



National
Operational
Guidance

Hazard

The LACES safety protocol



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

Developed and maintained by the NFCC



Contents

The LACES safety protocol	3
<i>Team lookouts (safety officers)</i>	3
<i>Tactical lookouts (sector safety officers)</i>	3
<i>Awareness</i>	4
<i>Communications</i>	5
<i>Escape routes</i>	5
<i>Safety zones</i>	6



The LACES safety protocol

<p>The LACES safety protocol</p>	<p>Understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LACES safety protocol in detail and why it must be adopted at all wildfire incidents • The responsibilities of the different roles within the LACES safety protocol. • How to implement the LACES safety protocol at all wildfire incidents • How to monitor the effectiveness of the LACES safety protocol
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Team lookouts (safety officers)

<p>Responsibilities of a team lookout</p>	<p>Understand how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all personnel are fully briefed on the situation, their task and the implementation of the LACES safety protocol • Ensure all team members operate within the LACES safety protocol at all times • Monitor personnel and ensure safe working distances are maintained between personnel using hand tools and equipment, and between personnel and vehicles • Establish and maintain communications with tactical lookouts and other personnel as appropriate • Communicate relevant information to the team, other teams and with other personnel within the command structure • Plan, evaluate and monitor escape routes and safety zones and communicate any changes to the team and other members of the incident command structure • Monitor and communicate any observed or predicted changes in wildfire behaviour and firespread to the team, the incident commander and other personnel as appropriate • Monitor and report any observed or predicted extreme wildfire behaviour to the team, incident commander, tactical lookouts and other personnel as appropriate • Monitor and report the location of members of the public, vehicles and aircraft not involved in firefighting operations to the incident commander and other personnel as appropriate • Initiate and monitor the withdrawal of personnel from areas that become too hazardous
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Tactical lookouts (sector safety officers)

<p>Responsibilities of a tactical lookout</p>	<p>Understand how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deploy and maintain a vantage point with direct sight of assigned area of responsibility • Establish and maintain good communications with team lookouts, other tactical lookouts and other relevant personnel within the incident command system • Plan, evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of the escape route • Plan, evaluate and monitor safety zones • Monitor all teams and personnel within their area of responsibility and ensure they operate within the LACES safety protocol at all times • Gather and review information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fuel type, condition and arrangement - Topography • Monitor current weather conditions and obtain accurate weather information • Use a wildfire prediction system to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Predict future wildfire behaviour and fire spread - Identify windows of opportunity, trigger points and critical points - Inform the implementation of the LACES safety protocol • Inform the Incident Commander and other personnel, as appropriate, on predicted wildfire behaviour, firespread and potential windows of opportunity, critical points and trigger points • Monitor and communicate any observed or predicted changes in wildfire behaviour, firespread and / or weather conditions to the incident commander and other relevant personnel • Monitor and report any observed or predicted extreme wildfire behaviour to the incident commander, team lookouts, other tactical lookouts and other personnel as appropriate • Monitor and report the location of members of the public, vehicles and aircraft not involved in firefighting operations to the incident commander and other personnel as appropriate • Exchange information with relevant personnel and other agencies • Initiate and monitor the withdrawal of personnel from areas that become too hazardous
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Awareness

Awareness	<p>Understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The requirements of personnel to ensure that they remain aware of their surroundings at wildfire incidents • Refer to Establish and maintain situational awareness
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Communications

Importance of communications	<p>Understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The actions to be carried out when briefing personnel at wildfires • How the LACES safety protocol will be implemented and managed throughout the incident • The emergency evacuation procedure and evacuation signal • The situation, including information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location and size of incident - Observed and predicted direction of firespread - The topography over which the fire is burning and any effects it may have on the fire - Fuel type, condition, arrangement and any changes - Weather forecast (short, medium term, if available) - Observed and predicted wildfire behaviour • The scene of operations and identify potential hazards and control measures to personnel • The tactical plan • Outline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The role and task of team - The role and tasks of other teams - The location and tasking of crews or teams already deployed • How the team will operate and complete the task • Contingency plans • Information on logistical issues • Information on the command structure and communications
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Escape routes

Escape routes	<p>Understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of identifying, monitoring and maintaining escape routes for people and resources • The importance within the LACES safety protocol for establishing and monitoring appropriate escape routes that lead to a suitable safety zone • Why a tactical or team lookout should be deployed to monitor escape routes <p>Understand the requirements of escape routes to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-planned, to avoid confusion and panic • Communicated to all personnel during initial briefings and through further communication throughout the incident • Monitored throughout the incident and changed as required, with all personnel being informed of any changes as soon as possible • Established at the earliest opportunity • Kept simple – where possible using the quickest and shortest route upwind of the fire • Downslope of the fire • Other areas on the landscape that could result in dangerous fire behaviour
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Safety zones

Safety zones	<p>Understand the requirements of safety zones to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-planned, to avoid confusion and panic • Of sufficient size • Connected by appropriate escape routes, to enable access to personnel • Continually monitored throughout the incident and changed as required • Communicated to all personnel during initial briefings and through further communication throughout the incident. Close enough to be effectively used • Devoid of fuel (or contain the minimum of fuel) • Downslope of the fire <p>Understand why safety zones should not be located:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beneath aerial fuels • Beneath or near overhead powerlines, gas pipelines, oil pipelines or wind turbines • Other areas on the landscape that could result in dangerous fire behaviour • Where access is via steep uphill escape routes
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