

Bush Fire Advisory Committee

MINUTES

Section 67 of the Bush Fires Act 1954

Tuesday 21 August 2018

Committee Brief:

To provide advice to the local government on matters pertaining to obligations contained within the Bush Fires Act, organising, managing, resourcing and training volunteer bush fire brigades.

Members as per Council Resolution No. 171/10/17

- Councillor Welburn, Council Member
- Councillor Rayner, Council Member
- Councillor Twine, Council Member
- Councillor Dow, Council Deputy Member
- Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer (DBFCO) 1
- Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer (DBFCO) 2
- Bejoording Brigade Representative
- Morangup Brigade Representative
- Coondle-Nunile Representative
- Julimar Brigade Representative
- Toodyay Central Bush Fire Brigade Representative
- Toodyay Volunteer Fire & Rescue Representative
- Chief Executive Officer Shire of Toodyay
- Community Emergency Services Manager
- Department of Parks & Wildlife Representative
- Department of Fire & Emergency Services (DFES) Representative

Distribution

These minutes of meeting were approved for distribution on 5 September 2018.



Stan Scott
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Please Note: These Minutes will remain "Unconfirmed" until the next Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting, where the Minutes will be tabled and confirmed subject to any amendments made by the Committee.

The "Confirmed" Minutes are then signed off by the Chairperson.

Attachments that formed part of the Agenda, in addition to those tabled at the Meeting are incorporated into a separate attachment to these Minutes.

Confirmation

These minutes of meeting were confirmed at a meeting held on

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Signed: 

Note: The Presiding Member at the meeting at which the minutes were confirmed is the person who signs above.

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MINUTES OF BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON 21 AUGUST 2018

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Shire of Toodyay

MINUTES

21 AUGUST 2018

1. OPENING PROCEDURES

Cr Rayner, Chairperson, declared the meeting open at 6.05pm.

1.1 Announcement of Visitors

J Hansen

1.2 Record of Attendance and Apologies

Members

Cr B Rayner	Shire President/Council Member
Cr R Welburn	Council Member
Cr E Twine	Council Member
Mr C Stewart	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Mr R Hunter	Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer (DBFCO) 1
Mr R Koch	CESM/ and DBFCO2
Mr B Grey	Bejoording Brigade Representative
Mr S Gamble	Morangup Brigade Representative
Mr M McKeown	Toodyay Central Bush Fire Brigade Representative
Mr I McGregor	Toodyay Volunteer Fire & Rescue Representative
Mr T Bendtsen	Department of Fire & Emergency Services (DFES)

Staff

Mrs M Rebane Executive Assistant

Apologies

Nil

2. TABLING OF MINUTES AND STATUS REPORT

2.1 Minutes of Meeting held on 15 May 2018

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION/BFAC RESOLUTION NO. 09/08/18

MOVED C Stewart

That the Unconfirmed Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held on 15 May 2018 be confirmed.

MOTION CARRIED

2.2 Matters arising from previous minutes

Nil

2.3 Review of the BFAC Status Report

2.3.1 Applications for Membership to BFB's

Points raised:

- *Deliberative processes with respect to membership of Bush Fire Brigades;*
- *Probationary periods are part of the process; and*
- *Records be kept in accordance with State Records Act 2000.*

3. PRESENTATIONS OR EVENTS

Presentation of reports, people coming, topics, et cetera

J Hansen provided a verbal update of progress made in relation to management plan for the Shire of Toodyay.

4. REPORTS FROM SHIRE OFFICERS

4.1 Report(s) from CESM

4.1.1 Criminal History Checks

Date of Report:	13/08/2018
File Reference:	FIR1
Author:	R Koch – Community Emergency Services Manager
Responsible Officer:	S Scott – Chief Executive Officer
Attachments:	Proposed Standard Operating Procedure – Criminal History Checks

PURPOSE

For Shire of Toodyay Bush Fire Advisory Committee to consider the information in this report in relation to a draft Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Criminal History Checks (CHCs) for Bush Fire Brigade Volunteers.

It is not the intent of the Officer to seek a recommendation which would seek adoption the proposed SOP at the August 2018 BFAC. The intent of this report is along the lines of a 'first reading' to allow adequate time for this report and proposed SOP to be considered by BFAC members and the brigade members they represent. However, an optional recommendation had been included, in which BFAC could request to council a fully inclusive draft of the Shire of Toodyay Bush Fire Operating Procedures including the SOP and references there to along with consideration of out of session feedback to the November BFAC for consideration.

BACKGROUND

Volunteer Bush Fire Bridge personnel regularly engage with the community through the services they provide and may have unsupervised access to private property. They are trusted with the care and use of valuable community assets and work with the public, often during times when individuals are most vulnerable. Additionally, Shire or Toodyay Volunteer Bush Fire Bridge personnel are entitled to expect that their colleagues are of good character and do not pose a risk to their safety.

This topic was initially discussed during at the May 2018 BFAC. With a recommendation to council (subsequently resolved) to call for feedback from the entire Shire of Toodyay Bushfire Brigade membership. The request for feedback was accompanied by a background report.

ANAYLSIS OF FEEDBACK

Six (6) items of feedback were received in response. All responses were in support of adoption of Criminal History Checks. Two of the responses were brigade summaries of feedback received via the captain. The responses raised a number of items of comment/question, being:

- a. One response was in favour of new members only.
- b. One response inferred that a member was concerned a retrospective check may affect their membership.
- c. One response was seeking further information in regards to responsibly or level of assessment (who does the assessment).
- d. One response advocated for the process to be a simple as possible for applicants.
- e. Three of the responses specifically mentioned alignment with other emergencies services groups as a justification for supporting adoption of CHCs.

The officer has also been approached by members since the request for feedback. All such conversations have been favour of the prospect of CHCs, with an identifiable desire for further detail as to how this may be implemented.

The request for feedback also requested thought of adoption of Probationary Period for new brigade members. Two of the above response specifically mentioned their support for the introduction of a probationary period, with no responses opposed.

OFFICER COMMENT

Based on the positive reception of the subject by members, the officer has drafted a proposed Standard Operating Procedure for further consideration by BFAC.

It is envisaged that if adopted that this/any SOP would be included along with other SOP in Section 2 of the Shire of Toodyay Bush Fire Operating Procedures and referred by the relevant items in Section 1 of the document (i.e. 2.1 New Membership Application).

It is not the intent of the Officer to seek a recommendation which would seek adoption the proposed SOP at the August 2018 BFAC. The intent of this report

is along the lines of a 'first reading' to allow adequate time for this report and proposed SOP to be considered by BFAC members and the brigade members they represent. However, an optional recommendation had been included, in which BFAC could request to council a fully inclusive draft of the Shire of Shire of Toodyay Bush Fire Operating Procedures including the SOP and references there to, along with consideration of out of session feedback to the November BFAC for consideration.

Comment on Proposed CHC SOP

The proposed SOP is modelled off the corresponding DFES Policy (Policy 38: Criminal History Checks). The proposed SOP aims to be concise, and has been adapted to roles which exist in the local government setting.

The SOP is in three main parts:

1. **Mandatory Requirements** – These are the principal which underpins the SOP.
2. **Procedure** – This is the envisaged procedure followed in regards to application and assessment. Responsibilities/roles (see description below) are covered by the procedure. Please note: This procedure make assumptions in regards to how service providers of CHCs operate and as such may require amendment to fit with the operation of a given service provider.
3. **Conviction Risk Assessment Guide** – This is a ready reckoner for to assist the assessment of an applicant with a history. This guide at present is exactly in line with DFES Policy 38. It does not attempt to handle all possible outcomes, which by the procedure and mandatory requirements of the SOP are handled by exception by the CEO.

Process Roles

The procedure section of the proposed SOP lists a number of roles which are described below. Please note any mention of a particular Shire Officer caring out these roles is indicative only as any recommendation/resolution by BFAC/Council cannot directly task individual Shire Officers.

Applicant – This is the new or existing member seeking the CHC.

Verifying Officer – This the person authorised to verify the identity documents of the applicant. This could be an authorised person within the Shire or potentially an approved brigade captain (permitted in the DFES Policy).

Lodgement Officer – This is person responsible for summiting the request to the Service Provider. It is proposed that this role be carried out by a suitable officer of the Shire, potentially the CESM or delegate.

Administration Officer – This is the person to whom the CHC will be receiving he CHC within the Shire. It is proposed that this be the same officer responsible for receiving Shire Staff CHC/NPCs – nominally with Human Resources function.

Probationary Period & Amendments to Termination of Membership

No further detail is provide by the officer in relation to the proposal for introducing of Probationary Period & Amendments to Termination of

Membership, as presented at the May 2018 BFAC. It is proposed that the relevant amendments to the Shire of Toodyay Bush Fire Operating Procedures are presented and considered at the same time as the integration of the Criminal History Check SOP into the above mentioned document, if progressed further by BFAC/Council.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That BFAC recommend to Council that:

1. The CEO seek to present to BFAC a proposal incorporating Criminal History Checks, Probationary Period & Amendments to Termination of Membership in to the Shire of Toodyay Bush Fire Operating Procedures.

The CESM provided an overview of the report.

Clarification was sought.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION/BFAC RESOLUTION NO. 10/02/18

MOVED C Stewart

SECONDED R Hunter

1. That BFAC Members note the attached proposal incorporating Criminal History Checks, Probationary Period and Amendments to Termination of Membership in to the Shire of Toodyay Bush Fire Operating Procedures and provide comment to the CESM by 30 September 2018; and
2. The CESM provide an amended version of the attached proposal, consolidating amendments, as appropriate, to the BFAC at the November 2018 BFAC Meeting.

MOTION CARRIED 12/0

4.1.2 Use of Chainsaws in Bushfire Response

Date of Report:	13/08/2018
File Reference:	FIR1
Author:	R Koch – Community Emergency Services Manager
Responsible Officer:	S Scott – Chief Executive Officer
Attachments:	Nil.

PURPOSE

For the Shire of Toodyay Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) to review officer investigation and recommendations in regards to a request via Coondle-Nunile Bush Fire Brigade to carry chainsaws on appliances made at the May 2018 BFAC meeting.

BACKGROUND

At the May 2018 BFAC meeting Coondle-Nunile Bush Fire Brigade raised the question of bushfire appliances being able to carry chainsaws for the purpose of clearing fallen vegetation on potential escape routes.

Bush fire appliances do not carry chainsaws. The current approach to use of Chainsaws on the fire ground come from deployment of Shire of Toodyay works staff or private contractors.

While some appliances have previously carried chainsaws, due to lack of lack of training, PPE, servicing and related procedures, brigades have previously been instructed by the Shire not to carry or use chainsaws due to the associated safety risks. DFES was consulted as part of that process.

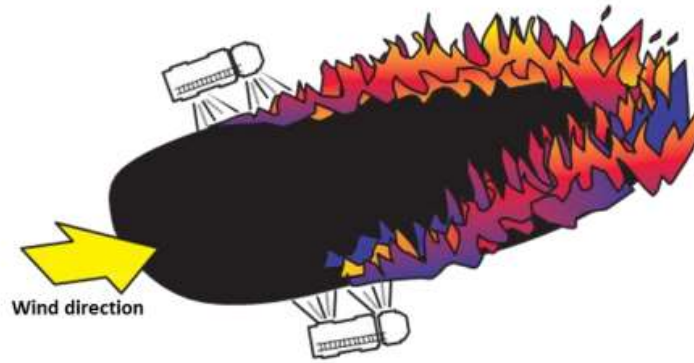
OFFICER'S ANALYSIS OF REQUEST

The officer has analysed the request in line with its proposed scope: clearing fallen vegetation on potential escape routes. In doing so the officer as considered the likelihood of occurrence, existing mitigation measures, alternative strategies, safety, financial consideration and other down-stream impacts of the request.

Existing Mitigating Strategies

All bushfire firefighters are trained in strategies and methods of extinguishing a bushfire. These strategies are based around safety. Furthermore Lieutenants, Captains and FCOs responsible for their crews and the management of the incident are further trained in respect to the safe deployment of crews.

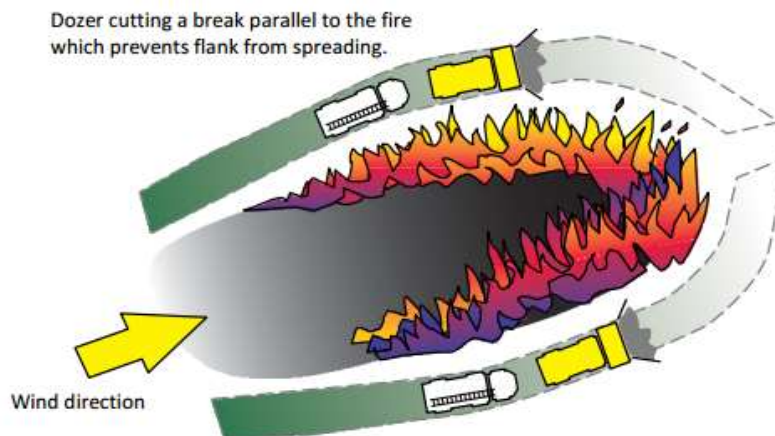
Method 1 – Flank Attack: Flank attack is a preferred method of suppression as it ensures that the tail of the fire is extinguished prior to crews moving down the flanks. This ensures that crews are at all times near the burnt ground which can be considered a safe point of retreat from the perspective of avoidance of burn over. As crews a working close to low intensity fire with minimal fuel between the fire and themselves the risk of the fire intensifying and taking a run at the truck is minimised.



Flank attack.

The route of escape on a flank attack is either directly onto the burnt ground or back along the blacked out fire edge. If a tree was to fall along the previously traversed fire edge this would not constitute a safety issue for the crew as they are not in front of any head or active flank fire, and next to burnt ground.

Method 2 – Parallel Attack: This method is used for low to medium intensity fires. It involves the construction of a control line parallel to the fire, or just a short distance away from the fire's edge. This method requires construction of a control line (fire break) which is most commonly conducted with earth moving machinery.



Parallel attack.

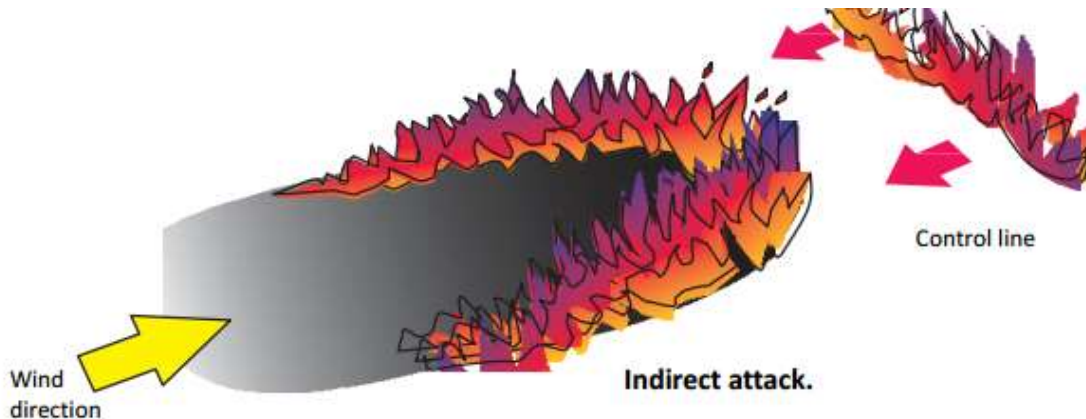
Because this method puts fuel between the fire and the crews, and by its nature also puts the crew further away from the safety of the burnt ground, this method can potentially compromise firefighting safety. However this risk is minimised by:

- Use of Flank Attack as the preferred firefighting method.
- Adoption in only lower intensity fires
- Adoption only where current and predicted weather conditions permit.

In respect the scenario of crews becoming trapped due to vegetation which may subsequently fall across the control line, the risk of being trapped is mitigated by the presence of earth moving machinery as part of this method. The machine

may be used to remove the fallen vegetation or cut a new break around it. This would be more expedient by clearing than any other method.

Method 3 – Indirect Attack: This attack method is used for intense and inaccessible bush fires. The indirect method requires the use of either a natural fire barrier or the construction of a control line some distance from the fire's existing perimeter. The fuel between the control line and the main may be back burnt.



This method is rarely used due to its high logistical and planning overhead and other associated risks. Like Indirect Attack use of machines would be required and therefore be available for assisting with the clearing of any fallen vegetation on escape routes. Furthermore back burning operations remove the fuel and provide a buffer to the head fire.

Alternate Methods of Dealing with Blocked Egress

Should a tree be encountered across the path of a vehicle there are alternate options to removal of the tree via chain saw:

1. Alternate Route: An alternate route may be selected. Given the grass, shrub or woodland nature covering most of the Shire, simply driving around the blockage is a viable (and quickest) option in many scenarios.
2. Earthmoving Machinery: As indicated above earthmoving machinery is commonly working in tandem with fire appliances and may be used to move the blockage or create alternate access.
3. Dragging by Vehicle: Many appliances carry chains which can be utilised to move timber (within reason).
4. Hand tools: Fire appliances carry axes which in limited circumstances could be used to assist in clearing a blockage.

Likelihood of Occurrence

From the above analysis of firefighting methods the likely hood of tree falling on an escape route, where there are no other options to remove, and presents a dangerous scenario to crews is considered to be extremely rare.

Safety

Under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1984* the Shire has obligations to Bush Fire Brigade Volunteers. The may be considered the same as those to employed staff. The placement of chainsaws on appliances has a number associated safety risks.

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1. Training – A distributed approach to chainsaws on appliances presents a risk in difficulty of ensuring that only those who are suitably qualified for a given task in respect to the ease of availability to many personnel; and
2. Type of Task – A distributed approach to chainsaws on appliances presents a risk that chainsaws may not be used for tasks as originally intended, i.e. felling of trees.
3. Fuel – DFES recently undertook a concerted effort to remove unleaded fuel from fire appliances based on the risk of burns to fire fighters operation on the fire ground. A distributed approach to chainsaws on appliances to some degree undermines these recent safety improvements, by re-introducing elements of the original risk.

Financial

Chain Saws are not an eligible item under the Local Government Grants Scheme (LGGS) otherwise known as ESL. This statement is also true for related PPE and training. Thus, the purchase, servicing, PPE and training of chainsaws would be required to be fully funded by the Shire of Toodyay.

A conservative estimate for purchase of a chainsaw, multiple sizes of chaps and ear muff and mesh shield attachments for helmets would be around \$2,000 per kit. The Shire operates 9 BFB appliances meaning the outlay could be as much as \$18,000.

Training is approximately \$300/head. Which could be up to potentially be up to another \$10,000 upfront to train say 2 members per rostered crew. These costs are based on the most basic level of training which would only allow use on fallen timber.

On top of the upfront costs, ongoing maintenance, replacement and servicing costs would apply. This has been conservatively estimated at around 10% of initial outlay annually.

It should be noted that the above does not contemplate costs which would be realised by the issues identified as downstream impacts listed below.

While the initially posed request from the Coondle-Nunile Bush Fire Brigade was made with the offer of brigade funding for, purchase and training, does not recommend such a path as being viable as it would be unsound management by the Shire to enter into an arrangement which is not fully funded and supported by means which they have control. This is particularly pertinent given the safety considerations outline herein. It is also important to note that such an approach would could see a diversion in capability of between brigades.

Downstream Impacts

A number of flow on effects from a distributed approach to chainsaws on appliances have also been identified:

1. Stowage: BFB appliances are not designed to store the chainsaws and associated PPE. In the case of the saw it would require modifications which would require permission from DFES under the terms of the capital LGGS grants under which the appliances are provided. To a lesser extent general storage of PPE would present space issues for many appliances.

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2. **Vehicle Weight:** Any additional equipment added to fire appliances have the potential to create axle or gross vehicle mass issues. This would attract significant downstream costs or compromise of other capabilities of on affected appliances.
3. **PPE:** As correct PPE for operating a chainsaw and being on the fire ground would be required during operation, any operators would need to be upgraded to a BR9 model helmet (approximately \$220 per head) to support clip on ear muffs/mesh visors.
4. **Security:** Chainsaws are a high risk to theft. Having these items could increase the risk of breaking to brigade sheds/stations. There is also an attraction and therefore a risk that members may be tempted to use the chainsaws for private purposes.
5. **Coordination:** Coordination of procurement, servicing, training and any other related issues would draw resourcing away from other tasks which would could benefit members.

Summary of Pros and Cons for distributed a distributed approach to chainsaws on appliances:

Pro	Con
High availability of chainsaw resource.	Usage scenario very unlikely to be realised
	Upfront & Ongoing Costs
	Safety (Monitoring thereof, unleaded fuel)
	Vehicle Compatibility Issues (weight/storage)
	Security (theft or misuse)
	Coordination - impact on resources

Officer Recommendation (in relation to request)

Thus, the Officer has come to the opinion that the usage of chainsaws in respect to the request does not represent a viable option both in respect to risk of the usage scenario occurring and the challenges in establishing and maintaining distributed cache of chainsaws on bush fire appliances.

Other Uses of Chainsaws in Bushfire Response

Despite the above analysis of a distributed cache of chainsaws on bush fire appliances for the use of clearing escape routes, the officer does recognise the application of chainsaws in bushfire response can indeed be useful. This was discussed to some extent at the May BFAC on the general topic of the use of chainsaws. To ensure that this report is thorough analysis of all aspects raised in the May BFAC the wider value of chainsaws to bushfire response is hereby considered.

There are three main classifications under which chainsaws could potentially be used; containment and mop-up with the latter historically generating the most demand.

Mop-up application for chainsaws include (but not limited to):

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- Opening (cutting) up of fallen timber in conjunction with other mop up methods.
- Obtaining Access (trimming or pruning)
- Felling of stags
- Pre-mop up in mitigation activities

Current Situation

Currently the use of chainsaws is via Shire Staff, external contractors or in limited circumstances spontaneous volunteers.

The current training of Shire Staff is extremely limited in regards to staff with training to fell trees.

On the negative side of the equation, issues around the timely availability of accessing these resources (particularly after hours i.e. evenings/weekends) often occur. It should be noted that industry standards prevent tree felling practices after dark. As such there should be no expectation that such activities can be serviced by any method of resourcing and that alternate strategies/methods are required in such circumstances (i.e. use of shire staff or contractors to facilitate night time road closures, or deployment of machinery).

Downstream impacts which occur in the event any resourcing is not available, includes longer duration of incidents (and volunteer hours) and potential extended closure of roads (where the verge cannot be made safe)

Approach of Other Organisations

DFES – DFES do not train fire fighters in the use of chainsaws. In short this is work is primarily left to contractors (as per machinery). SES have chainsaw capabilities limited to fallen timber only. There may be circumstances where SES could be deployed for such tasks. This would require agreement of the IC and the RDC.

PAW – Parks and Wildlife service do train some employees in the felling of tree (including stags). For safety reasons, any felling operations are not permitted between sunset and sunrise. Parks and Wildlife may be able to provide operators for non-PaW estate fires upon request.

Shire of Toodyay (Works) – Similar to PAW, the Shire only permits crews to use a chainsaw in line with their training with felling operations not permitted between sunset and sunrise.

Contractors – The officer has spoken to training providers and contractors who also practice a prohibition of felling trees after dark due to the safety implication.

Training Costs associated with Chainsaw Operators

Level of Training	Scope	Duration	Costs
FPICOT2239A – <i>Trim and cut felled trees</i>	Fallen Timber, Punning, standing timber to 100mm dia/4m height.	1 Day	\$250-350pp

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Level of Training	Scope	Duration	Costs
FPICOT2236 – <i>manual tree felling (basic)</i>	Sound standing timber to 500mm dia/20m height.	3 Days	\$1,100-\$1,550pp
FPIFGM3212 – <i>Fall trees manually (intermediate)</i>	Sound standing timber to 800mm dia/40m height.	4 Days	\$1250-1700pp
FPIFGM3213 – <i>Fall trees manually (advanced)</i>	Any size trees, including stags.	5-6 Days	\$1450-1900pp

Risk with Felling Stags

Felling stags represents considerable risk to operators. While training may provide justification for an operator to carry out the task, the infrequent nature of the need to fell stags via chainsaw would ensure that experience levels would remain low – a situation exacerbated in models which have a higher number of operators available.

Alternatives to the Status Quo

Opportunities to improve the access to chainsaw resources may exist under the following two models:

Model 1 – Enhanced utilisation of Shire Recourses.

In a nut shell this model would see the Shire committing to a suitable on-call roster for staff ensuring availability of a saw and trained operator.

This would have the benefit of utilising existing plant, and to some degree existing training. However adoption of such an approach may require some HR related negotiations/associated costs.

It would be envisaged that the Shire would need to maintain 4 trained staff to achieve this.

Model 2 – Controlled use of dedicated plant and trained volunteers.

This model would see one (or two) bush fire dedicated chainsaws (most logically located on fire support/management vehicles), and a number of select bush fire volunteers trained in their use.

Use of the Chainsaw would be limited to those trained for the task, and with the expressed permission of the incident controller.

It would be envisaged that the Shire would need to maintain around 10 trained volunteers to achieve this, or as an alternative a smaller number on a dedicated roster.

Costs and duration of courses for advanced tree felling courses could be a significant barrier the adoption of models which provide full range of potential foreground use.

An SOP would be required to formalise such arrangements.

Improving the 'Status Quo'

Finally, it should be noted that during this investigation/report, new potential resources in the form of PaW and Fire Mitigation Services have been identified. While neither can provide a guaranteed service, if nothing else it does improve the pool, and potential positive outcomes in regards to outsourced resourcing.

Comments at the Meeting

- Rarely gets used;
- Training required if a chainsaw gets included as part of the kit;
- User to make a call on the day;
- Battery operated chainsaw options;
- Maintenance issues with chainsaws if introduced;
- Most brigades have a chainsaw available;
- Discretionary purchase & use a brigade call/decision;
- Clear understanding of liabilities;
- Minimum PPE requirements;
- Rostered crew to take on task of use of the chainsaw (who are trained);
- BFAC recommendation to the Shire which would give the Shire an opportunity to consider their liabilities with respect to training, and identification of any other risk management factors;

MOTION/BFAC RESOLUTION NO. 11/02/18

MOVED R Hunter

SECONDED M McKeown

1. That a standard operating procedure be drafted that will allow chainsaws to be used by trained brigade members; and
2. The drafted procedure will be brought back to the BFAC in November 2018 for consideration.

MOTION CARRIED 12/0

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

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For the purpose of comparison the matrix below compares the distributed model with the two alternate models above. It is presented in traffic light format using a linear scale 1-3 (where lower is considered better). It does not quantify the degree of the pro or con.

Consideration	Distributed	Alternate Model 1 (Shire Staff)	Alternate Model 2 (Dedicated Volunteers)
Existing Plant Utilisation/Plant Costs	3 (worst)	1 (best)	2
Impact on Appliance's primary function.	3 (may cause appliance to cease other duties, by additional utilisation for of personnel)	1 (external personnel)	3 (may cause appliance to cease other duties, by additional utilisation for of personnel)
Availability/Time to Access	1 (quickest)	3 (slowest)	2
Staff/Contractor Costs (incident costs)	1 (equal least)	3 (highest)	1 (equal least)
Training Costs	3 (highest)	1 (lowest)	2
Administration/ management overheads	3 (highest)	1 (lowest)	2
OSH/Compliance (ease of) (includes controls on use, servicing and reporting of defects, fuel on fire grounds considerations)	3 (lease control/worst)	1 (most control/best)	2
PPE Requirements/Impacts	3 (most)	1 (least)	2
HR Considerations (Staff)	1 (least – N/A)	3 (most)	1 (least – N/A)
Security	3 (least)	1 (most – assumption vehicles and plant are ex-depot)	2
TOTALS	24	16	19

SUMMARY

After investigation of the initial enquiry at the May 2018 BFAC the officer does not recommended the placement of chainsaws on Shire of Toodyay Bush Fire brigade vehicles. The officer presents alternatives for consideration by BFAC which could augment current practices.

BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

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4.1.3 FCO Recommendations (Ballot)

Note:

The Community Emergency Services Officer (CESM) will speak to this report at the meeting.
The CESM provided a verbal overview of the process for nomination of FCO Candidates to be chosen by the Members.

Ballot papers were tabled at 7.12pm.

Clarification was sought in relation to a confidential report that had been provided to all members via email from the CESM within the last fortnight.

All nominated candidates achieved a simple majority and the nominations will be submitted to Council.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 7.12pm.

The Chairperson resumed the meeting at 7.15pm.

C Stewart was nominated by E Twine.

C Stewart accepted the nomination.

I McGregor seconded the nomination.

Nomination forms were distributed at 7.30pm.

C Stewart was nominated by a full complement of votes.

B Rayner nominated R Hunter as Deputy CBFCO1.

R Hunter accepted the nomination.

R Welburn seconded the nomination.

The Chairperson requested that nominations be received for the Deputy CBFCO2.

R Hunter nominated R Koch as Deputy CBFCO2.

R Welburn seconded the nomination.

Nomination forms for both positions were distributed at 7.33pm.

R Hunter was nominated as Deputy CBFCO1 by a full complement of votes.

R Koch was nominated as Deputy CBFCO2 by a full complement of votes.

Clarification was sought in relation to whether there was a requirement for Deputy CBFCO3 position.

RESULT OF NOMINATIONS BY BALLOT

Nominated Positions	Name
Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	C Stewart
Deputy CBFCO1	R Hunter
Deputy CBFCO2	R Koch
Fire Control Officers (FCO's)	
C Stewart	R Hunter
B Wood	G Forsyth
	J Wakka

C Wroth J-D Bartels K Maddrell J Hansen B Rayner
I McGregor

4.2 Report(s) from CEO

Nil

5. UPDATES AND REPORTS

5.1 Brigade Roundtable discussion and reporting

5.1.1 Morangup

Bituminisation completed all the way to the road.

5.1.2 Julimar

Struggling a bit with roster.

5.1.3 Bejoording

Lieutenants were shuffled round at the recent AGM.

5.1.2 Toodyay Fire and Rescue

Date: 23rd September 2018 Car Fire Training at Coondle Fire Shed – open invitation to attend. Advise Coondle Brigade for catering purposes.

5.1.3 DFES

Exercise at Ferngrove that revealed building incident lapses; and

Date: 15 October 2018 - Exercise to be held at the simulation centre in Belmont.

5.1.3 C Stewart

Terrific response from BFB's and support;

Permits: feedback has been good. New system works well;

Mitigation and fire preparedness;

Great outcomes regarding funding, particularly for the SES Centre at Morangup; and

When Albany got burnt and we did a section 46, there was feedback in relation to this. Please provide further feedback that will be included into future reports and planning for the season.

5.1.3 Central

External cameras monitor movement around the shed.

5.1.3 CESM

Funding been approved for the Toodyay SES to perform upgrades to the Morangup BFB;

Permit process – working on the streamlining ability of application for permits and the approval process;

Make sure you register for courses on e-academy. Prior registration is compulsory. When registering put the Captain/Supervisor's name as the person approving the training otherwise the application might not progress;

AIMSIV course replacement. Gap course not on-line yet but soon to be. Once available the CESM to advise;

Introduction to Firefighting Course - 6 October 2018

Bushfire firefighting - 20-21 October 2018.

Shire had a mitigation burn in dawn Atwell Reserve that went well. Good result in there;

PPE forms – we have gone to online forms. Make sure you circulate them;

Exercise 1 Sept 2018 – make sure all crews are teed up. We are expecting full complement of Toodyay Units. The poster that was put out had the incorrect number on it. More information will be provided to Captains in due course;

CESM to complete the list and update.

Firebreak notice been amended. This will manage expectation in regards to using section 46 of the Bush Fires Act to “enact out of season” restrictions when required.

5.2 BFCO Roundtable discussion and reporting

5.1.1 Bush Fire Ready Meeting

J Hansen and R Koch attended – full day. Very well structured and enlightening. Mitigation resources available to other communities was interesting.

A generalised guideline for burning procedures needs to be formulated. Feedback from the community (particularly new residents) has been that this would be useful from a community engagement point of view and to take advantage of other social media engagement opportunities.

5.1.2 DFES

Looking at doing a higher level communications plan and using social media to get information to the community about what their responsibilities are when it comes to burning.

The brigades will be involved (and engaged) in the process.

Toodyay will be a pilot. We will test in Toodyay to see if it works.

Volunteering will be encouraged within the social media communications effort.

MINUTES OF BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON 21 AUGUST 2018

6. CONFIRMATION OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee is scheduled to be held on 20 November 2018 commencing at 6.00pm.

7. CLOSURE OF MEETING

The Chairperson declared the meeting closed 8.01pm.

Attachments to Minutes

Bush Fire Advisory Committee

Tues 21 August 2018

TABLING OF MINUTES AND STATUS REPORT

2.3	Review of Bush Fire Advisory Committee Status Report	1
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REPORTS FROM SHIRE OFFICERS

4.1	Report(s) from CESM	4
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4.1.1. Criminal History Checks

Attachment 1 – Proposed Standard Operating Procedure



STATUS REPORT Bush Fire Advisory Committee

Including Recommendations made to Council, Action List and Completed items

Recommendations made to Council			<i>Responsible Officer CESM / CEO</i>
Meeting Date	Item	Title/Description of Item	Recommendation Made / Other Comment
21/08/2018 BFAC Meeting	4.1.3	Recommendations (by Ballot)	Nominated Positions Name Chief Bush Fire Control Officer C Stewart Deputy CBFCO1 R Hunter Deputy CBFCO2 R Koch Fire Control Officers (FCO's) C Stewart R Hunter B Wood G Forsyth J Wakka C Wroth J-D Bartels K Maddrell J Hansen B Rayner I McGregor

Action List			<i>Responsible Officer CESM / CEO</i>	
Meeting Date	Item	Title/Description	Actions to be taken	With the Aim of:
21/08/2018	4.1.1	Criminal History Checks	1. That BFAC Members note the attached proposal incorporating Criminal History Checks, Probationary Period and Amendments to Termination of Membership in to the Shire of Toodyay Bush Fire Operating Procedures and provide comment to the CESM by 30 September 2018; and 2. The CESM provide an amended version of the attached proposal, consolidating amendments, as appropriate, to the BFAC at the November 2018 BFAC Meeting.	Bringing it back to BFAC at the November 2018 BFAC Meeting.
21/08/2018	4.1.2	Use of Chainsaws in Bushfire Response	1. That a standard operating procedure be drafted that will allow chainsaws to be used by trained brigade members; and 2. The drafted procedure will be brought back to the BFAC in November 2018 for consideration.	Bringing it back to BFAC at the November 2018 BFAC Meeting.



STATUS REPORT Bush Fire Advisory Committee

Including Recommendations made to Council, Action List and Completed items

COMPLETED RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE GONE TO COUNCIL (and ACTIONS Completed)				
Meeting Date	Item	Title/Description of Item	Status / Action / Notes	RESOLUTION NO.
20/02/2018	2.2.1	Julimar Brigade Letter	<p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult and request feedback from BFAC members, Bushfire Brigade Captains and Bush Fire Control Officers regarding the process of nomination, recommendation and termination of Bush Fire Control Officers including the appointment recommendations Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and Fire Control Officer Representative Bush Fire Advisory Committee Member roles. 2. Table a report and recommendations to the May 2018 Bush Fire Advisory Committee. 	Discussed at the May 2018 BFAC Meeting. Completed.
15/05/2018	4.1.1	Fire Control Officer Nominations and Recommendations – Proposed Process	<p>The Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommends to Council the following:</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Endorse the changes (Sections 3.2, 5.1, 5.2, 10.3, 10.9, 10.10 and 11) to the Shire of Toodyay Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade Bush Fire Operating Procedures subject to the following amendments: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Timelines be amended to 21 days for notification of nominees to the Shire, with the associated report distributed 14 days prior to a Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting. (b) That brigade meeting nominations may be generated from an AGM, Ordinary or Special Meeting of the Brigade. 	Completed. This information was brought back to the BFAC in August 2018.



STATUS REPORT Bush Fire Advisory Committee

Including Recommendations made to Council, Action List and Completed items

COMPLETED RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE GONE TO COUNCIL (and ACTIONS Completed)				
Meeting Date	Item	Title/Description of Item	Status / Action / Notes	RESOLUTION NO.
15/05/2018	4.1.1	Fire Control Officer Nominations and Recommendations – Proposed Process	<p>The Bush Fire Advisory Committee recommends to Council the following: That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. BFAC recommend to Council that the FCO Representative position on BFAC be retired; and 2. A standing agenda “General Business from guest Bush Fire Control Officers” item is added to BFAC agenda. 	Completed.
15/05/2018	5.1	Question regarding possibility of having a chain saw on the appliance (with some associated discussion).	CESM to provide information/report	Presenting at next BFAC Meeting
15/05/2018	5.1	Expelled member names or denied memberships to be provided to Brigades in case the person attempts to resign with another brigade.	CESM to provide information/report	Presenting at next BFAC Meeting

PROPOSED STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE – CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS

INTRODUCTION

Volunteer Bush Fire Bridge personnel regularly engage with the community through the services they provide and may have unsupervised access to private property. They are trusted with the care and use of valuable community assets and work with the public, often during times when individuals are most vulnerable. Additionally, Shire or Toodyay Volunteer Bush Fire Bridge personnel are entitled to expect that their colleagues are of good character and do not pose a risk to their safety.

CHC are a contemporary workplace practice which improve the Shire of Toodyay's commitment to the wellbeing and safety of its personnel and the community. This SOP outline the process for undertaking CHC for existing and prospective Shire of Toodyay Volunteer Bush Fire Bridge personnel.

The SOP includes a number of mandatory requirements to ensure CHC are properly conducted and applied. An adverse criminal record will not necessarily preclude employment or being a volunteer with DFES.

The first section of This SOP covers the mandatory requirements, while the second guide the procedure followed.

1. MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- 1.1 **Application** – All prospective Shire of Toodyay volunteer Bush Fire Brigade members are required to undertake a CHC (and where required a satisfactory National Police Certificate (NPC)) as part of their membership application.
- 1.2 **Under 18 years of age** – Where the applicant is under 18 years of age. A parent or guardian must consent to a CHC for a person under 18 years as part of the application.
- 1.3 **Existing Shire of Toodyay Volunteer Bushfire Brigade personnel requested to provide a CHC or NPC** – The CEO may request existing Shire of Toodyay Volunteer Bushfire Brigade personnel undertake a CHC at any time including (but not limited to):
 - a. when an employee is offered a promotion or transfers to a higher risk role in the service or
 - b. where the Shire of Toodyay receives information that Volunteer Bushfire Brigade member is charged or convicted of an offence and they have not reported the matter.

The member must comply with the CEO's request to provide a CHC or NPC within 28 days. If the CHC/NPC reveals a charge and/or conviction, the CEO will utilise the provisions of this SOP to determine if membership is to be terminated or allowed to continue. For the purposes of interpreting terminology of this SOP, the member will be deemed to be an 'applicant' or 'prospective' in such a circumstance.

- 1.4 **Prospective personnel with an existing NPC** – The Shire of Toodyay will accept an existing satisfactory NPC from prospective personnel providing it is not more than 3 months old. The person must provide a statutory declaration to certify the NPC is true and correct and they have not been charged with or convicted of an offence (excluding minor traffic offences such as speeding) since the NPC was issued.

- 1.5 **Volunteer Bushfire Brigade member charged with and/or convicted of an offence** – Any personnel must report if they are charged and subsequently convicted of an offence in writing to the attention of the Shire of Toodyay CEO via mail or records@toodyay.wa.gov.au within 14 days of being charged or convicted of an offence. The correspondence should be marked 'CONFIDENTIAL'. The CEO, in consultation with the brigade captain and relevant shire staff will determine the next course of action in line with this SOP.
- 1.6 **Spent Convictions** – Under the provisions of the Spent Convictions Act 1988, a person can apply to have certain convictions removed from their criminal record after 10 years plus any term of imprisonment. The Shire of Toodyay must not ask personnel or an applicant to disclose any spent convictions. The Shire of Toodyay cannot discriminate against persons with spent convictions.
- 1.7 **Exemptions from CHC** – An exemption may be granted by the CEO where the member has previously completed a CHC as part of membership with a DFES business group or unit (i.e. FRS, SES, etc) in line with relevant DFES policy. Membership must current and evidence satisfying CEO that DFES policy has been complied with may be sort or requested.
- 1.8 **Accuracy of criminal history information** - Current or prospective Shire of Toodyay Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade personnel must dispute any inaccurate information in a CHC/NPC with the service provider, not the Shire of Toodyay.
- 1.9 **Prospective Shire of Toodyay Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade personnel on visas** - Prospective overseas personnel who are in the country on a specific visa must provide a certified copy of their visa and a NPC to support their application.
- 1.10 **Confidentiality** - Strict confidentiality must be maintained regarding any CHC and related documentation. Information on a person's CHC must only be accessed and distributed as required for decision-making purposes.
- 1.11 **Consultation/Right of Reply** – No application will be dismissed or deemed unsuccessful on the grounds of the result of a CHC without:
- a. The applicant being advised in wiring of the CHC result, and provided 28 days to respond to their adverse criminal history. This advice may also request the provision of the full Police Clearance by the applicant in support of the application/assessment, and;
 - b. The applicant's Captain (or Chief Bushfire Control Officer) being advised in wiring of the CHC result, and provided 28 days to provide their recommendation to the CEO in respect to their support or withdrawal of support for the application.
- 1.12 **Costs** – The Shire of Toodyay will cover the costs of all CHCs. The Shire will reimburse costs of a NPC where the prospective member is directly requested to produce a NPC. Reimbursement of existing NPC will be at the discretion of the CEO, as it may be reasonably assumed that the NPC was originally obtained for other purposes.

2. VOLUNTEER CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK PROCEDURE

Application

- 2.1 **Applicant** - All prospective Shire of Toodyay Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade personnel must complete the CHC Fit2Work Application/Consent Form and submit it with the original or a certified true copy of their personal identity documents (100 point check) to the verifying officer.

- 2.2 **Verifying Officer** – Will complete any portion of the application in relation to the organisation (Shire of Toodyay), sight, verify and sign identification documents and provide to the Lodgement officer.
- 2.3 **Lodgement Officer** – Will manage the online lodgement of the documents with the service provider.

Results

- 2.4 **Lodgement Officer** – Will receive notification of the result from the Service provider the verifying officer being:
 - a. No Match Found - Where the volunteer applicant returns a result of no disclose able criminal history they can be registered and approved as a volunteer.
 - or
 - b. Match Found - Where the volunteer applicant returns an adverse criminal history the Lodgement Officer will refer to Administrator Officer for further action in line with this SOP
 - b (alternate). Match Found - Where the volunteer applicant returns an adverse criminal history the Lodgement Officer will contact the applicant in writing providing 28 days to provide a response to the 'Match Found' result, and permission to refer the application to the Administration Officer and potentially the CEO.

Please note: the Lodgement Officer does not receive the specifics of the 'Match'

- 2.5 **Administration Officer** – Will assess the application in line with conviction risk assessment matrix and make the following recommendation:
 - a. to the **Lodgement Officer** that the applicant can be registered and approved as a volunteer, where the returned history falls outside the time period of the relevant risk category and where a pattern or history of regular offences does not exist.
 - b. referred to the **CEO**, where the returned history falls within the time period of the relevant risk category or where a pattern or history of regular offences does not exist, or the nature of the history cannot be determined in relation to the risk assessment matrix.
- 2.6 **CEO** – Will assess the application in line with the conviction risk assessment matrix and make the following recommendation:
 - a. to the **Lodgement Officer** the applicant can be registered and approved as a volunteer.
 - b. advise the applicant, and lodgement officer that the application has been unsuccessful. Noting the requirement of mandatory requirement (14) above.

Commented [C1]: This alternative provided initial outcome at the earliest possible point in the process. This has the following advantages:

1. Allow s the applicant to withdraw their request before anyone lay eyes on the specifics (protects privacy).
2. Allows the applicant to follow up an unexpected result with relevant services providers.

Its disadvantage is:

1. It may cause an applicant to be 'spooked' and remove an application which would otherwise be approved (i.e. minor history).

3. CONVICTION RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDE

This table is a guide only and does not cover all possible offences. It is intended for use where offences are isolated. It is not intended where a pattern or history of regular offences exists.

Risk Category	Offences	Advisory Note
Extreme	Arson Murder-Attempted Murder Sexual Assault Offences Serious Assault (Grievous Bodily Harm +) Deprivation of Liberty Robbery Offences Burglary (Dwelling) Drug Offences (Sell/Supply) Any offences against children	Any of these offences would probably prohibit service.
High	Manslaughter Driving Causing Death Assault Offences Indecent Assault Offences Assault Police/Public Officer Stealing as a Servant Fraud Offences Indecent-Obscene acts	Any of these offences, which are less than 10 years since conviction, may prohibit service.
Medium	Threatening Behaviour Steal Motor Vehicle Theft Receiving/Illegal Use Burglary (Non-Dwelling) Breach of a Restraint Order Graffiti Drug Offences (Possess) Property Damage	Any of these offences, which are less than 1 year since conviction, may prohibit service.
Low	Antisocial Offences (Disorderly Conduct) Traffic Offences (Drink Driving etc.)	Simple offences where there have been multiple repeated offences in 12 months may prohibit service.

