

**FPA Australia
Bushfire Planning and Design
Certification Scheme**

**General Conditions
of the**

**BUSHFIRE
PLANNING
AND DESIGN**

Certification Scheme

Version 2011:4



Copyright statement

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Published by FPA Australia

Version 2011:4

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Program overview

The FPA Australia BPAD Certified Practitioner and Business Program has been developed for individuals and businesses delivering BPAD services. It identifies practitioners and business entities able to meet criteria based on competency requirements, the planning, development and/or building legislation of the relevant state or territory, and the Building Code of Australia (incorporating AS 3959 *Construction of buildings in bushfire prone areas*).

The BPAD sector has traditionally had no entry requirements to practise and little in the way of frameworks for credentialing individuals or businesses. FPA Australia has recognised the need for a credentialing framework and, following consultation with industry, regulators, fire agencies and end-users, is now able to offer individuals and businesses a Certification Scheme. Through the Certification Scheme, members of FPA Australia can now be recognised by industry, regulators, fire agencies, end-users and the community as providers of professional BPAD services.

A key component of the Certification Scheme is the requirement for businesses to become certified. This means Certified Practitioners may only promote themselves and their services as BPAD Certified Practitioners when they are engaged to deliver BPAD services on behalf of a Certified Business in the same or a higher category.

Similarly, a Certified Business may only promote and deliver its services as a Certified Business when it engages Certified Practitioners in the same or a higher category to deliver services and sign off on any projects promoting the business as BPAD-Certified.

Certification is a formal acknowledgement by FPA Australia that the certificate holder has met the requirements of one or more of the Certification Scheme categories.

Certified Practitioner and Business categories

There are two Certified Practitioner and two Certified Business categories in the program.

BPAD-D Certified Practitioners and BPAD-D Certified Businesses must meet specific requirements in relation to identifying bushfire prone land, assessing potential bushfire impact, and developing and submitting **deemed to satisfy** designs and plans, by use of the prescriptive requirements of the relevant Australian Standards, the Building Code of Australia and the specific state or territory legislation, for subdivisions, new buildings or modification to existing buildings aiming to minimise the risk to future developments, their occupants and responding emergency services from a bushfire event.

BPAD-A Certified Practitioners and BPAD-A Certified Businesses must meet specific requirements in relation to identifying bushfire prone land, assessing potential bushfire impact, and developing and submitting designs and plans, **both deemed to satisfy and alternate solution**, to meet the performance requirements of the Building Code of Australia and the specific state or territory legislation, for subdivisions, new buildings or modification to existing buildings aiming to minimise the risk to future developments, their occupants and responding emergency services from a bushfire event.

Applicants for all categories must be Corporate Members of FPA Australia. Applicant must also have Public and Product liability insurance policy for a minimum of AUD \$10 Million, and a Professional Indemnity policy for a minimum of AUD \$2 Million. For practitioners this may be through the business entity that engages them to provide BPAD services.

A Certified Business applicant must be able to demonstrate that it is capable of providing services at the required level and that it has a sound business structure, including being a registered business and having quality assurance processes in place.

A Certified Practitioner applicant must meet specific requirements in relation to experience and academic achievement in the BPAD discipline.

The complete evidence requirements are documented in the guide and application form for each category. These can be downloaded from <http://www.fpaa.com.au/certification/index.php?certification=bpad>.

Assessment of applications is through document analysis for Certified Business applicants and document analysis, followed by an interview with a peer review panel, for Certified Practitioner applicants.

Applying for certification

Before submitting your application, check the FPA Australia Web site to ensure you are using current versions of the Certification documents. The version number is in the footer of each document.

Complete the application form for the relevant category and mail or deliver a copy of the form, along with any additional documentation required, and payment of the application fee to FPA Australia. The mailing address is listed at the top of each application form.

Please do not send original documents. FPA Australia bears no responsibility for items lost in the mail. After the certification process has been completed FPA Australia will return any documents to you that contain confidential commercial information such as reports.

A tax invoice will be mailed or emailed as confirmation of your application. Please allow 10 working days for confirmation.

Unsuccessful applicants

Applicants who are unsuccessful will be provided with feedback. They will not have their application fee refunded however they will be entitled to appeal a certification outcome and may be re-assessed again, enabling them to provide further evidence to support their application. Reassessment will only occur on 2 other occasions, and not within 30 days of the previous assessment. If applicants are unsuccessful on their third attempt, then their application for BPAD status has been unsuccessful in total. If they wish to reapply they must wait at least another 6 months before they can attempt another full application at the full fee.

Fees

Payment of the application fee and any relevant documentary evidence must be received by FPA Australia with the application form before the application will be processed. The fee is not refundable for unsuccessful applications. Fees are inclusive of GST and are in Australian dollars.

A non-refundable appeal fee of \$125 will be charged for appeals to certification outcomes.

FPA Australia reserves the right to amend the fee structure without notice.

Schedule of fees

Certification type	Application fee: one-off	Reapplication fee: two-year intervals*
Certified Practitioner	\$660	\$330
1 st reassessment	complimentary	
2 nd reassessment	\$175	
Certified Business	\$660	\$330
Upgrade from BPAD-D to BPAD-A Certified Practitioner	\$330	N/A
Upgrade from BPAD-D to BPAD-A Certified Business	Complimentary in association with successful Certified Practitioner upgrade	N/A

*Providing the Certified Practitioner or Business meets the requirements for recertification.

Payment of fees

FPA Australia accepts:

- Cash. Cash payments are only accepted in person at FPA Australia, 13 Ellingworth Parade, Box Hill, Victoria during business hours or by arrangement. FPA Australia bears no responsibility for cash lost in the mail.
- Cheque. Cheques must be made out to Fire Protection Association Australia.
- Credit card: Amex, Bankcard, MasterCard and Visa (but not Diners Club). There is provision on the application form for credit card details.
- Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT):
 - BSB: 633-000
 - Account number: 115932105.
- Money order.

Certification entitlements

Practitioners who successfully complete the certification process and agree to the conditions of certification will:

- receive a framed certificate for the category for which they are certified,
- be listed on FPA Australia's online Certified Practitioners Register in the category for which they are certified, and
- receive a photo identification card for the category for which they are certified.

Businesses that successfully complete the certification process and agree to the conditions of certification will:

- receive a framed certificate for the category for which they are certified,
- be listed on FPA Australia's online Certified Businesses Register in the category for which they are certified,
- be entitled to indicate on their stationery that they are certified in the appropriate category, and
- be entitled to use the FPA Australia logo on their stationery and marketing materials in accordance with the *Guidelines for Licensed Use of FPAA Logo*.

Replacement documentation is available on request for a nominal fee.

FPA Australia will issue renewal certificates to Certified Businesses and Practitioners, and photo identification cards to Practitioners, who successfully renew certification after each two-year period. The cost of this documentation is covered by the renewal fee.

Conditions of certification

- Certification is only available to individuals and business entities that have satisfied the criteria set out in the FPA Australia Bushfire Planning and Design Certification Program.
- Certification holders are required to abide by the FPA Australia Code of Practice, Disciplinary Code and guidelines as determined by FPA Australia.
- To maintain certification all Certified Businesses and Practitioners must undertake recertification at two-year intervals.
- A BPAD Certified Practitioner must be employed or engaged by a BPAD Certified Business or be the owner/director of a BPAD Certified Business to use an FPA Australia logo (refer to the *Guidelines for Licensed Use of FPAA Logo*).
- Contractors and subcontractors must be certified by FPA Australia as if they were the business's own staff. Businesses will be fully responsible for the quality of service provided by the contractors and subcontractors they engage to provide services.
- Certified Practitioners or Certified Businesses may not provide services to a third party and have that third party claim compliance with the Certification Program if the third party is not a Certified Business or is not a Certified Business of the appropriate category.
- Practitioners and Businesses must maintain current and financial corporate level FPA Australia membership to remain certified.
- A Certified Business must agree to surrender any certification if a petition is filed for the winding up of the certificate holder's business or if a receiver, receiver-manager or liquidator is appointed to that business. Certification is not transferable.
- Certification of a Business or Practitioner may be withdrawn by FPA Australia for breaches of the Code of Practice, or where action is taken by the relevant federal, state or territory government for improper practices.

The Certified Business or Practitioner will be advised of the alleged breach by the Chief Executive Officer of FPA Australia and asked to respond within 30 days. If the breach is proven the business or practitioner will be asked to show cause as to why their certification should not be withdrawn. The decision to withdraw certification will be made by the full board of FPA Australia. No refunds or part refunds apply for certification that is subsequently cancelled.

- Notification of any changes affecting the business's or practitioner's certification must be provided to FPA Australia within seven days of the changes.
- Those seeking certification or who are already certified agree to provide FPA Australia with documentation when requested.

- A BPAD-D Certified Business must surrender its certification where circumstances arise where the business no longer employs or engages at least one Certified Practitioner holding either BPAD-D or BPAD-A certification.
- A BPAD-A Certified Business must surrender certification where circumstances arise where the business no longer employs or engages at least one BPAD-A Certified Practitioner.

Expectations of Certified Practitioners and Businesses

Certified Practitioners and Businesses are expected to:

- Maintain Current Corporate Membership with FPA Australia and abide by FPA Australia's Code of Practice
- abide by FPA Australia's Disciplinary Code
- abide by the conditions of certification (see previous page)
- comply with relevant Federal and State Acts and/or regulations
- comply with relevant Australian Standards
- ensure advertising is accurate and truthful in every respect and is not misleading
- exercise skill and judgment to the best of their ability
- support the principles of the Certification Program
- act in all ways to uphold the reputation of FPA Australia at all times.

In addition:

- Certified Practitioners must commit to continuing professional development throughout their certification period
- Certified Practitioners may only promote themselves and their services as BPAD Certified Practitioners when they are engaged to deliver BPAD services on behalf of a Certified Business in the same or a higher category.
- A Certified Business may only promote and deliver its services as a Certified Business when it engages Certified Practitioners in the same or a higher category to deliver services and sign off on any projects promoting the business as BPAD-Certified.

Recertification

All Certified Businesses and Practitioners must undertake recertification at two-year intervals and pay a reapplication fee.

In advance of the expiry of certification, FPA Australia will issue a renewal notice which will include a recertification form and other material to assist recertification.

It is the certificate holder's responsibility to ensure that the completed recertification form, supporting documentation and reapplication fee are provided to FPA Australia by the due date. Failure to do this may result in the cancellation of certification. FPA Australia will allow a maximum 30-day transition period, at which time FPA Australia must receive the required documents and payment.

Practitioner recertification

To maintain their certification Certified Practitioners must:

- Continue to provide BPAD services consistent with their level of BPAD Practitioner certification.
- Continue to abide by the certification conditions and the expectations of Certified Practitioners specified in this document and in the *Certification Guide* for their Certified Practitioner Category.
- Provide evidence that they have undertaken continuing professional development (CPD) during their two-year period of certification which has a minimum CPD point value of **15**.

Continuing professional development

You will find information on CPD requirements, the CPD process, and examples of CPD activities and documentary evidence at www.fpaa.com.au. Click on the 'Certification' menu, select 'Bushfire Planning and Design', and then click on the [Continuing Professional Development](#) link on the left sidebar.

Business recertification

Certified Businesses are required to provide:

- a copy of their business registration certificate
- evidence of public liability and professional indemnity insurance
- a list of Certified Practitioners who provide services on behalf of the business.

Appeals process

To appeal a decision regarding a certification application an applicant should apply in writing to FPA Australia. An appeal must be lodged in writing within 14 days of notification of assessment outcome, providing detailed reasons for the appeal. A non-refundable payment of \$125 applies for the appeal fee.

All written appeals will be reviewed by a panel consisting of three members determined by the FPA Australia Chief Executive Officer, including a member of FPA Australia's Board of Directors.

The appeals panel will consider the appeal and provide a written decision of the outcome. A decision of the appeals panel will occur within 20 working days. The appeals panel decision is final and no other means of appeal is available.

Industry complaints

All complaints made against a Certified Practitioner or Certified Business by a customer will be brought before the FPA Australia Chief Executive Officer (CEO). In accordance with FPA Australia's Privacy Policy, the complaint process will remain confidential at all times.

Where the CEO finds a minor breach of regulations, standards or codes has occurred that could result in incorrect or improper assessments and/or recommendations being made, disciplinary action will occur and may involve any combination of, guidance, coaching and mentoring, letter of warning.

Where the CEO finds a major breach of regulations, standards or codes has occurred that could result in incorrect or improper assessments and/or recommendations being made, the complaint will be referred to the Disciplinary Review Panel.

Major breaches will be heard by the Disciplinary Review Panel, comprising the FPA Australia CEO, members of the relevant Fire Agency, members of the Peer Review Panel, and possibly members of the FPA Australia Board of Directors.

The Certified Practitioner or Certified Business will be required to appear before the panel to explain their actions. If a major breach is substantiated, disciplinary action will occur and may involve any combination of:

- Requirement to undertake a re-assessment before a Peer Review Panel for BPAD – D and BPAD – A Certified Practitioners
- Suspension from the Certification Scheme
- Termination from the Certification Scheme

Confidentiality agreement

In accordance with FPA Australia's Privacy Policy (<http://www.fpaa.com.au/docs/privacy.pdf>) personal information and documentation collected will remain confidential at all times.

Further information

For further information about the Certification Program contact FPA Australia:

Phone: 1300 731 922 or 03 9890 1544

Email: certification@fpaa.com.au

Fax: 03 9890 1577