

# Operation Synergy overview 2018-2019





# The background



# Predictions for Operation Synergy

**HAZARD NOTE**

ISSUE 06 (10 JULY 2018) 1000  
 TOPICS IN THIS SECTION | FIRE ACTS | FIRE SERVICES | FIRE WEATHER

**SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA SEASONAL BUSHFIRE OUTLOOK 2018**

**OVERVIEW**  
 The southern Australian bushfire season is expected to be above average in 2018. This is due to a combination of factors including above average rainfall in the winter and spring months, which has led to above average soil moisture and a high level of fuel availability. The outlook for southern Australia is above average for 2018. This is due to a combination of factors including above average rainfall in the winter and spring months, which has led to above average soil moisture and a high level of fuel availability.

**ANTICIPATED CONDITIONS**  
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**NORTHERN AUSTRALIA SEASONAL BUSHFIRE OUTLOOK 2018**

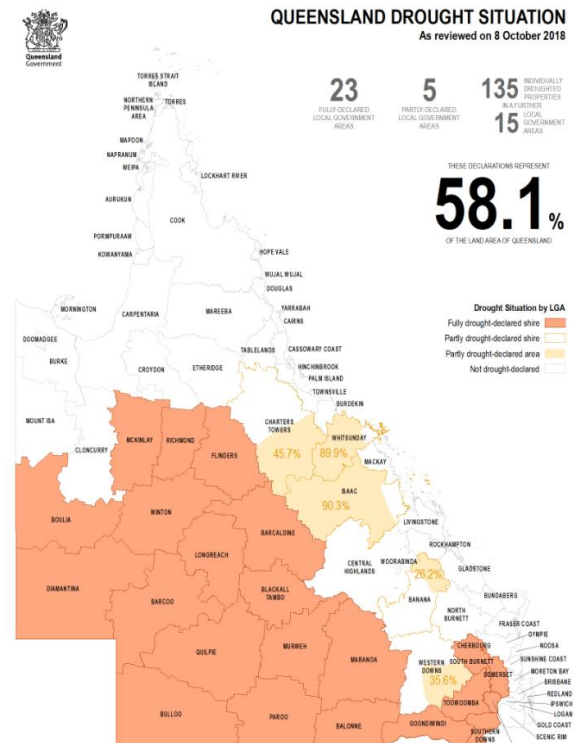
**OVERVIEW**  
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The Northern Australia Seasonal Bushfire Outlook 2018 (July 2018 updated September 2018) indicated an above normal fire potential for areas along the Central Coast, Whitsundays and the Capricornia, with normal fire potential for most other areas.



# Weather

**4<sup>th</sup>**  
Warmest  
November on  
Record

**1.42°C**  
Above Long-  
term Average

**45.2°C**  
Highest  
Recorded  
Temp

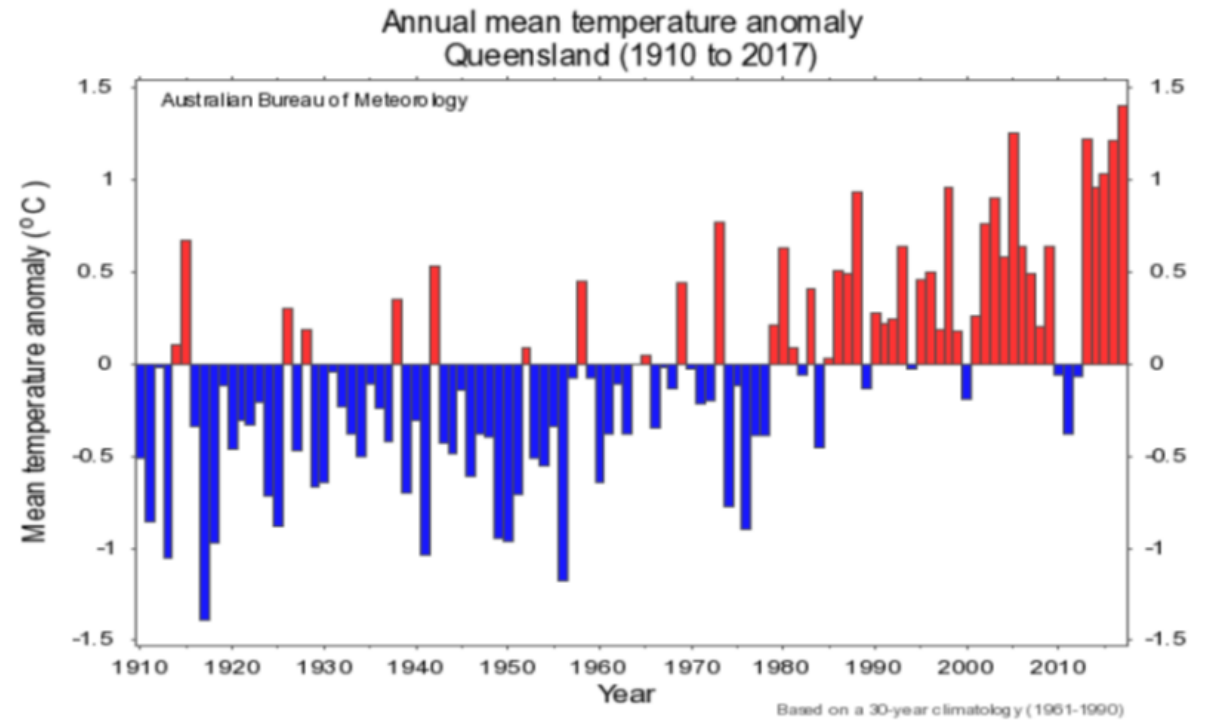


Record breaking high temperatures

Antecedent dry conditions – Eastern part of state drier than usual

Low RH

Prolonged heatwave conditions



# Climate Change

Tropical and Subtropical QLD has seen a 40% increase in bushfire frequency in the past 5 years

For the first time in QLD the FFDI reached over 130 triggering the catastrophic category

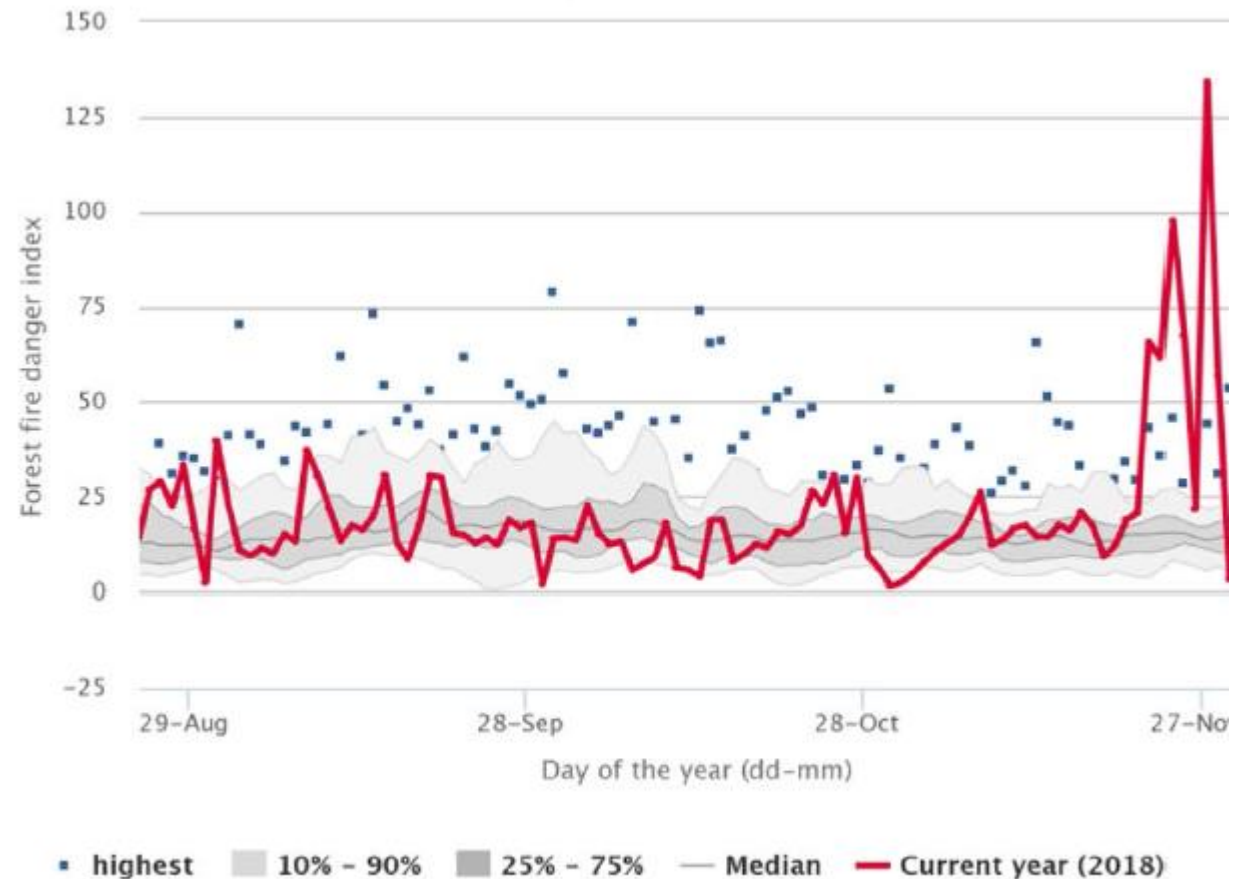


Figure 5 – Forest Fire Danger Index for Rockhampton area (Source Bureau of Meteorology, 2018)





# The events



# Continuous activity

## Internal deployments

September – Townsville

October – Tablelands

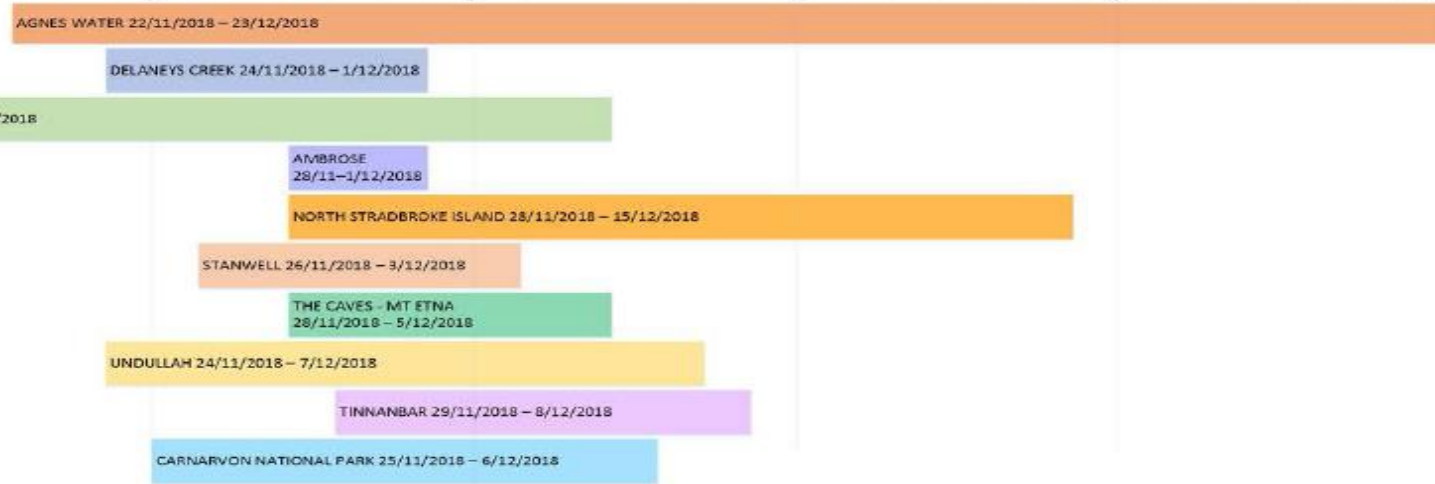
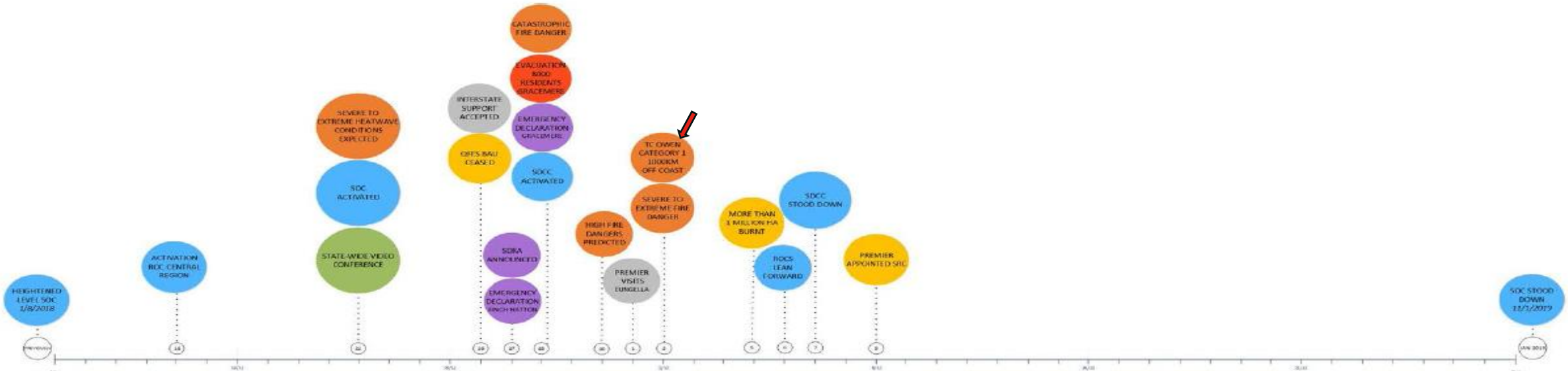
November – Central Queensland, Carnarvon and Frazer Coast

December till February – Frazer Coast, North Stradbroke (SE) and South West

## Interstate and Overseas

USA, Tasmania, New South Wales and Victoria



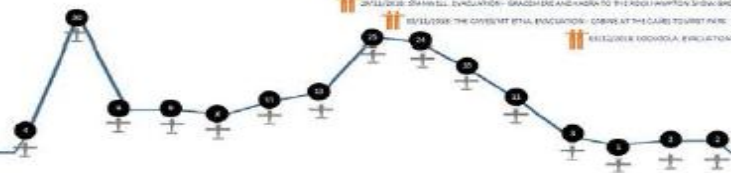


- 24/11/2018: FIRE CHAMBER BURNING - STANWELL
- 25/11/2018: LIGHTNING STRIKE - COME FROM NEAR BEACH NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND
- 26/11/2018: FIRE - FINCH HATTON - FINCH HATTON NATIONAL PARK
- 27/11/2018: POSSIBLY HEAVY DRAFT
- 28/11/2018: CARBONER ACE BURNING - CARBONER NATIONAL PARK
- 29/11/2018: AMBROSE FIRE - DEEP WATER AND NEARLY WINTER TO WINDY WAVE
- 29/11/2018: NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND - FIRE (LATION) - CHAMBER BURNING FROM 18 BALZ WARRIE
- 29/11/2018: CARBONER ACE BURNING - CARBONER NATIONAL PARK
- 29/11/2018: FINCH HATTON - FINCH HATTON NATIONAL PARK
- 29/11/2018: THE CAVES - MOUNT ETNA - COME AT THE CAVES TO MOUNT ETNA
- 29/11/2018: UNDULLAH - UNDULLAH - UNDULLAH NATIONAL PARK
- 29/11/2018: TINNANBAR - TINNANBAR - TINNANBAR NATIONAL PARK
- 29/11/2018: CARNARVON NATIONAL PARK - CARNARVON NATIONAL PARK

KEY:

- FIRES
- EVACUATIONS
- AIR SUPPORT

TOTAL 2,400,000 SQUARE METRES BURNED BY FIRE





Event Scale			
	1,248 Fires		8,000 calls to FireCom 2,600+ received on 28/11/2018
	17 Dwellings damaged 9 Dwellings destroyed		571 x Bushfire Community Warnings issued
	1 Indirect fatality		52 x Emergency Alerts to 1 million devices
	59 Aircraft utilised 47 Airborne at peak		44/77 LGA with Fire Bans
	3,000+ QFES personnel working day and night		SDCC & QDMC stood-up for 1 <sup>st</sup> time for bushfires
	1,200+ Firefighters from every state and territory		1.4m hectares burnt
	Increase of 42,400 QFES Facebook followers		640 Posts to QFES Facebook

Figure 1 – Summary of the Scale of Operation Synergy November to December 2018





# Lessons learnt



## Learnings from 2017-18 Bushfire Season

The 2017-18 bushfire season, known as Operation Thum Noon, started early and was very intense. In spite of the conditions, there was no loss of people, including firefighters, and loss of structures was very low. Although short in duration, significant changes were made during the season and the following key learnings were identified:

### Early Activation of Regional Operations Centres and the State Operation Centre

The early activation of ROCs and the SOC assisted with response preparedness, although some challenges with reporting and other processes were identified.

1

### Fire Bans and Permit Restrictions

Widespread local fire bans and permit restrictions for regions experiencing very high to severe fire danger ratings were well received by the community, heightening awareness of the need to avoid causing fires and ensuring public vigilance.

2

### Increasing Use of Predictive Services

The growing capacity to receive fire predictive information through trained Fire Behaviour Analysts in the regions and the Predictive Services Unit allows for informed and evidence-based decisions.

3

### Proactive Media Engagement

Early engagement with QFES Media ensured a consistent stream of information was delivered, ensuring the public were well informed and aware of the bushfire risk.

4

### Public Information Officers (PIOs)

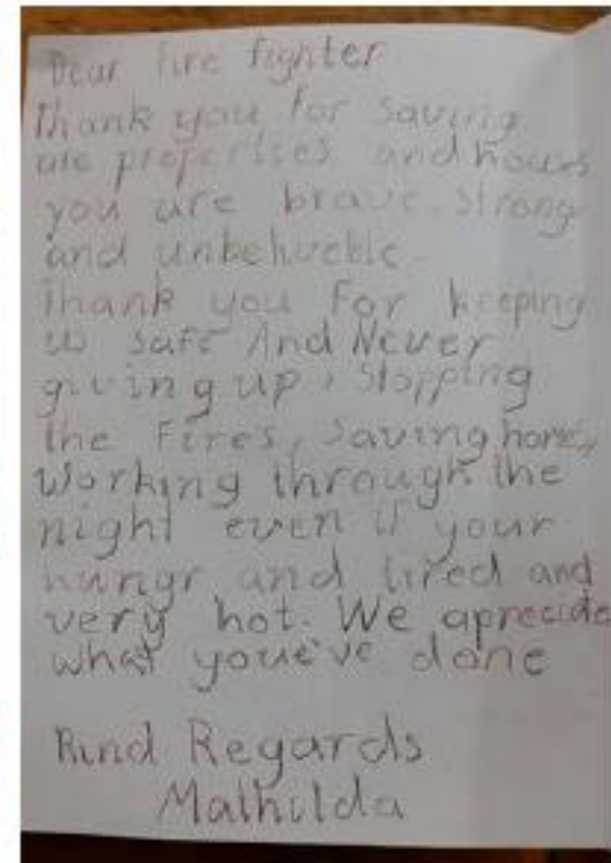
The need to proactively communicate with the community has seen the increase of the use of PIOs at significant incidents, identifying the need to include the PIO role within each Incident Management Team (IMT).

5



# What worked well?

- AIIMS methodology
- Lessons management
- Command and Control
- Aircraft operations
- Interstate Liaison (1200)
- Partnerships with stakeholders
- Community messaging and warnings



# Opportunities for improvements

- Commitment to AIIMS
- Interoperability and training
- Clarity of roles, structures and authority (C4I)
- Information management
- Facility standards
- Preplanning and strategic execution of plans
- Interstate liaison
- Logistics processes

