

Bush Fire Advisory Committee – Mullewa Meeting Minutes

Meeting Name	Bush Fire Advisory Committee - Mullewa	Meeting No.	1/2023 D-23-008260
Meeting Date	2 February 2023		
Meeting Time	09:30 am		
Meeting Location	Chambers Room, Mullewa District Office		
Attendees	Cr Jerry Clune - Moonyoonooka FCO, Chair Cr Michael Librizzi (Teams) Gerard Rowe – Mullewa South Captain Murray Preston – Casuarinas Captain Zac Grima –Tardun/Pindar - Captain/FCO Tony Crudeli – Mullewa VFRS Captain Chris Lee – CGG Director Infrastructure Services Phil Melling – CGG Director Development Services Wayne Ellis – CGG Coordinator Emergency Management Murray Smith - CGG Emergency Operations Officer Stuart Wain - CGG Emergency Training Officer Selina Boryczewski - Secretariat	By Invitation	Kieran Mussen – DFES DO Tom Coffey – DFES Acting AO Shane Karatti – Geraldton VFRS Captain Ritchie Boykett - DBCA Regional Leader Fire Management Julia French- DBCA District Fire Coordinator
		Apologies	Ross McKim Steve Cooper–Councillor Tarleah Thomas–Councillor Brendan Weir- Tenindewa FCO Daniel Critch- Tenindewa Captain Craig Moran- Mullewa Central - Captain Peter Barneston- Tenindewa FCO Brett Stelle- Mullewa South FCO
		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 13 October 2022 as previously circulated, be adopted as a true and correct record of proceedings.

3. ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 3.1. Cr J Clune - *The City to follow up on the use of machinery for Mullewa Fires. Councillors to negotiate.*
- Will continue to raise and negotiate this item.
- 3.2. W Ellis - *Seek clarification of the new system and its impact in relation to proposed permit dates.*
- New Fire Danger Rating system will not affect dates on permits. Dates are set by the State, but if advised by the committee, the City can move the dates two weeks in either direction.

3.3. W Ellis - *To circulate the new rating system flyer in the next smoke signals publication.*

- New Fire Danger Rating System information was published in the November and December Smoke Signals newsletter.

4. AGENDA ITEMS

4.1. Plant and equipment replacement proposals – W Ellis

- Mullewa Central is outstanding on the replacement program. Will be submitted this year with a response from DFES expected around May 2023.

4.2. Glengarry Fire – 13 December 2022– W Ellis

- A total of 1544ha had been burned and produced a 28km fire perimeter.
- At the peak of the response there were 11 fire trucks, two water bombers, an air attack platform, two graders, four water carts, three traffic management crews, and approximately 50 City volunteers involved in the incident.
- Although the fire was contained and extinguished within 7 hours, City and farm units continued to patrol and knock down break outs and flare ups over the next 3 days.
- Cr J Clune - Communications are difficult in that area due to signal loss.

5. AGENCY AND BRIGADE REPORTS

5.1. Chief Bush Fire Control Officer – Murray Smith

- Personal Protective Equipment

Reminder to review your PPC/E and order replacement or new items as required.

- Use the online form to complete the request.
- Go to CGG website, go to Emergency Services, go to volunteers, and click on the link halfway down the page.
- Review your filter cartridges as they may need to be replaced.

- Leadership training

Suggested training for Captains and Lieutenants to improve incident management.

- advanced bushfire – 22 April
- crew leader – 30 April
- sector commander – 5-6 August

- Air Operations

Use of water bombing aircraft has been very beneficial to firefighting operations – particularly the Glengarry Fire.

They continue to be forward based out of either Geraldton or Jurien Bay as the risks indicate. With their success, there is a good chance that they will return for the 2023-24 fire season.

- AVL / VPOWER Checks

Meeting invites have been distributed as a reminder to conduct the monthly AVL check, which takes about 10 minutes.

If you require assistance there is an instruction page available upon request.

When completing AVL checks, please complete the VPOWER checks on the appliance.

All appliances have VFR books. If a fault is picked up, lodge a report so it can be remedied.

- Fire Reports

Please ensure these are completed in a timely manner, a hard copy is fine, and an electronic version is also available.

Input as much information as possible and try not to leave fields incomplete.

Put an urgency on reports involving injuries, vehicle damage or property losses (for insurance purposes).

5.2. Coordinator, Emergency Management – Wayne Ellis

- Fire Season
 - During January the City volunteers responded to:
 - 12 fires.
 - There has also been:
 - 10 Total fire Bans (TFB's) called by the State.
 - Four Harvest Vehicle Movement Bans (HVMB's) called by the City.
- Training
 - The complete training list for the year at present time has been included in the Smoke Signals Newsletter that will be distributed today.
 - The City asks that the Captains encourage their brigades to register and attend the available courses that would further develop each member's individual competencies and abilities.
 - The City is continuing to improve the volunteer application process. When a new volunteer has been confirmed to be enrolled in the required training courses, they will be contacted to provide their completed PPE request forms prior to the commencement of training. This will assist in ensuring that, on completion of the required training, their PPC requirements can be met.
- Prohibited Burning period
 - Currently the prohibited burning period will revert to restricted burning period at midnight of 14 February 2023. The "no permit required" period for those districts that qualify will start on 7 April.
- Replacement vehicles
 - The City has received two replacement vehicles as a part of the Local Government Grant Scheme (LGGS) which is managed within the ESL framework
 - A new 3.4 urban has replaced the 2.4 urban at Cape Burney.
 - A new LT has replaced the LT stationed at Waggrakine.
- Stuart Wain
 - I would like to take this opportunity to introduce Stuart Wain and put a face to the voice that you may have already spoken to. He has been appointed to the Emergency training officer role and will be concentrating on ensuring all WHS requirements in regard to City volunteers are being met, including onboarding and induction requirements.

5.3. Department of Fire & Emergency Services – K Mussen with T Coffey

- Introduction of Tom Coffey, DFES Acting AO
- Acknowledgment of invitation and support of City Officers. Appreciation of City Volunteers who assisted with various incidents throughout to area was noted.
- Acknowledgment of a tragic fatal incident involving a machine operator from the Shire of Yalgoo. The investigation is ongoing.
- Portable Automatic Vehicle Locators (AVLs) can be supplied to machine operators at an incident, allowing tracking around incident grounds, and also tracking the edges of the fire. Plugs into the cigarette lighter of the vehicle with a magnetic aerial for the roof.
- DFES Training calendar commences in April 2023 with an emphasis on leadership training. Machine Operator as well as a vast array of other bush fire courses are also included. The calendar is a lot more flexible this year to work around the needs and requirements of volunteers.
- Air Operations – Fixed wings and the support platforms with other resources available. Large Air Tanker 747 (LAT) for retardant drops and a Line Scanner aircraft that goes over fire tracking thermal heat signature, relaying the shape of fire to the incident controller. There will be a review of air support

however, it is anticipated that the fixed-wing resource will be ongoing. More statistics will be supplied at the Greenough BFAC next week.

- Drones – If there are any drones flying in the incident grounds, air support is grounded immediately.
- VFRS brigade - Incidents of no water or no fuel in trucks.
- Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS) – Some Shires are getting frustrated due to Total Fire Bans (TFB) being issued. There will be an end-of-season National review taking feedback. Provide any feedback to T Coffey, he will collate and present.
- Thank you to Mullewa Central Brigade for assisting with a structure fire a couple of weeks ago.

5.4. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attraction – Julia French

- Water bomber feedback - Identify ground controller early and contactable on the fire ground via aerial radio. If the water bomber is unable to make contact to confirm the drop zone is clear, they will return to the base without making a drop.
- Autumn Prescribed Burn – Commenced work on the program. Wandana Nature Reserve has been identified as a priority. Hope to commence burning from March into April.
- Additional gang trucks joined Geraldton and Jurien fleet.

5.5. Mullewa Central Bush Fire Brigade- Craig Moran

- No attendance. Nil to report.

5.6. Mullewa South Bush Fire Brigade- Gerard Rowe

- Couple of fires this harvest with no serious injuries. Truck went okay.

5.7. Tenindewa Bush Fire Brigade – Daniel Critch

- No attendance. Nil to report.

5.8. Pindar/Tardun Bush Fire Brigade – Zac Grima

- No fires, nil to report.

5.9. Casuarina Bush Fire Brigade – Murray Preston

- Couple of small fires.

5.10. Mullewa VFRS – Tony Crudeli

- Pretty quiet.
- Thank you to Mullewa Central for assistance, appreciate the backup.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

6.1. C Lee – A recent structure change within the City sees the Emergency Management Department transition over to the Development Services directorate with Director Phil Melling. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

6.2. M Preston – Queried why a HVMB wasn't in place on the day of the Glengarry Fire. It was noted that resources were already stretched, leaving Mullewa open to risk. Response – the HVMB triggers were not hit.

6.3. M Preston – Queried restricted burn times. Response – Permit period commences on 15 February until 14 March.

6.4. Cr J Clune – Questioned the relevance and distribution frequency of the Smoke Signals Newsletter. Suggested bimonthly might be more suitable. Response – The Smoke Signals Newsletter was

implemented in an effort to improve communications between the City and Brigades. The City invites feedback as to what Brigades would like to see in the Newsletter and the frequency.

6.5. T Coffey – Presented the Portable Automatic Vehicle Locators (AVLs). Testing is required monthly.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be scheduled for early September, prior to school holidays commencing.

8. CLOSE OF MEETING

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 10.46 am.