

Bushfire Risk Management Plan for FDC Services Procedure



Applies to	Intereach Family Day Care (FDC)				
Policy	NQS Two: Children's Health and Safety Policy				
Version	2.0	Date approved	3/11/2022	Next review date	3/11/2025

1. Objective

In regional Australia, there is the genuine possibility of bushfire impacting upon our service and/or our families. While there are elements of bushfire that Intereach cannot control, like the weather, there is a wide range of planning and preparation activities that Intereach can undertake which will dramatically increase the chances of the FDC educator, the children in care, the FDC educator's family members and their home surviving in the event of a bushfire.

- Catastrophic Days**

- Family Day Care educators registered with Intereach, that are located in an area of bushfire or grass fire risk, will close and will not operate on any day declared by the Emergency Management Commissioner to be a day of 'Catastrophic' Fire Danger Rating that applies to the area or district at which the family day care educator's residence is located.
- FDC educators may choose to pre-emptively close on days determined Catastrophic even if they have not been identified on the bushfire at-risk register, Category 4 or bushfire prone zone. This must be documented in the FDC residence plan.
- In the event of a catastrophic day Intereach service will be closed according to the Catastrophic day determination of the Australia Fire Danger Rating Levels.

The Australia Fire Danger Rating Levels



- If an extreme fire danger rating is declared for the district in which a family day care residence is located the family day care service should follow the emergency and evacuation policy and procedures to reduce the associated risks and maintain children's safety; this may include identifying circumstances where a decision is made for the family day care service to pre-emptively close or not operate.

2. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Nominated Supervisor to:

- maintain a record of educators identified on the bushfire at-risk register, risk of grassfire (Category 4) (VIC) and bushfire prone areas (NSW) and update it regularly such as when new educators are registered, educators move to another residence or other influencing factors are identified;
- monitor the Bureau of Meteorology district and contact educators on declared Catastrophic days to ensure identified FDC residences are not in operation and that they have contacted all families;
- maintain up to date emergency and evacuation policies and procedures and include an Emergency Management Plan (EMP) for managing Family Day Care Educators bushfire and grassfire related risks;
- notify the Regulatory Authority in the event of any closures within 24 hours or as soon as possible via the NQA ITS (Refer to *Intereach Risk and Incident Policy*);

It is the responsibility of the Coordination unit Staff and the FDC educators to:

- work together to develop and review their Emergency Management Plan (EMP) and a FDC Residence Bushfire Plan (Refer to *Appendix A*);
- annually review the Emergency Management plan and FDC Residence Bushfire plan;
- review the Emergency Management plan and FDC Residence Bushfire plan after any bushfire event;
- consult with relevant authorities for guidance and advice on the management of bushfire risk and emergencies;
- conduct a risk assessment to identify a potential bush fire risk to each FDC residence;
- communicate with the educator, coordinator and families about bush fire preparation information and provisions
- discuss bush fire response procedures at meetings with FDC educators, Coordinators and responsible persons including decisions to pre-emptively close services on a day forecast as an extreme fire rating
- contact the local council or use a program (such as that available at <https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/building-in-a-bush-fire-area/planning-for-bush-fire-protection/bush-fire-prone-land/check-bfpl> for NSW) to determine if you are in a bush fire prone area
- ensure a current emergency and evacuation floor plan is clearly displayed near each exit of the FDC residence and/or approved FDC venue;
- ensure FDC educators in residences and or venues, clearly understand how emergencies will be managed in collaboration with the Approved Provider to reduce any associated risks and maintain children's safety;
- ensure emergency drills, including a bush fire drill are practiced at least every 3 months by the FDC educator and children being educated on that day;
- ensure a record is kept of each emergency evacuation rehearsal;
- ensure each FDC premises and FDC educators are prepared for bush fire conditions and prepared to respond quickly and appropriately during high fire danger periods;
- ensure all fire safety equipment is installed and maintained regularly;
- contact families to organise alternative care if a service needs to close due to potential fire risk;

Children's Services Bushfire Risk Management Plan for FDC Services Procedure

- ensure a clear and effective communication procedure during an emergency is implemented;
- organise and communicate with off-site evacuation centres about emergency arrangements;
- ensure the Fire Danger Rating (FDR) is checked daily through [Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology](#);
- ensure FDC educators regularly clean gutters at their residence/venue so they are free from dry leaves and other debris;
- ensure FDC educators keep emergency exits clear and accessible at all times;
- ensure FDC educators keep accurate record of attendance of children, visitors and volunteers each day;
- ensure educators keep a current list of emergency contact numbers near the phone and in the contacts of their mobile phone;
- monitor the bush fire situation when the rating is above **High** through internet or radio;
- ensure the “*Fires Near Me*” app (NSW Rural Fire Service); or “*Vic Emergency*” app (CFA emergency services) is downloaded and installed on mobile phones (NSW or Victoria);
- be prepared for **Code Red Days** and consequent closure of FDC services if listed on the Bushfire At Risk Register (BARR) in Victoria; and,
- support educators to inform families of any FDC services where education and care cannot be provided due to a Catastrophic Fire Day in their area.

3. Procedure

The Family Day Care Educators will:

- conduct a risk assessment to prepare emergency evacuation procedures for bush and grass fires considering:
 - prevention measures to take prior and during the bush fire period;
 - procedures to be taken when there is a bush fire in the local district;
 - response measures if confronted with a bush fire hazard or emergency;
 - identified evacuation assembly areas and evacuation routes;
 - procedures to ensure children are only released to persons authorised to collect them; and,
 - mechanisms to ensure visitors and family members living in the residence are aware of the service's emergency response procedures.
- consider how to safely evacuate infant/s and children with any disabilities in the event that this is to occur and include these practices when completing their Emergency Management Plan
- examine the grounds of their residence/venue during daily indoor and outdoor safety checks to ensure flammable and/or combustible materials (e.g., Dead leaves and bark, chemicals) have been removed;
- ensure they are familiar with the daily Fire Danger Rating (FDR);
- ensure a fire alarm is installed and checked annually and fire protection equipment is tagged and tested six monthly;
- ensure they have ready access to an operating telephone or other similar means of communication to always initiate immediate communication to and from parents and emergency services while education and care is being provided;
- ensure all contact details of parents/carers and emergency contact details are up to date;

Children's Services Bushfire Risk Management Plan for FDC Services Procedure

- ensure family members residing in the home are familiar and confident with emergency evacuation policies and procedures and aware of designated assembly areas;
- ensure emergency exits are clearly indicated; and,
- keep up to date with professional development and training about bush fires and emergency evacuation.

4. National Quality Framework

Element	Concept	Description
.2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
.2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service

5. Context

5.1. Standards or other external requirements	<p>Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017), <i>National Quality Standards</i></p> <p>Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (2017), <i>Guide to the National Quality Framework</i></p> <p>Early Childhood Australia (2016). <i>Code of Ethics</i></p> <p>Department of Education (Vic), Bushfire preparedness https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/Pages/bushfireprepare.aspx</p> <p>Department of Education (NSW) – Bushfire preparedness https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/operating-an-early-childhood-education-service/latest-alerts/bushfire-preparedness-and-the-national-law</p> <p>CFA About Fire Danger Ratings, Accessed October 2022 https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/about-fire-danger-ratings</p>
5.2. Legislation or other requirements	<p>Education and Care Services National Regulations consolidated 2017</p> <p>Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010</p>
5.3. Internal Documentation	<p>Intereach Risk and Incident Policy</p> <p>Emergency and evacuation procedure</p> <p>Emergency Management Plan</p> <p>Home Safety Audit</p> <p>FDC Residence Bushfire plan</p>

2. Document Control

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Next review date
---------	---------------	-------------	------------------

Children's Services Bushfire Risk Management Plan for FDC Services Procedure

1.0	2/03/2020	R.Phillips - Acting Senior Manager, Children and Family Services	2/03/2023
2.0	3/11/2022	M.Tai, General Manager, Operations	3/11/2025

Appendix A. FDC Residence Bushfire Plan

At all times be alert for signs of fire (particularly the smell of smoke or sight of flames) or other catastrophic events. Stay calm.

Educator Name	
1. Catastrophic (please tick your planned strategy)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	On days of Catastrophic my service is CLOSED
<input type="checkbox"/>	Give as much notice as possible of closure of my service to each family and Coordination unit.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitor the situation by checking the BOM (Bureau of Meteorology) website (or alternative media outlets) every 1-2 hours. (I.e. ABC news TV/Radio, 2ay Radio etc.) Please list:
1.	3.
2.	4.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mobile phone will be charged and switched on. All telephone contacts are current. Coordination unit emergency contact number is:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Off-site activities will be cancelled, postponed or relocated
If a fire or catastrophic event is imminent	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact families and arrange for the immediate pick-up of the children.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Collect FDC Emergency Survival Kit: children to be seated at doorway (content of emergency survival kit on the next page).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Begin placing children into vehicle.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Meet at designated safe meeting place. Location:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Text parents upon arrival at pick up location.
Contingency plan is:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepare home: close windows/doors/vents; remove curtains; place wet towels on window sills/doors to stop embers; tape on windows; shut off gas at the meter.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Move furniture away from windows; fill objects with water to put out spot fires that start inside.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Collect children and move to a room away from direction of fire.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Call Triple Zero ('000') and notify of your location.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Notifying parents by text if able.

2. Extreme Fire Days NSW and Vic					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitor the situation by checking the BOM (Bureau of Meteorology) website (or alternative media outlets) every 1-2 hours. (i.e. ABC news TV/Radio etc.) Please list:				
1.		3.			
2.		4.			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mobile phone will be charged and switched on. All telephone contacts are current. Nominated Supervisor contact numbers are:				
On Extreme fire days my plan is as follows:					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Be prepared at the highest level, 'Emergency Survival Kit' is ready to go if the fire is nearby.				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitor the 'Fires Near Me NSW' app or the 'Vic Emergency' app.				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep updated with 'News Media.'				
<input type="checkbox"/>	If the fire is close by, follow the Catastrophic procedures.				
3. Other days					
On other days my plan is as follows:					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitor the 'Fires Near Me NSW' app or the 'Vic Emergency' app.				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Perform emergency evacuation drills every three months as required and discuss preparation in the educational program.				
FDC Emergency Survival Kit					
<input type="checkbox"/>	Water	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family contact details (including emergency contact details)	<input type="checkbox"/>	First Aid Kit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Children's medication	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medical management plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	Woollen blankets
<input type="checkbox"/>	Children's bags	<input type="checkbox"/>	Purse/Wallet (cash, ATM/credit cards)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mobile phone and charger
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other				
Educator Name			Signature		Date
Nominated Supervisor Name			Signature		Date