

YASS RIVER-NANIMA VOLUNTEER BUSH FIRE BRIGADE

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD

AT 7PM ON THURSDAY 5 APRIL 2018

1. Opening and Apologies.

The meeting started at 1905.

The following members were present: Peter Clark (President), Stu Burrows (Captain), Tim Scully (Secretary), Gareth Ellem, Dave Morton, Neville McMartin, Scott Burrows, Rick Mumberson, Sonia Slattery and Sally Kaufmann.

Apologies were accepted from the Treasurer, Joanne Reid, and Catering Officer, Judy Hancock. Dave Morton excused himself early from the meeting.

2. Acceptance of the minutes of the 3 October 2017 Executive Committee Meeting.

The Committee acknowledged that, due to a major IT failure, the minutes of the previous meeting were not available.

3. Matters arising from the previous meeting.

See List of Actions at Attachment 1.

4. Captain's Report.

The Captain's report was accepted by the Committee as proposed by Neville and seconded by Gareth. Stu's report is as follows:

As I submit this report the fire season has officially ended however we all need to be vigilant due to the dry conditions we still face until the rain comes and the cooler conditions commence.

During the fire season we have attended three fire callouts and stood up crews ready to deploy on numerous occasions. We deployed crews to Goulburn, Galong, Kangiara and within our own area being a power pole on Rick Mumberson's property. When deploying our people some have missed their allocated trucks through no fault of theirs and we have learnt how to manage our people better.

Unfortunately, during our major deployments, I was interstate due to family issues and my thanks goes to Gareth and Neville for stepping up and organising the brigade and the members. The brigade is always in good and safe hands due to our dedicated people.

We celebrated our 60th anniversary as a brigade with a dinner and what a success the night was. Everyone who attended was treated to fabulous night with good food, wines and entertainment and once again thank you to the organising committee, helpers and all our wonderful sponsors.

Further we have had another successful year raising funds for the brigade from the Murrumbateman Field Day. Another big thank you to the organising committee and all the members who dedicated their time to this community event.

A very special thank you to Kane Fillingham who once again organised fund raising for the brigade via the Bunnings sausage sizzle and his marathon effort running through the Blue Mountains – Kane you are an absolute champion.

We have been using the BART system for the members availability and callouts. From the majority of users, it seems to be the system for us and I'm sure with further time and use we will get the best out of the system.

Members have been undergoing training courses and I will leave those results to the training officer. Our pathway program is progressing with the members at the half way point. I see this as a viable and appropriate system to developing our Field Officers for the future of the brigade. I encourage members who are interested in this program to speak with the training officer.

It appears we will have to instigate a new constitution and from all accounts from Tim this should not be too difficult. I have no doubt we will have teething problems but so will all brigades in NSW as this has to be adopted by all.

The extension of the shed is progressing while slow due to no fault of ours. The wheels of government turn slowly, but it is moving and we may see work started/completed by the next fire season.

As I end this report I would like to mention my thanks and gratitude to all the executive and the members of the brigade for their tireless dedication to their community and others in their times of need during the last fire season.

5. **Treasurer's Report.**

The Secretary presented the Treasurer's report on her behalf. The report was accepted by the Committee as proposed by Rick and seconded by Scott. The report is as follows:

The Brigade's accounts for 2017-18 are in draft form; however, at this stage the following points are noted:

- The Brigade will record a surplus of around \$4,000
- The surplus can largely be attributed to the two special fundraising events held this year, being the Bunnings sausage sizzle and Kane Fillingham's fun run. Each event returned a net amount of around \$1,700 to the Brigade
- Tax deductible donations were up almost \$1,000 on last year's result
- The 60th anniversary dinner was held at a net cost to the Brigade of around \$900
- The main expense items were works carried out on the Cat 1, dash cams, BART licences and the purchase of the honour board
- At the end of the year the Brigade had combined funds (including the term deposit) of around \$27,000

The Secretary asked the Catering Officer, Sally, a question about expenditure on catering for training nights, which was satisfactorily answered.

The Secretary noted that reimbursements related to Brigade expenditure should be made promptly.

6. **Training Officer's Report.**

The Training Officer's report was accepted by the Committee as proposed by Tim and seconded by Broni. Gareth's report is as follows:

OVERVIEW

Since the last committee meeting we have continued with our monthly training with an emphasis on the basics of fire fighting, teamwork, and awareness of the unfolding situations around us.

While the actual fire fighting and deployment activities have been excellent with good reports from Group and Paid RFS staff, overall attendance has been trending downward in recent months and we should examine some of the reasons and remedies for this.

FOCUS

We have taken to identifying training needs based on what we see during real fire events – such as radios and situational awareness; navigation without GPS; changing mode of activity and responding to changing external factors. As witnessed at both the fires and at the last training, we are getting better and better.

The crews are taking the training on board and we have discovered how good we are at real hot-fire situations. We have discovered a need for patience and working to a plan.

Reasons and Remedies for Attendance Drops

One of the key factors in declining attendance is that there is a bit of sameness creeping into our training activities. Factors impacting are:

A need for change to the training team. We have had the same Training Officer since 2011 and in my opinion it is time for new ideas and approaches to reinvigorate our training activities;

We need to have a greater engagement with our neighbouring brigades and introduce a greater emphasis on effective command and control;

We need to empower our AF qualified members to play a greater role in operational training as the key interface between the field officers and the BF members;

The Pathway Program members have shown an aptitude during training activities. This should be encouraged and enhanced;

Training nights should be complimented by a couple of weekend daylight activities – navigation, hot-fire etc. – to supply more hands-on skill work.

PATHWAY PROGRAM UPDATE

As at the May Training, the Program will have hit its halfway point. As with all pilot programs progress has been a little slower than hoped due to a time-lag in preparation on the part of the Training Officer and insufficient management of expectation. However, it has gained momentum and the participants are transitioning into useful and effective crew leaders.

The participants will undertake the mid-program assessment with the Captain and Training Officer in the weeks following May Training.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Kylie Eggins will conduct April Training. This is the surprise mentioned in previous weeks communiqués and is part of the strategy to introduce new methods and ideas.

May Training will be a joint exercise with neighbouring brigades (Murrumbateman, Springfield, and Back Creek) being conducted at a location remote from the fire shed involving a simulated MVA evolving into a grass fire, HAZMAT and search and rescue. We will be using two or three CPR dummies, the training defibrillators, 2–3 cars and a tractor. This training will also form several modules of the pathway program.

We have encouraged our members to update their qualifications and attend the upcoming FAA and ART courses on 5th of May. We will also be sending attendees to the RFD and VF courses.

We need to start promoting the annual Gunning Zone training exercise. Last years was quite successful and had learning experiences for all members.

7. Equipment Officer's Report.

The Equipment Officer's report was accepted by the Committee as proposed by Gareth and seconded by Scott. Neville's report is as follows:

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM THE MINUTES

- Hose drying rack, [Part of the extension]
- Quickfill modifications including a replacement pump and trailer (sometime this year).

ROUTINE MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS

- Replaced Cat 9 pressure gauge
- Cat 9 cold starting issues [Fitted parallel battery leads and 350-amp solenoid on the isolator]
- 4 x new drip torch wands
- Cat 2 pump exhaust rain cap
- Handheld radios were purchased for Capt and Senior Deputy Captain
- 4 x Dash cams fitted to vehicles
- Reprogrammed a handheld radio for Field Ops
- Insect zapper for the station
- Safety vests for each truck for highway work
- Cat 1; repaired AC, replaced clutch master and slave cylinder
- Cat 1 pump motor; repaired hard starting, hopefully!
- 150 PSI compressor for recharging foam extinguishers
- Shed progress.

Neville also noted that rather than modifying the existing quickfill trailer, it would be more effective to build a new one.

ACTION: Neville will lead a working group to build a new quick fill.

8. Workplace, Health and Safety Officer's Report.

The WHS officer had no matters to report but noted that evacuation of the shed should be exercised during training this year.

The Committee accepted the report as proposed by Stu and seconded by Neville.

ACTION: Sonia to coordinate evacuation training with the Training Officer.

9. Catering Officer's Report.

The Committee accepted the Catering Officer's as proposed by Neville and seconded by Stu. The report is as follows:

This has been a quiet fire season in terms of catering. There has been no catering beyond planned brigade events: no catering for fires in our area, no call to assist at fires in other areas.

The catering support team is taking a much bigger role in catering at training, with consequential improvements and variety in the menu, which appears to be appreciated.

The cost per head has been unchanged since a regular monthly training night was adopted some years ago, that is, \$1.50-\$2.50 per expected person at training. This also covers the cost of routine kitchen incidentals and maintains some frozen food in the freezer that is immediately available for an initial response to a fire. The fact that the amount has not increased possibly represents a reduction in costs over time, probably as we have become more confident of attendance numbers, more efficient at shopping,

and more effective at organising and managing the food across the season and through the freezer, minimising wastage.

The clock on the wall above the sink was a gift from Jo Bryant, one of the catering support team.

10. **Membership Report (See attachment to Agenda email).**

Tim stated that the Brigade Register was up-to-date but invited any comments or correction to be passed to him.

11. **Other Business.**

a. BART Trial Feedback and Review (Neville, Tim).

The BART trial was successful. We need to train to use it more effectively.

ACTION: Sub-committee led by Dave with Neville and Tim to examine BART to improve the Brigade's use of it before the next season.

The Committee accepted a proposal by Tim, seconded by Peter, to adopt BART as the Brigade's operational callout tool.

b. Discussion on new RFS Brigade Constitution and Brigade Rules (Tim).

Tim presented the requirements of the Brigade to adopt the new RFS Brigade Constitution and Brigade Rules.

ACTION: Tim is to prepare the presentation of the Constitution and Rules for the upcoming AGM.

c. Upcoming Training Strategy (Gareth).

Gareth prepared a Training Strategy for the Brigade that was presented to Committee members out of session. The strategy was considered to be an excellent document that would help develop focussed training for the Brigade.

d. Community Engagement Officer.

Broni briefed the Committee on the role and functions of the Community Engagement Officers (CEG) established by the RFS.

Stu would like the Brigade to have a media officer for the Brigade, which would combine the functions of the CEG and the media officer. The new role would not be a member of the Executive Committee but would report to the President and Captain.

A suggestion was made to nominate Judy at AGM for Community Engagement Officer.

ACTION: Broni to get CEG duty statement, adapt with media tasks. Tim to add media role tasks.

ACTION: Tim to ask Judy (absent) if she would consider the role.

e. Proposal to Purchase Chainsaw for Cat 1 (Neville).

Neville briefed the Committee on the need for a new chainsaw. The Committee agreed to Gareth's proposal (seconded by Dave) to purchase a Stihl MS281 chainsaw and associated accessories at a cost of approximately \$1300

ACTION: Neville to purchase the chainsaw with advice from Dave.

f. RFSA Submission on Amalgamation (Tim).

Tim briefed the Committee on calls for submission from RFS members on the amalgamation of the various fire fighting organisation in NSW. Given the political nature of the matter, Tim recommended, and the Committee agree, that the Brigade not make a submission at this stage.

g. RFSA Grant for Telstra repeater vs kitchen equipment.

Neville raised the matter of purchasing a Telstra repeater to improve mobile communication reception at the shed. We need to know if such equipment can be purchased under an RFSA grant.

ACTION: Tim to check if an RFSA grant can be used for this.

h. Condition of "Khyber Pass".

Neville raised the problem of the of the state "Khyber Pass", i.e. Boucher's Lane, and whether we should consider grading it. Rick stated that it needs to be done properly as grading alone will not be effective. An immediate solution to this problem was not further discussed at the meeting.

12. **Closure.**

Peter declared the meeting closed at 2110.



Tim Scully
Secretary

6 May 2018

Attachment:

1. List of Actions.

List of Actions

Number	Action	Details	Responsible Executive	Status
Jun 14-02	Assess “Fair Air, Fire Masks	<p>Gather feedback on fire masks functionality from members trialling the masks during next fire season. Ask active members to use the masks and provide feedback.</p> <p>Purchase 20 masks for Captain to hand out.</p> <p>UPDATE: Gareth noted they are not good for members with beards.</p> <p>ACTION: Tim to take on all actions.</p>	Tim Scully	Open
Feb 16-4	Shed Extension	<p>Develop a plan for a shed extension, including remedial action on the mezzanine floor, to be completed by the Brigade’s 50th anniversary.</p> <p>UPDATE: Survey plan was provided to Warrumbui for its board’s consideration. (Objective 1: 4m on west end of shed. Objective 2: Mezzanine and other works).</p> <p>Neville proposed that a quote from Rapley’s was assessed by the Committee to be reasonable based on the fact that Rapley’s built the original shed using its proprietary structural design and, according to experienced members of the Executive Committee, the price quoted was fair. It was proposed that other quotes would not be required. Acceptance of a quote from <i>Jasique Building</i> for construction was also proposed. Accepted.</p> <p>Neville’s proposal was seconded by Judy and accepted by the Committee.</p> <p>Rick abstained from voting.</p> <p>ACTION: Rick to follow up with Rapley’s when he hears from Warrumbui.</p> <p>ACTION: Peter to send a letter of appreciation to the surveyors for their work on the shed site. Neville is to include them on the web site.</p> <p>UPDATE: Awaiting DA approval. Peter Alley said Brent Scanes Yass Council has several questions about</p>	Peter Clark, Stu Burrows Neville McMartin Rick Mumberson	Open

List of Actions

		<p>the shed. Peter Clark responded to Scanes' questions. (see email from Scanes). Scanes said the Council's electronic system meant they had not held a copy of the hard copy plans given to the Council. Rick said the problem is the internal layout of the shed is not on the original plan and approved previously as a three-bay shed.</p> <p>ACTION: Peter to continue to pursue Council.</p>		
Jun 17-1	Seek RFS Grant for Kitchen Equipment	<p>An RFS Grant is to be sought for a stove and microwave for the kitchen.</p> <p>Sally will provide Tim with equipment details in order to submit the grant request.</p> <p>UPDATE: awaiting equipment details.</p>	Sally Tim	Open
Apr 18-1	Quickfill Trailer	Build a new quickfill trailer.	Neville	Open
Apr 18-2	Shed Evacuation Training	Coordinate evacuation training with the Training Officer.	Sonia	Open
Apr 18-3	BART Improvements	Examine use of BART to improve its use by the Brigade before next season.	Dave (Lead) Neville Tim	Open
Apr 18-4	New RFS Constitution	Prepare presentation of new RFS Brigade Constitution and Brigade Rules for AGM 2018	Tim	Open
Apr 18-5	Media Officer Role	Develop a duty statement for the media officer using existing Community Engagement Officer functions and combine with Brigade media tasks.	Broni Tim	Open
Apr 18-6	Chainsaw	Purchase a Stihl MS281 chainsaw and associated accessories at a cost of approximately \$1300.	Neville Dave	Open