

**Local Emergency Management Committee Draft Minutes  
6 May 2021 at 4.00 pm  
Merredin Fire Station  
4 Mitchell Street, Merredin**

<b>1.0 Attendance</b>	
Cr Romolo Patroni	Shire of Merredin – Chairperson
Cr Mal Willis	Shire of Merredin
Cr Phil Van Der Merwe	Shire of Merredin
Mark Dacombe	Shire of Merredin Temporary CEO
Andrina Prnich	Shire of Merredin – Deputy CEO
Heath Soutar	WAPOL
Chris Thompson	WAPOL
Philippa Davey	Department of Communities
Yvette Grigg	Office of Emergency Management
Karen Horsley	Merredin Hospital
Sheree Lowe	Merredin VFRS

<b>2.0 Apologies</b>	
Gren Putland	Main Roads WA
Cr Julie Flockart	Shire of Merredin – President
Cr Mark McKenzie	Shire of Merredin
Peter Zenni	Shire of Merredin – Executive Manager of Development Services
Calvin Shotter	Shire of Merredin – Executive Manager Engineering Services
Jamie Holmes	Shire of Merredin – Asset Management Officer
Gabriella Rechichi	Shire of Merredin – Administration Support Officer
Matthew Reimer	DFES
Mark Briggs	Merredin SES
Andrew Galbraith	WAPOL
Jarrad Ritchie	Merredin College
John Flockart	Merredin Bush Fire Services
Joanne Spadaccini	Department of Communities
Sally Trunfio	Department of Communities
Scott Rastall	St John Ambulance
Shaun Whisson	Merredin IGA
Gareth Davies	Merredin Energy
Jo Trachy	CEACA
Nicholas Hopkin	CEACA
Jeremy Willis	DFES

### 3.0 Welcome

#### 3.1 Opening of Meeting

### 4.0 Confirmation of Previous Minutes

**Motion:** That the Minutes of the previous Meeting of the Local Emergency Management Committee held on 4 February 2021 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

**Moved:** Chris Thompson

**Seconded:** Philippa Davey

Carried

### 5.0 Business Arising from Previous Minutes

#### 5.1 Nil

### 6.0 Correspondence

#### 6.1 Incoming Correspondence

Nil

#### 6.2 Outgoing Correspondence

Nil

### 7.0 HMA and other Agency Updates

#### 7.1 Agency Briefings pre-circulated (attached)

- a. Wheatbelt District Advisor Report May 2021  
The recent tropical cyclone Seroja was a learning process for DFES, navigating protocols with BOM providing weather pattern forecasts and then DFES putting on the severe weather warnings and advice on when to prepare/evacuate. In future, early warnings to be issued to allow people to move out of pathway early or evacuate if preferred. Dalwallinu was the main area hit - most severe, least prepared (yellow zone). Communications were lost 4-5 days north of Merredin (Mukinbudin area). Learnings for contingencies at local level – clear communications in LEMA communications plan in LEMA.
- b. DFES Report for LEMC May 2021
- c. Merredin Police LEMC Report May 2021  
Chris Thompson reiterated information in report, advising that Merredin Police now have drone access for planning and access during incidents eg. for locating people in emergency scenario.
- d. Department of Communities LEMC Report May 2021
- e. Shire of Merredin LEMC Report May 2021

## **7.2 Other Agency Briefings**

### **a. Merredin Hospital**

Karen Horsley informed the meeting that the Merredin Hospital now had access to 60 vaccines available first to front line workers and volunteers (including fire, police and ambulance). Anyone fitting into 1a category (under 50) can enrol online into vaccinate clinic. Each timeslot is individual. Each vial of pfizer can vaccinate 6 persons. Every site has had access to astrozenica, every eligible resident who has consented to having vaccine has been able to (ie. Moorditj Mia and Beringa). No major side effects reported - some have had typical flu/headache symptoms but recovered within day or two.

Each hospital has a covid pathway - any positive results cared in room with full separate air conditioning etc – with plans to shift patient from site quickly.

During recent cyclone, hospital had a good plan of communication in lead up (contact with all vulnerable residents) and generators were activated where power outages occurred.

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

### **8.1 Update of Contacts and Resources Register**

Removal of Stacey Jaskiewicz, Ranger of Shire of Merredin from the Emergency Contacts Register.

Removal of Gerry Duke, CBH from the Emergency Contacts Register and replace with Gary Anderson.

Removal of Leigh Nelson, Merredin College from the Emergency Contact Register and replace with Jarrad Ritchie.

It was noted that John Flockart had resigned from the role of Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (DBFCO) at the recent Bush Fire Brigade AGM and that the new DBFCO is Mick Caughey who will be added to the contract registry.

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

Resignation of Stacey Jaskiewicz as Ranger at the Shire of Merredin.

Resignation of Gerry Duke as the Zone Safety Advisor at CBH.

Appointment of Gary Anderson as the Zone Safety Advisor at CBH.

Secondment of Leigh Nelson, Principal of Merredin College (9 months).

Appointment of Jarrad Ritchie as Principal of Merredin College (9 months).

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

### **8.4 Risk Profile Change**

## **8.5 Local Emergency Management Arrangements**

Workshop proposed for July (TBC)

## **8.6 Local Recovery Plan**

The Local Recovery Plan will be reviewed at same time as part of the LEMA package of work.

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

Cyclone Seroja – Debrief

The Meeting held a debrief on Cyclone Seroja which affected the region in April 2021

Philippa Davey – Department of Communities

Stranded in Northam due to road closure, Philippa received no communication on whether she could travel or bring back the emergency bedding supplies, which were picked up from Northam office (blankets, sheets, stretchers, sleeping bags).

There were no signs or person on road to advise whether access was permitted on GEH – no information available at a state or regional level.

No communication from Shire and communication from DFES had not been passed on as to whether there was a need to be set up in Merredin to bring people from other Shires in region eg Dalwallinu.

Communities contacted police but they were also unable to advise whether travel was permitted on highway.

Yvette Grigg - Office of Emergency Management

Police, communities were all contacted from OASG to provide updates about strong weather warnings and no need to activate evacuation centres. DFES were not advised in advance about GEH being shut.

Heath Soutar – WAPOL

From communications he had received, it was business as usual for police. The Main Roads closure came as surprise, but Merredin Police were confident that only severe weather would arrive. Regardless, officers were ready to support town (or neighbouring towns) or open emergency support committee if required.

Communication next day was still limited and it was difficult for local police to advise if inter-region travel was allowed along GEH.

Chris Thompson - WAPOL

Would have been good, in lead up to event, to know who on committee were in town from all relevant organisations.

Phil Van Der Merwe - VFRS

Business as usual as VFRS are always emergency ready. If power had gone out, Brigade was set up and would manage vehicle charging (taking vehicle for drives to keep charged).

As captain, VFRS was aware of who within the brigade was in town and available and had also advised SES accordingly.

The Captain attended damage assessment with DFES on Monday morning and arranged for assistance with Shire (loaders) where damage was evident with road closure. Damage in Mukinbudin – hotel, private home and other calls along with damage in Nungarin.

Lack of communication was noted and the level of communication provided in relation to the road closure may have caused unnecessary panic with many vehicles coming through, probably trying to beat the timing of closure. It was clear that road closure was necessary to manage safety with large trucks.

Unsure what VFRS would do differently next time.

Mark Dacombe - Shire of Merredin

The Shire was in contact with DFES from Friday through to Sunday. There was no indication that an evacuation scenario was required. Crew was on standby to deal with fallen trees/damage.

The Shire followed DFES communication advice through its usual channels. Evacuation centre was understood to be available if necessary (not cyclone rated).

The VFRS captain asked whether Shire should have confirmed Centre was ready to be activated if necessary.

Heath Soutar - WAPOL

Heath offered to create whatsapp group and decide who to add for pre-event communication and to create contingencies if power/comms go out. Heath to establish using existing contract register.

Karen Horsley – Merredin Hospital

All vulnerable community residents (particularly aged) – checked to see if they were safe at home (eg. if lost power – would they have access to oxygen) or if they would need to come into the hospital.

This was carried out for each site (8) within the path of cyclone.

All hospitals within the region have had generator upgrades and do monthly checks on generator and fully fueled.

St John

A van was brought in from Westonia with three cabs in town. Officers were prepared but received no call outs.

Yvette Grigg

DFES offered all affected Shires to attend ISG meetings to help with any information or resources required following event.

Philippa Davey Department of Communities

Philippa noted an opportunity to educate community on what to do in a cyclone.

Yvette Grigg – DFES

DFES has a range of online material for what to do in cyclone. This can be circulated.

## 9.0 Documentation

Nil

## 10.0 Presentations or Proposed Exercises

Nil

## 11.0 General Business

Phil Van Der Merwe asked what are other Shires are doing with evacuation centres gensets.

Yvette Grigg advised - Shire of Moora went through national disaster resilience programs – to fund a district generator - two on trailers for the good of the district. Shire maintains/services - could even come to Merredin if required. Options then are to wire evacuation centre building/s so that they can be plugged in if need be. (Use of district trailer or Coates hire etc)

Heath Soutar- asked if we can access their application to pursue.

Yvette Grigg advised this could be made available.

## 12.0 Next Meeting

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

Date and Time	Venue
Out of Session LEMA Workshop TBC (July)	North Merredin Primary School
Thursday, 5 August 2021 at 4.00 pm	St John Sub Station
Thursday, 7 October 2021 at 4.00 pm	North Merredin Primary School
Thursday, 3 February 2022 at 4.00 pm	TBC
Thursday, 5 May 2022 at 4.00 pm	TBC

**Moved:**

**Seconded:**

## 13.0 Close

There was no further business and the Chair closed the meeting at 5.30pm thanking all in attendance.