

C11 Strategic Bushfire Management Plan

Each year the Directorate works closely with the ACT Emergency Services Agency (ACT ESA) and the ACT Rural Fire Service (ACT RFS) to minimise the risk and impact bushfires may have on school communities and directorate assets.

In 2010-11 the Directorate, in consultation with ACT ESA, refined school emergency protocols in relation to the declaration of elevated fire danger ratings ('extreme' or 'catastrophic'). These protocols complement the ACT Elevated Fire Danger Plan and identify the temporary closure of seven public and 14 non-government schools when the ACT ESA declares an elevated fire danger rating.

Under an 'extreme' fire danger rating, the following five public schools will be closed temporarily:

- Birrigai Outdoor School (Paddy's River)
- Black Mountain School
- Fraser Primary School and Fraser Preschool
- Hall Preschool site of Gold Creek School
- Tharwa Preschool site of Charles Conder Primary School.

Under a 'catastrophic' fire danger rating, Bonython Primary and Preschool and Jervis Bay Primary school will be temporarily closed along with the five schools identified above under an 'extreme' fire danger rating.

The 14 non-government schools to be closed temporarily under a 'catastrophic' fire danger rating are:

- Brindabella Christian College
- Burgmann Anglican School (Valley and Forde campuses)
- Canberra Christian School
- Canberra Girls' Grammar School
- Canberra Grammar School
- Canberra Montessori School
- Covenant College
- Daramalan College
- Islamic School of Canberra
- Marist College Canberra
- Orana Steiner School
- Radford College
- St Edmund's College
- The Galilee School.

All ACT schools are required to be on high alert on days when extreme or catastrophic fire danger ratings are declared. If a bushfire occurs and poses a risk to schools, the ACT RFS or ACT Fire Brigade may direct schools to close immediately.

Public schools are reviewing Emergency Management Plans to ensure plans are consistent with the Directorate's Security and Emergency Management Governance Framework. An annual bushfire preparation program was undertaken by the Directorate to ensure vegetation and other fire hazards were well managed.

Under the Directorate responsibility, a Bushfire Operation Plan was in place for Birrigai Outdoor School which operates at Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve. The plan provided an outline of the Directorate's bushfire planning to ensure that both the school and Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve were assessed together for bushfire prevention.

Responsibility for Birrigai Outdoor School infrastructure transferred to the Territory and Municipal Services Directorate in 2010-11.

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