

MINUTES



ACT BUSHFIRE COUNCIL (BFC)

05 May 2010

ACTRFS HEADQUARTERS

4 POINT COOK AVENUE

FAIRBAIRN ACT

Wednesday 5th May 2010

AGENDA

- 1. Opening and Introduction by Chairman**
- 2. Attendees/ Apologies**
- 3. Minutes of previous meeting**
- 4. Actions running sheet**
- 5. Correspondence**
 - Incoming
 - Outgoing
- 6. Agenda Items**
 - 6.1 Review of 2009/10 Bush Fire Season and Risk Management
 - 6.2 Review of Volunteer Issues
 - 6.3 ESA Strategic Plan
 - 6.4 Report from Christine Goonrey on the amendments to the ESA Act.
 - 6.5 PCL BOP and Budget
 - 6.6 PCL Planning issues
- 7. Other Business**
- 8. Outstanding Items/Issues**
- 9. Confirmation of next meeting**

AGENDA ITEM: 1 – 5

DATE: 05 May 2010 1600-1900Hrs

LOCATION: ASOC Fairbairn

Meeting Opened

Time: 1615

Close: 1820

1. Welcome by Chairman

Kevin Jeffery opened the meeting at 1615

2. Attendees/Apologies:

Kevin Jeffery	(KJ) Chair / Member
Michael Lonergan	(MIL) Member
Marion Leiba	(ML) Member
Tony Fearnside	(TF) Member
Christine Goonrey	(CG) Member
Cathy Parsons	(CP) Member
Simon Katz	(SK) Member
Kenn Batt	(KB) Member
Peter Kanowski	(PK) Member
Neil Cooper	(NC) Ex-officio ACT Parks Conservation and Land Management
Andrew Stark	(AS) Ex-officio RFS Chief Officer
Nick Lhuede	(NL) Ex-officio ESA Director Risk & Planning Group
Michelle Jenkins	(MF) Secretary

Apologies:

Tony Bartlett	(TB) Deputy Chair / Member
Mark Crossweller	(MC) Ex-officio ESA Commissioner
Conrad Barr	(CB) Ex-officio Chief Officer ACT Fire Brigade

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Minutes of the 5nd May 2010 meeting tabled.

Changes to the minutes to be updated:

NIL

Motion to accept the minutes of the previous meeting was moved by MIL and by seconded ML, and carried by the meeting.

4. ACTIONS RUNNING SHEET:

Workshop:

NC explained briefly about the CRC sponsored conference - Fire in the High Country to be held in Albury NSW on the 18/19 May – BFC to email Andrew if interested in attending.

SBMP Packs:

NICK Lhuede – Packs given to BFC members, with a focus on the SBMP.

- Information was handed out focussing on fuel management and the proposed treatments.
- A copy of regional fire management plans was distributed to the BFC.
- Two actions in the plan are directed at BFC
 - 1) Directs the BFC to monitor and review the implementation of the plan.
 - 2) Provide the Minister with a Bushfire Preparedness Report.
- ESA have established an SBMP Implementation Working Group.
- Andrew Stark described how the BFC can approach the development of its report.
- Andrew Stark explained that although a significant amount of work has been undertaken there are no expectations that everything will be finalised prior to the 31 July deadline.

AGENDA ITEM: 6.1

SUBJECT: Review of 2009/10 Bush Fire Season and Risk Management

BACKGROUND:

2009/2010 Bushfire Season

As part of the BFC annual review process of operational functions it is required that the ACTRFS provide a summary of activities for the 2009/2010 bushfire season.

Due to significant rainfall at vital stages throughout the season the A.C.T. again experienced a mild season.

CURRENT SITUATION:

Local:

- 208 responses to bush and grass fires within the A.C.T.
- Assistance given to Parks, Conservation and Land with several Hazard Reduction Burns

Interstate:

- 2 deployments to Armidale, NSW
- 1 deployment to Hawkesbury, NSW
- 1 deployment to Brindabella Valley, NSW
- 2 deployments to the Blue Mountains, NSW
- 15 deployments to the Cooma-Monaro Shire, NSW

DISCUSSION:

- Andrew Stark – Submitted an activity report for 2009-10 fire season.
- Briefly discussed weather patterns locally and interstate.
- Andrew was asked a range of questions from members, and the major answers were as follows:
 - Fleet? - Six tankers out of eight have been delivered.
 - RFS Training? - RAFT was the main focus due to expense and other general training throughout the season.
 - Communications? - With assistance of NC, further discussion and work to TRN improvements are being discussed.
 - What percentage of responses attended by volunteers? - Approximately 20%.
 - Who keeps statistics on Arson and Accident? - Eyres reporting, A.G's office has provided funding to produce national data dealing with bushfire arson. AFAC sub-committee are looking at 24 national landscape performance indicators to be reported on by each state.
 - Of the 208 incidents, is there a breakdown of causes? - No specific data, very few from natural causes.

AGENDA ITEM: 6.2

SUBJECT: Review of Volunteer Issues

A discussion was held in regard to whether volunteer issues were able to be usefully discussed. Key points of the discussion were:

- The utilisation of Volunteer Brigades has been raised as an issue. The Chief Officer noted that it is a real issue, and the Minister is aware of it.
- Council agreed to postpone this item, and discuss this issue at appropriate time.
- In regard to the key issue of correct first response of units, RFS is proposing to reduce grid square size to help Comcen operators/CAD work better.
- The Chief Officer noted that Brigade Membership up 12%, and the outgoing trend has slowed.

AGENDA ITEM: 6.3

SUBJECT: Report from Christine Goonrey on the amendments to the Emergencies Act.

Christine Goonrey attended a half hour meeting with Greg Newton (JACS), Doreen McEnroe (SES), Jamie Shaw, and Tony Graham (Acting Commissioner).

- Changes to Emergencies Act were tabled. There is no structural changes.
- There are changes to the Emergency Controller/Emergency Management Committee.
- Folding emergency and terrorist streams together.
- [Security and Emergency Management Senior Officials Group \(SEMSOG\)](#) – new group – meets four times a year and it is the Chief Officials of Departments ('Not' hands on).
- It is still not known if the EMC requires an environmental expert! (~~Question has not yet been asked~~).

AGENDA ITEM: 6.4

SUBJECT: PCL BOP and Budget

Neil Cooper explained the concepts regarding the BOP.

- PCL/TaMS has been successful in securing funding for capital works and recurrent works.
- NC asked that the BFC understand the need for flexibility in work achieved in accordance to the BOP. If works are moved forward or back this does then not represent non-compliance as long as (1) It is clearly reported and explained, (2) the final BOP is achieved in due process.
- The new BOP is almost completed and ready for review. There is more of a focus in the coming BOP on education and volunteer hazard reduction burns.

Discussions were held around the BOP processes. Concern was raised about effectiveness of grazing the old Coonan property during this season. Simon Katz explained that due to an unexpected delay on getting cattle onto the property last year it took some time to get on top of things. Cattle will be in place earlier this year if grazing is to be done again pending the government's direction for this area.

AGENDA ITEM: 6.5

SUBJECT: PCL Planning Issues

SOURCE: Neil Cooper

- Mt Franklin Road used as an example of frustrations in reference to planning and approval.

Total Planning Costs:

- Planning and compliance costs per kilometre in the ACT = \$7,500, whereas in NSW the are only \$50 per kilometre
- 33% in ACT for planning this project – 5% in NSW
- Action – BFC to write to the Minister with examples expressing this regulatory process in exceeding costs.

AGENDA ITEM: 7

SUBJECT: Other Business

(AS) Just a reminder to the BFC Members to submit CV's.

(NC) Mt Clear burn is completed. Line scans are to be done to determine effect.

- Total cost: \$ 386,000 Mt Clear/Brandy Flat.
- NSW slop over \$68,000 to assist with this, TAMS is looking to recover this amount from NSW.

Minister has responded to BFC letter re PCL/TaMS issue.

Action: BFC to write back to the Minister with acknowledgement and thanks for extended budget allocation to TaMS.

Time and Date of Next Meeting:

| 2 June 2010 at 16400 at RFS Fairburn