



# ACT Bushfire Council Minutes

Date: 5 May 2021

Time: 4 pm – 7 pm

Location: Black Mountain Room HQ ESA and WebEx

Attendance	
<b>Chair</b>	Sarah Ryan – Chair, ACT Bushfire Council
<b>Attendees</b>	Natarsha Jakubaszek – Deputy Chair, ACT Bushfire Council Tony Bartlett – Member Steve Angus – Member Cathy Parsons – Member David Snell – Member Nick Lhuede – Member Jeremy Watson – Member Kylie Coe – Member Georgeina Whelan – ESA Commissioner Rohan Scott – Chief Officer, ACT Rural Fire Service (ACTRFS)
<b>Apologies</b>	Bhiamie Williamson-Member Daniel Iglesias - Executive Branch Manager, Parks and Conservation Service, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD)
<b>Guests</b>	Matthew Mavity – A/G Chief Officer ACT Fire and Rescue Scott Hankel – ACT ESA Risk and Planning Scott Seymour – ACT ESA Risk and Planning Neil Cooper - Parks and Conservation Service, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD)
<b>Secretariat</b>	Tara Bucknall – Executive Officer ESA Deputy Commissioner

Item	Topic	Action or Decision	Area Responsible	Due
1.	<p><b>Welcome and Apologies</b></p> <p>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 the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attending the meeting.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were noted from Bhiemie Williamson and Daniel Iglesias.</p>			
2.	<p><b>Declaration of Interest</b></p> <p>The Chair asked for any declaration of interest – Nil.</p>			
3.	<p><b>Community Fire Units and allocation of new units in bushfire prone areas – presentation by ACT ESA F&amp;R</b></p> <p>A/G Chief Officer Matthew Mavity from ACT Fire and Rescue provided a presentation outlining the history and methodology behind establishing Community Fire Units (CFUs) in the ACT. This included information on the equipment and training provided as well as expectations and roles of active and non-active CFU members. Council members asked questions regarding the risk assessment to determine where CFU were raised, specifically asking if there were areas within the Bushfire Prone Areas (BPA) that did not currently have a CFU. The A/G Chief Officer confirmed that the location of current CFUs were determined primarily prior to the establishment of the BPA and their locations do not necessarily align with the BPAs. It was noted that the 2 new CFU established in Denman Prospect were done as part of the development planning. They were raised through funding provided by the developer as part of their development proposal. Discussion was held around the nature of the CFU, their use during the whole fire season and use during an event. During a response event, all agencies across ACT look at the risk for that event and include CFU engagement and / or support in placement of response assets to address the situation. This done across government to address the risk proposed by the relevant emergency event and how this can be mitigated across all response capabilities.</p>			
4.	<p><b>Climate Risk Management – Presentation by ACT ESA Risk and Planning</b></p> <p>Scott Hankel from ACT ESA Risk and Planning provided a presentation on Climate Risk</p>			

	<p>Management based around work being led from NSW Treasury. This has provided concepts and options that ESA is exploring as input into the Territory Wide Risk Assessment (TRWA) and future iterations of the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan (SBMP). This includes a consideration of prioritisation of risk across the All-Hazards spectrum to determine actions and outputs. This will provide government with a clear direction for funding and budgeting priorities in future preparedness and protection of the community. The presentation concluded with an outline of a number of opportunities in 2021 for inclusion of Climate Risk in government mechanisms.</p> <p>Discussion occurred around TRWA, SBMP and other ACT government mechanisms to ensure appropriate inclusion of climate risk management. This also includes consideration and examination of national approaches and their impact on the ACT as an island within NSW. There was also discussion around what ESA is considering in the review and updating to SBMP 5. The ESA Commissioner advised Council that ESA is going to commence this process in 2021.</p>	ESA to provide a copy of the TOR for the next TRWA	ESA / Secretariat	When available
<p>5. <b>Evaluation and reporting on SBMP objectives – Presentation by ACT ESA Risk and Planning</b></p>	<p>Scott Seymour from ACT ESA Risk and Planning provided a presentation on work being undertaken for the SBMP Governance Committee involving development of a methodology for the evaluation and reporting of progress towards SBMP objectives. An example of what this may look like was provided.</p> <p>Discussion occurred around the value of this methodology and how the Bushfire Council can utilise this information to inform their annual report. Council requested to be provided with access to the SBMP Governance Committee Sharepoint site to enable review and access to the progress reports on SBMP actions.</p> <p>The Chair thanked all presenters for the information and discussions. She noted in particular that all the ESA presentations had been scheduled for June and the presenters had agreed at short notice to bring forward their presentations to May following a request from EPSDD / SLA to move their scheduled presentations to June. She thanked them for their response give the short notice preparation time.</p>	SBMP Governance Committee to be requested to provide relevant links to their SharePoint site.	Secretariat	By June meeting
<p>6. <b>Acceptance of Minutes from last meeting</b></p>	<p>Council accepted the April minutes.</p>			
<p>7. <b>Correspondence for noting</b></p>				

	The Chair noted that she had received a letter from the Minister in response to Council's request for a short extension. It was identified that this had only been sent to the Chair. The Secretariat will distribute to all other members.	Letter from the minister to be circulated to all members.	Secretariat.	Out of Session
8.	<b>Report on activities undertaken</b>			
	Chair attended the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SBMP Governance Committee – 22 April</li> </ul>			
9.	<b>Reports from SBMP Governance Committee</b>			
	The CO RFS advised that the focus of the last Governance Committee meeting had been the continuing development of tools for the evaluation and reporting, as per the presentation provided today.			
10.	<b>BFC Business Plan</b>			
	<p>Council confirmed activities / presentations for June to be as previously scheduled for the May meeting. Main items will be a set of presentations from EPSDD / SLA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban interface protection – presentation from SLA</li> <li>Forward planning for protection of new suburbs from bushfire – presentation from EPSDD</li> <li>Western Edge Preliminary bushfire risk assessment – presentation by EPSDD</li> </ul> <p>Council discussed the paper provided by the Chair confirming member responsibilities and approach for the development of the 2021 Council report. It was confirmed that the focus would be on two key elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any items from 2020 report that require further discussion or recommendation</li> <li>Detailed consideration of those objectives that need final commentary as the Council wraps up.</li> </ul>	<p>RFS to provide update of progress against the Minister response to the 2020 report.</p> <p>Secretariat to provide a final confirmation of Council members objective allocation.</p>	<p>RFS</p> <p>Secretariat</p>	<p>July meeting</p> <p>As soon as possible</p>
11.	<b>Officials reports</b>			
	14.1 EPSDD provided a report with updates of actions undertaken and planned. EPSDD had previously provided several reports as a result of recent field trips undertaken. These had only been circulated to a limited number of Council members. These will be provided to the Secretariat and circulated to all members.	EPSDD to provide copies of reports for circulation to all members.	EPSDD / Secretariat	As soon as possible.
	There was discussion about the Burnability map that was provided, and how this is	EPSDD to provide presentation	EPSDD	July

	<p>being used by EPSDD in the planning and conduct of their prescribed burns. EPSDD offered to provide a more detailed presentation to Council on this map and how it is being used. Council accepted the offer.</p> <p>EPSDD advised that the conservation Research Report is being finalised and will be circulated to Council shortly. EPSDD offered to provide a presentation to Council on this report.</p> <p>14.2 ESA Commissioner had nothing significant to report.</p> <p>14.3 CO RFS advised of several activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RFS participated in some hazard reduction burns supporting PCS</li> <li>• RFS undertook some scientific burns in support of CSIRO</li> <li>• Final preparation underway for a cultural burn in the Birrigai area</li> <li>• Conducted a join field exercise with SES, PCS and RFS members.</li> <li>• Well into bushfire preparedness phase, busiest time of year for RFS. Brigade AGM's are also occurring in the next few months.</li> <li>• Planning the conduct of an Incident Management exercise as part of a whole of Agency activity</li> </ul> <p>Council asked for an update of the activities planned to be undertaken to conduct an evaluation of suppression activities in the 2019-20 bushfire season. The ESA Commissioner provided an update on the status of the contract to engage an external evaluator.</p>	<p>to council at July meeting.</p> <p>Update to Action item 202011-01</p>	<p>EPSDD</p>	<p>meeting</p> <p>TBC</p>
12.	<b>Discussion of feedback from Council on the draft RFMP</b>			
	<p>Nick Lhuede provided a summary of the draft Council feedback to be provided to EPSDD. Council discussed this and noted that the description of the RFMP that is listed on the ACT Government website refers to it covering "all ACT Government lands" but in fact it only covers land managed by EPSDD and TCCS. EPSDD indicated that there was an error on the website.</p> <p>Council approved the report and Nick agreed to provide the document to EPSDD/Your Say for consideration. The Chair thanked Nick and other members who worked on the report.</p>	<p>Nick Lhuede to submit the feedback document on Council's behalf.</p>	<p>Nick Lhuede</p>	<p>As soon as possible</p>
13.	<b>Other business</b>			

	<p>Council sought advice from the Commissioner as to when they would receive a response to their letter of 11 December 2020 (note that this was in relation to correspondence initiated by the Commissioner on 22 September 2020). The Commissioner advised that she was still considering her response and was unable to confirm when or if she would respond. The Council then sought an explanation for why the Commissioner was unable to confirm when she would, or if she would, respond. The Commissioner acknowledged the request by Council and reiterated that she was not able to advise any further information at this stage.</p> <p>Tony Bartlett provided information with regards to a relevant webinar being conducted by ANU on use of Technology in Fire Management which Council members may find of interest.</p> <p>The Chair recorded appreciation for the support provided by the Secretariat.</p>			
14.	<b>Review of Action items and adoption of action items from meeting</b>			
	Action items reviewed and updated.			
16.	<b>In Camera session held.</b>			
	<b>Meeting closed 7.10 pm. Next meeting: Wednesday 2 June 4-7 pm</b>			