



ACT
Government



Wednesday 6 July 2016
16:00 to 19:00
Black Mountain Meeting
Rooms
ACT ESA Headquarters

Chair:	Cathy Parsons	Secretariat:	Lynda Scanes
Attendees:	Christine Goonrey		Mark Brown, A/g Commissioner
	Sarah Ryan		Phil Canham, Chief Officer, ACT Fire & Rescue
	Steve Angus		Joe Murphy, Chief Officer, ACT Rural Fire Service, ESA
	Marion Leiba		Neil Cooper, Parks and Conservation Service (PCS), Environment and Planning Directorate (EPD)
	Natarsha Carney		
	Mick George		
	Sandra Lauer		
	Andrew Joyce		
Invited Guests	Ben Ribbons, Training Coordinator, ACT Rural Fire Service, ESA		
	Lianna Guest, Membership Support Officer, ACT Rural Fire Service, ESA		
	Adam Leavesley, Fire Management Officer, PCS, EPD		
	Tony Scherl, Fire Management Officer, PCS, EPD		

Minutes

Agenda item: 1.0 – Welcome and Apologies

Presenter: Chair

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Kevin Jeffery, Tony Bartlett, Daniel Iglesias and Dominic Lane.

Agenda item: 2.0 – Presentation on ACTRFS Volunteer Brigades in relation to recruitment, retention, succession planning, mentoring, training and competencies

Presenter: Lianna Guest and Ben Ribbons

Discussion:

The Chair welcomed Lianna Guest and Ben Ribbons from the ACTRFS Membership Team.

Ms Guest provided an overview of the ACTRFS Membership Team who provide support, advice, leadership and management on all areas of ACTRFS membership to prospective and current volunteers, volunteer leaders as

well as ESA and JACS staff. Providing support, advice, management and leadership on injury prevention and management. Brigade management, service records, recruitment, and service awards and recognition.

There are currently 679 members across the nine brigades; Guises, Gungahlin, Hall, Jerrabomberra, Molonglo, Rivers, Southern, Tidbinbilla including Parks and Conservation Service with 12 support staff at ESA Headquarters.

There was discussion about planning for the future by streamlining the recruitment process, training, fitness standards and how to manage long term brigade members that have become inactive; and present at times of heightened bushfire activity.

Mr Ribbons provided an overview of ACTRFS Learning and Development. The team identifies the strategic training needs, design and development of training packages, delivers training to meet operational need and develop recognition strategies.

Council asked questions about the capability/capacity and succession planning of the Service. Mr Ribbons explained the ACT Bushfire Capability Framework benchmark for high demand. The ACTRFS maintains a sufficient number of trained fire fighters, crew leaders and field commanders to meet this capability statement. The ACTRFS has the capability to cover two shifts for two to three days, and then would require interstate assistance.

The ACTRFS is working to build Incident Management Team (IMT) capacity against new National requirements of competency for IMT roles. ACTRFS training works in partnership with volunteers and Parks Brigade staff to deliver fire fighting and other training to staff and volunteers of the Service. Bushfire Fighter and Advanced Fire Fighter courses are delivered by the volunteers. Crew Leader and Divisional Commander courses are led by the staff and supported by senior volunteers

The ACTRFS external partnerships with National Emergency Management Projects, Australasian Fire & Emergency Services Authorities Council, NSW Rural Fire Service, National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Internal Partnerships with Emergency Services Agency, ESA Training (Registered Training organisation, RTO), Justice and Community Safety Directorate, ACT State Emergency Service and ACT Fire and Rescue Service all providing access to subject matter expertise. Courses are reviewed and aligned to National competencies, Bushfire Fighter, Village Fire Fighter, Advanced Fire Fighter and Work Safely Around Aircraft, Helicopter winch and hover exit, Crew Leader, Divisional Commander, AFAC Prescribed Burning package, Compressed Air Foam Safety and driver training. There is a focus on mental health first aid, peer support for Volunteers and opportunities to attend social media training.

It was noted that Volunteer participation at hazard reduction burns provides the best training situation. The meeting noted the increased collaborative/co-operative work between fire management agencies and volunteers has improved. Council asked questions about the capability/capacity of the Service.

The Council commended the ACT Rural Fire Service for the recent presentations by staff members and thanked

Ben and Lianna for the update requesting they report back in 6 months.

Action:

Secretariat to place on work plan the 6 month update on recruitment, retention, succession planning, mentoring, training and competencies

Agenda item: 3.0 – Presentation about cost benefits of fuel reduction

Presenters: Adam Leavesley and Tony Scherl

Discussion:

The Chair welcomed Adam Leavesley and Tony Scherl from Environment Planning Directorate to talk about cost benefits of fuel reduction.

Adam Leavesley provided an overview of what the ACT is doing to track costs and how to determine best ‘value for money’ between prevention, preparedness, response and recovery and the cost benefits of suppression (aircraft, trucks), insurance, strategic breaks, and road network and/or fuel mitigation. As a starting point ACT reviewed experience from other jurisdictions using risk modelling approaches. Victoria uses the Phoenix RapidFire modelling and INFFER process. Ecological, forestry/timber, water catchments are modelled.

The ACT is conducting a three pronged approach with the **development** of TM1 to track costs in **collaboration** with Melbourne University and **AFAC** to assess risk that will lead into the Regional Fire Management Plans 2019 and Strategic Bushfire Management Plan version 4.

Council highlighted the importance of the partnership with AFAC and attendance at the interstate meetings and thanked Adam for the edifying presentation.

Agenda item: 4.0 – Presentation on different approaches to achieve low intensity and different seasonality in fire regimes **Presenter:** Neil Cooper

Discussion:

Mr Cooper spoke about the different approaches to the delivery of the burning program that PCS intend to investigate in the discussions towards the next Sub Regional Plan. Some of the issues Mr Cooper discussed included:

- The Sub Regional Plans look at fuel management over a five year period and sets two-year windows for hazard reduction burns. However this outcome depends if it is a good burning year – it is too restrictive to achieving the fuel management objectives of reducing risk
- PCS provide for extensive community consultation on the Sub Regional Plans in relation to issues of the five year targets to be treated by fuel management (prescribed burning, slashing, grazing and physical removal) as well as the distance (km) of access works - this is a good model, however if the Sub Regional Plan is too prescriptive it becomes very inflexible when changes are required

PCS have a lot of challenges and are looking out how to improve the process in relation to hazard reduction burns versus ecological impact – all with the objective of reducing the risk whilst maintaining ecological integrity.

Agenda item: 5.0 – Disclosure of “Conflict of Interests” of Council Members **Presenter:** Chair

Discussion:

Nil.

Agenda item: 6.0 – Acceptance of minutes of previous meeting **Presenter:** Chair

Discussion:

The minutes from the previous meeting on 1 June 2016, were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Moved: Sandra Lauer and Seconded: Natarsha Carney

Agenda item: 7.0 – Update on action items arising from previous meetings **Presenter:** Chair

Discussion:

Please refer to Attachment A for further details.

The field trip to Blue Range scheduled for the week commencing Monday 18 July 2016 was cancelled due to the availability of Council Members and inclement weather conditions.

Action: Nil

Agenda item: 8.0 – Correspondence **Presenter:** Chair

Discussion:

- Correspondence for noting: Correspondence from the Friends of the Aranda Bushlands and Mr McCue – regarding Aranda prescribed burn.

Discussion to be held to agenda item 14 – General Business

Action: See agenda item 14

Agenda item: 9.0 – Council representation on Emergency Services Operational Review Group (ESORG) – Terms of reference attached **Presenter:** Joe Murphy

Discussion:

As part of the amendments to the *Emergencies Act 2004*, ESA is reviewing the boundaries of the Built Up Area prior to the commencement of the next bushfire season.

The Emergency Services Operational Review Group (ESORG), which includes representation from all key stakeholders, commenced the discussions on the parameters. ESORG will meet a further three times to finalise the review, with the aim to have this completed before the commencement of the 2016-17 bushfire season.

As per the Terms of Reference it is imperative a Council Member is involved in BUA review discussions. It was agreed that Natarsha Carney will represent Council on ESORG meetings.

Action: Natarsha Carney to represent Council on ESORG meetings

Agenda item: 10.0 – Review BFC work plan for 2016 – attachment to draft minutes **Presenter:** Chair

Discussion:

At the previous Council meeting it was noted that Council would review the BFC work plan for 2016. The items listed have been addressed. The review of achievements of the TAMS Bushfire Operational Plan in 2014/15 (SBMP 1 & 6) was listed to be presented in May. Mr Cooper advised this action would not be able to deliver until August or September each year. It was agreed to move the item to August/September meeting schedule.

Agenda item: 11.0 – Commissioner's Report

Presenter: Mark Brown

Discussion:

Mr Brown advised he is acting Commissioner while Mr Lane is acting Director-General, Justice and Community Safety (JACS) for the next three months.

Mr Brown tabled the Commissioner's Report that provided an overview of current activities as summarised below:

Estimates Committee Hearings — The ESA attended Estimates hearings on Tuesday 28 June 2016. Questions were asked in relation to the Pialligo fire, the appointment of the RFS Chief Officer, the emergency services vehicle replacement program, the Bronto, the relationship with NSW in relation to emergencies, and ESA staffing matters.

ESA Strategic Reform Agenda — Seven key projects identified are:

- the Strategic Bushfire Mitigation Plan (SBMP), to be led by Chief Officer, ACT RFS
- CAD/TRN and website upgrades, to be led by Director, Risk and Planning
- Workforce Connect – to be led by Chief Officer, ACTAS
- Station Upgrade and Relocation Program – to be led by Director, Governance and Logistics
- Women in Emergency Services – to be led by Chief Officer, ACT F&RS
- Blueprint for Change – to be lead by Chief Officer, ACTAS
- ComCen reforms – to be lead by the ESA Commissioner

Emergencies Amendment Bill 2016 – update —The Bill was debated and passed (unchanged) on 9 June 2016.

ComCen Reforms — The Government has announced reforms to the ESA Communications Centre (ComCen). Under the change, the ESA Comcen transition to Emergency Triple Zero (000) call takers will extend from ambulance across to fire and other emergency related incidents. It will see more firefighters available to respond to incidents and continue important prevention initiatives to keep the ACT community safe. The

changes to the ESA Comcen will be implemented from 1 July 2017.

Women in Emergency Services (WIES) Strategy — ACT Fire & Rescue Recruit College — The campaign to attract and encourage women to apply for the 2016 recruit college was successful, with 18% of the applications received being from women. The previous ACTF&R recruitment process in 2012 attracted 7% of applications from women.

The most recent firefighter recruitment process received 802 applications made up of 144 females (a 500% increase on the previous recruitment campaigns which attracted 26 female applicants) and 658 male applicants. Following the recruitment process, four female and 12 male applicants commenced at the ACTF&R Recruit College on 16 June 2016.

AFAC and Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC Conference — The 2016 AFAC and Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC Conference will be held in Brisbane at the Convention Centre from 31 August to 1 September 2016. The main theme: Mitigation – Response – Recovery.

Council discussed the 2016 AFAC and Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC Conference and indicated that the Commissioner advised earlier in the year he was happy to consider BFC representation at Interstate Conferences. The Chief Officer ACTRFS advised he would seek further advice out of session and follow-up through email. Secretariat to circulate the conference program.

Action:

The Chief Officer ACTRFS advised he would seek further advice about BFC attendance at the 2016 AFAC and Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC Conference (out of session and follow-up through email). Secretariat to circulate the conference program.

Agenda item 12.0 – Land Manager's Report (Parks and Conservation EDP) Presenter: Neil Cooper

Discussion:

Mr Cooper provided an overview of current activities within the Parks and Conservation Service as summarised below:

- The 2015/16 BOP has been completed with less than 30 jobs still requiring paperwork completion. There are a number of roll-overs into this year's (2016/17) BOP., the timeline is:
 - Finalisation of paperwork and marking off for auditing — 11 July
 - Information rollover into TM1 for reporting — 14 July
 - Preparation of 2015-16 BOP Report — 18 - 22 July
 - Report Available to Bushfire Council — 27 July
- End of Financial Year Achievements - There were a number of significant achievements for the Fire, Forests and Road Group for June, where the budget allowed for purchase of key BOP items. Weather stations and calibration equipment, smoke Modelling, University of Melbourne - cost benefit analysis, completion of post-fire hydrological risk assessment, turbidity probe and sedimentation monitoring equipment, resourcing and rostering project, ADFA Agreement of fire weather course material and agreement of

atmospheric sounder information – ACT PCS has also entered into agreement with UNSW to utilise an atmospheric sounder to gain better information on upper level wind direction and strength and laminar flows, to May 2017. This will assist with smoke modelling, and during the fire season.

- Transition arrangements with move to EPD, Ms Dorte Ekelund is the Director-General EPD, Annie Lane is the Executive Director Environment (Conservator) and Daniel Iglesias is the Director PCS
- TM1 – Improvements are being finalised
- Brandy Flat Rehabilitation
- Blue Range – similar or better results for the trails at Blue Range
- Training – entered into agreement with NSW NPWS and ForestCorp to look at fire camp training for firefighters. Mick Ivill also attended air observer course in Mudgee.
- Demountables for the Stromlo Depot ordered for installation soon.
- Planning Day for the Fire Unit on 27 July 2016
- Attendance at conferences/meetings – Neil Cooper to NZ AFAC Board meeting, three people to AFAC Conference in September, three people to ‘Women in Fire’ Conference and two people to Indigenous Conference in Cairns in August
- ACT PCS have one representative for the Emergency Management Spatial Information Network Australia and one rep on the Forest Information Systems Group
- The 2016/17 BOP is progressing well and is on track for delivery with over 95% of potential jobs now entered on the database.

Action: Nil.

Agenda item: 13.0 – Chief Officer ACT Rural Fire Service Report

Presenter: Joe Murphy

Discussion:

The Chief Officer provided an overview of current activities within the ACTRFS as summarised below:

- The 2015/16 CBR Report was tabled
- RFS are advertising three positions, Manager, Operations and Manager (12 month contract), SBMP, Policy & Governance and Assistant Manager Community Engagement both for permanent filling
- National Bushfire Mitigation Program – ACT RFS received commonwealth funding of \$375,000 over 3 years to assist ACT Rural Landholders with minor works on their property – papers attached with approved submissions - Deeds of Grant are currently being signed with Rural Leaseholders who were successful with their applications
- RFS Operations - new PPE trail underway, new light unit and heavy tanker are at final inspection stage, Preseason preparation and the fire tower contract is going to be advertised soon
- Membership is 531, as at 1 July 2016 (100 female members)
- Training – 16 members attended the first weekend of the crew leader course
- Public Events/Community Awareness - ACTRFS supported the Lightning Bolt Convoy that was en route from Brisbane to Melbourne to inform and increase public understanding of Post Traumatic Street Disorder
- Community Protection - to date 55 out of the 74 Rural Leaseholders in the BAZ have completed Farm Fire Wise

- The Fire Tower Contract will be advertised with a short turn around.

Action: Nil

Agenda item: 14.0 – General Business

Presenter: Chair

Discussion:

- Correspondence for noting: Correspondence from the Friends of the Aranda Bushlands and Mr McCue — regarding Aranda prescribed burn.

The Chair received two correspondence raising concerns in relation to the ACT Parks and Conservation Service, Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) prescribed burn in Aranda Bushland in March this year.

In response to the concerns raised in the correspondence, members from the ACT Bushfire Council sought advice from the ACTRFS and ACT Parks and Conservation Service. The Chief Officer, ACTRFS stated a permit to undertake the hazard reduction burn was issued under section 124 of the *Emergencies Act 2004*. A media alert was released to advise residents that TAMS would be undertaking a 7.9 hectare hazard reduction burn that day.

TAMS advice to Council was the prescribed burn was undertaken after five consultation meetings with the public and extensive consultation with the Friends of Aranda Bushland. The key representatives in ACT Parks and Conservation Service reviewed the impact after the burn and were satisfied with the outcome.

The Council agreed the response correspondence should note, The Council received advice from the Agencies concerned and are satisfied the burn plan was undertaken in accordance with the objectives set by ACT Parks and Conservation Service.

ACT Parks and Conservation Service advised they will be providing a more detailed response to the Friends of the Aranda Bushlands and Mr McCue.

- Mr Lonergan resignation from the ACT Bushfire Council
- Bushfire Council wishes to express their thanks to Mr Lonergan for his service to the Council.

Action:

Secretariat to draft:

- a response to Friends of the Aranda Bushlands
- a response to Mr McCue and email to the Chair for signature.
- letter of thanks sent to Mr Lonergan for his service to the ACT Bushfire Council

Agenda item: 15.0 – Next Meeting

Presenter: Chair

Next Meeting Wednesday 3 August 2016

Closing: The meeting closed at 19:10pm.



ACT BUSHFIRE COUNCIL MEETING IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTION ITEMS

1 JUNE 2016

~Principles~

- The register will include all action items that have yet to be implemented or where implementation is in progress. The status of implementation should be reviewed at each Bushfire Council meeting.
- The status update information is the only information that will be regularly updated in the relevant column. The only exception to this is if a revised completion date is suggested, the status must clearly detail rationale for this change.
- Status of implementation will continue to be regularly updated until action item is fully implemented.
- Action items will only be indicated as “Complete” after due consideration by the Bushfire Council.

Active Items for current meeting

	Action Item / Issue ¹		Originating Meeting date	Responsibility	Proposed/Revised completion date	General Comment	Status Update

	Action Item / Issue ¹			Originating Meeting date	Responsibility	Proposed/Revised completion date	General Comment	Status Update
1	Consultation information on changes to building requirements to be provided to Council			2 March 2016, agenda item 6	EPD			ongoing
2	Addressing concerns relating to the SBMP – refinement of the BPA			6 April 2016, agenda item 11	Chair		Lidar validation	Pending data from Qld being released
4	The Bushfire Prone Area map will continue to reviewed and refined to reflect changes in land use and tenure, as improved vegetation mapping becomes available and to address local and site specific issues as required. Changes will be approved by the Commissioner and reported back to BFC.			1 June 2016, agenda item 6	ESA		The project for Bushfire Prone Area (BPA) includes validation of the vegetation mapping on the ACT urban interface with rural and natural reserve. The outcome to be delivered when correct information is available.	The Bushfire Prone Area is being reviewed by ESORG, Natarsha Carney represents BFC on ESORG
5	Recruitment, retention, succession planning, mentoring, training and competencies follow-up presentation in 6 months			6 July 2016, agenda item 2	Secretariat	January/February	Follow up presentation to be put on the BFC work plan	Pending the development of the 2017 work plan

	Action Item / Issue ¹				Originating Meeting date	Responsibility	Proposed/Revised completion date	General Comment	Status Update
6	Correspondence from Mr McCue and the Convenor of Friends of Aranda Bushland				6 July 2016, agenda item 8 and 14	Secretariat		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • response to Friends of the Aranda Bushlands • response to Mr McCue • letter of thanks to Mr Lonergan for his service to the ACT Bushfire Council 	Complete and emailed Chair
7	Council representation on Emergency Services Operational Review Group				6 July 2016, agenda item 9	Chair		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natasha Carney to represent BFC on ESORG 	
8	Council attendance at AFAC Conference				6 July 2016, agenda item 11	CO ACTRFS/ Secretariat		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate conference details 	

Summary of recommendation or issue

Assessment of progress represented by appropriate coloured 'traffic lights'

Actions shaded in grey reflect completed Actions.

Progress status legend

Red: Significant delays

Amber: Some delays

Green: On track

Completed Items from current previous meeting/s

1	Circulate the 2015/16 CBR Report to BFC members		Completed on 6 July 2016
2	Set a presentation about cost benefits of fuel reduction		Completed on 6 July 2016
3	Send report on Fire Behaviour and Fuels Conference to BFC out of session		Completed on 6 July 2016
4			
5			

Attachment B

The 2016 BFC Business Plan

Tentative meeting agenda topics.

Feb-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cross Border Arrangements (RFS) (SBMP 2&3)• Update on Review into Community Fire Units (F&R) (SBMP 9)	Completed Completed
Mar-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of Bushfire Prone Areas (EPD + ESA) (SBMP 10&11)• Update on community awareness and warning activities (SBMP 9)	Completed Completed
Apr-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of new technology for weather forecasting and fire behaviour (ESA + BOM) (SBMP 3&8)• New approaches to identifying priorities for reducing fuel hazards and monitoring and evaluating risk reduction (SBMP 8)• Overview of lessons learnt – inquiries, reviews and reports (SBMP 8)	Completed July agenda Completed
May-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outcome of strategic review of fuel hazards and road network in Lower Cotter (SBMP 6&7)• Update on Indigenous Fire Management Program	Completed Completed
Jun-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Farm FireWise Program update	Delayed Completed
Jul-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigate different approaches to achieve low intensity and different seasonality in fire regimes (SBMP 8)• Overview of volunteer brigades in relation to recruitment, retention, succession planning, mentoring, training and competencies. (SBMP 2&3)	July agenda July agenda

Aug-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of achievements of the TAMS Bushfire Operational Plan in 2014/15 (SBMP 1 & 6) • Aviation Arrangements and Developments (SBMP 3) • New approaches for risk reduction 	
Sep-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonal Outlook for 2016/17 • Production of Annual Preparedness Statement for the Minister • Annual pre-season briefing on Preparedness by Rural Fire Service 	
Oct-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burning Program for 2017 	
Nov-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingency meeting to allow for slippage 	
Dec-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016 in Review - Planning for 2017 • Verbal Report to Commissioner on scope and effectiveness of SBMP as required by <i>Emergencies Act 2004</i> 	