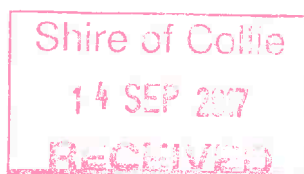




Government of Western Australia
Department of Fire & Emergency Services



Our Ref: 18003-10; 17/157042
Your Ref:



Mr David Blurton
Chief Executive Officer
Shire of Collie
87 Throssell Street
COLLIE WA 6225

Dear Mr Blurton

COUNCIL ENDORSEMENT OF THE BUSHFIRE RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN AND FUTURE SUPPORT FOR THE SHIRE OF COLLIE

I am writing to clarify several issues the Shire of Collie's Council have raised in adopting the draft Bushfire Risk Management (BRM) Plan.

The Office of Bushfire Risk Management (OBRM) has provided the Shire with feedback on the BRM Plan and has confirmed the issues that need to be addressed in order for it to be compliant with the Bushfire Risk Management Planning (BRMP) Guidelines. These issues include references to the reliance on State funding to implement the BRM Plan, undertake mitigation works and provide continued funding for a local government (LG) Bushfire Risk Planning Coordinator.


The BRMP program is making significant progress across Western Australia, with twelve LG Councils having currently endorsed their BRM Plan. Adoption of the plan does not waive or increase a LG's liability or obligations under the existing legislation and policies. This includes implementing treatment activities, where the LG is the land owner or land manager and has responsibility to mitigate the bushfire risk on their tenure. To support the mitigation of bushfire risk the State Government, through the State Bushfire Coordinating Committee, is developing criteria for managing and distributing the State-wide Mitigation Activity Fund (MAF). Further information regarding the MAF is anticipated to be published in 2017, although it is expected that a Council endorsed BRM Plan will support a local government's application for future mitigation funding.

The *Bush Fires Act 1954* does not bind the Crown, as such LGs cannot require State Government agencies to undertake treatment activities. However, a Shire's Bushfire Risk Planning Coordinator and DFES' Bushfire Risk Management Officer will advise the relevant State Government agencies of their bushfire risk within the Shire and will work with the agencies to mitigate their bushfire risk. Since implementing the BRMP program, DFES has not had any issues with State Government agencies undertaking treatment activities for bushfire risks on their tenure.


The BRMP program has supported the Shire of Collie, through dedicated resources, since 2014. To ensure other Western Australian communities benefit from the program DFES has decided to conclude the current contract arrangements with the Shire of Collie, as per the 2017 Interim BRMP Grant Agreement, in late September 2017. Subject to government funding the BRMP resources will be allocated to an alternative LG. Future support in the implementation of the BRM Plan may be renegotiated should OBRM and the Shire's Council approve the plan.

If you have any questions in relation to this advice please contact Mark Bowen, Superintendent Bushfire Risk Management, on (08) 9395 9322.

Yours sincerely



WAYNE GREGSON APM
COMMISSIONER



September 2017