



# Shire of Woodanilling

# Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade Operating Procedures

(Bush Fire Administration Manual including the Standard Operating Procedures)

(Adopted by Council on 17 December 2024)

## Amendment Record

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## INTRODUCTION

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The Bush Fire Operating Procedures are guidelines adopted by the local government.

This document incorporates both the Administration Procedures and Standard Operating Procedures.

This document is considered to be a living document that may, from time to time, require updating and annual review.

Review:

The Shire of Woodanilling Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade Operating Procedures will be reviewed annually through the BFAC Meeting.

## ACRONYMS/INTERPRETATION

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In these procedures, unless the context is otherwise requires:

Acronym	Definition
3.4	3,000 litre of water and 4 wheel drive (the type of fire appliance)
4.4	4,000 litre of water and 4 wheel drive (the type of fire appliance)
6AR	Department of Fire and Emergency Services Communication Centre radio call sign
6IP	Department of Fire and Emergency Services Communication Centre radio call sign
7.2	7,000 litre of water and 2 wheel drive (the type of fire appliance)
9.2	9,000 litre of water and 2 wheel drive (the type of fire appliance)
12.2	12,000 litre of water and 2 wheel drive (the type of fire appliance)
AIIMS	Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System
BFAC	Bush Fire Advisory Committee
BFB	Bush Fire Brigade
BFS	Bush Fire Service
CEO	Chief Executive Officer of the Shire of Woodanilling
ComCen	Department of Fire and Emergency Services Communication Centre
CBFCO	Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
DCBFCO	Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
DBCA	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
DCEO	Deputy Chief Executive Officer for the Shire of Woodanilling
DFES	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
ESL	Emergency Services Levy
FCO	Fire Control Officer
IC	Incident Controller
LGGS	Local Government Grant Scheme
NUCOM	Name, Use, Construction/Components/Operation/Maintenance
OIC	Officer in Charge
PWS	Parks and Wildlife Service
SitRep	Situation Report
SAP	Standard Administrative Procedure
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TRK	Training Resource Kits
UCL	Unallocated Crown Land
UMR	Unmanaged Reserve

VFR	Vehicle Fault Report
CESM	Community Services Manager
PAFTAC	Position Area Fuel Time Assistance required Communications

#### Authorisation

These procedures have been produced and issued under the authority of the Shire of Woodanilling in accordance with the *Bush Fires Act 1954* and endorsed by the Shire of Woodanilling.

Cr Dale Douglas  
 Shire President  
 Shire of Woodanilling

DATE

Paul Hanlon  
 Chief Executive Officer  
 Shire of Woodanilling

DATE



# 1 OVERVIEW

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## 1.1 PROCEDURES MANUAL

### 1.1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to establish procedures for the operations and administration of the Shire of Woodanilling's Bush Fire Brigades.

Brigades are required to make their members familiar with these procedures to ensure consistency throughout the Shire of Woodanilling.

### 1.1.2 Related Documents/Legislation

These procedures should be read in conjunction with the following related items:

- *Bush Fires Act 1954*
- *Bush Fires Regulations 1954*
- *Emergency Management Act 2005*
- *Fire Brigades Act 1942*
- *Local Government Act 1995*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*
- *Equal Opportunities Act 1984*
- Shire of Woodanilling Code of Conduct
- Any other relevant Shire or adopted Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) procedures/documents
- State Hazard Plan Fire

The Shire acknowledges and thanks the NSW Rural Fire Service and Department of Fire and Emergency Services, whose documents have been used extensively as reference material in preparing these procedures.

### 1.1.3 Modifications, amendments and review

The Shire of Woodanilling (The Shire) may amend these procedures in consultation with the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO) from time to time in order to maintain contemporary standards.

Modifications to these procedures will be circulated to all Bush Fire Brigades (BFBs) and new members and it is the responsibility of each brigade to ensure this information is passed on to current members.

Notwithstanding the modifications which may be made to these procedures from time to time, the Shire will review these procedures annually.

## 1.2 ADOPTION OF DFES STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPs)

### 1.2.1 Application of DFES Doctrine, Standard Operation Procedures and Standard Administrative Procedures to Bush Fire Brigades

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) has a set of Operational Doctrine, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Standard Administrative Procedures (SAPs) for the operations of Bush Fire Brigades. The hierarchical relationship between these documents is shown below.

In order to promote consistency and commonality, the Shire may adopt DFES Operational Doctrine, Standard Operating Procedures and/or Standard Administrative Procedures as they apply to Bush Fire Brigades and their operations as listed in section 1.2.2 of these procedures.

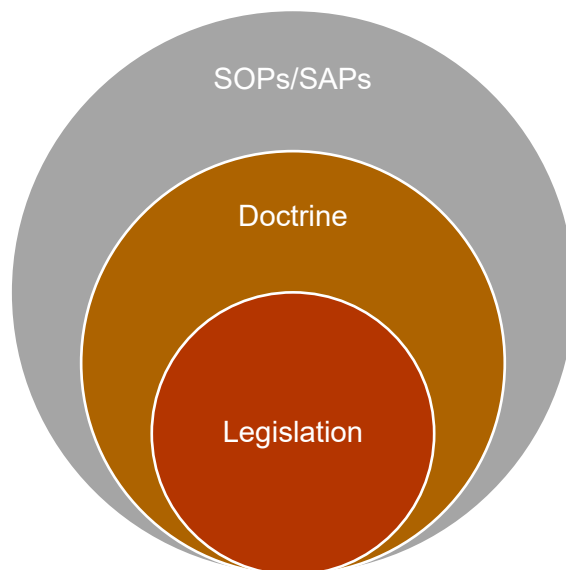


Figure 1: Hierarchical relationship between DFES documentation.

Where the Shire has developed its own policy/procedure/process and there is duplication or inconsistency with the DFES protocols, the Shire policy/procedure/process shall be the overriding policy.

### 1.2.2 List of DFES Doctrine Adopted by Shire of Woodanilling

The Shire adopts the following DFES Doctrine/SOPs/SAPs and applies them to their Bush Fire Brigades:

Reference	Title	Type
3.2	Incident Control	Doctrine
3.4	Structural Fire	Doctrine
3.5	Bushfire	Doctrine
3.11	Air Operations	Doctrine
2.1.2	Mobilising	SOP
3.2.3	Making Safe Rules for Departure	SOP
3.2.4	Incident Communications	SOP
3.2.5	Communications Planning	SOP
3.2.6	T Cards and Incident Management Boards	SOP
3.2.7	Red Flag Warnings	SOP
3.2.11	Strike Team Task Force Resources	SOP
3.3.7	Hazard Isolation Tagging	SOP
3.4.8	Electrical Hazards	SOP
3.4.14	Fire Cause Investigation and Reporting	SOP
3.5.1	Bushfire Response	SOP
3.5.2	Diesel Particulate Diffusers Regeneration During Bushfire Firefighting	SOP
3.5.3	Ground Control of Aerial Suppression Platforms	SOP
3.5.4	Safe Use of Drip Torches	SOP
3.5.5	Use of Class A Foam at Incidents	SOP
3.5.6	Structural Triage	SOP
3.5.7	Employment of Task Forces/Strike Teams at the RUI	SOP
3.5.8	Immediate Street Assessment at the RUI	SOP
3.5.9	Structural Defence at the RUI	SOP
3.5.10	Crew Safety at Bushfires	SOP

3.5.11	Entrapment at Bushfire	SOP
3.2.12	Tree Removal at Bushfires	SOP
3.5.13	Operating within Registered UXO Sites	SOP
3.5.14	Dieback Hygiene	SOP
3.5.15	Exposure to Bushfire Smoke	SOP
3.11.1	Aerial Suppression Response	SOP
3.11.5	Floating Collar Tank Operations	SOP
3.1.B	Basis of Allocation Operational Radios	SAP
3.1.D	Telephone Warning System	SAP
3.1.J	Recovery	SAP
3.1.K	Incident Documentation	SAP
3.2.B	Information and Warnings	SAP
3.2.C	Incident Action Planning	SAP
3.3.B	Hydrant Servicing	SAP

## 2 OPERATIONS

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### 2.1 INCIDENT RESPONSE

#### 2.1.1 Mobilisation

Brigades can be dispatched to emergency incidents via the following procedures:

- DFES ComCen receive '000' call and determine that the incident requires BFB attendance.
- DFES ComCen send SMS message to relevant BFB, Chief and CESM with incident details.
- A message is placed on the WhatsApp group that a fire has been reported.
- The relevant Brigade is mobilised to the incident. All Brigades are registered with the Shire's SMS system. The CBFCO/DBFCO/CESM will send turn out message to the relevant Brigade/s with details of the incident, initially through the Brigade's WhatsApp, then by SMS through the Shire's SMS system if required.
- CBFCO, DCBFCO or relevant officer is to contact DFES ComCen on 1800 198 140 advising of Brigade activation for all incidents.

#### 2.1.2 Dispatch Method

- CBFCO/DCBFCO/FCO/CESM mobilises the required resource as per the above.
- On notification of mobilisation: Brigade members shall advise the CBFCO of estimated time of arrival at incident by WhatsApp or bushfire radio.
- The CBFCO shall advise Brigade members who the Incident Controller is on site.
- On arrival at incident site: Wherever possible, Brigade members shall advise the Incident Controller on site of their arrival by WhatsApp or bushfire radio.
- 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 on site.
- Consideration should be given after assessment as to whether a Bushfire Warning should be issued. This is undertaken by the CESM or the Regional Duty Coordinator.
- Within 30 minutes of arrival: The Incident Controller will provide updated details to the CBFCO and CESM as outline above.
- When the incident is resolved: The Incident Controller shall notify the CBFCO and CESM when the incident is resolved.
- CBFCO, CESM or relevant officer is to contact DFES ComCen on 1800 198 140 of brigade stand down. At this point an incident number is generated, for inclusion on Fire Incident Report.
- FCOs on site are to forward a list of attendees to the CESM for recording.

#### 2.1.3 Agency Notification

Where the Shire is the Controlling Agency at an incident, the CBFCO shall notify the following:

- Chief Executive Officer
- CESM
- DFES Communications Centre
- Katanning Police or CESM (if roads will be impacted and traffic management or road closure is required)

**\*N.B:** The mobilisation of resources is at the discretion of the Chief/Deputy Chief and/or FCO on duty.

Bush Fire Brigade members are to drive to their respective station/Incident observing all road rules.

Prior to engagement at the incident, the following items are to occur:

- Don PPC/PPE. Don the correct levels of PPC in accordance with the nature of the incident.
- Confirm crewing of fire unit /appliances. Crews are registered at the incident either through the IC or WhatsApp.
- Secure Station. Ensure station is secured prior to departure.
- Mount appliance(s). Mount appliances, ensuring any additional equipment is on board (portable radios, drinking water, etc.)
- Depart station. Depart station and transmit turnout message as per 2.1.2.

#### **2.1.4 Incident Management**

Management of incidents in the Shire shall be in accordance with the following documents and these procedures:

- State Hazard Plan – Fire (Interim)
- DFES Operational Doctrine 3.2 Incident Control

##### **2.1.4.1 Transfer of control of fire/incident (Bush Fires Act s.13/s.45)**

In accordance with Section 13 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, a local government may transfer control of a fire to a DFES representative in the following circumstances:

- At the request of the local government; or
- If, because of the nature or extent of the bush fire, the FES Commissioner considers that it is appropriate to do so.

Similarly, Section 45 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954* provides for local governments to transfer control of a fire to a Parks and Wildlife Service Officer.

State Hazard Plan – Fire identifies the process for these actions to occur. In the Shire, only the CEO, CBFCO or DCBFCOs may authorise a transfer of control to/from DFES and/or DBCA.

##### **2.1.4.2 Incident expenditure**

Only the following persons may expend funds in connection with an incident:

- Shire employees with relevant purchasing authorisation;
- Shire CEO or designated officer.

Any emergency expenditure must be in accordance with Section 6.8 of the *Local Government Act 1995*.

#### **“6.8. Expenditure from municipal fund not included in annual budget**

(1) *A local government is not to incur expenditure from its municipal fund for an additional purpose except where the expenditure -*

- (a) is incurred in a financial year before the adoption of the annual budget by the local government; or*
- (b) is authorised in advance by resolution\*;* or
- (c) is authorised in advance by the mayor or president in an emergency.*

*\* Absolute majority required.*

*(1a) In subsection (1) -*

**additional purpose** means a purpose for which no expenditure estimate is included in the local government’s annual budget.

- (2) Where expenditure has been incurred by a local government -
- (a) pursuant to subsection (1)(a), it is to be included in the annual budget for that financial year; and
  - (b) pursuant to subsection (1)(c), it is to be reported to the next ordinary meeting of the council.

[Section 6.8 amended by No. 1 of 1998 s. 19.]”

#### 2.1.4.3 Catering and responder welfare

Shire BFB vehicles will be required to be self-sufficient in terms of drinking water and food for at least 3 hours.

Where an incident is predicted to be of a duration of 3 hours or more, the IC in conjunction with the Shire/CBFCO/DCBFCO will coordinate refreshments, in accordance with the DFES Refreshments Matrix:

Grade	Description
1	Water (every hour) Water is stored on appliances. It is the responsibility of the OIC to ensure each vehicle has a minimum immediate supply of at least 2L of water per person on each vehicle.
2	Refreshment (between 3 to 5 hours) Refreshments as required.
3	Light meals (Between 4 to 8 hours) Local catering providers such as fast food outlets, roadhouses, hotels, cafes etc in the regional area. These meals are able to be prepared within a quick timeframe.
4	Substantial meals (working over 6 hours) These are provided for major incidents which are likely to be running for extended periods of time. These meals are provided by either the Salvation Army or local/external catering providers. They are prepared in a commercial kitchen setup or on the Salvation Army catering truck.

#### 2.1.5 Shift rostering and fatigue management

Brigades will be asked to confirm their ability to provide crews/vehicles in the following circumstances:

- Christmas/New Year holiday period;
- Australia Day holiday period;
- Days with a fire danger rating of ‘Severe’ or above; and
- At the discretion of the CBFCO/DCBFCO.

Any deployment, either locally or outside of the Shire will have shifts of no more than 12 hours duration including travel. Where a shift is longer than this due to unforeseen circumstances, arrangements will be made to drive the fatigued crew home and have a rested driver bring the appliance back to the station.

#### 2.1.6 Lithium – Ion Battery Response

**Call 000 explaining the situation and requesting support.**

##### Background

Devices such as phones, tablets, power banks, computers, toys, appliances, tools, electric bikes, scooters, and cars can contain lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries and are prolific in society.

On a larger scale, community battery hubs, off grid properties, industrial battery banks and other battery energy storage systems (BESS) are becoming more common. DFES has seen a significant rise in the number of fires involving Li-ion batteries.

## Defensive Tactics:

Allowing the battery to burn itself out is the preferred option if there are no other exposures are risk.

- Keep clear of the fog/vapour cloud if it is omitted as this is not steam.

If not sufficiently cooled, thermal runaway may continue, and the battery can have secondary ignitions. In addition, adjacent cells may also undergo thermal runaway if heat propagation from the initial cell is not controlled. Therefore, cooling the cells in a battery pack is essential to prevent heat propagation and extinguish fires from a single cell. Large quantities of water may be required (at least 4000 litres) to cool large batteries for up to 15 minutes (250L @ 7 bar x 15 mins = 3750 litres). If available, check temperatures with a Thermal Imaging Camera (TIC) after a further 15 minutes.

Under no circumstances should salt water or any other additive (foam) be introduced into the battery or container.

**Note** – Carbon dioxide and Dry chemical powder extinguishers may extinguish the flames, but have no cooling effect, therefore creating a flammable vapour cloud risk.

This may require extended periods of monitoring. Visible flame may continue for over 90 minutes. Once self-extinguished and all cells have completely burnt out, the battery will not reignite but will continue to off-gas and have elevated temperatures for some time afterwards.

When ambient temperature is reached, the battery should be monitored for another 60 minutes to confirm no further rises in temperature.

<https://shared.dfes.wa.gov.au/business-units/doctrine/IRISDoctrinesyncfolder/Doctrine/3%20Operations/3.17%20Special%20Risks/SOP-3.17.15---Standard-Operating-Procedure-Lithium-Batteries.pdf>

After an incident involving Li-ion Batteries provide, detailed information in the incident report and forward it to the [Fire Investigation and Analysis Unit](#), including the following information:

- o Product type of the lithium-ion battery involved.
- o Brand name of the battery.
- o Serial number of the battery.
- o Include photos of the incident, if possible.

### 2.1.7 Mop-up and Requirements for Demobilisation

The Shire has the following minimum mop up standards:

- 30 metre black out for all ground/near surface fuels; and
- 100 metre black out for all standing/aerial hot spots.

Wherever possible, a mineral earth break will be constructed around the perimeter of a fire prior to departure. The IC, OIC have a responsibility to maintain the safety of both emergency responders and the general public. The IC shall continue to commit resources until the incident is deemed safe for the community. Making an incident safe requires assessment of risks and consideration in accordance with DFES SOP 3.2.3 – Making Safe/Rules for Departure.

### 2.1.8 Demobilisation and Return to Station

At the direction of the IC, appliances may be stood down from an incident or conduct a crew change in the case of a protracted incident.

Upon demobilisation, the officer in charge of the fire unit / appliance should notify via WhatsApp that they are leaving the incident / and returning home/ to the station.

All vehicles and equipment must be returned to a state of readiness upon return to station. At a minimum, this means the following items:

- Vehicle fuel tank is at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  full of fuel;
- Pump fuel tank (if fitted) is full of fuel;
- The fire unit/appliance water tank is refilled and the pump is primed;
- All equipment is properly re stowed on the appliance;
- Drinking water/refreshments are replenished;
- The vehicle is left in a clean/tidy state; and
- Any defects/issues with the vehicle/equipment are reported.

If a vehicle or critical equipment on the fire unit / appliance is damaged or defective, the process outlined in 2.5.3 of this manual should be followed.

Officers/members of BFBs should debrief after all incidents to identify:

- What went well?
- What didn't go well?
- What needs to be changed/improved in the future?
- Reporting of any WHS issues, near misses or injuries.
- Any follow up requirements such as critical incident stress/wellness needs.

#### **2.1.9 Offences against the Bush Fires Act 1954**

Where a Bush Fire Brigade attends an incident and it is believed an offence against the *Bush Fires Act 1954* has occurred, the officer in charge should contact the CBFCO or CESM as soon as practicable. This extends to all fires (regardless of the burning period/time of year) where the fire is likely to escape the property or is uncontrolled/not adequately controlled.

#### **The following protocol is in effect during Restricted or Open periods of burning:**

Establish whether:

- A permit has been issued, (*phone call to the office or relevant FCO*);
- Is the fire under control;
- Is there a likelihood of the fire spreading, or is it within the span of control of attending persons;
- Is there a risk or hazard to other assets within the land, or to adjoining lands and assets?

An assessment of the incident must be considered and made, and subject to the assessed risk or threat, the following actions are available:

- Where it is considered that the fire is clearly a risk or threat and not under control, call "000" and report the incident, and;
  - The Authorised Officer may stay onsite to provide updates until the incident is attended with a Fire brigade response.
  - The Authorised Officer is to provide a handover to the first Brigade Officer attending the incident.
  - Once the handover is completed, the Authorised Officer is to depart the area, unless otherwise directed or requested by the Brigade Officer, Incident Controller or relevant Shire or Fire Management Team.



- Where a permit has been issued, but it appears that conditions are not being met, the Authorised Officer is to refer the matter to the relevant Fire Control Officer.
- Where a permit has not been issued, it is considered that the fire is safe, and under control, the Authorised Officer is to refer the matter to the relevant Fire Control Officer.
- Where a permit has been issued, and it appears that conditions are being met, the Authorised Officer is not required to attend the report.

**Any applicable enforcement proceedings will be considered once all fire reports are received and processed at the Shire Office.**

## 2.2 HAZARD REDUCTION BURNING

### 2.2.1 Issue of permits to private landowners

The Shire maintains a network of authorised Fire Control Officers (FCO), who issue permits to the public for the purpose of hazard reduction burning on their own property.

Permits are to be issued in accordance with the provisions of the *Bush Fires Act 1954* and subject to any directions from the CBFCO and/or local government.

Prior to issuing a permit, FCO's should be satisfied that the applicant has sufficient measures in place to adequately control the burn and that the applicant is aware of their obligations and requirements as per the rear of the permit.

The FCO is to ascertain a phone contact number of the applicant in order to maintain communications in regards to conditions of permit. A permit may only be issued to the landowner. In the case that a person applies that is not the landowner then written consent is required by the landowner. A copy of this will be attached to the permit and forwarded to the Shire.

The following items are to be minimum conditions for all permits issued within the Shire:

- Refer to Permit conditions regarding able bodied people to be in attendance during the burn;
- Notification to all adjoining landowners prior to the burn;
- Notification to Parks and Wildlife Local Duty Officer prior to lighting if the burn is within three (3) kilometres of forest land.

Upon notification by a permit holder of the intention to commence burning, a FCO may postpone or cancel the lighting of any fires under the issued permit. This may be due to forecast weather conditions, resource availability or other factors.

In the case a permit is postponed or cancelled, an FCO should note the date and time of the cancellation of the permit and write this on the retained copy of the permit in their permit book.

Copies of permits issued are to be retained in the permit book. Upon completion of the permit book, it is to be submitted to the Shire for recording/archiving purposes.

A copy of the permit issued must be forwarded to the CESM by FCOs for recording and placed on WhatsApp.

The *Bush Fires Act 1954* allows for residents to burn during the restricted season without a permit for the purposes of burning garden refuse subject to the requirements of the *Bush Fires Act 1954* and the Shire's Firebreak and Fuel Hazard Reduction Notice.

## 2.2.2 Requirements for Hazard Reduction Burning by Brigades/Shire

All hazard reduction burning conducted by Brigades must meet the following conditions:

Burn Type	Requirements
Landscape burn greater than one (1) acre in size <sup>^</sup>	Request to burn form/authorization from landowner to burn Permit to burn (if required by burning period) Additional documents as necessary (Clearing Permit, etc).

<sup>^</sup>: Where there is significant complexity associated with a burn (i.e assets directly adjacent, high risk of burn escape, environmental impacts), a full-prescribed fire plan will be required.

## 2.2.3 Burning by Brigades on Private Property

All burning by brigades on private property requires the approval of the landowner on the 'Request for Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade to Burn Private Property' form. This form must be submitted to the Shire for approval prior to burning taking place. The CESM will check the proposed burn for any environmental and other implications and either approve or reject the request.

The Brigade will be notified of the outcome of the request to burn within one week of submission.

## 2.2.4 Burning on Government/Shire Managed Lands

All burning on Government/Shire land will be coordinated through the Shire's CESM in consultation with the CEO/CBFCO.

### 2.2.4.1 Government Land

Requests from government agencies for prescribed burning should be directed to the CESM.

The Shire's CESM and CBFCO will liaise with the government department and identify:

- Why the burn is needed;
- What assets/infrastructure the burn may affect;
- Additional permissions needed (clearing permit, environmental approvals); and
- If the burn is within the capacity of the Shire/Brigades.

Once this initial information is obtained, the Shire will discuss the feasibility with the land management agency and if feasible, consult with the local brigade to plan the burn. The requirements of s2.2.2 will apply to all burns on government lands. The land management agency may also require additional paperwork/administration to be completed.

The Shire, in partnership with brigades, will coordinate the burn, complete any necessary administration and ensure the burn objectives have been met.

### 2.2.4.2 Shire lands including road reserves

The Shire must approve burning on Shire land, including road reserves, in writing before any burning is undertaken. Associated cost is limited to providing welfare for brigades undertaking burns on Shire land due to the community benefit of managing bushfire risk.

The Shire will discuss any Shire burns internally with the CESM and appropriate Shire Officer/s prior to the burn.

Once approval to burn has been obtained, the CESM/CBFCO will consult with the local brigade to plan the burn. The requirements of s2.2.2 will apply to all burns on Shire lands.

The Shire, in partnership with brigades will coordinate the burn, complete any necessary paperwork and ensure the burn objectives have been met.

## 2.3 TRAINING

### 2.3.1 Brigade Training Profiles and Minimum Standards

The Shire is guided by the DFES Pathways methodology of managing training. The current requirements for each pathway are listed on the DFES volunteer portal (eAcademy).

The minimum skills standard for all members to attend emergency calls (including mop-up) and hazard reduction burns is:

- Registered member of a Shire Bush Fire Brigade;
- Rural Fire Awareness and
- Endorsement from Brigade FCO/Captain.

### 2.3.2 DFES Training Course Management

The CESM shall run DFES training courses locally utilising a training needs analysis to identify required courses. As a minimum, the following courses should be run annually.

- Rural Fire Awareness; and
- Fire Control Officer.

AllIMS Awareness may be completed online through the DFES eAcademy by members that have completed Rural Fire Awareness. Shire BFB members should complete the above courses locally to ensure they are trained in local procedures and requirements.

Further DFES courses are available, via the DFES Regional Training Calendar and are available on eAcademy. Approvals for training must go to the relevant Brigade Captain who will liaise with the CESM prior to approval.

#### 2.3.2.1 Course administration and coordination

DFES Courses run locally by the CESM shall be conducted in accordance with the DFES training procedures and policies and will be scheduled by the training team.

Local courses will only be planned where there are at least 6 confirmed participants (or as a course minimum participant requirement). A lead time is required to set up and administer any DFES training courses. Courses may be cancelled or postponed in the following circumstances:

- There is insufficient trainer/assessors to deliver the course;
- Lack of participants (ie below 6 participants);
- Adverse/forecast weather conditions;
- Significant incident commitments; or
- Any other circumstances as determined by the Course Coordinator.

#### 2.3.2.2 Management of applications through DFES eAcademy system

Requests for training in the above courses run locally within the Shire must be submitted through the CESM who will place the information into the DFES eAcademy system. Access to this system is available to volunteers via the DFES Volunteer Portal: <http://extranet.dfes.wa.gov.au/sites/volunteers/pages/home.aspx>

To register for pathway prior to making application for training course. Requests for training must be within the applicant's pathway, endorsed by the Brigade Captain and authorised by the CESM.

### 2.3.3 External Training Course Management

Any other courses not covered through the DFES training syllabus or brigade skills maintenance training may only be run with the approval of the CBFCO and, if expenditure of funds is required, by the CESM

#### 2.3.3.1 First Aid Training

First aid training will be organised by the Shire through DFES each year through an expression of interest process commencing in April. To be eligible to undertake first aid training, a nominee must:

- Be a current active member of a Shire BFB;
- Have completed Rural Fire Awareness; and
- Be endorsed by their Brigade Captain.

First aid qualifications should be completely refreshed every three years. It is the responsibility of members to ensure their qualifications are up to date.

#### 2.3.4 Brigade Skills Maintenance Training

Brigades are required to maintain the skills and knowledge of their members through routine brigade training program undertaken throughout the year. The CESM will provide an annual training schedule program as per DFES training portal when courses will be run. These will be consistently advised by the CESM as required.

It must be noted that the Town Brigade will be required to undertake or review the program associated with the townsite requirements. The Captain will liaise with the CESM to guide the best suited training for the capacity of brigade members and the townsite.

A recommended program of activities is contained below and should be undertaken at the appropriate time of year.

Topics
Pumping exercise – Bushfire fighting and suction drill
First aid exercise
On and Off Road Driving
Dieback hygiene and snake awareness
AIIMS/T Cards refresher
Static Water Supply familiarisation
Pre-season briefing (Shire-wide)
Brigade Vehicle, Burn over and Rural Urban Interface refresher
Hydrants and area familiarisation
Radio communications
Firefighter Welfare, Health and Safety
Working with aircraft and machinery
Map reading and navigation
Pumping/hose drill exercise – Structural
Incident management - training exercise
Fire blankets and extinguishers
Structural firefighting review
Vehicle/HAZMAT fire awareness
Ropes and knots
Fires and electrical infrastructure

## 2.4 OTHER ACTIVITIES

### 2.4.1 Risk assessment and authorisation of activities

A notification and/or risk assessment form will need to be filled out where a brigade wish to undertake an event/activity outside of the following:

- Response to an emergency;
- Training (either a single brigade or multiple Shire brigades with no other stakeholders);
- Vehicle maintenance;
- Brigade meetings; or
- Hazard reduction burning.

The purpose of the risk assessment is to ensure that any risks to brigade members and other stakeholders are managed appropriately.

## 2.5 DFES VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

### 2.5.1 Driving of firefighting vehicles

Vehicles may only be driven by persons with the appropriate license for the class of vehicle being driven. This is related in the below table:

License Class	Vehicles
C - Manual	Light Tanker
MR – B (Synchromesh)	2.4/3.4/4.4
HR – B (Synchromesh)	9.2/12.2
HR-A Automatic	ICV

'L' plated drivers may not drive C – class Shire firefighting vehicles. 'L' plated drivers may drive MR-B or HR-B vehicles under supervision of an experienced driver and with the prior approval of the Brigade Captain and not under emergency conditions.

'P' plated drivers may drive Shire firefighting vehicles in accordance with their vehicle driver's licence conditions, except for driving under emergency conditions.

A member must be approved by the Brigade FCO/Captain prior to driving a vehicle under emergency and/or operational conditions. Once approved by the brigade FCO/ Captain as a driver, permission is not required for every incident unless stated otherwise by the FCO/Captain.

### 2.5.2 Use of DFES firefighting vehicles, stations and equipment

Firefighting vehicles, stations and equipment must only be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and relevant guidelines/documents.

Firefighting vehicles, stations and equipment may not be used for private purposes.

Any use of brigade vehicles/stations/equipment for brigade activities within the Shire must be authorised by the Brigade FCO/Captain. Any use of brigade vehicles/equipment for brigade activities outside of the Shire must be authorised by CBFCO.

#### 2.5.2.1 Housing of DFES firefighting vehicles

Brigade vehicles and equipment shall be housed at the relevant brigade's station. Where circumstances require the temporary relocation of vehicles/equipment (ie damage to station), this must be endorsed by the Brigade FCO/Captain and CBFCO or DCBFCO.

### **2.5.3 Vehicle/Station/Standpipe Trailers/Equipment Fault Reporting**

The brigade is responsible for the cleanliness, general maintenance and preventative service of fire brigade appliances, equipment and the brigade station under its care. After every use, the brigade shall ensure that the vehicle/s are returned to a response condition.

Members are required to report any consumed, worn, suspect, defective or unserviceable items in a timely manner to the FCO/Captain. A Vehicle Fault Report form (VFR) must be filled out and submitted to the Shire's CESM for all vehicle defects, even if they have been rectified at brigade level. The Brigade should identify the likely priority of the VFR on the form, as per the below descriptions. All vehicle repairs must be authorised and/or organised by the Shire prior to commencement.

The Shire, based on the information presented in the VFR, shall determine the final priority level for the fault to be rectified, being either:

- Urgent (a repair which significantly affects the safety or operational serviceability of a vehicle or critical piece of equipment ie flat battery, vehicle not starting, major mechanical issues, etc.);
- Routine (a repair which affects the serviceability of the vehicle but does not render the vehicle unsafe or non-operational ie electric rewiner on a hose reel non-operational); or
- Service (all other repairs which can wait until the next service of the vehicle ie minor panel damage).

In the case of an urgent repair (a repair which affects the safety or operational serviceability of a vehicle or critical piece of equipment), the FCO/Captain and Shire are to be notified as soon as possible. The Shire will notify the CBFCO, DCBFCOs and the CESM and organise a backup for the period the appliance is under repair.

The Shire will endeavour to have repair items actioned within 72 hours once reported.

In all circumstances where a vehicle will be offline/unavailable for normal turnout for a prolonged period of time (two hours or more), the relevant Brigade FCO/Captain and Shire are to be notified as soon as possible. The Shire will notify the CBFCO, DCBFCOs, and CESM as soon as reasonably practical.

A vehicle checklist has been provided to Brigades for general maintenance/checking of vehicles and this checklist must be returned to the Shire on a monthly basis.

This checklist is used to identify faults and then a VFR should be lodged with the Shire.

A copy of the vehicle fault reporting form is located in the appendices to this procedures manual.

### **2.5.4 Scheduled Servicing and Maintenance**

A Shire mechanic or suitably equipped and competent brigade member as determined by the Brigade FCO/Captain may perform minor tasks such as replacing faulty light bulbs (not LED's), fuses and regular lubrication of hose couplings, hose reels and cleaning out air cleaner elements on fire appliances.

All major servicing and maintenance of the bushfire brigade vehicles and equipment is the responsibility of the CESM/Shire in line with the predetermined servicing schedules, with exception of Western Australian Emergency Radio Network (WAERN) equipment, which is the responsibility of DFES.

The appropriate Shire officer will schedule servicing of vehicles in accordance with the LGGs manual service schedules.

Service checklists shall be completed by the mechanic/service provider conducting the service and be recorded in the Shire's record management system. A copy of the service checklist shall also be provided to the Shire's CESM and Brigade Captain for recording.

#### **2.5.5 DFES Vehicle/Equipment Replacement**

The replacement schedule for vehicles and equipment will be provided by DFES in the LGGs annual allocation for the upcoming financial year. Where this replacement schedule for vehicles is considered inconsistent with the needs of the Brigade, Shire Officers may liaise with DFES and take action in accordance with the LGGs manual to request a modification to the allocation.

For capital purchases of equipment which is \$1,500 or more per item, an application will need to be submitted in the upcoming financial year's LGGs allocation, including quotes.

Items which are defective or no longer serviceable will need a vehicle fault report submitted. There may also be a requirement to submit an insurance claim, in accordance with Section 4.4.5, to repair/replace any damaged items.

The Shire will circulate the annual LGGs allocation received from DFES in accordance with part 3.3.3 of these procedures.

#### **2.5.6 Vehicle/Station/Equipment Modifications**

No brigade is to conduct any modifications or alterations to any brigade/Shire vehicle, station or equipment without endorsement from the Brigade Captain **and** authorisation from the Chief Executive Officer in writing.

Modifications to vehicles/stations/equipment should be proposed through the Brigade Executive Committee and referred to the Shire for further investigation and if endorsed, approval.

Modifications to LGGs vehicles/assets will also need to follow the required process through DFES for formal approval.

#### **2.5.7 Personal Protective Equipment/Clothing (PPE/PPC)**

##### **2.5.7.1 PPE minimum standard/allocation**

The Minimum PPE standard for active members in the Shire is;

Cotton long sleeve shirt, trousers and hat, fully enclosed work boots, gloves, goggles and masks.

The **recommended minimum PPE standard for active members** in the Shire is:



- Level 1 Proban Jacket (Tunic)
- Level 1 Proban Trousers (Cargo Pants)
- Cotton T-shirt or Nomex Viscose Workshirt
- Firefighting helmet
- Firefighting Rated Safety boots
- Gloves
- Fire Protection Goggles/safety glasses
- Helmet
- Full face respirators
- Smoke mask (Type 2)

It is recommended that members wear 100% cotton undergarments and avoid wearing jewellery while attending to fire incidents and hazard reduction burning.

All issued PPE is and remains the property of the Shire and must be returned upon a member resigning or surrendering their membership to the brigade.

The **PPE standard for cadet members** is:

- Level 1 Firefighting Coveralls
- Firefighting helmet (cadet)
- LV1 Gloves
- Firefighting/safety boots with steel toe cap

PPE provisions are under the LGGS Scheme and will be within the grant operational requirements and DFES's approval should it be outside of the scope within in any financial year. CESM will work with Brigades, DFES and LGGS on all matters associated with the purchase of PPE.

#### **2.5.7.2 PPE storage, upkeep and maintenance**

PPE must be cared for and maintained in accordance with manufacturer specifications.

It is the responsibility of each member to ensure their PPE is in a serviceable condition and maintained appropriately.

#### **2.5.7.3 Replacement of PPE**

Requests for PPE must be submitted on the "PPE Request" form and submitted to the CESM who will check and fulfil the request. Most requests for PPE will be fulfilled within two weeks, however some items may need to be ordered in which could cause a delay.

PPE will be replaced on an initial issue or fair wear and tear basis. Old items which are being replaced must be returned to the Shire. Items which are still considered serviceable should be retained in brigade stocks and re-issued to new members for their probationary period. All other unserviceable items should be destroyed and disposed of.

Minor PPE items such as gloves, safety eyewear and respiratory protection will be replaced from stocks held at the Shire.

All PPE requests are to be recorded in the Shire's records management system and retained in the Shire's firefighter database to comply with the requirements of the LGGS.



### 2.5.7.4 PPE contamination and laundering

All operational personnel are responsible for ensuring Personal Protective Clothing (PPC) and Equipment is cleaned to maintain hygiene standards and ensure optimum visibility of the garment.

As a guide, items require cleaning when contaminated or are visually soiled or when directed by your Brigade Officers.

Brigades may launder PPC where a washing machine is available. Where a washing machine is unavailable, consideration should be given to having the PPC laundered by a dry cleaning contractor.

In the case of the PPC being contaminated by asbestos or other hazardous materials, PPC is to be bagged and labelled with contaminated label. PPC will then be laundered by a dry cleaning contractor, this should be arranged through the CESM and an emergency set of PPC issued to the member from Brigade/Shire stocks at the discretion of the FCO/Captain or CBFCO/DCBFCO/CESM.

The following information provides guidance on the laundering standard/requirements:

#### Guidance to Laundry Contractors.

Guidance to laundry contractors is as follows.

GUIDANCE	DESCRIPTION
<b>Isolate PPC</b>	PPC is not to be washed in the same washing cycle with other garments.
<b>Do Not Overload Machine</b>	It is important not to overload the machine. To ensure a cleaner wash, the load size must permit the garment to move freely through the water and rinse cycle.
<b>Re-Wash to Standard</b>	Where garments have been washed as per the instruction and they are still soiled at the conclusion of the process the garment should be re-washed. If stains cannot be removed, the contractor should bring this to the attention of the relevant station so a decision can be made whether or not to remove the item from service.
<b>Special Instructions for L2 PPC</b>	The Level 2 outer fabric is finished with a water and oil repellent treatment –fluorocarbon finish. To maintain performance it is essential to rinse garments extremely well. Traces of detergents may impact on the effectiveness of the finish. For this reason do not add softeners, anti-static or wicking agents.
<b>Safety</b>	Ensure appropriate PPE is worn and procedures followed when dealing with contaminated items.

#### Level 1 PPC and Helmet Neck flap.

ACTION	DESCRIPTION										
<b>Wash</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Machine wash regular cycle – warm temperature (40 degrees C) - cold rinse well</li> <li>Do not dry clean</li> <li>Do not bleach</li> </ul>										
<b>(Cycle)</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>TEMP</th> <th>TIME</th> <th>CYCLES</th> <th>ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS</th> <th>NOTE</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>40°C</td> <td>8 mins</td> <td>2 cycles</td> <td>Coolwash @ 20gm/kg of machine capacity &amp; SYNTHET @ 3mls/kg</td> <td>Reflective tape vulnerable to heat</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	TEMP	TIME	CYCLES	ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS	NOTE	40°C	8 mins	2 cycles	Coolwash @ 20gm/kg of machine capacity & SYNTHET @ 3mls/kg	Reflective tape vulnerable to heat
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40°C	8 mins	2 cycles	Coolwash @ 20gm/kg of machine capacity & SYNTHET @ 3mls/kg	Reflective tape vulnerable to heat							
<b>Dry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Warm tumble dry</li> <li>Line dry in shade preferred</li> </ul>										
<b>Iron</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use iron on 'COTTON' setting</li> </ul>										

### 2.5.8 Station Maintenance, Security and Access

#### 2.5.8.1 Station maintenance

Cleanliness and upkeep of the station is the responsibility of all members. Members should keep the station tidy at all times to minimise any occupational safety and health hazards.

Maintenance to the buildings are the responsibility of the Shire. Any requests for maintenance should be forwarded via email to the Shire.

### **2.5.8.2 Security and access**

All stations must be kept secure at all times due to the equipment, information and vehicles being stored there. All brigade members are responsible for ensuring that the station is secure prior to departure. This includes ensuring all windows and doors are locked and the alarm is armed.

Access will be limited to Brigade members, Shire Officers and authorised contractors/visitors. All members, contractors/visitors attending a station must sign in on a brigade attendance log sheet to record their attendance/departure and purpose for attendance.

Where contractors or visitors are required to access a station, they are required to record their visit in the attendance book.

### **2.5.8.3 Attendance at station by non-brigade personnel**

Only registered members or prospective members of a Shire Bush Fire Brigade may attend Bush Fire Brigade stations.

Brigade member's family, partners and invited dignitaries may attend social functions held at the brigade station at the FCO/Captain's discretion. In the case of dignitaries (DFES or other Government Agency staff, Federal/State Members of Parliament, Councillors), the Shire shall be notified prior to the event.

Any request from any other party (including, but not limited to, DFES or other Government Agency staff, Federal/State Members of Parliament, Councillors) to attend a Bush Fire Brigade station must be authorised by the Shire.

Requests to attend a station should be directed to the Shire in the first instance, and the Shire will either approve or reject the request in consultation with the relevant Brigade FCO/Captain and CBFCO.

All visitors must sign in/out on the Brigade Activity Log to ensure accurate records of attendance are maintained and to comply with WHS requirements.

## **3 ADMINISTRATION**

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### **3.1 MEMBERSHIP**

#### **3.1.1 Induction Procedure for New Members**

All new members must complete an Application for Membership in the first instance. The new member will complete prior to attending any formal theory training.

Membership recruiting guidelines are set through the Brigade officers and the Brigade officers and CBFCO hold the right to refuse membership. These guidelines include but not limited to

- Location of residence
- Commitment expectations
- Previous memberships

The relevant induction package along with copies of the forms described in the process are available, as well as being attached to these procedures.

Once the induction package is completed at the Brigade, a copy is retained by them, and the original is forwarded to the CESM for action. The Shire/CESM will register the documents in the Shire's records

management system, record the information in the firefighter's database, create a personnel file for the member and file the hard copy.

For members who do not continue through the induction process, the person will still forward the original paperwork to the CESM/Shire. The Shire will file this paperwork in the relevant file.

### 3.1.2 Application for Membership to Join Bush Fire Brigade

The application for membership to join a Bush Fire Brigade form is included in the Shire's induction package. A copy is attached to these procedures.

This form must be completed for all members of a brigade, including cadet members, upon commencement. The processing of this application is in accordance with 3.1 with the additional step of sending a copy of the application to DFES for their records.

Upon receiving the relevant paperwork, DFES shall issue an ID number to the new member. DFES through the CESM will pass this ID number onto the Brigade for their records along with updating the firefighter's database and records management system with this information.

### 3.1.3 Criminal history and background checks

The Shire reserves the right to conduct background and criminal history checks on prospective members at their discretion.

During the induction process, prospective members are asked to provide details regarding any current and previous criminal offences. Consent is also sought for performing a criminal history check. If consent is refused or withheld, an application for membership may be refused by the Brigade/Shire. The Shire may, upon review of the information provided by a prospective member or by information provided through a criminal history/background check, refuse the prospective member's application to join a Bush Fire Brigade.

### 3.1.4 Fitness for Work

All members are required to be "Fit for Work" at all times. As volunteers, you are bound by and must adhere to the Shire Alcohol and Drug Workplace Policy. The Brigade recognises that an individual's fitness for work may be affected for a variety of reasons including the adverse effects of fatigue, stress, injury / illness, alcohol or drugs (over the counter, prescription, or illicit). These factors can lead to major deficiencies in an individual's work performance and can be a contributing factor in workplace accidents. The Fitness for Work procedure provides a framework for dealing with these difficult and often sensitive issues. The Brigade believes that early intervention strategies can assist individuals to address a difficult situation, which may otherwise place at risk, theirs and others health and safety.

**"Fit for work" means that an individual is in a state (physically, mentally and behaviourally) which enables the volunteer to perform assigned tasks competently and in a manner which does not compromise or threaten the safety or health of themselves or others.**

Final determination of "Fit for Work" is based on the opinion of the CBFCO, or any other person representing management, and where appropriate, in conjunction with other assessment procedures, and following due consultation with the member.

As an emergency responder the Shires and community's expectation is that you conduct your duties free from the influence of alcohol and drugs.

### **3.1.5 Update of Membership Information**

The Brigade and Shire is to be notified of any changes to a member's membership information, including but not limited to the following:

- Change of name;
- Change of address;
- Change to next of kin details;
- Contact details (phone number, email address);
- Position within brigade; and
- Termination or transfer to another brigade.

This update of membership information should be submitted on the "Update of Membership" form available as an appendix to these procedures. Once completed at Brigade level, the form is to be forwarded to the CESM. The CESM/Shire shall record the updated information in the Shire's record management system, firefighter's database and forwarded to DFES for their records.

### **3.1.8 Dual membership (BFB and/or other Emergency Service)**

Membership of more than one Bush Fire Brigade (either two brigades within the Shire or one brigade within the Shire and one external to the Shire) or a Shire Bush Fire Brigade and VFES/VFRS brigade requires the approval from the Brigade officers in consultation with the CBFCO. Should the dual membership bring the Brigade into disrepute the Brigade officers and CBFCO hold the right to terminate membership.

Brigade members may be dual-registered as a member of a Bush Fire Brigade and a State Emergency Service unit, in consultation with the relevant Brigade Captain and the Local Unit Manager.

### **3.1.9 Maintaining SMS Listing/Call-out Information**

Where a member has a change in their contact phone number, this must be communicated to the CESM/Shire.

The CESM/Shire will update the DFES SMS listing information with new members or updates to existing member details on a monthly basis.

### **3.1.10 Termination of membership**

Where a member terminates their membership with their brigade, an update of membership form must be submitted in writing to the Shire/CESM/Captain/FCO.

All uniform, Brigade/Shire issued equipment and PPE/C items remain the property of the Shire and must be immediately returned to the CESM/Shire if the member ceases to be a member of the Brigade.

### **3.1.11 Certification of volunteer attending emergency**

Where a volunteer has a requirement from their employer to provide proof of attendance at an emergency call, they must request this through their Brigade Captain or FCO.

The Brigade is to forward the following details to the Shire's CESM:

- Volunteer's name;
- Date(s) of the incident attended; and
- Incident number(s) of the incident(s).

The Shire will confirm the authenticity of the details provided and produce a certification letter.

The letter will be registered in the Shire’s records management system and forwarded to the relevant Brigade secretary. The Brigade may take a copy of the document for their records and shall pass the document on to the relevant Brigade member.

## 3.2 REPORTING

### 3.2.1 Brigade activity log

Members must sign on and sign off in the brigade activity log contained in their respective station. This provides a record of attendance for insurance purposes as well as providing data on brigade activities.

The format of this log is as per the template in the appendices to this procedure.

### 3.2.2 Incident reports

Incident reporting is a requirement under the *Bush Fires Act 1954*. The data from incident reports is also critical for safety recalls on defective products, tracking brigade / appliance / member activity and reporting suspicious fires. Incident reports must be captured through the relevant incident reporting forms and entered into the DFES Incident Reporting System (IRS).

All Brigades must complete the relevant DFES paper or electronic-based incident report forms for the incident. It is the officer in charge’s job to ensure that an incident report form is completed for each incident.

The following table shows the required reporting form for each incident type:

Incident Type	Reporting form/documents
All incidents (primary and secondary)	DFES IRS Attendance Form Any other incident documents, notes, plans, etc.
Bushfire incidents (primary brigade only)	DFES IRS Bushfire Form
Structural/car fire incidents (primary brigade only)	DFES IRS Structure or Mobile Property Fire Form
All other incidents including DBAs (primary brigade only)	DFES Other Incidents Form

In addition to the required reporting form, all incident documentation (T-cards, Incident Action Plans, Incident Diary Notes, etc.) should be retained with the incident report.

The CESM is responsible for entering the incident details in the DFES IRS system. Brigades should have at least two members (nominally the secretary and one of the operational officers) qualified in accessing the DFES IRS system. The training for this system is available via eAcademy.

Ideally, incident reports should be completed (ie the incident form filled out and the details entered on the IRS system). If the brigade is unable to enter the report on IRS, then they can either:

- Forward the completed reporting forms to the Shire’s CESM via email.
- Forward the completed reporting forms to the DFES Operational Information Systems team via [reports@dfes.wa.gov.au](mailto:reports@dfes.wa.gov.au) (CESM must also be cc’d in).

Paper copies of reports shall be retained by the Brigade through the year, with the year’s fire reports submitted to the Shire at the end of each financial year. The Shire will retain incident records in archive boxes in their storeroom for four years and then send the records for archiving in accordance with the Shire’s record-keeping policy.

### **3.2.3 Gift/donations register and charitable status reporting**

To provide transparency and accountability, Bush Fire Brigades are required to maintain a register of all gifts and donations of a value greater than \$50. Individual brigade members should not accept gifts that cannot be shared with other Brigade members.

Any pecuniary, financial or other interests must be declared in accordance with the Code of Conduct contained in these procedures.

### **3.2.4 Asset register – Minor Assets (required to be maintained by the Shire)**

For insurance purposes, all brigades must maintain an up-to-date asset register for all items. The asset register will be retained and should be updated when the Brigade procures new items.

No insurance claims will be processed unless the claimed items appear on the current asset register for the Brigade.

The asset register should contain the following items:

- All items contained within the Brigade station.
- Any standard items on any brigade appliance.
- All non-standard items on any Brigade appliances.

A template asset register is available in the appendices to these procedures.

### **3.2.5 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer / Community Emergency Services Manager reporting**

The CBFCO/CESM has the right to request a meeting with the Shire's Chief Executive Officer at any time. All attempts shall be made by the relevant Shire Officers to facilitate this meeting.

In the interest of open, honest two-way communication, the CBFCO/CESM. The CBFCO also provides a report at each Bush Fire Advisory Committee meeting.

The CBFCO is required to report yearly to the local government or as directed by the CEO on the Bush Fire Brigades' resourcing, equipment (including protective clothing) and training levels. This will be tabled at the BFAC meetings held and then report through to Council in the minutes.

## **3.3 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

### **3.3.1 Local Government Grant Scheme (LGGs) application**

The Local Government Grants Scheme is a funding program overseen by DFES which supports the operating costs and replacement of capital items for Bush Fire Brigades and SES units. The funding is provided to the Shire for management/administration and is paid in quarterly instalments in advance of each quarter of the financial year.

DFES contacts the Shire in February/March each year with a proposed allocation for the upcoming financial year. The Shire/CESM will consult with the Brigades to determine if there are any additional items that need to be submitted as part of the application. All application requirements must be in accordance with the current LGGs manual published by DFES.

Once consultation has occurred, Shire Officers will investigate any subsequent actions, prepare the LGGs application for signing by the CEO, and return it to DFES for regional endorsement prior to the closing date.

The Shire is notified in late June of the finalised allocation for the upcoming financial year. Shire Officers will circulate the finalised allocation to Brigades for their information.

### **3.3.2 Local Government Grant Scheme (LGGs) acquittal**

At the conclusion of each financial year, the Shire is required to acquit the LGGs in accordance with the LGGs Manual.

The Shire's Finance team will conduct the acquittal process in consultation with the CESM. Where there is any discrepancy in the items purchased, these will be resolved by the CESM in consultation with any other stakeholders as required.

### **3.3.3 Brigade financial reporting**

At each general meeting of the brigade, the treasurer shall present a statement of the following items:

- Income (monthly and financial year to date).
- Expenses (monthly and financial year to date).
- Current net financial position of brigade (ie funds in any brigade accounts, petty cash and other financial assets).

The Brigade Treasurer is required to maintain accurate financial records. The brigade's finances must be audited each year.

The financial statements must form part of the minutes of each general meeting. At the end of each financial year, the auditor's report must be forwarded to the Shire along with the minutes of the Annual General Meeting.

### **3.3.4 LGGs Reimbursement Claims**

LGGs reimbursement claims are for incidental/minor purchases by Brigades for items eligible under the LGGs manual.

For all LGGs reimbursement claims, the following requirements apply:

- The monthly claim cannot exceed \$500 without Community Emergency Services Manager approval or District Officer approval.
- LGGs reimbursement claims, along with copies of supporting receipts and/or invoices must be submitted to the CESM prior to the end of each month.

Any purchases must be in accordance with the Shire's procurement and purchasing policy. A copy is available from Shire officers if required.

## **3.4 CADET MANAGEMENT**

Cadet members are Bush Fire Brigade members aged 11-15 years old. The main difference between the activities undertaken by a junior/cadet as opposed to an operational or 'adult' volunteer is that the juniors/cadets are in a training program only and they are not permitted to attend any incidents. Cadets may attend prescribed burns with approval of their parent/guardian.

The objectives of the cadet program is:

- To encourage young Western Australians to participate in the development of skills and knowledge about the role and functions of Western Australia's emergency services agencies.
- To develop values of duty, loyalty and service to their teams and the community.
- To support and promote public education and awareness of the management of emergencies at state, regional and local level.
- To support and strengthen the links between volunteer emergency services and the community.

- To assist communities to deal with natural or other emergencies through appropriate training, supervision and control.
- To provide a pathway to future emergency service volunteering and leadership.

### 3.4.1 Establishment of a cadet unit

Due to the nature of youth-based work, there are a number of approvals and considerations required prior to the establishment of a cadet unit. The checklist below details the requirements prior to the establishment of a cadet unit:

Item	Y/N	Comment
Program has the support of the Brigade Captain.		
Adult members are happy to have juniors/cadets in the Brigade.		
The Brigade has the resources (ie cadets, cadet leaders, helpers, safe environment, etc.) to support cadet program.		
The Brigade has approached the Shire to confirm their interest in commencing a cadet program.		
A cadet program coordinator and assistant coordinator (one male and one female) have been identified.		
Additional adult helpers have been identified (a mix of males and females are required at a ratio of 1 adult per 3 cadets).		
A structure for the program has been developed (term-based structure with either weekly or fortnightly activities).		
Appropriate paperwork templates have been obtained/created: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cadet application to join.</li> <li>• Medication/health care management plan.</li> <li>• Personal protective clothing form.</li> <li>• Attendance forms.</li> <li>• Risk assessment form.</li> <li>• Excursion/travel permission form.</li> <li>• Update of membership form.</li> <li>• Permission for use of images.</li> </ul>		
All adult cadet leaders/coordinators either currently have Working With Children Checks or are able/willing to obtain prior to the commencement of the program.		

Once the above requirements have been completed, the Brigade is to contact the Shire for a meeting to discuss the program overall and ensure the required documentation has been completed. Once the Shire has authorised the creation of a cadet program in writing, then the Brigade may commence cadet activities.

### 3.4.2 Cadet membership and administrative requirements

#### 3.4.2.1 Cadet membership requirements

All cadets are required to comply with the following Code of Conduct, along with any brigade BOPs established for the cadet program:

1. Follow all reasonable instructions given by those authorised to do so.
2. Respect the rights of others.
3. Be polite and respectful to ALL.
4. Do your best in ALL activities.
5. Consider the safety of yourself and others at ALL times.
6. Look after Brigade/Shire property and use it safely.
7. Wear your uniform correctly and with pride.
8. Positively promote your Brigade in the community.



9. Maintain Brigade confidentiality.
10. Abide by the anti-alcohol and other drugs policy.
11. Use social media responsibly.

Where the Code of Conduct for cadets has been breached, the cadet program coordinator may undertake any of the following actions:

<b>Caution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A caution is a verbal caution given on the spot by a leader. Any number of cautions can be given before a verbal warning is given.</li> </ul>
<b>Verbal Warning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A verbal warning is given by the program coordinator/leader and is recorded in the Cadet Activity Log</li> </ul>
<b>Written Warning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The program coordinator/assistant coordinator will issue a written warning immediately if the offence is serious enough to warrant it. A meeting with the junior/cadet's parents/guardians will be called to discuss the junior/cadet's behaviour and explore strategies to improve conduct</li> </ul>
<b>Suspension</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should the junior/cadet's conduct be deemed undesirable or where the junior/cadet remaining in the Brigade would set negative example or lead others into undesirable behaviour, the captain shall have the power to recommend suspension of membership of that junior/cadet.</li> </ul>
<b>Dismissal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspension / termination of membership must be in accordance with the Shire of Woodanilling Bush Fire Brigade Constitution.</li> </ul>

Not all steps in the above process need to be followed in order. The principles of procedural fairness must be applied and juniors/cadets made aware of the allegation and given the opportunity to answer it.

Similarly, at all times while on duty, the Leaders will model the appropriate behaviours required by the juniors/cadets, as outlined in the Code of Conduct.

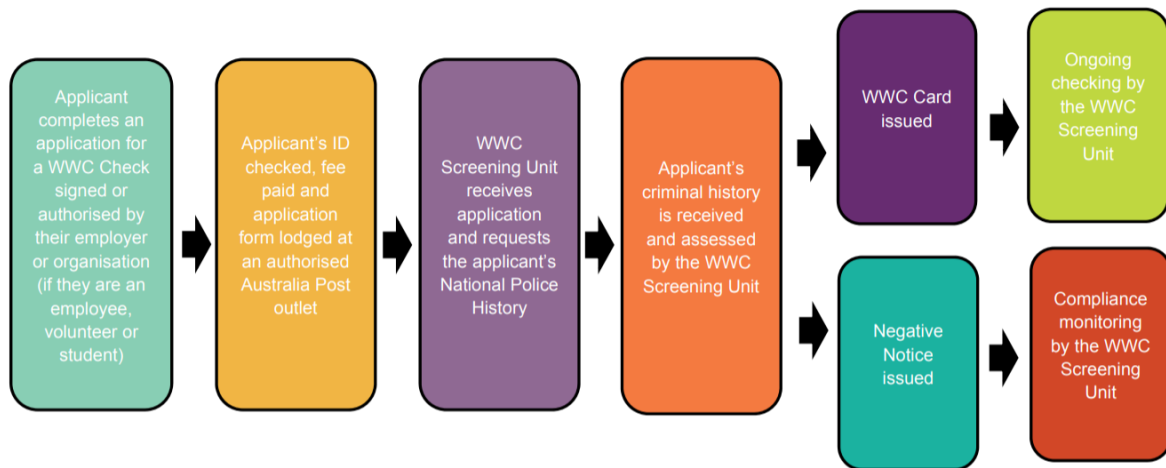
Where a cadet leader has acted contrary to the Code of Conduct, this should be referred to the Brigade Captain in the first instance in accordance with the Grievance and Misconduct procedure contained in part 4.4 of these procedures.

### 3.4.3 Working with Children Checks

In accordance with the *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004*, all persons whose work normally involves, or is likely to involve, contact with a person under the age of 18 years must hold a Working with Children Card (WWC). This includes any participation in programs or activities designed and operated for the sole purpose of engaging children (for example – junior/cadet program; direct, ongoing mentoring of a young person; and school aged programs.

Working with children cards are valid for three years. This cost is borne by the individual volunteer, however the Shire/CESM is able to reimburse this charge through the LGGS.

The process below is for obtaining an initial WWC check:



Renewals of WWC checks must be completed online via the following link:  
<https://workingwithchildren.wa.gov.au/applicants-card-holders/online-services/re-apply-online>

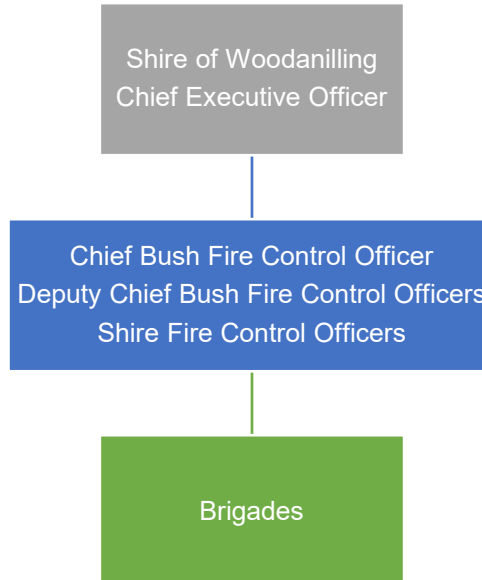
In all circumstances the Community Emergency Services Manager / Chief Executive Officer must be the signatory to verify the identity of the person seeking the WWC check.

## 4 PERSONNEL

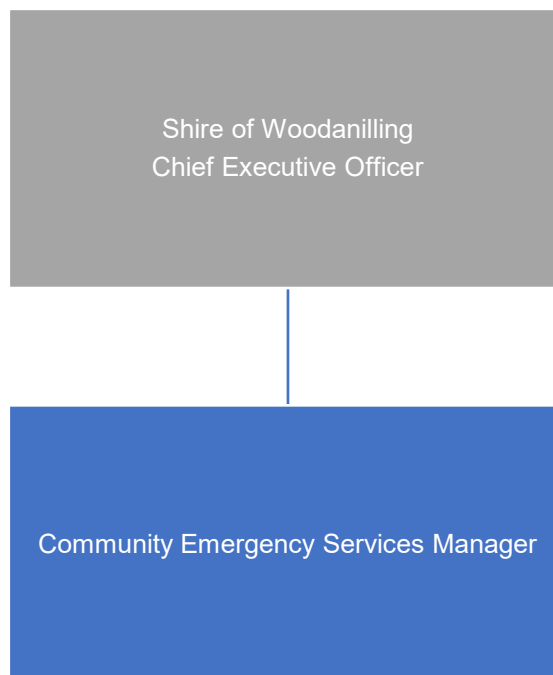
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### 4.1 CHAIN OF COMMAND AND DUTY STATEMENTS

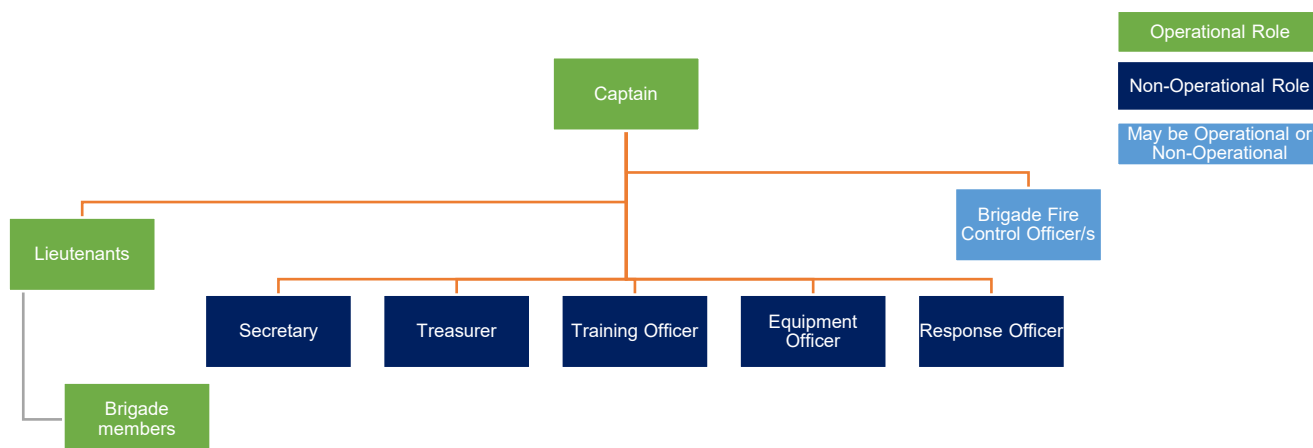
All Brigade members must be aware of and follow the chain of command as per below:



Internal Shire Structure:



Within Brigades, the following chain of command applies (DFES Module):



#### 4.1.1 Operational Roles

Operational roles are roles which are directly involved in the management or undertaking of normal brigade activities.

The chart below shows the rank markings for each operational position:

Rank	Helmet Colour	Helmet Stripes
Chief & Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer	Red	Red
Captain and Fire Control Officer	Yellow	Red
Lieutenant	Yellow	Yellow
Firefighter/Member	White	White

##### 4.1.1.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

**Responsible To:** Shire of Woodanilling Chief Executive Officer.

**Position Summary:** Subject to any directions by the local government, the CBFCO has primary managerial responsibility for the organisation and maintenance of Bush Fire Brigades. The CBFCO works with the Shire to provide general oversight to the operations of the Shire’s six Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades.

The CBFCO is a key leadership role, with the responsibility to support, enable and empower Brigade Captains and Brigade members to provide a high standard of service to the community whilst ensuring the safety of all members.

#### Responsibilities and Duties:

- All duties and responsibilities assigned to the position under the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.
- To support the Brigade Captains and trainers to ensure a cohesive and high standard of training is provided to all Brigade members.
- Work with the Brigade Captains to deliver a cohesive cadets program (if applicable).
- To attend meetings with the Shire and Brigades as required.
- Provide fire-ground leadership to Bush Fire Brigades and/or other response units where necessary, including undertaking the role of Incident Controller as required.

- Participate in shared group call arrangement in response to “000” and other emergencies. Manage or assist in managing incidents either verbally (phone) or in person (on a fire-ground/site of emergency).
- Coordinate response to emergency incidents in conjunction with the DCBFCOs.
- Attend to and investigate unauthorised fires.
- Organise Brigades to attend, arrange relief crews, machinery and welfare for fire crews (in consultation with DCBFCOs).
- Support and mentor Brigade leaders and FCOs to perform the role of Incident Controller as required.
- Liaise with the local government concerning fire prevention/suppression matters generally and directions issued by the local government to FCOs, bush fire brigades or brigade officers.
- Work with the Shire to prepare and manage exercises to test plans and procedures.
- Treat all colleagues equally, in a non-discriminatory manner and with consideration and respect.
- Recognise and celebrate the achievements of brigades and members, whilst recognising the principles of volunteerism.
- Complete all documentation as required in a timely manner and provide to the Shire.
- Undertake other relevant duties as requested in order to achieve the outcomes of the role.

#### **4.1.1.2 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer**

**Responsible To:** Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

**Position Objective:** Subject to any directions by the local government the DCBFCO supports the CBFCO and in their absence has primary managerial responsibility for the organisation and maintenance of Bush Fire Brigades.

#### **Responsibilities and Duties:**

- All duties and responsibilities assigned to the position under the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.
- To support the Brigade Captains and trainers to ensure a cohesive and high standard of training is provided to all Brigade members.
- Work with the Brigade Captains to deliver a cohesive cadets program (if applicable).
- To attend meetings with the Shire and Brigades as required.
- Provide fire-ground leadership to Bush Fire Brigades and/or other response units where necessary, including undertaking the role of Incident Controller as required.
- Participate in shared group call arrangement in response to “000” and other emergencies. Manage or assist in managing incidents either verbally (phone) or in person (on a fire-ground/site of emergency).
- Coordinate response to all emergency incidents in conjunction with the CBFCO.
- Attend to and investigate unauthorised fires.
- Organise Brigades to attend, arrange relief crews, machinery and welfare for fire crews (in consultation with CBFCOs).
- Support and mentor Brigade leaders and FCOs to perform the role of Incident Controller as required.
- Liaise with the local government concerning fire prevention/suppression matters generally and directions issued by the local government to FCOs, bushfire brigades or brigade officers.
- Work with the Shire to prepare and manage exercises to test plans and procedures.
- Treat all colleagues equally, in a non-discriminatory manner and with consideration and respect.
- Recognise and celebrate the achievements of brigades and members, whilst recognising the principles of volunteerism.
- Complete all documentation as required in a timely manner and provide to the Shire.
- Undertake other relevant duties as requested in order to achieve the outcomes of the role.

#### 4.1.1.3 Senior/Operational Fire Control Officer

**Responsible to:** CBFCO, DCBFCOs

**Position Objective:** An FCO is an authorised representative of the Shire delegated certain functions under the *Bush Fires Act 1954*. The position is required to perform active operational duties in relation to both fire operations and fire prevention strategies within the local community and may on occasion be required to take charge of an incident or form a part of the incident management team.

##### **Responsibilities and Duties:**

- Administer all powers and responsibilities of a FCO as defined in *Bush Fires Act 1954* as authorised.
- Perform duties prescribed by the Act and as authorised by the Shire.
- Demonstrate positive leadership and mentor members.
- Ensure appropriate incident control systems and management principles are implemented and maintained during emergency incidents as required.
- Command and manage resources during emergencies or hazard reduction burns as required.
- Actively participates in training and undertakes skills and training development as outlined in the Shire bush fire brigade training program.
- Assist brigades in mentoring fire-fighters during training and exercises.
- Maintain a personal log book to include a record of events and decisions during an incident.
- Issue permits for hazard reduction burns within the Shire in accordance with the Act (where authorised).
- Answers telephone calls and respond to enquiries in a courteous and timely manner.
- To represent and report to the CBFCO on issues arising in the district in relation to bushfire hazards and other matters as identified.
- Comply with any lawful directions of the CBFCO and/or Shire.

That the Council endorses the appointments of the FCOs on the recommendations of the BFAC Committee.

#### 4.1.1.4 Captain/Fire Control Officer

**Responsible To:** CBFCO, DCBFCOs

**Position Objective:** The FCO/Captain of the Brigade is responsible for the sound leadership and management of Brigade members. The Brigade FCO/Captain is the senior FCO of a brigade and may perform all roles of an Operational FCO.

##### **Responsibilities and Duties:**

- Demonstrates positive leadership and helps to mentor members.
- Administer all powers and responsibilities of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.
- Command, control and confidently manage firefighting activities at emergency incidents.
- To ensure appropriate incident control systems and management principles are implemented and maintained during all emergency incidents.
- Maintain a personal log book with a record of events and decisions that occur at an incident.
- Work with the CESM to conduct training activities for Fire Fighters.
- Conduct Brigade briefings and post incident analysis of any incident involving firefighting, management issues or at the request of the CBFCO.
- Actively participates in training and undertakes skills and training development as outlined in the Shire Bush Fire Operating Procedures.
- Works to assist brigades in mentoring firefighters during training and exercises.

- To ensure members deployed for operational duties have the competencies to complete the task or duty assigned and hold currency in training to carry out the functions required, in accordance with the Brigade Training Program as developed and maintained by the Shire.
- To undertake responsibility for the proper management and maintenance of Brigade property and equipment ie Fast Fill Trailer.
- To represent and report to the Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) meetings on behalf of the brigade.
- May delegate functions of the brigade management to officers and members as determined necessary for the effective operation of the brigade.
- To adopt procedures on behalf of the Brigade as endorsed by the BFAC.
- Ensure conduct of members is in accordance with acceptable standards.
- Report any injuries of personnel or damage to fire fighting vehicles immediately.
- Answers telephone calls and respond to enquiries in a courteous and timely manner.

As a leader, role model and mentor for all members, the FCO/Captain should always act with integrity and consider each member equally.

#### **4.1.1.5 Fire Control Officer**

**Responsible to:** CBFCO, DCBFCOs and Senior FCO

**Position Objective:** An FCO is an authorised representative of the Shire delegated certain functions under the *Bush Fires Act 1954*. The position is required to perform specific functions under the Act including issuing permits to burn and providing feedback in relation to bushfire prevention for their area of responsibility.

#### **Responsibilities and Duties:**

- Administer all powers and responsibilities of a FCO as defined in *Bush Fires Act 1954* as authorised by the Shire.
- Perform duties prescribed by the Act and as authorised by the Shire.
- Demonstrate positive leadership and mentor members.
- Assist brigades in mentoring fire fighters during training and exercises.
- Maintain a personal logbook to include a record of events and decisions.
- Issue permits for hazard reduction burns within the Shire in accordance with the Act (where authorised).
- Answers telephone calls and respond to enquiries in a courteous and timely manner.
- To represent and report to the Shire on issues arising in the district in relation to bushfire hazards and other matters as identified.
- Comply with any lawful directions of the CBFCO and/or Shire.

That the Council endorses the appointments of the FCOs on the recommendations of the BFAC Committee.

#### **4.1.1.6 Lieutenant/s**

**Responsible To:** Brigade Captain

**Position Objective:** Provide both operational and administrative support to the Captain. The Lieutenant is responsible for the operational management of members during Brigade activities and reports to the Captain on all matters pertinent to the effective and efficient functioning of the Brigade and/or personnel whom they are supervising.

#### **Responsibilities and Duties:**

- Provide support to the Captain and assist with the management of the Brigade.

- In the absence of the Captain administer all powers and responsibilities of the *Bush Fires Act 1954* (Part IV Section 44 (1)).
- Command and manage members during emergencies and other Brigade related activities.
- Maintain a personal logbook with a record of events that occur during all incidents.
- Conduct briefings during and after incidents and maintain open lines of two-way communications between members and the Officers.
- Actively participate in training and undertakes minimum skills and training development requirements as outlined in the Shire's Bushfire Operating Procedures.
- Works to assist brigade members through mentoring firefighters during training and exercises.
- Encourage positive interaction and teamwork between members.
- Ensure that Brigade activities adhere to the Shire's Bush Fire Operating Procedures.
- Ensure firefighters engaged in firefighting activities hold competencies relevant to the task.
- Work cohesively with the CESM to conduct training activities for fire fighters.
- To ensure that the behaviour of members is in accordance with acceptable standards.
- Represent the Brigade members, in the absence of the FCO/Captain.

The position reports to the FCO/Captain on all matters pertinent to the effective and efficient functioning of the Brigade and/or personnel whom they are supervising.

The FCO/Captain of the Brigade may choose to delegate specific tasks or portfolios within the brigade to assist in the overall management of the brigade.

In the absence of the FCO/Captain, the most senior Lieutenant assumes all powers and responsibilities and duties of that Officer, unless otherwise directed by the FCO/Captain or, CBFCO.

#### **4.1.1.7 Firefighter/Active Member**

**Responsible To:** Brigade Captain (and officers by delegation)

**Position Objective:** Undertake activities associated with fire prevention, preparedness and suppression.

#### **Responsibilities and Duties:**

- Respond promptly to emergency incident callouts when notified.
- Operates and drives fire units/appliances under operational conditions
- Operates pump and other equipment associated with firefighting, and exercise operations.
- Effectively communicates verbally by means of two-way radio as person-to-person and in writing through completion of various records, and statements as required.
- Provides emergency medical care to fire or accident victims, when qualified, and assists at other incidents as and when required.
- Assists to maintain all firefighting equipment, buildings and grounds.
- Actively participates in training and undertakes minimum skills and training development requirements as outlined in the Shire's Bush Fire Operating Procedures.
- Conduct preliminary smoke and arson investigation with CESM.
- Protect property from unnecessary smoke and water damage by using firefighting equipment and techniques suitable to the situation.
- Work in extremes of temperature from summer conditions and radiated heat from close proximity work to the fire front.
- Requirement for working in periods of strenuous activity over normal to extreme terrains.
- Potentially exposed to high levels of stress and or pressure in certain circumstances.
- Wearing personal protective clothing (helmet, fire resistant overalls, goggles, facemask, or respirator, safety boots and heat resistant gloves).



- Loading and unloading equipment including heavy items.
- Using heavy equipment ie charged firefighting hose and labour intensive tools .g rakes, hoes, shovels, axes.
- Participates in an emergency environment (inc. sudden decision-making, potentially life threatening situations, exposure to sights and smells associated with emergency situations).
- Performs other duties as lawfully assigned.

All actions and decisions that are made should be in the interest of the Shire, safety, the community, the brigade and its members.

#### **4.1.2 Administrative Roles**

Administrative roles are roles which support the management or undertaking of normal brigade activities or otherwise contribute to the overall management and coordination of the brigade and its members.

##### **4.1.2.1 Secretary**

**Responsible To:** Brigade FCO/Captain

**Position Objective:** The Secretary is to manage administrative matters of the Brigade. The position reports to the FCO/ Captain on administration matters pertinent to the Brigade and is responsible to assist the FCO/Captain in the dissemination of information and communications of the brigade.

##### **Responsibilities and Duties:**

- Ensure Members receive notification of Brigade meetings in accordance with the constitution.
- Attend all Brigade Management Committee, General, Special and Annual General Meetings.
- Prepare an agenda and minutes for Brigade meetings and distribute to members prior to the next consecutive meeting in accordance with the constitution.
- Document and record all Brigade correspondence.
- Ensure Brigade information is disseminated to all listed Brigade members in a timely manner.
- Make available safety circulars and other information pertinent to members.
- Work with Shire management and administration staff on matters pertinent to Brigade administration.
- Maintains basic telephony and computer skills.

The position is not required to perform active operational duties and may not be held in conjunction with the Treasurer position.

##### **4.1.2.2 Treasurer (If applicable)**

**Responsible To:** Brigade Captain

**Position Objective:** The role of the Treasurer is to manage and report to the brigade on all financial matters. The position reports to the Captain on financial matters pertinent to the brigade.

##### **Responsibilities and Duties:**

- Manage financial affairs of the brigade.
- Maintain brigade financial records and provide detailed report of income and expenditure at meetings.
- Work with Shire management and administration staff on matters pertinent to Brigade financial matters, including copies of financial statements if required.
- Present the brigade's financial records for auditing on an annual basis to an independent auditor, prior to each Annual General Meeting.

- Act as a signatory to brigade financial transactions in conjunction with other authorised persons.

The position of Treasurer is not required to perform active operational duties. The position may not be held in conjunction with the Secretary position.

#### **4.1.2.3 Equipment Officer (if applicable)**

**Responsible To:** Brigade Captain

**Position Objective:** The Brigade Equipment Officer is responsible to the Brigade Captain for the maintenance and management of all brigade equipment and property in accordance with current applicable standards and legislation.

#### **Responsibilities and Duties:**

- Manage Brigade equipment and maintain a register of all Brigade assets.
- Monitor serviceable condition of equipment and personal equipment levels and organise repairs/replenishment with the Shire as required.
- Report all damage of the Brigade equipment or property to the Captain and Shire immediately.
- Work with Shire management and administration staff on matters pertinent to Brigade equipment.
- Ensure relevant paperwork including equipment checklists, vehicle faults and damages or losses are submitted to the Shire as necessary.
- Maintaining the Brigade's equipment and asset register in partnership with the Secretary.

The position is not required to perform operational active duties but should be able to demonstrate sound knowledge of all firefighting equipment and ideally have some degree of basic mechanical aptitude.

The position may be inclusive to an operational position held within the Brigade and may request, at their discretion, other suitably able members of the brigade to assist in this role as deemed necessary.

#### **4.1.2.4 Senior Training Officer / Training Officers (if applicable)**

**Responsible To:** CBFCO, Brigade Captain

**Position Objective:** The Brigade Training Officers are responsible for coordinating and/or conducting training at brigade level. The position is responsible to the Brigade Captain, CBFCO and the Shire on all training matters relevant to the Brigade.

#### **Responsibilities and Duties:**

- Ensure Brigade Members maintain basic firefighting skill levels equal to, or better than the minimum competency standards outlined by the Shire.
- Assists the Captain and Secretary in maintaining updated membership information.
- Ensure consistent training sessions are conducted within the Brigade to maintain currency of qualifications and skills.
- Delivers training to new and existing members.
- Actively participates in training and undertakes minimum skills and training development requirements as outlined in the Shire's Bush Fire Brigade training program.
- Works to assist brigade members through mentoring fire fighters during training and exercises.
- Maintain accurate records of training undertaken by members.
- Provide mentoring for members who express an interest in training to encourage future development.
- Supports/assists the Shire in facilitation and delivery of regional level training as required.

- Identifies training needs within the brigade and helps to develop training strategies and implements them in consultation with the Brigade Captain and Shire.
- Report to the Brigade, any relevant training opportunities.
- Assist in any other activities relating to Brigade training.
- Compiles and submits all training applications and documentation as received on behalf of the brigade.

The position is not normally required to perform active operational duties, however; it is deemed appropriate that this position is active in operational duties to maintain competency in their skills. As such, the position may be inclusive to an operational position held within the Brigade.

The Senior Brigade Training Officer may request other suitably trained members of the brigade (particularly officers) to conduct training sessions as deemed necessary.

## **4.2 MEETINGS OF BUSHFIRE BRIGADE**

### **4.2.1 Annual General Meeting of a Bush Fire Brigade**

A bushfire brigade must hold an Annual General Meeting each year. This meeting shall hold the election of the brigade officers committee consisting of the following positions as required.

- Captain
- Lieutenants
- Secretary
- Treasurer

### **4.2.2 Nominations**

Nominations will be taken on the day/evening of the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

### **4.2.3 Form of Election**

The CBFCO will vacate the chair and hand over to the CEO/DCEO/CESM who will conduct the election. If a ballot is required for any position it will be a secret ballot and will be held in accordance with the “first past the post system”. If after the votes are counted for a position, there is a tie for first place, a further ballot will be conducted involving only the two members who tied for the position. If there is still a tie there will be a further ballot for the position involving only the two.

### **4.2.4 Eligibility of Votes and Validity of Votes**

Only confirmed active members are eligible to vote in any election and may only vote once in each ballot. The Secretary will prepare a list of members eligible to vote. Votes will only be accepted on a complete ballot paper issued by the Returning Officer’s assistants. A vote will be considered valid if the intention of the voter is clear. If the intention is not clear the vote will be invalid. The Returning Officer’s decision is final once a position is declared.

### **4.2.5 Absentee Votes**

Should there be the requirement of an absentee vote this will be determined by the CBFCO upon application. On approval the CBFCO will notify the Brigade secretary who will include the absentee vote for the AGM.

### **4.2.6 Ordinary Meeting of a Bush Fire Brigade**

A Bush Fire Brigade must hold an Ordinary Brigade Meeting once as required, with the agenda set by the brigade’s secretary in consultation with the Brigade Officers Committee.

#### **4.2.7 Special Meeting of a Bush Fire Brigade**

Should any matter arise that requires a Special Meeting of a Bush Fire Brigade an application and meeting agenda must be submitted to the Brigade FCO/Captain or next senior officer. The brigade officers committee hold the right to accept or decline the meeting and select the attendance of the required members.

#### **4.2.8 Vacancy of Officer Position**

Should a brigade officers position become vacant throughout the duration of the appointed term a special brigade meeting is to be held as soon as practicable. The vacant position will be open for nominations the day/ evening of the meeting. A second special meeting will be scheduled for the election of the position to be conducted on the closing day of the nominations with the new officer commencing on the closing of the meeting.

#### **4.2.9 Brigade Officers Meeting**

The Brigade officers shall meet as required after an Ordinary meeting to ensure action items have been addressed. Management of the brigade will be completed at this meeting with the ability to raise items to the Executive Management Committee as required. All brigade elected officers will be included into the Brigade Officers meeting and hold voting rights. Should there be a requirement for serious matters to hold the Brigade officers meeting the FCO/Captain can hold this meeting with Lieutenants and the Brigade secretary at the FCO/Captain's discretion.

#### **4.2.10 Executive Management Committee**

The Brigade executive management committee will consist of the CBFCO, DCBFCO, Senior FCO and an appointed secretary will be conducted by an officer from the Shire. The Executive Management Committee will meet at a minimum of 2 times per year for the overall management of the Shire of Woodanilling Bushfire Brigades.

### **4.3 SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT PROCESS**

#### **4.3.1 Chief Bush Fire Control Officer**

The CBFCO is appointed by Local Government under s38 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954* on the recommendation of the BFAC and endorsed by Council Resolution through the minutes.

##### **4.3.1.1 Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer selection and appointment**

The DCBFCO is appointed by the Local Government on the recommendation from the BFAC.

The CBFCO and DCBFCO is appointed in accordance with the *Bush Fires Act 1954* and must be provided with a letter of appointment.

#### **4.3.2 Senior/Fire Control Officers**

S/FCOs are appointed in accordance with one of the following three categories which relate to their powers under the *Bush Fires Act 1954*:

- Non-Operational – Enforcement (Shire Staff)
- Non-Operational – Permit-issuing Only (FCOs who issue permits and do not have operational powers)
- Operational – (FCOs with permit-issuing powers along with authority to take charge and control bushfire firefighting operations)

#### **4.3.2.1 Appointment and powers of FCOs**

Appointments will be continuous until terminated and will commence in the new financial year. In accordance with the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, appointments must be:

- Authorised by the CEO via internal memorandum/delegated authority.
- Published in a newspaper circulating within the district.
- Published in the Government Gazette.

Each appointee must also be issued a letter of appointment confirming their appointment and relevant authorisations. Vacancies to be filled as soon as possible after a position becomes available.

#### **4.3.3 Brigade officer development and succession planning**

The Shire is committed to developing future leaders within its Bush Fire Brigades, both for brigade leadership positions and CBFCO/DCBFCO positions. It is recognised that there is more required for these positions than just the basic training and experience, there is an inherent level of leadership ability required.

Upon commencement with the Brigade, each new member is assigned a mentor to guide them in their initial skills development. The mentor is also responsible for considering the leadership potential of new members (with appropriate training and experience).

A Brigade Officer mentor provides guidance and advice to brigade officers along with promoting the succession planning and brigade officer development programs.

It is the responsibility of currently serving Brigade officers to promote an inclusive, safe and healthy environment for future leaders to develop. This includes providing opportunities for up-and-coming/potential officers to develop their own leadership and management skills, openly discussing succession planning and discussing development requirements for potential officers to step up.

##### **4.3.3.1 Capability assessment for existing officers and officer candidates**

The CBFCO and their delegate (generally one of the DCBFCOs) will meet with the existing officer group and any officer nominees within each brigade prior to the Annual General Meeting to analyse their skills, knowledge, training, aptitude, attitude and experience.

The purpose of this capability analysis is to provide guidance on any gaps in training/skills/knowledge that will need to be addressed if a candidate is elected to an officer position.

A further meeting with those elected as operational officers within the brigade may be required, at the Captain/CBFCO's discretion after the AGM to re-affirm the individual and collective training needs of each officer.

##### **4.3.3.2 Brigade Officers Development Program (BODP)**

In order to build the appropriate operational and non-operational skills for new and existing brigade officers, DFES has developed a development program.

The focus of the program is to develop positive brigade leadership, team working and culture-building and develop officer's conflict resolution, negotiation and management techniques along with operational skills. The program is run throughout each year and is strongly recommended for currently serving and newly elected brigade officers.

## 4.4 WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

### 4.4.1 Work Health and Safety

The Shire is firmly committed to enabling all brigade activities to be carried out safely, and with all possible measures taken to remove (or at least reduce) risks to the health, safety and welfare of brigade members and anyone else who may be affected by brigade activities.

It is recognised that fire and emergency response is an inherently dangerous environment, however exposure to hazards to health and safety should be minimised as far as reasonably practical.

The Shire commits to the following responsibilities:

- Maintaining plant, facilities and equipment in a safe condition.
- Providing information, instruction, and training that is reasonably necessary to ensure that each member is safe from injury and risks to health.
- A commitment to consult and cooperate with brigades in all matters relating to health and safety.
- A commitment to continually improve performance through effective safety management.

Brigade members are charged with the following responsibilities:

- Comply with safe work practices, with the intent of avoiding injury to themselves and others and damage to plant and equipment.
- Take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and others.
- Wear personal protective equipment and clothing as required.
- Comply with any direction given by the shire and/or officers for health and safety.
- Not misuse or interfere with anything provided for health and safety.
- Report all accidents, incidents and near misses.
- Report all known or observed hazards to their supervisor or manager.

#### 4.4.1.1 Smoke-free environment

Passive exposure to environmental tobacco smoke has been shown to present a significant health risk and the Shire seeks to ensure that members, contractors and visitors are not exposed to environmental tobacco smoke as a result of their duties with the Shire's Bush Fire Brigades.

In accordance with legislative requirements, the Shire does not permit smoking or vaping in any Shire / DFES building, fire appliance or vehicle.

A designated smoking area may be established outside Shire buildings.

Where designated smoking areas are established, they shall be located at least 10 metres away from:

- Exterior walls, doors and windows;
- Air-conditioning intakes;
- Shire vehicles and tankers;
- Areas where fuel or chemicals are stored or decanted;
- Areas where visitors or the public may frequent;
- Designated eating areas;
- Provided with a purpose built receptacle for cigarette butts;
- Identified on the building and/or site plan;
- Included in the site induction;
- Give consideration to the welfare of non-smoking staff;

- Have consideration to the following items;
- Lighting, particularly if used after hours;
- Degree of protection from weather;
- Degree of protection from uv light (sunlight);
- Access to and from the area should be free from trip hazards; and
- The safety and security of users.

In relation to incident grounds, members should give due consideration to the welfare of others, prevailing conditions and the community perception of Bush Fire Brigade members seen to be smoking at incidents.

#### **4.4.2 Critical Incident Stress and Wellbeing**

Brigade members may be confronted with a critical incident at some time throughout their membership. A critical incident is any situation faced in an operational context by emergency services personnel that may cause them to experience unusually strong emotional reactions which have the potential to interfere with their ability to function at the scene or later.

A critical incident does not have to be a major disaster, but it is usually sudden and out of the ordinary, and often involves death, or traumatic injury, or the possibility of either. The following are examples of the types of incidents which may present critical incident stress reactions for personnel:

- Death or serious injury to a fellow worker in the line of duty;
- Exposure to gruesome sights – i.e. human remains, dead animals;
- Failure to save a life, injury or loss;
- Suicide or non-suicidal self-injury;
- Threat to life/safety of self or crew;
- Motor vehicle accident involving personnel responding to an incident;
- Equipment failure at critical times;
- Responsibility for the lives and property of others;
- Responding to other major disasters, for example earthquakes, aircraft/bus crashes, floods, storms, disease control;
- Attendance at motor vehicle accidents which are severe or fatal;
- Unexpected or unanticipated tragedy;
- Incidents where there has been a large number of casualties; or
- Where there are circumstances with which a person or group identifies, for example, where the victims are known to the person, or the incident brings back memories of past traumatic events.

Debriefing is an important method of ensuring welfare of crew members. The OIC in charge of brigade activities should monitor their crews wellbeing and ensure that a debrief is held after any critical incident. Officers should also ensure that the personnel under their control have knowledge of critical incident stress and the Critical Incident Support Services available to them.

The following networks/services are available to BFBs in the Shire:

- Shire's Employee Assistance Provider (LGIS contact)
- DFES Employee Assistance Provider (PeopleSense – 1300 307 912)
- DFES Wellness Branch ([wellness@dfes.wa.gov.au](mailto:wellness@dfes.wa.gov.au))
- LifeLine (13 11 14)

#### **4.4.3 Fitness for Duty/Certificate of Capacity**

Employees, contractors and volunteers are obliged to present themselves for work in a fit state so that when undertaking normal work activities, they do not expose themselves, their co-workers or the public to unnecessary risks to health and safety.

It is the employee's or contractor's or volunteer's responsibility to advise their supervisor if they are taking any prescribed drug or medication that may affect their fitness for duty or work performance. The individual should also find out from their doctor or pharmacist what the effects of any prescribed drugs are on their work performance.

The welfare of employees, contractors and volunteers, as well as being the responsibility of the Council as the employer, is also the responsibility of each individual. It is therefore each employee's or contractor's or volunteer's responsibility to ensure that they do not place themselves or any other person or member of the public in an unsafe work environment. The health and safety of all people is paramount.

If a manager or supervisor has justifiable cause to doubt a person's fitness for duty, they may be removed from the workplace and the employer may initiate any reasonable action considered necessary as detailed in the Shire of Woodanilling Fitness for Work Procedure.

If it is believed that the use of alcohol or drugs renders risk to the health or safety of the employee, contractor, co-workers or the public, the employer reserves the right to remove the employee from duty pending an urgent medical examination to determine fitness for duty.

#### **4.4.4 Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy**

Drug and alcohol use can affect a person's ability to operate safely. It creates a risk to volunteers and health and safety.

A member must not:

- Sell or allow the sale of alcohol on brigade premises and at brigade sponsored events to any person other than a brigade member or a family member of a brigade member's;
- Supply or allow the supply of alcohol to minors on brigade premises and at brigade sponsored events by any person, including the minor's parent or guardian;
- Supply or allow the consumption of alcohol by minors on brigade premises or at brigade sponsored events; or
- Consume alcohol on brigade/shire premises or at brigade sponsored events unless a responsible officer is present who is willing to assume responsibility for:
  - Ensuring compliance with the Code of Conduct and other relevant procedures; and
  - Supervising the conduct of the members in attendance.

A responsible officer must be:

- The Chief/DCBFCO, Shire FCO, Brigade FCO/Captain or any other operational brigade officer;
- Over the age of 18 years; and
- Present at all times while alcohol is being consumed.

Soft drinks or other non-alcoholic drinks must be made available whenever alcohol is consumed or available for consumption on brigade premises or at brigade sponsored events.

A member must not use, supply or possess any prohibited substance.

A prohibited substance includes:



- Any prohibited drug or prohibited plant as that term is used in the *Misuse of Drugs Act 1981 (WA)* or *Medicines and Poisons Act 2014 (WA)*.
- Any prescription drug or pharmaceutical other than in circumstances where the member:
  - Has a prescription for the prescription drug or pharmaceutical provided by a registered health care provider; and
  - Is using it in accordance with the advice of that health care provider.

#### **4.4.5 Accident, Near Miss and Insurance Claims Procedure**

Any brigade member who has experienced an ‘accident’ or ‘near miss’ is required to complete an accident/incident report form as soon as practicable. This information is to be forwarded to the Brigade FCO/Captain and Shire as soon as reasonably practical.

Failure to inform the FCO/Captain and Shire in reasonable time may result in delays or refusal of any insurance claims by the Shire’s insurer.

This process is not intended to originate blame but to minimise the likelihood of a repeat incident occurring. The Shire is obligated to ensure all Occupational Health and Safety issues are investigated thoroughly to ensure measures are put in place to either reduce or eliminate the risk of the incident occurring again.

In accordance with the *Bush Fires Act 1954*, the Shire is required to provide insurance coverage for all Bush Fire Brigade volunteers for the following:

- Personal injury/death.
- Personal property damage.
- Motor vehicle and plant damage.
- Third party liability.

Coverage applies when a volunteer fire fighter is carrying out “normal brigade activities” which are defined in s.35A of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*.

The Shire uses the Local Government Insurance Service (LGIS) to provide this insurance coverage. All accidents/near misses/insurance claims shall be submitted to the OIC, CBFCO or DCBFCO.

Please note Insurance paperwork can be obtained from the CESM or the Shire of Woodanilling.

## **4.5 CONDUCT AND GRIEVANCE MANAGEMENT**

### **4.5.1 Discipline and Misconduct Management Procedure**

#### **4.5.1.1 Reporting breaches**

A member may make an allegation of a breach of discipline (allegation) to:

- One of their Brigade’s Lieutenants; or
- Their Brigade FCO/Captain.

Note: Where a Brigade Lieutenant receives an allegation as the next in charge they must pass the allegation to the Brigade Captain as soon as practicably possible.

An allegation must be:

- Made in writing; and
- Signed by the person making the allegation.

An allegation may be submitted by email.

A person who receives an allegation must consider the allegation and, if he or she considers it appropriate:

- Investigate the allegation personally; or
- Appoint another person to investigate the allegation.

In the case where a criminal offence may have been committed, the Shire is to be notified as soon as practical and the matter should be referred to WA Police for investigation.

#### **4.5.1.2 Investigation of breaches**

A person who is:

- A witness or potential witness in relation to the allegation;
- Involved in the events or circumstances relating to the allegation; or
- Is a relative or business associate of:
  - The respondent;
  - The person who made the allegation or caused it to be made; or
- A person who is a witness or potential witness in relation to the allegation ; or
- Must not investigate the matter.

The person who appoints the investigator (the appointing officer) must inform the respondent in writing and the person who made the allegation that an investigation is being conducted along with the details of the investigator.

The investigator must consider each allegation on its merits and must:

- Exercise caution before concluding that the respondent has a case to answer where:
  - The allegation is based on hearsay evidence; or
  - There has been a lengthy delay in making the allegation and there is no adequate explanation offered for that delay; or
  - There is a possibility that the person who has made the allegation has been motivated by personal rivalry or other inappropriate or improper matters; and
- Recommend the dismissal of an allegation which is, in the opinion of the investigator:
  - Trivial;
  - Frivolous,
  - Vexatious; or
  - Unable to be substantiated;
- Should the breach require any member involved to be stood down from active duty pending an investigation this is to be done in writing by the investigating officer in consultation with the FCO/ Captain and CBFCO. The letter of standing a member down from active duty must include the following information:
  - Allegation that has been made.
  - Commencement date of being stood down.
  - Meeting schedule date for resolution.

In the case of a minor breach of Procedure, the matter may be disposed of by the FCO/Captain verbally discussing the breach and the appropriate procedures with the respondent. If the FCO/Captain does

not believe the breach is minor in nature or will be effectively resolved in this manner, the matter should follow the following process.

If the investigator concludes that the respondent has a case to answer in whole or in part then he or she must prepare a report for the appointing officer that:

- Specifies the clause(s) of the Bush Fire Brigades Procedures that are alleged to have been breached by the respondent;
- Contains a summary of the facts, circumstances and other evidence that explains or clearly demonstrates how the Bush Fire Brigades Procedures have been breached;
- Includes or attaches copies of any statements, other evidence, relevant documents or other material that have been gathered or obtained by the investigator; and
- Includes the original allegation unless there are special circumstances that justify the identity of the person making the allegation being kept confidential and the withholding of the identity of the person making the allegation does not prejudice the respondent.

The initial investigation of the alleged breach of discipline must be completed and referred to the appointing officer within 28 days.

If the investigator concludes that the respondent does not have a case to answer he or she must prepare a report for the appointing officer that sets out the reasons for that conclusion including, where necessary, reference to any material obtained by the investigator during the investigation.

The investigator must provide all evidence, documents, notes, statements or other material collected or created during the investigation in addition to any document provided in the investigation report to the appointing officer.

#### **4.5.1.3 Disciplinary action**

Upon receipt of a report prepared in accordance with these procedures, the appointing officer must consider the report and:

- If he or she believes that the matter should be dealt with, in whole or in part, as a breach of discipline:
- Refer it to the Brigade Executive Committee for consideration;
- Give a copy of the report to the respondent; and
- Notify the person who made the allegation that the matter will proceed to the Brigade Executive Committee for consideration;
- The appointing officer may provide additional material to the disciplinary panel or discipline delegate provided that a copy of that additional material is also provided to the respondent;
- If he or she believes that the matter should not be dealt with as a breach of discipline:
- Notify the respondent of that decision;
- Notify the person who made the allegation that the matter will not proceed further; and
- Make an appropriate notation detailing the reasons for that decision.

The Brigade Executive Committee must deal with a breach of discipline allegation within 28 days of its referral.

Upon receiving a breach of discipline allegation, the Brigade Executive Committee shall:

- Consider the report prepared by the investigator.
- Allow the respondent seven days' notice to provide a statement (either in person at the Brigade Executive Committee or in writing) answering the allegations.

- Determine appropriate disciplinary action or determine that the alleged breach does not warrant disciplinary action and dismiss the matter.

All decisions, including rationale for the decision-making, shall be recorded in the Brigade Executive Committee minutes.

Disciplinary action which may be invoked by the Brigade Executive Committee includes:

- Reprimand the respondent;
- Suspend the respondent for a specified period;
- Impose conditions on the respondent's membership of a brigade; or
- Revoke the respondent's membership of the brigade.

The Brigade Executive Committee must provide a written copy of its decision, including disciplinary action where appropriate, within 14 clear (working) days of arriving at that decision to:

- The Respondent;
- The Shire of Woodanilling;
- The Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.

A member that has been directed to stand down from all brigade activities must not:

- Respond to any incident call;
- Participate in any brigade activity;
- Approach or contact any member or witness involved in or providing evidence in relation to the investigation;
- Approach or enter any brigade's station; or
- Wear brigade uniform or PPE;

until further notice.

#### **4.5.1.4 Appeals procedure**

A respondent who has undergone the above process may appeal the decision made by the Brigade Executive Committee to the Shire's CBFCO.

An appeal must be:

- Made within 14 days of the date of the Committee's decision;
- Submitted in writing (email is acceptable);
- Detail what is being appealed (ie the breach of discipline itself and/or the penalty imposed by the Committee);
- Explain the grounds for appeal.

The CBFCO shall, within 14 days of receiving an appeal request:

- Consider all documents/facts of the case, including the minutes of the Brigade Executive Committee meeting and the appeal request;
- Determine if the appeal is sustained or overruled.

The CBFCO, in determining a final outcome, may:

- Sustain the findings and action of the Committee;
- Modify the disciplinary action imposed by the Committee; or

- Overrule the findings and/or action imposed by the Committee.

The CBFCO must provide a written copy of their decision, including disciplinary action where appropriate, within 14 clear (working) days of arriving at that decision to:

- The Respondent;
- The Shire of Woodanilling.

This process/outcome is final and is not subject to any further appeal.

#### **4.5.2 Grievance Management Procedure**

The purpose of this procedure is to establish a clear and fair process for members to raise and resolve a grievance which arises against another member or members of the Shire's Bush Fire Brigades in that context. It is not to be used in relation to a grievance between members that arises outside the brigade.

It is expected that wherever possible members will resolve differences between themselves, before the need to commence the steps set out in this procedure.

The Shire is committed to providing a safe and healthy work place for its members, maintaining a harmonious and productive environment in which diversity is valued and encouraged. It aims to resolve grievances in a prompt, conciliatory, fair and effective manner.

A reference to a next in charge in this procedure means:

- One of the Brigade's Lieutenants; or
- The Brigade FCO/Captain.

Note: Where a Brigade Lieutenant receives an allegation as the next in charge they must pass the allegation to the Brigade FCO/ Captain as soon as practicably possible.

##### **4.5.2.1 Preliminary action**

Before initiating the Local Procedure, the grievant must attempt to resolve the grievance directly with the member/s concerned.

A grievant must raise their grievance with the respondent as early as possible.

While trying to settle the grievance a grievant or respondent may, at any time, consult confidentially with anyone they choose and may seek advice or assistance from support services such as those listed in section 4.2.2 of these procedures.

If the respondent refuses to engage with the grievant or the matter cannot be resolved by the parties within a reasonable period, the grievant may commence the Local Procedure.

##### **4.5.2.2 Local/Informal Procedure**

The local procedure must not be commenced unless the grievant has first attempted to resolve the grievance directly with the respondent in accordance with the preliminary action.

If the grievant wishes to initiate the local procedure, the matter must be referred to the next in charge as soon as reasonably possible after the grievant has unsuccessfully attempted to resolve the grievance in accordance with the preliminary action steps.

In the case of a grievance against an officer holding one of the following appointments, the next in charge shall be the Shire's Chief Executive Officer:

- Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
- Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

In the case of a grievance against an officer holding one of the following appointments, the next in charge shall be the CBFCO:

- Shire Fire Control Officer
- Fire Control Officer/ Captain

If the grievance is against their next in charge, the grievant must refer the grievance to that person's next in charge.

To commence the local procedure, the grievant must provide a written Notice of Grievance to their next in charge. The Notice of Grievance must include:

- A concise statement of the grievance, which includes the names of the parties to the grievance and any witnesses;
- An outline of the attempts the grievant has already taken to resolve the grievance in accordance with the preliminary action steps or an explanation as to why the preliminary action steps were not taken or were unsuccessful;
- A proposed solution which the grievant believes would resolve the grievance. An appropriate solution will focus on achieving a positive working relationship, rather than apportioning blame.

If the grievant next in charge who receives the Notice of Grievance believes that they are unable to participate in the local procedure because they are:

- Involved in the grievance; or
- May reasonably be considered by one of the parties to have a conflict of interest,

they must immediately refer the matter to their next in charge with a written explanation as to why they believe they should not deal with the matter.

A person who receives a referral in accordance with this procedure must, within two working days, either:

- Appoint another member to carry out the local procedure; or
- If they believe there is no proper basis for the referral, direct the grievant next in charge to implement the local procedure.

*Note: Any reference to the person's next in charge in this procedure includes a person appointed under this clause.*

Within 10 working days of receiving the Notice of Grievance and all associated documentation, the next in charge must determine whether:

- The grievance is a matter which can be dealt with under this procedure; or
- The alleged grievance is frivolous, malicious or vexatious.

If the subject of the grievance is not a matter that is to be dealt with under this procedure, the next in charge may direct the grievant to the most relevant procedure that covers the circumstances.

If the next in charge determines that the alleged grievance is:

- A matter which cannot be dealt with under this procedure;
- Frivolous, malicious or vexatious; and/or
- The subject matter of the grievance is such that it does not justify the utilisation of Brigade/Shire resources;

they must dismiss the grievance and notify the grievant in writing.

If the next in charge does not dismiss the grievance pursuant to the above clause, he or she must attempt to resolve the grievance by taking the action set out as follows.

The next in charge must, in attempting to resolve the grievance:

- Provide the respondent with a copy of the Notice of Grievance;
- Gather such other information as is required to assist with the resolution of the grievance. This should include asking each party to provide the next in charge with any relevant documents, emails or other material which the next in charge believes will assist the next in charge in understanding and resolving the grievance;
- Allow the respondent a reasonable opportunity (to be determined by the next in charge but not less than 7 days from providing the respondent with a copy of the Notice of Grievance) to respond verbally or in writing to the grievance; and
- Attempt to resolve the grievance either or both:
  - Through discussion between the parties and the next in charge; and/or
  - By arranging any informal mediation or facilitated discussion with the CBFCO and/or Shire.

After taking the steps set out above the next in charge may, if the grievance is not otherwise resolved:

- Dismiss the grievance as unsubstantiated;
- Give a written reasonable management direction to the grievant and respondent with respect to their future conduct, including work arrangements; or
- Put in place appropriate arrangements with respect to the future interaction between the grievant and respondent.

A failure to comply with a direction given under the above clause may constitute a breach of discipline in the case of a volunteer member.

At the conclusion of the local procedure, the next in charge must write to the parties stating the outcome of the local procedure specifying:

- Action that has been agreed by the parties;
- Direction that the next in charge has given; or
- Other arrangements which have been put in place as part of that process.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the next in charge must complete the local procedure within 28 working days of receiving the Notice of Grievance.

The next in charge must send a copy of the letter or email referred to above to the relevant Brigade FCO/Captain, CBFCO and the Shire for their records.

If the grievance has been resolved through the local procedure, then the grievance process ends.

If the grievance has not been resolved then the grievant may, if he or she wishes, commence the formal procedure.

#### 4.5.2.3 Formal Procedure

The formal procedure must not be commenced unless the local procedure has been completed.

If a grievance has not been resolved for any reason through the local procedure, including as a result of a determination by the next in charge that the grievance is:

- A matter which cannot be dealt with under the local procedure;
- Frivolous, malicious or vexatious; or
- The subject matter of the grievance is such that it does not justify the utilisation of Brigade/Shire resources;

the grievant may, if he or she wishes, commence the formal procedure.

If the grievant wishes to commence the formal procedure, he or she must do so within 10 working days of the next in charge notifying the parties of the outcome of the local procedure.

The formal procedure is commenced by sending an updated Notice of Grievance Form to the appointing officer.

The Notice of Grievance Form must be in writing and must include:

- A concise statement of the grievance, which includes the names of the parties to the grievance;
- Copies of any relevant evidence, letters, emails or other material which will assist the resolution officer to understand the issues including a copy of the Notice of Grievance;
- An outline of the attempts they have made to resolve the grievance in accordance with the:
  - Preliminary action steps; and
  - Local procedure;
- A copy of any letter or email provided to the grievant as part of the local procedure; and
- A proposed solution which the grievant believes would resolve the grievance.

Within 10 working days of receipt of the Notice of Grievance the appointing officer must consider the material submitted with the Notice of Grievance and:

- If they form the opinion that the matter is such that it does not justify the further action on the part of the Shire, advise the grievant that no further action will be taken; or
- Appoint a resolution officer, who need not be a member of the Shire/Brigade, to consider the grievance and make a recommendation for its resolution.

If the appointing officer believes he or she is unable to conduct the formal procedure because they are:

- The subject of, or otherwise involved in, the grievance; or
- May be reasonably considered by one of the parties to have a conflict of interest;

they must immediately refer the matter to the Shire Chief Executive Officer with a written explanation as to why they believe they should not deal with the matter.

If the Shire Chief Executive Officer receives a referral pursuant to the above clause, the Shire Chief Executive Officer must, as soon as practicable, either:

- Appoint another person (resolution officer) to conduct the formal procedure; or
- If the Shire Chief Executive Officer believes there is no proper basis for the referral, direct the appointing officer to implement the formal procedure.



The resolution officer must, as soon as reasonably practicable:

- Provide the respondent with an updated copy of the Notice of Grievance Form;
- Interview in person or otherwise the grievant, respondent and any other persons as may be appropriate;
- Gather any further information the resolution officer considers necessary;
- Determine whether the grievance has substance based on the evidence provided;
- Attempt, if appropriate, to resolve the grievance by negotiation, mediation or conciliation; and
- Recommend to the Chief Executive Officer any appropriate action (which may include a recommendation that no further action be taken in relation to the matter) to resolve the grievance; or
- Otherwise recommend that the Chief Executive Officer dismiss the grievance.

Unless the Chief Executive Officer grants an extension of time, the resolution officer must complete the formal procedure with 40 working days of his or her appointment.

If, at any stage during the formal procedure, the resolution officer forms the opinion that the grievance is frivolous, malicious or vexatious the resolution officer must refer the matter back to the appointing officer and may recommend that disciplinary action or misconduct proceedings be taken against the grievant.

Within 10 days of receiving the resolution officer's report, the Chief Executive Officer must:

- Decide what action, if any, will be taken in relation to the matter; and
- Notify both the grievant and respondent in writing of:
  - The outcome of the formal procedure;
  - The reasons for that decision; and
  - The action, if any, he or she intends to take in relation to the matter.

The reasons provided by the Chief Executive Officer need not be detailed nor must they include a detailed analysis of the evidence or other matters considered by the resolution officer or the appointing officer. In appropriate circumstances, the appointing officer may simply elect to adopt the resolution officer's report and recommendations for the reasons set out in that report.

The decision of the Chief Executive Officer is the final step in the grievance procedure and is not subject to any appeal or review.

## **4.6 COMMUNICATIONS**

### **4.6.1 Media, Public Statements and Social Media Use**

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995*, the spokesperson for the Council is the Shire President and with the Shire President's authorisation, the Chief Executive Officer, either of whom may make a statement on behalf of the Council/Shire.

Brigade members are not permitted to provide any comment or public statements with regard to the Brigade, its officers or members or its activities to the media or public without prior written authorisation from the Shire. This does not include Brigade Facebook pages as they are expected to be maintained for the purpose of sharing activities.

At emergency incidents, the Incident Controller or delegated person are the only people able to make comment to the media regarding the incident and any public notifications, alerts and warnings. Brigade members are not to make comment/statements regarding an incident to the media unless authorised to do so.

Members must be mindful of the information they post on public forums and social media because it may impact on the reputation of their brigade, other members and the Shire. Members must not post information relating to their brigade and/or brigade activities on social media which could:

- Bring the Brigade, it's members or the Shire into disrepute;
- Reasonably found to breach the Bush Fire Brigades Code of Conduct or are not consistent with the Bush Fire Brigade Organisational Values;
- Depict the Brigade, it's members or the Shire in an unprofessional light;
- Encourage improper safety, operational or work related practices;
- Be misleading or deceptive;
- Result in bullying, victimisation or harassment;
- Lead to criminal penalty or civil liability;
- Divulge confidential or sensitive information;
- Reasonably be found to be vexatious, offensive, obscene, threatening, abusive, defamatory, rude, threatening, vulgar, obscene, pornographic or culturally insensitive;
- Be interpreted to be of a commercial or political nature;
- Portray content of a confidential, private or sensitive nature such as serious or critical injury, fatalities or incidents that are under investigation;
- Could reasonably be found to cause distress to members of the community or the brigade; and/or
- Identify people under the age of 18 without written parental consent.

Where a Brigade has a social media page or would like to disseminate any information, the information must be authorised in writing by the Shire, prior to publication.

#### **4.6.2 Supply and Use of DFES supplied equipment**

Information Communications and Technology (ICT) solutions, equipment and data are valuable corporate assets which must be safeguarded at all times from malicious attack, unauthorised access, and inappropriate use.

Each Brigade will be provided with the following resources:

- WAERN Radio

All Shire/Brigade ICT equipment must only be used for brigade activities.

By using any Shire/Brigade ICT equipment or services, members agree to not:

- Intentionally create, send or access information that could damage the Shire/Brigade's reputation, be misleading or deceptive, result in victimisation or harassment, lead to criminal penalty, or be reasonably found to be offensive, obscene, threatening, abusive or defamatory;
- Operate a business, usurp business opportunities or generate personal income (including through gambling);
- Send, receive, print or otherwise disseminate, without appropriate authorisation, proprietary data or other confidential information of the Shire/Brigade;
- Gain unauthorised access to, or make unauthorised changes to, programs or data, or otherwise destroy the integrity of Shire/Brigade data;

- Import or use executable programs within the Shire/Brigade’s network, or download programs from the Internet without the express written permission of the Shire;
- Make copies of any software licensed to the Shire/Brigade, or load any software licensed to the Shire/Brigade onto personal computers, laptops, servers or any other device not owned by the Shire/Brigade;
- Breach copyright law or any law or regulation relating to intellectual property;
- Violate the privacy of other individuals;
- Use for games, streaming multimedia or other non-business activities not related to agreed roles and/or responsibilities, or without prior approval; or
- Use in any other inappropriate manner including, but not limited to, any use of Shire/Brigade equipment or services for intentionally transmitting, communicating or accessing pornographic or sexually explicit material, images, text or other offensive material, or any material which may discriminate against, harass or vilify any other person.

#### 4.6.3 Records management, privacy and document storage

Records are defined as “information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligation or in the transaction of business.”

As the Shire’s Bush Fire Brigades are formed under legislation and perform legal duties, there is a requirement to maintain records.

All correspondence, reports, memoranda, email, faxes, file notes, plans etc, which meet any of the 5 criteria outlined below must be retained:

1. Does it convey information considered essential or relevant in making a decision?
2. Does it convey information upon which others will be, or are likely to be, making decisions affecting their business operations or rights and obligations under legislation?
3. Does it commit the Shire or its officers to certain causes of action or the commitment of resources or provision of services?
4. Does it contain information about matters of public safety or public interest or involve information upon which contractual undertakings are entered into?
5. Is the information likely to be needed for future use or considered to be of historical value or interest?

In summary, ask yourself if it contains information, which is of **Administrative, Legal, Financial, Evidential** or **Historical** value and is not recorded elsewhere on the public record. If your answer is ‘yes’, then it is a significant record that needs to be captured into the record keeping system.

All records meeting the above criteria must be:

- Retained in the relevant brigades emails or retained in hardcopy; and
- Forwarded to the Shire for registration in the Shire’s records management system.

Any hardcopy information should be retained for a minimum of seven (7) years as a rule. The Shire can provide further information on the retention and disposal of records after this timeframe, including secure disposal and archiving options.

##### 4.6.3.1 Privacy and personal information collection

Personal information is information or opinion about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion. This includes information forming part of a database, and whether or not recorded in a material form.

Personal information shall only be collected or solicited for a lawful purpose that is directly related to a function or activity of the Shire/Bush Fire Brigades, and is reasonably necessary for that purpose.

Personal information shall be collected from the individual to whom it relates unless:

- That person authorises the collection of the information from someone else; or
- The information is collected from the parent or guardian of a person under the age of 16 years.

Where personal information is collected, the person providing the information must be advised of:

- The purposes for which the information is being collected;
- The intended recipients of the information;
- The consequences (if any) of not providing the information;
- The person's right to access and correct the information;
- Whether the supply of the information is required by law, and the consequences for the individual if the information is not provided; and
- The name and address of the agency that is collecting the information and the agency that is to hold the information.

If personal information is collected from an individual then reasonable steps (having regard to the purposes for which the information is collected) must be taken to ensure that:

- The information collected is relevant to that purpose, is not excessive, and is accurate, up to date and complete; and
- The collection of the information does not intrude to an unreasonable extent on the personal affairs of the individual to whom the information relates.

It must be ensured that personal information held:

- Is kept for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the information may lawfully be used;
- Is disposed of securely and in accordance with any requirements for the retention and disposal of personal information;
- Is protected by taking reasonable security safeguards (given the circumstances) against loss, unauthorised access, use, modification or disclosure and against all other misuse; and
- That if it is necessary for the information to be given to a person in connection with the provision of a service to the Shire/Brigade that everything reasonably within the power of the Shire/Brigade is done to prevent unauthorised use or disclosure of the information.

#### **4.6.3.2 Disclosure of personal information**

Personal information relating to a person's:

- Gender
- Race (includes colour, ethnicity, national origin)
- Impairment or disability
- Age
- Pregnancy or potential pregnancy
- Breastfeeding
- Marital Status
- Family/Carer Responsibility
- Family Status
- Health
- Political Conviction
- Religious Conviction

- Gender History
- Sexual Orientation
- Spent Conviction
- Trade Union membership/activities
- Association with someone who has one of the listed attributes;

shall not be disclosed unless it is necessary in order to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of a person or where it is required by law.

Personal information shall not be disclosed to another person or body unless:

- The disclosure is directly related to the purpose for which the information was collected and there is no reason to believe that the person concerned would object to the disclosure;
- The person from whom the information was collected is reasonably likely to have been aware or to have been made aware that information of that kind is usually disclosed to that other party; or
- Disclosure is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of a person; or
- It is required to be disclosed by law and/or for law enforcement purposes.

Personal information that is required in order to contact or communicate with a member of a brigade (e.g. telephone and address lists) for operational or administrative purposes may be collected and disclosed to:

- members of the brigades to which an individual belongs;
- Shire/Bush Fire Brigade Officers;
- members of the staff of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services; and
- investigating authorities;

who require access to that information in order to carry out their functions.

Other than for exceptional circumstances, the disclosure of a members personal details must be requested in writing to the Chief Executive Officer and approved or refused by them.

#### **4.6.3.3 Legitimate use of recordings**

The recording of conversations and images is covered by several statutes and must be treated with the utmost privacy and integrity.

They shall be replayed or made available only in the following situations:

- Investigation of alleged untimely or inadequate responses to fire or other incidents;
- Written inquiries from the WA Police, CCC, Coroner or other investigating body;
- For the conduct of internal Shire/Brigade/DFES investigations; or
- As required by law.

Voice recordings and transcripts of voice recordings obtained during volunteer grievance/discipline investigation processes shall only be used for that purpose or associated appeals.

## **4.7 AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

### **4.7.1 DFES Awards**

DFES awards Bush Fire Brigade volunteers for diligent service for the following time intervals:

The Bush Fire Service medallion is awarded to volunteers who have completed five (5) years of diligent service.

The Bush Fire Brigade Medal is awarded for ten (10) years of diligent service to the Bush Fire Service.

A clasp to the medal is awarded for each subsequent five years of diligent service with the Bush Fire Service up to 55 years.

After 60 years of active and diligent service a member will be awarded a framed Medal and Certificate. A congratulatory letter from the Minister for Emergency Services will also be issued.

The length of service is calculated from the date of joining the Bush Fire Service. The period of service may be an aggregate amount of years, not necessarily a continuous period.

### **DFES Eligibility**

Medal recipients must be a registered, active or support member of a Bush Fire Service (BFS) Brigade. The Medal is intended to recognise actual service with the BFS on a regular basis and may be awarded to both serving and past members of the BFS who meet the eligibility criteria.

### **DFES Eligibility Criteria**

The Medal may be awarded to a member of a BFS Brigade after they have completed ten years of service with the BFS, either in a single continuous period or over a number of separate periods that equate to ten years in aggregate. Eligible service must be voluntary service completed with the BFS in Western Australia.

A clasp may be awarded to a person who has been awarded the Medal after a further five years of service either in a single continuous period or over a number of separate periods that equate to five years in aggregate.

In cases where the Medal is being awarded to a member for the first time, and they have 15 years of eligible service or more, only the current set of clasps will be awarded. This is because only one clasp can be worn with the Medal.

If the member has already used their years' of service with the Bush Fire Service towards any other DFES long service medal the same years cannot be used toward a Bushfire Fire Service medal. A member of dual registered brigade can only use their years of service toward one volunteer service medal.

Medal eligibility is from 17 years of age onwards and therefore service as a Bush Fire Brigade Cadet will not be counted towards the Medal.

### **Records of service**

Any period of service claimed towards the Medal that is not recorded on the DFES Resource Management System (RMS) database will need to be supported with evidence and records of service. The District Officer, in conjunction with Local Government, will ensure service has been verified before the application is approved and sent to the Reward and Recognition Officer for processing.

The National Medal recognises long and diligent service by members of recognised government and voluntary organisations that risk their lives or safety to protect or assist the community in enforcement of the law or in times of emergency or natural disaster.

Fifteen years of diligent service is required to qualify for the National Medal. A clasp may be issued for each subsequent ten years of diligent service.

All DFES awards must be applied for via the online system on the DFES Volunteer Portal.

The Shire will apply for awards on members' behalf for presentation at the annual awards event each year. A list of members who are eligible for awards will be forwarded to the Brigade Captain for endorsement prior to applications being submitted.

## 5 CODE OF CONDUCT

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### 5.1 CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct for the Shire of Woodanilling employees, volunteers and contractors are to abide by the current Code of Conduct endorsed by Council. The Code of Conduct for employees is required under section 5.51A of the *Local Government Act 1995*, and includes the matters prescribed in Part 4A of the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*.

All employees, volunteers and contractors are to abide by the Code of Conduct which is a mandatory requirement under the legislation, it is also a necessary tool that clearly and consistently articulates the standards upon which all employees/volunteers/contractors agree to abide by the performance of their duties and their conduct towards others. It is also very important measure for performance and basis upon which disciplinary action is applied in a fair and reasonable manner.

The CESM will produce this document through the New Members Induction process however at times when the document is updated, will be distributed for members to acknowledge and send back to the CESM to record.

### 5.2 VALUES

The Bush Fire Brigade values are aligned with the Shire of Woodanilling Values which are:

**Be fair**

**Be honest, open and accountable**

**Respect the views and rights of individuals and groups**

**Be receptive as everyone in the community counts**

**Will recognise the increase awareness that a small community brings**

**Will provide an atmosphere of energy, excitement, optimism and positiveness**

**Will facilitate group discussion and help to overcome stumbling blocks and conflict**

## 5.3 INTRODUCTION

### 5.3.1 Who does this Code of Conduct apply to?

A Code of Conduct is a set of rules outlining the norms, rules and responsibilities of, or proper practices for, an individual, party or organisation. The Code of Conduct is important as it establishes clear expectations in terms of behaviours, decision-making and ethics for the organisation.

The Code of Conduct applies to all Brigade officers and members. Shire Officers performing the requirements of their role are required to abide by the Shire Employee's Code of Conduct.

In the Code of Conduct:

- Brigade members are referred to as “volunteers”;
- Brigade officers are referred to as “officers”;
- Brigade members and officers are referred to collectively as “members”; and
- The supervisor or manager directly in charge of a member is referred to as the “next in charge”, ie, for most volunteers this is the Brigade Captain or Lieutenants.

### 5.3.2 When does the Code of Conduct apply?

The Code of Conduct applies whenever a member is:

- Acting in the capacity of a member;
- Attending or participating in any Brigade activity, including but not limited to attending incidents, training, or other community relations events;
- On Brigade/Shire premises;
- Wearing Brigade uniform, whether on duty or otherwise;
- Attending any Brigade or Shire sponsored event including social events; or
- holding him or herself out as a member.

Members should also make certain their off duty conduct is consistent with these standards to avoid any adverse impact on the Shire, their Brigade, or on their volunteer status.

### 5.3.3 How does it relate to other policies and the law?

The Code of Conduct does not replace the general law, *Bush Fires Act 1954*. All members must also comply with all relevant State and Commonwealth laws and subsidiary policies and procedures.

If a conflict arises between the Code of Conduct and the provisions of any Act, Regulation or the Local Law the latter provisions prevail.

### 5.3.4 What happens if a member breaches the Code of Conduct?

Behaviour contrary to the Bush Fire Brigade values and/or the Code of Conduct can bring individual members into disrepute, undermine productive working relationships, hinder service delivery and damage the community/public's trust in the individual brigade, Bush Fire Brigades as a whole, Shire or the government sector more broadly.

There are a range of consequences for breaching the Bush Fire Brigade values and the Code of Conduct depending on the nature and seriousness of the breach and the status of members involved.

A failure to comply with the Code of Conduct may constitute a breach of discipline in the case of a volunteer. There may also be a requirement by law to report some breaches of the Code of Conduct to one or more of the following external agencies and such conduct may constitute a criminal offence:

- WA Police



- Western Australian Public Sector Commission
- WA Corruption and Crime Commission

Brigade members are classified as ‘public officers’ for the purpose of the *Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003*.

If it is alleged that a member has acted in a way that is contrary to the Code of Conduct, he or she will have an opportunity to provide their version of events. How this will happen will be proportionate to the seriousness of the matter. Where the allegation is minor or low level the member’s next in charge may discuss the matter directly with the member. If the allegation is more serious, and/or there is evidence of a pattern of similar behaviour over a period of time, a formal process may be required.

Potential outcomes where a finding of breach of discipline/misconduct has occurred may include reprimand, suspension, demotion, disqualifying the respondent from holding rank, imposition of conditions on membership, prohibition of future membership (including life membership) or removal from membership.

The process for managing misconduct is contained in the Shire’s Bush Fire Brigade Operating Procedures.

## **5.4 CODE OF CONDUCT OBLIGATIONS**

Bush Fire Brigades are a community based fire and emergency service. They are both part of the community and serve the community.

Serving the community means more than fighting fires and protecting people, property and the environment from emergencies. It also means we have other obligations as detailed in this section.

### **5.4.1 Compliance**

All members must comply with:

- The Bush Fire Brigade values;
- The Code of Conduct; and
- Any other Shire laws, policies, procedures and guidelines relevant to their role.

All members must also comply with any lawful and reasonable direction or instruction given to by another Brigade member empowered to make such a direction or instruction under legislation, regulation, delegation or authorisation.

All officers must also:

- Lead and promote implementation of the Code of Conduct in their brigade;
- Ensure their Brigade culture, practices and systems (including recruitment and promotion) operate consistently with the Code of Conduct;
- Act promptly and with due process to prevent and address any breaches of the Code of Conduct.

### **5.4.2 Public Interest**

Since the functions and powers of Bush Fire Brigades can have a broad effect on members of the community, you are expected, as a member to perform your duties and activities, make decisions and exercise any delegation or authorisation in ways that promote or preserve the community/public’s interest.

It is acknowledged that members also have their own private interests. An “interest” in this context means anything that can have an impact on an individual or group. The term “private interest” includes not only the personal, professional or business interests of a member, but also the personal, professional or business interests of individuals or groups with whom a member is closely associated. This can include relatives, friends, business associates, or even rivals and enemies.

In order to ensure their actions and decisions actively place the interests of the community / public and the Brigade before that of their own, a member must:

- Act professionally with honesty, consistency and impartiality as they carry out their Brigade duties;
- Treat people with whom they have contact during the course of their duties equally without prejudice or favour;
- Uphold the law, institutions of government and democratic principles;
- Provide transparency to enable public scrutiny;
- Not use Bush Fire Brigade information or resources for private gain;
- Not take improper advantage of their Brigade membership;
- Provide apolitical and non-partisan advice;
- Promptly disclose and effectively manage any actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest so that they can;
- Perform their duties in a fair and unbiased way;
- Make adequate records of any decision made or actions taken during the course of their duties;
- Be fiscally responsible and focus on the efficient, effective and prudent use of resources.

#### **5.4.3 Ethical Decision-Making**

A member must act ethically in all their dealings with members of the community, our stakeholders and their fellow members.

The decisions and actions members take must be consistent with legislation, the Bush Fire Brigade values, the Code of Conduct and any other policies, procedures and guidelines that apply to members.

Members should use the following framework to guide their decision making:

- Is what I am proposing to do within the law and consistent with the Code of Conduct, Bush Fire Brigade values and Bush Fire Brigade Operating Procedures?
- Is what I am proposing to do in the best interests of the Brigade and the Community?
- Is this a decision I have the authorisation to make, or should it be referred to a more senior member?
- What will the outcomes of the decision be for: me, my role, the Brigade, the Shire?
- Does this outcome support integrity and build trust?
- Does this outcome deliver better services?
- Is this decision accountable?

#### **5.4.4 Accountability**

Being accountable in everything we do:

- Enhances the public’s confidence in Bush Fire Brigades;
- Helps to ensure that we are responsive to the interests of the community; and
- Protects individuals, members and the brigade.

A member is accountable for their own conduct and the decisions they make and actions they take. Members can demonstrate their accountability by:

- Acting according to the requirements of the relevant legislation;
- Complying with Shire/Brigade policies, procedures and guidelines at all times;
- Making certain that all decisions, actions and advice are based on evidence and within delegation/authorisation;
- Being answerable for their decisions and actions, and the outcomes resulting from their decisions and actions;
- Making sure that any decisions made, actions taken or advice provided on behalf of the brigade is properly documented;
- Ensuring they take ownership of situations that they are involved in. They see them through, and take responsibility for what happens – good or bad;
- Not blaming others if things go wrong. Instead, they do their best to make things right;
- Taking an active role in implementing the objectives of the brigade; and
- Ensuring that brigade resources and assets are used responsibly in accordance with relevant procedures.

#### **5.4.5 Fairness, Inclusivity and Equity**

The community, stakeholders and other members have a right to expect that members demonstrate fairness and equity whenever they perform their duties, take actions, have interactions and make decisions.

Accordingly, all members must:

- Act honestly, in good faith, reasonably and with integrity at all times when dealing with members of the community, stakeholders and fellow members;
- Perform their duties impartially, particularly when exercising discretionary powers or delegated authority;
- Inform other members and members of the community of their rights, the procedures to be followed and the criteria on which any decisions will be made; providing them with adequate opportunity to respond and / or put their case and then taking this information into consideration when making decisions;
- Ensure other members and members of the community are advised of the reasons for any decision; and
- Act in a manner that is inclusive and respectful of people and their linguistic, cultural, religious, ethnic, national or racial backgrounds, physical, mental or intellectual attributes or disabilities, age, gender and sexual orientation.

The Shire is strongly committed to providing and maintaining a respectful and inclusive environment, where all members are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect at all times, and in all work locations. Bullying, discrimination, vilification and/or sexual harassment have no place in a respectful and inclusive workplace. Misconduct should be managed in accordance with the Bush Fire Brigades Constitution, Bush Fire Brigades Operating Procedures and any other relevant policies/procedures.

#### **5.4.6 Conflicts of Interest**

A “conflict of interest” refers to situations where a conflict arises between the performance of a member’s responsibilities / duties (i.e. their public duty) and their private or personal interests.

A conflict of interest can involve gaining a personal advantage as well as avoiding or minimising personal disadvantage. That is, a conflict of interest may allow you to avoid a loss, expense, or something else that has a negative impact on your personal or private interests.

Conflicts of interest may be actual, or be perceived to exist, or potentially exist at some time in the future.

Members must avoid situations where in the performance of their duties they could be influenced, or be seen to be influenced by their private interests.

The best way to handle conflicts of interests is to avoid them entirely, wherever possible. If a member thinks they have a conflict of interest they must disclose it to their next in charge as soon as possible, and work cooperatively with them on a strategy to manage the situation.

Outside of a members brigade duties he or she has the right to participate in political and community activities and to pursue personal interests, provided that:

- Any participation does not conflict with their duty as a member to serve the community's interest and the local government in a politically neutral manner; and
- Any conflict that arises is recognised and adequately managed.

Where a member becomes aware that a conflict of interest has arisen regarding their political or community activities they must inform their next in charge immediately who will then work with them to develop the most appropriate strategy for addressing the conflict.

#### **5.4.7 Gifts and donations**

All members must exercise judgment and caution in regard to any gifts or benefits they may be offered in connection with their official duties, or because of their position or role in a Bush Fire Brigade.

The acceptance of gifts / benefits regardless of their monetary value may compromise, or appear to compromise the impartial performance of a member's duties and responsibilities, or cause, or appear to cause a conflict of interest. Accordingly, members must always consider the reasons and the context in which the gift / benefit has been offered and the consequences of receiving it, before making any decisions to accept it.

All members must comply with all relevant policies relating to gifts and benefits as defined under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1995* and relevant regulations.

It is a requirement by law to provide in writing within 10 days to the Chief Executive Officer of a gift or donation to be recorded appropriately and aligned with the *Local Government Act 1995*.

#### **5.4.8 Safety, welfare and well-being of children and young people**

The Shire and its Bush Fire Brigades have both a legislative and moral obligation to protect children and young people.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 years.

Protecting children and young people engaged in brigade activities and providing a child-safe, child-friendly environment is a responsibility that all members share. In order to create a child-safe environment all members must take an active role in keeping children and young people safe from all forms of harm and creating a trusting environment where they are valued, respected and welcomed.

Members must:

- Comply with any relevant pre-screening employment / membership checks if they will be involved in child related activities (cadets, school visits and other activities involving minors).

- Ensure that they act professionally and maintain a respectful and professional distance around any child or young member or with whom they come into contact during the course of their duties.
- Recognise circumstances that may involve inappropriate behaviours towards a child or young person; and
- Discussing their concerns with their next in charge, or with the shire; and
- Ensure that any child or young person that approaches them with a concern or complaint about another member's behaviour towards a child or young person is appropriately supported and the matter immediately reported to their next in charge, or to the Shire.

#### **5.4.9 Confidential, private and personal information**

All members must ensure that personal and private information that is collected from other members or the public is treated in a confidential manner.

All members must ensure that corporate information created, received, or collected in the course of their duties is treated in a confidential manner.

#### **5.4.10 Public comments**

A member must comply with relevant Bush Fire Operating Procedures when making any public comments or publishing official information regarding the brigade and/or brigade activities.

Public comment includes comments made in the context of public speaking engagements, comments on radio, television, the internet or other collaborative or social networking applications, letters to newspapers, books, journals or other written publications where it is reasonably expected that the comments will be available to the community at large.

Only the Shire President, Shire Chief Executive Officer or other delegated persons are authorised to speak on behalf of the Shire/Brigades.

Members who are an elected or nominated spokesperson for a relevant representative association or union are entitled to make public comments in relation to bush fire service matters, as long as it is made clear to the audience that those comments represent the views of the association or union, and are not necessarily those of the Shire/Brigade.

If a member wishes to make a statement on an official matter as a private citizen they must not do so in Brigade uniform. They must also make clear that the comments made are their own or those of other entities and are not made on behalf of the Shire/Brigade.

Members must be mindful to ensure they do not reveal any confidential, personal or private information when making public comments.

#### **5.4.11 Personal presentation**

When a member wears Brigade uniform, or operate identifiable Brigade vehicles or equipment they are clearly identified to the community as a member of the brigade. A member's appearance must be clean, neat and tidy; other than when undertaking operational activities on an incident ground.

A member must only wear brigade uniform and/or PPE:

- When on duty or travelling to or from duty; and/or
- When attending training, official functions, meetings or conferences.

A member must wear the appropriate personal protective equipment / clothing (PPE/C) for the task when undertaking operational activities in accordance with the Bush Fire Operating Procedures.

A member must not wear their uniform, or brigade apparel/insignia when visiting a public bar or registered club, other than if they are attending the venue for an official function, meeting, conference or a Shire sponsored event.

Members who are not wearing uniform must still ensure that their personal appearance and presentation are clean, tidy and appropriate for their role when on duty.

All uniform and PPE/C items remains the property of the Shire and must be immediately returned to the Shire if the member is directed to do so by their next in charge or when they cease to be a member of the brigade.

## 6 APPENDICES

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### 6.1 APPENDIX A: LIST OF FORMS/REGISTERS/OTHER DOCUMENTS

#### 6.1.1 Department of Fire and Emergency Services

Department of Fire and Emergency Services Operational Doctrine (Volunteer login required):

<https://extranet.dfes.wa.gov.au/sites/volunteers/members/sharedrepository/opsdoctrine/Pages/OperationsDoctrine.aspx>

Department of Fire and Emergency Services SOPs (Volunteer login required):

<https://extranet.dfes.wa.gov.au/sites/volunteers/members/SharedRepository/opsresources/Pages/Resources-SOP.aspx>

Department of Fire and Emergency Services SAPs (Volunteer login required):

<https://extranet.dfes.wa.gov.au/sites/volunteers/members/SharedRepository/opsresources/Pages/AdministrativeProcedures.aspx>

#### 6.1.2 Shire of Woodanilling

Activity Notification and Risk Assessment Form

Asset Register

Brigade Activity Log

Callout Prompt Sheet

Certification of Volunteer Attending and Emergency Incident

Donations and Gift Register

First Aid Kit Replenishment (4.4)

First Aid Kit Replenishment (Station)

LGGS Expenditure Reimbursement Form

Vehicle Fault Report Form

Vehicle Service Checklist 'A' Service

Vehicle Service Checklist 'B' Service

Vehicle Service Checklist 'C' Service

Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades - Medical Assessment - Fit for Duty

## 6.2 APPENDIX B: BRIGADE MEMBERS/OFFICERS MINIMUM SKILLS REQUIREMENTS

This section establishes the minimum skill requirements for operational positions within Bush Fire Brigades. The training competencies are listed in order of commencement (ie they are listed chronologically in the order they must be completed. The relevant DFES Pathway is included in the right hand column.

### 6.2.1 Brigade Member

Upon commencement:	
Shire of Woodanilling Volunteer Induction	VFF1
Introduction to Rural Fire Awareness	VFF1
Bushfire Firefighting	VFF1
AIIMS Awareness (online)	VFF1
Introduction to Structural Firefighting	VFF2
Pump Operations (optional)	VFF2

### 6.2.2 Lieutenant

Upon commencement:	
Advanced Bushfire Fighting / Crew Leader	VFF5
Brigade Officers Development Program (BODP)	N/A
Ground Controller	VFF5
Leadership Fundamentals (optional)	VFF5
AIIMS 2017	VFF5
Sector Commander	VFF5
Workplace Trainer/Assessor (optional, with approval from Chief/Training Team)	VFF5

### 6.2.3 Permit/Enforcement Fire Control Officer

Permit issuing FCOs if appointed should meet the standard of Brigade Member and will complete the FCO course within 12 months of their commencement within an FCO role.

Enforcement FCOs are municipal officers and as such may not have previous fire experience. They must complete the FCO course to understand the powers of an FCO.

Within 12 months of commencement:	
Fire Control Officer	VFF6