

Frequently Asked Questions: Wind Farms and Fire Risk

Can wind farms reduce the risk of bushfires in regional Australia?

Yes, wind farms can reduce the risk of bushfires. The certified lightning protection systems installed in modern wind turbines can help reduce the overall risk.

According to Australia's CSIRO, lightning strikes are the most common cause of bushfires across regional Australia. International wind turbine certification standards require all turbines to be fitted with tested and proven lightning protection systems. These systems safely capture lightning strikes protecting people and property.

Because wind turbines are tall structures equipped with certified lightning protection, they reduce the likelihood of lightning striking flammable objects such as nearby trees, fences, buildings, and flammable materials on the ground within and around a wind farm.

Wind farms can also support regional firefighting efforts by providing 24-hour, well-maintained, all-weather access roads into areas that were previously difficult to reach. These roads can be critical during emergency response operations.

What else do we do to minimise fire risks?

A bushfire risk assessment is undertaken, and a bushfire management plan is prepared and made available to the community. The management plan includes details of water tanks and other firefighting equipment maintained at the wind farm site, and how the wind farm personnel and equipment will assist firefighting efforts in case of bushfires in the region.

The wind turbines to be used on the project are fitted with advanced smoke detection and fire suppression systems. When smoke is detected, a signal is sent to the operator who will immediately shut down the turbine and alert the fire authority.

The suppression system will activate in the event of fire, a gas suppressant is released to extinguish any fire, the types of gas used are environmentally safe and act to cool the fire and remove oxygen to extinguish flames.



Limerick Wind Farm Project Update

September 2025



Can aerial firefighting still be used around a wind farm in the instance of a bushfire?

Yes. Wind turbines are treated like any other obstacle to be considered when planning flight paths during aerial application operations.

Aerial application flight operations are regulated and conducted by certified companies and specifically trained pilots. Wind turbines are large and easily identified by the pilot during the aerial application process. There is no regulatory prescribed lateral separation limit of the aircraft from the wind turbines or other obstacles in the work area.

Safe and effective aerial application flights are routinely conducted in accordance with the regulations and guidelines in and around wind farms and on adjacent properties.

Firefighting aircraft operators are also appropriately resourced and trained to overcome the challenges of operating within the vicinity of wind farms. Firefighting aircraft operators regularly deal with obstacles in the area of operation for firefighting, and wind farms are treated no differently to any other obstacle within these areas.

Commander Wayne Rigg, Aviation Coordinator, Aviation Unit – Strategy, Fire Rescue Victoria, was interviewed for an article in Issue 30 of the Air Attack magazine about his experience fighting fires on wind farms, concluding:

“With wind farms, you have to be mindful of the met’ towers but you know where the sub-station and wind towers are. Anticipate and understand the weather and fire behavior. I don’t see windfarms as any different from other fires in terms of our tactics, operations and how we go about it.”

– Commander Wayne

Round 2 Early Community Sponsorship

Round 2 of the early community sponsorship program will open on 1 January 2026 and close on 28 February 2026.

Eligible groups include community organisations including not-for-profit organisations and other groups, clubs or schools located within the Upper Lachlan Shire Local Government Area and are invited to apply for grants up to \$5,000 per organisation.

Full details of eligibility and the application form are available on the Limerick Wind Farm website.

Merry Christmas!

The Limerick Wind Farm team is grateful to members of the local community who took the time to meet with us during 2025.

We would like to wish you and your families a happy, safe and restful Christmas and all the best for the New Year.



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