



SHIRE OF BROOKTON

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BFAC)

MINUTES

Thursday 30th March 2017

Commencement of Meeting 7:30 pm

These minutes were confirmed as a true and correct record of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting held on 30th March 2017

Presiding Member:.....**Date:**.....

Shire of Brookton

Bush Fire Advisory Committee held 30th March 2017

with a scheduled commencement at 7:30 pm

Table of Contents

1.03.17	DECLARATION OF OPENING / ATTENDANCE	3
2.03.17	ANNOUNCEMENTS OF VISITORS	3
3.03.17	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MINUTES	3
4.03.17	BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES – BUSHFIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP	4
5.03.17	ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PRESIDING MEMBER WITHOUT DISCUSSION	5
6.03.17	CORRESPONDENCE	5
7.03.17	GENERAL BUSINESS	6
7.03.17.01	FUEL CARDS	6
7.03.17.02	AVL UPDATES	6
7.03.17.03	PROPOSED CHANGE OF DATE - RESTRICTED BURNING PERIOD	6
7.03.17.04	CHANGES OF SEASON DATE WITHIN ONE FIRE SEASON	6
7.03.17.05	BROOKTON SHIRES MANAGEMENT POLICY - COUNCIL ACTIVITIES DURING A HARVEST & VEHICLE MOVEMENT BAN	8
8.03.17	BRIGADES REPORT – CAPTAINS	9
8.03.17.01	CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER	9
8.03.17.02	EAST BRIGADE	9
8.03.17.03	WEST BRIGADE	9
8.03.17.04	CENTRAL BRIGADE	9
8.03.17.05	RANGERS REPORT	10
8.03.17.06	VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE	10
9.03.17	DOAC REPORT	10
10.03.17	DFES REPORT	12
11.03.17	NEW BUSINESS	13
12.03.17	NEXT MEETING	14
13.03.17	CLOSURE	14

1.03.17 DECLARATION OF OPENING / ATTENDANCE

Murray Hall opened the meeting at 7.38 pm and thanked everyone for their attendance.

Attendance

Murray Hall	Chairman, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Travis Eva	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, East Brigade
Tim Evans	Captain - West Brigade
Troy Bassett	Captain - Central Brigade
Bevan Walters	Captain - East Brigade
Georgie Beecroft	
Len Simmons	
Blair Montague	
Scott Atkins	
Neville Messenger	
Ashley Hobbs	
Dennis Wilkinson	
Jaime Blight	
Dean Atkins	

DFES Representative

Paul Blechynden	DFES Area Manager, Narrogin District
-----------------	--------------------------------------

Shire Representatives

Ian D'Arcy	Chief Executive Officer
Courtney Fulwood	Works Administration Officer (minute taker)
Katrina Crute	Deputy Shire President

Apologies:

Les Eyre
DOAC Representative

2.03.17 ANNOUNCEMENTS OF VISITORS

3.03.17 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

MOVED: TRAVIS EVA SECONDED: GEORGIE BEECROFT

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting held on 29th September 2016, be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

BFAC 1.03.17
CARRIED

**4.03.17 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES – BUSHFIRE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP**

Bushfire Advisory Committee Working Group met on the 8th March 2017 to discuss changes to the Firebreak Order for 2017-2018 and the relocation of Wayne Thompson's Fire Radio

Attachment 4.03.17(a) Proposed changes to Firebreak Order 2017-2018

Attachment 4.03.17(b) Firebreak Order 2016-2017

**BUSHFIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION
MOVED: TRAVIS EVA SECONDED: JAMIE BLIGHT**

That the Bushfire Advisory Committee acknowledges the proposed changes to the Shire of Brookton Firebreak Order 2017/2018 as presented in *Attachment 4.03.17(a)*.

BFAC 2.03.17
CARRIED

The Committee discuss the proposed changes by the Working Group and resolved to further amend some of the wording in relation to fire management measures for in Sections 1.2, 2.1 and 2.2 of the Notice, with the view to requesting Council adopt the final changes.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION
MOVED: TRAVIS EVA SECONDED: JAMIE BLIGHT**

That Council endorsed the revised Shire of Brookton Firebreak Order 2017/2018 as amended by the Bushfire Advisory Committee and presented in *Attachment 4.03.17(c)*.

BFAC 3.03.17
CARRIED

The Committee discussed concerns regarding the burning garden refuse and open camping or cooking fires during prohibited burning season. It was agreed that a Local Law should be adopted by the Council to be used in enforcing the prohibited burning in relation to these types of activities.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

MOVED: TRAVIS EVA SECONDED: JAMIE BLIGHT

That Council create a local law to restrict the burning garden refuse and open camping or cooking fires during prohibited burning season.

BFAC 4.03.17

CARRIED

BUSHFIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION

MOVED: TIM EVANS SECONDED: ASHLEY HOBBS

That the Bushfire Advisory Committee endorses the relocation of Fire Radio from Wayne Thompson's property to Jamie Blight's property.

BFAC 5.03.17

CARRIED

5.03.17 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PRESIDING MEMBER WITHOUT DISCUSSION
--

Nil

6.03.17 CORRESPONDENCE

Email received: 7/03/2017

To whom it man concern,

Regarding Balco's harvest ban exception.

We would like to raise our concerns of fire risk to our farm house as it is approximately 700-800 metres from the nearest hay shed with a large percentage of their paddock is covered in hay chaff from the plant.

The main exit for the house runs past the hay plant and with 3 young children if there was to be a fire and strong North/East winds it would be near impossible to exit.

Due to these concerns we would like to see all future exceptions for Balco's hay plant to be cancelled.

Thank you.

Murray Hall advised the committee Balco Pty Ltd currently have no exemption in place and future exemption requests will be reviewed.

7.03.17 GENERAL BUSINESS

7.03.17.01 FUEL CARDS

Brigade Captain's to distribute fuel allowance amounts to active members.

Murray Hall advised the brigade Captain's to distribute fuel allowance amongst each brigade. The value of \$2,000.00 is to be distributed to each brigade.

7.03.17.02 AVL UPDATES

Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) updates required for the below Tenders

1. Brookton East 4.4
2. Brookton West 2.4 R
3. Brookton West 2.4
4. Brookton Central 2.4

Brigade Captions to ensure the below AVL updates:

1. Un-isolate the vehicle and wait until the Emergency Distress Button light is solid green as it will not update if flashing green. If solid green cannot be achieved it will be necessary to relocate the vehicle to an area with better GSM coverage
2. Leave the vehicle in this condition for 30 minutes to allow sufficient time for the firmware update to be loaded onto the unit.
3. Note: do not activate lights or sirens during this period.

Paul Blechynden advised all AVL updates in the Brookton Tenders have been completed.

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee supports the purchase of two additional mobile AVL units to be installed in the Shire of Brookton plant equipment.

7.03.17.03 PROPOSED CHANGE OF DATE - RESTRICTED BURNING PERIOD

The unrestricted burning period to commence 1st April 2017.

7.03.17.04 CHANGES OF SEASON DATE WITHIN ONE FIRE SEASON

Bush Fires Act 1954

- Division 2 – Prohibited Burning times

Unconfirmed Brookton Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes 30th March 2017

(7) Subject to subsection (7B), in any year in which a local government considers that seasonal conditions warrant a variation of the prohibited burning times in its district the local government may, after consultation with an authorised CALM Act officer if forest land is situated in the district, vary the prohibited burning times in respect of that year in the district or a part of the district by —

(a) shortening, extending, suspending or reimposing a period of prohibited burning times; or

(b) imposing a further period of prohibited burning times.

(7B) A variation of prohibited burning times shall not be made under subsection (7) if that variation would have the effect of shortening or suspending those prohibited burning times by, or for, more than 14 successive days

- Division 3 — Restricted burning times

(5) Subject to subsection (5B) in any year in which a local government considers that seasonal conditions so warrant the local government may, after consultation with an authorised CALM Act officer if forest land is situated in its district —

(a) vary the restricted burning times in respect of that year in the district or a part of the district by —

(i) shortening, extending, suspending or reimposing a period of restricted burning times; or

(ii) imposing a further period of restricted burning times; or

(b) vary the prescribed conditions by modifying or suspending all or any of those conditions.

(5B) A variation shall not be made under subsection (5) if that variation would have the effect of —

(a) shortening the restricted burning times by; or

(b) suspending the restricted burning times, or any prescribed condition, for,

more than 14 successive days during a period that would, in the absence of the variation under subsection (5), be part of the restricted burning times for that zone in that year.

**7.03.17.05 BROOKTON SHIRES MANAGEMENT POLICY - COUNCIL
ACTIVITIES DURING A HARVEST & VEHICLE MOVEMENT
BAN**

Title:	1.42 Council Activities during a Harvest & Vehicle Movement Ban
Responsibility:	Principal Works Supervisor
Last Updated	November 2016
Review Date:	May 2017

Objective:

To provide direction to the Principal Works Supervisor on what impact a Harvest & Vehicle Movement Ban has on outside crew activities during such a declaration.

Procedure:

During a declared Harvest & Vehicle Movement Ban, the outside crew cannot work or use a vehicle, equipment machinery powered by an internal combustion engine on land covered by bush, crop, pasture or stubble, as there is a chance that activity could start a fire. This would ordinarily stop the crew pushing or accessing (loading) gravel from pits unless the Principal Works Supervisor is satisfied that the access to the pit, and the pit itself, is completely free of flammable material and or it is immediately adjacent to the road reserve with no 'movement' into or from a paddock being required.

For clarity, that does not mean the outside crew cannot mow parks and gardens within the Townsite of Brookton, or work in the road reserve doing road maintenance or construction, however if works involve clearing or slashing or grading the shoulders of a bitumen road, then these particular activities should not be undertaken during the hours of the ban.

Further information for the general public about what is permitted and not during such a declaration is contained here:

<https://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/totalfirebans/Pages/TotalFireBanWhatCantIDo.aspx>

8.03.17 BRIGADES REPORT – CAPTAINS

8.03.17.01 CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER

Murray Hall thanked the following people for their hard work and support over the 2016/17 fire season;

- *Shire of Brookton staff,*
- *Eleesha Coote, wishing her all the best on maternity leave,*
- *The radio base operators,*
- *Local businesses for allowing staff to attend fires during work hours; and*
- *All volunteers*

8.03.17.02 EAST BRIGADE

Bevan Walters advised the East Brigade attended two major fires over the 2016/17 fire season; The fire caused by a mower in December 2016 and the recent fire at Eva's property.

8.03.17.03 WEST BRIGADE

Tim Evan advised the West Brigade attended two major fires over the 2016/17 season. Ed Kendell was humbled by the attendance of volunteers to the fire on his property. Tim Evans; Where are the Shire of Brookton at with receiving the Fire Response Identification Stickers of fire brigade members vehicles? Paul Blechynden (DFES) gave an update on the requirement for the Fire Response Identification Stickers.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

MOVED: MURRAY HALL SECONDED: TRAVIS EVA

To action item number 6.09.16.02 of the pervious Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting minutes to request to Council to order 50 Fire Response Identification Stickers.

BFAC 6.03.17
CARRIED

8.03.17.04 CENTRAL BRIGADE

The Central Fire brigade have attended several fires of the 2016/17 fire season; header fire at Eva's property, fire at the Olive Farm, hay stack fire at Balco, lighting strike fire at Pike's property.

Central brigade reported the Central Tender foam applicator system is blocked.

Courtney Fulwood (Works Administration Technical Officer) to advise Geoff Forward (Principal Works Supervisor) the Central Tender foam system requires servicing.

8.03.17.05 RANGERS REPORT

NIL

8.03.17.06 VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Scott Atkins advised the Brookton Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service (VFRS) have attended several car accidents and fires over the 2016/17 fire season.

VFRS have had good attendance of volunteers.

Scott Atkins advised to all brigade that water is not available accessible near Dale - Kokeby Road had the brigade travelled to Beverley for restock of water.

9.03.17 DOAC REPORT

Pre-season

- Lots of canvassing of the community to get fire brakes and fire equipment ready.
- Work with ranger services – doing pre deadline checks and info drops about fire preparedness yielding great results with higher compliance levels
- Desktop activity ran at pre summer BFAC involving a theoretical but realistic car crash on the highway NE of town, catching fire. This on a Total fire ban day with stifling NE hot wind which saw the town potentially consumed within an Hr and all in the room testing their responses. One Point I made -was once the desktop theme was announced- I as chief and the deputy declared we were out of town on other duties and this prompted the FCO's to create their responses and the challenges of engaging other agencies and the prospects of becoming a level 2 incident, and how and when to decide actions. It was a sobering activity for all. Thanks to Paul Blechynden for creating and running this.

Incidents

- Supported VRS in several vehicle fires causing small grass fires on the Brookton Hwy – one involved a road train dolly catching fire with a collapsed wheel bearing on a warm windy day, Some quick action by West Brigade members and private equipment saved the day
- Late model harvester burnt to the ground and about 10ha crop –Thanks to Pingelly supporting us there
- Remote Pumping generator burnt to ground on a near harvest ban day (Turbo failure) in The Olive farm- The issue here was that it was directly connected to 2000l fuel tank

- Fire, Christmas Day arvo – Petrol ute in a Paddock
- 30ha crop and stubble fire between Christmas and New Year – header front vrs rock big response from all brigades and Pingelly
- Supported the East Popo fire on the day and rotation later
- SP hay –hay refuse site where- sample Bags (plastic bag with Hay in side) accidentally got disposed and spontaneously combusted in the sun
- Several lightning strikes –
 - one on straw stack
 - One just in Beverley shire – In a very sandy swamp area – No Fire trucks could access –Too sandy – Land-cruisers only with loaders
 - Thanks to Beverley with their cooperation.
- 2 Large fires Balco Hay – Wet Hay being stacked –or restacked burying wet bales in a stack- 100t tonnes hay lost- Luckily Green grass everywhere around plant
 - The first fire was very poorly managed by Balco staff–
 - with no action at fire at first- standing around waiting for Volunteers
 - no Hydrants equipped with hoses / Branches
 - Site fire truck inoperable – flat batteries
 - Hay stacked near Hydrants

4 days to extinguish Thanks to Brookton and Pingelly VFRS here too.
Actually it should be noted -the very close relationship between Brookton VFRS and Brookton Bush Fire at a lot of incidents

A very terse meeting by myself and Travis Eva (deputy Chief) reminding them of their obligations under section 18 BF act saw a flurry of activity begin. A latter visit by Paul Blechynden in uniform backing us saw a different approach next day. I used my powers granted by shire, revoking all special concessions they enjoyed regarding Harvest ban activity, as their training and equipment (fire truck) where intertwined with these exemptions. Further meetings with management from South Australia rejuvenated their interest in fire management with all equipment checked and training starting immediately

- A Second fire a week later (9pm) saw a very different approach- Staff on hydrant hoses and fire trucks everywhere – We were able to just stand guarding their plant and sheds from ember attack ½ day to extinguish

Issues

- Comms callouts- incident location very poor- especially regarding incident location along Brookton Hwy. East and West mix ups especially –
 - One incident saw the incident East of Town but call out was for West.
 - Another saw us looking for a car fire West of Brookton but was for West of Corrigin on Brookton Hwy 90kms away. All this adds to volunteer fatigue
- Requested Maintenance schedules on Burn over deluge systems too onerous to manage by volunteers- Annually would suffice and or after say 5 incidents – Some trucks may not move for 2 months Volunteer fatigue here
- Fire Brake orders – we have just done a review of the wording of our Fire brake orders and also compared surrounding shires –Whilst our intentions haven't changes

a lot –the wording and intentions between different property sizes and capabilities, slashing, generators

This was a 3 hr plus meeting with Captains and Ranger services to get motions worded and ready for debate and ratification at our BFAC meeting 30 March

- Population decline – Our Brigades are becoming less – not from lack of enthusiasm but sheer population decline. I notice now- a big cooperation across shire boundaries and brigades travelling further as opposed to 10 years ago.

Big thanks to surrounding Chiefs and Captains for their constant communication even with harvest ban management and just time talking about Bush Fire issues.

10.03.17 DFES REPORT

2016/17 Fire season – Paul Blechynden

A significantly quieter season compared to last season; East Popanyinning and Ranford fires the most significant locally. February 2017 eight arson attempts Dwellingup to Mt Barker.

Reports

000 records indicate that there have been 16 fires recorded for the Brookton Shire; I understand that few if any reports have been lodged from the Bush Fire Brigade / Shire.

The benefits of completing reports include:

- Better records and support for members attending, particularly once the Presumptive Legislation comes into effect for volunteer fire fighter in respect to hazardous fires and the 12 prescribed cancers.
- 000 reports may not capture every fire that occurs in the shire. Forwarding reports provides a more accurate picture of the Brookton Shire and will help with future funding bids.

DOAC, Narrogin 16 March 2017. Minutes are still to be provided, some items discussed included

- Discussion on a simpler bushfire report form
- Discussion occurred on improving the 000 calls to BFBs. Support from DFES senior personnel present to trial changes for those shires interested to change 000 agreements that include group call and SMS lists. Benefits include fitting more people onto the calls and providing SMS's to key people; please let me now if you are interested in trialling these arrangements?
- Push to increase the number of WAERN radios
- Automatic Vehicle Location system (AVL)
- Installed at the start of the bushfire season

- Recommendation from Ferguson Report
- Distress alarm function
- Allows vehicles to be identified at a fire; brigade members can request access to web-based system to view vehicles.
- Portable units available for use on earthmoving equipment etc.

Training program

- Introduction to Bush Fire Fighting
- Bushfire Fighting Pingelly
- Ground Controller 12 September 2017
- Fire Control Officer 22 August 2017
- Other training that the shire may be interested in?
Information sessions, conducted at brigade sheds as part of pre-season work
- Radio use Automatic Vehicle Location system
- Map reading Community bushfire awareness
- Crew protection – discussion/hands-on (burn-over, deluge system, in-cab air units)
- Rural Urban interface (issues and strategies in fighting bush fires in built up areas)
- Walk through responding to a serious bush fire incident

Shire / Brigade Mapping

Working with shires to produce shire / brigade maps

Bushfire information

Requesting feedback on a local initiative – good idea or not anything missing?

11.03.17 NEW BUSINESS

The following questions were asked from the Brookton Bush Fire Brigades;

1. Are volunteer numbers required for training courses?

Paul Blechynden replied; Yes

2. Are 457 visa persons covered by insurance?

Murray Hall advised; Yes, if they volunteer has filled out a membership form and provided to the Shire of Brookton or is under the direction of a brigade member.

3. Received a request to burn crown land

All crown land is managed by an agency and to forward the requests onto the agency.

4. Request for additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

All requests to be forwarded to Murray Hall and to be considered with ESL budget.

Paul Blechynden (DFES) advised if the budget cannot cover the PPE request advised DFES and may be able to provide PPE

5. Are any hand held radio and aerials available?

All volunteers with hand held radios to advised Murray Hall for aerial requests.

Len Simmons expressed concerns for access to reserves.

Ian D'Arcy responded he will be meeting with Department of Parks And Wildlife - Mundaring regarding prescribed burns in reserves.

Ian D'Arcy to invite CBFCO and DCBFCO to the meeting.

Neville Messenger requested an available fire radio.

Courtney Fulwood (Works Administration Technical Officer) to follow up with Geoff Forward (Principal Works Supervisor) for radios that are no longer required by the Shire of Brookton and possibility of reallocating to brigades.

Travis Eva thanked Murray Hall for his commitment and service to the Brookton Community over the 2016/17 fire season.

12.03.17	NEXT MEETING
-----------------	---------------------

The next committee meeting will be held 14th September 2017.

13.03.17	CLOSURE
-----------------	----------------

There being no further business Murray Hall (Chair) closed the meeting at 10.48 pm and thanked all for their attendance.