



ACT
Government



ESA Black Mountain Meeting Room
ACT ESA Headquarters

Chair	Cathy Parsons	Secretariat:	Lynda Scanes
Attendees	Steve Angus, Marion Leiba, Mick George, Sarah Ryan, Natarsha Carney, Andrew Joyce and Christine Goonrey.		
Officials	Phil Canham, Acting Chief Officer, ACT Fire and Rescue Joe Murphy, Chief Officer, ACT Rural Fire Service Neil Cooper, Manager, Fire, Forests and Roads, Parks and Conservation Service, Environment, Planning and Sustainability Development Directorate (EPSDD)		
Invited Guests	Gary Morgan, Principal Consultant, Global Wildland Fire Management Services		
Presenters	Adam Leavesley, Fire Management Officer, Fire, Forests and Roads, Parks and Conservation Service, EPSDD Fiona Amundson, Manager Community Engagement Rohan Scott, Acting Manager ACT Rural Fire Service Operations		

Minutes

Agenda item	1.0 – Welcome and Apologies	Presenter:	Chair
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The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies received from Kevin Jeffery, Dominic Lane, Daniel Iglesias, Mark Brown, Sandra Lauer and Tony Bartlett.

Agenda item:	2.0 – Disclosure of “Conflict of Interests” of Council Members	Presenter:	Chair
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No Conflicts of Interest were reported by Council Members.

NOTE: Officials, Presenters and Secretariat were excused from the meeting at 5.55pm to allow BFC to discuss agenda item 5 in confidence.

Agenda item:	3.0 – Acceptance of minutes and review of action items and arising from previous meetings	Presenter:	Chair
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Discussion:

The minutes from the previous meeting 1 March 2017, were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Moved: Mick George and Seconded: Marion Leiba

Action items please refer to Attachment A for further details.

Action: Nil.

Agenda item: *4.0 – Correspondence*

Presenter: Chair

The Chair sent a response to Dr Annie Lane, Executive Director Environment ACT (the Conservator) in relation to the Eastern Grey Kangaroo draft controlled native species management plan.

Action: Nil

Agenda item: *5.0 – Review of the Fire Management Unit*

Presenter: Mr Morgan

Discussion:

Council met with Gary Morgan who is reviewing the operations of the Fire Management Unit (FMU), Parks and Conservation, Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate. The Council provided input about its interactions with the FMU over the past decade and requested that if possible, once the report has been provided to senior management in PCS, that a copy be provided to the Council for information.

Action: Nil

Agenda item: *6.0 – Topics for the 2017 ACT Bushfire Council Business Plan*

Presenter:

Chair

Discussion:

6.1 Update on research into the reduction of bushfire risk by Adam Leavesley

Adam provided a very detailed overview of the INFER benefit cost analysis by Melbourne University and Phoenix RapidFire and Flame modelling.

PCS have linked into research done by Melbourne University and the results that look predominately at the most appropriate burning programs. PCS are running two projects to look at risk and managing costs, and the best landscape fire regime model to use for future Regional Fire Management Plans. More information will be provided by the Researcher at the May Council Meeting.

The Chair thanked Adam Leavesley for the update.

6.2 Update on community engagement/education/awareness activities and an update on the Draft Community Engagement Plan by Fiona Amundson

Since commencing in the role in January 2017 the key focus has been the delivery of a whole range of community engagement activities across ESA. The significant activities delivered to date are the Royal Canberra Show display where this year all four services participated. The rollout of the Canberra Bushfire Ready (CBR) Campaign. This year's CBR Campaign has been delivered to residents during week days and weekends and ACT Fire & Rescue have been heavily involved in this year's CBR rollout.

A meeting was held with ACT RFS Brigade Community Engagement Officers, this group will focus on progressing Community Education at the Brigade level. Conducted a review of the Terms of Reference for the ESA Community Engagement and Education Working Group. Arranged meetings with volunteers, brigades, staff and ESA Chief Officers.

The Community Engagement Plan will develop a stronger connection between ESA activities/initiatives and breaking through to real social behaviour change using processes such as decision making, clear messaging, hierarchy of engagement (Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Empower). The implementation plan and annual calendar will include Volunteers, Working groups, Community groups and ESA's Capability.

Planned activities are to re-establish the ESA Community Engagement and Education Working Group, ESA Community Engagement Calendar management, Identifying target groups – clarifying what we mean by 'vulnerable' or 'at-risk' in this context, locate target groups demographics and mapping. Connecting with community sector, specific communities, ACT Government resources - Community Services Directorate (CSD), Child and Family Centres, and advisory bodies. Volunteer recruitment specifically for those interested in Community Engagement, scoping for volunteer role variety and continue to build relationships with volunteers and brigades.

BFC discussed using metrics to explore if the ESA community awareness campaigns are successful and asked for a report in three to four months.

The Chair thanked Fiona Amundson for the update and requested a copy of the Community Engagement Plan and Calendar of events (when endorsed) and to provide an update BFC at the August Meeting.

6.3 Update on whole of Emergency Services Agency Incident Management Capability by Rohan Scott and Joe Murphy

ESA is implementing strategies to continually improve and strengthen IMT capability through training and development opportunities. The Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS) is followed for the Incident Management Team (IMTs).

This year ESA trialed preformed IMT's, the Incident Management Room (IMR) had a changeover of three preformed IMT's that included a range of staff from ACT F&R, ACT RFS and Parks and Conservation Service. The IMT's had a predetermined combination of highly skilled staff and working in the IMT's built good working relationships for service staff that had previously never worked with each other. This training platform worked incredibly well, all involved supported the trial of IMT's. An After Action Review is arranged to evaluate the process and IMT activities. Volunteers experienced with ICON and EMOS information systems were operators during the preformed IMT's and information was updated quickly as the incidents developed. The use of technology system to provide information on the big screens and the Dynamic Coverage Tool for positioning of vehicle location to provide the ACT with a better coverage. The review will look at the role of the Duty Officer in COMCEN and IMT's.

In the event that the ACT experiences a long and sustained bushfire campaign, which requires additional IMT capability (to the three preformed IMT's), the ACT will engage our resource sharing arrangements (cross border arrangement MOU's) with other jurisdictions. ACT has cross border

arrangements with NSW has officers from the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service participates in our IMT's to ensure coordinated operations.

The Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) is located outside the IMR in the ESA is working well with increased information sharing between internal and external agencies. The location of the ECC to the IMR reduces the number of phone calls coming into the IMR/IMT. The location of the Public Information Coordination Centre (PICC) is slightly remote to the IMR and ECC and requires an information sharing wall.

Redundancy for the ESA HQ Emergency Incident Management Response is the ESA Hume Training Centre (they are on a different ring to Fairbairn) and additional redundancy backup is available at PCS Curtin Bio Security and Stromlo Depot. ESA HQ has a generator and dual network fields. Capability between the IMR personnel and linkages back into the field is being tested this year with a new microwave ring.

A/g Chief Officer ACT F&R and Manager PCS both stated the preformed IMT's were conducted really well and the IMT Exercises are the same as responding to a genuine major incident. The systems tested are effective the only issue from PCS is that ESA uses a more update IT package for windows.

The Chair thanked Rohan Scott and Joe Murphy for the update.

Action:

- Provide BFC with a copy of the Community Engagement Calendar of events when endorsed
- Provide another community engagement/education/awareness update at the August BFC Meeting

Agenda item: 7.0 – Commissioner’s Report to BFC

Presenter: CO ACT RFS

Discussion:

Commissioner’s report provided with the BFC papers.

CO ACT RFS provided a brief summary (on behalf of the Acting Commissioner) of the activities within ESA.

The ACT Bushfire Season for 2016-2017 concluded on 31 March 2017 and acknowledgment was provided to all the Volunteers, their family and employers, and Staff (ESA and Parks and Conservation Service) for their contribution and support in keeping the ACT Community Safe during the busy season.

An update was provided regarding the ESA Roundtable Meetings, the fourth and final meeting has occurred and the draft report with the outcomes is currently under draft and will be sent out for feedback.

The Built Up Area and Bushfire Abatement Zones have been amended and signed off to include the new suburbs of Throsby and Jacka. The ACT Community Protection Medal Ceremony is scheduled tomorrow at the National Arboretum (Thursday 6 April 2017) ESA progressed the nomination and committee proceeding and ACT Policing are managing the Ceremony.

The Acting Commissioner arrangements are in place until the 19 May 2017. Pat Jones will take over as Acting Chief Officer ACT F&R next week as Phil Canham will commence annual leave.

Ms Goonrey inquired (on behalf of the Conservation Council) about the Ginniderry development on the

western border of ACT (near Ginniderra Falls) and how it extends over the Murrumbidgee River into New South Wales. The land is managed by the Yass Council who assess the fire susceptibility and the Conservation Council has asked if ESA has been involved given that they would be the response units.

The Manager PCS, Acting CO ACT F&R and CO ACT RFS reassured Ms Goonrey to inform the Conservation Council that ESA has been heavily involved since the initial planning stages.

Action:

- ESA Acting Commissioner written response to BFC in relation to the outcomes of the Annual Report Hearings (QONs) re portable toilets (portaloo's)

Agenda item: 8.0 - Land Manager's Report

Presenters: Neil Cooper

Discussion:

Mr Cooper, Manager, Fire, Forest and Roads, ACT Parks and Conservation Service (PCS) Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) provided an update of current activities within PCS.

Papers tabled at meeting: Land Manager's Report and BOP Implementation reporting papers.

The BOP implementation is on schedule to deliver 90% by the end of 2017. The Implementation Dashboard 2016-2017 provided detail of completed and the activities scheduled.

The BFC congratulated PCS for reporting the ACT RFS in the prescribed burning program in the PCS BOP Report update. Sarah Ryan suggested reporting in two other metrics to include the dollar cost for each activity and how much reduction in risk.

Hazard Reduction (HR) activities scheduled to commence tomorrow with the initial HR at Black Mountain. The Aranda Bushlands is ready to commence and five conservation burns that include Wombat near Condor Creek in the Brindabella Ranges and possibly starting Tango Spur if the weather allows.

Three PCS Staff members have been selected to present papers at the AFAC Conference in Sydney this year. The presentations will be by Brian Levine about the Prescribed Burn Decision Support Tool, Adam Leavesley about utilisation of Bushfire CRC research in relation to soil erodibility and Dean Freeman about the cultural burning program.

The procurement for the new radio's for ESA and Parks is on track to be ordered by the end of April. An update was provided on the Warks Road post fire. Gary Morgan has commenced the review into the PCS Fire Management Unit and will speak to BFC at this meeting.

BFC thanked Neil Cooper for the update.

Action:

- Secretariat to include Trent Penman from AFAC to the May BFC Meeting

Agenda item: 9.0 – Chief Officer ACT Rural Fire Service Report

Presenter:

CO ACT RFS

Discussion:

The Chief Officer provided an overview of current activities as summarised below.

The 2016-2017 Bushfire Season concluded on the 31 March 2017.

The Strategic Bushfire Management Plan Project Implementation Document (PID) was signed on the 17 March 2017 and is attached to meeting papers for information. The PID outlines how the project will deliver the seven products identified.

NSW RFS are conducting a National Fire Danger Rating System project and a prototype system will be benchmarked in the 2017-18 Bushfire Season.

ACT F&R and ACT RFS Chief Officers were awarded the Director General Special Commendation Leadership award for demonstrating outstanding leadership, collaboration and consultation across two Fire Services particularly during the review of the Built Up Area (BUA).

The final Roundtable consultations concluded on 17 March 2017.

The Gungahlin volunteer brigade turned 20 years on 18 March 2017 and commemorated with a dinner and life member status to two of their dedicated and long serving members.

The recent wet weather and reduction in average day time temperatures has seen a decline in fires occurring in the rural areas of the ACT.

The 2016-17 season has been a busy one for members of the, with the majority of our large fires across the border in NSW.

The major fires in the ACT for this season were Coolum Ridge, Caloola Farm and Warks Road; all suppressed in the first shift and no property was ever under threat and no reports of significant injuries to firefighters.

The contracted aircraft have been released after providing significant support at fires in the ACT and across the border. The aircraft significantly enhanced the work done by ground crews. The Large Air Tanker (LAT) assisted at the Carwoola fire and the Canberra Airport was stage for refuel and refill with water by aviation trained members along with 2 SEATS (Single Engine Air Tanker).

The Personal Protective Clothing (PPC) survey was conducted receiving over two hundred responses. The results will be used to strengthen business case for funding.

Weather dependent, the Autumn burn program will commence and Volunteer members are to use different skills and gain some valuable experience. Six Bushfire Operational Plans (BOP) hazard reduction burns are scheduled where Volunteer Brigades can assess new members.

Stephen Carter was successful in gaining a permanent position with the ACT SES and Michael Joyce is now acting in the Manager, Membership and Training Section until the end of May when Brian Murphy is due to return from extended leave.

The Training section is continuing to assist Brigades in organising burns to finalise recruit assessments and to assist Crew Leaders in completing the post course hours. One member successfully completed their Bushfire Fighter assessment burn on 30 March 2017 and another twelve are due to complete their assessment on 1 April 2017.

The Crew Leader Resource Kit has been completed ahead of schedule. ACT RFS Learning and Development staff identified all Parks and Conservation staff that can complete a Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) to enable

certification against the current national units of competency for Crew Leader and Divisional Command units, and are working with the Parks Learning and Development Officer to prioritise this process.

The recognition policy/pathway has been refined into a single document which will make it easier for members to understand the RPL process. In addition the Training Information Handbook has been reviewed and uploaded to the internet.

A Crew Leader course is being organised for delivery in late April. This will provide an extra opportunity for those members without the full set of Units of Competence to complete their Crew Leader training.

As an SBMP project work commenced on producing an exit interview/survey that will be used to gain information on volunteers' experience with the ACT RFS and to identify any issues that requires action/improvement.

The Community Bushfire Protection Team have progressed the Electronic Fire Danger Rating (EFDR) sign project with all existing manual Fire Danger Rating signs to be retained with the current arrangements.

The Minor Works on Rural Leasehold Properties scheme, funded under the National Bushfire Mitigation Program 2015-16, is being finalised. Works to date have enabled better emergency access, water supply for firefighting operations and enhanced grazing for community protection within the Bushfire Abatement Zone (BAZ) and rural, urban interface.

Consultation with ACT Directorates who are required to produce a BOP under the *Emergencies Act 2004* is ongoing. Support with BOP drafting, reporting, and review of the Elevated Fire Danger Plan data is continuing.

Action:

- Nil.

Agenda item: 10.0 – Bushfire Council Appointments

Presenter: CO ACT RFS

Discussion:

The current Council Members were appointed by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services as per the *Emergencies Act 2004*. These Appointments end on 30 September 2017 and will be advertised as per the ACT Government Governance Framework for Boards and Committees.

BFC members will receive notification in relation to applying for re-appointment via mail.

Christine Goonrey advised she would not be seeking re-appointment.

Action:

- Nil.

Agenda item: 11.0 – Lower Cotter Catchment Draft Plan

Presenter: Chair

Discussion:

At the October 2016 BFC Meeting, Ms Trish Bootes from EPSDD provided Council with a detailed overview of draft Reserve Management Plan for the Lower Cotter Catchment 2016. Comments on the draft plan were requested by 14 October 2016.

BFC requested confirmation on the comments they provided.

Action:

Secretariat to email BFC the comments they provided in relation to the LCC Draft Plan

Agenda item: 12.0 – General Business

Presenter:

Chair

Discussion:

- Topics for the 2017 ACT Bushfire Council Business Plan

Note: Sarah Ryan advised of her absence at the June BFC meeting and requested the topics listed be rescheduled

- Cathy Parsons will be an apology for the May meeting

Actions:

- Secretariat to rearrange the ACT Bushfire Council Business Plan for June.

Agenda item: 13.0 – Next Meeting

Presenter:

Chair

The next meeting is scheduled for 4pm to 7pm Wednesday 3 May 2017.

Closing: The meeting closed at 7pm.



ACT BUSHFIRE COUNCIL MEETING IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTION ITEMS

Active Items for current meeting

Action Item / Issue	Originating Meeting date	Assigned To	Meeting Due Date	Status	Comments
Agenda 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	Pending	Chair to provide a verbal report at the May meeting
Agenda 6 - Provide BFC with a copy of the Community Engagement Calendar of events when endorsed and provide another update at the August BFC Meeting	1 April 2017	Secretariat	May 2017	Completed	Placed on the BFC Business Plan
Agenda 7 - ESA Acting Commissioner written response to BFC in relation to the outcomes of the Annual Report Hearings (QONs) re portable toilets (portaloo's)	1 April 2017	A/g Commissioner	3 May 2017		
Agenda 8 - Secretariat to include Trent Penman from AFAC to the May BFC Meeting	1 April 2017	Secretariat	3 May 2017		
Agenda 11 - Secretariat to email BFC the comments they provided in relation to the LCC Draft Plan	1 April 2017	Secretariat	3 May 2017		
Agenda 12 - Secretariat to rearrange the ACT Bushfire Council Business Plan for June.	1 April 2017	Secretariat	3 May 2017		

Completed Items

Action Item / Issue¹	Originating Meeting date	Responsibility	Proposed/Revised completion date	Date completed
Agenda item 10 – The Council would like to review the Project Implementation Document for the SBMP once it has been completed and signed off	1 February 2017	CO ACT RFS	1 March 2017	Completed
Agenda item 11 – Lower Cotter Catchment Management Plan to be discussed at the next meeting	1 February 2017	Secretariat	1 March 2017	Completed
Agenda item 5 – Write a response to Dr Annie Lane regarding BFC comments on the Eastern Grey Kangaroo draft controlled native species management plan	1 March 2017	Chair	5 April 2017	Completed
Agenda item 5 – Invite the Director, Strategic Reform Agenda Programme (SRP) to the June BFC Meeting.	1 March 2017	Secretariat	5 June 2017	Completed Added to the BFC Business Plan
Agenda item 7 – Email the 2016 ESA Report Card to BFC	1 March 2017	Secretariat	1 March 2017	Completed Emailed on 1 March 2017
Agenda item 8 – Mr Cooper to arrange Mr Gary Morgan the Fire Management Consultant to attend the next BFC meeting on 5 April 2017	1 March 2017	Mr Cooper	5 April 2017	Completed
Agenda item 10 – Invite Adam Leavesley to the April meeting to present AFAC topics/research	1 March 2017	Secretariat	5 April 2017	Completed
Agenda item 10 – Inform BFC closer to the date, if the Bushfire Season is extended	1 March 2017	CO	30 March 2017	Completed