WHS DOCUMENTS & TEMPLATES

DOC-BSW-TPL · Bushfire and Severe Weather Emergency Plan

Product Overview

For: Australian businesses with work outdoors, on the road or in places bushfire, storms or floods can reach: farms, construction and civil works, councils, mines and quarries, and transport

Version 1.0 · 15 November 2026

What each fire danger rating and severe weather warning means for your work, decided before the season: when work stops, when people leave early, when they shelter, and who makes the call.

The plan (Word and PDF) adds bushfire, storms, lightning, flooding and cyclones to your emergency plan. For each Australian Fire Danger Rating System rating (Moderate, High, Extreme and Catastrophic) and a total fire ban, it sets out what it means for the work, the stop-work and leave-early triggers, and who decides; it does the same for the Bureau of Meteorology's severe weather, thunderstorm, flood and cyclone warnings. A decision guide covers when to shelter in place and when to evacuate, and a check-in schedule and overdue procedure cover remote and travelling workers.

A contacts, assembly points and evacuation routes sheet and a pre-season preparation checklist (clearing, equipment, kits, vehicles and drills) come with it. Your state or territory's fire service and SES are fill-ins, and the guide names them for each jurisdiction.

Written once for Australia, to the model WHS laws, in plain terms that also work in Victoria. The guide's state and territory notes show where the law differs, including the regulator to contact. Made by Orana Skills Centre.

What is included

Item	File
Bushfire and severe weather emergency plan: roles, where the warnings come from, each fire danger rating and severe weather warning with its actions, triggers and decision maker, shelter or evacuate, remote and travelling worker check-ins, after the event, drills and review	02_TEMPLATE/Bushfire and Severe Weather Emergency Plan.docx and .pdf
Contacts, assembly points and evacuation routes sheet: emergency numbers, assembly points and safer places, routes out and a site map	02_TEMPLATE/Contacts, Assembly Points and Evacuation Routes.docx and .pdf
Pre-season preparation checklist: the plan and the people, clearing and the site, equipment, kits and vehicles, drills	02_TEMPLATE/Pre-Season Preparation Checklist.docx and .pdf
How to Use This Template: how to complete and adapt it, the law in brief, state and territory notes, records and every placeholder	01_START_HERE/How to Use This Template.pdf
Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms and Version Information	01_START_HERE/ (PDF)

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SAMPLE · Bushfire and Severe Weather Emergency Plan · Buy the full editable version:
training.oranaskillscentre.com/documents/bushfire-and-severe-weather-emergency-plan

How to Use This Template

How to complete, adapt and keep the bushfire and severe weather emergency plan

1 What this template is for

Bushfires, storms and floods give warning, but the warning only helps if someone is watching it and everyone knows what it means for the day's work. Most deaths in bushfires happen to people who leave late, and many flood deaths happen in vehicles driven into floodwater.

This plan sets those decisions in advance: what each fire danger rating and severe weather warning means for your work, when work stops, when people leave early or shelter, and who decides. It sits beside your emergency plan, which keeps the evacuation procedure for the site.

2 How to use it

Step	What to do
1	Find your fire district or fire weather area, and the fire service, SES and warning services for each site (the state and territory notes below).
2	List the work that bushfire, storms and floods can reach: outdoor sites, sites in or near bush or grassland, remote and field work, driving, and low-lying sites.
3	With your workers and health and safety representatives, adapt the actions and triggers for each rating and warning to your work, and fill in the leave-early distance and time.
4	Name the weather decision maker and a deputy, and set when they check the forecast and warnings.
5	Complete the contacts, assembly points and evacuation routes sheet for each site, and put a copy in every vehicle.
6	Fill in the remote check-in schedule and the overdue procedure for workers away from a site.
7	Complete the pre-season preparation checklist before the season starts, and fix what it finds.
8	Brief workers, run a leave-early drill and a shelter drill, and review the plan each year and after any event.

Make it work, not just exist

- Decide Extreme and Catastrophic days the evening before. A decision made while a fire is burning is made too late.
- Make the triggers ones a supervisor can see on the day: a rating, a named warning, smoke on site, water on the road.
- If in doubt, stop, shelter or leave. A lost day costs little.

3 Who does what

Who	What they do
Weather decision maker	Checks the ratings and warnings, decides what they mean for the day, and tells supervisors
Emergency coordinator	Decides to shelter or evacuate when a fire, storm or flood threatens, and accounts for everyone
Supervisors and workers	Apply the triggers, check in, and stop, shelter or leave when told
Manager	Approves the plan, closes sites at Extreme and Catastrophic, and provides the equipment

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Right-click > Change Picture

[Company name]

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Bushfire and Severe Weather Emergency Plan

What fire danger ratings and severe weather warnings mean for our work, who decides, and when we stop, shelter or leave

Site or work area		**Address: [Site address]**	
Emergency coordinator: [Emergency coordinator]		**Weather decision maker: [Weather decision maker]**	
Fire district or fire weather area		**Plan prepared by**	
Plan date		**Next review**	

1 Purpose and scope

This plan adds bushfire, bushfire smoke, storms, lightning, flooding and cyclones to **[Our emergency plan]**. It sets out where we get the warnings, what each fire danger rating and severe weather warning means for our work, when we stop work, shelter or leave early, and who decides. It covers everyone who works for **[Company name]** at **[Site name]**, on the road and in remote places, including contractors, labour hire workers and visitors.

Leaving early is the safest choice in a bushfire. Nobody stays at a site to defend it, and no work is worth driving into a fire, a storm or floodwater.

2 Who does what

Who	What they do
Weather decision maker: [Weather decision maker]	Checks the forecast fire danger rating, total fire bans and warnings the evening before and each morning, decides what the day's rating or warning means for the work, and tells supervisors
Emergency coordinator: [Emergency coordinator]	Takes charge when a fire, storm or flood threatens the site: decides to shelter or evacuate, calls triple zero (000) if no one has, and accounts for everyone
Supervisors	Brief the crew on the day's rating and warnings, stop outdoor work at the triggers in this plan, run check-ins for remote and travelling workers, and report back
Workers	Know the triggers and the routes, keep their phone or radio charged, check in on time, stop and shelter or leave when told, and say when they are worried
Manager	Approves the triggers, closes sites at Extreme and Catastrophic, provides the equipment and kits, and reviews this plan each year
Health and safety representatives	Are consulted on the triggers, the routes and any change to this plan

Who decides when the decision maker cannot be reached

- The deputy named on the contacts sheet decides. If neither can be reached, the most senior person on site decides, and always chooses the safer option: stop, shelter or leave.
- Any worker may stop work and move to safety when they believe they are in danger, and tell their supervisor straight away.

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Bushfire and Severe Weather Emergency Plan

END OF THE FREE SAMPLE

This sample shows a few pages, so you can judge the layout and the quality. What each fire danger rating and severe weather warning means for your work, decided before the season: when work stops, when people leave early, when they shelter, and who makes the call.

What the full product contains

- **Bushfire and severe weather emergency plan: roles, where the warnings come from, each fire danger rating and severe weather warning with its actions, triggers and decision maker, shelter or evacuate, remote and travelling worker check-ins, after the event, drills and review**
  02_TEMPLATE/Bushfire and Severe Weather Emergency Plan.docx and .pdf
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- **Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms and Version Information**
  01_START_HERE/ (PDF)

Formats

- Word (.docx), editable, with your logo and business name in the header
- PDF copies of the Word documents, for printing blank
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