

Minutes



BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE SHIRE OF DENMARK RECEPTION ROOM
953 SOUTH COAST HIGHWAY, DENMARK
THURSDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2021

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Council Committee Meeting

25 November 2021

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1. DECLARATION OF OPENING

6:06pm – The Chief Executive Officer declared the meeting open and announced that he would preside over the meeting until such time as a chair is elected.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

MEMBERS:

Cr Ceinwen Gearon, Shire President Council Delegate
Cr Claire Campbell, Council Delegate
Lez Baines, CBFCO
Nigel Marsh, DCBFCO
Shane Howlett, DCBFCO
Ian Thompson, Harewood FCO
Craig Lilley, Kordabup FCO
Murray Brooker, Mt Lindesay FCO
Bryce Edwards Kordabup FCO
Hank Alberts, Ocean Beach FCO
Trevor Brown, Peaceful Bay Captain
Callum Baxter, Somerset Hill FCO
Alex Williams, Hazelvale FCO
Brian Vigus, Tingle Dale FCO
Francis Amez, Parryville FCO
Lee Shelley, VFRS Captain
Paul Harbron, VFRS
Adrian Kranendonk, Fire Weather Officer
Neville Brass, Nornalup FCO
Simon Coppock, William Bay FCO
Craig Hughes, Carmarthen FCO
Geoff Bowley (proxy for Carl Wesley, Mt Shadforth FCO)
Paul Moncrieff, Mehniup FCO
William Miller, East Denmark FCO

NON VOTING MEMBERS:

Wes Bailye, Department of Fire & Emergency Services (DFES) Area Officer
Nikki Rouse, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)
Paul Ashton, Australian Bluegum Plantations
Mal Parker, PF Olsen (Aus) Pty Limited

STAFF:

Renee Wiggins, Manager of Community Services
Lee Shelley, Acting Community Emergency Services Manager
Charmaine Shelley, Senior Ranger
Claire Thompson, Governance Coordinator

APOLOGIES:

Nikki Rouse, DBCA
Carl Wesley, Mt Shadforth FCO
Paul Harbron, VFRS
Craig Hughes, Carmarthen FCO
Adrian Kranendonk, Fire Weather Officer
Murray Brooker, Mt Lindesay
Alex Williams, Hazelvale FCO
Bryce Edwards Kordabup FCO

ON LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

Nil

ABSENT:

Nil

VISITORS:

Wayne Green, Superintendent Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES)
 Cr Donald Clarke
 John Maxwell

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Name	Item No	Interest	Nature
Cr Ceinwen Gearon	8.2	Impartiality	WA Country Health Service Employee

4. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Section 67(2) of the Bush Fires Act 1954 states that the Bush Fire Advisory Committee shall elect one of their members to be Chair.

The Chief Executive Officer called for nominations.

Declaration of Chair

Lez Bains, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO) nominated Cr Ceinwen Gearon who accepted the nomination in writing.

There being no further nominations for the position, the Chief Executive Officer declared Cr Gearon elected as Chair of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) until October 2023.

Cr Gearon assumed the Chair.

5. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

Clause 8.6 of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Charter allows for a Deputy Chair also.

Cr Gearon called for nominations for the position of Deputy Chair. No nominations for Deputy Chair were received, the members considered that a Deputy Chair would not be required.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING

Cr Gearon thanked BFAC for the nomination of Chair and stated that she looked forward to working with the Committee and volunteers in working toward a safer community environment.

6.1 PEER SUPPORT, MENTAL HEALTH AND WELFARE

Donald Clarke and John Maxwell spoke to Peer Support, Mental Health and Welfare.

7. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION	ITEM 7
MOVED: BRIAN VIGUS	SECONDED: ROGER SEENEY
That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on the 2 nd September 2021, be confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings.	
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY	

8. REPORTS

8.1 UPDATES FROM DEPARTMENTS AND POSITIONS

The Committee were provided with updates on various matters from the following departments and positions.

8.1.1 DEPARTMENT OF BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION & ATTRACTIONS

Nil

8.1.2 AUSTRALIAN BLUEGUM PLANTATIONS

Plantation companies have a joint liaison officer and a 24hr on call duty officer. All Plantation Fire Appliances have the same specifications as DFES appliances. Fire break maintenance has stalled due to conditions

8.1.3 CHIEF BUSHFIRE CONTROL OFFICER

Report, including incidents to report is included as an attachment to these minutes.

8.1.4 ACTING COMMUNITY EMERGENCY SERVICES MANAGER

A report included as an attachment to these minutes.

8.1.5 BUSHFIRE RISK PLANNING COORDINATOR

It was noted that the Shire no longer had a Bushfire Risk Planning Coordinator and that this standing item would be removed from future Agendas.

8.1.6 FIRE COMPLIANCE OFFICER

Utilising Parryville Light Tanker for the fire inspections, it will be available for response if required.

Cr Gearon declared an Impartiality interest due to being employed by the Department of Health.

8.2 DFES COVID 19 MANDATE TO BUSH FIRE BRIGADES

Superintendent Wayne Green answered questions from the floor and advised that the COVID-19 mandate was issued by the Chief Medical Officer and not DFES.

Proof of vaccinations are to be uploaded to the DFES Volunteer Portal and if any Brigades had difficulties in doing so, to contact the Community Emergency Services Manager, CESM, for assistance. Frequently Asked Questions could also be accessed on the DFES Volunteer Portal.

8:15pm - Superintendent Wayne Green left the meeting and did not return.

8.3 POSITIVES AND NEGATIVES OF SHIRE BRIGADES BEING RUN BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OR BY DFES

Discussion ensued on the positives and negatives of brigade being run by Local Governments, as opposed to DFES. Members were encouraged to discuss the matter with their respective Brigades.

8.4 BUSH FIRE BRIGADE MINIMUM TRAINING STANDARDS

Members suggested that the DFES "suggested" minimum training standard be adopted as the "actual" minimum standard for the Shire of Denmark for all volunteers to be competent in before attending any incidents.

The training would include Bushfire Awareness, Fire Fights Skills and Australasian Interservice Incident Management System (AIIMS) awareness.

Outcomes:

Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO) and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (DCBFCO) to review the current minimum training standards and PPE/PPC Standards and recommend new minimum standard to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to update the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and Policy.

9. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Nil

10. GENERAL BUSINESS

Brigades received a \$200.00 IGA voucher in lieu of the Shire's *Feast not Fire* event because the event was unable to be facilitated in the 2020/2021 financial year.

11. NEXT MEETING

It is recommended that the next meeting of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee be held 17th February 2022 at the Shire of Denmark Reception Room commencing at 6.00pm.

12. CLOSURE

9:10pm - *There being no further business to discuss the Chair, Cr Gearon, declared the meeting closed.*

These minutes were confirmed at a meeting on the _____.

Signed: _____
(*Presiding Person at the meeting at which the minutes were confirmed.*)

DENMARK CHIEF BFAC REPORT
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 25th 2021

INCIDENTS TO REPORT.

18th October 2021

Parker Road Bush Fire.

Active bushfire with suspicious activity. 8 appliances plus a FEL on site. WAPOL were investigating further.

30th October 2021

View Road Tree/Scrub Fire

Owner was burning around the base of tree and got into difficulties.

31st October 2021

Ocean Beach Road

Handled by FRS Denmark

31st October 2021

Springdale Heights Bush/scrub Fire

Justifiable False Alarm due to numerous properties having small piles burning.

1st November

Big4 Caravan Park Ocean Beach

Manager was burning large pile of logs on edge of Tea trees and requested a Permit after igniting the pile the previous evening before the Restricted Season began. This Permit was refused and an incident was produced for Brigades to extinguish. Manager was warned about danger and instructed to move the remaining material into a large clear area close by and to use smaller piles plus to have his firefighting unit alongside the burns.

SUSPICIOUS FIRES.

Please be observant when approaching an incident and observe any vehicles or persons within the area as there have now been several of these incidents. Denmark Acting Community Emergency Services Manager (A/CESM) may have more information.

ANNUAL SKILLS REFRESHER 2021.

This skills refresher was put out to Fire Control Officers (FCO's), Captains and 1st Lieutenants this year. There are only 5 individuals still to complete the skills refresher, these will take place within the next 2 weeks. There has been an extremely good reaction towards the skills refresher and lots of positive comments received.

Now that the FCO's, Captains and 1st Lieutenants have completed the skills refreshers they are able to return to their Brigades and begin the relevant training for their members ready for next year when each member will participate in the Annual skills Refresher 2022.

The Annual Skills Refresher will replace the Pre Season Zone Training from this point on. This Annual Skills Refresher is an excellent training tool to ensure that our crews are current with their skills level prior to the Fire Season beginning. Nigel and Shane are putting together a

package which contains all of the relevant DFES training for the subjects we are looking at. This will be a comprehensive standardised training resource for those subjects so that all Brigades are at the same DFES recognised standard.

PRE SEASON ZONE TRAINING.

As per the previous years this was held in the 3 different Zones, Ocean Beach, Owingup and Peaceful Bay Brigades hosted these meetings where 87 volunteers attended in total.

Thank you to the Shire for providing each training session with a sausage sizzle and drinks. This has been a great opportunity for volunteers to meet others within their zones. It was also great for our volunteers to see our A/CESM, Lee Shelley who also attended the Owingup meeting where he also observed some FCO's completing their Annual Skills Refresher.

MINIMUM STANDARD TRAINING IN ORDER TO ACTIVE ON A FIREGROUND.

This will be discussed later in this meeting.

COVID VACCINATION MANDATE.

I have been receiving a large number of emails and phone calls regarding this matter. All of these correspondences have said that they fully support pro-choice and many have had the vaccinations but are not happy with the way the mandate has been done.

Please remember that this Directive does not come from our Local Government or DFES but from the State. Don't shoot the messenger!.

Thank you to Superintendent Wayne Green who is attending this meeting to hopefully answer any questions. DFES have put out a sheet of frequently asked questions which may answer yours.

To our valuable volunteers who are standing down for whatever their reasons I would like to say a heartfelt thank you. These people will be missed. Please keep in touch with our friends, just because they may be standing down, we need to keep in touch with them especially since we have all shared highs and lows whilst on the fire ground.

Call them to say G'day.

THANK YOU'S.

A massive thank you to you all for your support and comments. Especially big thanks to Nigel and Shane who are taking a load off my shoulders. Both gentlepeople are confident and effective in the way in which they communicate to all volunteers, they are a real asset.

FAREWELL....SORT OF !.

Mr Lee Shelley has been our "Acting CESM" whilst waiting for the new appointee.

Lee,

you have done an amazing, professional job, effective and efficient better than our previous appointees who had that position. No question was too hard or too silly, yes we may have

banged heads a couple of times but that was good. Problems and solutions were always found.

I sincerely thank you for your efforts and accomplishments, you will be missed in this role and you leave some rather large shoes to be filled !!.

Lee is the Captain of Denmark FRS as we all know so we will see him at the next BFAC meeting, just in a different chair.

Massive personal thank you Lee for your support, understanding and for “just” calling to see if I’m doing OK.

Lez Baines
CBFCO Denmark

BFAC REPORT 25TH NOVEMBER 2021

ACTING COMMUNITY EMERGENCY SERVICES MANAGER

PREPAREDNESS

MITIGATION ACTIVITIES FUND (MAF)

Works have been awarded and are now being undertaken.

UNALLOCATED CROWN LAND (UCL)/UNMANAGED RESERVES (UMR)

The Shire has received \$30K funding through Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) to complete the Townsite UCL/UMR program. There will be no new works within this program, money will go to retreating existing works and continuing the upgrade of tracks and drainage within the UCL adjacent to the water treatment plant.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPEMTN (PPE)/PERSONAL PROTECTIVE CLOTHING (PPC)

Still waiting on some items of PPE/PPC when the remaining arrives it will be distributed

MAINTENANCE VEHICLE

Any vehicle faults, please complete/fill out the maintenance log book relevant to the specific vehicle and send it through to the CESM in order to process and allow any action required to be addressed promptly.

TRAINING

- Several Bushfire Safety Awareness and Firefighting Skills have been delivered and were well attended by brigade members. Members have been advised that a range of courses are advertised on Eacademy.
- Brigades have begun regular training. If help obtaining resources like printouts etc is required, please contact the Acting CESM alternatively, assistance is available through the Chief and Deputy Bush Fire Control Officers to assist with training or activities.
- DCBA Water Bomber Reloader Training was held on 6th November 2021 with 25 Member's participating.

RESPONSE

- Scrub Fire Parker Road
- Suspicious fire Ocean Beach Road - 7 separate ignition points WAPOL investigating
- Big 4 Caravan Park
- View Road
- A/CESM Lee Shelley was deployed to Canada on 26th July 2021, through to 1st September 2021 + 14-day quarantine in Sydney