



Shire of  
Serpentine  
Jarrahdale

**Special Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Minutes**

**24 August 2023**

**1900hrs**

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**In Person**

Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale

6 Paterson Street, Mundijong WA 6123

Open Monday to Friday 8.30am-5pm (closed public holidays)



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A Special Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting for the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale was held on Thursday, 24 August 2023 via MS Teams.

The item of business per the Bush Fire Advisory Committee's Resolution 5.1.2/04/23.

*That the Bushfire Advisory Committee DOES NOT RECEIVE the update on the progress made against the corrective actions identified the audits on the management, facilities, and operations of the Volunteer Bushfire Brigades and that a review to be undertaken in consultation with the brigades for an updated and accurate report to be presented to a special BFAC meeting for endorsement and to be presented to Council.*

Paul Martin  
Chief Executive Officer

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## Minutes

### 1. Attendances and Apologies (including leave of absence):

#### Voting Delegates

Chris Burgess	Keysbrook Captain (Chairperson)
Mike Ross	Oakford Captain (Deputy Chairperson)
Jess Maddern	Byford Captain
Nathan Carrall	Emergency Support Brigade Captain
Sarah Davis	Jarrahdale Captain
Scott Jones	Serpentine Captain
Nathan Houweling	Mundijong Captain
Leigh Mulholland	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Cr Dave Atwell	Council Delegate
Cr Michelle Rich	Council Delegate

#### Non-Voting Delegates

Jason White	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer 2
David Gibson	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer 3
Brian Oliver	Director Community Engagement
David Richer	Coordinator Emergency Services

#### Apologies

Tina Bullman	Minute Taker / Administration
Paul Southam	District Officer Southeast Department Fire and Emergency Services
Brodie Selby	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
Ken Elliott	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer 1



## 2. Declaration of Councillors, Officers and Committee Members interest:

Nil

## 3. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

3.1/08/23

### BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Michelle Rich; Seconded: Scott Jones

That the Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on 20 April 2023 be confirmed (E23/4958).

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## 4. Resolution 5.1.2/4/23 – Status Update - Audit Findings Corrective Actions (SJ3914)

5.1.2 – Status Update - Audit Findings Corrective Actions (SJ3914)	
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Coordinator Emergency Services
<b>Senior Officer:</b>	Director Community Engagement
<b>Disclosure of Officer's Interest:</b>	No Officer involved in the preparation of this report has an interest to declare in accordance with the provisions of the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i>

### Authority / Discretion

Information	For the Council / Committee to note.
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### Report Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update the Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) on the progress made against 134 corrective actions identified in response to the following third-party audits of the Volunteer Bushfire Brigades (for compliance with the WHS Act and Regulations):

- VBFB Facility Review - LGIS - October 2021
- WHS Audit Report - Workplace Safety Consultants - November 2021



## Relevant Previous Decisions of Council

OCM160/07/22 - COUNCIL RESOLUTION - extract

*That Council:*

3. *REQUESTS the Chief Executive Officer convene a special working group of Shire Officers, the CBFCO and brigade Captain's to develop an enhancement strategy plan for the next 5 years to be presented via BFAC in November and to the OCM December 2022.*

## Background

The Shire proactively undertook audits of the management, facilities and operations of the Volunteer Bushfire Brigades as a gap analysis and to determine what corrective actions for minimum compliance with the WHS Act and Regulations to be completed by 31 March 2023.

Following the formation of the Volunteer Bushfire Brigade Enhancement Working Group, and as a result of further internal consideration of the audit outcomes by the Working Group, it was determined there was a need to establish an overall program for tasks, within three key program areas:

1. Facilities: 109 corrective actions identified, as outlined in **attachment 1**.
2. Training: 4 corrective actions identified, as outlined in **attachment 2**.
3. IT and Procedures: 21 corrective actions identified, as outlined in **attachment 2**.

Consistent with the Shire's Project Management Framework, these were structured with clear scopes, project sponsorship, project management and project resources allocated to achieve the intended program outcomes.

## Community / Stakeholder Consultation

A report was presented to the 20 April 2023 BFAC meeting with a status report on the progress of works achieved up to 31 March 2023. BFAC members requested Officers to undertake further consultation with the Brigade Captains about the status of the compliance works to ensure agreement on the accuracy of the report.

Over the past 3 months, consultation has been undertaken with Brigade Captains to ensure that there is agreement relating to the status of the facility WHS remedial works. The results of this consultation are captured in the updated Corrective Action Tables at **attachments 1 and 2** and summarised in the Comment section of this report.

## Statutory Environment

*Bushfires Act 1954*

*Work Health and Safety Act 2020*

## Comment

### Summary

The Shire has worked with the Brigades to progressively close out actions relating to facilities maintenance and repair identified in the original audits and the status of each item has been agreed by both the Shire and the individual Brigades as outlined in **attachments 1 and 2**.



The status of each item been classified as follows:

**1. Completed - Controls in Place**

All items that have been addressed, with the hazard either eliminated or with a control in place have been marked as completed. Generally, ongoing monitoring is expected to be undertaken by Brigade Captains and/or Shire WHS Officers to mutually ensure ongoing compliance.

For facilities, this classification is then further broken down into 2 sub-categories:

- a) Completed, with no further actions or controls recommended to further reduce risk. Ongoing monitoring to ensure compliance is expected to occur via Brigade Captains and Shire WHS Officers.
- b) Completed, with additional actions or controls recommended to further reduce or eliminate the risk.

**2. In Progress**

This status describes corrective actions identified in the original audit that have commenced but are not yet complete.

**3. Not Started**

It is noted that no items in the audits have been classified as not started. All items are either completed, or in progress.

The tables below provide a summary of the current status of all corrective actions identified by the third-party audits of the Volunteer Bushfire Brigades, as per the program areas identified by the Working Group.

Audit	VBFB Facility Review LGIS	WHS Audit Workplace Consultants	Report - Safety	
Program Area	Facilities	Training	IT and Procedures	Totals
Corrective Actions Identified	109	4	21	134
Completed: Controls in place	107	4	16	127
Subcategory a	83			
Subcategory b	24			
In Progress	2	0	5	7

**Completed Items**

From the commencement of this project there has been a significant increase in the level of facility compliance across all brigades. This is evidenced by a reduction in the number of hazards and corrective actions identified at the monthly WHS inspections, being undertaken by the Shire's WHS Officer.

127 of the 134 corrective actions identified have had controls applied to date. Each of these items are specifically referenced in **attachments 1 and 2**, but includes 107 completed actions relevant to facilities, all 4 items relevant to training and 16 items relevant to IT and Procedures.



- Officers and brigade volunteers have worked together to meet the minimum training requirements identified in the audit, to ensure that the brigades are staffed by appropriately qualified and competent crews for the management and suppression of Bushfires in the area. This has included brigade officers obtaining minimum qualifications, and all active members completing their pre-season competencies.
- A Brigade Volunteer portal has been developed, creating an online platform for the completion of the brigade monthly reporting, as well as vehicle and facility fault reporting. This is currently in the testing phase with the Mundijong Brigade.

It is acknowledged that although 127 corrective actions within the audits have been completed, 24 of these (relevant to facilities) have additional corrective actions recommended to be undertaken in order to further reduce the risk. This is further described in this report under the section: *Ongoing Actions and Next Steps*.

#### Items In Progress

Of the 134 corrective actions initially identified in the audits, there are 7 items that are currently in progress. The status of these items is detailed in **attachments 1 and 2**.

#### **Ongoing Actions and Next steps**

##### Facilities - Project Development

In undertaking corrective actions to date and in consultation with the Brigades, additional actions to further mitigate or eliminate hazards within the facilities have been agreed via the following projects.

- Construction of the Oakford Fire Station.
- Byford Fire Station Enhancement Project.
- Serpentine Fire Station Enhancement Project.

Given the scope and scale of the projects identified, dedicated project officers have been allocated to these projects. The status of the projects are as follows:

Project/Facility	Status
Oakford Fire Station - New Build	Concept design in progress
Serpentine Fire Station - Enhancement Project	Concept design in progress to enable progression to the detailed design and budgeting process.  Preparation of revised business cases for these projects required.  Site visit completed Wednesday 16 August 2023
Byford Fire Station - Enhancement Project	Concept design in progress to enable progression to the detailed design and budgeting process.  Preparation of revised business cases for these projects required.  Site visit completed Wednesday 16 August 2023



### Training

- Continued collaboration between the Shire and the Brigades is to occur, to develop and deliver fire fighters competencies that are appropriate for the roles undertaken.
- Monitoring of Individual Training plans to ensure progress is being made towards full competency for each position held will be undertaken.

### IT and Procedures

It is acknowledged that the following steps are still required to be undertaken, identified as “in progress”:

- Finalise the user testing process and finalise the development of the Brigade user portal.
- Roll out the user interface across all brigades.
- Complete the revisions to the Brigade Operating Procedures, for review by the brigades prior to finalisation.

## **Options and Implications**

### Option 1

That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommends Council RECEIVES the update on the progress made against the 134 corrective actions identified in the audits on the management, facilities, and operations of the Volunteer Bushfire Brigades, which identified:

- a) 127 corrective actions have been completed.
- b) 24 completed corrective actions related to facilities, have additional actions identified to further reduce risks.
- c) 7 items are in progress.

### Option 2

That the Bushfire Advisory Committee DOES NOT RECEIVE the update on the progress made against the corrective actions identified the audits on the management, facilities, and operations of the Volunteer Bushfire Brigades.

Option 1 is recommended.

## **Conclusion**

The Shire and Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades have worked collaboratively over the past 11 months, to address corrective actions identified for compliance with the WHS Act and Regulations.

Of the 134 corrective actions originally identified, 127 have been completed and 7 are in progress. 24 corrective actions completed relevant to facilities have additional actions identified to further reduce risks.

The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale will continue to work with the Brigades to complete items identified in the audits, in particular on the delivery of three key projects, being the Oakford Fire Station (new build), Serpentine Fire Station (Enhancement Project) and Byford Fire Station (Enhancement Project).

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee is requested to receive the status update of the progress made towards achieving minimum compliance with the WHS Act and Regulations, as contained in this report and the associated attachments.

## **Attachments (available under separate cover)**

- **Attachment 1** – Corrective Action Plan Status – Facilities August 2023 (E23/10766)





- **Attachment 2** - Corrective Action Plan Status – Training, and IT and Procedures - August 2023 (E23/10320).

**Alignment with our Strategic Community Plan**

<b>Outcome 1.3</b>	A safe place to live
<b>Strategy 1.3.1</b>	Comply with relevant local and state laws, in the interests of the community
<b>Strategy 1.3.2</b>	Support local emergency services
<b>Outcome 4.1</b>	A resilient, efficient and effective organisation
<b>Strategy 4.1.1</b>	Provide efficient, effective, innovative, professional management of Shire operations to deliver the best outcome for the community within allocated resources

**Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

**Risk Implications**

Risk has been assessed on the Officer Options and Implications:

Officer Option	Risk Description	Controls	Principal Consequence Category	Risk Assessment			Risk Mitigation Strategies (to further lower the risk if required)
				Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Rating	
1 & 2	Nil.						

**Voting Requirements:** Simple Majority

**Officer Recommendation**

**That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommends Council:**

**RECEIVES** the update on the progress made against the 134 corrective actions identified in the audits on the management, facilities, and operations of the Volunteer Bushfire Brigades, which identified:

- 127 corrective actions have been completed.
- 24 completed corrective actions related to facilities, have additional actions identified to further reduce risks.
- 7 items are in progress.

**4.1/08/23**

**BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

Moved: Cr Michelle Rich; Seconded: Chris Burgess

Standing Orders be suspended to facilitate open discussion at 7:30pm.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**



4.2/08/23

**BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

Moved: Cr Michelle Rich; Seconded: Scott Jones

Standing Orders be reinstated at 7:48pm.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

4.3/08/23

**BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

Moved: Cr Michelle Rich; Seconded: Chris Burgess

Motion to DEFER until the issues that have been raised can be provided to the BFAC committee or resolved to allow the BFAC committee to vote on the officer's recommendation to call another special BFAC meeting for 21 September 2023.

**CARRIED 5/5**

**The Presiding Member used his casting vote and voted FOR the motion**

Cr David Atwell, Cr Michelle Rich; Chris Burgess; Nathan Houweling; Sarah Davis voted FOR the motion.

Scott Jones, Jessica Gibson; Leigh Mulholland, Nathan Carrall, Mike Ross voted AGAINST the motion.

*Reason for difference to officer's recommendation:*

*So that the issues that have been raised can be provided to the BFAC committee or resolved.*

**5. Next meeting:**

Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale Civic Chambers, 21 September 2023

**6. Closure:**

There being no further business, the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 8.11pm.