

Bush Fire Advisory Committee Annual General Meeting Minutes Wednesday 30 September 2026

- 1. Welcome, Record of Attendance and Apologies**
- 2. Confirmation of Minutes of the Previous Meetings**
 - 2.1. Annual General Meeting held on 13 March 2025
- 3. Business Arising from Minutes**
- 4. Election of Office Bearers**
 - 4.1. Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
 - 4.2. Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
 - 4.3. Captains (DBFB, MBFB, DFRB)
 - 4.4. Lieutenants (DBFB, MBFB, DFRB)
 - 4.5. Brigade Equipment Officer
 - 4.6. Brigade Training Officer
 - 4.7. Secretary
 - 4.8. Treasurer
 - 4.9. Fire Control Officers
 - 4.10. Dual Fire Control Officers
- 5. General Business**
 - 5.1. DFES Budget Actuals 24/25 and 25/26
 - 5.2. DFES Operation and Capital Grant 2026/2027
 - 5.3. Fire Brigade Unit Reports
 - 5.4. DFES Local Government Report Package
 - 5.5. Fire Restriction Periods and Fire Break Order
- 6. Date of Next Meeting**
- 7. Closure**

Dowerin Bush Fire Advisory Committee
Annual General Meeting
4.30pm Wednesday 30 September 2026

1. Welcome, Record of Attendance and Apologies

The Chief Executive Officer welcomed those in attendance and declared the Meeting open at 4:43pm.

Present:	Manisha Barthakur	Chief Executive Officer
	Kahli Rose	Manager of Governance and Community
	Denika Griffiths-l'Anson	Governance Officer
	Jason Sewell	SOD Representative
	Evyn Johnston	DFES
	Paul Millstead	
	Gavin Howard	
	Peter Richards	
	Gavin Hagboom	
	Graham Ralph	
	Phil Pickering	
	Steven Couper	
	Simon Emmott	
	Peter Henning	
	Ethan Waun	
	Shane Melvin	
	Adam Metcalf	
	Ray Bear - 5:12pm	
Apologies:	Nil	

2.	Confirmation of Minutes of the Previous Meeting(s)
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2.1 Bush Fire Advisory Committee Annual General Meeting held on 13 March 2025.

Attachment 2.1A

Recommendation - 2.1

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Moved: Gavin Hagboom

Seconded: Phil Pickering

1383

That the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 13 March 2025, as presented in Attachment 2.1A, be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3.	Business Arising from Previous Minutes
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CBH - Harvest Bans (for notification on differences on bans). Discuss with CBH representatives the differences in the bans and how harvest bans work vs total fire bans. Evyn to reach out from DFES - Kahli to reach out on behalf of SoD.

4.	Election of Office Bearers
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All positions will be declared vacant, and the CEO will call for nominations for the following positions:

Please note, the Shire of Dowerin has previously taken on the Secretary, Treasurer, Brigade Equipment Officer, and Brigade Training Officers positions. Due to formalities, these must be declared as vacant at the AGM.

4.1	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
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Nominee: Paul Millsteed - Nominated by: Gavin Hagboom

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Moved: Gavin Hagboom

Seconded: Peter Richards

1384

There being no further nominations, BFAC recommend to Council that:
Paul Millsteed be elected unopposed as Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

CARRIED

4.2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Nominee: Gavin Hagboom - Nominated by: Paul Millsteed

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Moved: Paul Millsteed

Seconded: Simon Emmott

1385 There being no further nominations, BFAC recommend to Council that:
Gavin Hagboom, be elected unopposed as Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

CARRIED

4.3 Captains of:

Dowerin Bush Fire Brigade

Nominee: Gavin Howard - Nominated by: Paul Millsteed

Minnivale Bush Fire Brigade - AGM held 1 October 2026

Nominee: Reece Stratford - Nominated by: Graham Ralph

Dowerin Farmer Response Brigade

Nominee: Gavin Hagboom - Nominated by: Paul Millsteed

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Moved: Paul Millsteed

Seconded: Steven Couper/Peter Henning

1386 There being no further nominations, BFAC recommend to Council that:
Gavin Howard be elected unopposed as the Captain of the Dowerin Bush Fire Brigade
Reece Stratford be elected unopposed as the Captain of the Minnivale Bush Fire Brigade
Gavin Hagboom be elected unopposed as the Captain of the Dowerin Farmer Response Brigade

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4.4 Lieutenants of:

Dowerin Bush Fire Brigade

1st Lieutenant Nominee: -Phil Pickering Nominated by: Paul Millsteed

2nd Lieutenant Nominee: Peter Richards Nominated by: Paul Millsteed

3rd Lieutenant Nominee: Jasmine Hedland Nominated by: Paul Millsteed

Minnivale Bush Fire Brigade

1st Lieutenant Nominee: Shane Metcalf - Nominated by: Graham Ralph

2nd Lieutenant Nominee: Cam Masson - Nominated by: Graham Ralph

3rd Lieutenant Nominee: Oscar Metcalf - Nominated by: Graham Ralph

Dowerin Farmer Response Brigade

1st Lieutenant Nominee: Shane Melvin- Nominated by: Paul Millsteed

2nd Lieutenant Nominee: Jason Sewell- Nominated by: Paul Millsteed

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Moved: Paul Millsteed

Seconded: Gavin Hagboom/Steven Couper

1387 There being no further nominations, BFAC recommend to Council that:

1. Phil Pickering, Peter Richards, and Jasmine Hedland, be elected unopposed as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Lieutenants of the Dowerin Bush Fire Brigade.
2. Shane Metcalf, Cam Masson, and Oscar Metcalf, be elected unopposed as the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Lieutenants of the Minnivale Bush Fire Brigade.
3. Shane Melvin and Jason Sewell, be elected unopposed as the 1st and 2nd Lieutenants of the Dowerin Farmer Response Brigade.

CARRIED

4.5 Brigade Equipment Officer

4.6 Brigade Training Officer

4.7 Secretary

4.8 Treasurer

4.5 - 4.8 - Nominee(s): Shire of Dowerin

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Moved: Paul Millsteed

Seconded: Peter Richards

1388 There being no further nominations, BFAC recommend to Council that:

The Shire of Dowerin, be elected unopposed as Brigade Equipment Officer, Brigade Training Officer, Secretary and Treasurer for the Dowerin Bush Fire Brigade, Minnivale Bush Fire Brigade, and Dowerin Farmer Response Brigade.

CARRIED

4.9 Fire Control Officers:

Fire Weather Officers

Bush Fire Control Officers

Minnivale

Cadoux-Manmanning

Ejanding

Ucarty

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Moved: Phil Pickering

Seconded: Jason Sewell

1389 BFAC recommend to Council that the following officers be appointed:

Position	Name	Phone
Fire Weather Officer:	Phil Pickering	0429 311 250
Bush Fire Control Officers:	Paul Millsteed Phil Pickering Manisha Barthakur Ranger (Keith Squibb)	0427 311 721 0429 311 250 0499 659 168 0474 779 374
FCO – Minnivale:	Graham Ralph	0427 313 014
FCO – Cadoux-Manmanning:	Alan Bear Shayne Booth - TBC Simon Emmott	0499 156 500 0427 732 013 0428 955 940
FCO – Ejanding:	Paul Millsteed Peter Richards	0427 311 721 0428 311 772
FCO – Ucarty:	Gavin Hagboom	0427 341 026

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4.10

Dual Fire Control Officers:

Shire of Cunderdin

Shire of Goomalling

Shire of Koorda

Shire of Wongan-Ballidu

Shire of Wyalkatchem

Voting Requirements



Simple Majority



Absolute Majority

Moved: Paul Millsteed

Seconded: Gavin Hagboom

1390

BFAC recommend to Council that the following persons be appointed as Dual Fire Control Officers:

Position	Name
Shire of Cunderdin	Gavin Hagboom
Shire of Goomalling	Gavin Hagboom Phil Pickering
Shire of Koorda	Alan Bear Shaun Kalazich
Shire of Wongan-Ballidu	Simon Emmott Paul Millsteed
Shire of Wyalkatchem	Graham Ralph

CARRIED

5. General Business

5.1 DFES Budget Actuals 2024/25

The actual expenditure for the 2024/2025 financial year is provided in [Attachment 5.1A](#), along with the drafted Form 8 actuals for the 2025/26 financial year, provided as [Attachment 5.1B](#).

This report offers a detailed overview of how LGGS funding was utilised in the previous financial years. It includes key expenditure areas, trends in spending, and any variances from the budgeted allocations.

5.2 DFES Operation and Capital Grant 2026/27

The 2026/2027 LGGS grant, included as [Attachment 5.2A](#), outlines the allocated financial assistance from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services.

For this funding cycle, the Shire has opted not to apply for a capital grant, instead prioritising brigade capability. The focus will be on providing comprehensive training for new brigade members and ensuring all personnel are equipped with a full set of personal protective equipment (PPE), enhancing safety and preparedness across all brigades.

5.3 Fire Brigade Unit Reports

Dowerin Bush Fire Brigade

Paul Millsteed

- Isuzu truck – light keep staying on
- Quiet season – small harvest fires
- Vehicle warning lights – issues
- 4 new members (recent)
- Regular training being undertaken – 4 now qualified for aerial support on the fire grounds.
- Ongoing training for new members
- New members being identified to bring into the brigade.

Minnivale Bush Fire Brigade

- Nil report submitted for Minnivale Brigade

Dowerin Farmer Response Brigade

Gavin Hagboom

- Very busy season at the south end into adjoining shires
- Worked very well together, lots of PPE on grounds and good communications
- Fire awareness courses haven't been completed for all members, Gavin following up on training standards
- Shire to Shire communications need improvement for coordinated response where needed.

DFES

- Bushfire training program is coming to an end for the region in a few weeks. Bushfire Safety Awareness, Firefighting Skills, and Ground Controller courses were completed in Dowerin. Correspondence requesting EOLs from Local Governments for courses in the 2027 training calendar will be communicated by the end of the year.
- Bushfire Safety for Workers is an online course developed collaboratively by Australian fire agencies, including AFAC, to help workers understand and prepare for bushfire risk. The course provides practical guidance on recognising bushfire hazards, preparing for travel, responding to bushfire warnings, and taking appropriate action during a bushfire emergency. The course is suitable for workers, supervisors and organisations whose staff travel or work in bushfire-prone environments. See attached flyer
- DFES has launched an advertising campaign to better inform Western Australians about the risks posed by lithium-ion batteries and how to buy, store and use them safely. Visit dfes.wa.gov.au/lithiumion
- First responders are reminded of the emerging risk of lithium-ion battery fires in EVs, off grid solar set ups and incorrectly disposed batteries. Crews without Breathing Apparatus (BA) must remain well clear of the smoke produced by these fires.
- New Bush Fire Brigade handheld VHF radios have been delivered. Each radio has a cheat sheet with instructions for use, if any additional training is required, please reach out to me.
- Our DFES region is one position away from being fully staffed leading into the high threat period. A number of these positions are filled on a fix-term/contract basis so there remains some risk.
- The water bomber grain harvest program will continue during the 2026/27 season, with fixed wing aircraft being positioned across the wheatbelt while harvest is underway to facilitate quick response.
- A response message will be placed into the CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) system for 56 Stewart St Dowerin, requesting that any incidents at this address have WAPOL mobilised and the GM RDC notified.

SoDowerin

- Whatsapp group will be trialled this year
- Harvest ban notifications will still be going per usual SMS
- 99 members across 3 brigades
- Gazettal of new burning period dates so they will now be the same annually.
- Firebreaks 31 October

5.4

DFES Monthly Report

The latest DFES Monthly Report is provided as [Attachment 5.4A](#)

5.5

Fire Restriction Periods and Fire Break Order

2026 - 2027 Fire Break Order is provided as [Attachment 5.5A](#).

5.6

General Business (Raised by Members)

Fuel Loading issues

- Unable to burn during March and April due to the fire weather readings.
- Paul noted he has sent over 500 photos through last season, and the restrictions did not change.
- Only update the grid where the photos are taken (km³), not the full region
- AFDRS email for feedback
- No luck at the DOAC meetings and Zones to have the issue addressed
- Due to it being a national system the requirements to be easily accessible and read.

****Do firebreaks need to be installed prior to harvest starting??****

- With the new restricted burning dates it may be wise to change the firebreak date to 1 October going forward.
- A Council motion will be required to do so, and the dates will need to be gazetted to be formal.
- This will be reassessed prior to the March AGM 2027 and a recommendation to council can be put forward for then.

Peter Richards – Fire Control Officers

- Is there a refresher course? – yes
- Will be added into the DFES training calendar and distributed.

Shire Map with water points and tanks

- This is a work in progress and will be a significant job to undertake, it is on the radar and a long term goal for the district.

Firebreak compliance

- Ranger does spot checks in townsite and around rural areas
- Notify shire if there are any properties in particular to investigate.

54 gate west road

- Standpipe and water tanks are being investigated but will be a long term project due to funding constraints.

M Barthakur – What do our brigades do if there is a fire at the Stewart st property?

- *DFES are working with WAPOL and CBFCO to have the property flagged for police attendance if another 000 call is made for a fire situation. Brigade member's safety remains the #1 concern at all times.*

A Metcalf – How long does it take for the water planes to get to Dowerin from Jandakot?

- *The plane travels at 300kph, and takes approx. 40 mins travel time from Jandakot*

Adam Metcalf – Unable to log into BART

Linley Dreghorn – not getting SMS from DFES when a fire is active

6.	Date of Next Meeting
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March 2027

7.	Closure
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There being no further business, the Chief Executive Officer declared the meeting closed at 5:37pm.

UNCONFIRMED