



Minutes of Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting

Held on 10 April 2025 and commenced at 5:58pm

Held at the Donnybrook SES

(80 Bentley Street, Donnybrook WA 6239)

Authorised:

Nicholas O'Connor, Chief Executive Officer

Prepared:

16 April 2025

Disclaimer:

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Contents

1.	Declaration of Opening / Announcement of Visitors.....	3
2.	Attendance	3
2.1.	Apologies.....	4
3.	Declarations of Financial/Impartiality Interest.....	4
4.	Confirmation of Minutes – Previous Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting	4
4.1.	Bush Fire Advisory Committee Annual General Meeting held on 10 October 2024.....	4
5.	Confirmation of Minutes – Bush Fire Brigade Annual General Meetings	5
6.	Correspondence.....	5
6.1.	Ferndale-Stirling Park Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade	5
6.2.	ARC Infrastructure Rail Corridor Works	5
7.	Business Arising from Previous Meetings	6
8.	Endorsement of Nominated Fire Control Officers	7
9.1	Election of BFAC Office Bearers	12
10.	Reports.....	15
10.1.	Committee Members.....	15
10.2.	Staff.....	15
10.3.	Guests	15
11.	General Business.....	16
11.1.	Outstanding Incident Reports	17
11.2.	Local Governments Grants Scheme	17
11.3.	Structured Recruitment	18
11.4.	Fire Prevention Order	19
12.	Closure.....	21

1. Declaration of Opening / Announcement of Visitors

Acknowledgement of Country:

The Chairperson to acknowledge the continuing connection of Aboriginal people to Country, culture and community, including traditional custodians of this land, the Wardandi and Kaneang People of the Noongar Nation, paying respects to Elders, past and present.

The Chairperson to declare the meeting open at #pm and welcome the public gallery.

2. Attendance

Committee members

Chairperson & Upper Capel Bush Fire Brigade	Bevan Dix
Argyle Irishtown Bush Fire Brigade	Jayden Hitchcock
Balingup Bush Fire Brigade	Paul Davis
Beelerup Bush Fire Brigade	Stuart Simmonds
Donnybrook Town Bush Fire Brigade	David Tooke
Stirling Park Bush Fire Brigade	Max Walker
Ferndale Bush Fire Brigade	Jamie Thomson
Kirup Bush Fire Brigade	Chris Wringe
Lowden Bush Fire Brigade	Scott Bartholomew – (Proxy)
Mullalyup Bush Fire Brigade	Andrew Scott
Mumballup Bush Fire Brigade	Garry Hatch – (Proxy)
Munro Bush Fire Brigade	Tosh Thamo
Brookhampton Bush Fire Brigade	Tim McNab
Thomson Brook Bush Fire Brigade	Graham Foan
Elected Member	Cr Grant Patrick

Guests

Dept. Fire & Emergency Services	Chris Sousa
Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service	Jess Cooper
Forest Products Commission	Greg Hodgson, Bryce lastname
Dept. Biodiversity Conservation & Attractions	Steve Ward
SES Manager	Julie Carrick
Kirup Bush Fire Brigade	Mick Zwart
Donnybrook Town Bush Fire Brigade	Sue Tooke

Shire Staff

Community Emergency Services Manager	Conor McGregor
Chief Executive Officer	Nick O'Connor
Director Operations	Ross Marshall
Ranger	Ange Browne

2.1. Apologies

Mumballup Bush Fire Brigade	Brad Kettle – Nominated Garry Hatch as Proxy
Chief Executive Officer	Nick O'Connor
Lowden Bush Fire Brigade	Andrew Rohrbach, Michael Anderson – Nominated Scott Bartholomew as Proxy
Shire of Donnybrook Balingup & Deputy Chief	Ian Ralph – (Late apology)

3. Declarations of Financial/Impartiality Interest

Paul Davis (Shire employee and contractor), Scott Bartholomew (Contractor to Shire)

4. Confirmation of Minutes – Previous Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting

4.1. Bush Fire Advisory Committee Annual General Meeting held on 10 October 2024

Minutes of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting held 10 October 2024 are attached as Attachment 4.1 (1).

Officer Comment/Consultation

Nil.

MOVED BY: S Simmonds	SECONDED BY: T McNab
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That the Minutes from the Bush Fire Advisory Meeting held on 10 October 2024 be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

5. Confirmation of Minutes – Bush Fire Brigade Annual General Meetings

Pursuant to Section 3.9 of the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Bushfire Brigades Local Law, minutes of each of the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Bush Fire Brigade’s Annual General Meetings are attached in Attachments 5.1 (1)- 5.1(12) for BFAC noting.

Officer Comment/Consultation

Nil.

MOVED BY: B Dix	SECONDED BY: A Scott
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That the Bush Fire Advisory Committee receives the minutes of each of the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Bush Fire Brigade’s 2025 Annual General Meetings.

6. Correspondence

6.1. Ferndale-Stirling Park Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade

- Ferndale-Stirling Park Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade - Attachment 6.1(1)

CBFCO Max Walker - Advised FCO’s about emerging issue of HIP CAMPS,

Ross Marshall - Advised for any issues to be formally reported to the Shire, Shire will then follow up to confirm legal land use or request a DA, Shire to educate on liability and civil risks.

6.2. ARC Infrastructure Rail Corridor Works

- ARC letter of complaint of works - Attachment 6.2(1)

Conor McGregor - Advised of complaints received regarding mitigation works carried out by ARC within rail corridor.

Garry Hatch - Has spoken with Brian from ARC

Outcome - CESM to request a written plan from ARC, discuss with ARC about communicating their plans and consulting with the community.

7. Business Arising from Previous Meetings

Officer	Topic	Agreed Action	Outcome
CESM	Rail Corridor Maintenance	ARC to provide mitigation program to Shire once approval process complete.	Verbal update - Works commenced January 2025 within the rail corridor, several complaints received from residents – CESM to follow up with ARC for a formal plan of works and community consultation.
CESM	Poor WAERN Radio Reception	CESM to investigate grant funding to upgrade tower DO Nelson advised that fault reports need to be logged via CESM to DFES.	Ongoing. No suitable grant funding identified. Faults are being forwarded to DFES as they are received Chris Sousa advised to continue sending fault reports, DFES identifying new technology
All Brigades	Outstanding Fire reports	Brigade Leaders to complete and submit outstanding incident Fire Reports Upcoming training identified for direct uploading to DFES	Ongoing – CESM to provide information to brigades regarding training. Continue sending to reports@dfes.wa.gov.au and shire@donnybrook.wa.gov.au
Director Operations	40 kph speed zones	To discuss with Communications team and Local Police to push message.	Ongoing.
Director Operations	Asset Management Plan	Shire to develop asset management plan including BFB facilities	BFB's to document their needs/ challenges to be incorporated into plans.
CESM	Structured Recruitment	To review forms and "Application Pack"	Ongoing.

8. Endorsement of Nominated Fire Control Officers

Report Details:

Prepared by: Conor McGregor, Community Emergency Services Manager

Manager: Ross Marshall, Director Operations

Applicant: Shire of Donnybrook Balingup

Location: Shire of Donnybrook Balingup

File Reference: FRC 01, FRC 10A-FRC10L **Voting Requirement:** Simple Majority

Attachment(s):

5.1 (7) Lowden AGM, 5.1(9) Mumballup AGM

Executive Recommendation

That BFAC endorse the nominated Fire Control Officers listed for authorisation by the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup for the 2025/26 financial year and recommend.

That Council:

- 1. Endorse the following persons as Fire Control Officers for the period 30/06/2025 until 01/07/2026 pursuant to section 38 of the Bush Fires Act 1954, and the persons to be advertised in accordance with the Bush Fires Act 1954 subject to the following:**
 - 1.1 Each endorsed FCO having completed the DFES FCO training prior to the October BFAC meeting;**
 - 1.2 In the event that an FCO has not completed the training by the October BFAC meeting the brigade shall be requested to nominate an alternative member who has completed the FCO training for the remainder of the applicable period.**
- 2. Request that the Chief Executive Officer authorise the following persons as Fire Control Officers for their respective brigade areas under Section 38 of The Bush Fires Act 1956 delegation 3.1.8 *Appoint Bush Fire Control Officer/s and Fire Weather Officer.***

BRIGADE AREA	OFFICER
Argyle Irishtown	Mr Jayden Hitchcock
Balingup Town	Mr Paul Davis
Beelerup	My Stuart Simmonds
Donnybrook Town	Mr David Tooke
Ferndale/Stirling Park	Mr Jamie Thomson (Ferndale) Mr Max Walker (Stirling Park)
Kirup	Mr Chris Wringe
Lowden	Mr Michael Anderson Mr Andrew Rohrbach
Mullalyup	Mr Andrew Scott
Mumballup / Noggerup	Mr Garth Fitzpartick Mr Brendon Giudici
Thomson Brook	Mr Graham Foan (Thomson Brook) Mr Tim McNab (Brookhampton)
Munro	Mr Tas Thamo
Upper Capel	Mr Bevan Dix

Strategic Alignment

The following outcomes from the Council Plan relate to this proposal:

- Outcome:** 3 - The natural environment is well managed for the benefit of current and future generations.
- Objective:** 3.2 - Develop community readiness to cope with natural disasters and emergencies.
- Item:** 3.2.4 - Provide support for emergency services volunteers.

Executive Summary

The Authorisation of Fire Control Officers is made pursuant to Section 38 of the Bush Fires Act 1954.

Background

In Accordance with Sections 3.6 and 3.7 of the *Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Bushfire Brigades Local Law*, Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Bush Fire Brigades are to hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) during the month of March, where a person is to be nominated to the Bush Fire Advisory Committee (BFAC) for the position of Fire Control Officer (FCO) until the next AGM.

Endorsed nominations for FCO by the BFAC are then submitted to Council for consideration and further endorsement. Upon endorsement from Council, the Chief Executive Officer is then instructed to authorise the nominee for FCO under delegation 3.1.8 *Appoint Bush Fire Control Officer/s and Fire Weather Officer* and Section 3.11 of the *Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Bushfire Brigades Local Law*.

The following nominations for FCO have been received by the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup, for consideration of the BFAC in accordance with the *Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Bush Fire Brigades Local Law*:

BRIGADE AREA	OFFICER
Argyle Irishtown	Mr Jayden Hitchcock
Balingup Town	Mr Paul Davis
Beelerup	My Stuart Simmonds
Donnybrook Town	Mr David Tooke
Ferndale/Stirling Park	Mr Jamie Thomson (Ferndale) Mr Max Walker (Stirling Park)
Kirup	Mr Chris Wringe
Lowden	Mr Michael Anderson Mr Andrew Rohrbach
Mullalyup	Mr Andrew Scott
Mumballup / Noggerup	Mr Garth Fitzpatrick Mr Brendon Giudici
Thomson Brook	Mr Graham Foan (Thomson Brook) Mr Tim McNab (Brookhampton)
Munro	Mr Tas Thamo
Upper Capel	Mr Bevan Dix

The Shire of Donnybrook Balingup generally authorises one Fire Control Officer in a voluntary capacity per brigade area, with Shire staff such as Rangers and the Community Emergency Services Manager also authorised for the entire Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Local Government area. Shire Staff can assist Fire Control Officers by responding to incidents, issuing permits during periods of leave and providing general assistance and support.

- During the 24/25 period Lowden Bush Fire Brigade had two FCO's endorsed for their respective area, this was done on a trial basis. Again, at the Lowden BFB 2025 AGM the brigade voted in favour of nominating the two persons for the position of Fire Control Officer in a shared capacity. There has been no change to the persons nominated.
- At the Mumballup Bush Fire Brigade 2025 Annual General Meeting (AGM) the brigade voted in favour of nominating two persons for the position of Fire Control Officer in a shared capacity, subject to BFAC endorsement and Council approval.

The nominees for this proposal are:

- Brendon Giudici, proposed callsign Mumballup FCO 1
- Garth Fitzpatrick, proposed callsign Mumballup FCO 2

Both nominees hold the relevant experience and qualifications for the proposed joint FCO position as outlined in section 4.2.3 of the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade Operational Procedures.

Following the brigade's motion at the AGM, The Shire has spoken with the brigade Captain and existing FCO to provide rationale and support this proposal, being:

1. Succession Planning
2. Assist incumbent FCO
 - This proposal could provide more capacity within the Mumballup Bush Fire Brigade area whilst enabling both proposed Fire Control Officers an opportunity to achieve a more sustainable work/life balance that appropriately utilising their respective skillsets and experience.

Mumballup Bush Fire Brigade has also acknowledged that the proposed authorisation will not alter their current BFAC voting rights of 1 vote, as per the BFAC Terms of Reference.

Financial Implications

Nil

Policy Compliance

Fire Control Policy 8.2 – Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meetings

Statutory Compliance

Section 38, *Bush Fires Act 1954*

Section 3.6, *Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Bushfire Brigades Local Law*

Section 3.7, *Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Bushfire Brigades Local Law*

Section 3.11, *Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Bushfire Brigades Local Law*

Consultation

Lowden Bush Fire Brigade

Mumballup Bush Fire Brigade

Officer Comment/Conclusion

That BFAC endorse the nominated Fire Control Officers listed for authorisation by the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup for the 2025/26 financial year and recommend.

That Council:

1. Endorse the following persons as Fire Control Officers for the period 30/06/2025 until 01/07/2026 pursuant to section 38 of the Bush Fires Act 1954, and the persons to be advertised in accordance with the Bush Fires Act 1954 subject to the following:
 - 1.1 Each endorsed FCO having completed the DFES FCO training prior to the October BFAC meeting;
 - 1.2 In the event that an FCO has not completed the training by the October BFAC meeting the brigade shall be requested to nominate an alternative member who has completed the FCO training for the remainder of the applicable period.
2. Request that the Chief Executive Officer authorise the following persons as Fire Control Officers for their respective brigade areas under Section 38 of The Bush Fires Act 1956 delegation 3.1.8 *Appoint Bush Fire Control Officer/s and Fire Weather Officer.*

BRIGADE AREA	OFFICER
Argyle Irishtown	Mr Jayden Hitchcock
Balingup Town	Mr Paul Davis
Beelerup	My Stuart Simmonds
Donnybrook Town	Mr David Tooke
Ferndale/Stirling Park	Mr Jamie Thomson (Ferndale) Mr Max Walker (Stirling Park)
Kirup	Mr Chris Wringe
Lowden	Mr Michael Anderson Mr Andrew Rohrbach
Mullalyup	Mr Andrew Scott
Mumballup / Noggerup	Mr Garth Fitzpatrick Mr Brendon Giudici
Thomson Brook	Mr Graham Foan (Thomson Brook) Mr Tim McNab (Brookhampton)
Munro	Mr Tas Thamo
Upper Capel	Mr Bevan Dix

MOVED BY: D Tooke	SECONDED BY: T Thamo
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Financial Implications

Nil

Policy Compliance

Fire Control Policy 8.2 – Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meetings

Statutory Compliance

Section 38 (1) Bush Fires Act 1954

Section 67 Bush Fires Act 1954

Consultation

Nil

Nomination of Office Bearers of BFAC

The Chairperson to declare all positions vacant and hand meeting to the Director Operations.

Director Operations to call for nominations for Chairperson. If more than one nomination received private ballot to be held with Director Operations to then hand control of meeting to newly elected Chairperson.

OFFICE	NOMINATION	MOVED	SECONDED
CHAIRPERSON	Bevan DIX	Stuart SIMMONDS	Tosh THAMO

Chairperson to call for nominations for vacant positions. If more than one nomination received private ballot is to be held.

OFFICE	NOMINATION	MOVED	SECONDED
CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER	Max WALKER	Stuart SIMMONDS	Andrew SCOTT
1 st DEPUTY CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER	Bevan DIX	Stuart SIMMONDS	C WRINGE
2 nd DEPUTY CHIEF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICER	Tim MCNAB	Jamie Thomson	Bevan DIX
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER	Murray WEBB	Max WALKER	Bevan DIX
FIRE WEATHER OFFICER	Murray WEBB	Max WALKER	Bevan DIX

MOVED BY: B Dix	SECONDED BY: T Thamo
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That BFAC recommends Council:

- 1. Endorse the recommended office bearers of the Bush Fire Advisory Committee.**

10. Reports

10.1. Committee Members

1. Argyle/Irishtown Fire Control Officer
2. Balingup Fire Control Officer
3. Beelerup Fire Control Officer
4. Brookhampton Fire Control Officer
5. Donnybrook Town and Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
6. Ferndale/Stirling Park and Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
7. Kirup Fire Control Officer
8. Lowden Fire Control Officer
9. Mullalyup Fire Control Officer
10. Mumballup Fire Control Officer
11. Thomson Brook Fire Control Officer
12. Munro Fire Control Officer
13. Upper Capel Fire Control Officer
14. Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer
15. Elected Member – Cr G Patrick - (Verbal)
16. Chief Bush Fire Control Officer - (Verbal)

10.2. Staff

1. Ranger Report [Attachment 10.2\(1\)](#)
2. CESM Report (Jess) [Attachment 10.2\(2\)](#)
3. CESM Report (Conor) [Attachment 10.2\(3\)](#)
4. Director Operations (Rosco)
 - a. Update on Argyle Irishtown Bush Fire Brigade Facility
 - b. Discussion regarding Upper Capel Bush Fire Brigade Facility
 - c. Longterm asset management planning/ future needs (capital works)
 - d. Bulk fuel storage
 - e. Irishtown Bridge

10.3. Guests

1. DBCA
2. DFES
3. VFRS
4. FPC

11. General Business

Max Walker

- Permits to burn, FCO to use discretion permits may be issued from Monday 14th April excluding public holidays/long weekends and that permits holders light up after 4pm.

Tim McNab

- EmergencyWa app often advises faster than Comcen, should brigades prepare to go on standby? Advised to assess the information i.e. DBCA Tenure and consider the need to activate crews to standby.

Bevan Dix

- Question to Shire regarding after hours issues when equipment will be needed i.e. loader to clear road, Response (Rosco) Yes there is an afterhours on call roster for response, the Shire is also looking into contractors to cover availability shortfalls.
- Behavior on the fire ground, recently a complaint was received regarding inappropriate behavior being witnessed by the public from crews relating to a vehicle approaching at speed to fire tenders, there was insufficient information to determine who was/is responsible but a reminder that we do represent the Shire and DFES and that inappropriate behavior is not acceptable.

11.1. Outstanding Incident Reports

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services has provided data to the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup outlining the number of outstanding incident reports by brigade for the past two financial years.

It is requested that brigades refer to the table below and complete their outstanding reports by 30 June 2025.

A full list of incident details such as dates, brief incident description and incident numbers can be obtained upon request from the Shire’s Community Emergency Services Manager.

Brigade	Number of Reports Outstanding as at 31 st December 2024
Argyle Irishtown	2
Balingup	8
Beelerup	6
Donnybrook Town	0
Ferndale Stirling Park	4
Kirup	4
Lowden	15
Mullalyup	2
Mumballup	4
Munro	16
Thomsons Brook	14
Upper Capel	2

11.2. Local Governments Grants Scheme

As at 24/3/2025, a summary of LGGs Grant expenditure for the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup is as follows:

Expenditure Category	Amount
Purchase Plant & Equipment <\$1,000 per item	\$ 3,098.81
Maintenance of Plant & Equipment	\$ 496.54
Vehicle Maintenance	\$ 67,262.66
Maintenance of Land & Buildings	\$ 4,349.68
Clothing & Accessories	\$ 23,648.25
Utilities, Rates & Taxes	\$ 10,681.38
Other Goods & Services	\$ 25,961.44
Insurance	\$ 121,451.85
Total	\$ 256,950.61
Amount Overspent	\$ 28,077.64

Based on the figures provided above and that the operating grant is overspent, any non-essential purchasing will be deferred until the 2026/27 financial year.

11.3. Structured Recruitment

The Shire has moved to Structured recruitment as outlined in [Attachment 11.3\(1\)](#)

Applications will only be accepted between the months of April until July.

Applications with missing information or submitted on the incorrect forms will not be accepted.

Applications will be processed as listed below:

1. Volunteer completes 'Application to join a Bush Fire Brigade Form'
2. Brigade Leader completes induction and 'Volunteer induction Checklist'
3. Volunteer either provides Police Clearance or gives the shire permission to initiate alternate process through partnership with WA Police and Australia Post.
4. The above documentation is then submitted to the CESM for processing and submission to DFES. April-July annually.
5. DFES ID number issued (1-2 weeks), access to Volunteer Hub & eAcademy granted
6. Volunteer eligible to nominate for:
 - a. AIIMS Awareness (online)
 - b. Bushfire Safety Awareness
 - c. Firefighting Skills
7. The volunteer is now a Firefighter and eligible for new PPC

11.4. Fire Prevention Order

Report Details:

Prepared by: Conor McGregor, Community Emergency Services Manager

Manager: Ross Marshall, Director Operations

Applicant: Shire of Donnybrook Balingup

Location: Shire of Donnybrook Balingup

File Reference: FRC 01, FRC 04 **Voting Requirement:** Simple Majority

Attachment(s):

11.4(1) Draft Fire Prevention Order

Executive Recommendation

That BFAC recommends Council:

- 1 Endorse the 2025/26 Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Fire Prevention Order as drafted by Community Emergency Services Manager.**
- 2 Requests that the Chief Executive Officer facilitate the production and distribution of the 2025/26 Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Fire Prevention Order in accordance with Section 33 of the Bush Fires Act 1956.**

Strategic Alignment

The following outcomes from the Council Plan relate to this proposal:

- Outcome:** 3 - The natural environment is well managed for the benefit of current and future generations.
- Objective:** 3.2 - Develop community readiness to cope with natural disasters and emergencies.
- Item:** 3.2.4 - Provide support for emergency services volunteers.

Executive Summary

The Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Fire Prevention order is a notice that is produced and distributed in accordance with Section 33 of the *Bush Fires Act 1954* and is presented for BFAC endorsement (Attachment 11.4(1)).

Background

The Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Fire Prevention Order determines the fire prevention requirements of owners or occupiers within the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup, such as the installation of firebreaks or the removal of flammable materials that may contribute to the spread of fire.

The Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Fire Prevention Order is included with the annual rates notice, which is distributed via post to all ratepayers within the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup. This notice is also available to all residents via advertising in the Preston Press and is published on the Shire website.

Each year, the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Bush Fire Advisory Committee is provided an opportunity to review the requirements contained within the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Fire Prevention Order. Other updates such as dates and contact names are performed by the Shire's Community Emergency Services Manager and Ranger Services.

During the 2025 review conducted by the community Emergency Services Manager the following Grammar and wording changes are recommended these are highlighted in [Attachment 11.4\(1\)](#)

Financial Implications

The total cost of the production and distribution for the 2024/25 Fire Break Order was \$3,668.50

Policy Compliance

Nil

Statutory Compliance

Section 33, Bush Fires Act 1954

Section 67 Bush Fires Act 1954

Consultation

Shire of Donnybrook Balingup BFAC

Ranger Services

Officer Comment/Conclusion

It is recommended that the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Fire Prevention Order is updated as follows:

- Page 4. S 2. Eucalyptus and Pine Plantation b.
 - Change current wording "Eucalyptus and Pine Plantation b. "Not less than 10m in width along those portions of plantation which enjoy a common boundary with a road reserve". to "Not less than 10m in width along portions of plantation which adjoin a road reserve."

MOVED BY: C Wringe	SECONDED BY: T Thamo
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That BFAC recommends Council:

- 1. Endorse the 2025/26 Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Fire Prevention Order as drafted by Community Emergency Services Manager.**
- 2. Requests that the Chief Executive Officer facilitate the production and distribution of the 2025/26 Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Fire Prevention Order in accordance with Section 33 of the Bush Fires Act 1956.**

12. Closure

The Chairperson to advise that the next Bush Fire Advisory Committee Meeting will be advised.

The Chairperson to declare the meeting closed at 21:22PM.