

Local Emergency Management Committee Minutes
1 May 2025 at 3.00 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
Craig Watts	Shire of Merredin
Codi Brindley-Mullen	Shire of Merredin
Sheree Lowe	Shire of Merredin / Merredin VFRS
Greg Hart	WA Police
Blair Jordan	WA Police
Ashley Smith	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Aaron Cuthbert	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Shelby Robinson	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Danielle Parkin	Merredin SES
Paul Wanless	Merredin Bush Fire Services
Michael Phillips	Department of Communities
Philippa Reppington	Merredin Hospital
David Hamersley	St Mary's School (left at 4.01pm)
Gren Putland	Main Roads WA (left at 3.52pm)
Blake Newton	Main Roads WA (left at 3.52pm)
Terrence King	Western Power
Gary Anderson	CBH
2.0 Apologies	
Cr Brad Anderson	Shire of Merredin
Peter Zenni	Shire of Merredin
Glenn Crees	Merredin Bush Fire Services
Laurent Marsol	Department of Parks and Wildlife
Kylie Cattaway	Merredin College

3.0 Welcome

3.1 Opening of Meeting

The Chair opened the meeting at 3.05pm, welcomed all in attendance and asked those present to introduce themselves.

4.0 Presentations or Proposed Exercises

4.1 Emergency management discussion exercise

Q & A with Gren Putland and Blake Newton of Main Roads

Gren and Blake walked the meeting through Main Roads processes around opening and closing roads for emergencies, and touched on topics including:

- The process for notifying Main Roads WA of an incident
- The process for reopening a road that has been closed by emergency responders
- Additional support that Main Roads can provide

A couple of key points of note included:

- If a road is fully or partially closed, even if only for crew safety, Main Roads WA need to be the ones to reopen it. This may be possible over the phone, but it's best to advise Main Roads WA of an incident as early as possible so they can begin mobilising sooner.
- Main Roads WA is not ever the Hazard Management Agency (HMA) for an incident, but a support agency.
- Main Roads WA have good public information processes, so even for minor incidents where Main Roads are not required on scene, it's beneficial to keep them informed from a communications perspective.

5.0 Confirmation of Previous Minutes

Motion: *That the Minutes of the previous Meeting of the Local Emergency Management Committee held on 6 Feb 2025 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.*

Moved: G Hart

Seconded: G Anderson

6.0 Business Arising from Previous Minutes

6.1 Activating evacuation centres

In investigating an action arising from the discussion exercise during the February meeting, it has become apparent that more clarity is required on the process of opening an evacuation centre.

Outcomes: Michael confirmed again that the Hazard Management Agency (HMA) (generally in the form of the Incident Controller) must formally activate an evacuation centre through the Department of Communities emergency on call number.

If the LG is asked directly by the IC to open an evacuation centre, they are to check that the IC has formally activated Department of Communities; if not, the LG is assuming responsibility for costs associated with the evacuation centre.

7.0 Correspondence

7.1 Incoming Correspondence

Email from Shelby Robinson "Disability Inclusive Emergency Management – Expressions of Interest"

Email from Megan Lehaney "Disability Inclusive Emergency Planning Forums – Dates"

7.2 Outgoing Correspondence

Email to Leah Parlour and Saloni Sharma with the Shire's EOI for "Disability Inclusive Emergency Management – Expressions of Interest"

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

Moved: M Phillips

Seconded: C Watts

8.0 HMA and other Agency Updates

8.1 Agency Briefings pre-circulated

Nil

8.2 Other Agency Briefings

Addressed at item 11.1

9.0 Standing Items (Submitted at each Meeting)

9.1 Update of Contacts and Resources Register

- **Merredin VFRS** email address has been updated
- **Mick Caughey** has been removed as Merredin Bush Fire Services Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- **Glenn Crees** has been removed as Merredin Bush Fire Services Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and added as Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- **Paul Wanless** has been added as Merredin Bush Fire Services Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- **Keith McCarron** has been removed as DFES Area Officer (Central Wheatbelt) and replaced by **Aaron Cuthbert**
- **Blake Newton** added as Deputy Incident Manager for Main Roads WA
- **Danielle Parkin** has been added as Merredin SES Unit Leader

9.2 Change of Positions/Leave and Acting Arrangements Notification

- **Mick Caughey** has been removed as Merredin Bush Fire Services Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

- **Glenn Crees** has been removed as Merredin Bush Fire Services Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and added as Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- **Paul Wanless** has been added as Merredin Bush Fire Services Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- **Keith McCarron** has been removed as DFES Area Officer (Central Wheatbelt) and replaced by **Aaron Cuthbert**
- **Danielle Parkin** is Acting Unit Leader, Merredin SES
- **Jacinta Herbert** is on secondment, and **Philippa Reppington** is filling in temporarily.

9.3 Incident Support Group Activations

Nil

9.4 Risk Profile Change

Nil

9.5 Local Emergency Management Arrangements

Nil

9.6 Local Recovery Plan

Nil

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

Nil

10.0 Documentation

Nil

11.0 General Business

11.1 Around the table

Merredin Police

No changes from the last meeting. The last of the vacant positions at Merredin has been filled, with a new Sergeant en route. Sergeant Lindsay Collett should be in place by the next LEMC meeting.

Department of Fire and Emergency Services

The “high threat” period has finished and the focus has shifted from response to training. August has been designated “Local Government training month”, where the focus will be to schedule in training to benefit Local Governments / the Bush Fire Brigades.

If a severe weather warning is issued by the Bureau of Meteorology, a storm advice will automatically be put in place.

The “Great ShakeOut” is an international drill taking place on 16th October where people all over the world participate in earthquake training drills. DFES will be participating and will

send more information out closer to the date. DFES are producing some information packages and Ash will be working with Community Preparedness to do school visits.

Merredin SES

No updates

Merredin Hospital

Jacinta Herbert has moved to Great Southern for next 6 months, with Philippa Reppington covering at the moment.

Currently everyone's attention is on the measles outbreak, with WACHS ensuring staff are vaccinated. Processes and procedures that were refined during Covid can be applied to any outbreak, so the Hospital is already geared up to isolate patients, put marquees in the carpark for testing, etc. The elderly population (those born before 1966) are the lowest risk demographic, so it's young children, particularly babies who are not yet vaccinated, that staff are concerned about. If you're not sure if you've been vaccinated, it's safe to be vaccinated a second time, but if you know you have been vaccinated you don't need a booster.

CBH

Business as usual, still outloading. Ash Sharp is the new manager for south of the highway (Area 9).

They have emergency response drills scheduled in June with St John Ambulance. Seeing a consistent trend of the same type of incident that CBH staff haven't responded to as well as they'd like, so will be using previous incidents as scenarios for training.

Western Power

Crews have been unexpectedly busy for the last few months. This has been the result of a combination of staff turnover and farmers accidentally burning some poles down. Some planned outages in the near future will be cancelled while crews prioritise a significant amount of fault works.

Bush Fire Brigades

Business as usual.

Shire of Merredin

There are new Chief and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officers in position. The Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) have decided to implement a rotation system so that every two years there is a new Deputy, and the previous Deputy steps up into the Chief role.

Council has endorsed Fire Control Officers and Fire Weather Officers for the upcoming financial year, as well as the Fire Breaks Order, the Restricted Burning Period and the Prohibited Burning Period.

Merredin VFRS

Business as usual. Several training courses coming up.

Encourage everyone to download the Emergency WA app. The app enables the user to set zones, so you receive an alert if there's an incident in that zone.

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 (or combine with Disability forum once date is confirmed)	Shire of Merredin Council Chambers
Thursday, 2 October 2025 at 3pm	Shire of Merredin Council Chambers
Thursday, 5 February 2026 at 3pm	Shire of Merredin Council Chambers
Thursday, 7 May 2026 at 3pm	Shire of Merredin Council Chambers

Moved: *P Van Der Merwe*

Seconded: *A Smith*

13.0 Close

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 4.33pm, thanking all in attendance.