



Cherbourg Bushfire Support Operations Manual

Version 1.0

Dated: March 2020

This Manual has been developed to provide guidance to the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council and the Cherbourg Local Disaster Management Group on providing support to Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) in bushfire management and response.

QFES is the Lead Agency for bushfire and the Cherbourg LDMG or Council will provide support to QFES as required. This manual details what support and how it may be provided.



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Authority to Plan

This Bushfire Support Operations Manual has been prepared by the Cherbourg Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) under the provisions of Section 57(1) of the Disaster Management Act 2003.

Approval

The preparation of this manual has been undertaken in accordance with the Disaster Management Act 2003, to provide for any response by the Local Disaster Management Group to support Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) for the management of bushfires in the Cherbourg local government area.

The Bushfire Support Operations Manual is endorsed for distribution by the Local Disaster Management Group.

Cr. Elvie Sandow
Chair
Local Disaster Management Group

Date:.....

Amendments and Review

This manual will be reviewed at least annually as required by *Section 59 of the Disaster Management Act 2003*, with relevant amendments made and distributed.

Approved amendments to the manual will be circulated as per the distribution and contacts lists, which are maintained by the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council on behalf of the Local Disaster Management Group.

Document Control

The controller of the document is the Cherbourg Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC). Any proposed amendments to this manual should be forwarded in writing to:

Cherbourg Local Disaster Coordinator, Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council, 22 Barambah Avenue, Cherbourg Qld 4605

The LDC may approve inconsequential amendments to this document. Any changes to the intent of the document must be approved and endorsed by the Local Disaster Management Group.

Amendment Register

Amendment		Manual Updated	
Version	Issue Date	Author	Reason for Change
1.0	February, 2013		Original Document
2.0	March 2020	Warren Bridson Consulting	Redeveloped to contemporary practices and procedures in providing support to a Lead Agency
	January 2023		Reviewed

Distribution

This manual is not publicly available, and is not for distribution and/or release to persons or agencies other than those identified in the Cherbourg Local Disaster Management Plan.

1. Governance

1.1. Overview

The bushfire risk to Cherbourg is moderate with risks coming from grass fires in and immediately around the town and bushfire in the adjacent forestry. Grass fires are generally not a high risk to the community although some property damage could occur.

1.2. Purpose

The purpose of this Bushfire Support Operations Manual is to define the role of the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council in providing support to QFES with the response to bushfires. The manual also details the role that the LDMG may have in coordinating assistance that has been requested by QFES for their response to bushfires.

1.3. Scope

This manual applies in the circumstances where the Council, elements of the Local Disaster Management Group and/or some functions of the Local Disaster Management Plan may be activated to provide support to QFES in the management of bushfires in the Cherbourg Local Government Area.

1.4. Bushfire Risks

The bushfire risk in the adjacent forestry could pose a threat to Cherbourg residents. The greatest threat arises when a large forestry fire is burning in extreme conditions and when wind direction is generally from the south. In such conditions two particular threats to Cherbourg could arise. They are:

- Smoke hazard which may cause respiratory problems for residents
- Ember attack – where burning embers are blown from the fire front. Such burning embers can move several kilometres in front of the forest fire and cause fires in vulnerable properties.

1.5. Lead Agency - Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

The Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), is the lead response agency. Council's role is to provide support to QFES. The Local Disaster Management Group's role is to coordinate member agencies' support to the QFES if the event warrants coordination from the Local Disaster Coordination Centre.

1.6. Activation

This Bushfire Support Operations Manual may be activated by the Local Disaster Coordinator on advice received from QFES that they require support from Council or coordinated assistance from the Local Disaster Management Group.

This manual may be activated without convening the Local Disaster Management Group and establishing the Local Disaster Coordination Centre if supporting the QFES can be provided using usual communications and work practices by Council and other agencies that may provide assistance.

If the bushfire is likely to have consequences on the community, the LDC may choose to activate the LDMG and the LDCC to coordinate disaster operations. Liaison between the LDCC and the QFES Incident Control Centre should be established and maintained throughout the event.

If necessary, QFES will appoint a Liaison Officer to the LDCC to assist in coordination.

2. Bushfire Mitigation and Response in Cherbourg

2.1. QFES Responsibilities

The QFES Area Director (Rural Fire Service), Kingaroy is a member of the Cherbourg LDMG and is responsible for coordination the bushfire response effort with the LDMG and LDCC (If activated).

Mitigating bushfire in the Cherbourg Local Government area is the responsibility of QFES and will normally be conducted on an annual basis by QFES from Cherbourg and Murgon. The Council will work closely with QFES on the bushfire mitigation program for the Cherbourg area to minimise bushfire and grassfire risk.

The QFES Area Commander, Kingaroy is a member of the Cherbourg LDMG and is responsible for coordinating the bushfire response effort with the LDMG and LDCC (if activated). This includes the provision of warnings and public information on QFES operations.

QFES is also responsible for providing advice to the LMDG on current bushfire threats in the Cherbourg Local Government area to enable adequate preparation.

2.2. Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

Queensland Parks and Wildlife provide advice and support to the Cherbourg LDMG as necessary for matters relating to bushfires in the Wondai State Forest.

Queensland Parks and Wildlife have custodial responsibilities of the Wondai State Forest and work in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry through Forest Products Queensland for bushfire mitigation in the Wondai State Forest.

All requests from QPWS for Council support in response to bushfire on their land tenures are to follow the process detailed for supporting the QFES.

2.3. Local Disaster Management Group Involvement

The Cherbourg LDMG is responsible for managing the community consequences that may arise from bushfires, for providing public information regarding bushfires and for providing support to QFES on request to assist in bushfire response operations.

In addition to specific agency assistance being provided to QFES, components of the Local Disaster Management Plan may be activated to support QFES operations.

This may include the need for evacuations and the establishment of evacuation centres with associated personal services being provided.

Activation of the Local Disaster Management Group will be at the request of the QFES Incident Controller or as determined by Local Disaster Management Group Chair or Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC).

2.4. LDC Communications with QFES

QFES should notify the LDC upon becoming aware of a major or potential major fire event that may affect the Cherbourg Community so that appropriate communication and liaison links between QFES and the Council are established.

2.5. Council Support

Requests for Council support will be directed to the Local Disaster Coordinator. The Local Disaster Coordinator will task the appropriate Council Officers to provide support to QFES. This may be achieved using existing internal council arrangements or by activating the LDMG.

3. Warnings

3.1. Fire Weather Warnings

The Bureau of Meteorology issue Fire Weather Warnings when weather conditions are conducive to the spread of dangerous bushfires. Warnings are generally issued within 24 hours of the potential onset of hazardous conditions. QFES determine Fire Danger Ratings. In Queensland, fire agencies declare fire bans based on a range of criteria including forecast weather provided by the Bureau.

3.2. Community Messaging

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services use the three level alert message approaches to provide information to the community. This approach is used nationally and comprises the following levels:

- **Advice Message** - A Fire or other emergency has started in the area however there is no immediate threat.
- **Watch and Act Message** - There is a heightened level of threat, you need to be aware of your situation and take action to be prepared and protect yourself and your family.
- **Emergency Warning** - You are in danger and need to take immediate action recommended by the Fire Service.

QFES is responsible for issuing bushfire warnings to the public and public information about QFES operations. The LDC is responsible for ensuring bushfire warnings are provided to Cherbourg residents and to assist residents in complying with any actions required.

QFES have authority to make direct requests for Emergency Alert campaigns if necessary. If QFES initiate an Emergency Alert for any part of the Cherbourg Local Government area they are to advise the LDC.

3.3. Warning Delivery

There are a number of products or tools available to the QFES to enable effective and timely messaging to the community. They may be used individually or in conjunction with each other, dependent on the situation and available resources.

	Advice	Watch & Act	Emergency Warning
Door knocking	Optional	Yes	Yes
Road signs	Yes	Yes	Yes
Community meeting	Yes	Optional	No
TV & Radio	Yes	Yes	Yes
Websites / Social Media	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emergency Alert	Optional	Optional	Yes
SEWS (with Emergency Alert, TV, & Radio)	No	No	Yes

4. Evacuations

4.1. Overview

In very extreme cases it may be necessary to evacuate parts or all of Cherbourg although a full scale evacuation of Cherbourg due to bushfire is not considered likely. It may however be necessary to evacuate some people, particularly those with severe respiratory problems.

4.2. Evacuation Procedures

The Queensland Police Service is responsible for the decision to evacuate residents affected by or likely to be affected by a bushfire. This decision is made in consultation with the QFES Forward Commander. Council may provide support to QPS and QFES by providing evacuation centres in accordance with the procedures detailed in the **Cherbourg Evacuation and Evacuation Centre Management Operations Manual**.

4.3. Neighbourhood Safer Places

The Cherbourg LDMG has identified 2 locations as Neighbourhood Safer Places as a place where community members can go to if their houses are threatened by bushfire.

- The Sports Complex (Collins Rd, Cherbourg).
- Indigenous Knowledge Centre (Cnr Barambah and Broadway St, Cherbourg).

