



# BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference  
August 2025



## Purpose

To advise Council on matters relating to the prevention, control, and extinguishment of bush fires, and to provide recommendations to assist Council in discharging its responsibilities under the Bush Fires Act 1954.

## Objectives

- Provide a forum for discussion and coordination between the Shire, bush fire brigades, and relevant agencies.
- Recommend to Council policies and strategies for effective bush fire prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.
- Contribute to the development and review of the Bush Fire Risk Management Plan, fire break notices, and operational procedures.
- Identify and prioritise equipment, training, and resource requirements for brigades.
- Foster cooperative arrangements with neighbouring local governments and state agencies.

## Legislative Framework

- *Bush Fires Act 1954*,
- *Local Government Act 1995*,
- Shire of Dowerin Local Laws
- DFES guidelines

## Role & Responsibilities

The Committee will:

- Advise Council on all matters referred to it in relation to bush fire management within the district.
- Provide advice on the coordination of bush fire brigades and recommend appointments of Bush Fire Control Officers, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO), and Deputy CBFCOs.
- Recommend to Council the establishment, disbandment, or amalgamation of brigades.
- Provide input on public education and awareness campaigns.
- Review and recommend annual capital and operational funding requirements for bush fire management.

## Delegated Authority

The Committee has no delegated authority and is advisory only. All recommendations are to be referred to Council for consideration and decision.

## Membership

Membership shall comprise:

- One (1) Councillor appointed by Council.
- Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.
- Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer(s).
- Captain (or delegate) from each registered Bush Fire Brigade within the Shire.
- One (1) DFES representative (non-voting).
- Other persons as determined by Council.

Members are appointed by Council, generally for a two-year term to align with the local government election cycle. The Presiding Member will be the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, and Deputy Presiding Member the Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

## Member Responsibilities

- Declare any conflicts of interest in accordance with legislation and Council policy.
- Attend meetings regularly and participate constructively in discussions.
- Represent the views and interests of their brigade or agency while supporting collective decisions.

## Meetings

The Committee will meet at least once annually, generally post-season, with additional meetings scheduled as required. A quorum shall be 50% of voting members plus one.

Voting shall be by simple majority; in the event of a tie, the Presiding Member shall have a casting vote.

## Notice of Meeting and Agenda

Notice of meetings, including the agenda and supporting documents, will be provided to members at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

The agenda will be prepared by the Committee's Executive Officer in consultation with the Chairperson.

## Minutes of Meetings

Minutes will be taken by the Executive Officer and distributed to members within 10 business days of the meeting.

Minutes, including all recommendations, will be submitted to the next Ordinary Council Meeting for consideration.

## Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if required by legislative changes or Council resolution.

## Functions

In accordance with Section 67 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, the Committee will:

- Plan for the prevention, control, and extinguishment of bush fires.
- Plan the layout of fire-breaks in the district.
- Make recommendations on the prosecution of offences under the Act.
- Advise on the coordination of brigades, including under Group Brigade Officers if applicable.
- Perform any other function assigned to it by the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, regulations, or Council.

