

Building within a Bush fire-prone area



The State Governments bushfire reforms were launched on the 6th December 2015. Included within the reforms was the release of the map of Bush Fire Prone areas.

The map is available to view online at this website www.dfes.wa.gov.au/bushfireproneareas

Certain buildings that fall within the new designated bush fire prone areas must comply with the bush fire construction requirements of the Building Code of Australia (BCA). This is required for applications for building permit submitted on or after the 8th April 2016.

The Building Act 2011 adopts the BCA as the primary applicable building standard for new building work. The BCA (which references AS 3959 – Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas) The BCA includes specific bush fire construction requirements for the following classes of residential buildings.

Class 1 buildings

Class 2 buildings

Class 3 buildings

Or Class 10a buildings and decks associated with a Class 1, 2 or 3 building.

Bushfire Attack Level (BAL)

A BAL is a means of measuring the severity of a building's potential exposure to ember attack, radiant heat and direct flame contact. The different construction methods required for each BAL rating are determined by AS 3959 – Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-prone areas.

The following Bushfire Attack Levels (BAL) are used in AS 3959;

- BAL – LOW
- BAL – 12.5
- BAL – 19
- BAL – 29
- BAL – 40
- BAL – FZ

The process for determining construction requirements is shown below

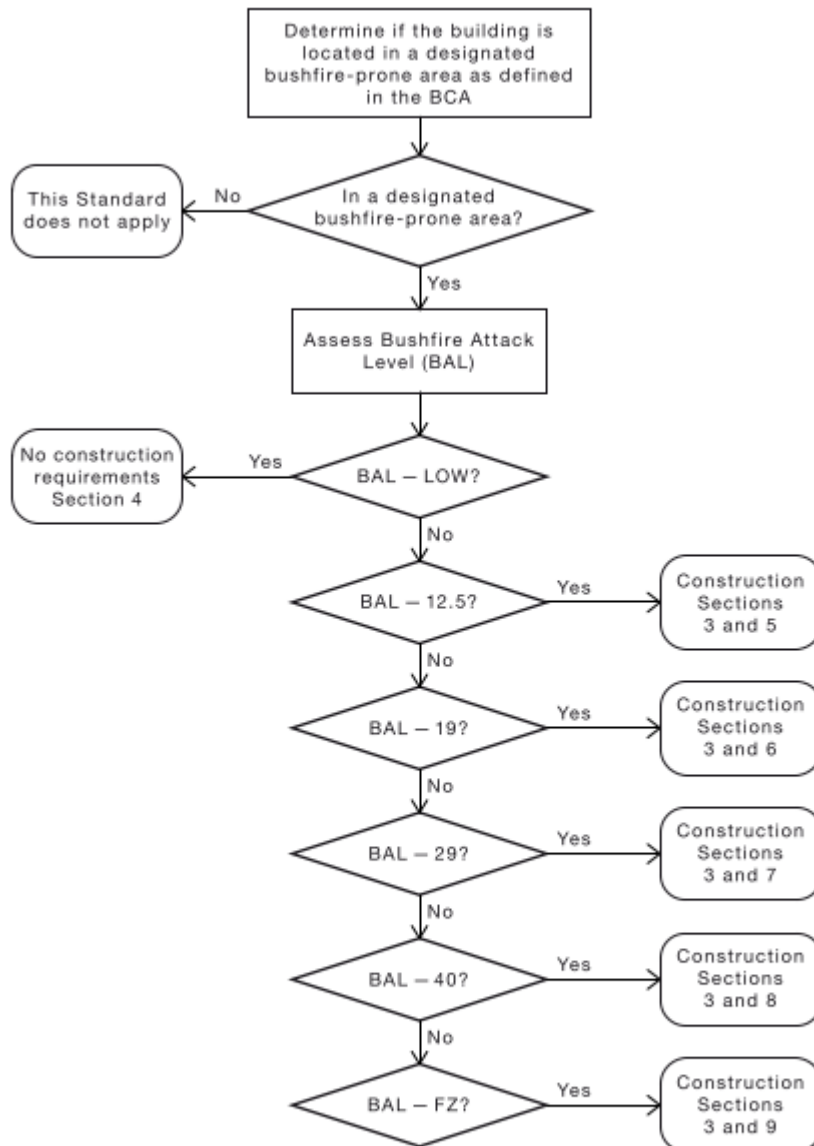


FIGURE 1.1 FLOW DIAGRAM SHOWING THE PROCESS FOR DETERMINING CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

The objective of AS 3959 is to prescribe particular construction details for buildings to reduce the risk of ignition from a bushfire, appropriate to the –

- a) potential for ignition caused by burning embers, radiant heat or flame generated by a bushfire; and
- b) intensity of the bushfire attack on the building.

Most building permit applications for buildings on properties that fall within a bushfire-prone area will require a BAL assessment. Determining the BAL for the property will require an assessment by an appropriately accredited professional. Please refer to the link to the WA accredited Practitioners (View bpad accredited practitioner register) who will be able to assist with the relevant Bushfire Prone Area affected properties. -

<http://www.fpaa.com.au/bpad.aspx>

Once the BAL for the property is determined the construction requirements of AS 3959 will be applied to the development in order to determine compliance with the standard.

It is also recommend that you visit the City's Planning section on the website. There is general information with regards to the Planning requirements for properties within bushfire-prone areas.

