



INFORMAL MEETING NOTES

**Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting to be held
Monday 3 November 2025**

Commencing at 7.00pm

**Nannup State Emergency Service (SES)
319 Sexton Way, Nannup**

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Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Monday 3 November 2025

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY:

The Presiding Member, Cr Cheryle Brown could not declare the meeting open as quorum was not met.

Presiding Member, Cr Brown advised the Committee that a quorum was not present. To avoid wasting attendees' time, the meeting proceeded as a discussion only, with formal minutes from 1 September 2025 to be accepted at the next meeting in February 2026. This meeting will be recorded as notes. Presiding Member, Cr Brown confirmed all members were agreeable

The Presiding Member, Cr Brown thanked everyone for attending.

Welcome to country was acknowledged by presiding member:

I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on, the Wardandi and Bibbulmun people. I acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and their contribution they make to the life of this region.

The Presiding Member, Cr Brown advised everyone that the meeting is being recorded for note taking purposes only.

2. ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES:

| Councillors | Staff |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Cr Cheryle Brown (Presiding Member) | Geoff Allam – Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) |
| | Lisa Atkinson – Executive Support Officer |

| Members (Full Voting rights) |
|---|
| John Patman, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer |
| Mike Vasey – Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and North Nannup FCO (DCBFCO) |
| Robert Marshall – Carlotta FCO |
| Vic Lorkiewicz – East Nannup FCO |
| John Jonker, Peerabeelup Coastal FCO |

| Other Attendees (Non-Voting rights) |
|--|
| John Thompson – Captain, North Nannup |
| Peter Grubb, President, Nannup Brook Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade |
| Peter Thomas – District Officer - Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) |

2.2 APOLOGIES

| Councillors | Staff |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Cr Lyn Curtis (Deputy Presiding Member) | David Taylor, Chief Executive Officer |

| Members (Full Voting rights) |
|--|
| Mark Scott – Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Balingup Road FCO (DCBFCO) |
| Gerald Brown – Cundinup FCO |
| Jesse Francis – Darradup FCO |
| Leigh Fletcher, Nannup Brook FCO |
| Andrew McNab – Scott River/Lake Jasper FCO |
| Bryce Edwards – Forest Products Commission |

3. PETITIONS/DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS:

Nil.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES:

4.1 Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting – 1 September 2025

Due to the lack of quorum, the minutes from the Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) held on 1 September 2025 will be confirmed as a true and correct record at the next BFAC meeting on 2 February 2026 (Attachment 4.1).

5. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:

Nil.

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES:

6.1 *Actions from previous meeting 1 September 2025*

11.1 The Shire to follow up on the operational status of the Golf Course Pump for the upcoming fire season

Geoff Allam (CESM) reported the pump at the dam near the golf course is operational. The standpipe near the recreation centre (red, from water tanks) is available, but North Nannup reported it was not working on Sunday. Nannup Brooke has used the standpipes three times without issue. Geoff Allam advised he will investigate if the standpipe is working.

Action: Geoff Allam (CESM) will investigate if the Standpipe is working.

7. REPORTS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

7.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (Attachment 7.1)

John Patman (CBFCO) reported one incident in the past three months—a vehicle fire in North Nannup. He attended the W-FAC Conference in Perth and the Scott River AGM after training with Geoff Allam (CESM), both well attended. John added the Brigade is becoming familiar with the 1.4 tanker, which performs well off-road but poorly on-road, requiring further discussion. John also attended East Nannup's AGM and training, he noted some training gaps. On 2 November 2025, Darradup Bush Fire Brigade hosted a pre-season catch-up with 40 attendees for training, skills assessments, and networking. John thanked Geoff Allam (CESM) for organising that.

7.2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers

Nil.

7.3 Bush Fire Control Officers

7.3.1 Balingup Road Bush Fire Control Officer

Mark Scott (Balingup Road FCO) was an apology. Geoff Allam (CESM) reported that Balingup Road Bush Fire Brigade held its AGM on 11 November 2025.

7.3.2 Carlotta Bush Fire Control Officer (Attachment 7.3.2)

Rob Marshall (Carlotta FCO) advised there was nothing further to add. Report was attached.

7.3.3 Cundinup Bush Fire Control Officer

Gerald Brown was an apology. Geoff Allam (CESM) reported the Cundinup Bush Fire Brigade official opening was held on 22 November 2025. A 65-year service medal was presented to Brian Thomas. Geoff added he will try to arrange the Scott River Tanker for handover.

7.3.4 Darradup Bush Fire Control Officer (Attachment 7.3.4)

Jesse Francis (Darradup FCO) was an apology. Report was attached.

7.3.5 East Nannup Bush Fire Control Officer

Vic Lorkiewicz (East Nannup FCO) advised East Nannup Bush Fire Brigade held its AGM and there were no changes.

John Patman (CBFCO) noted that East Nannup currently does not have a captain. Vic Lorkiewicz (East Nannup FCO) responded that the Brigade President would contact the previous captain to confirm whether he wishes to continue in the role, no decision has been made yet as they are waiting for his response. Vic Lorkiewicz added that if the previous Captain declined, someone else will volunteer. John Patman (CBFCO) emphasised that whoever takes on the captain role must be prepared to undertake training and fulfill the responsibilities. Vic Lorkiewicz responded this will be addressed once the captain's position is confirmed. John Patman (CBFCO) responded that an answer on the captain appointment be provided by the end of November 2025.

John Patman (CBFCO) raised concerns about East Nannup Bush Fire Brigades lack of skills sign-off and compliance, he noted that at this stage the brigade may not be deployable. Geoff Allam (CESM) confirmed that only a few members have completed the required skills, including hydrant use, hoses, water suppression, and the burn-over drill. Geoff Allam (CESM) added that these training requirements have been communicated throughout the year via email and at BFAC meetings. Vic Lorkiewicz (East Nannup FCO) responded and disputed receiving official correspondence and requested that Geoff Allam (CESM) present the details directly to the brigade. John Patman (CBFCO) responded that there is no need for another meeting as the correspondence and requirements can be provided. Vic Lorkiewicz (East Nannup FCO) responded that he was not aware of the matter. John Patman (CBFCO) responded to Vic Lorkiewicz that he was the only FCO in the Brigade he has heard that from and that he is confident everyone received the same correspondence.

The Presiding Member, Cr Brown, stated that the meeting should move forward.

Mike Vasey (North Nannup FCO) offered formal training to East Nannup Bush Fire Brigade at North Nannup Fire Shed to assist East Nannup members in meeting compliance. Presiding Member Cr Brown suggested Vic Lorkiewicz, Geoff Allam, John Patman, and Mike Vasey work together to resolve the matter.

7.3.6 Nannup Brook Bush Fire Control Officer

Leigh Fletcher (Nannup Brook FCO) was noted as an apology. Geoff Allam (CESM) reported that Leigh advised Nannup Brook conducted a burn on Keith Vickery's property about a month ago, and apart from that Nannup Brook have been conducting continuous training.

7.3.7 North Nannup Bush Fire Control Officer

Mike Vasey (North Nannup FCO) reported that, apart from a recent car fire incident which served as an exercise for the North Nannup crew on the VFRS, the brigade is continuing ongoing training. He noted that approximately 85% of the crew is available for this season, while 15% are standing down for personal reasons for the next 12 months.

7.3.8 Peerabellup Fire Control Officer

Nil.

7.3.9 Peerabellup Coastal Fire Control Officer

Nil

7.3.10 Scott River/Lake Jasper Bush Fire Control Officer

Nil.

8. REPORTS OF OFFICERS:

8.1 *Community Emergency Services Manager (Attachment 8.1)*

Geoff Allam (CESM) reported that all appliances are being serviced, with the Carlotta truck scheduled for an on-site service later in November or December 2025. All lay-flat hoses will be tested for the first time in the Shire. Rob Marshall (Carlotta FCO) raised concerns about hoses being returned without tags, he questioned how to identify tested hoses and their ownership. Geoff Allam (CESM) responded that metal tags are not used as they can cause injury; instead, he has recorded all returned hoses and will mark them with a black marker. Geoff added is still awaiting the official testing report.

Secondary PPC is largely in place, with most active members equipped along with respirators and additional cleaning stations. The only outstanding installations are washing machines at Scott River and Cundinup.

The current budget is \$175,140.00, with \$80,000 already spent. Geoff advised that an overspend notice has been submitted. A significant portion of the expenditure, \$70,000, was for appliance servicing, and three appliances have been fitted with new tyres. Additionally, two fascia trailers have been received. Geoff noted that he will review the budget toward the end of the year to determine if further items can be included; otherwise, they will be deferred and listed as a Line 9 item.

8.2 *CESM Agenda Items (Attachment 8.2)*

Bush Fire Brigades – Standard Operating Procedures (Attachment 8.2.1)

Geoff Allam (CESM) reported that the restricted burning period commenced on 3 November 2025 and will run until 19 December 2025. He was awaiting confirmation on the grant application for signage; once approved, applications can proceed. In the meantime, existing signs would remain displayed around town.

The fire break awareness program has been successful. He noted that the Shire currently does not have a Ranger, and there is significant activity regarding the Ranger role. The position will work closely with Geoff in the CESM role and supporting mitigation efforts. The plan is to appoint someone as soon as possible.

Geoff advised members to monitor areas of interest for mitigation works. A grant application will be submitted early next year, and Geoff will send correspondence, and brigades should inform him of any areas requiring work.

The BFAC Terms of Reference was endorsed by Council in September, and a copy has been circulated.

The Bushfire Operating Procedures have been updated and distributed, with key changes to roles and responsibilities. Geoff requested everyone review and provide comments. Additional updates are required, and the Shire's Code of Conduct must be followed. Once clarified, the document will be presented to Council for endorsement.

9. REPORTS OF OTHER ATTENDEES:

9.1 *Department of Fire and Emergency Services*

Peter Thomas (DFES) reported he had been away for six weeks acting as Superintendent in Geraldton and Bunbury and has now returned. He thanked Geoff Allam (CESM) and the team for their efforts in training and pre-season preparedness. Peter advised there have been significant changes to the State Bushfire Plan, which sits under multiple fire-related legislations and is managed by DFES as a Hazard Management Agency. The plan has undergone major reforms, with the most notable impact being the introduction of minimum training standards for firefighters, including basic firefighting skills, bushfire safety awareness, and rural fire awareness for farmers. Another key change is the formal documentation of transfer of control, which Geoff Allam (CESM) has already implemented. Peter offered to provide further details or table the plan at the BFAC meeting in February 2026.

DFES has conducted pre-season audits of Incident Control Offices, including Nannup, to ensure readiness. Locations include Bridgetown, Donnybrook, Margaret River, and Busselton. A multi-agency workshop with WA Police, DBCA, and others is scheduled for early December 2025 to prepare for the bushfire season.

9.2 *Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions*

Nil.

9.3 *Forest Products Commission*

Nil.

10. STANDING ITEMS:

10.1 *Emergency Services Levy (ESL)*

Geoff Allam (CESM) advised this was covered in his report.

11. GENERAL BUSINESS:

11.1 Geoff Allam (CESM) advised John Patman, (CBFCO) and MIKE Vasey (DCBFCO) that the ROAC meeting is 20 November 2025 and will be held at Loose Goose.

11.2 John Thompson (Captain, North Nannup) expressed concern that brigades are primarily engaged in blackouts rather than active firefighting, often being overlooked for fire response. He warned this could discourage volunteers and make attracting new members difficult.

Peter Thomas (DFES) responded John Thompson's concerns about blackout duties, he explained that deployment requests—whether within or outside the region—are made to relieve fatigued local crews, not always for active firefighting. He emphasised the need to set expectations before deployment, as tasks can range from monitoring to full fire suppression. Some deployments may involve long waiting periods due to potential risk, while others can be highly demanding.

John Patman (CBFCO) added that mop-ups are necessary as wind changes can cause flare-ups, sometimes saving homes. Extra crews are deployed as a precaution, and participation in mop-ups is optional.

Vic Lorkiewicz (East Nannup FCO) noted that members of the East Nannup Fire Brigade all work for a living and lose income if deployed only for mop-ups. He stated that volunteers are willing to respond to active fires, but being told later they are just mopping up discourages participation. John Patman (CBFCO) acknowledged this concern. Vic added that if volunteers were called for an active fire, most would attend, but if told days later they are only mopping up, they would be unlikely to respond.

John Patman (CBFCO) noted that some volunteers choose to attend deployments for experience or personal reasons, which is acceptable as participation is voluntary. He added that recent fires, such as at Shannon National Park, can change quickly—one crew was present when conditions escalated, highlighting the unpredictability of deployments. John added he was there mopping up.

Peter Thomas (DFES) acknowledged the challenges of long-distance deployments, such as Shannon National Park, and emphasised the importance of having resources on-site promptly. He agreed with John Thompson's (Captain, North Nannup) concerns and stressed the need to set clear expectations for crews—whether they will be relieving locals or engaging in active firefighting. Peter committed to improving communication and ensuring taskforce leaders clarify roles before deployment.

Presiding Member Cr Brown emphasized the importance of setting expectations and acknowledging brigades' efforts, noting that recognition for tasks like blacking out can make a big difference. Peter Thomas (DFES) agreed, adding that knowing other crews are coming to assist provides reassurance and value.

Vic Lorkiewicz (East Nannup FCO) noted that while local crews respond readily, long-distance deployments for minimal tasks can frustrate volunteers. Peter Thomas (DFES) acknowledged this concern. Geoff Allam (CESM) added that similar complaints were raised at the ROC debrief across multiple Shires, he explained volunteers often serve as backup while paid crews handle front-line firefighting. John Jonker (Peerabeelup Coastal FCO) shared his experience in Nortcliffe, where his crew initially patrolled roads but later assisted with backburning.

11.2 Cr Brown acknowledged Cr Fraser for her long-standing contribution and support to BFAC, noting her service of over six years, and welcomed Cr Curtis as the new Council representative.

11.3 Geoff Allam (CESM) advised that packs have been prepared for FCOs, including information on incident controller support and the State Exercise. He requested everyone collect a pack today and review the contents.

11.4 Vic Lorkiewicz (East Nannup FCO) spoke about the difficulties faced by rangers inspecting plantations in East Nannup, noting that there are around 30 plantation owners and most do not have proper firebreaks in place. He explained that when rangers come out for inspections, they often say they cannot enforce compliance, which creates an ongoing problem. Vic highlighted that the responsibility lies with the State Government to ensure firebreak standards are met and that private plantations follow the same requirements. He added that he has been dealing with this issue for over 40 years without any resolution and expressed hope that the new ranger will receive strong support from the Council and others in the role. Vic questioned who will ensure plantations comply and provide the necessary firebreaks. Presiding Member, Cr Brown acknowledged the concern and suggested it may be more of an operational matter and will be taken on notice for further discussion, possibly by Geoff Allam (CESM).

12. PROPOSED DATE FOR NEXT MEETING:

Monday, 2 February 2026 starting at 7pm at the Nannup SES.

13. CLOSURE OF MEETING:

Presiding Member, Cr Brown could not declare the meeting closed as quorum was not met.

Attachments

| Attachments | Title |
|--------------------|--|
| 4.1 | Minutes from the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Annual General Meeting held 1 September 2025 |
| 6.1 | Actions from previous meeting 1 September 2025 |
| 8.1 | CESM Report |
| 8.2 | Agenda Items CESM |
| 8.2.1 | Bush Fire Brigades Standard Operating Procedures |
| 7.3.2 | Carlotta FCO Report |
| 7.3.4 | Darradup FCO Report |