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Global Wildland Fire Network

Statement of the Australasian Region



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8TH
INTERNATIONAL
WILDLAND FIRE
CONFERENCE

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Australasian Region

- Australia is predominantly a continental climate with much of its flora and fauna having evolved to not only survive fire but also depending on it for their persistence
- New Zealand in comparison is predominately a maritime climate with much of its native ecosystems not being adapted to fire.
- Black Summer bushfires 2019/20 – 33 fatalities, 19 million hectares burnt, 3000 homes destroyed, fires burnt from August in northern Australia and progressed down the east coast through to March in the south-east.
- Ohau township, 3 am 4th October 2020, destroyed 48 homes and buildings, damaged 5043 ha.



Photos: **Top:** Scorched landscape of the southern Gippsland coastline and **Mid:** Eastern Alps following Black Summer bushfires in Victoria. **Bottom:** The Ohau Township following the Ohau Fire.



Australasia Region – Fire and Emergency Networks

- FFMG is a committee of Australian and New Zealand land management agencies with responsibility for forest fire management, plus representatives from research and education organisations and the forest industry.
- AFAC is an independent, member-based organisation dedicated to achieving connected and capable emergency management in Australia and New Zealand.

Australasian Region – Key Challenges

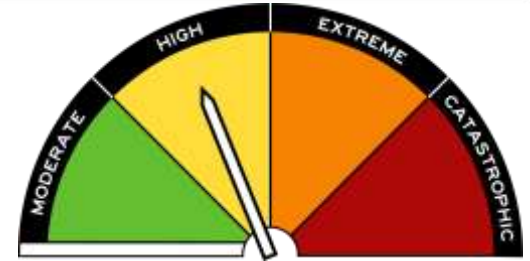
- Climate change affecting wildfire risk
- A decline in the rural population and changes in land management and forestry industries
- Population growth leading to the expansion of urban areas in the interface between built and natural environments, leading to an increased wildfire risk
- An increasing opposition to prescribed burning and use of fire as a land management tool, particularly associated with smoke and ecological impacts.
- Alternative energy technology and its wider application within the natural environment



Photos: **Top:** Mount Iron, subdivision, high flammable fuel, on slope, single road in and out. **Mid:** Planned burn amongst high density industrial and residential area in Melbourne's western suburbs. **Bottom:** Grass Stubble burn, Canterbury NZ

Australasian Region – Capacity Building and Policy Development

- AFAC National Resource Sharing Centre that coordinates and facilitates international and interstate deployments
- Nationally consistent Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS).
- Turning the Goals of the National Bushfire Management Policy Statement into Objectives and Key Performance Indicators
- Natural Hazards Research Australia as Australia's national centre for natural hazard resilience and disaster risk reduction
- Enhancement and recognition of the importance of First Nations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Maori) people as a partner
- Preparing New Zealand for extreme fire research programme



Photos: **Top:** New Australian Fire Danger Ratings System introduced nationally in 2023. **Mid:** SCION research burns 2021 Testing fire spread model. **Bottom:** Traditional Owner-led burn in Western Victoria