



OFFICIAL

Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas Mapping Standards

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Currency of the Standard

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas Mapping Standard (Standard) was approved in June 2026.

The current version of the Standard is available at <https://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/hazard-information/bushfire/bushfire-prone-areas>.

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Definitions

The following definitions apply to terms used in the Standard.

Bush fire	An unplanned fire burning in vegetation. 'Bushfire' and 'bush fire' should be taken to have the same meaning, with the latter used in this document to align with the <i>Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998</i> .
Bush fire prone area	An area that has been designated by the Fire and Emergency Services (FES) Commissioner under section 18P of the <i>Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998</i> as an area that is subject, or likely to be subject, to bush fires.
Bush fire prone buffer	An area 100 metres wide that surrounds bush fire prone vegetation.
Bush fire prone vegetation	Vegetation classified as bush fire prone in accordance with the criteria specified in this Standard.
Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas	An online map identifying areas of WA that are designated as bush fire prone, produced in line with the requirements of this Standard.

1. Introduction

The Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas (Map) shows areas of Western Australia (WA) designated by the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner as likely to be subject to bush fire attack. DFES works with local government and partner agencies to maintain the Map.

The identification of bush fire prone areas (BPAs) is fundamental to controls for bush fire risk to be implemented through the planning and building system. The Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas Mapping Standard (Standard) defines the methodology applied to identify bush fire prone areas and develop the Map.

1.1 Definition of a bush fire prone area

A BPA is an area that is likely to be subject to bush fire attack¹. Research has shown about 85 percent of houses destroyed in bush fires were within 100 metres of bushland, with ember attack being a significant cause of property ignition². As such, a BPA is defined as any area within 100 metres of bush fire prone vegetation (BPV).

Under Section 18P of the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998* the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner can, by order published in the Gazette, designate areas of Western Australia as bush fire prone if satisfied that the area is likely to be subject to bush fires.

1.2 Purpose of the Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas

The Map shows areas designated as bush fire prone. Development and building proposals in locations designated as BPA must meet additional planning and construction requirements. These requirements are set out in *State Planning Policy 3.7 Bushfire* and the *National Construction Code*. Further information on the bush fire planning policy and regulatory framework is available at [Bushfire planning - Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage](#).

1.3 Area 1 and Area 2 on the Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas

The Map identifies two different designations of BPA. Area 1 is where urban density, topography and the absence of contiguous vegetation reduce the risk of landscape scale bush fires. Area 2 comprises the remainder of the State. All BPA within areas identified as Area 1 are labelled as BPA 1 on the Map. All other BPA is labelled as BPA 2.

¹ Standards Australia 2019, *Australian Standard Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas AS 3959:2018*, Fourth Edition incorporating Amendment No. 1, Standards Australia, Sydney, Australia p. 8.

² K. Chen & J. McAneney 2010, *Bushfire Penetration into Urban Areas in Australia: A Spatial Analysis*, Risk Frontiers Macquarie University for Bushfire CRC, p. 16.

2. Identifying bush fire prone areas

2.1 Vegetation data

The most current and accurate data available to DFES were used to identify vegetation extent and type. High-resolution imagery of the Perth, Peel and Greater Bunbury Region Scheme areas sourced from *WA Now (LGATE-361)* was used to improve the precision of the mapping. Additional high-resolution imagery was used to identify vegetation around major townsites in WA.

2.2 Classification of bush fire prone vegetation

BPV may consist of any of the seven classes of vegetation described in *Australian Standard 3959-2018 Construction of Buildings in Bushfire Prone Areas* as shown in Table 1. A visual guide to assist with classifying vegetation is provided at Appendix 1, *Vegetation Classification Summary*. Managed grassland and low threat vegetation, as described in clause 2.2.3.2. (e) and (f) of AS 3959-2018, are not bush fire prone.

Table 1: Vegetation classifications that can comprise bush fire prone vegetation³.

Vegetation Classification ⁴	Vegetation Type	Description
A Forest	Tall open forest Tall woodland	Trees over 30 m high with 30-70% foliage cover (may include understorey of low trees and tall shrubs). Found in areas of high reliable rainfall.
	Open forest Low open forest	Trees up to 30 m high; 30-70% foliage cover (may include understorey of low trees or shrubs). Includes eucalypt plantations.
	Pine plantations	Trees 30 m in height at maturity, comprising softwood species, planted as a single species for the production of timber.
B Woodland	Woodland Low woodland	Trees up to 30 m high; 10%–30% foliage cover. May contain isolated shrubs.
C Shrubland	Closed (low) heath Open heath	Found in wet areas and/or affected by poor soil fertility or shallow soils. Shrubs 1m–2 m high. Wet heaths occur in sands adjoining dunes of the littoral (shore) zone. Montane heaths occur on shallow or water-logged soils.
	Low shrubland	Shrubs <2 m high; greater than 30% foliage cover. Understoreys may contain grasses.
D Scrub	Closed scrub (Tall heaths)	Found in wet areas and areas affected by poor soil fertility or shallow soils; >30% foliage cover. Dry heaths occur in rocky areas. Shrubs >2 m high. Typical of coastal areas and tall heaths up to 6 metres in height.
	Open scrub	Shrubs greater than 2 m high, 10%–30% foliage cover with a mixed species composition.
E Mallee/ Mulga	Tall shrubland	Vegetation dominated by low trees or tall shrubs some with a multi-stemmed habit (mallee); usually greater than 2 m in height; <30% foliage cover. Understorey of widespread dense low shrubs or sparse grasses and generally found in the arid and semi-arid zones, but not within the rangelands.
F Rainforest	Tall closed forest Closed forest Low closed forest	Trees >90% foliage cover; understorey may contain a large number of species with a variety of heights. Not dominated by eucalypt species.
G Grasslands	Hummock grassland Closed tussock grassland Tussock grassland Open tussock Sparse open tussock Dense sown pasture Sown pasture Open herbfield Sparse open herbfield	All forms (except tussock moorlands), including situations with shrubs and trees, if the overstorey foliage cover is less than 10%. Includes pasture and cropland.

³ Source: AS 3959-2018: Table 2.3 © Standards Australia. Reproduced with permission under Standards Australia licence number CL0821dfe.

⁴ Vegetation Classification relates to those shown in Appendix 1 – Classification of Vegetation Summary.

2.3 Spatial definition of bush fire prone vegetation

An area of vegetation is identified as BPV if it meets the prerequisite and any of the three criteria below at the time the assessment is undertaken. Changes in vegetation are identified via regular reviews of the Map.

Prerequisite: Patches of vegetation must be at least 20 metres in width to be assessed.

Criterion 1. Single patches of vegetation at least 1 hectare in area.

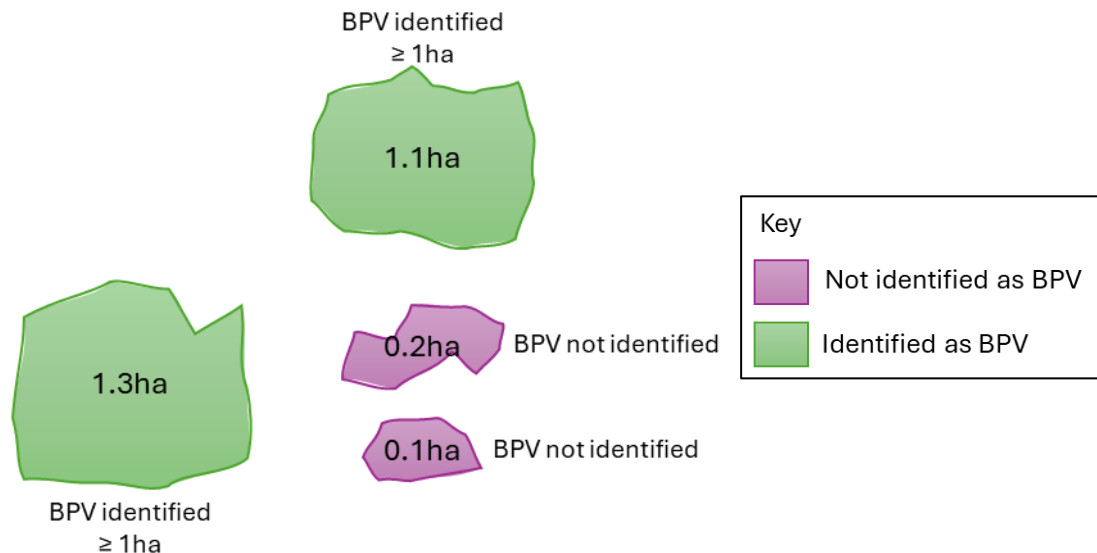


Figure 1 – Depiction of Criterion 1 for defining bush fire prone vegetation.

Criterion 2. Multiple patches of vegetation within 20 metres of one another that sum to one hectare or greater.

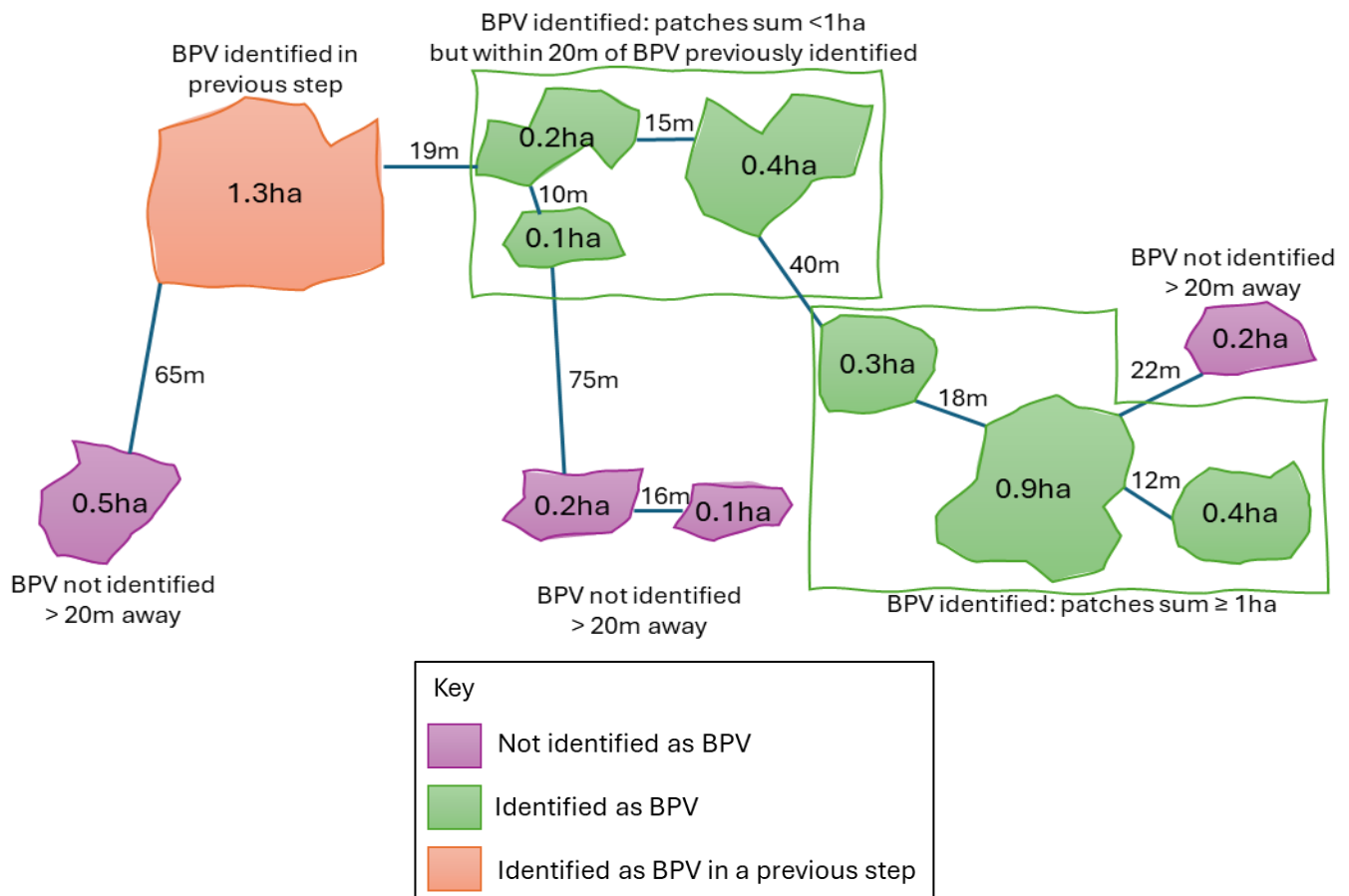


Figure 2 – Depiction of Criterion 2 for defining bush fire prone vegetation.

Criterion 3. Vegetation that is within 100 metres of BPV identified in Criterion 1 or Criterion 2 AND is a single patch of vegetation of at least 0.25 hectares OR in multiple patches of vegetation within 20 metres of one another that sum to equal or greater than 0.25 hectares.

Criterion 3 does not iterate, i.e. a patch of vegetation is not BPV if it is greater than 100 metres from BPV identified in Criteria 1 and 2 but near BPV identified in Criterion 3.

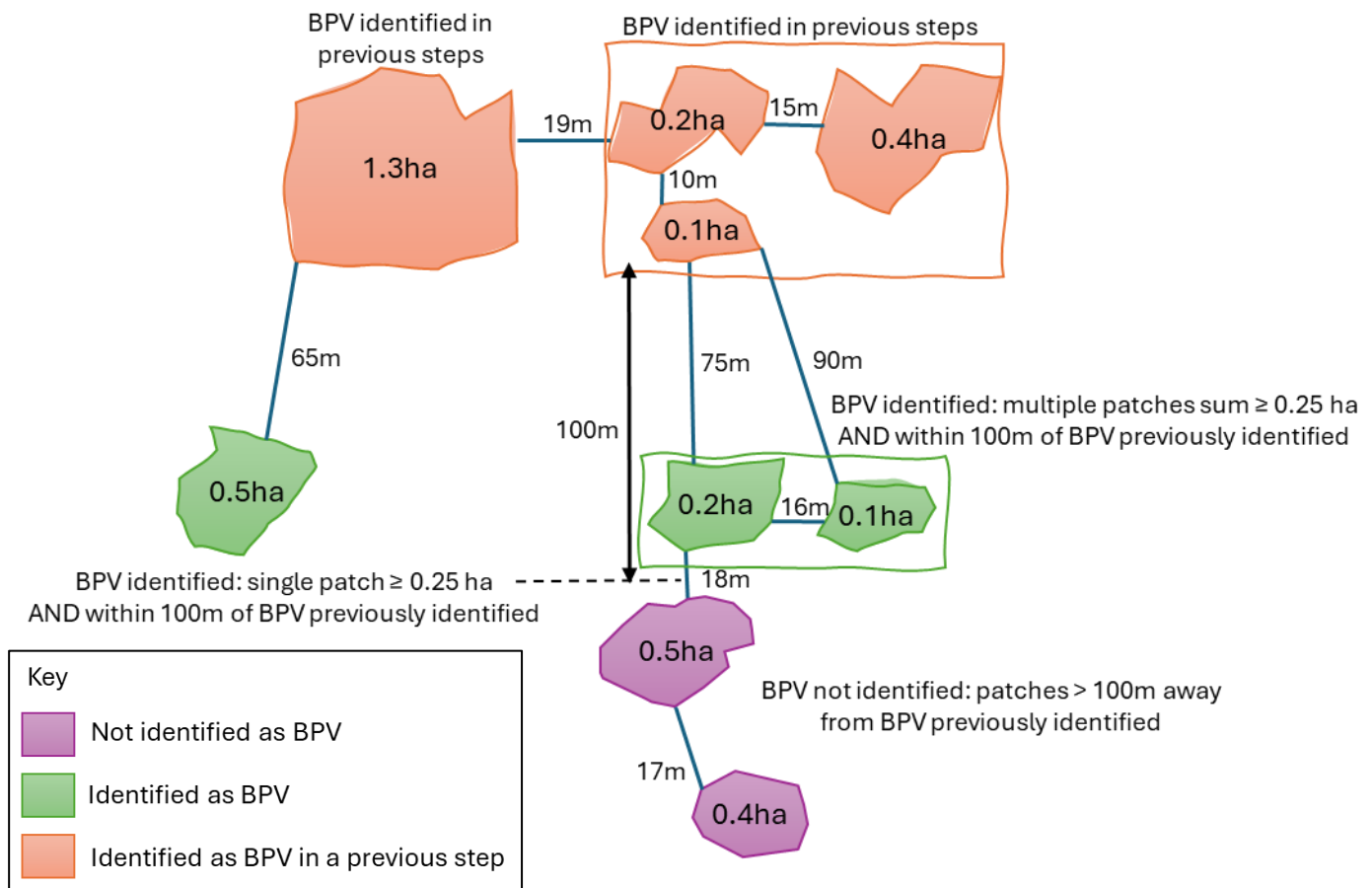


Figure 3 – Depiction of Criterion 3 for defining bush fire prone vegetation.

2.4 Exceptions for the Perth Central Planning Sub-region

Within the Perth Central Planning Sub-region⁵ patches of vegetation less than four hectares in area are not identified as BPV. This is in recognition of the reduced bush fire risk associated with this highly urbanised area.

2.5 The precautionary principle

DFES takes a precautionary approach to identifying BPV. Unless an area of vegetation clearly does not meet the prerequisite and Criteria 1, 2 or 3, it is identified as bush fire prone. DFES may undertake additional assessments to determine the characteristics of vegetation.

2.6 Defining the Bush Fire Prone Area

The BPA is defined by applying a 100-metre buffer to the periphery of all BPV. The BPA comprises the totality of the BPV and the area encompassed by the 100-metre buffer.

⁵ City of Stirling, City of Bayswater, Town of Bassendean, Town of Cambridge, City of Vincent, City of Nedlands, City of Subiaco, City of Perth, City of Belmont, Town of Claremont, City of South Perth, Town of Victoria Park, Town of Cottesloe, Shire of Peppermint Grove, Town of Mosman Park, City of Fremantle, Town of East Fremantle, City of Melville and City of Canning.

3. Identifying Bush Fire Prone Areas 1 and 2

The methodology to identify Area 1 has been revised to identify where urban density, and the absence of contiguous vegetation reduce the risk of landscape scale bush fires.

Area 1 was identified using spatial data at the scale of Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Mesh Blocks. Mesh Blocks were analysed to find locations that are predominantly composed of buildings, roads or cleared land and contain only limited and isolated patches of vegetation.

Mesh Blocks may be included in Area 1 if they:

1. are predominantly composed of artificial surfaces, natural bare surfaces, or water;
2. border step 1 Mesh Blocks and are predominantly surrounded⁶ by step 1 Mesh Blocks; and
3. contain buildings

Groupings of Mesh Blocks meeting these criteria are classified as Area 1 if they form a contiguous area of at least 1000 hectares.

This method has been applied within the Perth, Peel and Greater Bunbury Region Scheme Areas and regional towns with populations over 10,000 people. All other parts not included in Area 1 are Area 2.

⁶ >50% of Mesh Blocks within a 1000 metre radius were selected in Area 1.
Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas Mapping Standards

4. Technical Specifications of the Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas

4.1 Map and Data Accessibility

The Map can be viewed online through the [DFES website](#) utilising the Shared Location Information Platform (SLIP) administered by Landgate. The dataset depicting designated BPA is available from the WA open data website, www.data.wa.gov.au. Historical BPA datasets are also available upon request from [DFES](#).

4.2 Transition period

For the first four months following designation, new BPA will be identified separately on the Map.

Following the end of the four-month transition period, all designated BPA will be depicted as BPA 1 or BPA 2 as appropriate.

5. Reviews of the Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas

5.1 Review of Bush Fire Prone Mapping

DFES' Office of Bushfire Risk Management (OBRM) updates the Map regularly including consulting local governments and relevant state government agencies on BPAs in their jurisdiction. Local governments and state government agencies that manage land should monitor BPAs identified within their administrative areas and report any need for change to OBRM. Any feedback on the Map from members of the public or industry groups should be provided to the relevant local government to be considered for inclusion in OBRM's consultation process.

Reviews of the Map follow the following procedure:

- OBRM undertakes analysis and vegetation mapping using the best available imagery to identify BPV and areas suitable to include in Area 1.
- OBRM publishes the draft BPV and Area 1 on the [Draft Bushfire Prone Vegetation Feedback Application](#) and notifies local governments and relevant state government agencies of the Map review.
 - Local governments and state government agencies are given 8 weeks to review the mapping for their administrative areas.
 - Assistance may be provided by OBRM if required.
- Local governments and state government agencies provide requests for amendments via the [Draft Bushfire Prone Vegetation Feedback Application](#) for OBRM to review.
- OBRM reviews all proposed amendments.
 - Any amendments must comply with the Standard to be accepted.
 - Unless an area of vegetation clearly does not meet the prerequisite and Criteria 1, 2 or 3, it is identified as bush fire prone. DFES may undertake additional assessments to determine the characteristics of vegetation.
 - OBRM may liaise with relevant parties or conduct desktop or field-based reviews⁷ to validate proposed amendments.
- OBRM uses accepted amendments to update the BPV data.

5.2 Finalisation of the Bush Fire Prone Areas dataset

OBRM will use the accepted BPV data to prepare the BPA dataset and Map. OBRM will review the BPA dataset and Map before providing them to the FES Commissioner for approval.

5.3 Publication of the Map of Bush Fire Prone Areas

The FES Commissioner designates the BPAs through an order published in the Government Gazette. After designation, DFES makes the BPA dataset publicly available through Landgate. The dataset is accessible as an interactive map on the DFES website, as downloadable spatial data on www.data.wa.gov.au and as a field within relevant Landgate Property Interest Reports. OBRM will advise local governments of each new version of the Map through formal correspondence and through the communication channels of the Western Australian Local Government Association including its networks and newsletters.

⁷ In most cases, a desktop assessment and application of local knowledge is an adequate process for verifying the bush fire prone vegetation data. A field assessment is appropriate where data or local knowledge is not sufficient to make a determination.

6. Monitoring and Review

The Standard is subject to regular review to maintain its currency and improve the accuracy of the resulting Map. Review is undertaken concurrently with consultation on revised versions of the Map. Local governments, state government agencies, industry groups and members of the public are invited to provide feedback on the Standard during the consultation processes.

Appendix 1 - Classification of Vegetation - Summary

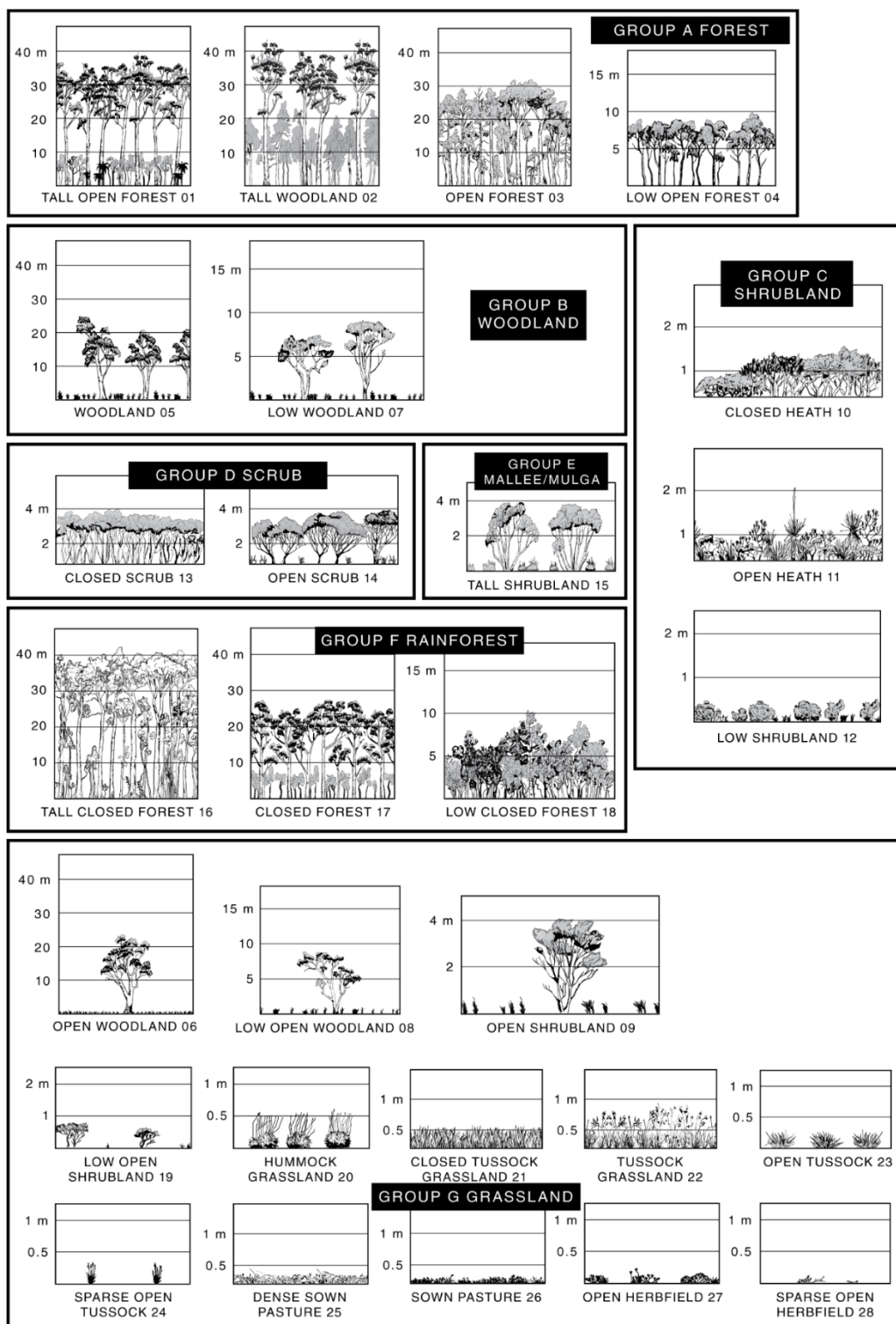


Figure 4 – Classification of vegetation – summary⁸

⁸ Source: AS 3959-2018: Figure 2.4a © Standards Australia. Reproduced with permission under Standards Australia licence number CL0821dfe.