

OFFICIAL

WEST WIMMERA SHIRE  
MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT  
PLANNING  
COMMITTEE



# Municipal Emergency Management Plan

## West Wimmera Shire



# 2022-2025 Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plan

Version 1.0



OFFICIAL

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## 1. DOCUMENT INFORMATION

### 1.1 FOREWORD

The West Wimmera Shire Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMP) acknowledges and thanks all those who have contributed to the production of this plan and those who have been willing to commit their time and considerable expertise, both as members of the West Wimmera Shire MFMP and those who supplied agency-specific information for this publication.

### 1.2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The West Wimmera Shire Council, as Chair of the West Wimmera Shire Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC), acknowledges the five Traditional Owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagulk, Jaadwa and Jadawadjali people. We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community.

We pay our respects to the Elders, both past and present, and commit to working together in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect for the benefit of the broader community and future generations.

### 1.3 AUTHORITY

In 2020, the [Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018](#) amended the [Emergency Management Act 2013 \(EM Act 2013\)](#) (Act) to provide for new integrated arrangements for emergency management planning in Victoria at the state, regional and municipal levels. It created an obligation for a MEMPC to be established in each of the municipal districts of Victoria. Each MEMPC is a multi-agency collaboration group whose members bring organisation, industry or personal expertise to the task of emergency management planning for the municipal district.

This plan has been prepared in accordance, and complies, with the requirements of the [Act](#) including having regard to the guidelines issued under s77, [Guidelines for Preparing State, Regional and Municipal Emergency Management Plans](#).

### 1.4 PLAN ASSURANCE AND APPROVAL

#### 1.4.1 ASSURANCE

A Statement of Assurance (including a checklist and certificate) has been prepared by the West Wimmera Shire MEMPC and submitted to the REMPC pursuant to the [Act](#) (s60AG).

This planning template holds similar information as Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plans (MFMSPs) developed for the Wimmera Emergency Management Resource Sharing Partnership municipalities of Hindmarsh, Horsham and Yarriambiack. Plans have been administered by the Wimmera Emergency Management Team (WEMT). Each plan is developed in collaboration with the four MEMPCs, however, they are individualised to the specific MEMPC.

*Meets assurance general: Plan has been prepared with regard to the following guidance in ministerial guidelines issued under the [Act](#) s77 ([Guidelines for Preparing State, Regional and Municipal Emergency Management Plans](#))*

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### 1.4.2 APPROVAL

This plan has been written and approved by the West Wimmera Shire MFMPC at its meeting held on the 17 June 2022. The plan has been through an assurance process overseen by the Grampians REMPC and is self-assured by the West Wimmera Shire MEMPC. This plan comes into effect when it is published and remains in effect until superseded by an approved and published update.

### 1.4.3 AUTHORISATION

This MFMSP was adopted by the West Wimmera Shire MFMPC on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of June 2022.

Signed:



Date: 17/06/2022

**Mark Gunning**

Chair  
West Wimmera Shire  
Municipal Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee

**Plan endorsed by:**

Municipal Fire Management  
Planning Sub Committee

Signed:



Date: 17/06/2022

**John Hutchins**

Chair  
West Wimmera Shire  
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee

**Plan endorsed by:**

Municipal Emergency Management  
Planning Committee

## 1.5 PLAN REVIEW

The West Wimmera Shire MFMSP may be reviewed and updated as required:

- Annually in full or part at each MFMPC meeting
- After each major event where the plan has been activated
- Where the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) has been exercised.

To ensure the plan provides for a current integrated, coordinated and comprehensive approach to emergency management and is effective, it is to be fully reviewed at least every three years.

An urgent update of this plan is permitted if there is a significant risk that life or property will be endangered if the plan is not updated (Act s60AM). Urgent updates come into effect when published on the West Wimmera Shire Council website.

This plan will be reviewed no later than 17 June 2025.

This plan is current at the time of publication and remains in effect until modified, superseded or withdrawn.

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## 1.6 AMENDMENT REGISTER

Criteria			Details
Document Title			West Wimmera Shire Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plan
Document Custodian			West Wimmera Shire Council
Version Number	Date of Issue	Author(s)	Brief Description of Change
1.0	December 2022	Wimmera Emergency Management Team	New plan with updated legislated changes

**Table 1. Amendment Register**

## 1.7 DISCLAIMER

No reader should act based on any matter contained in this publication without appreciating that it may be the subject of amendment or revocation from time to time without notice. The members of the West Wimmera Shire MEMPC and West Wimmera Shire MFMPC expressly disclaim all and any liability (including liability in negligence) to any person or body in respect of anything and of the consequences of anything done or omitted to be done by any such person or body in reliance, whether total or partial, upon the whole or any part of this publication.

## 1.8 PLAN AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This MFMSD documents the agreed emergency management arrangements for Prevention, Planning and Response, and defines the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders at the municipal level. It supports efficiency and effectiveness on a platform of shared responsibility and interoperability to deliver community centred outcomes.

This sub-plan seeks to build safer and more resilient communities through dynamic engagement and connectedness with the individuals, groups and broader society that makes up the West Wimmera Shire. It ensures a coordinated and integrated approach with a focus on community involvement in planning in line with the “all communities – all emergencies” approach to emergency management.

## 1.9 ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Administrative updates will be made to this plan from time to time and noted in the [Amendment Register](#) section. These amendments are administrative and do not substantially change the content or intent of this plan. These amendments do not require the plan to be endorsed by the West Wimmera Shire MFMPC or REMPC.

Where there is substantial change required to the content or intent of the plan, the plan will need to go through the endorsement process.

## 1.10 DISTRIBUTION OF THE MFMSD

The West Wimmera Shire MFMSD is intended for the use of the members of the West Wimmera Shire MFMPC, West Wimmera Shire MEMPC and the Grampians Regional Strategic Fire Management Planning Committee.

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The West Wimmera Shire MFMSPP will be distributed according to the committee membership of the MFMPCC, MEMPC and Grampians RSFMPC electronically, as required.

A public copy of the West Wimmera Shire MFMSPP is available from the West Wimmera Shire Council website: [www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au](http://www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au)

Access to the Restricted Version of the plan may be considered upon application to the Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO) via the [MFMP Contact Details](#) below.

### 1.11 MFMP CONTACT DETAILS

Please address all enquiries and feedback to:

Chairperson

Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee

West Wimmera Shire Council

PO Box 201

Edenhope Vic 3318

[council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au)

[www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au](http://www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au)

### 1.12 AUTHORITY AND ENDORSEMENT

The West Wimmera Shire MEMPC is the custodian of the West Wimmera Shire MFMSPP pursuant to current legislative arrangements. This MFMSPP was endorsed by the West Wimmera MFMPCC on 17 June 2022.

### 1.13 PUBLIC ACCESS

A Public Access version of the plan is available on the West Wimmera Shire Council's website under the Emergency Management tab: [www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au](http://www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au)

A Restricted Version of the plan may be available by contacting the MEMO via the contact details above.

Please note the Public Version will have some detail removed to comply with confidentiality and privacy requirements. The Restricted Version has full details included and is only made available to the appropriate agency and their representatives who have a role or responsibility detailed in this plan.

The current version of this sub-plan is maintained by Council on the "Crisisworks" emergency management platform for Council and approved agency staff access.

Names and contact details in the Restricted Version of this plan is only to be used for emergency management purposes and must be managed in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.

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## 2. INTRODUCTION

This integrated MFMS is risk-based, has regard to the social, economic, built and natural environment aspects of fire and guides participants involved in fire management activities. It is consistent with the West Wimmera Shire MEMPC to ensure that linkages are consistent and holistic. The plan also contains appropriate references to other uses of fire, including agricultural, ecological and cultural applications.

The purpose of this integrated MFMS is to chart the planned and coordinated implementation of measures designed to minimise the occurrence and mitigate the effect of bushfire, grass fire, residential and industrial fires in the community.

The West Wimmera Shire MFMS seeks to achieve consistent and effective fire management planning within the municipality through a commitment to cooperation, including sharing and building of collective knowledge and experience at municipal and regional levels.

This West Wimmera Shire MFMS is an integrated plan combining the municipality, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Country Fire Authority (CFA), Department of Transport (DoT), Parks Victoria, Victoria Police and fire management plans of other key stakeholders.

### 2.1 CORE MEMBERSHIP OF THE MUNICIPAL FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Membership of the West Wimmera Shire MFMPC, as appointed by the MEMPC, will comprise of representatives from key agencies and organisations, including as per the Committee's Terms of Reference ([Appendix A](#)):

- Country Fire Authority
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning / Forest Fire Management Victoria
- Department of Transport
- Emergency Recovery Victoria
- Parks Victoria
- West Wimmera Shire Council
- Victoria Police.

### 2.2 ROLE OF THE MUNICIPAL FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE

The role of the Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMPC) is to provide a municipal level forum to build and sustain organisational partnerships, generate a common understanding and shared purpose with regard to fire management, and ensure that the plans of individual agencies are linked and complement each other.

In addition to the roles and responsibilities conferred on the committee under its Terms of Reference ([Appendix A](#)) which are drawn from the MEMPC, the functions of the West Wimmera Shire MFMPC are:

- Plan the burning or clearing of firebreaks
- Advise the appropriate authorities as to the existence of and steps to be taken for the removal of fire hazards within the area
- Prepare the MFMS
- Recommend to CFA or the appropriate authorities (as the case may require) any action which the committee deems necessary or expedient to be taken for reducing the risk of an outbreak of fire or for suppressing any fire which may occur within the area

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- Advise the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer concerning the removal of fire hazards under Section 41 of the CFA Act
- Refer to the MEMPC for consideration of all matters which in the opinion of the MFMPC should be so referred
- Carry out other such functions as are conferred or imposed upon the West Wimmera Shire MFMPC by regulations made upon the recommendation of the Authority.

The preparation of this MFMSP has involved the experience of agencies and authorities charged with responsibilities for fire management. Consultation with local CFA brigades and community was also undertaken in the development of this document. This collaboration has ensured the development of a holistic and integrated approach to fire management across all land users, and that the strategies adopted were based on practical local knowledge and common sense.

### 3. ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

#### 3.1 COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES

The achievement of fire management objectives and the success of fire management outcomes will be dependent on effective communications in all planning and implementation phases. The objectives of the communications plan will be to:

- Build a collaborative approach to integrated fire management
- Identify internal communication flows within organisations
- Ensure that communication across agencies is effective in developing a shared understanding of the issues and key responsibilities and that all agencies deliver a consistent message to the community and their stakeholders
- Build resilient relationships and sound networks between key stakeholders
- Consult with communities so that local knowledge is captured in the planning process that the communications plan supports
- Foster better communication and planning between the agencies and local communities
- Achieve greater consistency from all levels of government on key policy issues.

#### 3.2 COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

The West Wimmera Shire MFMPC recognizes the value of local knowledge and the unique contribution the community can make to the MFMSP planning process.

Effective community engagement in fire management planning is required to:

- Promote acceptance, understanding and joint problem solving
- Raise knowledge and skills of fire management through participation
- Produce plans that support community and organisational expectations
- Incorporate community and organisational needs into the development of plans.

##### 3.2.1 STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

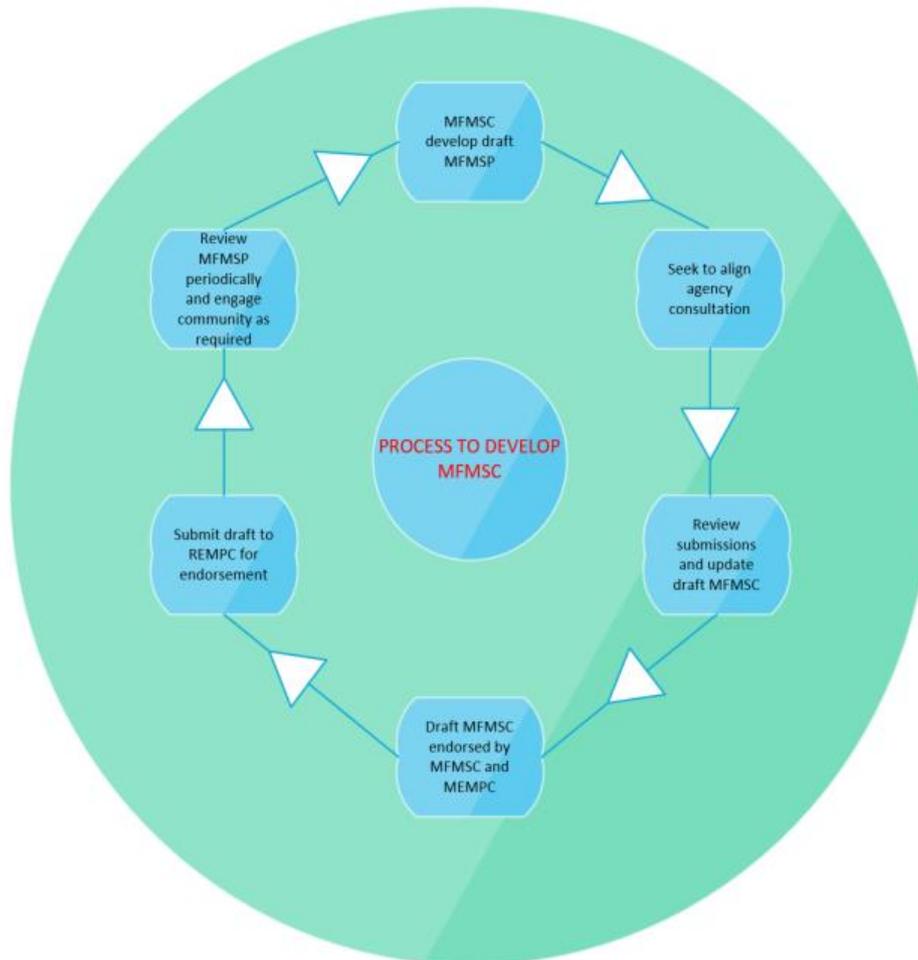
- A stakeholder and community engagement process was undertaken in the development of the first iteration of the MFMSP. This process featured:
  - Community information sessions held in West Wimmera Shire targeting high-risk communities
  - Stakeholder briefings held in West Wimmera Shire for special interest organisations as required
  - Online engagement program during the consultation period
- All submissions were considered in the development of the first iteration of the MFMSP.

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**3.2.2 PROCESS TO DEVELOP THE MUNICIPAL FIRE MANAGEMENT SUB-PLAN**

The plan is based on the Integrated Fire Management Planning (IFMP) framework. The Victorian Government developed the IFMP framework for Victoria in response to recommendations made in the Victorian Bushfire Inquiry 2009. IFMP aims to achieve a consistent and effective means for fire management planning within Victoria through a commitment to cooperation, including information sharing and the building of collective knowledge.

The planning framework operates under existing fire and emergency management legislation which is currently evolving. This approach does not replace the existing statutory roles and responsibilities of agencies; it supports and enhances them through government and agencies working together.



**Figure 1. Process involved in the development of the MFMSPP**

The State Fire Management Planning Committee has been created to establish, enable and monitor the implementation of the IFMP Framework, ensuring its consistency and sustainability. The committee provides policies and directions to facilitate an integrated approach to fire management planning across Victoria.

Regional Strategic Fire Management Planning Committees have been established across eight regions throughout Victoria and work collaboratively to produce a Regional Strategic Fire Management Plan. The West Wimmera Shire is one of 11 municipalities in the Grampians Region.

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The Regional Strategic Fire Management Plan is risk-based and considers the needs of the region as a whole. This plan guides the development of each municipal level plan within the region and includes advice on various treatment options, which may be considered in municipal level planning. The Grampians Regional Strategic Fire Management Planning Committee provides a critical link between municipal and state fire management planning.

Many other organisational plans and strategies have strong links to the development of this plan. The strategic intent of these plans is captured within this plan but the detail remains within those organisations' documents.



Figure 2. Hierarchy of Plans

For these and any other relevant strategies and/or documents that have and will influence this plan refer to [Appendix G: Other Documents and Links](#)

## 4. MUNICIPAL FIRE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

### 4.1 OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES

The primary objectives of the West Wimmera Shire MFMS are to:

- ***Effectively manage and reduce the risk of fire, protect life and property with due regard to our natural environment***
- ***Align and integrate existing fire management planning and practices across agencies and the community.***

The West Wimmera Shire MFMS is a strategic and operational document that identifies communities and assets at risk through an Environmental Risk Scan incorporating the MEMP, using the Victorian Fire Risk Register - Bushfire (VFRR-B) tool to identify assets at risk from bushfire and treatments currently applied to mitigate risk.

The intention of this MFMS is to minimise the occurrence and mitigate the impacts of bushfire, grass and structure fire and hazardous materials incidents on the community in accordance with the IFMP framework.

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## 4.2 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The plan addresses both public and private land across the West Wimmera Shire. The MFMSPP will be reviewed and updated to ensure it incorporates any new strategies, programs and tools developed to meet Council, agencies and community needs and expectations.

Also considered in the ongoing development of the MFMP are the following broad strategy documents which can be accessed through the CFA, Safer Together and Emergency Management Victoria websites at [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au), [www.safertogether.vic.gov.au](http://www.safertogether.vic.gov.au) and [www.emv.vic.gov.au](http://www.emv.vic.gov.au):

- *Strategic Directions for Planning in Victoria (2013)* – provides Victoria with clear direction to meet future bushfire challenges
- *Bushfire Safety Policy Framework* (Fire Services Commissioner 2013)
- *Safer Together* (DELWP 2015) – aims to bring land and fire managers, and communities together to minimise the risk of bushfire
- *Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management* (EMV 2017)
- *Community-Based Emergency Management Overview* (EMV, 2016).

The aim of the MFMSPP is to create greater community awareness and communicate fire management information more effectively. Ultimately, the community will share responsibility for implementing the strategies contained within the plan and create a safer municipality through undertaking the following tasks:

- Ensure that plans and actions are in place (that responsible authorities are advised of actions which the MFMSPP deem necessary) for minimising the risk of an outbreak of fire or for suppressing any fire that may occur within the area
- Develop programs that are relevant to the community
- Measure fire safety outputs to assess the reduction in community vulnerability to fire
- Engage community groups and businesses in ongoing dialogue about fire mitigation solutions including fire prevention activities
- Liaise with other agencies and committees to ensure integration and consistency of purpose.

## 4.3 LINKS TO OTHER BUSINESS PLANNING AND PROGRAMS

Important linkages include:

- [Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan \(SAP\) Update #4 2019-22](#)
- [Strategic Bushfire Management Planning](#)
- [Grampians Bushfire Strategic Fire Management Plan](#)
- [West Wimmera Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan](#)
- [DELWP Strategic Bushfire Management Plan West Central](#)
- [FFMV/CFA Joint Fuel Management Plan Grampians Region](#)
- [Powercor Bushfire Mitigation Strategy Revised June 2020](#)
- [Ausnet Services Bushfire Mitigation Plan](#)
- [VicRoads Roadside Management Strategy](#)
- [Central Highlands Water Plan](#)
- [Plantation Fire Mitigation Plans](#)
- Municipal Fire Management Plans for Neighbouring Municipalities
- [CFA Operational Plans and Brigade Pre Plans](#)
- Other CFA Plans.

Other linkages occur through alignment to organisational business planning cycles, agreed data sharing protocols and common risk assessment methodologies.

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## 5. MUNICIPAL FIRE PROFILE

For detailed information regarding the municipal profile of the West Wimmera municipality refer to the Municipal Emergency Management Plan. The following information relates to the municipal fire profile.

### 5.1 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

West Wimmera Shire includes sections of the Big Desert Wilderness Park in the north, a section of the Little Desert National Park in the central area and Glenelg River along part of the southern boundary. The great 4WD Border Track runs along the western border adjoining South Australia. The southeast of the Shire is dotted with stately redgums and about 3,000 wetlands. Numerous nature conservation reserves and state forest blocks are scattered throughout the Shire in all vegetation types.

West Wimmera Shire is home to the largest concentration of red-tailed black cockatoos in Victoria. It is estimated that the population of this endangered species is only 1,500-2,000 birds.

The following table depicts the major public land holdings in the West Wimmera Shire.

Name	Manager	Size (ha)
Big Desert Wilderness Area	Parks Victoria	13,500
Little Desert National Park	Parks Victoria	132,647
Dergholm State Forest	Parks Victoria	10,400
Toosan State Forest	Parks Victoria	7,475

**Table 2. West Wimmera Shire Major Public Land Holdings**

### 5.2 LAND USE

Rural land use comprises over 80% of the total land in the area with less than 3% (Department of Health Modelling 2013) being used for business, industrial or residential purposes. The major waterway is the Glenelg River located in the south of the Shire. There are a number of lakes within the area, the major lakes being Lake Wallace, Lake Charlegrark, Lake Bringalbert, Lake Ratzcastle and Lake Boorooki.

The major land use across the Shire is agriculture, but this varies greatly from the broad acre cereal crops of the northern area around Kaniva district to the bore irrigated intensive agriculture around the Edenhope area, to sheep grazing around Harrow and pine and blue gum plantations around the Dergholm district.

The Shire is completely divided into two by the Little Desert National Park which separates the red gum grazing plains from the sandy Mallee vegetation. There are a number of other public land forests and reserves scattered throughout the Shire, mainly consisting of brown stringybark vegetation associated with the poorer soils. A large number of naturally filled wetlands are scattered across the southern section of the Shire providing a range of recreational opportunities and significant environmental assets.

### 5.3 CLIMATE AND BUSHFIRE SEASON

The climate in the West Wimmera Shire area is dominated by warm dry summers and cool wet winters. In recent years there has been a significant decrease in average spring and autumn rainfalls. The bushfire season generally runs from November to April. Prevailing weather conditions associated with the bushfire season in the West Wimmera Shire area is warm to hot northwesterly winds accompanied by high temperatures and low relative humidity followed by a cool south-westerly change.

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Under the State Government climate change projections, West Wimmera Shire can expect to:

- Be hotter with the greatest increases in temperature expected in summer
- Be drier with the greatest decreases in rainfall expected in spring
- Have fewer rainy days but increasing rainfall intensity.

#### 5.4 HISTORY OF FIRE AND IGNITION CAUSES

The municipality has a history of lightning strikes in particular within the Little Desert National Park, Big Desert Wilderness Park and the scattered remnants of vegetation. The addition of agricultural machinery and stubble burning are also factors that increase the likelihood of ignition in the broadacre cropping area in the north. A summary of major fires is depicted in the table below.

Year	Location	Size (ha)	Ignition Source
2014/15	Little Desert – Jacobs Track 2	670	Lightning
2014/15	Little Desert – Salt Lake Track	130	Lightning
2014/15	Little Desert – East West Track	250	Lightning
2014/15	Little Desert – Broughtons Track	3,200	Lightning
2014/15	Edenhope – Johnsons Track	1,700	Lightning
2014/15	Little Desert – Mt Moffat Track	130	Lightning
2014/15	Little Desert – Lillimur Track	510	Lightning
2014/15	Little Desert – Lillimur Track No 2	922	Lightning
2015/16	Yanipy – Miram South Road	115	Burning vehicle, machine
2016/17	Minimay-Neauarpurr – Minimay Road	241	Burning vehicle, machine
2016/17	Miram South – Miram South Road	107	Lightning
2017/18	Wimmera 36-Telopea Downs – Chapple Road	104	Lightning
2017/18	Wimmera 49-Wombelano – Pine Hills No Two Road	160	Exhaust, other
2019/20	Wimmera 18-Little Desert – Koonik Track	1,477	Lightning
2019/20	Wimmera 29-Yallakar – Ross McDonalds Road	278	Lightning
2019/20	Wimmera 43-Little Desert – East West Track	255	Lightning
2021/22	Poolajelo	7,354	Burning vehicle

**Table 3. West Wimmera Shire Major Bushfire History**

#### 5.5 FUTURE FIRE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Future vulnerabilities, including larger landholdings managed by consortiums and serviced by contractors, will lead to declining populations across the Shire. This demographic, combined with an ageing population, has seen previously robust rural communities be replaced by smaller, older more vulnerable communities isolated from services. The shift in population could potentially lead to delayed suppression activities in rural areas.

An increase in private ownership of forested land being mostly absentee landowners may have implications for fire management, as the owners may not have the capacity to undertake appropriate fuel management works for a variety of reasons. Enforcement of compliance also presents complexities in terms of cost recovery and allocation of resources for management agencies.

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## 6. FIRE RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

### 6.1 RISK ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES

The Committee has considered the State Emergency Management Priorities which underpin and guide all decisions during a response to any emergency. The priorities are:

- Protection and preservation of life are paramount. This includes:
  - Safety of emergency services personnel
  - Safety of community members including vulnerable community members and visitors/tourists located within the incident area
- Issuing of community information and community warnings detailing incident information that is timely, relevant and tailored to assist community members to make informed decisions about their safety
- Protection of critical infrastructure and community assets that supports community resilience
- Protection of residential property as a place of primary residence
- Protection of assets supporting individual livelihoods and economic production that supports individual and community financial sustainability
- Protection of environmental and conservation assets that considers the cultural, biodiversity and social values of the environment

Following the State Emergency Management Priorities, the MFMP aims to reduce the number and severity of fires within the municipality with the intent of creating a more fire resilient community.

### 6.2 ANALYSIS AND PRIORITISATION OF MUNICIPAL BUSHFIRE RISK

To determine the bushfire risk within the West Wimmera Shire, an assessment was undertaken using the environments contained within the VFRR-B process.

The VFRR-B application is a systematic process that identifies assets at risk from fire and assesses their level of risk on a consistent statewide basis using ISO: 31000 2009 Risk Management model.

The VFRR-B data provides the starting point to assess effectiveness of existing treatments and determines residual risk levels to develop further mitigation treatments as required. For further details, refer to [Appendix B: West Wimmera Shire Bushfire Asset Risk Management and Reporting Register](#).

### 6.3 ALIGNMENT TO REGIONAL BUSHFIRE RISKS

The plan also references treatments for the six priority risks in relation to bushfires as determined by the Grampians RSFMP using the VFRR-B risk assessment process. The table below identifies the priority risks as articulated in the Grampians Regional Strategic Fire Management Plan (RSFMP) and aligned to the asset classes and sub-classes contained within the VFRR-B tool.

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Bushfire		
Grampians RSFMPC Priority	VFRR-B Asset Class	VFRR-B Asset Sub-Class/es
1. Urban interface	Human settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential dense and highly populated areas)</li> <li>Other (less dense areas with a lower population)</li> <li>Special Fire Protection (<i>a vulnerable congregation of people in a particular location one time</i>)</li> </ul>
2. Power supply 3. Communications 4. Water supplies and catchments 5. Transport	Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agriculture</li> <li>Commercial</li> <li>Infrastructure</li> <li>Tourist and recreational</li> <li>Mines</li> <li>Commercial forests</li> <li>Water catchments</li> </ul>
6. Natural Environment	Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Locally important</li> <li>Engangered</li> <li>Vulnerable</li> </ul>
	Cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aboriginal significance</li> <li>Non-indigenous</li> <li>Other</li> </ul>

**Table 4. Bushfire Priority with VFRR-B Asset Classes and Sub-Classes**

#### 6.4 TREATMENT OF MUNICIPAL BUSHFIRE RISK

In developing this plan, the MFMPC has considered the State Emergency Priorities as listed in [Section 6.1 Risk Assessment Methodologies](#).

Following the State Emergency Priorities, the MFMSP aims to reduce the number and the severity of fires within the municipality with the intent of creating a more fire resilient community.

The State priorities are underpinned by the primacy of life, the protection of property, the economy and the environment. These priorities inform and are integrated into the primary fire risk management strategies used in this plan, which are:

- Community education and engagement
- Hazard reduction
- Preparedness
- Regulatory controls.

There are a number of State-wide and municipal treatments that have been identified for each fire risk management strategy which can be used by agencies to reduce the risk and effect of fire on the community. The generic State-wide and municipal-wide treatments include:

- Building Code of Australia
- Bushfire management overlays
- Community education and engagement activities

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- Community education programs
- Compliance and enforcement of legislation
- Daily readiness
- Fire hazard inspection program and issue of notice
- Local laws
- Permits to burn
- Power line hazard tree identification, management and reporting
- Public awareness – multimedia communications.

To effectively reduce community vulnerability to fire requires more than inter-agency effort alone. It requires the facilitation of more self-reliant and self-aware communities. Communities should have the knowledge, motivation and capacity to manage the risks to reduce the threat of fire in their communities as an active partner with fire management agencies.

The key objectives and outcomes sought through the implementation of the primary fire risk management strategies for bushfires are outlined in the following tables.

<b>Community Education and Engagement</b>				
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Agency Treatments</b>	<b>Community/Individual Treatments</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
1. To build capacity and knowledge, resilience and understanding of the dangers of bushfires  2. To provide the tools and educational opportunities for the community and individuals to better prepare and understand the risks of bushfires  3. To build awareness and understanding of the role of fire in the environment	For the plan duration – 2022 to 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community education programs</li> <li>▪ Agency Integrated Community engagement activities</li> <li>▪ Bushfire awareness training</li> <li>▪ Multimedia communications</li> <li>▪ Victoria Bushfire Information Line</li> <li>▪ Tourism fire safety campaigns</li> <li>▪ Increase legislative and regulatory awareness</li> <li>▪ Increased awareness of planning controls</li> <li>▪ Targeted education campaign regarding the use and role of fire in the environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To be proactive and seek information</li> <li>▪ To be involved in community education and engagement programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All agencies will review and evaluate programs and participation of the community as part of the review process of the MFMSP</li> </ul>

**Table 5 . Bushfire – Community Education and Engagement Fire Risk Management Strategy**

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Hazard Reduction				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency Treatments	Community/Individual Treatments	Outcome
1. To strategically reduce fuel to minimise impact, intensity and spread of bushfire  2. To pre-plan and establish strategic points to effectively combat and manage structure fire activity	For the plan duration – 2022 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Slashing program</li> <li>▪ Planned burn program</li> <li>▪ Spraying program</li> <li>▪ Pruning program</li> <li>▪ Use appropriate incident modelling tools to identify potential impacts to communities, such as the Phoenix modelling tool</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Private property hazard reduction:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaning gutters</li> <li>- Slashing</li> <li>- Mowing</li> <li>- Ploughing</li> <li>- Grazing</li> <li>- Fuel reduction burns</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Shared responsibility between agencies and individuals to minimise fire hazards</li> </ul>

Table 6. Bushfire – Hazard Reduction Fire Risk Management Strategy

Preparedness				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency Treatments	Community/Individual Treatments	Outcome
1. To understand appropriate actions to reduce the risk and impact of bushfires, initiatives include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ignition prevention</li> <li>▪ Risk identification and treatment</li> <li>▪ Resource preparation</li> <li>▪ Response planning</li> <li>▪ Operational restrictions</li> <li>▪ System testing</li> <li>▪ Security of water supply</li> </ul>	For the plan duration – 2022 to 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ VFRR-B process</li> <li>▪ Establishment of Incident Control Centres</li> <li>▪ Code Red days</li> <li>▪ Powerline inspections</li> <li>▪ Places – Places of Last Resort</li> <li>▪ Fire breaks</li> <li>▪ Emergency Management Plan</li> <li>▪ Evacuation plans</li> <li>▪ Brigade pre-plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Personal bushfire preparedness plans</li> <li>▪ Daily readiness</li> <li>▪ Practice/rehearse plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All agencies regularly evaluate preparation and readiness to respond to fire</li> <li>▪ Strengthened capacity for agencies to provide an integrated response</li> <li>▪ Measurable reduction of the impact of bushfires</li> </ul>

Table 7. Bushfire – Preparedness Fire Risk Management Strategy

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Regulatory Controls				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency Treatments	Community/Individual Treatments	Outcome
1. To implement regulation aimed at reducing the risk and impact of bushfires  2. To create and maintain effective linkages between planning functions to better inform proposed residential developments	For the plan duration – 2022 to 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fire hazard inspections</li> <li>▪ Total fire bans</li> <li>▪ Planning schemes</li> <li>▪ Fire Danger Period</li> <li>▪ Building codes</li> <li>▪ Enforcement of fire hazard notices</li> <li>▪ Response to planning applications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Comply with regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Compliance with regulatory controls</li> <li>▪ Appropriate residential development</li> </ul>

**Table 8. Bushfire – Regulatory Controls Fire Risk Management Strategy**

In addition, there are a range of site-specific plans to reduce specific risks within the municipality that are required by other legislation. For details of specific strategy treatments and activities to treat assets identified at risk from bushfires and broader fire risk in the West Wimmera Shire, refer to [Appendix B: West Wimmera Bushfire Shire Asset Risk Management and Reporting Register](#).

#### 6.4 ANALYSIS AND PRIORITISATION OF MUNICIPAL STRUCTURE FIRE RISK

The West Wimmera Shire MFMPC undertook an analysis of assets at risk from structure fire using categories closely aligned to the asset classes contained within the VFRR-B process and risk assessment methodologies. ISO: 31000 2009 was also applied to produce a municipal risk profile to determine the risk level for the municipal footprint.

**Structure Fire** – is defined as any uncontrolled fire inside, on, under or touching a building or structure that needs to be extinguished.

The risk analysis process was conducted on asset sub-class categories rather than individual assets, due to the generic nature of their classification and treatments. Further risk analysis was undertaken where an individual asset within any of the sub-classes was identified as a significantly different or higher risk within that category. Current treatments for these risks were then identified and analysed to determine their relevance and effectiveness.

It should also be recognised that a range of strategies and treatments exist which are applied consistently State-wide and throughout municipalities to reduce the occurrence and impact of structure fires. These include:

- Provisions in the *Building Act 1993* (Vic)
- Provisions in the Victorian Planning Scheme
- Provisions in the Building Code of Australia (BCA)

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- Environmental Protection Authority Victoria (EPAVic)
- Compliance and enforcement of legislation
- Council Essential Safety Measures (ESM) Procedures and audit inspections
- Industry guidelines
- Standards (i.e. electrical safety)
- Engineered controls (i.e. sprinkler systems, monitored fire alarms, etc)
- Fire service response, planning and training
- Staff training
- Event permits and event management plans
- Targeted education programs
- Public awareness programs – multimedia communications.

## 6.5 STRUCTURE FIRE RISK MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Priority risks for structure fire incidents within the West Wimmera Shire have been defined by the Golden Plains MFMPC and are set out in the tables below. The tables identify Asset Sub-Classes using categories closely aligned to the asset classes contained within the VFRR-B process and risk assessment methodologies. These methodologies were applied to produce a risk profile to determine the risk level as well as current treatments for the municipality.

Structure Fire		
Grampians RSFMPC Priority	VFRR-B Asset Class	Asset Sub Class/es
1. Houses Accommodation Places of public gathering Infirm, assisted living	Human settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Residential               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High density</li> <li>- Urban</li> <li>- Interface living</li> <li>- Rural</li> <li>- Motels and other accommodation</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Public assembly               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Entertainment, leisure and conference venues</li> <li>- Institutions</li> <li>- Hotels and nightclubs</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Healthcare               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hospitals and medical centres</li> <li>- Special care facilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2. Retail Commercial businesses Industrial Infrastructure	Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Commercial and industrial               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Retail/business – joined or contiguous</li> <li>- Retail/business – separate structures</li> <li>- Industrial</li> <li>- Infrastructure</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3. Buildings of significant heritage or cultural value	Cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Heritage listed and locally significant structures</li> </ul>

**Table 9. Structure Fire – Priority with Asset Classes and Sub-Classes**

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## 6.6 TREATMENT OF MUNICIPAL STRUCTURE FIRE RISK

The key objectives and outcomes sought through the implementation of the primary fire risk management strategies for structure fires are outlined in the tables below.

Community Education and Engagement				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency Treatments	Community/Individual Treatments	Outcome
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To build capacity and knowledge, resilience and understanding of the dangers of a structure fire</li> <li>To provide the tools and educational opportunities for the community and individuals to better prepare for and understand the risks of a structure fire</li> </ol>	For the Plan duration – 2022 to 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community education programs</li> <li>Community engagement activities</li> <li>Multimedia communications</li> <li>Increase legislative and regulatory awareness</li> <li>Increased awareness of planning controls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be proactive and seek information</li> <li>To be involved in community education and engagement programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All agencies will review and evaluate programs and participation of the community as part of the review process of the MFMSP</li> </ul>

Table 10. Structure Fire - Community Education and Engagement Fire Risk Management Strategy

Hazard Reduction				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency Treatments	Community/Individual Treatments	Outcome
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To strategically reduce the impact and intensity of structure fire</li> <li>To pre-plan and establish strategic points to effectively combat and manage structure fire activity</li> </ol>	For the plan duration – 2022 to 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct fire safety inspections</li> <li>Buildings constructed according to the Building Code of Australia</li> <li>Use appropriate incident modelling tools to identify potential impacts to communities, such as the plume modelling tool</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Installation of sprinklers, smoke detectors, fire blankets and fire extinguishers</li> <li>Comply with regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agencies and individuals working towards minimising the loss and damage caused by structural fires in the community</li> </ul>

Table 11. Structure Fire – Hazard Reduction Fire Risk Management Strategy

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Preparedness				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency Treatments	Community/Individual Treatments	Outcome
1. To understand appropriate actions to reduce the risk and impact of a structure fire, initiatives include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ignition prevention</li> <li>▪ Risk identification and treatment</li> <li>▪ Resource preparation</li> <li>▪ Response planning</li> <li>▪ System testing</li> <li>▪ Security of water supply</li> </ul>	For the plan duration – 2022 to 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Emergency Management Plan</li> <li>▪ Brigade Pre Plans</li> <li>▪ Fire sprinkler/extinguisher installation and maintenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintenance of sprinklers, smoke detectors and fire extinguishers</li> <li>▪ Building/staff fire drills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All agencies and individuals regularly evaluate preparation and readiness to respond to fire</li> <li>▪ Measurable reduction of impact on a structure fire</li> </ul>

Table 12. Structure Fire – Preparedness Fire Risk Management Strategy

Regulatory Controls				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency Treatments	Community/Individual Treatments	Outcome
1. To implement regulation aimed to reduce risk and impact of a structure fire  2. To create and maintain effective linkages between planning functions to better inform proposed residential developments	For the plan duration – 2022 to 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conduct fire safety inspections</li> <li>▪ Planning schemes</li> <li>▪ Building codes</li> <li>▪ Response to planning applications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Comply with regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Compliance with regulatory controls</li> <li>▪ Appropriate residential development</li> </ul>

Table 13. Structure Fire – Regulatory Controls Fire Risk Management Strategy

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## 6.7 ANALYSIS AND PRIORITISATION OF MUNICIPAL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INCIDENT RISK

The previous MFMPC undertook an analysis of assets at risk from hazardous materials incidents using categories closely aligned to the asset classes contained within the VFRR-B process and risk assessment methodologies. ISO: 31000 2009 was also applied to produce a municipal risk profile to determine the risk level for the municipal footprint.

**HAZMAT (Hazardous Materials)** – is defined as any event involving an uncontrolled or unwanted release of hazardous substances that may threaten life or property. HAZMAT incidents include substances that may be flammable, combustible, corrosive, poisonous, oxidising, radioactive, explosive, or otherwise harmful chemicals or materials.

The risk analysis process was conducted on asset sub-class categories rather than individual assets, due to the generic nature of their classification and treatments. Further risk analysis was undertaken where an individual asset within any of the sub-classes was identified as a significantly different or higher risk within that category,

Current treatments for these risks were then identified and analysed to determine their relevance and effectiveness.

Identified treatment gaps or issues requiring further information and research, form the basis for further fire management planning activities that the MFMPC will need to undertake and include in their MFMSP work plan in the future.

It should also be recognised that a range of strategies and treatments exist which are applied consistently state-wide and throughout municipalities to reduce the occurrence and impact of hazardous materials incidents. These include:

- Compliance and enforcement of legislation
- Council ESM procedures and audit inspections
- Industry guidelines
- Fire service response, planning and training
- Staff training
- Event permits and event management plans
- Targeted education programs
- Public awareness programs – multimedia communications.

## 6.8 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INCIDENT RISK MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Priority risks for hazardous materials incidents within the West Wimmera Shire have been defined by the Golden Plains MFMPC and are set out in the tables below. The tables identify Asset Sub-Classes using categories closely aligned to the asset classes contained within the VFRR-B process and risk assessment methodologies. These methodologies were applied to produce a risk profile to determine the risk level as well as current treatments for the municipality.

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<b>Hazardous Materials Incident</b>		
<b>Grampians RSFMPC Priority</b>	<b>VFRR-B Asset Class</b>	<b>Asset Sub-Class/es</b>
1. Housing Accommodation Places of public gathering Infirm, assisted living	Human settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Residential               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High density</li> <li>- Urban</li> <li>- Interface living</li> <li>- Rural</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Motels and other accommodationPublic Assembly               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Entertainment, leisure and conference venues</li> <li>- Institutions</li> <li>- Hotels and nightclubs</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Healthcare               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hospitals and medical centres</li> <li>- Special care facilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
2. Retail Commercial Businesses Industrial Infrastructure	Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Commercial and industrial               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Retail/business – joined or contiguous</li> <li>- Retail/business – separate structures</li> <li>- Industrial</li> <li>- Transport</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3. Chemical incidents affecting the environment	Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Flora and fauna, land, water and air quality</li> </ul>
4. Buildings of significant heritage or cultural value	Cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Heritage listed and locally significant structures</li> </ul>

**Table 14. Hazardous Materials Incident – Priority with Asset Classes and Sub-Classes**

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## 6.9 TREATMENTS OF MUNICIPAL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INCIDENT RISK

The key objectives and outcomes sought through the implementation of the primary risk management strategies for hazardous materials incidents are outlined in the tables below.

Community Education and Engagement				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency Treatments	Community/Individual Treatments	Outcome
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To build capacity and knowledge, resilience and understanding of the dangers of hazardous materials incidents</li> <li>To provide the tools and educational opportunities for industry and individuals to better prepare and understand the risks of hazardous materials incidents</li> </ol>	For the plan duration – 2022 to 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community information in response to incidents</li> <li>Increase legislative and regulatory awareness</li> <li>Increased awareness of planning controls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be proactive and seek information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All agencies will review and evaluate programs and information dissemination as part of the review process of the MFMSP</li> </ul>

**Table 15. Hazardous Materials Incident – Community Education and Engagement Fire Risk Management Strategy**

Hazard Reduction				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency Treatments	Community/Individual Treatments	Outcome
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To strategically reduce the impact of hazardous materials incidents</li> <li>To pre-plan and establish strategic points to effectively combat and manage hazardous materials incidents activity</li> </ol>	For the plan duration – 2022 to 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide advice to industry and community in relation to appropriate compliance with the Acts, Regulations, and Code of Practice for the storage and handling of dangerous goods</li> <li>Use appropriate incident modelling tools to identify potential impacts to communities, such as the plume modelling tool</li> <li>Brigade Pre Plans</li> <li>Pre-Incident Response Plans</li> <li>Traffic route restrictions for hazardous materials loads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate storage and handling of chemicals</li> <li>Follow Chemical Material Safety Data Sheets</li> <li>Comply with regulations and standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agencies and individuals work towards minimising the loss and damage caused by mishandling or spillage of chemicals</li> </ul>

**Table 16. Hazardous Materials Incident - Hazard Reduction Fire Risk Management Strategy**

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Preparedness				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency Treatments	Community/Individual Treatments	Outcome
1. To understand appropriate actions to reduce the risk and impact of hazardous materials incidents, initiatives include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ignition prevention</li> <li>- Risk identification and treatment</li> <li>- Response planning</li> <li>- System testing</li> </ul>	For the Plan duration – 2022 to 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Emergency Management Plans</li> <li>▪ Evacuation Plans</li> <li>▪ Pre-Incident Response Plans</li> <li>▪ CFA and WorkSafe inspections</li> <li>▪ Written advice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintenance and testing of fire safety equipment</li> <li>▪ Emergency procedures for dangerous goods fire, spills and leaks</li> <li>▪ Correct signage and labelling of chemicals</li> <li>▪ Testing and exercising of Emergency Management Plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All agencies and individuals regularly evaluate preparation and readiness to respond to fire</li> <li>▪ Measurable reduction of impact on hazardous materials incidents</li> </ul>

**Table 17. Hazardous Materials Incident – Preparedness Fire Risk Management Strategy**

Regulatory Controls				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency Treatments	Community/Individual Treatments	Outcome
1. To implement regulation aimed at reducing the risk and impact of hazardous materials incidents	For the Plan duration – 2022 to 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Planning schemes</li> <li>▪ Building codes</li> <li>▪ Comply with legislation</li> <li>▪ Appropriate training for chemical use and handling</li> <li>▪ Environmental Protection Authority referrals to CFA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Comply with legislation and regulations</li> <li>▪ Seek written advice where appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Compliance with regulatory controls</li> <li>▪ Appropriate industrial development</li> </ul>

**Table 18. Hazardous Materials Incident – Regulatory Controls Fire Risk Management Strategy**

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## 6.10 NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFER PLACES – BUSHFIRE PLACES OF LAST RESORT (NSP-BPLR)

NSP-BPLRs are an area or premises that may, as a last resort, provide some sanctuary from the life-threatening effects of a bushfire (for example, direct flame contact or radiant heat).

Details of the specific locations of NSP-PLRs within West Wimmera Shire can be found in [Appendix D: Neighbourhood Safer Places – Places of Last Resort](#).

## 6.11 STRATEGIC FIRE BREAKS

The Strategic Break Classification System is used by all municipalities across the Grampians Region. Details are provided below.

**Strategic Fire Suppression Lines:** A Strategic Fire Suppression line is a break constructed or maintained in a strategically useful location to provide an effective and safe means to undertake fire prevention or suppression activities in advance of a future bushfire event occurring.

Strategic Fire Suppression Lines should meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Of sufficient width to be an effective break under high fire conditions
- Able to be effectively fuel managed from fence to fence
- Provide an effective line of defence in suppressing fires.

Council's Strategic Fire Suppression Lines will have the vegetation managed from fence line to fence line **where practicable**. Grass will be slashed to a height of 100mm or less and elevated fine fuels will not surpass a 'high' fuel hazard rating as assessed in the [Overall Fuel Hazard Assessment Guide, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Department of Sustainability and Environment \(now DELWP\)](#).

**Fire Control Lines:** A Fire Control Line is a natural or constructed barrier, used in fire suppression and prescribed burning to limit/prevent the spread of fire.

Council's Fire Control Lines will have the vegetation managed to 3 metres behind the guideposts **where practicable**. Vegetation will be slashed to a height of 100 mm or less.

**Priority Egress/Access Roads (PEAR):** The primary function of Priority Egress/Access Roads is to determine what treatments are required along the nominated road to maintain access and egress to an isolated community prior to or after a bushfire event. There are no identified Priority Egress/Access Roads in the West Wimmera Shire.

**CFA Brigade Fire Prevention Works:** CFA Brigade fire prevention works may enhance Strategic Fire Suppression Lines and Fire Control Lines, however, the implementation is not compulsory and will be subject to seasonal conditions and Brigade resource availability.

Fire breaks are any natural or constructed discontinuity in a fuel bed that may be used to segregate, stop and control the spread of a bushfire, or to provide a fire control line from which to suppress a fire. Where formally designated as such, a strategic fire break refers to a firebreak constructed to complement other fire prevention and preparedness activities aimed at the protection of assets of national, state or regional significance.

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**Standard Fire Prevention Works:** Council undertakes standard fire control works on almost all sealed roads within the municipality. Council's Standard Fire Prevention Works will have the vegetation managed to 1.5-1.8 metres behind the guideposts **where practicable**. Vegetation will be slashed to a height of 100mm or less.

**CFA Brigade Fire Prevention Works:** Brigade works may enhance Strategic Fire Suppression Lines and Fire Control Lines, however, the implementation is not compulsory and will be subject to seasonal conditions and Brigade resource availability. CFA brigade works on road and rail reserves, public reserves and private land are reviewed annually by the CFA Vegetation Management Officer, Council's MFPO and other agencies (for example, DoT, VicTrack) as required.

Strategic Fire Suppression Lines and Fire Control Lines are documented in [Appendix F: Strategic Fire Breaks](#).

## 6.12 FIRE ACCESS TRACKS

A Fire Access Track is a track constructed and/or maintained for fire management purposes that are not generally of a standard adequate for all-weather use by two-wheel drive vehicles.

West Wimmera Shire currently supports 24 Fire Access Tracks across the municipal area. These tracks have been adopted over a number of years through recognition of their importance within a community, development as part of the subdivision process or via requests from local CFA brigades who view a particular route as providing essential access in the event of a fire.

The provision of Fire Access Tracks does not alter the legislated ability of CFA resources to enter any property or place to control a fire. Fire Access Tracks simply facilitate rapid access by CFA resources into or through particular areas.

Fire Access Tracks are not escape routes for residents. The use of Fire Access Tracks as escape routes by members of the public during a fire event may place users at significantly higher risk than if they'd stayed on formed roads.

The use of Fire Access Tracks by the public, especially during winter will cause damage to the tracks, affecting the use during summer months.

### Fire Access Track determination guidelines:

- Provides a logical shortcut between two made roads or access into an area that is otherwise difficult to access.
- Does not place CFA appliances at additional, unnecessary risk
- The route can be readily maintained within Councils limited budget and resources
- Track establishment does not require extensive and expensive works
- Private landholder consent is given by the landholder where the track crosses private land.

### Fire Access Track determination process:

- Brigades bring Fire Access Track nominations to the CFA Commander.
- CFA Commander discusses the nominated Fire Access Track with Council's MFPO
- CFA Commander or MFPO brings a report to the MFMPC identifying the nominated track and how it meets the determination criteria
- MFMPC endorses the nomination and sends it to CFA for approval.

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## 6.13 COMMUNITY FIRE REFUGES

A Community Fire Refuge is defined in the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* as a place prescribed by the regulations to be a place that is available for use by the public for short-term shelter from a fire front during a bushfire.

Emergency Management Victoria implemented a [Community Fire Refuges Policy](#) in June 2015 that provides the framework for identifying, establishing, managing and monitoring Community Fire Refuges in areas of extreme risk where other bushfire survival options are limited or not available.

Victoria currently only has five dedicated Community Fire Refuges (CFA website: [Community Fire Refuges](#)). There are no designated Community Fire Refuges within the West Wimmera Shire. No location within the municipality has been identified that meet the policy for the establishment of a Community Fire Refuge at this point.

## 7. BUSHFIRE RISK TREATMENTS FOR PROPERTY OWNERS

Following amendments made to the Victorian Planning Provisions in November 2011, guidelines have been produced that allow property owners to clear vegetation on their properties to reduce the threat of bushfire to their homes.

Under section 52.48 of the Planning Scheme, the 10/30 and 10/50 rules enable clearing around existing buildings used for accommodation (legally erected before 18 November 2011).

For new buildings, clearing for bushfire protection will be considered through the planning permit process.

The following is a list of bushfire risk treatment options applicable to property owners.

### 7.1 VEGETATION MANAGEMENT RIGHTS

Native vegetation is important to many Victorians and its removal is carefully regulated by the planning system. A vegetation management right called the 10/30 rule is part of a suite of measures to help Victorians in areas at risk from bushfires prepare their properties.

The 10/30 rule simplifies the right to clear native vegetation around a home for bushfire protection without obtaining a planning permit. The right allows landowners to clear without a planning permit:

- Any vegetation, including trees, within 10 metres of their home on their property
- Any vegetation (except for trees) within 30 metres of their house on their property
- Any vegetation on either side of their property boundary fence to a combined maximum width of four metres (with the consent from the neighbouring landowner).

The 10/50 rule enables all landowners in areas within the Bushfire Management Overlay to undertake the following measures for bushfire protection on their property:

- Removal, destruction or lopping of any vegetation within 10 metres of an existing building used for accommodation
- Removal, destruction or lopping of any vegetation, except trees within 50 metres of an existing building used for accommodation.

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For new buildings, clearing for bushfire protection will be considered through the planning permit process.

Further information is available at:

[www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au) or [www.planning.vic.gov.au/bushfire-protection/bushfire-planning-provisions](http://www.planning.vic.gov.au/bushfire-protection/bushfire-planning-provisions).

## 7.2 HAZARD TREES – ELECTRICAL SUPPLY

For detailed information on how to manage ‘Hazard Trees’ on or near your property please refer to:

[Appendix D: Hazard Trees Identification and Notification Procedures](#)

## 7.3 INSPECTION OF PRIVATE PROPERTIES AND ISSUE OF NOTICES

West Wimmera Shire Council conducts fire hazard inspections within the municipality, concentrating on high-risk areas and townships in the lead up to the fire danger period each year. Fire prevention notices are issued on land considered to be a fire risk as soon as practicable. Landholders in receipt of a fire prevention notice are required to comply with the instruction on the notice by the required due date. Non-compliance assessed during a follow-up inspection after the due date may result in Council carrying out the required works, charging the costs back to the landholder and the issuance of a fine.

## 7.4 PLANNING PERMITS

When applications are lodged with West Wimmera Shire for permits under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* for the subdivision of land or the construction of buildings in areas of high fire risk, West Wimmera Shire may consider the following documents in determining any such application and also refer to the application to the relevant fire agencies for comment:

- Planning Guidelines for Subdivisions in bushfire-prone areas
- Building in a Bushfire Management Overlay, Guidance Notes – CFA and Department of Planning and Community Development
- Australian Standard 3959, 2009 – Construction of Buildings in Bushfire Prone Areas
- Bushfire Management Overlay – West Wimmera Shire Planning Scheme
- Other relevant documentation.

## 8. CROSS-BOUNDARY ARRANGEMENTS

West Wimmera Shire shares borders with Horsham, Hindmarsh, Glenelg, Mildura and Southern Grampians municipalities, as well as a number of municipalities in South Australia. It is the shared responsibility of the Victorian MFMPs to ensure that risks contiguous across these borders are planned for in a consistent and seamless manner. CFA Brigades currently share cross State border firefighting arrangements with the South Australian Country Fire Service. At this stage, there are no formal cross State border arrangements in place for fire management planning.

MFMPs will be considered by the RSFMPC to ensure that shared risks across municipal and agency boundaries are appropriately addressed. Details of current identified cross-boundary and contiguous risks from bushfire for the West Wimmera Shire are provided in the table below.

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Risk	Adjacent Municipality	Strategy
Little Desert National Park	Hindmarsh Shire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure alignment of planning and prevention activities in relation to these risks are discussed and co-ordinated with relevant municipalities</li> <li>• Ensure that these arrangements and plans are included in relevant municipalities' MFMPs</li> </ul>
Big Desert	Mildura Rural City Council and Hindmarsh Shire Council	
Glenelg River	Southern Grampians Shire Council and Glenelg Shire Council	

**Table 19. West Wimmera Shire Cross-Boundary Risks**

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## 8. APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: WEST WIMMERA SHIRE MUNICIPAL FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

The West Wimmera Shire Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee Terms of Reference are available on the West Wimmera Shire Council website. Follow the link below, then select the “Fire” tab:

<https://www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au/Residents/Emergency/Preparing-for-an-emergency>

### APPENDIX B: WEST WIMMERA SHIRE BUSHFIRE ASSET RISK MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING REGISTER

To access the West Wimmera Shire Bushfire Asset Risk Management and Reporting Register log into the Victoria Fire Risk Register – Bushfire (VFRR-B) <https://www.vfrr.vic.gov.au/>

- Select “Outputs”
- Select “West Wimmera”
- Download “79-01 Output – Exports”

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## APPENDIX C: HAZARD TREES IDENTIFICATION AND NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

### Introduction

The *Electricity Safety Act 1998* (Victoria), section 86B provides the obligation for municipal Councils in the “Municipal Fire Prevention Plan must specify procedures for the identification of trees that are hazardous to electric lines”. This will be achieved through:

- (a) Procedures and criteria for the identification of trees that are likely to fall onto or come into contact with an electric line (hazard trees)
- (b) Procedures for the notification of responsible persons of trees that are hazard trees in relation to electric lines for which they are responsible.

Under the *Electrical Safety Act 1998*, the person responsible for maintaining vegetation and clearance space around power lines is referred to as the “**responsible person**”.

The procedures outlined in this section of the Municipal Fire Management Plan seek to address the requirement detailed above.

Each responsible person should have their own internal procedure regarding the steps that will be taken when it receives the notification of a potentially hazardous tree.

### What is a hazard tree?

According to the *Electrical Safety Act 1998*, a hazard tree is a tree which “is likely to fall onto or come into contact with an electric line”.

The *Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2015* further provide that a responsible person may cut or remove such a tree “provided that the tree has been assessed by a suitably qualified arborist and that assessment confirms the likelihood of contact with an electric line having regard to foreseeable local conditions.”

Due to legal requirements which require a clearance space to be maintained around an electric line, hazard trees are usually located outside the regulated clearance space. Despite being outside the clearance space, the tree may still have the potential to contact the line due to its size or because of a structural fault or weakness which enders part, or all, of the tree likely to contact or fall onto the line.

### Who is responsible for a hazard tree?

Under the *Electrical Safety Act 1998*, the person responsible for maintaining vegetation and clearance space around power lines, including keeping the whole or any part of a tree clear of the line, is the responsible person.

Responsibility is allocated between distribution businesses and other owners of electricity infrastructure, landowners and occupiers for clearance of private power lines, public land managers where they are identified as the responsible person such as municipal councils, the DELWP and VicRoads.

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## Responsible persons within West Wimmera Shire

Powercor is the body primarily responsible for line clearance in West Wimmera Shire.

There is only one electricity distribution business in the West Wimmera Shire and there are no Declared Areas under Section 81 of the *Electrical Safety Act 1998* that are the responsibility of the Council.

## Other relevant information

Responsible persons, other than private persons, must have an Electric Line Clearance Management Plan in place for areas for which they have responsibility [refer to *Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2015*].

## Procedures and criteria for identification of hazard trees

In the course of everyday duties, potentially hazardous trees may come to the attention of Council staff or volunteer members of the entities with representation on the Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee, staff of the distribution business(es) or other persons, including members of the public.

There are a range of factors that may indicate that a tree is a hazard tree. That is, a tree that is likely to fall onto, or come into contact with, an electric line. Some of these factors will be obvious when looking at the tree but many may only be apparent when the tree is assessed by a person with specific expertise and training, such as an arborist.

The following criteria may be used to assist in identifying a hazard tree:

- The size of the tree suggests that it is likely to come into contact with the electric line, for example, because it appears to be encroaching or growing into the line clearance space
- There is an excessive lean on the tree, or branches hanging off the tree and the tree is in proximity to an electric (power) line
- The size or appearance of the tree suggests it could come into contact with the line including under foreseeable local conditions.

## Procedures and criteria for notification of hazard trees

If a potentially hazardous tree is identified, the notification procedure outlined below should be followed. Where a responsible person becomes aware of a potentially hazardous tree for which they have the responsibility, they must follow their applicable internal procedure and the notification procedure described below does not apply.

To ensure that information regarding potentially hazardous trees is captured efficiently and, as appropriate, referred to the responsible person for action, the following procedure for the notification of hazardous trees should be followed.

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- The person with responsibility for the highest percentage of lines within the municipality (**the primary responsible person**) is Powercor and therefore the person to whom potentially hazardous trees should be reported.
- Where any person becomes aware of or receives a report of, a potentially hazardous tree within the municipality, this should be referred to Powercor. Where the Committee becomes aware of or receives a report of, a potentially hazardous tree within the municipality, this must be referred to Powercor.
- Reports of potentially hazardous trees must be provided to Powercor for action as soon as practicable. Reports must include, as far as practicable:
  - The name and contact details and any relevant qualifications were known of the person making the report
  - As much detail as possible about the location of the tree (including, where known, GPS coordinates, details of numerical/nameplate on nearest pole, name of nearest road or crossroads, closest landmark, whether the tree is on private land or road reserve etc.)
  - A description of the tree (including, if known, the genus and species of tree)
  - The primary reasons given for the tree being identified as potentially hazardous (including, the tree is in proximity to an electric line **and** there is evidence of structural weakness, excessive lean, appears to be encroaching into line clearance space etc.)
  - An indication of whether urgent action is required.
- Powercor must take all necessary steps to advise the person responsible for the tree that it may be hazardous where they are **not** the responsible person.

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## MUNICIPAL HAZARD TREE NOTIFICATION FORM

This form should be used by municipal councils to report hazard trees to CitiPower and Powercor as required by Section 86(b) of the Electricity Safety Act 1998 (Vic).

Please complete the form digitally, then save it as a PDF and email it to [eqcustomer@powercor.com.au](mailto:eqcustomer@powercor.com.au)

### Local Government Authority (LGA) Contact Details

Municipality:

Contact:

Contact email:  Phone:

Job title:  Department:

Reported date:  Priority:  Urgent\*  Non-urgent

\* Please contact (03) 9683 2199 directly to report an urgent hazard tree.

### Hazard Tree Location

Street number:  Street name:

Town/suburb:  Pole number:

Voltage (if known)  LIS number: (large silver or yellow plate)

Comments:

### Hazard Tree Details

Number of tree(s)/limb(s):  Species of trees (if known):

Current status\*:

Reason for hazard classification\*\*:

Digital images:  Yes  No  Number of photos (if relevant)

### Further Comments

\* Clearly describe the current status of the tree, e.g.: tree/branch deemed to be leaning towards HV/LV conductors, tree/branch deemed to be able to strike the HV/LV conductors if it fell; general status of surrounding environment, high risk of bushfire ignition.

\*\* Clearly describe why the tree was determined to be a "hazard" i.e. root rot, leaning, bifurcation, split etc.

This form can be found at:

<https://media.powercor.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/02001438/council-tree-hazard-notification-form-v3.pdf>

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**APPENDIX D: NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFER PLACES – BUSHFIRE PLACES OF LAST RESORT**

There are two Neighbourhood Safer Places – Places of Last Report in the West Wimmera Shire.

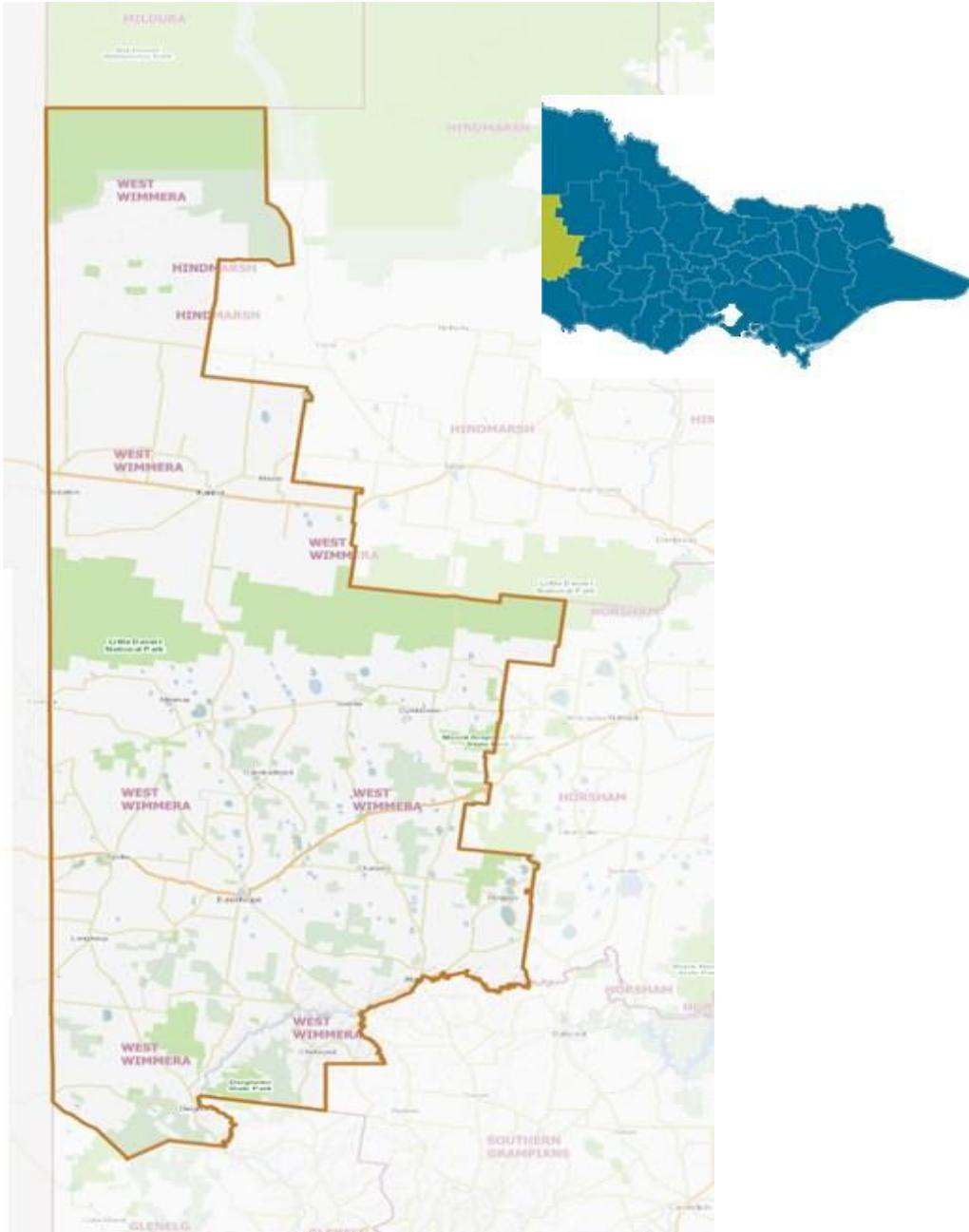
<b>West Wimmera Shire</b>		
<b>Neighbourhood Safer Places– Bushfire Places of Last Resort</b>		
<b>Township</b>	<b>Street Address</b>	<b>Location/Facility</b>
Edehope	Corner Lake and Amos Streets Edehope 3318	Lake Wallace Reserve
Apsley	Splatt Street (opposite Johnston Street) Apsley 3319	Apsley Recreation Reserve (south-west quarter of oval only)

Further information about Neighbourhood Safer Places – Bushfire Places of Last Resort in the West Wimmera Shire is available at:

<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/your-local-area-info-and-advice/neighbourhood-safer-places>

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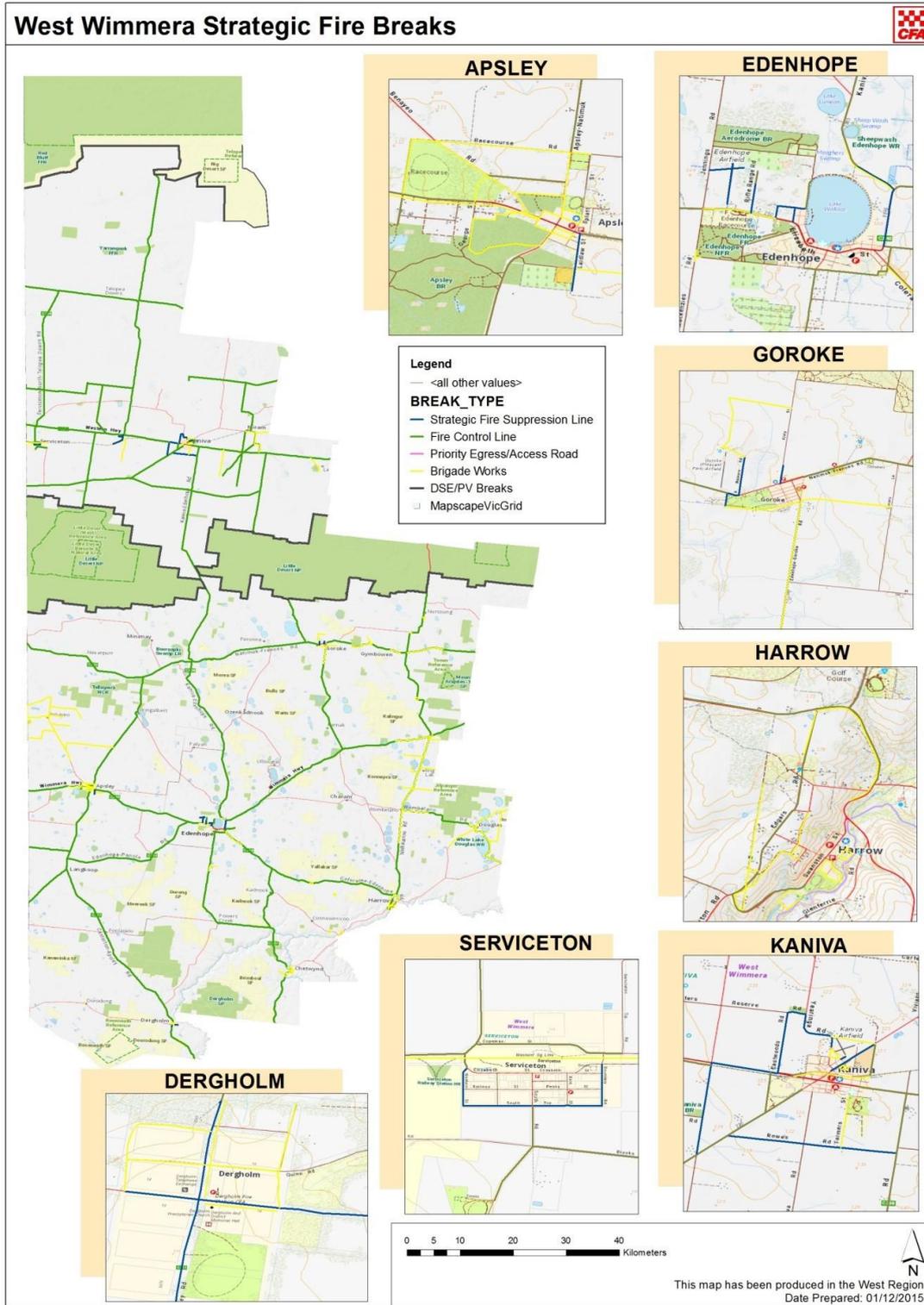
**APPENDIX E: WEST WIMMERA SHIRE BOUNDARY MAP**



For further information on maps refer to: [West Wimmera Shire Community Map](#)

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APPENDIX F: WEST WIMMERA SHIRE STRATEGIC FIRE BREAKS



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## APPENDIX G: OTHER DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

### Neighbouring Municipal Fire Management Plans

- [Horsham Rural City](#)
- [Northern Grampians Shire](#)
- Mildura Rural City
- Buloke Shire
- Hindmarsh Shire
- Yarriambiack Shire

### Useful Municipal and Agency Links

- [West Wimmera Shire Community Map](#) see emergency services tab
- [West Wimmera Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2021-2024](#)
- [Country Fire Authority](#)
- [Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning](#)
- [Department of Justice and Community Safety](#)
- [Emergency Management Common Operating Picture \(EM-COP\)](#) (restricted access)
- [Emergency Management Victoria](#)
- [Victorian Fire Risk Register – Bushfire](#) (restricted access)

### Local Fire Management Plans and Arrangements

- Big Desert Emergency Management Plan – Parks Victoria
- Wyperfield Parks Emergency Management Plan – Parks Victoria
- Western Goldfields Emergency Management Plan – Parks Victoria
- CFA Districts 17 and 18, Groups and Local Brigade Plans

**Note:** These plans may not be publicly available and the agency responsible should be consulted about access.

### Regional Fire Management Plans and Arrangements

- Grampians Regional Strategic Fire Management Plan V2 (2011)
- Wimmera Catchment Management Authority Regional Strategy
- Mallee Catchment Management Authority Regional Strategy
- Forest Fire Management Victoria – Wimmera and Mallee District Plans

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## State Fire Management Plans and Arrangements

- [Victorian State Emergency Management Plan](#)
- [Department of Education and Training – Emergency Management Requirements](#)

## Site-Specific Fire Management Plans and Arrangements

- [AusNet Bushfire Mitigation Plans](#)
- [Powercor Bushfire Mitigation Plan](#)
- VicRoads – Roadside Fire Management

## Works Program

Documents in this section of the plan may change on an annual basis. The following agencies will provide their annual fire mitigation works program to the West Wimmera Shire Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee, including notification when the works have been completed, prior to the fire danger season being declared.

- West Wimmera Shire Council Fuel Reduction Plans
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (including Parks Victoria and Forest Fire Management Victoria)
- Country Fire Authority (including Bridages and Groups Burn Plans)
- Victorian Fire Risk Register – Bushfire (VFRR-B) Treatment Overview (refer to separate file – 2019 treatment list V1, CFA)

Please contact the West Wimmera Shire Council Municipal Fire Prevention Officer on telephone 139 972 or Municipal Emergency Management Plan Chairperson on email [council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au) for further information.

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