

Bush Fire Advisory Committee – Greenough

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Name	Bush Fire Advisory Committee – Greenough	Meeting No.	3/2022
Meeting Date	29 September 2022		
Meeting Time	3:45 pm		
Meeting Location	Function Room, Civic Centre, 63 Cathedral Avenue		
Attendees	Cr Jerry Clune – Chair - Councillor - Moonyoonooka FCO Cr Steve Cooper – Councillor Rob Roffey – Cape Burney Captain/FCO Neil Johnstone – Moonyoonooka Captain/FCO Daniel Treasure – Moonyoonooka FCO Warren Treasure – Moonyoonooka FCO Jaymie Knight – Waggrakine FCO Josh Gardner – DFES Julia French – DBCA Wayne Ellis - CGG Coordinator Emergency Management Chris Lee – CGG Director Infrastructure Services Selina Boryczewski – Secretariat	By Invitation	District Officer, Dept. Fire & Emergency Services
		Apologies	Cr Kim Parker Ian Grant Brendan McCann Peter Freeman Bruce Garratt Daryl Hamersley Jack Milby Trevor Morrison Brodie Selby Ross McKim Murray Smith
		Distribution	All

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed the members and apologies were noted.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Committee Recommendation:

RECOMMENDED that the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting Greenough held on 24 March 2022 as previously circulated, be adopted as a true and correct record of proceedings.

3. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

3.1. Total Fire Ban Boundaries

- Total Fire Bans are controlled by the State. There is currently no way to split the boundaries.
- N Johnstone suggested that this issue be taken to the District Operational Advisory Group (DOAG) for further action. Fire weather districts have been split further.

Action – Cr J Clune to enquire at WALGA conference if Total Fire Ban boundaries can align with fire weather districts.

3.2. The Committee requests the City to investigate who is responsible for insurance for ad hoc volunteers.

- The City has discussed this question with the City insurers and they have responded to let the City know that a person, whether they are a volunteer or not will only be covered by City insurance when activated by the City or 000 to respond to an incident.

Josh Gardner from DFES arrived at 3.50 pm.

4. AGENDA ITEMS

4.1. Fire Danger Rating System – W Ellis

- The new Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) is now active. The changes have been communicated to all Captains and FCO's via email and to all members in the latest "smoke signals". Captains and FCO's are encouraged to complete the online awareness training so they are familiar with the rating and the fire behaviour index.
- N Johnstone raised concern as to where the community would evacuate in the instance of a catastrophic day in Geraldton.
- J Gardner advised the levels are advice not mandatory.

5. AGENCY AND BRIGADE REPORTS

5.1. Chief Bush Fire Control Officer's Report; and

5.2. Coordinator Emergency Management – W Ellis

- The City has just completed its final training course for members needing to achieve minimum training competency this year. The City, in the interests of giving all members who may not have completed the required courses, have run an unprecedented 27 courses or nine complete packages between January and the end of September this year. The uptake by members was spectacular, with a total of 226 volunteers completing the courses they enrolled in. Although most volunteers needed to enrol in all three courses to meet the requirements, there were instances where a member needed only one or two of the courses to obtain their competency, having completed some of the courses previously.
- The City also offered, to those who qualified, the opportunity to showcase their knowledge and competency levels by completing a Verification of Competency (VOC) challenge and obtaining the required competency accreditation that way.
- The locations for the training opportunities were not just confined to Geraldton or only on the weekends. Six courses (two complete packages) were offered in Mullewa during the week as well as three courses (one complete package) offered in Walkaway, also during the week.
- A big, thank you to all the members who grabbed the opportunity presented.
- Unfortunately, even after all the opportunities presented some members had still done the required training. As a result of this, the City had to take the hard decision to remove those members from the ranks.
- On a positive note the City would like to welcome more than 40 new members that have joined and done the required training since the last fire season.
- Firebreak inspections - Fire break inspection will be commencing on the 5 October, if any member has a block of particular concern please use the online hazard reporting form to let the EM team know.
- Prohibited Burning period - On 15 October the City will be entering Prohibited Burning Period, so after this time all fires spotted should be reported to 000. All permits will cease on the 14 October across the City. Restricted burning returns on 15 February 2022.
- New Fire truck - Mullewa South's has a new 4.4 Rural. The TATRA 4.4 has been commissioned and the brigade has received training on its operation. The appliance is currently housed at Gerrard Rowe's property in Devils Creek.

- Can captains please remind members to check their PPC/E and if any additional items or replacement items are needed? Submit an online PPC request form so the City can issue you the items before the start of the season.

5.3. Department of Fire and Emergency Services

- Currently in preparation for high threat period.
- High threat period for DFES commences 10 November 2022.
- Training calendar winding back and focusing on operational response capabilities.
- Preseason Bureau of Meteorology and Community Preparedness Unit 17-22 October 2022.
- Submitted application for the high-season fleet. Once confirmation is received, usually by the end of November, DFES will know what appliances can be allocated to the City.

5.4. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions – J French

- B Selby left the District Fire Coordinator role a month ago. J French will be acting in the position until the end of December.
- Water Bomber Reloading Training – Aimed at the SES. Discussions are ongoing with the City. No confirmed dates.
- Two additional gang trucks, Geraldton and Jurien.
- Since the new year, six conservation employees commenced, filling operational roles in the trucks during the fire and prescribed burn season and assisting with mitigation activity. Training in progress.
- Commenced fire access track identification. Priority around the reserve system. Looking to commence upgrading tracks by late October.
- Autumn Prescribed Burn Planning – Areas are Barnong, Wandana, Indarra Springs and Pallotine Nature Reserves.
- Potential Fire Line Construction course aimed at machine operators. Discussions are ongoing.

5.5. Cape Burney Bush Fire Brigade - R Roffey

- In the last financial year Cape Burney attended eight callouts, two members deployed to Gascoyne. Three calls since 1 July 2022.
- All members have completed the required bushfire training.
- Submitted a request to keep the high-season vehicle for another season. No response as yet.
- Completed annual burn-over drills.
- Public relations events upcoming including Christmas on the Mall and the All Ability Festival.
- Cape Burney have no light tanker. A worldwide shortage of chassis for Land Cruisers.

5.6. Eradu Bush Fire Brigade

- No attendance. Nil to report.

5.7. Moonyoonooka Bush Fire Brigade – N Johnstone

- Six – seven incidents since the last BFAC meeting. The most recent attended was a structure fire in Georgina with Fire and Rescue.
- Large burn coming up on Anderson Street in 10 days. Approximately 20-30 acres in Spalding/Webborton area.

5.8. Waggrakine Bush Fire Brigade – J Knight

- Attended six jobs since the last meeting and a few burn assists.

- Currently have 33 members and about to lose five before the fire season.
- Push back from the City on memberships.
- Struggling to get members.
- Expecting a new light tanker soon.
- Current Brigade members are up to date on training.

5.9. Walkaway Bush Fire Brigade

- No attendance. Nil to report.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

6.1. Fire Control Nominations – W Ellis

- Nominations for Fire Control Officers (FCO) normally come through to the City during this period, after the AGMs. The City will commence reissuing and gazetting Fire Control Officer positions.
- Cape Burney nominated Wayne Parker.
- Waggrakine nominated Mark Teale as an additional FCO. Numbers do not justify two FCOs in that area.

6.2. Public Transport Authority (PTA)

- Mitigation of railway lines etc.

Action – Committee members are to email J Gardner (DFES) any specific concerns regarding PTA mitigation.

6.3. Main Roads WA (MRWA)

- Concerns were raised regarding the Geraldton-Mt Magnet Road mitigation works being completed late in the season.
- Noted that MRWA have a works program that must be followed.

Action – Committee members are to email J Gardner (DFES) any specific concerns regarding MRWA mitigation.

6.4. Cape Burney Facility

- Question regarding the raising of the shed door to allow the vehicles to fit.
- The City is applying for the build in February with Moonyoonooka and Waggrakine.
- As soon as the new vehicle arrives adjustments will be made to the façade. Aerials will need to be moved to the rear.

7. NEXT MEETING:

2 February 2022

8. CLOSE OF MEETING

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 4.24 pm.