



BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes

Thursday 7 October 2021

CORRIGIN BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Instrument of Appointment and Delegation

1.0 NAME

The Committee shall be known as the Corrigin Bush Fire Advisory Committee (Committee).

2.0 ROLE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

To formulate for Council's consideration, recommendations and policy on matters relating to bush fire prevention, control and extinguishment.

3.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- To advise Council on all matters relating to the operations of the Bush Fires Act 1954.
- To advise Council on the best and most efficient means of maximising fire control resources in the district.

4.0 MEMBERSHIP

The Council appoints to the Committee those ex officio representatives listed in the categories of membership outlined below. Membership of the Committee shall, unless otherwise specified, be for a term ceasing at the date of the Local Government election in the year the Shire's local government elections are held, after which time the Council may appoint members for a further term.

Council may dismiss members who miss two consecutive meetings without reasonable cause. Membership of the Committee shall be:

- The President of the Shire of Corrigin.
- The Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO).
- The Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (DBFCO).
- One Bush Fire Control Officer (appointed by the Shire in accordance with the Bush Fires Act 1954) from each Brigade.
- One Councillor nominated by the Council.

Chief Executive Officer and other Shire staff members will provide advice and administrative support to the Committee.

A Representative from Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) Great Southern Region and any other agency as determined by the Presiding Member will be invited to attend and provide reports on their respective agencies.

5.0 PRESIDING MEMBER

The President takes the role of Presiding Member. The members of the Committee shall elect a Deputy Presiding Member to chair in the absence of the Presiding Member.

The election of the Presiding Member and the Deputy shall also be required to be repeated at the first meeting after the local government election to satisfy the requirements of the Local Government Act.

This can be facilitated by the CEO or the CEO's representative conducting the election calling for a motion to confirm the election of the CBFCO and the Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

The Presiding Member shall ensure that minutes of the proceedings are kept and that business is conducted in accordance with the Shire of Corrigin Standing Orders.

The minutes of the Committee are to be submitted to the next ordinary meeting of the committee for confirmation. The person presiding at the meeting at which the minutes are confirmed is to sign the minutes and certify the confirmation. The Local Government Act 1995 places responsibility for speaking on behalf of Council with the President, or the CEO if the President agrees. The Presiding Member if not the Shire President as well as individual members of the Committee are to refrain from speaking publicly on behalf of the committee or Council, or to issue any form of written material purporting to speak on behalf of the committee or Council without the prior approval of the Shire President.

6.0 CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

Ordinary meetings of the Committee shall be held on a day as determined by the Presiding Member generally in April or May and October or November each year. Written notice shall be given to all Committee members, at least 14 days prior to the meeting. Special meetings of the Committee may be convened:

- By the Presiding Member
- By written notice to all Committee members, such notice being signed by at least four members of the Committee, giving not less than 7 days notice and stating purpose of the meeting.
- By the Council

The time and venue of meetings will be determined by the Presiding Member or the Council having due regard to the general convenience of the Committee members.

The Committee is established by the Council of the Shire of Corrigin under the powers and given in section 5.8 of the Local Government Act 1995 and under section 67 (Advisory Committees) of the Bush Fires Act 1954. Notice of meetings, quorum requirements of 50% of members and all other matters pertaining to the conduct of the committee shall be carried out in accordance with the Local Government Act 1995.

7.0 DELEGATED POWERS

The Committee has no delegated powers and is an advisory committee to Council only. Recommendations of committees meetings are to be presented to Council by Shire staff for noting or for consideration as soon as practicable after unconfirmed minutes of Committee meetings are available.

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING

The Chairperson, President Des Hickey opened the meeting at 4.06pm.

2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

President	Cr Des Hickey
Chief Executive Officer	Natalie Manton
Executive Support Officer	Kirsten Biglin
CESM	Jason Carrall
DFES	Grant Hansen (4.14pm)
Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	Greg Evans
Bush Fire Control Officers	Sadow Jacobs
	Craig Jespersen
	Tim George
	Kim Courboules (4.11pm)
	Andrew Szczecinski (4.25pm)
	Adam Rendell
	Steven Bolt 4.25
	Bryce Nicholls
	Bruce Mills
	Paul McBeath

Apologies

Bruce Talbot, Garrick Connelly, Craig Poultney, Greg Doyle, John Hewett

3. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES – March 2021

Moved: G Evans Seconded: A Rendell

That the minutes of the Shire of Corrigin Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting held on 30 March 2021 be accepted as a true and correct record.

Carried

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Dual Fire Control Officers

Notification of the Shire of Corrigin Dual Bush Fire Control Officers were sent to neighbouring shires on 5 May 2021.

The Shire of Corrigin has received notification and endorsed Dual Bush Fire Control Officer from the Shire of Pingelly to date. The ESO will follow up with surrounding shires.

Fuel Cards

All funds for the 2020/2021 period were expended by 30 June 2021, with majority of the funds being used this year.

New cards for the 2021/2022 period have been received and are available to be used however you wish by 1 October 2021. Allocations have changed slightly, please see the table below:

Bushfire Control Officers -2021/2022
Volunteer Fuel Card Distribution List

Name	Amount
Greg Evans	\$ 950.00
Steven Bolt	\$ 450.00
Andrew Szczecinski	\$ 225.00
Sadow Jacobs	\$ 225.00
Bruce Mills	\$ 225.00
Paul McBeath	\$ 225.00
Greg Doyle	\$ 225.00
Craig Jespersen	\$ 225.00
Bryce Nicholls	\$ 225.00
Craig Poultney	\$ 225.00
Tony Guinness	\$ 225.00
John Hewett	\$ 225.00
Braden Grylls	\$ 225.00
Tim George	\$ 225.00
Kim Courboules	\$ 225.00
Bruce Talbot	\$ 225.00
Garrick Connelly	\$ 225.00
Adam Rendell	\$ 225.00
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	\$ 5,000.00

5. GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Season Briefing

The weather outlook and fuel loading in the district for the upcoming season was discussed.

Greg Evans reported on the high fuel load of weeds, especially on the sides of the roads and firebreaks.

Many of the FCO's have received phone calls about not being able to access their firebreaks from too much rainfall. FCO's are to encourage people make a fair effort to clear their firebreaks to the best of their abilities.

Grant Hansen reported of a predicted wet season and extra rain for the next 3 months.

2. Checking Firebreaks

Townsite inspections

Property owners received a flyer with the rates notices that they have until 31 October to ensure that their fire breaks are done.

The Ranger has done a first round of Pre-firebreak inspections on 16 September and the ESO issued 51 letters reminding residents of the firebreak requirements to be done by 31 October.

It will also be arranged with the Ranger for the Bullaring Townsite to be inspected this year.

A further inspection of the Corrigin townsite will take place on 4 November and a letter with a final warning will be sent out to any residents who have not completed firebreaks by that inspection and they will be given a further 14 days to comply. Any property owners who still have non-compliant firebreaks after the

14 day extension will be issued with a fine of \$250 on 3rd inspection which will be on 18 November. A further 7 days will then be given before the Shire works team will be sent in to complete the works and the residents will be charged as private works.

Rural inspections

ESO has given an area maps to each FCO with their brigade area mapped out. FCO's advised to mark out on maps exactly which locations the ESO needs to follow up the property owners with a letter.

Tim George queried responsibilities of lessee's or owners. Natalie Manton clarified that it is the responsibility of the owner but the lessee can be spoken to about the issue.

3. Training

Future training requirements

Training Topic	Date
1. Basic Fire Fighting – Rural	
2. Hay fire	
3. Fire weather	
4. Ladies Day	
5. Defibrillators	
6. First Aid	

G Hansen provided the latest training charts.

4. Brigade List Review

Review and update brigade membership lists. Jason will send out to Captains to edit prior to meeting.
Captains encouraged to hold an AGM.

5. Personal Protective Equipment

Please advise the ESO if there is any PPE that needs replacing in the trucks and whether there is any new equipment necessary eg: face masks, foam.

6. Resources for Managing Volunteers under Workplace Health and Safety Legislation

Workplace health and safety laws are changing in Western Australia with the introduction of the *Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) Act (WA) 2020*.

A key element of the legislation is the term **Person conducting a business or undertaking or PCBU**, which expands the old concept of employer.

A person who works for a PCBU is considered a worker. The definition of a worker has been expanded and now covers and includes all forms of paid and unpaid work, **including volunteers and bushfire volunteers**.

The LGIS Workplace Health and Safety team has created volunteer and bushfire volunteer resources to assist members to meet their WHS obligations.

See attachments to Agenda and there is a webinar you can watch below if you are interested in learning more about the legislation changes.

[Webinar: WHS Legislation and Local Government Bushfire Brigades - YouTube](#)

Jason Carrall and Grant Hansen gave an overview of some of the changes and there were some questions regarding insurance.

Grant Hansen in summary advised that insurance kicks in with the Shire when the incident is recorded or the Shire is notified. This can be done by calling 000 or by letting the Shire know (FCO's have Delegated Authority so they can act on the Shire's behalf).

7. Inductions

Brigade captains and CESM to welcome new members and ensure the following is completed:

- Membership form
- Induction
- Overview of Fire Truck and operating procedures
- Protective clothing and equipment
- Overview of training and book into e-learning or next course

8. Paper Incident Report Forms

DFES will be changing the way they process Paper Incident Reports. From now on, they will now only accept reports that meet the following minimum criteria:

- Have valid dates and times for the Incident
- Have named individuals as attending the Incident (ie. will not accept 5 firefighters or John)
- Please provide a separate attendance report per brigade (so we can work out where the volunteers are from)
- Have a valid address (ie. we don't know where Bob's Farm is)

If DFES receive paper incident reports missing any of this key information, they will not be processed. These will be identified on the new Monthly LG Report Pack. Please take extra care when filling out reports and please make sure you hand them into the ESO.

9. Bush Fire Radios

Servicing of radios is being arranged by Jason asap.

10. Power Outages

In June 2021 the CEO made contact with DFES to recommend that essential services continue to carry out off road activity during harvest and movement of vehicles bans.

Due to Corrigin having experienced a lot of widespread power outages over the past year or so and finding Western Power extremely hard to communicate with, the CEO has made the following recommendation;

When local governments declare a Harvest and Movement of Vehicles Ban (HMVB) under r.38A, it bans off-road activity for everyone (public/agricultural/business/public authorities). It is recommended that local governments stipulate that essential services (e.g. Western Power) can continue to carry out off-road activity during a HVMB declared under r.38A, as failure to do so may prevent urgent works by essential service providers from being carried out.

Essential service means any of the following
(a) water supply, sewerage or drainage services;
(aa) rubbish collection or disposal services;
(b) electricity or gas services;
(c) telecommunications services;
(d) public transport services;

So I support shires allowing essential services to carry out off road activity during HVMB declarations under r.38A but not necessarily a blanket exemption across the whole shire.

I also would like those essential services to communicate more with local government to identify where they would like to work and we can support them with additional firefighting resources to ensure they don't start a fire when driving across a paddock.

I understand that Western Power have requirements to have firefighting resources go with them when they go off road during a HVMB (as required under r24ZL) but if we worked together we could send out additional local resources and they could get their work done much more efficiently.

24ZL. Firefighting equipment for off-road activity At least 1 approved fire extinguisher for the off-road activity in proper working order must be carried on, or be in close proximity to, the engine, vehicle, plant, equipment or machinery involved in the off-road activity while it is being operated or used.

****Below is the response received from DFES****

HVMB issued by BFCO – regulation 38A:

As discussed the BFCO may, when declaring a HVMB under regulation 38A include specific conditions within the declaration that need to be followed (e.g. essential service providers to notify LG of works being carried out within an area or restrict works to a specific area within the LG). Any condition imposed within the declaration however must be reasonable and be able to be met.

38A. Vehicles etc., power to prohibit etc. use of in restricted or prohibited burning times

(1) Where a bush fire control officer is of the opinion that the use or operation of any engines, vehicles, plant or machinery during the prohibited burning times or restricted burning times, or both, is likely to cause a bush fire, or would be conducive to the spread of a bush fire, the bush fire control officer may by notice or direction prohibit or regulate the carrying out of any activity or operation in a specified area either absolutely or except in accordance with conditions specified in the notice or direction or without the consent of the local government or bush fire control officer.

In relation specifically to Western Power, please see below information that has been sent through to Essential Service providers to further explain what they can and cannot do on Total Fire Ban (TFB) and HVMB days.

Works on Total Fire Ban Day when Fire Danger Rating (FDR) reaches Catastrophic:

Bush Fires Regulations 1954 allow for certain prescribed activities to be undertaken on a total fire ban day, by essential service providers when the fire danger rating reaches catastrophic. Prescribed activities include hot works, road works and off-road activity (as defined within the regulations). These activities

can be undertaken by essential service providers, as along as all prescribed conditions, including notification (via the online notification form) are complied with.

Essential service is defined as:

essential service means any of the following —

- (a) water supply, sewerage or drainage services;
- (aa) rubbish collection or disposal services;
- (b) electricity or gas services;
- (c) telecommunications services;
- (d) public transport services;

Urgent works is defined as:

urgent works, in relation to the provision of an essential service, means repairs or maintenance necessary for the continued provision or restoration of the service.

Works on Total Fire Ban Day when a Harvest and Vehicle Movement Ban has been declared:

A local government authority (BFCO) may declare a harvest and vehicle movement ban under regulation 24C of the BF Regulations on a day when a total fire ban has been declared. This HVMB ban stops the off-road use of all engine vehicle, plant, equipment and machinery for both agricultural activity and work being carried out by business, industry and public authorities for the period that the ban has been declared for. A HVMB declared under regulation 24C does not stop the provision of essential services being carried out.

Regulation 24ZH(3) allows for off-road activity (as defined within the regulations) to continue if carried out as part of urgent works on infrastructure used in the provision of an essential service.

Definitions for urgent works and essential service are taken from the regulations as above.

Harvest and Vehicle Movement Ban declared under r.38A:

A local government authority (BFCO) may declare a harvest and vehicle movement ban under regulation 38A of the Bush Fires Regulations outside of, a declared total fire ban. The HVMB will stop the use of all engine vehicle, plant, equipment and machinery (off-road and agricultural activity) for the period that the ban has been declared for. A HVMB declared under regulation 38A does stop the provision of essential services being carried out, unless the local government authority notes that essential service activities can continue for the period that the ban is in place.

In addition to the prescribed activities Western Power also hold a valid exemption issued under s.22C of the Bush Fires Act 1954 permitting them to carry out power restoration activities (switching) on a declared TFB day, provided all conditions including notifying DFES and the relevant LG are complied with.

Notification is now required to be provided by all operators via the online notification form, found on the DFES website. When an operator completes and submits an online notification, the system will send through an email to the relevant LG and DFES. I have looked at the details we have saved for the Shire of Corrigin and on file we have the email address: ceo@corrigin.wa.gov.au –

this email should receive all notifications when submitted by an operator on a TFB day.

Operators with a valid exemption issued under s.25A of the BF Act are also required to provide notification of works via the online form when operating during the restricted and prohibited burning times declared for the LG, again these notifications should be received by the above email address.

When declaring a HVMB under r.38A it would not be unreasonable to have Essential Service providers have to notify the LG (either via phone call or email, depending on LG requirements) of work being carried out with in the area.

11. Harvest Weather Radio Calls

Need to agree on when calls will be made (previously been on Mondays only) and a date/time to do a test run for Harvest Weather Radio calls

Harvest weather calls to be made on **Monday 18th October 2021.**

Test run Harvest Weather Radio to be conducted on **18th October 2021 @8am.**

Fire Weather Officers

Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, the Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Sandow Jacobs

Harvest Ban Officers

Natalie Manton, Adam Rendell, Garrick Connelly (if Adam Rendell unavailable), Sandow Jacobs, Steven Bolt (if Sandow Jacobs unavailable), Paul Baker, Andrew Szczecinski (if Paul Baker unavailable), Greg Evans, Braden Grylls (if Greg Evans is unavailable).

12. Christmas SMS Messages

The following text messages will be used during the Christmas:

The Shire of Corrigin has imposed a harvest and movement of vehicles ban on Christmas Day 25 December 2021, Boxing Day 26 December 2021 and New Year's Day 1 January 2022.

13. OTHER BUSINESS AND REPORTS

Bilbarin AGM Friday 15 October 2021.

All Brigades are encouraged to hold an AGM.

14. MEETING CLOSURE

There being no further business the Chairperson thanked everybody for their attendance and closed the meeting at 5.22pm.

BBQ and refreshments will be provided following the meeting.
