



# GREAT EASTERN DISTRICT OPERATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## MINUTES **DRAFT**

### Merredin Volunteer Fire and Rescue Station Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2020

The meeting was declared open at 1230 hours by the  
Chairman, Wayne Della Bosca

#### 1 Record of Attendance

Phillip Hay	Executive Officer	DFES
Wayne Della Bosca	Chair	Shire of Yilgarn
Phil Smith	CBFCO	Shire of Mukinbudin
Graeme Keals	Regional Fire Manager	DFES
Geoff Ryan	CBFCO	Shire of Kellerberrin
Simon Bell	CESM/ CBFCO	Shires of Tammin & Kellerberrin
Stephen Crook	CBFCO	Shire of Merredin
Tony Crooks	DCBFCO	Shire of Bruce Rock
Ian Dalton	CBFCO	Shire of Bruce Rock
Damian Tomas	CBFCO	Shire of Mt Marshall
Jack Walker	EM Manager	Shire of Mt Marshall
Murray Dixon	CBFCO	Shire of Narembeen
Gary Coumbe	CBFCO	Shire of Nungarin
Alan Nicholson	DCBFCO	Shire of Yilgarn
Andrae Moore	Minute Secretary	DFES
Paul Rogers	A/AO Central Wheatbelt	DFES
Stacey Jaskiewicz	Ranger	Shire of Merredin
Andrina Prnich	D/CEO	Shire of Merredin
Craig Garrett	Superintendent	DFES – Bushfire Centre of Excellence
Justin Corrigan	AO Lower Wheatbelt	DFES
Daniel Hendriksen	AO Upper Wheatbelt	DFES

#### Apologies

Antony Sadler	Superintendent	DFES- Goldfields Midlands
Dirk Sellenger	CEO	Shire of Mukinbudin
John Flockart	DCBFCO	Shire of Merredin
Dave Gossage	President	AVBFB



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## 2 Confirmation of Previous Minutes

That the minutes of the meeting held on Monday the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2019 be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

**Moved:** Murray Dixon

**Seconded:** Phil Smith

All in Favour

## 3 Business Arising from Previous Minutes - NIL

## 4 Action List - NIL

## 5 Correspondence - NIL

## 6 Matters arising from the Correspondence – NIL

## 7 Submitted Agenda Item

7.1 Volunteer Management Support Officer – the first 12 months and what ideas are on the horizon

APOLOGY from Tracy McBride – Unwell – will present another time or send information to everyone.

## 8 Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades of WA (Inc) – Dave Gossage

APOLOGY from Dave Gossage – report attached

## 9 P & W Report – Graeme Keals

- Busy Fire season – 27 Fires in our region and a lot of large area fires. Half a million-hectare burnt, combined
- Assisted in Goldfields with Norseman West Complex and at the Stirling Rage fires and in the Collie area
- 7 fires occurred at the same time and were the only DBCA region with fires at that time so received assistance from other regions. Very grateful for assistance
- 7 burns planned in the region – one no longer required as the Forrestania fire bunt that area. Areas include Mt Hampton and Yellowdine
- Fire Access Track work is planned for around Nature reserves and will start in April.
- Chopper Rolling Program is continuing. 70kms planned also starting in April



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Yilgarn are looking into plans for some of their areas and wish to speak with DBCA about this and what can be done.

Wayne Della Bosca said that Shires need to look into mitigation in consultation with DBCA as it is expensive, and shires can't do it alone.

### **BOC Report – Murray Dixon**

Nothing to report at this time. Next meeting is this Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020

## **10 Local Government Reports**

### **Shire of Mukinbudin – Phil Smith**

- No reported fires during Harvest
- Christmas time we had some fires from lightning strikes
- 7 days of Total Fire Bans and 7 Harvest Movement Bans
- Assisted with Fires in Norseman and Trayning

### **Shire of Kellerberrin – Geoff Ryan**

- 1 Harvest Fire – the rest were lightning and Pole top fires
- A few Total Fire Bans
- Rotating the Chief every 2 years- Will change at their next meeting.

### **Shire of Merredin – Steve Crook**

- 16 Callouts – 3 header fires, 1 Grain truck, 1 car, 1 train and 9 lightning strike fires.
- 8 Total Fire Bans and 10 Harvest movement Bans. There were 3 days in February where Fire index was high, but they didn't put any bans on.
- Appliances are all going well.
- 4 BGUS now using WhatsApp for callouts.
- Since last meeting Shire of Merredin has lost their CEO, DCEO, Ranger and Foreman. There is a lot of work going on to rebuild the Shire.
- Only concern was with the Train incident – They were called to support VFRS at 130am. Not needed in the end and weren't contacted by Comcen to stand down. Comcen should have stood them down earlier.

### **Shire of Bruce Rock – Ian Dalton**

- 3 Harvest Movement Bans
- Some fires at Christmas time resulting from lightning strikes
- Waiting on Shackleton's 4.4Rural



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### **Shire of Mount Marshall – Damian Tomas and Jack Walker**

- 8 Harvest Movement bans
- Assisted Traying with Fire – No one was in control when they arrived – it was handed to them and it did take some time for other area's cerws to listen to them. They did sort it out eventually.
- They also had 1 Header fire that occurred overnight, and no one saw anything. Sign of the lower population.
- Have had 30 members go through IFF and some have done the FCO course. – Jack recommended for everyone to do it again if they can. Very helpful to have a refresher.
- Signing up to courses is becoming too complicated. eAcademy is not easy to use and people are having trouble logging in let alone registering for courses. Suggest, maybe the DFES managers can assist in putting people on manually when this occurs. – Murray Dixon to take to BOC.

**MOTION: That DFES allow Volunteers to be manually added to courses by their relevant Managers due to limited internet and contact and not being able to use eAcademy. This is to include Volunteers being added on the day of the course, where the course numbers allow.**

**Moved: Jack Walker**

**Seconded: Steve Crook**

**Carried: Unanimous.**

### **Shire of Narembeen – Murray Dixon**

- BFB has 2 header fires- both towing chaff cutter
- 6 Total Fire Bans
- Using WhatsApp for turnouts – Working well. Only issue they have had is when a group is developed for an incident ie. Forrestania Fire and then the fire gets handed over to DFES. When this happened, people were still receiving requests through the WhatsApp group and bypassing DFES. The IMT didn't know about them. Shires needs to remember that when a fire is handed over to DFES, the structure changes Phil Hay – Insure there is an FCO embedded in the IMT. Also, if you are receiving requests outside the chain of command, contact the DFES RDC and check with them.

### **Shire of Nungarin – Gary Coumbe**

- 4 Harvest Movement Bans
- 7 calls started by headers, 2 calls at Christmas started by lightning and then 2 suspicious fires – Rubbish tip and Green Waste Dump
- Waiting on a 3.4Urban – Daniel Hendriksen advised the build has started so it will be ready in 6-8weeks.



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## Shire of Yilgarn – Alan Nicholson

- 10 fires – 1 pole top and 2 header fires, lightning fires and a house fire.
- 10 Harvest movement Bans
- Have shortened the Fire Bans by 2 weeks thanks to favourable weather.
- Used a drone on their side of the Forrestania fire. Was very helpful to see the bigger picture.

## Shire of Tammin – Simon Bell

- Simon is now chief as no one in the shire wanted to do the role. Appointment was approved by the Regional Supt and by the DFES Commissioner at the request of the LG
- Tammin don't have a BFB, only a VFES which means people must do 4 extra days of foundation training to be able to do the FCO course and no one wanted to do that.
- Trying to convince Tammin Shire to apply for a BFB- They don't see the need. Simon feels the shire needs its own capability, so it doesn't have to rely on surrounding shires.  
Wayne Della Bosca- don't be afraid to ask for assistance and support.

## 11 Reports from DFES – Phil Hay – DO Avon

- In relation to the 4.4 Appliances- Phil has a meeting next week in regard to this. First of the project builds are complete. Cab Chassis are now approved to be various makes and models. – Phil will send update to DOAC after the meeting.
- December/January Incident Support Snapshot – presented and thanked everyone for their support over the fire season.  
A Post Incident Analysis will be done and DFES Staff will be coming to speak to those involved in deployments for their feedback and comments.
- Mitigation – The UCL/UMR work in townsites are about to start.  
Chiefs, if you have concerns about areas in your townsites that may need some mitigation, please advise your respective DFES Officer ASAP, as we can help with this.
- Bush Fire Risk Management Consultants have been approved for the Goldfields Midlands Region.  
1 in the Goldfields and 1 will start in the Wheatbelt with Quairading, Cunderdin and Tammin
- Regional Training calendar is out. There are 116 courses in our region. Please let your DFES manager know if you are having trouble using eAcademy ASAP so it can be rectified.



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### 12 Late Items

- Craig Garrett – Supt Training from Bush Fire Centre of Excellence – provided an update on the Centre of Excellence.
- Siteworks have now begun on the centre. Building to commence this month. Completion planned for December 2020.
- Training – new modularised system is now being rolled out for base Bush Fire Fighting courses. – Still able to do the old courses till the end of June. If you have IFF and still need to do BFF, it is advised to do this before June so that you don't have to start again.
- New courses are being written
  - Assist with Planned Burning
  - Simple and Complex Prescribed Burning
  - Introduction to Fire Weather
- Reviewing
  - Mechanical Supervision
  - Plantation Firefighting
  - FCO
- Professional Development Opportunity - Leadership Courses for Senior Volunteer firefighters and staff commencing in June

Powerpoint attached to minutes

### OTHER BUSINESS

- Bruce Rock – Ian Dalton
  - Total Fire Bans and Subsequent Harvest Movement Bans- Confusion of process with essential services such as Western Power. They want a letter of consent from Chief/Shire to progress. Is it possible to get a set of Guidelines about what essential services can and cannot do during Total Fire Bans and Harvest Movement Bans?  
Phil Hay – TFB doesn't stop them reenergising the lines, it is actually the internal policies of Western Power that stop them.  
Harvest movement Bans – Chief should be phoned. Chiefs to ask them about the risk and ask them if it safe to reenergise the lines? Put the onus back onto Western Power. It is not the Shire's place to say it is safe or not – Western power cannot blame you.  
\*\*Murray Dixon to raise at the BOAC meeting. Inconsistencies and parameters for risk assessment.
- Narembeen - Murray Dixon
  - Dam Cleaning during Harvest Movement Bans- Where does it sit? It comes down to if it is 'necessary agricultural practises' Work inside the dams should be low risk so you need to assess the risk of vehicles moving between the dam and other areas.
  - Permits – Narembeen CEO is the only one appointed to do this. When he is not present, can the DCEO do it? Needs to be an appointed to do it.



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Yilgarn have about 5 or 6 appointed people to write permits.

Some shires use WhatsApp to advise FCOs of any permits written.

Nungarin asked how long permits last for? They can last for as long as you like but most shires said 7-14days.

- Two Way Radios – How good is the WAERN Radio Supply at State? Need more for the FCOs – Phil Hay said to put an application in through LGGS for them.
- Phil Hay – DFES
  - LGGS Applications are being done soon. Have your shires spoken to you as Chief about what you and your brigades require? If not, contact them ASAP about your needs.

**Meeting closed 1343hrs**

**Date for the next Merredin DOAC is Monday September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020. This will be the AGM and the election of Officers.**

**To be held at the Merredin Volunteer Fire and Rescue Building.**



# Bushfire Centre of Excellence

Harnessing and providing valuable knowledge and experience to serve communities in bushfire management.

Craig Garrett

Superintendent | Bushfire Centre of Excellence





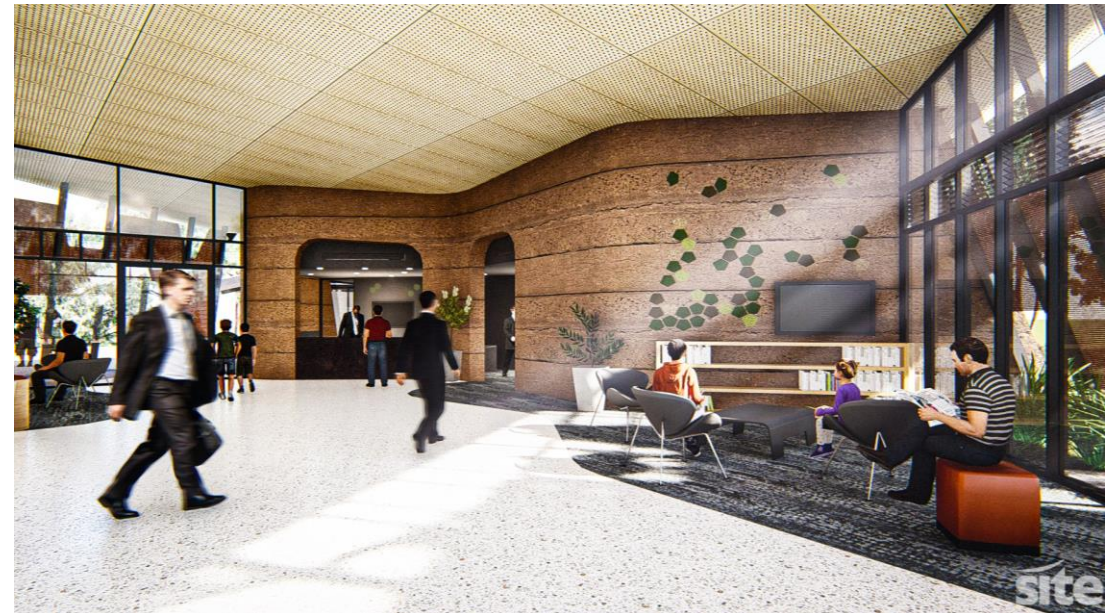
# The Location

- Western Australian government announced the location in the new Peel Business Park in the Shire of Murray
- The Business Park will incorporate a campus style technology park to welcome research, development and training organisations



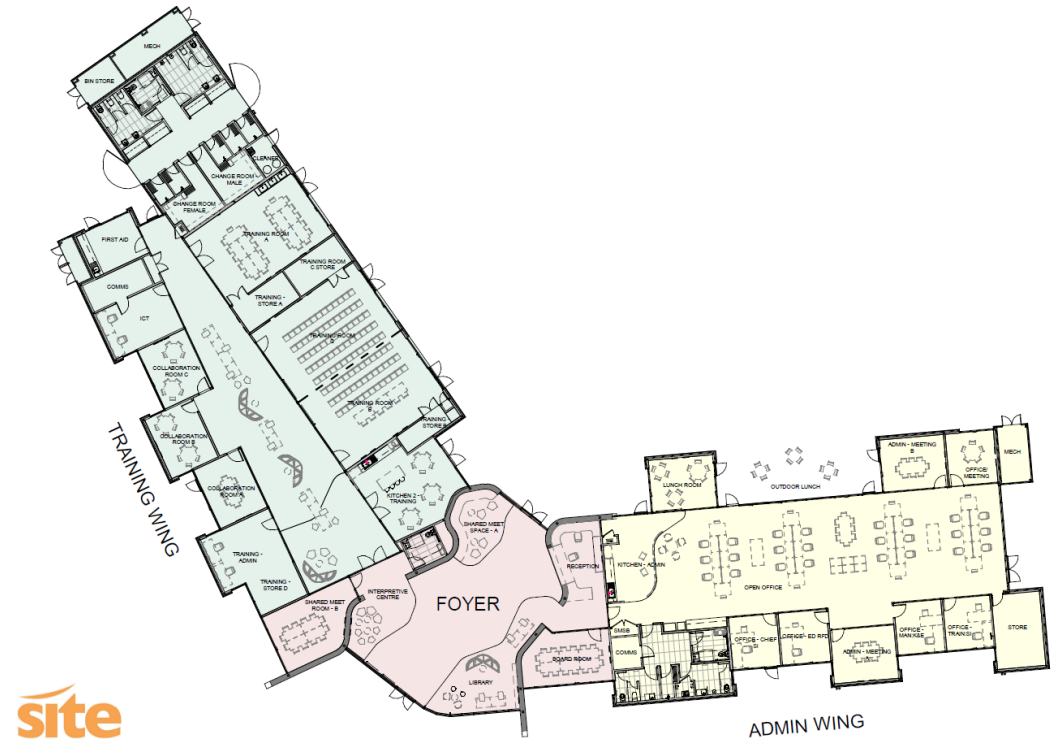
# The Facility

- Building design developed by a multi-stakeholder design working group
- Key Features:
  - Training rooms and outdoor training spaces
  - Open spaces for public meetings, workshops and briefings
  - Interpretive learning centre
  - Aboriginal themes incorporated into design, artwork and interpretive information
- Planned completion in December 2020
- Construction begins this month



# The Facility

- Administration and training wing linking off a central foyer to form a boomerang shape
- Landscaping will reflect fire design guidelines, indigenous and local heritage and local vegetation
- Construction contract awarded to Bunbury based company, Perkins



# Interim Facility

- Operating from the Pinjarra Heritage Train Station since November 2019
- Features large rooms and kitchen and bathroom amenities well-suited for training courses, information sessions and workshops



# Training Priorities – 2020

- Implementing reviewed bushfire training courses (IFF, BFF, ABF, CL)
- New courses:
  - Assist with Planned Burning
  - Simple & Complex Prescribed Burns
  - Introduction to Fire Weather (Fire Weather 1)
- Course reviews:
  - Machine Supervision
  - Plantation Firefighting
  - Fire Control Officer
- Professional development courses such as Fireline Leadership and Incident Leadership



# Training Priorities

- Updating training video resources
- Brigade Profiles guide
- Dry/Remote Area Firefighting
- Fire Ecology
- Online learning
- Deliver Bushfire training to TFF school



# Partnerships and Collaboration

- Partnership Statement with DFES Academy.
- Regular monthly meetings
- IBOC Training & Development Subcommittee.
- IBOC Common Doctrine Subcommittee.
- TSO Monthly Teleconferences
- Newmont Agreement



# Engagement, Outreach and Knowledge Priorities – 2020

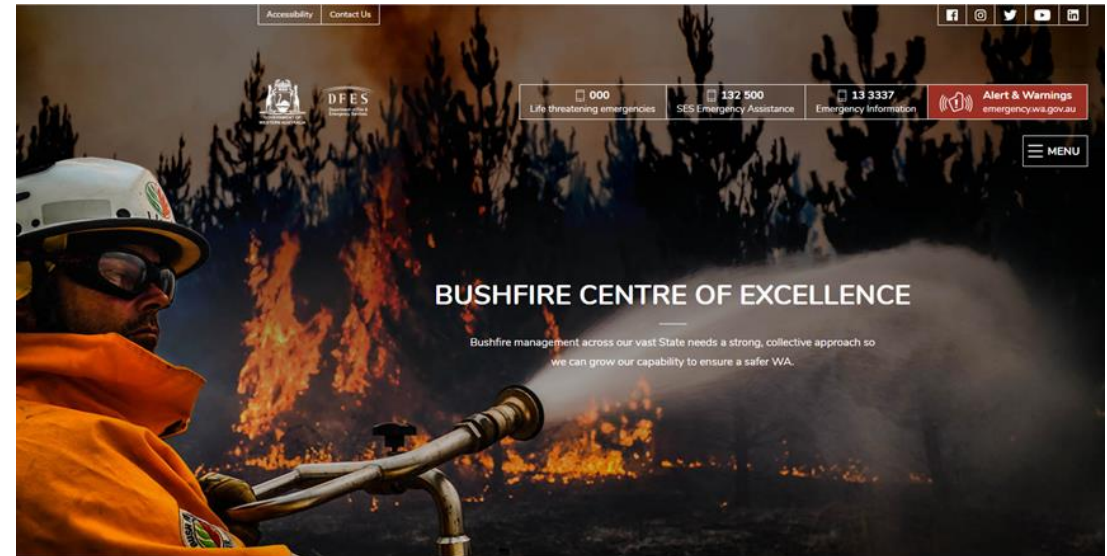
- Talking with people in the bushfire sector!
- Attending meetings, informal events and networking opportunities
- Understanding the needs of the sector
- Establishing knowledge management functional requirements
- Partnerships in traditional fire knowledge and practice





# Facility and Communications Priorities – 2020

- Management of build project
- Development of BCoE website
  - Website is already live – priority is adding content and building our digital presence
- Provide stakeholder updates on achievements and planned activities



# Questions?

For more information, visit  
[www.dfes.wa.gov.au/bushfirecoe](http://www.dfes.wa.gov.au/bushfirecoe)

Send an email to  
[BushfireCoE@dfes.wa.gov.au](mailto:BushfireCoE@dfes.wa.gov.au)





# BUSHFIRE VOLUNTEERS

**Issue:** Notes for DOAC's and ROAC's February/March 2020

**Date:** 26 February 2020

**Sensitivity:** Public - for presentation and/or tabling at DOAC, ROAC and BFAC meetings

## Notable specific Issues

### Eastern States Fires – we have been working hard to ensure WA is part of the policy response

- Unprecedented in terms not only of fire, but importantly, community awareness and global politics.
- WA Govt managed deployment of human resources to assist, with full support of the association.
- Association has worked very hard to ensure Western Australia (and our members) is part of the public awareness of natural hazard risk and policy responses.
- We had direct input and influence on the way the Prime Minister's volunteer compensation scheme was announced and the consideration of the Terms of Reference of a Royal Commission.
- As a result of the many years of hard work by the association's volunteer committee, our credibility and value as the peak body for WA's Bush Fire Brigades has delivered some financial support.

### Commonwealth Royal Commission – why it could deliver great value for our members

- The association was involved in discussions both at a State and Federal level about the Terms of Reference for a Commonwealth Royal Commission into bushfire.
- We have attached an Opinion piece we published to explain our qualified support.

### Federal/State Volunteer payment program – our long-standing policy and advocacy for smart outcomes

- The State Committee approved a policy last year to explain that the association does not support payments to Emergency Service Volunteers, but insists on compensation for any loss.
- This proved to be incredibly insightful because the Prime Minister announced his plan to offer ES Volunteers daily payments as a result of the Eastern States fires.
- The association has met with the Premier and representatives of the Prime Minister to urge the March meeting of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Meeting to adopt a policy of not making direct payments to volunteers, but to ensure neither volunteers or their employers (including farmers and self-employed volunteers) are not out of pocket for ordinary wages paid while the volunteer is responding to an emergency.

### Co-ordination of Coles gift cards – we are building opportunities for better community support

- We worked with Coles Group for a month or so late last year to distribute \$500 gift cards.
- Importantly, we urged Coles to make their generous gift available to all emergency services.
- We even offered to manage the distribution to other service brigades (for free) if needed.
- Coles told us DFES had told them it was not able to receive donations and Coles had made the decision to provide the cards only to the largest Rural/Country/Bush Fire Service in each State.
- A number of WA Bush Fire Brigades still have not registered for their Gift Card – go to <https://www.bushfire.org.au/coles> now to claim it.



# BUSHFIRE VOLUNTEERS

## Volunteer Bushfire Games – we are creating professional development and public awareness opportunities

- Bushfire Games were held in conjunction with the Mining Emergency Response Competition (MERC) on Langley Park in the Perth CBD for the first time in November last year.
- It was a very successful partnership and hence, will happen again this year – 27-29 November 2020
- This year will be the 10<sup>th</sup> year for MERC and have much stronger sponsors and prizes and outcomes for competing Bushfire Brigades.
- Details and calls for entries will come mid-year

## WAFES Conference 2020 – we are continuing to help DFES deliver the best that can be

- The WAFES Conference is happening again this year in Perth in September.
- The Exhibition has been reduced in size and will no longer include commercial exhibitors.
- The Conference will run Friday and Saturday, ending Saturday night (rather than Sunday morning as previous events have)
- The association has driven a new registration process that should allow more first-timers to attend.
- There will be more opportunities for site visits this year, based on all “selling out” previously.

## Bushfire Volunteers Recruitment Week – directly supporting Brigades with their recruitment and retention

- As one of the many new initiatives to better support our members this year, we have announced BV Recruitment Week to occur in the first week of May (Monday 4 – Sunday 10 May 2020)
- Our role will be to coordinate the community’s focus on volunteering with local Bush Fire Brigades and provide practical help to local governments and brigades to run their own fit-for-purpose campaigns.

## Fit-for-purpose vehicles – More major steps forward because of the persistence of the association

- After many hours of donated knowledge and experience from a number of association volunteers, the government has recently signed two tenders for fit-for-purpose vehicles:
  - \$75,000,000 for Heavy Class - 4.4 Broadacre Tankers
  - \$140,000,000 for Light Class vehicles
- We are very hopeful that the enormous amount of time our members donated to the process and design, the contracts will soon see truly fit-for-purpose vehicles begin to be delivered.
- Again, we thank Commissioner Darren Klemm and Brad Delavale for their willingness to listen to the advice we have given for many years and work toward changing the status quo.

## ESL Working Group – we are doing the best we can to make the ESL process fair, transparent and sensible

- The association has long advocated the need for the way ESL is spent to be completely transparent and more accessible to Bush Fire Brigades.
- One very big issue we had hoped to have resolved by now was to remove the “eligible items list” in the Local Government Grants manual because it creates the perception that only items on that list are available. Sadly, WALGA and DFES voted against the Bushfire Volunteers Association and SES Volunteers Association in this regard and hence, the next LGGs Manual looks certain to not change.
- We have a meeting in March at which we have moved a number of motions to remove items from the “ineligible items” because they are either inconsistent with other services or they impose unreasonable costs on Local Government. We will report on the outcomes of that meeting.



# BUSHFIRE VOLUNTEERS

## ESL-funded Defibrillators on Bush Fire Appliances – Successful advocacy for common sense

- The association proposed more than a year ago that bushfire brigades should be able to access funding for AED's from the ESL – just as Brigades from other services could.
- As a direct result, we achieved the very positive outcome of making AED's for Bush Fire Brigades ESL funded. A tender to supply the devices has closed and will be awarded before the end of the financial year.
- We again thank Brad Delavale for listening to our very reasonable advocacy and working with us to correct this unusual anomaly.

## Association building capacity – enabling us to deliver more direct member services

- The association is committed to delivering more direct members services and is on the verge of announcing some very exciting plans and initiatives.
- Departmental advice has meant we have all but given up in trying to have the imbalance in government funding to us fixed and have turned our attention to other government sources of income to fund the rapid increase in member services we have planned.
- After the WA Government rejected our offer to include our administrative headquarters and heritage museum in the Bushfire Centre of Excellence and have not made any offer to provide alternative office space for us, we took up a generous offer from WA Farmers to share their office space in Belmont which has delivered significant benefits – including credibility and accessibility for sponsors and donors.
- The association is not a funding body and is seeking donations and sponsorships to support the critical work we do to ensure Bush Fire Brigades and their volunteers are properly resourced, supported, represented and promoted.
- We have recently appointed a full-time Sponsorship and Partnership Manager on a one-year contract to help secure long term, sustainable income that we can use to underwrite the suite of direct member services and benefits we have planned.
- We have already had significant donations and in-kind services provided that have enabled a lot of very important “back-end” work to be done – such as those with software companies that have allowed us to set up proper, secure systems that will allow better collaboration and communication among and between our committee, members and stakeholders.
- We have very big plans and many opportunities for sponsors and partners to mutually benefit - If you know of any companies that might be interested in sponsoring the association in a way that will allow us to do even more for our members, please forward our contact details on today. For example, we are looking for a vehicle sponsor who will either provide or pay for the lease of a few sign-written vehicles so our hard working committee and support team can get out to visit more brigades without having to use their own cars and fuel.

## Exciting news coming – your support is driving big positive changes

- Wow, do we have some positive news! Unfortunately, it is still a little bit premature, but a whole lot of work has gone into many genuinely exciting services and outcomes that will soon be delivered for our members and those who support them. Stay tuned – sign up for our newsletter to get the latest when it breaks.