



Agenda

Bush Fire Control Officers Committee Meeting Tuesday 26 March 2024

Date	Tuesday 26 March 2024
Time	7.00pm
Location	Shire of Wickepin 77 Wogolin Road, Wickepin WA 6370
Distribution Date	Friday 21 March 2024



Notice of Meeting

Please be informed the Bush Fire Control Officers Committee Meeting of the Shire of Wickepin will be held at 7:00pm on Tuesday 26 March 2024 at the Shire of Wickepin, 77 Wogolin Road, Wickepin WA 6370.

Kellie Bartley
Chief Executive Officer
Friday 22 March 2024

Disclaimer

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In particular and without derogating in any way from the broad disclaimer above, in discussion regarding any planning application or application for a licence, any statement or limitation of approval made by a member or officer of the Shire of Wickepin during the course of any meeting is not intended to be and is not to be taken as notice of approval from the Shire of Wickepin. The Shire of Wickepin warns that anyone who has an application lodged with the Shire of Wickepin must obtain and only should rely on written confirmation of the outcome of the application, and any conditions attaching to the decision made by the Shire of Wickepin in respect of the application.

Terms of Reference

1. Name

Bush Fire Control Officers Committee

2. Members

Voting Members

- Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- All Fire Control Officers

Non-Voting Members

- Representative(s) from DFES
- Representative(s) from Wickepin Police
- Shire of Wickepin CEO and nominated staff

3. Function of the Committee

To provide advice to Council in regard to all matters relating to bush fire control, prevention and management including recommendations on the annual firebreak requirements, capital (equipment) purchase, review of firefighting/prevention practices, firefighting training, etc.

4. Role and Scope of the Committee

To advise 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, 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.

5. Meeting Frequency

Twice per annum with scope to call additional meeting if need arises (i.e. post-emergency events) – actual dates to be determined by the Presiding Member in consultation with Committee Members and applicable Shire officers.

6. Delegated Powers

The Committee has no delegated powers and is an advisory committee to Council only. Recommendations of Committee meetings are to be presented to Council by Shire officers for noting or consideration as soon as practicable after unconfirmed minutes of Committee meetings are available.

Contents

1	Declaration of Opening	5
2	Attendance.....	5
	2.1 Present.....	5
3	Apologies and Leave of Absence	5
	3.1 Apologies.....	5
4	Presentations.....	5
	4.1 Presentations.....	5
5	Declarations of Members and Officers Interest	6
6	Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings	6
	6.1 Minutes of the Bush Fire Control Officers Meeting held on 5 September 2023. ..	6
	6.2 Business Arising From Minutes.....	6
7	Status Report.....	6
8	Motions of Which Notice Has Been Given	7
9	Notices of Motions for the Following Meeting	7
10	Reports and Information.....	7
	10.1 Gavin Stevens - Department of Fire and Emergency Services.....	7
	10.2 Chief Bush Fire Control Officers Report.....	7
11	Appointments 2024/2025 Fire Season	9
	11.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	9
	11.2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	9
	11.3 Fire Control Officers/Bush Fire Radio Operators/Fire Weather Officers	9
	11.4 Clover Burning Permits	10
	11.5 Dual Fire Control Officers from Wickepin	10
	11.6 Dual Fire Control Officers from adjoining Shires	10
	11.7 Shire of Wickepin Fire Break Notice 2024/2025.....	10
12	General Business	11
13	Closure	11

1 Declaration of Opening

The Presiding Member declared the meeting open at [time].

2 Attendance

2.1 Present

Members

T Leeson	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
L Lansdell	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
R Butler	Fire Control Officer
P Russell	Fire Control Officer
T Heffernan	Fire Control Officer
D White	Fire Control Officer
D Stacey	Fire Control Officer
G McDougall	Fire Control Officer
W Astbury	Fire Control Officer
J Hamilton	Fire Control Officer
N Astbury	Fire Control Officer
T Mullan	Fire Control Officer
T Russell	Fire Control Officer
C Sims	Fire Control Officer
M Langford	Wickepin Police
D Gaul	Wickepin Police
G Stevens	Department of Fire and Emergency Services

Employees

K Bartley	Chief Executive Officer
G Hedditch	Manager Works and Services

3 Apologies and Leave of Absence

3.1 Apologies

Nil

4 Presentations

4.1 Presentations

Nil

5 Declarations of Members and Officers Interest

A member or officer who has an impartiality, proximity or financial interest in any matter to be discussed at this meeting must disclose the nature of the interest either in a written notice given to the Chief Executive Officer prior to the meeting or at the meeting immediately before the matter is discussed.

A member who makes a disclosure in respect to an interest must not preside at the part of the meeting which deals with the matter, or participate in, or be present during, any discussion or decision-making process relative to the matter, unless the disclosing member is permitted to do so under Section 5.68 or Section 5.69 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

The following declarations of interest have been disclosed –

6 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings

6.1 Minutes of the Bush Fire Control Officers Meeting held on 5 September 2023.

Officer Recommendation

That the minutes of the Bush Fire Control Officers Meeting held on 5 September 2023 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

6.2 Business Arising From Minutes

7 Status Report

Where a resolution is formal, procedural or lost it has not been recorded (e.g. confirmation of minutes, meeting behind closed doors, lapsed, etc.).

Subject/Action	Officer	Progress	Status	Comment
Additional Fire Radios	CEO	That the Committee recommends to Council to purchase an additional two (2) base station fire radios and four (4) transferable vehicle radios to provide additional radio coverage for Bush Fire Control Officers, some of which are in light radio coverage areas.	✓	Funds allocated in the 2023-2024 Annual Budget.

If not noted, please insert numbers of items once attended to and return sheet to CEO.

○ = in progress ✓ = completed ✕ =superseded

8 Motions of Which Notice Has Been Given

Nil

9 Notices of Motions for the Following Meeting

Nil

10 Reports and Information

10.1 Gavin Stevens - Department of Fire and Emergency Services

To be tabled.

10.2 Chief Bush Fire Control Officers Report

Thank you to all the Fire Control Officers for your continued commitment in assisting with harvest and vehicle movement bans, regular call ups, issuing permits and your management of several fires that we have had so far this season.

Thank you to the Shire of Wickpin for your continued support in supplying staff and equipment at fires and also the administration staff for the behind the scenes office work.

Thank you to DFES (Gavin Stevens) for your work within our shire brigades and your assistance with fires throughout the season particularly the rubbish tip fire.

It has been a very busy fire season with lightning strikes being the main cause. Thankfully with the quick response of volunteers the majority of the fires were kept to a minimum. During January we had a total of 8 lightning strike fires which put a lot of pressure on our FCO's and volunteer resources as a lot of people are on holidays at this time of the year.

Another issue putting pressure on our local volunteer resources is the changing of farmlands with absentee farmers being the major ones, purchasing or leasing these farms resulting in less volunteers around full time.

Noted Fires

16/10/23 Fraser Murray/Blacky's - 2ha crop burnt and the house caught fire but was saved. Cause unknown.

27/10/23 Matthew Orchard - Pole top fire, 2ha burnt.

18/11/23 Flavel's @ Claude Simpson's Farm - Header caught fire, electrical fault. 1 acre oat stubble burnt. Fire unit on the front of the tractor with the chaser bin was close by which kept this one to a minimum.

25/11/23 Lange's @ Lenny Lewis' Farm - Header with seed terminator caused the fire. Half an acre burnt. Chaser bin has a fire unit which kept this one to a minimum.

27/11/23 Angwin's @ Beaties Farm - Lightning strike 15 - 20ha stubble burnt.

6/12/23 Tillbrook's - Header, suspect fine dust from seed destructor built up on exhaust manifold. Less than an acre burnt, several spot fires in lupin stubble.

25/12/23 Rutherglen Dawes' - Lightning strike, small area burnt.

04/01/24 Wickepin Rubbish Tip - Cause suspect. Small area burnt.

12/01/24 Smith's Watts Road - Lightning strike. Small area burnt.

12/01/24 Russell Road Verge - Lightning strike. Small area burnt.

13/01/24 Hobby Farm? Coad Road - Lightning strike 5 - 10ha?

14/01/24 Ken Beatie's - Lightning strike, small area burnt.

16/01/24 Shane Hill - Lightning strike, small area burnt.

17/01/24 Russell's, Milligans Hill - Lightning strike 5 - 10ha burnt.

17/01/24 Simpson's/Flavel's Graves Road - Lightning strike, 20ha burnt (Pingelly Shire).

17/01/24 Halliday Road - Lightning strike, 10ha burnt.

06/03/24 Dowling, Leeson Road - Loader fire on crunched canola stubble. Nil area burnt. Fire was in the Cuballing Shire but Comcen (000) had contacted CBFCO Wickepin so we became the respondent which led to the fire being in our control.

09/03/24 Western Power near White Road - Tree branch fell on the lines, minimal area burnt. Very slow response time with this one!

Also with neighbouring shires having a very busy fire season, we had a number of volunteers attending to those as well.

Over all the fires were well attended and kept to a minimum.

I'd like to note that two of the header fires which had fire units on their chaser bins is a good example of keeping fires to a minimum. These could have had a quite a different outcome otherwise. Another good asset to have in your paddock and something for farmers to consider on their chaser bin or on the front of the tractor going forward.

A big thank you to all our volunteers and their equipment for this fire season.

11 Appointments 2024/2025 Fire Season

11.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

That _____ be nominated as the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer of the Shire of Wickepin for the 2024/2025 bush fire season:

_____ accepted the nomination.

There being no further nominations the Chief Executive Officer declared _____ elected to the position of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer of the Shire of Wickepin for the 2024/2025 fire season.

11.2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Officer Recommendation

That _____ be nominated as the Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer of the Shire of Wickepin for the 2024/2025 bush fire season:

_____ accepted the nomination.

There being no further nominations Chairman declared _____ elected to the position of the Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer of the Shire of Wickepin for the 2024/2025 fire season.

11.3 Fire Control Officers/Bush Fire Radio Operators/Fire Weather Officers

Officer Recommendation

That the following persons be appointed as Fire Control Officers/Bush Fire Radio Operators and Fire Weather Instrument Officers of the Shire of Wickepin for the 2024/2025 bush fire season:

*Tim Heffernan
Phil Russell
Daniel White
Gordon McDougall
Wes Astbury
Jim Hamilton
Nathan Astbury
Trevor Leeson
Dave Stacey
Roger Butler
Luke Lansdell
Todd Mullan
Toby Russell
Cal Sims*

11.4 Clover Burning Permits

Officer Recommendation

That the following persons be appointed as Clover Permit Issuing Officers for the 2024/2025 fire season:

Wes Astbury

11.5 Dual Fire Control Officers from Wickepin

Officer Recommendation

That the following persons be appointed as Dual Fire Control Officers for the 2024/2025 fire season:

<i>David Stacey, Jim Hamilton</i>	<i>Shire of Corrigin</i>
<i>Trevor Leeson, Nathan Astbury and Phillip Russell</i>	<i>Shire of Narrogin</i>
<i>Trevor Leeson, Roger Butler and Luke Lansdell</i>	<i>Shire of Cuballing</i>
<i>Gordon McDougall and Wes Astbury</i>	<i>Shire of Dumbleyung</i>
<i>Nathan Astbury, Dan White</i>	<i>Shire of Wagin</i>
<i>Roger Butler and Jim Hamilton</i>	<i>Shire of Pingelly</i>
<i>Wes Astbury, David Stacey, Tim Heffernan and Todd Mullan</i>	<i>Shire of Kulin</i>

11.6 Dual Fire Control Officers from adjoining Shires

Nil

11.7 Shire of Wickepin Fire Break Notice 2024/2025

That the Committee recommends to Council for the following wording for the 2024/2025 Fire Break Notice:

*Bush Fires Act 1954
Shire of Wickepin
Annual Firebreak Notice 2024/2025*

Action is required by owners and/or occupiers of all land in the Shire of Wickepin. Please read this notice carefully. Any queries should be directed to the Shire of Wickepin Administration Centre or Local Shire Bush Fire Control Officer. Pursuant to the powers contained in Section 33 of the Bush Fires Act 1954, owners and occupiers of property within the Shire of Wickepin are hereby required on or before 1 October 2023 and thereafter to 14 April 2024 to plough, scarify or otherwise provide and maintain firebreaks clear of all inflammable material at least 2.5 metres wide as follows:

Rural Land

Inside the boundary of all land held by each owner or occupier, their firebreaks need not follow the perimeter of any paddock but will be acceptable following land contours in an endeavour to overcome water erosion;

- To subdivide each holding into lots of no greater than 400 hectares; and*
- To surround the homestead, out buildings and fuel storages on any such land.*
- That from the 15th October all harvesting and baling (including cutting and raking) operations, there shall be an operational mobile engine powered firefighting unit or units with a minimum*

combined capacity of 1,200 litres of available water, located in or immediately adjacent to the paddock being harvested and/or baled. The minimum capacity of any single firefighting unit shall be 600 litres of available water. The responsibility to supply and operate the firefighting unit is that of the landowner/occupier.

Townsite Land

All lots within the townsites of Harrismith, Tincurrin, Toolibin, Wickepin and Yealering are required to be cleared and maintained free of all debris or inflammable material. Failure to comply with these requirements renders the owner or occupier liable to a penalty of \$5,000.

Clearing of Fence Lines

When clearing for new fence lines adjoining road reserves, you must have written approval from the Shire of Wickepin prior to commencement of clearing works. Landholders are asked to consider locating the fence three (3) metres inside their boundary to avoid any clearing on road reserves. Old fences should first be removed. If landholders wish to place their fence on the boundary, they may clear no more than one (1) metre beyond their boundary. This may be varied in special circumstances at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer. Any timber removed from the road reserve is to be pushed onto the owner's property.

Fencing of Road Reserves

Council encourages farmers to fence off road reserves running through their properties to protect trees on these reserves and to allow new growth of vegetation.

Burning on Roadsides

Should property owners wish to carry out burning of the road reserve adjacent to their property, it is necessary to obtain council approval prior to any burning taking place.

Burning Periods

Restricted Burning – 1 October 2024 to 13 November 2025

Prohibited Burning – 14 November 2024 to 7 February 2025

Restricted Burning – 8 February 2025 to 14 April 2025

Harvest and Fire Ban 2024/2025 Season

Harvesting is banned on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

Lighting of fires is banned on Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

12 General Business

13 Closure

The next Bush Fire Control Officers Committee meeting will be held in September 2024.

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at [time].