



**City of Busselton**  
*Geographe Bay*

**Bush Fire Advisory Committee  
Minutes**

**13 September 2016**

**Community Resource Centre, Meeting Room 1, 21 Camilleri Street, Busselton  
on Tuesday 13 September 2016, commencing at 7.30pm.**

**CITY OF BUSSELTON**

**MINUTES FOR THE BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING TO BE HELD ON  
13 SEPTEMBER 2016**

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**CITY OF BUSSELTON****MINUTES – 13 SEPTEMBER 2016****1. DECLARATION OF OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS**

The Chairperson, Oscar Negus declared the meeting open at 7.30pm.

**2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES****Present**

Robert Reekie	Councillor, City of Busselton
Oscar Negus	Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer, Hithergreen BFB
Chris Payne	Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer, Kaloorup District BFB
Andrew Hunt	Fire Control Officer, Dunsborough BFB
Barton Hatherly	Fire Control Officer, Dunsborough BFB
Todd Johnson	Fire Control Officer, Ruabon BFB
Peter Dawson	Fire Control Officer, Vasse BFB
Doug Walters	Fire Control Officer, North Acton Park BFB
Mark Smith	Fire Control Officer, Sussex BFB
David Hunt	Fire Control Officer, Yallingup Rural BFB
Mark Fisher	Fire Control Officer, Yallingup Rural BFB
Chris Ayres	Fire Control Officer, Yallingup Rural BFB
Colin Sanderson	Fire Control Officer, Eagle Bay BFB
Peter Stark	Fire Control Officer, ICV
Ian McGregor	Fire Control Officer, South Acton Park BFB

**In Attendance:**

Greg Simpson	Manager – Environmental Services
Tanya Gillett	Manager- Health Services
Phoebe Buntain-Barrie	Senior Administration Officer
Jeremy Friend	Department of Parks and Wildlife
Andy Thompson	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Mal Ballard	Captain Dunsborough BFB

**Apologies:**

Allan Guthrie	Chief Bushfire Control Officer
Tim Wall	Community Emergency Services Officer
Paul Blight	Fire Control Officer, Yallingup Coastal BFB

**3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Nil

**4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES****4.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM MEETING HELD 14 JUNE 2016**

Moved: Mark Smith

Seconded: Todd Johnson

**CARRIED**

**BUSINESS ARISING****4.2 Oscar Negus, Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer, Hithergreen BFB:**

Triple zero calls are being received during the winter months reporting bushfire incidents. This requires bushfire incident managers to respond to some calls which are determined to be unnecessary. A public awareness programme is required to inform the community regarding the reporting of bushfire especially during the winter months when the bushfire risk is very low. The proposed direction which was supported by members is that officers prepare an issues paper on Community Awareness for reporting through 000.

Fire Control Officers and people on the fire ground need to take responsibility for making sure that nothing is left unattended if it is unsafe to do so. Even if there is pressure for crew changes from Incident Controllers.

Additional 2016 South West Emergency Services directories were requested for each fire unit including light tankers.

**5. PRESENTATIONS**

Nil

**6. BUSINESS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE**

Nil

**7. OFFICER/DELEGATE REPORTS**

Attachment 7.1 - City of Busselton Ranger and Emergency Services Coordinator

Attachment 7.2 - Department of Fire & Emergency Services (Andy Thompson)

Attachment 7.3 - Community Emergency Services Manager (Tim Wall)

Attachment 7.4 - Department of Parks and Wildlife (Jeremy Friend)

**Officer Recommendation**

1. The committee receives the following reports and notes the comments therein:

a) City of Busselton Ranger & Emergency Services Coordinator

- b) Department of Fire & Emergency Services
- c) Community Emergency Services Manager City of Busselton
- d) Department of Parks and Wildlife

**Committee Recommendation**

1. The committee receives the following reports and notes the comments therein:
  - a) City of Busselton Ranger & Emergency Services Coordinator
  - b) Department of Fire & Emergency Services
  - c) Community Emergency Services Manager City of Busselton
  - d) Department of Parks and Wildlife

Moved: Chris Payne  
Seconded: David Hunt

**CARRIED**

**8. MATTERS OF URGENCY**

8.1 David Hunt announced Yallingup Rural Brigade fundraised \$20,000 to purchase a new Ute for the transportation of pumps.

8.2 Andy Thompson said thank you to Dunsborough and Yallingup Brigades for their attended number of structured fires.

8.3 Chris Payne spoke of the break-in at Kaloorup Brigade; a fridge was stolen out of the brigade truck and the offenders have not been caught. Andy Thompson suggested this incident be reported to the media to highlight the theft from volunteers.

**9. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY (OH&S)**

Nil

**10. NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on 13 December 2016 at 7:30pm in the Community Resource Centre, City of Busselton, 21 Cammilleri Street, Busselton.

**11. CLOSURE**

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 8:35pm.

**Attachment 7.1 Report to City of Busselton Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting to be held on 13 September 2016**

**Agency:** City of Busselton

**Officer Representing:** Ranger & Emergency Services Coordinator

**Matters to be discussed:**

**1. Sentinel Alert and Public Information - Report of the Special Inquiry into the January 2016 Waroona Fire**

At the meeting of the BFAC held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2016, the Committee recommended to Council as follows:

*The City of Busselton conducts a survey to ascertain the level of community interest in the Capes Region for a Sentinel Alert System.*

Shortly after that meeting, the Report of the Special Inquiry into the January 2016 Waroona Fire – “Reframing Rural Fire Management” was released.

The report goes into significant detail on the matter of public information and warning systems. In Chapter 10, Information, Alerts and Warnings, some 25 pages are devoted to this subject.

The majority of the report focuses on the operational aspects (timing, accuracy, completeness etc) of specific warnings issued during the fire, and whether these served the desired purpose of alerting the community to the dangers of the fire, or actually contributed to the overall uncertainty. The report also goes into the information provided at public meetings, on ABC radio and in other formats.

Whilst acknowledging numerous failings in timing, distribution and message content, the only Recommendation contained in this section is:

***Recommendation 11:*** *The Department of Fire and Emergency Services to investigate and adopt a system that will allow the public to opt in, monitor and receive, through a ‘push mechanism’, bushfire and other emergency warnings, maps and information using a wide variety of devices including personal hand held smart devices.*

This recommendation is based on evidence to the Inquiry that in the 2016-17 financial year DFES proposes to establish a Digital Communications and Social Media Team to take advantage of new technology. It is also proposed that this team will be tasked with expanding DFES social media engagement, developing the CMS and also investigating and delivering an app for handheld devices. Whilst specific details of the app have not yet been finalised, DFES proposes to deliver the app by 2017-18.

In the closing paragraphs of this chapter of the report, the Inquiry makes the following comments about the importance of communications, but also the false sense of security that can be generated:

*“Comments received in several written submissions to the Special Inquiry indicated that due to specific town sites not being mentioned in alerts, community members did not feel that action was required. The Emergency Alert Australia website advises individuals to not wait to receive a warning message before acting and this message is also promoted in the DFES Community Engagement Bushfire Strategy. The Special Inquiry endorses this message.*

*As the technology, timing and content of emergency information and warnings continue to be enhanced, so too the expectations of the community increase. In attempting to meet all of the (varying) needs of*

*community there needs to be a balance. There is a risk of a “learned helplessness”. That is, some individuals will choose not to proactively seek information or to act on information until they are told or shown directly by the emergency services. Consistent with the theme of ‘Shared Responsibility’, the aim of warnings and advice should be to empower the public to act on their own, to the greatest degree possible.”*

The Special Inquiry considers that continued emphases should be placed on education around warning and alert meanings and limitations. Further, self-reliance and preparedness should continue to be encouraged for people living in bushfire prone areas.

In summary, the Report makes a recommendation that:

- DFES “investigate and adopt a system that will allow the public to opt in, monitor and receive, through a ‘push mechanism’, bushfire and other emergency warnings, maps and information using a wide variety of devices including personal hand held smart devices.”

Given the content in the report relating to the difficulties around the current emergency warning systems, and that Sentinel Alert is designed to rebroadcast the DFES alerts direct into private residences, in the best interests of the Busselton community, information and advice will be sought from DFES in regards to the recommendations from the Special Inquiry by State agencies so that any system which may be provided in the City of Busselton is consistent with and complimentary to the emergency messaging services developed by DFES.

**Attachment 7.2          Report to City of Busselton Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting to be held  
on 13 September 2016**

**Agency:** Department of Fire & Emergency Services

**Officer Representing:** Andy Thompson

**Matters to be discussed:**

- Vehicle Identifier Stickers
- In Cab Air Training
- 12.2 Water Tanker
- RUI Exercise Commonage Nov 5<sup>th</sup>
- Leaders Forum
- WAFES Conference



**Attachment 7.3            Report to City of Busselton Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting to be held  
on 13 September 2016**

**Agency:** City of Busselton/ DFES

**Officer Representing:** Tim Wall

**Matters to be discussed:**

- 1) Full face mask training to be rolled out as required.
- 2) eAcademy update, extra training need as required, all course nominations through eAcademy only.
- 3) RUI exercise & operation control location set up 5 November
- 4) Expo 24 September.
- 5) Upgrade of all appliances training for key members from each brigade to trained allowing these keys personal to role out to each brigade as required.
- 6) Fuel reduction burns largest number undertaken to date more to be done as weather conditions allow.
- 7) Pre summer briefing, two briefings - one South West zones, second North East zone
- 8) Zone response starts on 1st December
- 9) 12.2 & ICV turnout 12.2 to be turned out each incident during zone response times, be mindful to mobilise ICV early to an incident.
- 10) Sector commander refresher date to be advised.
- 11) FCO Refresher training - legal requirement, date to be advised.

**Attachment 7.4            Report to City of Busselton Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting to be held on  
13 September 2016**

**Agency:** Department of Parks and Wildlife (Blackwood District)

**Officer Representing:** Fire Operations Officer – Jeremy Friend

**Matters to be discussed:**

- Multi-agency preformed teams being established/finalised prior to the 2016/17 fire season. Based around previous P&W model, will have specific roles identified for local government / BFB personnel to ensure the local knowledge is imbedded into the IMT
- Blackwood District prescribed burning program 2016/17 comprises of 33 Spring burns (approx. 51,000ha) and 18 Autumn burns (approx. 59,000 ha). Not all area will be achieved but need to ensure sufficient east-west spread to maximise opportunities, when the right weather conditions and moisture profiles are available.
  - Areas within the City are focused around Yallingup and Yelverton.
- Collins Tower (just south of Gracetown) will be manned on all days with an FDI greater than 100 and we will ensure adequate Spotter coverage on days with FDI's from 60 – 100.
- Conservation Employee numbers will increase in Margaret River and Busselton work centres, largely due to the changing nature of day to day works. Coverage across the District should remain similar to previous years.
- Additional equipment including Sign Trailer, Collar Tank trailer and a posi-trac is being acquired by the district to increased capabilities.