

Statement of Interest

My interest in attending this workshop lies in one of my current projects, the Bushfire Seasonal Assessment Workshop (BSAW). The goal of the workshop is to produce an outlook for the severity of the upcoming bushfire season. This is done by combining input on fuels and resources from the various fire agencies and current and projected climate information to arrive at a consensus outlook for the upcoming season.

The first BSAW was held earlier this year in June. The model being followed was derived from similar workshops held in the USA since 2003. I was charged with organising the workshop and preparing the final reports and forecasts. The final report was submitted to the Bushfire CRC in September.

The initial BSAW was designed primarily to work out the methodologies and the processes, although we also produced a useful forecast. We are planning on continuing to develop this process into the future, with a similar workshop for northern Australia to be held around late-March and on second in late-August for the southern portion of the continent.

The inaugural BSAW was a success; the product was seen to be useful by many agencies and well-received in the fire community in general. Despite this success, there is (as always) room for improvement. From the WAS*IS workshop, I hope to gain some insight into techniques and/or approaches which could be useful to the improvement of future BSAWs.