



**ACT**  
Government



## MEETING MINUTES – ACT BUSHFIRE COUNCIL

### MEETING INFORMATION

|                        |                 |                      |   |
|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|---|
| <b>Date:</b>           | 6 February 2019 | <b>Location:</b>     | Ground Floor ESA Headquarters,<br>Black Mountain Meeting Room |
| <b>Time:</b>           | 16:00           | <b>Meeting Type:</b> | Council   |
| <b>Call-In Number:</b> | 02 6207 7160    | <b>Call-In Code:</b> | N/A   |
| <b>Attendees:</b>      | See list page 2 | <b>Secretariat:</b>  | Lynda Scanes  |

### ORDER OF BUSINESS

#### AGENDA ITEMS

**Presenter: Chair**

#### 1 Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land that the meeting was on, the Ngunnawal people. She expressed acknowledgement and respect towards their continuing culture and the contributions they make to the life of this city and this region. She also acknowledged and welcomed other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attending the meeting.

**Presenter: Chair**

#### 2 Welcome, introductions, apologies and nomination of member to monitor performance checklist

The Chair welcomed all meeting attendees and noted apologies listed on page 2. The Chair noted the absence of Steve Angus and reported that he had work commitments and would be late to the meeting but finally was unable to attend.

#### Condolence

Mr Cooper advised Council of the recent passing of Ngunnawal Elder, Uncle Carl Brown. Council acknowledged Uncle Carl's dedicated service to Parks and Conservation Service and the ACT Community.

Council members agreed for Mr Cooper to pass on their condolence to the family.

**Action:** Mr Cooper to pass on condolence message to the Brown family, on behalf of Bushfire Council Members

## MEMBERS AND OFFICIALS – ATTENDANCE LIST

Meeting 16.00 to 19:00, Wednesday 6 February 2019

Black Mountain Meeting Room, ESA Headquarters

|                        |                          |                  |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Council Members</b> | Sarah Ryan (Chairperson) | Marion Leiba     | Tony Bartlett      |
|                        | Natarsha Carney          | Jeremy Watson    | Bhiamie Williamson |
|                        | Cathy Parsons            | Margaret Moreton |                    |
|                        | David Snell              | Kylie Coe        |                    |

**Officials**

Daniel Iglesias, Executive Director, Parks and Conservation Service (PCS), Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (PCS, EPSDD)

Mark Brown, Chief Officer, ACT Fire and Rescue (ACT F&R), ESA

Joe Murphy, Chief Officer, ACT Rural Fire Service (ACTRFS), ESA

**Secretariat**

Lynda Scanes, Executive Officer, ACT BFC

**Apologies**

Daniel Iglesias, Executive Director, Parks and Conservation Service (PCS), Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (PCS, EPSDD)

Steve Angus, BFC member

**Invited Guests**

Anna Mitchell, Senior Manager, SBMPv4, ESA

Neil Cooper, Manager, PCS, EPSDD

Tony Scherl, Project Manager, Regional Fire Management Plan, PCS

Scott Seymour, Project Manager, Assurance SBMPv3

**Presenter: Chair**

### 3 Declaration of Interest

No declarations of conflict of interest were received.

**Presenter: Chair**

### 4 Acceptance of minutes from the 5 December 2018 meeting

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting (with some minor amendments requested).

**Presenter: Chair**

### 5 Review action list

Council noted the following updates against the previous meeting action items:

- closed action on Bushfire Council meeting with PCS to discuss how burning targets are expressed
- edit an outstanding action for CO ACTRFS to provide a formal report on all interstate deployments
- closed action on communication to the ESA Commissioner in relation to Council's concerns about consultation in the review of SBMPv3 in preparation of SBMPv4
- closed action PCS presentation on RFMPs scheduled on the agenda for this meeting

## **6 Correspondence**

Correspondence for noting:

- Commissioner letter of response to the Chair ACTBFC regarding age of RFS recruits. Council thanked the Commissioner for the response.

Report on activities the Chair has attended on behalf of Council since the last meeting:

- An ESA Incident Management Exercise (IMX) on 11 December
- An internal ESA workshop reviewing SBMPv3 actions on 31 Jan
- A Bushfire Management Planning Committee Meeting on 5 Feb

### **Action:**

Chief Officer, ACTF&R to provide the Secretariat with the December 2018 IMX Evaluation Report.

## **7 EPSDD PCS quarterly BOP report**

The Manager Fire Management Unit advised the EPSDD PCS quarterly BOP report will be circulated out of session.

### **Action:**

The Secretariat to circulate the EPSDD PCS quarterly BOP report out of session.

## **8 Presentation of Regional Fire Management Plan**

The Manager, Fire Planning (RFMP) provided a detailed presentation of the process to develop the EPSDD RFMP (2019-28). The RFMP is produced in order to mitigate risk strategically over the next 10 years and provide guidance to the development of Bushfire Operations Plans (BOPs). The draft RFMP detailed the timing, type and location of fuel-reduction, access and infrastructure activities proposed to be undertaken in PCS and TCCS managed land in the ACT over that time.

A new concept in the next RFMP uses modelled measures of residual risk to assets to inform the design the most effective mix of timing and areas to be treated by prescribed burning.

Council suggested that a narrative that explains the concept and its application be included with the RFMP maps; this will assist users in understanding the concept and having confidence in its use.

Council members requested an out of session meeting to review the RFMP and associated maps in detail. It was agreed that on behalf of Council, three members will attend a meeting with PCS staff.

The draft RFMP was submitted to the ESA Commissioner on 31 January 2019. The public consultation process is scheduled for March-April 2019 in conjunction with public consultation on SBMPv4.

Council was supportive of the new approach used to develop the RFMPs.

**Action:**

- Secretariat to arrange a meeting between PCS staff and three BFC members to review in detail the RFMP and associated maps
- The Manager, Fire Planning (RFMP) to provide the Secretariat with the google drive link to the presentation

## **9 Strategic Bushfire Management Plan**

### **9.1 Report on the Review of the SBMPv3 Actions Workshop held 31 January 2019**

The Chair provided an overview of the Review of SBMPv3 Actions Workshop held at ESA HQ on Thursday 31 January 2019. The morning workshop covered the review of each of the 71 actions in the SBMPv3 in terms of whether they would be closed, retained, amended or consolidated into other actions to inform the development of SBMPv4 actions.

### **9.2 SBMP3 review – opportunity for preliminary observations by Council members**

The CO ACTRFS advised the Commissioner is very appreciative of Council's input and evaluation of the completion of SBMPv3 actions. There is one more batch (approx. 20 actions) to be circulated this month.

Discussion revealed that members have some concerns about:

- Council's role in the consultation process
- the imposition of the volume of documents being sent to home email accounts
- the structure and content in which the actions have been emailed
- the visibility of Council responses that appeared to be missing
- the absence of a shared agreed resolution in relation to the comments/ queries that Council provided

It was noted that the CO ACTRFS agreed to arrange a more user friendly process for Council to access business papers in the future.

**Action:**

CO ACTRFS to arrange a more user friendly process for Council to access papers.

### **9.3 Update on progress of SBMPv4**

The Senior Manager SBMPv4 tabled the SBMPv4 Strawman Structure and provided an informative update of the progress to date. The structure identifies all the sections of the current Plan (v3) and illustrates the proposed 'new' structure for SBMPv4. All sections will be retained; however, some will be consolidated and others may be marked as high/medium/low level within the Plan.

The Bushfire Management Plan Committee was held on 5 February 2018 and compromised internal, external stakeholders including the Chair of BFC.

Council expressed concern in relation to the internal consultation process for evaluating the SBMPv3 that will inform the SBMPv4. It was noted there is no plan to allow Council to meet its terms of reference in evaluation of the SBMPv3.

It was agreed to defer further discussion to an in-camera session of the meeting.

**Presenter: Officials**

## 10 Officials' Reports

### 10.1 EPSDD Report

The report was taken as read.

The following topics were highlighted in the report:

- Prescribed burning conditions remain very dry and there has been no opportunity to implement burns
- If weather conditions become suitable, PCS will endeavor to commence prescribed burns
- The RFMP is progressing
- Nadia Rhodes from PCS has been elected to the Board of Women and Firefighting Australasia (WAFA)
- PCS is looking at establishing a specific Aboriginal Fire Management Zone covering areas of Wallaby Rocks, Gibraltar Rocks, Jedbinbilla and Block 33 Grass Trees
- A New Portable Dam Trailer and an Asset Protection Equipment Trailer have been purchased
- Recent fires at Pierces Creek and Corin were noted

### 10.2 ESA Commissioner's Report

The report was taken as read.

The following topics were highlighted in the report:

- The Bushfire Preparedness Project has been completed and has better prepared the ESA and the Community in terms of the overall organisational preparedness of the territory for bushfire
- The Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) and the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (BNHCRC) have sent correspondence seeking ESA's support regarding the management of future research needs. ESA and EPSDD support seeking funding for a new Cooperative Research Centre; however, resources available from the ACT will be dependent on Government consideration.
- Sincere thanks were given to Council members for all their hard work on assessing the individual actions in SMBPv3, which will also assist in the drafting of SBMPv4
- The ESA Snapshot 31 January 2019 was provided.

### 10.3 ACTRFS Chief Officer Report

The report was taken as read.

The following topics were highlighted in the report:

- Three new permanent appointments have been made to the RFS team: Manager Membership, Learning and Development Officer and Manager Operations
- It has been very busy operationally with the unprecedented period of hot weather keeping staff, volunteers and Parks crews very active during the summer break, a huge thank you to all who gave up their time on duty at HQ and Brigades
- Helicopters have been equally busy with the new Specialist Intelligence Gathering (SIG) helicopter proving itself in the past month assisting both ACT and NSW with fire and lightning detection and providing IMTs with real time fire-ground imaging
- Three Total Fire Bans have been declared to date and 16 days at level 3
- Support provided to the Australia wide request for firefighters to assist in Tasmania
  - Commitment to deploy six firefighters for 30 days on a rotation, and a Fire Behaviour Specialist (ESA and PCS) and GIS specialist for two rotations
- The Royal Canberra Show is the next big community engagement activity, planning has commenced for the ESA Open Day and SBMPv4 community consultation process
- The Community Protection Team have kept busy auditing BOPs, FarmFire Wise Program

and liaising with commercial horse agistment owner/managers.

It was suggested that an ACTRFS volunteer who was on one of the recent deployments attend a meeting of the Bushfire Council in the near future to tell Council about their experience

Council thanked Officials for the informative reports.

**Action:** Nil.

**Presenter:** Council members

**11 Other Bushfire Council business**

The BFC business plan for the year was discussed and will be reviewed again at the March meeting.

**Action:**

Include a brief item on the BFC business plan on the agenda for the next meeting.

The Secretariat to circulate the BFC business plan each month with the meeting papers.

**Presenter:** Chair

**12 Review and adoption of action items from this meeting**

Action items were reviewed and agreed to and put in the action table.

**Presenter:** Chair

**13 Next Meeting**

Wednesday, 6 March 2019.

**Presenter:** Chair

**14 In Camera Meeting**

Required.

**Presenter:** Chair

**15 Council's performance checklist report.**

Natarsha completed the checklist and was happy with no issues to report.

**Meeting closure.**

The Chair closed the official meeting at 7:30, Officials departed to allow an in camera meeting.



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**ACTION ITEMS – ACT BUSHFIRE COUNCIL**

| Action Items (OPEN) |  |                                      | at 13 February 2019             |                                    |
|---------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Ref                 | ACTION   | DUE                                  | ACTION OFFICER                  | STATUS UPDATE                      |
| 190206-02           | Pass on condolence message to the Brown family, on behalf of Bushfire Council Members  | 1 week after meeting                 | Mr Cooper                       | <b>Complete</b>                    |
| 190206-06           | Provide the Secretariat with the December 2018 IMX Evaluation Report   | 1 week after meeting                 | Chief Officer, ACTF&R           | <b>Complete</b>                    |
| 190206-07           | Circulate the EPSDD PCS quarterly BOP report out of session  | 1 week after meeting                 | Secretariat                     | <b>Complete</b>                    |
| 190206-08           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secretariat to arrange a meeting with PCS staff and three BFC members to review in detail the RFMP and associated maps</li> <li>The Manager, Fire Planning (RFMP) to provide the Secretariat with the google drive link to the presentation)</li> </ul> | 12 February 2019<br>11 February 2019 | Secretariat                     | <b>Complete</b><br><b>Complete</b> |
| 190206-09-9.2       | CO ACTRFS to arrange a more user friendly process for Council to access papers   | 6 March 2019                         | CO ACTRFS                       | <b>Pending</b>                     |
| 190206-11           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include a brief item on the BFC business plan on the agenda for the next meeting.</li> <li>Circulate the BFC business plan each month with the meeting papers.</li> </ul>   | 1 week prior to meetings             | Secretariat                     |                                    |
| 1808-04             | EPSDD to provide an update on action taken against Morgan Review table.  | 5 December 2018                      | ED, PCS, EPSDD                  | <b>Pending</b>                     |
| 1811-08             | Secretariat to distribute closure reports to ACT BFC out of session. ACT BFC to provide endorsement within one week of receiving the SBMPv3 closure reports.   | Prior to<br>5 December 2018          | Secretariat and ACT BFC members | <b>Ongoing</b>                     |
| 181205-8            | Amended 190206 - Provide Council with the formal report on all the Interstate deployments once it has been finalised.  | 6 February 2019                      | CO ACTRFS                       | Pending                            |

| Action Items (CLOSED) |  |                | at 13 February 2019 |
|-----------------------|--|----------------|---------------------|
| Ref                   | ACTION   | ACTION OFFICER | Date closed         |
| 181205-9.1            | PCS will meet with the Chair and Jeremy for a discussion on how burning targets are being expressed.   | PCS and Chair  | 6 February 2019     |
| 181205-10             | Chair to convey to the Commissioner Bushfire Council's concerns about lack of consultation in the review of SBMPv3 in preparation of SBMPv4 and what opportunities there may be for further consultation | Chair          | 6 February 2019     |
| 181205-10             | PCS to present on RFMPs during the February 2019 meeting   | PCS            | 6 February 2019     |