



Australian  
Industry and  
Skills Committee

# BUSHFIRE PROTECTION ASSESSMENT

Case for Change

Name of allocated IRC(s): Property Services

Name of the SSO: Artibus Innovation

December 2021

## 1. Administrative information

For a list of the products proposed to be reviewed as part of this project, please see **Attachment A**.

Name of IRC(s):	Property Services
Name of SSO:	Artibus Innovation

### 1.1 Name and code of Training Package(s) examined to determine change is required

Six training packages were examined to confirm if existing training products meet the workforce skills gap under investigation. The training packages were: CPC Construction, Plumbing and Services; CPP Property Services, FWP Forest and Wood Products; LGA Local Government and PUA Public Safety. More information is available in Section 2.3 and at Attachment C.

## 2. The Case for Change

For information on the job roles to be supported through the proposed qualifications updates, enrolments data, completion rates, and the number of RTOs delivering these qualifications please see **Attachment B**.

### 2.1 Rationale for change

It is proposed to develop nationally available vocational training products comprising a Diploma of Bushfire Protection Assessment and a skill set, Bushfire Attack Level Assessor. The rationale and background for this proposal is outlined below.

Bushfire has been part of the Australian natural environment for thousands of years, but the nature of bushfire in Australia has altered in recent times. Due to climate change, bushfire conditions are now far more dangerous than in the past bringing increased risk to people and property. Scientists expect extreme fire weather will continue to become more frequent and severe.<sup>1</sup>

The Victorian bushfires of Black Saturday, 7 February 2009 were catastrophic. One hundred and seventy three people died, more than 2,000 homes were destroyed, and there was widespread devastation of the natural environment. A Royal Commission was established to make recommendations on preparation and planning for further fire threats and risks, land-use planning, and management, fireproofing of structures, emergency response, communication, training, infrastructure and overall resourcing.<sup>2</sup>

Recommendation 55 of the *2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, final report, July 2010*,<sup>3</sup> was that “The State initiate the development of education and training options to improve understanding of bushfire risk management in the building and planning regimes ...

The *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience* was endorsed by COAG in 2011. In 2012, a *Roadmap for Enhancing Disaster Resilience in the Built Environment* (the Roadmap) was finalised by the Land Use Planning and Building Codes Taskforce, a working group of the National Emergency Management Committee.

The Roadmap was developed as a “key deliverable” of the Implementation Plan for the *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience*. The Roadmap proposed a greater focus on mitigation through reform of land use planning and building regulation.<sup>4</sup>

The Black Summer bushfires of 2019-20 burned from July 2019 to March 2020 destroying 3,094 houses and burning more than 24 million hectares of land in areas of Qld, NSW, ACT, Victoria, Tasmania, SA, WA, and NT. The devastation and areas burned were greater than the Black Saturday 2009 and Ash Wednesday 1983 fires combined.<sup>5</sup>

The *Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, Commonwealth of Australia, 2020* identified that “the likelihood of increases in the severity and frequency of natural hazards should be taken into account in land-use planning and building decisions”.<sup>6</sup>

In March 2020, COAG endorsed the *National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework*<sup>7</sup>. The framework notes that: “To improve resilience in the built environment, further attention is needed to remove disincentives and strengthen planning and development practices while ensuring the sustainable needs of Australia’s growing population are met. Earlier work to implement the Enhancing Disaster Resilience in the Built Environment Roadmap should be leveraged to help deliver this.”

The *Final Report of the NSW Bushfire Inquiry, July 2020*<sup>8</sup>, Recommendation 28, page xii, highlighted the need for a 'model framework and statutory basis for the establishment of an enforcement, compliance and education program which adopts a risk-based approach to routine inspection of local bush fire prone developments to ensure that every local development on bush fire prone land is prepared for future bush fire seasons in accordance with bush fire protection standards of the day' and 'local government [resourcing] to enable effective audit, enforcement and compliance powers in respect of local developments and assets on bush fire land'.

In one way or another, in all the government inquiries and reviews cited above, better risk assessment for land-use planning and building in fire prone areas was a consistent issue raised.

An instrument that supports fire risk assessment for building is the *Australian Standard 3959 Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas* (AS3959). It was updated in 2009 to include different bushfire intensity levels. These are categorised as Bushfire Attack Levels (BALs) and indicate the severity of a building's potential exposure to ember attack, radiant heat, and direct flame contact during a bushfire, and are based on the region, vegetation type around property, distance of home from vegetation and slope of property. There are six levels: BAL Flame Zone (FZ), BAL 40, BAL 29, BAL 19, BAL 12.5, and BAL Low.

In May 2010 the AS3959 was adopted as part of the Building Code of Australia. The 2018 release of AS3959 was updated to require all proposed buildings in bushfire areas undergo a BAL Assessment to establish the threat of bushfire and determine compliant construction methods and materials.

However, as highlighted in the Victorian Auditor-General's Office report, *Reducing Bushfire Risks, October 2020*<sup>9</sup>, 'The regulatory framework does not require qualified or accredited consultants to perform these assessments. The CFA website refers landowners to the Fire Protection Association Australia's website for a list of accredited consultants. However, it [CFA] advised us that there is a shortage of suitably qualified specialists in local and state government agencies who deal with bushfire risks to private land.

CFA also estimates that the cost of a qualified assessment ranges from \$1500 for a standard assessment to \$5000 for a more complex one. As qualified consultants are more expensive and hard to come by councils and CFA report that they often receive poor-quality assessments completed by unqualified assessors.'

There are no vocational education and training products that fully address the specialist skills and knowledge required to plan and build bushfire resilient dwellings and to undertake inspections of existing structures to assess the building and surrounding landscapes for bushfire vulnerabilities and advise on mitigation measures.

The proposal to develop a Diploma of Bushfire Protection Assessment would include approximately 12 new units and a skill set, Bushfire Attack Level Assessor. The qualification would help alleviate the shortage of suitably trained practitioners, particularly in rural and regional areas, to undertake bushfire assessments for planning and building applications and improve land-use planning and building outcomes in bushfire prone areas. This technical capacity would contribute to improving community resilience, help reduce the risk of firefighting injuries, reduce insurance payouts following major bushfires and help make more widely known research advancements in fire science as applied to building and construction.

A Diploma of Bushfire Protection Assessment would provide a much needed nationally consistent, vocational training pathway into the field for practitioners wanting to specialise in bushfire consultancy and for those working in related areas wanting to upskill and improve their knowledge of bushfire behaviour and the planning and building strategies used to mitigate bushfire impacts on property, such as:

- local government workers in land use planning and building approvals
- builders
- building designers
- building surveyors/certifiers
- landscape gardeners
- conservation and land management officers.

Despite the issue of better risk assessment for land-use planning and building in fire prone areas being raised in every Bushfire inquiry since 2009, there is still a skills gap which could be addressed by VET training products.

Not developing training products in bushfire protection assessment has serious implications, including:

- risk of adverse findings against bushfire practitioners or government agencies that approve inappropriate development at a coroner's or government inquiry
- a continuing shortage of suitably qualified BAL practitioners which may contribute to undermining customer confidence with the bushfire protection industry
- lost opportunity for people in related roles to be upskilled resulting in perpetuation of problems in land use planning and building, for example:
  - non-compliant buildings -BAL rating is incorrectly certified and building not constructed, altered, or renovated in accordance with the NCC
  - planners unable to tell if the vegetation assessment, BAL rating and other aspects of a bushfire management plan is correct prior to approving a planning application
- the lack of a nationally recognised VET qualification limits the potential of a nationally consistent regulatory/training response for personnel to undertake bushfire assessments for land use planning or annual compliance checks.

<sup>1</sup>['This is Not Normal': climate change and escalating bushfire risk, Climate Council Briefing paper, 12 November 2019](#) downloaded 21.10.2021

<sup>2</sup>[National Strategy for Disaster Resilience](#), Commonwealth of Australia 2011, downloaded 25.10.2021

<sup>3</sup>[2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, final report, July 2010](#), downloaded 26.10.2021

<sup>4</sup>[Counsel Assisting Opening – Land Use Planning and the Built Environment 8 July 2020](#), downloaded 26.10.2021

<sup>5</sup>[2019-20 Australian bushfires – frequently asked questions: a quick guide](#), Commonwealth of Australia, downloaded 26 October 2021

<sup>6</sup>[Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, Commonwealth of Australia, 2020](#), downloaded 22.10.2021

<sup>7</sup>[National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework, page 14](#), downloaded 26.10.2021

<sup>8</sup>[Final report of the NSW Bushfire Inquiry July 2020](#), downloaded 26.10.2021

<sup>9</sup>[Victorian Auditor-General's Office VAGO – Reducing Bushfire Risks, October 2020](#), downloaded 26.10.2021

## 2.2 Evidence for change

The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimated that a total of 64,598 dwelling units, comprising new private sector home or new private sector other residential buildings, commenced during the 2021 June quarter. For this quarter, the seasonally adjusted estimate of the value of this new residential building work fell - 0.2% to \$30.3 billion. <sup>h</sup>

If the Australian Building Codes Board estimate of 10% of housing activity occurs within a bushfire prone area is currently accurate, <sup>i</sup> then applying the ABS construction statistics would indicate that there were 6,460 dwelling units being commenced during the 2021 June quarter within bushfire prone areas, valued at \$3.03 billion.

Recent consultation with municipalities from around Australia identified a shared concern that there are insufficient practitioners with the skills and knowledge to conduct BAL assessments and assess land use, development and building construction proposals in bushfire prone areas and to recommend mitigation and bushfire protection strategies.

The industry peak body, the Fire Protection Association of Australia (FPAA), has long advocated for trained practitioners with specialist bushfire knowledge and skills relevant to planning and development on land subject to bushfire impact. With no formal vocational education and training products available to address the skills gap the FPAA introduced its own Bushfire Planning and Design (BPAD) Accreditation Scheme for practitioners who offer bushfire assessment, planning, design, and advice services. It was adopted first in NSW in 2006 and then expanded to Victoria in 2012 and WA in 2015.

There are three levels in the BPAD Accreditation Scheme, underpinned by educational requirements. The introductory BPAD Level 1 requires successful completion of FPAA's non-accredited five day BAL Assessor Short Course.

To progress post-graduate qualifications are required:

BPAD Level 2 requires either a *Graduate Certificate in Bushfire Planning and Management* (University of Melbourne, ‘UM’) or a *Graduate Certificate in Bushfire Protection* (University of Western Sydney, ‘UWS’).

BPAD Level 3 requires either a *Graduate Diploma in Bushfire Planning and Management* or a *Graduate Diploma in Bushfire Protection*.

The study demand and cost to attain a post graduate university qualification for accreditation at Levels 2 and 3 is a barrier for many. (For example, the Graduate Certificates on offer for 2022 by UM and WSU have fees of \$16,848 and \$24,660 respectively.)

Figures obtained from the [FPAA accredited practitioner register](#), 28 October 2021 listed 51 BAL Assessors, 88 Level 2 and 57 Level 3 Bushfire Planning Practitioners - a total of 196 Australia wide.

BPAD Level	QLD	NSW	VIC	WA
<b>Level 1 – Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) Assessor</b> A BAL practitioner determines bushfire attack levels as specified in the Australian Standard 3959 Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas and incorporated into the National Construction Code. BAL assessors provide advice on appropriate building design and construction requirements.			3	48
<b>Level 2 – Bushfire Planning Practitioner</b> In addition to the activities of Level 1, a bushfire planning practitioner provides advice on the building design requirements and planning and building applications in accordance with bushfire regulations.		41	13	34
<b>Level 3 – Bushfire Planning Practitioner</b> In addition to the activities of a Levels 1 and 2, a bushfire planning practitioner provides advice on alternative design solutions and planning and building applications in accordance with bushfire regulations.	2	38	5	12

The number of FPAA accredited bushfire practitioners is insufficient to meet growing demand for their expertise. As well as bushfire assessments at the planning and building stage, there are increasing calls for local government and State government agencies to undertake more compliance checks on development that has bushfire construction standards or land-use planning mitigation measures applied ([Final Report of the NSW Bushfire Inquiry 2020](#),<sup>8</sup> *ibid* recommendation 28). If the states and territories were to introduce the requirement for mandatory disclosure of bushfire risks for property sales, it would also add to the demand.

To increase the numbers of practitioners with the specialised skills and knowledge to meet this demand, it is proposed to develop nationally available vocational training products comprising a Diploma of Bushfire Protection Assessment and a skill set equivalent to BPAD Level 1. The Diploma would become a recognised qualification for BPAD Level 2 and would provide a valuable pathway for BAL Assessors to progress their skills and knowledge.

### 2.3 Consideration of existing products

Existing training products have been considered to determine if there is a duplication of outcomes in relation to the proposed *Diploma of Bushfire Protection Assessment* and to identify if existing units might be suitable for inclusion. The training packages and associate qualifications and units of competency are detailed at Attachment C.

The training products examined included 25 units across 11 qualifications and six training packages. Of the 25 units 16 will be further considered for their suitability to include in the Diploma of Fire Protection.

### 2.4 Approach to streamlining and rationalisation of the training products being reviewed

Consideration of the streamlining and rationalisation of training products will be considered throughout the project. Possible duplication was investigated in preparing the Case for Change. The National Register of VET was interrogated for any existing qualification that addressed the vocational outcome of bushfire consultant. None was found.

Existing units of competency will be included where relevant.

The training products for bushfire protection will be developed to make them applicable and relevant across sectors.

### 3. Stakeholder consultation

#### 3.1 Stakeholder consultation undertaken in the development of Case for Change

*For a full list of industry-specific stakeholders that actively participated in the stakeholder consultation process undertaken to develop the Case for Change, please see Attachment C.*

Early phases of consultation were undertaken in 2020. It was a difficult time for many, many stakeholders who were dealing with the impacts of the Black Summer Fires and then COVID-19.

The Fire Protection Association of Australia (FPAA) was a driver behind the Case for Change. As outlined on their [website](#), FPAA is the national peak body for fire safety, providing information, services and education to the fire protection industry and the community. FPAA supports and represents accredited and competent practitioners working across all disciplines of the fire protection, building and construction industry. The Association is supported by approximately 1700 members consisting of leading companies, organisations, and individuals around Australia, with a growing reach of up to 30,000 people at all levels of the industry.

All local government areas (LGAs) in Australia were emailed and invited to comment on the proposal for a vocational training product in bushfire protection assessment. There are 537 councils Australia-wide. Of these, around 55% are regional, rural, or remote councils. Councils which formally expressed support are listed below.

Peak bodies, including the National Recovery and Resilience Agency – established in response to the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, the Building Designers Association of Australia, the Australian Institute of Architects, Master Builders Australia, and the Australian Building Codes Board were contacted by email and phone and invited to participate. An on-line meeting, as well as numerous telephone and email conversations, was held with the Australian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities.

Artibus attended the pre-conference program for bushfire planners and designers and the two day *Bushfire Building Conference, October 2019*. This is an annual event organised by the Blue Mountains Economic Enterprise in partnership with the NSW Rural Fire Service. It provides a forum for building industry professionals, researchers, and planners to learn from bushfire building experts in the field. It is an excellent opportunity to network, learn about the latest research, regulations, and technologies and get feedback on the proposal to develop a VET qualification in Bushfire Protection.

Stakeholders were targeted for consultation based on their likely interest in undertaking the proposed training or employing the services of someone who has.

#### 3.2 Evidence of Industry Support

*For a list of the issues raised by stakeholders during consultation and the IRC's response to these, please see Attachment D.*

Stakeholders involved in the case for change consultation process contributed to the scoping of the technical skills and knowledge required for assessment of bushfire risk and the identification and development of bushfire protection measures applicable to land use planning and construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas. The intent and coverage of new units required are indicated by the titles listed in Attachment A.

Industry representatives have offered their ongoing involvement in refining the development of the training products.

Business owners who undertake bushfire consultancy voiced strong support of a bushfire protection assessment qualification and indicated they would use it if one was available for the formal training and upskilling of employees.

Letters in support of the proposed Diploma of Bushfire Protection Assessment were provided by five stakeholders:

- National Recovery and Resilience Agency - The Agency combines expertise in natural disaster response, recovery, and resilience, working closely with affected communities and all levels of government and industry to reduce risk and lessen the impacts of future shocks. The Agency supports the proposed Diploma of Bushfire Protection Assessment and has recommended stakeholders for consultation during development of the Case for Endorsement.
- Building Designers Association of Australia (BDAA) is the leading national not-for-profit peak body representing the building design community – together creating a better built environment. BDAA offers its full support for the introduction of training package products to address known gap in the market for suitably qualified bushfire protection assessors.
- Western Australian Planning Commission has responsibility for responding to the strategic direction of government on urban rural and regional land-use planning and land development matters throughout WA. The Commission ‘supports the development of VET training in bushfire protection as the tertiary qualifications have limited relevance to the WA land use planning content.’
- Master Builders Australia (MBA) is the peak building and construction industry association representing over 33,000 businesses nationwide across all three sectors of the industry - residential, commercial, and civil construction. MBA is supportive and considers that the case for change is timely in light of recent government commissions.
- Western Australian Bushfire Accreditation Steering Committee offers its support of the national qualification proposed to support future planning and building decisions in bushfire prone areas.

Emails of support were submitted by nine local government areas:

- Bogan Shire, Western NSW
- Campaspe Shire, regional Victoria – Bendigo, Shepparton, Echuca
- City of Albany, Southern tip, WA
- Gunnedah Shire, Northwest Slopes, NSW
- Katherine Town Council, NT
- Mount Alexandra Shire, Regional Victoria, Castlemaine
- Shire of Chapman Valley, Midwest Region, Geraldton WA
- Surf Coast Shire, Victoria
- West Tamar Council, Northern Tasmania.

### 3.3 Proposed stakeholder consultation strategy for project

*Note: For a full list of industry-specific stakeholders who are planned to be contacted to participate in the stakeholder consultation process undertaken for this project, please see **Attachment E**.*

- The Property Services IRC will nominate a member to be the project chair for the development of the proposed Diploma of Bushfire Protection Assessment.
- The Artibus Innovation project manager, in consultation with the IRC project chair, will develop a project governance plan and stakeholder communication and engagement plan.
- Information about the project will be disseminated using the Artibus newsletter, social media, and website; industry channels including the FPAA, and other related industry associations (e.g., MBA, BDAA and

the Australian Local Government Association) industry training advisory bodies in each state and territory to assist in identifying rural and regional stakeholders.

- Stakeholder consultation activities will include:
  - An information launch of the project to explain how stakeholders can contribute to the development of the proposed training products.
  - A Consultation Webinar at the first draft – for stakeholders to provide direct feedback on the training product development.
  - In addition to the consultation webinar feedback will be invited via an online tool available on the Artibus website, written submissions, online meetings convened as necessary and, where possible, face to face meetings.
- Validation stage of the project, webinar to inform stakeholders of proposed training products and gather final feedback.

## 4. Licencing or regulatory linkages

Currently there are no licensing or regulatory linkages. Bushfire protection assessment in relation to land use planning and building is not a licensed occupation.

As mentioned in Section 2.2, there is a Bushfire Design and Planning accreditation scheme administered by the Fire Protection Association of Australia, which has been adopted in NSW, Victoria, and WA.

Tasmania has a scheme for Bushfire Hazard Practitioners who are accredited by the Chief Officer of the Tasmania Fire Service. They are private consultants and not employed by the Tasmania Fire Service.

It is envisaged that the proposed Diploma of Bushfire Protection Assessment would be recognised as an educational requirement for the industry accreditation schemes.

## 5. Project implementation

### 5.1 Prioritisation category

It is proposed that this product development be accelerated. The suggested approach is to have the training product available in as short a time frame as possible and provide a faster and more flexible pathway to becoming a bushfire planning and design consultant and/or a bushfire assessment consultant.

The accelerated approach is also necessary to accommodate the VET Reform process.

### 5.2 Project milestones

- Key project milestones include:
  - *AISC project approval – December 2021*
  - *DESE Activity Order issued – January 2022*
  - *Draft 1 consultation – April 2022*
  - *Stakeholder validation – May 2022*
  - *Quality Assurance – June 2022*
  - *Final consultation with states and territories – July 2022*
- *Case for Endorsement submitted for approval – September 2022.*

### 5.3 Delivery or implementation issues

- No implementation issues have been identified at this stage. The requirement, or not, for workplace training will be determined during the development of the competencies.

## 6. Implementing the Skills Minister’s Priority reforms for Training Packages (2015 and October 2020)

- The unit of competency Elements and Performance Criteria will be developed in consultation with industry and RTOs to ensure that current industry skills, knowledge and contemporary work practices are reflected. The articulation of assessment requirements in the Performance Evidence and Knowledge Evidence will reflect employer expectations of the skills and knowledge graduates would bring to the job.
- The stakeholder engagement strategy will include informing and involving potential end users of the training products all stages in the development of the new training products so that consumers will be well positioned to make informed course choices. The Companion Volume Implementation Guide will be used to provide additional information.
- The proposed qualification will include a range of electives to provide breadth and depth of choice supporting individuals to move between related occupations and industry sectors.
- The development of units of competency will consider their application in as broad a context as possible so that they might be used across industry sectors and thus improve the efficiency of the training system.
- A skill set is proposed to support worker employability, career progression or movement between related occupations.

This Case for Change was agreed to by the Property Services IRC

Name of Chair

Noel Hamey

Signature of Chair



Date

01 November 2021

## Attachment A: Training Package components to change

SSO: Artibus Innovation

Contact details: Wendy McLeod

Date submitted: 1 November 2021

It is proposed to develop one new qualification, one new skill set and approximately 13 new units of competency in relation to land use planning and bushfire protection.

Project number	Project Name	Qualification/ Unit / Skillset	Code	Title	Details of last review (endorsement date, nature of this update transition, review, establishment)	Change Required
TBC	Bushfire Protection	Diploma	CPP5XX22	Bushfire Protection Assessment	Establishment	New
		Skill Set	CPPSS0000X	Bushfire Attack Level Assessor		New
		Unit	CPPBAL5001	Research factors affecting bushfire behaviour		New
		Unit	CPPBAL5002	Interpret land use planning frameworks for development in bushfire prone areas.		New
		Unit	CPPBAL5003	Evaluate construction materials and methods for compliance with bushfire protection requirements		New
		Unit	CPPBAL5004	Evaluate building design measures to reduce the impact of bushfire on a building		New
		Unit	CPPBAL5005	Evaluate landscaping design measures for bushfire protection		New

Project number	Project Name	Qualification/ Unit / Skillset	Code	Title	Details of last review (endorsement date, nature of this update transition, review, establishment)	Change Required
		Unit	CPPBAL5006	Undertake a bushfire hazard site assessment		New
		Unit	CPPBAL5007	Prepare a BAL report, plan and diagram		New
		Unit	CPPBAL5008	Assess improvements to bushfire resilience for existing developments		New
		Unit	CPPBAL5009	Research measures in land use planning that support bushfire firefighting operations		New
		Unit	CPPBAL5010	Evaluate social and environmental factors impacting land use planning in bushfire prone areas		New
		Unit	CPPBAL5011	Develop bushfire plans and maps using GIS to support building and planning applications		New
		Unit	CPPBAL5012	Evaluate land use planning applications for bushfire safety		New

## Attachment B: Job role, enrolment information, the number of RTOs currently delivering these qualifications

Please set out the job roles to be supported through the updated qualifications,

The proposal is for new training products therefore there is no data for enrolments, or completion rates, or RTOs delivering these training products.

Job role	Qualification to be updated to support the job role	Enrolment data (for the past three years)	Completion rates (for the past three years)	Number of RTOs delivering (for the past three years)
<p>The proposed qualification is designed to provide building, planning and development professionals, working in local government and private practice, with the skills and knowledge to assess and advise on land use developments and the design and construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas.</p> <p>The qualification will be of value to planners, builders, building designers, building surveyors, landscape gardeners and conservation and land management officers and others working to improve bushfire resilience and safety.</p>	Diploma of Bushfire Protection Assessment	N/A	N/A	N/A
A BAL practitioner determines bushfire attack levels as specified in the <i>Australian Standard 3959 Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas</i> and incorporated into the National Construction Code. BAL assessors provide advice on appropriate building design and construction requirements.	Bushfire Attack Level Assessor Skill Set	N/A	N/A	N/A

## Attachment C: Consideration of existing training products

The training products in this table have been considered to determine if there is a duplication of outcomes in relation to the proposed *Diploma of Bushfire Protection* and to identify if existing units might be suitable for inclusion.

Training Package	Qualification	Unit	suitable
<b>AHC Agriculture, Horticulture and Conservation and Land Management</b>	AHC51120 Diploma of Conservation and Ecosystem Management	<a href="#">AHCFIR503</a> Plan and evaluate burning for fuel, ecological and cultural resource management	Not suitable. Emphasis is on planned burns.
		<a href="#">AHCFIR504</a> Manage wildfire hazard reduction programs	Not suitable. Job role includes managing wildfire hazard reduction programs through planning, advising, and monitoring the performance of operational personnel undertaking fire prevention activities.
	AHC42020 Certificate IV in Landscape	<a href="#">AHCLPW504</a> Assess land use applications for legislative compliance	Not suitable. Unit is about assessing formal applications for changes in land use (e.g., mining, forestry, residential) against legislative requirements, and making recommendations to ensure compliance. Considerations include impact on water bodies, flora and fauna, indigenous cultural sites). Emphasis is environmental impact.
	AHC31420 Certificate III in Conservation and Ecosystem Management	<a href="#">AHCPCM303</a> Identify plant specimens  <a href="#">AHCPCM306</a> Provide information on plants and their culture	Not suitable. Unit is very detailed and more applicable to a specialist horticulturalist/gardener that the broader context of bushfire protection.  Potentially suitable. Unit could be contextualised for bushfire resilient plantings. It addresses client issues or requirements, identifies the preferred solution, and provides information and solutions to clients.

<p><b>CPC Construction, Plumbing and Services</b></p>	<p>CPC3280 Certificate III in Fire Protection</p> <p>CPC50520 Diploma of Fire Systems Design</p>	<p><u>CPCPFS2021</u> Connect static storage tanks for fixed fire protection systems</p> <p><u>CPCCSV5009</u> Assess the impact of fire on building materials</p> <p><u>CPCSFS5001</u> Define scope and hazard level of fire systems design projects</p> <p><u>CPCSFS5002</u> Research and interpret detailed fire systems design project requirements</p> <p><u>CPCSFS5005</u> Research and evaluate fire system technologies and components</p>	<p>Aspects of this unit may be relevant. While qualification has similar title to qualification proposed, but not relevant. It reflects the trade qualified role of a fire sprinkler fitter installing, testing, maintaining, routine service and repairing a range of fire protection systems.</p> <p>Potentially suitable. It includes the research, analysis and reporting of testing conducted on a range of building materials and structures in differing circumstances to determine combustion, flammability, heat transfer, burning conditions, building material behaviour, fire loads of buildings and fire resistance.</p> <p>Potentially suitable. Unit specifies the skills and knowledge required to interpret briefs and specifications for fire systems design projects This unit of competency supports the role of fire system designers and design consultants who need to determine the nature and purpose of a fire systems design concept. The role may involve interaction with architects, builders, suppliers, clients, and relevant planning authorities and requires a sound understanding of applicable legislation, standards and codes, including the National Construction Code (NCC)</p> <p>Potentially suitable. Unit specifies the outcomes required to obtain and process design drawings and documentation required for the preparation of detailed fire systems designs and to make an initial assessment of how the fire systems are affected by other aspects of the project. The unit also covers researching detailed fire systems compliance</p>
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	<p>CPC40120 Certificate IV in Building and Construction</p>	<p><u>CPCBC4012</u> Read and interpret plans and specifications</p>	<p>requirements and regulatory processes and negotiating solutions to conflicts arising between the design brief and compliance or installation requirements.</p> <p>Potentially suitable. Unit specifies the outcomes required to research, evaluate, and select existing, new and incoming technologies and components for fire system detection and suppression systems. The unit also involves developing a broad understanding of the range of products available and their application, operation, performance, and interaction.</p> <p>Potentially suitable. Unit specifies the skills and knowledge required to read and interpret plans and specifications applicable to residential and commercial projects. It includes identifying site characteristics, features of the proposed building and details of the construction.</p>
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<b>CPP Property Services</b>	CPP40121 Certificate IV in Residential Drafting	<u>CPPBDN4102</u> Analyse building design drawings	Potentially suitable. Unit address read, interpret and analyse building design drawings for Class 1 and 10 buildings, as defined in the National Construction Code (NCC). It covers interpreting construction industry conventions for drawings and analysing drawings for different projects to identify design and technical features.
		<u>CPPBDN4106</u> Investigate materials for construction of Class 1 and 10 buildings	Potentially suitable. Unit includes assessment of materials used for structural elements, the building envelope and coatings and finishes. Required protection and fire resistance are included in KE
		<u>CPPBDN4107</u> Investigate construction methods for Class 1 and 10 buildings	Potentially suitable. Unit refers to construction in bushfire prone areas in the Performance Evidence.
	CPP50921 Diploma of Building Design	<u>CPPBDN5109</u> Recommend sustainability solutions for small scale building design projects.	Potentially suitable. While bushfire protection not explicitly mentioned the unit could be contextualised.
		<u>CPPBDN5110</u> Inspect and assess sites to inform the design process	Potentially suitable. While it does not explicitly include bushfire planning content it includes considerations such as physical characteristics, contours and local climate conditions of site.
	CPP41721 Certificate IV in Surveying and Spatial	<u>CPPSSI4025</u> Collect spatial data using GNSS	Potentially suitable. Unit covers skills to collect spatial data using global navigation satellite system (GNSS) equipment for surveying purposes, which could be contextualised for bushfire protections.
	<u>CPPSSI4035</u> Apply GIS software to spatial problems	Potentially suitable. Unit covers skills to use geographic information system (GIS) software applications to show spatial patterns and relationships for identified issues. It includes integrating various sources of spatial information	

			using spatial overlay techniques and analysis of data.
<b>FWP Forest and Wood Products Training Package</b>		FWPCOR3203 Evaluate fire potential and prevention.	Not suitable. Unit describes the outcomes required to continually monitor and assess the potential for fire during normal work activities. It applies to those working in a range of job roles across the forestry and forest products industry.
<b>LGA Local Government</b>	LGA50120 Diploma of Local Government  LGA50120 Diploma of Local Government – Elected Member	<u>LGAPLA001</u> Interpret and apply development planning, legislation, schemes and instruments.  <u>LGAPLA002</u> Perform minor development assessments  <u>LGAPLA003</u> Assess development applications and implement planning scheme	Potentially suitable. This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to interpret development planning requirements to determine compliance and provide advice.  Potentially suitable. This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required for development planning including planning and conducting site inspections and assessing minor development applications.  Not suitable. Unit applies to elected officers, councillors and mayors.
<b>PUA Public Safety</b>		<u>PUAFIR403</u> Assess building plans  <u>PUAEMR007</u> Develop emergency management plans  <u>PUAFIR518</u> Conduct and record a Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) assessment	Not suitable the unit has emphasis on firefighting activities, and has a pre-requisite, PUAFIR314 Utilise installed fire safety systems which is about fire suppression.  Aspects may be suitable. It is not specifically relevant to bushfire risk in the land use planning and building context.  Potentially suitable. It covers theoretical knowledge of fire, an understanding of regulatory

			frameworks, an ability to assess a location and consult with clients on the benefits of achieving fire resistance. It includes analysing the cause and effect of bushfire attack and correlating information about site conditions and determining the Bushfire Attack Level for a site.
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## Attachment D: List of stakeholders that actively participated in the consultation process of the Case for Change

Name of stakeholder	Title	Organisation	Organisation type	Jurisdiction
<b>Amanda Locatelli</b>	Manager Development	West Tamar Council	Council	Tas City
<b>Andrew Stark</b>	Deputy Chief Officer	Australian Fire and Emergency Service	Peak Body	National
<b>Blake O'Mullane</b>	Team Leader Building and Strategic Projects	Gunnedah Shire Council	Council	NSW Town
<b>Brent Savage</b>	Senior Policy Officer	Department of Planning Lands and Heritage	Government	WA
<b>Chris Wyborn</b>	National Manager Training and Bushfire Services	Fire Protection Association Australia	Peak Body	National
<b>Christiaan Van Dam</b>	Acting Assistant Director	National Recovery and Resilience Agency	Commonwealth Government	National
<b>Ian Bodill</b>	Chief Executive Officer	Katherine Town Council	Council	NT Town
<b>Ivan West</b>	Manager, Built Environment	Australian Fire and Emergency Service	Peak Body	National
<b>James Boyce</b>	Acting Director Development and Environmental Services	Bogan Shire Council	Council	NSW Town
<b>Jan Van Der Mescht</b>	Manager Planning and Building Services	City of Albany	Council	WA City

<b>Jarrold Manuel</b>	General Manager Infrastructure & Environment	District Council of Karoonda East Murray	Council	SA Town
<b>Jennifer Lawrence</b>	Senior Adviser Industry Policy	Master Builders Australia	Peak Body	National
<b>Kate Moore</b>	National Manager Education and Research	Australian Institute of Architects	Peak Body	National
<b>Katherine Nunn</b>	Principal Policy Officer	Department of Planning Lands and Heritage	Government	WA
<b>Lina Ramlee</b>	Environmental Officer	Native Vegetation Regulation	Government	WA
<b>Loretta Van Gasselt</b>	Chair	Western Australian Bushfire Accreditation Steering Committee	Government	WA
<b>Luke Ryan</b>	Emergency Management Coordinator	Mount Alexander Shire Council	Council	Vic Town
<b>Melissa Peppin</b>	Project Officer, Community Safety	Australian Fire and Emergency Service	Peak Body	National
<b>Peter Ashton</b>	Coordinator Community Emergency Management	Surf Coast Shire Council	Council	Vic Town
<b>Rob Whittle</b>	Coordinate Bushfire Management	Glenorchy City Council	Council	Tas City
<b>Sandra Lunardi</b>	Director Workforce Development	Australian Fire and Emergency Service	Peak Body	National
<b>Scarlett Goddard</b>	Project Officer	Australian Building Codes Board	Government	National
<b>Simon Lancaster</b>	Deputy Chief Executive Officer	Shire of Chapman Valley	Council	WA Town
<b>Suzanna Gorman</b>	Volunteer and Training Coordinator	Campaspe Shire Council	Council	Vic Town

## Attachment E: Issues Raised by Stakeholders during consultation on the development of the Case for Change

Stakeholder Type	Issues Raised	IRC's Response to Issues Raised
<p align="center"><b>Industry Reference Committee (IRC) Representatives</b></p>	<p>The Fire Protection Association of Australia raised the issue of a shortage of qualified people to undertake Bushfire Protection Assessment.</p>	<p>The IRC agreed to develop a Case for Change to illustrate the requirement for nationally available training for this job.</p>
<p align="center"><b>Peak Industry Bodies</b></p>	<p>AFAC, the National Council for fire and emergency services - The Group believes the project title 'Bushfire protection and safety assessor' is not an appropriate title and suggests that 'bushfire protection assessor' is more reflective of the work, as the Group understands it.</p> <p>2. The CfC does not include detail about the changes for job roles in the trades and professions. Therefore, no content is provided for Attachment B and it is clear that the existing members of the trades and profession which are responsible for all current development are not going to be provided with VET content as part of this proposal. This is not acknowledged directly by the CfC.</p> <p>3. The proposal is for a VET outcome to create a bridge between existing short courses and tertiary offerings. The existing Public Safety VET unit PUAFIR518 Conduct and record a Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) assessment was drafted by this Group for an emergency responder audience and is not directly suitable for use by other trades and professions. It is noted that other trades and professions rely on VET for skills and</p>	<p>Title changed</p> <p>Additional content provided.</p> <p>Units of competency developed under this project will be suitable for use by a wide range of trades and professions.</p> <p>In principle support noted.</p>

accreditation, so it is appropriate that VET includes bushfire protection material for relevant trainees. Therefore, this has in principle support from the AFAC BEPTG (BP) group.

4. The Group has previously advised that there is no support for a VET package to cover areas such as bushfire protection policy, strategic land use planning, development of alternate or performance solutions, modelling of bushfire behaviour, and design of bushfire shelters and refuges (for example, Class 10c buildings and NCC Importance Level 4 buildings). The list of units appears to adopt the Public Safety units and without strictly limiting that competency to applying existing methods to assess Bushfire Attack Levels (BAL) and applying known acceptable solutions from the jurisdictional firefighter operational requirements including the construction manuals, to design and develop land parcels and buildings. Therefore, the list of units is not supported as drafted.

5. Performance based design work is the domain of the professionally registered person. Whether an architect, engineer or BPAD assessor, these professionals have undertaken the requisite tertiary education and acquired the professional experience necessary to practice in these specialist areas. Currently in many states, professional registration is required by legislation for building design work, that is performance-based and is not prescriptive. This new regulatory pathway is attributed to the reforms arising from the Building Confidence Report of 2018, and the Case for Change appears to be ignoring this as a reality. Furthermore, AFAC member agencies has been engaged in this reform work and supports the desired outcomes. Unfortunately, the CfC is inconsistent by

List of proposed units has been amended.

It is also noted that in drafting the units some of this feedback will be addressed.

Units recommended for development amended considering this feedback. References to performance based solutions removed.

Reforms arising from the Building Confidence Report such as requirements of the NSW Design and Building Practitioners Act 2020 will be considered.

appearing to devolve performance processes to lower training levels. Subsequently AFAC could not endorse such a proposal particularly in such the high-risk environment of bushfire design.

6. Section 2.1 Rationale for change lists 'risks' that would occur should further training not be developed. Each of these "risks" is acknowledged. These risks already exist because of the failure to include bushfire protection within the training historically provided to the trades and professions responsible for design and development of land and buildings. The proposed new training pathway does not appear to address this current problem with specific detail, however, the proposal suggests that greater numbers of trained people to be available to industry in the future.

7. Section 2.2 Evidence for change is very weak. This section would benefit from acknowledging that accreditation is not mandatory in most jurisdictions and describing how development and building is regulated with respect to the bushfire protection space. AFAC notes FPAA does not run the only bushfire practitioner accreditation scheme in Australia. The CfC includes a graph with upwards of 25 new businesses per annum together with a pie chart showing demand for trained staff is common among FPAA members. Twenty five new businesses would hardly seem significant without reference to other business areas. The predilection of employers to seek to avoid the costs of training their own staff is widespread and not confined to the fire protection sector and has exacerbated the current skills shortage within the trades and professions in the development and building industry. It is also noted that in the regulatory space most

Feedback noted.

The Case for Change has been further developed to articulate the evidence for change.

A subject expert advisory group may recommend that some of the proposed units of competency have pre-requisite requirements which would address this concern.

practitioners need to be upskilled to include bushfire protection in their knowledge base because the likelihood of employing significant numbers of bushfire protection regulators is very low. 8. Section 2.3 Consideration of existing products could have considered the content of the existing Short Courses offered by University of Technology Sydney (for nearly 30 years!) as well as those offered by the Fire Protection Association of Australia. The list of existing VET units should not include PUA FIR508 – Develop and analyse the behaviour and suppression options for wildfire since it is plainly not relevant to this Diploma. Alternately, there are construction industry units which could be reviewed or augmented for the envisioned Diploma.

9. Section 2.4 Approach to streamlining and rationalisation of the training products being reviewed is lacking in significant detail. The CfC should have more information about which training packages exist which may have applicable units. Given the majority appear to be professions normally trained by the tertiary sector it appears to be unrealistic that most of these professions will have VET units which may be either streamlined or rationalised. Put another way, there is an absence of what units a Fire Agency staff member might study (at AQF Level 5 or higher) compared to a Building Surveyor (at AQF Level 6 or higher). AFAC would need to see the detail of the full training curricula across all persons before it could give endorsement to rationalising units of training.

10. Section 4 Licencing or regulatory linkages notes there is variation across jurisdictions and the CfC says it will seek to meet the needs of all jurisdictions without providing any detail of the

The list of existing units which may be relevant has been revised. PUEFIR508 has been removed and units relevant to design and construction have been added.

Section has been revised.

Section has been revised.

	<p>jurisdictional variations. Neither does the CfC assess the extent of resultant differences in needs in the different jurisdictions.</p> <p>11. In addition the persistent inclusion of modules intending to devolve performance processes to lower training levels, despite AFAC's advice to remove this content demonstrates an ongoing incompatibility between the intent of the proposed CfC and AFAC's Bushfire and Community Safety position <a href="https://www.afac.com.au/docs/default-source/doctrine/bushfires-communitysafety.pdf?sfvrsn=18&amp;download=true">https://www.afac.com.au/docs/default-source/doctrine/bushfires-communitysafety.pdf?sfvrsn=18&amp;download=true</a></p>	<p>Case for Change has been revised to address AFAC concerns.</p> <p>AFAC's Bushfire and Community Safety position is noted.</p>
<b>Employers (Non-IRC)</b>		
<b>Regulators</b>		
<b>Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)</b>	N/A	
<b>Training Boards/Other</b>		
<b>State and Territory Training Authorities (STAs)</b>	<p>The Victorian STA provided feedback that the early proposal to develop a skill set without naming the host qualification for the units of competency was not acceptable to them.</p>	<p>Now proposed as a qualification rather than as a skill set.</p>
<b>Unions</b>	N/A	
<b>Commonwealth Government Agency: Capacity Building and Partnerships Section   Disaster Risk Management Branch National Recovery and Resilience Agency</b>	<p>The Agency is supportive of this work.</p>	

## Attachment F: List of stakeholders to be contacted as part of the development of the Case for Endorsement

In addition to the stakeholders involved already the following will be invited to participate.

Name of Stakeholder	Title	Organisation	Organisation type (e.g. Employer, peak body, union, RTO, regulator)	Jurisdiction/town/city (e.g. NSW/Sydney)
		ACT Rural Fire Service		ACT
		All State Training Authorities		National
		Australian Building Codes Board		National
		Australian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council		National
		Australian Glass and Window Association		National
		Australian Institute of Architects		National
		Australian Institute of Building Surveyors		National
		Australian Institute of Landscape Architects		National
		Australian Local Government Association		National
		Building Designers Australia		National
		Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC		National
		Bushfire Building Council of Australia		National

		Consulting Surveyors National Ltd		National
		Country Fire Authority		Victoria
		CSIRO – Fire safety, testing, research and certification services		National
		Environmental Institute of Australia and New Zealand		National
		Fire Protection Association Australia		National
		Fire Rescue Victoria		Victoria, metro and major regional centres
		Green Building Council of Australia		National
		Housing Industry Association		National
		Insulated Panel Council Australasia		National
		Insurance Council of Australia		National
		Master Builders Association		National
		NATSPEC		National
		Northern Territory Fire Service		NT
		NSW Bushfire Risk Management Research Hub		NSW
		NSW Rural Fire Service		NSW
		Planning Institute of Australia		National
		Property Council of Australia		National

		Queensland Fire and Emergency Services		QLD
		Real Estate Institute of Australia		National
		South Australian Country Fire Service		SA, regional
		South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service		SA, metropolitan
		Tasmanian Fire Service		Tasmania
		The Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council		National
		Urban Development Institute of Australia		National
		WA Dep. Fire and Emergency Services		WA
		Relevant Industry Advisory Training Bodies		
		SSOs with related sectors		
		All STAs		
		RTOs – broad call for expression of interest for RTOs to self-identify if they have an interest in getting the proposed qualification on scope.		



## Attachment G: Letters in support of this Case for Change.

### Capacity Building and Partnerships Section | Disaster Risk Management Branch

#### National Recovery and Resilience Agency

Thanks for reaching out on this and apologies for the delay in our response. The Agency is supportive of this work.

I note we're involved in a number of related initiatives including:

- National Bushfire Intelligence Capability, being delivered by CSIRO in conjunction with the Australian Climate Service.
  - The National Bushfire Intelligence Capability will provide nationally consistent and authoritative bushfire hazard and risk information for planning and preparedness.
  - An example of NBIC's products is their work with Optus on [telecommunications infrastructure](#).
- [Bushfire Surveyor Applications Suite](#), being delivered by CSIRO.
  - The Bushfire Surveyor Applications Suite will develop two apps for use by individuals to collect pre-bushfire vulnerability and post-bushfire damage and loss information. It will also include a post-bushfire survey app and training for use by professionals in assessing loss context, cause and vulnerability.
- Canberra Joint Organisation of Councils (CRJO) [Climate Resilient Homes Toolkit](#). Insurance Council of Australia are active in this and have asked to access NBIC data to support.
- [Bushfire Resilience Star Rating](#), being delivered by the Bushfire Building Council of Australia.
  - The Bushfire Resilience Star Rating system, a self-assessment app that will provide site-specific mitigation guidelines to improve resilience.

As part of your stakeholder consultation, besides the Bushfire Building Council of Australia (which I note you already plan to contact), I suggest you also contact Insurance Council of Australia and [Justin Leonard](#), CSIRO's lead on bushfire adaptation.

Kind regards,

**Christiaan Van Dam**

A/g Assistant Director

Capacity Building and Partnerships Section | Disaster Risk Management Branch

National Recovery and Resilience Agency

p. 02 6228 6434 | e. [Christiaan.VanDam@recovery.gov.au](mailto:Christiaan.VanDam@recovery.gov.au) | w. [www.recovery.gov.au](http://www.recovery.gov.au)

The National Recovery and Resilience Agency acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to their elders both past and present.

The National Recovery and Resilience Agency acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to their elders both past and present.



**BUILDING DESIGNERS**  
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

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www.bdaa.com.au

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admin@bdaa.com.au

## **Bushfire Protection Assessor Training Package Endorsement**

### **Who We Are**

The Building Designers Association of Australia (BDAA) is the not-for-profit, peak industry association representing Australian Designers involved in, or associated with, the built environment nationally for 60 years. Our role is to educate and raise awareness of designers within the industry, to build and sustain relations with the key stakeholders, and to provide services to our members.

Our membership includes residential, commercial, and industrial building designers, architects, landscape architects, engineers, planners, specifiers, thermal performance assessors and design students.

### **Our Endorsement**

The Building Designers Association is fully supportive of the introduction of the proposed Bushfire Protection Assessor training package.

Design for the mitigation of bushfire risk aversion and damage is a key platform in the design of buildings, especially residential developments in heavily forested areas.

The failure of materials and adequate clearance around buildings from a fire source is a major area of complaint from building owners, and the correct documentation and assessment of these risks would assist in resolving these problems before they become an insurmountable issue for property owners.

Before they become a problem, we need to have suitably qualified assessors to prepare detailed reports that can assist in the design of buildings to address the risks of bushfire attack and provide competent advice on methods to minimise the consequences of building in high bushfire hazard areas.

There is a known gap in the market for suitably trained and qualified assessors and the introduction of a definitive training package will provide assessors with the tools to provide quality assessments rather than owners relying on poor quality assessments provided by unqualified assessors.

The BDAA stands behind this initiative and offers our full support for its introduction.

Regards

**Ian Bassett**

Life Fellow BDAA

### **Director Policy & Professional Development**

Building Designers Association of Australia

Mobile 0414 464 336

policy@bdaa.com.au

### **Head Office:**

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North Sydney NSW 2059

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Our ref: PLH2019P1195  
Enquiries: Katherine Nunn  
(08 6551 9332)

Property Services Industry Reference Committee (via Artibus)  
First Floor, Soundys Building  
373 Elizabeth Street  
North Hobart, TAS 7000

Dear Sir/Madam

**SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL BUSHFIRE  
PROTECTION (LAND USE PLANNING AND BUILDING) VOCATIONAL  
EDUCATION AND TRAINING PACKAGE**

The Bushfire Practitioner industry plays a vital role in providing information to inform land use planning decisions in bushfire prone areas across Western Australia. There are limited bushfire protection training opportunities in the land-use planning and building fields, particularly in Western Australia. The training options currently available are tertiary qualifications at eastern states universities, which have limited relevance to the WA land-use planning context and involve increased costs to attend out of State.

The need for the development of vocational education and training in the bushfire protection sector is recognised by the Western Australian Planning Commission and the Department of Planning Lands and Heritage and is supported.

Yours faithfully

David Caddy  
Chairman  
Western Australian Planning Commission

Lorissa Kelly  
Assistant Director General  
Department of Planning, Lands & Heritage

30 March 2021



15 December 2020

Wendy McLeod  
Operations Manager  
Artibus Innovation

Dear Wendy

Thank you for seeking the views of Master Builders Australia in relation to the Property and Services IRC case for change proposal to develop skill sets on bushfire building design and bushfire building design certification.

In-principle Master Builders is supportive of the case for change and recognises the need for training and skills development in bushfire mitigation across the building and construction industry.

The case for change is particularly timely given the release in late October of the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements report. In addition to the Royal Commission, other work currently underway that will need to be considered should the case for change be approved include:

- The Master Builders Australia and the Insurance Council of Australia roundtables on recommendations 19.1-19.4 of the Royal Commission scheduled for the first half of 2021 which will cover resilience options for existing and new buildings; building standards (including AS3959), codes and best practice; and information sharing and education tools.
- The preparation by the ABCB of a response to Building Ministers on the Royal Commission in relation to building codes and standards, with this likely to involve the ABCB and Standards Australia expanding the bushfire standard into broader natural hazard standards
- The work of Building Ministers to adapt the built environment to future climate and hazard conditions.
- Work by the Australian Building Codes Board in conjunction with CANZUS partners to develop international benchmarking and the building resilience guidelines.
- The implementation of the Shergold-Weir Building Confidence Report recommendations, many of which relate to building surveyors and certifiers.
- The release in early 2021 of the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of Your Home which incorporates building for bushfire resilience, as well as the likely development of additional Your Home bushfire resources in 2021.
- The potential development of a digital platform for the storage of compliance and emergency response plans for existing buildings and property (more so commercial).

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[www.masterbuilders.com.au](http://www.masterbuilders.com.au)

 Level 3, 44 Sydney Avenue  
Forrest ACT 2603  
 PO Box 7170  
Yarralumla ACT 2600

Your ref:

Our ref: FA831580

Enquiries: Loretta van Gasselt (08 6551 9097)

Property Services Industry Reference Committee (via Artibus)  
First Floor, Soundys Building  
373 Elizabeth Street  
North Hobart, TAS 7000

Dear Property Services Industry Reference Committee members

### ***IN PRINCIPLE SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A VET BUSHFIRE PROTECTION QUALIFICATION***

As a result of the Perth hills bushfire in February 2011, the Western Australian government appointed Mick Keelty AO to undertake an independent review of the fire. His report, 'A Shared Responsibility: The Report of the Perth Hills Bushfire February 2011 Review', recognised the central role that land use planning and building plays in reducing the risk of bushfire to life, property and infrastructure and reinforced that with early and improved intervention of the land use planning and building systems, the vulnerability of settlements to the risk of a bushfire can be minimised over time.

In response to the findings of the report, the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage in December 2015 released *State Planning Policy 3.7 – Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* (SPP 3.7) and the *Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* (Guidelines). The policy applies to all land-use planning proposals in designated bushfire prone areas. Complementing this was the State being given responsibility for designating areas bushfire prone (rather than local government), which saw 90% of the State being declared bushfire prone.

SPP 3.7's intent is to implement effective, risk-based land use planning and development to preserve life and reduce the impact of bushfire on property and infrastructure. Through implementation of the Guidelines, bushfire is now a key consideration for land-use planning proposals located within a designated bushfire prone area.

With the introduction of the bushfire planning reforms and the expansion of the area where bushfire construction requirements apply, the State recognised the importance of having qualified professionals to inform land use planning and building decisions in bushfire prone areas. A Bushfire Accreditation Steering Committee (WABASC), consisting of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage and the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety was formed to develop guidelines for organisations wishing to provide an accreditation scheme for bushfire consultants in WA.

The WABASC reviewed the various training packages available in 2015 and found that there are limited qualifications available within the bushfire planning and building areas, with the only options being postgraduate studies at the University of Melbourne or University of Western Sydney, or the Fire Protection Association Australia's five-day BAL assessor course. The WABASC notes that there is a significant gap between the level of training between the postgraduate degrees, and the five-day BAL assessor course. Developing a specific bushfire protection planning and building systems qualification may allow for a number of gaps to be filled, which could include for instance improved GIS skillsets, improved emergency evacuation/survival planning and other specific bushfire mitigation measures being integrated into land-use planning proposals.

Given the recent tragic bushfire events that have occurred in New South Wales and Victoria and with bushfire conditions expected to worsen in the coming decades due to climate change, it is vital that land-use planning and the building systems respond to the risk that bushfire presents and that there are a suitable

range of professionals with the expertise to inform bushfire land-use planning and building responses. As such, WABASC gives in principle support to the development of a national qualification for bushfire protection to help support future planning and building decisions in bushfire prone areas.

Please contact Jackie Holm, Principal Planning Officer (08 6551 9351) if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully



Loretta van Gaselt  
Western Australian Bushfire Accreditation Steering Committee Chair  
16<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Council	Officer	Comment	Date
Bogan Shire	James Boyce <a href="mailto:james.boyce@bogan.nsw.gov.au">james.boyce@bogan.nsw.gov.au</a>	<p>Thank you for your email seeking support for the proposed accredited bushfire assessor training package.</p> <p>With the changes to the Planning for Bushfire Protection Guidelines introduced this year it is very important that accredited bushfire assessors are available in regional and rural NSW to support the community.</p> <p>On behalf of Bogan Shire Council, I wish to wholeheartedly support this initiative and commend the case for change prepared by your organisation.</p> <p>Should you require anything further please contact me by return email or telephone 0418699971.</p>	18/11/2020
Katherine Town Council	Ian Bodill <a href="mailto:ceo@ktc.nt.gov.au">ceo@ktc.nt.gov.au</a>	<p>Katherine Town Council would welcome any alternate accreditation pathways that would lead to improved skills for various disciplines involved in assessment of Bushfire risks, particularly as it relates to assessment of future housing development in bushfire prone areas.</p> <p>This is highly supported by us.</p>	19/11/2020
Campaspe Shire	Suzanna Gorman	Thanks for including Campaspe Shire Council in the review	20/11/2020

Council Vic	S.Gorman@campaspe.vic.gov.au	<p>process for the Bushfire Protection qualification project</p> <p>Campaspe Shire Council stakeholders (Training &amp; Volunteer Coordinator, Building and Planning Manager and Emergency Management Coordinator have reviewed the case for change and endorse the project and support the initiative for skills in this space</p> <p>No changes or amendments from Campaspe</p>	
Mount Alexander Shire Council	<p>Luke Ryan</p> <p><a href="mailto:l.ryan@mountalexander.vic.gov.au">l.ryan@mountalexander.vic.gov.au</a></p>	<p>As Emergency Management Coordinator for the Mount Alexander Shire Council, I write to you in support of your endeavour to provide this crucial training.</p>	24/11/20
Gunnedah Shire Council	<p>Blake O'Mullane</p> <p><a href="mailto:blake@infogunnedah.com.au">blake@infogunnedah.com.au</a></p>	<p>I support an alternate accreditation pathway for Bushfire Assessors to gain accreditation than the current tertiary qualification offered.</p>	25/11/20
Surf Coast Shire Council	<p>Peter Ashton</p> <p><a href="mailto:PAshton@surfcoast.vic.gov.au">PAshton@surfcoast.vic.gov.au</a></p>	<p>Your request has come through to me to make comment.</p> <p>I have read the proposal and it seems great. I have made a few comments if you're interested.</p> <p>I personally believe this type of training would be very valuable.</p> <p>We find that there are a number of consultants with great skills in this area, but when it comes to the practical implementation through the various fields/occupations you have mention in the proposal, that there are limited operators with the necessary skill.</p> <p>I believe that if we are to make the steps necessary to build serious community adaptation to bushfire then, developing this knowledge in the industry, as well as an avenue for knowledge flow to the general community will be very important.</p> <p>Having this avenue of study could help in a tangible way.</p>	27/11/20

		<p>I have undertaken the post graduate study in this field and feel I am in a good position to comment on the lack of understanding out there and the need to improve.</p> <p>One point that I did note in my comments in the attachment is the real need to extend the target group to include landscape designers and landscapers.</p> <p>We have in the past been working with the local Tafe and operators to help build this knowledge as we see a gap. If the course could pick that up, I believe it would be also valuable in the longer run.</p> <p>Our Shire is a high bushfire risk area, so any pathway to help improve skills and knowledge would be supported.</p> <p>Please feel free to contact me for more information if needed.</p>	
West Tamar Council	Amanda Locatelli <a href="mailto:amanda.locatelli@wtc.tas.gov.au">amanda.locatelli@wtc.tas.gov.au</a>	On behalf of West Tamar Council, I would like to express Council's support for the proposal attached. Council often notes there is a shortage of Bushfire Assessors available to undertake the assessments required to meet development requirements in the West Tamar municipality and whilst we have not specific comment or feedback regarding the specifics of the proposal, we do support the intent to have a VET program established.	30/11/2020
Shire of Chapman Valley	Simon Lancaster <a href="mailto:dceo@chapmanvalley.wa.gov.au">dceo@chapmanvalley.wa.gov.au</a>	Its sounds like a great project and I would definitely be interested in looking at this course if it becomes available (my background is land use planner).	16/12/20
City of Albany	Jan Van Der Mescht <a href="mailto:janv@albany.wa.gov.au">janv@albany.wa.gov.au</a>	<p>Please find the following In principle support for a vocational qualification.</p> <p>The City of Albany as a Local Government currently assesses rezoning applications, structure plans , land-use planning applications or proposal to construct buildings in bushfire prone areas. We the assessment</p>	

		<p>of these application include assessment against WA state planning policy 3.7 and associated guidelines , Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) contour plans, Bushfire Management Plans and BAL assessments.</p> <p>We also provide advice /assess bushfire risk for existing developments and associated mitigation plans to enhance resilience.</p> <p>We in principle support the research and development of a Bushfire Protection VET qualification in the National Training package.</p> <p>Training package should result in a student walking away being confident in;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The assessment of Bushfire risk in accordance with AS3959, BAL assessments</li><li>• Ideally in WA:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ understanding SPP3.7 requirements</li><li>○ assessing Bushfire management plans</li><li>○ BAL contour Plans</li><li>○ Mitigation measures for proposed and existing developments</li></ul></li></ul> <p>Please feel free to contact me if you need any further information or if you would like to discuss this matter in more detail.</p> <p>Regards</p>	
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