



Shire of
Katanning

Heart of the Great Southern

Volunteer Bushfire Brigade
Guidelines and Procedures

DECEMBER 2023



Heart of the Great Southern

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The following Plans and Policies are to be read in conjunction with these guidelines.

Bushfire Act 1954

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 1974

Work Health and Safety Act 2020

Shire of Katanning Code of Conduct

Equal Opportunity Act 1984

State Hazard Plan – Fire

State EM Policy - Emergency Public Information.

State EM Policy - Community Evacuations.

State EM Policy - Traffic Management During Emergencies.

There may be other Plans and Policies that are relevant to this document, please refer to those if required.

Road Verge Burning Procedure	41-42
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Guidelines Review

Date	Details of amendment	Amended by	Approved By
21 October 2014	Guidelines initiated and endorsed by BFAC	Produced by CESM in consultation Bushfire Advisory Committee	BFAC
17 December 2014			Endorsed by Council
24 April 2018	Update on information in BOP'S	CESM in consultation with the Bushfire Advisory Committee	Endorsed by Council
30 October 2020	Update information	CESM in consultation with the Bushfire Advisory Committee	Endorsed by Council December 2020
November 2022	Update Training, WHS and Covid Procedures	CESM in consultation with CEO, CBFCO, DCBFCO	Endorsed by Council December 2022
October 2023	Update Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 1974. Update to reflect DRAFT Bushfire Local Law	CESM in consultation with CBFCO, DCBFCO	Endorsed by Council December 2023

Distribution of the Katanning Bushfire Guidelines will be to all Fire Control Officers, Shire CEO, Shire CESM New members, Shire Website.

GENERAL NOTES / RECOMMENDED FUTURE CHANGES

Acronyms

AllIMS – Australasian Inter – Services Incident Management System.
ACH Act 1974 – Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 1974
BFB – Bushfire Brigades.
BFAC – Bushfire Advisory Committee.
BOPS – Brigade Operational Procedures.
CBFCO – Chief Bushfire Control Officer.
CESM – Community Emergency Services Manager.
CEO – Chief Executive Officer.
DBFCO – Deputy Bushfire Control Officer.
PaW – Parks and Wildlife.
DFES – Department for Fire and Emergency Services.
DO – District Officer.
FCP – Forward Control Point.
FCO – Fire Control Officer.
FRS – Fire and Rescue Service.
HVMB - Harvest and Vehicle Movement Ban
ISG – Incident Support Group
LGGS – Local Government Grant Scheme.
OMS – Operational Management System.
SMS – Short Message Service.
SEMP – State Emergency Management Policy.
TRK – Training Resource Kit.
UHF – Ultra High Frequency.
VHF – Very High Frequency.
DER - Department of Environment and Regulation

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES AUTHORITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA ACT 1998

SECTION 37 - PROTECTION FROM LIABILITY

(1) Subject to section (2), a person does not incur civil liability for anything that the person has done, in good faith, in the performance or purported performance of a function under the emergency services acts.

(1a) without limiting subsection (1) a person is taken to be performing a function under an emergency services act if the person is -

- (a) A member or officer of a private fire brigade or a volunteer fire brigade who take part in an activity carried out by the brigade for the purpose for which it was formed.
- (b) A volunteer firefighter who is carrying out normal brigade activities (within the meaning of the Bushfire Act 1954).

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EVERYONE ON THE FIRE GROUND TO MAKE THE ENVIRONMENT AS SAFE AS POSSIBLE FOR ALL.

1. VOLUNTEER BUSHFIRE BRIGADES

1.1 ESTABLISHMENT OF A BUSHFIRE BRIGADE

The Council will establish and maintain sufficient Bushfire Brigades to provide proper and adequate fire protection for the municipality.

1.2 NAME AND OFFICERS OF A BUSHFIRE BRIGADE

On establishing a Bushfire Brigade the Local Government is to

- a) Give a name to the Bushfire Brigade and or associated sub-areas.
- b) Specify the area in which the Bushfire Brigade is primarily responsible for carrying out the normal Brigade activities.
- c) Appoint Fire Control Officers.

When considering the appointment of Fire Control Officers, the Local Government is to have regard to the qualifications and experience that may be required to fill each position.

If a position becomes vacant then the Local Government is to appoint a person nominated by the Brigade to fill the vacancy within a specific time frame agreeable to the Local Government and the brigade.

The current Brigade names and profiles are as follows:

Brigade	Profile
Badgebup	Farmer Response
Carrolup	Farmer Response
Central	Rural Brigade
Merrebin	Farmer Response

1.3 COMPOSITION OF BUSHFIRE BRIGADE

Membership of a Brigade may consist of the following categories:

- a) Fire Control Officer (s)
- b) Captain
- c) Fire Control Officer /Captain
- d) Lieutenants
- e) Secretary/Treasurer
- f) Maintenance person
- g) Active Fire Fighting Members
- h) Auxiliary Members
- i) Cadet

Chairperson

A person elected by the Brigade at its Annual General Meeting to chair the Brigade meetings.

Captain

A person elected by the Brigade at its Annual General Meeting to carry out the statutory duties associated with that post.

Lieutenants

Persons elected by the Brigade at its Annual General Meeting to carry out the statutory duties associated with that post.

Secretary/Treasurer (if required)

A person elected by the Brigade at its Annual General Meeting to look after the clerical and bookkeeping functions of the brigade.

Maintenance Officer (or if not appointed the brigade Captain)

A person/s elected by the Brigade at its Annual General Meeting to look after the Brigade appliance /s and equipment.

1.4 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Each Brigade when required to deal with brigade matters should hold its Annual General Meeting during the period March / April at which elections of Brigade Offices shall take place. Brigades shall advise Council of the incoming officers as soon as practical after an AGM so updates can be carried out, and the officers can be ratified by council.

1.5 DISSOLUTION OF A BUSHFIRE BRIGADE

In accordance with Section 41(3) of the Bushfires Act, the Local Government may cancel the registration of a Bushfire Brigade if it is of the opinion that the Bushfire Brigade is or has not complied with:

- a) The Act;
- b) The Local Law
- c) This Bushfire Brigade Procedures or the Rules;
- d) Is not achieving the objective for which it was established.

If the Local Government cancels the registration of a Bushfire Brigade, alternative fire control arrangements are to be made in respect of the Brigade area.

2. RULES GOVERNING THE OPERATION OF BUSHFIRE BRIGADES

2.1 OBJECTS OF BUSHFIRE BRIGADES

The objects of the Bushfire Brigade are to carry out:

- a) The normal Brigade activities.
- b) The functions of the Bushfire Brigade which are specified in the Bushfire Act 1954 and the Shire of Katanning's Bushfire Brigades Guidelines and Procedures.

2.2 MANAGEMENT OF BUSHFIRE BRIGADE

The committee of the Bushfire Brigade is to have the following functions to:

- a) Recommend to the Local Government amendments to this Bushfire Guideline and Procedures.
- b) Propose a motion for consideration at any meeting of the Bushfire Brigade.
- c) Recommend to the Local Government equipment needs to be supplied by the Local Government to the Bushfire Brigades.

2.3 MEETINGS OF BUSHFIRE BRIGADE

Committee Meetings

- a) May be called at any time by the FCO/Capt through the Secretary (if appointed) by giving at least 7 days' notice to all Brigade members and if deemed necessary the Chief Bushfire Control Officer and Community Emergency Services Manager.

Special Meetings

- b) The brigade FCO/Capt through the Secretary (if appointed) is to call a special meeting when 5 or more Brigade members request one in writing.
- c) At least 2 days' notice of a special meeting is to be given by the FCO/Capt through the Secretary (if appointed) to all Brigade members, Chief Bushfire Control Officer and the Community Emergency Services Manager.
- d) In the notice given the FCO/Capt through the Secretary (if appointed) is to specify the business that is to be conducted at the meeting.
- e) No business is to be conducted at a special meeting beyond that specified in the notice given in relation to the meeting.

Annual General Meeting

- a) At least 7 days' notice of the Annual General Meeting is to be given by the FCO/Capt through the Secretary (if appointed) to all Brigade members the Chief Bushfire Control Officer and the Community Emergency Services Manager
- b) At the Annual General Meeting the Bushfire Brigade is to:
 - i. Elect the Brigade officers from among the Brigade members;
 - ii. Consider the Captain's report on the years activities;
 - iii. Adopt the annual financial statements; (if maintained)
 - iv. Appoint an auditor for the ensuing financial year; (if financial are maintained)
 - v. Deal with any general business.

Quorum

The quorum of a meeting of the Bushfire Brigade is at least 50% of the number of officers of the Bushfire Brigade.

Voting

Each brigade member is to have one vote; however, in the event of an equality of votes, the FCO/Capt (or person presiding) may exercise a casting vote.

2.4 DISAGREEMENTS

Any disagreement between Brigade members may be referred to either the captain or to the Committee. Where a disagreement is considered by the FCO/Capt or the Committee to be of importance to the interest of the Bushfire Brigade. Then the FCO/Capt or Committee as the case may be, is to refer the disagreement to an Annual General Meeting, ordinary meeting or a special meeting of the Bushfire Brigade.

The Local Government by recommendation of the Chief Bushfire Control Officer or CEO is the final authority on matters affecting the Bushfire Brigades and may resolve any disagreement that is not resolved.

2.5 NOTICES

- a) Notices of meetings of the Bushfire Brigade are to be circulated through an agreed format to each Brigade member.
- b) Notice of meetings of the Committee may be given in writing in accordance with subclause (1) or by such means as the Committee may decide by an absolute majority at the meeting of the Committee.

- c) Any accidental omission to give notice of a meeting to, or non-receipt by a person entitled to receive such notice, is not to invalidate the meeting the subject of the notice or any resolutions passed at the meeting.
- d) Where any notice other than a notice of meeting is to be given under the Rules, the notice is to be:
 - i. In writing
 - ii. Unless otherwise specified, given to or by the Captain /Fire Control Officer or Secretary if appointed.
 - iii. Given by –
 - a. Personal delivery;
 - b. Post;
 - c. Email.
 - d. SMS
 - e. Bushfire radio network.
 - f. WhatsApp

Taken as the case may be:

- a. at the time of personal delivery
- b. 2 business days after posting; or
- c. on printing of the sender's transmission report.

3. APPOINTMENT, DISMISSAL AND MANAGEMENT OF MEMBERS

3.1 RULES TO GOVERN

The appointment, dismissal and management of Brigade members by the Bushfire Brigade are governed by the Rules.

3.2 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The Brigade and the Local Government recognise its legal obligations under the Equal Opportunity Act, 1984 and will actively promote equal employment based on merit to ensure that discrimination does not occur on the grounds of:-

- Gender
- Marital status
- Pregnancy
- Race
- Religious convictions
- Political convictions
- Physical impairment
- Age
- Family status and
- Racial vilification.

In accordance with the Equal Opportunity Act, 1984, both direct and indirect discrimination in the areas of recruitment and selection, training, health and safety and medical issues, conditions of employment and promotions, will not be tolerated. All policies and procedures in these areas will be directed towards providing equal employment to all volunteers provided that their relevant experience skills and ability to meet the minimum standards.

Furthermore, the Shire of Katanning and the Katanning Bushfire Brigade considers direct and indirect sexual harassment an unacceptable form of behaviour, which will not be tolerated under any circumstances, and all volunteers should be able to work in an environment free of intimidation and sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is a general term covering unwelcome sexual behaviour. This includes, but is not limited to:-

- a) Unwanted physical contact such as touching and pinching;
- b) Lewd comments or joked about a person's physical appearance or private life;
- c) Request for sexual favours; and
- d) The display of pornography

Both the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 and the Criminal Code make it unlawful for a person to incite racial hatred, racial violence, serious contempt or severe ridicule of a person or group of persons on the grounds of their race. Accordingly, the Shire of Katanning and the Shire of Katanning Bushfire Brigades will not tolerate and form of racial hatred or racial harassment under any circumstances. This includes, but not limited to:

- 1) Publication of material, or possession of material for publication, to incite racial hatred. Display of material, or possession of material for display, to harass a racial group or individual.

Managers and supervisors must ensure that all employees are treated equitably in accordance with the grounds listed. They must also ensure people who make complaints or are witnesses are not victimised in any way.

Any reports of discrimination or harassment will be treated seriously and investigated promptly, confidentially and impartially. People will not be disadvantaged in their volunteer work as a result of lodging a complaint.

Appropriate action will be taken against anyone who discriminates or victimises a co-worker, client, or member of the Local Government.

The Shire of Katanning and the Shire of Katanning Bushfire Brigades is committed to providing an environment that is free of all forms of discrimination or harassment. In addition, the equal employment opportunity goal of the Shire of Katanning is designed to provide an enjoyable, challenging, involving, harmonious work environment for all employees and volunteers where each has the opportunity to progress to the extent of their ability.

If any member of the brigade feels that they are being treated unfairly under the Equal Opportunity Policy, they are to contact the Shire of Katanning CEO.

3.3 WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Shire of Katanning and the Shire of Katanning's Bushfire Brigades are totally committed to establishing and maintaining, so far as reasonable, the highest standards of work safety and health for all employees and volunteers.

This will be achieved by ensuring that the appropriate resources and effort are effectively utilized in the areas of accident and injury prevention.

The Chief Executive Officer is the responsible officer.

Managers and supervisors at all levels regard safety and health at the workplace as one of their highest priorities and are responsible for ensuring that volunteers are given instruction on correct techniques for

performing the job. This incorporates instruction in safe working practises and procedures, and an awareness of all hazards associated with their work.

Volunteer has responsibility in accident and injury protection; and will be encouraged to participate in improving standards of workplace safety and health.

Members are responsible for:

- a) Maintaining work practises that are safe and minimise risk to health and safety.
- b) Encourage others to work in a safe and healthy manner.
- c) Brigade Members must follow State Government Health Directives for Emergency Services Volunteers Eg Covid.
- d) Supporting and promoting WHS in the workplace.
- e) Reporting and rectifying unsafe conditions that comes to their notice.
- f) Their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others affected by their actions within the brigade and the community.

3.4 CODE OF CONDUCT

General

Brigade members are to act in a professional manner at all times, whether they are on a fire ground or representing the brigade at any time e.g., school fete, or static display.

Brigade members are at all times to show courtesy to members of the public and staff and members of the Local Government.

Any members of the brigade found to cause disharmony, or by actions or speech to bring the brigade, or the Shire of Katanning into disrepute, or to act in other than a professional manner shall be disciplined.

See attachment Shire of Katanning Code of Conduct.

Alcohol and Drugs

Alcohol and drugs are not to be consumed at all whilst on duty.

Members must not operate DFES BFB vehicles or private Units whilst under the influence of alcohol, non-prescription drugs or prescription drugs that could change your ability to act in a safe manner.

Members of Other Emergency Services.

Members are to respect personnel from other Emergency Service Organisations and their knowledge, experience and skills when working with them. If any member has a matter of concern or conflict with a member from another Emergency Service, they are to submit it in writing to the Shire of Katanning CEO who will deal with the matter as in accordance with procedures.

4. COMMITTEE

4.1 BUSHFIRE ADVISORY MEETING

Council shall form and maintain a Bushfire Advisory Committee to formulate for Councils consideration, recommendations and policy on matters relating to bushfire prevention, control and extinguishment, as provided for by Section 67 of the Bushfires Act 1954.

Composition of Voting Delegates

- a) The Shire of Katanning will nominate one council representative to attend meetings.
- b) The Chief Bushfire Control Officer;
- c) The Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer;
- d) One Bushfire Control Officer (appointed by the Shire in accordance with the Act) nominated by each Brigade;
- e) Each Brigade shall nominate a proxy to attend at committee meetings where a delegate is unable to attend. It shall be the responsibility of a delegate to notify his/her proxy should he/her for any reason is unable to attend particular meeting.
- f) The Community Emergency Services Manager
- g) Council shall appoint a minute taker.

Observers and Advisors

Observers may attend with no voting rights.

Function

- a) To advise Council on all matters relating to the operation of the Bushfires Act 1954.

To advise Council on the best and most efficient means of maximising fire control resources in the district.

4.2 QUORUM

A quorum shall consist of more than one half of the voting Committee.

4.3 VOTING

At meetings of the Committee each member shall have one vote and in the case of equal votes. The Chairperson shall exercise a casting vote. Observers, advisers and ex – officers, members may not vote on any matter.

Observers attending meetings of the Committee will not be permitted to speak on any matter unless invited to do so by the Chairperson, or in conformity with Council Standing Orders.

4.4 BUSHFIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations of the Bushfire Advisory Committee will be referred to the earliest possible meeting of Council.

4.5 MEETINGS

1 Ordinary and Special

Ordinary meetings of the committee shall be held as required.

Written notice shall be given to all Committee members, at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.

Other meetings of the Committee may be convened:

- a) By the Chairperson.
- b) By written notice to all committee members, such notice being signed by at least four members of the Committee, giving not less than two (2) days' notice and stating purpose of the meeting.
- c) By the Council or its nominated members.

The time and venue of meetings shall be determined by the Chairperson, or Council nominated member, having due regard to the general convenience of the Committee members.

4.6 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

At the pre-season BFAC meeting the Committee if required is to recommend the Chief Bushfire Control Officer and Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer, Fire Control Officers as appointed to Council. And the Fire Weather Officers as gazetted by DFES.

In the event that the Meeting is unable or unwilling to make such nominations, Council will appoint the above Executive positions.

4.7 USE OF COUNCIL MEETING FACILITIES

Council shall provide use of a Council facility for the ordinary meetings of the Bushfire Brigade Association Meeting and BFAC.

4.8 MINUTES

A copy of the minutes of the Committee meeting shall be circulated to Council and Committee members.

4.9 REPORTS TO THE BUSHFIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- a) The CBFCO shall report on matters relevant to the Committee
- b) The Delegates from each Brigade shall report on matters relevant to the Committee
- c) Council delegates shall report on matters relevant to the Committee.
- d) Other agencies that may be in attendance shall report on matters relevant to the Committee.

4.10 APPOINTMENT OF FIRE CONTROL OFFICERS

The Committee shall recommend Fire Control Officers appointments to Council.

5. TRAINING OF MEMBERS

5.1 TRAINING OFFICER

Councils CESM is the Shires Training Coordinator.

5.2 BASIC TRAINING

Council will be responsible for basic training of its bushfire personnel through its Training Coordinator utilising program content and training resources developed by the Department of Fire and Emergency Service and other training agencies if required.

5.3 COMPLETION OF THE FIREFIGHTERS COURSE

Council requires all registered firefighting brigade members to have completed the following Training. Recognition of prior learning can be taken into consideration.

- a) Local Government Induction Package
- b) Farmer Response Brigades – Rural Fire Awareness.
- c) DFES Appliance Brigade – Induction Package, Bushfire Safety Awareness, Fire Fighting Skills

Council Fire Control Officers are required to complete the following training

- A Fire Control Officer Course and AIIMS Awareness. (AIIMS Awareness training is available online.)
- b) Fire Weather Officers are required to complete the Fire Control Officer Course.

A range of additional training courses are available on request to the CESM. Upon completion Council will arrange for a 'Record of Completion' and personnel protective equipment (PPE) to be presented.

5.4 TRAINING EXPENSES

All training expenses are covered by the Local Government Grant Scene (LGGS) this included fuel and accommodation for attending training courses outside of the local area. Application for reimbursement of costs must be presented to the CESM prior to course date. Receipts are to be presented to the CESM within 5 working days of course completion.

6. BUSHFIRE BRIGADE MEMBERSHIPS

6.1 TYPES

The membership of a Bushfire Brigade consists of the following:

- a) Fire Fighting members
- b) Associate members
- c) Honorary life members
- d) Cadet members.

Fire Fighting Members - Are those persons being at least 16 years of age who are trained or competent to undertake normal Bushfire Brigade activities.

Associated Members - Are those persons who are not 'firefighters' members of the brigade but are willing to render other assistance such as transportation requirements, catering, communications etc. as required by the Bushfire Brigade This is a non-combat role.

Honorary Life Member – The Bushfire Brigade may by simple majority resolution appoint a person as an honorary life member in recognition of services by that person to the Bushfire Brigade.

Cadet Members –

- a) To be aged 11 to 15 years;
- b) To be admitted to membership only with consent of their parent or guardian;
- c) Admitted for the purpose of training and are not to attend or be in attendance at an uncontrolled fire or other emergency incident;
- d) To be supervised by a fire fighting member when undertaking normal brigade activities as defined Section 35A of the Act;
- e) Not to be assigned ranks under the Departments rank structure.

6.2 APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

An application for membership is to be on the DFES Membership Application form for Bushfire Brigades.

6.3 PROCESS FOR APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Applications for membership are to be forwarded to the CESM for processing.

6.4 DECISION ON APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

The Brigades Executive may approve an application for membership unconditionally or subject to any conditions or refuse to approve an application for membership. If a brigade refuses to approve an application for membership, it is to give written reasons for the refusal, as soon as practical, but not more than ten days after the decision is made, to the applicant and the advice that the applicant has the right to object to the Local Government.

6.5 TERMINATION TO MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the bushfire brigade terminates if the member:

- a) Dies;
- b) Gives written notice of resignation to the Local Government;
- c) Is, in the opinion of the Brigade Committee, permanently incapacitated by mental or physical ill - health;
- d) Is dismissed by the Committee;
- e) Is dismissed by the Council;
- f) Does not follow the State Health Direction for Emergency Services volunteers eg Covid
- g) Leaves the district permanently without terminating their Brigade membership, or
- h) Fails to meet the membership criteria.

The brigade secretary is to supply details of terminations to the Local Government CESM. The CESM will then inform DFES of the updates.

7. ADMINISTRATION

7.1 FIRE OCCURRENCE REPORTS.

All fires shall be reported to the CBFCO and the CESM, so Fire Reports can be completed. Who will ensure the incident is entered onto the DFES OMS data base. Reports may also be submitted progressively to the Bushfire Advisory Committee for necessary action.

7.2 CENTRALISING ORDERING

All procurements made for or on behalf of brigades will be through Councils CESM or nominated person who will have due regard to Council existing policies and budgets. No purchases can otherwise be made to suppliers by brigades unless brigades own funds are used.

8. CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR

Protective garments shall be worn at all times whilst actively engaging in fire protection activities such as training, burning off, fire suppression. These garments may include coveralls, bushfire jacket and pants, safety helmet, gloves, goggles (or full-face respirator) and boots. Minimum standard is long pants, long sleeve shirt from natural fibre, boots, goggles, smoke mask and gloves or (full face respirator). Council through the LGGS will fund the annual purchase of this equipment.

9. COMMUNICATIONS

9.1 RADIO NETWORK FOR FIRE FIGHTING COMMUNICATIONS

DFES shall be responsible for the provision of any necessary Bushfire radios for brigades (WAERN). FCO and brigade vehicles are to establish an efficient radio network for firefighting communications. Records shall be maintained by Local Government of DFES supplied radios and their location. The Black Bushfire Radios are the property of the Shire of Katanning and will be maintained by the Shire of Katanning.

The first WAERN radio allocation for a Fire Control Officer must be installed in their fire unit. Other radio installation locations can be determined by the Fire Control Officer.

No brigade member may use bushfire frequencies for any other purpose than firefighting or normal maintenance checks unless otherwise authorised.

9.2 MAINTENANCE OF RADIOS.

Radio checks including handheld radios are to be conducted on a weekly basis during the fire season.

DFES are responsible for the ongoing serviceability for the WAERN radio network. Radios that require maintenance are to be reported to the CESM or nominated person. The CESM will then make sure maintenance work is completed.

10. PURCHASING OF FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT

10.1 PURCHASES

Council may allocate funds from its annual LGGS for purchasing and maintenance of firefighting equipment. The aim when purchasing shall be to DFES standardised firefighting equipment where possible.

All requests from Brigades are to be through the CESM or nominated person. Purchases made by a brigade member/s are the brigade's responsibility if purchases have not followed correct channel.

10.2 FOAM

An annual quantity of foam, if needed, will be purchased, and stored. Requests can be made through the CESM, CBFCO or nominated person to access the foam.

10.3 FAST FILL TRAILERS

Fast Fill Trailers are strategically located across the Shire and are to be maintained to a level determined by the BFAC or CBFCO. The Shire of Katanning will maintain and carry out pre season maintenance.

11. APPLIANCE SHIRE/ DFES

11.1 TASKING OF EQUIPMENT

It is the fire unit owner's responsibility to have the vehicle in a reasonable condition. If Local Government or DFES Officers observe equipment, which it considers as inappropriate for a task or is unsafe, it may be required to be withdrawn from the fire ground.

11.2 MECHANICAL REPAIRS / DAMAGE

Any mechanical repairs of a routine nature required for recognised Bushfire vehicles e.g. DFES Fire Appliance, Fast Fill Trailer shall be directed to Council Workshop Supervisor by the CESM, CBFCO or nominated person.

Accidental damage at an incident caused to fire units, including privately owned equipment will be reported to the CBFCO and Councils CESM immediately so the problem can be addressed.

All mechanical faults /repairs are to be reported to Council CESM or CBFCO immediately so the problem can be addressed.

11.3 SERVICING

The CESM or nominated person in consultation with Council's workshop manager will organise for an annual service of all brigade vehicles.

The brigade shall be required to adopt the following guidelines for care of all fire units and equipment: -

- a. All fire units shall be kept clean and free of rubbish when not in use.
- b. Units are not to be used for any private or contact work outside the normal brigade operation.
- c. The use of any poisons or chemicals (other than fire retardants) in the units is prohibited.

- d. Fortnightly vehicle and firefighting equipment checks, including hazard warning equipment and radios are to be conducted. Faults shall be immediately reported to the CESM or nominated person.

11.4 LICENSING AND INSURANCE

Council shall, through the LGGs Operating budget be responsible for licensing and insurance of Bushfire fighting vehicles, buildings and equipment.

11.5 HOUSING

All DFES fire fighting vehicles and Fast Fill Trainers are to be housed in a garage, shed or other suitable building.

11.6 PRIVATE USE

Under no circumstances is a Brigade firefighting unit to be used for private purposes.

11.7 FUEL

Council will, through the LGGs operating budget, pay for the fuel costs associated with the use of mobile firefighting equipment, subject to the following guidelines: Fuel for the Central Brigade appliance can be obtained through swipe card from the shire depot.

11.8 VEHICLE LOGBOOKS

Vehicle logbooks must be completed each time the vehicle is driven showing the date, purpose of use, kilometres travelled, name of driver and the driver's signature.

11.9 LOCATION AND OPERATIONAL STATUS OF THE BRIGADE'S APPLIANCES

The brigade FCO/ Capt will at all times keep the CBFCO/ Shire CESM of any change in the day-to-day location and operational status of appliance under the control of a brigade.

11.10 MANNING OF THE FIRE FIGHTING APPLIANCES

A firefighting appliance should be manned by no less than two trained persons while actively engaged in firefighting or fire control activities.

Members may drive the appliances to an incident on their own but MUST NOT become involved in firefighting activities until crew levels as above are achieved.

11.11 DRIVERS LICENCE

The driver of any firefighting appliance or fire control vehicle will hold a current driver's licence of the class appropriate for the appliance or vehicle being driven and be either:

- a. A Council employee
- b. Any person authorised by the Chief Bushfire Control Officer, his/her Deputy, or a Brigade FCO/Captain.

11.12 DFES DRIVING GUIDELINES

The following are the priority driving codes under which appliances are permitted to travel:

- 1) CODE 1 – Unit to respond with due haste life/property in immediate danger. Must not exceed the speed limit by more 20km/hr.
 - a) Emergency warning lights used at all times during travel and operation at incident.
 - b) Siren must be used during travel to incident.
 - c) All speed signs of the road traffic act to be obeyed
 - d) All traffic lights and road traffic signals/signs to be obeyed unless the driver of the fire appliance is confident that it is safe and expedient to contravene and that other traffic will give way to the fire appliance.
 - e) Rail crossing signals and boom gates to be obeyed at all times.

Normal road conditions are to be used when returning to station, attending training or exercises and general operations.

Note: - A probationary driver is not to drive a vehicle under emergency conditions.

11.13 INCIDENT CONTROLLER EQUIPMENT REQUESTS

Incident Controller may request through either the Shires CESM or DFES Regional office the hiring of privately owned equipment for fire suppression once Local Government has exhausted its capability. Permission must be sought prior to any machinery or other equipment being utilized.

12. ELECTRICAL EXPENSES

The Council through the LGGs will meet all electrical costs associated with Brigade Fire Stations.

13. INSURANCE COVER

Council will maintain a continuous policy for firefighters and firefighting equipment in accordance with the provision of Section 37 of the Bush Fires Act.

Interest Insured – Injury / Disability /Death to firefighters and assistance whilst in or travelling to or from any place of a bush fire. This includes non-firefighter personnel working under the direction of the Incident Controller.

Damaged to any appliance, equipment or apparatus of a bushfire brigade or any private owned appliance, equipment or apparatus that is being used under the direction or control of a Bushfire Control Officer or member in accordance with the provisions of the Bushfires Act.

Location – Anywhere within the district of the local authority and adjoining Shires or otherwise provided under the Bushfires Act 1954.

Sum Insured – Disability or Injury in accordance with the benefits of the Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation Act and the Bushfires Act.

Damage – Injury or damage limitations shall be in accordance with the shires Bushfire Brigades Insurance Policy.

Extensions - Travelling to or from normal brigade's activities. Disability or Injury the benefits of that portion of the State Government Insurance Officers Policy dealing with Disability or Injury Benefits will operate in respect to Volunteers Firefighters whilst such persons are proceeding to or returning from normal brigade activities under the Bushfire Act 1954 without any deviation or interruption unconnected therewith.

14. COUNCIL WORK FORCE – FIRE FIGHTING

Council acknowledges that it will provide, where authorised by the Chief Executive Officer or his/her delegated officer, available personnel and equipment from its work force as required for emergency situations. The CESM or nominated person is to direct Council's involvement on these occasions taking into consideration the nature of the work required, suitable PPE, communications and training.

15. PROTECTIVE BURNING BY BRIGADES ON ANY LAND

Brigades are NOT to carry out protective burning on lands unless the RELEVANT FORMS have been completed giving authorisation. These forms are available through the Shire CESM or nominated person.

16. ROADSIDE BURNING

Brigades must seek authorisation through the CEO to conduct any burning of roadside verges outside of a wildfire incident. Please view Burning Roadside Verge Procedure in the BOP.

17. FIRES OUTSIDE SHIRE BOUNDARIES

A Bush Fire brigade member shall notify at the first opportunity to the CESM who in turn will record their attendance outside of the local shire boundaries.

18. WELFARE

18.1 MEALS

In the event that meals are required for volunteers on duty at the scene of a fire the CESM or nominated person must be contacted for authorisation before the meals are sourced.

18.2 PEER SUPPORT

Brigade members are advised that DFES Peer Support personnel are available if required – contact the CESM or People Sense Direct on 1300 307 912. All contacts remain strictly confidential.

18.3 DEBRIEF

A HOT DEBRIEF will be conducted on site at the conclusion of a bushfire with any issues being presented to the next BFAC Meeting. For multi-agency fires a date is to be set within 2 weeks of the incident occurring with the debriefing notes being presented to at the next LEMC.

19. EVACUATIONS, TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT, COMMUNITY WARNINGS.

Any Incident Controller considering evacuation must comply with the State EM Policy.

20. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Chief Bushfire Control Officer

The principle responsibilities of the CBFCO include:

- a) During fire incidents manage the fire incident resources of the local and brigades and support the command functions undertaken by Brigade FCO's. Request activation of the ISG to support the incident if required.
- b) Establish and maintain effective communication and liaison with group personnel and Brigade Officers to facilitate prompt response and recovery to all incidents.
- c) At Local Government level, establish and maintain effective communication and liaison with emergency services, statutory authorities and facilitate prompt response and recovery to all incidents.

- d) Ensure that Brigade Officers have taken command and correct organisational structure; assigning resources to combat the incidents and undertaking tasks in accordance with established procedures.
- e) Represent the interest of Local Government and its bushfire personnel at a regional level.
- f) Attend any meetings as required or appoint his/her nominee (LEMC and ROAC).

Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer

- a) The principle responsibilities of the DCBFCO include:

As per CBFCO above a, b, c

- d) Act in the position of CBFCO in his/her absence.

Fire Control Officers / Captain

The role and responsibilities of a Fire Control Officer / Captain will be as depicted in Clause 39 (1) of the Bushfires Act 1954(as amended). These include:

- a. Assume the role of Incident Controller during incidents.
- b. To issue Permits to Burn if authorised by Council.
- c. Request the use of or to hire privately owned equipment to fight fires through the CBFCO / CESM or nominated person.

Brigade Secretary If Appointed

The brigade secretary is to:

- a) Be in attendance at all meetings and keep a correct minute and account of the proceedings of the Bushfire Brigade in a book which shall be open for inspection by Brigade members at any reasonable time. Forward copies of minutes to the Local Government for recording.
- b) Prepare and send out all necessary notices of meetings.
- c) Maintain a register of all current Brigade members, which includes each brigade members contact details and type of membership.

Fire Weather Officer

A Council / DFES appointed officer that follows the procedures set out under the Bushfires Act 1954 Section 38 and as recommended by BFAC.

21. COMPLIANCE OF FIRE MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Fire Breaks Inspections.

All fire break inspections will be conducted as near as practical to the compliance date by the Shires duly appointed Officers.

FCO are to notify Shire Officers of non-compliance issues within the rural location. All reported non-compliance issues are addressed internally with strict confidence.

22. BUSHFIRE ACT INFRINGEMENTS

Breaches of the Bushfires Act

Brigade Officers shall report breaches of the Bushfires Act, including details taken of Officers action to the CESM or nominated person. Breaches could include operation of machinery during a HVMB or burning within the Restricted Burn Period without a Permit.

Breaches are to be reported as soon as practicable to the Shire Officer so action can be taken.

23. HARVEST AND VEHICLE MOVEMENT BANS / VEHICLE MOVEMENT BANS

Harvest and vehicle movement bans are implemented by Council Appointed Officers when the Fire Danger Index reaches a nominated figure or the weather /resources on the day require a ban.

Due to changes to the Fire Danger Rating system this section will be updated in 2023 once the changes are implemented and a new figure under the new system is agreed upon.

Once the nominated figure has been reached and consultation with brigade officers has been completed the appointed Officer will notify all those parties on the HVMB SMS list of the ban and of the time the ban will be implemented from. Information on implementing the process can be located in the FCO Operations Handbook which includes notification to all on the Shires HVMB SMS system, WhatsApp Groups, ABC / local radio and email to neighbouring shires.

Removal of the Harvest and Vehicle Movement Ban is retracted by following the procedure on the FCO Operations Handbook.

Any breaches to the Harvest and Vehicle Movement Ban must be immediately reported to the Councils appointed Officer, CBFCO, DCBFCO, FCO and or CESM so the situation can be addressed.

24. TOTAL FIRE BAN

Total Fire Bans are implemented by DFES. Procedure for Total Fire Bans can be located in the Bushfire Act Section 22 or on the DFES website. Total Fire Bans do not impact normal farming activities apart from “hot works”.

25. PERMITS TO BURN PROCEDURE

Permits to Burn are issued by Council appointed Officers ‘Fire Control Officers’ to property owners to carry out burning during the Restricted Burning Time set out in the Councils “Fire Management Requirement Notice”.

Permit holders that do not follow procedures required under a Permit to Burn are to be reported by the FCO to the CBFCO, DCBFCO and or CESM immediately so the situation can be addressed.

FCO’s are NOT to issue Permit to Burn to themselves. The FCO must obtain a permit from another authorised Officer.

On issuing a Permit the Fire Control Officer is to forward a copy to the Shire of Katanning’s CESM so the Permit to Burn can be recorded at the Shire.

Permit To Burn books once completed are to be returned to the Shire as they are a legal document and are required to be stored as such.

26. MORNING RADIO SCHEDS

Radio scheds will take place at an appointed time determined by the CBFCO or nominated Council Appointed Officer. All FCO’s are to be available for scheds and if not available are required to contact the CBFCO/ DCBFCO for that day to discuss items that have been raised on the morning scheds call up.

Morning radio scheds will incorporate the daily weather forecast, and if required information on permits to burn that have been issued within the rural areas.

Brigade
OPERATION
PROCEDURES
BOP's

BUSHFIRE BRIGADE OPERATING PROCEDURES (BOP's)

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Bushfire Operational Procedure

1

INCIDENT NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

1. **BRIGADES**

- 1.1 The Brigade member assuming the FCO or Incident Controller role at a fire incident shall notify the CBFCO or DCBFCO and the CESM.
 - i. when mobile to a fire incident and or
 - ii. upon arrival at a fire incident.
- 1.2 ASAP on arrival, provide a Situation Report (see Incident Controller Checklist in Handbook) to the CBFCO or DCBFCO and the CESM so situational awareness can be gained and an incident can be created if this has not already be done.
- 1.3 ASAP after arrival complete the “Operations Pre- Starts” and set up a Forward Control Point.
- 1.4 The IC will need to determine if a Bushfire Advice, Watch and Act or an EMERGENCY WARNING will be required. If the CESM is not available, contact the Regional Duty Coordinator (contact number can be located in the FCO Handbook)

Bushfire Operational Procedure

2

DRIVING GUIDELINES

A. DRIVING CONDITIONS FOR BUSH FIRE BRIGADE PERSONNEL

1. All drivers must hold a current and appropriate class of driving licence necessary for the appliance being driven and not exceed the speed limit by more than 20km /hr.
2. Drivers holding “P” Plates may drive appliances as part of Driver Training, however, they are **not** to drive to or at emergency/incidents.
3. Driver is **not** to operate fire appliance for longer than a 12hour shift.

B. CODE 1

Unit to respond with due haste Life/Property in immediate danger.

1. Emergency Warning Lights at all times during travel and operation at incident.
2. Siren must be used during travel to incident.
3. ALL speed signs of the Road Traffic Act to be obeyed.
4. All Traffic Lights and Road Traffic Signals/Signs to be obeyed “Unless the driver of the Fire Appliance is confident that it is safe and expedient to “contravene” and that all other traffic will give way to the fire appliance.
5. Rail crossing signals and boom gates to be obeyed at **ALL** times as well as Roadworks signage and lollipop /Stop signs .

C. CODE 2

When returning to fire station, attending training or exercises and general operations:-

1. No emergency warning lights and sirens are to be used.
2. All Road Traffic Codes to be complied with.

D. DRIVING REQUIREMENTS FOR OFFROAD USE

1. Four-wheel drive vehicles may operate in 4x4 Low Range when driving off road.
2. Minimum speed to be used to ensure safety of occupants.

BOP B2 cont.

3. Exhaust brake were fitted to be engaged as required.

E. GENERAL

1. Bush Firefighters must at all times, drive with due care and attention and continue to show consideration to other road users.
2. It is essential that the privileges granted by law are not abused.
3. Crew Care and Safety must be of paramount importance at all times when driving fire appliances.
4. Driver must not use 2-way radios whilst driving.
5. Warning Lights to be in operation at all times when brigade personnel are working off the appliance as other vehicle movement may prove a hazard.
6. Smoke hazard signs to be installed on roads where Bush Fire Brigades operating.
7. In order to improve visibility of fire appliances to each other during fires it is recommended that emergency lights & headlights be used.

Bushfire Operational Procedure

3

PERSONNEL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT FOR BUSHFIRE BRIGADES ON THE FIRE GROUND

STANDARD OF DRESS FOR ALL FIRE FIGHTING PERSONNEL WILL BE:-

Personnel on the fire ground should be dressed in accordance with the minimum dress standard as specified below or equivalent. Personnel turning up to fires without the minimum requirement must be advised to dress properly or asked to leave the fire ground, or alternatively assigned a non-firefighting task.

All PPE remains under the property of the Local Government and must be returned once a brigade member ceases with the Brigade.

MINIMUM STANDARD FOR BUSH FIRE FIGHTING

Approved Proban Coveralls/ Jacket Pants (one or two piece)

Bush Fire Service Approved Helmet as appropriate.

Fire Gloves, Goggles and Smoke Mask or Full-Face Respirator. Fire Boots are available.

EQUIVALENT STANDARD FOR FIREFIGHTERS is cotton/woollen long trousers, long sleeve shirt, safety boots, Fire Gloves, Goggles and Smoke Mask or Full Face Respirator. Helmet as appropriate.

- Depending on individual Brigade requirements, protective clothing may be kept in the Brigade's fire station, with appliances or held by members as part of their individual firefighting kit. Protective clothing must be worn on any operational duty.
- All Brigade personnel are responsible for the availability, condition, care and cleanliness of their own kit.
- Only correctly attired personnel will be allowed to crew Brigade appliances and be allowed on the fire ground.
- The appearance and conduct of the Shires Bush Fire Brigade members whilst wearing either operational dress or uniform is to be such that will not cause any criticism upon the Shires Bushfire organisation.

Bushfire Operational Procedure

4

USE OF THE AUSTRALASIAN INTER SERVICES INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AIIMS

Introduction

All fire incidents no matter how large or small are more efficiently and effectively handled when they are well managed. In reality this means that during all fire incidents which occur someone must assume control and devote their time and energy to managing the situation. The Shire has adopted the AIIMS Structure to manage all fire incidents. Volunteer Bushfire Brigades are encouraged to obtain training in AIIMS for effective management of emergency situations. (AIIMS Training is available online through the DFES Volunteer Hub)

Initial AIIMS & Forward Control Point

Upon arrival at a fire incident, the Officer In Charge of the first arriving crew will assume responsibility as Incident Controller until relieved by an officer from the responsible agency for the fire. The relieving officer may be another Bushfire Brigade Officer a DPAW, VFRS or DFES Officer.

Amongst the initial tasks arranged by the Incident Controller will be:

- The establishment of a Forward Control Point (FCP).
- Report incident to DFES Comms (The contact number is in the FCO Operational Handbook)
- The gathering of fire ground information, location of infrastructure, fire behaviour, rate of spread, fuel types, prevailing weather conditions, weather forecasts, topography and local knowledge.
- Initiate community warning level if appropriate through the CESM.
- The establishment of what resource are already on the fire ground and if additional resources are required at the particular fire incident.

Understandably, the size of the fire and amount of resources involved will dictate the size of the AIIMS function, which is entirely flexible. AIIMS may be no more than a FCO with a map and Fire Diary on the bonnet of his vehicle. For large scale fires involving several agencies the AIIMS structure may involve a multi-agency team operating from a sophisticated, complex FCP.

Where the size of the fire incident so dictates, Brigades will request assistance from the Shire to establish and maintain an AIIMS structure for a fire incident.

Covid

Brigade Members must adhere to the directions by the State Chief Health Officer given to
Emergency Service Volunteers eg Covid

Bushfire Operational Procedure

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DRUG AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

1. The Shires Bush Fires Brigade personnel must **NOT** respond to an incident or participate in any Bush Fires operation if alcohol has been consumed in quantities that may reduce the judgement and capacity of the individual to act and undertake responsible action.
2. Alcohol must **NOT** be consumed by personnel whilst undertaking any task or function associated with incident response, suppression or recovery phases.
3. Alcohol must **NOT** be consumed by personnel whilst engaged in training activities associated with operational tasks.
4. When driving, personnel must comply with Road Traffic Regulations.
5. The Shires Bushfire Brigade personnel must **NOT** respond to an incident or participate in any Bushfire operations if non-prescription illegal drugs have been taken or prescription drugs are affecting your ability to work in a safe manner.

Bushfire Operational Procedure

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INCIDENT REPORTS

FIRE/INCIDENT REPORTS

All Shire Bushfire Brigades are to complete a Fire/Incident Report Form **every time** they are mobilised in response to **any fire or incident or false alarm. This can be done over the phone by contacting the CESM who will in turn complete the form and submit to records and finalize in DFES's OMS.**

The report should be completed as soon as possible after a fire (preferably within 24hrs) however; the paper report should be submitted **within seven days** of the fire/incident.

SUSPICIOUS FIRES

Where Bushfire Brigades attend fires where there are suspicions that the fire may have been deliberately lit, in addition to the Fire/Incident Report, the FCO or CESM is to complete a Wildfire Attendance & Information Report. (Located on the DFES Volunteer Hub) The report should be forwarded to the Shire **within 24 hours of the fire.**

All care should be taken to preserve the fire area near to the ignition point and police will be notified.

The purpose of this latter report is to assist the Arson Squad with its investigations.

Bushfire Operational Procedure

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ROAD CLOSURES

Fire burning on or near road verges, or fire that may impact a road within a time frame with smoke obscuring vision, is potentially the most dangerous situation in which volunteers and the general public can find themselves. More firefighters have been killed or injured in this situation than any other firefighting activity.

Where a road closure would directly or indirectly assist the Shire Bushfire Brigades in its efforts to extinguish or control a bush fire, then the road MUST be closed by a Bush Fire Control Officer pursuant to Section 39(1) of the Bush Fires Act. The same road closure action may also be taken by a Brigade Captain or the most Senior Member of the Bush Fire Brigade under Section 44 of the Act.

IT MUST BE EMPHASISED THAT ANY ROAD CLOSURE MUST ONLY BE FOR THE PURPOSE OF CREW SAFETY, FIRE FIGHTING OR THE EFFECTIVE MOVEMENT OF FIRE FIGHTING APPLIANCES / MACHINERY.

Extreme caution must be taken and the following procedures must be followed at all times:-

- The Incident Controller will request immediately support from Shire Officers to provide traffic control through the CESM / Works Manager, Police or Main Roads.

Volunteers Controlling Traffic

- Until traffic assistance is in place, traffic control of the immediate fire area may be conducted by properly dressed Firefighters, as issued by the Shire. **Firefighters are NOT to give alternate directions / detours to motorists when roads are closed as this is done by Main Roads or the local Shire. Road closures should be at an intersection to assist traffic in exiting the area.**

BRIGADE PERSONNEL HAVE A DUTY TO THEMSELVES AND THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC TO ENSURE THAT ALL OPERATIONS ARE PERFORMED WITH MAXIMUM SAFETY.

NO ROAD IS TO BE RE OPEN UNTIL AN INSPECTION OF THE ROADVERGE HAS BEEN COMPLETE BY A SHIRE OR MAIN ROADS OFFICER AND GIVEN THE ALL CLEAR.

Bushfire Operational Procedure

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REFUSE SITE FIRES

NOTIFICATION

All fires occurring within the Refuse site including garden refuse areas or bush areas, are to be reported to the CESM, Environmental Health Officer or another authorised Shire Officers. The Shire will then notify the necessary agency - Department of Environment and Regulation.

RESPONSE

Brigade Response will be as for a Rural Type Fire or as indicated in their Brigade Response Plan.

- a) The Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service are to be requested to attend the incident if a Hazmat fire or there is potential to become a Hazmat Incident.
- b) Brigade members to remain clear of danger zone, remain up-wind of incident. Attend to adjacent vegetation fires **if it is safe to do so**.

NOTE

If tip site involved includes a pit/trench area, Brigade members are to remain above ground level at all times.

- c) If incident is confirmed to be hazardous, Brigade members will assist Fire & Rescue Service who will assume the Lead Combat Authority Role.
- d) Consideration will be given to evacuation of persons likely to be affected by fire products.
- e) If incident is confirmed to be nonhazardous by Fire & Rescue Service or Shire Officer, Councils Waste Coordinator or the Fire Control Officer present, Brigade members can become involved in Fire Suppression as directed by the Incident Controller.

It cannot be stressed too strongly that to act without specialist advice is dangerous and that it is essential that safe Operating Procedures are adhered to in responding to all refuse site fire situations.

Bushfire Operational Procedure

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INCIDENT NOTIFICATION

Initial Notification

Notification of fires can take place at any time during the day or night. In some instances, fires are reported through the Emergency Triple '000' system which in turn results in VFERS being notified for fires within the Gazetted town site. Bushfire Brigades will be notified for all fire reported outside the gazetted area. DFES Comms notifies one of the following in order of precedence as per Local Government 000 Agreement:

- Shire of Katanning Chief Bushfire Fire Control Officer
- Shire of Katanning Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer
- Shire of Katanning CESM
- DFES Regional Office – DO.

Alternatively, notification of fires by members of the public (not through the '000' system) may be directed to:

- The Shire of Katanning on – 98 219999
- The Fire Control Officer (FCO) for the Brigade area where the fire has been reported,
- Brigade Areas WhatsApp group

Once the Shire of Katanning, CBFCO, DCBFCO or CESM are notified of a fire within the area of responsibility they will in turn:

- Alert the applicable FCO or Brigade members that a fire has been reported in their Brigade area and register the incident with DFES Comms.
- Provide assistance were requested to the Brigade in terms of Incident Management, backup resources logistics, & weather forecasts.
- Where the reported fire has potential implications for either DBCA or VFERS, notify those agencies.

Brigade Internal Call Out Procedures

The Shire of Katanning's Volunteer Bushfire Brigades are encouraged to devise and arrange their own internal call out procedures in order to mobilise Brigade resources. These internal procedures may utilise:

- SMS through DFES.
- SMS through the Shire SMS system
- VHF or UHF radio facilities.
- The local telephone system.
- WhatsApp

BOP B9 cont.

Brigades should compile, continually revise and update call out lists for all their members. These call out lists should include details of members names, their addresses and contact details (both working and after-hours contacts are preferable).

Bushfire Operational Procedure

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FIRE LIGHTER FUEL / DRIP TORCH

All Shire of Katanning Volunteer Bushfire Brigades are to use the 75% diesel to 25% unleaded in Firelighters.

Refer to manufacturer's instructions for further details on safety and maintenance.

Bushfire Operational Procedure

11

ACCIDENT / PROPERTY LOSSES REPORTING

Any loss or damage of appliance, equipment and apparatus either of the bushfire brigade or private property owned that is used under the direction of the Incident Controller or another officer of the bushfire brigade is covered by insurance.

All injuries and near misses are to be reported to the Incident Controller who will organise the appropriate response to the circumstances.

Injury, near misses and damage to a vehicle/s will be reported to the CESM who will complete the shires Incident Report Form and submitted to the OSH Committee by the CESM for review.

Bushfire Operation Procedure

12

ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

Once an electrical hazard has been identified the following procedure must be followed:

Pole Top Fires

- On arrival at the incident treat all wires as live.
- Secure the area from personnel and members of the public.
- Determine a safe distance from the hazard. **Minimum safe distance for low voltage wires is 10 metres.**
- Tape area off; if this is not possible appoint an officer to stay at location.
- Notify Western Power through DFES COMMS or on the Western Power 13 13 51. The following information will be required: Pole number from the nearest safest pole, Address / nearest intersection, are there lines down, how many poles have been affected.

Structural Fires

If the electricity is to be disconnected, it is the responsibility of the officer to check that power is switched off at the main board and that the fuses have been removed.

When disconnecting the power supply

- The switch is to be operated with the back of the hand at arm's length.
- The officer's head is to be turned away to avoid possible flash injuries.

240 Volt Power Generated By Solar Panels

All Emergency Services responders should be aware that if attending an incident at a property that has Solar Panels installed, there is the potential for live 240v power to be circulating through the property even though the mains switchboard has been isolated and fuses removed.

Only engage in firefighting activity if you have direct knowledge and/ or are training in Solar Panel firefighting.

Bushfire Operational Procedure

13

ENTRAPMENT AT A BUSHFIRE

Maintain Situational Awareness:

- Ensure crews are initially briefed on the task and risks
- Ensure crews remain aware of the current and forecast situation

Maintain Sound Work Practices:

- Maintain the minimum 25% water reserves on appliances for personal protection.
- Undertake suppression tasks with due reference to **LACES**.
 - L – LOOKOUT. Seek positions of observation and regularly patrol.
 - A – AWARENESS. Maintain situational awareness and act decisively.
 - C – COMMUNICATION. Be in communication.
 - E- ESCAPE ROUTE. Consistently re-assess potential escape routes.
 - S - SAFETY ZONE. Work from a known anchor point.

Ensure all crews understand the DEAD MAN ZONE

BURNOVER PROCEDURE FOR DFES APPLIANCE

Note - Do not hose down crew members' with water prior to the fire front passing as the conduction of heat through the clothing may induce steam burns.

- Activate the EMERGENCY AVL BUTTON as per training / guidelines.
- Transmit EMERGENCY message. EMERGENCY EMERGENCY EMERGENCY
- Activate beacons / emergency warning devices and siren.
- Request aerial assistance if available.
- Close hose lines and all crews return to vehicle.
- Park appliance on a burnt/ clear area in a position that affords as much protection as possible for the crew. With the rear of the appliance facing the fire front.
- Conduct a head count to ensure all the crew are present
- Take cover in the cabin. Activate the WATER DELUGE SYSTEM from the appliance.
- Dress in full PPE if not already and activate the IN-CAB AIR as per training / guidelines.
- Crew to cover with blanket/ protection.
- STAY INSIDE THE VEHICLE
- Stay in the vehicle until the fire front has passed and the temperature has dropped outside.
- Immediately after the fire front has passed, account for all crews and check the vehicle for damage. STAY TOGETHER
- Wait for assistance.

BOP B13 cont.

After the fire front has passed:

- Exit the vehicle once the fire front has passed. (be careful as internal / external parts will be extremely hot)
- Take portable radios and First Aid Kit to a safe area.
- If able to radio the control point and give a SITREP.
- Stay covered in PPE and blankets and continue to drink water and wait for assistance.

BURNOVER PROCEDURE FOR FARMER FIRE FIGHTING UNITS

- Transmit EMERGENCY message.
- Close hose lines and return to vehicle.
- Park vehicle on a burnt / clear area in a position that affords as much protection as possible for the crew. With the rear of the vehicle facing the fire front.
- Set up deluge system if there is one on the unit.
- Take cover in the vehicle.
- Dress in full PPE if not already.
- Get below the glass windows to shield from radiant heat.
- Leave the engine running and have the air conditioning on recycle.
- Crews to cover with a blanket if one is available. Stay in the vehicle until the fire front has passed and the temperature has dropped outside.
- Immediately after the fire front has passed, account for all crews and check the vehicle for damage. STAY TOGETHER.
- Wait for assistance.

After the fire front has passed:

- Exit the vehicle once the fire front has passed. (be careful as internal / external parts will be extremely hot)
- Take portable radios and First Aid Kit to a safe area.
- If able to radio the control point and give a SITREP.
- Stay covered in PPE and blankets and continue to drink water and wait for assistance.

Bushfire Operational Procedure

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BURNOVER BLANKET DFES APPLIANCE

Burnover blankets are a piece of equipment for protecting firefighter out on the fire line. The blankets are made from light weight, patented material (not wool). The blanket is located in the red protective sleeve or bag, mounted in the DFES / Shire appliance.

The blanket is 2m x 2m in size and each blanket can only be used once. There is one blanket per seat in appliance.

Using the Blanket

- First locate the blanket in the appliance. The blankets are fixed in positions appropriate to the appliance and must not be relocated.
- Make sure you are aware of the location of the blanket in the vehicle that you use.
- Obtain the blanket from its storage bag by lifting the flap and remove the vacuum-packed blanket.
- Open the plastic wrapping by tearing from the top then expanding the tear so the blanket can be removed easily.
- Straight pull towards you to start with, and then rip sideways. Removing the blanket from the cover and disregard the cover out of the appliance.
- Unfold the burn over blanket fully and cover yourself completely.
- Remain covered and get below the window level of the appliance until the fire has passed.
- The whole process including locating and deployment should take 20 seconds or less.

Bushfire Operational Procedure

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RED FLAG WARNING

Red Flag Warnings are a message system that provides a process to ensure critical information (such as weather changes) is confirmed as received by all at a incident.

- Red Flag Warnings are to be precise messages which convey present or impending hazards to responders. E.g. weather changes, fire behaviour, equipment failure etc.
- Red Flag Warning are to be initiated within the command hierarchy – IC.
- Red Flag Warnings are to be passed onto all personnel at the incident, including those from other agencies and private contractors.
- At all levels, red flag warning are to be acknowledged on receipt through confirmation of the message back to the sender.
- The transmission, receipt and acknowledgement of Red Flag Warnings are to be logged.

Standard message

RED FLAG WARNING. Personnel are advised of <actual forecast where appropriate> conditions that may present a hazard to personnel as follows< actual / forecast conditions>. Personnel are to < describe specific actions required to be taken > This message is to be passed on to all personnel on the fire ground. This information must be written in your fire diary.

Acknowledge

Bushfire Operational Procedure

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AUTOMATIC VEHICLE LOCATOR – AVL

The AVL system provides real-time visibility of appliances especially during large scale bushfires and provides automatic features to support crew safety. The AVL system also includes an emergency distress button to be used in emergency situations. When activated it sends an alarm to the DFES Communications Centre. The system records the vehicle location, speed, and if lights and siren have or are being activated. DFES Officers, CESM and authorised Brigade Officers have access to the link to track appliance locations across the state.

Procedure

- **Testing of the AVL system is to be carried out on a monthly basis** to keep the system updated with new software. This should be done as close to the first of each month as possible. Testing diagram located in the appliance.
- The system is connected to the 3G network and if this is not available the system will link to a satellite.
- Under normal conditions the light will be showing GREEN.
- To activate the emergency button HOLD IT DOWN FOR 4 SECONDS the green light will turn RED until DFES Comms acknowledges, then the light will show GREEN again. Once activated DFES Comms will contact the Incident Controller for the fire, the Duty Officer for the region or the CESM to follow up.
- If for any reason the button is accidentally activated and the light stays solid red (not flashing) ring DFES Comms to notify them of the mistake.
- Refer to Operational brochure and general information sheet that is located in the appliance for further information.
- Any issues with the system please contact the CESM to follow up.

Bushfire Operational Procedure

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ROAD VERGE BURNING PROCEDURE

The Road Verge Burning Procedure is to provide clear guidelines for the burning of road verges throughout the Shire of Katanning.

Procedure

- Must be obtained for all roadside burning. (12 months of the year.)
- A Permit is to be issued prior to any road verge burn in accordance with this procedure.
- The Shire Chief Executive Officer or nominated representative are the only officers authorised to issue burning permits for hazard reduction burns along road verges and only after a site inspection has been carried out by authorised persons.
- Burns are to be conducted by the relevant Bush Fire Brigade member or authorized Shire Staff. No road verge burning may be carried out by individuals unless authorised.
- No authority can be given by an officer of Council or Fire Control Officer to burn roadside verges that are not under the control of Council, unless written approval has been received from the controlling body.
- Site inspections will take into consideration the environment impact on the road verge, the potential hazard the verge would pose in the event of bushfire and the weather patterns and forecast for that time of year.
- Permits to burn road verges will only be issued to Brigade Fire Control Officer or member of the public and authorised Shire staff and are to state the measures that must be taken using the following broad guidelines.
 - Prevent damage to infrastructure (i.e. Telstra infrastructure, culverts and fencing);
 - Where native vegetation is present (depending on species) minimise damage and where possible, carry out burns in autumn or spring;
 - Ensure acceptable weather conditions have been considered;
 - Comply with normal permit requirements;
 - Only one side of a road to be burnt in any one year;
 - No single hazard reduction burns to exceed 500 meters along a single road verge;
 - Adjoining strips may not be burnt within three years;
 - Adjacent verges are not to be burnt within three years.
- If a larger burn area is required a risk-based assessment of the surrounding area will need to be completed including:

- Fuel tons per hectare.
 - Assets and locations.
 - Vegetation type.
 - Fire History.
 - Weather patterns.
-
- The use of fire to abate fire hazards and to clear roadside drains should be confined to area where distinct hazards, high ignition risks and high values can be identified. In general, these related to road verges where native plant species have been replaced by annual weeds and grasses. Where possible mowing and approved herbicide treatment is to be used as opposed to road verge burns.
 - On approval of a road verge burn, a Traffic Control Plan will be prepared and implemented when necessary, by Shire staff or its appointed contractors.

Bushfire Operational Procedure

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Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 1974 Bushfire Incident

To provide a standard process for brigade members to follow in support of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 1972.

The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 1972 recognises, protects, conserves, and preserves Aboriginal cultural heritage (ACH) and recognises the fundamental importance of ACH to Aboriginal people and its role in Aboriginal communities past, present, and future. The ACH recognises the value of ACH to Aboriginal people as well as to the wider Western Australian community.

There is a legal requirement to avoid impacts to ACH, until the amendments of the ACH Act 1972 are decided, due diligence must be exercised. This includes objects and places of importance or significance to Aboriginal people or connected with traditional cultural practises.

Mechanical works in areas that have not had ground disturbance in the past eg Bush blocks / corridors must be checked to determine if ACH is in or around that location. The Incident Controller or nominated person must check the online "Directory for Aboriginal Heritage" to assess if Aboriginal Cultural Heritage is located in or near the activity area.

The steps you have undertaken in the due diligence process need to be recorded in your fire diary, including the basis for any decision that there isn't a risk to harm.

If Aboriginal Cultural Heritage is located in the area do not proceed with the activity of clearing breaks / felling trees and other activities that could disturbed the area.

To access the maps - [Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System](#)