



ACT
Government



MEETING MINUTES – ACT BUSHFIRE COUNCIL

MEETING INFORMATION

Date:	6 March 2019	Location:	Ground Floor ESA Headquarters, Black Mountain Meeting Room
Time:	16:00	Meeting Type:	Council
Call-In Number:	02 6207 7160	Call-In Code:	N/A
Attendees:	See list page 2	Secretariat:	Lianna Guest

ORDER OF BUSINESS

AGENDA ITEMS

Presenter: Chair

1 Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land that the meeting was on, the Ngunnawal people. She expressed acknowledgement and respect towards their continuing culture and the contributions they make to the life of this city and this region. She also acknowledged and welcomed other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attending the meeting.

Presenter: Chair

2 Welcome, introductions, apologies and nomination of member to monitor performance checklist

The Chair welcomed all meeting attendees and noted apologies listed on page 2. The Chair noted all members were present at the meeting. Cathy Parsons left the meeting at 18:30 to attend another commitment.

MEMBERS AND OFFICIALS – ATTENDANCE LIST

Meeting 16.00 to 19.00, Wednesday 6 March 2019

Black Mountain Meeting Room, ESA Headquarters

Council Members	Sarah Ryan (Chairperson)	Marion Leiba	Tony Bartlett
	Natarsha Carney	Jeremy Watson	Bhiamie Williamson
	Cathy Parsons	Margaret Moreton	Steve Angus
	David Snell	Kylie Coe	

Officials Dominic Lane, ESA Commissioner
Joe Murphy, Chief Officer, ACT Rural Fire Service (ACTRFS), ESA
Tony Scherl, Project Manager, Regional Fire Management Plan, PCS

Secretariat Lianna Guest, Executive and Ministerial Support Officer.

Apologies Daniel Iglesias, Executive Director, Parks and Conservation Service (PCS), Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (PCS, EPSDD)

Mark Brown, Chief Officer, ACT Fire and Rescue (ACT F&R), ESA

Rohan Scott, Manager Operations, ACTRFS

Invited Guests Anna Mitchell, Project Manager, SBMPv4, ESA

Richard Maloney, ACT Fire and Rescue, Superintendent, Community Resilience

Presenter: Chair

3 Declaration of Interest

No declarations of conflict of interest were received.

Presenter: Chair

4 Acceptance of minutes from the 6 February 2019 meeting

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting except for omission of Council approval of the BFC business plan.

Action: New agenda item 5B to be added to this meeting agenda to review the business plan.

Presenter: Chair

5A Review action list

Council noted the following updates against the previous meeting action items:

- Closed action item 190206-11, noting the further agenda item in this meeting on the BFC business plan, and the secretariat agreeing to circulate the BFC business plan each month with the meeting papers.
- Update on action item 190206-09-9.2. An external facing intranet is due to be released in June 2019, this is a possible option for the BFC to utilise. A directory is being developed by ACTRFS EA to show a record of presentations made to council.
- Update on action item 181205-8 on a report to be provided to Council regarding interstate deployments. Deployments are still ongoing and the report will be delivered after deployments are completed for the season.

5B – Business Plan

The BFC business plan was discussed with the aim of approving the plan subject to minor alterations. Discussion was around the order of the objectives presented at BFC meetings. Council members agreed to move objectives 2 and 3 to the July meeting and move objectives 5 and 1 to the November meeting. Objectives will need to remain whole, be addressed in a systematic way and be better aligned with the annual report.

It was also noted that presentations will need to link to the objectives of the SBMP and be introduced with an overview of the whole objective within the presentation.

The Council approved the BFC business plan subject to changes to the objectives time slots.

Action: - Move objectives 2 and 3 to the July meeting and move objectives 5 and 1 to the November meeting.

Action: - Joe Murphy to organise a meeting with Sarah Ryan (BFC Chair) to discuss presentations and objectives.

6 Correspondence

Correspondence for noting:

- Letter from Dominic Lane regarding the possible extension of the 2018/19 bushfire season
- Copy of letter from the CSIRO to the Commissioner thanking the fire services for their work in combatting the Pierces Creek Fire.

Report on activities the Chair has attended on behalf of Council since the last meeting:

- NIL

Action: NIL

7 Extension of bushfire season

ESA Commissioner, Dominic Lane has written to the ACT BFC seeking their support to extend the ACT bushfire season. A final decision to extend the bushfire season will not be made for another two weeks, which will allow for a more accurate determination of the weather conditions in the lead up to the end of March.

Prescribed burns will continue to be conducted if conditions are right. Most burns conducted by PCS will be in grasslands.

Resource implications of the extended bushfire season include PCS tower stand up and resource stand up (dependent on FDIs).

The contracts for rotary aircraft currently located in the ACT are being extended on a fortnightly basis. Aircraft are still available in Australia, particularly in NSW and Victoria, should they be needed once the extended aircraft contract expires.

The extension to the current ACT Bushfire Season, if declared, was supported by Council.

Action: NIL

8 Report from council members on meeting with PCS on draft RFMP

A particular thank you was noted by Council members to Tony Bartlett, Cathy Parsons and Bhiemie Williamson for attending the PCS RFMP meeting and collating the information into a report for Council.

Tony spoke to the report, indicating the basis for items that they recommend Council support and identifying some items for consideration by PCS. Comment was made regarding the visibility of fuel break zones on the maps provided at the meeting.

Tony Scherl stated that key stakeholder consultation commenced this day, 6 March, and comments are welcome with any adjustments being made in conjunction with internal PCS comments. All comments received will be responded to acknowledging the information provided.

Steve Angus questioned whether rural land holders concerns are being addressed in the plan. The response was that the focus is on including concerns of land holders in regards to property protection.

Action:

9 Items from the ACTBFC 2019 Business Plan

9.1 SBMP Objective 1

Arson intervention program and reduction of ignitions data (verbal report)

Richard Maloney, ACT Fire and Rescue, Superintendent, Community Safety Section spoke to this topic. A written report to Council was subsequently provided.

The report noted:

- The MOU between ACT Fire & Rescue, ACT Rural Fire Service, AFP and the ACT Coroners Court was signed on January 2019. Notable changes from the previous version were: the inclusion of the ACT Coroners Court in the MOU, clarification of roles throughout the document including agency roles and responsibilities, evidence collection, and the inclusion of three specific documents as annexures.
- AFP was concerned about the management of evidence by ACTF&R and ACTRFS. This resulted in new documents being implemented including a handover form, which allows for more comprehensive reporting between the ACT fire services, general duties police officers and AFP forensic investigators.
- Data on the number of wildfire ignition over the last 10 years (2008 – 2018).
- Details on the Juvenile Firefighting and Intervention Program (JFAIP).

Discussion was around the two arson investigation courses run in the ACT by the NSW Rural Fire Service. Members from NSWRF, ACTRFS, ACTF&R and AFP attended this training. The mix of participants allowed for better collaboration and shared understanding around investigating bushfire arson. Two ACT F&R course participants were able to utilise their new skills in conjunction with the AFP at the Pierces creek fire investigation.

Council expressed its thanks to Richard for the presentation.

9.2 SBMP Objective 2 & 3

Development of tools to assist when deploying assets and resources for b(verbal report)

Presentation postponed due to illness of the presenter and will be placed on the agenda for the BFC meeting in July as per item 5B.

10. Strategic Bushfire Management Plan

10.1 Update of progress for SBMPv4 (verbal report)

The ESA Commissioner presented on the process for transition from SBMPv3 to SBMPv4 with assistance from the Senior Manager SBMPv4. A document portraying the 15 years of strategic bushfire management (SBMP) was distributed to attendees and subsequently sent to Council members along with the presentation.

The Commissioner thanked Members for their input into reviewing SBMPv3 and developing SBMPv4. Council noted they will have two opportunities to view and comment on the draft v4 plan over coming months.

A community and stakeholder consultation paper will be made available to the Council for comment. Public consultation is due to commence on 25 March, with four community consultation meetings planned in the first fortnight of April. The four meetings will aim to cover the 12 objectives of the SBMPv3, the progression in SBMPs and managing bushfire risk in the ACT over 15 years. Feedback from the public will be fed back into ESA for the development of SBMPv4.

Action: The Chair asked for a member of Council to attend the upcoming Bushfire Management Plan Committee meeting (1pm, Wed 20 March 2019). Tony Bartlett indicated he will check his diary to confirm availability. Alternatively Jeremy will also check his availability.

10.2 Tabling of BFC SBMPv4 recommendations (developed out of session)

11. Officials reports for noting:

11.1 EPSDD PCS Report

The report was taken as read.

The topics were highlighted in the report:

- Prescribed burning - Conditions remain exceptionally dry. Before any burn can be implemented on the PCS estate significant rain is needed – and none is forecast until at last the end of March. Weather conditions continue to be monitored.
- Considerable work continues with RFMP – all focus is now on finalising the maps for the public consultation phase. The consultation starts this week with the Park Care Fringe Forum and the Scientific Community meeting.
- 2018 / 2019 BOP approval - Other elements of the 2018/19 BOP, not mentioned above, are continuing to be delivered with no major issues to report.
- ACTPCS Women in Fire have arranged a forum for all interested EPSDD staff to discuss ways women might be supported in emergency services roles traditionally dominated by male employees.
- PCS and ESA participated in an AAR for the Corin Fire. Outcomes can be read in the report.
- ACTPCS hosted an international representative from the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC) for a day in Canberra and met with the ESA, EMA and the Canadian Ambassador.
- The Potter Hill review was released by the Minister on 22 February with both Commissioner Lane and Ian Walker addressing media.
- PCS met with ACT Health (ongoing) to discuss air pollution monitoring and how they can work together throughout the planned burning period.
- The Fire Unit was very well represented at the funeral of a much respected Ngunnawal elder – Uncle Carl Brown. The PCS Fire Aboriginal ranger group formed a guard-of-honour and provided significant cultural actions to the ceremony.

Action: The quarterly BOP report is required – was to be circulated out of session from the February meeting.

Council passed on its compliments to the Canadian representative from CIFFC.

11.2 Commissioner's Report

Report taken as read.

The following topics were highlighted in the report:

- The bushfire preparedness project has now been completed and has better prepared the ESA and the community for the 2018-19 bushfire season.
- See Agenda Item 7 re extension of bushfire season.
- The Potter Hill review - As a joint directorate initiated review both ESA and EPSDD are working together on implementing recommendations of the report as part of their continual improvement processes.
- The ESA is developing an updated Strategic Plan for 2019-2024 in consultation with all our business units. It will align with the JACS Strategic Plan 2019-2024 and be supported by Business Plans from all services and support services.
- Some key outcomes from the November 2018 National Emergency Communications Working Group – Australia / New Zealand were reported.
- The ACT State Emergency Service volunteers and staff have worked to support all ACT Rural Fire Service (ACTRFS) IMTs and multi-shift incidents undertaking multiple functions. Support has also been provided to the ACT Ambulance Service and the Australian Federal Police.

11.3 Chief Officer ACTRFS Report

Report taken as read.

The following topics were highlighted in the report:

- Through February the ACT Rural Fire Service (including PCS) has provided firefighters to Tasmania and two rotations to Victoria. Joe Murphy expressed his sincere thanks to the volunteers and PCS staff for their attendance in the deployments to date.
- On Tuesday 5 March the RFS Recruitment Information Evening was held, 49 people attended.
- In response to requests from volunteers, RFS is developing a training package to support people taking on community engagement roles and responsibilities within their brigades.
- Product completion documentation for 70 of the actions in the SBMPv3 were reviewed by the ACTRFS Chief Officer, circulated to the SBMP Project Board and approved.

Council acknowledged the considerable contribution of staff and volunteers involved in the interstate deployments.

Council members who have contact with volunteers were asked to pass on the Council's appreciation and thanks to those members deployed.

Action: Sarah Ryan (Chair) to write a letter of thanks to volunteers and staff for their time in deployments.

12. Any other Business

Nil

13 Review and adoption of action items from this meeting

Action items were reviewed and agreed to and put in the action table.

14. Next Meeting 3 April 2019

15. In camera meeting if required

Not required

16. Council's performance checklist report

Cathy completed the checklist and Margaret presented the issues.



ACTION ITEMS – ACT BUSHFIRE COUNCIL

Action Items (OPEN)			at 13 February 2019	
Ref	ACTION	DUE	ACTION OFFICER	STATUS UPDATE
190603-06	The chair asked for a member of council to attend the upcoming Bushfire Management Plan Committee meeting (1pm, Wed 20 March 2019)	20 March 2019	Tony Bartlett	Pending
190603-05	Sarah Ryan (Chair) to write a letter of thanks to volunteers and staff for their time in deployments.	3 April 2019	Sarah Ryan	Pending
190603-04	The quarterly BOP report is required – was to be circulated out of session from the February meeting.	1 week after meeting	Tony Scherl	Pending
190306-03	Joe Murphy to organise a meeting with Sarah Ryan (BFC Chair) to discuss presentations and objectives	3 April 2019	Joe Murphy	Pending
190306-02	BFC Business Plan - move objectives 2 and 3 to the July meeting and move objectives 5 and 1 to the November meeting	3 April 2019	Secretariat	Pending
190306-01	New agenda item 5B to be added to March agenda to review the business plan.	6 March 2019	Secretariat	Complete
190206-02	Pass on condolence message to the Brown family, on behalf of Bushfire Council Members	1 week after meeting	Mr Cooper	Complete
190206-06	Provide the Secretariat with the December 2018 IMX Evaluation Report	1 week after meeting	Chief Officer, ACTF&R	Complete
190206-07	Circulate the EPSDD PCS quarterly BOP report out of session	1 week after meeting	Secretariat	Complete
190206-08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariat to arrange a meeting with PCS staff and three BFC members to review in detail the RFMP and associated maps The Manager, Fire Planning (RFMP) to provide the Secretariat with the google drive link to the presentation) 	12 February 2019	Secretariat	Complete
		11 February 2019		Complete

190206-09-9.2	CO ACTRFS to arrange a more user friendly process for Council to access papers	6 March 2019	CO ACTRFS	Pending
190206-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a brief item on the BFC business plan on the agenda for the next meeting. • Circulate the BFC business plan each month with the meeting papers. 	1 week prior to meetings	Secretariat	Complete
1808-04	EPSDD to provide an update on action taken against Morgan Review table.	5 December 2018	ED, PCS, EPSDD	Pending
1811-08	Secretariat to distribute closure reports to ACT BFC out of session. ACT BFC to provide endorsement within one week of receiving the SBMPv3 closure reports.	Prior to 5 December 2018	Secretariat and ACT BFC members	Ongoing
181205-8	Amended 190206 - Provide Council with the formal report on all the Interstate deployments once it has been finalised.	6 February 2019	CO ACTRFS	Pending

Action Items (CLOSED)			at 13 February 2019
Ref	ACTION	ACTION OFFICER	Date closed
181205-9.1	PCS will meet with the Chair and Jeremy for a discussion on how burning targets are being expressed.	PCS and Chair	6 February 2019
181205-10	Chair to convey to the Commissioner Bushfire Council's concerns about lack of consultation in the review of SBMPv3 in preparation of SBMPv4 and what opportunities there may be for further consultation	Chair	6 February 2019
181205-10	PCS to present on RFMPs during the February 2019 meeting	PCS	6 February 2019