



**Shire of Ravensthorpe
Bush Fire Advisory Committee
MINUTES**

**held on Tuesday 26 August, 2014 at 4.30pm
Ravensthorpe Entertainment Centre**

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1. DECLARATION OF OPENING / ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

5.00pm – The Chairman, Mr Keith Rowe, declared the meeting open.

2. ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES / APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

MEMBERS

R Daw	(Chief Bush Fire Control Officer)
G Wornes	(DFES)
G Gibson	(Munglinup Brigade)
K Chambers	(North Ravensthorpe Brigade)
A Chambers	(North Ravensthorpe Brigade)
L Webster	(Cocanarup Brigade)
R Norrish	(West River / Mt Short Brigade)
B Kershaw	(West River Brigade)
P Bell	(Jerdacuttup Brigade)
D Bray	(Jerdacuttup Brigade)
P Kuiper	(West River Brigade)
G Webster	(Town Brigade)
M Tilbrook	(North Ravensthorpe Brigade)

STAFF

I Fitzgerald	(Chief Executive Officer)
S McGuire	(Manager, Airport and Compliance)

APOLOGIES

K Norman	(Council Representative)
A Duncan	(Deputy Chief Officer – Northern Region)
B Fetherstonhaugh	(Munglinup Brigade)
C Tuckett	(North Ravensthorpe Brigade)
P Masters	(Department of Parks and Wildlife)

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Division 6, Sub-division 1 of Local Government Act 1995. Care should be taken by all Committee members and staff to ensure that a financial/impartiality/interest is declared and that they refrain from voting on any matter, which is considered to come within the ambit of the Act.

Nil

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

This is an opportunity for any member or visitor to ask questions about any aspect of fire management.

Nil

5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

R Daw indicated three items had been missed from the minutes. The missing items were referred to General Business.

NOTED: The minutes were not accepted as a true record of the meeting.

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

6.1 ITEM 10.3 – RADIO SERVICING ON AN ANNUAL BASIS

Confirmed that correspondence forwarded to DFES however no response has been received. Follow up correspondence to be sent.

6.2 ITEM 9.1 – ESL DISTRIBUTION

COMMITTEE DECISION	ITEM 6.2
Moved: R Daw	Seconded: G Gibson
That the Shire responds to Item 9.1 from the April 2014 BFAC Meeting.	
Carried Unanimously	

7. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Nil

8. OTHER REPORTS

8.1 CHIEF BUSHFIRE CONTROL OFFICER

CBFCO REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 8/4/14 to 26/8/14 *(as presented)*

There has been 65 permits report to me as having been issued in this period 26 of which are still current.

If permits issued are not reported to the base radio operator it makes things difficult to answer some telephone reports of smoke of which there are many including 000 and 101 calls.

Some of these permit holders asked for advise and in some cases I have assisted at the burns with my private light tanker.

I have also assisted at several district burns which is great that we are reducing hazards around the place H tip, R tip, CO2, 2 areas at Hopetoun adjoining residential land north of town, RAV south, and Jerdy lakes, thanks to brigades and others that turned out.

Safety Circulars are now being sent from time to time by FESA and Gavin Wornes has undertaken to forward the ones relevant to our brigades.

With regard to insurance companies wanting info on escaped fires, it is important to advise them the paperwork belongs to the shire and they need to contact them for possible approved release.

I attended Jerdy BFB AGM on 20/8 and we were advised that there is new technology available for the safe burning of harvest windrows, contact M Palmer.

Reminder, all BFB truck drivers an MR Licence.

The NR truck issue is on the agenda for discussion.

Fire meetings attended in this period included DPAW, CO2, LEMAC, Airport security exercise, shire and Hopetoun bushfire planning.

I made a submission to the FESA concept paper with regard to proposed new legislation and hope that some of you did also.

We had a large, arson suspected and reported to Police fire at Mt BENSON that required considerable resources, thanks to all that assisted, and another suspected arson fire at Mills Rd / No 1 Highway.

FESA have introduced new laws re weights of vehicles which has to be done at our expense!

The govt in response to my request for urgent funds for the upgrade of our ECL fire protection plan, which was supported by the shire, have responded through the Ministers Joe Francis and Albert Jacob to basically say how much they have done in the past, or too bad so sad or in other words, 'let it grow'.

I responded to a request from the office of bush fire risk management review and permit trial report.

Thanks to Pascoe, Steve, shire staff, CESM and district manager Gavin Wornes for assistance as required.

Thanks to DPAW for their continued co-operation, water bombers, fire units, flame thrower and support of our roll call structure.

Police and SES have also been called on from time to time which is much appreciated.

CESM Peter Thurkle will be missed for his enthusiasm and support of our brigades.

And thanks to my fellow BFCOs whose support has been very welcome and appreciated.

Rod DAW CBFCO

8.2 DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Verbal report provide by G Wornes (DFES)

Hopetoun burn went well – the processes to obtain permission for fires around town sites are arduous. Thanks to all involved for a successful operation.

8.3 CESM

Nil

8.4 DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND WILDLIFE

Nil

9. BFAC ITEMS SUBMITTED

Nil

10. GENERAL BUSINESS

10.1 BASE RADIOS FOR FCOS

Discussion on radio coverage and radio accessibility for FCOs.

The following motion was one of the items missed in the minutes of April, 2014.

COMMITTEE DECISION

Moved: A Chambers

Seconded: B Kershaw

That all Fire Control Officers be issued with a base radio and mobile WAERN radio.

Carried Unanimously

Further discussion centred on use of mid-band radios. G Wornes indicated that repeater stations will not be maintained and therefore that radio network will cease in the future. All 'black' radios should be replaced with 'yellow' radios.

G Wornes to check DFES directive on the use of hand held radios on fire ground.

The possibility of vehicles not WAERN radio equipped being supplied with UHF radios was also discussed. No outcome on this matter.

Esperance Communications is to service all radios in the near future. S McGuire and R Daw to coordinate.

10.2 BURNING ON PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

R Daw noted that the previous had not reflected the wishes of the committee on this matter and this item had been omitted. The missing motion from the April 2014 meeting is now presented.

COMMITTEE DECISION	ITEM 10.2
Moved: M Tilbrook	Seconded: P Bell
Burning is prohibited on public holidays.	
Carried Unanimously	

10.3 ESL BUDGET

R Daw requested S McGuire meet with representatives from the Shire of Esperance with a view to obtaining further information on ESL budget matters

Noted

10.4 NORTH RAVENSTHORPE BRIGADE TRUCK

A Chambers raised the matter of the North Ravensthorpe Brigade truck. G Wornes commented that DFES require the truck to be returned at the earliest opportunity as it was only on loan. G Wornes will also pursue all avenues to ensure a replacement truck is available for the fire season; however there is no guarantee. G Wornes will liaise with brigade on return of vehicle.

10.5 FIRE DANGER INDEX

G Wornes tabled a document indicating changes to FDI and the differences between 'Grass Fire Index' and 'Forest Fire Index' ratings. The changes mean the Shire of Ravensthorpe would now require an FFI assessment.

Attachment: IBMC dated 1 August, 2014

COMMITTEE DECISION	
Moved: R Daw	Seconded: A Chambers
The Shire lodge a submission to retain the existing Grass Fire Index.	

10.6 PERMIT TO BURN BUSH - OBRM

G Wornes spoke on this matter and advised that trials conducted at various locations in the state were not representative of agricultural areas. The document was tabled and noted.

Attachment: DFES - OBRM Bushfire Risk Management Review

10.7 HEAT SHIELDS / CURTAINS

G Wornes commented that all units are to have the curtains fitted in the near future. Vehicle identification numbers (VIN) are required for this purpose, as is the physical location of each vehicle.

R Daw to coordinate this activity.

Noted

10.8 PROTOCOL FOR OBTAINING FUEL

P Bell queried the process of fuel purchase and storage.

S McGuire to follow up on provision of a fuel card for each vehicle.

Noted

10.9 CHANGE OF DATE ON BUSHFIRE NOTICE

R Daw requested the date for burning on Sundays, as indicated in the Bushfire Notice, be amended to read:

‘Burning on Sundays is prohibited, except between 30 April and 19 September’

This amendment was requested at the previous meeting and not reflected in the minutes. This request to be ratified at the next BFAC meeting when the Bushfire Notice will be presented for adoption.

Noted

MEETING CLOSED - 6.30PM