



**Shire of Esperance**

**BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 14 OCTOBER 2024**

**MINUTES**



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### **ETHICAL DECISION MAKING AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Council is committed to a code of conduct and all decisions are based on an honest assessment of the issue, ethical decision-making and personal integrity. Councillors and staff adhere to the statutory requirements to declare financial, proximity and impartiality interests and once declared follow the legislation as required.

### **RECORDINGS**

The Meeting will be recorded. The recording is for minute taking purposes only

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## SHIRE OF ESPERANCE

### MINUTES

#### **BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON 14 October 2024 COMMENCING AT 6:30 PM**

#### **1. OFFICIAL OPENING**

The Presiding Member declared the meeting open at 6:35pm.

#### **2. ATTENDANCE**

##### **Members**

|                   |                                                          |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Cr W Graham       | Shire of Esperance (Chairperson)                         |
| Pres. R Chambers  | Shire of Esperance (Deputy)                              |
| Mr P Longmire     | Chief Bush Fire Control Officer                          |
| Mr A Perks        | Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer                   |
| Mr T Carmody      | Cascade Bush Fire Brigade                                |
| Mr T Walter       | Cascade Bush Fire Brigade                                |
| Mr K Jeitz        | Coomalbidgup Bush Fire Brigade                           |
| Mr M Scott        | Coomalbidgup Bush Fire Brigade                           |
| Mr D Sanderson    | Grass Patch Bush Fire Brigade/Bush Fire Volunteer Assoc. |
| Mr R Longbottom   | Grass Patch Bush Fire Brigade                            |
| Mr C Hallam       | Grass Patch Bush Fire Brigade                            |
| Mr M Ietto        | Grass Patch Bush Fire Brigade                            |
| Mr J Durdin       | Quarry Rd Bush Fire Brigade                              |
| Mr L Palmer       | Quarry Rd Bush Fire Brigade                              |
| Mr P Rowe         | Six Mile Hill Bush Fire Brigade                          |
| Mr N Ruddenklau   | Condingup Bush Fire Brigade                              |
| Mr J Della Vedova | Condingup Bush Fire Brigade                              |
| Mr B South        | Beaumont Bush Fire Brigade                               |
| Mr L Mickel       | Beaumont Bush Fire Brigade                               |
| Mr M Bertola      | Beaumont Bush Fire Brigade online via MS Teams           |
| Mr S Schlink      | Howick Bush Fire Brigade                                 |
| Mr K Lawrence     | Pink Lake Bush Fire Brigade                              |
| Mr A Waters       | Pink Lake Bush Fire Brigade                              |
| Mr B King         | Mt Merivale Bush Fire Brigade                            |
| Mr R Locke        | Mt Merivale Bush Fire Brigade                            |
| Mr L Vandenberghe | Scaddan Bush Fire Brigade                                |
| Mr A Reichstein   | Neridup Bush Fire Brigade                                |
| Mr H Davies       | Gibson Bush Fire Brigade                                 |
| Mr B Wright       | Gibson Bush Fire Brigade                                 |
| Mr S Lawrence     | Dalyup Bush Fire Brigade                                 |
| Mrs S Prosser     | Esperance Emergency Support Unit                         |
| Mr P Pratt        | Esperance Emergency Support Unit                         |

**Ex Officio**

|                           |                                       |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Mr A Peczka               | Community Emergency Services Manager  |
| Ms Z Sheffield-van Mierlo | Manager Ranger and Emergency Services |
| Mrs C Magana              | Bushfire Mitigation Coordinator       |
| Mr W Green                | DFES Great Southern Superintendent    |

**3. APOLOGIES & NOTIFICATION OF GRANTED LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

|               |                                                                |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mr C Scott    | Six Mile Hill Bush Fire Brigade                                |
| Mr N Norwood  | Scaddan Bush Fire Brigade                                      |
| Mr W Carmody  | Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer                         |
| Mr P Harkness | Esperance Emergency Support Unit                               |
| Mr S Peterson | District Officer for Department of Fire and Emergency Services |
| Mr R Greive   | Director External Services                                     |
| Mrs K Naylor  | DBCA                                                           |
| Mr J Black    | DBCA Esperance District Manager                                |

**4. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS**

- 4.1 **Declarations of Financial Interests – Local Government Act Section 5.60a**
- 4.2 **Declarations of Proximity Interests – Local Government Act Section 5.60b**
- 4.3 **Declarations of Impartiality Interests – Admin Regulations Section 34c**

**5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

Moved: Mr Davies  
Seconded: Mr Longbottom

**BFA1024-064**

**That the Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting of the 15 July 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record.**

**CARRIED**

**6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

Nil

**7. REPORTS**

**7.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer – Mr Phil Longmire**

Thanked Kyle for the Firemapper training and everyone for their work throughout the year. Coming into a low soil moisture index ahead of this summer which is not ideal. Which has reduced the ability to complete inland mitigation.

**7.2 DFES District Officer – Mr Stephen Petersen**

Nil

**7.3 DBCA Esperance – Mr Justin Black**

Nil

#### **7.4 Community Emergency Services Manager**

Starlink is now available to be installed on Cascade 4.4, Mt Beaumont 4.4 and 3x Light Tankers. Appliances will need to go to Perth for installation, with a stand-by appliance to be made available.

WAERN servicing is currently occurring in the Shire.

The Shire was unsuccessful for capital grant applications for Cascade and EESU. Was successful though for Mt Beaumont BFB.

Current capital works for Condingup Bush Fire Brigade shed build and external walls are up. Land amalgamation has been completed and soon to go to tender for the Grass Patch Bush Fire Brigade shed. The Coomalbidgup Bush Fire Brigade flooring is nearly complete.

#### **7.5 Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades – Mr Danny Sanderson**

Zone reps have been attending ROAC's, DOAC's and other meetings.

Concerns have been raised to the content of the Fire Control Officer course. It is too onerous in regards to knowing the legislation and nothing in regards to operations.

There are many Shires still getting their LGGs applications for appliances and sheds knocked back every year. Great Southern ROAC still creating a working group to help prioritise the regions application with the regions CBFCA's. Association is trying to work with the LGGs committee in getting helpful information out.

Discussions have been had with Worksafe and LGIS in regards to farmer response units. What they need to do with workers is to take them to a fire, give them training and PPE.

### **8. HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT**

#### **8.1 Incident & Safety Report**

Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) – Issues with Dalyup 2.4B tracking unit, saying the vehicle is located SEA Heavy Duty Mechanics for the past 3 months. Still waiting for the service provider to rectify. Recently Grass Patch 4.4B was tracking the fire edge with vehicle still being located at the fire shed. This is of concern should have crews activated the AVL what coordinates would have been transmitted and would ComCen have received it. Still awaiting feedback from the service provider. Encourage brigades to carry out AVL checks on a monthly basis.

### **9. GENERAL BUSINESS**

#### **9.1 Farm Fire Safety Tier System**

CBFCA Mr Phil Longmire ran through his farm fire response training package to assist farmers in training/developing the farm staff, especially seasonal workers as they arrive at various times. There is a checklist that farmers can use to rate their workers abilities based upon their knowledge. Farmers can also utilise the DFES Rural Fire Awareness online training for their seasonal workers.

#### **9.2 Shire of Esperance Bush Fire Brigades Local Law 2024**

Ms Zoe Sheffield-van Mierlo ran through the various amendments to the Bush Fire Local Law with the committee.

**Table of Changes – Bush Fire Brigade Local Law Revision**

**Presented to the Bushfire Advisory Committee on October 14<sup>th</sup> 2024**

The purpose of the local law is to provide information about the forming, running and operations of a bush fire brigade in the Shire of Esperance

The effect of the local law is to ensure adequate preparedness of bush fire brigades to respond to emergency situations as they arise.

| Clause            | Clause detail                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Comment                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Table of Contents | Minor corrections                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 1.5 Definitions   | Inclusion of 'normal brigade activities'                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Ministerial Comment                                                                                                                                                        |
| 1.5 Definitions   | Rules - Edit - Remove requirement for Second Lieutenant                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Public Comment (DS)                                                                                                                                                        |
| 2.2               | Name and officers of bush fire brigade - a) Removal of Second Lieutenant; and added 'ranked by seniority' at 2.2(1)(c)(iii) additional Lieutenants                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Consultation                                                                                                                                                               |
| 2.3               | Ranks within the bush fire brigade - minor edits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 3.7               | Nomination of bush fire control officers to Bush Fire Advisory Committee - <b>at least one</b> brigade member, <b>to a maximum of five members</b> , is to be nominated to the Bush Fire Advisory Committee to serve as the bush fire control officer for the brigade area until the next general meeting.                                                                                                                           | Consultation                                                                                                                                                               |
| 4.2               | <u>Fire fighting</u> members - Change of age to 17 years; and, addition of: (2) <u>Fire fighting</u> members aged 17 years and under 18 years old must –<br>(a) Have the written consent of a parent/guardian , and;<br>(b) The Captain is satisfied that the member is able to perform an activity , and;<br>(c) Is accompanied by a member over the age of 18 during an activity to undertake normal bush fire brigade activities. | Minister Comment/Public Comment (DS)/Consultation/Anticipated legislative change. Considered City of Albany BFB & Shire of Plantagenet Local Laws and relevant legislation |
| 4.4               | Cadet Members - change of age to 11 to 16 years to reflect change to Clause 4.2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Public Comment (DS)                                                                                                                                                        |
| 4.6               | Notification of Membership - (No later than 31 May in each year - Removed) <b>When a change of membership occurs</b> , the bush fire brigade is to report to the (Chief Bush Fire Control Officer - Removed) <b>Shire of Esperance</b> the name, contact details and type of membership of each brigade member.                                                                                                                      | Consultation                                                                                                                                                               |

|                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Part 2 - Clause 2.4                 | Applications for Membership - removal of requirement for prescribed forms. Change to reflect form in use (Emergency Services Volunteer Membership Application) - this is the form in use                                                                                                                                                                   | Minister Comment (attachment of prescribed forms)                  |
| Part 2 - 2.6                        | DFES to be notified of registrations - If any application for membership is approved, the Secretary of the bush fire brigade is to supply registration details to the (Department - remove) <b>Shire who are to inform</b> the Department within 14 days of a person being admitted to membership in the form required by the Department from time to time | Public Comment (DS)/Consultation                                   |
| Part 2 - 2.7                        | Termination of Membership - removal of (f) A brigade member whose membership fees are more than one year in arrears is to be taken to have resigned from the bush fire brigade.                                                                                                                                                                            | Consultation                                                       |
| 2.7                                 | Addition: Breach of Code of Conduct                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Consultation                                                       |
| 2.7                                 | Where a membership is terminated, all property owned by the bush fire brigade or the local government that is held by or in the possession of the person whose membership has been terminated, shall be returned on demand to the bush fire brigade or the local government.                                                                               | Consultation                                                       |
| 2.8                                 | Suspension of Membership - Additional provisions for ability to act and criminal proceedings - Will need WALGA advice                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Consultation. Considered City of Albany Local Law                  |
| Part 3 - 3.2                        | Duties of Captain - Inclusion: The Captain is the most senior operational member of the brigade.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Minister Comment/Consultation. Considered City of Albany Local Law |
| Part 3 - (3.3) + formatting changes | Inserted Clause for Duties of Lieutenants: (1) Lieutenants shall be ranked numerically according to seniority.<br>(2) The first lieutenant is the second most senior operational member of the brigade, and so on.                                                                                                                                         | Consultation                                                       |
| Part 3 - 3.3 (3.4)                  | (Duties of) Secretary - numerous changes to modernise, remove reference to fees, reflect current practice, and reporting of membership details (change from 'by 31 May' to 'as required, from time to time')                                                                                                                                               | Public Comment (DS)/Consultation                                   |
| 3.4                                 | Treasurer - remove (5) reference of fees, not applicable                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Consultation                                                       |
| 3.5                                 | Equipment Officer - added: (1) A captain or secretary/treasurer may act as an equipment officer should a brigade elect not to appoint an equipment officer.                                                                                                                                                                                                | Consultation                                                       |
| Part 5 - 5.1                        | Minor correction                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                    |



|              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                              |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5.6          | <p>Auditor - Consultation process identified City of Albany provisions for auditing to be suitable: (1) The bush fire brigade shall supply on request to the local government the brigade's full financial records for the financial year.</p> <p>(2) The local government may request the brigade's financial and accounting records for a review at any time. However, awaiting advice from WALGA. Initial advice indicates that there should be no change to clause 5.6 as a local government may audit as it determines necessary</p>                 | Public comment (DS)/Consultation                                             |
| Part 7 - 7.4 | <p>Banking - Proposed sub clauses to reflect contemporary banking methods: (1) The funds of a bush fire brigade are to be placed in the bush fire brigade's bank account and are to be drawn on only by authorised use of electronic banking by the Secretary or Treasurer in accordance with subclause (2)</p> <p>7.4 (2) For the purposes of subclause (1)(b), any 2 of the President, Captain, Secretary or Treasurer may authorise in writing the use of electronic banking to draw on the brigade's funds for transactions greater than \$1500 .</p> | Public Comment (DS)/Consultation. Considered City of Albany Local Law        |
| Part 8 - 8.1 | <p>Notices - Edited 8.1(1) to reflect contemporary communication methods: (1) Notices of meetings of the bush fire brigade are to be in writing and sent by ordinary post or other means in 8.1(1)(4) to registered address of <u>each</u> brigade member</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Public Comment (DS)/Consultation                                             |
| 8.1(4)(c)    | <p>Notices Continued - means of providing notice - to be given by, (a)Personal delivery;<br/>(b) Post;<br/>(c) Email;<br/>(d) Short Message Service (SMS) or the like: or<br/>(e) Facsimile transmission<br/>or any other method approved by the local government.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Public <u>comment</u> (DS)/Consultation. Considered City of Albany Local Law |
| 8.2          | <p>Proxies - Form - to be removed from local law, to be standard form (as per City of Albany form)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Minister Comment/Consultation                                                |

### **MOTION**

**Moved: Mr Vedova**

**Seconded: Mr South**

**BFA1024-065**

#### **Committee Decision**

**That the BFAC recommend that Council makes the Bush Fire Brigades Local Law 2024, as per Attachment A, in accordance with section 3.12(4) of the Local Government Act 1995, subject to the Chief Executive Officer;**

- a) Publishing the Bush Fire Brigades Local Law 2024 in the Government Gazette in accordance with section 3.12(5) of the of the Local Government Act 1995**
- b) Following gazettal, providing local public notice of the Bush Fire Brigades Local Law 2024 in accordance with section 3.12(6) of the Local Government Act 1995**
- c) Following local public notice, providing an Explanatory Memorandum, signed by the Shire President and Chief Executive Officer and a copy of the Bush Fire Brigades Local 2024 to the Western Australian Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation in accordance with section 3.12(7) of the Local Government Act 1995**

**CARRIED**

### **9.3 Australian Warning System**

Mr Ash Peczka provided an overview to the updated Warning System. The system updated to be more aligned with the national system, which now includes action statements to accompany the warning message. Incident Controllers will need to select the most appropriate action statement to accompany the warning messaging that best reflects the incident status. It is important that we are not remaining on Emergency Warning for multiple days if it doesn't reflect the situation of the incident, the FES Commissioner would prefer that we are de-escalating our warnings and escalate back up when the incident requires the higher level of warning.

### **9.4 Mitigation Burning**

Mr Adrian Perks asked what approvals are required to carry out hazard reduction burning in the virgin bush/scrubland on private property. It was advised that landowners will need to carry out their diligence and appropriate checks to any environmental, flora, heritage values, etc, in the area they are wanting to burn. It was suggested that landowners look into developing their own burn prescriptions, which would have a relevant checklist to cover off.

Ms Zoe Sheffield-van Mierlo advised the committee there is an approval process for those wanting to carry out hazard reduction within the Shire road verges. Landowners will need to speak to the Shire.

Mrs Claudia Magana provided an update to the 2024/25 MAF program, with Coomalbidgup Bush Fire Brigade completing hazard reduction burning on the south west side of Coomalbidgup Lakes and the western side of the Coomalbidgup town site. If anyone has an mitigation enquires speak to Claudia.

**9.5 Coomalbidgup Fire Shed**

Mr Kirk Jeitz raised the issue of no mains power connected to the Coomalbidgup Fire Shed. The shed was built in 2020 and the brigade was supplied a generator as its power supply on the proviso that mains power would be connected at a later date. 4 years on and this still hasn't happened and its too noisy to operate the generator and have a meeting at night time. The committee was advised that the Shire is still waiting for the energy grant funding to be opened and it won't be until May 2025 before the Shire would here anything back to its application.

**Committee Decision/Motion**

**The Committee recommend the Shire to look into solar solutions that can provide trickle charge to maintain battery charge into the appliances before this fire season and for the Shire to apply/find a funding source for a standalone power system to supply constant power to the shed.**

**10. CLOSURE**

The Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 8:36pm.

The next meeting of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee is scheduled for the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2025 commencing at 6pm in the Council Chambers.

**These Minutes were confirmed at a meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_**

**Signed \_\_\_\_\_**

**Presiding Member at the meeting at which the Minutes were confirmed.**

**Dated \_\_\_\_\_**