

032	Bush Fire Brigade Grievance Process and Disciplinary Action	V1 Current
-----	---	------------

PURPOSE

Objective

The purpose of this policy is to establish an environment where members of Volunteer Bush Fire brigades of the City of Busselton can expect to be treated equally and with respect.

SCOPE

Policy Statement

Through the application of this Policy, Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades of the City of Busselton shall operate in a manner that affords respect to all brigade members and provides for a fair process for dealing with grievances within the brigade.

POLICY CONTENT

1. Grievance Process / Disciplinary Action

- (1) All Brigades, through their management and members shall commit to providing an environment in which all persons can expect to be treated equally and with respect.
- (2) All members upon joining a brigade shall be provided with a copy of this Policy as part of their induction into the brigade.
- (3) A grievance is any serious allegation, dispute or claim, arising during any training or activity involving the brigade, in relation to an act committed by a member. Examples that may be considered a grievance include acts that—
 - (a) constitute a breach of the Rules that may be from time to time be formed by a brigade,
 - (b) contravene the values of the Rules or the *Code of Conduct Policy*,
 - (c) bring the brigade, the City of Busselton Volunteer Bush Fire Service, and or the City of Busselton into disrepute;
 - (d) contravenes any reasonable direction given by the brigade's Fire Control Officer, Captain or the delegated authority of the committee of the Brigade;
 - (e) shows disregard for brigade regulations, City of Busselton policies or procedures;
 - (f) jeopardises the safety of the member or others; and/or
 - (g) results in the member being convicted of an offence for which an offender may be imprisoned.
- (4) Where a grievance arises, an investigation must be conducted by the Chairman of the Brigade and the CBFCO if necessary, or the CBFCO if the grievance involves the Chairman, or by the Chief Executive Officer or their nominee if the grievance involves the CBFCO.
- (5) During the investigation it may be determined that the member be suspended from all or part of brigade activities, subject to the CBFCO's approval. If a member is to be suspended during the investigation the CBFCO shall notify the member in writing or email of the terms of the suspension, including the reason for the suspension and the time period. The time period for suspension during an investigation, should not exceed three (3) consecutive months.

When an investigation is completed a report will be provided by the investigating officer to the CBFCO outlining the process of the investigation, the conclusions drawn and any recommended action.

- (6) Disciplinary action in relation to the member may include—
 - (a) suspension of membership;
 - (b) termination of membership; or
 - (c) any other reasonable disciplinary action as determined by the Brigade Executive Committee in consultation with the CBFCO.
- (7) If a disciplinary suspension is imposed, the CBFCO must notify the member in writing or email that they are suspended, including the suspension period and reason for suspension. Suspension may be from complete or specific brigade duties and activities.
- (8) The period of disciplinary suspension shall be determined by the CBFCO in consultation with the Chairman and the Brigade Executive Committee.
- (9) On completion of the suspension period the member may be required to undertake refresher training before resuming active fire fighting duties which will be supervised and or acknowledged by the Captain.
- (10) If a membership is to be terminated, the Chairman with the approval of the CBFCO will notify the member in writing or email, and provide a reason for termination.
- (11) Where a membership is terminated, all property owned by the local government shall be returned to the local government within fourteen (14) days of giving notice. Failure to meet these conditions may require the local government to seek reimbursement of costs against the member.

2. Termination by the Member

- (1) A member can decide to resign from brigade activities and terminate their membership by providing written notification to the Brigade Executive Committee.
- (2) Where a member resigns, all property owned by the local government shall be returned to the local government within fourteen (14) days of giving notice. Failure to meet these conditions may result in the local government to seeking reimbursement of costs against the member.

3. Rights of a Volunteer Member

- (1) A member shall not be suspended or dismissed from any brigade duty without an opportunity to defend the allegation.
- (2) Any member may lodge a written objection to the CBFCO should they consider they have been unfairly dealt with by the Brigade Executive Committee.
- (3) The CBFCO shall consider the objection and deal with it in consultation with the Brigade Executive Committee. This may include either—
 - (a) dismissing the objection;
 - (b) varying the decision;
 - (c) revoking the original decision;
 - (i) imposing an independent decision; or
 - (ii) referring the matter back to the Brigade Executive Committee to reconsider the decision.

Policy Reference No. – 032

Owner Unit – Ranger & Emergency Services

Originator - Ranger & Emergency Services Coordinator

Policy approved by – Council

Date Approved – 12 August 2015

Review Frequency - As required

Related Documents - Acts, Regulations and Local Laws administered by the City

Background/History -

History

Council Resolution	Date	Information
C1508/216	12 August, 2015	Date of implementation Version 1