

TERMS OF REFERENCE

SHIRE OF NORTHAM BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. Objectives of Bush Fire Advisory Committee

Northam Bush Fire Advisory Committee is established pursuant to Section 5.8 of the Local Government Act 1995 and Section 67 of the Bush Fires Act 1954 within the local government boundaries of the Shire of Northam. The Committee's objective is to provide efficient and responsive fire service and as a Committee to advise the Council on matters relating to bush fire, make recommendations and advise Council on all matters relating to bush fire planning, control, management and rehabilitation.

To liaise with other emergency organisations and relevant bodies with regard to Fire and Emergency Management within the Shire of Northam.

Reports from the Committee will assist Council in discharging its legislative responsibilities of controlling the local government's affairs, determining the local government's policies and overseeing the allocation of the local government's finances and resources.

2. Powers of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee

The Committee is a formally appointed committee of Council and is responsible to that body. The Committee does not have executive powers or authority to implement actions in areas over which the CEO has legislative responsibility and does not have any delegated financial responsibility. The Committee does not have any management functions and cannot involve itself in management processes or procedures.

The Committee is to report to Council and provide appropriate advice and recommendations on matters relevant to its term of reference in order to facilitate informed decision-making by Council in relation to the legislative functions and duties of the local government that have not been delegated to the CEO.

3. Membership

3.1 Full voting members

- Chief Bush Fire Control Officer;
- Two (2) Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers;
- Two (2) Shire of Northam Elected Members;
- One (1) delegate or proxy representative from each of the registered Shire of Northam Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades listed below:
 - Bakers Hill Bush Fire Brigade;
 - Clackline/Muresk Bush Fire Brigade;
 - Grass Valley Bush Fire Brigade;
 - Inkpen Bush Fire Brigade;
 - Irishtown Bush Fire Brigade;
 - Jennapullin Bush Fire Brigade;
 - Southern Brook Bush Fire Brigade;
 - Northam Central Bush Fire Brigade; and
 - Wundowie Bush Fire Brigade.

One (1) delegate or proxy Department of Fire and Emergency Service Northam District Officer

3.2 Non-voting

- Shire of Northam Community Emergency Services Manager
- One representative from Northam Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service; and
- One representative from Wundowie Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service and;
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions representative.

4. Meetings

The committee shall meet at least three times annually.

Additional meetings shall be convened at the discretion of the chairperson.

5. Reporting

Reports and recommendations of each Committee meeting shall be presented to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

6. Duties and Responsibilities

The Committee is to facilitate:

- Preventing, controlling and extinguishing of bush fires;
- The planning of the layout of fire-breaks in the district;
- Prosecutions for breaches of the Bush Fire Act 1954;
- The formation of bush fire brigades;
- The ensuring of co-operation and co-ordination of bush fire brigades in their efforts and activities;
- Any other matter relating to bush fire control whether of the same kind, as, or a different kind from, those specified;
- Provide guidance and advise to Council to the carrying out the functions of the local government in relation to bush fires; and
- Develop and recommend to Council appropriate processes for bush fires.

7. Tenure of Membership

Shall be in accordance with the Local Government Act 1995, section 5.11.

8. Authority

Bushfires Act 1954, Section 67, Advisory Committees

A local government may at any time appoint such persons as it thinks fit as a bush fire advisory committee for the purpose of advising the local government regarding all matters relating to the preventing, controlling and extinguishing of bush fires, the planning of the layout of fire-breaks in the district, prosecutions for breaches of this Act, the formation of bush fire brigades and the grouping thereof under group brigade officers, the ensuring of co-operation and co-ordination of bush fire brigades in their efforts and activities, and any other matter relating to bush fire control whether of the same kind as, or a different kind from, those specified in this subsection.

9. Committee

9.1 Chairperson

The Committee shall elect one of their number to be chairman thereof in accordance with the Local Government Act 1995, section 5.12.

9.2 Secretary

A Shire employee will fulfil the role of non-voting Secretary.

9.3 Quorum

The quorum at any meeting shall be half plus one of the number of offices.

9.4 Voting

Shall be in accordance with the Local Government Act, Section 5.21.

9.5 Minutes

Shall be in accordance with the Local Government Act, Section 5.22.

A copy of the unconfirmed minutes shall be forwarded to all members within fourteen (14) days of the meeting for endorsement at the next meeting.

Members are given at least 5 working days after the minutes of a BFAC meeting are circulated to comment or raise issues associated with the wording of the minutes, before the BFAC minutes are included in a Council agenda; and

Each draft document considered by BFAC is amended in accordance with BFAC resolutions and the amended version is circulated to BFAC members for at least 5 working days for comment before it is included in the Council agenda.

Recommendations arising from the minutes shall be presented to Council in the next available Council agenda for endorsement and/or action.

The person presiding at the meeting at which the minutes are confirmed is to sign the minutes and certify confirmation.

9.6 Who Acts If No Chairperson

Shall be in accordance with the Local Government Act, Section 5.14.

9.7 Meetings

Meetings shall be generally open to the public pursuant to Section 5.23 of the Local Government Act and include question time for members of the pursuant to Section 5.24 of the Local Government Act.

9.8 Members Interests to be Disclosed

Members of the Committee are bound by the provisions of the Local Government Act Section 5.65 with respect to disclosure of financial, impartiality or proximity interests.

9.9 Brigade Reports

Each member brigade may provide a brigade report to the meeting.

9.10 Working Groups

A working group can be established to carry out specific tasks. A working group will undertake only those duties specified by the committee.

9.11 Deputations

A person or organisation maybe invited to attend any meetings but such persons shall not be entitled to vote on any decision arising from such meetings.