

NSW Bushfire Inquiry 2020 Progress Report

Implementation of the NSW Government's
response to the NSW Bushfire Inquiry

Reporting Period

January to March 2023

Key Highlights

Protecting Frontline Firefighters

- As at March 2023, 86 new light tankers, and 188 new medium and heavy tankers have been built and delivered to NSW RFS Fire Brigades.
- 81 existing heavy tankers have been refurbished with appropriate crew protection systems.
- A new service standard in catering to ensure firefighter sustenance has been finalised and is expected to be published in 2023.

Improving Operational Capability

- All NSW RFS medium aircraft are now night time capable. Night bombing and winching trials are underway. Work is continuing to develop capability using Artificial Intelligence and for intelligence gathering, search/rescue and remote area operations.
- NSW Telco Authority continues to procure solutions and services to provide sufficient redundancy options for the Public Safety Network (PSN). Battery upgrades to 19 sites have been completed, with upgrades to 75 sites currently underway. Manufacturing of 18 mobile radio assets has commenced, which will be used to provide additional redundancy to maintain telecommunications coverage during unplanned outages.
- Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) are scheduled to be rolled out across NSW RFS Districts in early 2023. The MDTs will provide local situational awareness to field commanders on the ground, allowing them to better plan fire suppression and asset protection strategies.

Addressing the needs of the Community

- To improve information flows and increase public awareness of ABC emergency broadcasts, 99 roadside signs displaying the frequency of local/regional ABC stations, have been strategically installed across NSW.

Hazard Reduction

- The rollout of Next Generation Bush Fire Risk Management Plans is continuing. The Bush Fire Management Committee continues to facilitate community consultations and public exhibitions processes to capture community inputs into the Bush Fire Risk Planning process.
- Bush Fire Management Committees continue to assess local fire risks and prioritise works accordingly. 54 Fire Trail Access Plans have been endorsed. 53 Fire Trails having been completed, with another 29 being constructed or upgraded, and 8 more in the planning and design phase.

Strengthening Research, Technology, Governance & Accountability

- 279 sites have been declared as environmental Assets of Intergenerational Significance to protect the habitat for 108 species.
- DPE scientists continue to develop an advanced air quality forecasting and assessment system which combines up-to-date data, modelling and satellite observations to provide accurate air quality forecasts for NSW.
- As part of accelerating spatial technology in natural hazards, trials using NSW RFS Cessna Citation aircraft to undertake additional scanning flights are continuing, despite this work being challenged by adverse weather conditions and the Citation's involvement in regular flood support missions.

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Background

NSW Bushfire Inquiry

The 2019-20 bush fire season was without a doubt one of the most catastrophic on record. It lasted eight months, from July 2019 until February 2020, with a total of 11,774 fire incidents throughout the season and 5.5 million hectares burned.

In NSW, 26 people lost their lives, including four NSW RFS volunteers and three contracted air crew. Each one of these deaths was a tragedy and greatly affected the community.

The 2019-20 bush fire season saw 2,476 homes destroyed and 1,034 damaged. 5,559 outbuildings and 284 facilities were also destroyed in the fires.

More than 2.7 million hectares of national park was impacted by the fires. 55 national parks had more than 99% of their area affected by fire. The habitats of at least 293 threatened animals were affected by fire.

On 30 January 2020, the Premier announced an inquiry into the 2019-20 bush fire season to make recommendations in relation to bush fire preparedness and response.

The Independent Bushfire Inquiry was led by Dave Owens APM, former Deputy Commissioner of NSW Police Force and Professor Mary O’Kane AC, Independent Planning Commission Chair and former NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer.

The Inquiry report was released on 24 August 2020, with the NSW Government accepting all recommendations.

Reporting on Implementation of the Inquiry’s Recommendations

The NSW Government has committed to providing regular reports on the progress of the implementation of actions to address the Inquiry’s recommendations.

In December 2022, following the abolition of Resilience NSW, responsibility for coordinating reporting on the implementation of the Inquiry’s recommendations has been assigned to the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

The NSW Parliament passed amendments to the *Rural Fires Act 1997* in late 2020 to require quarterly reporting to both houses of Parliament.

This is the eighth quarterly report produced in response to this amended legislation. This report captures the activities of the NSW Government agencies leading implementation of initiatives and projects to address the Inquiry’s recommendations and sub-recommendations.

Methodology

This section outlines the process established to implement, monitor and report on the agreed actions to address the Inquiry’s recommendations to improve how NSW plans, prepares for and responds to bush fires.

The process for assigning status to a recommendation is as follows:




- Step 1:** Recommendations/sub-recommendations are referred to a nominated lead agency to prepare a Project Plan to implement an agreed action for the recommendation. The lead agency then submitted this to the former Resilience NSW for review.
- Step 2:** The lead agency is responsible for working with nominated supporting agencies in implementing the agreed action. The Department of Premier and Cabinet monitors progress of all accepted and allocated responses to help ensure the lead agency is meeting the agreed implementation timeframes.
- Step 3:** Once the lead agency has completed the required action, it will submit a claim for closure of the recommendation to the Department of Premier and Cabinet. This application indicates that the lead agency believes it has completed the required action and/or ongoing work has been integrated into the lead agency’s ‘business as usual’ operations. The status of the recommendation is then changed to “Completed”.

The Department of Premier and Cabinet, as the current agency responsible for overseeing the implementation of the recommendations, will continue with this process until all recommendations are closed.

It is acknowledged that many recommendations are contingent on collaboration with other jurisdictions, including the Commonwealth Government and other states and territories.

This report identifies any change to target timeframes or to actions proposed to be taken to address the Inquiry’s recommendations.

Schema for Quarterly Reporting

BEING SCOPED		A recommendation that has a project being scoped or does not have an approved Project Plan yet.
IN-PROGRESS		A recommendation that has a project that is being progressed as at the end of the reporting period.
COMPLETED		A recommendation that has been delivered, including those incorporated into an ongoing program of work.

Status of Implementation

The Inquiry made 76 recommendations, and some of these recommendations included further sub-recommendations which require implementation of discreet actions or projects.

Consequently, the Department of Premier and Cabinet is reporting against a total of 148 recommendations and sub-recommendations.

At the end of the reporting period, the implementation progress for all 148 recommendations was as follows:

- 101 recommendations completed (68.2%)
- 47 recommendations in progress (31.8%).

Of the 47 recommendations in progress, with 35% having a target completion date that falls within 2023, with the remaining recommendations expected to be completed between 2024 to 2029.

More than \$830 million allocated to respond to recommendations

Since the release of the NSW Bushfire Inquiry Final Report in August 2020, the NSW Government has announced more than \$830 million to address the recommendations of the Inquiry. As part of the 2022-23 Budget, the NSW Government has committed:

- \$191 million for NSW RFS to keep NSW communities safe, including:
 - \$105.6 million to deliver new trucks and retrofit old trucks
 - \$75.4 million to significantly boost the number of mitigation crews
 - \$10 million to enhance strategic fire trails.
- \$56.5 million for NSW RFS to construct new co-located Emergency Operations Centres and Fire Control Centres at Moruya, Tumut, Hawkesbury, Grafton, Narrabri and Cooma.
- \$9 million to FRNSW to acquire 16 firefighting tankers.
- \$201.5 million over four years for National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) for:
 - 200 additional permanent firefighter roles to deliver increased hazard reduction and boost capacity to respond to bush fires
 - 50 additional permanent roles to protect and manage Assets of Intergenerational Significance
 - Upgrades to the NPWS firefighting fleet
 - Upgrades to the NPWS radio infrastructure.
- \$44.8 million over 10 years for a state-wide environmental and air-quality monitoring program

This builds on the existing funding invested in 2020-21 and 2021-22, including:

- \$45.7 million in additional personal protective clothing for frontline firefighters
- \$36 million for a new first responder mental health strategy for emergency services
- \$54 million to accelerate the state-wide delivery of strategic fire trails
- \$19.9 million to upgrade the FRNSW's dispatch systems, ensuring greater integration across the fire agencies
- \$2.5 million for improvements to NSW RFS's Fires Near Me app. The Fires Near Me app has been renamed to Hazards Near Me and expanded to include flood alerts from the NSW State Emergency Services (SES). The expanded app was launched on 14 February 2023.

Quarterly Progress Report: January – March 2023

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R1 That, in order to ensure recommendations accepted by the Government are implemented in a timely and transparent manner, Government establish a central accountability mechanism to track implementation of recommendations from bush fire-related reviews and inquiries and consider expanding this to other policy areas.	Assign Resilience NSW to oversee recommendations from the NSW Bushfire Inquiry and bush fire related reviews. NSW Government to establish a legislative function for the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) to oversee lessons arising from emergencies.	Resilience NSW	Q4 2021	Completed ■	<p>Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. The NSW Government assigned Resilience NSW to track the implementation of recommendations from the NSW Bushfire Inquiry and develop a public reporting framework for the Inquiry and related reviews.</p> <p>Legislation was passed in November 2020 to establish an explicit statutory function for the State Emergency Management Committee to promote the continuous improvement in the NSW emergency management sector, including through consideration of reviews and inquiries and their recommendations.</p>
R2 That at the start of each fire season, based on advice from the Bush Fire Coordinating Committee (BFCC), Government provide a public statement with an evaluation of the likely fire season risk and the effectiveness of the planning and preparation for the upcoming season. This should be based on sophisticated monitoring of the key risk factors and signals for an extreme fire season. It should form the basis for clear public communication about these risks on a regional basis and the actions that Government proposes in preparation.	NSW RFS Commissioner (Chair of BFCC) will prepare a report outlining the State's preparedness for the upcoming season, which is endorsed by the BFCC and presented to the Minister.	NSW RFS	Ongoing	Completed ■	<p>Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. The inaugural Fire Season Public Statement was tabled in Parliament on 17 November 2020, and the 2021-22 Fire Season Statement tabled in Parliament on 13 October 2021. Work is underway to develop the 2022-23 Fire Season Statement.</p> <p>This will continue to be completed annually as part of agency BAU.</p>






Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<p>R3 That the NSW Government, along with other Australian governments, ask AFAC to establish a national bush fire database. This database would enable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> monitoring of trends in bush fire activity and impacts, including timing, cause, extent and intensity across all land tenures and vegetation types tracking trends and identifying patterns in associated weather and climate signals that contribute to severe bush fires evaluation of the cost and effectiveness of risk mitigation efforts, including hazard reduction, and fire suppression activities so we have a better understanding of what works. 	<p>NSW RFS will collaborate with AFAC and the Disaster Research Centre (announced by the Commonwealth Government 23 July 2020) to ensure a national repository for bush fire history, including those elements listed within the recommendation.</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Q2 2023</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Recommendation completed in Q1 2023. NSW RFS has been successful in advocating for a Natural Hazards Research Australia (NHRA) Project to achieve this recommendation. The Bushfire Information Database Project team is currently scoping a national bush fire database and surveying jurisdictional stakeholders for information about available datasets.</p> <p>https://www.naturalhazards.com.au/research/research-projects/bushfire-information-database-scoping-study</p>
<p>R4 That, in order to improve capability to detect ignitions and monitor accurately all fire edge intensity and progression automatically across the State in near real time, Government establish a spatial technology acceleration program to maximise the information available from the various remote sensing technologies currently in use and to plan for inclusion of new remote sensing systems that can sense precisely and rapidly through heavy smoke, cloud, fog and dust. This will require work within the State and with partners nationally and internationally.</p>	<p>NSW RFS will develop a project to trial new NSW RFS Citation aircraft for early detection by increasing surveillance flights during and before heightened fire dangers.</p> <p>NSW RFS will also, working with other agencies, examine the feasibility and trial an integrated detection and monitoring camera surveillance network across high-risk bush fire areas area of the State.</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Q2 2022</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Recommendation completed in Q2 2022. The NSW Government has established the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Research and Technology Program, and the Bushfire Response Research & Design Mission, with an investment of \$69.8 million over four years, to accelerate research and development and promote new and emerging industries and technology to better prepare the state for future bush fires.</p> <p>NSW RFS is continuing trials using its two Citation aircraft to produce thermal scan images to allow for the early detection of bush fire danger. NSW RFS has also participated in Forestry Corporation of NSW trials in early fire and smoke detection, via both camera and satellite systems.</p>





Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<p>R5 That Government establish NSW as a major world centre of bush fire research, and technology development and commercialisation. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) establishing a Bush Fire Technology Fund, modelled on the Medical Devices Fund, to assist with the rapid development of technologies and services to sense, fight, mop up after and protect from bush fires b) commissioning further research into extreme fire behaviour and building up the research and research training capacity in this field. This will improve our ability to understand, model and predict the likelihood of extreme fire behaviour in the landscape and enable targeting of firefighting resources to areas where fires are likely to become most damaging. 	<p>Resilience NSW in collaboration with relevant agencies will scope the potential establishment of a Bushfire and Natural Hazards Research and Technology Acceleration Program. It is proposed to consider proposals to address this recommendation in detail in mid-2021.</p>	<p>Resilience NSW</p>	<p>Q3 2022</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Recommendation completed in Q2 2021 ahead of target date.</p> <p>The NSW Government has committed \$69.8 million over four years for the establishment of a Bushfire and Natural Hazards Research and Technology Program, and Bushfire Response Research & Design Mission, to accelerate research and development and promote new and emerging industries and technology to better prepare the state for future bush fires. This funding includes \$16 million over four years to establish an early-stage Bushfire Commercialisation Fund, to enable small and medium enterprises to develop and commercialise products related to bush fire technologies, which opened for applications in July 2022. The NSW Government has also opened the second round of the Bushfire Technology Pilots Program to support innovation and new bush fire technology.</p> <p>Resilience NSW and Investment NSW will be responsible for administering this funding over the next four years.</p> <p>This funding also includes \$10 million over five years to establish a Bushfire and Natural Hazards fflee. DPE are leading the procurement and future administration of the research centre on behalf of Resilience NSW. The procurement for this research centre is underway.</p>
<p>R6 That Government support training initiatives to increase the capacity of fire authorities to fight the kind of megafires seen in the 2019-20 season. The training initiatives should include:</p>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) targeted training in local weather effects for fire behaviour analysts who are embedded in Incident Management Teams 	<p>NSW RFS to enhance existing multiagency Fire Behaviour Analyst training programs, to improve knowledge of local weather effects.</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Recommendation completed in Q3 2021.</p> <p>NSW RFS has developed and delivered Local Weather Effects training to over 60 NSW RFS and interagency Fire Behaviour Analysts. This training has enhanced their knowledge and ability to consider local weather effects and their influence on bush fires.</p>

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
b) an increase in the number of trained fire behaviour analysts so that, should there be a repeat of the scale of these fires, all Incident Management Teams can have an embedded analyst and there is some redundancy under more normal conditions	NSW RFS to recruit additional fire behaviour analysts and trainers in regional NSW.	NSW RFS	Q4 2021	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q3 2021. NSW RFS continues to increase its Fire Behaviour Analyst capacity. Additional Fire Behaviour Analysts have been recruited, meaning each Area Command has this specialised capacity.
c) training of more meteorologists in fire behaviour so there are more expert resources available to embed within the NSW RFS State Operations Centre	NSW RFS to develop a specific training package to enhance the knowledge of embedded BOM meteorologists within the NSW RFS State Operations Centre.	NSW RFS	Q1 2022	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q1 2022. NSW RFS in partnership with the Bureau of Meteorology continues to build greater capacity for meteorologists to assist at the NSW RFS State Operations Centre. Meteorologists rotated through NSW RFS State Operations over the 2021-22 summer period. During this time a training and induction checklist was piloted, detailing training and induction steps for meteorologists to assist in NSW RFS Headquarters.
d) dedicated training for firefighters in extreme fire behaviour	NSW RFS to develop an extreme fire behaviour training module and online training package, incorporated into existing foundational training frameworks.	NSW RFS	Q2 2021	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q2 2021. Extreme fire behaviour content has been included in all mainstream firefighting training packages. This includes Bush Firefighter, Advanced Firefighter and Crew Leader training packages.


Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
e) support for research training in challenging firefighting problems.	NSW RFS will work with RFSA to develop an annual scholarship program for RFS volunteer members.	NSW RFS	Q2 2023	Completed ■	<p>The RFS, in consultation with the Rural Fire Service Association, continues to develop partnerships with the Natural Hazards Research Australia (NHRA) and NSW Bushfire Natural Hazards Research Centre (BNHRC) to promote opportunities for its volunteer members to undertake scholarship opportunities. The NHRA has established a program of annual scholarships, including postgraduate research and associate, early career researcher and industry fellowships, with 12 PhD candidates already being funded nationally.</p> <p>The newly established BNHRC will provide another source of scholarships to support the NSW research agenda. As a key partner in both research centres, the RFS will offer ongoing support to its members seeking to pursue research scholarship opportunities and continue to work with the scholarship providers to ensure suitable research themes are funded.</p>
R7 That the NSW RFS Commissioner consult with the Fire and Rescue NSW Commissioner and other emergency services to develop a protocol in the event that simultaneous emergency events necessitate the re-allocation of resources while a Section 44 declaration is in place.	The NSW RFS Commissioner to consult with the Fire and Rescue NSW Commissioner, to establish an agreed position on minimum standards of fire protection to be afforded to Communities within a declared Section 44 area.	NSW RFS FRNSW	Q3 2022	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q3 2022. NSW RFS and FRNSW have implemented a protocol to ensure an ongoing collaborative approach to fire service delivery is maintained, and that all resourcing for bush and grass related fires are coordinated through the Incident Controller or NSW RFS State Operations Centre.
R8 That, to strengthen cross-agency accountability and deliver improved bush fire risk management outcomes:					
a) Bush Fire Coordinating Committee (BFCC) members from NSW government agencies are at the level of Coordinator General/Deputy Secretary/Agency Head/Deputy Commissioner (or equivalent)	NSW RFS will review BFCC membership and make appropriate recommendations for appointment by the Minister.	NSW RFS	Q3 2021	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q3 2021. A review of Bush Fire Coordinating Committee members has been completed.



Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
b) the BFCC ensures all Bush Fire Risk Management Plans (BFRMPs), Operation Coordination Plans and Fire Access and Fire Trail (FAFT) Plans are compliant with the timeframes outlined in section 52 of the Rural Fires Act as soon as practicable	This recommendation will be addressed in conjunction with Recommendation 19.	NSW RFS	Q2 2022	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q2 2022. All Bush Fire Management Committees have a valid Bush Fire Risk Management Plans and Section 52 Operations Plan. 29 Fire Access and Fire Trail Plans have been approved by the Bush Fire Coordinating Committee.
c) the BFCC develops a risk-based performance auditing cycle to ensure Bush Fire Risk Management Plans, Operation Coordination Plans and FAFT Plans are fit-for-purpose and any opportunities for improvement are identified and actioned	This recommendation will be addressed in conjunction with Recommendation 19.	NSW RFS	Q4 2021	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q4 2021. This recommendation is addressed in conjunction with Recommendation 19. The <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> was amended in November 2020 to provide new powers for the Commissioner to audit implementation of Bush Fire Risk Management Plans (BFMPs). NSW RFS has commenced development of a qualitative audit plan for BFMPs defined by Section 52 of the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> .
d) the NSW RFS considers the best way of enhancing the transparency of BFCC decision-making, for example by publishing BFCC membership and minutes on its website	NSW RFS will enhance its website to provide BFCC content.	NSW RFS	Q4 2022	Completed ■	
e) the BFCC endorses the annual statement to Parliament on the likely fire risk and the effectiveness of planning and preparation	This recommendation will be addressed in conjunction with Recommendation 2.	NSW RFS	Q1 2021	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. This recommendation has been addressed in conjunction with Recommendation 2.
f) relevant agencies review Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC) membership and confirm to the NSW RFS that members have sufficient discretion and authority to agree and implement risk mitigation activities at the local level	NSW RFS in collaboration with BFCC to update BFMC Policy and Handbook, the BFCC secretariat to provide a report to Commissioner NSW RFS regarding agency endorsement of all BFMC members in alignment to this recommendation.	NSW RFS	Q3 2021	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q3 2021. All Bush Fire Management Committee Executive Officers have reviewed their membership and ensured representatives are of appropriate level of seniority.

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
g) the NSW RFS Commissioner amends the BFMC Policy to require BFMCs to refer unresolved issues to the BFCC for resolution.	NSW RFS in collaboration with BFCC will update the BFMC Policy and Handbook.	NSW RFS	Q3 2023*	In Progress 	A Policy Writer has been appointed to facilitate the review of the BFMC Handbook. This position is establishing mechanisms to collate feedback from BFMCs for the review. Specific actions include establishing terms of reference and a review working group and a survey of relevant agencies / stakeholders.
R9 That the NSW RFS work with AFAC to analyse the impact of changing fire seasons on inter-jurisdictional resource sharing agreements, both domestic and international, and determine any flow-on effects for NSW firefighting personnel capacity.	NSW RFS to work with NRSC to update policies and plans, and to undertake annual resource analysis between jurisdictions.	NSW RFS	Q4 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q3 2021. The 2021 National Statement of Capability has been completed and published by Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council. The <i>Bush Fires Amendment Bill 2020</i> passed by Parliament in 2020 did not include changes relating to industry-based brigades. NSW RFS continues to work with industry stakeholders.
R10 That, in order to expand NSW's specialist aviation personnel safety and capacity, Government expand simulator capabilities at the NSW RFS Training Academy.	NSW RFS will install an aviation simulator and engage additional trainers at RFS Academy.	NSW RFS	Q2 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q2 2021. NSW RFS Aviation Simulator is now integrated into aviation training courses, including the interstate Air Attack Course conducted in June 2021 at the NSW RFS Dubbo Training Academy.
R11 That, in order to strengthen the capability of local councils in future emergency events:					
a) Resilience NSW, in consultation with local government, develop specific training that focuses on the role, responsibilities and expected functions of the Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO), including regular 'refresher' components	Resilience NSW will expand the Regional Disaster Preparedness Program, with modules on local council emergency management capability development.	Resilience NSW	Q4 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q2 2021. Local Emergency Management Committee online training package has been re-developed and released including guidance on the role and responsibility of Local Emergency Management Officer.
b) Councils support their staff to participate in LEMO training on an ongoing basis and ensure that staff who are LEMOs are appropriately senior and have the authority to commit resources.	Local Council Capability Development Program	Resilience NSW	Ongoing	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. The Regional Disaster Preparedness Program, piloted in four regions, is being transitioned into core business for Resilience NSW through its regional teams.

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R12 That Government work with other Australian governments to provide long-term funding certainty to AFAC, including the National Resource Sharing Centre (NRSC) and the National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC).	This will be progressed by national forums to also address related recommendations from the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements.	Resilience NSW	Ongoing	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. NSW continues to support the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council arrangements through existing national forums including the National Emergency Management Minister's Meeting and Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee.
R13 That, to ensure updated resource-sharing arrangements are in place, the NSW and Victorian Governments progress and finalise a multi-agency Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) before the 2020-21 fire season commences.	NSW RFS to review all MoUs including Victoria ahead of the 2020-21 bush fire season.	NSW RFS	Q2 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. All Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) were reviewed ahead of the 2020-21 bush fire season. MoUs will be reviewed annually.
R14 That in order to provide greater consistency in public information and warnings, especially in border areas: a) the finalisation of the Australian Warning System be prioritised to provide greater consistency in public information and warnings b) the NSW State Emergency Management Committee, including the Public Information and Warnings Sub-Committee, prioritise the implementation of the Australian Warning System and data standards for relevant hazards within NSW.	NSW RFS will continue to work with the National Warnings Group to finalise the National Warning System framework and engage with SEMC to implement the system.	NSW RFS	Q2 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. On 19 March 2021, Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee endorsed the adoption of the Australian Warning System across multiple hazards.
R15 That Government commit to: a) evaluating existing bush fire preparedness programs to determine the most effective and efficient approach given increased frequency of extreme fire seasons, and develop outcomes-based measures to monitor programs' impact over time b) post-evaluation roll out the most effective bush fire preparedness programs to all communities and at-risk cohorts in bush fire prone areas across NSW.	NSW RFS will establish a comprehensive review of all preparedness programs, to identify and prioritise those programs that provide better outcomes for communities.	NSW RFS	Q2 2022	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q2 2022. NSW RFS has reviewed the effectiveness of 20 bush fire preparedness programs. Three programs have been identified as leading programs which are highly effective and efficient. The remaining programs have been identified as effective but with opportunities to improve them through program design and delivery updates. This will ensure all programs are highly effective and efficient.

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<p>R16 That, in order to ensure tourism businesses are prepared for natural disasters including bush fires, Resilience NSW work with NSW RFS and Destination NSW to develop bush fire preparedness support for tourism businesses, based on research into existing models. Over time, this support could be expanded to include other natural hazards.</p>	<p>Resilience NSW will review Get Ready materials, and other appropriate business disaster preparedness tools, and tailor for the tourism market using behavioural insights and testing with tourism businesses to ensure effectiveness of message delivery.</p>	<p>Resilience NSW SBC</p>	<p>Q4 2022</p>	<p>Completed ■</p>	<p>Recommendation completed in Q3 2021. On 9 September 2021, NSW Government launched a set of new guides to bolster tourism businesses resilience to bush fires and other natural disasters. The guides were developed by Destination NSW, working closely with Resilience NSW and NSW RFS. They address tourism industry needs and provide straightforward and practical advice to help tourism businesses keep everyone safe and informed.</p>
<p>R17 That the NSW RFS identifies remote bush fire prone areas that do not already have an indoor Neighbourhood Safer Place (NSP) and upgrades the relevant NSW RFS Stations to meet NSP guidelines. These stations would require adequate Asset Protection Zones and active/passive protection systems to provide short-term protection.</p>	<p>NSW RFS will undertake analysis of how many remote locations do not have an indoor NSP and a NSW RFS station is in the same locality. NSW RFS will trial the upgrade of three remote RFS stations in areas that do not have an indoor NSP.</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Q4 2024*</p>	<p>In Progress ■</p>	<p>The RFS has completed an analysis of the number of remote locations that did not have an indoor NSP but had an RFS station in the same locality. More than 300 locations were identified.</p> <p>Three suitable RFS stations were identified in areas without an indoor NSP: Bell, Balmoral and Penrose stations. Construction of an NSP at Bell station is 50% complete and on track for completion in Q2 of 2023, pending suitable weather conditions.</p> <p>Project initiation documents are currently being finalised for Balmoral & Penrose stations in the Southern Highlands. Mount Tomah scoping works are continuing.</p>

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<p>R18 That, in order to equip NSW RFS with comprehensive information on all structures and assets at risk of bush fire, Government ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> there is a single whole-of-government procurement and acquisition program for imagery and LiDAR and that Government accelerate the building of the State Digital Twin and associated Digital Workbench owners/managers of assets (apart from private home owners whose information will be provided through local councils) in bush fire prone land are required to provide to the Digital Twin at least the following information/metadata with quality control certification on an annual basis (with annual census at least two months before the start of the fire season): precise geolocation; description of asset including picture; value level; fire treatment on asset; Asset Protection Zone (APZ) details and how it is maintained; access details; what redundancy is available if relevant; any metadata requirements specific to the asset class; emergency contact and instructions on how to access where more information is held; and any restrictions on data access and sharing. <p>The Digital Twin must also be able to incorporate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> information about the hazard reduction results for road verges, fire trails, APZs and other defensible space local information supplied by organisations such as local NSW RFS brigades. 	<p>Department of Customer Service (DCS) Spatial Services to coordinate whole-of-government option for procurement and acquisition of imagery and LiDAR.</p> <p>NSW government agencies to engage with current activity of the Commonwealth Government to deliver significant reforms in this area.</p>	<p>DPC^ DCS</p>	<p>Q4 2024</p>	<p>In Progress</p> 	<p>The NSW Government has undertaken a single whole of government procurement and acquisition program for imagery and LiDAR.</p> <p>The Commonwealth Government has progressed a number of amendments to the <i>Security of Critical Infrastructure Act 2018</i>. However, these have not addressed the provision of data on critical infrastructure to assist in planning, preparation and response for bush fire.</p> <p>Work is progressing to consider the development of proposed models for changes to the NSW Critical Infrastructure Framework. This includes consideration of a method for obtaining data and metadata on critical infrastructure, as recommended by the Inquiry.</p>

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R19 That Government re-commit to the current, regionally based approach to planning and coordinating hazard reduction activities across all tenures through Bush Fire Management Committees but ensure that it is actually being implemented at a high-level of quality across NSW. Getting it to a high-level of quality requires:					
a) implementing the Inquiry's recommendation about performance auditing of Bush Fire Risk Management Plans (BFRMPs)	The Government to introduce legislation to expand NSW RFS Commissioner's existing powers to audit the implementation of bush fire risk management plans and provide for the specific power to audit 'Fire Access and Fire Trail Plans' and 'Plans of Operations'. NSW RFS Commissioner to establish a performance, audit and implementation unit to undertake ongoing review of BFCC and BFMC functions, plans and outcomes.	NSW RFS	Q2 2023	In Progress 	Recruitment of audit staff across NSW RFS Headquarters and Area Commands is substantially completed and training undertaken. A draft Strategic Audit Plan is in the final stages of development and is due to be endorsed within Q2 2023. The NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) created and filled a Bushfire Risk and Evaluation Team to improve identification and risk management of environmental and cultural assets. The NPWS Bushfire Risk and Evaluation Team continues to support the NSW RFS and Bush Fire Management Committees in the preparation of new Bush Fire Risk Management Plans.
b) prioritising implementation of revised processes for bush fire risk management planning that incorporate new modelling and methods for quantifying risk and the residual risk profile as a result of proposed hazard reduction works	A new Bush Fire Risk Management Planning process to be created which incorporates new modelling and methods of quantifying risk and the residual risk profile as a result of proposed hazard reduction works. Relevant policies to be updated to support new BFRMP and implementation plan for roll out created.	NSW RFS	Q3 2024*	In Progress 	The rollout of next generation Bush Fire Risk Management Plans is continuing. The RFS is also in the process of planning for a project to improve the bush fire risk modelling framework through the NSW Bushfire and Natural Hazards Research Centre. During the last quarter, the RFS participated in the inaugural Research Centre workshop to design and align research themes to Inquiry recommendations. Enhancements for bush fire risk modelling will be an important part of the Centre's program, with this research helping to improve understanding of bush fire risk.




Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<p>c) ensuring regional priorities for hazard reduction, and how they are determined, are communicated clearly to the community, and their implementation is reported on transparently. This will include being very clear about the objectives of hazard reduction activities and communicating that hazard reduction does not eliminate the risk of fire affecting properties</p>	<p>NSW RFS will collaborate with the BFCC to update the BFMC handbook and policy to require that regional annual risk plans are communicated to all agency members and the community.</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Q4 2023*</p>	<p>In Progress ■</p>	<p>This recommendation will be delivered in conjunction with recommendations 19(a) and 19(b). The BFMC Handbook and policy are noted against recommendation 8(g). A Policy Writer has been appointed to facilitate the review of the BFMC Handbook. This position is establishing mechanisms to collate feedback from BFMCs for the review. Specific actions include establishing terms of reference and a review working group and a survey of relevant agencies / stakeholders.</p>
<p>d) the methodology for assessing and planning for risk reduction becomes an ongoing area of research and the frameworks are formally reviewed every three years.</p>	<p>This recommendation will be addressed through recommendation R3 and R5(b).</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Q3 2024*</p>	<p>In Progress ■</p>	<p>The rollout of next generation Bush Fire Risk Management Plans is continuing. The RFS is also in the process of planning for a project to improve the bush fire risk modelling framework through the NSW Bushfire and Natural Hazards Research Centre. During the last quarter, the RFS participated in the inaugural Research Centre workshop to design and align research themes to Inquiry recommendations. Enhancements for bush fire risk modelling will be an important part of the Centre's program, with this research helping to improve understanding of bush fire risk.</p>



Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R20 That Government, noting that hazard reduction targeted in proximity to assets is on balance more likely to provide help than hinder, should:					
<p>a) support local councils and partner agencies to implement more comprehensive hazard reduction at a local level around towns/cities, communities and local infrastructure assets, and provide incentives for communities to organise themselves to prioritise and implement local hazard reduction initiatives. This will involve a suite of hazard reduction techniques depending on the landscape including prescribed burning, clearing, mowing, and mechanical treatments, and easy disposal of green waste into processors turning it into bioenergy or biofuels</p>	<p>NSW RFS to increase access to mitigation resources to support local government and land managers with implementation of Asset Protection Zone (APZ) and Strategic Fire Advantage Zone (SFAZ) works.</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Recommendation completed in Q2 2022.</p> <p>On 12 June 2022, the NSW Government announced \$75.4 million for 318 ongoing NSW RFS Mitigation Crew positions. These ongoing positions will improve continuity of service delivery such as hazard reduction mitigation works to the community.</p> <p>Since 1 July 2021, NSW RFS Mitigation Crews have assisted with completing more than 3,551 inspections and completed over 1,504 site works.</p> <p>Additionally, despite significant wet weather, between 1 June 2021 to 30 June 2022, NSW RFS Mitigation Crews have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mitigated the bush fire risk and provided protection to 20,402 properties ▪ Assisted with 9 hazard reduction burns for a total of 960ha burnt ▪ Constructed 1,457km of control lines ▪ Completed 814 Assist Infirm, Disabled and Elderly Residents (AIDER) mitigation works ▪ Completed 118ha of Asset Protection Zone works. <p>NSW RFS also continue to administer and manage funds to assist land managers which local government can access to undertake mitigation works and resilience activities to protect the NSW community from bush fires.</p>

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<p>b) beyond the local level priorities for hazard reduction, prioritise prescribed burning in parts of the landscape where fuel treatment may help reduce probability of fires escalating quickly and where terrain and potential atmospheric interactions are likely to escalate fires into fire-generated thunderstorms. This will likely involve a proactive program of treating ridge tops that are prone to dry lightning where reduced fuels may help reduce speed of spread when the fire first starts, or particular windward or lee-slopes that are susceptible to generating extreme fire behaviour and drive fire towards towns.</p>	<p>NSW RFS and NPWS to extend mitigation programs, with the addition of increased resource capabilities to focus on areas of potential bush fire ignition.</p>	<p>NSW RFS DPE</p>	<p>Q2 2022</p>	<p>Completed ■</p>	<p>Recommendation completed in Q2 2022. This recommendation is being addressed through recommendation 21(a).</p>




Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R21 That, in order to improve understanding of optimal hazard reduction techniques and their application in the landscape:					
a) Government extend the recently introduced program of mitigation crews so that hazard reduction activities can be undertaken when conditions are optimal (throughout the week and potentially at night)	The Government will extend the existing 12-month funding for NSW RFS and NPWS mitigation programs, including extension of NPWS fire fighter roles to undertake additional hazard reduction activities and enhance rapid bush fire response capacity.	NSW RFS DPE	Ongoing	Completed ■	<p>Recommendation completed in Q2 2022.</p> <p>On 12 June 2022, the NSW Government announced \$75.4 million for 318 ongoing NSW RFS Mitigation Crew positions. These ongoing positions will improve continuity of service delivery such as hazard reduction mitigation works to the community. The NSW Government also committed \$201.5 million over four years to NPWS to support ongoing implementation of the Inquiry's recommendations in national parks, including 200 permanent firefighter positions from 2023 onwards, and 50 additional permanent roles to protect Assets of Intergenerational Significance. The NPWS firefighter capacity enhancement program will also train 70 additional firefighters for the 2022-23 fire season.</p> <p>Despite above normal rainfall from July 2021 to June 2022, NSW RFS along with other fire authorities and land managers treated more than 40,500 hectares of bush, protecting almost 47,223 properties directly on the urban and bush interface.</p> <p>Extensive planning continues to ensure that NSW RFS and NPWS is positioned to take full advantage of any favourable weather conditions for burning.</p>
b) all fire authorities review prescribed burning techniques and their implementation, and commission further research into optimal prescribed burning regimes and techniques. This should include research to understand critical thresholds that, when breached, may render fuel treatment ineffective (i.e. fuel moisture thresholds), and the short, medium and long-term outcomes of hazard reduction burning regimes	All fire agencies to review and ensure that the prescribed burn plans clearly identify the outcome that the Hazard Reduction activity is to deliver, and that those undertaking Hazard Reduction activities are appropriately trained.	NSW RFS	Q1 2022	Completed ■	<p>Recommendation completed in Q1 2022.</p> <p>NSW RFS has completed training package upgrades for planning and conducting prescribed burning.</p> <p>NSW RFS is also working with research organisations including Natural Hazards Research Australia to ensure that research into optimising hazard reduction burning outcomes is undertaken.</p>





Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<p>c) Government commission research into a range of other hazard reduction techniques to understand better the cost versus benefit and effectiveness of different practices in various circumstances, including grazing.</p>	<p>The NSW RFS in collaboration with BFCC and universities to research initiatives for hazard reduction practices, techniques, and technologies.</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Q2 2023</p>	<p>In Progress ■</p>	<p>The RFS is continuing goat grazing trials as an alternative method of fuel reduction capability, particularly in rough and inaccessible terrain and wet weather conditions. Since the trial began, the goats have grazed 17 sites across NSW, with another five in progress or being planned. The total area grazed is more than 138 hectares.</p> <p>In conjunction with the NSW Bushfire and Natural Hazards Research Centre (BNHRC), the NSW RFS is working to identify opportunities for research to be undertaken on the goat grazing trial.</p>
<p>R22 That, as part of the spatial technology acceleration program, Government support deployment of remote sensing and picture processing technologies to monitor and audit how well Asset Protection Zones and defendable space are being maintained, especially around towns.</p>	<p>The NSW RFS will develop project to trial use of its owned Cessna Citation jets fitted with remote sensing technology to monitor APZs. The NSW RFS will work with NSW Spatial Services to develop emerging technologies and methods for monitoring APZs.</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Q4 2024*</p>	<p>In Progress ■</p>	<p>Capability development is continuing, with Citation aircraft scanning operations using Overwatch technology. Two RFS aircraft are operational for scanning, air to ground communications have been modified with positive results and work continues on systems integration. Scan imagery has been able to be provided to other agencies (e.g. NSW SES) to assist with associated operations.</p> <p>Scanning for Asset Protection Zone assessments, fuel density and vegetation began this quarter with two sorties undertaken in northern NSW and south-western Sydney. These trials will continue ahead of the 2023/24 bush fire season.</p> <p>Several meetings have also been held with NSW Spatial Services to discuss the use of light detection and ranging (LiDAR) technology. To address the possibility that the RFS is unable to equip RFS-owned aircraft with LiDAR technology, discussions are underway in relation to the viability of a new satellite network being commissioned in Australia, which would provide increased capability for integration of scanned data into current systems.</p>



Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R23 That Government amend the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> so that all public land management agencies be required to forward complaints received about bush fire hazards to the Commissioner of the NSW RFS. As an interim measure, heads of agencies should commence this practice immediately.	The Government will amend the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> to require all public land managers to provide any hazard complaints they receive to the NSW RFS Commissioner within 14 days consistent with requirements already placed upon local authorities and ensure that public and private land holders are treated consistently.	NSW RFS	Q4 2020	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. The <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> was amended in November 2020 to require public land managers to report complaints on bush fire hazards to the NSW RFS.
R24 That government agencies managing land (at all levels and through all agencies) be the best neighbours possible by considering their neighbours when undertaking activities related to bush fire preparation and having clear, two-way communication about these activities, with the aspiration that government landholders will be seen as highly desirable neighbours.	The Government will amend the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> to remove the capacity for certain land (including those managed by public authorities) to be exempted from the requirements for land managers to repair and replace any dividing fences damaged by bush fire.	NSW RFS	Q4 2020	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. The <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> was amended in November 2020 to remove the capacity for certain land (including those managed by public authorities) to be exempted from the requirements for land managers to repair and replace any dividing fences damaged by bush fire.
R25 That Government adopt the principle that cultural burning is one component of a broader practice of traditional Aboriginal land management and is an important cultural practice, not simply another technique of hazard reduction burning.	DPE and AANSW to develop a long-term Cultural Fire Management Strategy working in partnership with Aboriginal communities.	DPE AANSW	Q4 2023	In Progress 	The NSW Government has committed to a community driven, co-design process, for the development of a long-term Cultural Fire Management Strategy and business model. The Cultural Fire Management Unit has been established and is working across government and with Aboriginal communities towards the coordination of cultural fire implementation in NSW. An Aboriginal Working Group has been established to lead the development of the NSW Cultural Fire Strategy and advise on cultural fire matters within NSW. The Aboriginal Working Group will work collaboratively with the Cross Government Working Group to develop a NSW Cultural Fire Strategy and to improve the coordination and wider implementation of cultural fire management in NSW whilst upholding cultural integrity.



Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<p>R26 That, in order to increase the respectful, collaborative and effective use of Aboriginal land management practices in planning and preparing for bush fire, Government commit to pursuing greater application of Aboriginal land management, including cultural burning, through a program to be coordinated by Aboriginal Affairs and Department of Planning, Industry and Environment working in partnership with Aboriginal communities. This should be accompanied by a program of evaluation alongside the scaled-up application of these techniques.</p>	<p>DPE will measure benefits of Aboriginal land management (cultural burning) to conservation, soil properties, and community wellbeing, and to work with Aboriginal communities to foster and deliver cultural burning.</p>	<p>DPE AANSW</p>	<p>Q4 2023*</p>	<p>In Progress </p>	<p>This recommendation is being addressed in conjunction with Recommendation 25.</p> <p>The Cultural Fire Management Unit has established relationships with nine Aboriginal communities and has funded Aboriginal community-led projects to implement cultural fire and cultural land management projects in and with those communities. These projects focus on holistic healing of Country outcomes. DPE works with these Aboriginal communities to support them to tell their own story through a variety of quantitative and qualitative monitoring and evaluation tools that fit their needs and aspirations.</p>
<p>R27 That Government commit to shifting to a strategic approach to planning for bush fire and develop a new NSW Bush Fire Policy similar to the NSW Flood Prone Land Policy in order to accommodate changing climate conditions and the increasing likelihood of catastrophic bush fire conditions; to build greater resilience into both existing and future communities; and to decrease costs associated with recovery and rebuilding.</p>	<p>The NSW RFS and DPE will design and establish a new bush fire planning framework. The Framework will incorporate a new strategic planning approach and fit into the existing Planning for Bush Fire Protection regulatory scheme.</p> <p>The SEMC will consider the development of a new NSW Bush Fire Planning Policy to support this new approach as part of its work program.</p>	<p>DPE NSW RFS</p>	<p>Q2 2026</p>	<p>In Progress </p>	<p>DPE and NSW RFS are preparing two key deliverables of Recommendation 27 including a draft NSW Bush Fire Policy (the draft policy) and draft Risk Framework for Strategic Land Use Planning (the risk framework).</p> <p>It is expected that the draft policy and risk framework will be submitted to the SEMC in the near future for noting.</p>

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R28 That Government, acknowledging that a strategic approach to planning for bush fire will take time, and in order to protect, prepare and build resilience into existing communities better, should immediately:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> prepare, in association with the insurance sector, a model framework and statutory basis for the establishment of an enforcement, compliance and education program which adopts a risk-based approach to routine inspection of local bush fire prone developments to ensure that every local development on bush fire prone land is prepared for future bush fire seasons in accordance with bush fire protection standards of the day, that account for worsening conditions 	The Government to introduce legislation to expand NSW RFS Commissioner's existing powers to audit the implementation of bush fire risk management plans, and resource a new implementation unit to undertake ongoing review of risk plans, including Asset Protection Zones (APZ) and Strategic Fire Advantage Zones (SFAZ).	NSW RFS	Q4 2024	Completed ■	<p>Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. The <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> was amended in November 2020 to provide new powers for the Commissioner to audit implementation of Bush Fire Risk Management Plans.</p> <p>The NSW Government has invested \$24.9 million over five years commencing in 2020-21 to establish new, regionally based Community Safety Teams within NSW RFS responsible for auditing compliance with bush fire plans and taking regulatory action (including issuing notices and fines) to ensure land managers (including public land managers) address bush fire hazards.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure local government is resourced to enable effective audit, enforcement and compliance powers in respect of local developments and assets on bush fire land 	Consider potential strategies to increase local government capability to undertake audit, enforcement and compliance activities in accordance with existing powers.	Resilience NSW	Q4 2022	In Progress ■	<p>The NSW Government continues to provide support to local government in the exercise of their functions with a range of funding and support programs to build council capacity and capability, including the establishment of Regional Housing Flying Squad Program to help councils with the assessment of development applications for regional councils.</p> <p>In response to the NSW Independent Flood Inquiry, the NSW Government established the NSW Reconstruction Authority. The NSWRA is dedicated to disaster prevention and preparedness and as outlined under the <i>NSW Reconstruction Authority Act 2022</i>, the Authority has a role in providing advice and support to local councils to help maximise the effectiveness of councils' disaster preparedness.</p>




Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider the introduction of subsidies for property owners to undertake site mitigation works to reduce bush fire risk and work with the Insurance Council of Australia to develop an agreed set of measures to insure against with a view to risk reductions resulting in lower insurance premiums 	Partner with Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) to investigate a Household Resilience Program for NSW	Resilience NSW	Q4 2022	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q4 2022. In November 2022, the NSW government approved \$2.2 million in funding for the Bushfire Building Council of Australia Limited for the Disaster Resilience & Energy Efficiency Ratings project. This project will provide a single home assessment program for energy efficiency and disaster resilience ratings, assessor training and rating certification.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review vegetation clearing policies to ensure that the processes are clear and easy to navigate for the community, and that they enable appropriate bush fire risk management by individual landowners without undue cost or complexity. 	The Government will implement legislation to empower rural landholders to clear their property boundaries in accordance with a code of practice but otherwise without further approval.	NSW RFS	Q4 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q3 2021. The <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> was amended in November 2020 to simplify vegetation management for rural land holders and allow the clearing of vegetation within 25 metres of their property boundary to reduce the potential for the spread of bush fires. The supporting Rural Boundary Clearing Code was gazetted on 11 September 2021.
R29 That, in order to maximise the protection of critical infrastructure in a bush fire, Australian governments revise the regulatory framework for the provision to government authorities of information about all critical infrastructure (public and private) including a possible change to compel the owners of critical assets to provide all needed metadata, updated annually, for appropriate planning, preparation and response for bush fire. This would include information about location, ownership, access, details of service the infrastructure supports, and fire treatments of building and surrounding zones.	This recommendation will be addressed in conjunction with recommendation 18.	DPC^ NSW RFS	Q4 2023	In Progress 	This recommendation will be addressed in conjunction with recommendation 18. The Commonwealth Government has progressed a number of amendments to the <i>Security of Critical Infrastructure Act 2018</i> . However, these have not addressed the provision of data on critical infrastructure to assist in planning, preparation and response for bush fire. Work is progressing to consider the development of proposed models for changes to the NSW Critical Infrastructure Framework. This includes consideration of a method for obtaining data and metadata on critical infrastructure, as recommended by the Inquiry.



Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<p>R30 That, in order to minimise communication outages and extend basic communication coverage during bush fires, the NSW Government work directly, or together with other Australian governments and/or their relevant power and telecommunications regulatory, policy and market bodies, to:</p>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure there are sufficient redundancy options available (e.g. backup diesel generators, deployed temporary telecommunications facilities, etc.) to supply power to essential telecommunication infrastructure or alternative telecommunications infrastructure 	<p>NSW Telco will continue to deliver against the NSW Operational Communications Strategy 2020.</p>	<p>NSW Telco Authority</p>	<p>Q2 2024</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p></p>	<p>NSW Telco Authority continues to procure solutions and services to provide sufficient redundancy options for the Public Safety Network (PSN). Increasing battery backup on selected sites has commenced with site analysis and initial rollout. Manufacturing has commenced and continues to increase the mobile radio asset pool of cell-on-wheels and generators.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that the telecommunication entities and electricity network providers' Bush Fire Risk Management Plans are updated annually and reported on in the NSW RFS Commissioner's annual statement to Parliament on the upcoming bush fire season and include details of all actions taken to mitigate those risks including maintenance of APZs and access roads 	<p>This recommendation will be addressed in conjunction with recommendation 2. NSW Telco Authority will liaise with carriers.</p>	<p>NSW Telco Authority</p>	<p>Q2 2024</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p></p>	<p>NSW Telco Authority continues to work with the telecommunications industry and the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts on this recommendation.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure there is appropriate auditing of distributors' preparedness for risks arising from network assets being affected by bush fire, as well as the risk of networks initiating a bush fire 	<p>This recommendation will be addressed in conjunction with recommendation 2.</p>	<p>NSW Telco Authority</p>	<p>Q2 2024</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p></p>	<p>NSW Telco Authority continues to work with the telecommunications industry and the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts on this recommendation.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilitate cross-carrier roaming arrangements between carriers and the public for basic text, voice and data during the period of emergency in areas directly affected by fire 	<p>Implementation of this recommendation is affected by Commonwealth regulations. NSW Telco Authority will engage with the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (DITRDC).</p>	<p>NSW Telco Authority</p>	<p>Q2 2024</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p></p>	<p>The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has published submissions it received as part of its Regional Mobile Infrastructure Inquiry. The Inquiry's terms-of-reference include investigating the feasibility of 'emergency roaming'. While NSW's submission supports this outcome, mobile network operators note technical and operational difficulties and significant infrastructure costs and are opposed to mandating its implementation.</p>


Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enable NSW RFS to require carriers to provide regular information on the status of outages and areas affected by fire. 	<p>Implementation of this recommendation is affected by Commonwealth regulations. NSW Telco Authority will engage with the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (DITRDC).</p>	NSW Telco Authority	Q2 2024	In Progress 	NSW Telco Authority continues to progress this sub-recommendation.
R31 That, in order to improve bush fire planning and protection of road infrastructure and to ensure communities, freight movers and firefighting agencies have appropriate access and egress in a bush fire event, Government, working with local government as needed:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a formal bush fire risk assessment process for all State roads and bridges, to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'high-risk' communities where access and egress in the event of a fire will be affected, for example rural communities connected by a single road surrounded by bushland, and ensure community bush fire planning processes (i.e. Bush Fire Risk Management Plans (BFRMPs) or Community Protection Plans) include plans to 'leave early' or enforce mandatory evacuation orders how waterways can be integrated better into the transport network as evacuation routes or places of shelter when road and rail transport is unavailable – waterways should be included in regional emergency management plans route options for rapid identification of needed road closures in the event of fire key sections of the state's road network for future upgrade to ensure whole corridors are resilient to fire impacts, regardless of who manages the asset 	<p>TfNSW and NSW RFS will work with key partners to include critical transport networks in BFRMPs prepared by BFMCs and LEMCs across the State and develop a formal bush fire risk assessment process for all State roads and bridges. TfNSW will roll out the Bushfire Corridor Resilience Program (see Recommendation 32). The program comprises a prioritized program of works to identify and apply risk assessment processes for State roads and bridges.</p>	TfNSW NSW RFS	Q2 2022	Completed 	<p>Recommendation completed in Q2 2022. A bush fire risk assessment process to identify 'high-risk' communities has been developed. This includes considerations for roads and rail links in the event of a fire that may affect access and egress.</p> <p>The status of waterways and other considerations such a freight, industry and investment considerations for the risk assessment have been incorporated.</p>

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> audit, through the NSW RFS Audit Unit (to be established) the inclusion of critical road infrastructure in BFRMPs prepared by Bush Fire Management Committees (ensuring that appropriate transport representation is provided to BFMCs) and Local Emergency Management Committees across the State. 	<p>NSW RFS and TfNSW to review the 62 NSW BFRMPs to verify that appropriate state road infrastructure is identified, and for BFMCs to consider any unidentified state road infrastructure for inclusion in the BFRMPs.</p> <p>TfNSW will work with NSW RFS to ensure appropriate representation from TfNSW on BFMCs.</p>	TfNSW NSW RFS	Q3 2022	Completed 	<p>Recommendation completed in Q3 2022.</p> <p>TfNSW has completed an audit of the inclusion of critical road infrastructure in Bush Fire Risk Management Plans (BFRMPs) and Local Emergency Management Committees across the State. BFRMPs and Transport incident response plans have been updated including identification of critical road infrastructure and alternative route options in the event of critical road closures.</p> <p>TfNSW is included in Bush Fire Management Committee memberships under the <i>Rural Fires Regulation 2013</i>.</p> <p>Audit of state road infrastructure identified in BFRMPs will also be included in the risk-based performance auditing program addressed in Recommendation 19. A modelling platform to support the new Next Generation BFRMPs has commenced design. The design will include identification of 'high-risk' communities where access and egress in the event of a fire will be affected.</p>
<p>R32 That, in order to ensure outcomes-based roadside vegetation management to reduce roadside tree fall and grass ignitions in planning and preparing for bush fire, Transport for NSW, working with local government and NSW RFS, establish a consistent framework for roadside vegetation management that analyses road priority, utility, amenity, strategic value and risk. The framework should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> take into consideration landscape characteristics like distance, slope, set back, vegetation maturity and type. Acceptable outcomes under this framework could include clear verges, or alternatives such as safe zones/pull-outs. tie in formally with other strategic land use and biodiversity processes. 	<p>TfNSW will roll out the Bushfire Corridor Resilience Program, designed to improve the resilience of evacuation and emergency services access routes and increase the speed of return to service post a fire event. The program comprises a prioritised program of works to identify and apply risk assessment processes for State roads and bridges.</p>	TfNSW	Q4 2021	Completed 	<p>Recommendation completed in Q3 2021.</p> <p>The TfNSW Vegetation Management framework is operational and was developed in consultation with arborists and other vegetation management experts.</p> <p>The NSW Government allocated \$28 million over three years to deliver TfNSW's Bushfire Corridor Resilience Program to improve the resilience of evacuation and emergency services access routes and increase the speed of return to service post a fire event. The roll out of the Bushfire Corridor Resilience Program is continuing progressively across eight key corridors.</p>




Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R33 That as a matter of urgency, in order to accelerate and finalise a State-wide strategic fire trail network, the NSW RFS Commissioner and Bush Fire Coordinating Committee (BFCC):					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> set a deadline for Bush Fire Management Committees to complete all outstanding Fire Access and Fire Trail (FAFT) Plans for submission to BFCC for approval, and a related deadline for BFCC consideration of these 	NSW RFS to lead acceleration to complete FAFT plans. NPWS to support NSW RFS response through continuation and acceleration of the delivery of the NPWS fire road and trail upgrade project.	NSW RFS	Q4 2020	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. All Bush Fire Management Committees have prepared draft Fire Access and Fire Trail plans for approval.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assess the completed suite of FAFT Plans to identify high-priority trails of relative strategic importance across the State for urgent construction or upgrades with particular reference to the needs of upcoming fire seasons 	NSW RFS to review all draft FAFT plans for endorsement by BFCC including identification of priority strategic trails and develop a risk-based construction and upgrade program.	NSW RFS	Q2 2029	In Progress ■	<p>The RFS delivered approx. \$10 million in fire trail works in 2021/22, despite prolonged and significant wet weather across the state. Another \$21 million has been committed to fire trail works in 2022/23.</p> <p>Fifty-three fire trails have been completed since 1 July 2021. Another 29 trails are currently being constructed or upgraded, with 80 more in the planning and design phase.</p> <p>54 Fire Access and Fire Trail Plans have been endorsed.</p> <p>In conjunction with BFMCs, Crown Lands and Forestry Corporation of NSW, NSW RFS has led risk modelling across the state to develop a four-year prioritised plan for fire trail maintenance.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> enforce completion of annual fire trail condition assessment reporting by relevant landholders. Following this, the BFCC should, as part of its standard business, undertake an audit of all FAFT Plans and annual fire trail condition assessment reports 	NSW RFS to implement annual audit and reporting requirement to be overseen by audit unit established under recommendation 19(a).	NSW RFS	Q2 2023	In Progress ■	FAFT Plans and Annual Condition Assessment reporting will be included in the Strategic Audit Plan that is addressing Recommendation 19a.

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a single asset management system to capture the outcomes of annual fire trail condition assessment reporting on a tenure-blind basis to support BFCC strategic and budgetary prioritisation and inform funding allocation to agencies for capital works programs 	NSW RFS to upgrade the Guardian mitigation management system to include fire trail mapping and management including provision for the annual fire trail condition assessment reporting.	NSW RFS	Q4 2023	In Progress 	<p>A Strategic Fire Trail Assurance system is in the final stages of development to enable certification and ongoing condition assessment data capture and to facilitate reporting through the Guardian mitigation works management system.</p> <p>It is anticipated this will be progressively deployed over the next 12 months.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> commission a review of FAFT Plans, with particular assessment of containment line potential, following a significant bush fire event in their area, as part of the planned review of BFCC Policy and NSW RFS Standards in 2020-21. 	NSW RFS to review fire trail standards and BFCC policy to ensure fit for role.	NSW RFS	Q2 2023*	In Progress 	The RFS coordinated workshops with major land managers in Q4 2022 and has since appointed a Fire Trail Policy Officer. This position is currently collating feedback from these workshops and identifying key themes for consideration in a policy and standards review. Work is continuing on a digital assurance system to support fire trail standards.
R34 That, in order to capture and understand the impacts of bush fire smoke better, Government invest in operational air quality forecasting and alert systems, and public health research and policy development. This would involve investment to:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a comprehensive system of forecasting and alerts for air quality incidents and all pollutants of concern, including but not limited to bush fire smoke, ozone and dust, and which is ideally nationally consistent 	<p>Enhancements to the NSW Air Quality Forecasting Framework, to improve smoke emissions modelling and better forecast smoke impacts.</p> <p>DPE to increase capacity for Emergency Air Quality Monitoring, to provide additional air quality monitoring pods and sensors to ensure sufficient air monitoring during emergencies.</p>	NSW RFS DPE	Q4 2022	Completed 	<p>Recommendation completed in Q3 2022.</p> <p>The NSW Government has invested \$44.8 million over 10 years for a state-wide environmental and air-quality monitoring program. Integration of National Smoke Forecasting System with DPE forecasting systems is complete. NSW RFS will work with other jurisdictions to support the delivery of Recommendation 14.2 from the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements to establish a national air quality forecasting capability.</p>




Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> investigate further the health impacts of bush fire smoke, based on improved data collection and including research on the long-term health impacts of poor air quality as a result of sustained exposure to severe bush fire smoke, particularly for vulnerable and at-risk segments of the community (children, elderly, firefighters, etc). 	<p>Enhancements to the NSW Air Quality Forecasting Framework, to improve smoke emissions modelling and better forecast smoke impacts.</p> <p>DPE to increase capacity for Emergency Air Quality Monitoring, to provide additional air quality monitoring pods and sensors to ensure sufficient air monitoring during emergencies.</p>	NSW RFS DPE	Q4 2024*	In Progress 	<p>The NSW Government has invested \$44.8 million over 10 years for a state-wide environmental and air-quality monitoring program.</p> <p>The NSW Bush Fire and Natural Hazards Research Centre was launched on 19 January 2023. The Centre will support research into better understanding the impact of smoke on communities.</p>
<p>R35 That, in order to improve the provision of evidence-based public health messaging about air quality during bush fire events, Government develop a public education campaign and supporting systems before the next bush fire season. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a public education campaign (like sun exposure), to help people make their own decisions about exposure to bush fire smoke tailored messaging to target smoke-vulnerable cohorts of the community; general practitioners, particularly in rural and regional areas, so they can advise patients with relevant, susceptible comorbidities; and employers, to support development of appropriate workplace health and safety guidance for outdoor workers an improved air quality alert system such as an enhanced Air Rater app. 	<p>DPE will work with NSW Health to develop key messaging which will align with the Clean Air Strategy, and a targeted information campaign.</p>	DPE	Q1 2023*	Completed 	<p>Recommendation completed in Q1 2023.</p> <p>To support public health messaging during bushfire events, DPE continues to improve evidence-based messaging around air quality alerts, through more accurate air quality forecasting and clearer online messaging. DPE scientists continue to develop an advanced air quality forecasting and assessment system which combines an ensemble of state-of-the-science models, high resolution emission inventories, surface measurements of most relevant chemical species, available remote sensing data and satellite observations to provide accurate air quality forecasts for NSW.</p> <p>The new model is undergoing testing and performance evaluation which will be internally and externally peer reviewed by experts to ensure it can best support strong public health outcomes.</p> <p>Additionally, this recommendation is now marked as complete, as ongoing work has been integrated into business as usual functions.</p>

<p>R36 That Government invest in long-term ecosystem and land management monitoring, modelling, forecasting, research and evaluation, and harness citizen science in this effort. This will include, among other things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> tracking and trying to forecast what is happening to ecosystems over decades under projected changes to climate extremes, including fire regime change better understanding interaction of fire with other disturbances, e.g. drought, hydrological changes in the landscape commissioning experiments and feasibility studies for ecosystem adaptation experiments – for example, facilitating shift of high conservation-value rainforest vegetation communities further south as climatic conditions change better understanding the influence of different land management practices on landscape flammability (in different landscapes) over the short, medium and long-term, and enabling an adaptive management approach. 	<p>DPE to enhance capability to assess priority at-risk species and ecosystems and identify long term recovery actions.</p>	<p>DPE</p>	<p>Q4 2023</p>	<p>In Progress</p> 	<p>Impacts of Bushfires on Aquatic Ecosystems: In collaboration with the University of Wollongong and DPI Fisheries, DPE Science, Economics and Insights has supported a successful ~\$540,000 Australian Research Council (ARC) linkage grant to investigate the vulnerability of coastal wetlands to bushfires, and to develop coastal wetland risk maps to help guide coastal management practices. Erosion and water quality impacts are two key concerns for land and water managers after a bushfire. Erosion mapping/modelling and experimental analyses of water quality impacts related to different soil types and burn severities inform the development of regional and NSW-wide erosion risk and water quality risk maps. Two stakeholder and community workshops on the NSW south coast will discuss the use and refinement of these datasets, and others, in assisting prioritisation and management efforts when recovering from, or preparing for future bushfires.</p> <p>Assets of Intergenerational Significance (AIS): To date, 279 sites have been declared as environmental AIS to protect important habitat for 108 species. Seventy-two (72) Conservation Action Plans have been approved and published. A further 39 will progress to public exhibition in the near future. Recruitment of 50 new roles dedicated to managing declared AIS sites is largely complete, with staff beginning to onboard in April.</p> <p>Soil Erosion Research: DPE is undertaking research to better understand the impacts of hazard reduction activities on various soil types and landscapes and mitigate the risk of associated soil erosion. A methodology and sampling protocol has been prepared, and access has been granted to hazard reduction burn areas in national parks. The team has now conducted 11 pre-fire site assessments and 4 four post-fire assessments in eight reserves on the north coast, central west and south-east of the state, encompassing a wide range of soil and landscape types. At each site, a range of variables including soil surface condition and groundcover are</p>
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Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
					<p>assessed, and soil samples are collected for laboratory analysis both before and immediately following the burn. The research enables an understanding of the impact of hazard reduction regimes on soil formation, erosion and sedimentation rates. Further field studies are planned for 2023.</p> <p>Applied Bushfire Science Program: The Program has been successful in obtaining funding through competitive funding rounds managed by the NSW Reconstruction Authority. This additional funding will extend the program until June 2026 to continue aspects of the program for another two to three years, enabling further advances in progressing our long-term (terrestrial) monitoring and reporting program for ecosystem health.</p> <p>Work is also underway under the Program to deliver an Imagery Hub. This will support future natural hazard responses and leverage DPE's expertise in hazard and bushfire impact mapping, helping to guide initial on-ground responses. Given that these actions are now BAU activities until EOFY 2026, the Applied Bushfire Science Program is considered ongoing and complete in terms of future reporting requirements.</p>

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R37 That, in order to ensure all firefighters, understand how local situational awareness reflects (or may not reflect) the broader scale situation presented by a large/extreme bush fire and the implications this may have on asset protection and fire suppression strategies, the NSW RFS:					
a) develops information packages for all types of operating environments to improve out-of-area crews' understanding of the local terrain and fuels, and distributes information to out-of-area crew members from all fire authorities	NSW RFS will update the Firefighter Pocketbook App to make available information to out of area crews including information such as topography, vegetation, fuels and firefighting matters unique to each NSW RFS District.	NSW RFS	Q2 2022	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q2 2022. District information packs and maps, including information such as local topography, terrain, vegetation and fuels unique to that geographic location, have been completed for all districts and uploaded to the NSW RFS website. District information packs and maps can also be accessed through the NSW RFS Pocketbook app.
b) accelerates the roll out of Mobile Data Terminals into all fire fighting vehicles to improve delivery of briefings and incident information/intelligence to field commanders.	NSW RFS to implement 'Mobile Data Terminal' technology and solutions across firefighting fleet.	NSW RFS	Q2 2025	In Progress 	52 MDTs are currently undergoing User Acceptance Testing (UAT) across a number of RFS Districts. The RFS has expanded the MDT project to include an assessment of satellite connectivity, particularly in those rural and remote areas without mobile/NBN coverage. The MDT program will be rolled out across the State in a phased approach planned for completion in 2025.
R38 That, in order to ensure the safety of local landholders on firegrounds, the NSW RFS emphasises the importance of local landholders using protective clothing while firefighting as part of the RFS' 'Farm Fire Unit Integration' priority for 2020-21.	NSW RFS to finalise the Farm Fire Unit Initiative, and to facilitate safe and effective communication between local landholders and NSW RFS at fires, UHF radios will be installed in all relevant appliances.	NSW RFS	Q4 2023	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q3 2022. Following extensive stakeholder consultation over the past 18 months and working closely with NSW Farmers, the NSW RFS has developed and released a Commitment Strategy and Operational Guide. These documents underpin the way the NSW RFS and farming communities will work together before, during and after fires. NSW RFS continues to strengthen relevant and meaningful relationships with NSW farming communities.


Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<p>R39 That, in order to ensure frontline personnel have appropriate personal protective clothing during bush fires:</p> <p>a) FRNSW review the current design of its bush fire jacket, noting improvements that have been made since 2002 that meet AS/NZS4824:2006 Protective clothing for firefighters, and increase the allocation of bush fire coats to two jackets per member</p> <p>b) NSW RFS issue two sets of personal protective clothing to operational members, and others as appropriate.</p>	<p>NSW RFS and FRNSW will update personal protective clothing (PPC) allocation to facilitate two sets of PPC to be issued to firefighters.</p>	<p>NSW RFS FRNSW</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Recommendation completed in Q2 2022.</p> <p>The NSW Government has allocated more than \$45 million to deliver additional Personal Protective Clothing (PPC) to NSW RFS and FRNSW members with rollout continuing.</p> <p>NSW RFS continues to issue second sets of PPC to all volunteers and are encouraging members who have not yet received their second set to place an order.</p> <p>FRNSW has completed an extensive trial of a new bush fire jacket across a variety of stations. FRNSW has placed an initial sizing order of 90% of jacket replacement requirements. Due to supply chain disruptions, the delivery date has been revised to September 2022.</p>
<p>R40 That, in order to improve firefighter safety, Government fire authorities:</p>					
<p>a) ensure all light tankers used as part of active frontline bush firefighting operations are fitted with a single point crew protection safety spray system and radiant heat protection blankets as a minimum standard across all NSW fire authorities</p>	<p>Multi-agency Fleet Retrofit and Tanker Replacement Program.</p> <p>Additional equipment to be fitted to light and medium / heavy tankers to enhance crew protection.</p>	<p>NSW RFS DPE</p>	<p>Q2 2024</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>■</p>	<p>From 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2023, 86 new compliant Light Tankers (Category 9) have been built and handed over to RFS Brigades.</p>
<p>b) ensure all medium/heavy tankers are fitted with radiant heat protection blankets, wheel and 'halo' sprays fitted as a minimum standard across all NSW fire authorities</p>	<p>This recommendation will be addressed in conjunction with recommendation 40(a).</p>	<p>NSW RFS DPE</p>	<p>Q2 2024</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>■</p>	<p>From 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2023:</p> <p>▣ 213 new compliant Medium Tankers (Category 7) and Heavy Tankers (Category 1) have been built and handed over to RFS brigades;</p> <p>▣ 81 existing Heavy Tankers have been refurbished with appropriate crew protection systems and returned to RFS brigades.</p>

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
c) undertake additional research to determine the most appropriate cabin protection for the different frontline vehicles.	NSW RFS will work with Monash University to determine the feasibility of fitting FOPS to new and existing fleet. Additionally, the NSW RFS will seek industry engagement next financial year to look for a new generation fire tankers.	NSW RFS	Q2 2023	In Progress 	The Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC) has submitted its completed report to the NSW RFS. The report was the subject of evidence before the NSW Coroner's Court on 29/03/2023. MUARC identified a number of broad recommendations that are in the process of being actioned or planned to improve driver/passenger safety in RFS appliances. MUARC also identified a further phase of investigation it will undertake on behalf of the RFS to confirm the precise mechanisms that would offer an appropriate level of roll-over and/or falling object protection.
d) provide ongoing investment for NSW RFS fleet upgrades.	This recommendation will be delivered in conjunction with recommendation 40(a) and 40(b).	NSW RFS	Q2 2024	In Progress 	This recommendation will be delivered in conjunction with recommendation 40(a) and 40(b).
R41 That, in order to ensure all NSW RFS members can access the mental health support they need, the NSW RFS expands in-house mental health support for members.	NSW RFS to provide additional frontline access to direct clinical care as part of a Board of Commissioner's endorsed Emergency Services Mental Health Strategy.	NSW RFS	Ongoing	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. The NSW Government allocated \$36 million over five years (commencing 2020-21) and \$7.65 million ongoing to support the implementation of a new mental health strategy for emergency services (including the NSW RFS, FRNSW, NSW SES and Resilience NSW). This investment has supported a significant scaling of services for personnel, including additional psychologists across the three fire and emergency services agencies to provide direct clinical care.

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<p>R42 That, to ensure firefighters can access mental health support through GPs, Government work with the Commonwealth Government to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) provide a free mental health screen to firefighters post-fire event and waive any gap payments if additional treatment is required b) create a new Medicare Benefits Scheme item number to enable Governments to track demand for mental health services from firefighters over time and ensure an appropriate level of support is available. 	<p>NSW will collaborate with the Department of Home Affairs on the National Mental Health Review and will pursue this recommendation through the Commonwealth Taskforce.</p>	<p>Resilience NSW</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Recommendation completed in Q3 2022. Resilience NSW has advocated for access to mental health screening through GPs, and for additional work to explore the creation of a dedicated Medicare Benefits Scheme number to be included as priority actions in the Commonwealth's National Action Plan, as issues of national importance. The Commonwealth Government has advised that these measures do not align with existing Medicare processes.</p> <p>The implementation of this recommendation in full is reliant on support from the Commonwealth Government. As such, the NSW Government will continue work meeting the intent of this recommendation, such as the ongoing delivery of projects outlined in recommendation 41.</p>
<p>R43 That, in order to ensure firefighter sustenance is of sufficient volume and quality, the NSW RFS reviews food standards and procedures in consultation with volunteers. The review should include catering service standards, including food safety, as well as the viability of sourcing commercial contracts and providing 12-hour food packs to firefighters.</p>	<p>NSW RFS to review food standards and procedures in consultation with volunteers to ensure firefighter sustenance is of sufficient volume and quality. The review should include catering service standards, including food safety. NSW RFS to provide meal packs to all appliances to provide initial sustenance to all firefighters.</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Q4 2022</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>■</p>	<p>The Draft Catering Service Standard has been finalised. As part of standard RFS practice, it is currently undergoing a Policy Review before its expected release in Q1 2023.</p>
<p>R44 That, in order to ensure suitably skilled and experienced personnel operate as Divisional Commanders during major fire incidents, Bush Fire Management Committees identify appropriate personnel as part of their plan of operations.</p>	<p>NSW RFS augment existing IMT personnel listing within the Operations Coordination Plan to include Divisional Commanders.</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Q2 2021</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. A new S52 Operations Coordination Plan has been finalised which includes the pre-identification of Divisional Commanders.</p>



Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R45 That, in order to prioritise early suppression and keep fires small:					
a) Government set a KPI for NPWS regarding the percentage of fires that start on-park and are contained within 10 hectares, and consider whether 70% is an appropriate KPI for the NSW RFS and NPWS	NSW RFS will update the state-wide target KPI of keeping fires within 10 hectares or less, to 80% of the time.	NSW RFS	Q4 2020	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. NSW RFS has adopted this target and will report annually.
b) NSW fire authorities deploy remote area firefighting resources based on enhanced research and predictive modelling. In some circumstances, this may require prioritising the deployment of RART to enable rapid initial attack of new remote area ignitions over ongoing suppression operations, where supported by a relative risk assessment.	NSW RFS will develop a predictive model for prioritised deployment of Rapid Aerial Response Teams (RART) for rapid initial attack in remote areas.	NSW RFS	Q2 2022	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q3 2021. NSW RFS has embedded a predictive model into its systems that forecast ignition potential and identifies areas expected to reach (and exceed) Rapid Aerial Response Teams triggers up to four days in advance.
R46 That, in order to improve early fire suppression, the NSW RFS trial initial aerial dispatch in areas of high bush fire risk. The trial should identify the most appropriate and cost-effective mix of aircraft, and any associated infrastructure improvements that would be required.	NSW RFS will develop a trial for the 2020-21 fire season, to automatically dispatch Single Engine Air Tractor (SEAT) and reconnaissance Aircraft concurrently with land based firefighting resources.	NSW RFS	Q2 2021	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q2 2021. Pre-determined Dispatch Trial was conducted between December 2020 and February 2021 in Wagga Wagga, Cowra and Sydney.

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<p>R47 That, in order to enhance firefighting strategies in severe conditions, the NSW RFS implements the following in respect to backburning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) establish protocols for each category (tactical and strategic) within their operational and training doctrine. These protocols should include lessons learnt from the 2019-20 season b) modify 'ICON' to implement the capability to record all backburns, including whether or not they break containment lines c) when fire conditions are approaching Severe or above, an independent review must be undertaken at State Operations Level before strategic backburns are implemented d) where there is significant concern within a community regarding a backburn, the NSW RFS should undertake a community engagement session with affected residents to discuss the backburn, including any investigation and relevant findings. 	<p>NSW RFS will develop operational doctrine to ensure strategic back burns are independently reviewed and affected communities are advised of back burns, this will include defining what is strategic and what is tactical. In addition, our operational system (ICON) will be upgraded to enable recording of back burns.</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Q4 2020</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. Operational Protocol Backburning was released on 26 February 2021 to all fire authorities. Backburning can be recorded in ICON intel module.</p>
<p>R48 That Government commission further research on the potential risks and benefits of backburning during severe, extreme and catastrophic conditions and/or in particular terrain, and that the NSW RFS use this research to inform future backburning protocols and training.</p>	<p>NSW RFS and DPE to continue support for the University of Wollongong's NSW Bush Fire Risk Management Research Hub and include back burning into the research program.</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Q2 2022</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Recommendation completed in Q2 2022. The University of Wollongong has provided a draft report to the NSW RFS that has evaluated back burning on five fires during 2019-20 fire season. The NSW RFS is currently evaluating the report.</p>





Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<p>R49 That, in order to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of heavy plant used in dry firefighting techniques, the NSW RFS expand and introduce the following in respect to heavy plant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) increase the number of trained Heavy Plant Supervisors and Managers to ensure an appropriate level of supervision in future significant fire seasons b) expand ARENA software to include the Heavy Plant Register, including the introduction of GPS tracking for all agency and contracted plant, to improve contractual compliance and to facilitate better the identification and tasking of appropriate localised heavy plant contractors; and review the feasibility of linkage to the SAP system for invoicing improvements. This should be introduced prior to the 2020-21 fire season. c) review the existing contractual process to ensure all heavy plant is categorized into types, size and functionality along with exploring potential for a standardised hourly rate for that category of equipment d) work with Soil Conservation Service to ensure appropriate standards for the engagement and management of heavy plant to deliver safe and effective heavy plant service, including the delivery of standards and auditing. 	<p>NSW RFS to review existing training, streamline delivery and engage trainers to increase capacity and trial ARENA aviation system for HP Management and tracking. NSW RFS in partnership with other agencies including SoilCon to review existing Heavy Plant engagement process.</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Q2 2024</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p>Training continues to be a critical focus, with both Heavy Plant Supervisor (HPS) and Manager (POM) courses scheduled during 2023. Two HPS upgrade courses have also been scheduled to ensure capability by ensuring the currency of those trained in past years. Online skills development for broader NSW RFS personnel is at the planning stage.</p> <p>ARENA HP was used extensively through the 2022/23 fire season and was highly regarded by all.</p> <p>Improvements to ARENA HP have been ongoing, including the introduction of a dynamic fuel component to contractor pricing that came into effect on 1 May 2023. The NSW RFS is liaising with AFAC as ARENA HP is developed for national use. Work is progressing on the development of an AVL solution for heavy plant that feeds into both COP and ARENA HP.</p> <p>R49c is complete, with ongoing contract review and maturing activities transitioning to Business As Usual.</p> <p>R49d is largely complete, with a methodology for auditing the remaining component of this recommendation still outstanding.</p>





Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R50 That, in order to ensure Australia's firefighting aerial capacity capitalises on existing assets and is made up of the right mix, Government:					
a) request the Commonwealth to conduct a trial with NSW RFS on the feasibility of retrofitting RAAF C130 aircraft with modular airborne firefighting systems to provide the Australian Defence Force with the capacity to augment aerial firefighting during major disasters	NSW RFS will request NAFC to initiate a RAAF C-130 trial of the Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS).	NSW RFS	Q2 2021	Completed ■	<p>Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. Emergency Management Australia (EMA) advised that the Department of Defence would make available previous research and trial outcomes.</p> <p>Further discussions with the Department of Defence identified that the trial information from previous research would not assist in providing any relevant information to the NSW RFS beyond its existing knowledge.</p>
b) work with states and territories through the National Aerial Firefighting Centre to review the current mix of aviation assets and determine whether it is fit-for-purpose, noting the current lack of mid-sized firefighting aircraft.	NSW RFS will work with NAFC on the preparation of a strategic review of the provision of aerial firefighting capability across Australia.	NSW RFS	Q4 2022	Completed ■	<p>Recommendation completed in Q2 2021. The National Aerial Firefighting Centre published the National Aerial Firefighting Strategy 2021-26 in July 2021.</p>

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
<p>R51 That, in order to enhance NSW’s ability to improve situational awareness, Government expand FRNSW’s Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS) capability (both capital assets and trained operators) to major regional centres and ensure the NSW RFS and other NSW government agencies can access this capability as required.</p>	<p>FRNSW to explore expansion of existing RPAS capability in accordance with the FRNSW Plus Plan.</p>	<p>FRNSW</p>	<p>Q3 2022</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Recommendation completed in Q3 2022. The NSW Government allocated \$5.2 million over five years from 2021-22 to acquire additional Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS) capability for FRNSW.</p> <p>The RPAS project team has expanded FRNSW’s RPAS capability, including 25 fire stations commissioned and online with RPAS Tier 1 capability. This capability has been used to great effect in many operations to date including the recent flood event.</p> <p>FRNSW’s RPAS capability is a pivotal tool in protecting the community of NSW. This capability supports operations in fire, urban search and rescue, counter terrorism, Hazmat, protection of the environment, natural disaster and humanitarian and is used across the four sectors of emergency management: prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery and is available for use by other agencies. It is ably supported by the Bushfire and Aviation Unit for data analysis to provide more accurate, highly responsive, information-driven emergency response across the State leading to greater protection of the community timely and relevant warnings to communities.</p>
<p>R52 That, in order to enhance NSW’s firefighting capacity, Government trial aerial firefighting at night in the 2020-21 season with a view to full implementation if successful.</p>	<p>NSW RFS will ensure that its aircraft (NSW RFS Owned) are night firefighting capable (aerial attack, supervision, insertion and extraction, and ignition), and where appropriate suitable fixed wing contracted machines that deliver effective night firefighting capabilities (e.g. Large Air Tankers).</p>	<p>NSW RFS</p>	<p>Q4 2023</p>	<p>In Progress</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Night-time aerial trials have continued throughout the quarter, including a successful night time fire-bombing operation during a live bush fire response near Narrabri. Over two nights, the aircraft successfully conducted nine missions, dropping 75,000 litres. These two operations allowed the pilots and air crew to enhance their skills</p> <p>All RFS-owned medium helicopters can undertake night-time aerial observation and aerial incendiary missions. Further trials of night-time search and rescue missions, followed by RART/RAFT operations, are scheduled throughout Q2-Q3 2023.</p>



Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R53 That Government develop and implement a policy on injured wildlife response, rescue and rehabilitation including:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a framework for the co-ordination and interaction with emergency management structures b) guidelines for Incident Management Plans to include wildlife rescue and rehabilitation as a consideration 	<p>NPWS has commenced development of a framework for wildlife in emergencies under the Agricultural and Animal Services Functional Area (AASFA) supporting plan of the EMPLAN.</p> <p>NPWS is working with the NSW RFS to develop guidelines and training for wildlife response teams. This will include bush fire awareness training for wildlife responders, as well as other relevant training.</p>	DPE	Q1 2023	In Progress 	<p>EPA, NPWS and DPI jointly deliver Recommendation 53. As of September 2022, the State Emergency Management Committee approved the transition of responsibilities for wildlife under the NSW emergency arrangements to be transferred from the Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area (AASFA) [DPI] to the Environmental Service Functional Area [EPA]. This change in functional area responsibilities will see a review of the AASFA Support Plan and Environmental Services Support Plan (under the NSW State Emergency Plan).</p> <p>The statutory responsibility for wildlife in emergencies sits with EnVSFA as defined by the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 (SERM). In collaboration with NPWS, EnVSFA will produce a Wildlife Response Plan and all documentation, including role summaries and guidelines related to R53 a) and b). These need to correlate and be governed by the Wildlife Response Plan that has yet to be produced. NPWS will continue to report on the delivery of Rec 53.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c) a requirement for all vets and wildlife rescue volunteers to obtain the Bush Fire Awareness accreditation 	<p>NPWS is working with NSW RFS to develop guidelines and training for wildlife response teams. This will include bush fire awareness training for wildlife responders, as well as other relevant training.</p>	DPE	Q4 2022	In Progress 	<p>NPWS is working with Wildlife Heroes to provide further training and PPE to WERT stakeholders. Nominations were sent out in September 2022 to vets, vet nurses and wildlife rehabilitators and courses offered online in February and March 2023 include Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIIMS), Bushfire Awareness and First Aid. Order forms for nominated WERT members to purchase schedule 1 PPE to safely enter the fireground were sent out in March 2023. PPE purchase was prioritised based on geographical location and role needs..</p>




Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
d) guidance for firefighters on handling injured wildlife.	NSW RFS will enhance its fire fighter's pocketbook (application) to incorporate a section related to this topic.	NSW RFS	Q4 2021	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q4 2021. NPWS has released the Wildlife First Responder Training Program, which consists of online training and a supporting field handbook. The training package was published on 1 December 2021 and has been provided to NSW RFS, Forestry Corporation of NSW and FRNSW. Ongoing consultation will occur with these agencies on the training and establishment of new IMT roles.
R54 That, to ensure mobile generators are sourced and distributed on a priority basis during natural disasters, the EUSFAC work with the NSW Telco Authority, relevant NSW government agencies and commercial stakeholders to develop a mobile asset deployment strategy. The strategy should reduce duplication in purchasing, maintaining and housing mobile generators and improve agility in deployment.	EUSFAC to coordinate with relevant NSW government agencies and commercial stakeholders to support the development of a mobile power asset deployment strategy.	DPE	Q4 2021	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q4 2021. The Mobile Generator Deployment Strategy has been completed by the Energy and Utility Services Functional Area Coordinator and the Engineering Services Functional Area Coordinator. The Strategy was endorsed by the State Emergency Management Committee in December 2021 for use by the NSW Government.
R55 That, in order to improve fire ground communications between NSW agencies and interstate personnel:					
a) Government ensure all NSW fire authority personnel and vehicles can access and utilise the Public Safety Network (PSN). This should include access to NSW RFS Private Mobile Radio (PMR) networks where PSN coverage is not yet available.	NSW RFS will provide approval for NSW firefighting agencies to program their radios with NSW RFS PMR channels in accordance with standard protocols.	NSW RFS NSW Telco Authority	Ongoing	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q2 2021. NSW RFS has provided approval for NSW firefighting agencies to program their radios with NSW RFS Private Mobile Radio channels in accordance with standard protocols.
b) the NSW Telco Authority review cross-border communications availability and planning and advise NSW fire authorities on next steps to enable multi-state interoperability for wide area communications.	NSW Telco will review jurisdictional interoperability and continue to deliver against the Operational Communications Strategy 2020.	NSW Telco Authority	Q2 2025	In Progress ■	Cross-border communications and inter-operability is a key tenet of NSW Government Operational Communications Strategy. Implementation continues for operational communications networks across the NSW-QLD border. Engagement with Victorian and South Australia counterparts has commenced to develop a roadmap for interoperability.




Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R56 That, in order to ensure the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) can maintain communications during emergencies, the Government provide the SEOC with independent Public Safety Network functionality.	Resilience NSW will work with NSW Telco to get PSN capability for SEOC.	Resilience NSW	Q2 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q2 2021. Resilience NSW and NSW Telco Authority have secured an agreement to provide Public Safety Network capability for State Emergency Operations Centre.
R57 That, in order to ensure emergency response agencies can communicate across state and territory borders, the Commonwealth Government allocate 10 + 10 MHz as a dedicated spectrum for Public Safety Mobile Broadband (PSMB) at no cost to states and territories.	This recommendation will be progressed through engagement with the Commonwealth Government, particularly through the PSMB SOC and ministerial liaison.	NSW Telco Authority	Q2 2023*	In Progress 	NSWTA is awaiting the Commonwealth's response to the PSMB Strategic Review's Final Report. The Report will address access to spectrum for PSMB as part of its findings and recommend a path forward for PSMB implementation.
R58 That, in order to ensure all agencies have a clear understanding of cross-border communication channels during bush fires, all MoUs between state or territory agencies include an agreed protocol about how agencies will communicate across borders and that these are reflected in Incident Action Plans.	NSW RFS will upgrade border Memorandum of Understanding to include a communications protocol and include this information in Operational Coordination Plans.	NSW RFS	Q4 2022	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q3 2022. The RFS has a memorandum of understanding with all its neighbouring jurisdictions. All Cross Border and Interstate MoUs are current for the 2022-23 bush fire season.
R59 That, in order to improve response times to Triple Zero calls, the NSW RFS implements the integrated dispatch system before the 2020-21 fire season commences.	NSW RFS is implementing an integrated dispatch system. The system will be implemented during the 2020-21 fire season for 18 of 45 Districts. NSW RFS will accelerate transition of the remaining 27 Districts.	NSW RFS	Q2 2023	Completed 	<p>Recommendation completed in Q4 2022</p> <p>The NSW Government has allocated \$8.3 million over five years (commencing 2020-21) for the extension of an integrated dispatch system for the NSW RFS.</p> <p>Work is underway to bring the remaining three NSW RFS Rural Fire Districts onto the system. By July 2023, 44 Rural Fire Districts will be onboarded and fully operating on centralised dispatch.</p> <p>In addition, 38 NSW Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA) Squads were integrated into the NSW RFS 46 centralised dispatch system in December 2022 for rescue operations, strengthening interagency relationships.</p>

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R60 That, in order to ensure timely payment and maintain positive ongoing supplier relationships during large-scale bush fires, the NSW RFS implements an automated logistics solution, informed by the outcomes of the Emergency Logistics Project.	NSW RFS to develop an automated emergency logistics and resource management solution.	NSW RFS	Q4 2022	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q4 2022 The Emergency Logistics System has successfully been released into production and is now being used operationally. The automated solution will ensure timely payment and maintenance of positive ongoing supplier relationships during large scale bush fires.
R61 That, in order to improve cross-agency communication and coordination during bush fires, the NSW RFS review Fire Control Centres (FCCs) in areas that were heavily affected by fire. The results should be combined with the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Facilities Review to identify areas that would benefit from a purpose-built FCC, enabling co-location with the EOC.	The NSW RFS to review fire control centres in areas heavily affected by fire to identify priority areas where purpose-built FCCs will include support for an EOC. The review is to be undertaken in conjunction with the NSW Emergency Services Board of Commissioners EOC review.	NSW RFS	Q2 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q2 2021. NSW RFS completed a review of Fire Control Centres (FCCs) and identified 13 FCCs that would benefit from priority upgrades. The NSW Government has allocated \$15 million to support the build program in 2021-22 and 2022-23. In early 2022, the NSW Government announced a further \$56.5m for the construction of six new co-located Emergency Operations Centres and Fire Control Centres at Moruya, Tumut, Hawkesbury, Grafton, Narrabri and Cooma.
R62 That, in order to ensure State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) interoperability during all natural disasters, Resilience NSW review the current SEOC arrangements and location including responsibilities for ongoing resourcing and maintenance.	Resilience NSW will review the current SEOC arrangements and location including responsibilities for ongoing resourcing and maintenance.	Resilience NSW	Q4 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed Q4 2021. Resilience NSW and the State Emergency Operations Controller completed the State Emergency Operations Centre review in December 2021. The final report and its findings were endorsed by the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) on 2 December 2021. SEMC tasked Resilience NSW and the NSW Police Force to develop an implementation plan to progress the findings of the review.
R63 That, in order to ensure the guiding principles and approval processes are contemporary, streamlined and more flexible, the NSW and Commonwealth Governments review the Defence Assistance to the Civil Community (DACC) arrangements. This review should include the circumstances in which the State can request Commonwealth assistance, and the level of information provided by the ADF to the State on available resources and capabilities.	This recommendation will be progressed through engagement with the Commonwealth Government, particularly with EMA.	Resilience NSW	Q4 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. Emergency Management Australia completed an administrative change to COMDISPLAN to reflect recommendations from the Royal Commission in December 2020. The Commonwealth also updated the Defence Assistance Civil Community policy and manual in August 2020.

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R64 That, in order to expand the pool of trained personnel able to undertake the Public Information Functional Area Coordinator (PIFAC) role, Resilience NSW and the NSW Police Media Unit (PIFAC) develop and deliver a training package for Emergency Management Media Liaison Officers.	Resilience NSW to design, develop and deliver Media Liaison Officer training specific to the Emergency Management Arrangements in consultation with the PIFAC.	NSW Police	Q2 2022	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q2 2022. The Public Information Functional Area Coordinator has completed the training package and is currently working with agencies to deliver training.
R65 That, in order to improve information flows and increase public awareness of ABC emergency broadcasts, Government:					
a) include an ABC Manager in the Public Information Functional Area Coordinator (PIFAC) team within the State Operations Centre.	NSW RFS will review its media facilities at the State Operations Centre, and in collaboration with the NSWPF (PIFAC) consider improved liaison arrangements with the ABC, as well as other media outlets.	NSW RFS PIFAC	Q4 2021	Completed ■	Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. NSW RFS has established a process for the ABC to be based at NSW RFS headquarters on days of significant fire danger or activity. Other media outlets also have access to NSW RFS headquarters on days of significant fire danger or activity.
b) strategically place roadside signage with local/regional ABC station frequency band throughout the State.	TfNSW to consider options to support enhanced public information through fixed and portable variable electronic messaging signage across the road network, together with the Live Traffic website and app, and TfNSW social media.	TfNSW	Q1 2023	Completed ■	Recommendation closed in Q1 2023. 99 of 99 signs have been installed throughout the state with local ABC frequency bands. Engagement with ABC Radio and Local Emergency Management Committees on road signage is now finalised.
R66 That, in order to provide real-time information on evacuation door-knocking during emergency events, Government explore a shared data gateway for NSW agencies based on the NSW State Emergency Service Collector app and a common mapping and analytics platform.	This recommendation will be addressed in the Review of Evacuation Management Guidelines (noted in recommendation 70).	NSW SES	Q3 2023	In Progress ■	The NSW Emergency Services Board of Commissioners is overseeing the Door-knocking Data Collection Working Group. Work is continuing to develop an app to provide users with real-time information on evacuation door-knocking during emergency events. The Working Group is currently developing training and guidance resources, and testing and preparing the app for production.




Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R67 That, in order to ensure people can access clear information on cross-border fires, the NSW RFS:					
a) incorporate information on fires in neighboring states and territories into Fires Near Me NSW	The NSW RFS will work with interstate jurisdictions on data sharing to establish a 50km buffer areas across interstate boundaries within the Fires Near Me app.	NSW RFS	Q1 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q1 2021. Incidents within 50km of the NSW border have been incorporated into NSW RFS systems and released in March 2021.
b) collaborate with other states and territories to develop a national app as part of the Australian Warning System being developed through the AFAC Warnings Group.	COAG requested the Australian Data and Digital Council to improve national natural hazard data and intelligence to enable the development of new information products such as a national fire map in March 2020. NSW will continue to participate in national forums to progress integration and tactical sharing of hazard information across all hazards and implementation of this recommendation and Royal Commission recommendations 13.5 and 13.6.	DCS	Q4 2025	In Progress 	The National Multi Hazards program has launched with NSW SES with flood and, more recently, with tsunami warnings. Additional hazards are in the progress of being onboarded. The program is working with other jurisdictions to potentially onboard them to the platform.

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R68 That the NSW RFS include the following priorities in the Fires Near Me improvements roadmap: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ text enlargement functionality ▪ a clear statement about the app's limitations and the importance of heeding public warnings and relying on personal observations ▪ fire spread prediction maps on extreme/catastrophic days ▪ update fire map information as technology improves. 	NSW RFS will upgrade the Fires Near Me app to incorporate the functionality recommended.	NSW RFS	Q4 2021	Completed 	Recommendations completed between Q1-Q4 2021.
R69 That, in order to ensure evacuation arrangements can be scaled up when needed, Resilience NSW:					
a) ensure staff who are willing to be deployed to evacuation centres are trained as soon as possible to bolster evacuation centre staff surge capacity b) train council and NSW government regional staff in evacuation centre establishment and management, supported by a one-page 'start up sheet' for opening an evacuation centre	Resilience NSW to deliver an enhanced training strategy for evacuation management and consider if development of a supplement to Evacuation Management Guidelines is required.	Resilience NSW	Q3 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q3 2021. All currently trained staff are able to undertake refresher courses through the online eLearning portal and updates to support COVID safe procedures have been added to training packages. The Welfare Services Functional Area has also produced a guide for Evacuation Centre Facility Managers. This guide has been distributed to Regional Emergency Management Officers to support Local Emergency Management Committees and Facility Managers in their role in an Evacuation Centre.
c) enable interested community members to be trained to assist in evacuation centre establishment and management and provide an avenue for skilled volunteers to register their interest	This recommendation will be delivered in conjunction with recommendation 69(a) and 69(b).	Resilience NSW	Q3 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q3 2021. The Community Partners Volunteer Training Scheme has been allocated \$200,000 in 2021-22 to support community organisations including the Red Cross, Anglicare, The Salvation Army, and Uniting Church Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Network, to provide volunteers with the training and knowledge to support the Welfare Services Functional Area in evacuation centres.

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
d) develop an exercise for the management of multiple evacuation centres dealing with large numbers of people for a protracted period over a widespread area.	Resilience NSW will also develop evacuation exercises for catastrophic events for the local, regional and state context.	Resilience NSW	Q3 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q2 2021. This was exercised in a real scenario. The Welfare Services Functional Area opened 33 evacuation centres in the March 2021 floods, with 20 open simultaneously. The operation ran smoothly with support provided to nearly 3,000 people.
R70 That, in order to ensure evacuation centres are fit-for-purpose, Resilience NSW work with Local Emergency Management Committees (LEMCs) to: a) update the guidelines for LEMCs identifying evacuation centres to require a risk assessment of potential locations, which should include identifying alternate sources of power for use by evacuation centres and recording these appropriately b) review existing evacuation centre locations to assess compliance with updated LEMC guidelines and report to the State Emergency Management Committee on their suitability.	SEMC will review the Evacuation Management Guideline to incorporate recommendations from the Inquiry related to evacuation. The review will consider if a supplement to the Evacuation Management Guidelines is required.	DCJ [^]	Q1 2023*	Completed 	Recommendation complete Q1 2023. The checklist for Evacuation Centre facilities that forms part of the new Draft Evacuation Management Guidelines has been distributed to LEMCs with an instruction from the SEOCON to have all evacuation centre audits completed by 30th April.
R71 That, in order to ensure people only need to tell their story once to access government agency support following an emergency, Resilience NSW and Service NSW jointly design an inclusive, person-centred approach to information collection at evacuation centres. This should be supported by an opt-in scheme enabling personal information to be shared between NSW government agencies, local councils and non-governmental organisations administering support services for disaster-affected people.	Service NSW to develop a customer-centric registration, identification and care capability based on a central register/database of disaster affected people to enable sharing of information between levels of government and other authorised parties for the purposes of delivering support and recovery.	DCS	Q2 2023*	In Progress 	The 'Tell Your Story Once' Minimum Viable Product will continue to be used within Service NSW Contact Centres and Recovery Centres, with the Disaster Impact Form. The Disaster Impact Form will be updated iteratively to continue to improve customer experience. The formal adoption of the Disaster Impact Form has seen over 3,200 customers registered and been welcomed by Service NSW frontline teams. The next implementation milestone for the 'Tell Your Story Once' project will provide support to customers with Emergency Accommodation needs. The launch of this end-to-end pathway will see the Disaster Impact Form updated with specific questions to help determine if a customer requires emergency housing.

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R72 That, in order to ensure Aboriginal people can access appropriate support during evacuation, Resilience NSW work with Local Emergency Management Committees and Aboriginal Affairs to ensure:					
a) local Aboriginal communities are included in emergency planning and preparation	<p>Aboriginal Affairs NSW, in partnership with Resilience NSW, to support pilot program for enhanced emergency preparedness and capability of discrete Aboriginal communities.</p> <p>The NSW Government will amend the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> to allow the Minister for Police and Emergency Services to appoint a member representing NSW Aboriginal Land Councils to the BFCC.</p>	AANSW Resilience NSW	Q4 2021	Completed ■	<p>Recommendation completed in Q4 2021. AANSW delivered a pilot project with four discrete Aboriginal communities to support a range of emergency planning and preparedness. Resilience NSW and Aboriginal Affairs NSW are committed to expanding the project.</p> <p>This will enable the strong foundations that have been established to be built upon, harness community engagement and interest; and continue to build on relationships with local emergency services, other stakeholders and the community.</p> <p>The <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> was amended in November 2020 to expand Bush Fire Coordinating Committee membership to include representatives from NSW Aboriginal Land Council and NTSCORP Ltd, and a representative to promote the integrity of cultural burning.</p>
b) all staff involved in evacuation centres and support services are culturally competent.	This recommendation will be addressed in the Review of Evacuation Management Guidelines (noted in recommendation 70).	DCJ [^]	Q1 2023	In Progress ■	<p>The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) have been delivering Evacuation Centre Manager training to their staff which touches on some of these areas.</p> <p>Lunch & Learn sessions held by the DCJ Disaster Welfare team will include cultural inclusivity and capability components, and will be complete in the next quarter.</p> <p>DCJ core induction training also contains some content focused on cultural training.</p>

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R73 That, in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable people during an evacuation, Resilience NSW:					
a) identify aged care facilities in fire and flood prone areas, and ensure that emergency plans are in place and comply with the Evacuation Decision Guidelines for Private Health and Residential Care Facilities	This recommendation will be addressed in the Review of Evacuation Management Guidelines (noted in recommendation 70).	Resilience NSW	Q2 2022	Completed ■	<p>Recommendation completed in Q2 2022. All aged care facilities are recorded on the Emergency Services Spatial Information Layer available via the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) operating system.</p> <p>The Commonwealth Department of Health and Aging together with the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission have undertaken a large site audit plan to review Business Continuity Management and Emergency Plans to ensure preparedness for large scale events utilising the Evacuation Decision Making Guidelines for Private Health and Residential Care facilities as a benchmark for assessment.</p> <p>A briefing is provided by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aging to all aged care facilities prior to the high-risk weather season to ensure preparedness for disasters and related risks that may impact business continuity.</p>
b) develop/refresh evacuation centre protocols to specifically address the needs of vulnerable people.	This recommendation will be addressed in the Review of Evacuation Management Guidelines (noted in recommendation 70).	DCJ [^]	Q3 2023	In Progress ■	DCJ will be updating the Welfare Services Functional Area Supporting plan in the near future to clarify roles in supporting vulnerable people. DCJ have been working with the Health Functional Area for a trial partnership with Healthy North Coast – PHN who will support the elderly, persons with a disability, and those with medical needs in evacuation centres with appropriate accommodation, medication, referrals and carers. This service is supported and activated by NSW Health.

Recommendation	Action	Lead Agency	Target Date	Status	Progress to Date
R74 That, in order to ensure equitable access to evacuation centres and associated support services for people in border communities, Resilience NSW ensure cross-border access arrangements are reflected in evacuation centre management guidelines.	This recommendation will be addressed in the Review of Evacuation Management Guidelines (noted in recommendation 70).	Resilience NSW	Q4 2021	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q4 2021. The NSW Disaster Assistance Guidelines were updated in 2021. The updated guidelines have been distributed to other jurisdictions confirming the eligibility through the Social Recovery Reference Group (SRRG).
R75 That, in order to improve support for people evacuating with animals, the Department of Primary Industries: a) work with Resilience NSW to develop evacuation protocols and procedures to ensure appropriate supports are provided for both people and animals (informed by the findings from Project Ohana), including a process for animal registration at evacuation centres and mutually agreed naming conventions, and provide this information to Local Emergency Management Committees (LEMCs) b) work with LEMCs to identify overflow sites that can be used for evacuated animals when preferred sites are full c) further develop the domestic pet's evacuation protocol.	This recommendation will be addressed in the Review of Evacuation Management Guidelines (noted in recommendation 70).	Resilience NSW	Q3 2022	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q3 2022. The Department of Primary Industries in its function as AASFA coordinates immediate relief, ensuring animal welfare and support to primary producers during an emergency. The Department of Primary Industries have worked with Resilience NSW and completed actions to support evacuation protocols and procedures, specifically in relation to AASFA established processes and procedures and support implementation of the AASFA supporting plan
R76 That Resilience NSW review existing functional area arrangements to ensure they are closely aligned to agencies responsible for direct service delivery.	SEMC will conduct a review of functional area arrangements.	Resilience NSW	Q2 2022	Completed 	Recommendation completed in Q2 2022. The Review of Functional Area Arrangements was endorsed by the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) on 2 June 2022, with all recommendations accepted. SEMC has tasked Resilience NSW and the SEMC secretariat to prepare an implementation plan to address the recommendations.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AANSW	Aboriginal Affairs NSW
AASFA	Agricultural and Animal Services Functional Area
ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
AFAC	National Council for Fire and Emergency Services
ANZEMC	Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee
APZ	Asset Protection Zone
BAU	“Business as Usual”
BFCC	Bush Fire Coordinating Committee
BFMC	Bush Fire Management Committee
BFRMP	Bush Fire Risk Management Plan
BOM	Bureau of Meteorology
CFA	Country Fire Authority (Victoria)
CFMU	Cultural Fire Management Unit
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
COMDISPLAN	Australian Government Disaster Response Plan
DACC	Defence Assistance to the Civil Community
DCJ	Department of Communities and Justice
DCS	Department of Customer Service
DITRDC	Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
DPC	Department of Premier and Cabinet
DPI	Department of Primary Industries
DPE	Department of Planning and Environment
EICU	Emergency Information Coordination Unit
EMA	Emergency Management Australia
EMPLAN	Emergency Management Plan
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EUSFAC	Energy and Utilities Services Functional Area Coordinator
FAFT	Fire Access and Fire Trail
FBA	Fire Behaviour Analyst
FCC	Fire Control Centre
FCNSW	Forestry Corporation of NSW

FRNSW	Fire and Rescue NSW
ICA	Insurance Council of Australia
IMZ	Ignition Management Zone
LEMC	Local Emergency Management Committee
LEMO	Local Emergency Management Officer
LiDAR	Light Detection and Ranging
LGA	Local Government Area
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAFC	National Aerial Firefighting Centre
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NEMMM	National Emergency Management Minister’s Meeting
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
NRSC	National Resource Sharing Centre
NSP	Neighbourhood Safer Place
NSW	New South Wales
NSWRA	New South Wales Reconstruction Authority
PIFAC	Public Information Services Functional Area Coordinator
PMR	Private Mobile Radio
PPC	Personal Protective Clothing
PSMB	Public Mobile Safety Broadband
PSMB SOC	Public Mobile Safety Broadband Senior Officers Group
PSN	Public Safety Network
ResNSW	Resilience NSW
RFS	Rural Fire Service
RPAS	Remote Piloted Aircraft Systems
SBC	Small Business Commissioner
SEMC	State Emergency Management Committee
SEOC	State Emergency Operations Centre
SES	State Emergency Service
SFAZ	Strategic Fire Advantage Zone
TfNSW	Transport for NSW
UHF	Ultra-High Frequency