Municipal Emergency
Management Planning

South Gippsland Shire

The South Gippsland Fire Management Arrangements – bushfire, structure fire & fire involving chemicals

Contents

Introduction

The Community Emergency Risk Management (CERA) is a process which aims to reduce risks within a community. This can be done by identifying the risks that a community faces, assessing the vulnerability of the community to those risks and providing options to reduce or eliminate the risks.

The South Gippsland MEMPC have identified Urban Fire, defined as a significant residential or industrial fire and Bushfire/Grassfire as risks that may impact broadly on the community and visitors of South Gippsland.

The South Gippsland Fire Management Arrangements – bushfire, structure fire & fire involving chemicals have been developed reflecting this to recognise the efforts of stakeholder agencies working toward a shared objective across Urban Fire & Bushfire/Grassfire - the protection and preservation of life, property and the environment in South Gippsland.

The Arrangements cover both public and private land tenures with a focus on actions to be taken *before* a fire. Planning for activities *during* and *after* a fire are addressed in the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP).

The South Gippsland Fire Management Arrangements is a living document and will assist emergency management agencies in relation to fire management planning at the local level and community resilience building activities.

These arrangements were developed by the Fire Management Planning Working Group

of the South Gippsland MEMPC with the following membership

- Country Fire Authority (CFA)
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action [DEECA]
- Parks Victoria
- South Gippsland Shire Council
- Other members as required (HVP Plantations, Department of Transport and Planning, Utilities)

The arrangements aim to

- Recognise the roles played by stakeholder agencies and highlight opportunities for multi-agency works

- Identify critical infrastructure and at-risk communities

- Identify mitigation treatments for bushfires, structure fires, other fires to reduce their impacts on the community

- Increase community resilience by improving overall awareness and preparedness

The arrangements were endorsed by the MEMPC at their meeting on 24/5/2022.

Governance

The Fire Management Planning Working Group meet 4 times a year in March, June, September and December (or as required). The groups purpose is to review the planned and coordinated implementation of measures designed to minimise the occurrence, and mitigate the effect of fire in South Gippsland and ensure that the plans of individual agencies are linked and complement each other.

The group provide advice and report progress on relevant activities to the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee. The Fire Management Planning Working group provide regular

input into the CERA process relating to Fire - Commercial/ Industrial/ High-rise (commercial) & Bushfire/Grassfire.

The South Gippsland Fire Management Arrangements – bushfire, structure fire & fire involving chemicals will be amended and maintained by the Fire Management Planning Working Group in consultation with the South Gippsland Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC). Amendments will be recorded in the table below.

Version	Author	Update Details	MEMPC Approval Date
1	Fire Management Planning Working Group	Development of plan and adoption	25/5/2022
2	Fire Management Planning Working Group	Change of name from DELWP to DEECA and RRV to Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) Updates to map and table of Bushfire - Victorian Fire Risk Register – Bushfire (VFRR-B) Human Settlement assets	13/10/2023
3	Fire Management Planning Working Group	Recognition of 4 meetings per year of working group. Updates to terminology. Add in information regarding registration of burn offs Removal of references to FARSS funding. Assets listed in VFRR in alphabetical order Update to name of Gippsland Bushfire Management Strategy 2020 Removal of reference to Engagement and Resilience Plan Update to planned burn section recognising Fire Danger Period and TFBs	26/11/2024

Suggestions for amendments to this document should be forwarded to em@southgippsland.vic.gov.au

Bushfire

Bushfire risk is the likelihood of a fire starting, spreading and impacting on people, property and the environment – the things we care about most. Factors which affect bushfire risk include the type and condition of fuels, weather, topography, the location of people and assets, as well as our ability to prevent fires from igniting and suppress them once they have started.

The Gippsland Strategic bushfire management plan has been developed to bring together land and fire managers, communities and stakeholders to develop a common understanding of bushfire risk and determine strategies and actions to reduce that risk. The plan includes mapping of areas of highest (modelled) risk. Strategic Bushfire Management Planning (safertogether.vic.gov.au).

The distribution of human settlements in the landscape is the other dominant driver of bushfire risk to human life. In South Gippsland, the localities at highest risk are typified by extensive areas of forest abutting settlements such as Mirboo North. Many other localities are interspersed with discontinuous or fragmented native vegetation, which is still a source of significant bushfire risk.

The larger regional centres like Leongatha are surrounded by areas of cleared land, meaning that fire severity in these areas is reduced and successful suppression is more likely.

Major fires have occurred at Wilsons Promontory in 1939, 1951, 2005 and 2009. The Wilsons Promontory fire 2009 was contained within the park but affected businesses throughout the Shire, due to the closure of the park. The Delburn Complex Fire in 2009 was deliberately lit and affected the townships of Darlimurla and Mirboo North. There were 128 properties directly impacted by this fire.

Structure Fire & Fire - Commercial/ Industrial/ High-rise

Structure fire is a hazard directly relating to surroundings that are manmade and provide the setting for human activity. Structure fire can lead to impacts across a number of environments including:

- Residential
- Industry
- Commercial
- Infrastructure
- Public Assembly
- Public Accommodation
- Healthcare and Special Accommodation
- Agriculture
- Marine

Structure fires occur regularly through the year with fires at residential properties being the most common.

Fires Involving Chemicals

There is no history of chemical caused fires in South Gippsland however; there have been a number of fires resulting from vehicle accidents which involve the transport of volatile materials on local roads. In addition, there have been occurrences of fires which involve chemicals. These fires are more complicated to manage and control due to the possibility of toxic fumes, damaging environmental runoff, and the possibility of increased or erratic fire behaviour.

Working together

Fire is one of the most common emergencies individuals and communities can face, and the impact of fire on lives and property can be devastating. Working together is essential for good community outcomes relating to the occurrence of fire and is a shared responsibility between communities, government agencies, land managers, organisations and businesses.

CFA

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) is responsible for fire prevention and suppression activities on private land, public roadways and rail lines throughout South Gippsland. CFA is also the primary response agency for structure fires, fire involving motor vehicles and fires involving hazardous materials.

CFA is heavily involved in community education and awareness activities both at a corporate and local level.

The Risk Intelligence Unit in CFA administers and publishes the Victorian Fire Risk Register – Bushfire (VFRR-B). CFA also conducts annual assessments and recertification of Bushfire Places of Last Report (BPLR).

During the Fire Danger Period, the District Management Team assess applications to conduct burns on private land for agricultural purposes and issue Permits to Burn if the application meets all requirements.

Detailed role and responsibilities are outlined in the SEMP's CFA role statement.

Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)

DEECA brings together Victoria's energy, environment, water, agriculture, forestry, resources, climate action, and emergency management functions into a single department, maximising connections between community, industry and economy.

They are responsible for the prevention and suppression of fire in State forests, national parks and on protected public land and for developing policy and regulation to mitigate bushfire through land use planning, building and heritage. They also coordinate recovery of the natural environment, public land and waterways following bushfires.

DEECA has road management responsibilities for a network of tracks throughout State parks and forests, including mitigation of hazardous roadside vegetation. Other land management responsibilities include recreational sites, walking tracks, campgrounds and day visitation sites.

The Department undertakes a wide range of community engagement, education and compliance activities that contribute to fire prevention and stands ready to respond to fires.

Detailed role and responsibilities are outlined in the SEMP's DEECAs role statement.

Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMV)

FFMV is the public face of fire prevention, planning and response for State managed land. Its aim is to reduce the risk and impact of bushfires in Victoria's parks and forests.

FFMV is comprised of specialist staff from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), Parks Victoria (PV), Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR), Vic Forests and Melbourne Water.

Parks Victoria (Parks Vic)
Parks Vic is responsible for managing an expanding and diverse estate covering more than 4 million hectares, or about 18%, of Victoria.

Parks Vic staff support the planning and delivery of fuel treatment programs across public land, but overall responsibility for planned burning remains with DEECA. Parks Victoria manage Wilsons Promontory National Park as well as other land across South Gippsland including the Cape Liptrap Coastal Park.

Detailed role and responsibilities are outlined in the SEMP's Parks Victoria role statement.

South Gippsland Shire Council
Council has several defined fire prevention roles outlined in *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*, the State Emergency Management Plan and other relevant legislation.

The *CFA Act* requires Council to appoint a Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO) responsible for all aspects of fire hazard mitigation, enforcement and community awareness. The MFPO's key legislated duty is to manage the annual private property fire hazard inspections across the Shire to determine any additional vegetation reduction works needed to reduce the local risk to life and property.

Council maintain a number of nature reserves across South Gippsland with Fire Management Plans for high risk reserves having annual actions implemented. Council's road maintenance crews conduct fire hazard reduction works by slashing or spraying specific roadsides. Electric Line Clearance is also conducted by Council in certain areas across the municipality.

Councils play a key role in designating and recording Neighbourhood Safer Places-Bushfire Places of Last Resort (NSP-BPLRs) as last resort shelter options during bushfire. Council maintain the Sandy Point Community Centre which is a Bushfire Places of Last Resort (BPLR) in Sandy Point.

Local Laws restrict open air burning in some areas – see General Local Law 2024 Open Air Burning | South Gippsland Shire Council . Council does not issue permits to burn during the Fire Danger Period, instead referring applicants to CFA for review.

Municipal and State planning schemes outline how townships can grow and change in line with their bushfire threat. Building regulations are in place to ensure structures meet mandated fire safety standards, including resistance to likely forms of bushfire attack.

Council supports fire prevention awareness through media releases, website updates and social media postings.

HVP Plantations
HVP Plantations is a commercial landholder in South Gippsland Shire, with multiple hardwood and softwood plantations located throughout the municipality. Plantations have different fuel structures and more complex fire behaviour characteristics compared with traditional rural environments like farmlands, grasslands and scrub. HVP have a Forest Industry Brigade under the CFA Act.

More information about HVP's role in fire mitigation and response is at www.hvp.com.au/hvp-forest-management/hvp-fire-management

Department of Transport and Planning (DTP)
The road network is recognised as being vital to the community when deciding how they will respond to any bushfire threat. The Department of Transport and Planning ensures the network continues to function efficiently before, during and after a fire by embedding emergency management and fire prevention into its core business practices.

Core bushfire prevention efforts include DTP's annual pre-season slashing, spraying and other mitigation works to reduce fuel loads within road reserves.

Victoria Police

Victoria Police fire prevention efforts cover education, awareness, investigation, prosecution and support to other agencies. Both the Municipal and Regional Emergency Response Coordinators (MERC & RERC) provide ongoing training to personnel to ensure response to emergency events, including fires, are robust and contemporary with ongoing development and planning with a focus on evacuation and traffic management.

Local police have a Zero Tolerance approach to illegal fires lit during the during the Fire Danger Period. Police will attend and investigate any illegal fires reported by responding fire brigades, with prosecution at the discretion of the attending police members.

Ausnet Services

Electricity powerlines contacting vegetation is one cause of bushfire. The Electricity Safety Act 1998 requires electricity distribution companies to prepare bushfire mitigation plans, which are audited by Energy Safe Victoria.

Energy Safe Victoria works with power companies to install new protection mechanisms to reduce the risk of starting fires, and work closely with fire agencies to review expected conditions to assist in identifying priority areas over high-risk periods. The bushfire mitigation programs of electricity distribution companies typically include activities such as asset inspection, maintenance, construction, upgrading, replacement, vegetation management, performance monitoring and auditing.

Individuals and households

Individual community members are responsible for learning the risks of their environment and making decisions about how to respond to risks commensurate with their risk appetite. Owners and occupiers of land are responsible to manage their properties to reduce the risk of bushfire.

Each household is responsible for preparing their property for bushfire for example, retrofitting existing dwellings and clearing vegetation around the house, in accordance with State planning controls for the clearing of native vegetation and planning scheme requirements.

Information to assist householders and landowners to prepare their property for bushfire can be found on the CFA website. Every household should have a well-practised written bushfire survival plan.

Notify Triple Zero Victoria of your planned burn (see above for South Gippsland Shire Council Local Laws restricts open air burning in some areas):

- **Online (Preferred)** - Register online through the Fire Permits Victoria website. You can do so if your burn-off commences more than two hours from now.

- **By Phone** - You may register your burn-off by calling Triple Zero Victoria on 1800 668 511, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. National Relay Service Users can ring 1300 555 727 and ask for Information to be relayed to Triple Zero Victoria.

During the Fire Danger Period in Victoria, businesses or individuals needing to use fire in the open air for work or activities must apply for a permit. However, permits are not guaranteed, they will be assessed individually on their justification and needs and applications may be declined. Even if granted, permits can be suspended or cancelled by the CFA, the issuing officer, or during a Total Fire Ban declaration for details see Fire Permits Victoria

Managing Bushfire Risk

Managing bushfire risk is an ongoing and shared responsibility and everyone has a role. Victoria is moving to a more integrated approach across public and private land, with fuel management just one of a range of different management actions taken to protect lives, homes, jobs and the environment.

A range of bushfire mitigation strategies and treatments exist that are applied across the State and Municipality, these include:

- provisions in the Victorian Planning Scheme & the Building Code of Australia (BCA) & Bushfire Attack Level assessments for new buildings proposals Planning for bushfire protection

- Bushfire Management Overlays/Bushfire Prone Areas Planning and Bushfire Management Overlay | CFA (Country Fire Authority)

- compliance and enforcement of legislation

- declared Fire Danger Period and restrictions Fire Danger Period Restrictions | CFA (Country Fire Authority)

- seasonal prohibited period (for Fire Protected Areas) Fire restrictions and regulations (ffm.vic.gov.au)

- Total Fire Ban day declarations About Total Fire Bans | CFA (Country Fire Authority)

- community information and warnings Warnings & Restrictions | CFA (Country Fire Authority)

- Incidents and Warnings Incidents and Warnings - VicEmergency

- powerline hazard tree identification, management and reporting – see Hazard Trees near Electric Lines – Identification and Notification Procedures

- fire hazard inspection program and issue of notices

- public awareness programs – multimedia communications

- roadside vegetation management by DTP and municipal councils (a standard suite of treatments, broadly applied which includes: slashing, spraying and mechanical clearing)

- emergency management signage

- Event Management Plans

- routine asset maintenance - slashing, spraying and mechanical clearing

- coordinated planning between agencies across prevention, preparedness, Response and recovery

Bushfire - Victorian Fire Risk Register – Bushfire (VFRR-B)
The Victorian Fire Risk Register - Bushfire (VFRR-B) is a process allowing representatives from local government, fire services, public land managers and utilities to map assets at risk from bushfire, then assess the perceived level of risk to the asset.   The VFRR is a more detailed risk assessment process than CERA that considers the municipality's risk of bushfire/grassfire more broadly.

Assets may include townships, residential areas, hospitals, critical infrastructure, commercial industry, economically significant landholdings, environmentally sensitive areas and those that are culturally significant.

Agency representatives can use these rating to determine what type of mitigation activities may be used to reduce the risk, such as fire prevention inspections, community education activities and

hazard reduction. It will also be used by the Fire Management Planning Working Group to identify opportunities for coordinated activities to take place with a focus on vegetation management and community education.

The Fire Management Planning Working Group of the South Gippsland MEMPC have agreed to review the registered assets once every three years, or more often if deemed appropriate.

Through the working group, new assets can be added and those deemed to no longer require their own rating can be removed. The following table shows townships or areas and the VFRR risk level of extreme or very high.

Areas not shown in the table can be seen on the map and may have high/medium/low risk. Remember not all locations have been assessed, if you live in one of the following environments, you need to plan and prepare before the fire season.

- **Close to or among grass or paddocks** - Grassfires can be extremely dangerous – people can die in grassfires

- **Close to or among dense or open bush** - Risk is most extreme if you live surrounded by or near forest that is difficult to see through. However, all dense or open bush presents a fire risk

- **Near coastal scrub** - Burning scrub, heath or other coastal vegetation can create hot, dangerous bushfires. If you live by, work by or travel to the coast you are at risk. Beaches, foreshores and shallow waters may not be safe or protect you from radiant heat. A fire may be burning between you and the beach.

- **Where suburbs meet the bush or grasslands** - You do not have to live in the bush to be at risk of bushfire. Suburban homes can burn in bushfire too.
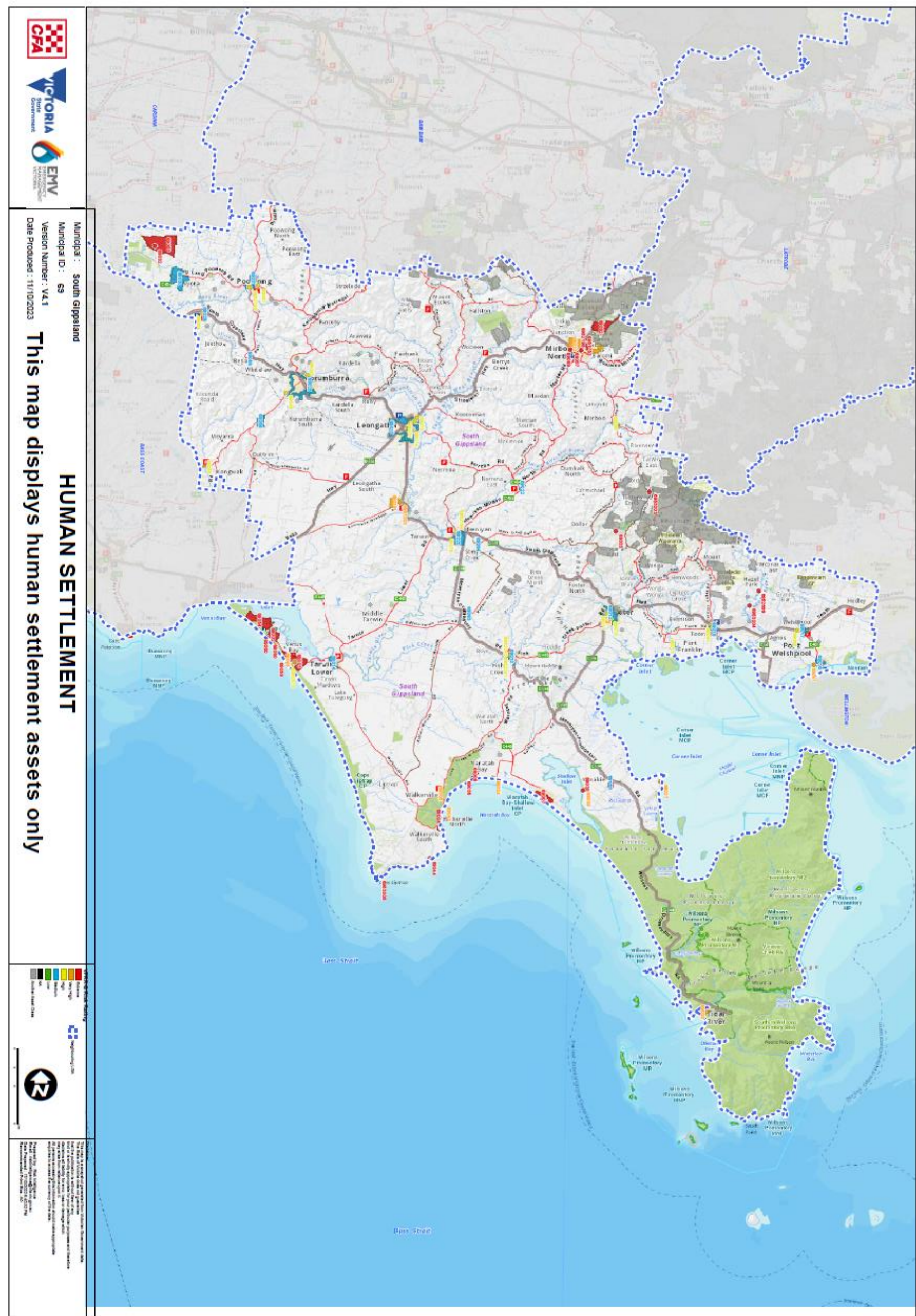

For more information on identifying you risk visit Am I at Risk? | CFA (Country Fire Authority)

Asset ID	Asset Class	Asset Name	Location	Risk Rating
6952195	Human Settlement	1st Mirboo North	Strzelecki HWY and Couper ST Mirboo North	Extreme
6953004	Human Settlement	Agnes Falls Picnic Area	Agnes Falls RD	Extreme
6951753	Human Settlement	Baromi	Baromi	Extreme
69044	Human Settlement	Bear Gully Camping Ground	Bear Gully RD Walkerville	Extreme
69033	Human Settlement	Camp Rumbug	90 Dollar Woorarra West RD Foster North	Extreme
69034	Human Settlement	Camp Waratah	30 Gale ST Waratah Bay	Very High
6953005	Human Settlement	Cape Liptrap Lighthouse	Cape Liprap RD	Extreme
69062	Human Settlement	Darlimurla Estate	Mirboo North Complex	Extreme
6952699	Human Settlement	Hazel Park Campsite	547 Hazel Park RD Hazel Park	Extreme
69019	Human Settlement	Koonwarra	Koonwarra	Very High
6951303	Human Settlement	Koonwarra Village School	20-26 Koala DVE	Very High
69041	Human Settlement	Long Jetty Caravan Park	6 Port Welshpool RD Port Welshpool	Very High
69053	Human Settlement	McDonalds Track Cherry Tree RD Subdivision	Nyora	Extreme
69023	Human Settlement	Mirboo North	Mirboo North Complex	Very High
6951291	Human Settlement	Mirboo North Kindergarten	8 Brennan ST	Extreme
69087	Human Settlement	Mirboo North PS	Balook ST Mirboo North	Extreme
69069	Human Settlement	Mirboo North SC	Castle ST Mirboo North	Extreme
69005	Human Settlement	Promontory View Estate	Walkerville Complex	Very High
69032	Human Settlement	REMAR	955 McDonalds Track Nyora	Extreme
69007	Human Settlement	Sandy Point	Sandy Point	Extreme
69036	Human Settlement	Sandy Point Caravan Park	Beach PDE Sandy Point	Very High
69038	Human Settlement	Shallow Inlet Camping Ground	Lester RD Yanakie	Extreme
69039	Human Settlement	Shallow Inlet Caravan Park	350 Lester RD Yanakie	Very High
6951290	Human Settlement	St Andrew's Child Care Centre	32 Ridgeway ST	Extreme
69008	Human Settlement	Tidal River	Tidal River	Very High

Asset ID	Asset Class	Asset Name	Location	Risk Rating
6953003	Human Settlement	Turtons Creek Camp Ground	Turtons Creek RD	Extreme
69045	Human Settlement	Venus Bay Caravan Park	113A Jupiter BLVD Venus Bay	Very High
69001	Human Settlement	Venus Bay Estate 1	Venus Bay Complex	Extreme
69059	Human Settlement	Venus Bay Estate 1 Beach Access	Venus Bay Estate One	Extreme
69002	Human Settlement	Venus Bay Estate 2	Venus Bay Complex	Extreme
69060	Human Settlement	Venus Bay Estate 2 Beach Access	Venus Bay Estate Two	Extreme
69054	Human Settlement	Venus Bay Estate 3	Venus Bay Complex	Extreme
69004	Human Settlement	Walkerville	Walkerville Complex	Extreme
69043	Human Settlement	Walkerville Caravan Park	3 Loop RD Walkerville North	Very High
69006	Human Settlement	Waratah Bay	Waratah Bay	Extreme
69035	Human Settlement	Waratah Bay Caravan Park	Waratah Bay	Extreme
69037	Human Settlement	Wilson's Prom Holiday Park	Foley RD Yanakie	Very High
69213	Economic	Bass HWY	Leongatha to Shire Boundary	Very High
6953020	Economic	Burra Foods	Station ST	Very High
69203	Economic	Foster Promontory RD	Foster	Very High
69214	Economic	Hardwood Plantations	South Gippsland	Extreme
69223	Economic	Holmes Hill and Foster North Communications Towers	Korumburra	Very High
6951791	Economic	Little Morwell Catchment	North of Mirboo North	Very High
69231	Economic	Meeniyan Promontory RD	South Gippsland	Very High
6953019	Economic	Murray Goulburn Milk Factory	Yarragon RD	Very High
69215	Economic	Softwood Plantations		Extreme
69212	Economic	South Gippsland HWY	South Gippsland	Very High
69202	Economic	Strzelecki HWY	Leongatha to Mirboo North	Very High
69216	Economic	Wilsons Promontory NP including Tidal River	Wilson Promontory	Very High

Map – This map shows where these Human Settlement assets are located across South Gippsland.

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Roadside Management

Typical roadside fuel management treatments in South Gippsland include mowing, slashing and spraying. Municipal councils and road managers may also work with fire agencies through an integrated planning process to identify, plan and deliver a planned program of works that aims to further mitigate the risks associated with fire and roadside fuels.

Water Supplies

Adequate water supply for the purpose of firefighting is integral to planning for fire suppression. Static water supply for firefighting purposes is available from; water supply from nearby town supplies (reticulated water), static water supplies, permanent rivers or streams, farm dams or reserved firefighting dams and sea water (undesirable but usable).

Static water supplies (water tanks) have been provided at various sites for the purposes of water supply for fires. It is the responsibility of the South Gippsland Shire Council to ensure annually (Pre-Summer Season) that each water tank site is in "fit for purpose "condition and the responsibility of the local CFA fire brigade to ensure tanks are full of water during the Fire Danger Period. It is the responsibility of DEECA to maintain their fire dams.

Any short comings in the adequate supply of water to any location will be discussed by the Fire Management Planning Working Group.

Each Fire Brigade has developed a Plan of the sites available for rural water supply that have been selected by the brigades as being permanent, accessible, reliable and adequate sites from which to obtain water for firefighting purposes. Plans should be kept in an easily identifiable and available location at each Fire Station.

Fire Access Roads

Fire access roads/ tracks are constructed and/or maintained expressly for fire management purposes to; provide safe and secure access for authorised vehicles, provide access to high fire risk areas, provide a link between established routes to reduce travel times for firefighting vehicles, and may provide a safe and adequate means of escape or alternative means of escape for persons residing in an area. The road manager will maintain removable bollards or gates with a standard key locking system and suitable signage at the entrance to all fire access tracks.

Fire access roads facilitate a rapid and concentrated response to areas where it will be critical to enable the early containment of an outbreak of fire, and where Road access is limited and off-road operation of two wheel drive fire fighting vehicles would be difficult.

The Fire Access Road Subsidy Scheme (FARSS) is administered by CFA and is a State Government funded subsidy scheme. Subsidies are available for Municipalities for the construction and maintenance of fire access roads. Funding is provided annually. Applications are called for and made through the CFA.

Where fire access roads are identified for construction or maintenance, the Fire Management Planning Working Group shall review and adopt a priority listing and applications made by the MFPO based on Council budgeting processes. All funding is on a shared basis with the municipality.

Neighbourhood Safer Places/Places of Last Resort (NSPs/PLR)

Neighbourhood Safer Places/Places of Last Resort (NSPs/PLR) are identified buildings or spaces within the community that may afford some protection from radiant heat, the biggest killer during bushfire. They are a place of last resort in emergencies only; to be used when individual Bushfire Survival Plans fail.

NSPs/PLR do not offer guaranteed ultimate safety. Relocating to an NSP/PLR also carries a level of risk including death. NSPs/PLR have been assessed by CFA against NSP/PLR report assessment guidelines. It then becomes the responsibility of Council to endorse and maintain the NSP/PLR.

NSPs/PLR are reviewed annually to ensure they still meet the municipal safer places criteria.

There are no Community Fire Refuges in South Gippsland.

There is currently one authorised Neighbourhood Safer Places - Places of Last Resort (NSF/PLR) within the Shire of South Gippsland. The Fire Management Planning Working Group

Will provide ongoing annual advice to Council in relation to the ongoing designation of this NSP.

Township	NSP/PLR Location
Sandy Point	**Sandy Point Community Centre: Corner Ocean View Parade and Church Parade** **Sandy Point 3959**

Private landowners – management of private property

Private landowners and occupiers are responsible for ensuring their activities, use of fire and the level of vegetation on their land does not present an unacceptable danger to life or property from the threat of fire.

Landowners and occupiers are encouraged to remove fire hazards and manage fuels around their property before the Fire Danger Period. This routinely includes cutting long grass, removing fallen timber and rubbish, and clearing leaves and branches from gutters. Information on the clearing of native vegetation around houses can be found Clearing Trees and Vegetation | CFA (Country Fire Authority).

To assist property owners in the management of vegetation on their land and mitigate their bushfire risk, specific planning permit exemptions exist in Victorian planning schemes to allow the clearance of vegetation around certain dwellings to create or maintain defendable space that assists bushfire protection.

The level of hazard reduction on private land can influence fire behaviour, survivability and can either complement or detract from the effectiveness of hazard reduction on adjoining land. Where unacceptable risks are identified, Municipal Fire Prevention Officers (MFPOs) enforce fine fuel hazard management on private land.

Farmers, farm managers and other primary produces have special need to consider fire safety, actively plan for and mitigate fire risk, manage vegetation and on occasion undertake farming activities that present a fire risk. On the Land - Agriculture Fire Management Guidelines have been developed for farmers and other rural landholders.

Links to key Fire Management documents

In Victoria agencies conduct fuel management activities like planned burning to reduce the risk of bushfires causing harm to things we care about. Each region of Victoria has developed a fuel management strategy that describes why, where and how often planned burning, other fuel management activities and supporting actions are needed.

Plan Name	Management Plan Owner	What	Link
Gippsland Bushfire Management Strategy 2020	Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVic), Country Fire Authority (CFA), Emergency Management Victoria (EMV), and local government in consultation with communities.	Gippsland Strategic bushfire management planning is about bringing together land and fire managers, communities and stakeholders to develop a common understanding of bushfire risk and determine strategies and actions to reduce that risk.	Regional Bushfire Management Strategies Gippsland
Joint Fuel Management Program	FFMVic and CFA	The Joint Fuel Management Program is a state-wide program that manages fuel on public and private land over the next three years. The program integrates a risk-focused bushfire management approach.	Joint Fuel Management Program
SEMP) Bushfire Sub-Plan	Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) on behalf of the Emergency Management Commissioner (EMC) coordinated the development of this plan in conjunction with the fire services agencies	(SEMP) Bushfire Sub-Plan outlines the current arrangements for the management of bushfires in Victoria. This supports a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated approach and reflects a shared responsibility for bushfire management. In alignment with the SEMP, this plan contextualises the current arrangements, roles and responsibilities for bushfire mitigation, planning, preparedness, response (including relief) and recovery.	SEMP Bushfire Sub-Plan	Emergency Management Victoria (emv.vic.gov.au)

Hazard Trees near Electric Lines – Identification and Notification Procedures

What is a hazard tree?

According to the ES Act, a hazard tree is a tree which 'is likely to fall onto, or come into contact with, an electric line'.

There are a range of factors which may indicate that a tree is a hazard tree. That is, a tree which is likely to fall onto, or come into contact with, an electric line. Some of these factors will be obvious when looking at the tree but many may only be apparent when the tree is assessed by a person with specific expertise and training, such as an Arborist.

The following criteria may be used to assist in identifying a hazard tree:

- The size of the tree suggests that it is likely to come into contact with the electric line, for example because it appears to be encroaching or growing into the line clearance space.
- There is an excessive lean on the tree, or branches' hanging off the tree and the tree is in proximity to an electric (power) line.
- The size or appearance of the tree suggests it could come into contact with the line including under foreseeable local conditions.

If a potentially hazardous tree is identified, the notification procedure outlined below should be followed. Where a responsible person becomes aware of a potentially hazardous tree for which they have responsibility, they must follow their own applicable internal procedure.

Reporting a hazard tree & recording action

Where any person becomes aware of, or receives a report of, a potentially hazardous tree within the municipality, this should be referred to AusNet Services in the first instance and South Gippsland Shire Council if the potential hazard tree is within the townships of Leongatha or Korumburra.

AusNet Services or South Gippsland Shire Council must take all necessary steps to advise the person responsible for the tree that it may be hazardous where they are not the responsible person as soon as practicable.

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Agency Name – AusNet Services
Position – Arborist
Telephone Number – 1300 360 795 or 13 17 99
Email - customersupport@ausnetservices.com.au

Agency Name – South Gippsland Shire Council
Position – Council Arborist
Telephone Number – 5662 9200 (24/7)
Email - council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au

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It is recommended that AusNet Services and South Gippsland Shire Council maintain a register in which all notifications are recorded together with the date of receipt of the notification and the date the notification was reported to the responsible person and actions taken (details of the time and person contacted should be recorded). It is recommended that AusNet Services and South Gippsland Shire Council also maintain a register of notifications received of hazardous trees for which they are the responsible person and actions taken.

Structure and Other Fire Mitigation Strategies

Structure fire risk in the South Gippsland municipality consists of a mix of residential, commercial and industrial premises with the large towns of Leongatha and Korumburra. Smaller towns such as Mirboo North and Foster contain mainly residential and commercial properties.

A considerable number of residential properties exist in remote locations and small hamlets scattered throughout the municipality.

A range of strategies and treatments exist which are applied consistently across the state and municipality to reduce the occurrence and impact of structure fires, these include:

- provisions in the Victorian Building Act - Essential safety measures | Victorian Building Authority
- provisions the Victorian Planning Scheme
- compliance and enforcement of legislation
- industry guidelines
- Standards (i.e. electrical safety) Electricity safety general regulations | Energy Safe Victoria
- engineered controls
- fire service response planning (pre-incident plans) and training
- staff training
- event permits and event management plans
- targeted education programs
- public awareness programs
- multimedia communications
- Business Continuity Planning

Certain critical infrastructure facilities require additional planning and mitigations works. Close working relationships with these facilities ensures that internal mitigation strategies are supported and understood by fire agencies.

Other incident types including chemical fires, vehicle accidents, hazardous material spills are managed through specific fire agency policies and guidelines.

What the community can do

The CFA's Plan & Prepare webpage has a specific "Fires in the Home" section detailing steps community members can take to reduce their own risks. Visit www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/fires-in-the-home

Communications and Engagement

The MEMP has an identified Engagement and Resilience planning will occur through the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee that identifies activities undertaken by members agencies. The Fire Management Planning Working Group can identify any additional engagement and resilience items through their MEMPC representative of by contacting em@southgippsland.vic.gov.au