State Government Victoria
Department of Sustainability and Environment

State Fire Situation Report

1600hrs Wednesday, 11 February 2009

CFA

State Fire Control Objectives

- Safety of personnel tasked to the incident
- Protection of members of the community, including keeping the community informed
- Protection of critical infrastructure and community assets
- Aggressive first attack on new outbreaks
- Protection of conservation and environmental values

Daily Incident Overview

- There is no Total Fire Ban today.

Agency	Going	Contained	Under Control
DSE	18	13	97
CFA	20	5	2

(Nine of these fires are managed jointly, with 7 lead by DSE and 2 by CFA)

- DSE and CFA are working together to monitor fire potential and respond to any threats.

Current Significant Fire Details

The following situation report comments are the best available information at the time of publishing, and are only a snapshot representation of current events. They do not cover the full extent of statewide fires.

Kinglake Complex – 224,400 ha

Kilmore –Saunders Rd.

- Control line from Wandong to Strath Creek completed.
- Reports from Yea suggest containment lines established in Strath Creek & Junction Hill Sectors. Waiting on confirmation of the location of these lines - believed to be some distance to nth of fire edge.
- Glenburn sector has several areas of concern under forecast conditions.
- Army D3s constructing control line working east from Strath Creek.
- Direct response to flare ups or break outs with aerial support as required.
- Continued asset protection as required

Kangaroo Ground

- Two tankers will be kept on site for emergency dispatch for Whittlesea and Kinglake. Other CFA tankers available for community response and flare ups.
- Region 14 (Melton) supplying Divisional Commander into Kangaroo Ground ICC area.
- Nink and Sugarloaf sectors continue to have small areas of active fire in inaccessible areas.
- Dozer work and burning out operations should address these issues next shift
- Objective is to scale down shift and move into recovery mode. Night shift may not be required tonight.

Yea- Murrindindi Complex 108,000 ha

- This fire is providing control difficulties in the northern sectors (Black Range and Blue Range south of Alexandra).
- Substantial perimeter of unconsolidated edge to the south that will require work.
- Black Range area – fire is burning on the western and eastern side of the Black Range with increased fire activity due to southerly winds.
- Fire activity has increased in the northern edges with strengthening S to SE winds.
- Connelleys Creek, Crystal Creek, Scrubby Creek and Native Dog Creek are under urgent threat message as at 1200 hrs.
- Control lines being established along Whanregarwen from the Maroondah Highway to Molesworth.
- Some spotting activity is occurring into private property between Shannon's Rd and Limestone Rd.

- Blue Range area – is experiencing continued fire activity due to south east winds.
- Urgent threat messages continue for Acheron, Cathedral Lane, Thornton-Taggerty and Bulls Lane.

Churchill-Jeeralang – 34,860 ha

- Fire activity quiet, with misty rain falling on parts of the fireground.
- There are some hotspots within the fire boundary and these are being attended by crews.
- The Rapid Impact Assessment teams and Police are continuing their work within the Callignee South and Balook areas.

Beechworth-Library Road (Murmungee) – 30,000 ha

- Currently burning within containment lines in the Beechworth, Myrtleford and Stanley Areas.
- Fire behaviour and weather general quiet and stable across the fireground.
- Work being undertaken to strengthen containment lines and to conduct burning of unburnt fuels.
- Plans established for ongoing high level protection of communications on Mt Big Ben (Melbourne/ Sydney Air Traffic Control).
- SP Ausnet is conducting ground survey of electricity transmission lines.

Bunyip SP – Bunyip Ridge Track – 25,000 ha

- DSE is preparing containment lines in preparation for back burning in the Moomba/Tonimbuk sector when conditions are favourable.
- CFA S/T 0844 will assist with this task as well as patrolling the western edge of the fire, south of the high voltage transmission lines.
- In the Nayook/Tarago Dam sector work is continuing to prepare containment lines in preparation for back burning operations when weather conditions are favourable.

Dargo - White Timber Spur – 15,000 ha

- No active fire edge and fuel reduction burning proposed when weather conditions favourable.
- 68 kms of control line built with 15 kms of additional line to be completed.

East Tyers – Thomson - 1561 ha

- Fire break on the northern boundary of the fire, east of Aberfeldy river completed with construction of break west of river.
- Hand trail in the East Tyers - Amors sector has been breached and construction of a fire break on the ridge to the north of this point is progressing.

Wilsons Promontory - Cathedral – 1300 ha

- Fire is still in remote country.
- Air attack ineffectual, direct attack not possible due to terrain.
- Western flank expected to become head fire due to SE wind shift
- Focus on community and asset protection and planning for possible cutting of Tidal River Road

Maroondah Yarra Complex – 10617 ha

- Fire south of Toolangi is larger than previously expected and crews have conducted burning to the South of the township and working to black out areas and consolidate control lines.
- Fire has burnt up to Mount St Leonard (and its communication tower) from the Myers Creek Road with minimal damage and crews have been securing the site.
- Overnight Tasmanian Fire crews were involved in burning operations in the Upper Yarra - Doctors Creek fire & at Healesville.
- An MFB Task Force remains in Healesville to provide asset protection and respond to calls in the Healesville area.
- A fire in the Britania Sector south of the Yarra Valley broke containment lines this morning. A new control line is being put in and crews are confident that the fire will be fully tracked by late afternoon.

A cluster of fires is now being managed as part of the Maroondah – Yarra Complex. These include:

- Upper Yarra – Road 12
- Upper Yarra – Road 3
- O'Shannassy – Road 8
- Healesville- Chum Creek
- Britania Range - Platts Creek
- Loch Valley – Leadbeaters Gully

Losses

Fatalities 181

State / Community Infrastructure	78
Private Dwellings	1033
Agricultural Assets	203
Agricultural properties / public land	197770 ha

Resources Committed

NEO resources committed:
Human Resources: 4250 personnel, including 2007 NEO staff and 2243 other.
Approximately 1452 CFA fire fighters are deployed.
Other Resources:
DSE: 73 fire tankers, 186 slip-on units, 70 bulldozers. 42 dispatched aircraft.
CFA: There are currently 419 CFA appliances.
MFB: 28 personnel, 6 appliances.

Interstate:

NSW RFS: 24 strike team vehicles (167 personnel) *NSW Fire Brigades*: 47 personnel, 10 appliances
NSW National Parks Services: 18 appliances (36 people)
Tasmania: 94 personnel
ACT: 95 personnel, 20 appliances
SA: 110 personnel
WA: Arrived 10 February - 22 personnel, (IMT, sector commanders, forest fire crews)
Offers received from QLD, NT & additional teams offered from NSW to assist in house loss, incident stress, and investigation. USA assistance is currently in discussion. NZ resources to arrive on Friday.

Weather

A southerly airflow will persist over Victoria for several days as a large high pressure system well south of Western Australia drifts slowly eastwards and a series of weak cold fronts cross Tasmania. The high will be located east of Tasmania by Friday night. Another high pressure system is expected to move into the Bight on Saturday.

Forecast for the rest of Wednesday
Isolated showers in the south, more widespread over East Gippsland. Areas of smoke. Dry in the north. Cool to mild with moderate to fresh southerly winds.
Maximum Fire Danger: High to very high grading to extreme in northern grasslands

Forecast for Thursday
Isolated showers in the south, mainly about the coast and more widespread over East Gippsland. Dry in the north. Areas of smoke. Cool to mild with moderate to fresh south to southeast winds.

Forecast for Friday
Isolated showers in Gippsland. Fine elsewhere. Areas of smoke. Mild to warm with moderate to fresh east to southeasterly winds.

Forecast for Saturday
Isolated showers in Gippsland. Fine elsewhere. Areas of smoke. Mild to warm with moderate to fresh east to southeasterly winds.

Communications

- 13 Urban Search and Rescue teams have been established at Kinglake.
- Both DSE and CFA continue to provide information updates to local communities.
- Primary focus is on safety of fire fighters and public.
- A number of international media inquiries have been received overnight.
- VBIL operating on 24hr basis; continuing high level of interest and queries from public.
- Residents are asked to remain vigilant, cooperate with emergency services.

Peter Billing
State Duty Officer
Fire and Emergency Management
Department of Sustainability and Environment

Peter Lucas
State Duty Officer
Country Fire Authority