

COMMUNIQUE

The State Bushfire Advisory Council (SBAC) met at the Department of Fire and Emergency Services Emergency Services Complex in Cockburn, on the 8 March 2024, for the first meeting of 2024.

Wooroloo Bushfire Independent Review Recommendations Implementation

The SBAC noted the release of the third edition of the public reporting document, released on 7 February. The report resides with the Wooroloo Independent Review on the government webpage at [WA Government website](#).

The SBAC received briefings from project leads on the progress of recommendations 3 and 7.

The SBAC were briefed on the closures of recommendations 3, 4, 5 and 12.

Recommendation 3: DFES to continue development of the bushfire risk planning framework and guidelines to allow implementation, coordination, and prioritisation of cross tenure Bushfire Risk Management Plans across WA local governments.

Recommendation 4: DFES in collaboration with local government should consider the establishment of dedicated bush fire mitigation crews to work with local Bush Fire Brigades in implementing the Bushfire Risk Management Plan activities in the identified high-risk bush fire prone areas (e.g. Perth Hills) of the State.

Recommendation 5: Any determination that the FES Commissioner as the Hazard Management Authority (Bushfire) makes in respect of construction standards or subdivision developments, regarding requirements such as Asset Protection Zones, Bushfire Attack Levels etc. should be upheld by the consent authority.

Recommendation 12: DFES should continue improvements to the warnings platform to develop more timely and tailored information for all communities, including a focus on mapping for community, the content of messages and transition between warning levels.

The SBAC endorsed the closure of all four recommendations.

More information on the Implementation of the Review recommendations can be obtained from the updated public reports or by emailing RuralFire@dfes.wa.gov.au

Places of Last Resort (PLR)

The SBAC received an update on the progress of the work completed to date including:

DFES has committed to development of a state level position statement and guidelines/toolkit in relation to NPLR – this will be done in collaboration with other stakeholders.

A paper is being developed, summarising internal working group findings and legal position(s) (Autumn 2024)

Guidance to be developed in collaboration with key stakeholders, investigate pilot exercises. (Draft – 2024/2025).

Awaiting SSO consultation and confirmation on legislative anomalies, a more detailed update will be available at the June meeting.

SBAC noted the progress of work and complexities with this project.

SBAC Planning – SBAC Priorities 2024

The annual SBAC planning session was held as part of the March 2024 meeting. The aim of this session was to discuss and agree work priorities for SBAC for 2024. This activity is in accordance with the Governance Manual for WA Government Boards and Committees, which recommends that time is set aside each year to develop strategy and assess the strategic environment (Actioning Principle 3).

Members broke into small groups to review the 2023 Ministerial Statement of Expectations, and the register of Future Agenda Items, and then reconvened to discuss and agree outcomes.

As part of the planning session, members agreed to the following:

- The establishment of an ad hoc working group tasked with identifying and recommending a subset of work priorities to present to broader SBAC for consideration at the Q1 meeting each year. Membership of the working group will be finalised at the December meeting of the SBAC, and the pre-work will be undertaken during January and February, each year;
- Invite organisations that are identified in the annual Fuel Management Activities Report, undertaken by the DFES Office of Bushfire Risk Management, to present to the SBAC on their activities. These briefing sessions will be aligned to the meeting schedule of SBAC.
- Retain SBAC's focus on the four immediate priorities identified in the 2023 Ministerial Statement of Expectations:
 - o Facilitate constructive consultation on the Consolidated Emergency Services Bill;
 - o Ensure the implementation of the recommendations of the Wooroloo Review;
 - o Simplify Land Use Planning Guidelines and mapping of Bushfire Prone Areas; and
 - o Develop guidelines for Places of Last Resort in Bushfire Prone Areas.
- Undertake other required updates to the register of Future Agenda Items to: remove items that have been completed/identified as out-of-scope; combine items that overlap; and add new items on carbon farming, and mining industry.

The next SBAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 5th June 2024.

For SBAC related information or enquiries, please email RuralFire@dfes.wa.gov.au