NSW GOVERNMENT

NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

# BUSH FIRE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CODE - SUPPORTING DOCUMENT

JANUARY 2022

# FIRE INTERVALS FOR STRATEGIC FIRE ADVANTAGE ZONES AND LAND MANAGEMENT ZONES

## Introduction

This document is a component of the Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code (Code). As such, a level of understanding of the Code will assist in comprehending this document, particularly in regard to matters such as terminology. The Code and related documents can be located at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au. The Code provides for a streamlined environmental assessment and approval process for bush fire hazard reduction works under certain circumstances. A Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Certificate (Certificate) is a form of environmental approval that may be issued in accordance with the Code.

This document has been prepared by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment [Environment, Energy and Science Group (EES)] in consultation with the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) to reflect current knowledge surrounding fire intervals for vegetation classes in NSW. It provides the following Fire Interval Table to support Clauses 5.4.3 and 5.4.4 of the Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code.

The fire intervals have been informed by the *Guidelines for Ecologically Sustainable Fire Management* (Kenny et al 2004).

The terms Vegetation Formation and Vegetation Class follow the statewide vegetation classification hierarchy in Keith (2004).

The fire intervals in the Fire Interval Table for SFAZs and LMZs are based on current best available data and may be reassessed as new data becomes available. The fire intervals may be modified by Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (Environment, Energy and Science Group) with the approval of the NSW RFS. Modifications to the fire intervals may be considered on the basis of scientific merit.

**NB**: *SFAZ refers to Strategic Fire Management Zones and LMZ refers to Land Management Zones.*

## Fire Interval Table for SFAZs and LMZs

| VEGETATION FORMATION | VEGETATION CLASS | MINIMUM FIRE INTERVAL FOR SFAZ (YEARS) | MINIMUM FIRE INTERVAL FOR LMZ (YEARS) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Alpine Complex** | Alpine Heaths | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Alpine Fjaeldmarks | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Alpine Herbfields | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Alpine Bogs and Fens | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |

## Fire Interval Table for SFAZs and LMZs *cont.*

| VEGETATION FORMATION | VEGETATION CLASS | MINIMUM FIRE INTERVAL FOR SFAZ (YEARS) | MINIMUM FIRE INTERVAL FOR LMZ (YEARS) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Arid Shrublands (Acacia subformation)** | Gibber Transition Shrublands | 10 | 15 |
| | North-west Plain Shrublands | 10 | 15 |
| | Stony Desert Mulga Shrublands | 10 | 15 |
| | Sand Plain Mulga Shrublands | 10 | 15 |
| **Arid Shrublands (Chenopod subformation)** | Riverine Chenopod Shrublands | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Aeolian Chenopod Shrublands | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Gibber Chenopod Shrublands | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| **Dry Sclerophyll Forests (Shrub/grass subformation)** | Central Gorge Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 5 | 8 |
| | Clarence Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 5 | 8 |
| | Cumberland Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 5 | 8 |
| | Hunter-Macleay Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 5 | 8 |
| | New England Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 5 | 8 |
| | Northern Gorge Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 5 | 8 |
| | North-west Slopes Dry Sclerophyll Woodlands | 5 | 8 |
| | Southern Hinterland Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 5 | 8 |
| | Upper Riverina Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 5 | 8 |
| | Pilliga Outwash Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 5 | 8 |
| **Dry Sclerophyll Forests (Shrubby subformation)** | Coastal Dune Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | North Coast Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | Northern Escarpment Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | Northern Tableland Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | South Coast Sands Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | South East Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | Southern Tableland Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | Southern Wattle Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | Sydney Coastal Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | Sydney Hinterland Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | Sydney Montane Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | Sydney Sand Flats Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | Western Slopes Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | Yetman Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| **Forested Wetlands** | Coastal Floodplain Wetlands | 7 | 10 |
| | Coastal Swamp Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | Eastern Riverine Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | Inland Riverine Forests | 7 | 10 |

| VEGETATION FORMATION | VEGETATION CLASS | MINIMUM FIRE INTERVAL FOR SFAZ (YEARS) | MINIMUM FIRE INTERVAL FOR LMZ (YEARS) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Freshwater Wetlands** | Coastal Freshwater Lagoons | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Coastal Heath Swamps | 7 | 10 |
| | Inland Floodplain Shrublands | 7 | 10 |
| | Inland Floodplain Swamps | 7 | 10 |
| | Montane Bogs and Fens | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Montane Lakes | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| **Grasslands** | Maritime Grasslands | 2 | 3 |
| | Riverine Plain Grasslands | 2 | 3 |
| | Semi-arid Floodplain Grasslands | 2 | 3 |
| | Temperate Montane Grasslands | 2 | 3 |
| | Western Slopes Grasslands | 2 | 3 |
| **Grassy Woodlands** | Coastal Valley Grassy Woodlands | 5 | 8 |
| | Floodplain Transition Woodlands | 5 | 8 |
| | New England Grassy Woodlands | 5 | 8 |
| | Southern Tableland Grassy Woodlands | 5 | 8 |
| | Subalpine Woodlands | 5 | 8 |
| | Tableland Clay Grassy Woodlands | 5 | 8 |
| | Western Slopes Grassy Woodlands | 5 | 8 |
| **Heathlands** | Coastal Headland Heaths | 7 | 10 |
| | Cumberland Dry Sclerophyll Forests | 7 | 10 |
| | South Coast Heaths | 7 | 10 |
| | Southern Montane Heaths | 7 | 10 |
| | Northern Montane Heaths | 7 | 10 |
| | Sydney Coastal Heaths | 7 | 10 |
| | Sydney Montane Heaths | 7 | 10 |
| | Wallum Sand Heaths | 7 | 10 |
| **Rainforests** | Subtropical Rainforests | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Northern Warm Temperate Rainforests | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Cool Temperate Rainforests | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Dry Rainforests | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Littoral Rainforests | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Southern Warm Temperate Rainforests | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Western Vine Thickets | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |

## Fire Interval Table for SFAZs and LMZs *cont.*

| VEGETATION FORMATION | VEGETATION CLASS | MINIMUM FIRE INTERVAL FOR SFAZ (YEARS) | MINIMUM FIRE INTERVAL FOR LMZ (YEARS) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Saline Wetlands** | Mangrove Swamps | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Saltmarshes | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Seagrass Meadows | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| | Inland Saline Lakes | No burning permitted | No burning permitted |
| **Semi-arid Woodlands (Grassy subformation)** | Brigalow Clay Plain Woodlands | 6 | 9 |
| | Inland Floodplain Woodlands | 6 | 9 |
| | North-west Floodplain Woodlands | 6 | 9 |
| | Riverine Plain Woodlands | 6 | 9 |
| **Semi-arid Woodlands (Shrubby subformation)** | Desert Woodlands | 10 | 15 |
| | Dune Mallee Woodlands | 10 | 15 |
| | Inland Rocky Hill Woodlands | 10 | 15 |
| | North-west Alluvial Sand Woodlands | 10 | 15 |
| | Riverine Sandhill Woodlands | 10 | 15 |
| | Sand Plain Mallee Woodlands | 10 | 15 |
| | Semi-arid Sand Plain Woodlands | 10 | 15 |
| | Subtropical Semi-arid Woodlands | 10 | 15 |
| | Western Peneplain Woodlands | 10 | 15 |
| **Wet Sclerophyll Forests (Grassy subformation)** | Montane Wet Sclerophyll Forests | 10 | 15 |
| | Northern Hinterland Wet Sclerophyll Forests | 10 | 15 |
| | Northern Tableland Wet Sclerophyll Forests | 10 | 15 |
| | Southern Lowland Wet Sclerophyll Forests | 10 | 15 |
| | Southern Tableland Wet Sclerophyll Forests | 10 | 15 |
| **Wet Sclerophyll Forests (Shrubby subformation)** | North Coast Wet Sclerophyll Forests | 15 | 30 |
| | Northern Escarpment Wet Sclerophyll Forests | 15 | 30 |
| | South Coast Wet Sclerophyll Forests | 15 | 30 |
| | Southern Escarpment Wet Sclerophyll Forests | 15 | 30 |

**References:**

**Keith, D.** (2004) *Ocean Shores to Desert Dunes: the native vegetation of New South Wales and the ACT.* DIPNR (NSW) and NSW Department of Environment and Conservation.

**Kenny, B. Sutherland, E. Tasker, E. Bradstock, R.** (2004). *Guidelines for Ecologically Sustainable Fire Management*. N.S.W. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Hurstville, N.S.W.