



ACT Bushfire Council Meeting

4th February
2015
16:00 to 19:00
Black Mountain 1 & 2
Meeting Rooms
ACTESA Headquarters

Chair:	Kevin Jeffery	Secretariat: Vanessa Althorp
Attendees:	Christine Goonrey , Member Michael Lonergan, Member Cathy Parsons, Member Marian Leiba, Member Andrew Joyce, Member Steve Angus, Member	Andrew Stark, Chief Officer ACT Rural Fire Service Conrad Barr , A/g Chief Officer ACT Fire & Rescue Scott Farquhar, A/g Mgr Fire Forest and Roads, PCS Tony Hanson, A/g Manager, Bushfire Planning & Coordination, ESA Jim Corrigan Executive Director Planning Delivery, EPD Steven Gianakis Senior Manager Environment and Planning, EPD Ryan Lawrey Fire Management Officer

Minutes

Agenda item:	1.0 – Apologies	Presenter:	Chair
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The chair welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting.
Apologies received from:

- Dominic Lane, ESA Commissioner
- Tony Bartlett, Member

Agenda	2.0 – Disclosure of “Conflict of Interests” of Council Members	Presenter:	Chair
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No Conflict of Interests reported by Council Members

Agenda item:	3.0 – Acceptance of minutes of 6 Apr 13 meeting	Presenter:	Chair
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Discussion: The minutes from the previous meeting held on 3rd December 2014 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Accepted by Cathy Parsons and seconded by Marian Leiber

August minutes still need to be approved.

Agenda item:	4.0 – Update on action items arising from previous meetings	Presenter:	Chair
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Discussion: Council noted the following updates against the previous meeting action items:

- closed action on Bushfire Suppression Resource Atlas;
- new action Tony Hanson to resend Terms of Reference;
- Kevin to send Tony Hanson comments on the August minute

Agenda item:	5.0 – Correspondences	Presenter:	Chair
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NIL

Agenda item:	6.0 – Land Manager Report to Bushfire Council	Presenter:	Scott Farquhar
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Discussion: *BOP Update*

Scott presented t the 2nd Quarter report showing how TAMs is tracking against the BOP.

Scott advised fuel management activities are on target which includes slashing, physical activities and grazing.

Scott informed the Council that:

- Burning has been put on hold due to the wet weather;
- Preliminary discussions between Andrew Stark and Scott Farquhar have indicated that, if the conditions are right, the burn program will be bought forward.

Council noted approvals are in place for the current BOP.

General maintenance is ongoing, no upgrades have occurred to the scope of works.

TAMS Monthly Report briefing

Scott outlined:

- Cotter Hut Rd culverts and sheeting started in October;
- Culverts crew are forecast to be finished in April / May;
- Slash buster working on removal of road side vegetation approximately 90Km; Monitoring Namadgi slashing currently on hold due to 40% curing, if conditions change slashing will start again;
- Grazing is ongoing;
- TAMs responded to physical removal jobs in Campbell following complaints.
- Stromlo Forest Park work for Fire & Rescue is on hold due to wet weather;
- Maintenance is ongoing to Booth and Pearce's Creek BHP repeaters which are still used in Hazard Reductions and available for suppression if required;
- A micro storm hit Googong dropping 125mm rain in two hours which basically destroyed the road network in the southern end. No public access is available at the moment. Current emergency vehicles access should be extended to the public next week.

Consultant Andrew Yates has been appointed to look after the draft Blue Range Plan and Greater Lower Cotter catchment currently background reading, hopefully results will flow on in the next few weeks.

TAMS and RFS are working towards a common goal establishing remote sensing for hazard ratings and curing assessments with ANU. This is important to TAMs for expenditure and to RFS for potential for fire conditions.

Ryan Lawrey briefed Bushfire Council Members on Ipad technology & Fire Pre-Suppression Atlas.

Bushfire Pre-Suppression Atlas's were distributed to Bushfire Council Members.
TAM has appointed an Indigenous Officer, Bhiemie Williams who has completed a PHD in Aboriginal Engagement in Land management.

Council members commended TAMs for their work on the Atlas and the App.

Agenda item:	7.0 – ESA Commissioner's Report to BFC	Presenter:	Dominic Lane
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Discussion:

Andrew Stark spoke to the Commissioners report in his absence

Strategic Bushfire Management Plan

The Commissioner has established an Implementation Working Group (IWG) to oversee the implementation of the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan. The IWG includes senior representation from all ACT government agencies with responsibilities under the SBMP. The SBMP Implementation Working Group (IWG) met on 24 November 2014 and 3 February 2015 to further progress the SBMP's implementation.

Strategic Bushfire Capability Framework

ESA has been working to develop an ACT Strategic Bushfire Capability Framework which will serve as a series of inter-related 'whole of government' activities that supports the ACT's prevention and preparedness for bushfires.

The capability framework seeks to bring together assets, people, organisational knowledge, ICT and governance in order to ensure a strategic approach to the management of bushfires in the ACT. Capability is scheduled as an area of focus to be discussed at your March 2015 meeting and is strategically linked to Objectives 2, 3 & 4 of the ACT Strategic Bushfire Management Plan.

Development of tools to assist when deploying assets and resources for Bushfire

Bushfire response capability not only relates to the amount of resources available, but their effective deployment across the Territory. Given that any situation will be dynamic, it is important that deployment decisions can be made in real time and be responsive to the changing operational environment.

ESA is continuing to scope systems and tools that could be developed to support real-time decision-making in relation to deployment of assets and resources.

Power infrastructure and bushfire prevention

The Australian Electricity Regulator recently published their draft decision regarding ActewAGL Distribution's revenue for 2015–19 and the draft decision is currently subject to public consultation. Stakeholders have the opportunity to make submissions on the draft decision to the Regulator by 13 February 2015.

The Regulator made statements on ActewAGL's vegetation management and bushfire prevention activities in their draft decision. As such, I have written to ActewAGL Distribution to clarify their statutory requirements and obligations under the Emergencies Act 2004 and SBMP.

The ACT Bushfire Council has earmarked Electricity Distribution and Bushfire Prevention for discussion at your October 2015 meeting. I intend to report on progress to implement the SBMP's actions outlined above in October 2015.

Lower Cotter Catchment and Blue Range

The ACT Auditor-General outlined in her 2014/15 Performance Audit Program that a review of The Lower Cotter Catchment Area would be undertaken involving Territory and Municipal Services Directorate, Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate and ACTEW Corporation.

Following the Bushfire Council's:

1. briefing by TAMS in November 2014;
2. visit to the Lower Cotter Catchment / Blue Range in November 2014; and,
3. Council's advice to me regarding the Lower Cotter Catchment in December 2014,

I was invited by the Auditor-General to meet with her in January 2015 to discuss the review of the Lower Cotter Catchment Area.

Specific actions to support minimising the risk of bushfire in the Lower Cotter Catchment have been included with the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan. ESA continues to work with TAMS and ACTEW to address concerns and I would like to thank Council on your recent advice.

Agenda item:	8.0 – RFS Chief Officers Report to BFC	Presenter:	Andrew Stark
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Discussion:

Andrew informed the council:

- that there has been mild conditions with fire risk across broader region exception Adelaide Hills;
- RFS assisted NSW RFS with Sawyers Gully fire by sending parks and volunteer brigades attended, 2 shift and a airbase was set up at Hume to assist;
- The Tidbinbilla tracking station new equipment has been installed, now there is a exclusion zone in place including air space. A week notice is needed to be able to access the exclusion zone. An official MOU is currently being developed with CSIRO, NASA etc;
- No Incident Management Teams have been deployed this summer;
- Crews from NSW have been offered to both South Australia and Western Australia;
- The Victorian government has contracted large aircraft at Avalon, has Steve Forbes is currently down there and Paul Simakoff –Ellims & Dave Ingram will also participate for a week. All arrangements are in place for Victorian aircrafts to operate out of Hume if required.

Brigades have been actively involved in door knocking for Canberra Bushfire Ready campaign and other community events including fetes, Summernats, and 40 trucks in the convoy for cancer. Brigades will be assisting in the stand at Canberra show.

Agenda item:	9.0 – Presentation by Environment and Planning Directorate on Land Use Planning and Bushfire Prone Areas	Presenter: Steve Gianakis & Jim Corrigan	
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Discussion:

Representatives from the planning area within the Environment and Planning Directorate provided an overview of the ACT strategic and statutory planning system.

Strategic (forward) planning is informed by the ACT Planning Strategy, which was approved by the Government in 2012. The document sets the direction on how growth will be managed in the ACT over the next 20 years and beyond. In relation to Greenfields areas, it indicates that development will continue in Gungahlin and Molonglo, proposes continuing investigations in the Eastern Broadacre area, identifies an investigation area in West Belconnen, and a western edge study of Canberra. Throughout and at key stages in the strategic planning process, EPD engages with ESA and comments taken into consideration.

In the subsequent statutory planning process, ESA is also consulted during the draft variation to the Territory Plan (e.g. proposals to rezone land) and in estate development plan (subdivision) development applications. Comments are taken into consideration.

In addition to ESA consultation, engagement protocols have been strengthened with Territory and Municipal Services Directorate for the delivery of bushfire operation plans and associated capital works projects, in particular those activities that may require statutory approval under the *Planning and Development Act*.

EPD and ESA are continuing to progress a proposal to Government to introduce bushfire

prone areas into the urban area.

Ms Parsons asked Mr Corrigan to clarify the Mt Franklin road and the problems in getting the EIA done in a timely fashion. The council wanted reassurance about whether under the new processes, the timeframes for approval of TAMS projects would now be much streamlined and quicker.

Mr Corrigan did assure Council this would be the case.

The meeting was closed at 7:00pm The next meeting is scheduled for 4th March 2015