



Minutes

Bush Fire Advisory Committee

Tuesday 10 December 2024

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MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee held in the Council Chambers, Administration Building, Southern Drive, Busselton, on Tuesday 10 December 2024 at 6:00 pm.

I Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Busselton welcomed Councillors, staff, guests and members of the public to the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting of 10 December 2024.

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

This meeting was audio recorded for minute taking purposes.

2 Attendance and Apologies

2.1 Present

Allan Guthrie	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (Chairperson)
Phill Cronin	Mayor (Via TEAMS)
Todd Johnson	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Oscar Negus	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Jamie Oates	Fire Control Officer, Hithergreen
Chris Payne	Fire Control Officer, Kaloorup
Ken Sue	Fire Control Officer, Ambergate
Mark Fisher	Fire Control Officer, Yallingup Rural
Mark Jolliffe	Fire Control Officer, Wilyabrup
Annette Batley	Fire Control Officer, Yoongarillup
Ian McGregor	Fire Control Officer, Acton Park
Andrew Hunt	Fire Control Officer, Dunsborough
Mal Ballard	Fire Control Officer, Dunsborough
Peter Dawson	Fire Control Officer, Vasse
Ray Fokkema	Fire Control Officer, Metricup
Doug Walters	Fire Control Officer, Acton Park
Mark Smith	Fire Control Officer, Sussex

2.2 In Attendance

Rachel Runco	City of Busselton, Manager Community Safety
Matt du Plessis	CESM Busselton (Executive Officer)
Peter Thomas	DFES, District Officer Capes – LSW
Ben Horsnell	City of Busselton, Ranger Services Coordinator
Neil McKay	City of Busselton, Bushfire Mitigation Officer
Phoebe Buntain	City of Busselton, Senior Administration Officer (Minute Taker)
Tanya Simpson	City of Busselton, Ranger & Emergency Service Administration Officer
Helen Holzheuer	DBCA, Blackwood District Fire Coordinator
Moritz Kurys-Romer	Captain, Wilyabrup
Chester Burton	Secretary, Eagle Bay

2.3 Apologies

Kate Cox	Councillor
Neville Haddon	Fire Control Officer, Yoongarillup
Matt Muir	Fire Control Officer, Yallingup Rural
Peter Stark	Lead Trainer - Brigades

3 Disclosures of Interest

Nil

4 Confirmation and receipt of minutes

COMMITTEE DECISION

BF24/1 Moved Todd Johnson, seconded Annette Batley

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting held 10 September 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

CARRIED

5 Officer/ Delegate Reports

5.1 City of Busselton Emergency Services Update

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:	Community Emergency Services Manager – Matt du Plessis
Authorised By:	Director Community Planning - Gary Barbour
Nature of Decision:	Noting: The item is simply for information purposes and noting.
Voting Requirements:	Simple Majority
Disclosures of Interest:	No officers preparing this item have an interest to declare.
Attachments:	{attachment-list-do-not-remove}

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee receives and notes the December 2024 Emergency Services Update Report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides the Committee an overview of the operations and activities of the volunteer Bush Fire Brigades for the region.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee is established under the powers given in Section 67 of the Bush Fires Act 1954 (the Act).

To provide advice to BFAC and the Council regarding:

- all matters relating to preventing, controlling, and extinguishing of bush fires
- purchase of capital equipment and infrastructure, training of personnel and plans and programs in preparation for bush fire emergencies.

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.

OFFICER COMMENT

Significant incidents in the City of Busselton region

Nil

Deployments

Nil

Operational update

Incidents summary

The incident summary details all incidents responded by both DFES Volunteer Fire & Rescue Services and the City of Busselton Bush Fire Brigades up until 7 November 2024.

Large bushfires are down by 20% on the 5-year trend and small bushfires are down by 57%. This is highly likely due to the wetter conditions compared to last year. The majority causes of ignition is both Suspicious/Deliberate, which is the most common cause of fires in the region for the past 5 years.

Incidents: Year to Date Comparison: July 1 to November 7

Incident Type	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	Average Excluding 2024/2025	% TREND this year
Called Off - No Attendance	7	3	10	11	5	7.8	-35.48%
False Alarm - System Initiated	24	21	30	28	38	25.8	47.57%
False Call - Good Intent	21	24	23	25	31	23.3	33.33%
False Call - Malicious	0	0	0	1	0	0.0	0.00%
Fire - Bushfire (lge)	3	0	1	1	1	1.3	-20.00%
Fire - Bushfire (sml)	25	13	14	13	7	16.3	-56.92%
Fire - Other/Rubbish/Vehicle	9	9	8	18	7	11.0	-36.36%
Fire - Structure	6	6	5	5	2	5.5	-63.64%
General Service Calls	1	2	1	2	0	1.0	100.00%
Hazardous Situation	3	3	6	3	3	3.8	-20.00%
Natural Hazard	6	29	8	28	24	17.8	35.21%
Not Reported	0	0	0	0	1	0.0	0.00%
Rescue & Medical	14	11	13	10	9	12.0	-25.00%
Road Crash & Rescue	19	20	14	18	19	17.8	7.04%
Search	10	1	3	3	1	4.3	-76.47%
Totals:	148	142	136	166	148	147.25	2.55%

% TREND compares this FY to the Average.

Hectares Lost

Nil

Bush Fire Brigade Memberships

The below chart shows the summary of the City’s Bush Fire Brigades memberships up until 7 November 2024. Membership has seen an 8% increase of 30 members from November 2023 figures.

Volunteer Position	Age Group					Total
	<=18	<=55	56-65	66-70	71+	
Junior or Cadet Rank	1	0	0	0	0	1
Active Operational	2	223	67	49	51	392
Non-Operational	0	9	5	5	11	30
Vol Leave of Absence	0	4	0	0	0	4
Total	3	236	72	54	62	427

Training

The following training has been completed over the past three months:

- PUAVEH001 Drive vehicles under operational conditions – 10 persons
- HLTAID011 - Provide Fist Aid – 31 persons
- Marine Search and Rescue Exercise (MARSAR) – CESM assisted WAPOL in running a multi-agency MARSAR exercise off Bunkers Bay for missing persons in the water.

Grants

LGGS Capital Grant Submissions for 2025/26 are required to be submitted by 28 February 2025. Brigades are required to provide additional information to the reasoning behind the grants, based on the current LGGS Grant Manual.

Capital funding

LGGS Capital Grant progress:

Brigade	Project Category	Value (\$)	Status
Yallingup Rural BFB	Facilities Extension	\$143,315	Completed
Yallingup Coastal BFB	Water Pump – Emergency Water Supply	\$16,722	Completed
Eagle Bay BFB	Ceiling Install and Insulation	\$27,000	In Progress
Eagle Bay BFB	CCTV systems	\$4,628	In Progress
Hithergreen	CCTV systems	\$4,628	In Progress
Kaloorup	CCTV systems	\$4,628	In Progress
Metricup BFB	Water Tank – Emergency Water Supply	\$16,722	In Progress
Yoongarillup BFB	Water Tank – Emergency Water Supply	\$16,722	In Progress

Projects

Emergency Water Supply

Contracted Pioneer Tanks to conduct servicing and end of life audit for all water tanks, including camlock preventative maintenance. Noted that the camlocks were seizing and required a preventative maintenance program. The City will also be developing a replacement program for water tanks that have met end of life and location is strategic for firefighting purposes.

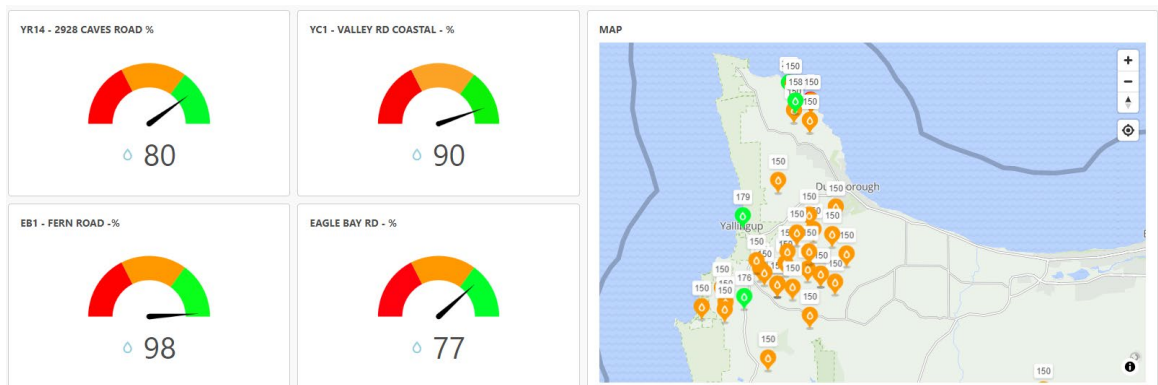
Water Tank Sensors

Trial ongoing with Sensors placed on strategic tanks. Automated emails are sent to CESM when the sensor shows water levels are 50%, contractors are then tasked to fill tanks. Awaiting Grant funding approval to install sensors on the remainder of Emergency Water Supply Tanks.

Sensors currently installed on the following tanks:

- Yallingup Coastal BFB Tank
- Yallingup Rural BFB Tank
- Eagle Bay BFB Tank
- Eagle Bay Road Tank

Dashboard developed showing real time water levels on tanks as seen below:



Commonage Bush Fire Brigade Facility

Concepts plans and development approvals completed. Next step is to seek a Request for Quote (RFQ) to develop engineering designs and complete build. Current aim is to have RFQ submissions in by 28 February 2025 to enable further submissions in LGGS Grant.

Fire Danger Rating Signs

Funding received for five signs. Requests for Quotes in progress and Land and Infrastructure Officer is in discussions with Main Roads to allow permission to install at some of the strategic locations. ETA of install expected by June 2025.

Asset Management System

Continuing the development of a web-based Geographic Information Systems (GIS) with asset management, including spatial visualization and web mapping of the Emergency Water Supply, Brigade Facilities, Appliances, Equipment, Emergency Access Ways.

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

Relevant Plans and Policies

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

Plan:

Not applicable.

Policy:

Bush Fire Brigade Management

Financial Implications

Not Applicable

External Stakeholder Consultation

Not Applicable

Risk Assessment

Not Applicable

Options

Not Applicable

CONCLUSION

Not Applicable

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
Water Tank Sensors - Install	30 June 2025
Dunsborough BFB Facility - RFQ	28 February 2025
Fire Danger Rating Signs - Install	30 June 2025
Asset Management System - Completion	30 September 2025

5.2 DFES LSW Region Report - 10 December 2024

Tabled at attachment 5.2.1.

5.3 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Report

No report was tabled at the meeting.

6 General Business

The DBCA Summer Update Presentation 2024 was tabled by Helen Holzheuer – attachment 6.0.1.

Two motions were moved and carried by the Bush Fire Advisory Committee.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

BF24/2 Moved Todd Johnson, seconded Ken Sue.

The City of Busselton Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommends that the Council request the CEO advocate through WALGA to enable a broader local government third party licence agreement to be developed and implemented, allowing the use of DFES Western Australian Emergency Radio Network (WAERN) frequencies and associated radio communication equipment following the successful Boyup Brook Trial.

CARRIED

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

BF24/3 Moved Mark Joliffe, seconded Ian McGregor.

Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommends in the annual review of the Bush Fire Risk Reduction Notice post 2024/25 Category 3 firebreak requirement returns to compliance date of 15 December 2025 for the 2025/26 notice.

CARRIED

7 Next Meeting Date

The next meeting of the Bushfire Advisory Committee will be held on 11 March 2025.

8 Closure

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting closed at 7.20pm.