



## BUSHFIRE POLICY FRAMEWORK

If you are proposing to build a single house or ancillary dwelling (e.g. granny flat) on a site that is designated as bush fire prone on the [Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas](#), and your property is covered by a local planning scheme and equal to or greater than 1,100m<sup>2</sup>; you will be required to undertake a BAL assessment before you can commence development.

### DO I NEED A BAL ASSESSMENT AND HOW DO I FIND OUT IF MY PROPERTY IS DESIGNATED AS BUSH FIRE PRONE?

A Bush Fire Attack Level (BAL) assessment is an assessment set out in *Australian Standard 3959 Construction of Buildings in Bush Fire-Prone Areas* (AS 3959) which determines the BAL rating for a proposed building.

A BAL is one way of determining a proposed building's potential for bush fire exposure and is used to establish the construction requirements you can use to improve the protection of your building from bush fire attack.

BAL ratings include:

#### **BAL-LOW**

If the BAL assessment indicates that the development is rated BAL-LOW then there are no further bush fire planning or building requirements.

#### **BAL-12.5 to BAL-29**

If the rating is between BAL-12.5 and BAL-29 you will need to build your house to the corresponding standard set out in the Building Code of Australia.

#### **BAL-40 or BAL-Flame Zone**

If the rating is BAL-40 or BAL-Flame Zone (BAL-FZ) then you will need to lodge a development application with your local government. The development application will need to address the bush fire protection criteria in the *Guidelines for Planning in Bush Fire Prone Areas* with the aim of achieving BAL-29 or less for the site. You will then need to build to the corresponding construction standard set out in the Building Code of Australia.

### DO I NEED A BAL ASSESSMENT?

You can use the [BAL Assessment Tool](#) to determine if you need a BAL assessment. Alternatively, you can follow these three easy steps to determine if you need to undertake a BAL assessment for planning purposes:

1. check to see if your property is located in a designated bush fire prone area;
2. determine if the lot size is 1,100m<sup>2</sup> or greater; and
3. check to see if your property is located in an area covered by a local planning scheme.

#### **FACT SHEET**

Building a house in or near a city or town

#### STEP 1: CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR PROPERTY IS LOCATED IN A DESIGNATED BUSHFIRE PRONE AREA

The bush fire planning requirements only apply to properties in designated bush fire prone areas.

You should check if your property is located within a designated bush fire prone area by finding your property on the [Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas](#). If any section of your property is shaded pink on the map then it is designated as being bush fire prone.

If your property has been designated bush fire prone for 4 months or more you may be required to undertake a BAL assessment. You will be able to find the designation date by typing in your address in the [Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas](#).

#### STEP 2: DETERMINE IF THE LOT SIZE IS 1,100M<sup>2</sup> OR GREATER

The bush fire planning requirements only apply if you are proposing to build a single house or ancillary dwelling on a lot 1,100m<sup>2</sup> or greater. You should check your Certificate of Title to confirm the size of your property.

If your property is in a bush fire prone area and equal to or greater than 1,100m<sup>2</sup>, the requirement to undertake a BAL assessment may apply to you.

However, even if your property is less than 1,100m<sup>2</sup>, you may still need a BAL assessment or have other bush fire building requirements under the Building Code of Australia. You can find further information on building in bush fire prone areas by visiting the Building Commission's website [www.bca.vic.gov.au/bushfire](#).

#### STEP 3: CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR PROPERTY IS LOCATED IN AN AREA COVERED BY A LOCAL PLANNING SCHEME

The bush fire planning requirements only apply to properties which are covered by a local planning scheme.

You should check with your local government to find out if your property is covered by a local planning scheme.

If your property is in a bush fire prone area, equal to or greater than 1,100m<sup>2</sup> and covered by a local planning scheme, the requirement to undertake a BAL assessment will apply to you.

However, even if your property is not covered by a local planning scheme, you may still need a BAL assessment or have other bush fire building requirements under the Building Code of Australia. You can find further information on building in bush fire prone areas by visiting the Building Commission's website [www.bca.vic.gov.au/bushfire](#).

## BALANCE MEN OPTION

If a BAL Contour Map already exists for your lot, you

## FURTHER INFORMATION

You can find further information about when a BAL assessment is required by visiting the Department of Planning's website [www.dpp.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpp.qld.gov.au)

You can also find information on building in bush prone areas by visiting the Building Commission's website [www.bcm.qld.gov.au](http://www.bcm.qld.gov.au) or by contacting your local government.

