

# Augusta Margaret River Bush Fire Advisory Committee

## Minutes

For the meeting held  
Wednesday, 20 May 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 20 May 2020, commencing at 6.00pm

Margaret River Council Chambers  
41 Wallcliffe Road  
Margaret River WA 6285

This particular meeting was closed to members of the public.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact Lisa Garstone, Executive Assistant.

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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 Attendance / Apologies / Non-attendance
  - 2.1 Attendance
  - 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 February 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 Reports
  - 7.10 Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions
  - 7.11 State Emergency Services
- 8.0 General business
  - 8.1 Shire Autumn Burning Program Updates – Adam Jasper, CESM
  - 8.2 Biodiversity and Conservation Form – Adam Jasper, CESM
  - 8.3 New Member Application and Induction Process – Adam Jasper, CESM
  - 8.4 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Position – Adam Jasper, CESM
  - 8.5 Permit Notifications – Sharon McTaggart, Shire Coordinator Ranger Services
  - 8.6 Emergency Services Monthly Updates – Wallcliffe BFB
  - 8.7 Strategy Sub Committee – Wallcliffe BFB
  - 8.8 Western Power – Wallcliffe BFB
  - 8.9 DOAC / ROAC Minutes – Wallcliffe BFB
  - 8.10 Nomination of Rosa Brook BFB BFAC Delegate and Proxy – Rosa Brook BFB
  - 8.11 Nomination of Rosa Brook BFB Osmington FCO – Rosa Brook BFB
  - 8.12 Emergency Services Weather Briefing – 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 6.00pm.

*The Chair also welcomed Cr Julia Meldrum to the meeting via Zoom.*

## 2.0 Attendance / Apologies / Non-attendance

### 2.1 Attendance

#### Committee Members

David Holland	:	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO)/ Presiding Member
Tony Mostert	:	Alexandra Bridge Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Tim Garstone	:	Cowaramup Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Peter Delfs	:	Gracetown Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Peter Brindley	:	East Augusta Bush Fire Brigade Delegate (6.03pm)
Simon Hanson	:	Karridale Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Matt Nield	:	Kudardup Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
John Matten	:	Molloy Island Bush Fire Brigade Delegate
Andrew Newnham	:	Rosa Brook Bush Fire Brigade Proxy
Gordon Temby	:	Wallcliffe Bush Fire Brigade Delegate/ Bush Fire Ready Coordinator (North)
Diane Holland	:	Witchcliffe Bush Fire Brigade Delegate

#### Shire Staff Members

David Nicholson	:	Acting Director Sustainable Development and Infrastructure Services
Adam Jasper	:	Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM)/ Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO)
Sharon McTaggart	:	Coordinator Ranger Services
Ian Earl	:	Councillor
Brian Daniel	:	Councillor
Julia Meldrum	:	Councillor ( <i>via Zoom</i> )
Lisa Garstone	:	Minute Secretary

#### Observers

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

### 2.2 Apologies

Stephanie Addison-Brown	:	Chief Executive Officer
Adrian Yates	:	Augusta Margaret River State Emergency Service (SES)
Georgina Thiele	:	Bush Fire Ready Coordinator (South)

## 3.0 Question time for the public

Nil

## 4.0 Disclosure of members' interest

Nil

**5.0 Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting**

**5.1 Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes: 19 February 2020**

**RECOMMENDATION/BFAC DECISION BFAC2020/04**

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

**Moved: Tony Mostert, Alexandra Bridge BFB**

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

**Carried: 10/0**

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## 6.0 Matters arising from previous minutes

### 6.1 Action List

Date	Action Item	Action Update	Status	Actioning Officer
20/5/2020	Cr Julia Meldrum enquired as to what sort of a percentage of burns would be completed in spring compared to autumn?	<b>20/5/20:</b> Adam Jasper to investigate and look into getting some more accurate figures to Cr Meldrum.	In progress	Adam Jasper
20/05/2020	Registering of Permits with DFES COMCEN in regard to the inconsistent questions Permit holders are being asked and information they had to provide.	<b>20/5/20:</b> Peter Thomas to investigate and seek clarity from the current Superintendent in charge of COMCEN.	In progress	Peter Thomas
20/05/2020	Registering of Permits after hours with the Department of Parks and Wildlife in regard to answering machine/unclear auto attendant options.	<b>20/5/20:</b> Ed Hatherley to look into the auto attendant menu system options.	In progress	Ed Hatherley
20/05/2020	Request from Wallcliffe BFB that Shire ask Western Power to continue to address the buildup of fuel under their transmission lines throughout the shire before the next fire season.	<b>20/5/20:</b> Wallcliffe and East Augusta BFBs to provide Adam with details of the areas of concern for follow up with Western Power. Adam to also investigate whether there is some sort of 'standards' document available for Brigades to refer to.	In progress	Adam Jasper, Gordon Temby and Peter Brindley.
20/05/2020	Request from Wallcliffe BFB for the distribution of the DOAC / ROAC Minutes to all Brigade secretaries once they are received by the Shire delegate.	<b>20/5/20:</b> David Holland to recommence distribution of DOAC/ROAC Minutes to all Brigade secretaries and possibly Shire Council BFAC delegates Julia Meldrum, Brian Daniels and Ian Earl.	In progress	David Holland
20/05/2020	Enquiry from Rosa Brook BFB as to whether there would be an electronic version of the Biodiversity and Conservation form made available.	<b>20/5/20:</b> Adam to provide FCOs with an electronic version of the Biodiversity and Conservation form.	In progress	Adam Jasper

## 7.0 Reports from Shire Officers and Delegates

### 7.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

- It has been a very quiet bush fire season in our Shire, probably the quietest in memory! Most Brigades have not needed to attend to any fire within our own Shire, but most Brigades have offered appliances and volunteers to assist combat fires out of our Shire. All Brigades have maintained their training schedules and are ready and willing to assist when called upon. However, we then had the Covid-19 issues, Brigades stopped all training and meetings. Turnout procedures were developed to ensure that only a minimum number of crew numbers would respond to an incident in the first instance. Thank you to all Brigades for their assistance in developing a modified turnout procedure.
- The Restricted Burning Period commencement was delayed due to unfavourable weather conditions. Once implemented, it was noticeable that there were very few permits issued early in the season. We made up for this later as the weather became more favourable and landowners started reducing fuel on their properties. The new requirement for a permit for the 1 cubic metre garden refuse came into force and it was noticeable how many people would undertake this kind of fuel reduction. Thank you to all of the FCOs for their assistance in working with the modified restrictions of what we would allow permits to be issued for, namely, no bush burning and the delay in burning windrows, etc.
- One of the many casualties of the Covid-19 shutdown was an event that had been organized in Dunsborough to raise funds for the families of the three fire fighters who were killed during the NSW fires. Unfortunately, the event had to be cancelled due to the restrictions on gatherings. Please see below an email that I received from the event organisers which thanked the Shire's Bush fire Brigades for its donation of \$3,000.

*Dear David Holland - AMR Shire Brigades*

*As you read this, the devastating bushfire events during the summer of 2019-20 may seem a long time ago. More recent events have captured the world's attention and changed the way we all interact now and maybe forever.*

*Our Bushfire Fundraiser was an event that promised to unite the community and at the same time show our support for the families of three brave individuals: firefighters killed while protecting their own communities.*

*The two events, a golf competition and a gala night promised to provide a full day of exciting competition and a social gathering showcasing the talents of our local chefs and wineries, all supported by local businesses in the form of sponsorships and services.*

*Sadly, the COVID-19 outbreak and the ensuing restrictions meant that none of these events could happen. We were deeply saddened that our efforts to support the families would be compromised but we would not compound the problems we all faced by proceeding with the events.*

*We were overwhelmed by the support of individuals who registered for places on one or both of the events. In fact, the golf competition was over-booked to the point where we introduced a wait-list. A field of 144 players hitting off on a shotgun start would have been really impressive.*

*In total, we had 152 golfers registered (8 on the waitlist) and 154 registered for the gala night. We were confident that we would have reached our capacity of 200 for the gala night.*

*The funds we raised for these events came from bookings and donations with additional fundraising from auctions that we had planned for the gala night. Our intended amount of \$100,000 seemed very achievable.*

*One positive aspect of this fundraiser is that we incurred no expenses at all in putting on the events. The support from our sponsors was amazing and we would*

*like to thank them all. We would like to single out the following organisations and people for special mention: Wills Domain winery, Coby Cockburn from Blue Manna restaurant and the Dunsborough Lakes Golf Club. We would also like to thank the Shire of Augusta Margaret River Bushfire Brigades for their kind donation to a cause that is acutely close to their hearts.*

*COVID-19 changed everything. Not only did we have to cancel the fundraising events, but the broader economy suffered, causing financial concerns for many.*

*Although the events were cancelled in March, we have had to dismantle things in the form of cancelling services from sponsors and processing refunds for individuals who requested them. Those activities are now complete, and we are planning to make the payment to the families during the week of 4 May 2020.*

*The final total which will be divided three ways is \$27,959.80 (plus a small amount of interest which will be paid at the end of April.)*

*We want to thank everyone who was involved in the fundraiser, either as a sponsor, donor or participant. Your kindness is really appreciated. Please stay safe in this worrying time and we hope to see everyone when this situation is over, and we can gather together again.*

- I have been involved in the working group designing the new replacement for the Light Tanker. I am able to advise that a tender has been let to build the new design, which is based on a Toyota Landcruiser cab chassis. It will have a deluge system and a new locker design. Frontline Fire & Rescue will be building a couple of prototypes and I will try and get one for our Shire to try out.
- Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Brett Trunfull for his dedication and service to the Shire as the Deputy Chief from 2013. Brett was a great support to me and I was always very confident in his ability to manage the Shire in my absence.
- Please keep yourselves safe and thank you for your dedication and support.

*Peter Brindley, East Augusta, entered the meeting at 6.03pm.*

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

- As per CESM report.

## **7.3 Shire Bush Fire Brigades Alexandra Bridge**

- Chairs and tables for training shed received, still waiting on TV.
- Training last Sunday was not well attended.
- AGM in 3 weeks' time.
- No incidents yet this year.
- 17 Permits issued.

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

### **Cowaramup**

- Nothing to report.

### **East Augusta**

- No training due to COVID-19.
- 3 Permits issued.

### **Gracetown**

- One callout to machinery fire at Ellensbrook.
- Training last Monday with good member turnout within COVID-19 rules.
- New door lock and sensor light for door installed.
- Several Permits issued.
- Brush pile at fire shed reopened, will be burned in about 4-5 weeks.



*The Gracetown report was received following the distribution of the Agenda, but prior to the Committee meeting being held.*

### **Karridale**

- Nothing to report apart from praise to our Captain, Peter Warrilow, for keeping the Brigade functioning during the COVID-19 shutdown.

### **Kudardup**

- Nothing to report.

### **Molloy Island**

- Nothing to report apart from the completion of the earthworks around the fire shed to stop pooling of water.

### **Rosa Brook**

- Like everyone it has been fairly quiet since the last BFAC.
- Not long after the previous meeting Keith and Sally Scott have taken on a caretaker position at Yougawalla Station as such are taking a leave of absence for a while. As a consequence, Keith has resigned as Osmington FCO and the BFAC Delegate.
- Andrew Newnham has moved to temporarily fill the Osmington FCO position and has moved to BFAC Delegate with Mark Ridge taking on Proxy. The FCO position will be filled at our AGM which is being held on the 15 June.
- We have only attended one incident and conducted three HRBs since the last meeting.

### **Wallcliffe**

#### **Training**

- 13 Members have been nominated for the next First Aid Course when it becomes available. 5 of our members completed their Intro and Bushfire Training courses at Witchcliffe and Wallcliffe. One brigade training session was conducted before training was suspended due to the pandemic.

#### **Membership**

- Currently 63 Active Trained Firefighters, 10 Probationary members and 13 Auxiliary members. Total 86 BFB/FRS members.

#### **Brigade Activity**

- Bushfires - 1, Structural fires - 2, Fuel reduction burns - 1, Interstate deployment locations - Nil, State deployment locations – 1.

#### **Transition to DFES**

- Discussion between the LG and DFES will recommence once the pandemic requirements are lowered.

### **Witchcliffe**

- It has been a busy period for permits since 31 March. I have been unable to get numbers from my other two FCOs, but I have written 32.
- The brigade was required to attend an escaped burn on Forest Grove Road. This was a landowner who was burning without a permit. We also attended a smaller backyard burn in the town site that was again lit without a permit and was called in by a neighbour who was concerned that enough care had not been taken to maintain control.
- Training has been suspended due to Covid-19 but we set up a couple of social sundowners by Zoom on our normal training nights and this was another option to stay connected and a means of checking in with some of our crews in addition to providing them all with regular emails.
- We continued with minimal crew carrying out essential maintenance on station.

- Surprisingly we signed up a new member whilst in lockdown, he has moved to Margaret River, bought a block in Witchcliffe and is transferring from Dunsborough BFB where he was part-way through the basic training. He will now join our other 3 newer members who are waiting to complete the second weekend of basic training.
- We had four members who just got through both weekends of training prior to the lockdown and they have now completed their probationary period and we have welcomed them as active members and look forward to getting them back into brigade training shortly and out on a job to get real experience.

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

##### **Prevention**

##### **Mitigation Works**

- We are approaching the closure of this round of funding with approx. half the funds spent, and as in previous years, the ability to undertake HRB accounts for the majority of the unspent funds. This year will see the Shire apply for an earlier round of funding which will see funds become available early and thus allow us to undertake MAF Spring burning.

##### **Preparedness**

##### **Training**

- Shire training at this stage remains on hold. In line with the recent announcement, Brigades can undertake in house training provided they comply with the 10-person maximum and the social distancing requirements.

##### **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**

- All relevant Brigades will be serviced again in late 2020.

##### **Carpet Cleaning**

- All relevant Brigades will be cleaned again in late 2020.

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

- Next tagging and testing to be carried out in May 2020.

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

- All Brigade Fire Extinguishers will be serviced again in May 2020.
- First Aid Equipment will be serviced again in late 2020.

##### **Gutter Cleaning**

- All relevant Brigades will be cleaned again in late 2020.

##### **Pest Control Treatment**

- Some Brigades will be treated again in May 2020.
- Remaining Brigades will be treated in October 2020.

##### **Roller Door Servicing**

- All Brigades will be serviced again in late 2020.

##### **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 CESM Admin 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**

- Next testing due to be carried out prior to fire season later in 2020.

#### **PPE Orders**

- Please use the new Shire PPE Order Form (*please refer to Attachment 8.3.6*) 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.

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

- The LGGs 2020/21 application has been submitted with a request for a substantial increase due to appliance servicing and changes to the full faced respirator.

#### **Response**

- Nil

#### **New Memberships**

- Nil – as per Agenda Item 8.3

#### **Recovery**

- Nil

*In addition to the above report, Adam Jasper informed Alexandra Bridge FCO, Tony Mostert, that his TV, along with Karridale, has been included in the next round of LGGs funding.*

*Mr Jasper also thanked all the Brigades for their compliance with all the instructions and restrictions over last 6-8 weeks due to the COVID-19 issue.*

*Mr Jasper also asked the Brigades to keep him in the loop regarding holding of Brigade AGMs and if any assistance with video conferencing was required to let him know.*

*Adam informed the meeting of the two recently completed HRBs at the Pony Club and Karate Club and that mitigation spending for this financial year was just about finished. He added that he has also taken advantage of the early funding application for the 2020/21 MAF which will allow for spring burning.*

*Adam Jasper then called upon Andrew Hunt, AMR/Busselton/Nannup BRMP Coordinator, for an update on the 2020-21 MAF Grants Program.*

*Andrew Hunt addressed the meeting.*

- Grant - \$387,500.00
- 35 Treatments:
  - Fire Access Track           1           (Flinders Bay Caravan Park)
  - Mechanical works       19       (Street pruning, firebreaks, parkland clearing)
  - Prescribed Burns       15       (Large and small)
- Advice available in July as to what treatments are successful.
- Works commencing almost immediately, once agreement is signed.

*The Chair asked if funds for incomplete HRBs in this financial year were carried over to next financial year?*

*Mr Hunt advised that as the Royalties for Regions program has now been closed, the funding now comes from a completely different source and therefore funds for any incomplete burns will need to be reapplied for.*

*Cr Julia Meldrum enquired as to what sort of a percentage of burns would be completed in spring compared to autumn.*

*Adam Jasper advised that we expect to get around 6-8 burns achieved across the full 12 months but would take the question on notice and look into getting some more accurate figures to Cr Meldrum.*

*Mr Jasper also added that the Shire was not looking to implement any training at this stage and will reassess after two weeks following the June long weekend.*

## **7.5 Shire Executive Officer / Representative**

- Nothing to report.

## **7.6 Shire Coordinator Ranger Services Reported Incidents**

11/03/2020

- Report of fire being lit during Prohibited Burning Period – Mammoth Street, Witchcliffe.
- Ranger attended and residents were extinguishing a fire they had lit in a drum on their back verandah – residents were unaware that they were not permitted to light a fire.
- Written warning issued.

20/03/2020

- Report of fire being lit during Prohibited Burning Period – Bovell Avenue, Margaret River.
- Ranger attended and observed resident burning a small pile of garden refuse – resident was unaware that the Prohibited Burning Period had been extended and extinguished fire immediately.
- Ranger advised that a Permit is required for burning garden refuse in Restricted Period.
- Written warning issued.

23/03/2020

- Report of fire being lit during Prohibited Burning Period – Hermitage Drive, Margaret River
- MR Brigade attended fire and reported to Rangers.
- Rangers contacted resident who was unaware that the Prohibited Burning Period had been extended.
- Written warning issued.

25/03/2020

- Report of resident lighting heaps of garden refuse without a Permit – Gimbel Road, Deepdene.
- Ranger spoke with the property owner who was unaware of the requirement to obtain a Permit.
- Verbal warning and advice provided.

5/04/2020

- Report of a fire in a backyard – Fantail Place, Margaret River.
- Ranger attended and occupants had a large fire pit burning in the backyard – they thought they were allowed to have a fire as it was no longer Prohibited Burning Period.
- Fire extinguished and written warning issued.

6/04/2020

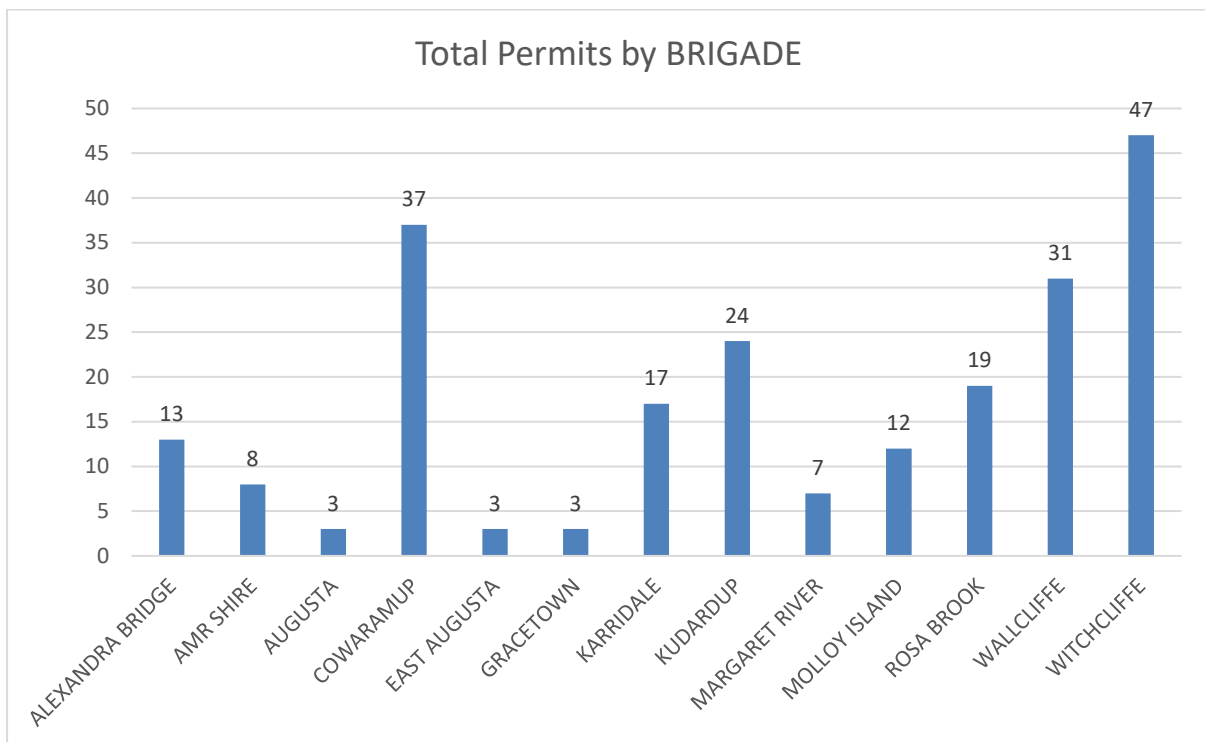
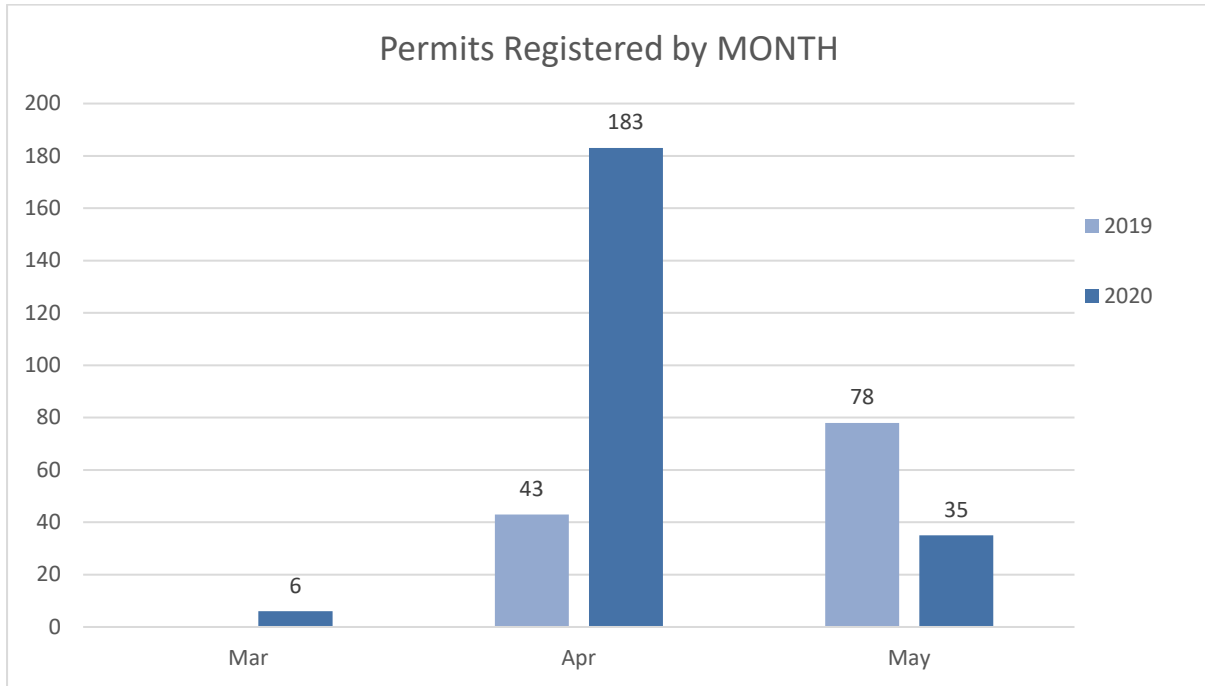
- Report of a resident burning without a Permit – Mammoth Street, Witchcliffe.
- Ranger attended and spoke with property owner who was not aware of requirement to obtain a Permit.
- Written warning issued.

14/04/2020

- Report of resident burning off without a Permit – Sebbes Road, Forest Grove.

- Ranger attended and spoke with occupant who was unaware of the requirement to obtain a Permit.
- Written warning issued.

<b>2020 Restricted Burning Period (15 Mar – 12 May)</b>		
<b>PERMITS Registered with AMR Shire</b>		
<b>BRIGADE</b>	<b>Issuing FCO</b>	<b>No. of Permits</b>
<b>Alexandra Bridge</b>	Tony Mostert	13
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Augusta</b>	Brendan Jordan	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Cowaramup</b>	Ian Earl	16
	Geoff Jenkins	7
	Tim Garstone	4
	Billy Pascoe	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>East Augusta</b>	Peter Brindley	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Gracetown</b>	Peter Delfs	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Karridale</b>	Paul Vanzetti	2
	Simon Hanson	15
	<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Kudardup</b>	Matt Nield	7
	Scott Hamilton	17
	<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Margaret River</b>	Leith Jones	7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Molloy Island</b>	John Matten	12
	<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Rosa Brook</b>	Andrew Newnham	11
	Mark Ridge	8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Wallcliffe</b>	Bob Baker	8
	Dave Kelly	19
	Ian Dowling	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Witchcliffe</b>	Dianne Holland	29
	Larry Brennan	16
	Richard Nash	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>
	<b>Shire</b>	<b>8</b>
	<b>Total number of permits registered</b>	<b>224</b>



**7.7 Department of Fire and Emergency Services  
 DFES LSW Incidents & Arrangements**

- The state had its first decent storm impact our region from 5 to 6 May. This created some widespread damage to both homes, businesses, infrastructure and caused the blockage of several roads from fallen trees.
- DFES LSW had staff and volunteers on standby to assist in both incident management and running of the Regional Operation Centre in Manjimup.
- Local SES crews received 52 Requests for Assistance (RFA). 35 were completed by SES teams, 17 cancelled / referred / rejected for various reasons.
- Most calls were for roof damage or fallen trees, ranging from replacing the water tank inspection hatch for an elderly caller, to making safe and tarping an entire farmhouse near Donnybrook.
- There has also been an increase in structure fires around the Busselton area with a total of 12 for this calendar year.

### **Training**

- The Region has had to cancel some of its courses due to Covid-19, a plan was put in place to reinstate training and investigate possible alternative training options like utilising web-based platforms to deliver courses.
- Several volunteers were required to complete their annual Breathing Apparatus refresher. Due to the restrictions with Covid-19 this made it a challenge, so a trial web-based session has been conducted with great success.
- An initiative in sending out training themes to volunteers with articles to read and videos to watch has also been implemented. This allowed volunteers stuck at home to still be involved in brigade training and maintain enthusiasm.

### **DFES Regional Staff**

- Regional staff had split into two teams, this was initiated to restrict the potential of an outbreak in the LSW which could have affected DFES operational capability. The teams were rostered 2 days in the office and 2 days at home, minimising contact between members however still maintaining service delivery.
- Since the easing of restrictions, we have now returned to our normal working arrangements.

### **Volunteers**

- To keep our volunteers up to date we have been conducting weekly teleconferences to supply the latest Covid-19 news and any changes in our operating procedures. These have proved to be very successful with a nearly 100% attendance by Brigades from both the VFRS and SES.
- During the main stages of the Covid-19 restrictions Brigades had limited the activities on stations to essential checks and incident response only. Training and other meetings had been cancelled. Cleaning and social distancing measures were adopted with an audit of all PPE conducted. In the last few weeks we have been able to retract some of these conditions allowing Brigades to resume training and other activities, if they meet the social distancing guidelines.

*In addition to the above report, Peter Thomas advised the meeting of the possibility of unusual weather coming in this weekend. He expressed concern over possible impact on prescribed burns with DFES to advise caution not to participate in prescribed burns in the lead up to the weekend.*

*Alexandra Bridge FCO, Tony Mostert, mentioned that he had received a few complaints from landowners registering their Permits with DFES COMCEN in regard to the inconsistent questions they were being asked and information they had to provide.*

*Peter Thomas stated that he would investigate and seek clarity from the current Superintendent in charge of COMCEN.*

*A query regarding the registering of Permits after hours with the Department of Parks and Wildlife was raised due to answering machine/unclear auto attendant option issues. DBCA representative, Ed Hatherley, stated he would look into the auto attendant menu system options.*

## **7.8 Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service**

- Nil – not in attendance.

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

- Since the last BFAC meeting in February I have not attended any community Bushfire Ready meetings. This activity has also been restricted due to the current pandemic.
- Members may be interested in DFES's new Burn SMART campaign which will be launched later this month. This program is to educate people about planned burning on private land. More details and the launch details can be accessed on the Volunteer Hub.

*Gordon Temby added that DFES District Officer Emergency Management, Nathan Hall, has advised the campaign will be launched on 25 May 2020.*

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

- In partnership with Augusta Community Radio I am presenting a nine-part series titled 'From the Embers'.
- This series is based on the fires during 2019/2020 on the east coast of Australia.
- The first episode was based on the impact on community radio stations broadcasting emergency services warnings to their communities.
- The second episode was on the destruction of fire on the family home, the environment and the impact on wildlife carers.
- The broadcast goes to air each Friday at 1pm.
- You can tune in via 97.1FM, live stream on [www.2oceansfm.com.au](http://www.2oceansfm.com.au) or via TuneIn or other digital radio platforms.

### **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 autumn 2020. (Please refer to Attachment 7.10.1).*

*Mr Hatherley added that he had received a really comprehensive weather summary from BOM today and no new burns will be lit. A re-fly of a couple of burns will be conducted on Thursday and Friday and a busy weekend was possibly expected.*

### **7.11 State Emergency Services**

#### **Incidents & Events**

- 4 March – Sugar Loaf Rock – land search – joint exercise with WAPOL and other LSW and SW SES units.
- 21 April – Ambulance assistance – Cosy Corner on Cape to Cape track.
- 25 April – Ambulance assistance – Augusta.
- 29 April – Ambulance assistance – Gas Bay – 2 events – linked with Rescue helicopter.
- 5 May – Extreme weather conditions:
  - Gracetown – roof damage.
  - Augusta hospital – structural damage.
- 6 May – Weather clean up:
  - Gracetown – secured water tank.
  - 6 x local Margaret River RFA's – damage to buildings and vehicles.
  - Team despatched to Busselton to assist Busselton SES.
- 8 May – Ambulance assistance – Cowaramup.

#### **Training**

- Regional training suspended due to COVID-19 precautions.
- Final Regional BGR training at Margaret River on 17 February.
- Joint Cave rescue familiarisation exercise held with caving groups on 21 March.
- Final full unit training held on Monday 16 March attended by District Officer.
- Four Unit members qualified for ATU operation.
- Unit training held weekly via ZOOM from 29 March.
- Plan to restart Regional training in small groups is under development.

#### **Administration and Other**

- Adrian Yates seconded to act as District Officer (DO) Natural Hazards LSW region until 14 June. David Hull acting Local Manager.
- ATU trailer sent for upgrade work, temporary hire trailer in use. No off-road capability during this period.
- General Rescue Utility Vehicle (Isuzu D-Max) evaluation – regional trials suspended during COVID-19 restrictions – awaiting notification of resumption.
- Weekly Regional COVID-19 update link using Web-ex run by DO for Unit management in Region.
- COVID-19 precautions instituted for all unit access and for all call out procedures. Additional cleaning regime at Unit.



## **8.0 General business**

### **8.1 Shire Autumn Burning Program Updates – Adam Jasper, CESM**

- Will continue to watch for opportunities to conduct HRBs.
- Current MAF funds will be available until 15 June then we will need to start the acquittal process.
- As mentioned in the CESM report, hoping to be able to conduct spring burning due to the early application of the next round of MAF funding.

### **8.2 Biodiversity and Conservation Form – Adam Jasper, CESM**

- Prescribed Fire Conditions - Brigade Assistance to Private Property Owners (*please refer to Attachment 8.2.1*)

*Adam Jasper informed the meeting that Shire Bushfire Mitigation Advisor, Greg West, has put a significant amount of work into this form that was created with information from DBCA on how to better manage Brigade assistance on private property burns.*

*The form has been put out to Brigades for comment with not a lot of feedback returned.*

*ABC forms will now need to be accompanied by this form and we are interested in feedback should you get to utilise this form.*

### **8.3 New Member Application and Induction Process – Adam Jasper, CESM**

- To assist in ensuring a fast and efficient membership registration process, we have developed a new step-by-step Procedure for all new Bush Fire Brigade membership applications, along with a redesign of some of the associated forms, for review by the Brigades.
- Please refer to the following Attachments:
  - Bush Fire Brigade New Membership Application Procedure (8.3.1)
  - BFS Application to Join a Bush Fire Brigade Form (8.3.2)
  - VNPC Consent Form (8.3.3)
  - BFS Update of Membership Information Form (8.3.4)
  - Volunteer Firefighter Tour Orientation Checklist (8.3.5)
  - PPE Order Form (8.3.6)
- Feedback on the Procedure and updated forms is welcome.

*Adam Jasper noted Molloy Island FCO, John Matten's, request for an electronic version of the form(s).*

### **8.4 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Position – Adam Jasper, CESM**

- Temporary appointment of Adam Jasper to the role of DCBFCO.
- Intention is that Brigades start to consider nominations which are to be sent to Lisa, along with a brief resume of the nominee, approx. one month prior to the August BFAC meeting.
- Lisa to email BFAC members re nominations in July.
- Nominations will then be presented at the August BFAC meeting and a vote will be held.
- We may look at having more than one DCBFCO (to represent the Northern and Southern parts of the Shire).

### **8.5 Permit Notifications – Sharon McTaggart, Ranger Coordinator**

- Current system can be set up so that registered Permits are automatically emailed to the BFB-FCOs from Ranger Services.
- FCOs can then set up receipt of these emails in their personal email accounts however they wish to do so.
- We will be moving towards a new system which may have better options and capabilities, possibly enabling people able to register Permits online, interactive mapping, etc.
- Either way, the process will be simplified come next Permit season.

**8.6 Emergency Services Monthly Updates – Wallcliffe BFB**

- Will the Shire ensure that all our Emergency Service Volunteers are receiving the DFES Emergency Services Volunteer Monthly Updates online?

*The following information was received from Linda Ashton, DFES Volunteer Management Support Officer (VMSO).*

*To receive the DFES Emergency Services Volunteer Monthly Online Updates, DFES need to have a valid email address for registered volunteers entered onto RMS. If volunteers have provided DFES with a valid email address and are still not receiving the monthly update, they may need to adjust subscription preferences within the My Profile page on the Volunteer Hub to opt-in for non-operational communications.*

**8.7 Strategy Sub Committee – Wallcliffe BFB**

- When will Brigades be informed of the acceptance/rejection of items submitted at our recent Strategy Sub Committee meeting?

*Shire CESM, Adam Jasper stated that the outcomes will be advised regarding operational budget in approx. June/July, however capital requests of \$1,500 to \$5,000 are normally advised early in the new financial year.*

**8.8 Western Power – Wallcliffe BFB**

- Can the Shire request Western Power to continue to address the buildup of fuel under their transmission lines throughout the shire before the next fire season?

*Adam Jasper stated that he was happy to address these issues, in collaboration with Andrew Hunt who has contacts for Western Power, if Wallcliffe can provide details of the areas of concern.*

*East Augusta FCO, Peter Brindley, also queried some areas of concern in the Scott River National Park and was advised to also send that information through to Adam for investigation with Western Power.*

*Molloy Island FCO, John Matten, enquired as to whether there was a standard that the Brigades can refer to.*

*Adam Jasper stated he would investigate if there is some sort of document available.*

**8.9 DOAC / ROAC Minutes – Wallcliffe BFB**

- Is it possible to distribute these committee minutes to all Brigade secretaries once they are received by the Shire delegate?

*The Chair advised the group that the Minutes from the DOAC/ROAC meetings had been distributed to the Brigades in the past, but after receiving no feedback, the distribution ceased. However, distribution can recommence if the Brigades wish.*

*Cr Julia Meldrum stated that she would also be interested in receiving those minutes from a regional perspective.*

*David Holland to action accordingly.*

**8.10 Nomination of Rosa Brook BFB BFAC Delegate and Proxy – Rosa Brook BFB**

- Due to the resignation of Keith Scott from the position of BFAC Delegate, Rosa Brook would like to nominate Andrew Newnham and Mark Ridge to the positions of BFAC Delegate and Proxy respectively.

**RECOMMENDATION/BFAC DECISION BFAC2020/05**

*That Rosa Brook nominate Andrew Newnham and Mark Ridge to the positions of BFAC Delegate and Proxy respectively.*

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

**Seconded: Peter Brindley, East Augusta BFB**

**Carried: 10/0**

### **8.11 Nomination of Rosa Brook BFB Osmington FCO – Rosa Brook BFB**

- Due to the resignation of Keith Scott from the position of Osmington FCO, nominations for the position will be discussed at the Rosa Brook BFB AGM in June and presented at the next BFAC meeting due to be held on Wednesday, 19 August 2020.

### **8.12 Emergency Services Weather Briefing – Adam Jasper, CESM**

- A discussion with Gianni from SOCMET indicates that there is significant potential, that fire in the landscape will not be able to be contained, with incoming gusty northerly winds, ahead of a significant trough on Saturday and Sunday (*please refer to Attachment 8.10.1*).
- With this in mind, there is a significant risk in undertaking burning (in general) in the wake of the trough.
- The advice from SOCMET has been to reconsider any introduction of fire in the landscape given the current weather warnings.

*The Chair informed the meeting that the City of Busselton has already issued a Section 46 for this weekend and requested feedback from delegates on the decision for the need for the Shire of Augusta Margaret River to possibly do the same.*

*A discussion was held, and feedback provided by some of the BFAC delegates on this matter.*

*The CBFCO stated that he would take all comments and concerns into consideration and himself and Adam would monitor the situation closely. He informed the meeting that the Shire would be issuing a fire weather warning through various media.*

### **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.*

*Hamelin Bay FCO, Simon Hanson, enquired about a recent Council decision regarding a planning amendment to a Karridale property.*

*Cr Ian Earl addressed the query and stated that the application would still need to go through the Planning Commission.*

*Mr Hanson also asked CBFCO, David Holland, if he had any updates on the design of the proposed new Light Tanker.*

*David Holland responded stating that the new Light Tanker will be the same as the old one, based on the Toyota Landcruiser cab chassis, with some significant modifications such as:*

- Weight capacity upgrade.
- Possibility of evening track width for front rear wheels.
- Deluge system operating out of the main tank.
- Locker system similar to the trucks (cabinet style rather than fold up).
- 500L
- 2 radios (handheld and WAERN).
- Diesel pump.
- Possibly a fridge.

*Cr Ian Earl thanked all for their hard work over the very challenging last couple of months.*

*DBCA representative, Ed Hatherley, enquired as to a resolution on the Section 46, to which David Holland responded that he would hopefully have an answer tomorrow.*

*Andrew Newnham enquired as to whether DBCA requires notification of the 1m<sup>3</sup> burns.*

*David Holland stated that for any burn within 3kms of DBCA tenure, DBCA must be notified. Because of the difficulty in deciding how far away a DBCA tenure was from each and every planned burn, the Shire had decided to implement a blanket rule on notification of all burns to DBCA.*

*Andrew Newnham also asked if there would be an electronic version of the Biodiversity and Conservation form made available, to which Adam Jasper stated that he would look into it.*

*As there were no further items to discuss, the meeting was closed at 7.24pm.*