

# Emergencies (Strategic Bushfire Management) Plan 2019

## Disallowable instrument DI2019–206

made under the

**Emergencies Act 2004, s 72 (Strategic bushfire management plan)**

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

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### Overview

The Strategic Bushfire Management Plan (SBMP) is the overarching document that directs all levels of bushfire planning in the ACT. Its purpose is to provide a strategic framework to protect the ACT community from bushfires and reduce resulting harm to the physical, social, cultural and economic environment of the Territory.

The first SBMP was developed in 2004, and since this time the SBMP has underpinned the continuous improvement in bushfire management outcomes in the ACT. Section 80 of the *Emergencies Act 2004* (the Act) provides that the SBMP must be reviewed at intervals of not more than 5 years. Accordingly, SBMP version 2 was released in October 2009 and version 3 was released in September 2014. The instrument makes version 4 of the SBMP and revokes the existing version 3.

To achieve its purpose, the SBMP sets objectives and actions for:

- agency and community preparation and response for bushfires
- bushfire hazard assessment and risk analysis
- bushfire prevention, including hazard reduction
- adaptive management to apply best practice to bushfire management and prevention practices in the ACT in a changing environment.

This version of the SBMP draws upon policies, strategies and actions implemented through the previous versions of the SBMP and delivers a number of improvements in operational practices, community education and awareness and overall risk mitigation. This plan ensures that the ACT will continue to have a robust governance and planning framework, informed by best practice, and reflective of community priorities, for its bushfire management activities.

Building on the achievements of the current plan, this SBMP retains the existing 12 objectives of SBMP version 3. To provide greater emphasis and clarity, these objectives are grouped under 6 themes:

- community
- firefighting operations
- broad scale fuel reduction and access
- adaptive management for climate change
- land use planning and
- recovery from bushfires.

Additionally, preparation of this plan took into account five factors expected to play an increasing role in bushfire risk management in the ACT over the next 5 years of the plan. These factors are:

- the important role of the ACT community,
- the use of technology in bushfire management,
- climate change (adaptive management),
- recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture,
- bushfire recovery.

Part A of the SBMP provides the background and sets the context for fire management in the ACT. It describes the bushfire environment and how the ACT assesses risk factors and manages bushfire risk.

Part B of the SBMP contains the objectives and actions. It details the current and ongoing management strategies that inform the actions that apply to each of the 12 objectives.

In developing the SBMP, the Commissioner, Emergency Services Agency, consulted with the ACT Bushfire Council and the Conservator of Flora and Fauna as required by section 72 (2) of the Act.

In addition, a comprehensive community and stakeholder consultation campaign was undertaken to support the development of the draft plan. This consultation recognised the delivery of the comprehensive strategies in the SBMP over the next 5 years is contingent on the support of government, key stakeholders and the broader community. This included a public consultation period as required by section 75 of the Act.

### **Clause notes**

Clause 1 and 2 are formal provisions that deal with the name and commencement of the new instrument.

Clause 3 is the provision making the SBMP, which is contained at schedule 1.

Clause 4 revokes the existing SBMP version 3.

There are no human rights implications arising from this instrument.

There are no climate change implications arising from this instrument, although a priority for the SBMP is responding to the impacts of climate change. This is addressed through the focus area ‘adaptive management for climate change’.