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Bushfire arson prevention handbook

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Disclaimer

This handbook and related worksheets are not considered a definitive guide in developing bushfire arson prevention strategies. It has been produced to offer assistance to those developing prevention strategies who may not know when or how to start a project. The approaches included in this handbook are suggestions only and it is at the discretion of the user of this handbook as to whether the content and worksheets are applicable to their local context.

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Introduction

The following handbook is for use by local organisations, particularly fire agencies and the police, when developing community-based bushfire and bushfire arson (BFA) prevention strategies. It was developed as part of a five year project by the Australian Institute of Criminology (funded by the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre) which aims to reduce the impact of deliberately lit fires in Australian bushland environments.

Over the past four years, research into bushfire arson has found that, among other things:

- bushfire arsonists are rarely caught, so it is difficult to profile bushfire arson offenders; and
- bushfires are quite patterned in time, space etc, therefore, there is potential to map and predict where fires are most likely to occur (AIC 2008, 2007; Bryant 2008; Muller 2008).

Research shows that it is possible to prevent bushfire arson by applying what is known about bushfire arson in a more systematic way (Muller 2009).

The handbook and worksheets provided here draw on current crime prevention knowledge about the factors that lead to BFA occurring and describe what information is important when evaluating your activities or project. This handbook aims to assist you in developing BFA prevention strategies that take into consideration the local context, including issues such as stakeholder engagement, measuring success and how to structure your bushfire arson prevention activities using crime prevention theory.

This handbook does not provide a review of bushfire arson literature, nor does it suggest what types of strategies you should implement for each bushfire-related problem—there have been numerous publications and research on this topic by the Australian Institute of Criminology and other agencies (see *Suggested reading* and *References*). As bushfire arson characteristics and threats vary according to local context, you need to decide what you want to do based on your available resources and needs.

Using this handbook

- This handbook has been designed for use in planning workshops for BFA prevention strategies, but can also be used as a general project planning tool.
- **It does not have to be followed chronologically**—it is only a guide to help structure how you could think about implementing a BFA prevention project or program in your local area.
- The handbook is divided into two sections: the first is a summary of how to develop and implement a BFA prevention project. The second is a series of resource worksheets that can be used to document and plan your project. They support the information provided in the summary.
- Each summary element in the handbook has one or more corresponding worksheets. The name of these worksheets are found in the box:

Worksheet support

- **This handbook and the worksheets are suggestions only** and if you already collect the information or have done something similar, it is not necessary for you to use the worksheets, nor should you feel compelled to re-do the work to suit this format.
- It may be helpful for you to go through this process and the worksheets step-by-step, or you may wish to complete multiple worksheets at the same time and within the same discussion. It doesn't matter how you use this handbook, as long as you have the information available.
- **There is no need to complete the worksheets all at once, or to complete them at all.** The information for one worksheet might take from five hours or two days to collect, or it could take just half an hour. It doesn't matter how long you take and there is no recommended timeframe or number of worksheets to complete.

The handbook outlines seven key elements in project development:

- Element 1: Establishing local coordination between police and fire agencies
 - Element 2: Identifying the BFA threat
 - Element 3: Getting stakeholders involved
 - Element 4: Deciding what should be done about the BFA threat
 - ✓ choosing objectives that address the key problems
 - ✓ deciding on projects that address the objectives
 - ✓ choosing indicators that measure whether you have achieved the objectives
 - Element 5: Planning project implementation
 - Element 6: Developing the evaluation plan for your project
 - Element 7: Putting your project into action and revisiting the various elements when necessary
- As the worksheets are designed for the development of a strategy in a workshop setting, there is not a lot of detail about how to conduct a final evaluation as this will be conducted at the end of the project. However, it is important to lay the foundation for evaluation before a project begins and as such, there is a section on how to prepare for this.
- Not every aspect of project implementation is included. **Developing BFA prevention projects relies heavily on local context.** As such, these worksheets have been designed to give you the skeleton of what you need to consider—it is up to you to add the body.

The order of the elements is a rough guide and does not need to be rigidly followed: Let local context guide you on when to do each one

Before a workshop

There are some things that you need to consider before convening a local BFA prevention workshop:

Key ingredients for a successful bushfire arson prevention project

- ✓ Need access to local agency data relevant to bushfires (eg police statistics, fire statistics)
- ✓ Use current research findings and reports to support your approach
- ✓ Have stakeholders who have committed or promised to provide resources (eg time, skills, money and/or support for the project)
- ✓ Only propose projects that you have the capacity to sustain (ie adequate staff, time, expertise, funding and support)
- ✓ Good communication across key stakeholders is essential

Remember these when choosing prevention projects!

When should you start thinking about developing a bushfire arson prevention strategy?

Any time is a good time to start planning a community-wide BFA prevention strategy. While the commencement of certain activities and projects may depend on factors such as the season, available resources and the weather, for example, it is never too early to start planning an overall strategy. However, **before engaging with potential partners and stakeholders, consider their availability to try to maximise participation and engagement.** For example:

- **Is it bushfire season?** Organising information, data and attending meetings take time, which may not be practical for fire fighters in the high fire-danger season.
- **Are schools going to be involved?** The very beginning and end of the school year may not be a good time to engage with schools, or during school holidays, or during the time when schools are preparing student reports. These may not be factors at all, but it could be worthwhile talking to the local school(s) about the best times, particularly if you would like the schools to become involved in a prevention strategy.
- **Are there any community events on at the same time as the proposed meeting?** Does the proposed time for the first meeting clash with any other community events or activities? If so, consider whether any key stakeholders might already be committed to other activities. Conversely, the presence of an already established group of community representatives could be useful to promote the BFA prevention strategy plans and attract more community representation.

This list is not exhaustive, and some of these factors may not be relevant to you. Often, not everyone invited to attend meetings or engage in a prevention strategy will do so. In addition, it may be an inconvenient time to engage with stakeholders for many reasons, but some circumstances might prevent rescheduling activities or meetings for a different time. It is unlikely that a particular time will be suitable for everyone, so do not be discouraged if you do not get as many people as you want. **The key is to make sure organisations/agencies you think will be key stakeholders in a BFA prevention strategy become engaged at some point.** If they cannot attend a multi-agency meeting, consider having a separate meeting with them at another time. More suggestions on when to engage stakeholders are outlined in the following section.

Laying the ground work: Developing a bushfire arson prevention strategy

Element 1: Establishing local coordination between police and fire agencies

Good practice in BFA prevention is built on good working relationships between police and fire agencies. **To get an accurate picture of the local bushfire and BFA threat, it is a good idea to compare what both sides know, as often police collect different information to fire agencies.** This will involve agencies comparing statistics, local knowledge, anecdotal evidence and any other information to create a complete picture. People with expertise in using and analysing databases should be involved at this stage to assist with interpreting the data. These can be found either within fire and police agencies, or from external sources.

For most local areas, regular liaison between fire agencies and the police is primarily driven by operational matters.

Some communities already have an established relationship between fire agencies and police, so this step may not be needed. If you need to re-establish or initiate a more productive working relationship, the worksheet *Establishing local coordination between police and fire agencies to tackle bushfire arson* offers tips on how to do this.

In the first stage of a meeting between fire and police, the aim should be to:

- compare what you know;
- set goals and objectives for your approach;
- start developing your strategies;
- have an idea of who you would need to engage in the community; and
- start developing project timelines.

Note! Templates for facilitating these aims are in this guide and are described in the following sections. These tips can also be used when engaging other stakeholder agencies and groups.

Worksheet support:

 *Establishing local coordination between police and fire agencies to tackle bushfire arson*

A good relationship can facilitate better knowledge sharing and improve response to the BFA threat

Element 2: Identifying the bushfire arson threat in your area

In general, most fire fighters will have a good idea of the nature of BFA in the area. To back up this information, map and identify the characteristics of BFA in your local area. **This provides a stronger evidence base for your proposed actions** and be used to illustrate your approach to the community, other agencies, other jurisdictions, or funding agencies.

By mapping the information, you may find BFA threats in your community that you were not aware of. This is where mapping what you know and comparing it to information from other agencies can help. You do not need to limit it to police and fire agencies; there may be other local data sources that could assist. Collecting data over more than one session could also help as there may be sensitive data that cannot be shown to other stakeholders.

- Other agencies and departments that may hold relevant data include:
 - ✓ education;
 - ✓ corrections; and
 - ✓ land management agencies, such as parks and wildlife services.

When mapping, it can also be useful to raise what you know or suspect informally about BFA in your area. **However, you must also be mindful of privacy and other legal obligations when raising any issues.** This is particularly important to remember if you are talking about juveniles in your meetings.

It is useful when looking at the available data to conduct a trend analysis (ie looking for patterns or changes in the data when mapped), so you can see if there are any changes over time and if there are any particular times that fires appear to be occurring.

Mapping the BFA threat can help justify your actions and support your knowledge of BFA in your local area

Before sharing information, make sure you are able to do so legally, and with permission from your agency

Why map?

- ✓ Obtain a complete picture of BFA threat in your area
- ✓ Fill in any gaps in knowledge
- ✓ Chance to compare what you officially know with what you informally suspect may be the case

Be aware of any limitations in the data you are using for mapping or other analysis. Maps and trend analyses are only as good as the data used. The data may be:

- unreliable;
- incomplete—information or parts of the data you want to use might not have been put into the dataset, making a proper analysis of the data difficult;
- not updated regularly—if data are not updated regularly, you may be making decisions based on old or redundant information; or
- not completed properly—for example, if you know that certain categories in a dataset might not be selected by the person filling out a form as a means to reduce paperwork, or that employees do not consistently enter data into the database or system used.

Maps and trend analyses are only as good as the data behind them

No dataset is perfect, but, try to become familiar with the data you plan to use in your BFA strategy planning so you will be less likely to misinterpret it. It would be useful to learn how, when and who completes data entry for the information you plan to use in any mapping or analysis. A good approach would be to talk to the people who manage the datasets and find out where they can see potential problems occurring.

Note! If you do not know how to map, or do not have access to the expertise or software needed, then do not feel that you have to do it. If you cannot interpret the results or are left with results generated from very poor data, then mapping is probably not worth the time or effort. However, try to engage people with research or mapping skills in the strategy-development process so you can develop a BFA prevention strategy built on a solid evidence base, as well as good qualitative evidence and local knowledge. People with skills in mapping could come from:

- police services;
- fire agencies;
- universities; or
- partner agencies.

If your community does not have the capacity to map, do the best with what you can, including obtaining information via other methods such as conducting interviews, community surveys and talking to agencies and organisations that might have some useful anecdotal evidence.

How much does bushfire arson cost the local community?

No dataset is perfect. Become familiar with any limitations to reduce the risk of misinterpreting results

BFA could have a large drain on a community's resources. BFA not only incurs the actual financial cost of the fire damage, but can have staffing, psychological and other resource costs that can impact the community as well. The environmental costs can also have a large affect on the community that may not be obvious. These less tangible costs can be considered 'hidden costs'. For example, there are a lot of hidden costs associated with the land surrounding a water catchment area being damaged by fire. Two possible costs include:

- New growth in bushfire-affected areas often requires more water than established vegetation which can use water that would normally flow to the dams. This can affect water levels of dams.
- There can be quite high costs associated with treating water contaminated by the effects of the fire and the related labour costs needed for treating the water.

Examples of bushfire arson costs to the community

• Loss of local business (eg businesses not rebuilding; people not moving to the community for fear of BFA etc)	• Staffing and financial resources diverted from other areas of police operations (such as other criminal investigations) to investigate BFA	• Psychological costs (eg damage to community's sense of safety; support needed for victims of BFA)
• Staffing and financial resources diverted from other sectors of the community (eg schools, charities) to address the damage caused by BFA	• Investigation costs (employing specialist investigators, taskforces, police and fire agency time)	• Insurance costs and the flow-on effects to the community (eg higher insurance premiums)
• Replacing equipment (including its upkeep, setting up the equipment—these hours are often not costed)	• Environmental damage	• Replacing infrastructure (eg rebuilding houses, fences, school buildings etc)
• Payment of fire levy to local council	• Damage to water supplies	• Reduction in productivity

The list above is not exhaustive, so it is important to think about what costs would be specific to your local community. Having a good estimate of how much BFA can cost a community can be used to garner community and stakeholder support.

Worksheet support:

-  *What do we know about bushfires? Fire agencies*
-  *What do we know about bushfires? Police and other agencies: Police intelligence*
-  *What do we know about bushfires? Police and other agencies: Criminal justice intelligence*
-  *The consequences of bushfire arson: How much does it cost the local community?*

Element 3: Getting stakeholders involved

- No matter what community BFA strategies you implement, you will most likely need to engage stakeholders outside of your agency for support. This support could be:
 - ✓ financial; or
 - ✓ other resources including:
 - ◆ data;
 - ◆ staff;
 - ◆ expertise;
 - ◆ time; and
 - ◆ communication (eg spreading the word, advertising project results).
- You may wish to involve potential stakeholders in the development of the projects from the start. For example, there may already be projects that exist in the community to deal with BFA or arson prevention, or you may like to take the advice of local agencies before you propose projects that would involve their services or support.
- You will know what approach will work best in your community, so do what suits your community to get the best outcome for your prevention project.
- **Try to get agencies/organisations to send representatives who have the ability to make decisions and have the ability to commit resources to the BFA prevention strategy.**

- Not every agency/organisation/individual will be as enthusiastic as you to address the problem of BFA and take part in its implementation, even if you both see it as an important initiative. Therefore, it is advantageous to **plan ahead before you approach possible stakeholders by identifying potential ways that may encourage them to participate**; in other words, let them know ‘what’s in it for them’ if they get involved. This could include a variety of things from access to data you hold, making them aware that the project is aligned with their agency’s core goals etc.
- It is important to **update and keep a list of who these stakeholders are**, in particular:
 - ✓ You need to know exactly who your stakeholders are and what they provide.
 - ✓ You need to be aware of any potential issues in engaging the services or support of a stakeholder.
 - ✓ Often stakeholders change or situations evolve, so you need a list handy that you can update regularly to help keep everyone abreast of the changes.
 - ✓ You will know where to look when you need data or information for your project, or when you conduct an evaluation of activities during or at the end of your project.

Worksheet support:

-  *Who to involve in bushfire prevention strategies: Potential stakeholders contact list*
-  *Who to involve in bushfire prevention strategies: Detailed stakeholder list*
-  *Benefits, generating momentum and sustaining support: What’s in it for us?*

Element 4: Deciding what should be done about the bushfire arson threat in your area

Once the nature of the problem has been identified, you need to decide how to deal with the BFA threat. This involves three steps:

- choosing objectives (ie what you want to achieve);
- choosing activities that will help achieve them (ie your project); and
- choosing indicators (ie making sure you have something that can be used to measure success).

Note! There is a simple example of how these three steps can help you shape your response to the BFA threat at the end of Element 4—refer to this if you need to figure out how each element fits together.

Choosing objectives

Objectives are important to have from the outset—they can help structure your response to the BFA threat based on local needs.

Objectives are statements that say what you want to achieve

It is important to have mapped the local BFA threat prior to choosing objectives. For example, there is little to gain from saying your project objective is to reduce offending by recidivist (also known as repeat) arsonist offenders when the mapping shows no evidence of recidivist offenders in the community.

The worksheet *What do we want to do? Summary sheet* outlines a list of generic objectives that you might consider for a BFA prevention strategy. It also provides a place to list what activities you would use to achieve those objectives and what you would use to see if the activity is achieving the desired objective (ie the indicators).

Worksheet support:

-  *What do we want to do? Summary sheet: Benefits, generating momentum and sustaining support: What’s in it for us?*

Choosing activities

Once you have selected objectives, you can then focus on choosing activities to help you address them. The activities you decide to implement to prevent BFA will need to reflect not only the bushfire threat in your area, but also the local capacity to effectively implement a project.

Factors that could influence your choice of prevention activities

- Do we have the funds to run this project?
- Do we have stakeholders who have committed, or promised to provide, resources (eg time, skills, money) and/or support for the project?
- Do we have the necessary skills and staff to be able to implement this project effectively?
- Do we have the time to put into the project?
- Is this project approach supported by evidence?

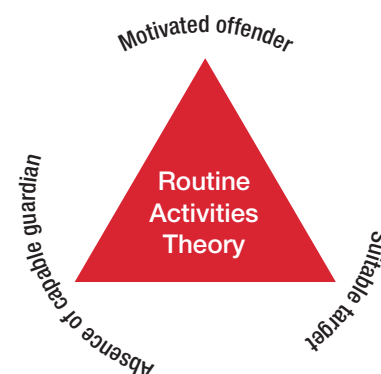
If thinking of replicating a promising project from another area:

- Do we have the same level of resources?
- Do we have the same problems?
- Can the project be adapted to our local area?

Base activities on your BFA needs—not just on what works well in another area

A good source of project ideas is to find out what other communities and fire agencies have done to tackle similar problems. You may wish to implement the concept of the project and/or only certain elements. This is fine, as long as it can be, and is, adapted to local context and you have the capacity to implement it. Just because a project worked well in another community doesn't mean it will be successful in yours.

- **You should not try to do too much—be realistic about what your community can do.** For example, there is no point deciding to run expensive intervention programs for 'at-risk' youths (ie youths who are at risk of engaging in offending behaviours) if you do not have the expertise or funding to do it, or if you do not even have a problem with at-risk youth in the first place. If you have already mapped your BFA threat, you should be able to avoid these traps.
- When deciding how to tackle the identified BFA problem, it can be useful to structure your response within a framework, to make sure you are tackling as many possible elements of the problem as you can in a strategic way. The worksheets provide a framework for you to structure your response. This framework is based on the principles of routine activities theory—a criminological theory developed by Lawrence Cohen and Marcus Felson—where it is considered that **crime can only occur if there is a suitable target, absence of a capable guardian (ie someone who could prevent or stop arson from occurring) and a motivated offender. This is often called the crime triangle.**
- To prevent crime (in this case, BFA), you need to remove one or more elements of the triangle, usually by proposing interventions that look at altering the physical environment, targeting the offender and/or targeting the potential victim. You do this by proposing activities that, among other things:
 - ✓ reduce rewards of BFA;
 - ✓ increase risks of committing BFA;
 - ✓ increase the effort to commit BFA;
 - ✓ remove excuses for the behaviour; and
 - ✓ empower the community.



One activity can often have more than one purpose. For example, it could aim to deter offenders, as well as empower the community and potential victims

These are often also seen as techniques of situational crime prevention (eg see Cornish & Clarke 2003). The worksheets allow you to group your proposed activities under three categories:

- targeting the environment;
- targeting the community and potential victims; and
- targeting known and potential offenders.

For each category, you are able to list actions for the five prevention techniques above. They are not necessarily mutually exclusive, so do not worry if an activity fits in more than one category—put it into each category that applies. You also do not need to have activities for each area, it is only a structure to let you conceptualise what your project is tackling. Refer to the example at the end of *Element 3* to see how it can be applied. For more information on these theories, see the UK Home Office crime reduction website at <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/learningzone/rat.htm>

Timing of projects

Another thing to consider when choosing activities is how they will be implemented over time. It can be useful to think of responses as being separated into three categories: strategic, tactical and operational. Some activities will be implemented prior to the bushfire season and will have long-term goals (strategic), whereas others may need to be reviewed and acted upon a daily basis depending on the weather and season (tactical responses), which could be either proactive or reactive. There could also be activities that are performed as part of everyday fire fighting/investigation duties that could play a role in the prevention process (operational). For a more comprehensive prevention project, you might consider having activities that fall into each category.

When choosing activities:

- relate it to an objective;
- make sure the success of the project can be measured. If you cannot measure your project then you won't know if what you have done works; and
- do not be too ambitious. It is better to have smaller scale or fewer projects that aim to do one or two key things than to try to do everything. Smaller projects are often more manageable and easier to evaluate than ones that attempt to address every problem.

Worksheet support:

-  *Targeting the environment: Possible actions*
-  *Targeting the community and potential victims: Possible actions*
-  *Targeting known and at-risk offenders: Possible actions*

Selecting indicators to measure success

Indicators are used during and at the end of a project as a means of telling you if the project you chose is actually helping you achieve your objective. **You need to have a good idea of how you will measure your success down the track, so they must be considered from the outset.**

Tips for selecting indicators

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Make sure you can access the data | If you are looking at diversion rates, do you have access to diversion figures? If keeping young at-risk arsonists in schools is a priority, will the school let you see these records? Are there any privacy or legal barriers to the data? |
| • You have the tools to measure what you want to see | <p>If you want to know if the community is more aware of reporting suspicious arson behaviour, how would you measure that awareness—by the number of reports to police? Attitude surveys?</p> <p>Do your indicators actually allow you to see if your objective has been reached? For example, if your objective is to have a 20 percent increase in young arsonists successfully completing a diversion program, measuring how many abandoned vehicles are removed from bushland as an indicator does not tell you anything about achieving the objective (although it may be an indicator for another objective such as reducing fires in a known car dumping area)</p> |
| • Think in terms of what you would expect to see if your project is working | It could be an increase in detection of arsonists, decrease in the number of bushfires, increase in community reporting of suspicious arson behaviour etc |
| • Specify the extent of change you want to see | <p>For example, it could be a 10 percent increase, savings of \$1,000, or 20 offenders counselled etc so you know what to aim for</p> <p>There is no rule on the extent of the change you can specify—local knowledge will be invaluable in determining what is realistic and what is not</p> |
| • Specify when you might expect to see a change | Some objectives will be short term and others long term. Setting a timeframe for meeting an objective can help determining whether your project is timely |

Indicators usually show increases or decreases, but they are not limited to these

Note! When selecting and analysing indicator data, remember that it is up to you to interpret whether, for example, an increase or a decrease in numbers is a good thing. In other words, if there is an increase in reporting of suspicious fires, does that mean that there are more fires (bad thing), or that the community is more willing to report them (good thing)? Use your experience and local knowledge to guide how you interpret the results.

Worksheet support:

 *What we want to do? Summary sheet*

An example of choosing objectives, activities and indicators

Here is a simple example of how the objectives, activities and measures are linked and help you shape your BFA response. This is not a real example and projects may target many more factors, or target only one. They would also involve a lot more decision-making processes. It is included here to help you conceptualise the process.

A simple illustration of deciding how to address the bushfire arson threat in your area

You have decided the local objective is to decrease the amount of suspicious bushfires in a national park. Based on your mapping exercise, you find that most fires occur in summer between Friday afternoon and Sunday morning. Most fires are started as the result of other behaviours, for example, locals excessively consuming alcohol and then carelessly lighting fires in the grassland. There are also many abandoned vehicles in the area and these are often set alight by locals looking for fun, and sometimes by thieves who want to destroy evidence of their crime.

Based on this information, you decide to implement some activities to try to reduce the number of suspicious bushfires by trying to disrupt what you know about the crime triangle (guardian, offender and target). Your primary concerns are to deter would-be offenders and to make the community more aware of the problem.

To **remove the potential offenders from the situation**, you decide to start ranger and police patrols in known hotspots on Friday and Saturday nights to **increase the risk** of getting caught. This will be measured by counting the number of patrols done during the project; the number of arrests made; and how many people are sent away from the park at night and whether there is a decrease in suspicious fires during patrol times.

In addition to these patrols, the council has agreed to assist in removing abandoned vehicles within five days of being reported, as well as erecting signs in the park to alert people to the fines of illegally dumping cars and for lighting fires in the area. These signs will also contain information on who to call if someone sees suspicious activity in the area.

Removing vehicles has the benefit of not only targeting the environment by **increasing the effort** to commit the crime for offenders, it aims to make the environment more resistant to arson. You may decide that this will be a successful activity if 95 percent of abandoned vehicles are removed from the park within five days of being reported, as well as having an 80 percent reduction in bushfires originating from abandoned cars in the national park.

The signage targets potential offenders by **removing the excuses** of not knowing that starting fires in the park and dumping cars are illegal activities and also the broader community by **empowering** their ability to act if they witness suspicious behaviour. You have decided to see if there is an increase in reporting of suspicious behaviour in the parks via a hotline to see if there is any effect.

Implementing a bushfire arson strategy

Element 5: Planning who will do what, who knows what and who has what: Project implementation

Regardless of what you decide to do, or how big or small a project is, there still needs to be a clear understanding on how the project will be implemented and everyone involved needs to know their roles and responsibilities. There may also be legislative and/or organisational responsibilities that need to be fulfilled when implementing a project.

Knowing each other's roles and responsibilities can improve communication, cut down on confusion, and limit unnecessary duplication of tasks

Knowing these things can be the foundation for an effective communication strategy. For example, If there is a change in staff or management and people need to be briefed, having these documents helps you show the them who is responsible for what and their new role (in particular if they are replacing someone else). **It can also save time.** As time is a precious resource for many project implementers, particularly when it is an additional role above your normal duties, knowing where you can go to find out information, or to access the data you need in one easy document is invaluable.

For successful communication and project implementation	
Be clear on	Examples (list not exhaustive)
• who does what	implement key project activities, alert others of developments, collect data, measure results, prepare reports, release media and communication, pay contractors, manage project activities, organise stakeholder meetings, disseminate findings, manage budgets
• who needs to know what	decisions, results, outputs, reports, changes in project, deadlines, budget expenditure
• who has what	data, knowledge, experience, funding, expertise, contacts

The worksheet provided can be used as resource to document one project, or a new sheet could be used for each activity within a project. The choice is up to you and should reflect your needs.

Worksheet support:

 *Identifying the responsibilities/contribution of the community*

Element 6: Developing an evaluation strategy

How you evaluate has to be decided before you start a project

A common mistake is to only think about evaluating your project near its completion. **Evaluation needs to be considered at the start of the project** and depending on what you need to know and what you are trying to achieve from your project (as identified in the objectives and indicators section), results could indicate whether what you want to do is realistic in the long run.

The *Did it work?* worksheets ask a series of implementation and results questions that you would need to answer at the end of your project. It is important to know the answer to these questions for a few reasons:

- It shows you are clear on what you want to achieve and how you plan to achieve it.
- You can see if what you are planning to do can be realistically measured.
- It provides a foundation for the project's eventual evaluation.
- You are able to show others what you have achieved.
- A good evaluation can help add to the knowledge base of what works/does not work in BFA prevention.

The last point is particularly crucial. So little is known about what works and the best ways to deal with BFA, the responsibility to share and document what we do know depends on those implementing projects and interventions, in other words, you.

The worksheets do not tell you how to analyse and interpret the data; that is up to you and depends on the measures you choose. See the box below for some tips if you have to evaluate your BFA project, but do not know where to start.

In summary, **if you know how you can answer the questions in the resource sheets, you are in good shape and understand the needs of your project.**

Evaluation tips:

- If you do have to evaluate a project and you do not know how to go about it, use the evaluation sheet questions and answer them to create a 'story' of the project that is both useful and practical for others to understand how the project worked
- Even if you do not have the resources to give in-depth quantitative analysis (eg statistics, pre-post test results etc), it is still useful to write down what you do know, particularly about the process of how you did it
- A good rule of thumb when including information is thinking about what you would find useful to know if you wanted to implement a similar project, but had no idea how to go about it
- Think about engaging local people who have experience in evaluation from the start of any project or strategy development

Having good documentation on what you have done and how it worked can help in BFA prevention knowledge sharing

Worksheet support:

-  *Did it work? A basic template for questions that need to be asked when evaluating your project or strategy*

Elements 7 and 8: Putting your project into action and revisiting when necessary

Now you should have the basic foundation for implementing your prevention project. Not every aspect of project planning has been covered, just the basics, so you can adapt these suggestions to your suit local needs.

It is important to realise that projects and situations constantly change, so your responses and actions must also change. Sometimes the threat no longer exists (eg serial arsonist caught, no more abandoned vehicles), or you no longer have access to planned resources (eg budget cuts, a stakeholder no longer on board).

Do not rigidly follow your initial project plan if circumstances change—be flexible enough in planning to ensure you have the capacity to adapt to new circumstances.

Suggested times to revisit your bushfire arson project

Changes in		
• staff	• environment	• data or information access
• roles	• unexpected events	• stakeholders
• responsibilities	• situations	• organisational priorities
	• who conducts the analyses	

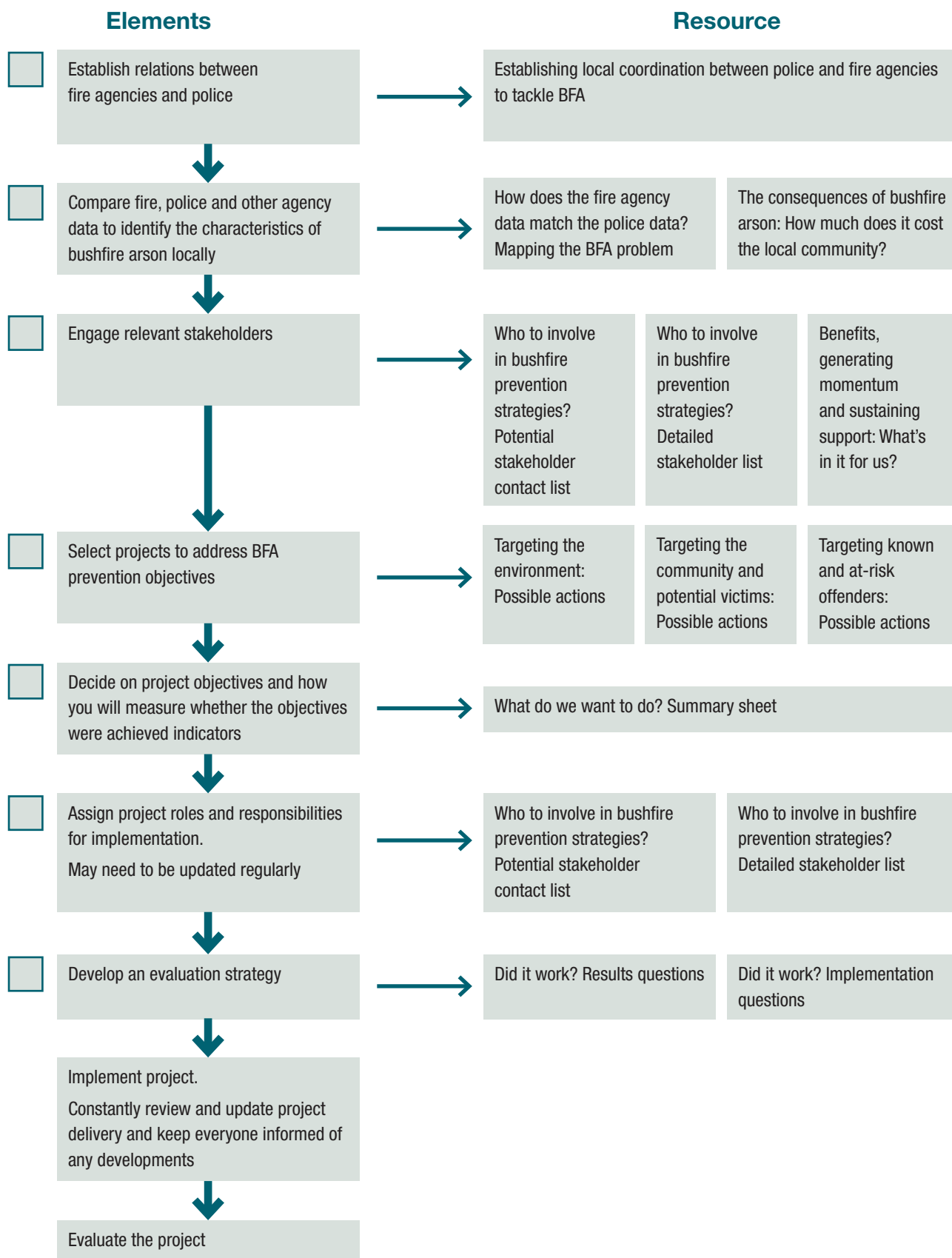
Worksheets to review during the life of the project

-  *What do we want to do? Summary sheet*
-  *Did it work? A basic template for questions that need to be asked when evaluating your project or strategy: Implementation questions*
-  *Did it work? A basic template for questions that need to be asked when evaluating your project or strategy: Results questions*
-  *Identifying the responsibilities/contribution of the community*
-  *Who to involve in bushfire prevention strategies? Detailed stakeholder list*
-  *Who to involve in bushfire prevention strategies? Potential stakeholder contact list*

Action elements

Below is a diagram to help conceptualise the elements involved in developing a BFA prevention strategy. The diagram will also show where there are resource sheets to support you in that particular element.

This is a very simplified, generic step-by-step process; naturally, it can be adapted to suit your local needs. Some processes may occur at the same time, others may not be necessary as they have already occurred. Use the boxes on the left to tick off tasks, so you can keep track of what you have done.



References

All URLs correct at 12 April 2010

Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) 2008. Weekly patterns in bushfire ignition. *Bushfire Arson Bulletin* no. 55. Canberra: AIC. <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/bfab/41-60/bfab055.aspx>

Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) 2007. The time of day of bushfires in Australia. *Bushfire Arson Bulletin* no. 40. Canberra: AIC. <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/bfab/21-40/bfab040.aspx>

Bryant C 2008. *Understanding bushfire: Trends in deliberate vegetation fires in Australia*. Technical and background paper series no. 27. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/tbp/21-40/tbp027.aspx>

Cornish DB & Clarke RV 2003. Opportunities, precipitators and criminal decisions: A reply to Wortley's critique of situational crime prevention, in Smith M & Cornish DB (eds), *Theory for situational crime prevention*. Monsey, NY: Criminal Justice Press

Muller D 2009. *Using crime prevention to reduce deliberate bushfire in Australia*. Research in public policy series no. 98. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/rpp/81-99/rpp98.aspx>

Muller D 2008. Offending and reoffending patterns of arsonists and bushfire arsonists in New South Wales. *Trends & Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice* no. 348. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/tandi/341-360/tandi348.aspx>

Suggested reading

All Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) publications can be found on the AIC website: <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications.aspx>

BushFIRE Arson Bulletins

To date, the AIC has released 61 BushFIRE Arson Bulletins (BFABs). BFABs are concise and topical one page sheets on a broad range of topics relating to the deliberate lighting of fires in Australian bushland environments. BFABs aim to build knowledge of all aspects of BFA—who lights fires, why they do it and what authorities can do about it. They are also a forum for sharing new information about bushfire arson—such as developments in research and legislation, or new publications. These are an initiative of the AIC, the Bushfire CRC and the ACT Department of Justice and Community Safety.

All BFABs are online at <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/bfab.aspx>

Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council

The Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) is the peak body for public sector fire, land management and emergency service organisations in Australia and New Zealand. The AFAC website hosts a wealth of information on BFA and also runs a knowledge web. The knowledge web contains case studies, research reports and other information to assist emergency services to share knowledge, collaborate and optimise the use of resources.

AFAC home page: <http://www.afac.com.au/>

AFAC knowledge web: <http://knowledgeweb.afac.com.au/home>

Resources for risk assessment

The NSW fire prevention strategy provides a selection of risk assessment checklists for reducing the threat of fire, looking at the following areas of prevention:

- reducing arson vulnerability;
- removing opportunity for arson to occur;
- increasing education on the issue; and
- improving security.

These are available on the NSW Fire Brigade website: http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/news.php?whats_new=929

Additional web resources

Fire agencies

www.fire.nsw.gov.au (NSW Fire Brigades)

www.rfs.nsw.gov.au (NSW Rural Fire Service)

<http://www.mfb.vic.gov.au> (Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board, Victoria)

<http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au> (Victorian Country Fire Authority)

<http://www.fire.qld.gov.au> (Queensland Fire and Rescue Service)

<http://www.samfs.sa.gov.au> (South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service)

<http://www.cfs.org.au> (South Australian Country Fire Service)

<http://www.fesa.wa.gov.au> (Western Australia Fire and Emergency Services Authority)

<http://www.dec.wa.gov.au> (Western Australia Department of Environment and Conservation)

<http://www.fire.tas.gov.au> (Tasmanian Fire Service)

<http://www.pfes.nt.gov.au/index.cfm?fire> (Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service)

<http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/natres/bushfires> (Northern Territory Bushfires Council)

http://www.firebrigade.act.gov.au/ESAWebsite/content_actfb/actfb_home_page/fire_brigade_home_page.html (ACT Fire Brigade)

http://www.rfs.act.gov.au/ESAWebsite/content_rfs/rfs_home_page/rfs_home_page.html (ACT Rural Fire Service)

Police and citizens youth clubs

www.pycnsw.org (NSW PCYC)

<http://www.pyc.org.au/> (Qld PCYC)

www.wapcyc.com.au (WA PCYC)

<http://pyc.net.au/> (ACT PCYC)

<http://www.pcyctas.org/#redirect> (Tas PCYC)

<http://www.stkildapcyc.org/> (a PCYC in Victoria)

<http://www.nt.gov.au/pfes/PFES/index.cfm?fuseaction=page&p=115&m=19&sm=34> (NT PCYC)

Police

<http://www.police.sa.gov.au> (South Australia Police)

www.police.nsw.gov.au (NSW Police Force)

<http://www.police.wa.gov.au> (Western Australia Police)

<https://www.afp.gov.au/act.html> (ACT Policing)

www.police.vic.gov.au (Victoria Police)

www.police.qld.gov.au (Queensland Police Service)

www.police.tas.gov.au (Tasmania Police)

<http://www.pfes.nt.gov.au> (Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services)



Worksheets

List of BFA prevention resources

The following resources are divided into three categories:

- Establishing police and fire agency partnerships for bushfire arson prevention;
- Developing a bushfire arson prevention strategy; and
- Implementing bushfire arson prevention strategy

Establishing police and fire agency partnerships for bushfire arson prevention

★ Worksheets are coded RED

- Establishing local coordination between police and fire agencies to tackle bushfire arson
- How does the fire agency data match with the police data? Mapping the bushfire arson problem

Developing bushfire arson prevention strategies

★ Worksheets are coded BLUE

- What do we know about bushfires in our local area?
 - ✓ Fire agency data
 - ✓ Police and other agency data: Police intelligence
 - ✓ Police and other agency data: Criminal justice intelligence
- Sample spreadsheets : Plotting the bushfire arson threats
- The consequences of bushfire arson: How much does it cost the local community?
- Targeting environmental factors
- Targeting community factors
- Targeting known offenders

Implementing bushfire arson prevention strategies

★ Worksheets are coded GREEN

- What do we want to do? A project summary sheet
- Potential stakeholders list
- Who to involve in bushfire prevention strategies? Stakeholder list
- Identifying the responsibilities/contribution of the community
- Benefits, generating momentum and sustaining support: What's in it for us?
- Did it work?
 - ✓ Implementation questions
 - ✓ Results questions

Before you use the worksheets, remember...

These worksheets are only a guide to help you fill in the knowledge gaps and organise the information you have in a more structured way. They do not have to be rigidly followed, so adapt the information or style of the sheets to suit your local context. If you already collect the information or have done something similar, it is not necessary to use the worksheets or redo the work to suit this format.

All worksheets are available from the Research in Practice section of the AIC website <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/current-series/rip.aspx>

Establishing police and fire agency partnerships for bushfire arson prevention

Establishing local coordination between police and fire agencies to tackle bushfire arson

How to initiate coordination between the two agencies

When thinking about establishing coordination, you may not need to start from scratch. There could be an existing framework you can use (such as a local management committee), so don't reinvent the wheel—use the organisations that already exist in the community.

- Approach your state or territory fire management committee. Most jurisdictions have one—in New South Wales this is the District Bushfire Management Committee.
- This committee should have representatives from key stakeholders (eg fire agencies, police etc).
- These committees tend to drive bushfire prevention initiatives, so if you can get them engaged in what you are planning to do, they can then support their counterparts at the local level of their agency or organisation.

Before you go into the meetings, you need to interrogate your data:

Find out:	Notes/comments:
☐ What information you can access	
☐ How the data is stored (eg Excel; paper based etc)	
☐ Frequency (eg available monthly, quarterly etc)	
☐ Who has access to the data	
☐ Whether you can share the data with stakeholders (you might be able to share with some and not others; privacy and security issues)	
☐ Knowledge of any arson offenders or suspects in the area	
☐ Any diversion or other strategies employed by police when dealing with offenders or suspects	

- When you go to the meeting, make sure to take with you what information you can
- Also, make sure that you have facilities to display or present your data (eg if you want to use an Excel spreadsheet, do you have computer and projection access? If using a mapping tool like ESRI, can you access it at the meeting place?)
- Use graphs to illustrate the data if available

During the meeting

- set initial goals and note each other's expectations/aims of the partnership;
- start initial strategy development;
- share resources;
- negotiate data access and sharing between the agencies, and develop boundaries;
- map the bushfire arson threat in the community using the data. See the following worksheets for templates to collect the information if needed:
 - ✓ *How does the fire agency data match with the police data? Mapping the bushfire arson problem*
 - ✓ *What do we know about bushfires? Fire agencies*
 - ✓ *What do we know about bushfires? Police and other agencies: Criminal justice intelligence*
 - ✓ *What do we know about bushfires? Police and other agencies: Police intelligence*

Establishing police and fire agency partnerships for bushfire arson prevention

- Appoint a secretariat function—in other words, who is going to drive this initiative?

In the mapping exercises:

- Plot findings on a spreadsheet and or undertake Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping (if resources available);
- Do some trend analyses—particularly where peaks and troughs are. Also see where there are hotspots (in suburbs, days, times, months etc); and
- Put in a parameter chart—have a timeframe for how far you go back with the data. This could go back five or 10 years, or longer.

There may be more than one meeting needed to come to an agreement

Establishing police and fire agency partnerships for bushfire arson prevention

How does the fire agency data match with the police data? Mapping the bushfire arson problem

Before hosting a workshop or meeting with broader stakeholders, it would be beneficial for fire agencies and police to map the extent and nature of bushfires locally.

Identifying patterns in bushfire arson

Although it often seems to strike randomly, bushfire arson is in fact a strongly-patterned activity; the same areas are targeted at the same time of year by the same type of offenders, year after year.

Identifying these patterns is an important way for police and fire agencies to become proactive and the most successful arson prevention programs in Australia so far have at their base, police and fire agencies sharing spatial data.

Regardless of how you do it, the most important thing to remember is that **compatibility and comparability between data sources used is the key.**

What to consider before planning a mapping exercise	
Maps used must:	There are two ways of locating a place on a map:
✓ identify the same ignition location ✓ Be the same format	• The first is a geocode or point on a map ✓ the most common is a street address. This can be converted into a latitude and longitude location using a program called the Geocoded National Address File (GNAF) ✓ while street addresses are suitable for structural arson, the preferred measure of the ignition point for bushfires is either a grid reference on a topographic map, or a straight lat-long from a GPS or electronically-generated map ✓ geocodes have several advantages. First, they are a good aid in generating a common map. Second they allow a bigger range of analysis tools to be used and third, the crucial information can be in micro-locations • The second method of locating ignition points is polygons ✓ This is simply a shape on a map that can represent a local government area, police local-area command, postcode, suburb etc ✓ Polygons are difficult to share because agencies seldom use a common boundary. The other problem is that the boundaries often change to reflect local government changes, new postal services or other administrative changes ✓ So if polygons are going to be used, they must be same type from the same year • Police and fire agencies use topographic maps, satellite images, electronic maps and ordinal maps (street directories etc.). Successful examples of data sharing have always involved moving to a single format • The preferred format is a Geographic Information System (GIS) because it allows the use of more sophisticated electronic analyses such tracking tools that enables the relationship between time of day, week and month, and location of ignition to be measured • It is best if one type of GIS is used but, in practice, there is a large degree of compatibility between the two major propriety suppliers
Jones W 2009. <i>Identifying the BFA threat and establishing local coordination</i> . Presentation to the Australian Institute of Criminology Bushfire arson prevention workshop, Lake Illawarra, 3 December	

Developing a bushfire arson strategy

What do we know about bushfires? Fire agencies

Use the following resource to help you obtain a snapshot of the bushfire threat in your local area.

This sheet is also available in a spreadsheet format from the AIC website.

Timeframe for data collection:_____

Bushfires in general			Deliberately lit/suspicious fires	
	Figures/ number	Data source	Figures/ number	Data source
How many?				
Where are they lit?				
When do they seem to occur:				
*False callouts can indicate a pattern of motivation for arsonists (eg testing response times)	Time of day?			
	Day of the week?			
	Day of the month?			
	Seasonal?			
	Source of ignition?			
	Who do you suspect light the fires?			
	How are emergency calls relating to fires being recorded?			
	Any information on false callouts?*			
	Any other trends?			

What does this tell us of the bushfire arson risk in your community?

Is there anything else that we need to know?

Developing a bushfire arson strategy

What do we know about bushfires? Police and other agencies: Police intelligence

Use the following resource to help you obtain a snapshot of the bushfire threat in your local area based on available police and/or criminal justice data.

Timeframe for data collection: _____

Section one: Police intelligence		
	Intelligence-related information	Data source
Who do you <i>think</i> lights fires in your local area?		
	Apprehension-related information	
How many people are apprehended for arson related activities?		
	Charge-related information	
How many known offenders are in the community?		
How many arson-related charges?		
How many convictions for arson?		
Are there any trends over time?		

Developing a bushfire arson strategy

What do we know about bushfires? Police and other agencies: Criminal justice intelligence

Use this sheet to give you ideas on other potential data sources for your mapping.

NB: availability and access of information from agencies listed below vary from state to state; some of this information may be hard to get. **If you cannot get this information, do not worry—they are only suggested alternative data sources that you may wish to think about.**

Section two: Criminal justice intelligence	
Data source	What it tells us
☐ Courts	
☐ Juvenile justice	
Any programs in place for offenders/potential offenders?	
☐ Corrections	
☐ Sentencing outcomes	
☐ Education department	
☐ Other agency (name)_____	
Are there any local programs in place for offenders, or at risk individuals?	

*Include where possible: program numbers, gender and age breakdown of participants, their geographical location (eg suburb), or any other de-identified data

What does this tell you of the bushfire arson threats in your community, and what you might expect in your community?

Other key points:

The consequences of bushfire arson:
How much does it cost the local community?

	Money (including funds diverted from other activities)	Human resources	Time	Environmental	Tackling fires	Prevention activities	Education and awareness	Impact on community
☐ Courts								
☐ Juvenile justice								
☐ Corrections								
☐ National parks								
☐ Schools								
☐ Council								
☐ Police: Homicide squad, police rescue, specialist squads, other								
Opportunity costs								
Total estimated costs								

Types of costs to consider:

- ✓ Training
- ✓ Fire drills
- ✓ Diverted funds from one area of need to fighting or preventing bushfires

Developing a bushfire arson strategy

Targeting the environment: Possible actions			
	Possible action/ activities	Any local activities that exist?	Any activities that we could use as a model?
Reduce rewards			
Increase risks			
Increase the effort			
Remove excuses			
Community empowerment			

Possible actions could relate to:

- controlling access
- reinforcing guardianship/ownership
- fuel reduction and prescribed burning
- removing abandoned cars
- arson in schools

Have we got a balance of these three types of approaches?

- ☐ Strategic (preparation and prevention strategies before bushfire arson occurs)
- ☐ Tactical
- ☐ Operational

Developing a bushfire arson strategy

Targeting the community and potential victims: Possible actions			
	Possible action/activities	Any local activities that exist?	Any activities that we could use as a model?
Reduce rewards			
Increase risks			
Increase the effort			
Remove excuses			
Community empowerment			

Possible actions could relate to:

- targeting arson-prone communities
- community awareness campaigns
- reducing cigarette-caused bushfires

Have we got a balance of these three types of approaches?

- ☐ Strategic (preparation and prevention strategies before bushfire arson occurs)
- ☐ Tactical
- ☐ Operational

Developing a bushfire arson strategy

Targeting known and at-risk offenders: Possible actions			
	Possible action/activities	Any local activities that exist?	Any activities that we could use as a model?
Reduce rewards			
Increase risks			
Increase the effort			
Remove excuses			
Community empowerment			

Possible actions could relate to:

- juvenile arson intervention programs
- programs for adult arsonists

Have we got a balance of these three types of approaches?

- ☐ Strategic (preparation and prevention strategies before bushfire arson occurs)
- ☐ Tactical
- ☐ Operational

Implementing a bushfire arson prevention strategy

What do we want to do?

Summary sheet			
Potential objective(s)	Possible actions/activities	Ways we could see if the action(s) are working (indicators)	Who could be responsible?
☐ Reduce bushfire arson incidents			
☐ Increase reporting of bushfire arson or suspected bushfire arson activities			
☐ Reduce offending by recidivist arson offenders			
☐ Deter at-risk bushfire arson offenders			
☐ Increase community knowledge and/or awareness of bushfire arson			
☐ Improve response time to suspected bushfire arson			
☐ Introduce new/updated bushfire arson laws			
☐ Increase support for at-risk individuals in danger of coming involved in bushfire arson			
☐ Increase communication between the targeted group of people and the fire and/or criminal justice agencies			
☐ Evaluate of an existing bushfire arson prevention project			
☐ Research into bushfire arson			
☐ Other(s)			
☐ Other(s)			
☐ Other(s)			

Source: Objective classifications are based on NSW Attorney Generals Department Crime Prevention Division unpublished data: Coding scheme

Implementing a bushfire arson prevention strategy

Who to involve in bushfire prevention strategies? Potential stakeholders contact list

Below is a list of potential stakeholders to give you ideas of who you may wish to include in your prevention strategy.

Try to get stakeholders involved that are high enough in their organisation to:

- have knowledge to make decisions; and
- have the ability to commit resources

Stakeholder	Types of activities and roles that they could be involved in	Possible positions to target	Names	Contact details
Fire agencies	All interventions	Fire prevention officers etc		
Police	Offender based programs or interventions	Someone who can commit resources; local crime prevention officer		
Schools	Activities targeted at youths	Principals, school counsellors, dept of education, school regional coordination		
Neighbourhood Watch and similar groups	Door-knocks, community awareness campaigns			
Local council	Clear-up days, removal of abandoned vehicles	Community crime prevention officer; community safety officer; council rangers		
Community corrections	Offender rehabilitation activities, monitoring etc	Community corrections officers		
Local media	Public awareness campaigns	Crime reporter, editor(s)		
National Parks and Wildlife	Patrols, back burning, clearing scrub etc	Park rangers		
Department of Housing	Data provided on complaints; tenant histories			
CrimeStoppers				
Land management agencies				
General public	Monitoring fires/hotspots, use as informants			
Others				

Who to involve in bushfire prevention strategies? Detailed stakeholder list

List the groups or individuals who we can involve in the prevention activities	What they can offer/do • data • services • financial support etc	Are there costs (financial or otherwise) in obtaining their services? What are they?	How can we get them involved? • data sharing • activities align with goals • play key role in delivery of activity etc	Are there any concerns that should be addressed?	What (if any) are they?
*				☐ yes ☐ no	
*				☐ yes ☐ no	
*				☐ yes ☐ no	
*				☐ yes ☐ no	
*				☐ yes ☐ no	
*				☐ yes ☐ no	
*				☐ yes ☐ no	
*				☐ yes ☐ no	
*				☐ yes ☐ no	
*				☐ yes ☐ no	
*				☐ yes ☐ no	
*				☐ yes ☐ no	

Identifying the responsibilities/contribution of the community

Stakeholder list (could be an organisation, agency or a position)	Local	Responsibilities/role in this project	Needs to know about:	Has knowledge of:	Will communicate any findings/ information to:
	☐ local ☐ regional ☐ state ☐ national				
	☐ local ☐ regional ☐ state ☐ national				
	☐ local ☐ regional ☐ state ☐ national				
	☐ local ☐ regional ☐ state ☐ national				
	☐ local ☐ regional ☐ state ☐ national				
	☐ local ☐ regional ☐ state ☐ national				
	☐ local ☐ regional ☐ state ☐ national				

Implementing a bushfire arson prevention strategy

Benefits, generating momentum and sustaining support: What's in it for us?

Any prevention project needs to be sustainable and to have that, you need to generate momentum and support for the project. One of the key things to remember when attracting and retaining stakeholders in the project is to highlight and reinforce:

What's in it for them?

This could mean different things to different stakeholders; it could be recognition, increased funding, fulfilling a core business aim, makes the stakeholder feel valued etc. The list is endless. The important thing is to try to identify it and see if you can make it worth their while (and yours) to be involved.

Below are some tips on how to have a sustainable committee, based on the NSW Interagency Arson Committee's experience over the past four years.

Tip	
✓ Start off with something manageable and with a realistic timeframe	This makes it easier to measure success highlight achievements. (see <i>Element 3: Deciding what should be done about the bushfire arson threat in your area</i> section for advice)
✓ Have shared goals and needs	For example, the NSW Interagency Arson Committee's more successful activities are related to joint training needs improving investigation cooperation and improving training in general. These activities were mutually beneficial and a priority for each agency This training was driven when practitioners on the ground saw the need
✓ Data sharing between agencies is essential	This allows each agency to get the full picture on bushfire in their local area and help with making more strategic decisions around prevention (see the <i>Establishing local coordination between police and fire agencies to tackle bushfire arson</i> worksheets for more information)
✓ Support for prevention should be driven from the top, but implementation needs to be done locally	Most senior staff are on performance based contracts, so this should be used when trying to build prevention into core business
✓ Try to build relationships with other local initiatives or committees with common goals and establish a realistic timeframe for partnership building and activities from the start	Find out how long it took comparable committees to establish partnerships and ask how long it took to establish Be prepared for events taking longer than you plan, so don't rigidly set deadlines or mile. Note: This could take months, or even years
✓ Most importantly, sell it! It is not about catching offenders, it is about reducing fires. Sell this prevention message to your community and stakeholders	In the case of police, offender arrests drive the statistics and reduction in crime. However, not all fires get reported to police, so the fire statistics are not driving police response Use the 'How can we get them involved?' column in the <i>Who to involve in bushfire prevention strategies? Stakeholder list</i> to document ways to attract specific stakeholders

Implementing a bushfire arson prevention strategy

Tip	
✓ Have a vehicle to show the results	Having a committee or a reporting framework could assist to get your success noted in the community and other organisations. The prevention strategies are then likely to attract more attention and potentially more support
✓ Show partners what they have to gain from being part of bushfire arson prevention strategies	Highlight the opportunities that can arise from being part of the committee. Be familiar with their core business aims and if the prevention activities support this, use it when trying to get support
✓ Have a way to monitor the results/actions some way	This allows you to support the argument for prevention and more resources. It also allows the community and your organisations that what you are doing is worthwhile
✓ Establish credibility of the prevention approach—you have to 'improve the brand' somehow	Make prevention more acceptable and ingrained in the community as an appropriate and preferred response to bushfire arson. Highlight the limitations and flaws in reactive responses (damage done, rarely catch arsonists, hard to prove etc)
✓ Think about establishing a 'revolving chair'	Although changing the chair each meeting may not be a good idea, a revolving chair can allow ownership to be shared among members and therefore generate more commitment and support Note: Revolving chairs may not give the committee a degree of permanency, which would be desirable in the long term
✓ Try to obtain a prevention budget	It is hard to get strategies and other activities off the ground when money for such things has not been set aside. Try to get senior management on board to set aside 'a bucket of money'. This may require making a case for prevention—do this by providing evidence of the benefits of prevention. Try to get prevention included as part of core business for agencies. Note: This may take years, so start small and do not factor this in until you are assured of obtaining funds

Key sustainability stumbling blocks	
Policy can often drive Local Area Command priorities	This illustrates why it is so important to get senior personnel involved in prevention
Key personnel changes	This threatens sustainability and tacit knowledge is often lost. Key strategies to minimise this are to have good record keeping for the project so any key information can be passed to the replacement. Try not to have any role position <i>personality</i> driven (although this is often hard to do). Then, if a key figure leaves it does not have such a dramatic impact on the project

Implementing a bushfire arson prevention strategy

Action	Your approach
☐ Establish a revolving chair for committees (if applicable)	
☐ Establish a realistic timeframe (including allowances for partnership building, obtaining resources, developing activities etc)	
☐ Establish data sharing across agencies	
☐ Make prevention a core business aim	
☐ Develop a prevention budget	
☐ Make the 'on the ground' practitioner see the need for prevention (or identify it)	
☐ How the results/actions will be monitored	
☐ Selling the prevention approach	
☐ Establish credibility for the prevention approach	
☐ Need a vehicle to sell the results of the prevention activities	
☐ How to show partners what they have to gain by being involved in prevention	
☐ Driving prevention from the top	
☐ Build relationships with other local initiatives	
☐ Identify shared goals and needs of stakeholders	
☐ Have a strategy in place when key personnel change	

Implementing a bushfire arson prevention strategy

Did it work? Implementation questions

Once the project is over, you and most likely your key stakeholders will want to know:

- Did the project work?
- What factors made it a success/failure?
- Could anything be done better?
- Successful or not, should the project continue?

Think about how you would answer these questions in the planning stage, so you can make sure you have the capacity to evaluate and determine if you were successful at the end of the project.

Implementation questions		
Question	How would you show this?	Your data source
How does this project activity attempt to prevent or reduce the bushfire arson threat in your local area?	<i>Show how the activities link to the objectives</i>	
How did you customise it for the local problem and context?	<i>Link information found in what do we know/environmental scan for your local area to match the activities</i>	
How were the actions planned, managed, organised and steered?	<i>Stakeholder responsibility chart could be useful, particularly if it is updated regularly</i>	
How were they monitored? Have you documented milestones?	<i>Use the indicators and available data sources</i>	
Have any ethical issues arisen when implementing it?	<i>List any issues that arose and how you dealt with them</i>	
What was the reality of implementing the project?	<i>Use the available worksheets as a guide for what you propose to do and compare it to the reality, stating how and why things changed (if applicable)</i>	

Framework structure based on Ekblom P nd. 51's: A practical tool for transfer and sharing of crime prevention knowledge. <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/learningzone/51sintro.htm>

Implementing a bushfire arson prevention strategy

Did it work? Results questions

Results questions		
Question	How would you show this?	Your information source
How did you evaluate? (or how will you evaluate?)	<i>Check your data sources and indicator section</i>	
Who evaluated?	<i>Refer to responsibility charts</i>	
What worked and how?	<i>Match objectives and outcomes using the indicators. Also record any observations that might be relevant</i>	
What variables may have contributed to the change in fire frequency at the site of this project? (eg weather)	<i>Your experience and knowledge of implementing your projects</i>	
What didn't work?	<i>Using the indicators, document any activities that did not achieve the desired outcome and offer reasons why</i>	
What could be improved in the future?	<i>Your experience of implementing your projects</i>	
Would you do anything differently?	<i>Your experience of implementing your projects</i>	
Were there any unexpected outcomes/events?	<i>Your experience of implementing your projects</i>	
Was it cost-effective?	<i>Conduct a cost-benefit analysis</i>	
Are there any cost savings for implementing this project?	<i>Conduct a cost-benefit analysis, record any savings made</i>	
Did the timeframe for the project fit?	<i>Compare the time you initially proposed to the time it took in reality</i>	
Is there potential for this project to be replicated elsewhere? If so, what local conditions aided/hindered the implementation?	<i>Your experience from project implementation</i>	
Were any community services needed for the activity's implementation? (eg counsellors for rehabilitation)	<i>Use stakeholder list/responsibility chart. Also any reflections after the activities are completed</i>	
What were the lessons learnt?	<i>Your experience from implementing the project</i>	
Is there anything other areas should avoid doing if they wanted to implement this project?	<i>Your experience from implementing the project</i>	

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