

COMMUNIQUE

The State Bushfire Advisory Council (SBAC) convened its third meeting of 2026 on Thursday, 3 September 2026, at the DFES Bushfire Centre of Excellence. The meeting provided an opportunity for members to consider key priorities in the bushfire sector, receive updates on current and emerging issues, and discuss matters relevant to improving bushfire risk management, preparedness, and resilience across Western Australia.

Leadership transition

SBAC acknowledged the contribution of outgoing Chair Murray Carter and welcomed Allyson Lardner as the incoming Chair in her role as Executive Director, Rural Fire Division. Members also welcomed Deputy Commissioner Operations Jon Broomhall to the Council. The transition provides continuity for SBAC's strategic advisory role and ongoing engagement across the bushfire sector.

Regional telecommunications and resilience

Members received an update on regional telecommunications, including the importance of layered communication solutions across radio, telephone, satellite and digital platforms. Discussion highlighted the distinction between public warning systems and operational communications for responders, and noted the ongoing role of Emergency WA, Next Generation Emergency WA, the Public Safety Network and Public Safety Mobile Broadband in supporting improved information sharing and emergency response capability.

Cultural fire and land management

SBAC considered a discussion paper on enabling cultural fire strategies in Western Australia. Members discussed the increasing role of Aboriginal ranger groups and land managers in cultural fire and broader land management activities, along with barriers relating to training and capability, public liability and insurance, legislative settings, funding constraints and the need for clearer enabling frameworks.

Bushfire risk intelligence and digital innovation

SBAC received a presentation on transforming bushfire risk intelligence through digital innovation and collaborative design. Members noted improvements to Bushfire Prone Area mapping, including enhanced functionality for reporting, validation, and assessment of changes in land use and risk. The updated approach was recognised as an important step in improving transparency, consistency and collaboration with local governments.

The next SBAC quarterly meeting is scheduled for **December 2026**.

For further information, please contact: RFDCcommittees@dfes.wa.gov.au