



City of Gosnells Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade

Emergency Operations Centre
16 Horley Road
BECKENHAM

www.gosnellsbfb.com.au



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A word from the Captain

Welcome to the City of Gosnells Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade.

As Captain, I would like to introduce you to our Brigade and hope that after reading the information contained in this booklet you might consider becoming part of our dedicated volunteer and professional team.

As a Brigade we attend a vast array of incidents in our Local Government area as well as many other Bush Fire related incidents state-wide as requested through the Department of Fire and Emergency Services. Our role also includes Community Engagement, Education, Hazard Reduction and Preparedness to name a few.

Your role as a volunteer fire fighter will challenge you physically and mentally. It will provide you with comradery, mateship, leadership and technical skills and many more unforgettable experiences. Volunteering offers you the opportunity to make a difference in our community and help protect the lifestyle and environment we all enjoy. There may be times when you will question your role as a volunteer and it is at these times that the Brigade shows itself to be the extended family that it truly is.

Firefighting and Emergency Management is more than a hobby or a career, it is a way of life and the fact that you will be a volunteer means that you will have new friends around the world, something that is indeed unique to emergency services.

For me personally, I have been a volunteer for many years starting off as a new recruit all those years ago and look forward to my new role as Captain. Volunteering will always be challenging and rewarding but the acquaintances, friends, skills and knowledge you gain makes it all worthwhile. I hope your time with the Brigade will be as satisfying and rewarding as mine continues to be and I look forward to speaking to all new interested volunteers individually in the near future.

Mr Allan Brown
Captain/Fire Control Officer

Background

The City Of Gosnells covers an area of 127 square kilometres. 67 square kilometres of the City has been gazetted as a fire district which means Career Firefighters provide primary response to fires within this area. The remainder of the City, 60 square kilometres, is served by volunteers of the City of Gosnells Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade.

The Brigade is managed by the City of Gosnells and is generally well funded and trained. It is currently equipped with the following appliances (vehicles):

- 2 x Light Tankers (Toyota Landcruiser with approx. 550 litres of water)
- 1 x 3.4 Urban (Isuzu 4WD Truck carrying approx. 3000 litres of water)
- 1 x 12.2 Bulk Water Tanker (6x4 Isuzu Truck with 12,000 litres of water)
- 1 x Fire Support Vehicle (Ford Ranger Dual Cab)

Brigade Expectations

As a volunteer you are considered to be an “unpaid professional” and as such the brigade expects you to:

- Regularly attend training sessions,
- Attend the Emergency Operations Centre on Monday nights at 1830 hours for shift change as rostered,
- Respond to all incidents when rostered on shift,
- Arrange an equal rank replacement for you if you are unable to attend calls whilst on shift,
- Not consume alcohol or drugs whilst rostered on shift,
- Do your best at all times, and;
- Do what you can, when you can.

Rosters and Shifts

To ensure that volunteers are able to maintain other commitments outside of the brigade it operates a shift roster system. Once you have completed your training you will be assigned to a shift and have a mentor appointed to assist you in your training.

During your roster you should be available from 1700 hours until 0700 the next morning, and all day on weekends and public holidays. You are also expected to stay within 15 minutes of the fire station to ensure your response time is kept to a minimum.

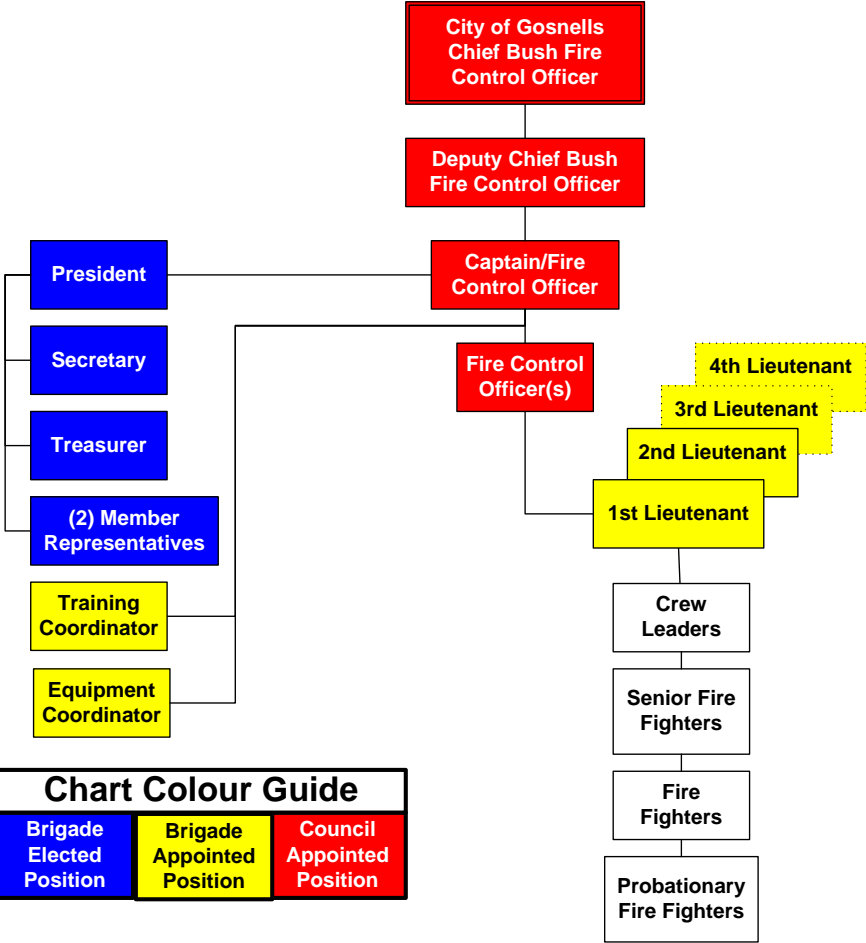
The Brigade operates a four shift system (plus a day shift) , this means in effect that you will be “on call” for week and then have 3 weeks off shift before coming on shift once again.

Most training is conducted during the months of May through to October when bush fires are less likely. The Brigade also conducts extensive Planned Burns both before and after the Fire season (November to April).

Due to the large scale of many incidents the duty shift often requires relief crews to replace them on the fire ground. This is arranged by calling in off duty personnel as required.

The Brigade attempts to keep time on the fire ground to a maximum of six to twelve hours and this could mean rotating all available crews over a period of several days.

Brigade Structure



| Chart Colour Guide | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Brigade Elected Position | Brigade Appointed Position | Council Appointed Position |

Membership & Training

Upon entering the Station you will be given an induction tour of the brigade facilities (station and vehicles, etc....). At this stage you will be required to attend an interview with the Captain, and another Brigade member.

This interview is to ensure you understand fully what is required and what to expect from the brigade and is also your chance to ask any questions you may have. You will then be asked to complete a medical history form, not to measure your physical fitness but to ensure that you have no pre-existing medical condition that may endanger yourself or others in your role as a volunteer. The Brigade will also conduct a Volunteer National Police Certificate on your behalf and at no cost to you.

Upon acceptance of your application you will be advised of the next upcoming basic training course that you can attend, this will provide you with basic knowledge that you will require to be a volunteer Fire fighter. It will cover areas such as safety, fire behaviour and suppression, communications, driving and equipment. Upon completing your training you will be given a mentor. This person will be an experienced Fire fighter that is capable of “showing you the ropes”, any questions you have regarding your training or role within the brigade should be directed toward them. Probationary periods normally range from 3 to 12 months whilst you complete a log book and gain operational experience and a working knowledge of fires and brigade appliances.

Fires & Other Incidents

Although the Brigade is a “Fire Service” it is sometimes called upon to perform other roles within the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES).

These could include assisting the Career Fire and Rescue Service with water supplies at a chemical spill or helping the State Emergency Service with searches, storm damage or floods. Primarily though our incidents are bush fires and we attend in excess of 100 calls per year.

When a fire is reported to the DFES Communications Centre via a “000” call it is logged and passed onto the appropriate Brigade/Station.

In our situation the Brigade is notified through the BART system, an app that each member places on their personal mobile phone. Incident details are provided through the BART app with each on duty member acknowledging their attendance through the app. The Duty Officer will then assign crew to appliances (vehicles) through the app, so each member can immediately see where they have been assigned.

Many of our calls are to assist other Brigades at fires within their districts; in this instance they usually specify what appliances are required.

Once a message has been received, all on duty volunteers travel in their own vehicles to the station. Please note that members are not permitted to break any road rules whilst travelling in personal vehicles.

Once on station, the Duty Officer will advise crews as to what road conditions they are to travel under. Basically “normal road” conditions mean that the vehicle must obey all traffic laws and drive normally to the incident. “Emergency road” or “Firecall” conditions means that the vehicle can travel with lights and sirens in operation and may contravene road rules so long as it is safe to do so. This also means that other road users should give way to the emergency vehicle.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is there an age limit?

Yes, you must be a minimum of 16 years old.

There is no current maximum age limit.

Do I need a licence?

Yes, all active members must hold a current WA manual "C" Car licence as a minimum. Truck licences are not required but are encouraged by the Brigade.

What will it cost to join?

Nothing. All equipment and training is provided to you at no cost.

What if I am unable to attend training due to other commitments?

You should contact the Captain or Training Coordinator and make alternative arrangements to attend training. Most training is flexible to a point.

What other training is available?

Once you have completed your basic training there will be many opportunities to attend more involved courses. These include: Advanced Driving; Heavy Vehicle Driving; First Aid; Advanced Firefighting and Incident Control.

How will being a volunteer affect my workplace?

There are no laws in place to give volunteers any privileges in the workplace. Some employers may be willing to discuss some form of flexi time if you are late or unable to attend after being out all night. This is something you should discuss with your employer on a personal level.

How can I get more information?

You can come down to the Emergency Operations Centre at 16 Horley Road, Beckenham, on Monday nights from 7pm or you can phone any of the following numbers:

- Captain on 6350 5910
- City of Gosnells 9397 3000