

## Activity 6.7: Rural Fire Management

### Accountable Manager: Murray Sinclair

#### What services are provided?

- 🚒 Rural Fire reduction, readiness and response (including within the Christchurch City Council area and rural fire management support for other Canterbury Rural Fire Authorities)
- 🚒 Training of rural fire response personnel including Voluntary Rural Fire Force members

#### Why do we provide these services?

To protect life, property and the natural environment from the threat of rural fires.  
 To respond to any rural fire within the Christchurch City Council Rural Fire Authority jurisdiction  
 To increase communities awareness of the risk and associated mitigation measures.  
 To meet the Council's statutory obligations as a Rural Fire Authority.

Note:

- 1) CCC is involved in consideration of an Enlarged Rural Fire District for Canterbury in line with the National Rural Fire Authority's 2009 – 2014 Strategic Plan;
  - 2) A review of fire management on Banks Peninsula is to be undertaken.
- Both these reviews may change the services provided.

What outcomes are we trying to achieve?	How do the services contribute to desired outcomes?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🚒 Risks from natural hazards are minimised including earthquakes, flooding, tsunami and rock fall are minimised</li> </ul>	<p><i>Public education and the management of rural fire permits contribute to the prevention of rural fires</i></p> <p><i>Maintaining a rural fire fighting readiness and response service and the training fire fighting personnel enables an effective response</i></p>
<p>Landscapes and natural features are protected and enhanced</p>	<p><i>Preventing and responding to rural fires helps protect the landscape and natural features of Banks Peninsula and Port Hills</i></p> <p><i>Preventing and responding to rural fires helps protect the natural values of coastal landscapes</i></p>
<p>Existing ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity are protected</p>	<p><i>Preventing and responding to rural fires helps protect ecosystems, sites and habitats</i></p>
<p>Sites and places of significance to tangata whenua are protected</p>	<p><i>Preventing and responding to rural fires helps protect sites of significance to tangata whenua</i></p>

#### Which group or section of the community will benefit from this activity?:

The rural community and visitors to rural areas, those people living in residential areas adjacent to rural land, Emergency Services, Forest Owners, Environment Canterbury, Canterbury territorial authorities, Department of Conservation.

#### Key legislation:

Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977 and Regulations 2005; Fire Service Act 1975; Christchurch City Urban Fire Safety Bylaw 2007; National Rural Fire Authority Strategic Plan, policies, and guidelines.

## Customer

*What business results must we deliver to our customers, to deliver on the outcomes?*

### Performance Standards for LTP

Performance Standards for LTP	Current performance	Benchmarks	Recommended LOS	Rationale	LTP Committee Direction
<b>Rural Fire Reduction, Readiness and Response</b>					
6.7.1 An approved and operative Rural Fire Plan is in place	At all times	The Forest & Rural Fires Act (the Act) requires a written Rural Fire Plan be in place that meets the Forest and Rural Fire Regulations and the National Rural Fire Authority's (NRFA's) requirements.  All Rural Fire Authorities have an operative Rural Fire Plan in place.	Plan is reviewed annually, by 1 October	<b>Key business driver</b> The Rural Fire Plan sets out the actions for reduction, readiness, response, and recovery phases. The Plan also provides information for the Principal Rural Fire Officer and Rural Fire Officers on the effective management of rural fire within Christchurch City Council's area. This Rural Fire Plan is required to be approved by the Council as the Fire Authority.	<i>accepted</i>
6.7.2 Respond to requests from the NZ Fire Service for fire fighting resources (personnel and equipment)	Response turnout initiated within 30 minutes from NZ Fire Service call for assistance.	The Act requires the Council to respond to rural fires and carry out fire control measures.  Waimakariri DC: response initiated within 60 minutes. Dept of Conservation and Selwyn DC: response initiated within 30 minutes.  Ashburton DC: response initiated within 10 minutes	Response turnout initiated within 30 minutes from NZ Fire Service call for assistance.	The Fire Service responds to all fires including fires in rural areas. For rural fires, the Fire Service generally responds for the first hour at which stage responsibility is past to the Rural Fire Authority. Where the NZ Fire Service continues its involvement beyond one hour, it will charge the Rural Fire Authority for fire suppression costs beyond the first hour. The NZ Fire Service will immediately notify the Fire Authority of a fire in the Fire Authority's area. A call for assistance will be initiated by the NZ Fire Service if they require additional resources. The 30 minute response time is measured from the time the NZ Fire Service call for assistance.  Rural fire appliances and equipment are strategically placed at sites throughout the rural parts of the Council's area.	<i>accepted</i>

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### Performance Standards for LTP

Performance Standards for LTP	Current performance	Benchmarks	Recommended LOS	Rationale	LTP Committee Direction
<b>Rural Fire Reduction, Readiness and Response (cont'd)</b>					
6.7.3 Issue fire permits	80% within 3 working days  95% within 5 working days  2011/12 actual was 98% within 3 days	The Act requires in the case of a restricted season that any permit issued for an open fire in rural areas be recorded in writing, noting any conditions which shall apply.	At least 90% within 3 working days.	<p>Fire permits are issued to ensure requested burning is able to be done in a safe environment and at a safe time.</p> <p>Inspections undertaken prior to the issuing of a fire permit enables the Rural Fire Officer to determine if it is safe for the member of the public to light a fire in the open and where necessary set appropriate conditions. From time to time an additional inspection is required due to specific conditions not being adequate at the time of the initial inspection.</p> <p>The 3 day timeframe may not be achievable where fire permits are to be issued for residents living in remote parts of Banks Peninsula. In such cases there will be an undertaking to issue within 5 working days.</p> <p>100% LOS is not achievable due to some incidents whereby the applicant fails to meet safety requirements. In these cases an additional inspection is required prior to the permit being issued.</p>	<i>accepted</i>

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### Performance Standards for LTP

Performance Standards for LTP	Current performance	Benchmarks	Recommended LOS	Rationale	LTP Committee Direction
<b>Rural Fire Reduction, Readiness and Response (cont'd)</b>					
6.7.4 Public education undertaken to increase communities awareness and preparedness	Public notice in the daily newspaper prior to fire season change.  Signage changed within 7 days of any fire season change.	All Fire Authorities are to erect signage and place notices in newspapers in accordance with statutory requirements.	6.7.4.1 A rural fire communication plan is in place.  6.7.4.2 Public notice in the daily newspaper prior to fire season change.  6.7.4.3 Signage changed within 7 days of any fire season change.	<b>Key business driver</b> The CCC Rural Fire Authority's Fire Plan states that a public education programme aimed at changing people's behaviour through awareness and knowledge is on-going through provision of information.  The intent of the communication plan is to raise community awareness around the risk and consequence of rural fires. Public notification and signage relating to fire seasons will be included within the communication plan.	<i>accepted</i>

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### Performance Standards for LTP

Performance Standards for LTP	Current performance	Benchmarks	Recommended LOS	Rationale	LTP Committee Direction
<b>Training of rural fire response personnel including voluntary rural fire force members</b>					
<p>6.7.6 Fire fighting personnel meet National Rural Fire Authority (NRFA) minimum training standards.</p>	<p>100% of paid personnel meet the new standards or are in training. (100 paid staff and contract staff)</p> <p>2009/10 25% of Voluntary Rural Fire Force members meet the new standards or are in training by 30 June 2010. (Approx. 50 volunteers)</p> <p>2012/13 75% of Voluntary Rural Fire Force members meet the new standards or are in training by 30 June 2013. (Approx. 50 volunteers)</p> <p>Actual 2011/12 95–100% paid staff 30–40% volunteers</p>	<p>The Forest and Rural Fires Act states that “every Fire Authority must comply with the standards set by the NRFA.”</p> <p>Auckland Council Percentage of rural fire fighters that meet national training standards – current baseline 87%</p>	<p>6.7.6.1 95% of paid personnel meet the relevant training standards for their role (Approx. 100 paid staff and contract staff in total)</p> <p>6.7.6.2 2013/14 50% of Voluntary Rural Fire Force members meet the relevant standards for the rural fire role. (out of approx. 100 volunteers in total)</p> <p>2014/15 (ongoing) 75% of Voluntary Rural Fire Force members meet the relevant standards for the rural fire role. (out of approx. 100 volunteers in total)</p>	<p><b>Key Business Driver</b> Currently, there are approximately 200 personnel involved in rural fire fighting (including volunteers).</p> <p>The NRFA set minimum training standards for the rural fire roles of Crew Leader, Fire Fighter, and Fire Ground Entry from 1 July 2008. All fire fighters are to meet the minimum standards prior to going onto the fire ground. Furthermore, all personnel involved with rural fire are required to maintain competency i.e. either participate in exercises or attend an actual fire within two years of gaining the standard.</p> <p>Failure to comply with these standards could result in the NRFA not reimbursing Fire Authorities those fire fighting costs they are eligible to recover.</p> <p>It is not practical to achieve 100% of training standards due to staff changes and the unpredictable nature of volunteer engagement. Achieving high volunteer training rates is likely to be difficult due to the time commitment required of volunteers to undertake the necessary training.</p> <p>Minimum fire ground entry is imperative for all fire ground operations.</p>	<i>accepted</i>

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### Non-LTP Performance Standards

Non-LTP Performance Standards	Current performance	Benchmarks	Recommended LOS	Rationale	LTP Committee Direction
<b>Rural Fire Reduction, Readiness and Response (cont'd)</b>					
<p>6.7.5 Fire equipment meets the National Rural Fire Authority's (NRFA's) audit standards.</p>	<p>6.7.5.1 Annual inspection of all equipment is undertaken.</p> <p>6.7.5.2 Quarterly inspections of pumps and personal protective equipment is undertaken.</p> <p>6.7.5.3 Corrective action is undertaken where equipment fails to meet audit standards.</p>	<p>The Forest and Rural Fires Act states that "every Fire Authority must comply with the standards set by the NRFA."</p> <p>All Fire Authorities endeavour to meet the NRFA's standards.</p>	<p>Inspection of equipment is undertaken on a quarterly basis as specified by the National Rural Fire Authority standards.</p>	<p><b>Key business driver</b></p> <p>The NRFA's standards regarding equipment requires that pumps are tested and personal protective equipment is inspected every quarter and that an annual inspection of all equipment is undertaken.</p> <p>The Council has equipment located at 16 sites around the City and on Banks Peninsula. It is necessary to visit each location to test and check equipment quarterly.</p> <p>Failure to comply with these standards could result in the NRFA not reimbursing Fire Authorities those fire fighting costs they are eligible to recover.</p> <p>The Council is externally audited by NRFA to ensure their standards are met.</p>	<p><b><i>accepted</i></b></p>