

## **Minutes CFA meeting**

**Licola 28 Jan 2003, Opened 8-00 pm**

**Present: Mark, Kevin and Bernard Coleman, Ray and Mary Winter, Ralph Barraclough, Robert Gilder, Kevin and Anthony Higgins.**

**Apologies from Buck, Claire and Willy.**

**The meeting was hastily organised to look at the DSE maps and discuss the "Fire Strategy Plan" for the Licola area should the fire going in the Alpine National Park burn into Licola. Of special concern was once again the fall back positions along Cobb Spur to the West of Licola for a fire that would threaten from the east or north east.**

**Mark Coleman was elected as acting secretary.**

***Moved: seconded***

**Minuets previous meeting read, accepted: *seconded***

**A motion was moved to endorse the previous meeting as there was some doubt that we may not have obtained a corium. Moved: *seconded*:**

**Matters arising from minutes: None.**

**General Business:**

**Captain outlined the "Fire Strategy Plan," from the combined Group meeting at Heyfield on Jan 27, 2003, that had been thrust on the Licola area by the DSE who would be in charge, as Licola was in the magic mile. Captain outlined how people had been hearing horror stories from other fires, of special interest was the Big Dessert, the lack of information, frustration with trying to obtain information, how a Government person was chased and caught following a suspicious fire on private land and the removal of their fire trucks when the fire came onto farmland leaving them to defend properties with whatever they could lay their hands on.**

**Captain outlined more problems from the North East and how gaps had been left at strategic points along rake hoe lines.**

**Captain asked the following:**

**(1) That all Government vehicles be monitored and suspicious activity be reported to Police and Captain.**

**(2) That if our truck went out with relief crews we had to endeavour to have at least one of our blokes on it to make sure we got it back.**

**Captain outlined how people had been abandoned at Benambra and said that all we could expect to protect us would be a few scrapes on the ground and a tanker to protect houses if we were lucky and said he was horrified. There was quite a bit of discussion on just what should be assets but Captain outlined this was a CFA definition of assets and this was the most valuable part of the property, usually the house. Brigade members were not at all happy with any of this.**

**There would be no burning back and Captain said that he believed there was a serious competency problem in the DSE.**

**There was also discussion how the DSE should be working with landholders doing controlled burning and that we should be pushing for more controlled burning.**

**Motions Passed:**

**(1) The Brigade calls on Premier Bracks to stop misleading Victorians that the weather is so much to blame for the failure of proper fuel reduction on Crown and public land that has lead to the present bushfire disaster.**

***Moved:                   seconded:***

**(2) The Brigade calls on Premier Bracks to protect communities from Department of Sustainability and Environment management of fires in the 1.6 kilometre zone surrounding Crown and Public land, when it has been repeatedly shown local people and properties are seriously disadvantaged by this Department in charge.**

***Moved:                   seconded***

**(3) The Brigade totally rejects the DSE proposal for "Fire Strategy Plan" for a fire entering Licola from the Crown and Public land as outlined at the meeting of Jan 27, 2003 at Heyfield and demands they present a plan with a more realistic approach.**

***Moved:                   seconded:                   unanimous.***

**(4) The Brigade believes the present "Fire Strategy Plan" is so bad it will threaten life and property that has been repeatedly saved from bushfires since settlement of the Licola area in 1863.**

***Moved:                   seconded:                   unanimous.***

**(5) The Brigade wishes it to be known that they are unaware of any houses sheds or outbuildings (apart from 2 unoccupied bush huts) ever being destroyed in the Licola area from any previous bushfire since 1863.**

**Moved:                    seconded:                    unanimous.**

**(6) The Brigade is concerned the present "Fire Strategy Plan" is more about protecting the Government from litigation than protecting landholders from being burnt out.**

**Moved:                    seconded:                    unanimous.**

**(7) The Brigade demands that any earthworks to protect private landholdings from a fire, amongst the ridiculous fuel build up, coming in from Crown and public land, should be on the Crown and public land and not private property.**

**Moved:                    seconded:                    unanimous.**

**(8) The Brigade expresses concern back burning is not being considered as a major tool of suppression in the Licola "Fire Strategy Plan."**

**Moved:                    seconded**

**(9) The Brigade believes that traditional back burning techniques would be even more effective if used in conjunction with modern water carrying air support.**

**Moved:                    seconded:                    unanimous.**

**(10) The Brigade expresses alarm at the allegations of unacceptable treatment of landholders and lessees in or bordering Crown and Public land, on the Bennison Plains 5 years ago, the Grampians 4 years ago, the big Dessert fire before Christmas, and the North East, Bogong and Benambra areas from the present fires.**

**Moved:                    seconded:                    unanimous.**

**The meeting finished 9-30 pm**

**Captain**

**Secretary**