



BUSHFIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

29 MARCH 2023

These minutes were confirmed by Bushfire Advisory Committee as a true and correct record of proceedings by the Bushfire Advisory Committee Meeting held on 29/03/23.

Presiding Member: *[Signature]* Date: 29 August 2023.

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1.03.23 DECLARATION OF OPENING/ATTENDANCE

The Presiding Member opened the meeting at 7:03pm and welcomed Councillors, Committee members and Staff.

On behalf of Council, I would like to acknowledge that this meeting is being held on the traditional lands of the Nyoongar People and pay respect to all Elders, past, present, and emerging. I wish to acknowledge and respect local people's continuing culture and the contribution they make to Country and it's life.

Elected Members (Voting)

Cr KL Crute Shire President

Cr TD Lilly

Committee Members (Voting)

Murray Hall Chief Bushfire Control Officer *(arrived at 7:05pm)*

Travis Eva Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer

Troy Bassett Central Brigade

Ashley Hobbs Central Brigade

Neville Messenger Central Brigade

Andrew Pike Central Brigade

Tim Evans West Brigade

Len Simmons West Brigade

Bevan Walters East Brigade

Darrell Turner East Brigade

Jarrad Turner East Brigade

Staff (Non-Voting)

Sandie Spencer Executive Governance Officer

Jason Carrall Community Emergency Services Manager

Other Agencies

Adam Whitford Department of Fire and Emergency Services Area Officer

Apologies

Gary Sherry Chief Executive Officer

Blair Montague Central Brigade

Holly Blechynden West Brigade

Jamie Blight West Brigade

2.03.23 CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

BFAC 03.23-01

BFAC RESOLUTION

MOVED T Eva

SECONDED T Bassett

That the minutes of the Bushfire Advisory Committee meeting held in the Shire of Brookton Council Chambers, on 7th September 2022, be confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

CARRIED

3.03.23 PRESENTATIONS

Nil

4.03.23 REPORTS

4.03.23.01 CHIEF BUSHFIRE CONTROL OFFICER – MURRAY HALL

Thank you and congratulations to brigades for their work throughout the year. Two major fires were the CBH fire, which is still an ongoing investigation and the Church fire on Richardson Street.

The Fire Behaviour Index is causing issues with the restricted burning period when issuing permits as the cut off FBI is 24. These discussions were held at the ROAC meeting and this was felt very strongly from fellow Chief Bush Fire Control Officers, particularly when the region is quite vast.

When Brigades turnout to header fires, ensure to document manufacture details of the header such as make and models and if possible, the cause of fire. Conveying this information back to the manufacture is enabling an overview of any faulty or malfunctioning machinery and improvements for future machine design.

4.03.23.02 DEPUTY CHIEF BUSHFIRE CONTROL OFFICER – TRAVIS EVA

Nil

4.03.23.03 WEST BRIGADE – CAPTAIN: TIM EVANS

Holly Blechynden has been appointed secretary for the West Brigade.

4.03.23.04 CENTRAL BRIGADE – CAPTAIN: TROY BASSETT

Thankfully it has been a quiet season, with only two major incidents. A truck fire on Great Southern Highway near SP Hay and the Church fire on Richardson Street. Les Eyre has stepped down as a Fire Control Officer.

There is a shortage on radios. It was agreed an audit needs to be carried out to determine exactly where radios are, if there are any spare and how many more need to be purchased, before the next season.

4.03.23.05 EAST BRIGADE – CAPTAIN: BEVAN WALTERS

East Brigade participated in a hands-on training with Central Brigade on 5th October 2022. There have been three fires which the brigade attended, two header fires and the fire at CBH Aldersyde. A suction hose is missing from the truck.

Additional tender drivers are Luke Blechynden, Sarah Walters, Tyrone Fulwood and Andrew Craig. Remove Noel Powell.

I would like to convey my discontent, in regard to no funding available to have a new shed for the East Brigade.

CESM and DFES Area Office explained the minimal amount of funding DFES provides for sheds. This is a statewide issue and there are many brigades in the same situation. The sheds are required to be built to DFES specifications. Within these specifications are the provisions of kit rooms, showers and laundry facilities to decontaminate after an incident.

CESM is actively applying for funding for Bushfire Sheds.

4.03.23.06 DFES – ADAM WHITFORD

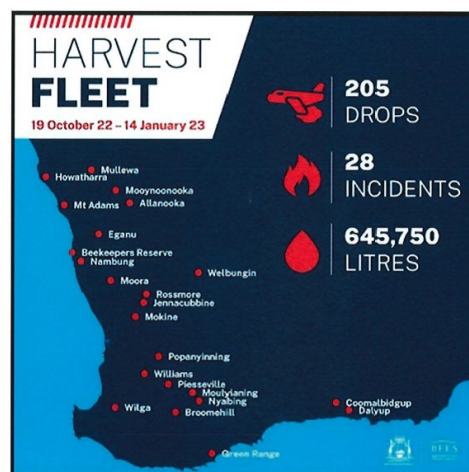
This season has been milder than some previous seasons, 141 bushfires reported since 1/7/2022 (175 in 2021/22 season) Woodanilling 6 fires reported since 1/7/2022.

Key points from this season:

- Two bushfire related fatalities in WA
- A higher number of header fires reported across the Upper Great Southern Region
- The grain harvest water bomber program saw water bombers start in the north (Geraldton) and follow the harvest south. Bombers were based in Narrogin (Nov - Dec) and were well used across the region.

Key points:

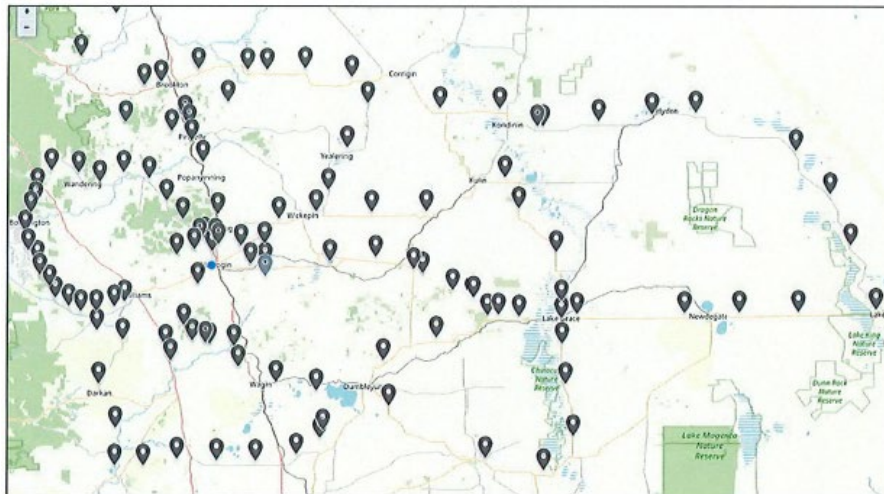
- water bombers can be requested during the season - important to know criteria
- Need to have trained Ground Controllers available
- Crews need to understand how to work with water bombers



Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) – Grass fuel load assessments

A feature of the AFDRS is the ability to adjust information about fuel condition and quantity. During harvest the grass fuel load was set to 4.St/ha which in some cases would have been less than the actual loads.

At this stage of the season there is less than 4.St/h in many areas. Extensive assessments (over 130) across the 17 shires in the Upper Great Southern Region are being entered into the national system with the expectation that the grass fuel load will be reduced, which will lower the forecasted Fire Behaviour Index/ Fire Danger Rating.



4.03.23.07 DEPARTMENT OF BIODIVERSITY, CONSERVATION & ATTRACTIONS (DBCA)

Mitigation burns will be conducted in the Strange Road Reserve and the Lupton Reserve.

5.03.23 COMMUNITY EMERGENCY SERVICES MANAGER (CESM) – JASON CARRALL

Mitigation funding of \$160,000. This will enable mitigation burns for the Country Club, Refuse Site and forestry mulching around Bridges. Control burning will commence next week, Tuesday 4th April 2023, and the need for volunteers to man tenders.

An ESL submission has been completed, this will be used to purchase thermal imaging cameras.

West Brigade Bushfire Shed – the tender process should be completed by June and the start of construction to commence July.

The outcome from the ROAC meeting regarding the FBI is for FCO's and Captains to provide information as to what would be an appropriate FBI figure their region.

5.03.23.01 TRAINING UPDATE

- Bushfire Safety Awareness
- Firefighter Skill
- FCO Course
- Ground Controller Course – cancelled due to prerequisites not completed.

5.03.23.02 STATUS TABLE

Item #	Date Initiated	Item Details	Assigned to	Comment	% Completed
1.	16 Mar 2021	Review water issues and possible placement of tanks in the district.	CESM	Long term project with more consultation with brigade members on placement of tanks, also different options and costings required. Extra Water tank approved to be constructed with the West Brookton Fire Shed and will be completed in the 2 year approved DFES cycle. Planning and land assessments will be commenced in 2nd quarter.	25%
2.	5 Oct 2021	Review Construct West Brookton Bushfire Brigade's 2 bay facility. To be constructed over a 2-year process. To be finalised by 30 June 2023.	CESM/West Brigade/Chief /Shire Officers	CESM to have site meeting and discuss with relevant parties. Work needs to be completed by Shire to progress to next stage Tender document being constructed to be sent out for tender. 50% deposit has been received. Sandie in talks with Local elder about Aboriginal site near by. Site clearing earthworks completed and shed location pegged. Site meeting this Wednesday with CEO and brigade to make sure everyone is happy with shed location.	10%
3.	5 Oct 2021	CESM and CEO to follow up on Policy and/or operating procedures	CESM/CEO	21.03.2021 – CEO has recently had a new delegation approved by Council “Delegation 1.50 – Amendment to Prohibited and Restricted Burning Periods – Bush Fires Act”. See attachment below.	10%
4.	30 Mar 2022	Garmin Mini Radios to be investigated (for ability to communicate outside of phone reception.	CESM		
5.	30 Mar 2022	Investigate requirements for providing lot/location numbers on Permit to Burn forms.	CEO/CESM		

Item #	Date Initiated	Item Details	Assigned to	Comment	% Completed
6.	30 Mar 2022	Organise a meeting with David Cliff (Brookton Country Club), Murray Hall (CBFCO), Travis Eva (DCBFCO), and CESM to discuss mitigation works.	CESM	Meeting held. Plan arranged. Control burn has now been completed and further works to continue after the fire season.	40%
7.	15 Jan 2023	Completion of 2023-2024 ESL Budget submission.	CESM	- Creating submission for new BFB Shed out East Brookton - Increase in BFB PPE allocation. - Creating submission for Thermal image cameras to be installed in tenders.	50%
8.	15 Jan 2023	Mitigation approved funding program	CESM		0%

6.03.23 GENERAL BUSINESS**6.03.23.01 APPOINTMENT OF FIRE CONTROL OFFICERS**

For the 2022/23 the Shire of Brookton made the following appointments.

Position	Appointment
Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	Murray Hall
Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	Travis Eva
FCO's – Central Brigade	Troy Bassett, Andrew Pike, Les Eyre, Ashley Hobbs, William Wilkinson, Neville Messenger, Blair Montague.
FCO's – East Brigade	Bevan Walters, Darrell Turner, Dennis Wilkinson
FCO's – West Brigade	Tim Evans, Ross Evans, Len Simmons, Mark Whittington, Jamie Blight.
FCO – Shire of Brookton	Jason Carrall

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the BFAC recommend that the Shire of Brookton make the following appointments for the 2023/24 fire season.

BFAC 03.23-02***BFAC RESOLUTION******MOVED: T Evans******SECONDED: T Eva***

That the BFAC recommend that the Shire of Brookton make the following appointments for the 2023/24 fire season.

Position	Nominee(s)
Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	Murray Hall
Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	Travis Eva
FCO's – Central Brigade	Troy Bassett, Andrew Pike, Ashley Hobbs, William Wilkinson, Neville Messenger, Blair Montague, Anton de Lange
FCO's – East Brigade	Bevan Walters, Darrell Turner, Dennis Wilkinson, Michael Eva
FCO's – West Brigade	Tim Evans, Ross Evans, Len Simmons, Mark Whittington, Jamie Blight
FCO – Shire of Brookton	Jason Carrall

CARRIED

Bushfire Operations Committee

Communique



Meeting date: Friday 7th October 2022

Location: Bushfire Centre of Excellence, 20 Dollyup Street, Nambelup

The BOC met for the third meeting of 2022 at the Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

CES ACT CONSULTATION

Update by DFES Project Manager Review of the Emergency Services Acts, Ms Lauren Townsend

The *Consolidated Emergency Services Act (CES Act)* discussion took place the day prior to the BOC meeting on Thursday 6 October 2022. The DFES Project Manager led the session, answering questions of members.

WOOROLOO IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

Presentation by DFES Bushfire Centre of Excellence Bushfire Knowledge & Practice Manager, Mr Peter Galvin.

Bushfire Operations Committee received a presentation from the Wooroloo Implementation Coordination Group (WICG).

The WICG was formed following the release of the State Government's response to the [AFAC Independent Operational Review of the Management of the Wooroloo Fire of February 2021](#). The State Government commissioned the review into the bushfire, which destroyed 86 homes and burnt more than 10,000 hectares in the Perth Hills. Of the 13 Recommendations, the Government accepted 10, noted 2 and accepted 1 in-principle. The report also made 5 conclusions, of which, 1 was accepted and 4 were accepted in principle.

The WICG is led by Murray Carter, Executive Director, DFES Rural Fire Division, and oversees the progress of the Report recommendations. Each recommendation will be addressed by Government and is being treated as an individual project, and each project has been appointed a report lead. Several projects are already established and underway prior to the release of the report. The WICG will be supporting the overarching monitoring and reporting to ensure the intent is being met, drive progress and improve communications amongst stakeholders.

Four recommendations will report through the BOC - Recommendations 5, 6, 11 & 12.

AFTER ACTIONS REVIEW – SEVERE WEATHER EVENT

A joint After Actions Review (AAR) is being undertaken by DFES, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, and WALGA, in relation to the significant weather event resulting in four concurrent level 3 bushfires that affected the State during 3-6 February 2022. Unusual and extreme fire weather affected the broader southwest land division during this period, resulting in significant bushfire activity across several DFES regions. The response to these emergencies required significant state-wide coordination involving numerous emergency management partner agencies. This review will focus on the preparatory actions, coordinated response and transition to recovery relating to this operational period for the four concurrent Level 3 bushfires:

- Bayview Rise Bushfire in the Shire of Denmark commenced on Friday 4 February 2022
- Bridgetown Bushfire in the Shire Bridgetown/Greenbushes commenced on Saturday 5 February 2022
- Shackleton Complex Bushfire in Shires of Bruce Rock, Quairading and Corrigin commenced on Sunday 6 February 2022
- Narrogin East Bushfire in the Shire of Narrogin commenced on Sunday 6 February 2022

CONTACTS

For BOC related information or enquiries please email Jo.Harding@dfes.wa.gov.au

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Bushfire Operations Committee appointed member, Rob Lynn is the representative on the review team. The Committee met in August and reviewed over 900 observations and submissions that were received as part of the review from online forms from DFES internally and volunteers through Local Governments. A draft report will be reviewed by the Committee in the coming weeks.

CBFCO FORUM 2023 NEXT STEPS

Presentation by DFES Bushfire Centre of Excellence Engagement & Outreach Coordinator, Ms Loredana Manfredi.

Two online Chief Bush Fire Control Officer sessions were held in June 2022. Following these sessions, a survey was sent to attendees for feedback on the proposed Chief Bushfire Control Officer Forum for 2023. Results from the surveys provided suggestions on content which will shape the Forum.

Bushfire Operations Committee nominated members, Craig Stewart, Murray Dixon and proxy Rod Wallington will participate in the working group and assist with the planning to progress arrangements for the Forum

AFDRS IMPLEMENTATION

Presentation by DFES Australia Fire Danger Rating System Project Manager, Ms Rachael Parkes.

The Project Manager provided members an overview of the implementation of the Australian Fire Danger Rating System following its launch on 1 September 2022. Any queries can be sent to the AFDRS inbox – afdrs@dfes.wa.gov.au

LGIS – BUSHFIRE VOLUNTEER PROTECTION

Presentation by LGIS Portfolio Manager Liability and Property, Mr Udam Wickreematne

The Portfolio Manager presented to the BOC on behalf of LGIS, providing an overview of protection available to Bushfire Volunteer through LGIS.

Topic covered by LGIS included:

- Personal Injury
- Personal Property
- Motor Vehicle
- Public Liability
- Statutory Liability

CONTACTS

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8.03.23 NEXT MEETING & CLOSURE

The next BFAC Meeting will be held Tuesday 5th September 2023 at 7:00pm.

- o Brookton - Fire Break Notice 2023/24 Season

There being no further business, the presiding member declared the meeting closed at 8:50pm.