



## **GCM ATTACHMENTS BOOKLET FOR ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING**

16 August 2023 at 5:00pm

### **GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY MANAGER**

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## Shire of Mingenew

### Minimum Standards for Bushfire Volunteers

We are working to make some improvements towards our compliance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2020 and Regulations, and provide guidance for Fire Control Officers to mobilise registered Farm Responders and Town Brigade members.

- 👤 We are asking that all farm responders and permanent workers register as a member in the Farmer Response 'brigade' where you live.
- 👤 You only need to be registered in 1 area, preferably where you live.
- 👤 Registration is free and allows the Shire to provide training and PPC as funding allows.

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## 1. Definitions

**Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMS)** - the nationally recognised system of incident management for Australia's fire and emergency service agencies.

**Auxiliary Role** - a non-combat / firefighting activity undertaken away from the site of a fire as required by the Bushfire Brigade/Unit. Examples include the organisation of transportation, catering and communications.

**Brigade** - refers to the Shire of Mingenew Town Bushfire Brigade registered with DFES.

**Brigade Member** - a person who is at least 16 years of age and is trained and deemed competent to operate Shire of Mingenew vehicles and equipment during bush firefighting activities. Includes the ranks of *Lieutenant & Captain*.

**Bush Fire Control Officer (BFCO)** - means a Fire Control Officer appointed by the Shire of Mingenew and encompasses the positions of Chief and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

**DFES** - Department of Fire and Emergency Services

**DPaW** - Department of Parks & Wildlife

**Fireground** - means the site of a fire attended by fire fighters.

**Spontaneous Volunteers** - individuals or groups of people who seek or are invited to contribute their assistance during and/or after an event, and who are unaffiliated with any part of the existing official emergency management response and recovery system and may or may not have relevant training, skills or experience.

**Farmers' Response Rural Brigade Unit Member** - a DFES registered member of a Shire of Mingenew Farmers Response Rural Brigade who **only** operate private vehicles and equipment during firefighting activities.

**Unit** - refers to the Shire of Mingenew Farmers Response Rural Brigade Units registered with DFES

## 2. Duties and Responsibilities

### 2.1 Captain

The Captain of the Shire of Mingenew Bush Fire Brigade or Farmers Response Unit shall be responsible for the leadership and management of its Brigade/Unit's firefighting activities.

The position reports to the CBFCO on Brigade/Unit related matters and represents the Brigade/Unit at the Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC). The Captain may delegate authority to another operational Member to represent the Captain at the BFAC.

Duties and responsibilities of the Captain in relation to their Brigade/Unit include:

- Demonstrate positive leadership and mentor members,
- Command, control and confidently manage firefighting activities at emergency incidents,
- To ensure AIIMS Incident Control System is implemented and maintained during all emergency incidents,
- Conduct briefings and post incident analysis of any incident involving firefighting or Brigade/Unit management issues,
- To ensure members deployed for operational duties have the competencies to complete the task or duty assigned and hold current qualifications to carry out the functions required, in accordance with this document and DFES Standard Operating Procedures,

- To undertake responsibility for the proper management and maintenance of Brigade property and equipment,
- Ensure conduct of members is in accordance with this document and DFES Standard Operating Procedures,
- Report any injuries of personnel or damage to fire fighting vehicles as soon as possible to the CBFCO and the Shire of Mingenew.

## **2.2 Bush Fire Control Officer (FCO)**

A Bush Fire Control Officer is a delegated representative of the Shire of Mingenew responsible for the administration of provisions within the *Bush Fires Act 1954*. The position is required to perform active operational duties in relation to both firefighting and fire prevention strategies within the local community.

This position reports to the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer on all matters pertinent to bush fire management.

A Fire Control Officer may hold jointly the position of Brigade Captain.

Duties and responsibilities of the Bush Fire Control Officer include:

- Authorise permits for hazard reduction burns within the Shire of Mingenew in accordance with the *Bush Fires Act 1954* and *Environmental Protection Act 1986*;
- Identify and conduct risk assessments of fire hazards within the Shire of Mingenew;
- Take control, command and manage resources during a bushfire within the Brigade/Unit area they are appointed.
- To take control of firefighting operations at a bushfire outside their Brigade/Unit area where no other Brigade Captain or Fire Control Officer is present.
- Demonstrate positive leadership and mentor Brigade/Unit members.
- Provide advice to the CBFCO as to when harvest bans and/or vehicle movement bans should be applied.

## **2.3 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Officer (DCBFO)**

The role of Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer is that of a leader, decision maker, and planner and assists the CBFCO in the activities of managing the Bush Fire Organisation as listed below.

## **2.4. Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFO)**

The role of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer is that of a leader, decision maker, planner and manager of the Bush Fire Organisation in the Shire of Mingenew and not as a 'hands on' fire fighter. The CBFCO is to ensure that the organisation is functioning to a standard commensurate to the risks within the Shire of Mingenew and is to ensure that the following tasks are achieved:

- During bushfire incidents manage the fire resources of the Shire Brigade/Units and when necessary, act as the Incident Controller,
- Promote the AIMS Incident Management system to all FCO'S, Brigade and Unit members and ensure an Incident Controller is appointed for all Incident Levels (1-3),

- Ensure that FCO'S, Brigade/Unit Officers and members are trained to a standard commensurate to the risk and equipment within the Brigade and Shire area,
- Demonstrate positive leadership and mentor DCBFCO, FCOs, Captains and Brigade members.
- Promote community fire prevention as a priority, to identify and reduce fire hazards,
- Develop the fire organisation to effectively and efficiently control bushfires,
- Develop and promote the use of Standard Operating Procedures and Guidelines, minimum training standards, identify hazards and assess risk to prevent injury to both members and spontaneous volunteers and implement the principals of OHS for members to develop a safe working environment for fire fighters.
- Ensure welfare preparedness is arranged for the provision of food, medical aid and counselling services for members and spontaneous volunteers,
- Establish and maintain effective communication and liaison with the Shire of Mingenew, FCO'S, Brigade/Units, DFES, DPaW, Emergency services, statutory authorities and facilitate prompt response to fire incidents.
- Ensure that Brigade/Units are involved in the development of policy for the preparation of ESL Fire Appliance program, maintenance programs for Shire and Brigade owned equipment, incident debriefing of bushfires, welfare and safety of members.
- Delegate specific tasks to the DCBFCO, FCO'S or Brigade/Units.
- Liaise with the Shire of Mingenew, DFES and other organisation to achieve the duties outlined above.

### 3. Conditions of Membership

#### 3.1. Inductions

Upon joining the Brigade/Farmer Response Units, a member must complete an induction by the Brigade/Unit Captain, to be completed as soon as possible but no later than 6 weeks after an initial application is received. The induction will cover the following:

- Facility and equipment use,
- Communications,
- Fire ground protocols,
- Incident, Accident & Injury reporting,
- Fitness for Duty,
- First Aid,
- Code of Conduct,
- The provision of a first aid kit and required PPE (as detailed below).

#### 3.2. Minimum Training Requirements

##### 3.2.1 Spontaneous Volunteers & Farmers Response Rural Brigade Unit Members

- 1) To be deemed competent to attend the fire ground spontaneous volunteers/members **must**:
  - a. Undertake, as a *minimum*, the formal 1-day **Rural Fire Awareness Training** course run by DFES,
  - b. Must **register with Shire** - contact details, skill statement.

- 2) Until the above training has been completed, Spontaneous Volunteers & Farmers Response unit members shall be restricted to auxiliary roles and shall not operate on the fire ground.

Note\*\* If a Farmers Response Rural Brigade Unit Member is to operate shire-owned vehicles or equipment, then they **must** complete the training associated with Brigade Members prior to operation.

### 3.2.2 Brigade Members

- 1) To be deemed a competent fire fighter to attend the fire ground and use shire-owned assets, Brigade members **must** undertake as a *minimum*, the following courses run by DFES:
  - a) **Bushfire Safety Awareness** (2-day face to face that delivers bushfire characteristics and behaviour, safety & survival, & suppress bushfire. Includes AIMS awareness unit))
  - b) **Firefighting Skills** (2-day practical that delivers map reading, intro to comms, tools & equip, ropes & ladders, crew protection)Until the above training has been completed, members shall be restricted to auxiliary roles and shall not operate on the fire ground.
- 2) Any member who will be using/driving an appliance (Fast Attack or Light Tanker) must undergo **appliance training** prior to use on the fire ground, with the Brigade Captain to ensure familiarity with the appliance/s and ensure they have the appropriate licenses to operate. The appliance training is to cover:
  - Basic operations of the appliance,
  - Basic radio communications,
  - Water drafting with the appliance,
  - Equipment location,
  - Appliance foam delivery (if used).

### 3.2.3 Bush Fire Control Officers (BFCO)

It is recommended that Bush Fire Control Officers have a minimum of 5 years active operational experience.

- 1) To be eligible for appointment as a Bush Fire Control Officer a person must:
  - a. Complete all training required of a Brigade Member; and
  - b. Complete the **Fire Control Officer Training Program** (1 day face to face which provides an understanding of legislative requirement and permits to burn) within 6 months of appointment.
- 2) For a person to continue as a Bush Fire Control Officer they must complete the Bush Fire Control Officers Course or a Refresher Course at intervals of no more than every five years.

### 3.2.4 All Members & Spontaneous Volunteers

- 1) First aid training is highly recommended, and courses will be offered free of charge on an annual basis.
- 2) All Active members must attend a refresher appliance training course if they have not attended a fire in the previous (12) months. This is to be organised through the Brigade/Unit Captain.

- 3) Attendance records and competency statements for all training sessions/courses must be given to the Shire within one (1) month of completing.

### 3.3 Uniforms / Personal Protective Equipment

All Brigade/Unit members, BFCOs and spontaneous volunteers on the fire ground **must** be dressed in accordance with the minimum dress standard as specified below or equivalent. Personnel turning up to fires without the minimum requirement will be advised by the Incident Controller to dress properly or be instructed to leave the fire ground, or alternatively assigned an auxiliary role.

#### 3.1 BFCO/ Brigade/Unit Members

On the fire ground all members/BFCOs are required to wear the following personal protective equipment:

- full protective (level 1) tunic & over trousers or coveralls,
- (level 1) helmet (where required),
- Goggles,
- Boots,
- gloves and respirators as required.

#### 3.2 Spontaneous Volunteers

For spontaneous volunteers the minimum standards require:

- long pants
- long sleeve shirt (of which must be 100% cotton or wool, no synthetic material allowed)
- fully enclosed work boots
- riggers gloves and
- safety glasses.

#### 3.3 General

- Requests for PPE can be made by at any time through the Shire (some uniforms and equipment available in stock). A bulk order will be compiled by September each year for distribution prior to the fire season.
- Persons issued with personal protective equipment are responsible for the availability, condition, care and cleanliness of their own kit.
- Any damage or replacement of uniform issue/PPE is to be reported to the Brigade Captain or Shire.

### 3.4. Driving and Licences

- 1) Any Brigade/Unit member or spontaneous volunteer who is operating a vehicle (including private vehicles) for fire-fighting purposes is required to hold a current Western Australian drivers' licence for the class of vehicle that is being driven (Fast Attack - C Class and the Fire Truck- HR).
- 2) Any situation that results in the suspension or loss of licence or impairment to a Members/BFCOs capability is to be reported to the Brigade/Unit Captain.
- 3) Brigade/Unit members are expected to provide a copy of their driver's licence to the Shire to be kept on file. At the expiry of licence, no further activity can take place until an updated copy of the driver's licence is provided to the Shire.



- 4) Fire Response Units should be registered with the Shire and show the Vehicle Response Unit sticker provided on registration. This system does not preclude the use of non-registered farm appliances on the fire ground, it is for ease of reference and control.
- 5) All drivers of the Fast Attack/Fire truck must have the approval of the Brigade Captain, CBFCO or DCBFCO to operate the vehicle and must always drive with due care and attention in accordance with Road Traffic legislation, and continue to show consideration to other road users.

### 3.5. Fitness for Duty & Code of Conduct

Any accident that occurs where it is found that a member/spontaneous volunteer has been taking illicit drugs and/or alcohol has implications not only for the individual but also the Shire. Consequences of such could include:

- Insurance cover could be denied.
- Civil action could be taken if other firefighters are injured whilst under that individual's care (as driver, member of a team or managing an incident).
- Compromise the Shire because they allowed you to represent them whilst you were under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol (knowingly or unknowingly).

Therefore, the below shall be observed by both members, BFCOs and spontaneous volunteers:

- 1) Shall not respond to any incident or participate in any training activities associated with operational tasks when drugs or alcohol have been taken or consumed.
- 2) If an individual is aware that another member, BFCO or spontaneous volunteer is taking drugs (illicit or prescribed that might impair their abilities) or have consumed alcohol, appropriate action should be taken to remove that person from firefighting duties.
- 3) If an individual is taking prescribed drugs that make them drowsy or functionally impaired, they must not take part in duties at an incident or operational training activities.

## 4. Brigade Equipment & Maintenance

### 4.1 Members Responsibility

- 1) Brigade Members/BFCOs are responsible for undertaking and documenting the operating level maintenance of Shire owned fire appliances and equipment. In this context operating level maintenance includes:
  - Checking vehicle tyre pressures.
  - Checking & replenishing radiator fluid levels for the vehicle engine and pump motor (where fitted).
  - Checking & replenishing lubricant levels on the vehicle and pump engines.
  - Checking & replenishing brake & clutch master cylinder fluid levels.
  - Checking & replenishing windscreen washer fluid.
  - Checking the operation of all vehicle lights, emergency lights & sirens.
  - Checking the operation of the WAERN Bushfire Radio including external speaker (where fitted).
  - Testing Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) – see SOP 6.02
  - Checking & replenishing battery electrolyte levels.
  - Cleaning of vehicles.

- Checking the presence of all appliance stowage & its serviceability.
  - Checking the operation of fire pumps, valves, sprays, nozzles & hose reels.
  - Reporting any defective or unserviceable appliance items to the Brigade FCO.
  - Check burnover blankets are available and stowed properly.
  - Checking Water Deluge System.
  - Checking the condition and stowage of the In Cab Air.
- 2) Members are required to ensure the vehicle log-book is completed and signed by the operator on every use.
  - 3) Members are to ensure and document that the first aid kit, handheld radios, spare PPE, firebug and spare matches are contained within the appliances and are serviced as required by legislation.

#### 4.2 Shire Responsibility

All major servicing and maintenance of the Shire owned appliances is the responsibility of the Shire. This is to be conducted at a minimum, annually and prior to the fire season. During this inspection, assessments will be made on any future remedial maintenance for the fire appliances.

### 5. Private Equipment & Maintenance

- 1) It is recommended that all private vehicles/equipment/machinery responding to a fire be:
  - in good working order and ideally possess service records,
  - appropriate and capable to carry out the required tasks,
  - roadworthy and must be registered if operating on public roads,
  - not overloaded - the vehicle's Gross Vehicle Mass must not be exceeded,
  - contain a working UHF radio,
  - equipped with an amber rotating beacon and
  - possess a first aid kit, water bottle and a woollen blanket for each person to use for personal protection at fires.
- 2) Further, for farm machinery primarily engaged in dry firefighting activities such as slashing, ploughing, ripping, grading, it is recommended that the machine also be fitted with wet firefighting capability (extinguishers/spray system).
- 3) Operators of all vehicles/equipment/machinery are to ensure they have completed the minimum training requirements to enable safe operation of their equipment and safe firefighting on the fireground.

### 6. Accident/Incident/Hazard Reporting and Insurance

Any incidents involving damage to equipment or vehicles, near misses, injury or fatality **must** be reported to the CBFCO and Shire as soon as reasonably practicable so steps can be put in place to mitigate any danger & notify relevant authorities (Notification of Hazard/Injury/Incident Form- appendix 1).

- 1) Any member/BFCO/spontaneous volunteer needing to make a report should contact the CBFCO or relevant Captain.
- 2) All reported incidents/hazards/injuries shall be investigated by the CBFCO and referred to the Bush Fire Advisory Committee to identify any gaps in procedure that may have allowed the incident to occur.
- 3) The objective of the reporting process is not to attribute blame, but rather to identify adjustments and improvements so as to minimise the likelihood of a repeat occurrence.

All members and spontaneous volunteers working under and within the direction of the BFCO are covered for personal injury and appliance/machinery damage when injury or damage occurs in the course of active duty\*.

\* Disclaimer

Should an insurance claim for appliance/property damage be deemed by the Shire a result of wilful or negligent behaviour, the volunteer may be liable to pay the excess and/or any out-of-pocket expenses to the Shire associated with said claim.

## 7. Legislative Requirements- Bushfire Attendance & Incidence Forms

- 1) It is a requirement of the *Bush Fires Act 1954* and *Bush Fires Regulations 1954* that all fire incidents within a local government are reported and that such reports are provided to the Department of Fire and Emergency Services no less than once per financial year.
- 2) Fire Control Officers (or Captains, in the absence of a FCO) are to complete an Incident Report Bushfire Form and/or an Incident Attendance Form (Appendix 1) every time their Brigade/Unit is mobilised in response to any fire incident or false alarm.
- 3) The Controlling (primary) brigade is required to complete and submit both the 'Bushfire' and 'Attendance' reports. Each assisting brigade is required to complete and submit the 'Attendance' report.
- 4) The report should be completed within 24hrs and submitted to the Shire for lodging with DFES within seven days of the fire/incident.

## 8. Operational Procedures

### 8.1. Chain of Command

- 1) CBFCO notified of incident and mobilises the required resources.
- 2) **On notification of mobilisation:** Brigade members shall advise the CBFCO of estimated time of arrival (ETA) at incident by radio or phone.
- 3) Upon arrival at a fire incident, the Fire Control Officer/Officer in Charge of the first arriving crew will assume responsibility as **Incident Controller** until relieved, if required, by a more senior Bushfire Brigade Officer or a DFES officer.
- 4) **On arrival at incident site:** wherever possible, Brigade members shall advise the Incident Controller on site of their arrival by radio or in person.
- 5) **As soon as is practicable:** the Incident Controller will provide details to the CBFCO such as location and direction of fire, entry points, fuel loadings, weather conditions and estimated number of units present, further units required and location of water refill site.
- 6) **Within 30 minutes of arrival:** the Incident Controller will provide updated details to CBFCO as outlined above.
- 7) **When the incident is resolved:** The Incident Controller shall notify CBFCO when the incident is resolved.
- 8) CBFCO to notify DFES COMCEN on 1800 198 140 of Brigade stand down. At this point an incident number is generated, for inclusion on Fire Incident Report. (See Appendix 1 – Incident Report Forms)

## 8.2. Operational Driving

Crew care and safety must be prioritised and always ensured.

### 8.2.1 Emergency Call Out - Code 1

Appliances responding where life/property is in danger must ensure:

- Emergency warning beacons, SIREN and headlights are to be on at all times when travelling to an operational emergency incident or at the discretion of the OIC or Crew Leader.
- Rail crossing signals and boom gates to be obeyed at ALL times.
- Drivers and Officers should also refer to DFES issued SOP's
  - SOP 36 Road Traffic Code
  - SOP 37 Driving Emergency Vehicles
  - SOP 40 Driver Responsibilities

### 8.2.2 Non-Emergency Operation - Code 2

When returning to fire station, attending training or exercises and general operations:

- No emergency warning lights and sirens are to be used.
- All road rules must be obeyed at all times

### 8.2.3 Driving on the Fireground

- Warning Lights are to be in operation at all times when brigade personnel are working off an appliance/vehicle as other vehicle movement may prove a hazard.
- **All occupants of vehicles on the fireground are to remain inside the vehicle whilst it is in motion**
- UHF radio is to be tuned to Channel 11.

## 8.3. First Aid

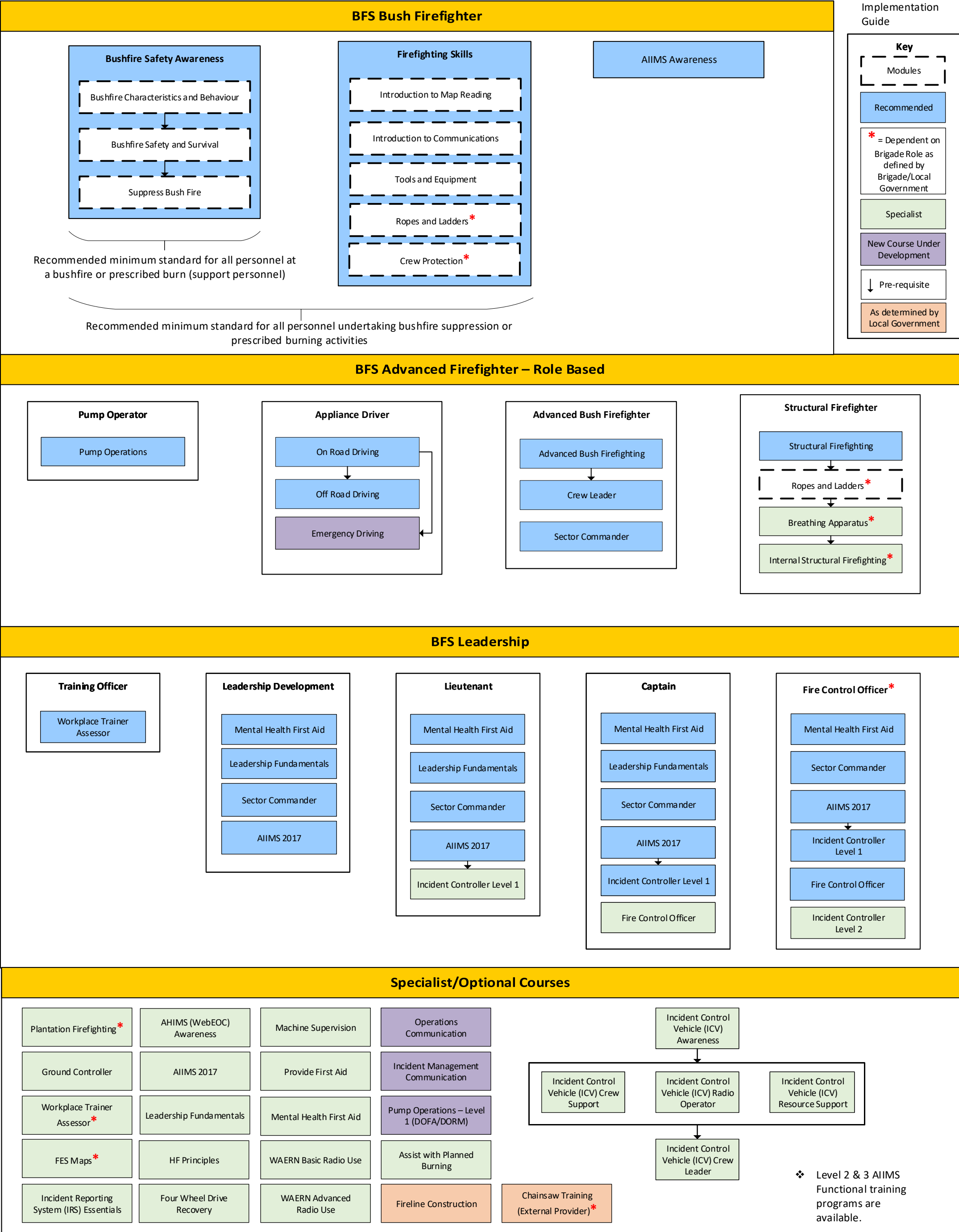
The Incident Controller shall request a St Johns Ambulance Post be established at a Control Point when the number of attending firefighters and other staff agencies exceeds 50 personnel.

The Incident Controller may request a St Johns Ambulance Post at any given time prior to the above number of personnel being reached.

# Bush Fire Service Training Program

Local induction to be completed at Brigade/Local Government level. If no local induction exists, the DFES Volunteer Firefighter Induction may be used.

❖ This diagram is to be read in conjunction with the Training Program Implementation Guide





# Implementation Guide

## Volunteer Bush Fire Service WA

### Bush Firefighter Training Program



## Training Programs Principles

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Training Programs are a role-based training framework designed for progressive and safe training.

Training content is designed to be delivered in a flexible manner, either as a full course delivered over a weekend or, depending on the course, modularised and delivered over a timeframe that better suits the local environment.

A Training Program may include Training Streams related to specific response or capability roles, such as Pump Operator or Advanced Bush Firefighter. Within each Training Stream there are one or more required courses, which must be completed to complete that Training Stream. You may participate in more than one Training Stream simultaneously.

The Training Streams are designed to provide:

- **Ease of targeting brigade profile requirements**  
*Be easy for Brigades, Local Governments and DFES Regions to target brigade training needs*
- **Flexibility**  
*Allow volunteers more flexibility in their training; and*
- **Choice**  
*Be easy to understand and complete.*

You are encouraged to complete the Bush Firefighter Training Program and the Advanced Bush Firefighting Training Stream prior to enrolling on any of the BFB Leadership Training Stream courses.

## Training Programs Entry

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You will automatically be enrolled on the Bush Firefighter Training Program, once you have completed a volunteer membership application and have a DFES volunteer number.

## Training Prerequisites

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DFES and the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA acknowledge that it is better that volunteers complete the courses in the specified order; however, course cancellations do happen and can affect a volunteer's attempts to complete a Training Program or Training Stream.

Volunteers can complete courses within specific Training Streams out of the specified order, unless otherwise illustrated in the Training Program with an arrow.

## Completion Requirements

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To complete the Bush Firefighter Training Program, you will need to complete all the courses listed on the Training Program.

## Training Programs Progress – Next Steps

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Once you have completed the Bush Firefighter Training Program Training Program, you will be automatically enrolled on the Advanced Firefighter Training Program.

## Associated Roles

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When you have completed this Training Program, you will have the skills and competencies required to be present on the fire ground under supervision.

## Recommended Timeframe

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It is up to your Local Government to establish the requirements that apply to your brigade. DFES recommends that volunteers complete the Bush Firefighter Training Program in three (3) to eighteen (18) months.

Brigades/Local Governments may specify other rules and regulations around the timeframe to complete training, depending on your circumstance.

## Recognition

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Contact the Academy at [academy@dfes.wa.gov.au](mailto:academy@dfes.wa.gov.au) for further details if you would like to enquire about the Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) process. This process may be used to recognise your existing skills, knowledge and experience in a course.

## Additional Approvals

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Training course applications can be submitted via eAcademy or through your Local Government.

In addition to your Brigade Supervisor, applications need to be approved by:

- *The applicable Local Government manager for your Brigade (nominally your Local Government's Training Coordinator, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer or Community Emergency Services Manager).*

## Training Program Changes/Review

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The nominated Training Program Manager, in consultation with the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA, reviews this Training Program annually.

Changes to the Training Programs and Training Streams will be incorporated in the transition notes below. Enrolled students will be notified if action is required.

## Current Training Program Contacts

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The Training Program Owner is Superintendent Training, Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

Questions regarding this Training Program can be directed to the Training Program Manager, District Officer Training Delivery, Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

## Training Program Consultation Stakeholder Groups

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Major changes to this Training Program will only be finalised after documented consultation with the following stakeholder groups;

- *Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA Executive Committee*
- *Volunteer BFB Training Advisory Group*
- *Training Programs Review Committee*

## Transition Notes

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Change	Date
All personnel who are in progress on or have completed VFF1 will be placed on the BFB Bush Firefighter Training Program.	July 2019

## Amendment Table

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Change	Date
Initial release	December 2018
Revision – eAcademy Support Team	August 2019
Update to reflect entry point	November 2019
Update - Change of order to Bushfire Safety Awareness Modules	February 2021
Update - Change to Training Program Owner and Manager	February 2021





# Implementation Guide

## Volunteer Bush Fire Service WA

### Advanced Firefighter – Role Based Training Program

## Training Programs Principles

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Training Programs is a role-based training framework designed for progressive and safe training.

Training content is designed to be delivered in a flexible manner, either as a full course delivered over a weekend or, depending on the course, modularised and delivered over a timeframe that better suits the local environment.

A Training Program may include Training Streams related to specific response roles or capability roles, such as Pump Operator or Advanced Bush Firefighter. Within each Training Stream there are one or more required courses, which must be completed to complete that Training Stream. You may participate in more than one Training Stream simultaneously.

The Training Streams are designed to provide:

- **Ease of targeting brigade profile requirements**  
*Be easy for Brigades, Local Governments and DFES Regions to target brigade training needs*
- **Flexibility**  
*Allow volunteers more flexibility in their training; and*
- **Choice**  
*Be easy to understand and complete.*

You are encouraged to complete the Bush Firefighter Training Program and the Advanced Bush Firefighting Training Stream prior to enrolling on any of the Leadership Training Stream courses.

## Training Programs Entry

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You will automatically be enrolled on the Advanced Firefighter Training Program upon your completion of the Bush Firefighter Training Program.

## Training Prerequisites

---

DFES and the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA acknowledge that it is better that volunteers complete the courses in the specified order; however, course cancellations do happen and can affect a volunteer's attempts to complete a Training Program or Training Stream.

Volunteers can complete courses within specific Training Streams out of the specified order, unless otherwise illustrated in the Training Program with an arrow.

## Completion Requirements

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To complete the Advanced Firefighter – Role Based Training Program, you will need to complete all the courses listed on the applicable Training Stream/s relevant to your role.

## Training Programs Progress – Next Steps

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You can apply for the Leadership Training Program upon your enrolment on the Advanced Firefighter Training Program.

## Associated Roles

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When you have completed this Training Program, you will have the skills and competencies required to be present on the fire ground with limited supervision.

## Recommended Timeframe

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It is up to your Local Government to establish the requirements that apply to your brigade. DFES recommends that volunteers complete each Training Stream within the Advanced Firefighter – Role Based Training Program in up to two (2) years.

Brigades/Local Governments may specify other rules and regulations around the timeframe to complete training, depending on your circumstance.

## Recognition

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## Training Program Consultation Stakeholder Groups

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Major changes to this Training Program will only be finalised after documented consultation with the following stakeholder groups;

- *Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA Executive Committee*
- *Volunteer BFB Training Advisory Group*
- *Training Programs Review Committee*

## Transition Notes

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Change	Date
All personnel who are progressing on or have VFF2 Pathway will be placed on the Advanced Firefighter Training Program.	July 2019
All personnel who are progressing on or have VFF3 Pathway will be placed on the Advanced Firefighter Training Program.	July 2019
All personnel who are progressing on or have VFF4 Pathway will be placed on the Advanced Firefighter Training Program.	July 2019
All personnel who are progressing on or have VFF5 Pathway will be placed on the Advanced Firefighter Training Program.	July 2019

## Amendment Table

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Change	Date
Initial release	December 2018
Revision – eAcademy Support Team	August 2019
Update – Change to Training Program Owner and Manager	February 2021



# Implementation Guide

## Volunteer Bush Fire Service WA

### Leadership Training Program



## Training Program Principles

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Training Programs are a role-based training framework designed for progressive and safe training.

A Training Program may include multiple Training Streams related to specific response or capability roles, such as Pump Operator or Advanced Bush Firefighter. Within each Training Stream there are one or more required courses, which must be completed to complete that Training Stream. You may participate in more than one Training Stream simultaneously.

These Training Streams are designed to provide:

- **Ease of targeting brigade profile requirements**  
*Be easy for Brigades, Local Governments and DFES Regions to target brigade training needs*
- **Flexibility**  
*Allow volunteers more flexibility in their training; and*
- **Choice**  
*Be easy to understand and complete.*

Training content is designed to be delivered in a flexible manner, either as a full course delivered over a weekend or, depending on the course, modularised and delivered over a timeframe that better suits the local environment.

## Training Program Entry

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You must apply to be enrolled on the BFS Leadership Training Program. Approval from your Brigade Captain or Training Manager, and a relevant District Officer, Area Officer or Community Emergency Services Manager (DFES Staff) is required.

You will be notified via email when your Training Program application is approved and confirmed. The Training Program and associated Training Streams will then appear on your eAcademy record.

## Training Prerequisites

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You are encouraged to complete the Bush Firefighter Training Program and the Advanced Bush Firefighting Training Stream prior to enrolling on any of the BFS Leadership Training Stream courses.

DFES and the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA acknowledge that it is better that you complete training courses in the specified order; however, it is understood that course cancellations do happen and can affect your attempts to complete a Training Program or Training Stream.

You can complete courses within Training Streams out of the specified order, unless otherwise illustrated in the Training Program Diagram with an arrow.

## Completion Requirements

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To complete the Leadership Training Program, you will need to complete all the courses listed on the applicable Training Stream/s relevant to your role.

## Associated Roles

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When you have completed this training, you will have the skills and competencies required to perform the BFB Officer (Role Specific) role.

## Recommended Timeframe

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It is up to your Local Government to establish the requirements that apply to your brigade. DFES recommends that volunteers complete each Leadership Training Stream within three (3) years.

Brigades/Local Governments may specify other rules and regulations around the timeframe to complete training, depending on your particular circumstances.

## Recognition

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Contact the Academy at [academy@dfes.wa.gov.au](mailto:academy@dfes.wa.gov.au) for further details if you would like to enquire about the Recognition of Current Competencies (RCC) process. This process may be used to recognise your existing skills, knowledge and experience in a course.

## Additional Approvals

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Training Program and Training Course applications can be submitted via eAcademy or through your Local Government.

In addition to your Brigade Supervisor, applications need to be approved by:

- *The applicable Local Government manager for your Brigade (nominally your Local Government's Training Coordinator, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer or Community Emergency Services Manager)*

## Training Program Changes/Review

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The nominated Training Program Manager, in consultation with the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA, reviews this Training Program annually.

Changes to the Training Program will be incorporated in the transition guide. Enrolled students will be notified if action is required.

## Training Program Contacts

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The Training Program Owner is Superintendent Training, Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

Questions regarding this Training Program can be directed to the Training Program Manager, District Officer Training Delivery, Bushfire Centre of Excellence.

## Training Program Consultation Stakeholder Groups

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Major changes to this Training Program will only be finalised after documented consultation with the following stakeholder groups;

- *Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA Executive Committee*
- *Volunteer BFB Training and Advisory Group*
- *Training Program Review Committee*

## Transition Notes

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Change	Date
All personnel who are in progress on or have completed VFF6 Pathway will be placed on the Leadership Training Program.	July 2019

## Amendment Table

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Change	Date
Initial release	October 2018
Revision – eAcademy Support Team	August 2019
Corrections – eAcademy Support Team	November 2019
Updated – Change to Training Program Owner and Manager	February 2021



# Understanding WHS Obligations for Bushfire Volunteers

A practical guide to assist local government  
leaders meet their obligations

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# INTRODUCTION

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With the introduction of the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 2020* (WHS Act), there are changes to the workplace health and safety laws in Western Australia.

This guide has been developed to support local governments provide and maintain a workplace free from physical and psychological hazards. This guide provides advice about operational hazards and the processes local governments can adopt in order to comply with the WHS Act with respect to the volunteer bushfire brigades (BFB) they manage and who work under their control.

Members should remember that if they already have good risk management and safety practices in place the legislative changes in the WHS Act will have minimal impact on day to day operations. The WHS Act has further formalised the safety responsibilities of employer's which were in some respects implied but not explicitly stated in the previous occupational health and safety legislation.



# 1 KEY WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY TERMS

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This section provides an overview of the key WHS terms as they apply to volunteer BFBs.

## 1.1 What is Work Health and Safety

The WHS Act applies to all workplaces (both private and government operations) within the natural jurisdiction of Western Australia. The WHS Act provides a framework to protect the health, safety and welfare of both those persons undertaking work and those persons who might be affected by that work.

### 1.1.1 PCBU – Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking

The concept of a **Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU)** replaces the term ‘employer’ in the WHS Act. Workers are not considered **PCBU**’s.

- A **PCBU** has a duty of care to keep workers and others safe “as far as reasonably practicable”.
- Local governments are defined as a **PCBU**.

### 1.1.2 Key features relating to volunteering

- The concept of the ‘person conducting a business or undertaking’ (**PCBU**) is intended to capture a broad range of contemporary workplace relationships including volunteering activities.
- A primary duty of care requires **PCBUs** to, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure the health and safety of workers and others who may be affected by the carrying out of work.
- Duties of care apply to persons who influence the way work is carried out, as well as the integrity of products used for work, including providers of WHS services.
- It is a requirement that ‘officers’ exercise ‘due diligence’ to ensure compliance with the WHS Act.
- Reporting requirements apply for ‘notifiable incidents’ such as the serious illness, injury or death of persons and dangerous incidents arising out of the conduct of a business or undertaking
- Consultation on WHS matters with workers is a requirement under the WHS Act
- Procedures for the resolution of WHS issues.

## 1.2 Duties under WHS

The **PCBU** (*local government*) has a primary duty of care to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of persons is not put at risk from work conducted as part of the business or undertaking.

### 1.2.1 Volunteer organisation or association

**An organisation** will have WHS duties as a person conducting a business or undertaking (**PCBU**) under the WHS Act where one or more persons are employed to carry out work for the organisation, including paid and unpaid positions. A person may be employed by either:

- The organisation itself
- The organisation's members, whether alone or jointly with any other members.

Example:

- Bushfire brigades engaged under the relevant local government

**A volunteer association** is a group of volunteers working together for one or more community purposes and none of the volunteers, either separately or jointly, or the association itself employ a person to carry out any work for the association.

The WHS Act does not apply if the organisation is a 'volunteer association' (whether incorporated or unincorporated).

Example:

- A social sporting group formed and engaged by individual volunteers

### 1.2.2 Volunteers

Under the WHS Act a volunteer is a person who works for an organisation without payment or financial reward (but who may receive out of pocket expenses). The law also recognises volunteers as workers. Meaning the **PCBU** must provide the same protections to its volunteers as it does to its paid workers.

### 1.2.3 Spontaneous volunteers

A spontaneous volunteer is usually not associated with an existing bushfire brigade, but more likely to be a member of the community offering assistance in response to an event. These individuals may not have been screened or trained in accordance with procedures.

The management of spontaneous volunteers is a joint responsibility between all stakeholders. It should also be recognised that the majority of public offers of assistance come during the recovery phase of an emergency, which the local government manages on behalf of its community, and which is a positive step in the recovery process.

The *Bush Fires Act (1954)* states that the Chief Bushfire Control Officer can:

*"Employ a person or use the voluntary services of a person to assist him, subject to his directions in the exercise of any of the foregoing powers."*

In taking that action, responsibility should be assessed in regards to the suitability of each individual for the task to be performed. All stakeholders – the organisations, government agencies and authorities – have a mutual duty of care.

The following principles should be **APPLIED BY ALL** organisations, authorities, government agencies, and local governments when utilising spontaneous volunteers.

- Spontaneous volunteers should be added to the volunteer register and sign in and out after each shift.
- Spontaneous volunteers should only be assigned generalist tasks.
- Spontaneous volunteers should **NOT** be deployed to high risk activities.
- Spontaneous volunteer activities are supervised.
- Spontaneous volunteers are provided appropriate information to ensure activities are carried out safely.
- Provide adequate and appropriate personal protective equipment and personal protective clothing.

Your **local emergency management arrangements** will assist in identifying the various volunteering organisations that as a local government you may engage with.

#### 1.2.4 Officer

Officers are those individuals within an organisation who make (or participate in) decisions that affect the whole or a substantial part of the organisation, such as the Chief Executive Officer.

It's important to note that whether a person is a paid employee or a volunteer is inconsequential for the purpose of determining if they are an officer under the WHS Act.

An officer is someone who influences the organisation as a whole, rather than a particular function performed by the individual. This will determine if you have organisation-wide, strategic responsibility, as opposed to operational responsibility.

Factors include whether the role has the ability to recruit, commit funds, and determine the reporting structure, involvement in, or developed policy, process or procedures relevant to the operations undertaken.

## 1.3 Activities covered by WHS

Only work activities are covered by the WHS Act. Activities that are purely domestic, social, recreational or private in nature are not included. Whether an activity is considered work may depend on specific circumstances. The following criteria may help determine if an activity is work under the WHS Act:

- The activity involves physical or mental effort or the application of particular skills for the benefit of someone else or for themselves (if self-employed), whether or not for profit or payment
- Activities where someone would ordinarily be paid may be considered work
- Activities that are part of an ongoing process or project may be work if some of the activities are paid
- An activity may be more likely to be work if someone is managed or controlled by another person when they undertake that activity
- Formal, structured or complex arrangements may be considered to be work more than ad hoc or unorganised activities.

The activity may be work even though one or more of the criteria are absent.

Examples of activities that may be considered work include:

- Maintenance of the things needed to enable an organisation to carry out its work. For example, maintenance work on a shed where a volunteer group meets.
- Activities that people are ordinarily paid to do but are carried out for the organisation by a volunteer. For example, driving plant and equipment to service centres.
- Activities that the organisation has a great degree of direction or influence over.
- Activities carried out in accordance with formal or structured arrangements.

## 1.4 What is a duty of care

*One principle that has evolved from common law is the concept of duty of care, which imposes a duty to ensure we do not cause a reasonably foreseeable risk of harm to others for whom we owe a duty. Breach of duty of care can result in a finding of liability (e.g. negligence) which can have significant financial and reputational consequences for local governments.*

Under the WHS Act, the primary duty of care relating to S.19 states a PCBU must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable –

- (1) the health and safety of
  - (a) workers engaged, or caused to be engaged, by the person; and
  - (b) workers whose activities in carrying out work are influenced or directed by the person while the workers are at work in the business or undertaking.
- (2) that other persons are not put at risk from work carried out as part of the conduct of the business or undertaking

- (3) A person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure:
- (a) The provision and maintenance of a work environment without risks to health and safety
  - (b) The provision and maintenance of safe plant and structures
  - (c) The provision and maintenance of safe systems of work
  - (d) The safe use, handling and storage of plant, structures and substances
  - (e) Adequate facilities for the welfare of workers in carrying out work for the business or undertaking, including ensuring access to those facilities
  - (f) Any information, training, instruction or supervision that is necessary to protect all persons from risks to their health and safety arising from work carried out
  - (g) That the health of workers and the conditions at the workplace are monitored for the purpose of preventing illness or injury of workers arising from the conduct of the business or undertaking

To comply a person must exercise their duty of care over others where reasonably able to do so.

## 1.5 What is reasonable instruction

While at work, a worker must comply, so far as reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given and cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the PCBU relating to the health or safety at the workplace that has been notified to workers.

## 1.6 What is reasonably practicable

As per the WHS Act, ensuring health and safety means doing what is, or was reasonably able to be done at a particular time, taking into account all relevant matters, including:

- (a) the likelihood of the hazard or the risk concerned occurring
- (b) the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk
- (c) what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about
  - i. the hazard or the risk
  - ii. ways of eliminating or minimising the risk
  - iii. the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk
- (d) the cost associated, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

## 2 CORE VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

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A **volunteer organisation** has duties as a PCBU under the WHS Act and must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of all of its workers, including volunteers. This means that the organisation must provide the same protections to its volunteers as it does to its paid workers. The protection covers the physical safety and mental health of all workers, including volunteers.

### 2.1 A safe and healthy workplace

The legislation does not set out specific steps to show what is considered 'reasonably practicable' in ensuring the safety and health of their volunteers. Therefore, it will depend on the circumstances of each case.

Generally, to ensure the safety of volunteers' activities, it would be reasonable and practicable for a local government to:

- Ensure volunteer work areas are free of hazards
- Ensure that volunteers understand their duties and responsibilities
- Develop policies and procedures governing on-boarding, screening, training guides and supervision of volunteers
- Allocate sufficient resources to ensure the effective management and development of volunteer programs
- Communicate and consult with volunteers on occupational safety and health issues
- Induct and train/instruct volunteers in their tasks



### 2.1.1 Identify foreseeable hazards

This is the process of finding, recognising, and describing risks. In conjunction with relevant stakeholders, answer the following questions and capture the information within a risk register:

- What can go wrong? What are areas of uncertainty? (Risk description)
- How may this risk eventuate? (Potential causes)
- What are the current measurable activities that mitigate this risk from eventuating? (Controls)
- What are the potential consequential outcomes of the risk eventuating? (Consequences)

Unidentified risks can cause major losses through missed opportunities or adverse events occurring.

Bushfire volunteers in Australian local government areas are likely to be exposed to the following hazards:

- Bushfire
- Building/industrial fire
- Cyclone
- Storm
- Flood
- Tsunami (coastal inundation/river system flooding)
- Earthquake
- Hazardous materials
- Car accidents and traffic management

These hazards present numerous risks and can include:

- Exposure to high heat
- Fume inhalation
- Carbon monoxide exposure
- Dehydration
- Reduced visibility
- Damage to structures



### 2.1.2 Assess the activity (analysis and evaluation)

Use a risk assessment to assess each hazard, the likelihood and consequence of the potential risk occurring, and the suitability of current controls.

- Are you doing what is reasonably expected of you under the circumstances? (Existing control ratings)
- Determine relevant consequence categories and rate how bad it could be if the risk eventuated with existing controls in place (consequence)
- Determine how likely it is that the risk will eventuate to the determined level of consequence with existing controls in place (likelihood)
- Combine the measures of consequence and likelihood, determine the risk rating (level of risk)

The risk owner is to verify the risk analysis and make a risk acceptance decision based on:

- Controls assurance (i.e. are the existing controls in use, effective, documented, up to date and relevant)
- Level of risk
- Risk acceptance criteria
- Risk versus reward/opportunity

The risk acceptance decision needs to be documented and acceptable risks are then subject to the monitor and review process.

### 2.1.3 Minimise impacts

There are generally two requirements following the assessment of risks.

1. In all cases, regardless of the residual risk rating, controls rated 'inadequate' must have a treatment plan (action) to improve the control effectiveness to at least 'adequate'.
2. If the residual risk rating is high or extreme, treatment plans must be implemented to either:
  - Reduce the consequence of the risk materialising
  - Reduce the likelihood of occurrence
  - Improve the effectiveness of the overall controls to 'effective' and obtain delegated approval to accept the risk as per the risk acceptance criteria

### 2.1.4 Review practices and lessons learnt

Risk owners are to review their acceptable risks on a regular reoccurring basis or if triggered by one of the following:

- Changes to the context
- A treatment is implemented
- An incident occurs
- Audit or regulator findings

Risk owners are to monitor the status of risk treatment implementation and report on actions, as required.

## 2.2 Consultation arrangements

Participation in consultative meetings should occur with volunteers and identified stakeholders to provide up to date safety and health information. This consultation should also facilitate planning or reviewing tasks and activities, as well as building comradery amongst the brigades and resolving operational issues – a fundamental component of volunteering together safely.

Examples of Consultative arrangements include but not limited to:

- Bushfire advisory committee meetings
- Bushfire advisory group meetings
- Bushfire sector command meetings
- Brigade meetings
- Brigade debriefing sessions
- Local emergency management committees

## 2.3 Communication arrangements

Communication is essential to ensure volunteers are given consistent and up to date information as it relates to planned tasks and activities being undertaken, as well as ensuring brigades are able to operate in an effective manner.

It is also vital to have multiple means of maintaining effective communication when associated with remote or isolated work, due to the nature of work, time or location, as well as in an emergency situation.

Briefing formats may follow the Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS) 'SMEACS' Incident Planning & Briefing Aid:

- Situation
- Mission
- Execution
- Administration and logistics
- Command and communication
- Safety

Examples of communication arrangements include:

- Bushfire advisory committee meeting
- Bushfire advisory group meeting
- Bushfire sector command meeting
- Brigade meeting
- Training day
- Briefing schedule (initial deployment/situation update/delegation briefing/handover)
- Information briefing

### 2.3.1 Informing diverse parties

When delivering information, training or instruction it must be provided in a way that is readily understandable by any person to whom it is provided.

It is vital to ensure that the information, training and instruction provided is suitable and adequate for the nature of work undertaken in each role, the associated risks, and control measures available.

This should be considered in relation to an individual's ability to perform the inherent requirements and responsibilities of the role, suitable adjustments, or alternative roles.

## 2.4 Training and instruction arrangements

In relation to the *National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not-for-Profit Organisations*, the intent is for the organisation to establish a systematic program that provides needs-based training to volunteers. This is achieved by training volunteers in both job performance skills and organisational development skills such as teamwork, communication and problem solving.

Training for each role requires a different level of training, varying from online course, formal training sessions or exercises to weekly or fortnightly participation at your brigade, group or unit.

The specific requirements where a PCBU involves volunteers shall clearly specify and control the work of volunteers and ensure that their place of work is conducive to preserving their health, safety, general wellbeing, and will focus on:

- Developing policies and procedures that detail the organisation's approach to volunteer training and development
- Allocating responsibility and resources to training and development
- Providing training to address identified needs
- Monitoring the work of volunteers and providing appropriate feedback
- Recognising, formally and informally, the contribution made by volunteers to the organisation and to the community

With relation to the WHS Act, the PCBU must ensure that information, training and instruction provided to a worker is suitable and adequate having regard to:

- The nature of the work carried out by the worker
- The nature of the risks associated with the work at the time the information, training or instruction is provided
- The control measures implemented
- Information, training and instruction is provided in a way that is readily understandable by any person to whom it is provided
- Records of training is kept for a period of seven years in relation to hazardous chemicals to which the worker is likely exposed

## 2.5 Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Where PPE is identified as a control for mitigating risks to the hazards volunteers will likely be exposed to, as a direct result of the nature of their work, is required to be provided to workers (unless the personal protective equipment has been provided by another PCBU).

There is no need to double up in the provision of PPE. However when directing the work to be undertaken, the PPE must be suitable – including size, fit, and being reasonably comfortable for the worker to use and wear. It should be maintained, repaired or replaced as required to ensure it is clean, hygienic and in good working order for use.

Adequate supervision or readiness checks should incorporate assessing the appropriate use and wear of equipment provided and having available provisions for replacements.

## 2.6 Private equipment

The *Bushfire Act 1954* states that at different times private equipment may be used *“in connection with a bush fire, which is necessary for, directed towards, or incidental to, the control or suppression of the fire or the prevention of spread of the fire, or in any other way necessarily associated with the fire including travelling and support services, such as meals and communication systems”*.

It is important to communicate clearly when an individual is operating of their own accord, or commences operating as a volunteer. This means that when emergency services are activated, the personnel, plant, and equipment being provided (even if privately owned) are under the control of the local government. Therefore, the provision of reasonable information, training, and instruction needs to be established at that time (prior to engaging the equipment), through reasonable means to ensure the health and safety of involved parties.

## 2.7 Facility considerations

There are over 540 listed brigades (as of 2022) which all have individual workplace facilities. These facilities are required to be maintained so as to allow for persons to enter, exit and move about without risk to health and safety in both normal working conditions and in an emergency situation.

Considerations must be made to how facilities are maintained to allow for work to be carried out, safe storage of plant and equipment, safe means of evacuation, appropriate ventilation, mitigating the extremes of heat or cold, and accessible facilities (toilets, drinking water, washing and eating facilities).

A workplace inspection tool can be a suitable way of ensuring these aspects are monitored and maintained in relation to the nature of hazards at the workplace, size, location and nature of the business undertakings.

### 2.7.1 Fire protection and firefighting equipment

If hazardous chemicals are stored, handled or used on site, emergency equipment must always be available for use in an emergency.

The PCBU is to ensure fire protection and firefighting equipment is properly installed, tested and maintained, and where unserviceable or inoperative alternatively managed and returned to full operation as soon as practicable.

### 2.7.2 Fuel and chemical storage

When chemicals are stored onsite, a risk assessment should be undertaken to identify what is required, including signage, bunding, traffic management, training, security, and readily accessible, up to date material safety data sheets (within 5 years).

### 2.7.3 Containing and managing spills

If safety equipment is required to control an identified risk in relation to using, handling or storing hazardous chemicals, safety equipment is to be provided, maintained and accessible at the workplace.

Spill kits are a common way of ensuring adequate provisions are available when storing or using hazardous chemicals on site.

# 3 INCIDENT RESPONSE CONSIDERATIONS

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To ensure a consistent approach in managing the workplace and responding to a workplace incident or injury, it is important to apply your specific local government's processes. LGIS provides support in regard to reporting WHS hazards, reportable workplace incidents and diseases, injury management, and undertaking the relevant and required actions as soon as possible.

## 3.1 A notifiable incident

The Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety requires work related deaths and certain types of injuries and diseases to be reported to WorkSafe. Failure to report could lead to prosecution. Reporting must be done by the relevant local government whenever these occur in connection with their business, and an internal process should be outlined within internal WHS documentation.

For example, a resource sharing arrangement or activity undertaken by multiple local governments where a notifiable incident occurs would require all parties to separately report the incident to WorkSafe. Assistance and support can be provided individually to each local government by LGIS.

## 3.2 Injury management

Injury management is a workplace managed process to facilitate a quick and safe return to work following a workplace injury. Injury management is essentially about effective communication and coordination between claims and rehabilitation practitioners, employers, workers and medical practitioners, to ensure that injured workers are provided support and assistance to return to the workplace.

The LGIS injury management team can provide a variety of proactive injury management solutions to ensure you are meeting your legislative responsibilities and providing the highest standard of injury management support for injured workers within the sector.

To assist workers with gaining a greater understanding of the injury management process we encourage our members to make the [LGIS Injury Management and the Worker \(pdf\)](#) document readily available to a worker after an injury.



### 3.3 Public Liability

To enable LGIS to act on your behalf after receiving notification of an incident where a member of public has suffered an injury, financial loss or property damage which they claim you are responsible for, we require the following from the third party:

A written request (letter/fax/email) request addressed to the PCBU (referred to as a 'letter of demand') that includes:

- Details of the circumstances of the incident
- Time and date of the incident
- The address or location of the incident
- A specific request asking you to compensate or reimburse the third party for any loss suffered

Please note:

- The third party should not be encouraged to submit a letter of demand if they have not already indicated that they wish to be compensated in some way. If you are notified of an incident and the person does not indicate that they want to be compensated, you may wish to submit a 'report only' claim - this is denoted on the front page of the [Public Liability claim form \(pdf\)](#) or [Professional Indemnity claim form \(pdf\)](#). This will advise us of the incident in case any claim is submitted in the future.
- We recommend that you do not ask the third party to supply quotes or invoices, as some claimants assume they will automatically be reimbursed. In the event that LGIS Liability decides to settle a claim, we will request quotes/invoices prior to settlement negotiations.
- No 'forms' of any kind (e.g. Incident Report Form etc.) can be used in place of a 'letter of demand'.

What we require from you:

- Completed [Public Liability claim form \(pdf\)](#) or [Professional Indemnity \(pdf\)](#) claims form (pages 1 and/or 2) and signed (page 4)
- Page 3 of the [Public Liability claim form \(pdf\)](#) to be completed and signed by the relevant overseer/engineer/supervisor
- The third party's original letter of demand (or a copy)

The following information, if available, should be provided:

- A report describing all relevant details of the incident from your perspective
- Photographs of the incident site / alleged hazard, preferably before any hazards are repaired
- Copies of any relevant documentation related to the incident.

### 3.4 Supervision

Supervision of the volunteer is the same as for a worker; performance management should be structured and allow for two-way communication. Volunteers who are not performing should be



offered training and other appropriate forms of support. All performance management meetings and decisions should be documented. Volunteers should follow the grievance and complaints policy and procedure as adopted by the local government.

## 3.5 Bullying, harassment, discrimination and equal opportunity

### 3.5.1 Bullying or harassment

To ensure not only the physical wellbeing of the volunteers but also their mental wellbeing, the workplace must take all reasonable steps to ensure volunteers are not exposed to workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Bullying in the workplace is repeated, unreasonable or inappropriate behaviour directed towards a worker, or a group of workers, that creates a risk to the individual's health, safety and wellbeing.

Volunteers also have a duty under the WHS Act to ensure that their actions do not constitute a risk to their own health and safety or that of other people in the workplace.

The organisation needs to clearly communicate that bullying will not be tolerated and provide information to volunteers about the process and who they can contact if they are bullied in the workplace. This may incorporate communication within the induction, training process, or brigade communication arrangements on the local government's code of conduct.

### 3.5.2 Discrimination

It is sometimes a difficult decision for the coordinator of volunteers to reject a volunteer as unsuitable for a chosen volunteer position. The local government is subject to the same anti-discrimination legislation as applies to selecting paid staff.

It is therefore imperative that the local government has clearly defined position descriptions and selection criteria documented. The interview process should also be documented in case the rejection is challenged. Ideally, the reason for the rejection should be explained to the volunteer and if appropriate alternative positions should be offered. The local government needs to demonstrate that they have been reasonable and practical in their assessment of the volunteer.

### 3.5.3 Equal Opportunity

It is recommended that local governments have regard for equal opportunity objectives when developing policies and procedures governing recruitment, screening, training and supervision of volunteers.

### 3.6 Issue resolution

Teamwork is fundamental to achieving common goals. When issues arrive it is vital they are managed effectively in a proactive manner. To support this, following your health and safety resolution process or procedure for managing consultation and communication is one tool for ensuring action is taken, and the opportunity for action to be taken afforded to the relevant stakeholders.

### 3.7 Prosecution

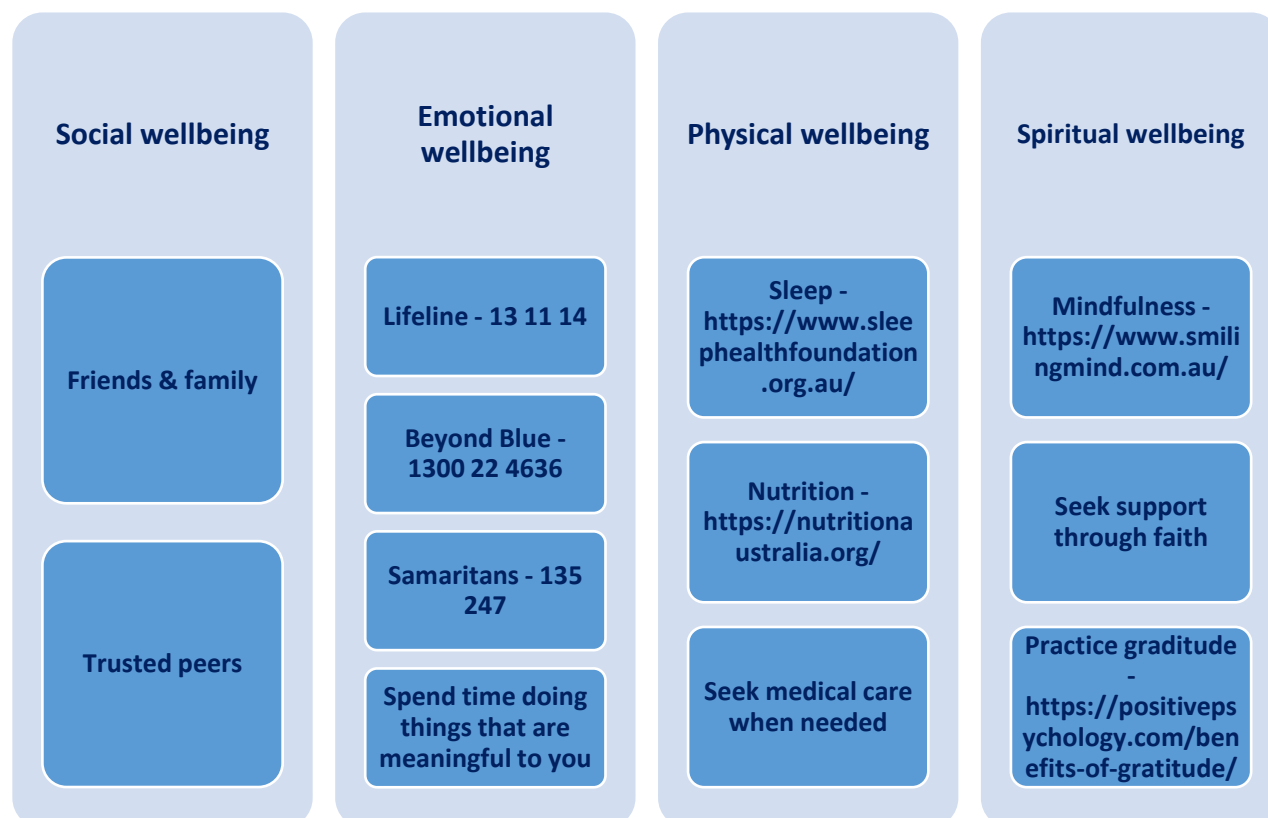
If volunteers comply with the health and safety duties when carrying out work for the organisation, they cannot be fined or prosecuted under the WHS Act.

### 3.8 Support

The nature of this type of activity can present significant emotional demands for bushfire volunteers. Emotional demands can be defined as work/situations that are emotionally challenging, due to high emotional involvement, or having to regularly disguise emotion in the moment.

Demands can arise through working within your own community, coping with the loss of life (human and animal), defending your own properties and/or properties of other families, viewing the loss of livelihoods, and being confronted with life threatening situations.

When emotional demands are coupled with additional demands, this can lead to adverse outcomes on health and wellbeing, such as psychological strain, burnout, and issues with sleeping. So, it's really important that volunteers are proactive in managing their own mental health and wellbeing, to be in the best frame of mind when responding to events. Support is available and may include:



## 4 RESOURCES

The below templates may assist in the implementation and maintenance of volunteer arrangements.

### 4.1 An organisational work health and safety system checklist

DOCUMENTATION	N/A	YES	NO
Work health and safety plan and policy			
Risk register (foreseeable high risk tasks/activities)			
Documented safe operating procedures			
Contractor OSH management process. Contractors provide Certificates of Currency for Public Liability, Professional Indemnity, Motor Vehicle and Workers' Compensation. Subcontractors also produce Certificates of Currency when required.			
Incident/injury/hazard/near miss management procedure/form			
Electrical isolation procedure/form			
Site security plan (arrangements)			
Site traffic management plan			
Establish roles and responsibilities			
DOCUMENTATION	N/A	YES	NO
Site inductions			
PPE policy/procedure and register			
Emergency preparedness and response plans including site maps/muster point/s, first aiders and emergency contacts			
Plant and equipment risk assessments			
Plant maintenance records			
Work health and safety policy			
Fitness for work policy			
Workers' compensation and rehabilitation policy			
Issue resolution process			
Material safety data sheet register			
Activation/call out/permit to work procedure			
TRAINING	N/A	YES	NO
Training competencies and licenses documented and recorded			
Emergency preparedness and response training provided (fire warden/s, chief fire warden, first aiders and firefighting equipment)			
Health and safety representative training			
List of Inducted workers			

SIGNAGE		N/A	YES	NO
Hazardous substances				
Designated speed restrictions				
Plant/pedestrian directional movement requirements				
Potable water				
Emergency exit signs				
PLANT & EQUIPMENT		N/A	YES	NO
Maintained first aid kits				
Personal protective equipment				
Hazardous substances banded in designated secure area				
Installed and maintained firefighting equipment				
Plant and equipment secure storage area				
Out of service and danger tags				
RCD's on electrical power boards and equipment				
Lockable electrical power boards				
Tagged (in date) electrical equipment				
ACTION PLAN ITEM		ACTION DATE		RESPONSIBLE PERSON/S

## 4.2 A risk assessment

This risk assessment example is to be used in conjunction with your enterprise risk management framework and risk matrix.

STEP 1 BACKGROUND																
Directorate/department:																
Activity being assessed:																
STEP 2 DOCUMENTATION (Relevant legislation/standards/documentation)																
Is the activity/task/equipment or plant required to be registered				Yes <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>		Is this involving new plant or equipment or impact other tasks?				Yes <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Are instruction manuals accessible?				Yes <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>		Is a Safe Work Procedure or Safe Work Method Statement required?				Yes <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>		
STEP 3 RISK ASSESSMENT (Use the Local Government Enterprise Risk Framework when assessing and controlling hazards)																
Activity/step/ process	Hazard description	Risk and potential impacts	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk rating	Priority	Description and evidence of controls/corrective actions	Date controls in place	Likelihood	Consequence	Residual risk rating	Effectiveness of the control in place	Responsible person	Additional controls or changes made		
1)																
2)																
3)																
4)																
5)																
6)																
Assessment conducted by:							Signature:						Date:			

### 4.3 A facility inspection checklist

DOCUMENTATION		N/A	YES	NO
Visible WHS Policy				
Incident/injury/hazard/near miss management procedure/form available				
Site evacuation plan and diagram available				
Brigade standard operating procedures available				
Issue resolution procedure available				
Material safety data sheets available				
PPE available				
Emergency contacts information available				
Out of service and danger tags				
SIGNAGE		N/A	YES	NO
Hazardous substances signage				
Designated speed and vehicle movement signage				
Emergency equipment and exit signs				
Potable water signage				
PLANT & EQUIPMENT		N/A	YES	NO
Access restricted to plant and equipment				
PPE in good working order, clean and hygienic for use				
Facilities clean and free from slip, trip, and fall hazards				
Hazardous substances banded in designated secure area				
Firefighting equipment tested and tagged				
Maintained first aid kits				
RCD's on electrical power boards and equipment				
Tagged (in date) electrical equipment and batteries isolated				
Facilities, plant and equipment operational, clean, hygienic and tidy				
Stored food and drinks in-date and not spoiled				
Plant and equipment in good working order and state of readiness				
ACTION PLAN ITEM		ACTION DATE		RESPONSIBLE PERSON/S

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## COUNCIL POLICY Administration

1.2.17

<b>Title:</b>	<b>1.2.17 ATTRACTION AND RETENTION POLICY</b>
<b>Adopted:</b>	16 August 2023
<b>Reviewed:</b>	Biennially
<b>Associated Legislation:</b>	Work Health and Safety Act 2022
<b>Associated Documents:</b>	Code of Conduct Work Health and Safety Policy
<b>Review Responsibility:</b>	Governance and Community Manager
<b>Delegation:</b>	Nil

Previous Policy Number/s- Nil

### Objective:

To establish attraction and retention strategies to ensure the Shire of Mingenew is an 'Employer of Choice' and encourage a resident workforce.

### Policy Statement:

In order to remain competitive, attract and retain staff and provide incentives for candidates from outside the Shire to relocate to Mingenew, the Shire has adopted an Attraction and Retention Policy which outlines the Shire's values, employment benefits, commitment to equal opportunities, training and development and health and wellbeing of its employees.

### Organisation Values:

All employees are expected to work within the Shire of Mingenew values, Code of Conduct, policies and procedures and work towards the Shire's and community's strategic goals. Our culture is built on the Shire's Vision, Values and Purpose:

### Vision

Mingenew is an entrepreneurial community and offers opportunity for all to prosper and thrive in a place with a great lifestyle



*Mingenew dares to be different, to be **innovative** and lead change for our community and people*

*We are **passionate** about our place and creating an opportunity for people to belong and to share our special place*



*We focus on building and strengthening our relationships with each other and our region as our **connections** enable us to build and care for our community*

*We support each other to “**have a go**” and to use our initiative and drive to create new opportunities for our community and other people*

*We welcome all people to Mingenew and **share** our community so that people can **belong** and feel valued*

### ***Our Purpose***

We will be leaders in partnering to develop our community, and we will deliver services and development opportunities that balance financial sustainability and community aspirations.

### **Benefits:**

The Shire offers a wide range of benefits to its employees (as negotiated) including:

- Competitive and flexible remuneration packaging (above award wages)
- Loyalty incentives for 12 months' continued service and gratuity payments upon leaving the organisation in recognition of service (Council Policy)
- A wide range of salary packaging options to maximise value to the employee
- Subsidised housing or allowance for own accommodation in Mingenew
- Ongoing Training and Development opportunities, including Professional Memberships.
- Support for study leave and reimbursement of expenses
- Personal use of Shire resources (e.g. plant and equipment)
- Flexible working hours / one RDO per fortnight or month.
- Executive Leave for management staff
- Festive Leave for Christmas shutdown period
- Allowances for use of vehicles, tools and communication devices in performance of duties
- Generous superannuation scheme (Shire contributes up to 5% matching co-contribution as per Council Policy)
- Relocation assistance for new employees
- Monthly staff and family social BBQ
- Tickets to Mingenew Expo (local show)
- Free Employee Assistance Program (free counselling whether it is work related or personal – available to immediate family members also).
- Strong safety culture and access to resources
- Promotion of health and wellbeing, through initiatives such as:
  - Free flu vaccinations;
  - Skin cancer screening
  - Executive Health Checks
- Unlimited tea and coffee supplies
- Free car parking

The conditions and application of these benefits will be established in internal HR Policies and Procedures to ensure a consistent application

**Safe Work Environment:**

The Shire is committed to achieving best practice in work health and safety by building a safety culture dedicated to minimising risk and preventing injuries and ill health to employees, contractors and the general public by ensuring all can operate in a safe and healthy environment whilst at their workplace.

The Shire has adopted a Work Health and Safety Policy and associated procedures to support this.

**Equal Opportunity:**

The Shire of Mingenew is committed to a policy of equal employment opportunity, fair treatment and non-discrimination for all existing and future employees by ensuring:

- Our workplace is accountable and free from harassment.
- Our workplace is free from unlawful discrimination.
- Fair practice in the workplace.
- Management decisions are made without bias.
- Recognition of and respect for the social and cultural backgrounds of all staff, Elected Members and customers.
- Improving productivity by ensuring:
  - The best person is recruited and/or promoted
  - Skilled staff are retained
  - Training and development are linked to employee and the Shire's needs.
- Striving to ensure fair outcomes in areas of employment, including:
  - Recruitment
  - Training and development
  - Promotion and transfer
  - Supervision and management of employees
  - Access to information
  - Conditions of employment
  - Access to Employee Assistance Program.

**Training and Development:**

The Shire of Mingenew recognises that continuing to focus on the career development of its employees is a beneficial strategy in retaining staff and developing each employee's potential.

The Shire supports the development and use of structured career path plans and will provide all employees with the opportunity to participate in training and development programs at the Shire of Mingenew's expense where training / development complements the Shire's goals and strategies and is consistent with the skills identified during the performance appraisal process.