



## NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE



Director General  
Department of Planning & Environment  
PO Box 36  
JINDABYNE NSW 2627

Your reference: 16/15691 & 8154  
Our reference: D16/4340

**ATTENTION:** Mark Brown

9 March 2017

Dear Mark

**Re: 'Unit 5, 7 Summit Way Thredbo – Ember Upgrade'**

This letter has been provided as an attachment to the Bush Fire Safety Authority issued on 9 March 2017, referenced D16/4340. The aim is to provide additional information regarding ember protection. The RFS requests that the Department of Planning and Environment forwards this information to the applicant.

Bush fires are a natural part of the Australian environment and occur regularly and unfortunately, this has resulted in the loss of life, property and the environment. Property owners and managers should be advised that even if a building is not located adjacent to bushland, embers can travel hundreds of metres from a fire to impact on a building. In fact, studies show that 85% of lost houses in previous bushfires were ignited by ember attack rather than direct flame contact.

The RFS recognises that many buildings in bushfire prone areas, including the Alpine Villages, were constructed prior to bushfire construction standards, and that these buildings may not be adequately designed and constructed to minimise the chances of a building being ignited in the event of a bushfire. As such the RFS encourages all existing residential and tourist accommodation buildings on bush fire prone land to be upgraded for ember protection at a minimum. This can be achieved by enclosing or covering openings and gaps to prevent the entry, lodgement or build up of embers. The RFS has created the '*Best Practice Guide to Bush Fire Protection – Upgrading of Existing Buildings*' which provides detailed information regarding how to upgrade an existing building for bush fire protection and has been attached for your perusal.

**Postal address**

NSW Rural Fire Service  
Records Management  
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**Street address**

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Where alterations and additions are proposed to an existing building on bushfire prone land in N.S.W., the RFS generally requires that, where the existing building is not constructed to a bush fire construction standard, it be upgraded for ember protection. This is to ensure the integrity of the new works in terms of bush fire resistance is not undermined, and to create an improved bush fire outcome for the site. However, in exceptional circumstances, and where adequate justification is provided, the RFS may not require this as a condition of the approval. It should be noted this decision is made individually for each development based on the merits of the application. Where the RFS has not conditioned ember protection as part of the approval, it is still recommended that existing buildings be upgraded for ember protection.

The RFS appreciates your consideration of the above information and suggests investigation is undertaken into how property owners and managers may conduct appropriate works in the future to reduce bush fire risk to their property and adjoining land.

For any enquiries regarding this correspondence please contact Martha Dotter on (02) 44 720600.

Yours Faithfully,



Amanda Moylan

**Team Leader Development Assessment and Planning**

*The RFS has made getting information easier. For information on Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2006, visit the RFS web page at [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au) and search under Planning for Bush Fire Protection 2006.*