

SHIRE OF DENMARK

Minutes



BUSH FIRE ADVISORY AGM & COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD IN THE SHIRE OF DENMARK RECEPTION ROOM
THURSDAY, 28th September 2023, COMMENCING AT 6:30pm

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1. DECLARATION OF OPENING 6.31pm

The Chairperson to acknowledge the land on which this meeting is being held and the traditional custodians of the land, the Bibbulmun and Menang people and pay respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS:

Cr Ceinwen Gearon	Shire President, Council Delegate and Chairperson
Lez Baines	CBFCO
Nigel Marsh	DCBFCO
Shane Howlett	DCBFCO
Brian Vigus	Tingledale FCO
Gavin Butler	Somerset Hill FCO
Blair Darvill	William Bay FCO
Chris Hudson	Harewood FCO
Ian Coulson	Nornalup FCO
Craig Lilley	Kordabup FCO
Paul Moncrieff	Owingup FCO
Trevor Brown	Peaceful Bay FCO
Geoff Bowley	Shadforth FCO
Adrian Kranendonk	Fire Weather Officer
Graham Dixon	Ocean Beach FCO
Keith Da Silva	East Denmark Proxy
Chris Hoare	East Denmark FCO
Em Harper	Mt Lindesay Proxy

STAFF:

Mark Guerin	Community Emergency Services Manager
Claire Thompson	Governance Coordinator
Charmaine Shelley	Senior Ranger
Victoria Holloway	Bushfire Risk Mitigation Coordinator
Natalie Pescud	Administration Officer – Community Services

VISITORS:

Darin Hockley	VFRS, FCO
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APOLOGIES:

Cr Clare Campbell	Council Delegate
Paul Ashton	Australian Blue Gum Plantations
Diarmuid Kinsella	DFES
Tristan Farmer	DBCA
Nikki Rouse	DBCA
Alex Williams	Hazelvale FCO
Craig Hughes	Carmarthen FCO
Renee Wiggins	Manager of Community Services
Murray Brooker	Mt Lindesay FCO

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING

3.1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Ceinwen last meeting – thank you to everyone for keeping the community safe. Big thank you to all and please take this thank you back to brigades. Nice to see new faces. Sincere thank you for everything you do, well supported by the Council and Shire staff.

It is preferable that the mover of any motion to confirm previous Minutes needs to have been at the meeting.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

ITEM 3.1

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on the 23rd August 2023, be confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

Moved: Lez Baines

Seconded: Geoff Bowley

Carried: Unanimously

4. REPORTS

4.1. DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

- High Season Fleet for GS Region has been approved, first of these appliances should start arriving in November.
- Same allocations as last year, Denmark to receive a LT (hopefully for longer than 2 weeks)
- Industrial Action has lifted, we are attempting to catch up on the training that was postponed, but fire season is approaching soon.
- Public Information remains a key priority this season, expectations from the public are ever growing (if you cannot put the fire out, put the message out) NB: Murray Brooker on Denmark FM monthly.
- Incident Control Vehicle, located in Albany, can be requested through the RDC should you need it.
- At incidents, please update COMCEN regularly, they can assist you in the early stages of an incident, ie. request WAPF, Western Power, other resources or agencies required.
- Discussion – Any upgrade to Albany airport? Not yet. Any action on replacement vehicles? Not at this stage. Schedule for this? Mark will ask.
Is DFES doing more training in Denmark? Not now, Mark will be doing some training to allow him to run training in the future.
Can we reach out to Albany if many people want training? We can, but they are also busy.

4.2. DEPARTMENT OF BIODIVERSITY, CONSERVATION AND ATTRACTIONS

Spotter plane in Manjimup, if you are keen to attend pre-season day, call Mark.

What is pre-season training? It is like a refresher course; you are invited to do the training on the 10th of October.

ACTION: Mark to find out details of pre-season training and pass it on to brigades.

4.3. CHIEF BUSHFIRE CONTROL OFFICER

Lez is away for 7 weeks as of tomorrow. All enquiries to go to Nigel, Shane or the CISM. Phone will be turned off.

See Appendix A

ACTION: Vic to send electronic version of Prescribed Burn forms.

4.4. COMMUNITY EMERGENCY SERVICES MANAGER

Please collect various items for each brigade before leaving. Mark discussed batteries and chargers. Incident diaries, 1 per appliance, 1 per FCO. Fill it in and give Mark the top copy.

ACTION: Mark to order more incident diaries.

4.4.1. Incident reporting – Fire Incident Reporting System (FIRS) and hardcopy reports

Hardcopy reports to be completed and sent to Mark within 7 days of incident. Reports to be entered into FIRS within 14 days. Do it asap after the incident so you remember the details clearly.

4.4.2. Appliance tablets update & donated funds

Update on rollout, remaining funds, and distribution. Waiting for the tablets, everything else has arrived. Remote management will be possible. After tablets are installed, we have \$500 in group fund. Any suggestions, bring to next BFAC.

4.4.3. Standpipe checks

Brigades to function test their local standpipes and report any issues to Mark.

4.4.4. Training incl first aid

Availability of basic training courses, contingency plans, and future strategy. Next first aid course is 11th Nov. Conditions apply from DFES.

4.4.5. Driver training

No bookings available for practical driving assessment in next 6 months. If we can get 5 starters, an assessor can be requested for Denmark. Let Mark know asap if you have anyone wanting training, costs are covered.

4.4.6. Brigade payments & donations – process for funds

Send details of costs to Mark. Paid before burn.

4.4.7. Equipment Officer Role

Monthly function test of pumps. Integrity checks on hoses.

4.4.8. Appliance battery issues & timers

4.5. BUSHFIRE RISK MITIGATION COORDINATOR

Mitigation works started. 4 in the next month. 4 more in autumn. Great to have brigades and environment centre on board.

- Station Rd,
- Ocean Beach.
- Hazelvale,
- William Bay,
- Peaceful Bay – autumn.

Indigenous Rangers ready to go, Vic to catch up with Murray and interested brigades. 4 rangers, 2 different Indigenous Ranger Groups.

4.6. BUSHFIRE READY UPDATE

See Appendix B – presented by Em Harper (Mt Lindesay proxy)

ACTION: Murray to send street co-ordinators contact list to FCOs.

4.7. COUNCIL

All recommendations from last meeting went to council, all but one accepted.

Agreed – Lez Fire 1, Nigel Fire 2, didn't agree Shane as co-fire 2. Review of local laws needed. Shane – FCO, still Fire 3, just not official name. This doesn't change Shane's role.

ACTION: Mark to follow up with CEO. How can the local laws be changed to fix this issue?

5. GENERAL BUSINESS

Members are welcome to raise any items of general business at this point of the meeting. Items of general business must align with the Committee's Terms of Reference.

5.1. Local Laws and policies – Council representatives

An update on the timeframe for reviewing and updating bushfire local laws and policies. These are being worked on.

5.2. Turn out comms – Shane Howlett

Need brigades to call COMCEN (communications centre) Need to call them more often, as you leave the shed, on arrival call and call again when you get back to the shed. Call COMCEN if there is no driver available. Write all details in your diary if you are out of range, then call it in when you get back in range. Do not call COMCEN for training, just do a dry run during training. Duplicate the information – call over the radio and COMCEN. Discussion about coverage.

Enquiry - Telstra – can the Shire enquire about towers and reception?

5.3. BFB training schedule – Nigel Marsh

Most brigades have standard, regular training days. Nigel encouraging brigades to let Mark know when you're training. Mark can email brigades the combined schedule. If you can't make it to your training day, you can go to another brigade. Also, good to see the delivery of training in other brigades and meet other members.

5.4. Brigade Boundary Map – Nigel Marsh

Thanks for the input from everyone. Will be drawn, then printed. Same boundaries for now, if it's close to a boundary, let the neighbouring FCO know. If it's a structural fire VFRS, Bush Fire – BFBs.

Process to update gazetted area – town area.

5.5. Town BFB

Brigade will dissolve, nothing will change for this financial year. Members will transfer to other BFBs. Going forward, BFAC to decide on the role of Town BFB/VFRS in the meeting. Still in fire notice for public, so will remain until next financial year. Permits in town – for BFAC to decide.

General Business - around the room

Blair - Can another brigade member be trained to do permits? Is it useful to lobby or request for this to change? Lez – William Bay can have 2 FCOs and then they can both write permits. Shane – Albany has designated permit writers, not just FCOs.

ACTION: Blair to nominate people and communicate with Mark.

Next Meeting Agenda item: What do other Shires/Cities do for permits. Do they put requests through the Shire or to the volunteers? Some background information needed before next meeting.

Graham – permit process needs to be carefully reviewed.

Shane – Fire Management Notice – starting a burn, you must call COMCEN (DFES registration line) before burning. Be aware that fire dangers are starting to increase. Fires must be out if fire rating is high or above.

Gavin – permits, should sites be visited before a permit is given? Lez – it's highly recommended in Denmark. Can request photos prior to visiting.

If they have no means to put the fire out, do not issue a permit? Lez – Yes, if you are not sure call on Lez, Nigel, or Shane.

Nigel – ask for help if needed with permits. You can say no to a request.

Geoff – Some pads on DFIBS are being recalled, please check. How can the information from circulars be distributed to everyone? Ceinwen - If you read it and it's a high priority or a risk, put it on the agenda.

Insurance – people may not be covered if they don't follow the insurance.

ACTION: Victoria to investigate the wording of the notice.

Brian – incident at Bow River, the Shire slasher started fire. Chris Hoare – they did dial 000, they do have fire extinguishers (2x 9L for each slasher) and used them all, then tried with shovels to put it out, it's under review.

- Who is in control of maintaining from Evergrove-Pascoe Rd to South Coast Hwy?

Chris Hoare – often first to attend filling water bombers. Electric pumps have been left on after bombers have been use and not drained. Want to bring this back to East Denmark BFB to look after, and SES to assist. Mark – suggested go through steps with SES. Conversation needed with SES about refilling and care and maintenance.

Lez – radio schedules, if you write a permit, please submit to Shire and DBCA before 7pm to Marius and Betty Wakka.

Plantations – request for Mark to ask plantations to let COMCEN know about burns. Thank you to Ceinwen for her service, being a part of the BFAC.

Charmaine – lots of book a ranger appointments.

Nat – will ask Courtney to do a Facebook announcement with the DFES phone number to register burns.

6. NEXT MEETING

It is recommended that the next meeting of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee be held on the 14th of December at the Shire of Denmark Reception Room commencing at 6.30pm.

7. CLOSURE 8.53pm

8. Appendix A - DENMARK CHIEF REPORT

Just a few items in this report.

Brigade Equipment Officers.

Brigade Equipment Officers as one of their tasks need to start all stand-alone pumps to ensure that they are operating as they should.

Any issues should be put in the Fault book and the CESM notified.

Brigades also need to check out all of the layflat hoses on their appliances to ensure that they hold pressure and that the fittings are all serviceable.

This can be incorporated into normal Brigade training.

Incident Call Out Procedure.

Please can FCO,s push across to their members that if they respond to a call out then they must notify COMCEN that they are able to turn out or not able to turn out.

Precious time can be lost if this is not done.

BART is working effectively but more training is required across the Shire.

Please, Please get your crews to respond by either hitting the green or the red so that the IC can have an idea if a crew is turning out.

The Annual Skills Refresher 2023/24 will remain the same as last year, however Brigades need to apply their training now so that all members can be signed off prior to the Fire Season commencing.

Please can FCO's collect their 2023 folders as they leave this evening.

Any Brigade who is preparing to do a Hazard Reduction Burn on Private Property should continue to use the 2 existing forms but also there is the need to complete the Simple Prescribed Burn paperwork which Victoria presented to an earlier meeting.

As from tomorrow I will be out of the Country for 7 weeks. The Denmark Chief's phone will be turned off and will not be checked for messages.

All enquiries to go to Nigel, Shane or the CESM.

Lez Baines

CBFCO Denmark

27/09/23

9. Appendix B

Bushfire Ready Report BFAC September 2023

Bushfire Ready Weekend November 3rd 4th and 5th.

Friday 3rd @ The Dam start to gather at 4.30pm for speakers to start at 5.15pm

FCO's and Captains can meet with Steve Birkbeck at 5.00pm for a tour of the new Hydrant facilities and the fast fill facilities set up for future fires.

I will require a heavy, a light and perhaps the command vehicle along with someone prepared to wear full PPE and change later for dinner.

We will have welcome to country and an address re: cultural burning and ranger program. Charlotte Powis DFES will MC and open the sundowner.

At this stage we look like having the Commissioner attend and if this is not possible a recorded message. Wayne Green, Hopefully the new shire president.

We are hoping we may have the Hazard Management Commissioner or another key note speaker.

Announcement of Bushfire Ready community grants. At this stage last years grant funded the Wentworth Road new Hydrant. \$5000 from the Fire Day Fund has been matched by various community contributors and likely is to grow further. These are all ongoing funding commitments.

One grant will be secure BART for all the BFR facilitators and street coordinators, all end users are provided access free. The grant will also fund a community member to upload details etc.

The Dam will be providing nibbles and snacks, but you will need to buy your own drinks.

We are also suggesting people book a table with their friends or in brigade groups and enjoy a social dinner afterwards.

In the past we have had a feast not fire dinner which has dissipated in recent years. I would like to propose that after the sundowner we book tables for a feast not fire event.

If this idea is agreed to I can organize the key note speaker to speak at our dinner and brigades could have long service medals presented perhaps by the commissioner or other VIP.

Saturday November 4th.

Brigades need to let me know if they can attend and will be allocated places around the busiest parts of town. This is a chance to recruit but also pass on the Bushfire Ready Message/Toolkits and advertise the afternoon events at the Civic Centre which start at 1pm.

Three workshops 1. How to best prepare your property for bushfire. 2. Creating a bushfire emergency plan. 3. Q and A with a panel of experts.

Sunday November 5th

Bushfire Brigade Games – Denmark High School Oval 10.00am (Next to the Weekly markets)

Once more an opportunity to recruit and for BFR facilitators to get the message out there. Need a commitment from brigades to join in, four fun games.

Lay flat race with water delivery

Dodge ball using water to defend your team.

Egg and spoon relay race in full PPE

Tug o War – Can be West V East, Police Ambos and SES V Bushfire Brigades, VFRS v BFB.

Details will be provided to brigades two weeks prior so you can practice and take home the inaugural BFB Games Trophy.

A great deal of this needs pre-planning so I really need to know the commitments so I can plan accordingly.

10. General Business

The new Fire Notice has been well received. Along with the accompanying letters has made many residents enquire at the shire about how to best meet the requirements and many are already booking into have someone come out and explain.

It was with a very heavy heart that I drove the Parryville light tanker to the William Bay shed. But was most uplifted to hear it will be returning to its home at Mount Lindesay very soon.