



Bush Fire Advisory Committee

Minutes | 15th October 2024



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SHIRE OF QUAIRADING

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 15th October 2024 commencing at 5:00 pm.

ITEM 1 OPENING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the Meeting and declared the Meeting open at 5.04 pm.

ITEM 2 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

2.1 Fire Control Officers / Weather Monitors

Mr N Gelmi	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, FCO Wamenusking BFB
Mr L Johnston	Fire Control Officer, Representative South Caroling BFB
Mr M Davies	Fire Control Officer, Representative Balkuling/Doodenanning BFB
Mr M Peacock	Representative Balkuling/Doodenanning BFB
Mr H Harris	Representative Balkuling/Doodenanning BFB
Mr B Wilson	Fire Control Officer, Captain North Quairading BFB
Mr T Hadlow	Fire Control Officer, Representative North Quairading BFB
Mr D Mastin	Brigade Lieutenant, Central BFB, VFRS Lieutenant
Mr B Davies	Fire Control Officer, Central BFB, CESM
Ms S Korzonek	VFRS Representative

2.2 Shire

Cr J Haythornthwaite	Shire President, Chair
Cr T Stacey	Deputy Shire President
Ms N Ness	Chief Executive Officer
Ms S Caporn	Executive Manager of Works and Services, Minute Taker

2.3 Invited Observers / Visitors/Agencies

2.4 Apologies

Mr G Mills	Captain, Wamenusking BFB
Mr T Mills	Fire Control Officer, Representative South Caroling BFB
Mr G Hughes	Fire Control Officer, Representative Wamenusking BFB
Mr A Duncan	Fire Control Officer, Captain Central BFB /VFRS Captain
Mr M Richards	Captain, Representative South Caroling BFB
Mr J Corrigan	Department of Fire and Emergency Services

ITEM 3 DEPUTATIONS / PRESENTATIONS / SUBMISSIONS

Australian Fire Warning System Update: Presentation by Ben Davies to group to explain the – national approach and changes to the three consistent levels of warning regardless of the hazard –

1. Advice (yellow) -> 2. Watch & Act (orange) -> 3. Emergency Warning (red)

All hazards have the same coherent tiered coloured icon system (fire, flood, cyclone etc).

Presentation covered both the escalation and de-escalation of hazardous conditions.

Pre-Season Planning: Presentation by Ben Davies.

Harvest & Vehicle Movement Bans – FDR trigger is 40. Discussion between CESM & CFCO.

WhatsApp group will be utilized to wider FCO group. Shire's EMWS will be responsible for bulk text messaging to Shire's Harvest Ban text group to communicate HVMB.

The group agreed for to landowners contacting an FCO to communicate an isolated incident of accessing to access a paddock during a HVMB. The FCOs will have a collective WhatsApp group to let all other FCOs know of any approvals.

ACTION: BEN TO ESTABLISH AND COMMUNICATE APPROVAL PROCESS TO FCOs

Incident Response & Mobilising – Please report all incidents to 000. Key points on control, initial information.

DFES – Regional Duty Coordinator (monitored 24/7 for 365 days per year) 1800 966 077

ITEM 4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES AND BUSINESS ARISING

4.1 Confirmation of Minutes – 11th April 2024

RESOLUTION: BFAC 001-24/25

MOVED L Johnston SECONDED T Stacey

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on the 11th of April 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record of that meeting.

CARRIED

4.2 Business Arising

Nil

ITEM 5 CORRESPONDENCE

5.1 Inward

April 2024 – “Thank You” from the Shire of Waroona (see attachment).

3.4 Urban Tankers – issue with rear pump where impellor between pump and gear fails. Aware of issue and impacts 136 appliances across the state. Goldfields/Midland are due for repairs in November.

5.2 Outward

Nil

ITEM 6 CBFCO / DCBFCO / FCO / CESM REPORTS

6.1 CBFCO Report

Thanks to Ben – covered a lot of information. 82 fires in last 24 months – highest number on record (since 1999), mostly lightning strikes. Thanks for fellow FCOs for their volunteering and thanks to Shire to supplying equipment. Fire breaks are due on 31st October.

6.2 DCBFCO Report

Role vacant

6.3 FCO's Reports

Nothing to report from those present.

6.4 CESM Report

Thanks to everyone for the role they do. Fuel loadings are high so potential for fire starting to run. There's lots of resources available if needed. All trucks have been serviced. There are some issues with electrics but an auto sparky is coming.

Works around North Quairading shed – needs slashing and blue metal at front.

New water tank at South Caroling has been installed.

Defib batteries and pads require changing – Ben has available for each brigade to collect and install along with trauma kits and first aid kits.

Basic First Aid Training is available to anyone who would like to do some.

We have seven new ground controllers so thank you to those for completing that training.

Online course for Bush Fire Awareness

PPE is available. Ben has an order form for those that want some.

Water bombers – available in Narrogin and Cunderdin.

6.5 Shire Report

Shire were successful in receiving DFES Fire Aware funding. Ben will present to the two Community Forums tomorrow.

Bushfire Mitigation activities have been completed at Waste Site and Cemetery.

Ben requested some potential locations for new fire water tanks, particularly on the north and north west sides of town.

6.6 Other Agency Reports

ITEM 7 ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

7.1 Appointment of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Mr T Hadlow nominated Mr Nigel Gelmi as Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

Mr L Johnston seconded.

Mr N Gelmi accepted the nomination.

RESOLUTION: BFAC 002-24/25

MOVED L Johnston SECONDED H Harris

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommend to Council that Nigel Gelmi be appointed as Chief Bush Fire Control Officer until October 2025.

CARRIED

7.2 Appointment of Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

No nominations received.

RECOMMENDATION

MOVED SECONDED

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommend to Council that _____ be appointed as Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer until October 2025.

7.3 Appointment of Fire Control Officers

Mr B Wilson nominated all who had been appointed Fire Control Officers in the previous year and M Peacock and H Harris.

Mr Harris seconded the nominations.

All present nominees accepted.

RESOLUTION: BFAC 003-24/25

MOVED B Wilson SECONDED H Harris

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommend to Council that the following persons, subject to their acceptance, be appointed Fire Control Officers for the Shire of Quairading until October 2025:

Mr N Gelmi, Mr L Johnston, Mr M Davies, Mr M Peacock, Mr H Harris, Mr B Wilson, Mr T Hadlow, Mr G Mills, Mr T Mills, Mr G Hughes, Mr M Richards.

CARRIED

7.4 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.

RESOLUTION: BFAC 004-24/25

MOVED B Wilson SECONDED L Johnston

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommend to Council that the following persons be appointed as Fire Weather Advisors until October 2025:

Town	Sarah Caporn, CESM (when available)
North West Area	Mitch Davies
South West Area	Todd Mills
South East Area	Greg Hughes
North East Area	Ben Wilson
Advisor	Nigel Gelmi

CARRIED

ITEM 8 DISCUSSION POINTS

8.1 Pre-Season Synopsis

See presentation on pre-season planning at Item 3

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

The following dates have been made public to the community with the Shire's Fire Break Notice 2024/25:

Restricted Burning Period:

- 16th October 2024 – 31st October 2024

Prohibited Burning Period:

- 1st November 2024 – 28th February 2025

Restricted Burning Period:

- 28th February 2025 – 29th March 2025

It was discussed that current weather and ground conditions in addition to high fuel load warrant a cautious approach to burning restrictions. The Committee agreed to modify the previously advertised restriction dates to the following:

Restricted Burning Period:

- 16th October 2024 – 17th October 2024

Prohibited Burning Period:

- 18th October 2024 – 28th February 2025

Restricted Burning Period:

- 28th February 2025 – 29th March 2025

Shire to circulate messages regarding Prohibited Burning Period for Easter and Anzac Day.

RESOLUTION: BFAC 005-24/25

MOVED H Harris SECONDED T Hadlow

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommend to Council that the Prohibited Burning Period commence on 18th October 2024.

CARRIED

8.3 General Business

Is there going to be a truck based at Yoting this year? Ben confirmed that a truck will be moved on Friday for the duration of harvest period. Once harvest is finished, it will be moved back to town.

ITEM 9 NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 9 April 2025 commencing at 5:00pm in the Council Chambers.

The 2025/26 Pre-Season Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, 8 October 2025.

ITEM 10 CLOSURE

There being no further business, the Chairperson closed the meeting at 6.19 pm.

15 April 2024

To the members of the Quairading Bush Fire Brigade,

Thank you!

On Wednesday the 3rd of April, our Chief bushfire control officer declared an All Clear for our recent Nanga Brook bushfire. This marked the culmination of a significant effort by many to help contain and control a bushfire that had the potential to impact many properties.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to everyone who came to help and the support we felt as a community was truly appreciated. As many of you know, in the last decade our community has dealt with the peril of bushfires and the anxiety that comes with facing the possibility of losing property, and the anguish of a life threatened from a bushfire.

Once again, we have been blessed with the generosity of time and endeavour from volunteers and emergency service personnel from all over Western Australia who took time from their own lives to assist in all facets of making our community safe again. To all the supporting agencies, your assistance has also not gone unnoticed.

I sincerely thank you from our community. We are indebted to you for the efforts you all displayed in helping us through this challenging period.

Yours faithfully



Mike Walmsley
Shire President