

Bushfire information database – scoping study



RESEARCH TEAM

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Project duration: 6 months

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS

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Background

[The 2020 Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements](#) and the 2020 NSW Independent Bushfire Inquiry both found that Australia does not have a national centralised bushfire information database that can be used to understand trends, including in bushfire intensity and extent, and the extent and efficacy of mitigation activities. This means that policy and decision-makers currently do not have access to all the credible information required for evidence-informed practice. Researchers will identify and determine current data and systems, current knowledge gaps, data needs and availability.

This project is aimed at scoping the knowledge gaps and data needs and availability for this database.

Project description

This scoping project is aimed at identifying and determining current data and systems, current knowledge gaps, data needs and availability – to provide recommendations on what an ideal National Bushfire Information Database could contain. For example, this might include elements such as bushfire history, intensity, the extent and tenure of monitored bushfire sites, case studies and post bushfire research.

The project will include an audit of current datasets, a sector needs analysis to inform a comprehensive gap analysis, a comparison of current datasets and systems with international practice, and the development of recommendations to inform the development of a national plan for the collection, use and accessibility of bushfire data – to address the range of industry and research needs.



Intended outcomes

This scoping study will provide an evidence base and recommendations that can be used to support the development of a National Bushfire Information Database, as well as contributing to developing a plan to achieve it. The research will build an informed understanding of the bushfire data landscape in Australia and provide guidance to assist in the development of a national plan to improve national bushfire data collection.

The four main outcomes of this interdisciplinary study include:

1. a holistic understanding of bushfire information databases across Australia, including the characteristics, limitations, use, and stakeholders associated with the data.
2. a systematic understanding of gaps as well as system integration challenges that will collectively provide the knowledge necessary for future development of a nationally consistent bushfire information database.
3. strengthened collaborations and knowledge transfer between emergency management professionals within and outside of Australia.
4. a guideline that can be used by federal and local agencies to prioritise future initiatives for efficient and impactful investments in moving towards bushfire analytics in Australia.

Translation and implementation potential

With the involvement of wide range of stakeholders, the outcomes of this project will be delivered as a report to provide the context of bushfire data in Australia, depicting the potential alternatives for a national database as well as unique characteristics that can be considered in this consolidated approach. Providing a comparative framework with international examples, the guideline and communications pieces will be tailored to the stakeholders for implementation in practice.

Further information

For full project details, head to www.naturalhazards.com.au/research/research-projects/bushfire-information-database-scoping-study
Or contact nicola.moore@naturalhazards.com.au.

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