



**SCOTTISH WILDFIRE FORUM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
FRIDAY 9 MARCH 2018 AT 1200 HRS
MORAY CONFERENCE ROOM
INVERNESS**

MINUTES

Present:

Bruce Farquharson (Chair)	BF	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)
Michael Bruce	MB	Confederation of Forest Industries (Confor)
Andrew Denovan	AD	Highland Council
Robbie MacDonald	RM	SEPA
Janette Sutherland	JS	SAC
Ann McArdle	AM	Scottish Government
Mark Crowley	MC	Forestry
Graham Sullivan	GS	SNH
Eric Baird	EB	Scottish Countryside Rangers Association (SCRA)
Stephen Bray (via Telephone)	SB	MOD
Simon Thorp (via Telephone)	ST	Director of Heather Trust and Chairman of England & Wales Wildfire Forum
Helena Turnbull	HT	Note Taker
Kerry Mezals	KM	Note Taker

Item		Action
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies received from Dr Michael Foxley	
2.	MINUTES OF LAST MEETING These were read for accuracy, there was one change	
3.	ACTION LOG <u>Action Log Number 003 – Asset Database</u> BF advised this was now fully complete. This action was now closed. A new action from this however is for BF to communicate the Asset	BF

	<p>Database more widely to groups and how assets can be added to the database.</p> <p><u>Action Log Number 009 – Wildfire Tactical Advisor Role</u></p> <p>BF would like to close this item as there are now 2 Tactical Advisors in situ, with 4 more on track. It was agreed a brief description of what a Tactical Advisors is and their role would be created and provided to the group for feedback and approval prior to issuing. ST suggested it could be covered in the Muirburn supplementary which he is starting to put together. BF to ask the Tactical Advisors for them to put together.</p> <p><u>Action Log Number 013 – SWF Memo of Understanding</u></p> <p>This remains ongoing. It was agreed that BF would review the MoU and also produce a draft set of Aims and a Terms of Reference document, all of which would be circulated for the Forum's feedback so at the next meeting the documents can be agreed and signed off.</p> <p><u>Action Log Number 015 – Communications Strategy</u></p> <p>It was agreed that there was a need to have a better communications chain than is currently in place. There needs to be a chain which can utilised to get the information out. The Forum members are to go away and provide feedback, comment and/or observations.</p> <p>MB raised the subject of the recent fires in both Skye and Barra and explained his actions following the fire in Appin last week. IW confirmed that the crofters were happy with the warnings that they receive and that Skye and Glenelg picked up on it. BF highlighted that the key is getting the right information, to the right people at the right time and also to eradicate any errors in the chain.</p> <p>At present MB produces the note for issue and then gets approval from SFRS for its issue. However there is a need to eradicate the single point of failure, therefore there needs to be a system in place, in partnership with SFRS, that takes account of current procedures, duty rotas etc. BF highlighted that the job of the Forum is to select the right information and which people it goes to. He is currently trying to get a suite of documents which would be tailored to meet the needs and are appropriate. The aim of all of this is to reduce the instances of wildfires.</p>	<p>BF</p> <p>BF</p> <p>ALL</p>
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	<p>The Tactical Advisors will become involved so that the responsibility will no longer sit solely with MB.</p> <p>BF will circulate round documents to the Forum for their feedback.</p> <p>ST suggested also possibly setting up a Twitter account, which MB confirmed he would look at as well as becoming involved in the reformatting of the website.</p> <p><u>Action Log Number 024 – Emergency Planners</u></p> <p>BF had discussed with MB and a couple of Emergency Planners. BF proposed that this be closed. It was agreed to be closed, however an action which arose was that Emergency Planners should be included in communications.</p> <p><u>Action Log Number 033 – Promote Appropriate Health and Safety at Wildfires</u></p> <p>BF and MB had discussed. There is a new FISA produced. This item was closed.</p> <p><u>Action Log Number 037 – SWF National Conference 2017</u></p> <p>This action was closed.</p> <p><u>Action Log Number 039 – Software Platform</u></p> <p>BF advised this remains ongoing. The Pilot Project had been done but has remained stagnant for nearly 2 years. He proposed that it should now go ahead and see what happens, suggesting that an observation pilot of a small area in Aberdeenshire to replicate. However this would require some funding. SB advised that Northumberland had rolled it out and he could share their plans.</p> <p><u>Action Log Number 40 – Fire Plan Template</u></p> <p>BF will recirculate to everyone due to there being new members on the Forum. TB confirmed that he would send a list of co-ordinators of the Grouse Management groups.</p> <p>TB left the meeting at this point.</p> <p>This Action was now closed.</p> <p>MB would like to put back on the Agenda, Joint Training Exercises.</p>	<p>BF</p> <p>MB</p> <p>BF</p> <p>BF/MB</p> <p>SB</p> <p>BF TB</p> <p>Note Taker</p>
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	<p><u>Action Log Number 42 – Muirburn Code Review</u></p> <p>This has been reviewed and issued. The Action is now closed.</p> <p><u>Action Log Number 44 – Controlled Burning Training Event</u></p> <p>Approval has now been received to hold an annual event in May with Northumberland. BF advised that there was only a small number who were allowed to burn. The Service was happy for their personnel to observe but not to physically burn.</p> <p>This Action is now closed.</p> <p><u>Action Log Number 45 – Fire Danger Warnings</u></p> <p>This was discussed earlier.</p> <p><u>Action Log Number 46 – SWF Website</u></p> <p>This item was on the Agenda.</p> <p><u>Action Log Number 47 – SWF Newsletter</u></p> <p>This has only been issued once and it was rather large and cumbersome. It was suggested that perhaps an E-News approach would be better. It was agreed that a Newsletter should be a short document, of perhaps 4 pages and issued more frequently and used to highlight the Aims and Objectives of the Forum, the membership and an article on the Tactical Advisors and what they do. BF advised that SFRS media team could become involved in this publication.</p>	
4.	<p>MEMBERSHIP – Executive Committee & General Committee</p> <p>BF asked whether the committee structures were correct in terms of the correct people attending and who was missing, albeit he hadn't seen a General Committee take place.</p> <p>It was agreed that this would be looked at off table, with a view to refreshing the correct names for the representative organisations and from there identify where there are gaps.</p>	ALL
5.	<p>REVIEW OF 2017 FIRE DANGER WARNINGS & PLANNING FOR 2018</p> <p>MB confirmed that they have a system which works and it</p>	

	continues to improve all the time.	
6.	<p>MUIRBURN CODE UPDATE</p> <p>ST confirmed that the Code had been launched in September. He also confirmed that it was published on the website.</p> <p>Events are taking place and there has been Burning Workshops also. There will also be notifications going out with regards to the Code. ST now wants to look at a supplementary information which will accompany the Code and develop it further. The aim of the information is that it is adapted and kept up to date as the process of Muirburn evolves and provides additional information in addition to that contained the Code.</p> <p>ST confirmed that input from both SFRS and the Wildfire Forum would be required as it will help to bring all the threads together.</p>	
7.	<p>WILDFIRE CONFERENCE 2018 – REPORT</p> <p>ST was pleased with how the Conference went and also the balance between Speakers, Workshops and Stakeholders. ST would send a link to BF of the booklet from the Conference.</p> <p>He advised however there were missing stakeholders, i.e. Government and Agency Staff, Home Office, Insurance etc.</p> <p>MB confirmed from an attendees point of view the Conference was well run and he wished to record thanks to Andy Elliott and his team. He had enjoyed the range of speakers and felt that progress was continuing to be made. The Conference allows an opportunity to have wider discussions at both national and international levels.</p>	
8.	<p>WILDFIRE CONFERENCE 2019 – UPDATE</p> <p>ST advised that it was proposed to stay with the rotation of Conference and that it would be Wales. There has been initial discussions with South Wales and they are keen to take it on. The theme will be Prescribed Burning, there is a possibility that there will be feeder workshops but more discussion is required regards this.</p> <p>The forum were happy for Wales to take this on and to support them.</p>	

9.	<p>WILDFIRE RESEARCH MEETING, LONDON 10 JANUARY 2018 – UPDATE</p> <p>MB had attended and whilst there had been some people from Scotland and Wales the majority of attendees were from English universities and is disappointed that they aren't picking up the baton in terms of research. MB felt that the problem was the lack of support from Scottish Government.</p> <p>EB advised that research can be initiated but have to wait until someone takes it on.</p> <p>Discussion ensued, it was agreed that the key activities of the Forum would be to decide on research priorities and look for a sponsor.</p>	ALL
10.	<p>NATIONAL RISK REGISTER – WILDFIRE POSITION</p> <p>BF advised that ST had sent an email to some to advise what will be on the register and to ask SFRS what part they play in the national risk register. BF confirmed that he sat on the Scottish Board for the Scottish Risk Register, this register had been taken from the National Risk Register and adapted to better reflect the situation in Scotland.</p> <p>BF asked ST if there was still an opportunity to contribute given the timescale had been missed. ST confirmed he would be speaking to the Home Office in 10 days time and thought it would be useful if the Forum contributed. ST would circulate to BF the submission which had been prepared. From that the Forum would then be able to add or support on what had been said and also echo with Scottish Government.</p>	ST BF
11.	<p>SWF WEBSITE – FEEDBACK</p> <p>BF advised that the platform is currently empty. He would recirculate the URL and ask the Forum members thoughts on what should be on it. The website has an important part to play but only if the right information is on it. This will then be picked up at the next meeting.</p>	ALL
12.	<p>SWF – PLANNER</p> <p>BF confirmed that the Forum required to have Terms of Reference, a Memorandum of Understanding and a Planner which aims and objectives, along with timelines. BF will populate and circulate the Forum members for comment, feedback and any additions.</p>	BF

13.	<p>SLA – WILDFIRES IN SCOTLAND – INFORMATION SHEET</p> <p>MB had previously prepared an information note on what to do for wildfires. This could be made into a joint briefing note of the Scottish Wildfire Forum. The opportunity is there to circulate a briefing note and this can be turned around quickly. BF confirmed that this was a good idea. MB and EB to look at producing.</p>	MB/EB
14.	<p>A.O.C.B.</p> <p>14.1 <u>Scottish Countryside Rangers</u></p> <p>EB whilst not having anything to raise, wished to make it known to the Forum that the Scottish Countryside Rangers was a source of information, support and are available as a communication channel.</p> <p>14.2 <u>SFRS Transformation</u></p> <p>GS advised that SNH may take the opportunity to comment on the SFRS Transformation which is currently out to consultation. BF advised that at the next Forum meeting, if it was useful, he could provide an overview of what route transformation was taking within SFRS.</p> <p>14.3 <u>Firewise – Urban Heath Partnership</u></p> <p>There was a discussion about whether it would be beneficial to look at Firewise, which is high fuel located next to heavily populated areas, however it was agreed that rather than forming a Firewise community it would be prudent to adopt the concept rather than forming formal communities. BF would pick this up off table with MB.</p> <p>14.4 <u>Stakeholders Event</u></p> <p>BF had received a communication from Dr Michael Foxley regarding a stakeholders event and believed this would be very useful. The Forum agreed that this was something which should be progressed and that the Forum put up some money, with the hope that other agencies would also do the same. It was suggested that this was done before the Muirburn in 2019, in either Dingwall or Fort William.</p> <p>14.5 <u>Wildfire Forum in Northern Ireland</u></p>	<p>BF</p> <p>BF/MB</p>

	<p>MB advised that he, along with ST, Rob Gazzard and others were hoping to establish a Wildfire Forum in Northern Ireland, along with a national wildfire strategy.</p>	
15.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>It was proposed that the next meeting take place in mid June. BF will circulate a doodle poll to identify a date. It was confirmed the meeting would take place in Inverness.</p>	