

Shire of Northam Heritage, Commerce and Lifestyle

SHIRE OF NORTHAM

MINUTES BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BFAC) MEETING HELD TUESDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2016

SHIRE OF NORTHAM

MINUTES

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	OPENING AND WELCOME		
2.	DECLARATION OF INTEREST		
3.	ATTE	NDANCE	87
4.	APOLOGIES		
5.	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS		
6.	AGENDA ITEMS		
	6.1	VBFB PROCEDURES MANUAL – UPDATE FROM WORKING GROUP	89
	6.2	UPDATE ON REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE	91
	6.3	CHANGES TO BURNING OF REFUSE DURING LIMITED BURN	-
	6.4	FIRE PERMITS	96
	6.5	CREATION OF NEW BUSHFIRE BRIGADES	98
	6.6	CREATION OF NORTHAM CENTRAL BRIGADE	101
	6.7	CESM REPORT	103
	6.8	CBFCO REPORT AND ITEMS FROM THE COMMITTEE	105
7.	OTHE	R BUSISNESS FROM THE COMMITTEE	107
8.	DATE	OF NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING	107
9.	DECL	ARATION OF CLOSURE	107

Minutes of the Shire of Northam Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting to be held in the Council Chambers on TUESDAY, 16 FEBRUARY 2016 at 5:30 pm

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1. OPENING AND WELCOME

The Presiding Member Mr G Shepherdson declared the meeting open at 5.32pm.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Nil.

3. ATTENDANCE

Bakers Hill Brigade Clackline/Muresk Brigade Grass Valley Brigade/CBFCO Inkpen Brigade Irishtown Brigade Jennapullin Brigade Southern Brook Brigade Wundowie Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service Northam Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service Shire of Northam

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS (NON-VOTING RIGHTS)

Chief Executive Officer Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (East) Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (West) Shire Executive Manager Development Services Community Emergency Services Manager

4. APOLOGIES

Inkpen Brigade Shire of Northam Department of Fire and Emergency Services Mat Macqueen Chadd Hunt Daniel Hendriksen

Jason Whiteaker

Rob Herzer

Steve Gray

Blair Wilding

Soren Nielsen

David Russell

Aaron Smith

Paul Antonio

Trevor Sangston

Greg Montgomery

Cr Ulo Rumjantsev

Garry Shepherdson

Sim Kuiper Cr Terry Little Sven Anderson

SHIRE OF NORTHAM

MINUTES

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2016

5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RECOMMENDATION

Minute No: BFAC.119

Moved: D Russel Seconded: S Gray

That the minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, 17 November 2015 at 5.30pm be confirmed as a true and correct record of that meeting

SHIRE OF NORTHAM MINUTES

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2016

6. AGENDA ITEMS

6.1 VBFB PROCEDURES MANUAL – UPDATE FROM WORKING GROUP

Name of Applicant:	Procedures Manual Working Group
Name of Owner:	N/A
File Ref:	5.1.3.1
Officer:	David Russell, Ulo Rumjanstev, Garry Shepherdson
Officer Interest:	Nil.
Policy:	Nil.
Voting:	N/A
Date:	16 February 2016

PURPOSE

For the Committee to receive an update and report from working group on the review and recommended updates, of the VBFB Procedures Manual.

BACKGROUND

As per Minute No: BFAC 103 AND 104, the Committee endorsed that a working group be established to review the Volunteer Bushfire Brigade procedures manual and was to include Committee members Garry Shepherdson, David Russell and Ulo Rumjanstev. It was requested that the working group report back to the next BFAC meeting. In addition the working party were to review and recommend updates to the VBFB Administration Procedures Manual prior to the next meeting.

These Committee decisions were endorsed at the Ordinary Council meeting held on 15 July 2015.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Bush Fires Act 1954 Local Government Act 1995.

CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN

OBJECTIVE: Provide services and processes to enhance public safety.

STRATEGY C2.1: Provide community services to uphold public safety standards.

- STRATEGY C2.2: Support provision of emergency services.
- STRATEGY C2.3: Provide, monitor and improve adequate Bush Fire Protection provisions.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

OFFICER'S COMMENT

The current procedures manual is generally defined as a Policy of Council and as such can be modified through the normal policy review procedure (generally every year) or at any other time as determined by Council. As the name suggests Local Laws are more formal instruments adopted under the relevant Act, in this case the Bush Fires Act and Local Government Act. There is a more stringent procedure for adopting and modifying Local Laws including the requirement for advertising (state-wide), calling for public submissions, and approval through the relevant Government department and Minister.

Staff support the standardisation of the content and format of either the current procedures manual or any proposed local law. In staff's opinion the key issue is having a set of guidelines that the Brigades, Council and staff believe are appropriate and are utilised for the intended purpose. The options of local laws as opposed to a Council policy can be determined once the key elements of the document have been agreed to by the sub-committee and BFAC.

RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.120

Moved: D Russell Seconded: B Wilding

That Council;

- 1. Review all (any) current Local Laws that are bush fire related, including those that apply to fire breaks, and if they are found to be out-of-date or not applicable that they be rescinded or amended.
- 2. Request BFAC to investigate and report back to Council regarding the adoption of WALGA's Model Bush Fire Brigade Local Laws as adopted by several other Shires to better reflect the current BUSH FIRES ACT 1954, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1995 and the FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES ACT. Should Council decide that the adoption of "Local Laws" may be appropriate then these be developed in conjunction with the Shire of Northam's Bush Fire Brigades Administration Procedures Manual.

6.2 UPDATE ON REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

Name of Applicant:	Terms of Reference Working group
Name of Owner:	N/A
File Ref:	5.1.3.1
Officer:	David Russell, Garry Shepherdson, Mat Mac queen and Blair Wilding
Officer Interest:	Nil.
Policy:	Nil.
Voting:	N/A
Date:	16 February 2016

PURPOSE

For the Committee to receive an update and report in relation to the working group undertaking a review and recommendations of improvements of the Committee's Terms of Reference.

BACKGROUND

As per Minute No. BFAC 109, from the previous committee meeting held on 7 July 2015, the Committee endorsed that the Bushfire Advisory Committee (BFAC) establish a working group consisting of the following members, David Russell, Gary Shepherdson, Mat Macqueen and Blair Wilding to review the terms of reference and make recommendations for the consideration at the next scheduled BFAC meeting.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Bushfire Advisory Committee Terms of Reference. Local Government Act 1995.

CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN

OBJECTIVE: Provide services and processes to enhance public safety.

STRATEGY C2.1: Provide community services to uphold public safety standards.

STRATEGY C2.2: Support provision of emergency services.

STRATEGY C2.3: Provide, monitor and improve adequate Bush Fire Protection provisions.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

OFFICERS COMMENT

An update on the progress on where the working party is at with the review will be provided at this meeting.

RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.121

Moved: U Rumjantsev Seconded: P Antonio

That Council note the progress on the BFAC Terms of reference working party.

6.3 CHANGES TO BURNING OF REFUSE DURING LIMITED BURNING TIMES

Name of Applicant:	Bushfire Advisory Committee
Name of Owner:	N/A
File Ref:	5.1.3.1
Officer:	Daniel Hendriksen
Officer Interest:	Nil.
Policy:	Nil.
Voting:	N/A
Date:	16 February 2016

PURPOSE

Reduce the risk of fire in the restricted and prohibited burning periods by prohibiting all burning during prohibiting burning period and specifying what, were and when burning of refuse can occur.

BACKGROUND

Under the Bushfires Act 24G (2) the Shire of Northam can make changes to the limit the burning of refuse. It has been suggested that the Shire of Northam should make changes to reduce the risk of bushfire caused by a backyard burn getting out of hand.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Section 24G Bushfire Act 1954 which states as follows -

24G. Minister or local government may further restrict burning of garden refuse

- (1) On the recommendation of the FES Commissioner the Minister may, by notice published in the Gazette, prohibit or impose restrictions on the burning of garden refuse that is otherwise permitted under section 24F.
- (2) A local government may, by notice published in the Gazette and a newspaper circulating in its district, prohibit or impose restrictions on the burning of garden refuse within its district that is otherwise permitted under section 24F.
- (3) A person must not burn garden refuse contrary to a prohibition or restriction imposed under this section.
- (4) In a notice under this section the Minister or a local government must specify —

 (a) the person or class of persons to whom; and
 - (b) the area in which; and
 - (c) the period during which,
 - (d) the notice applies.
- (5) The Minister or a local government may vary or cancel a notice under subsection (1) or (2) by publishing a further notice under the relevant subsection.

CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN

SHIRE OF NORTHAM MINUTES

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2016

OBJECTIVE: Provide services and processes to enhance public safety.

STRATEGY C2.1: Provide community services to uphold public safety standards.

- STRATEGY C2.2: Support provision of emergency services.
- STRATEGY C2.3: Provide, monitor and improve adequate Bush Fire Protection provisions.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

OFFICER'S COMMENT

It appears that the burning of garden refuse on residential lots is causing an issue from a number of perspectives, including the fact that technically the burning of refuse during the prohibited burning period can be undertaken without a permit. In addition a number of permits are being requested by residents within the town site areas primarily to burn garden refuse. The intent of the changes is to ensure that residents within town site undertake the burning of garden refuse outside of the restricted and prohibited periods.

By stipulating the below recommendations we have removed the issue of residents burning during the prohibited period without a permit. Reduced burning with in the town sites to permit only will mean less smoke complaints or hazards caused by backyard burning in the town site. Instead green waste can be taken to the landfill.

SHIRE OF NORTHAM

MINUTES

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2016

RECOMMENDATION

Minute No: BFAF.122

Moved: P Antonio Seconded: T Sangston

That Council;

- 1. Endorse that the following restriction apply to the burning of garden refuse in accordance with Section 24G (2) of the Bush Fires Act 1954
 - i. During the prohibited period no burning without a permit, this includes incinerators and on the ground burning.
 - ii. During the restricted period no burning on a property less than 2000m2 with in the Shire of Northam without a permit.
 - iii. During the restricted period properties 2000m2 and above can light a fire under the conditions of Section 24F (3) of the Act without a permit.
- 2. Following the adoption of the above recommendation, place public notice of the new restrictions and include within the future Firebreak Orders for the Shire of Northam.

Name of Applicant:	Bushfire Advisory Committee
Name of Owner:	N/A
File Ref:	5.1.3.1
Officer:	Daniel Hendriksen
Officer Interest:	Nil.
Policy:	Nil.
Voting:	N/A
Date:	16 February 2016

6.4 FIRE PERMITS

PURPOSE

To better manage and control the issuing of fire permits within the Shire of Northam.

BACKGROUND

At the BFAC meeting held in November 2015 the following resolution was reached -

That Council, request the Chief Executive Officer to investigate the possibility of Council Officers issuing permits to burn for the 2016/17 fire season and present a report through BFAC.

It is clear that currently Fire Control Officers are overwelmed with the number of permits that are required to be issued through the restricted period. In addition our current system does not allow us to properly manage the number of permits that are being issued on any given day nor a central databse for permits that have been issued for any given day.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Bushfires Act 1954

CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN

OBJECTIVE: Provide services and processes to enhance public safety.

STRATEGY C2.1: Provide community services to uphold public safety standards.

STRATEGY C2.2: Support provision of emergency services.

STRATEGY C2.3: Provide, monitor and improve adequate Bush Fire Protection provisions.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Possible Budget requirements for the addition of a portal on website

OFFICER'S COMMENT

A number of possible options for improving the current system are being investigated including but not limited to the following –

- Create a simple procedure on Permit issuing which covers simple backyard burns and a point where it is passed off to the CBFCO. Set areas were a permits are denied such as in the town site unless there is mitigating circumstances.
- Allow Rangers to become FCO's (Permit issuing only) to issue permits during the week with in the town site. All permits that present more of a hazard than a simple backyard burn are to be handed to the CBFCO or Deputy CBFCO.
- Reduce the number of Active FCO's to make some (Administration only) which will cover permits and weather.
- Create a set date and time to get a permit on rural land during weekends 9-11, Sat-Sun at the local station.
- A portal on the shires website with a calendar of all permits issued which can be checked by FCO's

This purpose of this report is to seek some feedback from BFAC on the options that are being proposed above. Following this feedback, and any other suggestions that members may have a report will be submitted to the next BFAC meeting to ensure that any changes are acted on for the 2016/17 Fire Season.

RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.123

Moved: U Rumjantsev Seconded: B Wilding

That Council note the content of the Fire Permits report.

CARRIED 10/0

Note: Staff are to email ideas to the Brigades in regards to the FCO's viewing, tracking and monitoring permits which have been issued.

Name of Applicant: **Bushfire Advisory Committee** Name of Owner: N/A 5.1.3.1 File Ref: Officer: Garry Shepherdson, BFAC Members Officer Interest: Nil. Nil. Policy: N/A Voting: Date: 16 February 2016

6.5 CREATION OF NEW BUSHFIRE BRIGADES

PURPOSE

Preparedness for bushfires to ensure that the shires needs are met by preplanning for ongoing and future develop around the townships of Wundowie and Northam.

BACKGROUND

With our community growth and more farmland being sub-divided there is an increasing need to provide further asset protection in the event of a bushfire. This demand will need to be met with additional resources.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Nil.

CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN

OBJECTIVE: Provide services and processes to enhance public safety.

STRATEGY C2.1: Provide community services to uphold public safety standards.

STRATEGY C2.2: Support provision of emergency services.

STRATEGY C2.3: Provide, monitor and improve adequate Bush Fire Protection provisions.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

OFFICER'S COMMENT

The concept of additional brigades and/or the change of existing brigade structures is something that is generally included with strategic planning documents such as "Risk to Resource" reviews. The Shire of Northam will in the near future being undertaking a review of the Risk to Resource document once more clear guidelines have been received from

DFES on the form and content required. It is inevitable given the current and future development occurring within the western sector of the Shire that a review of the brigade structures in those areas will be required. In addition the concept of potentially creating additional brigades that may increase volunteer numbers is also worthy of further investigations.

A number of options exist around the future structure of the current and future brigades of the Shire. Some of these options may include –

- Establishing a dual registered Brigade with Northam VFRS
- Establishing a VES Brigade with Northam SES
- Establishing a dual registered Brigade with Wundowie VFRS
- Establishing a new standalone Bush Fire Brigade in Northam
- Establishing a new standalone Bush Fire Brigade in Wundowie
- Options for increasing the capacity of Bakers Hill/Clackline Muresk to undertake structural firefighting

As indicated considerable discussion and consideration needs to be undertaken with regard to any proposed changes to the current structure. In addition a report/business plan needs to be written to support this and presented to DFES should any recommendations be reached.

The purpose of this report is to determine if BFAC considers the options discussed above worthy of further investigation or if the current structure adequate. Should BFAC believe there to be merit in undertaking the review then Council resources should be allocated to undertake further research and review.

In staff's opinion the review of the current structure and the development of new brigades (in whichever format), is required. This will require more formal meetings with both BFAC members, BFB, VFRS, DFES representatives as well as research into other operating models from around the State.

SHIRE OF NORTHAM

MINUTES

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2016

RECOMMENDATION

Minute No: BFAC.124

Moved: S Gray Seconded: A Smith

That Council create a subcommittee to undertake a review of the existing and future structure of the Bush Fire Brigades as indicated within this report and requests that a further report be presented to BFAC with the findings of the review. The subcommittee is to consist of the following members;

- Daniel Hendriksen;
- Ulo Rumjantsev;
- Greg Montgomery; and
- Rob Herzer.

Name of Applicant:	Bushfire Advisory Committee
Name of Owner:	N/A
File Ref:	5.1.3.1
Officer:	David Russell, Garry Shepherdson
Officer Interest:	Nil.
Policy:	Nil.
Voting:	N/A
Date:	16 February 2016

6.6 CREATION OF NORTHAM CENTRAL BRIGADE

PURPOSE

Provide the community and brigades with additional fire support in central location

BACKGROUND

Local Brigades are coming under increasing pressure due to the lack of volunteers who are able to crew fire trucks particularly the heaver units that require drivers who have heavy vehicles licences. The factors around the diminishing volunteer base are well known and include a changing demographic, fly in-out / ageing population and generally a reluctance for people to volunteer.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Nil.

CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN

OBJECTIVE: Provide services and processes to enhance public safety.

STRATEGY C2.1: Provide community services to uphold public safety standards.

STRATEGY C2.2: Support provision of emergency services.

STRATEGY C2.3: Provide, monitor and improve adequate Bush Fire Protection provisions.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

OFFICER'S COMMENT

There would be greater potential for a Central Bush Fire Brigade to attract volunteers from within the town.

A secondary outcome of a Central BFB would be the ability to house a dedicated Incident Control Centre as per the Toodyay facility.

The report by the sub-committee could also include suitable site(s) for the facility and investigations as to whether ESL / Funding monies would be available for construction.

RECOMMENDATION

Minute No: BFAC.125

Moved: D Russell Seconded: P Antonio

That Council forms a subcommittee of BFAC, consisting of Daniel Hendriksen as the Shire representative and David Russell as the BFAC representative, to investigate and report on the prospect of establishing a Central Heavy Fast Reaction Bush Fire Brigade.

CARRIED 9/1

6.7 CESM REPORT

Name of Applicant:	Bushfire Advisory Committee
Name of Owner:	N/A
File Ref:	5.1.3.1
Officer:	Daniel Hendriksen
Officer Interest:	Nil.
Policy:	Nil.
Voting:	N/A
Date:	16 February 2016

PURPOSE

For the Community Emergency Services Manager to provide an update to the Bushfire Advisory Committee.

BACKGROUND

N/A

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

N/A

CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN

OBJECTIVE: Provide services and processes to enhance public safety.

- STRATEGY C2.1: Provide community services to uphold public safety standards.
- STRATEGY C2.2: Support provision of emergency services.

STRATEGY C2.3: Provide, monitor and improve adequate Bush Fire Protection provisions.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

OFFICER'S COMMENT

Inkpen Fire shed is proceeding with the block being cleared ready to build. The contract to build the shed was signed on the 3rd of this month. The project is scheduled to be complete by the end of this financial year.

ESL LGGS Budget - We have contacted DFES as we will have an over expenditure for the 2015-2016 LGGS Grant. This is due to high vehicle maintenance cost and PPE. At

present the Shire has spent \$34,785 with an estimate of another \$9,000 outstanding on vehicle repairs. Some repairs are due to damage at the Waroona Fires. In addition, we have also spent \$20,499 on PPE uniform costs. These added expenses on top of the usual expenditure of insurance, running costs and building maintenance has caused this to occur.

DFES Training calendar for 2016 is out. I have emailed a copy on to all brigade captains. Please speak to your brigades training officer for a copy.

Standpipes - Interim fittings have been made up for the all standpipes that have not been permanently fitted with BIC and 38mm Camlock. The interim fitting is an adaptor Male BIC to 38mm Male Camlock which will be welded with a chain to the existing BIC Hydrant. Further works will be completed in the future to provide a permanent solution.

Congratulations, to Tania Petersen from Bakers Hills on taking out the award for volunteer of the month award for January. Just a reminder to all captains to nominate a member each month to promotional your volunteers.

Bakers Hill Fire shed has been allocated funds to complete the concrete cross over at the fire shed. I will be organising these works shortly.

CBFCO Vehicle - The ex-Ranger Holden Colorado 4WD will become the CBFCO vehicle. The shire is currently in the process of purchasing a new Ranger vehicle. Once this vehicle arrives the old one can be kited out as the CBFCO vehicle. DFES have donated some equipment for the vehicle and I have received quotes back for other items. As soon as the new vehicle is purchased and the Rangers items are transferred. I will start work on setting the vehicle up.

RECOMMENDATION

Minute No: BFAC.126

Moved: U Rumjantsev Seconded: A Smith

That Council notes the contents of the CESM Report.

6.8 CBFCO REPORT AND ITEMS FROM THE COMMITTEE

Name of Applicant:	Bushfire Advisory Committee
Name of Owner:	N/A
File Ref:	5.1.3.1
Officer:	Garry Shepherdson
Officer Interest:	Nil.
Policy:	Nil.
Voting:	N/A
Date:	16 February 2016

PURPOSE

For the Committee to discuss the items raised by CBFCO and Committee members.

BACKGROUND

The Chief and Committee members are asked to put forward any items they would like to discuss relating to the operation of Bushfires or the BFAC.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Bushfire Advisory Committee Terms of Reference. Local Government Act 1995.

CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC COMMUNITY PLAN

OBJECTIVE: Provide services and processes to enhance public safety.

STRATEGY C2.1: Provide community services to uphold public safety standards.

- STRATEGY C2.2: Support provision of emergency services.
- STRATEGY C2.3: Provide, monitor and improve adequate Bush Fire Protection provisions.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

OFFICER'S COMMENT

Items put forward for discussion by the Committee.

• FCO numbers - the number of active FCO's is too high. Some of the FCO's titles can be modified to be (Administration Purposes) which would cover Permits and

SHIRE OF NORTHAM MINUTES

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2016

Weather but the list needs to be reduced to only people who will step up to an incident control level.

- Brigade Captains are asked by DFES and the Shire to reduce their members list to properly denote a member's role in the brigade being active or support. There is a large number of members that do not actively attend fires but the shire still must pay the high insurance cost for their membership. If we reduce this amount then in future years we will have more of a budget to spend on the items you want or need.
- Brigades Annual General Meetings Brigades are asked to begin organising the date for their AGM's so that nominations for positions can be put forward at the next BFAC.
- Set a Date for the next BFAC The date put forward is the 31st of May 2016 to allow brigades to complete AGM's
- WAERN Radio Network A reminder to all users that the WAERN is only for operational use.
- The term for the positions of CBFCO and Deputy East and West is due for replacement. If anyone would like to nominate for the positons please put forward the nominations before the 16th May 2016.
- Extension of the Prohibited Period I would like to put forward that the Prohibited Period is extended 14 days to the 7th March 2016 due to the seasonal change. Does anyone have any objections?
- CBFCO report Discuss fires since previous meeting.

RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Moved: S Gray Seconded: S Nelson

That Council extend the Prohibited Period 14 Days until the 7 March 2016 and give public notice Pursuant to Section 17 of the Bushfires Act 1954.

LOST 10/0

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

- Insurance was questioned in regards to who is covered and at what level, relating to point 2 above.. Staff are to contact Local Government Insurance Service (LGIS) to clarify coverage and insurance issues
- In regards to point 8 above, it was advised that there were 57 turn outs since the meeting held in October 2015.
- Acknowledgement and appreciation was made in regards to the volunteers over the years.

7. OTHER BUSISNESS FROM THE COMMITTEE

- Horton Road Fire- issue it was questioned whether this could/should have been handed back to BGC rather than Local Governments retaining control.
- Fire Break Notice It was raised to put the emphasis back on the landowner for being responsible for the control of fire on their property.
- Harvest, Hot Work and Vehicle Movements Bans Issues were raised in regards to fire bans being imposed and the implications for landowners if one is imposed. A question was raised with regard to a recent ban that was imposed due to risk of resources not being available (Horton Road fire). It was suggested that the Brigades be notified of the existing procedure and delegation for imposing Harvest and Vehicle Movement Bans
- Issue raised with respect to the position of the fire blanket rear window shield obstructing the view of firefighters on the back of the truck on Inkpen 1.4 It is a safety issue that you cannot see if the person traveling on the back is safe. – CESM to investigate further
- Recently heard from DPaW firefighters that they are no longer managing fires on water catchment land and that it has been handed back to the LG. - CESM to investigate Water Catchment Land and the MOU with DPaW.

8. DATE OF NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

The next Bushfire Advisory meeting to be held on 31 May 2016.

9. DECLARATION OF CLOSURE

There being no further business, the Presiding Officer, Mr Garry Shepherdson declared the meeting closed at 7.18pm.

"I certify that the Minutes of the Bushfire Advisory Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 16 February 2016 have been confirmed as a true and correct record."		
Presiding Member.		
Date		