

Scottish Wildfire Forum

Memorandum of Understanding

Introduction

The Scottish Wildfire Forum (“the Forum”) comprises of representatives from key organisations committed to developing a mutual understanding of, and a reduction in the number of unwanted wildfire occurrences in Scotland.

The aim of the Forum is to create a focus to enhance joint working between Fire and Rescue Services, agencies and those with land management interest within Scotland, that will be able to develop and communicate strategic wildfire protection and prevention initiatives to ministers, stakeholders and the wider community.

To progress the above aim, the Forum will work together to achieve the following objectives which will be delivered through the SWF Strategic Action Plan;

1. To actively promote the work of the Forum
2. To encourage relevant interest groups to join the Forum
3. To consult additional stakeholders as appropriate
4. To promote the formation of Wildfire Groups
5. Develop and promote a common understanding of wildfire related issues and procedures
6. To minimise environmental damage from wildfire
7. To advise on wildfire safety matters
8. Develop a wildfire prevention programme which will include education, hazard and risk reduction and enforcement issues
9. Identify suitable management systems for wildfire hazards and associated risks within Scotland
10. Improve wildfire suppression activities including fire plans, tactical skills, incident command skills and liaison

11. Identify specialist equipment availability, develop appropriate preparedness and mobilisation procedures, and other partnership arrangements
12. To stimulate research and development of wildfire related issues
13. To advise wildfire related national policy, strategy, and action plans
14. To communicate with Scottish Government, Ministers, other stakeholders and the media
15. To promote key wildfire issues and priorities for partner agencies
16. To assist with policy development within partner agencies

Our Commitment

In recognition of the above, we the undersigned pledge our co-operation, commitment and support to the Forum and undertake to use our best endeavours to;

- Take cognisance of the work of the Forum in the day-to-day business of our organisations
- As appropriate to the aims of our organisations identify sources of funding to assist the Forum deliver against the identified strategic aims
- Assist the Forum in delivering against the actions identified as part of the Strategic Action Plan 2009-2012

Governance of the Forum

The Forum will operate on the following principles:

Legal Status: The Forum will hold no legal status. In signing this Memorandum of Understanding members agree to work together to deliver the Forum's aim and address wildfire issues

Chair: Initially, meetings of the Forum will continue to be chaired by a senior fire service officer nominated by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Advisory Unit (SFRAU). Longer term arrangements for chairing the Forum will be agreed by the Forum itself. The Chair holds responsibility to report on the work of the Forum to the Chief Fire Officers Association.

Membership: Meetings will be open to Forum members as agreed by the SWF. Invitations to attend to discuss specific items of business may be extended to other organisations and individuals.

Meetings: Forum meetings will be determined by the Forum on an initial frequency of three times per year. Additional meetings to address specific matters may be held when necessary.

Working Group: Forum Working Groups have been established to undertake tasks of a specific nature. Membership of Working Groups comprise of representatives of organisations with expertise, interest in the identified task. Working Groups will report back to the wider Forum membership.

Administration: The administration function associated with the organising of meetings will be undertaken by the Chair. Longer term arrangements for the administration support function of the Forum will be agreed by the Forum itself.. Forum members will host meetings of the Forum as appropriate.

Budget: The Forum holds no budget and membership of the Forum is on a voluntary basis. Any funding requirements identified will be progressed through partnership arrangements amongst Forum members and other bodies as appropriate.

Voting: Every effort will be made to reach decisions by consensus but where a vote is required, the quorum will be 10. Each Forum member will have one vote and decisions will be taken on the basis of a simple majority. For the avoidance of doubt decisions taken by the Forum will not be binding upon Forum members, albeit members will be expected to support the Forum's deliberations in accordance with their commitment hereunder

Reporting: The Forum will produce reports for public circulation as appropriate, related to progress on the Strategic Action Plan and other matters relevant to its remit.

Relationship with other Groups: The Forum will promote new and existing relationships with other groups and forums operating in the wildfire arena.

Recognition: The Forum members agree that in conducting the Forum and in publicising its work, full recognition will be given to the support of each member.

Withdrawal from SWF: Any member will be entitled to withdraw from the Forum after giving written notice to its chair.

Review and winding-up: the Forum will review progress on delivery of its aims and objectives on a regular basis. The Forum will cease to exist if support from SFRAU is withdrawn or membership falls below 6 strategic partner organisations, or upon a majority vote of Forum members.

Our Commitment

In recognition of our aim and objectives we pledge our co-operation, commitment and support to the Scottish Wildfire Forum and will work together in order to deliver its strategic objectives;

Signature.....Print name.....Date

(Executive, Forum member organisation)

Organistaion.....



Signature

(Trevor Johnson) Date: 20th January 2010

(SWF Chair, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, HIFRS)