Ancillary Assets Guide

A Guide for Shire of Mundaring Bushfire Brigade Support Assets

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Review Cycle – Annual (or earlier if DFES/LG policy changes)

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Contents

1. Document Control ... 3
2. Purpose ... 4
3. Intent / Principles ... 4
4. Scope ... 4
4.1 In scope (Ancillary assets) ... 4
4.1.1 Replacement horizons (planning guide) ... 4
4.2 Out of scope (managed separately) ... 5
5. Definitions ... 5
6. Governance and Roles ... 5
6.1 Shire (Asset Owner / Controller) ... 5
6.2 Brigade (Operational User) ... 5
6.3 BFAC / Governance Committee (if used) ... 6
6.4 DFES interface (where applicable) ... 6
6.5 Approval model (ancillary assets) ... 6
7. Asset Ownership & Acceptance Parameters ... 7
7.1 Default position ... 7
7.2 Minimum acceptance requirements ... 7
7.3 Donations and sponsored assets ... 7
7.3.1 ... 8
8. Process – Considering New Ancillary Assets (end-to-end) ... 8
8.1 Step 1: Need Identification (brigade or Shire) ... 8
8.2 Step 2: Business Case and Options Assessment ... 8
8.3 Step 3: Prioritisation & Endorsement ... 9
8.4 Step 4: Procurement Planning ... 9
8.5 Step 5: Delivery, Acceptance Testing & Asset Registration ... 9
8.6 Step 6: Handover to Operations ... 9
9. Updating / Upgrading Existing Assets (refresh vs replace) ... 9
9.1 Triggers for review ... 9
9.2 Decision test (recommended) ... 10
9.3 Summary of Process ... 10
10. Maintenance, Inspections, and Compliance ... 10
10.1 Maintenance standards (minimum expectations) ... 10

10.2 Routine checks (operational user) 10
10.3 Records 10
11. Disposal Process (planned and auditable) 11
11.1 Triggers for disposal 11
11.2 Disposal steps 11
11.3 Transfers to another brigade or use-case 11
12. Forms / Templates (include as appendices) 11

1. Document Control

Title	**Shire of Mundaring Ancillary Assets Guide**
Reference Number	To be allocated
Author	Lennard Sabin – Manager Community Safety and Emergency Management
Business Area	Community Safety and Emergency Management
Approval Date	TBC
Review Cycle	5 Years (or sooner when applicable)
Related Documents	LGGS Manual for Capital and Operating Grants; relevant Shire of Mundaring and DFES policies
Applies to	Shire of Mundaring Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades
Strategic Alignment	This guide is intentionally consistent with DFES LGGS manual themes/sections such as: Asset management, asset ownership, standards of assets and equipment, and asset modification governance expectations. It also draws on DFES operational safety guidance relevant to equipment used in fire contexts (maintenance readiness, roadworthiness, safe loading, securing loads, etc.), which is highly applicable to support vehicles/trailers that brigades operate.

2. Purpose

This guide provides a consistent, transparent process to:

- Introduce and accept **new ancillary assets** (e.g., support vehicles, trailers, pods, plant, specialist gear).
- Determine **ownership, responsibility, and ongoing costs** once accepted as a **Shire asset**.
- Manage whole-of-life requirements: **procurement, maintenance, compliance, replacement/upgrade, and disposal**.
- Ensure decisions are evidence-based and align with DFES practice and funding frameworks (including LGGS where applicable).

3. Intent / Principles

The Shire will manage ancillary assets using the following principles:

1. **Fit-for-purpose & risk-based:** Assets must support operational outcomes and risk profiles.
2. **Safety and compliance first:** Assets must be safe, roadworthy (where relevant), and maintained appropriately. [dfes.wa.gov.au]
3. **Whole-of-life value:** Decisions must consider purchase price **and** ongoing operating costs (maintenance, insurance, registration, storage, training).
4. **Standardisation where practical:** Maximise compatibility, interoperability, and maintainability.
5. **Clear ownership & accountability:** Once accepted, ancillary assets are treated as Shire-controlled assets (unless explicitly documented otherwise).
6. **Probity and transparency:** Procurement and disposal processes must be fair, documented, and auditable.

4. Scope

4.1 In scope (Ancillary assets)

Any non-appliance asset intended to support brigade capability that the Shire may accept onto its asset register, including for example:

- **Support vehicles** (utilities, vans, 4WDs used for logistics/IMT support)
- **Trailers** (general, plant, lighting towers, water pods, variable messaging board trailers, generator trailers)
- **Specialist pods/modules** (communications pods, rehab trailers, logistics fit-outs)
- **Plant and equipment** above minor/consumable threshold (as defined by Shire finance policy)

4.1.1 Replacement horizons (planning guide)

For budgeting and lifecycle planning, the Shire applies indicative replacement horizons for common ancillary asset categories. Actual replacement timing may occur earlier or later depending on condition, utilisation, compliance requirements, maintenance history, and operational risk.

Category	Indicative replacement horizon	Notes
Vehicles (support utilities, Vans, 4WDs used for logistics/IMT support)	**7 years or 100,000 km**	Subject to kilometres/hours, operating environment, downtime, and whole-of-life economics.
Trailers (general, plant, generator/lighting, pods)	**10 years**	May vary based on corrosion, structural condition, braking/suspension wear, and compliance/roadworthiness.

4.2 Out of scope (managed separately)

- Primary firefighting appliances and scheduled fleet replacement processes that are managed under DFES/LGGS fleet programs (where applicable).

5. Definitions

- **Ancillary asset:** A support asset (vehicle/trailer/equipment) that enhances brigade capability but is not the brigade's primary firefighting appliance.
- **Acceptance:** The formal decision that an asset will be taken into Shire ownership/control and recorded on the Shire asset register.
- **Asset Custodian:** The Shire officer responsible for lifecycle governance (usually Community Safety/Emergency Management).
- **Operational User:** The brigade/unit primarily using the asset (e.g., a specific brigade).
- **Whole-of-life cost (WOLC):** Purchase + operating + maintenance + compliance + disposal costs.

6. Governance and Roles

6.1 Shire (Asset Owner / Controller)

The Shire is responsible for:

- Accepting assets onto the Shire asset register and confirming ownership arrangements.
- Procurement oversight (quotes/tenders, contracts, insurance, registration, fit-out approvals).
- Establishing and funding agreed maintenance and compliance regimes (as determined at acceptance).
- Disposal decisions and processes (including auction/sale/write-off).

6.2 Brigade (Operational User)

The brigade is responsible for:

- Identifying operational need and providing justification for new/upgrade requests.
- Day-to-day checks, cleanliness, reporting faults promptly, and using assets within defined purpose.

- Ensuring operators have appropriate competence/induction for the asset class.

6.3 BFAC / Governance Committee (if used)

- Provides operational advice and prioritisation recommendations, noting final decisions remain with the Shire (and Council where required).

6.4 DFES interface (where applicable)

Where assets are intended to be funded, supported, or aligned with DFES programs:

- Shire will ensure applications/approvals are consistent with DFES LGGS guidance, including asset ownership/management expectations and conditions.

6.5 Approval model (ancillary assets)

All ancillary asset decisions must be recorded and approved at the appropriate level to ensure probity, budget control, safety assurance and consistency across brigades. The approval pathway applies in all cases regardless of the funding source and is instead determined by the total whole-of-life cost, risk profile, and whether the decision creates an ongoing Shire liability (maintenance, insurance, registration, storage, training).

Decision / trigger	Endorsement (recommended)	Approval authority (final)	Minimum documentation
Minor spend / like-for-like replacement within approved budget (low risk; no material change to capability)	Brigade Captain (operational need) and Asset Custodian	Manager Community Safety & Emergency Management (delegated authority), plus Procurement/Finance checks as required	Quote(s) and purchase justification; confirmation of funding source; basic WOLC impacts (maintenance/rego/insurance)
New ancillary asset OR upgrade that changes capability, duty of care controls, or ongoing operating costs	BFAC for prioritisation; Asset Custodian for governance and lifecycle impacts	Manager Community Safety & Emergency Management (and Director/Executive where budget escalation is required)	Full business case (Section 8.2), options, WOLC estimate, specification, compliance plan, storage/security, training/induction impacts
Capital purchase above delegated authority threshold OR unbudgeted spend requiring budget variation	BFAC + Director/Finance review	CEO (where delegations allow) or Council (where required by Shire delegations/policy)	Business case + financial implications; procurement approach; risk assessment; recommended decision option
Acceptance of donated / brigade-funded assets to be used operationally (creates Shire liability)	Asset Custodian + BFAC + Insurance/Finance input	Manager Community Safety & Emergency Management (and Executive/Council if required by value/risk)	Condition/compliance assessment; confirmation of ownership; funding of ongoing costs; acceptance checklist (Appendix C)

7. Asset Ownership & Acceptance Parameters

7.1 Default position

Any ancillary asset purchased by or on behalf of the Shire, or accepted by the Shire for brigade use, will be recorded as a Shire asset (unless there is a written agreement stating otherwise). This aligns with DFES LGGS manual concepts around asset ownership and management responsibilities being clearly defined.

Asset capitalisation threshold: Assets with an acquisition cost of **$5,000** or more (including fit-out where applicable) are to be treated as capital and recorded on the Shire asset register in accordance with the Shire's financial management practices.
The acquisition cost must reflect the full build cost at the time of purchase, including any required fit-out, accessories, modifications or add-ons needed for the asset to be operationally fit-for-purpose. Add-ons should not be acquired later using maintenance budgets where the original capital purchase budget was insufficient or did not include the full required specification.
Items below $5,000 may be treated as operating/consumable unless the Shire determines they should be controlled and recorded due to risk, compliance, or whole-of-life considerations.

7.2 Minimum acceptance requirements

An asset will not be accepted unless the following are satisfied:

- A documented **business case** (see Section 7) demonstrating operational need, benefits, and WOLC.
- **Fit-for-purpose** specification and intended use defined (and not duplicating existing capability without justification).
- **Compliance requirements identified**, including registration/insurance (vehicles/trailers), safe loading, and any safety equipment requirements. [dfes.wa.gov.au]
- A documented **maintenance plan** and funding source (operating budget, LGGS operating categories, or other).
- Storage, security, and availability arrangements confirmed.
- Training/induction impacts identified.

7.3 Donations and sponsored assets

Brigade-funded or donated assets are not automatically accepted by the Shire. If an asset is intended to be used operationally (including at incidents, training, or Shire-supported activities), it must be formally assessed and accepted by the Shire before it can be treated as a Shire-controlled asset or supported through Shire systems (insurance, registration, maintenance, storage approvals, branding and fit-out approvals).

- Donated assets (and brigade-funded purchases) must go through the same acceptance gate: condition assessment, safety and compliance checks, and confirmation of who pays ongoing costs.
- The Shire reserves the right to decline any asset that creates unacceptable risk, does not meet specification/compliance requirements, or **introduces an unfunded liability.**

- **If an asset is acquired, modified, stored, or used operationally without Shire consent**, the Shire may direct that it is **stood down from operational use** until acceptance is completed, and/or require it to be removed from Shire/brigade facilities. The Shire is not responsible for costs, losses, registration, insurance, maintenance, or compliance matters for unaccepted assets.

7.3.1

Where a donated or brigade-funded asset has been formally accepted and managed as a Shire asset, any proceeds or cost recovery from its disposal are to be returned to the Shire and managed in accordance with Shire financial and asset disposal processes.

8. Process – Considering New Ancillary Assets (end-to-end)

This summary outlines the key steps involved in the end-to-end process for considering and managing new ancillary assets, ensuring that each stage, from identifying the need to eventual replacement or disposal, is carefully managed and aligned with organisational requirements.

Raise need → 2) Provide brief business case → 3) Shire assesses & prioritises → 4) Approved procurement → 5) Acceptance checks → 6) Shire registers asset → 7) Brigade uses & reports faults → 8) Annual review → 9) Replace/dispose when due.

8.1 Step 1: Need Identification (brigade or Shire)

Trigger examples:

- New capability requirement (e.g., logistics, comms support, rehab, transport)
- Increased incident tempo, new risks, interoperability gaps
- Replacement of end-of-life asset (see Section 8)

Output: "Ancillary Asset Proposal – Concept" (1–2 pages)

8.2 Step 2: Business Case and Options Assessment

Business case should include:

- Operational problem statement (what will improve / what risk is reduced?)
- Options (do nothing, refurbish, reassign existing asset, purchase, lease)
- Whole-of-life cost estimate (WOLC)
- Proposed specification (minimum requirements)
- Funding pathway (e.g., internal capital, grant, co-contribution)
- Compliance and safety requirements (registration, safe loading, GVM, fit-out, etc.). DFES emphasises the importance of vehicles not being overloaded and loads being properly secured in fire operations contexts, this should inform spec and fit-out decisions. [dfes.wa.gov.au]

Output: "Ancillary Asset Proposal – Full Business Case"

8.3 Step 3: Prioritisation & Endorsement

- Shire reviews against strategic priorities, risk, operational benefit, and budget.
- BFAC endorsement (if used) for operational prioritisation.
- Determine approval pathway:
  - **Operational budget / minor capital** (delegated authority)
  - **Capital works / Council approval** (as required)

8.4 Step 4: Procurement Planning

Procurement planning includes:

- Confirm whether DFES/LGGS conditions or standards apply (funding source dependent).
- Specification finalisation (including fit-out, safety, interoperability)
- Procurement method (quotes/tender) in line with Shire procurement policy
- Contracting, delivery timelines, acceptance testing, and documentation requirements

Note: DFES LGGS guidance includes sections covering standards of assets, asset management, and ownership, which your internal process should "mirror" conceptually (specification, approval, recordkeeping, and lifecycle governance).

8.5 Step 5: Delivery, Acceptance Testing & Asset Registration

Before "go-live":

- Pre-delivery inspection / acceptance test (roadworthy/compliance where applicable)
- Confirm registration/insurance/keys/logbooks and any tracking
- Add to **Shire asset register** (asset ID, custodian, location, replacement horizon)
- Provide brigade induction (use, limitations, reporting faults)

8.6 Step 6: Handover to Operations

- Confirm custody arrangements (where stored, who can use, booking/dispatch rules)
- Confirm maintenance schedule and who raises work orders
- Confirm operating cost allocation (fuel, servicing, tyres, repairs)

9. Updating / Upgrading Existing Assets (refresh vs replace)

9.1 Triggers for review

An ancillary asset must be reviewed when:

- It is no longer fit-for-purpose, unreliable, or costly to maintain
- Operational risk changes (new hazards, response model changes)
- Compliance requirements change
- Major repair is required that materially affects lifecycle economics

9.2 Decision test (recommended)

Consider replacement if any apply:

- Total annual downtime is increasing and impacts response readiness
- Repair costs exceed an agreed threshold (% of replacement value)
- The asset cannot meet safety/compliance requirements without disproportionate spend
- The asset cannot practically be used within safe operating parameters (e.g., safe loading/GVM constraints). [dfes.wa.gov.au]

9.3 Summary of Process

Raise need → 2) Provide brief business case → 3) Shire assesses & prioritises → 4) Approved procurement → 5) Acceptance checks → 6) Shire registers asset → 7) Brigade uses & reports faults → 8) Annual review → 9) Replace/dispose when due.

10. Maintenance, Inspections, and Compliance

10.1 Maintenance standards (minimum expectations)

- Preventive maintenance must be planned and recorded (service intervals, inspections, faults).
- Vehicles and trailers must remain **mechanically sound, roadworthy and compliant** where used on public roads. DFES safety guidance for equipment used in fire contexts highlights reliability, servicing, and road/vehicle compliance as essential. [dfes.wa.gov.au]
- Maintenance is to be completed through Shire-approved providers (or as otherwise authorised).

10.2 Routine checks (operational user)

Brigade to complete:

- Pre-use checks (lights, tyres, hitch/coupling, brakes, load security, fluids as relevant)
- Post-use checks and defect reporting
- Seasonal readiness checks pre-fire season

10.3 Records

All ancillary assets must have:

- A service/maintenance record (logbook or system record)
- Modification records (what changed, who approved, compliance sign-off)
  DFES LGGS guidance includes explicit areas dealing with asset management and asset modification—your internal recordkeeping should match that standard of governance.

11. Disposal Process (planned and auditable)

11.1 Triggers for disposal

- End-of-life as per 4.1.1, unsafe, unserviceable, obsolete capability
- Uneconomical to repair
- Replacement delivered and commissioned

11.2 Disposal steps

1. **Condition assessment** (mechanical/safety, remaining value)
2. **Decommission** (remove markings/fit-outs as required, wipe data from comms equipment)
3. **Approval** (delegated authority/Council depending on value)
4. **Disposal method** (auction, trade-in, transfer, recycling/scrap, write-off)
5. **Asset register update** and financial close-out

11.3 Transfers to another brigade or use-case

- Must be in agreement with the Shire and relevant stakeholders
- Allowed only if the receiving brigade has the capability to store/operate/maintain safely
- Must be recorded as a change of location/custodian in the asset register

12. Forms / Templates (include as appendices)

- **Appendix A – Ancillary Asset Proposal (Concept) (1–2 pages)**
- Requestor brigade
- Operational need
- Proposed asset type
- Indicative cost range
- Proposed funding source
- Benefits and risks
- **Appendix B – Ancillary Asset Business Case (Full)**
- Options analysis + WOLC
- Specification and compliance requirements
- Implementation timeline
- Maintenance plan and responsibility split
- Approvals required
- **Appendix C – Acceptance Checklist**
- Compliance met
- Service plan established
- Insurance/registration in place
- Asset ID assigned and recorded
- Induction completed
- **Appendix D – Annual Asset Review Checklist**

- Fitness for purpose
- Maintenance history
- Downtime and defects
- Replacement horizon recommendation
- **Appendix E – Disposal Recommendation Template**
- Condition and risks
- Disposal method and expected return
- Approvals and probity steps