

HEAVY MACHINERY AT BUSHFIRES: USAGE AND COMPENSATION

During bushfire season, heavy machinery (or plant) is often used to help contain and extinguish bushfires. In some circumstances, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) will request to hire a landowner's heavy machinery.

What is heavy machinery?

- » Dozers
- » Graders
- » Skidders
- » Excavators
- » Water tankers
- » Other similar equipment.

Earthmoving equipment can be used in multiple scenarios including:

- » for direct attack on a low to medium intensity fire
- » constructing a fire break
- » creating access routes for fire trucks
- » dealing with logs, trees or other obstacles.

Does QFES compensate for machinery hire?

QFES is wanting to work with a land owner around compensation if:

- » QFES has asked the land owner to hire their heavy machinery for firefighting purposes,
- » The machinery passes safety checks, and
- » Authorisation has been given through the senior on-call officer, who will liaise with QFES Fire Communications to coordinate use of the machinery, including approved tasking.

This authorisation ensures that government funding is spent in a justified and accountable manner.

Note: If a land owner is a member of their local Rural Fire Brigade, they must still get authorisation through the correct channels.

Following this process means QFES can be sure about what machinery they have available on the ground to use and where it is located.

When will QFES not compensate for machinery hire?

In Queensland land owners are legally responsible for taking all reasonable steps to report, manage, and prevent a fire leaving their property.

If a land owner chooses to fight a fire on their own property using their own heavy machinery, they will not be compensated.



Other important information

Make sure you know how to contact your neighbours as part of your bushfire preparedness, including where your property neighbours state or local government owned land such as road/rail corridors and national parks as different approaches may exist if using heavy machinery in these circumstances.

For more information, contact your local rural fire brigade.

Join our team. Whether you're on the front line or supporting those who are, every role in the Rural Fire Service counts. Join your local brigade today.

