

Canobolas Zone Conference

25 May 2013



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

Rob Rogers AFSM
Deputy Commissioner



2012/13 Fire Season

- More than 6000 bush and grass fires (July – March)
- 1.4 million hectares burnt
- 80 Section 44 Declarations
- 33 incidents reached Emergency Warning status
- 62 homes destroyed
 - 57 during January
 - 53 in Coonabarabran
- Extensive loss of livestock and many hectares of valuable farmland and fencing destroyed



7 to 21 January 2013

7 January



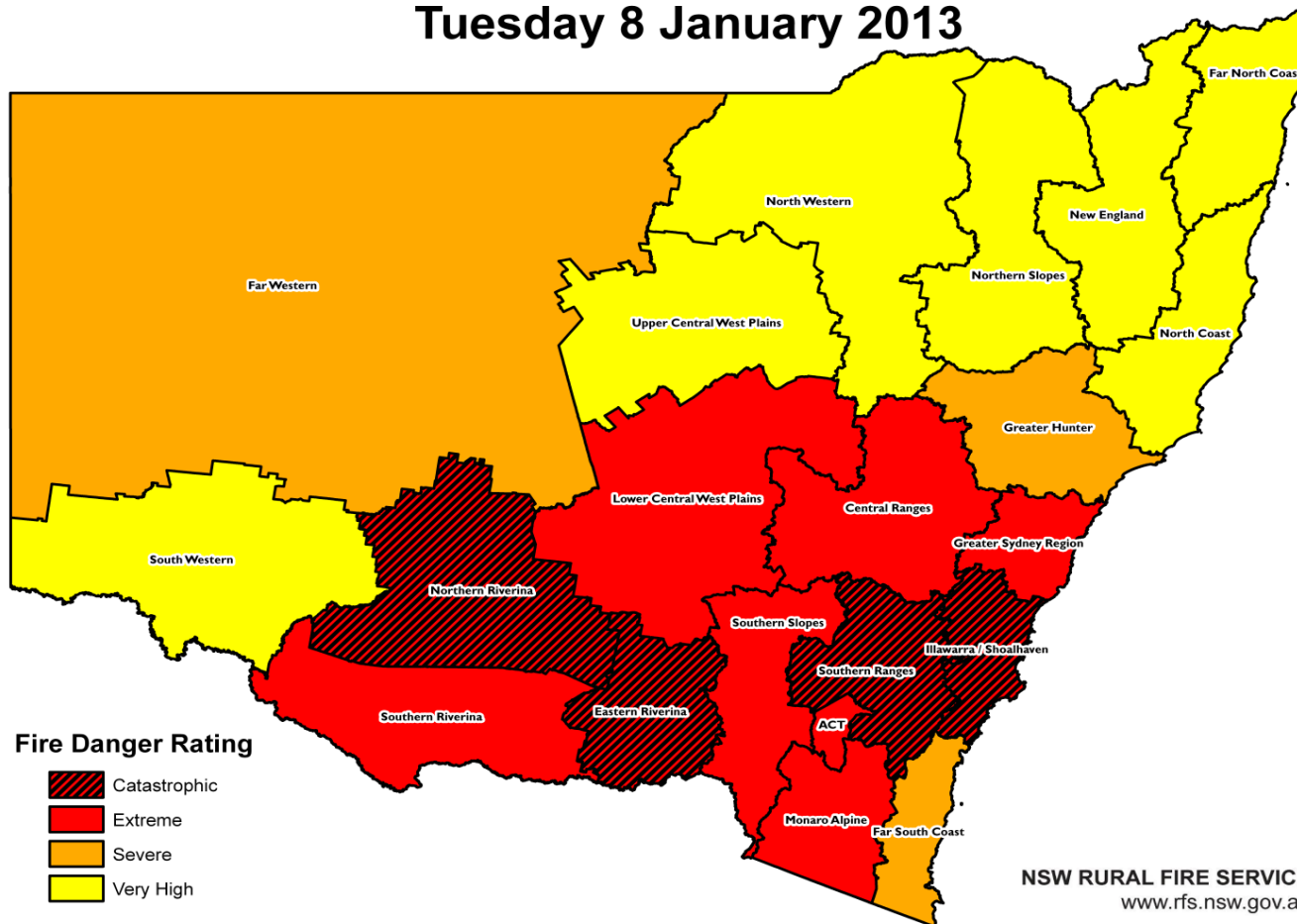
Based on the BOM's forecast for 8 January of 'Catastrophic' and wide spread Severe and Extreme Fire Danger Ratings the following actions were taken:

- Distributed warnings through *Emergency Alerts* and the media
- Catastrophic FDR arrangements were implemented (Illawarra/Shoalhaven), including the directed closure of public places within bush fire prone areas
- Pre-formed Strike Teams
- Pre-emptive Section 44 Declarations
- Proactive policing of high risk areas
- Arrangements for vulnerable communities



08 January – Fire Danger Rating

State-wide TOTAL FIRE BAN Tuesday 8 January 2013





8 January cont'd

- 186 incidents across the State (127 bush and grass fires)
- Incident Control Online (ICON) saw its busiest single day with over 1,000 concurrent users across the State
- Bureau of Meteorology confirmed record January temperatures for Sydney at Observatory Hill (45.8°C), Sydney Airport (46.4°C) and Canberra (41.6°C)

Wambelong fire (Warrumbungle & Coonamble LGA)



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Key Statistics: 07 to 21 January 2013

1,348

Total number of Triple Zero calls for bush and grass fires

512

Total number of bush and grass fires attended

650,000

Hectares burnt between 7 & 21 January

8

days of Total Fire Ban, including four state-wide declarations

41

Section 44 declarations

10,500

Total number of firefighters from NSW RFS, FRNSW, NPWS, Forests NSW deployed across firegrounds

650

aircraft taskings by NSW RFS State Air Desk

88

Deployments of Remote Area Firefighting Teams

450

Pallets of foam, retardant, drinking water and energy packs distributed



Key Statistics: 07 to 21 January 2013

57 homes destroyed	33,000 hectares of mixed pasture destroyed
13,493 head of sheep destroyed	3,000 + media inquiries to NSW RFS
489 head of cattle destroyed	52 total number of local government areas covered by natural disaster declarations
1,700 kilometres of fencing destroyed	0 human lives lost

Deans Gaps fire (Shoalhaven LGA)



Information & Warnings



Medium	Total Event (2 weeks)	08 January 2013
NSW RFS Website	8.7 million views	2.7 million views (1 million unique visitors)
NSW RFS FaceBook	27.6 million impressions	6.8 million impressions
NSW RFS Twitter	15.5 million impressions	5.0 million impressions (trending 4 th globally)



Information & Warnings cont'd

Medium	Total Event (2 weeks)	08 January 2013
Bush Fire Information Line	Over 26,300 calls received of which 12,600 taken by operators.	Over 7,500 calls received of which 2,860 taken by operators.
Emergency Alert	99 campaigns (of which 43 used location based function)	Over 784,000 SMS and 224,000 land lines messages distributed on the 07 January 2013
Fires Near Me App	Over 150,000 downloads in January Used over 750,000 times in January	12,000 downloads 80,000 searches for a single fire in a single hour



Information & Warnings cont'd

Medium	Total Event (2 weeks)	08 January 2013
<i>Bush Fire Survival Plans</i> downloaded	50,100	16,700
MyRFS Website	150,000 views	21,000 views - 1,600 concurrent views at its peak

Aberdare fire (Cessnock LGA)





General: 07-21 January 2013

- Two NSW RFS Base Camps established at Nowra and Coonabarabran to accommodate firefighters and emergency service workers.
- 131 Building Impact Assessments undertaken by NSW RFS.
- 306 fires identified for formal investigation by NSW RFS, NSW Police Force and Fire & Rescue NSW.

Cobbler Road fire (Harden LGA)





Emergency Management

- Animal & Agriculture Services facilitated assistance to affected land owners and completed related Impact Assessments.
- Nine Evacuation Centres were opened throughout the fires, co-ordinated by welfare agencies with assistance from community partners.
- Evacuation of Baradine Hospital co-ordinated by Health Services and Ambulance Service NSW whereby patients were accommodated in surrounding facilities.

Yarrabin fire (Cooma Monaro LGA)



Watershed Stud fire (Harden & Yass Valley LGA)





What worked ...

- Co-ordinated Firefighting arrangements
 - Cooperation between firefighting agencies
- Bush Fire Management Committee structure
- Hazard reduction effectiveness
- Use of Aircraft (including 88 RAFT / 65 RART)



Next Season?

Millingandi fire (Bega Valley LGA)

