

Shire of Denmark Minutes



BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE WAS HELD IN COUNCIL'S RECEPTION ROOM, 953 SOUTH COAST HIGHWAY, DENMARK, THURSDAY, 4th SEPTEMBER 2014, COMMENCING 7.30PM.

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1. DECLARATION OF OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

The Presiding Person opened the meeting at 7.32 pm.

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCEMEMBERS: (Voting)

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Graeme Thallon | C.B.F.C.O |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Adrian Kranendonk | F.W.O |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Cr Roger Seeney | Council Representative / Chairman |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Lez Baines | Carmarthen FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Chris Hoare | East Denmark FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Mike Hills | Harewood FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Alex Williams | Hazelvale FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Bruce Pringle | Kordabup FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Colin Tindale | Mehniup FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Peter Mildwaters | Mt Shadforth FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Joe Baker | Ocean Beach FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ms Ann Howard | Parryville Proxy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Ivars Sulcs | Peaceful Bay FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Sid Marshall | Scotsdale FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Callum Baxter | Somerset Hill FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ms Joan Merrifield | William Bay FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Darin Hockley | VFRS Proxy |

MEMBERS: (Non-Voting)

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Mick Murphy | DPaW Acting Manager |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Daniel Austin | DFES Superintendent |

STAFF: (Non-Voting)

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Ross McDougall | A/g Community Emergency Services Manager / Secretary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Gregg Harwood | Director of Community & Regulatory Services |

ATTENDEES: (Non-Voting)

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Murray Anning | Australian Bluegum Plantations |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|

APOLOGIES:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Jean-Marc Merat | Nornalup FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ms Sam Blythe | Owingup FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Brian Vigus | Tingledale FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Gary Stanway | VFRS Captain |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Wes Bailye | DPaW Fire Coordinator |

ABSENT:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Malcolm Hick | Mt Lindesay FCO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mr Don Atkinson | Town FCO |

VISITORS:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ms Suzanne Bright | Peaceful Bay |
|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------|

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Name	Item No	Interest	Nature

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING

The Chairman, Cr Roger Seeney, welcomed new and continuing FCOs to the meeting, and would like to reminded all Committee members and proxies that they have the ability to cast a vote and if they are in attendance at a Committee meeting then it is mandatory to do so. Cr Seeney also thanked brigade members for their support for the Black Dog ride that recently travelled through Denmark.

The Chairman also informed the meeting that he intended to write to the former CESM, Mr Nathan Hall on behalf of BFAC to thank Nathan for his service during the four years he was in Denmark.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES****5.1 Committee Meeting Minutes**

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION & COMMITTEE DECISION	ITEM 5.1
Moved: Lez Baines	Seconded: Adrian Kranendonk
That the minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on the 5 th June 2014, be confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings.	
Carried 17/0	

5.2 Matters Arising From Minutes**5.2.1 Review of the Emergency Services Acts – Concept Paper**

At the 5th June 2014 Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting the following decision was carried;

COMMITTEE DECISION

ITEM 8.1

That the BFAC authorise the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer to form a sub-committee / working group of a maximum six interested FCOs or brigade officers to make a submission on the proposed Emergency Services act on behalf of BFAC prior to the 30th July 2014.

Moved: Graeme Thallon

Seconded Joe Baker

Carried 20/1

As a result of this decision the sub-committee held three meetings attended by Graeme Thallon, Joe Baker, Mike Williams, Alex Williams, Cyril Edwards and Ross McDougall.

The sub-committee considered those sections of the concept paper that pose an impact on volunteer BFS members and prepared a response to DFES that was circulated to Denmark Brigade FCOs and subsequently submitted to DFES.

At its Council meeting on 29th July 2014 meeting Council also considered the matter from a corporate perspective and the following resolution was passed in relation to the Shire's response to the concept paper.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION & OFFICER RECOMMENDATION ITEM 8.2.1
 MOVED: CR SEENEY SECONDED: CR SAMPSON

That Council supports the June 2014 WALGA Submission to the DFES Concept Paper – Review of the Emergency Services Acts, and submits a letter in writing to DFES outlining that support.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: 9/0

Res: 22071

Copies of both submissions are attached.

CBFCO Thallon explained to the meeting the process adopted by the sub-committee in reviewing the concept paper and thanked the FCOs for their work on preparing the submission.

5.2.2 Changing Status of DFES and DPAW Representatives on BFAC

At the 5th June 2014 Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting the following recommendation to Council was carried.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ITEM
8.10

Moved: Sam Blythe

Seconded: Lez Baines

That BFAC recommends to Council that the BFAC Charter be altered to make the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the Department of Parks and Wildlife representatives' non-voting members.

Carried 21/0

Subsequently at the Council meeting of 8th July 2014 the following resolution was carried:

COUNCIL RESOLUTION & OFFICER & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ITEM 9.1
 MOVED: CR SEENEY SECONDED: CR ROWLANI

That Council authorise the CEO to alter the BFAC Charter to change the status of the representatives from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the Department of Parks and Wildlife to non-voting members.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: 9/0

Res: 07071

Noted.

6. TABLED ITEMS

7. OFFICER REPORTS

7.1 Department of Fire and Emergency Services

DFES Superintendent Daniel Austin provided a verbal report to the meeting.

He advised that some changes are scheduled in the Great Southern DFES regional office staffing. Steve McDonald from DFES Geraldton has been appointed to replace Russell Gould and should start duties in October. John Tonkin will take over

responsibilities for support to Denmark. A Training Support Officer is currently being recruited and expected to start duties in late October. A District Officer position is also being recruited to augment the staffing in the Narrogin office.

Superintendent Austin advised that DFES has received some five and a half thousand submissions in response to the Concept Paper.

The bushfire seasonal outlook has been released and indicates a busier than normal fire season for Southern Western Australia. Also the forecasting agencies are also examining the use of the forest index rather than the grass fire danger index.

Recently a number of safety circulars have been issued relating to appliance weight, appliance front tyres, stand pipes and crew havens on appliances.

7.2 Department of Parks and Wildlife

DPaW Acting Manager Mick Murphy provided a verbal report to the Committee.

The meeting was advised that DPaW Walpole office will have thirty one fire staff, eight fire appliances, a front end loader and a bulldozer available for deployment during the 2014/2015 fire season. The meeting was also advised that DPaW have twenty prescribed burns scheduled for 2014/2015 covering 50,000Ha. A map showing the planned prescribed burns over the next three seasons was tabled.

7.3 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Graeme Thallon provide a written report to the Committee. (Report Attached)

7.4 Community Emergency Services Manager

Acting Community Emergency Services Manager Ross McDougall provided a report to the Committee. (Report Attached)

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 Distribution of BFAC Papers

Up until now BFAC papers have traditionally been distributed by post to members and also generally emailed. In order to speed up and simplify the distribution of BFAC papers it is intended to send documents out electronically by email to FCOs and dispense with the posting of the same documents. This information was included in the letter posted to FCOs on 6th August 2014 advising of the September BFAC meeting and requesting agenda items.

FCOs were invited to advise if email was not suitable and several have requested that papers continue to be posted and this request will be accommodated. If any other FCOs wish to have BFAC documents mailed please let the CESM know.

The committee acknowledged that whilst most were satisfied to receive papers by email a few had chosen to continue to receive papers by post. The committee requested that some copies of papers be available at BFAC meetings.

8.2 Owingup BFB Fire Shed

In the lead up to Council considering the 2014/2015 budget the Owingup Brigade had not put forward a proposal to have funds made available to establish a fire shed on South Coast Highway. The CESM did however prepare a submission for the fire shed

as part of the 2014/2015 ESL application, as he had done in previous years, but this was unsuccessful and DFES advised that it had identified higher priorities across the state.

At a meeting with senior BFS and Shire officers on the 2nd July 2014 representatives from Owingup Brigade indicated that the brigade had some \$12,000 available to contribute towards the development of a fire shed the drawback however was that the Shire budget had already reached an advanced draft stage by that time and was due to be presented to Council on 29th July 2014.

At the Special Meeting of Council for the purpose of considering the 2014/2015 draft Municipal Budget held on 29th July 2014 the following amendment was proposed and lost.

AMENDMENT

MOVED: CR SEENEY

SECONDED: CR OSBORNE

That the forecast surplus in part 3 be reduced by \$7,000 and be allocated in the 2014/2015 Municipal Budget for contribution to the Owingup Volunteer Bushfire Brigade for the purpose of building a shed/garage to house the 1.4 Fire Tanker subject to a report to Council from Bush Fire Advisory Committee.

LOST: 2/6

Res: 130714

Whilst Councillors fully supported the provision of basic fire sheds to brigades they also acknowledge the role of BFAC in considering technical and policy matters and chose to seek BFAC's consideration and endorsement of the proposal before allocating funds.

At the time of writing the Owingup BFB has not provided specific details on what they are proposing nor the level of financial support they are seeking from Council.

This item has been referred to BFAC so it can be considered and make a recommendation to Council.

Brigades should note that the new Owingup Light Tanker is being garaged at the Parryville fire shed whilst this issue of a shed is unresolved and this arrangement will continue the new fire shed has been built.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION & COMMITTEE DECISION		ITEM 8.2
Moved: Adrian Kranendonk	Seconded: Bruce Pringle	
That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee advise Council that it supports the Owingup Volunteer Bushfire Brigade's request for assistance with the cost of constructing a shed/garage to house a 1.4 Fire Tanker and recommends that Council approve an allocation of \$7000 towards this project in the 2014/2015 financial year.		
Carried 17/0		

8.3 Hazelvale and Tingledale Brigades Proposed Amalgamation

The Hazelvale and Tingledale Brigades are seeking endorsement from BFAC for the amalgamation of the brigades.

Subject to the Hazelvale and Tingledale Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade members approving the amalgamation of their brigades into one Brigade they would like the following put to Council:

That Council approves the concept of the Hazelvale and Tingledale VBFs amalgamating to form the Tingledale/Hazelvale VBFB and support the following conditions;

- There would be one Committee of Management.
- The Brigade Officer structure would require one Captain and at least a First Lieutenant with one position filled by a Brigade Member of the current Hazelvale Brigade and the other filled by a current Member of the Tingledale Brigade (most likely the FCOs).
- The Brigade structure would retain an FCO for each Brigade District and each of these FCOs would hold a position on BFAC.
- The current Fire appliances would retain their Brigade Badging as a transitional arrangement so the Members of the current Brigades retain a feeling of identity.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION & COMMITTEE DECISION	ITEM 8.3
Moved: Adrian Kranendonk	Seconded: Lez Baines
<p>That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee advise Council that it supports the proposed amalgamation of the Hazelvale and Tingledale Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades and recommends that the following management structure be adopted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) There would be one Committee of Management. 2) The Brigade Officer structure would require one Captain and at least a First Lieutenant with one position filled by a Brigade Member of the current Hazelvale Brigade and the other filled by a current Member of the Tingledale Brigade (most likely the FCOs). 3) The Brigade structure would retain an FCO for each Brigade District and each of these FCOs would hold a position on BFAC. 4) The current Fire appliances would retain their Brigade Badging as a transitional arrangement so the Members of the current Brigades retain a feeling of identity. <p>Carried 17/0</p>	

8.4 SOP Committee

On 11th June the SOP Committee met and considered two proposed SOPs being Voice Recorders and Safe Use of Drip Torches.

8.4.1 Voice Recorders

At the December 2011 BFAC meeting discussions on the desirability of recording the Denmark fire channel (173) resulted in a recommendation to Council to provide voice recorders for all fire appliances that was subsequently supported by Council. The SOP Committee believes that there are a number of issues with recording all conversations in the cabins of all fire appliances:

- No other local government or DFES require the use voice recorders in appliances and there is some concern that their use could have unintended consequences. The Committee believes that it would be wise to allow others to lead in their use.
- Voice recorders in vehicles do not record conversations outside the cabin so what is recorded would only be a part picture that could be misleading.

- Voice recorders require positive action by the vehicle OIC to be effective and this places another requirement on volunteers during what can be an already stressful mobilisation to an incident.
- FCOs will be required to download and manage any recordings at the conclusion of incidents and this process could be onerous.
- The maintenance of voice recorders could be problematic and will require constant checking and replacing of batteries.

The committee considers that there may be value in recording the primary fire channel and this could be relatively easily achieved and would meet the intent of the 2011 BFAC discussion.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION	ITEM 8.4.1
Moved:	Seconded:
<p>That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee advise Council that having considered the implications and additional work load involved with the across the board usage of personal voice recorders advise Council that;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) It no longer supports the usage of personal voice recorders in Shire of Denmark bushfire brigade vehicles. 2) That it considers the recording of the Denmark fire channel (173) to be the most practical and appropriate way of documenting information that is passed onto the fire ground and command decisions. 	
Carried /	

The committee split the motion in to two recommendations

COMMITTEE DECISION	ITEM 8.4.1
Moved: Alex Williams	Seconded: Lez Baines
<p>That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee advise Council that having considered the implications and additional work load involved with the across the board usage of personal voice recorders advise Council that it no longer supports the usage of personal voice recorders in Shire of Denmark bushfire brigade vehicles.</p>	
Carried 16/1	

COMMITTEE DECISION	ITEM 8.4.1
Moved: Chris Hoare	Seconded: Joe Baker
<p>That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee advise Council that having considered the implications and additional work load involved with the across the board usage of personal voice recorders advise Council that it considers the recording of the Denmark fire channel (173) to be the most practical and appropriate way of documenting information that is passed onto the fire ground and command decisions.</p>	
Lost 8/9	

8.4.2 Safe Use of Drip Torches

The SOP Committee recommends to BFAC that the following SOP on the Safe Use of Drip Torches be endorsed and referred to Council for adoption.

Safe Use of Drip Torches

Objective

A drip torch is a device which holds, distributes and ignites a fuel mixture in a controlled manner in order to deliberately ignite surface fuel loads. This SOP details the safe use of drip torches in support of bush fire operations.

Procedures

- Ensure that the task is authorised by the Incident Controller
- Understand the burn pattern, (eg continuous line/spot/multiple ignition lines/multiple operators, etc) required rate of ignition and intent of burn.
- Use the torch on the designated burn area only
- Wear full PPE including gloves and goggles
- Ensure sufficient fuel is available to complete the burn
- Check that the tap is working and that the filler cap is secure and seals correctly with “O” ring in place
- Ensure that air valve is pointing away from the handle
- Make sure that there is no risk to other people in the vicinity
- Ignition sequence:
 - Loosen air vent screw
 - Ensure wand tap in on
 - Tilt torch so that wand is pointing to the ground
 - Allow fuel to drip from nozzle onto the gauze
 - Ignite pilot flame at gauze
 - Observe and regulate flow using wand tap
- Drip burning fuel onto vegetation and complete the burn under direction of the OIC

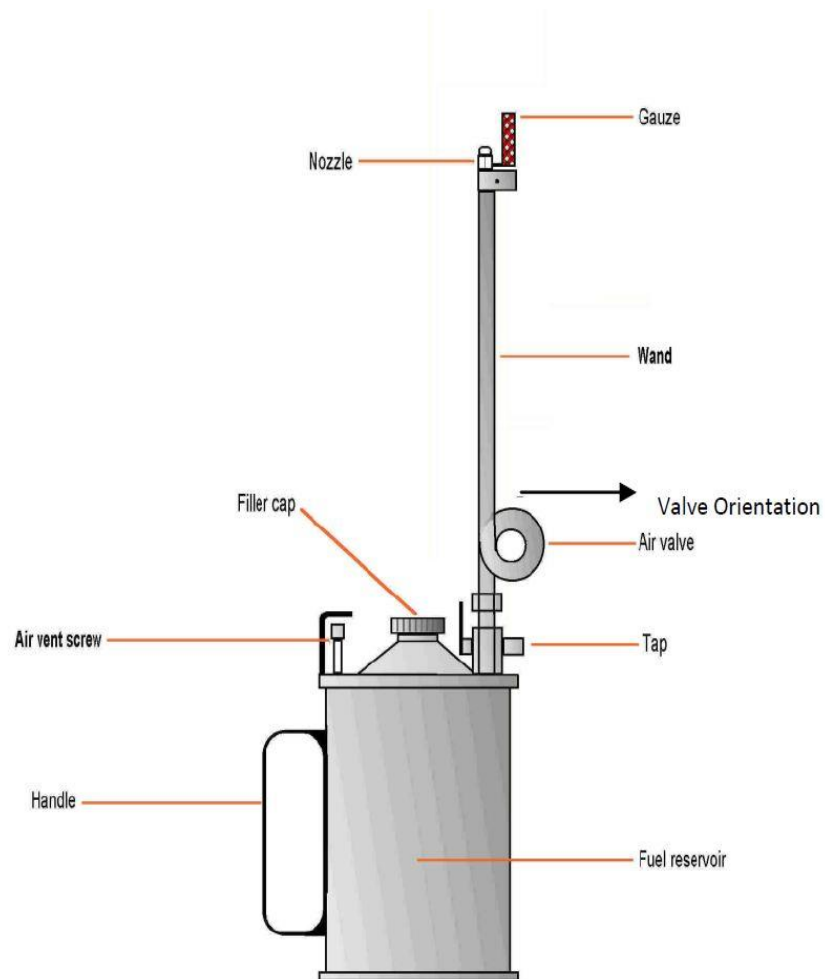
Drip Torch Fuel

Only use DFES approved pre-mixed fuel – Three parts Diesel (75%) to One part (25%) Petrol. Refuel torch away from any ignition source and use a funnel.

Safety Precautions

- Always be aware of position of other crew members prior to using drip torch
- Do not leave lit drip torches unattended
- Do not use drip torch near stored or escaped flammable liquids or gases
- Do not use techniques for back burning that involve placing people in the path of the fire front
- Never mix individual fuels in the drip torch
- Store drip torches with no more than $\frac{3}{4}$ fuel level, with wand tap on and air vent closed
- Store pre-mixed drip torch fuel cans in designated cradle on appliance and no more than $\frac{3}{4}$ full and clearly marked
- Wipe of excess fuel spilt while refilling torch and ensure that filler cap and O ring are secure without leaks before use

- Reject drip torches that leak from filler, tap or wand connection
- Do not place drip torch where it is exposed to fire or in unburnt fuel in the path of a fire – if torch catches fire warn others and keep everyone at least 30 metres back.



Drip Torch Components

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION & COMMITTEE DECISION

ITEM 8.4.2

Moved: Alex Williams

Seconded: Joan Merrifield

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommends to Council that it adopt the following standard operating procedure for the usage of drip torches on fire grounds:

Safe Use of Drip TorchesObjective

A drip torch is a device which holds, distributes and ignites a fuel mixture in a controlled manner in order to deliberately ignite surface fuel loads. This SOP details the safe use of drip torches in support of bush fire operations.

Procedures

- Ensure that the task is authorised by the Incident Controller
- Understand the burn pattern, (eg continuous line/spot/multiple ignition lines/multiple operators, etc) required rate of ignition and intent of burn.
- Use the torch on the designated burn area only
- Wear full PPE including gloves and goggles
- Ensure sufficient fuel is available to complete the burn
- Check that the tap is working and that the filler cap is secure and seals correctly with “O” ring in place
- Ensure that air valve is pointing away from the handle
- Make sure that there is no risk to other people in the vicinity
- Ignition sequence:
 - Loosen air vent screw
 - Ensure wand tap in on
 - Tilt torch so that wand is pointing to the ground
 - Allow fuel to drip from nozzle onto the gauze
 - Ignite pilot flame at gauze
 - Observe and regulate flow using wand tap
- Drip burning fuel onto vegetation and complete the burn under direction of the OIC

Drip Torch Fuel

Only use DFES approved pre-mixed fuel – Three parts Diesel (75%) to One part (25%) Petrol. Refuel torch away from any ignition source and use a funnel.

Safety Precautions

- Always be aware of position of other crew members prior to

using drip torch

- Do not leave lit drip torches unattended
- Do not use drip torch near stored or escaped flammable liquids or gases
- Do not use techniques for back burning that involve placing people in the path of the fire front
- Never mix individual fuels in the drip torch
- Store drip torches with no more than $\frac{3}{4}$ fuel level, with wand tap on and air vent closed
- Store pre-mixed drip torch fuel cans in designated cradle on appliance and no more than $\frac{3}{4}$ full and clearly marked
- Wipe of excess fuel spilt while refilling torch and ensure that filler cap and O ring are secure without leaks before use
- Reject drip torches that leak from filler, tap or wand connection
- Do not place drip torch where it is exposed to fire or in unburnt fuel in the path of a fire – if torch catches fire warn others and keep everyone at least 30 metres back.

Carried 17/0

8.5 Mobile Phone Tower for Western Portion of Shire of Denmark

Information has been received from the Department of Commerce that the proposed mobile phone tower scheduled to be constructed at Mt Frankland will not precede due to the high establishment and ongoing cost.

As an alternative they are proposing that four mobile phone towers be established to replace the Mt Frankland tower. The Tindale Road and Mt Frankland West towers are the most relevant to coverage in the west of the Shire of Denmark.

This proposal will be funded under the Regional Mobile Communications Project (RMCP) and the new \$45M Regional Telecommunications Project (RTP) through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Regional Development.

A coverage map is attached and it should be noted that while the coverage is not identical to that of Mount Franklin tower the Department of Commerce maintains that it is equal to or better in terms of hectares of coverage.

BFAC noted the information and CBFCO Thallon thanked Gregg Harwood for his efforts in pursuing this issue.

8.6 Feast not Fire 2015

In order to allow sufficient time for the development of the 2015 Feast not Fire event BFAC needs to consider how best to endorse the formation of a suitable committee. Previous experience with this event suggests that the committee needs to be in place prior to the December BFAC meeting in order to undertake grant applications for funding before the end of 2014.

The most practical way of achieving this is for the opportunity to be circulated to brigade FCOs and secretaries and via the “interested members” email list and the Chief and Deputy Chief Fire Control officers to consider the people that come forward and appoint a working group.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION & COMMITTEE DECISION**ITEM 8.6**

Moved: Alex Williams

Seconded: Joe Baker

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee delegate the tasks of advertising and appointing members to the 2015 Feast Not Fire Night Working Group to the Chief and Deputy Chief Fire Control officers.

Carried 16/1

8.7 Pre-Fire Season Meeting

Leading up to the last few fire seasons a meeting has been held with FCOs and key brigade members as part of the preparations in order to be best placed for the fire season. The Chief Bush Fire Control Officer is seeking comment from BFAC about how brigades can be best placed in order to meet the 2014/2015 fire season and if a meeting has merit and whom should be invited.

Following discussion on this matter the CBFCO advised that he would circulate a date for the pre-season meeting at which a bringing forward of the permit date will be considered if dry conditions continue. The Chief was also proposing to place an article in the Denmark Bulletin with information about permits and encouraging residents to volunteer for their local brigade.

8.8 CESM Recruitment

Gregg Harwood provided information to the meeting on progress in recruiting a CESM to replace Nathan Hall.

8.9 Fire Appliance Servicing

Adrian Kranendonk advised that the Shire Workshop had completed the annual service on about one third of the Denmark BFB fire appliances and anticipated that all would be serviced by the beginning of the fire season.

8.10 Plantation Industry

Murray Anning provided advice to the meeting about preparations being undertaken by the plantation industry to prepare for the fire season and their intention to hold a briefing for relevant persons in Denmark in the near future.

8.11 Fire Shed Security

The committee discussed fire shed security in light of a recent theft from the Shadforth/Scotsdale brigade shed and supported the CESM taking appropriate action to improve the security at fire sheds.

9. NEXT MEETING

It is recommended that the next meeting of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee be held at 7.30pm on Thursday 4th December 2014 at the Denmark Shire reception room.

10. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business to discuss the Presiding Person closed the meeting at 9.42pm.

The Chief Executive Officer recommends the endorsement of these minutes at the next meeting.

Signed: _____
Dale Stewart – Chief Executive Officer

Date: 12 September 2014

These minutes were confirmed at the meeting of the _____

Signed: _____
(Presiding Person at the meeting at which the minutes were confirmed.)