

**SHIRE OF
MT MARSHALL**



**Bush Fire Advisory
Committee**

**Minutes of the Mt Marshall Bush Fire Advisory
Committee meeting held the Council Chambers,
80 Monger Street, Bencubbin on Wednesday 29
March 2023, commencing at 5.00pm.**

Mr Damian Tomas
Chairman

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Minutes of the Mt Marshall Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting
Held on Wednesday 29 March 2023

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Minutes of the Mt Marshall Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting
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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 5:00pm.

2.0 Record of Attendance / Apologies

In Attendance

Mr Damian Tomas	CBFCO / Chair / Committee Member
Mr Garry Huckstep	Deputy CBFCO / Committee Member
Mr Brett Clark	BFCO Wialki / Committee Member
Mr Tony Sachse	BFCO / Captain Welbungin BFB
Mr Craig Walker	BFCO Welbungin
Mr Terry Gobbart	BFCO Gabbin 5:03pm
Mr Ben Sachse	BFCO Welbungin
Mr Steven Kett	BFCO Gabbin / Captain Gabbin BFB
Mr Daniel Spencer	BFCO Bencubbin
Mr Ben McKay	CEO
Mrs Jordan Millar	Regulatory Officer

Apologies

Mr Noel Miguel	BFCO / Captain Beacon VESU
Mr Tim Cashmore	BFCO Cleary
Mr Brandon Lancaster	BFCO Beacon

3.0 Confirmation of Minutes

3.1 Minutes of the Mt Marshall Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held Friday 7 October 2022

BFAC2023/001 OFFICER RECOMMENDATION / COMMITTEE DECISION:

That the minutes of the Mt Marshall Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting held on Friday 7 October 2022 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

Moved: D Spencer

Seconded: C Walker

Carried

4.0 Reports of Officers

4.1 Regulatory Officer

Welbungin Fire Shed

Tender for the construction of the Welbungin fire shed was awarded to Multicon Commercial Construction (Stallion Homes.) The new fire shed will be built next to the Welbungin Town Hall. This was decided on to enable the hall, kitchen and ablutions to be used by both the brigade as well as the community when attending events at the hall. The land has been cleared and preparation has started for construction to commence. At this stage, we are anticipating an April start.

DFES Training

Dates to be set for 2023 “off season” to enable all volunteers multiple opportunities to attend. Notification of training sessions will be sent to volunteers via SMS to allow all volunteers to be notified. Brigade members who need to update their contact details are asked to contact Regulatory Officer, Jordan Millar at the Shire. Any requests for specific training will be considered.

Suggestion by the Committee for Regulatory Officer Jordan Millar to be appointed as a workplace trainer to assist with facilitating local training. Due to current work loads, this will not be supported by the Shire. Further suggestions include local members to volunteer for the position. If there are no members who volunteer to become a workplace trainer, the training sessions will continue to be run by DFES.

Brigade members compulsory training is encouraged to be completed prior to the 2023/2024 bushfire season.

Water Map

A map of the Shire which highlights water source locations has been discussed. The Committee has suggested that the request for information from the community should be published in local newspapers, social media and within the Shire’s rates notice. The Shire will produce a document to be published over the coming months.

Purchasing Parts and Equipment

There has been an increase in recent weeks of parts and equipment being ordered by individual volunteers without receiving authorisation from the Shire. The Committee has been advised that this can no longer occur. Authorisation, in the form of a purchase order, is to be issued to suppliers by the Shire prior to the work being carried out or parts being ordered. Regular suppliers will be notified to contact the Shire prior to issuing volunteers with products or commencing work. The only exception is after hours or weekend emergencies. If it is not an emergency, it will need to wait until business hours.

Servicing on Fire Appliances

The Committee has requested that all fire appliances be serviced prior to the bush fire season. This will eliminate the risk of an appliance being out of use in case of an emergency. The Shire will contact suppliers to notify them of this requirement.

4.1.1 Information for the Committee

Resignation of Jack Walker as Bushfire Control Officer and Fire Weather Officer. Jack will remain a volunteer and secretary of the Bencubbin Bushfire Brigade.

BFAC2023/002 COMMITTEE DECISION:

The Committee request that a certificate of service be produced by the Shire and sent to Jack Walker on their behalf.

Moved: D Spencer

Seconded: G Huckstep

Carried

5.0 Other Reports

5.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer – Mr Damian Tomas

Restricted/Prohibited Burning Periods

Mr D Tomas requested input from the Committee in regard to how the new dates worked for the 2022/2023 bushfire season. The Committee agreed that whilst some aspects worked, they would like to review the dates going into the 2023/2024 season. The Committee has been reminded that the dates can be moved 14 days either side of the selected dates. Further discussion to be held at the next meeting.

Use of Private Vehicles and Equipment During Incidents

Mr Tomas advised that all private equipment needs to be authorised by the officer in charge of the incident. DFES Command Centre require notification of all private equipment in use. It is also a requirement to list all private equipment on both attendance and incident reports.

Conditions of a Burning Permit during Restricted Burning

Personnel: DFES confirmed that 3 personnel are required to be able and present during burning when a permit has been issued during the restricted burning period.

Farmer Awareness Course: The Committee agreed that the completion of the Farmer Awareness Course should be a condition of receiving a permit. Currently, this is not a condition, therefore this would need to be put in place prior to enforcing.

Conditions During Harvesting/Prohibited Burning Period

Water Supply: Suggested that a minimum water/unit requirement be introduced as part of a permit requirement as well as during harvest/prohibited burning period. Further discussions are required prior to a recommendation being presented to council.

BFAC2023/003 COMMITTEE DECISION:

Shire to investigate local laws and legislation to determine the requirements for water being available during the harvest/prohibited burning period.

Moved: D Spencer

Seconded: B Clark

Carried

Fire Breaks

Discussions held regarding the enforcement of firebreaks throughout the Shire. Additional information required before any further discussions can be had.

BFAC2023/004 COMMITTEE DECISION:

Shire to confirm if compulsory firebreaks are a legislative/legal requirement.

Moved: S Kett

Seconded: T Gobbart

Carried

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Non Compliant Town Blocks

Importance of town blocks removing flammable materials from property has been highlighted. To be considered when looking to update the firebreak order.

Replacement of Bushfire Control Officer's

Request for volunteers to assume the role of Bushfire Control Officer's for vacancies north of the Shire. Interested members will be notified of required training over the coming weeks.

Fire Behaviour Index

Following on from the March Great Eastern District Operations Advisory Committee meeting, it was advised that the Fire Behaviour Index rating of 40 is closer to the old reading of 32. The Committee agreed that the 37 reading currently used to issue harvest bans will remain in place until further notice.

Weather Officers

Request for a Bushfire Control Officer to be selected for the position of Fire Weather Officer. Bushfire Control Officer Mr Brett Clark volunteered for the role. The Shire will confirm if any further training is required.

5.2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer – Mr Garry Huckstep

Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, Mr Garry Huckstep, will resign from the position at the end of 2023.

5.3 Bush Fire Control Officer – Beacon

Nil

5.4 Bush Fire Control Officer – Wialki

Nil

5.5 Bush Fire Control Officer – Cleary

Nil

5.6 Bush Fire Control Officer – Gabbin

Nil

5.7 Bush Fire Control Officer – Welbungin

Nil

5.8 Bush Fire Control Officer – Bencubbin

Nil

5.9 Beacon Volunteer Emergency Services Unit

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Nil

5.10 Department of Fire & Emergency Services

Nil

6.0 Next Meeting – to be advised

Suggestion of October meeting to be arranged prior to fire season. Dates to be suggested closer to October.

7.0 Closure of Meeting

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7:26pm.

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

Date

Mr Damian Tomas Chair