

Bush Fire Advisory Committee – Mullewa Meeting Minutes

Meeting Name	Mullewa BFAC Meeting	Meeting No.	1 / 2019
Meeting Date	Wednesday 13 February 2019		
Meeting Time	11:00 AM		
Meeting Location	Board Room, Mullewa District Office		
Attendees	Cr Jerry Clune, Chair CGG Councillor	By Invitation	DBCA, DFES, VFRS
	Cr Natasha Colliver CGG Councillor (via video) Cr Jennifer Critch, CGG Councillor Sam Messina Mullewa Manager Community Development Murray Smith, Chief Bush FCO Brett Steele, FCO, Mullewa South Peter Barnetson, FCO, Ambania Maya Engstrom – (City Officer – Minutes)	Apologies	Councillor Thomas, CGG Councillor Brendan Weir, FCO- Tenindewa Nth Darrin Fulker, FCO, Mullewa Central Malcolm Taylor, Parks and Wildlife
		Distribution	Attendees, CGG Council

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair opened the meeting at 11.08am and welcomed all present, and Cr Colliver via video conference. Apologies were noted as above.

The Chair declared that a quorum was not present and therefore no decisions or recommendations can be made by the Committee at this meeting.

2. REVIEW PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 2.1 Minutes of previous meeting cannot be confirmed without a quorum.
- 2.2 Noted that Brendan Wilson has resigned from his role at the City and the Acting Co-ordinator Emergency Management until Monday 18 February 2019 is Murray Smith.

The two actions assigned to Brendan Wilson from the previous minutes were resolved as follows:

The use of City plant/contractor arrangements at bushfires:

The CEO would prefer contractors however in major situation use City machinery.

Weather Stations – creation of map and recommendation of sites:

The City is still working with the Bureau to ascertain locations.



3. REPORTS

3.1 Captains Reports

Brett Steele (Mullewa South)

Two fires. One due to lighting strike, the other due to header hitting a rock.

Peter Barnetson (Ambania)

One fire on 15 December 2018 which was contained.

3.2 Fire Control Officer Reports

Nil

3.3 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Correspondence from DFES received 6 February 2019, attached to these minutes. Essentially a reminder that local governments fulfil their obligations and a reminder it is important to call 000 when there is a fire.

4. GENERAL BUSINESS

4.1 Alignment of RBT & PBT from Chapman Valley/Northampton

Discussion has been held between City of Greater Geraldton, Shire of Chapman Valley and Shire of Northampton with regards to alignment of restricted and prohibited burning dates across the three local government authorities.

The Committee agreed the Mullewa Broadacre Zone needs to go back to the proposed Zone 4 for the Shire of Chapman Valley. This still gives a 2-week window to allow for seasonal adjustment.

The Committee agreed that collaborating with the other boundary shires of Morawa, Mingenev and Irwin would be beneficial.

ACTION: Murray Smith to provide feedback to both the Shire of Chapman Valley and Shire of Northampton on the amended dates for the Mullewa Broadacre Zone.

4.2 Feedback from Devil's Creek fire (Brett Steele, Mullewa South)

- Incident occurred when a header comb hit a rock.
- Due to change in wind direction, the fire was uncontrollable.
- Two farms were impacted by the fire.
- Response was provided by 3x ploughs, 3x loaders, 3x BFB trucks and a private water cart.
- No buildings were lost but approx. \$1m of wheat crop was destroyed.

Murray Smith advised the incident was close to becoming a Level 2 incident, and congratulated Brett and his brigade on their handling of the incident.

Committee noted the need for new water tanks with easy access in the southeastern area of the local government area.

ACTION: Murray Smith to contact David Bairstow, City of Greater Geraldton Supervisor Urban Roads on the status of construction of water tanks.

4.3 Communications – Email & SMS

Murray Smith reminded all that UHF channel 11 is to be used by all responding crews in the event of a fire.

Reminder that Total Fire Bans are instigated and communicated by DFES.

ACTION: Murray Smith to contact DFES concerning education of community to phone 000 and not their local government authority in event of an emergency.

4.4 Western Power Outages

Cr Critch raised the issue of Western Power outages and lack of attendance in rural areas IE. Mullewa.

Was reported that the local Western Power (WP) line crew can come out do repairs during a Total Fire Ban of Harvest Vehicle Movement Ban under their current exemptions, but they need to contact the control room in Perth to re-energise the line. If the Fire Danger Index is 32 or higher, the control room is reluctant to re-energise the line, as they cannot be confident there is no further faults down the line.

Sam Messina noted that the Mullewa line is very old – community need to look at alternatives – wind, solar and batteries like Kalbarri.

4.5 Mullewa Town Rail Corridor

Sam Messina reported that that Youth Justice has been engaged to whipper snipper the Mullewa town rail corridor, as Brookfield Rail had not maintained this area. Committee noted that ideally this work should be completed annually in late September. This could be done with local bush fire personnel and possibly seasonal farm workers.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 18 September 2019, at 9am.

6. CLOSE

Meeting closed at 12.25 pm.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Letter from DFES dated 6 February 2019
2. Restricted Burn Times and Prohibited Burn Timetable





Government of Western Australia
Department of Fire & Emergency Services



6 February 2019

City of Greater Geraldton
Mr Ross McKim
PO Box 101
Geraldton WA 6517

Dear Ross,

TIMELY REMINDER

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) Midwest Gascoyne Region has so far experienced numerous fires during the 2019 bushfire season and I thank you for your City's commitment to the prevention, preparedness and response activities required to keep our communities safe.

However, there have been a number of local governments that have overlooked their obligation in reporting fires to the Midwest Gascoyne Regional Duty Coordinator.

I would like to take this opportunity to provide a "*Timely Reminder*" of the reporting obligations that exist. The reporting of fires to the relevant Regional Duty Coordinator as soon as possible allows the MWG Region to maintain situational awareness, allocate resources and provide necessary and adequate assistance when required.

The reporting of fires can be achieved through direct contact with DFES ComCen by dialling triple zero (000). The Midwest Gascoyne Regional Duty Coordinator can be contacted directly on 9956 6020.

Please refer to the attached correspondence sent to Local Governments in November 2018 from Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner Darren Klemm that explains the obligations under the Bushfire Act and State Hazard Plan FIRE. Can you please provide this information to your Chief Bushfire Control Officer, Fire Control Officers, Brigade Captains and members?

Your ongoing support and assistance is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Craig Smith
Superintendent
Midwest Gascoyne Region

Midwest Gascoyne Regional Office
1 Vulcan Way, Geraldton WA 6530, PO Box 284 Geraldton WA 6531
Tel (08) 9956 6000 Fax (08) 9964 4617 dfes@dfes.wa.gov.au www.dfes.wa.gov.au

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Government of Western Australia
Department of Fire & Emergency Services



TIMELY REMINDER FOR BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS

A positive relationship between the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) and local governments during bushfires benefits both parties, and ultimately, the State of Western Australia.

DFES and local governments both have responsibilities and reporting obligations under the *Bush Fires Act 1954* (BF Act), *Bush Fires Regulations 1954* (BF Regs) and the State Hazard Plan in relation to preventing and responding to bushfires.

The reporting obligations exist to keep the community safe and enable DFES to allocate resources and provide assistance when it is required in areas that experience a large number of fires. In addition, accurate records enable DFES and the State government to provide timely and targeted support to career and volunteer fire fighters.

I acknowledge that the majority of local governments are fulfilling their obligations. Local governments play a crucial role in managing fires and are legislatively responsible for establishing and running volunteer bush fire brigades. Having up to date information enables DFES to provide necessary and adequate support.

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a number of obligations under the BF Act, BF Regs and the State Hazard Plan that are critical for the coordination of effort during this coming season and on occasions are overlooked:

1. Local governments must notify the FES Commissioner of fire weather officer appointments under section 38(13) of the BF Act so they can be published in the Government Gazette.
2. If a local government makes a seasonal variation to the prohibited burning times or restricted burning times it must by the quickest means available to it, give particulars of the variation to the FES Commissioner. (s 17(8) BF Act) Notification can be completed through an email to legal_legislation@dfes.wa.gov.au
3. A local government shall keep a register of bush fire brigades and their members in the specified form 12 and notify the FES Commissioner as soon as practicable after any changes occur in the register. (s 41(2) and 41(2a) BF Act)

Emergency Services Complex | 20 Stockton Bend Cockburn Central WA 6164 | PO Box P1174 Perth WA 6844
Tel (08) 9395 9300 | Fax (08) 9395 9384 | dfes@dfes.wa.gov.au | www.dfes.wa.gov.au

AEN 39 563 851 304

4. A local government must provide the FES Commissioner with the losses caused by bushfires in its district during the preceding 12 months in the month of June each year. (reg 43(2) BF Regs) Notification can be completed through the DFES Incident Reporting System (IRS) or through paper forms emailed to reports@dfes.wa.gov.au
5. The State Hazard Plan sets out that:
 - a. all fires state-wide are to be reported to DFES COMCEN via Triple Zero (000), radio or 1800 198 140 (or by other means, where agreed between agencies)
 - b. any fires reported directly to a Controlling Agency are to be immediately reported to DFES COMCEN;
 - c. triple zero (000) agreements are maintained with those LGs, with fire response responsibilities, to ensure calls are expedited state-wide and reporting arrangements identified; 31 Bush Fires Act 1954 s28
 - d. all fire agencies will keep DFES informed of bushfires that have the potential to escalate to Level 3, including their incident level declaration; and
 - e. local governments will notify by telephone or radio the relevant DFES Regional/Metropolitan Duty Coordinators as soon as is reasonably practicable where Incident Control arrangements are transferred to another agency.

The State Hazard Plan can be viewed at <https://semc.wa.gov.au>

I commend all local governments for the work they do to protect the community from the devastating effects of bushfires and I seek your continued support and assistance this coming bushfire season.

If you require further information, please contact DFES' Manager Regulation and Compliance, Stephen McClelland on 9395 9509 or regulation.compliance@dfes.wa.gov.au.

Your sincerely



**DARREN KLEMM AFSM
COMMISSIONER**

26 November 2018

FIRE NOTICES – CURRENT DATES										
LGA	Area/District	RBT (Permit Required)		PBT	RBT (Permit Required)					
Chapman Valley	Zone 2 (Excludes Yuna Brigade Area)	07/09	↔	20/10	21/10	↔	14/02	15/02	↔	29/3
	Zone 4 (Yuna Brigade Area)	14/08	↔	30/09	01/10	↔	31/01	01/02	↔	14/03
City of Greater Geraldton	General Semi Rural & Central/Built Up Areas	15/03 ↔ 17/10 (All of the year outside PBT Period)		18/10 ↔ 14/03			15/03 ↔ 17/10 (All of the year outside PBT Period)			
	Broadacre (Excludes Mullewa District)	07/09	↔	17/10	18/10 ↔ 14/03			15/03 ↔ 07/04		
	Broadacre (Mullewa District)	01/10 ↔ 31/10		01/11 ↔ 28/02		01/03 ↔ 15/03				
Northampton		01/09	↔	14/10	15/10 ↔ 1/03		02/03 ↔ 15/04			

FIRE NOTICES – PROPOSED DATES										
LGA	Area/District	RBT (Permit Required)		PBT	RBT (Permit Required)					
Chapman Valley	Zone 4 (Excludes Yuna Brigade Area)	01/09	↔	14/10	15/10	↔	14/02	15/02	↔	07/04
	Zone 2 (Yuna Brigade Area)	01/09	↔	14/10	15/10	↔	14/02	15/02	↔	07/04
City of Greater Geraldton	General Semi Rural & Central/Built Up Areas	01/09	↔	14/10	15/10 ↔ 14/02			15/02	↔	07/04
	Broadacre (Excludes Mullewa District)	01/09	↔	14/10	15/10 ↔ 14/02			15/02	↔	07/04
	Broadacre (Mullewa District)	01/10 ↔ 31/10		01/11 ↔ 28/02		01/03 ↔ 15/03				
Northampton	Whole of Shire	01/09	↔	14/10	15/10 ↔ 4/02		15/02 ↔ 07/04			

