

Shire of Northam

Minutes
Bush Fire Advisory
Committee
4 June 2024



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1 DECLARATION OF OPENING

The Presiding Member, Mr C Marris, declared the meeting open at 5:33 pm.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Presiding Member, Mr C Marris, acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet, the Ballardong and Whadjuk people of the Nyoongar nation and paid our respects to Elders, past present and emerging.

The Community Emergency Services Manager entered the meeting at 5:34 pm.

3 ATTENDANCE

3.1 ATTENDEES

Voting Committee:

Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer
Councillor – Shire of Northam
Councillor – Shire of Northam
Bakers Hill Bush Fire Brigade
Clackline Muresk Bush Fire Brigade
Grass Valley Bush Fire Brigade
Inkpen Bush Fire Brigade
Irishtown Bush Fire Brigade
Northam Central Bush Fire Brigade

Non-Voting Committee:

Clackline Muresk Bush Fire Brigade Clackline Muresk Bush Fire Brigade

Staff:

Chief Executive Officer
Executive Manager Development Services
Community Emergency Services Manager
Governance Officer

3.2 APOLOGIES

Voting Committee:

Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer Jennapullin Bush Fire Brigade Southern Brook Bush Fire Brigade Wundowie Bush Fire Brigade Chris Marris
Kris Brown
Maria Girak
Attila Mencshelyi
Carla Miller
Blair Wilding
Bruce Devereux
Nic Dewar
Rob Herzer
Jamie Wilkinson

Justin Fox Joe Marasco

Debbie Terelinck Chadd Hunt Alex Espey Tamika Van Beek



3.3 APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil.

3.4 ABSENT

Voting Committee:District Officer Northam - DFES

Sydney Davies



4 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members should fill in Disclosure of Interest forms for items in which they have a financial, proximity or impartiality interest and forward these to the Presiding Member before the meeting commences.

As defined in section 5.60A of the Local Government Act 1995, a **financial interest** occurs where a Councillor / Committee Member, or a person with whom the Councillor / Committee Member is closely associated, has a direct or indirect financial interest in the matter. That is, the person stands to make a financial gain or loss from the decision, either now or at some time in the future.

As defined in section 5.61 of the Local Government Act 1995, an **indirect financial** interest includes a reference to a financial relationship between that person and another person who requires a Local Government decision in relation to the matter.

As defined in section 5.60B of the Local Government Act 1995, a person has a **proximity interest** in a matter if the matter concerns a proposed change to a planning scheme affecting land that adjoins the person's land; or a proposed change to the zoning or use of land that adjoins the person's land; or a proposed development (as defined in section 5.63(5)) of land that adjoins the person's land.

As defined in clause 22 of the Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021, an **impartiality interest** means an interest that could, or could reasonably be perceived to, adversely affect the impartiality of the person having the interest and includes an interest arising from kinship, friendship or membership of an association.

Item Name	Item	Name	Type of	Nature of Interest
Fire Control Officer - Leadership Appointments	No. 6.2	Mr Chris Marris	Interest Financial	Mr Marris is nominated for the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer role, which receives an honorarium.
		Mr Kristafer Brown	Financial	Mr Brown is nominated for a Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer role.
		Mr Blair Wilding	Financial	Mr Wilding is a voting member for Clackline and a nominated person for Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.



5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

5.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM THE BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 14 NOVEMBER 2023

RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.326

Moved: Blair Wilding Seconded: Attila Mencshelyi

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on 14 November 2023 be confirmed as a true and correct record of that meeting.

CARRIED 9/0

For: Chris Marris, Kristafer Brown, Cr Maria Girak, Cr Attila Mencshelyi, Carla Millar, Blair Wilding, Bruce Deverux, Nic Dewar and Rob Herzer

Against: Nil.

5.2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM THE BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 26 MARCH 2024

RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.327

Moved: Kristafer Brown Seconded: Carla Millar

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on 26 March 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record of that meeting.

CARRIED 9/0

For: Chris Marris, Kristafer Brown, Cr Maria Girak, Cr Attila Mencshelyi, Carla Millar, Blair Wilding, Bruce Deverux, Nic Dewar and Rob Herzer.

Against: Nil.



6 OFFICER REPORTS

6.1 Community Emergency Services Manager Report

File Reference:	5.1.3.1		
Reporting Officer:	Alex Espey (Community Emergency Services		
	Manager)		
Responsible Officer:	Jacky Jurmann (Acting Executive Manager		
	Development Services)		
Officer Declaration of	Nil		
Interest:			
Voting Requirement:	Simple Majority		
Press release to be	No		
issued:			

BRIEF

For the Committee to receive and note the update provided by the Community Emergency Services Manager.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

A. BACKGROUND / DETAILS

This report is to provide the Committee an update on the current issues and actions of the Officer.

B. CONSIDERATIONS

B.1 Strategic Community / Corporate Business Plan

Performance Area: Planet.

Outcome 5: A resilient community.

Objective 5.1: Build community resilience to cope with natural disasters and emergencies, including pandemics, storms, flooding and fire. Priority Action: Nil.

B.2 Financial / Resource Implications

Nil

B.3 Legislative Compliance

Nil

B.4 Policy Implications



Nil

B.5 Stakeholder Engagement / Consultation

Nil

B.6 Risk Implications

Refer to Risk Matrix here.

Risk Category	Description	Rating (likelihood x consequence)	Mitigation Action
Financial	N/A	N/A	N/A
Health & Safety	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reputation	N/A	N/A	N/A
Service Interruption	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	N/A	N/A	N/A
Property	N/A	N/A	N/A
Environment	N/A	N/A	N/A

B.7 Natural Environment Considerations

Nil

C. OFFICER'S COMMENT

Fuel Load Cameras

DFES have requested and been provided 2 x camera locations to capture fuel loads within the Shire. 1 has been placed in Bakers Hill and Grass Valley has been selected for the other. More information on this project will be disseminated as this project evolves towards the 25/26 High Threat Period.

Enhanced Mobilisation

Enhanced mobilisation for turnouts has now been deactivated as we are now in the medium threat period. Group calling capability has been maintained allowing the leadership group to verbally upscale a response based on the information provided to and from COMCEN.

Bush Fire Risk Mitigation Coordinator

Siobhan Bishop has tendered her resignation. The Community Emergency Services Manager passes on his deep appreciation for her contribution to the



Shire of Northam and his role more broadly, and wishes her every success in her new role as Community Emergency Services Manager – Serpentine Jarrahdale.

Mr Phillip Gentle

On behalf of the Shire of Northam, the Community Emergency Services Manager passes on our thanks, and congratulations to Mr Phillip Gentle of the Grass Valley Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade on the anniversary of his 60 years of service to the Bush Fire Service and the Shire of Northam.

RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.328

Moved: Nic Dewar Seconded: Bruce Deverux

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee endorses the following recommendation being presented to Council:

1. That Council notes the Community Emergency Services Manager Report as provided.

CARRIED 10/0

For: Chris Marris, Kristafer Brown, Cr Maria Girak, Cr Attila Mencshelyi, Carla Millar, Blair Wilding, Bruce Deverux, Nic Dewar, Rob Herzer and Jamie Wilkinson.

Against: Nil.

Mr Jamie Wilkinson entered the meeting at 5:44 pm.

Discussion:

Discussion was held regarding the information provided in the Community Emergency Services Manager's report.

Clarification was sought regarding the fuel load cameras, how they work and how they have done. The Community Emergency Services Manager provided a brief overview of how the cameras work and some challenges that have been identified, as well as potential advantages to their use.



Mr Chris Marris declared a "Financial" interest in agenda item 6.2 Bush Fire Advisory Committee – Leadership Appointments, as Mr. Marris is nominated for the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer role, which receives an honorarium.

Mr Kristafer Brown declared a "Financial" interest in agenda item 6.2 Bush Fire Advisory Committee – Leadership Appointments, as Mr. Brown is nominated for a Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer role.

Mr Blair Wilding declared a "Financial" interest in agenda item 6.2 Bush Fire Advisory Committee – Leadership Appointments, as Mr. Wilding is a voting member for Clackline and a nominated person for Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

6.2 Fire Control Officer - Leadership Appointments

File Reference:	5.1.3.1
Reporting Officer:	Alex Espey (Community Emergency Services
	Manager)
Responsible Officer:	Jacky Jurmann (Acting Executive Manager
	Development Services)
Officer Declaration of	Nil
Interest:	
Voting Requirement:	Simple Majority
Press release to be	No
issued:	

BRIEF

For the Committee to recommend to Council the appointment Fire Control Officers Leadership Positions for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Fire Seasons.

Following the appointment of Fire Control Officers, Council is required to appoint the following leadership positions for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 High Threat Periods:

- 1 x Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- 2 x Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers
- 1 x Senior Bush Fire Control Officer

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

A. BACKGROUND / DETAILS



At the November Ordinary Council Meeting a revised version of Part 5 of the Bush Fire Manual was adopted. This revision included an increase in the term of a Fire Control Officer and by extension the leadership positions from 12 months to 2 years with positions reconsidered on every even year.

Nominations may only be received by successfully endorsed Fire Control Officers.

The following nominations have been received for the respective positions having been successfully endorsed by Council at its Ordinary Meeting held on 17 April 2024.

Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Nominations have been received from Christopher Marris

Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Nominations have been received from Kristafer Brown Simon Peters

Blair Wilding

Senior Bush Fire Control Officer

Nominations have been received from Justin Fox

Given there are 3 nominations for 2 vacancies for the Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, voting will be undertaken at the Committee meeting to enable a recommendation to be made to Council.

B. CONSIDERATIONS

B.1 Strategic Community / Corporate Business Plan

Performance Area: Planet.

Outcome 5: A resilient community.

Objective 5.1: Build community resilience to cope with natural disasters and emergencies, including pandemics, storms, flooding and fire. Priority Action: Nil.

B.2 Financial / Resource Implications

Nil

B.3 Legislative Compliance

Section 38 (1) Bush Fire Act 1954 which states as follows:
38. Local government may appoint Bush fire control officer (1) A local government may from time to time appoint such persons as it thinks necessary to be its bush fire control officers under and for the purposes of this Act, and of those officers shall subject to section 38A(2) appoint 2 as the Chief Bush fire Control Officer and the Deputy Chief Bush fire Control



Officer who shall be first and second in seniority of those officers, and subject thereto may determine the respective seniority of the other Bush fire control officers appointed by it.

B.4 Policy Implications

The qualifications, criteria and experience requirements of Fire Control Officer and Leadership roles are governed by Part 5 of the Shire of Northam's Bush Fire Manual.

B.5 Stakeholder Engagement / Consultation

Nominated Bush Fire Control Officers and Brigades have been consulted in relation to the nomination process.

B.6 Risk Implications

Refer to Risk Matrix here.

Risk Category	Description	Rating (likelihood x consequence)	Mitigation Action
Financial	Appointed persons may have unexpected financial costs.	Low (1) Low (1) Rare (1)	Council has endorsed an honorarium for the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and the 2 x Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer positions.
Health & Safety	The Health and Safety of the volunteer brigade members is an operational priority.	High Risk (10) Extreme (5) Unlikely (2)	The use of two experienced fire control officers with the rank of Senior FCO or above.
Reputation	Council	N/A	Council has endorsed minimum training standards and criteria for all positions within the Bush Fire Service including Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Deputy Bush Fire Control Officers.
Service Interruption	N/A	N/A	N/A



Compliance	Council may	Moderate (8)	Staff have provided
	appoint a CBFCO	High (4) x	options for Council
	as per the	Unlikely (2)	to consider.
	obligations under		Council has
	s38 Bush Fires Act		endorsed the
	1954 Council must		minimum training
	consider potential		standards for the
	for legal		position of Chief
	ramifications		Bush Fire Control
	based on decision		Officer.
	to appoint.		
Property	N/A	N/A	N/A
Environment	N/A	N/A	N/A

B.7 Natural Environment Considerations

Nil

C. OFFICER'S COMMENT

Staff support the appointment of the nominated candidates for their respective nominated roles based on the following:

- 1. All candidates have been successfully endorsed as a Fire Control Officer by Council.
- 2. All candidates can satisfy the role's prescribed requirements per the Bush Fire Manual.
- 3. Candidates not meeting the prescribed pre-requisites but nominated for a role cannot execute their respective office until such time as the pre-requisites have been satisfied.
- 4. No objections have been received from BFAC representatives in respect of a nomination or nominee.

Process for Electing Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers:

Due to having 3 nominations for the 2 vacancies for Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer a secret ballot was held in which the Councillors on the Committee, the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and 1 member from each fire brigade indicated their brigade's first and second preference for Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer on a ballot form.

The Committee preferences from the brigades of Southern Brook, Jennapullin and Wundowie would be included in the ballot based on what was communicated to the Community Emergency Services Manager and submitted in writing.

The ballot was conducted and counted and it was announced that Mr Kristafer Brown and Mr Blair Wilding are the preferred Deputy Chief Fire



Control Officer nominees. This result was reflected in the relevant recommendation.

The Chief Bush Fire Control Officer wished to express appreciation to the outgoing Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer, Mr Simon Peters, for his contribution to the Shire of Northam Bush Fire Brigades and the community, during his many years of service in the role.

The Presiding Member, Chris Marris, left the meeting due to a "Financial" interest, at 5:56 pm.

The Deputy Chairperson, Blair Wilding, took the Chair at 5:56 pm.

RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.329

Moved: Attila Mencshelyi

Seconded: Carla Millar

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee endorse the following recommendation being presented to Council:

- 1. That Council consider the following individuals for appointment of leadership positions for the 2024/25 and 2025/26:
 - a. Chief Bush Fire Control Officer:
 - i. Mr Christopher Marris

CARRIED 9/0

For: Kristafer Brown, Cr Maria Girak, Cr Attila Mencshelyi, Carla Millar, Blair Wilding, Bruce Deverux, Nic Dewar, Rob Herzer and Jamie Wilkinson.

Against: Nil.

The Presiding Member, Chris Marris, returned to the meeting at 5:57 pm and resumed the Chair.



Kristafer Brown and Blair Wilding left the meeting, due to a "Financial" interest, at 5:58 pm.

RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.330

Moved: Attila Mencshelyi

Seconded: Rob Herzer

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee endorse the following recommendation being presented to Council:

- 1. That Council consider the following individuals for appointment of leadership positions for the 2024/25 and 2025/26:
 - a. Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer:
 - i. Kristafer Brown
 - ii. Blair Wilding

CARRIED 8/0

For: Chris Marris, Cr Maria Girak, Cr Attila Mencshelyi, Carla Millar, Bruce Deverux, Nic Dewar, Rob Herzer and Jamie Wilkinson.

Against: Nil.

Kristafer Brown and Blair Wilding returned to the meeting at 5:59 pm.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee endorse the following recommendation being presented to Council:

- 1. That Council consider the following individuals for appointment of leadership positions for the 2024/25 and 2025/26:
 - a. Senior Bush Fire Control Officer
 - i. Mr Justin Fox

Reason for Change:

It was noted that in accordance with the Bush Fire Manual, the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer is authorised to appoint the Senior Bush Fire Control Officer without authorisation from the Committee or Council, as such this recommendation lapsed.



6.3 Fire Control Officer Nominations

File Reference:	5.1.3.1
Reporting Officer:	Alex Espey
Responsible Officer:	Chadd Hunt (Executive Manager Development
	Services)
Officer Declaration of	Nil
Interest:	
Voting Requirement:	Simple Majority
Press release to be	No
issued:	

BRIEF

For the Committee to recommend to Council the appointment of Bushfire Control Officers (BFCO) for the 2-year term for the 2024/2025 and 2025/26 Fire Seasons.

ATTACHMENTS

1. CRITERIA [6.3.1 - 1 page]

A. BACKGROUND / DETAILS

Council resolved at its Ordinary Council Meeting held on 20 December 2023 to adopt the revised versions of Part 4, and Part 5 of the Shire of Northam Bush Fire Manual to replace the previously adopted 2018 versions.

Council also approved a transition target period of 18 months for the training requirements of roles specified within Section 4 and 5, to allow members currently holding these positions to meet any training gaps while continuing to fill those roles. This includes those current Fire Control Officers (FCO) not meeting the prescribed criteria for appointment as a FCO, which primarily relates to one course, being Sector Commander.

B. CONSIDERATIONS

B.1 Strategic Community / Corporate Business Plan

Performance Area: Planet.

Outcome 5: A resilient community.

Objective 5.1: Build community resilience to cope with natural disasters and emergencies, including pandemics, storms, flooding and fire. Priority Action: Nil.

B.2 Financial / Resource Implications



Nil

B.3 Legislative Compliance

Section 38 (1) Bush Fire Act 1954 which states as follows:

38. Local government may appoint Bush fire control officer (1) A local government may from time to time appoint such persons as it thinks necessary to be its Bush fire control officers under and for the purposes of this Act, and of those officers shall subject to section 38A(2) appoint 2 as the Chief Bush fire Control Officer and the Deputy Chief Bush fire Control Officer who shall be first and second in seniority of those officers, and subject thereto may determine the respective seniority of the other Bush fire control officers appointed by it.

B.4 Policy Implications

The Shire of Northam's Bush Fire Manual Part 5 reviewed on 20 December 2023 and subsequently endorsed by Council (Resolution C.4909) outlines all components of Fire Control Officer nomination, endorsement, appointment and criteria.

Section 5.5C states:

Council reserves the right to endorse, adjust, or remove Bush Fire Control Officers as it deems necessary to effectively manage bush fires within the Shire.

Section 4.4G has subsequently been reviewed, adjusted and adopted by Council enabling Fire Control Officers to be appointed for a term of 2 years.

B.5 Stakeholder Engagement / Consultation

Shire of Northam Bush Fire Brigades WA Department of Fire and Emergency Services

B.6Refer to Risk Matrix here.

Risk Category	Description	Rating (likelihood x consequence)	Mitigation Action
Financial	N/A	N/A	N/A
Health &	Appointing	Likely (4) x	Officers
Safety	volunteers that do	Major (4) =	recommend
	not meet the	High (16)	Council to appoint
	minimum training		members who
	standards as		meet the minimum
	identified in the		level of training
	Bushfire Service		qualifications as



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B.7 Natural Environment Considerations

Nil



C. OFFICER'S COMMENT

Irishtown Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade having missed the nomination deadline for the last BFAC, sought and received approval to submit an additional candidate at the following BFAC meeting.

It is proposed that while this nomination is being considered at this meeting of the Committee, the term of this FCO will align with the term of appointment for the other Fire Control Officers who were endorsed at the last Committee meeting.

Irishtown

Mr Christopher McDonald

RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.331

Moved: Nic Dewar Seconded: Rob Herzer

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee endorses the following recommendation being presented to Council:

- 1. That Council appoints the following individual as a Bush Fire Control Officer for the Shire of Northam for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Bush Fire Seasons:
 - a. Mr Christopher McDonald

CARRIED 10/0

For: Chris Marris, Kristafer Brown, Cr Maria Girak, Cr Attila Mencshelyi, Carla Millar, Blair Wilding, Bruce Deverux, Nic Dewar, Rob Herzer and Jamie Wilkinson.

Against: Nil.



MOTION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.332

Moved: Kristafer Brown Seconded: Attila Mencshelyi

That the Committee REQUEST Council to accept Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommendation BFAC.331 subject to the below condition being added:

1. subject to Mr Christopher McDonald meeting the minimum training requirements for a Fire Control Officer.

CARRIED 10/0

Reason for Change:

It was identified that the recommendation should have included reference to the training requirements for a Fire Control Officer.

For: Chris Marris, Kristafer Brown, Cr Maria Girak, Cr Attila Mencshelyi, Carla Millar, Blair Wilding, Bruce Deverux, Nic Dewar, Rob Herzer and Jamie Wilkinson.

Against: Nil.

RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.333

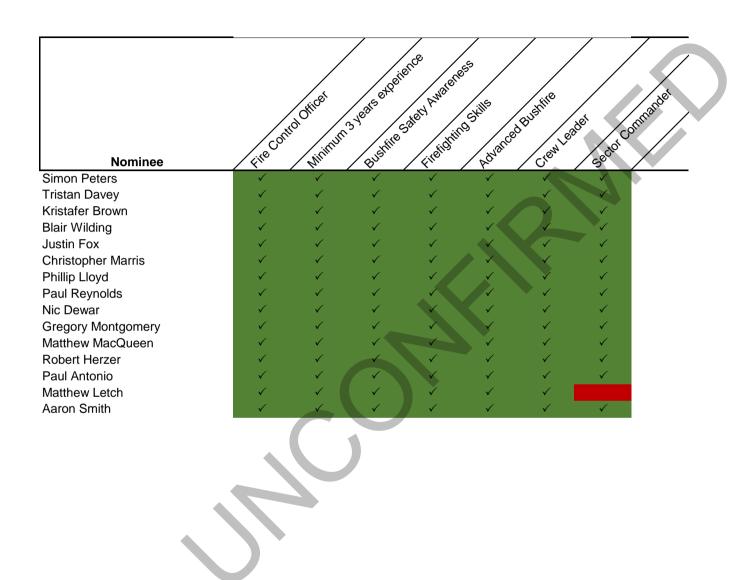
Moved: Kristafer Brown Seconded: Nic Dewar

That the Committee notes the approval on 20 December 2023 for persons not meeting the prescribed criteria to have 18 months to meet any training gaps while continuing to fulfill these roles per Council resolution C.4909.

CARRIED 10/0

For: Chris Marris, Kristafer Brown, Cr Maria Girak, Cr Attila Mencshelyi, Carla Millar, Blair Wilding, Bruce Deverux, Nic Dewar, Rob Herzer and Jamie Wilkinson.

Against: Nil.





7	MOTIONS OF WHI	TH PREVIOUS	S NOTICE HAS BEEN	GIVEN
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Nil.

8 URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY DECISION

Nil.

9 GENERAL BUSINESS

Clarification was sought in relation to any update on when the progress of the working group submissions will be provided to the Committee or brigades. The Community Emergency Services Manager advised that the intent is to meet with the Chairs of the working groups to identify a suitable timeline to work towards. This timeline will then be communicated to the Committee and brigades.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Upcoming meetings:

• 08 October 2024 at 5:30pm

11 DECLARATION OF CLOSURE

There being no further business, the Presiding Member, Mr Chris Marris, declared the meeting closed at 6:18 pm.

"I certify that the Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held		
on 4 June 2024 have been confirmed as a true and correct record."		
	_ Presiding Member	
	Date	