



## MINUTES OF THE BUSH FIRE CONTROL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### 28 March 2014

<b>Meeting Name.</b>	Gero-Greenough Bush Fire Control Advisory Committee Meeting	<b>Meeting No.</b>	1 (2014)
<b>Meeting Date</b>	Friday 28 March 2014		
<b>Meeting Time</b>	15:30 – 17:30		
<b>Meeting Location</b>	Function Room, Civic Centre, Cathedral Avenue, Geraldton		
<b>Attendees)</b>	Andy Darbyshire (AD) [CBFCO] Konrad Seidl (KS) Craig Wing (CW) Councillor Jerry Clune (JC) Councillor Tarleah Thomas (TT) Kevin White (KW) (Captain Cape Burney Brigade) Kevin G Forrest (KF) (President - Waggrakine Bush Fire Brigade) Rich Maslen (RM) Len Hamersley (LH) Trevor Morrison (TM ) (Captain - Waggrakine Bush Fire Brigade) Warren Treasure (WT) (Captain Moonyoonooka Fire Brigade) Brad Austin (BA) Ian Grant (IG) (FCA Moonyoonooka) Don Spark (DS) (Captain - Cape Burney) Rod Bennett (RB) (ADSCS ) Chris Phoebe (CP) (Parks and Wildlife) Michael Marsh (MM) (Fire Control Officer, Waggrakine) Steve Lloyd (SL) Observer - long time Bush Fire Brigades) Alison Lloyd (AL) (Bush Fire Brigades Association)	<b>By Invitation</b>	John Oliver (JO) Andrew Royce (AR)
		<b>Apologies</b>	Ken Diehm CEO (KD) Marlene Stevens Bruce Garrett Darryl Hamersley Cr Jennifer Critch Phil Melling (PM)
		<b>Distribution</b>	<as above>

The Meeting was opened by Andrew Darbyshire, who welcomed all in attendance.

#### 1. NEW MEETING PROCEDURES

- 1.1 (AD) Some new changes to the BFAC meetings was put forward to the attendees. All observers were welcomed along.
- 1.2 (TT) Cr Tarleah Thomas, Cr Jerry Clune and Jennifer Critch (the three City Councillors elected to be on the Committee).
- 1.3 (KS) Konrad Seidl was named as the Executive Officer to these meetings.
- 1.4 (JC) The focus of these meetings is to keep on track and as short as possible and with the new elected Chair Person to preside at the meetings.

## **2. ELECTION OF NEW CHAIR PERSON**

2.1 (AD) Overview on Points of Order and the process for voting in a new Chair person. There are currently 2 Brigade representatives from each Brigade and they are listed and documented.

2.2 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> nominations - will follow up on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> representatives preference which are to be named.

2.3 (KS) briefly explained the Process of electing the Chair person.

2.4 (KS) Called for nominations for Chair to Bush Fire Control Advisory Committee –

## **3. NOMINATIONS PUT FORWARD:**

Andrew Darbyshire put forward by Kevin Forest but declined nomination.

Jerry Clune was NOMINATED by Warren Treasure.

SECONDED: Kevin White

No further nominations received.

## **4. ELECTED**

4.1 Cr Jerry Clune - was duly elected as Chair of Bush Fire Control Advisory Committee.

4.2 (KS) (handed the meeting over to New Chair, Jerry Clune, who took the Chair).

## **5. The Meeting commenced @ 15:47 hours**

## **6. APOLOGIES – read as above.**

### **Motion: (1)**

Tarleah Thomas - Called for email addresses of all members to be circulated - MOVED

Warren Treasure - SECONDED

Motion was CARRIED

ACTION (Val Gray to follow up)

## **7. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

### **7.1 Minutes of previous meeting 27 September 2013 be Accepted:**

### **Motion: (2)**

Jerry Clune – called to accept the Minutes as Correct - MOVED

Craig Wing - SECONDED

Motion was CARRIED

## **7.2 Business arising from Previous Minutes:**

7.1 (KW) – Fire Hydrant not mentioned in General Business. Queried the hydrants with sand blocking valves. These blocked valves are flushed out. Voiced concern that flushing of sand blocked valves may destroy the hydrants. Query raised - should the hydrants be purged?

7.2 (AD) advised yes, purge the hydrants at fires when drawing water. Water Corp has stated that once hydrants are opened they will never seal properly again (design fault)...Water Corp won't give permits to clear lines of debris unless they can be justified to their satisfaction..

7.3 (CW) speaks regularly with Water Corp who are doing maintenance on hydrants.

7.4 (JC ) Course of Action – Hydrants to be noted to Water Authority about these issues.

ACTION:(1) (CW) to talk to Water Corp noting that hydrants are blocked with sand and concerns with flushing of hydrants.

7.5 (JC) Suggested action MOU with Water Corp and to determine who is responsible for it.

ACTION:(2) (CW) (AD) (KS) will discuss hydrants with Water Corp and a look at a joint MOU.

Note from AD: Water Corp operates to their own policies endorsed by State Government. Liaison with DFES is ongoing at a state-wide level – finally achieving some results. (Correspondence from David Lamont {DFES Water Policy and Strategy Manager} to be attached.)

## **8. FIRE INCIDENTS REPORT (AD)**

(Statistics presented to Chairman to be tabled with these Final Minutes (see attachment).

(Apology from Len Hamersley who then left at 4:00pm).

8.1 (WT) - Noted Kerosene being used about 2 to 3 weeks ago at (Bringoo Lookout fire )

8.2 Wicherina Fire - Loss of phone coverage occurred, but still had a good result.

8.3 Mullewa had 6 fires.

8.4 Gabyon fire 2 teams of earth moving equipment and aerial support was used. No risks to farms and infrastructure. Good effort from all.

8.5 Waggrakine total of 7 fires.

8.6 Walkaway had 4 fires. Good effort from brigades.

8.7 Moonyoonooka BFB assisted Chapman Valley 1 fire (water Bombers used).

8.8 Clunes farm 1 fire noted.

8.9 Good efforts noted in helping out in surrounding areas Carnarvon, Irwin, Chapman Valley.

(JC) Request from Chair for a spreadsheet listing, to be drafted for the next meeting, of the above statistics along with each members information for contact purposes.

ACTION:(3) (AD) to document a spreadsheet of fire statistics and contact details of members for the next meeting and future meetings for distribution to all.

## **9. REPORT**

9.1 (AD) Moonyoonooka 1.4 – handed over to the Brigade and come winter, they will get a smart phone car kit installed. Blankets in all appliances. Some additional training will be offered in burn over scenario.

9.2 Eadon Clarke – Prepare Act Survive Banner has been up all summer (reminding Public of the importance of being prepared).

- 9.3 All Brigade memberships – increasing at sustainable rates. Hoping for experienced people to share their experience first-hand with new recruits.
- 9.4 Full Brigade Turnouts have been fantastic. Also Good individual responses when called out – Conference calls are being managed very well.
- 9.5 Captains taking phone call and the members coming in and saying their name if they are available. This Allows captain to take information from the CBFCA and then manage the call.
- 9.6 External Radio speakers roll out has occurred.
- 9.7 Defibrillator & Training provided to Waggrakine Brigade. Funds are being sought for purchaser of one for Moonyoonooka. Fundraising to continue for those brigades who need a defibrillator.
- 9.8 New WestPlan Fire was released by DFES in Final Draft version.

This new Plan also formalizes the need for Harvest/Vehicle movement bans when conditions dictate them.. This puts a lot of pressure on local government during harvest time/summer. There were ten Vehicle Movement bans days declared this summer. People are respecting this fire prevention measure. These Harvest/Vehicle Movement bans may have prevented several fires this summer. There were various causes to fires that did start this year i.e. Power lines, pole fires and lightening etc.

WestPlan Fire does load Local government and specially Fire Control Officers with more and more responsibility to manage the Bans, but no extra resources are provided and there is no funding for ensuring people comply with the Bans.

- 9.9 Total Fire bans - There were five TFB's imposed by DFES this year. One was imposed purely due to conditions in the southwest and was not required for conditions here – therefore unnecessary.
- 9.10 Positive achievement for CGG on Fire Services webpage – City of Greater Geraldton recently uploaded the web page which is now up and running – hazard board on webpage for coastal and inland - people can check this to see if their burn permit is still valid. If noted as Very High people will be able to cancel their burns and stay within the law.

## **10. FIREBREAK COMPLIANCE**

- 10.1 (AD) - Graphs of inspection and works orders shown and explained to meeting. Result is a very high level of compliance by Private Property owners to the Fire Break Requirements - fines and work orders issued are keeping town fire risk under control.
- 10.1.1 Raised 250 infringements and 220 work orders over last fire break period in CGG. This out shadows many outer metropolitan areas whose figures are very weak in comparison.

## **11. TRAINING**

- 11.1 Training for Bush Fire Brigades – First Aid and Training Calendar lists course.

ACTION:(4) (AD) to Set Training dates –

(Provided at the back of the room) -

- Training maps of Brigade response areas.
- Parkerville fire review available for anyone to check.

## 12. BUSHFIRE BRIGADES FIRE REPORTS

12.1 ( DS) On behalf of New volunteers / new recruits – there is problem with Structural Fire-fighting being a prerequisite to other courses (Pump Operations). Some older members find structural fires confronting but can't move forward with their training progression. Noted as a handicap for first users.

(JC) DFES write up courses. Bushfire Brigades should 'not' be fighting structural fires.

12.2 (AD) held discussions with DFES about this: Training is structured and the flowchart has structural fire fighting as a prerequisite to Pump Operation course, you can do either course but no certificate will be issued for Pump Operations until your structural fire fighting is completed.

12.3 (DS) stated he can use them as a pump operator – knows what the person needs at a structural fire. He has to take structural fire fighter and put them on the pump but can't replace that fire fighter.

### QUESTION:

(KW) how do we get over that issues because the training has not been recognised.

### ACTION:(5) AD to follow up

Captain /OIC can use the best fit firefighting resources that he has at a fire regardless of certificates issued.

### COMMENT:

(KW) we are getting new members as fire fighters who are not aware of how fires behave. It needs a formal process where 2, 3 or 4 burns are done for new members to see how it works and what live fire does etc. There is no formal training in place. Needs to structure a process for that day in summer and needs to formally recommend that fuel burning as part of training program.

### RESPONSE:

(JC) Needs to address these issues and recognise the need for training of new volunteers.

### ACTION:(6) AD to follow up

- (AD) Kevin's Statement is accepted. DFES will put on training officer soon and include training in burning. Brigades are encouraged and supported to conduct burning wherever possible.

### COMMENT:

(KW) currently it does not address the lack of experience and training and person needs practical exposure on actual burning and if not addressed we will lose volunteers and in worse possible ways. We take novices to incidents that are getting more aggressive. Concerned that the untrained person is in the paddock where the incident occurs and formal training is needed before the worst happens.

(CP) – their program this year, process is Margaret River incident part of notifying fire Brigade and has to identify burning and on day of burn, brigades rings and notifies. They recognise with their troops. They will extend to other Brigades if they wish.

(CP) – Darren Springs fire, Chapman Valley, Wandin Nature reserve, relevant Brigades will be invited to attend. Big emphasis on their program this year.

(CP) – Burn prescription document explained. Trying to get everyone involved in this. Chris will liaise with Brigades to invite them. It is expected to take place in May 2014 (possibly).

(RM) – Problem with City spending money on conservation no mention of fire. What it has done is black wattle not allowed to do any burn. Had to be under section of fire act and technically no one should live in Waggrakine due to section of fire hazards. Cape Burney not a problem. These wattle seen as extremely dangerous.

(JC ) need to reinforce to the City that Bush Fire Act will take precedence over any strategy.

12.4 Waggrakine BFB - City doing a good job on clean ups. Has got so far ahead. Keeping up work on fire hazard reduction. Fuel loads are unbelievable. Some fires would not be put out without great work of all who help out and getting on top of it all.

12.5 (WT) - Moonyoonooka Brigade -

12.5.1 couple of fires at (JC) farm.

12.5.2 couple of other fires burnt cables off. Fortunately, it didn't cause ground fires. Need to talk to Western Power to suggest washing insulators.

12.5.3 Silicone that is hanging off insulators is an issue that needs addressing.

12.5.4 Couple of meetings at spy base. Maps - zone maps not sure what has happened with these.

12.5.5 Good communication with radios established now and much improved since last time it was discussed. Zones outside of base.

COMMENT:

(RB) Zone Maps are really needed.

(JC) Called for someone who will draw up the Communication Base Zone maps.

ACTION:(7) (RB) put forward that he will do up these Zone maps which he is still drafting and will source from that.

12.5.6 (IG) – Industrial land to be rezoned has put this to the Shire and this is an industrial hazardous chemical area and has 800m exclusion zone and 1.1 buffer zone. Noted that it is a contentious matter this zone, as it would be on satellite base and Shire has knocked the proposal back at this stage. (A) – they are not trained to go to chemical fire. Noble drive - at this stage, this has been put aside and will keep a close watch on it.

COMMENT:

(Cape Burney) – enquired if Water Corp were to be invited to BFAC meeting?

(AD) Water Corp have been invited to attend in the past.

ACTION:(8) (AD) Water Corp to be invited to the next BFAC meeting.

12.6 (AL) Report from deputy president was read out. (tabled for members to peruse).

12.7 (Len H) stated significant bush on property south of walkaway (Giacci block) trying to get a burn happening there and looking for assistance from other Brigades. Described as very thick bush and the burn is planned between 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> April 2014 south east of Walkaway.

### **13. GENERAL BUSINESS**

13.1 (KS) Gave comments on behalf of City – operationally, thanks to the support of Brigades on some of the fires we have had in terms of season, but without the support being here and without the commitment and effective communication, things would be a lot worse. This sounds like they are doing a good job and getting appreciation from neighbouring Shires. The City puts their support behind the Brigades, Captains, Deputy and Chief.

13.2 Mid band radio contract complete to get rid of blank spots and this will provide a lot more coverage. There has been a lot of research and study into this and will get this happening which will be of great benefit to others.

13.3 Grants – State funding for animals in disaster welfare plan and developing exercise.

13.4 Mid West Emergency Management Network is being established with chair and executive officer of LEMC in the District. Will build communication across local government and emergency management. It will build collaboration there as well as provide grants for local governments.

- 13.5 An Emergency Management Conference will be held on 30 June 2014. There is opportunity for others to attend the Conference. Speakers of high calibre from across Australia and overseas will present. Emergency situations will be spoken of and recovery and litigation and other relevant topics.
- 13.6 Bush Fire Ready - needs to express thanks to bushfire ready crew. No loss or damaged to gear noted and this has been consistent over last 5 years and this is put down to experienced brigades and needs to bring up to that good culture.
- 13.7 New employee to City and training program and more resources.
- 13.8 Trucks - 3 fire trucks with lower steps these need to be signed off by engineers.
- 13.9 Tanks for Moonyoonooka, Geraldton Mt Magnet Road money being applied for these tanks.
- 13.10 Airport Exercise – LEMC and DEMC wants to be involved, a big review about fires over last few years, training will be made more interesting and more challenging.
- 13.11 In the last 2 years a training DVD was made. This DVD has been recognised at State level on Local Emergency Management, the DVD has been shown at Canterbury University in New Zealand and has been used for training in Local Government Emergency Management. These exercises are reported to be good.
- 13.12 (RM) noted the important thing that is not happening is a new fire station for the area. This Committee needs to urge Council to push the State Government harder to build a new fire station at Webberton.
- 13.12.1 (KS) This new fire station proposal was mentioned at the District Emergency Management Committee, Gordon Purvis.
- 13.12.2 (JC) The City is to encourage DFES to Lobby the State Government to implement a new second fire station within the City boundaries.

**Motion:** (3)

Jerry Clune, Chair – Recommended the need for a new second fire station within City boundaries that this be put to Council to lobby the State Government. MOVED

All in Favour of this motion - UNANIMOUS

Motion was CARRIED

- 13.13 (JC) voiced the need to re-name 'Hills Ward' to 'Greenough Ward'. This will be put back to Council to rename Hills Ward to Greenough Ward. The re-naming gives back a bit of locality and help identify with the fire fighting area. There has been a dilemma over what to call the area.

ACTION:(9) (JC) to put to Council the request to rename 'Hills Ward' to 'Greenough Ward'.

**Meeting Closed:** With no further business arising, the meeting was declared closed at **5:01pm**

**Next Meeting:** 25 September 2014 Venue: City Function Room, Cathedral Avenue.

## Action Items

Meeting date	Items	Action By	Completed
22 March 2013	Ellendale pool signs	CW	
	ID Cards	CW	80%
27 Sept 2013	Hydrant work – update	CW	Ongoing
	Fire Services Website Update	CW	Dec 2013
	Gazetted Fire District review	AD	ongoing
	Support for Howatharra –postponed pending current application	AD	Pending ESL results
	Water Tank -Yanget	AD	ongoing
	Midland /WAERN aerials	AD	done
	Cape Burney External Aerials	KW	done
	Moony 1.4 additional equipment requests	AD	Done
	Update on guidelines for Volunteers	AD	done
	LT Support for Cape Burney for burning	AD	Done - unsuccessful
28 March 2014			
1 & 2	Talk to Water Corp noting that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HYDRANTS are blocked with sand and concerns with flushing of hydrants.</li> <li>- MOU with Water Corp to be discussed / drafted.</li> </ul>	CW	
3	To create a spread sheet of fire statistics for presenting to meeting. Email addresses of all members to be circulated.	AD / Val	
4	Set Training Dates.	AD	
5	Training certificates v's operational use	AD	See statements in minutes
6	Need for burning experience	AD	See statements in minutes
7	Communications Base zones maps	RB	
	City Council to be approached to lobby for new second Fire Station within City Boundaries.	JC	
8	Invite Water Corp to BFAC Meeting Discuss hydrants with Water Corp and a joint MOU.	CW / KS	
9	Request to put to Council to rename 'Hills Ward' to 'Greenough Ward'.	JC	