

City of Hobart

Policy

Title: Fire Management Policy

Category: Recreation, Parks and Reserves

Date Last Adopted: 30 October 2023

1. Objectives

To deliver fire management activities that mitigate bushfire risk while maintaining and enhancing biodiversity values through the City of Hobart's bushland reserves.

2. Background

The City of Hobart owns and manages 4,600 ha of bushland reserves. These reserves are intrinsic to the City's amenity and provide an important sense of place to many residents. The bushland reserves are important for nature conservation as they contain threatened flora species, threatened vegetation communities and provide significant habitat for threatened fauna.

The proximity of native vegetation in bushland reserves to the City also presents a bushfire hazard. Bushfire risk can be mitigated through appropriate fire management, including planned burning and mechanical vegetation thinning and removal.

Hobart's bushland reserves will continue to be managed in a way that seeks to minimise the bushfire risk to homes, infrastructure and people while protecting natural values. Maintaining appropriate fire regimes is important for healthy ecosystem function and maximising biodiversity.

This policy covers all aspects of fire management work overseen by the Open Space Unit. This includes, but is not limited to, planned burning, fuel break and fire trail management, and mechanical thinning. This policy does not relate to emergency response or structural firefighting, the responsibilities for which are defined in the Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements.



3. Policy

The City of Hobart will:

1. Conduct fuel reduction activities to provide an acceptable level of protection to human life and property on the urban interface.
2. Take all reasonable steps to ensure that fire management activities take into account ecological needs, biosecurity, cultural heritage and natural values, and are conducted in a manner that mitigates impact to these values.
3. Based on the best available knowledge, develop and implement fire regimes that achieve biodiversity objectives and that all vegetation communities on bushland reserves that are outside of Asset Protection Zones are managed within their tolerable fire interval.
4. Develop a planned burning program that maximises burn objectives, recognising that all burns achieve more than one objective.
5. Identify the most suitable fuel reduction method (e.g. fuel reduction burning, slashing, mechanical thinning, fuel break construction) for each vegetation management unit.
6. Ensure fuel break widths are established according to the outputs of the [Tasmania Fire Service Fuel Break Calculator](#).
7. A network of fire trails are maintained to a minimum Class 5 standard.
8. Work cooperatively and effectively with the community, Wellington Park Management Trust and the Tasmania Fire Service to develop and implement bushfire prevention plans and programs within the City of Hobart.
9. Implement the Co-ordinated Smoke Management System for the Repulse Air Shed and provide advice to vulnerable people about our intention to burn.
10. Take all reasonable steps to extinguish unplanned fires burning on City of Hobart land and report these fires to triple zero.
11. Respond to requests from the Tasmania Fire Service Brigade Chief to assist with the suppression of bushfires burning within the City of Hobart within the capacity and training of staff involved.
12. Conduct all planned burning operations in accordance with the Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS).



13. Provide a safe working environment for all staff and others working within the City of Hobart's Open Space programs.
14. Ensure that appropriate training is provided to staff, and that staff are competent and accredited to operate in defined roles during fire management operations.
15. Ensure that staff have available to them equipment and other resources that are suitable for the environment in which they are required to operate.
16. Conduct an annual audit of fire management activities as identified in the Bushfire Management Strategy 2021.

4. Legislation, Terminology and References

The *Fire Service Act 1979* requires the City of Hobart as a land owner to suppress unplanned fires on council land and assist with fire suppression activities if requested by the Brigade Chief or responsible fire officer. The *Fire Service Act 1979* provides the authority for the declaration of fire permit periods and regulates the issuing of fire permits for the duration of this period.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act) is federal environmental legislation that provides a legal framework to protect and manage nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities and heritage places as matters of national environmental significance.

The *Nature Conservation Act 2002* regulates the conservation and protection of flora, fauna and geological diversity within Tasmania.

The *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995* sets out special protection measures for threatened flora and fauna that are considered to be endangered, vulnerable or rare in Tasmania.

The *Forest Practices Act 1985* regulates the clearing and conversion of native vegetation within Tasmania.

The *Local Government Act 1993* provides for the identification and mitigation of bushfire hazards on private property through the Hazard Abatement Notice process.

The *Wellington Park Act 1993* requires all works on Wellington Park to be undertaken in accordance with the Wellington Park Management Plan.

The Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements outlines the roles and responsibilities for emergency prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.



The *City of Hobart Bushfire Management Strategy 2022* provides strategic and operational direction for fire management activities on City of Hobart managed land. The strategy is due for review after five years.

The tolerable fire intervals for Tasmanian vegetation communities can be found in Leonard (2021) Tolerable Fire Intervals for TASVEG communities. Nature Conservation Report 21/04: Hobart.

Responsible Officer:	Director City Life
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