



MEMORANDUM

To: North Arm Cove Community

From: Ian Cook, Community Protection Planning Officer. Customer Service Centre (North)

Subject: **North Arm Cove Community Protection Plan**

Date: March 2016 **File No.** NAC CPP 2016 / 1

Dear Community

2016 is certainly off to a flying start. I cannot believe how quick Australia Day has disappeared from my memory and that we are now staring down the barrel to the Easter festivities.

I would imagine that most people in the community have noticed the activity over the past week in the Cove.

The upgrade to the hall was one of the proposals identified during the Community Protection Plan development. The majority of quotes for the scheduled upgrade to the hall have now been supplied and formal approval has been provided for those works to begin.

Over the coming weeks we will see the upgrade to the hall (NSP) take shape. These works have been a long time in planning and it will be extremely satisfying to see these proposed works come to fruition.

Vegetation management along The Ridgeway and installation of an APZ to the Telstra facility were 2 other proposals identified. These 2 projects were completed last Friday.

A contractor was engaged to slash the APZ that was installed for the establishment of the Neighbourhood Safer Place. Now may very well be a good time to throw out some lawn grass seed to help establish a nice grassy area for underfoot. This area was certainly looking quite clean and good during my last visit.

While the mitigation works are designed to increase protection to the community and for residents, it is ultimately the responsibility of each individual/family to ensure they have a Bush Fire Survival Plan and that it is completed and clearly states sensible and realistic actions that you plan to take in the event of a approaching bush fire.

These decisions/actions must take into account your mental and physical ability to endure the stress and physical activity relating to staying and defending, the ability to have a suitable supply of water on hand to fight the fire or douse spot fires, consideration given to whether you will have family members at home and what will happen should you lose power or your back up system fails if this is your choice .

Knowing what the Fire Danger Rating is on the day of the fire should play an important role in the decision making process, as on days of Extreme and Catastrophic Fire Danger it is recognised that it is simply safer to leave early.

You must also have a backup plan for when things do not go to plan. Things to consider are, where are the Places of Last Resort or safer locations and can I safely navigate to these areas and if not what other options are available to you. There are a range of other scenarios that should be considered and all require careful consideration.

I urge everyone to take a little time and go through the information that has been provided to the community, read and listen to the testimonials of survivors whom have been through a bush fire event, and make an informed decision about what you will do in the event a bush fire does threaten to impact you or your community.

By preparing for such events as a community and being prepared to evacuate, the potential for loss of life can be drastically reduced. Homes can be rebuilt.

I would also like to encourage residents to take the time to make themselves familiar with the Bush Fire Survival Map and Preparation Map that are located at the hall and brigade station. These maps will help you determine the level of risk you may face as well as provide valuable information on mitigation strategies around the community.

During the course of communicating with the community I have lightly touched on providing thanks to the people and organisations that have provided assistance to the development of the Community Protection Plan (CPP). While not trying to single out too many individuals there are a few that deserve recognition.

The support and assistance from Great Lakes Council has been substantial and I do need to make reference to the Executive Coordinator, Engineering Services, Andrew Blatch. The proposed upgrade to the community hall alone has been a significant task that has provided many a challenge with the organisation of contractors to provide quotes and to undertake the works. I must also mention Councils Environmental Service's (Natural Systems) for their guidance on environmental matters.

Superintendent Jim Blackmore and his staff at Tuncurry Fire Control Centre certainly deserve recognition as they have kindly provided plenty of assistance with mitigation strategies and the preparation of hazard reduction activities. Just for one proposed hazard reduction activity over 160 letters requesting consent from landowners to enter land to undertake hazard reduction works was required. With a disappointing response of 60 odd, the requirement to follow up on some 100 landowners will now be required. If we look at the landscape across the Cove we can easily calculate that for any one HR activity many hours can be spent attempting to correspond with vacant land holders to remind them of their obligation under Section 63 of the Rural Fires Act, 1997.

The service provided by our own Rural Fire Service Head Office staff in Community Planning, Hazard Management, Operational, Environmental Services, Community Engagement and our Procurement and Finance section is often overlooked.

Obviously the assistance from Doug and Maureen. Without the help of Maureen and Doug it would of been a arduous task providing the dissemination of updates to the community. The ability to post research articles onto the Cove web page and into the Cove news has been a tremendous asset and has played a major role in being able to provide up to date information to the community.

The local NAC Brigade Captain has provided me with plenty of time & advice along the way. Thanks Mark

The Office of Environment & Heritage who kindly provided specialist staff to attend field excursions up to Gooreengi, Aborigine Place. These staff were able to provide expert advice and approval for the proposed hazard reduction activity planned for Baromee Hill. Obviously with any cultural or heritage sensitive area we need to ensure no damage will occur to the site.

All in all a lot has been achieved for what is a really a very short time.

For any one that may have any questions my email address is Ian.Cook@rfs.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Ian



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DO YOU?**

Get prepared for the Bush Fire Season and make your Bush Fire Survival Plan Now.
Go to www.myfireplan.com.au and discuss with your family what to do if a fire starts near you.