



ACT Bushfire Council

4 May 2011

1600-1900

ESA Headquarters

Chair: Kevin Jeffery
Note taker: Amy McLenaghan

Attendees: Christine Goonrey, Member
Simon Katz, Member
Marion Leiba, Member
Michael Lonergan, Member
Tony Fearnside, Member
Cathy Parsons, Member

Greg Potts, Manager Community Bushfire Protection ACT Rural Fire Service

Meeting commencement: 1615 **Meeting concluded:** 1800

Minutes

Agenda item: 1.0 - Apologies

Tony Bartlett, Deputy Chair/Member
Neil Cooper, Manager ACT Parks and Land Conservation
Andrew Stark, Chief Officer
ACT Rural Fire Service
Paul Swain, Chief Officer ACT Fire Brigade
Michael Joyce, Deputy Chief Officer ACT Rural Fire Service

Agenda item: 2.0 – Minutes of previous meeting Presenter: Tony Fearnside

Discussion:

The April Minutes will be sent out shortly

Agenda item: 3.0 – Actions running sheet Presenter: Tony Fearnside

Discussion:

BFC Minutes on website (1)

Council decided that they would prefer the minutes to be uploaded now rather than waiting for the new website. Amy McLenaghan advised that the minutes will be reviewed and uploaded onto the website.

BFC Abstracts on website (2)

Members were reminded to send their abstracts through to Tony Bartlett to collate and Amy McLenaghan will upload them onto the website.

Website(3)

Greg Potts advised that RFS staff member Rohan Samara was working closely with the ESA webmaster to develop our new website. He also advised that the RFS is utilising social networking to reach out to the community. Members requested a presentation from RFS on their social media sites. The BFC discussed in length current technology that could be utilised to contact the community in an emergency.

Molonglo update:

Members requested an update on a previous action item regarding the development of Lower Molonglo and dealing with the environmental aspects. Greg Potts advised council that development is being expedited and there is much public scrutiny of the whole development. As an agency, ESA have major concerns in the development of Coombs as the area is a historical fire path. ESA concerns are mainly for the Outer Asset Protection Zone. Has

been identified as habitat for the Pink Worm Tail Lizard and it is a requirement that the species is protected and that the Outer Asset Zone be maintained as per SBMP standards. ESA will not approve until it is confirmed that these requirements will be met.

Council supports ESA's stance to withhold final approval of development, and ensure integrity of bushfire protective measures for Coombs.

Agenda item: 4.0 – *Correspondence*

Presenter: Tony Fearnside

Incoming:

Nil

Outgoing:

Letter to Minister endorsing the amended BOP

Advertisement for Bushfire Council Members – Chair, Deputy Chair and two members.

Council noted that public advertisements had been placed for Council positions without prior notifications to council and council considered that direct interaction with the minister and commissioner had not been as frequent as previously as a result Council had concerns about their perceived effectiveness and responsibilities of the bushfire council. Michael Lonergan contrasted ACT arrangements with NSW RFS Section 52 Operation Plans which detail roles and responsibilities of IMT and field personnel and reporting to the Bushfire Coordinating Committee at State level.

Action items

Nil

Agenda item: 5.0 – *BOP Review*

Presenter:

Discussion:

Council were presented the proposed amended BOP earlier in the year, and had endorsed this with a letter to the Minister. Council received a progress update in that presentation so in the absence of Neil Cooper, supported postponing this agenda item to a later month. Greg informed Council that the grass does not seem to be curing and is currently less than 60% cured in most areas Greg predicts that until the grass cures or the frost cures the grass it will be difficult for TAMS to ensure that some aspects of the BOP can be met. Burns are proving difficult to complete but Council noted that TAMS have put a lot of effort into showing flexibility with the BOP and attempting to complete what is possible with the current conditions.

Action items

Nil

Agenda item: 6.0 – *Other Business*

Presenter:

Discussion: 6.1

Greg Potts gave Council an update on RFS business. He advised Council that the Elevated Fire Danger Plan has been finalised with every Department besides Education. The next step is developing a process where RFS contact Departments regarding accuracy of current data and updating data regarding new or altered facilities in pre season checks.

Council members were updated on RFS projects including Hume Air Base, which has been completed and is due to operational as of 1 June. The Rivers Shed is currently being rectified as there were major issues regarding the construction and the Jerra shed construction is progressing and handover is next week.

RFS have staff members enrolled in the TAMS lighting pattern course, and are utilising the new training centre with RFS running a Basic Fire Fighting course throughout May. RFS Staff were involved in an Air Attack course run for AMSA and assisted with the Air Operations and gained valuable experience.

Greg advised Council that RFS staff are continuing to finalise our personal development plans which interlocks with

a lot of the IMT roles and responsibilities. . Michael Joyce is currently in Mt Macedon attending a Level 3 Incident Controller course which is part of that initiative. Staff and Volunteers are working quite diligently with the background of Royal Commission recommendations and community expectations to ensure that people won't be placed in roles where they are not qualified. Ben Ribbons is working hard as the new RFS training coordinator to adapt standard competencies to meet what is required under that operational readiness. Marion Leiba enquired into the similarities of the call signs between NSW RFS and ACT RFS. Greg confirmed that in both our fire ground SOP and aviation SOP, they are exactly the same.

Discussion: 6.2

Cathy Parsons requested an update on Comcen. Greg informed members that Comcen is still currently operating out of Curtin. Greg stated that Risk and management have moved back to the downstairs area of Fairbairn along with Media, but due to the complexity of the computer system, it may be August before Comcen can move back to Fairbairn. Greg advised Council that ESA will maintain capability at Curtin and will be testing Business Continuity with an exercise injure. This initiative is nationally funded.

Agenda item: 8.0 – Outstanding Items/Issues

Presenter: Insert Position Title

Discussion:

Nil

Action items

Nil

Other Information

Next Meeting: 1600 1 June 2011, ESA Headquarters.