

SHIRE OF WEST ARTHUR

MINUTES of the Bushfire Advisory Committee Meeting held Tuesday 15 October 2019, in the Hawthorn Room in the West Arthur Health and Recourse Centre.

1. Declaration of Opening/Announcement of Visitors

The Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, Duncan South, declared the meeting open at 7.09pm

2. Record of Attendance and Apologies

Duncan South	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Ray Harrington	President, Shire
Nicole Wasmann	Chief Executive Officer, Shire
Nicki Morrell	Customer Service Officer, Shire
Neil Morrell	Fire Control Officer, Arthur River BFB
James Campbell	Fire Control Officer, Darkan BFB
Adrian South	Fire Control Officer, Duranillin BFB
Trevor Bunce	Fire Control Officer, Darkan BFB
Jessica Newman	Parks and Wildlife Service, DBCA
Kim Hales	Fire Control Officer, Duranillin BFB
Chris Cochrane	Deputy CBFCO/FCO, Duranillin BFB
Rob Jefferies	Fire Control Officer, Duranillin BFB
Greg Hodgson	FPC
Simon Vogel	District Officer, DFES

Apologies

Graeme Blake	DWER
Kohdy Flynn	Ranger, Collie Shire
Trevor Palfalman	Captain, Williams VFRS
Brad Wooldridge	Fire Control Officer, Arthur River BFB
Donna Morgan	Bushfire Risk Management Officer, DFES
Tristan Gulvin	CESM, Collie Shire

3. Confirmation of Minutes – 9 April 2019

Moved: Adrian South

Second: Kim Hales

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held 9 April 2019 be confirmed.

3.1 Business Arising from the Minutes

Neil Morrell advised that the cost of the floating fast fill pumps investigated were cost prohibitive.

Duncan advised that traffic control at incidents on Albany Highway was discussed at the LEMC meeting.

4. Guests/Presentations

4.1 DFES – District Officer and Bush Fire Risk Management

The high season unit should be delivered soon. It was agreed that it be stored at Brad Wooldridge's.

4.2 Forrest Products Commission

Greg advised that they had a new tenant looking after the property at Sandawindy.

FPC have acquired properties around Muja and Maringee (approx. 3000ha) and properties have been planted. Fire breaks will be completed in near future and fire management plans are being prepared for these properties. Fencing is being installed with livestock to graze. Grazing will be advertised.

FPC are working closely with local brigades due to the number of private plantations. Many ex blue gums have been converted to pines.

Expansion is ongoing with the potential for more properties (not necessarily West Arthur Shire).

Graeme Blake has asked Greg to report on current harvesting operations (north of Coalfields behind Lubcke's and south of Bowelling). Prescribed burn undertaken by Working with Fire for Department of Water earlier this year. The escaped fire from late April (outside of the restricted burning period) was discussed.

FPC are looking at how the fire risk can be best managed and are working closely with Rural Fire Division and DBCA with regards to how best to monitor and respond to fire. Plantation Fire Fighting training being further developed for local brigades.

FPC own 18 light units and three trucks and have a work force that can assist. They have a duty officer roster. Liaising with FPC for response to fire was discussed. If 000 called FPC are notified. Direct number for duty officers will be put in Fire Control Officer booklet to be distributed.

4.3 Department of Biodiversity, Conservation, and Attractions – Fire Operations

The spring burn program commenced approximately four weeks ago. With eight burns in the district. 37 burns are planned with four in the West Arthur Shire. Unfortunately, they have not been able to burn in West Arthur in spring and hope to burn in Autumn.

Ten bush fires to date

Spotter planes have commenced.

There have been some staff changes with Kyle and Simon both working in new roles outside of the fire coordinator role. Jess will be acting in the role for this season

Two water bombers in Bunbury with additional resources in Busselton, Manjimup, Perth and Albany.

5. Reports

5.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Duncan advised that at the LEMC meeting the incident on highway was discussed and reinforced that communication with police is the key.

5.2 Arthur River Bush Fire Brigade

Neil reported that the Arthur River truck still had no siren (Shire mechanic to arrange repairs). Truck is having ongoing problems due to age.

The fire is still going at Bunge. Duncan is maintaining communications with Bunge and it is likely that foam will be required. Bunge maybe requested to make a donation for the foam used.

5.3 Darkan Bush Fire Brigade

Nil.

5.4 Duranillin Bush Fire Brigade

The fire discussed with FPC was reported.

6 Financial Report

2019/20 ESL Allocation \$31,670

Expended to date:

Insurance – vehicles	\$6,537
Other	\$10,968
Synergy (Darkan)	\$81
Vehicle licensing	\$445
Freight	\$129
Total expended	\$18,160

Funds remaining \$11,781

Some shed maintenance required at Arthur River.
PPE requests to be given to Nicki.

7. General Business

7.1 Equipment

Arthur River Brigade – 4.4 Broad acre Single Cab - \$412,000 approved waiting for supply. Tenders are currently under evaluation.

7.2 Training

In March incident training with props and scenarios will be undertaken with Paul Blechynden.

7.3 Call ups

To commence 4th November – Monday with Geoff Bunce.

Two way radios were discussed and the potential for external aerials for hand held radios.

7.4 Water Bomber Reloading Training

Sunday 3 November.

Planes have changed – so important people are aware of the changes.

Trevor Bunce advised that he will be available to attend.

7.5 Maps

Jess will try and get an electronic that can be used on any phones or Ipads with an App. Photocopies will also be distributed to FCOs.

7.6 Communications

Radio communications are difficult in the Bowelling area. Discussed whether it would be possible to have an additional repeater in this area. Kim Hales has limited reception. Bowelling Duranillin Road has some areas that have no cover.

Concerns would be raised with Allan Brown at DFES.

Mobile communications are extremely limited in this area which makes locating fires extremely difficult.

7.7 Accessing Repairs for Farmer Units

Where to access repairs for farmer units was discussed. A number of farmers own decommissioned DFES trucks and as some functions are specialised, knowledge for repairs is limited. Companies manufacturing new vehicles are not necessarily associated with repairs and refurbishments.

7.8 AVL on Brigade Trucks

I reminder was raised to activate the AVL on the trucks.

8. Closure

The Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 8:30pm.

Next Meeting to be held on Tuesday 7 April 2020.