



ACT Bushfire Council Minutes

Date: 4 August 2021

Time: 4 pm – 7 pm

Location: Online Teams Meeting

Attendance	
Chair	Sarah Ryan – Chair, ACT Bushfire Council
Attendees	Bhiamie Williamson-Member Tony Bartlett – Member Cathy Parsons – Member David Snell – Member Jeremy Watson – Member Kylie Coe – Member Georgeina Whelan – ESA Commissioner Rohan Scott – Chief Officer, ACT Rural Fire Service (ACTRFS) Matthew Mavity – A/g Chief Officer ACT Fire and Rescue (F&R) Daniel Iglesias - Executive Branch Manager, Parks and Conservation Service, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD)
Apologies	Natarsha Jakubaszek – Deputy Chair, ACT Bushfire Council Steve Angus – Member Nick Lhuede – Member Neil Cooper - Parks and Conservation Service, EPSDD
Guests	Scott Seymour – ACTESA Julian Seddon – EPSDD Adam Leavesley - EPSDD
Secretariat	Tara Bucknall – Executive Officer ESA Deputy Commissioner

Item	Topic	Action or Decision	Area Responsible	Due
1.	Welcome and Apologies			
	<p>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.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were noted from Steve Angus, Natarsha Jakubaszek, Nick Lhuede and Neil Cooper.</p>			
2.	Declaration of Interest			
	The Chair asked for any declaration of interest – Nil.			
3.	Progress report on monitoring fire risks and fuel mitigations on a tenure blind basis – presentation from RFS			
	<p>RFS provided a progress report on the ongoing work that is being undertaken to provide a single map / product that tracks fuel mitigation plans and their outcomes across the whole of the ACT on a tenure blind basis. This will be updated and refined in a planning day with stakeholders later in August. The Council requested that RFS provide a paragraph regarding this work for inclusion in the preparedness report. RFS also invited the relevant Council member to engage with Ailish Milner and Greg Potts should there be any further information required.</p>	<p>RFS to provide a summary paragraph of progress towards a tenure blind product that maps fuel risk and mitigation across the ACT, for inclusion in the Preparedness Report</p>	RFS	
4.	Review of Bushfire Management Zones – presentation from ESA			
	<p>ESA provided a presentation on the process undertaken for the Review and update of Bushfire Management Zones. There was discussion regarding some specific areas within the ACT and how they have been managed within the BMZ. ESA will share a link with the information available on the “Your Say” website.</p>	<p>Distribute the link to “Your Say” to Council members</p>	Secretariat	
5.	Presentation on the Burnability/ Prescribed Burn Map – presentation from EPSDD			
	<p>EPSDD provided a presentation on a flammability mapping they are developing to improve the planning of their BOP and to assess the effectiveness of the outcomes. There was discussion regarding the ability to include information about climate change. There was also discussion around its applicability to cultural burning and the protection of endangered species. There were also some questions about who else is undertaking this sort of management, planning and assessment.</p>	<p>EPSDD to provide some written material to the Council to support the presentation</p>	EPSDD	ASAP

6.	Discussion in response to questions on draft Conservation Research Report			
	Chair handed over to Tony Bartlett to lead the questions. It was acknowledged that the work in the report was excellent and that the key issue is that this information and the assessments are translated into policy. There were questions about the applicability of the research across nature reserves and parks within the ACT. There were also question about the varying classification and severity data and the differences across the different systems used.	EPSDD to provide written update on progress on the Regional Fire Management Plan.	EPSDD	ASAP
7.	2020-21 BOP Annual Report			
	EPSDD provided a verbal update on the 2020-2021 BOP report with the overall BOP being considered as 94% complete. There was a discussion around the draft BOP for 2021-21 BOP and potential impacts on any budget constraints. The key points for EPSDD over the last 12 months were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited access to seasonal workers, primarily due to COIVD restrictions, and wet weather • Focus over the next few years is to be in the N/NW area • Have commenced recruitment for seasonal workers and their fitness assessments for the coming bushfire season 	EPSDD to provide a written summary on the 2020-21 BOP for Council to consider in the preparation of their Preparedness Report.	EPSDD	ASAP
8.	Acceptance of Minutes			
	Minutes from July Meeting were accepted.			
9.	Correspondence for noting			
	NIL			
10.	Report on activities undertaken			
	Sarah and Cathy held a meeting with several staff of the Minister’s office about finalising the work of the current Council including the conduct of a meeting of Council members with the staff so that members can provide feedback on the working of Bushfire Council and make recommendations for the future.			
11.	Reports from SBMP Governance Committee			
	The Chair and CO RFS advised that the last Governance Committee meeting had not			

	occurred due to unavailability of members.			
12.	Officials Reports			
	<p>12.1 EPSDD had nothing additional to add after their verbal report associated with the BOP.</p> <p>12.2 The ESA Commissioner provided a verbal report with key items being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESA is currently finalising business cases and awaiting the outcome of budget allocations • ESA is heavily involved in provide support to the Whole of Government COVID response • Undertaking planning and other activities for the ESA preparedness cycle for this coming season <p>12.3 The CO RFS provide a verbal update as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFS is focusing on preparedness • Vehicle servicing is underway ahead of a possible high-risk weather season • The Divisional Commander, crew leaders and village firefighting courses have been completed • Recruitment for Director Operations position has been completed • A recruit course with 22 new recruits is full. There will be no more recruiting in the next 12 months due to a large waiting list. The focus will instead be on the development and training of current members • A Females Network has been initiated by female members within RFS to support and increase the female membership base • A new Leadership speaker series has been planned for presentation to senior members of RFS as a professional development activity and to enhance their leadership skills 	RFS to provide a link / copy of the Season Outlook when available	RFS	When available
13.	Review of Action items and adoption of action items from meeting			
	<p>Action items were reviewed and updated.</p> <p>Action items arising from meeting were confirmed.</p>			
14.	In Camera			

	The Chair closed the meeting for Officials and held in in camera meeting for members to discuss progress of their contributions to the the Council’s annual Bushfire Preparedness report.			
15.	Meeting closed 7. pm. Next meeting: Wednesday 1 September 4-7 pm			