

SHIRE OF DALWALLINU

MINUTES of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held in the Dalwallinu Shire Council Chambers, on **Monday 15 September 2025**.

1.0 OPENING & ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Chairperson opened the meeting at 6.01pm.

2.0 ATTENDANCE RECORD

2.1 Present

Aaron Mills (Chairperson)
Paul Burrige
Shannon Fry
Shaun Fitzsimons
Mike Dodd
Michael Cail
Rowan McCreery
Hanna Jolly
Jean Knight

2.2 Apologies

Gareth Barnes
Bryce Hathway
Gary Butcher
Melissa Harms

3.0 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING

3.1 Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting 16 September 2024

MOTION

Moved Mike Dodd
Seconded Shaun Fitzsimons

That the Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting of Council held on Monday 16 September 2024 be confirmed.

CARRIED

4.0 CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER'S REPORT

The CBFCO presented his report (verbally) at the meeting.

5.0 MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

Chief Fire Control Officer	Aaron Mills	Appointed 16 September 2022
Deputy Chief Fire Control Officer	Gareth Barnes	Appointed 16 September 2022
Deputy Chief Fire Control Officer	Paul Burrridge	Appointed 11 October 2023

Appointments done as per policy for three (3) year term. Appointments of Aaron Mills and Gareth Barnes are now at the end of their term so these positions will need to be re-appointed.

5.1 Chief Fire Control Officer (FCO) - Appointment

MOTION

Moved Mike Dodd
Seconded Shaun Fitzsimons

That Aaron Mills be appointed as Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

CARRIED

5.2 Deputy Chief Fire Control Officers (DFCO) - Appointments

MOTION

Moved Mike Dodd
Seconded Shaun Fitzsimons

That Gareth Barnes be appointed as Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

CARRIED

MOTION

Moved Mike Dodd
Seconded Shaun Fitzsimons

That Paul Burrridge be appointed as Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

CARRIED

5.3 Fire Control Officers (FCO) - Appointments

MOTION

Moved Mike Dodd
Seconded Shaun Fitzsimons

That the following people be appointed as Bush Fire Control Officers:

Michael Dodd, Shaun Fitzsimons, Gary Butcher, Shannon Fry, Rowan McCreery, Bryce Hathway and Michael Cail.

CARRIED

6.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

6.1 Council Policy – Bush Fire Brigades Management, WHS and DFES training requirements

FCO training requirements and other brigade members training

Out of 178 currently registered volunteers, 47 are fully compliant, 94 are part compliant and 37 volunteers have done no training at all. We have been actively following these trainings up for last 3 months with some response.

- Keep following up 94 volunteers with missing requirements
- Issue a letter for 37 volunteers with no training that they will be removed and not allowed to access incidents outside of their own property
- Shire will advise all FCO's of the 37 volunteers to ensure they are not responding to incidents

Fire Control Officer training is up to date for 2025/26 season.

Action

Hanna Jolly to advise Fire Control Officers of the volunteers who have not completed their training requirements. These volunteers should not attend the incidents.

6.2 Fire Vehicle Locations during peak season

Establish a procedure if the fire vehicles are stored outside of the sheds during the fire season. Items to consider:

- Who needs to know the location – FCO's, Shire, local brigade
- If volunteer not available, Fire Vehicle is to be moved back to the Shire shed
- Fire vehicles must be fully charged, tank full of water and fuel at all times

Action

Michael Cail and Gareth Barnes to ensure via Fire Control Officer's WhatsApp group that location of the vehicles are always known. Trucks must be moved back to the designated Fire Sheds if the FCO's are away.

Hanna Jolly to check with the insurance company that there are no insurance restrictions of storing the fire vehicles outside of their designated sheds.

6.3 Application for Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) funding

Shire made an application to Commissioner to be included in the CESM program. DFES has informed us that State Government has committed extra funds for the program and Shire of Dalwallinu will be considered for the program when the extra funding becomes available.

6.4 Vehicle Identification Stickers

Any private vehicles should be issued with a vehicle identification sticker if they are outside of their own property acting as bushfire volunteer. Previously we have not issued many of these stickers, but we should ensure all private vehicles and equipment

meet standard criteria when they are on the fire ground. This is important for WHS and insurance perspective. Looking for advise how best to manage these criteria in the future.

Action

Shire will issue stickers on return of the form and keep a register. Aim to identify all vehicles and equipment attending the incidents. Vehicles must be suitable and capable of performing the task, equipment is reliable, has the capability and robustness to operate in a hostile environment. The vehicles must also comply with the *Road Traffic Act 1974*.

6.5 Bush Fire Appliances

Amber light (1) and blow torches (4) to be ordered.

6.6 Other Matters

- Water Supply map. Supplied to the Fire Control Officers.
- Mt Gibson Security gates – access. Not required.
- Lighting Strike Application. Noted that ‘My Lighting Tracker’ App is used.
- Fire break reminder to Shire Facebook, LED board and Newsletter.
- Ranger to check Fire Breaks commencing 1 October.
- Investigate if Nugadong Airstrip could have water refill option for DFES Water bomber planes.
- Shire to follow up handheld radios ordered from Phil Lehman in 2022.
- Burning Periods. Current burning periods (as Gazetted) are:

Open Period	16 March to 30 September
Burning Restricted	1 October to 14 November and 15 February to 15 March
Burning Prohibited	15 November to 14 February

MOTION

Moved Mike Dodd
Seconded Rowan McCreery

Amend Prohibited Burning period to 1 November to 14 February and Restricted Burning period to 1 October to 31 October.

CARRIED

- Recognition of Long Service of Bushfire volunteers

MOTION

Moved Mike Dodd

Seconded Rowan McCreery

The following criteria was established to recognise long service of bushfire volunteers:

- Minimum 25 years of service as a bushfire volunteer
- Must have been a Fire Control Officer at some stage of their volunteer career
- Fire Control Officers Group to approve recipients in the annual meeting commencing 2026
- DFES Medal to be ordered and CEO to write a letter of appreciation for any approved recipients

CARRIED

- Honorarium Payment to Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

MOTION

Moved Shannon Fry

Seconded Rowan McCreery

That Council consider the inclusion of a provision in the 2026/27 Budget for an annual honorarium payment to be made to the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Deputy Bush Fire Control Officers, in recognition of the significant responsibilities, time commitment, and community service associated with the role.

CARRIED

7.0 CLOSURE

There being no further business, the Chairperson closed the meeting at 7.10pm.