

Shire of Esperance

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 24 JUNE 2026

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	6
6.1	Bush Fire Brigade's Operating Procedure Workshop	6
7.	REPORTS	6
7.1	Chief bush Fire Control Officer – Mr Phil Longmire	6
7.2	DFES District Officer – Mr Stephen Peterson	7
7.3	DBCA Esperance Officer – Mr Justin Black	7
7.4	Community Emergency Services Manager – Mr Ashley Peczka	8
7.5	Bushfire Risk Mitigation Coordinator – Mrs Claudia Magana	9
7.6	Association of Bush Fire Brigades – Mr Danny Sanderson	10
8.	HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT	11
8.1	Incident and Safety Report	11
9.	ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS	11
9.1	Election of Chief & Deputy Bush Fire Control Officers – 2026/27 Season	11
9.2	Election of Senior Fire Control Officers	12
9.3	Election of Deputy Senior Fire Control Officers	12
9.4	Confirmation of Brigade Fire Control Officers for 2026/26 Season	13
9.5	Confirmation of brigade Permit Issuing Officers for 2026/27 Season	13
10.	GENERAL BUSINESS	13
10.1	Fire Access Track	13
10.2	Coolmalbidgup BFB Shed Power	13
10.3	DFES Starlink Trail	13
10.4	Online Burn Permits	14
10.5	Campfire and Cooking Policy	14
10.6	Training Schedule	15
10.7	Fire Hazard Reduction Notice	15
10.8	Vehicle Servicing Schedule	15

10. CLOSURE	15
11. NEXT MEETING	15

SHIRE OF ESPERANCE

MINUTES

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON 24 June 2026 COMMENCING AT 6:00 PM

1. OFFICIAL OPENING

The Presiding Member declared the meeting open at 6:05pm.

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 N Ruddenklau	Condingup Bush Fire Brigade
Mr L Palmer	Quarry Rd Bush Fire Brigade
Mr J Durdin	Quarry Rd Bush Fire Brigade
Mrs S Prosser	Esperance Emergency Support Unit
Mr K Rymer	Pink Lake Bush Fire Brigade
Mr J Thomas	Six Mile Hill Bush Fire Brigade
Mr I Hartley	Quarry Rd Bush Fire Brigade
Mr K Lawrence	Pink Lake Bush Fire Brigade
Mr H Davies	Gibson Bush Fire Brigade
Mr M Scott	Coomalbidgup Bush Fire Brigade
Mr R Longbottom	Grass Patch Bush Fire Brigade
Mr T Carmody	Cascade Bush Fire Brigade
Mr D Sanderson	Grass Patch Bush Fire Brigade / Bushfire Volunteers Assoc.
Mr P Harkness	Emergency Support Unit
Mr M Siemer	Scaddan Bush Fire Brigade
Mr C Eves	Mt Merivale Bush Fire Brigade
Mr S Lawrence	Dalyup Bush Fire Brigade
Mr J Graham	Neridup Bush Fire Brigade
Mr L Vandenberghe	Scaddan Bush Fire Brigade
Mr T Redding	Scaddan Bush Fire Brigade
Mr J Della Vedova	Condingup Bush Fire Brigade
Mr K Jeitz	Coomalbidgup Bush Fire Brigade
Mr I Richardson	Six Mile Hill Bush Fire Brigade
Mr T Antonio	Salmon Gums Bush Fire Brigade
Mr D Smith	Gibson Bush Fire Brigade
Mr T Walter	Cascade Bush Fire Brigade (via Microsoft Teams)
Mr L Mickel	Mt Beaumont Bush Fire Brigade
Mr S Schlink	Howick Bush Fire Brigade

Ex Officio

Mr K Stuchbury
Mr A Peczka
Mrs C Magana
Mrs K Naylor
Mr S Peterson

Manager Ranger and Emergency Services
Community Emergency Services Manager
Bushfire Mitigation Coordinator
DBCA Esperance District Fire Coordinator
District Officer for Department of Fire and Emergency Services

3. APOLOGIES & NOTIFICATION OF GRANTED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Mr B South	Mt Beaumont Bush Fire Brigade
Mr B King	Mt Merivale Bush Fire Brigade
Mr J Black	DBCA Esperance - District Manager
Mr M Ietto	Grass Patch Bush Fire Brigade
Mr N Norwood	Scaddan Bush Fire Brigade
Mr C Scott	Six Mile Hill 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 J Durdin
Seconded: Mr N Ruddenklau

BFA0626-089

That the Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting of the 19 June 2025 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

CARRIED

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

6.1 Bush Fire Brigade's Operating Procedure Workshop

Mr Ash Peczka advised the committee due to his extended leave the working shop didn't occur. Operating Procedures will be developed for Senior's to review, adjust, or to remove sections.

7. REPORTS

7.1 Chief bush Fire Control Officer – Mr Phil Longmire

Evening all, as usual, I'll keep this short to keep the meeting moving. First and foremost, thank you to everyone here, especially Adrian Perks, Will Carmody, FCO's, all the captains, seniors and volunteers that keep our region safe.

It's great to see Ash back in the role at home in Esperance after a challenging time dealing with an intense and draining treatment schedule to a positive outlook going forward. I would also like to thank Kyle Lawrence for stepping into the session role and doing an excellent job while continuing to work in his business. Thanks to everyone for their patience through this challenging time.

While an increased number of harvest fires locally added to the usual tally, I would like to thank those that gave up their time for the Fitzgerald fires. I would also like to thank DBCA, DFES, especially Steve, Danny Sanderson as president of the Volunteers Association, VFRS, SES, Incident Control Unit, Tjaltraak for allowing us to access sensitive areas and the Esperance Shire, especially Kade and Shane, who do an excellent job of supporting us during complex events. Apologies if I've missed anybody.

After meeting recently, we are looking forward to developing inter-agency planning at the start of complex events to allow for more complete solutions. The future of Mitigation on broad scale continues to be challenging and this will be addressed tonight. We've had a constructive meeting with all stakeholders, but with the size and scale of our district, we feel our approach needs to change.

We're working on having electronic burn permits by the restricted period coming this year, which will be refined tonight. Thanks to Kade for helping us with the process with these permits, which will be a great council initiative.

While we continue to push forward on a number of projects behind the scenes, hopefully 26-27 summer provides us with a quiet fire season.

7.2 DFES District Officer – Mr Stephen Peterson

- Welcomed Ash back and acknowledged Kyle for covering responsibilities during Ash's absence.

Mitigation

- Requested \$108,000 to continue annual townsite mitigation works.
- Encouraged brigades to identify any additional mitigation needs, with funding currently available to support further works where required.

Training

- Invited expressions of interest for AIIMS 2017 and Level 1 Incident Controller courses.
- Requested early nominations due to the limited availability of qualified instructors.

Fire Reports

- Highlighted an increase in overdue fire reports and the growing importance of timely completion.
- Advised that insurance companies are delaying claim payments until fire reports are received.
- Reinforced the need to submit paper reports promptly so electronic reports can be completed without delay.
- Stressed the importance of accurately recording the incident address, as incorrect details can result in delayed or rejected insurance claims.

7.3 DBCA Esperance Officer – Mr Justin Black

Staffing & Capability

- Increased dedicated fire management capacity and expanded frontline conservation team to five staff, with four new recruits currently undertaking training.
- Invested in new operational equipment, including a tractor, slasher and spray rig, enabling more mitigation work to be completed in-house and reducing contractor costs.

Communications & Infrastructure

- Progressing the transition to a digital VHF radio network, with infrastructure upgrades complete and vehicle upgrades underway before full implementation.
- Advised the Howick Hill repeater has permanently changed from Channel 516 to Channel 503 due to ongoing interference.
- Working with the Shire of Esperance to establish a permanent, secure water bomber support facility at the airstrip.

Fire Season Overview

- Attended 15 bushfire incidents during the season, including Boyatup, Vic Harbour, Poison Creek and Margaret Cove.
- The Margaret Cove Fire caused significant damage to the Skippy Rock Campground and associated infrastructure.

Recovery & Rehabilitation

- Completed rehabilitation works at Woody Lake Nature Reserve, Kepa Kurl Trail and South Burdett Nature Reserve.
- Recovery efforts over the next 12 months will focus on Poison Creek, Helms and Margaret Cove, including replacement of damaged visitor infrastructure.

Fire Mitigation

- Delivered 70.2 km of fire mitigation works valued at approximately \$132,000 across key reserves and the Esperance townsite.
- The 2026/27 mitigation program will continue firebreak maintenance, track spraying and asset protection works, with increased efficiency expected through the use of DBCA's new equipment.
- Continuing collaboration with Ngadju Rangers on track maintenance across the southern rangelands.

Prescribed Burning

- Successfully completed approximately 1,400 hectares of prescribed burning after an extended period of unsuitable conditions.
- Despite the visible smoke, the burn treated only 0.5% of the total burn area, achieving the desired patchy mosaic outcome NW of Cascade.
- Further prescribed burning is planned to complete remaining untreated areas when conditions allow.

2026/27 Priorities

- Mitigation Activity Fund program to support ongoing mitigation works.
- Progress an 18-burn prescribed burning program, prioritised according to risk, available resources and planning capacity.
- Continue improving operational capability through infrastructure upgrades, equipment investment and staff development.

7.4 Community Emergency Services Manager – Mr Ashley Peczka

Leadership & Staffing

- Thanked members for their support during his cancer journey.
- Thanked Kyle Lawrence for acting in the CESM role during his absence.
- Welcomed Kade Stuchbury as the new Manager Ranger and Emergency Services.

Volunteer Membership & Insurance

- Advised that LGIS now requires all registered brigade members to be insured, increasing insured volunteers from approximately 400 to 790.
- Requested brigades review and update membership lists to remove inactive members and help reduce ongoing insurance costs.
- Confirmed volunteers remain protected under the Bush Fires Act when operating under the direction of a Fire Control Officer.

PPE & Operational Support

- Online PPE ordering trial has been delayed but will be recommenced.

- A central stores facility has been established at the Shire Works Depot to improve equipment management and distribution.
- New PPE orders are currently being issued to brigades.

Engagement

- Harvest Fire Conversations been rescheduled for 24 July at the Esperance Yacht Club.
- Recognised the Incident Control Vehicle (ICV)/Emergency Support Unit for reaching 20 years of service.

Financial Update

- Reported ESL budget overspend of approximately \$60,000 for this financial year, primarily driven by vehicle maintenance & repairs, PPE and insurance premiums.
- Volunteer insurance costs have nearly doubled for the 2026/27 period following the requirement to insure all registered members.
- The 2026/27 ESL operational budget has been set at approximately \$395,000 (ex GST).

Infrastructure & Capital Projects

- Building maintenance program continues across brigade facilities.
- Condungup Bush Fire Shed completed, minor works remaining. Shed opening to be set.
- Grass Patch Shed construction is underway.
- New 135,000-litre water tanks have been ordered for Six Mile and Beaumont.
- Capital grant applications submitted for a diesel storage tank at Cascade and PPE storage infrastructure at Dalyup/Quarry.

Fleet & Equipment

- Quarry Road Brigade has taken delivery of a new Tatra appliance, replacing their 1.4R.
- Fleet replacement program continues, with Cascade, Gibson and Pink Lake appliances expected to enter production this financial year.
- A portable toilet unit is now available with the Incident Control Vehicle (ICV) for deployment to incidents.

Communications

- Brigades were asked to confirm all operational radios have received the latest programming upgrade and report any outstanding units for updating.

7.5 Bushfire Risk Mitigation Coordinator – Mrs Claudia Magana

Bushfire Risk Management Plan

- Continuing the review and update of the Bushfire Risk Management Plan, including asset risk assessments and mapping.
- Risk maps identifying Extreme, Very High and High bushfire risk areas underpin applications for the Mitigation Activity Fund (MAF).
- Approximately 500 assets are included in the register, with ongoing updates to ensure risk ratings remain accurate.
- Brigades will be invited to review draft maps and provide local knowledge to validate risk ratings and identify any missing or outdated assets.

Mitigation Activity Fund (MAF)

- Managing a \$1.1 million, three-year MAF program supporting mitigation works on Shire-managed reserves.
- The delayed commencement of the funding program required initial Shire funding to enable priority mitigation works to proceed.
- The program comprises 151 treatment sites, including 8 prescribed burn sites, with approximately 45 recurring maintenance treatments undertaken each year.

Mitigation Program Delivery

- Completed 43 mitigation treatments during the current reporting period.

- Expenditure to date totals approximately \$174,000 in MAF funding and \$39,000 in Shire funding.
- Works have primarily included slashing, mulching and firebreak maintenance, with prescribed burning to commence when conditions become suitable.

Future Priorities

- Additional mitigation sites can continue to be nominated and may be incorporated into the program through funding variations where capacity exists.
- Prescribed burning remains a priority component of the program and will be delivered when seasonal conditions permit.

7.6 Association of Bush Fire Brigades – Mr Danny Sanderson

Fire Season Support

- Although Esperance experienced a relatively quiet fire season, support was provided to neighbouring regions, including the Great Southern, following major bushfire events.
- Assisted with post-incident debriefs and lessons learnt.

Work Health and Safety (WHS)

- WHS legislation continues to create uncertainty for local governments following serious bushfire incidents.
- Volunteers remain protected under the Bush Fires Act when acting in good faith, while also being recognised as workers under WHS legislation.
- Engagement continues with the WorkSafe Commissioner to improve understanding of legal responsibilities for Chief Bush Fire Control Officers, CEOs and local governments.
- Feedback indicates there have been no prosecutions under the current legislation, however clearer guidance is needed to improve confidence across local government.

Volunteer Capability

- Bushfire training has become more relevant and practical, with improved delivery through the Bushfire Centre of Excellence and DFES.
- Continued focus on ensuring volunteers have appropriate PPE and minimum training before responding to incidents.

Funding & Fleet

- The Local Government Grants Scheme (LGGS) remains underfunded and is not expected to receive additional government funding in the short term.
- Bushfire Association continues to advocate for increased funding while working with DFES to better prioritise existing grants.
- Ageing appliances, maintenance costs and fleet replacement remain ongoing challenges.

Bushfire Mitigation

- Major bushfires, including Fitzgerald and Dunn Rock, highlighted the need for increased mitigation within large conservation reserves.
- Approval processes continue to delay mitigation works, despite strong support from volunteer brigades to assist.
- Collaboration between DBCA, local government and Traditional Owners is progressing to improve mitigation planning and delivery.

Emergency Services Legislation

- New Emergency Services legislation remains under development. Concerns have been raised that the specific recognition of bushfire may be reduced within the legislation.
- Government has committed to consultation before the legislation is finalised, with Bushfire Volunteers Association advocating for a meaningful consultation period.

Bushfire Volunteers Association

- Members were encouraged to attend the upcoming Bushfire Association Conference and AGM, during the WAFES Conference.

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

8.1 Incident and Safety Report

- Confirmed the Six Mile Hill 2.4B burnover investigation report will be distributed to brigade members with the meeting minutes.
- Noted that insurance negotiations for the damaged appliance were lengthy, with a significant difference between the assessed value and replacement cost before reimbursement was finalised.
- A replacement appliance has since been provided.

Key recommendations from the investigation:

- Install burnover survival action reference cards in all brigade appliances (with consideration of dashboard stickers).
- Ensure all appliances meet the minimum standard of two handheld radios, with a long-term goal of one radio per seat.
- Equip all Shire appliances with CAD mapping systems (e.g. Fire Mapper).
- Continue working with DFES on the rollout of new communications networks and resources.
- Develop a quick reference guide outlining PPE requirements for firefighters on the fireground.
- Introduce a standard station maintenance and end-of-shift checklist across brigades.
- Investigate an electronic volunteer sign-in/sign-out system to improve attendance recording and incident accountability.
- Discussion highlighted the importance of the debrief, including lessons learned regarding steam burns, with advice that wet clothing can significantly increase burn severity.
- Members discussed the importance of ongoing post-incident welfare and wellbeing support, including exploring access to counselling and Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services for volunteers.

9. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

CBFCO Phil Longmire, DCBFCO Will Carmody and DCBFCO Adrian Perks addressed the Committee the need for succession planning and rotating of positions with Committee members to maintain continuity, provide effective leadership, develop/mentor future leaders and to keep progressing the Bush Fire Service.

CBFCO Phil Longmire thanked Will (8 years) and Adrian (5 years) for their service as Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers who are standing down from the roles, whilst Phil will remain in the Chief position for another 12 months to help mentor the incoming deputy chief's.

9.1 Election of Chief & Deputy Bush Fire Control Officers – 2026/27 Season

- Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Nominated/Elected: Mr Phil Longmire
Nominated by: Mr Will Carmody
Seconded: Mr Ron Longbottom
- Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Nominated/Elected: Mr Tom Carmody
Nominated by: Mr Will Carmody
Seconded: Mr Nic Ruddenklau
- Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Nominated/Elected: Mr Lyndon Mickel
Nominated by: Mr Adrian Perks
Seconded: Mr Phil Longmire

9.2 Election of Senior Fire Control Officers

- West Zone
Nominated/Elected: Mr Will Carmody
Nominated by: Mr Phil Longmire
Seconded: Mr Tom Carmody
- West Coast Zone
Nominated/Elected: Mr Mark Scott
Nominated by: Mr Will Carmody
Seconded: Mr Kirk Jeitz
- North Zone
Nominated/Elected: Mr Chris Hallam
Nominated by: Mr Ron Longbottom
Seconded: Mr Dan Sanderson
- East Zone
Nominated/Elected: Mr Simon Schlink
Nominated by: Mr Phil Longmire
Seconded: Mr Nic Ruddenklau
- East Coast Zone
Nominated/Elected: Mr Adrian Perks
Nominated by: Mr Nic Ruddenklau
Seconded: Mr Joey Della Vedova
- Urban Rural Zone
Nominated/Elected: Mr John Durdin
Nominated by: Mr Laurie Palmer
Seconded: Mr Will Carmody

9.3 Election of Deputy Senior Fire Control Officers

- West Zone
Nominated/Elected: Mr Liam Vandenberghe
Nominated by: Mr Tom Carmody
Seconded: Mr Phil Longmire
- West Coast Zone
Nominated/Elected: Mr Scott Lawrence
Nominated by: Mr Mark Scott
Seconded: Mr Harry Davies
- North Zone
Nominated/Elected: Mr Perrin Guest
Nominated by: Mr Terry Antonio
Seconded: Mr Dan Sanderson
- East Zone
Nominated/Elected: Mr Lyndon Mickel
Nominated by: Mr Adrian Perks
Seconded: Mr Simon Schlink
- East Coast Zone
Nominated/Elected: Mr Nic Ruddenklau
Nominated by: Mr Joey Della Vedova
Seconded: Mr Lyndon Mickel
- Urban Rural Zone
Nominated/Elected: Mr Kyle Lawrence
Nominated by: Mr John Durdin
Seconded: Mr Keith Rymer

9.4 Confirmation of Brigade Fire Control Officers for 2026/26 Season

Thanks to Dave Cox (Neridup), Mitch Greaves (Dalyup) & Eddie Herbert (Condingup) for their service as Fire Control Officers.

Committee Decision/Motion

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

9.5 Confirmation of brigade Permit Issuing Officers for 2026/27 Season

Committee Decision/Motion

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

10. GENERAL BUSINESS

10.1 Fire Access Track

- Mr Matt Walker advised the Committee works are under way to join Keenan Rd from West to East to make an all through road
- From the Dalyup Bushfire understands additional works is needed for Telegraph Rd to connect it all the way through to Murray's Rd to the West. Is seeking advice to what are the priorities for other Fire Access tracks.
- The Committee provided the following:
 - Bukenerup Rd (between Paterson Rd track and Shark Lake Rd)
 - Merivale Rd (between Grewar Rd and Poison Creek Rd)
 - Stockyards Rd
 - Keenans Rd
 - Paterson Rd (connect through to Bukenerup Rd)
 - Telegraph Rd
- Discussion occurred in regards to access and maintenance to the State Barrier Fence should a bushfire occur nearby.

10.2 Coolmalbidgup BFB Shed Power

- Coolmalbidgup Bush Fire Shed to receive a 10 kW solar system and 15 kWh battery system to improve power reliability.
- Tender has been awarded for the system to be installed July/August 2026.

10.3 DFES Starlink Trail

- DFES Starlink trial is progressing, with a contractor appointed to install units in:
 - Cascade 4.4B-2
 - Mt Beaumont 4.4B-1 (Tatra)
 - Esperance Light Tankers (LT1- Scaddan / LT2 - Coolmalbidgup / LT4 - Condingup)
- Installation dates are yet to be confirmed, with additional vehicle measurements and information requested by the contractor delaying the rollout.
- As part of the response to the Six Mile Hill burnover recommendations and to improve communications, the Shire submitted a proposal to install Starlink Mini units across the fleet over a three-year staged rollout.
- Council has approved first-year funding of approximately \$23,000, subject to obtaining updated quotations to confirm current pricing.
- The rollout will prioritise more remote brigade appliances, with approximately 10–11 vehicles equipped each year.
- To reduce ongoing subscription costs, members supported deactivating Starlink units during the off-season (approximately five months over winter and early spring).

Committee Decision/Motion

- **The Committee endorses the following;**
- **The order of appliances to have Starlink Mini's installed.**
- **For Starlink units to be placed into standby mode between May-September.**
- **Control to be provided to the Emergency Services Team should Starlink's need to be activated during the standby period.**

10.4 Online Burn Permits

- Proposal to introduce an online burn permit system to modernise the permit process and replace paper-based applications.
- The system would:
 - Allow landholders to apply for burn permits online through the Shire website.
 - Display approved burns on an interactive map, improving visibility of active burns across the district.
 - Enable burns conducted outside the permit season to be voluntarily logged, assisting with 000 call verification and reducing unnecessary emergency responses.
- Permit Issuing Officers would receive applications electronically and approve them using digital signatures.
- Fire Control Officers would set permit conditions (e.g. permit duration, restrictions and requirements), with these controls automatically applied during the application process.
- The system would simplify permit administration, improve consistency, and reduce manual checking by Permit Issuing Officers.
- Development will occur in consultation with brigades before implementation, with members to review the proposed system and provide feedback.
- The Shire will ensure the system complies with new privacy legislation, with personal information protected while maintaining operational functionality

10.5 Campfire and Cooking Policy

- Committee considered the draft Campfire Cooking Policy and general support was expressed for the policy, with members agreeing it places appropriate responsibility on individuals using campfires.
- Discussion centred on whether additional restrictions should apply during High Fire Danger conditions, with no consensus reached and concerns raised about making the policy overly restrictive.
- Members recommended the policy clearly state it applies only to occupied residential properties with an approved dwelling and a connected water supply, and does not apply to vacant land, commercial or industrial properties, campgrounds or public reserves.
- Recognised the need for a comprehensive community education and communication campaign before implementation to ensure residents understand the policy requirements and their responsibilities.
- Agreed to revise the draft, circulate an updated version, and bring the policy back to the committee for further consideration at the next meeting.

Committee Decision/Motion

The Committee supports the draft Cooking & Camping fire policy with the following amendments to be presented to the next BFAC meeting;

- **Definitions and enforcements measures to be included in the policy.**
- **Amend draft policy to state more clearly occupiers place of residence.**
- **Change title of draft policy to residential fire pits.**
- **Consult with Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service to see whether there would be an increase of unwanted calls within the gazetted fire district.**
- **Check whether community consultation to the policy is required and its timeframe.**

10.6 Training Schedule

- Mr Ash Peczka provided a draft 2026 training calendar to the Committee.
- 14x courses have scheduled for the 2026 calendar to help make up from last year's disruption. Including, Drive vehicles under emergency conditions course.
- It was noted, efforts are being made to have backup instructors to prevent last year's disruption, pending on upcoming medical results.

Committee Decision/Motion

The Committee endorses the draft 2026 training calendar.

10.7 Fire Hazard Reduction Notice

- Fire Hazard Notice and Guidance Notes was emailed out to the FCO group for any adjustments. No feedback was received.
- No other feedback was received from Committee.

MOTION

Moved: Mr A Peczka

Seconded: Mr Phil Longmire

BFA0626-090

The Committee moves the following:

- 1. To support the draft 2026/27 Fire Hazard Reduction Notice**
- 2. To endorse the following Restricted and Prohibited Burning Times**

Rural Zone

Restricted Burning Period 18 September 2026 – 12 November 2026

Prohibited Burning Period 13 November 2026 – 31 January 2027

Restricted Burning Period 1 February 2027 – 31 March 2027

Urban Rural Zone

Restricted Burning Period 18 September 2026 – 12 November 2026

Prohibited Burning Period 13 November 2026 – 9 March 2027

Restricted Burning Period 10 March 2027 – 30 April 2027

CARRIED

10.8 Vehicle Servicing Schedule

- Mr Ash Peczka presented the upcoming BFB vehicle servicing schedule.
- 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.

Committee Decision/Motion

The Committee endorses the draft 2026 BFB fleet servicing schedule.

10. CLOSURE

The Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 8:20pm.

11. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee is scheduled for Tuesday 15 September 2026, 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 _____