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BAL FZ Construction Compliance & Testing Regimes



1. What is the primary mechanism of house loss during a bushfire, and why does it matter for construction outside the immediately exposed zone?

Ember attack, responsible for roughly 80% of house loss.

2. Name the three mechanisms of bushfire attack that the BAL system accounts for.

Ember attack, radiant heat and direct flame contact.

3. A building's BAL rating drives its construction requirements. What does the rating represent?

It represents the severity of bushfire exposure a building is likely to face at its site, factoring in ember attack, radiant heat and direct flame contact.

4. List the five factors assessed under AS 3959 to determine a site's BAL rating.

The relevant Fire Danger Index (FDI) region,
The classification of surrounding vegetation,
The distance from the classified vegetation,
The effective slope under that vegetation, and
The resulting BAL from the tables.

5. BAL-FZ is split into two types by distance. What is the threshold, and why does it matter?

10 metres between the site and classified vegetation. Beyond 10 m the exposure is less severe, so more construction options are available; under 10 m the requirements are stricter.

6. Why does the NCC exempt a BAL-FZ roof from the roof ventilation requirement?

Openings that ventilate the roof under normal conditions would also let embers in during a fire. The BAL-FZ bushfire requirement takes precedence over condensation management.