



## **UNCONFIRMED MINUTES**

### **BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**2 MARCH 2021**



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**ATTENTION/DISCLAIMER**

The purpose of this Committee Meeting is to discuss and make recommendations to Council about items appearing on the agenda and other matters for which the Committee is responsible. The Committee has no power to make any decisions which are binding on the Council or the Shire of Mundaring unless specific delegation of authority has been granted by Council. No person should rely on or act on the basis of any advice or information provided by a Member or Employee, or on the content of any discussion occurring, during the course of the Committee Meeting.

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## LEGEND

To assist the reader, the following explains the method of referencing used in this document:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Description</b>
Page Numbers	BFAC1 NOVEMBER 19 (BFAC2, BFAC3 etc)	Sequential page numbering of BFAC Agenda or Minutes for November 2019.
Item Numbers	8.1 (8.2, 8.3 etc)	Sequential numbering of reports under the heading "8.0 Reports of Officers"
Committee Recommendation Reference	BFAC11.11.19	Committee Recommendation number 11 from BFAC meeting November 2019.
Committee Decision Reference	DBFAC7.11.19	Committee Decision number 7 from BFAC meeting November 2019.

<b>1.0</b>	<b>OPENING PROCEDURES</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1	ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS.....	4
1.2	RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES .....	4
<b>2.0</b>	<b>ANNOUNCEMENT BY PRESIDING MEMBER WITHOUT DISCUSSION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1	DISCLOSURE OF FINANCIAL INTEREST AND PROXIMITY INTERESTS.....	5
3.2	DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST AFFECTING IMPARTIALITY.....	5
<b>4.0</b>	<b>CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>PRESENTATIONS</b>	<b>6</b>
5.1	CESM MUNDARING/CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER.....	6
5.2	DEPARTMENT FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES – DO NORTH EAST .....	6
5.3	DEPARTMENT PARKS AND WILDLIFE.....	7
5.4	MUNDARING FIRE SCHOOL/TRAINING OFFICERS COMMITTEE – MFS CHAIRPERSON .....	7
5.5	ATTACHMENTS FOR INFORMATION.....	7
5.5.1	BRIGADE FIRE REPORTS .....	7
5.5.2	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT .....	7
5.5.3	INFRINGEMENTS/PROSECUTIONS .....	7
5.5.4	SCHEDULE OF PENDING ITEMS .....	7
<b>6.0</b>	<b>URGENT BUSINESS (LATE REPORTS)</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>CLOSING PROCEDURES</b>	<b>11</b>
7.1	DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING.....	11
7.2	CLOSURE OF THE MEETING .....	11

**BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
CIVIC AREA – 7.30PM**

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**1.0 OPENING PROCEDURES**

The Presiding Person declared the meeting open at 7.05pm.

Acknowledgment of Country

Shire of Mundaring respectfully acknowledges the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation, who are the traditional custodians of this land. We acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the region.

**1.1 Announcement of Visitors**

**1.2 Record of Attendance and Apologies**

<b>Members</b>	Toni Burbidge	Chair Person/Councillor
	Jamie O'Neill	CESM/CBFCO
	Gary Rowles	Deputy Chief 1
	Nigel Morgan	Deputy Chief 2
	Ian Zlatnik	Deputy Chief 3
	Daniel Heptinstall	Deputy Chief 4
	Cameron Greaves	Deputy Chief 5
	Simon Cuthbert	Councillor
	George Watkins	Captain Chidlow VBFB
	Gerry Starr	Captain Darlington VBFB
	Rod Reed	Captain Darling Range VBFB
	Tom Belger	Captain Glen Forrest VBFB
	Matt Castaldini	Captain Mt Helena VBFB
	Mark Bush	Captain Parkerville VBFB
	Adrian Woodley	Captain Sawyers Valley VBFB
Lesley Lynam	Captain Wooroloo VBFB	
<b>Staff</b>	Adrian Dyson	Manager Community Safety & Emergency Management
	Craig Cuthbert	Coordinator Community Safety & Emergency Management
	Craig Cuthbert	Minute Secretary
	Allan Entwistle	Fire Protection Officer
<b>Guests</b>	Neil Inwood	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt Darlington VBFB
	Elton Van Den Dungen	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt Sawyers Valley VBFB
	Craig Rudge	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt Stoneville VBFB
	Craig Pabst	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt Wooroloo VBFB
	Katina Sweeney	Lt Wooroloo VBFB
	Warwick Leete	President Stoneville VBFB

<b>Apologies</b>		
	Mark Luzi	Director Statutory Services
	Murray McBride	DFES District Officer
	Mark Jeans	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt Glen Forrest VBFB
	Steven Smith	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt Parkerville VBFB
	Jeff Bromilow	Captain Stoneville VBFB

## **2.0 ANNOUNCEMENT BY PRESIDING MEMBER WITHOUT DISCUSSION**

Nil

## **3.0 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Nil to 3.1,3.2

### **3.1 Disclosure of Financial Interest and Proximity Interests**

Members must disclose the nature of their interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting. (Part 5 Division 6 of the Local Government Act 1995).

Employees must disclose the nature of their interest in reports or advice when giving the report or advice to the meeting. (Sections 5.70 and 5.71 of the Local Government Act 1995).

### **3.2 Disclosure of Interest Affecting Impartiality**

Members and staff must disclose their interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting in respect of which the member or employee has given or will give advice. (Shire of Mundaring Code of Conduct, Local Government (Admin) Reg. 34C).

## **4.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee held Wednesday 25 November 2020 be confirmed.

<b>COMMITTEE DECISION</b>		<b>DBFAC1.03.21</b>	
Moved by:	Gary Rowles	Seconded by:	Cameron Greaves

**CARRIED** 14/0

**For:** Jamie O'Neill, Gary Rowles, Nigel Morgan, Ian Zlatnik, Daniel Heptinstall, Cameron Greaves, Simon Cuthbert, George Watkins, Gerry Starr, Rod Reed, Tom Belger, Matt Castaldini, Mark Bush, Lesley Lynam.

**Against:** Nil

## 5.0 PRESENTATIONS

### 5.1 CESM Mundaring/Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

**WOOROLOO FIRE** - Over the duration of the Wooroloo incident, the significant efforts of crews resulted in no lives being lost, and over 200 properties being saved. The unrelenting efforts of all involved, to protect the lives and homes of the effected communities have been remarkable, particularly in such challenging conditions. Shire of Mundaring crews have undertaken and continue to undertake on what is nothing short of exceptional effort. It is by no means an easy task and your efforts undeniably demonstrate the best and most capable people are on the job.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all, for your and your crew's efforts throughout the Wooroloo Incident and please extend my gratitude to the families and employers, who continually make sacrifices by giving up family time and accepting additional work responsibilities when called away to incidents.

**MITIGATION, UCL/UMR** - Assessments have begun for Hazard reduction burn planning. Larger UCL/UMR priority burns are in Wooroloo, Chidlow, Mt Helena and Helena Valley. There are also smaller Brigade burn plans to be completed which will be given to brigades once completed.

**COVID19** - With recent lock down can brigades please check stocks of masks, sanitiser and gloves and put any request through to the Shire ASAP.

**BRIGADE RESPONSE SINCE LAST BFAC** – 66 incidents attended by SoM Brigades.

**CIRCULARS SENT OUT 15/02 (please ensure they are circulated)**

- **WELLNESS SUPPORT** – Recent weeks have seen a sudden COVID-19 lockdown and the devastating fires affecting Wooroloo and surrounding areas. Situations such as these have the potential to increase feelings of stress, anxiety and negative emotional reactions and reduce resiliency. Please remember to look after yourselves and your crew and circulate **DFES General Circular No: 20/2021**.

**EQUIPMENT/PPC CHECK** – Please take the opportunity to check all equipment and PPC after the Wooroloo Incident and report any losses, damage or repairs asap.

**BGU - MOBILISATION ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** - With the South West Land Division (SWLD) High Threat Period rapidly approaching, ComCen would like to remind Brigades, Groups and Units (BGUs) about the requirement to acknowledge mobilising SMS messages sent from ComCen, with a phone call on 1800 198 140.

**TRAINING CALENDARS** – Both the DFES Metro and MFS calendars are now available and courses are on e-Academy, please encourage your members to apply early for courses.

### 5.2 Department Fire and Emergency Services – DO North East

Nil provided.

### **5.3 Department Parks and Wildlife**

Nil provided.

### **5.4 Mundaring Fire School/Training Officers Committee – MFS Chairperson**

There is little to report this month as our training season has not yet started. All the MFS courses are loaded into e-Academy and I encourage brigades to help members book training early. Remember if rosters or schedules don't allow a member to do one of our courses they can apply for any course advertised at the FES Academy, or other local Governments.

We have left several free weekends in the calendar to allow for ad-hoc courses to be run, we also have the flexibility to run courses on station and/or during the week if necessary, so talk with your members and let us know if there is a specific need.

### **5.5 Attachments for Information**

#### **5.5.1 Brigade Fire Reports**

#### **5.5.2 Community Engagement**

#### **5.5.3 Infringements/Prosecutions**

#### **5.5.4 Schedule of Pending Items**

- i) Combined Stoneville Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade/MFS Facility

Adrian Dyson revised the meeting of the process carried out through the Local Government Grants System (LGGs) to assist with the construction of a new Stoneville Volunteer Bushfire station and that it was knocked back. Adrian explained that an appeal was lodged with he attended Dundas House to provide feedback on the reasons of appeal. Still nothing has been heard back from this process.

During this time the Shire was made aware of Federal Government grants as a part of a COVID-19 stimulus. Council voted as a part of this \$1.5 million grant to include the new build of the Stoneville station. The Shires Director of Infrastructure Shane Purdy put together this application and submitted it to the Federal Government. Adrian was happy to announce that this was approved and the Stoneville station build is back in track. However Adrian said there would be some constraints in regards to the time the shire has to complete the build of the 3 bay station and the associated funds. All funds need to be spent by December 31, 2021. The next step in this process is to engage an architect to carry out a more detailed plan of the DFES blueprint with in the LGGs manual. And to oversee ad manage the project.

The MFS extensions are now gaining momentum and an engineering inspection and certificate has been issued for the project along with a CDC for the works to be



carried out on the extensions of the toilets. Adrian advised he will be obtaining 3 quotes over the coming weeks to commence the next phase.

ii) BRMP Update

One project is left to complete from the previous round of funding. Applications for the up and coming financial year funding is currently underway. Last year's business case to have a BRMO officer is being reconsidered again for this year and has progressed further and commented on by Council. It was noted since the Wooroloo fires and also the Royal Commission in to Bushfires along with the past Keelty Report that verges are just one of the contributing factors that needs to be mitigated. Verges that may need mitigation are those major types of roads used by public in the event they need to evacuate. We will start incorporating this into our MAF applications to get some of these verge mitigated.

If any brigades have any verges in mind please let us know so we can assess and consider it for mitigation works.

**Matthew Castaldini** – The brigade has had a message sent to them by a concerned resident. We will forward this onto the Shire Emergency Management Team

## **6.0 URGENT BUSINESS (LATE REPORTS)**

Cr Burbidge advised that this will now be the opportunity for Captains and 1st Lieutenants to express their brigades concerns and feedback from the recent Wooroloo Bushfire. Cr Burbidge encouraged open and frank discussion so that any stand out matters can be properly addressed.

Jamie O'Neill started the meeting with the below information so the committee could understand the extent of the fire;

- Initial call came through as a structure fire, which in the end was incorrect and catching first arriving by surprise.
- After ascertaining it was not a structure fire it was classified as a 3<sup>rd</sup> alarm bushfire requiring additional resources.
- By 13:40 it was confirmed small number of assets had been destroyed
- At 14:00 it was escalated to a level 2 incident
- 14:08 was when the call from the Wooroloo prison 3.4 advising that their appliance had caught fire
- 14:15 it was confirmed that Forrest Field 4<sup>th</sup> was a complete loss due to a burn over
- By 14:30 it had already burnt 230 hectares

- At 14:45 the had now entered the City of Swan, by 16:30 the fire had jumped Toodyay Road which was a trigger to escalate the incident to a Level 3
- By 17:00 Tilden Park was being impacted by the fire
- By 19:00 2661 hectares had been burnt, it past O'Brian Road at 00:20 and by 08:30 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February it had reached and jumped the Great Northern Highway.
- The fire travelled approximately 28km, in 20 hours, this was with a peak ROS of 5kmph and the ROS not going under 1.3kmph in the later stages of the fire
- The intensity of the fire has been estimate to have been up to 55,000K/w at its peak
- The fire travelled through mostly private property
- Due to the nature of the fire and its rapid ROS, consolidation was unable to be done in the earlier stages
- DFES are satisfied with the response/management of the fire. And have acknowledged it was the quickest escalation and setup to a level 3.

Feedback from the committee was now carried out in a around the table discussion. This involved all brigades and Shire of Mundaring DCBFCO 1-5, and shire staff.

**Below in dot point is feedback received by representatives of all nine brigades and in relation to the incident as raised by them and their members.**

1. Sector Commanders, some firefighters qualified but not confident/or prior to becoming a Lieutenant
2. Private fire appliances and the condition of their vehicles. As well as lack off or different training to DFES. Some of these practices need work
3. Catering was excellent in some areas, sectors, divisions however there was also a lot of crews missed due to the delay in meals being delivered in time for crew handovers. Some cases a Divisional Commander was arranging meals for crews through external providers so they did not miss out.
4. The interaction between CFRS, P&W and volunteer fire fighters was excellent. Was difficult in RUI situations as there is no clear indication to firefighters the capabilities or of what the RUI process is. Both for career and volunteer brigades.
5. Radio communications were poor and unreliable in this area, this led to a lot of discussions over telephones and information being forgotten or not passed on. The use of channels 346 and 238 were excellent, until channel 346 was utilised for a lesser task then what it was originally being used for.

6. Mapping was not entirely helpful due to the wrong format, this led to not being able to identify roads/tracks due to the thickness of lines. Maps within IAP's were received but not making it out to crews or being available when required.
7. T-card management at particular points was poor, this was due to crews asking for T-cards to be removed when departing and there not being any sign of the cards and unable to be located. Or crews would be re-tasked and told to drive back to the original control point to check out.
8. Sectors not clearly marked or identified to incoming crews
9. Brigades ran various shifts some were 6 hourly others were 8 hourly, this length of time seemed efficient and allowed for shift workers and those wishing to do a shift and have a reasonable rest before going to work.
10. Traffic management needs to be improved and better communicated. Volunteer firefighters were at some stages unable to get back to their property even though it was not directly affected. This was due to decisions on VCP's being made without utilising local knowledge.
11. Lack of support to Sector Commanders in some instances
12. Western Power was good to work with and assisted hugely in the early stages of response
13. Some brigade members felt resources were wasted having to follow around machinery carrying out strategic mitigation activities. This is essential and important and was eventually put onto more regular shorter periods to assist with fatigue.
14. Lack of information was being feed down from the ICC
15. A lot of time was taken up in traveling to control points (is acknowledged this was unique fire given the ROS and distance covered
16. Initial arriving IMT/Shire FCO's worked well and did a great job tasking appliance as quickly as possible to asset protection.
17. DFES technician and Bridgestone crew very handy and helpful. Shire would benefit having access to something like this.
18. AVL users have access to view fire shape in conjunction with the location of the vehicles
19. Power lines across roads was an issue, non-combustible poles where lines cross would possibly avoid this but would be additional cost, however not for every pole just those that cross the road
20. Cell-fi units in appliances would be beneficial and allow better mobile telephone coverage
21. Media unauthorised entry to the fire ground distracting and dangerous
22. A Purpose built vehicle for attending DCBFCO's on duty is needed
23. Make use of the DFES welfare service as it assisted one brigade greatly and allowed for the group to come together post an incident of this size.

A common theme during this debrief was matters to do with Communication, Sectoring, T-Cards, Mapping, Traffic Management and Catering.

## **7.0 CLOSING PROCEDURES**

Prior to Cr Burbidge closing the meeting Jamie O'Neill made mention of the appreciation from the DFES/Shire in relation to their brigades efforts during this difficult scenario. And reiterated that a fire of this size and it being very unfortunate property was lost we managed to save in excess of 200 homes, did not seriously injury or kill some during the response/operations of the fire and that is something to reflect on. Brigades are reminded of the available access to the Shires EAP and DFES welfare if members are not coping to well given the recent events.

### **7.1 Date, Time and Place of the Next Meeting**

The next Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting will be held on **Tuesday 1 June 2021** at 7.00pm in the Civic Area.

### **7.2 Closure of the Meeting**

Meeting closed at 9:45pm