



MINUTES
BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
5 October 2023

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 16/10/2023

These minutes were confirmed at the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held ..~~28~~.. ~~March~~.. 2024

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.

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BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING 5 OCTOBER 2023

1. OFFICIAL OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Presiding Member, President Ballard, declared the meeting open at 4: 05 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

Braden Lange
Daryl Kilpatrick
Jon Rick
Kieran Quartermaine
Nathan Walker
Russell Ashley
Troy Smith

Staff

Mr Dale Stewart – Chief Executive Officer
Mr Azhar Awang – Executive Manager Development and Regulatory Services
Mr Guy Maley – Senior Ranger
Mrs Wendy Russell – Executive Support Officer (minutes)

Other

A/Senior Sergeant Greg Yendle – Narrogin Police
Craig Smith - DFES

Apologies

Clayton Hardie
Lewis Hardie
Murray Saunders

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION AND COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Moved: Kieran Quartermaine

Seconded: Guy Maley

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on 20 March 2023 be confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings.

CARRIED

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING WITHOUT DISCUSSION

The Presiding Person invited the new representatives from WA Police and DFES to introduce themselves.

5. MATTERS WHICH REQUIRE DECISIONS

5.1 BUSH FIRE BRIGADE GUIDELINES AND OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

Attachment 1– Draft Shire of Narrogin Bush Fire Brigade Guidelines and Operational Procedures

The Draft Shire of Narrogin Bush Fire Brigade Guidelines and Operational Procedures attached are based on the Shire of Katanning's. Please note they require review of FCO's for local conditions and requirements before adoption.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION AND COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Moved: Stuart Moyses

Seconded: Nathan Walker

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee endorse the Bush Fire Brigade Guidelines and Operational Procedures and recommend that the CEO approve the Guidelines and Operational Procedures as per Attachment 1 (as agreed and modified at the meeting)

CARRIED

6. MATTERS WHICH REQUIRE DISCUSSION

6.1 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL VOLUNTEERS

At the BFAC meeting held on 20 March 2023, the following was resolved:

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommend to Council the following change to Council Policy 5.2 clause 7 as follow:

1. Training

- a) 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;
- b) 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 fighter's 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.

c) With effect from 1 October 2023:

- i) only volunteer fire fighters that have successfully completed or have been RPL assessed for and passed the DFES approved *Bushfire Safety Awareness* and *Firefighting Skills* courses should drive or operate Shire Fire Trucks; and
- ii) only volunteer firefighters that have recognised RPL for, or passed the DFES approved *Rural Fire Awareness* course, either in person or online, are eligible to be registered as an active operational (in the field) Shire Volunteer Firefighter.

In accordance with this recommendation an amendment to Council Policy was presented to Council and endorsed at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 22 March 2023.

As a result of this policy as of 1 October 2023, no volunteer is permitted to be an active bushfire volunteer unless they have completed the required training or have had their previous experience recognised through the RPL process.

DFES provided the Shire with the training status of all registered Volunteers as at 29 September 2023. All volunteers whose records indicated that they had not completed the minimum required training have been contacted.

The CBFCO and Brigade Captains have also been advised of registered volunteers in their brigades whose training is not up to date.

Following discussion it was noted that:

- training is available online and takes about 2 hours to complete;
- if there are several volunteers wanting to complete the training DFES is willing to run courses;
- Incident Controllers need to be aware of any 'spontaneous volunteers'.

6.2 BUSH FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN (BMP) UPDATE

The Executive Manager Development & Regulatory Services to provide an update on the BMP.

The Shire of Narrogin was successful in securing \$207,560 under the Mitigation Activity Fund (MAF). This will be used to implementing crucial bushfire mitigation works within the shire including establishing fire access tracks, mechanical works to reduce fuel loading and improve access, and some planned Hazard Reduction Burns.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

Bush Fire Brigade Reference Handbook

The Bush Fire Brigade Reference Handbook was discussed. The following was noted:

- Page 9 GS Repeaters Hi Band and Page 10 Hi Band Radio Channel List were basically the same, page 10 to be removed.
- There may be changes to the contact details for the Shire of Williams.
- FCO's to review the document at forward any changes to ESO by 12 October 2023.

Standpipes

- The Highbury South standpipe is new fixed, the area has been graded by main roads, there are just a few stumps that need to be ground down.
- The keys provided to FCO's give access to the standpipes, it is important to let Shire staff know when water is used for firefighting as the Shire needs to advise Water Corp so that we are not billed for that water.
- It was requested that the CBFCO and the DCBFCO's have access codes for the Highbury West standpipe, for situations where they are unable to contact the rangers.

ACTION – Guy to liaise with CBFCO and the DCBFCO's to provide details required.

Water Corp

- Water Corp is looking at paying Local Brigade/s to do a protective burn, this will provide a great training opportunity for some volunteers as well as reducing the fire load in the area.

Firebreaks

- Concern was expressed about the size of firebreaks.

ACTION – Administration to investigate and present a recommendation to the next BFAC for inclusion in the 2024/25 fire order to the effect that Fire access tracks on certain classes or zoning of properties outside of townsites, such as rural residential, must be 4m X 4m to allow access for fire trucks.

Roadside spraying

- A question was asked about the spraying of roadsides.

Roadsides are only sprayed to ensure that the drains are clear of weeds, not for fire control.

Tanks

- It was brought up that there are some areas where there is very little water available, it was suggested that we investigate installing small tanks in these areas. Guy advised that he is looking into grants that may be available for things like this.
- Discussion also took place about the tank at the CBH site, suggested that the Shire contact CBH to see if we could have access to the tank in case of an emergency.

8. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business to discuss, the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 5:18 pm.