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# **MINUTES**

**Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Monday 31 July 2023**

**Nannup SES, Sexton Way, Nannup**

Unconfirmed copy

## Contents

1.	DECLARATION OF OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY: .....	4
2.	ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES:.....	4
2.1	Attendance .....	4
2.2	Apologies .....	5
3	PETITIONS/DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS: .....	5
4	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES: .....	5
4.1	Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting – 1 May 2023 .....	5
5	DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST: .....	5
6	BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES: .....	5
7	REPORTS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS:.....	6
7.1	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer .....	6
7.2	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer .....	6
7.2.1	John Patman.....	6
7.2.2	Mark Scott.....	7
7.3	Bush Fire Control Officers (FCO's) .....	7
7.3.1	Balingup Road .....	7
7.3.2	Carlotta.....	7
7.3.3	Cundinup.....	7
7.3.4	Darradup .....	7
7.3.5	East Nannup .....	7
7.3.6	Nannup Brook .....	7
7.3.7	North Nannup .....	7
7.3.8	Peerabeelup .....	8
7.3.9	Peerabeelup Coastal .....	8
7.3.10	Scott River/Lake Jasper .....	8
8	REPORTS OF OFFICERS:.....	8
8.1	Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) .....	8
9	REPORTS OF OTHER ATTENDEES: .....	8
9.1	Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Peter Thomas, District Officer.....	8
9.2	Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions, John Fishwick .....	9
9.3	Forest Products Commission, Greg Hodgson .....	9
10	STANDING ITEMS:.....	9
10.1	Emergency Services Levy (ESL) .....	9
10.2	Mitigation Activity Fund (MAF) .....	10

11 GENERAL BUSINESS: ..... 10

12 PROPOSED DATE FOR NEXT MEETING:..... 13

13 CLOSURE OF MEETING:..... 13

## Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

### Monday 31 July 2023

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

Welcome to country acknowledged by presiding member. Meeting declared open at 5:40pm.

Presiding member, welcomes both Nathan Manning and Brodie Walton to their new roles and to their first Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting.

#### 2. ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES:

##### 2.1 Attendance

Councillors	Staff
Cr Cheryle Brown (Presiding Member)	Kellie Jenkins – Manager Corporate Services/Deputy Chief Executive Officer (MCS)
	Nathan Manning – Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM)
	Brodie Walton – Ranger
	Andrea Jenkins – Communications Officer (CO)

Members (Full Voting rights)
Robin Mellema – Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO)
Mark Scott – Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Balingup Road FCO (DCBFCO)
John Patman – Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Darradup FCO (DCBFCO)
Mike Vasey – North Nannup FCO
Peter Hastie – Carlotta FCO
Victor Lorkiewicz – East Nannup FCO
John Jonker – Peerabeelup Coastal FCO
Gerald Brown – Cundinup FCO
Andrew McNab – Scott River/Lake Jasper FCO

Other Attendees (Non-Voting rights)
Chris Doherty – Bushfire Risk Mitigation Coordinator – Shire of Nannup
Peter Thomas – District Officer - Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES)
Greg Hodgson – Forest Products Commission (FPC)
John Fishwick – Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)
Glen Delbridge – Captain Darradup

## 2.2 Apologies

Councillors	Staff
Cr Patricia Fraser (Deputy to Presiding Member)	David Taylor, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Members (Full Voting rights)
Carey Curtis – Nannup Brook FCO
Brett Fowler – Peerabeelup FCO

Other Attendees (Non-Voting rights)
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) staff

## 3 PETITIONS/DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS:

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Nil.

## 4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES:

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### 4.1 Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting – 1 May 2023

#### *Motion*

*That the Minutes from the Bush Fire Advisory Committee held 1 May 2023 be confirmed as a true and correct record (Attachment 4.1).*

<b>MOVED</b> Gerald Brown	<b>SECONDED</b> Robin Mellema
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**CARRIED**

## 5 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:

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Nil.

## 6 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES:

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6.1 Robin Mellema, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, requested further information regarding signage spoken off at the last meeting.

ACTION: Nathan Manning, CESM, to confirm this is the signage that Helen Holzheuer (DBCA) has passed to BLACKWOOD District rangers to investigate further. Nathan Manning, CESM, to discuss this further with Louise Stokes, Recovery Officer, Shire of Nannup, and add it to the November 2023 meeting as an agenda item.

**6.10Cr** Cheryle Brown, Presiding Member, asked if Brian Tomas Cundinup VBFB 60 year service required further follow up. Peter Thomas confirmed no further action was required.

**6.12** Mark Scott, Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Balingup Road FCO, enquired about termite and vermin inspections. Nathan Manning, Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM), spoke to the item, stating that Louise Stokes, Recovery Officer Shire of Nannup, had been in contact with pest control companies and he had received an email to schedule inspections.

ACTION: Nathan Manning, CESM, to confirm termite and vermin inspection scheduling of VBFB sheds and vehicles.

### **Motion**

***That the Business Arising from the Previous Minutes has been addressed and actioned.***

<b>MOVED</b> John Patman	<b>SECONDED</b> Mike Vasey
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**CARRIED**

## **7 REPORTS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

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### **7.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer**

Welcome to new CESM and Ranger. We wish you all the best and look forward to working with you.

There were a few incidents that were dealt with by other FCOs but everything else has been quiet.

Thank you to John Patman for going to the course, Chief Bushfire Control Officer Forum, at the Bushfire Centre of Excellence. This course was attended by John Patman as Robin Mellema could not attend.

### **7.2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer**

#### **7.2.1 John Patman**

Spoke to the Chief Bushfire Control Officer Forum, at the Bushfire Centre of Excellence, recommending the Centre of Excellence to the room. The forum was held over three days and was very informative. Guest speaker of interest was Shane Fitzsimmons, Former Commissioner of the New South Wales Rural Fire Service, who detailed statistics from the 2019/2020 fires he managed. Also as part of the forum, Risk Management within DFES was discussed with DFES taking on more of a risk

mitigation role. Fleets were also discussed with the new 1.4 IVECO suggested as a vehicle of interest for the Scott River/Lake Jasper Bush Fire Brigade. The Future Frontier was mentioned with DFES not taking over Local Government brigades.

### **7.2.2 Mark Scott**

Nothing to report

## **7.3 Bush Fire Control Officers (FCO's)**

### **7.3.1 Balingup Road**

Nothing to report

### **7.3.2 Carlotta**

Nothing to report

### **7.3.3 Cundinup**

No incidents to report. The Cundinup Unit attended the Volunteer Expo on Saturday 20 May as part of National Volunteer Week.

The Cundinup Fire Shed is close to being complete, with lighting to shower and toilets being done. The floors are still to be sealed but needs to wait for warmer weather.

### **7.3.4 Darradup**

Darradup Bushfire Brigade recently had a new residents' day aimed at gaining new members. There were new sign ups from the day.

It was also noted that residents in Jalbarraup/Darradup would like to know resident statistics, particularly the number of residents in Jalbarragup/Darradup.

Kellie Jenkins, Manager Corporate Services/Deputy Chief Executive Officer, spoke to this item, stating that data would not provide information regarding permanent and holiday residents.

ACTION: John Patman, Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Darradup FCO, to follow up Jalbarragup/Darradup resident number information.

A mention to the agenda item regarding non-compliant firebreaks and wanting to see action taken in this area.

### **7.3.5 East Nannup**

Nothing to report

### **7.3.6 Nannup Brook**

Nothing to report

### **7.3.7 North Nannup**

North Nannup Bushfire Brigade held their AGM ten days ago with no changes to the structure.

Nothing else to report

### **7.3.8 Peerabeelup**

Nothing to report

### **7.3.9 Peerabeelup Coastal**

Spoke to the new 1.4 IVECO in relation to the DFES committee he is on and Peter Thomas is chair of.

### **7.3.10 Scott River/Lake Jasper**

Nothing to report

## **8 REPORTS OF OFFICERS:**

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### **8.1 Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM)**

Nothing to report after the first month in the role. Nathan is looking forward to touching base with all committee members and brigades.

## **9 REPORTS OF OTHER ATTENDEES:**

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### **9.1 Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Peter Thomas, District Officer**

New information regarding the National Warning Systems. The rest of the roll out looking to be complete mid-2024. There will be some changes to the icons, warning levels and colours with the addition to the warnings some accompanying action statements.

There is a new number for the Public Information Officer – members advised to change that number in their phones, especially the Chief, Deputies and CESM. Also, a reminder that the number is for internal use only, not for the public.

Spoke regarding firefighting in Canada and how different it is to Australia. Recommended members take up the opportunity to go to Canada if it presents.

Lower South West Leadership Forum is on 2 September 2023 in Nannup at the Nannup Recreation Centre, with various guest speakers, vehicle displays, with the view to get the IVECO 1.4 there, occupational health and safety and conflict resolution. Email should have gone out to Chief and CESM for nominations. There are 4 positions per each Local Government.

The Western Australia Fire and Emergency Services (WAFES) Conference starts on 8 September. No representation is going from Nannup as nominations have already closed.

Welcome to Nathan Manning to the role of CESM.



## **9.2 Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions, John Fishwick**

Nothing official to report. It is the quiet time of the year with lots of planning of burns, trying to prepare for the next fire season.

## **9.3 Forest Products Commission, Greg Hodgson**

Spoke to report that was circulated around the table as a late attachment.

Key points were in relation to building internal capacity.

Partnering with DBCA for ecological thinning.

Plantation Fire Guidelines are probably still 12 months from completion. This will be consistent with state planning and referenced.

Two new FPC properties on the hill that a Japanese Power Company bought had promotional planting.

Forest Industries Federation Western Australia (FIFWA) have participants attending the Rural Fire Awareness Course. FPC will be assisting with that.

Community Grants have just been granted and Greg Hodgson believes Shire of Nannup was successful in securing funding for UHF radios.

**ACTION:** Nathan Manning, CESM, to confirm this funding is secured

Welcome to Nathan Manning and Brodie Walton and Greg suggested a future conversation with himself and Chris Doherty to discuss issues that may arise.

Mark Scott, Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Balingup Road FCO, raised a question to Greg Hodgson and John Fishwick regarding FPC's reduced capacity to fund hazard reduction burning as part of the harvest process and whether DBCA has seen an increase in funding to allow for changes in this area.

Greg Hodgson spoke to this question stating that FPC is funding eleven burns in the Warren Blackwood District as plantation protection burns.

John Fishwick, DBCA, stated the changes could be beneficial as it will allow space for DBCA to focus on larger burns, rather than having to delegate resources to smaller FPC burns.

Mark Scott said council and Councillors need to be aware of these changes and pressure kept on the government to ensure hazard reduction burning funding is matched as it has been previously to avoid further worsening of hazards.

Robin Mellema, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, raised a question regarding the ecological thinning programs – seeking clarification regarding where they are and the parameters. Greg Hodgson spoke to the question, stating that details are not known yet however priority will be on the Karri. 8,000 Hectares that FPC was meant to work on, on behalf of DBCA, but further fine tuning needs to take place.

## **10 STANDING ITEMS:**

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### **10.1 Emergency Services Levy (ESL)**

Acquittal in progress for 22/23.  
Current YTD \$130,000 yet to be finalised

## **10.2 Mitigation Activity Fund (MAF)**

Guest, Chris Doherty, Bushfire Risk Mitigation Coordinator, Shire of Nannup, delivered a MAF information session.

He detailed the treatment design and application process currently in place for the Shire of Nannup and tabled the BRMS treatment as well as the table to be completed for any areas of concern.

There is roughly two weeks until MAF opens for application and a further two weeks to finalise applications. Management of the MAF goes back to the Shire of Nannup CEO and the Shire of Nannup Treatment Manager. Chris Doherty discussed changes to funding that has halved since the last round.

**ACTION:** Chris Doherty to talk with Nathan Manning, CESM, to discuss funding process further.

Robin Mellema, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, questioned funding. Chris Doherty spoke to costing as stated in the MAF guidelines and how funding is secured.

## **11 GENERAL BUSINESS:**

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### **11.1** John Patman, Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (South), to discuss firebreak compliance

John Patman detailed the history being this issue over the last 13-14 years with lots of properties in Jalbarragup/Darradup non-compliant. Discussion occurred regarding Rosalyn Edwards, previous Shire of Nannup Ranger, making positive progress when properties were sold. John Patman detailed a time 6 months ago, when himself and Rosalyn drove through an area and marked non-compliant properties.

Kellie Jenkins spoke to this saying it was the first she had heard of it, agreeing that the focus has been on the sale of properties as they are easy to identify.

**ACTION:** Brodie Walton, Ranger, and Kellie Jenkins, Manager Corporate Services/Deputy Chief Executive Officer, request the map with markings and determine a plan and schedule. Kellie Jenkins suggested utilising FCO knowledge as a guiding point but discussion occurred regarding road view and aerial view and how knowledge might misrepresent.

John Patman stated that historically infringements have been given but then retracted as they were not legally binding. He wants to ensure that infringements are in line with the law. Kellie Jenkins spoke to this with regards to the recommendation to endorse the Bushfire Risk Compliance Notice.

**ACTION:** Kellie Jenkins, Manager Corporate Services/Deputy Chief Executive Officer, and Brodie Walton, Ranger, to look at education awareness and FCOs to provide properties with known non-compliance as a starting point.

Chris Doherty, Bushfire Risk Mitigation Coordinator, stated that FCOs had supported the Ranger by driving with them at the Shire of Bridgetown with success.

Mike Vasey, North Nannup FCO, spoke to the variations stated in the Compliance Notice and how it led people to believe they didn't need to action their compliance as their variation was still current.

More than half the FCOs present also stated they had driven around with the previous ranger regarding non-compliant firebreaks.

**11.2** Robin Mellema, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, to discuss electric vehicle fires

**11.2.1** Vehicle fires (attachment 11.2.1)

**11.2.2.** Fire safe information pack for volunteer emergency services (attachment 11.2.2)

**11.2.3** Minutes Volunteer Bush Fire Service Training Advisory Group (VBFSTAG) (attachment 11.2.3)

**11.2.4** Safety Circular LPG Vehicle Fires attachment (attachment 11.2.4)

**11.2.5** SOP 3.3.2 – Road Hazard Management (attachment 11.2.5)

**11.2.6** Special operations response =electric vehicle fires (attachment 11.2.6)

Robin Mellema spoke to all above documents, requesting members read through the information provided.

Peter Thomas, District Officer DFES, spoke to car fires, stating that the best practise was to keep a safe distance due to the high danger and toxicity levels as PPE will not offer protection in these circumstances. Peter Thomas also stated that if pre-season training is occurring, electric vehicles could be added as a training topic.

**11.3** Robin Mellema, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, to discuss Local Law Bushfire Brigades Out for review at the moment. David Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, has sent out as an email to CBFCO and both DCBFCO and will roll out further feedback after that.

**11.4** David Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Shire of Nannup, to discuss new agenda item template as per attachment 11.4 for future meetings

Nathan Manning, CESM, spoke to this item as David Taylor is an apology. Nathan stated that David wanted to bring more structure to the meeting and allow time for review of items, being given the chance to source information prior to the meeting where possible. The process will be that Nathan Manning will attach the template to an email requesting correspondence 3-4 weeks prior to the meeting dates. Members are to provide their items back to Nathan Manning minimum one week prior to the meeting dates. This can be sent digitally. Peter Hastie, Carlotta FCO, requested further information regarding the template which Nathan Manning provided. It was agreed that if there are any questions when filling in the template, members are to contact Nathan Manning for clarification.

**11.5** 2023-24 Bushfire Risk Compliance Notice (attachment 11.5)

<b>COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:</b>
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The Bush Fire Advisory Committee request the 2023-24 Bushfire Risk Compliance Notice as per attachment 11.5 be published in the Government Gazette, local newspaper and distributed to ratepayers.

Mark Scott, Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Balingup Road FCO, spoke to 3.2 in the Bushfire Risk Compliance Notice and notes historically the grass height recommended in this item as not to exceed one hundred twenty-five (125) millimetres in height, has sat in Rural Unmanaged Land. Mark Scott went on to explain that seed crops on rural managed land will be over the stipulated height and recommends that this grass height limit gets moved to 3.3 Rural Unmanaged Land.

Andrew McNab, Scott River/Lake Jasper FCO, recommended that the variations be moved from the front of the document to the end of the document.

Robin Mellema, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, and Mike Vasey, North Nannup FCO, questioned the variations and Kellie Jenkins, Manager Corporate Services/Deputy Chief Executive Officer, confirmed that variations still need to be compliant.

Cr Cheryle Brown, Presiding Member, questioned if the fees stated are set by council. Kellie Jenkins confirmed they are set by council as an administration fee.

Robin Mellema questioned the Cockatoo Valley Bushfire Management Plan and strategic firebreak. Kellie Jenkins confirmed that property owners are responsible for that as part of their development applications.

**ACTION:** Members to communicate with Kellie Jenkins, Manager Corporate Services/Deputy Chief Executive Officer, any further recommendations by 4 August 2023 prior to David Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, signing off on the document, ensuring that recommendations are legal.

### **Motion**

***That the 2023-24 Bushfire Risk Compliance Notice as per attachment 11.5 be published in the Government Gazette, local newspaper and distributed to ratepayers after stipulated recommendations are made to the document.***

<b>MOVED</b> Robin Mellema	<b>SECONDED</b> Peter Hastie
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**CARRIED**

- 11.6** Alteration of signage –need to follow up on the signage item as actioned in Business Arising from Previous Minutes.
- 11.7** Cr Cheryle Brown, Presiding Member, brought up previous discussion regarding Peter Thomas, District Officer, DFES, doing an information training session regarding being first on scene and protecting any potentiometer arson evidence. Peter Thomas will do a presentation on this prior to the next BFAC meeting. Captains are invited to attend presentation at 6:30pm prior to BFAC meeting commencing at 7pm.

ACTION: Captains of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades to be invited to the DFES presentation run by district officer, Peter Thomas, occurring at 6:30pm on Monday 6 November 2023.

- 11.8** Mark Scott, Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Balingup Road FCO, brought up the lack of mobile reception in the SES Building, as an incident management building, and asked why the booster is not working.

Action: Nathan Manning, CESM, to investigate why there is no reception in the SES building.

## **12 PROPOSED DATE FOR NEXT MEETING:**

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Monday 6 November 2023 starting at 7pm at the Nannup SES.

## **13 CLOSURE OF MEETING:**

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Closed at 7:16pm.