

# BUSHFIRE ACTION PLAN EXTRACTS FOR VISITING SCHOOLS

*These extracts from the Bushfire Action Plan (BAP) provide information on matters likely to be of most concern when planning an Arbury Park camp during the fire danger season. Visiting school leaders can obtain copies of the full plan from Arbury Park if required.*

## Introduction

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

- on days of Total Fire Ban
- where fire danger ratings are forecast to be *High, Extreme* or *Catastrophic* (a catastrophic fire danger forecast will automatically trigger closure of the site)
- when there is a fire in the local district – within 5 km radius of APOS
- when a bushfire starts in, or enters, the APOS grounds, and
- during the period immediately after a bushfire has impacted on APOS - the 'Recovery Phase'.

## Cancellation of camps in event of *High* fire danger forecasts or above

1. When days of *High, Extreme* or *Catastrophic* fire danger are declared, or weather forecasts are such that bushfires could threaten APOS; eg expected temperatures 38<sup>o</sup> or above for an extended period and/or strong northerly winds, the APOS Principal will contact the Principal and/or the visiting teacher in charge of the expected visiting school, in advance of departure, to discuss cancel the camp without financial penalty. Arrangements for the school to transfer their booking to another date will be offered.

To assist this process, emergency contact numbers for the Principal and Program Coordinator of all schools with a booking for Terms 1 and 4 will be sought prior to the commencement of these terms. This will enable the APOS Principal to contact clients after hours, should the need arise, to discuss proposed cancellations.

2. When days of *High* or *Extreme* fire danger are declared while a school is in residence the APOS Principal may contact the Principal of the client school, to discuss an early finish to the camp and return home, preferably the night before such a day or if not as early as possible the next morning, if it is safe to do so. Camp fees will be adjusted accordingly.
3. When a day of *Catastrophic* fire danger is forecast while a school is in residence, the APOS Principal will contact the following to discuss the safest evacuation actions for the group and to alert authorities that a group is in residence.
  - Department for Education Emergency and Security Management (ph 82263714)
  - Visiting school Principal
  - Local and Regional CFS
  - Education Director

The evacuation options will depend on several factors including

- Whether the catastrophic conditions forecast occur early in the morning (approx. 7.00am) or on the preceding afternoon (approx. 4.30pm).
  - The time required to locate a suitable bus company.
  - The distance from APOS to the home school.
4. In line with Department for Education guidelines for schools (pg 19 Camps & Excursions – Guidelines for schools and preschools) when a bushfire is burning in the local district and the expected visiting school has not left their site, or is in transit to APOS, the APOS Principal will cancel their camp. Arrangements for the school to transfer their booking to another date will be made.

## Bushfire Shelter

1. The Administration/Dining room is the designated Bushfire Shelter. The building has; roof sprinklers, sealed cavities, bronze screens on opening windows, shutters on northern side, laminated glass in all windows with commercial grade aluminium frames and colorbond mini-orb steel cladding covering northern and western walls. The tank feeding the roof sprinklers is a dedicated fire fighting supply of approx 180 kilolitres and will run all sprinklers (fire shelter and dormitories) for approximately one hour.
2. The APOS Bushfire Shelter is for staff, students and day visitors only. It is *not* a designated community Fire Refuge. Staff and clients present at APOS when a bushfire threatens will move into the Bushfire Shelter on hearing numerous blasts of the school's fire siren.
3. In the event of a fire starting in a building, not as the result of a bushfire, the school's siren will sound to indicate that all activities are to cease. Teachers direct students to the tennis court, where there is emergency lighting, or if necessary, to another Bushfire Shelter.
4. A portable siren/megaphone for signalling a move to the Bushfire Shelter during periods of electricity blackout is stored with all other bushfire emergency equipment in the steel cupboard, Visiting Teachers Room. This room is contained within the Bushfire Shelter.
5. Visiting staff will have student and staff roll, medical information and medications in the Visiting Teachers Room.
6. Bushfire emergency equipment stored in the steel cupboard, Visiting Teachers Room, includes hard hats, overalls, blankets, goggles, gloves and portable siren.
7. Additional emergency equipment; first aid kit, drinking water, food, duct tape, important telephone numbers, street directory, battery powered radio, spare batteries, torches are accessible in the Bushfire Shelter. A separate tub contains *Emergency Only* equipment and is stored in the cupboard. It includes torches, batteries, duct tape, lollies.
8. A Porta-potti is moved into the Bushfire Shelter from the First Aid room as part of Level 2 Bushfire Preparedness.
9. 100 litres of water for wetting blankets and assisting to cool visitors is stored in the cellar of the school. This will be moved from the cellar as part of Level 2 Bushfire Preparedness.
10. Visiting staff will have student and staff roll, medical information and medications in the Visiting Teachers Room.

## Telephones

1. In the event of a bushfire, the power to the school may be cut and mobile phones may not have connection. There is satellite phone available in the main office for such instances.

## **Access to Bushfire Shelter**

1. The Bushfire Shelter can be easily and quickly reached from all areas of APOS and will safely hold a maximum of 115 persons.
2. On days of Total Fire Ban, the APOS camp Coordinator will remind visiting staff and students of the siren signal that indicates movement to the Bushfire Shelter. This is done at breakfast time while all visiting staff and students are in the Bushfire Shelter. This procedure needs to occur each Total Fire Ban Day as APOS does not have a permanent enrolment of students.
3. In order to ensure a safe and orderly operation, a decision to move all persons into the Bushfire Shelter will be made by the Emergency Response Team when any of the following agreed 'triggers' are reached.
  - CFS information and warning messages broadcast on the local ABC radio or the CFS website indicate a fire is burning within the local district.
  - The local Emergency Services advise that a bushfire is likely to impact on the site.
  - There is a confirmed sighting of nearby smoke or flame.
4. Visiting staff are responsible for posting their list of student, staff and adult helper dormitory groups on the emergency section of the dining room noticeboard in the Bushfire Shelter at the beginning of a camp. This list is to be used to check all visitors are accounted for as soon as possible after accessing the refuge
5. Arbury Park Road is the only entry and exit roadway to the school. It is a no-through road.
6. Private vehicles will not be able to access the Bushfire Shelter during or after a bushfire emergency until emergency services deem it safe to do so.
7. The administration staff of the visiting school will be informed by the APOS Principal that all staff and students will be in the Bushfire Shelter and not evacuated until emergency services deem it safe to do so. Parents of visiting students will be advised that under no circumstance are they to attempt to reach APOS to collect their child in a Bushfire emergency.