

SFMC Chairman

The State Fire Management Council (SFMC) clearly punches above its weight and has a significant impact on fire related issues in Tasmania.

Over the last 12 months the SFMC has been in a period of adapting to the implementation of the State Government's \$28.5m fuel reduction program.

The SFMC has no direct responsibility for the fuel reduction program, however some issues fall into our remit such as the fire management areas committees, community understanding and advice we give the Minister.

Within this changing environment the council is taking a strategic approach to our operations and is finalising our strategic directions framework which will guide the SFMC to achieve its mission - 'to enhance the efficient management of bushfire related risk in Tasmania in order to protect life, property and significant community values'.

This strategic framework features six themes: Understand, Communicate and Manage Risk; Advance Fire Management Area Committees; Foster and Maintain Effective Relationships; Build Community Capacity; Continually Improve Council Capability, Governance and Organisational Culture; Measure Performance and Effectiveness.

It will strategically focus the council's direction, and once the work plan has been developed, it will allow all those that want to measure our success and performance to do so.

Over coming months a number of local forums will be held to raise community awareness of the fuel reduction burning program, however this will not overshadow the primary role of being an advisory body to the Minister. This good work continues because you have skilled and dedicated membership on the SFMC, and just as importantly, a great team at the Fuel Reduction Unit at the TFS headed by Sandy Whight.

Whilst the SFMC will continue to work to reduce the bushfire related risk in Tasmania, remember we can all play a role. If you can talk to, refer or disseminate information regarding bushfire, please do so. If you or your group need further information, or would like to be more involved, then please ask.

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Fuel Reduction Unit

It's been a very busy period for the FRU with a continued focus of increasing the unit's capacity for the upcoming treatment season. This follows a very successful autumn treatment program which saw 28,419 ha burnt, exceeding the State Government target for 2014-15 of 27,000 ha.

Key strategic burns over autumn season included: **Hobart area** – Mt Nelson (Hobart College and Signal Station) and Howrah (Knopwood Hill); **Strahan** (Lynch St and Strahan West); **Launceston** – Trevallyn North, Kate Reed; **NE** – Big Boggy; **East Coast** – St Helens Point, Akaroa South, Scamander Tip, and the Apsley Conservation Area.

Work has begun on a Community Engagement Strategy for the Fuel Reduction Program. With the Chair of the SFMC, the FRU is working with the public, local communities and all stakeholders to organise and participate in community forums on the fuel reduction program.

These forums will provide information on key aspects of the fuel reduction program to the public, including a Q&A session with an expert panel. The first of these was in Launceston on the evening of July 7, hosted by Tamar NRM.

Substantial work has been invested in the website and GIS database, including a revision of the burns map which will show the location and status of fuel reduction burns and it will be updated daily during burn seasons.



Above: A promotional magnet. *Below:* A stand up banner.

Some of the promotional items that have been coordinated by the unit's Media and Communications officer Catherine Clemens.



Important Date

Annual SFMC and FMAC Meeting at the Grange, Campbell Town, Wednesday July 29.

FMACs

The FMAC's are progressing towards the revised Fire Protection Plans before the October due date.

Southern – Community Protection Plans have been prepared for the Longley/Leslie Vale area. Bushfire Ready Neighbourhoods program has been established in the Pelverata area. Bushfire mitigation planning has commenced in the Snug Tiers and Grey Mountain areas. Some burns were conducted during autumn, concerns were raised with smoke and vineyards in the Tinderbox area.

Hobart – Smaller burns were conducted within the Hobart Fire Management Area. PWS and HCC conducted a joint burn at the Mt Nelson signal station as a first joint venture and this arrangement will be expanded to other areas.

Midlands – Denna Kingdom, from Tasmanian Land Conservancy, is the new Midlands FMAC Chairperson. Burning was conducted at Gravelly Ridge by PWS. Bushfire mitigation planning has started for the East Bagdad/Alpha Pinnacle area. Operational burn planning has been discussed with Tasmanian Land Conservancy for their property.

East Coast – A Bushfire Mitigation Plan was prepared for the Orford/Shelly beach area, with some burns scheduled for this spring. Mitigation planning has started in Nugent and a large multi-tenured area west of Swansea. Burns were conducted within the East Coast Fire Management Area in the autumn including a large cross-tenure burn to the northwest of Bicheno.

Flinders – A Community Bushfire Mitigation Plan has been completed for Lady Barron and burns have been conducted north of Lady Barron with more planned. Community Protection and Response Plans have been completed for the Killiecrankie, Palana, Whitemark and Emita areas.

Tamar – Smaller burns were conducted in the FMA including strategic burns in the Travellers Rest, Trevallyn NRA and Ravenswood/Mayfield area. Burning has commenced by FT in the Beaconsfield area with more planned. A mitigation plan has begun for the Boomer

Hills area out to Nunamara. A Community Protection Plan has been prepared for Rossarden.

North East – Burns were undertaken in the FMA including behind the Scamander township and around Stieglitz. PWS undertook larger burns in the Douglas-Apsley and Ansons Bay/Mt Cameron areas. A Community Protection Plan has been prepared for the Scamander-Beaumaris area.

Central North – Peter Rowlands is now FMAC Chairperson for Central North. Several burns have been completed by PWS, Devonport City Council, Forico and FT. TFS Community Development activities have been held in the Wee-geena area. Of the 23 actions identified in the FPP, 6 have commenced.

Western – Burns have been completed by PWS, Forico, Burnie City Council and FT. Community Protection Plans have been developed for Rosebery & Tullah, as well as a Community Response Plan for Rosebery. The Community Response and Protection Plans for Strahan have also been revised and updated. Community development activities have been held at Sisters Beach, Strahan and Rocky Cape. Of the 27 actions identified in the FPP, 10 have commenced.

King Island – Fire trail maintenance work has finished and further fuel break maintenance will occur soon. FT, TFS and King Island Council are working on vegetation clearing operations. Of the 17 actions identified in the FPP, 7 have begun.

Red Hot Tips Update

All threatened species permits (permit to take) for Rounds 1 and 2 have been issued by DPIPWE and sent to landholders. All permissions to burn in covenant areas from Round 2 from DPIPWE have been issued and sent to landholders.

For round 3 there are 8 participants in the Buckland group, 8 in the Midlands/Fingal group and 4 in the far north west group. Workshops locations and dates have been finalised for Round 3.

The project team has conducted a mid-project review of all M&E data



Fuel Reduction Program Burns undertaken in Autumn 2015 totalling 16,935 ha.

Fuel Reduction Program launches at Mt Nelson



L-R: TFS Chief Officer Mike Brown; PWS General Manager, Peter Mooney; and SFMC Chair Ian Sauer at the launch of the Fuel Reduction Program at Mt Nelson in March this year.

collected to date. A survey has been developed in which previous participants will be contacted to gauge the benefit they received from participating in the program and to help identify any training gaps. Participants who have completed the Red Hot Tips program and the pilot Planned Burning on Private Land project will be contacted. To date a total of 6 case study burn documents have been produced with an additional 8 (6 completed case studies and 2 scheduled for winter) to be completed this year. In consultation with SFMC the project team intend to produce video clips rather than written case studies for Round 3. The project team will work collaboratively with the SFMC on this.