



# City of Busselton

*Geographe Bay*

## **Bush Fire Advisory Committee Minutes**

**14 June 2022**

City of Busselton, Kaloorup Room, 2 Southern Drive Busselton Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022

## CITY OF BUSSELTON

MINUTES  
14 JUNE 2022

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
1.	Declaration of Opening, Acknowledgment of Country and Announcement of Visitors	2
2.	Attendance and Apologies	2-3
3.	Disclosure of Interests	3
4.	Confirmation of Minutes	3
4.1	Confirmation of minutes from meeting held 8 March 2022	3
5.	Business Arising	3
6.	Presentations	3
6.1	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions - Ed Hatherly	3
7.	Business Before the Committee	3
7.1	WA Local Government Association Proposed Advocacy Position on Arrangements for Management of Volunteer Bushfire Brigades - Blake Moore/Rachel Runco	3-4
7.2	COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination changes and volunteer return to service process - Blake Moore	4-5
8.	Officer/Delegate Reports	5
8.1	Department of Fire and Emergency Services - Andy Thompson	7-9
8.2	CoB/Department of Fire and Emergency Services - Blake Moore	10
9.	Matters of Urgency	5-6
9.1	Update on tablets for brigades - Blake Moore	5
9.2	Vasse Brigade Station insurance claim regarding flooding - Peter Dawson	5
9.3	Changes to fire weather districts - Blake Moore	5
9.4	WhatsApp, advising Harvest Vehicle Movement Bans - Allan Guthrie	6
9.5	Fire season debriefs - Mark Smith	6
9.6	Special rural properties to log their burns with DFES COMS - Mark Jolliffe	6
9.7	Changes to fire danger ratings - Blake Moore	6
10.	Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S)	6
11.	Next Meeting	6
12.	Closure	6

**CITY OF BUSSELTON****MINUTES – 14 JUNE 2022****1. DECLARATION OF OPENING, ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS**

The Presiding Member noted this meeting is held on the lands of the Wadandi people and acknowledged them as the Traditional Owners, paying respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging and Aboriginal Elders of the other communities who may be present.

The chairperson, Allan Guthrie declared the meeting open at 6:32pm.

**2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES**

**Welcome to our new Manager of Regulatory Services (Rachel Runco) - Allan Guthrie**

**Welcome to our new Councillors, Phill Cronin and Kate Cox - Grant Henley**

**Present**

Allan Guthrie	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (Chairperson)
Grant Henley	Mayor, City of Busselton
Phill Cronin	Councillor, City of Busselton
Oscar Negus	Deputy Chief & Fire Control Officer, Hithergreen
Todd Johnson	Deputy Chief & Fire Control Officer, Ruabon
Ken Sue	Fire Control Officer, Ambergate
Peter Dawson	Fire Control Officer, Vasse
Mark Fisher	Fire Control Officer, Yallingup Rural
Mark Jolliffe	Fire Control Officer, Wilyabrup
Andrew Hunt	Fire Control Officer, Dunsborough
Mark Smith	Fire Control Officer, Sussex
Doug Walters	Fire Control Officer, Acton Park North
Annette Batley	Fire Control Officer, Yoongarillup
Neville Haddon	Fire Control Officer, Yoongarillup
Paul Blight	Fire Control Officer, Yallingup Coastal
Ray Fokkema	Fire Control Officer, Metricup

**In Attendance**

Rachel Runco	City of Busselton, Manager Regulatory Services
Blake Moore	CESM Busselton (Executive Officer)
Andy Thompson	DFES, Acting District Officer Capes
Phoebe Buntain-Barrie	City of Busselton, Senior Administration Officer (Minute Taker)
Ed Hatherley	DFES, Fire Operations Officer

**Apologies:**

Peter Thomas	DFES, District Officer Capes
Kate Cox	City of Busselton, Councillor
Matt Muir	Fire Control Officer, Yallingup Rural
Colin Sanderson	Fire Control Officer, Eagle Bay

Peter Stark                      ICV  
Chris Payne                      Fire Control Office, Kaloorup  
Ian McGregor                      Fire Control Officer, Acton Park

**3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Nil.

**4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**4.1 Confirmation of minutes from meeting held 8 March 2022**

Moved: Mark Smith  
Seconded: Mark Jolliffe

CARRIED

**5. BUSINESS ARISING**

Nil.

**6. PRESENTATIONS**

6.1 Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions - Ed Hatherly  
Attachment 6.1 DBCA PowerPoint Presentation

**7. BUSINESS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE**

7.1 WA Local Government Association Proposed Advocacy Position on Arrangements for Management of Volunteer Bushfire Brigades - Blake Moore/Rachel Runco

Blake Moore – Community Emergency Services Manager

A few weeks ago the WALGA dropped a proposed advocacy position on the Local Governments across the state for the management of Bush Fire Brigades. This was not something we received any heads up on at the time. The reason to bring this forward to this forum is this is due to the city needing to put forward a position forward to council on the management of Bush Fire Brigades. One of the biggest takeaways from this is it is not for the discussion about transferring brigades at this time. This advocacy position is setting up for allowing the correct framework to be in place for the change of Legislation for the *Consolidated Emergency Services Act (CES Act)* that is coming up next year. Making sure the right framework is in place should the Local Government wish to transfer control of brigades to State Government/DFES. Key messages from the City perspective is that there is no position at this point from the City in regards to whether we would transfer the management of Bush Fire Brigades and that if anything was to occur it would in consultation and agreeance with this room. Please read through and familiarise yourselves with the advocacy position attachment provided.

Rachel Runco – Manager Regulatory Services

This is stemming not only from the changes to the *Consolidated Emergency Services Act* but it is also being triggered from the feedback from the survey WAGLA put out at the end of 2021 to all Local Governments on the thoughts on Emergency Management practices in general. This is one of ten advocacy positions which if you had have a chance to look at the document it is in Appendix 1. There are ten different positions

that WALGA are putting forward with regards to all sorts of difference things in relation to Emergency Management, this is just one. It has also stemmed from the changes to the Work Health and Safety as well under that Local Governments are responsible for managing volunteers as they would employees, which is needs a balance of risk and liability. This combined with the changes to legislation and also the results from the survey stemmed for us to look at the Emergency Management Positions from WALGA in general. What the Advocacy position is doing is not just looking at a framework for potential transition of brigades but looking at a framework for management of brigades in general. Whether a brigade stays with Local Government in the future or transitions over to DFES isn't really relevant from our perspective, this is about looking at the model that is in place for managing brigades consistently across the state. This is about looking at mandatory travel requirements for volunteers, so when brigades from Margaret River for example may attend one of our fires we can be comfortable that those volunteers have had the same level of training standards that we would expect of our volunteers attending the fire. It also looks at mitigation funding and making sure that the funding model is sufficient regardless of the localised context when it comes to management of brigades because every LGA has a different number that they are responsible for and they have a different structure in their organisations when it comes to Emergency Management in general. Here we have a CESM, Mitigation Officer and resourcing for administration support whether our places may not have these roles, so their capacity may be different to handle this space. It is really important to think of this as something that is setting a position to transfer brigades but something we can be quite agnostic on as it is about an improved model to allow the transfer of brigades for LGAs that don't have the capacity to manage them and making sure that all the practical implications that are involved with that are met. We want to make sure when we respond to this piece that we provide enough insight to WALGA to make sure all the little things that should be considered are considered, things like ESL funding, brigade boundaries, training, mitigation funding, transfers of assets not just appliances but also buildings and the land that they sit on etc. We have put forward a request to WALGA for an extension of time to respond (if approved will be until 4 August 2022) and will be consulting with the group if there are concerns, talking to local members and other local governments to come as a group to put forward a revised statement.

Management of Bush Fire Brigades, page 9 – Mark Jolliffe

To add to 1 a) A clear pathway of Local Governments to transfer responsibility for the management of Bush Fire Brigades to the State Government when ongoing management is beyond capacity, capability and resources of the Local Government also **allows a clear pathway to transition back to the Local Government.**

Attachment 7.1.1 Arrangements for Management of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades:  
Proposed Advocacy Position

Attachment 7.1.2 Info Page

- 7.2 COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination changes and volunteer return to service process  
- Blake Moore

Thank you to yourselves and all your brigade members for your assistance with the WA Government mandatory vaccination process that came in through November/December last year. As of four days ago the mandatory vaccinations are no longer in place for volunteers. A letter will be sent to Fire Control Officers to be

distributed to members. Returning members are to undergo the annual Skills Refresher training. This is to be completed once a calendar year by all active members, for returning members who may undergo the training earlier than November 2022 the training will remain eligible until the following year. A Skills Refresher form with revised dates will be sent to all FCO's.

**Motion:**

**The Bush Fire Advisory Committee endorses a letter to be sent to returning members for intent to continue service and that members are to undergo the annual Skills Refresher Training prior to becoming an active status again.**

**Moved: Ken Sue**

**Seconded: Mark Jolliffe**

**CARRIED**

**8. OFFICER/DELEGATE REPORTS**

Attachment 8.1 - Department of Fire and Emergency Services - Andy Thompson

Attachment 8.2 - CoB/Department of Fire and Emergency Services - Blake Moore

**Officer Recommendation**

- 1) Department of Fire and Emergency Services - Peter Thomas
- 2) CoB/Department of Fire and Emergency Services - Blake Moore

**9. MATTERS OF URGENCY**

9.1 Update on tablets for brigades - Mark Smith

Blake Moore advised that the city has reapplied for tablets to be covered by the ESL, an update will be provided.

9.2 Vasse Brigade Station insurance claim regarding flooding - Peter Dawson

Blake will follow up and provide an update.

9.3 Changes to weather district - Blake More

The City of Busselton now has a new fire weather district.

City of Busselton and Augusta Margaret River are now together in a new fire district, called 'Fire Weather District Capes'. Busselton was previously being influenced by Harvey and Dardanup and others up further North we now have more localised fire districts. This is going to affect how we issue fire permits as a result, where permits were no longer valid at Very High or Above they will now no longer be valid at 'High or above'. We are waiting for the new system to go live before more information/guidance will be provided.

#### 9.4 WhatsApp, advising Harvest Vehicle Movement Bans - Allan Guthrie

Blake will provide an update.

#### 9.5 Fire season debriefs - Mark Smith

A debrief session will be held, Blake will provide a date in the next coming months.

#### 9.6 Special rural properties to log their burns with DFES COMS- Mark Jolliffe

To add a section into the Firebreak and Fuel Hazard Reduction Notice to remind special rural properties to log their burns with DFES COMS, regardless of the time of year.

Blake will provide information to Ranger and Emergency Services Coordinator to be included in the FB notice 2022-23.

#### 9.7 Changes to fire danger ratings - Blake Moore

1. Moderate: Plan and prepare
2. High: Be ready to act
3. Extreme: Take action now to protect life and property
4. Catastrophic: For your survival, leave bushfire risk areas

### **10. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY (OH&S)**

Nil.

### **11. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on 13 December 2022.

### **12. CLOSURE**

There is no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 7:53pm.

**Attachment 8.1 Report to the City of Busselton Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) meeting to be held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022****Agency:** Department of Fire and Emergency Services**Officer Representing:** Andy Thompson**Matters to be discussed:**Government of Western Australia  
Department of Fire & Emergency Services**City of Busselton BFAC Meeting**DFES LSW Region Report – 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022

- **Covid Restrictions**

With the state easing the Covid restrictions this has rolled out to both our staff and volunteers. Volunteer support guide will be issued to support BGUs and volunteers with the process. (Attached) copies provided.

**Masks**

The use of Face Masks will no longer be mandatory in indoor venues, such as workplaces. However, Face Masks will still be required when –

- Visiting hospitals, residential aged care, disability services and correctional facilities.
- Using public transport, taxi, or rideshare vehicles.
- At any airport or on any aircraft, including those used for DFES operations.

Under the OSH Act, DFES, as an employer, has the responsibility to provide a safe workplace and therefore staff and volunteers are encouraged to continue to wear Face Masks, especially where physical distancing isn't possible. If you feel at risk, you are encouraged to wear a Face Mask.

**Reporting COVID-19 details**

Staff and volunteers are still required to register their positive PCR test or RAT results and Close Contact status with the DFES COVID-19 Call centre and if unwell they are not to attend work or Brigades, Groups, or Units.

- **Training**

Face to Face Training has started back up with courses starting to fill up with new volunteers.

Completion of Bush Fire Awareness on 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> May at Ambergate and Fire Fighting Skills at Dunsborough on 1<sup>th</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> June. BFS Brigade members attended from Wilyabrup, Metricup, Dunsborough Yallingup Coastal, Nannup, Sussex and VFRS members.





- **DFES Staff**

The region has several new staff that have joined our office,

- Area Officer Leeuwin (Capes District) Paul Dennison
- Bush Fire Mitigation Officers – Rob Brogan and Tim Hutton
- Area Officer Warren Blackwood – Tim Wray a firefighter from Perth will be acting in the role for a minimum of 3 months.
- Admin – Casey has joined the team in Manjimup.

- **International Firefighters Day Memorial**

Wednesday the 4<sup>th</sup> of May was International Firefighters Day, whereby we remember the firefighters that gave their lives in the line of duty. Two services were conducted in our region, one in Bridgetown and the other in Busselton.

- **Burn SMART**

Burn SMART was launched as a resource package in 2020 to inform and support landholders preparing for and undertaking planned burns. The resources include:

- Burn SMART - A planned burning guide for small landholders (Burn SMART Guide)
- Burn SMART checklist
- Leaf moisture method
- Planned burning fact sheet

In 2021 a four-part video series was released to bolster the Burn SMART toolkit.

The series covers the six stages of preparing for and conducting a planned burn, as outlined in the Burn SMART Guide. The videos are designed to be watched in conjunction with reading the Burn SMART Guide to give landholders a visual understanding of all necessary steps.

Volunteers and staff can help their community be better prepared to undertake a planned burn by sharing the Burn SMART resources and including the videos in engagement and education activities.

All of the resources, including imagery for your social media pages and talking points to guide your conversations, are available on the Volunteer Hub, Intranet and DFES website.



- **Australian Fire Danger Rating System**

The Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) Program is redesigning the forecasting of fire danger in Australia. The AFDRS is a project of national significance being developed collaboratively by each state and territory, and the Commonwealth government. It aims to improve public safety, reduce the impacts of bushfires and better support the community with nationally consistent ratings and messaging. The AFDRS will be implemented on 1 September 2022 across Australia.

- **Resources Unit Agency Appliance Guide**  
Copies provided.

- **Vehicle/Structure Fires**

There has been several vehicle and structure fires throughout the region which have occurred outside the gazetted fire district for VFRS. The Local Government BFB are the controlling agency for these and usually the VFRS will be mobilised to support and work alongside the BFB. In some situations, the VFRS have not been called or local crews have extinguished the fire. I would like to stress the importance for crews without Breathing Apparatus to exercise extreme caution when dealing with these incidents. Car fires pose a great risk to health and safety of crews these include and not limited to,

- Toxic smoke
- Metals that react to water (Magnesium)
- Tail shafts/ Gas struts/ Air Bags
- Fuel
- Gas cylinders

It is important to keep out of the smoke from these types of fire unless you are in Breathing Apparatus as the bush fire masks do not offer adequate protection and should not be used.

Andy Thompson

A/District Officer Capes - LSW

**Attachment 8.2 Report to the City of Busselton Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) meeting to be held on 14 June 2022**

**Agency:** City of Busselton/Department of Fire & Emergency Services

**Officer Representing:** Blake Moore, Community Emergency Service Manager (CESM)

**Matters to be reported:****Incidents**

- Nil significant

**Mitigation**

- Unfortunately no autumn mitigation was conducted.
- The City of Busselton is currently recruiting a full time Bushfire Mitigation Officer that will allow for better continuity of mitigation programs across the city and will lead to beneficial long term strategic plan outcomes.
- Spring burns have been programmed including capitalising on mitigation in Meelup using current fire scars

**Vehicles**

- Annual servicing has commenced. Please keep an eye on BART for appliance movements
- Significant number of faults and damage reported. These will be fixed during annual service program if able, otherwise parts will be ordered and fixed following the service program.

**COVID**

- Vaccination requirements have been removed. We will now work with brigades to contact members that were suspended as a result of the mandate, to gain member intentions and a return program for these members.

**Training**

- Training calendar has been developed and dates set for the training. COVID restrictions will potentially reduce courses run at times.
- Online options for introductory courses are still being developed

**Safety**

- SAFETY CIRCULAR 02/2022 – POTENTIAL EXPOSURE TO CHROMATED COPPER ARSENATE (CCA)