



Agenda

Bush Fire Advisory Committee

Tuesday 10 September 2024

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NOTICE is given that a meeting of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee will be held at the City of Busselton, Kaloopup Meeting Room, 2 Southern Drive, Busselton with the option of via Microsoft Teams video conference on Tuesday 10 September 2024 commencing at 6:30pm.

Your attendance is respectfully requested.



TONY NOTTLE
Chief Executive Officer, City of Busselton

[date]

1 Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Busselton acknowledges the Wadandi and Bibbulmun people as the traditional custodians of this region and pay respects to Elders past and present.

The meeting will be declared open.

2 Attendance and Apologies

2.1 Present

2.2 In Attendance

2.3 Apologies

Mayor Phill Cronin

Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, Allan Guthrie

3 Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures received.

4 Confirmation and receipt of minutes

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting held 11 June 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

5 Presentations

5.1 Presentation

Nil.

6 Officer/ Delegate Reports

6.1 Adoption of Bush Fire Brigade Operating Procedures

Strategic Theme:	Key Theme 2: Lifestyle 2.2 Work with key partners to facilitate a safe, healthy and capable community. Key Theme 4: Leadership 4.2 Deliver governance systems that facilitate open, ethical and transparent decision making.
Directorate:	Community Planning
Reporting Officer:	Manager Community Safety – Rachel Runco
Authorised By:	Director Community Planning - Gary Barbour
Nature of Decision:	Executive: Substantial direction setting, including adopting budgets, strategies, plans and policies (excluding local planning policies); funding, donations and sponsorships; reviewing committee recommendations.
Voting Requirements:	Simple Majority
Disclosures of Interest:	No officers preparing this item have an interest to declare.
Attachments:	Draft City of Busselton Bush Fire Operating Procedures

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the Council adopts the Bush Fire Operating Procedures as shown in Attachment 1.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the Ordinary Council Meeting 18 October 2023, Council resolved to make the *City of Busselton Bushfire Brigades Local Law 2023 (BFBL)*. This local law was gazetted on 31 October 2023 and came into operation on 14 November 2023.

Under the BFBL the local government can adopt Bush Fire Operating Procedures (BFOP) to formalise the governance and operational and strategic procedures applied for administration and maintenance of Bush Fire Brigades (BFB) within the City of Busselton.

The BFOP will be annually reviewed, to ensure on-going alignment with the City of Busselton objectives of bush fire operations, remain consistent with legislative changes, Department of Fire and Emergency Services guidelines and any other relevant considerations.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Adoption of the operating procedures supports transparent governance of the district. With formalisation of a consistent strategic and operational management framework for the administration of BFB contributing to facilitation of a safe community.

BACKGROUND

It is widely recognised that the legislative framework which establishes the broad policy architecture for the establishment and regulation of BFB matters in Western Australia, being the *Bush Fires Act 1954 (BF Act)* is well overdue for renewal.

The BF Act is 70 years old and reflects the ideological practices at the time of establishment, now inconsistent with contemporary emergency service practice. A hindrance of the legislation is the power of delegation for the local government to delegate its functions are limited. The powers within the BF Act that provide for the establishment of BFB and the applicable administration framework cannot be delegated by the local government.

As such, the BFOP in attachment 1 outlining the governance and operations guidelines for BFB within the district requires the formal adoption by the Council. This requirement for formal adoption of the BFOP by the Council is unusual, and is inconsistent with the *Local Government Act 1995 and Regulations*, which clearly delineate that strategic functions of a local government are the responsibility of the Council, with operational implementation the responsibility CEO. Nevertheless, until such time as the power to delegate functions of the local government under the BF Act is modernised, or replaced by the introduction of the proposed *Consolidated Emergency Services Act* adoption of the BFOP requires a decision of the Council.

OFFICER COMMENT

The City of Busselton BFBLL is based on the WALGA model, and is local law is divided into the following parts:

- Establishment of Bush Fire Brigades
- Organisation and maintenance of Bush Fire Brigades
- Types of Bush Fire Brigade Membership
- Appointment Dismissal and Management of Members
- Equipment of Bush Fire Brigades
- The Rules under which the brigades are to operate.

Under the BFBLL the City can adopt Bush Fire Operating Procedures to formalise the operational and strategic procedures applied for administration and maintenance of Bush Fire Brigade.

The BFOP were initially drafted by the City of Busselton Community Emergency Services Manager then finalised in consultation with a BFB member working group, prior to review and feedback by Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) members. The document has been informed and developed with consideration to relevant DFES operational Guidelines, manuals, standard operating procedures, combined with a review of adopted BFOP in place in other local government districts across Western Australia.

The resulting BFOP is structured into 10 sections, each addressing key strategic and operational aspects of brigade operations:

1. **Introduction:** Provides an overview of the purpose of the procedures and the context in which they are applied. It includes definitions of key terms and mentions that the procedures will be reviewed every three years or as needed.
2. **Objectives of Bush Fire Brigades:** Describes the primary objectives of the brigades, which include carrying out normal brigade activities and fulfilling functions as specified in relevant legislation and local laws.
3. **Membership:** Details the requirements for membership in a bush fire brigade, including age restrictions and the need for parental approval for members under 18. It also references additional information available in the City of Busselton's Bush Fire Brigade Local Law 2023 and Bush Fire Brigade Management Policy V1.0.
4. **Roles and Responsibilities:** Outlines the reporting structure and specific roles and responsibilities within the brigades and the City of Busselton staff.

5. **Brigade Management:** Covers topics related to work health and safety, accident and injury reporting, code of conduct, wellness, first aid, and insurance claims.
6. **Brigade Training:** Discusses training information, record-keeping, expenses, trainer/assessor roles, and annual skills maintenance.
7. **Equipment and Appliances:** Addresses repair and recovery, appliance checks, fault reporting, breakdowns, road accidents, and radio communication equipment defects.
8. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Provides guidelines on PPE personal issue, laundering, and ordering equipment.
9. **Brigade Information Systems:** Includes information on email access, DFES Volunteer Hub access, station notice boards, and expenses related to mobile phones, internet, and tablets.
10. **Brigade Security:** Discusses station security, alarm and door codes, and loss of uniform.

Statutory Environment

Bush Fires Act 1954

Pursuant to section 41(1) of the BF Act, where a local government elects to establish a bushfire brigade, it must do so in accordance with local laws it has made for that purpose.

Section 62 of the BF Act provides a general power to make local laws relating to –

(a) the appointment, employment, payment, dismissal, and duties of bush fire control officers; and (b) the organisation, establishment, maintenance and equipment with appliances and apparatus of bush fire brigades to be established and maintained by the local government; and (c) any other matters affecting the exercise of any powers or authorities conferred and the performance of any duties imposed upon the local government by this Act.

Local Government Act 1995 – Section 3.5 of the Act provides Council with the head of power for making local laws, which stipulates:

A local government may make Local Laws under this Act prescribing all matters that are required or permitted to be prescribed by a local law, or are necessary or convenient to be so prescribed, for it to perform any of its functions under this Act.

The procedure for making local laws is set out in sections 3.12 to 3.17 of the Act and regulation 3 of the Local Government (Functions and General) Regulations 1996 (WA).

Relevant Plans and Policies

The officer recommendation aligns to the following adopted plan or policy:

Plan:

Not applicable.

Policy:

Bushfire Brigade Management Policy

Financial Implications

Nil – adoption of the BFOP will simply formalise the existing management framework applied for the governance of BFB. As such there will be no financial implications to the adopted 2024-25 Annual Budget as a result.

External Stakeholder Consultation

The BFOP have been developed in consultation with a working group comprised of BFB volunteers from a variety of Brigades across the district including Eagle Bay, Yallingup Rural, Yallingup Coastal, Metricup, Dunsborough, Vasse and Wilyabrup.

At the Committee meeting 11 June 2024 BFAC supported the distribution of the draft BFOP to the committee following a review and incorporation of any feedback from the Chief and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers.

The Committee received the draft documentation via email 23 July 2024 for review and discussion with their respective BFB.

The BFOP in attachment 1 incorporate provided feedback.

Risk Assessment

An assessment of the potential implications of implementing the officer recommendation has been undertaken using the City's risk management framework, with risks assessed taking into account any controls already in place. No risks of a medium or greater level have been identified.

Options

1. As an alternative to the proposed recommendation, the Committee could vary the provisions of the Proposed BFOP in many ways.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that the Council adopt the BFOP at attachment 1.

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

The officer recommendation will be implemented in full, or in stages as per the following table:

Milestone	Completion Date
Update City of Busselton website to include the BFOP	30 October 2024
Communicate the adoption of BFOP and provide an induction and training as part of the pre fire season refresher processes to all active firefighting BFB volunteers	30 November 2024

DFES

6.2 **DFES Report**

DFES LSW Region Report – 10 September

As at Attachment 6.2.1

COB/ DFES

6.3 COB DFES Report

Reporting Officer: Matt du Plessis – Community Emergency Services Manager

Recommendation

That the Committee:

- 1. Receives and notes the Emergency Services Update Report**

SUMMARY

This report provides the overview of the operations and activities of City's Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades for the region.

BACKGROUND

Under the Bush Fires Act 1954, the City is responsible to make provisions about the organisation, establishment, maintenance, and equipment of bush fire brigades. The City achieves this through the provision of Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery functions to provide a comprehensive approach to emergency management within the City. This is delivered by:

Prevention: The City administers and enforces the appropriate fire prevention provisions of the Bush Fires Act 1954. The City promotes and participates in appropriate community safety programs in consultation with DFES (Department of Fire and Emergency Services).

Preparedness: In addition to the applicable community safety programs identified against prevention, the City, through their staff and infrastructure, supports the emergency services preparedness programs developed and implemented by DFES. The City ensures that their bush fire brigade volunteers are trained to the appropriate levels.

Response: The City responds to day-to-day incidents through the turnout of the Bush Fire Brigades. City support, including access to volunteers, appliances and other resources as required, is extended to DFES controlled incidents when requested by the Incident Controller.

Recovery: The City undertakes recovery actions in accordance with its role as documented in the Emergency Management Act 2005.

Management and Administration: The City provides leadership and support to the development and management of their local emergency management arrangements. The City appoints a Community Emergency Services Manager to deliver the emergency services within the City. In addition to this, the City appoints a Bushfire Mitigation Officer and a Ranger and Emergency Services Administration Officer to support service delivery.

OFFICER COMMENT

Significant Incidents in the City of Busselton region

Nil

Deployments

Nil

Statistics update

The incident summary details all incidents responded by both DFES Volunteer Fire & Rescue Services and the City of Busselton Bush Fire Brigades up until 1 August 2024.

During the winter months, the likelihood of bushfires is low due to the wet conditions and the statistics reflect this.

Incidents: Year to Date Comparison: July 1 to August 1

Incident Type	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	Average Excluding 2024/2025	% TREND this year
Called Off - No Attendance	1	1	0	1	1	0.8	0.00%
False Alarm - System Initiated	4	3	9	5	9	5.3	71.43%
False Call - Good Intent	10	4	4	6	8	6.0	33.33%
Fire - Bushfire (sml)	1	1	2	0	1	1.0	0.00%
Fire - Other/Rubbish/Vehicle	2	1	2	2	1	1.8	-42.86%
Fire - Structure	1	1	3	1	0	1.3	-20.00%
General Service Calls	1	1	1	1	0	0.8	0.00%
Hazardous Situation	1	0	1	0	1	0.5	0.00%
Natural Hazard	3	20	0	14	2	9.3	-78.38%
Rescue & Medical	5	3	3	2	1	3.3	-69.23%
Road Crash & Rescue	7	2	2	10	7	5.3	33.33%
Search	2	0	0	1	0	0.5	0.00%
Totals:	38	37	27	43	31	35.5	-4.23%

% TREND compares this FY to the Average.

Hectares lost

There have been zero hectares lost over the winter period.

Size of fires is not always available; fires less than 1 hectare are not included.

Hectares Lost	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
All Bushfires	53	427	32	34	0

Bush Fire Brigade Memberships

The below chart shows the summary of the City’s Bush Fire Brigades memberships up until 31 July 2024. Membership has seen an increase of **9 new** members from May 2024. This is a 2% increase of membership across the brigades.

Volunteer Summary for LGIS	Age Group					Total
	<=18	<=55	56-65	66-70	71+	
Junior or Cadet Rank	1	0	0	0	0	1
Active Operational	0	232	67	48	51	398
Non-Operational	0	10	7	5	10	32
Vol Leave of Absence	0	3	0	0	0	3
Total	1	245	74	53	61	434

Training/ Workshops

The following courses/workshops have been delivered/attended:

- o Trainers Workshop
 - o 22 June
 - 11 persons attended
- o Prohibited and Restricted Burning Review Workshop
 - o 10 July
 - 7 persons attended
- o Fire Fighting Skills
 - o 3 – 4 August
 - 14 persons attended
- o Regional Operations Advisory Committee (ROAC)
 - o 8 August
 - Chief Bush Fire Control Officers – Various
- o Annual All Agency Burn Plan Meeting 2024
 - o 15 August
 - All agencies
- o Lower Southwest Trainers Workshop
 - o 23 August
 - DFES led workshop
- o Spontaneous Volunteers (NDRR Grant Funded Regional Training Session)
 - o 30 August
 - Volunteering WA

Courses to be completed throughout Spring are:

- o Incident Controller Refresher
 - o 12 October
- o Ground Controller
 - o 20 October
 - o 2 November
- o WAERN Refresher – on request

Grants:

Local Government Grants Scheme:

LGGS 2023 - 2024

Last season the City of Busselton applied for \$427,200 in operational funding for the Bush Fire Brigades to enable service delivery requirements.

The City was granted \$390,000 for the Operational Funding for the Bush Fire Brigades which was \$37,200 short of what was required to manage the service. The City have since had an overspend of \$31,600. Below highlights the areas of expenditure for the Brigades:

EXPENDITURE ITEM	
Purchase of Plant & Equipment <\$1,500 per item	17,648
Maintenance of Plant and Equipment	5,395
Maintenance of Vehicles/Trailers/Boats	155,142
Maintenance of Land and Buildings	49,701
Clothing and Accessories (PPE/PPC)	93,581
Utilities, Rates and Taxes	16,846
Other Goods and Services	40,629
Insurances	42,663
Total	\$421,603

A major readjustment in operational spending had to occur throughout the year address the above expenditure. In June 2024, an additional \$20,000 was granted by DFES LGGS Grants team. The below table details the overspend:

Factors contributing to Overspend:	2023-24 Actual	2022-23 Actual	Difference
Brigade Facilities – Introduced planned maintenance to ensure facilities maintained under WHS requirements	\$49,700.00	\$22,992.00	\$26,708.00
Appliances: Replacement of tyres (DFES A/B/C Servicing requirements)	\$42,000.00	\$1,168.00	\$40,832.00
Total	\$91,700.00	\$24,160.00	\$67,540.00
Additional expenses 23-24	\$67,540.00		

LGGS 2024 - 2025

The City of Busselton applied for \$436,500 in operational funding for the Bush Fire Brigades to the enable service delivery of all the City’s Bush Fire Brigades for 2024-25.

The City was granted \$390,000 for the Operational Funding for the Bush Fire Brigades 2024-25.

We have been successful with an additional **\$234,321** in the LGGS Capital Funding and DFES Asset Maintenance Fund. We have also received **\$66,000** for the Disaster Ready Fund (DRF):

Operational Funding:	\$390,000
Capital Funding:	\$64,006
DFES Asset Maintenance Fund:	\$170,315
Disaster Ready Fund (DRF):	\$66,000 (plus an additional \$66k CoB contribution)
Total Funding Received:	\$684,321

See below for further details on the breakdown of the additional funding received:

CAPITAL FUNDING:

Water Tanks (132,000L & pump):

1. Metricup BFB: \$16,722

Siteworks to be completed/funded by the City of Busselton.

2. Yoongarillup BFB: \$16,722

Siteworks to be completed/funded by the City of Busselton.

High Flow Diesel Pump:

1. Yallingup Coastal BFB: \$16,722

CCTV Systems:

1. Eagle Bay BFB: \$4,628 - CCTV Camera Installation: 3 x HANWHA Vision A Series, 1 x HANWHA Vision Q Series - plus connections and hard drive and installation costs
2. Hithergreen BFB: \$4,628 - CCTV Camera Installation: 3 x HANWHA Vision A Series, 1 x HANWHA Vision Q Series - plus connections and hard drive and installation costs
3. Kaloorup BFB: \$4,628 - CCTV Camera Installation: 3 x HANWHA Vision A Series, 1 x HANWHA Vision Q Series - plus connections and hard drive and installation costs

Installation of Ceiling Cladding/insulation:

1. Eagle Bay BFB: \$27,000

Yallingup Rural Facility Extension:

1. Yallingup Rural BFB: \$143,315

Yallingup Rural BFB was originally granted funding for the extension, however three weeks later, the City was informed that due to an error, the funding was no longer going to be received.

The City of Busselton had then written to the Western Australian Minister for Emergency Services Stephen Dawson, and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) Commissioner Darren Klemm, calling for an immediate review of the local government grant scheme (LGGs) application processes, and the subsequent associated communication and administration processes deployed by DFES in processing the grant.

At the recent South West WALGA Zone Meeting, CEO Tony Nottle, raised concerns in relation to the inadequacy of the LGGs model and application processes.

After further consultation, the City received funding for Yallingup Rural BFB.

Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) 2024/25

1. 5 x Electronic Fire Danger Rating Signs: \$132,000 (includes 50% CoB contribution)

Locations:

- 2259 Caves Rd, Yallingup (Yallingup Hall Intersection)
- Moses Rock Road x Caves Road (100m North on Caves Road)
- Cornerstone Way x Commonage Road (100m South of intersection on Commonage Rd)
- Wildwood Rd x Bussell HWY Carburnup River Store (200m Northeast on Busselton Highway)
- Vasse Hwy x Neville Hyder Dr near Airport (200m North of intersection Vasse Hwy x Neville Hyder Dr)

JOINT AGENCY GRANT FUNDING:

WA Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) 2024/25 joint submission with the Australian Red Cross (ARC), Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the City of Busselton to implement a disaster resilience program known as RediCommunities within the local government area. The ARC will be the lead agency in this program which will run over 24 months. The City is awaiting further details from the ARC.

WA Disaster Ready Fund (DRF) 2024/25 Department of Fire and Emergency Services Community Preparedness Directorate has been successful in the grant for DRF to support the delivery of several Disability Inclusive Emergency Planning forums across the state.

Project/s:

Bushfire Risk Reduction Notice 2024 - 2025

Pamphlets have been developed for the Guidelines for preparing and maintaining your property to reduce the risk of bushfire. These will be distributed in September.

For more information, see attached:

- Cat 1 – Bushfire Risk Reduction Notice 2024 – 2025
- Cat 2 – Bushfire Risk Reduction Notice 2024 - 2025
- Cat 3 – Bushfire Risk Reduction Notice 2024 - 2025

Prohibited and Restricted Burning Review

A review of the **Prohibited and Restricted Burning** controls to investigate the risk and subsequent recommendations for lighting fires during restricted and prohibited burning has been completed.

The outcomes will be gazetted and published in the Bushfire Risk Reduction Notice Pamphlet and the City of Busselton Website. For more information, see attachments in the above project, Bushfire Risk Reduction Notice 2024 – 2025.

Bush Fire Brigade Operating Procedures

The Bush Fire Brigade Operating Procedures have been completed and distributed to the BFAC for endorsement.

Dunsborough Bush Fire Brigade Facility

Consultations have been completed with City of Busselton Planning department and next steps are to go to market to develop engineering designs, apply for building approval then Tender for Building works.

Statutory Environment

Bushfires Act 1954
Bush Fire Regulations 1954
Emergency Management Act
2005 Work Health and Safety
Act 2020 Local Government
Act 1995
Bush Fire Brigade Local Law 2023
Fire and Emergency Services Legislation

TIMELINE

Milestone	Completion Date
NIL	

6.4 Bush Fire Mitigation Update Report

Reporting Officer: Neil McKay - Bushfire Mitigation Officer

Status update of currently approved and funded mitigation activity works

The City applied for 46 mitigation treatments valued at \$500,000 to be funded under 2024/2025 Round 1 of MAFG. 26 Treatments to a total value of \$295,500.00 were approved with a further 3 variances currently being considered for inclusion in this program. Additional variances are also being considered for this round. Work has already commenced and is expected to be completed by November/December 2024.

Treatment Type	Applied	Approved
Follow up Chemical Treatments	12	3
Fire Access Roads / Tracks	21	20
Mechanical Work	9	2(+3)
Prescribed Burns	4	1
Grand Total	46	26(29)

Mitigation works completed from general revenue:

- Broken gate in Reinscourt repaired
- Broken gate in Cowrang Lang repaired

Future mitigation activity works - MAFG

The City is in the process of preparing an application for 2024/2025 Round 2 of MAFG. 43 Treatments are currently being considered to a value of \$417,931.00.

This will be finalised and submitted by 25th September.

Treatment Type	Count
Chemical Works - Boom spraying	2
Chemical Works - Hand spraying	11
Create Fire Access Road / Track(s)	9
Install Culvert	1
Mechanical Works	19
Tree Removed	1
Grand Total	43

A significant portion of this application is to improve the surface condition of some of our fire access tracks. Water damage and erosion has made some sections of these tracks difficult or impassable for vehicles particularly 2wds in some cases. This work is to resolve this.

A summary of the application can be found in attachment one.

Changes to the Mitigation Activity Fund Grant program in 2025 will mean that there will only be one application round per year. At this time the City will have the option to apply for a 1 year or 3 year program.

TIMELINE

Milestone	Commence Date	Completion Date	Progress
2024/2025 Mitigation Activity Fund Grant Round 1 Application – Application has been submitted and is being reviewed by DFES.	NA	25 April 2024	Completed
2023/2024 Mitigation Activity Fund Grant Round 2 Acquittal – Finalise treatments for current round. All treatments to be completed or closed by 21 st to allow time to process final payments.	1 st May 2024	30 June 2024	Completed
2024/2025 Mitigation Activity Fund Grant Round 1. Receive notification of approved treatments. Raise purchase orders and/or send out request for quotes for contractors to begin work.	1 July 2024	31 December 2024	In Progress
2024/2025 Mitigation Activity Fund Grant Round 2 Application – Begin preparations for the next round application. Identify and prepare treatments.	Now	September 2024	In Progress
2024/2025 Mitigation Activity Fund Grant Round 1 Acquittal - Finalise treatments.	~ November 2024		Yet to commence
2024/2025 Mitigation Activity Fund Grant Round 2 Receive notification of approved treatments. Raise purchase orders and/or send out request for quotes for contractors to begin work.	~ January 2025		Yet to commence

Bushfire Risk Management Plan Review

The Bushfire Risk Management Plan is due for renewal by May 2025. The City will be seeking nominations from BFAC for participation in a working group to support officers with this review shortly through an EOI process.

BFAC will be provided updates on the status of this project as it progresses, and the revised plan will be presented to BFAC for endorsement prior to adoption by Council.

6.5 **Chief Bush Fire Control Officer**

To be tabled: Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Report – 10 September 2024

Todd Johnson, Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

7 Other Business Before the Committee

7.1 Fire Control Officer – Yallingup Coastal Brigade

Endorsement of nomination: Ross McNab

8 Closure

9 Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee will be held on 10 December 2024.