

Bushfire Hazard Practitioner Mentoring Program



Tasmania Fire Service

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Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Introduction | 3 |
| 2. Goal of the Mentoring Program | 3 |
| 3. Entry into Mentoring Program..... | 3 |
| 4. Mentoring Process..... | 4 |
| 5. Roles and Responsibilities..... | 5 |
| Collective Roles and Responsibilities..... | 5 |
| Bushfire Hazard Practitioners | 6 |
| Mentor..... | 6 |
| Accreditation Officer | 7 |
| 6. Complaints..... | 7 |
| Appendix 1: Application Pro Forma – mentoring extension | 8 |

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1. Introduction

The Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) administers the training and accreditation of Bushfire Hazard Practitioners (BFPs) in accordance with the *Chief Officer's Scheme for the Accreditation of Bushfire Hazard Assessors* (the 'Accreditation Scheme').

Bushfire protection is an evolving discipline that combines planning and building controls for use and development in bushfire-prone areas. The *Bushfire Hazard Practitioner Mentoring Program* (the 'Mentoring Program') has been developed by TFS to ensure that professionals from varied technical and professional backgrounds possess best-practice understanding of bushfire protection in Tasmania.

This document describes the TFS framework for the delivery of mentoring services to provisionally accredited BFPs.

2. Goal of the Mentoring Program

The goal of the Mentoring Program is to ensure that BFPs gain the required competency and capacity to be accredited to undertake the work of a Bushfire Hazard Practitioner. Competency and capacity is achieved once the Scope of Work outlined in Schedule 1 of the Accreditation Scheme is completed to an acceptable standard.

The mentoring program is applicable to both BFPs who have completed the Short Course in Development and Building in Bushfire-Prone Areas (University of Technology Sydney), and to BFPs who possess another relevant Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma or higher degree.

The extent of mentoring required to achieve the competency and capacity standards will reflect the BFPs existing knowledge and skills and their progress in meeting the required standards.

The TFS will offer a limited number of mentoring places at any one time based on TFS staff (mentor) availability. Limiting of mentoring places ensures that the TFS can adequately support BFPs engaged in the mentoring process, which will enable a faster transition to full accreditation.

3. Entry into Mentoring Program

Persons seeking entry into the mentoring program must make a written request to the Accreditation Officer, via bfpr@fire.tas.gov.au. This request is usually made at the same time that provisional accreditation is being sought. A pro-forma letter is provided in Appendix 1 of the *Chief Officer's Scheme for the Accreditation of Bushfire Hazard Practitioners*.

Mentoring will only be provided for the scope of work for which the BFP is provisionally accredited.

Requests for mentoring places will generally be assessed in the order they are received, however consideration may be given to any identified industry needs or priorities (e.g. a shortfall of BFPs in a particular region), or other extenuating circumstances.

Should a mentoring place not be available, applicant details will be recorded and they will be contacted when a mentoring place becomes available.

TFS will notify applicants in writing regarding the outcome of their application for entry into the mentoring program.

Once accepted into the mentoring program, a mentoring place will remain available to the BFP for up to 12 months. After 12 months, the BFP may request a 6 month extension or forego the mentoring place. A written request for extension must be addressed to the Accreditation Officer via bfm@fire.tas.gov.au. A pro-forma letter is provided in Appendix 1 of this document. An extension will be granted at the discretion of the Accreditation Officer, and TFS will notify applicants in writing regarding the outcome of their application.

4. Mentoring Process

The mentoring process is focused on building the BFPs knowledge and skills to the required level. An overview of the process is illustrated in figure 1, and as follows:

1. The Accreditation Officer assigns a mentor to the BFP.
2. The BFP will submit draft Bushfire Hazard Reports, Bushfire Hazard Management Plans and associated documentation to the mentor via bfm@fire.tas.gov.au.
3. The mentor will review the work submitted and will aim to provide a response within 10 business days. This may involve:
 - a) If the work is of an acceptable standard, the mentor will certify that work. The work will be recorded as progress towards meeting the requirements of Schedule 1 of the Accreditation Scheme;
 - b) If the work is not of an acceptable standard, the mentor will provide feedback to the BFP on specific areas that require attention.
4. If required, the BFP will revise the work and will resubmit with the mentor as per Step 2.
5. The mentor will advise the BFP and the Accreditation Officer when they believe that the BFP meets the required competency and capacity standards for the Scope of Work.

Throughout this process, frequent communication between the mentor and BFP is necessary to ensure that learning and development outcomes are achieved.

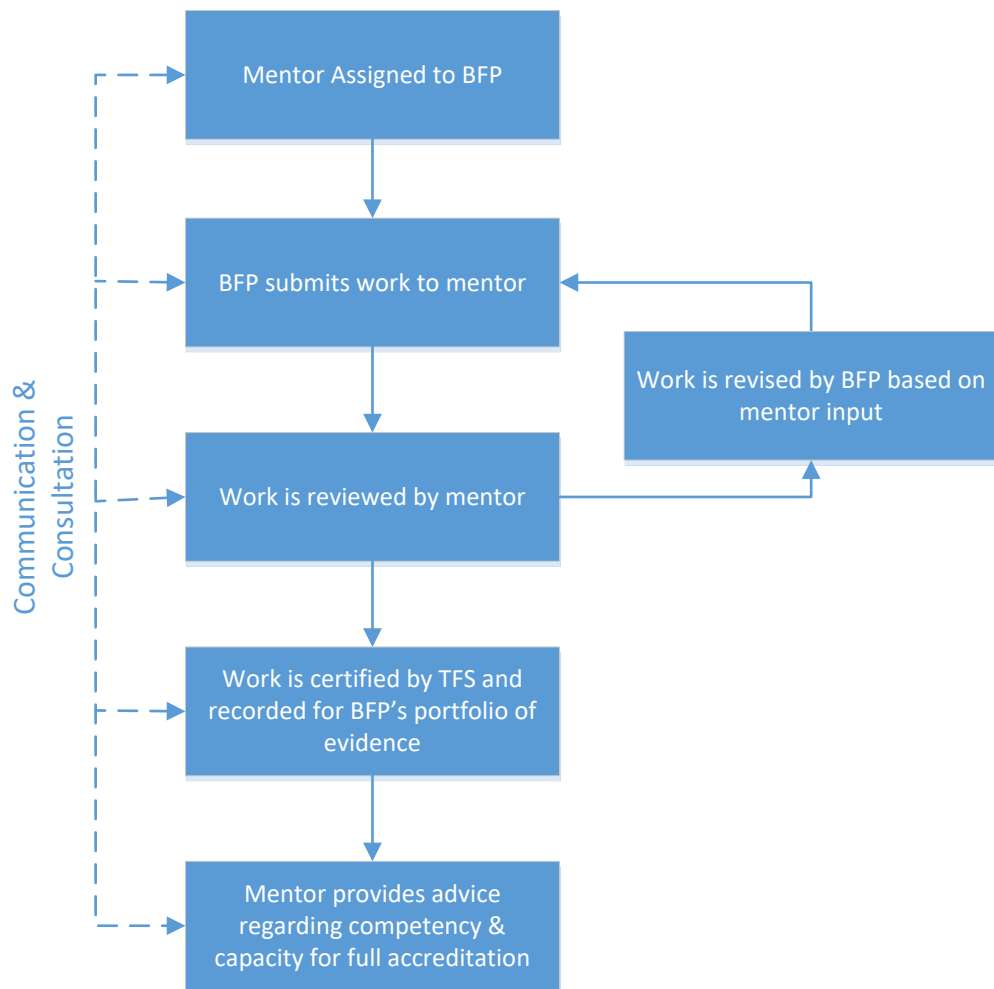


Figure 1 – Mentoring Process

Generally work submitted to the mentor is the result of a consultancy request received by the BFP in the course of their business or employment. In these circumstances, it is incumbent on the BFP to notify the client, prior to engaging in the work, that they are provisionally accredited for the scope of work and are therefore subject to the mentoring process which will delay the completion of the project.

Should the BFP not be in a position to receive such projects on a regular basis, they may request that the mentor provide them with theoretical projects for assessment. This arrangement is by negotiation with the mentor.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Collective Roles and Responsibilities

The BFP and mentor will jointly decide how and when they shall communicate, whether they will meet and where, time expectations, and anything else that either party considers appropriate. This provides the foundation for a successful mentoring relationship.

Good communication between parties is important for a successful mentoring relationship. For any issue, the initial contact is the mentor. Where this may be inappropriate, the Accreditation Officer should be contacted via bfp@fire.tas.gov.au.

Bushfire Hazard Practitioners

The role and responsibilities of the BFP are as follows:

1. The BFP will possess a minimum qualification as per Schedule 1 of the Accreditation Scheme and/or acceptable industry experience ensuring a minimum understanding of development and building in bushfire-prone areas.
2. The BFP must be familiar with the content of the Accreditation Scheme, Bushfire Hazard Advisory Notes and other applicable documents. The BFP must conform with any requirements of the Accreditation Scheme, Bushfire Hazard Advisory Notes and other applicable documents.
3. The BFP must not submit the work of others without full acknowledgement and the agreement of the mentor.
4. The BFP must undertake the Scope of Work required in Schedule 1 of the Scheme in order to demonstrate the competency and capability for full accreditation.
5. The BFP must submit completed items of the required Scope of Work to the mentor and revise them until the work is deemed acceptable by the mentor.
6. The BFP must advise the Accreditation Officer if they have reasons to believe that they are not receiving adequate mentoring from the mentor. This may result in the BFP being reassigned.

Mentor

The role and responsibilities of the Mentor are as follows:

1. The Mentor must provide support and guidance to the BFP throughout the mentoring process.
2. The Mentor will review work submitted by the BFP to determine whether it is acceptable.
3. The Mentor will provide constructive feedback and guidance to the BFP so that they may amend any work that is not of an acceptable standard.
4. The Mentor will only suggest edits and revisions. They will not complete the work themselves.
5. The Mentor will certify the work only once the work is of an acceptable standard.
6. The Mentor will advise the Accreditation Officer when they believe that the BFP has achieved the required competency and capacity standards for the Scope of Work.
7. The Mentor will advise the Accreditation Officer if they have reason to believe that the work submitted by the BFP is not their own work.
8. The Mentor will keep records of work deemed acceptable for the purposes of satisfying Schedule 1 of the Accreditation Scheme.

Accreditation Officer

The Accreditation Officer manages the accreditation process and the mentoring program.

1. The Accreditation Officer will assign a Mentor to the BFP.
2. The Accreditation Officer may amend the roles and responsibilities outlined in this document.

6. Complaints

The relationship between the Mentor and BFP is important. Should either party have a grievance or complaint which cannot be resolved between them, the matter should be directed in writing to the Accreditation Officer. The Accreditation Officer will determine appropriate action in accordance with the Accreditation Scheme, and will advise the complainant of any decision or action.

Appendix 1: Application Pro Forma – mentoring extension

-- Example Letter requesting extension to the mentoring program --

Name
Position
Organisation
Address
Email
Telephone

Date

The Accreditation Officer
Tasmania Fire Service
bfp@fire.tas.gov.au

Application for extension of the Bushfire Hazard Practitioner Mentoring Program

Dear Sir / Madam,

I write to apply for a 6 month extension to my current place in the Bushfire Hazard Practitioner Mentoring Program.

Yours sincerely,

Your Name.