



Shire of  
**Katanning**  
Heart of the Great Southern

Our Ref: C/20/3688  
File No: ES.CU.1

To our Hero's, Helpers and Support People.

At the time of writing this we are in the final process of mopping up the remnants from last week's fires which started North West of Katanning. With adverse weather conditions forecast for this weekend and the extremely dry state of the landscape, the threat of escape is not yet gone but hopefully the massive efforts of all involved has alleviated that threat somewhat. The purpose of this letter is to thank you sincerely from the Katanning Bushfire Brigade and from the community as a whole for the efforts your teams have put in helping through this ordeal.

As a quick background, the fire started at approximately 11am on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> Feb. By evening the fire had been contained to an area of 1725ha. As winds and temperatures picked up on Saturday afternoon, the fire broke containment lines heading in a south east direction towards town. As you would have all been aware, the fire was uncontrollable, and the wind changes made it extremely hard to contain. As well as the numerous houses in its path, other critical infrastructure under threat included WAMMCO and Western Power. I am still overwhelmed at how the fire was stopped and this was due mainly to the bravery and fire knowledge that was shown from all the fire crews over those two days. The fact that only one house was lost in town and no major injuries or vehicle damage reported is staggering. There are however farm sheds, infrastructure and many kilometres of fencing that has been lost or damaged. As a result, a total of 4219ha has been lost.

The quick response from your crews contributed massively to the fire being stopped before sweeping through town and I would like to personally thank you for your calls asking if assistance was required however on most occasions, crews were just deployed and I would also like to thank you for that.

As we now move towards clean-up and re-fencing, we are very wary of the trauma that some have experienced. We are in the process of identifying the correct paths to follow if some of our people are in need and urge you to keep an eye out for your crews that may be experiencing the same.

I know we can all learn from what has occurred over the past week and look forward to offering you any information or assistance that you may find beneficial if we can. Thanks again.

Regards

Matt Kerin

**CHIEF BUSHFIRE CONTROL OFFICER – KATANNING**

26 February 2020

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Heart of the Great Southern

*Our Ref: C/20/3808  
File No. ES CU.1*

To all who volunteered, assisted and supported with the Katanning Fire

On behalf of the people in the Shire of Katanning, I would like to sincerely thank you for your support and assistance with the February 2020 bushfires in Katanning district. Without the help of volunteers such as yourselves, Katanning would have faced far more serious damage and loss.

The sudden outbreak of the fire and the high winds made control and containment of the fire difficult in the first instance. Control was further hampered by regular changes in direction of the wind and lots of smoke, and all this conspired to make firefighting extremely difficult for the crews. Establishing containment lines under these conditions must have been an ordeal in its own right. All crews did a remarkable job in fighting the fire, responding to situational changes, refusing to lose and bringing the blaze under control. Katanning is very thankful for that determination.

Katanning is also very thankful that, at a moment's notice (it seemed like a moment), so many generous volunteers could come from far and wide to help us bring this destructive force under control. It is a testament to the courage and determination of all the firefighters and those in support, that so few properties were lost and that all volunteers, townspeople and district residents were safe at the end of such a gruelling period.

The people in Shire of Katanning are deeply indebted for your support and very rapid assistance with this natural disaster and thank you for helping to save our town and district from an even worse fate.

Yours sincerely



Liz Guidera  
**PRESIDENT**

16 March 2020





# BRAESIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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21/2/2020

To Whom It May Concern,

When returning to school on Monday the 10<sup>th</sup> of February after the devastating fires in Katanning, I had a lot of Year One students who were a little stressed and confused about the week end tragedy that had taken place.

A number of students had to either evacuate, had family members fighting the fires or were directly affected by the fires themselves. To help these students to feel calm, safe and relaxed we talked about all the amazing things the people in our community did to keep us safe.

This led to a discussion about kindness and in particular how we could show thanks and kindness to all of the volunteers who protected us, our town and our community. The students decided that they would like to write letters of thanks to you all.

Please find enclosed letters of thanks written by the Year Ones (with assistance from their Year Six Buddies) at Braeside Primary School. We greatly appreciate all the efforts and time you have put into keeping us all safe and protected.

As a teacher of the future generation, it makes me so proud and honoured to be living and working in such a caring community like Katanning.

With Kind Regards,

Mrs Nerida Campbell  
Year One Teacher  
Braeside Primary School Katanning.

Dear firefighters,

Thank you for Saving our town!  
Thank you for Putting your  
life at risk to Save our  
town. From Janelle Punch

