



CITY OF GOSNELLS



# Gosnells Volunteer Fire Service

Emergency Operations Centre  
Canning Park Avenue  
Maddington

PO Box 131  
Gosnells WA 6110

Captain - 0438 391 322



## **A word from the Gosnells Captain**

Welcome to the City of Gosnells Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade.

As Captain, I welcome you to the Brigade and hope that after reading this booklet you will choose to become a part of our professional team.

As a Brigade we attend mostly bush fires but also assist at various other incidents as requested through the Fire and Emergency Services Authority.

Your role as a volunteer fire fighter or communications operator will offer you many experiences and provide you with the opportunity to make a difference in our community and help protect the lifestyle 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.

Fire fighting is more than a hobby, 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, being a volunteer has been both challenging and rewarding for many years but the friends I have made, the skills I have gained and the experiences I have had all make my contribution seem worthwhile.

I hope your time with the Brigade will be as satisfying as mine has and I look forward to speaking to all applicants individually in the near future.

Michael Battrick  
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 500 litres of water)

1 x Rural 2.4 (Isuzu 4WD Truck carrying approx. 2000 litres of water)

1 x 12.2 Bulk Water Tanker (6x4 Isuzu Truck with 12,000 litres of water)

1 x Chief Vehicle (Nissan Pathfinder 4WD)



## 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 1900 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.
- 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 1530 hours until 0700 the next morning, and all day on weekends and public holidays. You are also expected to stay within City Of Gosnells boundaries where possible to ensure your response time to the fire station is kept to a minimum.

The Brigade operates a three or four shift system (A,B,C,D) , this means in effect that you will be “on call” for week and then have 2 -3 weeks off shift before coming on shift once again.

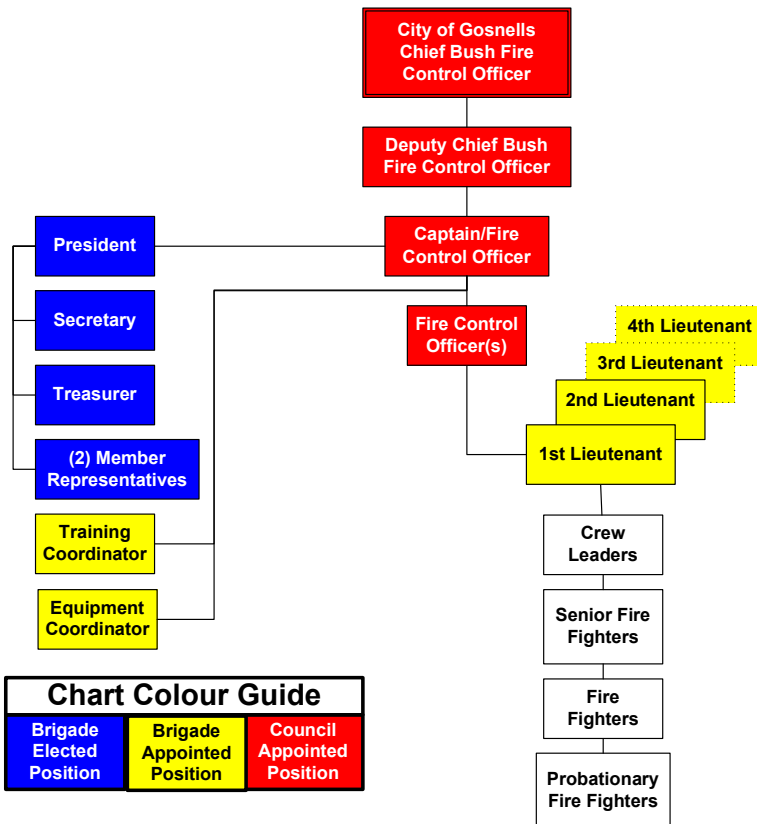
Most training is conducted during the months of May through to October when bush fires are less likely. The Brigade also conducts extensive Hazard Reduction Burns both before and after the Fire season (November to April).

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 eight hours and this could mean rotating all available crews over a period of several days.



## Brigade Structure





**The Chief or Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (CBFCO)** is appointed by the City Of Gosnells and is a full time paid employee. The Chief's role is to oversee the management and operation of the brigade.

**The Deputy or Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer (DCBFCO)** is appointed by the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer for a period of two (2) years. The Deputy's role is to assist the Chief and to liaise between the Chief and the Captain of the Brigade.

**The Captain** is appointed by the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer for a term of two (2) years and has the overall responsibility for the management/operations and leadership of the Brigade.

**Lieutenants** assist the Captain in leadership and management of the Brigade and are also responsible for the operation of their assigned shifts.

**Crew Leaders** are senior members who have been recognised for their expertise. They assist the Lieutenants in the management of the shift.

**Senior Fire Fighters** are Fire fighters who have served usually for a period of between two and three years and have shown the ability to lead small groups and have completed the Advanced Fire fighter Training Course. They also perform the role of Fire fighters.

**Fire fighters** are the people who fight the fires and it is expected that they will attend most fires on their shift. In addition, they are required to participate in controlled burns, attend training and assist in maintaining equipment.



## Membership and 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 Police Check 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.

### Other training courses

Once you have completed your Fire fighters Course you are eligible to apply to attend various other courses including:

- Crew Leader Advanced Bush Fire Fighting
- Sector Commander
- Ground Controller
- Machine Supervision
- Certificate of Fire Management
- Certificate of Fire Prevention
- Trainer/Assessor
- Advanced/Emergency/Off Road Driving
- First Aid



## Fires and 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 paged through a number of pagers. Each on duty member is issued with a pager, this will beep and provide a written message of the incident details, i.e. what the call is, where it is and if already attended by other Brigades, what appliances are required.

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 the pager has beeped, all on duty volunteers should get dressed in their Personal Protective Equipment and 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 assigns crews to each appliance (vehicle) and advises them 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 17 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 Fire fighting 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 station (Canning Park Avenue, Maddington) on Monday nights from 7pm. Or you can phone any of the following numbers:

- Captain on 0438 391 322
- City of Gosnells 9397 3000