



Shire of Esperance

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 19 JUNE 2025

MINUTES

DISCLAIMER

No responsibility whatsoever is implied or accepted by the Shire of Esperance for any act, omission or statement or intimation occurring during Council or Committee meetings. The Shire of Esperance disclaims any liability for any loss whatsoever and howsoever caused arising out of reliance by any person or legal entity on any such act, omission or statement or intimation occurring during Council or Committee meetings. Any person or legal entity who acts or fails to act in reliance upon any statement, act or omission made in a Council or Committee meeting does so at that person's or legal entity's own risk.

In particular and without derogating in any way from the broad disclaimer above, in any discussion regarding any planning application or application for a licence, any statement or intimation of approval made by a member or officer of the Shire of Esperance during the course of any meeting is not intended to be and is not to be taken as notice of approval from the Shire of Esperance. The Shire of Esperance warns that anyone who has any application lodged with the Shire of Esperance must obtain and should only rely on written confirmation of the outcome of the application, and any conditions attaching to the decision made by the Shire of Esperance in respect of the application.

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.

ATTACHMENTS

Please be advised that in order to save printing and paper costs, all attachments referenced in this paper are available in the original Agenda document for this meeting.

Table of Contents / Index

ITEM NO.	ITEM HEADING	PAGE
1.	OFFICIAL OPENING	5
2.	ATTENDANCE	5
3.	APOLOGIES & NOTIFICATION OF GRANTED LEAVE OF ABSENCE	6
4.	DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS	6
4.1	Declarations of Financial Interests – Local Government Act Section 5.60a	6
4.2	Declarations of Proximity Interests – Local Government Act Section 5.60b	6
4.3	Declarations of Impartiality Interests – Admin Regulations Section 34c	6
5.	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES	6
6.	BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES	7
6.1	Firemapper:	7
6.2	Bushire Local Laws:	7
7.	REPORTS	7
7.1	Chief Bush Control Officer – Mr Phil Longmire	7
7.2	DFES District Officer	7
7.3	DBCA Esperance Officer	7
7.4	Community Emergency Services Manager – Mr Ashley Peczka	7
7.5	Association of Volunteer Bushfire Brigades - Mr Danny Sanderson	8
8.	HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT	8
8.1	Incident & Safety Report	8
8.2	Light Tanker fuel line airlock issues:	9
9.	ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS	9
9.1	Election of Deputy Chief Bushire Contril Officers – 2025/26 Season:	9
9.2	Election of Senior Fire Control officers:	10
9.3	Election of Deputy Senior Fire Control Officers:	10
9.4	Confirmation of Fire Weather Officers for 2025/26 season:	11
9.5	Confirmation of Brigade Fire Control Officers for 2025/26	11
9.6	Confirmation of Brigade Permit Issuing Officers for 2025/26	11
10.	GENERAL BUSINESS	12
10.1	Fire Access Track	12
10.2	Harvest & Vehicle Movement Ban Signage for Tracks	12
10.3	Bush Fire Brigade Operating Procedures Workshop	12
10.4	Esperance Emergency Support Unit	12
10.5	Campfire & Cooking Policy	13
10.6	Mitigation	13

10.7	Training Schedule	13
10.8	Fire Hazard Reduction Notice	13
10.9	Vehicle Services Schedule	14
11.	MEETING CLOSED	14

SHIRE OF ESPERANCE

MINUTES

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON 19 June 2025 COMMENCING AT 6:00 PM

1. OFFICIAL OPENING

The Presiding Member declared the meeting open at 6:12pm.

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 W Carmody	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
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 G Harris	Grass Patch Bush Fire Brigade
Mr M Ietto	Grass Patch Bush Fire Brigade
Mr J Durdin	Quarry Rd Bush Fire Brigade
Mr C Govans	Quarry Rd 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 S Schlink	Howick Bush Fire Brigade
Mr K Lawrence	Pink Lake Bush Fire Brigade
Mr A Waters	Pink Lake Bush Fire Brigade
Mr K Rymer	Pink Lake Bush Fire Brigade
Mr C Hines	Mt Merivale Bush Fire Brigade
Mr B King	Mt Merivale Bush Fire Brigade
Mr R Locke	Mt Merivale Bush Fire Brigade
Mr A Reichstein	Neridup Bush Fire Brigade
Mr H Davies	Gibson Bush Fire Brigade
Mr D Smith	Gibson Bush Fire Brigade
Mr B Wright	Gibson Bush Fire Brigade
Mr P Luberdia	Dalyup Bush Fire Brigade
Mr S Lawrence	Dalyup Bush Fire Brigade (teams)
Mr L Vandenberghe	Scaddan Bush Fire Brigade
Mr M Siemer	Scaddan Bush Fire Brigade
Mr T Redding	Scaddan Bush Fire Brigade
Mr T Antonio	Salmon Gums Bush Fire Brigade
Mr J Thomas	Six Mile Hill Bush Fire Brigade
Mrs S Prosser	Esperance Emergency Support Unit

Mr P Pratt	Esperance Emergency Support Unit
Mr P Harkness	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

Guests

Nil

3. APOLOGIES & NOTIFICATION OF GRANTED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Mrs K Naylor	DBCA
Mr P Rowe	Six Mile Hill Bush Fire Brigade
Mr J Black	DBCA Esperance District Manager
Mr S Peterson	District Officer for Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Mr L Palmer	Quarry Rd Bush Fire Brigade
Mr T Carmody	Cascade Bush Fire Brigade
Mr K Jeitz	Coomalbidgup Bush Fire Brigade
Mr N Norwood	Scaddan Bush Fire Brigade
Mr S Brennan	Six Mile Hill Bush Fire Brigade
Mr C Scott	Six Mile Hill Bush Fire Brigade
Mr K Scott	Coomalbidgup Bush Fire Brigade
Mr C Hallam	Grass Patch Bush Fire Brigade

4. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

4.1 Declarations of Financial Interests – Local Government Act Section 5.60a

Nil

4.2 Declarations of Proximity Interests – Local Government Act Section 5.60b

Nil

4.3 Declarations of Impartiality Interests – Admin Regulations Section 34c

Nil

5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Moved: Mr Longbottom
Seconded: Mr Mickel

BFA0625-081

That the Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting of the 14 October 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

CARRIED

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

6.1 Firemapper:

- Everyone is happy utilising firemapper.
- Refresher training to occur before upcoming bushfire season.
- QR codes for appliance for 'how to guides'.
- Development of a protocol as to who is tidying maps.
- Allow a view only access for private units that can use their device as an AVL.

6.2 Bushfire Local Laws:

Ms Zoe Sheffield-van Mierlo advised the committee, from last meeting the Local Laws was endorsed by Council and went for a 6 week public comment period. No comments were received. It went to the Minister of Local Government and Minister of Emergency Services for comment. Feedback received from the Minister of Emergency Services, was asking for a description of the Captain duties, as it is noted the Captain is the highest Brigade officer. The intention is to describe duties in Council policy or management practice instead. Still waiting for comment from the Minister of Local Government, once received the next step is to go back to Council for the Local Laws to be fully gazetted.

7. REPORTS

7.1 Chief Bush Control Officer – Mr Phil Longmire

It has been one of the lowest soil dryness indexes on record for the Esperance region. It did not disappoint in providing an active fire season. This reduced our ability to mitigate and we will focus on that as we move forward.

Thanks all the volunteers for their huge efforts, dealing with almost continual calls for assistance and attending these. I'd like to thank the hierarchy of who managed these fires, from the Captain's, FCO, Shire, especially Zoe and Shane. DFES special thanks to Ash and Steve, who do an enormous amount behind the scenes. VFRS, ICV, SES, all Government services and the contractors who put themselves in the danger zone, way too often. There's a huge amount of personal sacrifice given to keep our communities safe.

I personally like to thank Pete Rowe who is stepping down from the senior role of urban rural. It's a huge commitment and he is highly respected, not only within the wider community, but within the ranks of these brigades.

Thanks to Kingsley Scott who gave up his senior role, Kingsley has fought tirelessly for the volunteers and we have been rewarded with the excellent level of equipment that we currently have at our disposal.

I would like to read a message from Air Attack sent on behalf of their pilots after the Dalyup fires – "It was quite it was a pleasure to work alongside yourselves. Very professional outfit and the guys on the ground did an awesome job. It was a pleasure to be able to help wrap it up. Until next time, take care".

7.2 DFES District Officer

Nil

7.3 DBCA Esperance Officer

Nil

7.4 Community Emergency Services Manager – Mr Ashley Peczka

Thank you to all volunteer's efforts this particular year, this year has been busy and proven to be a challenge. Please thank your partners, children and families for allowing you to leave

and help the community in their times of need. Thanks to the brigades who assisted with the Toowacka Burn

Still waiting for an update from DFES in regards to Starlink, last we heard they were going to tender for a system similar to New South Wales.

There is talks of a third deployment to Canada to assist with various bushfires. Deployment is for approx. 36 days, with pre-requisites to be considered.

Please remind community members to log their burns, as still getting 000 calls for private burns. Shire is still looking into developing an online fire permits, hopeful to have a test page by September.

We need Hi-Fire season fleet be dropped out the Co-location before the end of this month, for collection by DFES. Fire Weather Officer Approval notice will be reviewed and likely to be changed after legal advice. Looking at trailing online PPE order with the Urban-Rural brigades and Grass Patch BFB

Provided an overview of 2024/25 LGGS expenditure. Provided an overview of expenditure for 2025/26 period with increase costs in building maintenance and insurances. Provided an update of current capital works program. Provided overview of 2025/26 capital grant submissions.

2025 WAERN radio maintenance program. Is only targeting vehicle radios. Radios will be reprogrammed, function keys to change, removal of all zone groups and new labelling. Base radios to be reprogrammed next year and will not be looked at this year unless there are significant issues requiring to be rectified.

7.5 Association of Volunteer Bushfire Brigades - Mr Danny Sanderson

A lot is occurring behind the scenes with the association, with advisory committees attending BFAC's & ROAC's where possible.

Main issues affecting bushfire volunteers is LGGS capital grant funding and training. Have attended a forum discussing LGGS what work is needed to make the system better. Currently the LGGS pot is at \$35 million for SES and BFB Capital and Operating grant funding. There is no desire to increase this amount and it's up to Local Governments, via WALGA to pressure State Government for an increase allocation of ESL into the LGGS.

Training is needed for a fit-for-purpose training course that is catered for each level of skills/knowledge. Have provided feedback to BCoE for FCO refresher courses, which is being looked into.

Have been in touch with local brigades on the Association can better communicate with brigades. If there are problems within the brigades or issues with the Local Government please contact dan.sanderson@bushfires.org.au Dan would be happy to have discussions between parties to find a direction to move forward and find a possible solution.

Attended the CBFCO forum recently, LGIS did a presentation, they are having issues retaining and attracting assessors to assess and process claims. Please make sure your fire reports are handed in on time, as having the information straight away helps with processing claims, if reports are delayed so are claims.

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

8.1 Incident & Safety Report

Six Mile Hill 2.4B – *Burnover event*:

Thankful the crews involved are still with us and managed to walk away with minor burns and abrasions. Thanks to the Coomalbidup and Pink Lake brigades for responding and assisting the Six Mile Hill crew in a timely matter.

There is a Draft investigation report, that has 6x recommendation to go to the CEO for his consideration. Once signed off, the report will be shared to all brigades.

We are contesting the insurance assessment report of the appliance, it has come back with market value for the cab chassis, with no consideration to the fit-for-purpose equipment on board or the value to which Six Mile Hill brigade has put into the vehicle with the various equipment added to it. Six Mile Hill has a permanent loan vehicle from DFES until there replacement appliance arrives, timeframe unknown.

Representative of Six Mile Hill BFB raised the following concerns to the committee;

- Timeframe of personal belongings replaced via insurance
- Replacement of damaged PPE
- Wellness process and debrief of affected crews

8.2 Light Tanker fuel line airlock issues:

Main diesel line to the pump is fed from the appliance fuel tank. There is a pickup tube that sits above quarter of a tank to supply the pump, once the main fuel line falls below quarter of tank fuel, supply is cut off to the pump.

Issue is occurring regardless whether the pumps are operating, the LT main fuel tank has been falling below quarter of tank by the days end, it gets fueled but it is creating airlocks in the fuel lines when starting the pump on the next occasion.

Have discussed with frontline as to why there is not self-priming fuel pump to negate the issue, apparently that is how the appliance was requested to be designed. Talks are on-going with DFES regarding a solution. Please remind all operators to not allow the main diesel fuel tanks to fall below quarter of a tank, to avoid airlock issues with your pumps.

9. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

9.1 Election of Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officers – 2025/26 Season:

Chairperson Wes Graham declared all positions vacant at 7:12pm and acted as Returning Officer to carry out the election of Office Bearers;

Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Nomination	Mr Phil Longmire
Nominated By	Will Carmody
Seconded	Brett South
Elected	Mr Phil Longmire

Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Nomination	Mr Will Carmody
Nominated By	Adrian Perks
Seconded	Nic Rudddenklau
Elected	Mr Will Carmody

Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Nomination	Mr Adrian Perks
Nominated By	Brett South
Seconded	Nic Rudddenklau
Elected	Mr Adrian Perks

9.2 Election of Senior Fire Control officers:

Senior Fire Control Officers:

West Zone

Nomination	Mr Tom Carmody
Nominated By	Will Carmody
Seconded	Adrian Perks
Elected	Mr Tom Carmody

West Coast Zone

Nomination	Mr Mark Scott
Nominated By	Ron Longbottom
Seconded	Will Carmody
Elected	Mr Mark Scott

North Zone

Nomination	Mr Chris Hallam
Nominated By	Ron Longbottom
Seconded	Dan Sanderson
Elected	Mr Chris Hallam

East Zone

Nomination	Mr Simon Schlink
Nominated By	Lyndon Mickel
Seconded	Phil Longmire
Elected	Mr Simon Schlink

East Coast Zone

Nomination	Mr Adrian Perks
Nominated By	Will Carmody
Seconded	Simon Schlink
Elected	Mr Adrian Perks

Urban Rural Zone

Nomination	Mr John Durdin
Nominated By	Andrew Waters
Seconded	Keith Rymer
Elected	Mr John Durdin

9.3 Election of Deputy Senior Fire Control Officers:

West Zone

Nomination	Mr Will Carmody
Nominated By	Phil Longmire
Seconded	Nic Ruddenklau
Elected	Mr Will Carmody

West Coast Zone

Nomination	Mr Scott Lawrence
Nominated By	Mark Scott
Seconded	Harry Davies
Elected	Mr Scott Lawrence

North Zone

Nomination	Mr Perrin Guest
Nominated By	Terry Antonio
Seconded	Dan Sanderson
Elected	Mr Perrin Guest

East Zone

Nomination	Mr Lyndon Mickel
Nominated By	Nic Ruddenklau
Seconded	Simon Schlink
Elected	Mr Lyndon Mickel

East Coast Zone

Nomination	Mr Nic Ruddenklau
Nominated By	Joey Della Vedova
Seconded	Lyndon Mickel
Elected	Mr Nic Ruddenklau

Urban Rural Zone

Nomination	Mr Kyle Lawrence
Nominated By	Andrew Waters
Seconded	John Durdin
Elected	Mr Kyle Lawrence

9.4 Confirmation of Fire Weather Officers for 2025/26 season:

Fire Weather Officer:	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Fire Weather Officers:	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (East)
	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (West)
	Senior Fire Control Officer – Urban/Rural
	Community Emergency Services Manager

MOTION

Moved: Mr Peczka
Seconded: Mr Longmire

BFA0625-082

That the Committee move the above titles that were created for the Fire Weather Officer group be moved to the Council policy, where it can be reviewed when required.

CARRIED

9.5 Confirmation of Brigade Fire Control Officers for 2025/26

Thanks to Kingsley Scott (Coomalbidgup) and Peter Rowe (Six Mile Hill) for their service as Senior Fire Control Officers. Due to their absence, formal recognition of their many years of service to occur next meeting.

Committee Decision/Motion

That the Committee endorses the current Fire Control Officer list and that the Community Emergency Services Manager follows up with brigades that were not present to confirm their listings.

9.6 Confirmation of Brigade Permit Issuing Officers for 2025/26

Committee Decision/Motion

That the Committee endorses the current Permit Issuing Officer list and that the Community Emergency Services Manager follows up with brigades that were not present to confirm their listings

10. GENERAL BUSINESS

10.1 Fire Access Track

Mr Phil Longmire advised the committee this was an issue raised at the local electors meeting for fire access tracks to be maintained for the purpose of ease of access for firefighting vehicles and to act as an escape route for local residents.

A discussion occurred of the pre-identified tracks of Telegraph Rd, Keenan Rd, Patterson Rd and Bukenerup Rd. Committee asked what condition could tracks be formed too and if there was a budget to help prioritise tracks. Sainty Rd/Stockyard Rd was raised as another strategic track to assist with reducing fire running into Bandy Creek from Cape Le Grand/Merivale.

Committee Decision/Motion

That the Committee agrees if the identified tracks were able to be form to a 4WD track standard and with ongoing management of vegetation along the tracks, would be preferred. Committee considered that all tracks had equal need for adequate formation to serve the purpose of fire access tracks for emergency access and egress.

10.2 Harvest & Vehicle Movement Ban Signage for Tracks

Mr Ash Peczka advised community members have asked Council whether signage can be erected on tracks that are not allowed to be accessed on days of a Total Fire Ban or during a Harvest & Vehicle Movement Ban period. Council has asked for the thoughts of the Committee. Checking with other coastal Local Governments no one else has any specific signage denoting this purpose.

Committee Decision/Motion

That the Committee agrees that increase public information and awareness of what you can and can't do on Total Fire Ban days and Harvest & Vehicle Movement Ban periods, would be more beneficial. Signage would be beneficial at locations of 4WD track conditions signs, or this information included on that signage, rather than signage of individual tracks.

10.3 Bush Fire Brigade Operating Procedures Workshop

Mr Ash Peczka advised the committee that Local Laws are nearly finalised. We need to sit down to develop local operating procedures for the operations of bushfire brigades and at incidents, to link with updated Local Laws. This is something that is lacking, having formal procedures for how we operate, there is a possibility there could be an improvement notice from WorkSafe after recent incidents. Proposal date within the first half of August, does the committee want a core group to represent, or have it open to anyone that would like to attend?

Committee Decision/Motion

The Committee agreed the Senior Fire Control Officer group to represent brigades at the workshop.

10.4 Esperance Emergency Support Unit

Mr Peter Harkness presented to the committee about the function of Incident Control Vehicle (ICV) and some issues the brigade had from recent incidents.

The brigade has 17x members to crew the ICV and train fortnightly during the summer period to support ground crews. When arriving at an incident they can setup and be fully operating in 8 minutes. It has Starlink capabilities, operates 3x different mapping systems to know vehicle locations and provides live updates for fire shape progression.

One of the many purposes of the ICV is logging of decisions being made over the main VHF frequencies. By logging the times of the decision, who was being tasked, what resources

were needed, etc is one way to protect volunteer firefighters should there be an investigation held into that particular incident.

There are conversation being held over phone between the IMT in town and with those on the fireground that isn't being logged with the ICV. The brigade would like to have better understanding how the IMT operates on how it can support that team. Mobile phones are considered as a closed form of communication, suggested whether a speaker phone for mobile phones in the ICV would be helpful to record decisions made by the Incident Controller.

The brigade would like callout procedures of the ICV clarified, as there they called out via WhatsApp from the recent Dalyup fires. Callout procedures from ICV operators manual is reflective on how things operate in Esperance. With recent Dalyup bushfire the ICV was setup for a few hours with no one with a functional role operating from the ICV. The brigade is keen to get out to the rural brigades to further promote and have rural captains and FCO's see its capabilities and how it can support them in those functional roles.

10.5 Campfire & Cooking Policy

Mr Ash Peczka advised this is a policy that needs to be considered. It would assist in providing clear direction to visitors in regards to camping fires and there has been request from the community as to why they cannot have a fire pit on evenings where conditions are suitable and to save permits being written out for fire pits.

Committee Decision/Motion

The Committee would be interested to see to what a policy entails for the next BFAC meeting.

10.6 Mitigation

Mrs Claudia Magana provided an update on 2024/25 MAF program. With all scheduled mechanical treatment works completed, including additional treatment area. There burns prescription still outstanding for completion. Working towards a 3 year MAF funding program.

Mr Phil Longmire advised he has been receiving calls about the lack of clearing along the Dog Fence recently installed. Information received indicate that there should be a 20m clearance on either side of the fence and to speak to either DPIRD or DBCA in regards to the works permit of the fence project.

10.7 Training Schedule

Mr Ash Peczka provided a draft training calendar to the committee. Majority of training to occur over a weekend. If brigades want localised training, to please start penciling dates with Ash in advance. Apart from the inclusion of Firemapper training later there was no question in regards to the draft training calendar.

10.8 Fire Hazard Reduction Notice

Mr Ash Peczka advised the committee of the following amendments to the notice; Based on WALGA guidance we have to change the requirements around individual Bushfire Risk Management Plans – properties with approved plans by council will also need to meet to the requirements of the Notice, as a minimum.

MOTION

Moved: Mr Durdin
Seconded: Mr Schlink

BFA0625-083

That the Committee moves the following;

- **To support the draft 2025/26 Fire Hazard Reduction Notice, and**
- **To endorse the following Restricted and Prohibited Burning Times;**

Rural Zone:

Restricted Burning Period – 18 September 2025 – 12 November 2025

Prohibited Burning Period – 13 November 2025 – 31 January 2026

Restricted Burning Period – 1 February 2026 – 31 March 2026

Urban-Rural Zone:

Restricted Burning Period – 18 September 2025 – 12 November 2025

Prohibited Burning Period – 13 November 2025 – 9 March 2026

Restricted Burning Period – 10 March 2026 – 30 April 2026

CARRIED

10.9 Vehicle Services Schedule

Mr Ash Peczka presented the upcoming BFB vehicle servicing schedule. It was noticeable last year that some brigade had all their appliances held up at service provider yards, this schedule has appliance staggered between other brigades. Members were reminded, if there are any known issues with the appliance to let the service provider know so the appropriate parts can be ordered in advance.

11. MEETING CLOSED

The Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 8:53pm

The next meeting of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee is scheduled for Tuesday 16 September 2025, commencing at 6:00pm 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 _____