

# 2013 New South Wales Bushfires

## Background

In late 2013, the lower Blue Mountains faced two major bushfire events. The first, in September, was the Winmalee fire, which caused widespread damage and demanded a significant firefighting effort to safeguard lives and property. This was followed in October by the Linksvie Road fire in Springwood, which further challenged the capabilities and coordination of emergency services. These events underscore the immense challenges posed by bushfires in the region and emphasize the importance of preparedness and effective response measures.

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### Springwood

The fire in the **Springwood** area began in bushland adjacent to Linksvie Road, just before 1.30pm on 17 October.<sup>[35]</sup> It has been alleged in a damages lawsuit to be caused by powerline damage due to strong winds felling a tree that had not been removed by the owner of the property on which it was located, however a Police investigation is still ongoing and is yet to determine the cause.<sup>[22]</sup> The fire spread over 3,500 hectares (8,600 acres),<sup>[1]</sup> primarily in Winmalee and Yellow Rock and nearby bushland, completely destroyed 193 houses and partially damaged approximately 200 more.<sup>[36]</sup> A subsequent report described the damage in the Springwood, Mt Victoria and Lithgow fires that "took hold within minutes and went on to destroy a total of 203 homes and damage another 286." The report noted: "Financial losses have been estimated at around \$170 million. Springwood Hospital was evacuated as were a number of nursing homes and several hundred children from schools."<sup>[37]</sup>

Affected streets were Singles Ridge Road and most of the streets that intersect it, as well as some other nearby streets. The fire also impacted on the grounds of St Thomas Aquinas Primary School, and led to evacuations and lock-downs at several schools in Springwood and Winmalee that afternoon and evening.<sup>[5]</sup>

Over the following weeks, the fire spread to bushland in Faulconbridge, but

firefighters successfully protected residential properties there.

- Source: [Wikipedia](#)

## Radio Recordings

The recordings below provide valuable insights into how radio communications are conducted during high-intensity and stressful bushfire incidents. These real-life examples help listeners understand the tone, structure, and urgency of messages exchanged in critical situations.

By analyzing these recordings, trainees will gain a better appreciation of how to manage radio communications effectively under pressure and learn how to interpret key information and apply it to real-life scenarios. This understanding is crucial for ensuring clear, concise, and accurate communication during emergencies, which can directly impact safety and operational outcomes.

We encourage trainees to listen carefully to these recordings, identify patterns in communication, and practice applying these techniques in simulated scenarios to build confidence and readiness.

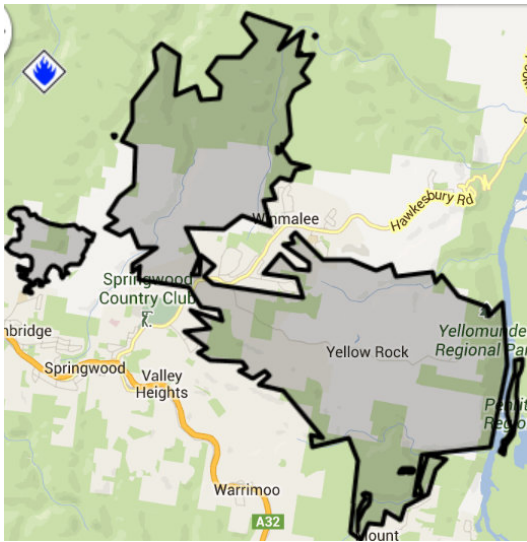
Below are copies of the RFS radio recordings for your training purposes.

Date	Location	Recording
2013-09-10	Warrimoo	<a href="#">2013-09-10 Warrimoo Fire.mp3</a>
2013-10-17	Linksvie Road, Springwood	<a href="#">2013-10-17 Linksvie Rd - Start at 1_05_50.mp3</a>

## Summary

### Source

There were three major fires across the Blue Mountains during October of 2013. Below is some of the media coverage of these fires.



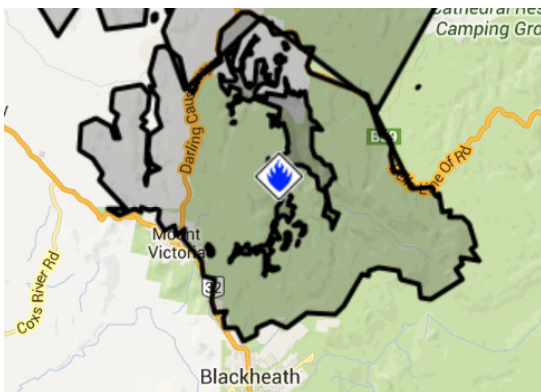
COUNCIL AREA: Blue Mountains

STATUS: Under Control

TYPE: Bush fire

FIRE: Yes

SIZE: 3623 ha



LOCATION: Located at Mt York Rd, Mt Victoria, Darling Causeway, Bells Line of Road, Blackheath, Mt Banks 3km north of Mt Boyce 4km north of Blackheath 2km east of Little Hartley 3km south of Hartley Vale

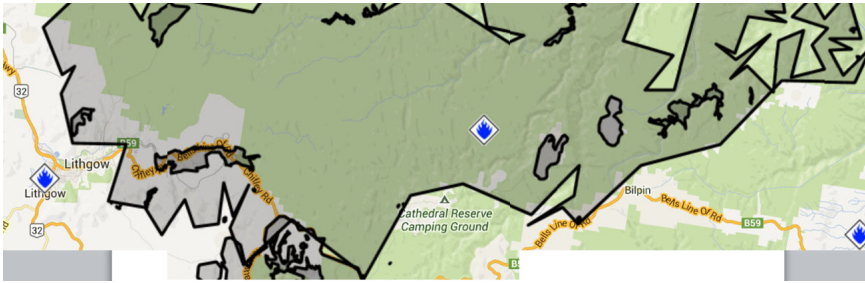
COUNCIL AREA: Blue Mountains

STATUS: Under Control

TYPE: Bush/Scrub fire

FIRE: Yes

SIZE: 8476 ha



COUNCIL AREA: Lithgow

STATUS: Under Control

TYPE: Bush/Scrub fire

FIRE: Yes

SIZE: 55182 ha

## Media Coverage

[View the Blue Mountains Gazette October 2013 Bush Fire Emergency coverage](#)

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