

**MINUTES OF THE WAGIN BUSHFIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD IN THE SHIRE OF WAGIN COUNCIL CHAMBERS
ON TUESDAY 17th MARCH 2020**



1. OPENING

The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 7.34pm and welcomed those in attendance.

2. ATTENDANCE:

Cr P J Blight	Chairperson
Mr R Goldsmith	CBFCO
Mrs C Goldsmith	
Mr X White	
Mr A Rowell	
Cr L Lucas	
Mr I McDougall	
Mr T Hamersley	
Mr C Clifton	
Mr S Angwin	
Mr P R Webster	CEO
Mr B Roderick	DCEO
Mrs D George	CLO

APOLOGIES

Mr G Abbott
Mr T Cook

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

NIL

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES /BUSINESS ARISING

COMMITTEES RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mr T Hamersley

Seconded: Mr X White

That the minutes of the Bushfire Advisory Committee Meeting held on the 25th March 2019 be confirmed as true and correct

Carried 10/0

5. PUBLIC FORUM

Nil

6. CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTS

5.1 DCBFCO Reports

5.1.1 Mr X White – DCBFCO No 1 – Nothing to report as all good.

5.1.2 Mr A Rowell – DCBFCO No 2 – Nothing to report as all good.

5.2 BRIGADE Reports

5.2.1 Badjarning

Had three fires, with two being lightning strikes and one was a pole top fire. The lightning strikes occurred along Sprigg Fraser Road and near the quarry and the pole top fire was Jeremy Abbott's property.

Aaron Turnor and Ed Porter have been appointed Vice Captains of the Brigade.

5.2.2 Ballaying

Nothing to report

5.2.3 Cancanning

Nothing to Report other than attended other fires throughout the Shire

5.2.4 Lime Lake

No Report

5.2.5 Piesseville

Had a number of fires including Jaloran Farm, an area behind the pub, Kirk's farm and three fires at Unigrain. All up there was seventeen fires in the Shire and one in Katanning. It has been a busy season.

5.2.6 Wedgecarrup

Had a pole top fire at Hamersley's, lightning strike at Becker's and assisted with the two fires at Robinson's.

5.2.7 Wagin/Town & VFRS

Acted in a support role and attended a lot of the fires in the Shire. There is good communication and working relationship between all the brigades.

5.3 SHIRE REPORT

On behalf of Council I would like to acknowledge and congratulate the Chief Bushfire Control Officer, his deputy, the Fire Control Officers and all volunteers for their efforts and the fantastic job they did during the fire season.

It was a busier bushfire season than last year regarding bushfire control and administration, less so than the other side of the country. With three of our local volunteers heading over east for a spell to help out the local fire fighters who have been doing it very hard for a long time. Well done to you all Ty, Lyn and Chris.

The Katanning fire was a big event which resulted in a lot of our volunteers pulling on their kit and helping out in a significant way, rostering on crews to man 12 hours shift – day and night and working very hard toward a good final result. Staff were called on to help out where they could – giving access to fuel and providing some water for the crews.

Council have worked hard on getting extra support for the volunteers in way of a better supply of PPE, adding fire boots and tohl fire hose nozzles into the mix. We have a wide range of PPE in the office for any volunteers who require gear.

Vehicle Stickers renewals have been steady – with the first issue of stickers expiring in 2018 and with the current issue expiring in September 2020. 82 vehicles have current stickers in place – including 13 shire vehicles. These stickers will allow access to the fire ground through a roadblock and should be on any vehicle which may be required on ground. They are available at the shire office.

A plan was put in place last year to have some pre-season training and combining it with the crop farmers meeting – the timing of this proved to be impossible, getting the trainers and the farmers/volunteers at the same time. Potential of pre-season training is doable – but as a stand-alone session.

Staff continue to work with all Bush Fire Brigades and the VFRS toward a more cohesive working relationship and this seems to be resulting in some really good outcomes.

5.4 ESL GRANT APPLICATION 2019/20

ESL Grant 2019/2020

For the 2019/2020 financial year DFES has offered the Shire BFB program \$44,720. This offer was rejected, and an alternative operating grant application was made for \$53,000. They eventually came back and approved an allocation of \$49,000 plus an insurance allowance of \$4,262 for insurance increases, bringing the total amount to \$53,262.

With the operating funds we have again purchased more Tohl Nozzles and also replaced a number of pumps on the Standpipe Trailers. I have highlighted below the expenditure to date and what the expected total expenditure for the year will be.

ESL OPERATING GRANT					
EXPENDITURE ITEM	BUSH FIRE BRIGADE		Variance	Projected 2019/20 Actual	Budget 2020/2021
	2019/20 Budget	2019/20 Actual			
RECURRENT:					
1. Purchase of Plant & Equipment <\$1,200 per item	\$3,000	3,762	-762	4,000	4,000
2. Maintenance of Plant and Equipment	\$3,000	599	2,401	3,000	3,000
3. Maintenance of Vehicles/Trailers/Boats	\$7,000	3,733	3,267	7,000	7,000
4. Maintenance of Land and Buildings	\$500	84	416	500	550
5. Clothing and Accessories	\$10,000	4,411	5,589	8,000	8,000
6. Utilities, Rates and Taxes	\$1,500	1,067	433	1,500	1,500
7. Other Goods and Services	\$4,000	583	3,417	4,600	4,500
8. Insurances	\$24,262	24,604	-342	24,604	29,000
Sub Total Recurrent	\$53,262	\$38,842	14,420	53,204	57,550

Also, last year we received confirmation that we were successful in our application for a third fire tender for the Town Brigade. This approval is for a 4.4 Broadacre – Crew Cab at a value of \$440,000. This was great news; however, delivery of the new fire tender could be some time off. **We have just received advice as to a choice of what type of Tanker the Town Brigade requires. In consultation with the Wagin Town Brigade Captain we have advised it must be a Isuzu 4.4 Broadacre Crew Cab. It will take up to eight months for DFES to supply the tender.**

ESL Grant 2020/2021

A meeting was held at the shire on Feb 11th, with the Chief FCO and other FCO's and BFB representatives – enabling all involved to outline their requirements for the next financial years funding request.

Discussion around a variety of topics included:

- Time frame on the arrival of the new 4 x 4 truck and if that was the right fire tender for our shire.
- Water storage tanks are required West of Wagin as scheme water not available
- Water storage tank are also required East of Wagin due to everyone drawing off the scheme resulting in the standpipe being very slow.
- Replacement fittings for the standpipe trailers
 - Recommended 32 x 3-inch Banjo Plastic fittings

Also, there was a request for the following Capital items through the ESL application process:

- A new 4 x 4 2.4 Fire Tender for the Ballaying Brigade to be housed in Ballaying

- A new Single Bay Bushfire shed/station (as per Piesseville and Wedgecarrup) to house a new Fire Tender. To be built on Shire land near the Ballaying bin.

There is no provision for applying for water tanks through the ESL grant process, however other grant funds could be sourced to purchase this. Also, maybe an opportunity to approach water tank suppliers/companies as a sponsorship arrangement.

There was also a discussion for the need to acquire a mobile tanker to be stationed in key areas within the Shire. Again, this can't be funded through the ESL, however funds raised through the Mitigation Activity Funding (Bushfire brigades being paid to burn off) could be used to purchase a second-hand water tanker.

In the 2020/2021 financial year DFES has offered the Shire BFB program and operating amount of \$52,550, this is a significant increase on their first offer compared to previous years. Staff are recommending we accept their offer. On top of the \$52,550 there will again be a State Government Insurance allowance to cover expected increases in Bushfire insurance cover

Wagin ESL Operating Grant Allocations		
Year	Operating Grant	Other / Comments
2014-2015	\$26,610	
2015-2016	\$28,000	
2016-2017	\$31,440	
2017-2018	\$33,000	
2018-2019	\$44,000	Plus \$15,000 one off PPE Allocation & \$3,288 insurance Allowance
2019-2020	\$49,000	Plus \$4,262 Insurance Allowance
2020-2021	\$52,550	Plus Insurance Allowance (est \$5,000)

5.5 BUSHFIRE COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

PROPONENT:	Shire of Wagin
OWNER:	Shire of Wagin
LOCATION/ADDRESS:	
AUTHOR OF REPORT:	Shire President
SENIOR OFFICER:	Chief Executive Officer
DATE OF REPORT:	11 th March 2020
PREVIOUS REPORT(S):	N/A
DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:	N/A
FILE REFERENCE:	
ATTACHMENTS:	

SUMMARY

To endorse Council's new Bushfire Communication Policy.

BACKGROUND/COMMENT

The Shire and Bushfire brigade members have been using Digital Text based communication for some time now. It is seen as an appropriate and effective means of communication in times of emergency.

The author of the report believes it is necessary to have a policy in place to ensure there are some rules around using these digital communication platforms and also to protect the Shire and Managers of the platforms.

The Draft Bushfires Communications Policy is attached for review, change and endorsement.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION:
Shire CEO, CBFCO, Deputy CBFCO

STATUTORY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:
Local Government Act 1995

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:
New Bushfire Policy 8

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:
Nil

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS:
Nil

VOTING REQUIREMENTS:
Majority

OFFICER AND COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mr X White

Seconded: Mr I McDougall

That Bushfires Policy 8 – Bushfire Communications Policy be endorsed.

Carried 10/0

Note: Proposed New Policy

Policy Type:	Bushfire
Date Adopted:	

Policy No:	8
Date Last Reviewed:	

Legal (Parent):
1. Local Government Act 1995

Legal (Subsidiary):

Delegation of Authority Applicable
No

Delegation No.

ADOPTED POLICY

Title:	BUSHFIRES COMMUNICATION POLICY
Objective:	This Policy is designed to Validate the use of Digital Text based communication for Emergency Management. It is designed to obtain maximum value of this communication for the majority of Wagin Residents.
Policy Statement:	<p>Policy Statement</p> <p>The Shire of Wagin Endorses the use of Digital Text messaging platforms as an appropriate form of communication in times of Emergency.</p> <p>Rules of use:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Management of the platforms will be held by the endorsed FCO's and Shire CEO or his delegate 2. Text messaging is accepted as a legitimate form of communication of Harvest and Movement of Vehicle Bans, Total Fire Bans and similar. 3. Use of the WhatsApp Chat "Wagin Fire Emergency" is to be limited to the discovery, locating, and management of fire and similar emergencies. 4. Chatter is specifically unwelcome 5. Users of this system will be deemed to have accepted these rules. 6. Managers of the platforms have the right to remove members who disrupt the platform. 7. Persons removed from the Platform will be written to and advised the platform rules, they will then have the opportunity to rejoin.

5.6 PROHIBITED AND RESTRICTED BURNING PERIODS

PROPONENT:	Shire of Wagin
OWNER:	Shire of Wagin
LOCATION/ADDRESS:	
AUTHOR OF REPORT:	Chief Executive Officer
SENIOR OFFICER:	Chief Executive Officer
DATE OF REPORT:	11 th March 2020
PREVIOUS REPORT(S):	N/A
DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST:	N/A
FILE REFERENCE:	
ATTACHMENTS:	

SUMMARY

To endorse new Prohibited and Restricted Burning Period dates for the Shire of Wagin.

BACKGROUND/COMMENT

The Shire's current Prohibited and Restricted Burning periods are as follows:

Restricted 1st October to 31st October – Permit Required

Prohibited 1st November to 14 February - No Burning or issuing of Permits

Restricted 15th February to 30th April – Permit Required

The Chief Fire Control Officer, over the years, has made it clear that no permits to burn should be issued before the Annual Woolorama Event. This directive should be adopted in Council's Fire Break notice each year.

The author is proposing the following new Prohibited and Restricted Burning Periods:

Restricted 1st October to 31st October – Permit Required

Prohibited 1st November to 14 March - No Burning or issuing of Permits

Restricted 15th March to 30th April – Permit Required

The Bushfires Advisory Committee must endorse these new Prohibited and Restricted Burning Period dates so then it can go to Council for adoption.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION:

Nil

STATUTORY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Local Government Act 1995

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Nil

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Nil

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS:

Nil

VOTING REQUIREMENTS:

Simple

OFFICER AND COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Mr I McDougall

Seconded: Mr R Goldsmith

That the following new Prohibited and Restricted Burning Period dates be endorsed:

Restricted 1st October to 31st October – Permit Required

Prohibited 1st November to 14 March - No Burning or issuing of Permits

Restricted 15th March to 30th April – Permit Required

Carried 10/0

Unconfirmed

5.7 MITIGATION ACTIVITY FUNDING (MAF)

Information Only

Council has received \$65,200 in MAF for the following: -

• Etelowie St	Mechanical Fire Breaks	\$16,000
• Lloyd St	Mechanical Fire Breaks	
• Upland St	Mechanical Fire Breaks	
• Mt Latham	Burning – South	\$9,200
• Mt Latham	Burning - South	\$23,000
• Mt Latham	Access Tracks - South	\$17,000

There has been an issue with clearances to undertake the work, but this has not been resolved and work should commence within the month.

It is planned to have the Bushfire Brigade volunteers to undertake some of the work which will enable the Brigades to generate funds to be kept in a Reserve for Bush Fire Brigades plant and equipment purposes.

All funding must be acquitted by the 15th June 2020

5.8 BUSHFIRE BRIGADES THANKYOU GIFT CARDS – DONATION FROM COLES

Coles is throwing its support behind Australia's volunteer fire fighters by donating \$3 million in gift cards to rural fire brigades.

The Supermarket chain has given **\$500** each to more than 6,000 fire brigades across the nation saying it was their way of thanking these crucial volunteers for helping to keep rural communities safe.

The retailer suggested the gift card could be used to stock up on supplies of food and essentials for stations over the fire season, or to run a thank you event for members. The gift cards can't be spent on alcohol, cigarettes, phone/gift cards or petrol. The cards can't be redeemed for cash and must be spend within four years.

Staff have applied for a card for each brigade and we believe each Brigade in Wagin should have their gift card by email.

It has been suggested that through this Bushfire Advisory Committee meeting that the brigade Captains and members discuss how best to expend the gift cards.

The Committee decided to look at ways each individual Brigade can expend the funds on their Brigade needs. They also agreed that a funds spent of food supplies for a pre-season training BBQ would be a good way to expend some of the vouchers.

The Community Liaison Officer would work with the Top Crop groups to hold a pre-season training BBQ before the next fire season.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

Bushfire Radios

Anthony Rowell asked about the funding of new Bushfire Radios both hand-held and static vehicle radios. Radios will not be covered under the ESL & alternate funding will need to be sourced, with a suggested list of 3 vehicle and 1 base radio needed – at a cost of approx. \$4,800 plus installation. Anthony will follow up, ensuring all FCO’s currently have a working base and truck radio.

Updated List of Contacts and Resources

A request made for updating of the resources list, staff will send out the current resource list for ‘local knowledge’ to amend & staff will then follow up with phone calls and ensure FCO’s have the list of item which may assist in a fire.

Shire Staff will undertake this task to update all contact mobile numbers and resource list.

Overhead Tank opportunity

A suggestion for an overhead tank to be purchased for a quicker truck re-fill, to be located at the depot. Staff to follow up suggested options.

SES availability

A reminder that SES can assist with roadblocks and delivery of essential items along with water bomber refill relief.

Wedgocarrup Truck Issues

Currently no caretaker, Ian McDougall agreed to take on the role.

The hand crank for the hose is missing – suggestion that shire staff could create one.

The Chief requested that the truck be brought into depot and shire staff blow out the radiator as overheating has been an issue.

Communication of Fire Status

It was discussed that only FCO’s can communicate on the progress or status of a fire in the current electronic platforms, if the FCO requests someone else to update fire status then their name needs to be included as the authorising FCO.

7. CLOSURE

With no further business the acting chairperson thanked those in attendance and declared the meeting closed at 8.17pm

<p>I certify that this copy of the Minutes is a true and correct record of the meeting held on 17th March 2020</p> <p>Signed: <i>Presiding Elected Member</i></p> <p>Date:</p>
