

Bushfire Advisory Committee

Notice of Meeting | 15th April 2021

Dear Members,

The next BFAC Meeting will be held at the Shire Administration Centre in the Council Chambers, Jennaberring Road, Quairading, WA on Thursday 15th April 2021 commencing at 5.00 pm.

MEETING AGENDA ATTACHED

Disclaimer

Members of the public should note that in any discussion regarding any planning or other application that any statement or intimation of approval made by any member or officer of the Shire of Quairading 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 Quairading. No action should be taken on any item discussed at a Council meeting prior to written advice on the resolution of the Council being received.

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SHIRE OF QUAIRADING

Bushfire Advisory Committee

ITEM 1 OPENING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the Meeting and declared the Meeting open at ____ pm.

"Before we start our Meeting, I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on Noongar / Ballardong land and we pay respect to the original custodians...past, present and future and welcome you all here today for this Meeting".

ITEM 2 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

2.1 Members

Mr N Gelmi	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer / Chairperson
Mr J Smart	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Mr C Anderson	Fire Control Officer
Mr P Groves	Fire Control Officer
Mr S Hadlow	Fire Control Officer
Mr B Wilson	Fire Control Officer
Mr M Whyte	Fire Control Officer
Mr L Johnston	Fire Control Officer
Mr N Fraser	Fire Control Officer
Mr G Hughes	Fire Control Officer
Mr M Davies	Fire Control Officer
Mr P Hudson	Fire Control Officer
Mr A Duncan	Fire Control Officer

2.2 Shire

Cr W Davies	Shire President
Mr G Fardon	Chief Executive Officer/FCO
Mr S Bell	Community Emergency Services Manager
Cr P Smith	Councillor

2.3 Invited Observers / Visitors

Mr B Humfrey	Bushfire Risk Planning Coordinator
Mr J Corrigan	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Mr G Rowles	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Ms T Patton	Quairading Volunteer Fire and Rescue Captain

2.4 Apologies

Mr P Hay	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
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ITEM 3 DEPUTATIONS / PRESENTATIONS / SUBMISSIONS

Bushfire Risk Planning Coordinator Project (BRPC) – Mr Brian Humfrey to provide an update on the Project to date.

ITEM 4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES AND BUSINESS ARISING

4.1 Confirmation of Minutes – 9th September 2020

The minutes from the previous Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting have been attached for comment and consideration.

MOVED _____ **SECONDED** _____

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on 9th September 2020 be confirmed as a true and correct record of that Meeting.

4.2 Business Arising

Volunteer Fuel Cards

Fuel Cards for active volunteers have been received. CESM has been in contact with all brigade officers requesting active member lists that should be entitled to receive the benefit of the fuel card entitlement. Once all brigade lists have been received, the same formula that has been used in previous years will be utilised again.

ITEM 5 CORRESPONDENCE

5.1 Inward

No inwards correspondence has been received.

5.2 Outward

There has been no outgoing correspondence.

ITEM 6 REPORTS

6.1 CBFCO Report

Verbal Report

6.2 DCBFCO Report

Verbal Report

6.3 FCO Reports

Verbal Reports

6.4 CESM Report

Bushfire Season Report

Reasonably quiet bushfire season with only a handful of turnouts in the Shire of Quairading.

- Balkuling / Doodenanning BFB – 4 turnout requests (all 4 out of Shire)
- Quairading Central BFB – 6 turnout requests (including 5 out of Shire)
- Quairading North BFB – 2 turnout requests (both out of Shire)
- South Caroling BFB – 1 turnout request (out of Shire)
- Wamenusking BFB – 1 turnout request (out of Shire)

The Out of Shire incidents included locations such as Beverley, York, Corrigin, Wundowie, Red Gully and Woorloo.

Local Government Grant Scheme (LGGS)

The LGGS Application was submitted on the 26th March.

Other than the Standard Operating Grant received annually, extras that were applied for include

- New Facility for Balkuling / Doodenanning BFB
- New Facility for Quairading North BFB

The installation of the CelFi-Go units (mobile reception boosters) from the 2020/2021 LGGs is expected to occur during May.

Green Waste at Quairading Waste Facility

The Green Waste Stockpile was last burnt in October 2020.

Stockpile burn will need to be conducted in April / May 2021.

Quairading Central and Quairading VFRS have had a lot of involvement in undertaking this task biannually. Due to a decrease in volunteer numbers both in the Central BFB and Quairading VFRS, it is becoming increasingly hard to find volunteers who are willing and able to assist with this task due to the requirement for volunteers to "babysit" the fire for a minimum of six (6) hours.

Truck Servicing

All of the Bush Fire Appliances had two (2) services last calendar year, including a major service in June and a secondary service in September.

This will be taking place again this year, with the major service to be conducted in May and the secondary service in September.

WAERN Servicing

If maintenance or installations are required please let Mr Bell know in order to organise the radio technicians for May / June. They will be organised in conjunction with the neighbouring Shires as well.

Incident Report Books

All of the Bush Fire Appliances have now been given Incident Report Books.

There are 3 different types of Incident Reports: -

- Structure / Mobile Property Fire Report
- Bushfire Report
- Attendance Report.

It is imperative that brigades begin to utilise these for any incidents that result in the Appliance leaving the Station. These records are required to be sent to DFES on an annual basis, for updating in the IRS and to maintain a Log of who turned out to an incident. If arriving in a personal vehicle, it is also important to ensure your name has been listed on the Attendance Report.

Should anyone develop cancer/illness that can be related to firefighting DFES will assist with covering costs for any treatments that may be required if it can be proven that the volunteer has been an active member and turning out to incidents through means of the DFES Incident Reporting System (IRS).

Vehicle Fault Report Books

Vehicle Fault Report Books have been placed in each of the Appliances and these are to be filled out and given to the CESM so that there is a formal written record of any maintenance that is required to be carried out on the Appliance.

Report Book also can be used to record when the maintenance / fault repair has been completed.

6.5 DFES Report

Verbal Report from DFES

6.6 Shire Councillor / Staff Report(s)

Verbal Reports

ITEM 7 DISCUSSION POINTS

7.1 Post Season Debrief

Discussion at the Meeting

7.2 Restricted Burning Period/Prohibited Burning Period (RBT/PBT)

Listed for discussion on current Gazetted Restricted and Prohibited Burning Periods for the 2021/22 firebreak notice, all dates are inclusive.

Restricted Burning Period:

- 16th October 2021 – 31st October 2021

Prohibited Burning Period:

- 1st November 2021 – 14th February 2022

Restricted Burning Period:

- 15th February 2022 – 29th March 2022

In recent years the Shire of Quairading has extended the Prohibited Burning Period by a minimum of seven (7) days, extending from the 14th February to a minimum of the 21st February and regularly 14 days to the 28th February.

Due to the ongoing change of seasonal conditions resulting in often hotter temperatures and higher FDI in February, it has been noted by Shire representatives that the Prohibited Burning Period may be able to be permanently extended by a minimum of seven (7) days.

If this was approved and gazetted this will mean that the Prohibited Burning Period will cease on the 21st February annually.

This change would not impact any other dates for the Prohibited and Restricted Burning Periods.

Should seasonal and local conditions warrant, there is the option of modifying any of the dates by a maximum of fourteen (14) days.

RECOMMENDATION

MOVED _____ **SECONDED** _____

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting recommend to Council that: -

The Prohibited Burning Period be amended and gazetted to reflect the following dates: -

- 1st November to 21st February.

7.3 Burning Prohibition – Pursuant to Section 46 of the Bush Fires Act 1954

7.3.1 Prohibited Burning - ANZAC Day

As per Recommendation BFAC2 – 20/21 in the Post Season Meeting held in July 2020, The BFAC Committee decided (and Council supported) the prohibition of lighting of fires between the hours of 12am and 12pm (noon) on Sunday 25th April for ANZAC Day.

7.4 Bush Fire Exercise/Training

Rural Firefighting Awareness Course

A Pilot Course titled "Rural Firefighting Awareness" was run in Quairading on Monday 29th March, with majority of participants being CBFAC's or other senior ranking members of Bushfire Brigades from surrounding Local Governments. This Course has been pushed for a matter of years now to encompass a target audience such as farmers and seasonal workers (including backpackers) to give an understanding and educate about fire line safety and awareness.

Unfortunately from many of the comments from those present on the day, it seems as though the course is still requiring some work due to going in to too much detail in some aspects such as suppression techniques, instead of focussing on basics such as safety.

The Bushfire Centre of Excellence (BCoE) is hoping to finalise this Course by the end of April and to be made available for delivery at a local level.

This Course has the potential to assist the Local Governments in moving forward with some training for volunteers which in turn will satisfy the requirements of the new Occupational Health and Safety Legislation that is currently expected to come in to effect later this year.

Fire Control Officer Course

A review has been conducted by the CESM on current competencies for the Fire Control Officers (FCO).

Attached is a list of all Shire of Quairading FCO's and the last time they have undertaken the FCO Course.

Previous discussions surrounding the competency for this course at BFAC meetings came to an agreement that while completing the FCO course awards competency for some time, a Refresher Course should be attended by FCO's every 5 years, in order to upskill and learn about recent legislative changes.

Off-Season Training for Deployments

It has been noted by those that attended deployments over the 2020/21 Bush Fire season that some training should be conducted for those that are interested in attending future deployments, whether they be a single shift deployment or a multi-shift deployment.

7.5 Shire Firebreak Order

The Shire of Quairading issues all land owners within the Shire of Quairading a firebreak notice annually under section 33 of the Bush Fires Act 1954. The purpose of the notice is to ensure compliance is met from all land owners regarding firebreaks and cleanliness of properties to minimise the risk of bush fire spread.

Please find the Firebreak Notice attached for comment and consideration of any amendments required for the 2021/2022 Fire Season.

8.1 Joint Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Position

Currently there is only one DCBFCO and there is a need to identify a second DCBFCO for the election of positions in the Pre-Season BFAC meeting to be held in September 2021.

Council has in the past appointed two (2) Deputy Chiefs so there is a greater chance of one of the three (3) Chief / Deputy Chiefs being in the District at any point of time. Another reason for the Dual Deputies is to have one incoming, that will then step up to Chief, and one outgoing, that has been Chief and stepping down to Deputy to assist the incoming Chief in their role.

8.2 Personal Protective Clothing / Equipment

Many volunteers in surrounding Local Governments are now wanting to go away from the gold tunic and pants and move over to the blue cargo pants and lime green tunic for volunteers.

Helmets will slowly be ordered for FCO's and Brigade Captains as per DFES Directive 1.3 – Dress and Grooming, Standard Administration Procedure 1.3.D – Dress standards. This will be handed out at the meeting for viewing and comment.

8.3 Bush Fire Brigade T-Shirts

As Bushfire Brigade Volunteers are now eligible for T-Shirts under the LGGS there has been some questions raised as to who is eligible for these and when they will be ordered. While all volunteers are eligible to receive these if they are listed as a brigade member, there has been some arguments regarding many listed volunteers have not been actively involved with the brigade for some time and should not be eligible for these shirts.

8.4 Foam Induction Systems

Currently there have been many issues reported with the Foam Systems on the Appliances.

Much of the unreliability issue results from volunteers not correctly flushing out the systems once they have completed the foam.

The CESM has been requesting each brigade put a drum of water on the appliance that the spear can be put into following the conclusion of Foam operations, in order to flush the whole system.

Unfortunately, this has not been well received in some Brigades and again there has been many complications around the Foam induction systems.

8.5 Fire Appliance Swap

Proposal to swap Fire Appliance between Quairading North and Quairading Central BFB's – CESM Simon Bell to introduce for discussion.

ITEM 9 NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled to take place in September 2021, commencing at 5:00pm in the Shire Administration Centre, Council Chambers, Jennaberring Road, Quairading.

ITEM 10 CLOSURE

There being no further business, the Chairperson closed the meeting at _____pm.