

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION > BUSHFIRE-READY NEIGHBOURHOODS NEWSLETTER



Issue 20 • Spring Edition • November 2020

Helping Tasmanian communities work together to prevent, prepare for and respond to bushfires.

This edition features:

- Round 4 goes digital
- Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods – On the West Coast
- Southern Region BRN Update
- Update from the Northern Region
- ABC's *Big Weather*.

Round 4 goes digital

In June 2020, the TFS Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods program (BRN) had been in full operation for seven years. BRN is a community-based prevention, preparedness, and response program for bushfire-prone communities across Tasmania.

BRN has begun engagement with 16 communities for Round 4 of implementation (2020 to 2022). Communities have been selected based on bushfire risk, existing and future community protection planning priorities, social capital, TFS capacity, and consultation with regional and bushfire risk unit staff. Scaled support continues for the pilot, and Round 1, 2 and 3 communities.

A critical part of the engagement strategy for Round 4 is the trial of a new digital engagement platform www.engage.bushfireready.tas.gov.au/

Due in part to COVID-19, BRN is trialling the new platform with four Tasmanian communities: Binalong Bay, Dodges Ferry, Margate and the West Coast.

If evaluation of the trial shows it is successful, BRN is likely to look at rolling the online engagement out with other core BRN communities.

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AIMING TO BUILD RESILIENCE AND CAPACITY
IN BUSHFIRE PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE WITH AT RISK TASMANIAN COMMUNITIES

2020-22 PRIORITIES

TASMANIA

COMMUNITIES: TURNERS MARSH, BINALONG BAY, DODGES FERRY, QUEENSTOWN, TULLAH, MARGATE

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BUSHFIRE WHY RISK IT?



Tasmania Fire Service

fire.tas.gov.au/brn

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Round 4 goes digital

27 September 2020

Bianca says:

“Would love to have someone on site to talk about fuel reduction burn, possibly creating a fire break.”

23 September 2020

Paul says:

“Vegetation cleanup strategies, fuel reduction burns on private land.”

23 September 2020

INCANA ROAD says:

“Interactive, someone talking and showing us.”

22 September 2020

Georgia says:

“On site workshops showing how to prepare homes for bushfire and mitigate risk - as much as possible.”

23 September 2020

Regina says:

“On site workshops on how to identify risks and practical ways to manage them. Seminars on local area risks.”

Another area of focus for Round 4 includes TFS volunteer community engagement and training in a face-to-face environment and online. During the winter of 2020, a webinar series in community engagement was delivered for TFS volunteers.

Connected with the BRN program is the new [TFS Community Development Framework – 2020 to 2024](#). The new plan follows on from the success of the 2017 to 2020 plan.

The BRN program continues to be a national leader in good practice community engagement in the disaster resilience space. During 2020, the program contributed to the development of the [AIDR Community Engagement for Disaster Resilience Handbook](#). The handbook is a good practice guide to community engagement in disaster resilience.

*Peter Middleton
Coordinator, Community Development*



Tasmania Fire Service

TasFire

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fire.tas.gov.au/brn

Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods – On the West Coast

Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods (BRN) is no stranger to the West Coast. Since 2014, TFS has worked with communities in Granville Harbour, Queenstown, Strahan, and Zeehan to promote bushfire readiness.

Building on the BRN activities over the past few years, BRN is working closely with local fire brigades to promote bushfire readiness across all communities on the West Coast. A critical part of promoting bushfire readiness in the community will be working closely with the fire brigade in Rosebery, Queenstown, Strahan, Tullah and Zeehan.

“The Rosebery brigade is looking forward to the opportunity to be more involved within the community and help the town know what they can do to be prepared for bushfire season.”

Luke Smith, Brigade Chief, Rosebery Brigade

There have been many bushfires on the West Coast over the years. In the last few years there have been large bushfires around Rosebery and Zeehan in 2019; Strahan in 2017; and Granville Harbour in 2014. All communities on the West Coast face the risk of bushfires, so these fires are a reminder that it’s important for communities on the West Coast to be well prepared for bushfires.

“In my experience, fires are becoming more intense, unpredictable and harder to control. We’ve seen big fires on the West Coast in the last few years, plus what happened on the mainland over summer, and the US now. It’s more critical than ever that the community is prepared for bushfire season.”

Mark McDermott, Brigade Chief, Strahan Brigade

“Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods will help residents of Queenstown feel safer because they will have a

better understanding of what to do in the event of a bushfire. It will also make the brigade’s job easier because people will be more prepared.”

Paul Bugg, Brigade Chief, Queenstown Brigade

“During the Lynch Hill fire in 2019, there was a lot of confusion in town about what to do and where to go. I think Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods will give everyone a better understanding about how to be prepared so they can decide if they’ll stay and defend or leave early, and so they can work out where they will go. This will reduce panic within the community if we are faced with a fire near Rosebery again.”

Luke Smith, Brigade Chief, Rosebery Brigade

We are busy planning BRN events to promote bushfire readiness in each of the communities on the West Coast. Details will be posted on the [BRN website](#) when there are opportunities for the community to gather and find out more about developing your [bushfire survival plan](#) and [prepare your property](#) for bushfire.

As Peter explained in his article (p.1), the online platform provides us with an opportunity to engage with community members in the face of COVID-19 restrictions.

“The new online platform engage.bushfireready.tas.gov.au has lots of useful resources. I really like the video that explains what BRN does. It will still be important to have face-to-face events because the online platform won’t suit everyone in the community.”

Greg Blake, Second Officer, Tullah Brigade

Brett Patterson

Community Development Officer, North West



Check out the Disaster Resilience Education Tasmania online resources for teachers disasterresiliencetas.com.au.

Southern Region BRN Update

2020 means the start to a new round of Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods (BRN) activities in the Southern Region. With Round 4 now underway, four new southern communities will be the focus of activities for 2020-2022. These communities are Dodges Ferry, Margate, Miena, and Orford.

These locations are spread across the Southern Region and have unique characteristics. These include shack communities, permanent residents, urban fringe communities and rural. All have higher levels of bushfire risk including some with one-way-in one-way-out roads, remote access, and different community connectedness.

While in the initial stage of Round 4, there has been great interest from TFS fire brigades and various stakeholders to be involved in the program and to work with these communities to be more prepared for bushfires. Even though the recent weather in the south has been a little damp, community events are planned to start in October/November across the southern BRN communities.

We have several different types of events happening across the communities. One that is being held in a few

areas are the drop-in sessions. These types of sessions enable people to drop in anytime while the session is open. This allows the TFS fire brigades, Community Development Officer, and other stakeholders to talk to community members one on one or in smaller groups, as well as offering flexibility for community members to come along at a time that suits them.

Another benefit of drop-in sessions is being able to manage COVID-19 government restrictions. By encouraging people to come along during a period of time when they are available, group size is more easily managed within a limited space as well as maintaining physical distancing requirements.

So if you live in, work in, own a shack or spend some time in any of these areas, check out www.bushfirereadyneighbourhoods.tas.gov.au/community-events for when there is a community event in your area.

Selina Young
Community Development Officer, South

Update from the Northern Region

2020 has brought us a number of unknowns but one thing we do know is that Bushfire-Ready Neighbourhoods (BRN) has begun Round 4 of the program. Several communities across the state will benefit from their involvement in Round 4, with a variety of options available for you to become involved.

Work has already begun in some Northern Region Communities, with work in Ansons Bay continuing from Round 3. New communities in Round 4 are Musselroe Bay, Karoola / Turners Marsh, Binalong Bay and Ansons Bay.

It's exciting to enter this round of BRN as COVID-19 has forced us to think outside the box and create new ways to engage with communities along with some of the tried and trusted face-to-face meetings. For more information, read the article on page 1 in this issue of the BRN Newsletter.

Binalong Bay residents and shack owners will have an opportunity to engage with BRN electronically for the first time in a dedicated online platform with residents receiving an invitation to join. This will also be supported with onsite bushfire preparedness activities over the next two years.

As the fire season draws closer, now is an opportune time for Volunteers to be encouraging your communities to continue with bushfire survival planning, ember proofing and checking equipment, so it is not left too late in the season. Remember, your community's preparedness makes our job safer and easier for everyone during fire incidents.

If you would like further information on the program, please contact us.

David Cleaver
Community Development Officer, North



ABC's Big Weather

From the frontlines of Australia's Black Summer of 2019-20, *Big Weather (and how to survive it)* delivers a message about how our weather is changing and what we can do to survive it.

The three-part series premiered on ABC in October, and it is now available on ABC iview.

Presenter Craig Reucassel shares stories from frontline disaster crews, experts and communities dealing with the effects of escalating extreme weather events to answer some questions: Why are these events becoming less predictable and more intense? And what can we do to prepare, survive, and adapt into the future?

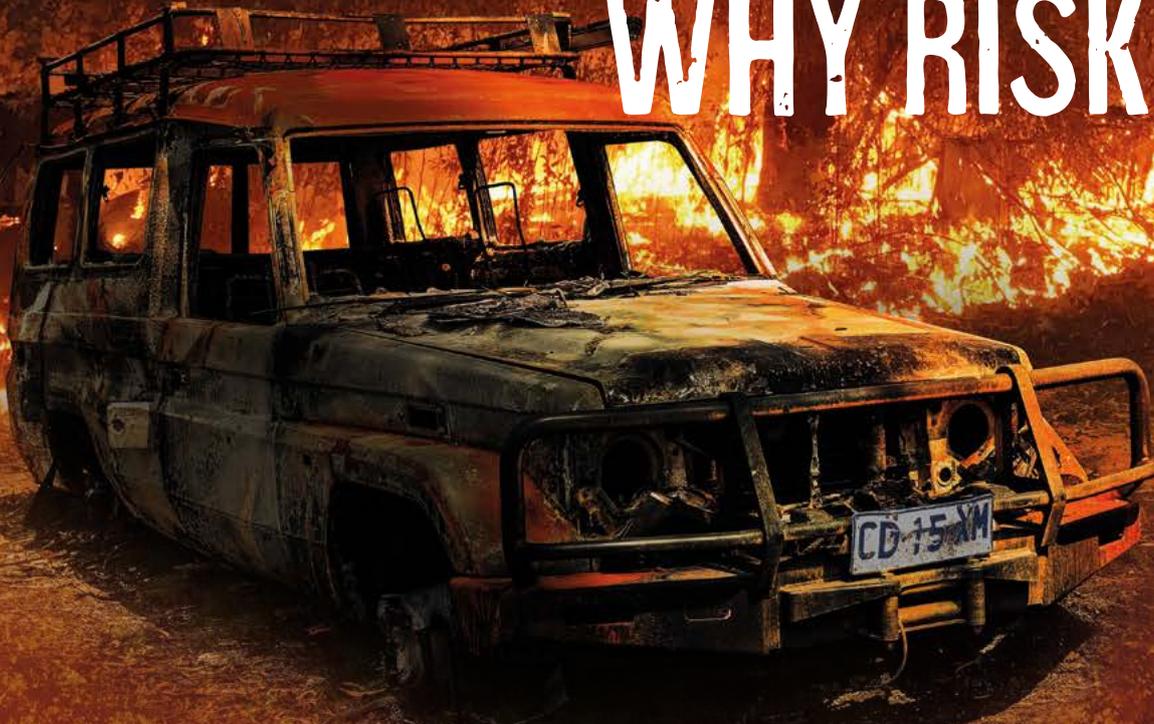
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