

# VOLUNTEER BUSHFIRE FIGHTER TOOLKIT

A resource to support local governments in managing their volunteer bushfire fighter brigades

## WELCOME

Local governments in Western Australia manage bushfire brigades made up of volunteers from the local community. The role of these volunteers is valued and important to local communities, but by the nature of the work, can pose hazards to volunteers, that if not managed properly can lead to harm.

For local governments, the management of volunteer bushfire fighters can be challenging given the high risk nature of the role; characteristics of volunteers; work, health and safety (WHS) obligations; and availability of resources.

To support our members LGIS has developed this toolkit which provides a range of resources for local government leaders to assist them in effectively managing valued volunteers and meeting WHS obligations.

The Toolkit is broken into sections, each dedicated to a different area of VBF management:

#### Section 1

The two handbooks in this section provide a comprehensive overview of duties and responsibilities for both managers and volunteers.

Resource	Used for
Manager's handbook: Understanding WHS obligation for bushfire volunteers: a practical guide to assist local government leaders meet their obligations	Everyone responsible for the management of VBF's will find the manager's handbook a practical guide to their duties; it also includes templates and forms to support you in developing procedures
Volunteer's handbook: Local government bushfire volunteers, returning home safe and well	This handbook should be provided to all local government volunteer bushfire fighters. It emphasises the importance of training, understanding the risks, and personal responsibility.

#### Section 2

This section features a number of forms and templates to assist local governments in developing procedures and documenting their on-boarding processes for volunteer bushfire fighters.

Resource	Used for
Roles and	Samples of typical roles and responsibilities within a bushfire brigade.
responsibilities:	It's important that everyone understands their duties within a
bushfire brigade	volunteer role.

Form 1: Applicant medical declaration	It's important to be aware of any medical issues a volunteer may have so that you can provide reasonable support and accommodations to meet WHS obligations.
Form 2: Bushfire brigade, membership application	Document all important personal, next of kin, and emergency contact details for your brigade members.
Form 3: National police clearance	Make sure that volunteers are of good character with a national police clearance.
Form 4: DFES registration	Register your new volunteer with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services

#### Section 3

Managing your volunteer bushfire brigades is a continuous process. The job dictionary and manual task risk assessments are valuable tools to provide all stakeholders - managers, brigade and individuals - with an understanding of the specific jobs and tasks which are inherent requirements of a job role.

These resources have been developed by the LGIS Injury Prevention team to equip managers throughout a volunteer's lifecycle including:

- during the pre-employment process when looking to determine the appropriateness of a candidate against the inherent requirements of the role,
- tailoring injury prevention programs to the physical and psychological requirements and demands of the role, and
- identifying suitable duties in establishing a return to work program for injured workers.

Resource	Used for
<b>Job dictionary:</b> Volunteer bushfire fighter	Details the physical and psychological demands of the role. Use the job dictionary to make sure an individual can complete required tasks and develop reasonable accommodations where required.
Manual task risk assessments: Volunteer bushfire fighter	Details common brigade tasks and the risks associated with them. Use this document to make sure tasks are understood and carried out correctly. Identify individual capabilities and make reasonable accommodations where required.

#### Section 4

This section details the protections provided by LGIS to local government volunteer bushfire fighters.



# Section 1



# Understanding WHS Obligations for Bushfire Volunteers

A practical guide to assist local government leaders meet their obligations

## CONTENTS

UNDERSTANDING WHS OBLIGATIONS FOR BUSHFIRE VOLUNTEERS	1
INTRODUCTION	
1 Key Work Health and safety Terms	4
1.1 What is Work Health and Safety	4
1.2 Duties under WHS	5
1.3 Activities covered by WHS	7
1.4 What is a duty of care	7
1.5 What is reasonable instruction	8
1.6 What is reasonably practicable	
2 CORE VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS	9
2.1 A safe and healthy workplace	9
2.2 Consultation arrangements	
2.3 Communication arrangements	
2.4 Training and instruction arrangements	
2.5 Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	
2.6 Private equipment	
2.7 Facility considerations	15
3 Incident Response Considerations	
3.1 A notifiable incident	
3.2 Injury management	
3.3 Public Liability	
3.4 Supervision	
3.5 Bullying, harassment, discrimination and equal opportunity	
3.6 Issue resolution	
3.7 Prosecution	
3.8 Support	
4 Resources	
4.1 An organisational work health and safety system checklist	21
4.2 A risk assessment	23
4.3 A facility inspection checklist	24

## INTRODUCTION

With the introduction of the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 2020* (WHS Act), there are changes to the workplace health and safety laws in Western Australia.

This guide has been developed to support local governments provide and maintain a workplace free from physical and psychological hazards. This guide provides advice about operational hazards and the processes local governments can adopt in order to comply with the WHS Act with respect to the volunteer bushfire brigades (BFB) they manage and who work under their control.

Members should remember that if they already have good risk management and safety practices in place the legislative changes in the WHS Act will have minimal impact on day to day operations. The WHS Act has further formalised the safety responsibilities of employer's which were in some respects implied but not explicitly stated in the previous occupational health and safety legislation.



# 1 KEY WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY TERMS

This section provides an overview of the key WHS terms as they apply to volunteer BFBs.

#### 1.1 What is Work Health and Safety

The WHS Act applies to all workplaces (both private and government operations) within the natural jurisdiction of Western Australia. The WHS Act provides a framework to protect the health, safety and welfare of both those persons undertaking work and those persons who might be affected by that work.

#### 1.1.1 PCBU – Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking

The concept of a **Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU)** replaces the term 'employer' in the WHS Act. Workers are not considered **PCBU**'s.

- A **PCBU** has a duty of care to keep workers and others safe "as far as reasonably practicable".
- Local governments are defined as a **PCBU**.

#### 1.1.2 Key features relating to volunteering

- The concept of the 'person conducting a business or undertaking' (PCBU) is intended to capture a broad range of contemporary workplace relationships including volunteering activities.
- A primary duty of care requires PCBUs to, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure the health and safety of workers and others who may be affected by the carrying out of work.
- Duties of care apply to persons who influence the way work is carried out, as well as the integrity of products used for work, including providers of WHS services.
- It is a requirement that 'officers' exercise 'due diligence' to ensure compliance with the WHS Act.
- Reporting requirements apply for 'notifiable incidents' such as the serious illness, injury or death of persons and dangerous incidents arising out of the conduct of a business or undertaking
- Consultation on WHS matters with workers is a requirement under the WHS Act
- Procedures for the resolution of WHS issues.

#### 1.2 Duties under WHS

The **PCBU** (*local government*) has a primary duty of care to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of persons is not put at risk from work conducted as part of the business or undertaking.

#### 1.2.1 Volunteer organisation or association

An organisation will have WHS duties as a person conducting a business or undertaking (**PCBU**) under the WHS Act where one or more persons are employed to carry out work for the organisation, including paid and unpaid positions. A person may be employed by either:

- The organisation itself
- The organisation's members, whether alone or jointly with any other members.

Example:

Bushfire brigades engaged under the relevant local government

A volunteer association is a group of volunteers working together for one or more community purposes and none of the volunteers, either separately or jointly, or the association itself employ a person to carry out any work for the association.

The WHS Act does not apply if the organisation is a 'volunteer association' (whether incorporated or unincorporated).

Example:

A social sporting group formed and engaged by individual volunteers

#### 1.2.2 Volunteers

Under the WHS Act <u>a volunteer is a person who works for an organisation</u> without payment or financial reward (but who may receive out of pocket expenses). The law also recognises volunteers as workers. Meaning the **PCBU** must provide the same protections to its volunteers as it does to its paid workers.

#### 1.2.3 Spontaneous volunteers

A spontaneous volunteer is usually not associated with an existing bushfire brigade, but more likely to be a member of the community offering assistance in response to an event. These individuals may not have been screened or trained in accordance with procedures.

The management of spontaneous volunteers is a joint responsibility between all stakeholders. It should also be recognised that the majority of public offers of assistance come during the recovery phase of an emergency, which the local government manages on behalf of its community, and which is a positive step in the recovery process.

The Bush Fires Act (1954) states that the Chief Bushfire Control Officer can:

"Employ a person or use the voluntary services of a person to assist him, subject to his directions in the exercise of any of the foregoing powers."

In taking that action, responsibility should be assessed in regards to the suitability of each individual for the task to be performed. All stakeholders – the organisations, government agencies and authorities – have a mutual duty of care.

The following principles should be **APPLIED BY ALL** organisations, authorities, government agencies, and local governments when utilising spontaneous volunteers.

- Spontaneous volunteers should be added to the volunteer register and sign in and out after each shift.
- Spontaneous volunteers should only be assigned generalist tasks.
- Spontaneous volunteers should <u>NOT</u> be deployed to high risk activities.
- Spontaneous volunteer activities are supervised.
- Spontaneous volunteers are provided appropriate information to ensure activities are carried out safely.
- Provide adequate and appropriate personal protective equipment and personal protective clothing.

Your **local emergency management arrangements** will assist in identifying the various volunteering organisations that as a local government you may engage with.

#### 1.2.4 Officer

Officers are those individuals within an organisation who make (or participate in) decisions that affect the whole or a substantial part of the organisation, such as the Chief Executive Officer.

It's important to note that whether a person is a paid employee or a volunteer is inconsequential for the purpose of determining if they are an officer under the WHS Act.

An officer is someone who influences the organisation as a whole, rather than a particular function performed by the individual. This will determine if you have organisation-wide, strategic responsibility, as opposed to operational responsibility.

Factors include whether the role has the ability to recruit, commit funds, and determine the reporting structure, involvement in, or developed policy, process or procedures relevant to the operations undertaken.

#### 1.3 Activities covered by WHS

Only work activities are covered by the WHS Act. Activities that are purely domestic, social, recreational or private in nature are not included. Whether an activity is considered work may depend on specific circumstances. The following criteria may help determine if an activity is work under the WHS Act:

- The activity involves physical or mental effort or the application of particular skills for the benefit of someone else or for themselves (if self-employed), whether or not for profit or payment
- Activities where someone would ordinarily be paid may be considered work
- Activities that are part of an ongoing process or project may be work if some of the activities are paid
- An activity may be more likely to be work if someone is managed or controlled by another person when they undertake that activity
- Formal, structured or complex arrangements may be considered to be work more than ad hoc or unorganised activities.

The activity may be work even though one or more of the criteria are absent.

Examples of activities that may be considered work include:

- Maintenance of the things needed to enable an organisation to carry out its work. For example, maintenance work on a shed where a volunteer group meets.
- Activities that people are ordinarily paid to do but are carried out for the organisation by a volunteer. For example, driving plant and equipment to service centres.
- Activities that the organisation has a great degree of direction or influence over.
- Activities carried out in accordance with formal or structured arrangements.

#### 1.4 What is a duty of care

One principle that has evolved from common law is the concept of duty of care, which imposes a duty to ensure we do not cause a reasonably foreseeable risk of harm to others for whom we owe a duty. Breach of duty of care can result in a finding of liability (e.g. negligence) which can have significant financial and reputational consequences for local governments.

Under the WHS Act, the primary duty of care relating to S.19 states a PCBU must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable –

- (1) the health and safety of
  - (a) workers engaged, or caused to be engaged, by the person; and
  - (b) workers whose activities in carrying out work are influenced or directed by the person

while the workers are at work in the business or undertaking.

(2) that other persons are not put at risk from work carried out as part of the conduct of the business or undertaking

- (3) A person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure:
  - (a) The provision and maintenance of a work environment without risks to health and safety
  - (b) The provision and maintenance of safe plant and structures
  - (c) The provision and maintenance of safe systems of work
  - (d) The safe use, handling and storage of plant, structures and substances
  - (e) Adequate facilities for the welfare of workers in carrying out work for the business or undertaking, including ensuring access to those facilities
  - (f) Any information, training, instruction or supervision that is necessary to protect all persons from risks to their health and safety arising from work carried out
  - (g) That the health of workers and the conditions at the workplace are monitored for the purpose of preventing illness or injury of workers arising from the conduct of the business or undertaking

To comply a person must exercise their duty of care over others where reasonably able to do so.

#### 1.5 What is reasonable instruction

While at work, a worker must comply, so far as reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given and cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the PCBU relating to the health or safety at the workplace that has been notified to workers.

#### 1.6 What is reasonably practicable

As per the WHS Act, ensuring health and safety means doing what is, or was reasonably able to be done at a particular time, taking into account all relevant matters, including:

- (a) the likelihood of the hazard or the risk concerned occurring
- (b) the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk
- (c) what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about
  - i. the hazard or the risk
  - ii. ways of eliminating or minimising the risk
  - iii. the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk
- (d) the cost associated, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

# 2 CORE VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

A **volunteer organisation** has duties as a PCBU under the WHS Act and must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of all of its workers, including volunteers. This means that the organisation must provide the same protections to its volunteers as it does to its paid workers. The protection covers the physical safety and mental health of all workers, including volunteers.

#### 2.1 A safe and healthy workplace

The legislation does not set out specific steps to show what is considered 'reasonably practicable' in ensuring the safety and health of their volunteers. Therefore, it will depend on the circumstances of each case.

Generally, to ensure the safety of volunteers' activities, it would be reasonable and practicable for a local government to:

- Ensure volunteer work areas are free of hazards
- Ensure that volunteers understand their duties and responsibilities
- Develop policies and procedures governing on-boarding, screening, training guides and supervision of volunteers
- Allocate sufficient resources to ensure the effective management and development of volunteer programs
- Communicate and consult with volunteers on occupational safety and health issues
- Induct and train/instruct volunteers in their tasks

#### 2.1.1 Identify foreseeable hazards

This is the process of finding, recognising, and describing risks. In conjunction with relevant stakeholders, answer the following questions and capture the information within a risk register:

- What can go wrong? What are areas of uncertainty? (Risk description)
- How may this risk eventuate? (Potential causes)
- What are the current measurable activities that mitigate this risk from eventuating? (Controls)
- What are the potential consequential outcomes of the risk eventuating? (Consequences)

Unidentified risks can cause major losses through missed opportunities or adverse events occurring.

Bushfire volunteers in Australian local government areas are likely to be exposed to the following hazards:

- Bushfire
- Building/industrial fire
- Cyclone
- Storm
- Flood
- Tsunami (coastal inundation/river system flooding)
- Earthquake
- Hazardous materials
- Car accidents and traffic management

These hazards present numerous risks and can include:

- Exposure to high heat
- Fume inhalation
- Carbon monoxide exposure
- Dehydration
- Reduced visibility
- Damage to structures

#### 2.1.2 Assess the activity (analysis and evaluation)

Use a risk assessment to assess each hazard, the likelihood and consequence of the potential risk occurring, and the suitability of current controls.

- Are you doing what is reasonably expected of you under the circumstances? (Existing control ratings)
- Determine relevant consequence categories and rate how bad it could be if the risk eventuated with existing controls in place (consequence)
- Determine how likely it is that that the risk will eventuate to the determined level of consequence with existing controls in place (likelihood)
- Combine the measures of consequence and likelihood, determine the risk rating (level of risk)

The risk owner is to verify the risk analysis and make a risk acceptance decision based on:

- Controls assurance (i.e. are the existing controls in use, effective, documented, up to date and relevant)
- Level of risk
- Risk acceptance criteria
- Risk versus reward/opportunity

The risk acceptance decision needs to be documented and acceptable risks are then subject to the monitor and review process.

#### 2.1.3 Minimise impacts

There are generally two requirements following the assessment of risks.

- 1. In all cases, regardless of the residual risk rating, controls rated 'inadequate' must have a treatment plan (action) to improve the control effectiveness to at least 'adequate'.
- 2. If the residual risk rating is high or extreme, treatment plans must be implemented to either:
- Reduce the consequence of the risk materialising
- Reduce the likelihood of occurrence
- Improve the effectiveness of the overall controls to 'effective' and obtain delegated approval to accept the risk as per the risk acceptance criteria

#### 2.1.4 Review practices and lessons learnt

Risk owners are to review their acceptable risks on a regular reoccurring basis or if triggered by one of the following:

- Changes to the context
- A treatment is implemented
- An incident occurs
- Audit or regulator findings

Risk owners are to monitor the status of risk treatment implementation and report on actions, as required.

#### 2.2 Consultation arrangements

Participation in consultative meetings should occur with volunteers and identified stakeholders to provide up to date safety and health information. This consultation should also facilitate planning or reviewing tasks and activities, as well as building comradery amongst the brigades and resolving operational issues – a fundamental component of volunteering together safely.

Examples of Consultative arrangements include but not limited to:

- Bushfire advisory committee meetings
- Bushfire advisory group meetings
- Bushfire sector command meetings
- Brigade meetings
- Brigade debriefing sessions
- Local emergency management committees

#### 2.3 Communication arrangements

Communication is essential to ensure volunteers are given consistent and up to date information as it relates to planned tasks and activities being undertaken, as well as ensuring brigades are able to operate in an effective manner.

It is also vital to have multiple means of maintaining effective communication when associated with remote or isolated work, due to the nature of work, time or location, as well as in an emergency situation.

Briefing formats may follow the Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS) 'SMEACS' Incident Planning & Briefing Aid:

- Situation
- Mission
- Execution
- Administration and logistics
- Command and communication
- Safety

Examples of communication arrangements include:

- Bushfire advisory committee meeting
- Bushfire advisory group meeting
- Bushfire sector command meeting
- Brigade meeting
- Training day
- Briefing schedule (initial deployment/situation update/delegation briefing/handover)
- Information briefing

#### 2.3.1 Informing diverse parties

When delivering information, training or instruction it must be provided in a way that is readily understandable by any person to whom it is provided.

It is vital to ensure that the information, training and instruction provided is suitable and adequate for the nature of work undertaken in each role, the associated risks, and control measures available.

This should be considered in relation to an individual's ability to perform the inherent requirements and responsibilities of the role, suitable adjustments, or alternative roles.

#### 2.4 Training and instruction arrangements

In relation to the *National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not-for-Profit Organisations*, the intent is for the organisation to establish a systematic program that provides needs-based training to volunteers. This is achieved by training volunteers in both job performance skills and organisational development skills such as teamwork, communication and problem solving.

Training for each role requires a different level of training, varying from online course, formal training sessions or exercises to weekly or fortnightly participation at your brigade, group or unit.

The specific requirements where a PCBU involves volunteers shall clearly specify and control the work of volunteers and ensure that their place of work is conducive to preserving their health, safety, general wellbeing, and will focus on:

- Developing policies and procedures that detail the organisation's approach to volunteer training and development
- Allocating responsibility and resources to training and development
- Providing training to address identified needs
- Monitoring the work of volunteers and providing appropriate feedback
- Recognising, formally and informally, the contribution made by volunteers to the organisation and to the community

With relation to the WHS Act, the PCBU must ensure that information, training and instruction provided to a worker is suitable and adequate having regard to:

- The nature of the work carried out by the worker
- The nature of the risks associated with the work at the time the information, training or instruction is provided
- The control measures implemented
- Information, training and instruction is provided in a way that is readily understandable by any person to whom it is provided
- Records of training is kept for a period of seven years in relation to hazardous chemicals to which the worker is likely exposed

#### 2.5 Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Where PPE is identified as a control for mitigating risks to the hazards volunteers will likely be exposed to, as a direct result of the nature of their work, is required to be provided to workers (unless the personal protective equipment has been provided by another PCBU).

There is no need to double up in the provision of PPE. However when directing the work to be undertaken, the PPE must be suitable – including size, fit, and being reasonably comfortable for the worker to use and wear. It should be maintained, repaired or replaced as required to ensure it is clean, hygienic and in good working order for use.

Adequate supervision or readiness checks should incorporate assessing the appropriate use and wear of equipment provided and having available provisions for replacements.

#### 2.6 Private equipment

The Bushfire Act 1954 states that at different times private equipment may be used "in connection with a bush fire, which is necessary for, directed towards, or incidental to, the control or suppression of the fire or the prevention of spread of the fire, or in any other way necessarily associated with the dire including travelling and support services, such as meals and communication systems".

It is important to communicate clearly when an individual is operating of their own accord, or commences operating as a volunteer. This means that when emergency services are activated, the personnel, plant, and equipment being provided (even if privately owned) are under the control of the local government. Therefore, the provision of reasonable information, training, and instruction needs to be established at that time (prior to engaging the equipment), through reasonable means to ensure the health and safety of involved parties.

#### 2.7 Facility considerations

There are over 540 listed brigades (as of 2022) which all have individual workplace facilities. These facilities are required to be maintained so as to allow for persons to enter, exit and move about without risk to health and safety in both normal working conditions and in an emergency situation.

Considerations must be made to how facilities are maintained to allow for work to be carried out, safe storage of plant and equipment, safe means of evacuation, appropriate ventilation, mitigating the extremes of heat or cold, and accessible facilities (toilets, drinking water, washing and eating facilities).

A workplace inspection tool can be a suitable way of ensuring these aspects are monitored and maintained in relation to the nature of hazards at the workplace, size, location and nature of the business undertakings.

#### 2.7.1 Fire protection and firefighting equipment

If hazardous chemicals are stored, handled or used on site, emergency equipment must always be available for use in an emergency.

The PCBU is to ensure fire protection and firefighting equipment is properly installed, tested and maintained, and where unserviceable or inoperative alternatively managed and returned to full operation as soon as practicable.

#### 2.7.2 Fuel and chemical storage

When chemicals are stored onsite, a risk assessment should be undertaken to identify what is required, including signage, bunding, traffic management, training, security, and readily accessible, up to date material safety data sheets (within 5 years).

#### 2.7.3 Containing and managing spills

If safety equipment is required to control an identified risk in relation to using, handling or storing hazardous chemicals, safety equipment is to be provided, maintained and accessible at the workplace.

Spill kits are a common way of ensuring adequate provisions are available when storing or using hazardous chemicals on site.



# **3 INCIDENT RESPONSE CONSIDERATIONS**

To ensure a consistent approach in managing the workplace and responding to a workplace incident or injury, it is important to apply your specific local government's processes. LGIS provides support in regard to reporting WHS hazards, reportable workplace incidents and diseases, injury management, and undertaking the relevant and required actions as soon as possible.

#### 3.1 A notifiable incident

The Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety requires work related deaths and certain types of injuries and diseases to be reported to WorkSafe. Failure to report could lead to prosecution. Reporting must be done by the relevant local government whenever these occur in connection with their business, and an internal process should be outlined within internal WHS documentation.

For example, a resource sharing arrangement or activity undertaken by multiple local governments where a notifiable incident occurs would require all parties to separately report the incident to WorkSafe. Assistance and support can be provided individually to each local government by LGIS.

#### 3.2 Injury management

Injury management is a workplace managed process to facilitate a quick and safe return to work following a workplace injury. Injury management is essentially about effective communication and coordination between claims and rehabilitation practitioners, employers, workers and medical practitioners, to ensure that injured workers are provided support and assistance to return to the workplace.

The LGIS injury management team can provide a variety of proactive injury management solutions to ensure you are meeting your legislative responsibilities and providing the highest standard of injury management support for injured workers within the sector.

To assist workers with gaining a greater understanding of the injury management process we encourage our members to make the <u>LGIS Injury Management and the Worker (pdf)</u> document readily available to a worker after an injury.



#### 3.3 Public Liability

To enable LGIS to act on your behalf after receiving notification of an incident where a member of public has suffered an injury, financial loss or property damage which they claim you are responsible for, we require the following from the third party:

A written request (letter/fax/email) request addressed to the PCBU (referred to as a 'letter of demand') that includes:

- Details of the circumstances of the incident
- Time and date of the incident
- The address or location of the incident
- A specific request asking you to compensate or reimburse the third party for any loss suffered

Please note:

- The third party should not be encouraged to submit a letter of demand if they have not already indicated that they wish to be compensated in some way. If you are notified of an incident and the person does not indicate that they want to be compensated, you may wish to submit a 'report only' claim this is denoted on the front page of the <u>Public Liability claim</u> form (pdf) or <u>Professional Indemnity claim form (pdf)</u>. This will advise us of the incident in case any claim is submitted in the future.
- We recommend that you do not ask the third party to supply quotes or invoices, as some claimants assume they will automatically be reimbursed. In the event that LGIS Liability decides to settle a claim, we will request quotes/invoices prior to settlement negotiations.
- No 'forms' of any kind (e.g. Incident Report Form etc.) can be used in place of a 'letter of demand'.

What we require from you:

- Completed <u>Public Liability claim form (pdf)</u> or <u>Professional Indemnity (pdf)</u> claims form (pages 1 and/or 2) and signed (page 4)
- Page 3 of the <u>Public Liability claim form (pdf)</u> to be completed and signed by the relevant overseer/engineer/supervisor
- The third party's original letter of demand (or a copy)

The following information, if available, should be provided:

- A report describing all relevant details of the incident from your perspective
- Photographs of the incident site / alleged hazard, preferably before any hazards are repaired
- Copies of any relevant documentation related to the incident.

#### 3.4 Supervision

Supervision of the volunteer is the same as for a worker; performance management should be structured and allow for two-way communication. Volunteers who are not performing should be

offered training and other appropriate forms of support. All performance management meetings and decisions should be documented. Volunteers should follow the grievance and complaints policy and procedure as adopted by the local government.

#### 3.5 Bullying, harassment, discrimination and equal opportunity

#### 3.5.1 Bullying or harassment

To ensure not only the physical wellbeing of the volunteers but also their mental wellbeing, the workplace must take all reasonable steps to ensure volunteers are not exposed to workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Bullying in the workplace is repeated, unreasonable or inappropriate behaviour directed towards a worker, or a group of workers, that creates a risk to the individual's health, safety and wellbeing.

Volunteers also have a duty under the WHS Act to ensure that their actions do not constitute a risk to their own health and safety or that of other people in the workplace.

The organisation needs to clearly communicate that bullying will not be tolerated and provide information to volunteers about the process and who they can contact if they are bullied in the workplace. This may incorporate communication within the induction, training process, or brigade communication arrangements on the local government's code of conduct.

#### 3.5.2 Discrimination

It is sometimes a difficult decision for the coordinator of volunteers to reject a volunteer as unsuitable for a chosen volunteer position. The local government is subject to the same antidiscrimination legislation as applies to selecting paid staff.

It is therefore imperative that the local government has clearly defined position descriptions and selection criteria documented. The interview process should also be documented in case the rejection is challenged. Ideally, the reason for the rejection should be explained to the volunteer and if appropriate alternative positions should be offered. The local government needs to demonstrate that they have been reasonable and practical in their assessment of the volunteer.

#### 3.5.3 Equal Opportunity

It is recommended that local governments have regard for equal opportunity objectives when developing policies and procedures governing recruitment, screening, training and supervision of volunteers.

#### 3.6 Issue resolution

Teamwork is fundamental to achieving common goals. When issues arrive it is vital they are managed effectively in a proactive manner. To support this, following your health and safety resolution process or procedure for managing consolation and communication is one tool for ensuring action is taken, and the opportunity for action to be taken afforded to the relevant stakeholders.

#### 3.7 Prosecution

If volunteers comply with the health and safety duties when carrying out work for the organisation, they cannot be fined or prosecuted under the WHS Act.

#### 3.8 Support

The nature of this type of activity can present significant emotional demands for bushfire volunteers. Emotional demands can be defined as work/situations that that are emotionally challenging, due to high emotional involvement, or having to regularly disguise emotion in the moment.

Demands can arise through working within your own community, coping with the loss of life (human and animal), defending your own properties and/or properties of other families, viewing the loss of livelihoods, and being confronted with life threatening situations.

When emotional demands are coupled with additional demands, this can lead to adverse outcomes on health and wellbeing, such as psychological strain, burnout, and issues with sleeping. So, it's really important that volunteers are proactive in managing their own mental health and wellbeing, to be in the best frame of mind when responding to events. Support is available and may include:



# **4 RESOURCES**

The below templates may assist in the implementation and maintenance of volunteer arrangements.

#### 4.1 An organisational work health and safety system checklist

DOCUMENTATION	N/A	YES	NO
Work health and safety plan and policy			
Risk register (foreseeable high risk tasks/activities)			
Documented safe operating procedures			
Contractor OSH management process. Contractors provide Certificates of Currency for Public Liability, Professional Indemnity, Motor Vehicle and Workers' Compensation. Subcontractors also produce Certificates of Currency when required.			
Incident/injury/hazard/near miss management procedure/form			
Electrical isolation procedure/form			
Site security plan (arrangements)			
Site traffic management plan			
Establish roles and responsibilities			
DOCUMENTATION	N/A	YES	NO
Site inductions			
PPE policy/procedure and register			
Emergency preparedness and response plans including site maps/muster point/s, first aiders and emergency contacts			
Plant and equipment risk assessments			
Plant maintenance records			
Work health and safety policy			
Fitness for work policy			
Workers' compensation and rehabilitation policy			
Issue resolution process			
Material safety data sheet register			
Activation/call out/permit to work procedure			
TRAINING	N/A	YES	NO
Training competencies and licenses documented and recorded			
Emergency preparedness and response training provided (fire warden/s, chief fire warden, first aiders and firefighting equipment)			
Health and safety representative training			
List of Inducted workers			

SIGNAGE		N/A	YES	NO	
Hazardous substances					
Designated speed restrictions					
Plant/pedestrian directional movement requir	rements				
Potable water					
Emergency exit signs					
PLANT & EQUIPMENT		N/A	YES	NO	
Maintained first aid kits					
Personal protective equipment					
Hazardous substances bunded in designated s					
Installed and maintained firefighting equipme					
Plant and equipment secure storage area					
Out of service and danger tags					
RCD's on electrical power boards and equipme					
Lockable electrical power boards					
Tagged (in date) electrical equipment					
ACTION PLAN ITEM ACTION DATE RESPONSIBLE					

#### 4.2 A risk assessment

This risk assessment example is to be used in conjunction with your enterprise risk management framework and risk matrix.

STEP 1 BACKGROL	IND															
Directorate/depar	tment:															
Activity being asse	ssed:															
STEP 2 DOCUMEN	TATION (Relevant leg	gislation/standards/	/docum	nentat	ion)											
Is the activity/task	/equipment or plant	required to be regis	stered			Yes□	Noロ	Is this inv	olving new	plant o	r equi	oment or im	pact other tasks?		Yes□	Noロ
Are instruction ma	nuals accessible?					Yes□	No Is a Safe Work Procedure or Safe Work Method Statement required?			Yes□	No					
STEP 3 RISK ASSES	SMENT (Use the Loca	al Government Ente	erprise	Risk Fi	ramework	when as	ssessing and c	ontrolling	nazards)							
Activity/step/ process	Hazard description	Risk and potential impacts	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk rating	Priority	Descriptio evideno controls/cc actio	on and ce of prrective ns	Date controls in place	Likelihood	Consequence	Residual risk rating	Effectiveness of the control in place	Responsible person	e Additio or cha	nal controls nges made
1)																
2)																
3)																
4)																
5)																
6)																
Assessment condu	ent conducted by:						Signature: Date:				Date:					

### 4.3 A facility inspection checklist

DOCUMENTATION		N/A	YES	NO
Visible WHS Policy				
Incident/injury/hazard/near miss managemen				
Site evacuation plan and diagram available				
Brigade standard operating procedures availab	ble			
Issue resolution procedure available				
Material safety data sheets available				
PPE available				
Emergency contacts information available				
Out of service and danger tags				
SIGNAGE		N/A	YES	NO
Hazardous substances signage				
Designated speed and vehicle movement signated	age			
Emergency equipment and exit signs				
Potable water signage				
PLANT & EQUIPMENT	N/A	YES	NO	
Access restricted to plant and equipment				
PPE in good working order, clean and hygienic				
Facilities clean and free from slip, trip, and fall	hazards			
Hazardous substances bunded in designated s	ecure area			
Firefighting equipment tested and tagged				
Maintained first aid kits				
RCD's on electrical power boards and equipme	ent			
Tagged (in date) electrical equipment and batt	teries isolated			
Facilities, plant and equipment operational, clean, hygienic and tidy				
Stored food and drinks in-date and not spoiled				
Plant and equipment in good working order ar	nd state of readiness			
ACTION PLAN ITEM	ACTION DATE	RESPOI	NSIBLE PE	RSON/S



# Local Government Bushfire Volunteers Returning Home Safe and Well

**A Practical Guide** 

Acknowledgement

The WA Local Government Association (WALGA) and LGIS acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land and pay respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Local Government Bushfire Volunteers Returning Home Safe and Well - A Practical Guide



Introduction
Work Health and Safety Act3
How can you volunteer safely?4
Managing your risk mindset4
Policies and Procedures5
Why training is key?6
Consultation and Communication7
Managing the Risks
Common Hazards and Controls9
Fire and Smoke9
Manual Handling10
Falling Objects and Debris11
Vehicle safety12
Plant and equipment13
Flammables (Petrol/Diesel)13
Asbestos
Your Health & Wellbeing as a Volunteer15
Emotional Distress and Having the Right Frame of Mind16
Using Personal Protective Equipment or Clothing17
The Role of DFES
Thank You19

<u> Igis</u>

WALGA



## Introduction

Local Governments in Western Australia manage bushfire brigades made up of volunteers from the local community. The role of these volunteers is highly valuable and important to local communities, but by the nature of the work, can pose hazards to volunteers, that if not managed properly can lead to harm.

As a volunteer you will be exposed to many environments with varying degrees of risk. You may encounter such hazards as fire and smoke, falling objects, debris, asbestos, manual handling, fatigue, dehydration, emotional distress and road hazards

This list is not exhaustive, but highlights the importance that volunteers are prepared and protected when they attend fire grounds or volunteering activities.

This booklet is designed to provide guidance to those who volunteer for their Local Government Brigade. It is not a replacement for other important safety information you receive, rather a compliment to that information.

Fundamental to ensuring you are equipped to volunteer effectively and safely is to be trained.

In addition, working collaboratively and positively with your Brigade, fellow volunteers and Local Government will prepare you to keep safe and perform your duties to the best of your abilities.

Knowing how to manage risk and how to act responsibly in your role are of great importance to you and your local community.



## Work Health and Safety Act (2020)

#### Safety Legislation

Under the Work Health & Safety Act (2020) volunteers are considered in the same context as a worker.

#### Volunteer

A **volunteer** is a person who is acting on a voluntary basis (irrespective of whether the person receives out-of-pocket expenses).



Within safety legislation a person is a **worker** if the person carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking, in this case the Local Government. This includes working as a *Volunteer.* 

#### Duty of Care as a Volunteer

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety; and
- Do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons; and comply, so far as reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the person conducting the business or undertaking to allow the person to comply with this Act; and
- Cooperate with the local government and brigade in ensuring your safety. This includes:
  - Participating in consultation and communication
  - Reporting hazards and incidents
  - Using personal protective clothing (PPC), personal protective equipment (PPE) and Respiratory protective equipment (RPE) appropriately
  - Following safety documentation and reasonable instruction
  - Attend any identified and required training



### How can you volunteer safely?

Fundamental to volunteering safely is ensuring you approach every task with a risk management mindset. That is, whilst working with your brigade, ensuring you consider the risks associated with the activity, and have a clear plan that uses measures to control those risks.

The role of a bushfire volunteer is dynamic, and whilst risk management is always considered in the planning, when on the ground and faced with a pending situation, it may not always be possible to conduct a formal risk assessment. This is why you must always have a risk management mindset

The diagram below is an example of how you can take a risk management approach to volunteering:



## Managing your risk mindset



## **Policies and Procedures**

Local Governments and your brigades have developed policies and procedures in relation to how they as an organisation support and manage the safety of volunteers. These may include but not be limited to:

- Safety Policy
- Hazard identification, risk assessment and control procedures
- Hazard and incident reporting processes and procedures
- Fitness for work policy including drug & alcohol.
- Task or activity process Standard operating procedures
- Personal Protective Equipment and Personal Protective Clothing
- Respiratory Protective equipment
- Plant and equipment use and instructions
- Volunteer safety manual
- Issue resolution processes

It is important you are familiar with these documents as they relate to your role as a volunteer. Please talk with your Brigade or Local Government if you are unfamiliar with the relevant policies and procedures or how they relate to you.





## Why training is key?

To ensure that you are adequately prepared to perform your tasks and activities in a safe and healthy manner it is important that you participate in all training, and are deemed competent in the activities that you will perform.

Topics may include but not be limited to;

Fatigue Management, hazard identification and asbestos awareness for example.

Training may be delivered in a class environment, such as at the brigade, or on the job; both are equally as important and set the foundation for how you will perform your role as a bushfire volunteer.

If you are having difficulty in understanding any aspect of the training provided, speak to your Brigade or Local Government, and they will review the training and work with you to ensure you have a good understanding.




### **Consultation and Communication**

Effective consultation and maintaining open communication are key to having a positive safety environment.

Whilst recognising the diverse nature of volunteers and competing responsibilities, as a volunteer it is important you attend and participate in as many group meetings as possible. These meetings occur to ensure volunteers are given consistent messages, up to date safety and health information as it relates to tasks and activities to be performed, as well as build comradery amongst the brigade; which is a fundamental component of volunteering together safely.

If you are unable to attend a group meeting, inform your brigade as soon as possible so they can provide you with any information you may have missed.





### **Managing the Risks**

As mentioned earlier, managing risks is about having the mindset to identify, assess, and work out the controls in a dynamic environment where you continue to review those controls to make sure they are effective or whether we need to change anything.

It is fundamental that each task you approach is with a risk mindset, whilst working with your brigade.

It is understood that in the role of a bushfire volunteer, it may not always be possible to conduct a formal risk assessment. So, it is important that you continually assess the risks for all activities, from the time activated.

The diagram below is an example of how you can apply a risk management mindset whilst volunteering.





### **Common Hazards and Controls**

When volunteering, you will be exposed to many hazards. On the following pages you will find information on those hazards, as well as common controls.

This information is by no means complete as every situation is different, which is why you must always approach volunteering with the risk management mindset.

It is important that we identify and report hazards so that action can be taken to address. Within your role as a volunteer, you should identify and report any hazards to your Brigade or Local Government

You can do this by:

- Formal hazard reporting processes
- Performing a "take 5" or similar (job size up)
- Participating in crew briefings
- Ensuring you have situational awareness
- Attend training and drills
- Incident reports (reactive)
- Red flag warnings

### Fire and Smoke

The hazards of fire and smoke present numerous risks. These can include:

- Exposure to high heat
- Fume inhalation
- Carbon Monoxide exposure
- Dehydration
- Reduced visibility
- Damage to structures

You will be provided training by your brigade and instruction on what to do in situations where these hazards are present.

Additionally, the training you receive on the correct use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Personal Protective Clothing (PPC) and Respiratory Protective Equipment will be of upmost importance to controlling these hazards.



### **Manual Handling**

As a bushfire volunteer, you will be involved in numerous manual handling and lifting tasks.

This may include:

- Moving fallen trees and debris
- Using a fire hose
- Using and maintaining vehicles
- Using and maintaining equipment

It is important you attend training and always follow correct manual handling techniques.

The following demonstrates safe manual handling principles:





### **Falling Objects and Debris**

Both falling objects such as tree branches, and on the ground debris (typically causing trip and fall injuries), pose hazards to volunteers. These hazards are present in a wide variety of situations.

While the personal protective clothing, and equipment you are provided will help reduce the risk associated with these hazards in some way, they cannot be relied on solely. This is particularly important when falling objects such as trees and branches can be a common occurrence on a fire ground.

Trees, branches, power lines and poles are all objects that can fall in the event of a fire or weather event.

Where possible keeping yourself and vehicles clear of the drop zone is the best form of control.

It is important to always take note of what is above you and your overall surroundings, and take direction from your brigade.





### Vehicle safety

Preparation for an emergency response begins before an alarm is raised.

Having a sound knowledge and understanding of how the vehicles and equipment you will be using or operating, and being competent in their use is vitally important, with this in mind it is important that you complete any training.

Your brigade should provide you with an induction to all equipment including vehicles.





### **Plant and equipment**

Bushfire volunteers use a variety of plant and equipment within their role.

It is important that volunteers familiarise themselves with these items, and how to operate them safely.

There are many ways in which this can be achieved, a few are listed below.

- Ensure that you are using the correct piece of equipment for the task.
- Familiarise yourself with the manual or safe operating procedures for the plant or equipment.
- Having the correct level of personal protective clothing and equipment is vital, this should be included in the manual or safe operating procedure.
- Carry out any prestart checks, make sure the equipment isn't damaged if it is don't use it, and report it.

#### **Post Activity**

- Conduct post operational inspection or maintenance
- Conduct any brigade processes on returning the item.
- Ensure that any damaged equipment is reported, so this can be addressed.

### Flammables (Petrol/Diesel)

Bushfire volunteers should be aware of the hazards that are involved when working with flammables, most commonly petrol and diesel.

The potential for explosion and fire is ever present during training and response processes.

Hot refuelling of plant and storage of fuel can be very dangerous in this working environment and should not be conducted without approval and supervision from a superior.

Some of the risks associated with these products include damaging skin, eyes and respiratory systems. It is vital that volunteers familiarise themselves with the safety data sheet, which explains how injuries should be treated as well as outlining the correct form of personal protective clothing or equipment needed.

It is good practice to have copies of safety data sheets in vehicles to access should the need arise.



### Asbestos

Many environments that bushfire volunteers respond to may have asbestos containing materials. Volunteers should approach and treat the hazard in a manner that ensures the safety of all crew members.

It is imperative that volunteers use the correct personal protective clothing. This should include P2 respiratory protection, full overalls with sleeves down and safety glasses or goggles, this can be further enhanced with disposable overall ot chemical protective clothing.

It is important that volunteers try to limit the release of any asbestos fibres during incident operations.

The following points provide general guidance.

- Hand tools should be used instead of powered tools as their use reduces the amount of potential fibre release
- Keep to a minimum the movement of ash and debris (e.g. turning over) and ensure it is carefully carried out to prevent/reduce the amount of fibres that may be released
- DO NOT intentionally break any asbestos into smaller pieces
- Leave intact and undisturbed individual pieces of asbestos cement sheeting if the fire/damage has disturbed and distributed it over a wide area
- If disturbed, ensure the asbestos is wet down, using a fine spray and moved as short a distance as possible (but still within the risk area) to a safe place
- Ensure good personal hygiene both during and post incident.





### Your Health & Wellbeing as a Volunteer

### **Mental Fatigue**

As a bushfire volunteer, mental fatigue could be an outcome of exposure to different types of demands that leaves you feeling exhausted which impacts overall function:

Type of Demand	What this looks like for a Bushfire Volunteer
<b>Cognitive demands</b> Tasks that are mentally demanding due to long periods of high concentration and difficult decision making.	<ul> <li>Reactive nature of emergency situations</li> <li>Being switched-on 100% to adequately attend during emergency situations</li> </ul>
Emotional demands	
Work that is emotionally challenging, due to high emotional involvement, or having to regularly disguise emotion whilst volunteering.	<ul> <li>Loss of life</li> <li>Being a pillar of support within a community</li> </ul>
Physical demands	<ul> <li>Handling equipment</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Moving obstacles</li> </ul>
Tasks or a physical environment that negatively impacts our health.	<ul> <li>Maintenance of equipment</li> <li>Standing for long periods of time</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Deployment of time sensitive</li> </ul>
Time demands	interventions to support people, animals and communities
Long working hours, time pressure tasks.	<ul> <li>Shift work / working for long periods with feeling like you are</li> </ul>
	unable to take a preak.

When getting sufficient sleep, good nutrition and exercising regularly still results in difficulty performing everyday activities, concentrating or being motivated at normal levels, you may be experiencing fatigue that needs further investigation

Some signs of fatigue may include: tiredness, headaches, dizziness, muscle weakness/aching, impaired decision making, moodiness, impaired coordination, appetite changes, changes in vision, and changes in memory.

It is important for you to report in a timely manner to your brigade captain if you are feeling unwell.

# Emotional Distress and Having the Right Frame of Mind

As a bushfire volunteer your role is key in supporting communities when man-made or natural disaster strikes.

The nature of this type of activity can present significant emotional demands for bushfire volunteers. Emotional demands can be defined as work/situations that that are emotionally challenging, due to high emotional involvement, or having to regularly disguise emotion in the moment.

Remember – as a bushfire volunteer these emotional demands can arise through working within your own community, coping with the loss of life (human and animal), defending your own properties and/or properties of other families, viewing the loss of livelihoods, and being confronted with life threatening situations.

When emotional demands are coupled with additional demands, this can lead to adverse outcomes on health and wellbeing, such psychological strain, burnout, and issues with sleeping. So, it's really important that volunteers are proactive in managing their own mental health and wellbeing, to be in the best frame of mind when responding to events.



Local Government Bushfire Volunteers Returning Home Safe and Well - A Practical Guide

ALGA



## Using Personal Protective Equipment or Clothing

As a volunteer, you will be provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) and protective clothing (PPC) this is to be used to mitigate against the hazards you will be exposed to; it's important this is worn where required at all times.

The brigade or Local Government will provide instruction and training in how equipment and clothing should be:

- Worn and appropriately fit you
- Conditions for it to be kept in and looked after
- When it should be replaced and how often
- Cleaning and hygiene
- If Personal protective equipment, Personal protective clothing or Respiratory protective equipment is required for a task or activity, it **MUST** be worn
- Damaged PPE or PPC should not be used and replacements should be requested.





### The Role of DFES



#### FOR A SAFER STATE

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) works in collaboration with Western Australian communities and other government agencies to help prevent, prepare or, respond to and recover from a diverse range of hazards. These include fires, cyclones, floods, rescue missions on land and at sea, as well as assisting at road and traffic emergencies.

The majority of bushfire response in Western Australia is managed by Local Governments Brigade and their volunteer responders. However, DFES may get involved in bushfire emergencies at the request of the Local Government Brigade or if an incident becomes a major event.

When a Local Government Brigade formally hands over an incident to DFES, all responding volunteer bushfire brigades **MUST** act on the instructions given by DFES.

Instructions are provided by the Incident Controller and may include:

- o declaration of incident levels
- $\circ$  tactics
- instruction to leave the fire ground (e.g., welfare breaks or transitioning between sectors)
- o requests to change roles on the fire ground
- o undertaking black-out/mop-up
- moving into a maintenance role

It is imperative that the Local Government, DFES and other supporting incident groups work collaboratively to manage the health and safety of all volunteers.

At DFES controlled incidents, where LG volunteers are undertaking emergency services work at the incident, DFES is obligated (where reasonably practicable) to:

- Provide safe systems of work
- Ensure appropriate supervision
- Verify volunteers have been trained to carry out allocated tasks
- Ensure volunteers have appropriate personal protective equipment and clothing for the activity
- Ensure volunteers understand any relevant safe operating procedures and have been given instructions to perform tasks safely
- Ensure there are appropriate facilities and welfare provisions for all volunteers.
- Ensure safety incidents and injuries reported are investigated to prevent recurrence, working towards continuous improvement.

DFES works with Local Governments to provide a holistic, safe system of work to protect all our people.



### Thank You

Bushfire volunteers provide a vital and important role in assisting local government brigades to protect their communities, keeping volunteers safe and well to ensure they return home to their families is a priority for all Local Governments and other agencies involved in emergencies.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment. Stay Safe and well.



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# **Example roles and responsibilities bushfire brigades**

### **Bushfire Control Officer (BFCO)**

#### Role

- A Bushfire Control Officer (BFCO) is a delegated representative of the Local Government, responsible for administering provisions of the Bush Fires Act 1954 (WA).
- The position is required to perform active operational duties in relation to both firefighting and fire prevention strategies within the local community.
- A BFCO is to have demonstrated experience in wild fire behavior, AIIMS and knowledge of the area.
- The person in this position must be able to interpret provisions of the *Bush Fires Act* 1954 (WA) and the Bush Fires Regulations 1954 and be a confident communicator.
- This position reports to the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer on all matters pertinent to bush fire management.
- A BFCO may hold any active position within the brigade.

#### **Duties and Responsibilities**

Duties and responsibilities of the Bush Fire Control Officer include:

- Respond to community request to conduct property risk assessments or refer to Ranger Services where appropriate
- Perform duties prescribed by the *Bush Fires Act 1954 (WA)* and authorised by local government
- Maintain a personal log book to include a record of events and decisions during an incident
- Take control, command and manage resources during wildfire or hazard reduction burns within the Brigade area they are appointed
- To take control of firefighting operations at

a wildfire outside their Brigade area where no other Brigade Captain or Fire Control Officer is present

- Demonstrate positive leadership and mentor Captains and Brigade members
- Provide advice to the Chief Bushfire Coordinator (CBFCO) as to when harvest bans and or movement of vehicle bans should be applied
- Actively participate in Bush Fire Advisory Committee

### Criteria of BFCO

- Knowledge of managing a volunteer organisation
- Knowledge of Fire Response Plans
- Knowledge of the *Bush Fires Act 1954 (WA)* and local bushfire control requirements
- Ability to attend further fire and emergency management training
- Effective interpersonal skills
- Good written and verbal communication skills
- Leadership skills
- Management skills
- Experience in managing operations
- Ability to perform under stressful conditions

#### Desirable Qualifications of BFCO

- Minimum 5 years of firefighting experience
- Following courses completed:
  - Introduction to Fire Fighting
  - Bush Fire Fighting
  - AIIMS awareness
  - Crew Leader
  - Advanced Bush Fire Fighting
  - Sector Commander
  - Fire Control Officer



### Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer (DCBFCO)

Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officers are appointed by the local government.

#### Role

- The role of DCBFCO is that of a leader, decision maker and planner, assisting the Chief Bushfire Control Officer in managing the Bush Fire Organisation.
- Demonstrate positive leadership and mentor, BFCOs, Captains and Brigade members.
- If more than one BFCO or Brigade is in attendance may take control of fire operations and be Incident Controller or part of the Incident Manager Team as delegated by the Incident Controller.
- Actively participate in the Bush Fire Advisory Committee
- Ability to attend further fire and emergency management training
- In the absence of the CBFCO, the Deputy will take on that role
- Readily availability to attend operational incidents and support CBFCO as required

#### Criteria of DCBFCO

- Minimum 5 years firefighting experience
- Effective interpersonal skills
- Good written and verbal communication skills
- Leadership skills
- Management skills
- Experience in managing operations
- Ability to perform under stressful conditions
- Current appointment as Bushfire Control
   Officer
- Experienced in firefighting operations
- Currently holds all of the preferred qualifications of the Fire Control Officer
- Knowledge of Fire Response Plans
- Knowledge of the *Bush Fires Act 1954 (WA)* and Bush Fires Regulations 1954 and local

firecontrol requirements

 Knowledge of the State Emergency Management Policy No 4.8 (Traffic Management During Emergencies)

#### Desirable Qualifications of DCBFCO

- Following courses completed:
  - Introduction to Fire Fighting
  - Bush Fire Fighting
  - Aims Awareness
  - Crew Leader
  - Advanced Bush Fire Fighting
  - Structural Fire Fighting
  - Sector Commander
  - Fire Control Officer
  - Incident Controller Level 1
  - AIIMS 4
    - Ground Controller
  - Machine Supervision



### **Chief Bushfire Control Officer (CBFCO)**

#### Role

- The role of the Chief Bushfire Control Officer is that of a leader, decision maker, planner and manager of the Bushfire Organisation and not as a 'hands on' fire fighter. The CBFCO is to ensure that the organization is functioning to a standard commensurate to the risks and is to ensure that the following tasks are achieved.
- During wildfire incidents manage the fire resources and Brigades and when necessary act as the Incident Controller.
- Promote the AIIMS Incident Management system to BFCOs, Brigades and volunteer fire fighters and ensure an Incident Controller is appointed for all Incident Levels (1-3).
- Ensure that BFCOs, Brigade Officers and volunteers are trained to a standard commensurate to the risk and equipment within the Brigade and Council area.
- Demonstrate positive leadership and mentor DCBFCOs, BFCOs, Captains and Brigade members.
- Promote community fire prevention as a priority, to identify and reduce fire hazards.
- Promote the use of DFES Standard Operating Procedures and Guidelines.
- Promote hazard identification and risk management to minimise risk to volunteer fire fighters.
- Ensure welfare preparedness is arranged for the provision of food, medical aid and counselling services for volunteers.
- Establish and maintain effective communication and liaison with (EM & Rangers), BFCOs, Brigades, DFES, DBCA, emergency services, statutory authorities and facilitate prompt response to fire incidents.
- Promote the values of Volunteer Fire Brigades to the community and within the Brigades.
- Delegate specific tasks to DCBFCO, BFCO,

or Brigades.

- Liaise with DFES and other organizations to achieve the duties outlined above.
- Actively participate in Bushfire Advisory Committee and represent the Brigade on DOAC, MOC, SOC teleconferences as required.

# Criteria of CBFCO (as noted for DCBFCO)

- Minimum of 8 years firefighting experience
- Readily availability to attend operational incidents, supporting the Local Government and DFES as required

#### Desirable Qualifications of CBFCO

- Following courses completed:
  - Introduction to Fire Fighting
  - Bush Fire Fighting
  - AIIMS Awareness
  - Crew Leader
  - Advanced Bush Fire Fighting
  - Structural Fire Fighting
  - Sector Commander
  - Fire Control Officer
  - Incident Controller Level 1
  - AIIMS 4
  - ✓ Ground Controller
  - ✓ Machine Supervision





(To be completed on first visit to station)

#### **APPLICANT MEDICAL DECLARATION**

#### **PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL**

Volunteering with the <<LOCAL GOVERNMENT>> is conditional on the applicant being fit and fully able to perform all the inherent requirements of the position of volunteer fire fighter.

When completing this pre-volunteering medical declaration, it must be in full knowledge of this position's physical requirements and duties.

The intention of this medical declaration is to provide appropriate information for assessing the applicant's medical history against the designated work tasks to determine whether their proposed volunteering in this position may aggravate a pre-existing condition, precipitate a condition in a susceptible person and to determine if workplace modifications are required.

All the details provided on this form are treated confidentially and in accordance with the <<LOCAL GOVERNMENTS>> privacy policy.

The information requested on this medical declaration is typically disclosed to the office bearers at the Bush Fire Brigade, and the Emergency Management and Organisational Development staff. It may also be disclosed to the local government's contacts such as the preferred medical practitioner if an assessment of the applicant's suitability for volunteering and fitness for duties is required. In the event a successful applicant submits an injury claim during the course of their volunteering, this medical declaration may also be disclosed to the local government's insurer/protection provider.

### Have you had any disability, injury, illness or disease, which may impact upon your ability to safely carry out the duties required of this position?

Heart disease/stroke/high blood pressure	. Yes	🗆 No
Diabetes	🗆 Yes	🗆 No
Epilepsy	🗆 Yes	🗆 No
Migraines	🗆 Yes	🗆 No
Fainting/blackouts/giddiness	🗆 Yes	🗆 No
Hearing loss	🗆 Yes	🗆 No
Asthma	🗆 Yes	🗆 No
Allergies	🗆 Yes	🗆 No
Fractures/ dislocation	🗆 Yes	🗆 No
Overuse injuries/sprain/strain	🗆 Yes	🗆 No
Back injury	🗆 Yes	🗆 No
Vision impairment (including glasses)	□ Yes	🗆 No
Other, please note	□ Yes	□ No

If you have answered **YES** to ANY of the above, please provide details:



If you answered **YES** to any of the above question, are there any services or facilities which you require or which would assist you to be able to perform the inherent requirements of the position?

🗆 No

Yes

If **YES**, please give details

Have you ever claimed workers' compensation for an injury that may impact upon your ability to safely carry out the duties required of this position? If **YES**, please give details

### **Applicant medical declaration:**

I declare that I understand;

- The physical demands associated with this position, and to the best of my knowledge I have no existing medical condition that would impact my ability to safely carry out the duties required of this position.
- That the <<LOCAL GOVERNMENT NAME>> reserves the right to request a medical examination by a medical practitioner, at the local government's expense, at any point either before or after my membership. This may be taken into consideration when determining my suitability to safely carry out the duties of this position. I authorise the release of any such medical information, deemed appropriate for release, by the examining medical practitioner, to the local government.
- That wilfully inaccurate or misleading representation made in relation to this medical declaration may make me ineligible to volunteering, or if volunteering, liable to terminate my position.
- My membership will be made on the basis that the information I have provided is accurate, and that any false information may lead to the local government taking disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- This declaration will be treated confidentially and will be retained on my personnel file, which is kept secure at all times, in accordance with the <<LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S NAME>> privacy policy.

#### I declare that the information I have provided is true and correct:

Applicant Name (please print):		
Applicant signature:	Date:	
Witness Name (please print):		
Witness Signature:	Date:	

Office Use Only			
Reviewed by:	Date:		
Medical examination recommended:		🗆 Yes	□ No





(To be completed after 3 visits to station)

#### Bush Fire Brigade | Membership Application

PERSONAL DETAILS								
Surname:	Surname:				Given Names:			
Residential Address:								
Postal Address: (if differe	nt to abo	ove)						
Gender: M		F	Date of Birth:					
Tel. Home:			Mobile:					
Email:								
Driver's License No:	r's License No: Class/s:			Sighted Date:	Ву:			
Previous volunteer emerg	gency se	rvices experience:						
Membership Type	ACTIVE		AUXILIARY 🗆		CADET 🗆			
NEXT OF KIN DETAILS								
Full Name:								
Address:		<b>N</b>						
Telephone:		Mobile:	Relationship:					
EMERGENCY CONTACT	DETAIL	<b>S</b> (if different to above)		1				
Full Name:								
Address:								
Telephone:		Mobile:		Relatio	nship:			
Applicant Signature			Brigade Captain (or delegate) Signature					
Date		Date						

### Form 3: National Police Clearance

All volunteer bushfire fighters should have a national police clearance. Visit the WA Police website for more information and to apply.

### www.police.wa.gov.au





# Form 4

To be completed after Forms 1,2,3 (Volunteer National Police Clearance Form) Forward all 4 Forms to <<LOCAL GOVERNMENT>> and DFES District Officer.

<b>BFB/LG supports DFES volunteer</b> (All three must be ticked on comp	membership registrat	ion followin	g;
<ul> <li>Attendance at 3 training s</li> <li>Approval by BFB Officer g</li> <li>Presentation of an accept</li> </ul>	sessions roup rable Police Clearance		
	Entered into RMS		DFES Membership No.

#### Bush Fire Brigade | Conditions of membership

l,	(applicant name) hereby acknowledge that I have read, understand and
agree to comply with the Volunteer Bus	h Fire Brigade rules and regulations outlined to me by the Brigade Captain
(or delegated officer).	

I agree to undertake the <<LOCAL GOVERNMENT NAME>> and Brigade Induction sessions (within 3 weeks of receiving DFES ID, if not before) and to adhere to the Code of Conduct, Work Health and Safety Policies and Procedures outlined within.

I understand that I will be issued with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) from the Brigade Equipment Officer and will return these items upon resignation or termination of my membership. If not returned, the <<LOCAL GOVERNMENT NAME>> may seek to recover these items or the reasonable cost of replacing them.

I understand that to be granted permission to drive the fire appliances I must hold a current, valid, relevant license and will only drive under 'lights and sirens' when authorised to do so via the COMCEN, Incident Control or Officer In Charge.

I	in my application to be a member	of the Volunteer	Bush Fire Brigade, accept all
the conditions outlined above on _	(day) of	_ (month)	(year).

Brigade Captain (or delegate):

Date:

**Section 3** 



Job Dictionary

KEY MUSCULOSKELETAL RISK AREAS	PSYCHOLOGICAL DEMANDS HIGHEST RISK AREAS
$\cap$	COGNITIVE DEMANDS
	Oral comprehension/expression
	Critical thinking, attention to details
	Active listening, decision making
	Concentration/problem solving
8/18/5/12	EMOTIONAL DEMANDS
	Stress tolerance/social perceptiveness
	Dealing with customers
	Team work
HIGHEST RISK BODY AREAS	ROLES DEMANDS
Lower back, knees, shoulders and elbows	Adaptability and flexibility
Hands and fingers	Coordinate and lead others





Position: Volunteer bushfire fighter

Location:	WA Local Gove	ernments		Overall P	hysical Demand R	ating:	(VH) Very Heavy	
Task Description:							PPE:	
Volunteer Bushfire Fighters (VBF) are tasked with protecting rural and pastural areas against the threat and damage caused by bushfires. They carry out fire prevention, such as prescribed burning, risk management, and active fire suppression. VBF's are trained in personal and team safety, fire suppression methods, vehicle driving (on and off road), first aid, communication and emergency management procedures.All VBF's must undergo 4 days of minimal skills training in bushfire safety awareness and firefighting skills. VBF's typically deploy to their immediate local area, but can also assist in neighbouring and far reaching areas.						Total weight = 7 Helmet, Jacket, fire boots, gogg respirator, half torch.	l0kg Pants, steel capped les, gloves, full face face respirator, head	
Environm	ient:						Shift Length:	
Outdoor environments - varying terrain - hills, dense bush, forrest, extreme heat, extreme wind, uneven ground, operating machinery and vehicles.						at,	Varied - response dependent. On call at all times.	
Other hazards such as dust, smoke, ash, water, fire repellent, noise, and other hazardous fumes.						r	Volunteer basis events, shifts m	, however during fire ay be up to 15 hours.
Physical De	mands of Working	Day (Percent	tage of act	ual time s	spent doing tasks)		Task Rotation:	Varied - Constant
0 = Occasio	0 = Occasional (0-32%) F = Frequent (33-66%) C = Constant (67-100%)							
	0	F	C Com	ment				
Stair/Ladde Climbing	er L		Occ	asional ເ ວ height a	use of vertical step approx. 500mm.	os in tanker	/vehicles, or on to	o the back of the truck.
Squatting/	S		kneeling re	quired with the ro	le. May be required			

crouching/ kneeling	S		Minimal squatting, crouching, kneeling required with the role. May be required when assisting or communicating with a casualty or by-stander.
Floor to waist lifting		Н	Frequent floor to waist lifting of equipment into the back of the vehicle tray. Items include foam A containers (22kg), pumps, jerry cans of fuel and water, traffic management equipment, and other equipment.

Waist to eye level lifting		н		Frequent waist to above shoulder lifting of items into the back of the vehicle tray. Items include hoses, fast fill pumps, lay-flat hoses, hand tools (rakehoe, shovel, bolt cutter, axe, pliers, hammer and hacksaw.
Sitting		L		Frequent prolonged sitting when driving to fire locations. Vehicles include light tanker and tanker truck. Time frames in vehicles vary from 15 minutes to 4 hours.
Standing			Н	Constant standing required when performing active fire suppression. Standing and holding a charged hose (2 person task) weighing up to 40kg. Active fire suppression may last a whole 15 hour shift. Controlled burning involves standing while operating dip torch.
Walking			VH	Constant walking required for various aspects of the role, including active fire suppression, drip torch operations, knapsack spraying, vehicle inspections, surveying land and lifting/moving equipment and materials. May be required to lift up to 40kg (2 person task).
Carrying			VH	2 hand carry of charged hose when performing active fire suppression. Task is performed with hose tucked under operators arm and holding the hose end. Single arm carrying required for other tasks such as drip torch, sprayer, and other hand tools. Weigh required up to 40kg (2 person task).
Holding loads away from body	L			Occasionally hold sprayer or drip torch away from the body, weighing approximately 6kg.
Overhead reaching	М			Occasionally lifting or reaching overhead to access equipment off the back of the tanker. There is step access to reduce excessive reaching movements.
Work bent over - stoop		L		Repetitive trunk flexion required when using various hand tools such as shovel, axe, rack, hoe, etc. Minimal sustained stooped position required.
Carrying bulky/ large/awkward load	М			Frequent carrying 20kg between waist and shoulder. Minimal awkward postures required, particularly is technique is performed appropriately. May be required to move materials or equipment out of hazardous situations.
Trunk rotation (standing)		L		Repetitive trunk roatation required when using various hand tools such as shovel, axe, rack, hoe, etc. Minimal sustained trunk rotation required.
Trunk rotation (sitting)	S			May be required to view hard to see areas, particularly when operating vehicles.
Neck movement		L		Sustained neck postures required when operating, or completing sedentary support administration roles such as control center.

Pushing/pulling		VH		Frequent push/pull forces up to 40kg required, particularly when dragging charged hose across uneven ground, often in dense bush and hilly terrain.
Shoulder movements			VH	Repetitive and sustained shoulder movements required to perform a range of tasks. Sustained - active fire suppression, operating machinery, administration tasks. Repetitive - using hand tools such as axe, shovel, rake, etc.
Elbow movements			VH	Repetitive and sustained elbow movements required to perform a range of tasks. Sustained - active fire suppression, operating machinery, administration tasks. Repetitive - using hand tools such as axe, shovel, rake, etc.
Jerky movements	М			May experience when operating machinery on uneven or hilly terrain, or when using hand tools.
Forward reach	L			Minimal forward reaching tasks evident. May be required when accessing equipment off the back of the light tanker and tanker.
Wrist movements			М	Repetitive and sustained wrist movements required to perform a range of tasks. Sustained - active fire suppression, operating machinery, administration tasks. Repetitive - using hand tools such as axe, shovel, rake, etc.
Grip type			н	Sustained gripping required for most tasks, such as active fire suppression, holding equipment, supporting colleague with hose. Repetitive trigger grip when using sprayer or drip torch.
Whole body vibration	S			Occasional exposure to whole body vibration when operating tanker and light tanker. Long periods of driving in off-road conditions.
Hand-arm vibration		Н		High levels of hand arm vibration experienced during active fire suppression.

### Scale Key

Physical Demand Level	Occasional	Frequent	Constant
Sedentary	o - 4.5kgs	Negligible	Negligible
Light	4.5 - 9kgs	o - 4.5kgs	Negligible
Medium	9 - 22kgs	4.5 - 11kgs	o - 4.5kgs
Heavy	22 - 45kgs	11 - 22kgs	4.5 - 9kgs
Very Heavy	> 45kgs	22 - 45kgs	9 - 22kgs

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	PSYCHOLOGICAL DEMANDS	N	ο	F	С	COMMENT
COGNITIVE DEMANDS	Reading comprehension					Role requires understanding maps, diagrams, action plan documents, list of tasks and incident reporting.
	Oral comprehension					2-way radio - understand and comprehend verbal communications. Work within chain of command. Constant communication required within role (verbal and non-verbal).
	Oral expression					2-way radio – incident reporting, emergency response and relaying critical information clearly and timely. Constant communication required within role (verbal and non-verbal).
	Writing					Rarely required – may document incident reporting
	Numerical reasoning					Monitoring and understand water usage, street locations, tracking containment in KM's, number of public members in areas.
DS	Diagrammatic					Use maps, zones, locations, scales, legends and weather for incident response. Incident control roles may have increased demands.
DEMAN	Critical thinking					Focus and act on critical information – required to block our "white noise" info that is irrelevant to incident. Required to determine and absorb important information.
COGNITIVE	Attention to detail					High prioritising and attention to detail – PPE, LACES (Lookout, Awareness, Communications, Escape routes, Safety zones), DFES info, equipment checks and planning of incident response, etc.
	Judgement and decision making					Required to evaluate risks in emergency situation, dealing with rapid changing situations, and delegation of power. Constant decision making during fire incident.
-	Active listening					High priority – critical information, changing information, listening to relevant area of incident response, chain of command.
	Complex problem solving					Constant changing fire ground – wind direction, location, fire area. Aim to focus on focus on 3 factors – weather, topography, fire load.
	Memory					Understanding and remembering information when on the fire ground. Remember LACES – Lookout, Awareness, Communications, Escape routes, Safety zones.
	Concentration					High levels required for up to 12-16 hours, often adrenaline fuelled. High cognitive load, fatigue, reduced concentration occur during long fire incidents.

# Job Dictionary



ROLE DEMANDS EMOTIONAL DEMANDS	Social perceptiveness			Work in teams – non-verbal communication, tone of voice,
				stress levels on colleagues over radio.
	Stress tolerance			High stress environment – consequences of actions, driving
				with sirens on (emergency situation), dealing with media
S				follow on, public perception, other external factors.
ND	Persuasion			Dealing with team members, chain of command.
٩A				Communicate with public when required to evacuate area.
DEN	Dealing with customers			Deal with Local Govt's, DFES, Water Corp, DBCA, and other
AL C				relevant Govt. agencies.
DTIONA	Resolving conflicts & negotiating			Between agencies and crew members. Frequently dealing
	with others			with the public during inspections, patrols, etc. Long time
40	Deal with unpleasant or angry			Paoling with public during fire hand, patrole, inspections
Ш	people			Dealing with public during fire bans, patrois, inspections,
	Work with a group or team			Large amounts of teamwork within crew agencies and fire
	work with a group of team			brigade
	Working independently	x		Crews are from 2 – 5 crew members
		~		
	Adaptability and flexibility			Fire incident – extremely unpredictable situations.
ROLE DEMANDS EMOTIONAL DEMANDS	Time pressure			Incident response times, containment goals, objectives.
	Time management			Incident response – no KPI on time frame (volunteer basis).
				Manage personal time as volunteer.
	Coordinate and lead others			Crew leader – incident response, deployment of resources,
				delegate objectives, chain of command in place.
IAN	Instructing			Instructing within crews on the fire ground – internally
EN	Manago financial resources	v		training of new volunteers.
ЕD	Manage mancial resources	^ 		Not within this role.
OL	Manage personnel resources	X		Not within this role.
RC	Impact of decisions on co-workers			Decisions on the fire ground directly impact others, however
	or company results			issues are rarely outcomes of the role/actions.
	Structured work			Roles are structured within fire response and incident
				autonomous as required to respond to situation. Follow
				Incident Action Plan and Sector / Division Plan
	Responsibility for outcomes and			Actions on the fire ground impact others and the overall
	results			outcomes.









Figure 1: Example of light tanker vehicle – operated by 2 people teams.

Figure 2: Example of tanker vehicle, generally 3 people teams.







### **VOLUNTEER BUSHFIRE FIGHTER**



Figure 5: Example of knapsack sprayer operations.

Figure 6: Example of hose roll up and storage on the LV.





Figure 8: Example of control room incident response role.



# Job Dictionary

## **VOLUNTEER BUSHFIRE FIGHTER**





Figure 9: Example of hand tools/equipment used by<br/>VFF.Figure 10: Example of manual handling equipment on/off the<br/>back of LV tanker or large tanker.



Figure 11: Example of storage area on back of LV.



Figure 12: Example of potential bush terrain environment.



# MANUAL TASK RISK ASSESSMENTS

Volunteer Bushfire Fighter

# CONTENTS

OVERVIEW	. 4
Manual Task Risk Assessment	. 6
Light Tanker Operation	. 6
Risk Factor Assessment	. 7
Manual Task Risk Assessment	. 8
Tanker Operation	. 8
Risk Factor Assessment	. 9
Manual Task Risk Assessment	11
Rolling and Unrolling Lay-flat hoses	11
Risk Factor Assessment	12
Manual Task Risk Assessment	14
Active Fire Suppression	14
Risk Factor Assessment	15
Manual Task Risk Assessment	17
Drip Torch Operation	17
Risk Factor Assessment	18
MANUAL TASK RISK ASSESSMENT	20
Vehicle Checks	20
Risk Factor Assessment	21
Manual Task Risk Assessment	23
Knapsack Spraying	23
Risk Factor Assessment	24
Manual Task Risk Assessment	26
Support Roles	26
Risk Factor Assessment	27
Manual Task Risk Assessment	29
Use of Rakehoe	29
Risk Factor Assessment	30
Manual Task Risk Assessment	32
Miscellaneous Hand Tools	32
Risk Factor Assessment	33

MANUAL TASK RISK ASSESSMENT	35
General Equipment Lifting	35
Risk Factor Assessment	36
CONTACT DETAILS	38
### **OVERVIEW**

Volunteer Bushfire Fighter (VBF)				
Position description	Volunteer Bushfire Fighters (VBF) are charged with protecting rural and pastoral areas against the threat and damage caused by bushfires and are on-call at all times.			
	They may chose when to respond to a call out. They carry out fire prevention, such as prescribed burning, risk management, and active fire suppression.			
	VBF's are trained in personal and team safety, fire suppression methods, emergency vehicle driving (on and off road), first aid, radio communications and emergency management procedures.			
	An MR license is required to operate the large tankers, which can be automatic or manual.			
	All VBF's must undergo 4 days of minimal skills training in bushfire safety awareness and firefighting skills.			
	Shifts may be up to 12 hours, however fatigue their immediate local area, but can also assist i	is managed as able. VBF's typically deploy to in neighbouring and far reaching areas as able.		
Environment where task/s occurs:	Outdoors, varying terrain, hills, extreme heat, e surfaces, and shift work.	extreme wind, dense bush, uneven ground		
	Other hazards such as dust, smoke, ash, water, other hazardous fumes.	, fire repellent, noise, insects, reptiles and		
	Tools			
	Bolt outters			
	Shovel	Pakabaa		
	Adjustable wrench	Pliers		
	Claw hammer	Pine wrench		
	Hack saw	Crow bar		
	Equipment			
	Drin torch (6kg)	Dolphin torch		
	Suction hoses	Fast fill pump (38kg)		
Tools / Equinment /	Flat hoses (7-8kg uncharged, 35-42kg charged)	2 way radio		
PPE	Stand-pipe/key	Hose couplings		
	Light tanker	Crow bar		
	1.4, 2.4 and 4.4 tankers	Burnover blankets		
	Class A foam drums (22kg)	Traffic cones (4kg)		
	Road signs	Knap Sack (20kg)		
	PPE (Total weight 10kg)			
	Helmet	Goggles		
	Jacket (Proban treated)	Gloves		
	Pants (Proban treated)	Full face respirator		
	Lace-up/zip steel capped structural fire boots	Half face respirator		
	Head torch			

Critical Physical Demands:	<ul> <li>Frequent prolonged standing</li> <li>Frequent prolonged walking</li> <li>Frequent prolonged sitting</li> <li>Frequent fine motor control</li> <li>Frequent push/pull forces up to 50kg</li> <li>Frequent carrying up to 20kg between waist and shoulder height</li> <li>Frequent trunk flexion</li> <li>Frequent trunk rotation</li> <li>Frequent hip and knee flexion 0-100 degrees</li> <li>Frequent elbow and shoulder flexion 0-150 degrees</li> <li>Frequent heat exposure</li> <li>Occasional lifting floor to above shoulder height up to 8kg</li> <li>Occasional lifting floor to shoulder height up to 20kg</li> <li>Occasional full body vibration exposure</li> </ul>
Work/task organisation environment:	<ul> <li>Oral comprehension – radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Oral expression - radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Writing – passenger in vehicle completing risk assessments and other documentation</li> <li>Diagrammatic – reading and following maps for rapid response</li> <li>Critical thinking – thinking on feet to ensure safety of self and other VBFs, plus acting to constant changing conditions</li> <li>Attention to detail – to ensure safety when not only active fire suppression but also when blacking out to prevent re-ignition</li> <li>Complex problem solving – deciding most appropriate action to take in current situation</li> <li>Memory – procedures and correct firefighting techniques; memory of members of the public and vehicles in the vicinity of incidents</li> <li>Social perceptiveness – understanding bystander's body language and gestures.</li> <li>Work with a group or team – always working in groups or teams</li> </ul>

#### Light Tanker Operation

Task Description	Light Tankers (500L) are operated by 2 people, the driver and passenger. They are used to transport personnel, equipment to the fire ground and firefighting operations.			
	The cab is accessed from ground level, as per a standard light vehicle. They can be manual (primarily) or automatic, and require a standard C-class drivers' license to operate.			
	The passenger is generally in charge of navigation and completing required paperwork and risk assessments.			
Environment where task/s occurs:	Outdoors, varying terrain, hills, extreme heat, extreme wind, dense bush, uneven ground surfaces, and shift work.			
Critical Physical Demands:	<ul> <li>Constant sitting</li> <li>Frequent fine motor control</li> <li>Constant use of foot pedals</li> </ul>			
Forceful/muscular exertions:	Dependant on terrain, exposure high jerky forces; vehicle seats do not provide air- suspension.			
Repetition and duration:	The fire ground may be anywhere from a few minutes to a few hours' drive from the brigade base.			
Work/task organisation environment:	<ul> <li>Driving under lights and sirens can be quite an adrenaline rush, especially for new VBFs</li> <li>Oral comprehension – radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Oral expression - radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Writing – passenger in vehicle completing risk assessments and other documentation</li> <li>Diagrammatic – reading and following maps for rapid response</li> <li>Critical thinking – thinking on feet to ensure safety of self and other VBFs, plus acting to constant changing conditions</li> <li>Attention to detail – to ensure safety when not only active fire suppression but also when blacking out to prevent re-ignition</li> <li>Complex problem solving – deciding most appropriate action to take in current situation</li> <li>Memory – procedures and correct firefighting techniques; memory of members of the public and vehicles in the vicinity of incidents</li> <li>Social perceptiveness – understanding bystander's body language and gestures.</li> <li>Work with a group or team – always working in groups or teams</li> </ul>			



- 1. Indicate on the body chart which area/s of the body you feel are affected by the task.
- 2. If more than one body part is affected, you may shade the different body parts in different colours. If this occurs, use the matching colour when scoring the risk factors (e.g. red for arms on the body and score sheet, blue for low back on the body and score sheet).
- 3. Give each risk factor a score out of five. One (1) is when the risk factor is not present and five (5) is when the risk factor is the most severe level they have experienced.



Exertion: How much force is the person using? Think about starting or stopping quickly					
1 No effort		3 Moderate force & speed	4	5 Maximum force or speed	
Awkward posture:	How awkward is the person	s posture?			
1 All postures neutral		3 Moderately uncomfortable	4	5 Very uncomfortable	
Vibration: How much	are the whole body or hand	/s being vibrated?			
1 None	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Extreme	
Duration: How long is the action performed for?					
1 <10 minutes	2 10-30min	3 30min-1 hour	4 1-2 hours	5 >2 hours	
Repetition: How often are similar actions completed?					
1 No repetition	2	3 Cycle time <30 seconds		5 Cycle time <10 seconds	

#### **Tanker Operation**

Task Description	The 1.4, 2.4 and 4.4 tankers (see below) operate with a crew of 3 or 4 people, and are used to transport personnel, equipment to the fire ground and firefighting operations.			
	They can be automatic (primarily) or manual vehicles and require an MR license to operate.			
	<ul> <li>Cab access is via 2 vertical steps, the first being 50cm from the ground. 3 points of contact must be maintained at all times when accessing and egressing the cab or tray platform, with above shoulder height handles within the cab and tray platform.</li> <li>1.4: 1000L tank with 4wd capability</li> <li>2.4: 2000L tank with 4wd capability</li> <li>4.4: 4000L tank with 4wd capability</li> </ul>			
Environment where task/s occurs:	Outdoors, varying terrain, hills, extreme heat, extreme wind, dense bush, uneven ground surfaces, and shift work.			
Critical Physical Demands:	<ul> <li>Constant sitting</li> <li>Frequent fine motor control</li> <li>Constant use of foot pedals</li> <li>Occasional above shoulder height reach</li> <li>Occasional use of vertical steps (up to 500mm)</li> <li>Trunk rotation of front passenger during communication with those in rear seats</li> </ul>			
Forceful/muscular exertions:	<ul> <li>Access and Egress from cab – two vertical step – 500mm step height.</li> <li>Air suspension driver seat, passengers may be exposed to jerky, high forces due to terrain.</li> <li>Passengers in rear bench are not provided seats with suspension</li> </ul>			
Repetition and duration:	Travel time between destinations varies from 15 minutes to over 4 hours.			
Work/task organisation environment:	<ul> <li>Driving under lights and sirens can be quite an adrenaline rush, especially for new VBFs</li> <li>Oral comprehension – radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Oral expression - radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Writing – passenger in vehicle completing risk assessments and other documentation</li> <li>Diagrammatic – reading and following maps for rapid response</li> <li>Critical thinking – thinking on feet to ensure safety of self and other VBFs, plus acting to constant changing conditions</li> <li>Attention to detail – to ensure safety when not only active fire suppression but also when blacking out to prevent re-ignition</li> <li>Complex problem solving – deciding most appropriate action to take in current situation</li> <li>Memory – procedures and correct firefighting techniques; memory of members of the public and vehicles in the vicinity of incidents</li> <li>Social perceptiveness – understanding bystander's body language and gestures.</li> <li>Work with a group or team – always working in groups or teams</li> </ul>			

- 1. Indicate on the body chart which area/s of the body you feel are affected by the task.
- 2. If more than one body part is affected, you may shade the different body parts in different colours. If this occurs, use the matching colour when scoring the risk factors (e.g. red for arms on the body and score sheet, blue for low back on the body and score sheet).
- 3. Give each risk factor a score out of five. One (1) is when the risk factor is not present and five (5) is when the risk factor is the most severe level they have experienced.



Exertion: How much force is the person using? Think about starting or stopping quickly					
1 No effort		3 Moderate force & speed	4	5 Maximum force or speed	
Awkward posture:	How awkward is the person	s posture?			
1 All postures neutral		3 Moderately uncomfortable	4	5 Very uncomfortable	
Vibration: How much	are the whole body or hand	/s being vibrated?			
1 None	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Extreme	
Duration: How long is the action performed for?					
1 <10 minutes	2 10-30min	3 30min-1 hour	4 1-2 hours	5 >2 hours	
Repetition: How often are similar actions completed?					
1 No repetition	2	3 Cycle time <30 seconds		5 Cycle time <10 seconds	



Figure 2: Example of tanker vehicle, generally 3 people teams.

#### Rolling and Unrolling Lay-flat hoses

Task Description	Lay-flat hoses are used for water delivery. They are stored in the tray of the tankers, and must be unrolled and re-rolled before and after use. Two main techniques of rolling are Dutch and Centre roll.			
	They are a minimum of 10m long out to 30m and come in 3 thicknesses (20mm, 38mm an 64mm).			
	They weigh between 10 and 15kg depending on diameter when uncharged. When charged, they weigh between 40-42kg.			
	The hoses are taken from the side of the tankers, usually stored above shoulder height, and are rolled out using an underarm rolling technique (Dutch Rolled) or held at shoulder height and walked out using a circular motion to unroll the hose (Centre Rolled).			
	When the hoses are uncharged, they are manually rolled back up, using one or two people to assist, and placed back on the tanker for storage.			
	They are connected to the tanker via manually operated couplings. Couplings can be pushed on, twisted on or clipped on.			
	Multiple lengths may be connected via couplings, and varying branches are fitted dependent on task.			
	Hoses may also been wound back in using hose reels.			
Environment where task/s occurs:	Outdoors, varying terrain, hills, extreme heat, extreme wind, dense bush, uneven ground surfaces, and shift work.			
Critical Physical Demands:	<ul> <li>Constant standing</li> <li>Occasional above shoulder height reach</li> <li>Occasional floor to above shoulder lift up to 8kg</li> <li>Occasional push/pull forces up to 42kg</li> <li>Occasional fine motor control</li> <li>Occasional trunk flexion</li> </ul>			
Forceful/muscular exertions:	<ul> <li>Floor to above shoulder height lifting</li> <li>Holding loads away from body when storing hoses</li> <li>Underarm rolling of hose</li> <li>Sustained trunk flexion, whilst holding load and rolling hose</li> <li>Movement of charged hoses</li> <li>Flake hose technique – requires two people, high hand grip force exerted.</li> </ul>			
Repetition and duration:	<ul> <li>This task can last between 30min – 2hours depending on quantity and VBFs available.</li> <li>Each hose takes between 1-3mins to roll up</li> <li>Between 1-6 hoses are rolled up by each VBF</li> </ul>			
Work/task organisation environment:	<ul> <li>Attention to detail – hoses must rolled correctly to ensure ease of use for next incident</li> <li>Memory – procedures and correct hose rolling techniques.</li> <li>Work with a group or team – always working in groups or teams</li> </ul>			

- 1. Indicate on the body chart which area/s of the body you feel are affected by the task.
- 2. If more than one body part is affected, you may shade the different body parts in different colours. If this occurs, use the matching colour when scoring the risk factors (e.g. red for arms on the body and score sheet, blue for low back on the body and score sheet).
- 3. Give each risk factor a score out of five. One (1) is when the risk factor is not present and five (5) is when the risk factor is the most severe level they have experienced.



Exertion: How much force is the person using? Think about starting or stopping quickly					
1 No effort	2	3 Moderate force & speed		5 Maximum force or speed	
Awkward posture:	How awkward is the person	s posture?			
1 All postures neutral		3 Moderately uncomfortable	4	5 Very uncomfortable	
Vibration: How much are the whole body or hand/s being vibrated?					
1 None	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Extreme	
Duration: How long is the action performed for?					
1 <10 minutes	2 10-30min	3 30min-1 hour	4 1-2 hours	5 >2 hours	
Repetition: How often are similar actions completed?					
1 No repetition	2	3 Cycle time <30 seconds	4	5 Cycle time <10 seconds	





#### Active Fire Suppression

Task Description	This is when a fire is being actively fought.
	The hose operator holds the hose, while the second person (backup) acts as a support and director of the hose for the hose operator. The backup person holds the weight and points the hose in the direction it is required.
	These roles are swapped every 15 minutes approximately, depending on fatigue levels.
	If using the hose reel, a single operator can complete this task; incident dependant.
	A charged hose weighs around 40kg, and must be dragged across uneven ground, often in dense bush and hilly terrain.
	Multiple hoses may be joined together.
	The hose is be tucked under the operators arm (preferred technique), or propped on the shoulder (not preferred), depending on volunteer preference.
	The fire may be fought from the ground or from the platform of the tankers and can use lay- flat hoses, live reels and water monitors.
Environment where task/s occurs:	Outdoors, varying terrain, hills, extreme heat, extreme wind, dense bush, uneven ground surfaces, and shift work.
Critical Physical Demands:	<ul> <li>Constant standing</li> <li>Constant walking</li> <li>Constant push/pull forces 40kg</li> <li>Frequent fine motor control</li> <li>Frequent 10kg lift floor to chest height</li> <li>Frequent above shoulder lift 10kg</li> </ul>
Forceful/muscular exertions:	<ul> <li>Floor to above shoulder height lifting</li> <li>Holding loads away from body</li> <li>Sustained trunk flexion, whilst holding charged hose</li> <li>Sustained grip and hold of charged hose</li> <li>Movement of charged hoses</li> </ul>
Repetition and duration:	<ul> <li>Active fire suppression can be ongoing for a whole 12 hour shift.</li> <li>The hose operator directs the spray of the hose, while the second person acts as a support prop for the hose operator.</li> <li>These roles are swapped every 15 minutes, depending on fatigue levels.</li> </ul>
Work/task organisation environment:	<ul> <li>Oral comprehension – radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Oral expression - radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Critical thinking – thinking on feet to ensure safety of self and other VBFs, plus acting to constant changing conditions</li> <li>Attention to detail – to ensure safety when actively completing fire suppression</li> <li>Complex problem solving – deciding most appropriate action to take in current situation</li> <li>Memory – procedures and correct firefighting techniques; memory of members of the public and vehicles in the vicinity of incidents</li> <li>Work with a group or team – always working in groups or teams</li> </ul>

- 1. Indicate on the body chart which area/s of the body you feel are affected by the task.
- 2. If more than one body part is affected, you may shade the different body parts in different colours. If this occurs, use the matching colour when scoring the risk factors (e.g. red for arms on the body and score sheet, blue for low back on the body and score sheet).
- 3. Give each risk factor a score out of five. One (1) is when the risk factor is not present and five (5) is when the risk factor is the most severe level they have experienced.



Exertion: How much force is the person using? Think about starting or stopping quickly				
1 No effort	2	3 Moderate force & speed		5 Maximum force or speed
Awkward posture:	How awkward is the person	s posture?		
1 All postures neutral		3 Moderately uncomfortable	4	5 Very uncomfortable
Vibration: How much	are the whole body or hand	/s being vibrated?		
1 None	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Extreme
Duration: How long is t	the action performed for?			
1 <10 minutes	2 10-30min	3 30min-1 hour	4 1-2 hours	5 >2 hours
Repetition: How often are similar actions completed?				
1 No repetition		3 Cycle time <30 seconds	4	5 Cycle time <10 seconds



Figure 2: Example of active fire suppression

#### Drip Torch Operation

Task Description	Drip torches are hand held devices used for controlled burning purposes.			
	When full of fuel, they weigh 6kg.			
	Controlled burning can last an entire shift.			
Environment where task/s occurs:	Outdoors, varying terrain, hills, extreme heat, extreme wind, dense bush, uneven ground surfaces, and shift work.			
Critical Physical Demands:	<ul> <li>Constant standing</li> <li>Constant walking</li> <li>Constant carrying 6kg</li> <li>Frequent fine motor control</li> <li>Frequent lifting 6kg ground to shoulder height</li> </ul>			
Forceful/muscular exertions:	<ul> <li>Floor to above chest height lifting</li> <li>Holding loads away from body</li> </ul>			
Repetition and duration:	<ul> <li>This task can last between 30min – 4hours depending on VBFs available.</li> <li>Repetitive movement of hand/arm</li> <li>Can cover up to 4km by foot completing tasks</li> </ul>			
Work/task organisation environment:	<ul> <li>Oral expression - radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Diagrammatic - reading and following maps for rapid response</li> <li>Critical thinking - thinking on feet to ensure safety of self and other VBFs, plus acting to constant changing conditions</li> <li>Attention to detail - to ensure safety when completing preventative burns</li> <li>Complex problem solving - deciding most appropriate action to take in current situation</li> <li>Memory - procedures and correct techniques.</li> <li>Social perceptiveness - understanding bystander's body language and gestures.</li> <li>Work with a group or team - always working in groups or teams</li> </ul>			

- 1. Indicate on the body chart which area/s of the body you feel are affected by the task.
- 2. If more than one body part is affected, you may shade the different body parts in different colours. If this occurs, use the matching colour when scoring the risk factors (e.g. red for arms on the body and score sheet, blue for low back on the body and score sheet).
- 3. Give each risk factor a score out of five. One (1) is when the risk factor is not present and five (5) is when the risk factor is the most severe level they have experienced.



Exertion: How much force is the person using? Think about starting or stopping quickly					
1 No effort	2	3 Moderate force & speed	4	5 Maximum force or speed	
Awkward posture:	How awkward is the person	s posture?			
1 All postures neutral	2	3 Moderately uncomfortable	4	5 Very uncomfortable	
Vibration: How much	are the whole body or hand	/s being vibrated?			
1 None	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Extreme	
Duration: How long is the action performed for?					
1 <10 minutes	2 10-30min	3 30min-1 hour	4 1-2 hours	5 >2 hours	
Repetition: How often are similar actions completed?					
1 No repetition	2	3 Cycle time <30 seconds		5 Cycle time <10 seconds	



Figure 2: Example of drip torch use (Note environment risk factors)

#### Vehicle Checks

Task Description	Visual checks of all vehicles is carried out on weekly and monthly schedule; involving inspection of tyres, electrics, petrol, water and oil levels, equipment lockers and hose reel. The weekly checks take approximately 15mins; and the monthly checks up to an hour. Vehicle check are encouraged to be completed once returning from an incident.
Environment where task/s occurs:	Outdoors, on station extreme heat, and shift work.
Critical Physical Demands:	<ul> <li>Constant standing</li> <li>Constant walking</li> <li>Occasional trunk flexion</li> <li>Occasional fine motor control</li> </ul>
Forceful/muscular exertions:	<ul> <li>Waist to above shoulder height lifting</li> <li>Holding loads away from body</li> </ul>
Repetition and duration:	The weekly checks take approximately 15mins; and the monthly checks up to an hour.
Work/task organisation environment:	<ul> <li>Attention to detail – to ensure all checks are completed and equipment is functioning</li> <li>Memory – procedures and correct techniques.</li> <li>Work with a group or team – always working in groups or teams</li> </ul>

- 1. Indicate on the body chart which area/s of the body you feel are affected by the task.
- 2. If more than one body part is affected, you may shade the different body parts in different colours. If this occurs, use the matching colour when scoring the risk factors (e.g. red for arms on the body and score sheet, blue for low back on the body and score sheet).
- 3. Give each risk factor a score out of five. One (1) is when the risk factor is not present and five (5) is when the risk factor is the most severe level they have experienced.



Exertion: How much force is the person using? Think about starting or stopping quickly					
1 No effort	2	3 Moderate force & speed	4	5 Maximum force or speed	
Awkward posture:	How awkward is the person	s posture?			
1 All postures neutral	2	3 Moderately uncomfortable	4	5 Very uncomfortable	
Vibration: How much are the whole body or hand/s being vibrated?					
1 None	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Extreme	
Duration: How long is the action performed for?					
1 <10 minutes	2 10-30min	3 30min-1 hour	4 1-2 hours	5 >2 hours	
Repetition: How often are similar actions completed?					
1 No repetition		3 Cycle time <30 seconds	4	5 Cycle time <10 seconds	

# Manual Task Images Figure 6: Example of sustained standing postures required when completing a vehicle inspection DALE 3.4U

Figure 2: Example of awkward postures required when completing a vehicle inspection.

#### Knapsack Spraying

Task Description	Knapsack sprayers are used to contain small spot fires or maintain control of fires that have been extinguished. They hold a volume of 20L, weighing 20kg when full. The knapsack should be filled once already on the operators back.			
Environment where task/s occurs:	Outdoors, varying terrain, hills, extreme heat, extreme wind, dense bush, uneven ground surfaces, and shift work.			
Critical Physical Demands:	<ul> <li>Constant standing or walking</li> <li>Constant carrying 20kg</li> <li>Constant fine motor control</li> <li>Walking on uneven surfaces</li> </ul>			
Forceful/muscular exertions:	<ul> <li>Lifting and carrying knapsack on back</li> <li>Push/pull action to spray water</li> </ul>			
Repetition and duration:	<ul> <li>This task can last between 10-30min depending on VBFs available.</li> <li>Repetitive movement of hand/arm</li> <li>Can cover up to 2km by foot completing tasks</li> </ul>			
Work/task organisation environment:	<ul> <li>Oral comprehension – radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Oral expression - radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Critical thinking – thinking on feet to ensure safety of self and other VBFs, plus acting to constant changing conditions</li> <li>Attention to detail – to ensure safety when actively completing spraying</li> <li>Complex problem solving – deciding most appropriate action to take in current situation</li> <li>Memory – procedures and correct firefighting techniques; memory of members of the public and vehicles in the vicinity of incidents</li> <li>Work with a group or team – always working in groups or teams</li> </ul>			



- 1. Indicate on the body chart which area/s of the body you feel are affected by the task.
- 2. If more than one body part is affected, you may shade the different body parts in different colours. If this occurs, use the matching colour when scoring the risk factors (e.g. red for arms on the body and score sheet, blue for low back on the body and score sheet).
- 3. Give each risk factor a score out of five. One (1) is when the risk factor is not present and five (5) is when the risk factor is the most severe level they have experienced.



Exertion: How much force is the person using? Think about starting or stopping quickly					
1 No effort	2	3 Moderate force & speed	4	5 Maximum force or speed	
Awkward posture:	How awkward is the person	s posture?			
1 All postures neutral		3 Moderately uncomfortable	4	5 Very uncomfortable	
Vibration: How much are the whole body or hand/s being vibrated?					
1 None	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Extreme	
Duration: How long is the action performed for?					
1 <10 minutes	2 10-30min	3 30min-1 hour	4 1-2 hours	5 >2 hours	
Repetition: How often are similar actions completed?					
1 No repetition	2	3 Cycle time <30 seconds	4	5 Cycle time <10 seconds	



#### Manual Task Images





Figure 2: Example of knapsack spraying (training image)

#### Support Roles

Task Description	Support roles encompass those not directly on the fire ground, including those operating in the incident control centre. This role involves communicating with all key personnel and agencies via phone, radio and computer, conducting risk assessments and forming strategies.			
Environment where task/s occurs:	Outdoors, varying terrain, hills, extreme heat, extreme wind, dense bush, uneven ground surfaces, and shift work.			
Critical Physical Demands:	<ul> <li>Frequent standing</li> <li>Frequent sitting</li> <li>Frequent fine motor control</li> </ul>			
Forceful/muscular exertions:	Nil			
Repetition and duration:	<ul> <li>This task can last between 30min – 12hours depending on VBFs available.</li> <li>Repetitive movement of hand/arm</li> </ul>			
Work/task organisation environment:	<ul> <li>Oral comprehension – radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Oral expression - radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Writing – record keeping, completing risk assessments and other documentation</li> <li>Diagrammatic – reading and following maps for rapid response</li> <li>Critical thinking – thinking on feet to ensure safety of self and other VBFs, plus acting to constant changing conditions</li> <li>Complex problem solving – deciding most appropriate action to take in current situation</li> <li>Work with a group or team – always working in groups or teams</li> </ul>			



- 1. Indicate on the body chart which area/s of the body you feel are affected by the task.
- 2. If more than one body part is affected, you may shade the different body parts in different colours. If this occurs, use the matching colour when scoring the risk factors (e.g. red for arms on the body and score sheet, blue for low back on the body and score sheet).
- 3. Give each risk factor a score out of five. One (1) is when the risk factor is not present and five (5) is when the risk factor is the most severe level they have experienced.



Exertion: How much force is the person using? Think about starting or stopping quickly					
1 No effort	2	3 Moderate force & speed	4	5 Maximum force or speed	
Awkward posture:	How awkward is the person	s posture?			
1 All postures neutral		3 Moderately uncomfortable	4	5 Very uncomfortable	
Vibration: How much are the whole body or hand/s being vibrated?					
1 None	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Extreme	
Duration: How long is the action performed for?					
1 <10 minutes	2 10-30min	3 30min-1 hour	4 1-2 hours	5 >2 hours	
Repetition: How often are similar actions completed?					
1 No repetition	2	3 Cycle time <30 seconds		5 Cycle time <10 seconds	



#### Manual Task Images



Figure 8: Example of support roles within administration/control room setting.



Figure 2: Example of incident response control centre.

#### Use of rake hoe

Task Description	Rake hoe: used to cut, rake, scrape and chip and area to clear or clean up. Used by VBFs as a main tool in the fighting of fires, back burning and blacking out.			
Environment where task/s occurs:	Outdoors, varying terrain, hills, extreme heat, extreme wind, dense bush, uneven ground surfaces, and shift work.			
Critical Physical Demands:	<ul> <li>Constant standing</li> <li>Frequent sustained trunk flexion</li> <li>Frequent trunk rotation</li> <li>Constant hand grip</li> <li>Frequent lifting 5kg ground to shoulder height</li> </ul>			
Forceful/muscular exertions:	<ul> <li>Floor to above shoulder height lifting</li> <li>Holding loads away from body</li> <li>Trunk rotation</li> <li>High jerky forces when puling rake hoe through the ground – can strike tree roots and rocks.</li> </ul>			
Repetition and duration:	<ul> <li>This task can last between 30min – 10hours depending on VBFs available.</li> <li>1hr on average.</li> <li>Repetitive movement of hand/arm</li> <li>Repetitive trunk rotation</li> </ul>			
Work/task organisation environment:	<ul> <li>Oral comprehension – radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Oral expression - radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Critical thinking – thinking on feet to ensure safety of self and other VBFs, plus acting to constant changing conditions</li> <li>Attention to detail – to ensure safety when actively completing fire suppression</li> <li>Complex problem solving – deciding most appropriate action to take in current situation</li> <li>Memory – procedures and correct firefighting techniques; memory of members of the public and vehicles in the vicinity of incidents</li> <li>Work with a group or team – always working in groups or teams</li> </ul>			



- 1. Indicate on the body chart which area/s of the body you feel are affected by the task.
- 2. If more than one body part is affected, you may shade the different body parts in different colours. If this occurs, use the matching colour when scoring the risk factors (e.g. red for arms on the body and score sheet, blue for low back on the body and score sheet).
- 3. Give each risk factor a score out of five. One (1) is when the risk factor is not present and five (5) is when the risk factor is the most severe level they have experienced.



Exertion: How much force is the person using? Think about starting or stopping quickly					
1 No effort	2	3 Moderate force & speed	4	5 Maximum force or speed	
Awkward posture:	How awkward is the person	s posture?			
1 All postures neutral	2	3 Moderately uncomfortable	4	5 Very uncomfortable	
Vibration: How much	are the whole body or hand	/s being vibrated?			
1 None	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Extreme	
Duration: How long is the action performed for?					
1 <10 minutes	2 10-30min	3 30min-1 hour	4 1-2 hours	5 >2 hours	
Repetition: How often are similar actions completed?					
1 No repetition	2	3 Cycle time <30 seconds	4	5 Cycle time <10 seconds	

#### Manual Task Images



Figure 9: Example of rack hoe usage, note awkward posture and repetitive movements.



Figure 2: Example of rack hoe usage in an emergency.

#### Miscellaneous Hand Tools

Task Description	<ul> <li>Multiple hand tools are required to be used by VBFs at any time. These included:</li> <li>Axe: used for felling small trees and shrubs, removing branches, grubbing stumps or cleaning bark from tree.</li> <li>Shovel: used for throwing mineral soil over fire and assisting in the recovery of off-road vehicles.</li> <li>Bolt cutters: used to cut chains, padlocks, fencing wire etc.</li> </ul>
Environment where task/s occurs:	Outdoors, varying terrain, hills, extreme heat, extreme wind, dense bush, uneven ground surfaces, and shift work.
Critical Physical Demands:	<ul> <li>Constant standing</li> <li>Frequent sustained trunk flexion</li> <li>Frequent trunk rotation</li> <li>Frequent fine motor control</li> <li>Frequent lifting 5kg ground to shoulder height</li> </ul>
Forceful/muscular exertions:	<ul> <li>Floor to above shoulder height lifting</li> <li>Holding loads away from body</li> <li>Trunk rotation</li> <li>Use of bolt cutter</li> </ul>
Repetition and duration:	<ul> <li>This task can last between 30min – 12hours depending on VBFs available.</li> <li>Repetitive movement of hand/arm</li> <li>Repetitive trunk rotation</li> </ul>
Work/task organisation environment:	<ul> <li>Oral comprehension – radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Oral expression - radio and phone communications; talking with team members in vehicle and on fire grounds</li> <li>Critical thinking – thinking on feet to ensure safety of self and other VBFs, plus acting to constant changing conditions</li> <li>Attention to detail – to ensure safety when actively completing fire suppression</li> <li>Complex problem solving – deciding most appropriate action to take in current situation</li> <li>Memory – procedures and correct firefighting techniques; memory of members of the public and vehicles in the vicinity of incidents</li> <li>Work with a group or team – always working in groups or teams</li> </ul>

- 1. Indicate on the body chart which area/s of the body you feel are affected by the task.
- 2. If more than one body part is affected, you may shade the different body parts in different colours. If this occurs, use the matching colour when scoring the risk factors (e.g. red for arms on the body and score sheet, blue for low back on the body and score sheet).
- 3. Give each risk factor a score out of five. One (1) is when the risk factor is not present and five (5) is when the risk factor is the most severe level they have experienced.



Exertion: How much force is the person using? Think about starting or stopping quickly					
1 No effort	2	3 Moderate force & speed		5 Maximum force or speed	
Awkward posture:	How awkward is the person	s posture?			
1 All postures neutral	2	3 Moderately uncomfortable	4	5 Very uncomfortable	
Vibration: How much are the whole body or hand/s being vibrated?					
1 None	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Extreme	
Duration: How long is the action performed for?					
1 <10 minutes	2 10-30min	3 30min-1 hour	4 1-2 hours	5 >2 hours	
Repetition: How often are similar actions completed?					
1 No repetition	2	3 Cycle time <30 seconds	4	5 Cycle time <10 seconds	

![](_page_102_Picture_0.jpeg)

Figure 2: Example of hose reels and tool storage on the back of the vehicles.

#### **General Equipment Lifting**

Task Description	Throughout the course of a shift, various items may need to be lifted on/off the fire appliances. This could include a fast fill pump, jerry cans of fuel and water, containers of Class A foam and traffic control signs and cones.			
Environment where task/s occurs:	Outdoors, varying terrain, hills, extreme heat, extreme wind, dense bush, uneven ground surfaces, and shift work.			
Critical Physical Demands:	<ul> <li>Frequent fine motor control</li> <li>Frequent single person lift floor to above shoulder height up to 22kgs</li> <li>Occasional two person lift floor to above shoulder height up to 38kgs</li> </ul>			
Forceful/muscular exertions:	<ul> <li>Floor to above shoulder height lifting</li> <li>Holding loads away from body</li> <li>Fast fill pumps weigh 38kgs – requiring a two person lift</li> <li>Class A foam container weighs 22kg – one person lift</li> </ul>			
Repetition and duration:	<ul> <li>This task can last between 30min – 1hour depending on VBFs available.</li> <li>Repetitive movement of hand/arm</li> </ul>			
Work/task organisation environment:	<ul> <li>Attention to detail – to ensure all items are correct positioned and located for ease of use</li> <li>Memory – procedures and correct storage techniques</li> <li>Work with a group or team – always working in groups or teams</li> </ul>			

![](_page_103_Picture_3.jpeg)

- 1. Indicate on the body chart which area/s of the body you feel are affected by the task.
- 2. If more than one body part is affected, you may shade the different body parts in different colours. If this occurs, use the matching colour when scoring the risk factors (e.g. red for arms on the body and score sheet, blue for low back on the body and score sheet).
- 3. Give each risk factor a score out of five. One (1) is when the risk factor is not present and five (5) is when the risk factor is the most severe level they have experienced.

![](_page_104_Picture_4.jpeg)

Exertion: How much force is the person using? Think about starting or stopping quickly					
1 No effort	2	3 Moderate force & speed	4	5 Maximum force or speed	
Awkward posture:	How awkward is the person	s posture?			
1 All postures neutral	200	3 Moderately uncomfortable	4	5 Very uncomfortable	
Vibration: How much are the whole body or hand/s being vibrated?					
1 None	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Extreme	
Duration: How long is the action performed for?					
1 <10 minutes	2 10-30min	3 30min-1 hour	4 1-2 hours	5 >2 hours	
Repetition: How often are similar actions completed?					
1 No repetition		3 Cycle time <30 seconds	4	5 Cycle time <10 seconds	

#### Manual Task Images

![](_page_105_Picture_1.jpeg)

Figure 11: Example of lifting of general equipment (note 2 person lift with above waist height lifting)

![](_page_105_Picture_3.jpeg)

Figure 2: Example of equipment that may be moved off the back of vehicles.

# CONTACT DETAILS

For any further information or onsite review, please don't hesitate to contact LGIS.

Name: Title: Mobile: Email: James Larkin - LGIS Manager, Workcare Services 0419 355 943 james.larkin@lgiswa.com.au

# **Section 4**


# **VOLUNTEER PROTECTION**

## Looking after local government's bushfire brigade volunteers

# Information sheet

Local governments in Western Australia who have bushfire brigades are required to obtain and keep current protection coverage for volunteer firefighters (VFF) under the *Bush Fires Act 1954 (WA) (BFA)* and the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998 (FES)* Part 6B.

Another related Act is the *Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981 (WA).* LGIS will arrange the required protection on behalf of local government as per below protections:

- Personal injury (VFF personal injury)
- Motor vehicle and plant damage
- Personal property
- Third party liability

#### This protection applies when a volunteer firefighter is carrying out "normal brigade activities" which are defined in the *Bush Fires Act* 1954 (WA) as:

- a. the prevention, control or extinguishment of bushfires;
- any act or operation at or about the scene of a bushfire, or in connection with a bushfire, which is necessary for, directed towards, or incidental to, the control or suppression of the fire or the prevention of spread of the fire, or in any other way necessarily associated with the fire including travelling and support services such as meals and communication systems;
- c. any bushfire prevention activity including the burning, ploughing or clearing of fire-breaks or any other operation, including but without being limited to, the inspection of fire-breaks or other works and the survey of areas for the purpose of detecting fire or ascertaining the need for precautions against the outbreak of fire, but not including the activities of an owner or occupier providing a fire-break or

fire prevention works on his own property in order to comply with a notice given under section 33 (1), 34(2) or 35(1) or a local law made under section 33 (5a);

- demonstrations, exercises, fundraising, promotions, public education, competitions or a training process for volunteers;
- e. examination, preparation, maintenance, adjustment or repair of any vehicle, equipment, building or thing used or intended to be used by a bushfire brigade for the purpose of fighting fires or for carrying out fire prevention operations including activities associated with administration of a bushfire brigade;
- f. travelling in aircraft for the purposes of inspection of fire-breaks, fire hazards and bushfires;
- g. erection, removal or maintenance of radio masts used for fire related purposes;
- h. attending an incident where the skills of a volunteer firefighter or the operation of firefighting equipment may reduce or remove a perceived threat to life or property;
- i. attending an incident subsequently found to be a false alarm.

**"Volunteer firefighter"** means a bushfire control officer, a person who is a registered member of a bushfire brigade established under this Act or a person working under the direction of that officer or member.

# Bushfire volunteers personal injury

Protection for personal injury to a VFF whilst undertaking normal brigade activities applies as if the volunteer were a worker and suffered that injury under the *Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act (WA) 1981* (as amended). The protection can be briefly summarized as follows:

a. Death

Benefit as per the WorkCover WA Prescribed Amounts Schedule

- Medical and additional expenses
  Benefit as per the WorkCover WA Prescribed
  Amounts Schedule
- c. Weekly benefits
  - If the volunteer is a self-employed or unemployed person, the actual weekly earnings received by the volunteer; or
  - In any other case, the volunteer's weekly earnings calculated in accordance with the Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981 (as amended).
  - The volunteer will need to produce sufficient evidence of his or her actual weekly earnings (e.g. pays lips, tax returns etc.). (Depending upon the complexity of the documentation provided, LGIS may need to refer the documentation to an accountant or similar – with the written approval of the volunteer).
  - In the event that the volunteer does not agree with the decision concerning the claim, the matter can be referred to an independent arbitrator under the *Commercial Arbitration Act 1985 (WA).*

#### **Claims procedure**

In the event that a volunteer is injured, priority should be given to seeking medical treatment. Once the volunteer is able, they should lodge a claim through the local government who will then forward it to LGIS for processing.

LGIS will require:

- Completed LGIS Bushfire claim form
- Attending physician statement plus any medical certificates, accounts / invoices involving your treatment; and
- Bushfire declaration to be completed by the bushfire control officer or other member of the bushfire brigade under whose direction the Injured person was fighting the bushfire at the time of the accident.

The above forms can be obtained from your local government or on the LGIS website (LGIS – Claim Form - Igiswa.com.au)

# Motor vehicle and plant damage

Protection is provided for loss or damage to:

- all appliances, equipment and apparatus of a bushfire brigade; and
- any privately owned vehicle, appliance, equipment or apparatus.

Protection is for the market value or the reasonable cost of repair, whichever is the lesser, of any such vehicle, lost or damaged that is used under the direction of a bushfire control officer or a member of a bushfire brigade for the purposes of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*. Such loss or damage occasioned in the course of normal brigade activities, as defined in the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.

#### There is no excess payable.

#### **Claims procedure**

Loss of, or damage to any vehicle should be reported immediately to the relevant local government officer so that a claim can be lodged with LGIS.

LGIS will require:

- Completed motor vehicle claim form, with photographs of the damage and at least one quote for repairs; and
- Bushfire declaration to be completed by the bushfire control officer or other member of the bushfire brigade under whose direction the injured person was fighting the bushfire at the time of the accident.

The above forms can be obtained from your local government officer or LGIS website (LGIS – Claim Form - Igiswa.com.au). Once the form is completed, return the form back to the local government and they will forward direct to the insurer as per normal motor vehicle claims procedures.

# Personal property damage

Protection is provided for loss or damage to any privately owned property including prescription glasses.

Protection is for the reasonable cost of repairs or replacement, whichever is the lesser and applies when a volunteer firefighter is undertaking "normal brigade activities" as defined in the *Bush Fires Act 1954.* 

#### There is no excess payable.

#### **Claims procedure**

Loss of, or damage to personal property should be reported immediately to the local government officer so that a claim can be lodged with LGIS.

LGIS will require:

- Completed property claim form and a quote for the repair. If not repairable, the repairer's report would be required to confirm that the damaged item is not repairable. Please provide a quote for replacement of the item; and
- Bushfire declaration to be completed by the bushfire control officer of the bushfire brigade under whose direction the person was fighting the bushfire at the time of the accident.
- Proof of ownership of the lost or damaged item (ie manual/photos/copy of original invoice)
- Photographs of all damages
- A written estimate of repair or replacement costs

The above forms can be obtained from the local government officer or LGIS website (LGIS – Claim Form - Igiswa.com.au). Once completed, return back to the local government and they will forward to LGIS as per normal Property claims procedures.

In any event, local government Public Liability cover through LGIS includes protection for volunteer firefighters and registered bushfire brigades carrying out their duties in accordance with the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.

#### **Third Party Liability**

On occasion, injury and/or damage could be incurred by third parties when volunteer firefighters are carrying out their normal brigade activities. In such situation, threats and lawsuit could occur and you may be threatened with legal action claiming compensation for damages.

According to the *Fire and Emergency Services Act* 1998 (Section 37), provides a protection from any liability that a volunteer firefighter may incur in the purported performance of a function under the *Emergency Services Act* 1998, including carrying out 'normal brigade activities (within the meaning of the *Bush Fires Act* 1954)' provided they have carried out their duties, in good faith.

The Fire and Emergency Services Act 1988 does not limit the right of recovery for damages in respect of the death of or bodily injury to any person directly caused by, or by the driving of, a motor vehicle.

#### **Claim procedure**

If any claim is received from a third party intending to take legal action or is seeking compensation against you or your brigade, then please notify local government officer immediately and they will seek instructions from LGIS.

Admissions of liability and/ or comments should never be given

## **Further Queries**

For more information, please contact LGIS on:

Level 3, 170 Railway Parade West Leederville WA 6007

Ph:	08 9483 8888
Email:	admin@lgiswa.com.au
Website:	lgiswa.com.au

#### PROPRIETARY NATURE OF DOCUMENT

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