

Augusta Margaret River Bush Fire Advisory Committee

Minutes

For the meeting held
Wednesday, 18 November 2020
Margaret River Council Chambers
41 Wallcliffe Road, Margaret River
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 18 November 2020, commencing at 6.00pm

Margaret River Council Chambers
41 Wallcliffe Road
Margaret River WA 6285

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

Agenda Listing	Subject
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Notice of meeting
Order of business

- 1.0 Declaration of opening
- 2.0 Attendance / Apologies / Non-attendance
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 - 2.2 Apologies
- 3.0 Question time for the public
- 4.0 Disclosure of members' interests
- 5.0 Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting
 - 5.1 Bush Fire Advisory Committee Minutes: 19 August 2020
- 6.0 Business arising from previous minutes
 - 6.1 Action List
- 7.0 Reports from Shire Officers and Delegates
 - 7.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
 - 7.2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
 - 7.3 Shire Bush Fire Brigades
 - 7.4 Community Emergency Services Manager / Shire Training Officer
 - 7.5 Shire Executive Officer / Representative
 - 7.6 Shire Coordinator Ranger Services
 - 7.7 Department of Fire and Emergency Services
 - 7.8 Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service
 - 7.9 Bush Fire Ready Facilitators
 - 7.10 Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions
 - 7.11 State Emergency Services
- 8.0 General business
 - 8.1 Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan Survey – David Holland, CBFCO and Diane Holland, Witchcliffe Captain/FCO
 - 8.2 Progressing Opportunities Arising from May 2018 Escapes from Planned Burns – Adam Jasper, CESM
 - 8.3 Request for Electronic Signage at Kilcarnup – Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB
 - 8.4 Request for Audit of Fire Management Plans – Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB
 - 8.5 Permit Issue During Transition from Unrestricted to Restricted Burning Period – Diane Holland, Witchcliffe Captain/FCO
 - 8.6 Thank a Volunteer Day Event – Adam Jasper, CESM
- 9.0 Matters for which the meeting may be closed (Confidential Items)
- 10.0 Closure of meeting

1.0 Declaration of opening

The Chair welcomed all in attendance and 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)/ Presiding Member
Quentin Blunsdon	:	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO)
Tony Mostert	:	Alexandra Bridge Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Tim Garstone	:	Cowaramup Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Peter Brindley	:	East Augusta Bush Fire Brigade Delegate (6.14pm)
Simon Hanson	:	Karridale Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Matt Nield	:	Kudardup Bush Fire Brigade Proxy
John Matten	:	Molloy Island Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Mark Ridge	:	Rosa Brook Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Gordon Temby	:	Wallcliffe Bush Fire Brigade Delegate/ Bush Fire Ready Coordinator (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)/
Sharon McTaggart	:	Coordinator Ranger Services
Ian Earl	:	Councillor
Brian Daniel	:	Councillor
Lisa Garstone	:	Emergency Services Admin Officer/Minute Secretary

Observers

Georgina Thiele	:	Bush Fire Ready Coordinator (South) (6.25pm)
Ed Hatherley	:	Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)

2.2 Apologies

Adrian Yates	:	Augusta Margaret River State Emergency Service (SES)
Julia Meldrum	:	Shire of Augusta Margaret River Councillor
Peter Thomas	:	Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES)
Peter Delfs	:	Gracetown Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Andrew Newnham	:	Rosa Brook Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Stephanie	:	Shire of Augusta Margaret River
Addison-Brown	:	Chief Executive Officer

3.0 Question time for the public

Nil

4.0 Disclosure of members' interest

Shire President Ian Earl declared an Impartiality Interest in all BFAC agenda items, as he is a member of the Cowaramup Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade.

5.0 Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting

5.1 Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes: 19 August 2020

RECOMMENDATION/BFAC DECISION BFAC2020/12

That the unconfirmed minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held 19 August 2020 be confirmed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

Moved: Diane Holland, Witchcliffe BFB

Seconded: Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB

Carried: 12/0

6.0 Matters arising from previous minutes

6.1 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>20/5/20: Peter Thomas to investigate and seek clarity from the current Superintendent in charge of COMCEN.</p> <p>19/8/20: 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>18/11/20: 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>	In progress	Peter Thomas
19/08/20	Query from Karridale regarding the correct size fitting landowners are required to have on their water tanks. Following a number of recent phone calls, landowners are stating that various building licenses and documents have conflicting size requirements.	<p>19/8/20: Committee has previously discussed this and an 80mm female camlock was the recommended option. Director of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure Services to investigate to ensure that consistent information is being provided to building applicants.</p> <p>18/11/20: Director of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure Services has investigated this query and confirms that the 80mm female camlock is the recommended option provided in all Shire information provided to building applicants. However, there may be alternative recommendations</p>	Completed	Nick Logan

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		within non-Shire documents such as the Fire Management Plan. Witchcliffe Captain/FCO, Diane Holland, advised that Pioneer Water Tanks have informed her that they have received conflicting advice from different agencies. The Chair advised all Brigades to check their appliance lockers to ensure a suitable fitting is available. Lisa to contact Pioneer and Blackwood Water Tanks to inform them of the correct Shire requirements. New Action Item created.		
18/11/20	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.	18/11/20: Lisa to contact Pioneer and Blackwood Water Tanks to inform them of the correct Shire requirements.	In progress	Lisa Garstone
18/11/20	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.	18/11/20: Ed Hatherley, DBCA, stated that he was not sure unsure 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.	In progress	Ed Hatherley
18/11/20	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.	18/11/20: 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.	In progress	Nick Logan and Adam Jasper
18/11/20	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.	18/11/20: 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	In progress	David Holland

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		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.		
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7.0 Reports from Shire Officers and Delegates

7.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

- Even though the bush fire season is only just starting, we have already experienced a number of callouts, mainly due to property owners who have lost control of their burns. I have been pleased to note the quick turnout times and rapid response to these fires. Well done to many of you for the PAFTACS that have been provided as well!
- This year the WAFES conference was held at Burswood. It was a 'Special Edition' conference with no specific topic speakers or sessions but concentrated on some 'big picture' thinking and topics. We had a very interesting presentation from Craig Challen, who was one of the Australian cave divers who was involved in the Thailand cave rescue.
- Prior to the conference we had the chance to have a look at the latest fleet appliances including the new Light Tanker. As I mentioned before, it is a Toyota Landcruiser that has some upgrades to be able to carry the extra weight and to alter its track. Having been part of the design panel, I am pleased to see it "in the flesh" and the general comments from the conference attendees were all positive. There have been 5 prototypes produced to date and I have asked if we can get one in our region to trial.
- I attended a Pre-season Forum for Level 2 – 3 Incident Controllers held in Floreat. There was an emphasis on making sure that we get the level of incident correct, i.e. it is a level 1 incident until it actually becomes a level 2, not declared a level 2 because we think it might become one! We had a briefing from the Bureau of Meteorology who asked that if we can give a LAT and LONG for the exact area if we are requesting a Spot Weather Forecast, there is a high likelihood of accuracy. He also said that as we are entering an El Nino weather pattern, that we should not experience the same weather patterns as we have been during May and June over the past few years. He also suggested that this year should be relatively "normal" as far as weather for bushfire activity goes, but there is still the possibility of a "blow up day" and that we need to be aware of the conditions on the day. The aircraft availability for this season was discussed and it is pretty much the same as last year. I am sure that DBCA and DFES will be able to provide the specifics at this meeting, but one change is the location of the Large Air Tanker (LAT). This aircraft is usually only available from NSW or Victoria but there is a possibility of one being located in Adelaide. The aircraft is available for retardant line building and require 24hrs notice. If we need this aircraft in WA it will be based out of Busselton airport as Pearce airbase is undergoing some upgrades and is not available. Perth airport is not available for this aircraft.
- I attended a Bushfire Operations Committee meeting (BOC) at the DFES training academy on November 5th and we had an update on some of the issues we had put forward previously. One was the need for an App to be developed that would send notifications of fire information out to people that were nearby or who had registered an interest in that area. Another was the need for each appliance to have a tablet device installed. DFES is considering both of these requests, along with others, and is doing some research into the possibility of both. We had a presentation of the proposed changes to the Fire Danger Rating system which is proposed to come into effect around the middle of 2022. At the moment it would seem that we will change to a system with fewer rating steps from the Low/Moderate through to Catastrophic. More to come!
- We were also advised that DFES will be initiating a new committee, the Volunteer Bush Fire Service Training Advisory Group, "VBFSTAG". The idea will be to enable volunteers to advise DFES of issues around their training via this committee. Our region was asked to provide a nominee for this committee, and I am pleased to be able to advise you that Peter Stark from Busselton was accepted as our region's nominee. Peter will do a good job!
- I attended the August ROAC meeting which was in Bridgetown and the October ROAC which was held in Donnybrook. The draft minutes will be an attachment to these meeting Minutes (*please refer to Attachment 7.1.1*).
- I attended the Ground Controller refresher course held in Cowaramup which was run by Peter Stark.

- We brought the Restricted Burning Season forward by three days due to the forecast of dry and windy weather. We have of course, had a number of rain days since then which have moderated the soil dryness and have perhaps allowed some more opportunities for planned burning.
- I participated in a number of planned burns, run by Brigades as well as the Shire and DFES.
- I assisted at a Bush Fire Safety Awareness course in Busselton and will be assisting at this weekend's Bush Firefighting Skills course in Witchcliffe. It is great to see the new volunteers learning these new skills!
- Please keep yourselves safe and thank you for your dedication and support.

In regard to the information regarding the request for a BOM Spot Weather Forecast during an incident, Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB, enquired about the correct procedure the IC should follow.

The Chair advised that the request would need to go through the ROC, who would then lodge the request with BOM, and when the information was received it would be sent back to the IC.

7.2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

- Nil.

7.3 Shire Bush Fire Brigades Alexandra Bridge

- 2 small incidents.

The Alexandra Bridge report was provided at the meeting.

Cowaramup

- We have attended a few call outs for out-of-control private property burns.
- We have also conducted 6 hazard reduction burns for local landowners and have at least 2 more to conduct, if the weather is favourable for us to conduct them safely.
- Cowaramup has assisted the Shire at the A Class Reserve and The Pony Club Controlled burn, and this has been invaluable training for our members, in both fire suppression and fire lighting techniques. We are utilising fire lighting techniques, learnt from Greg & Joy Hamlyn, in our Brigade burns and are having much better success in keeping flame heights and scorch heights down to a minimum, even with high fuel loads.
- The Brigade has also hosted the Parkwater Community Group to assist them in writing their Fire Plans, as well as having Gordon Temby attend in the hopes of starting up a Bushfire Ready group within Parkwater Estate. This is showing signs of gaining traction within the community and we hope that the Brigade can build on this relationship to conduct good hazard reduction burns within the Parkwater Estate.
- Our membership is going from strength to strength with consistent enquiries from members of the Community about joining the Brigade and the interest from the Cowaramup Community in what we do, is a promising sign to build on our membership base.
- We would like to thank Adam Jasper and the Shire, as well as Greg and Joy Hamlyn, DFES, for their professional approach and leadership shown to all our crews that attended the above mitigation activities.

East Augusta

- One callout to Scott River Fire – second responder.
- Attended Shire mitigation burn at the Pony Club Margaret River.
- Green waste burnt on Shire reserve.
- Private mound burnt Curtis Street.
- Recipient of the Western Power grant to purchase handheld radio.
- Training fortnightly with weekly maintenance runs on the 1.4.
- One member attended St John Ambulance training.
- 1.4 has been serviced.
- One new member.

- HSV has arrived.

Gracetown

- Training is regular, each Monday fortnight, with good member turnout.
- One call to Karri View on 27 Oct for a controlled burn of piles that they needed assistance with as it had escaped into some bush. Thanks to Cowaramup for their assistance.
- Several new members have completed their Fire Fighting Courses.
- Several members completed the First Aid Course last weekend.
- The Brush Pile has been burnt off several times in the past month as community members clear their yards and prepare for the summer. This service is greatly appreciated by the community.

Karridale

- Training has re-started twice/month with good attendance.
- Assisted one callout which was great as many things failed initially.
- New shed extensions still have plumbing/ drainage issues from builder which have still not been rectified.
- All ready for this season.

Kudardup

- Training in full swing.
- One small incident.
- Busy issuing Permits for small heaps on small blocks.

The Kudardup report was provided at the meeting.

Peter Brindley, East Augusta BFB, entered the meeting at 6.14pm

Molloy Island

- Training has recommenced with good attendances.
- Eileen Matten has been elected as the new Captain for the interim.
- Working on new members to step up and fulfill the role into the future.
- Issued at least 12 Permits
- Volunteers hard to come by as all away.
- Low attendance.

Rosa Brook

- Fortnightly training continuing with usually more people turning up than seats in vehicles.
- We've attended two fires and four controlled burns.
- 1 Permits issued so far.

Wallcliffe

- Members have been attending numerous DFES and LG training courses as well as First Aid training since the August BFAC.
- The first Sunday and middle of the month training sessions have been well attended.
- Currently 63 Active trained firefighters, 10 Probationary members and 14 Auxiliary members. Total 87 BFB/FRS members.
- Brigade has attended 3 bushfires, 1 structural fire, 1 vehicle fire.
- DFES transition update - discussion currently taking place in regard to asset and land transitions.

Witchcliffe

- Regular fortnightly training continues and is well supported.
- The majority of our members have completed our three-session series of pre-season annual training consisting of:
 - PPC audit & turnout practice
 - Burnover Drill theory and practical

- RUI & Incident Management refresher which covers the role of the crew leader, reporting structures and safety such as LACES and Red Flag Warnings.
- Four new members have just completed their Bush Firefighting Skills Training.
- We have also had members undertake AFF & CL (2), SC (1), IRS (1), WebIOC (2), GC Refresher (2), AIMS 17 (2), and Level 1 IC (1).
- We have also had 4 community members express an interest to join the Brigade.
- We have been able to undertake 1 private planned burn at the Margaret River Independent School, 1 burn on behalf of the Shire in the Mammoth Street Reserve, and also assisted the Shire with the A-Class Reserve and the Pony Club.
- We have been called to 2 incidents so far, both being escaped burns in the Forest Grove area.

7.4 Community Emergency Services Manager / Shire Training Officer

Prevention

Mitigation Works

- 6 burns completed to date, including a preparatory burn on the A Class reserve in town, additionally provided assistance to DFES for a further 2 burns. We may get another opportunity in the next week or so for some burns in the Augusta region, however we will let weather drive the schedule. Completion of the 5 burns means that new burns can now be considered for the next round of funding, so if any FCOs would like anything considered, please get in contact with me. We have some significant burns planned for Autumn which will require substantial Brigade involvement over a number of days, including the possibility of nighttime ignition. Many thanks to the Brigades for their assistance in the completion of a successful spring burning campaign.
- We have developed a standard for roadside burning of vegetation for which copies are attached in the annexures (*please refer to Attachment 7.4.1*). Approval is at the discretion of myself in line with the Shire's BRMP and we hope to include substantial sections of Shire road reserve in the next round of MAF funding. If any Brigades would like any further information on this, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Preparedness

Training

- Shire training for the upcoming season has now been completed.
- Two St John Provide First Aid Courses have recently been conducted, with one being held in Augusta and the other in Margaret River. Both courses were well attended. For those that missed out, we will endeavor to facilitate another course post fire season in mid-2021.

Leaders Forum

- Bottled water will be distributed to all Brigades at the Leaders Forum.

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

- All relevant Brigades will be cleaned in late 2020 prior to Fire Season.

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 is due to be 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 AGMs

- All of the Brigades have now held their 2020 Annual General Meetings.
- As per the Shire's Bush Fire Procedure (August 2018), please ensure that, following your AGMs, you send a copy of the following documents through to Lisa for registration and so that any relevant updates can be made:
 - AGM Minutes of Meeting
 - Brigade Financial Statement
 - Updated Office Bearers List

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 all your 2020/21 ESL Wish List requests.

DFES AED Rollout

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

Appliance Servicing

- Appliance servicing is now complete with some remedial work where parts were required to be undertaken in the next couple of weeks.

Transition

- Shire and DFES working towards a transition date.

Response

- Nil

Recovery

- Nil

Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB:
Adam Jasper, CESM:

Have the Red Files been sent out electronically?
Yes

Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB:
Adam Jasper, CESM:

Is there an update on bush fire information being distributed to short term accommodation providers?
The DFES produced Bushfire Travellers' Checklist information booklet will be distributed to tourist operators shortly.

Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB:
Adam Jasper, CESM:

Has Western Power given an indication of works completed within the shire?
I will check on this.

Tony Mostert, Alexandra Bridge BFB:
Adam Jasper, CESM:

Will the Roadside Verge Burning attachment be given more attention from the Shire or put through Council?
Current Shire policy is that roadside burning is not supported unless recommended in a fire management plan. We have developed a policy to enable the Shire, through its Bush Fire Brigades, to undertake roadside burning in identified high risk areas and along at-risk access/egress roads and justify the work in line with the Shire's Bushfire Risk Management Plan.

7.5 Shire Executive Officer / Representative

- Nil.

7.6 Shire Coordinator Ranger Services

- 45 Permits registered since 6 November.
- 29 Variations approved in relation to the new 3-metre firebreak width.
- Number of enquiries have also been received, and inspections have found that a Variation is not required as their firebreaks are already 3 metres wide.
- Inspections begin on 1 December, focusing on high risk properties.
- My last week at the Shire as I have taken a position at the City of Busselton.

The Chair thanked Sharon and wished her well in her new role.

Georgina Thiele, Bushfire Ready Facilitator (South), entered the meeting at 6.25pm

7.7 Department of Fire and Emergency Services

Aerial Firefighting Fleet

Bunbury Airport

- Commencement date To Be Advised (DBCA), available daily 0600-1800hrs.
 - 2 x Air Tractor 802 fixed wing (SEATs/BOMBERS)
 - 1 x AS350 Squirrel Type 3 FIREBIRD helicopter (AAS, utility)
 - 1 x GA8 Airvan BIRDDOG fixed wing (AAS, utility)

Busselton Airport

- 15 December 2020, available daily 0900-1800hrs
 - 2 x Bell 214B Type 2 HELITAKS

Manjimup Airfield

- Commencement date To Be Advised (DBCA), available daily 0600-1800hrs
 - 2 x Air Tractor 802 fixed wing (SEATs/BOMBERS)
 - 1 x Champion Scout BIRDDOG light fixed wing (AAS)

Serpentine Airfield

- 20 December
 - 1 x Erickson's skycrane

Jandakot

- From 1 Nov 330 Day Contract 18 hours a day
 - Line Scanner

New Prescribed Burn Plan Templates

- All DFES staff and volunteers are now required to complete documentation for any burns they are undertaking.
- The current basic prescription template along with supporting documentation has recently been reviewed. Several improvements were identified and have been incorporated into this new Burn Plan document package.
- Where a full prescription is not required, the templates have been designed as a tool for all DFES staff engaged in prescribed burning activities to use. These templates ensure a range of considerations are addressed during the planning phase, enabling informed decision making. All volunteers engaged in prescribed burning activities are also encouraged to adopt these templates.

Combined Pre-Season Forum

- DFES, DBCA and WAPOL will be holding a combined bushfire Pre-Season Forum in December. It will involve members from both the SW and LSW region participating in a day event to build capacity and networks in the lead up to the fire season.

Air Ops Channels

- DFES, DBCA met to discuss Air ops channels for the Region. The outcome was an agreement that 610 would be the primary channel for the AMR area. With the southern end needing to go onto Talkaround. 610 is linked to 638 which allows DBCA to monitor the aircraft from the Kirup office if required. 622 was identified as an alternative if 610/638 were being used however it is likely that Talkaround would also be required for ground crews using this channel. All potential ground controllers should make themselves familiar with how to get to Talkaround. If required I am happy to run a season on the radios and or supply aid memoirs to assist.
- Attached is an Air Ops Field Guide (*Attachment 7.7.1*) for your information.

7.8 Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service

- Nil – not in attendance.

7.9 Bush Fire Ready Facilitators Reports Bush Fire Ready Facilitator (North)

- I have facilitated 5 community meetings since the last BFAC meeting in August.
- A total of 71 people attended these meetings.
- The presentations were well received with all attendees hopefully gaining an insight to the bushfire risk in their area.
- Discussion and advice was given in relation to completing their Bushfire plans as soon as possible after discussing all the issues with family members.
- I have another meeting to attend at the end of this month.

Bush Fire Ready Facilitator (South)

- Augusta Primary School year six students participated in Exploring Emergency Services with volunteers from Augusta Fire and Rescue Service, Marine Rescue and St John Ambulance.
- I attended the two final sessions on House Fires and Bushfires with DFES personnel Charlotte Powis, Andy Thompson and Ric Harrison from Augusta Fire and Rescue.
- I attended the Protect your Property and the Environment by Bio Diverse Solutions, Kathryn Kinnear, in Margaret River on Monday 9 November, where 22 residents and contractors attended.
- Unfortunately, I was unable to make the Augusta session due to work commitments.
- I encourage Brigades to promote the resilience workshop scheduled for Margaret River on the 24 November through their social media platforms.
- After completing a unit on resilience in the face of emergencies I am looking at alternative engagement practices still focusing on Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery but directing discussions toward community groups.
- I am also holding an information day outside IGA over the next few months.
- 'Monthly themes' continue to be published in the local paper, The Pelican Post, with articles supplied by the DFES Community Engagement Office.
- All Brigades' secretaries are encouraged to forward these articles onto their members.
- Congrats to Brigades using their social media platforms and promoting the mitigation work being done by the Brigades and the Shire.

7.10 Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions

DBCA Representative, Ed Hatherley, gave a brief presentation on their planned and achieved hazard reduction burns for Summer 2020/21. (Please refer to Attachment 7.10.1).

Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB, referred back to the DFES report regarding the mention of a New Prescribed Burn Plan Template.

Adam Jasper, CESM, advised that these templates were only for DFES staff and volunteers, so did not apply to LG Brigades.

7.11 State Emergency Services

Incidents and Events

- **Missing person:** Two searches during the quarter; one in in Margaret River and one in Yallingup.
- **Ambulance assist:** Three callouts for injured persons at Kilcarnup, the Wadandi track, and at the River Mouth. Two were stood down en-route.
- **Storm damage:** One minor incident each in September and October.

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.
- Annual Water bomber reload training scheduled for 14 November.
- Annual burn over training to be arranged.
- Planned interagency Land/Marine Search exercise with WAPOL/Marine Rescue/SES on 15 November.

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 37 members.
- 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 four members, but storage pod is well-designed for storm damage incidents.
- 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.
- Collaborating with VFRS and DFES on site plans for the adjacent fire station.
- A replacement telephone system was installed in June, but ongoing issues with Telstra billing and services are preventing its use. AMR Shire and CESM are 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.

8.0 General business

8.1 Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan Survey – David Holland, CBFCO and Diane Holland, Witchcliffe Captain/FCO

- Please see survey (*Attachment 8.1.1*) being conducted by DFES on Mental Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Action Plan.
- There are two surveys, one for staff and one for volunteers.
- If you could distribute the survey to your members that would be great.
- It is of course entirely voluntary but the more information they get, the more that they can support us.
- We only need to do the volunteer one and it only takes 5 minutes.
- Diane can provide copies of the poster and information handouts to the Brigades for display at the stations.

Diane Holland, Witchcliffe Captain/FCO, advised the meeting that herself, David Holland, CBFCO, and John Wilson of Kudardup BFB, recently attended Peer Support refresher training. Diane presented each Brigade with a resource package from this training course.

Diane added that the support program is not just for firefighters, and that it extends to family and people closely associated with you. The DFES Peer Support Program can provide 6 free counselling sessions, with 4 more available if required, and can be used multiple times. The sessions are also completely anonymous.

8.2 Progressing Opportunities Arising from May 2018 Escapes from Planned Burns – Adam Jasper, CESM

- AC Country is the nominated lead for a number of the opportunities for improvement identified in the Report of the Circumstances that led to the escapes of planned burns in the South West and Great Southern Regions of Western Australia on 24 and 25 May 2018.
- A copy of the report is available here under the heading Reviews: <https://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/waemergencyandriskmanagement/obrm/Pages/Publications.aspx>
- Country Operations has been progressing some of these opportunities, with some of the governance arrangements for progressing some of the collaborative opportunities now in place and functioning. In the interests of progressing Opportunity 8 (DFES, *through the RFD works with government organisations and local governments to provide access to tools and information that can support situational awareness and decisions to burn or not burn*).
- It has been requested by the AC that regional superintendents bring to the attention of their relevant BFAC, DOAC/ROAC and DEMC the **Operational Circular 71/2020 – New Prescribed Burn Templates – Basic Burns** (please refer to *Attachment 8.2.1*). There is an expectation that there will be some dialogue provided by regions to these stakeholders outlining the OBRM review background, the opportunity and the rationale for adopting the revised templates etc.
- This action closes one component of *Opportunity 8* with the remaining actions being finalised by the RFD i.e. Burn SMART and prescribed burn training.

8.3 Request for Electronic Signage at Kilcarnup – Wallcliffe BFB

- Due to potential increase in tourism this summer the Wallcliffe Fire Brigade has requested that the LG and DBCA erect an electronic sign to be located at the end of the western bitumen section of Kilcarnup Road. Sign to read NO CAMPFIRES.

Gordon Temby, 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.

Ed Hatherley, DBCA, stated that he was not sure unsure 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.

8.4 Request for Audit of Fire Management Plans – Wallcliffe BFB

- The Wallcliffe Fire Brigade requests that the Shire Planning Department instigate an immediate audit of all the Shires Fire Management Plans and Firebreak requirements in conjunction with relevant stakeholders with particular emphasis on incorporating the existing road networks, and investigating the possibility of incorporating existing high risk areas into cells with appropriate fire breaks and emergency access routes.

On behalf of the Wallcliffe BFB, 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 certainly some confusion within the community regarding awareness and conflicting information between these plans and the Firebreak Notice, and suggested some sort of community education program be developed.

Director of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure Services, Nick Logan, responded and agreed that some of the plans have lost their relevance over time and that the Shire is already looking at ways to improve awareness and accessibility by the community, and that a full review of the plans would be a lengthy process. Mr Logan advised that he and Adam Jasper, CESM, would look into the matter further.

8.5 Permit Issue During Transition from Unrestricted to Restricted Burning Period – Diane Holland, Witchcliffe Captain/FCO.

- It has always been my understanding that if someone has a burn going at the time that we enter the restricted season then we should issue a Permit for those burns so that they are covered.
- I feel that this is important, as to not do so means that there are burns occurring that are not registered.
- We recently received a 000 call to an area where there was a Permit issued, but on calling the Permit holder, we were informed that their fire was under control, but they advised that a fire was in fact out of control on a nearby property.
- That burn was unattended and did not have a Permit as it was lit before the restricted date. If they had requested a Permit, then at least we would have known that they had an ongoing burn.

The Committee discussed this item and reference was made to the Bush Fires Act 1954, that has clear information regarding Permits issued during the transition from the Restricted to Prohibited Burning Period, but not from Unrestricted to Restricted.

The preference of the Committee is 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, CBFCO, will investigate further and endeavor to clarify.

8.6 Thank a Volunteer Day Event – Adam Jasper, CESM

- The Shire's annual Thank a Volunteer Day event will be held on Thursday, 10 December 2020 at the Margaret River HEART. Please see attached for the official invitation which has also been distributed to all Brigades (*please refer to Attachment 8.7.1*)
- Nominations for the 2020 Volunteer of the Year and Youth Volunteer of the Year Awards, which will be presented at the event, closed on Friday, 6 November 2020. Brigades were emailed information regarding nominations for these awards in October 2020.

The Chair encouraged distribution of this invitation and attendance of the event, and also encouraged Brigades to nominate members that have gone above and beyond, for the Volunteer/Youth Volunteer of the Year Awards.

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

Nil

10.0 Closure of meeting

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

Shire President, Ian Earl, reminded members not to become complacent regarding COVID-19 and to continue to remain vigilant with hygiene measures, etc. as we need to ensure our Brigades are not compromised, especially prior to or during Fire Season, should another outbreak occur.

Ian also reminded the Committee that this time next year will mark the 10-year anniversary of the 2011 Margaret River Fires. He informed the group that former ABC Radio broadcaster and producer, Bill Bunbury, is interested in compiling an oral history of the event from a variety of perspectives, and encouraged anyone who was interested in speaking with Mr Bunbury about their personal experience and involvement with the fires, to register their interest with Adam.

Cr Earl also thanked Coordinator Ranger Services, Sharon McTaggart, for her time and efforts here at the Shire and welcomed Quentin Blunsdon into the role of Shire Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

Cr Brian Daniels addressed the meeting regarding the Climate Change Action Group and suggested the possibility of contact being made with the group to discuss their expectations regarding mitigation adaption activities, etc.

Georgina Thiele, Bushfire Ready Facilitator (South), enquired as to whether, in addition to the St John Provide First Aid Course, which only requires refresher training every 3 years, an annual CPR Course could be made available for members, as this qualification requires annual renewal.

Adam Jasper, CESM, stated that a CPR refresher course could be looked into as a yearly training occurrence.

Gordon Temby, Wallcliffe BFB, discussed the 'Arrival Codes' mentioned in the recent Bush Firefighting Skills course last weekend, and what the decision was regarding the use of these codes by BFS volunteers at an incident.

The Chair informed the meeting of what Arrival Codes are and some of the various codes that are used, and advised that these codes are often utilised by DFES and VFRS when attending structural or road crash incidents, where clearer details of the fire or crash location and circumstances are provided in the initial 000 call to COMCEN. However, Arrival Codes may not be as relevant to the scenarios BFS volunteers face as often the initial details of the fire are not entirely accurate and therefore require more clarification on arrival.

Diane Holland, Witchcliffe Captain/FCO, stated that this particular query had recently been raised at a recent IC Course and it was agreed that PAFTAC is a better communication system for BFS volunteers to use as it informs all and gives more of an idea of what is actually going on at a particular incident.

Simon Hanson, Hamelin FCO, informed the meeting of the current low attendance rate of members at Karridale BFB due to full time employment and annual leave, etc.

Emergency Services Admin Officer, Lisa Garstone, informed the meeting of the availability of current Permit to Set Fire to the Bush Permit Books featuring a sticker on the front cover containing the new Shire After Hours phone number. This sticker will hopefully act as a reminder to FCOs to change the incorrect A/H mobile number on the Permit itself, which is no longer in use, when issuing a Permit. Stickers are also available for those that already have a current or old Permit book.

The Chair then asked the Shire President, Ian Earl, to present former Captain and current FCO of Molloy Island BFB, John Matten, with a Certificate of Appreciation from the Shire, for his valuable service and dedication to the Shire and the Brigade during his 10 years of Captaincy.

As there were no further items to discuss, the meeting was closed at 7.33pm.