



## Bush fire Advisory Committee

Minutes | 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023



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# SHIRE OF QUAIRADING

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2023 commencing at 5:30 pm.

## ITEM 1 OPENING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

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The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the Meeting and declared the Meeting open at 5:30pm.

## ITEM 2 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

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### 2.1 Fire Control Officers / Weather Monitors

Mr N Gelmi	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Mr B Wilson	Fire Control Officer / Captain Quairading North BFB
Mr A Duncan	Fire Control Officer / VFRS Captain / Central BFB Captain
Mr D Mastin	Central Brigade Lieutenant
Ms S Zorzonek	VFRS Representative
Mr L Johnston	Fire Control Officer, South Caroling
Mr T Mills	Representative, South Caroling
Mr C Mills	Fire Control Officer, Representative South Caroling BFB
Mr H Harris	Representative, Mawson/Doodenanning BFB
Mr G Mills	Captain, Wammenusking BFB

### 2.2 Shire

Cr J Hathornthwaite	Shire President, Chair
Cr T Stacey	Deputy Shire President
Ms N Ness	Chief Executive Officer
Mr B Davies	Community Emergency Services Manager
Ms S Caporn	Executive Manager of Works and Services, Minute Taker

### 2.3 Invited Observers / Visitors

Mr G Rowles	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
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### 2.4 Apologies

None received.

### ITEM 3 DEPUTATIONS / PRESENTATIONS / SUBMISSIONS

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Nil

### ITEM 4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES AND BUSINESS ARISING

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#### 4.1 Confirmation of Minutes – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022

**RECOMMENDATION: BFAC1– 23/24****MOVED Mr Nigel Gelmi****SECONDED Mr Linden Johnston**

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022 be confirmed as a true and correct record of that Meeting.

**CARRIED**

#### 4.2 Business Arising

Nil.

### ITEM 5 CORRESPONDENCE

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#### 5.1 Inward

Letter of Resignation from Mr M Whyte from the role of FCO.

#### 5.2 Outward

No outgoing correspondence.

### ITEM 6 CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER (CBFCO) REPORT

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- Fuel loads higher than 2022 and the landscape has dried off very fast.
- Trial of keeping one of the Central BFB trucks at Yoting.
- The Wamenusking truck attended the Corrigin incident several weeks ago.
- Our CBFCO attends DFES meetings so can raise any local brigade issues there on behalf of Quairading.
- Thank you to the Shire for making plant available at incidents.

### ITEM 7 DEPUTY CBFCO REPORT

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No report. Role remains vacant.

### ITEM 8 COMMUNITY EMERGENCY SERVICES MANAGER (CESM) REPORT

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- The Fuel cards have arrived for all our Brigades.

- South Carolling- tank location (diagonally OPP). OBRd and Dangin Mears Rd. ES2 fundraising will pay for cost of water and connection.
- Shire plant and staff at incident. (Corrigin fire)
- Water bomber reloading 5/11- Sunday.
- Deployment of resources out of area- process in the CESM or CFC5 are contracted.
- 24- central shed- relocating to Yoting for 23/24 season to trial.

**RECOMMENDATION: BFAC2– 23/24**

**MOVED Mr Ben Wilson**

**SECONDED Mr Grant Mills**

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee supports Council moving the Central 24 unit to Yoting housed at suitable location for 2023/24 season.

**CARRIED**

- Truck servicing is underway, carried out by Allen Cowcill. Any other repair requests to come through to Ben for actioning.

**ITEM 9 SHIRE REPORT**

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The meeting requested an update on training levels throughout the registered volunteers.

Bushfire Safety Awareness training is the minimum course to attend a fire ground.

Firefighting skills will be coming – how to track and enforce the training levels at fire remains an issue - particularly with private and farm response.

Bulk SMS system is working well and now contacts can easily be added.

**ITEM 10 OTHER AGENCY REPORTS**

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Seasonal outlook is that there will be greater chance of higher temperature this summer. DFES is concerned about the impact of heat extrema on vulnerable residence.

A reminder to nominate your grounds controller early.

Public information campaign for consistent messaging - bookmark [emergency.wa.gov.au](https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au) in web browser or on mobile device. Warning levels are Bushfire Advice, Watch & Act and Emergency Warning.

Starlink is a company that provides wireless internet. Devices work like satellite phone. A DFES trial was successful so this will be rolled out to incident response vehicles.

An update provided on state logistic capabilities such as increased number of bulk fuel pods as well as additional tyres and air filters available at incident sites. Also table, chairs, gazebo, hot boxes, eskys ,etc.

Fire mitigation activities around Quairading will focus on Unallocated Crown Land on the north side of town, towards the Waste Site.

## ITEM 11 ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

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### 11.1 Appointment of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Cr J Haythornthwaite was asked to act as returning officer for the following office bearer elections. Cr Haythornthwaite thanked all FCO's for their service over the past year, and then declared all positions vacant.

Nominations were called for the position for Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Mr B Wilson nominated Mr N Gelmi

Mr L Johnston seconded this nomination

Mr N Gelmi accepted the nomination

There being no further nominations, Mr N Gelmi was elected unopposed.

#### **RECOMMENDATION: BFAC3– 23/24**

**MOVED Mr Ben Wilson**

**SECONDED Mr Linden Johnston**

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

Mr Nigel Gelmi be appointed as Chief Bush Fire Control Officer until September 2024.

**CARRIED**

### 11.2 Appointment of Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Nominations were called for the position for Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer/s.

Nominations were called for the position for Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Mr N Gelmi nominated Mr B Wilson

Mr L Johnston seconded this nomination

Mr Wilson declined the nomination. No other nominations were received.

### 11.3 Appointment of Fire Control Officers

**Current FCO's: -**

South Caroling BFB – Mr T. Mills, Mr L Johnston

Wamenusking – Mr G Hughes, Mr N Gelmi

Balkuling / Doodenanning – Mr M Davies

North Quairading – Mr B Wilson, Mr T Hadlow

Central – Mr B Davies

All Fire Control Officers were moved in block as per the below recommendation.

**RECOMMENDATION: BFAC4– 23/24**

**MOVED Mr Linden Johnston                      SECONDED Mr Ben Wilson**

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

The following persons subject to their acceptance, be elected as Fire Control Officers for the Shire of Quairading for the next 12 Months: -

Mr N Gelmi, Mr T Mills, Mr L Johnson, Mr G Hughes, Mr M Davies, Mr T Hadlow, Mr B Wilson, and Mr B Davies.

**CARRIED**

Mr B Davies noted that there is a digital permit for a Fire Breaks Notice now available.

*6.10pm Mr D Mastin and Ms S Zorzonek left the meeting to attend an incident.*

#### **11.4 Appointment of Fire Weather Monitors**

The Role of the Fire Weather Monitors is to keep an eye on current weather conditions at the request of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, or Deputy in the Chiefs absence in order to decide whether a harvest vehicle movement and hot works ban will be implemented at any given time on a day that is required should the weather conditions warrant it.

**RECOMMENDATION: BFAC5– 23/24**

**MOVED Mr Mathew Whyte                      SECONDED Mr Linden Johnston**

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

The following persons be appointed as Fire Weather Advisors for the forthcoming year: -

Town	Ms Sarah Caporn
North West Area	Mr Mitchell Davies
South West Area	Mr Todd Mills
South East Area	Mr Greg Hughes
North East Area	Mr Ben Wilson
Advisor	Mr Nigel Gelmi

**CARRIED**

## **ITEM 12      DISCUSSION POINTS**

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### **12.1 Pre-Season Synopsis**

- High fuel loadings
- Expecting similar weather conditions
- High temps, lower fuel loads, dry already
- Early air support- high response level required.

## **12.2 Restricted Burning Period/Prohibited Burning Period (RBT/PBT)**

No changes to the current Gazetted Restricted and Prohibited Burning Periods for the 2023/24 firebreak notice, all dates are inclusive.

### **Restricted Burning Period, permits required:**

- 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023

### **Prohibited Burning Period:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2024

### **Restricted Burning Period, permits required:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024 – 29<sup>th</sup> March 2024

## **12.3 Fire Control Officer Training**

BFAC wish to hold some FCO training prior to next restricted burning period in February 2024. This training will be a half day refresher covering permits and weather monitoring procedures.

## **12.4 Letter from Mr B Wilson**

A letter was tabled by Mr Ben Wilson regarding use of the North Quairading Fire Truck. He received an initial letter from the Shire and he tabled his response dated 10 February 2023 for the meeting. He is yet to receive a formal reply from the Shire which Ms Natalie Ness said she would follow up and provide a formal reply from the Shire.

## **ITEM 13 NEXT MEETING DATE**

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The next Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April commencing at 5:00pm in the Council Chambers.

The 2024/25 Pre Season Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

## **ITEM 14 CLOSURE**

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There being no further business, the Chairperson closed the meeting at 6.28 pm.



I certify the Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022 were confirmed on \_\_\_\_\_ as recorded.

Confirmed.....\_/\_/2023