



Shire of Murray

Minutes

**Bush Fire Advisory Committee
Meeting**

Wednesday 8 July 2026 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, 8 JULY 2026 AT 6:00PM**

1 DECLARATION OF OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Chair Cr Ange Rogers declared the meeting open the time being 6.01pm.

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

Voting Members

Cr Ange Rogers (BFAC Chair), Dave Vuletic (Proxy FCO Coolup VBFB), Lawrie Caffin (FCO South Yunderup VBFB), Kevin Jones (FCO Pinjarra VFRS), Jarron Vanelst (Proxy Dwellingup VBFB), Brendan Webster (Proxy North Dandalup VBFB), Ron McBride (Proxy West Murray VBFB), Nicole Stevens (CBFCO)

Non-Voting

Alan Smith (Acting Chief Executive Officer), Donna Walker (BFAC Executive Officer / Manager Ranger and Community Safety), Ricky Southgate (District Officer Wellington – DFES),

Guests

Dean McGuinness (Captain SYRVBFB), Robert Wilson (SYRBFB), Louise Pleasance (Director Corporate Services), Belinda Brown (Minute Taker), Bella Harrison (Senior Ranger)

APOLOGIES

Douglas McLarty (FCO Coolup VBFB), Anthony Cocivera (FCO Dwellingup VBFB), Michael Webster (FCO North Dandalup VBFB), Justin Crotty (FCO West Murray VBFB), Justyn Bennett (DCBFCO)

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil.

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING

3.1 Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting – 27 May 2026

Noted

That the Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 27 May 2026 be noted.

4 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Nil.

5 BUSINESS ARISING**5.1 Nomination of Bush Fire Control Officers for the 2026/2027 Fire Season**

File Ref: D26/28882
Previous Items: Nil.
Applicant: Nil.
Author and Title: Donna Walker, Manager Ranger and Community Safety
Declaration of Interest: Nil.
Voting Requirements: Simple Majority
Appendices: Item 5.1 Appendix 1 - Expression of Interest - Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO) and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (DCBFCO) Positions
Item 5.1 Appendix 2 - Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade (VBFB) Annual General Meeting (AGM) Minutes

Recommendation/Committee Decision BFAC26/005

Moved: J Vanelst
Seconded: L Caffin

That Council:

Appoints Robert Wilson to the position of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer for the 2026/2027 fire season.

In Favour: Cr Ange Rogers, Lawrie Caffin, Kevin Jones, Jarron Vanelst and Brendan Webster

Against: Dave Vuletic, Ron McBride and Nicole Stevens

CARRIED 5:3

Recommendation/Committee Decision BFAC26/006

Moved: N Stevens
Seconded: L Caffin

Appoints the following person/s to the position of Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer for the 2026/2027 fire season:

- Justyn Bennett
- Brendan Webster
- Jarron Vanelst

In Favour: Cr Ange Rogers, Dave Vuletic, Lawrie Caffin, Kevin Jones, Jarron Vanelst, Brendan Webster, Ron McBride and Nicole Stevens

Against: Nil.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8:0

Amended Recommendation/Committee Decision BFAC26/007

Moved: J Vanelst
Seconded: B Webster

Appoints the following persons to the position of Bush Fire Control Officer and to the position of Bush Fire Control Officer – Permit Issuing Only for the 2026/2027 fire season:

Bush Fire Control Officers

- Douglas McLarty – Coolup VBFB
- Anthony Cocivera – Dwellingup VBFB
- Michael Webster - North Dandalup VBFB
- Lawrie 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
- Lorraine Webster – North Dandalup VBFB
- Brendan Webster – North Dandalup VBFB
- Andrew Taylor – West Murray VBFB
- Rachael Hinton – West Murray VBFB
- Dave Turner – Dwellingup VBFB

In Favour: Cr Ange Rogers, Dave Vuletic, Lawrie Caffin, Kevin Jones, Jarron Vanelst, Brendan Webster, Ron McBride and Nicole Stevens

Against: Nil.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8:0

Reason for Change: To resolve an administrative error to allow the Bushfire Control Officer – Permit Issuing Only for the Dwellingup VBFB to be added into the recommendation.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Appoints _____ to the position of Chief Bush Fire Control Officer for the 2026/2027 fire season.
2. Appoints the following person/s to the position of Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer for the 2026/2027 fire season:
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
3. Appoints the following persons to the position of Bush Fire Control Officer and to the position of Bush Fire Control Officer – Permit Issuing Only for the 2026/2027 fire season:

Bush Fire Control Officers

- Douglas McLarty – Coolup VBFB
- Anthony Cocivera – Dwellingup VBFB
- Michael Webster - North Dandalup VBFB
- Lawrie 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
- Lorraine Webster – North Dandalup VBFB
- Brendan Webster – North Dandalup VBFB
- Andrew Taylor – West Murray VBFB
- Rachael Hinton – West Murray VBFB

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 (Act)*:

- Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (**CBFCO**)
- Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (**DCBFCO**)
- Bush Fire Control Officers (**FCO**)
- Bush Fire Control Officers - Permit Issuing Only (**FCO-PIO**)

Background

The Shire of Murray Bush Fire Brigades Standard Operating Procedures (**SOP's**) clause 8.2 sets out the nomination process for the FCO and FCO-PIO and the CBFCO and DCBFCO.

Each of the Shire Bush Fire Brigades have undertaken their respective Annual General Meetings (**AGM**) and provided the recommended FCO and FCO-PIO's officers for BFAC consideration in accordance with the SOP's. The Shire has undertaken the Expression of Interest process for the CBFCO and DCBFCO roles and this report provides the outcomes to the BFAC for consideration.

Report Detail

Following Council endorsement of the Volunteer Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Model for the Shire of Murray at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 18 June 2026 (OCM26/062), the Shire called for Expression of Interest (**EOI**) on 2 June 2026, seeking nominations for the positions of CBFCO and DCBFCO. A copy of the EOI email is attached as **Appendix 1**. The initial closing date for nominations for CBFCO and DCBFCO was 16 June 2026.

On 16 June 2026, the Shire advised all Brigades of the proposed support arrangements for CBFCO and DCBFCO that will be considered by Council at the July Ordinary Council Meeting. To allow time for this information to be shared amongst volunteers, the closing date for the EOI was extended until 9:00am on 22 June 2026.

The proposed Support arrangements that were provided were:

Position	Proposed Support Arrangements
Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	A fit for purpose vehicle, including the following usage arrangements: During the Limited Burning Times • Permitted Private Use, limited to travel within adjoining local governments only. • Where use is for Chief Bush Fire Control Officer related activities, travel is not limited to adjoining local governments (eg. attending training in Perth).

- When CBFCO is unavailable (eg. on leave), the vehicle will be transferred to the Deputy delegated as Chief for the defined period. During Unrestricted Burning Times (open season) - Vehicle will be kept at a central location (to be determined) and used as required by the Chief and Deputies.
Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Honorarium - \$1,500 each (limited to up to 3 Deputies).

At the closing of the EOI, the following nominations were received:

Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

- Robert Wilson

Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

- Justyn Bennett
- Brendan Webster
- Jarron Vanelst

In accordance with the SOP a panel, consisting of the Manager Ranger and Community Safety and Department of Fire and Emergency Services District Officer Wellington, undertook a review of the EOI nominations and while it is recognised that the number of nominations met the minimum requirement, the panel assessed the suitability of each nomination against the assessment criteria, which is reflective of the nomination form and the position descriptions for both roles.

Assessment Criteria	Description	Weighting (%)
Legislative Knowledge <i>Question 1</i>	Understanding of the Bush Fires Act 1954, Bush Fires Regulations 1954, local fire control requirements, relevant policies, SOPs.	15%
Safety and Risk Management <i>Question 2</i>	Knowledge and commitment to WHS principles, safe work practices, and promoting a safety culture within brigades.	15%
Operational Experience <i>Questions 3, 4</i>	Demonstrated practical experience in bushfire response, including leadership at incidents, sector command, or brigade captain-level experience.	25%
Leadership and Teamwork <i>Questions 5, 6, 7</i>	Ability to support, guide, and motivate volunteers; promote collaboration between brigades; resolve conflict and maintain morale, communicate effectively	25%
Personal Attributes <i>Question 8</i>	Integrity, reliability, calmness under pressure, community focus, and availability for after-hours call-outs and Shire representation.	10%
Training and Qualifications	Training as relevant to the role	10%
TOTAL		100%

As a result of the evaluation of the nominations, the panel determined that all nominations satisfied the criteria as described in the Position Description for both roles.

BFAC are requested to consider the nominations and make recommendation for the CBFCO and DBFCO's for consideration by Council.

It should be noted that an election by secret ballot is normally carried out to determine the preferred CBFCO and DBFCO, however as a result of the EOI for the role of the CBFCO an election will not be required as no other nominations were received. BFAC will only be required to endorse the nomination for CBFCO in the recommendation. An election for the DBFCO will only be required if the BFAC determine that three DBFCO's is no longer preferred.

The nominations for FCO and FCO-PIO were determined by each brigade at their respective AGM's. A copy of the AGM minutes from the following brigades are attached as **Appendix 2**.

- Coolup VBFB
- Dwellingup VBFB
- North Dandalup VBFB
- South Yunderup/Ravenswood VBFB
- West Murray VBFB

The nominations received from the AGM's for the FCO and FCO-PIO are included in the recommendation for BFAC to endorse for Council consideration at the July Ordinary Council Meeting.

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	If the BFAC does not make recommendation for the roles, then the decision will be put to Council for final determination.

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, FCO-PIO's, 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. Endorse the nominees for the roles for recommendation to Council.
2. Propose an alternate recommendation for Council consideration.

Conclusion

The BFAC recommendations are for the consideration of Council. Should Council endorse the BFAC recommendations the persons will be formally appointed 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.

6 REPORTS – EXTERNAL AGENCIES

6.1 Department of Fire and Emergency Services Report

File Ref: D26/30533

Author and Title: Donna Walker, Manager Ranger and Community Safety

Appendices: Item 6.1 Appendix 1 - Department of Fire and Emergency Services Report
- Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) meeting - 8 July 2026

In Brief

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services Report is attached for information.

6.2 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Report

File Ref: D26/30536

Author and Title: Donna Walker, Manager Ranger and Community Safety

Appendices: Item 6.2 Appendix 1 - Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO) Report -
Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) meeting - 8 July 2026

In Brief

The Chief Bush Fire Control Officer report is attached for information.

7 VOLUNTEER BRIGADE REPORTS

South Yunderup / Ravenswood VBFB FCO - Report attached to the minutes.

West Murray VBFB FCO – Report attached to the minutes.

Dwellingup VBFB FCO – Report attached to the Minutes.

Pinjarra Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service – Provided a verbal report.

Coolup VBFB FCO – No report tabled.

North Dandalup VBFB FCO – No report tabled.

8 MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT MEETING

Nil.

9 NEXT MEETING

The next Bush Fire Advisory Committee will be advised.

10 CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed the time being 6.15pm.

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CHAIRPERSON