



**Shire of Murray**

# **Minutes**

**Bush Fire Advisory Committee  
Meeting**

**Wednesday 21 May 2025  
at 6:00pm**

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**MINUTES OF SHIRE OF MURRAY  
BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT THE MURRAY SHIRE COUNCIL, 1915 PINJARRA ROAD, PINJARRA  
ON WEDNESDAY, 21 MAY 2025 AT 6:00 PM**

**1 DECLARATION OF OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS**

The Chair Cr A Rogers declared the meeting open the time being 6:00pm.

It should be noted that decisions of this committee are only recommendations to and not decisions of Council. Committee recommendations should therefore not be actioned on or otherwise relied upon until Council has formally considered and decided on the Committee recommendations.

**2 ATTENDANCES/APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

**PRESENT**

Cr Ange Rogers (BFAC Chairperson), John Kowal (Manager Ranger and Community Safety), Nicole Stevens (Coordinator Ranger and Community Safety/CBFCO), Douglas McLarty (FCO Coolup VBFB), Anthony Cocivera (FCO Dwellingup VBFB), Brendan Webster (FCO North Dandalup VBFB), Jim Camplin (FCO South Yunderup/Ravenswood VBFB), Liam Barker (Proxy for FCO West Murray VBFB) and Kevin Jones (FCO Pinjarra VFRS).

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Dean Unsworth (Chief Executive Officer), Chantelle Goff (Minute Taker), Ricky Southgate (DFES), Justyn Bennett (DCBFCO) and Peter Thurkle (DCBFCO).

**APOLOGIES**

Justin Crotty (FCO West Murray VBFB), Chris Thompson and DBCA Representative.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Nil.

There were eight (8) members of the public and two (2) members of staff in attendance at this time.

**3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING**

**3.1 Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting - 22 May 2024**

**Recommendation**

**That the Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 22 May 2024 be noted.**

**3.2 Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting – 2 November 2024**

**Recommendation**

**That the Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on Saturday 2 November 2024 be noted.**

**4 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Nil.

## **5 BUSINESS ARISING**

### **5.1 Review of BFAC Terms of Reference**

File Ref: D25/17542  
Previous Items: Nil.  
Applicant: Nil.  
Author and Title: John Kowal, Manager Ranger and Community Safety  
Declaration of Interest: Nil.  
Voting Requirements: Simple Majority  
Appendices: Item 5.1 - Appendix 1 - Amended BFAC Terms of Reference (pages 4 - 10)

#### **Recommendation/Committee Decision BFAC25/001**

**Moved: D McLarty**

**Seconded: J Camplin**

**That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee:**

- 1. Recommends that Council endorses the amended BFAC Terms of Reference at Appendix 1, with the amendment that the CBFCO does vote, but excluding when the position of CBFCO becomes vacant at an AGM, or at any other time the position is to be filled.**
- 2. Recommends the new BFAC Terms of Reference be circulated to all members of the BFAC and all Shire of Murray Bushfire Brigades.**

**In Favour: Cr Ange Rogers, Douglas McLarty, Nicole Stevens, Anthony Cocivera, Jim Camplin, Kevin Jones, Brendan Webster and Liam Barker**

**Against: Nil.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8:0**

Recommendation

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee:

1. Recommends that Council endorses the amended BFAC Terms of Reference at Appendix 1.
2. Recommends the new BFAC Terms of Reference be circulated to all members of the BFAC and all Shire of Murray Bushfire Brigades.

Reason for Change: To clarify that the incumbent CBFCO shouldn't vote in an election to ensure incumbency doesn't have an advantage over other nominees, but that the CBFCO does vote on all other items at any BFAC meeting.

#### **In Brief**

To consider the proposed amendments to the Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) Terms of Reference.

#### **Background**

A recent review of the BFAC Terms of Reference was undertaken to ensure that the Terms of Reference were correct and reflect the requirements of the BFAC and Council.

The BFAC Terms of Reference were included as part of the Bush Fire Brigades Standard Operating Procedures Appendix Register which were accepted by the BFAC at its meeting held on 16 August 2023 and then endorsed by Council at its meeting held on 28 September 2023, (OCM23/131).

### Report Detail

A recent review of the BFAC Terms of Reference was undertaken to review the composition of the BFAC membership due to the changes in certain positions within the Shire together with the timelines for BFAC meetings, and the issuing of BFAC documentation. A copy of the reviewed BFAC Terms of Reference showing the proposed changes is provided at **Appendix 1**.

The major change is in relation to voting members. The view of the Chief Executive Office was that Shire of Murray officers should be advising the Bush Fire Advisory Committee (and in due course Council), and that they should not have a formal vote. This reflects their statutory and advisory roles.

Further, it is recommended that the BFAC and Council considers an alternative position to the current Standard Operating Procedure 8.2 where it states

#### 8.2 Nominations for BFCO and Permit Issuing Officers to the Shire

- (iii) the BFAC shall select (1) one of the nominated BFCO's for the position of CBFCD and select (1) one of the nominated BFCO's for the position of DCBFCO.

### Council Plan

<b>Focus Area</b>	Planet
<b>Outcome 6</b>	A resilient community equipped to respond to natural disasters and other emergencies.
<b>Objectives 6.1</b>	Minimise risks and impacts from fires, floods and natural disasters.
<b>Actions 6.1.1 and 6.1.2</b>	Implement bushfire mitigation works. Implement the Local Emergency Risk Management Plan to raise community awareness, understanding and confidence in what the Shire is doing to address bushfire risks.

### Other Strategic Links

Nil.

### Statutory Environment

Section 37 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954* deals with the establishment of committees and states:

#### 67. Advisory committees

(1) A local government may at any time appoint such persons as it thinks fit as a bush fire advisory committee for the purpose of advising the local government regarding all matters relating to the preventing, controlling and extinguishing of bush fires, the planning of the layout of fire-breaks in the district, prosecutions for breaches of this Act, the formation of bush fire brigades and the grouping thereof under group brigade officers, the ensuring of co-operation and co-ordination of bush fire brigades in their efforts and activities, and any other matter relating to bush fire control whether of the same kind as, or a different kind from, those specified in this subsection.

(2) A committee appointed under this section shall include a member of the council of the local government nominated by it for that purpose as a member of the committee, and the committee shall elect one of their number to be chairman thereof.

(3) *In respect to a committee so appointed, the local government shall fix the quorum for the transaction of business at meetings of the committee and may —*

- (a) make rules for the guidance of the committee; and*
- (b) accept the resignation in writing of, or remove, any member of the committee; and*
- (c) where for any reason a vacancy occurs in the office of a member of the committee, appoint a person to fill that vacancy.*

(4) *A committee appointed under this section —*

- (a) may from time to time meet and adjourn as the committee thinks fit;*
- (b) shall not transact business at a meeting unless the quorum fixed by the local government is present;*
- (c) is answerable to the local government and shall, as and when required by the local government, report fully on its activities.*

### **Sustainability & Risk Considerations**

*Economic - (Impact on the Economy of the Shire and Region)*

Nil.

*Social – (Quality of life to community and/or affected landowners)*

Nil.

*Environment – (Impact on environment's sustainability)*

Nil.

*Policy Implications*

Nil.

*Risk Management Implications*

<i>Risk Level</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Low	Nil.

### **Consultation**

The review and amendments of the BFAC Terms of Reference has been completed in consultation with the CEO, Director Corporate Services, Manager Governance and Coordinator Ranger and Community Safety (previous CESC).

### **Resource Implications**

*Financial*

Nil.

*Workforce*

Nil.

### **Options**

The Committee has the following options –

1. Support the recommendation.
2. Amend the recommendation.

3. Reject the recommendation and determine an alternate position.

**Conclusion**

The proposed amendments to the BFAC Terms of Reference are considered minor and have been proposed to only include changes in Shire positions and to ensure that sufficient time is provided for the members of the BFAC to receive BFAC documents and to ensure that the BFAC Terms of Reference remain contemporary.



## 5.2 Amendment to Bush Fire Brigades Standard Operating Procedures

File Ref: D25/17734  
Previous Items: Nil.  
Applicant: Nil.  
Author and Title: John Kowal, Manager Ranger and Community Safety  
Declaration of Interest: Nil.  
Voting Requirements: Simple Majority  
Appendices: Item 5.2 - Appendix 1 - Extract of Clause 8 - Shire of Murray Bush Fire Brigades Standard Operating Procedures (page 11)  
Item 5.2 - Appendix 2 - Proposed Amended Clause 8 - Shire of Murray Bush Fire Brigades Standard Operating Procedures (page 12)

### Recommendation/Committee Decision BFAC25/002

Moved: B Webster

Seconded: D McLarty

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommends to replace the current Standard Operating Procedure 8.2 (Appendix 1) to the new proposed Standard Operating procedure 8.2 (Appendix 2).

**In Favour:** Cr Ange Rogers, Douglas McLarty, Nicole Stevens, Anthony Cocivera, Jim Camplin, Kevin Jones, Brendan Webster and Liam Barker

**Against:** Nil

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8:0**

### In Brief

Amendments to clause 8 of the Bush Fire Brigade Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) is requested to provide clarification to the procedures for the nomination and selection of Bush Fire Control Officers (FCO), Bush Fire Control Officers – Permit Issuing Only (FOCO-PIO), Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO) and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (DCBFCO).

### Background

A review was recently conducted of the SOP's and a recommendation is made for the amendment to clause 8 of the SOP's to provide a more open process be supported for the nomination, assessment and selection process for the positions of FCO's, FCO-PIO, CBFCO and DCBFCO.

### Report Detail

The SOP's were introduced in 2023 after significant consultation with Shire of Murray Volunteer Bushfire Brigades (brigades), FCO's, including the then CBFCO and DCBFCO. An extract of the current clause eight (8) of the SOP's is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Recently, the SOP's have been reviewed to ensure that they reflect current practices, and it is considered that clause 8 of the SOP that deals with the nominations and the selection process for the FCO's, FCO-PIO, CBFCO and the DCBFCO does not truly reflect the process that is actually undertaken, or the desire of Brigades. The proposed amended clause 8 is attached at **Appendix 2**.

### Council Plan

<b>Focus Area</b>	Planet
<b>Outcome 6</b>	A resilient community equipped to respond to natural disasters and other emergencies

<b>Objectives 6.1</b>	Minimise risks and impacts from fires, floods and other natural disasters.
<b>Actions 6.1.2</b>	Implement the Local Emergency Risk Management Plan to raise community awareness, understanding and confidence in what the Shire is doing to address bushfire risks.

### Other Strategic Links

Nil.

### Statutory Environment

The Shire of Murray Bush Fire Brigades Local Law provides the requirements for SOP's for the management and operation of the Shire's Volunteer Bushfire Brigades including the election of brigade office bearers including FCO's, CBFCO and DCBFCO, Captains, Lieutenants, Secretaries and Treasurers.

The appointment of FCO's, CBFCO and DCBFCO is dealt with in accordance with section 38 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, which states:

**38. Local government may appoint bush fire control officer**

*(1) A local government may from time to time appoint such persons as it thinks necessary to be its bush fire control officers under and for the purposes of this Act, and of those officers shall subject to section 38A(2) appoint 2 as the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and the Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer who shall be first and second in seniority of those officers, and subject thereto may determine the respective seniority of the other bush fire control officers appointed by it.*

### Sustainability & Risk Considerations

*Economic - (Impact on the Economy of the Shire and Region)*

Nil.

*Social – (Quality of life to community and/or affected landowners)*

Nil.

*Environment – (Impact on environment's sustainability)*

Nil.

*Policy Implications*

Nil.

*Risk Management Implications*

<i>Risk Level</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Low	Nil.

### Consultation

There has been consultation with the CEO, Director Corporate Services, Coordinator Ranger and Community Safety about the need for the review and the amendment to the SOP's. BFAC members were also provided a copy of the proposed amendment prior to the BFAC meeting.

**Resource Implications***Financial*

Nil.

*Workforce*

Nil.

**Options**

The Committee has the following options –

1. Support the recommendation.
2. Amend the recommendation.
3. Reject the recommendation and determine an alternate position.

**Conclusion**

The proposed amendments to clause 8 of the SOP's is to ensure that the SOP's reflect the true process undertaken for the nomination, assessment and the selection of the FCO. FCO-PIO, CBFCO and DCBFCO that are critical for the Shire's Bushfire Management Structure in accordance with the Bush Fires Act 1954, and the Shires Bushfire Management requirements under State Hazard Plan Fire together with other Shire bushfire management plans and policies.

### 5.3 Nominations for Bush Fire Control Officers

File Ref:	D25/17508
Previous Items:	Nil.
Applicant:	Nil.
Author and Title:	John Kowal, Manager Ranger and Community Safety
Declaration of Interest:	Nil.
Voting Requirements:	Simple Majority
Appendices:	Item 5.3 - Appendix 1 - Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade ( VBFB ) Annual General Meeting ( AGM ) Minutes (pages 13-28) Item 5.3 - Appendix 2 - Copy of Email - Issuing of Expression of Interest - CBFCO and DCBFCO Positions (pages 29-30) Item 5.3 - Appendix 3 - Expression of Interest (EOI) for Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO) Position (pages 31-38) Item 5.3 - Appendix 4 - Expression of Interest ( EOI ) for Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer ( DCBFCO ) Position (pages 39-46)

Secret ballot conducted by Manager Governance (Returning Officer) at 6:04pm.  
BFAC Chairperson declared the successful candidate was Nicole Stevens with 4 votes.

#### Recommendation/Committee Decision BFAC25/003

Moved: K Jones

Seconded: B Webster

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee:

1. Determines the successful candidate for the position of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer by the conducting of a secret ballot by the voting members of the BFAC.

**In Favour:** Cr Ange Rogers, Douglas McLarty, Anthony Cocivera, Jim Camplin, Kevin Jones, Brendan Webster and Liam Barker

**Against:** Nil.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7:0**

#### Recommendation/Committee Decision BFAC25/004

Moved: A Cocivera

Seconded: N Stevens

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee:

1. Recommends to Council that the following persons be appointed by the CEO under delegated authority to the position of Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer:
  - Justyn Bennett – Coolup VBFB
  - Brendan Webster – North Dandalup VBFB
  - Jarron Vanelst – Dwellingup VBFB

**In Favour:** Cr Ange Rogers, Douglas McLarty, Nicole Stevens, Anthony Cocivera, Jim Camplin, Kevin Jones, Brendan Webster and Liam Barker

**Against:** Nil.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8:0**

**Recommendation/Committee Decision BFAC25/005****Moved: B Webster****Seconded: J Camplin****That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee:**

1. **Recommends to Council that the following persons be appointed by the CEO under delegated authority to the position of Bush Fire Control Officer and to the position of Bush Fire Control Officer – Permit Issuing Only:**

**Bush Fire Control Officers**

- **Douglas McLarty – Coolup VBFB**
- **Anthony Cocivera – Dwellingup VBFB**
- **Michael Webster - North Dandalup VBFB**
- **Laurie Caffin – South Yunderup/Ravenswood VBFB**
- **Justin Crotty – West Murray VBFB**
- **Kevin Jones – Pinjarra VFRS**

**Bush Fire Control Officers – Permit Issuing Only:**

- **Chris Sattler – Coolup VBFB**
- **Stuart Kirkham – Coolup VBFB**
- **Dave Turner – Dwellingup VBFB**
- **Lorraine Webster – North Dandalup VBFB**
- **Brendan Webster – North Dandalup VBFB**
- **Graeme Baldwin - South Yunderup/Ravenswood VBFB**
- **Andrew Taylor – West Murray VBFB**

2. **The Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommends to Council that the following positions be re-advertised amongst Shire of Murray Bush Fire Brigades with any nominations being referred to the CEO for consideration:**

- **Fire Weather Officer**
- **Deputy Fire Weather Officer**
- **Shire Training Coordinator**

**In Favour:** Cr Ange Rogers, Douglas McLarty, Nicole Stevens, Anthony Cocivera, Jim Camplin, Kevin Jones, Brendan Webster and Liam Barker

**Against:** Nil.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8:0****In Brief**

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) is to consider and recommend the appointment of the following positions in accordance with the *Bush Fires Act 1954* (the Act):

- **Bush Fire Control Officers;**
- **Bush Fire Control Officers - Permit Issuing Only;**

- Chief Bush Fire Control Officer;
- Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and;
- Fire Weather Officer and Deputy Fire Weather Officer.

## Background

In accordance with the Shire of Murray Bush Fire Brigades Local Law 2024 (local law) and the Shire of Murray Bush Fire Brigades Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) the nomination for Bush Fire Control Officers (FCO) and Bush Fire Control Officer - Permit Issuing Only are determined by each brigade at their respective Annual General Meetings (AGM) and this then also supports the Shire's BFAC membership structure. A copy of the AGM minutes from the following brigades are attached at **Appendix 1**:

- Coolup VBFB
- Dwellingup VBFB
- North Dandalup VBFB
- West Murray VBFB

The AGM for the South Yunderup/Ravenswood VBFB will be held on the 19 May 2025 and therefore a copy of these AGM minutes were not available to be distributed with the agenda.

With the introduction of delegated authority in recent years, the appointment by Council of FCO's, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, Fire Weather Officer and Deputy Fire Weather Officer is no longer required as the CEO has the delegated authority under *Section 48* of the Act to make these appointments. Additionally, the appointment of Fire Weather Officer/s also requires DFES endorsement.

However, the CEO continues to support the democratic process that currently exists.

## Report Detail

The proposal and recommendation presented to BFAC is to support the appointment of the nominated FCO's, including FCO's - Permit Issuing Only as nominated each of the brigades.

In consideration of the importance of both the key roles of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and the Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and ensuring that any brigade members nominating for either position is compliant with criteria as outlined in the Position Description for each of the roles as established under the SOP's, an Expression of Interest (EOI) process was undertaken and circulated on the 13 April 2025 to all brigade captains, brigade secretaries and the current CBFCO, DCBFCO's and FCO's with a closing date and time of 5pm Friday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

The following three (3) EOI submissions were received for the CBFCO role and three (3) EOI submissions were received for the DCBFCO role prior to the abovementioned closing date and time:

### Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

- Nicole Stevens
- Michael Webster
- Robert Wilson

### Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

- Justyn Bennett
- Brendan Webster

- Jarron Vanelst

A copy of the email detailing the Eol process with the Eol attachment that was sent to each brigade and other officers is attached at **Appendix 2**. A copy of each of the Eol submissions as received for the CBFCO role is attached at **Appendix 3** and the Eol submissions as received for the DCBFCO role are attached at **Appendix 4**.

The Director of Corporate Services and the Manager Ranger and Community Safety undertook a review of the Eol submissions, and it was considered that the submissions for the CBFCO role and the DCBFCO role satisfied the criteria as described in the Position Description in the SOP's.

### Council Plan

Focus Area	Planet
Outcome 6	A resilient community equipped to respond to natural disasters and other emergencies.
Objectives 6.1	Minimise risks and impacts from fires, floods and natural disasters.
Actions 6.1.1 and 6.1.2	Implement bushfire mitigation works. Implement the Local Emergency Risk Management Plan to raise community awareness, understanding and confidence in what the Shire is doing to address bushfire risks.

### Other Strategic Links

Nil.

### Statutory Environment

Local Government Act (1995)

5.21 Voting

(3) If the votes of members present are equally divided, the person presiding is to cast a second vote.

### Sustainability & Risk Considerations

*Economic - (Impact on the Economy of the Shire and Region)*

Nil.

*Social – (Quality of life to community and/or affected landowners)*

Nil.

*Environment – (Impact on environment's sustainability)*

Nil.

### Policy Implications

There are no policy implications, and the level of risk is considered to be low if the recommendation is endorsed. The proposed appointments under delegated authority are in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

*Risk Management Implications*

<i>Risk Level</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Low	Nil.

**Consultation**

In accordance with previously established procedures, all brigades are cognizant of the process for each brigade to nominate an FCO, PIO and a Fire Weather Officer.

All brigades were also contacted to ensure that they forwarded their AGM minutes to the Shire. This was to ensure that Shire had a record of each brigade's AGM minutes and also a copy of each brigade's respective nominations for FCO's. PCO's – Permit Issuing Only, Fire Weather Officer, Deputy Fire Weather Officer and Shire Training Coordinator.

**Resource Implications***Financial*

The cost of advertising the appointments in accordance with 38(2A) of the Act is accommodated within the annual operating budget.

*Workforce*

Nil.

**Options**

The Committee has the following options –

1. Support the recommendation.
2. Amend the recommendation.
3. Reject the recommendation and determine an alternate position.

**Conclusion**

The BFAC recommendations are for the consideration of Council. Should Council endorse the BFAC recommendations the CEO under delegated authority can then formally appoint persons in accordance with the provisions of the Act for the following positions:

- Chief Bush Fire Control Officer,
- Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer,
- Fire Control Officers,
- Fire Control Officers - Bush Fire Permit Issuing Only.



**5.4 2025/2026 Bushfire Compliance Notice**

File Ref: D25/17524  
Previous Items: Nil.  
Applicant: Nil.  
Author and Title: John Kowal, Manager Ranger and Community Safety  
Declaration of Interest: Nil.  
Voting Requirements: Simple Majority  
Appendices: Item 5.4 - Appendix 1 - Shire of Murray Bushfire Compliance Notice 2025 / 2026 Booklet

**Recommendation/Committee Decision BFAC25/006****Moved: D McLarty****Seconded: B Webster****That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee:**

- 1. Recommends that Council endorses the 2025/2026 Shire of Murray Bushfire Compliance Notice, as attached at Appendix 1; and,**
- 2. Recommends that Council approves for the publication of the 2025/2026 Shire of Murray Bushfire Compliance Notice in accordance with the provisions of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.**

**In Favour:** Ange Rogers, Douglas McLarty, Nicole Stevens, Anthony Cocivera, Jim Camplin, Kevin Jones, Brendan Webster and Liam Barker

**Against:** Nil.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8:0****In Brief**

To determine the Shire of Murray 2025/2026 Bushfire Compliance Notice (Notice) to manage bushfire related matters within the district in accordance with Section 33 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.

**Background**

The Shire of Murray Firebreak Notice was previously reviewed and amended in 2023 in compliance with the WALGA and DFES developed Guidance Notes that were provided to support Local Governments to produce a standard, clear, concise and enforceable Notice that aligns with regulatory requirements.

Further minor amendments of the 2025/2026 Notice have been again undertaken to include the feedback received from Bush Fire Brigades and Bush Fire Control Officers about the 2024/2025 Bushfire Compliance Notice to include:

- the provision for the burning of garden refuse and rubbish,
- the provisions for camp and cooking fires,
- provide clarification of the requirements for land over 45,000m<sup>2</sup>; and,
- provide further clarification regarding any items that require the burning of any solid fuel during the restricted and prohibited burning time, including the use of fire pits, chimineas, pizza ovens, solid fuel BBQ's that require the burning of wood, charcoal or heat beads.

## Report Detail

As stated, the Notice is developed in accordance with section 33 of the Act and is designed to provide important information about bushfire preparedness and prevention, bushfire risk mitigation plus sufficient means to direct landowners to undertake works to prevent the outbreak, spread or extension of a bushfire. The Notice also provides a mechanism for Special Work Orders to be issued to landowners to further reduce bushfire hazards, if required.

The proposed Notice will also be specifically formatted to be published within the *Government Gazette* and also within the local newspaper. All information contained in the Notice will also be advertised on the Shire's website and periodically various subjects and information from the Notice will be advertised on the Shire's social media site to bring to the attention of land owners/occupiers' important information during the bushfire season.

## Council Plan

Focus Area	Planet
Outcome 6	A resilient community equipped to respond to natural disasters and other emergencies.
Objective 6.1	Minimise risks and impacts from fires, floods and natural disasters.
Actions 6.1.1 and 6.1.2	Implement bushfire mitigation works. Implement the Local Emergency Risk Management Plan to raise community awareness, understanding and confidence in what the Shire is doing to address bushfire risks.

## Other Strategic Links

Nil.

## Statutory Environment

Section 33 of the Act provides local government with the legislative authority to make a Notice requiring all owners or occupiers of land within the district to undertake work on their land for preventing the outbreak of a bushfire, or for preventing the spread or extension of a bushfire which may occur.

Section 24G(2) of the *Bush Fires Act 1954* provides a local government the ability, by notice published in the Gazette and a newspaper circulating in its district, to prohibit or impose restrictions on the burning of garden refuse within its district that is otherwise permitted under section 24F of the Act.

Section 25(1)(1a) of the Act provides a local government the ability, by notice published in the Gazette and a newspaper circulated in its district, to prohibit or prohibit the lighting of fires in the open air in its district for the purpose of camping or cooking for such period during the prohibited burning times as is specified in the notice.

## Sustainability & Risk Considerations

*Economic - (Impact on the Economy of the Shire and Region)*

Nil.

*Social – (Quality of life to community and/or affected landowners)*

The proposed amendments provide further clarity for owners of land over 45,000m<sup>2</sup>. The proposed amendments also provide further clarification regarding any items that require the burning of any solid fuel during the restricted and prohibited burning time, including the use of fire pits, chimineas, pizza ovens, solid fuel BBQ's that require the burning of wood, charcoal or heat beads.

*Environment – (Impact on environment's sustainability)*

Nil.

*Policy Implications*

Nil.

*Risk Management Implications*

<i>Risk Level</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Low	The level of negative community feedback will likely be low as technically no change to the current Notice is proposed.

**Consultation**

The development of the Notice has taken place with consultation with Shire staff including Governance, Media and Communications, Rangers/FCO's and with the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and the Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

It is proposed that the Notice will be sent with the Shire's rate notices to every property owner. The Notice will also be publicly advertised in the local newspaper, Shire venues such as the Shire's Administration Centre, Libraries, Visitor Centres and also on the Shire's website and Social Media sites.

**Resource Implications***Financial*

Funds are provided in the annual budget for the development and publishing of the Notice.

*Workforce*

Nil.

**Options**

The Committee has the following options –

1. Support the recommendation.
2. Amend the recommendation.
3. Reject the recommendation and determine an alternate position.

**Conclusion**

The proposed Notice is required under section 33 of the Act and applies a reasonable standard of fire prevention requirements across land categories within the Shire to prevent the spread or extension of a bushfire. The Notice also prescribes additional Special Work Orders to be issued as required for the provision of additional requirements to manage any land that is considered to pose a higher bushfire risk.

## 6 REPORTS – EXTERNAL AGENCIES

### 6.1 CBFCO/Coordinator Ranger and Community Safety

File Ref: D25/19374  
 Author and Title: Nicole Stevens, CBFCO/Coordinator Ranger and Community Safety  
 Appendices: Nil.

#### In Brief

Dear Members,

This year presented us with a milder season than we are typically accustomed to. While I'd like to credit this to a well-educated community, I believe luck also played a part—especially given the high threat levels we experienced. That said, we have witnessed a few escaped burns during the restricted period.

In response to prevailing weather conditions, we extended the Prohibited Burning Period by four weeks and the Restricted Burning Period by an additional two weeks. Unfortunately, conditions have not yet been favourable enough to move into the Unrestricted Period.

Our brigades responded to a total of 179 incidents this season. The table below compares the previous 2 years of incident but does not include any incidents from May 6<sup>th</sup>. Many of these saw multiple Incident Controllers throughout with incidents managed by the Deputies, Captains, FCOs, Lieutenants, brigade members and I was able to attend several incidents to provide help, support and mentoring to those that I have mentioned above who were managing the incident and not actually taking over the incidents as Chief. This highlights the dedication, calibre and depth of leadership within our brigades. I'd like to commend all brigade leaders and members who stepped up to take on the command roles and who actively mentored others taking on responsibilities as Incident Controllers, Crew Leaders, Ground Controllers and Sector Commanders.

Incidents Attended and IRS Reports completed	2022/2023			2023/2024			2024/2025		
	Incidents Attended*	IRS Report completed	Perc. Completed %	Incidents Attended*	IRS Report completed	Perc. Completed %	Incidents Attended*	IRS Report completed	Perc. Completed %
<b>Brigade</b>									
COOLUP BFB	59	38	64%	89	47	53%	81	54	67%
DWELLINGUP BFB	24	16	67%	33	16	48%	45	5	11%
NORTH DANDALUP BFB	52	45	87%	90	68	76%	66	41	62%
STH YUNDERUP / RAVENSWOOD	75	53	71%	71	50	70%	77	50	65%
WEST MURRAY BFB	85	73	86%	129	113	88%	93	67	72%

The 12.2 appliance saw extensive use across the region. On only a few occasions were we unable to crew the 12.2— an very impressive outcome. A special thank you to the Coolup Brigade for consistently providing crews throughout the year.

We also had a High Season Light Tanker stationed at North Dandalup for a few weeks before it was relocated to West Murray for the majority of the fire season. Thanks to both brigades for supporting the deployment of this resource, which also responded to incidents in the northern regions. Thank you to DFES for providing that additional appliance during our fire season.

This year we welcomed two new appliances: the North Dandalup Light Tanker and the Dwellingup 1.4. Additionally, we have submitted an application to the LGGS for consideration of an additional Light Tanker for the Dwellingup Brigade, with an update expected by June.

We held four leadership meetings throughout the year. These sessions provided valuable opportunities for open discussion and collaboration on matters affecting our brigades. Our brigade SOPs are being reviewed again by the brigades to then be brought back to our leadership meeting in June 2025. The SOPs will continue to be a working document with all changes endorsed by council.

Training participation remains strong, with 43 members attending courses both within and outside the Shire. This continued commitment to upskilling not only strengthens our brigades' capabilities but also builds confidence among volunteers as they step into their various roles.

I want to personally thank each of you for the incredible support I've received over the past 12 months as Chief. Your open communication, trust, and willingness to back each other—and me - it has meant a great deal.

To the Deputies:

**Peter**, as this season marks your final one in the role of Deputy, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks for your guidance, support, and conversations. While we may not have always agreed, our differing views often led to stronger, well-rounded solutions. I know your mentorship will continue to be invaluable from within the brigades as we pursue our shared goals around growth, personal development and succession planning.

**Jussy**, you've shown real strength and determination in stepping into the newly appointed role of Deputy South. Your commitment has been both clear and commendable. You've faced challenges—some no doubt not listed in any position description—but you've sought advice when needed and stood confidently by your decisions. That kind of leadership makes a real difference.

**DFES**, thank you for the continued support you provide to our brigades and the Shire in times of need. It's truly appreciated to know we can rely on your assistance when it matters most.

And last but certainly not least, to the **Shire of Murray and Councillors**—thank you for believing in me and trusting that my decisions are made with the best interests of both the brigades and the Shire at heart. Your support has been invaluable.

To those stepping into newly appointed positions within the brigades—I wish you all the very best. You are in safe hands, with great mentors not only within your own brigades but also across our broader network. Lean on each other and keep growing together.

Let me leave you with a thought that I believe reflects what leadership truly means:

*"A great leader doesn't only inspire us to have confidence in what they can do. A great leader inspires us to have confidence in what we can do".*

## 6.2 Manager Ranger and Community Safety

File Ref: D25/19373  
Author and Title: John Kowal, Manager Ranger and Community Safety  
Appendices: Nil.

### In Brief

The following summary is provided as the major activities for Emergency and Bushfire Management.

- The Shire's Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) including the Local Recovery Plan and Welfare Plans have been completed and endorsed by the Shire's Local Emergency Management Committee at its meeting on the 2 April 2025 and the item will be considered by Council at its meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.

The review of the LEMA and other plans was conducted due to the separation of the joint Shire of Murray and Shire of Waroona LEMC with the updating of all LEMC details together with the updating of all contact details for various other agencies, organisations and suppliers of goods or services.

The full review of the LEMA is due in 2027.

- A review has also been completed on the Shire's Bushfire Management and Response Plan which will be circulated to the CBFCO, DBFCO's, FCO's and brigades so that they can go through draft plan and provide feedback.
- A Bushfire Risk Mitigation Plan has been developed for Yunderup, Ballee and Cooleenup Islands. The mitigation plan has been developed in consultation and liaison with the residents of the islands, Dean McGuinness, Captain of the South Yunderup Ravenswood BFB, CBFCO and the Shire's Bushfire Risk Mitigation Officer. A funding application for the mitigation works has recently (April) been submitted to the DFES Mitigation Activity Fund and we are awaiting the outcome of the Shire's funding submission, which should be advised by June 2025.
- You are most probably aware that a recent restructure of the Shire's Ranger and Community Safety department, resulted in the contract for the Community Emergency Services Coordinator for Nicole Stevens not being renewed with DFES by the Shire. Instead, Nicole Stevens has been employed on a full-time basis as the Coordinator Rangers and Community Safety (CRCS), which will continue to coordinate and support all brigades, and the Murray SES as previously provided with the only change being that the day-to-day operations of the Shire Rangers will be managed by the CRCS position. I take the opportunity to congratulate Nicole Stevens on her successful appointment to the role, which I know she will do an outstanding job and has already.
- Also, due to the restructure of the Shire's Ranger and Community Safety department, the Shire advertised for a Bush Fire Risk Mitigation Officer (BRMO), which closed on the 30 April 2025. Several excellent applications were received and the recruitment and selection process is continuing, which should see the appointment of someone into the role in June 2025. There are several key responsibilities of the role including the review and updating of the Shire's Bushfire Risk Mitigation Plan, updating of the DFES Bushfire Risk Mitigation System, programming of bushfire mitigation works on shire owned and managed land, working with brigades in the development of prescribed burning plans and assisting and providing information about bushfire risk mitigation to State agencies, land developers and private landowners.
- In consultation and liaison with DFES, the Shire is currently conducting a review of Bush Fire Brigade buildings (fire stations) and future resource requirement for the Shire. Currently, the 2 brigades identified for new fire stations are South Yunderup Ravenswood BFB and West Murray BFB. North Dandalup has also been identified as requiring extensions to their existing fire

appliance bays with the extensions to include office/s, communications room, training room, male/female change rooms/toilets/showers and offices.

Currently DFES is in the process of determining their future service provision for both Career and Volunteer Fire & Rescue Services. The Shire is in the process of identifying potential locations for new fire stations should it be considered that new fire station locations may be required due to the current and future development of residential, commercial and industrial areas, together with the assessment of risks within each of the areas and the district as a whole.

- The Shire recently signed a new MoU with DFES for the provision of the 12.2 appliance. There were no changes with the MoU, however, there have been recent robust discussions about out of district deployment of the 12.2, the Shire of Murray requirements, especially during the High Threat Period being first the consideration prior to any deployment of the 12.2 or any other appliances out of district.

In closing, I would like to thank shire staff, all bushfire personal, brigade leaders, office bearers and all volunteers for the enormous amount of time, work and effort that is provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to safeguard the Shire of Murray and other communities. Our community and communities across WA would be unable to cope with any emergency if it weren't for the dedication and commitment of our emergency service volunteers.

I would also like to thank all the brigade officers and office bearers, Nicole as Chief, Peter Thurkle and Justyn Bennett as Deputy Chief's for their enormous efforts and contribution and I look forward to working with the new teams.

I would like to acknowledge the significant contribution provided by two stalwarts of the shire and the bushfire fraternity in Peter Thurkle and Jim Camplin who have both provided decades of service, dedication, training and mentoring to brigades, shire staff and volunteers across several shires in various brigade and shire officer positions. I am informed that they will still remain within the brigade ranks and that is very heartening to hear because there will still be many a volunteer that will be able to benefit from both Peter and Jim's immense knowledge and experience. I personally have known Peter and Jim for decades and I personally thank them for all they have done, their war stories and some very funny stories over the years and wish them both the very best for their future endeavours.

### **6.3 DFES Representative**

File Ref: D25/19838  
Author and Title: Ricky Southgate, DFES Acting District Officer Wellington  
Appendices: Nil.

#### **In Brief**

##### **Fire Season 24/25**

Conditions are starting to ease with the SDI still sitting around 1650 In Dwellingup, 1700 in Harvey and 1500 in Collie. While conditions are easing, we are much drier than the 5-year average and still sitting in dryer conditions than this time last year across the Southwest. This has been evident with the increase in lost prescribed burn on private property across the Southwest district.

We have had a consistent season across the Southwest and the Department acknowledges and thanks every volunteer and staff member from the Shire of Murray that has aided across the Southwest. The professionalism, organisation and effective response has seen fires controlled effectively.

#### **Training**

The DFES Southwest region has emailed the 2025 training calendar, please make sure this has been emailed to all members, and they are aware of the application process through Eacademy for additional training requirements.

#### **Brigade training Nights**

I would like to congratulate all the Shire brigades on the work to facilitate brigade level training. The uptake of training has been well received and as always, I am happy to attend brigade training nights to support and assist as required.

#### **High Season Fleet**

The Shire of Murray had a high season fleet LT and have crewed this when required this fire season supporting fires within and outside the Shire of Murray. This work from Shire of Murray crews has been extensive and extremely appreciated by the Department and surrounding LGA.

DFES SW have managed to keep 2x LT and 1 x 2.4 for mitigation fleet. Should the Shire require them to assist in completing prescribed burns, please reach out.

#### **Lessons from recent burn over**

This fire season has seen an unfortunate accident involving a burn over in a local Shire and fortunately the crew had minor injuries due to the training and actions of the crew. Its import we always conduct burn over training preseason and ensure we capture the small detail items to prevent serious injury including

- Don PPE before turning out
- Ensure the vehicle windows and doors are closed
- Always conduct LACES
- Check communications before entering fire ground
- Always have a safe zone identified and communicated



**Suspicious fire**

Several suspicious fires have occurred in various Southwest local governments this year and DFES asks that if you observe any suspicious behaviour to call 000 immediately. If you suspect someone of arson or fire lighting, make a report online or call Crime Stoppers on 1300 333 000.

CESM Murray

With the end of the MOU between DFES and the Shire of Murray for the position of CESM, DFES Southwest would like to thank the Shire of Murray for the work during the period of the MOU and we look forward to working with the structure changes at the Shire of Murray into the 25 / 26 bushfire season.

#### **6.4 DBCA Representative**

Not present at the meeting therefore no report tabled.

## **7 VOLUNTEER BRIGADE REPORTS**

### **7.1 Coolup VBFB**

File Ref: D25/20404  
Author and Title: Douglas McLarty, FCO Coolup VBFB  
Appendices: Nil.

#### **In Brief**

I just wanted to thank Nicole as Chief and CESM and endorse Nicole's new role going forward. Thanks to Jussy for her help and congratulations for her conduct in the role as Deputy. Thank you to Peter and Jim for their long-standing service.

Thank you to the Shire Administration Support and finally thank you to all the other brigades for their support.

## **7.2 Dwellingup VBFB**

File Ref: D25/19398  
Author and Title: Anthony Cocivera, FCO Dwellingup VBFB  
Appendices: Nil.

### **In Brief**

I want to thank the Dwellingup Bushfire Brigade and all its members for its support for the last 12 months.

On behalf of the Dwellingup bush fire brigade, we want to thank the Murray Chief Nicole Stevens and the Deputy Chiefs Jussy and Pete Thurkle for their support in the last 12 months. A extra shout out for Pete for his service for multiple years in the deputy Chief role and the support he offered to Dwellingup.

We supported the shire with around 40 emergencies in the last 12 months and carried out multiple mitigation burns around the Dwellingup area.

Dwellingup has taken delivery of a new Iveco ¼ appliance, this was not our preferred option as we requested 2 x light tankers, after discussions with the shire it became clear DFES had put us in a corner and taking the ¼ was the only option. But we would like noted this vehicle is not suited to Dwellingup's terrain, the trial carried out in our minds justifies our position.

We the Dwellingup Bush fire brigade need to attract more active members to our brigade, and this should be our priority for the next 12 months, also when we do attract, we then need to support the new members with training to allow them onto the fire grounds. We need to look as a shire how we train our people as everyone has busy lives with their families now and weekend training in our view is not the path forward.

Lastly, we want to thank Dean, the Shire of Murray and the BFAC committee for their ongoing support.

**7.3 North Dandalup VBFB**

File Ref: D25/19238  
Author and Title: Brendan Webster, FCO North Dandalup VBFB  
Appendices: Nil.

**In Brief**

Firstly, I would like to thank all our brigade members for the support, dedication and professionalism this fire season, it does not go un-noticed. To our broader brigades and the Shire, I would also like to say thank you for the support.

We have seen our 3.4 receive additional maintenance and been offline which has been unfortunate, we received our new LT and had to say goodbye to our old trusty LT.

Although a mild fire season compared to the last few years, we have all learnt and are continuing to grow as a Brigade and at a Shire level.

We have seen a lot of courses held within the shire for all our members which has been a real benefit.

To see brigade leadership meetings being held and have open on honest discussions has also been helpful.

I would like to make a special mention to Nicole for taking on the Chief position and supporting our Brigade this fire season it's been appreciative.

I believe our Brigade and the Shire are moving in the correct direction.

#### **7.4 South Yunderup/Ravenswood VBFB**

File Ref: D25/19400  
Author and Title: Jim Camplin, FCO South Yunderup/Ravenswood VBFB  
Appendices: Nil.

##### **In Brief**

The brigade has had a productive twelve months and a busy one. We have been able to recruit a number of new members and get them trained and onto the fire ground with more coming on.

This means that the brigade has been able to respond nearly every time we have been called out with at least a minimum crew. Training has become more regular and this has showed up with more member participation. The brigade has held more functions to encourage members to attend meetings and we hold a sausage sizzle every meeting night. We also have an open day next Sunday in South Yunderup to show new residents and not so new residents of South Yunderup what their brigade is about and there is another planned for August for our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.

This has been the work of our Captain Dean and his senior officers, ably assisted by our secretary and resident dynamo Sue Daley and her team. Their dedication to the brigade has been rewarded by the improvements.

The Brigade would like to thank Chief Nicole for her help and support over the year and especially thank the other brigades and their crews for their support over the many incidents big and not so big that we have faced this year. Your support is very much appreciated.

I step down as brigade FCO this year and my place will be taken by Lawrie Caffin. Lawrie has been a tireless officer with the brigade for a number of years and I feel I am leaving the position in good hands. I will still be around to attend the meetings and other functions and to give advice whether solicited or not.

The brigade held the AGM last Monday and the following were elected:

FCO Lawrie Caffin, Captain Dean McGuinness, 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Riley Jenkinson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Luke Stevens, 3<sup>rd</sup> Lieutenant Jasmin Treloar, 4<sup>th</sup> Lieutenant Brock Cooper, Secretary Sue Daley, Treasurer Alanna Carter, Training Officer Brian Young, Maintenance Gordon Newton and Permit Issuing Officer Graeme Baldwin.

Jim Camplin  
Retiring Brigade FCO

**7.5 West Murray VBFB**

File Ref: D25/19539  
Author and Title: Liam Barker on behalf of Justin Crotty, FCO West Murray VBFB  
Appendices: Nil.

**In Brief**

West Murray has attended approx. 85 incidents over the last 12 months. We would like to thank all Brigades for their assistance at incidents.

Over the permit seasons, West Murray has conducted many Hazard Reduction Burns within our area to help reduce the fuel load as well as by request from community members. So far, this coming winter, we have 6 Hazard Reduction Burns to complete with first being this coming Friday 23rd May 2025.

Just after BFAC 2024, West Murray celebrated their 40th Anniversary by holding a Community Family Day at the Brigade. This event was a success with a great turnout. A big thank you to Coolup for providing the 12.2 on the day as well as the Bushfire Historical Museum who made the trip from down South in an old appliance along with bringing some memorabilia to be displayed.

On behalf of the members at West Murray, we would like to say thank you to all Brigades and Shire Representatives we work alongside.

**8 MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT MEETING**

Nil.

**9 NEXT MEETING**

The next Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting is TBA.

**10 CLOSURE OF MEETING**

**There being no further business the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed the time being 6:43pm.**

  
CHAIRPERSON