Fuel Management Activities in Western Australia

2024/2025

Office of Bushfire Risk Management
Rural Fire Division

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

DFES
Department of Fire & Emergency Services

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Disclaimer

The report uses the best available data at the time of writing. Direct comparisons between this report and past or future reports cannot necessarily be made. For the most accurate view of current and historic figures, always consult the most recent report.

Acknowledgment

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout Western Australia as the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we live, work and volunteer. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' continued connection to land, waters, and community, and pay our respects to Elders both past and present.

Front page image credit: OBRM

Contents

Message from the Executive Director Rural Fire Division

I'm pleased to present the ninth annual Fuel Management Activities report, which summarises the efforts to manage bushfire risk across Western Australia (WA). This year's report includes data from 83 organisations and demonstrates another productive year of bushfire risk management. Thank you to all the contributors for being part of the report and for your work to keep WA safe from bushfires.

2024/25 was a productive year for the Department of Fire and Emergency Services' (DFES) Rural Fire Division (RFD) in assisting the community to understand and reduce bushfire risk. Some of our key achievements include:

State bushfire mitigation capability

The State Government funded the establishment of a State Bushfire Mitigation Branch, with dedicated personnel, machinery and appliances to enhance the delivery of on-ground mitigation activities and reduce the risk and impact of bushfires to communities across WA. The initiative supports a strategic, coordinated approach to reducing bushfires on lives, property, critical infrastructure and the environment.

Firewise gardening mini-series

The Bushfire Centre of Excellence (BCoE) launched a three-part mini-series and guide to help landowners adopt fire-resilient gardening practices. Resources are available for free on the *DFES YouTube channel*.

Cultural competence and First Nations Australians knowledge

Workshops and gatherings fostered collaboration with First Nations Australians, with a focus on cultural burning and traditional knowledge. Highlights included AFAC25 sessions, a Nulungu Research Institute course, and a Noongar Elders gathering at Bindjareb Park.

Bushfire Risk Management (BRM) Planning and the Mitigation Activity Fund Grants Program (MAFGP)

91 local governments now have endorsed BRM plans. In 2024/25, $5.9 million in MAFGP funding supported 907 treatments across 44 local governments, including two first-time recipients. Since 2017, 74 local governments have received $62 million from the MAFGP for over 8,200 mitigation treatments.

In 2024/25, a new initiative commenced with the start of a three-year MAFGP funding round. This will help local governments in implementing longer-term bushfire risk management strategies.

Bushfire Community Day

The annual Bushfire Community Day was held at the Kalamunda Community Centre. The Community Day is a family-friendly event and a fun way for emergency services personnel to educate the community about bushfire preparedness.

The inaugural event took place in 2021 at the BCoE and is now held in collaboration with various local governments each year to engage high bushfire risk communities.

Murray Carter
Executive Director Rural Fire Division
Department of Fire and Emergency Services

The 2024/25 bushfire season at a glance

WA's 2024/25 bushfire season was marked by the warmest mean summer temperature ever recorded for the State. It was a particularly hot summer in the South West and Pilbara while the Kimberley experienced a severe heatwave from September to mid-November 2024.

These record breaking temperatures and widespread drought resulted in elevated bushfire risk across large parts of the State including the Midwest-Gascoyne, Wheatbelt-Goldfields and the South West Land Division.

Extreme drought caused widespread vegetation death between Kalbarri and the South Coast, including throughout the forests of the South West.

WA recorded 5,191 incidents, of which only three escalated to major bushfires requiring a protracted inter-agency response. This underscores the effectiveness of proactive fuel management strategies and coordinated response arrangements that where in place during the bushfire season.

Summary of bushfires in 2024/25

Over the 2024/25 period 753,841 hectares was burnt with the most affected regions being:

- Pilbara: 221,550 ha burnt by 146 bushfires
- Kimberley: 183,000 ha burnt by 300 bushfires
- Midwest: 150,580 ha burnt by 167 bushfires.
- The Perth-Peel region experienced 144 bushfires totalling 13,617 ha burnt.

Across the State:

- 728 bushfires were reported as suspicious
- 1,275 bushfires were reported as deliberate
- 927 bushfires were reported as having an unknown cause
- 324 incidents were attributed to natural causes.

Note: These figures represent bushfires attended or monitored by DFES only and may not include some bushfires that occurred in remote areas.

Image credit: 2024 Red Hill bushfire, Lexi Sargeant

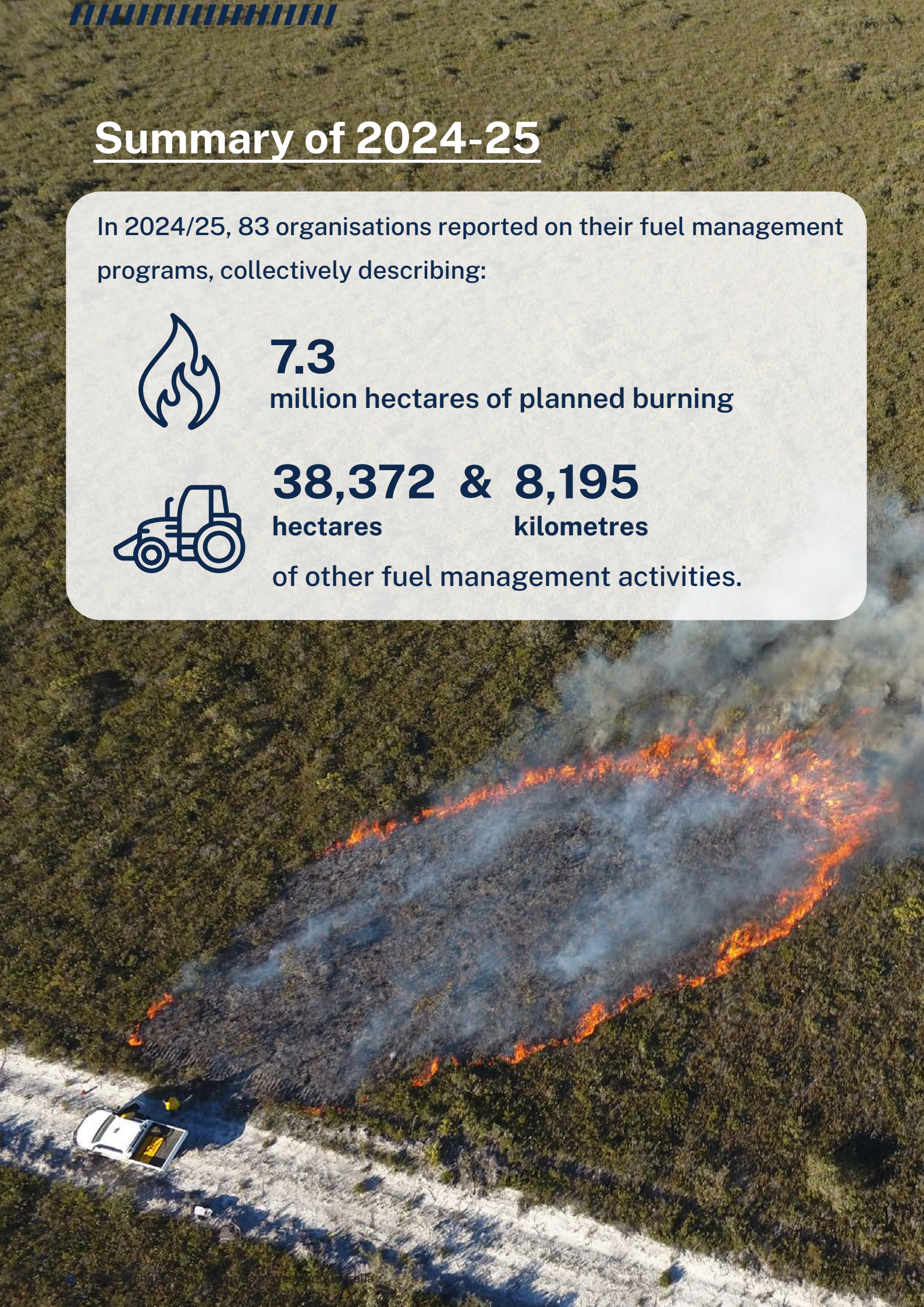
Summary of 2024-25

In 2024/25, 83 organisations reported on their fuel management programs, collectively describing:

7.3
million hectares of planned burning

38,372 **hectares** **&** **8,195** **kilometres**

of other fuel management activities.



Compiling the FMA report

The report is based on data from:

83 organisations in 2024/25

23% fewer than in the 2023/24 reporting period.

76 local governments

4 state government agencies

3 private organisations

The FMA report describes the fuel management activities completed across WA during 2024/25, highlighting the collaborative efforts of local governments, state government, private organisations and community stakeholders. It provides insights into planned burning, mechanical and chemical fuel reduction and the strategic planning that underpins mitigation efforts.

The data reflects a continued commitment to reducing bushfire risk, enhancing community resilience and adapting to the evolving challenges posed by climate change.

The report is based on data self-reported by contributing organisations. Between August and September 2025, DFES surveyed WA's local governments, state government agencies and private organisations with significant fire management programs on their 2024/25 fuel management activities.

The survey asked a range of questions about the number of activities completed, the methods used, factors that helped or hindered and lessons learned. Additional information about local governments and DFES was taken from the Bushfire Risk Management System (BRMS). Data from these two sources were consolidated and analysed to provide a summary of fuel management activities across WA in 2024/25.

Figure 1 shows a comparison of the number of contributors since the FMA report was first published. The number of state government respondents has declined over that period while private organisations have remained stable and local government contributors have varied.

On average 99.5 organisations respond to the survey each year with an average of 85% of respondents being local governments.

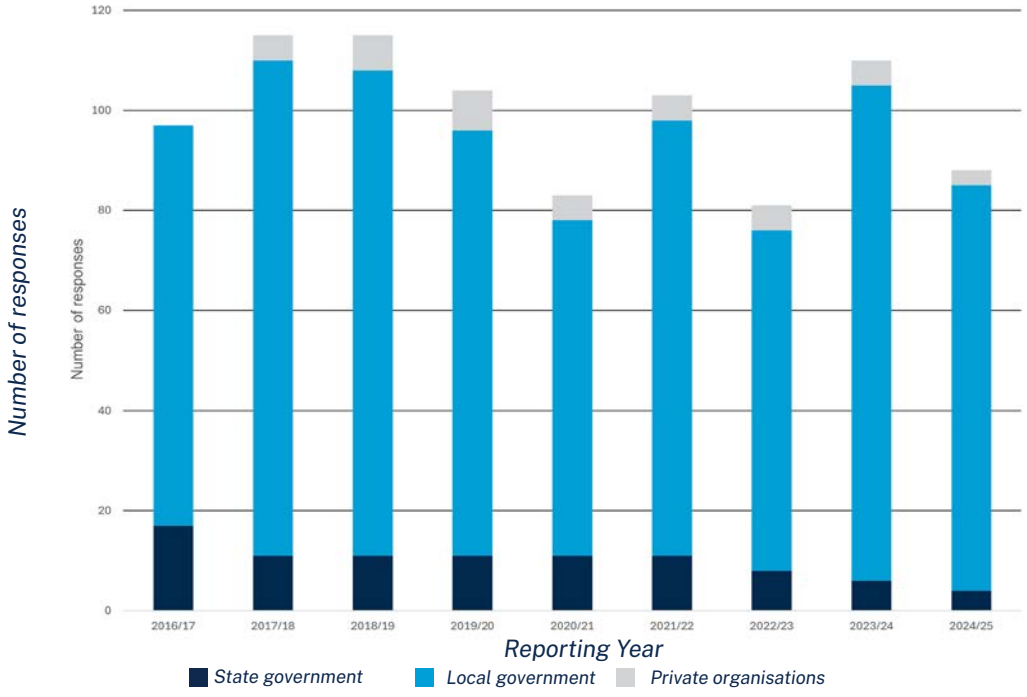


Figure 1: Number of organisations responding to the survey each year.

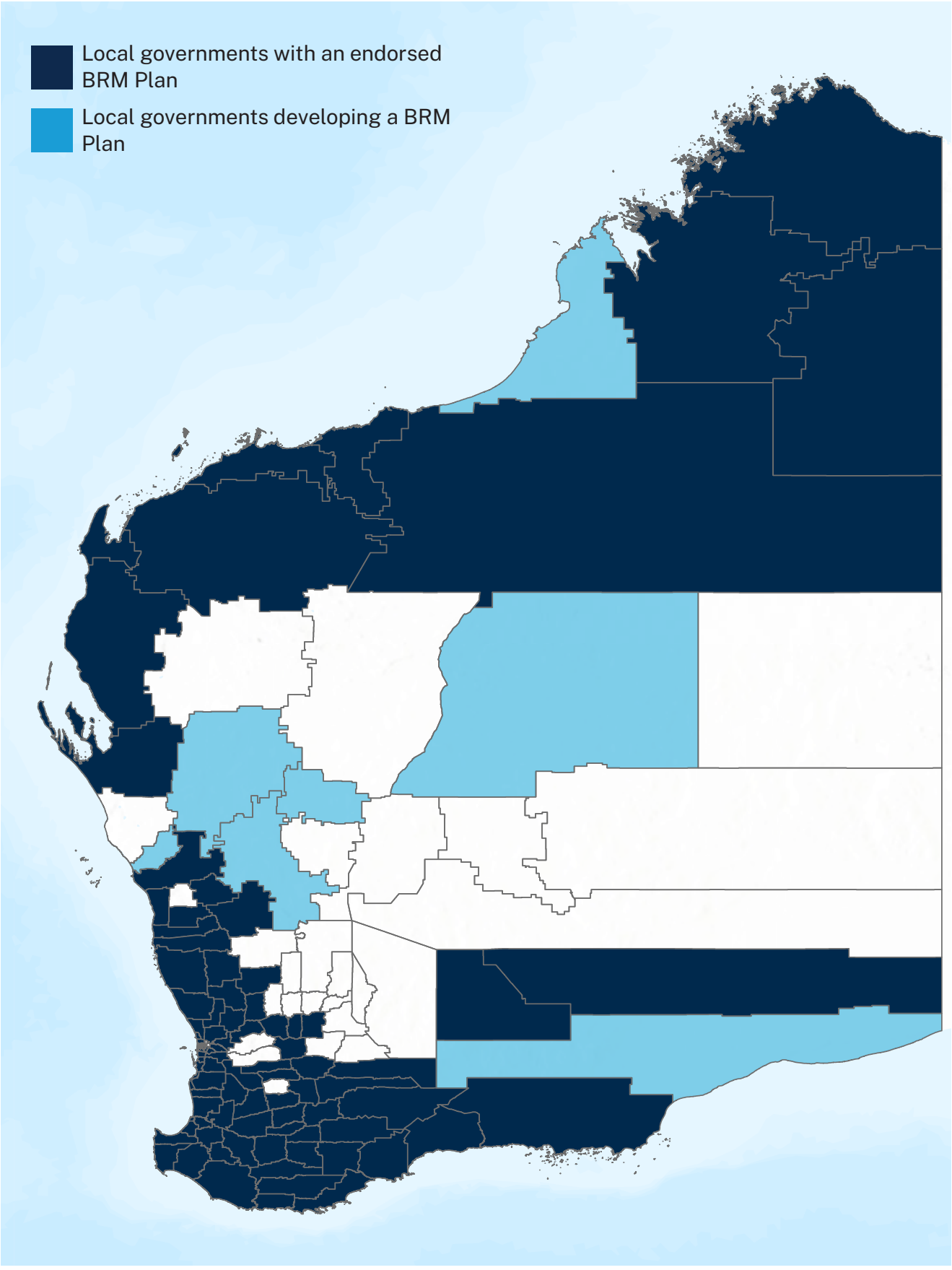


Figure 2: Local governments with a BRM Plan contributing to strategically reducing bushfire risk in their communities, as at 9 December 2025.

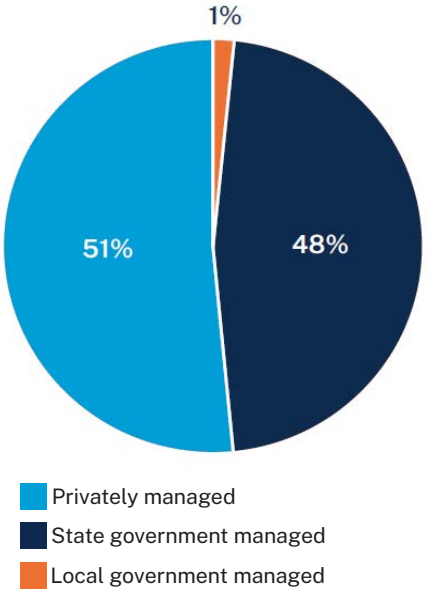
Who manages fuel in Western Australia?

In WA, anyone that manages land is responsible for managing the bushfire fuels on it. The *State Hazard Plan Fire* outlines the roles and responsibilities of land managers and contains information on fire prevention and mitigation.

Local governments are responsible for fuel management on the land vested in them and to issue an annual fire management notice to land owners. Further local government responsibilities for bushfire prevention are provided in the *Bushfires Act 1954.*

Land owners and occupiers must identify and manage bushfire risk on the land they own or lease according to the requirements of their local government's annual fire management notice.

Private organisations need to comply with local government fuel management notices and manage bushfire risk and fuel on their land to limit the impact of fire on the community.



State government agencies that manage land in WA are not bound by local government fire management notices. They must, however, take reasonable measures to mitigate bushfire risk, including managing fuel on land vested in them.

Approximately 86% of WA's land mass is subject to registered and determined native title claims. Native Title holders may have obligations to manage bushfire risk on their Country.

The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) is responsible for managing fire in National Parks, Nature Reserves, State Forest and UCL and UMR outside of townsites.

DFES does not manage land but manages the bushfire risk and fuel on UCL and UMR within gazetted townsites and metropolitan areas.

State government managed lands:

- National Parks, Nature Reserves, State Forest and other conservation areas
- Unallocated Crown land (UCL) and unmanaged reserves (UMR)
- Public schools, hospitals, correctional facilities and similar facilities with bushland
- Highways and water reserves

Local government managed lands:

- Local government parks and reserves
- Verges of local government roads

Privately managed lands:

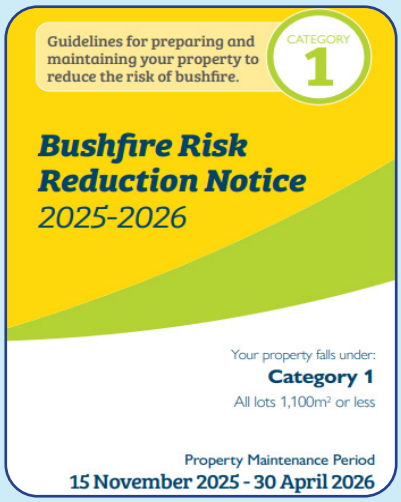
- Land managed by First Nations Australians
- Pastoral and mining leases
- Farms and private plantations
- Residential areas

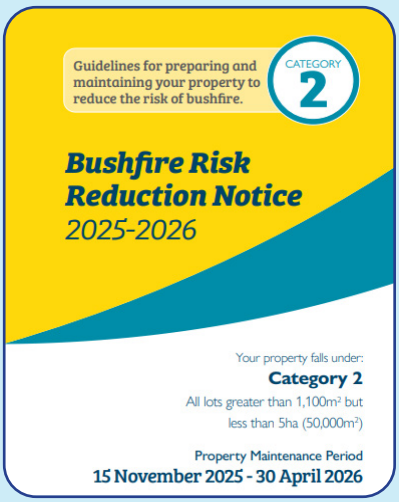
Figure 3: Summary of responsibilities for fuel management by area across WA.

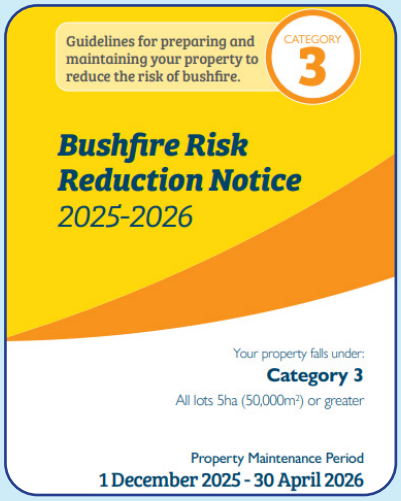
Case Study City of Busselton

Community designed Bushfire Risk Reduction Notice

Under Section 33 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, the City of Busselton issues an annual Bushfire Risk Reduction Notice requiring property owners to undertake preparedness actions. The previous notice had remained largely unchanged for over a decade, was no longer fit for purpose and failed to meet evolving legislative, environmental and community expectations.







The City of Busselton faced some challenges in developing a new Bushfire Risk Reduction Notice, because the notice must:

- meet legal and environmental standards
- align with community values.

A community led co-design process included a community working group to**:**

- define property categories
- determine risk mitigation requirements
- establish compliance processes.

Outcomes of the process included:

- a revised notice with clear, actionable requirements tailored to property types and risk levels
- support materials for community specific needs to aid understanding and compliance with the notice.

Lessons learned:

- effective bushfire management is about people, partnerships and shared responsibility
- early engagement builds trust and improves outcomes
- community ownership drives compliance as people support what they create
- clear, adaptable communication is essential for navigating complex issues.

Looking ahead:

- ongoing annual reviews and expanded education of community members will help to strengthen community resilience
- learnings will be shared with other local governments seeking community driven bushfire preparedness.

Image Credit: BCoE

Why manage fuel?

There are three factors that determine how a bushfire will burn. They are the weather conditions, topography of the landscape and fuel available to burn (figure 4).

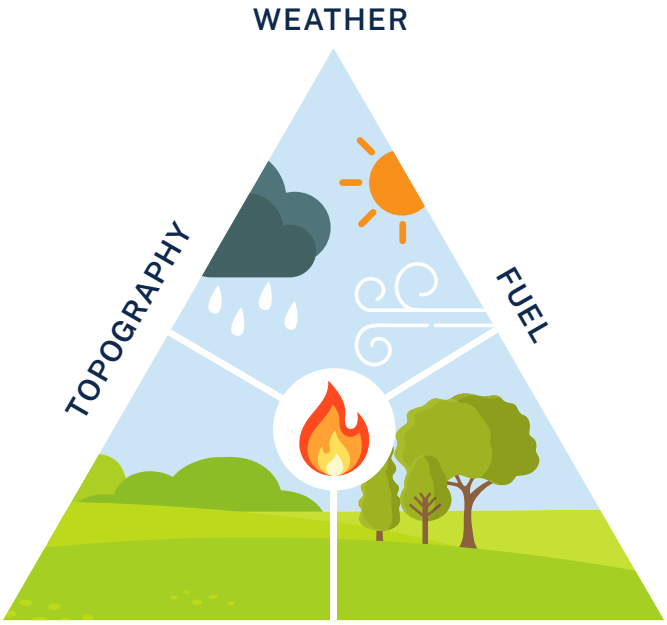


Figure 4: The fire behaviour triangle

Fuel management:

- Removes or modifies vegetation and leaf litter so it is not available to be burnt in a bushfire.
- Makes bushfires less likely to start, burn less intensely and spread less rapidly.
- Makes bushfires easier and safer to control.
- Separates fuel and assets, reducing exposure to flames, radiant heat and ember attack.

Planned burning

Planned burning is used to reduce the amount of fuel available, reducing the intensity and impact of any future bushfire. Planned burns also make an important contribution to maintaining WA's biodiversity as fire is a crucial component of many ecosystems.

For millennia, First Nations Australians used fire to maintain healthy country, for cultural purposes and to assist with hunting game. The resultant fine scale mosaic of vegetation age, composition and structure created diverse habitats and supported biodiversity, while also reducing the likelihood of large, intense bushfires. Today, land managers continue to use planned fire to promote healthy country.

Organisations responding to the 2024/25 FMA survey reported 7.3 million ha of planned burning. This is a decrease of about one million ha on what was reported in 2023/24.

This reduction was largely caused by warmer and drier than usual conditions limiting opportunities to conduct burns safely.

Consistent with recent FMA Reports, the four organisations with the largest planned burning programs collectively accounted for 99% of all planned burning.

Planned burning 2024/25

State government agencies completed 5,644,832 ha

Private organisations completed 1,663,342 ha

Local governments completed 2,450 ha

Organisations with the largest burn programs

DBCA 5,056,369 ha

Australian Wildlife Conservancy 1,096,500 ha

DFES 588,000 ha

Kimberley Land Council 566,842 ha

Image Credit: DBCA

Most of this burning occurred in the Kimberley, where these four organisations all implement extensive fuel management programs designed to reduce the risk of landscape scale bushfires. Aside from preventing devastating bushfires, these burn programs also reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contribute millions of dollars to the local economy by generating Australian Carbon Credit Units.

Thirty-two local governments conducted planned burning in 2024/25, representing 39% of local governments that contributed to the report. In total, local governments completed 2,450 ha of planned burning in 2024/25, a decrease of 675 ha from the previous year.

Image Credit: BCoE

Aerial burning

DFES, DBCA and some private organisations run aerial planned burning programs to assist in reducing fuel loads at a landscape scale. Aerial burning involves dropping flammable material from an incendiary machine or aerial drip torch mounted to an aeroplane or helicopter.

Aerial burning allows for slow, controlled burns over large areas. The spread of the fire is managed by burning under carefully planned weather, fuel and environmental conditions.

The benefits of aerial ignition include the ability to conduct burns:

- at large scales
- in areas inaccessible by foot
- that result in complex mosaics
- in areas of high moisture content or discontinuous fuels.

Planned burn escapes

Organisations that conduct planned burning must have rigorous procedures in place to ensure burns are conducted safely. Despite this, burns do occasionally escape their intended boundaries. In 2024/25, 10 burn escapes were reported, affecting a total of 178 ha of land. In comparison, there were two escapes in 2023/24 impacting 596 ha of land.

While the number of escapes reported in 2024/25 has increased, the area impacted has reduced significantly. Considering the large amount of burning completed across the State, this low incidence of escapes indicates the risks associated with planned burning are being managed well.

Image Credit: DFES

Case Study DFES Cultural Fire Program

About the Cultural Fire Program (CFP)

The DFES Bushfire Centre of Excellence manages the CFP to enhance understanding, knowledge and application of cultural burning in WA. Cultural burning maintains spiritual and cultural connection to Country and helps traditional custodians to care for Country and share knowledge between generations.

A cultural burning factsheet can be found on the DFES *publications* site.

Image Credits: BCoE

Key achievements of the CFP in 2024/25

Growing demand & credibility
Increased collaboration with First Nations and non-Indigenous organisations. Strengthened stakeholder networks and reputation.

Training and capacity building
Hands-on fire management training with Wespine Industries and Gnaarla Karla Booja Impact Rangers in Dardanup.

Community engagement and education
NAIDOC Week event at Bindjareb Park with live burn demonstration and Caring for Country activities.

Knowledge management
Lessons captured through CFP Lessons Management Process to inform future projects and engagement strategies.

Considerations for a cultural burn: Right People - Right Time Right Way

Bindjareb Park cultural burns
A community led burn during the Karla Katitjin Gathering fostered intergenerational knowledge sharing. Burning was supported by Binjared Rangers and provided training opportunities for Winjan Rangers and Bushfire Centre of Excellence trainees.

Nowanup-Boodja cultural burns
Third consecutive year of Elder-led burns of increased size and complexity and enhanced stakeholder engagement led to improved knowledge sharing.

Shire of York partnership
Two-year collaboration delivering multiple burns at Wongborel (Mt. Brown) and Gogulyar Bilya (Avon Riverbanks) promoting cross cultural knowledge exchange.

Urban cultural burn
The cultural burn in Hillview Terrace Bushland in Victoria Park revived traditional practices in an urban setting.

Mechanical and chemical fuel management

Mechanical fuel management is the most widely used method for reducing fuel loads with 76% of organisations reporting completing some slashing, mowing, mulching, parkland clearing or scrub rolling in 2024/25 (table 1). This is an increase of 23% from 2023/24. Mechanical fuel management methods are widely used due to their flexibility and the possibility of contracting the work out. The installation of firebreaks and fire access roads also increased in 2024/25 in both the number of organisations using the method and the extent of firebreaks and access installed.

Chemical treatments are also commonly used in bushfire mitigation, with more than half the surveyed organisations having undertaken chemical fuel management. In 2024/25 almost 50% more organisations reported using chemical treatments as part of their fuel management program and the area treated doubled, compared to 2023/24. The sharp increase in the area treated by chemical treatment in recent years has largely been due to Main Roads WA increasing their road verge weed management program.

Table 1 Amount of mechanical and chemical fuel management reported in 2024/25. Activity may be reported as either area (hectares) or linear distance (kilometres) treated as treatments may be applied to either a block (such as a patch of vegetation) or a strip (such as a road verge) of land.

Treatment	# of organisations that used the method	Area completed (ha)	Length completed (km)
Chemical spraying	57	17,247	2,986
Firebreaks & fire access roads	54	7,401	4,184
Mechanical fuel management	80	13,724	1,026

Image Credits: OBRM

Local government fuel management

State Hazard Plan Fire describes WA's arrangements and responsibilities for prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. It identifies 45 local governments that are at particularly high risk from bushfire and require a BRM Plan as part of the DFES led BRM Planning program. A BRM Plan is designed to consider bushfire risk holistically across the local government area, regardless of land tenure or ownership.

Across the 45 high risk local governments identified in *State Hazard Plan Fire*, DBCA, DFES and local governments jointly completed 236,544 ha of mitigation in 2024/25:

- DBCA completed 232,448 ha
- The 45 local governments collectively completed 2,909 ha
- DFES completed 1,188 ha.

The FMA report includes information about fuel management activities for 76 local governments. Of these, data for 62 local government was sourced through the fuel management activity survey and data for 14 local governments was sourced from the BRMS.

In 2024/25, 64 local governments undertook fuel management. Collectively, local governments mitigated bushfire risk on 5,975 ha of land across the state and constructed or maintained 632 km of firebreaks (figure 5).

Planned burning accounted for the largest area treated by local government with over 2,450 ha of burning completed by 32 local governments. Mechanical treatments were the most used treatment type, with 59 local governments conducting mechanical treatments during 2024/25.

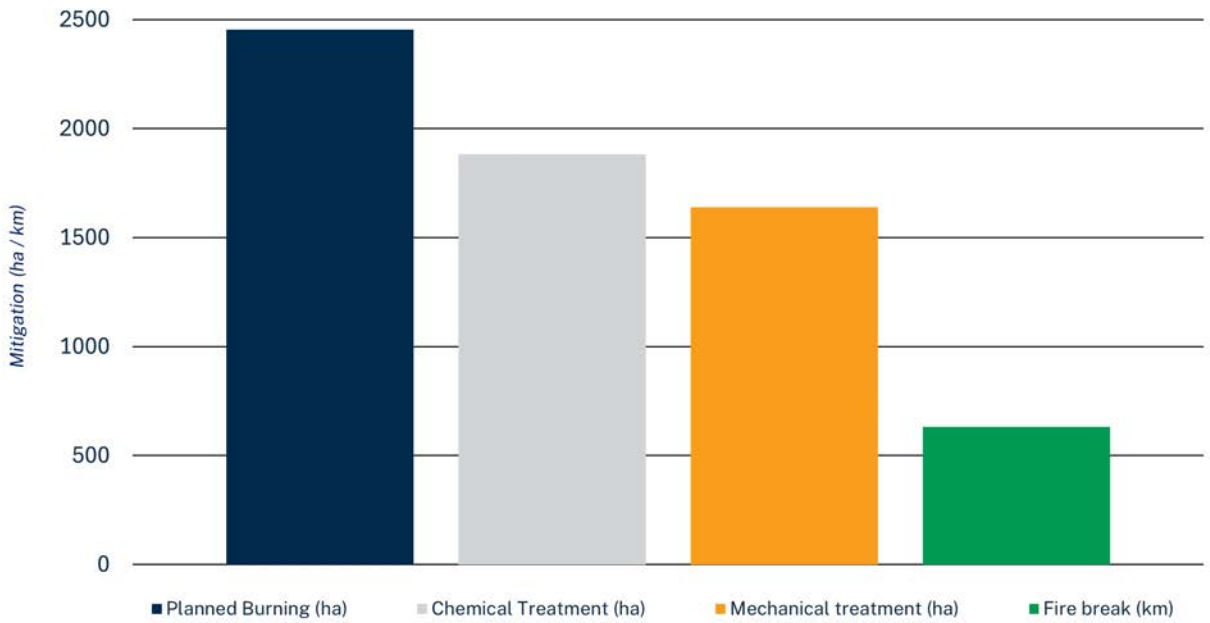


Figure 5: Bushfire fuel management completed by local governments over the 2024/25 reporting period

Local governments participating in the BRM planning program completed more fuel management in 2024/25 than in any of the previous seven years (figure 6).

The combined area of planned burning, chemical, and mechanical treatments completed by local governments has increased consistently since 2017/18, apart from a downturn during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The length of firebreaks constructed or maintained by local governments in the BRM planning program peaked in 2021/22 and has remained relatively stable since. The increasing area of mitigation completed by local governments demonstrates the effectiveness of the BRM planning program and the MAFGP.

Image Credit: OBRM

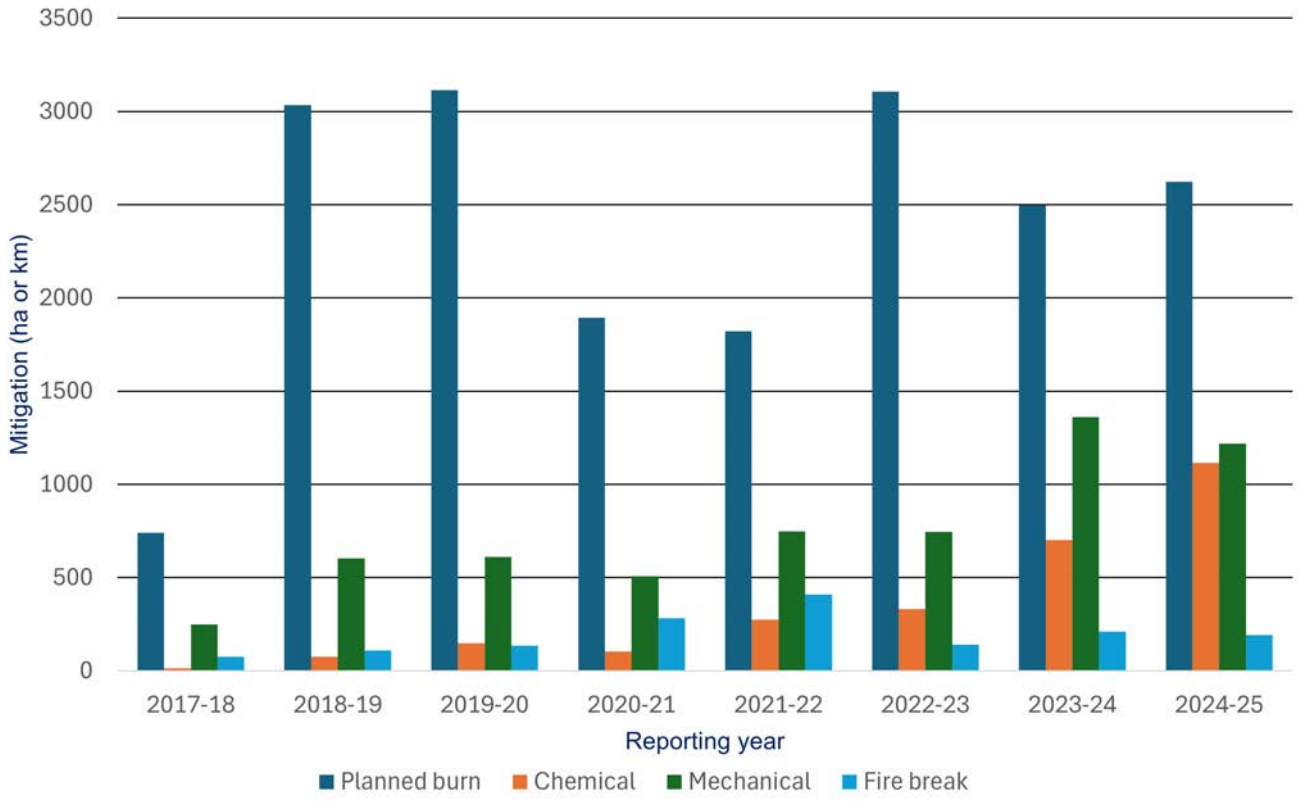


Figure 6: Amount of bushfire fuel management completed by local governments in the BRM planning program since 2017/18 based on analysis of data in the BRMS.

Case Study

Shire of Boyup Brook

Wilga Townsite, bushfire mitigation and community resilience

Wilga townsite is located 24 km from Boyup Brook and is historically at a high or extreme risk of bushfire. The secluded location surrounded by bush, a single access road, limited water supply and a community of older residents makes Wilga vulnerable to bushfires. In response, the Shire of Boyup Brook initiated a targeted bushfire fuel management program during the 2024/25 season to enhance safety and resilience.

Proactive mitigation efforts implemented to reduce bushfire risk include:

- asset protection zones established near homes
- firebreaks for emergency access
- parkland clearing - removal of woody and non-native vegetation
- dedicated firefighting water tank installed in the townsite funded by a grant to provide a reliable water source for emergency services.

The strategy to maintain the effectiveness of treatments includes:

- continuous maintenance of asset protection zones - regular slashing, undergrowth clearing and pruning
- community awareness programs for property preparedness and to build community awareness and resilience to the impacts of bushfire
- routine inspections of water tank to ensure operational readiness
- ongoing assessment and maintenance of firebreaks, fire access roads and critical infrastructure.

Outcomes and future outlook of the strategy include:

- improved safety and resilience of the Wilga townsite
- development of a “Bushfire Ready” facilitator role
- transition from a vulnerable to resilient community.

Image Credits: Shire of Boyup Brook

Community engagement and collaboration was essential to successful outcomes. This included meetings with community leaders and local volunteer bushfire brigades to foster community ownership and empowerment.

Goal - To embed bushfire resilience into the community

Enabling fuel management

Survey respondents most commonly identified the following factors as being important to achieving their fuel management objectives:

BRM Plans for local governments provide a structured process to identify, assess and create a treatment strategy specific to their local context.

A growing number of organisations used mixed funding sources such as organisational budget and government grants to complete their fuel management programs.

The MAFGP provides financial assistance to local governments with BRM Plans to deliver fuel management treatments.

Collaboration between DFES, DBCA, volunteer brigades, private property owners and First Nations Australians, enhanced the implementation of fuel management programs.

Enabling fuel management across the broad WA landscape is complex due to the varying needs of local governments and stakeholders. However, it is an essential component of mitigating bushfire risk and keeping communities safe.

Figure 7 illustrates the changing dynamics of funding sources for mitigation activities between 2021/22 and 2024/25.

Over that period there has been a shift from heavy reliance on internal funding to many organisations using a mixture of internal funds and government grants.

This correlates with increasing local government participation in the BRM planning program and wider access to the MAFGP.

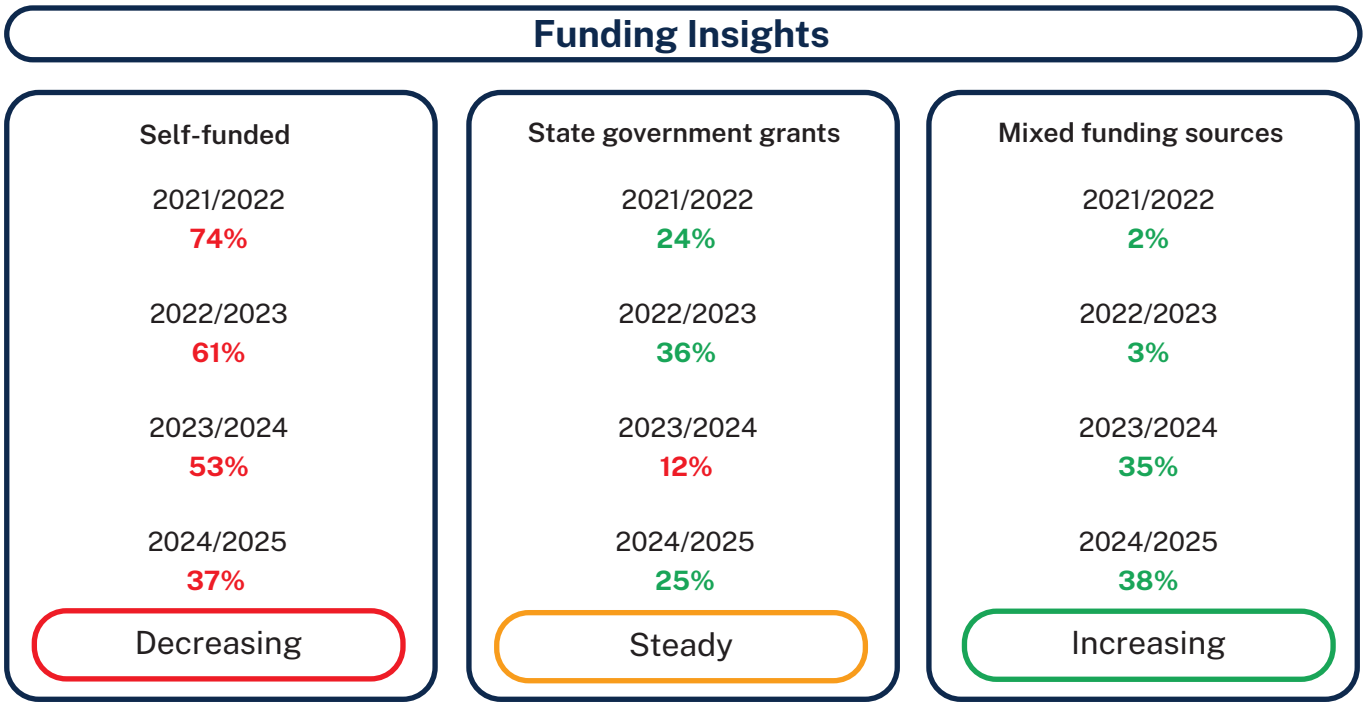


Figure 7: The percentage of organisations that reported entirely self-funding their fuel management program, being entirely reliant on State Government grants or using a mixture of these funding streams over the last four reporting periods.

Importance of external resources and expertise

Survey respondents were asked how important external resources and expertise were to the completion of their fuel management program (figure 8). Respondents indicated that DFES and volunteer brigades are crucial to delivering fuel management outcomes. DBCA, other state government agencies, public utility managers and First Nations Australians also contributed important resources and expertise. Private property owners were frequently reported as participating in fuel management programs.

Some respondents noted a reliance on private contractors for the completion of mitigation works. Several organisations reported that arborists are essential to achieving fuel management due to lack of skill and training within their organisation to operate machinery and handle chemicals.

Stakeholder collaboration

Survey responses indicate a continuation of the trend of increasing engagement between organisations undertaking fuel management (figure 9). The group most engaged are private property owners, reflecting the strong representation of local governments in survey responses.

Collaboration and involvement are most common with volunteer brigades and DFES, while about 60% of respondents engaged DBCA, reflecting the breadth of DBCA's land management responsibilities and planned burning expertise. Increasing engagement with First Nations Australians when planning and implementing fuel management was also reported.

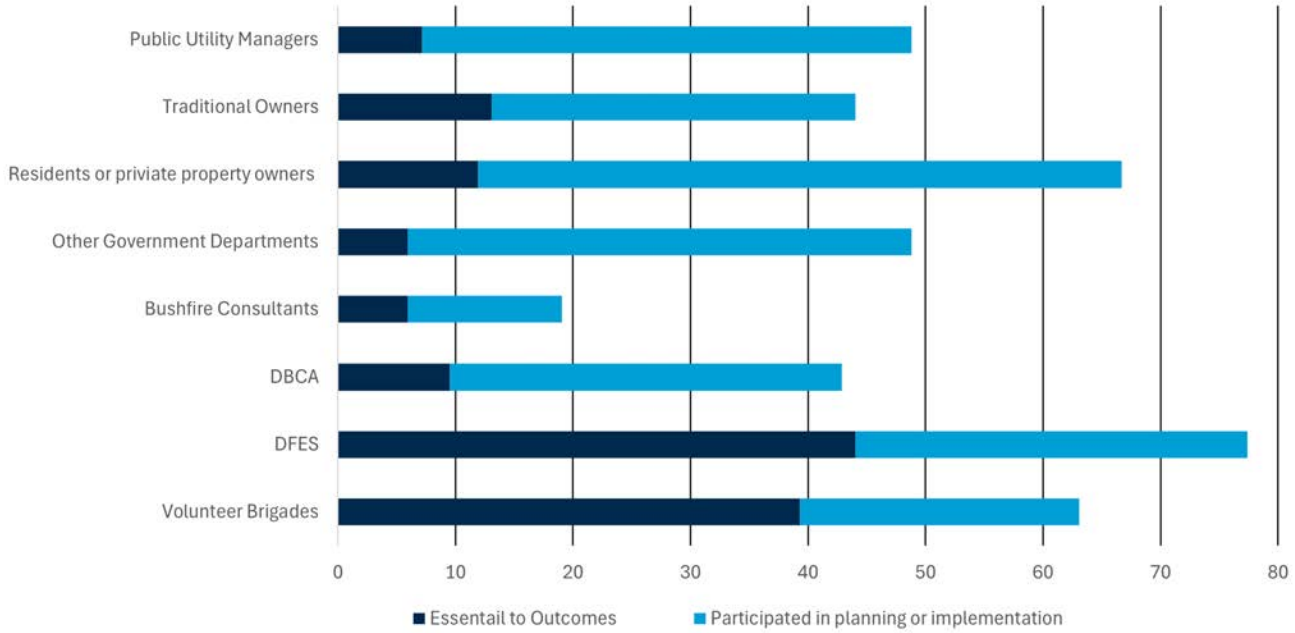


Figure 8: Involvement of stakeholders in other organisations' fuel management programs. The graph shows the percentage of respondents that reported some reliance on the listed stakeholder.

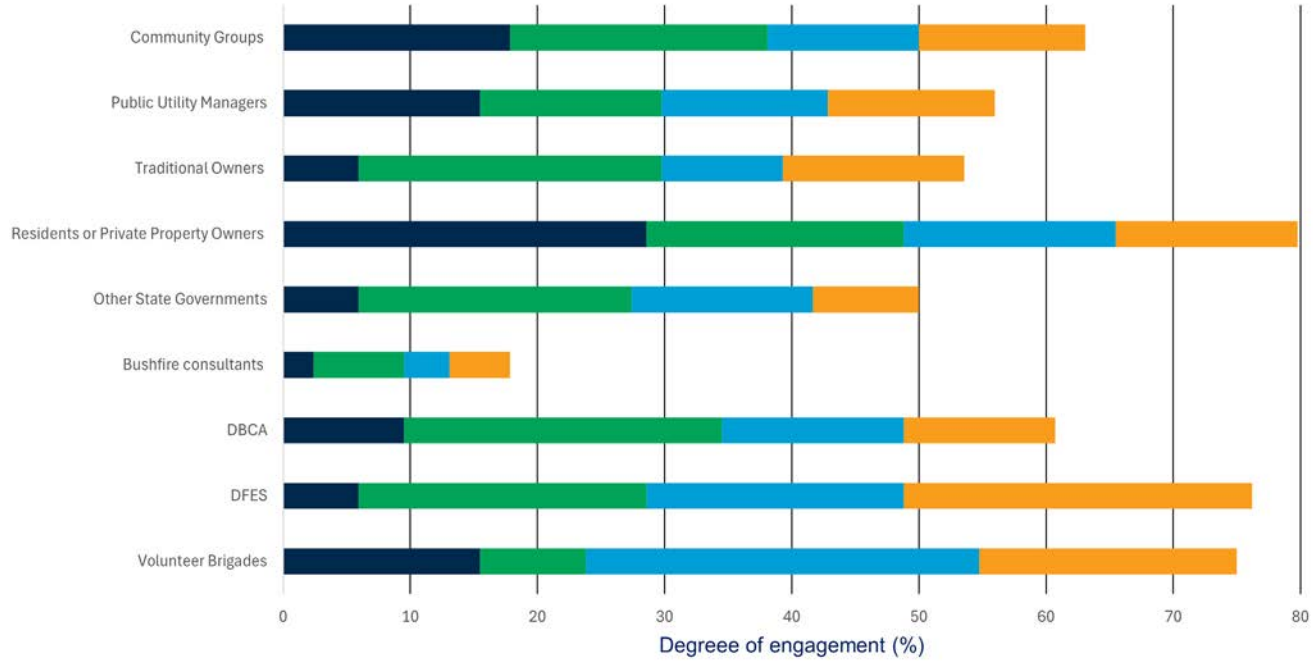


Figure 9: Engagement of stakeholders when planning fuel management. The graph shows the percentage of respondents that reported some engagement with the listed stakeholder.

Taken together, these results tell a positive story. It appears that organisations in WA work collaboratively with fire management agencies and volunteer brigades but are not overly reliant on these external resources or expertise to complete fuel management activities. The high level of stakeholder engagement within the bushfire sector is also positive as collaboration facilitates good outcomes for the community and enables the sharing of best practice.

Image Credit: BCoE

Case Study Shire of York

Reigniting Culture and Country: Cultural burning on Ballardong Noongar Land

The Shire of York partnered with the Ballardong Noongar community to reintroduce cultural burning on Wongborel (Mt. Brown) and Gogulyar Bilya (Avon Riverbanks) Crown land identified as high bushfire risk in the Shire's BRM Plan.

The project aimed to restore cultural custodianship, protect sacred sites and reduce bushfire risk.

Image Credits: Shire of York

Community led planning

- Ballardong Elders advocated for cultural fire practices as spiritual and ecological care for the land
- success required balancing legislation, local government responsibilities and cultural protocols
- an Environmental Conservation Management Plan was developed to ensure ecological sensitivity and biodiversity restoration.

Implementation and two-way learning

- collaboration occurred between the Shire, DFES, Ballardong Elders and local environmental groups
- six 'cool burns' were conducted between October 2023 and April 2025
- the first ignition was completed by a local Noongar woman as a symbolic act of cultural continuity.

Knowledge sharing and cultural integrity

- involvement of the Noongar volunteer brigade captain and Cultural Fire Program Coordinator ensured cultural protocols were upheld including the integration of traditional and contemporary fire management practices
- community events and storytelling educated the community on cultural significance and bushfire resilience.

Future directions by the Shire of York

- embed cultural fire practices in the BRM Plan
- secure funding to finance a permanent Noongar Ranger program
- continue cultural burning to reduce risk and restore Country
- ongoing collaboration with the Ballardong Elders and other stakeholders.

Recognition

- Awarded High Commendation at the 2024 Resilient Australia Awards
- Honourable Mention in the 2024 National Awards for Local Government.

Restrictions on fuel management activities

When asked why they were unable to complete their fuel management program, respondents most frequently identified the following barriers (figure 10):

- organisational and grant funding
- weather conditions
- availability of organisational resources (skills, capacity and availability)
- finding an available and affordable contractor.

The issues identified as being the most significant barriers have not changed significantly since FMA reporting began.

Environmental and heritage approvals and community concerns were reported as having the least impact on fuel management programs.

Survey results specifically indicated that high staff turnover and vacant positions were key factors that limited many respondents from completing their fuel management programs. This was most commonly the case for local governments, who noted that sharing organisational resources means that not all planning and treatments can be completed in the available timeframes.

Works being constrained by the limited availability and cost of contractors has been a growing trend in recent reports. The reasons vary across the State but include:

- increased competition from the mining and construction sectors for contractors
- greater competition for access to contractors as more bushfire fuel management work is completed across the State.

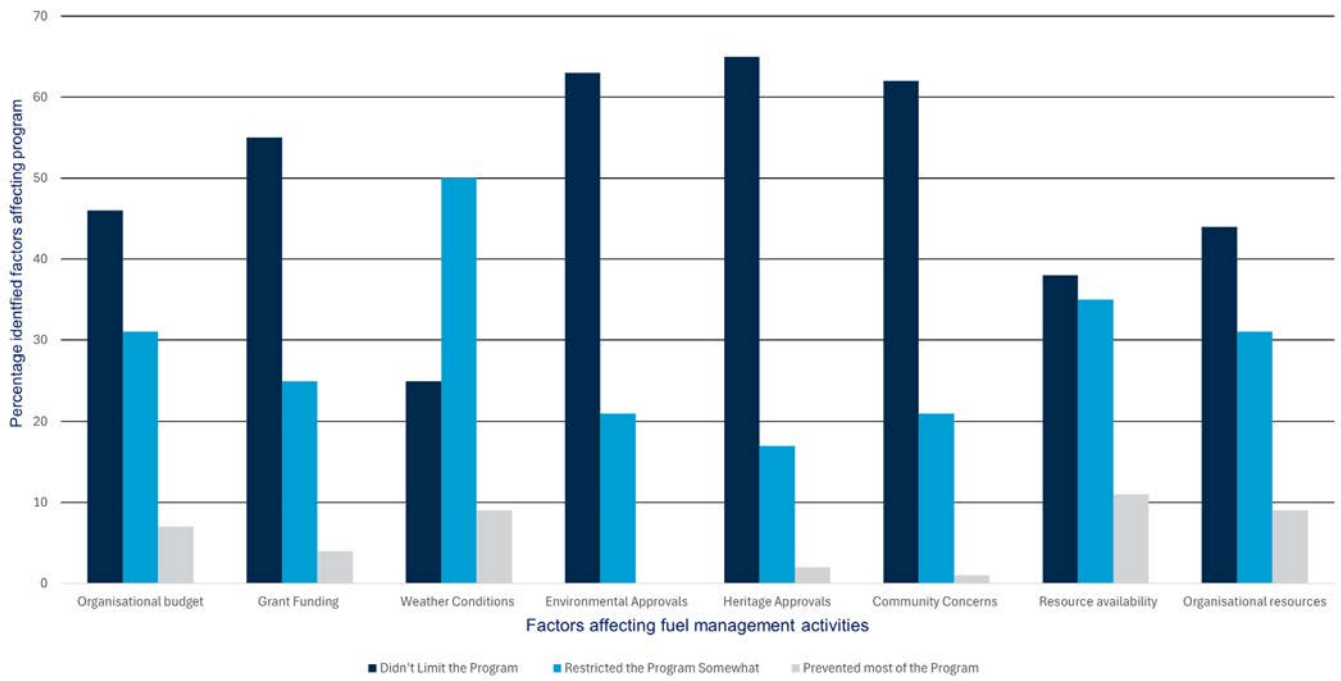


Figure 10: The factors affecting respondents' ability to achieve their bushfire fuel management program in 2024/25

Lessons learned

The 2024/25 FMA report shows that collaboration between stakeholders undertaking fuel management continues to improve. Engaging residents and volunteer fire brigades was identified as being particularly important to building resilient communities that are prepared for bushfires. This highlights the importance of relationship building and empowerment when managing bushfire risk.

When asked about opportunities for improvement in their fuel management program, many respondents referred to increasing budget and funding for bushfire fuel management, or the need for increased personnel resources and access to contractors to complete planned work. Specifically, many respondents noted a need to 'succession plan' and increase support and mentoring for emerging mitigation practitioners to increase the skilled workforce. Many respondents also commented on the desire to increase expertise and knowledge sharing between state agencies and local governments to support those facing similar challenges.

Additionally, local governments indicated the desire for their mitigation programs to be based on long-term strategic approaches, and supported by greater flexibility in the MAFGP. The MAFGP has begun to address this by introducing a three-year grant. This allows for long term planning, more effective budgeting and an ethos of continuous improvement to better refine strategies for more effective and sustainable outcomes in bushfire fuel management.

Many local governments also commented on the need for better integration with internal and external stakeholders in their mitigation planning. Improvements in streamlining legislation and compliance processes were also mentioned.

To strengthen fuel management outcomes and reduce barriers to reducing bushfire risk across WA, the following key areas of improvement were identified by survey respondents:

Enhance collaboration and partnerships

Continue to build strong relationships between government agencies, industry, First Nations Australians and community stakeholders to ensure coordinated and effective fuel management strategies.

Increase resource allocation

Additional funding, personnel and equipment to address resource limitations that restrict the completion of planned fuel management activities.

Expand and support community engagement and resilience programs

Support local governments to initiate, maintain and grow community education and engagement programs to reinforce shared responsibility and encourage participation in fuel reduction initiatives.

Support cultural fire practices

Promote and integrate First Nations-led fire management programs to leverage traditional knowledge and strengthen cultural partnerships.

Monitor and report progress

Improve data collection and monitor trends for transparent reporting and performance monitoring to track achievements, identify gaps, and inform future strategies.

Image Credit: DBCA

Conclusion

The 2024/25 FMA report demonstrates the continued commitment of land managers across WA to reduce bushfire risk through responsible and collaborative fuel management practices. The ongoing participation of organisations contributing to this report reflects a continued recognition that bushfire risk reduction is a shared responsibility.

The report highlights strong community support for fuel management initiatives, underpinned by effective communication and engagement strategies. Many organisations reported successful collaboration with private landholders, community groups, volunteer brigades, and state government agencies. Importantly, the expanding involvement of First Nations Australians in collaborative fuel management represents a positive and valuable development.

The findings of the report affirm that effective bushfire risk reduction in WA depends on shared responsibility and collaboration.

While substantial fuel management activities have been undertaken across the State, organisations continue to face challenges that limit the completion of planned works. Resource and funding constraints and adverse weather conditions remain significant constraints, and continued focus and innovation in these areas will be needed to ensure the ongoing success of fuel management programs in WA.

Image Credit: OBRM

Appendix A: Participating local governments

Table 2 List of local governments that participated in the Fuel Management Activities report 2024/25

Local governments			
City of Albany	City of Armadale	Shire of Ashburton	Shire of Augusta Margaret River
City of Bayswater	City of Belmont	Shire of Beverley	Shire of Boddington
Shire of Boyup Brook	Shire of Brookton	Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup	City of Bunbury
City of Busselton	City of Canning	Shire of Capel	Shire of Carnamah
Shire of Carnarvon	Shire of Chittering	City of Cockburn	Shire of Collie
Shire of Coorow	Shire of Corrigin	Town of Cottesloe	Shire of Cranbrook
Shire of Cunderdin	Shire of Dandaragan	Shire of Dardanup	Shire of Denmark
Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup	Shire of Dundas	Shire of East Pilbara	Shire of Esperance
Shire of Gingin	Shire of Gnowangerup	Shire of Goomalling	City of Gosnells
City of Greater Geraldton	Shire of Harvey	Shire of Jerramungup	City of Kalamunda
City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder	City of Karratha	Shire of Katanning	City of Kwinana
Shire of Lake Grace	Shire of Manjimup	Shire of Meekatharra	City of Melville
Shire of Morawa	Shire of Mount Magnet	Shire of Mukinbudin	Shire of Mundaring
Shire of Murchison	Shire of Nannup	Shire of Northam	Shire of Perenjori
Shire of Plantagenet	Shire of Quairading	Shire of Ravensthorpe	City of Rockingham
Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale	Shire of Shark Bay	City of South Perth	City of Stirling
City of Swan	Shire of Tammin	Shire of Toodyay	Shire of Victoria Plains
Shire of Wagin	Shire of Wandering	City of Wanneroo	Shire of Waroona
Shire of West Arthur	Shire of Woodanilling	Shire of Yalgoo	Shire of York

Private organisations		
Australian Wildlife Conservancy	Kimberley Land Council	Nyamba Buru Yawuru
State government agencies		
WA Country Health Service	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions	
Main Roads, Western Australia	Department of Fire and Emergency Services	