

**BUSH FIRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Thursday 12th of October 2023 - General Meeting – 5.30pm

Derek Fletcher Training Room, Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade / State Emergency Service,
20 Raymond Road, Walliston

1. OPENING OF MEETING

Chairperson – Cr. John Giardina welcomed attendees,

2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES**Attending Members:**

Cr. John Giardina – City of Kalamunda, Councillor – South-East Ward

John Idland – Acting Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Sean Winter – Captain, Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade

Tony Moiler AFSM – Captain, Kalamunda Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service

City Staff:

Nicole O'Neill – City of Kalamunda, Director Community Engagement

Ex- Officio Members:

Michael Hall – Fire Control Officer, City of Kalamunda

Paul Postma – DFES District Officer South-East

Nick Miles – Firefighter, Kalamunda Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service

Visitors: Nil**Apologies:**

Mike Ward – CESM, Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Steve Lake – Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer

Andrew Haselden – Fire Control Officer, Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade,

Stuart Parks – Deputy Captain, Kalamunda Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service

Natalie Smailes – First Lieutenant, Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade

Michael Pasotti – DBCA – Fire Coordinator

Warwick Martindale – Local Manager State Emergency Service

Minutes:

John Turner – Lieutenant, Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade,

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3. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Moved: John Idland

Seconded: Tony Moiler

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 4.1. Cr. John Giardina to arrange for a letter to be sent by the City to Matthew Hughes MLA and Stephen Dawson MLC, regarding the UFU's industrial action and its impact on volunteer training.

Nicole O'Neil confirms a letter was sent by Matthew Hughes MLA. Michael Hall states it is unknown if training has commenced until November as much of the training is being run by volunteers. Nicole O'Neil provides support from the city in the future if anything similar occurs again.

Paul Postma confirms industrial action has lifted to allow training; however, action has not yet ceased. He continues stating a large amount of training is occurring with DFES trainers doing multiple weekends and training continuing into November.

5. CORRESPONDENCE IN/OUT

- 5.1. Nil.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

- 6.1. Future meetings for 2024 – Schedule will align with current practice, with the following dates: 21st March 2024, 20th July 2024, 10th October 2024.

- 6.2. Tony Moiler tables the need for support against the Labor Government's decision to block an amendment to the *Workers Compensation and Injury Management Bill 2023* to include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) support for volunteers. Tony Moiler continues; Stephen Dawson MLC (Minister for Emergency Services) was asked about the decision not to provide PTSD support to volunteers and avoided the question. Tony Moiler believes associations and councils should show support for volunteers to access PTSD support as many volunteers do the same job and are exposed to the same risks as career firefighters.

Nicole O'Neil queries how this works in with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020* and other legislation to see if there is any other cover afforded to our volunteers. Tony Moiler states Bush Fire Brigade volunteers may be able to access cover through the city, Sean Winter remarks that PTSD is historically difficult to diagnose.

Paul Postma advises his substantive position is District Officer for Health and Safety, therefore, he may be able to provide more information on this matter. He states, the decisions to block the

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amendment is only by the Western Australian state government at this time, not other states. Paul Postma also clarifies the previous statement by Tony Moiler, advising Bush Fire volunteers will only be covered while serving as a volunteer. Nicole O'Neil agrees that if it is a former member of a brigade, they would not be covered by the City of Kalamunda.

John Giardina agrees if people are doing the same job, they should be covered equally for presumptive illnesses and diseases. Sean Winter mentions situation where a member from the brigade had to prove their attendance to HAZMAT incident to get cover for a type of cancer that was on the presumptive list provided in the *Workers Compensation and Injury Management Bill 2023*, this member was unable to provide sufficient evidence due to limited reports from the past and was therefore not covered.

Tony Moiler mentions the modern IRS system provides traceability on incidents, but records were not kept as well in the past. Sean Winter says brigade records go back to 1990, however, details are very limited. John Giardina asks if this is improving. Sean Winter mentions the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020* requires us to maintain a higher level of Health and Safety procedures to record any exposures. Tony Moiler states it relies on the incident report having all the necessary information. Sean Winter confirms with the risks of firefighting be better known now, people are becoming better at recording the relevant information to attain cover in the future, should it be required.

Nicole Oneil to seek advice from Martin Aldrige MLC who is championing the need for cover for volunteers. Nicole O'Neil to see what is available to volunteers currently.

Paul Postma stated the block against cover for volunteers was done by the government, DFES were not notified with sufficient notice. DFES are still trying to determine all the facts.

7. AGENCY UPDATE

7.1. Department of Fire and Emergency Services - Paul Postma

Paul Southam sends apologies for his absence due to receiving back surgery, Paul Postma will be covering the role in the interim. Current substantive is District Officer of Health and safety, with previous experience as an Area Officer at the Bush Fire Centre of Excellence and as Chief of Gingin and Wanneroo.

Paul Postma presents a series of maps from the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) and DFES (Appendix 1). The first map display rainfall and maximum temperatures, showing that the Southwest Land Division (SWLD) for rainfall over winter was very low and temperatures were very much above average. Positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) and El Nino impacting Australia, resulting in ocean waters around Australia being cooler, therefore, less rainfall will be received by Australia. Last El Nino was

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2015/16 when Waroona/ Yarloop fire occurred, last Positive IOD was 2018/19 which was Black Summer.

Paul Postma then presents the long-range forecast; maximum temperatures will very much exceed temperature as will minimum temperatures. Rainfall is expected to be very much below average.

There is an increased likelihood of very hot conditions and dry conditions, therefore, likely to experience drought conditions. Current soil moisture content is 7%, therefore, we are already experiencing drought conditions. Comparing the last Positive IOD in 2019, it remained very dry until June 5th.

BoM has stated there is an increased risk of bushfire, drought, and extreme heat. Risks of fires like Wooroloo and Waroona is very high.

Paul Postma reflects on AFDRS fuel models from last year that were showing double the amount of fuel as there really was, so fire danger was significantly overestimated. However, with the expected fire season, more pre-emptive Total Fire Bans (TFB) are expected. However, these will likely be more accepted by the public due to the expected weather conditions.

7.2. Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions – Michael Pasotti

Nothing tabled.

7.3. City of Kalamunda Community Emergency Manager – John Idland (Acting)

With an El Nino weather pattern this summer, which will bring a longer, hotter than usual summer and possibly an early start to the high threat period for our community and the volunteer fire brigades.

In preparation, the Brigade, the Bush Fire Ready Groups, and the Chief, with City assistance has planned or completed the below events,

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Community Preparedness	Date
Street meet - Conti Gardens Walliston	16/09/2023
Bush Fire Ready Street Coordinators Workshop	23/09/2023
City's machinery contractors Information Session	27/09/2023
Street meet - Pickering Brook Sports Club	7/10/2023
Burn SMART demonstration - Huntley Reserve Gooseberry Hill	14/10/2023
Street meet - Lancelot Green Wattle Grove	21/10/2023
 Operations	 Date
DFES Preseason Forum	7/10/2023
Remote Area Fire Fighting Awareness Training (required to be deployed)	14/10/2023
Pre-season refresher assessment for all active FFs	15/10/2023
RUI Exercise - Shipp RD area Piesse Brook	4/11/2023
Kalamunda BFB Preseason Forum & Probationary FF graduation	26/11/2023

A Fire Control Officer refresher workshop was also completed at the end of August.

The City has gone to a quality surveyor to have a estimate cost to build the Pickering Brook Fire Station and this should be available around December this year. Once a cost is established then funding requests through the City and DFES will occur for the next budget/grants in 2024/2025.

The Brigade Pickering Brook Working Group is busy establishing what is critically needed in a fire station to complete the build submission before the funding request deadline of February and March 2024.

John Idland also presents the update FCO appointments on Mike Wards behalf (Appendix 2).

Nicole O'Neil adds to the report from a city perspective, the city has moved into restricted burning, and has so far issued 10 burning permits mostly to the Kalamunda Bush Fire Brigade . So far the city has completed a record number of walk throughs (67) and variation meetings (118). Formerly, the city started from 1st November, but people have come early. Variations are annual except for grazing, feedback from inspectors is that compliance has been good across the board. However, full success is not accepted yet, as those who want to be properly prepared are those who would come to the city early and the season isn't considered started for the inspectors until 1st November.

John Giardina has received good feedback so far about the inspectors from residents. Nicole Oneil confirms that a lot of work has gone into making sure this is a success.

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Sean Winter says we have been doing a lot of burning this season, completing 8 burns this spring, so far, and these have been mostly large blocks with very old fuel, for example, 70-year fuel, 40-year fuel, 20-year fuel. All of these are private burns. We do not have the capacity to cover all these properties with old fuel.

John Giardina asks Nicole O'Neil, what can the city do when we don't have the capacity? Nicole O'Neil mentions burn smart to educate residents to be able to complete their own burns, but they will not be issued a permit if they do not have the capacity to do the burns themselves. Burning isn't the only mitigation measure; manual work, chemical treatment, weed control are all examples of alternatives to burning. Notices provided by the city is to achieve the minimum compliance / minimum standard. If they had been inspected and not been compliant, they may have just paid the \$200 fine and not done the work, therefore, fuel load has been allowed to build up over many years.

Nicole O'Neil clarifies the process for achieving the minimum compliance is 21-days work order, if no work is completed, a fine is issued. If residents are seen to be trying then advice is provided, if nothing is done, prosecution is an option. Tony Moiler states it's too late by the time 1st November comes around, when the only real option is hazard reduction burn. This is the issue of starting on 1st November, they don't have time to do a burn. Nicole O'Neil confirms work is happening all year around, but the city can enforce from 1st November. But with the aging population, they sometimes reach the point of not being able to complete the necessary work.

Sean Winter states we have changed our strategy for burning and burn at any possible window. Historically, we burnt on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Nicole O'Neil with predicted weather and climate drivers, there will likely be knock on effect in Autumn with shorter burning period.

Sean Winter states we have seen a ramp up in fire behaviour over the last 4 weeks. Nicole Oneil believes as a city we are in a good place due to mosaic burning completed to the east of the city.

Sean Winter provides input from the brigade's observations stating the main risk areas are the Darling Scarp, Walnut Road, Zig-Zag Scenic Drive is looking increasingly bad, Girrawheen Drive, between Welshpool Road and Crystal Brook Road and Mitchell Road. The Government needs to consider how burn strategy is completed with the changing climate and burning window.

John Giardina questions how can the city help the brigade? Sean Winter suggests making permits easier to get, although the process isn't hard, if they can be gained with shorter notice, this would provide the brigade with more flexibility. Nicole O'Neil to chat with the team to see how it can be improved.

Tony Moiler advises Kalamunda Fire and Rescue (KVFRS) are not getting calls from resident when usually KVFRS would be. Nicole O'Neil will see if any burns can be made available for KVFRS.

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Nicole O'Neil has received a lot of complaints regarding adjoining properties with Water Corporation blocks as the fuel loads are very high on the Water Corporation owned tenures.

8. NEXT MEETING

- 8.1.** Next meeting, Thursday the 21st of March 2024 (GM), 1730hrs, Derek Fletcher Training Room, Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade / State Emergency Service, 20 Raymond Road, Walliston.

Future Meetings for 2024 20th of June (AGM) and 10th of October 2024 (GM).

- 8.2.** John Giardina states this may be his last meeting as it is election time, he states it has been a pleasure working with everyone in the committee and hope he will see everyone next meeting.

9. CLOSURE

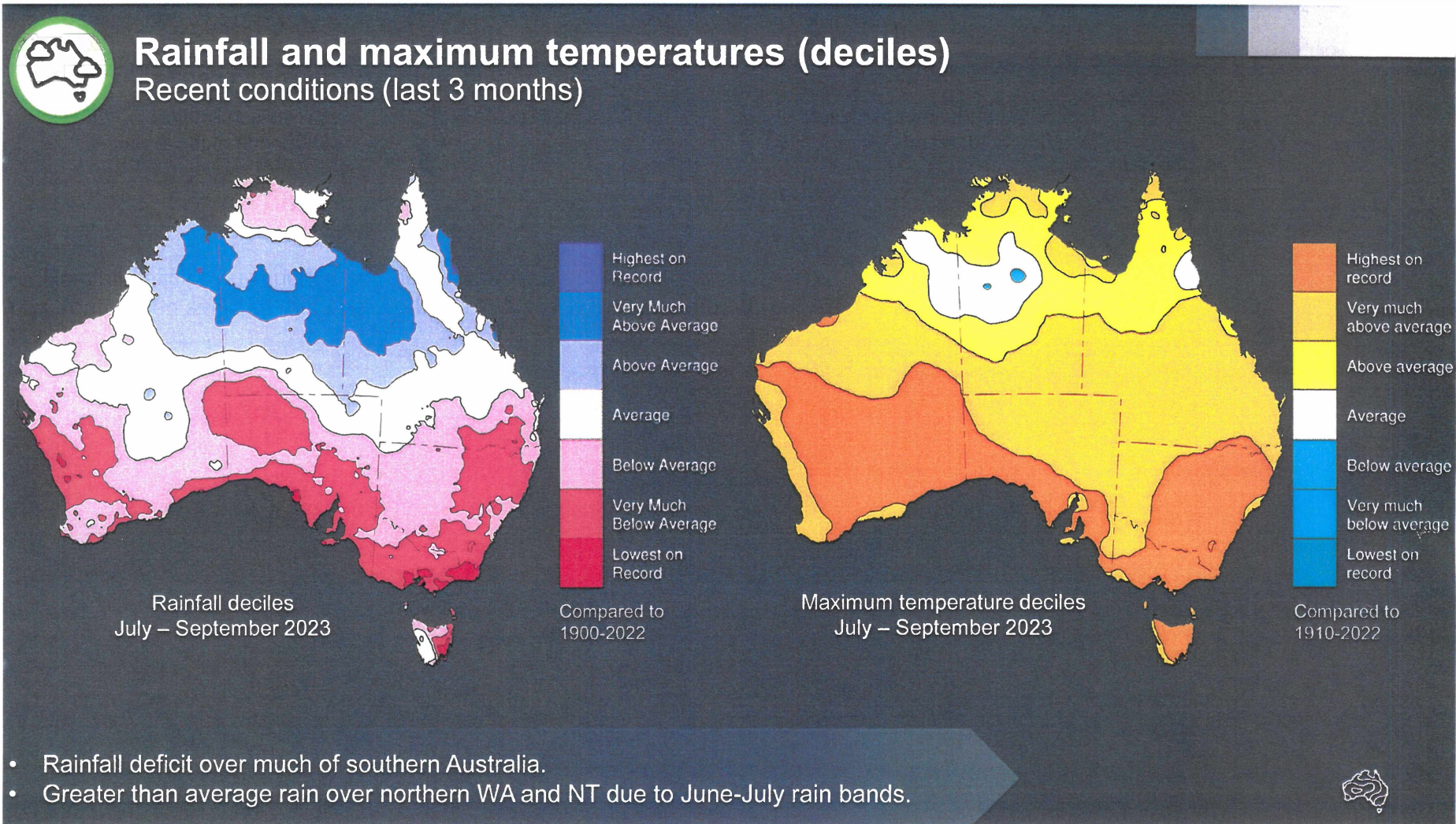
- 9.1.** Meeting closed at 1826hrs.

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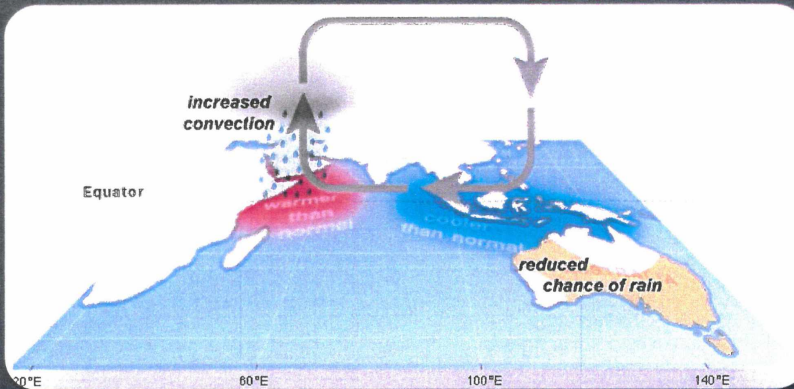
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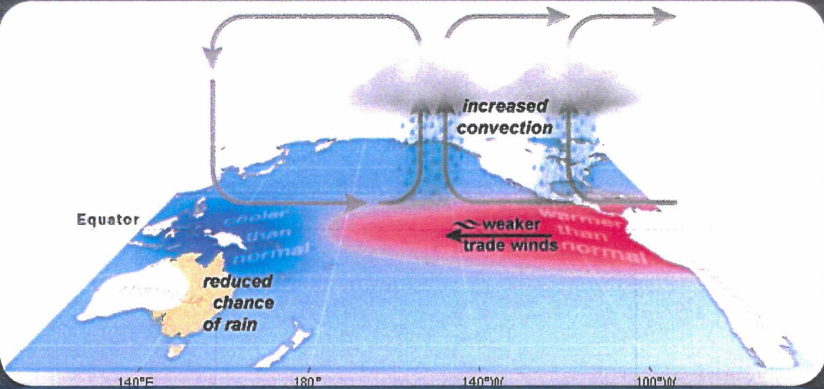


Global Seasonal Drivers - IOD and ENSO

Positive IOD

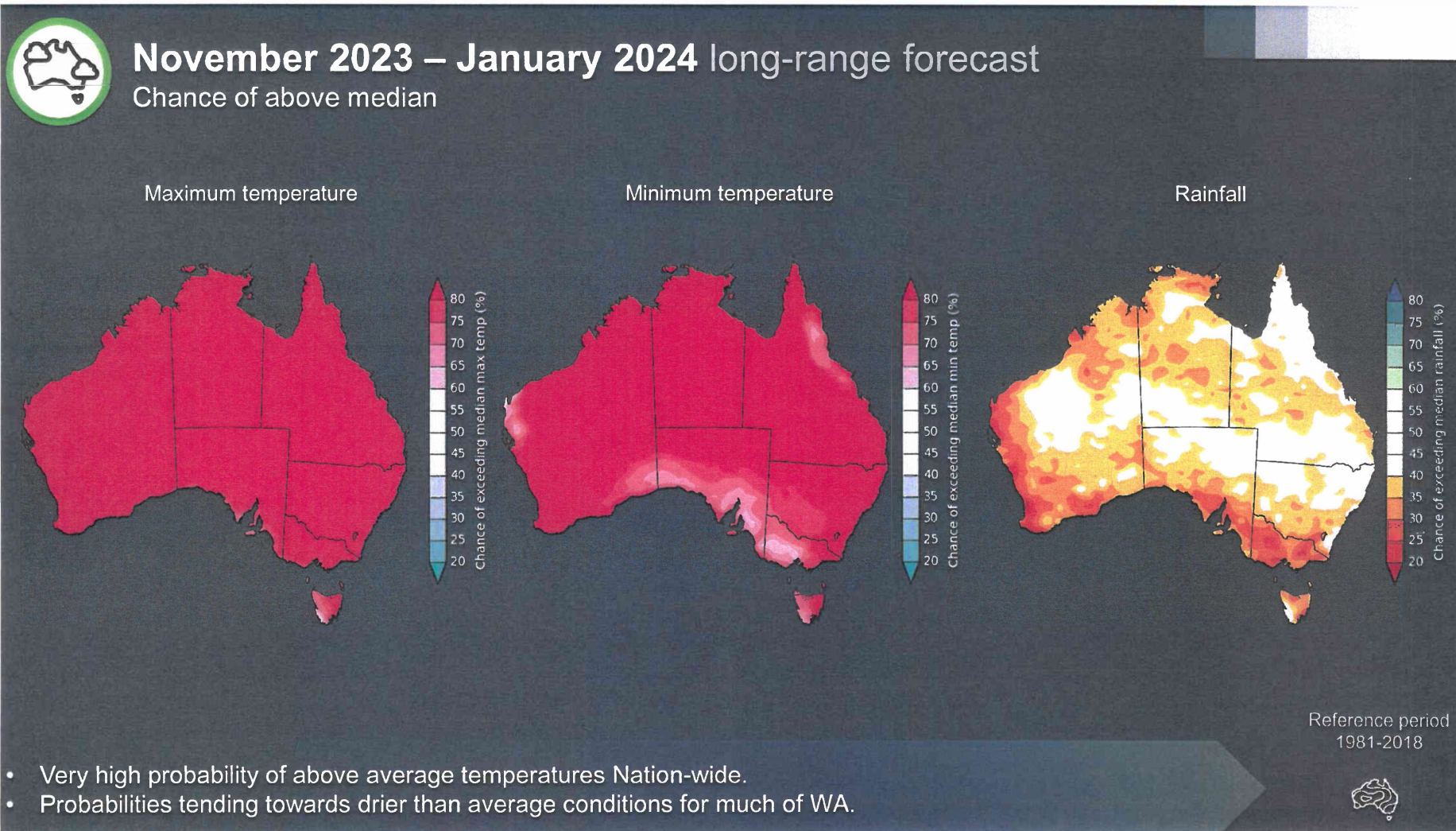


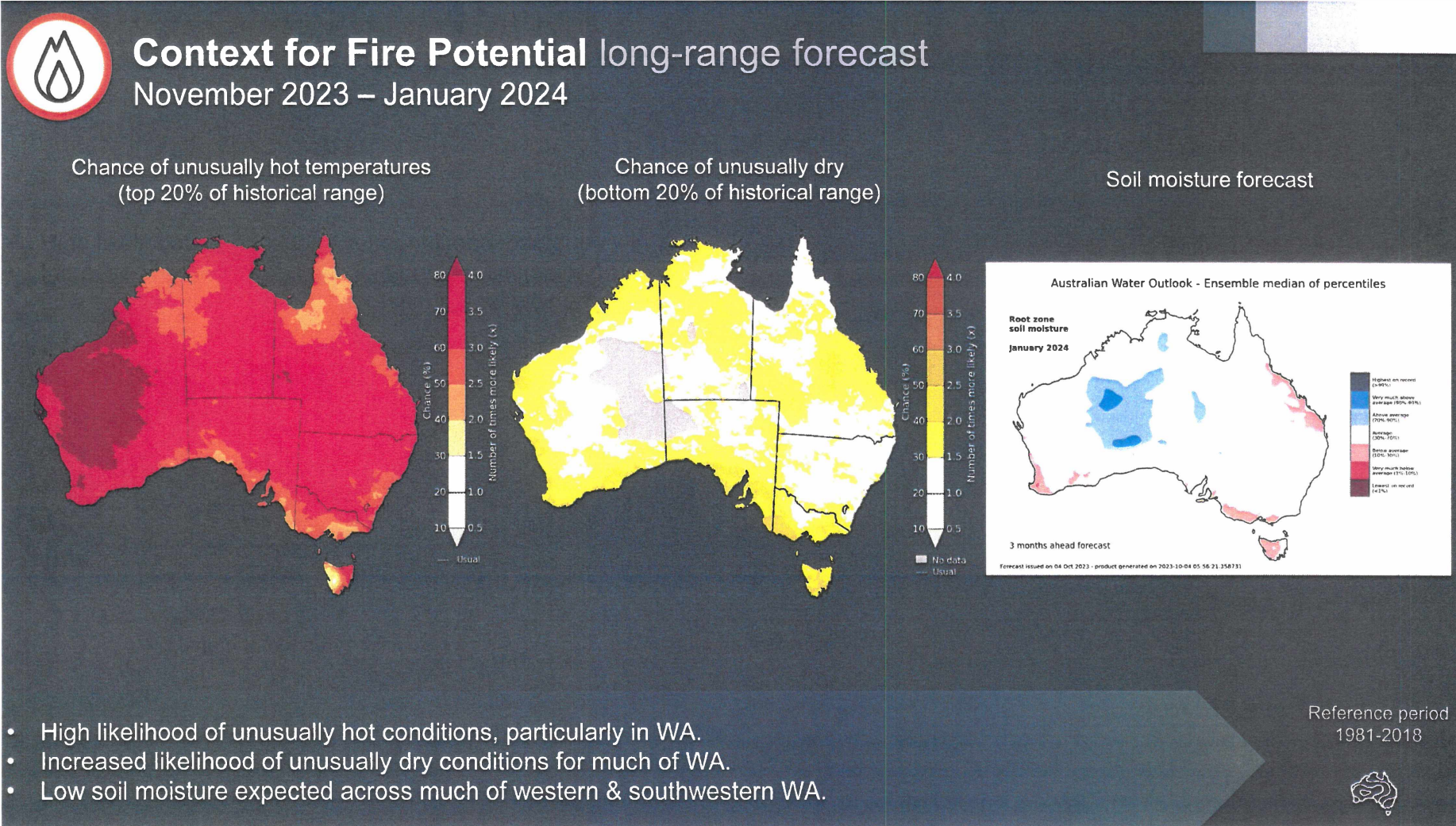
El Nino

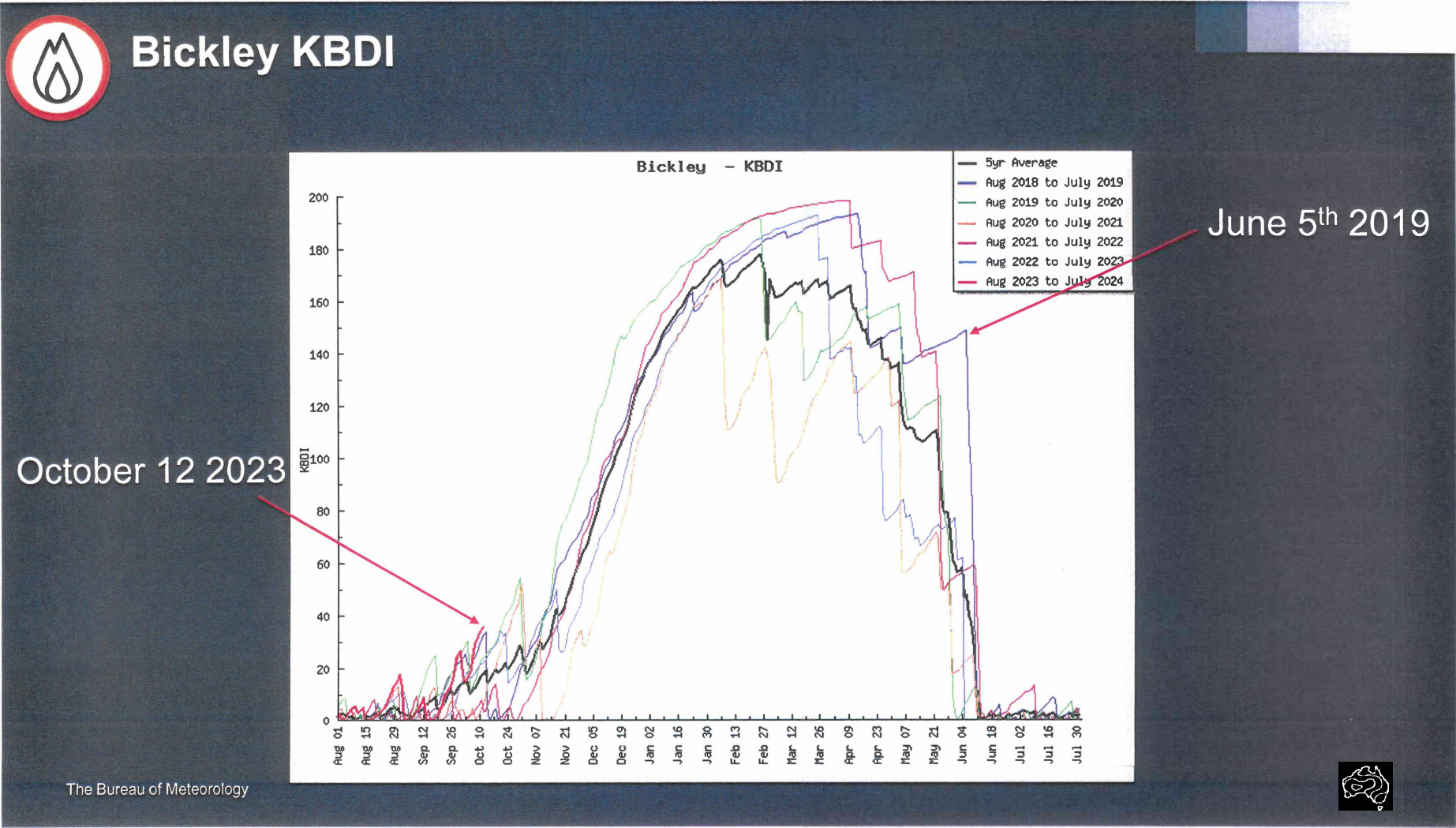


The Bureau of Meteorology









WA Seasonal Outlook Summary: October 2023 – January 2024

Hazard

Likelihood compared to recent decades



Bushfire



Increasing risk as we move into Summer



Drought



Existing deficiencies over much of SW WA and a drying trend



Extreme heat



Very much increased chance



Widespread flooding



Inconclusive over northern WA, below average over southern WA



Storm



Inconclusive

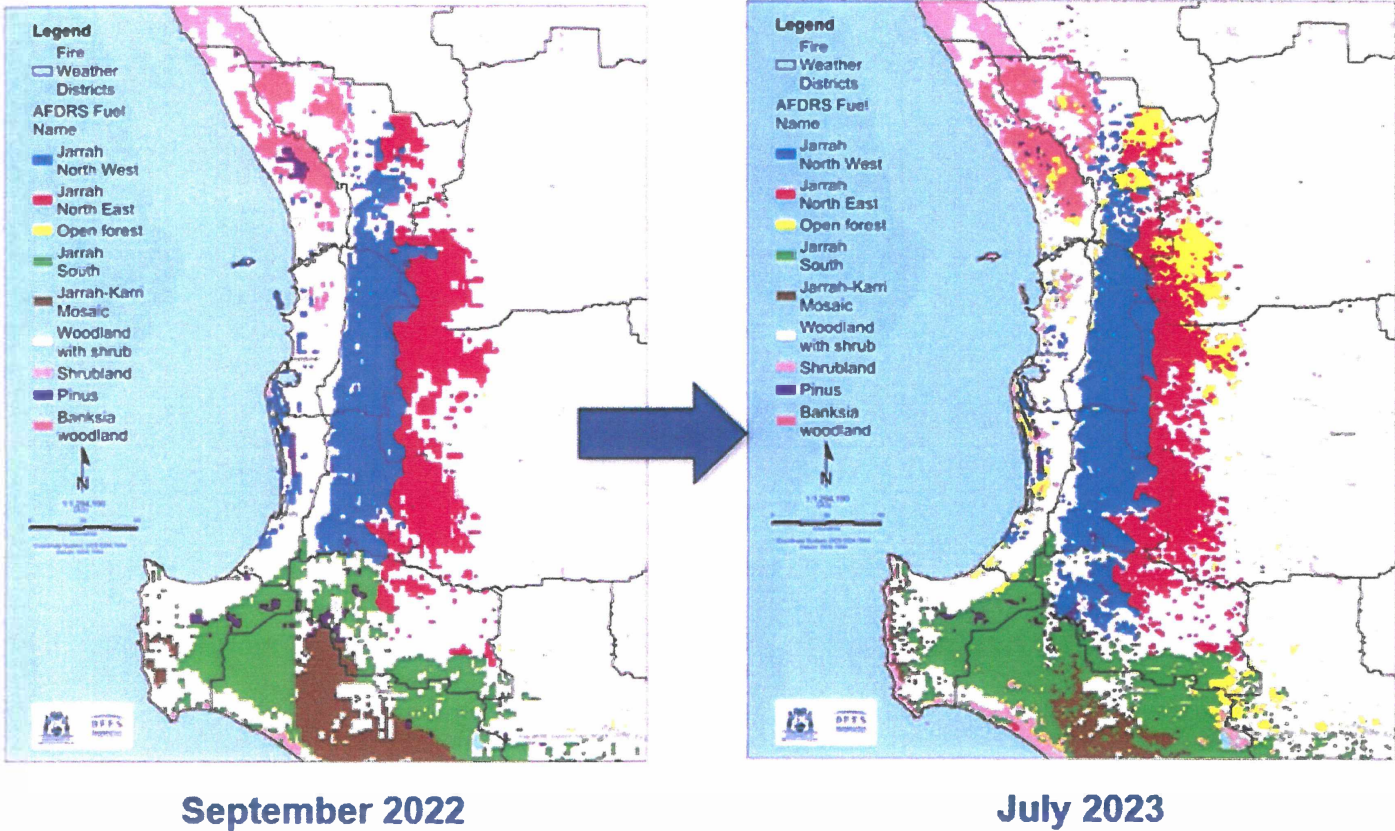


Tropical cyclone



Expected fewer than average.

AFDRS Fuel Types 2022 vs 2023





Western Australia
BUSH FIRES ACT 1954
City of Kalamunda
2023/2024 Fire Control Officer Appointments

BUSH FIRES ACT 1954 City of Kalamunda APPOINTMENTS It is hereby notified for public information that the following persons are appointed as Bushfire Control Officers for the City of Kalamunda, to administer the provisions of the Bush Fires Act 1954 and Regulations pursuant to section 38(1) –

Chief Bushfire Control Officer

- Michael Ward – CBFCO (Appointed by DFES under Section 38A)

Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer

- Steven Lake – DCBFCO

Bushfire Control Officers City of Kalamunda – Full Powers

- Andrew Haselden – FCO 1
- John Idland – FCO 2
- Sean Winter – FCO 3
- Michael Hall – FCO 4
- Peter Wilson – FCO 5
- Mark Jeans – FCO 6
- Robert Moiler – FCO 7

City of Kalamunda – Restricted Powers Pursuant to Section 38 (4) of the Bush Fires Act 1954 all powers of a Fire Control Officer except for control and extinguishment of bush fires:

- Tim Parry – FCO 8
- Grant Howatson – FCO 9
- Nathan Garrington – FCO 10
- Declan McCubben – FCO 11
- Sarah Stampalia – FCO 12
- Megan Carter – FCO 13
- Gary MacMillan-Smith-Davies – FCO 14
- Phillip Munckton – FCO 15
- Angie House – FCO 16
- Myles Bird – FCO 17
- John Hardbottle – FCO 18

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Signed: _____

GARY TICEHURST - ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Date: _____