

SHIRE OF KOJONUP

# Kojonup



## MINUTES

Kojonup Bush Fire Advisory  
Committee

7 November 2023

## **BUSHFIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Established under *Section 67 of the Bush Fires Act 1954*.

### **Terms of Reference**

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee is established for the purpose of:

- a) Advising the Shire regarding all matters relating to the preventing, controlling and extinguishing of bush fires;
- b) The planning of the layout of firebreaks in the district;
- c) Prosecutions for breaches of this Act;
- d) The formation of bush fire brigades and the grouping thereof under group brigade officers (in accordance with any local laws);
- e) Recommendations on Fire Control Officer positions;
- f) Feedback on the Council's Fire Break Notice;
- g) Specific requirements from each brigade with regard to:
  - Protective Personal Equipment;
  - Equipment and vehicles resources required; and
  - Training Requirements;
- h) The ensuring of cooperation and coordination of Bush Fire Brigades in their efforts and activities; and
- i) Any other matter relating to bush fire control whether of the same kind as, or a different kind from, those specified in this subsection.

### **Other:**

- a) The Bush Fire Advisory Committee shall include an elected member of the Council;
- b) The committee shall elect one of their members to be chairman;
- c) The quorum required for the transaction of business at meetings of the committee is set at 50%

### **Membership**

Voting Members (9 in total)

- Councillors x2;
- The President of the Kojonup Bushfire Association
- The Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- The Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- Senior Fire Control Officer (Zulu)
- Senior Fire control Officer (Zulu)
- Secretary of the Kojonup Bushfire Association

- Captain of the Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service

**Observers**

- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Shire Delegates x2
- Muradup Town Fire Control Officer (FCO)

Unconfirmed

**MINUTES FOR THE KOJONUP BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**HELD 7 NOVEMBER 2023**

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## MINUTES

### 1. **DECLARATION OF OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF GUESTS**

The Presiding Member declared the meeting open at 07:02 pm and alerted the meeting of the procedures for emergencies including evacuation, designated exits and muster points.

### 2. **ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES**

#### **MEMBERS**

Ned Radford	Councillor
Digby Stretch	President Kojonup Bush Fire Association
Denise Berryman	Secretary of the Kojonup Bush Fire Association
Matthew Crabb	Kojonup Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service
Tony Fisher	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
Ross Fryer – Smith	Senior Bush Fire Control Officer
Matthew Crabb	Kojonup Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service

#### **OBSERVERS**

Grant Thompson	Chief Executive Officer
Derek Jones	DFES District Officer
Stephanie Swain	Shire of Kojonup Ranger
Shane Harris	Community Emergency Services Manager (Minute taker)
Robert Jehu	Manager Regulatory Services (Presiding member)

#### **APOLOGIES**

Ben Blewett	Senior Bush Fire Control Officer
Nick Trethowan	Senior Bush Fire Control Officer

3. **SUMMARY OF RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE**

Nil

4. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Nil

5. **APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Nil

6. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

Minutes of the Bushfire Advisory Committee Meeting held on 8 August 2023 were previously circulated under separate cover.

**COMMITTEE DECISION**

**That the minutes of the Bushfire Advisory Committee Meeting held 8 August 2023 be confirmed as a true record.**

**Moved by Tony Fisher and second by Digby Stretch.**

**Carried 8/0**

7. **ANNOUNCEMENTS** by the Presiding Member without discussion

The Presiding member would like to thank the Zulu's and all the bushfire volunteers for all of their hard work, support. We do appreciate it.

8. **PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS & PRESENTATIONS**

Nil

9. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Nil

## 10. STATUS REPORTS

### 2022/2023 Fire Season Update

As of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023, there have been the following fires reported within the Shire:

#### Incidents within the Shire of Kojonup by Financial Year \*current FY incomplete

Incident Type	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Called Off - No Attendance	0	0	1	1	2
False Alarm - System Initiated	1	5	1	3	0
False Call - Good Intent	5	1	5	5	0
False Call - Malicious	0	0	0	0	1
Fire - Bushfire (lge)	3	5	4	7	1
Fire - Bushfire (sml)	14	8	19	10	3
Fire - Other/Rubbish/Vehicle	2	2	5	4	0
Fire - Structure	0	1	0	1	1
Hazardous Situation	2	1	0	2	0
Rescue & Medical	1	0	0	2	0
Road Crash & Rescue	2	3	9	7	1

These reported fires provide a vital argument when the Shire requires extra funding or there is a need for extra resources to be allocated to this area. All fires need to be reported to DFES Communications Centre. This allows a record of incidents which can be utilised for resource allocation.

## 11 GENERAL ITEMS

### New CESM

New CESM started on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023

### Communications Update

Robert Jehu updated the progression on the new Communications tower, expected to be completed and operational by the end of November 2023.

Robert explained its new location and the vegetation around the tower was managed, approx. 10m from the bush.

Tower is located at the peak of the hill.

### HMA/AGENCY REPORT

#### Shire of Kojonup – Executive Officer - Grant Thompson

- Bushfire prone area mapping has been sent through to Kojonup LG from DFES for comment in relation to the existing Bushfire prone areas and new proposed areas. Grant has taken this proposal to Council and the Councillors wanted to see the existing BPAs be brought back (leave it as it was) rather than using the proposed new areas that had been highlighted on the current map. Grant also commented on the timeframes around completing this project was not doable due to the amount of work that was needed to complete this project properly.
- Discussion was held around how this effects Kojonup, Grant explained that the more BPA areas would mean further costs to building and developments due to BALs being required and construction methods being constructed to a higher standard.
- (DJ) explained that BPA was originally completed by satellite imaging rather than on the ground or use of local knowledge so there would be areas that are shown as a BPA but may very well be very low fuel loads and may very well be a non-BPA.

#### Shire of Kojonup Ranger – Stephanie Swain

Fire break inspections for both the townsites of Kojonup and Muradup were conducted on the 3/11/2023 and 6/11/2023.

For the Kojonup townsite, 49 properties were found to be non-compliant. Out of this number:

- 15 were re-offending address from the previous Fire Season and were issued immediate infringements upon inspection.
- 12 were shire owned properties and referred to the Depot for action.



- 2 were Department of community's properties and have been referred to the Katanning area manager for action.
- 22 properties were first time offenders and have been provided until the 17/11/2023 to comply under warning, after which a second inspection will commence, and further non-compliance will result in infringement.
- For the Muradup townsite, 5 properties were found to be non-compliant. Out of this number:
  - 2 were re-offending addresses from the previous Fire Season and were issued immediate infringements upon inspection.
  - 1 was shire owned and has been referred to the depot for action.
  - 2 were first time offenders and have been provided until the 17/11/2023 to comply under warning, after which a second inspection will commence, and further noncompliance will result in infringement.

Out of the above properties, 5 have been identified as high risk and past interactions with owners have shown no effort to complete. These 5 properties need to be referred to a contractor for immediate mitigation works however sourcing a contractor is posing challenges. At this stage, the earliest they can be completed is after a 3.5 - 4 week wait time.

Low staffing in the depot means they are unable to render assistance currently to complete the works. Any work completed is at the property owners' expense and can be placed against their rates as per Section 33(8) of the Bush Fires Act 1954.

DFES – District Officer – Derek Jones

Insert from feedback from Derek Jones

- 1. Public Warnings - Emergency WA**  
Commissioner's priority for this season.  
Emergency WA being revamped to be more inclusive and informing.  
Still dependent upon a warning area being mapped.  
Don't hesitate to request assistance with map/warning area production.
- 2. AFDRS Review**  
Mild summer last year – did not see full impact of AFDRS  
Fuel Loads key component  
Proposal to accept key player's estimation of fuel loads.  
Will need 'evidence'
- 3. Mitigation Works**  
Muradup – permits did not arrive in time – reverted to additional slashing.  
Jingalup – done  
Kojonup – powerline block done – liaised with SoK to be invoiced for work done on approx. 12 blocks in town.  
Boscabel – approved – waiting for late autumn/winter 2024.  
Showground – done – now being reviewed.  
UCL/UMR – happy to burn. Need advanced notice ~12months
- 4. Harvest and Vehicle Movement Bans**  
Information on DFES Website  
Western Power

- Derek to send out a letter to Muradup Community to update them on proposed mitigation works and why DFES was unable to complete this works this year which was due to the fire season coming in approx. 6 weeks early.
- Western power has exceptions in total harvest bans but they do need approval through the Chief before carrying out works, western power also have exemptions on TFB days.

#### **Kojonup Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade – Digby Stretch**

- Radio operators meeting was held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023.
- Opening standpipes and access to Volunteers during fires, can Volunteers have keys/Fobs? (RJ) explained that the Volunteer LG trucks have fobs and there are also other members that also have keys, if private owners or users use there fobs to give access to fire units the shire will reimburse the water usage costs.
- Wind Farm inspection was carried out and discussions were had between Kojonup Volunteers and Windfarm managers around fire safety and preparedness. (GT) mentioned that as part of there DA approvals they are required to have a fire unit on site while works are being carried out, a trailer was not except able it needs to be a fixed fire unit on a vehicle. There is also a requirement for a permanent fire unit to be kept onsite all year round.

#### **Kojonup Volunteer Bushfire Brigade – Chief – Tony Fisher**

- Thanked the shire for the Muradup water tank clearing, also asked if the shire could erect signage for in and out points to prevent congestion and vehicles blocking access.
- Skeds have started.
- 6 new radio operators
- Tony asked Matt Crabb questions around structure fire and what assistances a BFB station could provide, conformation from the floor was confirmed that outside of Kojonup VFRS gazetted areas becomes the responsibility of the local BFB station. In saying this the VFRS crews will respond as they are the experts with structure fires and have the correct equipment and training to deal with these incidents, BFB crews are there to support and provide water.

There were also discussions around EV cars, Matt also gave a quick rundown on the risks to firefighters around EV cars, Matt explained that there is many dangers around firefighting involving EV cars and that we need to look after exposures due to the risks of Lithium batteries and the fact that they cannot be extinguished.

#### **Kojonup Volunteer Fire & Rescue – Matt Crabb**

- New signs have been picked up and ready for install, Matt opened the floor for locations.
- Main Roads would need to be notified (RJ) asked for Matt to send through the location of where the new signs will be located, and Rob will look after the application.

**Kojonup Community Emergency Services Manager – Shane Harris**

- AVL units need to be replaced on both Kojonup fire appliances with new 4G AVL capable units, CESM will engage with a contractor to carry out these works and will notify the relevant officers when this will take place.
- Rural Fire Awareness training has now been completed for Kojonup shire, there was 21 participants with 6 applications for new BFB volunteer applications.
- Deployment requests now starting to come through from DFES, CESM will send these requests out to Chief, FCO's, Captains for expression of interest from their volunteers, there is no obligations to attend deployments, but if there are volunteers available to go, noting they must have the appropriate training.

**11. OTHER ITEMS**

- Email out Bushfire Prone area maps to all members.
- Muradup community letter to be sent out, Derek Jones to prepare the letter and (DB) to distribute.

**12. MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN**

Nil

**13. LATE ITEMS**

Nil

**14. NEXT MEETING**

6 February 2024

**15. CLOSURE**

There being no further business to discuss the Presiding Member thanked the members for their attendance and declared the meeting closed at 8:30pm.

Confirmed as true and correct:

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Chairperson

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Date

Unconfirmed