



DFES General Circular No: 178/2024

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Updates to the BOM Incident Weather Forecast Request System

Key Message

The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) Incident Weather Forecast (IWF) request system will be updated to include the option to specify sub-fuel types for bushfire or prescribed burn requests. Fire Behaviour Indices (FBI) will now be calculated using these sub-fuel types, providing greater accuracy and relevance.

Implementation date

From Thursday 28 November 2024, subject to final testing and release procedures.

What Are the Advantages?

The key benefit of this update is the ability to select a representative fuel type for any incident location, leading to more accurate FBIs in IWFs. Previously, FBIs were calculated using one of the eight primary fuel types, which employed conservative assumptions. While this approach ensured safety margins, it often produced overestimated indices. The new system addresses this limitation by incorporating sub-fuel types, allowing for more tailored and realistic outputs.

Key Changes to the Incident Weather Forecast Request System

1. Order and Layout Adjustments

- The *Incident Details* section has been reorganised for better usability.
- A new option has been added to select a desired sub-fuel type.

2. Fuel Type and Sub-Fuel Type Selection

- The state/territory selected will determine the fuel types available.
- For Western Australia, the requester may choose from the following:
 - *Fuel at grid point*
 - *No FBI required*
 - *Forest*
 - *Grassland*
 - *Mallee Heath*
 - *Pine*
 - *Shrubland*
 - *Spinifex*
 - *Woodland*



3. Option Details

- *Fuel at grid point*: Uses the sub-fuel type from the AFDRS Fuel Type map at the incident location.
- *No FBI required*: No FBI will be calculated.
- If either "*Fuel at grid point*" or "*No FBI required*" is selected, the sub-fuel type option will be disabled (greyed out).
- If one of the eight primary fuel types is selected, the requester must choose the appropriate sub-fuel type (a 4-digit code with a brief description) *.

*The Bushfire Technical Services team are available to provide advice on the selection of an appropriate sub-fuel type option at AFDRS@dfes.wa.gov.au

Other Changes

- Upon submitting a request, the requester will receive an automated email:
"Please call the Fire Weather desk on (phone number) to confirm receipt of the IWF Request and to discuss any sensitivities or watch points for this request. This is an automated message. Do not reply to this email."

For more information contact webreg@bom.gov.au or wadutyofficer@bom.gov.au

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