



Shire of Northam
Heritage, Commerce and Lifestyle

Shire of Northam

Agenda

Bush Fire Advisory Committee

8 September 2020

NOTICE PAPER

Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting

8 September 2020

Committee Members

I inform you that a Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting will be held in the Northam Recreation Centre, located on Peel Terrace, Northam on 8 September 2020 at 5:30pm.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Whiteaker', with a large circular flourish on the left side.

Jason Whiteaker
Chief Executive Officer

DISCLAIMER

This agenda has yet to be dealt with by the Council. The Recommendations shown at the foot of each item have yet to be considered by the Council and are not to be interpreted as being the position of the Council. The minutes of the meeting held to discuss this agenda should be read to ascertain the decision of the Council.

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1. DECLARATION OF OPENING

2. ATTENDANCE

Voting Committee:

Councillor – Shire of Northam	Terry Little
Councillor – Shire of Northam	Carl Della
Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	Chris Marris
Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer	Mathew Macqueen
Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer	Simon Peters
Inkpen Bush Fire Brigade	Nic Dewar
Clackline Muresk Bush Fire Brigade	Blair Wilding
Bakers Hill Bush Fire Brigade	Kris Brown
Grass Valley Bush Fire Brigade	Sam Moss
Irishtown Bush Fire Brigade	Rob Herzer
Jennapullin Bush Fire Brigade	Aaron Smith
Southern Brook Bush Fire Brigade	Paul Antonio
Wundowie Bush Fire Brigade	Mathew Macqueen
Northam Central Bush Fire Brigade	Murray McGregor
Wundowie Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service	Jeffrey Roberts
Northam Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service	Greg Montgomery

Non-Voting

Community Emergency Service Manager	Brendon Rutter
District Officer Northam	Darrel Krammer
Department of Parks and Wildlife (Wheatbelt)	Graeme Keals
Department of Parks and Wildlife (Perth Hills)	Michael Pasotti

Staff:

Executive Manager Development Services	Chadd Hunt
Executive Assistant - CEO	Nadege Vinicombe

2.1 APOLOGIES

Nil.

2.2 ABSENT

3. 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 34C of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, 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 No.	Name	Type of Interest	Nature of Interest

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.1 COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 JULY 2020

RECOMMENDATION

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory meeting held on 21 July 2020 be confirmed as a true and correct record of that meeting.

5. RECEIVING OF PRESENTATIONS

Nil.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1 COMMUNITY EMERGENCY SERVICES MANAGER REPORT

Address:	N/A
Owner:	N/A
Applicant:	N/A
File Reference:	5.1.3.1
Reporting Officer:	Brendon Rutter, Community Emergency Services Manger
Responsible Officer:	Chadd Hunt, Executive Manager Development Services
Officer Declaration of Interest:	Nil.
Voting Requirement:	Simple Majority
Press release to be issued:	No

BRIEF

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

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Third Party Agreement

A. BACKGROUND / DETAILS

N/A.

B. CONSIDERATIONS

B.1 Strategic Community / Corporate Business Plan

Theme Area 3: Safety and Security

Outcome 3.1: Shire of Northam residents are able to pursue the fullest life possible without fear of or hindrance from crime and disorder.

B.2 Financial / Resource Implications

Nil.

B.3 Legislative Compliance

Nil.

B.4 Policy Implications

Nil.

B.5 Stake Holder Engagement / Consultation

Nil.

B.6 Risk Implications

Risk Category	Description	Rating (consequence x likelihood)	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

C. OFFICER'S COMMENT

Update on WAERN

Further to the last report there have been several discussions between DFES staff, Shire staff and the BFS leadership group regarding the development of solutions to protect the DFES-owned WAERN network including the VHF Mid Band 43. Discussions have also been held concerning finding a way to identify authorised users within the brigades, with a view of improving the overall management of the privately-owned communications equipment that has caused ongoing significant issues on the network, and the sensitive critical infrastructure that supports it.

Staff have discussed the ongoing issues around radio use and identifying ways to improve the overall management of the privately-owned equipment that has proven at times to create interference issues on the network. Staff have put steps in place to ensure the wider membership is kept informed of important issues such as this when they arise in the future.

As of September 1st 2020 the DFES Regional has temporarily approved the reinstatement of the link between VHF Mid Band 43 & VHF High Band 329. The connection will remain at this stage until December 31st 2020 with no guarantee of continuity after this date.

Pursuant to s114 Radio Communications Act 1992, The Shire of Northam is entering into a 3rd party agreement with the FES commissioner only for radios that are owned by the Shire, installed in Shire of Northam vehicles.

The process from here requires all authorised members who have a privately owned radio that demonstrates a need to broadcast onto the WAERN network to enter into a 3rd party agreement – this process will be managed by the Shire as the authorising body, with the radio owner agreeing to comply with the obligations outlined in the agreement, specifically relating to the quantity, type and capabilities of the radios. An example of the 3rd party agreement has been attached to this agenda.

Training

Thank you to the members that have committed to training in the shortened training period post-COVID, it has been an incredibly busy period and the courses have been in most cases well over-subscribed which has been impressive to see. Brigade members' commitment to continuous improvement and development is recognised and appreciated.

Photoshoot

In partnership with the DO Northam, arrangements have been made for DFES photographers to attend the region on Monday October 12th 2020. The team will spend the day with all services to gain photos of all local members to be used in DFES promotional media. We will also retain copies of the photographs for specifically targeted local use.

Captains will be kept in the loop with regard to timings to be disseminated to brigade members who wish to take part.

Appliance Servicing & Operational equipment annual inspection

The annual appliance servicing has been completed. The program for testing, tagging and inspections of appliances, lay flat, hose reels etc. is currently under way by the manufacture. DFES radio technicians will be starting their program soon for testing and maintenance of the appliance radios, to be ready for the upcoming fire season.

Bush Fires Manual Review

A review was originally undertaken in Feb of the Bush Fires Manual based on feedback received from brigades relating to some compatibility issues with some sections of the manual.

Regrettably COVID-19 made further workshops difficult due to physical distancing requirements, however staff are currently identifying a suitable date in September/October to conduct a further workshop as part of this review.

It's important to note the purpose of the review is to look at resolving identified concerns with a specific section of the manual only, and is not intended to function as a full manual review, the criteria around active membership and voting rights has come up as one specific issue that is in need for further interrogation.

Staff request brigades to provide feedback on suggested amendments to specific sections only for discussion at the upcoming workshop.

Letter to the Rural Fire Division

Staff have made contact with representatives from the RFD to seek further information in relation to questions raised at previous BFAC's, unfortunately COVID-19 had stopped a lot of meetings taking place, however these discussions have again resumed and information will be provided to the committee in due course.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Attachment 1 – Third Party Agreement

Radiocommunications Act 1992

THIRD PARTY AUTHORISATION

Pursuant to section 114 of the *Radiocommunications Act 1992*, the FES Commissioner, acting on behalf of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services of WA (the Licensee), authorises **XXXXXXXX** (the Third Party) to operate a radio communications device under the licence(s) listed in Appendix C.

This authorisation is issued subject to the special conditions outlined in Appendix A and Appendix B to this Authorisation and the licence conditions which include:

- the conditions set out in the *Radiocommunications Act 1992*;
- such other licence conditions as determined by the ACMA (in licence condition determinations) from time to time; and
- any special conditions as detailed in the licence(s).

The Licensee reserves the right to amend or cancel this Authorisation at any time.

This Authorisation is valid until the date of expiry of the licence, unless otherwise amended or cancelled.

If you require further information, contact the District Officer, Operational Communications, on 9396 9676.

ANDREW DUCKWORTH

Superintendent Operational Communications of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, as a delegate of the Minister under section 15 of the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998*.

Date

Appendix A.

The special conditions outlined in this Appendix relate specifically to the Third Party's use of DFES Western Australian Emergency Radio Network (WAERN) frequencies and associated radio communications equipment. The special conditions are:

- The Third Party may only use the WAERN frequencies for the purpose of providing assistance to emergency services, in particular for rural firefighting purposes;
- The Third Party will procure radio communications equipment that is compliant with the technical specifications detailed in Appendix B;
- The costs associated with the procurement, installation, repair, testing, reprogramming and maintenance of equipment used under the Authorisation will be the responsibility of the Third Party;
- The Third Party shall be responsible for annual testing and maintenance of any radio communications equipment installed under this Authorisation;
- The Third Party must maintain a register detailing the number of vehicles/locations where the Authorised frequencies have been installed and the serial numbers of installed radios, and provide an updated record of this information within 21 days of the annual anniversary date of approval to the Manager, DFES Radio Communications;
- The Third Party shall provide information as requested by the Manager, DFES Radio Communications;
- The Third Party shall ensure that any installed radio communications equipment is kept secure and report any theft of this equipment within 24 hours to the Manager, DFES Radio Communications;
- The Third Party is to ensure that only authorised and trained personnel are to operate the equipment that is installed with the Authorised frequencies;
- The Manager, Radio Communications, DFES will provide operating instructions to the Third Party which must ensure training is provided within one month of receipt;
- This authorisation covers all radio communications equipment including fixed mobile (vehicle) radios and base station radios. The Third Party is not approved to install these radio frequencies into hand held radio equipment under this authorisation;
- Select Calling feature (Selcall) will not be automatically installed as part of this Authorisation. Any installation of the Selcall feature must be agreed to by DFES prior to installation;
- DFES Radio Communications Branch will advise the Third Party of any changes to the installed channel programme;
- The Third Party will install updated channel programmes using qualified radio communications technicians and advise The Manager, DFES Radio Communications of radios that have been re-programmed within one month or re-programming; and
- The Third Party will use radio technicians that have the appropriate certifications from an approved product dealer or authorised channel partner.

Appendix B.

The technical requirements detailed in this Appendix provide the minimum technical requirements for radio communications equipment (fixed mobile radios) installed by the Third Party under the Third Party Authorisation:

- Radio equipment must meet the relevant Australian Land Mobile standards as applied by ACMA:
 1. AS/NZS 4770 for MF/HF SSB equipment;
 2. AS/NZS 4295 for analogue VHF/UHF equipment; and
 3. AS/NZS 4768 for digital VHF/UHF equipment.
- Radio equipment must be installed so as to operate effectively with DFES radio systems;
- Installed radio equipment shall have sufficient channel capacity to allow pre-programming of all specified DFES channels;
- If the radios need the same Selcall feature as DFES WAERN radios, the Manager, Radio Communications, DFES shall provide advice on the Selcall number scheme and allocation;
- Selcall format (as applicable) required for Analogue-mode VHF/UHF equipment shall be CCIR format, 40mS tone period, 2000mS LID, capable of sending and receiving 6-digit plus Status tone-sequential Selcall;
- VHF/UHF analogue radio equipment shall be capable of CTCSS encode and decode facility using industry standard tones between 67.0 and 250.3 Hz, with tones programmable on a per-channel basis;
- All installed radio communications equipment must be reprogrammable - by authorised technicians only – for functions such as adding or altering channels, or channel / signaling parameters;
- For every channel, the radio's internal channel numbering to match DFES' list numbering i.e. if a user enters "371" the radio will operate on the frequencies allocated to DFES channel 371;
- Radios must be capable of direct channel entry i.e. channel number must be able to be entered on a numeric keypad or similar, not have to step up and down one channel at a time);
- Each channel to have a screen text display which continuously indicates the number of the current channel i.e. if channel 354 is selected the screen text must indicate at a minimum the numerals "354".

Appendix C.

Approved Licences



Acknowledgement of Special Conditions and Technical Requirements

Signed on behalf of (Company, LG Name)

Name _____

Title _____

Signature _____

Date / / _____



6.2 CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER (CBFCO) REPORT

Address:	N/A
Owner:	N/A
Applicant:	N/A
File Reference:	5.1.3.1
Reporting Officer:	Chadd Hunt, Executive Manager Development Services
Responsible Officer:	Chadd Hunt, Executive Manager Development Services
Officer Declaration of Interest:	Nil.
Voting Requirement:	Simple Majority
Press release to be issued:	No

BRIEF

For the Committee to receive and note the update provided by the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

A. BACKGROUND / DETAILS

N/A.

B. CONSIDERATIONS

B.1 Strategic Community / Corporate Business Plan

Theme Area 3: Safety and Security

Outcome 3.1: Shire of Northam residents are able to pursue the fullest life possible without fear of or hindrance from crime and disorder.

B.2 Financial / Resource Implications

Nil.

B.3 Legislative Compliance

Nil.

B.4 Policy Implications

Nil.

B.5 Stake Holder Engagement / Consultation

Nil.

B.6 Risk Implications

Risk Category	Description	Rating (consequence x likelihood)	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

C. OFFICER'S COMMENT

Report will be provided prior to the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Report as provided.

6.3 APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF BUSHFIRE CONTROL OFFICER, DEPUTY CHIEF BUSHFIRE CONTROL OFFICER AND SENIOR BUSHFIRE CONTROL OFFICER

Address:	N/A
Owner:	N/A
Applicant:	N/A
File Reference:	5.1.3.1
Reporting Officer:	Chadd Hunt Executive Manager Development Services
Responsible Officer:	Chadd Hunt Executive Manager Development Services
Officer Declaration of Interest:	Nil.
Voting Requirement:	Simple Majority
Press release to be issued:	No

BRIEF

Upon appointment of the Fire Control Officers for the 2020/21 year, Council is required to appoint a Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO) and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (DCBFCO). In addition it has been recommended for consideration for the appointment of a Senior Bush Fire Control Officer (SBFCO) for the coming seasons.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Training Matrix of nominated BFCOs
Attachment 2: Brigade Voting Summary(will be provided as a separate confidential attachment for viewing at the meeting)

A. BACKGROUND / DETAILS

At the BFAC meeting held in July 2020 it was resolved that the appointment process for the CBFCO and DCBFCO position follow normal nomination and voting procedures. Specifically it was resolved –

That it be recommended to Council that the Chief and Deputy positions be discussed and be sent back to the brigades for nominations following normal processes and that brigades are to have all meetings completed by 23 August 2020, two weeks prior to the next BFAC meeting on 8 September 2020.

Nominated BFCOs for the 2020-21 season were asked to nominate for each of the positions of CBFCO, DCBFCO and SBFCO. As a result the following nominations were received and forwarded to the brigades for consideration and voting:

CBFCO

Chris Marris
Neil Diamond
Kris Brown

DCBFCO

Neil Diamond
Kris Brown
Simon Peters

Senior FCO

Kris Brown
Neil Diamond
Matt Letch

The current Bush Fire Manual does not contain the position of SBFCO and does not stipulate if Council is to appoint one or two DCBFCOs. In recent years BFAC has recommended and appointed 2 DCBFCOs and last year a Senior FCO was appointed prior to that FCO being appointed CBFCO.

B. CONSIDERATIONS

B.1 Strategic Community / Corporate Business Plan

Theme Area 3: Safety and Security

Outcome 3.1: Shire of Northam residents are able to pursue the fullest life possible without fear of or hindrance from crime and disorder.

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

Section 5.1B of the Bush Fire Manual states the following –

5.1B Criteria of a Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

- Knowledge of managing a volunteer organisation
- Knowledge of all Fire Response Plans in the Shire
- Working Knowledge of the Local Emergency Management Arrangements
- Knowledge of the Bush Fires Act 1954 and Bush Fires Regulations 1954
- Knowledge of the State Emergency Management Policy No 4.8 (Traffic Management During Emergencies)
- Ability to attend further fire and emergency management training
- Effective interpersonal skills
- Good written and verbal communication skills
- Leadership skills
- Management skills
- Experience in managing operations
- Ability to perform under stressful conditions
- Current appointment as Fire Control Officer
- Experienced in firefighting operations within the Shire
- Currently holds all of the preferred qualifications of the Fire Control Officer
- Be a member of the DOAC, BFAC and LEMC

Section 5.1C of the Bush Fires manual states the following:

5.1C Qualifications of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

“Completion of the DFES training core modules and a minimum of 3 years as a BFCO and 5 years firefighting experience in the last 3 years preferably as an executive officer within a brigade of the Shire of Northam.

Persons currently holding the CBFCO's position will have until 2020 to comply with the below training requirements. Any persons newly

appointed must hold the below training certifications prior to 31st October each year".

Completion of required courses are:

- AllMS Awareness
- Introduction to Fire Fighting
- Bush Fire Fighting
- Machine Supervision
- Structural Fire Fighting
- Advanced Bush Fire Fighting
- Crew Leader
- Ground Controller
- Sector Commander
- AllMS 4 or 2017
- Incident Controller Level 1
- Fire Control Officer (in the Last 5 Years)

In addition, with respect to the DCBFCO position, the manual states the following:

5.2B Criteria of a Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

- Knowledge of managing a volunteer organisation
- Knowledge of all Fire Response Plans in the Shire
- Working knowledge of the Local Emergency Management Arrangements
- Knowledge of the Bush Fires Act 1954 and Bush Fires Regulations 1954
- Knowledge of the State Emergency Management Policy No 4.8 (Traffic Management During Emergencies)
- Ability to attend further fire and emergency management training
- Effective interpersonal skills
- Good written and verbal communication skills
- Leadership skills
- Management skills
- Experience in managing operations
- Ability to perform under stressful conditions
- Current appointment as Fire Control Officer
- Experienced in firefighting operations within the Shire
- Holds all of the preferred qualifications of the Fire Control Officer
- Be a member of the DOAC, BFAC and LEMC

5.2C Qualifications of a Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Completion of the DFES training core modules and a minimum of 3 years as a BFCO and 5 years firefighting experience in the last 3 years preferably as an executive officer within a brigade within the Shire of Northam.

Persons currently holding the CBFCO's position will have until 2020 to comply with the below training requirements. Any persons newly appointed must hold the below training certifications prior to 31st October each year.

Completion of required courses are:

- AllMS Awareness
- Introduction to Fire Fighting
- Bush Fire Fighting
- Machine Supervision
- Structural Fire Fighting
- Advanced Bush Fire Fighting
- Crew Leader
- Ground Controller
- Sector Commander
- AllMS 4 or 2017
- Incident Controller Level 1
- Fire Control Officer (in the Last 5 Years)

B.5 Stake Holder Engagement / Consultation

Nominated BFCO and Brigades have been involved in the nomination and voting process.

B.6 Risk Implications

Risk Category	Description	Rating (consequence likelihood) x	Mitigation Action
Financial	Person appointed may have unexpected financial costs	Insignificant(1) x Rare(1) = Low(1)	Council has endorsed an honorarium for the CBFCO and DCBFCO positions
Health & Safety	The health and safety of volunteer brigade members may be put at risk if CBFCO and DCBFCO are not	Major(4) x Likely(3) = High (12)	Council has endorsed the minimum training standards for the position of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

	adequately trained or experienced		Additional training and mentoring to be provided to any applicant who doesn't meet the criteria.
Reputation	Appointed CBFCO and DCBFCO are unable to perform the role satisfactorily resulting in loss of reputation.	Medium(3) x Likely(4) = High (12)	Council has endorsed the minimum training standards for the position of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer. Additional training and mentoring to be provided to any applicant who doesn't meet the criteria.
Service Interruption	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	Council must appoint a CBFCO as per the obligations under s38 Bush Fires Act 1954	Medium(3) x Likely(4) = High(12)	Council has endorsed the minimum training standards for the position of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.
Property	N/A	N/A	N/A
Environment	N/A	N/A	N/A

C. OFFICER'S COMMENT

Following the nomination and voting from each of the brigades that have been provided to staff it is recommended that BFAC recommend and Council appoint, for the 2020-21 season, the positions of:

- CBFCO;
- Two DBFCOs; and
- Senior BFCO

Several brigades actually voted on whether one or two DCBFCOs should be appointed and whether a Senior BFCO should be appointed. Those brigades that did not actually vote specifically on whether there should be one or two DCBFCOs have made their position clear by either nominating one or two persons for that role. Similarly all brigades voted to have a Senior BFCO. In collating the results of the voting a "first-past-the-post" method was used for each of the positions.

It is recognised that those nominated and subsequently recommended for the positions do not fully meet the minimum training/experience requirements as stipulated in the manual. Because the training required to be completed is one unit each for the nominated DCBFCOs it is recommended that they be appointed with the understanding that the courses will be completed when available locally. Similarly, with respect to the experience requirements for the CBFCO and one nominated DCBFCO (not having been a BFCO for a minimum of 3 seasons), based on their recent experience and training it is recommended that they be appointed for the coming season.

It is also recommended that the position of Senior BFCO and the appointment of two DCBFCO positions be included in the review/updating of the Bush Fire Manual.

As indicated in the background Wundowie BFB have submitted a notice of motion which is different to the staff recommendation regarding the appointment of the CBFCO. In order to deal with the matter at the same time the notice of motion and the background to the motion is provided here. It is proposed that the Notice of Motion from Wundowie BFB be dealt with first.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council formally appoints the following qualified Bush Fire Control Officers to the position of Chief and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers for the 2020-21 fire season:

- 1. Chief Bush Fire Control Officer – Chris Marris**
- 2. Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers – Simon Peters and Neil Diamond**
- 3. Senior Bush Fire Control Officer- Kristafer Brown**

D. NOTICE OF ALTERNATION MOTION RECEIVED

NOTICE OF MOTION

Moved: Mr Mathew McQueen

That Council:

- 1. Appoints the CESM position as permanent Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.**
- 2. Appoints Simon Peters to the position of Deputy Chief 1 until June 30 2021**
- 3. Appoints Neil Diamond to the position of Deputy Chief 2 until June 30 2021**
- 4. Appoints Kristafer Brown as the Senior Bush Fire Control Officer until June 30 2021**

BACKGROUND

The position of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer is a critically important role within the volunteer Bush Fire Service, and not one that should be taken lightly.

Due to how the world has evolved over the past 20 years, it is apparent that the Chief BFCO position has an increasing workload, and should no longer be a volunteer position due to the legislated obligations placed on what has traditionally been a volunteer role, especially for a Shire the size of Northam. Recognising the increasing workload of the position of Chief, the Wundowie BFB have discussed ways to improve the current structure that puts the onus of the Chief position onto a paid employee to manage the statutory obligations of the role.

The Shire of Northam in partnership with the Department of Fire & Emergency Services has employed a Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) to manage the day to day running of the service, and provide support to the volunteers through incident response, improved training etc.

Due to the level of training the person employed as CESM is required to maintain as part of their role, and the expectations to maintain training levels to a high level of currency in line with industry standards, it would be considered best practice for a paid employee to undertake all requirements of the Chief position under the Bush fires Act 1954, therefore reducing the impact on the volunteers.

The Wundowie BFB therefore puts the abovementioned motion to Council.

OFFICER'S COMMENT:

The issue of the CBFCO being a staff member of either Council or DFES has been discussed previously when looking at options for the position.

Specifically, the following motion was passed by BFAC at their meeting held on 10th September 2019:

MOTION / COMMITTEE DECISION

Minute No: BFAC.230

Moved: Mr Nic Dewar

Seconded: Mr Sam Moss

The Council refer the following structure to the Bush Fire Brigades to endorse:

- Chief Bush Fire Control Officer position is to become a paid role under the Shire of Northam;

- *Appointment of 2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Officers; and*
- *1 Senior FCO (deputy in training); and*
- *Honorarium stays in place for the x2 deputies*

CARRIED 11/0

At the same meeting it was also resolved to advertise for the position of CBFCO and appoint two DCBFCOs and a Senior BFCO.

Following the above, at the next BFAC meeting a volunteer BFCO was recommended to be appointed to the position of CBFCO. This was also endorsed by Council.

Given the issues with appointing a CBFCO for the 2019-20 season and the issues surrounding COVID-19 in 2020, it appears that the above option has not been fully discussed or endorsed at brigade level.

It is staff's recommendation that an appointment to the position of CBFCO be made for the 2020-21 fire season following the current suggested process whilst the motion as passed above is considered by brigades prior to the next fire season.

Attachment 1 – Training Matrix of Nominated BFCOs



Shire of Northam Volunteer Bushfire Control Officers 2020/21

Active FCO's to have completed FCO & Sector Commander or FCO & Advanced Bush/Crew Leader within 5 yrs.
 All must have completed Intro, Bushfire & Structural to be eligible. Minimum level of training required

	INTRODUCTION TO FIREFIGHTING (Date)	BUSHFIRE FIGHTING (Date)	STRUCTURAL FIRE FIGHTING (Date)	CREW LEADER (Date)	ADVANCED BUSH (Date)	SECTOR COMMANDER (Date)	FIRE CONTROL OFFICER (Date)	Compliance with minimum training criteria YES/NO	Additional qualifications for Chief & Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer				Comments
									Machine Supervision (Date)	Ground Controller	AIMS 2017	Incident Controller Level 1	
Chris Marris	2017	2017	2017	2020	2018	2017	2018	YES	2017	2019	2019	July/Aug 2020	Scheduled for July/Aug 2020 training
Neil Diamond	2010	2015	2012	2010	2010	2015	Aug-20	YES-subject to booked training being completed	2015		2020	National Unit PUAOPE012A	Scheduled for Aug 2020 FCO
Kistafer Brown	2014	2015	2015	2014	2014	2017	2015	YES	2017	2015	2019	July/Aug 2020	Scheduled for July/Aug 2020 training
Simon Peters	2014	2015	2016	2011	2005	2015	2015	YES	Sep-20	Sep-20	Aug-20		Scheduled for Aug/Sep 2020 training
Matthew Letch	2014	2015	2014	2017	2017		2015-Aug-20	YES		2015			Scheduled for Aug 2020 FCO

6.4 UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE UXO ISSUES

Address:	N/A
Owner:	N/A
Applicant:	N/A
File Reference:	5.1.3.1
Reporting Officer:	Chadd Hunt Executive Manager Development Services
Responsible Officer:	Chadd Hunt Executive Manager Development Services
Officer Declaration of Interest:	Nil
Voting Requirement:	Simple Majority
Press release to be issued:	No

BRIEF

Following an incident in May 2020 at a property within the Shire of Northam the issue of Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) and management of fire on and around similar areas has arisen. The purpose of this report is to identify the issues raised by that specific incident but to also provide recommendations for the manner in which future incidents in documented UXO areas are managed.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: DFES SOP 3.5.13
- Attachment 2: Extracts of Department of defence mapping applicable to the Shire of Northam

A. BACKGROUND / DETAILS

On 15th May 2020 the Shire of Northam responded to a fire on a property known as Lot 2 No 705 Spencers Brook Road, Spencers Brook. Numerous brigades and appliances from both the Shire of Northam, Shire of York and Northam VFRS attended the incident.

Following the initial turnout it was identified that the incident was in a potential UXO area which was not communicated in the original turn-out message, as is the current protocol.

Following the completion of the fire concerns/complaints in the form of incident reports lodged with the Shire of Northam, DFES and Worksafe have

raised concerns with the manner in which the incident was managed given the potential UXO classification.

In undertaking further investigation into the concerns/complaints received it has become evident that the entire issue of UXO sites within the Shire of Northam and in particular, the response to fire incidents on identified potential UXO land is in need of urgent review.

It is clear that while the identification of potential UXO sites is documented within the Shire of Northam Bushfire Manual, there has been a lack of clear and concise information relating to the manner in which all agencies (including the Shire of Northam) have responded to incidents in these areas/locations.

In addition it is understood that DFES are currently in the process of reviewing SOP 3.5.13 – Operating within Registered UXO sites.

A summary of some of the key issues regarding this is as follows:

- The initial "000" message to Shire of Northam did not identify the site as being a "Potential UXO area" as per established procedures
- On being identified by Shire of Northam CESM of the potential UXO area, outgoing BART and radio messages included this fact. All units were subsequently advised of the potential UXO for the site via radio communications & SMS through DFES Comcen, and instructed that appliances are to remain on "hard established tracks" at all times by the CESM.
- DFES SOP 3.5.13 includes several categories of UXO as follows
 - Other
 - Slight
 - Substantial-Vacant Land
 - Substantial-Developed Land
- SOP 3.5.13 details various fire suppression activities, appliances and machinery that can be used in the categories above.
- The UXO mapping available on the Department of Defence website does not distinguish between Substantial-Vacant Land and Substantial – Developed land. They are all mapped together.
- Following from the above point, it is assumed that given the site has a house, various structures and developed areas (bitumen roads etc.), the correct classification was as "Substantial –Developed" land.

- SOP 3.5.13 indicates that for “Substantial-Developed” land, “Rubber tired tankers up to and including 4.4 classification (fast attack, light tankers, heavy tankers, heavy duties and gang trucks etc.) can be used for back burns and mop on well-travelled tracks and identified on the site specific pre-plan”.
- Mapping subsequently provided to the Shire of Northam through DFES identifies the three parcels within the Shire of Northam as “Substantial-Vacant” land including the property which was the subject of the fire in May.
- Based on that classification, DFES SOP 3.5.13 states that there is “No access by land-based firefighting resources”.
- The SOP further states that “Incident Controllers may vary the guidance herein to enable the application of safe strategies for the purpose of fire control. If the IC varies the interpretation for fire control requirements, this must be done in a risk assessment framework and fully documented.”
- Previously provided UXO mapping for the Shire of Northam does not match that provided on the Department of Defence website or by DFES in terms of location and classification status
- Significant portions of the Shire of Northam are within the designation of “Slight” including large portions of the Clackline-Muresk BFB and Irishtown BFB areas
- With the current classification of the land for those three parcels within the Shire of Northam there is significant implication for the manner in which uncontrolled fires in and around those properties can be managed
- Concern has been raised that appliance and equipment were tasked to access/work in areas not in accordance with the SOP (i.e. not on a “well-travelled track”)
- There is no definition within the SOP of what a “well-travelled track” is
- In addition to fire appliances additional earthmoving equipment (Shire FEL) was mobilised to the above incident on the provision that it was to remain on bitumen tracks only, and was not permitted under any circumstances to traverse of the bitumen tracks.

- AVL mapping indicates in several locations that vehicles appear to have left well-established tracks – in several areas this may have been to turn around or to allow the passing of other vehicles
- One area appears to be between two established tracks that was used by numerous appliances. It is difficult to ascertain if that area was previously an established track or if a path was used by several appliances on that day although later reports suggest the FEL was instructed to cut a track between the firebreak and the bitumen track.
- Historically aerial photographs indicate previous tracks for the majority of the area in question

B. CONSIDERATIONS

B.1 Strategic Community / Corporate Business Plan

Theme Area 5:	Infrastructure and service delivery
Outcome 5.2:	Environmental Risks are managed to minimise impacts on residents
Objective:	Continued bushfire management planning and mitigation works Provide training and support to BFB volunteers to perform firefighting operations to an acceptable standard

B.2 Financial / Resource Implications

Nil.

B.3 Legislative Compliance

Bush Fires Act 1954
Bush Fires Regulations 1954

B.4 Policy Implications

The Shire of Northam Bush Fire Manual states the following –

1.12E Unexploded ordnance

Refer to the Standard Operating Procedure on Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) for information on how to deal with fire management in purported UXO areas.

Maps showing UXO zones are available showing possible affected areas, the CBFCO, the Shire of Northam and the DFES regional office can provide maps as required.

Please note if working in these areas and you require specialist information please contact DFES Regional office or the Duty Coordinator.

DFES SOP 3.5.13 – Operating within Registered UXO Sites (refer to Attachment 1)

B.5 Stakeholder Engagement / Consultation

Discussion and consultation has been undertaken with parties involved including but not limited to DFES, CBFCO, CESH, DCBFCOs and Worksafe representatives.

B.6 Risk Implications

Risk Category	Description	Rating (consequence x likelihood)	Mitigation Action
Financial	Potential significant cost to landowners with UXO identified on their property	Possible (3) x Minor(2) = Moderate(6)	Implementation of SOP and new protocols as recommended in this report
Health & Safety	Major safety risk to volunteers attending fires on and around UXO areas	Possible (3) x Extreme = High(15)	Implementation of SOP and new protocols as recommended in this report
Reputation	In the event of a major incident not managed in accordance with guidelines significant reputation damage will occur	Possible(3) x Extreme (5) = High (15)	Implementation of SOP and new protocols as recommended in this report
Service Interruption	In case of a major emergency significant disruption to the operations of the Shire	Possible(3) x Medium(3) = Moderate (9)	Implementation of SOP and new protocols as recommended in this report
Compliance	Brigades and volunteers not	Possible(3) x High(4) = High(12)	Implementation of SOP and new protocols as

	adhering to revised SOP's		recommended in this report
Property	Potential significant damage to property identified as Significant UXO due to current restrictions	Possible(3) x Extreme(5) = High(15)	Undertake urgent review of current SOP's and liaise direct with landowners regarding the current restrictions
Environment	N/A	N/A	N/A

C. OFFICER'S COMMENT

It is clear from undertaking the investigation into UXO sites within the Shire of Northam there are a number of significant improvements that need to be made. These improvements related to the manner in which information is provided to the Shire and the Brigades and the way incidents are responded to and managed within specific areas of the Shire. This conclusion is made following more detailed information being provided and further research being undertaken by staff and DFES representatives.

The list of recommended actions is comprehensive however given the complexity of the issue and the serious ramifications if a major incident were to occur they are seen as the most appropriate response to the identified issues.

It is proposed that as further information becomes available this is provided back through the brigades for further action and implementation.

One of the highest priorities from staff's perspective is to clarify with the Department of Defence and DFES the status of the three privately-owned properties designated as "UXO-Significant" on the Department of Defence mapping given the significant implications that this has for the manner in which fires both in and around those sites can be managed. This may involve the development of a site-specific risk management plan or pre-approved operational plan.

RECOMMENDATION

That it be recommended to Council that the following actions be undertaken in response to the issue of Unexploded Ordnances (UXO) within the Shire of Northam:

General

1. All existing UXO mapping be removed from operational use
2. All Brigades, Brigade appliances and CBFCO, DCBFCOs, FCOs and CESM be provided with hard-copy maps of existing potential UXO

areas currently available from the Department of Defence website-
<https://www.defence.gov.au/UXO/Where/MapAppInfo.asp>

3. Provided mapping to clearly distinguish the various classifications of the land as included within the DFES SOP
4. Clarification be sought from DFES/Department of Defence on the previously distributed mapping that indicated additional High Risk areas not currently included on the mapping
5. Engagement be sought with the Department of Defence and DFES re 'Slight UXO' areas (which equates to most of Clackline-Muresk and half of Irishtown brigade districts, with small areas elsewhere) to discuss the implications for firefighting efforts, e.g., understanding the risks of using a grader on a previously cropped paddock in Irishtown
6. DFES/Department of Defence be requested to clarify the three existing land parcels identified as being "Substantial" if they are classified as "Developed" or "Vacant Land", given the development on the land
7. DFES/Department of Defence be requested to clarify the extent of the "slight occurrence" on the above mapping given the historical development of the area, with specific reference to the active firefighting suppression methods that can be used in these areas
8. Council provide official notification to landholders of "Substantial" sites concerning the implications of future fires, based on the current operational SOP
9. DFES be requested to provide a timeframe for updating the SOP

Operational/Response

10. The Shire of Northam Bushfire Manual (Section 1.12E) be updated to include specific turn-out requirements for incidents within the "Substantial-Vacant" and "Substantial-Developed" classifications, and land within close proximity to that land (suggest within a 500 mtr radius).
11. DFES be requested to ensure turn-out procedures include an automatic UXO warning for those sites either within or within ~~500mtr~~ 1km radius of land identified as "Substantial" from the above mapping, as included with DFES SOP3.5.13.
12. Turn-out messages to include a more specific warning such as "This incident is within the vicinity of a known Substantial UXO area – please refer to local mapping."
13. DFES be requested to update FESMAPS, to reflect the above
14. The Shire of Northam mobilisation matrix be updated to include the requirement for the CESM, CBFCO or DCBFCOs, and DFES to be mobilised with the DEFS staff member to provide operational assistance to the Incident Management Team (IMT).
15. The procedure above to also include the requirement to adhere to SOP3.5.13 – this is currently that brigades cannot enter the site unless the IC approves a variation to the guidelines in the SOP based on a fully documented risk assessment

- 16. Subject to the clarification of the above, the Shire of Northam Bushfire Manual (Section 1.12E) be updated to include specific turn-out requirements for incidents within the “Slight” classification – the turn-out requirement is to include the advice that heavy earth-moving machinery (such as a dozer) not be used and that other earth-moving machinery complies with SOP 3.5.13. This is to be reviewed following additional advice from DFES and Department of Defence**
- 17. Mandatory training session be held with CBFCO, DCBFCOs all FCOs, brigade leadership teams and Shire plant operators on the revised Bush Fire Manual procedures relating to UXO issues mentioned above – it is recommended that appropriate DFES and Department of Defence staff attend the training session**
- 18. Site specific bushfire response plans be developed for the three properties within the Shire of Northam classified as “Substantial” - the response plans are to detail how bushfires either within the property or that in the immediate vicinity (suggested 500 mtr radius) will be handled (alternately, a site-specific documented risk assessment for the three sites be developed in consultation with DFES and Department of Defence in accordance with the requirements of SOP 3.5.13)**
- 19. UXO issues be included as an ongoing aspect to scenario training, pre-season briefings, and pre-season tours of the Shire**

Attachment 1 - DFES SOP 3.5.13



[Download Field Guide](#)

Introduction

Unexploded ordnance (UXO) is any type of military ammunition or explosive ordnance which has failed to function as intended. In Australia, UXO contamination is generally the result of military training activities. In the past large numbers of ranges and training areas were approved for military use in many areas of Australia, and there are now many sites which are affected by UXO. Western Australia in particular is heavily contaminated with UXO compared with all other Australian States and Territories.

Although there are no known cases of UXO detonating involuntarily within Western Australia; UXO may be detonated through vibration, mechanical disturbance or exposure to a heat source all of which may occur during firefighting operations. However, most UXO are sub-surface and will not be exposed to direct fire heat and would require substantial impact (metal-to-metal) in order to cause detonation. Any UXO that may be on the surface will generally require intense heat over a long duration in order to achieve detonation.

The procedures below and at Annex A have been developed to guide the IC in the application of bushfire fighting techniques within registered UXO sites.

Note:

- Incident Controllers may vary the guidance herein to enable the application of safe strategies for the purposes of fire control. If the IC varies the interpretation for fire control requirements, this must be done in a risk assessment framework and fully documented.
- If specific UXO sites are identified requiring different actions for firefighting operations then an Urban Bushland Response Plan needs to be developed for the site.

Procedures

- IC made aware bushfire is in a UXO risk area and the UXO category (as per FESMaps) through SOP 2.1.2 Mobilising.
- Fire control operations informed by the UXO Category and Annex A. There are site specific considerations for the Two Rocks, Warnbro townsites and Stake Hill area (as per references included in Annex A).
- On request of any aerial suppression aircraft, it must be clearly identified as a UXO site in the Flight Hazards column on the request form (ADF 01).**
- If a suspected UXO is found during fire control operations, firefighters are to carry out the following actions:

Clearly mark the site without disturbing the immediate vicinity
Withdraw from the area
Notify the Sector Commander/Ops Officer/IC, who is to immediately notify WAPOL through the COMCEN
If possible, maintain a presence near the site until advised to the contrary
IC to implement alternative firefighting strategies that reduce the presence of firefighters within the immediate area.

SOP 3.5.13 – Operating within Registered Unexploded Ordnance Sites			
Version:	Issue Date:	Review Date:	Accountable Position:
1.5	Mar 18	Nov 19	AC Metropolitan

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SOP 3.5.13	Firefighting Guidance – Operating within Registered Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) Sites	ANNEX A
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LEGEND: DOD – DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE, LT – LIGHT TANKER, HT – HEAVY TANKER, FEL – FRONT END LOADER, DZ – DOZER, AIR – AERIAL SUPPRESSION

DOD - UXO CATEGORY	DOD - DEFINITION	DOD - WARNING	DFES - INTERPRETATION FOR FIRE CONTROL	APPLIANCE ABLE TO BE USED SAFELY				
				LAND-BASED				AIR
				LT	HT	FEL	DZ	
OTHER	Defence records confirm that the area was used for military training but do not confirm that the site was used for live firing. UXO or explosive ordnance fragments / components have not been recovered from the site. Defence opinion is that it would be inappropriate to assess as either slight or substantial.	Allied Defence Forces used many areas throughout Australia, during and after World War II, for encampments, field training, live firing of weapons and other military activities. This property is on such a site; however no specific UXO contaminated site has been identified in the area.	These areas have no constraints to fire control operations. Access is not limited. All types of ground and aerial suppression equipment can be used.	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

SOP 3.5.13 – Operating within Registered Unexploded Ordnance Sites			
Version:	Issue Date:	Review Date:	Accountable Position:
1.6	Jan 19	Nov 19	AC Metropolitan
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DOD - UXO CATEGORY	DOD - DEFINITION	DOD - WARNING	DFES - INTERPRETATION FOR FIRE CONTROL	LT	HT	FEL	DZ	AIR
SLIGHT	Areas categorised as slight will have a confirmed history of military activities that have resulted in residual UXO but which Defence considers it inappropriate to assess as substantial.	Allied Defence Forces used many areas throughout Australia, during and after World War II, for encampments, field training, live firing of weapons and other military activities. This property is on such a site. A possibility exists that dangerous items of Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) may still be found on this site.	Rubber tyred tankers up to and including 4.4 classification (fast attack, light tankers, heavy tankers, heavy duties and gang trucks etc) can be used for back burn and mop up on well-travelled tracks and identified on the site specific pre-plan. Aerial suppression tactics can be applied. *1 Rubber tyred earth moving equipment i.e. (FEL) can be used to remove the light surface fuels only on well-established tracks.	YES	YES	YES *1	NO	YES
SUBSTANTIAL – VACANT LAND	Sites categorised as being substantial will have a history of numerous UXO finds or heavy residual fragmentation. Areas likely to be assessed as substantial include impact areas, demolition sites and areas of heavy explosive ordnance dumping.	Allied Defence Forces used many areas throughout Australia, during and after World War II, for encampments, field training, live firing of weapons and other military activities. This property is on such a site. A possibility exists that dangerous items of Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) may still be found on this site.	No access by land based firefighting resources. *1. Aerial Fire Suppression may occur if IC in conjunction with air operations determines justified and safe to do so in accordance with 'Suppression Response Criteria' from SOP 3.11.1 – Aerial Suppression Response .	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO *1

SOP 3.5.13 – Operating within Registered Unexploded Ordnance Sites			
Version:	Issue Date:	Review Date:	Accountable Position:
1.6	Jan 19	Nov 19	AC Metropolitan
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DOD - UXO CATEGORY	DOD - DEFINITION	DOD - WARNING	DFES - INTERPRETATION FOR FIRE CONTROL	LT	HT	FEL	DZ	AIR
SUBSTANTIAL – DEVELOPED LAND Site Specific Refer to FESMaps TWO ROCKS TOWNSITE WARNBRO TOWNSITE STAKE HILL	Sites categorised as being substantial will have a history of numerous UXO finds or heavy residual fragmentation. Areas likely to be assessed as substantial include impact areas, demolition sites and areas of heavy explosive ordnance dumping.	Allied Defence Forces used many areas throughout Australia, during and after World War II, for encampments, field training, live firing of weapons and other military activities. This property is on such a site. A possibility exists that dangerous items of Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) may still be found on this site.	Rubber tyred tankers up to and including 4.4 classification (fast attack, light tankers, heavy tankers, heavy duties and gang trucks etc.) can be used for back burn and mop up on well-travelled tracks and identified on the site specific pre-plan. Aerial suppression tactics can be applied.	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES

SOP 3.5.13 – Operating within Registered Unexploded Ordnance Sites			
Version:	Issue Date:	Review Date:	Accountable Position:
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DOCUMENT HISTORY

VERSION	DATE	DESCRIPTION of CHANGE
1.0	Jan 10	New SOP created. New sections created: • (All) Source documents: SOP 66 – Unexploded Ordnance <i>All listed SOP/SAP, now retired.</i>
1.1	Sep 12	Content reviewed for currency – no change
1.2	Jan 14	Update formatting and general review
1.3	Nov 17	Major review of SOP 3.5.13
1.4	Dec 17	Change to appliance classification changed from 3.4 to 4.4 Change to Accountable Position from AC Operations Capability to AC Hazard Planning and Response
1.5	Feb 18	Change to DFES interpretation for fire control tables Change of Accountable position from AC Hazard Planning and Response to AC Metropolitan
1.6	Jan 19	Inclusion of the following statement in notes section • Incident Controllers may vary the guidance herein to enable the application of safe strategies for the purposes of fire control. If the IC varies the interpretation for fire control requirements, this must be done in a risk assessment framework and fully documented.

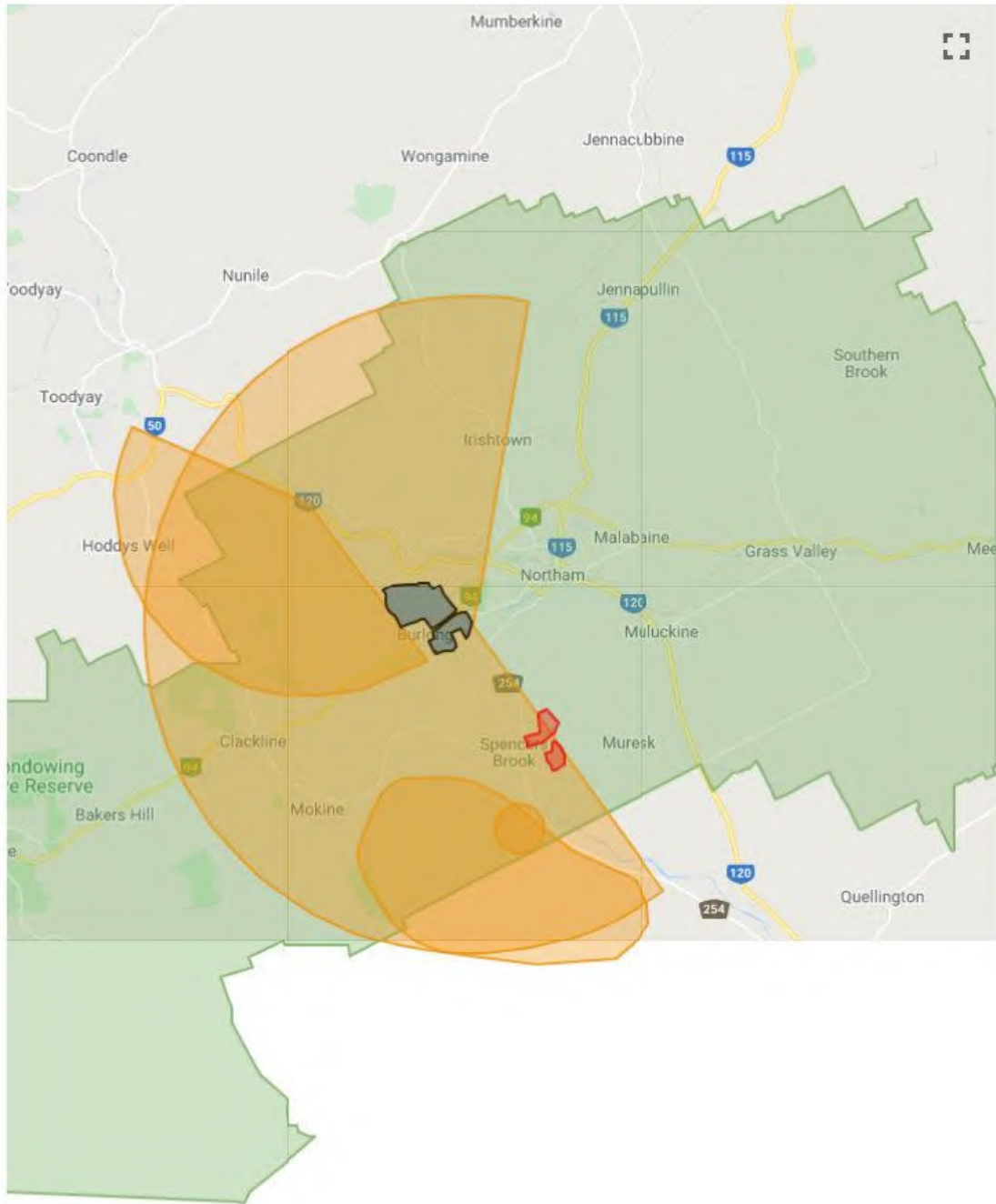
SOP 3.5.13 – Operating within Registered Unexploded Ordnance Sites			
Version:	Issue Date:	Review Date:	Accountable Position:
1.5	Mar 18	Nov 19	AC Metropolitan

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Attachment 2 - Extracts of Department of Defence mapping applicable to the Shire of Northam

9/1/2020

UXO Map



Google
<https://maps.google.com/maps?ll=-31.699192,116.649757&z=11&t=m&hl=en-US&gl=US&mapclient=mapdata>
52.65.9.125 1/1

7. MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

7.1 BAKERS HILL BFB - MOTION TO ESTABLISH MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING REGARDING MANAGEMENT OF BUSH FIRE BRIGADES

A. BACKGROUND

Due to changes occurring within emergency services and the community in general, it is becoming apparent that how the Bush Fire Service is run as a Shire Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade needs to change to future-proof the brigades and community.

Having discrepancies in correct protocols and procedures creates confusion and inconsistencies on the fire ground that have proven to create significant issues in regards to personnel safety.

Having a consistent approach to incident and brigade management with a single set of standard policies and procedures will allow brigades to focus on their primary role of protecting the community.

The issues we have been seeing in the past and into the future could put our community at undue risks.

The time has come for a comprehensive review into the current model that is failing us as volunteers and is eroding morale within brigades and affecting the way in which we serve the community.

In the interest of moving forward and improving the Bush Fire Service inter-operability with other emergency services, the Bakers Hill VFBF puts the following motions forward to Council.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Moved: Mr Kris Brown

That Council:

- 1. Initiates discussions with DFES staff for a Memorandum Of Understanding to be established for DFES to manage the VFBFs with a view of an agreement being in place prior to the 21/22 bush fire season**
- 2. Instructs the CEO to investigate and prepare a report on the different models that would operate under a Memorandum Of Understanding with DFES and provide this report back to brigades for formal discussions prior to the next BFAC for formal direction from Brigades**
- 3. In consultation with DFES investigates the options and time frames for Brigades to convert to DFES-managed VFES Brigades**

B. OFFICER'S COMMENT:

It appears that the option of DFES managing the Shire of Northam Bush Fire Brigades has not been raised formally through BFAC previously. There are a number of issues that would need to be researched by staff and considered as part of any report that Brigades and Council considers relating to this proposal.

8. URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY DECISION

Nil.

9. GENERAL BUSINESS

Nil.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11. DECLARATION OF CLOSURE