



Catastrophic Fire Danger Procedures

2011





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CATASTROPHIC FIRE DANGER PROCEDURES

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PREAMBLE

Like many schools across the state, Southern Vales Christian College has included days of upper extreme fire danger in the College critical incident management plan. Because the College Campuses are not situated in areas that are generally high fire risk areas, it is not likely that either Campus would be closed down. However, we have families and students who live in bushfire prone areas and whose homes could be threatened by a major fire. For students living in affected zones, the following procedures will be put into place:

- 1. If a Catastrophic Fire Danger Day is declared, College buses (and buses chartered by the College) will not operate that day in the regions effected by the warning. (Refer also to Appendix 3 – Willunga Charter Bushfire Protection Policy.)**
 - A message will be sent to parents in the region/s affected by the warning.
- 2. Families living in or having to travel through regions that are at risk on Catastrophic days should not send their children to College on those days. Likewise, staff living in or having to travel through regions that are at risk should not attend College on those days.**
- 3. If a bushfire starts during a College day**
 - The Principal (or nominee) will determine the area or the transport routes which are at risk taking into account the CFS advice.
 - Students who normally travel into the area at risk will be required to attend a special assembly before the end of the school day.
 - Students from a bushfire emergency zone are to be supervised at College and only allowed to leave if collected by either a parent or a nominated person as advised by the parent. Likewise, no student from a bushfire emergency zone will be allowed to leave the College grounds before normal dismissal time unless a parent or nominated person gives permission.
 - Parents will be contacted if the responsible person designated by the family has not collected the student.
 - Those students who do not have refuge accommodation will be supervised at the College – overnight if necessary.
 - In the event that a College bus run is unable to operate in the morning because of an overnight fire, the College will contact families impacted by this decision.
- 4. If there is a fire in the Mt Lofty Ranges Fire Ban District**

On high fire risk days, important Bushfire Information and Warning Messages will be broadcast on local ABC 891 AM radio station and FIVEaa. For more information, the CFS Bushfire Information Hotline can be contacted on 1300 362 361, or information can be gathered from www.cfs.sa.gov.au



The CFS website advises:

“Official emergency warnings will be broadcast on longstanding partner stations ABC Local Radio and FIVEaa, as well as commercial radio stations across SA, and television stations SkyNews and WIN TV.

Anyone who lives or travels through bushfire prone areas this during Fire Danger Season should keep aware of the conditions and listen out for warnings and alerts.

For emergency warnings and alerts, tune into one of our Emergency Broadcast Partners: ABC Local Radio (891), FIVEaa Radio, Sky News Television, WIN Television, Commercial Radio Australia.

Do not rely on one single source for emergency warning information.”

5. Excursions

The College will cancel excursions to regions which are on high bushfire alerts or where a fire is already burning.

6. Emergency Information

Families who live in a bushfire emergency zone are asked to review this plan to determine how they would manage the movement of their children at the end of a school day. Appendix 4 provides a letter to families and a **Bushfire Response Form** that should be completed by families in high risk zones and returned to the College via Home Group/Class Teachers, advising the nominated person for contact in regard to collection of students at the end of the school day.

Please contact the College (8381 9877) should there be any questions regarding these procedures or the return of the forms.

NOTES:

The following map identifies all the Fire Ban Districts in South Australia. Both Campuses of the College are within the Mt Lofty Ranges Fire Ban District.

Source: http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/bushfire/prepare/identify_the_risk/am_i_at_risk/fire_ban_districts.jsp

The following map identifies all the Fire Ban Districts in South Australia. Both Campuses of the College are within the Mt Lofty Ranges Fire Ban District.

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BUSHFIRE HAZARD MANAGEMENT PLANS

On Site General Vegetation

During Term 3 each year the Principal will meet with the Property Manager and conduct an inspection of site vegetation.

They will review and assess potential bushfire hazards around the site with relation to the vegetation guidelines provided.

- All grasses and shrubs more than 10 cm in height and growing within 20 metres of buildings around the site have been removed.
- Tall trees within 20 metres of buildings have been trimmed of branches up to a height of 2 metres.
- Overhanging trees branches have been trimmed to a distance of 2 metres from building rooflines.

They will determine action required to meet the guidelines.

- Trimming, cutting back and removal of trees, slashing of undergrowth, mowing of grassed areas, etc.

They will consider if the Grounds Committee and groundsperson can carry out necessary actions.

Remedial action will be undertaken before start of Term 4.

The groundsperson will undertake regular inspections and maintain required clearances during the year.

On Site 'Native Vegetation'

During Term 3 Principal will meet with the Property Manager and conduct an inspection of site vegetation.

An area of registered (or unregistered) 'Native Vegetation' is located in the front 'horseshoe' of the site. It is likely to impact on the site facilities during an intense bush fire.

There are special conditions to be met when dealing with Native Vegetation. Approval is required from the Minister of Environment and Conservation before the area can be touched.

The Principal will contact and seek advice from:

- Craig Whisson – Native Vegetation Secretariat (8124 4755)
- Vicky Linton – Manager DEH Heritage Agreements (8222 9415)



BUSHFIRE ACTION PLAN (BAP)

GENERAL INFORMATION

<p>The BAP is to be reviewed annually during Term 2 each year to reflect any changes that may have taken place in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DECS or government policy• CFS policy/procedures• site facilities• personnel normally on site.
<p>The BAP outlines required actions to prepare:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the site before the bushfire season• the building which has been nominated as the site Bushfire Ready building/s (see below).
<p>The BAP also outlines activities to be undertaken by staff and students at the different levels of a bushfire emergency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• on days of Total Fire Ban• when there is a fire in the local district• when a bushfire is threatening or impacting on the site• during the period immediately after a bushfire has impacted on the site (known as the 'Recovery Phase').
<p>The Multi-Purpose Hall at Aldinga and the Church Hall at Morphett Vale are the nominated Bushfire Ready buildings (formerly Safe Refuge) for the respective sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• They have been prepared for a bushfire emergency and will safely accommodate all persons normally on the site.
<p>The Front Office SSO will forward a copy of the BAP to all families of students of the site at the beginning of Term 1 each year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The BAP is explained to the families of new students by the Registrar during the enrolment process.
<p>All staff members receive pre fire season updates during Term 3 and ongoing information and instruction about the contents and requirements of the BAP during Term 4 and Term 1 staff meetings.</p>
<p>The Principal will ensure that all new staff members, relieving staff and visitors are briefed about the requirements of the BAP during the site induction process.</p>

TEMPORARY CANCELLATION OF BUS SERVICES ACROSS FIRE BAN DISTRICTS and if necessary, CLOSURE OF THE CAMPUSES

If the Bureau of Meteorology and the Country Fire Service issue a *catastrophic (Code Red)* warning within the Fire Ban District, the College bus service for that Fire Ban District will be cancelled. If necessary, the Campuses may be closed. (Bus services chartered by the College will also be cancelled.)

The Emergency Response Team should **prepare** to advise all parents and care givers about the cancellation of bus services (and if necessary, Campus closures) by telephone and by follow-up written notification.



The Emergency response Team will **contact** all parents and school bus operators, by telephone, to inform them of the decision. A template letter will be provided with key messages to parents and care givers.

- The letter will provide parents and caregivers with an emergency hotline telephone number and a web address to obtain bus service cancellation and Campus closure and reopening details.
- Parents will also be reminded to listen to ABC radio (891) for further warnings and advice messages.

Refer also to **Appendix 3 – Willunga Charter Service – Bushfire Protection Policy**

PREPARING THE COLLEGE FOR A BUSHFIRE

An Emergency Response Team has been established and members instructed on their roles and responsibilities. The members are:

- The Principal
- The Deputy Principals
- The OHSW Coordinator
- The Registrar
- The Front Office SSOs
- Teachers

Their roles and responsibilities are detailed throughout the BAP.

A Bushfire Action Plan has been developed.

- It will be reviewed during Term 2 each year by the staff and presented to the Board for endorsement at the final meeting in Term 3.

The Deputy Principals will ensure that emergency bushfire drills are carried out by students and staff during the first 2 weeks of Term 4 and Term 1 each year.

The members of the Emergency Response Team will provide all staff and regular visitors with pre fire season updates during Term 3 each year and instruction about any changes to the contents and requirements of the site Bushfire Action Plan during the first two weeks of Term 4 and Term 1.

Nominated staff members will monitor local ABC radio for CFS Bushfire Information and Warnings Messages on days of high bush fire danger and pass on relevant messages to the Principal and Deputy Principals.

- Front Office SSO,
- SSO,
- Resource Centre teacher

All grasses and shrubs more than 10 cm in height and growing within 20 metres of buildings around the site have been removed.

- The Grounds person and Governing Council Grounds Committee will inspect the site during Term 3 each year.
- Maintenance will be carried out by the Grounds person or others as required.

Tall trees within 20 metres of buildings have been trimmed of branches up to a height of 2 metres.

- The Grounds person and Governing Council Grounds Committee will inspect the site during Term 3 each year.
- Maintenance will be carried out by the Grounds person or others as required.



Overhanging trees branches have been trimmed to a distance of 2 metres from building rooflines.

- The Grounds person and Governing Council Grounds Committee will inspect the site during Term 3 each year.
- A request will be made to the Facility Manager for the site to safely remove any high level regrowth.

The eaves and open air vents on all timber transportable buildings have been sealed.

- The Grounds and Property Manager will be requested to carry out an annual inspection to ensure the integrity of the buildings is maintained.

All cavities and openings in the facades and roofs of other buildings have been sealed.

- The Facility Manager will be requested to carry out an annual inspection to ensure the integrity of the buildings is maintained

The gutters and roof gullies of buildings under or near over hanging trees are regularly cleaned and free of vegetation.

- The Grounds person will attend to lower level gutters each month.
- High gutters and roof gullies are included in the Preventative Maintenance Schedule for the site and will be cleaned at least every three months.

Open areas under the raised timber deckings have been sealed to prevent entry of sparks and embers. An entry space has been constructed to allow for inspection by CFS personnel after a bushfire.

A portable pressure pack gas siren and spare gas canisters have been purchased for use in signalling a move to the **Bushfire Ready** building (formerly Safe Refuge) during periods of electricity blackout.

- It is stored in the Emergency Supplies kit

The kit is to be checked at the start of each term by SSO to ensure contents are operational.

THE BUSHFIRE READY BUILDING/S

The Multi-purpose Hall at Aldinga and the Hall at Morphett Vale Baptist Church are the nominated **Bushfire Ready** buildings.

- Students are reminded of the location during bushfire drills.
- Articles in the Parent Handbook and College newsletters reinforce the location of the **Bushfire Ready** buildings.

The **Bushfire Ready** buildings are of solid construction. All façade and roof open spaces have been sealed to prevent entry by embers and ash during a bushfire.

The **Bushfire Ready** buildings can be easily and quickly reached from all areas of the Campuses and safely hold the students and staff normally present.

Students and staff practise using the **Bushfire Ready** buildings and moving to them from a number of areas around the Campuses during emergency bushfire drills carried out during the first 2 weeks of Term 4 and Term 1 each year.

- The Principal or Deputy Principals determine the timing of the drills after consultation with staff.

Fully stocked first aid kits will be kept permanently in the Front Offices of both Campuses. They will be checked and restocked if necessary by the First Aid SSO at the start of each term.

Student and staff medications have been listed, and are easily assembled and transported to the **Bushfire Ready** buildings by the Front Office SSO.

Student rolls and staff/visitor registers are readily available. SSO will accurately record:

- those present when the move to the **Bushfire Ready** building/s takes place



- those who have left the site before the move
- those who leave the site after the bushfire emergency has passed.

In order to ensure a safe and orderly operation, a decision to move all persons into the site **Bushfire Ready** building/s will be made when any of the following agreed 'triggers' are reached.

- CFS Information and Warning messages broadcast on the local ABC radio indicate a fire is moving towards SVCC.
- The local Emergency Services advise that a bushfire is likely to impact on the site.
- We are advised that a bushfire is burning in any of the surrounding areas.
- There is a confirmed sighting of nearby smoke or flame.

TOTAL FIRE BAN DAY

The Principal or Deputy Principals will inform students and staff in the 'Morning Notices' that a day of Total Fire Ban has been declared.

All staff will ensure that all hazards (eg bench seats, bags etc) have been removed from passages and walkways and stored in a safe location.

FIRE REPORTED IN LOCAL DISTRICT

When a bushfire has been reported in the local district, the Principal or Deputy Principals will visit all classes and inform students and staff of its location.

The members of the site Emergency Response Team will be called together to put into place the pre determined bushfire emergency procedures.

The Principal or Deputy Principals will maintain a visual check of the surrounding area.

The nominated staff members will carefully monitor ABC Radio for CFS Information and Warning Messages and provide site leaders with updates concerning the latest location of the bushfire front and any impact it may have on the site.

The Front Office SSO will monitor the ABC 891 radio and pass on relevant information to the Principal or Deputy Principals.

The Principal or Deputy Principals will liaise with local CFS to obtain the latest information and advice about likely effect of the bushfire on the site.

The Principal or Deputy Principals will cancel all outdoor activities for students.

The Front office SSO will identify and list all students and staff who live in the area reported to be affected by the bush fire.

All class room teachers and the Front Office SSO will record the names of any students who may be collected from the site by parents during the day.

The Principal or Deputy Principals will assess if it is safe for students to take outside recess and lunch breaks and notify all classes of their decision.

The Principal or Deputy Principals will assess if it is safe to release students from the site at normal dismissal time.

- If specific school bus routes or local roads are impacted upon or threatened by the bushfire, they will make arrangements to supervise the affected students until Emergency Services report that the situation is safe to release them from the site.

The nominated teacher will turn on sprinklers and irrigation systems hourly to dampen surrounds.

The SSO will turn off all external gas cylinders.

The Front Office SSO will back up all site computer records.

The Principal or Deputy Principals will open and prepare the **Bushfire Ready** building/s.

- e.g. close blinds and windows, wet towels, prepare drinking water, arrange appropriate



locations for local community members, ready fire extinguishers, remove hazards from passageways etc
The SSO will ensure the alternative audible warning device is ready for use and operating correctly should power fail.
All class teachers will encourage students to top up personal water bottles during the day so that they have adequate drinking water should a move to the Bushfire Ready building/s become necessary.
The Front Office SSO will alert visitors and volunteers of the situation during the registration process and advise them of action to take should a move to the Bushfire Ready building/s become necessary.
The Deputy Principal/s will liaise with SAPOL, College bus operator and College bus drivers to determine any likely impact of the reported bushfire on College bus routes.
College buses will not leave site unless a clear directive given to the Principal or Deputy Principals by SAPOL or CFS Incident Management indicating bus routes are safe to travel.
If a bushfire prevents College buses leaving the site or students from boarding public buses, the Principal or Deputy Principals and teacher will supervise students remaining on site until they are collected by parents.



SITE BUSHFIRE ACTION PLAN (BAP)

Required Action	Response
Notify students and staff that a day of Total Fire Ban has been declared.	
Remind students of Bushfire emergency procedures and drills.	
Display 'Total Fire Ban' signs in staff room, classrooms, on student notice boards and at site entrances.	
Nominate staff members to monitor ABC Radio for CFS Information and Warning Messages.	
Cancel student excursions away from the site.	
Cancel off site meetings for staff.	
Unlock and open access gates and security gates.	
Monitor weather conditions while students are on breaks or outside.	
Park school buses and private vehicles in an open area away from vegetation.	
Discuss with students the procedures to be followed if a school bus is overtaken by a bushfire.	
Update student and staff medication list and prepare medicines for transportation.	
Ensure mobile phones are working correctly and spare batteries are fully charged.	
Remove all hazards (eg bench seats, bags etc) from passages and walkways.	

FIRE IN IMMEDIATE VICINITY OR IMPACTING ON SITE

Required Action	Response
A 'trigger' for a move to the Safe Refuge has been pre-determined (i.e. a call from AISSA or other authority).	
All students and staff move to the Safe Refuge when the pre-arranged signal is activated.	
Assist students to move to, and assemble in, the Safe Refuge.	
Turn on bushfire sprinkler and grounds irrigation systems.	
Notify as many parents as possible that students are moving into the Safe Refuge.	
Close all doors and windows and turn off air conditioners as rooms are vacated.	
Turn off air conditioners and close air vents in Safe Refuge as front approaches.	
Ensure all site personnel are accounted for and in Safe Refuge.	
Ensure that staff and students from other associated sites are accounted for and accommodated appropriately.	
Ensure that local community members are accommodated appropriately.	
Institute search procedures for missing persons if needed.	
Ensure all persons are located away from windows and unnecessary movement is limited.	
Liaise with CFS units and other Emergency Services if on site.	
Prepare for arrival and passage of fire front.	
Describe the situation to those in Safe refuge and assist all to remain calm.	
Outline possible plans of action after the front has passed with the students.	
Prepare for unexpected toileting of students.	
Check for and extinguish spot fires as necessary.	
All staff undertake their assigned roles and responsibilities.	



Appendix 1 – AISSA Risk Assessment Report – Aldinga Campus

SCHOOL SITE BUSHFIRE RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT

School	Southern Vales Christian College
Campus	Aldinga
Location	Aldinga Beach Road, Aldinga
Fire Ban District	Mount Lofty Ranges
Personnel Consulted	Andrew Clayton – Principal; Michael Bignell - Business Manager; Marj Hinkley

Southern Vales Christian College is assessed as LOW bushfire risk.

CONTEXT

The context statement for the risk assessment considers the school campus and the landscape (climate, topography, land use, bushfire season) surrounding the school, and the incidence of bushfires within that landscape.

Southern Vales Christian College, is located on Aldinga Beach Road, Aldinga. There is vehicle access to the campus from Aldinga Beach Road only.

276 students (R-12), and 20-25 staff attend the campus. 15 staff attend the campus on a full-time basis, and the remainder commute from the College's Morphett Vale campus to teach specific subjects. Normal school hours are from 8:45hrs to 15:15hrs, with staff present on campus from 7:30 - 18:00hrs. Out of School Hours Care is provided on the campus between the hours of 6:30 - 18:15hrs. The school draws students from Tooperang, Mount Compass, Willunga, Normanville, Maslin's Beach, McLaren Flat, Old Noarlunga, Hackham, Seaford, Hallett Cove, Happy Valley, Blackwood, Crafers and the local Aldinga area. The school has its own buses and also utilises sub-contracted bus services. The longest route is approximately 50 minutes.

Land use within the vicinity of the school is urban housing development, open grassland, and the township of Aldinga. Native vegetation along the Gawler River less than 1km to the north of the township is *Eucalyptus porosa* (Mallee box). However, the area around the school and the wider landscape is substantially cleared. The only significant block of native vegetation in the area is the Aldinga Scrub Conservation Park, the north eastern boundary of which is approximately 780m to the south west of the school. There have been 5 recorded bushfire incidents in the Aldinga Scrub since 1955.

The school grounds are managed in a 'park-like' state, with managed gardens containing a mix of native and exotic species around the buildings. The school has a small agricultural area to the south, including a small olive grove and a small number of sheep.

The school is located within the Mount Lofty Ranges fire ban district and the official fire danger season usually runs from 1st December - 30th April. Dangerous fire weather conditions are generally associated with strong north to north westerly winds, high temperatures, and low humidity. However, localised wind factors and topography can create dangerous fire behaviour in 'uncharacteristic' conditions. Temperatures in the summer months at Aldinga have a maximum average of 28, and minimum around 16 degrees.



RISK ASSESSMENT

The risk assessment considers likelihood - the chance of a fire igniting and spreading to reach the asset, and consequence - composed of an assessment of bushfire threat (considering fuel hazard, slope and aspect, separation distance between the asset and the nearest vegetation) and vulnerability of the occupants of the asset to bushfire. Note that schools are assessed as 'Special Fire Protection' assets (refer Glossary for further details).

Likelihood

Assessment of likelihood takes into consideration: fire history in the surrounding landscape (frequency of fires, sources of ignition, likely rate of spread and fire run potential); climate and prevailing fire weather conditions; and response capacity and containment potential.

Based upon the landscape context assessment for the school campus, and assessment of the school grounds, the likelihood of bushfire occurring and impacting upon the school is assessed as set out below:

Do fires occur frequently?	YES
If a fire occurs, is it expected to spread and reach the asset?	NO

	Fires are expected to spread and reach assets	Fires are not expected to spread and reach assets
Fires occur frequently	Almost certain	Possible
Fires occur infrequently	Likely	Unlikely

Consequence

Consequence considers: a fuel hazard assessment within 100m of the school campus boundary; slope and aspect on the campus and adjacent to the school property boundary; separation distance between the asset and the nearest vegetation; and the vulnerability of the occupants of the asset to bushfire, based on assessment of access and egress, building standards, water supply, and existing risk mitigation strategies.

Overall Threat Assessment **LOW**

Step	Hazard Assessment							
1	Surface Fine Fuel	L	M	H	VH	E		
2	Elevated Fuel	L	M	H	VH	E		
3	Bark	L	M	H	VH	E		
4	Overall Fuel	L	M	H	VH	E		
5	Slope and Aspect	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
6	Separation Distance	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
7	Priority for Treatment	P3	P3	P2	P1		P1	

* Refer attached Glossary for explanation of abbreviations used in this table



Notes on threat assessment:

The school grounds are well managed, and the school is increasingly surrounded by urban housing development.

Vulnerability

Access and egress: There is vehicle access to the site from Aldinga Beach Road only.
 Building standard: The buildings are a mixture of masonry on concrete slab and fibro on stumps, both with metal roofing.
 Grounds Management: The grounds are well managed, with a mix of exotic and native managed vegetation. The agricultural area to the south of the school is slashed prior to the Fire Danger Season, and grazed throughout the year.
 Water supply: The campus has mains water only.
 Refuge area: There is no identified refuge area on the campus, but the BER building under construction could be utilised for this purpose.
 Emergency Response Planning: At the time of inspection, the school's policy was not to close on days of forecast Catastrophic fire danger. However, school buses travelling through high risk areas are not to operate, or travel on alternate routes, on days of forecast Catastrophic fire danger.

Vulnerability Assessment

Threat > Vulnerability	Low	Medium	High	Very High
High Vulnerability	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic	Catastrophic
Moderate Vulnerability	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Low Vulnerability	Minor	Minor	Moderate	Major

Overall Risk Assessment

Likelihood Rating	Possible
Consequence Rating	Minor

Consequence > Likelihood	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Almost certain	High	Very High	Extreme	Extreme
Likely	Medium	High	Very High	Extreme
Possible	Low	Medium	High	Very High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	High

The campus is located in an area of the landscape at low bushfire risk, and the school site itself is rated as being of low risk.



RISK TREATMENT

Southern Vales Christian College is assessed at being of LOW risk of bushfire impact.

The campus is assessed accordance with AS3959: 2009 (Construction of Buildings in Bushfire Prone Areas) as having a Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) of LOW. There are no specific construction requirements set out in the Standard for LOW.

The following mitigation activities are recommended:

- Emergency Response Planning
 - It is recommended that the DECS checklists and templates are reviewed and bushfire procedures are developed to incorporate all relevant elements from the checklists and templates. Refer: <http://www.crisis.sa.edu.au/pages/welcome/37261> and click on 'Bushfires' on the left hand side of the page.
- Fuel Hazard Reduction
 - Unless or until the school olive orchard is converted into an oval area, grass in the inter-rows between the olive trees needs to be slashed and maintained at a height of no greater than 10cm for the duration of the Fire Danger Season. Alternatively the inter-rows could be sprayed in late winter.
 - Unless or until the grassland area to the west of the school property is developed for housing, this needs to be maintained at a height of no greater than 10cm for the duration of the Fire Danger Season. If this area is not maintained during the Fire Danger Season, the school should request the City of Onkaparinga to issue a hazard reduction compliance notice over this area.

In the event of a fire threatening the campus it is recommended that:

- Students may remain in their classrooms. Internal communication within the school would be required in these circumstances (eg. consider use of manually operated sirens and handheld UHF radios in case of power failures). Alternatively all students and staff could be relocated to the new BER hall, once it is completed.

Management of student transport on days of high fire danger.

Procedures are being developed through discussions with the SA CFS to assist in the management of school bus routes, including situations where schools contract companies or run their own bus services. The following procedures are not yet endorsed by CFS, but may assist the school in developing its approach to management of student transport on days of high fire danger.

Procedures need to address:

- a) Going fires prior to departure of buses. This situation is relatively well addressed by the current DECS checklist and procedures in place for notification of schools of incidents, and incident management for Level 2 and 3 incidents. Refer: <http://www.crisis.sa.edu.au/pages/welcome/37261> and click on 'Bushfires' on the left hand side of the page.
- b) Ignition development just prior to departure of buses
- c) Ignition development in vicinity of bus routes while buses are in transit

The latter two elements are not currently addressed.



Prior to Departure from School

- Designated staff member(s) checking CFS incident website immediately prior to home group at the end of the day so that teachers can advise students on any affected routes of ignitions and/or RSS incident feed to designated staff member(s) mobile phones
- Notification of bus drivers for relevant routes of ignition development
- Arrangements in place to:
 - notify parents/carers;
 - take care of students on school campus until:
 - accurate incident information can be obtained
 - route is safe and bus can depart (if bus company is in a position to continue the service)
 - parents or carers can collect students

Buses in Transit

- Duty officer (not bus driver) on school staff monitors bus routes for the duration of the trip - either on CFS website or via RSS feed on mobile phone. Don't rely on radio warnings as these will not (reliably) pick up ignition development
- Duty officer communicates with bus drivers - mobile phone and back up radio communications (UHF and/or VHF portable) - in the event of ignition development in area of a school bus route
- Bus drivers activate protocol in the event of:
 - capacity to turn around and reverse route;
 - turnover (Note that the school will need to develop a protocol for bus drivers encountering a fire, including burn over procedures - based on Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) Guidelines - and drill students on this protocol. The drill is important as students are likely to panic and this may assist in behaviour management.)
- Duty officer seeks further information from CFS and communicates this to the bus driver(s). (The best source of information within CFS is currently unresolved. At this stage all that can be recommended is use of the CFS Bushfire Information Line 1300 362 361, or contacting AISSA.)



FUEL HAZARD REDUCTION - Southern Vales Christian College



ABOVE: Grass in inter-rows between olive trees needs to be maintained at no greater than 10cm in height for the duration of the Fire Danger Season.



ABOVE: Grassland area to the west of the school needs to be maintained at no greater than 10cm in height for the duration of the Fire Danger Season.



GLOSSARY

E	Extreme	VH	Very High
H	High	M	Medium
L	Low		

Slope and Aspect are assessed for the purposes of the threat assessment as follows:

Downslope = asset at top of slope

Upslope = asset at base of slope

		Downslope		Upslope	
		NE, E, SE	N, NW, W, SW, S	NE, E, SE	N, NW, W, SW, S
SLOPE	0 – 5	A	C	A	C
	6 – 10	B	D	A	C
	11 – 15	C	E	A	C
	16 – 20	D	F	A	C
	> 20	E	G	A	C

Separation Distance is assessed for the purposes of the threat assessment as follows:

Less than 20m	E, F, G
20-60m	C, D
Greater than 60m	A, B

Priority for treatment for the purposes of the threat assessment is determined as follows:

		Slope and Aspect, Separation Distance						
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Fuel Hazard Rating	LOW	P3	P3	P3	P2	P2	P2	P1
	MODERATE	P3	P3	P2	P2	P2	P2	P1
	HIGH	P3	P2	P2	P2	P2	P1	P1
	VERY HIGH	P2	P2	P2	P2	P1	P1	P1
	EXTREME	P2	P2	P2	P1	P1	P1	P1

P3 = Low – Moderate; P2 = High; P1 = Very High-Extreme

Levels of Preparedness are set out below:

Low (Green) - Routine operations. Risk of significant incident is low. Focus on routine planning, training and exercising with an awareness of situations with the potential to develop. FDR - Low to Moderate
Elevated (Yellow) - A heightened level of alertness and preparedness for response. Risk of a localised impact event is present. Focus on preparedness and planning, with an awareness of actual situations as they develop. FDR - High
High (Orange) - A substantial level of preparedness and/or multiple responses occurring. A significant response to a particular event or community impact situation is likely. The focus is on response and the delivery of forecasting information to the public and other agencies. FDR - Very High.
Extreme (Red) - The highest level of preparedness. The risk of significant or catastrophic impact from a particular event or multiple events is very likely or almost certain and/or multiple responses are occurring. The focus is on public safety and asset protection. FDR - Severe, Extreme, Catastrophic



Special Fire Protection Assets

A special fire protection asset is described as follows:

"The nature of Special Fire Protection assets means that occupants may be more vulnerable to bushfire attack for one or more of the following reasons:

- They may be less educated in relation to bushfire impacts
- They may have reduced capacity to evaluate risk and to respond adequately to bushfire threat
- They may present organisational difficulties for relocation and/or management
- They may be more vulnerable to stress and anxiety arising from bushfire threat and smoke
- There may be significant communication barriers
- Supervision during a bushfire may be difficult
- Logistical arrangements for the numbers of residents may be complicated in terms of alternative accommodation, transport, healthcare, food supplies.

Assets considered as Special Fire Protection include:

- Schools
- Childcare centres
- Hospitals
- Hotels, motels or other tourist accommodation
- Homes or other establishments for mentally incapacitated persons
- Retirement villages and nursing homes."

(Bushfire Risk Management Planning Guidelines, NSW Rural Fire Service, 2007)

This categorisation automatically confers a minimum level of 'moderate vulnerability' as a component of the risk assessment, with most special fire protection assets being assessed as 'high vulnerability'. Vulnerability is assessed according guidelines set out below:

Category	Examples
Low Vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Area has had targeted community education programs• Properties are prepared (eg. APZs are maintained, gutters are cleaned, and flammable objects are located away from hazards and buildings)• Adequate access and egress• Residents/owners are likely to be able to defend their own property• Adequate water supply• The majority of homes meet current construction standards for building in bushfire prone areas <p>Note: Special Fire Protection assets will not be assessed as low vulnerability</p>
Moderate Vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Area has had targeted community education programmes• Properties are not prepared• Adequate access and egress• Residents/owners are likely to be able to defend their own property• Adequate water supply <p>Note: Special fire protection assets must have fire relocation plans in place to be assessed as moderate vulnerability.</p>
High Vulnerability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No recent or targeted community education programs or programs have been ineffective• Properties are not prepared• Inadequate access and egress• Residents/owners unlikely or unable to defend their own property• Inadequate water supply



Appendix 2 – Fire Danger Rating

Source: http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/bushfire/prepare/identify_the_risk/am_i_at_risk/fire_danger_rating.jsp

Fire Danger Rating

To help you assess your level of bushfire risk and action to take, it is important that you understand the Fire Danger Rating.

The rating is forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology each day and is an early indicator for you of the potential danger, should a bushfire start. The higher the Fire Danger Rating, the more dangerous the fire conditions.

The Fire Danger Rating chart will assist you to understand the predicted bushfire behaviour, potential impacts and recommended actions you should take for each category level. Take the time to review and understand the chart.

The Fire Danger Rating is not a predictor of how likely a bushfire is to occur, but how dangerous it could be if it did occur. It should be used as an early indicator to trigger your plans.

- **Fires can threaten suddenly and without warning**
- **Watch** for signs of fire, especially smoke and flames
- **Know** the Fire Danger Rating in your area, be aware of local conditions and keep informed
- **Have** your Bushfire Survival Plan and kit ready
- **Call** 000 to report a fire
- **To seek information**
 - listen to local radio,
 - go to www.cfs.sa.gov.au
 - or call the Bushfire Information Hotline on 1300 362 361 (TTY 133 677)

Fire Danger Rating	What Does it Mean?	What Should I Do?
Catastrophic Total Fire Ban Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are the worst conditions for a bush or grass fire. • If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be extremely difficult to control and will take significant fire fighting resources and cooler conditions to bring it under control. • Spot fires will start well ahead of the main fire and cause rapid spread of the fire. Embers will come from many directions. • Homes are not designed or constructed to withstand fires in these conditions. • The safest place to be is away from bushfire prone areas. 	<p>YOU NEED TO ACT NOW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put your survival first and leave bushfire prone areas the night before or early in the day - this is your safest option. • Act immediately - do not wait and see • Avoid forested areas, thick bush or long, dry grass; • Prepare, know and practise a plan for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When you will leave - How you will get there - What you will do if you cannot leave - Where you will go - When you will return



<p>Extreme</p> <p>Total Fire Ban Day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are very hot, dry and windy conditions for a bush or grass fire. • If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be unpredictable, move very fast and very difficult for fire fighters to bring under control. • Spot fires will start and move quickly. Embers may come from many directions. • Homes that are prepared to the highest level, have been constructed to bushfire protection levels and are actively defended may provide safety. • You must be physically and mentally prepared to defend in these conditions. • The safest place to be is away from bushfire prone areas. 	<p>YOU NEED TO GET READY TO ACT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only stay with your property if you are prepared to the highest level. This means your home needs to have been constructed to bushfire protection levels e.g.; enclosed eaves, covers over external air conditioners, metal flyscreens etc. • You must be well prepared and able to actively defend your home if a fire starts. This means you have the right equipment and resources to put out fires around your home e.g.; enough water supply, petrol/diesel portable pump, generator, protective clothing etc. • If you are not prepared to the highest level, leaving bushfire prone areas early in the day is your safest option.
<p>Severe</p> <p>Total Fire Ban Day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are hot, dry and possibly windy conditions for a bush or grass fire. • If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be hard for fire fighters to bring under control. • Well prepared homes that are actively defended can provide safety. • You must be physically and mentally prepared to defend in these conditions. 	<p>YOU NEED TO BE AWARE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well prepared homes that are actively defended can provide safety. This means you have the right equipment and resources to put out fires around your home e.g.; enough water supply, petrol/diesel portable pump, generator, protective clothing etc. • If you are not prepared, leaving bushfire prone areas early in the day is your safest option.
<p>Very High</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a fire starts, it is likely to be controlled in these conditions and homes can provide safety. • Be aware of how fires can start and reduce the risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your Bushfire Survival Plan. • Monitor conditions. • Action may be needed. • Leave if necessary.
<p>High</p>		
<p>Low - Moderate</p>		



Appendix 3 – Willunga Charter Service – Bushfire Protection Policy



BUSHFIRE PROTECTION POLICY

In collaboration with the Country Fire Service, Willunga Charter Pty Ltd has developed a policy that establishes a process for school buses to be cancelled on days of 'catastrophic' bushfire weather conditions.

This policy will facilitate the announcement by Willunga Charter Pty Ltd, in most cases on the day prior to the forecast 'catastrophic' conditions, of details of the school bus runs subject to closure. This will assist families to make alternative arrangements for their children's care / transport the day prior to the closure.

Willunga Charter Pty Ltd will keep representatives of the Schools / College's affected by run stoppages informed at all stages.

Procedure:

On days of days of forecast 'catastrophic' conditions in a region where school buses operate, Willunga Charter Pty Ltd will cancel the affected services until the rating reduces from 'catastrophic'.

The decision will be made the day prior at 4pm in collaboration with the CFS website and or the ABC weather report.

In instances where there is not a 'catastrophic' rating but there are fires known to be in an area where Willunga Charter Pty Ltd school buses operate, the runs in that area will also be cancelled until the fire is extinguished or it is declared as safe by the CFS officer in charge of the incident. (In this circumstance prior notice may not be possible)

Revised 16/12/2009

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Appendix 4 – Letter to Parents and Bushfire Response Form

Dear Families

We wish to advise you of our plans to cope with any bushfire emergency, including catastrophic fire danger days. The College does not want any student or member of the College community to be placed at any risk from a bushfire.

Southern Vales Christian College obtains information on bushfires through the CFS Website &/or ABC 891 AM radio and from the Association of Independent Schools of SA (AISSA). The AISSA is normally notified of significant bushfires.

The College will seek to comply with bushfire warnings from emergency management authorities. When the College is aware of a bushfire in an area, we will cancel any excursions or trips into that area.

If a Catastrophic Fire Danger Day is declared

College buses (including buses chartered by the College) will not operate that day in the region/s affected by the warning.

Families living in or having to travel through regions that are at risk on catastrophic days should not send their children to College on those days. Likewise, staff living in or having to travel through regions that are at risk should not attend College on those days.

If a bushfire starts during a College day

- Buses will not operate on non-catastrophic days on which bush fires occur.
- Students who normally travel into or through the area at risk will be required to attend a special assembly before the end of the school day.
- These students will be supervised at College and only allowed to leave if collected by either a parent or a nominated person as advised by the parent. These students must be signed out at the front offices regardless of the time of departure, including normal dismissal time.
- In the event that students remain at College because of a bushfire, the College will endeavor to contact parents and the College phones will be staffed – Morphett Vale: 8381 9877; Aldinga: 8556 6118.
- Parents will be contacted if the nominated person designated by the family has not collected the student.
- Those students who do not have refuge accommodation will be supervised at the College – overnight if necessary.
- In the event that a College bus run is unable to operate in the morning because of an overnight fire, the College would contact families impacted by this decision.

In the event that communications to the College are not functioning, parents are encouraged to contact the Bushfire Information Hotline on 1300 362 361.

To enable the College to manage these situations, we ask all families to complete the attached form.

If your home is in an area that may be at risk from a bushfire or your child/ren travel to and from College through an area that may be at risk from a bushfire, please indicate this and provide details of an alternative accommodation provider to which your child/ren can be directed if necessary.



To assist the College in determining students who may be at risk if there is a bushfire, please also indicate the suburbs/towns/main roads normally used to and from your home.

It is recommended that the alternative accommodation provider is in an area that is regarded by the CFS as a Bushfire Safer Settlement or Bushfire Safer Precinct that can be safely accessed from the College. Details of Safer Settlements or Safer Precincts are available at www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/bushfire/home.jsp

Even if your child/ren are not at any risk please indicate this on the attached form and return it so that we can be sure that no one is missed.

Please inform us of any changes that may impact on whether it is safe for your child/ren to travel home in the event of a bushfire.

The College has developed *Catastrophic Fire Danger Procedures* which will be available on our website by the end of Week 2.

Yours in Christ
Andrew Clayton
Principal



BUSHFIRE RESPONSE FORM

Every family is requested to complete the following information (whether you are in a risk area or not) and return it to the Front Office of your child's Campus.

Family:

Address:

1. IS YOUR HOME IN AN AREA THAT MAY BE PARTICULARLY AT RISK FROM BUSHFIRE? YES / NO
2. DOES YOUR CHILD/REN TRAVEL TO AND FROM SCHOOL THROUGH AN AREA THAT MAY BE PARTICULARLY AT RISK FROM BUSHFIRE? YES/NO

If your answer is YES to either question, please advise:

Names of student/s:

.....
.....

Student/s at other schools:

Name: School:

Name: School:

Alternative Accommodation:

Name of Contact Person:

Relationship to family/students:

Address:

Contact Numbers: Hm:..... Wk: Mb:

Details where travel to and from school is through an area or areas that may be particularly at risk from bushfire: – e.g. suburbs/towns; main roads taken; any other relevant information:

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