



09.11 Handing Over the Incident SOP

Section 1 - Purpose and Objectives

(1) This procedure guides Incident Controllers on how to handover an incident in the country area of Victoria to a Responsible Landholder.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This procedure applies to Incident Controllers handing over incidents to Responsible Landholders.

(3) This procedure does not apply to transferring control to another agency. Please refer to [8.04 SOP Transfer of Control SOP](#) for more information.

Section 3 - Procedure

(4) Handing over to a Responsible Landholder is an important part of the transition to recovery.

(5) The Incident Controller should make reasonable enquiries (where practicable) to ascertain who will be the Responsible Landholder.

(6) The Incident Controller can hand over to the Responsible Landholder once they are satisfied with the following:

- a. the continued presence of CFA resources is no longer required;
- b. it is reasonable for a Responsible Landholder to take control and manage the incident; and
- c. the ongoing risk to life and property has been sufficiently mitigated.

(7) The Responsible Landholder must have the capacity and the means to manage the incident.

(8) If this is not the case, the Incident Controller must remain in control until the fire is extinguished, the incident is resolved or until the Responsible Landholder can meet the requirements in clause 6.

Assessing the Capacity of the Responsible Landholder

(9) The Incident Controller must have a reasonable belief that the Responsible Landholder has an appropriate capacity and means to manage the incident.

(10) The Incident Controller should consider the following factors:

- a. Does the Responsible Landholder understand the requirements to manage the incident?
- b. In the interactions had with the Responsible Landholder, a belief that they have sufficient knowledge, skills and capabilities to manage the incident, having regard to the weather conditions, status and location of the incident?
- c. Does the Responsible Landholder have the appropriate equipment to manage the incident?

(11) If the Incident Controller determines that the Responsible Landholder is capable of managing the incident, they should:

- a. Brief the Responsible Landholder on the situation and the ongoing actions required to manage the incident in the absence of CFA resources and to contact 000 if the situation changes. Members should consider using SMEACS-Q to undertake this briefing.
- b. Where the incident relates to a fire that is not yet extinguished, direct the Responsible Landholder under section 48(1A) of the [Country Fire Authority Act 1958](#):
 - i. to extinguish the fire;
 - ii. to take the steps directed to extinguish the fire; or
 - iii. to prevent the fire from spreading or causing injury.
- c. Where the incident relates to a fire that is not yet extinguished, complete the Incident Handover Direction Notice and ensure it is signed by both the Incident Controller and the Responsible Landholder. If the Responsible Landholder refuses to sign, write 'refused to sign'.

(12) For fire response, once the Incident Controller has issued the Responsible Landholder with a direction under section 48(1A), the Responsible Landholder must take all reasonable steps to comply with the direction. At this stage, handover is complete and the Responsible Landholder has the responsibility to manage the fire (section 48(2) [Country Fire Authority Act 1958](#)).

After the Handover

(13) For a fire where smoke will continue to be emitted, the Incident Controller should consider lodging a burn off notification via FireCom to prevent accidental notification to the brigade.

(14) The Incident Controller will communicate the handover to FireCom and ensure sufficient detail is included in the FIRS incident report of any handover, including any directions given to a Responsible Landholder. Record the Incident Handover Direction Notice number in the FIRS incident report (if applicable).

Safety Note

(15) Known potential hazards should be identified and communicated to the Responsible Landholder when conducting a scene handover.

Environmental Note

(16) Nil.

Section 4 - Definitions

(17) Commonly defined terms are located in the CFA [centralised glossary](#).

Section 5 - Related Documents

[Standing Order 11.00 Health and Safety](#)

[Guidelines for Operating Private Equipment at Fires](#)

Status and Details

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Responsible Officer	Garry Cook Deputy Chief Officer Operational Response & Coordination
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Incident Controller" - The individual designated by the control agency to have overall management of the incident and who is responsible for all incident activities.

"FireCom" - The callsign for day to day / normal radio communications to CFA vehicles and aircraft.

"FIRS" - Fire and Incident Reporting System.

"SMEACS-Q" - A briefing format incorporating: Situation, Mission, Execution, Administration and logistics, Command and Communications, Safety, and Questions.

"Responsible Landholder" - A person who owns or occupies the land where the incident has occurred.