



Terms of Reference

Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC)



Shire of
Serpentine
Jarrahdale

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Special Council Meeting - 6 November 2023



Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC)

Delegates

Delegated Voting Membership

- 2 x Councillors
- 1 x Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- 7 x Brigade Captains / or an office bearer of the Brigade as nominated by the Captain

Ex Officio Members and Observers

- 1 x Department of Fire and Emergency Services District Officer
- 1 x Department of Parks and Wildlife
- 4 x Deputy Bush Fire Control Officers

Shire Officers

- 1 x Chief Executive Officer / Representative
- 1 x Emergency Services Coordinator

Officer Responsible	Coordinator Emergency Services
Meeting Schedule	April and November each year
Meeting Location	Civic Centre Meeting Room
Quorum	Per Section 5.19 of the Local Government Act 1995 as if the group was a Committee of Council
Delegated Authority	Nil [All recommendations must be adopted by Council before implementation]
Term of Office	Per section 5.11 of the Local Government Act 1995 as if the group was a Committee of Council
References / Notes	



Bush Fire Advisory Committee Terms of Reference (BFAC)

Introduction

Under section 67 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, a local government may appoint such persons as it thinks fit as a bush fire advisory committee. The Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale Bush Fire Advisory Committee provides advice regarding:

- matters related to previously controlled and extinguished bush fires;
- planning layout of fire breaks in the district;
- advice pertaining to prosecutions for breaches of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*;
- advice pertaining to the formation of Brigades; and
- coordination and cooperation between Brigades and Agents.

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee is an Advisory Group and is not a Committee of Council established under section 5.8 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Functions

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee is responsible for the reporting to and making recommendations to Council on:

- the financial affairs of the Brigade/s.
- the general management of the affairs of the Brigade/s.
- the planning, setting of standards and works programs for fire prevention within the Local Government area of responsibility.
- activities of Bush Fire Brigade/s.
- subject to any direction of the Advisory Committee as a whole:
 - a) Ensuring that the equipment in the possession or control of the Brigade/s in the Local Government area is inspected on a regular basis.
 - b) Making representation and recommendations to Local Government in relation to the firefighting equipment that should be reviewed in accordance with the Risk to Resource documentation as submitted to DFES.
 - c) Taking steps to ensure the appropriate distribution of fire equipment amongst brigade/s in the Local Government Area of Responsibility.
 - d) Co-ordinating training within the Brigade/s in the Shire to ensure they work together efficiently.
 - e) Overseeing the preparation and maintenance of an Incident Response Plan for the bushfire district and ensuring that a communication plan is developed and functions across the Local Government area.
 - f) Selecting members of the Committee to represent the Local Government area on a regional basis.
 - g) Carrying out other functions assigned to the Committee by the Council.

Membership

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee consists of a total of ten members.



- Two (2) Councillors
- One (1) Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- Seven (7) Brigade Captains

Council shall appoint members to the Committee per section 67 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.

The tenure of membership shall be per section 5.11 of the Local Government Act 1995 as if the group was a Committee of Council.

Chairperson

The Committee is to elect a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson for the term. Any member of the Committee can nominate as Chair. Following a call of nominations, the positions are to be decided by secret ballot.

Responsibilities will include:

- Guide meeting according to agenda.
- Keep meetings timely, effective and accountable.
- Ensure discussion items end with decision, action or definite outcome.

Shire Support

This role is to be fulfilled by a Shire Officer who can provide advice and undertake the role as the group's 'secretary'.

Responsibilities will include:

- Facilitates the link between Shire deliverables and the Advisory Group;
- Prepare and disseminate minutes and agendas;
- Schedule meetings and notify Advisory Group members; and
- Extend invitation/s to attend meetings as requested by CEO, relevant Director and/or Chair.

The Shire Officer for the Bush Fire Advisory Committee is the Coordinator Emergency Services.

Other attendees

Meetings are open to the public but may be closed at any time by the Chair, including on the recommendation of the CEO or relevant Director.

Invitations can be extended to internal Shire representatives, external organisations and service providers to guide and advise on specific topics as identified and agreed on by the Committee.

Councillors, who are not part of the Committee, are invited to observe meetings, however they are not entitled to participate in the meeting and in the event of a vote, do not have a vote.



Resignations and Termination

Council may by simple majority resolution remove a member of the Committee if they breach confidentiality, fail to attend two or more consecutive meetings without notice or otherwise cause detriment.

Conduct

Committee members will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner that supports a positive culture and outcomes for the group including:

- Provide apologies in advance if attendance is not possible;
- Seek to obtain and represent the views of the broader community and / or the specific organisation / group represented;
- Disseminate authorised information with the community in an unbiased manner;
- At all times act in good faith, with honesty, integrity and fairness;
- Respect the ideas and beliefs of all members and endeavor to create a positive working environment;
- Notify the Shire of any potential conflict of interest that may arise with respect to participation in this group;
- Agree not to disseminate confidential information that is discussed at the meeting as advised by the Chair; and
- Agree not to make any media comment on behalf of the Committee in relation to the work of the group unless approved by Council.

All Committee members must adhere to the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995* related to the disclosure of interests as if the Committee was a Committee of Council.

External members of the Committee must also adhere to the provisions of Regulation 3 and Regulations 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 of the *Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007* as if they were a Councillor attending a Committee of Council.

Failure to adhere to the provisions related to conduct and interest can result in Council removing a member from the Committee.

The CEO is responsible for determining appropriate actions related to dispute resolution.

Meetings

Meeting Schedule

Meetings will be held biannually or as required. Urgent meetings may be called by the Presiding Member or Committee by request to the CEO.



Minutes of Meetings

The Shire Officer is to ensure that accurate minutes are recorded at each meeting and all agreed actions noted in the Outcomes/Requirements column of the Minutes and include the Responsible Officers name and an "Action By" date.

Recommendations requiring Council action arising from the Meeting Minutes shall be presented to Council at the earliest available Ordinary Council Meeting.

Quorum

A Committee recommendation is not recorded and does not have effect unless it has been made by simple majority. A simple majority is the agreement of not less than half of the members present at the meeting.

Order of Meetings

Discussions at the Committee meetings are to be directed through an Agenda. Any individual wishing a specific item to be included in the agenda should advise the minute taker at least two working days prior to the meeting date.

Decision Making

The Committee will endeavour to reach any decision by consensus. The Committee will provide advice as a and where possible by consensus group. There may be occasions where decisions are to be decided by a vote. The Chairperson may exercise a casting vote should this be necessary. All members have voting rights, unless they are guests to the meeting, such as additional Councillors to the membership of the group.

A Committee recommendation is not recorded and does not have effect unless it has been made by simple majority. A simple majority is the agreement of not less than half of the members present at the meeting.

Cases not provided for in the Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference are intended to provide a framework for the efficient and effective operations of the Committee. In cases not provided for in the Terms of Reference, the Presiding Member in consultation with the CEO or relevant Director is to determine the appropriate action to enable to the Committee to perform its functions.

Amendments to the Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference may be amended, varied or modified by resolution of Council.



Continued

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Reference Documents

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Approval and Amendment History

Reviewed/Modified	Reference	Date	Comment	Reviewed By
Adopted	Ordinary Council meeting OCM142/06/21	21/06/2021	Adopted	GF
Reviewed				
Reviewed				