

Dear Valued Bushfire Brigade Member

With the introduction of the Workplace Health and Safety Act 2000 (WHS Act) there are changes to the workplace health and safety laws in Western Australia.

This will slightly change the way you conduct business as volunteers, remembering that if you have good risk management and safety principals in place the legislation changes in the WHS Act will have minimal impact on day-to-day operations.

The WHS applies to all workplaces (both private and government operations) within Western Australia. The WHS Act provides a framework to protect the health, safety, and welfare of both those persons undertaking work and those persons who might be affected by that work. A Person conducting a business or undertaking has a duty of care, with Local Governments defined in this role. As Volunteers you are classed as workers meaning the same protection must be provided to you as Local Governments do to its paid workers.

It is required that all taking part in brigade activities exercise “due diligence” to ensure compliance with the WHS Act.

The process of eliminating or minimising health and safety risk is “Risk Management” and involves four steps:

- Identify hazards – find out what could cause harm.
- Assess the risks – understand the nature of the harm that could be caused by the hazard.
- Control the risks – implement the most effective control measure that is reasonably practicable in the circumstances.
- Review control measures – ensure they are working as planned.

As Volunteers you also have health and safety duties to:

- Take reasonable care for your own health and safety
- Take reasonable care to ensure they do not affect the health and safety of other people, for example, other volunteers, members of the public or clients you may be assisting.
- Comply, so far as you are reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given to you by the organisation and
- Cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure that the organisation has provided to you.

It’s important to remember that you as a volunteer are protected from liability from anything you do in “good faith” in carrying out any fire brigade activities under the Bushfire Act 1954. (WA).

For your convenience the local Bushfire Brigade Guidelines / Standard Operating Procedures can be located on the Shire website.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact your local Fire Control Officer or the Community Emergency Services Manager. Your commitment to our community is highly valued and recognised and we thank you for your commitment.

Yours sincerely



Julian Murphy
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

8 November 2022

Street Address: 52 Austral Terrace, Katanning WA 6317
Postal Address: PO Box 130, Katanning WA 6317
Phone: 9821 9999 Email: admin@katanning.wa.gov.au
Website: www.katanning.wa.gov.au
www.facebook.com/ShireOfKatanning