

Emergency Management Fact Sheet For Tourism Operators in the Bega Valley

The Bega Valley offers pristine natural environments consisting of stunning waterways and unspoilt areas of wilderness for tourists to enjoy. Our local environment can pose a challenge in times of natural disaster and this fact sheet has been developed to provide basic information to raise individual emergency management knowledge regarding a natural disaster and details of the relevant agencies that offer support to the community.

Bush Fire Emergency

The Bega Valley has many areas of national park and native forests where there is potential for dangerous bush fires to occur. When a bush fire happens, the preferred option is for affected people to leave early.

Bush Fire Combat Agency

The agency responsible for combating bushfires in the Bega Valley is the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS). Please refer to the following website for information regarding bush fire preparedness:



<https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/>

Bush Fire Survival Plan

Tourism operators should develop a site-specific bush fire survival plan. For more information:

<https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/bush-fire-survival-plan>

For other advice please consider the following planning resource:

https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/2927/1/DPP1079-Emergency-management-and-evacuation-plan-FORM.pdf

If tourism operators have any questions, need advice or assistance in developing their plan please contact **Bega RFS on (02) 6494 7400**.




Fire Danger Ratings & Actions

The Bush Fire Danger Ratings give you an indication of the possible consequences of a fire, if one was to start. The higher the fire danger rating, the more dangerous the conditions.

Fire Danger Rating	What You Should Do
CATASTROPHIC	For your survival, leaving early is the only option. On these days it is advisable that all sites be closed.
EXTREME	Leaving early is the safest option for your survival.
SEVERE	Monitor conditions and be prepared to activate the implementation plan.
VERY HIGH	Keep yourself informed and monitor conditions. Be ready to act if necessary.
HIGH	
LOW MODERATE	

Fires Near Me

For information on current fire events use the 'Fires Near Me' website: <https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/> or download the 'Fires Near Me App'. These resources will provide a fire status and alert level to assist operators on deciding what actions to take:

Status and alert levels	What You Should Do
Emergency Warning 	An Emergency Warning is the highest level of Bush Fire Alert. You may be in danger and need to take action immediately. Any delay now puts your life at risk.
Watch and Act 	There is a heightened level of threat. Conditions are changing and you need to start taking action now to protect you and your family.
Advice 	A fire has started. There is no immediate danger. Stay up to date in case the situation changes.

Neighbourhood Safer Places

A Neighbourhood Safer Place is designed as a **place of last resort** in **bush fire emergencies only**. Please note that travelling to or sheltering at a Neighbourhood Safer Place does not guarantee your safety. A full list of Neighbourhood Safer Places can be found at:

<https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/neighbourhood-safer-places>

If there is no Neighbourhood Safer Place in your area, you should identify other safer locations (for example an oval, shopping centre – areas that are away from bush) where you and your guests can go to as a last resort.

https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/2927/1/DPP1079-Emergency-management-and-evacuation-plan-FORM.pdf

Planning for Emergencies in Facilities

Any information in this fact sheet compliments and does not supersede your obligations to have a facility emergency plan in accordance with *AS 3745 Planning for emergencies in facilities*.

Floods, Storms & Tsunamis

The Bega Valley does occasionally experience flooding and storm events. It is important that tourism operators understand local flooding patterns and appropriate safety precautions.

Floods & Storms Combat Agency

The agency responsible for offering assistance during tsunami's, flood and storm events is the NSW State Emergency Service (SES). Please refer to the following website for information regarding floods and storms:

<https://www.ses.nsw.gov.au/>



Maritime & Coastal

The Bega Valley boasts some of the most pristine and family friendly beaches along the east coast. Additionally, our waterways are popular recreational attractions. Notwithstanding tourism operators may wish to advise their clients of some of the resources available regarding maritime and coastal safety.

Hazardous Surf Warning

From time to time local weather patterns can generate dangerous surf conditions. Visitors the Bega Valley should be encouraged to monitor the Bureau of Meteorology warnings page prior to undertaking aquatic activities.

<http://www.bom.gov.au/nsw/warnings/index.shtml>

Beach Safety

The local peak body that provides beach safety advice is Surf Life Saving NSW. Tourists may need to be shown SLSNSW website for advice on beach safety, local conditions and lifesaving services:

<https://beachsafe.org.au/>



NEW SOUTH WALES

Many of the Bega Valleys most popular beaches are patrolled by both professional life guards as well as volunteers. Bega Valley Shire Councils website lists these sites:

https://begavalley.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-AXF-48-32-14

Marine Rescue

Marine Rescue NSW is the official volunteer marine rescue service, committed to saving lives on the water.

<https://www.marinerescuensw.com.au/>



RMS - Maritime

In NSW the Roads & Maritime Service (RMS) has jurisdiction over waterway rules and safety, and other information about using waterways in NSW:

<https://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime/index.html>



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Medical Emergency

Visitors to the Bega Valley may not be familiar with local medical services. There are two hospitals and a number of private practices:

South East Regional Hospital

The South East Regional Hospital is the main hospital for the Bega Valley and has emergency department services.

- **Address:** 4 Virginia Drive, BEGA, 2550
- **Ph:** (02) 6491 9999

Pambula District Hospital

Pambula District Hospital is an Assessment, Treatment and Care Clinic for minor illnesses and injuries. For emergencies, please go to the South East Regional Hospital or dial 000. Pambula District Hospital no longer has a GP led Emergency Department.

- **Address:** Lot 7014, Merimbola Street, PAMBULA, 2549
- **Ph:** (02) 6495 8200

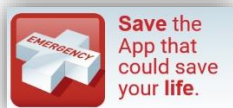
Reporting a Medical Emergency

1. **Stay Calm:** Call Triple Zero (000) from a safe location.
2. **State what services you require:** Stay on the line - Speak clearly and answer the operator's questions.
3. **Give the details of where you are:** Locality, Street Number, Street Name and Nearest Cross Street.
4. **Don't hang up until the operator has all the information they need:** If possible wait outside at a prearranged meeting point or in a prominent location.

Emergency Plus App

As visitors may not be familiar with the local area you may wish to advise them of some apps which they can freely download which will help them identify their location. The Emergency+ app is a free app developed by Australia's emergency services and their Government and industry partners. The app uses GPS functionality built into smart phones to help a Triple Zero (000) caller provide critical location details required to mobilise emergency services.

<http://emergencyapp.triplezero.gov.au/>



Roads & Traffic

Tourists travelling to the area may not be aware of the relevant authorities to contact regarding road closures. For most local roads the point of contact is Bega Valley Shire Council:

https://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-EXJ-60-54-35

For information on the Princes Highway or The Snowy Mountains Highway direct visitors to the Roads & Maritime Service (RMS):

<https://www.livetraffic.com/desktop.html>

Evacuation

Evacuation is a risk management strategy that may be used to manage the effects of an emergency on a community. It involves the movement of people to a safer location and their return. In NSW the agencies with legislated authority to order an evacuation are Combat Agencies (e.g RFS, SES) with appropriate legislation; and the NSW Police Force. Preparation prior to any event is crucial and tourism operators need to have appropriate site-specific processes in place for their visitors. This may include (but not limited to) emergency assembly areas, safe places to shelter on site if required and advice on safe places to go off site if required. An evacuation centre will only be established if required depending on the situation and will be advised to affected residents / visitors at the time.

Emergency Updates

During times of natural disaster, it is essential that visitors know where to go to get more information. Visitors should be firstly directed to each emergency service organisations web site and face book page.

Radio

The following list details local radio station frequencies where news updates may be heard.

- **ABC** (Official Emergency Broadcaster) FM 103.5 / AM 810
- **2EC** (Commercial Station) FM 105.9 & 105.5 / AM 765 & 1584
- **Power FM** (Commercial Station) FM 104.3 (Batemans Bay) 102.5 (Bega)
- **Edge FM** (Community Station) FM 93.7

Get Ready

The NSW Office of Emergency Management and Department of Industry has put together a host of resources to help businesses prepare for emergency management situations.

Office of Emergency Management

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) leads, coordinates and develops capability in the emergency management sector and conducts state-wide welfare and recovery operations when disaster strikes. The OEM website contains valuable information that tourism operators may find useful:

<https://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/>

Get Ready Business

The Department of Industry website contains resources to assist businesses prepare for disaster:

<https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/business-and-industry-in-nsw/assistance-and-support/get-ready-business>

The Get Ready Business initiative has five simple steps to prepare your business for disasters:

1. **Know your risk:** Identify the disasters that might face your business.
2. **Plan now for what you will do:** Sit down and talk with your staff and make an emergency action plan.
3. **Get your business ready:** There are some really practical and easy actions you can take now to prepare your business and plan for business continuity.
4. **Be aware:** Connect with key information sources— including emergency services— now to receive regular alerts.
5. **Look out for each other:** Develop connections with local businesses and commit to helping one another.

Contributors & Disclaimer

This fact sheet has been developed in consultation with the following groups:

- Bega Rural Fire Service
- Tathra Chamber of Commerce
- Merimbula Visitor Information Centre
- Bermagui Visitor Information Centre
- Sapphire Coast Destination Marketing
- Bega Valley Local Emergency Management Committee
- Bega Valley Shire Council

This information is designed to assist tourism operators in their emergency management preparation and is not intended to supersede any formal advice given to them by an appropriate authority.