# A new, nationally consistent Fire Danger Rating System.

Australia's Fire Danger Rating System has been improved and simplified to make it easier for you to make decisions to stay safe on days of fire danger risk.

The move to a simpler system is backed by improvements in science, which mean we can better predict areas of greater risk on days of fire danger.

Across the country, fire and emergency services have applied nationally consistent colours, signs and terminology. This means that wherever you go in Australia, and whatever the season or fuels you're surrounded with, you can understand the level of threat and what you need to do to stay safe.

The new ratings are:
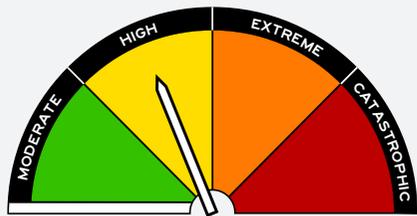
Moderate
Plan and prepare

High
Be ready to act

Extreme
Take action now to protect life and property

Catastrophic
For your survival, leave bushfire risk areas

Benefits

The Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) Program has redesiged the forecasting of fire by:

- Improving the scientific accuracy behind fire danger predictions.
- Improving the way that fire danger is communicated.
- Providing government and industry with better decision-making tools.
- Reducing the costs associated with bushfire impacts.

The key benefit is a more prepared and resilient community resulting in a reduction in loss of life, property and human harm.

The AFDRS calculates fire danger at a finer geographic scale than ever before so more specific and relevant information can be provided.

Significant cost savings are expected due to improved fire danger information leading to better decisions and more appropriate and timely action. It will also improve cross-border operations and support sharing of firefighting resources.

For more information visit dfes.wa.gov.au/prepare or email AFDRS@dfes.wa.gov.au

The Australian Fire Danger Rating System

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA | DFES Department of Fire & Emergency Services

HOW FIREPROOF IS YOUR PLAN?

AFDRS

YOUR FIRE RISK TODAY IS

MODERATE | HIGH | EXTREME | CATASTROPHIC
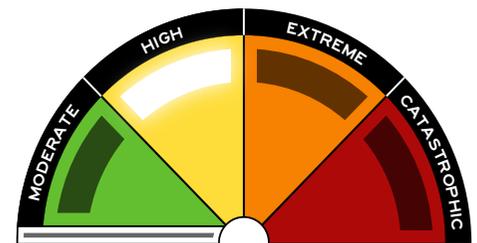
BE READY TO ACT
UPDATED 25/09/2022

Changing the science

The old Fire Danger Rating System was largely based on science that was more than 60 years old. New technology and research have greatly improved our ability to accurately predict fire behaviour and the potential threat to the community.

The AFDRS uses the latest scientific understanding about weather, fuel and how fire behaves in different types of vegetation to improve the reliability of fire danger forecasts. This strengthens the ability of those working in emergency services to be better prepared, make improved decisions and provide better advice to the community.

The AFDRS is designed to be updatable so that it can take advantage of improving science, data and information into the future.

By better understanding fuel types and fire behaviour on any given day of fire risk, agencies will be in a stronger position to respond to fires, adopting specific firefighting suppression strategies.

What are Fire Danger Ratings?
Fire Danger Ratings describe the potential level of danger should a bushfire start and are calculated using a combination of weather forecasting and information about vegetation that could fuel a fire.

Why did we reduce the number of ratings?
Extensive social research found that most people in bushfire risk areas didn't understand the old system. There were calls for a simpler, action-oriented system.

But with more fire danger days and prolonged fire seasons, shouldn't we be getting more information?
The science that sits behind Fire Danger Rating modelling has been improved. A better understanding of how different fuel types burn and improvements in technology means we can more accurately predict the risk faced by communities on any given day.

Photo: CFA

But I work in an industry that requires more specific fire danger information?
Industries and members of the community who need more information can access the Fire Behaviour Index, which will give a more in-depth level of detail about the fire danger.

The AFDRS doesn't look that different to the old system, so why did we change it?
Community research found that while most people were familiar with the old system, it just seemed too technical and irrelevant for them. We have made significant changes to how we calculate fire danger risk, so that the ratings and information provided to the community are more accurate.

Who is responsible for these changes?
The AFDRS Program has been coordinated by NSW RFS and AFAC (the National Council for Fire and Emergency Services), with support from the Bureau of Meteorology. A National Program Board, with representation from each of the State and Territories' fire agencies has overseen the program, which is being delivered by local implementation teams.