# 9 Emergency services for fire events

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| Attachment tables are identified in references throughout this chapter by a ‘9A’ prefix (for example, table 9A.1) and are available from the website www.pc.gov.au/rogs/2017. |
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This chapter reports performance information for emergency services for fire events.

In future reports, the scope of this chapter will be extended to include other emergency services that prepare for, respond to, and recover from, any emergency event.

All abbreviations used in this Report are available in a complete list in volume A: Approach to performance reporting.

## 9.1 Profile of emergency services for fire events

### Service overview

A fire event is an incident that is reported to a fire service organisation and requires a response. Fire events include (but are not limited to):

* structure fires (that is, fires inside a building or structure), regardless of whether there is damage to the structure
* landscape fires, including bushfires and grass fires, regardless of the size of the area burn
* other fires, including vehicle and other mobile property fires, and outside rubbish fires.

### Roles and responsibilities

Fire service organisations are one of the primary agencies involved in providing emergency management services for fire events. The role of fire service organisations varies across jurisdictions but commonly includes prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery activities and services for each jurisdiction. Detailed activities by jurisdiction are available in table 9A.1.

Each State and Territory government operates multiple fire service agencies, which service different populations and geographic areas according to specified governance arrangements (table 9A.2). Fire service organisations work closely with other government departments and agencies that also have responsibilities in the case of fire events (see Emergency management sector overview —table DA.1 for a summary of emergency management organisations).

This chapter covers the finances and activities of urban and rural fire service agencies and, for selected tables and jurisdictions, the fire event finances and activities of land management agencies (tables 9A.2–3).

### Funding

The total revenue of fire service organisations in 2015-16 was $3.7 billion (table 9.1).

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| Table 9.1 Real revenue of fire service organisations (2015‑16 dollars) ($ million)**a, b** |
| |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | NSW | Vic | Qld | WA | SA | Tas | ACT | NT | Aust | | 2011-12 | 1 016.8 | 1 242.5 | 536.3 | 436.6 | 190.6 | 72.8 | 68.7 | 38.6 | 3 602.9 | | 2012-13 | 1 063.8 | 1 203.1 | 528.8 | 380.5 | 187.1 | 87.5 | 64.2 | 51.2 | 3 566.1 | | 2013-14 | 1 140.6 | 1 238.6 | 644.0 | 353.2 | 215.1 | 76.7 | 65.0 | 33.7 | 3 767.0 | | 2014-15 | 1 044.0 | 1 166.6 | 637.4 | 374.2 | 217.3 | 75.7 | 69.9 | 39.7 | 3 624.6 | | 2015-16 | 1 052.1 | 1 221.3 | 602.1 | 395.3 | 222.2 | 136.5 | 69.1 | 34.8 | 3 733.5 | |
| a See table 9A.4 for detailed footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 9A.4. |
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Jurisdictions have a range of funding models to resource fire service organisations. In all jurisdictions except the ACT and the NT, levies are the largest source of fire services revenue (63.7 per cent of total funding in 2015-16), and are raised from levies on property owners or, in some jurisdictions, from levies on both insurance companies and property owners. The ACT and the NT do not raise fire levies, relying on government grants as their largest revenue source (table 9A.4).

Jurisdictions may fund other fire event services (not provided by fire service organisations), for which data are currently not available.

### Size and scope

#### Human resources

Nationally in 2015‑16, 18 980 full time equivalent (FTE) paid personnel were employed by fire service organisations, with the majority (76.3 per cent) firefighters (table 9A.5).

A large number of volunteer staff (226 509 people) also participated in the delivery of services in 2015-16. The proportion of volunteer personnel and the nature of their role varied across jurisdictions (table 9A.5).

#### Demand for emergency services

Fire service organisations provide emergency response and rescue services for a range of domestic, industrial, medical, and transport fire and emergency events. Nationally, fire service organisations attended a total of 382 440 emergency incidents in 2015‑16, of which 97 433 were fire events (table 9A.13).

## 9.2 Framework of performance indicators

The performance indicator framework is based on governments’ common objectives for emergency services (box 9.1).

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| Box 9.1 Objectives for emergency services for fire and other events |
| Emergency services for fire and other events aim to build resilient communities that work together to understand and manage the risks that they confront, and to reduce the adverse effects of events on the community (including people, property, infrastructure, economy and environment).  Governments’ involvement is aimed at providing emergency services that:   * contribute to the communities management of risks and its preparedness, through the promotion of risk reduction and mitigation activities * are accessible, responsive and sustainable.   Governments aim for emergency services to meet these objectives in an equitable and efficient manner. |
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The performance indicator framework provides information on equity, efficiency and effectiveness, and distinguishes the outputs and outcomes of emergency services for fire events (figure 9.1). To reflect the activities of the emergency management sector, performance reporting in this chapter also uses the prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery framework (see figure D.4 in sector overview D).

The performance indicator framework shows which data are complete and comparable in the 2017 Report. For data that are not considered directly comparable, text includes relevant caveats and supporting commentary. Chapter 1 discusses data comparability, data completeness and information on data quality from a Report‑wide perspective. In addition to section 9.1, the Report’s Statistical context chapter contains data that may assist in interpreting the performance indicators presented in this chapter (chapter 2).

Improvements to performance reporting for emergency services for fire and other events are ongoing and will include identifying indicators to fill gaps in reporting against key objectives, improving the comparability and completeness of data and reviewing proxy indicators to establish whether more direct measures can be developed.

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| Figure 9.1 Emergency services for fire events performance indicator framework |
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## 9.3 Key performance indicator results

Different delivery contexts, locations and types of clients can affect the equity, effectiveness and efficiency of fire services.

### Outputs

Outputs are the services delivered (while outcomes are the impact of these services on the status of an individual or group) (see chapter 1). Output information is also critical for equitable, efficient and effective management of government services.

### Equity

There are currently no identified indicators on equity of access to fire services for special needs groups.

### Effectiveness

#### Prevention/mitigation — Fire risk prevention/mitigation activities

‘Fire risk prevention/mitigation activities’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to contribute to the communities management of risks and its preparedness, through the promotion of risk reduction and mitigation activities (box 9.2).

All jurisdictions undertake a range of fire risk prevention/mitigation tasks to assist households, commercial businesses, and communities prepare for the risk of fire (see table 9A.22 for activities by jurisdiction). To assist in determining the most appropriate activities and priorities, fire service organisations and other emergency management stakeholders look at fire cause identification (see table 9A.17 for data on ignition factors).

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| Box 9.2 Fire risk prevention/mitigation activities |
| ‘Fire risk prevention/mitigation activities’ is defined by two measures.   * ‘Accidental residential structure fires per 100 000 households’ — the number of accidental residential structure fire incidents divided by the total number of households, where accidental residential structure fires are defined as fires that are not deliberately lit and could have been reduced or prevented with effective educational programs.   A low or decreasing incidence of accidental residential structural fire indicates greater community preparedness.  The rate of accidental residential structure fires per 100 000 households should be interpreted with caution. In particular, rates are affected by differences across jurisdiction in distinguishing accidental structure fires from structure fires resulting from other causes.  Data reported for this measure are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) within jurisdictions over time but are not comparable across jurisdictions * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2015‑16 data are available for all jurisdictions. * ‘Proportion of residential structures with smoke alarms’ —the number of households with a smoke alarm installed, divided by the total number of households.   High or increasing numbers of households with a smoke alarm installed indicates greater community preparedness  Data reported for this measure are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) within jurisdictions over time but are not comparable across jurisdictions * incomplete for the current reporting period. All required 2015‑16 data are not available for SA, Tas and ACT. |
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##### Accidental residential structure fires per 100 000 households

The national rate of accidental residential structure fires was 81.9 per 100 000 households in 2015‑16 (figure 9.2 and table 9A.15).

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| Figure 9.2 Accidental residential structure fires per 100 000 households**a** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 9.2 Accidental residential structure fires per 100 000 households  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a See box 9.2 and table 9A.15 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS (2015) *Household and Family Projections, 2011 to 2036*, Cat. no. 3236.0; table 9A.15. |
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##### Residential structures with smoke alarms

One key fire risk mitigation strategy across all jurisdictions is the mandated installation of smoke detectors in residential structures. Nationally consistent data for all jurisdictions are not available. However, recent jurisdictional surveys estimate that 93.6 per cent, 97.2 per cent, 96.5 per cent, 91.0 per cent and 80.0 per cent of households in NSW, Victoria, Queensland, WA and the NT respectively, had an installed smoke alarm/detector in 2015‑16 (table 9A.23).

Fire service organisations also have programs to encourage households to test their smoke detector/alarms regularly to ensure that they are operational. In 2015‑16, 87.3 per cent and 69.0 per cent of households in Queensland and Western Australia respectively, had a smoke alarm that had been tested in the previous 12 months — data were not available for other jurisdictions (table 9A.23).

#### Prevention/mitigation — Confinement to room/object of origin

‘Confinement to room/object of origin’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to contribute to the communities management of risks and its preparedness, through the promotion of risk reduction and mitigation activities (box 9.3).

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| Box 9.3 Confinement to room/object of origin |
| ‘Confinement to room/object of origin’ is defined by two measures.   * ‘Proportion of building fires confined to room of origin’ — the number of building fires confined to the object, part room and room of origin, divided by the number of building fires attributed to confinement. A building fire is a fire that has caused some damage to a building structure (such as a house). * ‘Proportion of building and other structure fires confined to room/object of origin’ — the number of building and other structure fires confined to the object, part room and room of origin divided by the number of building fires attributed to confinement. Other structure fires are fires within a building structure (such as fires confined to rubbish bins, burnt foodstuffs and fires confined to cooking equipment).   A high or increasing proportion of structure fires confined to the object or room of origin is desirable.  Data reported for these measures are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) within jurisdictions over time but are not comparable across jurisdictions * incomplete for the current reporting period for the measure ‘proportion of building and other structure fires confined to room/object of origin’. All required 2015‑16 data are not available for NSW. |
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##### Proportion of building fires confined to room of origin

The proportion of building fires confined to room of origin varies across jurisdictions, and within jurisdictions over time (figure 9.3).

| Figure 9.3 Proportion of building fires confined to room of origin, all ignition types**a** |
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| | Figure 9.3 Proportion of building fires confined to room of origin, all ignition types  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | | --- | |
| a See box 9.3 and table 9A.10 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: State and Territory governments (unpublished); table 9A.10. |
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##### Proportion of building and other structure fires confined to room/object of origin

The proportion of building and other structure fires confined to room/object of origin is generally greater than that for building fires, as the measure incorporates object fires that do not spread to the building.

Incendiary and suspicious structure fires (those that are, or suspected of being, deliberately lit) are less likely to be confined to the object or room of origin than for accidental structure fires (tables 9A.10‑11).

#### Preparedness — Level of safe fire practices in the community

‘Level of safe fire practices in the community’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to contribute to the communities management of risks and its preparedness, through the promotion of risk reduction and mitigation activities (box 9.4).

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| Box 9.4 Level of safe fire practices in the community |
| Data on the level of safe fire practices have been identified for development and reporting in future. Data are available on community preparedness for emergency events (see box D.3 in the Emergency management sector overview — sector overview D). |
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#### Sustainability — Firefighter workforce

‘Firefighter workforce’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide emergency services that are sustainable (box 9.5).

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| Box 9.5 Firefighter workforce |
| ‘Firefighter workforce’ is defined by two measures.   * ‘Workforce by age group’ — defined as the age profile of the workforce, measured by the proportion of the operational workforce in 10 year age brackets (under 30, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59 and 60 and over).   A low or decreasing proportion of the workforce who are in the younger age groups and/or a high or increasing proportion who are closer to retirement, suggests sustainability problems may arise in the coming decade as the older age group starts to retire.  Data reported for this measure are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) within jurisdictions over time but are not comparable across jurisdictions * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2015‑16 data are available for all jurisdictions. * ‘Workforce attrition’ — defined as level of attrition in the operational workforce, calculated as the number of FTE employees who exit the organisation as a proportion of the number of FTE employees.   Low or decreasing levels of staff attrition are desirable.  Data reported for this measures are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) within jurisdictions over time but are not comparable across jurisdictions * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2015‑16 data are available for all jurisdictions. |
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The workforce by age group and staff attrition measures should be considered together. Each provides a different aspect of the changing profile and sustainability of fire service organisations’ workforces and should also be considered in conjunction with data on the:

* number of full time equivalent firefighter personnel per 100 000 people
* fire service organisation volunteers per 100 000 people (table 9A.24).

#### Workforce by age group

Nationally in 2015-16, 63.8 per cent of the firefighter workforce were aged under 50 years (figure 9.4 and table 9A.5).

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| Figure 9.4 Firefighter workforce, by age group, 2015-16**a** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 9.4 Firefighter workforce, by age group, 2015-16  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a See box 9.5 and table 9A.5 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: State and Territory governments (unpublished), table 9A.5. |
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#### Workforce attrition

In 2015-16, the staff attrition rate varied across jurisdictions (table 9A.5).

#### Response — Response times to structure fires

‘Response times to structure fires’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to provide emergency services that are responsive (box 9.6).

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| Box 9.6 Response times to structure fires |
| ‘Response times to structure fires’ (as illustrated below) is defined as the time taken between the arrival of the first fire crew appliance at the scene of a structure fire and:   * *initial receipt of the call at the communications centre*. Response time (*including* call taking time) reflects jurisdictions’ overall responsiveness to the notification of a structure fire * *dispatch of the responding fire crew*. Response time (*excluding* call taking time) reflects service organisations’ responsiveness to the notification of a structure fire.   Response times are calculated at the 50th and 90th percentile. (The time taken for 50 per cent of all responses to arrive at a structure fire is equal to or below the 50th percentile. The time taken for 90 per cent of all responses to arrive at a structure fire is equal to or below the 90th percentile).  Diagram in box 9.6 of process for response times to structure fires from receipt of call to departing scene  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image.  Response time measures are provided for:   * state‑wide — the entire jurisdiction. * capital cities — measured as the geographic area that incorporates the jurisdictions’ capital city. Boundaries are based on the ABS Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) structure. Capital cities are calculated as the major cities classification for all jurisdictions, other than Tasmania and the NT, where the inner regional (incorporating Hobart and Launceston) and outer regional (incorporating Darwin) classifications are applied. * remoteness areas — inner regional (excluding Tasmania), outer regional (excluding the NT), remote and very remote boundaries based on the ASGS structure.   There are many factors that influence remoteness area response times including:   * land area (which has particular impact across urban, rural and remote areas) * population size and density (which has a particular impact in urban areas) * the dispersion of the population (particularly rural/urban population proportions), topography, road/transport infrastructure and traffic densities   (continued next page) |
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| Box 9.6 (continued)   * crewing configurations, response systems and processes, and travel distances — for example, some jurisdictions include responses from volunteer stations (often in rural areas) where turnout times are generally longer because volunteers are on call as distinct from being on duty (table 9A.25).   Calculations are based on emergency responses to structure fire incidents and include responses by both permanent and volunteer brigades (unless otherwise noted).  Shorter response times suggest that services are more responsive.  Response times need to be interpreted with caution because the data are not directly comparable across jurisdictions. Differences between jurisdictions in definitions of response times, geography, personnel mix, and system type (manual or computer assisted dispatch) affect the comparability of response times data.  Data reported for these measures are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) within jurisdictions over time but are not comparable across jurisdictions * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2015‑16 data are available for all jurisdictions. |
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##### Response times to structure fires — state‑wide

Nationally in 2015‑16, the time within which 90 per cent of the first responding fire resources arrived at the scene of a structure fire (including call taking time) varied from 10.2 minutes to 17.2 minutes across jurisdictions (figure 9.5).

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| Figure 9.5 Response times to structure fires, state‑wide,  2015-16, 90th percentile**a, b** |
| |  | | --- | | **Including call taking time**  Figure 9.5 Response times to structure fires, state-wide, 2015-16, 90th percentile, Including call taking time  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| **Excluding call taking time**  Figure 9.5 Response times to structure fires, state-wide, 2015-16, 90th percentile, Excluding call taking time  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. |
| a See box 9.6 and tables 9A.26–27 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats.b SA data including call taking time are not available prior to 2014‑15. |
| *Source*: State and Territory governments (unpublished); tables 9A.26–27. |
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##### Response times to structure fires — capital city

Response times in capital cities are lower than the state–wide responses for all jurisdictions. The time within which 90 per cent of the first responding fire appliances arrive at the scene of a structure fire (including call taking time) within capital cities ranged across jurisdictions from 9.1 minutes to 17.8 minutes in 2015-16 (figure 9.6).

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| Figure 9.6 Response times to structure fires, capital cities, 2015‑16, 90th percentile**a, b, c** |
| |  | | --- | | **Figure 9.6 Response times to structure fires, capital cities, 2015-16, 90th percentile  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image.** | |
| a See box 9.6 and tables 9A.26–27 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. b Data for Tasmania are for Inner regional areas. c Data for NT are for Outer regional areas. See box 9.6 and tables 9A.26–27 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats |
| *Source*: State and Territory governments (unpublished); tables 9A.26–27. |
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##### Response times to structure fires — remoteness areas

Response times are generally higher for all jurisdictions in regional and remote areas, compared to capital cities (figure 9.7).

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| Figure 9.7 Response times to structure fires, regional and remote areas, 2015‑16, 90th percentile**a, b, c** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 9.7 Response times to structure fires, regional and remote areas, 2015-16, 90th percentile  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| IR = Inner Regional OR = Outer Regional Rem = Remote VR = Very Remote  a See box 9.6 and tables 9A.26–27 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats.b Some geographical areas are not applicable for some jurisdictions. c **VR** data are not available for SA. |
| *Source*: State and Territory governments (unpublished); tables 9A.26–27. |
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#### Recovery

Recovery indicators relate to community restoration and to communities’ and fire service organisations’ ability to return to a state of preparedness (box 9.7).

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| Box 9.7 Recovery |
| There are two elements to recovery: supporting communities in reconstruction of the physical infrastructure and restoration of emotional, social, economic, ecological and physical wellbeing following a fire event, and return of communities and fire service organisations to a state of preparedness after experiencing a fire event.  Recovery indicators are identified as a key development area for future reports. |
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### Efficiency

#### Fire service organisations’ expenditure per person

‘Fire service organisations’ expenditure per person’ is a proxy indicator of governments’ objective of providing emergency services in an efficient manner (box 9.8).

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| Box 9.8 Expenditure per person |
| ‘Fire service organisations’ expenditure per person’ is defined as total fire service organisation expenditure per person in the population.  All else being equal, lower expenditure per person suggests greater efficiency. However, efficiency data should be interpreted with caution. High or increasing expenditure per person may reflect deteriorating efficiency. Alternatively, it may reflect changes in aspects of the service (such as improved response), increased resourcing for fire prevention or community preparedness, or the characteristics of fire events (such as more challenging fires). Low or declining expenditure per person may reflect improving efficiency. Alternatively, it may reflect lower quality responses or less challenging fires.  Expenditure per fire is not used as a measure of efficiency because an organisation that works to reduce the number of fire incidents could erroneously appear to be less efficient.  The role of volunteers needs to be considered when interpreting this indicator. Volunteer personnel provide a substantial proportion of fire services (and emergency services more generally). While costs such as the training and equipment associated with volunteers are included in the cost of fire service provision, the labour costs of providing fire services would be greater without volunteers (assuming these functions were still performed).  Data reported for this measure are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) within jurisdictions over time but are not comparable across jurisdictions * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2015‑16 data are available for all jurisdictions. |
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Nationally in 2015‑16, the total expenditure of fire service organisations was $168 per person in the population (figure 9.8). Expenditure data disaggregated by labour, capital and other costs are available in table 9A.28.

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| Figure 9.8 Fire service organisations’ expenditure (2015‑16 dollars)**a** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 9.8 Fire service organisations expenditure in 2015-16 dollars  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a See box 9.8 and table 9A.29 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: State and Territory governments (unpublished); ABS (unpublished); table 9A.29. |
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### Outcomes

Outcomes are the impact of services on the status of an individual or group (while outputs are the services delivered) (chapter 1).

#### Fire death rate

‘Fire death rate’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to reduce the adverse effects of events on the community (including people, property, infrastructure, economy and environment) (box 9.9).

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| Box 9.9 Fire death rate |
| ‘Fire death rate’ is defined by two measures.   * ‘Annual fire death rate’ — all deaths, per million people, whose underlying cause of death is fire related to smoke, fire and flames, including all (structure and landscape) fires * ‘Landscape fire death rate’ — deaths resulting from landscape fires only, per million people. Landscape fire deaths include those that result from the fire, but whose primary cause may be related to other factors (except for self-harm deaths).   A low or decreasing fire death rate represents a better outcome.  Data for these measures are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2015 data are available for all jurisdictions. |
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##### Fire death rate — Annual fire death rate

The annual fire death rate was 4.1 deaths per million people in 2015 (97 fire deaths) (figure 9.9 and table 9A.6). Nationally, exposure to smoke, fire and flames accounted for the majority of fire deaths in 2015 (57 deaths) (table 9A.7).

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| Figure 9.9 Annual fire death rate, 2006–2015**a** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 9.9 Annual fire death rate 2006 to 2015  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a See box 9.9 and table 9A.6 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: ABS (2016) *Causes of Death, Australia*, Cat. no. 3303.0; table 9A.6. |
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Annual fire death rates can be particularly volatile because of the small number of fire deaths and the influence of large irregular fire events. One method to overcome data volatility is to present fire death rates as three‑year averages. Alternatively, annual death rates can be viewed over a longer time series to help identify any underlying trends. Nationally, in the ten years from 2006–2015, the average deaths per million people was 6.0 (table 9A.6).

##### Fire death rate — Landscape fire death rate

Nationally, comparatively few deaths are related to landscape fires annually (10 deaths in 2015‑16), although the landscape fire death rate is punctuated by large, irregular events (table 9.2 and 9A.8). To assist in identifying underlying trends in the annual landscape fire death series, a 30 year time series is provided in table 9A.8.

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| Table 9.2 Landscape fire deaths**a** |
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| a See box 9.9 and table 9A.8 for detailed caveats. – Nil or rounded to zero. |
| *Source*: Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (unpublished); table 9A.8. |
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#### Fire injury rate

‘Fire injury rate’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to reduce the adverse effects of events on the community (including people, property, infrastructure, economy and environment) (box 9.10).

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| Box 9.10 Fire injury rate |
| ‘Fire injury rate’ is defined as the number of fire‑related hospital admissions per 100 000 people.  A lower fire injury rate represents a better outcome.  Fire injuries are represented by hospital admissions (excluding emergency department non‑admitted casualties) and are reported by the State or Territory where the admission occurs. A person injured by fire may be treated more than once, and in more than one State or Territory. Data reported exclude deaths from fire injuries after hospitalisation (counted in the fire death rate data).  Data for this measure are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. All required 2014-15 data are available for all jurisdictions. |
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Nationally, there were 3857 hospital admissions due to fire injury, equating to a rate of   
16.3 per 100 000 people in 2014‑15 (table 9A.9 and figure 9.10).

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| Figure 9.10 Annual fire hospitalisation rate per 100 000 people**a** |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 9.10 Annual fire hospitalisation rate per 100 000 people  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a See box 9.10 and table 9A.9 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), *National Hospital Morbidity Database* (unpublished); table 9A.9. |
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Fire hospitalisation rates need to be interpreted with caution because of the small number of fire injuries. Data for three‑year averages are reported in table 9A.9.

#### Value of asset losses from fire events

‘Value of asset losses from fire events’ is an indicator of governments’ objective to reduce the adverse effects of events on the community (including people, property, infrastructure, economy and environment) (box 9.11).

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| Box 9.11 Value of asset losses from structure fire |
| ‘Value of asset losses from fire events’ is defined as the estimated monetary value of the damage to property and contents caused by the fire and fire‑fighting operations based on insurance claims. It does not include land value.  The value of these insurance claims is the sum of the incurred claims on insurance companies related to fires and explosions, reported to Insurance Statistics Australia (ISA). Data are presented as: average domestic insurance claim from fire events; total domestic insurance claims from fire events per person; and total commercial insurance claims from fire events per person.  Lower or decreasing asset losses from fire events represent a better outcome.  Data need to be interpreted with caution as actual asset losses may differ from incurred claims due to:   * under insurance — insurance payouts are limited by the estimated value of assets a policy holder provides when taking out insurance * new for old — new for old policies replace an old asset for a new equivalent * excess policy — most small fire incidents will not be recorded in the insurance data due to the need for policy holders to pay an excess prior to claim.   Data reported for this measure are:   * comparable (subject to caveats) across jurisdictions and over time * complete (subject to caveats) for the current reporting period. Required 2015-16 data are available for all jurisdictions; however, ISA estimate that their data cover approximately 69 and 60 per cent of the potential domestic and commercial insurance markets respectively. |
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Nationally in 2015‑16, household and commercial property insurance claims in relation to fire events (excluding major events) totalled $806.1 million (table 9A.12).

Domestic insurance fire event claims increased for:

* average claims — a 29.6 per cent increase in real terms from an average claim of $44 651 in 2011‑12 to an average claim of $57 858 in 2015‑16
* claim per person — a 26.9 per cent increase in real terms from $20.06 per person in the population in 2011‑12 to $25.46 per person in the population in 2015‑16 (table 9A.12 and figure 9.11).

Nationally, there were 2132 commercial insurance claims from fire events in 2015‑16 (table 9A.12).

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| Figure 9.11 Total value of fire event insurance claims (2015‑16 dollars)a |
| |  | | --- | | Figure 9.11 Total value of fire event insurance claims in 2015-16 dollars  More details can be found within the text surrounding this image. | |
| a See box 9.11 and table 9A.12 for detailed definitions, footnotes and caveats. |
| *Source*: ISA Database (2016), unpublished; table 9A.12. |
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## 9.4 Definitions of key terms

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| **Expenditure** | Includes:   * salaries and payments in the nature of salaries to fire personnel * capital expenditure (such as the user cost of capital) * other operating expenditure (such as running expenditure, contract expenditure, training expenditure, maintenance expenditure, communications expenditure, provision for losses and other recurrent expenditure).   Excludes interest on borrowings. | |
| User cost  of capital | The opportunity cost of funds tied up in the capital used to deliver services. Calculated as 8 per cent of the current value of non‑current physical assets (including land, plant and equipment). | |
| **Human resources** | Human resources refers to any person delivering a service, or managing the delivery of this service, including:   * firefighters (qualified paid and volunteer firefighters) * support personnel (any paid person or volunteer directly supporting operational providers, including administrative, technical and communications personnel). | |
| **Revenue** | Revenue received directly or indirectly by fire service organisations on an accrual accounting basis, including: | |
| Government grant funding | Grant funding, as established in legislation, from the Australian, State/Territory and Local governments. | |
| Levies | Revenue from levies, as established in enabling legislation, raised on insurance companies and property owners. | |
| User/transport charges | Revenue from fees and charges on individuals, private/public organisations and insurers. | |
| Subscriptions and other income | Other revenue, including:   * subscriptions and benefit funds received from the community * donations, industry contributions and fundraising received * other income. | |
| Indirect revenue | All revenue or funding received indirectly by the agency (for example, directly to Treasury or other such entity) that arises from the agency’s actions. | |
| **Preparedness** | Actions/programmes designed to strengthen the overall capacity and capability of a community to manage disasters; and procedures planned for during a non‑disaster response period to be actioned during a disaster response period to minimise the loss of life, injury and damage to property when a disaster occurs. | |
| **Response** | Actions taken in anticipation of, during and/or immediately after a disaster to ensure that its effects are minimised and that affected people are provided with immediate care, relief and support. | |
| **Volunteer personnel** | |  |
| Volunteer firefighters | All personnel engaged on an unpaid casual basis by the emergency service organisation who deliver or manage a firefighting service directly to the community and who are formally trained and qualified to undertake firefighting duties, but do not receive remuneration other than reimbursement of ‘out of pocket expenses’. | |
| Volunteer support staff | All personnel engaged on an unpaid casual basis that are not remunerated and are principally involved in the provision of support services. For fire service organisations, this includes any staff whose immediate client is the firefighter. These can be people in operational support roles provided they do not receive payment for their services other than reimbursement of ‘out of pocket expenses’. | |

## 9.5 References

ABS 2008, *Household preparedness for emergencies: NSW, Vic., Qld and ACT*,   
Cat. no. 4818.0.55.001, Canberra.