

**Local Emergency Management Committee Agenda**  
**6 February 2025 at 3.00 pm**  
**Shire of Merredin Council Chambers**  
**Cnr Barrack Street and King Street, Merredin**

<b>1.0 Attendance</b>	
Cr Phil Van Der Merwe	Shire of Merredin – Chair / Merredin VFRS
Craig Watts	Shire of Merredin (left 3.04pm, returned 3.08pm)
Codi Brindley-Mullen	Shire of Merredin
Sheree Lowe	Shire of Merredin / Merredin VFRS
Greg Hart	WA Police
Laurent Marsol	Department of Parks and Wildlife
Michael Phillips	Department of Communities (left 3.56pm)
Alan Matthews	St John Ambulance (arrived 3.08pm)
Di Dixon	Merredin Hospital (arrived 3.02pm)
Kylie Cattaway	Merredin College
David Hamersley	St Mary's School (arrived 3.25pm)
Terrence King	Western Power
Gary Anderson	CBH
<b>2.0 Apologies</b>	
Lawrie Carr	Shire of Merredin
Ashley Smith	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Keith McCarren	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Shelby Robinson	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Jacinta Herbert	Merredin Hospital

### 3.0 Welcome

The Chair welcomed all attendees and opened the meeting at 3.00pm.

### 4.0 Confirmation of Previous Minutes

**Motion:** *That the Minutes of the previous Meeting of the Local Emergency Management Committee held on 3 Oct 2024 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.*

**Moved:** C Watts

**Seconded:** G Hart

### 5.0 Business Arising from Previous Minutes

Nil

### 6.0 Correspondence

#### 6.1 Incoming Correspondence

Email from Shelby Robinson "District Emergency Management Committee Membership"

Email from Michael Phillips "Updated Local Emergency Relief and Support Plan"

Email from Shelby Robinson "EM Webinar – Road Closures"

Multiple emails from Shelby Robinson regarding coming adverse fire weather

#### 6.2 Outgoing Correspondence

Email to Shelby Robinson confirming nominees for "District Emergency Management Committee Membership"

### 7.0 HMA and other Agency Updates

#### 7.1 Agency Briefings pre-circulated

Shelby Robinson - DEMA Report

#### 7.2 Other Agency Briefings

This item was addressed in General Business

### 8.0 Standing Items (Submitted at each Meeting)

#### 8.1 Update of Contacts and Resources Register

- **Mark McKenzie** has been removed as President and been replaced by **Donna Crook**.
- **Amer Tawfik** has been removed as Executive Manager Engineering Services.
- **Lawrie Carr** has been added as Acting Executive Manager Engineering Services.
- **Dave Watson** has been added as Town Maintenance Supervisor at Shire of Merredin.
- **Todd Roberts** has been removed as Shift Supervisor Sergeant at Merredin Police Station and has been replaced by **Blair Jordan**.
- **Jeremy Willis** has been removed as DFES Area Officer (Central Wheatbelt) and replaced by **Keith McCarron**.
- **Scott Campbell** has been removed as Merredin SES Unit Leader.

- **Gumtree Restaurant** and **Café 56** removed as local food outlets.
- **Merredin Harvest Fresh Food Market** added as local food outlet.
- **Puma Roadhouse** amended to **Caltex Merredin**.
- **Emu Earthworks Merredin** and **Topline Earth Moving** added to Contract Earth Moving Services.

#### **8.2 Change of Positions/Leave and Acting Arrangements Notification**

- **Mark McKenzie** has stepped down as President and been replaced by **Donna Crook**.
- **Amer Tawfik** has resigned as Executive Manager Engineering Services. **Lawrie Carr** is currently Acting in the role.
- **Dave Watson** has been appointed as Town Maintenance Supervisor at Shire of Merredin.
- **Todd Roberts** has left Merredin Police Station and has been replaced by **Blair Jordan**.
- **Jeremy Willis** is no longer DFES Area Officer (Central Wheatbelt). **Keith McCarron** is currently acting in the role.
- **Scott Campbell** has resigned as Merredin SES Unit Leader.

#### **8.3 Incident Support Group Activations**

Nil

#### **8.4 Risk Profile Change**

Nil

#### **8.5 Local Emergency Management Arrangements**

Nil

#### **8.6 Local Recovery Plan**

Nil

#### **8.7 Report and/or debrief of any LEMC exercise(s)**

Nil

### **9.0 Documentation**

Nil

### **10.0 General Business**

#### **10.1 Around the table**

##### **Shire of Merredin**

A lot of trees have come down over the roads in recent storms, but Shire crews have picked up most of them that the Shire is aware of. Please advise Shire if any issues are spotted that need addressing.

### **Merredin College**

Nothing to report. Numbers are stable compared to last year (540 last year).

### **Department of Communities**

There is a new Local Emergency Relief and Support Plan in place, which was discussed earlier in this meeting.

The trailer containing emergency bedding and supplies which is being forward based in Merredin has been delivered to the Merredin SES unit for storage. The regional manager is currently working on a maintenance programme for the trailer.

Busy high threat season for the team with nine activations since the end of November. Currently business as usual for the Department of Communities.

### **CBH**

Took in their third biggest crop in history. Most sites are full and busy given the volume of grain that needs moving, and there are a lot of trucks on the road from Narembene and Mt Walker.

Starting to kick off first round of emergency drills in conjunction with St John Ambulance.

Prior to harvest the bushfire plans underwent a review, and they would like the Chair to have a look at the revised plans.

*Action: Craig to liaise with Gary regarding upcoming Crooks Road upgrade*

### **Western Power**

A lot happened over the Australia Day long weekend, with fires and heat waves. A lot of planned works were cancelled during the heat waves. Some poles were lost in a storm, and Western Power crews had them repaired in a couple of days. No-one was without power in this region for longer than three days.

14 poles were lost at the Bruce Rock fire. There are concerns about how that incident was managed that Western Power need to raise with the Shire of Bruce Rock.

Currently have ten staff full-time in the field. There are a couple of vacancies, but generally comfortable enough with numbers to manage large and small faults. When situations escalate local crews can call on crews from outside the region.

### **Merredin Hospital**

January was reasonably busy with high acuity cases and a lack of doctors. Looking good moving forward with just one day a week currently without medical cover. A Nurse Practitioner will commence full-time on Monday, and there are two new nurses. Will only need to use agency staff to relieve for holidays now.

The heat is affecting people considerably, and there has been an increase in mental health presentations over the last month due to the heat.

### **Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions**

The Mt Holland bushfire was controlled and contained to 44,000 hectares. Three structures were destroyed as well as fifteen power poles. The main camp and minesite was saved. The mining camp hosted DFES and DBCA and didn't require them to pay for their stay. The fire only disrupted mining for 1.5 days. Western Power was also offered two days of meals and accommodation

It has been a busy fire season – a fire this morning was the 28<sup>th</sup> for the Wheatbelt, and the region is on track to match the 56 bushfires recorded last year.

### **St Mary's School**

Have to close the school if the Fire Danger Rating reaches 76. Reached 75 one day in December. Business as usual at the moment.

### **Merredin Police**

In a good position from a policing point of view, having gone from about 35% staffed to almost 100% staffed. A lot of new young officers with three to four years in the job and a good mixture of enthusiasm and youth. One of the new officers is Sergeant Blair Jordan, who has a history with VFRS in different places and will be a good addition to forums like these.

### **Merredin College**

Could potentially acquire funding of up to \$50,000 to improve buildings for community use at the College. It has to be spent on the school grounds, and can, for example, upgrade facilities, lighting, seating around courts. Please contact Kylie with any ideas.

### **St John Ambulance**

Worked through the Christmas and holiday period without impact, volunteer numbers remain the same (low), however, new applicants are still onboarding and completing their observer shifts. Community call out numbers have been low given the time of year, which has helped while they shore up volunteer numbers.

A new Emergency Management Plan has been submitted to the St John Ambulance Emergency Management Team, can also submit to LEMC if required.

There is also a new paid patient transport crew in town Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 6pm, assisting with patient movements around the region and to Northam. The service is going well and the crew is predominately on the road three to four days out of five. There have been a few teething issues, but they're being worked out. The crew is averaging approximately seven transfers out of Merredin each week.

### **Merredin VFRS**

Assisted with the recent fire down in Bruce Rock after initially being turned out to provide asset protection. There was one aerial drop, but there were unfortunately a number of other fires around the state happening at the same time that required the aerial resources.

Attended a couple of motor vehicle accidents with cars in the large drains, both drivers were extremely lucky.

Attended a fire threatening homes in the grassed area between Merredin BP and Dobson Avenue.

## 11.0 Presentations or Proposed Exercises

### 11.1 Emergency management discussion exercise

Presentation: Updated Local Emergency Relief and Support Plan

Michael Phillips presented the Department of Communities' updated Local Emergency Relief and Support Plan (LERSP) and sought feedback.

A key takeaway from the presentation was the reminder that activation must go through the Department of Communities 24/7 on call number (0418 943 835). If the Local Government gets a request to open an evacuation centre direct from the IC, ask if the Department of Communities has been activated through this number.

*Action item: Can the DFES RDC activate on that number or does it have to be the IC?*

**Motion:** *That the updated Local Emergency Relief and Support Plan (LERSP) supplied by the Department of Communities be tabled and accepted as the Shire of Merredin Local Emergency Relief and Support Plan.*

**Moved:** *P Van Der Merwe*

**Seconded:** *C Watts*

## 12.0 Next Meeting

**Motion:** *That the next LEMC Meetings be held on the following dates:*

Date and Time	Venue
Thursday, 7 August 2025 at 3pm	Shire of Merredin Council Chambers
Thursday, 2 October 2025 at 3pm	Shire of Merredin Council Chambers
Thursday, 5 February 2025 at 3pm	Shire of Merredin Council Chambers
Thursday, 7 May 2025 at 3pm	Shire of Merredin Council Chambers

**Moved:** *G Anderson*

**Seconded:** *T King*

## 13.0 Close

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 4.22pm, thanking all in attendance.