

Fire Protection Policy

for Caravan Parks on Crown Reserves and Leasehold Lands



Version 1

Prepared by: Crown Lands Division

Department of Lands

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1. Introduction

There are about 300 areas of Crown land in NSW used for caravan parks, many of which also provide camping sites. The majority of these areas are reserved or dedicated for public purposes and managed by trust managers, usually local councils. Others are held under lease from the Department of Lands.

Fire in caravan parks and camp sites, poses a significant risk to people's lives and property. In recent years there have been a number of deaths in caravan and camp sites in New South Wales resulting from fire. The fire threat can be internal e.g. from gas stoves, or external e.g. from bush fires on adjoining lands or fire on other camp sites.

This policy is provided for park managers to ensure compliance with fire safety requirements within caravan parks particular in bush fire prone areas. The general section of the policy is applicable to all caravan parks on Crown land as all land managers have obligations under the *Rural Fires Act 1997* and the *Local Government (Caravan Parks, Camping Grounds and Moveable Dwellings) Regulation 1995*.

In addition, many Crown caravan parks are within bushfire prone lands (as defined under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979* and identified on maps prepared by the Rural Fire Service or local government). These parks have additional requirements which address the threat of bush fire.

2. Policy Requirements

General (*applicable to all caravan parks on Crown land*)

- 2.1 All caravan parks on Crown lands are to comply with all statutory requirements, by laws and regulations relating to the safety of persons or property, particularly with respect to the *Local Government (Caravan Parks, Camping Grounds and Moveable Dwellings) Regulation 1995*.
- 2.2 All fire protection systems (eg hydrants, hoses and extinguishers) must comply with Australian Standards and be operative at all times. These fire protection systems must be regularly inspected and serviced as per the Australian Standards.
- 2.3 All on-site caravans and cabins are to have as a condition of their occupation on Crown lands, that:
 - the roof, gutters and site are regularly maintained to ensure that a build up of combustible materials, such as leaves and twigs does not occur, and
 - they must be fitted with a smoke alarm, appropriate dry chemical extinguisher, and fire blanket.
- 2.4 All private caravans are to be mobile at all times and be fitted with a smoke alarm, dry chemical extinguisher and a fire blanket.
- 2.5 Caravan park managers are to ensure all caravan and camp sites have appropriate separation to prevent ignition from each other. The local fire authority or the council should be able to provide advice on this.

- 2.6 At a minimum of every three years, an invitation should be given to the local fire authority to visit the park so that they can become familiar with the layout of the park as well as the location and type of fire hydrants.
- 2.7 The local government regulation requires that hydrants and hose reels must be provided at caravan parks and many camping areas. This regulation must be complied with at all times.
- 2.8 There are no legislative requirements for caravan parks to have fire trucks. Fire trucks may be used in addition to, but not instead of, hoses and hydrants provided both the truck and personnel using the truck meet all appropriate occupational health and safety requirements including (but not limited to) those relating to training, personal protective clothing, standard operating procedures, communication systems, and the equipment being appropriate and fully operational at all times.

Bush Fire Prone Lands (*applicable to caravan parks on bush fire prone Crown land*)

- 2.9 Maps showing bush fire prone land are produced under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. These maps can be viewed at Council offices and Rural Fire Service fire control centres.
- 2.10 Park managers for all caravan parks and camping grounds on bush fire prone lands must establish and maintain appropriate asset protection zones as per advise from the local fire authority. Asset protection zones must be within the existing park boundaries and not on adjoining Crown lands i.e. the areas of Crown land occupied by existing caravan parks and camping grounds within Crown reserves is not to be increased to facilitate asset protection zones.
- 2.11 Parks are to set appropriate limits of vehicles and occupants per site and ensure compliance at all times. Most sites would normally accommodate a maximum of 6 occupants and one motor vehicle.
- 2.12 Evacuation procedures must be developed by the park manager in consultation with local emergency authorities and provided to all occupants. The procedures must take into account the number of sites in the park, the number of exit points available, whether exits are vehicular or pedestrian, recommendations for more exits or relocation if existing exits are inappropriate or dangerous, other users (e.g. residents of adjacent villages) who may be using the area at the time of an emergency, and assembly areas.
- 2.13 Areas in and around caravan sites and camping areas are to provide an appropriate level of fuel management of understorey species. This does not mean that all native vegetation needs to be removed. Consult with your local fire authority and ensure that any necessary approvals have been acquired prior to any clearing.

3 Further Information

- 3.1 The NSW Fire Brigade or the Rural Fire Service (whichever is appropriate for your area) are a valuable source of advice on many matters referred to in this policy document.
- 3.2 *A Guide to Planning for Bushfire Protection 2001* provides assistance for managers of caravan parks located on bush fire prone lands, and can be accessed at www.rfs.nsw.gov.au.
- 3.3 A variety of Australian Standards are available at www.standards.com.au.
- 3.4 Commercial fire consultants, if required, can be found under 'Fire Protection Equipment and Consultants' in the *Yellow Pages*.

Annexure 'A'

Crown Lands Act 1989

Objects of Act

10. The objects of this Act are to ensure that Crown land is managed for the benefit of the people of New South Wales and in particular to provide for:
 - a) a proper assessment of Crown land;
 - b) the management of Crown land having regard to the principles of Crown land management contained in this Act;
 - c) the proper development and conservation of Crown land having regard to those principles;
 - d) the regulation of the conditions under which Crown land is permitted to be occupied, used, sold, leased, licensed or otherwise dealt with;
 - e) the reservation or dedication of Crown land for public purposes and the management and use of the reserved or dedicated land; and
 - f) the collection, recording and dissemination of information in relation to Crown land.

Principles of Crown land management

11. For the purposes of this Act, the principles of Crown land management are:
 - a) that environmental protection principles be observed in relation to the management and administration of Crown land;
 - b) that the natural resources of Crown land (including water, soil, flora, fauna and scenic quality) be conserved wherever possible;
 - c) that public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged;
 - d) that, where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged;
 - e) that, where appropriate, Crown land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity; and
 - f) that Crown land be occupied, used, sold, leased, licensed or otherwise dealt with in the best interests of the State consistent with the above principles.

Annexure 'B'

Crown Land NSW Offices

Should you require any further information regarding this matter please contact the relevant Crown Lands NSW Office of the Department of Lands.

Office	Address	Postal Address	City or Town	Contacts
Armidale	108 Faulkner Street	PO Box 199A	Armidale 2350	T (02) 6772 2308 F (02) 6772 8782
Dubbo	142 Brisbane Street	PO Box 865	Dubbo 2830	T (02) 6841 5200 F (02) 6841 5230
Goulburn	159 Auburn Street	PO Box 748	Goulburn 2580	T (02) 4828 6725 F (02) 4828 6730
Grafton	76 Victoria Street	Locked Bag 10	Grafton 2460	T (02) 6640 2020 F (02) 6640 2036
Griffith	120-130 Banna Avenue	PO Box 1030	Griffith 2680	T (02) 6962 7522 F (02) 6962 5670
Hay	126 Lachlan Street	PO Box 182	Hay 2711	T (02) 6993 1306 F (02) 6993 1135
Maitland	Cnr Newcastle Road and Banks Street	PO Box 6	East Maitland 2323	T (02) 4937 9300 F (02) 4934 2252
Moree	Cnr Frome and Heber Streets	PO Box 388	Moree 2400	T (02) 6752 5055 F (02) 6752 1707
Nowra	Level 1, 5 O'Keefe Avenue	PO Box 309	Nowra 2541	T (02) 4428 6900 F (02) 4428 6988
Orange	92 Kite Street	PO Box 2146	Orange 2800	T (02) 6393 4333 F (02) 6362 3896
Parramatta	Level 12, 10 Valentine Avenue	PO Box 3935	Parramatta 2124	T (02) 9895 6275 F (02) 9895 6227
Tamworth	25-27 Fitzroy Street	PO Box 535	Tamworth 2340	T (02) 6764 5100 F (02) 6766 3805
Taree	98 Victoria Street	PO Box 440	Taree 2430	T (02) 6552 2788 F (02) 6552 2816
Wagga Wagga	Cnr Johnston and Tarcutta Streets	PO Box 60	Wagga Wagga 2650	T (02) 6937 2700 F (02) 6921 1851