

Professional Standard: Registered Arduous Bushfire Firefighter

Authority

This standard was approved by the AFAC Council on 30 April 2018.

Context

The AFAC Emergency Management Professionalisation Scheme (the Scheme) is a program to recognise the skills, abilities and experience of emergency management practitioners.

Established by AFAC, the national council and peak body for fire, land management and emergency service agencies in Australia and New Zealand, the Scheme is an initiative specifically designed to reinforce emergency management as a profession.

The Scheme is open to career and volunteer personnel of AFAC member agencies, as well as individuals from approved commercial or government entities.

Scope of application

This standard applies to applicants seeking registration in the role of Arduous Bushfire Firefighter. A proficient Arduous Bushfire Firefighter will possess the levels of training and personal fitness required to work in steep and heavily vegetated terrain away from any support vehicles for an entire shift. Arduous Bushfire Firefighters may need to be inserted into or retrieved from a fireground on foot or by boat or helicopter.

This category of registration is limited to wildland firefighting personnel only and is hazard-specific. Arduous firefighters can operate where a guaranteed means of extraction exists within a 45-minute walk. They can be deployed on foot, by vehicle, by boat and by helicopter to an existing Helicopter Landing Site (HLS). Firefighters registered with this skillset may be expected to be supervised by crew or taskforce leaders with additional qualifications and experience.

Applicants may be career staff or volunteers of AFAC member agencies or personnel from approved commercial or other government entities.

Credential

Registration as an Arduous Bushfire Firefighter is awarded to an individual who has successfully fulfilled all fitness and eligibility requirements. Individuals will be recognised as proficient in arduous bushfire firefighting, with at least two years' relevant fireline experience.

Education requirements for Arduous Bushfire Firefighter

Applicants must be able to provide documented evidence of successful completion of the education components and all associated prerequisites as specified in Table 1.

Table 1:

Course or Program
HLTAID011 Provide first aid HLTAID009 Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation PUAFIR204 Respond to wildfire PUAOPE013 Operate communications systems and equipmentPUAEQU001 Prepare, maintain and test response equipment PUAWHSS002 Maintain safety at an incident scene PUATEA001 Work in a team
A vocational or other qualification which was awarded after formal assessment and which in the view of the Panel provides evidence of the Applicant’s competence as an arduous bushfire firefighter equivalent to the PSTP units of competency described above.

Experience requirements for Arduous Bushfire Firefighter

Applicants must be able to provide documented evidence to demonstrate that he or she:

- has committed to the EMPS Code of Ethics 2017
- has the equivalent of two years’ or more relevant fireline experience (the minimum requirement for deploying internationally as a wildfire firefighter) and has demonstrated the ability to work on fire suppression away from vehicles in arduous environments
- has, within the 12 months prior to applying, passed the Arduous Pack Hike Test: confirmation will be expected from the applicant’s home agency. Annual successful completion of the Arduous Pack Hike Test is required to maintain registration in this role, in addition to other Continuing Professional Development requirements
- ss supported by their home agency or jurisdiction.

Definitions

<i>Two years’ or more relevant fireline experience</i>	Is active fireline experience over two fire seasons involving working in arduous fireground locations working away from vehicles and employing dry firefighting techniques.
<i>Arduous fireground locations</i>	Arduous firefighters can operate where a guaranteed means of extraction exists within a 45-minute walk. They can be deployed on foot, by vehicle, by boat and by helicopter to an existing Helicopter Landing Site (HLS).
<i>Arduous Pack Hike Test</i>	Means completing a timed walk on a level course measuring 4.83 kilometres carrying a pack weighing 20.4 kilograms in a maximum time of 45 minutes (candidates weighing ≤68kg can carry 15.4kg).

Review

This standard will commence April 2018. The Panel will review this standard after five years or as required.

Related professional standards

- Code of Ethics (2017)
- Professional Standard: Continuing Professional Development (2018).