

SHIRE OF MT MARSHALL



Bush Fire Advisory Committee

**Minutes of the Mt Marshall Bush Fire Advisory
Committee meeting held in the Council
Chambers, 80 Monger Street, Bencubbin on
Friday 25 March 2022, commencing at 2.00pm.**

Mr Damian Tomas
Chairman

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Minutes of the Mt Marshall Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting
Held on Friday 25 March 2022

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1.0 Declaration of Opening / Announcement of Visitors

Mr Damian Tomas welcomed committee members to the meeting and declared the meeting open at 2.00pm.

2.0 Record of Attendance / Apologies

In Attendance

Mr Damian Tomas	CBFCO / Chair
Mr Jack Walker	BFCO Bencubbin
Miss Jordan Bairstow	Regulatory Officer
Mr Ben Sachse	BFCO Welbungin
Mr Brett Clark	BFCO Wialki
Mr John Nuttall	CEO
Mr Alex Espey	Bushfire Volunteers/Member Service
Mr Tony Sachse	BFCO / Captain Welbungin BFB
Mr Daniel Spencer	BFCO Bencubbin
*Mr Daniel Hendriksen	DFES Area Manager
Mr Garry Huckstep	Deputy CBFCO

Apologies

Mr Tim Cashmore	BFCO Cleary
Mr Shaun Gratte	BFCO Gabbin
Mr John Dunne	BFCO Beacon
Mr Noel Miguel	BFCO / Captain Beacon VESU
Sgt David Tapscott	WAPOL
Cr Stuart Putt	BFCO Welbungin / Councillor
Mr Craig Walker	BFCO Welbungin
Mr Brandon Lancaster	BFCO Beacon
Mr Terry Gobbart	BFCO Gabbin
Mr Steven Kett	BFCO Gabbin / Captain Gabbin BFB

**indicates person attending the meeting via telephone conference*

3.0 Confirmation of Minutes

3.1 Minutes of the Mt Marshall Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held Friday 1 October 2021

BFAC2022/001 OFFICER RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION:

That the minutes of the Mt Marshall Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting held on Friday 1 October 2021 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

Moved: J Walker

Seconded: D Spencer

Carried

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Business Arising from Previous Minutes

Mr. J Walker, BFCO Bencubbin discussed the following topics from previous minutes;

- Fire Break Order remains unchanged. Discussed with members and decided to leave as is until wording can be agreed upon.
- Scott Promask's are yet to be issued. Need to be distributed. Question raised as to if they should be allocated one per seat in vehicle versus one per person. Mr. Daniel Hendriksen, DFES Area Manager confirmed that they should be issued one per seat until further can be allocated. Training to be provided on how to use/how to wash the masks.

4.0 Reports of Officers

4.1 Regulatory Officer

The new Work Health and Safety Act 2020 was passed in November 2020 will come into effect 31st of March 2022. In this new legislation volunteers are included in the definition of Workers. The Act places Duty of Care obligations on Officers of a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking, workers (including volunteers) and Others. I believe with this new legislation coming into place it would be an excellent time for everyone to be speaking to their brigades and reiterating how important safety and completing training that is provided to them is. It is important for volunteers to complete the below training to make sure they are competent before attending a fire:

- Bushfire Skills
- Bushfire Awareness
- AIMS Awareness

Appointment of new Regulatory officer, Jordan Bairstow. Jordan is new to Local Government with experience in fleet management, finance, and administration. Jordan has enrolled in an Emergency Management for Local Government course which will be held at WALGA head office (West Leederville) on April 4th 2022.

- Mr. T Sachse, BFCO/Captain Welbungin, has suggested further is required on the above mentioned Work Health and Safety skills and awareness. Mr. D Hendriksen, DFES Area Manager confirmed training can be arranged at any stage once numbers are confirmed. Mr. D Hendriksen also advised that those who have previously completed training would only require a refresher course. Whilst new volunteers would be required to attend a 4 day course.

4.1.1 Information for the Committee

Notification of COVID Vaccination Status

- COVID vaccination status mentioned as per report received by Mr. J Nuttall, Shire of Mt Marshall CEO. Mr. A Espey, Bushfire Volunteers/Member Services to provide alternative ways on how members can record their vaccination status. Information will then be relayed to the brigades to produce a letter to all members. Letter to come from captains or secretaries.
- Note – members who have not been vaccinated can remain members however there are restrictions around what they can and can't do (DFES enforced.) DFES managed fires require proof of vaccination.

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Welbungin Fire Shed

- Mr. J Nuttall, Shire of Mt Marshall CEO, provided update on funding approval. Mr. J Nuttall confirmed that further funding application was put forward in 2022/2023 Local Government Grant Scheme. Mr. T Sachse, BFCO/Captain Welbungin questioned if Welbungin's 4:4 should be handed over to another brigade due to not fitting comfortably in current shed. Mr. D Hendriksen, DFES Area Manager advised against this suggestion.

Department of Fire and Emergency Services Control of Local Brigades

- Mr J Nuttall, Shire of Mt Marshall CEO happy to receive feedback from brigades as to pros and cons of DFES control. It has been suggested due to Occupational Health and Safety changes as well as COVID related requirements. Concerns from brigades around restrictions and rules. Mr. J Nuttall confirmed that the same rules should be applied currently. If control remains with Local Government, stricter rules will come into place to line up with DFES standards. Concerns also voiced over a "mass exit" of volunteers should control be taken over by DFES.
- Mr. T Sachse, BFCO/Captain Welbungin recognizes the protection of liability to Local Government should changes be made. Mr. T Sachse suggests joining brigades for training and for call outs. Mr. D Hendriksen, DFES Area Manager agrees to group training however suggests brigades should not be merged for fire fighting to allow a wider spread of volunteers. Points also made by Mr. D Hendriksen that if brigades are DFES controlled, it can be difficult to get funding for buildings.

5.0 Other Reports

- Burning Periods - Discussions took place to extend the restricted burning period.

BFAC2022/002 COMMITTEE DECISION:

Restricted burning period to be changed to 1st March to 31st March annually whereby permits are required during this time.

Moved: G Huckstep

Seconded: B Clark

Carried

5.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer – Mr Damian Tomas

- Guideline for Operating Private Equipment at Fires – PDF supplied. Request for Shire to email out information to farmers. Suggestion to put information on website, newsletter, social media etc.
- Mr. Gary Huckstep, Deputy CBFCO will stay in Deputy CBFCO position for remainder of the year. Recruitment for Mr. G Huckstep's replacement will need to commence over the coming months. Fire control officer training will need to be provided.

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- WhatsApp - No response out of Beacon or Cleary.
- Changing Conditions - During harvest, if conditions “turn bad” mid afternoon, suggestion to put on harvest ban as required regardless of backlash received by public.
- Fire Break Order - Enforcement of fire break order to continue to be monitored by Ranger. BFCOs and volunteer members to report any fire breaks that they believe are non-compliant and the ranger will be sent to review. All reports will be kept anonymous.
- Harvest Movement Bans - Outside of harvest - harvest/movement bans can be separated.
- Very High Fire Danger – Bush Fire Control Officer can issue a 46 notice (Bushfire Control Officer or Forest Officer may postpone lighting a fire) as required out of the restricted burning period as per the Bush Fires Act 1954.

5.2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer – Mr Garry Huckstep

- Uneventful Season. Mr. Garry Huckstep has suggested any correspondence to be distributed to farmers, volunteers or the public should be done so in the form of a letter/paper notice.

5.3 Bush Fire Control Officer – Beacon

Nil.

5.4 Bush Fire Control Officer – Wialki

- Issues with service/signal. Mr. B Clark, BFCO Wialki asked if booster ariels could be provided. Comments made by other members that it will not help phone reception issues. Suggestion to use handheld WAERN radios.

5.6 Bush Fire Control Officer – Gabbin

Nil.

5.7 Bush Fire Control Officer – Welbungin

- Mr. M Cooper has left the district. Mr. T Sachse, BFCO/Captain Welbungin has taken on the role of Acting Secretary following Mr. M Cooper’s departure.
- Formal meeting held for the Welbungin Bush Fire Brigade in October 2021 with familiarisation exercises performed.

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- Members of Welbungin Bush Fire Brigade attended DFES exercise at Koorda/Mukinbudin Rd as well as attending LEMC exercise outside Bencubbin Primary School.

5.8 Bush Fire Control Officer – Bencubbin

- Bencubbin Bush Fire Brigade attended 10 fires and was stood down on 3.
- Noted that familiarisation exercises have not been well attended locally.
- Mention of new fire region's.
- Suggestion to send DOAC (District Operations Advisory Committee) meeting info out to BFCO's and discuss at next meeting.
- Campfires – Any requests need to be put in the fire break notice otherwise camp fires are allowed as per the Bush Fires Act 1954.

5.9 Beacon Volunteer Emergency Services Unit

Nil.

5.10 Department of Fire & Emergency Services

- 11 March 2022 Welbungin's new truck will arrive. Shortly followed by the arrival of Gabbin's 4:4.

6.0 Next Meeting – to be advised

7.0 Closure of Meeting

There being no further business the meeting closed at 3.44pm

These Minutes were confirmed at the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on

Date

Mr Damian Tomas

Chair