

BUSHFIRE ACTION PLAN

TINTINARA AREA SCHOOL

Version: November 26, 2014



Summary: In the event of the school and preschool being advised by the CFS that Tintinara is threatened by a fire and that Action Plans should be implemented, all staff and students will relocate to the Tintinara War Memorial Hall, where children will only be signed over and allowed to leave with the express consent of their parents.

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General Information

This Bushfire Action Plan (BAP) was reviewed in Term 3 2014 after consultation with:

- staff
- families of students attending the Tintinara Area School and Preschool
- members of the Tintinara Country Fire Service (CFS) Brigade.
- The Fire Officer of the Coorong District Council

The BAP outlines required actions to prepare:

- the site before the bushfire season

- the building nominated as the site Safe Refuge.

The BAP also outlines activities to be undertaken by staff and students at the different levels of a bushfire emergency:

- on days of Total Fire Ban
- when there is a fire in the local district
- when a bushfire is threatening or impacting on the site
- during the period immediately after a bushfire has impacted on the site (known as the 'Recovery Phase').

The Tintinara Hall is the nominated Bushfire Safer Refuge for this site.

It has been prepared for a bushfire emergency and will safely accommodate all persons normally on the site. Students, staff and visitors present at Tintinara Area School and Preschool when a bushfire threatens the site will move together to the Safe Refuge when 'triggers' detailed later in this BAP are reached.

The Safer Refuge for the wider Tintinara Community is defined by the CFS as the entire area between the Dukes Highway and Wendt Terrace.

It is anticipated that some members of the local Tintinara Community will want to shelter in the School's Safe Refuge during a bushfire. The process to safely accommodate those people along with students and staff is included in this BAP.

The Principal and Fire Warden will hold discussions with members of the Tintinara CFS Brigade during each school year about the bushfire preparedness of the school, preschool and Safe Refuge. The Principal will forward a copy of the site BAP to the Tintinara CFS Brigade during the third term of each school year.

The Front Office staff will forward a copy of the BAP to all families of students on site at the beginning of each year. The BAP is explained to the families of new students in the Parent Handbook given during the enrolment process.

The Principal will include bushfire season reminders and information in site newsletters during term one and four of each school year. The Bushfire Action Plan will be included with the Tintinara Area School and CPC information booklets for new families to the School and CPC which are updated in Term one of each school year.

All staff members are to receive pre-fire season updates during term three and ongoing information and instruction about the contents and requirements of the BAP during terms one and four at staff meetings.

All staff members are required to undertake Fire Extinguisher use Training every third year to be organised at a school level through DECS.

The Principal/Delegate will ensure that all new staff members and relieving staff are briefed about the requirements of the BAP during the site induction process. Visitors will be briefed through a message in the visitors sign in book upon their arrival to the site.

Preparing the Tintinara Area School and Preschool for a Bushfire

An Emergency Response Team (ERT) has been established and members instructed on their roles and responsibilities. The members are:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Fire Warden
- Health and Safety Representative (HSR)
- Library Manager
- Front Office Staff.

Their roles and responsibilities are detailed throughout the BAP.

A Bushfire Action Plan has been developed.

It will be reviewed every year by the staff and any changes will be presented to the Governing Council for endorsement at the final meeting in term three.

The HSR will ensure that emergency bushfire drills are carried out by students and staff during the first two weeks of term one and four each year. The Principal will arrange for the students and staff of the CPC to participate in these drills and to become familiar with the Safer Refuge. Particular attention will be paid to ensure practice of safe movement to the Safe Refuge area.

All changes and updates to this Bushfire Action Plan will be highlighted on the school's website.

All members of staff have been allocated roles and responsibilities at the various stages of the Bushfire Action Plan.

All members of the ERT are instructed in the operation of grounds irrigation systems during the first two weeks of term one and four of each year.

Front Office staff will monitor local ABC radio and the CFS Website for CFS Bushfire Information and Warning Messages on days of bushfire danger and pass on relevant messages to the Principal/Delegate, Classroom Teachers and Library staff.

All growth within 10 metres of the buildings is to be regularly maintained by the Groundsperson. Tall trees within 20 metres of buildings are required to have been trimmed of branches up to a height of 2 metres. The Groundsperson and the Principal will inspect the site during term three of each school year. Maintenance will be carried out by the Groundsperson or through the site Facilities Manager as appropriate.

Overhanging tree branches are required to be trimmed to a distance of 2 metres from building rooflines. The Groundsperson will regularly inspect the site throughout the school year. A request will be made to the site Facilities Manager to remove any high level re-growth.

The eaves and open air vents on all timber transportable buildings, the open eaves of the old stone building (previously covered by timber slats and wire netting) and the cavities and openings in the facades and roofs of the admin building are to be kept sealed. The site Facilities Manager will be requested to carry out an annual inspection to ensure the integrity of the buildings is maintained. All slatted air vents on all buildings are to have metal fly wire attached to the outside of them the stop embers from entering the roof space.

The gutters and roof valleys of buildings under or near to over hanging trees are to be regularly cleaned and free of vegetation. The Groundsperson is to tend to lower level guttering each month with higher gutters and roof gullies to be included in the site Regular Maintenance Plan. These are to be cleaned every three months or as required.

Timber and paintwork on all buildings is to be well maintained. The site Facilities Maintenance Plan provides information about future maintenance. Emergency maintenance is referred to the Site Facilities Manager as required.

A Safe Refuge Kit of 'Emergency Supplies' has been assembled in a single container and is stored in the Admin Office. It will be taken to the Safe Refuge by the Front Office staff at times detailed in the BAP.

The kit will contain:

- a copy of the BAP with staff roles and responsibilities
- student contact information
- important telephone numbers
- street directory
- battery powered radio
- spare batteries
- torch
- lanterns
- first aid kit
- staff/student medications
- school mobile phone
- blankets
- towels
- duct tape
- plastic sheeting, etc.

The kit is to be checked at the start of each bushfire season by the Administrative Officer to ensure the contents are fresh and operational.

In the event of an emergency, Front Office Staff would take student rolls, Attendance records and Staff/Visitor Registers to the Safe Refuge

The Safe Refuge

The Tintinara War Memorial Hall is the nominated bush fire Safe Refuge for use by Tintinara Area School and Presechool students and staff.

Tintinara Area School has been assessed as being in an area of "Moderate" fire danger.

Students and staff practice using the Safe Refuge and moving to it from a number of areas around the site during emergency bushfire drills carried out during the first two weeks of terms one and four of each school year. The Principal determines the timing of the drills after consultation with staff.

It is likely that other members of the Tintinara community will shelter in the site Safe Refuge during a bushfire. To ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of all students', classes will sit on the floor with their teacher at the carpeted northern hall. Community members will be able to use the main auditorium.

A cupboard labeled 'Safe Refuge' has been identified in the Hall. Essential items for use during a bushfire emergency have been placed in it, including a fully stocked first aid kit. This will be checked and restocked if necessary by the First Aid Officer at the start of each bushfire season.

Student and staff medications are easily assembled and transported to the Safe Refuge by the Front Office staff.

Student rolls and staff/visitor registers are readily available. Front Office staff will accurately record:

- those present when the move to the Safe Refuge takes place
- those who have left the site before the move
- those who leave the site after the Bushfire emergency has passed.

Safe Refuge TRIGGERS

In order to ensure a safe and orderly operation, a decision to move all persons into the site Safe Refuge will be made when **any** of the following agreed '**triggers**' are reached:

- Tintinara residents are advised to implement their bushfire action plans.
- CFS information and warning messages broadcast on the local ABC radio or on the CFS website indicate a fire is moving towards Tintinara
- the local Emergency Services advise that a bushfire is likely to impact on the site

- there is a confirmed sighting of uncontrolled fire in the vicinity of the school.

Total Fire Ban Day

The Principal/Delegate will inform staff via a note on the notice board in the staff room that a day of Total Fire Ban has been declared. Teaching staff are to inform students during the morning home group session.

Laminated A3 "Total Fire Ban" signs will be kept in the front office and library and will be placed in visible locations by office/library staff by 8:30am.

During the first lesson on a total fire ban day, home group teachers will remind students of the site Evacuation Procedures and drills referring to the Emergency Evacuation signs in all classrooms.

Students will also be reminded of the procedures to be followed if a school bus is overtaken by a bushfire.

Office staff will monitor ABC radio or the CFS Website for CFS Information and Warning messages.

All student excursions away from the site will be cancelled for the day and rescheduled by the teacher, unless otherwise informed by the Principal or delegate.

Staff members on yard duty will monitor weather conditions while students are on breaks or outside and report any concerns to the Principal/Delegate.

School Buses and private vehicles will be parked on the road frontage on Wendt Terrace.

The Front Office staff will be prepared with a container for the emergency supplies and student and staff medication lists ready to transport to the Safe Refuge.

The Groundsperson is to check levels in the water storage tanks for fire fighting and top up from the town water supply if necessary.

The Groundsperson is to check that the grounds irrigation systems are operating correctly and hoses are attached.

Front Office staff are to ensure mobile phones are working correctly and the batteries are fully charged.

Fire Reported in Local District

When a bushfire has been reported in the local district the Principal/Delegate will visit all classes and inform students and staff of its location.

The members of the site Emergency Response Team will be called together to put into place the pre-determined bushfire emergency procedures.

The Principal/Delegate will maintain a visual check of the surrounding area.

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The Front Office staff will carefully monitor ABC Radio or the CFS Website for CFS Information and Warning Messages and provide the ERT with updates concerning the latest location of the bushfire front and any impact it may have on the site.

The site telephone system operates on back up power when the electricity supply is cut. Phone calls may also be transferred to mobile phones.

The Principal/Delegate will advise the DECD Education Director that a bushfire has been reported in the local district.

The Principal/Delegate will liaise with local CFS Brigade to obtain the latest information and advice about likely effect of the bushfire on the site.

The Front Office staff will prepare the Emergency Supplies kit for transport to the Safe Refuge.

The Principal/Delegate will cancel all on site outdoor activities for students.

The Front Office staff will identify and list all students and staff who live in the area reported to be affected by the bushfire.

All classroom teachers will send parents to Front Office where staff will record names of any students who may be collected from the site during the day.

The Principal/Delegate will assess if it is safe for students to take outside recess and lunch breaks and notify all classes of the decision.

The Principal/Delegate will assess if it is safe to release students from the site at normal dismissal time. If specific school bus routes or local roads are impacted upon or threatened by the bush fire the Principal/Delegate will make arrangements to supervise the affected students until Emergency Services report that the situation is safe to release them from the site.

The Groundsperson will:

- prepare and test grounds irrigation systems
- turn on sprinklers and irrigation systems hourly to dampen surrounds
- turn off all external gas cylinders.

Front Office staff will back up all site computer records.

The Principal/Delegate will open and prepare the Safe Refuge (Town Hall).

All class teachers will encourage students to top up personal water bottles during the day so that they have adequate drinking water should a move to the Safe Refuge become necessary.

All class teachers will encourage students to assemble personal belongings (books, pencils, games, clothing, bags, etc) and keep them close by should a move to the Safe Refuge become necessary.

All staff undertake their assigned roles and responsibilities.

The Front Office staff will alert visitors and volunteers of the situation during the registration process and advise them of action to take should a move to the Safe Refuge become necessary.

The Principal/Delegate will liaise with SAPOL, school bus operators and school bus drivers to determine any likely impact on the reported bushfire on school bus routes.

School buses will not leave site unless a clear directive is given to the Principal by SAPOL or CFS Incident Management indicating bus routes are safe to travel.

If a bushfire prevents school buses leaving the site or students from boarding public buses the Principal/Delegate and teachers will supervise students remaining on site (or at the Safe Refuge) until they are collected by parents.

Fire in Immediate Vicinity or Impacting on Site

The 'triggers' for a move to the Safe Refuge have been previously detailed. All staff, students, visitors and parents are aware and prepared for the move that will take place when the 'triggers' are reached.

When a 'trigger' is reached, all staff will be verbally advised by the Principal/ Support Staff.

All students, staff and visitors will move to the Safe Refuge on being informed personally by the Principal/Delegate.

All staff will assist students to move to, and assemble in, the Safe Refuge. Students will sit in their classes.

The Groundsperson will turn on the grounds irrigations systems after determining that the task can be undertaken without placing themselves in undue danger.

Front Office staff will notify parents via the text message from the school mobile phone that students are moving into the Safe Refuge.

All teaching staff are asked to take the Fire Extinguishers with them from their classrooms to the Safe Refuge (if safe to do so). The Fire Extinguishers are to be placed on the floor inside the doorway on arrival.

Staff will close all doors and windows and turn off lights and air conditioners as classrooms are vacated provided it is safe to do so.

The Principal/Delegate will turn off all air conditioners in the Safe Refuge as the bushfire approaches.

The Principal/Delegate will ensure all site personnel are accounted for and in the Safe Refuge:

- classroom teachers will do a roll call of students in their care
- front office staff will monitor visitors and volunteers.

Staff will ensure that local community members and school visitors are accommodated appropriately in the main auditorium of the Safe Refuge.

The Emergency Response Team members will institute search procedures for missing persons if needed.

The Principal/Delegate will advise the Education Director of the move to the Safe Refuge and provide information about:

- the 'trigger' that has been reached and likely impact on the site shelter
- the number of site students, staff and registered visitors taking shelter
- the number of community members present
- Emergency Services assistance immediately available.

The Emergency Response Team members will liaise with CFS units and other Emergency Services on site.

All persons sheltering in the Safe Refuge will prepare for arrival and passage of the fire front. The Emergency Response Team will:

- ensure all persons are located away from doors and walls and unnecessary movement is limited
- provide regular updates at an appropriate level to students and adults
- describe the situation that can be safely observed outside the building to all persons in the Safe Refuge
- assist all students and adults to remain calm
- outline possible plans of action after the front has passed with the students.

The Emergency Response Team members will check for and attempt to extinguish spot fires inside or impacting on the Safe Refuge as necessary:

- it is not expected that they will undertake major fire fighting activities
- they are not expected to put themselves in any dangerous situations.

All staff will undertake their assigned roles and responsibilities.

Recovery after the Fire Front has Passed

The Principal/Delegate and Staff will ensure no one leaves the Safe Refuge until the situation outside has been assessed as safe by the members of the Emergency Response Team or members of the Emergency Services.

The Emergency Response Team members will determine if there is a need to evacuate the Safe Refuge unless otherwise directed by SAPOL and/or the CFS. In consultation with

SAPOL and/or the CFS, the Emergency Response Team members will determine an alternative safe location if required.

The Emergency Response Team members will make an assessment of the need for, and if necessary, begin preparations to care for students for an extended period of time.

Nominated staff members will remain on duty until all students are collected from the site by their parents.

Drinking water and blankets are available to meet the immediate needs of students waiting to be collected by their parents.

The First Aid officer will check for and treat any injuries.

The Emergency Response Team members will check the building for damage and burning embers.

Staff will extinguish small fires in or near the Safe Refuge if safe to do so.

The Principal/Delegate will liaise with the Emergency Services on site as soon as possible.

The Principal/Delegate will advise the Regional Office of the current situation as soon as the position becomes clear and it is safe to do so.

The Principal/Delegate will refer media enquiries to the Regional Director.

All staff members will begin to reunite families at a safe location when the situation has been declared safe and vehicles can safely access the site. The Front Office staff will record the names of students and the person collecting them as they leave the site. Students will only be released to Parents, or where express permission can be obtained from a parent at the time.

The Principal/Delegate will seek support for students and staff from counsellors and social workers when appropriate.

The Principal/Delegate, Emergency Response Team, staff and students (where appropriate) will undertake a debrief of the bushfire emergency situation and the procedures undertaken at an appropriate time shortly after the incident.

The Emergency Response Team will review the effectiveness of staff instruction undertaken before the bushfire emergency in light of the experience in order to ensure that lessons learnt are captured for future benefit.

The Principal/Delegate will arrange to have fire fighting systems checked and readied for use again.

The Front Office staff will replenish the Emergency Supplies package.

The Principal/Delegate will arrange to have the appropriate authorities assess the safety of site buildings once the area is declared safe.

The Principal will complete the relevant report available from www.crisis.sa.edu.au

All staff will undertake their assigned roles and responsibilities.

School Buses

Bus actions on days of CATASTROPHIC/CODE RED Fire Danger Rating

Tintinara Area School is situated in the Fire-Ban district of the “UPPER-SOUTH EAST”.

On days that there is a report of a **CATASTROPHIC/CODE RED** Fire Danger Rating for the Upper South East district **all School Bus runs for that day** will be **CANCELLED**. Bus drivers and school families should have their own Bush Fire Action plans and may need to implement these on such days. At their own discretion, parents and carers may transport their child/children to and from school, if they believe it is safe to do so.

Bus drivers are asked to listen in to ABC radio and monitor the CFS Website for weather and bushfire information updates. If the Upper-South East district has a rating of Catastrophic (Code Red) for any particular day, bus drivers are to cancel their run for the whole day.

Bus Action Checklist

The actions on this Checklist are to be implemented by all bus drivers

1. Where it is known that a bush fire is likely to threaten part of a route, bus drivers, under no circumstances, should depart the school before obtaining clearance from the Principal/Delegate.
2. Where an unexpected bush fire threatens a route and drivers approach obvious signs of the fire, no attempt should be made to drive along roadways obscured by smoke or flame unless a clear direction to do so is given by a Fire Control Officer or Police Officer. In the event that no direction is received the driver should reverse the route, return to a safe refuge and notify, as soon as possible, the local emergency service by ringing 000.
3. In the event that homes to which children are being delivered by school bus are likely to be at risk by nearby fire, drivers must ensure that children can be delivered into the hands of parents BEFORE allowing them to off-load. If parents are not at the bus stop, the students must not be off-loaded but kept on the bus and taken to a Safe Refuge (the school).
4. School office staff are to notify parents **urgently** of the safety and whereabouts of the children.

Should the Fire Front hit the bus

- (a) Stop the bus on bare ground or the roadway in an area as clear as possible of undergrowth/vegetation.
- (b) Ignition off, handbrake on, vehicle in gear, and headlights and hazard warning lights on.
- (c) Close windows and vents and block draughts.

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- (d) Children to lie on floor.
 - (e) Cover with approved protective materials if available.
 - (f) Once fire front has passed, assess bus exits (ordinary or emergency).
 - (g) Evacuate bus and locate the students in a previously burnt area.
 - (h) Check bus before allowing children to re-enter.
 - (i) Driver to assess the situation and proceed accordingly.
 - (j) Driver to make contact with the school as soon as possible to keep school informed of their actions.
5. (a) All drivers to have mobile phones switched on at all times.
- (b) School bus UHF radio sets to be switched on at all times (except under the conditions as per point 4 part (b) should the Fire Front hit the bus). The school band is channel 6 (repeater band). Remain on that channel unless advised by an Emergency Services officer or delegate.