

**Local Emergency Management Committee Draft Minutes**  
**7 October 2021 at 4.00 pm**  
**Room 9, old North Merredin Primary School**  
**Coronation Street, Merredin**

<b>1.0 Attendance</b>	
Cr Romolo Patroni	Shire of Merredin – Chairperson
Cr Julie Flockart	Shire of Merredin – President
Cr Roy Butler	Shire of Merredin
Mark Dacombe	Shire of Merredin Temporary CEO
Lindon Mellor	Shire of Merredin – Executive Manager Engineering Services
Sheree Lowe	Shire of Merredin – Emergency Services Officer / Merredin VFRS
Heath Soutar	WAPOL
Stephen Crook	Merredin Bush Fire Services
Joanne Spadaccini	Department of Communities
Scott Rastall	St John Ambulance
Johnno Bowring	St John Ambulance
Karen Horsley	Merredin Hospital
<b>2.0 Apologies</b>	
Cr Phil Van Der Merwe	Shire of Merredin / Merredin VFRS
Andrina Prnich	Shire of Merredin – Deputy CEO
Peter Zenni	Shire of Merredin – Executive Manager of Development Services
Yvette Grigg	Office of Emergency Management
Jeremy Willis	Department of Fire & Emergency Services
Matthew Reimer	Department of Fire & Emergency Services
Michael Caughey	Merredin Bush Fire Services
Elizabeth Moody	Merredin Residential College
Gren Putland	Main Roads WA
Sally Trunfio	Department of Communities
Philippa Davey	Department of Communities
Chris Cox	Merredin Hospital
Jarrad Ritchie	Merredin College

### 3.0 Welcome

#### 3.1 Opening of Meeting

The Chair opened the meeting at 4.08pm and welcomed all in attendance.

### 4.0 Confirmation of Previous Minutes

***Motion:** That the Minutes of the previous Meeting of the Local Emergency Management Committee held on 6 May 2021 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.*

**Moved:** Heath Soutar

**Seconded:** Stephen Crook

### 5.0 Business Arising from Previous Minutes

#### 5.1 Nil

**Outcomes:**

### 6.0 Correspondence

#### 6.1 Incoming Correspondence

Emergency Management Welfare Activation Kit, received from Jo Spadaccini

#### 6.2 Outgoing Correspondence

Nil

### 7.0 HMA and other Agency Updates

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

Nil

#### 7.2 Other Agency Briefings

##### a. Emergency Services – Shire of Merredin, Mark Dacombe

The Shire of Merredin received funding from the AWARE (All West Australians Reducing Emergencies) Program to appoint an Emergency Services Officer part-time for 12 months in order to undertake a number of Emergency Management related projects including the review of the Local Emergency Management Arrangements; several capability exercises; emergency management training for Shire Executive Managers; and the planning and delivery of emergency exercises. Sheree Lowe was appointed to this role.

The Shire has taken a coordinated approach to addressing fuel hazard reduction around town. The Rangers began pre-inspections 6 weeks prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> November deadline,

and have been part of a wider communications push by the Shire to draw attention to the landowner/residents' obligations with regard to fire hazard reduction on their properties.

**b. COVID-19 Vaccination update – WA Country Health Service - Wheatbelt, Karen Horsley**

Compulsory Covid 19 vaccinations have been mandated for all health workers, and WACHS staff are currently working through that process. With the exception of those working in aged care, Merredin Hospital is classed as a Tier 2 hospital, which requires everyone to receive their first dose by 1 November 2021, and to be fully vaccinated by 1 December 2021. Staff are required to produce hard copy evidence of their vaccinations, and those who refused to take the vaccine have stopped working for the hospital.

Merredin Hospital has been running a weekly vaccination clinic on Fridays, and has been almost fully booked each time, with close to 100 vaccines administered each Friday. They are going to move to a drive in, drive out model 4 days per week. This will facilitate a greater capacity to administer vaccinations, and people will be able to book in more easily than they currently can.

Both Karis Medical and Merredin Medical Centre, and Merredin Pharmacy are also administering Covid vaccinations. The state government has also opened up eligibility for vaccinations to everyone 12 years and older.

Community complacency is proving a challenge with Merredin experiencing comparatively low vaccination rates, and authorities had a difficult time conducting contact tracing with the recent Covid positive truck drivers who drove through Southern Cross from the eastern states.

**c. Update on changes to St John Ambulance, Merredin – St John Ambulance, Johnno Bowring / Scott Rastall**

Merredin St John has changed from a sub-centre fully serviced by volunteer ambulance officers to a model utilising a combination of volunteers and paid paramedics (funded by WACHS). The volunteer committee has been disbanded and Johnno Bowring is now the station manager.

Paramedics will be working 7am-7pm on a 4 days on, 4 days off shift pattern, so only one volunteer will be required during the day to form a crew. There will be no change from 7pm-7am – 2 volunteers will still be required during those hours. Mr Bowring reported overwhelming support from the community, feeling that they appreciate the enhanced skillsets and experience that career paramedics bring in to the community. Mr Bowring is also hopeful that having career paramedics at Merredin Station will help attract new volunteers, knowing that they'll be learning from and supported by career paramedics.

**d. Department of Communities, Jo Spadaccini**

Ms Spadaccini is based in Northam, and her role is to make sure local governments are as prepared as possible in the event of an evacuation activation.

Covid is necessitating a re-evaluation of the current processes, as it's not ideal to put everyone in one spot, and the processes may need to be modified according to the Covid requirements of the time.

Ms Spadaccini is in the process of organising with Ms Prnich to install a cage at the Merredin Regional Community & Leisure Centre with emergency bedding & supplies in the event of an activation.

**e. WAPOL Merredin, Heath Soutar**

There is currently one vacancy at the Merredin station. The police have had no major incidents recently, but have had to deal with a bit of anti-social behaviour and community violence; however, crime is down overall.

The Merredin Police held their first Remembrance Day ceremony last week.

There will be a public open day at the Police Station on 13<sup>th</sup> November, 10am – 2pm.

Renovations at the Station are nearly complete. They have a small operations room, a large secure parking compound and a generator that is regularly tested.

Vaccinations have not yet been mandated across the board at WAPOL; however, in a lot of positions staff are required to wear masks if they're not vaccinated, and this has pushed up vaccination rates. Staff aren't losing their jobs if they refuse to get vaccinated, but many have been retasked to safer roles.

**f. Merredin Bushfire Brigades, Stephen Crook**

The appointment of Ms Lowe as Shire Emergency Services Officer has been a big change for the brigades. Mr Crook has been working with Ms Lowe on a Bushfire Operating Procedures document (brought about in part by the changes to the Work Health & Safety legislation) spelling out administrative and operational procedures for the brigades. The FCOs and farmers have expressed some concern with not knowing where their liability starts and finishes.

Mr Crook has been involved in communications with the Shire regarding efforts to reduce the fuel load around town (which will possibly be exacerbated by frost dust this year).

The bushfire appliances have been serviced, and Ms Lowe invited brigades to deliver first aid kits and AEDs to the Shire for servicing. She has also been appointed a Shire of Merredin FCO, handling the permits to burn inside the town boundary.

The Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) Pre-Season meeting will be taking place on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> October.

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

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

Removal of Calvin Shotter, Shire of Merredin from the Emergency Contacts Register and replace with Lindon Mellor.

Update of Sheree Lowe details in the Emergency Contacts Register to reflect new Shire of Merredin appointment.

Addition of Johnno Bowring, St John Ambulance to the Emergency Contacts Register.

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

Resignation of Calvin Shotter as Shire of Merredin Executive Manager of Engineering Services.

Appointment of Lindon Mellor as Shire of Merredin Executive Manager of Engineering Services.

Appointment of Sheree Lowe as Shire of Merredin Emergency Services Officer (12 months).

Appointment of Johnno Bowring as St John Ambulance Merredin Station Manager.

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

### **8.4 Risk Profile Change**

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

*LEMA Review Update - Shire of Merredin, Sheree Lowe*

The completed draft document has been distributed to LEMC members for comment, and was sent to Yvette Grigg, District Emergency Management Advisor DFES, for review.

Ms Grigg reviewed the document and noted in her email dated 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021 that:

*I have made a few very minor tweaks and suggestions on the attached doc, but at the moment it is compliant to the requirements of the State EM arrangements, so there is no reason for the LEMC and Council not to endorse.*

There are sections that she would like to see developed further, but Ms Grigg advised that these can be done over subsequent LEMC meetings in the form of discussions and desktop exercises.

A small number of minor changes and corrections (mostly reflecting the change of status of Merredin St John Station) were noted to be made to the document.

#### **Motion:**

*That the LEMC recommend that Council:*

- a) endorse the draft Local Emergency Management Arrangements for public consultation;*

- b) return any material changes to LEMC via a special meeting; and
- c) notes that any minor or immaterial changes will be circulated to the committee via email.

Moved: Karen Horsley  
CARRIED

Seconded: Heath Soutar

## 8.6 Local Recovery Plan

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

## 9.0 Documentation

Nil

## 10.0 Presentations or Proposed Exercises

Ms Spadaccini noted that in other towns (including Kellerberrin, Moora, Wongan Hills, Cunderdin and Corrigin), evacuation centre exercises have been run with the Curtin University students as evacuees, and suggested it could be considered as a potential future exercise.

## 11.0 General Business

Cr Flockart noted that the Local Government elections are taking place this month, and all 3 Councillors present at the meeting today are up for election. Cr Flockart thanked Cr Patroni for his efforts chairing LEMC over the last several years, and commended him as a strong and successful leader.

## 12.0 Next Meeting

The next LEMC meetings are scheduled to be held on the following dates:

Date and Time	Venue
Thursday, 3 February 2022 at 4.00 pm	TBC – Merredin St John Station
Thursday, 5 May 2022 at 4.00pm	TBC
Thursday, 4 August 2022 at 4.00pm	TBC
Thursday, 6 October 2022 at 4.00pm	TBC

## 13.0 Close

There was no further business and the Chair closed the meeting at 5.27pm, thanking all in attendance.