoria	6.1
6.c	Deliver an updated Code of Practice for Bushfire Management on Public Land	December 2024	DEECA	EMV Parks Victoria DTP FRV	ERV LGV MAV Traditional Owners	6.2

Number	Action	Delivery date	Leads	Partners		
6.d	Review the legislative framework for fuel management, including land and fire managers' responsibilities, powers and functions, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support agencies to work together more closely • ensure all firefighters have sufficient legal protections when carrying out fuel management • consider what statutory support may be required to implement the end-to-end framework effectively. 	December 2024	DEECA	Parks Victoria	DTP	6.2
			DJCS	CFA	MAV	6.4
				FRV	LGV	
				ERV	Councils	
6.e	Deliver a review of cross-sector bushfire management planning arrangements in Victoria and make recommendations to the Victorian Government on opportunities for improvement	December 2024	DEECA	CFA	LGV	6.4
				FRV	EMV	
				DTP	Parks Victoria	
				Councils	DTF	
				MAV	DPC	





7. ENHANCED CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY

Outcome: Victoria is supported and equipped with the skills, equipment, capability and systems to safely and effectively manage bushfire.

To ensure the sector is better prepared for bushfire events now and into the future, it will develop enhanced systems, processes, tools and programs that offer improved training and support to all sector staff.

These improvements will be made with consideration of the sector’s increasingly diverse and inclusive workforce and will be consistent with other relevant strategies.

The actions in this domain are led by DEECA, EMV and the CFA. This includes investment in training and capability development, improving current standards and resourcing models and delivering pilot programs for new vehicles and fire detection technology.

Number	Action	Delivery date	Leads	Partners	The Strategy’s strategic directions
7.a	Deliver the remote fire detection pilot trial combining satellites and cameras with artificial intelligence to test how it might improve existing fire detection methods (workforce and public observations) and support faster bushfire detection	June 2025	DEECA	EMV	7.1
					7.6
7.b	Transition DEECA and stakeholders to the state digital RMR radio network to enhance multi-agency communication capability	June 2025	DEECA	Parks Victoria ESTA	7.1
					7.6
7.c	Design and develop vehicle falling object protection structures (FOPS) certified to ISO3449 (Level 2) for the broad range of operational vehicles in the forest and fire fleet including firefighting and forward command vehicles	June 2025	DEECA		7.3
					7.6

Number	Action	Delivery date	Leads	Partners		
7.d	Design a more sustainable and reliable resourcing model for state-wide IMT capacity and capability that meets the needs of control agencies	June 2024	DEECA	CFA	FRV	5.2
			EMV	DTP	ERV	7.1
				DH	Parks Victoria	7.2
				SES		7.5
7.e	Deliver the heavy tanker suppression effectiveness trial – test devices on vehicles to monitor pump operation, water tank levels and flow rates to determine operational effectiveness of the heavy tanker fleet	December 2025	CFA	DEECA	7.5	
					7.6	
7.f	Develop and apply alternative crew protection system for the CFA light tanker fleet to increase safety for volunteer firefighters	December 2024	CFA	DEECA	7.5	
					7.6	
7.g	Investigate and commence development of the next generation ultralight and light tanker platforms to meet future operational requirements including investigation into alternative cab chassis options	June 2025	DEECA	Parks Victoria	7.5	
				CFA	7.6	

WHAT WE'VE DONE

- Record \$517 million investment
 - Improved risk management
 - Safer Together program
 - Technology upgrades
 - Over 600 new firefighters since 2020
 - 1447km of new or expanded strategic fuel breaks
-

WHAT WE'RE DOING

- Working together to deliver risk-based fuel management
 - Partnering with Traditional Owners
 - Roadside vegetation management
 - Research and prevention programs
 - Community engagement and preparedness programs
-

WHERE WE'RE GOING

- Removing barriers to cultural fire
- New fuel management targets
- Continuously improving our modelling
- Delivering grants to communities
- **Over 50 additional actions**

