Augusta Margaret River
Bush Fire Advisory Committee

Minutes

For the meeting held
Wednesday, 20 March 2019
Council Chambers
41 Wallcliffe Road, Margaret River
Commencing at 6.00pm
Notice of Meeting

Please be advised that the next meeting of the Augusta Margaret River Bush Fire Advisory Committee will be held on 15 May 2019, commencing at 6.00pm

Augusta Council Chambers
66 Allnutt Terrace
Augusta

This meeting is open to members of the public.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact Lisa Garstone, Executive Assistant to Director Corporate and Community Services.

Contact Number: 9780 5639
Email Address: lgarstone@amrshire.wa.gov.au
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1.0 Declaration of opening
The meeting was declared open at 6.01pm.

2.0 Attendance / Apologies / Non-attendance

2.1 Attendance

Committee Members
- David Holland : Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO)
- Brett Trunfull : Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (DCBFCO)
- Tony Mostert : Alexandra Bridge Bush Fire Brigade
- Tim Garstone : Cowaramup Bush Fire Brigade
- Georgina Thiele : East Augusta Bush Fire Brigade (Rep) and Bush Fire Ready Coordinator (South)
- Peter Delfs : Gracetown Bush Fire Brigade
- Simon Hanson : Karridale Bush Fire Brigade
- Matthew Nield : Kudardup Bush Fire Brigade
- Keith Scott : Rosa Brook Bush Fire Brigade
- Robert Barnett : Wallcliffe Bush Fire Brigade
- Diane Holland : Witchcliffe Bush Fire Brigade

Shire Staff Members
- Andrew Ross : Shire Acting Director Corporate and Community Services
- Greg West : A/Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM)
- Julia Meldrum : Shire Councillor
- Ian Earl : Shire Councillor
- Sharon McTaggart : Coordinator Ranger Services
- Lisa Garstone : Minute Secretary

Observers
- Gordon Temby : Bush Fire Ready Coordinator (North)
- Ed Hatherley : Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)
- Chris Lloyd : Department of Fire and Emergency Services A/Area Officer Leeuwin (DFES)
- Andrew Hunt : City of Busselton BRMP Coordinator

2.2 Apologies

- Alex Bernhagen : Augusta Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service
- Frank Bartoll : East Augusta Bush Fire Brigade
- Peter Brindley : East Augusta Bush Fire Brigade
- John Matten : Molloy Island Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade
- Glenn Edwards : Molloy Island Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade
- Dale Putland : Shire Acting Chief Executive Officer

2.3 Non Attendance

Nil

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, with a special welcome to the Shire’s new Coordinator Ranger Services, Sharon McTaggart.

Sharon has returned to WA after her recent experience in Ranger Services at the City of Darwin and Litchfield Council in the NT and also a the Shire of Coorow in WA.

The Chair also welcomed Greg West to the meeting. Greg has been appointed as Acting CESM whilst Chris Lloyd undertakes the role of DFES Acting Area Officer Leeuwin during Nathan Hall’s absence. Nathan is currently Acting in the position of DFES District Officer Emergency Management.

Alexandra Bridge Captain and BFAC delegate, Tony Mostert, entered the meeting at 6.03pm.

3.0 Question time for the public

Nil
4.0 Disclosure of members’ interest
4.1 Item 8.3 Planting Strategies for Shire and Landowners – Financial Interest – David Holland, CBFCO and Diane Holland, Captain, Witchcliffe BFB

Captain of the Witchcliffe BFB, Diane Holland, disclosed a financial interest in Item 8.3 Planting Strategies for Shire and Landowners.

The nature of the interest is as follows:

‘I am a property developer.’

BFAC Chair and CBFCO David Holland also disclosed a financial interest in the same item for the same reason.

5.0 Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting
5.1 Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes: 21 November 2018

RECOMMENDATION That the unconfirmed minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held 21 November 2018 be confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

Moved: Diane Holland, Witchcliffe BFB
Seconded: Keith Scott, Rosa Brook BFB

Carried: ALL
### Matters arising from previous minutes

#### 6.1 Action List

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| 21/2/18    | Rosa Brook Brigade request: Is it possible for the CESM and or the CBFCO to write to the Wine Association to encourage vineyard owners and contractors, to have firefighting resources available when using machinery in the vineyard during the ‘Prohibited Burning Period’ that could potentially start a fire, e.g. slashers, vine trimmers, etc. | **16/5/18:** We have opened discussions with the Wine Associations about this and other issues however; no formal letter has been sent at this time. The Shire is working on a much larger marketing strategy for 2018-19 where this will be addressed.  
   **21/11/18:** CESM – Marketing Strategy has been delayed. Will have to target the WIA directly.  
   **20/3/19:** CBFCO has drafted a letter of recommendation to the CEO of the Margaret River Wine Association (MRWA) for review. This action item will be deferred and discussed at Confidential Item 9.1. | In progress | CESM and CBFCO    |
| 21/2/18    | Rosa Brook Brigade request: Ask ComCen to better interrogate 000 callers that report a ‘grass fire’ to determine if a vineyard is involved. This will allow brigades to activate Light Tankers as a priority over Heavy Appliances as Light Tankers are more appropriate for fires in vineyards. | **16/5/18:** DFES AO Leeuwin is following up internally with DFES.  
   **21/11/18:** DFES – DFES AO Leeuwin has been dealing with it, will follow up. Group Calls as normal, will need to remind ComCen that fires in vineyards require a different approach.  
   **20/3/19:** CBFCO has contacted Danny Mosconi, DFES Superintendent State Coordination Operations Capability, to relay Brigade request. CESM explained the current ComCen 000 process. ComCen understand what we are asking but are unable to put the request into a formal procedure at this stage. Decision to be put back onto the Brigades and their local knowledge as to what appliances to send. | Complete    | CESM and DFES AO Leeuwin |
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| 21/2/18  | Bush Fire Ready Facilitator North to advise brigades on the outcome of negotiations with Rotary relating to donation of helmets and PPE to East Timor. | 16/5/18: Negotiations continue.  
21/11/18: BFRF (North) - Rotary currently in East Timor, back in the next couple of weeks. PPE sent over to Commissioner of ES. Feedback upon return.  
20/3/19: Gordon Temby informed the meeting that this action item is now complete. All has been actioned with DFES and Shire authorisation. Brigades to inform Gordon of any surplus PPE/C following the meeting. | Complete BFRF (North) |
| 21/11/18 | New Membership Statistics for 2018 - Seems to have been a record year for new BFB memberships. Lisa will retrieve the statistics for the next BFAC. | 20/3/19: Please refer to CESM report and Attachment 7.4.2. | Complete CESM Admin |
| 20/3/19  | Shire Planting Strategies - BFAC to invite Acting Director Sustainable Development, Nick Logan, or Acting Manager Planning and Development, Matt Cuthbert, to explain the current processes and implications of planting strategies in subdivisions within the Shire. | 20/3/19: Please refer to Item 8.3. | In progress CESM |
7.0 Reports from Shire Officers and Delegates

7.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

- The past three months (now four) have been relatively quiet in our Shire, (can I say that?) with fewer than usual calls to fires. Perhaps this can be put down to the great work being done by everyone in managing the fuel loads as well as general good behaviour by the public? We did send a contingent of members with three appliances to the Allanson fire in January. By all reports, this was a valuable experience for all those involved. We also sent a number of appliances to the Lewana fires in Nannup and Donnybrook-Balingup. Brigades from this Shire provided up to five appliances at any one time for both day and night shifts over several days. I want to thank all of those who gave up their time to assist our neighbours.

- During the Lewana fires, DBCA Busselton and Margaret River fully committed all of their appliances as well as all of their Officers, machinery and aircraft, to the response effort. I received a ‘heads up’ from the DBCA District Fire Coordinator to advise me of this lack of resourcing in our region and to ask for our assistance in providing a first response effort in the event of a fire in their tenure. For this reason, we held back from sending appliances to Lewana once the fire was under control and the mop up phase was well underway.

- I also received a request from DFES enquiring about the capacity in our region and our ability to provide appliances to the Goldfields/Esperance complex fires. I outlined the area that we were now covering given the lack of capacity from DBCA with their commitments elsewhere and I offered to provide one appliance if it was really needed. In the end the offer was never taken up. I am aware of Cowaramup sending their VFRS Urban Tanker for 2 x 5 day deployments and this was crewed by some of our Bush Fire Service members.

- We have also had several smaller fires locally which were attended by the relevant Brigades.

- At our August BFAC meeting, we passed a recommendation that supported the position of Superintendent for the Lower South West Region being made a permanent position. I am very pleased to be able to acknowledge that Mr Phil Brandrett has been appointed as Superintendent for the Lower South West region. I am sure that we will be well supported by Phil as we have been in the past.

- I was invited to represent our region at a workshop that was held in Belmont to discuss the new Bushfire Centre of Excellence project. Participants came from DFES, DBCA, WALGA as well as several volunteer services. We are expecting an announcement from Government soon to outline exactly how this new project will operate as well as where it will be located. It is not expected to have any sort of an operational role and it seems that it will focus mainly on research, prevention and education. Since writing the above, the Government has made the location known as being near Pinjarra.

- I have also been nominated to represent the LSW region on a new committee called the Bushfire Operations Committee (BOC for short). It is designed to be a pathway to report directly to DFES any issues relating to bush fire. I will be attending the first meeting on 21 February in Cockburn. The first meeting will be mostly about defining our terms of reference. More to follow! Since writing the above, I have now attended the first meeting. The minutes are not yet available, but I can tell you that the creation of this committee is a sign of the commitment being shown by DFES to consult with bushfire service personnel from across the State. The meeting was mainly taken up with the housekeeping type of debate involving terms of reference, etc. which we all agreed on. We then had a brief discussion of the expectations being placed upon a volunteer workforce by landowners, both public, corporate and private. It seems that this is a difficulty Statewide!

- We held a Steering Committee meeting during December at the Witchcliffe Station that was well attended. The committee was presented with an outline of events following on from the previous committee meeting which was held in 2016. These included waiting for the outcome from the Ferguson enquiry, the announcement of the new Centre of Bush Fire Excellence, the State election and the Shire elections. A copy of the report that was provided to Council was made available to the committee along with several other documents. A request was made to all Brigades to consult with their Brigades and then submit a list of questions back to the
committee so that be able to start the process of determining the actual issues. In the meantime, Council has provided a facilitator to provide expert management of the committee and the first meeting with the committee and the facilitator will be held on Monday, 18 February. I will provide a further report at the February BFAC meeting. Further to the above, a meeting was held which was attended by all stakeholders and facilitated by Andrew Huffer. The meeting discussed a number of items and was held in a good attitude, especially when we finished one minute prior to the advertised finish time! The outcomes included the provision of a Your Say website page, a proposed timeline which includes having a recommendation to take to the May BFAC meeting and a desire to make decisions based on what is best for the team.

- I applied for the recently advertised position of Bush Fire Mitigation Officer with the Shire and was successful in obtaining one of the three casual positions. The main role of this position is to implement the program for mitigation that has been financed by the State Government through Mitigation Activity Funds. It is a very comprehensive program that will continue the work of the Bushfire Risk Mitigation Officers. I am very pleased to see the Shire taking such a proactive role in managing the bush fire risk within the Shire. I hope that the Shire will see the benefits of this program and fund it sufficiently into the future to enable the appointment of a full-time position. (P.S. It won’t be me!)

- After taking into consideration the prevailing weather conditions, it was decided to extend the Prohibited Burning Period for 14 days. This is a process that needs to be advertised two weeks prior to the change of date to allow full community consultation and awareness. It involves consultation with neighbouring Shires (both of which have extended their Prohibited season), DFES and DBCA. The reason we chose to extend the Prohibited Burning Period rather than start the Restricted Burning Season and simply not write permits, was to prevent the start of campfires being allowed. (Please refer to Attachment 7.1.1)

- Upon further consideration, it has been decided to suspend the Prohibited Burning Season as of Midnight (2400hrs) on Sunday, 17 March 2019 due to the widespread rain that fell last week. When I initially extended the Prohibited season, there was no rain included in the long range forecast. Most of the Shire received enough rain for me to reconsider my original decision. The weather has now turned into more of an autumn weather pattern which lowers the risk of out of control fires.

- The Restricted Burning Period will therefore commence on Monday, 18 March 2019 and be in force until Sunday, 12 May 2019, unless varied. During the Restricted Burning Period, burning may only be undertaken with a valid Permit issued by an authorised Bush Fire Control Officer. (Please refer to Attachment 7.1.2)

- Please keep yourselves safe and thank you for your dedication and support.

In addition to the above report, CBFCO David Holland informed the meeting that he has also been asked to sit on two Project Advisory Teams and has nominated a couple of other local Brigade members to also be considered for those Committees.

7.2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

- Very quiet season, I like to think that quiet times are a result of all the work we have done in educating the public on fire preparation, etc.
- Thanks to all Brigades for getting crews out to the Lewana fire last month.
- Two crews were also sent to the fire in Esperance through DFES.

7.3 Shire Fire Control Officers

Alexandra Bridge

- Quiet season.
- Congratulations to the CBFCO on managing the changes to the Prohibited and Restricted Burning Seasons.

Cowaramup

- Quiet season.
- Sent crews to Nannup and Esperance.
- One car fire which was attended by VFRS.
East Augusta
- A controlled burn has been carried out on Reserve 35745 south of the fire shed.
- The green waste site continues to be managed by the community and burns continue to be carried out by brigade members.
- The mitigation burns on Reserve 39434 north of the quarry has been deferred until autumn.
- The HSV has been delivered for this year’s fire season.
- The injectors on the 1.4 water pump have been replaced and the driver’s emergency beacon has been repaired. The platform radio cannot be used when the pump is in operation due to the noise level. Do the new diesel pump motors comply with OH&S practices?
- Training continues on a fortnightly basis, and fortnightly maintenance runs are carried out on the 1.4 and the HSV.
- The Captain and Secretary attended the Bush Fire Strategy Sub-Committee meeting.
- The Captain and Proxy attended the Transition Steering Committee meeting.
- The Captain is taking a leave of absence for eight weeks commencing 5 February 2019, the FCO is still residing in Perth. Lieutenant Jarrod Brindley will step up and fulfil the duties of Acting Captain in the interim.

Gracetown
- Training is regular, each Monday fortnight, with steady member turnout.
- Trouble with pump pressure on 2.4 has been fixed.
- No callouts for brigade.

Karridale
- We have had a very quiet time with no callouts so far.
- Training every two weeks with a Christmas break.
- Very lively DFES transition discussion with a unanimous maybe, but if pushed the answer will be no.
- Would like to see Leaders’ Forum in a similar style to 2018 with Captains, FCOs and key people in each Brigade attending, but not too large.
- Brigade members are developing a theory of no permits issued = no fire callouts!

Kudardup
- The Brigade had an open day for the public to show our new extensions, this was well attended with lots of interest and praise for the Brigade.
- The new electric doors have been installed as well as rubber strips on the floor to help keep the rain out.
- Training has been continuing on the first and third Thursday and has been well attended.
- Our light tanker went up to the fire near Collie.
- Three shifts attended the fire near Nannup, it was good experience for our new members. There were some concerns from our members regarding the fire and a request to have an informal debrief amongst the Shire Brigades.
- Is there a way to let the public know that during the restricted burning season they will see smoke? Having had so many call outs for burn offs in the last couple of years this has become an issue.

Molloy Island
- Nothing to report, all quiet on the western front.

Rosa Brook
- Fairly quiet summer so far.
- Training has continued, with numbers a bit sporadic over the holidays.
- Shed extension have been continuing, with the kitchen still left to do, quotes have been finalised and the work should be completed shortly.
- The brigade did want to raise concerns over the Crouch Road fire on 28 January.
• Fortunately this fire was brought under control quickly, however we are concerned about the callout process.
• There was no 000 / Group Call and the brigade only became aware about it at 9:50 when it appeared on the DFES twitter feed, however if the Wallcliffe Facebook page is correct, DBCA were notified at 8:30am.
• The obvious concern here is that's an hour and a half before the public were notified which is a bit of a worry with landholders only 4km away.
• While we appreciate not having to attend because it was all in-hand, not having any information made us look very unprofessional when landholders were calling to ask as to the severity.
• We would also think that if we had been notified at 8:30 when it was spotted we would have been able to turn out and be on-site very quickly.
• Ultimately what we would like clarified is why the O-Zone response was not followed, and why it took so long for the public to be notified.
• If conditions had been slightly hotter, or stronger wind (both very common at this time of year) this wouldn't have left much time for landholders to evacuate.
• We also find it concerning that information about this fire was relayed to a coastal brigade for social media publication when the local brigade and FCO's had none of this information.

Further discussion regarding the above comments and questions will be held at General Business Item 8.5.

Wallcliffe
• We have registered six new members since last BFAC meeting.
• We congratulate the Shire on its Bush Fire compliance program in Prevelly, however this has generated more requests for the brigade to carry out more Fuel Reduction Burns than we can cope with. It has also resulted in requests to burn blocks which in our opinion should never be burned due to the dangerous nature of burning coastal heath.
• We congratulate DBCA on their response to mitigation work on their land to the north of Prevelly. On a recent fire break inspection it was apparent that much work had been done. However, there is a critical infrastructure site with a communication tower and the town water supply tank that is causing concern. There is a strong fire break surrounding this facility just outside a cyclone fence topped with razor wire. However, inside the enclosure it is fully vegetated with scrub three to four metres high. If tasked to protect these assets we would be reluctant to enter this block and would struggle to extinguish any fire within the compound. We request that scrub be removed or reduced within the compound.

Witchcliffe
• It has been relatively quiet since the last BFAC.
• Our VFRS assisted Margaret River at the Squid Lips incident.
• We also sent a crew of 4 in the 2.4 up to the recent Allanson Incident as part of a LSW task force. I was the VLO for the task force which went under the leadership of Greg Hamlyn from DFES Manjimup.
• We have signed up 3 new members, 2 late last year in Nov/Dec and 1 has joined us this past week. They have all chosen to join both brigades.
• We are getting good attendance at all our training sessions.
• The station hosted the last Steering Committee Meeting and the more recent Strategy Committee Meeting.
• We attended the Australia Day weekend Leeuwin Estate Concert.
• Our annual Brigade Newsletter has been published and mailed to our 380 landholders.
• Three separate shifts were also sent to the Lewana fire.
7.4 Community Emergency Services Manager / Shire Training Officer

Prevention

Mitigation Works

Approximately $140,000 spent to date from the Mitigation Activity Funding of the
$322,800 approved by State Government. The Shire has employed three Casual Fire
Mitigation Employees to assist with implementation of the works. Works undertaken to
date include:

- Wallcliffe Road mechanical works
- Firebreak installation Reserve 38181 Boodjidup Road
- Firebreak installation at Parkwater Estate, Cowaramup on the Wadandi trail near
  Daisy Rise
- Firebreak installation Reserve 39434, East Augusta in preparation for mitigation
  burn

Planning for the autumn 2019 Shire Reserve burn program has commenced and draft
plans have now been distributed. (Please refer to Attachment 7.4.1)

BFCO David Holland stated that it would be beneficial for Councillors if BFAC, in principal,
approved the Draft Burn Program.

Shire Councillor Ian Earl agreed, adding that the support from BFAC would give weight to the
document.

Wallcliffe Captain, Robert Barnett, was also in agreement, but expressed concerns regarding
the timeframe.

David Holland agreed that the list was indeed optimistic but a priority shortlist would be made
if the need arose. As soon as the preparation work is complete, Brigades will be invited to assist
in carrying out mitigation works.

A/CESM Greg West, proposed the following recommendation:

RECOMMENDATION

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee, in principal, accepts and endorses the Draft Autumn 2019
Hazard Reduction Burn Program.

Moved: Robert Barnett, Wallcliffe BFB
Seconded: Peter Delfs, Gracetown BFB

Carried: ALL

Community Education

The Karridale Electronic Fire Danger Rating Sign was installed and powered up on 12
February 2019.

Preparedness

Training

- Introduction to Firefighting on 24 November 2018 – 19 students from AMR Shire
  Brigades – first training course in the new Rosa Brook facilities.
- Bush Firefighting on 13 and 14 October 2018 – 10 students in the upgraded
  Cowaramup Station facilities.
- LG and DFES Training Calendars for 2019 have been released for all brigade
  members to register through eAcademy as required.

Vehicle Maintenance

Thirteen Air Compressors purchased for the Light Tankers (will investigate possibility
of hard mount on vehicles).

Fire Shed Maintenance

We are currently in the process of organising a variety of maintenance services for each
of the Brigades. Update as follows:
Air Conditioning Servicing
- Collating information from each Brigade as to servicing requirements.
- Still waiting on a few Brigades to send through information.
- Once all information is received we will organise servicing as required.

Carpet Cleaning
- Collating information from each Brigade as to their requirements.
- Still waiting on a few Brigades to send through information.
- Once all information is received we will organise cleaning as required.

Gutter Cleaning
- Will organise gutter cleaning for all Brigades in August/September 2019.

Electrical Testing and Tagging (incl RCD and Emergency/Exit Lighting)
- Alexandra Bridge and Karridale completed Friday, 15 February 2019.
- Kudardup, Witchcliffe, Rosa Brook, Gracetown and Cowaramup completed Monday, 18 February 2019.
- Wallcliffe and AMR SES completed Tuesday, 19 February 2019.
- Molloy Island and East Augusta completed Thursday, 7 March 2019.

Pest Control Treatment
Treatments have recently been completed for the following Brigades:
- Cowaramup
- Gracetown
- Karridale
- Kudardup
- Molloy Island
- Rosa Brook
- Wallcliffe

All remaining Brigades will be treated in the new financial year.

Roller Door Servicing
Servicing will be carried out as required in April/May 2019.

Water Filter Replacement
- Collating information from each Brigade as to their requirements.
- As the Brigades that currently have water filters may have different brands/models, etc. it may be easier if we could please ask you to source and replace the water filters yourselves and then email the tax invoice receipt through to the Shire for reimbursement.
- For those Brigades that do not currently have a water filter, we will look into supplying you with one in the near future.

Layflat hose testing
- Testing has been arranged for early May. Further information in respect to specific dates will be provided to Brigades closer to the time.

PPE Orders
Ongoing and additional orders for new members completing the courses will continue.

Local Government Grant Scheme (LGGS) and Shire Budget
The Brigade Strategy Meeting for Local Government Grant Scheme 2019/20 was held at Witchcliffe Fire Station on 29 January 2019. This meeting is for brigades to identify where money needs to be allocated for operational and non-operational items. CESM to submit the application to DFES by 30 March 2019.

The Shire has budget for some items that are not eligible for LGGS funding. The CESM will investigate and submit in budget application to Council.
Response
Since the November BFAC meeting the Shire’s brigades have responded to 20 incidents.

- 27 individual brigade responses since 13 November 2018: 20 landscape fires / 7 calls of concern from public, other/rubbish/vehicle/special service.
- The Shire BFB’s provided 3 appliances, 1 VLO and 8 crew members for the Task Force that went to Collie on 21 January 2019.
- The Shire committed a significant contingent of appliances and crew to the Lewana fire over a number of shifts.
- A BFS member also travelled with VFRS members to the Esperance fire.

Thank you to the brigades who have promptly provided their incident reports, can I please encourage all brigades to submit their reports as soon as possible following an incident to assist with:

- Local Government Grant Scheme (LGGS) applications;
- Insurance and incident reporting; and
- Suspicious fire /Arsonist reporting.

Recovery
Nil

General
Station Security
Four of our Fire Stations will soon be installed with security systems. The City of Busselton has reported some minor break-ins and attempted burglaries and we hope to prevent these from occurring in our Shire. The others will either receive funding next FY or be installed with CCTV.

New BFB Membership Statistics for 2018
2018 seemed to have been a record year for new BFB memberships. Lisa requested and has received a report from DFES showing statistics of volunteer turnover for the financial years dating back to 2009/10 (Please refer to Attachment 7.4.2).

Some things to note about this report:

- It counts All DFES Volunteers once, based on the selected service and members are counted once for each region they are registered in.
- The year shown is in financial year from 1 July of the indicated year to 30 June.
- The number of volunteers is as at the 30 June each year.
- ‘Left’ and ‘New’ volunteers are counted for the duration of the year.
- The row labelled ‘New’ shows Volunteers who started at any BFS Brigade within your Shire in that year.

7.5 Shire Coordinator Ranger Services
- Second property bush fire management compliance inspections are currently underway.
- All reported non-compliant properties have been inspected. These are a result of direct complaints from concerned neighbours, etc.
- Rangers have inspected multiple properties in the Judd, Juniper and Cullen Road areas. Many of which are extremely dense and have excess fuel loading. The problem we now face is that now is not the right time to be conducting any burns and that many of the properties are subject to a covenant that restricts mechanical clearing if it causes the natural habitat to be affected. This issue will be raised at the next Bush Fire Risk Management Committee meeting.
- Rangers have provided extensions to numerous landowners, allowing them some extra time to prepare a burn once the weather and season dictates. The fallback from this is that Rangers are being approached by landowners asking whether the local Brigades are in a position to assist with these burns.
In addition to the above comments, Sharon stated that she has been busy working with Rangers to gain a better understanding of bushfire risk in the area to develop strategies in dealing with issues such as absentee landowners, etc.

The group discussed a couple of key areas, including sites on Juniper Road and in Gracetown, and discussed mitigation options, such as firebreaks and mosaic burning, for these areas.

7.6 Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Online Volunteer Recruitment Tool
Over the past nine months, the Strategic Volunteer and Youth Programs and Media and Corporate Communications teams have been working to establish a new public-facing website to assist emergency services volunteers with their recruitment efforts. The website will work like a ‘jobs board’, allowing brigades, groups and units to upload and advertise local volunteering roles.

Brigades, groups and units will be invited to use the website as an additional tool to support their current recruitment efforts.

This website will provide an additional tool for volunteers to use in their recruitment efforts, supporting the great work already being done by brigades, groups and units on Facebook, websites and other forums. Further support is provided by a range of resources which can be downloaded from the Volunteer Portal.

For more information, please contact Jen Pidgeon on 9395 9989, Manager Strategic Volunteer and Youth Programs on jennifer.pidgeon@dfes.wa.gov.au.

SW Staff Movements
I am pleased to announce that Phil Brandrett has been appointed as the Superintendent for the LSW region. This has now left a vacancy for the District Officer Manjimup role. Applications close on the 4th for current District Officers to apply for the position. Currently Steve Ward is acting in the role.

Linda Ashton has been appointed in the role of Volunteer Management Support Officer (VMSO).

VMSO’s will be liaising with Managers and Leaders to identify issues, gaps or deficiencies within their Brigade, Group or Unit (BGU), with the aim of being able to assist, guide or advise and cut down on some of the administration issues, where possible. Collaboration between individuals, teams, services and agencies remains as important as ever and enquiries should be processed through the BGU leadership to the respective DFES Manager who will work with the VMSO to identify solutions.

Line Scanner Online
On January the 6th FIRESCAN 124, a Learjet 35 aeroplane with the line scanner fire mapping sensor arrived at its Perth base in time to commence its first 90-day contract with DFES.

FIRESCAN 124 will support DFES, the Department of Biodiversity and Conservation’s Parks and Wildlife Service and other government agencies as required by mapping wide area emergencies such as landscape bush fires and floods.

Travelling at 700 km/h, FIRESCAN 124 can rapidly respond throughout WA.

DFES A/AO Leeuwin, Chris Lloyd informed the meeting of the use of the Line Scanner during the Lewana Fire. The flyover images were a great asset, giving good intel and a much better idea of the fire shape. The difference between the images taken 18 minutes later showed the fast movement of the fire. The images could be uploaded on the FES map with the ability for it to be seen in the overlay.

Ed Hatherley of DBCA informed the meeting that he would show a few of the Line Scanner images during his presentation at Item 7.9. The quality of the images are very good but better during the night.
DFES A/AO Leeuwin, Chris Lloyd, discussed the recent movements of staff within DFES and also informed the meeting of his formal resignation from DFES and the Shire as of Friday, 26 April 2019. Chris said that the decision to resign was a tough one and stated he will be working with the Shire to hand over the role to his replacement.

On behalf of the Committee, David Holland thanked Chris for his efforts over the last two and a half years at the Shire, noting his professional attitude, passion and desire to better Emergency Services within the Shire of Augusta Margaret River.

The following recommendation was then proposed:

**RECOMMENDATION**
That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee recognises the outstanding efforts of Chris Lloyd during his time in the role of Shire of Augusta Margaret River Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM).

**Moved:** Tony Mostert, Alexandra Bridge BFB  
**Seconded:** Simon Hanson, Karridale BFB  
**Carried:** ALL

### 7.7 Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service
- Nil

### 7.8 Bush Fire Ready Facilitators Reports
**Bush Fire Ready Facilitator (North)**
- I have not attended any Bush Fire Preparedness meetings since the last BFAC meeting in November. However, due to the annual compliance inspections, numerous questions have been raised as to how property owners can better prepare their properties against bush fires.
- I would ask delegates to remind property owners that there is a very comprehensive reference list of contractors on the Shire’s website. These contractors may be able to assist property owners better prepare their properties and comply with the Shire’s mitigation requirements.
- Also, one of the northern brigades has a program in place which can assist firefighters in identifying properties that have designated ‘fire pumps’ that may be able to be used as an additional resource for firefighters when carrying out asset protection activities. Contact Rob Barnett at Wallcliffe Fire Brigade for more details.

The meeting discussed the reference list of contractors available to property owners on the Shire website. It was made clear that this list was not a list of Shire approved or recommended contractors and that the Shire takes no responsibility for the quality of works carried out by these contractors.

Chris Lloyd informed the meeting that for the past two years a meeting for contractors has been held and facilitated by the Shire Coordinator Ranger Services, in order to inform local contractors of the Shire’s mitigation needs and requirements. However, these have not been well attended.

Kudardup FCO, Matthew Nield, enquired as to how to remove a contractor from this list and was informed to request the removal through the Shire CESM.

BFRF (North), Gordon Temby, informed the meeting that any firefighting equipment, such as pumps, etc., purchased by primary producers, are tax deductible. For more information please contact Gordon directly.
Bush Fire Ready Facilitator (South)
- ‘Monthly themes’ are being published in the local paper, The Pelican Post. These articles are supplied by the DFES Community Engagement Office. All Brigades’ Secretaries are encouraged to forward these articles on to their members.
- The Bush Fire Preparation Street Meet after the RUI exercise held in Augusta in November was successful. Thanks to DFES Community Preparedness Advisors Steph DeBruin, Andy Thompson, Nathan Hall and Shire of Augusta Margaret River CESM, Chris Lloyd.
- An information display was held outside IGA in December providing locals and visitors the opportunity to discuss property preparedness. As a community service provider, I have also had the opportunity to engage and discuss bush fire preparedness with consumers, one on one in their own homes, and perform a property assessment.

It was requested that the Brigades be informed of any planned mitigation works as close to the proposed date as possible in case there is pre-mitigation works that are required to be carried out.

7.9 Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions

Ed Hatherley, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the upcoming autumn burn program for the DBCA. The presentation also included information from the recent Lewana fire including timeline, area of impact through aerial images from the Line Scanner and spotter aircraft, the terrain of the area and the property and machinery affected. (Please refer to Attachment 7.9.1)

Shire Councillor, Julia Meldrum, enquired as to the DBCA process of community consultation for the proposed burn schedule.

Ed Hatherley responded that the information was distributed to the general public via social media, etc.

City of Busselton BRMP Coordinator, Andrew Hunt, informed the meeting that the Bush Fire Risk Management Plan was also currently underway, identifying high risk and treatment areas. Andrew requested that, if there were any particular reserves that the Shire and Brigades were keen to see in the Plan, to inform him as soon as possible. The Plan is due for finalisation around 30 June 2019 with at least the high priority areas, risk assessment and management sections and treatment schedule completed.

7.10 State Emergency Services
- Nil

8.0 General business

8.1 DFES Operational Fleet Project February/March 2019 Update – Chris Lloyd, DFES A/Area Officer Leeuwin
- DFES recently released their Operational Fleet Project Update for February and March 2019.
- These updates have been distributed to all BFB Captains, FCOs and Secretaries (Please refer to Attachments 8.1.1 (February), 8.1.2 (March) and 8.1.3 (Project Dashboard)).

Chris Lloyd informed the meeting that the project is endeavouring to standardize fleets by reducing the types of appliances but at the same time ensuring the versatility and user-friendly nature of the appliances chosen.

Brigade input and involvement in choosing this new fleet of appliances is welcomed and highly recommended and we are hoping that the Brigades are also contacted to be a part of the decision process through feedback and test driving, etc.

Chris Lloyd will send out all relevant links, however, all information is available on the Volunteer Portal (see link below):
The meeting then discussed some of the proposed fleet appliances and the differences between the new and old models.

8.2 Prevelly Mitigation and Fire Protection – Rob Barnett, Captain, Wallcliffe BFB

Wallcliffe Captain, Robert Barnett, voiced his concerns regarding fire protection in the Prevelly/Gnarabup area, in particular, that private property owners are receiving requests to maintain their properties through burning and clearing, however, he feels that some properties should not be burned. Robert also informed the meeting that he has already written a letter to the Shire Acting CEO and requested that the mitigation process for those areas be reviewed as soon as possible.

The Committee then held a discussion regarding the issue and the various options available to property owners such as utilising information within the current Bush Fire Management Information Booklet (Firebreak Notice), possible community strategic or project management funding assistance, financial impact on landowners when undertaking mitigation works, community preparedness to undertake these works themselves and problems arising from certain types of mitigation options (e.g. erosion through slashing), etc.

CBFCO, David Holland, suggested that the Shire’s Bush Fire Risk Management Committee be the most appropriate forum to contact with these concerns and requests. Firstly, a risk needs to be identified and then followed up with possible mitigation options.

Chris Lloyd suggested that BFAC recommend Council direct the relevant staff to investigate and Shire Councillor, Julia Meldrum was in agreement with this suggestion.

Therefore, the Committee proposed the following recommendation:

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommend that Council ask the Bush Fire Risk Management Committee to investigate suitable and appropriate options to mitigate against bush fire, for all land tenures in the Prevelly/Gnarabup area.

*Moved: Robert Barnett, Wallcliffe BFB*

*Seconded: Keith Scott, Rosa Brook BFB*

*Carried: ALL*

8.3 Planting Strategies for Shire and Landowners – Quentin Blunsdon, Captain, Cowaramup BFB

The Chair, CBFCO David Holland, along with Captain of the Witchcliffe BFB, Diane Holland, both disclosed a financial interest at Item 8.3 and left Chambers at 7.34pm.

In the absence of CBFCO David Holland, Deputy Chair and DCBFCO Brett Trunfull, took the position of Chair.

- Discuss the planting strategies imposed on subdivisions by the Shire.
- Further discuss these planting strategies in regards to the planting of trees on property boundaries and fire break areas, as well as the planting of shrubs under trees in public spaces which can create conduits into tree tops.

On behalf of the Cowaramup BFB Captain and Brigade, Burnside FCO, Tim Garstone led the discussion regarding concerns relating to the planting strategies imposed on subdivisions by the Shire, the planting of trees on property boundaries and fire break areas, as well as the planting of shrubs under trees in public spaces which can create conduits into tree tops. For example, we are currently seeing new subdivisions with mass plantings of Eucalypts right where the firebreaks should be. The appropriate people need to be informed that this is not the right thing to be doing.
DCBFCO Brett Trunfull suggested the idea of compiling a criteria of risk assessment for this issue.

Chris Lloyd suggested following the same criteria as the construction/building in bush fire prone areas. Many agencies, all with different requirements, are involved in these plantings, e.g. Main Roads, vineyards, Shire (Parks and Gardens), etc.

Shire Councillor, Ian Earl, suggested BFAC invite Acting Director Sustainable Development, Nick Logan, or Acting Manager Planning and Development, Matt Cuthbert, to explain the current processes and implications.

DCBFCO and Acting Chair, Brett Trunfull, advised the group that this suggestion would be added onto the Action List for the next BFAC meeting. (Please refer to Item 6.1 Action List)

David Holland and Diane Holland re-entered Council Chambers at 7.41pm and CBFCO David Holland resumed the position of Chair.

Shire Councillor, Julia Meldrum, left the meeting at 7.42pm

8.4 Public Private Burn Register – Quentin Blunsdon, Captain, Cowaramup BFB

- Proposal that the Shire looks into implementing some sort of record that is accessible to the general public to register their private burns.
- This would enable the Shire and Brigades to track and manage mitigation, as well as have knowledge of burns being conducted or completed during the onset of inclement weather (e.g. May 2018).

On behalf of the Cowaramup BFB Captain and Brigade, Burnside FCO, Tim Garstone spoke to the Item.

Chris Lloyd responded by informing the meeting that the idea of some sort of public burn register had been proposed for quite a while now. The first step would be to ask for this information when issuing permits and then try to track where the burning is occurring, recording as much information as possible to start capturing how much private burning is taking place. Second to that, and if time allows, we would endeavor to also map the information. This would be an ongoing development process.

Cowaramup BFB Representative, Tim Garstone, noted the response and feedback from Mr Lloyd.

8.5 Crouch Road Incident Callout Process – Keith Scott, FCO, Rosa Brook BFB

- As per the Rosa Brook BFB report, the Brigade would like to raise some concerns over the callout process for the Crouch Road fire on 28 January.
- Why was there was no 000 / Group Call?
- If DBCA were notified at 8:30, why did it take until 9:50 for the Brigade and the public to be made aware of the incident?
- Why was the O-Zone response procedure not followed?
- Why also was information about this fire relayed to a coastal brigade for social media publication when the local brigade and FCO’s had none of this information?

Osmington FCO Keith Scott, voiced concerns on behalf of the Rosa Brook BFB, regarding the notification issues experienced during the Crouch Road fire.

CBFCO David Holland advised the group of the process that was undertaken on the day:

- The fire was spotted by DPaW aircraft.
- Ed Hatherley of DBCA was made aware of the fire and called 000, logging the job.
- Ed then rang David to inform him of the fire but at that stage no assistance was required from the Shire.
- David then made the decision to call DFES Manjimup to request to use the weather text to inform all in the Shire of the fire but that no action was needed.
- At the time it was thought that this text would reach a wider group than the group call, however this was not the case.
8.6 Bush Fire Control Officer ID Cards and Confirmation of FCO Details – Greg West, A/CESM

- With the assistance of Oscar in the Shire’s IT department, we have managed to revive our Mobile ID Card machine and Lisa has begun the production of the new FCO ID Cards.
- We are still waiting on a few FCOs to send through their photos for the new cards, along with a response to the email requesting confirmation of personal details in accordance with Section 50 (1)(a)(b) of the Bush Fires Act 1954.

8.7 New Bush Fire Brigade Service Medal – Diane Holland, Captain, Witchcliffe BFB

Captain of the Witchcliffe BFB, Diane Holland, spoke to the item:

- A new Bush Fire Brigade Service Medal has been released.
- In the past the BFS have only been able to receive a 5 or 10 year medallion.
- The new medal will be issued to members who have served for 10 years or more.
- Members who have already had their 10 year medals issued will automatically receive this new medal.
- Members in support roles will be eligible for the medal if they hold a role such as Secretary, Treasurer, etc.
- It is easy to apply for the new medal via the Volunteer Portal.
- Once applied for, the application is lodged, approved and then the medal distributed.
- Lots of other information on the portal including how to wear, when to wear, etc.

9.0 Matters for which the meeting may be closed (Confidential Items)

9.1 Draft Letter to the Margaret River Wine Association – David Holland, CBFCO

Chair and CBFCO David Holland, proposed the following motion:

**MOTION**

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting go behind closed doors.

Moved: David Holland, CBFCO

Seconded: Brett Trunfull, DCBFCO

Carried: ALL

The meeting was closed at 7.54pm.

- As part of the Action List item relating to Rosa Brook Brigade’s request to write to the Wine Association to encourage vineyard owners and contractors to have firefighting resources available when using machinery in the vineyard during the ‘Prohibited Burning Period’, CBFCO David Holland has drafted a confidential letter for review by BFAC delegates and the Shire CEO.

David Holland read the draft letter to the meeting. (Please refer to CONFIDENTIAL Attachment 9.1.1)

After a brief discussion the Committee proposed the following recommendation:

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee endorses the contents of the Draft Letter to the Margaret River Wine Association for review and distribution by the Shire CEO.

Moved: David Holland, CBFCO

Seconded: Keith Scott, Rosa Brook BFB

Carried: ALL

The Chair and CBFCO David Holland then proposed the following motion:
MOTION
That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting come out from behind closed doors.
Moved: David Holland, CBFCO
Seconded: Brett Trunfull, DCBFCO
Carried: ALL

The meeting was re-opened at 7.59pm.

10.0 Closure of meeting
Chair and CBFCO David Holland, asked for any further comments or items from Committee members.

Acting Director Corporate and Community Services, Andrew Ross, advised the meeting of the current status of the CESM advertising process:

- Advert is out this week in the local newspapers, Shire website and DFES Portal.
- Applications close 2 April 2019 with shortlisting in the following week.
- Hoping there will be a slight overlap with Chris before he leaves.
- Also hoping to retain Greg for a couple of days a week.

Wallcliffe Captain, Robert Barnett, referred to a concern from his FCO report at Item 7.3 regarding the critical infrastructure site on land north of Prevelly.

DFES Acting Area Officer Leeuwin, Chris Lloyd, advised the meeting that the above query was forwarded to the Water Corporation via email on Friday, 15 February 2019.

A response was received from Josh Jackson, Water Corporation Acting Operations Manager Leeuwin, via email on Tuesday, 19 February 2019 as follows:

“The tank in question services all of Gnarabup and Prevelly plus back feeds to some properties west of the main town site so you are right in saying that it is critical.

I have done some investigation into your email and its claims of minimal fire mitigation works done. Please find attached and below the recommendations from your predecessor John Carter from 4 years ago. All recommendations were undertaken and since then we have maintained the 10 metre buffer around the tank. Recent works include pruning of the access track, pruning behind the comms huts, ground clean up and firebreak maintenance.

I do see a need to clear behind the communications huts and we currently have a clearing permit underway to do just that. There is also some pre-planning happening for the installation of a Chlorine module on this site that would need further clearing and buffers.

If you have further recommendations or if standards have changed please feel free to let me know and we will take them into consideration for future site works.”

Further to the above, Chris Lloyd has asked the DFES Bushfire Risk Management Officer and the Shire Bushfire Risk Planning Coordinator to follow up and advise if any further treatment is required.

(Please refer to Attachment 7.3.1)

Alexandra Bridge Captain, Tony Mostert, led a brief discussion on the Western Power Grants.
Shire Councillor, Ian Earl, thanked all members, stating he was pleased to see such a quiet season. He also thanked Chris Lloyd for his services to the Shire as CESM and also for his ongoing support to the Cowaramup BFB. Ian wished Chris all the best in his future endeavours and stated he was pleased that he will still be living in Cowaramup and will also remain an active member of the Cowaramup BFB. Chris will be sorely missed at the Shire and has done a terrific job in bringing the Emergency Services Business Unit and Brigades up to a very high standard.

Chris Lloyd thanked Ian and all attendees for their kind words and support.

As they were no further items to discuss, the meeting was closed at 8.06pm.