Guidelines for Preparing a Bushfire Risk Management Plan

2023

Disclaimer

The Guidelines for Preparing a Bushfire Risk Management Plan 2023 (Guidelines) were developed by the Office of Bushfire Risk Management (OBRM) as the standard to support local governments involved in the Bushfire Risk Management (BRM) program in Western Australia. Any representation, statement, opinion, or advice expressed or implied in this publication is made in good faith and on the basis that the Government, its employees, and agents are not liable for any damage or loss whatsoever which may occur as a result of action taken or not taken, as the case may be, in respect of any representation, statement, opinion or advice referred to herein. Professional advice should be obtained before applying the information contained in this document to non-specified circumstances.

The Guidelines describe the key risk management principles for developing a BRM Plan. The information within the Guidelines is based on the best available information at the time of development and may be subject to change over time as new knowledge becomes available.

The risk management process described in the Guidelines was designed to support BRM planning undertaken by local governments engaged in Western Australia's BRM Program. OBRM does not endorse the use of this methodology in any other context or for any other purpose.

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Chapter 1
Introduction

The Bushfire Risk Management (BRM) program is a Statewide initiative led by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) to support local governments to reduce the threat posed by bushfire. The *Guidelines for Preparing a Bushfire Risk Management Plan* (Guidelines) provide an overview of the process for local governments to develop a BRM Plan that reflects best practice risk management. The Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the *Bushfire Risk Management Planning Handbook* (Handbook) which provides tactical guidance in the application of the BRM planning methodology.

The responsibility for managing bushfire risk is shared across community. Successful bushfire risk management requires local government, State Government, industry, private landholders, and other community members to collaboratively identify and assess risk and implement coordinated treatments across the landscape. Local governments are central to the functioning of communities and so play a crucial role in coordinating BRM planning. However, while local governments prepare the BRM Plan, they do so on behalf of all stakeholders and aren't solely responsible for managing the risks identified in the plan.

1.1 Changes in this version of the Guidelines

The 2023 version of the Guidelines is a continuation of a process of incremental improvement that began in 2015. This version has a more strategic focus, with tactical information now found in the Handbook. The strategic focus includes more guidance on the principles of risk management, and how they can be embedded to facilitate the development of an effective BRM Plan.

The 2023 Guidelines add a new theme to the BRM planning process, focused on identifying, assessing, and treating systemic risks to the community. While this part of the process is optional for local governments to adopt, users of the Guidelines are encouraged to consider systemic risk and how its management can build community resilience.

The concept of a Treatment strategy is another addition to the 2023 Guidelines. This is an opportunity for local governments to describe their priorities and overall approach to managing the risks identified through the BRM planning process. The Treatment strategy will help guide the development of the more detailed Treatment schedule designed to address risk to individual assets.

Finally, the 2023 Guidelines see the introduction of a new process required for local governments to maintain Office of Bushfire Risk Management (OBRM) endorsement of their BRM Plans. This replaces the previous 5-yearly re-endorsement process and aims to ensure information in the BRM Plan and data in the Bushfire Risk Management System (BRMS) remains current and accurate.

1.2 Defining risk in bushfire risk management

In the context of BRM planning, risk is the potential for a bushfire to harm something that is valued by the community. The magnitude of risk at a location is determined by the potential consequences, or amount of harm caused by a bushfire, and the likelihood of these consequences being experienced.

Consequence and likelihood are calculated by considering the importance of the assets that are exposed to bushfire, the extent to which they are exposed and how vulnerable they are to harm. This calculation considers factors such as the type, quantity and proximity of fuels that might power a bushfire, the construction of assets, the demographics of the community and the nature of the networks that support community function and quality of life.

BRM planning considers two broad types of risk: risk to assets and systemic risk. Risk to assets relates to the tangible impacts of bushfire on people, property, infrastructure and the natural environment. Systemic risk arises from the impacts of bushfire on the interconnected systems and networks that support community function. It is a result of the disruption caused to a community by bushfire and its effects may be felt far from the direct impacts of the fire in both time and space.

1.3 Requirement for a Bushfire Risk Management Plan

The State Emergency Management Framework assigns responsibility for BRM planning to local governments in the most bushfire prone parts of the State.

> *Local governments identified within this State Hazard Plan Fire as having high or extreme bushfire risk must develop a BRM Plan that applies to the entire local government area.*
> — *State Hazard Plan Fire 2023*

The 45 local governments required to develop a BRM Plan are listed in the *State Hazard Plan Fire 2023*. OBRM strongly recommends that other local governments with significant bushfire risk also develop and implement a BRM Plan. An OBRM endorsed plan is required to be eligible to apply for the Mitigation Activity Fund Grant Program (MAFGP).

Chapter 2
Bushfire risk management planning overview

A BRM Plan assists a local government to identify, assess, prioritise, treat and monitor bushfire risk throughout its local government area. The plan is developed by a local government, following consultation with stakeholders. A BRM Plan must encompass all land within the local government area, regardless of tenure. However, while local governments prepare the BRM Plan, they do so on behalf of all stakeholders and aren't solely responsible for managing the risks identified in the plan.

The BRM planning process reflects the risk management process set out in the international standard *ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management*. It is a cyclic process of establishing the context for risk management; identifying, analysing and evaluating risks, and treating unacceptable risks. Communication and consultation, monitoring and review and reporting support the process throughout all these steps.

As a local government progresses through the BRM planning process, information is recorded in either the BRM Plan or the BRMS. There are several components that must be included for a plan to gain OBRM endorsement, while OBRM also recommends some optional components to enhance the BRM Plan's effectiveness. The components of a BRM Plan are summarised in this chapter and detailed in Chapters 3 to 10.

2.1 Bushfire Risk Management Plan and System

Bushfire Risk Management Plan

- Context statement
- Systemic risk
- Treatment strategy
- Communication plan
- Local government wide controls

Bushfire Risk Management System

- Asset data
- Risk assessment data
- Treatment data
- Maps

System Generated Reports

- Asset risk register
- Treatment schedule
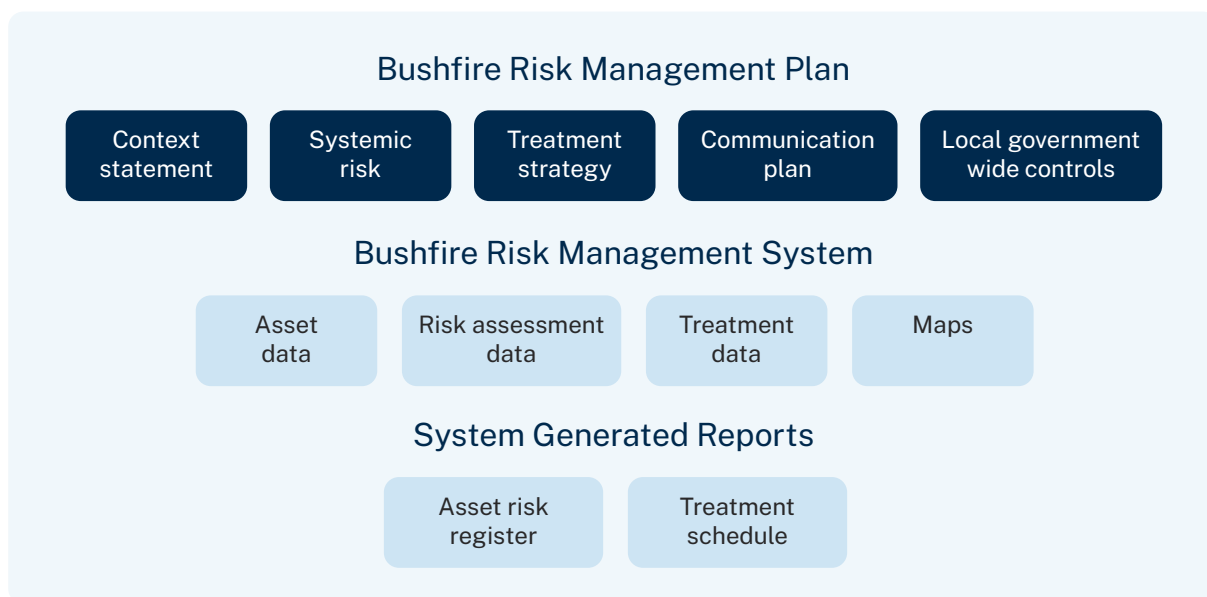
Figure 1: Components of the Bushfire Risk Management planning process

Bushfire Risk Management Plan

The BRM Plan is a document that provides contextual information about the local government area to inform the subsequent risk assessment. It also records information about risks and treatments that do not relate to a specific asset or location. The main features of a BRM Plan are:

- *Context statement* is a description of the political, economic, social and natural environments that will influence bushfire risk and treatment in the local government area. It explores community drivers for managing bushfire risk and so helps to identify and assess risks and plan suitable treatment strategies.
- *Systemic risk* is an optional component that assesses risks to the systems and networks that support the community. The aim is to identify how disruption to these could cause extended impacts following a bushfire and how such outcomes can be minimised.
- *Treatment strategy* provides high-level guidance on the approach that will be taken to treating bushfire risk in the local government area. This is informed by the context and community values and informs the development of the Treatment schedule.
- *Communication plan* identifies the key stakeholders to be involved in the BRM planning process, the role they play, and the objectives for communication activities.
- *Local government-wide controls* describes the programs and activities undertaken by the local government and other stakeholders that contribute to managing bushfire risk throughout the local government area.

Bushfire Risk Management System

The BRMS is an online application that is used to record and map assets, undertake risk assessments and record the treatments associated with specific assets. The BRMS can also generate reports and maps that provide a summary of the assets identified as being at risk from bushfire and their associated risk ratings and treatments. Systemic risks are not recorded in BRMS because they don't necessarily link to a specific location.

Bushfire Management Plans

The BRM Plan described in the Guidelines should not be confused with a Bushfire Management Plan enforced as a condition of development or subdivision approval under the *Planning and Development Act 2005.* Bushfire Management Plans provide conditions related to access, water provision and fuel management that must be achieved for a land development to be approved. They only apply to the area subject to development so do not facilitate the collaborative, district-wide approach to managing risk the BRM Plan seeks to achieve.

2.2 The Bushfire Risk Management planning process

The purpose of the BRM planning process is to reduce bushfire risk in a local government area via a program of works informed by a comprehensive risk assessment. The process reflects a risk management cycle (Figure 2) with outputs recorded in three main products: a BRM Plan, an Asset risk register, and a Treatment schedule. The risk management cycle involves the steps described below, with steps having mandatory and optional components in the BRM planning process, as described in Table 1.

Communication and consultation

Communication is providing information about the risk management process to ensure stakeholders understand their risks and why particular treatments are prioritised. Consultation is the sharing of information between stakeholders to ensure risk assessment and treatment planning is based on the best available information and considers different perspectives. Communication and consultation need to continue throughout the life of the BRM Plan to support the other risk management steps.

Establish the context

The context statement is a description of the characteristics of the local government area. It is written in relation to bushfire, with a focus on factors that will influence the amount and distribution of bushfire risk and how bushfire risk will be treated. A good understanding of the context is needed to undertake an effective risk assessment. The context statement makes up a significant portion of the BRM Plan.

Establish the context

Context statement

- - - - - - - - Risk assessment - - - - - - - -

Risk identification

Identify assets at risk
Human settlement
Economic
Environment
Cultural

Risk analysis

Assess consequences
Vulnerability
Hazard
Potential impact

Assess likelihood
Fuel age
Separation distance

Calculate risk rating
Extreme, Very high,
High, Medium, Low

Risk evaluation

Risk acceptance criteria
Current controls
Treatment priorities

- - - - - - - - Risk assessment - - - - - - - -

Risk treatment

Treatment strategy
Treatment schedule
Implement treatments

Recording and reporting

**Communication
and consultation**
Inform, consult,
involve,
collaborate

**Monitoring
and Review**
Monitor and
review risks
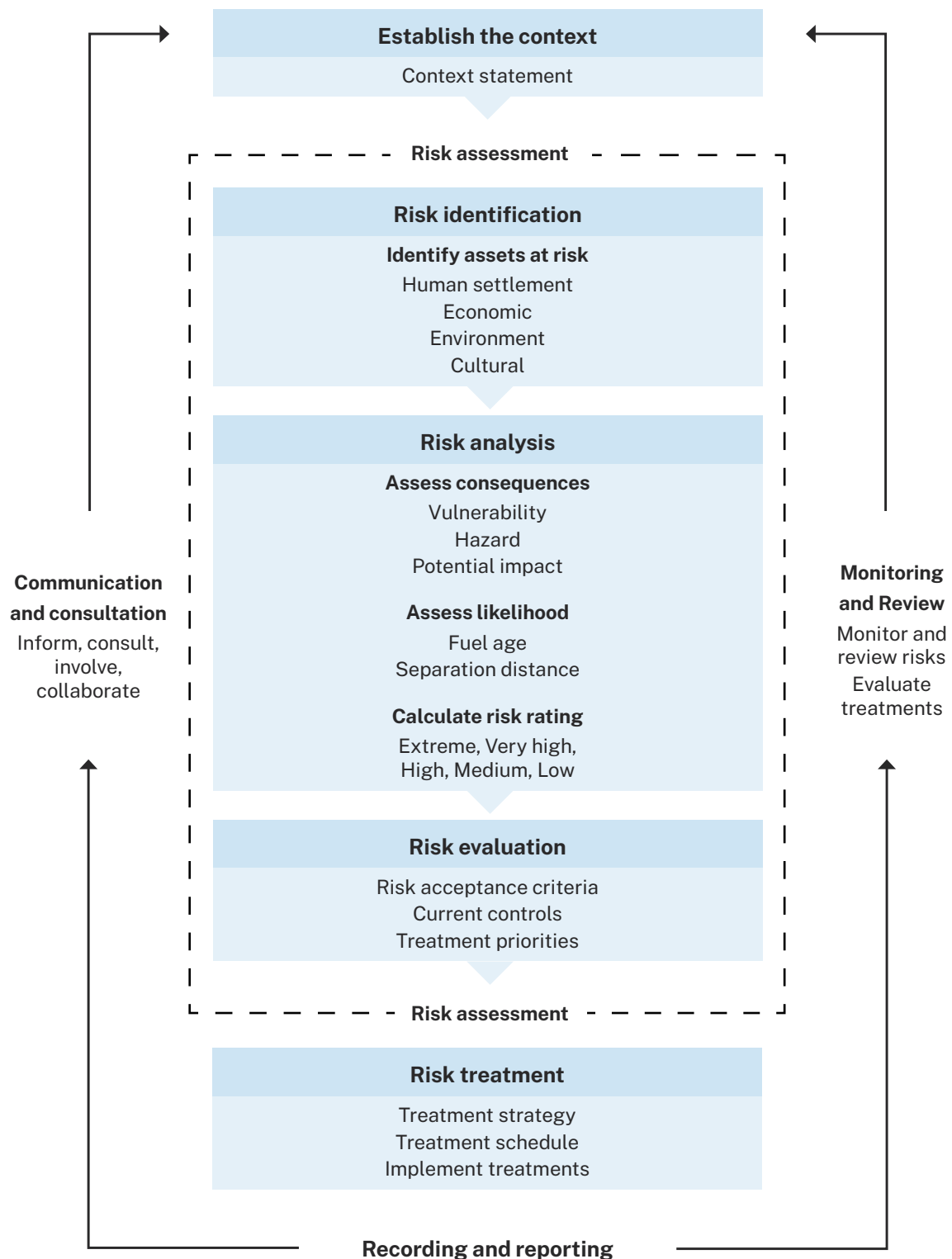Evaluate
treatments

Figure 2: Overview of the Bushfire Risk Management planning process

Risk assessment

Risk assessment involves identifying, analysing and evaluating risks. In the BRM planning process, this means identifying assets that are exposed to bushfire hazard and entering to the BRMS the variables used to calculate a risk rating. The BRMS then evaluates the risk and assigns a treatment priority, based on the risk acceptance criteria, asset type and risk rating. A summary of risk assessments is recorded in the BRM Plan. Systemic risks may also be described in the BRM Plan, but this is not mandatory.

Risk treatment

Risk treatments are the actions that will be taken to reduce risks identified as being unacceptably high. The Treatment strategy in the BRM Plan describes the overall approach that will be taken to address bushfire risk in the local government area, while the details of individual treatments are entered to the Treatment schedule in the BRMS. The way that systemic risks will be managed may also be described in the BRM Plan.

Monitoring and review

Ongoing monitoring of the outputs of the BRM planning process is required to ensure they continue to accurately reflect risk and inform planning. It is most important to ensure the risk assessments and Treatment schedule remain current, but the BRM Plan should also be monitored for any significant changes in the context.

Recording and reporting

The BRM planning process and its outcomes must be documented. The BRM Plan and BRMS record most of the necessary information, but records of consultation and any lessons learned through the process should also be recorded. Local governments are also required to report at least every two years to OBRM on the maintenance of their BRM Plan and supporting data.

When the steps described above are implemented as intended, the BRM planning process will provide numerous benefits, including:

- Building a shared responsibility for bushfire risk management and enhancing community resilience to bushfire.
- Providing a way for communities to engage in deliberations about bushfire risk and approaches to reducing it.
- Fostering greater understanding and ownership of bushfire risk by members of the community.
- Providing local government with an evidence-based approach to inform the allocation of resources to BRM treatments.
- Developing a holistic strategy for mitigating bushfire risk across a local government area.

Table 1: Summary of the Bushfire Risk Management planning process

Step	Mandatory task	Optional task
Communication and consultation	Consult significant stakeholders regarding assets, risk assessment and treatment planning.	Engage the community regarding locally held values and treatment strategies. Communicate the BRM Plan to the community.
Establish the context	Describe the political, economic, social and natural environment in the local government area, and the effect these factors have on bushfire risk.	
Risk assessment	In BRMS, identify assets at risk from bushfire and calculate the risk rating of each.	In the BRM Plan, describe systemic risks and the likely effects of disruption to systems and networks that support community function.
Risk treatment	In the BRM Plan, describe the over-arching treatment strategy and local government-wide controls. In the BRMS, select treatments to be applied to unacceptable risks and develop an annual Treatment schedule.	Develop a 3-year Treatment schedule. In the BRM Plan, describe approaches to treating systemic risks.
Monitoring and review	Every two years review the BRM Plan, risk ratings and Treatment schedule.	Every two years review systemic risks and treatment strategies.
Recording and reporting	Report to OBRM every two years that a review of the BRM Plan has been completed. Contribute to OBRM's Annual Fuel Management Activities Report.	Report annually to council, Local Emergency Management Committee, Bush Fire Advisory Committee and the community on bushfire risk and treatments.

2.3 Principles of risk management

ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management is the international standard for risk management. It provides guidance for organisations to develop and continuously improve their risk management practice. The principles and framework provided in the risk management standard should be applied to the BRM planning process to ensure a robust approach to managing risk. Table 2 describes how the principles of risk management should be applied to BRM planning.

Table 2: The application of the principles of risk management to the Bushfire Risk Management planning process

Principle	Application
Integrated	Managing bushfire risk contributes to achieving the strategic outcomes of the local government. Bushfire risk management is considered in other strategic and operational planning processes and the development of relevant policies and programs.
Structured and comprehensive	Bushfire risk management is conducted systematically according to documented processes and procedures. This ensures consistency in the way that bushfire risks are assessed, evaluated, treated, monitored and reported. Assets, risks and treatments are identified on all tenure throughout the local government area, and all risks associated with bushfire are considered in the planning process.
Customised	Bushfire risk management reflects the local context. The Treatment strategy and individual treatments are tailored to the capability, capacity and values of stakeholders and the community.
Inclusive	Stakeholders and the community can access and contribute information about bushfire risk to inform decision making. BRM planning incorporates the information and perspectives of all stakeholders and reflects the values of the community.
Dynamic	The BRM Plan, including risk assessments and treatments, are reviewed and updated in response to changes in the context or risk profile.
Best available information	BRM planning is supported by the most accurate and current information available. Knowledge limitations are understood and acknowledged.
Human and cultural factors	Bushfire risk management, particularly risk assessments and treatments, consider the preferences and values of the community to ensure they are appropriate to the context. Aspects of human behaviour have been considered when assessing risk and planning treatments.
Continual improvement	Bushfire risk management practice includes opportunities and mechanisms for participants to identify and share lessons that enhance knowledge, understanding and performance throughout the local government area.

Chapter 3
Roles and responsibilities

While responsibility for managing bushfire risk is shared throughout the community, some stakeholders have specific roles that must be clearly identified in the BRM Plan. It is particularly important to communicate and consult with stakeholders that have specific responsibilities in the BRM planning process to ensure their information is integrated and their accountabilities clearly understood. The roles and responsibilities of the primary stakeholders in the BRM planning process are described below.

Local Government

State Hazard Plan Fire requires local governments with high or extreme bushfire risk to develop a BRM Plan that applies to the entire local government area. Other local governments also accept this responsibility if they choose to participate in the BRM program.

Local government is the custodian of the BRM Plan for their area and coordinate its development, implementation, and ongoing review. With support from DFES, local governments are responsible for writing the BRM Plan, undertaking a bushfire risk assessment for their local government area and developing a Treatment schedule to address unacceptable risks.

Although local government is responsible for these outputs, they should be based on information provided by any organisations that manage significant areas of land or important assets in the area. As local governments vary significantly in size and resourcing, the extent of engagement with stakeholders should be commensurate to their capacity and the stakeholder's willingness to engage.

Local governments are encouraged to negotiate a commitment from risk owners to treat risks identified in the BRM Plan. Where this is not feasible, the minimum requirement is for the local government to plan treatments to address bushfire risk on local government-managed land.

Local governments are encouraged to engage their Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) and Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) in the development and implementation of their BRM Plan. This engagement aims to ensure BRM planning is integrated with other local emergency management plans and activities.

Department of Fire and Emergency Services

DFES is responsible for delivering the BRM program statewide, and also participates in BRM planning with local governments.

DFES' OBRM maintains the Guidelines and will endorse a local government's BRM Plan if consistent with the Guidelines. Prior to this, OBRM reviews plans in draft and provides feedback to local governments to assist with subsequent endorsement. OBRM reports annually to the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner on the state of bushfire risk in Western Australia, including treatments applied by local governments in the BRM program.

DFES' Bushfire Mitigation Branch (BMB) manages the BRMS, providing system administration, user support, quality assurance and training. They also support local governments throughout the BRM planning process. Finally, BMB administer and coordinate the MAFGP on behalf of the State. Local governments with an endorsed BRM Plan are eligible to apply for the MAFGP.

DFES regions contribute to locally developed and implemented BRM Plans. This can include providing expert knowledge and advice in relation to bushfire risk, prevention and treatment; assisting with the identification of appropriate risk treatment strategies and engaging State and Commonwealth government agencies in the BRM planning process. DFES may also act in support of land managers that do not have the capacity to undertake treatment strategies on their own land.

DFES' Community Preparedness Directorate can provide guidance and advice on conducting an effective program of community engagement to build resilience to bushfire.

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) is a significant land manager and treatment owner in many local government areas. Local governments are encouraged to engage with local DBCA personnel when developing and implementing their BRM Plan. Local governments should seek advice from DBCA when identifying environmental assets that are vulnerable to fire and planning appropriate treatment strategies for their protection. DBCA's fuel management program may also be influential in determining the Treatment strategy and Treatment schedule.

Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage

The Department of Planning Lands and Heritage (DPLH) is responsible for managing bushfire risk on land owned by the Western Australian Planning Commission. They can also provide advice to support the identification, assessment and treatment of Aboriginal and other heritage sites that require inclusion in the BRM Plan.

Other government agencies and public utilities

Other State and Commonwealth government agencies and public utilities support BRM planning by providing information about their assets and risk treatment programs, or by planning and managing treatments on their own land to address risks identified in the BRM Plan.

Corporations and private land managers

Private corporations and major landowners may support local governments by providing information about their assets or current risk treatment programs. Where privately managed land presents a significant risk to assets, local governments should engage with the land manager to collaboratively identify appropriate treatment strategies to reduce bushfire risk.

Chapter 4
Communication and consultation

The entire community shares responsibility for managing the threat of bushfire, including government, industry, and private landholders. While local government leads the BRM planning process, an effective cross-tenure program requires meaningful engagement with a range of stakeholders. Communication and consultation aim to ensure bushfire risk management is informed by the best available information, considers stakeholders attitudes and perspectives and is supported by the community.

Communication aims to ensure stakeholders are consistently updated on the planning process and their specific responsibilities regarding risks and treatments. Appropriate communication will help to maintain support for the BRM program and ensure stakeholders understand their risks.

Consultation aims to elicit information from stakeholders to inform risk assessment and treatment planning. Effective consultation will ensure risk assessment is based upon sound information and considers the values and objectives of stakeholders. It will also aid the treatment of risk by ensuring the Treatment strategy is supported by the community and integrated with other land managers' programs.

A BRM Plan should reflect the knowledge, values and objectives of stakeholders in the area and stakeholders should be involved in decisions that affect them. This is achieved by ensuring that all

relevant stakeholders, including members of the community, can contribute to its development and there is a diversity of stakeholders included in decision making.

Community engagement is also beneficial to determining the level of risk awareness and acceptance in the community, and understanding local values that may influence risk assessment or treatment planning. Community networks are crucial to resilience so understanding how these may aid bushfire prevention or recovery is important to effective risk management.

Local governments must develop a Communication plan to help guide communication and consultation during the development, implementation and review of the BRM Plan. The Communication plan identifies the key stakeholders, their role in the BRM planning process and the nature of engagement required. This may include identifying stakeholders that should be:

- Informed of the process so they understand how it affects them and their responsibilities.
- Consulted as they have important information to contribute.
- Involved in decision making as they own key risks or treatments.
- Collaborated with to facilitate shared management of risk.

Appendix C in the *BRM Plan Template* supports the development of a Communications plan.

Local government should also maintain a log of any stakeholder engagement during the development and implementation of the BRM Plan. This is a record of the engagement activities undertaken and stakeholders engaged during the process. It provides evidence of the inclusiveness of decision-making.

4.1 Building community resilience through effective engagement

A disaster resilient community will experience less financial, social, psychological, and physical impact from bushfires and will recover faster after an event. Disaster resilience is a process that enables adaptation and capacity for the whole community. Commonly agreed elements of a disaster resilient community are that it:

- Can function well under stress and cope with the demands and challenges of a disaster.
- Can undergo successful adaption by surviving, learning, and changing.
- Has high levels of self-reliance and can draw on local resources and support.
- Has high levels of social capacity via human networks that are well established, inclusive, and supportive.

Developing disaster resilience within a local government area requires long term behaviour change, led by the community, to build understanding of risk and encourage action to address it (Figure 3). This is in line with the 'shared responsibility' model where local communities, service providers and government work together to minimise risk, by maximising preparation. To achieve this, local governments need to know what the local community thinks about its risks; to allow the development of specific messaging and activities to improve people's preparation. For example, if a person does not believe they are at risk, they are unlikely to engage in organised activities.
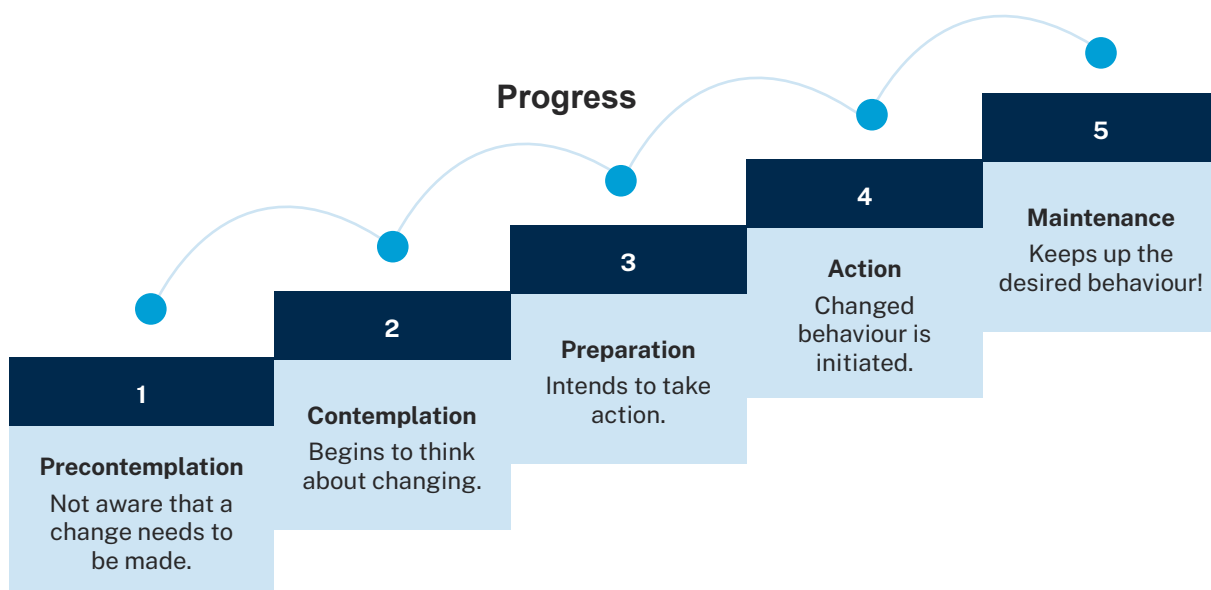
Progress

1
Precontemplation
Not aware that a change needs to be made.

2
Contemplation
Begins to think about changing.

3
Preparation
Intends to take action.

4
Action
Changed behaviour is initiated.

5
Maintenance
Keeps up the desired behaviour!

Figure 3: Risk perception and behaviour change model. Achieving 'Maintenance' level increases disaster resilience. Many community engagement plans must begin at the 'Precontemplation' level

One way to establish the community's understanding of, and attitudes to, bushfire risk is to establish a working group made up of key local stakeholders. The working group can engage with the community to determine what the community thinks and values, what they believe their risks are and the best approach to commence a behaviour change program. The key stakeholders to include on a working group may include:

- Local government personnel.
- Local DFES personnel.
- Local Recovery Support Officer (if there is one).
- Bushfire Risk Management Officers.
- Local volunteer emergency services personnel.
- Local community leaders and service providers.
- Local Emergency Management Committee members.

Once the working group understand the community, activities that could be introduced to build resilience could include:

- Using local newsletters, radio, television, websites, newspapers, social media, emails, and street signage to promote resilience messages.
- Organising local community events to promote resilience and build community connections.
- Developing local Bushfire Ready Groups.
- Engaging key local service providers (schools, aged care, disability facilities and services) and community groups (residents' associations, clubs, cultural groups, Men's Sheds, environment, and heritage groups) in events.
- Arranging for representatives of State and Commonwealth service providers to attend events.
- Identifying grants and funds that can be accessed for resilience measures.
- Developing resilience maintenance criteria for local government and other local key stakeholders.
- Holding events to celebrate achievements and public commitment to 'keeping the resilience' when milestones are met.

Information and support are available from the DFES Community Preparedness Directorate who have programs and resources that may assist, including:

- **The At-Risk Communities program** which offers important emergency preparedness information for health and community service agencies that support people that are at greater risk due to not being able to access, understand or act on preparedness and emergency information. The program offers online resources and guides for planning and preparing for an emergency.
- **Bushfire Ready** which is a community-led program that encourages local residents to learn about planning and preparing for bushfires by working together. The program is led by a Bushfire Ready Facilitator who is a local bushfire volunteer.
- **Children and Youth** programs that align with the school curriculum and are delivered by schools, operational personnel and volunteers. There are a range of programs and resources available.

You can contact the DFES Community Preparedness Directorate at Community.Preparedness@dfes.wa.gov.au.

Chapter 5
Establishing the context

Establishing the context is the first step in understanding bushfire risk in a local government area. It involves writing a context statement that describes the political, economic, social and natural environments that influence bushfire risk and its treatment. The context statement explores where and how bushfire hazard, exposure and vulnerability may arise and the community drivers for managing bushfire risk.

The context statement informs the identification of risks and planning of appropriate treatment strategies. It highlights features of the local government area that affect the risk profile and helps to ensure the BRM Plan is comprehensive and tailored to the specific challenges and priorities of the local government. The context statement can also help to identify systemic risks, as it describes networks that are important to community resilience and vulnerable to disruption by bushfire.

The context statement should be succinct and only describe things that are relevant to managing bushfire risk in the local government area. Chapter 5 of the Guidelines provides high level guidance on writing the context statement of the BRM Plan; detailed information and examples can be found in the BRM Plan Template.

It is recommended the headings in Chapter 5 be used in the BRM Plan to ensure a comprehensive context statement. Alternative formats are acceptable, however, provided they achieve the purposes described in Chapter 5.

Strategic and corporate framework

Purpose: To describe how BRM planning will be integrated to the local government.
This section of the context statement addresses how the BRM Plan aligns with the local government's corporate vision and how it contributes to the outcomes of the corporate strategy, business plan and other strategies or plans. It also specifies the roles and responsibilities of business units in the local government in developing and implementing the BRM Plan. Together, this information demonstrates how the BRM Plan is integrated to the local government's operations.

Land use and tenure

Purpose: To describe how land management influences risk ownership.
This section of the context statement summarises how land is used and who has responsibility for land management. In doing so, it identifies key stakeholders to involve in the development and implementation of the BRM Plan. These stakeholders will own risks identified in the planning process and have responsibility for implementing treatments.

Community demographics and values

Purpose: To describe the community's understanding of, and response to, bushfire risk.
This section of the context statement describes the characteristics of the local community that influence how local people understand and respond to bushfire risk. This may include information about demographics and population distribution that affects community capacity and resilience, such as the presence of vulnerable community groups. An important consideration is the extent to which the community is engaged in managing bushfire risk and how prepared people are for bushfire.

This section also explores community values –the principles and beliefs that drive people's behaviour and perceptions of what is important. Community values influence the importance the community places on assets, their willingness to accept bushfire risk and preferences for risk treatment strategies. It is important to understand these perspectives when conducting risk assessments and planning treatments.

Cultural heritage

Purpose: To identify Aboriginal stakeholders and areas of protected heritage.
This section of the context statement identifies Aboriginal Cultural Heritage sites and other protected heritage across the local government area. Aboriginal custodians or knowledge holders should be consulted before undertaking any works that could harm Aboriginal cultural heritage. Under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972,* Ministerial approval may also be required for such works. The context statement includes information about how to engage with relevant people in the area. It also describes any existing arrangements for engaging with local Aboriginal people when considering treatment activities in areas of cultural significance.

Economic activities and industry

Purpose: To describe how the local economy may be vulnerable to bushfire.
This section of the context statement describes significant industries and economic activities that are vulnerable to the impacts of bushfire. A bushfire affecting these will cause immediate economic impacts but may also trigger systemic risks through job losses or reduced economic activity in local communities. Some economic activities may also increase bushfire hazard or necessitate tailored treatments to address risk. Where relevant, these factors will also be explored in the context statement.

Topography and landscape features

Purpose: To describe geographic influences on bushfire risk.
This section of the context statement describes how the local topography shapes bushfire risk by influencing bushfire behaviour or constraining treatment options. Landscape features that may

be important to highlight include steep terrain, wetlands, riparian vegetation, peat soils, or areas susceptible to erosion or salinity. A map may also be used to communicate this information.

Climate and weather

Purpose: To describe climatic and weather factors that influence bushfire risk.

This section of the context statement summarises features of the area's climate and weather that influence bushfire occurrence and behaviour or constrain treatment options. This information assists with understanding potential fire behaviour and selecting, prioritising and scheduling treatments. Factors that may be relevant include annual temperature, rainfall and wind patterns, the usual timing of bushfire and planned burning seasons, and weather conditions that give rise to the most severe fire scenarios.

Vegetation and fuel

Purpose: To describe the vegetation and fuel that contributes to bushfire hazard.

This section of the context statement describes or maps the distribution of vegetation types in the area and how each contributes to bushfire hazard. The quantity, arrangement, and composition of fuel in different vegetation types will affect the rate of spread, intensity, and spotting potential of bushfires. As such, the distribution of vegetation across the local government area will strongly influence bushfire risk. Vegetation type also influences the selection of appropriate treatment options, so vegetation distribution should be considered when developing a Treatment strategy.

The list of vegetation classifications applicable to BRM planning can be found in the Handbook.

Important species and communities

Purpose: To identify significant environmental assets that may be affected by bushfire.

This section of the context statement lists or maps species and communities protected under State and Commonwealth legislation. It may also identify fire sensitive environmental assets that

are locally important or valued by the community. All these may require protection from bushfire and consideration when planning treatments that could impact them. Treatment activities must avoid impacts on protected species or communities unless appropriate approvals or permits have been obtained under relevant legalisation. Impacts may be avoided by varying the treatment type or timing of the treatment or excluding relevant habitat.

Historical bushfire occurrence

Purpose: To describe common sources of ignition and areas prone to bushfire.

This section of the context statement summarises fire occurrence data to identify common causes and locations of bushfires. Where data allows, this section should identify common causes of ignition and areas with frequent ignition. This information enables the development of targeted treatments to reduce the likelihood of fires, such as education campaigns, ignition source management and tactical fuel management.

This section may also discuss any historical fires of significance if lessons were learnt from them about how best to manage bushfire risk.

Current bushfire risk management controls

Purpose: To describe the current approach to managing bushfire risk.

This section of the context statement provides a strategic overview of the current approach to managing bushfire risk in the area. This may include information about the local government's policies for development approval in bushfire prone areas, use of legislative instruments to reduce risk, volunteer fire brigades, community engagement programs and other land managers' fuel management programs.

Chapter 6
Risk assessment

6.1 Identifying assets

In the BRM planning process, an asset is something that is valued by the community and is exposed and vulnerable to bushfire. There are four categories of assets: human settlement, economic, environmental, and cultural. Each asset category also has multiple sub-categories (Table 3). An asset may be valued for more than one reason, and so be relevant to multiple categories. In such cases, the risk assessment should be based on the asset category that will result in the highest risk rating. Refer to the Handbook for detailed descriptions of asset sub-categories and guidance on asset categorisation.

Table 3: Asset categories and sub-categories in the Bushfire Risk Management planning process

Human Settlement	Economic	Environmental	Cultural
Residential	Critical infrastructure	Protected	Aboriginal heritage
Temporary occupation	Agricultural	Priority	Recognised heritage
Special risk and critical facilities	Commercial and industrial	Locally important	Local heritage
	Tourist and recreation		
	Commercial forests and plantations		
	Drinking water catchments		

Only assets at risk from bushfire are included in BRM planning. An asset is at risk if it is exposed to bushfire hazard and vulnerable to the effects of a bushfire. An asset's exposure is defined by proximity to vegetation, and vulnerability by characteristics of the asset. The Handbook provides guidance on determining these factors, but if there is uncertainty, the asset manager should be consulted.

To streamline the risk assessment process, assets may be grouped rather than assessing each asset individually. Assets should be grouped if they belong to the same asset category, are near one another and have similar exposure and vulnerability to fire.

All assets to be included in the BRM planning process must be recorded in the BRMS using the procedures outlined in the Handbook and *BRMS User Guide*.

6.2 Identifying systemic risks

Systemic risk relates to the impacts of an event on the interconnected systems and networks that support communities. In the context of bushfire risk management, the concept recognises that a bushfire can trigger effects that cascade through the social fabric, economy and environment of a local government area. These impacts may extend far beyond the initial location of the fire, continue to be felt long after the incident and cause more severe harm than the immediate damage to assets. Systemic risks primarily relate to people, and the systems and networks that support their quality of life. Natural environmental systems may also be disrupted by bushfire with impacts on ecosystem services provided to people. A simplified example of risk cascading through a system is shown in Figure 4.
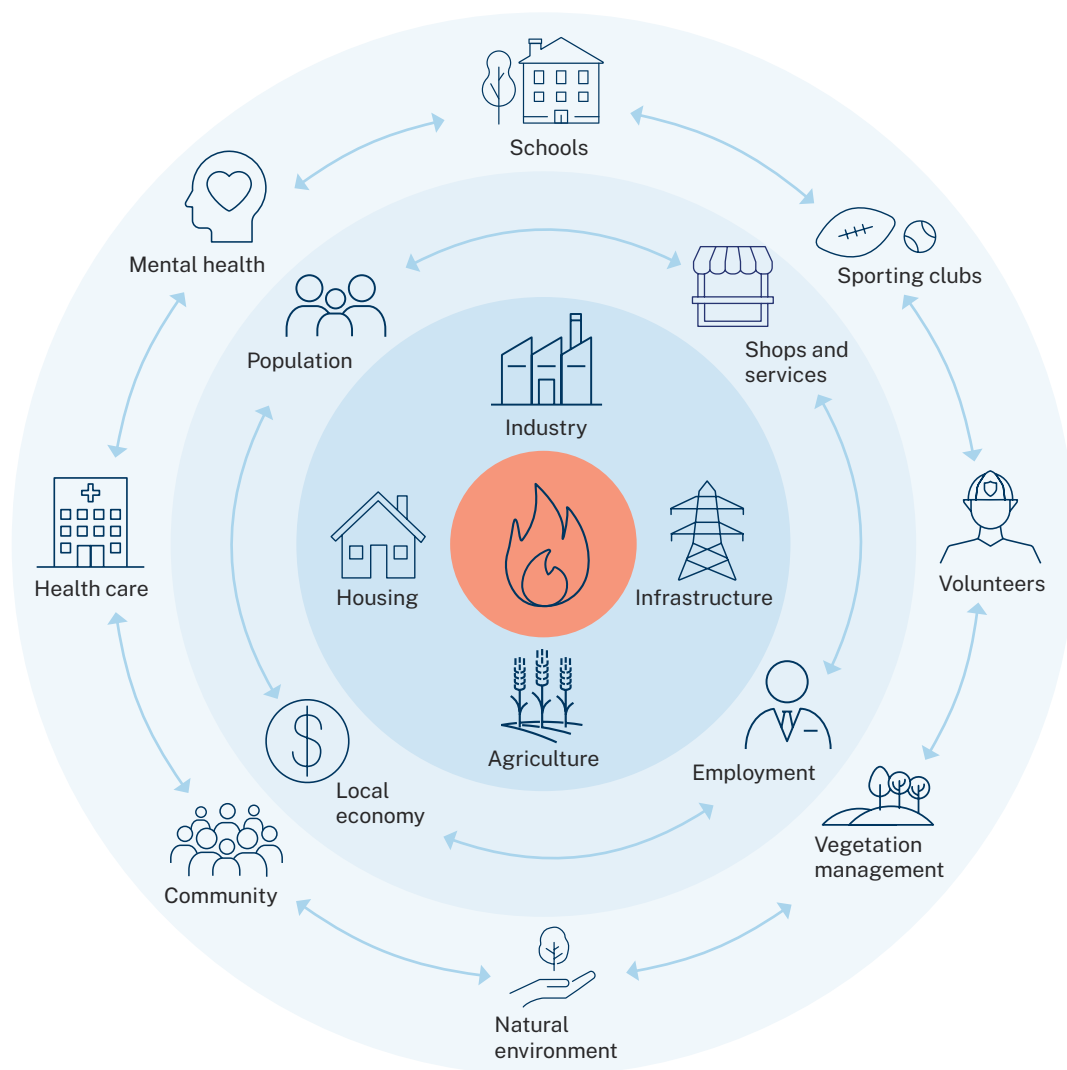
Figure 4: An example of systemic risk triggered by a bushfire. The things nearest the centre of the diagram are directly impacted by the fire with consequences that flow through to the next ring. These subsequent impacts, in turn, affect the things depicted in the outer ring. Effects also transmit back and forth between rings and around the rings because many of these elements are interconnected.

The BRMS is configured to assess and record risk to assets, so systemic risks are instead recorded in the BRM Plan. Appendix A has been provided in the BRM Plan Template to support the identification and assessment of systemic risks, and describe interventions to reduce systemic risk.

It is not mandatory to complete the systemic risk sections of a BRM Plan. Assessing systemic risk is complex and, even when included, it is not expected that BRM Plans will comprehensively address the topic. Local governments are encouraged, however, to consider potential impacts of a bushfire beyond the loss of physical infrastructure by recording in the systemic risk section of their BRM Plan any important networks and systems that support the community and how they might be affected by a bushfire.

6.3 Assessing risk to assets

Risk assessment allocates a risk rating to each asset, based on the consequences and likelihood of it being affected by bushfire. Risk assessment is conducted in the BRMS and detailed guidance is provided in the Handbook.

Consequence

Consequence is the outcome or impact of a bushfire on the asset. The method to calculate the consequence rating is different for each asset category because different information is needed to understand potential impacts on different types of assets (Table 4). For human settlement, economic and cultural assets, the consequence rating is a function of bushfire hazard (defined by vegetation class, separation distance and slope) and the vulnerability of the asset to fire. The consequences of a bushfire affecting environmental assets is determined by the rarity of the species or community and its response to fire. There are four consequence ratings: Minor, Moderate, Major and Catastrophic. A detailed methodology for calculating consequence is provided in the Handbook.

Table 4: Factors used to determine the consequence rating

Asset category	Vulnerability factors	Hazard factors
Human settlement	Community education Property preparedness Access Capability of occupants Water supply Construction standard	Vegetation category Slope
Economic	Susceptibility of asset Level of impact	Separation distance
Cultural	Susceptibility of asset	
	Vulnerability factors	**Potential impact factors**
Environmental	Conservation status Geographic extent	Fire regime category

Likelihood

Likelihood is how probable the calculated consequence is to occur, based on the potential for a bushfire to affect the asset. The likelihood rating is calculated in the same way for each asset category and is a function of the age of the nearest fuel and the distance separating the fuel from the asset (Table 5). There are four likelihood ratings: Unlikely, Possible, Likely and Almost Certain.

Fuel Age	Separation Distance		
	>100 m-400 m	>30 m-100 m	0-30 m
0-3 years	Unlikely	Unlikely	Possible
>3-6 years	Unlikely	Possible	Likely
>6 years	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain

The BRMS calculates the risk rating, based on the consequence and likelihood inputs entered for an asset. Table 6 shows how likelihood and consequence combine to calculate overall risk rating. There are five risk ratings: Low, Medium, High, Very High and Extreme.

Table 6: Matrix used to determine the risk rating

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

6.4 Assessing systemic risks

The assessment of systemic risks in the BRM planning process is more qualitative and subjective than the method used to assess risks to assets. The most important aspect of the systemic risk assessment process is the thinking that goes into describing the networks and systems that support community resilience and how they might be disrupted by bushfires. This is best achieved by workshopping or brainstorming ideas with people who are knowledgeable about local communities. The systemic risk assessment is recorded in the table provided in the BRM Plan Template, not in the BRMS.

If systemic risks have been identified in the risk identification step, they should be assessed by considering three key questions, namely, if the risk were to occur:

- How severely will community resilience be degraded?
- How widely will the effects be felt?
- For how long will the effects continue?

Tables 7 to 9 describe categories of severity, extent and duration of impact. Tables 10 and 11 show how extent and duration of impact can be combined to calculate a risk rating for medium and low impact events. All high impact events are rated as Extreme risk. Risk descriptions and ratings should be recorded in the template provided at Appendix A in the BRM Plan Template.

Table 7: Categories of impact severity for systemic risk assessment

Severity of impact	Description
Low	Some aspects of community function are reduced, resilience to bushfire and ability to recover are slightly reduced.
Medium	Important aspects of community function are lost, resilience to bushfire and ability to recover are significantly reduced.
High	Community becomes non-functional or ceases to exist.

Table 8: Categories of impact extent for systemic risk assessment

Extent of impact	
Local	Impacts felt within a community.
Widespread	Impacts felt in multiple places in the local government area.
Universal	Impacts felt throughout the local government area and beyond.

Table 9: Categories of impact duration for systemic risk assessment

Duration of impact	
Weeks	Impacts will continue for weeks.
Years	Impacts will continue for up to several years.
Ongoing	Impacts permanent or without a definable end.

Table 10: Risk rating for Low impact events

	Duration		
Extent	Weeks	Years	Ongoing
Universal	Low	Medium	High
Widespread	Low	Low	Medium
Local	Low	Low	Low

Table 11: Risk rating for medium impact events

	Duration		
Extent	Weeks	Years	Ongoing
Universal	High	Very High	Extreme
Widespread	Medium	High	Very High
Local	Low	Low	Medium

All high impact events are rated as Extreme risk.

Chapter 7
Risk evaluation

Risk evaluation involves comparing the calculated risk ratings to the risk acceptance criteria to determine whether a risk treatment is required and, if so, how that treatment should be prioritised. This is intended to help decision-makers decide how best to allocate funds and resources to mitigate the most significant risks.

The BRM Plan should state the level of risk that is acceptable to the local government. Any risks assessed as exceeding the acceptable level should be considered for treatment to reduce the level of risk. The level of acceptable risk should be set with consideration of the capacity and capability of stakeholders to treat risks.

The acceptable risk level is usually 'Medium' meaning all High, Very High and Extreme rated risks should have treatments assigned. However, the level of acceptable risk can be different for each asset category; the BRM Plan Template includes a table to list the level of acceptable risk for each asset category. The Treatment schedule may also include treatments for lower rated risks where this is desired and achievable.

Although the risk acceptance criteria will determine whether a treatment is recommended to manage a risk, the risk owner will ultimately decide whether to implement a treatment and what sort of treatment to apply. This decision will include consideration of the availability of resources, capacity to undertake treatments, cost, practicality of implementation, community values, and risks associated with the treatment. The latter will include potential impacts on the natural environment and cultural heritage. In some instances, a considered decision may be taken not to treat an unacceptable risk or to rely on non-asset-specific controls.

Chapter 8
Risk treatment

The purpose of risk treatment is to reduce the potential impact of bushfire on the community, economy and environment. This is achieved by implementing treatments that modify the characteristics of the community or the environment. The risk treatment step of the BRM planning process involves setting out a strategy to achieve the objectives for managing bushfire risk in the area and developing a schedule of treatment activities to progress toward achieving those objectives.

8.1 Treatment strategy

Throughout the development of the context statement and identification and assessment of risks, numerous factors will emerge that influence where and how treatments should be undertaken. These factors should be described in the Treatment strategy to build a picture of the overall approach that will be taken to managing bushfire risk. This overall approach may be influenced by factors such as:

- The local government's strategic objectives and objectives for bushfire risk management.
- Local communities' values and desired outcomes, including Traditional Owners.
- Land use patterns and sensitive industries.
- Patterns of topography, vegetation and weather.
- Existing risk controls and land management programs.
- Environmental or other constraints on treatment options.

These various factors may dictate what sort of treatments are suited to different parts of the local government area or in different environmental settings. They may also help to determine the order that treatments should be implemented if resources don't permit treatment of all high priority risks or treatments need to be sequenced for operational reasons. The Treatment strategy sets out these factors to help guide the development of subsequent annual treatment schedules in a way that will ensure works contribute to strategic outcomes.

The Treatment strategy may also describe how treatments other than physical mitigation measures may be integrated to address bushfire risk. This includes measures proposed to reduce the transmission of systemic risk or reduce the severity of the impacts it may cause.

8.2 Treatment priority

Treatment priority provides a guide to the order in which risks should be treated. It is assigned automatically by the BRMS once a risk assessment is completed for an asset as per the matrix shown in Table 12. Priority is based on the consequences and likelihood ratings used in the risk assessment so is directly related to the risk level.

Table 12: Treatment priority matrix

Consequence / Likelihood	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Almost Certain	3D (High)	2C (Very High)	1C (Extreme)	1A (Extreme)
Likely	4C (Medium)	3A (High)	2A (Very High)	1B (Extreme)
Possible	5A (Low)	4A (Medium)	3B (High)	2B (Very High)
Unlikely	5C (Low)	5B (Low)	4B (Medium)	3C (High)

8.3 Asset-specific treatments

Asset-specific treatments are implemented to protect an individual asset or group of assets, assessed in the BRM planning process as having an unacceptable level of risk from bushfire. Asset-specific treatments are recorded in the BRMS. There are five treatment tactics that may be applied to reduce risk to a specific asset:

- **Fuel management** reduces the availability of fuel to be burnt in a bushfire by removing some of the fuel load or changing how fuel is arranged so it is less likely to burn. This may be achieved by manual, mechanical or chemical fuel management, planned burning or grazing.
- **Ignition management** aims to reduce potential sources of ignition in the landscape by maintaining or improving infrastructure, restricting access to fire prone areas or regulating the use of fire.
- **Preparedness** activities enhance the community's capacity to respond to a bushfire, for example by improving vehicle access, water supply or availability of firefighting appliances.
- **Planning** treatments focus on developing plans to improve the ability of firefighters and the community to prepare for, respond to and recover from bushfire.
- **Community engagement** increases the resilience of the community by building relationships, raising awareness of bushfire risk and changing the behaviour of people exposed to bushfire risk.

8.4 Treatment schedule

A BRM Plan must include a Treatment schedule listing treatments planned to manage priority risks. To receive and maintain OBRM endorsement the schedule must identify works to be conducted for at least a 12-month period. Where possible, however, local governments are encouraged to develop a three-year indicative Treatment schedule. This will facilitate more strategic outcomes via the sequencing of treatment activities and ensure adequate time is available to undertake consultation and obtain permits and permissions for works.

The Treatment schedule is a living document that should be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect the current state of bushfire risk. It should also be a realistic representation of local capacity and consider any objectives or constraints identified in the Treatment strategy.

8.5 Local government-wide controls

Some controls for bushfire risk are applied across the entire local government area, rather than to specific assets. Examples include the use of fire management notices to ensure access and fuels are managed on private properties, planning policies to restrict development in bushfire-prone areas, restricting planned burning in periods of elevated fire danger, maintaining a capacity to respond to bushfires and broadscale community education programs.

These controls contribute significantly to risk management but can't be recorded in the BRMS as they do not link to a specific location. A summary of the identified controls is instead included the *BRM Plan Template* using the Local government-wide controls table in Appendix B.

8.6 Systemic risk treatments

Systemic risks are usually treated by enhancing the resilience of the networks that support community function so they are better able to cope with disruption and resist the transmission of impacts. This can be achieved by ensuring there is redundancy in key functions or that mechanisms are in place to restore key functions rapidly after a disturbance. In some cases, impacts to specific assets may trigger systemic risks, but treatments for systemic risks will often focus on planning and community engagement activities.

The human-centric nature of systemic risks means that community empowerment and resilience approaches are often the most effective treatments. Treating systemic risks is complex, but local governments opting to apply this part of the BRM planning process are encouraged to consider how community resilience can be enhanced to help manage systemic impacts.

Treatments for systemic risks should be recorded in Appendix A of the BRM Plan Template.

8.7 Risk ownership

A risk owner is responsible for managing a specific risk. In the context of the BRM program, this may come about because they have responsibility assigned in the State Emergency Management Framework, they own an asset that is vulnerable to fire or they manage land that contains bushfire fuel. It is important that responsibilities and expectations are communicated to risk owners during the BRM planning process to ensure clear accountability for managing risks, promote proactive management, and facilitate effective coordination among stakeholders.

Landowners and occupiers are responsible for implementing treatments on their own land. This includes any costs associated with the treatment and obtaining the relevant approvals, permits or licences to undertake an activity. Where agreed, another agency may manage a treatment on behalf of a landowner. However, the onus remains on the landowner to ensure treatments identified in the Treatment schedule are completed.

Ownership of systemic risk can be difficult to determine. The nature of these risks mean they affect multiple stakeholders in different ways. There may also be multiple points at which controls can be implemented to mitigate the risk. Workshopping the cascading effects of a systemic risk, who they will affect and who can intervene to arrest the spread of impacts can help to identify suitable risk or treatment owners for systemic risk. The Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience's *Systemic Disaster Risk Handbook* provides further advice about understanding governance of systemic risks.

Chapter 9
Endorsement and approval

A BRM Plan is in effect once it is endorsed by OBRM. It is also recommended that the endorsed plan be approved by the local government's elected council. The endorsement and approval process for a BRM Plan is summarised in Figure 5. The requirements for maintaining OBRM endorsement are provided in Section 10.2 Monitoring and review.

The first step in the endorsement and approval process is for the local government to submit their BRM Plan to OBRM in draft. OBRM reviews the BRM Plan and Bushfire Mitigation Branch reviews data entered to BRMS. OBRM then provides feedback to the local government on the extent to which these meet the standards described in the Guidelines and Handbook. The purpose of the review step is to ensure that the plan will gain endorsement once formally submitted. OBRM will continue to work with the plan's author until the requirements of a BRM Plan are met.

Once OBRM advises the BRM Plan meets the required standard, the local government may submit it to OBRM for endorsement. The plan should be provided by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the local government (or their delegate) to the Director OBRM, with a cover letter requesting it

be endorsed. At this stage, the data in the BRMS must be locked, to create a baseline for future reporting. Prior to endorsing the plan, OBRM will confirm that:

- The risk assessment data have been locked in the BRMS.
- All sections of the BRM Plan template have been completed as required.
- The context statement provides a meaningful description of the area's bushfire context.
- The Communication plan is complete and appropriate.
- Assets at risk of bushfire have been identified and assessed in the BRMS.
- The Treatment strategy is complete.
- Local government-wide controls are recorded and appropriate.
- A minimum 12-month Treatment schedule is completed.
- There is evidence of consultation with DBCA about management of significant environmental assets (if relevant).
- Contact details of the person responsible for the submission of the plan have been provided.

If all criteria are met, the Director OBRM will write to the local government CEO or delegate advising the plan has been endorsed by OBRM. The BRM Plan should then be approved by the local government's elected council. Council approval confirms the local government supports the plan's implementation and commits to working with risk owners to manage bushfire risk. Approval does not signify acceptance of responsibility for risk treatments or outcomes on land that is not managed by the local government.

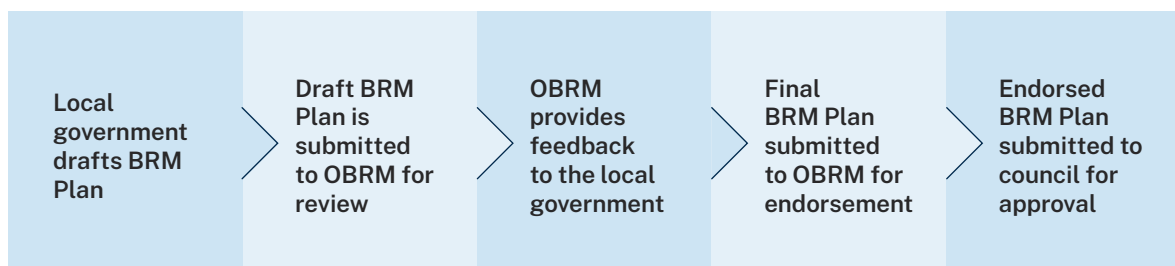| Local government drafts BRM Plan | Draft BRM Plan is submitted to OBRM for review | OBRM provides feedback to the local government | Final BRM Plan submitted to OBRM for endorsement | Endorsed BRM Plan submitted to council for approval |

Figure 5: Bushfire Risk Management Plan endorsement process

Chapter 10
Monitoring, review and reporting

10.1 Publishing the Bushfire Risk Management Plan

Local governments are encouraged to publish their BRM Plan on their website and promote it to the community. Engaging the community in BRM planning can help raise awareness of bushfire risk and acceptance of treatments planned by the local government and other land managers. It can also encourage community members to accept responsibility for implementing treatments on their own land.

10.2 Monitoring and review

Local governments should monitor the implementation of their BRM Plan, to detect any significant changes in the context or risk profile. An important aspect of this is monitoring the progress of the Treatment schedule as this will significantly affect risk ratings and future priorities.

Periodic review of the BRM Plan and BRMS data is required to maintain OBRM endorsement and remain eligible for the MAFGP. Review ensures the information in the BRM Plan and the BRMS continues to accurately reflect the local context, assets at risk, level of risk and treatment priorities.

To maintain OBRM endorsement, local governments are required to review and update their BRM Plans at least every two years to ensure:

- Requirements of the current Guidelines and Handbook are met.
- The objectives of the BRM Plan are relevant.
- The context statement accurately reflects the local bushfire context.
- All significant assets at risk from bushfire are identified.
- Risk assessments are based on current information.
- The Treatment strategy describes the contemporary drivers of, and approach to, risk treatment.
- The Treatment schedule identifies priority treatments for at least the next 12 months.

During the review process local governments are encouraged to consider the effectiveness of treatments from the previous year. These findings can be used to improve future iterations of BRM planning or treatment implementation.

The CEO or delegate must submit to OBRM a confirmation of completion of the review by May 30 every two years using the template provided by OBRM. If not received by that date, OBRM will initiate a mediation process to resolve the issue. If mediation is unsuccessful within 6 months, OBRM may revoke its endorsement of the BRM Plan until outstanding issues are resolved.

10.3 Recording and reporting

Local governments are encouraged to report regularly to their elected council, LEMC and BFAC on progress made towards implementation of the BRM Plan and Treatment schedule. Local governments will also be asked to contribute information relating to their bushfire risk treatment activities to the annual OBRM *Fuel Management Activity Report*.

10.4 OBRM assurance

OBRM will monitor local government conformance with the BRM Plan review requirements. OBRM's monitoring will include conducting assurance reviews of the BRM Plans, BRMS data, treatment schedules, treatment planning and implementation and supporting planning processes of selected local governments.

An assurance review will consider these components of the BRM planning process in the context of the principles of *ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management* (Table 2) and industry best practice. Where opportunities for improvement are identified, OBRM will provide guidance and advice to the local government for consideration. If an assurance review identifies that a local government's approach to bushfire risk management is no longer compliant with the Guidelines, Handbook or other required standards, OBRM will work with the local government to make the required changes. If a local government does not address the identified issues in accordance with the agreed process, OBRM endorsement of a BRM Plan may be suspended.

Assurance review is designed to be a collaborative, consultative process that supports continuous improvement of bushfire risk management across the local government sector, as well as to the Guidelines, Handbook and BRM Program. More information can be found in the *Bushfire Risk Management Program Assurance Review Protocol*.

10.5 Dispute resolution

Any dispute in relation to BRM Plan development, approval, or implementation that cannot be resolved between the involved parties, will be referred to OBRM for further advice. OBRM will work with relevant parties to design an appropriate mediation process.

Glossary

Asset	Something that is valued by the community and exposed to bushfire.
Asset category	The type of asset – Human Settlement, Economic, Environmental or Cultural.
Asset risk register	A report produced by the BRMS that details the consequence, likelihood, risk rating and treatment priority for each asset identified in the BRM Plan.
Bushfire	Unplanned vegetation fire. A generic term which includes grass fires, forest fires and scrub fires both with and without a suppression objective.
Bushfire hazard	The hazard posed by flammable vegetation, based on the vegetation type and age and topography.
Bushfire risk	The potential for a bushfire to cause harm to assets, defined by the bushfire's consequences and likelihood.
Bushfire Risk Management	A systematic process to coordinate, direct and control activities relating to bushfire risk; with the aim of limiting the adverse effects of bushfire on the community.
Community values	The principles and beliefs that drive people's behaviour and perceptions of what is important.
Consequence	The harm caused by a bushfire.
Likelihood	The potential of a bushfire igniting, spreading and impacting on an asset.
Mitigation Activity Fund Grant Program	State government grant program that funds treatments on Local Government managed Crown land to reduce the exposure of people and assets to bushfire hazard.
Risk acceptance	The informed decision to accept a risk, based on the knowledge gained during the risk assessment process.
Risk assessment	The systematic process of identifying, analysing and evaluating risk.
Risk evaluation	The process of comparing the outcomes of risk analysis to the risk criteria in order to determine whether a risk is acceptable.
Risk identification	The process of recognising, identifying and describing risks.

Risk register	A component within the BRMS used to record, review and monitor risk assessments and treatments associated with assets identified in the BRM planning process.
Risk to asset	The tangible impacts of fire on people, property, infrastructure and the environment.
Risk treatment	A process to select and implement appropriate measures to modify risk.
Systemic risk	The impacts of bushfire on the interconnected systems and networks that support community function. It is a product of the disruption caused by fire to the community and its effects may be felt far from the direct impacts of the fire in both time and space.
Traditional Owner	Aboriginal person or group recognised as having rights and interests in an area of land due to historical cultural connection.
Treatment schedule	A report produced within the BRMS that details the treatment priority of each asset identified in the BRM Plan and the treatments scheduled.
Treatment strategy	The overall approach that will be taken to managing bushfire risk, in consideration of the local government context and objectives.
Vulnerability	The susceptibility of an asset to the impacts of bushfire.