



# UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITIES PROJECT

## Bulletin No 5

The Bushfire CRC was established under the Commonwealth Government's Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) Programme.

The CRC aims to provide research which enhances the management of the bushfire risk to the community in an economically and ecologically sustainable way.

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BELOW: QFRS VOLUNTEER FIRE SERVICE TRAINING IN THE PERI URBAN ZONE - PICTURE ALISON COTTRELL



### WHAT'S IN A NAME - PERI-URBAN COMMUNITIES?

A number of labels have been used for locations at the urban periphery. In the context of Bushfire hazard we have:

<i>I-Zone</i>	<i>wildland-urban interface</i>	<i>forest-residential intermix</i>
<i>rural-urban interface</i>	<i>rural -urban fringe</i>	<i>exurbanisation</i>
<i>suburbanisation</i>	<i>pen-urbanisation</i>	<i>'technoburbs'</i>

In general, Wildland-urban interface tends to be a term used by Canadians, exurbanisation in the United States of America and in urban planning and peri-urbanism by researchers of issues in developing countries.

The Canadian Forest Service (CFS, 2004) defines the situation as:

The wildland-urban interface is any area where structures (whether residential, industrial, recreational, or agricultural) are located adjacent to or among combustible wildland fuels. There are many different types of wildland-urban interface areas in Canada:

- Large cities containing forest or grassland areas
- Structures (such as homes) situated in lightly populated agricultural areas which may also contain forests or rangelands
- Low density housing communities or subdivisions located next to or in the forest
- Cottages, cabins, and recreational and industrial facilities located in the forest
- Small-to-medium communities (often aboriginal settlements or resource-based communities with populations ranging from 500 to 50 000) surrounded by vast expanses of forest.

The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (2004) use the term I Zone and provides a pictorial schema of two basic types which represent higher and lower settlement densities. The first is land parcels of less than 0.25hectares and the second is land parcels greater than 0.25hectares but less than 10 hectares (see diagram below).

Type 1 IZone



Type 2 IZone



Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (2004).

Communities are often a mosaic of different land uses which makes service delivery difficult.

**REFERENCES:**

Canadian Forest Service (2004) Wildland-Urban Interface [http://fire.cfc.nrcan.gc.ca/research/mangement/wui\\_e.htm](http://fire.cfc.nrcan.gc.ca/research/mangement/wui_e.htm) Accessed: 22/10/2004.  
Hugo, G., A Champion, and A Lattes (2003) Toward a new conceptualisation of settlements for demography, *Population and Development Review* 29 (2) 277-297.

The Understanding Communities Project C1) is part of the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre's national research program. The aim of the project is to increase community resilience to bushfires. For more information visit the project website at [www.bushfirecrc.com](http://www.bushfirecrc.com)