



Shire of Northam
Heritage, Commerce and Lifestyle

Shire of Northam

Minutes

Bush Fire Advisory Committee

14 December 2021

UNCONFIRMED

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1. DECLARATION OF OPENING

The Chief Executive Officer declared the meeting open at 5:32pm.

ELECTION OF PRESIDING MEMBER

In accordance with section 5.12 of the Local Government Act 1995. The members of a committee are to elect a presiding member from amongst themselves in accordance with Schedule 2.3, Division 1.

The members of a committee may elect a deputy presiding member from amongst themselves but any such election is to be in accordance with Schedule 2.3, Division 2.

Should the presiding member not be available or is unable or unwilling to perform the functions of presiding member, then the deputy presiding member, if any, may perform the functions of presiding member.

Election Process

The Chief Executive Officer called for nominations for the role of Presiding Member. Mr Blair Wilding nominated Mr Chris Marris who accepted the nomination. The Chief Executive Officer then called for any further nominations for the position of Presiding Member. No further nominations were forthcoming and as such the Chief Executive Officer announced that the nomination period is closed. The Chief Executive Officer declared Mr Chris Marris as the Presiding Member and Mr Chris Marris took the Chair at 5:33pm.

The Chief Executive Officer left the meeting at 5:33pm.

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

Mr Chris Marris acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet, the Ballardong and Whadjuk people of the Nyoongar nation and paid our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging.

3. ATTENDANCE

Voting Committee:

Councillor – Shire of Northam	Paul Curtis
Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	Chris Marris
Inkpen Bush Fire Brigade	Nic Dewar
Clackline Muresk Bush Fire Brigade	Blair Wilding
Bakers Hill Bush Fire Brigade	Kris Brown

Grass Valley Bush Fire Brigade	Mark Littlefair
Irishtown Bush Fire Brigade	Terry Hasson
Wundowie Bush Fire Brigade	Jason Cacic
Northam Central Bush Fire Brigade	Luke Hagan left at 6:58pm
Wundowie Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service	Andrew Wilson

Non Voting

District Officer Northam

Darrel Krammer

Staff:

Chief Executive Officer

Jason Whiteaker

Executive Manager Development Services

Chadd Hunt

Executive Assistant - CEO

Alysha McCall

Gallery:

Volunteer Bush Fire Association

Alex Espey

Clackline Muresk Bushfire Brigade

Joe Marasco

Bob Stockman

3.1 APOLOGIES

Voting Members:

Councillor – Shire of Northam

Maria Girak

Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer

Simon Peters

Jennapullin Bush Fire Brigade

Aaron Smith

Southern Brook Bush Fire Brigade

Paul Antonio

Northam Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service

Greg Montgomery

Non-Voting Members:

Community Emergency Service Manager

Brendon Rutter

3.2 APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil.

3.3 ABSENT

Department of Parks and Wildlife (Wheatbelt)

Graeme Keals

Department of Parks and Wildlife (Perth Hills)

Michael Pasotti

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members should fill in Disclosure of Interest forms for items in which they have a financial, proximity or impartiality interest and forward these to the Presiding Member before the meeting commences.

As defined in section 5.60A of the Local Government Act 1995, a **financial interest** occurs where a Councillor / Committee Member, or a person with whom the Councillor / Committee Member is closely associated, has a direct or indirect financial interest in the matter. That is, the person stands to make a financial gain or loss from the decision, either now or at some time in the future.

As defined in section 5.61 of the Local Government Act 1995, an **indirect financial interest** includes a reference to a financial relationship between that person and another person who requires a Local Government decision in relation to the matter.

As defined in section 5.60B of the Local Government Act 1995, a person has a **proximity interest** in a matter if the matter concerns a proposed change to a planning scheme affecting land that adjoins the person's land; or a proposed change to the zoning or use of land that adjoins the person's land; or a proposed development (as defined in section 5.63(5)) of land that adjoins the person's land.

As defined in 34C of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, an **impartiality interest** means an interest that could, or could reasonably be perceived to, adversely affect the impartiality of the person having the interest and includes an interest arising from kinship, friendship or membership of an association.

Item Name	Item No.	Name	Type of Interest	Nature of Interest
Development Services Report	6.1	Mr K Brown	Impartiality	Mr Brown is nominated for Senior Bush Fire Control Officer.
		Cr P Curtis	Impartiality	Cr Curtis is an active member of the Wundowie Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service and member of the Wundowie Bush Fire Brigade.

5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

5.1 COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 OCTOBER 2021

RECOMMENDATION / COUNCIL DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.260

Moved: Mr Nic Dewar

Seconded: Mr Luke Hagan

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory meeting held on 5 October 2021 be confirmed as a true and correct record of that meeting.

CARRIED 10/0

The Chief Executive Officer returned to the meeting at 5:38pm.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr Brown declared an "Impartiality" interest in item 6.1 – Development Services Report as Mr Brown is nominated for Senior Bush Fire Control Officer.

Cr Curtis declared an "Impartiality" interest in item 6.1 – Development Services Report as Cr Curtis is an active member of the Wundowie Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service and member of the Wundowie Bush Fire Brigade.

6.1 DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT

File Reference:	5.1.3.1
Reporting Officer:	Chadd Hunt. Executive Manager Development Services
Responsible Officer:	Chadd Hunt, Executive Manager Development Services
Officer Declaration of Interest:	Nil.
Voting Requirement:	Simple Majority
Press release to be issued:	No

BRIEF

For the Committee to receive and note the update provided by the Community Emergency Services Manager.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Open BFAC Decisions.
- Attachment 2: OHS Workshop- Summary of Outcomes
- Attachment 3: OHS Workshop - PPE/PPC Outcomes.
- Attachment 4: OHS Workshop- Training Outcomes.
- Attachment 5: Fire and Emergency Services Worker (Restrictions on Access) Directions (2).
- Attachment 6: DFES Frequently Asked Questions – Volunteers (updated 3 December 2021).

A. BACKGROUND / DETAILS

N/A.

B. CONSIDERATIONS

B.1 Strategic Community / Corporate Business Plan

Theme Area 3: Safety and Security

Outcome 3.1: Shire of Northam residents are able to pursue the fullest life possible without fear of or hindrance from crime and disorder.

B.2 Financial / Resource Implications

Nil.

B.3 Legislative Compliance

Nil.

B.4 Policy Implications

Nil.

B.5 Stake Holder Engagement / Consultation

Nil.

B.6 Risk Implications

Risk Category	Description	Rating (consequence x likelihood)	Mitigation Action
Financial	Additional safety measures will have some impact on Council resources	High Risk Medium(3) x Likely (4)	Ensure necessary financial capacity in the LGGS and/or Council Budget
Health & Safety	Significant risk to volunteers regarding ongoing health and safety issues	High Risk High (4)x Possible (3)	Ensure a documented and clear process is undertaken for mitigating most of the major health and safety risk
Reputation	Significant risk to reputation if serious incident was to occur	Moderate Risk Medium (3)xPossible(3)	Ensure processes are clear and are documented
Service Interruption	Limited potential for service interruption	Moderate Risk Medium (3) x Unlikely (2)	Undertake necessary training and development as required
Compliance	Risk of not complying with current and proposed legislation	Moderate Risk Medium (3)x Possible (3)	Ensure risks are documented and processes put in place to address
Property	Significant risk to property if required training and	Moderate Risk Medium (3) x Possible (3)	Undertake necessary training and development

	experience is not developed		
Environment	Moderate risk to environment if training and experience is not developed	High Risk High (4)x Possible (3)	Undertake training and development as required

C. OFFICER'S COMMENT

As per the previous BFAC report the following is an update of the matters raised:

1. OHS Issues

Following the last BFAC meeting, an OHS Workshop was held on 9th November 2021 where a number of issues identified at the previous BFAC were discussed. The workshop was facilitated by the CBFCA and was attended by representatives from Brigades, Council staff, and the Bushfire Volunteers Association.

The main topics workshopped are as follows –

- Injury on Fireground
- Training
- PPE/PPC
- Vehicles on Fireground
- Farmer Response
- Station, Appliances and Equipment
- Communication
- UXO and HAZMAT

Attached to the agenda is a summary of the issues raised and proposed actions for the above topics. These were compiled by from the notes taken at the meeting.

Given the number of topics covered at the workshop it is recommended that the 2 most significant matters be addressed in more detail, with other recommendations and findings being presented at future BFAC meetings or workshops as deemed appropriate.

The 2 most pressing matters relate to the PPE/PPC issue and Training Requirements. Attached to the Agenda is a summary of the issues raised and suggested implementation of the actions proposed to address those issues.

2. General Updates – Operational

2.1 Appliance Audio/Visual recording (Dash Cams)

All appliances should have had the dash cameras installed. A note will be sent to all Brigades in the coming weeks regarding the correct operation and use of the cameras.

2.2 Comprehensive Crew Protection Training

As indicated in the last agenda it is requested that the annual CCP training drills are delivered by the brigade training coordinator, supported by a qualified volunteer trainer assessor to sign off on each members assessment (currently being clarified). If a volunteer trainer assessor is unable to sign off then further information on what process to follow will be forwarded to all brigades.

2.2 COVID-19

Refer to additional information within the agenda.

2.3 Training Calendar 2022/23

Further to the last BFAC meeting a draft calendar is in the process of being prepared in conjunction with the DFES Regional Office. This is including the provision of the Volunteer Training Assessors as highlighted below. In the meantime, it is requested that Brigades provide identified personnel and courses required, and suggestions on timing of the training over the coming weeks.

Once a formal draft has been received the calendar will be forwarded to training officers for feedback/comment.

2.4 Volunteer Trainer Assessors

As indicated at the last BFAC two Shire of Northam Volunteer Trainer Assessors have completed DFES Workplace Trainer Assessor course in October 2021.

Currently both volunteers have assisted in the delivery of the foundation courses with one being accredited and one in the process of being signed off so that they can deliver the foundation/introductory courses.

2.5 Flexible Training Delivery Options

The trial run at Northam Central whilst initially successful, requires an assessor to attend and complete the formal theory and practical assessments and to sign off the volunteer if they have the required level of competency. Due to various circumstances this has proved problematic and as such the development and formalisation of the volunteer trainer assessors is seen as critical component of the process.

2.6 Pre Season Training

Thermal Imaging Camera's

The FLIR K2 Thermal Imaging Camera's (TIC) and charging stations have been supplied and installed to the units

Vehicle Tablets

The tablets and cradles have now been installed in the majority of the units. Staff are currently working with the ICT provider to ensure the relevant applications and instructions on how to use them appropriately is rolled out over the coming weeks.

2.7 Emergency Water Tanks

Staff are still working with the supplier to remedy a few identified issues with these tanks, and some of the hardware such as the cage design, however the tanks are currently commissioned and available for emergency use only as required.

2.9 DCBFCO/Senior FCO position

As members would be aware the DCBFCO Neil Diamond has resigned from his position, whilst still remaining as an active FCO.

At the time of appointing the leadership positions there were three nominations for the DCBFCO position. Similarly, there were two nominations for the Senior FCO role.

In discussion at the recent Captains meeting it was suggested that rather than appoint a second DCBFCO that another Senior FCO be appointed, enabling that position to undertake professional development and mentoring to assist with a potential more senior role in the future.

2.10 COVID19 Direction

As all members would be aware the State Government has released the Fire and Emergency Services Worker (Restrictions on Access) Directions (2). This has significant implications for the operations of the Shire of Northam Bushfire Service. A full copy of the Direction is attached to this agenda and can be accessed on-line via - [Directions](#).

In addition, DFES has released a number of FAQ's which is also attached to this Agenda.

In essence the requirements are for all members of our Bush Fire Brigades to have a first dose vaccination by 31 December 2021 and the second dose by 31 January 2022. This requirement is for all members attending

incidents and applies to both brigade premises and local government premises.

It is recognised that the Directions are mandating vaccinations for all bush fire volunteers however this is a state government Directive and as such we have no option other than to comply with the requirement.

A number of questions have been made to both DFES and WALGA regarding various aspects of the Directions, however the information provided by DFES, as attached, is the most recent advice.

A specific question was asked with respect to the implications for farmer response units and the advice provided by DFES is that they would be considered as ad-hoc volunteers for the purposes of the Directions, and therefore not covered by the Directions. It is unclear still if that applies to a member of a bush Fire Brigade attending within their own private unit or not. It is assumed that if they are a registered brigade member they are subject to the provisions of the Direction.

2.11 Harvest, Vehicle Movement and Hot Works Ban – Christmas/New Year Period

The current Standard Operating Procedure for the implementation of the a Harvest, Vehicle Movement and Hot Works Ban stipulates the following –

Procedure

The Shire of Northam Chief Bushfire Control Officer or his/her Deputy (or the CESH in both their absence) may choose at any time to implement a Harvest Vehicle Movement and Hot Works Ban (HVMB) under section 27 of the Bush Fires Act 1954 subject the following conditions.

- *The following Public Holidays including any Saturday and Sunday of a long weekend will have a HVMB issued (irrespective of the forecast weather)*

Christmas Day

Boxing Day

New Years Day

Australia Day

With the current holiday periods it is interpreted that the following periods would be subject to a HVMB –

- 6pm Friday 24th December 2021 to midnight Tuesday 28th December 2021 (4.25 days)
- 6pm Friday 31st December 2021 to midnight Monday 3rd January 2022 (3.25 days)

Given the situation with respect to the current season and the potential for harvesting during this period it is suggested that the Committee may wish to review the above procedure.

Options may include the removal of certain days from the current proposed HVMB or potentially only including a Hot Works ban for a number of the days.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Note the Development Services Report as provided.**
- 2. Note the outcomes and proposed actions associated with the OHS workshop in particular reference to PPE/PPC and Training requirements.**
- 3. Appoint Kristafer Brown to the position of Senior BFCO for the remaining 2021/22 fire season.**

The Executive Manager Development Services provided an overview of the report. Clarification was sought in relation to:

- When the tablets were installed. The Executive Manager Development Services advised that the tablets are still being configured and are not yet installed. To date only the cradles have been installed.
- Whether all vehicles are getting dash cameras. The Executive Manager Development Services advised that he believes there is one camera per brigade however will clarify this.

There was discussion held around the State Governments directions notice relating to COVID-19 vaccinations. The Chief Executive Officer sought feedback from the committee in relation to how many members may be lost as a result of the directions, as this is a concern for the Shire of Northam. It was raised that a lot of the requirements are still unclear. Mr Hagan indicated that a small number of members from his brigade may be lost. The Chief Executive Officer requested that any questions be forwarded to staff to respond. Clarification was sought in relation to:

- When the first vaccination is required. The Chief Executive Officer confirmed that this is due by 1 January 2022 with full vaccination being required by 31 January 2022.
- Who is responsible for gathering vaccination information, tracking this and also managing this in the event of an incident. The Chief Executive Officer advised that Department of Fire and Emergency Services is currently collecting this information however it is unclear as to whether this will be shared with local governments. Mr Krammar advised that the issues around privacy are currently being reviewed by their legal

team however he believes information will be provided to local governments with respect to who has provided their vaccination status. The Chief Executive Officer advised that he believes this information will have to be shared however according to the recent release it outlines local governments are responsible for collecting this information. Mr Marris raised concerns around entering into the bush fire season with no information on the vaccination status of our volunteers and this being required by 31 December. The Chief Executive Officer advised once this information is available staff will sit with the captains to get a clear understanding of who is and isn't vaccinated. The Chief Executive Officer advised that the frequently asked questions provided by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services will be provided to the committee.

- How volunteers can have their vaccination status verified. Mr Krammer advised that there are a number of ways this can be completed, including uploading the certificate in the volunteer hub, attending the Department of Fire and Emergency Services Regional Office or having this sighted and verified by an authorised person.
- Whether farmers units are required to be vaccinated. The Chief Executive Officer advised that this would depend on the capacity in which they are turning up to an incident. If they are attending as being members of a brigade, then they are required to be vaccinated. If they are attending in their own right, then they are not required to be vaccinated.
- What will happen with volunteers who are not vaccinated? The Chief Executive Officer advised that the Shire would correspond with these members and stand them down. If there was a disaster, these members may be contacted and asked to assist with the incident.
- How the vaccination status and verification of this will be managed at an incident. The Chief Executive Officer advised that this is yet to be determined however this could include showing your vaccination certificate upon arrival at an incident or the incident controller having information with respect to who is and isn't vaccinated.
- Whether the cadets are required to be vaccinated. The Executive Manager Development Services advised that they are required to be vaccinated even though they do not turn out to incidents.

Discussion was held around the Harvest, Vehicle Movement and Hot Works over the Christmas and New Year period. Mr Marris advised that this currently starts at 6:00pm, Friday and runs until midnight Tuesday over the Christmas and New Year weekend due to these days being public holidays. Discussion was held around this starting at midnight as opposed to 6:00pm and only running over the Saturday and Sunday. Mr Marris advised that he believes the rationale for this starting at 6:00pm is to reduce the risk of an incident leading up to these holidays.

MOTION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.261

Moved: Mr Terry Hasson

Seconded: Mr Kris Brown

That Council amend the Harvest, Vehicle Movement and Hot Works Ban to:

- **Commence at 12:00am on Saturday, 1 January 2022 and cease at 11:59pm, Saturday, 1 January 2022.**
- **Commence at 12:00am on Saturday, 25 December 2021 and cease at 11:59pm, Sunday, 26 December 2021.**

Subject to review depending on weather conditions.

CARRIES 10/0

The Executive Manager Development Services provided an overview of the OSH outcomes. Clarification was sought in relation to:

- The PPE requirements for farmer response units. The Executive Manager Development Services advised that this will be presented to a future committee meeting. The Chief Executive Officer advised that staff would undertake some marketing to the farmers initially to encourage them to wear appropriate PPE, e.g. long pants. Discussion was also held around having spare PPE in appliances.
- The vehicle requirements. The Executive Manager Development Services advised that this will be looked at for next fire season. It was raised that prior to the season, an inspection can be offered to farmers to certify whether their vehicle/appliance is suitable.
- How much Council should be investing into members of the public assisting at an incident which are not affiliated with a brigade. The Chief Executive Officer advised that staff are trying to put some strategies in place to ensure the volunteers are in a safe environment as he is ultimately responsible. There is a level of exposure to Council if they are called upon to assist in an official capacity however there is minimal exposure if they haven't. If they are attending as employees of a farmer, then the farmer is responsible and if it was a homeowner defending their home the homeowner would be responsible. These strategies are also trying to get farmers on board with OSH and working with the brigades.
- Whether the training for farmers would be well received. The Chief Executive Officer advised that staff are seeking this feedback from the committee. Mr Marris advised that this training has been well received in other regions as it also helps farmers meet their own OSH obligations. Mr Hasson raised that this would have some value for the smaller, hobby farm landowners.

- The priority of actions. Mr Marris advised that he expects this to be a standing agenda item for the actions to be refined. Mr Marris raised that there are some items included which were not from the workshop (e.g. timeframes). It was requested if this can be defined. The Chief Executive Officer advised that the notes from the workshop will be included.

Clarification was sought in relation to the Firebreak and Fuel Notice which is referred as an attachment. The Executive Manager Development Services advised that the reference is from a previous Council decision and the referred attachment is to report on the progress of that decision.

Mr Stockman left the meeting at 6:37pm and returned to the meeting at 6:38pm.

RECOMMENDATION / COUNCIL DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.262

Moved: Mr Kris Brown
Seconded: Mr Nic Dewar

That Council:

- 1. Note the Development Services Report as provided.**
- 2. Note the outcomes and proposed actions associated with the OHS workshop in particular reference to PPE/PPC and Training requirements.**
- 3. Appoint Kristafer Brown to the position of Senior BFCO for the remaining 2021/22 fire season.**

CARRIED 9/1

Attachment 1

Decision Date	Motion No.	Item No	Subject	Motion	Comments
16/12/20	C.4100	11.3	BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2020	That Council: 1. Notes the Community Emergency Services Manager Report as provided. 2. Notes the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Report as provided. 3. Approve the matter of extending the leadership positions of Bush Fire Control Officers, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer to a two year term is included as part of the discussions at the next Bush Fires Manual workshop, is brought to the brigades for comment, and is then presented to the next Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting.	<p>Update 15/09/2021 1. No Action Required. 2.No Action Required 3. no action to date, meeting being held in July with Operational Command team to discuss, further discussions with LGIS representative</p> <p>Update 15/09/2021 3. No outcome from Operational Command Meeting in July or no feedback received from the brigades as requested.</p> <p>12/10/2021 3. No update, no further discussions have come from brigades, does not appear to have support from brigades due to lack of communications.</p> <p>09-11-2021 3. To be included in next Operational Command Meeting agenda 3-12-2021 To be included in next BFAC agenda (2022)</p>

Decision Date	Motion No.	Item No	Subject	Motion	Comments
21/07/21	C.4267	12.2	BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15 JUNE 2021	<p>That Council:</p> <p>1. Note the Community Emergency Services Manager Report as provided and notes the revised process for the selection of the CBFCA, DCBFCA and Senior BFCO positions as outlined in this report.</p> <p>2. Note the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Report as provided.</p> <p>3. Appoints the following Fire Control Officers for the 2021/22 Season in accordance with the criteria set in section 5 of the Shire of Northam Bush Fire Manual:</p> <p>Wundowie BFB Mathew Macqueen Jason Cacic (approved for appointment subject to meeting minimum training requirements prior to the start of the 2021/22 season)</p> <p>Wundowie VFRS Jeffrey Roberts (approved for appointment subject to meeting minimum training requirements prior to the start of the 2021/22 season)</p> <p>Inkpen BFB Neil Diamond Nic Dewar</p> <p>Bakers Hill Kris Brown Simon Peters (approved for appointment subject to meeting minimum training requirements prior to the start of the 2021/22 season) Tristan Davey</p> <p>Clackline BFB</p>	<p>1. No action required.</p> <p>2. No action required.</p> <p>3. No action required.</p> <p>4. No action required. To be included with Rates notice.</p> <p>5. To be provided at the next BFAC meeting in September.</p> <p>12/10/2021</p> <p>5. collating information and will discuss at Ops Command workshop prior to Nov/Dec BFAC.</p> <p>09-11-2021</p> <p>No update at this stage - awaiting next Ops Command meeting</p> <p>3-12-2021</p> <p>Issues being discussed as part of OHS workshops</p>

Decision Date	Motion No.	Item No	Subject	Motion	Comments
				<p>Blair Wilding (approved for appointment subject to meeting minimum training requirements prior to the start of the 2021/22 season)</p> <p>Matthew Letch (approved for appointment subject to meeting minimum training requirements prior to the start of the 2021/22 season)</p> <p>Richard Welch (approved for appointment subject to meeting minimum training requirements prior to the start of the 2021/22 season)</p> <p>Northam Central BFB Luke Hagan (approved for appointment subject to meeting minimum training requirements prior to the start of the 2021/22 season)</p> <p>Northam VFRS Greg Montgomery</p> <p>Irishtown BFB Murray McGregor (approved for appointment subject to meeting minimum training requirements prior to the start of the 2021/22 season)</p> <p>Rob Herzer</p> <p>Southern Brook BFB Paul Antonio (approved for appointment subject to meeting minimum training requirements prior to the start of the 2021/22 season)</p> <p>Grass Valley BFB Chris Marris Phil Lloyd Mark Littlefair (approved for appointment subject to meeting minimum training requirements prior to the</p>	

Decision Date	Motion No.	Item No	Subject	Motion	Comments
				<p>start of the 2021/22 season) Paul Reynolds (approved for appointment subject to meeting minimum training requirements prior to the start of the 2021/22 season)</p> <p>4. Endorse the Shire of Northam Fire Break and Fuel load notice as provided in Attachment 1. 5. Review the training requirements for the BFB leadership group, as determined by the Bush Fire Service Training Program, and provide feedback to the brigades in relation to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Council's view and action if a member does not attain the recommended Training Qualifications? • If Lieutenants/Captains do not attain the qualifications for the courses AIMS 2017 and Incident Controller Level 1 – what is Council's position and direction to the related Brigade? • How does the Council view Captains who prefer to provide good management and leadership roles in preference to being an Incident Controller and are more likely to attend fires in the capacity of a Fire Fighter only? • Whether the Council will consider prior experience as acceptable qualification to holding a Captain / Lieutenant role. 	

Attachment 2

HEALTH & SAFETY RISK

Farmer Response				
Identified Risk	Current mitigation acceptable	Future Actions Required		Timeframe
Incorrect Uniform/PPE	Nil	Marketing to encourage farmers to have long pants and shirts in their vehicles in case of Fire emergency		December 2021
		Each appliance to be provided with 1 spare sets of PPE.	Refer to Attachment 3 for more detailed information	August 2022
Lack of Organisation / Education	Nil	Provide Rural Fire Safety course	Refer to Attachment 4 for further detailed information	October 2022
		Promote use of CB/UHF 5		December 2021
No effective coordination on the fireground		SC or IC actively record Private Units		
		Sectorise Fires Early		
Poor quality of farmer units		Provide a preseason one-off event for free farmer unit checks	Look at potential to offer a prize as incentive to have units checked	October 2022
Lack of young farmer members of brigades		Marketing campaign to promote young farmers/people join volunteer brigades		February 2022 – October 2022
		Investigate potential incentives for volunteers	Work with Volunteering WA to identify opportunities	June 2022

Fire Stations, Appliances and Equipment				
Mitigation Action	Current Status	Future Actions Required		Timeframe
Undertake monthly workplace inspection	Nothing in Place	Brigades to undertake monthly workplace inspection during Fire Season.		January 2021
		Pre-season Safety inspection undertaken by Shire of Northam Safety Officer		October 2022
Improved manual handling	Nil	Provide manual handling training to volunteers	Run training at each fire station	July – September 2022
Vehicle Maintenance		Brigades to undertake weekly inspections of vehicles	Shire to provide check sheet	
		Preseason check of all vehicles to be coordinated by CESM		July/August
		Provide vehicle report forms to ensure any damage or maintenance requirements are identified and rectified		January 2022
Driver experience / competence		Provide annual on road/off road vehicle training		July – November 2022
		Require all drivers to observe the road rules and speed limits	Provide/update SOP and distribute	January 2022
Provide adequate Personal Protective Equipment		Ensure equipment is fit for purpose and volunteers are aware of the respective manuals of each original equipment manufacturer	Refer to Attachment 3 for more detailed information	January 2022
		Provide washing machines at all Fire Stations and encourage, recommending all PPE be washed on site	Refer to Attachment 3 for more detailed information	As soon as practicable
		Investigate costs and guidelines around providing volunteers with two sets of PPE	Refer to Attachment 3 for more detailed information	August 2022

Training				
Mitigation Action	Current Status	Future Actions Required		Timeframe
Member training not as up to date as it could be	Minimum training requirements in place	Review minimum training requirements with Captains to present to BFAC	Refer to Attachment 4 for further detailed information	October 2022
		Training registers up to date/maintained		October 2022
	SOP's in place			Immediate
		Advocate for additional training assessors to be approved through DFES	Refer to Attachment 4 for further detailed information	Ongoing
		Promote flexible training arrangements, with a particular focus on weeknight training to suit volunteers	Refer to Attachment 4 for further detailed information	Ongoing
Minimum Training Requirements (Fireground and Positions)	Minimum training requirements in place	Settle on Minimum Training – minimum expectations for leadership team. Look at DFES requirements to ensure we align	Refer to Attachment 4 for further detailed information	October 2022
		Require Minimum Training before a volunteer can be active on the Fireground – Utilise DFES Guidelines	Refer to Attachment 4 for further detailed information	January 2022
Maintain Skills		Require pre-season competency-based training / annual induction prior to fire season commencement		December 2021?

Shire of Northam unaware of incidents / accidents				
Mitigation Action	Current Status	Future Actions Required	Current mitigation acceptable	Timeframe
Require incidents/accidents & near misses to be reported to Shire of Northam		Reinforce requirements for Incident / accident / near miss reporting		Ongoing
		Investigate online system of reporting and investigating incident / accident / near misses		March 2022

UNCONFIRMED



Attachment 3

PPE / PPC – Fire Fighters

Personal protective clothing (PPC) and personal protective equipment (PPE) are a key line of defense in protecting fire fighters when undertaking a range of tasks including fire fighting, maintenance and other duties. PPC also is a key identifier of a trained fire fighter to the community.

Current situation:

All current active fire fighters can order a set of PPC/PPE including tunic, pants, boots, turn-out shirt, gloves, helmet, half/full face mask, goggles, face shield, hat, and torch. Their operational PPE/PPC is generally stored within a provided 'kit' bag. They can also receive a polo shirt and formal shirt (if in an elected position) for non-operational duties.

At any stage the volunteer can request a replacement of an item with fair wear and tear, although this is driven by the volunteer (i.e. there is no current tracking of the life of an item and the volunteer been prompted to replace).

The vast bulk of volunteer fire fighters wear their PPC/PPE during incidents. Those not wearing are asked to put their gear on – this may or may not be a documented request. At times, fire fighters have been asked to leave the fire ground due to non-compliance of PPE/PPC. Alternatively they are tasked to more appropriate tasks for their current PPE/PPC level (i.e. non-frontline duties).

PPE/PPC in the bulk of cases is kept by volunteers within their provided kit bag, which is taken home with them or stored in vehicles. Newer stations, such as Bakers Hill, has racking which allows for some volunteers to store their gear on station should they wish. The nature of rural fire fighting means that it is not always ideal from a speed of response perspective to have PPC/PPE centrally stored.

Historically, fire fighters left their PPC unwashed. This is largely no longer the case, with most uniforms being semi-regularly cleaned. Most washing is currently occurring at home. Washing machines are currently being installed in stations across the Shire, noting that Jennapullin does not have a station.

Possible issues/risks in current situation:

- Are provided PPE/PPC fit for purpose and are they being used in line with OEM instructions (i.e. washing, storage, lifespan), noting that the Shire does not currently have strong historic records of when a volunteer was supplied with a particular item
- Is PPE/PPC being used correctly
- Are volunteers bringing contaminants into their home when washing their uniform, or into their vehicles when storing their kit bags
- When washing their uniform, volunteers are left without PPC due to having only one set of uniform. This may reduce the likelihood of uniforms being washed frequently, and/or make washing on station/dry cleaning less practical because it is likely to add to the 'offline' duration
- Is washing/cleaning occurring in-line with OEM instructions
- Volunteers not wearing the required PPE/PPC during an incident
- Volunteers wearing operational clothing for non-operational activities (i.e. meetings as they have no alternative pants)
- Many stations do not have provisions (i.e. racking) for the storage of uniforms on station should a volunteer need/wish to

Initial steps

1. Wearing of PPC/PPE

Re-establish the expectation that full PPE/PPC is worn by fire fighters during incidents without exception when turning out in an official capacity. It should be known by all that this is a non-negotiable.

Those who are not wearing the correct PPE/PPC, will be asked to put on before continuing with their tasks. All brigades will be encouraged (and supported via the provision of) having spare PPE/PPC in each appliance, along with the CESM and Fire Support Vehicles. It should be noted, however, this can not be relied upon as not all sizes can be carried.

Those who do not put on their PPE/PPC (refuse/don't have) will be documented by their OIC. They should be asked to leave the incident (again if they refuse this should be documented) and/or be re-tasked to a low risk (in terms of PPE/PPC) activity such as ground controller, a member of the IMT, etc.

Key steps:

- Communication to all brigades outlining expectations (December 21, and on-going)
- Documentation of non-compliance by OIC (from January 22)
- Provision of spare PPE/PPC in all vehicles – Shire to engage with each Brigade, and order accordingly (December 21)
- Ongoing campaign encouraging the benefits of wearing (December 21 – April 22)
- Review of compliance at BFCO meeting post season (March 22)
- Provision of on-station signage around the correct wearing of PPE/PPC (February 22)
- Video's/documentation/training to be provided to Brigade Training Officers around the correct wearing of PPE/PPC, to allow Brigade training to incorporate (March 22)

2. Provision of PPE/PPC

Key steps:

- An audit be undertaken by the Shire of all currently issued PPE/PPC to determine if it is fit for purpose, OEM instructions, life-span (December 21 – January 22)
- Once known, an audit be undertaken of currently issued PPE/PPC to ensure it is within the recommended life-span (January 22 – March 22). Non-compliant/not fit for purpose gear replaced as a matter of priority
- A system put in place by the Shire to keep a register of PPE/PPC issued to each volunteer, along with a process to move to a pro-active approach where a volunteer can be contacted prior to the end of life of an issued item, for a replacement to be ordered (system implemented March 22, with any new gear issued prior being captured)
- Brigade Captain's/Equipment Officers be engaged to ensure that there are currently no gaps in the provision of PPE/PPC for any active fire fighter (December 21). Any gaps to be ordered as a priority
- A process developed with Equipment Officers to ensure that the provision of perishables PPE are replaced each season, with the Equipment Officers knowing which members require the items (i.e. batteries for torches, filters for face masks) (July 22)
- Provision of a second set of PPC to the most active fire fighters, given the increased need for washing of their uniform. Suitable candidates to be identified via a review of turnout data in IRS, combined with those in elected position of Captain's and BFCO's, in consultation with Captain's and Equipment Officers (order by March 22).

- Provision of non-operational uniforms to remove the need of volunteers wearing PPC during non-operational events (i.e. unnecessarily wearing potentially contaminated uniforms into clean settings – i.e. meetings, community engagement). This may include the provision of uniform pants to elected officials and non-operational jackets to all volunteers (July 22)

3. Washing / Storage of PPC

Key steps:

- A review of the kit bag be undertaken to ensure that it is the most suitable for purpose. Key considerations are around the practicality of its use and its performance to contain contaminants from the PPE/PPC stored within (March 22). This should also consider possible cleaning of the bag (i.e. is it appropriate to itself be washed or dry-cleaned).
- All stations be fitted with operational washing machines, including the ongoing provision of fit for purpose washing soap (January 22). Signage should accompany the machines detailing the correct washing procedures.
- All stations be fitted with the provision of being able to dry PPC on station, and/or it be confirmed that it is appropriate for washed PPC to be dried at home (February 22)
- A review be conducted to explore the practicality and suitability of PPC being dry cleaned either on an annual basis, and or at regular intervals. Consideration of compliance (i.e. you know they have been washed versus self washing machine), effectiveness, and duration of uniforms being offline to be considered (April 22)
- Shire of Northam to engage with Captains around the provision of PPC racking on station to allow the storage on station of PPC if desired by the volunteer, and subsequently make the necessary funding applications. This to be an ongoing endeavor, with initial plan to be developed by April 22
- An education campaign be undertaken among all fire fighters around the risks of contaminants and effective steps that can be taken to minimize these risks. (March 22 – ongoing)

Note: Many have noted that the storage of PPC/PPE on station is problematic for a rural based fire service. While it may reduce the risk of contaminants leaving the station, it also may result in delayed response times due to the decentralized nature of where volunteers are located. It is also felt that it may lead to volunteers less likely to be able to wear their PPC/PPE when responding to incidents in a private appliance. As such, steps must be taken to balance these risks, such as ensuring gear is regularly cleaned, appropriately stored (within kit bags, appropriate locations etc), combined with strong education.

These steps should be reviewed for effectiveness, changes and further opportunities at a workshop mid 2022.

Still needs consideration – farmer response, member response in private appliance, non-fire fighter uniforms (i.e. loader operators that may also be exposed to contaminants).

Attachment 4 Training

Current situation:

There has been a wide range of training undertaken by our volunteer firefighters across the Shire, with some members highly trained, others with basic training, while others have no formal training but extensive firefighting experience.

Over time, training courses provided by DFES have changed. In most instances, volunteers previous training is 'mapped' across to the new training, but at other times there may be small gaps that result, making a volunteer who is trained and experienced, no longer meeting the minimum training requirement of DFES. There have also been instances where a volunteers past training records have been lost. Through these issues, there is a degree of frustration, particularly among our longer-term members (who have seen more changes and more losses of previous training).

New members have an expectation that they will complete the Bush Firefighting training as outlined by DFES at the earliest opportunity, although at times, there are delays in these training occurrences taking place.

Some 62 members across the Shire require completion of AllIMS Awareness to meet the Bush Firefighter training as outlined by DFES's Bush Fire Service Training Program. A further approximately 96 members across the Shire currently are not recognized as having both Bushfire Safety Awareness and Bush Firefighting Skills Courses (they may have one, components of, none, or other more advanced training). Of these 96 members, 22 to have been active in the past two seasons according to IRS data.

As members become more senior and are appointed to positions such as Captains, BFCO's and leadership positions, so to does the expectation and requirement for them to do more extensive training. The Shire of Northam has strictly enforced compliance to its BFCO minimum training requirements as specified in the Bush Fire Manual. Where practicable, it also has enforced higher training standards for leadership positions of Chief and Deputy.

Outside of formal training, many stations run regular and seasonal training on Station, covering drills, driver training, appliance familiarization, burn-overs, radios, etc.

More broadly, training is provided to leaders via leadership forums, scenario days, and periodic practical exercises.

Possible issues/risks in current situation:

- Do all volunteers have adequate training?
- Are the current training requirements for members, Captains, BFCO's and others appropriate for their positions?
- Is the provided training fit for purpose and cover the correct areas?
- Formal DFES training tends to be available in person, during the day and often on weekends, which does not suit all volunteers including those who work weekends or are FIFO
- Some DFES courses are not provided with enough frequency or at suitable times of the year to meet the needs of volunteers
- Variations between Brigades on internal training may be significant, meaning some volunteers may not be afforded the same opportunity as others
- Current training has no exposure to actual fire, meaning newly trained recruits may experience fire for the first time at an incident

Initial steps

1. Basic DFES training

The ideal fire fighter will have a combination of experience and training.

Key steps:

- Contact all members requiring AAIMS Awareness, encouraging them to undertake this short (less than 30 minute) online course (Jan 22). In combination, engage with Brigade Training Officers and Captains, to target and assist these members (i.e. if they have difficulty getting onto eAcademy).
- Support the online AAIMS Awareness Course by conducting at least two face to face AAIMS Awareness courses (approx. 2 hours) by March 22, to capture those more willing to do in person. Endorsement of our volunteer Trainer Assessor in the delivery of this course to be sought (December 21)
- Introduce a program targeted at experienced fire fighters without currently recognized competency in Bushfire Safety Awareness and Bush Firefighting Skills, to have them recognized for current competency in these skills along with any required gap training (December 21) to be delivered by our volunteer Trainer Assessors. It is expected that most experienced volunteer firefighter will receive recognition of their current competency in these two courses across two evenings.
- Target current experienced fire fighters with the above program, with near monthly courses to be run until all willing participants have undertaken (Jan 22 onwards). Priority to be to those members who are active. New members not to be eligible to this program.
- From October 1, 2022 require all active fire fighters to have Bushfire Safety Awareness, Bush Firefighting Skills and AAIMS Awareness training and/or recognition of current competency to maintain active status. See point below.
- Introduce a policy that all new active fire fighters need to complete the Bushfire Safety Awareness, Bush Firefighting Skills and AAIMS Awareness Courses (or receive recognition of current competency) within 6 months of joining as volunteer, or be moved to be Aux status. Prior to/during achieving this training, new volunteers should not attend any incident of a major nature. If deemed appropriate by the Captain and IC, they may participate under direct supervision of a fully trained and experienced firefighter with mop-up, community burns, and incidents of a minor nature as part of their hands-on training
- Shire of Northam to develop a calendar of training for the Bushfire Safety Awareness and Bush Firefighting Skills courses, so that a new member should not need to wait more than eight (and ideally less) weeks before being afforded the opportunity to start their training no matter when in the year they join. This calendar may be run in collaboration with neighboring local governments and is likely to be supported heavily by volunteer trainer assessors (Feb 22 commencement)
- Active steps to be taken to increase the number of volunteer trainer assessors within the Shire of Northam to approximately four, to support the provision of training requirements locally without burning out our volunteer trainer assessors (2022)

2. Advanced training

Key steps:

- A review be undertaken by Captains and BFCO's around the current training requirements for these leadership positions (including Chief and Deputy) to ensure that they are suitable for the demands of these positions (March 22 – suggest as part of BFCO meeting). Current enforced training requirements (i.e. BFCO) to stand until such time (if) an alternative training requirement is developed and endorsed. Any suggested changes to be put to BFAC.
- A workshop be conducted between Shire of Northam senior volunteers, the Volunteer Bush Fire Association and DFES to discuss fit for purpose training with the view of identifying any gaps in current training offered by DFES and/or opportunities for improvements. Such training gaps may include Hazmat identification for bush fire fighters, UXO, an intro to Incident Controller Level 1 (i.e. a one day version), among others – April 22
- Identification of all appliance drivers without on-road and off-road training, so that a plan can be developed to reduce the size of this cohort (list by Mar 22)
- Request that some advanced training (and intro) be provided at alternative times and by alternative methods to allow volunteers greater access to this training (i.e. weeknights rather than just weekends). Request to be included to DFES each year as part of training calendar feedback (Nov 22 and ongoing) and to be considered in consultation with volunteer trainer assessors

3. Brigade Training

Key steps:

- Re introduce the convening of Brigade Training Officers no-less than twice per year to discuss Brigade based training initiatives. Volunteer trainer assessors should be included in these catch-ups. Opportunities for cross brigade participation, shared training packages, etc to be explored and encouraged (Mar 22 and ongoing)
- The Shire of Northam develop a program that allows for hot-training activities open to all Brigade members prior to the start of each fire season (i.e. community burn or coordinated hot-training exercise). It is intended that this be used as a refresher for current members (should they wish) and exposure to actual fire for new recruits (October 22, and on-going)

4. Farmer Response Training

Key steps:

- DFES to develop a training package specifically targeted at farmer response (Oct 21)
- Get our volunteer trainer assessors endorsed to delivery the farmer response training to be able to work alongside DFES (Dec 21 target)
- Provide courses to the community from Feb 22 and periodically ongoing. Aim for 100 participants ahead of the 2022 season

These steps should be reviewed for effectiveness, changes and further opportunities at a workshop mid 2022.

Still needs consideration – training crosses almost all aspects of WHS. As further policies are developed, additional training matters will need consideration.

Attachment 5

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT 2016 (WA)

Sections 157(1)(e), 157(1)(k), 180 and 190(1)(p)

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES WORKER (RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS) DIRECTIONS (No 2)

The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic on 11 March 2020.

On 23 March 2020, the Minister for Health declared a public health state of emergency with effect from 1.30 pm on 23 March 2020 in respect of COVID-19 pursuant to section 167 of the *Public Health Act 2016 (WA) (Act)*. On 22 September 2021, the Minister for Health declared a further public health state of emergency with effect from 4.25 pm on 22 September 2021 in respect of COVID-19 pursuant to section 167 of the Act. The public health state of emergency applies to the State of Western Australia.

I, Dr Andrew Robertson, the Chief Health Officer, authorised as an emergency officer under section 4 of the Act to exercise any of the emergency powers while the public health state of emergency declaration in respect of COVID-19 is in force, consider it reasonably necessary to give the following directions to all persons in Western Australia to prevent, control or abate the serious public health risk presented by COVID-19 pursuant to sections 157(1)(e), 157(1)(k), 180 and 190(1)(p) of the Act.

PREAMBLE

1. The purpose of these directions is to put in place some measures to address the unique risks posed by COVID-19 in the context of fire and emergency services workers given their close interactions with vulnerable groups and the broader community for the purposes of limiting the spread of COVID-19 and to ensure that these workers can continue to provide critical services to the community.

CITATION

2. These directions may be referred to as the **Fire and Emergency Services Worker (Restrictions on Access) Directions (No 2)**.

COMMENCEMENT

3. These directions come into effect upon signing.

REVOCATION

4. The Fire and Emergency Services Worker (Restrictions on Access) Directions are revoked.

DIRECTIONS

Access Restrictions Applying to Department of Fire and Emergency Services and Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions employees

5. Subject to paragraphs 7 and 8:
 - (a) on and from 12:01am on 1 December 2021, a person who is a **DFES employee** or **DBCA employee** must not enter, or remain at, a **fire and emergency services site** if the DFES employee or DBCA employee has not been **partially vaccinated** against COVID-19; and
 - (b) on and from 12:01am on 1 January 2022, a person who is a DFES employee or DBCA employee must not enter, or remain at, a fire and emergency services site if the DFES employee or DBCA employee has not been **fully vaccinated** against COVID-19.

Access Restrictions Applying to fire and emergency services workers

6. Subject to paragraphs 7 and 8:
 - (a) on and from 12:01am on 1 January 2022, a person who is a **fire and emergency services worker** must not enter, or remain at, a fire and emergency services site if the fire and emergency services worker has not been partially vaccinated against COVID-19; and
 - (b) on and from 12:01am on 1 February 2022, a person who is a fire and emergency services worker must not enter, or remain at, a fire and emergency services site if the fire and emergency services worker has not been fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

General Vaccination Requirements

7. Where only part of **premises** are being used as a fire and emergency services site, nothing in these directions prevents a DFES employee, DBCA employee or a fire and emergency services worker who does not meet the requirements of paragraphs 5 and 6 from entering that part of the premises which is not being used as a fire and emergency services site.

8. Nothing in these directions prevents a person who is not vaccinated against COVID-19 from entering any part of a fire and emergency services site for the purposes of:
- (a) performing a statutory duty arising under a law of the Commonwealth that cannot reasonably be performed other than by entering the fire and emergency services site; or
 - (b) performing any function or duty or exercising any right or power under a Fair Work entry permit issued by the Fair Work Commission under the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) or a Work Health and Safety entry permit issued by the Fair Work Commission under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth) or a right of entry permit issued by the Registrar of the Department of the Registrar Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission under the *Industrial Relations Act 1979* (WA);
 - (c) responding to an emergency where the emergency response is required to be provided immediately and a fully vaccinated or partially vaccinated person is not available to provide the response; and

to the extent that a DFES employee, DBCA employee or fire and emergency services worker enters a fire and emergency services site for any of the purposes in paragraph (a) to (c) then the DFES employee, DBCA employee or a fire and emergency services worker is an exempt person at any time and for so long as they enter or remain at a fire and emergency services site for that purpose.

9. A DFES employee, DBCA employee or a fire and emergency services worker must provide evidence in the form approved by the **Chief Health Officer** of their **vaccination status** for inspection, recording and retention of a copy, if:
- (a) **directed** to do so by an **emergency officer** or a **nominated officer**;
 - (b) required to do so by their employer or the person in charge of the DBCA employee or fire and emergency services worker or the Department of Fire and Emergency Services.
10. The Department of Fire and Emergency Services or Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions must:
- (a) take all reasonable and lawful steps to:
 - i. collect and maintain a record of the vaccination status of each DFES employee or DBCA employee;

- ii. if it is the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, collect and maintain a record of each fire and emergency services worker who has entered a fire and emergency services site under the control of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services; and
 - iii. only roster on, or otherwise permit to work at a fire and emergency services site a DFES employee, DBCA employee or fire and emergency services worker who is vaccinated or is an exempt person in accordance with these directions;
 - (b) on request, provide any record of the kind referred to in paragraph 10(a)(i) that it has collected and maintained to an emergency officer or nominated officer as soon as practicable after the request is made; and
 - (c) not use or disclose any record of the kind referred to in paragraph 10(a)i. except:
 - i. as provided for in this paragraph 10; or
 - ii. as permitted or required by law, including any law of the Commonwealth; or
 - iii. for the purpose of ascertaining compliance with any employer, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions or Department of Fire and Emergency Services' direction restricting entry to a fire and emergency services site; or
 - iv. to the extent that the person expressly provided the person's vaccination status for a purpose other these directions,

and

 - (d) take reasonable steps to protect any record it holds of the kind referred to in paragraph 10(a)i. from:
 - i. misuse and loss; and
 - ii. unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.
11. The employer or person in charge of a fire and emergency services worker must:
- (a) take all reasonable and lawful steps to:
 - i. collect and maintain a record of the vaccination status of each fire and emergency services worker; and

- ii. only roster on, or otherwise permit to work at a fire and emergency services site a fire and emergency services worker who is vaccinated or is an exempt person in accordance with these directions;
 - (b) on request, provide any record of the kind referred to in paragraph 11(a)i. that it has collected and maintained to an emergency officer or nominated officer as soon as practicable after the request is made; and
 - (c) not use or disclose any record of the kind referred to in paragraph 11(a)i. except:
 - i. as provided for in this paragraph 11; or
 - ii. as permitted or required by law, including any law of the Commonwealth; or
 - iii. for the purpose of ascertaining compliance with any employer direction restricting entry to a fire and emergency services site; or
 - iv. to the extent that the person expressly provided the person's vaccination status for a purpose other these directions,
- and
- (d) take reasonable steps to protect any record it holds of the kind referred to in paragraph 11(a)i. from:
 - i. misuse and loss; and
 - ii. unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.

12. A person who is required to provide evidence of their vaccination status under paragraph 9 or a record of the kind referred to in paragraphs 10(a)i or 11(a)i. under paragraphs 10(b) or 11(b) respectively must only provide a record that is true and accurate.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of these directions:

- 13. **Ad hoc basis** means no more than once per week.
- 14. **Ad hoc volunteer** means a person who provides welfare services in a volunteer or unpaid capacity and does so on an **ad hoc basis** only.
- 15. **Assistance operation** has the same meaning that it has in the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998* (WA).

16. **Bush fire brigade** has the same meaning that it has in the *Bush Fires Act 1954* (WA).
17. **Chief Health Officer** has the same meaning that it has in the Act.
18. **DBCA employee** means a person employed in the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions:
 - (a) to perform fire prevention, control and extinguishment activities; or
 - (b) in the Regional and Fire Management Services Division,
other than an exempt person as set out in paragraphs 24(a), (b) and (d).
19. **DBCA Premise** means any premise owned, leased or operated by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and used for the purposes of fire prevention, control and extinguishment, including an incident control centre, a vehicle, a vessel or an aircraft.
20. **DFES Premise** means any premise owned, leased or operated by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services including an incident control centre, a vehicles, a vessel or an aircraft.
21. **DFES employee** means a:
 - (a) a person employed in the Department of Fire and Emergency Services; or
 - (b) a person who is a student or on work experience or an internship and is on a placement at a DFES premise as a formal part of their education,
other than an exempt person as set out in paragraphs 24(a), (b) and (d).
22. **Direction** includes any direction under the Act, whether the direction is given orally or in writing, and **directed** includes directed by way of a direction under the Act, whether the direction is given orally or in writing.
23. **Emergency officer** has the same meaning that it has in the Act.
24. **Exempt person** means, to the extent that any such person is a DFES employee or fire and emergency services worker:
 - (a) a person who has:
 - i. a **medical exemption** of which the person provides proof on request by a person referred to in paragraph 9; or
 - ii. a **temporary exemption** of which the person provides proof on request by a person referred to in paragraph 9; or
 - (b) a person who is by operation of paragraph 8 of these directions an exempt person; or

- (c) a person of the kind set out in Column 2 of the table in Schedule 1;
 - (d) any other person or class of persons who the Chief Health Officer, or a person authorised by the Chief Health Officer for the purposes of this paragraph, declares in writing to be an exempt person upon receipt of a request for exemption in the form specified by the Chief Health Officer and subject to any terms and conditions specified.
25. **FES activity** means any FES activities as defined in the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998* (WA).
26. **Fire or emergency services incident area** means any premise where a **FES activity** or an **assistance operation** is being performed.
27. **Fire and emergency services site** means a:
- (a) **Fire or emergency services incident area;**
 - (b) **DFES Premise;**
 - (c) **Volunteer Brigade, Group or Unit premise;**
 - (d) **Local government premise;**
 - (e) **DFES premise.**
28. **Fire and emergency services worker** means a person of the kind set out in Column 1 of the table in Schedule 1 other than an exempt person (even if the exempt person falls within Column 1 of the table in Schedule 1) or a person who is a DFES employee or a DBCA employee.
29. **Fully vaccinated** means that the person has been administered with two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine registered by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.
30. **Local government premise** means any premise owned, leased or operated by a local government and used for the purposes of fire prevention, control and extinguishment, including a vehicle or a vessel.
31. **Medical exemption** means a medical exemption recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register and displayed on the individual's Immunisation History Statement.
32. **Nominated officer** means an employee of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services authorised by the Chief Health Officer orally or in writing to perform a function for the purposes of these directions.
33. **Partially vaccinated** means that the person has been administered with one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine registered by the Therapeutic Goods Administration.
34. **Premises** has the same meaning it has in the Act.

35. **SES Unit** has the same meaning that it has in the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998* (WA).
36. **Temporary exemption** means an exemption approved by the Chief Health Officer or a person authorised by the Chief Health Officer for that purpose whether in relation to an individual or a class of persons and subject to any terms and conditions specified in that approval.
37. **Vaccination status** means whether a DFES employee or fire and emergency services worker has been vaccinated or whether they are an exempt person.
38. **VMRS Group** has the same meaning that it has in the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998* (WA).
39. **Volunteer Brigade, Group or Unit premise** means any premise operated or used by a Department of Fire and Emergency Services Volunteer Fire and Emergency Service, Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service, State Emergency Service, Marine Rescue Service or a bush fire brigade, including a vehicle or a vessel.

PENALTIES

It is an offence for a person to fail, without reasonable excuse, to comply with any of these directions, punishable by a fine of up to \$20,000 for individuals and \$100,000 for bodies corporate.



Dr Andrew Robertson

Emergency Officer

16 November 2021 17:20 hours

SCHEDULE 1

Row	Column 1 Fire and emergency services worker	Column 2 Exempt persons
1	<p>A person who is a member of or a cadet in a Bush Fire Brigade.</p> <p>A person who is a member of or a cadet in an SES Unit</p> <p>A person who is a member of or a cadet in a VMRS Group.</p> <p>A person who is a Department of Fire and Emergency Services volunteer or cadet, including a person who is a volunteer or cadet in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) State Emergency Services; (b) Volunteer Marine Rescue; (c) Volunteer Fire and Rescue; or (d) Volunteer Fire and Emergency Services. 	
2	<p>A person who is employed or otherwise engaged, including in a voluntary or unpaid capacity, by a local government to perform fire prevention, control and extinguishment activities.</p>	
3	<p>A person who is employed or engaged by the Australian Defence Force</p>	
4	<p>A person who provides an assistance operation.</p>	

<p>A person who provides goods or services at a fire and emergency services site and is employed or otherwise engaged, including in a voluntary or unpaid capacity, to work at a fire and emergency services site by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services or a third party on behalf of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, other than a person covered by Column 2 of Schedule 1 including, for the avoidance of doubt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (e) a person engaged by a labour hire firm that provides staff to supplement the permanent workforce and contractors (f) an administrative staff member including a person working in administration, policy, management or reception services; (g) a person on placement from another government agency including a Commonwealth agency; (h) an ancillary staff member including a cleaner, a person performing food preparation services and a person providing maintenance services. 	
<p>5 A person who is a volunteer, other than an ad hoc volunteer, who provides welfare services at a fire or emergency services incident site, such as meals and refreshments, care packs, bedding, counselling and financial assistance.</p>	<p>A person who is an ad hoc volunteer who provides welfare services at a fire or emergency services incident site, such as meals and refreshments, care packs, bedding, counselling and financial assistance.</p>

Note: This includes volunteers from organisations such as Salvation Army, Country Women's Association and any other not for profit organisations or community groups that provide welfare services in response to a fire or emergency incident.

Attachment 6



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – VOLUNTEERS

COVID-19 Information updated: 3 December 2021 11.00am

On 17 November 2021, the Chief Health Officer issued the [Fire and Emergency Services Worker \(Restrictions on Access\) Directions \(No 2\)](#) under the *Public Health Act 2016*.

The [directions](#) specify COVID-19 vaccination requirements on fire and emergency services (FES) workers – the definition of which includes volunteers – before they can access fire and emergency services sites. Please see [Schedule 1](#) of the directions for a full list of people who are defined as fire and emergency services workers.

These measures have been put in place to address the risks posed by COVID-19 and the close interactions that FES workers have with vulnerable groups and the general community to limit the spread of COVID-19 and ensure that we can continue to provide critical services to the community.

The directions mean that all volunteers need to have received their first vaccination by 31 December 2021 and be fully vaccinated by 31 January 2022, if they wish to enter a fire and emergency services site.

To provide further assistance DFES has developed a series of Frequently Asked Questions. These will be updated regularly as required.

Am I required to be vaccinated?

Yes. The [directions](#) from the Chief Health Officer restrict access to fire and emergency services sites by all people who are not vaccinated against COVID-19.

What is a fire and emergency services site?

The directions define a fire and emergency services site as:

- A fire or emergency service incident area
- DFES premises
- Volunteer brigade, group or unit premises (including a vehicle, vessel or aircraft)
- Local government premises
- DBCA premises.



Why am I required to be vaccinated to enter a fire and emergency services site?

FES workers are at high risk of exposure to COVID-19 and represent an essential workforce for which the Chief Health Officer considers vaccination is justified on public health grounds.

Transmission of COVID-19 in fire and emergency sites, due to the role we play in responding to critical and life-threatening situations, our exposure to the broader community and our interactions with vulnerable communities, has the potential to cause serious illness in volunteers, your families, and members of the community.

Vaccination significantly reduces the risk of serious illness and death from COVID-19 and helps reduce the rate of transmission.

When do I have to be vaccinated by?

You must have received your first vaccination dose by 31 December 2021 and your second dose by 31 January 2022.

How can I get a vaccination?

You can get vaccinated at State-run COVID-19 clinics, at participating GP respiratory clinics, pharmacies, or Aboriginal Medical Services. For more information please visit, [Roll up for WA](#).

Why do I need to provide evidence that I am vaccinated?

Under the [directions](#), FES workers, which includes volunteers are required to provide evidence of vaccination in the form approved by the Chief Health Officer.

DFES is required to collect and maintain a record of the vaccination status of FES workers and volunteers. Unvaccinated personnel are restricted from entering fire and emergency services sites.

How can I provide evidence that I am vaccinated?

The Chief Health Officer has approved an Australian Government COVID-19 vaccination digital certificate, or your Immunisation History Statement, as [evidence of your vaccination status](#).

Once you have obtained your certificate or statement, you can provide to DFES using these options:

1. **Upload** your certificate on the [Volunteer Hub](#). The Hub is a secure site and once complete, your vaccination status will be visible in your personal profile.



If you are a first-time user please contact your nearest regional office for assistance with access or registration.

If selecting the upload option, please use these compatible web browsers: Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge and Apple Safari.

2. **Email** a **PDF** copy of your certificate to covidcert@dfes.wa.gov.au. To ensure your certificate is processed you must include:
 - Your full name
 - Volunteer ID number
 - Name of your Brigade, Group or Unit.
3. Once processed your vaccination status will be visible on your personal profile in the Volunteer Hub.
4. **In person.** Take a copy of your certificate to your nearest regional office; or provide a copy to your DFES Supervisor.

Your Brigade, Group or Unit may coordinate a collection on behalf of your team. See your BGU leader(s) to see if this option is available to you.

***Important:** When obtaining your certificate from the MyGov / Medicare site, please save the PDF and store in a location easily accessible to you.

What if I have received a vaccination but don't have a MyGov account?

You can still obtain evidence of your COVID-19 vaccination:

1. Call 1800 653 809 (National COVID Hotline) to request a copy of your certificate. Please note: This can take up to 10 working days to complete.

How do I get access to the Volunteer Hub?

If you do not currently have access to the [Volunteer Hub](#), or you have forgotten your password, contact your Volunteer Management Support Officer in your regional office.

How will my vaccination information be used?

DFES will only use this information to maintain a record of your vaccination status. There is an obligation for DFES to collect this information and maintain its security.



What happens if I do not provide vaccination evidence?

If you do not provide your vaccination evidence by the due date, it will be presumed that you are unvaccinated therefore you will be subject to the same restrictions as an unvaccinated person.

What if I choose not to be vaccinated?

Unfortunately, you will not be able to undertake any part of your volunteering role that requires you to enter a fire and emergency services site after 31 December 2021.

Failure to comply with the [directions](#), without reasonable excuse, is an offence and may result in fines to the individual.

I am a Bush Fire Brigade (BFB) volunteer. Do I have to provide my vaccination status to my local government?

Under the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, local governments are responsible for establishing and maintaining Bush Fire Brigades, therefore local governments are required to collect and maintain a record of the vaccination status of BFB volunteers.

All submission options offered by DFES are also available to BFB volunteers.

Can I be exempted from getting the vaccine?

Permanent and temporary exemptions are available on medical grounds from the Australian Immunisation Register or on a limited and temporary basis from the Chief Health Officer.

Further information on the exemption process can be found in the [Department of Health's Mandatory Vaccination FAQs](#).

FES workers who have been granted a permanent or temporary exemption will need to notify DFES at covid19@dfes.wa.gov.au.

Please note: The exemption process can take up to 7 working days to complete. To avoid needing an additional temporary exemption, please submit your application at the earliest opportunity.

Can I wait until Novavax is available to me?

Yes, however after 31 December 2021, unvaccinated fire and emergency services workers without an exemption, will not be able enter or remain at fire and emergency sites.



Failure to comply with the [directions](#), without reasonable excuse, is an offence may result in fines to the individual.

DFES career staff are to be vaccinated by 1 December 2021. Can I attend an incident alongside DFES career staff during December?

Yes. Volunteers are required to receive their first vaccination by 31 December 2021.

Will the directions apply to contractors?

Yes, the [directions](#) will apply to contractors working at fire and emergency services sites. DFES is developing a process to assist Brigades, Groups and Units in monitoring contractor's vaccination status. Further information will be provided shortly.

I am a Brigade, Group or Unit leader, how will I know if my team members have been vaccinated?

DFES will be developing a process prior to 31 December 2021 to support Brigades, Groups and Units leaders to understand their members vaccination status.

Where can I get more information?

You can access the [Volunteer Hub](#) for all the latest information. This includes information regarding the directions and how to provide proof of your vaccination status. Further information can be found below:

- For a full breakdown of each industry Group as listed in the Directions, see [Mandatory COVID-19 vaccination information](#).
- To download a one page summary, see the [Mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations summary](#).
- [Mandatory vaccination frequently asked questions](#) (Department of Health).
- [Getting proof of vaccination](#).

What if I have more questions?

These frequently asked questions will be regularly updated as the situation develops, however further questions can be emailed to covid19@dfes.wa.gov.au.

Does Section 8c of the Fire and Emergency Services Worker (Restrictions on Access) Direction (No 2) mean an unvaccinated volunteer can respond to emergencies where vaccinated persons are not available?

Section 8c is a standard clause that exists in all directions to allow for the provision of immediate assistance in an emergency ONLY when there is no fully, or partially vaccinated person able to render the assistance.



Section 8c of the Directions provides for absolute worst-case scenario situations where there is no other option than to have unvaccinated individuals respond.

What is the lifespan of the Directions?

The Directions were issued under the Public Health Act by the Chief Health Officer and are not aligned to the current State of Emergency declaration. The Directions will remain in place until the Chief Health Officer indicates otherwise.

I have received an exemption. What additional infection prevention measures or controls do I need when entering or remaining at a Fire and Emergency Services site?

The medical advice provided to DFES indicates unvaccinated persons may have an increased risk of contracting and transmitting COVID-19.

To ensure the health and safety of you and others operating close to you, additional protection measures may be put in place to reduce the risk of acquiring COVID-19.

Please see your medical practitioner for advice on the best protection measures for you.

6.2 CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER (CBFCO) REPORT

File Reference:	5.1.3.1
Reporting Officer:	Chris Marris, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Responsible Officer:	Chris Marris, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Officer Declaration of Interest:	Nil.
Voting Requirement:	Simple Majority
Press release to be issued:	No

BRIEF

For the Committee to receive and note the update provided by the CBFCO.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

A. BACKGROUND / DETAILS

N/A.

B. CONSIDERATIONS

B.1 Strategic Community / Corporate Business Plan

Theme Area 3: Safety and Security

Outcome 3.1: Shire of Northam residents are able to pursue the fullest life possible without fear of or hindrance from crime and disorder.

B.2 Financial / Resource Implications

Nil.

B.3 Legislative Compliance

Nil.

B.4 Policy Implications

Nil.

B.5 Stake Holder Engagement / Consultation

Nil.

B.6 Risk Implications

Risk Category	Description	Rating (consequence x likelihood)	Mitigation Action
Financial	N/A	N/A	N/A
Health & Safety	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reputation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Service Interruption	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	N/A	N/A	N/A
Property	N/A	N/A	N/A
Environment	N/A	N/A	N/A

C. OFFICER'S COMMENT

It was pleasing to again see seasonal conditions allow for the restricted burning period going unchanged this year, and again to the credit of the community, it appeared to be well respected. The weather has also seen minimal HVMBs needing to be declared thus far, allowing the largest harvest to progress. Let's hope it continues, unlike last season.

We go into this season with an enlarged list of active and trained FCO's, having five members complete their training, and another getting very close, just before the start of the season. I thank all involved and those FCO's who have taken the time to undertake the training. As noted elsewhere in the report, flexibility in training delivery is essential to recognise the other commitments our volunteers have across the week, and I hope to see this flexibility continue. Getting WAERN radios for our new BFCO's is our next challenge and priority.

Our BFCO's met in November for our annual 'pre-season' catch up. During the meeting, we discussed a range of topics including the desire and need to sectorise more often at fires within our district. Little did I know shortly afterwards we would have the opportunity to do just that with the incident at Mokine which had an emergency warning in place for a period and saw the GE highway closed for some 5-6 hours. Thank you to all involved.

November also saw a Work Health Safety forum held, which enabled attendees the opportunity to themselves identify some of the risks we face, as well as opportunities and solutions to address these. As you can see from the above report/attachments 3/4, some of these discussions have now been put into action items, with further and ongoing work to be done in this area. There is an opportunity here to improve the safety and wellbeing of our members, but it must be done in a way that also does not increase the risk to these same volunteers and community through the consequences of these decisions. To that end, we must constantly review to ensure the effectiveness of any

changes, and allow those with experience in fire fighting to be central to these discussions.

The vaccine mandate is going to add a difficult challenge to our service given its timing (mid-season) and lack of clarity in some regards over its implementation. I am a big supporter of vaccines and encourage members to get vaccinated, but I appreciate that some volunteers have their own reasons not to be vaccinated. We must work to minimise the impact on our ability to respond to incidents and work to ensure that these unvaccinated volunteers are not lost from our service permanently. We all know how important all our volunteers are to our brigades and how difficult they are to obtain. The administration of this mandate is also certainly going to present some potential challenges during incidents.

As many would be aware, the Northam Advertiser recommenced a local paper in Northam earlier this month and I was pleased to be able to engage with the organisers to have fire-related content included in the paper. Several articles were included in the first edition, and I hope to see this continue.

On November 23, I participated in a consultation session on the standardisation of Fire Danger Ratings across Australia, which is set to see the number of fire danger ratings reduce from six to four. This consultation session was held on short notice and showed that while there had been much work done on a national level, there seemed to be a lot of work still needed around the impact and implications for those at the ground level. Think impact on when people can burn with permits, HVMB, how ratings are calculated (they were thinking forecast rather than actual for determining things like HVMB). I am still awaiting the slides and details from this session, which I will share with Brigades once received. I believe the intention is to see this implemented before the 22/23 season, so fair to say we will hear more about this over the coming months.

Finally, on behalf of the leadership team, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members and staff for their service and dedication in 2021. We wish you all a calm (in terms of incidents) and a safe Christmas and look forward to working with you in 2022. Merry Christmas.

RECOMMENDATION / COUNCIL DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.263

Moved: Mr Mark

Seconded: Mr Nic Dewar

That Council note the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Report as provided.

CARRIED 9/1

Mr Chris Marris provided an overview of the report.

Clarification was sought in relation to the newspaper and whether brigades can put content in this. The Chief Executive Officer advised that this has been flagged with them and staff will provide the contact information to brigades.

7. MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

7.1 TRAINING

BACKGROUND

It has been identified recently that there are a number of members across the BFBs in the Northam Shire who do not hold the current Foundations courses being Bushfire safety awareness and Fire fighting skills. The members specifically being referred to are long serving members who have conducted similar but superseded training in the past. As part of the OHS improvements currently being investigated and actioned, it has been identified that these two courses need to be used as the most basic requirement for firefighters on the fireground.

It has also been raised that the requirement to go through the entire two day, usually weekend, training is unnecessary for these members and fears are held that it may drive valuable members away from the brigades.

Recently, under the drive by Chris Marris, Chadd Hunt and Justin Fox, there has been the idea raised that a Recognition of Current Competency be conducted to demonstrate the members' level of competency against these foundation courses. This strategy would comprise of experienced and previously qualified members to be given the course reading for approximately a month during which they can contact the trainer assessor for any clarifications. Then on an evening which suits, there would be an opportunity for all candidates to come together and have a short session to firm their understanding specifically regarding concepts that were not a part of the previous training packages. Once candidates are ready, they would sit the course assessment (be it theory based or practical) in full as their demonstration of competency. This would be marked, and contact will be made with candidates who are required to provide further information.

Once this process is developed, it should be possible to apply it to all updated training packages if confirming competency is required for the specific course. For example, if Advanced Bushfire Fighter was to be given an update.

Recently, there were three courses run over two evenings each, a total of six evenings, as a trial to work out if evening training was appropriate and accepted through the membership. From the feedback our members have received this was a preferred option compared to the usual two full day course. Many people who find it difficult to attend the usual two-day DFES trainings, believed this allowed them to balance their time more effectively.

MOTION

Moved: Clackline / Muresk Bushfire Brigade

We the Clackline Muresk VBFB would like more opportunities in the future for experienced members to utilise the Recognition of Current Competency (RCC) process when confirming competency and upgrading of as many qualifications as possible. This RCC process should be in a similar structure as being developed to address the current Northam Shire BFB members not yet in possession of a current version of Bushfire Safety Awareness and Fire Fighting Skills. Further to this motion, Clackline Muresk VBFB would like to see more opportunities for evening training sessions opposed to full weekend sessions when conducting DFES training packages face to face.

Note: This motion was passed unanimously by the Clackline / Muresk VBFB at our General Meeting on Friday November 26, 2021.

Mr Blair Wilding provided an overview of the motion.

The Executive Manager Development Services advised that staff having been working with DFES to modify the training and will be looking to trial this in the near future.

MOTION / COUNCIL DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.264

Moved: Mr Blair Wilding

Seconded: Mr Luke Hagan

That Council:

- 1. Formally develop a process for the Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) for the Shire of Northam Bushfire Brigades for a number of the DFES approved training modules.**
- 2. Formalise the RCC process for the DFES modules Bushfire Safety Awareness and Firefighting Skills those experienced members of the Shire of Northam Bushfire Brigades as currently being trialled.**
- 3. Continue to deliver flexible training options for the DFES modules utilising a combination of Volunteer Trainer Assessors and midweek training.**

CARRIED 9/1

The Chief Executive Officer left the meeting at 6:54pm.

OFFICERS COMMENT

The development of the RCC process is seen as a positive and proactive measure to ensure that current members can demonstrate the possession of appropriate skills and experience to continue to perform their current role. In addition, the development of a number of Volunteer Trainer assessors will assist in the delivery and roll out of the RCC process, in addition to the introductory/foundation courses for new members. This will then enable DFES staff and/or Local Government CESH's to deliver more advanced courses.

As indicated in the comments above the delivery of appropriate courses midweek has proven to be successful and there will be further opportunities for additional courses in the future.

It is suggested that the motion could read as follows (without changing the intent of the original motion)

That Council:

4. Formally develop a process for the Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) for the Shire of Northam Bushfire Brigades for a number of the DFES approved training modules.
5. Formalise the RCC process for the DFES modules Bushfire Safety Awareness and Firefighting Skills those experienced members of the Shire of Northam Bushfire Brigades as currently being trialled.
6. Continue to deliver flexible training options for the DFES modules utilising a combination of Volunteer Trainer Assessors and midweek training.

7.2 SERVICE CONCERNS

BACKGROUND

Over the last few years it's been increasing obvious the quality standard of fire unit pre-season/during season servicing has been in steady decline. All units must be maintained to the highest safety and service standards, be operational ready, including trusted local mechanics who can be relied on 24/7 in case of urgent repair works.

Traditionally in years gone by, a Northam approved automotive shop has provided an excellent one stop shop concept for all unit servicing/repair requirements. Over the last few years this type of critical work has now been outsourced to a variety of different automotive repairers, locally and from Perth.

For example:

- Truck and LT general service
- Electrics
- Fire deck
- Pumps
- Hoses and lay flat.
- Tyres
- Radios

Clackline brigade has not been satisfied with the quality and standard of work conducted with mechanically trained members inspecting works completed are not to servicing standards with many critical standard items not serviced. Simple examples, leaf shackles, drive train universal joints on LT and the heavy not or partially greased causing possible premature failure and replacement of air cleaners. As noted above there are at least seven functions being individually outsourced to either local or Perth metro repairers. This outsourcing must come at a considerable cost to the Shire and DFES as multiple service call outs from Perth including travel time must be paid by someone.

The Clackline brigade would like to know the associated service costs of the previous one stop shop concept vs outsourcing concept over the last 3-4 years of each for example. We believe based on our estimates outsourcing has greatly increased costs, with a steep decline in safety, quality and standards. Show all the brigades the real data cost. Have the units maintained by competent local people seems more beneficial as service history on individual units can be logged and the local business benefit.

MOTION

Moved: Mr Blair Wilding

The Council acknowledges Clackline brigade proposal, all service and repairs conducted by a local authorised automotive repairer (one stop shop concept) utilising local services implemented after the 2021/22 fire season, there on and no longer outsourced.

Note: This motion was passed unanimously by the Clackline / Muresk VBFB at our General Meeting on Friday November 26, 2021

Mr Blair Wilding provided an overview of the motion.

The Chief Executive Officer returned to the meeting at 6:57pm.

Clarification was sought in relation to:

- Why this was outsourced. The Executive Manager Development Services advised that the vehicle servicing has been undertaken locally however the items on the back of the vehicle have been outsourced. The Chief Executive Officer advised from his recollection, the reason it was changed was due to the quantum being spent which required Council to go out to market. A local supplier who previously completed the work did not quote despite considerable efforts by staff requesting the contractor to make a submission. It was requested that brigades communicate the current contractor issues to staff so these can be addressed with the contractor.
- The assessment of tenders. The Chief Executive Officer advised that there is a criteria which is weighted and price is not usually more than 50% of this weighting. Council also has a Local Price Preference Policy which provides a benefit to local businesses. Staff believe the primary issue was around receiving very few submissions. The Executive Manager Development Services advised that there is no contract in place and staff request quotes each year to service the vehicles and appliances.

Mr Luke Hagan left the meeting at 6:58pm.

MOTION / COUNCIL DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.265

Moved: Mr Blair Wilding

Seconded: Mr Terry Hasson

That Council request the Chief Executive Officer to call for quotes, with a preference to award to a local provider for the servicing of bush fire brigade appliances in their entirety.

CARRIED 8/1

OFFICERS COMMENT

The concept of a "one stop shop" for all servicing and repair works would require some additional investigations into the logistical and legal requirements of the various services being undertaken. From staff's perspective, provided those issues can be addresses there is certainly merit in investigating this option further.

7.3 APPRECIATION

MOTION / COUNCIL DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.266

Moved: Mr Blair Wilding

Seconded: Mr Nic Dewar

That Council, in the absence of the CESM, recognise the hard work done by Justin Fox, Chris Marris and Chadd Hunt in getting FCO training completed before this fire season. In addition, they have helped us all by developing processes for better training and recognition of member's valuable existing skills.

CARRIED 9/0

Note: This motion was passed unanimously by the Clackline / Muresk VFBF at our General Meeting on Friday November 26, 2021.

Mr Wilding provided an overview of the motion.

Clarification was sought in relation to whether a letter of appreciation can be sent to Tex McPherson. The Executive Manager Development Services advised that this will be arranged.

OFFICERS COMMENT

In addition to the above comments, staff would also like to recognise the assistance provided by Sharon Cocking, Training Support Officer, Northam who assisted with the logistics of the courses and in particular Tex McPherson, Volunteer Training Assessor who volunteered his time and expertise for the training.

7.4 PERMIT BOOKS

MOTION

Moved: Clackline / Muresk Bushfire Brigade

We move that the Shire of Northam issue permit books to FCOs to be used in conjunction with the online system for permit burning.

Note: This motion was passed unanimously by the Clackline / Muresk VBFB at our General Meeting on Friday November 26, 2021.

Mr Blair Wilding provided an overview of the motion.

Discussion was held around this being reviewed by the Fire Control Officer's and implemented prior to the next restricted burning period.

MOTION / COUNCIL DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.267

Moved: Mr Blair Wilding

Seconded: Mr Kris Brown

That Council request the Fire Control Officer's to review the process for issuing permits and implement the changes prior to the next restricted burning period.

CARRIED 9/0

OFFICERS COMMENT

It is apparent that the current permit system (refer to the next notice of motion) requires review in order to function more effectively for all parties.

The current online process has been developed to ensure that the records are kept centrally and can be updated on the Shire of Northam website.

The online system could be reviewed so that a combination of hard copy permits/online permits could be issued, provided that the hard copy permits are uploaded onto the system.

Again, it is suggested that the permit system be discussed at the next FCO meeting to gain a better understanding of any improvements that can be made.

7.5 BURNING PERMITS

At a recent Captains meeting, the process for obtaining a Burning Permit was raised. It was felt by the Captains that:

1. The process relied too much on one central person and that if that person was occupied by their usual duties that the process could stall and be prolonged.
2. The process was locked into "business hours" being 8am to 5pm Monday to Friday. If Public Holidays were incorporated that this could add up to four days to the process of the permit application.
3. The present process did not allow the direct use of the FCO's local knowledge on a first contact basis to allow completion of the application. Rather it had the applicant submit the application to the central contact point who would then contact the relevant FCO for the local knowledge to complete the application to be processed.
4. There is a need to find a way to simplify the extension process of a permit past seven days. Perhaps to incorporate in the application a check box to allow the permit to automatically renew up to two extra blocks of seven days but no longer than twenty-one days in total.
5. It was agreed by the meeting that a central list or database was necessary to track permits but rather than have it maintained by a central person that it could be incorporated into the application process. It could be accessed at the initial point of the application process and generate a permit number if all the criteria of the application were met via check boxes.

MOTION

The Grass Valley Bush Fire Brigade would like to propose a motion that the Burning permit process be reviewed.

- **That rather than have the process start with a central person that the process starts at a local FCO who is accessible 7 days a week to complete the application.**
- **That the FCO has the authority to process and approve low risk permit applications.**
- **That the FCO has access to a database to record any permits and that could utilise the present online system but incorporated into the application process.**
- **That the online application system could approve and generate a permit number by checks and measures.**
- **That the system of the extension process of a Permit past 7 days validity be simplified. Incorporate into the application the ability to have a permit automatically renew for up to two more blocks of 7 days or 3 blocks of 7 days in total.**

OFFICERS COMMENT

As per the previous motion staff are aware of concerns expressed with the current system. In addition, staff are also cognisant of any additional impact that changes the process may have on the volunteer FCO's.

As an interim solution it is suggested that the permit system be further discussed at the next FCO meeting so that an agreed solution can be reached.

OUTCOME

This above motion was not considered as it relates to the outcome from agenda item 7.4 - Permit Books.

8. URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY DECISION

Nil.

9. GENERAL BUSINESS

9.1 CESM POSITION

Clarification was sought in relation to when this position will be active. The Executive Manager Development Services advised that it is unknown at this stage. The Chief Executive Officer advised that it is believed that this role will be performed by the Executive Manager Development Services and Compliance Officer in the upcoming fire season.

9.2 WUNDOWIE FIRE LEGAL ACTION UPDATE

An update was requested in relation to the legal action for the Wundowie fire incident. The Executive Manager Development Services advised that he would obtain an update and provide this to the committee.

9.3 WUNDOWIE BUSH FIRE BRIGADE STATION

Clarification was sought in relation to:

- Whether there was any progress on this matter. The Executive Manager Development Services advised that the brigade has temporary accommodation at the Wundowie Shire Depot. In relation to a new facility, Council will be required to re-apply for funding in the 2022/23 grant scheme.
- Whether co-location is still being considered. The Executive Manager Development Services advised that this is not part of the discussion. A more permanent location is being considered at the football pavilion.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The 2022 meeting schedule is as follows:

- 8 March 2022
- 14 June 2022
- 13 September 2022
- 8 November 2022

11. DECLARATION OF CLOSURE

There being no further business, the Presiding Member, Mr Chris Marris declared the meeting closed at 7:30pm.

"I certify that the Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee, held on Tuesday 14 December 2021 have been confirmed as a true and correct record."

_____ Presiding Member

_____ Date