

BEHAVIOUR AND INTENTIONS OF HOUSEHOLDS ON CODE RED DAYS

A REPORT FOR THE COUNTRY FIRE AUTHORITY

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BACKGROUND

The Victorian Government has launched the Bushfire Preparedness Program (BFPP) to strengthen community preparedness and the capacity of emergency services to respond to bushfire events.

A revised set of key messages has been communicated to the Victorian community to inform and raise awareness among the rural and urban populations of bushfire risk, and promote behaviours that will increase the chance of personal bushfire survival.

There is now a strong emphasis on *leaving* instead of *defending* and the Government has launched a new Fire Danger Rating that includes a *Code Red* (catastrophic) Danger Rating which are for days where the community is advised that *leaving early* is the best option.

A key question for fire agencies and other stakeholders is to what extent the 7 February fires, their follow-up in the media and the new key messages have resulted in modified community behaviour and intentions.

CFA requires research to assess the impact of the declaration of 'Code Red-Catastrophic' fire danger rating on people response to the threat of bushfires.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objective of this research is investigate the behaviour and intentions of householders in fire danger districts during Code Red or catastrophic bushfire danger days.

Specifically this includes:

- The extent to which people in the regions designated as 'code red' were aware of the fire danger rating;
- What people in these regions did in response to the code red fire danger rating and the extent to which the declaration affected their decisions/actions;
- The understanding of key messages related to the code red fire danger rating; and
- The extent of differences in responses related to property type, household arrangement, age and gender.

METHODOLOGY

A random telephone survey of 602 households within three Fire Danger Rating districts in Victoria was undertaken between 14 and 21 January 2010. The survey was administered in the days following a code red declaration in those fire danger-rating districts.

It allows CFA to be 95% confident that sample results are within 5% of aggregate population values.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was based on the research issues outlined in the Research Objectives and developed in conjunction with CFA Officers.

The average duration of the questionnaire was 14 minutes

SAMPLING

Strahan Research drew a random sample of households from the following townships within the three following Fire Danger Rating districts:

Wimmera	Northern Country	North East
		Bandiana
		Beechworth
	Boort	Bonnie Doon
	Cobram	Bright
	Cohuna	Chiltern
	Dunolly	Corowa
Dimboola	Elmore	Corryong
Donald	Inglewood	Euroa
Glenorchy	Koondrook	Falls Creek
Halls Gap	Kyabram	Glenrowan
Horsham	Mitiamo	Harrietville
Murtoa	Murchison	Jamieson
Natimuk	Nagambie	Mansfield
Navarre	Nathalia	Merton
Nhill	Numurkah	Mitta Mitta
Stawell	Rochester	Mount Beauty
Warracknabeal	Rushworth	Mount Buller
Edenhope	Tatura	Alpine Village
Kaniva	Tongala	Omeo
	Violet Town	Myrtleford
	Wedderburn	Rutherglen
	Yarrowonga	Whitfield
		Woods Point
		Yackandandah

MANAGEMENT OF DATA COLLECTION

Our surveying of households was rigorous and comprehensive:

- one interview per household was obtained;

- sample households were telephoned up to three times in order to make contact to complete an interview;
- only individuals within the sample were interviewed;
- highly experienced interviewers were used

PRE-TEST

10 households were pre-tested to fine tune the questionnaire, ensure it was of an appropriate duration and ensure that it was able to achieve our collection objectives of meaningful, high quality data.

AUDIT

In order to continuously monitor quality, all our telephone interviewing was completed on the premises of Strahan Research under strict supervision. All surveys were thoroughly audited consistent with AMSRS practice. 10% of each interviewer's calls were audited at each interview session.

SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

A random telephone survey of 602 households within three Fire Danger Rating districts in Victoria – Wimmera, Northern Country and North East was undertaken between 14 and 21 January 2010 following Code Red Days.

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Awareness of Highest FDR

55.0% of respondents were able to state that the highest fire danger rating in their district over the previous weeks had been *Code Red* while 19.6% could not name the rating.

When they were told that there had been a Code Red Day, 79% of respondents said that they had been aware of it being declared as such the day before the Code Red day.

They had become aware of the declaration of the Code Red day primarily through television (49.5%) and radio including ABC radio (29.9%)

Actions of Code Red Day

33.1% of respondents spent the day away from home on the Code Red day, primarily because they were following their normal routine (72.4%), mainly working; because they had things to do (13.6%); and for other reasons (12.6%), mainly being away on holiday.

Only 1.5% of respondents were not at home because it was a Code Red day.

Sixteen independent adults, four children and two dependent adults spent the day away from home because it was a Code Red day.

Authorities' Advice on Code Red Day

56.8% of respondents say correctly that advice for a Code Red Day is to leave the night before or early in the morning. 9.7% say that the advice is to leave in some other time frame including "leave early (2.5%)," "leave immediately" (5.0%) and leave (at an indeterminate time) (2.2%).

8.8% do not know what emergency services advise.

Behaviour on Code Red Day

For 74.7% of respondents it would make no difference to their behaviour whether the day was declared *Code Red* or *Extreme*. 11.7% said that they wait to see if there was a bushfire before deciding what to do.

73.4% said that a future Code Red forecast would not prompt them to leave their house the night before or early on the morning of the Code Red day while 17.6% said they would leave.

Of those who said they would leave on a future Code Red day, 25.4% gave as a reason that they did not want to be threatened by bushfire, 20.5% wanted to be "play it safe" and be "safe rather than sorry" and 11.5% would leave because they felt vulnerable because they were old or had children. 16.4% of those who said they would leave on a Code Red day would need to have a fire threatening as well before they would actually leave.

Those who said they wouldn't leave on a Code Red Day felt they would not be threatened by bushfire (39.8%), need an actual fire to motivate them to leave (16%), felt safer staying in their own home rather than venturing out (12%) or felt there was no where else to go (10.8%).

A significant number (7.3%) had strong views that the Code Red advice was an over reaction and that they would make their own decision about what to do.

Specific Code Red Behaviours

Those who would leave on a Code Red day say that they would only leave if there is a fire in the area (78.1%), would plan to go to a NSP (76.2%) although they have several places they could go (77.9%) and would plan to do this whether it was a Code Red or Extreme Day (72.1%) (given there was a bushfire threatening). Many of the 57.7% who want more information about where to go want more information about NSPs.

Those who would not leave on a Code Red day say that they would only leave if there is a fire in the area (75.4%), would plan to go to a NSP or PLR (67.1%) and, similar to the leavers, want more information on where they could go (53.0%)

Fire danger ratings help both leavers (89.1%) and non-leavers (66.4%) decision making about what to do on days of bushfire risk.

Actions if Bushfire in Area

If there was a bushfire in the area and all household members were home respondents report three types of actions:

- Stay and defend (15.8%)
- Not home because would have left early (3.3%)
- Stay but leave:
 - o If threatened by fire (32.2%)
 - o If advised by emergency services (25.6%)
 - o As soon as aware of fire in the area (20.4%)

Conclusions

This research suggests that the declaration of a Code Red day will result in between 3 and 4 percent of the population of the declared district leaving the night before or early in the morning of the Code Red day.

The difference between respondents who say they would leave on a Code Red day and those who would not leave is reflected in the leavers' concern about risk and therefore their stated intention rather than in their actual behaviour on a Code Red day.

While 17.6% of respondents say they would leave early on the declaration of a Code Red day, for most of them this intention is only triggered **if there is a bushfire in the area**. And even then, other than about 3.5% who would have actually left early, the behaviour of the leavers is strikingly similar to those who say they would not leave on a Code Red day. Once there is a bushfire in the area respondents say that they would leave if they are:

- Threatened by the bushfire (Code Red leavers [37.7%]; non Code Red leavers [31.4%])
- Advised by emergency services ([19.8%]; [25.9%])
- Aware of fire in the area ([21.7%]; [20.6%])

Respondents who say they would leave on a Code Red day appear to differ from the non leavers only in that more of them would leave under threat of bushfire rather than waiting for emergency services to advise them to leave as more of the non-leavers would.

SECTION II: HOUSEHOLD SURVEY DATA

HIGHEST LEVEL OF BUSHFIRE DANGER RATING

Respondents were asked:

This/Last week, because of the weather conditions in the area where you live, authorities indicated that there would be an increased likelihood of bushfires. Since XXday last week, can you tell me what was the highest level of fire danger rating in the area where you live?

Highest Danger Rating	Respondents (n=602)
Code Red/Catostrophic	55.0
Extreme	13.8
Severe	1.5
Very High	3.5
Other categories (high, moderate, other colours/descriptions)	6.6
Don't Know	19.6

A clear majority of respondents (55.0%) knew that over the last week the highest fire danger rating had been *Code Red*.

Over one in six (13.8%) said that the highest fire danger rating had been *extreme*.

Almost one in five (19.6%) did not know what the highest fire danger rating had been over the last week.

Demographic Analysis

There are no significant differences between demographic groups for this question.

KNEW RATED CODE RED DAY

Respondents were asked:

Monday/Tuesday 11/12 January was rated as 'Code Red – Catastrophic' in your area. Before Monday/Tuesday, did you know that it had been declared a 'Code Red – Catastrophic' bushfire danger day?

Know Rated Code Red Day	Respondents (n=602)
Yes	79.0
No	16.6
Don't Know	4.3

Almost eight in ten respondents (79.0%) said that they were aware before that day that the Monday/Tuesday had been declared a Code Red Day.

Demographic Analysis

Those who more than other groups said that they did not know in advance that it was a Code Red Day tend to:

- Live in the Northern Country FDR district (22.1%)
- Say they would leave on a Code Red Day in the future (21.7%)

HOW FIND OUT ABOUT CODE RED DAY

Respondents who said that they planned to leave were asked:

How did you find out that it had been declared a Code Red Day?

How find out declared Code Red Day	Responses %
Television/ news/weather	49.5
Radio	24.2
ABC Radio	5.7
Newspaper	6.6
Internet	3.9
CFA pager/volunteer	3.9
Word of mouth/family/work	3.8
Media (general)	0.8
Other	1.7

* Multiple responses possible

The two main sources of information about the declaration of a Code Red Day were:

- Television including news and weather (49.5%)
- Radio (24.2%) and ABC Radio (5.7%) including news and weather and fire weather announcements

Demographic Analysis

Those aged 65 years and over (80.8%) more than other groups found out about the CRD on television.

Those living in the Wimmera (42.6%) more than other groups became aware of the CRD through radio.

SPEND DAY ON CODE RED DAY

Respondents were asked:

Where did you spend the **majority** of the day on Monday/Tuesday?

Spend Code Red Day	Respondents (n=602)
At home	66.9
Away from home	33.1

Two thirds of respondents (66.9%) said that they mainly spent the Code Red Day at home.

One third (33.1%) spent the day away from home

Demographic Analysis

Those who more than other groups say that they spent the Code Red Day at home tend to be:

Aged 65 years and over (89.6%)

Living in households without dependents (73.7%)

Those who more than other groups say that they spent the Code Red Day away from home tend to be:

Living in households with dependents (47.4%)

Men (39.3%)

WHY AWAY FROM HOME ON CODE RED DAY

Respondents who said that they had been away from home were asked:

Which of the following best describes why you were away from home for most of the day?

<i>Why away from home</i>	<i>Respondents % (n = 199)</i>
<i>Doing my normal routine</i>	72.4
<i>Had things to do so away from home</i>	13.6
<i>Concerned about bushfire danger rating so I decided to leave</i>	1.5
Other (mainly away on holidays)	12.6

Over seven in ten respondents (72.4%) who had not been at home said that they carried on their normal routine including going to work. A further one in six (13.6%) said that they weren't at home because they had things to do during the Code Red Day.

One in eight (12.6%) respondents had other reasons why they were not at home, primarily that they were on holiday at some other location.

Three respondents (1.5%) were not at home because they were concerned about the bushfire danger rating and so had decided to leave.

Almost one quarter (23.9%) had planned to leave early, in advance of or on, a high fire danger day.

Demographic Analysis

Those who more than others say that they were away from home because they were undertaking their normal routine tend to be:

Aged 45 to 64 years (80.4%)

Men (78.9%)

People who would not leave on a future CRD (78.0%)

TRIGGER TO LEAVE, WHEN LEFT AND WHERE WENT

The three respondents who left because of their concern about the bushfire danger rating were asked:

What prompted you to leave on Monday/Tuesday?

When did you leave your home?

(Where did you) mainly (go) when you left your home?

Two respondents said that they always leave their home on high risk days and one said that they were advised to leave by others.

One respondent left the evening before and the other two left on the morning of the Code Red Day.

One respondent went to family and friends in the local area, one went to a local community centre and one went to a nearby town or village.

OTHERS AWAY FROM HOME BECAUSE CODE RED DAY

Respondents were asked:

Did any of the following people in your household spend the day away from home because of concern about the danger of bushfires?

Others away from home because Code Red Day	Respondents % (n=602)
Other independent adults living in household	2.7
Children	0.7
Other dependent adult such as elderly or disabled it	0.3

Sixteen independent adults (2.7%), four children (0.7%) and two dependent adults (0.3%) spent the day away from home because of concern about the danger of bushfires.

The independent adults went to:

- A place where the person regularly spends time (6)
- Family and friends in the local area (1) and outside the local area (1)
- Local public place (1)
- Nearby town or village (1)
- Somewhere else (3)

The children went to:

- Family and friends in the local area (3)
- Nearby town or village (1)

The dependent adults went to:

- Family and friends in the local area (1)
- Local community centre (1)
- Somewhere else (1)

AUTHORITIES' ADVICE FOR CODE RED DAY

Respondents were asked:

Can you tell me what authorities recommend people do if there is a forecast of a Code Red or catastrophic bushfire danger day?

Emergency Services Advise for Code Red Day	Respondents % (n = 602)
Leave night before/early in morning	56.8
Leave early	2.5
Leave or be able to defend	1.8
Leave immediately	5.0
Leave (at some time)	2.2
Implement Bushfire plan	6.7
Stay till advised by ES to leave	3.7
Go to refuge/safe place	3.5
Stay alert/wait and see/prepare to leave	3.2
Stay home/inside	0.7
Don't Know	8.8
Other	5.2

A clear majority of respondents (56.8%) said correctly that advice for a Code Red Day is to leave the night before or early in the morning.

A further almost one in ten (9.7%) say that the advice is to leave in some other time frame including "leave early (2.5%)," "leave immediately" (5.0%) and leave (at an indeterminate time) (2.2%).

1.8% say incorrectly that the advice is to leave or be able to stay and defend their property.

Over one in twelve (8.8%) do not know what emergency services advise for a Code Red Day

Demographic Analysis

Those who more than others say correctly that authorities advise that people leave the night before or early in the morning of the CRD tend to be:

People who would leave on a future CRD (65.1%)

Living in households with dependents (62.4%)

DIFFERENCE IN BEHAVIOUR IF EXTREME RATHER THAN CODE RED DAY

Respondents were asked:

What difference would it make to what you would do if the forecast was for an “extreme” fire danger day rather than a Code Red Day?

<i>Difference in Behaviour for Extreme Rather than Code Red Day</i>	<i>Respondents % (n=602)</i>
<i>Would make no Difference/do the same thing whether Extreme or Code Red</i>	74.7
<i>Would change my plan and stay at home rather than leaving</i>	4.3
<i>Would change my plan and leave instead of staying</i>	1.8
<i>Would wait to see if there was a fire and then decide what to do</i>	11.7
<i>Other</i>	4.4
<i>Don't Know</i>	3.3

Almost three quarters of respondents (74.7%) say that it would make no difference to their behaviour whether the day was declared *Code Red* or *Extreme*.

Over one in ten (11.7%) said that they wait to see if there was a bushfire before deciding what to do.

Demographic Analysis

Those who more than other groups say that their behaviour would be no different on a CRD or an extreme fire danger day tend to be:

Living in the Wimmera FDR district (83.4%)

People who would not leave on a future CRD (80.5%)

FUTURE CODE RED DAY PROMPT LEAVE EARLY

Respondents were asked:

Would the declaration of a 'code red-catastrophic' forecast in future prompt you to leave your house the night before or early in the morning and spend the day elsewhere?

<i>Code Red Day Prompt Leave Early</i>	<i>Respondents (n=602)</i>
<i>Yes</i>	17.6
<i>No</i>	73.4
<i>Don't Know</i>	9.0

Almost three quarters of respondents (73.4%) said that a future Code Red forecast would not prompt them to leave their house the night before or early on the morning of the Code Red day.

Just over one in six (17.6%) said a future Code Red forecast would prompt them to leave early.

Demographic Analysis

There are no significant differences between demographic groups for this question.

WHY CODE RED RATING WOULD PROMPT TO LEAVE

Respondents who said that in the future a Code Red rating would prompt them to leave were asked:

Why would a declaration of a Code Red forecast prompt you to leave?

Why Code Red Prompt you to Leave	Responses %
Don't want to be in danger/threatened	25.4
Want to be safe/better safe than sorry	20.5
Vulnerable/old/children/unprepared to fight	11.5
Life more important	6.6
Remember Black Saturday	5.7
Authorities/ES advise you leave	5.7
Fearful	4.1
Other	4.1
Only leave if fire threatens/imminent	16.4

** Multiple responses possible*

The two primary reasons who the declaration of a Code Red rating would prompt respondents to leave are because they:

- Don't want to be in danger (25.4%)
- Want to be safe (including their family) feeling that it is "better safe than sorry" (20.5%)

More than one in ten (11.5%) are prompted to leave because they feel vulnerable to fire because they are old, have young children or are unable/unprepared to fight a bushfire.

Almost one in six respondents (16.4%) who said that they would leave if there was a Code Red rating qualified this by saying they would only leave if their was also a bushfire threatening them.

Demographic Analysis

There are no significant differences between demographic groups for this question.

WHY CODE RED RATING NOT PROMPT TO LEAVE

Respondents who said that in the future a Code Red rating would not prompt them to leave were asked:

Why wouldn't a declaration of a Code Red forecast prompt you to leave?

Why Code Red Not Prompt you to Leave	Responses %
Feel safe/ not threatened	39.8
Needs to be a fire to leave	16.0
Better/safer stay at home	12.0
Nowhere else to go	10.8
Can defend property/properly prepared	9.5
CRD over reaction/not appropriate/make own decisions	7.3
Can't keep coming and going	1.5
Don't Know	0.2
Other	2.9

* Multiple responses possible

The main reason why declaration of a Code Red forecast does not prompt respondents to leave cited in almost four in ten responses (39.8%) is because respondents feel safe where they are and believe that they are unlikely to be threatened by bushfire.

Four secondary reasons for declaration of a Code Red Day not prompting respondents to leave are because respondents believe:

- There needs to be a fire for them to leave (16%)
- They are safer to stay in their home (12.0%)
- They have nowhere to go (10.8%)
- Their property is defensible and they are prepared against bushfire (9.5%)

Demographic Analysis

Respondents living in the Northern Country FDR district (63.5%) more than other groups tend to say that declaration of a CRD forecast would not prompt them to leave because they feel they live in a safe area that is unlikely to be threatened by bushfire.

Those who more than others say that declaration of a CRD forecast would not prompt them to leave because there needs to be a bushfire tend to be living in:

The NE FDR district (23.5%)
A household with dependents (22.4%)

Those who more than others say that declaration of a CRD forecast would not prompt them to leave because they can defend their property tend to be living:

The NE FDR district (19.1%)

Living on a large farm (34.2%) or hobby farm/small acreage (25.0%)

Those who more than others say that declaration of a CRD forecast would not prompt them to leave because they have nowhere else to go tend to be:

Aged 65 years and over (18.8%)

Living in the Wimmera FDR district (16.9%)

Those who more than others say that declaration of a CRD forecast would not prompt them to leave because they are better off staying at home tend to be:

Living in the Wimmera FDR district (20.3%)

Women (18.6%)

Aged 65 years and over (18.2%)

Those who more than others say that declaration of a CRD forecast would not prompt them to leave because it is an over reaction by the authorities tend to be:

Men (12.0%)

Aged 45 to 64 years (11.6%)

ASPECTS OF CODE RED DAY BEHAVIOUR – LEAVERS

Respondents who said that in the future a Code Red rating would prompt them to leave were asked:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>
<i>I know where I will go on a Code Red Day</i>	17.1	74.3	8.6
<i>I have several places I could go on a Code Red Day</i>	18.3	77.9	3.8
<i>My plan is to do the same thing on a Code Red Day as I would on and extreme or severe fire danger day</i>	22.1	72.1	5.8
<i>I or others in my household need assistance to leave our home (transport etc) on a Code Red Day</i>	76.7	23.3	0.0
<i>I need more information about places I could go if I left my home on a Code Red Day</i>	40.4	57.7	1.9
<i>I would go to a Neighborhood Safer Place or Place of Last Resort on a Code Red Day</i>	18.1	76.2	5.7
<i>I will only leave if there is a fire in the area</i>	17.1	78.1	4.8
<i>The fire danger ratings help me decide what to do on days of bushfire risk</i>	8.9	89.1	2.0

Almost nine in ten Code Red Day leavers (89.1%) say that the Fire Danger Rating help them to make decisions on what to do on days of bushfire risk.

Almost eight in ten (78.1%) respondents who would leave on a Code Red Day say that they would only leave if there was a fire in the area. This suggests that many Code Red Day leavers require a strong trigger to leave - being a bushfire in the area that is not necessarily threatening them directly combined with catastrophic bushfire conditions.

Over seven in ten leavers (72.1%) would do the same thing on a Code Red Day as they would on an extreme or severe day. It appears that this means that their behaviour on days of high fire danger, whether it be catastrophic, extreme or severe will depend on whether there is a bushfire in the area.

Approximately three quarters of respondents who said they would leave on a Code Red Day agreed about aspects of where they would go including:

- Having several places to go (77.9%)
- Knowing where they will go (74.3%)

-
- Going to a Neighbourhood Safe Place or Place of Last Resort (76.2%)

A majority of Code Red Day leavers want more information on where they could go (57.7%).

Over three quarters (76.7%) say they (or household members) do not require assistance to leave.

Demographic Analysis

Those leavers who more than others plan to do the same thing on a CRD as an extreme or severe fire danger day tend to be:

- Aged 65 years and over (85.7%)
- Women (80.0%)

Those leavers who more than others need assistance to leave tend to be:

- Aged 65 years and over (29.2%)
- Living in households without dependents (26.7%)

Those who more than other groups say that they would go to a Neighbourhood Safer Place or Place of Last Resort tend to be:

- Aged 18 to 44 years (91.3%)
- Living in the Wimmera FDR district (85.0%)

Leavers living in the Wimmera FDR district (90.0%) and the Northern Country FDR district (87.0%) more than others tend to say that they would only leave if there was a fire in the area.

ASPECTS OF CODE RED DAY BEHAVIOUR – NON LEAVERS

Respondents who said that in the future a Code Red rating would not prompt them to leave were asked:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Don't Know</i>
<i>I or others in my household need assistance to leave our home (transport etc) on a Code Red Day</i>	92.7	6.6	0.7
<i>I need more information about places I could go if I left my home on a Code Red Day</i>	45.0	53.0	2.0
<i>I would go to a Neighborhood Safer Place or Place of Last Resort on a Code Red Day</i>	24.8	67.1	8.0
<i>I will only leave if there is a fire in the area</i>	21.1	75.4	3.4
<i>The fire danger ratings help me decide what to do on days of bushfire risk</i>	30.9	66.4	2.7

Similar to leavers, three quarters of Code Red Day non leavers (75.4%) say that they would only leave if there was a fire in the area.

Two thirds of Code Red Day non leavers (66.4%) say that the Fire Danger Rating helps them to make decisions on what to do on days of bushfire risk.

A similar proportion (67.1%) of non leavers would go to a Neighbourhood Safe Place or Place of Last Resort on a Code Red Day.

A majority of Code Red Day non leavers want more information on where they could go (53.0%).

Over nine out of ten (92.7%) non leavers say they (or household members) do not require assistance to leave.

Demographic Analysis

Non-leavers aged 65 years and over (57.9%), more than other groups tend to say they need information about where they can go on a CRD.

Non-leavers living on a large farm (39.5%) or on a hobby farm or small acreage (34.2%) more than other groups tend to say they would not go to a Neighbourhood Safer place or Place of Last Resort on a CRD.

Non-leavers who more than other groups say they would not only leave if there was a fire in the area tend to be:

- Living on a large farm (36.8%) or on a hobby farm or small acreage (34.2%)
- Living in the NE FDR district (33.8%)
- Men (27.1%)

Non-leavers living in the Wimmera FDR district (91.2%) more than other groups tend to say that they would only leave if there was a fire in the area.

ACTIONS IF BUSHFIRE IN AREA

Respondents were asked:

Which one of the following actions are **you** most likely to take if all members of your household were at home when a bushfire occurred in your area?

Which action would **other adult members (partner/spouse)** of your household take?

What action would any **dependants** (children under 18 years old or elderly) take?

Actions likely to take	You (n = 602) %	Partner (n = 602) %		Dependants (n = 602) %	
Stay throughout the fire to try and protect the house and property	15.8	12.3	16.2	3.2	10.3
Do as much as possible to protect the house but leave if threatened by the fire	32.2	26.4	34.9	10.1	32.5
Stay but leave if advised to do so by emergency services	25.6	19.1	25.2	7.1	22.9
Leave as soon as you are aware that there is a fire in the area	20.4	14.0	18.5	7.6	24.5
I would not be home as I intend to leave the area on days of high fire danger	3.3	1.8	2.4	1.0	3.2
Don't know what I would do	2.7	2.1	2.8	2.0	6.0
Not applicable	na	24.3		69.0	

Respondent's actions

Almost one-third of respondents (32.2%) would leave if threatened by bushfire.

One quarter of respondents (25.6%) would wait to be advised by emergency services before they would leave.

Over one in five respondents (20.4%) say that they would leave as soon as they were aware of a bushfire in their area.

Over one in seven (15.8%) would stay and defend their property.

One in thirty respondents (3.3%) would not be at home if there was a bushfire because they planned to leave early on a day of high fire danger.

Partners/Adults actions

Of those respondents who have partners or other adults in the household over one third (34.9%) say that they would leave if threatened by fire.

Over one quarter (25.2%) would leave if advised by emergency services.

Almost one in five (18.5%) would leave as soon as they were aware of a bushfire in their area .

One in six (16.2%) would stay and defend their property

Dependants

Of those respondents who have dependants in the household almost one third (32.5%) say that they would leave would leave if threatened by fire.

Almost one quarter (24.5%) would leave as soon as they were aware of a bushfire in their area.

Over one in five (22.9%) would leave if advised by emergency services.

Just over one in ten(10.3%) would stay and defend.

Demographic Analysis

Respondents

Those who more than others say that they will stay and defend their property tend to be:

- Living on a large farm (48.7%) or hobby farm/small acreage (22.1%)
- Living in the NE FDR district (22.3%)
- Men (25.6%)

People aged 18 to 44 years (41.3%) more than other groups tend to say that they will do as much as possible but leave if threatened by fire.

Those who more than other groups say that they would leave when they became aware that there was a fire in the area tend to be:

- Living in the Wimmera FDR district (25.0%)
- Women (24.7%)

Partners/Adults actions

Those who more than others say that partners/adults will stay and defend their property tend to be:

- Living on a large farm (43.6%) or hobby farm/small acreage (18.3%)
- Living in the NE FDR district (16.8%)
- Men (18.6%)

Those who more than other groups say that partners/adults will do as much as possible but leave if threatened by fire tend to be:

- Living in households with dependents (35.8%)
- Aged 18 to 44 years (39.1%)

Dependents

Respondents aged 18 to 44 years more than other groups tend to say that dependents will:

- Do as much as possible but leave if threatened (27.5%)
- Leave when aware fire is in the area (21.0%)

Those who more than others say that they would leave when advised by emergency services tend to be:

- Aged 18 to 44 years (12.3%)
- Living on a hobby farm or small acreage (15.4%)

SECTION III: DEMOGRAPHICS OF SAMPLE

	% Respondents (n = 602)
Household situation	
Couple with children or other dependents	27.5
Couple without children or other dependents	43.8
Single person with children or other dependents	4.7
Single person without children or other dependents	18.7
Group of adults	5.2
Other	0.0
Fire Danger Rating District	
Wimmera	33.2
Northern Country	33.2
North East	33.6
Gender	
Male	40.0
Female	60.0
Age	
	Respondent
18-24	1.5
25-34	5.1
35-44	16.7
45-54	17.6
55-64	20.1
65-74	20.4
75 and over	18.6
Ref/Not Applicable	0.0
Type of Property	
House on residential block	74.9
Hobby farm or small acreage	17.3
House on large farm	6.9
Other	0.8
Member of CFA	
CFA member	6.6
Someone in household a CFA member	4.2
None in household a member	89.2

SECTION IV: SURVEY

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0 _____

S. Hello. I am **[NAME OF INTERVIEWER]** ringing on behalf of the Country Fire authority (CFA) from Strahan Research. We are doing a survey that takes 5 minutes and your comments will be confidential. We would like you to answer all the questions but you don't have to.

1. Last week, because of the weather conditions in the area where you live, authorities indicated that there would be an increased likelihood of bushfires. Since Tuesday last week, can you tell me what was the highest level of fire danger rating in the area where you live? (DO NOT PROMPT)

- m Code Red/Catostrophic
- m Extreme
- m Severe
- m Very High
- m Other categories (high, moderate, other colours/descriptions)
- m Don't Know

2. Tuesday 12 January was rated as 'Code Red – Catastrophic' in your area. Before Tuesday, did you know that it had been declared a 'Code Red – Catastrophic' bushfire danger day?

- m Yes
- m No
- m Don't Know

2a. How did you find out that it had been declared a Code Red Day?

— _____

— _____

— _____

— _____

3. Where did you spend the **majority** of the day on Tuesday?

m At home

m Away from home

4. Which of the following best describes why you were away from home for most of the day

m I was concerned about the bushfire danger rating so I decided to leave for the most of the day

m I was just doing what I normally do on a similar day eg work

m I had things to do so was away from home

m Other (Specify) _____

-
5. What prompted you to leave on Tuesday (DO NOT PROMPT)
- m I always leave on days of high bushfire risk
 - m Heard announcements/told it was a Code Red Day
 - m Told/advised to leave by others (including family/neighbors)
 - m Did what other people/neighbors were doing
 - m Other (SPECIFY) _____
 - m Don't Know/Unsure
6. When did you leave your home?
- m The day or evening before Tuesday [Code Red Day]
 - m Morning of Tuesday
 - m Later during Tuesday
7. Which of the following best describes where you mainly went to when you left your home?
- m Home of family or friends in your local area
 - m Home of family or friends **outside** your local area
 - m A public place such as shopping centre, in your local area
 - m A public place such as shopping centre, **outside** your local area
 - m A community centre or facility in your local area
 - m A community centre or facility **outside** your local area
 - m A nearby town/village
 - m Another place where you regularly spend time eg school, volunteer organisation, holiday house etc
 - m Somewhere else (SPECIFY) _____

8. Did any of the following people in your household spend the day away from home because of concern about the danger of bushfires?

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| Other independent adults in household | m Yes |
| Children in household | m No |
| Other dependent such as elderly or disabled | m Don't Know |
| | m Not applicable |

8a. [IF YES TO Q8 CATEGORIES ASK FOR THOSE CATEGORIES) Where did they mainly go to when they left your home?

- | | |
|---|--|
| Other household members | Where they went |
| Other independent adults in household | m Home of family or friends in your local area |
| Children in household | m Home of family or friends outside your local area |
| Other dependent such as elderly or disabled | m A public place such as shopping centre, in your local area |
| | m A public place such as shopping centre, outside your local area |
| | m A community centre or facility in your local area |
| | m A community centre or facility outside your local area |
| | m A nearby town/village |
| | m Another place where you regularly spend time |
| | m Somewhere else |

9. Can you tell me what authorities recommend people do if there is a forecast of a Code Red or catastrophic bushfire danger day?[DO NOT PROMPT]

- m Leave the night before or early in the morning of the Code Red Day
- m Leave early (ASK HOW EARLY and recode if necessary)
- m Leave (ASK WHEN and recode if necessary)
- m Leave immediately
- m Leave if not able to defend your property
- m Implement your Bushfire Plan
- m Leave if advised by emergency services
- m Other (SPECIFY) _____
- m Don't Know

9a. What difference would it make to what you would do if the forecast was for an "extreme" fire danger day rather than a Code Red Day?

- m Would make no Difference/do the same thing whether Extreme or Code Red
- m Would change my plan and stay at home rather than leaving
- m Would change my plan and leave instead of staying
- m Would wait to see if there was a fire and then decide what to do
- m Other (SPECIFY) _____
- m Don't Know

10. Would the declaration of a 'code red-catastrophic' forecast in future prompt you to leave your house the night before or early in the morning and spend the day elsewhere?

- m Yes

m No
m Don't Know/Unsure

10a. Why would a declaration of a Code Red forecast prompt you to leave?

—

—

—

10b. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Extent of agreement
I know where I will go on a Code Red Day	m Strongly Disagree
I have several places I could go on a Code Red Day	m Disagree
My plan is to do the same thing on a Code Red Day as I would on an extreme or severe fire danger day	m Agree
I or others in my household need assistance to leave our home (transport etc) on a Code Red Day	m Strongly Agree
I need more information about places I could go if I left my home on a Code Red Day	m Don't Know
I would go to a Neighborhood Safer Place or Place of Last Resort on a Code Red Day	
I will only leave if there is a fire in the area	
The fire danger ratings help me decide what to do on days of bushfire risk	

11. Why wouldn't declaration of a Code Red forecast prompt you to leave?

—

—

—

11a. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Extent of agreement
I or others in my household need assistance to leave our home (transport etc) on days of bushfire risk	m Strongly Disagree
	m Disagree
	m Agree
	m Strongly Agree
	m Don't Know
I need more information about places I could go if I left my home on days of bushfire risk	
I would go to a Neighborhood Safer Place or Place of Last Resort if I left my home on days of bushfire risk	
I will only leave my home if there is a fire in the area	
The fire danger ratings help me decide what to do on days of bushfire risk	

12. Which one of the following actions are **you** most likely to take if all members of your household were at home when a bushfire occurred in your area? **[READ LIST]. 12b** Which action would **other adult members (partner/spouse)** of your household take? 12c What action would any **dependants** (children <18years old or elderly) take?

	You	Q12b Other Adults	Q12c Dependants
Stay throughout the fire to try and protect the house and property	m Yes m No	m Yes m No	m Yes m No
Do as much as possible to protect the house but leave if threatened by the fire			
Stay but leave if advised to do so by emergency services			
Leave as soon as you are aware that there is a fire in the area			
I would not be home as I intend to leave the area on days of high fire danger			
Don't know what I would do			
Not applicable (no other adult or dependants in household)			

S. And now for the last few questions.

13. Which of the following best describes your household situation?

- m Couple with one or more children or dependents
- m Couple without children or dependents
- m Single person with children or dependents
- m Single person without children or dependents
- m Group of adults living together
- m Other _____

14. Which of the following best describes the property you live on?

-
- m House on residential block
 - m Hobby farm or small acreage
 - m House on large farm
 - m Other[specify] _____

15. Which of the following age groups do you belong to?

- m 18 to 24
- m 25 to 34
- m 35 to 44
- m 45 to 54
- m 55 to 64
- m 65 -74
- m 75 and over

16. In which fire danger rating district do you live ? (DO NOT PROMPT)

District _____

16a. (NOTE DISTRICT IN CALL NOTES TEXT BOX AT TOP RIGHT OF SCREEN AND RECORD WHETHER RESPONSE TO Q 16 IS CORRECT OR INCORRECT)

- m Correct
- m Incorrect

17. What is the postcode of the area you live in?

Postcode _____

18. Are you or any member of your household a current member of CFA?

- m Yes I am in CFA
- m Yes a person in the household is in CFA
- m No

19. Sometimes our interviews are checked to make sure we have done them correctly. Could I have your first name only please?

Name _____

S. That is the end of the interview. Thank you for your time. Just to remind you that I am [NAME OF INTERVIEWER] from Strahan Research and If you have any questions, concerns or feedback please contact our office on 03 96049199.

20. RECORD GENDER

- m Male
- m Female

21. RECORD TELEPHONE NUMBER

Telephone _____

22. RECORD NAME OF INTERVIEWER

Interviewer _____

SECTION IV: CROSS-TABULATED DATA

