

Standard Operating Procedure



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J2.03

Incident Management Teams – Readiness Arrangements

Objective	SOP J2.03 ensures the State has Incident Management Teams pre-positioned to manage major bushfires or those with the potential to become major bushfires.
Scope	SOP J2.03 outlines the process for Regional and State Control to establish pre-positioned Incident Management Teams at various levels of bushfire risk to manage major bushfires or those with the potential to become major bushfires.
Definitions	<p>The following definitions apply to SOP J2.03:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agencies: The Country Fire Authority (CFA), Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) and Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB).• Bushfire: An unplanned fire primarily in vegetation such as grass, forest and scrub.• Bushfire season: Refers to the period from 1 October until 31 May each year unless otherwise determined by the Fire Services Commissioner.• Incident Control Centre (ICC): A location where the Incident Controller and the Incident Management Team manage bushfire response activities.• Incident Management Team (IMT): An Incident Controller supported by personnel responsible for the incident management functions identified in the State Emergency Response Plan (Emergency Management Manual Victoria Part 3) and applied in Victoria using the Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS).• ICC footprint: A defined area, surrounding an ICC.• ICC cluster: ICC footprint areas have been aggregated into clusters, each with a designated Primary ICC. As some clusters cross Regional boundaries, SOP J2.03 nominates a specific Regional Controller to be responsible for each cluster for the purposes of readiness and reporting.• Fire Danger Index (FDI): A numerical index calculated using weather inputs for both grassland and forest fuels and forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM). The indices are categorised into Fire Danger Ratings (FDR), ranging from Low to Code Red, which are used for public communications.• Line of control: The line of accountability for the control of bushfire in Victoria. The line-of-control is Incident Controller, who reports to the Regional Controller, who reports to the State Controller. The line of control for bushfire is in place at all times during the bushfire season but is not activated until a fire has potential for or reaches a major fire status.• Local Mutual Aid Plans (LMAP): Joint fire agency

arrangements for bushfire readiness and response for each Victorian Government Region.

- **Major fire:** a large or complex fire (however caused) which -
(a) has the potential to cause or is causing loss of life and extensive damage to property, infrastructure or the environment; or
(b) has the potential to have or is having significant adverse consequences for the Victorian community or a part of the Victorian community; or
(c) requires the involvement of 2 or more fire services agencies to suppress the fire; or
(d) will, if not suppressed, burn for more than one day.
- **Primary ICC:** The designated facility which, at various readiness levels, has an IMT that can provide support to other ICCs with lower levels of IMT in the cluster.
- **Region:** A Victorian Government Region.
- **Regional Controller** is the person approved by the FSC and acting on behalf of the FSC in each Region for the extent of the bushfire season to exercise control at the regional tier over bushfire readiness and response in the Region, irrespective of the jurisdiction.
- **State mobile IMT:** An IMT formed, positioned and deployed by the State Controller.
- **Transfer of control:** The transfer of the control function from a field-based Incident Controller to an Incident Controller located in an ICC and supported by an IMT.



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Contents

SOP J2.03 comprises a procedure and the following schedules:

- Schedule 1 lists the weather forecast location for each ICC
- Schedule 2 prescribes three levels of IMT for readiness purposes.
- Schedule 3 illustrates ICC footprints and clusters
- Schedule 4 identifies the level of IMT that should be placed in each ICC for each category of FDR

Procedure	Responsibility
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Fire Services Commissioner (FSC) is the State Controller for bushfire in Victoria and is responsible for the readiness arrangements for major bushfire. The FSC has issued SOP J2.03 under section 21 of the <i>Fire Services Commissioner Act 2010</i> and can vary the arrangements in the document if required to fulfil his legislated bushfire management responsibilities.2. Regional Controllers are responsible for implementing SOP J2.03 in the ICC clusters for which they are accountable (refer Schedule 4 for ICC clusters and the responsible Regional Controller).3. Regional Agency Commanders are responsible for:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing resources to fulfil the requirements of SOP J2.03• Monitoring the bushfire response activities of their agencies and notifying the Regional Controller if the transfer of control to an IMT is required (refer to FSC Guidance Note 02/2012 – Transfer of Control)4. Once fires are burning, readiness arrangements convert to response arrangements and Regional and State Controllers may

need to redeploy resources based on risk and major fire operations, possibly requiring variations to the readiness arrangements in Schedules 2 and 4.

Resource plans

5. LMAPs must reflect the requirements of SOP J2.03.

Principles of bushfire readiness and response

6. During the bushfire season, all bushfires in Victoria are managed in accordance with the State Arrangements for Command and Control for Bushfire in Victoria.
7. All Incident Controllers must adopt a functional management approach to bushfire management to ensure an IMT can easily take over management of a bushfire, if required. A functional management approach must achieve the following incident management outcomes:
 - Establish and maintain control
 - Ensure safety of personnel
 - Predict the spread of the fire
 - Issue warnings and advice to the community
 - Develop a summary Incident Action Plan in accordance with SOP J3.03 – Incident Action Planning
 - Coordinate resources
 - Build a common operating picture

ICC readiness

8. Schedules 1 and 4 list the ICC facilities that are activated in readiness for bushfire. The State also maintains other ICC facilities, activating these as required during a bushfire response. ICC facilities are managed by individual agencies.
9. An agency must immediately notify the Regional Controller if any of the ICC facilities it manages becomes unserviceable.
10. Agencies must test their ICC facilities for functionality one day prior to a forecast day of Severe, Extreme or Code Red fire danger in the Region (refer to ICC Facility documentation for details).

Weather forecast locations for each ICC

11. Schedule 1 identifies the designated BOM weather forecast location and the type of FDI (grass or forest fuel hazard) that best typifies the overall fuel conditions in each ICC footprint area.
12. The forecast FDI is used in Schedule 4 to determine the level of IMT resources required in each ICC for readiness purposes.
13. Gridded weather data, if available, can be used to supplement the decision-making process.

IMT resources and risk

14. Schedule 2 prescribes three levels of IMT for readiness purposes.
15. Subject to the prior approval of the State Controller, Regional Controllers may place resources in readiness at levels above or below the prescribed levels.

16. When planning readiness arrangements, Regional Controllers should discuss local conditions and risk mitigation options with Incident Controllers. Local conditions may include:

- Potential for multiple ignitions - lightning, arson
- Fuel characteristics – load, moisture content
- Personnel - skills, experience, availability
- Community risk, including special events, tourism
- Critical infrastructure - utilities, telecommunications, transport, water
- Operational factors – current deployments, ICC commitment and span of control
- Availability of aviation resources in the region
- Predicted fire behaviour – rate of spread, time of maximum FDI
- Weather components contributing to FDI
- State Controller's Intent – priorities for the period

ICC footprints, clusters and Primary ICC

17. Schedule 3 illustrates the ICC footprint areas.

18. Where an IMT is in place in an ICC, it will be responsible for managing bushfires within the ICC footprint area following the transfer of control.

19. Schedule 3 also aggregates the ICC footprints into clusters, each with a designated Primary ICC.

20. Subject to the prior approval of the State Controller, Regional Controllers may re-designate a Primary ICC to another ICC within a cluster.

21. Where an IMT is in place in the Primary ICC, it can provide support to the other ICCs in the cluster, with lower levels of IMT.

IMT readiness

22. Schedule 4 prescribes the IMT resources required in each ICC for different FDI.

23. Specialist roles (such as Safety Officer, Aircraft Officer, Public Information Officer, Fire Behaviour Analyst etc) can be centrally based in the Regional Control Centre, rather than in each IMT, if required.

24. Subject to the prior approval of the State Controller, Regional Controllers may re-allocate a Full IMT to another ICC within the Region.

25. IMT must be in place by 10.00am or as advised by the Regional Controller.

RCT and REMT notification

26. When a Regional Controller positions an IMT in readiness, they should consider notifying the member agencies of the Regional Control Team (RCT) and the Regional Emergency Management Team (REMT).

Monitoring

27. Once readiness arrangements are in place, Regional Controllers should continue to monitor conditions and, if they differ from those forecast, consider varying resource levels.

State mobile IMT

28. The State Controller may form additional state mobile IMT(s) as required when one or more fire weather districts has a forecast FDR of Extreme or Code Red.
29. The State Controller will approve the formation, positioning and deployment of State mobile IMT.

Reporting

30. Regional Controllers must attempt to resolve IMT resource issues locally, consistent with LMAP procedures.
31. Regional Controllers should escalate significant unresolved issues and requests for variations from the prescribed IMT resource levels to the State Controller during the Regional Controller's daily teleconference.
32. Regional Controllers must record IMT readiness arrangements on the Readiness tab of Fireweb by 16:00 on the day prior to the readiness day, when required. Details of variations to the prescribed IMT resource levels must be included, along with an explanation justifying the variations.
33. The State Control Centre Duty Manager will summarise Fireweb reports and provide a summary of state readiness arrangements to the State Controller by 17:00 on the day prior to the readiness day.



Related Documents	Other Links and References	SOPs
Emergency Management Act 1986	CFA Chief Officer's SOP 8.03 – <i>Incident Management Team Members</i>	FSC Guidance Note 02/2012 – Transfer of Control
Fire Services Commissioners Act 2010		J3.03 - Incident Action Planning
State Emergency Response Plan October 2010 (EMMV Part 3)		J3.04 - Safety Officer
State Command and Control Arrangements for Bushfire in Victoria August 2011		J2.01 - Local Mutual Aid Plans J2.04 - Local Knowledge J4.01 - Incident Warnings and Advice

Approved by:		Date:
Euan Ferguson Chief Officer, CFA		16 SEPT 2013
Alan Goodwin Chief Fire Officer, DEPI		16 Sep 2013
Shane Wright Chief Officer, MFB		16/Sept/13
Craig Lapsley Fire Services Commissioner		16/Sept/13

Date to be reviewed:
May 2014
Date to cease:
N/A

Schedule 1 – Weather forecast locations

Gridded weather data, if available, can be used to supplement the decision-making process.

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Accountable Regional Controller	ICC	BOM weather forecast location	FDI best representing fuel hazard in the ICC footprint
Loddon Mallee	Bendigo	Bendigo	Forest
	Mildura	Walpeup	Forest
	Swan Hill	Swan Hill	Grassland
	Gisborne	Melbourne Airport	Forest
Grampians	Ballarat	Ballarat	Higher of Grassland or Forest
	Ararat	Stawell	Higher of Grassland or Forest
	Horsham	Horsham	Higher of Grassland or Forest
Barwon South West	Geelong	Geelong Racecourse	Higher of Grassland or Forest
	Colac	Mortlake	Higher of Grassland or Forest
	Heywood	Hamilton	Higher of Grassland or Forest
	Warrnambool	Average of Mortlake and Portland	Grassland
	Hamilton	Hamilton	Grassland
North and West Metro	Kangaroo Ground	Average of Coldstream and Melbourne Airport	Forest
East Metro	Ferntree Gully	Coldstream	Forest
	Woori Yallock	Coldstream	Forest
South Metro	Moorooduc	Average of Ferny Creek, Pound Creek and Latrobe Valley	Forest
Hume	Wangaratta	Wangaratta	Higher of Grassland or Forest
	Ovens	Wangaratta	Forest
	Wodonga	Albury-Wodonga	Grassland
	Corryong	Hunters Hill	Forest
	Tallangatta	Albury-Wodonga	Forest
	Alexandra	Mangalore	Higher of Grassland or Forest
	Mansfield	Wangaratta	Forest
	Shepparton	Shepparton	Grassland
	Seymour	Mangalore	Higher of Grassland or Forest
Gippsland	Bairnsdale	Average of Sale, Orbost and Mt Moornappa	Forest
	Sale	Sale	Forest
	Swifts Creek	Average of Falls Creek, Mt Moornappa and Gelantipy	Forest
	Heyfield	Average of Latrobe Valley, Sale and Mt Moornappa	Forest
	Traralgon	Latrobe Valley	Forest
	Ellinbank	Average of Pound Creek and Latrobe Valley	Forest
	Leongatha	Pound Creek and Latrobe Valley	Forest
	Yarram	Average of Pound Creek and Sale	Forest
	Noojee	Latrobe Valley	Forest
	Erica	Latrobe Valley	Forest
	Orbost	Orbost	Forest
	Cann River	Orbost	Forest
	Bendoc	Gelantipy	Forest

Schedule 2 – Prescribed IMT levels for readiness purposes

- IMT should be multi-agency.
- Management support, log-takers and ground support can be added as required.
- Specialist roles (such as Safety Officer, Aircraft Officer, Public Information Officer, Fire Behaviour Analyst etc) can be centrally based (e.g. in the Regional Control Centre, rather than in each IMT, if required).
- Agency-specific roles (such as IRIS or IMS operators, DEPI timekeepers) can be added as required.
- Subject to the prior approval of the State Controller, Regional Controllers may place resources in readiness at levels above or below the prescribed levels.

Base IMT

Control:

- Incident Controller (Level 2 or Level 3)

Operations:

- Operations Officer
- Radio Operator / Administration

Public Information:

- Warnings and Advice Officer (or Public Information Officer)

Core IMT

Control:

- Incident Controller (Level 2 or Level 3)
- Deputy Incident Controller (recommended)

Operations:

- Operations Officer
- Aircraft Officer
- Radio Operator

Planning:

- Planning Officer
- Situation Officer
- Resources Officer

Public Information:

- Warnings and Advice Officer (or Public Information Officer)

Logistics:

- Logistics Officer

Full IMT

Control:

- Incident Controller (Level 3)
- Deputy Incident Controller/s
- Safety Officer

Operations:

- Operations Officer
- Aircraft Officer
- Radio Operator

Planning:

- Planning Officer
- Situation Officer/s
- Mapping Officer
- Fire Behaviour Analyst
- Resources Officer
- Communications Planner

Public Information:

- Public Information Officer (Level 3)
- Warnings and Advice Officer
- Media Officer

Logistics:

- Logistics Officer
- Catering
- Medical Unit

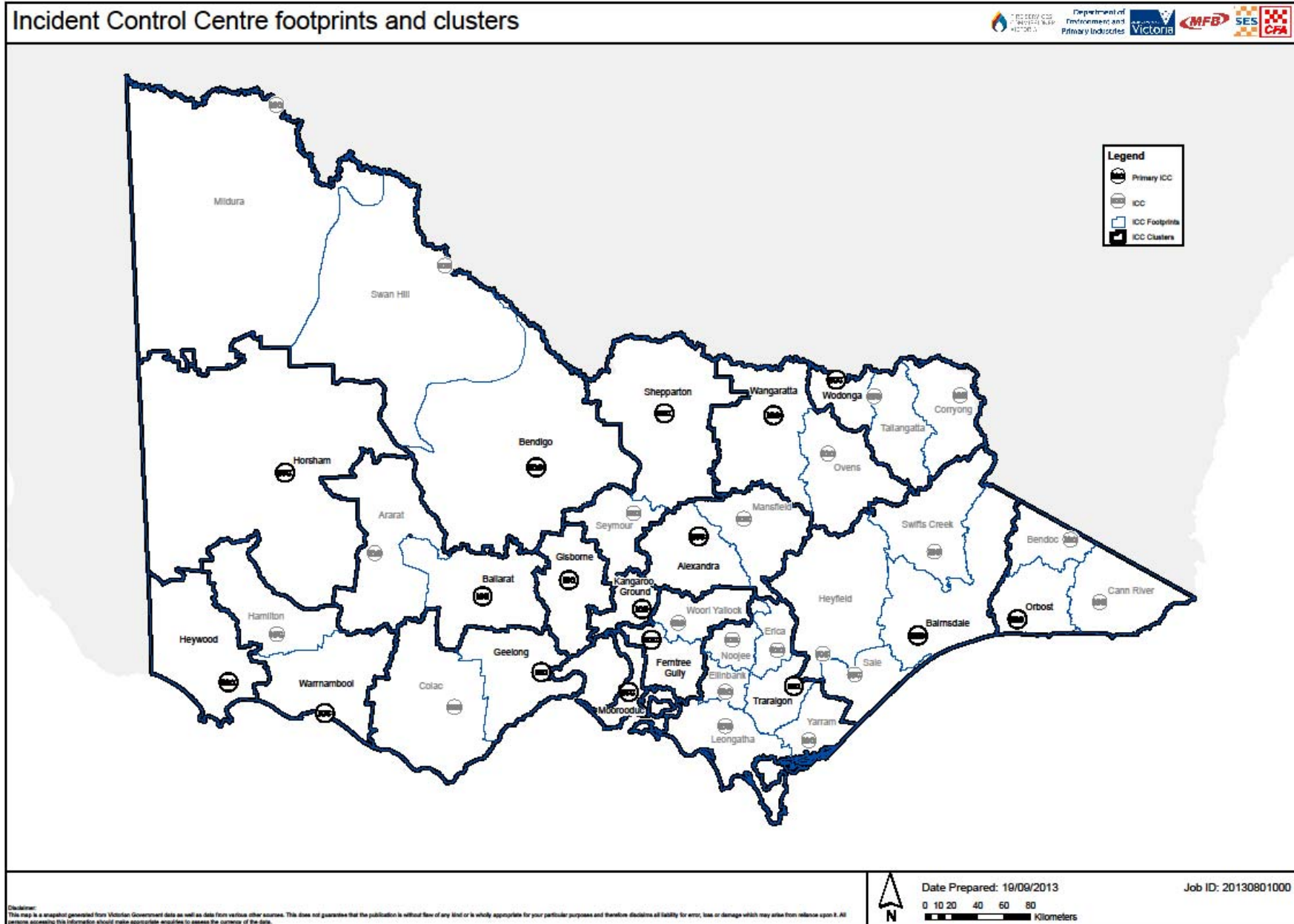
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Schedule 3 – ICC footprints and clusters

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Schedule 4 – Minimum ICC readiness arrangements

Full Full IMT (refer to schedule 2)

C Core IMT (refer to schedule 2)

* Base IMT (refer to schedule 2)

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Accountable Regional Controller	Primary ICC	ICC in cluster	Fire Danger Rating				
			Very High (35+)	Severe	Extreme	Code Red	
			Forest FDI	35-49	50-74	75-99	100+
			Grass FDI	35-49	50-99	100-149	150+
Loddon Mallee	Bendigo	Bendigo	*	C	C	FULL	
		Mildura	*	*	C	C	
		Swan Hill	*	*	C	C	
Grampians	Ballarat	Ballarat	C	C	C	FULL	
		Ararat	*	*	*	*	
		Horsham	*	C	C	C	
Barwon South West	Geelong	Geelong	C	C	C	FULL	
		Colac	*	C	C	C	
		Heywood ¹	*	C	C	C	
		Warrnambool	*	*	C	C	
North and West Metro	Kangaroo Ground	Kangaroo Ground	*	*	*	*	
		Hamilton	*	*	*	*	
East Metro	Ferntree Gully	Ferntree Gully ²	C	C	C	FULL	
		Woori Yallock	*	C	C	C	
South Metro	Moorooduc	Moorooduc ³	C	C	C	FULL	
Hume	Wangaratta	Wangaratta	*	C	C	FULL	
		Ovens	*	*	C	C	
		Wodonga	*	C	C	C	
	Wodonga	Corryong	*	*	*	*	
		Tallangatta	*	*	*	*	
	Alexandra	Alexandra	*	C	C	C	
		Mansfield	*	*	C	C	
	Shepparton	Shepparton	*	C	C	C	
		Seymour	*	*	C	C	
Gippsland	Bairnsdale	Bairnsdale	*	C	C	FULL	
		Sale	*	*	*	C	
		Swifts Creek	*	*	C	C	
		Heyfield	*	C	C	C	
	Traralgon	Traralgon ⁴	*	C	C	C	
		Ellinbank	*	*	*	*	
		Leongatha	*	*	*	*	
		Yarram	*	*	*	C	
		Noojee	*	*	*	C	
	Orbost	Erica	*	*	*	C	
		Orbost	*	C	C	C	
Cann River		*	*	*	*		
State Controller	Mobile	Bendoc	*	*	*	*	
		State Mobile IMT 1			FULL	FULL	
		State Mobile IMT 2				FULL	

¹ The Heywood ICC footprint includes the former Casterton ICC footprint.

² The Ferntree Gully ICC footprint includes the former Pakenham ICC footprint.

³ The Moorooduc ICC footprint includes French Island.

⁴ The Leongatha ICC footprint includes Phillip Island.