



ACT
Government



ACT Bushfire Council

Meeting 4.00 pm to 7pm, Wednesday 5 July 2017
Black Mountain Meeting Room
ESA Headquarters

Council Members	Kevin Jeffery (Chair)	Marion Leiba	Steve Angus
	Cathy Parsons (Deputy Chair)	Sarah Ryan	Mick George
	Christine Goonrey (apology)	Natarsha Carney	Sandra Lauer (apology)
	Andrew Joyce (apology)	Tony Bartlett	
Officials	Mark Jones, Acting ESA Commissioner		
	Pat Jones, Acting Chief Officer, ACT Fire and Rescue		
	Joe Murphy, Chief Officer, ACT Rural Fire Service, ESA		
	Tony Scherl, Acting Manager, Fire, Forests and Roads, Parks and Conservation Service, EPSDD		
Invited Guests	Richard Maloney, ACT Fire & Rescue/Project Manager, Women in Emergency Services		

Minutes

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

The Deputy Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Dominic Lane, Mark Brown, Andrew Joyce, Christine Goonrey and Neil Cooper. The meeting noted Chair would be late and requested the Deputy Chair commence the meeting.

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

No Conflicts of Interest were reported by Council Members.

Agenda item: 3.0 – *Acceptance of minutes from previous meeting and update on action items arising from previous meetings* **Presenter:** Chair

Discussion:

The minutes from the previous meeting on 7 June 2017, were not accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Members requested the recording from the June meeting be checked and clarification of the transcription from Agenda item 6.1 be provided out of session. There were a few minor amendments requested.

Action item 6.3 - The Acting Commissioner agreed to provide a briefing out of session for Commissioner Lane to provide Council with an update on the Strategic Reform Agenda Programme

Acceptance of the minutes was deferred to next meeting.

Moved: Nil Seconded: Nil

Action:

Action 1 – Secretariat to check the recording of the previous meeting, email the transcript to BFC.

Action 2 – Mark Jones to correspond to Council providing an update on the SRAP.

Agenda item: *4.0 – Correspondence for noting*

Presenter: Chair

Discussion:

Nil.

Action:

Agenda item: *5.0 – Topics from the 2017 ACT Bushfire Council Business Plan*

Presenter: Chair

Discussion:

5.1 Preliminary Report of achievements under the 2016-17 BOP – Tony Scherl

The preliminary BOP Report was provided as of 5 July 2017, 685 completed out of 767 jobs with only 8 jobs not started. Mr Scherl advised these figures will change – as further paper is finalised and administration and invoices finalised. The full BOP report will be provided at the next BFC meeting in August.

There was a breakdown of the Prescribed Burning program. The conditions were challenging for burning during the Autumn season, due to fuel moistures and rapidly moving from too dry. Some of the burns planned for 2016-17 will be rolled over into 2017-18 BOP.

Capital Expenditure — The ACT PCS successfully expended \$829K for planning and implementation of improvements and upgrades to the fire trail network, which was the full allocation for Capital Expenditure for 2016-17. The works include Naas Valley Fire Trail Upgrade, Clear Range fire trail, Brandy Flat fire trail and Old Boboyan Road upgrades and works plans. Adam McLachlan from ACT Planning in EPSDD to assist with the environmental approvals process.

Lower Cotter Catchment (LCC) — Fuel reduction included prescribed burning, roadside vegetation removal and pine regrowth removal, and reached the BOP targets for 2016-17. In addition for the LCC a river crossing was replaced, the road plan was finalised, fire trail, and strategic fire break maintenance.

The Council Members thanked Mr Scherl for the update.

5.2 Update of volunteer brigades in relation to recruitment, retention, succession planning, mentoring, training and competencies – Briefing note provided by Rohan Scott

The Chief Officer ACT RFS provided an overview of the Communication strategy to build partnerships with employers and volunteers is progressing, with a focus on Volunteer retention. The team are working with ACTSES to look at synergies and developing an exit survey for volunteers, employer recognition, linking to the WIES project and the establishment of a member survey.

The Council Members thanked Mr Scott for providing the briefing paper with the update of the project.

5.3 Update on the Women in Emergency Services project – Richard Maloney

The Mr Maloney provided an update on work being undertaken to implement the Women in Emergency Services (WIES) Strategy that was launched by Minister Joy Burch, in December 2015.

The WIES Strategy is being delivered as a Project within the strategic reforms under the Strategic Reform Agenda (SRA). It focuses on the attraction, recruitment, development and retention of women on our Emergency Services with the aim of increasing the number of women in the services and supporting more women to gain leadership roles.

The project has implemented some quick win measures, such as gender bias training that will be rolled out throughout the ESA starting with the Executives, new marketing/messaging for the ACT F&R recruitment college campaign to attract women to apply, female cut uniforms, privacy and dignity issues were identified and upgraded at ESA facilities and increased professional development opportunities for female staff.

The 2016 ACT F&R Campaign for the Recruitment College was very successful and a female Station Officer has been selected to lead the next Recruitment College.

The ACTRFS, ACTSES, and ACTAS are developing recruitment campaigns to attract more women into their services, and to support our emergency services in their recruitment programs.

Council discussed some of the statistics surrounding women participation in emergency services in the ACT and welcomed the project and found it very encouraging. Council are eager to see a report next year on the delivery and benefits of the WIES project.

The Council Members thanked Mr Maloney for the update.

5.4 Review the scope and effectiveness of SBMP V3 as required by *Emergencies Act 2004* – Mr Murphy

Mr Murphy provided an update of the 71 actions detailed in the SBMP V3, some of the actions have been completed and other have been set up as business as usual (BAU) and a few actions require an event to occur in the future for proficient implementation. A reporting system for the established BAU actions has been created with reporting timelines and auditable trails.

The actions that had not commenced are now projects within the ESA Strategic Reform Agenda Programme (SRAP). Mr Murphy spoke about the SRAP meeting held on 3 July 2017 and advised he would circulate the SBMP update with the meeting papers.

The seven projects to be achieved are:

- The Annual Planning Forum and this is scheduled for 23 August 2017
- The update on the Communication strategy was provided at agenda item 5.3.
- The Review of the Bushfire Prone Area Map is complete and is available via the ESA website and ACTmapi
- A specialist web analyst and developer have been engaged to undertake the ESA Website refresh process and the Manager Community Engagement will review language of website along community

standards.

- The project to develop a plan with location and timing of fuel-reduction activities in SFAZs for 2019–24 has commenced with discussions and meetings already undertaken between Conservation and Research and the Fire Unit within PCS.
- The Feasibility Report for Real Time Visualisation project has been put on hold until 2018 due to a lack of resources.
- Risk and Planning have advertised an officer to support the Government and Non Government institution Emergency Plan rollout strategy.

5.5 Developing the SBMP version 4

Council members discussed the next version of the SBMP and the timeliness for a review of the current SBMP. The purpose would be to ascertain if the intent has achieved what it was set out to do, the impact of resourcing liability to accomplish it and the sub-plans.

Mr Murphy advised he and the Commissioner have commenced discussion in relation to development of SBMP V4 and are looking at engaging an extra resource. Council spoke about the role they will play in the development of the next SBMP and stated they are very interested to be involved in the early stage to provide input in the content, designing the objectives and strategies of next plan.

The Acting Commissioner spoke about the critical role Council plays in the consultation process in preparing the draft plan.

Action:

Agenda 5.3 - SRAP SBMP update document to be circulated out of session.

Agenda item: 6.0 – Commissioner’s Report to BFC

Presenter: Mark Jones

Discussion:

Mark Jones provided an overview of current activities in ESA as summarised below.

The Volunteer Charter is currently under review. The Bushfire Council Appointments are progressing.

The ACT Budget 2017-18 provides funding for new initiatives for ESA, to employ more professional call-takers and dispatchers in the COMCEN, a recruit college for 16 firefighters, improving mental health services for frontline ESA personnel, funding for ACT RFS Volunteers fitness and health initiative, a second crew at the Ainslie ACT F&R Station and the relocation of ESA’s backup COMCEN.

The National Parks Association Symposium on Fire Management in the ACT in a Changing Climate and AFAC Conference on 4 to 7 September 2017. Council members to submit an expression of interest, via the secretariat, to attend the AFAC Conference.

The Council Members thanked Mr Jones for the update.

Action:

Secretariat to email the details for BFC to submit an expression of interest to attend the AFAC Conference.

Agenda item: 7.0 – Land Manager’s Report to BFC

Presenter: Tony Scherl

Discussion:

Mr Scherl provided an overview of current activities in the Forestry and Fire Management unit as summarised below.

The 2017-18 BOP is currently under development. Budget details should be known by the end of July, this will influence the extent and number of BOP jobs. PCS are on track having the draft BOP ready to show BFC by the end of August 2017.

Neil Cooper and Adam Leavesley are attending the CRC Research Conference in Adelaide this week. The ACT contributed by describing how we expect to use research to improve outcomes of prescribed burning and insights into the utilisation of research.

The use of funding sourced through the BOP for 2017-18 will be used to progress a number of projects. The SBIP project for resource allocation and rostering, this is complimentary to the Workforce Connect application used in ESA. Smoke modelling continuation of arrangements with BoM and two new remote automated weather stations for longer term deployment, including Mt Clear. The weather stations are providing new and additional information that has been collected across the region. The 'Fuels 3D' project, looking at photogrammetric measurement of surface and near surface fuels for ACT fuel plots including a trial site in ACT. Continue Cost-Benefit analysis with Melbourne University and associated research project from University of Wollongong, which will lead into Regional Fire Management Plan development and modelling. Ongoing SODAR installation at Tidbinbilla and new site establishment at Gudgenby.

PCS received over one hundred application for the seasonal positions, successful applicants will commence on 4 September 2017. The majority of existing seasonals have been retained to undertake forestry work and are expected to return for the 2017-18 seasonal program. PCS are looking at ways to retain people for longer periods consistent with other states. There is union and management support for long term contracts with enforced breaks and this will be included in the next enterprise agreement.

The Aboriginal Fire Project Officer position has been advertised (this is the position responsible for implementing the ACT Aboriginal Fire Management Plan) the successful applicant will be announced before the end of the month.

The Council Members thanked Mr Scherl for the update.

Action:

Agenda item: 8.0 – Chief Officer ACT Rural Fire Service Report to BFC	Presenter: Joe Murphy
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Discussion:

Mr Murphy provided an overview of the report that was provided with the meeting papers.

The current issues within RFS were addressed below.

The Brigade Annual General Meeting (AGM) season is in full swing. Mr Murphy advised he attends all AGMs with some members of staff accompanying him.

The delivery of the 71 actions against the SBMP is a top priority for ESA. Mr Murphy and the SBMP Project Manager have been spending time ensuring stakeholders are fully engaged and understand their reporting requirements.

The Molonglo and Guises Creek shed upgrades are progressing. Guises Creek is scheduled to begin on 10 July 2017 with completion due just prior to the bushfire season.

The team and I have been working with Rick McRae to better understand Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) forecast data.

I am taking annual leave from 17 July 2017 – 22 August 2017 with Rohan Scott acting for that time.

An updated business case for the new PPC project was presented to the Executive Leadership Group (ELG) for approval. ELG raised some addition concerns, which will require more work and agreed to provide \$50,000 to undertake a trial. The RFS Team are addressing the concerns to determine the best method for undertaking the trial.

The annual pre-season checklist program is in full swing and it is expected all activities to be completed by early September.

Brigades have been using the hot props for training at the ESA Training Centre at Hume. These sessions have been very well attended and the interaction between the brigades has been excellent. The Acting CO ACT F&R explained the hot props training.

The date for the ACT Open Day is to be confirmed. This year the Volunteer Brigades Association (VBA) decided to separate the Field Day from the Open Day. The RFS will continue to support the VBA with the Field Day.

The Council Members thanked Mr Murphy for the update.

Action:

Agenda item: 9.0 – General Business	Presenter:	Chair
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Discussion:

- Generic Bushfire Council email address for single point of contact – Joe Murphy
It has been decided to have a specific email address for the BFC so ACTRFS staff can use it for all emails associated with the BFC, the address will be bfcadmin@act.gov.au.
Secretariat will confirm with BFC once the email address has been set up.
- Discussion on the Council’s Annual Preparedness Report
Council noted the email had been distributed with the headings for the Annual Preparedness Report.

Sarah Ryan suggested she work (out of session) on some guidelines and review all the headings to confirm if they are required in this year’s report. Council members agreed it would be beneficial to draft the same sections of the annual preparedness report as the previous year. Reporting of the implementation of fire management works will require the data. Information from the ESA Community Engagement Report and Canberra Bushfire Ready project will be required and Council asked for a written report and verbal update at the August meeting.

Action:

The ESA Community Engagement Report and Canberra Bushfire Ready Campaign update to be included on the August Agenda.

Agenda item: 11.0 – Next Meeting	Presenter:	Chair
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The agenda for the next Council meeting to include:

- ESA Community Engagement and Canberra Bushfire Ready Campaign Report

Council discussed the clash with the AFAC Conference and the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 6 September 2017. It was agreed to move the meeting forward to Wednesday 13 September 2017. This will be the final meeting for the current Council and will be held at another venue. The Secretariat to provide a new calendar invitation for the final meeting in September and venue details.

Note: Cathy Parsons advised she would be an apology for the August Meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 2 August 2017.

Action:

Secretariat to provide a new calendar invitation for the final meeting in September and venue details.

Closing: The meeting closed at 19:00pm.



**ACT Bushfire Council Meeting
Implementation of Action Items**

Active items for current meeting

Action Item / Issue	Originating Meeting date	Assigned To	Meeting Date	Due	Status	Comments
Agenda item 6 – IBFC would like to be a invited guests at the Senior Operations Group (Operational Officers) and the Senior Management Group (Administrative Officers) next meetings in July and August	3 May 2017	Secretariat			Pending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat provided the information to the Senior Operations Manager - Complete • Senior Operations Manager suggested this occur when the new Council is formed – Complete <p>Note: This will carry over to the new Bushfire Council.</p>
<p>Agenda item 6</p> <p>6.1 – BFC to give details about the type of data required for the August presentation on the history of bushfires in the ACT and the history of aviation support for bushfires.</p> <p>1) Action: Council to write to the CO ACT RFS and relevant stakeholders requesting detailed information to form data for the Annual Preparedness Report to the Minister.</p> <p>6.3 – Update on the Strategic Reform Agenda Programme</p> <p>Action – Commissioner Lane to provide Council with an update on the SRAP at the next meeting.</p>	7 June 2017	<p>6.2 – Council</p> <p>6.3 – Commissioner</p>	5 July 2017			<p>6.1 Council to write to the CO ACTRFS</p> <p>6.3 5 July 2017 - Mark Jones, Acting Commissioner to send an update out of session.</p>
<p>Agenda item 5</p> <p>Item 5.3 SRAP SBMP update document to be circulated out</p>	5 July 2017	Secretariat	11 July 2017			Sent out with July draft minutes

Action Item / Issue	Originating Meeting date	Assigned To	Meeting Date	Due	Status	Comments
of session.						
Agenda item 6 – email the details for BFC to submit an EOJ to attend the AFAC Conference	5 July 2017	Secretariat				
Agenda item 9 – The ESA Community Engagement Report and Canberra Bushfire Ready Campaign update to be included on the August Agenda.	5 July 2017	Secretariat				
Agenda item 11 – Provide a new calendar invitation for the final meeting in September and venue details.	5 July 2017	Secretariat				

Completed Items

Action Item	Originating Meeting date	Responsibility	Proposed/Revised completion date	Date completed
Agenda item 8 – Write to the Commissioner inquiring about his role in Canberra’s surrounding region during high fire danger days.	1 February 2017	Chair	1 March 2017	May 2017
Outcome from Agenda item 5 – Rural landholder Slip On units Council supported the ACTRFS to dispose of the slip on units to landholders at no cost and the units will not be replaced.	7 June 2017	N/A		5 July 2017
Agenda item 7 – Commissioner to report to Council how the budget will affect the ESA and ACTRFS	7 June 2017	Commissioner	5 July 2017	5 July 2017
Agenda item 10 – Secretariat to investigate restaurants suitable for the final Council meeting.	7 June 2017	Secretariat	5 July 2017	10 July 2017
Agenda item 10 – Annual report to the Minister by the end of September. Chapters to be sent out to Council members and Sarah will co-ordinate the writing of the report and maybe change the framework.	7 June 2017	Secretariat	5 July 2017	5 July 2017

Agenda item 3 Action 1 – Secretariat to check the recording of the previous meeting in June, email the transcript to BFC.	5 July 2017	Secretariat	5 July 2017	6 July 2017
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