

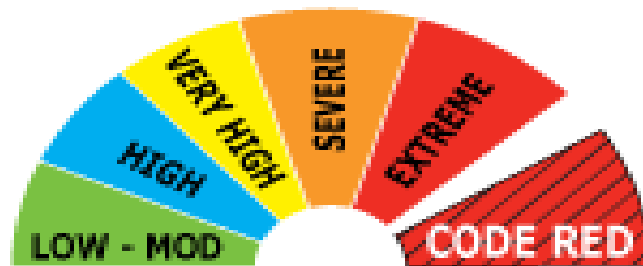
### ACTION SUMMARY

**A fire plan is not required while the fire rating is at its lowest or you are not entering high risk areas**

If you are travelling through or to a destination with a fire rating of High Risk or greater perform the following checks:

1. Before going out identify fire districts in which you will be working or travelling
2. Is it a day of **High or greater** Fire Danger Ratings at your destination?  
<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/total-fire-bans-and-ratings>
3. Are you planning to travel to or work in a high risk area (forested, scrubby or grassed) during the [high risk fire danger period](#)?

*If either answer is YES for your activity location, you shall have a fire plan.*



**Deakin Rule: During an Extreme or Code Red Day no work shall be conducted in high risk areas. Staff are to avoid such areas (or move to the proximity of a fire safe refuge when it is necessary to stay)**

Note the equivalent Code Status names for the state you intend working in (Where out of Victoria).

4. On your **VicEmergency** phone app, set a [watch zone](#) of 30Km or more

Each group work leader shall have access to a printed fire plan copy while in the field, and a copy left with the designated Deakin Duty Officer.

## SECTION 1a – FIRE SAFETY PLAN

Files names	Location/ Links	Notes

Emergency Sat Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Table 2	Name	Phone contact	Notes
Work Leader			
Alternate Work Leader			
Duty Officer			
Project Supervisor (PI)			

Dates current Fieldwork: [Estimated start date](#) until [Estimated end date](#)

### [Fire districts](#) Involved during travel & activity

Plan to travel through			
Plan to work in			
<a href="#">What triggers</a> will initiate emergency response?			
Describe your Emergency Response Plan			
Closest fire refuge (if applicable)			
Have you chosen a location of last refuge in the event you are trapped near the worksite?			
Describe the last refuge strategy. This includes a <a href="#">local area induction</a> :			
Closest fire safety refuge to worksite			
Identify people requiring critical medication while in refuge			
Is there a 12v mobile phone charger and/or backup battery pack?			

### SECTION 1b – TRIP ATTACHMENTS

- ☐ **Attach printed map showing:**
  1. Planned route to and from field location.
  2. Optional emergency escape routes.
  3. Closest fire safety refuge
  4. Location of worksite/s site
- ☐ **Attach detailed printed map of the fieldwork operational area, showing:**
  1. Vehicle parking area
  2. Annotated access route from vehicle to worksite/s site (include walking time)
  3. Work site locations
  4. Camping site (if applicable)
- ☐ **Attach current list of group participants, contact details, medical concerns (from general fieldwork application)**

***Each person with an appointed safety role (Table 2) shall keep a copy of the current Fire Safety Plan and the Fieldwork Safety Plans with them (or ensure reliable instant access) at all times the team is in the field. I.e. Until the Responsible person communicates the activity is completed.***

#### **EMERGENCY RESPONE PLAN OPTIONS:**

Notify Duty Officer of new location and plans                      and

Flight by Vehicle: Try to confirm safest available route options  
Consider leaving by best of the planned routes identified on the plan's access map.  
If no safe escape route available proceed to fire safety refuge (if safe to do so)

Defend – In Vehicle: Locate safest area for defence and prepare for fire front.

Defend – On Foot: Immediately scan for safest location considering the prevailing conditions. Move to the safest location and prepare for fire front.

Remember: If caught in a Forest Wild-Fire **YOU ARE UNLIKELY TO SURVIVE.**

**Ensure you don't get caught in this situation**

### SECTION 1c – UNDERSTAND RISK FACTORS

#### YOU MUST HAVE A FIRE PLAN

Victoria is one of the most fire-prone areas in the world. Sudden, deadly wild *fires* frequently occur during warm/ hot weather throughout Victoria and other states. Forested, scrubby and grassland areas may pose a high risk if you are driving, working, hiking or camping in these areas between November to April (in Victoria). Similarly, driving in proximity to a fire can be deadly if you are cut off or trapped.

*The main purpose of this fire plan is to recognise and avoid potentially dangerous situations that place lives at risk and may require a critical response.*

#### **Recognise The Risk.** (Assessment A)

- ☐ Is it a day of **High or greater** Fire Danger Ratings?  
<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/total-fire-bans-and-ratings>
- ☐ Are you planning to travel through or work in a high risk area (forested, scrubby or grassed) during the [high risk fire danger period](#)?  
*If either answer is YES for your activity location, you shall have a fire plan.*  
A fire plan is not required while the fire rating is at its lowest.

Understand the fire coding system and what it means (cfa.vic.gov.au)



***Remember fire risk rating is not a predictor of fire likelihood but how dangerous a fire will be in the conditions on that day.***

**Deakin Rule:** During an Extreme or Code Red Day no work shall be conducted in high risk areas. Staff are to avoid such areas (or move to the proximity of a fire safe refuge when it is necessary to stay)

If staying in a high risk area during the “fire danger period” (i.e. high or above) review the fire risk rating and your plans daily and immediately before moving to a new location or home.

## Working and Travelling in Fire Hazard Areas

### Fire Weather Districts the Planned Work Involves & This Plan Covers

Identify and know which fire weather districts you are planning to travel and work in.

This is vital: – fire danger ratings and total fire bans are declared by district on all media.

## How bad is the risk today?



3

### Things to address when managing fire risk:

- Have an [emergency plan trigger](#)
- Consider work location distance from safer primary roads, escape routes and local fire refuges
- Remember when planning an action and route, you may be trapped on forested roads by fallen trees, then engulfed by lethally hot fires.
- Plan to identify locality-specific steps to assist in survival when fire threatens to engulf you
- Always have available several reflective fire blankets and woollen blankets in each vehicle. Ready access to emergency reporting phone numbers. Report early as mobiles often don't work in fires. **Consider a Sat Phone if working in a Mobile Black Zone or uncertain of reception.**

### SECTION 3 – DEAKIN SAFE WORK INSTRUCTION

#### Procedure: Working and Travelling Safely in Fire Hazard Areas

Victoria is one of the most fire-prone areas in the world. Sudden, deadly wild fires frequently occur during warm/ hot weather throughout Victoria and other states. Forested, scrubby and grassland areas may pose a high risk ([high risk area](#)) if you are driving, working, hiking or camping in these areas between November to April (in Victoria). Similarly, driving in proximity to a fire can be deadly if you are cut off or trapped. The main thrust of this procedure is to **ENSURE YOU AVOID A CRITICAL SITUATION AT ALL COST**, this is necessary as if you are caught in a Forest Wild-Fire **YOU ARE UNLIKELY TO SURVIVE**.

#### 3.1 When & how to prepare a fire plan

When planning or undertaking a field trip or passing through a high risk fire area during the Victorian "[high risk fire danger period](#)" a **Fire Safety Plan** shall be prepared. Fire conditions shall be reviewed daily before leaving for the field and while in the field.

1. Identify the [fire weather districts](#) the plan involves
2. Perform the initial quick assessment [fire plan risk assessment \(Assessment A\)](#) .

Where high risk conditions are indicated a Fire Plan shall be created, authorised and communicated as required before the planned field trip is undertaken.

3. Create and [Use the Fire Safety Plan \(FSP\)](#)
4. *The designated [Work Leader](#) is responsible to ensure that there is a current fire safety plan in place and that it is reviewed as required.*
5. Other risk factors influencing your fire plan decisions: The accessibility of the research or activity site and the available communications will affect the risk and impact your fire plan.

#### 3.2 In Field Leadership

The field team shall have both a designated Work Leader and an Alternate Work Leader. The Work Leader shall ensure the [Duty Officer](#) (DO) has a current copy of the FSP and is aware of current FP changes. (As far as is practicable).

While in the field the [Work Leader](#) and most experienced person (i.e. CFA trained) in the group, shall review the fire weather risk rating twice daily (AM/PM) for the relevant districts. (Bureau of Meteorology 4PM release for following day)

In an emergency, the most experienced person shall make the timely, final decisions.

Prior to departing on the field trip, the Work Leader shall ensure each member of the group is familiar with and understands their Fire Safety Plan. Upon arrival on the field site, local relevant, topographical factors aspects of the FSP shall be reviewed with the group in terms useful locations of relevance to the plan. (A local area induction)

**Deakin Rule:** During an Extreme or Code Red Day no work shall be conducted in high risk areas. Staff are to avoid such areas (or move to the proximity of a fire safe refuge when it is necessary to stay)

## Working and Travelling in Fire Hazard Areas

### **3.3 In Field Emergency Response Triggers & Current Information Sources:**

When in the field, constant team vigilance is required to remain as safe as possible, and timely decisions are essential. Trip planning must establish [trigger indicators](#) to initiate appropriate and timely emergency responses.

The two main information sources of trigger indicators are:

#### **A. MEDIA WARNINGS & UPDATES**

1. **VicEmergency phone app.** (set a [watch zone](#) of 30Km or more on this phone app.) Very simple real time, if mobile reception. – Consider essential.
2. Vic Emergency App: *Victoria's combined source of emergency information and warnings, helping prepare for and respond to emergencies.* A Current visual fire outbreak and status map is at: <http://emergency.vic.gov.au/respond/> (Set watch zone at least 30km).
3. Social media: <https://www.facebook.com/vicemergency/> Twitter: [@vicemergency](https://twitter.com/vicemergency)
4. Radio: AM & FM radio. Find your areas' frequency: <http://reception.abc.net.au/>
5. Vic Emergency hotline & CFA:1800 226 226 (Most likely uncontactable in an emergency)

#### **B. IN-FIELD VIGILANT OBSERVATION:**

Team members must regularly and vigilantly watch their distant surrounds for any early signs of smoke, particularly the “up wind “areas. Remember fires change direction rapidly with changing wind direction.

##### **Remember**

*Expect fires that travel up to 25 km per hour. Fires move rapidly up slopes and more slowly down slopes but may leap-frog ahead with airborne burning materials, trapping persons between the two fires.*

*In open grassland speed increases up to 60 km per hour, generally when accompanied by extreme weather events (windy fronts with very high temperatures) speeds are highly unpredictable.*

### **3.4 During a potential threat:**

#### ***Assess your situation carefully before acting***

When you receive a fire warning, or see smoke:

- Immediately move to a nearby area where you have mobile phone reception or evacuate to a safe, [nearby town](#) where you can use phones & media to evaluate where the fire/s is and what the safest course of action is.
- (Check BOM Maps for weather changes and fronts)  
<http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDR021.shtml> On top of the radar page find the controls for local details.
- If unable to evacuate safely by vehicle initiate the INFIELD SURVIVAL PLAN adapting it carefully to the fire direction and best local topographical features.

**Make your plans and inform your Duty Officer if possible**

**3.5 Planned repeat trips to the site:** Where a series of repeat trips to the field activity sites are planned or undertaken, the primary Fire Plan may be used by updating the required fields. A new record shall be saved with current dates and changes. Be sure the Duty Officer has the current Plan.

# SECTION 4 – SURVIVING A FIRE

### **4.1 Vehicle Choice & Fire Preparedness Kit:**

The best vehicle is a robust DIESEL 4 wheel drive.

Keep the fuel as full as possible when entering the work area.

The vehicle shall contain a fire kit:

- Mobile AM/FM radio and batteries
- Fire extinguisher
- Reflective window covers
- Reflective covers for occupants (Minimum 2 for front and 2 for back.)
- Woollen Blankets for occupants
- Drinking Water
- Small shovel
- PLB- personal locator beacon ... save for rescue well after fire when a response is practical

### **4.2 If you are caught by an approaching fire in a vehicle:**

- Wear dry, natural fibre clothing covering as much as possible. Sturdy enclosed footwear
- If you can, U-turn to safety and leave the area (be sure route is safe)
- NEVER get out and run - stay in the vehicle it is much safer
- Park in a large clear area, well away from trees and long grass, facing oncoming fire
- Park behind a non-flammable barrier if possible (wall, rock, structure)
- Turn on headlights and hazards lights and park off road if possible.
- Close windows and vents. Get below window level as fire approaches
- Cover yourself with a dry woollen blanket and place reflective cover on top.
- When the fire has passed, get out of the car when safe to do so
- If a seat is unoccupied cover the upholstery with a non-flammable or insulated cover to prevent fire and release of toxic/lethal fumes & smoke. Extinguish any fire in vehicle.
- Do not try and leave fireground too early as trees may be falling and you may be trapped in a burning area. If trapped after a fire be patient, stay safe... you will eventually be found by reconnaissance flights or other surveillance systems.
- Never try to walk out...wait.

### **4.3 If you are on foot and caught by an approaching fire:**

- Always carry a basic fire survival kit, woollen blanket, several reflective covers, a small towel (wet to breathe), water, sturdy footwear and natural fibre clothing (cover up)
- Seek and prepare the best refuge.
- Avoid refuges on slopes and hill tops - avoid being above a fire  
As the fire approaches, seek refuge behind a rocky outcrop, in a cave, gully or large animal burrow, a large clear area *well away* from trees and grass or in large dam or lake. A depression in the ground will also help. **Get down, cover up.**
- Cover yourself with a woollen blanket and a reflective cover/s (top layer)
- Mouth at ground level and cover nose/ mouth with wet cloth to minimise inhaling hot air which can burn airways, and smoke. Create an air pocket until fire passes.
- Never seek refuge in above ground tanks or above ground pools

***Remember: It is not just flames that kill but intense heat radiation (the main killer), especially from high vegetation (shielding required), and smoke (create air pocket till fire passes). Tall flames emit huge amounts of radiation that may kill from hundreds of metres where there is nothing to shield from or reduce the radiation.***



## Working and Travelling in Fire Hazard Areas

### Definitions:

- Duty Officer: The designated person who is responsible for receiving communication from the Field Group 24/7 and taking the appropriate, agreed responses/ actions as agreed or required.
- Emergency Plan TRIGGER: A *trigger indicator* is an agreed event at which point all work shall cease and the team immediately leave the field or initiate the emergency response plan. A trigger indicator could be smoke, a fire in the district/ watch zone, act and watch advice from authority, extreme temperature day, hot and strong winds.
- Emergency Plan An action plan which is initiated by agreed triggers. The response actions are designed to give team members the greatest chance of survival in the changing conditions. Note the responses are trigger and situation dependant and may change. The Team leader is responsible for timely Plan initiation.  
Fire Safe Refuge: A CFA designated building or area used as protective refuge when it is too hazardous to leave the endangered area.
- High Risk Area: Any forested, scrubby or grassland areas.
- High Risk Fire Danger Rating: Referencing the CFA Fire Danger Coding system, Deakin declares any fire risk rating of HIGH or ABOVE to be a high risk condition.
- High Risk Fire Danger Period: (Victoria). Between November to April or Generally in any state: this is to be evaluated dependent upon the location and prevailing local conditions. Eg. NT most of the year, NSW from late winter onwards as Fire Danger periods are extending with the current global warming effects.
- Project Supervisor (Principal Investigator): The staff member who is supervising the work and is directly responsible for the safety of all participants; may be the same person as the Work Leader.
- Work Leader: The in-field person directly controlling the work. The Work Leader is responsible for the safety of the team undertaking infield activities, travelling and while away from their primary workplace).
- Watch Zone: Creating a watch zone on your device allows you to be notified of incidents and warnings in a particular area of your choice. E.g. fire outbreaks and threats close to you.

## Working and Travelling in Fire Hazard Areas

**VicEmergency App** for cell phones: Goto the App Store to download and install

### **TRAINING VIDEOS**

[https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/prepare\\_for\\_a\\_fire/surviving\\_a\\_bushfire.jsp](https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/site/prepare_for_a_fire/surviving_a_bushfire.jsp)

How fires behave

Fire stages

Vegetation and topography effects

What you will experience

Vehicles in bushfires – survival

Walker advice

[https://perthbushwalkers.asn.au/images/PDFs/Bushfire\\_Advice\\_BushfireServices\\_WA\\_1998.pdf](https://perthbushwalkers.asn.au/images/PDFs/Bushfire_Advice_BushfireServices_WA_1998.pdf)

La Trobe Uni Advice

[https://www.latrobe.edu.au/education/downloads/bushfire\\_safety.pdf](https://www.latrobe.edu.au/education/downloads/bushfire_safety.pdf)