

Planning for Risk and Uncertainty: preliminary results

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Talk Outline:

1. Bushfire Aware Planning
2. Focus groups – preliminary results
3. Next steps

- Identifying high risk zones and management treatments
- Site specific requirements for buildings
- Settlement and subdivision design to minimise risk and support fire fighting operations
- Strategic location of settlements and subdivisions
- Minimising peri-urban areas
- Social planning





Mogo, Eurobodalla and Shoalhaven Shires,
NSW

Litchfield Shire, Northern Territory



Molonglo, Australian Capital Territory

Mornington Peninsula, Victoria



1. What are we doing well?

Risk perceptions

- Fire presence (NT); greater since 2003 (ACT); agreed constraint and hazard (Vic)

Law and policy

- Prescribed burning authority (NT); clear guidelines and prescriptions (NSW, ACT); one land owner (ACT); strategic guidance (Vic); statutory mechanism (Vic)

Governance, collaboration

- Collaboration within and between govt agencies (NT, ACT); aligning with weeds (NT); decentralisation of RFS (NSW); Advisory Councils (ACT, NSW); mapping verified by partner agencies, and collaboration (Vic); fireys and planners collaborating (Vic); innovation, motivation (Vic)

1. What are we doing well, con'd

Outcomes, treatments

- Fire breaks (NT); DA assessments (NSW); developers responsible for APZs (NSW)

Engagement with communities

- Understanding responsibility (NT); very engaged (ACT)

Data, research, expertise

- Mapping (NSW, Vic); using and updating research (ACT); better use of science (Vic); agency expertise (Vic)

Ecological priorities

- Better match with conservation (Vic, ACT); weeds match (NT); better environmental assessment of prescribed burning (NSW); integrated approach (ACT)

2. What are we NOT doing well?

Risk perceptions

- Slow to acknowledge increasing risk and existing economic risk (NT); distracted by storm surges and flooding (NT); perceived risk versus actual risk (Vic); fragmented approach, focus on planning instead of hazard (Vic); focus on planning-development (ACT)

Law and policy

- Arson (NT); conflicting legislation (NSW); changing legislation (NSW); strategic advice too generic (NSW); cumulative impacts not addressed (NSW); non-land use planning needs not included (Vic)

Governance, collaboration

- Local politics undoes cooperation (NSW); cross-jurisdictional cooperation (ACT)

2. What are we NOT doing well, con'd

Outcomes, treatments

- Fire access and arson (NT); legacy development (NSW, ACT); construction costs (NSW); funding schemes for prescribed burning (NSW); time and space limitations (Vic)

Engagement with communities and stakeholders

- Arson (NT); politically unpopular (NT); pressure from developers (NT, NSW); lifestyle expectations (NSW); leasehold planning (ACT); generic message, 'cry wolf' (Vic); finger pointing, perception & action (Vic); consultation fatigue (Vic)

Data, research, expertise

- Collecting and analysing data (NT)

Ecological priorities

- Weeds (NT); soil erosion and fire breaks (NT); cumulative impacts (NSW); prescribed burning funding regime (NSW)

3. Why? Limitations, barriers, conflicts

Risk perceptions; changing risk

- Lack of community understanding (NSW) needs social-cultural change (Vic); flood v fire risk (NSW); changing fuels (NT); peri-urban complexity (NT); population increases, especially summer holidays (Vic)

Law and policy

- conflicting legislation (NT, NSW, ACT); guidelines not specific (NT); prescribed burning regulation complicated (NSW); need more complimentary legislation (Vic)

Governance, collaboration

- Local govt responsible (NT); state v local responsibility (Vic); planning scope (NT)

3. Why? Limitations, barriers, conflicts, con'd

Outcomes, treatments

- Management objectives change, unclear (NT, ACT); new info changes scenario (ACT); assessed on prescription not broader scale (NSW); prescription not flexible enough (NSW); legacy development (NSW); built environment focus, not land use (Vic);

Engagement with communities and stakeholders

- Lack of compliance (ACT, NSW, Vic); community values and expectations (ACT, NSW); third party appeal rights (ACT)

Data, research, expertise

- Need new technology (NT); fire and ecology evidence (ACT); modelling limitations (NSW); current practice reviews (Vic)

Topography, ecology

- Dry/ wet land, dry/wet seasons (NT); land scarcity (ACT, NSW)

Q4: Is this a problem? Do we need to better integrate bushfire risk into land use planning?

- Yes: change, complexity, uncertainty, risk

Q5: Is climate change an influence in your work?

- Storm surges (NT); flooding (NT, NSW)
- Just guidelines, working groups etc (NT, ACT); current processes can manage increased risk (NSW, Vic)
- Mitigation window closing (NT); merging of fire seasons (NT); additional funding sources (NSW)
- Challenges the aligning of issues. eg: aquifer (NT); conservation (ACT); ponds (ACT)
- Community education challenges (NSW, Vic)
- Lack of evidence, hard to predict (ACT); research slow (NSW)

Q6: What would you like to see coming out of this work?

- Fire as a constraint (NT); weeds, fire & planning links (NT)
- More shared responsibility (NT); legislation integration (NSW)
- More community awareness (ACT)
- Fire breaks included in development (NT); higher construction standards (ACT); fire risk treated like flood risk (NSW); streamlined prescribed burning approaches (NSW)
- More funds (NT)
- GIS modelling tool for trade-offs and objectives (ACT); best practice examples (ACT, Vic, NSW); approaches that consider full cost of development (ACT); spatial modelling (NSW); more free data (NSW)



Final Report structure

Intro: risk and uncertainty, research and action

- Strategy, plan and implementation
- Environmental Consciousness
- Shared Responsibility and Adaptive Governance
- Bushfires, coasts and climate change



Education Module

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