

4.7 Use of Shire and DFES Fire Appliances

1. POLICY PURPOSE

To provide guidelines and conditions for the use of Shire and Department of Fire & Emergency (DFES) fire appliances by volunteers.

2. POLICY SCOPE

The policy applies to volunteer bush firefighters registered with a Shire of Merredin Bush Fire Brigade.

3. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Bush Fires Act 1954

4. POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 Appliance Storage

- Brigades that have a brigade station or shed are to store brigade appliances inside the station/shed.
- Brigades that do not have a brigade station or shed are permitted to securely store the brigade appliance at the property of the brigade Captain, or another registered brigade volunteer nominated by the Captain, subject to the approval of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer or CEO.
- Appliance keys are to be stored outside the vehicle in a lock box.
- Appliances are to be easily and freely accessible to all brigade members, irrespective of whether they are stored on a brigade member's private property.

4.2 Usage

- The appliance should be kept "incident-ready" (clean, fully equipped and in good repair) at all times.
- Volunteers may not use the appliances, or any tools or equipment contained therein, for private purposes. Tools and equipment may not be removed from the appliance unless required for use at an incident, for training purposes, or to carry out servicing, care or maintenance procedures on the equipment.
- Appliances may only be driven or used by a registered member of a DFES brigade, group or unit, or personnel employed by DFES or the Shire of Merredin.
- Appliances may be driven for the following purposes:
 - In response to a request via DFES Communications Centre (ComCen);
 - In response to an incident reported or encountered where DFES involvement is appropriate, and the brigade's response has been recorded with DFES ComCen;
 - To carry out authorised training activities;
 - To carry out authorised hazard mitigation activities;
 - To attend or participate in a community activity or event, subject to the approval of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer or Chief Executive Officer;
 - To facilitate servicing or repairs to the appliance or to the firefighting equipment; or

- Other purposes as approved by the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer or Chief Executive Officer.
- Personnel driving or operating fire appliances are expected to adhere to DFES **SOP 3.3.1 Respond Under Emergency Conditions**.
- Appliances are not to be taken outside of the Shire of Merredin municipal boundary without the prior approval of the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer or Chief Executive Officer. Requests relating to attendance at an incident will not unreasonably be withheld but requests must be initiated by DFES ComCen or the Officer in Charge (OIC) of the relevant incident.

4.3 Servicing, Maintenance, Repairs and Replacement

- The Emergency Services Officer will arrange for appliances to be serviced annually.
- Any tools or equipment that are damaged or misplaced at an incident are to be reported to the Emergency Services Officer, who will organise for their replacement.
- Any damage sustained to the vehicle must be reported to the Emergency Services Officer, who will arrange for any necessary repairs.
- Truck wash and other supplies required to maintain the condition of appliances can be sourced through the Emergency Services Officer and funded by the Local Government Grants Scheme.
- If there is unreasonable damage or loss sustained to tools, equipment or the appliance in contravention of this policy, the volunteer or driver responsible may be required to pay the cost of associated repairs or replacement, at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer.

5. KEY POLICY DEFINITIONS

Appliance: A vehicle whose primary function is for emergency response purposes. In the context of this policy “appliance” and “brigade appliance” may be used interchangeably and refers specifically to firefighting vehicles funded by DFES and allocated to a Shire of Merredin bushfire brigade. It does not refer to privately owned farm response units.

Chief Bush Fire Control Officer: That person appointed by the Shire of Merredin to perform that role, or the person acting in that position as authorised.

Emergency Services Officer: That person appointed by the Shire of Merredin to perform that role, or the person acting in that position as authorised.

Officer in Charge: The officer for the time being in command of a firefighting crew for a given incident.

Volunteer Firefighter: Any person not employed as a paid firefighter, who is a registered fire service volunteer with the Department of Fire & Emergency Services who is contributing to firefighting operations on an active fireground.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The custodian of this Policy is the Executive Manager Strategy and Community.

7. MONITOR AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed by the Shire’s Executive Manager Strategy and Community and Emergency Services Officer every two years.

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