



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE



SCHOOL COMMUNITIES ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

JULY 2018

› School Communities Engagement Strategy

This strategy aims to deliver a program of activities and supporting resources that reduce the risk of fire and other emergencies on school communities. These will be developed and implemented in collaboration and in partnership with teachers, students, education authorities, professional associations and NSW RFS Members.

› Get Ready Schools Program

Activities that focus on school communities part of the NSW RFS Fire Ready Schools Program. Arranged in an order from Level 1 to Level 4 activities, they provide an indication of the reach and effectiveness of the activity.

ACTIVITIES

Higher reach Lower effectiveness		Lower reach Higher effectiveness		
LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	
Public Information	Community Relations	Behavioural Interventions	Community Development	Community Liaison
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › RFS Schools Website › Your Guide to Making a Bush Fire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Triple Zero Challenge › Get Ready Weekend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Project Firestorm › Secondary School Cadet Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Emergency Plan Review & Drills › Resilient Facilities Program › Community Protection Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Education Functional Area Liaison › Community Field Liaison

› The Strategy

Exploring the issue with stakeholders identified a number of initiatives to reduce risk of fire in school communities. Delivering these initiatives and supporting members to implement the activities is critical to the success of the NSW RFS Fire Ready Schools Program.



ISSUE	INITIATIVE	2018-19 DELIVERABLES	2022 OUTCOME
Holistic Approach Reducing risk is more than disaster reduction education, it includes safer emergency planning and facility standards.	Comprehensive Framework We will apply the Comprehensive School Safety Framework (CSSF) across our program to ensure schools are safe places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Integration of emergency plan 'checks' and drills into routine school program visits. › Tools and training to conduct checks and facilitate drills. 	>90% of schools on bush fire prone land have 'high standard' emergency plans and conduct bush and structural fire drills bi-annually by 2022.
Shelter-In-Place Schools at higher risk of bush fire understand bush fire exposure and have plans to mitigate their risk in an emergency.	Resilient Facilities Program All identified shelter-in-place buildings in schools on bush fire prone lands are assessed for bush fire attack (BAL) level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Policy settings that support administrators. › Resources to identify Shelter-In-Place facilities and integration into emergency plans. › Training for staff on assessment of Shelter-in-Place buildings. 	100% increase in number of school in high-risk area that have an identified shelter in place facility. Schools and NSW RFS understand school shelter-in-place arrangements.
Triple Zero (000) Emergency Young people need to be capable of seeking assistance in an emergency	Triple Zero Challenge Deliver an all hazards activity and supporting resources targeted at Lower Primary for emergency services to deliver efficiently across the state.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Activity tools including presentation, online resources, workbooks and evaluation resources. › Integration with emergency plan checks and drills. › Training to deliver Triple Zero (000) Challenge activities 	>95% of children aged 5-7 are able to make an effective Triple Zero (000) Call in an emergency.
Empower Students Students in Years 5-6 now study the impact of bush fire on people, places and the environment and seek expert advice to inform their studies.	Project Firestorm Deliver expert visit activities supported by online resources that support students enquiries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Activity tools including an image based & customisable presentation, facilitator guide, and online schools website with video based Q&A function. › Professional development opportunities for teachers. › Integration with emergency plan checks and drills. 	>90% of students in Years 5-6 have a 'high standard' bush fire survival plan.
Schools and Communities Schools are social focal points within communities and can influence overall preparedness.	Get Ready Schools Integrate school communities with broader communities through the Get Ready Weekend.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Incorporate school activities into Get Ready Weekend preparation plans. › Showcase leading practice. 	>100 schools are involved in Get Ready Weekend activities.
Developing Advocates Develop capability and confidence of youth to act as leaders in their community and take action to reduce risk.	NSW RFS Cadets Extend the Secondary School Cadets Program to include disaster resilience activities and consider impact of fire on the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Facilitator Guides for Session modules on school emergency and household planning. › Showcase leading practice. 	>20% of NSW RFS Secondary Schools Cadet Program participants transition into Brigade members for longer than 3 years.

School communities at a glance



There are 3,136 schools in New South Wales.



885 Schools are located on Bush Fire Prone Land.



4,000 teachers teaching about bush fire every year.
100,000 students learning about bush fire every year.

The NSW RFS uses *Mosaic* segmentation to identify, understand and tailor communication and engagement to at-risk communities. The ***New Homes and New Hopes*** and ***International Infusion*** segments have been identified as two at-risk segments of families with school age children across NSW that are on average less prepared for bush fire. NSW RFS should prioritise activities in schools where the Middle Australia segment and other identified at-risk segments dominate the local population in bush fire risk management and community engagement plans.

Method

The NSW RFS Community Engagement Team use the **TESTER** Framework to develop and implement these targeted engagement strategies. This strategy represents the output of the 'target' and 'explore' phases. As programs are delivered they will be rigorously trialled before expanded and reviewed for ongoing continuous improvement. To find out more and view the Behavioural Insights Toolkit visit MyRFS.

Acknowledgements

This strategy was developed in consultation with teachers, students, education sector staff, Professional Associations and NSW RFS Members across NSW. Thank you for your contributions.

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