



MINUTES

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

31 MARCH 2026



SHIRE OF WAGIN

Agenda of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting to be held at the Eric Farrow Pavillion on Tuesday, 31 March 2026 commencing at 7:00pm

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1. OFFICIAL OPENING

The Presiding Member, Cr Blight declared the meeting open at 7.03pm.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES

ATTENDANCE

Cr Phillip Blight
Dr Kenneth Parker
Donna George
Xavier White
Wade Brockway
Ian McDougall
Ross Goldsmith
Carol Goldsmith
Cam Clifton
Lyn Lucas
Shaun Robinson
Phil Ward
Chris Piesse
Bryn Becker
Cam Forrest
Jack Stallard

BFAC Chair
Shire CEO
Community Liaison Officer
Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Wedgecarrup Brigade Captain
Piesseville Brigade Captain
Piesseville Fire Control Officer
Badjarring Brigade Captain
Badjarring Fire Control Officer
Wedgecarrup Fire Control Officer
Lime Lake Fire Control Officer
Piesseville Fire Control Officer
Wedgecarrup Fire Control Officer
Town and VFRS Captain
Town and VFRS Lieutenant

APOLOGIES

Steve Angwin
Glen Thompson

Cancanning Fire Control Officer
Ballaying Fire Control Officer

3. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

3.1. MINUTES FROM THE BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 2 APRIL 2025

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Ian McDougall

Seconded: Lyn Lucas

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on 2 APRIL 2025 be confirmed

CARRIED

4. RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL ON APPOINTMENTS

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee has an important role making recommendations to Council on various appointments of Bush Fire Control Officers, Fire Control Officers and Brigade Captains.

4.1. BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICERS

Section 38 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954* provides that a local government may from time to time appoint Bush Fire Control Officers.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Jack Stallard

Seconded: Phil Ward

It is recommended that the Bush Fire Advisory Committee make recommendations to Council for appointment of Bush Fire Control Officers for the period up to 30 April 2027.

Bush Fire Control Officers:

- X White
- S Angwin
- B Becker
- C Clifton
- C Goldsmith
- R Goldsmith
- L Lucas
- I McDougall
- A Rowell
- W Brockway
- C Piesse
- S Robinson
- G Thompson
- P Ward

New Fire Control Officer for training in following 12-month period

- Bryan Kilpatrick
- Josh Kirk

CARRIED

4.2. CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER AND DEPUTY CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Ross Goldsmith

Seconded: Lyn Lucas

It is recommended that the Bush Fire Advisory Committee make recommendations to Council for appointment of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control for the period up to 30 April 2027.

- Chief Bush Fire Control Officer – Xavier White

CARRIED

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Ross Goldsmith Seconded: Bryn Becker

It is recommended that the Bush Fire Advisory Committee make recommendations to Council for appointment of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control for the period up to 30 April 2027.

- Deputy Chief Bush Control Officer – Wade Brockway

CARRIED

4.3. SHIRE OFFICE – TOWN FIRE PERMITS

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Bryn Becker Seconded: Chris Piesse

It is recommended that the Committee recommend that the following Shire Officers be appointed by Council as Bush Fire Control Officers for the purpose solely of issuing Town Fire Permits for the period up to 30 April 2027:

- Z Enright
- D George
- D Stephens

CARRIED

4.4. BRIGADE CAPTAINS

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Bryn Becker Seconded: Phil Ward

It is recommended that the Committee make a recommendation to Council on the Captain of each Brigade being:

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| • Badjarning | Cam Clifton |
| • Ballaying | Xavier White |
| • Cancanning | Anthony Rowell |
| • Lime Lake | Wade Brockway |
| • Piesseville | Ross Goldsmith |
| • Wedgecarrup | Shaun Robinson |
| • Wagin Town | Cam Forrest |

CARRIED



4.5. CHIEF FIRE WEATHER OFFICER

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Bryn Becker

Seconded: Chris Piesse

It is recommended that the Committee make recommendation on the appointment of Chief Fire Weather Officer:

Chief Fire Weather Officer

Xavier White

CARRIED

4.6. FIRE WEATHER COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Bryn Becker

Seconded: Chris Piesse

It is recommended that the Committee make recommendations on the appointment of the following Fire Weather Committee appointments:

- **BADJARNING – C Clifton**
- **BALLAYING – X White**
- **CANCANNING – A Rowell**
- **LIME LAKE – W Brockway**
- **PIESSEVILLE – R Goldsmith**
- **WEDGE CARRUP – I McDougall**
- **WAGIN TOWN – C Forrest**

CARRIED

4.7. DUAL FIRE CONTROL OFFICERS

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Ross Goldsmith Seconded: Bryn Becker

It is recommended that the Committee make recommendations to Council on the following Dual Fire Control Officer appointments:

- Dumbleyung
 - Xavier White
- Narrogin
 - Ross Goldsmith
 - Chris Piesse
- Woodanilling
 - Wade Brockway
 - Ian McDougall
- Williams
 - Chris Piesse
- West Arthur
 - Shaun Robinson
- Wickepin
 - Steve Angwin

CARRIED

4.8. CLOVER BURNING PERMIT OFFICER

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Phil Ward Seconded: Kenneth Parker

It is recommended that the Committee recommend that Council appoints the following appointment as Clover Burning Permit Officer:

Clover Burning Permit Officer – Brigade FCO

CARRIED

5. REPORTS

5.1. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORTS

5.1.1 CONSIDERATION OF CLOSURE OF WAGIN REFUSE SITE DURING HARVEST AND VEHICLE MOVEMENT BANS

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Moved: Chris Piesse

Seconded: Phil Ward

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee determine whether it supports the introduction of a default practice whereby the Wagin Refuse Site is closed whenever a Harvest and Vehicle Movement Ban is in place.

CARRIED

BACKGROUND/COMMENT

The Shire is seeking the viewpoint of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee regarding the need for the Wagin Refuse Site to close during Harvest and Vehicle Movement Bans.

In recent times out of an abundance of caution, the Refuse Site has been closed by the Wagin Administration. This has resulted in some negative reactions for patrons wishing to use the tip during the HVMBs.

Practices in neighbouring local governments vary:

- Shire of Dumbleyung – Waste facilities automatically close during a HVMB.
- Shire of Lake Grace – Similar practice; facilities close during HVMBs.
- Shire of West Arthur – Facilities do not automatically close, and operations continue unless otherwise determined.
- Shire of Narrogin – The tip face is closed, and no green waste disposal is permitted; however, the transfer station remains open, allowing limited waste disposal while reducing fire risk.

The Wagin Refuse Site includes green waste areas, putrescible waste areas, and general movement across unsealed surfaces, which can present ignition risks when heavy vehicles or machinery are involved.

Officers from the Shire are leaning to introducing a default position where the tip is closed during a HVMB.

Given public concern, fire risk, and varied regional practice, it is appropriate for the Bush Fire Advisory Committee to consider whether a consistent, clearly communicated position should be adopted.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

5.2. CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER REPORT

Annual report for the bushfire advisory committee
Shire of Wagin - Chief Bushfire Control Officer - Fire season 2025/2026 Xavier White
– CBFCO

Introduction

This report covers the 2025/2026 fire season for the Shire of Wagin.

The season presented a mix of conditions, with periods of elevated fire danger and a number of incidents requiring brigade response. The focus has remained on maintaining a practical and safe operational approach, ensuring effective response while supporting our volunteers and being mindful of their workload.

Season Overview

Brigades responded to multiple fires across the Shire throughout the season, with activity increasing through December and placing sustained demand on crews over that period.

While several incidents had the potential to escalate, effective response and coordination helped limit overall impact across the season. A number of incidents required additional support, including the use of aerial firefighting resources.

Operations and Coordination

The use of a designated Fire Control Officer (FCO) for each incident continues to improve clarity of command and coordination on the fireground. Early identification of the lead FCO, communicated via the Wagin Fire Emergency WhatsApp group, has supported a more structured and effective response.

Feedback from debriefs following major incidents has reinforced the importance of clearly establishing who is in control on the fireground. It is critical that the first FCO arriving on scene takes ownership of the incident and clearly communicates that to all personnel.

Establishing command early is essential for safe and effective operations.

If personnel on the fireground are unsure who is in control, further measures are required to improve visibility and clarity. Work is underway to address this through clearer immediate district, to quickly understand the layout of the fire, access points, and water locations. This significantly improves both safety and efficiency across the incident.

Fire Control Officers are reminded of the importance of maintaining a clear separation between operational and command roles.

Attending and engaging in initial suppression is often necessary; however, once an FCO is filling their second tank, it is time to step back from direct firefighting and transition fully into the command role.

Remaining on the hose beyond this point limits situational awareness, reduces the ability to identify risks, and impacts coordination across the fireground. The responsibility of the FCO is to manage the incident, support crews, and maintain communication - not to remain actively engaged in suppression.

Stepping back at the appropriate time ensures the broader team is supported and the incident is managed effectively.

Safety and Fireground Practices

Safety remains a key focus across all operations.

This season reinforced the importance of maintaining consistent standards on the fireground, particularly in relation to personal protective equipment (PPE) and situational awareness. While the majority of crews operate to a high standard, maintaining consistency across all responses remains critical.

We were initially uncertain about the most appropriate way to deliver this message; however, the approach taken received positive feedback with minimal pushback. Following this, a number of volunteers reviewed and renewed their PPE, and the standard of PPE use at subsequent incidents has been excellent.

Fire Control Officers are expected to lead from the front and set the standard for safety and PPE on the fireground.

Volunteer Team and Workload

Volunteer brigades continue to demonstrate a high level of professionalism, teamwork, and commitment throughout the season.

The administrative workload associated with brigade operations remains significant. Responsibilities including permits, weather monitoring and harvest bans continue to place additional pressure on FCOs outside of operational duties.

Managing expectations around harvest and movement bans remains a challenge, particularly where decisions must be made in response to rapidly changing conditions.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Donna and the Shire of Wagin team for their continued support. I would also like to acknowledge the support and leadership of CEO Dr Ken Parker and Shire President Phil Blight.

Thanks also to all Fire Control Officers, brigade members, DFES personnel, and neighbouring shires for their contribution throughout the season.

A sincere thank you to community members who provided support during incidents.

Conclusion

The 2025/2026 season reinforced the importance of clear leadership, early coordination, and maintaining strong safety standards on the fireground.

While challenges remain, continued improvements in coordination, communication, and operational capability will be important in ensuring effective response into future seasons.

Xavier White

Chief Bushfire Control Officer Shire of Wagin



5.3. DEPUTY CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER REPORT

NIL

5.4. BRIGADE REPORTS

5.4.1. BADIJARNING

Captain advised current members – Lyn Lucas and Darren Spencer go above and beyond in giving their time and expertise, making my life easier – credited them with a fuel voucher.

5.4.2. BALLAYING

NIL

5.4.3. CANCELLING

NIL

5.4.4. LIME LAKE

NIL

5.4.5. PIESSEVILLE

This has been a fairly quiet year for bushfires in our patch. An ongoing issue with power lines and power poles. There was a lime at Jaloran where one of the wires let go and in doing so whipped up hitting another wire causing sparks and a fire. Unfortunately, this was in a difficult area along the Bucchan River with oil mallees around it. Those who were able to get in put most of the fire out then they managed to get a loader in to put a break around the fire and let it burn out. Luckily there was very little wind that night. This highlights the age of the power infrastructure and the fact that these power lines have been up since the late sixties and the wire has not been replaced. It would seem that the wires over areas which are salt affected are starting to rust out.

There was also a pole top fire at Johnsons old farm now owned by Bryn Becker. We were lucky neither of these fires burnt much land. Thank you to all our volunteers. Still not happy with the Piesseville fire truck and thanks to Donna for her work on trying to resolve this problem.

5.4.6. WEDGECARRUP

Post damage after the Wedgescarrup / West Arthur Fire and western power pole which had been burnt in the January fire and replaced by Western Power – burnt again sometime prior to Feb 13th, 2026. No damage other than pole as the ground is bare.

5.4.7. WAGIN TOWN

All is well

Good strong crew

Communication is the key.

Stevie Greig has advised he has a fire truck for sale

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

6.1 Xavier identified ongoing requests for deployment from DFES to attend other locations to assist with fires. Post Wedgecarrup fire the intent is to support those other brigades who attended to assist us – however some situations are not practical to attend. Agreed that we are no longer ‘ beholden ’ to other shires to assist and should only be considered in extreme situations.

Admin is weighing heavily and suggestion was that future calls for assistance should be going to administration staff and the Community officer to complete paperwork / rosters as required.

6.2 Post Nobles rd fire it was identified that the Wagin District Hospital had insufficient medical supplies to treat the people injured.

6.3 Call up sheets – specific to weather forecasting should be completed to ensure we have evidence if any issues arise. Advised the new weather stations record all forecasting data which is easily attainable by anyone with a log in.

6.4 During the January holiday period – who is in charge? Potentially something to consider for the October meeting.

6.5 Cam Forrest discussed the benefits of the “Bart” ap to assist in knowing exactly who is attending, who is on the fire ground and where their vehicles are.

6.6 Review at October meeting to source who has water in their dams prior to fire season.

6.7 Requested a separate number to be arranged for all advertising - this number is to be forwarded to the Chief or the Chief of the day.

6.8 Shire has sufficient PPE if any new staff require it

6.9 Standpipe trailer signs are here for deployment

6.10 FCO / Incident controller vests for all present

6.11 All tanks NOT connected to mains supply now have level monitors which are connected to the ap – which can be shared to all.

6.12 ESL application has been submitted – available for all to review

6.13 A number of National medals are due – please review the list and advise.

7. CLOSURE

With no further business, Presiding Member Cr Blight closed the meeting at 9.40pm.