

SOP 09.39

Planning and Conducting a Planned Burn SOP

The new 09.39 Planning and Conducting a Planned Burn SOP replaces the existing 09.39 Planning and Conducting a Planned Burn (endorsed 2021)

- Updated terminology, along with roles and responsibilities of key personnel.
- Each step of the planned burn process has been amended to uphold current practices.
- Re-structured some sections to meet current safety and procedural expectations, such as the Ignition Authorisation process.
- Improved the Safety and Environmental Notes to include current topics and concerns for vegetation management.

NOTE – We have done our best to match the new SOP clauses with the old SOP however in some cases they do not match and the comparison is left blank.

Colour code

	Minor change in wording
	Small updates in the wording but the intent is the same as the old SOP
	Significant change or new procedure in the new SOP

	NEW SOP 09.39	OLD SOP 09.39
Objective	(1) To assist CFA members in planning and conducting planned burns effectively and safely, and to ensure positive outcomes for CFA, the community and environment.	To assist CFA members in planning and conducting burns effectively and safely, and to ensure positive outcomes for the community and environment.
Scope	(2) This procedure applies to all CFA members involved in planning and conducting planned burns.	This Standard Operating Procedure applies to all CFA members involved in planning and conducting burns.
	(3) This includes the ability of CFA Vegetation Management Staff who can be involved in planned burns with the delivery and application of planned burns, by providing support to the Planned Burn Operations Officer and observing burn conduct in order to improve future burn planning.	<i>This includes the ability of CFA Vegetation Management Staff who can be involved with the delivery and application of planned burns, by providing support to the Planned Burn Controller and to observe burn conduct in order improve future burn planning.</i>
	(4) This procedure does not apply to burning off or bushfire response/suppression operations such as back burning or burning out. Refer to the SOP 9.40 Burn Offs for more information.	During bushfire response or suppression operations this SOP does not apply to back burning or burning out operations.

<p>Procedure Nominating a Planned Burn</p>	<p>(5) All proposed planned burns require approval by the District Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) and nominated for inclusion in a relevant strategic plan (for example, a joint agency fuel management program or municipal plan).</p>	<p>1. Nominating a Planned Burn</p> <p>All proposed Planned Burns must be approved by the District Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) and nominated for inclusion in a relevant strategic plan (for example, a joint agency or municipal plan).</p> <p>Planned Burns for purposes include, but not limited to, cultural practice, capacity building or community engagement may be approved at the discretion of the District ACFO without inclusion in a strategic plan when urgency requires.</p>
	<p>(6) Planned Burns for purposes include, but are not limited to, fire prevention and risk reduction, cultural practices, training and capacity building, or community engagement. In limited circumstances, a planned burn may be approved at the discretion of the relevant Deputy Chief Officer or delegate without inclusion in a strategic plan when urgency requires.</p>	
<p>Planning a Planned Burn</p>	<p>(7) All planned burns must have a Burn Plan developed by an appropriately endorsed Burn Planner.</p> <p>(8) All Burn Plans must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conform to a current approved template (e.g. Fuel Management System (FMS)) and/or process appropriate for the risk and complexity of the burn. b. Comply with relevant legislation. <p>(9) Burn Plans will be approved by the District Assistant Chief Fire Officer or a delegate on endorsement of the Manager Community Safety (MCS) prior to any CFA members commencing pre-burn works.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. In some cases, complex burns may be approved by the Regional Deputy Chief Officer. <p>(10) Prior to the burn occurring, the Planned Burn Operations Officer is to notify their Region’s Vegetation Management Team (VMT) or nominated delegate (e.g. CFA State Planned Burn Coordinator) to allow for systems to be updated.</p> <p>(11) For guidance on roadside burning operations and traffic management, please refer to the Chief Officer’s SOP 11.09 Traffic Management.</p>	<p>2. Planning a Planned Burn</p> <p>2.1 All Planned Burns must have Burn Plan developed by an appropriately endorsed Burn Planner.</p> <p>2.2 All Burn Plans must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conform to a current approved template and/or process appropriate for the risk and complexity of the burn. ▪ Comply with relevant legislation. <p>2.3 Burn Plans must be approved by the District ACFO or a delegated Commander, on endorsement of the Manager Community Safety (MCS), prior to any CFA members commencing pre-burn works.</p> <p>2.4 Prior to the burn occurring, the Burn Controller is to notify their local Vegetation Management Officer (VMO).</p>

<p>Planned Burn Delivery</p>	<p>(12) On the day/s of the burn the Planned Burn Operations Officer must be in possession of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A valid, appropriate permit if burning during the declared Fire Danger Period. b. The current approved Burn Plan. 	<p>3. Conducting the Planned Burn</p> <p>3.1 On the day/s of the burn the Burn Controller must be in possession of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A valid appropriate permit if burning during the declared fire danger period. ▪ A copy of the approved and current Burn Plan. <p>3.2 The Burn Controller must ensure:</p> <p>3.2.1 All requirements in the Burn Plan are complied with, including necessary pre-burn works and notifications. Notifications to include the 1800 668 511 Burn Off Notification Line and the Rostered Duty Officer (RDO).</p> <p>3.2.2 All burn personnel are briefed and wearing appropriate bushfire PPC and PPE before commencing work.</p> <p>3.2.3 Required records and results are recorded on the Burn Plan.</p> <p>3.2.4 Before the last crew leaves and with consideration of forecast weather, the burn must be assessed as secure and/or the land owner must clearly assume management and responsibility.</p>
	<p>(13) The Planned Burn Operations Officer will ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. All requirements in the Burn Plan are complied with, including necessary pre-burn works and notifications. Notifications include Triple Zero Victoria or Fire Permits Victoria, and the District Assistant Chief Fire Officer/District Duty Officer or State Duty Officer (or as outlined in local arrangements). b. All burn personnel are briefed and wearing appropriate bushfire Personal Protective Clothing (PPC) and Protective Equipment (PE) before commencing work. c. Required records and results are recorded in the Burn Plan and logbook as per SOP 9.13 Keeping Logs and Documents. d. Before the last crew leaves and with consideration of forecast weather, the burn must be assessed as secure, and/or the responsible landholder assume responsibilities for control outlined by the Planned Burn Operations Officer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. For more detailed guidance, refer to the Chief Officer’s SOP 9.11 Handing over the Incident e. The Planned Burn Operations Officer is responsible for management of the planned burns in accordance with the approved burn plan. f. Any fire escape from the planned burn area must be reported to the relevant State Duty Officer / District Duty Officer. g. Any fire escape threatening assets or fire beyond any identified contingency areas must be reported immediately as a fire call to FireCom and additional resources requested as required. 	

<p>Ignition Authorisation</p>	<p>(14) Once approval of the Burn Plan has been given and all preparatory works have been accepted by the District Assistant Chief Fire Officer (or delegate), the burn ignition can be scheduled in the adopted record-keeping system, e.g. FMS.</p> <p>(15) If all appropriate steps have been taken and the pre-ignition documents have been completed, then the District Assistant Chief Fire Officer (or delegate) can provide ignition authorisation.</p> <p>(16) Ignition authorisation will be recorded in the Planned Burn Aide Memoire and reflected in the adopted recordkeeping system, e.g. FMS.</p> <p>(17) Ignition approval may be requested/required by the District Assistant Chief Fire Officer (or delegate), the method of confirmation will depend on local arrangements and should be outlined in the Burn Plan.</p> <p>(18) If conditions as per Burn Plan are met and ignition approval is not required, then the Planned Burn Operations Officer may proceed with the burn.</p>	<p>3.3. Ignition Authorisation</p> <p>Once approval of the Burn Plan has been given, there are two distinct ignition authorisation procedures depending on the CR provided for the Burn in the planning documentation.</p> <p>3.3 CR1 type Planned Burns Authorisation via RDC no less than 3 hours prior to ignition.</p> <p>These burns are considered lower risk due to the short burn residence time.</p> <p>3.3.2 CR2 and CR3 type Planned Burns Authorisation via RDC after consultation with RAC or ACFO (if further guidance is required, RAC or ACFO should contact SAC or SPBC) no less than 3 hours prior to ignition.</p> <p>These burns are considered higher risk because of the presence of more complex issues and the longer duration burn times.</p>
<p>Post Burn Activity</p>	<p>(19) The Planned Burn Operations Officer will ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Post burn patrol is arranged and is appropriate based on forecast weather and fire potential. b. Post-burn works required by the Burn Plan are carried out or responsibility is clearly transferred to the responsible landholder and recorded in the logbook. c. The completed Burn Plan report along with any other associated materials is sent to the Region’s Vegetation Management Team for reporting and filing. 	<p>4. Post-burn activity</p> <p>4.1 The Burn Controller must ensure:</p> <p>4.1.1 Post-burn works required by the Burn Plan are carried out or responsibility is clearly transferred to the land owner or manager.</p> <p>4.1.2 The completed Burn Plan report is sent to the relevant Vegetation</p>
	<p>(20) At the conclusion of the burn, all Brigade participation should be recorded in CFA’s Service Delivery and Resource Centre</p>	

	<p>(SDRC)/Fire and Incident Reporting System (FIRS) by each Brigade involved.</p>	<p>Management Officer (VMO) for reporting and filing.</p> <p>4.2 At the conclusion of the burn, all Brigade participation must be recorded in CFAs Service Delivery and Service Centre (SDRC) by each Brigade involved.</p>												
<p>Supporting Other Agencies to Burn</p>	<p>(21) CFA will participate in planned burns as a support agency where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. There is an established Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement allowing resource sharing with the lead agency. b. The District Assistant Chief Fire Officer/District Duty Officer or State Duty Officer approves all CFA participation. c. The lead agency has an approved Burn Plan. d. CFA members are adequately briefed prior to starting work. 	<p>5. Supporting other agencies to burn</p> <p>5.1 CFA will participate in planned burning as a support agency where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1.1 The District ACFO, or delegated RDO/Commander, endorses all CFA participation. 5.1.2 The lead agency has an approved Burn Plan. 5.1.3 CFA personnel are adequately briefed prior to starting work. <p>5.2 At the conclusion of the burn, all Brigade participation must be recorded in CFAs Service Delivery and Service Centre (SDRC) by each Brigade involved.</p>												
	<p>(22) At the conclusion of the burn, all Brigade participation should be recorded in CFA's SDRC/FIRS by each Brigade involved.</p>													
	<p>Roles and Responsibilities</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Roles</th> <th>Responsibilities</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Planned Burns Operation Officer</td> <td>Responsible for overall management of the planned burn, including liaising with Regional Vegetation Management Teams, obtaining and implementing Burns Plans and valid permits (if required) and meeting the necessary notification and reporting requirements (including post-burn activities).</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Burn Planner</td> <td>Responsible for developing Burn Plans. This includes the identification of essential safety, environmental and cultural heritage information.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Regional Vegetation Management Team</td> <td>Responsible for overseeing regional planned burn activity including Burn Plans.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Manager Community Safety</td> <td>Responsible for endorsing Burn Plans.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>District Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)</td> <td>Approves burn plans and provides ignition authorisation and ignition approval. The District ACFO also approved CFA member's attendance to another agency's burn.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Roles	Responsibilities	Planned Burns Operation Officer	Responsible for overall management of the planned burn, including liaising with Regional Vegetation Management Teams, obtaining and implementing Burns Plans and valid permits (if required) and meeting the necessary notification and reporting requirements (including post-burn activities).	Burn Planner	Responsible for developing Burn Plans. This includes the identification of essential safety, environmental and cultural heritage information.	Regional Vegetation Management Team	Responsible for overseeing regional planned burn activity including Burn Plans.	Manager Community Safety	Responsible for endorsing Burn Plans.	District Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO)	Approves burn plans and provides ignition authorisation and ignition approval. The District ACFO also approved CFA member's attendance to another agency's burn.	
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Safety Note	(23) When in the planning stage of a planned burn, Burn Planners should undertake a robust risk and complexity assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Burn Planners must undertake a robust risk and complexity assessment. ▪ Contingency plan should be part of planning process. ▪ During the planning process Burn Planners must ensure safety issues are identified and mitigated or managed in the plan. ▪ Traffic management must be considered as part of any burn planning. ▪ Hazardous tree assessment must be conducted as part of the burn preparation for any burn involving trees. <p>When conducting burning operations Burn Controllers must take notes of safety issues in the Burn Plan and conduct continual dynamic risk assessments.</p>
	(24) A contingency plan should be part of the planning process.	
	(25) During the planning process, Burn Planners should ensure safety issues are identified and mitigated or managed in accordance with the Safe Work Procedure – Conduct Planned Burning Operation.	
	(26) Traffic management should be considered as part of any burn planning, refer to the Chief Officer’s SOP 11.09 Traffic Management.	
	(27) Hazardous tree assessment should be conducted as part of the burn preparation and post-burn activities for any burn involving trees.	
	(28) When conducting burning operations Planned Burn Operations Officers should take notes of safety issues in the Burn Plan in accordance with clause 25 and conduct continual dynamic risk assessments.	
	(29) CFA members undertaking vegetation management activities and operating quadbikes or side-by-sides must wear the appropriate Personal Protective Clothing (PPC)/equipment (PPE) (e.g. quadbike helmet) in accordance with vehicle manufacturers' recommendations.	
Environmental Note	(30) During the planning process, Burn Planners will seek advice from internal and, where necessary, external advisors on matters of heritage and biodiversity values checks and updated as required.	
	(31) Where necessary, identified values will be addressed in the Burn Plan and mitigation options identified if required.	
	(32) Herbicides should only be used by appropriately trained and endorsed contractors to the relevant industry standard.	
	(33) To minimise the spread of pest plants and virulent soil pathogens, vehicles and plant machinery should be decontaminated before travelling between sites.	
	(34) Class A Foam is to be used in accordance with SOP 9.07 Firefighting Foams and Retardants SOP.	

	(35) The planned burn should be managed to minimise the smoke impact on the community. Appropriate notifications should be made in advance.	The Planned Burn must be managed to minimise smoke impact on the community. Appropriate notifications should be made in advance.
	(36) Plan control lines to minimise soil disturbance and ensure rehabilitation of control lines where necessary after the burn has been declared safe.	Plan control lines to minimise soil disturbance and ensure rehabilitation of control lines where necessary after the burn has been declared safe.
	(37) CFA values the importance and protection of Victoria’s historical and cultural heritage sites. CFA members in charge should be familiar with the identification and means of protection of cultural and historically significant artifacts, especially those that are significant to the heritage of the First Peoples and broader historic legacies.	

Related Documents

Aboriginal Heritage Act 2009

Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018

Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Act (Cth) 1999

Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988

Forest Act 1958 Land Act 1958

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 Summary Offences Act 1966

CFA Planned Burn Ignition Authorisation Process 2022 Memorandum

Safe Work Procedure – Conduct Planned Burning Operation

9.11 Handing Over the Incident

SOP 11.09 Traffic Management

SOP 9.07 Firefighting Foams and Retardants SOP