

**Minutes
BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL
HELD ON 10th MAY 2011
AT 6.04PM IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING AND WELCOME

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed delegates and visitors.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

3. ATTENDANCE

INVITED DELEGATES (VOTING RIGHTS)

(or nominated deputy delegate)

Bakers Hill Brigade	Mr Simon Peters
Clackline/Muresk Brigade	Mr B Wilding
Grass Valley Brigade	Mr R Marris
Inkpen Brigade	Mr S Nielsen
Irishtown Brigade	Mr R Herzer
Jennapullin Brigade	Mr A Smith
Southern Brook Brigade	Mr P Antonio
Northam Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service	Mr L Milhinch
Wundowie Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service	Apology
Shire of Northam	Cr S Pollard

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS (NON-VOTING RIGHTS)

Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (East)	Mr P Gentle
Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (West)	Mr G Ashman
Shire Executive Manager Regulatory Services	Mr P Steven
Shire Community Emergency Services Coordinator	Mr F McQuistan

PUBLIC GALLERY

There were 7 members of the public in the gallery

4. APOLOGIES

Kevin Pollock DEC, Linton Mincherton FESA, Adina Bruciani Wundowie FRS

5. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Recommendation: That the minutes for the BFAC meeting held on 13 September 2010 be endorsed.

Moved R Marris Seconded B Wilding

Carried 9/0

BUSINESS ARISING

7.4 Digital Electronic Recording Device – FM advised that one of the Brigades had linked the radio to their computer in order to record radio traffic, which may address this issue to a degree.

7.5 Fire Brigade Local Law – FM advised that a local law is not required in order to establish brigades.

7.6 Response on Extreme Fire Danger Days – FM advised that a working party has not been formed yet, and that a request for nominees from Brigades would be called to be in such a working party, to discuss the issue.

7.7 Risk to Resource – A preliminary draft has been developed and it is hoped this will be distributed prior to the next BFAC Meeting, for discussion by Brigades.

6. AGENDA ITEMS

6.1 PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO “COUNCIL COMMITTEES & COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATION REPRESENTATION” (PART 2 - TERMS OF REFERENCE - BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE)

Background:

The BFAC Committee Terms of Reference (as recorded in “Council Committees & Community Based Organisation Representation” document) currently require that the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers, Fire Weather Officers and Harvest ban Officers are permitted to be nominated for 2 consecutive periods of 2 years each, and require these Officers to take a break period of a minimum of 2 years before being able to be re-nominated for the position.

A copy of the relevant section of the Terms of Reference is shown below.

1.5.3 *Election of Local Government Officers at the Annual General Meeting to be held in April each year:*

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee may forward to the Shire of Northam recommendations for the following positions which will be appointed for a period of 12 months and then may be appointed for a maximum period of 4 consecutive years and then have a break of 2 years before they can be appointed to the same position:

- (a) *Chief Bush Fire Control Officer*
- (b) *Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (2)*
- (c) *Fire Weather Officers*

Persons wishing to nominate for the above positions must meet the training requirements and be prepared to carry out the duties of the position.

1.6 Terms of Office

A person holding the position of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer may seek re-election annually for a period of one (1) years making a total of 4 years in the position. After a two (2) year break from the position a person may seek re election.

This is proposed to broaden the experience of the Fire Control Officers and will help with the succession Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Deputy Chief Fire Control Officers.

Preferably the election of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer should be staggered so that one position appointed each year e.g.:-

Year 1 - Chief Bush Fire Control Officer should be declared vacant;

Year 2 – 1st Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer should be declared vacant;

Year 3 – 2nd Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer should be declared vacant.

Officers Comment:

The existing BFAC rules exclude the opportunity for some individuals of certain tenures to be nominated for the position of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers, Fire Weather Officers and Harvest ban Officer and were intended to promote succession planning for the position of these Officers.

As a result of this rule the opportunity for the existing officers to be nominated for the positions have been precluded without the BFAC having the opportunity to re-nominate people to the positions.

BFAC Recommendation

That the above item be carried over for the following BFAC for the delegates to take back to their brigades for direction:

Moved A Smith Seconded B Wilding

Carried 9/0

6.2 2011/12 FIREBREAK ORDER

Background:

The 2010/11 Firebreak Order was previously amended to include the following requirement:

“Firebreak Requirements – Land greater than 5ha

- Install a 3m wide firebreak clear of all flammable material except if the property is being used for pasture and cropping where the firebreak shall be a minimum of 2m in width.*
- A lot greater than 200ha requires a 3m firebreak around parcels of 200ha*
- Any areas of standing crop or pasture in excess of 100ha requires a 3m firebreak around parcels of 100ha”*

Although the first point makes reference to a minimum 2m firebreak in areas used for pasture and cropping, the rest of the points still refer to 3m.

Officers Comment:

It is recommended this section be modified to remove the inconsistencies.

BFAC Recommendation:

That BFAC request Council to amend and simplify the 2011/12 Firebreak Order So that all firebreak requirements are 2m in width with the exception to the access to all building and construction which will require 3m width and a 3m height requirement.

Moved B Wilding Seconded R Marris

Carried 9/0

6.3 IMMIGRATION YAGONGAH DETENTION CENTRE

Background:

The Department of Immigration (DOI) have offered to assist the Shire of Northam Bush Fire Service by providing funding for an additional fire appliance to service the area. The Clackline Muresk Bush Fire Brigade have expressed interest in receiving this additional appliance to be situated at the Spencers Brook Community Fire Shed (which is currently not a Council facility and not a Council operated Brigade).

Officers Comment:

Any additional appliance to be provided to the Shire under any other means than FESA's asset replacement schedule/Risk to Resource modelling would need to be funded by the Shire as it would not be eligible for ESL expenses. The acquisition of another fire appliance is supported, however further negotiation needs to be held between the Shire and FESA to ensure that the proposed appliance can be made eligible for ESL expenditure to cover operational and maintenance costs.

BFAC Recommendation:

- a) ***That Council write to the Department for Immigration advising that the offer of a fire appliance to the Clackline Muresk Bush Fire Brigade is supported.***
- b) ***That Council negotiate with FESA to include this fire appliance in the ESL eligible category.***

Moved B Wilding Seconded A Smith

Carried 9/0

7. DISCUSSION TOPICS

7.1 2011/12 Emergency Services Levy (ESL) Application

Limited feedback from Brigades

Have applied for additional 15% ESL Operating expenditure budget

Have applied for the following Capital expenditure items -

Cladding to toilets (Bakers Hill & Irishtown)

Hardstand (Grass Valley)

Phone Connection (Irishtown & Grass Valley)

Fire Shed (Southern Brook)

7.2 WAERN Radios

WAERN Installation 95% complete for Shire of Northam.

Training is available for brigades in the use of the New WAERN radio's

BFAC Recommendation:

That the Mid Band network is retained by the Shire of Northam once the WAERN is up and running and the capacity to cross link channels is retained and a plan be developed for the new WAERN radio's.

Moved B Wilding Seconded R Marris

Carried 9/0

7.3 Brigade Training

CESC can now provide the following courses –

Intro to Fire fighting / Bush fire fighting / Structural fire fighting
Bush Fire Fighting

If Brigades require any of these courses, please contact CESC to make arrangements

7.4 Nomination of CBFCO / DCBFCO / Harvest Ban Officers

Nominations for CBFCO / DCBFCO / Harvest Ban Officers has been deferred until Council consider amending the Terms of Reference (as per Agenda item).

Nominations for these positions are to be forwarded to the CESC by 18 June 2011 (despite the review of rules).

8. GENERAL BUISNESS

Richard Marris discussed the following:

- Emergency tape
- Multiple zones for restricted burning period and harvest bans
- Due date for the firebreaks.
- 400L requirement during TFB (to be taken to DOAC)

Proposed the firebreak notice should be 15 November as it was previously.

Moved RM / No Seconder.

Lapsed

Linton Smith discussed the following:

- The requirement for 400l to be carried during a total fire ban.
- Utilising zone 4 and 5 for splitting the restricted burning period

Simon Peters discussed the following:

- Responsibility of property owners to be aware of the firebreak requirements
- Harvest bans

Blair Wilding discussed the following:

- The number of Harvest bans imposed
- Splitting the shire into 2 zones for the harvest bans

BFAC Recommendation:

That the issue of separate zones in relation to harvest/hot works bans is taken back to Brigades for BFAC consideration.

Moved Blair Wilding Seconded Robert Herzer

Carried 9/0

9. NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED

The next meeting will be held on the TBA 2011 at 5.30pm in Council Chambers.

10. DECLARATION OF CLOSURE

This meeting was closed at 8:20 pm.

“I certify that the Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on 10 May 2010 have been confirmed as a true and correct record.”

_____ Presiding member

_____ Date