

Minutes



BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE SHIRE OF DENMARK RECEPTION ROOM
953 SOUTH COAST HIGHWAY, DENMARK
THURSDAY, 19TH JANUARY 2023.

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1. DECLARATION OF OPENING

6.30pm - The Manager Community Services declared the meeting open, welcomed attendees and spoke acknowledgment of country.

COMMITTEE DECISION AND OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Chair the Ordinary meeting of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee conducted 19 January 2023.

Moved: Alex Williams

Seconded: Murray Brooker

Carried: Unanimously

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

MEMBERS:

Hank Alberts	Ocean Beach FCO
Craig Hughes	Carmarthen FCO
Lez Baines	CBFCO
Nigel Marsh	DCBFCO
Shane Howlett	DCBFCO
Chris Hoare	East Denmark (proxy)
Alex Williams	Hazelvale FCO and Tingleddale FCO
Craig Lilley	Kordabup FCO
Murray Brooker	Mt Lindesay FCO
Neville Brass	Nornalup FCO
Paul Moncrieff	Owingup FCO
Geoff Bowley	Shadforth FCO
Darin Hockley	Denmark VFRS, FCO
Adrian Kranendonk	Fire Weather Officer

STAFF:

Renee Wiggins	Manager of Community Services
Mark Guerin	Community Emergency Services Coordinator
Victoria Holloway	Bushfire Risk Mitigation Coordinator (left the meeting at 8.35pm)
Helen Croke	Administration Officer – Community Services

VISITORS:

Paul Ashton	Australian Bluegum Plantations
Cameron Famlonga	DFES

APOLOGIES:

Cr Ceinwen Gearon	Shire President, Council Delegate and Chairperson
Cr Clare Campbell	Council Delegate
Brian Vigus	Tingleddale FCO
Paul Harbron	Denmark Town VFRS FCO
Ian Thompson	Harewood FCO
Trevor Brown	Peaceful Bay FCO
Steve Yates	Somerset Hill FCO
Simon Coppock	William Bay FCO
Claire Thompson	Governance Coordinator
Tristan Farmer	DFES

ON LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

Nil

ABSENT:

Nil

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING

Nil

5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

COMMITTEE DECISION & OFFICER RECOMMENDATION	ITEM 5
That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on the 27 October 2022, be confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings.	
Moved: Geoff Bowley	Seconded: Neville Brass
Carried: Unanimously	

6. REPORTS

6.1 UPDATES FROM DEPARTMENTS AND POSITIONS

The Committee to be provided with an update on various matters from the departments and positions.

6.1.1 DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

General update.

6.1.2 DEPARTMENT OF BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION & ATTRACTIONS

Nil

6.1.3 AUSTRALIAN BLUEGUM PLANTATIONS

- Update on company harvest activities including general discussion on shire-wide activities.
- Green Ranges fire debrief including thanks for support at incident.
- Update on South Australian trial of fire sensing cameras. These have a range of 20 kilometres, can be attached to existing infrastructure and scan 360 degrees every 60 seconds. Expressions of Interest will be sought from local governments when trial ends.

6.1.4 CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER

- Thanked brigades for assistance at Green Ranges incident.
- General update on training. ACTION ITEM: FCO's to confirm members that have completed skills refresher training.
- ACTION ITEM members to advise areas with high fuel loads suitable for hazard reduction burn.
- Status of donated funds and intended use moved to general business for discussion.

6.1.5 COMMUNITY EMERGENCY SERVICES COORDINATOR

- ACTION ITEM: brigades to provide incident attendance reports from last calendar year for collation, review, and input to Fire Incident Reporting System (FIRS).
- BART update. 300 licences acquired and training rollout will occur in the coming week. General discussion regarding acquisition of tablets/sims
- LGGS update. Eligible item submissions due by end March. Members are encouraged to advise brigade requirements ASAP. Murray Brooker noted that it would be ideal to present new members with a complete PPE kit once they have completed training.
- Town BFB – Discussion of reasons for & against retaining brigade in its current form deferred to General Business.

6.1.6 BUSHFIRE RISK MITIGATION COORDINATOR

- Airport burn review. Very good result confirmed by all relevant stakeholders.
- 3 more mitigation activity burns approved. Members advised to submit potential burn areas prior to March for inclusion with next lodgement.

6.1.7 DENMARK VFRS/DENMARK TOWN BFB UPDATE

- Denmark Town BFB – No Appliance (see Appendix A) General discussion regarding legislative and funding links relevant to brigades/groups/units. Darin Hockley will canvass members about amalgamation with another brigade.
- ACTION ITEM: CBFCO and CESC will coordinate a request to DFES regarding additional appliances for the Shire of Denmark.
- Report Appendix B.

6.1.8 BUSHFIRE READY

- Update regarding 2 events held in November. Future BFR weekend will be held in first weekend in November. Murray thanked all for their support and encouraged auxiliary members to come to BFR training scheduled for end January.
- ACTION ITEM: Murray to supply list of BFR groups to CBFCO.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

7.1 STATE GOVERNMENTS PRESCRIBED BURN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The CBFCO expressed concern at learning via media of Council intentions to consult with BFAC regarding the State Government's prescribed burning response.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

ITEM 7.1

With respect to the recent correspondence received from the State Government's prescribed burning policy and procedures, the Bush Fire Advisory Committee:

1. Welcomes the request from the Council for comment
2. NOTES that the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs is evaluating submissions regarding Petition No. 029 calling for an independent review of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions' Prescribed Burning Practices, and believe that this is an appropriate process.
3. BELIEVES that continued open investigation and research in relation to prescribed burning, especially on a large scale, is essential to determine the most effective bushfire mitigation strategies around towns and communities.

4. SUPPORTS the Council's request that the State Government provide additional resources for the early detection and rapid suppression of bushfires and in particular notes:
- a. that a number of Department of Fire and Emergency Services funded firefighting appliances and fire sheds are well beyond their scheduled replacement dates; and
 - b. improved backup power supplies to essential communication facilities is another underfunded issue.
 - c. additional LGGS funded resources for a growing community as supported by Report 13: 2022-23 Funding of Volunteer Emergency and Fire Services, Office of the Auditor General.
5. NOTES that the carefully targeted reduction of fuel loadings is important for the preservation of high value community and environmental assets.

Moved: Geoff Bowley

Seconded: Murray Brooker

Carried: Unanimously

7.2 STATUS OF DONATED FUNDS AND INTENDED USE

Historical donations to volunteer Bush Fire Brigades has been held by the Shire for the past five or so years. The amount held is approximately \$10,000.

Members discussed what the funds could be used for that would benefit all brigades.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

ITEM 7.2

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee use donated funds to purchase a tablet, tablet mount, sim, and charger for each appliance. Brigades with pre-existing tablets to be reimbursed.

Moved: Chris Hoare

Seconded: Murray Brooker

Carried: Unanimously

7.3 NORNALUP BFB

Thanks for standpipe repairs.

ACTION ITEM: Renee Wiggins to provide update on water tank installation.

7.4 BAYVIEW RISE REPORT

Content to be approved by LEMC March 23.

7.5 SECONDHAND PPE

Members to surrender excess to requirements PPE for re-use.

7.6 HYDRANT SERVICING

Members are advised of online reporting procedure. Darin Hockley is available to assist.

7.7 SHIRE OF DENMARK BUSH FIRE BRIGADES LOCAL LAW

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

ITEM 7.7

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee requests the review of the Shire of Denmark Bush Fire Brigades Local Law, policies and procedures are prioritised as in their current form they pose an unacceptable risk to the safety of volunteers.

Moved: Shane Howlett

Seconded: Nigel Marsh

Carried: Unanimously

7.8 FIRE INSPECTIONS

Murray Brooker thanked Neville Brass for his assistance during recent Fire Inspections in the Nornalup area.

7.9 FIRE AID COURSE

ACTION ITEM: schedule another First Aid Course.

7.10 FIRE DANGER RATING SIGNAGE

ACTION ITEM: CESC to advise DFES that pointer colour on current signage makes it difficult to discern when FDR is low or high and investigate solutions.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

ITEM 7.10

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee request Council funding for Electronic Fire Danger Rating signage in the 2023-24 budget considerations.

Moved: Alex Williams

Seconded: Darin Hockley

Carried: Unanimously

General discussion regarding targeted messaging on current FDR signage and educational signage affixed to existing brigade infrastructure.

7.11 FIREBREAK AND FUEL MANAGEMENT NOTICE 2023-24

ACTION ITEM: That the BFAC review of the Firebreak and Fuel Management Notice 2023-24 includes consideration towards banning all camping and cooking fires during the prohibited period.

8.35pm - Victoria Holloway left the meeting.

7.12 FIRE CONTROL OFFICER IDENTIFICATION CARDS

ACTION ITEM: that members are provided with an update regarding the production of FCO ID cards.

7.13 VEHICLE SAFETY NOTICES

ACTION ITEM: that members are provided with the procedure for actioning vehicle safety notices.

7.14 ILLEGAL CAMPING

Members held discussions regarding illegal camping at Fire Sheds. Brigades to report any suspicious activity to the Ranger team.

7.15 VERGE BURNING

Members were advised that Shire officers had met with a consultant and sought further clarification on what the Committee would like advice on.

7.16 ATTENDANCE AT INCIDENTS

A minimum of two personnel to attend all incidents. COMCEN to be advised of addresses where there is the potential for escalated violence.

8. NEXT MEETING

It is recommended that the next meeting of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee be held on Thursday 20 April 2023 at the Shire of Denmark Reception Room commencing at 6.30pm.

9. CLOSURE

8.58pm – There being no further business to discuss, the Presiding Person declared the meeting closed.

These minutes were confirmed at the meeting of the _____

Signed: _____

(Presiding Person at the meeting at which the minutes were confirmed.)

**Denmark Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service / Denmark
Town Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade**

BFAC AGENDA ITEM

DENMARK TOWN BFB - NO APPLIANCE

BACKGROUND

As one of the oldest bush fire brigades in the Shire of Denmark, it is with great sadness that we do not have a bush fire appliance to represent this side of our dual-registered organisation. Our brigade did fundraising to purchase one of the first bushfire appliances in Denmark, it was purchased from Pearce Air Force Base. Then several years ago, the Shire saw fit to give us a 2.4 BFB tanker and took the yellow international appliance we had purchased ourselves. This was a reasonable deal as the old one was relatively slow but held a reasonable amount of water, so it made sense to house it at the airport (East Denmark BFB), then a few years later, it was deemed that we no longer required the 2.4 bushfire appliance (we are unsure of the reasoning behind this decision) and it was taken back and redeployed to East Denmark Bush fire brigade (where our previous appliance had been sent). We did not, in return receive our previous appliance back (that we had privately fundraised for) in this deal. I am unaware as to whatever happened exactly to our old appliance. I do believe it was possibly sold privately for profit by someone, I'm not sure if it was the Shire or the brigade that ended up with it, either way we have no appliance or compensation for our initial purchase.

IMPLICATIONS

At the moment, we only have VFRS Urban appliances, which means that they are unavailable for use with BFB activities, including but not limited to, issuing permits, controlled burns, support of turnouts in the local area as well as deployments and bush fire preparedness & awareness safety activities. This limits the capability and availability of the brigade.

Currently, we do participate in some of these activities but moving forward have been instructed that VFRS appliances/PPE are for those activities only if it's a BFB activity, we are not to take VFRS equipment/PPE.

This also includes incidents; if we are at a bush fire and there is a VFRS callout, we currently if instructed to do so, must leave and attend the VFRS incident. As a dual registered brigade, we can

leave some crew but not an appliance, this of course is quite problematic even though we have ample crew to run another appliance or two.

The VFRS appliances are scheduled for replacement in the near future (no confirmed date at this stage) and the recommendation is not for an urban tanker but for an urban pumper and rescue capability rather than a bush fire / urban tanker.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Our recommendation to BFAC, is that at the earliest possible occurrence, Denmark Town BFB is be provided with an appliance to enhance the fire coverage and response time from a central location (we average around 6 minutes for turning out) with highly trained (weekly training) keen and motivated volunteers with additional capability including leadership, incident management structural and hazardous situation awareness. This will help us support the other brigades, the wider community, the Shire and our homes.

Regards

Darin Hockley

Captain/FCO

Denmark Volunteer Fire and Rescue/Denmark Town Bush Fire Brigade

Appendix B – VFRS Report



Denmark Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service / Denmark Town Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade - BFAC REPORT

Date: 19/01/2023

Current Member Stats:

- Active members – 23 (probation members 3)
- Junior – 3
- Auxiliary / Support– 3

Training:

- Monday night weekly training and monthly meeting night
- Water bomber refuelling attended.
- 2 x First aid course
- 4 x road crash rescue qualified.
- Road crash training with St Johns
- Leavers Alive multi-agency exercise at Denmark Agricultural college
- 98% of the active members completed pre-season skills training (inc. crew protection modules and all 5 x online mandatory courses)

Community Events:

- Bushfire Ready Weekend (Sundowner & Sat civic centre event)
- Colour Run Denmark Primary School
- Kindergarten visit
- Christmas parade
- Christmas Day lolly run (around 1000 bags and 7 hours on the day)

Incidents:

- 595841 – 000 Call Chimney fire
- 598890 – 000 Call Vehicle fire
- 600376 – 000 Call Private fire alarm
- 600555 – 000 Call Vehicle fire (Tractor)
- Deployment – Relief Crews attended Bushfire in Kalgan - Albany
- Hazard Reduction Burn at Airport
- 601436 – 000 Call Road crash rescue (life involvement) *stood down*
- 602319 – 000 Call Animal rescue
- 602365 – 000 Call Structure fire
- 603252 – 000 Call DBA - Hospital
- 603674 – 000 Road crash rescue (life involvement)
- 605284 – 000 Call fallen power line

Regards,
Darin Hockley
Captain
Denmark VFRS & Denmark Town BFB

Appendix C – DBCA Report



Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions



DBCA Parks & Wildlife Service - Frankland District Update for Shire of Denmark BFAC Meeting

Thursday 19 January 2023

2022/23 Burn Options Plan

Burns completed this spring/summer within the Shire of Denmark:

- FRK_092 Peak Roe Crossing
- FRK_082 Quickup Dam

Moisture levels across the district are now too low to implement prescribed burning.

Planning is underway for the autumn burning period, where a sufficient rainfall event and suitable cooler conditions are required to resume.

A reminder that our burn options plan is available to view on the Parks and Wildlife Service website at the following link:

<https://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/management/fire/prescribed-burning/burns/burn-options-program>

Bushfires

Bushfires within the Shire of Denmark:

- BF FRK003 Crossing

Frankland District resources have been deployed to assist at numerous bushfires in other Districts this summer including the Donnybrook complex, Bridgetown and Green Range bushfires.

DBCA Frankland District

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