



BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

7th July 2022

These minutes were confirmed by Bushfire Advisory Committee as a true and correct record of proceedings by the Bushfire Advisory Committee Meeting held on ~~7...../...../22~~

Presiding Member: *[Signature]* Date: 7/9/22

Shire of Brookton
Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting held 7 July 2022
Commenced at 5.00 pm

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1.07.22 DECLARATION OF OPENING / ATTENDANCE

The Presiding Member opened the meeting at 5.10pm, and welcomed Councillors, Committee Members and Staff.

Elected Members (Voting)

| | | |
|-------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Cr KL Crute | Shire President | Presiding Member |
| Cr TD Lilly | | |

Committee Members (Voting)

| | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|
| Murray Hall | Chief Bushfire Control Officer |
| Bevan Walters | Brookton East Brigade |
| Jamie Blight | Brookton West Brigade |
| Len Simmons | Brookton West Brigade |
| Blair Montague | Brookton Central Brigade |

Staff (Non-Voting)

| | |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| Gary Sherry | Chief Executive Officer |
| Jason Carrall | Community Emergency Services Manager |

Apologies

| | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| Travis Eva | Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer |
| Ashley Hobbs | Brookton Central Brigade |
| Troy Bassett | Brookton Central Brigade |
| Tim Evans | Brookton West Brigade |

2.07.22 CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

That the minutes of the Bushfire Advisory Committee meeting held in the Shire of Brookton Council Chambers, on 30th March 2022, be confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

BFAC 07.22-01

COMMITTEE DECISION

MOVED: T Lilly

SECONDED: B Montague

That the minutes of the Bushfire Advisory Committee meeting held in the Shire of Brookton Council Chambers, on 5th October 2021, be confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

CARRIED

3.07.22 STATUS TABLE

Black – No changes from previous reports **Red – Additions from since latest Bushfire Advisory Committee meetings**

| Item # | Date Initiated | Item Details | Assigned to | Comment |
|--------|----------------|--|-------------|---|
| 1. | 16 Mar 2021 | Obtain list of courses and dates to all brigade members. | CESM | <p>List sent out to captains and awaiting response for numbers and preferred dates. 1st FCO course completed, 2nd course (Bushfire Safety Awareness) cancelled due to lack of numbers; 3rd Course (Ground Controller) cancelled due to DFES trainer required to Emergency. Bushfire Safety Awareness has been rescheduled for Friday evening 8th October & Saturday 9th October to be held at Brookton Fire Station 05.10.2021 – course has been cancelled due to lack of numbers. 21.03.2021 – Course scheduled for 9th February was cancelled, due to the Corrigin fire.</p> <p>CESM - Prepare a 2022 training schedule and communicate to Brigades.</p> <p>EGO - publicise locally - newsletter, Facebook, fire mail out.</p> |
| 2. | 16 Mar 2021 | Further information with recent changes for LGIS – Workplace Work Health and Safety Act 2020 | CESM | <p>Meeting held with CEO, MCC & ODO on the future changes with WHS Act and the new provisions to be released on the new regulations. LGIS will be working with internal staff to assist and provide as much information to assist and provide the required documentation on what this means for volunteers and specific to Bush Fire Brigade Members. WALGA, DFES & LGIS are working together to achieve the outcomes required.</p> <p>Webinar held on 31st August 2021, with WALGA, DFES, LGIS on matters associated with new changes for Volunteer Bush Fire members. Review of Webinar with Senior Officers and CESM is required and will be tabled at a BFAC special meeting to be arranged.</p> <p>21.07.22 - Legislation is scheduled to come into effect from 31st March 2022.</p> <p>Legislation is now in effect.</p> |

| Item # | Date Initiated | Item Details | Assigned to | Comment |
|--------|----------------|---|-------------|---|
| 3. | 16 Mar 2021 | Water tanks – Shire to confirm the water flow and report back. | CESM | Nil. Requires further investigation on commencement with Shire MIW. |
| 4. | 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. |
| 5. | 16 Mar 2021 | Review through LGGS for maintenance on vehicles | CESM GO | LGGS has submitted for the 2021/2022 year. Notification will come through the approval been process with DFES. 2021/22 servicing nearing completion. |
| 6. | 16 Mar 2021 | Review (WAERN) Radios through LGGS Scheme | CESM | Radio maintenance has been completed on all radios for the 20-21 Period. Next servicing is due in the 21-22 Period. Please refer to report attached. In response to DFES query list of WAERN radios for brigade use submitted to DFES. |
| 7. | 16 Mar 2021 | Shire to investigate better communication for absentee landholders /hobby farmers. | CEO | MCC to review with the aspects of the Shire’s engagement on the areas in Rates, Budget & Shire website. CESM to review with the Firebreak notice. Mailouts and details will be done with the normal rating period (anticipated date: Late July/early Aug). Mail to residents has been completed with the annual rates procedures. Further engagement to occur through community events, social media, welcome packs to new owners. Fire information will be mailed separately nearer to fire break/fire safety deadline. Information will be publicised regularly in Newsletter, Facebook |
| 8. | 16 Mar 2021 | Review best method for absent landholders with identification for best contact details. | CEO | CESM to follow up with Rates Officer to see how the best way to combat these details. I.e. New Welcome Pack, emergency pack and community engagement event. CESM, Local Recovery Coordinators and MCC has action plan for engagement in the community to be held and detailed for the 2021/2022 financial year. |

| Item # | Date Initiated | Item Details | Assigned to | Comment |
|--------|----------------|---|--------------------------------|--|
| | | | | See response to Note 7. |
| 9. | 5 Oct 2021 | CESM/DFES to activate training for farmworkers and bush fire brigade members as soon as possible. DFES providing the training modules to accommodate the regions. | CESM/DFES /All Brigades | CESM to activate training programs with the recent changes to the WHS Act and the provisions to maintain. 21.03.2021 – Course was scheduled for 9 th February was cancelled, due to the Corrigin fire. Training Schedule advised and being advertised. More information below. |
| 10. | 5 Oct 2021 | Construct West Brookton Bushfire Brigade's 2 bay facility. To be finalised by 30 June 2023. | CESM/ West Brigade/ Chief/ CEO | CESM to have site meeting and discuss with relevant parties. Work needs to be completed by Shire to progress to next stage. Design and construct tender information from similar task received from Shire of Kellerberrin. Specification to be developed. |
| 11. | 5 Oct 2021 | CESM to review access to fuel for new site at West Brookton BFB site. | CESM | CESM to investigate and report back to BFAC. This is very difficult. Fuel will make the Fire Station a crime target. Fire hazard? Requires licence to store? |
| 12. | 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”. |
| 13. | 5 Oct 2021 | CESM to readvertise burning season periods for all residents and ratepayers | CESM | Social media is required to be advocated. 21.03.2021 – This has not occurred due to conversations with the CBFCO, regarding extension of the prohibited burning period. See response to Note 7. |
| 14. | 30 Mar 2022 | Letter to be sent to Georgie Beecroft to acknowledge and thank her for her continued service to the West Brigade, and the Brookton Brigades as a whole. | EGO | Georgie Beecroft attended formal hand over of new West Brigade Fire Truck. Presented with Certificate of appreciation. Event was be publicised in future Shire publicity. |
| 15. | 30 Mar 2022 | CESM to send COVID vaccination status to all captains. | CESM | |

| Item # | Date Initiated | Item Details | Assigned to | Comment |
|--------|----------------|--|-------------|---|
| 16. | 30 Mar 2022 | Garmin Mini Radios to be investigated (for ability to communicate outside of phone reception. | CESM | See note 6 |
| 17. | 30 Mar 2022 | Permit to Burn book for new FCO Brad Bassett | CEO | At this time Permit Books unable to be located. New stock may be required. Permit books orders, delivered and awaiting collection. |
| 18. | 30 Mar 2022 | Distribute BP fuel cards and instructions to fire Tenders | CESM GO | Shire will complete new purchasing arrangements and instructions for all trucks. |
| 19. | 30 Mar 2022 | 24-hour fuel access cards from Brookton Roadhouse and instructions for use for all fire tenders. | CEO | Shire will complete new purchasing arrangements and instructions for all trucks. |
| 20. | 30 Mar 2022 | Investigate requirements for providing lot/location numbers on Permit to Burn forms. | CEO/CESM | Nil to date |
| 21. | 30 Mar 2022 | Need to contact the property owners every time they need to access the tenders for servicing and garaged on private property. | CESM, CEO | Shire staff providing notice. |
| 22. | 30 Mar 2022 | Description of Fire Control Officer role to be provided to Bevan Walters | CESM | |
| 23. | 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. Burn to be scheduled. |

4.07.22 PRESENTATIONS

Nil.

5.07.22 REPORTS

5.07.22.01 Arrangements for Management of Volunteer Bushfire Brigades

Summary

The Council would like feedback from the BFAC prior to considering a policy position on the management of Volunteer Bushfire Brigades.

Background

Under the Bush Fires Act 1954, Local Governments have responsibility for bushfire and the management of volunteer Bush Fire Brigades (BFBs). 111 Local Governments manage 563 BFBs involving approximately 20,000 volunteers.

The State Government is currently drafting the Consolidated Emergency Services Act (CES Act), which consolidates the Fire Brigades Act 1942, Bush Fires Act 1954 and Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998 into a single piece of legislation, anticipated to be released as a Green Bill for consultation in early 2023.

The introduction of the Work Health and Safety Act 2020 has also shone a spotlight on Local Government responsibilities for managing volunteer BFBs.

WA Local Government Association (WALGA) has prepared a proposed Advocacy Position for the local government consideration. WALGA identified four possible for the future management of BFBs:

1. Status quo - continue with the current arrangements for management of BFBs whereby the majority are managed by Local Government and transfer arrangements are negotiated on an ad hoc basis between DFES and Local Governments (or their BFBs).
2. Improvements - continue with the current arrangements for Local Government management of BFBs with additional support provided by the State Government with respect to increased funding and better access to training resources and other support.
3. Hybrid Model - Local Government continues to manage BFBs where they have the capacity, capability and resources to do so; however where they do not have the capacity, capability and resources, responsibility for management of BFBs is transferred to DFES.
4. Transfer - Responsibility for management of all BFBs is transferred to the State Government, consistent with the arrangements in other States and Territories.

The proposed WALGA position is the hybrid model. WALGA are seeking responses from local governments.

Staff Comment:

The responsibility for Bushfire has traditionally sat with LG because historically LG was the only agency able to provide the services. This is no longer the case.

DFES now has access to ESL resources and funds a significantly higher level of Bushfire service than ever before. The Shire of Brookton has access to a CESM, new fire appliances, new fire shed and a range of new technology.

In reviewing Shire of Brookton Bushfire management there are two very separate considerations –

1. Responsibility; and
2. Funding.

The Shire of Brookton has full responsibility for Bushfire management. Therefore if there is any fire management issue – ie response to a fire, the standard or maintenance of fire fighting equipment, the safety of fire fighters – the Shire of Brookton is responsible. This responsibility only ceases if DFES want to take over an incident - but there is no requirement for them to do so.

While the Shire of Brookton is receiving unprecedented levels of funding from DFES for Bushfire equipment and response activities. The access is via funding through DFES's grant programs. There is no concrete link between responsibility and funding.

DFES restricts access to only DFES specified equipment and uses. If an LG believes that it needs equipment and DFES wont fund the purchase of it, the LG can use its own resources to purchase them.

A comparison between DFES funding levels of DFES responsible emergency services (Fire & Rescue, State Emergency Service, sea rescue) and the DFES grant system for Bushfire would see DFES ensuring that their responsibilities are funded, but LGs told to make do with whatever DFES think is appropriate.

If DFES was responsible for Bushfire Management in the Shire of Brookton, the Shire of Brookton could expect that:

- DFES would fully resource their local volunteer brigades. The long grant process would disappear for LG and DFES;
- DFES would need to meet the management responsibility. The CESM would likely be replaced by a permanent DFES employee;
- DFES would support and manage their local volunteers. Volunteers would have real input into DFES services – appliance specifications and equipment provision are just two areas;
- The entirety of DFES would need to learn about Bushfire. Currently the DFES senior management only ever have responsibility for a large incidents – 2 or 3 incidents each year. With responsibility they would need to be across all the issues all the time;

The Shire of Brookton should also expect support the local bushfire volunteers in the same way that the Shire currently supports our local ambulance volunteers and FRS volunteers.

That the Bushfire Advisory Committee supports the responsibility for management of Bushfire Brigades being transferred to a State Government specialist Rural Fire Service that:

- 1. is consistent with the arrangements in other States and Territories; and***
- 2. includes the retention of:***
 - a. a local volunteer bushfire brigade structure;***
 - b. local autonomy over fire prevention activities including the imposing of:***
 - i. harvest and movement bans; and***
 - ii. Fire Break Orders; and***
 - iii. Burning season timings and subsequent burning permits controls. within the Shire of Brookton;***
 - c. local input into bushfire mitigation planning and activities within the Shire of Brookton; and***
 - d. retaining a local operational command system for local level fires and powers as a Fire Control Officer within a local brigade as per existing act.***

CARRIED

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|--|
| 5.07.22.02 Appointments of Dual Fire Control Officers |
|--|

For the 2021/22 the Shire of Brookton had 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, Blair Montague; Neville Messenger, William Wilkinson |
| FCO's – East Brigade | Bevan Walters, Darrell Turner, Dennis Wilkinson |
| FCO's – West Brigade | Tim Evans, Jamie Blight, Ross Evans, Len Simmons, Mark Whittington |
| FCO – Shire of Brookton | Jason Carrall |
| Shire of Wandering | Peter Monk, GR Parsons |
| Shire of Pingelly | Rodney Shaddick, Sam MacNamara, Brodie Cunningham, Jeffrey Edwards, Victor Lee, Malcolm Cunningham, Adam Watts |
| Shire of Corrigin | Greg Evans, Braden Grylls |

The following are proposed for appointment for the 2022/23 fire season.

| Position | Proposal |
|--|--|
| 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, Blair Montague; Neville Messenger, William Wilkinson |
| FCO's – East Brigade | Bevan Walters, Darrell Turner, Dennis Wilkinson |
| FCO's – West Brigade | Tim Evans, Jamie Blight, Ross Evans, Len Simmons, Mark Whittington |
| FCO – Shire of Brookton | Jason Carrall |
| Shire of Wandering | Anthony Turton, Graeme Treasure |
| Shire of Pingelly | Rodney Shaddick, Sam MacNamara, Brodie Cunningham, Jeffrey Edwards, Robert Lee, Malcolm Cunningham, Adam Watts |
| Shire of Corrigin | Greg Evans, Braden Grylls |

The Shire will make these appointments at their July Meeting. If there are any other changes these can be completed at the same time.

The Bushfire Advisory Committee supported the appointments.

5.07.22.03 Scheduled Training

The following training has been scheduled for the Shire of Brookton

Rural Fire Awareness

This course covers the knowledge required for personnel to provide incident support at bushfires including bushfire response strategies. This course is aimed at Farmers/Pastoralists, Rural Landowners/Managers, Seasonal workers

Course Dates

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Thursday 14 th July 2022 | 12:00pm – 5:00pm |
| Friday 15 th July 2022 | 8:00am – 1:00pm |
| Thursday 1 st September 2022 | 12:00pm – 5:00pm |
| Friday 2 nd September 2022 | 8:00am – 1:00pm |

Venue in Brookton depends on numbers.

Bushfire Safety Awareness

This course covers the knowledge required for personnel to provide incident support at bushfires including bushfire response strategies and suppression. This course is aimed at BFS Bush Firefighters

Course Dates:

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Friday 2 nd September 2022 | 5:30pm – 8:30pm |
| Saturday 3 rd September 2022 | 8:30am – 4:30pm |

Venue in Brookton depends on numbers.

Fire Fighting Skills

This course is made up of four different modules including:

- Introduction to Map Reading:
- Introduction to Communications:
- Tools and Equipment:
- Crew Protection:

Course Dates:

Friday 9th September 2022 (17:30-21:30) and

Saturday 10th September 2022 (all day)

Venue - Brookton VFRS

The Shire President and CBFCO are releasing a joint statement supporting the fire training and encouraging residents to participate.

The Bushfire Advisory Committee noted the training schedule.

6.07.22 GENERAL BUSINESS

6.07.22.01 Scheduled Training

The meeting discussed the more complex technology of the new Brookton West Brigades 4.4 fire tender.

The Shire have recently completed a minor repair resulting from not using the correct operation procedure. This fault has the potential to impact the performance of the truck at a fire.

Brigades and the Shire of Brookton may wish to consider in the future a requirement for completion of a vehicle induction before volunteers can drive the fire appliances.

ACTION: The CESM will complete training with Brookton West Brigades to ensure that all are aware of the new operating procedure prior to the commencement of the season.

7.07.22 NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 7th September 2022 at 7.00pm

- o Brookton - Fire Break Notice 2022/2023 Season

8.07.22 CLOSURE OF MEETING

With no further business the Presiding Member closed the Meeting at 6.30pm.