



Shire of
Narrogin

MINUTES
BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
19 September 2022

COMMENCING AT 4:00 PM

The Chief Executive Officer recommends the endorsement of these minutes at the next Meeting of Bush Fire Advisory Committee.

Signed:
(CEO)

Date 29 September 2022

These minutes were confirmed at the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held

Signed:

(Presiding Member at the meeting at which minutes were confirmed)

Acknowledgement of Noongar People

The Shire of Narrogin acknowledges the Noongar people as traditional custodians of this land and their continuing connection to land and community. We pay our respect to them, to their culture and to their Elders past and present.

Naatj ngiyan Birdiya Gnarojin kep unna nidja Noongar Moort ngaala maya nidja boodjera baarlap djoowak karlerl koolark. Ngalak niny ngullang karnan balang Bibolman baalap borong koora wer boorda.

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Please note that meetings may be recorded for minute taking purposes.

CONTENTS

1.	OFFICIAL OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS	5
2.	RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE	5
3.	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS	6
4.	ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING WITHOUT DISCUSSION	6
5.	MATTERS WHICH REQUIRE DISCUSSION	6
5.1	THE NEW AUSTRALIAN FIRE DANGER RATING SYSTEM.....	6
5.2	MEMBERSHIP OF BRIGADES.....	6
5.3	TRAINING	7
5.4	BUSH FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN (BMP) UPDATE	7
6.	GENERAL BUSINESS	7
6.1	RADIOS AND COMMUNICATION	7
6.2	VOLUNTEER THANK YOU BARBEQUE	8
6.3	DFES UPDATE	8
6.4	POLICE UPDATE	8
7.	CLOSURE OF MEETING	8

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING 19 SEPTEMBER 2022

1. OFFICIAL OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Presiding Member, President Ballard, declared the meeting open at 4:07 pm.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Elected Members Present

Mr Leigh Ballard – Shire President (Presiding Member)

CBFCO

Pip Porter

DCBFCO

Vern Gibson

Stuart Moyses

FCO's

Daryl Kilpatrick

Jon Rick

Nathan Walker

Braden Lange

Troy Smith

Murray Saunders

Russell Ashley

Staff

Mr Azhar Awang – Executive Manager Development and Regulatory Services

Mr Guy Maley – Senior Ranger

Mrs Wendy Russell – Executive Support Officer

Other

Snr Sgt Shannon McGeown – Narrogin Police

Blake Halford - DFES

Apologies

Kieran Quartermaine

Clayton Hardie

Lewis Hardie

Mr Dale Stewart – Chief Executive Officer

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION AND COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Moved: Stuart Moyses

Seconded: Pip Porter

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on 29 March 2022 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings.

CARRIED

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING WITHOUT DISCUSSION

Nil

5. MATTERS WHICH REQUIRE DISCUSSION

5.1 THE NEW AUSTRALIAN FIRE DANGER RATING SYSTEM.

Attachment 1 – Australian Fire Danger Rating System flier.

Attachment 2 – Australian Fire Danger Rating System brochure.

Attachment 3 – DFES - Australian Fire Danger Rating System Info sheet.

Executive Manager Development and Regulatory Services (EMDRS) provided a brief mention of the new fire rating system which came into effect on 1 September 2022.

Blake Halford A/ District Officer Narrogin DFES provided the following information.

- The changing of the previous Fire Danger Rating System to a National Standard is the result of 5 years of study and evaluation.
- The changes are being publicised at the moment to ensure that the public are aware of them.
- The biggest change for FCO's will be in regards to the imposing of Harvest and Movement Bans. Details regarding this point are found in the DFES - Australian Fire Danger Rating System Info sheet under the subheading Harvest Vehicle Movement Ban.
- The following link is to a website with a Fire Behaviour Calculator which can be used by anyone <https://aurora.landgate.wa.gov.au/fbc>.

5.2 MEMBERSHIP OF BRIGADES

Registered Bush Fire Volunteers have been allocated to their new brigades according to the addresses provided in their registration.

Each Brigade Captain will have received a list of all volunteers registered in their brigade. Please advise the Executive Support Officer if you believe someone is allocated to the incorrect brigade and we will arrange to have the information changed by DFES.

5.3 TRAINING

Attachment 4 – Bush Fire Volunteer Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) Assessment Form.

Congratulations to all of the Shire of Narrogin Fire Control Officers (FCO's) who have successfully completed the FCO training course.

Council Policy requires all volunteers have either completed the Rural Fire Awareness, Bushfire Safety Awareness, and Firefighting Skills or had their previous experience formally assessed and accepted as Recognised Prior Learning (RPL). Volunteers who have not met these minimum requirements may, in future, not be permitted to enter fire grounds in this or other local government areas under duty of care for registered volunteers, who are now considered employees under the Work Health and Safety Act 2020.

The questions were asked when is the next Rural Fire Awareness (RFA) and how many can attend one session.

DFES (Blake Halford) advised the committee that if they have volunteers requiring training that they should let him know and he will arrange it. The RFA training only takes about 4 hours and could be held in the evening. Training could be held in a place suitable for the volunteers (Highbury Hall, Narrogin etc) with 15 to 20 persons being the maximum for any one course.

5.4 BUSH FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN (BMP) UPDATE

Stage 1 of the BMP has been completed. The Executive Manager Development & Regulatory Services is finalising the acquittal prior to making application for the next funding round.

EMDRS advised the committee that the BMP funding will now be available for maintenance work for the next three (3) years.

The Senior Ranger (Guy) has had communication with ARC about the fire risks pertaining to the railway line, and they are prepared to assist in ensuring that the risk to their sites is reduced.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

6.1 RADIOS AND COMMUNICATION

- All of the WAERN radios have been fixed;
- FCO's should ensure that they all know and are aware of each others call signs;
- There were issues with communication at the Narrogin East Fire with the radio channel becoming 'clogged' with general chatter. There were some general thoughts:
 - Volunteers could use 'WhatsApp' when they are responding and each brigade could have their own.
 - WAERN main channel should be for FCO and command only
 - In the incident of a larger fire (limited/no phone access) different channels could be assigned to different fronts of the fire.

ACTION:

Guy to investigate the use of different channels on different fronts of a fire.

6.2 VOLUNTEER THANK YOU BARBEQUE

DFES advised that they will be holding a thank you Barbeque for all volunteers involved in the Narrogin East Fire. This will be provided by funds raised by a quiz night fundraiser.

6.3 DFES UPDATE

- DFES have a high season fleet of old vehicles that can be requested. A request is being made for additional truck/s and light tankers to be stationed in Narrogin this summer.
- There will be a water bomber based in Narrogin for a few weeks this summer.

6.4 POLICE UPDATE

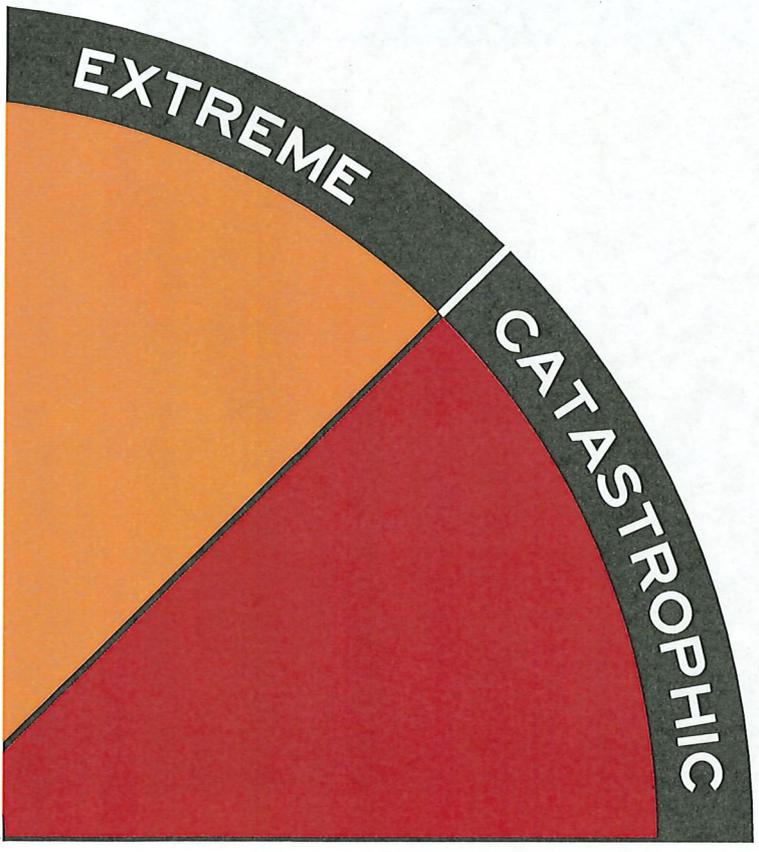
- Police are conducting operation 'Vulcan' keeping an eye persons who have a history of involvement with suspicious fires.

7. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business to discuss, the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 6:05 pm.



Danger Ratings (AFDRS) levels



MODERATE

Plan and prepare

EXTREME

Take action now to protect life and property

New Fire Behaviour Index – a scale of fire danger that uses different fire behaviour models (compared to the current index) to inform decisions about fire preparedness and bushfire survival.



IMPLEMENTING A NEW, NATIONALLY CONSISTENT FIRE DANGER RATING SYSTEM.

From 1 September 2022, Australia's Fire Danger Rating System will be improved and simplified, to make it easier for you to make decisions to stay safe on days of fire danger risk.

The move to a simpler system is backed by improvements in science, which will mean we can better predict areas of greater risk on days of fire danger.

Across the country fire and emergency services are applying nationally consistent colours, signs and terminology. This means that wherever you go in Australia, and whatever the season or fuels you're surrounded with, you can understand the level of threat and what you need to do to stay safe.

The new ratings are:

MODERATE:

Plan and prepare

HIGH:

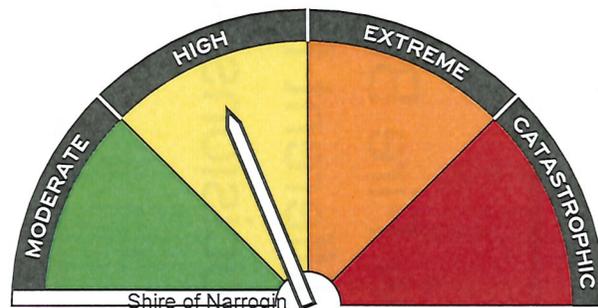
Be ready to act

EXTREME:

Take action now to protect life and property

CATASTROPHIC:

For your survival, leave bushfire risk areas



BENEFITS

The Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) Program is redesigning the forecasting of fire by

- Improving the scientific accuracy behind fire danger predictions.
- Improving the way that fire danger is communicated.
- Providing government and industry with better decision-making tools.
- Reducing the costs associated with bushfire impacts.

The key benefit is a more prepared and resilient community resulting in a reduction in loss of life, property, and human harm.

The AFDRS calculates fire danger at a finer geographic scale than ever before so more specific and relevant information can be provided.

Significant cost savings are expected due to improved fire danger information leading to better decisions and more appropriate and timely action. It will also improve cross-border operations and support sharing of firefighting resources.

AUSTRALIA'S FIRE DANGER RATING SYSTEM IS CHANGING.



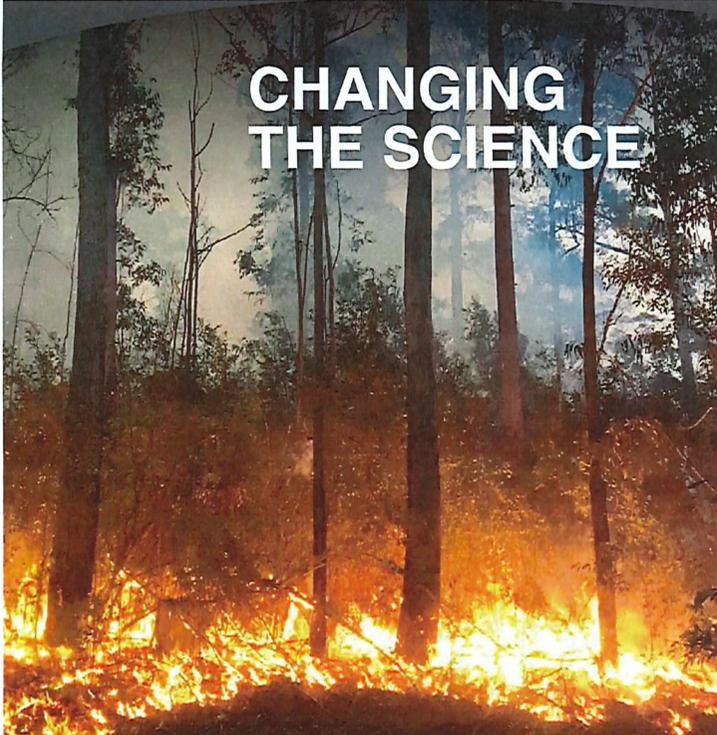
 Australian Fire Danger Rating System

✉ afdrs@afac.com.au

Minutes – Bush Fire www.afac.com.au 9 September 2022

Page 1

CHANGING THE SCIENCE



The current Fire Danger Rating System is largely based on science that is more than 60 years old. New technology and research have greatly improved our ability to accurately predict fire behaviour and the potential threat to the community.

The AFDRS uses the latest scientific understanding about weather, fuel and how fire behaves in different types of vegetation to improve the reliability of fire danger forecasts. This strengthens the ability of those working in emergency services to be better prepared, make improved decisions, and provide better advice to the community.

The Fire Danger Rating System is designed to be updatable so that the system can take advantage of improving science, data and information into the future.

By better understanding fuel types and fire behaviour on any given day of fire risk, agencies will be in a stronger position to respond to fires, adopting specific firefighting suppression strategies.

➤ What are fire danger ratings?

Fire danger ratings describe the potential level of danger should a bushfire start and are calculated using a combination of weather forecasting and information about vegetation that could fuel a fire.

➤ Why are we reducing the number of ratings?

Extensive social research found that most people in bushfire risk areas don't understand the current system. There were calls for a simpler, action-oriented system.

➤ But with more days and prolonged fire seasons shouldn't we be getting more information?

The science that sits behind Fire Danger Rating modelling is being improved. A better understanding of how different fuel types burn and improvements in technology means we can more accurately predict the risk faced by communities on any given day.

➤ But I work in an industry that requires more specific fire danger information?

Industries and members of the community who need more information will be able to access the Fire Behaviour Index, which will give a more in-depth level of detail about the fire danger.

➤ The new system doesn't look that different to the old system, so why bother changing it at all?

Community research found that most people were familiar with the old system, it just seemed too

significant changes to how we calculate fire danger risk, so that the ratings and information provided to the community is more accurate.

➤ Who is responsible for these changes?

The AFDRS is being coordinated by NSW RFS and AFAC (the National Council for Fire and Emergency Services), with support from the Bureau of Meteorology. A National Program Board, with representation from each of the State and Territories' fire agencies are overseeing the program, which is being delivered by local implementation teams.



What is the Australian Fire Danger Rating System?

The Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) Program is redesigning the forecasting of fire danger in Australia. The AFDRS is a project of national significance being developed collaboratively by each state and territory, and the Commonwealth government. It aims to improve public safety, reduce the impacts of bushfires and better support the community with nationally consistent ratings and messaging. The AFDRS will be implemented on 1 September 2022 across Australia.

What are Fire Danger Ratings?

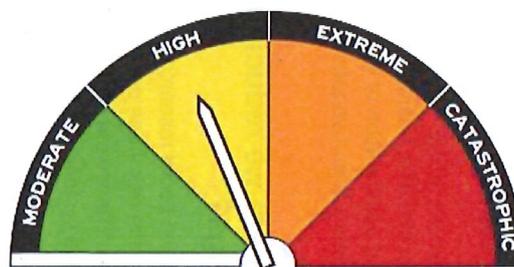
Fire Danger Ratings describe the potential level of danger should a bushfire start. They provide people with information so that they can take action to protect themselves and others from the potentially dangerous impacts of bushfires. Ratings are calculated using a combination of weather forecasting and vegetation information. They do not indicate the chance of a fire occurring.

How is the AFDRS different from our current system?

The current Fire Danger Rating System is largely based on 60-year-old science applied on a large scale. New technology and research have greatly improved our ability to more accurately predict fire behaviour and the potential threat to the community.

The AFDRS will have four levels with action-oriented messages to encourage people to take action. The ratings and high-level messages are:

1. **Moderate:** Plan and prepare.
2. **High:** Be ready to act.
3. **Extreme:** Take action now to protect life and property.
4. **Catastrophic:** For your survival, leave bushfire risk areas.



Supporting messages, including localised information, will clearly explain what community response is required at each level. The AFDRS also introduces an 'off' or 'no rating' level (white strip under Moderate) for days where no proactive action is required. This does not mean that fires cannot happen, but that they are not likely to move or act in a threatening way.

What are the benefits of the AFDRS?

Currently, there are inconsistencies in how jurisdictions determine and communicate Fire Danger Ratings. By implementing a national system, wherever people are in Australia they will see and be able to access consistent fire danger advice, maximising their ability to understand and appropriately respond to conditions. The AFDRS will also apply eight of the most contemporary fire behaviour models. This will see us move to a Fire Behaviour Index (FBI) that provides a much more accurate scale of potential fire behaviour based on weather conditions and the applicable model. The following table lists the agreed FBI thresholds for each rating:

Name/Colour	Fire Behaviour Index Range	Suppression difficulty
MODERATE (Green)	12-23	Most bushfires in this category. Fires typically suppressed with direct, parallel or indirect attack.
HIGH (Yellow)	24-49	Initial attack success critical to prevent large fire development. Defensive suppression strategies.
EXTREME (Orange)	50-99	Defensive suppression strategies. High levels of threat to life/property. Safety of firefighters and community paramount.
CATASTROPHIC (Red)	100+	Unsafe for firefighters and community. Without initial attack success, likelihood of very large fire development is very high. High probability of loss of life and property.

What do Local Governments need to know?

The move from six to four ratings, new names and thresholds, will change how Fire Danger Ratings are referenced within the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, *Bush Fires Regulations 1954* and *Bush Fires (Infringements) Regulations 1978*. DFES has been consulting with representatives across state and local government, agriculture and industry to identify and progress the required changes ahead of the nationally agreed 1 September 2022 implementation date.

Total Fire Ban

The primary justification for recommending the declaration of a Total Fire Ban (TFB) is based on the forecast Fire Danger Index (FDI) and resultant Fire Danger Rating (FDR). The State of WA is currently divided into the three TFB FDI indicator zones (Zone 1: FDI 50+, Zone 2: FDI 60+ and Zone 3: FDI 75+).

As the AFDRS will provide a Fire Behaviour Index (FBI) as a scale of fire danger that produces fine-scale information across a range of fuel types (compared to the existing two fuel types), there will not be a requirement for TFBs to be declared across separate zones. As the transition between the High and Extreme rating (50 FBI) is associated with erratic fire behaviour and an increased likelihood of community loss and significant consequences, it has been nationally recognised as the most appropriate threshold for a TFB declaration.

Harvest Vehicle Movement Ban

Currently during a TFB a Bushfire Control Officer MUST impose a ban, commonly referred to as a Harvest Vehicle Movement Ban (HVMB), on off-road activity for business, industry and agriculture if the FDI exceeds 35. However, as the AFDRS is based on the FBI rather than Grassland FDI (GFDI) and a new grassland model, an appropriate FBI/FDR threshold must be determined. Analysis was conducted to determine the range of weather combinations (temperature, relative humidity and wind speed) and fuel inputs (4.5 t/ha fuel load and 100% curing) that equate to a GFDI of 32. These same weather conditions when applied to the FBI algorithm, resulted in producing an average FBI of 40 which will become the new trigger under the AFDRS.

WA is currently leading the way in producing a tool that will allow for calculating an FBI to inform the requirement for a HVMB based on the new grassland model. The tool will be available on smart devices when either on or offline and will allow for the input of observed weather and grass curing conditions.

Burning under a Permit

Under the current system, burning during the restricted burning period is not permitted under a burn permit when the fire danger forecast reaches 'Very High' or above. Following detailed analysis work and understanding of the new science behind the AFDRS, the new 'High' rating has been identified as the most appropriate upper-level threshold for authorisation of burn permits under s.18 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, notwithstanding the requirements on a permit holder as set out in:

1. Section 38(17) of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*; and / or
2. Regulation.15B(7) of the *Bush Fires Regulations 1954*.

This is based on national recognition that planned burning is generally not recommended at the High rating (FBI 24 – 49) due to the potential that fire line intensity, spotting activity and rapidly spreading fires will pose a serious risk of burn escapes. A Fire Weather Officer will still be able to authorise the use of a permit at a rating of 'High' and above (i.e. an FBI of 24 or more) during the restricted burning period s.38(17).

Fire break and rates notices

Changes to legislation and new thresholds for restricted activities will not be finalised in time for information to be released with 2022 fire break and rates notices. Local governments are advised that thresholds are being finalised and the outcomes will be communicated as soon as practical.

DFES suggests the above information be included in your rates notice and fire break notice to inform your communities that changes are coming, with a note that the electronic version will be updated when the information becomes available.

Signage

A replacement program in direct consultation with local governments is proposed to replace the current network of analogue and digital roadside fire danger rating signage ahead of 1 September 2022. Local governments will need to submit their signage requirements and priorities to DFES, who will coordinate the procurement of new signage. Local governments will be required to oversee the removal of existing, and installation of the new, Fire Danger Rating signs. **See Attachment A in the email for information and guidance.**

Tools

The AFDRS will provide tools including the Fire Danger Viewer, and BOM registered user products, that display forecast and current FDRs. This will allow stakeholders that have part of their activity regulated by fire danger (e.g. harvesting operations, permit to burn cancellations, school closures) to obtain customised weather, fuel and fire history data that is precise to the location and the time of day of the activity. This will significantly reduce over-regulation and over-warning, avoiding the need to unnecessarily restrict activities. There will also be an upgrade to the Aurora Fire Behaviour Calculator that will enable users to input local weather conditions to determine the FBI, supporting sound decision making.

Education products

Updates are being worked on for public information sources (e.g. Emergency WA) and a suite of education and training products will be made available to local governments, volunteers and other key stakeholders. A national awareness campaign is also under development, which will launch with the new system to help embed understanding of the new levels and actions.

Training

Training has been developed in a digital modular format and includes eLearning, videos, PowerPoints and guides. Each module will be targeted to the different stakeholders' training requirements, split into three levels:

1. **Introductory:** Introduction to AFDRS concepts and changes. The target audience includes career and volunteer firefighters; government staff and private industries.
2. **Intermediate:** Designed for fire and land management agency staff, and bushfire practitioners for a practical and applied level of training.
3. **Advanced:** Technical training by BoM for Fire Behaviour Analysts (FBANs), planners and researchers.

Once user testing is complete, training packages will be released. In the meantime, we encourage you to [subscribe to our AFDRS Newsletter](#) and review resources at the [AFAC website](#).

Fire Weather Districts

The AFDRS project presented an opportunity for WA to review the [current Fire Weather Districts](#) to improve how FDRs are communicated. The review commenced in January 2021 facilitated by DFES and BoM, involving agency staff and key stakeholders. Following consultation across each region and detailed analysis work, the revised Fire Weather Districts have now been finalised and will be introduced with the release of the AFDRS. The new Fire Weather Districts can be accessed from the [interactive map viewer](#).

Effective from 1 September 2022, BoM will cease using the old model and only forecast using the AFDRS. Given the volume of data associated with forecasting, there will not be an overlap period.

Want to know more or stay in touch?

To learn more about AFDRS Program, visit afac.com.au/initiative/afdrs. For information about the AFDRS WA implementation project, email AFDRS@dfes.wa.gov.au or [subscribe to our AFDRS Newsletter](#).

Bush Fire Volunteer Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) Assessment Form (FDRS046)



89 Earl Street
PO Box 1145
Narrogin WA 6312

(08) 9890 0900

www.narrogin.wa.gov.au
enquiries@narrogin.wa.gov.au

CASHIER HOURS:
8:30am – 4:30pm
MONDAY- FRIDAY

This form is required to be completed to provide evidence of RPL for Bushfire Volunteers.

This form must be signed by the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and at least one of the Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers before being presented to the Chief Executive Officer for final approval.

VOLUNTEER DETAILS

Surname		First Name	
Residential Address			
Postal Address			
Email Address		Telephone No	

The minimum requirements of a Bush Fire Brigade Volunteer are:

- Following orders of a Fire Control Officer (FCO);
- Wearing appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE);
- Understanding and using correct communication methods;
- Notifying when arriving and leaving the fire grounds;
- Ensure firefighting plant and equipment is operational and that **all** those who will use the equipment have the required training.

I, _____ (Insert Given Name and Surname) acknowledge, understand and will adhere to the above requirements of a bush fire brigade volunteer.

Signature

Date

Shire of Narrogin Policy Manual 5.2 Bush Fire Brigades – Management Clause 7 Training

- All Fire Control Officer's (FCO's) must as a minimum complete the FCO's course training within the first 12 months of being appointed and complete a refresher at least once every 10 years.
- A sub-committee consisting of the Chief Bushfire Control Officer and the two (2) Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officers, be authorised to assess volunteer fire fighters competency with regards to the Rural Fire Awareness, Bushfire Safety Awareness, and Firefighting Skills and if satisfied, to recommend to the Shire's CEO that their previous experience be accepted as Recognised Prior Learning (RPL), although FCO's should be encouraged to complete the training.

We believe that _____ (Insert Given Name and Surname) has sufficient training and experience to be given RPL for their role as a volunteer bushfire brigade member.

Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Signature

Signature

Printed Name

Printed Name

Date

Date

OFFICE USE

Approved by CEO	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Signature		Date	
Training Register Updated-	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Signature		Date	



Our Ref: 23/008825

Mr Dale Stewart
Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Narrogin

Via email: CEO@narrogin.wa.gov.au

Dear Mr Stewart

ESTABLISHMENT OF BUSH FIRE BRIGADES - *BUSH FIRES ACT 1954*

As you are aware, a local government (**LG**) may establish and maintain bush fire brigades (**BFB**) as a part of its organisation for the prevention, control and extinguishment of bush fires. If a BFB is established, then this must be done in accordance with a LG's local law, pursuant to the powers given by section 41 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954* (**BF Act**).

In circumstances where there are no BFB local laws and BFBs have been set up informally by the LG (for example, by LG policies and procedures), the BFBs will not be in compliance with section 41 of the BF Act and will not be considered BFBs within the BF Act.

There is a very high risk that the volunteers in the BFBs not established in accordance with local laws, as required by section 41 of the BF Act, will not:

1. be able to exercise the powers of a "registered volunteer";
2. be covered by the protection from personal liability in Part 7 of the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1988* (WA) (**FES Act**); or
3. be covered by the compensation provisions in Part 6B of the FES Act.

Given the risk to volunteers, the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (**DFES**) is undertaking a state-wide audit to confirm compliance with section 41 of the BF Act.

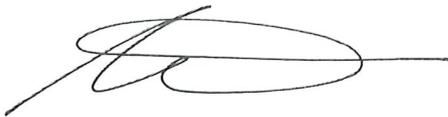
To assist DFES, please provide a copy of your LG's BFB local law or confirm that your LG does not have any BFBs, by email to legal.legislation@dfes.wa.gov.au. I note that DFES is considering changes to its procedures to ensure that this information is captured and regularly updated when new BFBs are registered.

DFES is working collaboratively with WALGA on this issue, and as such, information you provide regarding the status of your BFBs and BFB local laws may be shared with WALGA. WALGA is available to provide advice and assist LGs to manage the above risks. James McGovern, Manager, Governance and Procurement can be contacted on 9213 2093 or JMcGovern@walga.asn.au

Local governments may also wish to seek their own independent legal advice regarding this matter.

Should you have any queries or require further information on this request please contact Leah Brown, Principal Legislation Officer on 0423 250 204 or leah.brown@dfes.wa.gov.au

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DK', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**DARREN KLEMM AFSM
COMMISSIONER**

11 January 2023



Our Ref: D06807; 22/241202

Mr Aaron Cook
Chief Executive Officer
Town of Narrogin
PO Box 188
NARROGIN WA 6312

Shire of Narrogin	
RECEIVED	
Directed to	Dale /AZHAR
Ref No.	10 JAN 2023 ICR2329440
Property File	
Subject File	9.8.1
Ref	

Dear Mr Cook

VOLUNTEER BUSHFIRE TRAINING INFORMATION

The enactment of the *Work, Health and Safety Act 2020 (WA)* has resulted in a recent increase in local governments seeking guidance from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) on minimum training standards for local government Bush Fire Brigade members.

As you would be aware, Bush Fire Brigades that are gazetted under the *Bush Fires Act 1954* are under the remit of local government, and appropriately, local governments determine the level of training their volunteers require to address their local bushfire risk context.

To inform this decision-making and to assist local governments in fulfilling their responsibilities, DFES provide training products and courses, and support to local government staff as trainer – assessors in delivering bush fire training programs – a role we have held since the advent of the Bush Fires Board.

In light of recent queries, I believe it is timely to provide all local governments with updated information about our available training courses and doctrine guidance, as well as to reiterate our minimum recommended standards as outlined in the Bush Fire Service Training Program, enclosed for your reference.

As per the Bush Fire Service Training Program, developed in conjunction with volunteers across Western Australia, DFES has identified the following minimum recommended standards for Bush Fire Service Bush Firefighters:

- The minimum recommended standard for Farmer Response/Pastoral Brigades without a Local Government Grants Scheme Fire Appliance is completion of the Rural Fire Awareness Course.
- The minimum recommended standard for Bush Fire Brigades with a Local Government Grants Scheme Fire Appliance is completion of the Bushfire Safety Awareness and Firefighting Skills courses. This is consistent with requirements for DFES-managed volunteers who are required to undertake both courses prior to commencing operational duties.

The new Rural Fire Awareness course offers a simplified, contextualised version of the Bushfire Safety Awareness and Firefighting Skills courses, with a focus on members in Western Australia's seasonal workforce and agricultural communities. It consists of a basic introduction to the main fire agencies in Western Australia, an overview of bushfire behaviour, bushfire safety and survival procedures, and an overview of bushfire suppression strategies and tactics.

The Rural Fire Awareness program is currently available as face-to-face training through the existing network of 375 regionally-based trainer assessors. It is also being converted to an online course, which will make it accessible 24/7 to any member who has registered and holds a volunteer service number. The online course is anticipated to become available during January 2023.

I also continue to encourage local governments to adopt higher minimum recommended standards as relevant to their local bushfire risk context. As we are all aware, Western Australia is a diverse state, and the importance of tailoring bushfire training requirements to your local needs is acknowledged and supported.

I would also like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you and your volunteers for their ongoing efforts to protect Western Australian communities, livelihoods, and environments, from damaging bushfires. Should you have any queries regarding training for Bush Fire Brigade members, please contact training staff at the Bushfire Centre of Excellence BushfireCoE@dfes.wa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Klemm', with a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

**DARREN KLEMM AFSM
COMMISSIONER**

3 January 2023



Implementation Guide

Volunteer Bush Fire Service WA

Bush Firefighter Training Program



Training Programs Principles

Training Programs are a role-based training framework designed for progressive and safe training.

Training content is designed to be delivered in a flexible manner, either as a full course delivered over a weekend or, depending on the course, modularised and delivered over a timeframe that better suits the local environment.

A Training Program may include Training Streams related to specific response or capability roles, such as Pump Operator or Advanced Bush Firefighter. Within each Training Stream there are one or more required courses, which must be completed to complete that Training Stream. You may participate in more than one Training Stream simultaneously.

The Training Streams are designed to provide:

- **Ease of targeting brigade profile requirements**
Be easy for Brigades, Local Governments and DFES Regions to target brigade training needs
- **Flexibility**
Allow volunteers more flexibility in their training; and
- **Choice**
Be easy to understand and complete.

You are encouraged to complete the Bush Firefighter Training Program and the Advanced Bush Firefighting Training Stream prior to enrolling on any of the BFB Leadership Training Stream courses.

Training Programs Entry

You will automatically be enrolled on the Bush Firefighter Training Program, once you have completed a volunteer membership application and have a DFES volunteer number.

Training Prerequisites

DFES and the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA acknowledge that it is better that volunteers complete the courses in the specified order; however, course cancellations do happen and can affect a volunteer's attempts to complete a Training Program or Training Stream.

Volunteers can complete courses within specific Training Streams out of the specified order, unless otherwise illustrated in the Training Program with an arrow.

Completion Requirements

To complete the Bush Firefighter Training Program, you will need to complete all the courses listed on the Training Program.

Training Programs Progress – Next Steps

Once you have completed the Bush Firefighter Training Program Training Program, you will be automatically enrolled on the Advanced Firefighter Training Program.

Associated Roles

When you have completed this Training Program, you will have the skills and competencies required to be present on the fire ground under supervision.

Recommended Timeframe

It is up to your Local Government to establish the requirements that apply to your brigade. DFES recommends that volunteers complete the Bush Firefighter Training Program in three (3) to eighteen (18) months.

Brigades/Local Governments may specify other rules and regulations around the timeframe to complete training, depending on your circumstance.

Recognition

Contact the Academy at academy@dfes.wa.gov.au for further details if you would like to enquire about the Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) process. This process may be used to recognise your existing skills, knowledge and experience in a course.

Additional Approvals

Training course applications can be submitted via eAcademy or through your Local Government.

In addition to your Brigade Supervisor, applications need to be approved by:

- *The applicable Local Government manager for your Brigade (nominally your Local Government's Training Coordinator, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer or Community Emergency Services Manager).*

Training Program Changes/Review

The nominated Training Program Manager, in consultation with the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA, reviews this Training Program annually.

Changes to the Training Programs and Training Streams will be incorporated in the transition notes below. Enrolled students will be notified if action is required.

Current Training Program Contacts

The Training Program Owner is Superintendent Training, Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

Questions regarding this Training Program can be directed to the Training Program Manager, District Officer Training Delivery, Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

Training Program Consultation Stakeholder Groups

Major changes to this Training Program will only be finalised after documented consultation with the following stakeholder groups;

- *Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA Executive Committee*
- *Volunteer BFB Training Advisory Group*
- *Training Programs Review Committee*

Transition Notes

Change	Date
All personnel who are in progress on or have completed VFF1 will be placed on the BFB Bush Firefighter Training Program.	July 2019

Amendment Table

Change	Date
Initial release	December 2018
Revision – eAcademy Support Team	August 2019
Update to reflect entry point	November 2019
Update - Change of order to Bushfire Safety Awareness Modules	February 2021
Update - Change to Training Program Owner and Manager	February 2021
Update as per IIR PW25/21	September 2021
Update as per IIR PW28/21, PW30/21, and PW32/22	February 2022



Implementation Guide

Volunteer Bush Fire Service WA

Advanced Firefighter – Role Based Training Program



Training Programs Principles

Training Programs is a role-based training framework designed for progressive and safe training.

Training content is designed to be delivered in a flexible manner, either as a full course delivered over a weekend or, depending on the course, modularised and delivered over a timeframe that better suits the local environment.

A Training Program may include Training Streams related to specific response roles or capability roles, such as Pump Operator or Advanced Bush Firefighter. Within each Training Stream there are one or more required courses, which must be completed to complete that Training Stream. You may participate in more than one Training Stream simultaneously.

The Training Streams are designed to provide:

- **Ease of targeting brigade profile requirements**
Be easy for Brigades, Local Governments and DFES Regions to target brigade training needs
- **Flexibility**
Allow volunteers more flexibility in their training; and
- **Choice**
Be easy to understand and complete.

You are encouraged to complete the Bush Firefighter Training Program and the Advanced Bush Firefighting Training Stream prior to enrolling on any of the Leadership Training Stream courses.

Training Programs Entry

You will automatically be enrolled on the Advanced Firefighter Training Program upon your completion of the Bush Firefighter Training Program.

Training Prerequisites

DFES and the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA acknowledge that it is better that volunteers complete the courses in the specified order; however, course cancellations do happen and can affect a volunteer's attempts to complete a Training Program or Training Stream.

Volunteers can complete courses within specific Training Streams out of the specified order, unless otherwise illustrated in the Training Program with an arrow.

Completion Requirements

To complete the Advanced Firefighter – Role Based Training Program, you will need to complete all the courses listed on the applicable Training Stream/s relevant to your role.

Training Programs Progress – Next Steps

You can apply for the Leadership Training Program upon your enrolment on the Advanced Firefighter Training Program.

Associated Roles

When you have completed this Training Program, you will have the skills and competencies required to be present on the fire ground with limited supervision.

Recommended Timeframe

It is up to your Local Government to establish the requirements that apply to your brigade. DFES recommends that volunteers complete each Training Stream within the Advanced Firefighter – Role Based Training Program in up to two (2) years.

Brigades/Local Governments may specify other rules and regulations around the timeframe to complete training, depending on your circumstance.

Recognition

Contact the Academy at academy@dfes.wa.gov.au for further details if you would like to enquire about the Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) process. This process may be used to recognise your existing skills, knowledge and experience in a course.

Additional Approvals

Training Course applications can be submitted via eAcademy or through your Local Government.

In addition to your Brigade Supervisor, applications need to be approved by:

- *The applicable Local Government manager for your Brigade (nominally your Local Government's Training Coordinator, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer or Community Emergency Services Manager).*

Training Program Changes/Review

The nominated Training Program Manager, in consultation with the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA, reviews this Training Program annually.

Changes to the Training Programs and Training Streams will be incorporated in the transition notes below and enrolled students will be notified if action is required.

Current Training Program Contacts

The Training Program Owner is Superintendent Training, Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

Questions regarding this Training Program can be directed to the Training Program Manager – District Officer Training Delivery, Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

Training Program Consultation Stakeholder Groups

Major changes to this Training Program will only be finalised after documented consultation with the following stakeholder groups;

- *Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA Executive Committee*
- *Volunteer BFB Training Advisory Group*
- *Training Programs Review Committee*

Transition Notes

Change	Date
All personnel who are progressing on or have VFF2 Pathway will be placed on the Advanced Firefighter Training Program.	July 2019
All personnel who are progressing on or have VFF3 Pathway will be placed on the Advanced Firefighter Training Program.	July 2019
All personnel who are progressing on or have VFF4 Pathway will be placed on the Advanced Firefighter Training Program.	July 2019
All personnel who are progressing on or have VFF5 Pathway will be placed on the Advanced Firefighter Training Program.	July 2019

Amendment Table

Change	Date
Initial release	December 2018
Revision – eAcademy Support Team	August 2019
Update – Change to Training Program Owner and Manager	February 2021
Update as per IIR PW25/21	September 2021
Update as per IIR PW28/21, PW30/21, and PW32/22	February 2022



Implementation Guide

Volunteer Bush Fire Service WA

Leadership Training Program



Training Program Principles

Training Programs are a role-based training framework designed for progressive and safe training.

A Training Program may include multiple Training Streams related to specific response or capability roles, such as Pump Operator or Advanced Bush Firefighter. Within each Training Stream there are one or more required courses, which must be completed to complete that Training Stream. You may participate in more than one Training Stream simultaneously.

These Training Streams are designed to provide:

- **Ease of targeting brigade profile requirements**
Be easy for Brigades, Local Governments and DFES Regions to target brigade training needs
- **Flexibility**
Allow volunteers more flexibility in their training; and
- **Choice**
Be easy to understand and complete.

Training content is designed to be delivered in a flexible manner, either as a full course delivered over a weekend or, depending on the course, modularised and delivered over a timeframe that better suits the local environment.

Training Program Entry

You must apply to be enrolled on the BFS Leadership Training Program. Approval from your Brigade Captain or Training Manager, and a relevant District Officer, Area Officer or Community Emergency Services Manager (DFES Staff) is required.

You will be notified via email when your Training Program application is approved and confirmed. The Training Program and associated Training Streams will then appear on your eAcademy record.

Training Prerequisites

You are encouraged to complete the Bush Firefighter Training Program and the Advanced Bush Firefighting Training Stream prior to enrolling on any of the BFB Leadership Training Stream courses.

DFES and the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA acknowledge that it is better that you complete training courses in the specified order; however, it is understood that course cancellations do happen and can affect your attempts to complete a Training Program or Training Stream.

You can complete courses within Training Streams out of the specified order, unless otherwise illustrated in the Training Program Diagram with an arrow.

Completion Requirements

To complete the Leadership Training Program, you will need to complete all the courses listed on the applicable Training Stream/s relevant to your role.

Associated Roles

When you have completed this training, you will have the skills and competencies required to perform the BFB Officer (Role Specific) role.

Recommended Timeframe

It is up to your Local Government to establish the requirements that apply to your brigade. DFES recommends that volunteers complete each Leadership Training Stream within three (3) years.

Brigades/Local Governments may specify other rules and regulations around the timeframe to complete training, depending on your particular circumstances.

Recognition

Contact the Academy at academy@dfes.wa.gov.au for further details if you would like to enquire about the Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) process. This process may be used to recognise your existing skills, knowledge and experience in a course.

Additional Approvals

Training Program and Training Course applications can be submitted via eAcademy or through your Local Government.

In addition to your Brigade Supervisor, applications need to be approved by:

- *The applicable Local Government manager for your Brigade (nominally your Local Government's Training Coordinator, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer or Community Emergency Services Manager)*

Training Program Changes/Review

The nominated Training Program Manager, in consultation with the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA, reviews this Training Program annually.

Changes to the Training Program will be incorporated in the transition guide. Enrolled students will be notified if action is required.

Training Program Contacts

The Training Program Owner is Superintendent Training, Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

Questions regarding this Training Program can be directed to the Training Program Manager, District Officer Training Delivery, Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

Training Program Consultation Stakeholder Groups

Major changes to this Training Program will only be finalised after documented consultation with the following stakeholder groups;

- *Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA Executive Committee*
- *Volunteer BFB Training and Advisory Group*
- *Training Program Review Committee*

Transition Notes

Change	Date
All personnel who are in progress on or have completed VFF6 Pathway will be placed on the Leadership Training Program.	July 2019

Amendment Table

Change	Date
Initial release	October 2018
Revision – eAcademy Support Team	August 2019
Corrections – eAcademy Support Team	November 2019
Update – Change to Training Program Owner and Manager	February 2021
Update as per IIR PW25/21	September 2021
Update as per IIR PW28/21, PW30/21, and PW32/22	February 2022

Bush Fire Service Training Program

Induction to be completed at Brigade/Local Government level. If induction exists, the DFES Volunteer Firefighter Induction used.

❖ This diagram is to be read in conjunction with the Training Program Implementation Guide

