

**Minutes of Committee Meeting****Ian's House, Banjup****12 April 2011 at 6:30 pm****Present:**

Ian Thurston	Coco Franklin	Neil Raine
Neil Cunliffe-Williams	Ken Mellor	Jim Wilson
Tina Klimaitis (part time)		

**Guests:**

Glenn Bebbington	) Jandakot Volunteer Bushfire Brigade
Mal Dobson	)

<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Minute</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.	<b>Emergency Meeting</b>	
1.1	<p>Ian welcomed the guests and explained that this was an emergency meeting to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to proceed with residents' objection to Cockburn's fire permit policy; and</li> <li>• how the BRG could support the Jandakot Volunteer Bushfire Brigade in its campaign for the bulk water tanker not to be relocated.</li> </ul>	
2.	<b>Briefing by Jandakot Volunteer Bushfire Brigade Representatives</b>	
2.1	The letter from the FESA CEO to the BRG was the first that the Brigade heard of the imminent relocation of the bulk water tanker to the combined Coogee and Jandakot facility at Poletti Road.	
2.2	Brigade members are incensed that FESA officers and some at Cockburn Council have known about the relocation for some time but had not informed the Brigade.	
2.3	The Brigade has written to every Cockburn Councillor to express very strongly their concerns about the relocation. Many Councillors have replied that they fully support the Brigade in its efforts to prevent the relocation. Apparently, at the upcoming AGM of the Brigade, Cllr Whitfield will support a motion of no confidence in Cockburn's Chief Bushfire Control Officer, Don Johnston.	

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2.4	The bulk water tanker is used to bring 12,000 litres of water to volunteer fire-fighters combating a bush fire. If the water is not readily available, then the volunteers' ability to contain a fire is seriously compromised and the risk of the fire getting out of control is greatly magnified, putting Banjup lives and property in jeopardy.	
2.5	Currently, the bulk water tanker can be brought to a fire within 8 minutes of it being called out. The Brigade is concerned that basing the tanker at Poletti Road could extend its arrival time by 30 minutes or more, particularly during heavy traffic periods in the morning or afternoons as the bridges across the Freeway become congested.	
2.6	Many bush fires are deliberately set, with a peak in the late afternoon as schoolchildren go home. The bridges across the Freeway are congested at this time and so Banjup lives and property would be at considerable risk if the water tanker were delayed. The Committee agreed that this was unacceptable to Banjup residents.	
2.7	Ilan read from Cockburn's letter to the BRG of 28 February 2011 in which claims of abuses of fire permits by residents were made. Ilan asked the Brigade representatives on how many occasions had the Brigade been called over the past few years to deal with fires caused by the abuse of permits cited by Cockburn.  Glenn and Mal could recall less than half a dozen in their 27 years' combined service in the Brigade.	
3.	<b>BRG Committee Support for the Brigade</b>	
3.1	The Committee resolved to write to the FESA CEO and to Cockburn Council objecting strongly to the relocation of the bulk water tanker.	Ilan
3.2	The Committee resolved to liaise closely with the Brigade, through its Captain, Steve Dobson, in the campaign to prevent the relocation of the tanker.	Ilan
3.3	As President of the BRG, Ilan will attend the AGM of the Jandakot Volunteer Bushfire Brigade on 18 April in support of the Brigade.	Ilan
4.	<b>Telephone Conversation with Don Johnston, Cockburn Chief Fire Control Officer</b>	
4.1	Ilan reported that he had spoken with Don Johnston about the legislation that he relies on to require fire permits in the winter and to limit the number issued during a year.	

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4.2	Johnston maintained that section 18 10A of the Bushfires Act gave Cockburn the authority Ian contended that the section referred only to the 'restricted burning period' and had no relevance during winter months. Johnston said that the BRG should meet with Cockburn and FESA who would demonstrate why Cockburn did have the authority.	
4.3	Johnston also maintained that Cockburn's Local Laws gave the authority to limit the number of permits. Ian contended that there is nothing in the published Local Laws that mentions fire permits. Johnston said that he must have some paperwork that supported his claim.	
5.	<b>Telephone Conversation with FESA Legal Officer</b>	
5.1	Ian reported that he had spoken with a FESA legal officer about the legislation that Johnston relies on. After consultation with a colleague, the legal officer said that section 18 10A of the Bushfires Act applies only to the 'restricted burning period' and did not apply outside that time.	
5.2	The legal officer also said that there was nothing in the Bushfires Act that would limit the number of permits issued.	
6.	<b>Lobbying Councillors</b>	
6.1	The Committee recognised that the BRG's contentions about fire permits would likely be successful at litigation. However, the Committee resolved to try to achieve the residents' aims by negotiation.	
6.2	Ian will telephone the 3 ward councillors and invite them to meet with Committee members at their properties this weekend to demonstrate the magnitude of the firebreak clearance work and to discuss the misinformation provided to them by council officers.	Ian
6.3	Glenn and Mal said that the Brigade would support the BRG in its lobbying of Councillors about fire permits.	
7.	<b>Other Business</b>	
7.1	Committee members agreed with the form and wording of the proposed ANZAC Day planting at the Banjup Memorial Reserve.	
8.	<b>Next Meeting</b>	
8.1	The Committee will meet next on 5 May 2011 at 7:30 pm at the house of Ken Mellor, Banjup.	