

**ACT Fire & Rescue**  
**Bushfire & Storm**  
**Enhanced Crewing Policy**  
Policy number OP – 07



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**1. AIM**

This Policy provides guidance in relation to the enhanced crewing of operational appliances and the Communication Centre (ComCen) to provide surge capacity during the Declared Bushfire Season and whenever a requirement for additional crewed appliances and/or ComCen operators can be anticipated.

**2. LEGISLATION**

This Policy is pursuant to *Emergencies Act 2004* and the *Emergencies (Concept of operations for bush and grass fires in the ACT) Commissioner's Guidelines 2017*.

**3. APPLICATION**

The Chief Officer shall ensure that members of ACT Fire & Rescue (ACTF&R) are deployed in such a manner as to provide effective and efficient services to the ACT community.

This Policy applies to the following members:

All members

#### 4. POLICY

##### Declared Bushfire Season

The ACTF&R Operations Superintendent (business days) or On-call Superintendent (at other times) will determine the enhanced crewing stand-up arrangements for days during the declared bushfire season based on the Bureau of Meteorology's (BOM) Fire Danger Indices relevant to the ACTF&R's legislative responsibilities as per the *Emergencies Act 2004*.

Upon receipt of the BOM afternoon fire weather forecast in ComCen the Operational or On-call Superintendent is to be advised by phone of the next day's fire weather forecast.

While the Forest Fire Danger Index is an important factor in determining the stand-up level, other factors are also taken into account. The relevant Superintendent will liaise with the ACT Rural Fire Service to confirm the stand-up level for the next day.

Forest FDI	Grassland FDI	Fire Danger Rating	Indicative Stand-up level
0 – 11	0 - 11	Low – Moderate	Level 1
12 - 24	12 – 24	High	Level 2
25 – 49	24 – 49	Very High	Level 3
50 – 74	50 – 100	Severe	Level 4
75 – 100	101 – 150	Extreme	Level 5
100+	150+	Catastrophic	

Resources may be staged either North or South or a combination of both depending on the risk to the ACT.

The following table will be used as a reference to determine the minimum number of resources stood-up. The relevant Operational Commander has the discretion to bring ComCen operators in earlier if either ACTF&R or ACT Rural Fire Service resources create additional activity and workload for the ComCen.

Stand-up level	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Times	NA	NA	1200 – 1800 hours	1000 – 1900 hours	1000 – 2000 hours
Crewing	Tankers and CAFS units cross crewed	Tankers and CAFS units cross crewed	4 Tankers and 4 CAFS units crewed with dedicated staff*	4 Tankers and 4 CAFS units crewed with dedicated staff*	4 Tankers and 4 CAFS units crewed with dedicated staff*
Additional ComCen staffing	Normal staffing	Normal staffing	1 operator	2 operators	2 operators

\* CAFS units (Large and Medium) and Tankers (Medium and Light Units) are to be staffed with Station Officer and 4 Firefighters across the two appliances. CAFS units will be staffed with a combination of a Station Officer and 3 Firefighters who are CAFS Level 2 qualified and another Firefighter across the 2 appliances.

In the case of staff shortages impacting on the ability to crew all additional appliances (i.e. all efforts to fill these positions, including the use of day workers have been exhausted), priority will be given to staffing the CAFS units. If all additional appliances cannot be staffed, existing cross crewing arrangements will still apply.

Throughout the declared bushfire season, an additional operator will be rostered in the ComCen from half an hour before until half an hour after any ACTF&R or ACTRFS tanker or tower stand-up times. When the forecast FDI is above 50, this will be increased to two additional operators. Where an Incident Management Team (IMT) is stood-up on high-risk bushfire days, consideration will be given to rostering an additional ComCen operator to support the IMT.

Stand-up arrangements for weekends and/or public holidays may be determined up to three days in advance following receipt of the afternoon’s Fire Weather Forecast.

If the morning weather forecast changes the stand-up arrangements from the previous afternoon’s forecast, the ComCen Station Officer will contact the Operations or On-call Superintendent at 08:00 hours to advise of the changed forecast. The relevant Superintendent may increase or decrease the resource stand-up levels where a significant change in the forecast fire weather has occurred overnight.

The Chief Officer may stand-up additional resources as necessary where the Fire Danger or risks dictate. This may include, but is not limited to additional crews, additional ComCen operators, and command, control and co-ordination staff as required.

Once the stand-up arrangements are determined the ComCen Station Officer will notify all stations, the ACT RFS Duty Officer and the Parks & Conservation Duty Officer and in consultation with the Operational Commanders will make the necessary arrangements for appliances to be crewed.

**Planned Burns**

When sufficient notification of planned prescribed burns is available, one additional operator is to be rostered in ComCen for the period of the scheduled hazard reduction activity.

**Storm and Flood Events**

When practical and after consultation between the ComCen Station Officer and the relevant Operational Commander, an additional operator may be rostered if there is a high likelihood of a severe storm and/or wind event occurring.

Where the ACT State Emergency Service has an Incident Management Team stood-up for a severe weather event an additional operator will be rostered in the ComCen.

**Policy Data**

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