

Local Emergency Management Committee Minutes
26 October 2023 at 4.00 pm
Shire of Merredin Council Chambers
Cnr Barrack Street and King Street, Merredin

1.0 Attendance	
Cr Phil Van Der Merwe	Shire of Merredin – Chair / Merredin VFRS
Amer Tawfik	Shire of Merredin – Executive Manager Engineering Services
Sheree Lowe	Shire of Merredin – Emergency Services Officer
Laurie Barron	WAPOL
Ashley Smith	DFES – District Officer, Natural Hazards
Keith McCarren	DFES – Acting Area Officer, Central Wheatbelt
Joanne Spadaccini	Department of Communities
Jacinta Herbert	Merredin Hospital
Di Dixon	Merredin Hospital
2.0 Apologies	
Cr Mark McKenzie	Shire of Merredin – President
Lisa Clack	Shire of Merredin – CEO
Codi Brindley-Mullen	Shire of Merredin – Executive Manager Strategy and Community
Peter Zenni	Shire of Merredin – Executive Manager of Development Services
Yvette Grigg	DFES – District Emergency Management Adviser
Scott Campbell	Merredin SES
Laurent Marsol	Department of Parks and Wildlife
Alan Matthews	Acting Station Manager – St John Ambulance
Tracy Pickering	Merredin College
Gren Putland	Main Roads WA

3.0 Welcome

3.1 Opening of Meeting

The Chair opened the meeting at 4.04pm, welcomed all in attendance and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

4.0 Confirmation of Previous Minutes

Motion: *That the Minutes of the previous Meeting of the Local Emergency Management Committee held on 3 August 2023 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.*

(Attachment 1)

Moved: P Van Der Merwe

Seconded: L Barron

5.0 Business Arising from Previous Minutes

5.1 Nil

Outcomes:

6.0 Correspondence

6.1 Incoming Correspondence

Yvette Grigg – DEMA report for August/September 2023 **(Attachment 2)**

Yvette Grigg – email from Department of Communities regarding emergency relief **(Attachment 3)**

Yvette Grigg – DEMA report for October/November **(Attachment 4)**

Yvette Grigg – LEMC Handbook **(Attachment 5)**

6.2 Outgoing Correspondence

Nil

Motion: *That correspondence in/out be received as presented.*

Moved: D Dixon

Seconded: J Herbert

7.0 HMA and other Agency Updates

7.1 Agency Briefings pre-circulated

Jo emailed through the Department of Communities briefing at the meeting **(Attachment 6)**

7.2 Other Agency Briefings

Merredin Police

Had been going through a good quiet spell coming out of winter, until the two recent high profile incidents. The debrief for the Kellerberrin active shooter incident took place on

Thursday, then the armed offender on the weekend. Both incidents were very intense for all involved, but Laurie was very happy with the external police support sent to Kellerberrin/Merredin during both incidents.

Merredin Police has welcomed some new officers to town, and will shortly be at full capacity (17 officers). There is talk of expanding the numbers by another 2 to allow Merredin Police to do more relief at smaller stations around the Wheatbelt.

Merredin Hospital

Going fine. Staff numbers are good, having recently taken on 5 new graduates (the most they've had in a long time), mainly to support aged care. They are working on building their permanent numbers.

Been averaging approximately 70 admissions per week through the Emergency Department, noting that acuity (ie, the level of sickness/demand on resources) is getting higher. They're having to do a lot more transfers out of Merredin.

An increase in family violence related admissions than in the past.

Have been doing some work around emergency management, tightening up processes to ensure they have appropriate response. A few learnings have come out of the Kellerberrin active shooter incident, and hoping to make small improvements in that area.

Shire of Merredin

Been busy with hazard reduction, including an extra focus on clearing firebreaks at Burracoppin.

The Merredin SES have a new troop carrier, and the Hines Hill Bush Fire Brigade have a new fire truck.

The ESO attended 5 out of the 7 brigade AGMs to conduct respirator training and issue respirators to the brigades.

Department of Communities

The Emergency Services Unit of the Department of Communities has been renamed to Emergency Relief and Support. Jo's role has been abolished, and she is currently in the process of reapplying for the new version of her old role. She is hoping this restructure will give additional personnel providing the support Jo currently does on her own around the region.

Working on the statewide evacuation centre audits and review, with the end result intended to be that in the event of an emergency, an HMA can pull up current, relevant info on any evacuation centres they may be considering, and so will have good information on the available facilities and the standards it's been built to.

The state support plan now been endorsed, and the Local Emergency Welfare Plan (LEWP) has been renamed to Local Emergency Support Plan (LESP) as part of a wider push to

remove reference to “welfare” and replace instead with “support”. Templates will be sent out when available.

Working with WAPOL on disaster victim ID and mass fatality support.

Still involved in assisting with the aftermath of the Kimberly floods.

Department of Fire and Emergency Services

The Merredin SES was deployed to Kalgoorlie to assist after a wind event recently, which generated approximately 40 calls for assistance. The Merredin SES has assisted on about 7 jobs/deployments over this year, so the unit is getting busier.

Agencies are encouraged to ensure contact details and LEMAs are kept up to date.

There will be more teleconferences from the Superintendent this year to keep Local Governments up to date over this fire season. Unfortunately, it’s looking like it will be a bad season statewide.

Keith has been doing some updating for new Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS). The complete Australian Warning System (AWS) won’t be rolled out until 2024 (there has been a partial rollout for bushfire warnings, but it’s not quite ready for cyclone warnings).

In September EOI was sent to Chiefs, VFRSs, VFESs for the regional deployment list. Will be doing a few more task forces, depending on where the weather systems are forecast to hit the hardest.

Merredin VFRS

Brigade has been relatively quiet recently. There is a lot of dry grass, an estimated 3 weeks earlier in the year than normal. The Merredin Chief Bush Fire Control Officer ended the distribution of burn permits approximately 2 weeks early.

8.0 Standing Items (Submitted at each Meeting)

8.1 Update of Contacts and Resources Register

Nil

Attachment 7

8.2 Change of Positions/Leave and Acting Arrangements Notification

Nil

8.3 Incident Support Group Activations

Nil

8.4 Risk Profile Change

Nil

8.5 Local Emergency Management Arrangements

Annual review of LEMA

The Merredin LEMA was formally approved by the SEMC early in 2022 following its major 5-year review. It is recommended that the LEMA undergo minor reviews annually.

The LEMA has undergone an initial minor review, and a version of the document with recommended changes was circulated to members ahead of the meeting, and members were invited to submit changes or recommendations.

Endorsement will be tabled until the February meeting to allow members more time to review the LEMA. (**Attachment 8**)

8.6 Local Recovery Plan

Nil

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

Merredin Hospital held an emergency fire and evacuation drill this morning. They were fortunate to have had the Chubb contractor (who maintains the fire panel) onsite, who was able to provide good advice on operating the panel and the WIP phone. A lot of learnings came out of the drill, and processes and practices were tested and found areas that were impractical and needed to change. Di thanked Phil from Merredin VFRS for supporting and assisting.

9.0 Documentation

Nil

10.0 Presentations or Proposed Exercises

10.1 Emergency management discussion exercise

Jo Spadaccini – Evacuation Centre scenario

Jo presented a scenario based on the early stages of opening an evacuation centre in Merredin following an incident in Bruce Rock.

Recommended action items arising from the exercise:

- The Shire have an emergency contact number that remains consistent irrespective of staff member movements
- The Shire source lime green Local Government tabards for the emergency activation kits

Laurie requested a scenario based around the evacuation of Merredin townsite following and ammonium nitrate incident in town. Sheree to schedule conversation with Laurie prior to February meeting.

11.0 General Business

11.1 Around the table

This item was brought forward to Item 7.2 - Other Agency Briefings.

12.0 Next Meeting

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

Date and Time	Venue
Thursday, 1 February 2024 at 4.00pm	Shire of Merredin Council Chambers
Thursday, 2 May 2024 at 4.00pm	TBC
Thursday, 1 August 2024 at 4.00pm	TBC
Thursday, 3 October 2024 at 4.00pm	TBC

Moved: P Van Der Merwe

Seconded: J Herbert

13.0 Close

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 5.50pm.