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# **SAWYERS VALLEY VOLUNTEER BUSH FIRE BRIGADE (INC.)**

## **OPERATIONAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

VERSION: 0.3



# Document Control

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0.2	30/07/21	A. Woodley	Typo corrections
0.3	31/07/21	A. Woodley	Comments from K. Woodley
0.4	04/08/21	A. Woodley	Add sign-off to record sheets.

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# 1. Overview

Fire fighting is both a technical and hazardous activity. In order to ensure that our operational members<sup>1</sup> are not only appropriately trained, but also maintain their skills and knowledge, this document has been developed.

The document details the required training, qualifications, and experience required to achieve each rank within the Brigade. Not only will this help to maintain the high level of competency and professionalism for which our Brigade is known, but it also makes clear the requirements for aspiring officers.

By following this structure our members, as well as personnel from across the fire services, can have confidence that a crew member or officer of our Brigade is well trained, competent, and capable of undertaking the tasks asked of them.

Once adopted, this Operational Training and Development document is endorsed by the Brigade, and supported by the By-Laws to the Rules of Association, to be implemented and adhered to by all members of the Brigade.

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<sup>1</sup> Operational members are Brigade members directly involved with fire fighting or fire management activities.



## 2. Operational Ranks

Ranks are awarded to members on a semi-permanent basis; a member will retain an awarded rank whilst they continue to meet the minimum requirements. As part of the Chain of Command, the issue of rank also bestows additional responsibilities.

In addition to meeting the qualification and experience requirements, a member must be endorsed to a given rank by the Operations Committee.

A member may voluntarily relinquish a rank at any time. However a rank can only be restored by meeting the qualification and experience requirements for that rank, followed by endorsement by the Operations Committee.

The ranks are as follows, in order of increasing seniority:

1. Fire Fighter
2. Senior Fire Fighter
3. Lieutenant (ranked from First Lieutenant)
4. Captain / Fire Control Officer

Qualification, experience, and currency requirements for each subsequent rank include, or extend, the requirements for the previous ranks. ie Senior Fire Fighter must meet all of the qualifications, experience, and ongoing maintenance requirements of a Fire Fighter in addition to those of a Senior Fire Fighter.



## 2.1 Fire Fighter

Fire Fighter is the minimum rank required to undertake fire fighting activities, or attend an active fire ground.

It is expected that Fire Fighters are familiar with fire ground safety requirements, and aware of the relevant operating procedures. Fire fighters should be familiar with the basic operation of:

- PPE;
- Hand and fire tools;
- Pumps, hoses, hose couplings, and branches;
- Radios; and
- General appliance operations.

### 2.1.1 Qualifications

Fire Fighters must be enrolled in, or have completed, the *BFS Bush Firefighter* pathway.

- Bushfire Safety Awareness (DFES)<sup>2</sup>;
- Firefighting Skills (DFES)<sup>2</sup>; and
- AIIMS Awareness (DFES).

### 2.1.2 Experience

- Two hazard reduction burns.

### 2.1.3 Ongoing Maintenance

- Annual Skills Refresher;
- Participate in two hazard reduction burns, or two Level 2 incidents, within a 12 month period;
- Complete a minimum of three rostered vehicle checks within a six month period;
- Attend three Brigade training sessions, or DFES/MFS training courses, within a six month period; and
- Attend a minimum of two Brigade meetings within a six month period.

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<sup>2</sup> Minimum requirements for fire ground activities as required by DFES and the Shire of Mundaring.



## 2.2 Senior Fire Fighter

Senior Fire Fighters have completed a few years of operational service, and be comfortable on a fire ground and with general fire operations. They should be aware of Incident Management processes, and be extending their knowledge of bush fire behaviour and fire fighting techniques.

The rank of Senior Fire Fighter is the minimum rank for the appointment of a Crew Leader without supervision or mentoring from a Lieutenant or Captain.

### 2.2.1 Qualifications

Fire Fighters must be enrolled in, or have completed, the *BFS Advanced Firefighter* pathway.

- Advanced Bush Firefighting (DFES);
- Crew Leader (DFES);
- Practical Crew Leader (MFS);
- Initial Control at Wildfire (MFS); and
- First Aid Certificate.

Recommended qualifications

- Machine Supervision (DFES);
- Pump Operations (DFES); and
- Mundaring Hazard Reduction Burning (MFS).

### 2.2.2 Experience

- Operationally active for a minimum of two years.

### 2.2.3 Ongoing Maintenance

- Act as Incident Controller at a Level 1 incident within a 12 month period;  
or
- Plan and control a Brigade hazard reduction burn with a 12 month period;  
or
- Attend a minimum of one DFES or MFS training course within a 12 month period.

Senior Fire Fighters must also meet the ongoing maintenance required for the rank of Fire Fighter.



## 2.3 Lieutenant

Lieutenants form the basis of the Brigade Operational Leadership, and should be actively engaged with team leadership in general Brigade activities. The responsibilities of a Lieutenant are broader, and cover both internal Brigade responsibilities and Incident Management roles.

It is expected that a Lieutenant is capable of fulfilling a number of command roles at an incident, including:

- Sector Commander;
- Ground Controller; and
- Incident Controller.

Beyond their operational duties, Lieutenants are also integral in the forming and development of teams within the Brigade. Lieutenants should be able to display leadership and act as mentors to other Operational Members.

### 2.3.1 Qualifications

Lieutenants must be enrolled in the *BFS Leadership* pathway.

- AIIMS 2017 (DFES);
- Sector Commander (DFES);
- Practical Sector Commander (MFS); and
- Ground Controller (DFES).

Recommended qualifications

- Leadership Fundamentals (DFES);
- Mental Health First Aid (DFES);
- Incident Controller Level 1 (DFES); and
- Incident Reporting System (IRS) Essentials (DFES).

### 2.3.2 Experience

- Operationally active for a minimum of four years; and
- Held the rank of Senior Fire Fighter, or equivalent, for a minimum of two years.

### 2.3.3 Ongoing Maintenance

- Conduct three Brigade training sessions within a six month period;
- Attend one of the following in a 12 month period:
  - BFAC meeting;





- Pre-season briefing<sup>3</sup>;
- Air-operations briefing; or
- Bushfire related seminar or conference.
- Sign off a minimum of two Operational Members on the Annual Skills Refresher within a 12 month period; and
- Undertake a minimum of two mentoring activities with a Fire Fighter or Senior Fire Fighter within a six month period.

Lieutenants must also meet the ongoing maintenance required for the ranks of Senior Fire Fighter and Fire Fighter.

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<sup>3</sup> DFES Annual Pre-season Forum, Shire of Mundaring Pre-season Forum, or Brigade run Pre-season Briefing



## 2.4 Captain / FCO

The Captain holds the senior operational rank within the Brigade. They are responsible for ensuring the Brigade meets its operational obligations and is suitably prepared to serve the community.

Operationally, the Captain should have a good understanding of Incident Management, and be capable of taking on responsibilities within an Incident Management Team.

A core responsibility of the Captain is the development of knowledge and capability within the Brigade. This includes mentoring of Brigade members, and assisting aspiring officers to achieve their desired progression through the service.

### 2.4.1 Qualifications

Captains must be enrolled in the *BFS Leadership* pathway.

- Leadership Fundamentals (DFES);
- Mental Health First Aid (DFES);
- Incident Controller Level 1 (DFES);
- Fire Control Officer (DFES); and
- Incident Reporting System (IRS) Essentials (DFES).

Recommended qualifications:

- Operations Officers (DFES);
- FES Maps (DFES);
- Workplace Trainer Assessor (DFES); and
- AHIMS (WebEOC) Awareness.

### 2.4.2 Experience

- Operationally active for a minimum of five years; and
- Held rank of Lieutenant for a minimum of two years.

### 2.4.3 Ongoing Maintenance

- Attend a minimum of three Operational Command meetings within a 12 month period;
- Attend a minimum of two BFAC meetings within a six month period; and
- Undertake a minimum of two mentoring activities with a Senior Fire Fighter or Lieutenant within a six month period.



### 3. Operational Roles

Operational roles are those that are appointed for a limited period of time to meet an operational requirement. These roles confer specific responsibilities, such as the safety and welfare of a crew or the safe control of an emergency vehicle. As such these roles have additional criteria and requirements to those of an associated rank.

#### 3.1 Emergency Road Driver

An Emergency Road Driver is the driver of an appliance attending an incident under Emergency Road Conditions. The driver shall be selected by the appointed Crew Leader prior to attending the incident.

##### 3.1.1 Qualifications

- DFES driving qualifications:
  - On Road Driving;
  - Off Road Driving; and
  - Emergency Driving.

Or

- LG On Road Driving

##### 3.1.2 Experience

- Operationally active for a minimum of two years.

##### 3.1.3 Ongoing Maintenance

- Maintain current drivers' license; and
- Within a four month period log<sup>4</sup>:
  - 50km of gazetted (sealed) driving per appliance; and
  - 25km, or 2 hours, of off-road 4-wheel-drive driving.

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<sup>4</sup> A reduction to 10km of gazetted road driving, with no off-road driving, may be given to drivers who can demonstrate equivalent experience driving MR or greater vehicles over the time period.



## 3.2 Crew Leader

A Crew Leader is appointed to lead the crew of an appliance when attending an incident. The Crew Leader may not necessarily be the most senior ranked member of the crew, and should be selected based on the perceived complexity and risk of the incident.

The Crew Leader is responsible for:

- The safety of the crew;
- The welfare of the crew;
- Managing the activities and operations of the crew; and
- The appliance and associated equipment.

In the absence of an existing Incident Controller, a Crew Leader may also assume the role of Incident Controller, until they are relieved or the incident is concluded.

### 3.2.1 Qualifications

- Rank of Senior Fire Fighter or above.

### 3.2.2 Experience

- Attend two incidents as a mentored Crew Leader.

### 3.2.3 Ongoing Maintenance

- Coordinate one hazard reduction burn within a 12 month period.



### 3.3 Permit FCO

The Shire of Mundaring may appoint a Fire Control Officer under section 38 of the Bush Fires Act 1954, with powers limited to the issuing of *Permits to Burn*, and termed *FCO – Permit Issuing Only*. *Permits to Burn* may be issued under Section 23 of the Bush Fires Act 1954. Permit FCOs are nominated by the Brigade for consideration by the Shire of Mundaring for appointment. Appointments are made annually.

During the Restricted Burning Period, Permit FCOs are expected to be available to issue permits from the station; typically Saturday mornings between 10:00am and 11:00am. A roster may be created to share this responsibility between the Permit FCOs.

#### 3.3.1 Qualifications

- Fire Control Officer (DFES);
- Mundaring Hazard Reduction Burning (MFS); and
- Minimum rank of Senior Fire Fighter.

#### 3.3.2 Experience

- Operationally active for a minimum of four years;
- Receive mentoring in the role from an existing Permit FCO for a minimum of 12 months;
- Coordinated a minimum of two hazard reduction burns.

#### 3.3.3 Ongoing Maintenance

- Attend pre-season briefing<sup>5</sup>; and
- Issue a minimum of two permits within a 12 month period.

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5 DFES Annual Pre-season Forum, Shire of Mundaring Pre-season Forum, or Brigade run Pre-season Briefing



## 4. Implementation Plan

In order to allow Brigade members to meet the criteria associated with their existing rank, an introductory period of 12 months shall be implemented. Operational Members must meet the requirements of their rank within this period in order to maintain that rank. Additionally, the Ongoing Maintenance requirements for the Operational Roles shall be waived during this period.

Following the introductory period, any member who does not meet the criteria for their existing rank shall instead receive the highest rank for which the criteria can be met. If no rank criteria can be met, the member shall no longer be operational. Should the member wish to return to operational status, they must do so via the procedures and requirements established by this document.

Whilst attendance shall be recorded for Brigade activities, such as meetings and training sessions, members are ultimately responsible for collecting sufficient evidence to demonstrate completion of the requirements for their rank or role.

Record sheets for personal activities, and driving activities are included in Appendix B - Personal Activity Record Sheet and Appendix C - Driving Activity Record Sheet.



## Appendix A - Reference Documents

Bush Fires Act 1954

[https://www.legislation.wa.gov.au/legislation/prod/filestore.nsf/FileURL/mrdoc\\_37056.pdf](https://www.legislation.wa.gov.au/legislation/prod/filestore.nsf/FileURL/mrdoc_37056.pdf)

Shire of Mundaring Bush Fire Brigades Local Law 2013

<https://www.mundaring.wa.gov.au/AboutCouncil/Policieslocallaws/Council%20Policies/Local%20Laws/Bush%20Fire%20Brigades%20Local%20Law.pdf>

Shire of Mundaring Brigade Operating Procedures

DFES Bush Fire Service Training Program

<https://volunteerhub.dfes.wa.gov.au/docs/default-source/vhprocesscopy/training/volunteer-training-programs/training-program-and-implementation-guide-bfs-pdf.pdf>

Sawyers Valley Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade Operational Readiness Plan 2017

<http://sawyersvalley.bfb.asn.au/files/sv.bfb.asn.au/Brigade%20Operational%20Readiness%20Plan%202017%20v1.0.pdf>



## Appendix B - Personal Activity Record Sheet

Name:

Rank:

Record Sheet Start Date:

Activity (6 month period)	Fire Fighter	Senior Fire Fighter	Lieutenant	Captain / FCO
Skills Refresher				
Hazard Reduction Burn				
Vehicle Checks				
Training Sessions				
Brigade Meetings				
Incident Control				
Manage HRB				
Training Course				
Conduct Training				
PD				
Skills Refresher Sign-off				
Mentoring				
Ops Command				
BFAC				

Endorsed by:

Captain / First Lieutenant

Date:



