



# PBSAG SAFETY INITIATIVE NEIGHBOUR ALERT BULLETIN 2019

## BACKGROUND

Pearl Beach Safety Advisory Group (PBSAG) is a Sub-committee of the Pearl Beach Progress Association. The group evolved as a reaction to the tragic drowning at Pearl Beach of a 5 year old boy in July 2014. A small group of local people, some with great expertise, such as medicos, trainers and life savers, met and formed this group and were responsible for obtaining beach safety equipment, defibrillators and First Aid Training.

## BUSHFIRE DANGER

On 14th December 2016, the Patonga Rd fire provided a real wake up call for our community. Overall, our residents were ill prepared, some evacuated, some had a bushfire survival plan and knew what they should do; however most either didn't know what to do or were totally ignorant of the fire threat. Although there was a mobile signal, the RFS bushfire TXT message alerts didn't happen that day in Pearl Beach.

## NEIGHBOUR ALERT

Thus, the role of the PBSAG was expanded to be proactive to a bushfire threat. After much research and deliberation the group developed the **Neighbour Alert** - program.

***Neighbour Alert** is a communications network only, providing and accessing information on bushfires and bushfire emergencies. The core of the network are local residents ...**Street Contacts** who are supported by PBSAG members.*

Each Pearl Beach street has at least two or more **Street Contacts** who have volunteered to connect and provide information to their neighbours and be a point of contact. Household Information sheets are given to residents so that they may provide relevant information, such as name, address and contact numbers, for registration to the program. **Street Contacts are not fire wardens, fire fighters or are expected to provide any other support to people in time of a bushfire emergency.** Also, the role they play is completely dependent on their own personal situation.

## TEXT MESSAGING SYSTEM

PBSAG has established a **Text Messaging System** to send to registered residents of the Neighbour Alert - program via their mobile phones. This is our first preference to alert residents, and others who have registered, on the bushfire alert for Pearl Beach. *We are notified at the same time as the Pearl Beach RFS via the RFS call out officer.*

In essence this system aims to alert Pearl Beach residents (plus any home owners registered in our system) of the three RFS bushfire notifications:-

## ADVICE WATCH AND ACT EMERGENCY WARNING

***Residents are expected to enact their own Bushfire Survival Plan.***

Should the Text Messaging System fail, we will endeavor to personally alert residents through our Street Contacts

***NOTE:*** *The PBSAG Text Messaging System is in addition to RFS/SES Text Messages notifications they initiate in serious danger situations. That is, text messages are sent to all mobile phone numbers registered on the local mobile phone tower.*

## YOUR BUSH FIRE SURVIVAL PLAN

The Neighbour Alert initiative has been active in encouraging all residents to write a Bushfire Survival Plan. We have been working with the RFS in distributing these to residents. So, as notifications are issued, residents enact their own bushfire Survival Plan. **Please ensure your plan is up to date.**

## NEWSFLASH – Call to Action

Through our RFS, we now have a Country Fire Unit (CFU) Trailer. This trailer will be manned by trained local volunteers from your community. This will help protect your home from bushfire and ember attack...Do you want to help? ...If so, please notify your Street Contact or call into the Pearl Beach RFS.

## **Bush Fire Emergency “Must Have Bags”**

With emergency contact information, and an emergency survival check list to assist you in taking the important items with you in a bush fire emergency.

These are a highly visible and safe way to keep all your Emergency Documents in one place. A practical holder of those important items you don't want to leave behind

**Only \$10**

Our Red Bag initiative helps residents keep all their bushfire documents together. Please ask your street contact about purchasing a Red Bag

### **MEDIA REPORT - 24 September 2019**

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-09-24/authorities-say-many-coastal-residents-dont-have-emergency-plan/11531676>

**This is an ABC article, a must read for the Pearl Beach community:**

### **Emergency authorities warn of life-threatening complacency towards evacuation plans**

#### **Key points:**

- Residents impacted by recent bushfires in Queensland say they didn't have an evacuation plan – but they do now
- QFES says people living near the coast are less likely to be prepared for a bushfire because they think it won't happen to them
- The Red Cross says unprepared residents often arrive at evacuation centres with items like hair dryers but not wallets or medications

## **Emergency kit suggestions:**

- Hardcopy, digital photos or USB
- Insurance papers
- Medicare and health insurance cards
- Birth certificates, passports
- Phone
- Prescriptions and medical supplies
- Cash, handbag/purse
- Underwear
- Water bottles, non-perishable food snacks
- Toothbrush/paste, deodorant
- Chargers for electronic items
- Jewellery, small sentimental items
- A plan for pets and their food
- Know the radio station and social media pages you'll need to follow for more information

### **IMPORTANT CONTACTS**

**Police, Ambulance, Fire Brigade, RFS**  
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**Major Bushfire Information**  
1800679737

**NSW RFS Website**  
rfs.nsw.gov.au

**Free Smartphone APP**  
Fires near me

**Local Radio**  
ABC 92.5FM / 702 AM

**Social Media**  
facebook.com/nswrfs    twitter.com/nswrfs

**SES**  
132500

**Central Coast Council**  
4325 8222

**Pearl Beach Safety Advisory Group (PBSAG)**  
pbpa.safetyadvisorygroup@gmail.com