Reducing the Risk of Bushfires

Dr Peter Toyne MLA
Minister for Central Australia

A plan to reduce the risk of bushfires in the Alice Springs area was released today by Minister for Central Australia, Dr Peter Toyne.

The Alice Springs Crown Land Strategic Fire Management Plan sets out effective ways to mitigate the impact of fire, protect life and property and prevent wildfires from becoming unmanageable.

“The plan is an integral part of the fire management strategy for Alice Springs,” Dr Toyne said.

“Preventing bushfires is impossible but we can reduce the threat by managing the fuel loads and making sure fire breaks and other mitigating strategies are carried out.”

The plan was developed after several large bushfires around the Alice Springs region in late 2002.

The Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment, the NT Fire and Rescue Service and Bushfires Council NT developed the plan to give a more co-ordinated approach to fire management.

“There are many mitigation and suppression methods that can be used to control fires and many are already carried out,” Dr Toyne said.

“For example, about 100,000 square metres of firebreaks have been created around residential properties in the town boundary.

“The plan also includes a fire protection plan and action table listing who is responsible for carrying out the works and the frequency of work.”

Dr Toyne said public awareness was crucial in minimising the risk of fires.

“Making sure that land holders are aware of the importance of minimising fuel loads and residents and visitors know about the dangers of the indiscriminate lighting of fires is vital,” he said.

“The NT Fire and Rescue Service and the Bushfires Council are very pro-active in educating people about the need to take care with fire.

“Plans such as this one developed for crown land will complement fire plans being developed by other property holders in Alice Springs.”