

The logo for the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (afac). It features the lowercase letters 'afac' in a bold, red, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a stylized graphic element consisting of three overlapping, curved shapes in green, red, and orange, forming a circular, flame-like or eye-like shape.

Australasian Fire and Emergency
Service Authorities Council

Fire and emergency services strengthened through
sharing, collaboration and innovation



In the past four years members of the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC), have seen the focus and expectation of the community perceptibly change in relation to public safety in emergency management.

Major flooding in our northern States, significant bushfires in all States and particularly the tragic loss of life in the “Black Saturday” bushfires in Victoria in February 2009, have brought into sharp relief how our fire and emergency service agencies plan and operate to protect the community.

The tremendous efforts of all fire and emergency agencies to work collaboratively, learn from each other, both here and overseas, from each unique circumstance, has been a major factor in building industry capability and capacity.

This learning has been underpinned by an increased focus on the utilisation of research from the Bushfire Cooperative Research centre and other sources.

AFAC has played a strong role in facilitating closer working relationships between the talented and committed people that make up our industry. That connectivity has led to a number of significant achievements in efficiency, cost reduction, the development of standards based on best practice and leadership on issues that affect not only our industry but the wider community.

AFAC members operate in a dynamic, complex, challenging and often dangerous environment. Through AFAC, our members have the opportunity to engage in and contribute to the development of public policy, ensuring our collective knowledge and expertise has a voice and is heard.

Our ultimate strength is our shared purpose and vision and our ability to harness those qualities and that knowledge for the benefit of all communities.

If you are considering how your involvement with AFAC may help your organisation, then I encourage you to read further about how we operate, what we have achieved together and our goals both in the short and longer term.

Naomi Brown

CEO Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC)

AFAC is...

The Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) is the industry body for fire, land management and emergency service organisations in Australasia. AFAC member agencies, drawn from every State and Territory in Australia, New Zealand and from around the Pacific, are responsible for the provision of fire, land management and emergency services.

AFAC was established by its members in 1993 to collaborate on matters of international, national and regional importance. By sharing in each other’s extensive capabilities, experience and knowledge, AFAC members expect communities to benefit from the economies of scale, reduction in the duplication of effort and the strengthening of industry capability, continuously improving community safety results in an effective and efficient way.

The organisation fosters and promotes strong relationships between the members and with partners in emergency management. The AFAC network of members is an important aspect of rapid problem solving at the industry level and optimising the use of resources.

STRUCTURE and GOVERNANCE

AFAC is a not for profit company limited by guarantee and is governed by a Board, elected by a Council. The AFAC Council is made up of the most senior representatives of all member agencies who come together twice a year.

The work of AFAC is conducted through a group structure and from time to time, cross functional project teams.

“AFAC provides opportunities to build strong and enduring relationships allowing members to achieve better outcomes than working alone.”

- Commissioner Lee A Johnson AFSM MIFIREE,
Queensland Fire and Rescue Service - AFAC President



goals of AFAC

The AFAC Strategic Plan 2010-2012 articulates five clear goals. AFAC is focused on creating opportunities to lead, build consistent standards, innovate methods and develop service delivery approaches in support of the industry.

Leadership and Advocacy is a core responsibility for the organisation that has seen AFAC develop positions on a range of issues, work with governments at the State and Federal level to inform policy development and provide a consistent public “voice” for emergency services both in Australia and overseas. As the industry body, AFAC promotes best practice, lobbies for change and works to strengthen emergency services across Australasia.

Promoting consistency and effectiveness in the provision of services is vital to ensuring efficiency and leveraging economies of scale. AFAC through its Groups, works to develop risk based frameworks which are adaptable across a range of operating environments. This ensures agencies are able to work together in times of need, and is key in providing common benchmarks for evaluation.

Capturing and sharing the collective experience and knowledge of the industry is the bedrock of our organisation. We strive to ensure that collective knowledge is shared and applied across the many and diverse imperatives of our member organisations. Facilitating exchange of ideas and experience through our networks and tools such as ‘knowledgeweb.afac.com.au’ is a critical success factor for disseminating industry knowledge and fostering collaboration. Providing easy member access to quality research and industry information is a fundamental part of this goal.

Building capability and capacity across the sector is a crucial aim to ensure that our volunteers, staff and contractors are safe, skilled, capable and resourced. We strive to ensure that workforce competencies are transportable and nationally recognised, that our leaders are strong and effective and there is a consistent approach to training and assessment of all fire and emergency service personnel.

Demonstrating our value to members while might seem obvious, is a stated goal of AFAC to ensure our ongoing viability and worth in the industry. We must ensure that our member agencies have confidence in our governance and administration and that our delivery of products and services are well aligned to our shared vision and mission.

“AFAC connects people and organisations, setting the building blocks for developing industry capability and capacity.”

- Mr Euan Ferguson AFSM,
Chief Officer, SA Country Fire Service



how AFAC works

AFAC draws on people from all member agencies who are supported by the staff of the AFAC office. The Group structure allows people to combine their skills, experience and talent, collectively developing strategies, designing practice change initiatives and exploring opportunities for continuous improvement and innovation.

Through Groups or cross functional project teams, senior representatives of member agencies work to frame research, inform policy, develop regional or national positions and explore solutions to a range of issues aimed at improving efficiency and strengthening industry capability.

The work of AFAC flows across a diverse range of activities and includes:

Advocacy

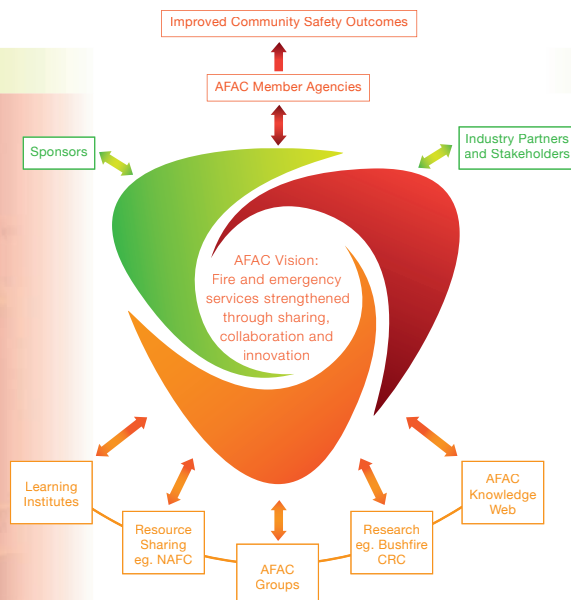
- Industry Positions
- Representation on standards bodies
- Submissions

Professional Development

- Annual conference
- Seminars and workshops
- Leadership programs
- Tailored training programs, packages and accreditation
- Research utilisation

Information Sharing and Collaboration

- Knowledge Web
- AFAC Group updates
- Fire Australia Magazine
- AFAC newsletter
- Collaborative purchasing
- Professional networks
- Statistical data management



what AFAC has achieved

AFAC has been highly successful in advancing the work of fire and emergency services, and is actively sought for its opinion in informing public policy and as a collaborative partner. We are a trusted source of information and advice and are recognised as a valuable contributor to innovation across the industry.

The foundation of our success is the connectivity we have been able to facilitate and foster among the senior representatives of our agency members. The ability to develop strong and enduring relationships, build on trust and enlightenment, has led to great achievements in strengthening our industry.

An Industry Perspective

AFAC has developed a position on a range of issues that are of strategic importance to the business of AFAC members. Such positions inform debate and can be used as input to the development of public policy. Positions include:

- Climate Change and the Fire and Emergency Services Sector: an assessment of the impact of climate change on fire and emergency services.
- Bushfires and Community Safety: a view of the safety of residents and their homes during bushfires.
- National Systems Approach to Community Warnings: a discussion of all the elements necessary for the effective flow of information to the community during times of emergency.
- Smoke Alarms: to inform and educate about good practice in regards to domestic smoke alarms and improve the safety of residents
- Fire Risk from the Management of Gamba Grass in Northern Australia: to inform and debate the increasing fire risk from the use of this grass.
- Class A Recycled Water for Fire Fighting Purposes: to provide a view as to whether the use of recycled water poses a health risk to firefighters.

Working collaboratively has led to great outcomes in efficiency and cost reduction. The recent Collaborative Purchasing Initiative has seen cost savings in the order of \$3.1 million flow to member agencies This Initiative is managed through the Collaborative Purchasing Group who work on the guidelines, contracts and logistics.



A Common System of Operation

AFAC has developed the Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS), a scalable incident management framework that can be applied to all emergency incidents as they develop. The framework has been adopted by Australian fire, land management and emergency service agencies as the standard. AIIMS supports agencies to effectively manage incidents and interoperate in times of emergency.

In addition, AFAC has developed a comprehensive training regime that supports the AIIMS standard and licenses various providers to deliver entry level programs. A wide range of AIIMS training products and support tools have also been developed.

Interaction and Knowledge Sharing

AFAC has developed an innovative approach to the creation and management of knowledge within the industry. The 'thinking and interaction' model is underpinning a range of initiatives to unlock the talent and knowledge across the industry.

The AFAC Knowledge Web has been created as an online presence that connects members and stakeholders to the most up to date and reliable information and research on emergency service management. The Knowledge Web provides a forum for our members to share ideas, work collaboratively and have their say and find out about forthcoming events, seminars and conferences. Membership is steadily growing and reaches across the world.

Fire Sector Qualifications

AFAC, through its representation on the Industry Advisory Committee of Government Fire Skills Australia, has been instrumental in developing the fire qualifications for the Public Safety Training Package. To support the effective implementation of these qualifications, AFAC has developed a comprehensive suite of training resource kits.

This major initiative ensures that our workforce competencies are transportable and nationally recognised and there is a consistent approach to training and assessment of all fire and emergency service personnel.

Advocacy

AFAC has represented the industry at a range of inquiries including the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, on standards bodies and at government and non-government forums.

Every year around 1,000 senior representatives from Australia and the Pacific region attend the AFAC and Bushfire CRC annual conference to network, share experiences and have their minds stretched by challenging national and international experts from a range of endeavours.



“The large cost savings achieved through collective purchasing agreements is testament to the power of collaboration, and strong relationships built on trust and respect.”

- Adrian Pyrke, Manager Fire Operations, Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service

members of AFAC

- AirServices Australia
- Australian Capital Territory Emergency Services Agency
- ACT Parks, Conservation and Lands
- Attorney General's Department National Security Capability Division
- Bushfires NT
- Country Fire Authority, Victoria
- Country Fire Service, South Australia
- Department of Community Safety Queensland Government - Queensland Fire and Rescue Service
- Department of Environment Climate Change and Water, NSW
- Department of Environment & Conservation, Western Australia
- Department for Environment & Heritage, SA
- Department of Environment and Resource Management, QLD
- Department of Sustainability & Environment, Victoria
- Emergency Management Queensland - State Emergency Service
- FESA State Emergency Service - Western Australia
- Fire & Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia
- Forests New South Wales
- Forestry SA
- Forestry Tasmania
- Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board, Melbourne
- New South Wales State Emergency Service
- New South Wales Fire Brigades
- New South Wales Rural Fire Service
- New Zealand Fire Service
- New Zealand National Rural Fire Authority
- Northern Territory Emergency Service
- Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service
- Parks Victoria
- Parks & Wildlife, Tasmania
- Queensland Parks and Wildlife Services
- South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service
- South Australian State Emergency Service
- Tasmania Fire Service
- Tasmania State Emergency Service
- Victoria State Emergency Service

affiliate AFAC members

- Australasian Road Rescue Organisation (ARRO)
- Bureau of Meteorology
- CSIRO Forestry & Forest Products
- Fire and Rescue Services Industry Training Organisation (FRSITO)
- Melbourne Water
- Pacific Islands Fire Service Association (PIFSA)
- New Zealand Department of Conservation
- Papua New Guinea Fire Service
- South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM)



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Level 5, 340 Albert Street,
East Melbourne, Victoria,
Australia, 3002

T +61 3 9419 2388

F +61 3 9419 2389

E afac@afac.com.au

www.afac.com.au

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