



Guidelines for the Management of Forestry Industry Brigade Operations

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1 OBJECTIVE

This guideline provides the framework for Forestry Industry Brigade operations. The guideline outlines the principles for efficient and effective Forestry Industry Brigade operations and links these to general CFA operations policy and procedures. This guideline is intended to be used by forestry industry brigade personnel and their owners, and by volunteer and career CFA personnel.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Legislative Framework

Section 20 of the Country Fire Authority Act (1958) imposes the duty for prevention and suppression of fires in the Country Area of Victoria on the CFA. Section 23AA of the CFA Act enables the Authority to form industry brigades for specific industries.

The State Disaster Response Plan (DISPLAN) also defines a range of incidents for which the CFA is the responsible combat authority.

Sections 16 and 16A of the Emergency Management Act 1986 enable the Chief Officers of the fire services to agree to one officer being appointed to have overall control of response activities at a particular incident.

2.2 CFA Policy

This guideline should be read in conjunction with CFA policy. Particular policies that apply to Forestry Industry Brigades include:

CS05005	Advice to the Community Before & during Wildfire.
OP.07	Hire of heavy or supplementary equipment.
FM.03	Fire investigation.
OP-B	Evacuation During Wildfires
OP-16	Class A Foam, Wetting Agent & Agricultural Land
P.A. 05007	Procedure: Dealing with the Media
P.A. 05008	Media Policy
HR52	CFA Occupational Health and Safety
OP08003	Chief Officers SO and SOP's

2.3 Chief Officer's Standing Orders

This guideline should be read in conjunction with the Chief Officer's Standing Orders which specify certain requirements that must be met for certain activities and situations.

Chief Officer's Standing Orders that apply particularly to Forestry Industry Brigades include the following and any future direct or associated replacements:

1.00	Chief Officer's Standing Order and SOP's
2.00	Fire Brigades – Structure and Management
4.00	Forestry Industry Brigades
6.00	Training and Competence
8.00	Chain of Command

9.00	Management of Fires and Incidents
11.00	Health and Safety
13.00	Aircraft Operations
14.00	Post Incident Actions
15.00	Role and Structure of fire Brigades Groups.
16.00	Environmental Care

2.4 Standard Operating Procedures

Standard Operating Procedures specify the way in which Officers should carry out certain tasks and responsibilities. Standard Operating Procedures may be prescribed at State, Regional, Group or Brigade level.

State Standard Operating Procedures that apply particularly to Forestry Industry Brigades include the following and any future direct or associated replacements:

2.01	Responsibilities of Brigade Officers
4.01	Forestry Industry Brigades
5.01	Testing of Firefighting Equipment
5.03	Protective Equipment
8.00	Chain of Command
9.00	Management of Fires and Incidents (most sections)
11.00	Health and Safety
13.00	Aircraft Operations
14.00	Post Incident Actions
15.00	Role and Structure of Fire Brigade Groups

2.5 Operations Checklists

The Operations Checklists is a compilation of quick reference guides that may be used by members to assist with the conduct of day-to-day operations. They support and in some instances summarise, the Chief Officer's Standing Orders, the Chief Officer's Standard Operating Procedures, the AIIMS Manual and CFA training manuals. They are a guide for Action and do not replace Policy, Standing Orders or Standard Operating Procedures which FIBs need to be aware of. Adopting a Safety First approach at each incident is fundamental in implementing the guidance provided by these check lists.

3 PREPAREDNESS

3.1 Group and FIB relationship

Forestry Industry Brigades are registered as part of a CFA Group which is often referred to as their “Home Group” even though the FIB has estate potentially spread across multiple Group areas.

As with all CFA brigades, FIB’s should interact with their Home Group, informing them when responding to incidents (unless Cat 1 area) regardless of whether it is in the Home Group area or further away. This relationship is important to ensure appropriate chain of command and resource management. Group’s need to be aware of brigade strength, availability and any incidents occurring in or around their area. This enables appropriate and timely dispatching of resources and for FIB’s can provide a level of mutual support if an incident occurs when they are committed outside the Home Group area.

The role of the Group is detailed in CFA SOP 15 Role and structure of Groups while CFA SOP 8 Chain of Command provides direction on working with Groups.

3.2 Training and Accreditation

Chief Officer’s Standing Order 6.00 determines certain procedures for the management and recording of training of brigade members. Forestry industry brigade members should be trained and accredited for fire suppression roles under the Public Safety Training Package National Competency Framework.

Brigade members may also be trained and accredited for roles in the AIIMS incident management teams.

Detailed specifications for training of forestry industry brigade members can be found in Appendix 3.

3.3 Availability of Personnel

Before each fire season the plantation owner should consider:

- Availability of staff during and outside working hours.
- Training and accreditation requirements.
- Preparedness of equipment.
- Contact arrangements.
- Arrangements for hire of heavy or supplementary equipment.

Plantation owners are responsible for ensuring that arrangements are made for members of Forestry Industry Brigades to be available for duty at high fire dangers, or when fires are burning or the likelihood of fire is imminent.

3.4 Preparedness of equipment

At all times Forestry industry brigade equipment, including personal protective equipment, must be maintained in operational order (Forestry Industry Brigade Regulation 71(i)).

Tankers, slip-on units and pumps should be equipped with at least the mandatory items in the "Forestry Industry Brigade Equipment Specifications and Guidelines" (refer to Appendix 2).

3.5 Inspection of Forestry Industry Brigades

Under section 29 of the CFA Act, the CFA Regional Operations Manager has a duty to inspect or arrange an inspection of brigades, including forestry industry brigades. This is usually an annual inspection and normally involves equipment and apparatus, records, fire reports and fire management plans (Appendix 1). It is customary to use this opportunity for the Regional staff to meet members of the brigade.

3.6 Forestry Industry Brigade Duty Officer

The forestry industry brigade Captain or Duty Officer shall act for the OIC of the brigade and will maintain preparedness and co-ordinate response to incidents by the forestry industry brigade. Duties may include:

- Transmitting preliminary incident reports and situation reports up the chain of command in accordance with local procedures.
- Notifying the CFA Regional Duty Officer of significant incidents.
- Carrying out harvesting restriction and Total Fire Ban notifications.
- Acting upon resource requests from other brigades and groups, or other plantation owners.
- Stepping up resources to fill "gaps" created when resources are committed to incidents.
- Liaising with adjoining CFA Brigades and Groups, other plantation owners and the CFA Regional Duty Officer as required.

During the Fire Danger Period, the forestry industry brigade duty officer shall be immediately contactable and be able to respond to incidents or attend an established incident control points as required.

3.7 Trigger Points

The plantation owner should determine various trigger points for increasing the preparedness of staff and equipment and introduction of restrictions of harvesting operations as fire danger increases. These trigger points should be documented in the plantation fire management plan (see guidelines in Appendix 1) and should be consistent with actions of other plantation owners and adjoining landholders.

3.8 Fire Weather Forecasts

Fire weather forecasts are provided by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM), and will normally be transmitted to each CFA Regional Headquarters regularly during the Fire Danger Period.

Information related to Fire Danger Index (FDI) can be sourced from the CFA BoM site. As this site has access security, user ID and password can be sourced from your local Regional Headquarters.

Forestry Industry Brigade headquarters may be requested to provide local weather observations from time to time to supplement CFA's weather monitoring network.

3.9 Regional and Group Radio Schedules

Regional radio schedules may be conducted from time to time to disseminate BoM fire weather estimates, storm or wind change warnings; urgent operational information; updates on operational situations. FIB's are encouraged to participate in the Group schedule.

3.10 Spot Weather Forecasts

Spot Fire Weather Forecasts can be provided by BoM for significant incidents. Requests for Spot Weather Forecasts should be made to the relevant CFA Regional Headquarters, or through an Incident Control Centre.

3.11 Radio and EAS Communications

CFA has a number of radio systems including Telstra maintained SMR or Trunk radio, and a CFA narrow band VHF radio system. CFA is developing the capacity to manage the initial dispatch radio traffic across the state. It is envisaged that in the future the majority of brigades will communicate directly with Vicfire via VHF radio during the initial response phase of an incident. (See Appendix 5).

Each CFA Region has allocated to it a main channel for VHF communications as well as a number of "go to" channels. Channel arrangements for routine turn outs and for incident management are contained in the Regional Communications Plan. All radio communications shall be in accordance with the Regional Communications Plan, or with an approved incident communications plan.

Radio traffic at incidents must be kept to a minimum, with due regard for personnel safety and provision of situation reports up the chain of command.

FIBs will be notified by Vic Fire of incidents by EAS pager unless other arrangements are agreed by CFA in consultation with the FIB concerned. EAS Pagers also have the capacity to individual and group page personnel with non emergency messages.

3.12 Aircraft Frequencies

Regional Fire Spotter aircraft generally use the Regional main frequency for routine operations or trunk radio (SMR). For major incidents a separate “**go to**” channel may be nominated by the Regional Headquarters.

Aeronautical frequencies have been allocated by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority for use by fire authorities. The frequencies are primarily for aircraft to aircraft use or for use by specialist aviation personnel.

4 RESPONSE

Upon detection of a fire in or near a plantation, suppression action will be safe, fast, determined and thorough, with the primary objective of controlling the fire in the shortest possible time, to minimise loss and environmental damage.

In achieving the primary objective due regard will be paid to:

- Safety of personnel;
- Protection of members of the community;
- Protection of critical infrastructure and community assets;
- Aggressive first attack on new outbreaks; and
- Protection of conservation and environmental values.

4.1 Safety of Personnel

- Safety of CFA personnel is of primary importance at all times. Actions are to be in accordance with Chief Officer’s Standing Order 11.00 (Health and Safety).
- All personnel, as well as Officers of Brigades and Groups are to ensure that the proper personal protective equipment is used and that safe work practices are used. “*CFA Operations Checklists*” can be used as a guide to appropriate safety gear and actions.
- Particular consideration must be made by all personnel to the “10 standard fire orders” and the “18 Watchout situations”, implemented using the Lookouts, Situational Awareness, Communications, Escape Routes and Safety Zones (LACES) safety process.

All FIB members need to be trained in Forestry fire fighting, and use on the fire ground, CFA’s Safe Person Approach, and Dynamic Risk Assessment (SPADRA) system of operation.

4.2 Protective Equipment

All Forestry Industry Brigade firefighters must wear the following minimum personal protective equipment whilst on the fire line:

- Boots.
- Naphide gloves.
- Goggles.
- Proban treated full cover overalls.
- A safety helmet.

Specifications for this and other personal and protective gear is detailed in "Forestry Industry Brigade Equipment Specifications and Guidelines" (refer to Appendix 2).

All vehicles and plant used by the forestry industry brigade in firefighting must be equipped with sufficient non flammable blanket(s) (usually pure wool) to fully cover the operator, or driver and passengers.

4.3 Weight of Response to Wildfires

Each Group of Brigades will have local Operating Procedures that define the minimum number of appliances that are responded to incidents. FIB's are additional to these and FIB response is expected to relate to the risk for that forest owner and pre planned cooperative response arrangements.

4.4 Notification of a Fire or Incident

Forestry Industry Brigades must notify VicFire using "000" as soon as possible of any new fire event (refer Regulation 71(2)). If discovered by the FIB or the FIB is notified of a fire by the public, additional notifications and escalation will be arranged in accordance with Local Group/Vicfire Operating Procedures and usually actioned by Vic Fire using the Computer Aided Dispatch system.

4.5 Incident Response and Reporting

- Specific details on what FIB's should do when notified of a fire are detailed in Appendix (5). In accordance with SOP 9.04 all brigades including FIB's must inform the Group/Vicfire of what action they are taking with regard the fire (i.e. responding, not available, etc).
- **Further Response:**
Where an FIB is in a command role, escalations can be arranged by request using the radio back to Vic Fire, Incident Control Centre (if activated) or the local Group Base station. If this is not possible it can be arranged by ringing Vic Fire direct on telephone 1800 452 544.

- **Notification of Significant Incidents:**

The following incidents shall be notified to the CFA Regional Duty Officer as soon as practicable:

- Large and going incidents with potential for major loss.
- Fatalities involving fire.
- Special incidents (e.g. involving major road closures, evacuations, aircraft etc).
- Injuries or fatalities to personnel whilst engaged in operations.
- Accidents involving appliances.
- Major damage or theft occurring to CFA property.
- Any incident that may cause more than unusual media interest.

It is the responsibility of the Incident Controller to ensure the Regional Duty Officer is notified in accordance with Regional established procedures.

4.6 The powers of the Chief Officer in fire suppression

Section 33 of the CFA Act 1958 confers the powers of the CFA Chief Officer on any officer in charge of any brigade (including FIB's) or group of brigades who is present at the fire.

Chief Officer's Standing Order SO 9.00 and SOP 9.00 "Management of Fires and Incidents" specifies the circumstances that determine which members of which brigade or group may exercise these powers in the Country Area of Victoria.

The Chief Officer's powers may be exercised if there is a danger of a fire occurring or a fire is burning or has recently been extinguished as follows:

- Within the Country Area of Victoria; or
- Within State Forest, National Park or Protected Public Land where a Forest Officer is not present at the fire or is unable to exercise those powers.

The Chief Officer has the following general powers (refer section 30 of CFA Act):

- To control and direct brigades at the fire.
- To enter any land house building or premises and to use force if necessary if there is a fire, and to direct apparatus as he considers convenient.
- To take any measures which in the circumstances are reasonable, necessary and expedient including that fences, undergrowth, trees, scrub, grass, stubble, weeds or other vegetation can be burnt or otherwise destroyed or removed.
- To cause water to be shut off, or take water from any waterway, lake, lagoon, bore, dam, tank main or pipe or other source of water supply whatsoever.
- To close to traffic any street, road, lane or thoroughfare or any part thereof in the vicinity of the scene of any fire, and direct traffic on any part of that street, road, lane or thoroughfare which is not closed.
- To order to withdraw and (in the event of a failure or a refusal to withdraw)

remove any person who interferes with operations.

- Pull down or shore up any wall or building damaged by fire that may become dangerous to life or property.
- To take other measures for the protection of life and property.

4.7 Command and Control

The forestry industry brigade OIC (Captain) is responsible for the operation and command of the forestry industry brigade in relation to the plantation holdings of the relevant owner or owners (Regulation 71(1)(a)).

All brigades and all officers and members of brigades are under the control of the Chief Officer (s.27 of CFA Act). Standing Order 8.00 determines who shall exercise the powers of the Chief Officer in various delegated situations.

Where a forestry industry brigade attends a fire then the control shall be exercised consistent with the Chief Officer's Standing Orders on "Forestry Industry Brigades" and "Control & Command of Incidents".

4.8 CFA/DSE Heads of Agreement (Partnership and Joint Service Delivery)

Both CFA and DSE have adopted a Heads of Agreement which recognises that one Incident Controller and one AIMS structure will be used to manage all resources deployed to a multi-agency incident. Refer to CFA-DSE Heads of Agreement (Partnership and Joint Service Delivery) document.

4.9 Emergency vehicle response

Drivers of CFA and FIB vehicles must follow the Road Traffic Regulations at all times. Under the Road Traffic Regulations (1988), a fire brigade vehicle being used on urgent fire brigade duty may be exempted from certain requirements under specific conditions.

Only drivers with the necessary skills are permitted to drive a CFA vehicle under emergency condition (Emergency Lights and Siren). Additionally approval on a vehicle by vehicle basis is required from the Chief Officer to equip any FIB vehicle with emergency lights and siren.

The installation and use of emergency lights and siren may be considered for FIB operational vehicles where there is sufficient justification. Written requests and justification are to be submitted to CFA, for the attention of the Manager, Wildfire Policy and Planning.

In all cases, the operation of an emergency vehicle shall be done with due care and attention, and only if it is expedient to do so and in accordance with Chief Officer's Standing Order 12.00 *"Driving of CFA and Brigade Owned vehicles"*, Chief Officer's Standard Operating Procedure 12.04 *"Emergency vehicle response"* and the Victorian Road Safety Regulations 1999. These documents outline the requirements and exemptions for CFA emergency vehicles.

The CFA objective is to limit the number of appliances traveling as emergency vehicles to those considered essential. Chief Officer's Standard Operating Procedure 12.04 *"Emergency Vehicle Response"* defines Codes for the status of responding vehicles and requirements for emergency vehicle response.

4.10 On Arrival at the fire

It is vital that fire ground control is established as soon as possible including nominating an Incident Controller in accordance with CFA SOP 8.02. For CFA fires, the most senior brigade officer in attendance from the primary brigade should assume control of the fire and continue to control all fire response until relieved or the fire is deemed safe.

In the case of plantations, the Incident Controller may be from an FIB. The Incident Controller should be nominated following negotiations between the FIB and the senior brigade member from the primary brigade. A control point must be established as a reference point for all fire ground resources and as the location of the Incident Controller.

Following the CFA SOP 9.28, the Incident Controller should conduct a size up of the fire, ensure an immediate and aggressive initial attack and conduct a Dynamic Risk Assessment. This initial size up should also be communicated back up the chain of command.

Where impractical or unsafe to attack the fire head, alternative fire suppression and asset protection measures should be implemented to limit the fires escalation and losses caused by the fire.

Resources shall then be rearranged and used to the best advantage in preventing the spread of the fire and protecting assets. See Appendix 5 for more detailed response guidelines.

At all times safety of firefighters will be paramount. Using the LACES safety system, the 10 standard orders for rural firefighting and the "18 Watchout situations" shall guide the actions of all personnel on the fire-ground.

It is also important for all personnel to be trained and implement CFA's safe work system, Safe Person Approach Dynamic Risk Assessment (SPADRA).

These two safety systems will reduce the incidence of accidents on the fire ground.

Situation reports up the chain of command shall be made at least once every 30 minutes until the fire is contained. If the assessed task appears to be beyond the capability of the initial attack crew the Incident Controller will review the situation and arrange for extra resources.

4.11 Incident Management Team

FIB members are encouraged to become involved in incident management beyond the fire ground. Input into strategic decision making at incidents by FIB's provides CFA with increase fire behavior information along with improved local intelligence of ownership, rates of spread and potential loss figures.

Activation of an Incident Management Team should be considered if:

- The incident is still "going" 30 minutes after attendance by the first resources, and
- The fire is more than 50 hectares, or
- The incident is sectorised.

Sectorisation of the incident should be considered if:

- There are more than 5 appliances or 30 personnel involved in the incident.
- The whole of the incident cannot be easily seen and resources cannot be directly commanded by one Officer.

The establishment and fire ground command trigger points above are guides. Variation will occur due to environment, weather and local Regional Operational procedures.

4.12 Plantation Technical Advisor role

- This role has been identified as support to the IMT in the Planning Unit to assist with planning and information flow regarding fire fighting involving plantations
- It is recommended that the role be identified and available for deployment on Code Red and Total Fire Ban days as part of the preplanned IMT structure.

4.13 Incident Control

Three levels of Incident Control Centre are recognised:

- **Level 1 Incident – vehicle based ICP (Incident Control Point)**
 - Established in the field (e.g.: a MCV or Field Command Vehicle).
 - The Operations Officer may be a separate person to the Incident Controller if the situation requires.
 - CFA Group/DSE Office to provide support/co-ordination.
- **Level 2 Incident – Identified Level 2 ICC (Incident Control Centre)**
 - May be located at CFA Group, DSE Office, mobile control unit, or a preplanned Level 2 location.
 - Co-ordination of CFA Group resources and other Group activities to be managed by the Group.
- **Level 3 Incident – Pre Planned Level 3 ICC**
 - Located at a preplanned Level 3 ICC.
 - Incident Management Team to include 4 ICS functions.
 - Possible long duration incident.

Incident Control Centres are pre planned with DSE before each fire season and are documented in the Regional Operations Management Plan and wildfire response plans.

4.14 Suppression operations outside the forestry industry brigade area

Under Regulation 71 (i)c a forestry industry brigade may respond to calls to assist other brigades attending fires beyond the plantation holdings. This support to neighboring Brigades, Groups and Regions is encouraged on the understanding that appropriate notification is provided to the Home Group or Region and is at the FIB's discretion.

4.15 Mutual support arrangements

Mutual support arrangements are commonly made between brigades, groups, regions and across interstate borders. Forestry industry brigades are encouraged to make contact with relevant adjoining brigades, groups, CFA Regions and DSE to determine mutual support arrangements in and around plantations.

Details of such arrangements should be discussed first with the CFA Operations Manager or Group Officer to ensure consistency and co-ordination in response.

4.16 Strike teams

Strike Teams consist of four or five vehicles of a similar type (e.g.: all Slip On's) complete with a leader's vehicle and support (e.g. quick fill). Requests for Strike Teams will be directed to the Regional Duty Officer. FIB's may be request to join or form a Strike Team but are not part of the Regional Strike Team roster. A request will include:

- How many appliances?
- 2WD or 4WD?
- Location of staging area?
- Name/call-sign of person to report to?
- Duration of tour of duty

The Region will:

- Initiate actions to ensure an appropriate Strike Team Leader is appointed.
- Provide the Strike Team Leader with a briefing to cover the formation, travel and arrival at the Incident Staging Area.
- Nominate a Regional Staging/Assembly Area and a time for the Strike Team to depart the Staging/Assembly Area.
- Provide a marshalling officer at the Regional Staging/Assembly Area.

Any Brigade or Group participating in a Strike Team will:

- Ensure that personnel are appropriately equipped and qualified.
- Complete the relevant details of the Strike Team Registration form.
- Arrive at the Regional Assembly Area with sufficient time to be briefed before assigned departure time.
- Hand over the Strike Team registration form to the Strike Team Leader at the Regional Assembly Area.
- Notify the Brigade or Group Communications Officer of the names of personnel on the tanker.

Brigades on Rostered Strike Teams should be able to respond within 30 minutes. Strike Team Leaders should preferably travel in a separate radio equipped vehicle. Once assembled the call-sign of the Strike Team Leader will be a unique call-sign tied to the Region (e.g. "Strike Team 10-02" represents strike team number two from Region 10).

Radio traffic will be kept to an absolute minimum. Where possible the Strike Team Leader shall communicate face to face with tanker crews in the Strike Team. Leaders will assemble vehicles at the assembly point, collect (or fill out) the Strike Team Registration forms, and brief Crew Leaders and drivers on the destination, route and convoy procedure.

At the fire or destination the Strike Team Leader shall report to the nominated person, or in his/her absence the Planning Officer, without delay.

4.17 Media Releases

Timely and accurate information on incidents will be provided to the media on all newsworthy incidents in which CFA personnel are, or have been involved or which could impact on the CFA.

For fires and incidents affecting plantations, the plantation owner where practical will be involved when planning the media response. Media releases will be authorised by the Incident Controller or the Regional Duty Officer.

Information should be provided on; where, when, what happened, how did it happen, who did it involve, why did it happen. The owner of the plantation should be available to take part in the media interview if possible.

4.18 Evacuation Policy

In relation to Evacuation, CFA's policy (CS02005) states that ".The Emergency Management Act (1986) and the Country Fire Authority Act (1958) gives residents the right to stay with their homes during a bushfire".

CFA and other emergency service personnel do not have the authority to order the removal of a person from a property if they have pecuniary interest in the relevant land, building or goods within it.

CFA messages in relation to evacuation during wildfire are:

- The decision to leave the area or stay with their property during a wildfire is the responsibility of the individuals concerned and should be made well before the expected arrival of the fire front. The available research suggests that late evacuation by residents is a dangerous option.
- If a resident is away from home at the time of the fire they can legally be prevented from entering the fire area and can be prevented from returning to their residence.
- Victoria Police manages road access in and out of the fire area. While safety is the overriding concern every effort should be made to allow residents and landholders to reach their properties before the fire impacts and as soon as possible after the fire has passed.
- CFA does not encourage any resident to be traveling on the roads when there is a wildfire in the area.

CFA and Victoria Police and other emergency services personnel must be careful not to give advice that is in conflict with this policy. This will only cause greater confusion, possibly contributing to further loss of life and property.

4.19 CFA/DSE Aircraft

Regional fire spotter (single engine) or bird dog (dual engine) aircraft shall be activated at the discretion of the Regional Duty Officer. These aircraft will be crewed by trained Air Observers.

Local guidelines may use some of the following events to trigger activation of fire spotter aircraft:

- it is a Day of Total Fire Ban or;
- fire danger index exceeds a predetermined local trigger point or;
- there are more than 5 fires burning or;
- lightning has occurred or is imminent or;
- patrol of potential arson activity is required.

Prior to the flight, adjoining Regions and DSE will be consulted to determine a suitable flight plan. A flight plan and crew list shall be completed for every flight before take-off, and entered on IMS. Faxed confirmation of all planned flight details must be submitted to the State Aircraft Unit, local DSE Fire District headquarters and CFA Regional headquarters.

4.20 State Aircraft Unit (SAU)

The primary objective of the SAU is a “one stop shop” for all aspects of coordination and management of specialist aviation resources and activities between the CFA and DSE to satisfy fire and land management objectives in Victoria.

The SAU coordinates a large fleet of modern rotary and fixed wing firefighting and support aircraft. The specific details of the number and type of aircraft available may vary from year to year and depending on the fire danger level. .

SAU aircraft can be requested through the CFA Regional Headquarters Duty Officer.

Appropriate management arrangements must be put in place for any aircraft operation. This will include arrangements for the following:

- Refueling.
- Flight planning.
- Flight following.
- Passenger records.
- Radio channels.
- Aircraft officer.
- Air attack supervisor.
- Air observers.
- Restricted airspace.
- Pilot and crew welfare.

The use of Interstate aircraft in Victorian fire suppression should only occur with prior registration of the aircraft with the SAU, incident communications plan and agreement from the CFA Regional Duty Officer or the Incident Controller if the incident is being run by an Incident Management Team.

4.21 Control of road traffic

Under the CFA Act (Section 44A), members may undertake certain actions including controlling traffic at fires. When possible it is preferable to request Victoria Police undertake traffic management at an incident as they are the responsible agency. CFA Standard Operating Procedure 9.30 provides more specific direction on traffic control needs and procedures when Victoria Police are unavailable.

4.22 Accidents and Injuries

Any accident that requires medical treatment or that may result in the person affected missing work, or is a potential "near miss" is to be reported to the Incident Controller and then onto the CFA Regional Duty Officer as soon as practicable.

CFA/DSE Wildfire Incident Report Cards are to be completed whenever a safety issue/near miss /or injury occurs. This then needs to be handed onto the IMT. For issues requiring immediate attention details should be transmitted by radio back to the base station as quickly as possible after the incident has occurred.

The Regional Duty Officer or Incident Controller will initiate an investigation and report for the Operations Manager in accordance with CFA policy.

4.23 Hire of heavy and supplementary equipment for fire suppression

The plantation owner should make pre-season arrangements for the hire and payment of local private plant, and equipment for use on plantation fire suppression. All plant must meet agreed safety standards and operators must have completed Basic Wildfire Awareness or Wildfire Firefighter training, including the maintain safety (SPADRA) module.

FIB's will pay for machinery that they hire and deploy on or near their land to protect their plantations, unless other arrangements are made with the Incident Controller.

Forestry Industry Brigade Officers must obtain the approval of the CFA Regional Duty Officer before requisitioning private equipment for fire suppression at CFA expense. Preference should be given to hiring equipment for which acceptable rates have been arranged prior to the fire season.

Officers of the Forestry Industry Brigade in control of equipment hired on behalf of the CFA shall keep adequate records (hours/kilometres of operation) and/or any fuel, oil or repairs supplied. This should also include water cartage contractors.

CFA policy for the use of heavy or supplementary equipment for fire suppression is documented in Operations policy OP.07.

4.24 Brigade Operating Procedures

FIB's should develop Operating Procedures (OP's) that deal with Brigade level response, turnout and support arrangements, including support with other agencies, crewing arrangements, local communications, safety and training issues.

Care should be taken to ensure that forestry industry brigade plans are consistent with Group and Regional OP's.

5 RECOVERY

5.1 Fire Investigation

The origin and cause of every fire will be investigated. Section 98 of the CFA Act empowers the Chief Officer to search a place where a fire has occurred and exercise relevant powers. Section 98 is delegated to the Regional Operations Manager.

Initial investigations will be the responsibility of the Brigade. If the origin and cause is easily determined then it will be entered onto the fire incident report form.

To facilitate fire investigations, Forestry Industry Brigade personnel involved in first attack shall follow the investigation procedures for traveling to and on arrival at a fire (Operations Checklists page 53). In circumstances where there are items or materials near the origin or burnt by a fire in suspicious situations a trained Fire Investigator will be requested. When a Fire Investigator is requested to attend a scene the Incident Controller must arrange for adequate preservation and security of the scene and continuity of evidence.

A Fire Investigator may request attendance by Police or a forensic scientist. Section 99 empowers the Chief Officer to request the Coroner to inquire into a fire (refer Chief Officer's Standard Operating Procedure 14.01).

All requests for Fire Investigators are through the Regional Duty Officer.

Fire Investigation will be conducted in accordance with the CFA's Chief Officers SOP 14.03 – Fire Investigation, and the Victorian Fire Investigation Policy and Procedures.

Criteria for Fire Investigation:

- Fatal or serious injury
- Significant fire
- Structural, vehicle, marine craft and wildfires where the origin and cause of the fire is undetermined or suspicious in nature.
- CFA property is involved.

5.2 Reports of Significant Fires

The Chief Officer requires a report of any significant fire. A "significant fire" is one where structural damage exceeds one million dollars, or is of an unusual nature of interest to the fire services or Insurance Council of Australia. The Operations Manager and Manager, Community Safety shall be advised as soon as possible of any significant incident and will co-ordinate preparation of a report.

5.3 Fire fatalities

The Regional Duty Officer shall attend and prepare a report (in conjunction with Police and the Coroner) for the Coronial Inquiry. A request for an accredited Fire Investigator

must be made and the State Fire Investigation Coordinator from CFA Headquarters must be advised by telephone or pager.

5.4 Critical Incident Stress Support

Critical Incident Stress teams have been identified to help reduce the impact of a critical event and to accelerate the recovery of people who are suffering normal reactions to abnormal events. This service is available to FIB's.

Activation of CIS Peers or the Chaplain must only be after prior approval from the Regional Duty Officer.

5.5 Operational Analysis or "Debrief"

The aim of operational analysis is to review an incident to identify common themes and take actions to improve deficiencies in performance. FIB's are included in this process.

5.6 Rehabilitation of Damage caused by Fire Suppression

Costs of restoration of damage to plantations such as drainage works on temporary fire lines or repairs to roads to rectify damage caused by fire suppression actions are to be kept to a minimum and may even be avoided through the careful use of equipment during fire suppression.

Costs of rehabilitation shall, unless by other agreement, be the responsibility of the land owner.

Where property is damaged by suppression actions, and the owner of the property has insurance, a claim should be submitted to their insurance company.

5.7 Finance

Unless otherwise determined by the Chief Officer and after consultation with the relevant forestry industry brigade or brigades, each relevant owner or group of owners of a forestry industry brigade shall be responsible for:

- Costs associated with the establishment, maintenance and operation of resources required under the Forestry Industry Brigades Regulations (1998) and other resources acquired by the forestry industry brigade in support of its obligations; and
- The establishment and maintenance of the forestry industry brigade or brigades formed to protect plantations within the designated area; and
- Costs associated with the officer(s) and members of the forestry industry brigade acquiring and maintaining competencies to meet the requirements of the Chief Officer unless otherwise negotiated with CFA.

6 REFERENCES

CFA Act 1958
CFA Regulations 2004
Emergency Management Act 1986
Victorian Road Safety Regulations 1999
CFA policy on evacuation during wildfire and Wildfire risk Management CS 02005
CFA policy on fire investigation FM.03
CFA policy on Charging for uninsured property fires FA 11011
CFA policy on hire of heavy or supplementary equipment OP.07
Chief Officer's Standing Order 4.00 "Forestry Industry Brigades"
Chief Officer's Standing Order 6.00 "Training and Competence"
Chief Officer's Standing Order 8.00 "Chain of Command"
Chief Officer's Standing Order 9.00 "Management of Fires and Incidents"
Chief Officer's Standing Order 11.00 "Health and Safety"
Chief Officer's Standing Order 12.00 "Driving of CFA and Brigade Owned Vehicles"
Chief Officer's Standing Order 14.00 "Post Incident Actions" Chief Officer's Standing
Standard Operating procedure 14.03 "Fire Investigation"
Victorian Fire Investigation Policy and Procedures
CFA Operational Guidelines
CFA Operational Checklists
State Operations Management Plan
Regional Operations Management Plan
Relevant Group and Brigade Operating Procedures
10 Standard Fire Orders
18 Watchout situations