



## **Tenterfield Shire Council**

### **Development Proposal**

Tenterfield Shire Council has received an application for a Camping Ground – Bi-annual Recreational Camping Events and Live Music at Lot 9 Mole River Road, Mole River.

## **DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION NO: 2024.094**

**SITE DESCRIPTION:** Lot 9 DP 751515  
Mole River Road, Mole River.

**APPLICANT:** Sian Crawford

**OWNER:** Christopher Crawford & Sian Woods

As the consenting authority, Tenterfield Shire Council has received the abovementioned Development Application for the proposed Camping Ground – Bi-annual Recreational Camping Events and Live Music located at Lot 9 Mole River Road, Mole River. Dates for the Events for 2025 are:

- 2 – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2025
- 2 – 6<sup>th</sup> October 2025

The proposals may be inspected at Council's Office, 247 Rouse Street, Tenterfield during normal working hours, Monday to Friday, between 9am and 4pm and on Council's website: [www.tenterfield.nsw.gov.au](http://www.tenterfield.nsw.gov.au)

Any person may make a written submission to Council about the development application. The closing date for receipt of submissions is Wednesday, 12 March 2025. If the submission includes an objection to the proposal, the grounds of objection must be given, quoting the Development Application number. Any submissions received will be considered on their merits in conjunction with the assessment of the application and made available to the applicant.

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* requires public disclosure of donations or gifts when lodging or commenting on development proposals. Anyone lodging or commenting on a development proposal will be required to disclose any political donations or gifts they have made in the two years preceding the application.

For further information on the Disclosure or Political Donations or Gifts, please view the Department of Planning website: [www.planning.nsw.gov.au](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au)

# 2025 EVENTS

## 2025 Event #1 American Truck and Van Jamboree

### Event Overview

**Event Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2025

**Maximum Capacity:** 200 people (including up to 100 caravans)

**Participants:** Recreational users of caravans, campers with American vehicles.

**Location:** Agora Hideaway, Mole River NSW

### PROPOSED AGENDA:

**The American Truck and Van Jamboree is the direct offspring from a successful 2024 event, The Ram Van Jamboree. There will be three days of bands, competitions, exhibitors and lots of fun. It's not just about the trucks but about getting out with our campers and caravans to enjoy the company of like minded folk.**

#### FRIDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> MAY

Check in from 10:00am

Live Music - 7pm till 10pm

#### SATURDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> MAY

Live Music - 3pm - 6pm

Live Music - 7pm till 10pm

#### SUNDAY 4<sup>th</sup> MAY

Live Music - 7pm till 10pm

#### MONDAY 5<sup>th</sup> MAY

Check out by 12:00 noon

# 2025 Event #2

## Big Oz Camp Out

### Event Overview

**Event Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> October 2025

**Maximum Capacity:** 100 people (including up to 50 caravans)

**Participants:** Recreational users of caravans, campers, and/or tents/swags. Big Oz Explorers Community Members.

**Location:** Agora Hideaway, Mole River NSW

### PROPOSED AGENDA:

#### THURSDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> OCTOBER

Check in from 8:30am

ALL DAY: Lawn games for the kids & adults

ALL DAY: Scan QR Codes around the camp for a chance to WIN giveaways on Saturday afternoon. All winners will be announced between 4:00 – 8:00pm during live music event.

5:00pm: Happy hour at the communal fire.

#### FRIDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> OCTOBER

ALL DAY: Lawn games for the kids & adults

ALL DAY: Scan QR Codes around the camp for a chance to WIN giveaways on Saturday afternoon. All winners will be announced between 4:00 – 8:00pm during live music event.

11:30am sharp: Leave camp in convoy to a local lunch venue. Possibly a Winery or Pub within 1 hour of Agora Hideaway Campground. Convoy will travel on UHF Channel 19.

11:45am-2:30pm: Lunch at chosen location.

2:30pm: Convoy back to camp with a convoy drone shot on arrival to Agora Hideaway.

4:00pm – 8:00pm Live music and a communal fire.

6:30pm: Movie Time. We will set up a portable screen and movie for children.

#### SATURDAY 4<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER

ALL DAY: Lawn games for the kids & adults

ALL DAY: Scan QR Codes around the camp for a chance to WIN giveaways on Saturday afternoon. All winners will be announced between 4:00 – 8:00pm during live music event.

10:30 – 11:30am Nature-based treasure hunt children attending. Run by Sian (First aid trained and Working with children check)

2:30pm – 3:30pm Trivia Afternoon. Prizes to be won!

3:45pm Group photo around 3:45pm before the music gets going.

4:00pm – 8:00pm Live music and a communal fire. Speeches and giveaways with Sian & Chris.

6:30pm: Movie Time. We will set up a portable screen and movie for children.

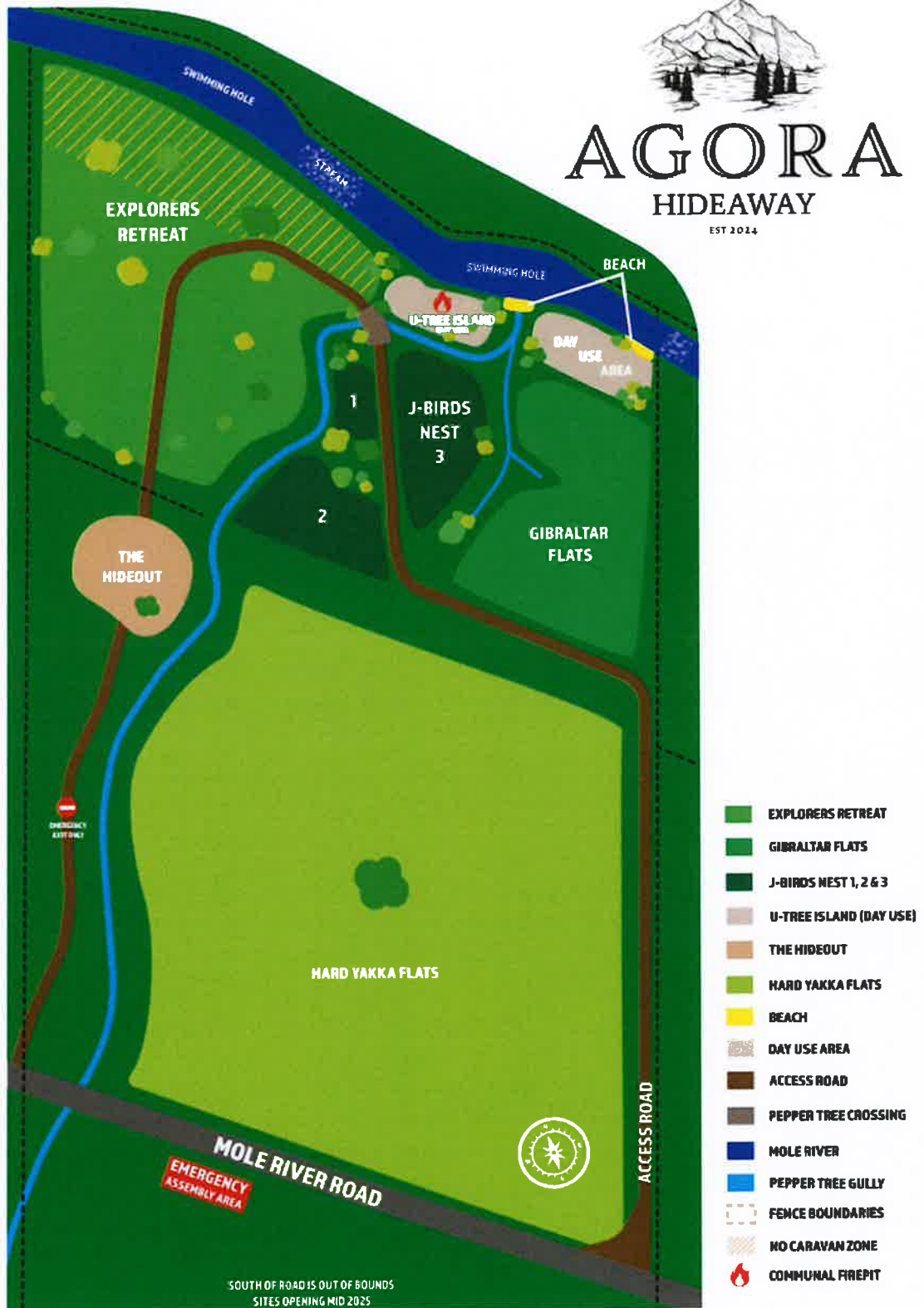
#### SUNDAY 5<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER

Check out by 12:00 noon.



# AGORA HIDEAWAY

EST 2024



# Agora Hideaway Bushfire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan

Agora Hideaway – 687 Mole River Road, Mole River NSW 2372  
Lot 9, DP 7515157

## Document Control Details

	Details
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## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b><i>Bushfire Emergency and Evacuation Summary</i></b> .....	<b>5</b>
1.1	Objective .....	5
1.2	Facility Details .....	5
1.3	Roles and Responsibilities .....	5
1.4	Emergency Contacts .....	5
1.5	Evacuation Procedures .....	6
1.6	Sheltering Procedures .....	6
<b>2</b>	<b><i>Context</i></b> .....	<b>7</b>
2.1	Location of Property in Fire-Risk Area .....	7
2.2	Usage of Property .....	8
<b>3</b>	<b><i>Bushfire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan</i></b> .....	<b>9</b>
3.1	Access and Map of Evacuation Routes .....	9
3.2	Check In, Emergency Information, Signage, Training & Equipment .....	10
3.2.1	Check In .....	10
3.2.2	Emergency Information & Equipment .....	10
3.2.3	Signage .....	10
3.2.4	Training .....	10
3.2.5	Water Sources .....	10
3.3	Fire Danger Ratings, Property Zoning, Agora Hideaway Closure Policy, Triggers for Evacuation ..	11
3.3.1	Fire Danger Ratings .....	11
3.3.2	Property Zoning .....	11
3.3.3	Agora Hideaway Closure Policy .....	12
3.3.4	Trigger to Evacuate .....	12
3.3.5	Trigger to Shelter .....	12
3.3.6	Fire on the Property .....	12
3.4	Evacuation Plan, Duties and Responsibilities, and Last Place of Refuge .....	13
3.4.1	Notification to Evacuate .....	13
3.4.2	Duties and Responsibilities .....	13
3.4.3	Evacuation Routes .....	13
3.4.4	Evacuation Transport .....	13
3.4.5	If Unsafe to Evacuate .....	13
<b>4</b>	<b><i>Facility Management</i></b> .....	<b>16</b>
4.1	Fire Mitigation – General .....	16
4.2	Fire Mitigation – Events .....	16
4.3	Asset Protection Zones .....	16
4.4	Photos .....	17
4.5	Proposed Improvements .....	18
<b>5</b>	<b><i>Additional Documentation</i></b> .....	<b>20</b>
5.1	Total Fire Ban rules .....	20

## Table of Figures

<i>Figure 1: Bushfire Prone Land Excerpt</i> .....	7
<i>Figure 2: Existing Overall Property Usage Diagram</i> .....	8
<i>Figure 3: Access routes to the property</i> .....	9
<i>Figure 4: Fire Danger Ratings</i> .....	11
<i>Figure 5: Location of NSP's</i> .....	12
<i>Figure 6: Location of Emergency Assembly Point &amp; Exit Routes</i> .....	14
<i>Figure 7: NSP separation from bush fire hazards</i> .....	15
<i>Figure 8: Property Identification</i> .....	17
<i>Figure 9: Eastern Boundary Fire Break</i> .....	17
<i>Figure 10: Western Boundary Fire Break</i> .....	17
<i>Figure 11: Workshop Shed (Due for completion in March 2025)</i> .....	18
<i>Figure 12: Proposed Irrigation System</i> .....	19
<i>Figure 13: Proposed 2000L Water Trailer</i> .....	19



# 1 Bushfire Emergency and Evacuation Summary

## 1.1 Objective

To ensure the safety of all event participants and staff at Agora Hideaway by establishing clear procedures for bushfire evacuation and emergency management. The NSW Planning for Bush Fire Protection & NSW Neighbourhood Safer Guidelines have been used to create this report.

## 1.2 Facility Details

**Site:** This plan is for Agora Hideaway, 687 Mole River Road, Mole River NSW 2372

**Contact person:** Sian Crawford – 0477 281 287

**Personnel:** All persons on site are owners, volunteers or visitors.

**Occupancy:** No permanent occupants.

Number of attendees with support needs: Nil

**Attendees - General:** Between 10 - 20 daily (approximately)

Attendees - At Events: Up to 200

**Event Type:** Recreational camping events (200 attendees, up to 100 caravans)

**Event Duration:** Once per quarter, primarily held over long weekend dates for 2 nights and 3 days.

**Typical Event Attendees:** The attendees to these events are couples aged 45-65 years or couples aged 30-40 years with children approximately 8-14 years old.

**Event Details:** An event *may* include the following: Live music, exhibitor tents for promotional products (3x3m easy up tent with trestle tables spaced 1.5m apart). There will also be games such as trivia, totem tennis, pickle ball and treasure hunts for children attending.

## 1.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Position	Name	Area of Responsibility	Mobile phone
Chief Fire Wardens	Sian Crawford Chris Crawford	Sound alarms; Communications; Co-Ordinate visitors and wardens.	0477 281 287 0431 438 977
Area Warden	Volunteer TBC during events	Explorers Retreat & Riverfront (Camping Area)	
Area Warden	Volunteer TBC during events	Gibraltar Flats & J Birds Nest (Camping Area)	
Area Warden	Volunteer TBC during events	Hard Yakka Flats (Events Area)	
Area Warden	Volunteer TBC during events	Backup: Communications; All Areas	

Agora Hideaway will require the above event volunteers at a minimum. Additionally, the owners of Agora Hideaway will complete the necessary training and attend all events and act as Chief Fire Wardens as they are familiar with the landscape and the unique features of the property.

## 1.4 Emergency Contacts

Name of organisation	Office/Contact	Phone Number
NSW Rural Fire Service	Local Fire Control Centre: Tenterfield	02 6736 4150
NSW Rural Fire Service	Bush Fire Information Line	1800 679 737 1800 NSW RFS
NSW Rural Fire Service	Website: <a href="https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/">https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/</a>	-
Mingoola Fire Brigade	Richard Magner (Captain)	0437 675 528

Mingoola Fire Brigade	Leigh Kelly	0412 531 600
	Tenterfield	02 9739 8540
Police	Armidale	02 6771 0699
	Emergency Assistance	000
	Non-Urgent Assistance	131 444

### **1.5 Evacuation Procedures**

- Chief Fire Warden sounds alarm and contacts visitors in campground.
- All campers assemble at Emergency Assembly Point south of Mole River Road.
- Campers who have signed in are all accounted for.
- Attendees leave by own transport according to safest route as advised by Chief Fire Warden and proceed home.
- It is estimated that an orderly evacuation could be completed in one hour.

### **1.6 Sheltering Procedures**

- If unsafe to leave, the designated refuge is the Workshop Shed, the only permanent structure at the property. Refer to Figure 2.
- Open paddocks on the east and west of the property are to be used to assemble if it is unsafe to get to the Workshop Shed or unsafe to leave. Refer to Figure 5.

## 2 Context

### 2.1 Location of Property in Fire-Risk Area

Agora Hideaway is in a rural, bushfire-prone area. The property is located at 687 Mole River Road, Mole River NSW 2372. The site is surrounded by vegetation and open spaces, making it vulnerable to bushfire risk. The property is identified on the NSW Rural Fire Service website as 'within a designated bush fire prone area' as displayed in Figure 1. This plan is prepared with reference to the NSW Rural Fire Service's *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019*, which outlines necessary precautions for developments in bushfire-prone areas and each area of concern under 8.3.8 have been addressed.

Agora Hideaway will adhere to Bush Fire Prone Land (BFPL) guidelines by providing advance warnings to campers via email, clearly identifying that the event is located on Bush Fire Prone Land and offering detailed advice on fire restrictions and maps to show how to evacuate and what is expected of them as a camper in a BFPL area.



### Your search result

You have conducted a search of the online bush fire prone land tool for the land in the map above. This search result is valid for the date the search was conducted. If you have any questions about the Bush Fire Prone Land Tool please contact [bushfireprone.mapping@rfs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bushfireprone.mapping@rfs.nsw.gov.au)



The parcel of land you have selected is within a designated bush fire prone area.

Figure 1: Bushfire Prone Land Excerpt

## 2.2 Usage of Property

An outline of the usage of the property is shown on Figure 2. It should be noted that most of the active use occurs within areas that have been cleared of undergrowth and are regularly maintained and close to water supplies.

### Property Use Diagram Agora Hideaway 687 Mole River Road, Mole River



Figure 2: Existing Overall Property Usage Diagram

The property is used by visitors for camping under Agritourism guidelines in the orange areas. Agritourism restricts the number of people and vehicles to attend on any one day (maximum 20 people OR 6 vehicles, whichever comes first). Only at the time of an event will numbers increase. Fire control and vigilance will always be implemented and increased for events according to the numbers attending. During all events, at least two people who are familiar with the fire emergency procedures is on the property. Emergency management planning during the event organisation stage will be undertaken for all new events in consultation with event planners and landowners whilst using the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) guidelines.

### 3 Bushfire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan

#### 3.1 Access and Map of Evacuation Routes

The property's main access tracks run north and south directly off Mole River Road. There is a loop track on the northern side of the property to access camping areas. A loop access road also runs on the south of Mole River Road to the permanent structures, water tanks and the dam. By travelling east or west on Mole River Road you will reach the main road, Bruxner Way.

Road access to the property is set out in Figure 3, below. The egress routes in the case of evacuation are shown in red on Figure 3.

The recommended egress route out of Agora Hideaway would be selected based on the fire event characteristics. Routes may differ from the preferred routes shown. If the preferred route is not available, the decision may be made to shelter.

An additional route can be established via the northern neighbour's property when crossing the creek. This route traverses a watercourse (Mole River), as shown in Figure 2. This alternative route should only be used if a fire makes it impossible to reach Mole River Road and the designated shelter from the northern side the property.

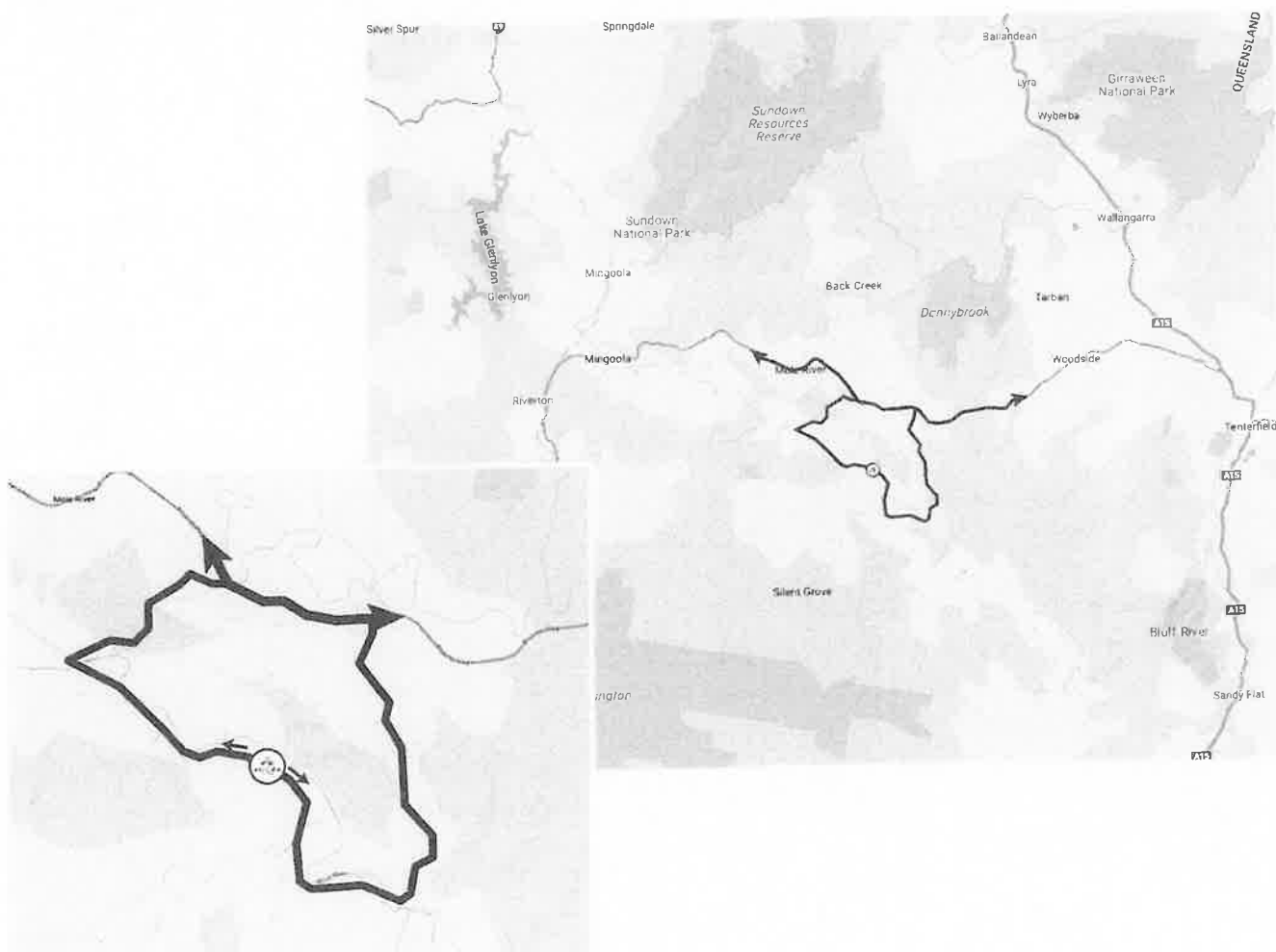


Figure 3: Access routes to the property

In the event that there is someone on the property in time of bushfire, the Primary Action to follow is to EVACUATE via route shown in red.

## **3.2 Check In, Emergency Information, Signage, Training & Equipment**

### **3.2.1 Check In**

All attendees are prebooked and checked in using the booking schedule from the [www.agorahideaway.com](http://www.agorahideaway.com) website. Every guest is greeted after arrival and occupancy numbers are checked and vehicle registration details are recorded.

### **3.2.2 Emergency Information & Equipment**

Emergency information for campers is sent via email prior to arrival.

Emergency information and equipment kept at the Workshop Shed includes:

- An Emergency Flipchart (site hazards, fire procedures, emergency contacts, emergency evacuation procedure, property diagram).
- Detailed site maps showing the locations of all on-site major **structures**.
- Regional topographic maps.
- A procedure to sound the alarm to campers.
- A first aid kit and a minor injuries kit.
- Orange vests for Fire Wardens.

### **3.2.3 Signage**

There are signs around the campground that will depict emergency contact information, property address details and evacuation procedures. Installation in March 2025.

### **3.2.4 Training**

The chief fire wardens and **area** fire wardens will review emergency procedures and conduct refresher exercises before events onsite. Guidelines are available in Step 6 (p22) of [https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/29271/DPP1079-Emergency-management-and-evacuation-plan-FORM.pdf](https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/29271/DPP1079-Emergency-management-and-evacuation-plan-FORM.pdf)

### **3.2.5 Water Sources**

There is a total of **120,000L of water stored on site** and available for use by emergency services in the event of a major bushfire. Further details are below. There is also Mole River on the northern boundary of the property which will be irrigated to the south of the property from April 2025, see Figure 7 for further information about the irrigation system being installed.

Four water tanks totalling 42,000L are available for use by emergency services in the event of a major bushfire. 1 x Rainwater tank 12,000L next to non-permanent structure (**current**), 1 x Rainwater tank 10,000L & 1 x River water tank 10,000L next to workshop shed (**install April 2025**) and 1 x River water tank 10,000L in the camping area (**install April 2025**).

The dam is located on the west of the Workshop Shed and contains approximately 76,000L.

A **fire trailer** in April 2025 which will hold 2000L of water and a firefighter pump. It will be parked next to the Workshop Shed.

**Mole River** has three accessible clearings which can be used by emergency services in the event of a major bushfire. It is located on the northern boundary of the property and runs continuously.

### 3.3 Fire Danger Ratings, Property Zoning, Agora Hideaway Closure Policy, Triggers for Evacuation

#### 3.3.1 Fire Danger Ratings

Fires in the area are monitored using the NSW Rural Fire Service application "Hazards Near Me". This free application allows the centre of the monitored area to be selected ensuring that, whether on-site or off-site, the chief fire warden has up-to-date information about any fires in the area, their status, and the fire danger rating. The app can be downloaded to a user's device here:

<https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/news-and-media/stay-up-to-date>

On days with an Extreme or Catastrophic fire danger rating, events will be cancelled. For campers already staying at Agora Hideaway who are unable to leave the premises, a strict no-campfire or flame rule will be enforced, and they will be advised to relocate their caravan or camper to a designated Zone 2 or Zone 3 area for personal safety as shown in Figure 5.

Fire danger ratings are set out in Figure 4, below:

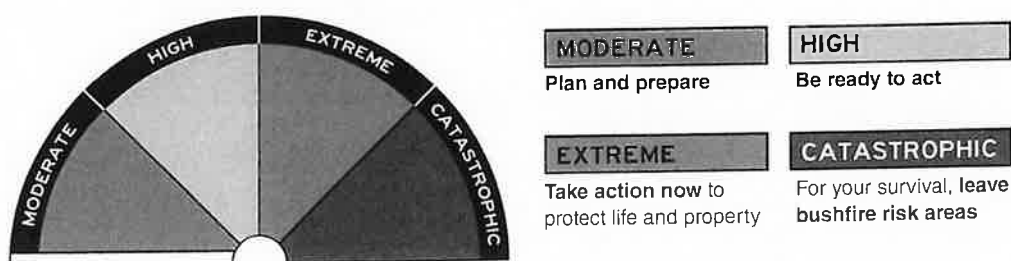


Figure 4: Fire Danger Ratings

#### 3.3.2 Property Zoning

The campground has been designated into risk zones between 1 and 3, 3 being the highest risk area.

**Zone 1: High Risk (dense bush and overhead trees)**

**Zone 2: Intermediate (open grass fields)**

**Zone 3: Safe Assembly Points (NSP) with first aid, water and communication devices.**

If a fire was to approach during an event, the campground will be evacuated in stages from highest to lowest risk areas. Campers will receive email communication before they arrive about evacuation procedures and be given a campground map with details of where safe refuge can be found.

Volunteers at an event will be educated about the zones and stages before an event starts ensuring a smooth evacuation procedure. A mock evacuation will be performed with volunteers to ensure understanding prior to the start of the event and the campers arrival.

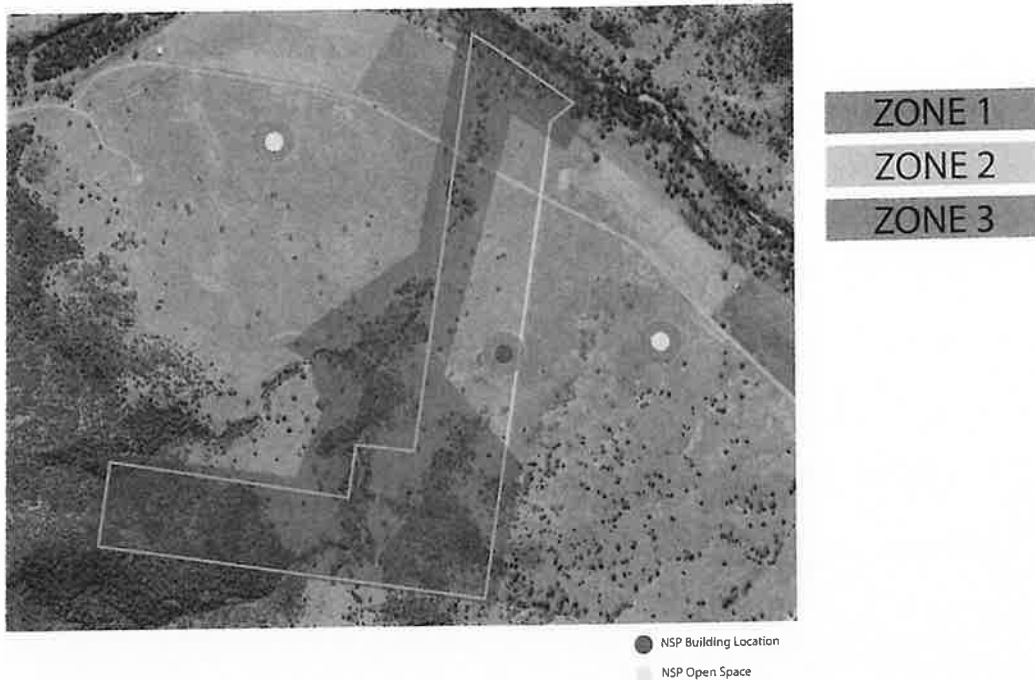


Figure 5: Location of NSP's

### 3.3.3 Agora Hideaway Closure Policy

If the fire danger rating is greater than "High" or there are any uncontrolled fires currently burning in the area (i.e., anywhere near the Mole River Road or Bruxner Way region) and the property is unoccupied, **the property will remain closed** and new bookings will not be taken.

### 3.3.4 Trigger to Evacuate

If fire breaks out anywhere in the area (cited above in 3.3.3) and the property is occupied, **the property will close** and guests would be required to evacuate immediately if safe to do so.

### 3.3.5 Trigger to Shelter

If situation 3.3.4 occurs and evacuation is not able to be safely carried out, "stay in place" will apply using the Workshop Shed as a fire refuge.

### 3.3.6 Fire on the Property

If fire breaks out on the property when it is occupied, and initial attempts to extinguish it with the fire-fighting trailer are unsuccessful, emergency services would be called and persons other than the fire wardens would **evacuate** if safe to do so or **shelter**, if necessary, as above.



### **3.4 Evacuation Plan, Duties and Responsibilities, and Last Place of Refuge**

#### **3.4.1 Notification to Evacuate**

Attendees will be alerted of an emergency with loudspeaker or PA system. These will serve the main camping area. Occupants at the Workshop Shed or at the rear of the property, may be contacted by mobile phone or two-way radio on UHF 19.

#### **3.4.2 Duties and Responsibilities**

The decision to alert of an emergency will be made by a chief fire warden, based on available information about a fire or other emergency or as notified by local RFS.

Upon being alerted of an impending evacuation, everyone on the property is required to assemble at the Emergency Assembly Point at the Workshop Shed.

At the Emergency Assembly Point, area fire wardens will collect their orange vests and will check their areas (if safe to do so) to prompt anyone who has not complied or is not aware of the emergency.

Areas to be checked are:

- Explorers Retreat
- Gibraltar Flats
- J Birds Nest
- Hard Yakka Flats
- Mole River (for anyone swimming)

Parents of children on site are responsible for ensuring their children also accompany them to the Emergency Assembly Point.

Once assembled, the chief fire warden will provide updates to those on site and liaise with emergency authorities.

The chief fire warden will account for everyone who has checked in using the Agora Hideaway booking calendar.

**Recommendations about evacuation and/or refuge will be made by the chief fire warden at the Emergency Assembly Point**, based on information available at the time and recommendations made by Fire and Emergency Authorities. The chief fire warden will remain in contact with said authorities who may be in attendance, or in direct contact by personal phone or radio, or via 000.

Any decision about evacuation or sheltering will be announced by the chief fire warden.

#### **3.4.3 Evacuation Routes**

Detailed maps of the exit routes shown in Figure 3 & Figure 6 are kept in the Workshop Shed (Emergency Assembly Point) and would be used to indicate the safest route for evacuation.

#### **3.4.4 Evacuation Transport**

Transport, in the event of evacuation, would be by each party's personal transport that was used to get to Agora Hideaway.

#### **3.4.5 If Unsafe to Evacuate**

The Workshop Shed is designated as a last place of refuge. This is a Class 10a building which is available to contain all campers & complies with the NSW RFS Neighbourhood Safer Place Guidelines. This building will provide over 139 metres separation distance in all directions from a bush fire hazard pictured on Figure 7 in red.

An open-air emergency assembly area capable of accommodating all campers can be found on either neighbouring property or on Mole River Road giving over 310 metres separation distance in all directions from a bush fire hazard. Locations are shown on Figure 7 in yellow.

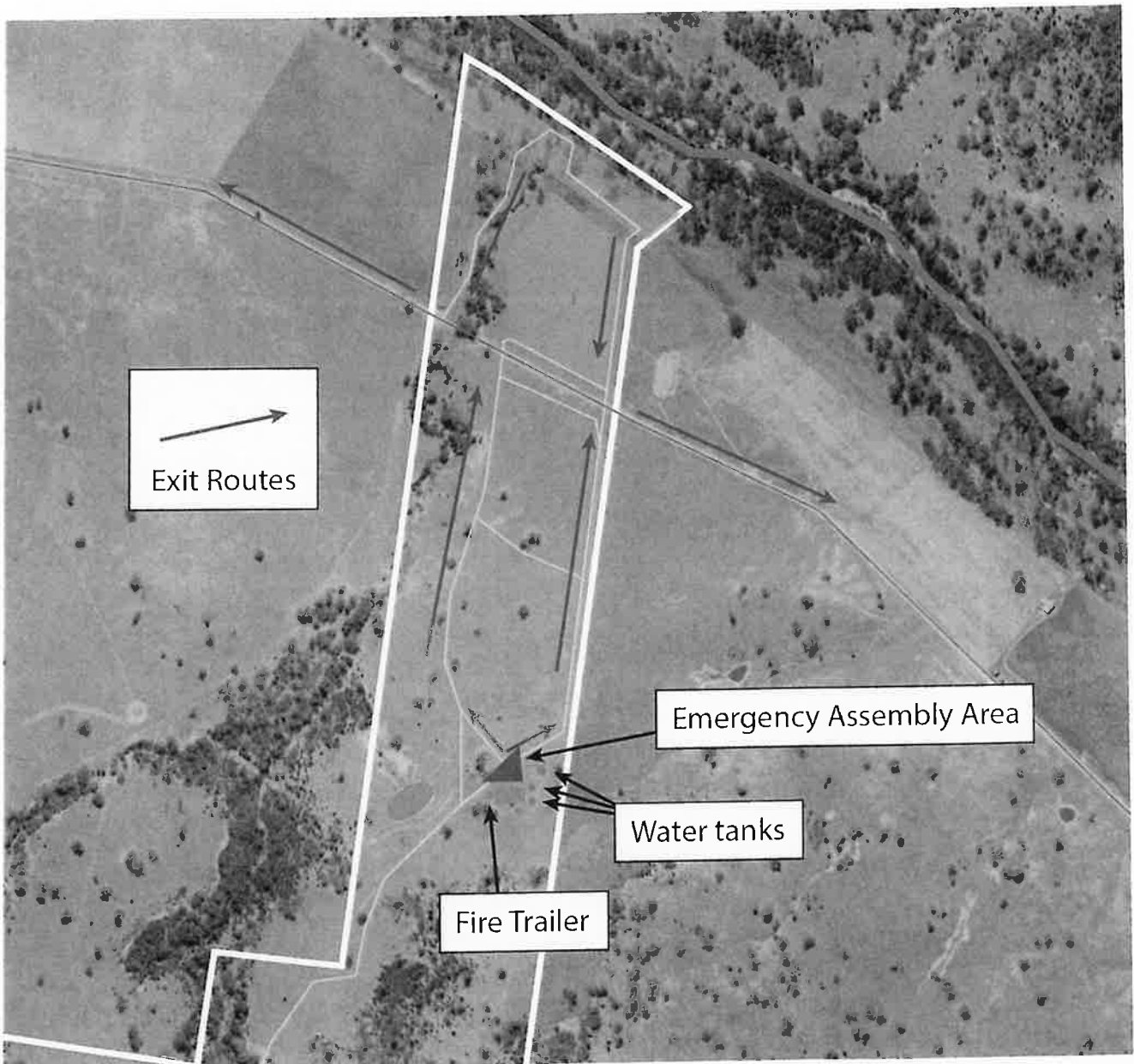


Figure 6: Location of Emergency Assembly Point & Exit Routes



- NSP Building Location
- NSP Open Space

Figure 7: NSP separation from bush fire hazards

## **4 Facility Management**

### **4.1 Fire Mitigation – General**

- No open fires are permitted on the property other than campfires in properly constructed, maintained and designated campfire sites and BYO raised firepits.
- Campfires must be attended when alight and extinguished when no longer in use. A campfire is considered extinguished when it is cool enough that a hand can be safely placed on the fire remnants.
- During total fire bans that apply during any occupancy of the site, all campers are informed of the ban. Requirements during a total fire ban are included in 5.1 of this document.
- Undergrowth is managed in the campground areas, dam area and Workshop Shed surrounds. All tracks are maintained for undergrowth in the centreline.
- A 6-metre cleared space is maintained alongside the eastern boundary fence north of Mole River Road. This allows for easy access by emergency vehicles and provides some measure of a firebreak between the neighbour's land and the boundary fence. A fire break track is located on the far western boundary in the pine forest.
- Controlled hazard-reduction burns are utilised when the conditions are suitable (with an approximate 2-year frequency) in conjunction with RFS. The last burn off attempt took place on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2024.
- Vehicle fuels, flammable materials, gas bottles and associated cookers must be in the vicinity of the campers designated site and, in a container and quantity per camper, that meets Australian standards.

### **4.2 Fire Mitigation – Events**

- Events will be held outside of the gazetted fire danger period for Mole River NSW after discussion with the local RFS to ascertain the specific restriction dates each calendar year. If no date can be provided by local RFS services, events will be held outside of the state specific dates 31<sup>st</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> October per calendar year.
- Areas of accommodation in the campsite grounds will be in marked sites created specific to the event and on arrival, camper numbers will be documented. Volunteers will be utilised on the arrival and departure day to ensure campers park in designated sites. Designated sites have road access and will not allow for any camper to be parked in to ensure maximum time to warn and evacuate people who may be sleeping or slow to respond.

### **4.3 Asset Protection Zones**

At Agora Hideaway, we maintain unobstructed Asset Protection Zones (APZs) of suitable width along the boundaries adjacent to bushfire-prone areas (see Figure 9 & Figure 10) to minimize fire risks. In preparation for events or guests, grassed areas are regularly mowed and slashed to reduce potential fuel loads, with ongoing maintenance carried out throughout the event's duration. Camp areas are kept clear of debris, sticks, and logs, and campfires are only permitted in designated fire pits to ensure safety. Additionally, boundaries are kept free of obstructions, ensuring effective fire protection and easy access for emergency services if required.

#### 4.4 Photos



Figure 8: Property Identification



Figure 9: Eastern Boundary Fire Break

Figure 10: Western Boundary Fire Break

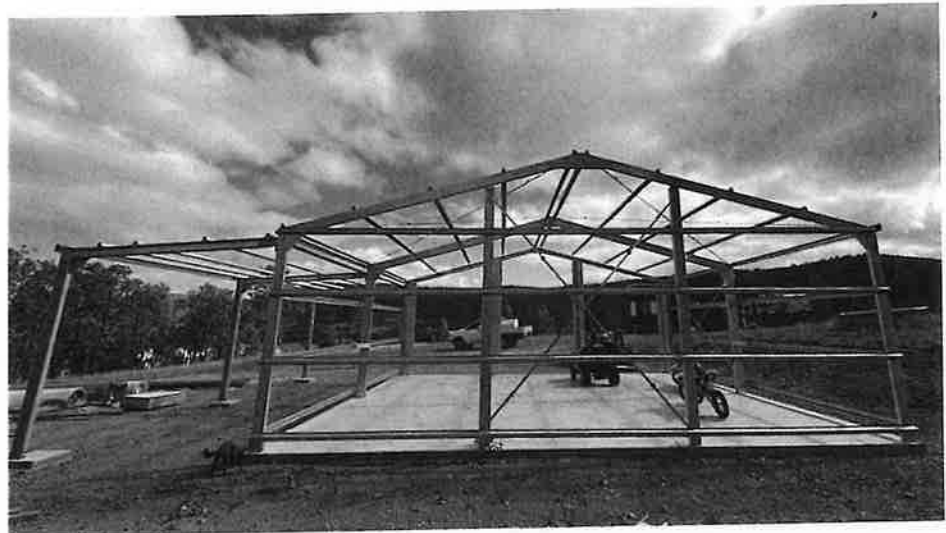
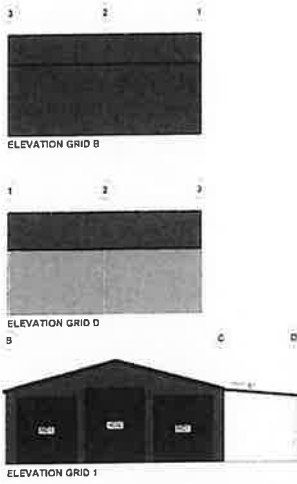


Figure 11: Workshop Shed (Due for completion in March 2025)

#### 4.5 Proposed Improvements

A fire trailer will be acquired, to be permanently ready on the property, with 2000-litre water tank and fire fighter pump— this could be towed and used for extinguishing a small fire as recommended by *Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2019*, providing essential resources for an immediate response to fire outbreaks. (April 2025) See Figure 13.

The Workshop Shed will be upgraded to minimum BAL 29 requirements. (Winter 2025)

An irrigation system with supplementary tanks and water access points are being installed to enhance the land's fire management capabilities for both event and domestic use. This includes two 10,000L storage tanks that will have connections for firefighting purposes. Imagery of the proposed irrigation system is below in Figure 12. (April 2025)

An additional 10,000L rainwater tank will be installed at the Workshop Shed and have connections for firefighting purposes. (April 2025)

Property identification, warnings, assembly areas and evacuation signage to be erected (March 2025).





Figure 12: Proposed Irrigation System



Figure 13: Proposed 2000L Water Trailer

## 5 Additional Documentation

### 5.1 Total Fire Ban rules

Reproduced from:

<https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/fdr-and-tobans/total-fire-ban-rules>



A total fire ban means no fires out in the open. A total fire ban helps limit the potential of fires developing. During a Total Fire Ban you cannot light, maintain or use a fire in the open, or to carry out any activity in the open that causes, or is likely to cause, a fire.

General purpose hot works (such as welding, grinding or gas cutting or any activity that produces a spark or flame) are not to be done in the open.

The NSW RFS strongly recommends you reconsider activities such as such using a tractor or slashing, to help reduce the chance of a fire starting on your property. Under certain conditions, the NSW RFS may issue a Harvest Safety Alert.

Why are Total Fire Bans declared?

Bush fires are more likely to spread and cause damage on days when the weather is very hot, dry and windy. These are usually on very high to extreme fire days.

To reduce the risk of fires damaging or destroying life, property and the environment the NSW RFS Commissioner may declare a Total Fire Ban.

Can I use an electric barbeque?

You can use an electric barbeque for cooking as long as it is under the direct control of a responsible adult, who is present at all times while it is operating, and no combustible material is allowed within two metres at any time it is operating.

Can I use a gas barbeque?

You can use a gas barbeque under the following conditions:

- It is under the direct control of a responsible adult, who is present at all times while it is operating;
- No combustible material is allowed within two metres at any time it is operating;
- You have an immediate and continuous supply of water; and o The barbeque is within 20 metres of a permanent private dwelling such as a home; or
- o The barbeque is within a designated picnic area and the appliance is approved by Council, National Parks or State Forest.

Can I use a barbeque or pizza oven which burns solid fuel (e.g. wood, charcoal or heat beads)?

No. A barbeque or wood fire pizza oven which uses solid fuel, such as wood, charcoal or heat beads, cannot be used outside during a Total Fire Ban.

Can I use fire during a Total Fire Ban if I have a fire permit?

Permits are suspended on days of total fire ban. Permits may resume after the total fire ban is lifted, as long as the permit hasn't expired.

More information on permits can be found on our Fire Permit page.

What is a No Burn day?

The EPA may prohibit the burning of fires in the open or in incinerators by issuing a No-Burn Notice (see section 133 Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997) if it is of the opinion that, because forecast weather conditions, burning is likely to contribute to the build-up of air pollution.

To find out if a No-Burn notice is in force:

- check the EPA website; or



- check the Public Notices section of the Sydney Morning Herald. A No-Burn notice will be published in the newspaper on the day it is in force; or
- call the EPA Environmental Information Line on 131 555.

Are there any exemptions during a Total Fire Ban?

A range of activities may be exempt from Total Fire Bans, such as emergency infrastructure work, bee hive smokers, mining operations, sugar cane harvesting, use of fireworks or ceremonial fires. The NSW RFS Commissioner is responsible for exemptions to Total Fire Bans. These exemptions are detailed in the NSW Government Gazette each time a Total Fire Ban is declared.

How do I apply for a Total Fire Ban exemption?

If you want to light a fire, or carry out any hot works activities during a Total Fire Ban you can check the Government Gazette to see if there is a standard exemption that applies to your situation. If the standard exemptions don't cover your circumstances then you may apply for a specific exemption using our Total Fire Ban exemption application form.

You will receive an acknowledgement email upon our receipt of your application however a minimum of seven days processing time is required for us to assess your application.

If approved the NSW RFS will issue an Exemption that contains any conditions that you must follow when lighting the fire or conducting your activity on the total fire ban day.

What penalties are there for lighting a fire during a Total Fire Ban?

Lighting a fire on a day of Total Fire Ban attracts an on the spot fine of \$2200. If the matter goes to court, you could be subject to a fine of up to \$5500 and/or 12 months gaol.

Penalties for a fire that escapes and damages or destroys life, property or the environment can attract much greater fines and gaol terms with maximums at \$132,000 and/or 14 years gaol.

Civil law suits can also be brought against the person responsible for a fire by those seeking compensation for losses sustained.