



## **VOLUNTEER BUSH FIRE BRIGADE GUIDLINES**

**Shire of Collie – Policy DS2.1**

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# FORWARD

These guidelines have been developed to supplement to the Shire of Collie Bushfires Local Law 2017 and the other associated legislation to provide guidance to volunteers and brigades regarding their rights and responsibilities. More detailed information can be found in this legislation.

## INTRODUCTION

### Purpose

The purpose of this document is to:

- Provide guidance and accessible information to Bush Fire Brigade Volunteers.
- Clarify the requirements of the various legislation relating to Bush Fire Brigades; and
- Provide consistency across all Brigades.

### Review

The Bush Fire Guidelines are designed to be responsive to the functioning of Bush Fire Brigades and subject to an annual review after each fire season through the Bush Fires Advisory Committee with the reviewed document presented to the Bush Fire Advisory Committee at the commencement of each fire season.

Any proposed amendment to this document is subject to the approval of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee and the Shire of Collie.

### Council's Strategic Plan

#### Shire of Collie Strategic Community Plan -2022

Strategy 1.1.2: To improve our emergency management planning in terms of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery capabilities.

### Adoption and Review

<b>Council meeting held:</b>	12 September 2017
<b>Adopted by Minute No:</b>	
<b>Date to be reviewed:</b>	September- on an annual basis

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## Document Control

AMENDMENT		DETAILS OF AMENDMENT	AMENDED BY
1	Aug 17	Initial Issue	CESO
2	Aug 17	Internal Review	DDS
3	Aug 17	BFAC Review	BFAC
4	Aug 17	Policy Review Committee Review	PRC
5	Sep 18	BFAC Review	BFAC
6	Sep 19	Internal Review	CESM
7	Sep 24	BFAC Review	BFAC

## Distribution

It is a requirement that this document be supplied to all new members upon them signing up to a brigade and shall be available to any member upon request. This document can be distributed via email or hard copy.

It is important that these guidelines are read in conjunction with:

- Bush Fires Act 1954
- Emergency Management Act 2005
- Work Health and Safety Act 2020
- Shire of Collie Employees Volunteers Code of Conduct
- Shire of Collie Bush Fire Brigades Local Law 2017
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984
- State Hazard Plan – Fire
- DFES SOP's
- State EM Policy - Emergency Public Information.
- State EM Policy - Community Evacuations.
- State EM Policy - Traffic Management During Emergencies.

## Acronyms

ACRONYM	MEANING
AIIMS	Australian Inter Service Incident Management System
AGM	Annual General Meeting
BFB	Bush Fire Brigade
BFAC	Bush Fire Advisory Committee
CESM	Community Emergency Services Manager
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CBFCO	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
DCBFCO	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
DDS	Director of Development Services
DFES	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
DBCA	Department of Biodiversity Conservations and Attractions
EM	Emergency Management
FCO	Fire Control Officer
FWO	Fire Weather Officer
LGGS	Local Government Grant Scheme
OMS	Operational Management System
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PPC	Personal Protective Clothing
SOP	Safe Operating Procedure
VNPC	Volunteer National Police Clearance

# 1. VOLUNTEER BUSH FIRE BRIGADES

## 1.1 Bush Fire Brigades currently registered with the Shire of Collie

In accordance with relevant Act's and regulations, the Fire & Emergency Services Commissioner is the prescribed Hazard Management Agency (HMA) for fire.

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) administer and distribute operational costs and the provision of appliances through the Shire of Collie Local Government Grants Scheme (LGGs). The LGGs is funded through the Emergency Services Levy.

The Shire of Collie is the controlling agency for Bushfire in the municipal area of Collie outside of the gazetted fire district, as such has established 5 Bushfire Brigades. The current Bush Fire Brigades are registered by the Shire of Collie and their respective brigade profile:

	BRIGADE	PROFILE	RMS NUMBER
1	Allanson	Settlement	6008
2	Collie Preston	Rural	6540
3	Collieburn Cardiff	Rural	6148
4	Harris River	Rural	6277
5	Worsley	Rural	6804
6	Shire of Collie*	Shire	9029

*\*Shire of collie is a brigade profile for the sole purpose of recording appointed CBFCO, DCBFCO, FCO's and shire staff involved in brigade activities*

## 1.2 Objectives of Bush Fire Brigades

The Shire of Collie Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades undertake the following objectives:

- Provide timely, quality and effective emergency service.
- Minimise the impact of emergencies on the community.
- Collaborate with the community to increase bush fire awareness and fire prevention strategies.
- To ensure that bush fire brigade volunteers receive appropriate training for their respective roles within the brigade.
- Ensure that operational equipment is serviceable and available for emergencies.
- Provide a workplace where everyone is treated with respect in an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment.
- Work cohesively with other agencies.
- Report to Council through the Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) on any relevant matters.

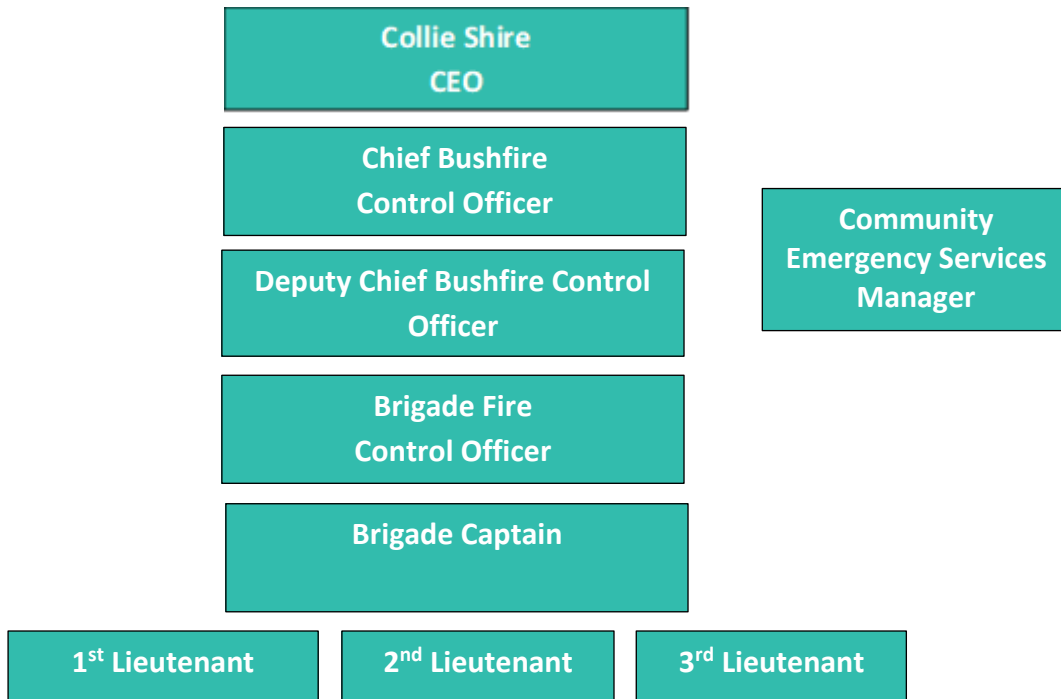
## 1.3 Values of Bush Fire Brigades

Members are to adopt the following principles at all times when representing the Shire of Collie Bush Fire Brigades, these values include.

- Put the community first.
- Act with honesty and integrity.
- Work together in a committed team.
- Strive to keep ourselves and others safe.
- Respect the value and contribution of others.
- Have open and honest two-way communication.
- Continually develop skills to service the community.



## 1.4 Bush Fire Management Structure



In consultation with the Bush Fire Brigades through the BFAC, the Shire of Collie will appoint a Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO), Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (DCBFCO), Fire Control Officers (FCO), Chief Fire Weather Officer (CFWO), Deputy Chief Fire Weather Officer (DFWO) and Bush Fire Brigade Officers.

The CBFCO, DCBFCO and FWO's appointments are for a 2-year term Council appoints a suitable person to each position after calling for nominations and receiving a recommendation from the Bush Fire Advisory Committee.

Each brigade shall nominate a Captain, Fire Control Officer, Lieutenant/s, Secretary, Treasurer and other office bearers for their respective Brigades at their Annual General Meeting (AGM). Nominations will be considered by the Bush Fire Advisory Committee and recommendations made to Council for their endorsement. These appointments are for 1 year term.

The Shire of Collie Community Emergency Services Manager's (CESM) role is to support the Bush Fire Brigades and the volunteer members as well as maintaining effective communication with the CEO, CBFCO, DCBFCO and other agencies. It is a requirement that the CESM be endorsed as an FCO.

## **2 THE OPERATION OF BUSH FIRE BRIGADES**

### **2.1 Membership**

#### **2.1.1 New members**

A person wishing to become a member of a Bush Fire Brigade is to be provided with these guidelines and complete an application for membership form. By completing the application for membership, the new member is deemed to have accepted the conditions of membership included in this document and other associated policies and procedures.

The completed form is to be forwarded to the CESM which in turn will be provided to DFES to record the information on the Resource Management System (RMS) database.

All new members will be required to complete a National Volunteer Police Clearance check (VNPC) and a Shire of Collie medical declaration at full cost to the Shire. Refusal to participate or complete these documents will deem a membership invalid and the membership will not be processed.

Membership may also be refused due to historic, or any new criminal offences committed of any member. The captain of a brigade or the Shire of Collie may refuse an application for new membership for any reason as per Shire of Collie Bush Fire Brigades Local Law 2017 and Shire of Collie Policies.

## 2.1.2 Conditions of membership

### **Minimum Training Standards:**

All volunteer Bush Fire Brigade members are required to complete a Brigade volunteer induction, DFES AIIMS Awareness (Online), DFES Bushfire Fighting Safety Awareness and Bushfire Fighting Skills prior to commencing active firefighting duties, attending to any call outs or assisting in any prescribed burning operation.

To access training, members are required to register on the DFES Volunteer Portal on a Level 1 Volunteer Fire fighter pathway in eAcademy. The brigade training officer can offer assistance in this process.

### **Fitness for Duty:**

If attending a brigade activity including training, fund raising, meetings and call outs, all volunteers are required to be in a fit state to perform the duties involved. This does not include social gatherings.

If a volunteer present unfit for duty, the person presiding over the activity must instruct that person to leave. Examples include being impaired due to drugs (including prescription drugs), alcohol or fatigue. Failure to leave may result in membership termination.

### **Update Personal Details:**

Members can update their personal details on the Volunteer Portal or by completing a Membership Update form (available on the DFES Portal) and providing it to the CESM and Brigade Captain.

### **Drivers Licences:**

All drivers of vehicles are required to hold a current Western Australian driver's licence for the class of vehicle that is being driven. Any situation that results in the suspension or loss of licence or impairment to the driver's capability is to be reported to the Brigade Captain.

It is preferable for volunteers who routinely drive under operational conditions to have completed the DFES (or equivalent) on road driving course and emergency driving training.

Members who hold probationary or restricted driving licences can drive appliances but under no circumstances are they to drive under emergency conditions.

### **Personal Protective Equipment**

Members will be provided with the appropriate Level 1 personal protective equipment/clothing PPE/PPC, consisting of Helmet, Tunic, Trousers, Gloves, Goggles and Respirator. It is required that the supplied PPE/PPC be worn when attending the fire ground. The PPE/PPC remains the property of the Shire of Collie.

Any replacements to PPE/PPC are to be requested via the QR Code system for tracking and reporting purposes.

New member PPE/PPC issues will be ordered once the new member has been confirmed on the mandatory introductory courses.

## **2.1.3 Related Documents**

The main legislation that should be read in conjunction to this policy and that are pertinent to the role of Bush Fire Brigade members are:

- Bush Fires Act and Regulations 1954
- Environmental Protection Act 1986
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984
- Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998
- Work Health and Safety Act 2020
- Road Traffic Act 1974
- Shire of Collie Local Law – Bush Fire Brigades 2017

## **2.1.4 Types of Membership**

### **Firefighter:**

Members at least 16 years of age who are trained and undertake normal Bushfire Brigade activities.

### **Auxiliary:**

Members who are not 'fire fighters' members of the brigade but are willing to render other assistance such as transportation requirements, catering, communications etc. as required by the Bushfire Brigade. This is a non-operational role.

### **Cadet:**

Members that are between 11 and 15 years of age, which have their parent or guardian consent to participate in brigade activities and training.

**Honorary Life Member:**

Member voted by simple majority by the brigade that is appointed in recognition of services to the Bush Fire Brigade.

## **2.1.5 Suspension of a member**

Suspension of membership of a Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade may occur:

- By the Captain in writing and ratified at the next Brigade Committee meeting
- If in the opinion of the Brigade Committee or Council, circumstances warrant suspending the member.
- The period of suspension is at the discretion of the Brigade Committee or Council.
- Upon the expiry of the period of suspension the Committee may
  - (a) extend the suspension.
  - (b) terminate membership; or
  - (c) reinstate membership.

## **2.1.6 Termination of membership**

Termination of membership of a Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade may occur when:

- The member provides written notification of resignation to the brigade.
- Is in the opinion of the Brigade Committee, the member is permanently incapacitated by mental or physical health.
- Is dismissed by the Brigade Committee or by Council; or
- Dies

When a membership is terminated the member must return within 21 days all property belonging to the Bush Fire Brigade and/or the Shire of Collie to the Shire of Collie.

## **2.1.7 Rights of a member**

A brigade member shall not be dismissed from any brigade duty without the opportunity to defend the allegation. Any person may lodge a written objection to the CBFCO, CESM and/or CEO of the Shire of Collie if they believe they have been unfairly treated to have the matter reconsidered.

## **2.1.8 Complaints and Grievances**

Any member of a Bush Fire Brigade who is unhappy with the operation of a Bush Fire Brigade should raise their concerns with the Brigade Captain. If the member is still dissatisfied the member can raise their concerns in writing to the CBFCO, CESM and/or the CEO of the Shire of Collie.

## **2.1.9 Awards and Recognition**

Milestone Badges are awarded to recognise 5 years of service. Service Medals are awarded to recognise 10,15, 25, 35, 45, 55 and 65 years of service. Service medals are to be presented at brigade AGM's or special events organised by the Brigade's or Shire such as the Australia Day Ceremony.

## **2.2 Meetings of Bush Fire Brigades**

Bush Fire Brigades are required to hold at least one meeting per year with all meetings being minuted by the Secretary of the Brigade. An invite to the CBFCO and the CESM shall be made to attend Bush Fire Brigade meetings.

### **2.2.1 Annual General Meeting**

Each Brigade shall hold its Annual General Meeting during June/July at which elections of Brigade Offices shall take place, Consider the Captains and FCO Report on the years activities, appoint an auditor for the following financial year and deal with any general business of the Brigade whose responsibility it is to audit the accounts of the brigade and certify their correctness or otherwise to report to the brigade 7 days prior to the next AGM.

Brigades shall advise Council through the BFAC by providing the minutes of the meeting of any outcomes from the meeting within one month after the meeting.

### **2.2.2 Notice of meeting**

A notice of an AGM meeting will be circulated in the Collie River Valley Bulletin newspaper at least two weeks prior to the meeting, the Shire will be responsible for the cost of the advertisement. Notification must also be given to the CBFCO and CESM.

Quorum for a meeting is 50% of the number of members of the brigade, no business of a brigade is to be transacted unless a quorum of members in person or by proxy is present.

### **2.2.3 Voting**

Each brigade member present at the meeting shall be entitled to a vote. In the event of an equality of votes the Brigade Captain may exercise the deciding vote.

Proxy votes must be submitted in writing to the Secretary before the start of the meeting.

## **2.3 Office Bearers appointed to a Bush Fire Brigade**

Office Bearers appointed to Bush Fire Brigades have specific responsibilities in respect to their position. It is therefore necessary that Office Bearers have the appropriate skills and attributes to fulfil their position.

It is recognised that it may not always be practicable for all office bearers to hold the qualifications that pertain to their position. In addition, the importance of soft skills such as leadership, communication and fairness are recognised. In such cases, the officers will be encouraged to obtain the relevant qualifications within 12 months of their appointment. The CESM will consult with the CBFCO to identify training requirements and ensure the availability of relevant courses.

### **2.3.1 CBFCO**

The Chief Bush Fire Control Officer is that of a leader, decision maker, planner and manager of the Bush Fire Brigades. The CBFCO is to ensure that the organisation is functioning to a standard commensurate to the risks within the Shire of Collie.

#### **Duties & Responsibilities of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer:**

- Demonstrate positive leadership to Bush Fire Brigades.
- Monitor Bush Fire Brigade resourcing, equipment and training levels and report with recommendations at least once a year to the Shire of Collie.
- Consult with the Shire of Collie concerning fire prevention/suppression matters generally and directions to be issued by the Shire of Collie to Bush Fire Control Officers (including those who issue permits to burn) bush fire brigades or brigade officers.
- Provide representation on the Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC), Regional Operations Advisory Committee (ROAC) and Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC)
- During wildfire incidents and where possible, manage the fire resources of the Shire and Brigades and where necessary fulfil role as incident controller.
- Promote the use of the AIIMS structure during response to FCO's, Brigades and volunteer firefighters.
- Ensure consultation and operational/seasonal debriefs occur and that the information from this consultation is appropriately circulated.

- Promote the values of the Bush Fire Brigades in the Collie community and within Brigades.
- Determine when Harvest and Vehicle movement bans should be implemented in conjunction with the FWO's and other officers of the Shire of Collie as applicable.
- Be appointed as an FCO.

**Qualifications of a Chief Bush Fire Control Officer:**

- Firefighting experience of 4 years
- DFES courses or approved equivalent
  - Bushfire Safety Awareness
  - Firefighting Skills
  - Advanced Bushfire Fighting
  - Structural Fire Fighting
  - Sector Commander
  - Leadership Fundamentals/Crew Leader
  - AIIMS 2017
  - Level 1 Incident Controller
  - Fire Control Officer (& refresher courses every 2 years)
  - Authorise permits to burn in accordance with the Bush Fires Act
  - Desirable for a CBFCO to hold Ground Controller in addition to the above

## **2.3.2 DCBFCO**

The role of Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer is that of a leader, decision maker and planner that assists the CBFCO in managing the Bush Fire Brigades and incidence.

This position reports to the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer on all matters pertinent to bush fire management.

**Duties & Responsibilities of the Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer:**

- To deputise for the CBFCO in his/her absence.
- To take control where appropriate of firefighting operations at a wildfire where more than one FCO is present.
- Provide representation on the Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC), Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) and Regional Operations Advisory Committee (ROAC) – in the absence of the CBFCO.
- Demonstrate positive leadership.
- Provide advice to the CBFCO, FWO's and the Shire of Collie when Harvest and Vehicle movement bans should be implemented.
- Be appointed as an FCO.



- Authorise permits to burn in accordance with the Bush Fires Act

**Qualifications of a Deputy Fire Control Officer:**

- Firefighting experience of 2 years
- DFES courses or approved equivalent
  - Bushfire Safety Awareness
  - Firefighting Skills
  - AIMS awareness
  - Advanced Bushfire Fighting
  - Crew Leader
  - Sector Commander
  - Fire Control Officer (& refresher courses every 2 years)

Desirable for a Deputy Bush Fire Control Officer to hold Ground Controller and Structural Firefighting in addition to the above and be working towards Level 1 incident controller.

### **2.3.3 Fire Control Officer**

A Fire Control Officer is a delegated representative of the Shire of Collie for the administration of the provisions of the Bush Fires Act 1954. The position is required to perform active operational duties both in firefighting and fire prevention strategies in the local community.

A Fire Control Officer must be able to demonstrate experience in wildfire behaviour, AIMS and knowledge of the local area. The person must be able to interpret the Bush Fires Act and regulations and be confident with communication skills.

This position reports to the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer on all matters pertinent to bush fire management.

A Fire Control Officer may jointly hold the position of Brigade Captain.

**Duties & Responsibilities of a Fire Control Officer:**

- Authorise permits to burn in accordance with the Bush Fires Act
- Identify and conduct Risk assessments in the brigade area.
- Maintain a personal fire diary to include a log of events and decisions made.
- Perform duties prescribed by the Bush Fires Act and authorised by The Shire of Collie
- Provide representation on the Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC)

- To take control of firefighting operations at a wildfire outside their brigade area where no other brigade captain or Fire Control Officer is present.
- Demonstrate positive leadership.
- Provide advice to the CBFCO and the Shire of Collie when Harvest and Vehicle movement bans should be implemented.

**Qualifications of a Fire Control Officer:**

- Firefighting experience of 2 years
- DFES courses or approved equivalent
  - Bushfire Safety Awareness
  - Firefighting Skills
  - AIIMS awareness
  - Advanced Bushfire Fighting
  - Crew Leader
  - Fire Control Officer (& refresher courses every 2 years)

Desirable for a Fire Control Officer to hold Ground Controller and Structural Firefighting in addition to the above and be working towards Level 1 Incident controller.

## 2.3.4 Fire Weather Officer

Fire Weather Officers can allow burning to proceed on days that are deemed to have a High or above fire danger rating that has been forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology. The Bureau of Meteorology weather zones are exceptionally large and this inclusion in the *Bush Fires Act* allows for an approved local government to appoint Fire Weather Officers to maximise burning opportunities considering the prevailing local conditions. Fire Weather Officers cannot issue permits to burn but they may validate permits already issued.

## 2.3.5 Captain

**Role**

The captain of the Bush Fire Brigade is responsible for the leadership and management of the Brigade. The position reports to the CBFCO on Brigade related matters.

As a role model and mentor for members of the Brigade the captain should always act with integrity and consider members equally. All decisions made should be in the interest of the brigade and its membership.

**Duties & Responsibilities**

- Represent the Brigade to the Shire and the Community

- Preside over brigade meetings.
- Demonstrate positive leadership and mentor Lieutenants and Brigade members.
- Command, control and confidently manage firefighting activities.
- Maintain a personal fire diary with a record of fire incidents as well as events and decisions made at incidents.
- Conduct brigade briefings and lead post incident debrief with brigade members.
- Ensure brigade members deployed for operational duty have the skills to complete the task and qualifications to conduct the functions required.
- Ensure the conduct of Brigade members is in accordance with these guidelines and Bush Fire Brigade Local Law
- Report any injuries or damage to property that occur as soon as possible to the Shire of Collie
- Attends BFAC meetings where possible.

### **Qualifications**

- Firefighting experience of 2 years and preferably some time spent as a lieutenant.
- DFES courses or approved equivalent
  - Bushfire Safety Awareness
  - Firefighting Skills
  - AIMS awareness
  - Crew Leader

It is desirable that Captains are working towards Advanced Bushfire Fighting and Sector Commander training.

## **2.3.6 Lieutenant**

### **Role**

The Lieutenant of the Bush Fire Brigade is responsible for the operational management of volunteer firefighters during brigade activities. The role is required to provide operational and administrative support to the captain in managing the brigade. The Position reports to the captain on all matters pertinent to the functioning of the Brigade and/or the personnel they are supervising.

The Brigade should appoint a maximum of four lieutenants identified by rank from 1 to 4 with Lieutenant 1 being the more senior position. In the absence of the Captain, the Lieutenant assumes all responsibilities of that position.

### **Duties & Responsibilities**

- Provide support to the captain in the management of the Brigade.

- Demonstrate positive leadership and mentor Brigade members.
- In the absence of the captain administer all powers and responsibilities of the Bush Fires Act
- Command and manage bush firefighting volunteers.
- Maintain a personal fire diary with a record of fire incidents as well as events.
- Conduct brigade briefings during and after incidents and maintain open two-way communication between volunteers and management.
- Encourage positive interaction and teamwork between volunteers.
- Ensure standard operating procedures are adhered to.
- Encourage volunteer members to undertake training activities.
- Ensure brigade members deployed for operational duty have the skills to complete the task and qualifications to conduct the functions required.

### **Qualifications**

- Firefighting experience of 2 years
- DFES courses or approved equivalent
  - Bushfire Safety Awareness
  - Firefighting Skills
  - AIIMS awareness
  - Crew Leader

It is desirable that Captains are working towards Advanced Bushfire Fighting and Sector Commander training.

## **2.3.7 Secretary**

### **Role**

The Secretary's role is to provide administrative support to the Bush Fire Brigade. This position is not required to perform active operational duties but may also hold an operational role within the brigade.

### **Duties & Responsibilities**

- Circulate Notice of Meetings, attend brigade meetings, record the minutes of Brigade meetings and ensure that these documents are circulated to members and the CBFCA as well as the Shire of Collie
- Provide names of elected members to the Shire of Collie within 14 days of the AGM
- Document and record all brigade correspondence.
- Maintain a register of all current members with the type of membership and contact details as well as reporting any changes to the CBFCA as well as the Shire of Collie

- Apply for Milestone Awards on behalf of members within the guidelines of the Recognition and Rewards Guidelines
- Report to the CBFCO and Shire of Collie the membership register in June or July each year.
- Assist in the completion of the DFES Incident Report Forms and forward to the CESH within 14 days of attendance by the Bush Fire Brigade at an incident.
- Advise the CBFCO any items for The Shire of Collie to consider in the budget for brigades by the 31 December each year.

#### **Qualifications**

- Suitable administration skills
- Basic understanding of meeting procedures and minute taking
- Basic Computer Skills

### **2.3.8 Treasurer**

#### **Role**

The Treasurer's role is to be the custodian of funds of the Bush Fire Brigade. This role may be combined with that of the Secretary. This position is not required to perform active operational duties but may also hold an operational role within the brigade.

#### **Duties & Responsibilities**

- Deposit money to the brigade's account.
- Pay accounts as authorised by the Brigade Committee.
- Keep a record of all money paid and received.
- Maintain the Brigades balance sheet.
- Report on the financial position of the Brigade at meetings and to the Brigade Committee.

#### **Qualifications**

- Basic financial management skills
- Basic computer skills

### **2.3.8 Training Officer**

#### **Role**

The Training Officer is responsible for the coordination of training activities. This position is not required to perform active operational duties but may also hold an operational role within the brigade. If a Training Officer is not formally elected, the duties of this position are the responsibility of the Brigade Captain.

#### **Duties & Responsibilities**

- Document and record all brigade training activities.
- Assist the Shire of Collie in the administration of DFES Pathways Training
- Ensure that training is available to any interested member on an equal opportunity basis.
- Develop brigade training plans as appropriate.
- Where applicable, approve members to attend training via the DFES eAcademy.

#### **Qualifications**

- Bushfire Safety Awareness
- Firefighting Skills
- IT proficiency
- Basic understanding of the DFES eAcademy system

### **2.3.9 Equipment Officer**

The Equipment Officer is responsible for the custody and maintenance of Personal Protective Clothing (PPC) equipment and appliances for the brigade. This position is not required to perform active operational duties but may also hold an operational role within the brigade. If an Equipment Officer is not formally elected, the duties of this position are the responsibility of the 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant.

#### **Duties & Responsibilities**

- Report to the Shire of Collie, Secretary, Captain and/or CBFCO, by the 31 December each year the quantity and quality of all PPC, equipment and appliances.
- Assist members in applying for any new or replacement PPC and/or equipment required.
- Store equipment at the station or other place as approved by the captain.
- Conduct basic maintenance and checks on appliances and equipment.

### **2.3.10 Other**

A Brigade may choose to appoint other position as required in addition to those listed above.

## 3 COMMITTEES

### 3.1 Bush Fire Advisory Committee

Council shall form and maintain a Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) to discuss and provide recommendations on matters relating to bushfire prevention, control and extinguishment for the Shire of Collie to consider, as provided for by Section 67 of the Bushfires Act 1954. The conduct of the committee shall be in accordance with the Local Government Act 1995 and any other statutory requirements.

The Shire of Collie will make facilities available to conduct Bush Fire Advisory Committee meetings.

#### 3.1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the BFAC is to:

- Consider all matters raised by Bush Fire Brigades and make recommendations to the Council.
- Advise the Shire of Collie on all matters relating to the operation of the Bushfires Act 1954.
- Advise the Shire of Collie on the best and most efficient means of maximising fire control resources in the district.
- Recommend endorsement of office bearers of Brigades and the CBFCO, DCBFCO, and FWO's to Council.

## **3.1.2 Composition**

This committee will consist of the following members:

- The Chief Bushfire Control Officer
- The Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer
- The FCO from each Brigade (or an elected delegate)
- The Director Development Services
- Shire of Collie Councillor(s)
- Shire of Collie Senior Ranger
- Department of Fire and Emergency Services
- Western Australian Police Service
- Department of Parks and Wildlife

The Shire will supply a minute taker for this meeting.

## **3.1.3 Chair**

The Committee shall elect a Chairperson from amongst members on the committee. In the absence of a Chairperson, a member shall be elected to preside.

## **3.1.4 Observers and Advisors**

BFAC meetings are public, observers and any members of the brigades are welcome to attend. Observers attending meetings of the Committee will not be permitted to speak on any matter unless invited to do so by the Chairperson.

## **3.1.5 Quorum**

A quorum for a meeting is 50% of the brigade members of the committee.

## **3.1.6 Voting**

At meetings of BFAC each member shall have one vote and in the case of an equality of votes the Chairperson shall exercise a deciding vote. No proxy votes are permitted.

Observers and advisers may not vote on any matter.

## **3.1.7 Frequency**

Meetings of the BFAC will be held at least twice per year or as needed, e.g. after a major incident.



### **3.1.8 Agendas and minutes for BFAC meetings**

The agenda for a BFAC meeting will provide for the CBFCO, each brigade, DBCA, DFES and CESM shall provide a report on relevant matters to the committee.

Minutes will be circulated by the Shire of Collie to all members of the committee.

## **3.2 Regional Operations Advisory Committee**

The Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (or nominated delegate) will represent the Shire of Collie on the Regional Operations Advisory Committee (ROAC) and report back to the BFAC on any relevant matters to the Shire of Collie Bush Fire Brigades.

# **4 TRAINING OF BUSH FIRE BRIGADE MEMBERS**

## **4.1 Training Officer**

Each brigade is to nominate a Training Officer. The CESM is nominated the Shire's Training Coordinator for Bush Fire Brigades and will promote training courses available through DFES and other opportunities that may become available for brigade members.

## **4.2 Training Expenses**

All training expenses are covered by the LGGS, this includes fuel and accommodation for attending approved training courses outside of the local area. Application for reimbursement of costs must be presented to the CESM or nominated person prior to course date. Receipts are to be presented to CESM within five working days of course completion.

Attendance at training outside of the DFES Southwest region will need to be pre-approved by the CESM.

## **4.3 MR Driving Licence Training**

The Shire of Collie provides for members of each brigade to upgrade their licence to a Medium Rigid licence if a need is identified by the brigade.

Reimbursement will be made upon the successful completion of the driving test. No reimbursement is available for an unsuccessful attempt.

### **Eligibility**

- Active brigade member for 2 years.

## **5 ADMINISTRATIONS**

### **5.1 Equal opportunity**

The Shire of Collie is committed to providing an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and/or harassment. In addition to this objective the Shire of Collie promotes a workplace that is enjoyable, challenging, harmonious and inclusive in which volunteers can develop skills and knowledge.

Brigade members are at all times to show courtesy to members of the public and staff and members of the Local Government Brigade, members are to act in a professional manner at all times, whether they are on a fire ground or representing the brigades at any time.

### **5.2 Work Health and Safety**

The Shire of Collie and the Shire of Collie Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades are committed to establishing and maintaining, as far as reasonable, the highest standards of work safety and health for all employees and volunteers.

This will be achieved by ensuring that the appropriate resources and efforts are effectively utilized in the areas of accident and injury prevention.

#### **Members are responsible for:**

- Maintaining work practices that are safe and minimise risk to health and safety.
- Encourage others to work in a safe and healthy manner.
- Brigade Members must follow any State Government Health Directives for Emergency Services Volunteers E.g. Covid.
- Support and promote WHS in the workplace.
- Reporting and rectifying unsafe conditions that comes to their notice.
- Their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others affected by their actions within the brigade and the community.

## **5.2.1 Responsible Officer**

The Chief Executive Officer for the Shire of Collie is the responsible officer for Work Health and Safety matters, although every volunteer has the responsibility to contribute to safe work practices and are encouraged to participate in improving standards of workplace safety and health.

## **5.2.2 Insurance**

The Shire of Collie will maintain insurance that covers firefighters, appliances, equipment including private vehicles and equipment being used under the direction of an incident manager or Fire Control Officer.

## **5.2.3 Incident Reports**

Any incidents involving damage to equipment or vehicles, near misses, injury or fatality must be reported to the CESM and/or CBFCO immediately so and steps put in place to mitigate the danger. Reports can be made by using the QR code system but any severe damage that would render an appliance or equipment unsafe/unusable or major injury will need a follow up phone call to the CESM and/or CBFCO.

If significant damages have occurred to plant or equipment or a reportable injury has been sustained to any member, all parties involved in the reported incident may be required to undergo a drug and alcohol test at full cost to the Shire, refusal to participate in the test will result in the member being stood down pending an investigation.

## **5.3 Radios**

DFES provide an allocation of WAERN radios to the Shire of Collie in accordance with the Basis of Allocation policy. These radios remain the property of DFES with all maintenance relating to the WAERN radios the responsibility of DFES. If any faults are identified the fault should be reported to the CESM for action.

Handheld radios remain the property of the Shire. If the brigades have purchased the radios from their own funds or from grants funding, the respective brigade will be responsible for the maintenance and replacement of the units. The Shire must give authorisation for the handhelds to be programmed to DFES frequencies.

## **5.4 Procurement**

The Shire of Collie is funded through the Local Government Grants Scheme that administers the Emergency Services Levy for most operational costs relating to Bush Fire Brigades.

The Shire of Collie will be responsible for the maintenance of all Bush Fire Brigade appliances, equipment, facilities as well as direct operational costs relating to the brigades.

### **5.4.1 Purchase Authorisation**

Any procurement by Brigades must be authorised by the Shire of Collie prior to being organised.

### **5.4.2 Equipment and Vehicles**

Annual servicing of all appliances will be organised by the Shire, any routine repairs of appliances and Equipment must be authorised by the Shire prior to being organised with a service provider.

If emergency repairs are needed this will be prioritised by the Shire and every attempt will be made to rectify the issue with a suitable service provider ASAP. However, this cannot always be guaranteed and may result in the appliance or equipment being taken out of service.

### **5.4.3 Petty Cash**

All brigades have been supplied with \$250 or \$500 petty cash (dependant on previous operating budgets of brigades), which is to be used for sundry minor purchases. Minor purchases are represented by any item below \$100 in total value. Receipts and a petty cash recoup form must be presented to the Shire of Collie for the petty cash to be 'topped up'.

For the purchase of any items over \$100 a request must be made to the CESM for a purchase order to be raised.

## **5.5 External Plant and Equipment**

Where deemed necessary by the CBF CO, or in their absence the DCBF CO or the Incident Controller of an incident a request may be made to Shire of Collie Senior Management to utilise Shire owned, operated or controlled plant and equipment and/or contract plant and equipment. Shire of Collie Senior

Management means the Chief Executive Officer and Directors of the Shire and excludes Councillors.

If none of the Senior Management are contactable, the CBFCO, DCBFCO the Incident Controller or the CESM may authorise Shire and/or contract plant and equipment until Senior Management can decide on the matter.

## **5.6 Private Works**

Any requests to brigades should be brought to the attention of the Shire of Collie for approval including any requests for brigades to undertake a private burn. The Request for Brigade Burning on Private Property must be filled out and signed by the CEO before the commencement of the burn.

## **5.7 Hazard Reduction Burning**

The Shire of Collie or Brigade Fire Control Officers may identify Shire managed land that requires mitigation work. In some cases, this may include a hazard reduction burn of the area identified. The Brigade FCO, Shire and CESM will consider on an individual basis any areas identified and prepare a prescription for the area to be burnt.