



ACT Rural Fire Service
Standard Operating Procedure 1.13
Permits To Burn

1.13
Administrative
Management

Purpose

To outline procedures in the issuing/processing of *Permits to Burn* by the ACT Rural Fire Service (Service) for areas of the ACT under the responsibility of the Service.

A permit is required under the *Emergencies Act 2004* to light and maintain any fire during the declared bushfire danger period within the ACT. All Permit holders must adhere to the conditions outlined on the permit as issued by the Service.

Requests for *Permits to Burn* are to be referred to the Rural Liaison Officer or to the Operations Section of the Service.

Permits to Burn will be processed with the minimum of delay, however sufficient time for pre-planning and the application process prior to the planned burn is recommended to allow time for inspection, if required, and to take advantage, or defer the activity, according to weather conditions. As a minimum the Service require 5 working days to process a request for a *Permit to Burn*

The Chief Officer will appoint Permit Issuing Officers (PIOs).

The Chief Officer, PIO or the RFS Duty Officer (RFS DO) may at any time, revoke a *Permit to Burn*, for any reason. All current *Permits to Burn* are revoked upon the declaration of a Total Fire Ban for the period of the Total Fire Ban.

All current *Permits to Burn* are suspended if the actual FDI from the Bureau of Meteorology for any area of the ACT reaches Very High (FDI 25) or greater, and for the duration of any day the forecast FDI is greater than 25 during the 24 hour period. This shall be written as a condition on all issued *Permits to Burn*.

Operating Procedure

The following is to occur upon application for a *Permit to Burn*

1. A PIO will process each request for a *Permit to Burn*.
 - A PIO is to be designated as an authorised **Inspector** under the *Emergencies Act 2004* and hold the delegation to approve Permits under section 124 *Emergencies Act 2004*
 - A PIO will not issue a *Permit to Burn* on property owned, leased or managed by themselves or immediate family members, or property managed by his/her employer.
2. The PIO is to reference SOP 1.20 (Hazard Reduction Burn Plans) to determine if a burn plan is required. If required they must review the burn plan as part of the permit application process.



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3. The PIO will, if required, arrange for a site inspection. The following must be considered when deciding whether or not an inspection is required.
 - Risk to assets (Buildings, Fences etc)
 - Forecast fire weather
 - Current fire weather
 - Current fire activity
 - Location of burn, with regard to adjoining exposures.
 - Size of burn
 - Resources required to control the burn
 - Expected duration of burn
 - Type, amount and distribution of fuel involved
 - Proposed control lines
 - RFS Brigade involvement
4. The PIO will determine appropriate specific conditions necessary to ensure all safety parameters apply, prior to the issue of the *Permit to Burn* as required.
5. The PIO shall provide the applicant with the completed *Permit to Burn*, and ensure applicant is fully aware of all conditions of the *Permit to Burn*.
6. A *Permit to Burn* issued to a Rural Landholder must be site specific and limited to 14 days. If this expires without the activity being completed, a new application and *Permit to Burn* is required.
7. The Chief Officer can issue a *Permit to Burn* to an ACT Government Agency for multiple sites and an extended duration.
8. Notification of a *Permit to Burn* is to be given by the PIO to the ESA Communications Centre, ESA Media Duty Officer, EPA Duty Officer, ACT Fire Brigade and RFS DO at all times and to the adjacent NSW Rural Fire Service District/Zone Offices as appropriate.
9. Details of the *Permit to Burn* are to be written on the appropriate board within the RFS HQ at the first available opportunity during work hours by the PIO
10. Permit details are then to be entered into the Permit Database by the PIO.
11. All paperwork associated with the burn, including a copy of the *Permit to Burn* is to be placed into the 'Permits Issued' file, aligned to the fire season of issue, by the PIO.



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12. Issued Permit to Burn activities require post burning reports in accordance with Legislation and PIO's are authorised and required to collect the relevant data to meet these reporting requirements.

Maintained By: Manager, Operations

Approved By: Andrew Stark

Position: Chief Officer RFS

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Andrew Stark', written over a light green rectangular background.

Date: 15/02/2011

Cross Reference SOP/s: SOP 1.12 Actions upon declaration of total fire ban

Amendments: Replaces SOP1.13 Processing Permits to Burn