

# Augusta Margaret River Bush Fire Advisory Committee

## Minutes

For the meeting held  
Wednesday, 17 February 2021  
Augusta Council Chambers  
66 Allnutt Terrace, Augusta  
Commencing at 6.00pm

## Notice of Meeting

Please be advised that a meeting of the Augusta Margaret River Bush Fire Advisory Committee was held on 17 February 2021, commencing at 6.00pm

Augusta Council Chambers  
66 Allnutt Terrace  
Augusta WA 6290

This meeting was open to members of the public.

If you were unable to attend the meeting, please contact Lisa Garstone, Emergency Services Admin Officer.

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# Order of Business

<b>Agenda Listing</b>	<b>Subject</b>
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**Notice of meeting**  
**Order of business**

- 1.0 Declaration of opening**
- 2.0 Appointments**
  - 2.1 Appointment of Deputy Presiding Member**
- 3.0 Attendance / Apologies**
  - 3.1 Attendance**
  - 3.2 Apologies**
- 4.0 Question time for the public**
- 5.0 Disclosure of members' interests**
- 6.0 Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting**
  - 6.1 Bush Fire Advisory Committee Minutes: 18 November 2020**
- 7.0 Business arising from previous minutes**
  - 7.1 Action List**
- 8.0 Reports from Shire Officers and Delegates**
  - 8.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer**
  - 8.2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer**
  - 8.3 Shire Bush Fire Brigades**
  - 8.4 Community Emergency Services Manager / Shire Training Officer**
  - 8.5 Shire Executive Officer / Representative**
  - 8.6 Shire Coordinator Ranger Services**
  - 8.7 Department of Fire and Emergency Services**
  - 8.8 Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service**
  - 8.9 Bush Fire Ready Facilitators**
  - 8.10 Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions**
  - 8.11 State Emergency Services**
- 9.0 General business**
  - 9.1 New Digital Emergency Services Radio Network (ESRN) – Wallcliffe BFB**
  - 9.2 BFAC Sub-Committee – Wallcliffe BFB**
  - 9.3 Weather Station/Radar – Kudardup BFB**
  - 9.4 Witchcliffe EWS – Witchcliffe BFB**
- 10.0 Matters for which the meeting may be closed (Confidential Items)**
- 11.0 Closure of meeting**

## **1.0 Declaration of opening**

*The Chair welcomed all in attendance and the meeting was declared open at 6.00pm.*

## **2.0 Appointments**

### **2.1 Appointment of Deputy Presiding Member**

The Presiding Member conducted the election of the Deputy Presiding Member in accordance with Schedule 2.3 of the *Local Government Act 1995*. Nominations are to be in writing.

The Presiding Member called for written nominations for the position of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Deputy Presiding Member.

The Presiding Member received the following written nomination as follows:

- Witchcliffe BFB nominated – Quentin Blunsdon

Quentin Blunsdon verbally accepted the nominations.

The Presiding Member called for further nominations.

There being no further nominations, the Presiding Member declared the nomination period to be closed.

The Presiding Member announced that Quentin Blunsdon had been nominated for the position of Deputy Presiding Member unopposed and as such, there was no requirement for a secret ballot to be held. He then declared that Quentin Blunsdon had unanimously been elected to the position.

### 3.0 Attendance / Apologies

#### 3.1 Attendance

##### Committee Members

David Holland	:	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO)/ Presiding Member
Quentin Blunsdon	:	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (DCBFCO)/ Deputy Presiding Member (as at 6.02pm)
Tony Mostert	:	Alexandra Bridge Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Tim Garstone	:	Cowaramup Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Peter Brindley	:	East Augusta Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Peter Warrilow	:	Karridale Bush Fire Brigade Proxy
Matt Nield	:	Kudardup Bush Fire Brigade Proxy
John Matten	:	Molloy Island Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Andrew Newnham	:	Rosa Brook Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Gordon Temby	:	Wallcliffe Bush Fire Brigade Delegate/ Bush Fire Ready Facilitator (North)
Diane Holland	:	Witchcliffe Bush Fire Brigade Delegate

##### Shire Staff Members

Nick Logan	:	Director Sustainable Development and Infrastructure Services
Adam Jasper	:	Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM)/
Ian Earl	:	Shire President
Lisa Garstone	:	Emergency Services Admin Officer/Minute Secretary

##### Observers

Ed Hatherley	:	Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)
Peter Thomas	:	Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES)
Andrew Hunt	:	AMR/Busselton/Capel BRMP Coordinator

##### Public

6

#### 3.2 Apologies

Adrian Yates	:	Augusta Margaret River State Emergency Service (SES)
Julia Meldrum	:	Shire Councillor
Brian Daniel	:	Shire Councillor
Peter Delfs	:	Gracetown Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Georgina Thiele	:	Bush Fire Ready Facilitator (South)
Ian McLeod	:	Acting Coordinator Ranger Services
Stephanie	:	Shire of Augusta Margaret River
Addison-Brown	:	Chief Executive Officer
Simon Hanson	:	Karridale Bush Fire Brigade Delegate

### 4.0 Question time for the public

*One member of the public addressed the meeting to express concerns regarding an area of bushland near her property, and queried what possible mitigation action, if any, was being considered.*

*The Chair directed her enquiry to the AMR/Busselton/Capel Bushfire Risk Management Planning Coordinator, Andrew Hunt, who received her written submission.*

*The member of public then left the meeting at 6.03pm.*

*Two members of the public then enquired about possible future mitigation activity in a recreation reserve near the Augusta Heights development. The reserve is in close proximity to a school and playground.*

*Mr Hunt responded by stating he was aware of this particular reserve and would be happy to discuss the details with the members of public following the meeting or receipt of contact details.*

*One member of the public left the meeting at 6.04pm.*

**5.0 Disclosure of members' interest**

Nil

**6.0 Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting**

**6.1 Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes: 18 November 2020**

**RECOMMENDATION/BFAC DECISION BFAC2021/01**

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That the unconfirmed minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held 18 November 2020 be confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

**Moved: Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB**

**Seconded: John Matten, Molloy Island BFB**

**Carried: 12/0**

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## 7.0 Matters arising from previous minutes

### 7.1 Action List

Date	Action Item	Action Update	Status	Actioning Officer
20/05/2020	Registering of Permits with DFES COMCEN in regard to the inconsistent questions Permit holders are being asked and information they have to provide.	<p><b>20/5/20:</b> Peter Thomas to investigate and seek clarity from the current Superintendent in charge of COMCEN.</p> <p><b>19/8/20:</b> Peter Thomas has investigated this matter and has since had a response from DO COMCEN which was relayed to the meeting. A couple more queries raised. Peter Thomas to relay these additional queries back to COMCEN for clarification.</p> <p><b>18/11/20:</b> As Peter Thomas was an apology for this meeting, the group discussed the item and the additional query from the last BFAC meeting regarding the requirement of providing a specific burn end time when registering a Permit with COMCEN, which in some cases can be difficult to predict (e.g. log piles). Peter Thomas to clarify with COMCEN the expectations in these particular circumstances.</p> <p><b>17/2/21:</b> Peter Thomas advised that when registering Permits with COMCEN, Permit holders can give an approx. time for the end of the burn. If COMCEN receive a 000 call in that area, they will often call the Permit Holder to confirm if it is related to the Permit. COMCEN and FCOs to be as flexible as possible, understanding that not every situation is the same.</p>	Complete	Peter Thomas

Shire of Augusta Margaret River  
Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes: 17 February 2021

18/11/20	<p>In reference to the previous Action Item relating to the correct size fitting landowners are required to have on their water tanks, Karridale has requested that the Emergency Services Admin Officer contact Pioneer and Blackwood Water Tanks to inform them of the correct Shire requirements of an 80mm female camlock fitting.</p>	<p><b>18/11/20:</b> Lisa to contact Pioneer and Blackwood Water Tanks to inform them of the correct Shire requirements.</p> <p><b>17/2/21:</b> Lisa emailed Pioneer and Blackwood Water Tanks on 9 December 2020 to inform them of the correct Shire requirements.</p> <p><i>A brief discussion was held on the types of tanks found on older residential properties versus the newer developments, the difference between the stand-alone tanks and the residential potable source, and the regulations regarding access to these tanks.</i></p> <p><i>Peter Warrilow, Karridale BFB, suggested that this information could be recommended to landowners via the Shire's Firebreak Notice. Adam Jasper noted that this was a good idea.</i></p>	Complete	Lisa Garstone
18/11/20	<p>In relation to General Business Item 8.3, Wallcliffe BFB raised Brigade concerns regarding the increasing tourist levels in areas such as Kilcarnup (Joey's Nose, Melaleucas), and suggested some sort of signage, such as an electronic VMS, regarding NO CAMPFIREs, be erected prior to Summer.</p>	<p><b>18/11/20:</b> Ed Hatherley, DBCA, stated that he was not sure if there would be an increase in signage, but that the areas mentioned are always heavily patrolled by DBCA Rangers, especially over the tourist season. There are no designated campsites at Kilcarnup, so no campfires are allowed at any time. However, he stated that he would take this request back to DBCA for review.</p> <p><b>17/2/21:</b> Ed Hatherley stated that at this stage no additional signage is planned.</p>	Complete	Ed Hatherley



Shire of Augusta Margaret River  
Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes: 17 February 2021

18/11/20	<p>In regard to General Business Item 8.4, Gordon Temby requested that the Shire's Fire Management Plans be reviewed due to age and relevancy and, through his role as Bushfire Ready Facilitator (North), advised that there was some confusion within the community regarding awareness of the plans and conflicting information between the plans and the Firebreak Notice.</p>	<p><b>18/11/20:</b> Director of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure Services, Nick Logan, stated that the Shire is already looking at ways to improve awareness and accessibility of the plans. A full review would be a very lengthy process but advised that he and Adam would look into the matter further.</p> <p><b>17/2/21:</b> Nick Logan advised the meeting that a full review of the BRMP was due in 2022, one part of which would incorporate consideration of all the FMPs which have differing types of controls for different areas. So, capturing the information through that process would be one part of trying to consolidate the document.</p> <p>The second part would be a 2-stage process of making the plans more readily available to the general public, with a good collection of plans being provided as required, easily accessible via the Shire website. The mapping issues would also hopefully be rectified through a future website upgrade.</p>	In progress	Nick Logan and Adam Jasper
18/11/20	<p>In relation to General Business Item 8.5, Diane Holland, Witchcliffe Captain/FCO, requested clarification on the issuing of Permits during the transition from the Unrestricted to Restricted Burning Period.</p>	<p><b>18/11/20:</b> The Committee discussed this issue and the preference was decided that Permits are to be issued to landowners who inform the Shire that they have commenced a controlled burn in the Unrestricted Burning Period that is, or will be, still alight during the Restricted Burning Period, as long as the burn is deemed safe to continue. However, David Holland, CBFCA, will investigate further and endeavor to clarify.</p> <p><b>17/2/21:</b> David advised the Committee that after a bit more research, and finding that there was no real documentation that clarifies the issue faced by FCOs issuing Permits during the transition from the Unrestricted to</p>	In progress	David Holland

Shire of Augusta Margaret River  
Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes: 17 February 2021

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		Restricted Burning Period, he suggested that additional text be added to the Shire's Firebreak Notice such as 'this includes for any burn lit prior to the Restricted Burning Period, and which is still burning on the start date of the Restricted Burning Period.' David to discuss this additional text with the Rangers for consideration as a possible inclusion in the 2021-22 Firebreak Notice and Bushfire Information Booklet.		
17/02/21	Peter Warrilow, Karridale BFB, raised the concern his Brigade has with the current 5-day length of deployments. He stressed that the Brigades were always keen to assist, but that 5 days is just too long for most members.	<b>17/2/21:</b> David Holland advised the group that he recently spoke with DFES Superintendent, Phil Brandrett, about the issue, who suggested he take the concern to the next ROAC to be passed onto other forums.	In progress	David Holland

## **8.0 Reports from Shire Officers and Delegates**

### **8.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer**

- Despite some really windy and warm weather over the last few months, it has again been a relatively quiet start to the bush fire season in our Shire so far with only a few call outs. In what seems to be the pattern for this time of year, most of the fires that we have had to attend were caused by landowners either not monitoring their burns well enough, or not understanding that you cannot bury a burn pile and think that it is safe!
- This has not been the case in many other parts of our State, and they have had to endure some protracted fire responses. Our Brigade members have shown their willingness to support the deployments that have been sent to assist other Shires when requests have been made, in particular to Nannup and most recently, Wooroloo and Yallingup. We also had a deployment ready to go to the Gingin Complex of fires, but these were not required. Thank you for your assistance in making this happen.
- The Yallingup fire was an example of how well Brigades can adapt to an unusual event. While we all knew that there was rain coming, I was very impressed (as was the City of Busselton) with the quick response to this event. There was the potential for a very different outcome for the residents of Yallingup if the wind had turned to the North East as predicted and the rain didn't turn up until it was actually forecasted to do so. The normal method of turnout was compromised by a fault at our Comcen meaning the normal SMS system did not work, but Brigades were able to get appliances underway with the minimum of fuss. Thank you to those Brigades which turned out and thankfully we weren't needed!
- We have had a number of false alarms, mostly because of smoke drifting in from planned burns in other Shires. While these can be annoying, we will always investigate them to ensure we never get caught out presuming something is a false alarm. Better to attend 10 false alarms than not attend a real fire!
- A Total Fire Ban was implemented for 9 of January by DFES for our Shire, along with most of the South West. As we were expecting strong dry winds with low humidity and elevated temperatures, we also declared a Vehicle Movement and Harvest Ban. As it turned out, because the Fire Danger Index reached 35 and we were under a TFB, we were actually compelled to implement a VMHB. We had a number of discussions with the City of Busselton leading up to the expected bad weather so that we could try to minimise some of the confusion between the requirements for each Local Government.
- Please keep yourselves safe and thank you for your dedication and support.

*Tim Garstone, Cowaramup BFB, queried the notification process of the recent Harvest Vehicle Movement Ban (HVMB) as other Shires, such as Kojonup, receive a text notification.*

*David stated that as a wheatbelt town, the Shire of Kojonup enforces multiple HVMBs throughout their fire season, whereas our Shire may only issue 1-2 per year, therefore a text messaging system may not be feasible. The Shire distributes the HVMB notification via their website and Facebook page, via ABC Radio/TV, the Emergency WA website, through the Brigades and via email distribution to a list of stakeholders and agencies that can ultimately pass this information on as they see fit.*

*One member of public left the meeting at 6.29pm.*

### **8.2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer**

- We have had a fairly quiet start the season within the shire. There have been numerous fires surrounding the shire and out of the area that the Shire has sent crews and Brigades to.
- The Shire had a TFB and subsequently a HVMB, implemented in January. Although these bans can feel like a nuisance and extreme at times, they are something that, in this changing climate, we will need to get accustomed to.
- Thank you to all Brigades for your work and effort towards the Fire Season and good luck to everyone for the remainder of the season.
- Thanks also to David, Adam and Lisa for the help received in getting settled into the role of DCBFCO.

### 8.3 Shire Bush Fire Brigades Alexandra Bridge

- Two small incidents.

*The Alexandra Bridge report was provided at the meeting.*

#### **Cowaramup**

- Training has been conducted for both BFB and FRS and is regularly attended by a large number of Brigade members. Members have completed their pre-season burn-over and truck familiarisation training leading into to Prohibited Season.
- Our 4.4 attended the Wooroloo fire with a crew of 4 members. We also attended the incident at Yallingup with our LT and 3.4U. Our 4.4 also attended a fire at Injidup, as part of a task force assessing and protecting properties within Injidup.
- Membership is still going well, with people coming in to see what volunteering is about and what they can do to help. We have had people stay and join and others finding that is not for them.
- All vehicles have been serviced and there are no outstanding issues or concerns within the Brigade.

#### **East Augusta**

- Captain and FCO attended the Leader's Forum at Witchcliffe.
- Joint training sessions with Alex Bridge on 12.2 and recon of East Augusta.
- Alex Bridge and East Augusta attended substation fault with Western Power.
- Two flat tyres on the 1.4 in the space of a fortnight.
- Two crew attended the Wooraloo Fire in the HSV.
- Training fortnightly with weekly maintenance runs on the 1.4.

#### **Gracetown**

- Training is regular, each Monday fortnight, with good member turnout.
- Call Out to Fire at Claret Ash / Gracetown Caravan Park boundary on 4 January. Fire was deliberately lit. Under control very quickly.
- Maintenance runs being carried out on vehicles.
- Clutch seal issues on 2.4 solved.

#### **Karridale**

- Training well underway with majority of members now confident with the new 3.4.
- Many members undertaking off-road driving and fire suppression training.
- Have found the new 3.4 to be an excellent unit, easy to operate and reliable so far, with an easy, high volume drafting process.
- Brigade has attended a number of incidents – grass, bush and structural shed fire.
- Have been part of a Task Force on a number of occasions, but not activated, leading to our new motto 'never fought, never defeated'.
- New shed extensions all very functional.
- Brigade concerns include:
  - Length of deployment – 5-day deployments are out of most members' range.
  - Urge FCOs to be cautious when issuing permits this upcoming Restricted Burning Period.

*David suggested the deployment concern be discussed further later in the meeting.*

*The Karridale report was provided at the meeting.*

#### **Kudardup**

- 80-110mm of rain over the corner.
- 2 call outs, 1 being a false alarm.

#### **Molloy Island**

- Ferry is back in tomorrow.

### **Rosa Brook**

- Since the last meeting the Brigade has turned out to:
  - 3 x Grass/scrub fires
  - 1 x Vehicle fire
  - 2 x Task Force Deployments (Daradup and Yallingup)
- We had crews ready to attend Wooraloo, however didn't get requested.
- Fortnightly training has been well attended and continued over the festive season.
- We held our start of season full Brigade training on 29 November, of which all members completed Burnover training.
- Training since then has focused on a 2-part RUI exercise, Drafting, Air Operations, Relay Pumping.
- One training was an excursion to the Busselton Airport to have a look through the LAT and Helitacs based there.
- Special thanks to Nathan Hall for arranging this, members have commented how beneficial this was to gain an understanding of what happens up above!
- One fire we attended on 5 January highlighted the need for firebreaks around property boundaries.
- A fire started in a vineyard due to slashing operations, it escaped the vineyard due to poorly constructed breaks, this then spread to the neighbouring property.
- Fortunately, this property owner had installed proper firebreaks around the whole perimeter which ultimately stopped the fire spreading to the adjoining state forest.
- According to the current firebreak regs this property owner wouldn't have actually needed to install any as none of the paddock abutted a road reserve, however, has always simply put in a break around the boundary.
- As a Brigade and community, we have felt this has been a short coming in the firebreak regs for quite some time.
- We have also questioned the 'break within 100 metre' rule as this seems pointless and recommend 4 metres would be more appropriate.

### **Wallcliffe**

#### **Training**

- Excellent attendance at our monthly and mid monthly training sessions. Training Officer Ian Dowling ably assisted by Scott Jones conducting informative and interesting exercises and drills. Members have been informed of the opportunities to advance their training by looking at the newly released 2021 DFES Training Calendar.

#### **Membership**

- Membership remains at 72 Active trained firefighters, 1 Probationary member and 14 Auxiliary members. Total 87 BFB/FRS members

#### **Brigade Activity**

- Bushfires - 6, Structural - 2, Out of Shire State deployment - 2 (Wooraloo, Yallingup), Interstate - nil.

#### **Transition to DFES**

- DFES Fleet Management still to assess appliances and DFES Asset Management awaiting land transfer and a report on land contamination.

### **Witchcliffe**

- It has once again been very quiet for fires locally.
- The VFRS did attend the structure fire in Karridale in December.
- We also provided a Sector Commander for the Nannup fire and sent a relief crew up to Wooroloo.
- We turned out all of our BFB appliances to the recent Yallingup fires and were able to include five of our most recently trained members. Though we didn't get to see any action it was very encouraging that we could respond so quickly. It was great practice for what will unfortunately be real enough one day.
- The 12.2 has been more active and is getting requested more often. It went to the recent Vasse fire.

- Witchcliffe take it to almost every activation that we get as it is easy for us to do so but would encourage all BFB's to consider it early on and ask for it if you will need water.
- Training continues fortnightly on Fridays and on the first Tuesday of the month and is well attended with numbers getting up around 25 on most nights.
- Our annual newsletter is ready for printing and by the time you are reading this it will be ready for distribution with many thanks to Lisa and the Shire for printing our 450 copies.
- On a personal note I attended the December Meeting of the State Bush Fire Advisory Committee (SBAC). I sit on this committee by Ministerial Appointment as a Community Representative. Items we have been considering include Bush Fire Risk Treatment Standards, State Bushfire Management Policy, Planned Burn Terminology and Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas Policy.
- As a member of the SBAC I also had the privilege of being invited to the opening of the new Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

#### **8.4 Community Emergency Services Manager / Shire Training Officer**

##### **Prevention**

##### **Mitigation Works**

- Preparation work has commenced on prescriptions for the Autumn burning period. Where burns are being proposed, Brigades will be contacted closer to the date to seek assistance.
- Planning is underway for the next round of Mitigation Activity Funding round. Should Brigades have any areas that feel may benefit from activity could they please contact myself to discuss. Funding is limited to Shire-managed reserves.

##### **Preparedness**

##### **Training**

- Shire training calendar will be finalised in the next month.
- Regional calendar has been distributed to all Brigades

##### **Leaders Forum**

- Leaders forum was held with presentations by SOCMET, DOSS and the region. All presentations have been distributed to Brigades, however, should anyone want a copy please let me know.

##### **2021 Country Operations LSW Contact Directory**

- DFES has now completed and distributed the 2021 Country Operations LSW Contact Directory.
- Each Brigade will receive two copies of the directory.
- Some Brigades have already collected their copies, with the remainder to be distributed at the BFAC meeting.

##### **Fire Shed Maintenance**

- We are currently in the process of reviewing a variety of maintenance services for each of the Brigades as follows:

##### **Air Conditioning Servicing**

- Servicing of all relevant Brigades was completed in October 2020.
- All relevant Brigades will be serviced again in late 2021.

##### **Carpet Cleaning**

- All relevant Brigades will be cleaned post Fire Season in early 2021.

##### **Electrical Tagging and Testing (incl RCD and Emergency/Exit Lighting)**

- Tagging and Testing was successfully completed in May/June 2020.
- Brigades with any faults have been notified.
- Next tagging and testing to be carried out in May 2021.

#### First Aid Kit and Fire Extinguisher Servicing for Bushfire Appliances

- Brigade Fire Extinguisher and First Aid servicing was completed in Nov 2020.
- All Brigade Fire Extinguishers and First Aid will be serviced again in May 2021.

#### Gutter Cleaning

- Gutter Cleaning of all relevant Brigades was completed in November 2020.
- All relevant Brigades will be cleaned again prior to Fire Season in late 2021.

#### Pest Control Treatment

- Some Brigades were treated in May 2020.
- Remaining Brigades were treated in October 2020.
- Treatment is carried out on an annual basis, however, if you have any pest control issues throughout the year, please let us know.

#### Roller Door Servicing

- Servicing of all Brigades was completed in November 2020.
- Brigades will be serviced again in late 2021.

#### Water Filter Replacement

- Brigades that currently have water filters have been asked to source and replace the filters for their specific systems themselves and then email the tax invoice receipt through to the Emergency Services Admin Officer for reimbursement.
- For those Brigades that do not currently have a water filter installed, and would like one, please notify Adam or Lisa.

#### Layflat Hose Testing

- All Brigade hose testing was completed in June 2020.
- Any repairs have since been completed and returned to the relevant Brigades.
- Hose testing is carried out on an annual basis.

#### **PPE Orders**

- Please use the current Shire PPE Order Form to ensure that your orders contain all the required information.
- If you require any additional PPE/C not listed on the form mentioned above, please email Lisa.
- The Shire will exhaust all remaining PPC stock before commencing with the issue of the new style Level 1 jackets and trousers.
- Please note that the sizing of the new style Level 1 PPE is slightly different to the old style. The new trousers no longer have an elasticated waist and the jackets are a slimmer fit.

#### **Brigade Membership Contact Lists**

- Once Lisa has made all the relevant updates to the Brigade Office Bearers in the Shire records and DFES RMS systems, she will begin to distribute the Brigade Membership Contact Lists to the Brigade Captains and Secretaries for review.
- Please ensure that these contact lists are reviewed in a timely manner, and any updates sent back to Lisa by the requested date.
- Please be mindful when displaying/distributing the contact lists for review as they contain sensitive information and personal details of your members.
- The Contact Lists are required to be reviewed and updated at least once per year in accordance with the *Bush Fires Act 1954* and ensure our Brigade membership numbers, contact details and position/ranks are up to date prior to fire season.

#### **Local Government Grant Scheme (LGGS) and Shire Budget**

- Lisa is currently in the process of sourcing the remaining items on your 2020/21 ESL Wish List requests.
- Brigade Strategy Meeting for 2021/22 was held on Thursday, 11 February.
- Operating Grant has been received and will be submitted in the next month to DFES for approval after the strategy meeting.

#### DFES AED Rollout

- Stickers are now available to indicate location on the appliances.

#### Appliance Servicing

- All deployed vehicles were subject to a service and COVID clean upon their return including the HSV.

#### Transition

- DFES are currently working through their compliance requirements to facilitate the transition of the two Brigades.

#### Response

- Nil

#### Recovery

- Nil

*Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB, enquired as to whether there had been any response from Western Power following the presentation made at BFAC last year, where some Brigades presented specific areas of concern to the Western Power representative for review and action.*

*Adam Jasper asked Andrew Hunt to chase up this mitigation work.*

### **8.5 Shire Executive Officer / Representative**

- Nothing to report.

### **8.6 Shire Coordinator Ranger Services**

- Nil – not in attendance.

### **8.7 Department of Fire and Emergency Services**

#### **DFES Regional Staff**

- Tim Wall has returned to duty as Area Officer Leeuwin. Tim has been off battling illness for the last 2 years and it is great to have Tim back on deck in our Region. Tim originally was in our Region as the CESM of Busselton and since then has gained employment with DFES working out of both the Great Southern and South West Regions. Tim will be looking after the following Brigades Augusta VFRS, Witchcliffe VFRS, Wallcliffe VFRS and Margaret River VFRS along with working on the development of response plans to aged care facilities within the Capes District.

#### **Training**

- The new LSW Training calendar is now completed and is online. Please advise all brigade members to book through the DFES portal and any issues with this process go through CESM Adam Jasper or Donna Virgo DFES LSW Office 9771 6800.

#### **The Bushfire Centre of Excellence**

- Had the official opening on Monday 25th January - The building consists of an administration wing and a training wing linking off opposite sides of a central foyer to form a boomerang shape. Designed as a public entrance and education space, the foyer will feature an interpretive learning centre, library, shared meeting spaces and reception area. three large training rooms and a series of smaller training rooms with capacity to support training in virtual reality and bushfire management systems and software. Training is developed and delivered collaboratively with a range of stakeholders suited to the subject matter. This includes the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) who we are currently working with to review and refine courses in planned burning, Fireline construction, machine supervision and plantation fire suppression.



### **WAEMTC**

- WA Emergency Management Training Centre, or WAEMTC Project is undertaking detailed planning for a new training academy, specifically designed for the needs of both volunteer and career personnel. Detailed investigations of the location, facility and functional training design and colocation options are currently underway. Following the detailed planning, the project will develop a detailed business case for government, presenting the preferred location, facility and prop design, colocation partners, budget and transition plans.
- Consultation has begun with volunteers, career personnel and other emergency management agencies and will continue throughout the planning phase. Consultation is important for the project to understand the needs and functional requirements of all end-users to ensure a fit-for-purpose and realistic training facility is designed.
- As the new facility will require different ways of working, the development of a Target Operating Model is also within scope and will be explored in parallel with the facility and functional training design investigations.
- The project will also be looking to increase collaboration with other emergency management agencies who can use the facility for their operational training including the Australian Federal Police, WA Police, Department of Justice – Corrective Services, St John Ambulance and Australian Defence Force.

### **Emergency Services Radio Network (ESRN)**

- The Government of Western Australian is investing more than \$60 million for part one of a multi-stage project to build a shared emergency services radio network (ESRN). This network will be utilised by DFES, West Australian Police Force, Department of Justice and Department of Health (St John Ambulance). It will comprise of a digital trunked radio network and will operate across the extended Metropolitan Area and Albany, Bunbury, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Port Hedland and Karratha.
- The ESRN business case comprises four parts (tranches) over eight years. Tranche 1 focuses on mitigating the immediate operational risks until such time as the ESRN is developed. Tranche one is expected to take 3 years to complete.

### **Bush Fire Awareness Campaign (My Bushfire Plan App)**

- DFES has developed an online bushfire preparedness platform that enables Western Australians to create robust bushfire plans. My Bushfire Plan is an intuitive online platform where the community can prepare, store, print, share and update their bushfire plan any time, from any device.

*In addition to the above report, Peter Thomas gave thanks to all that attended the Wooroloo and Yallingup fires, stating the support was very much appreciated.*

### **8.8 Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service**

- Nil – not in attendance.

### **8.9 Bush Fire Ready Facilitators Reports Bush Fire Ready Facilitator (North)**

- Since the November BFAC I have attended another three community meetings, reinforcing to community members the importance of being Bushfire Ready. These additional 65 community members brings the total this fire season to 136 people who now have a better understanding of the bushfire threat and how to write their Bushfire Plans.
- Another meeting is planned in the Burnside area in late February. There is still a lot of complacency out there in regard to preparing for bushfires and to quote Roger Underwood - *"Too often humans seem unable or unwilling to remember the past, to learn and to profit from the lessons of history"*

### **Bush Fire Ready Facilitator (South)**

- Met with the Augusta Chamber of Commerce in November 2020 to discuss resilience for the business sector and the role business can take in the recovery process.
- A bushfire ready meet was held on Molloy Island on 13 December 2020 with 50 Molloy Island residents and Brigade members present. Thank you to Eileen and John Matten for arranging the information session. If other Brigades or your members would like to hold open days, information sessions or street meets please contact me on 0417 998 461.
- I will be meeting with residents of Augusta Heights on 27 February. Tanya Tebbutt and John Stevens are trying to establish a bush fire ready group in this area. Sue Bussau in 2013 organised a supporter group in Allnutt Street. They accomplished the clean up the road reserve and the adjoining reserve on Allnutt Terrace decreasing fuel loads.
- 'Monthly themes' continue to be published in the local paper *The Pelican Post*. These articles are supplied by the DFES Community Engagement Office. All Brigade secretaries are encouraged to forward these articles onto their members.

### **8.10 Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions**

*DBCA Representative, Ed Hatherley, gave a brief presentation on their planned hazard reduction burns for Autumn 2021. (Please refer to Attachment 8.10.1).*

*Following the presentation, David suggested Ed provide the Committee with some information on the use of the Large Air Tanker (LAT).*

*Ed stated that there has been varying degrees of how effective the LAT can be. There are some limitations with heavy smoke which can affect getting into where it needs to be, however, the LAT was very successful at Nannup, working the flanks alongside the bombers ahead of the machinery, and the use of retardant helped to keep the fire behaviour down. The LAT was also really effective at Wooroloo.*

*Shire President Ian Earl commented on the significant part that Busselton Airport played in the Wooroloo fire.*

*The Chair made special mention to the Busselton SES for being available and carrying out the reloading of the aircraft.*

### **8.11 State Emergency Services**

#### **Incidents and Events**

- **Missing person:** Three searches during the two quarters: Margaret River, Yallingup, and Warner Glen.
- **Ambulance assist:** Six callouts for injured persons at Kilcarnup (x2), the Wadandi track, the River Mouth, Carter's Rd mountain bike and Lefthanders at Gracetown. Three were stood down en-route.
- **Storm damage:** One minor incident each in September and October.
- **Water bomber:** One day of reloading for Yallingup fires in December.

#### **Training**

- Members attended on-road driving, radio, mental health, vertical rescue, team leader and first aid training courses.
- Vertical Rescue team training in collaboration with caving groups to support cave response capability.
- Three SES volunteers across the region completed SES Search Commander training, enhancing local capability to support land searches.
- Weekly Monday-night training proceeding well with 15-20 members. Training recommenced 25 Jan, cancelled 1 Feb, plan to start 2021 training calendar on 8 Feb.
- Annual Water bomber reload, burnover, and fire safety training all completed in November/December.

- Interagency Land/Marine Search exercise with WAPOL/Marine Rescue/SES completed November 15.
- Regional flood boat training day conducted at Alexandra Bridge in December.

#### **Administration and Other**

- AGM held on 31 August. Welcome to incoming Training Manager, Carrie-Ann Phillips; Deputy Local Managers, David Glasson and Petrina Yates.
- Membership steady at 33 members. Recruitment ad published with good response; information night postponed until 15 February due to COVID lockdown.
- GRU (General Rescue Utility) Isuzu D-Max trialled by the unit during September. Some concerns over off-road capability and ability to transport more than 4 members, but storage pod is well-designed for storm damage incidents. Concerns are shared by SES units across the state with SESVA and DFES holding meetings to discuss issues.
- Vertical Rescue training tower enhancements approved by DFES and project manager appointed. These include safety upgrades, lighting, an enclosed space for cave rescue training and a staircase for general rescue training. Lighting installed. Designs work with Margaret River engineering.
- Collaborating with VFRS and DFES on site plans for the adjacent fire station, ensuring suitable access to SES facilities in case of major incidents.
- Replacement telephone system was installed in June, transfer of services completed in December. Thanks to AMR Shire and CESH for working with Telstra to resolve.
- Concept approval form submitted for ablutions in the shed to supplement the two toilets at the SES facility.
- Compiling unit history – please get in touch if you have documents or were involved in the AMR SES during the 1970s – 2000s.
- DFES has approved the use of handheld VHF radios with repeaters. SES duty officer will carry a VHF radio to maintain contact with members during incidents.
- Flood boat confirmed by DFES for replacement later in 2021. We have some concerns over the intended vessel due to height, draft and size which will limit capability in the Blackwood and Margaret Rivers. Ongoing discussions with DFES.
- Met with Augusta Marine Rescue for familiarisation and our unit is available to support waterbomber refill at Augusta.

## **9.0 General business**

### **9.1 New Digital Emergency Services Radio Network (ESRN) – Wallcliffe BFB**

- Propose that the BFAC requests that DFES includes the Shire of Augusta Margaret River in the 'Proposed' New ESRN Footprint.
- Peter Thomas' report highlights the information on the ESRN.
- The item has been brought up at recent Wallcliffe BFB meeting.
- We understand it will be a long-term process, but the coverage area on the current ESRN map seems to cut off at the City of Busselton/Augusta Margaret River Shire boundary.
- It doesn't make sense to have a different radio network within the Capes area.

*Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB, proposed the following motion:*

#### **MOTION/BFAC DECISION BFAC2021/02**

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee requests that the Shire writes to the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, requesting that the Shire of Augusta Margaret River be included in the proposed new Emergency Services Radio Network (ESRN) Footprint.

**Moved: Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB**

**Seconded: John Matten, Molloy Island BFB**

**Carried: 12/0**

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## 9.2 BFAC Sub-Committee – Wallcliffe BFB

- Propose that BFAC forms a sub-committee to review existing Fire Management Plans and the Firebreak Notice. This sub-committee to consist of the DCBFCO, Ranger Coordinator, CESM, Bushfire Ready Facilitators, Shire Planning representative, DBCA representative and the Bushfire Risk Planning Coordinator. This committee to submit reports to BFAC meetings.

*Gordon Temby provided the meeting with a re-worded version of his original motion:*

- That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee form a Working Group, to be chaired by the DCBFCO, and to consist of the CESM, Ranger Coordinator, Bushfire Ready Facilitators and a Shire Planning representative, to review existing Fire Management Plans and the Shire Firebreak Notice. The Working Group would be asked to meet regularly and submit reports to the quarterly BFAC meetings.

*Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB, spoke in favour of the above motion, stating that since the November BFAC meeting, and after numerous community meetings and discussions with Brigade offers, he believes that BFAC, as advisors to Council, should have more of an input in the Firebreak Notice and review of the Fire Management Plans.*

*Nick Logan, Director Sustainable Development and Infrastructure Services, stated that a full review of the FMP in the short term was way beyond the capacity of the Shire administration at this time. The level of assessment required would require outsourcing at a considerable cost to the Shire. However, the review could be worked on over time and, as stated in the related Action Item, the process of how this can be done is already being considered.*

*David Holland stated that he was unsure what level of expertise the BFAC could bring to a planning document, and that the level of review of the FMP that the Shire plans to undertake seems like it might be satisfactory.*

*Adam Jasper advised that Acting Coordinator Ranger Services, Ian McLeod, was considering a full review of the Firebreak Notice prior to its next issuance. This review will form part of the handover with the new Ranger Coordinator.*

*One member of public left the meeting at 7.09pm.*

*After further discussion the Chair suggested that the motion be amended to remove reference to the FMP, but this suggestion was declined, and the following motion was proposed and moved by the Wallcliffe BFB BFAC delegate:*

### **MOTION**

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee form a Working Group, to be chaired by the DCBFCO, and to consist of the CESM, Ranger Coordinator, Bushfire Ready Facilitators and a Shire Planning representative, to review existing Fire Management Plans and the Shire Firebreak Notice. The Working Group would be asked to meet regularly and submit reports to the quarterly BFAC meetings.

**Moved: Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB**

**Seconded: Nil**

**LAPSED**

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*The above Motion lapsed due to no seconder.*

### 9.3 Weather Station/Radar – Kudardup BFB

- After the leaders meeting with the BOM presentation, we would like to ask the Shire, with neighbouring Shires and relevant growers' groups, to approach the relevant body to upgrade the weather stations on the southwest corner to include a radar and anything else they require to improve weather forecasting.

*After a brief discussion, Matt Nield, Kudardup BFB, proposed the following motion:*

#### **MOTION/BFAC DECISION BFAC2021/03**

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommends the Shire, at the WALGA South West Country Zone meeting in April, request that the Bureau of Meteorology upgrades the weather stations in the South West corner to include a weather radar, along with anything else required to improve weather forecasting in the Lower South West region, including the Shire of Augusta Margaret River.

**Moved: Matt Nield, Kudardup BFB**

**Seconded: Andrew Newnham, Rosa Brook BFB**

**Carried: 12/0**

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### 9.4 Witchcliffe EWS – Witchcliffe BFB

- Witchcliffe Bush Fire Brigade would like to request that the Shire investigate the suitability and reliability of the EWS located near the corner of Caves Road, Redgate Road and Squires Road.
- This EWS consists of a concrete tank and separate standpipe and it is currently not serviceable, and has not been for at least 18 months, with previous ongoing problems prior to that.
- This EWS services the residential areas of Squires Road, Coppin Grove and Wadandi Place, a total of 40 to 45 small landholdings. There is no other alternate water source nearby other than gaining access to private rural dams.

*Adam Jasper stated that he was aware of the issue and it was on the list of items to address.*

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

Nil.

### 11.0 Closure of meeting

*Before the closure of the meeting, the Chair called for any final items of discussion.*

*Shire President, Ian Earl, thanked all crews that were sent on recent deployments.*

*Peter Warrilow, Karridale BFB, raised the concern his Brigade has with the current 5-day length of deployments. He stressed that the Brigades were always keen to assist, but that 5 days is just too long for most members.*

*David Holland advised the group that he recently spoke with DFES Superintendent, Phil Brandrett, about the issue, who suggested the concern be taken to ROAC to be passed onto other forums. If DFES Deployment are made aware of the concerns, then they may consider altering the length of deployment.*

*The above item has been added to the Action List.*

*Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB, enquired as to whether DFES had given more consideration to installing tablets into the appliances.*

*David Holland responded, saying that Bush Fire Service were currently not on the list for installation of tablets, however pressure is being applied for BFS to be included.*

*Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB, provided the Committee with some feedback received from Wallcliffe members following their recent deployment at the Wooroloo fire:*

- *Lots of communications issues.*
- *If you have hand-held UHF radios, take them with you.*
- *Career Firefighter trucks are impractical for our terrain and heavily relied on bushfire trucks for refilling their water.*
- *Career Firefighters are required to end their shift as per their roster timetable so rarely hang around after shift changes.*
- *Using big vehicles in tight terrain caused plenty of vehicle accidents, so make sure you have a spotter when reversing.*
- *High season vehicle issues including lack of stowage equipment.*

*Tony Mostert, Alexandra Bridge BFB, enquired as to the completion of hardstands, which were originally requested just prior to COVID in 2019/20.*

*Adam Jasper stated that the COVID situation caused each Business Unit at the Shire to address some areas in order to reduce expenditure. Unfortunately, the hardstands was one of these areas. The program will go ahead as soon as the Shire has the capacity to fund it.*

*Adam Jasper then informed the Committee of the new 3M Full Face Respirator, which will be used in lieu of the discontinued Scott ProMask. He advised that although DFES had not yet confirmed this particular mask as the official replacement, he is confident that this is the brand and style that they will be running with. Unfortunately, there is currently a limited supply within the LSW so the masks will be only be distributed to new members pending stock levels. The 3M mask filters can also be used on the 3M half face respirators.*

*Adam informed the meeting that the Shire currently has a significant amount of the Scott Pro filters to service those members using those masks. Any requests for more the Scott Pro filters were to be forwarded through to Lisa, but that Brigades would not receive a bulk supply for stock purposes.*

*Adam also informed members that the Shire also has a supply of disposable masks, including the P2s. These masks were made available at the meeting for members to take away with them, with any further requests to be forwarded to Lisa.*

*As there were no further items to discuss, the meeting was closed at 7.42pm.*