



CITY OF
TEA TREE GULLY
Naturally Better



BUSHFIRE MITIGATION FRAMEWORK

2026-2030

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Executive summary

Bushfire is one of the most significant natural hazards affecting the City of Tea Tree Gully. While bushfires cannot be eliminated, their impact on people, property, infrastructure and the environment can be reduced through coordinated planning, mitigation and preparedness.

This Bushfire Mitigation Framework sets out Council's strategic approach to managing bushfire risk across land under its care and control. It explains how risks are identified, how mitigation activities are prioritised and delivered, and how Council works with government agencies, emergency services and the community.

The 2019-20 bushfire season demonstrated the devastating impacts of extreme fire conditions across Australia. As climate conditions continue to change, bringing more frequent and intense extreme weather events, the importance of a proactive, risk-based and collaborative approach to bushfire mitigation is increasing.

Bushfire preparedness is a shared responsibility. Council plays a key role, but residents, landowners and partner agencies all contribute to reducing risk and improving community safety.

In practice, Council manages bushfire risk by:

- Understanding local risk using data, mapping and regional planning
- Prioritising actions through an annual Bushfire Treatment Action Plan
- Delivering mitigation activities across Council-managed land
- Supporting private landowners and community preparedness
- Working collaboratively with partner agencies
- Monitoring, reporting and continuously improving outcomes.



About this Framework

Why this Framework was developed

Bushfire risk is dynamic and influenced by climate variability, vegetation growth patterns and land use change. Managing this risk effectively requires a consistent, coordinated and transparent approach across Council functions and land types.

This Framework has been developed to provide that structure. It sets out how Council:

- Assesses bushfire risk
- Prioritises mitigation activities
- Delivers and records works
- Monitors outcomes and improves over time.

The Framework also responds to internal audit recommendations by strengthening documentation, governance and reporting processes related to bushfire mitigation.

Purpose

The purpose of this Framework is to provide a clear, risk-based approach to bushfire mitigation that is practical for staff, transparent for stakeholders and informative for the community.

Specifically, this Framework:

- Establishes consistent principles for managing bushfire risk
- Defines how risks are identified, assessed and treated
- Guides annual mitigation planning and delivery
- Supports consistent tracking and reporting of activities
- Clarifies roles and responsibilities
- Strengthens reporting and transparency
- Provides clear information for the community

Relationship to other documents

This Framework operates within a broader emergency management and land management context. It aligns with key Council, regional and State documents including:

- Emergency Management Plan
- Total Fire Ban Day Procedure
- Bushfire Treatment Action Plan (BTAP)
- Biodiversity Strategy
- State and regional bushfire management plans
- Relevant legislation.

How to use this Framework

This Framework supports decision-making, coordination and communication across multiple audiences, helping to:

- **Council staff** should use it to guide planning, prioritisation, delivery and reporting of bushfire mitigation activities
- **Partner agencies** can use it to understand Council's role, priorities and coordination arrangements
- **Residents and landowners** can use it to understand bushfire risk, shared responsibilities and available support.

The Framework provides the strategic direction, while operational detail and annual priorities are captured within the Bushfire Treatment Action Plan.



Key focus areas

Council's bushfire mitigation activities are guided by five key focus areas.

Together, these focus areas ensure Council's approach is risk-based, coordinated, practical and responsive to changing conditions.

The focus areas connect strategic planning with on-ground delivery and community outcomes, and guide both annual planning and longer-term improvement.

1



Enhance understanding of local bushfire risk

Use data, local knowledge and partner insights to continuously improve understanding of local bushfire risk and inform mitigation priorities.

2



Strengthen data-driven planning and coordination

Maintain a centralised Bushfire Treatment Action Plan to guide prioritisation, resourcing and delivery of mitigation activities.

3



Maintain safe and fit-for-purpose access and infrastructure

Ensure fire access tracks and related infrastructure remain functional and meet operational standards, with responsibilities clearly defined across land tenures.

4



Support community awareness and resilience

Work with partner agencies to provide clear, localised information that supports community preparedness.

5



Foster inter-agency collaboration and continuous improvement

Collaborate with emergency services, neighbouring councils and land managers to share knowledge, align priorities and adapt to changing risks.

Bushfire mitigation approach

Council delivers bushfire mitigation through a coordinated, risk-informed annual program supported by the Bushfire Treatment Action Plan (BTAP).

This approach ensures resources are directed to areas of highest risk, mitigation activities are scheduled appropriately, and outcomes are monitored consistently.

Guiding principles

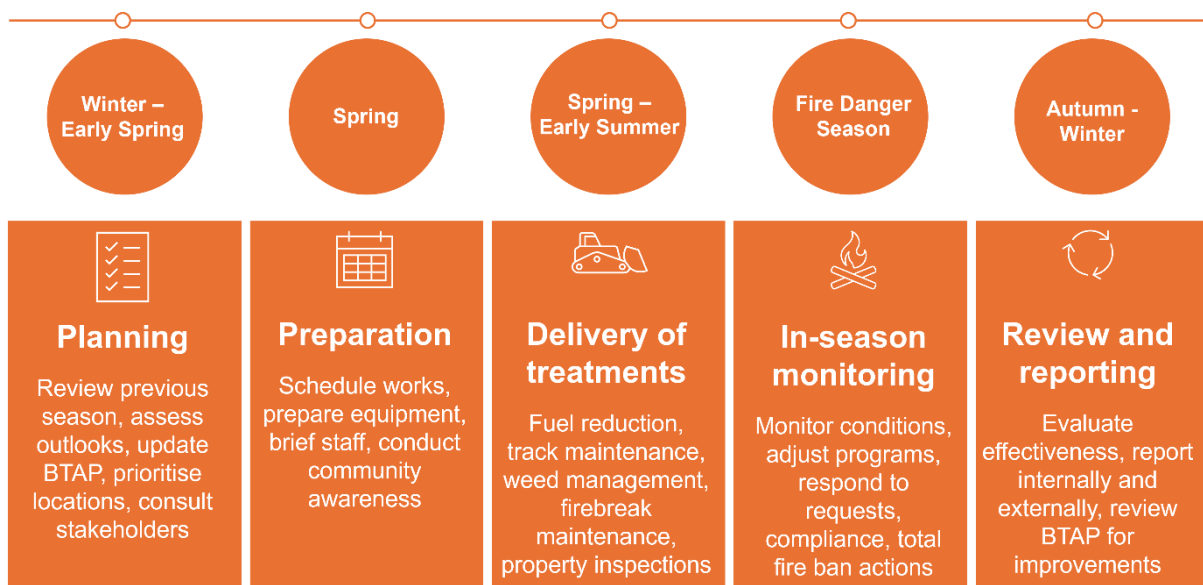
The following principles guide Council's bushfire mitigation decision-making and delivery across all land types and activities:

- **Risk-based decision making:** Treatments are prioritised using the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Bushfire Management Area Plan (BMAP), local knowledge, climate outlooks and fuel conditions.
- **Consistency and accountability:** All activities are recorded, monitored and reported in a consistent manner using established internal processes.
- **Collaboration:** Council works closely with emergency services, neighbouring councils and other agencies to coordinate actions and ensure alignment with regional priorities.

- **Environmental stewardship:** Hazard reduction activities are balanced with the need to protect biodiversity and native vegetation.
- **Staff and community safety:** All works are planned and undertaken with safety as the highest priority.
- **Continuous improvement:** Council reviews mitigation practices annually and after significant events to enhance future preparedness.

Annual bushfire mitigation cycle

Bushfire mitigation is a year-round process. Activities occur before, during and after the Fire Danger Season and are informed by seasonal conditions, treatment effectiveness and emerging risks. The annual mitigation cycle ensures that planning, delivery, monitoring and review are integrated and continuous rather than reactive.



Prioritisation of activities

Because resources are finite and risk varies across the City, Council prioritises bushfire mitigation activities using multiple data sources and professional judgement.

- **The BMAP's risk classifications** for human settlement, economic, environmental and cultural heritage assets
- **Local risk assessments** undertaken as part of Council's emergency management planning
- **Fuel load observations** informed by seasonal growth and previous treatment history
- **Terrain and access factors**, especially in steep or isolated areas
- **Climate and weather forecasts**, including seasonal bushfire outlooks
- **Community reports and requests** regarding vegetation hazards.

Internal coordination and governance

Effective bushfire mitigation requires coordination across multiple Council business units. Clear governance arrangements and regular communication ensure responsibilities are understood and activities are aligned.

- **City Operations** – roadside, reserve and fire access track maintenance
- **Regulatory Services** – property inspections, Section 105F notices, compliance, public education
- **Biodiversity and Pest Management** – biodiversity, roadside marker sites, weed management
- **Corporate Governance** – emergency management planning, governance, reporting and review
- **Marketing and Communications** – community messaging, public information sharing.

Recording and tracking

Accurate recording and tracking of bushfire mitigation activities is essential for effective planning, coordination and accountability.

Council records all bushfire mitigation activities in the BTAP, capturing information on treatment type, location, timing, responsible teams and follow-up requirements. Centralised recording supports monitoring of progress, internal and external reporting, alignment with the BMAP, and continuous improvement of mitigation planning and delivery.

Community engagement and education

Community awareness and preparedness are critical to reducing bushfire risk and strengthening resilience.

Council supports community bushfire preparedness by distributing seasonal information, promoting CFS resources, responding to resident enquiries and hazard reports, and providing targeting communication to residents in higher-risk locations.

These activities support shared responsibility, encourage early preparation and help ensure residents have access to clear, trusted and locally relevant bushfire information.



Understanding our bushfire risk

Understanding bushfire risk is fundamental to effective mitigation. Bushfire risk is influenced by environmental, climatic and human factors, and varies across locations within the City.

This section provides context on the factors that shape bushfire risk in the City of Tea Tree Gully and explains why certain areas are prioritised for mitigation.

Local context

The City of Tea Tree Gully includes a diverse mix of urban, rural and natural environments. This diversity, particularly where development interfaces with native vegetation, influences both the likelihood and potential impacts of bushfire.

The City falls within both the Adelaide Metropolitan and Mount Lofty Ranges Fire Ban Districts (a map is provided in Attachment 1). The eastern portion of the City forms part of the Hills Face Zone, which is one of the most bushfire-prone parts of South Australia due to steep slopes, dense vegetation and exposure to strong winds.

Climate and weather

Climate and weather conditions strongly influence bushfire behaviour, intensity and frequency. Understanding these factors supports effective timing and prioritisation of mitigation activities.

Climate change and future bushfire conditions

Climate change is expected to increase bushfire risk across South Australia. Council considers seasonal conditions and observations when planning and scheduling mitigation works to ensure resources remain effective under changing conditions.

Bushfire factors



Temperature – high temperatures dry out fuels, increasing flammability



Relative humidity – low humidity leads to fast-moving fires and rapid ignition



Wind – strong winds drive fires downhill and can cause sudden direction changes



Rainfall patterns – Spring and early Summer rainfall leads to increased vegetation, which then cures into fine fuels



Lightning – dry thunderstorms can ignite fires in remote or inaccessible areas

Topography

Terrain influences how fires spreads:

- **Steep slopes** in the Hills Face Zone accelerate fire movement uphill
- **Narrow gullies** funnel wind and can intensify fire behaviour
- **South-west facing slopes** may dry out earlier and be more vulnerable early in the Fire Danger Season
- **Elevated areas** near the eastern boundary are more exposed to strong, variable winds.

Areas with complex terrain often pose access challenges for firefighting appliances, reinforcing the need for well-maintained fire access tracks and strategic fuel management.

Vegetation and fuel types

Vegetation types across the City influence fire intensity and behaviour:

- **Grasslands:** fast-moving fires
- **Woodlands and forests:** higher-intensity fires and long-distance ember attack
- **Dense understory:** increased ladder fuels
- **Weeds (e.g. Coolatai grass):** high fuel loads.



Historical bushfire events

South Australia has experienced a long history of devastating bushfires across many parts of the State. Some of these events have directly impacted the City of Tea Tree Gully, while in others Council has support beyond its boundaries.

The Sampson Flat Fire in January 2015 affected the City of Tea Tree Gully, City of Playford and the Adelaide Hills Council areas. Burning for eight days from 2 to 9 January 2015, the fire destroyed approximately 13,000 hectares of land. The event resulted in the loss of 24 houses and 192 sheds destroyed, injuries to 134 people and impacts to 11 businesses. Residents self-evacuated from several suburbs including Greenwith, Golden Grove, Banksia Park, Yatala Vale and Upper Hermitage.

Events such as the Sampson Flat Fire demonstrate the potential for rapid and unpredictable fire spread, and highlight the importance of effective access tracks, coordinated response, and well-prepared communities.

Areas of elevated risk

Higher risk areas include:

- Hills Face Zone
- Rural eastern areas
- Urban-rural interface areas near conservation parks
- Cobbler Creek Recreation Park vicinity
- High-risk roadside vegetation corridors.



Roles and responsibilities

Managing bushfire risk is a shared responsibility between Council, emergency services, government agencies, landowners and the community. Clear understanding of roles supports coordination, compliance and community safety.

Council responsibilities

Council has a significant role in reducing bushfire risk on land under its care and control, supporting community preparedness and working collaboratively with partner agencies.

Mitigation and vegetation management

- Reducing fuel loads on Council-managed land through mowing, slashing, pruning and weed management
- Maintaining firebreaks, strategic access points and roadside vegetation in accordance with relevant standards
- Supporting conservation of native vegetation while appropriately balancing hazard reduction requirements.

Property inspection and enforcement

- Undertaking annual inspections of vacant land and high-risk private properties
- Issuing and enforcing Section 105F Hazard Reduction Notices where fire hazards are identified
- Coordinating contractor works where landowners do not comply and recovering associated costs.

Fire access tracks

- Maintaining a network of fire access tracks and service tracks
- Ensuring tracks meet standards for emergency service access wherever possible
- Working with the CFS and other agencies to identify improvements.

Community information and support

- Providing community information on bushfire risk, preparedness and property maintenance
- Sharing fire danger and seasonal information through Council's communication channels
- Supporting agency-led community education programs.

Emergency response support

- Supporting the CFS during incidents when capacity allows
- Operating under Council's Incident Management arrangements.

Governance and reporting

- Recording and reporting bushfire mitigation activities
- Reporting to the Audit and Risk Committee and regional agencies.

Fire Prevention Officer

The Fire Prevention Officer (FPO) is a statutory role established under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005*, and plays a central role in hazard identification, compliance and advice across the City.

The FPO's responsibilities include:

- Assessing bushfire hazards across the City
- Providing advice to landowners about bushfire prevention and vegetation management
- Issuing Schedule 9 and 10 permits for hazardous activities where required
- Responding to customer reports relating to potential fire hazards
- Administering vegetation pile burning permits outside the Fire Danger Season in accordance with the CFS Vegetation Pile Burning Code of Practice
- Monitoring and reporting on grassland curing rates as required
- Liaising with the CFS, neighbouring councils and other agencies to support consistent approaches to bushfire mitigation.

Emergency Services

Country Fire Service (CFS)

The CFS is the Hazard Risk Reduction Leader and Control Agency for rural fire (bushfire), and is responsible for:

- Leading bushfire planning, mitigation and response activities
- Issuing community warnings and public information
- Setting and managing Fire Danger Seasons and Total Fire Ban Days
- Supporting community education and preparedness programs
- Providing guidance to Council on fire access tracks and mitigation works.

Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS)

The MFS is the Hazard Risk Reduction Leader and Control Agency for urban fire, and is responsible for:

- Responding to structural and other urban fire incidents
- Providing fire safety education and prevention programs
- Supporting the CFS where required.

State Government agencies

State agencies with land management responsibilities include:

Department for Environment and Water (DEW)

- Managing conservation parks and reserves (e.g. Anstey Hill, Black Hill)
- Undertaking prescribed burning and fuel reduction works
- Maintaining fire access in parks and reserves.

SA Water

- Managing infrastructure and catchment land
- Collaborating with Council and CFS to maintain access and reduce risk.

Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT)

- Managing roadsides and road reserves on state-controlled roads
- Undertaking vegetation management and supports emergency access requirements.

Bushfire Management Committees

State Bushfire Coordination Committee (SBCC)

- Providing statewide policy direction and oversight
- Approving and auditing Bushfire Management Area Plans (BMAPs)
- Promoting consistent practices across fire ban districts.

Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Bushfire Management Committee (AMLR BMC)

- Preparing and maintaining the regional BMAP
- Coordinating risk reduction activities across multiple agencies
- Ensuring mitigation works align with strategic risk priorities
- Receiving annual reporting from Council
- Promoting collaboration between councils, CFS, DEW, SA Water and others.

Council is represented on the AMLR BMC through the General Manager Community Services.

Community groups and volunteers

Community groups play an important supporting role in:

- Undertaking environmental and conservation activities
- Reducing fuel loads in reserves (e.g. Friends Groups)
- Assisting with weed control and biodiversity maintenance
- Participating in education, readiness and resilience programs.



Residents and landowners

Residents and property owners play a critical role by:

- Maintaining their properties to reduce fuel loads
- Managing vegetation and defensible space
- Preparing homes for bushfire conditions
- Staying informed and planning for emergencies
- Complying with Hazard Reduction Notices.



Create Space

- Maintain 20m around your home
- Mow grass short
- Prune trees and shrubs



Reduce Fuel

- Clear leaves, bark and debris
- Keep grass low
- Tidy around structures



Ember-Proof

- Seal gaps and cracks
- Cover vents and openings
- Install metal screens



Clean & Maintain

- Clean gutters regularly
- Remove leaf build-up
- Check roof condition



Store safely

- Keep firewood away from buildings
- Store fuels safely



Be Ready

- Hoses reach all areas
- Independent water supply
- Check pumps and equipment



Maintain your property year-round



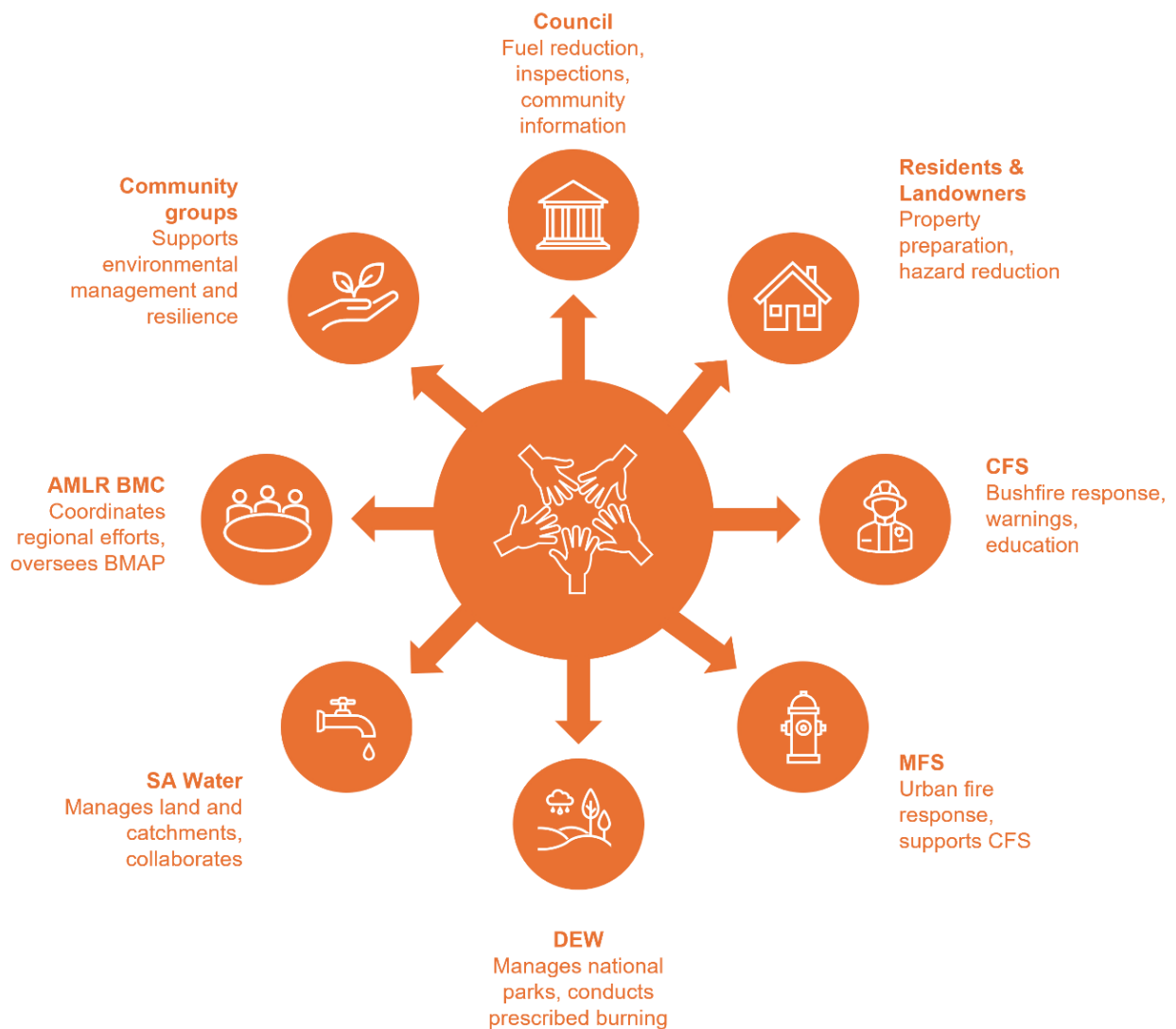
Prepare early – don't wait for fire season



Protect your home, neighbours and community

Information and fact sheets on how to plan and prepare are available on the [CFS website](#).

Who does what in bushfire management



Mitigation strategies

Council undertakes a broad range of bushfire mitigation strategies designed to reduce the likelihood, intensity and impact of bushfires.

These strategies support safe access for emergency services, protect assets and improve overall community resilience.

Mitigation activities are aligned with regional planning frameworks, local risk assessments and seasonal conditions, and are delivered by multiple Council teams, often in collaboration with partner agencies.

Fuel load reduction

Fuel load management is a primary component of Council's bushfire mitigation program. Activities focus on reducing the amount, continuity and arrangement of vegetation that could contribute to fire spread.

Key activities include:

- **Mowing and brush cutting** grassed areas, including urban reserves and open spaces
- **Multiple cutting cycles** in high-growth areas, or during years with greater fuel accumulation
- **Selective pruning** of shrubs and low branches in strategic locations
- **Maintaining asset protection buffers** (typically 20m where appropriate) around key Council and community assets
- **Removal of dead wood or fallen branches** where they present a hazard
- **Targeted vegetation work** where residential properties adjoin reserves or rural fire risk areas.

Fuel reduction is generally timed to occur between October and December, after grasses have cured but before the Fire Danger Season peaks.

Prescribed burning

Prescribed burning is the controlled use of fire under specified conditions to achieve ecological and fuel reduction objectives. In the City of Tea Tree Gully, prescribed burning is undertaken by DEW and/or the CFS on Crown land, conservation parks or private land where appropriate.

While Council does not conduct prescribed burns, it works with DEW and the CFS to understand planned activities and support community communication and preparedness where required.

Roadside vegetation management

Roadside vegetation corridors can act as pathways for fire spread and can also impede emergency access if not properly managed. Council undertakes fuel reduction and vegetation management on a wide range of rural roadsides.

Typical roadside treatments include:

- **Slashing and cutting** of cured grasses on roadside verges
- **Selective clearing** to maintain sightlines and access
- **Vegetation thinning** to break up continuous fuel layers
- **Assessment of high-risk sites** and scheduling additional late-season cuts if needed.

Approximately 65 roadside sites are treated annually, with more frequent treatment where risk or vegetation growth requires it.



Roadside Marker Sites (RMS)

Roadside Marker Sites are designated sections of roadside that contain high-value native vegetation. These areas require sensitive and targeted management to protect biodiversity while also reducing fire hazard.

Activities include:

- **Selective cutting of exotic grasses**, undertaken at the optimal time for native seed dispersal
- **Hand-pruning or selective brush-cutting** to retain native understory
- **Monitoring weed incursions** and treating priority species
- **Working with Friends Groups** and environmental stakeholders.

Council manages seven RMS locations, representing approximately 5km of roadside vegetation.

Weed management

Weeds can significantly increase fuel loads due to their structure, density and rapid growth. Weed management is an important part of Council's hazard reduction and environmental stewardship.

Weed mitigation activities include:

- **Targeted control of high-risk species**, with particular focus on Coolatai grass within the Hills Face Zone and escarpment areas
- **Spot spraying and selective treatment** to reduce seed spread and regrowth
- **Woody weed control**, including thinning or removal of species such as olives where they contribute to dense understory
- **Collaboration with regional partners**, including DEW, City of Salisbury, SA Water and community groups
- **Mulching or reuse of removed material** where environmentally appropriate.

Coolatai grass control has achieved significant reductions in infestations over recent years,

contributing both to biodiversity outcomes and reduced fire intensity potential.

Fire access tracks

Fire access tracks are a critical component of bushfire response capability. Council maintains an extensive network of fire access tracks and service tracks of approximately 35km across the City.

Fire access track maintenance activities include:

- **Grading** to maintain safe surface conditions
- **Vegetation clearance** to achieve required vertical and horizontal clearance envelopes
- **Weed control** along track edges to reduce fine fuel build up
- **Assessment of drainage and erosion** to ensure tracks remain passable
- **Installation and maintenance of turning areas** where required to support appliance manoeuvrability.

Council has undertaken a major review of all fire access tracks in consultation with the CFS to ensure they are safe, fit for purpose and provide strategic benefit for firefighting operations. This review resulted in the modification or realignment of some tracks, while a small number of tracks were deemed of little benefit and will no longer be maintained by Council. All tracks are appropriately sign-posted and recorded on Council's GIS system.

Track classifications (as per State Guidelines):

- **Major Fire Track** – minimum width of 7 metres, allows two-way access
- **Standard Fire Track** – width of 4 to 5 metres, constructed with passing bays
- **Minor Fire Track** – width of 4 to 5 metres, single lane access on through roads.

Tracks that do not meet full standards are classified as Service Tracks. These tracks are not maintained for access or clearance, may not be trafficable, and should only be used with caution under suitable conditions.

Firebreaks

Firebreaks help slow fire spread, provide protection to assets and create space for firefighting operations.

Council maintains fire breaks to:

- **Provide a buffer** between vegetation and assets
- **Enable access** for emergency services
- **Reduce radiant heat** exposure
- **Support suppression** activities.

Firebreaks and fire access tracks are managed in accordance with the South Australian Firebreaks, Fire Access Tracks and Sign Standard Guidelines, ensuring consistency with State expectations.

Reserve and urban fringe management

Reserves located along the urban-rural interface can pose significant bushfire risk. Council undertakes mitigation works to reduce the risk of these areas contributing to fire spread into residential neighbourhoods.

Activities may include:

- **Fuel load reduction** (mowing, slashing, selective cutting)
- **Managing vegetation buffers** along residential fences
- **Pruning overhanging limbs** that may act as ladder fuels
- **Removing dead or fallen vegetation** that increases fuel continuity
- **Firebreaks and access tracks** within larger reserves.



GIS mapping and spatial data recording

Council uses Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to support accurate planning, documentation and monitoring of bushfire mitigation activities.

GIS is used to:

- Plot treatment locations (roadsides, reserves, tracks, firebreaks)
- Record programmed bushfire mitigation works
- Overlay BMAP assets and risk ratings
- Identify high risk, medium risk and urban interface bushfire areas
- Support the BTAP and reporting
- Identify gaps, overlaps or areas needing additional mitigation work.

Spatial data enhances decision-making and enables transparent, evidence-based reporting.

Staff Work Health and Safety considerations

Staff safety is paramount during all mitigation works and across the Fire Danger Season.

Key WHS considerations include:

- Total Fire Ban Day procedure, which outlines services that must be modified or ceased on Total Fire Ban Days
- Automated notifications to staff in advance of Extreme or Catastrophic days
- Safe work procedures when operating machinery in high-risk conditions
- Identification of the Tea Tree Gully Safer Working Area – areas deemed lower risk where permitted works and activities can be undertaken on Total Fire Ban days.

Collaboration with agencies and neighbouring councils

Bushfire risk does not stop at council boundaries. Council collaborates regularly with:

- CFS – track assessments, risk advice, mitigation planning, staff training
- DEW – Fire Management Plans for recreation and conservation parks, track connections
- SA Water – management of high-risk infrastructure areas
- Neighbouring councils – shared reserves and boundary roads, information and knowledge sharing
- Community groups – environmental maintenance, awareness programs.

Joint activities help maintain consistent fuel reduction and access outcomes across land tenures.

DEW Fire Management Plans

The Department for Environment and Water maintains Fire Management Plans for key reserves in around the City, including Anstey Hill Recreation Park, Cobbler Creek Recreation Park and Angove Conservation Park. These plans guide prescribed burning, fuel management and access improvements on public land adjacent to Council-managed areas.

Community awareness and preparedness support

Council plays an important role in supporting residents and landowners to understand bushfire risk and take appropriate preparedness actions.

Council will support community awareness and preparedness by:

- Promoting CFS resources and local risk information
- Encouraging property preparation, vegetation management and defensible space requirements
- Supporting community education activities and access to trusted bushfire information
- Encouraging early preparation and informed decision-making before the Fire Danger Season
- Working with emergency services and partner agencies to share preparedness messaging.



Private property preparedness

Reducing bushfire risk is a shared responsibility, and preparedness on private land plays a critical role in protecting lives, property and neighbouring areas.

Council supports private property preparedness through education, inspection programs and, where necessary, enforcement under legislation.

Landowner responsibilities

Landowners have specific responsibilities for managing bushfire risk on the land they own or occupy.

Legal obligations

Under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005*, owners of private land must take reasonable steps to:

- Prevent or inhibit the outbreak of fire on their land
- Prevent or inhibit the spread of fire through their land
- Protect property on their land from fire
- Minimise the threat to human life from a fire on their land.

These legal obligations underpin the property preparation and maintenance actions outlined in the [Residents and landowners section](#).



Hazard reduction inspection and compliance program

Council's annual inspection and compliance program is designed to ensure vegetation hazards are identified and addressed early in the Fire Danger Season, particularly on vacant or high-risk properties. The program includes:

Period	Activity
Early October	Correspondence sent to landowners of vacant and high-risk properties advising of the need to reduce vegetation hazards before inspections commence.
November	First inspections. Non-compliant properties are issued with a Section 105F Hazard Reduction Notice with 14 days to complete required works.
First two weeks of the Fire Danger Season	Compliance checks occur. Properties still non-compliant are issued an Expiation Notice. Council contractors may complete the required works in default, with costs charged to the landowner.

Burning in the open

Burning vegetation in the open can increase risk if not undertaken safely. Burning in the open is not permitted during the Fire Danger Season (except by authorised agencies). Outside this period, permits may be required, and conditions must be followed.

Burning should be considered a last resort for vegetation disposal. Residents are encouraged to consider alternative disposal options, such as Council's free green waste drop-off service, before applying to burn.

Residents who are unsure about whether burning is appropriate are encouraged to speak with Council's Fire Prevention Officer.



Planning and development

Land use planning and building design significantly influence long-term bushfire risk. Bushfire-resilient development reduces vulnerability to fire impacts and improves firefighter and community safety.

Development in bushfire-prone areas

New developments or significant alterations in bushfire-prone areas must comply with the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* and associated regulations. These requirements ensure buildings are designed and constructed to withstand bushfire conditions.

Key elements include:

- Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) assessments
- Compliance with AS 3959 – Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas
- Building materials resistant to embers and flame contact, depending on BAL rating
- Design features such as non-combustible fencing, metal mesh screens, enclosed subfloors
- Providing suitable access for firefighters and emergency vehicles
- Maintaining defensible space around structures.

These requirements aim to increase the likelihood that buildings will survive ember attack, radiant heat and flame contact.

Native vegetation clearance

Bushfire mitigation must be balanced with environmental protection. Legislative provisions allow limited vegetation clearance for bushfire

safety, provided it is necessary, proportionate and compliant with applicable laws.

Detailed guidance on native vegetation clearance is available through the [CFS](#) and [Department for Environment and Water](#) websites.

Fire management zones

Asset Protection Zones

An Asset Protection Zone (APZ) is a reduced-fuel area surrounding a building or asset that is managed to minimise flame contact, radiant heat and ember attack during a bushfire. APZs provide separation between vegetation and assets, reducing the likelihood of ignition and improving safety for residents and firefighters. APZ design is informed by the Fire Management Zone Standard and AS 3959.

Bushfire Buffer Zones

A Bushfire Buffer Zone (BBZ) is a strategically reduced-fuel area designed to slow fire spread, reduce ember attack and break up continuous fuel structures. BBZ works typically focus on selectively reducing grass and understory vegetation to limit vertical fuel connectivity between surface and canopy layers.

APZs and BBZs play an important role in reducing bushfire intensity and improving the effectiveness of suppression activities.

Balancing environmental values

Council recognises that many areas of the City contain important native vegetation that provides significant environmental, cultural and amenity value.

Council maintains a balanced approach by:

- Applying selective or minimal disturbance methods
- Retaining habitat trees where safe and appropriate

- Avoiding unnecessary removal of native species
- Using weed control to reduce fuel loads while preserving biodiversity
- Aligning works with ecological best practice.

Where possible, bushfire mitigation works are integrated with biodiversity and land stewardship objectives.



Monitoring, reporting and review

Monitoring, reporting and review are essential to ensuring bushfire mitigation activities remain effective, accountable and responsive to changing risk conditions.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring of bushfire mitigation activities is undertaken through a coordinated, whole-of-Council approach, with contributions from relevant teams based on their functional responsibilities.

This includes:

- **Tracking treatment status** of mitigation treatments
- **Reviewing treatment effectiveness**, including whether mitigation works have achieved intended outcomes
- **Considering seasonal conditions** such as fuel growth, rainfall patterns and Fire Danger Ratings
- **Evaluating operational capacity**, including equipment availability, contractor resources and workforce impacts
- **Checking alignment** with the BMAP requirements and updating priorities where required
- **Monitoring community requests** and reported hazards
- **Assessing safety considerations**, particularly when works are undertaken in high-risk areas.

Council's Regulatory Services department has overall responsibility for the oversight of the Bushfire Mitigation Framework and the BTAP.

Internal reporting

Council reports regularly on the planning and progress of bushfire mitigation activities to ensure transparency, accountability and oversight.

Key internal reporting includes:

- Twice yearly reports to the Audit and Risk Committee (pre-season and post-season)
- Ad-hoc reporting where emerging risks, incidents or high-priority issues arise
- Internal dashboards or summaries, supported by GIS mapping and treatment status data.

These reports help guide decision-making, resource allocation and continuous improvement.

External reporting

Council contributes to bushfire risk reduction at a regional and state level through its reporting obligations.

External reporting includes:

- Annual reporting to the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges Bushfire Management Committee on mitigation activities relevant to the BMAP
- Providing information to the State Bushfire Coordination Committee where required
- Participating in audits, reviews and evaluations conducted by external agencies
- Collaborating with neighbouring councils and sharing information to support cross-boundary risk mitigation.

This reporting ensures that Council's mitigation activities support broader bushfire management strategies across the region.

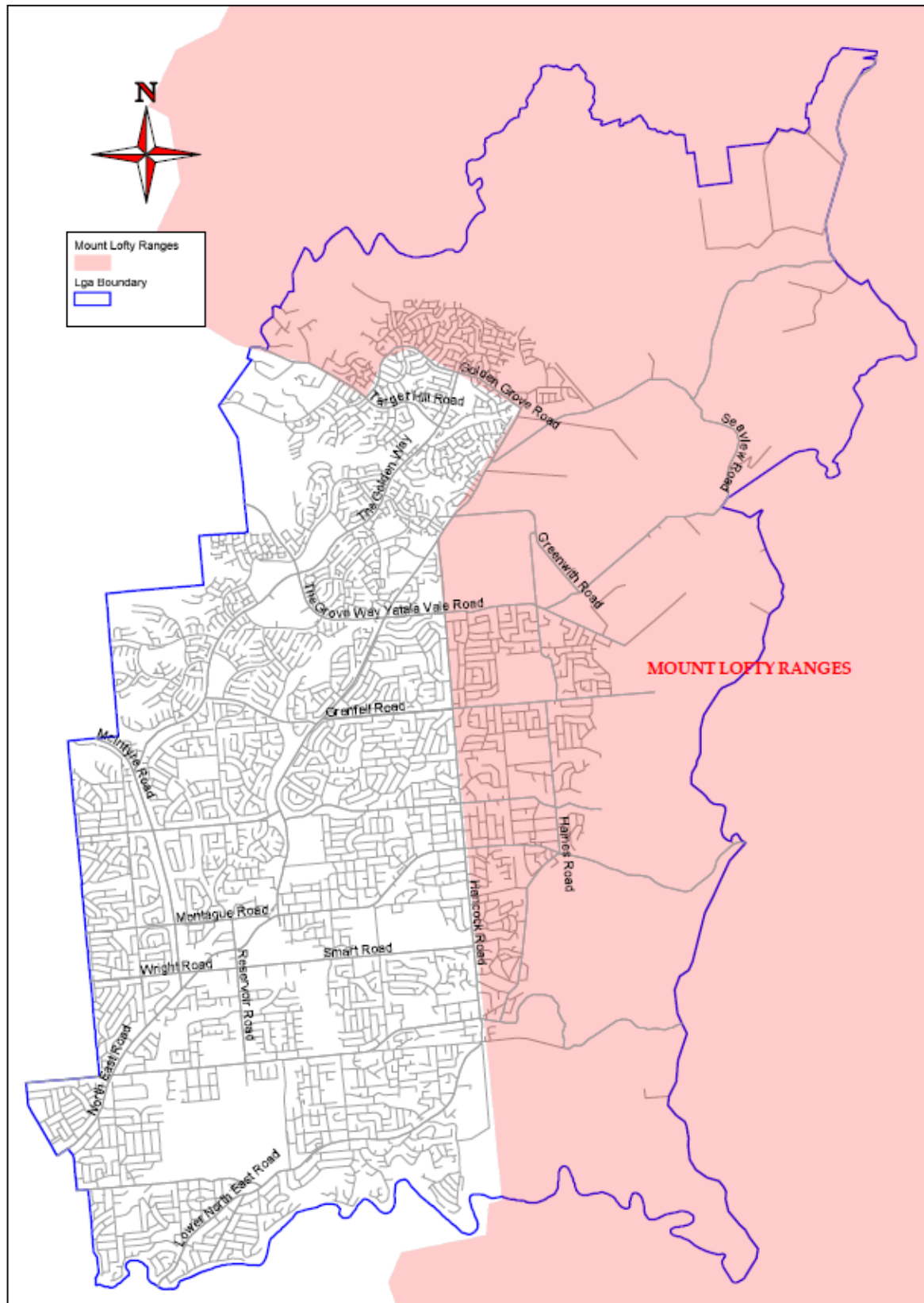
Continuous improvement

Council is committed to continuous improvement in bushfire mitigation. Lessons identified from audits, incidents, seasonal variation and community feedback inform ongoing refinement of practices and priorities.

This Framework is reviewed every four years, or sooner if triggered by a significant bushfire event or legislative change.

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Fire Ban Districts map



Attachment 2 – Legislative summary

Legislation / Plan	Purpose	Relevance to the Bushfire Mitigation Framework
Local Government Act 1999	Establishes the functions and powers of councils in South Australia, including the responsibility for mitigating the effects of natural hazards	Provides the legislative basis for Council's role in bushfire mitigation, community welfare and well-being, risk reduction and alignment with regional, State and national objectives
Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005	Primary legislation governing bushfire prevention, control and suppression	Defines landowner responsibilities for hazard reduction, Council responsibilities for land under its care and control, appointment of Fire Prevention Officers, inspection powers, and the issuing of Section 105F Hazard Reduction Notices
State Bushfire Management Plan	Provides statewide strategic direction, objectives and principles for bushfire management	Ensures Council's bushfire mitigation activities align with statewide priorities, standards and expectations for consistent bushfire management
Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Bushfire Management Area Plan	Identifies bushfire risk across the region regardless of land tenure and assigns strategic mitigation priorities	Serves as the primary regional planning instrument guiding Council's risk-based prioritisation of bushfire mitigation treatments and the development of the annual Bushfire Treatment Action Plan
Emergency Management Act 2004 State Emergency Management Plan	Establishes South Australia's emergency management arrangements across prevention, preparedness, response and recovery	Defines local government's responsibilities in disaster risk reduction and recovery, and its support role to control agencies such as the CFS during bushfire incidents
Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016	Regulates planning and development in South Australia, including development in bushfire-prone areas	Requires bushfire-prone area identification, Bushfire Attack Level assessments, compliance with AS 3959, provision of defensible space, and appropriate access for emergency services
Native Vegetation Act 1991	Regulates the clearance of native vegetation and protects biodiversity values	Allows limited vegetation clearance for bushfire protection purposes while ensuring mitigation activities balance bushfire risk reduction with environmental protection obligations

South Australian Firebreaks, Fire Access Track and Sign Standard Guidelines	Establishes standards for firebreaks, fire access track and associated signage	Guides the design, classification, construction and maintenance of fire access tracks and firebreaks maintained by Council
Australian Fire Danger Rating System	Provides nationally consistent fire danger ratings and action-oriented public messaging	Informs Council decision-making regarding staff safety, service delivery, and Total Fire Ban Day procedures during periods of elevated fire danger
AS 3959 – Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas	Sets construction standards for buildings exposed to bushfire risk	Supports planning and development controls aimed at reducing building vulnerability to ember attack, radiant heat and flame contact
CFS Codes of Practice (including Vegetation Pile Burning)	Provide operational guidance for bushfire-related activities	Informs Council advice to residents and landowners regarding safe vegetation disposal, burning permits and alternative fuel management options

Attachment 3 – Definitions and abbreviations

Term	Definition
Asset	Any natural, built, social, cultural or economic value that may be exposed to bushfire risk, including people, infrastructure, critical services, environmental features and community facilities.
Asset Protection Zone (APZ)	An area surrounding a building or asset where vegetation and other fuels are managed to reduce the impact of radiant heat, flame contact and ember attack during a bushfire.
Bushfire	An unplanned fire burning in vegetation, including grass fires, scrub fires and forest fires.
Bushfire mitigation	Actions undertaken to reduce the likelihood, intensity or impact of bushfire on people, property, infrastructure and the environment
Bushfire risk	The likelihood of a bushfire igniting, spreading and causing harm to people, property, infrastructure or the environment
Bushfire Treatment Action Plan (BTAP)	Council’s annual operational plan that identifies, prioritises, records and tracks mitigation treatments in alignment with the Bushfire Management Area Plan.
Bushfire Management Area Plan (BMAP)	A regional plan prepared under the <i>Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005</i> that identifies assets at risk from bushfire, assesses, risk levels and sets strategic mitigation priorities across all land tenures.
Control Agency	The agency responsible for managing the response to an emergency event. For bushfires, this is the CFS.
Defendable space	An area around a building where vegetation and fuels are managed to improve the likelihood of the building surviving a bushfire and to support firefighter safety.
Disaster risk reduction	Measures aimed at preventing new disaster risk, reducing existing risk and managing residual risk to minimise the impacts of emergencies.
Fire Access Track	A track designed, constructed and maintained to provide access for firefighting vehicles and personnel for bushfire suppression and management activities.
Fire Danger Season	A period declared by the CFS during which restrictions apply to activities that may cause fire, due to elevated bushfire risk.
Firebreak	An area of land where vegetation has been removed or modified to reduce the risk of fires starting and reduce the intensity and rate of spread of fires that may occur.
Fuel load	The amount, type and arrangement of vegetation and other combustible material available to burn in a bushfire.
Fuel reduction	The modification or removal of vegetation and other fuels to reduce bushfire risk, including mowing, slashing, pruning and weed management.
Roadside Marker Site (RMS)	A designated section of roadside containing high-value native vegetation that requires sensitive management to balance biodiversity protection and bushfire risk reduction.

Total Fire Ban Day	A day declared by the CFS when conditions present an elevated bushfire risk and restrictions apply to activities that may cause a fire.
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Abbreviation	Meaning
AFDRS	Australian Fire Danger Rating System
AMLR BMC	Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Bushfire Management Committee
APZ	Asset Protection Zone
AS 3959	Australian Standard for construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas
BAL	Bushfire Attack Level
BMAP	Bushfire Management Area Plan
BTAP	Bushfire Treatment Action Plan
CFS	Country Fire Service
DEW	Department for Environment and Water
DIT	Department for Infrastructure and Transport
FES Act	Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005
FPO	Fire Prevention Officer
GIS	Geographic Information System
LGFSG	Local Government Functional Support Group
MFS	Metropolitan Fire Service
RMS	Roadside Marker Site
SBCC	State Bushfire Coordination Committee
SBMP	State Bushfire Management Plan
WHS	Work Health and Safety