

Shire of West Arthur

MINUTES: For the Bushfire Advisory Committee Meeting.

A meeting of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee was held Thursday 26th October 2022 in the Hawthorn Room at the West Arthur Health and Resources Centre commencing at 7.00pm.

1.0 Declaration of Opening/Announcements of Visitors:

The Chairperson of the meeting, Ben Robinson welcomed all present and declared the meeting open at 7.15pm. All attending members to sign the attendance list.

2.0 Record of Attendance and Apologies:

Attendance

Ben Robinson	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, Arthur River BFB
Nikki Morrell	Finance Officer, Shire of West Arthur
Neil Morrell	Fire Control Officer, Arthur River BFB & Shire of West Arthur President
Duncan South	Fire Control Officer, Darkan BFB
James Campbell	Fire Control Officer, Darkan BFB
Adrian South	Fire Control Officer, Duranillin BFB
Paul Blechynden	District Officer, DFES Upper Great Southern
Vin Fordham Lamont	CEO, Shire of West Arthur
Cassandra Squires	Works Admin Assistant, Shire of West Arthur
Gary Rasmussen	Manager Works and Services Shire of West Arthur
Matt Cooper	District Fire Coordinator, DBCA
Kohdy Flynn	Community Emergency Services Manager
Greg Hodgson	Manager Fire Protection, Forrest Products Commission
Rayna Barr	Bunbury Fibre Exports

Apologies:

Graeme Peirce	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, Duranillin BFB
Robert Jefferies	Fire Control Officer, Duranillin BFB
Graeme Blake	Dept of Water & Environmental Regulation

3.0 Confirmation of Previous Meetings Minutes:

Moved: Vin Fordham Lamont

Seconded: Duncan South

That the minutes of the Shire of West Arthur BFAC meeting held 26th June 2022 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

CARRIED

4.0 Presentations:

4.1 Community Emergency Services Manager, Kohdy Flynn:

Adam Lockhart from Tatra Trucks Australia wants to come down and do a run through and training day on the new 4.4. This will take roughly 20-30 minutes per pair. Completed a multi-agency tour of FPC existing and upcoming plantations in the Boyup Brook and West Arthur Shires; have requested maps to be stored in trucks of any existing or planned plantation areas from FPC and Bunbury Fibre to help with situational awareness and

notification when dealing with fires or any issues in or within close proximity to their plantation areas. Thanks Rayna for coming along and representing Bunbury Fibre Plantations. Vehicle ID stickers should be at the Shire office; collect your sticker and record your vehicle details on the run sheet. Stickers also available for each truck with radio channels for BFBs, DBCA and water bombers if dealing with fires on the western side of the Shire. Completed training for three new FCOs in the Shire.

4.2 District Officer, Paul Blechynden:

See attached full report, of note Rural Fire Awareness training has been rolled out across the Upper Great Sothern, trialling a training system that fast tracks training for experienced fire fighters reducing the time spent in the classroom. As a reminder, make the call early for air attack especially if a job is evolving the sooner they are requested the quicker they can assist. Ask for DPIRD's assistance if the euthanasia of animals is required this will help alleviate farmers from doing this job where there is usually a high amount of emotion attached.

4.3 Forrest Product Commission, Greg Hodgson:

See attached report.

4.4 Department of Water & Environmental Regulation:

No report received.

4.5 Williams Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service: Lester Fawcett:

No report received.

4.6 Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions, Matt Cooper:

Up to fire 24 for the Wellington District. Soil Dryness Index is drying fast, doing some prescribed burning mainly around Collie, some prescriptions may take place in the West Arthur Shire in Autumn. Water bombers online following the harvest season, currently based out of Geraldton and Northam to be online shortly depending on seasonal conditions. Water bomber reloading training at the Hillman Air Strip will have to be cancelled this year as there were little to no interest for this training. This may create a hesitance to utilise this area if there are no trained re-fillers available. It was noted by some of the members that they were not aware this is an annual requirement.

4.7 Bunbury Fibre Exports, Rayna Barr:

New to the area of forest fire management; looking forward to working in with and meeting everyone. Aware of a couple of issues regarding heaped piles on the western side of the Shire; hopefully this has been sorted out by now after a discussion was had with the harvesters.

5.0 Officer Reports:

5.1 Chief's Report, Ben Robinson:

Quiet winter with one car fire on the Albany Highway. Plantation piles smouldering on the Boyup Brook border; discussion was held around the time of year these are to be lit and the discussions already had with the harvesters to change their process to include the spreading out of these piles so as to not create a hazard of them sitting there over the high threat period.

5.2 Arthur River Bush Fire Brigade, Ben Robinson:

Nothing of significance to report in addition to the Chief's report.

5.3 Darkan Bush Fire Brigade, Duncan South:

Three new FCOs now trained up, with two new members needing fire awareness training.

5.4 Duranillin Bush Fire Brigade, Adrian South:

Vandals got into the shed, tyres were let down on the truck and the DEFIB was tampered with. The shed now has a coded lock on it. It was noted that the Arthur River shed also has a code lock installed on it. AGM coming up next month.

6.0. New Business Arising:

6.1 Recording of Fast Fill Trailers, Kohdy Flynn:

It was discussed there were roughly ten fast fill trailer units in the Shire, and it was agreed that there needed to be a recoding system to maintain servicing and replacement schedules. A list was left with Shire admin to collate what information there already was. Once all the trailers are accounted for, we can progress and issue identifying numbers for them and start to do any maintenance that is required on them.

6.2 Recording of DFES issued WAERN Radios, Kohdy Flynn:

A discussion was held around the issuing of WAERN base and handheld radios. Current list is out of date making new justifications difficult. A record sheet was left with Shire admin to collate any current information to see if there are any short falls that may exist in the Shire.

6.3 Review of the Fire Break Notice:

Moved: Neil Morrell

Seconded: Adrian South

A brief review of the fire break notice was required to stipulate the minimum mitigation requirements for land holders within the town boundaries whose land is less than 2023sqm. Previously there was no requirement. The changes highlighted in the notice were proposed with the recommendation that it is endorsed through council and publicised in the Government Gazette and conveyed to all ratepayers in the Shire.

CARRIED

7.0 Financial Report:

2022/23 ESL Allocation \$49,844

Expended to Date:

Insurance Vehicles -	\$8380.88
Other -	\$18,140.64
Vehicle Licensing	\$410.38
Vehicle Servicing	\$3117.45
Freight	\$74.45
PPE (Helmets)	\$4,825.12
Repairs -	\$206
Others -	\$193
Total Expended	\$35,347.92
Difference	\$14,496.08

8.0 General Business:

8.1 Fast Fill Trailer:

A group discussion was held regarding the fast fill trailers. The working group previously established has now designed a trailer with pump and fast fill components. This trailer has now been manufactured by an independent supplier. The complete cost of the unit is \$8,300. After seeking guidance from the DFES grants funding officer it was confirmed that, as these units were over \$5,000 each, an application will have to be made to the capital grants committee for approval to purchase. The other option was for the Shire or the brigades to seek independent funding for these units from such sources as community grant funding or lotteries grants. Kohdy advised he will send an email to the funding officer to gauge support from the committee. It's envisioned if positive feedback is received three units will be applied for (one for each brigade) in the 2023/24 round of LGGS funding.

8.2 Training:

A face-to-face training day/evening will be planned for FCOs/FWO wishing to gain access to the new Australian Fire Danger viewer to give members access to this platform and enable them to make sound judgments on harvest and vehicle movement bans and plan ahead for forecast days of elevated fire danger.

Training records of all members were requested by a brigade. All brigade personnel training records will be sent out to the Captains/FCO for their information along with the current training calendar of courses available to all members.

Rual Fire Awareness training was discussed for new and existing members, covering off on the basics. This can be done one evening within about 5 hours.

8.3 For Council to endorse Fire Weather Officers and publicise in the Gazette.

Moved: Neil Morrell

Seconded: Kohdy Flynn

A new motion was moved for the Council to endorse and Gazette Adrian South as a Fire Weather Officer and James Campbell as a Deputy Fire Weather Officer for the Shire of West Arthur as per the recommendation from the BFAC committee for the purposes of issuing and reviewing of permits to burn on days of forecast “High” fire danger ratings.

CARRIED

9.0 Closure:

The Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 10.00pm