

# Greater Rustenburg Fire Protection Association

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## RULES & REGULATIONS

# ANNEXURE A

of the GRFPA Business plan as  
reviewed in 2019

### Acronyms and Abbreviations used in this document.

DAFF	-	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
DEA	-	Department of Environment Affairs
FPA	-	Fire Protection Association
FPO	-	Fire Protection Officer
GRFPA	-	Greater Rustenburg Fire Protection Association
NVFFA	-	National Veld and Forest Fire Act. No 101 of 1998
PPE	-	Personal Protection Equipment
READ	-	Rural Environment and Agricultural Development
RLM	-	Rustenburg Local Municipality
SAWS	-	South African Weather Service
The Minister	-	The Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of SA
WfW	-	Working for Water
WoF	-	Working on Fire



agriculture,  
forestry & fisheries

Department:  
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Greater Rustenburg Fire Protection Association is a registered FPA in terms of Section 4(2) of the **National Veld and Forest Fire Act, No. 101 of 1998.**

**Registration number: 1521/01 of 27/10/2005**

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## 1 Terminology

- 1.1. **Skid Unit:** A water tank and pump which can easily be slipped onto the back of a bakkie.
- 1.2. **Rake Hoe:** Hand held tool with a dual purpose head. Used to clear control lines during a fire
- 1.3. **Fire beater:** Hand held fire-fighting tool consisting of a wooden/aluminium handle and a flexible flat rubber head.
- 1.4. **Backpack spray:** A hand operated 15 – 20 litre capacity water pump that is worn on the back of a firefighter.
- 1.5. **Drip Torch:** A hand held device for igniting fires. It consists of a fuel tank, a wick and nozzle through which the burning fuel is “dripped” onto vegetation.
- 1.6. **Water bowser:** A vehicle (or trailer) fitted with tank, pump and hoses e.g. Buffel, Unimog
- 1.7. **Landowner:** An “owner” means any landowner with a title deed as well as a lessee or other person legally controlling land , the executive body of a community, the manager of State land, and the chief executive officer of any local authority, or their duly appointed agents in the cases of State land ( including SANDF land) and local authorities.
- 1.8. **Fire Restriction Period:** the period between 30<sup>th</sup> June and 31<sup>st</sup> October each year when the lighting or maintaining of an open fire is restricted to fire safe areas.
- 1.9. **Fire Ban period:** when the FDI is Orange or Red or when a warning has been issued by the Minister via SAWS and the media

## 2 Membership (in accordance with Clause 8,9,10 & 11 of the GRFPA constitution)

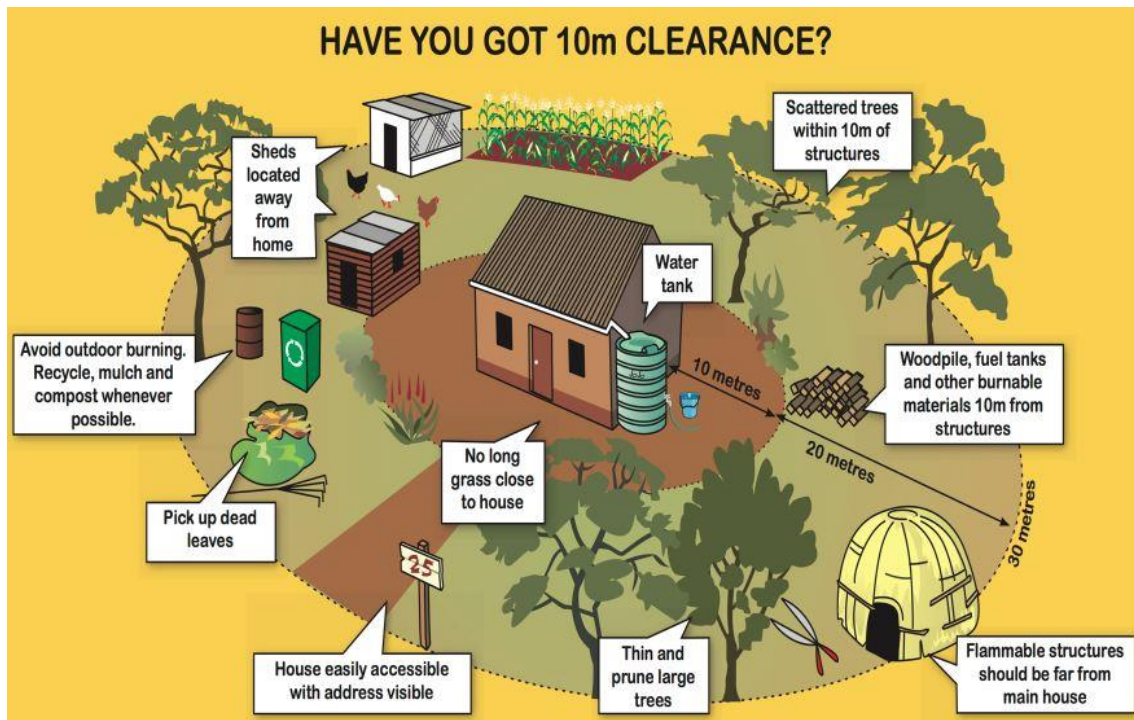
- 2.1. All land “owners” as defined by the NVFFA, and within the area of the RLM, can become members.
- 2.2. Every Municipality or organ of State must be a member.
- 2.3. Membership runs from 1st Jan to 31st December each year.
- 2.4. To become a member, landowners must complete and submit a “Membership Application Form” and pay the prescribed annual membership fee. Membership = Application Form + Annual Fees
- 2.5. Membership forms can be submitted online on the GRFPA website, or via email to the secretary.
- 2.6. Annual fees to be paid directly into the GRFPA bank account **before the 31st of March of each year**, after which, in terms Clause 10 (c) and (d) of the GRFPA Constitution, membership is automatically terminated and a re-joining fee will have to be paid as determined by the Executive Committee.
- 2.7. It is the responsibility of members to notify the Secretary of the Association in writing of any change of membership details, including change of ownership.

## 3 General

- 3.1. Members must comply with the National Veld and Forest Fire Act, 101 of 1998 and strive to comply with the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, 43 of 1983, in terms of alien vegetation clearing.
- 3.2. Members must be conversant with the overall Business Plan, including the Veldfire Management Strategy for the GRFPA and other Acts and by-laws as mentioned in the Business Plan.
- 3.3. Members must undertake to abide by the Constitution and Rules of the GRFPA as stipulated in Chapter 2 section 4(6) of the National Veld & Forest Fire Act.
- 3.4. Members must attend the annual general meeting (AGM) to elect office bearers and decide on any amendments to the constitution, Business Plan and fee structure.

## 4 Housekeeping

- 4.1. It is the responsibility of every member to ensure that the buildings on their property are protected and made safe against the danger of fires. (Examples of remedies are to create breaks and clean areas around properties and orchards, clean gutters, sprinklers on thatched roofs, etc.)
- 4.2. Members are responsible to isolate any fire hazardous area (e.g. storage of fuels, open cooking areas, ash pits) that are present or likely to develop on their property to eliminate any danger it may create to themselves or adjoining properties.



## 5 Compliance with Fire Danger Rating (FDR) System

- 5.1. Members must be conversant with the daily Fire Danger Rating System and comply with the instruction and rules pertaining to the system.
- 5.2. During the fire season the daily Fire Danger Index (FDI) will be sent via SMS to paid up members.

## 6 Cooking/Warming Fires and designated fireplaces

- 6.1. Domestic/social fires used outside of residences for preparing meals, beverages or for warmth during cold conditions must be:
  - a) Made within a "fire safe area"
  - b) not left unattended
  - c) properly extinguished with water or sand
- 6.2. A "fire safe area" is a specifically prepared and maintained area which is:
  - a) surrounded by ground that is clear of all combustible matter for at least 2m
  - b) a permanently constructed fireplace
- 6.3. Fires may not be made:
  - a) If the weather conditions are unsuitable (fire danger rating is high: orange or red)
  - b) In areas that have not been sufficiently cleared of combustible material.
  - c) In areas with a deep litter layer.
  - d) In no-fire zones as indicated by the landowner.
  - e) Near thickets of dense vegetation or any other combustible material.
  - f) If the fire is to be left unattended.
- 6.4. **The landowner is responsible to inform contractors and staff of this rule and remains responsible for the actions of said contractors and staff.**

## 7 Firebreaks

Chapter 4 of the National Veld and Forest Fire Act (NVFFA) applies to all land owners whether FPA members or not.

### 7.1. Legislation

According to the NVFFA (Section 12) *“Every owner on whose land a veldfire may start or burn or from whose land it may spread must prepare and maintain a firebreak on his or her side of the boundary between his or her land and any adjoining land.”*

### 7.2. Definition of a firebreak

A firebreak is a natural or constructed barrier utilized to stop or check fires, or to provide a control line from which to work.

### 7.3. Purpose of Firebreaks

The purpose of a fire break can influence its construction.

of controlled or uncontrolled fires

- create a point from where:
  - fires may be extinguished
  - back burns may be started
  - fires can be attacked
  - to access a fire

### 7.4. Firebreak requirements

According to the NVFFA (Section 13) an owner who is obliged to prepare and maintain a firebreak must ensure that, with due regard to the **weather, climate, terrain and vegetation** of the area:

- a) *It is wide enough and long enough to have a reasonable chance of preventing a veldfire from spreading to or from neighbouring land.*
- b) *Will not cause soil erosion.*
- c) *Is reasonably free of inflammable material capable of carrying a veldfire across it.*

The GRFPA does not prescribe a set width for firebreaks, but places the responsibility on owners to assess the veldfire risk, the purpose of the break and adjust the width of the firebreak accordingly.

When preparing firebreaks by burning, members must:

- a) notify the owners of adjoining properties of their intention to burn. Members must meet the requirements of the NVFFA Chapter 4, Sec 12 (2-10) in respect of agreements with neighbours.
- b) notify the FPA Cluster manager of their intention to burn, and the commencement and completion of the burn. (this avoids unnecessary alarm when smoke is sighted)
- c) have sufficient fire fighters available to prevent the spread of the fire.
- d) notify the GRFPA of any uncontrolled spread at the site where firebreaks are being burnt.
- e) check and comply with the instructions and rules of the Fire Danger Index (see 5. Above)
- f) observe all restrictions on the burning of firebreaks during restricted periods (1 July to 31st October) and fire ban periods (when the FDI is Orange or Red or when a warning has been issued by the Minister via SAWS and the media)
- g) Members must comply with the national policy applicable to exemptions.

### 7.5. Exemptions

Exemptions from the duty to prepare firebreaks can only be granted, under special conditions, by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in consultation with the GRFPA

### 7.6. Timing of firebreaks

Firebreaks must be prepared and maintained on an annual basis and completed by no later than the 30th June, after which date the form: **“Intention to burn after the date of 30th June”** is available on the GRFPA website and must be submitted to the Cluster manager of the GRFPA.

## 8 Prescribed burning

Members intending to conduct a prescribed burn a block burn or the burning of crop residue must please contact the relevant Cluster Manager of the GRFPA

## 9 Members duties in respect of readiness for fighting fires:

Members must comply with Chapter 5 of the National Veld and Forest Fire Act by having **equipment, protective clothing and trained personnel** as is reasonable for the extent of the member's property (NVFFA Section 17)

### 9.1. Equipment

Every owner or group of owners must have the **minimum firefighting equipment, sufficient to manage firebreak burning and unplanned fires.**

The GRFPA does not make prescriptions with regard to equipment and personnel required for firefighting, but urges owners to assess their needs according to the criteria below or the criteria of their relevant insurance companies. The Cluster managers or FPO can be consulted should members need help in this regard.

The type and quantity of equipment reasonable for each property may depend on:

- a) the size of the property,
- b) the fire frequency and risk to which the property is exposed,
- c) the topography and vegetation on the property,
- d) the means of access to the property i.e. can a fire engine access your property?
- e) the number of personnel available

Recommended equipment includes:

- a) beaters
- b) backpack sprayers,
- c) rake hoes
- d) skid units (Bakkie Sakkie)
- e) water bowser e.g.: trailer, tanker, Buffel, Unimog
- f) Blowers (especially useful for mountain fires where water is not available)
- g) cell phone or radio
- h) a first aid kit

**9.2. Protective Clothing** for any person involved in fire fighting

- a) ONLY 100% cotton clothing – Including all undergarments
- b) clothes with a high synthetic content could melt in the event of close contact with a fire & result in serious injuries to the fire fighter.
- c) Plastic boots are not recommended as these will melt when in close contact with fire for prolonged periods.
- d) A cotton T-Shirt worn as an undergarment will assist with keeping the direct heat off the skin.
- i) Recommended: leather gloves, helmet with neck strap, safety glasses, a head light for night time firefighting.

**9.3. Trained personnel**

Members/occupiers of land and/or their staff performing fire-fighting must be trained (at the owner's cost) to an acceptable standard or have previous practical experience in veld firefighting.

The GRFPA is not required to develop their own capacity for training but together with the FPO and the Fire Department can provide advice on:

- a) required standards, valid in terms of the National Qualifications Framework,
- b) accredited institutions and trainers

**9.4. Responsible person:**

All members must ensure that, in their absence, there is a responsible person present on, or near the property, that will assist in extinguishing fires and take reasonable steps to alert the neighbouring landowners and the GRFPA cluster managers.

## **10 Members duties in respect of fire fighting**

**10.1. Legislation:** NVFFA Chapter 5. 18. (1) applies to all owners

*“Any owner who has reason to believe that a fire on his or her land or the land of an adjoining owner may endanger life, property or the environment, must immediately take all reasonable steps to notify the fire protection officer or, failing him or her, any member of the executive committee of the fire protection association..... and owners of adjoining land and “do everything in his or her power to stop the spread of the fire”.*

**10.2. A member and/or landowner who becomes aware of a fire must -**

- a) report the fires to the GRFPA cluster manager/sector manager or if more help is needed a member of the GRFPA executive or the FPO and the RLM Fire Station Control Room.
- b) notify the owners of adjoining land:
- c) The landowner on which property the fire started must fight the fire. Members must offer assistance wherever practically possible.
- d) Members must be aware of the weather conditions and other circumstances regarding the spread of the fire and to take adequate precautions and actions during a fire situation.
- e) A responsible person should be in attendance for the whole time a fire is lit and for a suitable mopping up period.

### 10.3. Fire Access

NVFFA Chapter 5. 18. (2) states: *“Any person who has reason to believe that a fire on any land may endanger life, property or the environment, may, together with any other person under his or her control, enter that land or land to which the fire can spread in order to prevent that fire from spreading or to extinguish it”.*

- a) Members must ensure that access routes for firefighting are reasonably maintained
- b) Members must understand that in the absence of any access, fences will be damaged to gain access to the fire. Repairs to the fences will be for the account of the landowner on whose property the fire is burning.

## 11 Members duties after fires

### 11.1. Standard Mopping up rules

- a) The scene of the fire may not be left unattended.
- b) The perimeter must be patrolled and any smouldering material within 5m of the perimeter of the fire extinguished.
- c) The fire line should be patrolled to ensure that flare ups do not occur
- d) All firefighting equipment must be checked and serviced after each fire.
- e) Where necessary, in the case of injury or major damage to infrastructure or for insurance purposes, members can request the FPO to conduct a fire investigation.

### 11.2. Reporting after fire incidents

- a) Members must report all fires on their properties to the GRFPA on the prescribed form **within 5 days after a fire** on their property
- b) Forms can be completed online at <https://www.grfpa.org/> or requested from [grfpa.fire@gmail.com](mailto:grfpa.fire@gmail.com)
- c) Each Cluster Manager must, on a monthly basis before the 26<sup>th</sup> of each month, supply fire statistics to the GRFPA to ensure adequate record.

## 12 Mutual aid agreement

- a) Where necessary members should draw up formal agreements with neighbours with regards to mutual assistance and procedures.
- b) Each member must in an emergency offer assistance to their neighbours to reduce the possibility of fire spread and to reduce the damage to properties.

## 13 Communications.

The GRFPA does not have an ops room or dedicated two -way radio system.

Cell phones and private radio operators(where available) are the main method of communication

The cell phone numbers of key persons in the GRFPA are updated regularly on the webpage

Members must:

- a) Ensure that they and the responsible person (see 9.4 above) have, readily available, all emergency numbers, the numbers of their GRFPA Cluster manager and neighbours.
- b) updated their cell numbers with the GRFPA secretary
- c) give permission for their cell numbers to be given to the GRFPA cluster managers
- d) ensure that some form of communication is achieved with their staff on the fire scene.



## 14 Invasive Alien Plant Clearing

- a) Members must strive to comply with the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, 43 of 1983, in terms of alien vegetation clearing. (The “Alien and Invasive Species Lists, 2016” is available on the GRFPA website)
- b) The removal of invasive alien plants is of importance to the GRFPA in so far as
  - the reduction of combustible fuel is concerned and
  - To increase the biodiversity of natural indigenous vegetation.
  - To maintain river systems and encourage the return of non-burnable natural river edge vegetation.
- c) Members are encouraged to avail themselves of the herbicide and biological control assistance available from the Dept of Environmental Affairs, Working for Water programme. (application forms on the GRFPA website)

## 15 Enforcement

The following will be the enforcement officers regarding provisions under the NVFFA, by-laws affecting fires, and the rules of the GRFPA as applied within the area of the GRFPA:

- The Fire Protection Officer (with appropriate delegation of authority in terms of the Fire Brigade Services Act with respect to by-laws)
- The Chief Fire Officer and person to whom powers have been delegated, i.e. the Deputy Fire Officer and Traffic Officers
- Members of the SAPS.

## 16 By-laws for non-members

Municipal by-laws in terms of the Fire Brigade Services Act apply to the areas within declared townships and require home owners to meet prescribed building standards with regard to fire protection and to keep their erf clear of flammable material within 10 m of any structure.

## ANNEXURE B – The National Fire Danger Rating System

### The National Fire Danger Rating system and the recommended precautions and actions for the various ratings

INDICATIVE COLOUR	BLUE	GREEN	YELLOW	ORANGE	RED
DANGER RATING	Insignificant	Low	Moderate	High	High - Extreme
FIRE PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS MEASURES	No precaution is needed	Fires including prescribed burns may be lit, used or maintained in the open air on the condition that persons making fires take reasonable precautions against the fires' spreading.	No fires may be allowed in the open air except those that are authorised by the Fire Protection Officer where a Fire Protection Association exists, or elsewhere, the Chief Fire Officer of the local fire service, or fires in designated fireplaces.	No fires may be allowed under any circumstances in the open air.	No fires may be allowed under any circumstances in the open air and Fire Protection Associations and municipal Disaster Management Centres must invoke contingency fire emergency and disaster management plans including extraordinary readiness and response plans. All operations likely to ignite fires halted. Householders placed on alert.
APPLICATION OF THE ACT			Above precautionary measure to be prescribed and made applicable nationally on days rated moderate.	Section 10(1)(b) applies: no person may light, use or maintain a fire in the open air.	Section 10(1)(b) applies: no person may light, use or maintain a fire in the open air.
RELATIONSHIP WITH DISASTER MANAGEMENT				The threat of disastrous wildfires exists at municipal level under these conditions. Municipal Disaster Management Centres must invoke contingency plans and inform National and Provincial Disaster Management Centres. (Section 49 of the Disaster Management Bill).	The threat of disastrous wildfires at provincial level exists under these conditions. Municipal Disaster Management Centres must invoke contingency plans and inform National and Provincial Disaster Management Centres. (Section 49 of the Disaster Management Bill).
FIRE BEHAVIOUR	Fires are not likely to ignite. If they do, they are likely to go out without suppression action. There is little flaming combustion. Flame lengths in grassland and	Fires likely to ignite readily but spread slowly. Flame lengths in grassland and plantation forest litter lower than 1.0 m and rates of forward spread less than 0.3	Fires ignite readily and spread rapidly, burning in the surface layers below trees. Flame lengths in grasslands and plantation forests between 1 and 2m, and rates	Fires ignited readily and spread very rapidly, with local crowning and short-range spotting. Flame lengths between 2 and 5 m, and rates of forward spread between 1.5	Conflagrations are likely in plantation forests, stands of alien invasive trees and shrubs, sugar cane plantations, and fynbos. Long range fire spotting is likely in these fuel types. Rates of forward spread of head fires



**The National Fire Danger Rating system and the recommended precautions and actions for the various ratings**

INDICATIVE COLOUR	BLUE	GREEN	YELLOW	ORANGE	RED
DANGER RATING	Insignificant	Low	Moderate	High	High - Extreme
	plantation forest litter lower than 0.5 m and rates of forward spread less than 0.15 kilometres per hour.	kilometres per hour.	of forward spread between 0.3 and 1.5 kilometres per hour.	and 2.0 kilometres per hour.	can exceed 4.0 kilometres per hour and flame lengths will be in the order of 5 – 15 m or more.
FIRE SUPPRESSION DIFFICULTY	Direct attack feasible: one or a few field crew with basic firefighting tools easily suppresses any fire that may occur.	Direct attack feasible: fires safely approached on foot. Suppression is readily achieved by direct manual attack methods.	Direct attack constrained: fires not safe to approach on foot for more than very short periods. Best forms of control should combine water tankers and back burning from fire control lines.	Direct attack not feasible: fires cannot be approached at all and back burning, combined with aerial support are the only effective means to combat fires. Equipment such as water tankers should concentrate efforts on the protection of houses.	Any form of fire control is likely to be precluded until the weather changes. Back burning dangerous and best avoided.



## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED:**

### **Act**

The [National Veld and Forest Fire Act no. 101 of 1998](#).

### **Assets**

Anything valued by people which includes houses, crops, forests and, in many cases, the environment.

### **Climate**

The atmospheric conditions of a place over an extended period of time.

### **Consequence**

the outcome of a veldfire: can be an adverse effect to health, property and the environment or a gain

### **Fire Ban period**

A total ban on fires in the open air when the FIRE DANGER INDEX (FDI) is High (Orange) or EXTREME (RED) or a warning has been issued by the Minister, SAWS or the media.

### **Fire behaviour**

The manner in which a fire reacts to the variables of fuel, weather and topography.

### **Fire danger**

Sum of constant danger and variable danger factors affecting the start, spread, and resistance to control, and subsequent fire damage; often expressed as an index.

### **Fire danger index (FDI)**

A relative number denoting an evaluation of rate of spread, or suppression difficulty for specific combinations of temperature, relative humidity, drought effects and wind speed. The numbers may range from 1 to 100.

### **Fire danger rating**

A relative class denoting an evaluation of rate of spread, or suppression difficulty for specific combinations of temperature, relative humidity, drought effects and wind speed. Rated as low, moderate, high, very high or extreme, indicating the relative evaluation of fire danger.

### **Fire frequency**

A general term referring to the recurrence of fire in a given area over time

### **Fire hazard**

A fuel complex, defined by volume, type condition, arrangement, and location, that determines the degree of ease of ignition and of resistance to control.

### **Fire management**

All activities associated with the management of fire prone land, including the use of fire to meet land management goals and objectives. (AFAC).

### **Fire preparedness**

All activities undertaken in advance of veldfire occurrence to decrease its extent and severity and to ensure more effective fire suppression.

### **Fire prevention**

All activities concerned with minimising the incidence of veldfire particularly those of human origin.

### **Fire protection association**

an association registered in terms of [Chapter 2 of the Act](#) for the purposes of predicting, preventing, managing and extinguishing veldfires.

**Fire protection officer:** a person who performs the function of chief executive officer of a fire protection association, appointed in terms of [Section 5 of the Act](#).

**Fire regime**

The history of fire in a particular vegetation type or area including the frequency, intensity and season of burning. The description of the occurrence, distribution, size, and interval period of fires, is known as fire regimes and it may change over time due to variation in rainfall patterns, land use changes and fire management practices.

**Fire ecology type**

A fire-ecology type is a class of vegetation types that is relatively uniform in terms of the fire regimes (e.g. frequency, season, intensity and size) within the constituent vegetation types.

**Fire restriction period**

The period of the year during which a permit is required to light, use or maintain fires in the open air.

**Fire suppression**

The activities connected with restricting the spread of veldfire following its detection and making it safe.

**Fire season**

The period during which veldfires are likely to occur, spread and do sufficient damage to warrant organised fire control.

**Fuel**

Any material such as grass, leaf litter and live vegetation which can be ignited and sustains a fire. Fuel is usually measured in tonnes per hectare.

**Firebreak**

a strip of land where vegetation has been removed or modified to contain or to reduce the spread and intensity of any veldfire that may occur in or enter a property.

**Fuel reduction**

Manipulation, including combustion, or removal of fuels to reduce the likelihood of ignition and/or to lessen potential damage and resistance to control.

**Hazard**

A source of potential harm or a situation with potential to cause loss.

**Integrated veldfire management**

Integrated Fire Management (IFM) incorporates different fire management activities in a strategic framework to reduce the overall impact of unwanted wildfire damage and promote the beneficial use of fire.

**Integrated veldfire management Plan**

a plan for a given property of land that incorporates plans for both fire protection as well as the management of veldfire, for example, through prescribed burning for asset maintenance and habitat management.

**Likelihood**

The chance of something happening.

**Mitigation:**

any risk management measure that reduces risk, including fuel reduction burning, other prevention measures, preparedness and so on.

**Monitor**

To check, supervise, observe critically, or record the progress of an activity, action or system on a regular basis in order to identify change.

**Preparedness**

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.

**Prescribed burn or Controlled Burn**

A fire ignited under specified environmental conditions to a predetermined area and at the time, intensity, and rate of spread required to attain planned resource management objectives. It is undertaken in specified environmental conditions.

**Prevention**

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.

**Risk**

The exposure to the possibility of such things as economic or financial loss or gain, physical damage, injury or delay, as a consequence of pursuing a particular course of action. The concept of risk has two elements, i.e. the likelihood of something happening and the consequences if it happens.

**Risk analysis**

A systematic use of available information to determine how often specific events may occur and the magnitude of their likely consequences.

**Risk assessment**

The overall process of risk identification, risk analysis, and risk evaluation. (AS/NZS 4360)

**Risk evaluation**

Process of comparing the level of risk against risk criteria.

**Risk management**

The culture, processes and structures that are directed towards realizing potential opportunities whilst managing adverse effects. Application of available resources in such a way that overall risk is minimized.

**Rural**

Any area wherein residences and other developments are scattered and intermingled with forest, range, or farm land and native vegetation or cultivated crops.

**Urban-rural interface (URI)**

The line, area, or zone where structures and other human development adjoin or overlap with undeveloped bush land.

**Veldfire**

a veld, forest or mountain fire, where veld means the open countryside or peri-urban land beyond the urban limit or homestead boundary.