

Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Name	Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee	Meeting No.	2-2026
Meeting Date	17 September 2026		
Meeting Time	2:00pm		
Meeting Location	Mullewa District Office, Council Chambers		
Members	Mayor Jerry Clune Cr Kim Parker Bill McKay - Moonyoonooka Bush Fire Brigade Captain Daniel Critch - Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Dave Hoare - Waggrakine Bush Fire Brigade Captain Gerrard Rowe - Mullewa South Bush Fire Brigade Captain Murray Preston - Eradu Bush Fire Brigade Captain Murray Smith - Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Neil Johnstone - Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Rob Roffey - Cape Burney Bush Fire Brigade Captain Warren Treasure - Moonyoonooka Fire Control Officer	By Invitation	Jackson Parker
		Leave of Absence	
		Distribution	
Attendees	Andy Gaze - CGG Manager Regulatory Services Mark Teale - Department of Fire and Emergency Services Darren Simmons - Manager Mullewa District Office Jackson Parker - Department of Fire and Emergency Services (Online) Julia French - Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions Moana Wilson - CGG Secretariat Murray Smith - CGG Coordinator Emergency Management & DCBFCO (Coastal) Tim Daly - Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions Tony Crudeli - Mullewa Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service Zac Grima - Tardun/Pindar Bush Fire Control Officer		
Apologies	Aaron Halliday - CGG Training Officer Brendan McCann - Walkaway Bush Fire Brigade Captain Brendan Weir - Tenindewa Bush Fire Brigade Captain Bruce Garratt – Walkaway Bush Fire Control Officer Captain VFRS - Geraldton Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service Craig Moran - Mullewa Central Bush Fire Brigade Captain Daryl Hamersley - Walkaway Fire Control Officer Mathias Moerman - Department of Fire and Emergency Services Peter Freeman - Eradu Bush Fire Brigade/Fire Control Officer Tony Free - CGG Director of Development Services		
Purpose of Committee	The Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee is established under Section 67 of the <i>Bush Fires Act 1954</i> . As prescribed under the <i>Bush Fires Act 1954</i> , the Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee provides advice to the City of Greater Geraldton on matters relating to: • The prevention, control, and extinguishment of bush fires; • Planning and layout of firebreaks within the district; • Prosecutions for breaches of the <i>Bush Fires Act 1954</i>; • The formation of Bush Fire Brigades; • Coordination and cooperation between Brigades and relevant agencies		

All Committee Members, including external members, are subject to the same rules as a Council Meeting concerning confidentiality, public statements, conflicts of interest and behaviours of members, pursuant to the [Local Government \(Model Code of Conduct\) Regulations 2021](#).

The Presiding Member is to refer to the following Policy, Meeting Procedures and Regulations when chairing a meeting.

[Meeting Procedures Local Law 2011](#)
[Council Policy 4.4. Operation of Advisory Committees-V4](#)
[Council Policy 4.2 Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates](#)

1 Declaration Of Opening

The Chair, Mayor Clune, declared the meeting open at 2:00pm.

2 Acknowledgement of Country

I would like to respectfully acknowledge the Yamatji people who are the Traditional Owners and First People of the land on which we meet/stand. I would like to pay my respects to the Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Yamatji people.

3 Welcome & Apologies

The Chair welcomed members and guests to the meeting. Apologies were received from the following:

- Aaron Halliday - CGG Training Officer
- Brendan McCann - Walkaway Bush Fire Brigade Captain
- Brendan Weir - Tenindewa Bush Fire Brigade Captain
- Bruce Garratt – Walkaway Bush Fire Control Officer
- Craig Moran - Mullewa Central Bush Fire Brigade Captain
- Mathias Moerman - Department of Fire and Emergency Services
- Peter Freeman - Eradu Bush Fire Brigade/Fire Control Officer
- Tony Free - CGG Director of Development Services

4 Disclosure of Interests

Nil received by the Secretariat.

5 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Committee Recommendation:

RECOMMENDED that the minutes of the Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee held on 18 March 2026 as previously circulated, be adopted as a true and correct record of proceedings.

Committee Resolution:

The Committee RESOLVED that the minutes of the Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee held on 18 March 2026 as previously circulated, be adopted as a true and correct record of proceedings.

MOVED MOONYOONOOKA BUSH FIRE BRIGADE CAPTAIN, SECONDED MULLEWA SOUTH BUSH FIRE BRIGADE CAPTAIN

CARRIED 11/15

Not Voted: **4**

Against Votes: **0**

For Votes: **11**

Name	Vote (For or Against)
Mayor Clune	FOR
Cr Kim Parker	FOR
Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	FOR
Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (Coastal)	FOR
Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers (Inland)	FOR
Bush Fire Control Officer	FOR
Bush Fire Control Officer	NOT PRESENT
Cape Burney Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Eradu Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR

Moonyoonooka Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Mullewa Central Bush Fire Brigade Captain	NOT PRESENT
Mullewa South Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Tenindewa Bush Fire Brigade Captain	NOT PRESENT
Waggrakine Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Walkaway Bush Fire Brigade Captain	NOT PRESENT

6 Items for Discussion

• **PRESENTATION: DFES – Fire Weather District Boundaries - J Parker**

Discussion	• Presentation on the Fire Weather District boundary changes commenced at 2:04pm. • The City considered the process rushed and consultation minimal, expressed its disappointment with the outcome, and has written to the Minister. • Members questioned the rationale applied in determining the boundaries. • It was noted that the data does not include four full summer periods and that consultation occurred during a period of high fire threat, with the Irwin determination made on the basis that the township was not adequately represented within the boundaries. • Members discussed differing coastal and inland conditions, raising concern that the trough line will affect cropping operations differently across those locations. • Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) will continue to have regard to local government areas rather than relying solely on the boundaries. • Harvest and Vehicle Movement Bans remain the responsibility of the local government. • DFES advised the changes were developed primarily for the general public rather than informed forums such as this Committee. • A further review will be undertaken, at which the supporting data will be reconsidered.
Attachments (x#)	N/A
Outcome	• Complaints will be directed to DFES by the local government.

Zac Grima arrived at 2:09pm.

7 Agency and Brigade Updates

7.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer – N Johnstone

- The Committee was advised that vertical slashing has been completed at Mullewa.
- Restricted burning applies from 15 to 30 September 2026 and requires a permit, with prohibited burning commencing 1 October 2026.
- Firebreaks to be installed by 4 October 2026.
- Western Mulga has been engaged under contract for mitigation works.

- Chris Newton has been engaged under contract for machinery at fires and also works with DFES and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.
- Tanks have been installed at Wicherina and Casuarina.
- The Walkaway 3.4 appliance has been exchanged for the Moonyoonooka 1.4.
- A new light tanker for Moonyoonooka is expected in November 2026.
- All appliances are currently being serviced.
- The Fire Weather District has been renamed Mid-West - the impact on the City is yet to be determined.
- Absent Committee Member requested that the Committee consider firebreaks, having observed landholders cropping to the road reserve without installing firebreaks. Discussed further in General Business.

7.2 CGG Coordinator Emergency Management – M Smith

No further update.

7.3 Department of Fire and Emergency Services

- See **Report – Department of Fire and Emergency Services** for full detail.
- 22 additional appliances have been requested to cover breakdowns and similar contingencies, which DFES will allocate according to assessed risk.
- DFES is seeking to support shires with existing appliance requests; use of a spare vehicle assists the business case for a replacement or new appliance.
- Grain harvest water bomber operations will recommence, likely in late October or early November 2026.
- DFES would prefer to retain aircraft in the region for the full summer. Requests for use support this, and Brigades are encouraged to call for aircraft when needed.
- Grain Harvest Fire Risk Forums were noted as a useful source of information.
- A Fire Officer refresher course is available online at any time, along with a new course, Bush Fire Safety for Workers, for personnel who may encounter fire at work.
- Additional Community Emergency Managers will be coming online in the region.
- Brigades are encouraged to call on DFES throughout the season.

7.4 Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attraction

- **Midwest Region Duty Officer number is 0429 640 916.**
- See **Report – Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attraction.**
- Mandatory training is being undertaken in preparation for the season.
- Internal crew member and crew leader training is underway and will be held in Geraldton over the coming months.
- Significant growth across the region has prompted plans to train an additional 50 to 60 personnel in fire operations across the Turquoise, Murchison and Gascoyne districts.
- Tim Daly has commenced in Trevor Jones former role.
- An additional gang truck is now based in Geraldton, bringing the total to four in Geraldton and one in Kalbarri.
- The fire access track maintenance program is underway.
- Water bomber reloader training will be held in Kalbarri and Geraldton on Sunday, 1 November 2026.
- Grain harvest water bomber dates are confirmed, commencing 1 November 2026 for an initial six weeks.
- **REMINDER:** requests for water bombers must be made through the ground controller and directed via the Regional Duty Coordinator. The aircraft are provided to support grain harvest and Brigades are encouraged to request them.
- The Department thanked the City for its support of the bomber operation through works undertaken at the airport.

7.5 Cape Burney Bush Fire Brigade

- See attached **Report – Cape Burney BFB**.
- One member remains in training.
- Training has been delivered by DFES over recent months.

7.6 Eradu Bush Fire Brigade

- Peter Freeman has accepted appointment as Fire Control Officer for Eradu.
- Daryl Hamersley also services the area.

7.7 Moonyoonooka Bush Fire Brigade

- See attached **Report – Moonyoonooka BFB**.
- The Brigade has taken delivery of an additional 3.4 appliance.

7.8 Mullewa Central Bush Fire Brigade Captain

- Not present; no report provided.

7.9 Mullewa South Bush Fire Brigade Captain

- The appliance will be relocated to a brigade members shed from next week.
- The appliance will be serviced within the next fortnight.

7.10 Tenindewa Bush Fire Brigade Captain

- Two large fires occurred last season. The availability of local Yuna bombers to address scrub within the river systems was of considerable assistance.
- It would be beneficial to have bombers located closer to inland fires.
- PARKS advised that this is not feasible due to cost.

7.11 Waggrakine Bush Fire Brigade

- Brigade has 26 members, having both lost and gained members over the year.
- The Brigade attended 29 incidents last season.
- Training is held on the first Thursday and third Tuesday of each month.
- The Brigade will be conducting burning during the coming period.
- Both appliances are ready for the season.
- Three members attended the DFES conference.

7.12 Walkaway Bush Fire Brigade

- Not present; no report provided.

8 General Business

8.1 Action Log

The Action Log was reviewed and all items confirmed as complete.

8.2 Firebreaks – N Johnstone

- Concern was raised that some landholders have cropped up to the road reserve without installing a firebreak. Roads and road reserves cannot be used as a firebreak.
- Firebreaks must be mineral earth, three metres wide with four metres of vertical clearance. A firebreak is required around each title, at a minimum of every 500 acres.
- Members advised that larger management areas can be difficult to install a firebreak capable of stopping a fire.
- The City will undertake aerial surveillance of the entire district to assess firebreak compliance this year.
- Failure to comply with local government requirements may affect crop insurance.

- Firebreak requirements are unlikely to be removed. Enforcement will be strict due to a more serious season being anticipated.

8.3 Register Your Burn Cards – R Roffey

- **QUESTION:** Can DFES could provide the Register Your Burn number on business cards for distribution?
- **ANSWER:** Mark Teale will investigate as an education and promotional opportunity.

8.4 Fire Suppression Equipment at Harvest - N Johnstone

- Inspections will not be undertaken to confirm the presence of a plough however, insurance may be affected if a fire occurs and a plough is not present.
- Complaints regarding ploughs not being in place will be investigated.
- Chief Bush Fire Control Officer will circulate a reminder via WhatsApp.

8.5 Casuarinas Tank

- The tank will be filled by tanker.
- Murray Preston offered to assist with filling when possible – approved with thanks.
- A bore will be considered in the future; any additional support for filling is welcome.

9 Date of next meeting

The next meeting is proposed for Thursday, 18 March 2027 in Geraldton.

10 Close

There being no further business Chair Mayor Clune declared the meeting closed at 3:04pm.

ACTION LOG

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	AGENCY	DUE	UPDATE/COMPLETE
Ensure contractors avoid mowing roadside edges on rural roads during high-risk periods, due to the fire-ignition risk posed by exposed stones and granite.--	Neil Johnstone	City of Greater Geraldton	COMPLETE	Discussed with the Coordinator Parks and confirmed that this was a one-off work request, which is generally avoided during the summer period.



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Greater Geraldton
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GREATER GERALDTON BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TABLED DOCUMENTS

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| ITEM NO. 5 | MINUTES – GREATER GERALDTON BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING - 18 MARCH 2026 |
| ITEM NO. 7.3 | DFES REPORT |
| ITEM NO. 7.4 | REPORT – DEPARTMENT OF BIODIVERSITY, CONSERVATION AND ATTRACTION. |
| ITEM NO. 7.5 | CAPE BURNEY BFB REPORT |
| ITEM NO. 7.7 | REPORT – MOONYOONOOKA BFB |

17 SEPTEMBER 2026

ATTACHMENT:

**ITEM NO. 5 MINUTES – GREATER
GERALDTON BUSH FIRE ADVISORY
COMMITTEE MEETING - 18 MARCH 202**

Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Name	Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee	Meeting No.	1-2026
Meeting Date	18 March 2026		
Meeting Time	2:00pm		
Meeting Location	City of Greater Geraldton, Function Room		
Members	Mayor Jerry Clune Cr Kim Parker Bill McKay - Moonyoonooka Bush Fire Brigade Captain Bruce Garratt - Walkaway Bush Fire Brigade Captain/FCO Daniel Critch - DCBFCO (Inland)/Tenindewa Bush Fire Daryl Hamersley - Walkaway Fire Control Officer Ian Grant - Eradu Fire Control Officer Murray Preston - Eradu Bush Fire Brigade Captain Murray Smith - CGG Coordinator Emergency Management & DCBFCO (Coastal) Neil Johnstone (Interim Chairperson) Rob Roffey - Cape Burney Bush Fire Brigade Captain Steven Rowe - Mullewa South Bush Fire Brigade Captain Warren Treasure - Moonyoonooka Fire Control Officer	By Invitation	
		Leave of Absence	
		Distribution	
Attendees	Aaron Halliday - CGG Training Officer Moana Wilson - CGG Secretariat Tony Free - CGG Director of Development Services		
Apologies	Andy Gaze - CGG Manager Regulatory Services Brendan McCann - Walkaway Bush Fire Brigade Captain Brendan Weir - Tenindewa Bush Fire Brigade Captain Brent Allen - Department of Fire and Emergency Services Captain VFRS - Geraldton Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service Craig Moran - Mullewa Central Bush Fire Brigade Captain Darren Simmons - Mullewa District Office Manager Dave Hoare - Waggrakine Bush Fire Brigade Captain Gerrard Rowe - Mullewa South Bush Fire Brigade Captain Julia French - Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions Tony Crudeli - Mullewa Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service Will Miller - Bushfire Volunteers, State Committee Representative Zac Grima - Tardun/Pindar Bush Fire Control Officer		
Purpose of Committee	The Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee is established under Section 67 of the <i>Bush Fires Act 1954</i>. As prescribed under the <i>Bush Fires Act 1954</i>, the Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee provides advice to the City of Greater Geraldton on matters relating to: • The prevention, control, and extinguishment of bush fires; • Planning and layout of firebreaks within the district; • Prosecutions for breaches of the <i>Bush Fires Act 1954</i>; • The formation of Bush Fire Brigades; • Coordination and cooperation between Brigades and relevant agencies		

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[Meeting Procedures Local Law 2011](#)

[Council Policy 4.4. Operation of Advisory Committees-V4](#)

[Council Policy 4.2 Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates](#)

1 Declaration Of Opening

Interim Chairperson, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO) - Neil Johnstone, declared the meeting open at 2:03pm.

2 Acknowledgement of Country

I would like to respectfully acknowledge the Yamatji people who are the Traditional Owners and First People of the land on which we meet/stand. I would like to pay my respects to the Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Yamatji people.

3 Welcome & Apologies

The CBFCO / Interim Chair welcomed the members and apologies were noted from:

- Brendan McCann - Walkaway Bush Fire Brigade Captain
- Brendan Weir - Tenindewa Bush Fire Brigade Captain
- Brent Allen - Department of Fire and Emergency Services
- Dave Hoare - Waggrakine Bush Fire Brigade Captain
- Gerrard Rowe - Mullewa South Bush Fire Brigade Captain
- Will Miller – Bushfire Volunteers, State Committee Representative

4 Recognition of Service – Ian Grant

The Committee acknowledged Ian Grant for his exceptional 48 years of service to the Eradu Bush Fire Brigade. Mayor Clune and the CBFCO, Neil Johnstone presented Ian with a plaque and gift in recognition of his long-standing dedication and reliability. Ian's milestone highlights the critical contribution of long-serving volunteers to bush fire operations across the region.

5 Appointment of Chairperson

Mayor Clune tabled at the meeting a nomination of Chairperson on behalf of himself.

The election of Chairperson of the Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee was conducted in accordance with the provisions of section 67(2) of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.

Election result:

ELECTED: Mayor Jeremiah Clune is elected unopposed as the Presiding Member.

Term of Office: 18 March 2026 – 15 October 2027.

Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, Neil Johnstone handed over the meeting to elected Chairperson, Mayor Clune.

6 Review of Terms of Reference

The Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee reviewed the Terms of Reference and agreed changes were made to section 6.1 Committee Members as demonstrated in attachment *Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee - Terms of Reference 2026*.

Committee Recommendation:

The Committee RESOLVES to adopt the updated Terms of Reference document - *Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee - Terms of Reference 2026*.

COMMITTEE DECISION

MOVED MOONYOONOOKA BUSH FIRE BRIGADE CAPTAIN, SECONDED CAPE BURNIE BUSH FIRE BRIGADE CAPTAIN

Committee Resolution: The Committee RESOLVED to adopt the updated Terms of Reference document - *Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee - Terms of Reference 2026*.

CARRIED 8/10

Not Voted: **2**

Against Votes: **0**

For Votes: **8**

Name	Vote (For or Against)
Mayor Clune	FOR
Cr Kim Parker	FOR
Cape Burnie Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Eradu Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Moonyoonooka Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Mullewa Central Bush Fire Brigade Captain	NOT PRESENT
Mullewa South Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Tenindewa Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Waggrakine Bush Fire Brigade Captain	NOT PRESENT
Walkaway Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR

Following the adoption of the Greater Geraldton Bush Fire Advisory Committee – Terms of Reference 2026, five additional voting positions were established, bringing the total number of voting members to 15. Of these, 12 members were present at the meeting and therefore held voting rights for all subsequent decisions.

7 Disclosure of Interests

Nil received by the secretariat.

8 Minutes of Previous Meetings

Committee Recommendation:

RECOMMENDED that the minutes of the Greenough Bush Fire Advisory Committee held on 18 September 2025 and the Mullewa Bush Fire Advisory Committee held on 19 September 2025 as previously circulated, be adopted as a true and correct record of proceedings.

COMMITTEE DECISION

MOVED MOONYOONOOKA BUSH FIRE BRIGADE CAPTAIN, SECONDED CR PARKER

Committee Resolution: The Committee RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Greenough Bush Fire Advisory Committee held on 18 September 2025 and the Mullewa Bush Fire Advisory Committee held on 19 September 2025 as previously circulated, be adopted as a true and correct record of proceedings.

CARRIED 12/15Not Voted: **3**Against Votes: **0**For Votes: **12**

Name	Vote (For or Against)
Mayor Clune	FOR
Cr Kim Parker	FOR
Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	FOR
Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (Coastal)	FOR
Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers (Inland)	FOR
Bush Fire Control Officer (Walkaway)	FOR
Bush Fire Control Officer (Moonyoonooka)	FOR
Cape Burney Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Eradu Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Moonyoonooka Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Mullewa Central Bush Fire Brigade Captain	NOT PRESENT
Mullewa South Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Tenindewa Bush Fire Brigade Captain	NOT PRESENT
Waggrakine Bush Fire Brigade Captain	NOT PRESENT
Walkaway Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR

9 Items for Discussion**9.1 Mandatory Ploughs – N Johnstone**

Discussion	The group discussed the requirement for plough at farms over 1000 hectares. D Critch: concurred that necessary precaution. Intention is to target broadacre farms
Attachments (x#)	Nil.
Outcome	See below resolution.

Committee Recommendation:

RECOMMENDED that the Committee endorse the following Fire Suppression Equipment notification:

Pursuant to Regulation 38A & 38B of the *Bush Fires Regulations 1954*, the City of Greater Geraldton gives written notice that undertaking grain harvesting activities shall have the following conditions.

- Provide an operational mobile firefighting unit with no less than 400 litres of water & must be able to draw water from tanks/dams. Must be self-propelled with a 2-way radio.
- A separate firefighting fire appliance is required to be present in any paddock being harvested,
- Minimum 6 metres of hose (recommended 30 metres) with a controlled nozzle.
- Hitched to a tractor should be a plough, offset disc, speed tiller, stubble muncher or the like, or a grader to be situated in the vicinity of any land or paddock where harvesting operations are being carried out. Required for farming properties over 1000 hectares.

COMMITTEE DECISION

MOVED ERADU BUSH FIRE BRIGADE CAPTAIN, SECONDED DEPUTY CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER (INLAND)

Committee Resolution: The Committee RESOLVED to endorse the following Fire Suppression Equipment notification:

Pursuant to Regulation 38A & 38B of the *Bush Fires Regulations 1954*, the City of Greater Geraldton gives written notice that undertaking grain harvesting activities shall have the following conditions.

- Provide an operational mobile firefighting unit with no less than 400 litres of water & must be able to draw water from tanks/dams. Must be self-propelled with a 2-way radio.
- A separate firefighting fire appliance is required to be present in any paddock being harvested,
- Minimum 6 metres of hose (recommended 30 metres) with a controlled nozzle.
- Hitched to a tractor should be a plough, offset disc, speed tiller, stubble muncher or the like, or a grader to be situated in the vicinity of any land or paddock where harvesting operations are being carried out. Required for farming properties over 1000 hectares.

CARRIED 12/15

Not Voted: 3

Against Votes: 0

For Votes: 12

Name	Vote (For or Against)
Mayor Clune	FOR
Cr Kim Parker	FOR
Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	FOR
Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (Coastal)	FOR
Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers (Inland)	FOR
Bush Fire Control Officer (Walkaway)	FOR
Bush Fire Control Officer (Moonyoonooka)	FOR
Cape Burney Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Eradu Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Moonyoonooka Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Mullewa Central Bush Fire Brigade Captain	NOT PRESENT
Mullewa South Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR
Tenindewa Bush Fire Brigade Captain	NOT PRESENT
Waggrakine Bush Fire Brigade Captain	NOT PRESENT
Walkaway Bush Fire Brigade Captain	FOR

10 Agency and Brigade Updates

10.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer – **N Johnstone**

- Refer to attachment – CBFCO Report – 18 March 2026.

10.2 CGG Coordinator Emergency Management – **M Smith**

- Green Street Fire: Significant works were undertaken on the southern end of the Chapman Regional Park firebreaks. Firebreak widths were increased from approximately 3 metres to 15–20 metres, extending through to the urban interface.

- Verita Road Tenure Inspection: Firebreaks in this area have also been widened to 15–20 metres to ensure adequate protection for Wandina. Tenure arrangements remain complex, involving the Department of Communities, the City and another landholder, with works continuing across the shared boundaries to maximise protection.
- Vacant Land - Rangeway: Additional attention has been directed to the block behind the cemetery, identified as a high-risk area that could significantly impact residents. This location will remain a key focus.
- Bush Fire Management Plan: The updated Plan is expected to be completed within the month.

10.3 Department of Fire and Emergency Services

- Not present – attending Dongara bushfire.

10.4 Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attraction

- Not present – attending Dongara bushfire.

10.5 Cape Burney Bush Fire Brigade

- Refer to attachment - Cape Burney BFB Report - 18 March 2026.

10.6 Eradu Bush Fire Brigade

- No significant incidents to report; aside from a Christmas Eve fire overall it has been an uneventful year.

10.7 Moonyoonooka Bush Fire Brigade

- Refer to attachment - Moonyoonooka BFB Report - 18 March 2026.

10.8 Mullewa Central Bush Fire Brigade Captain

- Not present, no report submitted.

10.9 Mullewa South Bush Fire Brigade Captain

- Generally a good year, with a few lightning-strike fires that approached the DBCA reserve.
- **NOTED**: DBCA firebreak maintenance has decreased and requires upgrading.
- The new truck performs well in town but is less suitable for Mullewa conditions - heavy, sluggish in sand and difficult in rocky/hilly terrain.
- **RECOMMENDATION**: Deflate tyres when rigs return from servicing to improve bush performance

10.10 Tenindewa Bush Fire Brigade Captain

- A busy period with multiple lightning-strike incidents and heavy fuel loads across the area.
- A large fire on a large landholders property was well managed, with strong support from DFES and City appliances; appreciation was noted for the resourcing and professionalism provided.
- Commendation was given to CBFCO Neil Johnstone for managing dissatisfaction around Harvest and Vehicle Movement Bans. His willingness to make difficult calls during dangerous conditions was acknowledged as essential for community safety.

10.11 Waggrakine Bush Fire Brigade

- Not present – attending Dongara bushfire.

10.12 Walkaway Bush Fire Brigade

- No issues to report.

11 General Business

11.1 Action Log

All actions completed – as per attachment.

11.2 Open Burning – Neil Johnstone

- The open burning period has commenced. Conditions remain hot and windy; reminder to register all burns with DFES to avoid unnecessary brigade callouts.
- Failure to follow correct burning procedures may result in an extension of the restricted burning period, which the Committee would prefer to avoid.
- **NOTED**: There is a general reluctance to be the first to commence burning.

11.3 Firebreaks in the Broadacre – Darryl Hammersley

- Members noted that overall landholder compliance with firebreaks is good, though some inconsistencies remain. Continued encouragement is preferred, with enforcement applied only as regulated.
- Current legislative requirements were discussed, noting that properties are required to install a firebreak every 500 acres, and a 3-metre boundary firebreak for any parcel not exceeding 500 acres.
- **NOTED**: Road and rail reserves are not required to install firebreaks; instead, they undertake vegetation control, primarily through slashing.

11.4 Community Thanks – Councillor Parker

Cr Parker noted the significance of the Green Street fire for the Geraldton community. While one house was lost, he expressed gratitude that there were no fatalities. He extended sincere thanks to all brigades involved on behalf of the community, acknowledging their efforts and professionalism. He also observed that the incident served as an important reminder for those who do not routinely work with fire, unlike the farming community and Committee members, of the critical role these services play.

11.5 Eradu Fire Control Officer/Brigade Captain – M Preston

- Need identified for a local point of contact in the Eradu area due to distance from Geraldton.
- Suggested candidates: Peter Freeman, Peter Barnetson, Mick Green.
- Preference expressed for someone local to Eradu with strong local knowledge.
- Additional suggestions:
 - Simon Smart – large holding in the western district.
 - Colin Crawford – moving into Ian's former residence and may be suitable.
 - Fire ute has been allocated to Andrew Martin; priority is appointing someone willing and able to take leadership when required.

11.6 Minnenooka Road Verge Maintenance - Bruce Garratt

- Observed that a contractor was mowing roadside edges along Minnenooka Road in mid-January.
- Concern was raised that exposed stones and granite in the area posed a high fire-ignition risk if struck by machinery.
- **RECOMMENDATION**: this type of work is not undertaken during high-risk periods at that time of year.
- **ACTION**: CBFCO Neil Johnstone and Mayor Clune will discuss with the depot.

12 Date of next meeting

Proposed for Thursday, 17 September 2026 in Mullewa.

13 Close

There being no further business Mayor Clune closed the meeting at 3:03pm.

ATTACHMENT:

**ITEM NO. 7.3 DFES REPORT – 17
SEPTEMBER 2026**



Midwest Gascoyne Region – Preseason BFAC Report – 2026

FIRE SERVICES

Seasonal Outlook

Seasonal conditions across the Mid West Gascoyne indicate an increased bushfire risk across parts of the region, particularly through the Carnarvon, Geraldton Hills and Yalgoo areas.

Rainfall associated with ex-tropical cyclones and other significant weather events has contributed to increased grass and surface fuel growth across parts of the region. As conditions dry and temperatures increase, these fuels are expected to cure and become increasingly available to burn. Areas of continuous and ungrazed grass are likely to present the greatest risk, with the potential to support fast-moving fires during periods of elevated fire weather.

Across the eastern Gascoyne, fuel continuity is more variable and may limit fire spread in some areas despite existing soil moisture deficits. Local conditions will therefore remain important, particularly where rainfall has produced pockets of heavier or more continuous grass growth.

Further south, including parts of the Geraldton Sandplains, below-average rainfall and warmer temperatures are expected to progressively increase fuel flammability as the season develops.

CBFCOs and local governments should maintain awareness of local fuel conditions, particularly areas of above-average grass growth, and ensure pre-season preparedness activities reflect the potential for an earlier or more active fire season where fuels become fully cured.

Bushfire Appliances

The region currently maintains an additional five firefighting appliances, predominantly based in Geraldton, which are used to support regional training and operational requirements.

Over the summer period, these appliances, along with a further 14 appliances, will be positioned with brigades across the Mid West Gascoyne. These appliances will remain available to support incidents both within the region and, where required, across the State. During periods of increased operational activity, appliances may be formed into strike teams for deployment to significant incidents.

As bushfire brigade appliances approach replacement, brigades are strongly encouraged to review the type of appliance that best meets their current and future operational needs. A number of appliance options are available, each providing different capabilities depending on local risks, terrain and response requirements.

CBFCOs and brigades are encouraged to consult the current operational fleet catalogue and discuss future appliance requirements with DFES as part of the replacement planning process.

<https://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/about-us/operational-fleet>

Mitigation

The region has continued to support mitigation activities across the Mid West Gascoyne, including the delivery of a number of prescribed burns from Kalbarri through to Jurien Bay. These activities have been undertaken in partnership with local governments and other stakeholders to reduce bushfire risk and improve community resilience ahead of the summer period.

The latest round of Mitigation Activity Fund (MAF) funding closed on 29 April, with a number of local governments across the region successfully securing funding to undertake priority mitigation works. Congratulations to those local governments who were successful and are continuing to progress works within their communities.

We strongly encourage all eligible local governments to make use of the MAF Grants Program to support identified bushfire mitigation priorities. The next annual funding round is expected to open in March 2027, and local governments should begin considering suitable projects and ensuring their mitigation priorities and supporting documentation are ready ahead of the funding round.

Fire Weather Districts Review

The Fire Weather District (FWD) Review has now been completed, with updated boundaries taking effect from August 2026. The review considered updated scientific modelling, local knowledge and stakeholder feedback to better align Fire Weather Districts with local conditions, fuel types, operational requirements and the way Fire Danger Ratings are communicated to communities.



Within the Mid West, the previous Midwest Coast and Midwest Inland split has been removed, with Northampton, Greater Geraldton, Chapman Valley and parts of Irwin now included within the Mid West Fire Weather District. The Shire of Irwin will be split at Kailis Drive, with Dongara and Port Denison included in the Mid West district while Beekeepers Nature Reserve remains within the Lesueur Fire Weather District. These changes provide improved alignment with Local Government boundaries and local fuel types.

A new North Midlands Fire Weather District has also been established, incorporating Mingenew, Morawa, Carnamah and Perenjori. The former Yarra Yarra Fire Weather District has been replaced by the Watheroo Fire Weather District, incorporating Moora, parts of Coorow, Victoria Plains and eastern parts of Dandaragan, with the new name reflecting Watheroo National Park's central location within the revised district.

Across the Gascoyne and Murchison, the existing districts have also been realigned. The South Murchison Fire Weather District will include Sandstone, Mount Magnet, Cue and Yalgoo, while the Gascoyne Inland Fire Weather District will include Meekatharra, Murchison and Upper Gascoyne. All other Fire Weather Districts within the region remain unchanged. Overall, the revised boundaries provide a better representation of local conditions and improve alignment between Fire Weather Districts and Local Government areas.

Automated Incident Response and Brigade Dispatch

There is the opportunity to improve the efficiency and reliability of brigade mobilisation through the automation of incident response.

Recognising the increasing demands placed on personnel and the volume of calls managed under the **000** agreement, we can establish pre-determined response run cards that automate the decision-making process for brigade dispatch.

This reduces reliance on 000 agreement contacts to determine which brigade should respond to an incident. In consultation with CBFCOs and Local Governments, response beats can be established across the Local Government area. Incidents registered within a defined beat can then be automatically assigned to the appropriate brigade, based on the agreed response arrangements.

When linked to a brigade's SMS notification group, this system provides a streamlined process whereby the appropriate brigade can be identified and dispatched with minimal manual intervention. This approach has the potential to:

- Reduce human error in brigade selection and mobilisation.
- Improve response times and consistency.
- Reduce reliance on manual contact through the 000 agreement.
- Provide clear, pre-agreed response arrangements across the District.
- Reduce the workload on personnel managing incident notifications.
- Provide brigades with a simple and reliable method of receiving and responding to incidents.

Should you wish to consider the opportunity to develop and implement automated response run cards and brigade response beats please chat with your area officer.

Grain Harvest – Water Bombers

The Grain Harvest water bombers will once again be forward based at Geraldton Airport over the harvest period, with the primary intent of providing additional aerial firefighting support to protect standing crops and farming assets across the region. At times, these aircraft may also be forward based closer to areas of elevated risk to improve response times and ensure they are positioned where they can provide the greatest benefit.

It is important that CBFCOs and Fire Control Officers clearly articulate when a fire is impacting, or has the potential to impact, standing crop and that this information is passed through to the ComCen as early as possible. Regional Duty Coordinators will work to facilitate deployment of the aircraft where requested and appropriate. We would much rather deploy the bombers early and stand them down while en route if they are no longer required, than wait until a fire is well established and have the aircraft arrive when the incident has already developed into a prolonged response.

Please encourage your FCOs and incident controllers to maintain early communication with DFES and the ComCen so we can make the best possible use of this capability to protect community members, crops and other assets.



Where brigades require additional support around aerial firefighting operations, including Ground Controller training, the region has a number of qualified trainers available and is more than happy to work with brigades to arrange.

There is also an opportunity through the Grain Harvest program to demonstrate the value and operational demand for aerial firefighting resources within the Mid West. Effective utilisation of the aircraft, supported by accurate reporting of deployments and outcomes, will help build a clearer picture of the benefit they provide to the region and may support future consideration of extending aerial firefighting capability beyond the grain harvest period and across the broader summer fire season.

Grain Harvest – Fire Risk Forums

Following more than 170 harvest-related fires recorded across the previous season, DFES commenced a series of regional discussions with growers, machinery operators, Fire Control Officers and other stakeholders to better understand the causes and contributing factors associated with harvest fires. The forums, led by Karen Chappell, formed part of the first phase of a broader initiative aimed at improving harvest safety and reducing the likelihood and impact of fires during grain harvesting operations.

A number of consistent themes emerged through the discussions, including machinery maintenance and bearing failures, dust and crop type, telecommunications limitations, the use of FLIR cameras to identify heat build-up, and the importance of having firefighting equipment positioned with harvesting operations. Participants also highlighted the value of local WhatsApp groups and pre-harvest meetings, while identifying a need for clearer information around Total Fire Bans and Harvest and Vehicle Movement Bans, improved fire reporting processes, and better access to practical information tailored to broadacre farming operations.

The information gathered through these forums will help inform future work around harvest fire prevention, education and operational practices. Opportunities identified include improved sharing of fire cause data and lessons learnt, practical guidance for machinery operators and seasonal workers, improved communications capability in areas with limited coverage, and continued engagement with industry and farming communities to promote safer harvesting practices.

Importance of Incident Reporting

Accurate and timely incident reporting is critical for both operational and strategic purposes. When fires and other incidents are not reported to the LG or DFES, it becomes difficult to justify requests for additional resources, equipment, and funding to support brigades. Proper reporting ensures that the risks to personnel and appliances are formally recorded, supporting operational safety and informed decision-making. With current and future presumptive cancer legislation, maintaining a comprehensive record of incidents attended is essential to protect volunteers' health and legal rights, providing verifiable evidence of exposure for any claims.

Incident registration also has important legal and insurance implications, as insurance companies require an official incident number when processing claims. Reporting can be completed online or via paper-based forms simply speak to your CESM or DFES manager for more details. Consistent reporting supports data-driven fire management, informs community risk assessments, and strengthens advocacy for local brigades. Encouraging a culture of thorough incident documentation ensures responders, their equipment, and the broader community are protected while enabling brigades to secure the support they need to operate safely and effectively.

Training

The region continues to support a range of training and professional development opportunities for volunteers, Fire Control Officers and brigade leadership. CBFCOs are encouraged to promote the following training opportunities across their brigades and local government networks.

Fire Control Officer Refresher

A new voluntary online Fire Control Officer Refresher is available and should be distributed to all FCOs, Fire Weather Officers and Captains. The refresher takes approximately 60 minutes to complete and covers key legislative requirements, responsibilities, authorities and operational considerations associated with the FCO role. This provides a useful opportunity for experienced officers to refresh their knowledge ahead of the coming fire season.

Bushfire Safety for Workers

The Bushfire Safety for Workers online course should be shared more broadly throughout local communities and networks. The 45–60 minute course is designed for anyone who lives, works or travels in bushfire-prone areas and provides practical information on understanding bushfire risk, preparing for travel, interpreting warnings and the actions to take during a bushfire emergency. Local governments are encouraged to promote the course to their own



workforce as well as businesses, community organisations and other stakeholders operating in high bushfire risk areas.

Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) Awareness

DFES has also developed a new Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) Awareness online course in collaboration with Aviation Services. The course became available through eAcademy from 2 August 2026 and provides members with an introduction to RPAS operations and considerations when drones are being used around incidents.

External Structural Firefighting – Major Update

From 1 July 2026, the previous Structural Firefighting course has been replaced by External Structural Firefighting for VFRS, VFES and Bush Fire Service volunteers. The course remains two days; however, participants are now required to complete approximately two hours of pre-course review using the online student resource, allowing greater focus on practical activities during the face-to-face component.

The course content has been updated to reflect current legislation, doctrine, terminology, hazards and firefighting techniques, with the practical component now focused specifically on defensive external structural firefighting. Content already covered through Bushfire Safety Awareness, Firefighting Skills and Internal Structural Firefighting has been removed to reduce duplication and provide more time for the skills relevant to external structural firefighting operations.

Fireline Construction Course

DFES Bushfire Centre of Excellence, in partnership with DBCA, offered the regions the opportunity to attend Fireline Construction training for personnel involved in bushfire operations. The course focuses on the safe construction of firelines using machinery, trucks and light vehicles, including the safe use of equipment during fire control operations.

The training provides participants with the basic knowledge and practical skills to safely assist with fireline construction to DFES and DBCA standards.

Community Emergency Service Manager Changes

The Mid West Gascoyne Region has been fortunate to receive funding for an additional Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) position, which will be established to support the Shires of Dandaragan and Coorow. Recruitment for the new position is currently underway and, once appointed, will provide additional capacity to support local governments and brigades across the southern part of the region.

As part of these changes, the Shire of Mingenew has also joined the CESM program and will form part of the existing arrangement with the Shires of Irwin and Carnamah. This provides Mingenew with dedicated CESM support while also allowing the regional CESM footprint to be better balanced across participating local governments.

These changes continue to strengthen the CESM program across the Mid West Gascoyne, providing greater access to support for Chief Bush Fire Control Officers, brigades and local governments across prevention, preparedness, response and recovery activities.

How to Order DFES Publications/Brochures

DFES has a range of publications dedicated to increasing public information about hazards such as bushfires, structure fires, floods, storms, and cyclones that can impact communities. Please visit <https://publications.dfes.wa.gov.au/order-publications> to order

DFES Regional Duty Coordinator

The Midwest Gascoyne Regional Duty Coordinator is available 24x7 for support and advice. Please make contact on 1800 317 555

ATTACHMENT:

**ITEM NO. 7.4 REPORT –
DEPARTMENT OF BIODIVERSITY,
CONSERVATION AND ATTRACTION.**

LEMC/BFAC Meetings Report Sept 2026

Julia French

Midwest Region Duty Officer Number – 0429 640 916

General business

- Mandatory training happening
- Internal crew members and crew leader training being held in Geraldton over the coming months.
- Tim Daly started in Trev's role
- 1 Additional Gang truck based in Geraldton now
 - o 4 Geraldton
 - o 1 Kalbarri

General business

- Fire access track maintenance program underway

Water Bomber Reloader training

- Kalbarri & Geraldton - Sunday 1st Nov

Grain Harvest Waterbombers

- Dates confirmed
- Start 1st Nov
- 6 weeks initially
- Reminder to go through the ground controller for this
- Request to come through RDC
- There to be used to support grain harvest so don't be afraid to request them.

ATTACHMENT:

**ITEM NO. 7.5 CAPE BURNEY BFB
REPORT - 17 SEPTEMBER 2026**

Cape Burney's September 2026 report

Last financial Year Cape Burney attended 32 incidents making it one of our busiest years to date , we have had 3 call outs since and we are expecting another busy year .

As for members , we have 12 active members and 2 support members .

For public events we will be attending the sunshine festival , where we hope to educate more of the public on the rules of registered burning and Ringing to register there burns , and christmas on the Terrace , we will also be doing our annual Santa lolly run again subject to operational needs.

Most of our members was able to take part in the provide first aid course that was provided by the City and the brigade would like to say thankyou for it , while a few members were able to take advantage of some courses put on over the last couple of months. We also have our annual burn over drill coming up at our next training .

We are also in the process in applying for the western power grant so we can put 2 of our members through to get there commercial drivers licence , while they wont be able to drive under emergency conditions , it will help with driver fatigue after long incidents .

ATTACHMENT:	ITEM NO. 7.7 REPORT – MOONYOONOOKA BFB
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Moonyoonooka Bushfire Brigade - BFAC September 2026

Membership:

Membership has increased, with two new members completing training recently and another fully trained experienced person that has recently moved to town joining.

At our most recent training we had 16 members turn up to conduct a vehicle fire and fire in surrounding scrub scenario, which went well and gave us some areas to focus on during future training nights.

Incidents:

Fortunately, we have only a few callouts recently.

Last season was busy with over seventy callouts recorded

Equipment:

All vehicles have been serviced and are ready for the upcoming season, with upgrades to our communication capabilities by the instillation of starlink on all the appliances our ability to respond and manage incidents has been enhanced.

CGG:

I would like to thank the city for their continued commitment to providing support to the brigade.

Regards,

Bill McKay – Captain

Moonyoonooka Bushfire Brigade