



# Bushfire Centre of Excellence

Harnessing and providing valuable knowledge and experience to serve communities in bushfire management.

John Tillman

Chief Superintendent | Bushfire Centre of Excellence



TRAINING / KNOWLEDGE / ENGAGEMENT

# The journey so far...

- Creation of a Rural Fire Division announced in April 2018
- Rural Fire Division established as a fourth command structure within DFES to improve the focus on strategic bushfire management
- The Bushfire Centre of Excellence is part of this commitment harnessing and sharing bushfire knowledge and experience

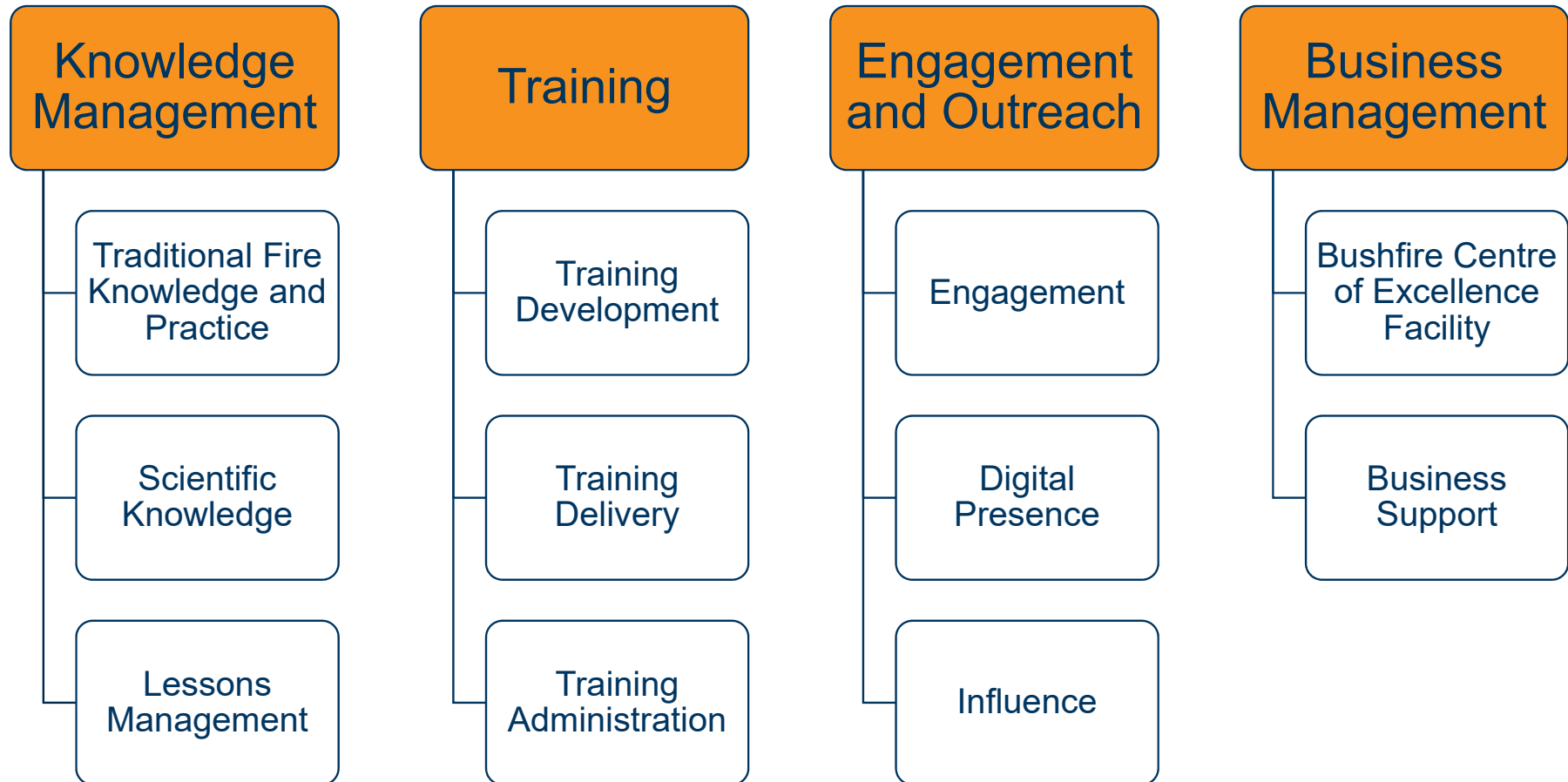


# Consultation

- In 2018 we engaged with over 500 stakeholders in the bushfire management sector
- Our consultation was primarily through workshops to inform the functions and service delivery model of the Bushfire Centre of Excellence



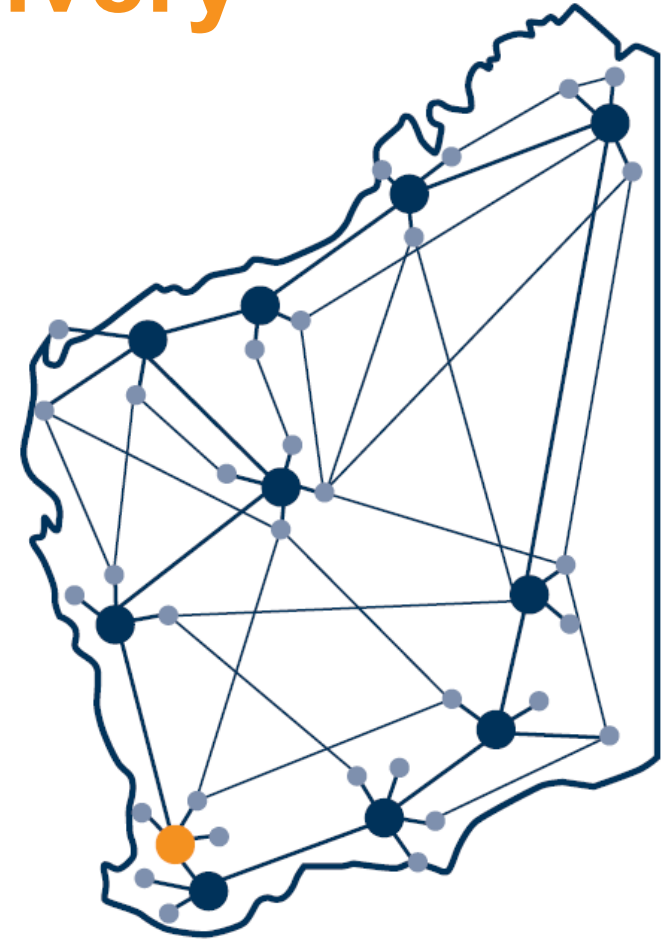
# Functions












# Hub and Spoke service delivery

- The hub and spoke system works as a network of regionally-based, interconnected hubs or nodes that support communication flow
- The Bushfire Centre of Excellence will be a key hub, but not the only one



# Our guiding principles

-  Reflect and serve the bushfire management sector
-  Recognise excellence everywhere in bushfire management
-  Decentralise the delivery of our training programs and services
-  Design our activities and services to be scalable across Australia and internationally.
-  Operate collectively across agencies through shared training and learning
-  Represent our communities with diverse and inclusive staff
-  Recognise and incorporate Aboriginal people's fire knowledge and experience

# The location

- Western Australian government announced the location in the new Peel Business Park in the Shire of Murray
- The Business Park will incorporate a campus style technology park to welcome research, development and training organisations



# Interim facility

- Operating from the Pinjarra Heritage Train Station since November 2019
- Supporting the delivery of on site training courses, information sessions, workshops and events

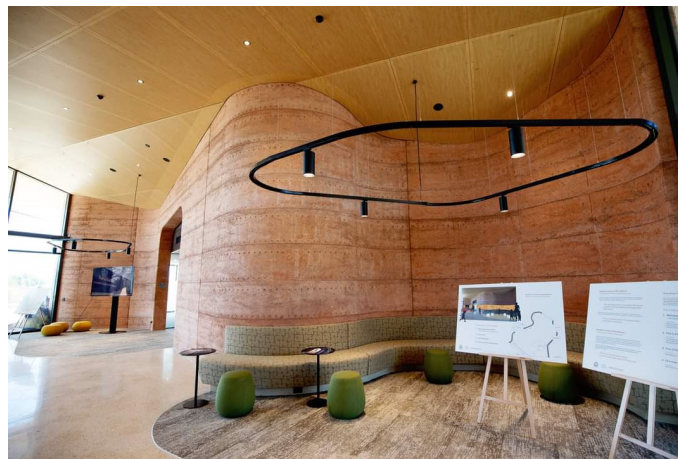




# The facility - Karla Katitjin

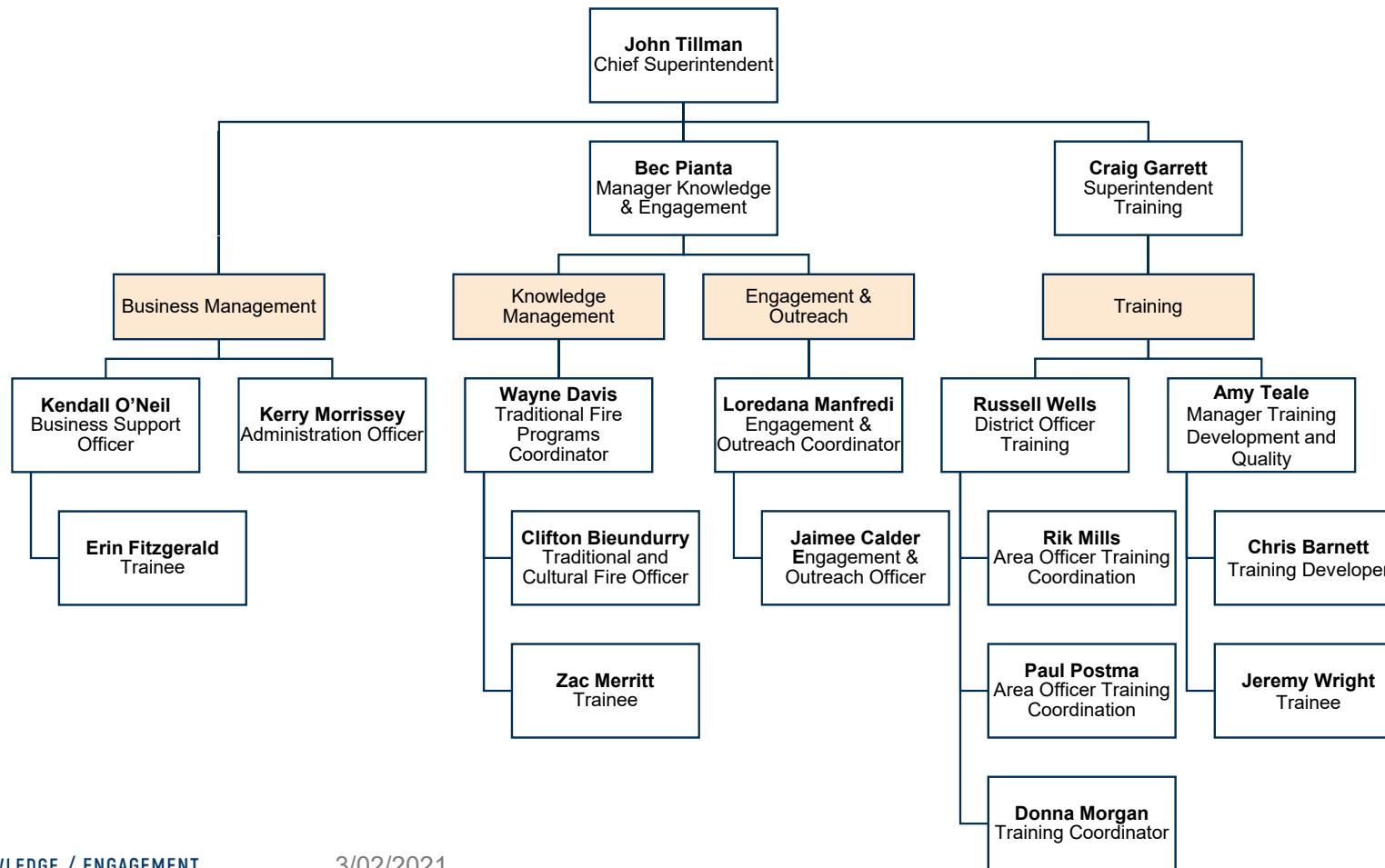


# The facility

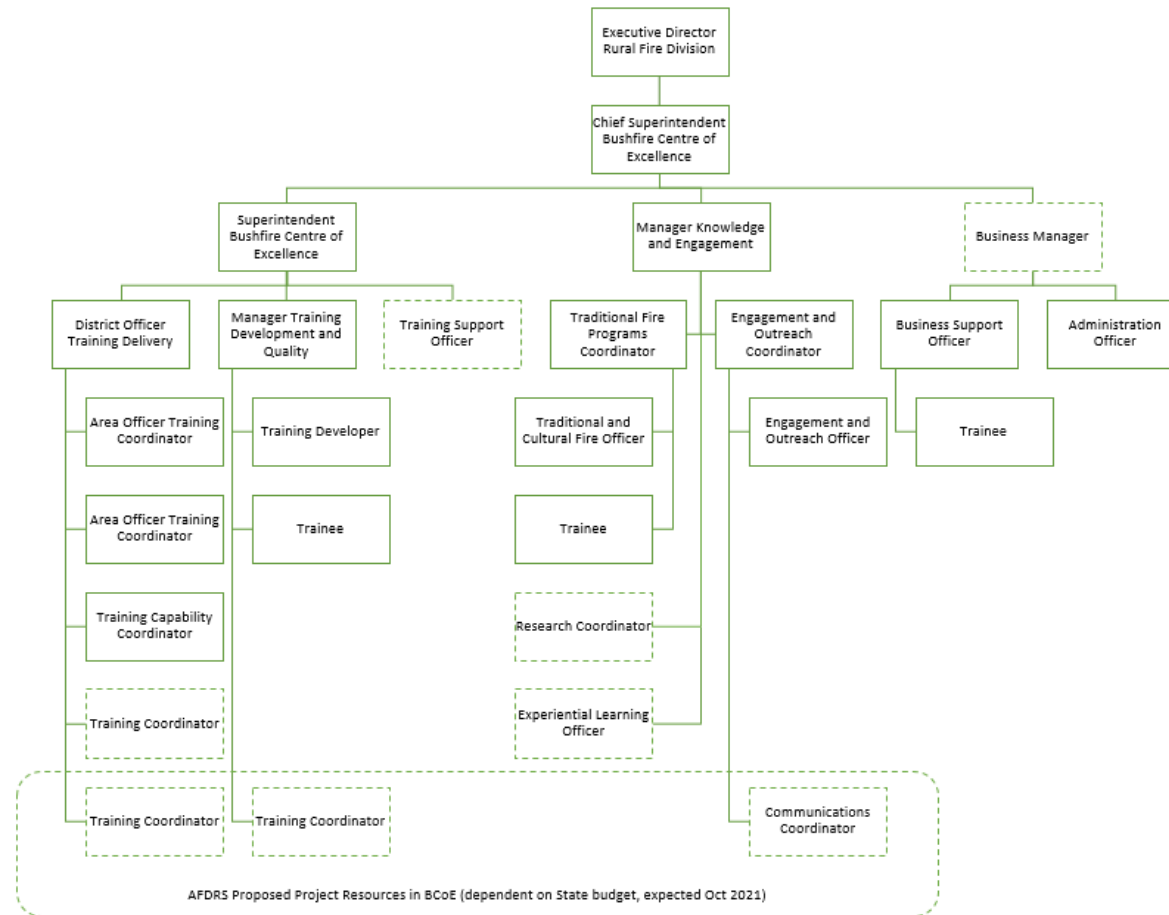




# The Team – current



# The Team – from 1 July 2021



# Training

- Objective: To promote and provide accessible and hands-on bushfire management training.
- Key outputs:
  - Support and deliver accessible bushfire management training
  - Develop new and refreshed training courses
  - Improve access to existing courses
  - Support existing network of trainers and assessors across the State



# Training priorities – 2021

- Roll out of new bushfire training courses
- Adapt essential training to provide flexible delivery options
- Develop new and review existing training courses and resources
- New courses:
  - Assist with Planned Burning
  - Plan and Conduct Simple Planned Burns
  - Fire Weather 1
  - Basic Wildfire Awareness
- Course reviews:
  - Machine Supervision
- Professional development courses:
  - Fireline Leadership and Incident Leadership
- [2021 Training Calendar](#)





# Engagement & Outreach

Purpose: Lead the engagement, outreach and communication-related activities of the Bushfire Centre of Excellence.



## Aboriginal traditional burning expert hired for key role in growing bushfire challenge

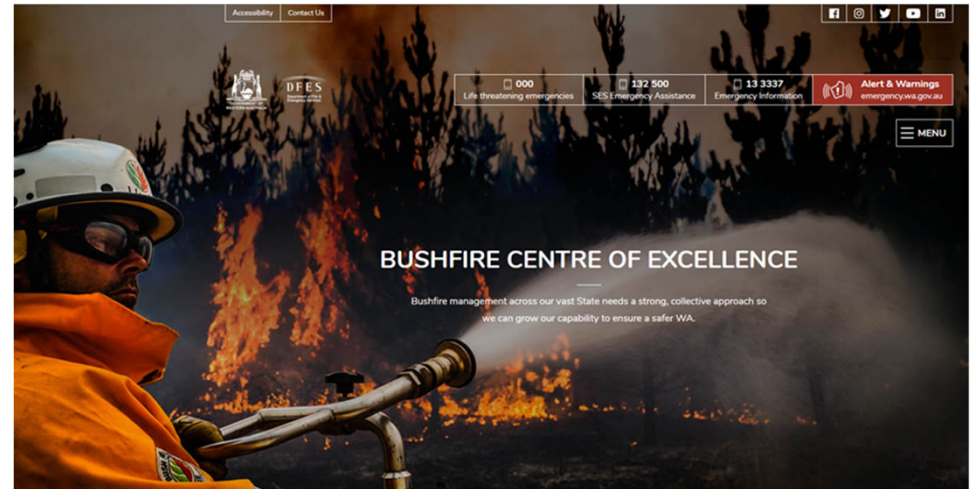
By: Claire Moodie

Posted Sun 31 May 2020 at 6:11am, updated Mon 1 Jun 2020 at 1:53pm





# Engagement & Outreach priorities –2021

- BCoE Interpretive Centre design
- BCoE online presence
- DFES Website – BCoE webpage
- Volunteer Hub – BCoE page
- DFES Intranet – BCoE Project page
- Provide stakeholder updates on achievements, milestones and planned activities
- BCoE Communications Strategy
- BCoE events program
- Develop and distribute BCoE communication and knowledge products






# Burn SMART

FOR A SAFER STATE


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## Burn SMART

### A planned burning guide for small landholders

DFES recommends managing your fuel loads to help protect your property from bushfire




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## Burn SMART

### Planned burning fact sheet

**What is planned burning?**  
Planned burning is the deliberate burning of a specific area, under carefully managed conditions, to reduce fuel such as dead wood, leaf litter, bark and shrubs.

**Why is planned burning important?**  
If you own or manage land in Western Australia it is your responsibility to reduce the risk of bushfire impacting it. This applies to all landholders and land occupiers, including private homes, businesses and Local, State and Federal Government.

Under the right conditions, planned burning can help you to reduce the amount of flammable material on your property, potentially reducing the impact of bushfire.

When a bushfire enters an area of reduced fuel, the rate of bushfire spread slows and the intensity at which it burns is reduced. This means landholders and firefighters have a better chance of containing the fire and it is less likely to cause damage to property.

In the wrong conditions, a planned burn can escape and become an uncontrollable fire, putting lives and homes at risk. If you plan to burn, plan to Burn SMART.


**How do I Burn SMART?**  
DFES' Bushfire Centre of Excellence has created a Burn SMART Guide and Burn SMART Checklist, with information for private landholders about planned burning, and actions to take before, during and after your burn. The Guide and Checklist apply to properties within the Swan Coastal Plain, Jarrah Forest or Warren biogeographic regions (see map). Copies can be downloaded at [dfes.wa.gov.au/plannedburning](https://dfes.wa.gov.au/plannedburning) or ask your local fire brigade.

Find out more at: [dfes.wa.gov.au/plannedburning](https://dfes.wa.gov.au/plannedburning) / Email: [BushfireCoE@dfes.wa.gov.au](mailto:BushfireCoE@dfes.wa.gov.au)

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Acknowledgment: This resource was prepared by DFES Community Preparedness in collaboration with the Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

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**KEY**  
 Swan Coastal Plain  
 Jarrah Forest  
 Warren  
 City  
 Town

Remember, YOU are responsible for any burns on your property and must take care to recognise and manage risks. Plan smart. Burn SMART.

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## Burn SMART

### Leaf moisture method

**Leaf moisture method - understanding the results**

How quickly and intensely a dead leaf sample burns offers a strong indication of its moisture level. This is valuable to consider when judging the potential success of a planned burn. Use these markers as a guide.

Wet	Damp	Moist	Dry	Very dry
				
Leaf burns only when pointed straight down or does not burn at all	Leaf burns when angled down but not when level	Leaf burns when level but not when angled up	Leaf burns when angled up, but not if vertical	Leaf burns when angled straight up
If in the area to be burnt, then the fuel is too moist to burn	If the leaf sample is from the:	If the leaf sample is from the:	If the leaf sample is from the:	The fuel is too dry to burn
	<b>Top layer</b> The fire will burn slowly	<b>Top layer</b> The fire will burn at the upper level of intensity for a burn	<b>Top layer</b> The fire will burn at too high an intensity for a burn	
	<b>Bottom layer</b> The fuel moisture is okay	<b>Bottom layer</b> The fuel moisture is okay	<b>Bottom layer</b> The fuel is too dry to perform a burn	
	Fires with damp fuels tend to need the wind and/or a slope to spread			
<b>Recommendation</b> Postpone planned burn until moisture levels drop	<b>Recommendation</b> Proceed with planned burn	<b>Recommendation</b> Proceed with planned burn, but exercise caution	<b>Recommendation</b> Do not proceed with planned burn	<b>Recommendation</b> Do not proceed with planned burn

Find out more at: [dfes.wa.gov.au/plannedburning](https://dfes.wa.gov.au/plannedburning) / Email: [BushfireCoE@dfes.wa.gov.au](mailto:BushfireCoE@dfes.wa.gov.au)

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# Knowledge Management

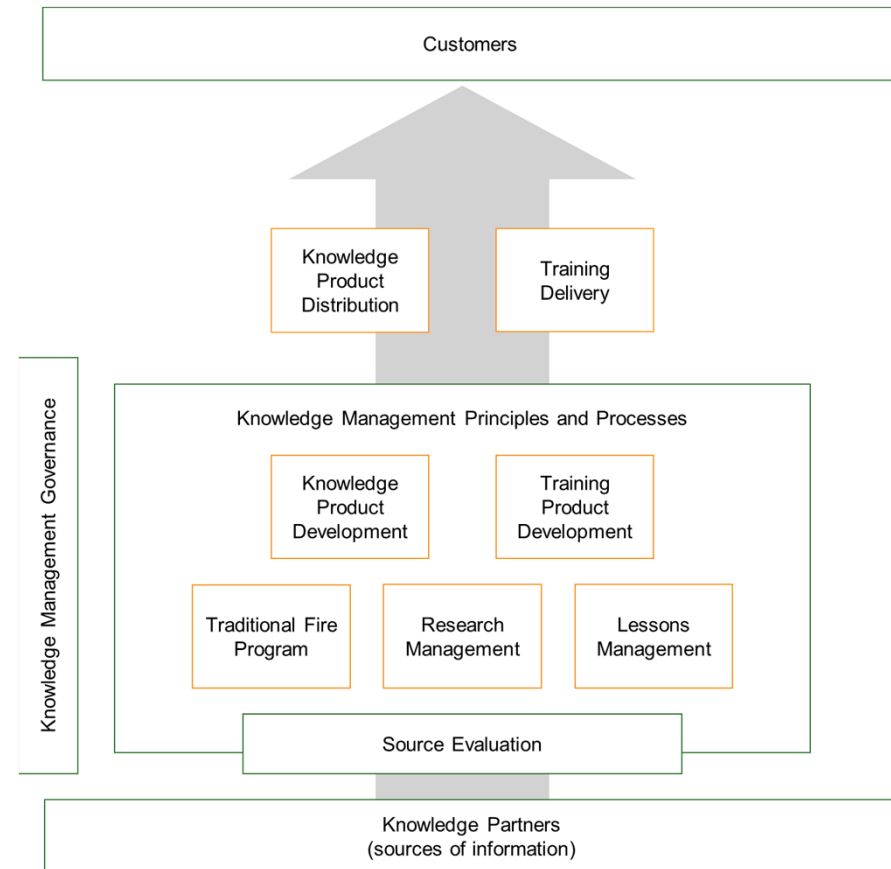
Key outputs:

- Gather and manage three kinds of knowledge:
  - Traditional
  - Academic
  - Experiential
- Develop knowledge products
- Advocate for research and coordinate research



# Knowledge Management Scope

- How information is gathered from knowledge partners and translated into knowledge products
- How knowledge product sources are evaluated and used, in particular, by the Training Development and Engagement & Outreach teams within the Bushfire Centre of Excellence



# Knowledge Management priorities – 2021

- Incorporate processes
- Raise awareness
- Prioritise and develop products
- Develop glossary
- Lessons management participation
- Determine research prioritisation approach
- Build partnerships in traditional fire knowledge and practice
- Develop the Traditional Fire Program





# Traditional Fire Program



# Traditional Fire Program

Purpose: To gather and incorporate traditional and cultural knowledge about fire practices into the Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

We will:

- Build local capacity
- Support communities
- Consider complementary methods





# Traditional uses of fire

- Right People, Right Time, Right Way
- For physical and spiritual wellbeing: to care for people and care for Country
- Also used practically for hunting, cooking and heating
- Small, low-intensity fires (cool burns)
- WA landscapes have changed:
  - Fragmented bushland
  - Invasive species
  - Urban spread
  - Asset development
  - Changing climate



# Contemporary uses of fire

- Contemporary burning practices have been adapted
- Planned fire is often used to:
  - manage the landscape
  - reduce fuel loads
  - reduce threat of bushfire to people, property and environment.
- Sharing cultural and contemporary fire knowledge will assist in developing adaptable fire and land management practices
- Complementary traditional and cultural methods to be considered





# Traditional Fire Program 2020

- Establish the program
- Engage locally and create partnerships
- Provide information to embed in training packages
- Pilot training package with Bindjareb Community
- Create the Cultural Guide





# Traditional Fire Program 2021

- Continue to engage with Traditional Custodians, land managers, and local communities
- Bushfire Risk Management planning
- Training packages
- Gap analysis
- Prioritise the integration of traditional and contemporary land management practice
- Cultural and traditional burning knowledge products



# Aboriginal Trainee Program

- Certificate III in Government
- 3 x trainees
  - Traditional Fire Program
  - Business Services
  - Training
- 12 months, + 12 months
- Employment pathways
- Undertook recruitment in-house
  - Information sessions
  - Panel interviews



# Questions?

For more information, visit  
[dfes.wa.gov.au/bushfirecoe](https://dfes.wa.gov.au/bushfirecoe)

Send an email to  
[BushfireCoE@dfes.wa.gov.au](mailto:BushfireCoE@dfes.wa.gov.au)

