BUSHFIRE EVACUATION PLAN

Prepared for

Southern Cross Care

402 Bobbin Head Road

North Turramurra

10th December 2014

FPA AUSTRALIA
Certified Business
Bushfire Planning & Design

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Contents

1 Introduction 6
1.1 How to read this plan in an emergency 6
1.2 The Facility 6
1.3 The Bushfire risk 8
1.4 Bushfire protection attributes of the facility 9
1.5 Evacuation Orders 9
1.6 Evacuate or seek on-site refuge? 9
1.7 Evacuation decision guide 10

2 Procedures for off-site evacuation 14
2.1 Management of off-site evacuation transport 16

3 Procedures for on-site refuge 17
3.1 On-site Refuge management 18

4 Preparedness for bushfire 19
4.1 Bushfire protection provisions 19
4.2 Signage 19
4.3 Where to get BUSHFIre related information 19
4.4 Bushfire Warnings and Alerts 20
4.5 Reporting fires 20
4.6 Pre-emptive Evacuation on catastrophic fire danger days 20

5 Emergency Control Organisation 21
5.1 Chief Warden 21
5.2 Deputy Chief Warden 21
5.3 Area Wardens 21
5.4 Responsibilities of ECO, Chief Warden and Area Wardens 22
5.5 Responsibilities of Emergency Control Organisation (ECO) 22
5.6 Chief Warden and Deputy Chief Warden 23
5.7 Area Wardens 24
5.8 ECO Training and Education 24
5.9 Plan display 24
5.10 Bushfire safety induction 24
5.11 Registration of residents/visitors 25
5.12 Debriefing 25

6 References 26

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Appendix A: RFS Bush Fire Alerts 27

Appendix B: Warden flow chart 28

Appendix C: Emergency procedures and assembly area maps to be displayed prominently 29

Appendix D: Contact list for emergency services and welfare agencies 31

Appendix E: Contact telephone list (internal) 32

Appendix F: Safety equipment requirements for Wardens 33

Appendix G: Document distribution 34

Appendix H: Example refuge / evacuation check in / out form 35

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Glossary, abbreviations and acronyms

Abbreviation	Description
Asset Protection Zone (APZ)	Often referred to as a bushfire fuel management zone. Aims to protect human life, property and highly valued public assets and values. An area surrounding a development managed to reduce the bushfire hazard to an acceptable level.
Assembly Area	An area determined suitable for the assembly of residents, staff and visitors during an emergency event, the refuge areas will provide suitable short-term accommodation to residents, staff and visitors.
Australian Standard AS 3745-2010	Sets out the requirements for the development of procedures for the controlled evacuation of building, structures and workplaces during emergencies.
BoM	Bureau of Meteorology
Bushfire	A fire involving grass, shrub or forest.
Bushfire attack	Arises from direct flame impingement, radiant heat or ember attack.
Bushfire Danger Period	A period of the year, either established by legislation or declared by the relevant agency (Commissioner, NSW Rural Fire Service), when restrictions are placed on the use of fire due to dry vegetation and the existence of conditions conducive to the spread of fire.
Bushfire hazard	The potential severity of a fire. Usually measured in terms of intensity, the factors that influence a bushfire hazard include climate and weather patterns, vegetation (fuel quantity, distribution and moisture) and slope.
Bushfire risk	Is the chance of a bushfire igniting, spreading and causing damage to assets of value to the community. Risk may be rated as being extreme, major, moderate, minor or insignificant and is related to the vulnerability of the asset.
Emergency	Any event (*e.g.* bushfire) that may significantly threaten or adversely affect the safety of residents, staff and visitors, which requires an immediate response.
DoFCS	Department of Family and Community Services.
Emergency Control Organisation (ECO)	A structured group or responsible entity from on-site staff that will initiate an appropriate response to emergency situations.
Emergency Planning Committee (EPC)	A committee responsible for establishing an emergency plan, emergency response procedure and an ECO. In this circumstance the ECO will undertake the duties of the EPC.
Emergency Services Personnel	Include NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW Fire Brigades, Police, Ambulance and State Emergency Service, may include others who have statutory authority and responsibility in the event of bushfire, e.g. National Parks and Wildlife Service.
LEMC	Local Emergency Management Committee (c/- NSW Police)
LEMO	Local Emergency Management Officer (c/- Ku-ring-gai Council)
Refuge Area	An area or location having the necessary attributes to provide short term protection from smoke and heat.

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Review of emergency procedures contained in this plan

AS:3745 – 2010 requires that the Emergency Planning Committee (EPC) ensure the emergency procedures remain viable and effective by review and monitoring at periods not exceeding 12 months. In addition, the EPC shall ensure that the procedures are reviewed after an emergency event, a training exercise or any changes that affect the Bushfire Evacuation Plan and Emergency Procedures.

Amendments are to be recorded in the following table and inserted into the body of the document.

Date Of Review	Reviewed By	Pages Amended

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1 Introduction

This is the Bushfire Evacuation Plan and Emergency Procedures (**the Plan**) for the redeveloped aged care development known as **Southern Cross Residential Care Apartments (the Facility)** situated at 402 Bobbin Head Road, North Turramurra (hereafter referred to as the Subject Land).

This Plan increases the preparedness of managers, employees and occupants for rapid and safe evacuation either within or from the Facility when an adverse fire danger or a bushfire attack is forecast.

Procedures to manage evacuation are provided along with information on roles and responsibilities for employees. Effective communication of the evacuation arrangements to employees and occupants is critical to the Plans success.

The Plan outlines the actions required to initiate an evacuation, the safe relocation of people (either on-site or off-site) and the return of those people when the bushfire threat has passed. The Plan requires fire wardens and designated staff to implement and adapt it if unforeseen safety or other constraints arise during evacuation.

[This version of the Plan is written as if the development has been approved and constructed. A revision of the Plan should occur prior to occupation, especially to enable insertion of contact details, etc.]

1.1 How to read this plan in an emergency

The Plan provides for offsite evacuation and in some cases onsite refuge. It is activated and implemented by the Emergency Control Organisation (ECO) (Section 5) or senior officers of emergency services (NSW Police, NSW Rural Fire Service and/or Fire and Rescue NSW).

The process for selecting either on-site refuge or off-site evacuation is outlined in Section 1.6 of this Plan. Off-site evacuation is always preferred to on-site refuge, but under specific situations on-site refuge within the RACF may offer a safer option.

1.2 The Facility

Figure 1 shows the location of buildings and the site. A maximum of 191 occupants plus visitors may be on site at any time.

The occupancy levels will fluctuate given available spaces and demand at any given time. However, occupant numbers will not be higher than 104 (RACF), 48 (ILU) and 39 (staff), plus any visitors.

The facility meets *Planning for Bushfire Protection* 2006 and *Australian Standard AS3959 Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone Areas* and bushfire is expected to impact the site sometime in the future. The Plan is one of many measures to reduce the bushfire risk. Staff are available 24/7 to enact the Plan.

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Figure 1: Site Plan and Refuge Area

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1.3 The Bushfire risk

The majority of deaths during bush fires result from people trying to leave their homes at the last moment. Leaving late from the Facility places people at a much greater risk of getting caught in a dangerous situation, suffering from smoke inhalation or extreme heat. In bushfire prone areas, the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) policy position is that the safest option is to leave early.

The NSW response to bushfire has undergone many changes since the Victorian bushfires of 2009. Major changes have been made to the advice provided to communities, fire danger information and warnings, and safety and shelter options. Fire danger information and warnings have been a focus of major change over several years, resulting in more effective warnings being issued and people being better informed and able to respond effectively to the threat.

The Facility is a Special Fire Protection Purpose (SFPP) development under Section 100B of the Rural Fires Act, 1997 (RF Act). SFPP occupants require a higher level of bushfire protection and support during emergencies as:

- *They may be less educated in relation to bush fire impacts;*
- *They may have reduced capacity to evaluate risk and to respond adequately to the bush*
- *fire threat;*
- *They may present organisational difficulties for evacuation and or management;*
- *They may be more vulnerable through stress and anxiety arising from bush fire threat and smoke;*
- *There may be significant communication barriers;*
- *Supervision during a bush fire may be difficult; and*
- *Logistical arrangements for the numbers of residents may be complicated in terms of alternate accommodation, transport, healthcare and food supplies.*

Bushfire will impact the subject land in the future. The severity of this attack typically varies with factors such as the weather and the ignition point. North Turramurra peninsular has been identified in Ku-ring-gai Councils Bush Fire Prone Land Map[1] as having bush fire evacuation risks. This is due to the single access road along the Peninsula, the surrounding bushfire hazard and some vulnerable sites along the access road.

Under adverse weather conditions a fire would spread rapidly and may impact the site well before it is possible to evacuate safely off-site. The rate of spread of a bushfire is strongly related to the Fire Danger Rating (i.e. weather conditions) it is burning under. The higher the Fire Danger Rating, the more intense the bushfire attack and the more rapid the fire will move.

The new buildings of the Facility are designed to withstand the potential bushfire attack of a fire attack highly adverse weather (as determined under AS3959 2009); however, a residual bushfire risk always remains. Bushfire burning under some catastrophic weather conditions may go beyond contemporary building design measures; and, if time permits the only safe option may be to leave the facility early when the forecast is for a catastrophic day.

[1] file:///C:/Users/lews/Downloads/Bushfire_Prone_Land_Map_and_Bushfire_Evacuation_Risk_Map.pdf

1.4 Bushfire protection attributes of the facility

The Facility has development on all but its south-western boundary which abuts an expanse of bushfire prone vegetation (forest). The bushland is also contiguous with Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park and has a history of bushfire, some of which have been higher intensity. The intensity of any potential bushfire attacking the Facility is very high due to this adjoining forest on steep slopes and the expanse of bushland that it is part of. Flames can be expected to be in the tree tops in bushland areas abutting the Facility property.

An annual bushfire protection audit of the Facility and subject land prior to the Bushfire Danger Period each year is vital, with audits considering the:

- Maintenance and current condition of Asset Protection Zones;
- Vulnerability of the external components of buildings and their adherence to standards under AS3959;
- Risks associated with landscaping and furnishings in the ILU and around the Facility e.g. potential risk to the integrity of buildings
- Provision and accessibility of access/egress to the Facility;
- Working order of water supply or other equipment (e.g. ensure hydrants and extinguishers);
- Adequacy and preparedness of 'first-aid' fire fighting/property protection/evacuation staff and equipment;
- Adequacy of preparedness to implement this Plan; including the functioning of the on-site refuge;
- Evacuation decision making.

1.5 Evacuation Orders

The NSW Police are legally responsible for protection of life and any lawful request by Police must be followed. Wherever possible, the decision to evacuate should be guided by NSW Police or Senior Officers of the NSW Rural Fire Service or Fire and Rescue NSW.

1.6 Evacuate or seek on-site refuge?

This Plan offers two primary options in response to a forecast bushfire attack; leave early by following off-site evacuation procedures; or if this is unsafe/not feasible seek on-site refuge.

EARLY EVACUATION WELL PRIOR TO THE POTENTIAL ARRIVAL OF A BUSHFIRE MUST BE UNDERTAKEN WHENEVER IT IS SAFE TO DO SO.

On-site refuge is only to occur when it is not safe or not feasible to complete early off-site evacuation. However, the risk of fire impacting the site prior to safe off-site evacuation is relatively high as the three or more hours required for execution of an evacuation will not always be available.

The primary strategy of this Plan is to evacuate occupants to a safe place. The fall-back option is for the refuge to provide temporary shelter for those who have not been able to evacuate to a safe place. Ultimately, those who shelter in the refuge will, when it is safe to do so, evacuate off site to a safe place or return to their previous lodgings within the Facility.

Care is required in decision making to firstly ask "Is it safe to evacuate to a safe place?" If the answer is "Yes" then initiate the off-site evacuation procedures of this Plan. If the answer is "No", then and ONLY then, initiate the on-site refuge procedures of this Plan.

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1.7 Evacuation decision guide

The Fire Danger Rating is a critical guide to evacuation decisions. It is widely publicised in the media and available on web-sites during the Bushfire Danger Period. The higher the Fire Danger Rating the higher the potential impact of a bushfire burning under those conditions. Bushfires move faster, are more intense and are more dangerous when burning under higher Fire Danger Ratings.

In the local area, any fire burning under a Fire Danger Rating of Very High or above can be a serious threat to the Facility and may be impossible to control by firefighters during the peak of its run. Evacuation decisions are linked to the Fire Danger Rating and the occurrence (or not) of a bushfire.

The proximity and predicted time of impact of a bushfire is as important as the Fire Danger Rating. Table 1 combines these two considerations in a matrix format showing the responses required under different Fire Danger Ratings (X-axis) against the presence or otherwise of a fire (Y-axis); the body of the matrix identifies the evacuation action/decisions required.

The distances to a fire referred to in Table 1 can be obtained from the RFS web site or the Fires near me app (also see

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Table 1: Evacuation Decision Matrix

Triggers for action	Fire Danger Rating					
	Low / Moderate	High	Very High	Severe	Extreme	Catastrophic
No fire within 50 kms	No action required	Keep informed and monitor conditions[1]	Keep informed, and monitor conditions. Be ready to act if necessary.	Keep informed and monitor conditions[1]. Be ready to act if necessary. ILU occupants and staff alerted to possible evacuation if fire occurs. Bus on standby on site.	Keep informed and monitor conditions[1]. Be ready to act if necessary. ILU occupants and staff alerted to possible evacuation if fire occurs. Bus on standby on site.	Keep informed and monitor conditions[1]. Leaving early is the only safe option. If a fire has started it may be too late. ILU residents evacuate the night before or by 9am the morning of forecast conditions and only return when conditions abate. No visitors or extra persons on site. SCC buses on standby on site and elsewhere.
Fire within 50 kms, but no risk to site	Keep informed and monitor conditions and fire[2].	Keep informed and monitor conditions and fire[1]. Be ready to act if necessary.	Keep informed and monitor conditions and fire[1]. Be ready to act if necessary. Bus on standby on site.	Keep informed and monitor conditions and fire[1]. Be ready to act if necessary. ILU occupants and staff alerted to possible evacuation	If fires are to the west or north of the site, initiate evacuation of ILU and review RACF needs with RFS. Keep informed and monitor conditions and fire[1].	Evacuate ILU (if safe to do so). Review RACF evacuation needs with RFS. If in doubt, evacuate early. SCC buses on standby on site and elsewhere.

[2] See section 4.3 of "Where to get information during a bush fire".

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Triggers for action	Fire Danger Rating					
	Low / Moderate	High	Very High	Severe	Extreme	Catastrophic
				if fire moves closer. Bus on standby on site.	Contact police or NSW RFS to seek instruction. SCC buses on standby on site and elsewhere.	
Time to predicted fire impact on site is longer than time required to evacuate	Evacuate ILU if safe to do so. Seek advice from RFS for RACF evacuation or onsite refuge.[3] SCC buses on standby on site and elsewhere.	Evacuate ILU if safe to do so. Seek advice from RFS for RACF evacuation or onsite refuge.[3] SCC buses on standby on site and elsewhere[3]	Evacuate all persons off-site if safe to do so. Seek advice from RFS regarding a caretaker presence for spot fires.	Evacuate all persons off site, if safe to do so. Contact RFS to seek instruction.	Evacuate all persons off site, if safe to do so. Contact RFS to seek instruction.	Evacuate all persons off site, if safe to do so. Contact RFS to seek instruction.

[3] As relocation of RACF occupants may of itself result in deaths or injury, expert consideration of the bushfire impact potential is required.

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Triggers for action	Fire Danger Rating					
	Low / Moderate	High	Very High	Severe	Extreme	Catastrophic
Time to predicted fire impact on site is shorter than time required to evacuate e.g. <3 hours, or emergency warning[4]	Consider moving staff and residents to the on-site refuge. Contact RFS to seek instruction.	Shelter in on-site refuge. Enact refuge procedures[5]. Contact RFS to seek instruction.	Shelter in on-site refuge. Enact refuge procedures[5]. Contact RFS to seek instruction.	Shelter in on-site refuge. Enact refuge procedures[5]. Contact RFS to seek instruction.	Shelter in on-site refuge. Enact refuge procedures[5]. Contact RFS to seek instruction	Shelter in on-site refuge. Enact refuge procedures[5]. Contact RFS to seek instruction.
Instructed to evacuate by police or RFS officer	Evacuate	Evacuate	Evacuate	Evacuate. Request escort.	Evacuate. Request escort.	Evacuate. Request escort.

[4] An Emergency Warning means that you may be in danger and must act immediately. Check with RFS about the time required to evacuate the Facility against the time until the fire is predict to impact the site.

[5] On-site refuge procedures are provided at 3.

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2 Procedures for off-site evacuation

Safe off-site evacuation may take more than three hours to complete. Wherever possible, off-site evacuation should commence at least 12 – 24 hours ahead of the anticipated arrival of a bushfire. Evacuation of the ILU is also to occur when the Fire Danger Rating is Catastrophic, even if there is no existing fire (see Table 1).

The following off-site evacuation procedures are to be followed.

1. Ensure the safety and well-being of residents, visitors and staff at all times during evacuation.

2. Following a decision to evacuate, alert all staff and brief them on procedures for evacuating the Facility. This should include the order and manner in which the evacuation is to unfold (who, what, where, when and how).

3. Notify ILU occupants to evacuate in their private vehicles by following their checklist of evacuation procedures. Prior to leaving bring indoors combustible items, and items capable of being blown around in strong winds; and close all windows and external doors (including security or fly screen) and draw curtains.

4. Depending upon the health and mobility of RACF occupants, move them to the external assembly area via the pre-agreed route.

5. Ensure all residents 'emergency bag' (ID, insurance papers, clothes, torch, medications, etc.) are collected and instruct all residents, staff and visitors to immediately move towards the Assembly Area for off-site evacuation. Details of the offsite evacuation centre and the route and means of transport to this location are to be provided at a briefing.

6. Post notices on entrance ways to the Facility notifying of its temporary closure; and prevent unauthorised people entering.

7. A list of 'personnel on-site' is to be used to check off all evacuees as they leave the Facility.

8. Once the evacuation is well underway; and if staff availability and time permit, check and secure windows and external doors are closed and curtains or blinds drawn in all buildings, with priority given to the buildings closest to the hazard.

9. The final location of the off-site evacuation centre will be made by NSW Police, NSW Rural Fire Service or Fire and Rescue NSW. North Turramurra Public School (see Figure 2) may be one option.

10. Carefully drive according to conditions directly to the assigned evacuation centre.

11. Evacuees are to be checked off the 'personnel list' when they arrive at the offsite evacuation point.

12. DoFCS may be contacted for disaster recovery assistance, if required.

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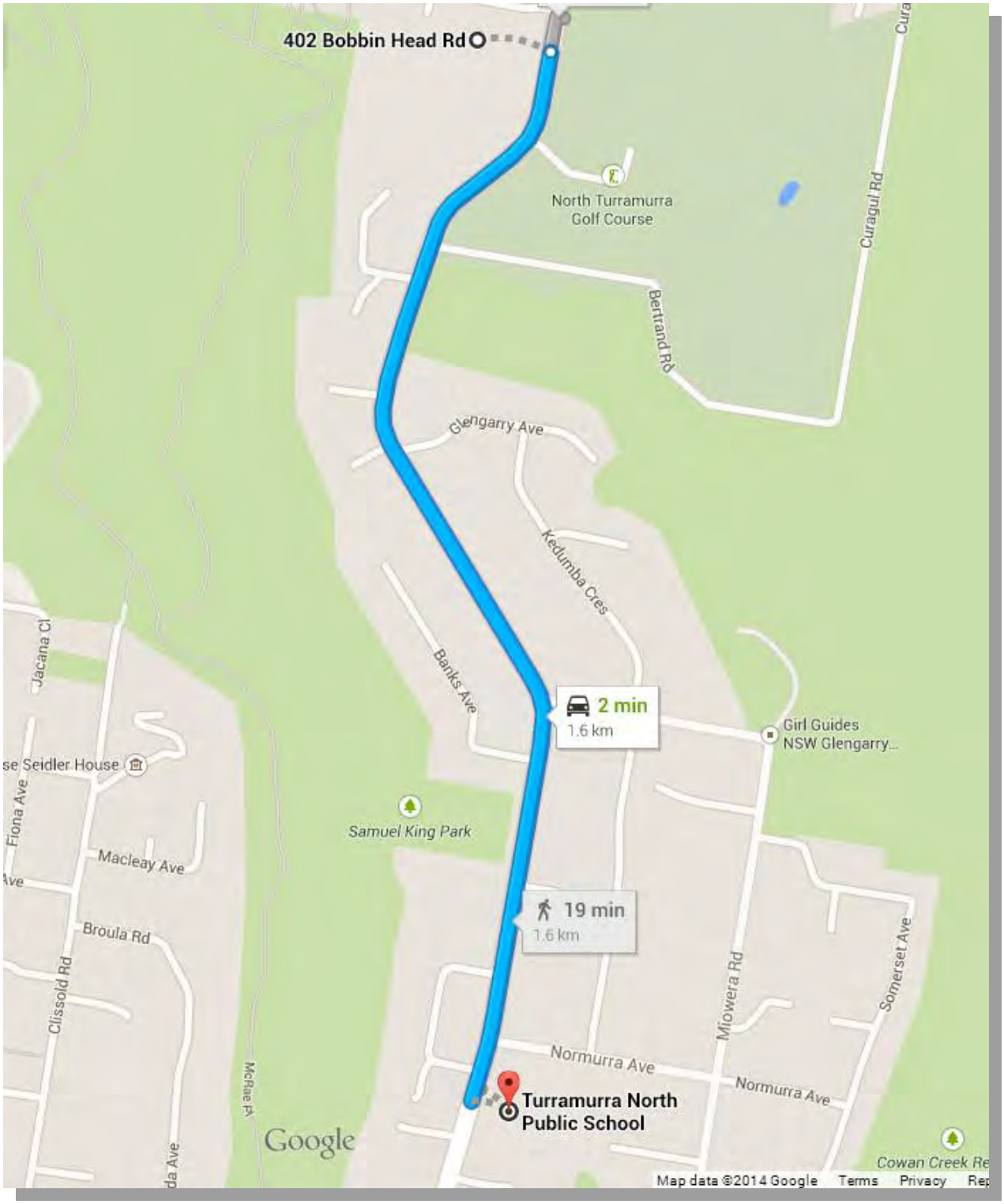

Figure 2: Off-site Evacuation Location

2.1 Management of off-site evacuation transport

The two primary sources of off-site evacuation are the private vehicles (of staff and ILU residents) and the onsite and off-site buses owned by Southern Cross Care.

ILU residents should obtain a briefing (either in written form or at an assembly point) prior to being asked to move quickly and carefully through a pre-arranged checklist of evacuation procedures; the only addition to the prior arrangements is clarification of the destination and route to be taken.

The on-site 22 seater bus offers primary transport for the mobile and semi-mobile RACF occupants. Given the RACF occupants may number 104, up to 5 bus trips may be required. Management has access to 3 additional 12 seat buses and one 25 seat bus for emergency situations.

If a road block is operated on Bobbin Head Road, arrangements will need to be made with Police prior to departure to obtain approval to re-enter the closed area if this is required to complete the RACF evacuation. If this cannot be obtained prior to departure it MUST be obtained at the road block point prior to passing out through it.

If the bus is not able to return after the first or subsequent evacuation trip the RACF must be notified immediately to activate the on-site refuge arrangements, if there is no additional transport out from the Facility. Staff vehicles may be used to augment the transport of RACF occupants by buses and any specialist medical transport vehicles assisting the evacuation.

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3 Procedures for on-site refuge

1. Confirm that off-site evacuation is not feasible.
2. Wherever possible, on-site refuge should commence immediately it is known that off-site evacuation is not feasible and on-site refuging is required.
3. If it is feasible to off-site evacuate a portion of the Facility e.g. ILU residents, this should occur up to the time when it is no longer considered safe.
4. The movement of high care patients to the on-site refuge has been estimated by SCC to take approximately three hours to complete. This time may not always be available and a prioritised relocation system will be required.
5. Ensure the welfare of the residents, visitors and staff at all times during the on-site refuging.
6. Notify all visitors and staff of the need to seek refuge and activate the Plan.
7. Collect residents 'emergency bag' (ID, insurance papers, clothes, torch, medications etc.) and instruct all residents, staff and visitors to immediately move towards the onsite refuge (see Figure 1).
8. The Chief Warden or Deputy Chief Warden is the 'Incident Controller' unless relieved by authorities e.g. NSW Rural Fire Service/Fire and Rescue NSW or Police.
9. Ensure that a person able to regularly advise evacuees of their welfare is appointed and occupies the on-site refuge.
10. Provide ample additional drinking water within the refuge for evacuees.
11. The use of mobile phone and/or portable radio communications may be an effective way of communicating within and outside the refuge area.
12. Require all ILU residents to bring indoors combustible items, and items capable of being blown around in strong winds; and close all windows and external doors (including security or fly screen) and draw curtains.
13. Once the on-site evacuation is well underway; and if staff availability and time permit, check and secure windows and external doors are closed and curtains or blinds drawn in all buildings, starting with the RACF and buildings closest to the hazard.
14. Inform evacuees of the location of the on-site refuge and the plan to move to it.
15. When in the on-site refuge, ensure backup lighting and power is ready for use (if required).
16. If staff availability and time permit, personnel delegated by the ECO may be required to assist emergency services personnel to patrol the area surrounding the buildings for spot fires and suppress or notify locations for attention by emergency service personnel.
17. Keep a watchful eye on the progress of the fire, as the fire approaches, retreat and move all evacuees to the on-site refuge. Take hoses and fittings inside the building when you move inside.

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18. While moving to the refuge, stay inside in areas furthest from the south-west of the subject land (direction from which main threat is expected). Avoid areas of potential exposure to radiant heat (if the flames can be seen, then radiant heat exposure exists).

19. It may become hot and smoky; drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration. Ensure all evacuees are also well hydrated.

20. Try to cover all exposed skin and instruct evacuees to do likewise if outdoors or in places where flames may become visible.

21. Watch for sparks entering the building or igniting gardens abutting windows and extinguish them if safe to do so.

22. After the bushfire has passed over and it is safe to do so, check each building for fires and extinguish.

23. Upon finalisation of the evacuation, the Chief Warden/Deputy Chief Warden will ensure that the incident is declared over, and when it is appropriate to do so, a debriefing of the incident will occur for all involved staff and, if desirable, Emergency Services representatives.

3.1 On-site Refuge management

The likely period of occupation of the refuge is 60 minutes. During this period the refuge is 'closed' and external conditions can be challenging, or untenable. Beyond 60 minutes the refuge can be re-opened, even though residents might remain within the building.

An assessment of post bushfire conditions should be undertaken in accord with XXXX [to be provided as part of proposed Detailed Fire Engineering Design]. Similarly matters relating to operation of the refuge, including (but not limited to); air supply systems, operational procedures, cooling systems, emergency power supply, maintenance requirements, access and egress, psychological conditions, interior fire separation from remaining parts of the building, construction materials, fire-fighting equipment, signage, communication equipment, first-aid equipment and sanitary facilities will be analysed and derived [in the Detailed Fire Engineering Design Phase].

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4 Preparedness for bushfire

4.1 Bushfire protection provisions

An annual bushfire protection audit of the Facility prior to the Bush Fire Danger Period is required to consider the functional adequacy of the following:

- Asset Protection Zones;
- Access/egress (external to buildings) for evacuation;
- Site water supply or other equipment (e.g. hydrants, pumps, hoses and extinguishers); and
- Staff to perform 'first aid' fire fighting and property protection, including use of equipment and processes;
- Off-site and on-site evacuation preparedness.

The Bush Fire Danger Period normally starts on 1 October each year, but occasionally starts earlier depending on seasonal conditions. If the start and/or end date of the annual Bush Fire Danger Period is altered, changes will be gazetted in local print media.

4.2 Signage

'Emergency Assembly Points' are to be signposted clearly as are the routes to and from the on-site refuge and the dispatch points for off-site evacuation. The Chief Warden and Deputy Chief Warden contact details (along with first aid officers) are also to be displayed here and at other locations – see Appendix E.

First aid equipment suitable for use in an evacuation is to be strategically located and signposted.

4.3 Where to get BUSHFIre related information

Prior to a bushfire

Contact details for NSW Rural Fire Service are detailed in Appendix D.

Fire weather information is available from the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) at www.bom.gov.au and the NSW Rural Fire Service (www.rfs.nsw.gov.au). The BoM are able to fax/email daily updates of weather forecasts and Fire Danger Ratings.

During a bushfire

- NSW RFS Bush Fire Information Line 1800 NSW RFS (1800 679 737)
- NSW Rural Fire Service website www.rfs.nsw.gov.au
- "Fires near me" app
- www.facebook.com/nswrfs
- www.twitter.com/nswrfs
- Local Radio, TV, Newspapers.

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4.4 Bushfire Warnings and Alerts

Where there is a risk from bush fire, the NSW Rural Fire Service uses Bush Fire Alerts to provide information to affected communities using radio, television, and the internet (See RFS leaflet provided in Appendix A. There are three Bush Fire Alert levels, these are:

Advice

A fire has started. There is no immediate danger. Stay up to date in case the situation changes.

Watch and Act

There is a heightened level of threat. Conditions are changing and you need to start taking action now to protect you and your family.

Emergency Warning

An Emergency Warning is the highest level of Bush Fire Alert. You may be in danger and need to take action immediately. Any delay now puts your life at risk.

4.5 Reporting fires

If there is a bushfire near the Facility, telephone the NSW Rural Fire Service, Hornsby (see Appendix D) to clarify the location of the fire and seek advice on the next point of contact if more information is required.

Use the following to report a fire within or near the Facility:

1. Ring '000' and you will be asked 'Would you like Police, Fire or Ambulance'.
2. Respond with 'Fire' and advise of:
    a. The exact location of the incident;
    b. The nature of the incident;
    c. Any persons trapped or injured or likely to be injured;
    d. A contact number;
    e. A contact name;
    f. Any requirement for further assistance, be specific *e.g.* an Ambulance if anyone is injured.

4.6 Pre-emptive Evacuation on catastrophic fire danger days

The ILU is to be evacuated for the duration of any period of Catastrophic Fire Danger (typically 1 day).

Fire weather forecasts are to be checked at least twice per day during the Bushfire Danger Period (9 am and 3 pm). If a Catastrophic Fire Danger is forecast, residents of the ILU are to be notified immediately to make personal arrangements to evacuate off-site to a safer place beyond bushfire prone land. Note: this evacuation is pre-emptive and does not depend on the existence of a fire.

Pre-emptive evacuations may be wise under other circumstances but are not mandated by this Plan.

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5 Emergency Control Organisation

In accordance with AS 3745-2010, an Emergency Control Organisation (ECO) operates in the Facility. The ECO has overall responsibility for the planning, preparation and implementation of the onsite refuge and emergency procedures.

The ECO should consist of a Chief Warden, Deputy Chief Warden and Area Wardens.

The ECO will also perform the duties of the Emergency Planning Committee (EPC) (Standards Australia 2010). The nature of the Facility and staff numbers justifies the incorporation of the EPC into the duties and responsibilities of the ECO.

The ECO does not have a 'statutory standing'. It must follow instructions and advice from Emergency Service personnel related to the preparedness for and response to an evacuation. The managers of the Facility will ensure that instructions given by the staff identified within the ECO overrule the normal management structure during emergency events/training when operating under this Plan.

Persons appointed to the ECO are to:

- Be physically capable of performing the duties required;
- Have strong leadership qualities;
- Have maturity of judgement, good decision-making skills and be capable of remaining calm under pressure;
- Have a comprehensive knowledge of the local area;
- Generally be on site during the Bush Fire Danger Period; and
- Be able to complete the required training (Section 5.8).

5.1 Chief Warden

The person selected to head the ECO, in addition to the above, is to have a good knowledge of the layout of buildings and the Facility and the location of all fire protection equipment. The Facility Manager is the Chief Warden.

5.2 Deputy Chief Warden

The appointment of the Deputy is to ensure continuity of the Chief Warden's functions during absences. The selection of the Deputy is to be consistent with the selection criteria for the Chief Warden. The deputy is to be fully trained and capable of taking over the role of the Chief Warden. The staff member rostered on duty at the time of the emergency is the Deputy Chief Warden.

5.3 Area Wardens

It is essential that the persons appointed have the qualities needed to enable them to perform duties required in emergencies. Area Wardens will be delegated by the Chief Warden or Deputy Chief Warden from suitable staff who meets the requirements listed below:

- Availability – they are to be persons who spend most of their time at, or near, their workplace when on duty;
- Ability to organise others in an emergency; and
- Reliability.

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Staff employed by the Facility work in shifts. Any staff working at the Facility and not fulfilling the role of Chief Warden or Deputy Chief Warden will assume the role of Area Warden. In the event that there are no other staff working at the time of an emergency, the persons nominated to the positions of Chief and Deputy Chief Warden may assume this role as the residents are independent care - AS3745-2010 allows this flexibility.

The Facility Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is to ensure that the ECO are indemnified against civil liability resulting from practice or emergency evacuations, where the personnel act in good faith and in the course of the duties as defined by this Plan.

5.4 Responsibilities of ECO, Chief Warden and Area Wardens

The Chief Warden and Deputy Chief Warden will coordinate the activities of staff during a bushfire event and ensure emergency responsibilities and duties are carried out. The primary role of members of the ECO is to ensure that protection of life, health and welfare of Facility occupants takes precedence over asset protection. The hierarchy of responsibility is shown in Appendix B.

Each officer in the ECO shall have clearly defined duties and responsibilities.

5.5 Responsibilities of Emergency Control Organisation (ECO)

The following is a list of the responsibilities of the ECO:

- Annual update of the Bushfire Evacuation Plan;
- Annual testing of the Bushfire Evacuation Plan;
- Reviewing and correcting any deficiencies in the Bushfire Evacuation Plan identified during annual testing or actual events;
- Distributing a current Bushfire Evacuation Plan in August each year to the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) and other appropriate authorities. (e.g. NSW Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW) – see Appendix G for document distribution details;
- Issue, to all staff with any responsibility for evacuation or firefighting, a copy of those components of the Bushfire Evacuation Plan necessary for their efficient and effective involvement;
- Display the emergency procedures and assembly area maps and to ensure that all signage is affixed in appropriate locations within the Facility as specified in Appendix C;
- During the Bush Fire Danger Period, a brief outline of the emergency procedures and assembly area maps (Section 2 Figure 2) is to periodically be included with all written handout material provided to staff;
- Maintain a Chief Warden and Warden roster;
- Provide safety equipment for the Chief Warden, Deputy Chief Warden and Wardens as outlined in Appendix F (i.e. safety vest, helmet, torch, mobile phone, portable radio, firefighting equipment, loud hailer) and any additional equipment determined appropriate by the ECO; and
- Invite representatives of the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) to participate in a review of evacuation exercises.

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5.6 Chief Warden and Deputy Chief Warden

The Chief Warden and/or Deputy Chief Warden are responsible for the following:

- Monitoring fire risk (e.g. weather patterns) during the Bush Fire Danger Period (Section 4.6);
- Monitoring through contact with NSW Rural Fire Service, the progress and situation of bushfires in the local region (Section 2);
- Supervision of the ECO;
- Ensuring the ECO achieves its responsibilities (see Section 5.5);
- Preparation, management and activation of the Bushfire Evacuation Plan (in conjunction with the ECO);
- Liaising with Emergency Services and maintaining the Emergency Service contact lists (Appendix D);
- Maintaining and displaying a current list of internal contact telephone numbers in prominent positions (Appendix E);
- Vehicle movement in and out of the Facility site during onsite refuge and offsite evacuation until this function is undertaken by emergency service personnel;
- Setting up the evacuees registration system to check people into and out of the Evacuation Areas (see Appendix H);
- Prior to August each year, arrange for the certification of all fire detection and suppression systems within the Facility and ensure all available firefighting equipment is ready, i.e. fire extinguishers, pumps and hoses;
- Implement annual evacuation exercises prior to the bushfire season to ensure that all staff of the Facility know what to do and where to assemble in the event of a bushfire emergency;
- On becoming aware of a bushfire emergency or potential emergency:
  - Ascertain the nature of the emergency and determine appropriate response in accordance with the Bushfire Evacuation Plan;
  - Ensure that the appropriate Emergency Services are notified;
  - Ensure the suitability of the onsite refuge areas;
  - Ensure that the emergency onsite refuge areas are set up to cater for a possible evacuation;
  - Instigate the operation of an evacuees registration system to check people into and out of the onsite refuge areas or offsite evacuation location;
  - Ensure Facility staff and visitors are notified that an orderly onsite refuge or offsite evacuation of the Facility has been initiated;
  - Monitor the progress of the fire and notify fire authorities on their arrival and whenever else required;
  - Supervise the evacuation and subsequent oversight of the onsite refuge or offsite evacuation areas unless relieved of this responsibility by the attending commanding officer of Emergency Services; and
  - Brief and co-operate with the Emergency Services personnel upon their arrival;
- Undertake a debrief with staff of the Facility and, if appropriate, the local emergency services within one month of the conclusion of the emergency.

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5.7 Area Wardens

Area Wardens are responsible for the following:

- Assisting with the notification and implementation of the evacuation;
- Ensuring that prescribed medications required by occupants, travel with the occupants;
- Assisting the Emergency Service personnel on their arrival, unless otherwise directed;
- Keeping the Chief Warden and/or Deputy Chief Warden regularly informed of the status of the emergency, and their current activities and location by telephone; and
- Area Wardens will also be responsible for assistance with setting up the evacuee's registration system to check people into and out of the onsite refuge or offsite evacuation areas.

5.8 ECO Training and Education

All members of the ECO are to be trained in evacuation procedures and the operation of bushfire protection equipment. Whilst it is not an expectation that Facility staff will be required to operate bushfire suppression systems it is beneficial if staff have knowledge of the various types of bushfire suppression equipment available within the Facility to pass onto emergency services personnel if requested. Guidance should be sought from the LEMC concerning the format and content of evacuation training exercises where no such material is available.

The Chief, Deputy Chief and Area Wardens are to receive training/awareness in the following:

- The layout of the Facility, including evacuation routes, refuge and assembly areas and locations of fire suppression systems, i.e. fire extinguishers, water supplies, pumps and hoses that are installed;
- The operation of communication equipment (if specialist equipment is supplied);
- The operation of a registration system to check current visitors and staff on the premises into the onsite refuge or offsite evacuation areas (see example in Appendix H);
- The operation of the Bushfire Evacuation Plan;
- The staging of annual evacuation exercises; and
- Bushfire awareness training.

5.9 Plan display

The Emergency Procedures of the Bushfire Evacuation Plan for the Facility are to be displayed as specified in Appendix C. During the Bush Fire Danger Period, information from this Plan is to be periodically distributed to all staff.

All staff members are to be provided with an updated summary version of the entire Bushfire Evacuation Plan in September each year.

5.10 Bushfire safety induction

During the annual Bush Fire Danger Period, visitors to the Facility will be given a brief bushfire safety induction when they check in. This induction will include:

1. A brief summary of the bushfire warning systems;
2. A map of the onsite refuge and offsite evacuation assembly area;
3. A summary of the onsite and offsite registration procedures; and

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4. How to identify staff who may assist with bushfire evacuation.

Note: Appendix B provides text only. This information can be transferred onto appropriate letterhead or generally made more presentable as determined by management.

5.11 Registration of residents/visitors

Residents in independent living may move on and off the Facility grounds at will and their movements will not be monitored by Facility management, except during a bushfire evacuation. Similarly, visitors to the Facility are not restricted and records of these movements will not be maintained except during a bushfire evacuation.

During an emergency requiring on-site or off-site evacuation, the Chief Warden will ensure that a register of residents and staff relocated to the on-site assembly area and if required the on-site evacuation location, is kept and updated on a regular basis. Movement in and out of the Facility during an evacuation is to be managed by the Chief Warden. If there are visitors present at the time of a declared bushfire emergency then they will be included in the registration system. This register should list the names of the current residents and visitors in attendance, their next of kin and contact details. In the event of an emergency, the register should be made available to the Emergency Service commander on his / her arrival if requested.

5.12 Debriefing

A debriefing, to be held within one month of each practice (or actual) evacuation and emergency, is essential to identify shortcomings in the procedures and the Bushfire Evacuation Plan.

A representative of the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) is to be invited to attend any debrief where emergency personnel have had an involvement in the exercise or actual emergency.

Minutes of the debriefing are to be recorded and distributed to all relevant agencies and personnel. Amendments are to be recorded within this document. Annual dissemination of the plan is to include these amendments (see Appendix G).

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6 References

Emergency Management Australia. 1998. *Australian Emergency Management Glossary Australian Emergency Manuals Series Part I The Fundamentals Manual 3.* Emergency Management Australia.

Standards Australia. 2009. *Australian Standard (AS) 3959-2009 'Planning for emergencies in* facilities' SAI Global, Sydney.

Standards Australia. 2010. *Australian Standard (AS) 3745-2010 'Planning for emergencies in* facilities' SAI Global, Sydney.

NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS). 2004. *A Guide to Develop a Bushfire Evacuation Plan.* Planning and Environment Services, RFS Sydney.

NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS). 2006. *Planning for Bush Fire Protection: A Guide for Councils, Planners, Fire Authorities, Developers and Home Owners*. Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.

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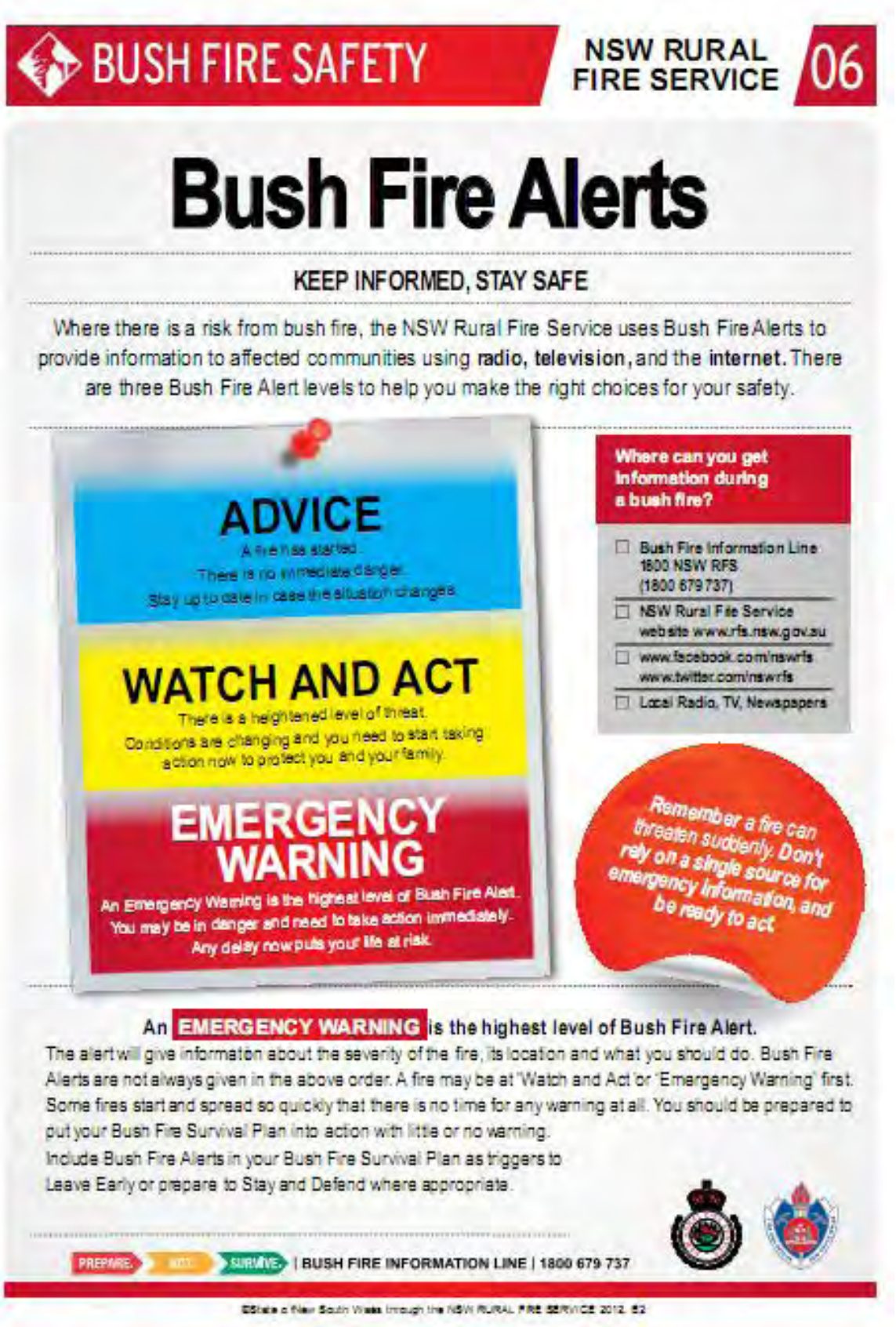
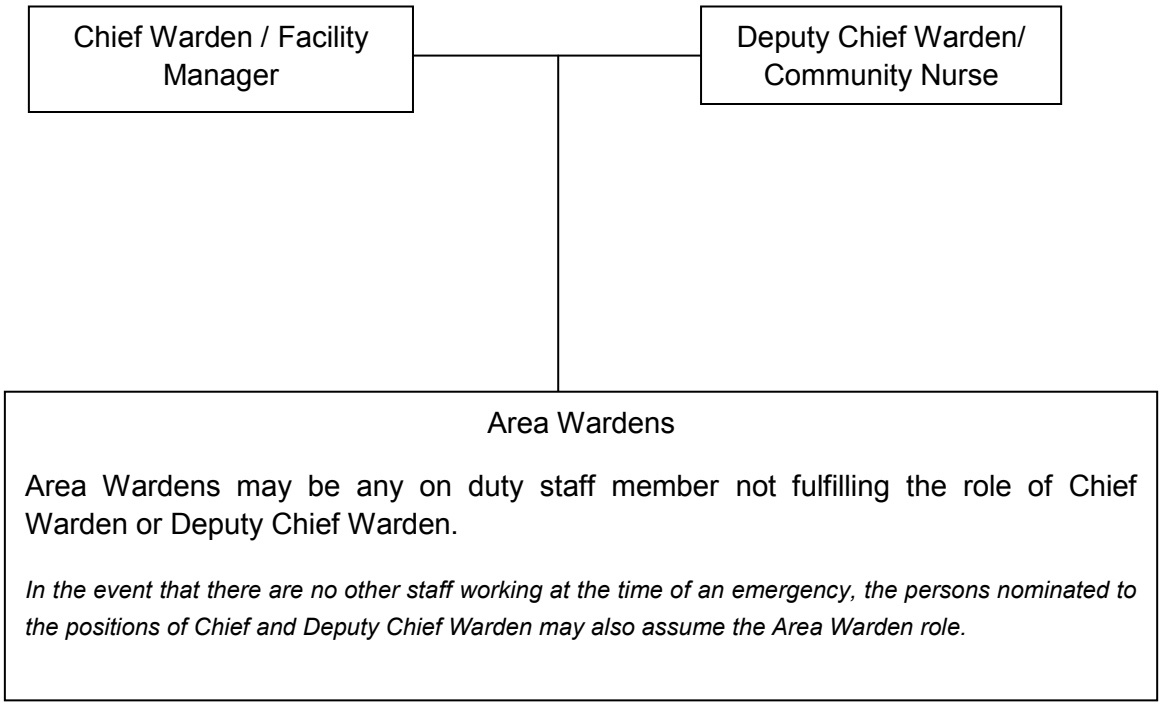
Appendix A: RFS Bush Fire Alerts



Appendix B: Warden flow chart



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Appendix C: Emergency procedures and assembly area maps to be displayed prominently

The following evacuation procedures and assembly/evacuation centre map are to be mounted on the rear of each dwelling door and in prominent locations in common buildings and near the stairway /elevator of multi storey buildings.

PLEASE READ THIS

WHAT TO DO IN A BUSHFIRE EMERGENCY REQUIRING EVACUATION

1. **DO NOT PANIC. Do not leave the grounds under any circumstances until directed by emergency services or the Chief Warden unless there is imminent danger and to delay departure would jeopardise life.**

2. An emergency is notified by the repeated sounding of a car horn, hand held air horn or loud hailer. If in doubt as to whether evacuation is required go to the source of the alarm or to the RACF office.

3. On being alerted of an evacuation, all residents are to collect their 'grab bag' and all residents, staff and visitors shall immediately make their way to the "Initial Assembly Area" nearest to them as shown on Map 1. Once assembled you will be briefed on how to proceed to the on-site Refuge Building, see Map 1. The staff wearing white, yellow or red helmet and/or a vest marked 'Warden' will assist in the evacuation. Please take directions from these persons.

4. Wherever possible, in a bushfire evacuation, avoid walking closer than 100 m to the forest and attempt to remain shielded from the forest by a building or other solid object. Generally, if a bushfire's flames are visible you should be within the Refuge Building or making your way to it by a route as far away from the flames as possible.

5. The suggested contents of your 'grab bag' are below. Cotton or woollen based clothing is safer in a fire.

Medications	Robe
Prescriptions	Spectacles
Medical documents (including name, address and telephone number of doctor)	Dentures
Medicare card	Spare underwear
Purse or wallet	One change of warm casual clothing
Personal documents (including telephone and address book)	Toiletries / cosmetics

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Night attire	Small torch and spare batteries
Slippers	

5 Nominated people are to keep a watchful eye on the progress of the fire, and as the fire approaches are to retreat to the inside of the Refuge Building.

6. Stay inside in the room furthest from the fire front and a room which affords greatest protection from radiant heat until the danger passes – it may become hot and smoky – drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration.

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Appendix D: Contact list for emergency services and welfare agencies

The following contact list is to be updated and displayed in prominently in all offices and work areas within the RACF.

Emergency Services (**EMERGENCY**) police, ambulance, fire	**000**
NSW Rural Fire Services, Hornsby Fire Control Centre	(02) 9485 5000;
NSW Rural Fire Service information line	1800 654 443
NSW Rural Fire Service - Website	www.bushfire.nsw.gov.au
Bureau of Meteorology - Website	www.bom.gov.au
NSW Fire Brigades Station (Hornsby)	(02) 9476 4318
Police (Hornsby)	(02) 9476 9799
NSW Ambulance public relations media unit	(02) 9320 7796
(SES) State Emergency Services	(02) 132 500
Department of Community Services (DoFCS) Disaster recovery Centre	1800 018 444
Energy Australia	13 15 35
Sydney Water	13 20 90
Telecom Australia	132 999
Salvation Army	9477 1412
Government Bus Depot	(02) 9652 1944
Security Company	RACF Management's preferred contractor.

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Appendix E: Contact telephone list (internal)

The following contact list is to be updated and displayed in prominently in all residential care facilities, the RACF office and all work areas.

Location / Position	Name	Telephone number
Chief Warden	Binod Nargorti	02 91442200 or 04 13957808
Deputy Chief Warden	Bernadette Palmer	02 91442200
Area Warden	Christine Nwabuokei	02 91442200 or 04 09867533
Other Contacts		
Chief Executive Officer	Paul McMahon	02 9790 9400
Deputy Chief Executive Officer	Andrew Fleming	02 9790 9400
General Manager – Operations	Helen Emmerson	02 9790 9400 or 04 10761804
Chief Finance Officer	Paul Smith	02 9790 9400
Maintenance Manager	Binod Nargorti	02 91442200 or 04 13957808

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Appendix F: Safety equipment requirements for Wardens

The following is a list of tools and safety equipment to be provided to the Wardens for use in bushfire emergencies and evacuations:

- Drinking water containers;
- Torch with spare batteries;
- A copy of the emergency procedures (Appendix C).

Warden Identification:

Chief Warden and Deputy Chief Warden – White helmet, cap or hat and vest with the marking 'Chief Warden'.

Area Warden – Yellow helmet, cap or hat and vest with the marking 'Warden'.

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Appendix G: Document distribution

A copy of the plan is to be located in a prominent position within every residential care facility and in the RACF office. All members of the Emergency Control Organisation (ECO) are to have a personal copy.

Copies should also to be sent to, and held by the following authorities:

- Gordon Police Station;
- Fire and Rescue NSW Gordon;
- NSW Rural Fire Service - Hornsby District Fire Control Centre;
- Local Emergency Management Committee (c/- Ku-ring-gai Council)

Amendments made after annual reviews are also to be disseminated to the aforementioned organisations.

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Appendix H: Example refuge / evacuation check in / out form

Name	Time in	Age of Resident	Medical Requirements	Time out	Proposed Destination after Emergency

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HEAD OFFICE
Suite 4, Level 1
2-4 Merton Street
Sutherland NSW 2232
T 02 8536 8600
F 02 9542 5622

SYDNEY
Level 6
299 Sussex Street
Sydney NSW 2000
T 02 8536 8650
F 02 9264 0717

ST GEORGES BASIN
8/128 Island Point Road
St Georges Basin NSW 2540
T 02 4443 5555
F 02 4443 6655

CANBERRA
Level 2
11 London Circuit
Canberra ACT 2601
T 02 6103 0145
F 02 6103 0148

NEWCASTLE
Suites 28 & 29, Level 7
19 Bolton Street
Newcastle NSW 2300
T 02 4910 0125
F 02 4910 0126

NAROOMA
5/20 Canty Street
Narooma NSW 2546
T 02 4476 1151
F 02 4476 1161

COFFS HARBOUR
35 Orlando Street
Coffs Harbour Jetty NSW 2450
T 02 6651 5484
F 02 6651 6890

ARMIDALE
92 Taylor Street
Armidale NSW 2350
T 02 8081 2681
F 02 6772 1279

MUDGEE
Unit 1, Level 1
79 Market Street
Mudgee NSW 2850
T 02 4302 1230
F 02 6372 9230

PERTH
Suite 1 & 2
49 Ord Street
West Perth WA 6005
T 08 9227 1070
F 08 9322 1358

WOLLONGONG
Suite 204, Level 2
62 Moore Street
Austinmer NSW 2515
T 02 4201 2200
F 02 4268 4361

GOSFORD
Suite 5, Baker One
1-5 Baker Street
Gosford NSW 2250
T 02 4302 1220
F 02 4322 2897

DARWIN
16/56 Marina Boulevard
Cullen Bay NT 0820
T 08 8989 5601
F 08 8941 1220

BRISBANE
Suite 1 Level 3
471 Adelaide Street
Brisbane QLD 4000
T 07 3503 7191
F 07 3854 0310

1300 646 131
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