

SHIRE OF KOJONUP



Kojonup Bush Fire Advisory Committee

Minutes

29 October 2020

BUSHFIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Established under *Section 67 of the Bush Fires Act 1954*.

Terms of Reference

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee is established for the purpose of:

- a) Advising the Shire regarding all matters relating to the preventing, controlling and extinguishing of bush fires;
- b) The planning of the layout of firebreaks in the district;
- c) Prosecutions for breaches of this Act;
- d) The formation of bush fire brigades and the grouping thereof under group brigade officers (in accordance with any local laws);
- e) Recommendations on Fire Control Officer positions;
- f) Feedback on the Council's Fire Break Notice;
- g) Specific requirements from each brigade with regard to:
 - Protective Personal Equipment;
 - Equipment and vehicles resources required; and
 - Training Requirements;
- h) The ensuring of cooperation and coordination of Bush Fire Brigades in their efforts and activities; and
- i) Any other matter relating to bush fire control whether of the same kind as, or a different kind from, those specified in this subsection.

Other:

- a) The Bush Fire Advisory Committee shall include an elected member of the Council;
- b) The committee shall elect one of their members to be chairman;
- c) The quorum required for the transaction of business at meetings of the committee is set at 50%

Membership

Voting Members (9 in total)

- Councillors x2 (Currently Cr Radford and Cr Benn);
- The President of the Kojonup Bushfire Association;
- The Chief Bush Fire Control Officer;
- The Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer;
- Senior Fire Control Officer (Zulu)
- Senior Fire control Officer (Zulu)
- Secretary of the Kojonup Bushfire Association
- Captain of the Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service

Observers

- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Shire Delegates x2
- Muradup Town Fire Control Officer (FCO)

MINUTES FOR THE KOJONUP BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD 12 FEBRUARY 2020

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A G E N D A

1. DECLARATION OF OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF GUESTS

The Acting Presiding Member declared the meeting open at 7:35pm and alerted the meeting of the procedures for emergencies including evacuation, designated exits and muster points.

2. ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES

MEMBERS

Cr John Benn	Shire President (Acting Presiding Member)
Mr Tony Fisher	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Mr Roger House	Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer
Mr Digby Stretch	President of the Kojonup Bush Fire Association
Mrs Denise Berryman	Secretary of the Kojonup Bush Fire Association

OBSERVERS

Rick Mitchell-Collins	Chief Executive Officer
Mr Robert Cowie	Administration/Regulatory Officer
Mr Bob Francis	Muradup Bushfire Brigade Member
Mr Paul Retallack	Senior Ranger/Building Maintenance Coordinator
Mr Kevin Bransby	Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM)

GUESTS

APOLOGIES

Mr Ross Fryer-Smith	Senior Bush Fire Control Officer
Cr Ned Radford	Councillor (Presiding Member)
Mr Myles Reid	Senior Bush Fire Control Officer
Mr Matthew Crabb	Kojonup Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service
Mr Brad Nagtegaal	Kojonup Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service

3. **SUMMARY OF RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE**

Nil

4. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Nil

5. **APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Nil

6. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

COMMITTEE DECISION

2/20 Moved Digby Stretch, seconded Roger House that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Bushfire Advisory Committee held 12 February 2020 be confirmed as a true record.

CARRIED 5/0

7. **ANNOUNCEMENTS** by the Presiding Member without discussion

Nil

8. **PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS & PRESENTATIONS**

Nil

9. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Nil

10. **STATUS REPORTS**

10.1 Water Shortages

- *Keys to the locked Standpipes (Katanning Rd and Carlecatup Rd) have been handed out to the Zulu's, the Kojonup and Muradup Truck and to the Captain of the Cherry Tree Pool brigade. Mr Cowie also has a key. The key will unlock both padlocks.*
- *Very dry in the East and Northeast of the Shire and fuel loads are quite high in the region and it is expected to be a dry season.*
- *There are a number of privately owned water tankers around the Shire. We should make contact with owners to see if they are willing to make these available as portable solutions for the season.*
- *The Shire owned tanker will be available and ready if required.*

- *Length of Harvest Season – Anticipate an early November start and still harvesting into the New Year in some areas.*
- *CEO has been in contact with Main Roads regarding the tanks at Crapella Rd. These tanks are ground fed water and are accessible all year round. Mr Benn informed the committee that the setup has been upgraded and all that is required is a 75mm female fitting to the fast fill pumps.*

Mr Cowie to make contact with Boscabel and Cherry Tree Pool Brigades to ensure that the Fast Fill Pumps are able to access the water at the Crapella Rd tanks.

- *Water Corporation (Town South Dam) – No guarantee that water level will get us through summer and \$1M Drought Communities Funding projects are planned to commence over summer in readiness for autumn/winter rains which does not help for this summer.*

It was agreed that the annual Firebreak Flyover also note dams that could be used for water supplies during fire emergencies especially if we don't get rain over summer.

10.2 Local Government Grants Scheme (LGGs)

DFES Resource Allocation Officer Natasha Dudarz and Grants Officer Peter Raykos are visiting Kojonup to meet with those who are involved or have a vested interest in the Local Government Grants Scheme (LGGs) process.

'The purpose of the visit is to provide clarification on the LGGs process, inform local governments of any impending changes that may be occurring and provide advice where required on any concerns or confusion that your local government or volunteers may have relating to the LGGs. Our aim is to guide you in simplifying the process with applications and operating grant acquittals (if required) and to finally meet personally and put a face to the name.'

Who should attend the briefing: Any local government employees that are involved in the LGGs process or wish to seek further information/clarification of the process. Local government CBFCO & DCBFCO, BFB Captains & office bearers, SES Unit Managers & office bearers, volunteers. The intent is for a casual and open meeting which we hope will be constructive and beneficial to all those attending.

Date & Time: Wednesday 4/11/20 at the Kojonup Sports Complex commencing at 9:30am and concluding 11:30am

Information was noted and members encouraged to attend.

10.3 Public Notifications

The new Messaging Trailer Unit will be utilised throughout the Fire Season advising public of restricted burning periods, Harvest Movement Bans and Total Fire Bans, etc.

Signage has been placed outside the Town Fire Brigade and also at the Kodja Place.

Information was noted.

10.4 Phone Towers – Battery Backup

Email from West Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) 2 Oct 2020.

“As advised Nick Sloan, Cr Stephen Strange and I met with Senator Dean Smith and Mark Thompson, Corporate Affairs Manager and Boyd Brown, WA Regional General Manager representing Telstra on Thursday 24 September, 2020.

The Senator had called the meeting as a follow up to our meeting of 22 July, 2020 when the Association assisted by Cr Stephen Strange, escalated the matter to the Commonwealth level via three fronts, Hon Melissa Price MP, Hon Mark Coulton MP and the Senator.

Telstra acknowledged that issues occur around ‘unplanned’ outages (as experienced in emergency situations) and that energy providers (Western Power and Horizon Power) should also be at the table to address this issue along with future proofing solutions.

Further, Telstra spoke of the Commonwealth’s ‘hardening’ grant funding program (funded via Mobile Black Spot Funding), at which time we were able to outline some of the limitations of the fund.

Acknowledged one of the gaps is between the battery back-up ‘going down’ and the technician arriving. Further, it was acknowledged that Telstra had distributed a ‘Notifications’ Fact Sheet as an outcome to previous advocacy by Zones and WALGA. (Currently notifications of ‘planned’ outages are going directly to the Local MP and the affected Local Governments).

Solutions discussed included but were not limited to:

- Investigating the actual ‘cost’ and options of a battery backup replacement and maintenance program to ensure longer back-up*
- Investigating ‘local’ options and training for technicians*
- Including Western Power and Horizon Power to seek a collaborative approach to both short term solutions and innovative solutions for the long term e.g. Gen Set/Solar/Battery combination.*

Outcomes of the meeting included:

- The Senator to write to the Telstra CEO outlining the specific nuances and needs of Western Australia*
- The Senator will write to the SEMC to encourage this matter as a standing item, suggesting Telstra, Western Power and Horizon Power attendance to seek a collaborative solution*
- The Telstra WA Regional General Manager, Boyd Brown and WALGA CEO, Nick Sloan to meet in the near future to progress solution seeking options for the short, medium and long term*

It was acknowledged that many of the options were currently prohibitive from a cost perspective, although the discussions did identify some options that could be explored further.

Where cost was seen as an issue, it was agreed that this should not limit investigating what is possible and to explore funding options that could be available now and into the future.

Most importantly, there is a commitment to keep exploring options.

I do hope this assists and we will keep the Zone abreast of progress.

Kind regards

Joanne Burges | Intergovernmental Relations & Risk | WALGA”

- Mr Stretch advised that he had received a number of complaints from all points of the shire suggesting the mobile reception in our region has decreased significantly. This may have an adverse impact on any fires or emergencies that may occur. It was suggested that a letter from the Shire or WALGA Great Southern Zone to Telstra may have some impact.

11. ITEMS (General Business)

11.1 Great Southern Regional Operational Advisory Committee (ROAC)

Minutes of the ROAC Meeting held 30 September 2020 and the Great Southern Regional Directory (Attachment 11.1.1 and Attachment 11.1.2).

Points to be aware of from the Minutes;

Item 4.6.7 – Action item from RAOC to LGGS Grants enabling changes to ESL Purchasing Guidelines

Pg. 10 – Bushfire Season Challenges

Information was noted.

11.2 Resource Sharing CESM – Position Description (PD)

Council, at its meeting held 28 July 2020 resolved:

Decision 93/20

“That Council:

- 1. Notes the concerns raised by the Kojonup Bushfire Association and apologises for the lack of communication regarding the DFES funding and appointment of a Community Emergency Services Manager for the Shires of Cranbrook, Gnowangerup and Kojonup;*
- 2. Re-affirms the CEO’s appointment of the CESM as the position directly reports to the CEO;*
- 3. Notes the CBFCO and Zulu’s can liaise directly with the CEO should CESM assistance be required on the fire ground;*
- 4. Invite the DFES Commissioner to attend a meeting of the Kojonup Volunteer Bush Fire Association to address concerns regarding DFES relationship with Volunteer Brigades;*

5. *The position description of the CESM be tabled at the next Bushfire Advisory Committee meeting to clearly identify the roles and functions required by the CEO and allay concerns raised by the Volunteer Bushfire Association; and*
6. *The Key Performance Indicators of the CESM be reviewed after 12 months.”*

Zulu’s and Digby Stretch met with the CEO and ‘walked through’ the Position Description and sections 1 – 5 of Schedule 1 and together with Denise met with Kevin Bransby, Monday, 19 October 2020. The revised PD ([Attachment 11.2.1](#)) was tabled in accordance with Point 5 above.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That the Resource Shared CESM Position Description and Key Performance Indicators be endorsed by the Bushfire Advisory Committee allowing Council via the CEO to review same after 12 months as per Council Decision 93/20.”

Motion lapsed with no mover or seconder.

Alternate motion put to BFAC

COMMITTEE DECISION

3/20 Moved Roger House, seconded Digby Stretch, that the Resource Shared CESM Position Description and Key Performance Indicators be noted by the Bushfire Advisory Committee allowing Council via the CEO to review same after 12 months as per Council Decision 93/20.

Carried 5/0

12 MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

Nil

13 LATE ITEMS

13.1 Townsite Firebreak

Discussion on the current date of the town sites firebreak order be brought forward by four (4) weeks to the start of November for the 21/22 season and beyond. The discussion centered on the town’s general preparedness and that 1 December is too late to be making reduction measures compulsory.

The dates for land outside the gazetted townsite will not be changed at this stage.

COMMITTEE DECISION

4/20 Moved Roger House, seconded Tony Fisher, that the Committee recommend to Council that the date that all firebreaks and fire hazard reduction measures be completed within the gazetted town sites within the Shire be brought forward to 2 November 2021 and to remain at 2 November in subsequent years

Carried 5/0

13.2 Health Precinct

Discussion regarding the “Health Precinct” area, which includes Hospital, Springhaven, Soldier Rd and Loton Close ILU’s, and what is the best way to make this area as safe as possible during a major fire and what would be required if there was a need to evacuate the area in an emergency or to stay and defend the buildings.

It was agreed that a separate meeting be organised with relevant emergency responders and stakeholders.

ACTION ITEM

Rob Cowie to organise meeting with representatives from the following organisations;

- **WACHS**
- **Kojonup VFRS**
- **Kojonup VBFB**
- **Kojonup Shire including Springhaven Aged Care Facility**

14 NEXT MEETING

Thursday 25 February 2021 at 7:30 pm

15 CLOSURE

There being no further business to discuss the Presiding Member thanked the members for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 8:35pm.

16 ATTACHMENTS (SEPARATE)