



Shire of Victoria Plains

**Minutes
General Meeting of the
Bushfire Advisory Committee held**

On	Tuesday 17 th March 2015
At	Council Chambers, Calingiri
Commencing	8.41am

1 DECLARATION OF OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

G Manning - CBFCO declared the meeting open at 8.41am

2 ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE GRANTED

Committee:

CBFCO	Gary Manning (Yerecoin/Piawaning)
DCBFCO/FWO/Capt	Ric Pearson (Yerecoin/Piawaning)
FCO/FWO/Capt	John Brennan (Calingiri)
FCO/Capt	Gavin Halligan (New Norcia)
	Brian McGill – (Bolgart)

Harry Hawkins - Chief Executive Officer
Fiona Watson - Hon Secretary (Minutes)

Visitors:

Nil

Apologies:

District Officer (Fire) South - Ian Thompson DFES Midwest/Gascoyne
Regional Office
CESM - Vicki Booth
FCO/Capt - Colin Guthrie (Bolgart)
FCO - Bevan King (Yerecoin/Piawaning)

3 WELCOMING OF VISITORS

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Resolution

Moved R Pearson seconded G Halligan that the Minutes of the General Meeting of the Bushfire Advisory Committee held Monday 15th September 2014 as circulated be confirmed.

Carried

5 BUSINESS ARISING FROM GENERAL MEETING HELD 15th SEPTEMBER 2014

J Brennan

Financial Report 2013/2014.

High costs of maintenance and repairs given that the fire units are now relatively new vehicles.

Foam Units – follow up with V Booth regarding foam units / pumps and lines.

G Halligan

Referred to the current tyres on the New Norcia and Gillingarra units. Once off hard ground the two vehicles are useless. Bugged numerous times at the recent Bullsbrook fires. Tyres are an issue and dangerous and need *immediate replacement*. Not to be funded by the shire but funded by DFES.

New Norcia truck has alternator issues that affect the rear external speaker. Workshops have “fixed” the problem by cutting the wire. There is now no rear speaker. The speaker is a requirement and something needs to be done to address an obvious wiring problem.

J Brennan

Discussed the TATRA vehicle that was on display at the recent DOAC Meeting. The vehicles are similarly priced to the IVECO and MAN options currently being sourced by DFES.

DFES don't appear interested in the TATRA which appear to be superior in build and options to the current fleet.

Servicing of brigade units was discussed.

Frontline Fire is able to assist with servicing the pumps and auxiliary motors.

R Pearson

Standpipes and Emergency Water.

H Hawkins

Advised the meeting that two hydrants have been installed at Yerecoin and an additional hydrant in Bolgart. These were funded by a State Government Grant - a cost to the Water Corporation.

R Pearson and G Manning suggested that a Hydrant Training day be arranged.

H Hawkins

Works to the Bolgart standpipe have increased the outlet on the tank and standpipe at the Bolgart Caravan Park to 100mm pipe.

G Manning
Fire Extinguisher Servicing costs.

Discussion was had regarding past contractor and new contractor. Costs are likely to decrease with new service contractor.

J Brennan
Alerted those present that training records held by DFES for personnel (volunteers included) have been “lost”.

F Watson
Advised that a record was held at the shire for everything prior to the commencement of the CESM.

F Watson to liaise with V Booth and amalgamate what training records do exist. Skills Declaration Forms are to be signed off by the CEO and or Chief Executive Officer BFCO by the 31st March 2015 in an effort to recognise skills, training and classification of volunteer officers for Victoria Plains.

6 GENERAL BUSINESS

6.1 Hon. Secretary Report – Fiona Watson

- Prepared Agenda's and Minutes of Meetings
- Liaised with brigade members on various administration issues
- Distributed DOAC meeting information to delegates
- Provided regular updates in the shire and community newsletter on various issues relating to permit times, SMS, firebreaks, permits etc
- Maintained fire report data
- Updated member lists on a regular basis
- Issued purchase orders for servicing, repairs and various maintenance items on brigade vehicles, PPE
- Notice of meeting distributed for 17th March 2015 (e-mail)
- Liaised with SoVP Building Maintenance Officer for inspection of fire extinguishers and equipment in brigade and council vehicles

6.2 Permit Burning – Fiona Watson

Further to my email circulated to FCO's on the 10th March 2015 I draw to your attention to Council's policy manual excerpt on Fire Control 10.1.14 below.

10.1.14 Burning on Sundays and Public Holidays

During Prohibited and Restricted Burning times burning on Sundays and Public Holidays is prohibited.

Clarification is sought regarding Regulation 15B (8) and (9) on the back of the Permit to Burn form, as Regulation 15B (8) and (9) refer to “prohibited” periods not “restricted and prohibited” (as per Council's policy manual).

Discussion was held by all present and it was agreed that Council Policy 10.1.14 be followed during periods of Prohibited and Restricted Burning.

Resolution

Moved J Brennan seconded B McGill that as of 12 noon today (17/3/15), there is no requirement for burning permits to be issued.

Carried

SMS to be sent i.e.:-

UNRESTRICTED BURNING in VP from 12 noon 17/03/15. Check daily wind conditions; ensure adequate water supply; exercise caution. More Info Ph: 96287004.

R Pearson

Spoke briefly on the escaped fire last week in north of the Shire

6.3 Brigade Requirements (including PPE)

New Norcia

Request for eight sets of two piece clothing.

6.4 Brigade Reports

Bolgart

Atlas Fire – Two days

Road Train fire (hay) – Old Plains Road (Toodyay Shire)

Candelloro fire callout – Clarke Road Bolgart

Truck OK.

All going along OK.

Calingiri

Quiet over Harvest period

3 days at Bindoon/Atlas Fire

2 days at Bullsbrook

4 days at Boddington

Annoyed that from the four other brigades in the Shire, no other replacement members could be found to relieve the Calingiri crew who attended the Boddington fire.

Calingiri Truck is dangerous and needs immediate action to fix, or the unit should be replaced.

Mogumber/Gillingarra

Nil

New Norcia

15 call outs

2 days at Bullsbrook

No crew available for Boddington as most were on holidays or workmen were on holidays.

3 call outs to Gillingarra / Mogumber areas. It appears that unless the core volunteer group from Mogumber/Gillingarra are available to take their fire unit, Mogumber/Gillingarra does not attend incidents.

New Norcia Truck same as Calingiri.

On Record

“I will not be responsible for the death of a volunteer by sending them to an incident on the New Norcia Fire Unit”.

Something needs to be done about the problems with the fire unit now.

G Halligan spoke regarding a recent fire event in an area at the edge of VP shire. Arrived to find that DPAW and Career officers would not fight the fire until instructed to do so. Finds it ludicrous that those officers would let a fire burn because they were not instructed to put it out.

Yerecoin/Piawaning

Truck running well.

Resents the insinuation for not sending relief crew to the Boddington fire. Our crews are all volunteers. Many were on holidays. We can't force them to attend fires outside our shire nor within the shire. Most volunteers join to protect their own areas and neighbours.

P Sinclair fire callout.

J King fire call out.

Pellet Mill fire call out.

G Manning

Thanked everyone within our Volunteer crews for their efforts. Appreciates that Calingiri brigade attends fires outside of VP. Spoken to many who have attended “other fires” and they have learned a lot.

Boundaries

Discussion was held and an assurance was given by Kim Lamkin at the recent DOAC meeting, that the current boundary system will be supported and remain in place.

7 REPORTS OF OTHER OFFICERS/VISITORS

7.1 DFES – Ian Thompson - District Officer (Fire) South Midwest/Gascoyne Regional Office

Nil

7.2 DOAC – John Brennan

As presented.

DOAC Report Meeting held 11/03/15

George Storer (chair person) there were two large fires in the South West this year and would like to thank all those that attended the Boddington and Hotham Fires from this region.

On a management note, he is concerned about the level of support DFES is giving ? Bushfire Service experience is lacking due to the replacement of BFB Senior staff with Career urban staff.

Bob Cox : Supt Country Nth. At the moment the Geraldton staff are preparing for the flooding of Carnarvon and pointed out that DFES is for all hazards.

He welcomed Ian Thompson back to Geraldton after several years at Kalgoorlie.

This year approx. 5 new appliances will be brought into this area.

Crew Protection is rolling out with the supply of Burn Over blankets and the retro-fitting of Fire Curtains to the older vehicles in the fleet.

This year we have had 3 Burn Overs. All vehicles involved were Light Tankers. No one was injured but an inquiry is ongoing to find out why these vehicles were in this situation.

Our High Season Fleet consists of two 2.4 Tankers and six Light Tankers.

We have had 103 major fires this year, with significant fires in the South West. We have not had three Level 3 fires in the same year since the 60's.

We Believe there are 30 significant arsonists in the Perth area. With the majority being kids ranging from 13 to 17 year olds.

Kim Lambkin : 500 call outs in the Mid West Gascoyne area this season. Our region has attended Bindoon, Bullsbrook, Waroona, Boddington & Hotham fires.

John Wheelock has moved to the coastal strip and will be under Gordon Purvis in VFRS. Paul Southam has been promoted to Perth. With the restructure, Geraldton now has a Training Support Officer- Jo Bettesworth.

Ian Comben : This year 119 volunteers have been trained. Courses this year Intro to FF & BFF, FCO & Sector Commander.

Dave Gossage VBFFA: They are very concerned about Career personal taking over jobs held by experienced Bushy's. There is only about half a dozen of them left in the system.

Fairness of distribution of the ESL levy.

Arson is a big issue at the moment.

A rumour has been going around that you will not be covered by insurance unless you are responding to a 000 call, this is not true, you are covered from the time you respond by LGIS.

The Auditors report is concerned at the level of funding, training, equipment & support that volunteers are receiving.

VAC volunteer advisory committee – In the terms of reference from DFES it states that they only have to report to the Commissioner. In the Act, it states that reporting can be to either the Minister or the Commissioner. This has been voted unanimously twice but DFES refuse to accept the decision.

Smart Phone App. This can be downloaded from the site and is a valuable tool when on a call out. Able to log : start time, your team, add notes and finish time. When back at station you can refer back for filling out your reports.

Western Power- working during TFB. Emergency repair fault work. The Auto Closing Transient Fault system works very well but it is turned off during summer in case of fires. When it trips there is a 30 minute delay to check with DFES if there are any fires. If it trips again when turned on then the line has to be visually inspected.

When searching for faults, they have to carry 400L of water. When repairing the fault they have to carry 800L of water.

When the fault is fixed they can't turn the power on until the FDI is below 32 and falling.

They are trying to speed up the process by using choppers to inspect the lines and going to double shifts, so night work can be carried out.

In General Business a complaint was raised about bringing in machinery was raised. Bob Cox replied that there are no restrictions on machinery if it was necessary and available, which surprised most people at the meeting.

At my last VFTAG meeting there was a push to change it to an all Emergency Group and renamed VTAG. I asked for feedback on this at the DOAC and a clear response was to keep it as it is.

Adam Lockhart : New type of Fire Truck : Chek made, AWD, All Terrain, Air Cooled Motor, Independent Suspension, The only FOPS ROPS cab on a truck in Australia, Live drive pump (off motor not gear box), Fire system is by THG Fire from Europe, Crew Protection is Aust. Standards. Two models 5.4 & 10.6 and within weight ranges, Change tyre pressures from cab, front cannon with joystick control, Halo sprinklers around truck, 5.4 is a 3 seater, designed for 1 man operation. Australian head office is in Maddington, they have every part in stock for that truck. Similar price to Calingiri's 3.4.

7.3 CESM – Vicki Booth

Vicki Booth had been succeded to Carnarvon from 12th March to possibly the 19th March and may be unavailable to attend the meeting. A brief report was submitted by phone.

1. Resource to Risk –Business Case for the Shire of Victoria Plains has been submitted with DFES Geraldton;

H Hawkins

Advised that there were no real changes to our original Resource to Risk Business Case. The Case Study has been revised and submitted to DFES.

G Manning

Was annoyed that Council put forward and passed a motion that a light tanker (fast attack) be requested from DFES for the Mogumber/Gillingarra Brigade. Mogumber/Gillingarra does not have a great attendance record at events and believes that the Chief BFCO should have access to a fast attack before the Mogumber/Gillingarra Brigade.

H Hawkins

Also noted that the New Norcia brigade have for a number of years required a fast attack vehicle (due to numerous incidents and call outs along Great Northern Highway)

Discussion was held.

2. I have investigated what is required for 2015/16 ESL budget and I am confident that the allocation being offered for Shire of Victoria Plains will be sufficient (2015/16 is \$48,420.00);

H Hawkins

Advised that the 2015/2016 ESL allocation appears to be satisfactory.

3. A list of names and mobile numbers is required from each brigade to be placed on a Comms Centre SMS database. Not all personnel are required. A standard form is required to be filled out.

F Watson

To provide a list of numbers from each brigade (Captains and FCO's) for the Comms Centre SMS Database.

4. Fire Reporting – forms are to be submitted to the shire office or myself following a fire incident. Reporting goes to statistic gathering for ESL allocations, vehicle replacement, issue of additional equipment etc;

F Watson

To order more stock of Incident/Attendance Folders. Originally each truck and each FCO should have been issued with folders.

J Brennan

Have new burning permit books been received?

F Watson

Not at today's date (Follow up).

**Minutes - General Meeting
Bushfire Advisory Committee – 17th March 2015**

G Manning

Atlas Fire – the response from our volunteers and farmer units was excellent. Approximately 65 personnel attended. It was very frustrating that radio communication was inadequate, which led to some confusion.

A de-brief is to be held in Northam in the coming weeks.

8 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Bushfire Advisory Committee will be held on 15th September 2015 commencing at 8.30am in Council Chambers.

9 DECLARATION OF CLOSURE

There being no further business the CBFCO closed the meeting at 10.10am.