

Municipal Emergency Management Plan

Yarriambiack Shire

Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plan 2023-2026



Version 3.0



Public Copy

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1. DOCUMENT INFORMATION

1.1 FOREWORD

The Yarriambiack Shire Municipal Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee (MFMPSC) acknowledges and thanks all those who have contributed to the development of this plan and those who have been willing to commit their time and considerable expertise, both as members of the Yarriambiack Shire MFMPSC and those who supplied agency specific information for this publication.

1.2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The MFMPSC acknowledges the five Traditional Owner groups of this land; the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagulk, Jaadwa and Jadawadjali people. We recognise the important and ongoing place that all Indigenous people hold in our community. We pay our respects to the Elders, both past and present, and commit to working together in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect for the benefit of the broader community and future generations.

1.3 AUTHORITY

In 2020, the [Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018](#) amended the [Emergency Management Act 2013 \(EM Act 2013\)](#) (Act) to provide for new integrated arrangements for emergency management planning in Victoria at the state, regional and municipal levels. It created an obligation for a Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) to be established in each of the municipal districts of Victoria. Each MEMPC is a multi-agency collaboration group whose members bring organisation, industry or personal expertise to the task of emergency management planning for the municipal district.

This sub-plan has been prepared in accordance, and complies, with the requirements of the [Act](#) including having regard to the guidelines issued under section 77, [Guidelines for Preparing State, Regional and Municipal Emergency Management Plans](#).

1.4 PLAN ASSURANCE AND APPROVAL

A Statement of Assurance (including a checklist and certificate) has been prepared by the Yarriambiack Shire MEMPC and submitted to the Grampians Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee (REMPC) pursuant to the [Act](#) (s60AG).


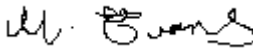

This planning template holds similar information as MFMPSCs developed for the Wimmera Emergency Management Resource Sharing Partnership municipalities of Hindmarsh, Horsham and West Wimmera. Whilst it has been prepared in collaboration with the four MEMPCs, it is individualised to the Yarriambiack Shire MEMPC.

This plan has been written and approved by the Yarriambiack Shire MFMPSC at its meeting held on 14 September 2023 and subsequently endorsed by the Yarriambiack Shire MEMPC on 14 September 2023. This plan has been through an assurance process overseen by the Grampians REMPC and is self-assured by the Yarriambiack Shire MEMPC. This plan comes into effect when it is published and remains in effect until superseded by an approved and published date.

Meets assurance general: Plan has been prepared with regard to the following guidance in ministerial guidelines issued under the [Act](#) s77 ([Guidelines for Preparing State, Regional and Municipal Emergency Management Plans](#))

1.5 AUTHORISATION

The Yarriambiack Shire MEMPC is the custodian of the Yarriambiack Shire MFMSPP pursuant to current legislative arrangements. This MFMSPP was adopted by the Yarriambiack Shire MFMPSC on 14 September 2023 and subsequently endorsed by the Yarriambiack Shire MEMPC on 14 September 2023.

<p>Yarriambiack Shire MFMPSC</p>  <p>Signature Mark Gunning ACFO, for Chairperson 14 September 2023</p>	<p>Yarriambiack Shire MEMPC</p>  <p>Signature Michael Evans, Chairperson 14 September 2023</p>
<p>Grampians REMPC</p>  <p>Signature Brett Boatman, Chairperson and CFA Deputy Chief Officer 22 November 2023</p>	

1.6 PLAN REVIEW

The Yarriambiack Shire MFMSPP may be reviewed and updated as required:

- Annually in full or part at each MFMPSC meeting
- After each major event where the plan has been activated
- Where the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMPC) has been exercised.

To ensure the plan provides for a current integrated, coordinated and comprehensive approach to emergency management and is effective, it is to be fully reviewed at least every three years.

An urgent update of this plan is permitted if there is a significant risk that life or property will be endangered if the plan is not updated (Act s60AM). Urgent updates come into effect when published on the Yarriambiack Shire Council website.

This plan will be reviewed no later than September 2026.

This plan is current at the time of publication and remains in effect until modified, superseded or withdrawn.

1.7 AMENDMENT REGISTER

Version number	Date	Details of amendment
1.0	May 2012	Adoption of Version 1.0.
1.1	November 2014	Updates to section 3.7, chapter 5, section 6.5, appendix A, B, C.2, C.3 and H, changed Township Protection Plan to Community Information Guide, inclusion of Disclaimer, new section 6.3 Plan Reporting and change section 6.3 and 6.4 to next sequence.
1.2	October 2015	Updates to department names, legislation references, authorisation and plan duration, references in environmental scan and VFRR-B data.
2.0	March 2017	Adoption of Version 2.0 – full review and rewrite.
2.0AU	May 2020	Administrative update – review of Appendix A and C.
3.0	14 September 2023	Review and rewrite to align with changes under the <i>Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018</i> .

1.8 DISCLAIMER

No reader should act based on any matter contained in this publication without appreciating that it may be the subject of amendment or revocation from time to time without notice. Members of the Yarriambiack Shire MEMPC and MFMPSC expressly disclaim all and any liability (including liability in negligence) to any person or body in respect of anything and of the consequences of anything done or omitted to be done by any such person or body in reliance, whether total or partial, upon the whole or any part of this publication.

1.9 PLAN AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This MFMSD documents the agreed emergency management arrangements for Prevention, Planning and Response, and defines the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders at the municipal level. It supports efficiency and effectiveness on a platform of shared responsibility and interoperability to deliver community centred outcomes.

This sub-plan seeks to build safer and more resilient communities through dynamic engagement and connectedness with the individuals, groups and broader society that makes up the Yarriambiack Shire. It ensures a coordinated and integrated approach with a focus on community involvement in planning in line with the “all communities – all emergencies” approach to emergency management.

1.10 ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Administrative updates will be made to this plan from time to time that will be noted in the [Amendment Register](#) section. These amendments are administrative and do not substantially change the content or intent of this plan. These amendments do not require the plan to be endorsed by the Yarriambiack Shire MFMPSC, MEMPC or Grampians REMPC. Where there is substantial change required to the content or intent of the plan, the plan will need to go through the endorsement process.

1.11 DISTRIBUTION OF THE MFMSD

The Yarriambiack Shire MFMSD is intended for the use of the members of the Yarriambiack Shire MFMPSC, MEMPC and the Grampians Regional Strategic Fire Management Planning Committee (RSFMPC).

The Yarriambiack Shire MFMSD will be distributed according to the committee membership of the MFMPSC, MEMPC and Grampians RSFMPC electronically, as required.

Please refer to the [Disclaimer](#) section for further details about the intended uses and appropriate distribution of this plan.

1.12 MFMSD CONTACT DETAILS

Please address all enquiries and feedback to:

Chairperson

Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee

Yarriambiack Shire Council

34 Lyle Street

Warracknabeal Vic 3393

P: 03 5398 0100

E: council@yarriambiack.vic.gov.au

W: www.yarriambiack.vic.gov.au

1.13 PUBLIC ACCESS

A Public Access version of the MFMSM is available on the Yarriambiack Shire Council website under the Emergency Management tab: www.yarriambiack.vic.gov.au This document is also available on the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and Forrest Fire Management Victoria (FFMV) websites.

Access to the Restricted Version of the plan may be considered upon application to the Municipal Emergency Management Officer (MEMO) via the [MFMSM contact details](#) above.

Please note the Public Version will have some detail removed to comply with confidentiality and privacy requirements. The Restricted Version has full details included and is only made available to the appropriate agency and their representatives who have a role or responsibility detailed in this plan.

The current version of this sub-plan is maintained by Council on the “Crisisworks” emergency management platform for Council and approved agency staff access.

Names and contact details in the Restricted Version of this sub-plan are only to be used for emergency management purposes and must be managed in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.

2. INTRODUCTION

This integrated MFMS is risk-based, has regard to the social, economic, built and natural environment aspects of fire, and guides participants involved in fire management activities. It is consistent with the MEMP to ensure that linkages are consistent and holistic. The plan also contains appropriate references to other uses of fire, including agricultural, ecological and cultural applications.

The purpose of this integrated MFMS is to chart the planned and coordinated implementation of measures designed to minimise the occurrence and mitigate the effect of bushfire, grass fire, residential and industrial fires in the community.

The Yarriambiack Shire integrated MFMS seeks to achieve consistent and effective fire management planning within the municipality through a commitment to cooperation, including sharing and building of collective knowledge and experience at municipal and regional levels.

This Yarriambiack Shire MFMS is an integrated plan combining the municipality, Country Fire Authority (CFA), Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) – Parks Victoria and Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMV), Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV), Victoria Police and the fire management plans of other key stakeholders.

2.1 CORE MEMBERSHIP OF THE MFMPSC

Membership of the Yarriambiack Shire MFMPSC, as appointed by the MEMPC, will comprise of representatives from key agencies and organisations as per the Committee's Terms of Reference ([Appendix C: Yarriambiack Shire Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee – Terms of Reference](#)):

- CFA
- DTP
- FFMV: DEECA, Parks Victoria
- FRV
- Victoria Police
- Yarriambiack Shire Council.

MFMPSC members work together to achieve a consistent, effective risk-based approach for fire management planning.

In the event of a departmental name change by Government to any of the core member agencies, any new name given to an agency that primarily retains the same function as its predecessor shall be deemed a core member of the committee.

2.2 ROLE OF THE MFMPSC

The role of the Yarriambiack Shire MFMPSC is to provide a municipal level forum to build and sustain organisational partnerships, generate a common understanding and shared purpose with regard to fire management, and ensure that the plans of individual agencies are linked and complement each other.

The MFMPSC works within an integrated State, regional and municipal planning structure. An overview of the State's emergency and fire management planning hierarchy and committee structure can be found on the [EMV website](#).

In addition to the roles and responsibilities conferred on the committee under its Terms of Reference ([Appendix C](#)) which are drawn from the MEMP, the Yarriambiack Shire's MFMPSC functions are to:

- Plan the burning or clearing of firebreaks
- Advise the appropriate authorities as to the existence of and steps to be taken for the removal of fire hazards within the area

- Prepare the MFMSP
- Recommend to CFA or the appropriate authorities (as the case may require) any action which the committee deems necessary or expedient to be taken for reducing the risk of an outbreak of fire or for suppressing any fire which may occur within the area
- Advise the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer concerning the removal of fire hazards under Section 41 of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*
- Refer to the MEMPC for consideration of all matters which in the opinion of the MFMPSC should be so referred
- Carry out such other functions as are conferred or imposed upon the Yarriambiack Shire MFMPSC by regulations made upon the recommendation of the Authority.

The preparation of this MFMSP has involved the experience of agencies and authorities charged with responsibilities for fire management. Consultation with the local CFA brigades and community was also undertaken in the development of this document. This collaboration has ensured the development of a holistic and integrated approach to fire management across all land users, and that the strategies adopted were based on practical local knowledge and common sense.

3. ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES

The achievement of fire management objectives and the success of fire management outcomes will be dependent on effective communications in all planning and implementation phases. The objectives of the communications plan will be to:

- Build a collaborative approach to integrated fire management
- Identify internal communication flows within organisations
- Ensure that communication across agencies is effective in developing a shared understanding of the issues and key responsibilities and that all agencies deliver a consistent message to the community and their stakeholders
- Build resilient relationships and sound networks between key stakeholders
- Consult with communities so that local knowledge is captured in the planning process that the communications plan supports
- Foster better communication and planning between the agencies and local communities
- Achieve greater consistency from all levels of government on key policy issues.

3.2 COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

The Yarriambiack Shire MFMPSC recognises the value of local knowledge and the unique contribution the community can make to the MFMSPP planning process.

Effective community engagement in fire management planning is required to:

- Promote acceptance, understanding and joint problem solving
- Raise knowledge and skills of fire management through participation
- Produce plans that support community and organisational expectations
- Incorporate community and organisational needs into the development of plans.

3.2.1 STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

A stakeholder and community engagement process was undertaken in the development of the first iteration of the MFMSPP. This process featured:

- Community information sessions held in Yarriambiack Shire targeting high-risk communities
- Stakeholder briefings held in Yarriambiack Shire for special interest organisations as required
- Online engagement program during the consultation period.

All submissions were considered in the development of the first iteration of the MFMSPP.

3.2.2 PROCESS TO DEVELOP THE MUNICIPAL FIRE MANAGEMENT SUB-PLAN

The MFMSPP was developed by the Yarriambiack Shire MFMPSC, following the process below. Key emergency service agencies were consulted throughout all stages of the development of this plan.

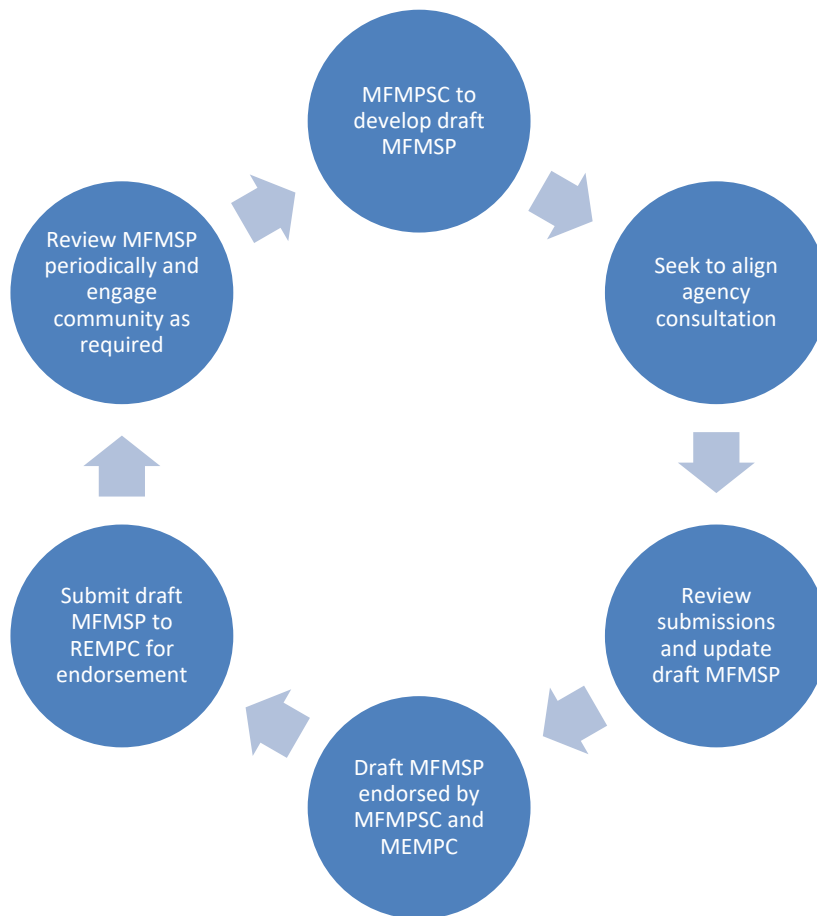


Figure 1. Process involved in the development of the MFMSPP

The MFMSPP aligns closely with the [Bushfire Safety Policy Framework](#). The framework’s goal is to contribute to building safer and more resilient communities from the risk associated with bushfire and is underpinned by principles and perspectives that reflect the findings and recommendations of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission.

The Yarriambiack Shire MEMPC and many other organisational plans and strategies also have strong links to the development of this plan. The strategic intent of these documents is captured within this plan, but the detail remains within those organisational plans and strategies.

For details about these plans and strategies, refer to [Appendix J: Other documents and links](#)

4. MUNICIPAL FIRE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

4.1 OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES

The primary objectives of the Yarriambiack Shire MFMS are to:

- Effectively manage and reduce the risk of fire, protect life and property with due regard to our natural environment
- Align and integrate existing fire management planning and practices across agencies and the community.

The Yarriambiack Shire MFMS is a strategic and operational document that identifies communities and assets at risk through an Environmental Risk Scan incorporating the MEMP, using the Victorian Fire Risk Register – Bushfire (VFRR-B) tool to identify assets at risk from bushfire and treatments currently applied to mitigate risk.

The intention of this MFMS is to minimise the occurrence and mitigate the impacts of bushfire, grass and structure fire and hazardous materials incidents on the community in accordance with the IFMP framework.

4.2 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The plan addresses both public and private land across the Yarriambiack Shire. The MFMS will be reviewed and updated to ensure it incorporates any new strategies, programs and tools developed to meet Council, agencies and community needs and expectations.

Also considered in the ongoing development of the MFMS are the following broad strategy documents which can be accessed through the [CFA](#), [FFMV](#) and [EMV](#) websites or via the links below:

- [Bushfire Safety Policy Framework – November 2018](#) (EMV)
- [Community-Based Emergency Management Overview - 2016](#) (EMV)
- [Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management - 2017](#) (EMV)
- [Emergency Risks in Victoria – July 2020](#) (State Crisis and Resilience Council)
- [Grampians Bushfire Management Strategy - 2020](#) (Safer Together)
- [Joint Fuel Management Program – November 2022](#)
- [State Emergency Management Plan Bushfire Sub-Plan – September 2021](#) (EMV)
- [Victorian State Emergency Management Plan \(SEMP\) – October 2021](#) (EMV)
- [Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Fire Strategy](#) (DELWP)

The aim of the MFMS is to create greater community awareness and communicate fire management information more effectively. Ultimately, the community will share responsibility for implementing the strategies contained within the plan and create a safer municipality through undertaking the following tasks:

- Ensure that plans and actions are in place (that responsible authorities are advised of actions which the Sub-Committee deem necessary) for minimising the risk of an outbreak of fire or for suppressing any fire that may occur within the area
- Develop programs that are relevant to the community
- Measure fire safety outputs to assess the reduction in community vulnerability to fire
- Engage community groups and businesses in ongoing dialogue about fire mitigation solutions including fire prevention activities
- Liaise with other agencies and committees to ensure integration and consistency of purpose.

4.3 LINKS TO OTHER BUSINESS PLANNING AND PROGRAMS

Important linkages are:

- [Ausnet Services Bushfire Mitigation Plan](#)
- [Australian Fire Danger Rating System \(AFDRS\)](#)
- [CFA Operational Plans, Brigade Pre Plans and other CFA Plans](#)
- [Forrest Fire Management and CFA Joint Fuel Management Plan Grampians Region](#)
- Forest Industry Plantation Fire Mitigation Plans (contact CFA District 17 on 03 5362 1700 for further details)
- [Grampians Bushfire Management Strategy 2020](#)
- [GWMWater Fire Prevention Plan](#)
- [Horsham Rural City Municipal Emergency Management Plan](#)
- Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plans – neighbouring municipalities ([Horsham Rural City](#), [Northern Grampians Shire](#), [Mildura Rural City](#), [Buloke Shire](#), [Hindmarsh Shire](#))
- [Powercor Bushfire Mitigation Plan](#)
- [Strategic Bushfire Management Planning](#)
- [VicRoads Roadside Management Strategy](#)
- [Wimmera Integrated Relief and Recovery Plan 2023-2026](#)
- [Yarriambiack Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2022-2025](#)

Other linkages occur through alignment to organisational business planning cycles, agreed data sharing protocols and common risk assessment methodologies.

5. FIRE RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

5.1 RISK ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES

5.1.1 ANALYSIS AND PRIORITISATION OF MUNICIPAL BUSHFIRE RISK

To determine the bushfire risk within Yarriambiack Shire, an assessment was undertaken using the environments contained within the VFRR-B process. The VFRR-B application is a systematic process that identifies assets at risk from bushfires and assesses their level of risk on a consistent State-wide basis using the ISO:31000 2009 Risk Management model. The VFRR-B data provides the starting point to assess the effectiveness of existing treatments and determines residual risk levels to develop further mitigation treatments as required.

For further information, refer to:

[Appendix D: Yarriambiack Shire Bushfire Asset Risk Management and Reporting Register](#)

5.1.2 ALIGNMENT TO REGIONAL BUSHFIRE RISK OBJECTIVES

The plan also references treatments for the six priority risks in relation to bushfires as determined by the Grampians RSFMPC using the VFRR-B risk assessment process. The following table identifies the priority risks as articulated in the Grampians RSFMP (aligned to the asset classes and sub-classes contained within the VFRR-B tool).

Bushfire		
Grampians RSFMPC priority	VFRR-B asset class	VFRR-B asset sub-class/es
1. Urban interface	Human settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Residential (dense and highly populated areas) ▪ Other (less dense areas with a lower population) ▪ Special fire protection (a vulnerable congregation of people in a particular location at one time)
2. Power supply 3. Communications 4. Water supplies and catchments 5. Transport	Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agriculture ▪ Commercial ▪ Infrastructure ▪ Tourist and recreational ▪ Mines ▪ Commercial forests ▪ Water catchments
6. Natural environment	Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Locally important ▪ Endangered ▪ Vulnerable
	Cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aboriginal significance ▪ Non-indigenous ▪ Other

Table 1. Bushfire – priority with VFRR-B asset classes and sub-classes

5.1.3 TREATMENT OF MUNICIPAL BUSHFIRE RISK

The [State Emergency Management Priorities](#) outlined in the SEMP underpin and guide all decisions during a response to any emergency, including fire. They are:

- Protection and preservation of life and relief of suffering is paramount. This includes:
 - Safety of emergency services personnel; and
 - Safety of community members including vulnerable community members and visitors/tourists
- Issuing of community information and community warnings detailing incident information that is timely, relevant and tailored to assist community members make informed decisions about their safety
- Protection of critical infrastructure and community assets that support community resilience
- Protection of residential property as a place of primary residence
- Protection of assets supporting individual livelihoods and economic production that supports individual and community financial sustainability
- Protection of environmental and conservation assets that considers the cultural, biodiversity and social values of the environment.

The MFMPSC has considered these priorities when developing this plan, which aims to reduce the number and severity of fires within the municipality with the intent of creating a more fire resilient community.

There are a number of State-wide and municipal treatments that have been identified for each fire risk management strategy, which can be used by agencies to reduce the risk and effect of fire on the community. The generic State-wide and municipal-wide treatments include:

- Community education programs
- Community education and engagement activities
- Public awareness – multimedia communications
- Powerline hazard tree identification, management and reporting
- Fire hazard inspection program and issue of notices
- Compliance and enforcement of legislation
- Bushfire management overlays
- Building Code of Australia
- Permits to Burn
- Local Laws.

To effectively reduce community vulnerability to fire requires more than inter-agency effort alone. It requires the facilitation of a more self-reliant and self-aware community that has the knowledge, motivation and capacity to manage the risks to reduce the threat of fire in their communities as an active partner with fire management agencies. The key objectives and outcomes sought through the implementation of the primary fire risk management strategies for bushfires are outlined in the tables below.

Community education and engagement				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency treatments	Community/ individual treatments	Outcome
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To build capacity and knowledge, resilience and understanding of the dangers of bushfires To provide the tools and educational opportunities for the community and individuals to better prepare and understand the risks of bushfires To build awareness and understanding of the role of fire in the environment 	For the plan duration – 2023 to 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community education programs Agency integrated community engagement activities Bushfire awareness training Multimedia communications Victoria Bushfire Information Line Tourism fire safety campaigns Increase legislative and regulatory awareness Increased awareness of planning controls Targeted education campaign regarding the use and role of fire in the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be proactive and seek information To be involved in community education and engagement programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All agencies will review and evaluate programs and participation of the community as part of the review process of the MFMS

Table 2. Bushfire – community education and engagement fire risk management strategy

Hazard reduction				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency treatments	Community/ individual treatments	Outcome
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To strategically reduce fuel to minimise impact, intensity and spread of bushfire To pre-plan and establish strategic points to effectively combat and manage structure fire activity 	For the plan duration – 2023 to 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slashing program Planned Burn program Spraying program Pruning program Use appropriate incident modelling tools to identify potential impacts to communities, such as the Phoenix modelling tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private property hazard reduction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cleaning gutters - Slashing - Mowing - Ploughing - Grazing - Fuel reduction burns Spraying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared responsibility between agencies and individuals to minimise fire hazards

Table 3. Bushfire – hazard reduction fire risk management strategy

Preparedness				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency treatments	Community/ individual treatments	Outcome
1. To understand appropriate actions to reduce the risk and impact of bushfires, initiatives including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ignition prevention - Risk identification and treatment - Resource preparation - Response planning - Operational restrictions - System testing - Security of water supply 	For the plan duration – 2023 to 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VFRR-B process ▪ Establishment of Incident Control Centres ▪ Code Red days ▪ Powerline inspections ▪ Community Information/ Fire Ready Guides ▪ Neighbourhood Safer Places – Bushfire places of Last Resort ▪ Fire breaks ▪ Emergency Management Plan ▪ Evacuation plans ▪ Brigade pre-plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal bushfire preparedness plans ▪ Daily readiness ▪ Practice/rehearse plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All agencies regularly evaluate preparation and readiness to respond to fire ▪ Strengthened capacity for agencies to provide an integrated response ▪ Measurable reduction of the impact of bushfires

Table 4. Bushfire – preparedness fire risk management strategy

Regulatory Controls				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency treatments	Community / individual treatments	Outcome
1. To implement regulation aimed at reducing the risk and impact of bushfires 2. To create and maintain effective linkages between planning functions to better inform proposed residential developments	For the plan duration – 2023 to 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fire hazard inspections ▪ Total fire bans ▪ Planning schemes ▪ Fire Danger Period ▪ Building codes ▪ Enforcement of fire hazard notices ▪ Response to planning applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comply with regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compliance with regulatory controls ▪ Appropriate residential development

Table 5. Bushfire – regulatory controls fire risk management strategy

In addition, there are a range of site-specific plans to reduce specific risks within the municipality that are required by other legislation. Details of specific strategy treatments and activities to treat assets identified at risk from bushfires and broader fire risk in the Yarriambiack Shire are listed in the appendices.

5.1.4 ANALYSIS AND PRIORITISATION OF MUNICIPAL STRUCTURE FIRE RISK

The MFMPSC undertook an analysis of assets at risk from structure fire using categories closely aligned to the asset classes contained within the VFRR-B process and risk assessment methodologies. ISO: 31000 2009 was also applied to produce a municipal risk profile to determine the risk level for the municipal footprint.

Structure fire – is defined as any uncontrolled fire inside, on, under, or touching a building or structure that needs to be extinguished.

The risk analysis process was conducted on asset subclass categories rather than individual assets, due to the generic nature of their classification and treatments. Further risk analysis was undertaken where an individual asset within any of the subclasses was identified as a significantly different or higher risk within that category.

Current treatments for these risks were then identified and analysed to determine their relevance and effectiveness.

It should also be recognised that a range of strategies and treatments exist which are applied consistently State-wide and throughout municipalities to reduce the occurrence and impact of structure fires. These include:

- Provisions in the *Building Act 1993* (Victoria)
- Provisions in the Victorian Planning Scheme
- Provisions in the Building Code of Australia (BCA)
- Environment Protection Authority
- Compliance and enforcement of legislation
- Council Essential Safety Measures procedures and audit inspections
- Industry guidelines
- Standards (i.e. electrical safety)
- Engineered controls (i.e. sprinkler systems, monitored fire alarms, etc)
- Fire service response, planning and training
- Staff training
- Event permits and event management plans
- Targeted education programs
- Public awareness programs – multimedia communications.

5.1.5 STRUCTURE FIRE RISK MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Priority risks for structure fire incidents within the Yarriambiack Shire have been defined by the MFMPSC and are set out in the tables below. The tables identify asset sub-classes using categories closely aligned to the asset classes contained within the VFRR-B process and risk assessment methodologies. These methodologies were applied to produce a risk profile to determine the risk level as well as current treatments for the municipality.

Structure fire		
Grampians RSFMPC priority	VFRR-B asset class	Asset sub-class/es
1. Housing Accommodation Places of public gathering Infirm, assisted living	Human settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Residential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High density - Urban - Interface living - Rural - Motels and other accommodation ▪ Public assembly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entertainment, leisure and conference venues - Institutions - Hotels/nightclubs ▪ Healthcare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hospitals and medical centres - Special care facilities
2. Retail Commercial businesses Industrial Infrastructure	Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commercial and industrial <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retail/business – joined or contiguous - Retail/business – separate structures - Industrial - Infrastructure
3. Buildings of significant heritage or cultural value	Cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Heritage listed and locally significant structures

Table 6. Structure fire – priority with asset classes and sub classes

5.1.6 TREATMENT OF MUNICIPAL STRUCTURE FIRE RISK

The key objectives and outcomes sought through the implementation of the primary fire risk management strategies for structure fires are outlined in the tables below.

Community education and engagement				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency treatments	Community/ individual treatments	Outcome
1. To build capacity and knowledge, resilience and understanding of the dangers of a structure fire 2. To provide the tools and educational opportunities for the community and individuals to better prepare for and understand the risks of a structure fire	For the plan duration – 2023 to 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community education programs ▪ Community engagement activities ▪ Multimedia communications ▪ Increase legislative and regulatory awareness ▪ Increased awareness of planning controls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To be proactive and seek information ▪ To be involved in community education and engagement programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All agencies will review and evaluate programs and participation of the community as part of the review process of the MFMS

Table 7. Structure fire – community education and engagement fire risk management strategy

Hazard reduction				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency treatments	Community/ individual treatments	Outcome
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To strategically reduce the impact and intensity of structure fire To pre-plan and establish strategic points to effectively combat and manage structure fire activity 	For the plan duration – 2023 to 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct fire safety inspections Buildings constructed and maintained, according to the BCA Use appropriate incident modelling tools to identify potential impacts to communities, such as the plume modelling tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of sprinklers, smoke detectors, fire blankets and fire extinguishers Comply with regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agencies and individuals working towards minimising the loss and damage caused by structural fires in the community

Table 8. Structure fire - hazard reduction fire risk management strategy

Preparedness				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency treatments	Community/ individual treatments	Outcome
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To understand appropriate actions to reduce the risk and impact of a structure fire. Initiatives include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ignition prevention Risk identification and treatment Resource preparation Response planning System testing Security of water supply 	For the plan duration – 2023 to 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency Management Plan Brigade pre-plans Fire sprinkler/ extinguisher installation and maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of sprinklers, smoke detectors and fire extinguishers Building/staff fire drills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All agencies and individuals regularly evaluate preparation and readiness to respond to fire Measurable reduction of impact on a structure fire

Table 9. Structure fire – preparedness fire risk management strategy

Regulatory controls				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency treatments	Community/ individual treatments	Outcome
1. To implement regulation aimed to reduce risk and impact of a structure fire 2. To create and maintain effective linkages between planning functions to better inform proposed residential developments	For the plan duration – 2023 to 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct fire safety inspections ▪ Planning schemes ▪ Building codes ▪ Response to planning applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comply with regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compliance with regulatory controls ▪ Appropriate residential development

Table 10. Structure fire – regulatory controls fire risk management strategy

5.1.7 ANALYSIS AND PRIORITISATION OF MUNICIPAL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INCIDENT RISK

The previous MFMPSC undertook an analysis of assets at risk from hazardous materials incidents using categories closely aligned to the asset classes contained within the VFRR-B process and risk assessment methodologies. ISO: 31000 2009 was also applied to produce a municipal risk profile to determine the risk level for the municipal footprint.

HAZMAT (hazardous materials) – is defined as any event involving an uncontrolled or unwanted release of hazardous substances that may threaten life or property. HAZMAT incidents include substances that may be flammable, combustible, corrosive, poisonous, oxidising, radioactive, explosive, or otherwise harmful chemicals or materials.

The risk analysis process was conducted on asset sub-class categories rather than individual assets, due to the generic nature of their classification and treatments. Further risk analysis was undertaken where an individual asset within any of the subclasses was identified as a significantly different or higher risk within that category,

Current treatments for these risks were then identified and analysed to determine their relevance and effectiveness.

Identified treatment gaps or issues requiring further information and research, form the basis for further fire management planning activities that the MFMPSC will need to undertake and include in their MFMSPP work plan in the future.

It should also be recognised that a range of strategies and treatments exist which are applied consistently State-wide and throughout municipalities to reduce the occurrence and impact of hazardous materials incidents. These include:

- Compliance and enforcement of legislation
- Council ESM procedures and audit inspections
- Industry guidelines
- Fire service response, planning and training
- Staff training
- Event permits and event management plans
- Targeted education programs
- Public awareness programs – multimedia communications.

5.1.8 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INCIDENT RISK MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Priority risks for hazardous materials incidents within the Yarriambiack Shire have been defined by the MFMPSC and are set out in the tables below. The tables identify asset sub-classes using categories closely aligned to the asset classes contained within the VFRR-B process and risk assessment methodologies. These methodologies were applied to produce a risk profile to determine the risk level as well as current treatments for the municipality.

Hazardous materials incident		
Grampians RSF MPC priority	VFRR-B asset class	Asset sub-class/es
1. Housing Accommodation Places of public gathering Infirm, assisted living	Human settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Residential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High density - Urban - Interface living - Rural - Motels and other accommodation ▪ Public assembly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entertainment, leisure and conference venues - Institutions - Hotels/nightclubs ▪ Healthcare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hospitals and medical centres - Special care facilities
2. Retail Commercial businesses Industrial Infrastructure	Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Commercial and industrial <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retail/business – joined or contiguous - Retail/business – separate structures - Industrial - Transport
3. Chemical incidents affecting the environment	Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flora and fauna, land, water and air quality
4. Buildings of significant heritage or cultural value	Cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Heritage listed and locally significant structures

Table 10. Hazardous materials incident - priority with asset classes and sub-classes

5.1.9 TREATMENTS OF MUNICIPAL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INCIDENT RISK

The key objectives and outcomes sought through the implementation of the primary risk management strategies for hazardous materials incidents are outlined in the tables below.

Community education and engagement				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency treatments	Community/ individual treatments	Outcome
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To build capacity and knowledge, resilience and understanding of the dangers of hazardous materials incidents To provide the tools and educational opportunities for industry and individuals to better prepare and understand the risks of hazardous materials incidents 	For the plan duration – 2023 to 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community information in response to incidents Increase legislative and regulatory awareness Increased awareness of planning controls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be proactive and seek information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All agencies will review and evaluate programs and information dissemination as part of the review process of the MFMSP

Table 11. Hazardous materials incident – community education and engagement fire risk management strategy

Hazard reduction				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency treatments	Community/ individual treatments	Outcome
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To strategically reduce the impact of hazardous materials incidents To pre-plan and establish strategic points to effectively combat and manage hazardous materials incidents activity 	For the plan duration – 2023 to 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide advice to industry and community in relation to appropriate compliance with the Acts, Regulations and Code of Practice for the Storage and Handling of Dangerous Goods Use appropriate incident modelling tools to identify potential impacts to communities, such as the plume modelling tool Brigade pre-plans Pre-incident response plans Traffic route restrictions for hazardous materials loads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate storage and handling of chemicals Follow Chemical Safety Data Sheets Comply with regulations and standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agencies and individuals work towards minimising the loss and damage caused by mishandling or spillage of chemicals

Table 12. Hazardous materials incident - hazard reduction fire risk management strategy

Preparedness				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency treatments	Community/ individual treatments	Outcome
1. To understand appropriate actions to reduce the risk and impact of hazardous materials incidents, initiatives include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ignition prevention ▪ Risk identification and treatment ▪ Response planning ▪ System testing 	For the plan duration – 2023 to 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emergency management plans ▪ Evacuation plans ▪ Pre-incident response plans ▪ CFA and WorkSafe inspections ▪ Written advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintenance and testing of fire safety equipment ▪ Emergency procedures for dangerous goods fire, spills and leaks ▪ Correct signage and labelling of chemicals ▪ Testing and exercising of emergency management plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All agencies and individuals regularly evaluate preparation and readiness to respond to fire ▪ Measurable reduction of impact on hazardous materials incidents

Table 13. Hazardous materials incident - preparedness fire risk management strategy

Regulatory controls				
Objectives	Timeframe	Agency treatments	Community/ individual treatments	Outcome
1. To implement regulation aimed at reducing the risk and impact of hazardous materials incidents	For the plan duration – 2023 to 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning schemes ▪ Building codes ▪ Comply with legislation ▪ Appropriate training for chemical use and handling ▪ Worksafe referrals from CFA/FRV, and to CFA/FRV from Worksafe ▪ EPA referrals to CFA/FRV, and referrals to EPA from Council/CFA/ FRV as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comply with legislation and regulations ▪ Seek written advice where appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compliance with regulatory controls. ▪ Appropriate industrial development

Table 14. Hazardous materials incident – regulatory controls fire risk management strategy

5.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFER PLACES – BUSHFIRE PLACES OF LAST RESORT (NSP-BPLR)

A NSP-BPLR is a place of last resort when all other bushfire plans have failed. NSP-BPLRs may provide some protection from direct flame and heat from a fire, but they do not guarantee safety. There is one NSP-BPLR in the Yarriambiack Shire.

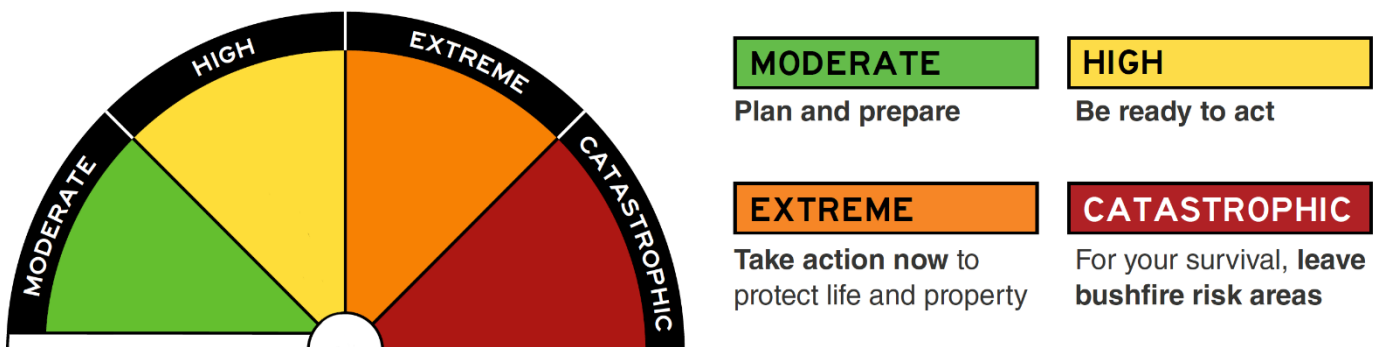
For further details, refer to [Appendix F: Neighbourhood Safer Places – Bushfire Places of Last Resort](#)

5.3 FIRE READY GUIDES

In consultation with the CFA, the Wimmera Emergency Management Team has developed Fire Ready Guides for areas of extreme fire risk. These guides provide important information for people living in extreme fire risk areas to help them plan and prepare for a fire. In the Yarriambiack municipality, a Fire Ready Guide has been developed for the Yaapeet area. This guide is reviewed regularly and distributed to households in Yaapeet leading up to the fire season. It is also available at the Yarriambiack Shire Council municipal offices, key locations in the Yaapeet community and on the [Yarriambiack Shire Council](#) and [Wimmera 72](#) websites.

5.4 FIRE DANGER RATINGS

Fire Danger Ratings tell you how dangerous a fire could be if one started. They are important because they help you decide what actions to take to protect yourself and others from bushfires and grassfires. A new Fire Danger Rating system was introduced in 2022 across Australia. Whether people are at home or travelling, they will now see the same system. There are four levels of fire danger in the new system.



Each fire danger rating has a clear set of messages including the actions the community can take to reduce their risk. Ratings are forecast using Bureau of Meteorology data for up to four days in advance, based on weather and other environmental conditions such as vegetation.

For further details, visit the [CFA website](#).

5.5 STRATEGIC FIRE BREAKS

Fire breaks are any natural or constructed discontinuity in a fuel bed that may be used to segregate, stop and control the spread of a bushfire, or to provide a fire control line from which to suppress a fire. Where formally designated as such, a strategic fire break refers to a firebreak constructed to complement other fire prevention and preparedness activities aimed at the protection of assets of national, state or regional significance.

Strategic fire suppression line – a break constructed or maintained in a strategically useful location to provide an effective and safe means to undertake fire prevention or suppression activities in advance of a future bushfire event occurring.

Strategic fire suppression lines should meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Of sufficient width and continuity to be an effective break under [Moderate to High Fire Danger Ratings](#)
- Able to be effectively fuel managed from fence to fence, that is –
 - No native vegetation likely to be negatively impacted by the proposed treatment is present
 - Where native vegetation is present, a relevant exemption to Clause 52.17 of local planning schemes provided for under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* applies
 - The treatment does not negatively impact any species, community or critical habitat listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*
 - Will not negatively impact any protected matters listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* such as listed species, ecological communities, habitat, heritage places or protected wetlands
 - The proposed treatment is likely to have positive or beneficial impacts on native species or habitat
- Provide an effective line of defence in suppressing fires.

Council's strategic fire suppression lines will have the vegetation managed from fence line to fence line **where practicable**. Grass will be slashed to a height of 100 mm or less and elevated fine fuels will not surpass a 'high' fuel hazard rating as assessed in the Overall Fuel Hazard Assessment Guide 4th Edition, Department of Sustainability and Environment (now DEECA).

For a list of strategic fire suppression lines, refer to [Appendix H: Strategic fire breaks – Yarriambiack Shire](#).

Fire control line – a natural or constructed barrier used in fire suppression and prescribed burning to limit/prevent the spread of fire. Council's fire control lines will have the vegetation managed to 3 metres behind the guideposts **where practicable**. Vegetation will be slashed to a height of 100 mm or less.

For a list of fire control lines, refer to [Appendix H: Strategic fire breaks – Yarriambiack Shire](#).

Standard fire prevention works – Council undertakes standard fire control works on almost all sealed roads within the municipality. Council's standard fire prevention works will have the vegetation managed to 1.5 to 1.8 metres behind the guideposts **where practicable**. Vegetation will be slashed to a height of 100 mm or less.

For further details about Yarriambiack Shire Council's standard fire prevention works, please contact the Chairperson, Yarriambiack Shire MEMPC on council@yarriambiack.vic.gov.au or 03 5398 0100.

Priority egress/access roads (PEAR) – The primary function of PEAR is to determine what treatments are required along the nominated road to maintain access and egress to an isolated community prior to or after a bushfire event. There are no identified primary egress/access roads in Yarriambiack Shire.

CFA brigade fire prevention works – Brigade works may enhance strategic fire suppression lines and fire control lines, however, the implementation is not compulsory and will be subject to seasonal conditions and brigade resource availability. CFA brigade works on road and rail reserves, public reserves and private land are reviewed annually by the CFA Vegetation Management Officer, Council's MFPO and other agencies (for example, DTP, VicTrack) as required.

For a list and map of CFA brigade works, please contact:

- CFA District 17 – 03 5362 1700
- CFA District 18 – 03 5036 2800

5.6 FIRE ACCESS TRACKS

A Fire Access Track is a track constructed and/or maintained for fire management purposes that are not generally of a standard adequate for all-weather use by two-wheel drive vehicles.

Yarriambiack Shire currently supports one Fire Access Track across the municipal area. These have been adopted over a number of years through recognition of their importance within a community, through development as part of the subdivision process or via requests from local CFA brigades who view a particular route as providing essential access in the event of a fire.

The provision of Fire Access Tracks does not alter the legislated ability of CFA resources to enter any property or place to control a fire. Fire Access Tracks simply facilitate rapid access by CFA resources into or through particular areas.

Fire Access Tracks are not escape routes for residents. The use of Fire Access Tracks as escape routes by members of the public during a fire event may place users at significantly higher risk than if they had stayed on formed roads.

The use of Fire Access Tracks by the public, especially during winter will cause damage to the tracks, affecting the use during summer months.

Fire Access Track determination guidelines

- Provides a logical shortcut between two made roads or access into an area that is otherwise difficult to access.
- Does not place CFA appliances at additional, unnecessary risk
- The route can be readily maintained within Councils limited budget and resources
- Track establishment does not require extensive and expensive works
- Private landholder consent is given by the landholder where the track crosses private land.

Fire Access Track determination process

- Brigades bring Fire Access Track nominations to the CFA Commander
- CFA Commander discusses the nominated Fire Access Track with Council's MFPO
- CFA Commander or MFPO brings a report to the MFMPSC identifying the nominated track and how it meets the determination criteria
- MFMPSC endorses the nomination and sends it to CFA for approval.

5.7 COMMUNITY FIRE REFUGES

A community fire refuge is a last resort shelter option. It is a designated building that can be opened during a bushfire to provide the public with short-term shelter from the immediate life-threatening effects of a bushfire. They are purpose-built or modified buildings that can provide protection from radiant heat and embers. Yarriambiack Shire does not have any designated community fire refuges.

6. MUNICIPAL FIRE PROFILE

The information below relates to the municipal fire profile. For detailed information regarding the municipal profile of the Yarriambiack municipality, refer to the [Municipal Emergency Management Plan](#).

6.1 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The Yarriambiack municipality contains several significant areas of public land including the Wyperfeld National Park, the Barrett, Barabool and Bryntirion State Forests and the Wathe Flora and Fauna Reserve. Other bushland areas exist throughout the municipality and together these areas of public land provide important habitat for Mallee Fowl and many other Mallee species.

The municipality is dominated by the Yarriambiack Creek and the Black Box Woodlands that follow its flood lines. The north of the municipality contains an ephemeral lake system where the Yarriambiack Creek terminates at Lake Coorong close to Hopetoun.

The following table depicts the major public land holdings in the Yarriambiack municipality.

Name	Manager	Size [ha]
Barabool State Forest	DEECA	1,050
Barrett State Forest	DEECA	370
Bryntirion State Forest	DEECA	700
Marma State Forest	DEECA	180
Wathe Flora and Fauna Reserve	Parks Victoria	7,000
Wyperfeld National Park	Parks Victoria	356,000

Table 15. Yarriambiack municipality major public land holdings

6.2 LAND USE

Rural land use comprises over 90% of the total land in the area with less than 3% used for business, industrial or residential purposes. There are a number of small farming communities located throughout the Yarriambiack Shire which produce one quarter of Victoria's total grain production, predominantly wheat and barley, and are also noted for their production of lamb and wool. In recent years, the area has also become rich in oilseed and legume crops. All soil types are highly productive within the limitations of the rainfall received. Areas of poorer quality soils have not been cleared for agriculture and much remains as public land. Floristically rich, these localities are prized habitats for native fauna. The forests are used for beekeeping, water-catchment protection, outdoor recreation activities and flora and fauna conservation.

6.3 CLIMATE AND BUSHFIRE SEASON

Climate in the Yarriambiack municipality is dominated by warm dry summers and cool wet winters.

The bushfire season generally runs from October to April in the northern section of the municipality, with a slightly later start in the southern section. Prevailing weather conditions associated with the bushfire season in the Yarriambiack municipality area are warm to hot north-westerly winds accompanied by high temperatures and low relative humidity, followed by a cool south-westerly change.

The State Government climate change projections predict that the municipality can expect:

- To be hotter with the greatest increases in temperature expected in summer
- To be drier with greatest decreases in rainfall expected in spring
- To have fewer rainy days but increasing rainfall intensity.

The years 2010 and 2011 recorded above average rainfall events in spring and summer with major flooding of the Yarriambiack Creek and its adjoining tributaries.

From 2020 to 2023, the Yarriambiack municipality experienced above average rainfall, culminating in a localised flooding event in October 2022. As we come out this high rainfall La Nina weather pattern, hot and dry El Nina conditions are expected to gradually strengthen throughout 2023-24.

6.4 HISTORY OF FIRE AND IGNITION CAUSES

There are very few records of any major fires occurring across the Yarriambiack municipality. The causes of most fires are from agricultural activities and lightning strikes. Haystack fires are seasonally common as a result of spontaneous combustion in stored hay. Ageing housing stock in the municipality also contributes to a number of single residential fires each year. A summary of major fires is provided in the table below.

Year	Location	Size (ha)	Ignition Source
2020	Lah West Road, Lah	133	Header
2018	Sheep Hills Road, Kellalac	500	Stubble
2017	Borong Highway – two fires joined together	200	Mechanical (wheel bearing)
2016	Woomelang – Christmas Day – started north of Sunraysia Highway	2,000	Mechanical
2014	Wyperfeld National Park – Lake Albacutya, Wirrengren Plain	56,543	Lightning
2013	Wallup-Dogwood Road – 15 km south-west of Warracknabeal	300	Unknown
2010	Boolite – duck farm	94	Spontaneous combustion (animal waste)
2007	Walthe Flora and Fauna Reserve	3,780	Lightning

Table 15. Yarriambiack municipality major bushfire history

6.5 FUTURE FIRE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Future vulnerabilities will include larger farm landholdings, managed by absentee landowners and serviced by contractors, leading to declining populations in broad acre cropping areas. This demographic combined with an ageing population has seen previously robust communities replaced by smaller, older, more vulnerable communities isolated from services. This shift in population could potentially lead to delayed suppression activities in the rural area. Work commitments and individual availability also impact heavily on volunteer response capability.

Changes in farming practices have led to increased fuel content being left on ground throughout the year, potentially increasing fire spread due to continuity of fuel load.

An increase in individuals purchasing property for investment purposes has resulted in more absentee landowners. These landowners traditionally live outside the municipality and have less understanding of fuel and fire management requirements and little engagement with the community. This limits their capacity and ability to undertake regular fuel management works and participate in local community networks.

Hay production is widespread throughout the municipality and there is potential for spontaneous combustion in stored product.

As detailed in [6.3 Climate and Bushfire Season](#), climate change and increases in severe weather events linked to temperature, wind, humidity and storms, has the potential to impact significantly on future fire management.

7. BUSHFIRE RISK TREATMENTS FOR PROPERTY OWNERS

Following amendments made to the Victorian Planning Provisions in November 2011, guidelines have been produced that allow property owners to clear vegetation on their properties to reduce the threat of bushfire to their homes. Under section 52.48 of the Planning Scheme, the 10/30 and 10/50 rules enable clearing around existing buildings used for accommodation (legally erected before 18 November 2011).

For new buildings, clearing for bushfire protection will be considered through the planning permit process.

For further details, refer to the [CFA](#) and [Department of Transport and Planning](#) websites.

Outlined below is a list of bushfire risk treatment options applicable to property owners.

7.1 VEGETATION MANAGEMENT RIGHTS

Native vegetation is important to many Victorians and its removal is carefully regulated by the planning system. A vegetation management right called the 10/30 or 10/50 rule is part of a suite of measures to help Victorians in areas at risk from bushfire prepare their properties.

The 10/30 rule simplifies the right to clear native vegetation around a home located in an area designated as a bushfire prone area under the *Building Act 1993* for bushfire protection without obtaining a planning permit. This right allows landowners to clear without a planning permit:

- Any vegetation, including trees, within 10 metres of their home on their property
- Any vegetation (except for trees) within 30 metres of their house on their property
- Any vegetation either side of their property boundary fence to a combined maximum width of 4 metres (with consent from the neighbouring landowner).

The 10/50 rule enables all landowners in areas **within the Bushfire Management Overlay** to undertake the following measures on their property:

- Removal, destruction or lopping of any vegetation, including trees within 10 metres of an existing building used for accommodation
- Removal, destruction or lopping of any vegetation, except trees within 50 metres of an existing building used for accommodation.

The 10/30 and 10/50 rules only apply for structures used for accommodation if the structure was built:

- Before 10 September 2009
- Approved by a planning permit or a building permit issued before 10 September 2009
- Lawfully constructed without a planning permit before 29 November 2011
- Constructed to replace a dwelling or dependent person's unit that was damaged or destroyed by a bushfire that occurred between 1 January 2009 and 31 March 2009.

For new buildings, clearing for bushfire protection will be considered through the planning permit process.

For further details, refer to [Vegetation Clearing Exemptions – Bushfire Protection Fact Sheet \(August 2020\)](#).

7.2 HAZARD TREES

Section 86B of the *Electrical Safety Act 1988* (Victoria) requires Councils to specify procedures for the identification of trees that are hazardous to electric lines in their Municipal Fire Prevention Plan.

For detailed information on how to manage hazard trees, refer to:

[Appendix E: Hazard Trees Identification and Notification Procedures](#)

7.3 PERMIT TO BURN

During the declared Fire Danger Period, limited permits may be obtained by individuals to conduct a fuel reduction or stubble burn within the municipality. Permits to Burn are issued by Victoria's fire services (CFA, FRV and FFMV) through an online process under authority of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*, and contain stringent conditions that must be followed. Yarriambiack Shire Council does not issue Permits to Burn.

Permits to Burn are issued online at the [Fire Permits Victoria website](#)

Further information is also available on the [CFA website](#)

7.4 INSPECTION OF PRIVATE PROPERTIES AND ISSUE OF NOTICES

Yarriambiack Shire Council conducts fire hazard inspections within the municipality, concentrating on high-risk areas and townships in the lead up to the Fire Danger Period each year. Fire prevention notices are issued on land considered to be a fire risk as soon as practicable. Landholders in receipt of a fire prevention notice are required to comply with the instruction on the notice by the required due date. Non-compliance assessed during a follow-up inspection after the due date may result in Council undertaking the required works, charging the costs back to the landholder and issuing a fine.

7.5 PLANNING PERMITS

When applications are lodged with the Yarriambiack Shire Council for permits under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* for the subdivision of land or the construction of buildings in areas of high fire risk, Council may give consideration to the following in determining any such application and also refer the application to the relevant fire agencies for comment:

- Bushfire Management Overlay – Yarriambiack Shire Council Planning Scheme
- [Bushfire Planning Policy – Department of Planning and Transport](#)
- [Construction of Buildings in Bushfire Prone Areas \(Australian Standard 3959\) – HIA website](#)
- [Planning and Bushfire Management Overlay – CFA website](#)

8. CROSS BOUNDARY ARRANGEMENTS

The Yarriambiack Shire shares borders with Horsham, Mildura, Hindmarsh, Buloke and Northern Grampians municipalities. It is the shared responsibility of the Yarriambiack MFMPSC and bordering MFMPs to ensure that risks contiguous across these borders are planned for in a consistent and seamless manner.

MFMPs will be considered by the RSFMPC to ensure that shared risks across municipal and agency boundaries are appropriately addressed. Details of current identified cross boundary and contiguous risks from bushfire for the Yarriambiack Shire are provided in the following table.

Risk	Adjacent municipality	Strategy
Barrabool State Forest	Horsham Rural City Council	Ensure alignment of planning and prevention activities in relation to these risks are discussed and coordinated with relevant municipalities. Ensure that these arrangements and plans are included in relevant MFMPs.
Bryntirion State Forest	Northern Grampians Shire Council	
Marma State Forest	Northern Grampians Shire Council and Horsham Rural City Council	
Wyperfeld National Park	Mildura Rural City Council and Hindmarsh Shire Council	

Table 16. Yarriambiack municipality cross boundary risks

9. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: ACRONYMS

Acronym	Description
AFDRS	Australian Fire Danger Rating System
BCA	Building Code of Australia
CERA	Community Emergency Risk Assessment
CFA	Country Fire Authority
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
ERV	Emergency Recovery Victoria
FFMV	Forest Fire Management Victoria
FRV	Fire Rescue Victoria
HAZMAT	Hazardous Materials
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
MEMPC	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
MEMO	Municipal Emergency Management Officer
MFMPSC	Municipal Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee
MFMSPP	Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plan
MFPO	Municipal Fire Prevention Officer
MRM	Municipal Recovery Manager
NSP-BPLR	Neighbourhood Safer Places – Bushfire Places of Last Resort
PEAR	Priority Egress/Access Roads
PPRR	Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery
SEMP	State Emergency Management Plan (Victoria)
VFRR-B	Victoria Fire Risk Register - Bushfire
VPF	Victorian Preparedness Framework

APPENDIX B: TERMINOLOGY

Term	Description
Agencies	Municipal Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee member agencies/ organisations including CFA, DEECA, DTP, ERV, FRV, FFMV, Parks Victoria, Victoria Police and Yarriambiack Shire Council.
Assets	Anything valued by the community including houses, crops, stock, heritage buildings and places, infrastructure, the environment, businesses and forests, that may be at risk from fire.
Bushfire	A general term used to describe fire vegetation, including grass fire.
Bushfire risk	The chance of a bushfire igniting, spreading and causing damage to the community or the assets they value.
Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA)	An all hazards risk assessment tool which aims to identify, mitigate and reduce risk within the community following the Australian Standard for Risk Management, ISO 31000.
Community fire refuge	A community fire refuge is a last resort shelter option. It is a designated building that can be opened during a bushfire to provide the public with short-term shelter from the immediate life-threatening effects of a bushfire. They are purpose-built or modified buildings that can provide protection from radiant heat and embers.
Community safety	A collaborative effort by community, government and non-government groups to ensure the safety, wellbeing and stability of society. These efforts are sustained by core values of sustainability, social cohesion, security, cooperation, self-reliance and an improved physical environment. Under such a regime, safer communities are locally organised and resourced, well informed about local risks, proactive in prevention, risk averse, motivated and able to manage the majority of local issues through effective planning and action.
Emergency	The actual or imminent occurrence of an event which in any way endangers or threatens to endanger the safety or health of any person in Victoria or which destroys or damages, or threatens to destroy or damage, any property in Victoria or in any way endangers or threatens to endanger the environment or an element of the environment in Victoria including, without limiting, the generality of the foregoing and specific to integrated fire management and therefore includes: a fire, an explosion, a road accident or any other accident, a disruption to an essential service (<i>Emergency Management Act 1986</i>).
Essential service	Transport, fuel (including gas), light, power, water, sewerage, or a service (whether or not of a type similar to the foregoing) declared to be an essential service by the Governor in Council from the effect or impact of fire (<i>Emergency Management Act 1986</i>).
Fire	Flames, light, heat, and often smoke, that are produced when something burns. Comes under "Emergency" definition (see above).
Fire management	All activities associated with the management of fire (bushfire, structural, chemical), including the use of fire to meet land management goals and objectives. In simple terms, PPRR as well as use of fire for economical, agricultural and cultural purposes.
Prevention	All activities undertaken in advance of the occurrence of an incident to decrease the impact, extent and severity of the incident and to ensure more effective response activities.
Preparedness	All activities concerned with minimising the occurrence of incidents, particularly those of human origin.
Recovery	The coordinated process of supporting emergency affected communities in reconstruction of the physical infrastructure and restoration of emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing.

Term	Description
Response	Actions taken in anticipation of, during and immediately after an incident to ensure that its effects are minimised and that people are given.
Risk assessment	The overall process of risk identification, risk analysis and risk evaluation.
Risk identification	The process of determining what, where, when, why and how something could happen.
Victorian Fire Risk Register – Bushfire (VFRR-B)	A systematic map-based process that identifies and assesses assets and provides a range of treatments which contribute to the wellbeing of communities and the environment which suffer the adverse effects of bushfire.
Victorian Preparedness Framework	A planning tool that planners at the State, regional, municipal, community, agency or group levels are encouraged to integrate into their emergency management planning.
Vulnerability	The susceptibility of an asset or community to the impacts of fire.

APPENDIX C: YARRIAMBIACK SHIRE MUNICIPAL FIRE MANAGEMENT PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Yarriambiack Shire Municipal Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee Terms of Reference are available on the Yarriambiack Shire Council website. Follow the link below and select Yarriambiack MFMP Terms of Reference:
<https://www.yarriambiack.vic.gov.au/Council-Services/Emergency/Municipal-Emergency-Management-Planning-Committee>

APPENDIX D: YARRIAMBIACK SHIRE BUSHFIRE ASSET RISK MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING REGISTER

To access the Yarriambiack Shire Bushfire Asset Risk Management and Reporting Register, log into the Victorian Fire Risk Register – Bushfire (VFRR-B) <https://www.vfrr.vic.gov.au/>

- Select “Outputs”
- Select “LGA”
- Select “86-Yarriambiack”
- Download “86-01 Output – Exports”

Note: Access to the VFRR-B is restricted to local government, fire services, public land managers, utilities and community groups.

APPENDIX E: HAZARD TREES IDENTIFICATION AND NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Introduction

The *Electricity Safety Act 1998* (Victoria), section 86B provides the obligation for municipal Councils “the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan must specify procedures for the identification of trees that are hazardous to electric lines”.

This will be achieved through:

- (a) Procedures and criteria for the identification of trees that are likely to fall onto or come into contact with an electric line (hazard trees)
- (b) Procedures for the notification of responsible persons of trees that are hazard trees in relation to electric lines for which they are responsible.

Under the *Electrical Safety Act 1998*, the person responsible for maintaining vegetation and clearance space around power lines is referred to as the “**responsible person**”.

The procedures outlined in this section of the Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plan seek to address the requirement detailed above. Each responsible person should have their own internal procedure regarding the steps that will be taken when they receive notification of a potentially hazardous tree.

What is a hazard tree?

According to the *Electrical Safety Act 1998*, a hazard tree is a tree which “is likely to fall onto or come into contact with an electric line”.

The *Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2015* further provide that a responsible person may cut or remove such a tree “provided that the tree has been assessed by a suitably qualified arborist and that assessment confirms the likelihood of contact with an electric line having regard to foreseeable local conditions.”

Due to legal requirements which require a clearance space to be maintained around an electric line, hazard trees are usually located outside the regulated clearance space. Despite being outside the clearance space, the tree may still have the potential to contact the line due to its size or because of a structural fault or weakness which enders part, or all, of the tree likely to contact or fall onto the line.

Who is responsible for a hazard tree?

Under the *Electrical Safety Act 1998*, the person responsible for maintaining vegetation and clearance space around power lines, including keeping the whole or any part of a tree clear of the line, is the responsible person.

Responsibility is allocated between distribution businesses and other owners of electricity infrastructure, landowners and occupiers for clearance of private power lines, public land managers where they are identified as the responsible person such as municipal Councils, DEECA and VicRoads.

Responsible persons within Yarriambiack Shire

Powercor is the body primarily responsible for line clearance in Yarriambiack Shire. There is only one electricity distribution business in the Yarriambiack Shire and there are no declared areas under Section 81 of the *Electrical Safety Act 1998* that are the responsibility of the Council.

Other relevant information

Responsible persons, other than private persons, must have an Electric Line Clearance Management Plan in place for areas for which they have responsibility [refer to *Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2015*].

Procedures and criteria for identification of hazard trees

In the course of everyday duties, potentially hazardous trees may come to the attention of Council staff or volunteer members of the entities with representation on the Municipal Fire Management Planning Sub-Committee, staff of the distribution business(es) or other persons, including members of the public.

There are a range of factors that may indicate that a tree is a hazard tree, that is, a tree that 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.

Procedures and criteria for notification of hazard trees

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 the responsibility, they must follow their applicable internal procedure and the notification procedure described below does not apply.

To ensure that information regarding potentially hazardous trees is captured efficiently and, as appropriate, referred to the responsible person for action, the following procedure for the notification of hazardous trees should be followed.

- The person with responsibility for the highest percentage of lines within the municipality (**the primary responsible person**) is Powercor and therefore the person to whom potentially hazardous trees should be reported.
- Where any person becomes aware of, or receives a report of, a potentially hazardous tree within the municipality, this should be referred to Powercor. Where the committee becomes aware of, or receives a report of, a potentially hazardous tree within the municipality, this must be referred to Powercor.
- Reports of potentially hazardous trees must be provided to Powercor for action as soon as practicable. Reports must include, as far as practicable:
 - The name and contact details and any relevant qualifications, where known, of the person making the report
 - As much detail as possible about the location of the tree (including, where known, GPS coordinates, details of numerical/nameplate on nearest pole, name of nearest road or crossroads, closest landmark, whether the tree is on private land or road reserve, etc)
 - A description of the tree (including the genus and species of tree, if known)
 - The primary reasons given for the tree being identified as potentially hazardous (for example, the tree is in proximity to an electric line **and** there is evidence of structural weakness, excessive lean, appears to be encroaching into line clearance space, etc)
 - An indication of whether urgent action is required.
- Powercor 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.

MUNICIPAL HAZARD TREE NOTIFICATION FORM

This form should be used by municipal councils to report hazard trees to CitiPower and Powercor as required by Section 86(b) of the Electricity Safety Act 1998 (Vic).

Please complete the form digitally, then save it as a PDF and email it to egcustomer@powercor.com.au

Local Government Authority (LGA) Contact Details

Municipality:

Contact:

Contact email: Phone:

Job title: Department:

Reported date: Priority: Urgent* Non-urgent

* Please contact (03) 9683 2199 directly to report an urgent hazard tree.

Hazard Tree Location

Street number: Street name:

Town/suburb: Pole number:

Voltage (if known) LIS number: (large silver or yellow plate)

Comments:

Hazard Tree Details

Number of tree(s)/limb(s): Species of trees (if known):

Current status*:

Reason for hazard classification**:

Digital images: Yes No Number of photos (if relevant)

Further Comments

* Clearly describe the current status of the tree, e.g.: tree/branch deemed to be leaning towards HV/LV conductors, tree/branch deemed to be able to strike the HV/LV conductors if it fell; general status of surrounding environment, high risk of bushfire ignition.

* Clearly describe why the tree was determined to be a "hazard" i.e. root rot, leaning, bifurcation, split etc.

This form can be found at:

<https://media.powercor.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/02001438/council-tree-hazard-notification-form-v3.pdf>

APPENDIX F: NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFER PLACES – BUSHFIRE PLACES OF LAST RESORT (NSP-BPLR)

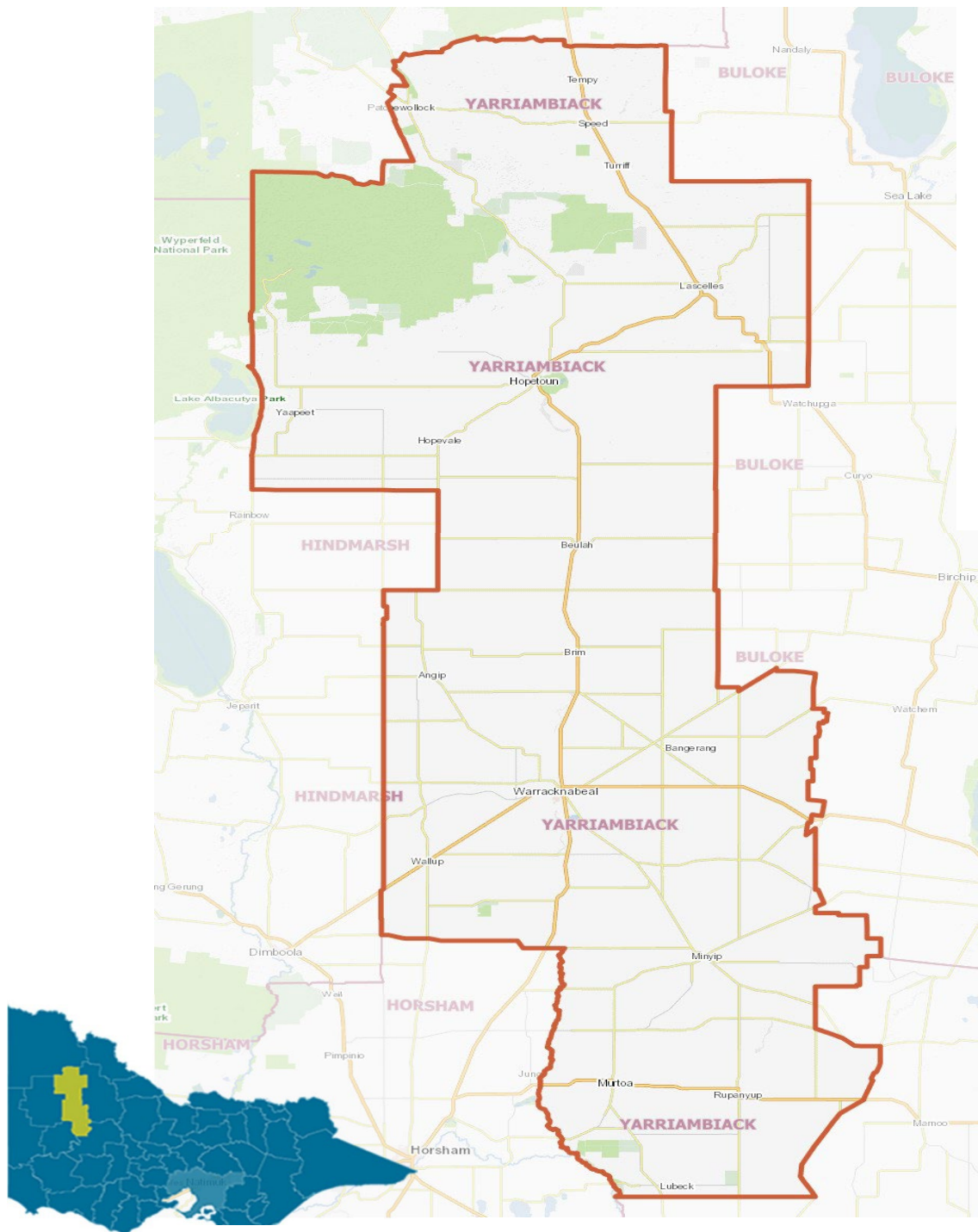
There is one NSP-BPLR in the Yarriambiack Shire.

Yarriambiack Shire Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort		
Township	Street address	Location/facility
Warracknabeal	Bounded by Scott Street, Arnold Street, Molyneaux Street and Gardiner Street Warracknabeal 3393 (entry off Scott Street or Molyneaux Street)	Anzac Park – open space in front of community centre

Further information about the Yarriambiack Shire NSP-BPLR is available at:

<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/your-local-area-info-and-advice/neighbourhood-safer-places>

APPENDIX G: YARRIAMBIACK SHIRE BOUNDARY MAP



For further information, refer to: [Yarriambiack Shire Community Map](#)

Restricted information

Restricted information

APPENDIX J: OTHER DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

Neighbouring Municipal Fire Management Sub-Plans

- [Buloke Shire](#)
- [Hindmarsh Shire](#)
- [Horsham Rural City](#)
- [Mildura Rural City](#)
- [Northern Grampians Shire](#)

Useful municipal and agency links

- [Country Fire Authority](#)
- [Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action](#)
- [Department of Justice and Community Safety](#)
- [Emergency Management Common Operating Picture \(EM-COP\)](#)
- [Emergency Management Victoria](#)
- [Emergency Recovery Victoria](#)
- [VicEmergency](#)
- [Victorian Fire Risk Register – Bushfire](#) (restricted access)
- [Wimmera Integrated Relief and Recovery Plan 2023-2026](#)
- [Wimmera 72](#)
- [Yarriambiack Shire Community Map](#) (select Emergency Management tab)
- [Yarriambiack Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan](#)

Local fire management plans and arrangements

- Big Desert Emergency Management Plan – Parks Victoria
- CFA Districts 17 and 18, Groups and Local Brigade Plans (contact CFA District 17 on 5362 1700 or District 18 on 5036 2800)
- [Murra Warra Wind Farm Bushfire Mitigation Plan](#) (scroll down to “Publicly Available Documents”)
- Wyperfeld parks Emergency Management Plan – Parks Victoria

Note: These plans may not be publicly available and the agency responsible should be consulted about access.

Regional fire management plans and arrangements

- [Grampians Bushfire Management Strategy 2020](#)
- [Grampians Regional Strategic Fire Management Plan V2.6 2011](#)
- [Forrest Fire Management Victoria – Grampians Bushfire Management Strategy](#)
- [Forrest Fire Management Victoria – Joint Fuel Management Program](#)

State fire management plans and arrangements

- [Department of Education Emergency and Critical Incident Management Planning – School Operations](#)
- [State Emergency Management Plan \(SEMP\) Bushfire Sub-Plan 2021](#)

Site specific fire management plans and arrangements

- [Ausnet Bushfire Mitigation Plans](#)
- [Powercor Bushfire Mitigation Plan 2021](#)
- [VicRoads Roadside Management Strategy 2011](#)

Works program

Documents in this portion of the plan may change on an annual basis. The following agencies will provide their annual fire mitigation works program to the Yarriambiack Shire Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee, including notification when the works have been completed, prior to declaration of the fire danger period.

- Yarriambiack Shire Council Fuel Reduction Plans
- DEECA, Parks Victoria and Forrest Fire Management Victoria
- CFA (including brigades and groups burn plans)
- VFRR-B Treatment Overview (follow instructions in [Appendix D](#) to download file)

Please contact the Yarriambiack Shire Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee Chairperson on email council@yarriambiack.vic.gov.au for further information.

APPENDIX K: RESTRICTED INFORMATION

Summary of the restricted information	Reason for restriction	Agency/ies that hold this information in full	Contact point/s
Appendix H: Strategic Fire Breaks – Yarriambiack Shire Council	Internal operational information	Yarriambiack Shire Council and CFA	MEMPC Chairperson Phone 03 5398 0100 MFMPSC Chairperson Phone 03 5362 1700
Appendix I: Fire Access Tracks – Yarriambiack Shire Council	Internal operational information	Yarriambiack Shire Council	MEMPC Chairperson Phone 03 5398 0100 MFMPSC Chairperson Phone 03 5362 1700