



Shire of Northam  
*Heritage, Commerce and Lifestyle*

# **Shire of Northam**

## **Minutes**

### **Bush Fire Advisory Committee**

**10 March 2020**

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## 1. DECLARATION OF OPENING

The Presiding Members, Cr T M Little declared the meeting open at 5:37pm.

## 2. ATTENDANCE

### Voting Committee:

Councillor – Shire of Northam	Terry Little
Inkpen Bush Fire Brigade	Nic Dewar
Clackline Muresk Bush Fire Brigade	Blair Wilding
Bakers Hill Bush Fire Brigade	Steve Gray
Grass Valley Bush Fire Brigade	Sam Moss
Irishtown Bush Fire Brigade	Rob Herzer
Southern Brook Bush Fire Brigade	Paul Antonio
Wundowie Bush Fire Brigade - Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer	Mathew Macqueen
Northam Central Bush Fire Brigade	Murray McGregor
Northam Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service	Greg Montgomery

### Non Voting

Community Emergency Service Manager	Brendon Rutter
District Officer Northam	Darrel Krammer

### Staff:

Executive Manager Development Services	Chadd Hunt
Executive Assistant - CEO	Alysha McCall
Payroll Officer	Jennifer Grant

### Gallery:

Bakers Hill Bushfire Brigade	Kris Brown
Bakers Hill Bushfire Brigade	Andrew Burrows
Irishtown Bushfire Brigade	Terry Hasson
Northam Central Bushfire Brigade	Matthew Carroll

## 2.1 APOLOGIES

Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	Chris Marris
Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer	Simon Peters
Department of Parks and Wildlife (Wheatbelt)	Graeme Keals
Department of Parks and Wildlife (Perth Hills)	Michael Pasotti

### 3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Nil.

### 4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

#### 4.1 COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2019

##### RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

**Minute No: BFAC.240**

**Moved: Mr Murray McGregor**

**Seconded: Mr Sam Moss**

**That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory meeting held on 12 November 2019 be confirmed as a true and correct record of that meeting.**

**CARRIED 10/0**

### 5. RECEIVING OF PRESENTATIONS

#### DFES Volunteering & Youth Services

Ms Jennifer Pidgeon from the DFES Volunteer & Youth Services Branch spoke in relation to the services and support offered by DFES to Brigades, Groups and Units regarding on-boarding, recruitment, retention, succession planning and management of volunteers.

There is the opportunity for Brigades, Groups and Units to organise DFES to come to site and provide workshops to assist, contact details can be obtained from the Community Emergency Services Manager.

Ms Jennifer Pidgeon left the meeting at 6:15pm

## 6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### 6.1 COMMUNITY EMERGENCY SERVICES MANAGER REPORT

<b>Address:</b>	N/A
<b>Owner:</b>	N/A
<b>Applicant:</b>	N/A
<b>File Reference:</b>	5.1.3.1
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Brendon Rutter, Community Emergency Services Manager
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Chadd Hunt, Executive Manager Development Services
<b>Officer Declaration of Interest:</b>	Nil.
<b>Voting Requirement:</b>	Simple Majority
<b>Press release to be issued:</b>	No

#### BRIEF

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

#### ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Open BFAC Decisions.

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#### 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

The 2019/20 season has been a busy one out in the Goldfields, but closer to home it has been relatively mild considering some of the conditions we have had.

This season seen an increase in the fire danger ratings, which resulted in Total Fire Ban's (TFB) being declared from early Nov onwards, with an marked increase in the triggers being met for Harvest, Vehicle Movement & Hot Works Bans (HVMB) being declared also.

That being said, the brigades have certainly been relatively busy still with some brigades well on their way to a standard season.

Our current incident attendance summary figures for the year to date are below,

Inkpen – 11  
Wundowie BFB – 5  
Bakers Hill – 22  
Clackline – 16  
Central – 20  
Irishtown – 12  
Southern Brook - 3  
Grass Valley – 18

There has also been a noticed increase in the training sessions at each brigade which is fantastic to see.

**PPC** – Almost all PPC should have been delivered by now, some orders took a while to be delivered which has been unfortunate due to the high demand from other local governments, but staff have implemented some steps to ensure that next years PPC orders are completed no later than July to ensure a targeted delivery of September/October moving forward.

**Static Water Supply connection issues** - A lesson learned from a fire early in the season was that a lot of our appliances lacked the resources to connect to the static water supplies that are strategically dotted around the Shire.

The first round of couplings to each appliance has been delivered, and with a 2<sup>nd</sup> coupling on its way, each appliance will no longer have difficulties in drafting from any of our tanks.

**Staub tyre deflators** – There was an incident in January where a heavy appliance utilised their tyre deflators on the fire ground, which resulted in the tyre being underinflated due to incorrectly calibrated equipment that resulted in a tyre rolling off the rim.

All tyre inflators from our fleet have been recalled, and the delivery of new, calibrated deflators to every appliance has been completed. It is important that these kits are checked with your weekly VPOWER checks to ensure the kit is intact and not missing any parts, but please ensure that all members are aware that these cannot be altered, as they are calibrated to the appliance type and any tampering/adjustments will risk damage to the tyres. Please ensure all members are aware that these have been pre-set and are maintenance free.

## **2019/20 – LGGS**

The Local Government Grants Scheme (LGGS) funding round is currently being completed.

The main items that we are requesting feedback from brigades on is electronic roller door motors, as a direct result of several near misses that had the potential to cause injury when the doors dropped down as the appliances pulled out of the stations, as well as several occasions of the drums becoming unspooled.

Justification has been provided to the LGGS committee for the allocation of funds to install the door motors in Grass Valley, Clackline & Inkpen Fire Stations, Staff will update on the progress once the Committee has made a decision.

**Inkpen BFB** – we have applied for a total off grid power solution due to the building only being able to support 12v systems unless the generator is running.

This would restrict the installation of CCTV and alarm systems at this location so an alternative solution is being researched.

**CCTV & Alarm systems** – Staff have requested pricing for the supply and installation of CCTV (4 camera) and basic alarm system to be installed on each station. As part of this works, consideration will be given the possibility of installing a FOB key system on each station that could eventually replace the need for pin code systems, and enable easier access management once a member leaves.

Will discuss further with the LGGs committee and will report back at later date.

**Cel-fi – Mobile Phone Reception Boosters** – Due to the various black spots in the district where radio communication can be inconsistent, for funding to install Cel-Fi boosters on all heavy appliances in the 2020/21 has been included in the current application. This is to provide members with a redundancy should the radio network suffer from interference or for any 'offline' discussions that may not be appropriate to discuss over the unsecured radio network back to the control point.

Will update our members if the grant request is successful.

**Washing Machines** – In the interest of ensuring volunteers have access to cleaning facilities to keep PPC clean and prevent potentially harmful carcinogens from contaminating private vehicles/property, washing machines are requested for each fire station for members to use as required at their discretion.

**Bakers Hill 4.4** – In accordance with the Council endorsed Resource to Risk document, and adopted 5yr plan, staff will be applying for the Bakers Hill 4.4B, Dual Cab appliance.

**Northam Central 12.2** – The R2R outlines the Northam Central BFB to be allocated a 12.2 in 2022, staff will be applying for a 12.2 in the 2020/21 LGGs application to get the ball rolling, anticipated delivery on a successful application will be close to the 2022 period.

**Bush Fire Manual** – At a recent workshop to review the Bush Fires Manual, it has been identified that there is a few items that need further discussion prior to making a formal submission to Council.

It is proposed that another workshop(s) will be required to further review and discuss each section of the manual to ensure that the manual remains a valuable resource of information for brigades and their members. Full details will be provided at June BFAC for Council consideration

**RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION**

**Minute No: BFAC.241**

**Moved: Mr Nic Dewar**

**Seconded: Mr Murray McGregor**

**That Council note the Community Emergency Services Manager Report as provided, and endorse the abovementioned additions in the 2020/21 LGGS application.**

**CARRIED 10/0**

**Attachment 1**

Date	Motion No	Item No	Subject	Motion	Action By	Comment	Date Completed	Status
18-Sep-19	C.3759	11.1	BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 10 SEPTMEBER 2019	<p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note the Community Emergency Services Manager Report as provided.</li> <li>2. Note the Chief Bushfire Control Officer Report as provided.</li> <li>3. Appoints Kristafer Brown as a Fire Control Officer for the 2019/20 Season in accordance with the criteria set in section 5 of the Shire of Northam Bush Fire Manual.</li> <li>4. Contact the Rural Fire Division (RFD) to request:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. An update on progress of the RFD implementation;</li> <li>b. Advice on how the RFD will be structured and where the Bush Fire Brigades will sit in that structure;</li> <li>c. A timeframe of when this is likely to occur;</li> <li>d. A response by 31st October 2019 to enable the response to be tabled at the November pre-season BFAC.</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. Present the SOP to the Fire Control Officer meeting on 13 September 2019 and subsequent brigade meeting prior to being reconsidered by BFAC.</li> <li>6. Refer the matter relating to the restricted burning date / creation of two zones to Fire Control Officer meeting on 13 September 2019 for further discussion.</li> <li>7. Refer the following structure to the Bush Fire Brigades to endorse:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Chief Bush Fire Control Officer position is to become a paid role under the Shire of Northam;</li> <li>b. Appointment of 2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Officers; and</li> <li>c. 1 Senior FCO (deputy in training); and</li> <li>d. Honorarium stays in place for the x2 deputies</li> </ol> </li> <li>8. Include an agenda item for 'General Business' to future BFAC meetings for discussion/general business.</li> </ol>	CESM	<p>Update: 04/03/2020</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No action required.</li> <li>2. No action required.</li> <li>3. Complete</li> <li>4. Ongoing</li> <li>5. Workshopped, draft SOP under development</li> <li>6. Complete, unable to split district under Bush Fires Act 1954</li> <li>7. Complete</li> <li>8. Complete</li> <li>9. Currently in Bush Fires Manual</li> <li>10. Complete. Protocols and procedures are in place, no change to operational capability.</li> <li>11. Complete</li> <li>12. Complete</li> <li>13. Complete</li> </ol>		Open

Date	Motion No	Item No	Subject	Motion	Action By	Comment	Date Completed	Status
				9. Develop a detailed and fully supported succession plan/s for the Chief and Deputy/s positions. 10. Develop a plan on how Council will manage fires in the 2019/2020 season. 11. Advertise for a Chief Bush Fire Control Officer for the 2019/20 bush fire season; 12. Appoint Mathew Macqueen and Simon Peters as Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers for the 2019/20 bush fire season; and 13. Appoint Chris Marris as Senior Fire Control Officer for the 2019/20 bush fire season.				
20-Nov-19	C.3801	11.2	BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2019	That Council: 1. Note the Community Emergency Services Manager Report as provided. 2. Endorse the proposed location of the new Bakers Hill Fire Brigade Shed on a portion of Reserve 4200 as provided in Attachment 2 of this report. 3. Appoint Mr Chris Marris as Chief Bush Fire Control Officer for the 2019/20 Bush Fire Season. 4. Endorse that the mobilisation risk matrix be circulated for consultation with the Shire of Northam Bush Fire Brigades and VFRS for further consideration at the March 2020 BFAC meeting.	CESM	Update: 04/03/2020 1. No action required. 2. Ongoing. 3. Complete. 4. Complete.		Open

## 6.2 CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER (CBFCO) REPORT

<b>Address:</b>	N/A
<b>Owner:</b>	N/A
<b>Applicant:</b>	N/A
<b>File Reference:</b>	5.1.3.1
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Brendon Rutter, Community Emergency Services Manager
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Chadd Hunt, Executive Manager Development Services
<b>Officer Declaration of Interest:</b>	Nil.
<b>Voting Requirement:</b>	Simple Majority
<b>Press release to be issued:</b>	No

### BRIEF

For the Committee to receive and note the update provided by the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

### ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

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#### 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

Well to say it has been a fortunate season to date is probably an understatement, particularly given the unprecedented weather we have faced. I believe this season DFES has placed more Total Fire Bans than any previous season in recent memory, with conditions drier than they have been for at least the past five seasons.

Even still, those incidents that we have had, through the quick response and dedication of our members, we have been able to get on top of quickly. We have also been able to assist with a number of incidents in our neighbouring Shires along with numerous members deploying to fires in the Goldfields and the Eastern States. I thank each of you for your work and dedication to the community.

However I am ever mindful that it only takes one incident to shape the season, and while we have had rain in recent weeks, the risk of the season is far from over. The scenario evening held in late February for our Lieutenants, BFCO's and Captain's showed how incidents can escalate quickly with dire consequences at a range of times of the year. I thank those who attended this event – it was well supported and the feedback strongly indicates a desire for this to become a regular on our calendar. I will also be making the scenarios available to Brigades should they wish to run them at a Brigade level.

Since stepping into the Chief role, I have enjoyed getting around to all Brigades to meet and discuss challenges and issues with you. I have also travelled to many areas of the Shire I had not previously been, with plenty of back roads still to be travelled. I thank Brigades for their support over this time.

Clearly the situation we found ourselves in as a collective, with no one willing or able to take of the Chief role, is not ideal and we must collectively work to find a solution moving forward. The Shire must take an active role in this process as well – not only when the issue comes to a head.

From my early perspective I see a few challenges and issues that have led to this result, with the three main being:

- 1) We have lost the depth of BFCO's we once enjoyed across the Shire. Given that the Chief and Deputy roles come from the BFCO's, it is unsurprising that a lack of one causes issues with the other. There are many contributing factors – bureaucracy, a loss of purpose/purpose being stripped away, aging membership base, etc. I want to make it clear to all that I believe that having active BFCO's across our Shire is essential. These roles are important, and I am determined to ensure that those that need to hear that do.
- 2) The role of the Chief has evolved/being lumbered with too much work and responsibility that it makes it difficult for a volunteer to take on such as task. It is early days for me to see what can be pushed back on or passed on but this must be a priority. The Shire needs to step up and take some of the load, we must find easier ways to achieve the same outcome, and we need to develop a support team (Deputies, BFCO's, Weather Officers, CESM etc) around the Chief that can help share the load. I have been pleased to see some support from the Shire since my appointment
- 3) Training. I believe that we would all inspire for our senior roles to be highly trained, although I think we'd all agree the experience is equally or more important. However, as volunteers, it can be unreasonable to expect people to be fully trained on day one, for roles that they are often coerced into undertaking or are the last to look away during a meeting. Sometimes it may take a number of months or even until the following season to be able to get the training undertaking due to scheduling issues, lack of courses run etc. During this time we must do our best to encourage our volunteers and mentor them, not push them away because they don't have all the training. We also need to work hard to make the training work for our volunteers, not the other way around.

I hope to try to focus on improving these issues, with Brigades support, as we move forward.

I am also keen and hopeful to pivot back to Brigades members and the BFCO's running more incidents, with the Chief and Deputies either only being there in support or not at all. This won't happen overnight, and requires strong communication, but I believe is important to occur.

At a Brigade level some of the key issues that are being faced include:

- Delays in receiving PPE/PPC. This is something that I have discussed with the CESH/Shire and I believe that mostly resolved for the current season, but this is clearly something we must work to improve at all levels. In particular, when we get new members, we must keep that momentum of interest going in those first few critical months with training and uniforms
- The CESH has pleasingly been able to invest heavily in repairs and maintenance of our appliances over the past year, combined with the reshuffle that occurred out of the R2R. With the positives, there has also been some teething issues with changes in suppliers etc, but I believe most of these issues have now been resolved or at least are closely being monitored
- A lack of new members. This is not a new issue and certainly isn't isolated to volunteer fire brigades, but this does not reduce its impact on our Brigades and our ability to protect our communities. As such, I call upon interested representatives from Brigades to join a working committee to both identify any impediments to new members and keeping existing members, as well as identifying opportunities to recruit new members to our service
- Buildings – Northam Central has been working hard to source a suitable medium term location to which to base the Brigade out of. Wundowie BFB is currently located within a facility that does little to encourage membership of this up-and-coming Brigade. Both Brigades are actively working to resolve their situations. Bakers Hill BFB new station has recently been out to tender, and will hopefully start progressing quickly over the coming months.

I think most would agree that the Central BFB has progressed very well this past year, driven by Murray. Well done to all involved. What I found having now been involved in turning our Brigades to incidents is that at times it seems more appropriate to turn-out Central to a small incident on the outskirts of town, then the Brigade who's official area it is as they are likely further away. Currently my approach has been to turn out both (often with Northam VFRS in addition) which potentially becomes overkill. Am interested in feedback from Brigades on how this should be approached.

So again, thank you to our Brigades for the work that you have and continue to do.

Regards  
Chris

**RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION**

**Minute No: BFAC.242**

**Moved: Mr Sam Moss**

**Seconded: Mr Rob Herzer**

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

**CARRIED 10/0**

### 6.3 FIRE BREAK AND FUEL LOAD NOTICE

<b>Address:</b>	N/A
<b>Owner:</b>	N/A
<b>Applicant:</b>	N/A
<b>File Reference:</b>	5.1.3.1
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Brendon Rutter, Community Emergency Services Manager
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Chadd Hunt, Executive Manager Development Services
<b>Officer Declaration of Interest:</b>	Nil.
<b>Voting Requirement:</b>	Simple Majority
<b>Press release to be issued:</b>	No

#### BRIEF

For the Committee to receive the Shire of Northam Fire Break & Fuel Load notice with the recommended changes.

#### ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Fire break & Fuel load notice.

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#### 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

Section 33 – Bushfires Act 1954

##### B.4 Policy Implications

Nil.

## B.5 Stake Holder Engagement / Consultation

Workshopped with Brigade leadership teams,

## 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

On Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> Feb 2020, a workshop was held in Council Chambers for the purpose of reviewing the current firebreak and fuel load notice to ensure it met community expectations, and to ensure that there was clarity around some of the provisions of the notice.

All brigades, including both the Northam & Wundowie VFRS were invited to attend, those present at the meeting were

Steve Gray –Bakers Hill BFB

Kris Brown – Bakers Hill

Paul Reynolds – Grass Valley BFB

Angus Cooke – Grass Valley

Murray McGregor – Irishtown & Northam Central BFB

Nic Dewar – Inkpen BFB

Neil Diamond – Inkpen BFB

Chris Marris – Shire of Northam – CBFCO

Feedback was also received and discussed from Scott Horlin – Northam VFRS.

The main areas of change proposed include the following:

Fuel Loads

There was discussion around the fuel load requirements for remnant vegetation on properties to maintain a fuel load below 4 ton per hectare as the existing requirement of 8 ton per hectare raised concerns about being too high. Further information was sought and after clarification that to maintain fuel loads below 4 ton/hectare would require almost a bare earth policy for all bush blocks, and blocks with remnant vegetation Staff recommended to the meeting that the fuel load requirements remain at 8ton/hectare however staff

have also provided a definitions section to the notice which was previously not provided to ensure clarity about fuel load assessments.

#### Firebreaks

The fire break requirements were clarified in section 5 of the document to ensure that the notice ensured clarity for compliance purposes whilst also aligning with community expectations.

#### Variations (Section 7)

Modified to provide clarity around variations, and ensure that mitigating circumstances are considered when dealing with property owners.

The variation order provides clarity around the variation process.

#### Burning of Garden Refuse (Section 8)

– it was voted at the workshop that pursuant to S24F, it would be prohibited to conduct 1m<sup>3</sup> refuse burning within the Shire of Northam in the restricted period following the prohibited burning period due to the high risk of fire escaping, S8 is also ensuring that the requirements of refuse burning are aligned with the requirements of the Bush Fire Regulations 1954 (15B).

#### Cooking and Camping (New Section 10)

In the past there has been confusion around what is or isn't allowed during the prohibited burning period in relation to camping and cooking fires.

Discussions were had around what is and isn't allowed under the act, and what appliances constitute a fire in the open air.

#### Harvest, Movement of Vehicles and Hot Works Ban (Section 12)

Modified to ensure that wording used aligns with the Bush Fires Act 1954 and is clear, concise & most importantly, enforceable during a Harvest, Vehicle Movement & Hot Works Ban.

#### Additional Works (Section 13)

this was revised to ensure that clarity was provided around the provisions of a notice additional to the Fire break and Fuel load notice under S33, the wording has been aligned to reflect the intent of s33 Bush Fires Act 1954.

#### Definitions (new section)

This was additional to the standard notice to ensure that clarity is provided around specific points within the notice to ensure that the notice is easy to understand by community members, and assist members of the public with compliance under the terms of this notice.

**RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION**

**Minute No: BFAC.243**

**Moved: Mr Nic Dewar**

**Seconded: Mr Sam Moss**

**That Council:**

- 1. Endorse the Shire of Northam Fire Break and Fuel load notice as amended; and**
- 2. Amend the above draft notice to amend fuel load on bush blocks and remnant vegetation from 4t per ha to 8t per Ha to ensure that the requirements of this notice are realistic and achievable for the property owner.**

**CARRIED 10/0**

## Attachment 1

### BUSH FIRES ACT 1954

#### Firebreak and Fuel Load Notice

##### *Shire of Northam*

Pursuant to the powers contained in Section 33 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954* (as amended), notice is hereby given to all owners and occupiers of land within the Shire of Northam adopted the following requirements as a measure to assist in the control of bush fires, or preventing the spread or extension of a bush fire which may occur within the Shire.

All owners and/or occupiers of land within the Shire of Northam are required to carry out fire prevention work in accordance with this notice by 1 November each calendar year and maintained until 30 April the following calendar year, or within 14 days of becoming an owner or occupier of land if after that date, to comply with the requirements set out in this notice.

**FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS ORDER MAY RESULT WITH THE ISSUE OF AN INFRINGEMENT NOTICE PENALTY \$250.00 OR PROSECUTION IN A COURT OF LAW WITH A MAXIMUM PENALTY OF \$5,000 AND BE LIABLE WHETHER PROSECUTED OR NOT TO PAY THE COSTS OF PERFORMING THE WORK DIRECTED BY THE NOTICE.**

#### 1. Building Protection Zone

The Building Protection Zone is an area of very low fuel levels and managed vegetation 20 metres out from habitable buildings (As defined in the Residential Design Codes of WA and in AS 3959) and must meet the following requirements,

Habitable building means a dwelling, workplace, place of gathering or assembly, a building used for the storage or display of goods or produce for sale by wholesale in accordance with classes 1-9 of the Building Code of Australia. The term habitable building includes attached and adjacent structures like garages, carports, verandas or similar roofed structures that are attached to, or within 6 metres of, the dwelling or primary building.

- Building Protection Zones for habitable buildings must extend a minimum of 20 metres out from any external walls of the building, attached structures, or adjacent structures within 6 metres of the habitable building.
- On sloping ground the Building Protection Zone distance shall increase at least 1 metre for every degree in slope on the sides of the habitable building that are exposed to down slope natural vegetation.
- Building Protection Zones must consist of non-flammable managed vegetation, reticulated lawns and gardens and other non-flammable features.
- All grass in Building Protection Zones must be maintained to or under 5cm in height.
- Fuel loads within Building Protection Zones must be maintained at 2 tonnes per hectare or lower.
- The crowns of trees must be separated to create a clear separation distance between adjoining or nearby tree crowns. The separation distance between tree crowns is not required to exceed 10 metres.
- A small group of trees within close proximity to one another may be treated as one crown provided the combined crowns do not exceed the area of a large or mature crown size for that species.
- Trees are to be low pruned (or under pruned) to at least a height of 2 metres from ground.
- No tree, or shrub over 2 metres high are to be within 2 metres of a habitable building.
- Trees and shrubs over 2 metres high must not be planted in groups close to the habitable building and there must be a gap of at least 3 times the height (at maturity) of the shrub away from the habitable building.
- There must be no tree crowns or branches hanging over habitable buildings.
- Firewood and flammable materials must be stored 20m from habitable buildings
- Driveways and access ways are to be a minimum of (3) metres wide with a vertical clearance of (4)metres to allow for the safe passage of a fire appliance to all buildings and assets on the land
- Roof gutters should be free of leaves and other combustible material.

#### YOUR PROPERTY

##### 2. Land with area less than 10,000m<sup>2</sup>(1 hectare)

- Maintain all grass on the land to a height no greater than 10cm all windrows or dead flammable material must be removed.
- **Maintain fuel loadings in natural bush areas at less than 4 tonnes per hectare across the land**
- Land with a habitable building on it must maintain a Building Protection Zone in line with the requirements of Section 1 of this notice.

##### 3. Land with an area g 10,000m<sup>2</sup> (1 hectare) to 100,000m<sup>2</sup> (10 hectares)

Options (selected one out of the three options)

1. Install bare earth firebreaks three (3) metres wide immediately inside within (10) metres of all boundaries in a continuous form. All overhanging branches, trees, limbs etc. to be trimmed back from over the firebreak area to a minimum height of four (4) metres to allow for the safe passage of a fire appliance or;
2. Maintain all grass on the land to a height no greater than 10cm all windrows and or dead flammable material must be removed. An access area within (10) metres of the boundary with a minimum width of (3) metres with a vertical clearance of (4) metres where all overhanging branches are trimmed back to allow for the safe passage of a fire appliance or;

3. A combination of the above two options for properties with natural bush sections and pastured land sections

- Land with a building on it must maintain a Building Protection Zone in line with the requirements of Section 1 of this notice.
- On land for the use of tendering livestock a level of feed can be maintained to last the season. All grass a distance of 5m from any firebreak must be maintained to a height no greater than 10cm.
- Maintain fuel loadings in natural bush areas at less than 4 tonnes per hectare across the land.

#### Firebreak

Means a strip or area of trafficable ground, which is at least three (3) metres wide for cropped/stubble areas, or Three (3) metres wide for bushland/remnant vegetation areas with a minimum height of four (4) metres, which is kept and maintained totally clear of all inflammable matter. Such firebreaks may be constructed by one or more of the following methods: PLOUGHING, CULTIVATING, SCARIFYING, RAKING, BURNING, CHEMICAL SPRAYING OR OTHER METHOD as approved by an Authorised Officer.

In agricultural areas it is considered acceptable if a vehicle can travel through crop area within 10m of the property boundary to traverse around low branches or limbs.

#### 4. Land with an area greater than 100,000m<sup>2</sup> (10 hectares)

Options (selected one out of the three options)

1. Install bare earth firebreaks two (2) metres wide immediately inside within (10) metres of all boundaries in a continuous form, for all cropped/stubble areas, or three (3) metres wide for all natural bush/remnant vegetation areas on the property within ten (10) metres of the property boundary. All overhanging branches, trees, limbs etc. to be trimmed back from over the firebreak area to a minimum height of four (4) metres to allow for the safe passage of a fire appliance or;
  2. Maintain all grass on the land to a height no greater than 10cm all windrows and or dead flammable material must be removed. An access area within (10) metres of the boundary with a minimum width of (3) metres with a vertical clearance of (4) metres where all overhanging branches are trimmed back to allow for the safe passage of a fire appliance or;
  3. A combination of the above two options for properties with natural bush sections and pastured land sections
- On land for the use of tendering livestock a level of feed can be maintained to last the season. All grass a distance of 5m from any firebreak must be maintained to a height no greater than 10cm.
  - Maintain fuel loadings in natural bush areas at less than 4 tonnes per hectare across the land.

#### Firebreak

Means a strip or area of trafficable ground, which is at least two (2) metres wide for cropped/stubble areas, or Three (3) metres wide for bushland/remnant vegetation areas with a minimum height of four (4) metres, which is kept and maintained totally clear of all inflammable matter. Such firebreaks may be constructed by one or more of the following methods: PLOUGHING, CULTIVATING, SCARIFYING, RAKING, BURNING, CHEMICAL SPRAYING OR OTHER METHOD as approved by an Authorised Officer.

In agricultural areas it is considered acceptable if a vehicle can travel through crop area within 10m of the property boundary to traverse around low branches or limbs.

#### 5. Fuel Depot and Storage Areas, Haysheds, Stockpiled Flammable Materials and Stationary Machinery.

- Remove all flammable matter within (10) metres of Fuel Depot and Storage Areas of where fuel drums whether containing fuel or not, fuel ramps or fuel dumps are located, Hay Shed, Stockpiled Flammable Materials, Stationary Machinery are stored.
- Install bare earth firebreaks three (3) metres wide immediately inside and along all boundaries of land in a continuous form with a vertical clearance of (4) metres where overhanging branches are trimmed back immediately adjacent to Stationary Motors, Haystacks, Stockpiled Flammable Materials and Stationary Machinery.

#### 6. Bushfire or Emergency Management Plans

(Compliance is required throughout the year, every year)

Means a bushfire management plan, emergency management plan or an approved Bushfire attack level (BAL) assessment that has been developed and approved to reduce and mitigate fire hazards as part of a Town Planning Scheme, subdivision approval, development approval or a building permit

- All properties with a Bush Fire, Fire or Emergency Management Plan shall comply with the plan in its entirety.
- Any requirements identified in a Bush Fire, Fire or Emergency Management Plan are in addition to the requirements of this notice.

#### 7. Application to vary the Firebreak Requirements with Alternative Arrangements

If it is considered impracticable for any reason whatsoever to implement any of the requirements of this Notice, you may apply in writing to the Shire of Northam by no later than the 1st October each year for permission to implement alternative measures under the following options,

- a) A temporary variation for extenuating circumstances only

- b) A permanent feature of the property requires a variation to his order, if approved the variation will apply until specifically rescinded or replaced with a new individual notice by the shire.

Take notice if permission is not granted in writing you must comply with the requirements of this notice.

### 8. The Burning of Garden Refuse

Pursuant to the powers contained in section 24G (2) of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, the Shire of Northam prohibits the burning of all garden refuse within its district during the Prohibited Burning Times. This prohibition applies to all persons within the Shire's district.

- The burning of garden refuse or rubbish on the ground or in an incinerator that would otherwise be permitted under Section 24F is prohibited absolutely on all land within the district during the Prohibited Burning Period.
- The burning of garden refuse or rubbish on the ground or in an incinerator that would otherwise be permitted under Section 24F is prohibited on all land under 2000m<sup>2</sup> (square metres) in size during the Restricted Burning Time, without a Fire Permit issued under Regulation 15 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.
- The burning of garden refuse or rubbish on the ground or in an incinerator that would otherwise be permitted under Section 24F is prohibited absolutely on all land within the district during the Restricted Burning period between 1st Mar - 30 Apr each year.
- During the Restricted Burning period October 1<sup>st</sup> & Nov 30<sup>th</sup> each year, residents on land that is greater than 2,000m<sup>2</sup> in area it is permissible to undertake the burning of garden refuse (dry leaves, small branches, off cuts, etc.) in a single pile on the ground no larger than 1.0 m<sup>2</sup> between the hours of 18:00 (6pm) and 23:00 (11pm) and by complying with all the conditions of section 24F (3) in the *Bush Fires Act 1954* & Regulation 15B Bush Fires Regulations 1954.
- Reticulated water supply or min 600lts of water must be available for immediate use at all times, the fire is to be completely extinguished with water prior to leaving area unattended.

### 9. Restricted and Prohibited Burning times

- The "Prohibited Burning Time" means the 1 December each calendar year through until 28th February the following calendar year (inclusive, and as varied pursuant to Sections 17 and 18 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*).
- The "Restricted Burning Time" means the 1 October through until 30 November and the 1 March through until 30 April each calendar year (inclusive, and as varied pursuant to Sections 17 and 18 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*).

### 10. Cooking & Camping

Pursuant to the powers contained in section 25H (1) of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, the Shire of Northam prohibits the lighting of a fire in the open air for the purpose of camping or cooking during the prohibited period. This prohibition applies to all persons within the Shire's district.

For the purposes of this section (1aa) a gas appliance, comprising a fire the flame of which is encapsulated by the appliance and which does not consume solid fuel, shall not be taken to be a fire in the open air.

An appliance that burns a solid fuel, (BBQ, Pizza Oven, Meat Smoker etc.) cannot be operated on days of "VERY HIGH", "SEVERE", "EXTREME" or "CATASTROPHIC" fire danger rating.

- Any chimney on the appliance must be fitted with a suitable spark arrestor that is maintained in a clean, sound and efficient condition.
- If solid fuel is being consumed, then the burning fuel must be sealed from the open air by a secure, sealable door.
- Appliance must not be left unattended and a reticulated water supply must be available for immediate use.

Take notice a person/s who contravenes a of this section is guilty of an offence that carries a penalty of \$3,000.

### 11. Permits to burn

Means a "Permit to Burn the Bush" as issued by an Authorised Officer under section 18 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.

- Applications for Permits are available from the Shire of Northam at no cost.
- You must comply with all conditions imposed by the Shire or an Authorised Officer in respect of any Permit issued by the Shire.
- Permits will not be valid on days of "VERY HIGH", "SEVERE", "EXTREME" or "CATASTROPHIC" fire danger.
- Permits may also be revoked if in the opinion of an authorised officer the conditions are not deemed suitable for prescribed burns.  
Take notice that the Shire of Northam prohibits the burning of any road verge within the entire district.

Take Notice that pursuant to Section 18 (11) of the *Bush Fires Act 1954* - Where a person starts a fire on land, if the fire escapes from the land or if the fire is in the opinion of a Bush Fire Control Officer or an officer of a Bush Fire Brigade out of control on the land, the person shall be liable

to pay to the local government on the request of and for recoup to its bush fire brigade, any expenses up to a maximum amount of \$10 000 incurred by it in preventing the extension of or extinguishing the fire, and such expenses may be recovered in any court of competent jurisdiction.

A person who commits a breach of this section other than subsection (11) is guilty of an offence.

Penalty: For a first offence \$4 500.

For a second or subsequent offence \$10 000.

## 12. Harvest, Movement of Vehicles and Hot Works Bans

All persons within the Shire of Northam are required to comply with a direction declared under Reg 38A, 38B, 38C & 38D, Bush Fires Regulations 1954.

- A Harvest, Vehicle Movement & Hot Works Ban (HVMB) requires the cessation of all harvesting, vehicle movements and hot work operations within the Shire of Northam.

- A Harvest, Vehicle Movement & Hot Works Ban (HVMB) prohibits the movement of vehicles on properties within the Shire of Northam except for the essential watering of stock in a diesel powered vehicle.

- A Harvest, Vehicle Movement & Hot Works Ban (HVMB) prohibits the use of all welding, grinding and abrasive tools on properties within the Shire of Northam in the open air. Exemptions in accordance with Council Policy may be available. Further information is available by contacting Shire of Northam (08) 9622 6100.

Take notice a person/s who contravenes a declaration made under regulation 38A, 38B, 38C or 38D or who fails to carry out any direction given to him is guilty of an offence that carries a penalty of \$5,000.

A Harvest Vehicle Movement and Hot works Ban will be advertised on the Shire of Northam Website or Emergency Information Line on (08) 9621 1120. Where possible on ABC Radio 531AM, MMM 864 AM and.

Notification can be obtained via a free SMS service which is available upon request from the Shire of Northam (08) 9622 6100

## 13. Additional Works

In addition to the requirements noted above, regardless of land size and location, the Shire of Northam or its duly authorised officer may require you to undertake additional works on your property to improve access and or undertake further hazard removal and/or reduction works, where in the opinion of that authorised officer, it is to be necessary to prevent the outbreak and/or the spread of a bush fire.

Take notice that pursuant to Section 33(4) of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, where the owner and/or occupier of land fails or neglects to comply with the requisitions of this Notice within the times specified, the Shire of Northam may by its officers and with such servants, workmen and contractors, vehicles and machinery as the officers deem fit, enter upon the land and carry out the requisitions of this Notice which have not been complied with and pursuant to Section 33(5) of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, the amount of any costs and expenses incurred may be recovered from you as the owner and or occupier of the land.

If the requirements of this Notice are carried out by burning, such burning must be in accordance with the relevant provisions of the *Bush Fires Regulations 1954*.

The owner or occupier of land to whom a notice has been given under subsection (1) and who fails or neglects in any respect duly to comply with the requisitions of the notice is guilty of an offence, that offence carries a penalty of \$5,000, additionally a person in default is also liable whether prosecuted or not to pay the costs of performing the work directed by this notice if it is not carried out by the owner and/or occupier by the date required by this Notice.

## 14. Reserves vested with the Shire of Northam

The Shire of Northam reserves the right to conduct any mitigation works deemed necessary on any reserves vested with Shire of Northam for the purpose of reducing the risk of fire to the community. Each reserve will be assessed in accordance with ISO 31000:2018 and identified in the Bushfire Risk Management Plan.

Treatments implemented may include but are not limited to prescribed burns, slashing, mulching or any other means necessary as determined by the Shire of Northam to ensure the risk is reduced to a satisfactory level.

## GENERAL ADVICE

This notice gives the minimum requirements for fire control within the Shire of Northam and all residents and ratepayers are encouraged to be prepared by undertaking additional fire protection measures. Creating a household "Bushfire Survival Plan" to ensure the safety of property and life. Further additional information to that contained in this notice can be obtained from the 5min Fire Chat website [www.dfes.wa.gov.au/firechat](http://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/firechat) or from the Shire of Northam website [www.northam.wa.gov.au](http://www.northam.wa.gov.au)

All previous versions of this notice are hereby cancelled.

By order of the Council,

JASON WHITEAKER, Chief Executive Officer

## DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Notice the following definitions apply:

**Alternative Arrangements** includes a variation as defined in Section 7 of this Notice to reduce and mitigate fire hazards within a particular subdivision, lot or other area of land anywhere in the district.

**Authorised Officer** means an employee of the Shire of Northam appointed as a Bush Fire Control Officer pursuant to the powers conferred in Section 38 of the Bush Fires Act 1954.

**Firebreak** means a strip or area of trafficable ground, which is at least two (2) metres wide for cropped/stubble areas, or Three (3) metres wide for bushland/remnant vegetation areas with a minimum height of four (4) metres, which is kept and maintained totally clear of all inflammable matter. Such firebreaks may be constructed by one or more of the following methods: PLOUGHING, CULTIVATING, SCARIFYING, RAKING, BURNING, CHEMICAL SPRAYING OR OTHER METHOD as approved by an Authorised Officer. In agricultural areas it is considered acceptable if a vehicle can travel through crop area within 10m of the property boundary to traverse around low branches or limbs.

**Flammable Material** means any plant, tree, grass, substance, object, thing or material that may or is likely to catch fire and burn or any other thing deemed by an authorised officer to be capable of combustion.

**Solid Fuel** means any fuel other than gas for cooking/camping, such as, wood, coal, BBQ briquettes

**Fuel Depot / Fuel Storage Area** means an area of land, a building or structure where fuel, ie (petrol, diesel, kerosene, liquid gas or any other fossil fuel) is kept in any container or manner.

**Fuel Load** is the leaf litter on the ground inclusive of leaves, twigs (up to 6mm in diameter) and bark. A litter depth of 5mm from the top of the layer to the mineral earth beneath is indicative of approximately 2.5 tonnes per hectare. A litter depth of 15mm from the top of the layer to the mineral earth beneath is indicative of approximately 8 tonnes per hectare.

The Shire of Northam can provide advice on determining fuel load levels further information is available [here](#)

<https://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/safetyinformation/fire/bushfire/VisualFuelLoadsPublications/Visual%20Fuel%20Load%20Guide%20Swan%20Coastal.pdf>

**Habitable Buildings** means a dwelling, workplace, place of gathering or assembly, a building used for the storage or display of goods or produce for sale by wholesale in accordance with classes 1-9 of the Building Code of Australia. The term habitable building includes attached and adjacent structures like garages, carports verandas or similar roofed structure(s) that are attached to, or within 6 metres of the dwelling or primary building.

**Maintaining Fuel Loads** relates to the management of leaf litter as described in this Notice. Reducing fuel load levels does not necessarily require the removal of existing natural vegetation. A combination of methods can be utilised inclusive of safe burning, raking, weed removal, pruning and/or the removal of dead plant material.

**Managed Vegetation** includes vegetation that is pruned away from buildings, under pruned to minimise contact with ground fuels and that is kept free of dead suspended matter such as twigs, leaves and bark.

**Trafficable** means to be able to travel from one point to another in a four-wheel drive fire appliance on a clear surface, unhindered without any obstruction that may endanger such fire appliances. A firebreak is not to terminate, or lead to a dead end, without provision for egress to a safe place or a cleared turn around area of not less than a 20 metre diameter.

**Vertical Axis** means a continuous vertical uninterrupted line at a right angle to the horizontal line of the firebreak to a minimum height of 4 metres from the ground.

## 6.4 BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER NOMINATIONS

<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Owner:</b>	
<b>Applicant:</b>	
<b>File Reference:</b>	5.1.3.1
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Brendon Rutter, Community Emergency Services Manager
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Chadd Hunt, Executive Manager Development Services
<b>Officer Declaration of Interest:</b>	
<b>Voting Requirement:</b>	Simple Majority
<b>Press release to be issued:</b>	No

### BRIEF

In line with the Bush Fires Manual, brigades are required to put forward their nominees for Bush Fire Control Officers as approved to allow each candidate to progress to the next step of application and formal appointment by Council at the June BFAC.

### ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

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### A. BACKGROUND / DETAILS

Pursuant to s38 Bush Fires Act 1954, Local Government may appoint Bush Fire Control Officer.

### 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

N/A

#### B.3 Legislative Compliance

Bush Fires Act 1954

#### B.4 Policy Implications

#### B.5 Stakeholder Engagement / Consultation

All Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades and Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service Brigades

#### B.6 Risk Implications

Risk Category	Description	Rating (likelihood x consequence)	Mitigation Action
Financial	Nil		
Health & Safety	Nil		
Reputation	The Shire of Northam appoints BFCO's that are not suitably qualified to take on the role or meet councils adopted minimum training standards	High (16)	The Shire of Northam has developed a process to ensure that officers are able to meet minimum training standards and have an understanding of their roles, and the legislation they work under.
Service Interruption	Nil		
Compliance	BFCO's do not meet the minimum training standards as adopted by Council	High (12)	The Shire of Northam has developed a process to ensure that officers are able to meet minimum training standards and have an understanding of their roles, and the legislation they work under.
Property	Nil		
Environment	Nil		

#### C. OFFICER'S COMMENT

In accordance with S5 of the Bush Fires Manual, brigades are required to hold a meeting prior to the March BFAC each year, where the brigade supported nominations would be put forward for approval from the committee for the

nominee to progress to the next step of the formal application, and Captain panel assessment.

A recommendation from the assessment panel will be tabled at the June BFAC for Council endorsement.

As of the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020, the brigade approved nominations are

<b>Inkpen BFB</b> Nicolas Dewar Neil Diamond	<b>Wundowie BFB</b> Mathew Macqueen	<b>Bakers Hill BFB</b> Simon Peters Kristafer Brown
<b>Clackline BFB</b> Matthew Letch	<b>Northam Central</b> Luke Hagen	<b>Irishtown BFB</b> Robert Herzer Murray McGregor
<b>Southern Brook BFB</b> Paul Antonio	<b>Jennapullin BFB</b> TBA	<b>Grass Valley BFB</b> Christopher Marris Paul Reynolds Philip Lloyd
<b>Northam VFRS</b> Greg Montgomery	<b>Wundowie VFRS</b> TBA	<b>Shire of Northam</b> Brendon Rutter – CESM Kellee Walters – Ranger(Administrative Only) Jason Cacic – Ranger (Administrative Only)

#### RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

**Minute No: BFAC.244**

**Moved: Mr Steve Gray**

**Seconded: Mr Sam Moss**

**That Council approve the following nominees to progress to the next stage of formal application, and assessment by panel for a recommendation to be made to Council at the June BFAC:**

- **Inkpen Bushfire Brigade**  
 Nicholas Dewar  
 Neil Diamond
- **Wundowie Bushfire Brigade**  
 Matthew Macqueen
- **Bakers Hill Bushfire Brigade**  
 Simon Peters  
 Kristafer Brown
- **Clackline Bushfire Brigade**  
 Matthew Letch

- **Northam Central Bushfire Brigade**  
Luke Hagen
- **Irishtown Bushfire Brigade**  
Robert Herzer  
Murray McGregor
- **Southern Brook Bushfire Brigade**  
Paul Antonio
- **Grass Valley Bushfire Brigade**  
Chris Marris  
Paul Reynolds  
Philip Lloyd
- **Northam Volunteer Fire Rescue Service**  
Greg Montgomery
- **Shire of Northam**  
Brendon Rutter – CESM  
Kellee Walters – Ranger (Administrative only)  
Jason Cacic – Ranger (Administrative only)

**CARRIED 10/0**

## 7. MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

### 7.1 PROPOSED REINSTATEMENT OF 07.30 SKEDS ON CHANNEL 329

#### BACKGROUND

The Clackline / Muresk volunteer bush fire brigade proposes that the 07.30 skeds on channel 329, as trialled over the past six weeks, be formally reinstated as a community benefit for all Northam volunteer brigades as a medium to share intelligence, information and news.

#### MOTION / COMMITTEE DECISION

**Minute No: BFAC.245**

**Moved: Mr Blair Wilding**

**Seconded: Mr Nic Dewar**

**That Council reinstates the 07.30 skeds on channel 329, as trialled over the past six weeks.**

**CARRIED 10/0**

#### OFFICERS COMMENT

Officers support further discussions around the reinstatement of the morning Sched calls in principal if the brigades are in support. There needs to be some clarification around the issues with the use of radios generally.

The WAERN Radio Network and associated infrastructure is owned and operated by DFES and provided to the region for operational use. All frequencies that form part of the network are licenced to DFES and access is as per DFES Operational Communications policies.

Channel 43/329 is one of the local channels provided by DFES for operational use only, all communication resources are for multi-agency use under the new communications plan.

All radio traffic must not interfere with another agencies operations on the designated frequency/channel, as operational requirements always take priority in accordance with DFES policies & procedures regarding operational communications.

The WAERN network and associated communications resources is owned and maintained by DFES, and any decisions around the future of the sched

calls and access to the network will need to involve DFES as the resource owner.

Notwithstanding the above comments should BFAC support the continuation of the sched calls then staff suggest that they be reinstated until such time as further information is provided by DFES. At this stage staff do not believe that a resolution of Council is needed if the majority of BFAC representatives are in support.

## 7.2 WUNDOWIE BFB FIRE STATION

### BACKGROUND

The Wundowie BFB requests the Shire of Northam to submit an application for the supply and installation of a 2 bay facility plus amenities on the 2020/21 LGGS application.

The brigade has identified 2 locations as potential sites, however only one is shire owned as outlined in the Shire of Northam R2R document.

- Location 1 - Reserve 33673, Leschenaultia Road Wundowie (Adjacent Shire Depot)
- Location 2 - Lot 103 McMullen Rd Wundowie, however would require acquisition of the title from Mr Pearce, this site would keep all the emergency service groups in the 1 precinct.

Location 2 is the preferred site for the new Wundowie BFB Fire Station

### MOTION / COMMITTEE DECISION

**Minute No: BFAC.246**

**Moved: Mr Mathew Macqueen**

**Seconded: Mr Rob Herzer**

**That Council**

- A) Initiates discussions with Mr Bill Pearce around the brigades proposal for the preferred location of the new station on Lot 103 McMullen Rd Wundowie.**
- B) Includes the application for funding of a 2 bay facility plus amenities in the 2020/21 LGGS application.**

**CARRIED 8/2**

### OFFICERS COMMENT

Staff are supportive of the brigade's desires to construct the new facility at Lot 103 McMullen Road.

Staff also support the location of a shed on the site of the current Wundowie VFRS site however understand that significant discussions and negotiation would need to be conducted to enable this to occur.

Discussions will need to be had with Mr Pearce about the proposal to gain his thoughts on the idea. If this is the preferred location and agreement is

obtained by the landowner there are a number of processes that need to be followed (including survey, subdivision etc.) that will take several months to complete.

In the interim staff will include the request for a 2 bay facility plus amenities in the 2020/21 LGGS application.

### 7.3 GRASS VALLEY BFB – BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICERS

#### BACKGROUND

Mr Lloyd and Mr Reynolds were previously put forward as BFCO's by the Grass Valley BFB (along with Mr Chris Marris) for the 2019/20 fire season.

They were endorsed by BFAC and subsequently the Shire of Northam Council to be appointed subject to the successful completion of the minimum training requirements. These minimum training standards have not been able to be met, despite a willingness and effort by both gentlemen to undertake the training, and thus their appointment remains outstanding.

Both gentlemen have previously operated as BFCO for the Shire of Northam for an extended and continuous basis prior to the 2019/20 fire season.

The outstanding training courses are as follows:

Philip Lloyd - Structural Firefighting (FYI has completed intro to structural firefighting)

Paul Reynolds – Sector Commander

In consultation with the Grass Valley BFB Training Officer, these gentlemen organised minimum numbers of volunteers needed to run both courses, with multiple dates proposed to DFES. DFES was unable to organise training for the requested dates nor provide alternative dates that they could provide a trainer. Follow-up requests by the brigade to the CESM for this training has been unsuccessful as DFES trainers are dealing with the current fire season. Furthermore, there is no current training scheduled for these courses locally as of time of writing. Both gentlemen are committed to do the training locally, at mutually suitable dates.

With the elevation of Mr Marris to the CBFCO role in late 2019, and the inability for Mr Lloyd and Mr Reynolds to get training run, there is now no standard BFCOs in the Grass Valley, Southern Brook and Jennapullin fire districts, with Rob Herzer (Irishtown) being the nearest BFCO. The role of CBFCO involves an element of review (i.e. of permits) and thus the CBFCO should not be issuing all permits for the east of the Shire by default. It is also a heavy burden for Mr Herzer to not only service the Irishtown district, but also the entire east of the Shire. It also risks local knowledge being lost/not applied.

**MOTION**

**Moved: Mr Sam Moss**

**That Council appoint Mr Philip Lloyd and Mr Paul Reynolds as Bush Fire Control Officers for the remainder of the 2019/2020 fire season for the Shire of Northam.**

**MOTION WITHDRAWN**

Clarification was sought in relation to the training being held over the coming months. Mr Darrell Kramar advised that DFES can hold additional training sessions if there is enough demand and can also be flexible for these, eg; hold them in the evening.

Mr Darrell Kramar requested a few dates be provided. Mr Sam Moss advised that he would provide dates for their members to attend training and withdrew his motion given that they have already been appointed as FCO's subject to meeting the training requirements.

**OFFICERS COMMENT**

Staff acknowledge Mr Reynolds & Mr Lloyds attempts during 2019 to attend the courses required for them to be appointed as active BFCO's as per council resolution from the June 2019 BFAC.

All BFCOs were provided a list of any outstanding courses they required after the June 2019 BFAC, as was the case in 2018.

There has been numerous opportunities since Council Decision C.248 on 15 July 2015 for any existing & future BFCOs to attend regional training occurrences in an effort to meet the minimum training requirements as endorsed by Council.

The two courses required to be completed are currently in the Training calendar to be run in July (York) and August (Inkpen) for Structural Firefighting and June (Northam) for Sector Commander. Obviously these are not before the commencement of the current restricted fire season but can be completed before next restricted season.

In the past Council have appointed permit only BFCO's, however this not a designation recognised under the Bush Fires Act 1954.

This specific issue was discussed at a recent BFCO meeting and a possible scenario discussed was the Shire Rangers could process and authorise permits to burn, only after consultation with the Brigade Captain of that area, therefore reducing the administrative burden on volunteers. Most of the BFCO's were in favour of this solution as a short term fix to enable members to continue to upskill in an effort to meet the training requirements.

Processing of permits is already an internal process due to the online permit system, this option was a way of ensuring the administrative task of issuing the permits to the applicants was completed with minimal impact on volunteers.

## 8. URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY DECISION

Nil.

## 9. GENERAL BUSINESS

### 9.1 APPLICATION FOR FUNDING NORTHAM CENTRAL BUSHFIRE BRIGADE

#### BACKGROUND

Mr Murray McGregor moved a motion for a 2 bay facility and amenities to be included as part of the 2020/2021 LGGS application for the Northam Central Bushfire Brigade as the current facility at the Northam Shire Depot is not suitable for the appliance nor does it have amenities.

#### MOTION / COMMITTEE DECISION

**Minute No: BFAC.247**

**Moved: Mr Murray McGregor**

**Seconded: Mr Sam Moss**

**That Council includes the application for funding of a 2 bay facility plus amenities in the 2020/21 LGGS application for Northam Central Bush Fire Brigade.**

**CARRIED 10/0**

### 9.2 PPE FOR NEW MEMBERS IN TRAINING TO BE HELD BY SHIRE OF NORTHAM

#### BACKGROUND

Mr Steve Gray moved a motion for Council to order ten sets of PPE to be purchased and held by the Shire as loan uniforms for new members to ensure members have uniforms for training should there be a delay in receiving member ordered uniforms.

#### MOTION

**Moved: Steve Gray**

**That Council order ten sets of PPE to be purchased and held by the Shire as a loan for new members.**

**MOTION WITHDRAWN**

Clarification was sought around the need to hold extra PPE as loan items for new members. The Community Emergency Services Manager advised that the Shire does hold an amount of uniforms so new members can be given uniforms as quickly as possible, a range of standard sizes are held by the Shire. The Community Emergency Services Manager advised that the cost to fit out a new member in a uniform is approximately \$1900 so a full selection of all sizes cannot be held. Mr Steve Gray withdrew his motion as there is already a selection of standard size uniforms available through the Shire by contacting the Community Emergency Services Manager.

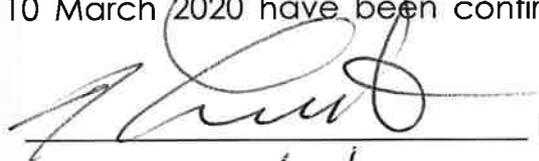
## 92. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 9 June 2020 at 5:30pm.

## 93. DECLARATION OF CLOSURE

There being no further business the Presiding Member, Cr T M Little declared the meeting closed at 7:18pm.

"I certify that the Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 10 March 2020 have been confirmed as a true and correct record."

 Presiding Member

26/8/2020 Date

