

# Updating South Australia's Bushfire Hazard Mapping and Planning Rules



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The State Planning Commission is seeking your feedback on proposed changes to bushfire hazard mapping and planning rules in the Planning and Design Code.

## Why the mapping and planning rules are being updated

In May 2022, the South Australian Government declared a climate emergency. Climate change is expected to result in more frequent and intense extreme weather events. Severe bushfires will occur more often and, without action, will have devastating impacts on our communities.

Advances in our ability to monitor fire fuel loads in the environment and our understanding of bushfire behaviour enable new methods to be used to update mapping, providing a more contemporary and accurate reflection of bushfire hazard.

The proposed changes to the Planning and Design Code aim to better reflect bushfire risk across the state and introduce new rules to help save lives and build more climate-resilient communities.

## Draft Code Amendment overview

Bushfire hazard overlays define the level of bushfire risk that applies to an area and the Code applies specific planning rules to development types based on the risk level.

The draft State-wide Bushfire Hazards Overlay Code Amendment proposes to:

- review and update the mapping of the current six bushfire hazard overlays
- improve the planning rules applying in each of these overlays
- ensure the right measures are in place to keep our state's people, property, infrastructure, economy and environments as safe as possible.

The draft Code Amendment also proposes to enable future updates to bushfire hazard mapping without undertaking a Code Amendment, to make the mapping update process more efficient.



## Developing updated mapping

The Department for Trade and Investment's Planning and Land Use Services division worked with the Department of Environment and Water, Country Fire Service, other state emergency service organisations and councils to review the existing bushfire hazard overlays and prepare new bushfire hazard mapping for the state, including for previously unmapped areas.

The new mapping incorporates more recent vegetation extent data and grassfire fuel modelling, including farm cropping and grazing vegetation, and amended forest modelling to identify and incorporate small-scale patches of forest.

## Reducing the number of overlays

The draft Code Amendment seeks to introduce one Hazards (Bushfire) Overlay, which will define 'high', 'medium' and 'general' bushfire risk areas.

This new overlay would replace the three existing Hazards (Bushfire – High), Hazards (Bushfire – Medium) and Hazards (Bushfire – General) overlays.

The Hazards (Bushfire – Regional) Overlay would be removed because bushfire hazard mapping has now been undertaken for these areas.

## Impacts for new development

A development application proposing development of land in the Hazards (Bushfire) Overlay would be assessed against the planning rules that apply to that land, which may vary based on whether the land's bushfire risk level is high, medium or general.

These rules can also affect the assessment pathway for specific development types and be used to determine if a development requires a formal referral to the Country Fire Service and a Bushfire Attack Level assessment.

The level of bushfire risk applied to your property may increase or decrease from the current level, based on the updated mapping data and new bushfire hazard mapping method.

A more streamlined 'deemed-to-satisfy' assessment pathway for particular types of development is also proposed, including for habitable buildings and minor structures like carports and verandahs outside the high bushfire risk area, where the proposed development meets minimum standards.

## Changes to building standards

Draft amendments to the state's Ministerial Building Standard are also being prepared to align with the proposed Code Amendment and recent updates to the National Construction Code. The state's Ministerial Building Standard sets out additional fire safety provisions to those required by the National Construction Code for bushfire resistance of new housing.

Community will be invited to provide their feedback on these proposed changes in early 2024.

## Have your say

Provide your feedback by 5 pm on Friday, 5 April 2024 by:

- visiting the YourSAy website and taking our survey
- attending an online or in-person information session
- emailing [plansasubmissions@sa.gov.au](mailto:plansasubmissions@sa.gov.au) with the subject: Submission – State-wide Bushfire Hazards Overlay Code Amendment
- posting your submission to:

Submission – State-wide Bushfire Hazards Overlay Code Amendment  
State Planning Commission  
Department for Trade and Investment  
GPO Box 1815, ADELAIDE SA 5001.

## Next steps

All feedback will be considered in finalising the draft Code Amendment and in preparing an engagement report for the Minister's decision.

The updated bushfire hazard mapping will then be incorporated into the bushfire hazard overlays of the South Australian Property and Planning Atlas (SAPPA).

## Find out more

To view the proposed bushfire hazard mapping and find out more about all of the changes proposed in the draft Code Amendment, community information sessions and submitting your feedback, visit the YourSAy website: [yoursay.sa.gov.au/state-wide-bushfire-hazards-code-amendment](https://yoursay.sa.gov.au/state-wide-bushfire-hazards-code-amendment).

Hard copies of the draft Code Amendment are available for viewing during standard business hours at Level 9, 83 Pirie Street, ADELAIDE SA 5000.