



ACT Multi Hazard Advisory Council Minutes

Date: 1 November 2023

Time: 4 pm – 7 pm

Location: 220 London Circuit, Webex

Attendance	
Chair	Sally Troy – Chair, ACT Multi Hazards Advisory Council
Attendees	Dylan Kendall – Deputy Chair, ACT Multi Hazards Advisory Council Nina Allen – Member Tony Bartlett – Member (online) John Brickhill – Member Romeo Gaubert – Member Matthew Harper - Member Len Morris – Member Asha Naznin – Member (online and then in person from xx) Nicola Smillie – Member
Apologies	Wayne Phillips – Interim Commissioner Rohan Scott – Chief Officer, ACTRFS Marta Yebra – Member
Guests	John Wildermuth – Infrastructure Officer, EPSDD Matt Shonk – Superintendent, ACT Fire and Rescue Anthony Burton – Senior Director, Building Reform team, EPSDD Bren Burkevics – EGM, EPSDD
Secretariat	Lianna Luton – Executive Officer Judith Bielleman – HorizonOne Recruitment (Minute taking)

1. Welcome and Apologies

On behalf of the Council, the Chair acknowledged that they were meeting on the lands of the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people to discuss natural hazards for these lands. She paid respects to elders past, present and emerging and to everyone of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage.

The Chair also welcomed Mr Matthew Harper as a new member of the Council. Matthew runs a consulting company on crisis business continuity and emergency management in Canberra and also has previous experience in the ESA as Director, Emergency Management Operations.

2. Declarations of Interest

Mr Bren Burkevics noted that he previously worked with Mr Harper but that it should not inhibit the workings of the Council.

3. Acceptance of Minutes from 4 October 2023 meeting

The draft minutes were accepted with no amendments.



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4. Review of Council Action items

Council action items were reviewed and updated.

5. Correspondence for noting

The Chair outlined correspondence received by the Secretariat:

- Advice from the Territory Plan Section, EPSDD, with plans for the estate development and estate development applications for Denman Prospect.
- Advice from Stephen Alegria, EBM ACTPCS, on Progress against the BOP.
- Information from Mr Len Morris on the Australian Disaster Resilience Index resources

The Council noted the level of detail provided in the plans for Denman Prospect and thanked the Territory Plan section for their helpful information. Further questions were raised concerning the area, namely:

- Will the outer asset protection zones and the inner asset protection zones in Stage 7A and Stage 4 be managed to the standard required by the bushfire management plan or are more environmental assessments required?
- Is the stringybark forest in the outer asset protection zones thinned out to the level it was prior to the 2003 bushfire as required by the original development application?
- What is the plan for Stage 7B – is this being developed?
- Who is responsible for maintenance of the RFS fire trails. Does RFS cover these maintenance costs or is it TCCS's responsibility?
- Has ESA reviewed these plans and are they comfortable they meet the bushfire standards? Do the plans get successively evaluated in terms of fire risk by the ESA?
- How do the ongoing cost implications for the different edge roads get considered in the approval process? Is this the responsibility of the developer or PCS, and is the budget for fire protection factored into the cost of the original development?

Action: Responses to be sought from the Territory Plan section to the further questions raised by the Council.

Person responsible: Secretariat to seek information from relevant areas

Mr Matt Shonk confirmed the ESA and RFS are involved in discussions with developers and do raise issues around ongoing maintenance costs. Mr Bren Burkevics also provided additional information later in the meeting to advise that the PCS Fire Management Unit is working with the Office of the Nature Conservation and the Office of the Conservator to establish appropriate containment and strategies for fuel management that balance different requirements including ecological values. Containment management trails will require an environmental significance of opinion decision by the Conservator. Fuel management strategies are likely to consider selective thinning and the trial of candling on stringybark. Bluett's block is also listed in the BOP for this year for thinning and candling and this work will be subject to conservator approval.

Dr Bartlett noted the significant hazard posed by bushfires in the Denman Prospect area and requested confirmation that works conform to bushfire management standards. Mr Burkevics advised he could provide an update to the Council on the environmental requests when they come to him as Conservator.



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The Council also discussed the information from ACTPCS concerning progress against the BOP. The Council thanked Mr Alegria for the information but noted some questions have not received a response and that some claims around contractors are in conflict with information provided in verbal briefings. They also noted that the provision of consecutive information over a period of years is important to enable trends to be identified.

Action: Previous questions on the progress against the BOP to be resubmitted and a further response to be requested from PCS.

Person responsible: Secretariat

Mr Burkevics sought some advice from PCS during the course of the meeting and advised the Council that the information previously provided around contractors was only in relation to surge requirements. He confirmed there is considerable maintenance work to be done but that it is anticipated this will be completed by the end of November, pending certain areas in Namadgi drying out. He also advised that consideration was being given to insourcing road maintenance back into PCS. The Council thanked him for this information.

6. Presentation on Murrumbidgee Flood Scoping Study

The Chair welcomed Mr John Wildermuth to the meeting.

Mr Wildermuth provided a presentation on the preliminary scoping study undertaken in relation to the Murrumbidgee River. The study includes flood modelling and is part of a suite of studies being undertaken into the rivers in Canberra. The studies take around 12 months and are done on a ten year cycle. The last studies were done in 2016/17 but have been brought forward in response to floods in Queensland and NSW and to incorporate information from climate change studies. He outlined the history of previous flood events and the Annual Exceedance Probability for different areas of the river. He noted the significant issue for Uriarra crossing which has a 50% AEP. Other areas for the Murrumbidgee in the ACT are generally in the 1% AEP range.

The Council questioned whether changes in land use management affect flood extent and Mr Wildermuth noted that there can be impacts from developments. The Murrumbidgee flows through the western edge of Canberra and a study is being conducted into this area which may help estimate this impact. Studies are also being conducted on Tuggeranong Creek and Sullivan's Creek, and will shortly commence on Yarralumla and Weston Creeks too. The studies are also being undertaken now due to the receipt of a Commonwealth disaster ready fund grant.

Nina Allen questioned whether developments in Queanbeyan have affected Jerrabomberra Creek. Mr Wildermuth advised a study is not currently being conducted on this area, but that studies can assess how the river has changed since the last study. He advised he could seek more information on this from TCCS. He also confirmed that the modelling is based on historical rainfalls but that they also take into account projections for an increase in intensity and periodicity due to climate change.

The Council thanked Mr Wildermuth for his informative presentation.



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Action: Mr Wildermuth to seek advice from TCCS on the status of Jerrabomberra Creek.

Person responsible: Secretariat to follow up.

7. Ten-year pathway to Sustainable Climate-ready buildings for the ACT (EPSDD)

The Chair welcomed Dr Anthony Burton to the meeting.

Dr Burton outlined the program to commence a shift to world's best practice on climate ready and environmentally sustainable buildings in the ACT and the mechanisms for achieving this through building and construction codes. The current stage is based around developing a road map to determine what best practice is and the steps that can be taken to achieve this. An information gathering phase has been conducted to thematically analyse issues around workforce and industry, sourcing and supply chains, design and siting, building design and materials, construction techniques and waste management, how buildings are used, renovation and re-use of buildings, and demolition.

Dr Burton noted the program has a high level policy ambition to lead to a change in practice. The key objectives are based around circulatory economy practices and principles, including reducing operational waste through the life of the building, increasing renewable generation and using efficient technology. Buildings also need to withstand extreme weather events and protect occupants, ensure thermal comfort and reduce impacts on biodiversity. Dr Burton further explained that this is a large and complicated 10 year project to drive change across the sector. The roadmap will involve a series of objectives, outcomes and action stages, and by mid next year a position will be taken to Government on immediate actions.

The Council questioned whether the program would impact property prices in the ACT. Dr Burton advised a cost benefit analysis is being undertaken and that an underlying principle is to ensure there is no significant impact on people moving to more sustainable practices and that buildings are fit-for-purpose for the future. Concepts on smart design for smaller houses are also being considered and he noted the importance of educating the community and building the market for sustainable design. A new minimum star rating will soon be implemented, along with a whole of home score for energy usage of appliances. The Council also discussed the potential for a rating system to identify if buildings are resilient to natural hazards and the desirability of mechanisms to drive improvements in existing building stock.

Dr Burton advised he could provide a further briefing to the Council when there is a draft set of objectives and outcomes. The Chair welcomed further discussions and thanked him for the presentation.

Action: Secretariat to liaise with Dr Burton on timing for consideration of draft objectives and outcomes.

Person responsible: Secretariat

8. Discussion on paper relating to community resilience data

Mr Morris provided a presentation on data from the Australian Disaster Resilience Index. The ARDI provides scores for each suburb in the ACT based on factors that contribute to disaster resilience including social character, social and community engagement, governance and leadership, information access,



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community capital, emergency services, economic capital and planning and the built environment. He noted the ACT has the lowest median scores in the country in relation to information access and governance and leadership.

Mr Morris also provided further breakdowns of the data by different community factors, including people who do not speak English at home, people aged 15-24, people in rental tenancies, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people aged over 65, median household income and people with long term health conditions. He noted that, based on the data, there appears to be greater inequality in social capital in the ACT, with this trend exacerbated by the number of people in rental tenancies.

The Council discussed the data and whether there were statistical anomalies in the ACT. The Chair proposed a working group be established to explore the information further and to also gain a better understanding of how the data could be used. The working group will meet separately and share this with the broader group.

Action: Working group to be established to gain more understanding of the ADRI data and how it could be used.

Person responsible: Chair and John Brickhill, Asha Naznin, Matthew Harper

9. Discussion on MHAC Annual Report

The Chair advised she has drafted an Annual Report plan for this year which has been circulated to Council members. Council members were asked to send any edits to her, for finalisation at the next meeting.

Action: Council members to provide comments on the Annual Report plan to the Chair.

Person responsible: Council members

10. Council member updates

The Chair advised she met with the Interim Commissioner, Wayne Phillips, and would be having another meeting next week. A record from the meeting with Dr Sophie Lewis and Professor Jason Sharples will be circulated to members. She has also been in discussion with Lai Heng Foong, Head of the Emergency Department at South-Western Sydney Hospital and Chair of the ACEM Public Health and Disaster Committee who is very interested in working with the Council on heatwave education. The Chair also attended a meeting of the Governance Committee of the Strategic Bushfire Management v4 which included the bushfire pre-season information briefing presented at the last Council meeting.

11. Any other business and next meeting arrangements

The Chair advised that this would be Lianna's last meeting as she was taking up another position in ESA. She thanked Lianna for all the support she has provided the Council and her efficiency and competence in managing the secretariat functions, organising speakers and working with her on the program of work.

The next meeting will be held at the ESA Headquarters at Fairbairn. The meeting will include:



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- A discussion from SEMD on the grants management process.
- A discussion from SEMD on lessons management.
- A briefing on SBMPv5.
- Finalisation of the Annual report and a discussion on the broader work program for next year.

Lianna also advised the Council that the February 2024 meeting would be a full session focused on the SBMPv5 consultation.

12. Confirmation of Communique

The draft meeting communique was discussed and agreed:

On 1 November 2023, the ACT Multi-Hazard Advisory Council were provided a presentation on the Murrumbidgee Flood Scoping Study from a representative of the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, John Wildermuth. The Council were also provided a presentation on the Ten-Year Pathway to Sustainable Climate Ready Buildings for the ACT and the Council discussed the paper on the Australian Data Resilience Index.

13. Meeting Close

Next meeting 6 December 2023