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BAL Ratings

Certified Products for bushfire areas

In response to devastating bushfires in Victoria in 2009, Australian Standard 3959 was updated and republished AS3959:2009. The Building Code of Australia (BCA) referenced the new Standard on the 1st May 2010.

The BCA and amended AS3959 cover all aspects of the external built environment, including windows and doors. AS3959 outlines different construction practices and building materials for five bushfire hazard levels. The old standard had 4 levels of bushfire attack, the new Standard has 6 levels of severity expressed as Bushfire Attack Levels (BALs):

Bushfire Attack Level (BAL)	Description of predicted bushfire attack and levels of exposure	Risk
BAL-Low	There is insufficient risk to warrant specific construction requirements	Very low
BAL-12.5	Ember attack	Low
BAL-19	Increasing levels of ember attack and burning debris ignite by windborne embers together with radiant heat exposure of between 12.5 and 19kW/m2	Moderate
BAL-29	Increasing levels of ember attack and burning debris ignited by windborne embers, together with radiant heat exposure of between 19 and 29 kW/m2	High
BAL-40	Increasing levels of ember attack and burning debris ignited by windborne embers together with increasing radiant heat exposure of between 29 and 40 kW/m2, with the increased likelihood of exposure to flames	Very high
BAL-FZ (flame zone)	Direct exposure to flames from fire front in addition to radiant heat exposure of greater than 40 kW/m2 and ember attack	Extreme

To determine your home's BAL rating and any special requirements for building in your area, consult your local council, government or local fire authority.