



# ACT Bushfire Council Meeting

7 October 2015  
16:00 to 19:00

Black Mountain Meeting  
Rooms  
ACT ESA Headquarters

**Chair:** Kevin Jeffery

**Secretariat:** Tony Hanson

**Attendees:**

- Ms Cathy Parsons, Deputy Chair
- Ms Christine Goonrey
- Dr Marion Leiba
- Mr Tony Bartlett
- Mr Michael Lonergan
- Mr Steve Angus
- Dr Sarah Ryan
- Ms Natarsha Carney
- Ms Sandra Lauer

- Mr Mark Brown, Acting ESA Commissioner
  - Mr Andrew Stark, Chief Officer, ACT Rural Fire Service
  - Pat Jones, A/g Chief Officer, ACT Fire and Rescue
  - Mr Tony Hanson, A/g Manager, Bushfire Coordination and Planning
- For Agenda Item 6 – Disaster Recovery
- Janelle Wheatley, Senior Manager, Community Recovery and Emergency Planning, ACT Community Services Directorate (CSD)
  - Virginia Hayward, Senior Director, Security and Emergency Management Branch, ACT Justice and Community Safety Directorate (JACS)
  - Dominic Lane, Acting JACS Deputy Director General

## Minutes

**Agenda item: 1.0 – Welcome and Apologies**

**Presenter: Chair**

An afternoon tea was held to welcome newly appointed members to Council – Dr Sarah Ryan, Ms Natarsha Carney, Ms Sandra Lauer and Mr Mick George. Unfortunately Mr George was interstate. The chair welcomed Members and Officials to the meeting and attendees introduced themselves. The Chair provided an overview of the Council, noting the Council's Terms of Reference and the advisory roles the Council plays in relation to the ACT Strategic Bushfire Management Plan. Apologies were received from Andrew Joyce (Member), Mr Mick George (Member) and Mr Neil Cooper, Manager, TAMS Fire Management Unit.

**Agenda item: 2.0 – Disclosure of “Conflict of Interests” of Council Members**

**Presenter: Chair**

Dr Sarah Ryan noted that she was currently undertaking some work for TAMS and would indicate if that work intersected with any discussions of Council. No Conflicts of Interest were reported by Council Members.

**Agenda item: 3.0 – Acceptance of minutes of previous meeting**

**Presenter: Chair**

**Discussion:** The minutes from the previous meeting, of 2 September 2015, were accepted as a true record.

Moved: Michael Lonergan Seconded: Tony Bartlett

**Agenda item: 4.0 – Update on action items arising from previous meetings**      **Presenter: Chair**

The Chair noted the Action Items from the previous meeting were completed or being actioned as part of this meeting.

**Agenda item: 5.0 – Correspondence**      **Presenter: Chair**

The Chair noted that recent correspondence included:

- The Council's submission to the review of the Emergencies Act;
- The Minister's letter to Council informing them of the new appointments to Council; and
- A letter sent to the TAMS Director General supporting the TAMS Indigenous Fire Management program.

**Agenda item: 6.0 – ACT Disaster Recovery Arrangements**      **Presenters: Officials**

The Council welcomed Guest Speakers Janelle Wheatley, Senior Manager, Community Recovery and Emergency Planning, ACT Community Services Directorate (CSD) and Virginia Hayward, Senior Director, Security and Emergency Management Branch, ACT Justice and Community Safety Directorate (JACS), who was accompanied by Dominic Lane, currently acting in the role of JACS Deputy Director General.

Officials provided an overview of the:

- National and ACT governance arrangements for recovery;
- The expansion of recovery planning into economic, environmental, community and infrastructure recovery.
- ACT Community Recovery Plan, including roles and responsibilities of participating agencies, both government and NGO's;
- Support to vulnerable communities, before, during and after activation and assistance measures available;
- Relationship between response and recovery;
- Examples of recent resilience building projects and activities, some of which have been funded through the National Disaster Resilience Program;

Council provided feedback on the ACT Recovery Arrangements following the presentation including:

- The chair noted the integrated nature of the Recovery Plan in line with response tiers, the inbuilt accountability mechanisms and the integration of national activities.
- Christine Goonrey noted the improved sophistication of the definition of vulnerability.
- Virginia Hayward noted that Janelle had chaired a national committee of officials that developed the definition of vulnerability.
- Steve Angus noted it was comforting to hear the work being undertaken, particularly to improve the flow of information. Steve Angus suggested that it would be good for Janelle to attend a Rural Leaseholders Association meeting to provide a similar presentation.
- Council noted the importance of the Communications component of the Recovery Plans.
- There was a discussion around land tenure, which appears to be better than in 2003.
- Council noted the Plan included the recovery of animals and accommodation for pets.

Council members thanked the presenters for the presentation. Janelle Wheatley, Virginia Hayward and Dominic Lane left the meeting.

**Agenda item: 7.0 – Consideration of Topics for 2016 Business Plan and Presenter: Chair meeting agenda**

**Discussion:** Council noted that a number of areas of focus for 2015 that remain outstanding including Cross Border Arrangements and Power Infrastructure and Bushfire Prevention activities.

Council discussed the potential themes for the 2016 meeting agenda which form part of Council's 2016 business plan.

Potential themes will also flow out of Council's annual preparedness report, such as consultation around Bushfire Prone Areas on the urban edge and the Communication Centre review.

Council noted that there may be a number of topics flowing from upcoming bushfire season, such as the usefulness of the new satellite imagery available through the Bureau of Meteorology. In addition, there were a number of emerging questions which might provide themes for a number of presentations, such as, best practice approaches to measuring the effectiveness of burning programs.

Michael noted that there were a number of Directorate Bushfire Operational Plans which the Council didn't have visibility. Michael suggested that these should also be included.

**Action Item:** Council agreed that Council Members should email potential themes for collation to the secretariat for collation.

**Agenda item: 8.0 – Chief Officer Updates**

**Presenter: Chief Officers**

Andrew Stark, CO RFS circulated the ESA Audit of the TAMS Bushfire Operational Plan to Council and provided an overview of the upcoming 3 day Incident Management Exercise to test ESA's Incident Management Teams and a workshop for Level 3 Incident Controllers in preparation of the bushfire season. Andrew Stark gave an overview of the recent RFS Pre Season Briefing and RFS Centenary Exhibition. Andrew Stark noted that Pat Jones had initiated a Communications Centre Pre-season Briefing for four Fire & Rescue Comcen Platoons regarding stand-up arrangements, fire towers, alerts and warnings, etc. The RFS Open Day would be held on 25 October 2015.

Mark Brown CO F&R provide an update on Community Fire Unit (CFU) Saturday and indicated he would distribute the locations for the event through the secretariat.

Pat Jones, Andrew Stark and Mark Brown left the meeting at 18.50 for Council Members to consider their Draft Annual Preparedness Report.

**Agenda item: 9.0 – Councils Annual Preparedness Report**

**Presenter: Chair**

**Discussion:** Council considered their annual report making a number of minor amendments. The meeting agreed that the Chair would finalise the draft and send it to the Minister.

**Agenda item: 10.0 – Next Meeting**

**Presenter: Chair**

The next meeting is scheduled for 4 November 2015.

**Closing: The meeting closed at 7:13pm.**