



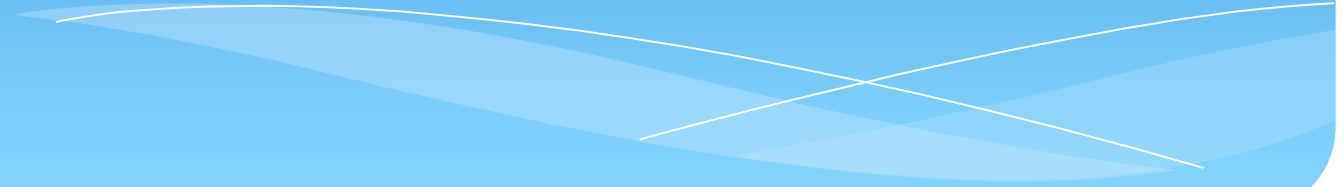
Victoria Police



Intentionally or Recklessly Causing a Bushfire - section 201A Crimes Act

- A person who
 - Intentionally or recklessly causes a fire; and
 - Is reckless as to the spread of the fire to vegetation on property belonging to **another** – is guilty of an offence and liable to be imprisoned up to 15 years.
- Some exemptions apply for fire suppression and land management activity

Recklessness



Considerations of Investigators

➤ Headers/vehicles/equip:

- Make/Model and age
- Condition
- Faults and Defects
- Spark arrester
- Last serviced/ last checked
- Bearings replacement
- Knap sack on vehicles

Preparation for burn

Permits / notifications

Weather conditions

Fire fighting equip

Fire breaks

Anticipation of “What if?” scenarios.

Experience

Awareness of media

Donnybrook Fire

➤ Scenario:

- 35 degree day, “very high” CFA fire rating, strong northerly wind; 1:15 p.m. mid January
- Sub-contractor using an angle grinder for VicRoads road safety barrier project; his boss had previously decided an angle grinder was not required

➤ Reckless?

- No water supply, no spark shield, had not wet the area he was grinding above, no barrier between him and dry grass nearby

CFA

- CFA has a legislative responsibility to investigate the cause and origin of all fires that occur within the Country Area of Victoria. This is in accordance with the CFA Act 1958 – section 98 "Place where fire occurs".
- Fire Investigation is one of the critical components of CFA's responsibilities. Outcomes from fire investigations contribute significantly towards the strategic development of fire prevention, education and suppression strategies. Fire Investigation is the very foundation on which fire prevention is

CFA

➤ Objectives:

- To determine the origin and cause of the fires
- To obtain accurate information for further analysis,
- To ascertain or identify the presence of any criminal activity or neglect involved.

➤ Outcomes from Fire Investigation can result in:

- Evaluation and development of fire prevention strategies such as Community Fire Safety / Education Programs and Media Safety Campaigns;
- Identification and referral of children to the Juvenile Fire

CFA

➤ Fire Investigation with CFA

In accordance with the Chief Officer's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP 14.03) – Fire Investigation, the following are the criteria for Fire Investigation attending:

- Fire related fatality or serious injury;
- Significant fire;
- Structure where the fire is of a suspicious nature or the origin and cause is undetermined;
- CFA property is involved;
- Other fires / incidents as determined by the Regional Duty

CFA

➤ CFA Fire Investigators work with the following agencies at fire scenes:

- Coroner's Office;
- Victoria Police – Arson & Explosives Squad;
- Victoria Police – Criminal Investigation Units (CIUs)
- Victoria Police Forensic Services Centre – Fire Explosion Investigation Unit;
- Fire Services
 - Country Fire Authority (CFA)
 - Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP)

CFA

➤ Cost of Fires

- Every fire has a cost.
- There is a cost to the community associated with:
 - Firefighting time & resources
 - Destruction & damage to property and personal assets
 - Loss of production
 - Loss of natural resources
 - Emotional trauma
 - Downtime in business

CFA

➤ Reducing Fires

- The data collected from the investigation of fires allows CFA to produce a number of outcomes, including:
- A description of a community's fire problems, highlighting where preventive action is required
- The evaluation for future fire prevention strategies
- The evaluation and development of present and future fire prevention education programs
- The identification and referral of children requiring the Juvenile Fire Awareness and Intervention Program (JFAIP)

CFA

➤ Reporting Structure

- Fire Investigation is an integral and critical component of CFA's responsibilities and outcomes of such investigations contribute significantly towards the strategic development of fire suppression and fire prevention strategies.
- Fire Investigation is the very foundation on

