COMMUNITY INFORMATION & SOCIAL CENTRE 2024/25

This template that may be used by any community. Balingp/local contact details have been deleted.
 If you want a MS Word copy, please email balinguppa@outlook.com.

Aim. The aim of the Community Information & Social Centre (CISCO) is to provide a venue where members of the community can gather together to provide mutual support during an emergency (could be during a fire, storm, heat wave, major power outage or incident).

Community Information & Social Centre (CISCO) Guidelines

Activation. There are a number of scenarios that could result in the activation of the CISCO and some examples are given in the table below.
If the CISCO is activated, see the recommended process at Annex A.

Authorisation. Any of the CISCO member (see page 1) can initiate a request to open the CISCO.
Contact telephone numbers are to be updated in November each year by Balingup Progress Association Resilience Group.

Possible Activation Scenarios:

Situation	Possible action
Power is on but there are bushfires or other threats within 30km of Balingup.	Consideration would be given to opening the Recreation Centre depending on the level of concern in the community. Unless requested by the Department of Communities or Shire Incident Management Team, it would not be opened if the town was subject to an Emergency Warning (including Watch and Act).
Power is off. Check Western Power website. https://www.westernpower.com.au/faults-outages/power-outages/ Will it be off for more than 6 hours? No⟶ 　　　　　Yes 　　　　　↓	If power will be restored in less than 6 hours, make a decision based on the conditions at the time. If it is a very hot day, you may decide to open the Centre, even if the power is expected back on in a few hours. In this case, it should not be necessary to organize the generator.
If power will be off for more than 6 hours, and you have the resources available, open the Recreation Centre using the process at Annex A.	Serious consideration should be given to organizing a generator.

See Annex B & B1 for phone/contact details.

Telecommunications. The mobile phone tower and telephone exchange (landlines) have a maximum of 8 hours battery backup. Telstra will try to provide a generator to the mobile phone tower but this cannot be relied on. Balingup should assume that after 8 hours, all usual telecommunications will be lost (may be sooner).

The Recreation Centre has a Sky Muster (pop up internet) system that can be accessed using the process at Annex D. According to the provider, between 40-100 mobile phones can be used at any one time – phone users must be within 100 metres of the Recreation Centre and do not have to be inside.

A satellite phone is available for community use and is stored in the Recreation Centre bar. See Annex E for instructions how to access.

Annual Preparatory Actions

The following actions are to be taken by the Balingup Progress Association Resilience Group in November each year. See Annex J for details.

Contact numbers to be updated and a copy provided to the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup Community Emergency Services Manager (CESM) and Local Recovery Coordinator (LRC)	*This list is not for general distribution.*
One person is to be nominated as first point of call for Balingup on the Shire list.	If the authorities wish to activate the CISCO or get information out to the community, they will call this number.
Liaise with Balingup Bushfire Ready Facilitator to update the Neighbourhood Phone Tree contact numbers. Put list of Phone Tree street coordinators at Post Office & General Store.	See Annex K for Phone Tree process.
Check that the Emergency Box (stored in the Recreation Centre) has the following: • copy of these instructions with updated contact details • record of attendance registers (see Annex G-1) • hard copy road maps of the area to handout to non residents (showing possible exit routes from the town).	
Offer members of the Resilience group and other key persons the opportunity to meet and review: • these procedures. • contents of emergency box in Recreation Centre and location of CISCO sign and whiteboard, and • how to access the satellite phone.	
Provide the General Store with a list of people authorized to sign out the Recreation Centre key.	

Community Information & Social Centre
Activation Process

IMPORTANT: If an Emergency WA Incident Advice is active, the CISCO is to comply with all instructions issued by the Incident Management Team (Shire Executive). LEMA and Local Recovery Plans take precedence over the CISCO activation process.

	Step	Comment
1	Contact a member of Recreation Centre Committee (BADSA) and check Centre is available.	See Annex B for contact details. There will be no hire fee charged by BADSA but it must be left clean after use. A key to the Recreation Centre is held at the General Store. This key ring also holds keys to the Balingup Oval chain locks.
2	Check Emergency WA https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au/ • If an Emergency Incident is active in the Balingup townsite, consult the Shire Executive (Director Operations). • If not active, follow steps below.	Shire contact is Director Operations. See Annex B for contact details. **The CISCO is to comply with all instructions issued by the Incident Management Team (Shire Executive)**
3	Request the Shire arrange delivery of the generator (on trailer) from Balingup BFB Fire Shed. Check the fly-wire cable is attached to the generator. This generator uses diesel fuel. *The person who delivers the generator is responsible for ensuring its safe return when the CISCO closes*.	The Shire, or a nominated representative, will deliver the generator. If a generator is not available, consider sourcing a smaller generator. See Annex C-1 for details.
4	Contact CWA and ask if they can provide volunteers.	CWA will pay for the purchase of light refreshments. If needed, any member of the BPA Executive can authorize CWA to buy food at the General Store on the BPA account. If CWA cannot provide volunteers, and you are not able to source other people to help, do not open the Centre.

5	Advise the Shire Local Recovery Coordinator and key local businesses that the Centre will be opened. See Annex J ("Message to key local facilities") for sample notice to be used.	Shire (information only) during working hours, Local Recovery Coordinator. *Note: Also let them know when you are closing down for the night.*
6	Open the Emergency Box (stored in the Recreation Centre) and check contents.	See Annex H for list of contents.
7	Put attendance register for all people accessing the Centre (including volunteers) at entrance. Also display sign at Annex I. Make sure they know this is NOT an Evacuation Centre.	See Annex G for attendance register. Hard copies of Annex G & I are in Emergency Box in Recreation Centre (main hall – metal cabinet).
8	Check that the Sky Muster unit is operating properly. See Annex D-1.	If not, call 1300 626 267 (use the satellite phone if necessary). Note: A Starlink satellite unit will be also installed in the Recreation Centre late 2024. See Annex D-2 for details.
9	If the generator is used, go to the store room in the Recreation Centre Main Hall and collect plastic storage box marked "BPA Emergency Kit".	This storage box contains: • 20 ltr fuel drum (empty) • 1 trailer/generator lock (to unlock, use pass code ....)
10	Put "Community Information and Social Centre - Open" sign out (near highway). Write notice on community whiteboard in main street.	Sign is stored in the Recreation Centre on top of the metal cupboard.
11	Ensure that the generator is refueled regularly and **return the generator at the earliest opportunity**.	Generator fuel – to be charged to Balingup Progress Association. The 22kva generator (Fire Shed) is diesel. **Always check the type of fuel to be used – it may vary.**
12	At night, use your discretion depending on the circumstances. It is not intended for people to stay overnight in the CISCO – if they cannot return to their home, try to arrange for them to be billeted with a community member.	When you close the CISCO: - tell the local shops etc - bring in the CISCO 'open' sign and update the town whiteboard - put a whiteboard sign outside the Recreation Centre telling people where to get help/ how to use their mobile phones. - put a notice in the Recreation Centre door telling people how to access Sky Muster.
13	If someone is sick or too frail to remain, liaise with Donnybrook Hospital and try to arrange for the person to be transferred there.	For contact details, see Annex B.

14	Please make sure the Centre is left clean and tidy.	If necessary, BPA will pay for the cleaning (or Department of Communities will pay if an evacuation centre is activated)
15	After the event, contact the Shire Local Recovery Coordinator and ask if they want a copy of the attendance register.	These records may be useful if the LRC wants to contact any of the people affected by the emergency.

Important!

In the event of an Emergency Incident, the LEMA and Local Recovery Plans will take precedence over the CISCO process.

If Department of Communities and/or the Shire Incident Management Team advise the Centre is to be used as an Evacuation Centre, follow their instructions - provide what help they may need and vacate the Centre if directed to do so. When activated, Communities do walk-through, checklist and handover with Recreation Centre or Shire staff. Any damage or cleaning prior to activation is responsibility of CISCO.

If members of the media ask questions – see guide at Annex F

Don't forget we have lots of tables/chairs and other useful equipment stored in the Small Farm Field Day shed and Carnivale grounds. Keys to those sheds are hold by SFFD and Carnivale volunteers (see Annex B) .

Parking.

Keep bays at front of Recreation Centre free for disabled parking (Carnivale has signs).
If parking on the Oval required, make sure 50% of the oval is kept clear for helicopter landings. Keys to the Oval gates are held at the General Store, Visitor Centre and in a lock box at the Recreation Centre. Consider asking Shire to open showers and/or stop/start sprinklers at the Oval.

Offers of Assistance
Keep a record of residents wishing to offer help:
• skills or equipment to help with the clean up, or
• provide emergency supplies (food, blankets, generators etc), or
• offer emergency accommodation for people affected by the emergency, or
• provide child care for people involved in the clean up,
• provide medical assistance.
Note: People with medical training, wishing to assist, need to provide identification (eg drivers license) and applicable medical registration details.
 Utilise Dept Communities "Offers of Assistance" Form (in Emergency Box) to assist in the management of spontaneous volunteers.

Useful community contacts:

Balingup Bushfire Brigade	Insert contact details	
Keys to the Recreation Centre bar		
SFFD		
Carnivale		
First aid		
Bus license		
General Store		
Horse float & paddock		
Portable yards		
First Aid		

Shire & Emergency Services -Not for general distribution

Shire Local Recovery Coordinator	Insert contact details	
Director Operations (24/7)		
Shire Ranger		
Tuia Lodge		
Donnybrook Hospital		
DFES Regional Coordinator		
Community Emergency Services Manager		
DFES Community Preparedness Advisor		
Chief Bushfire Control Officer		
Shire President		

AGENCY NAME	LOCAL CONTACT NUMBER	
Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES)	9771 6800 (Manjimup Office)	
DBCA – Department of Parks and Wildlife	9752 5555 (Blackwood District, Busselton)	9731 6232 (Kirup Work Centre)
WA Police Force (WAPOL)	9732 3333 (Donnybrook Office)	
Department of Communities Relief and Support available 24/7	0418 943 835	
Department of Communities Regional Coordinator	64141762 or 0427 476 658 (Regional Coordinator)	

The Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) updates their contact details in August each year however these numbers are not for public distribution. The following have access to the LEMC list:
- Balingup Progress Association President or Secretary,
- Shire Community Emergency Services Manager,
- Shire Local Recovery Coordinator
- Chief Bushfire Control Officer,
- Shire President.

Query	Who to contact
For general emergency assistance	000
For emergency assistance to deal with property damage.	Call the SES on 13 25 00
If someone is injured or sick (non-life threatening).	Call Health Direct 1800 022 222
For problems with electrical supplies. (Have your account number ready).	Western Power 13 13 51
Problems with scheme water supply. (Have your account number ready).	Water Corporation 13 13 75
Telephone (to set up call forwarding to another number)	Telstra: 13 22 03
Residents needing help: • Containing roaming stock, or replacing fences, or • To clear fallen trees across roads.	Call the Shire on 9780 4200
• Dealing with injured wildlife	Call DPAW
• Assistance with emergency accommodation, childcare, food etc	Call Department of Communities.

- St John Ambulance (non emergency)   131233 or 97914999 (Donnybrook)
- Police   131444 or 97323333 (Donnybrook)
- Poisons Information   131126
- Rural Aid - ruralaid.org.au,
    - Counseling: 1300 175 594;
    - Support with finances, water, fodder, and volunteer assistance:1300 327 624
- Lifeline - 13 11 14
- Crisis Care - 1800 199 008
- Rural Link - offers specialist after-hours mental health support for people in rural communities: 1800 552 002
- Ease WA- for assistance with horse evacuations, animal feed vouchers, rolls of hay and other care: 0436 389 445 or 0458 203 887
- Emergency Relief and Support number which is available 24/7 is 0418 943 835 (Metro based and available 24/7).
- Department of Communities - Disaster Relief Hotline: 1800 032 965
- Drinking water may be unsuitable for drinking, please visit www.healthywa.gov.au for information including rainwater tanks after a bushfire.
- Help with fencing - Blazeaid set up a camp to assist with volunteers for fencing. In the meantime, notify the local recovery coordinator at the Shire regarding your fence damage and loss.
- Department of Agriculture - land management advice after a fire: www.agric.wa.gov.au/fire/farm-recovery-after-fire---western-australia

How to order a Generator

The Recreation Centre building needs a 15kva, 20kva or 22kva generator to be able to run power points, lights, air conditioning, refrigerators etc. When a generator is required, any of the following is authorised to arrange for its use:

• BPA President, Vice President or Secretary
• BADSA President or Secretary

A 22kva generator was purchased by the Shire in 2023 and is mounted on a trailer for portability. It is stored at Balingup Fire Station. The instructions below are written to suit that 22kva generator.

Step	Action	Details
1	Contact the Shire and ask them to deliver the 22kva generator.	For Shire contact details, see Annex B This task may only be carried out by Shire or their designated representative. If the generator is not available, Skymuster can still be powered using a small generator (details at Annex C-1).
2	Check that the General Store can supply diesel fuel and top up the generator. Ask that they charge the BPA account.	
3	Collect the security lock/lock and fuel can (in the metal cabinet from the Recreation Centre sports hall). Purchase one 20 liter drum of diesel fuel from the General Store. Charge to Balingup Progress Association.	The 22Kva generator uses diesel fuel. The fuel capacity of the generator is 154 liters, and this should run for 42 hours at 75% load.
4	• The generator can be located at either of the two locations as shown in the image. • Check and inspect the site for any hazards prior to installing. (Be aware of soft ground conditions in winter on the East side of the building). • Park and secure generator at designated location/s (using the chain and padlock collected at Step 3).	**Red lines = path of access** **Yellow rectangles = generator locations (2 options)** **Green lines = Fly wires to connect to external power socket**
5-15	Steps 5 – 15 not on website. contact balinguppa@outlook.com for details.	

If a Generator is Not Available – Sky Muster

If the generator is not available, it is important to remember that the Sky Muster communications system only needs a simple 240v power point to be able to use it. If you can source a small (5 or 6 kw) generator and long extension cord, you can keep power up to the Sky Muster unit.

Sky Muster is fitted to the wall inside the Recreation Centre bar and only a very limited number of Recreation Centre committee staff have a key. Contact the Balingup & District Sports Association (BADSA) President to access this area. See Annex B for contact details.		Skymuster unit

Sky Muster (pop up internet) system access

This service can be accessed inside and outside; within around 100 metres of the Recreation Centre. Sky Muster unit is not to be turned off – it is left on 365 days a year (for automatic updates).

Mobile calls need to be made either:
*   over the wi-fi calling function on a mobile phone (*see Note 1)* , or
*   using internet based applications such as WhatsApp, Messenger, Facetime, Zoom, Skype etc

Note 1: First, check you have wifi calling turned on:

iPhone	*Android/Galaxy*
Go to Settings	*Go to Settings*
Mobile	*Connections*
Turn on wifi calling to make calls as usual.	*Turn on wifi calling to make calls as usual.*

When you have confirmed that wifi calling is turned on:
*   Go to "Settings" on your phone, tablet or laptop.
*   Select "WiFi"
*   Select "Community WiFi" (no password is required)
*   Wait for page to load
*   Click "Get on line"
*   Agree to terms of use
*   You are now online and can use the internet.

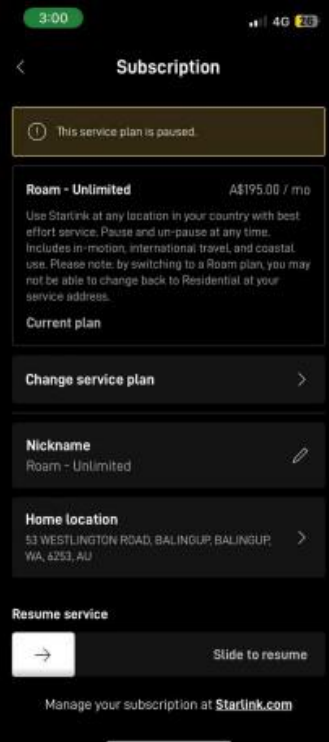If it is not working, it probably means we have not been able to get a generator.

The Skymuster hardware is fixed to the wall of the Recreation Centre bar. Only the following have keys to this area:

BADSA Secretary.	Insert details	
Bar officer		

Any problems – use the Balingup community satellite phone to call 1300626267 (Press 2 for Community Wifi Support Centre)

For community emergency updates, see www.emergency.wa.gov.au

Starlink (note, Starlink can be run off a car battery)

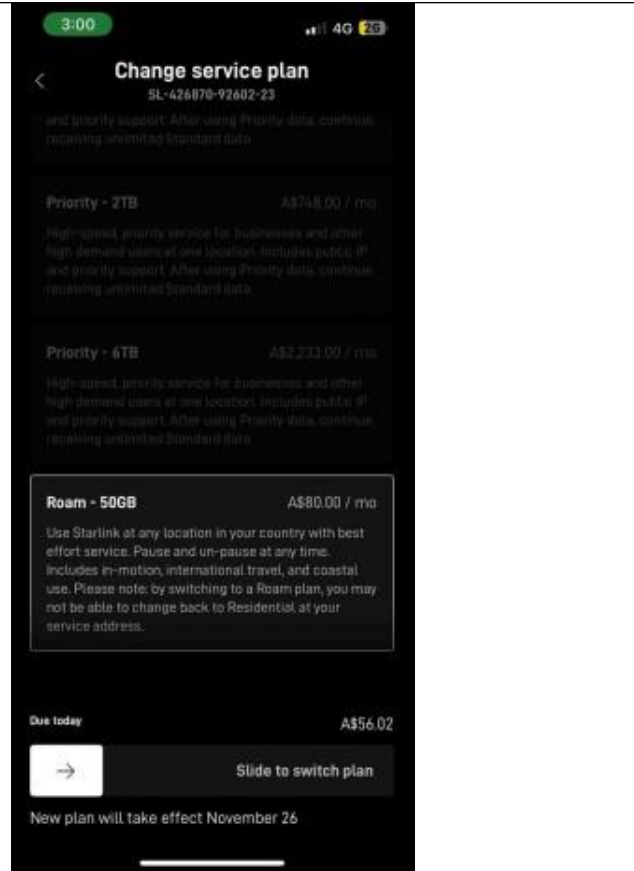|	
The Starlink system will be installed at the Recreation Centre, and ready to use straightaway if needed. People registered with Starlink to activate are as follows: • ....insert details • Recreation Centre (BADSA dedicated phone). Instructions on how to activate in Emergency as follows: 1. Switch the starlink system on at the mains outlet. 2. Go to your starlink App on your phone and sign in. 3. Click on the "Human" Icon on the top right	
Scroll Down and click on "Change Service Plan	

Scroll all the way down and Select "Roam 50gb".

Swipe the arrow to the right.

You will be charged for one month's usage ($80) even if you turn it on for one day.

Remember to turn off after use!!!

To deactivate - click on human icon, and then "Pause Subscription".

Satellite Phone – How to Access and Operate

The phone number of the Balingup satellite phone is ……………	Turn on using this button
DO NOT PRESS THE SOS BUTTON WHICH IS NEXT TO THE ON/OFF SWITCH!!!	
Pull out the antenna, take the phone outside and check the signal. Antenna *You can only get a clear signal outside –no verandah, no trees – clear line of sight is needed to the satellite.*	
Make a call in the same way as a regular mobile phone. Note: Calls cost around $2.00 per minute.	
If the battery is flat and there is no power, use the 12V charger and charge it up in a vehicle.	If the signal is poor, plug in the external antenna.

Media response

In the event of an Emergency WA Incident – the Shire President is the only authorised spokesperson for staff and volunteers. Direct all enquiries to the Shire President.

In any other event - the Shire President is the approved spokesperson for the Shire. If not able to contact, the community member in charge of the CISCO may choose to speak to the press BUT:
- Have a strategy in place to speak to the media – one central point where people can contact for information. Stick to the basics:
  - What we know
  - What we don't know
  - What we are doing
  - What we want you to do.
- Any time you talk to the media about donations, reinforce this message.
  - Only accepting money.
  - Do not want physical donations – we'll ask for it if we need it.

For community emergency updates, see www.emergency.wa.gov.au

Record of attendance

Balingup Information and Social Centre
Date:

Important: This is NOT an Evacuation Centre.

Arrival time	Name/ Address	Departure time	Planned destination	Contact No	Comments
1030am	Jen Evans 822 Glenarden Road		822 Glenarden Road Balingup	0307 341 234	CWA volunteer
10.45am	Mary Smith 4 Dearle Street	12.20pm	4 Dearle Street Balingup	97641250	Needs transport
10.50am	Jim & Sue Black 122 Jayes St	12.45pm	Staying in Donnybrook	97312000	
10.50am	Tim & Fay Jones 4 Forrest St			0400 222 666	

For blank template, see 'Annex G-1 CISC check in' sheet.

Department of Communities
Contents of Emergency Box stored in Balingup Recreation Centre

Garbage bags large
Kitchen towels
Nappies/ Huggies
Baby bottle
Sanitary pads
Cord
First Aid kit
Radio
D size batteries
C size batteries
Can opener
Toothpaste
Toothbrushes
Soap
Hand sanitizer
Emergency blankets
Pens
Pencils
Scissors
A4 notebooks
Clipboards
Brochures - dealing with trauma
National Registration forms
Posters (re donations)
Large brown envelope containing Department of Communities registration and enquiry forms

COMMUNITY INFORMATION & SOCIAL CENTRE

This is NOT an Evacuation Centre

ATTENDANCE RECORD

- Please sign the attendance record (when you arrive and when you leave).
- Did you bring your medication?
- For your own comfort, consider bringing your own food and comfortable (portable) chair.

For updates on all community emergency warnings – go to
www.emergency.wa.gov.au

This Centre is run by volunteers. We will do our best to help you but please note that the safety of you/your family/your pets/your valuables is YOUR responsibility.

ANIMALS POLICY

Small cats/dogs/pets that are safely contained in a cage/container will be permitted on verandah. Large dogs/ other animals must be kept safely restrained outside.

Community Notices

The following notices will be issued in November each year.

What	Content (draft)
Mail box drop and email to BPA general list.	**Important Notice – Please Read.** **COMMUNITY INFORMATION & SOCIAL CENTRE** **AT BALINGUP RECREATION CENTRE** • Another bushfire season is around the corner and it's up to you to plan ahead. • Have you taken photos of your house (inside and outside) to streamline any insurance claims process? **Assistance Any Time** Balingup Recreation Centre (BADSA) is offering to open their doors to members of the community who might be facing difficulty – for example, during heat waves and power outages (both widespread and/or individual homes). If you need short term relief, please contact either the Visitor Centre or General Store and they will ask one of the amazing Recreation Centre volunteers to open up for you. A gold coin/small donation to help the Centre cover its costs, would be much appreciated. Please note that this service is offered at the discretion of BADSA volunteers – they'll do their best to help but it may not always be possible as there may be existing bookings etc **Mutual Support During emergency** The Recreation Centre aims to provide a venue where members of the community can gather together to provide mutual support during an emergency (could be during a fire, storm, heat wave or major incident). A process is now in place to open the Balingup Recreation Centre for use as a Community Information & Social Centre (CISCO) when such support is required. During bushfires and regional power outages, power may be lost, resulting in the loss of telecommunications (including copper landlines) after 4- 8 hours. We now have systems in place to obtain a large generator. The CISCO will provide access to the following services: • information and support • air-conditioning, toilets and showers. • Sky Muster pop-up internet and phone service which can be accessed from

	inside or outside the building. • CWA may be able to provide teas/light refreshments. If we activate the CISCO, signs will be placed on the highway and we will advise local businesses. If you decide to go to the CISCO please be aware: • It is important you take your medication with you. • Small cats/dogs/pets that are safely contained in a cage/container will be permitted on the verandah. Large dogs/ other animals must be kept safely restrained outside. • For your own comfort, consider bringing your own food and comfortable (portable) chair. *Note: The Recreation Centre is also designated as an Evacuation Centre. In the event that the Evacuation Centre was activated, the building would be handed over immediately to the Department of Communities.* **NEIGHBOURHOOD PHONE TREE** Balingup also has Neighbourhood Phone Trees and Bushfire Ready Coordinators where one volunteer in each street/area agrees to receive information from emergency agencies and pass that information on via their phone tree (word for word). The Phone Tree will also let people know if/when the CISCO is opened. Anyone wishing to be a Neighbourhood Phone Tree Coordinator should contact ...... insert details...... for Bushfire Ready. The list of Neighbourhood Phone Tree Coordinators will be updated and displayed on local noticeboards in December. If no volunteers step forward, then that neighbourhood will not be covered. **It is the responsibility of community members to contact your local Phone Tree Person if you wish to be added to their list.** "*If your plan is to stay and actively defend.....you need an independent water supply because public water supply and water pressure **cannot be guaranteed**"*. (Water Corporation) *Mains power **cannot be guaranteed*** (Western Power) *Mobile phones and landlines **cannot be guaranteed*** (Telstra) For updates on all community emergency warnings – go to www.emergency.wa.gov.au
Email to community groups	Please see the attached notice which is being distributed to the community via mail box drops and email in November. It would be appreciated if you would discuss this with your group members and consider how you can provide mutual support during an emergency.
Email to	Please see the attached notice which is being distributed to the community via mail

Bushfire Ready Network	box drops and email in November. It would be appreciated if you would distribute this through your neighourhood group network and also consider becoming a Street/Area Phone Tree Coordinator. Your expertise as a BFR coordinator would make you ideal to fill this roll.
Phone Tree poster distribution.	See Excel spreadsheet "Balingup Phone Tree Coordinators". Put at Post Office and General Store.
Message to key local facilities. (To be issued if the CSICO is activated)	This message would be sent to Post Office, General Store, Visitor Centre, Pharmacy and local shops to tell them the CISCO is active. This could be word-of-mouth, email or phone. Due to …insert reason……..The Balingup Recreation Centre has been opened for use as a Community Information and Social Centre (CISCO). The CISCO will provide access to the following services: • information and support • air-conditioning, toilets and showers. • Sky Muster pop-up internet and phone service which can be accessed from inside or outside the building. • Note: Sky Muster does not support a traditional phone service – calls can only be made using internet based applications such as WhatsApp, Messenger, Facetime, Zoom, Skype etc. If you don't have these Apps on your phone, ask a friend to set up your phone and explain it to you. • CWA may be able to provide teas/light refreshments For community emergency updates, see www.emergency.wa.gov.au *Please also let them know when the CISCO is closing down for the night.*

Balingup Neighbourhood Phone Tree

Aims/Role. The primary role of a Neighbourhood Phone Tree Coordinator is to:
- Receive information from emergency agencies and pass that information on via the phone tree (word for word) and
- Let people know if/when the CISCO is opened.

Neighbourhood Phone Tree Coordinators might also maintain a list of:
- people in their street /area who may need help to evacuate
- first aiders in their street
- bushfire brigade members or other emergency workers in their street so that their families can be contacted to ensure they are coping.

Preparation. In November each year, the list of Neighbourhood Phone Tree Coordinators will be updated and displayed on the local noticeboards. The notice will advise the community that it is the responsibility of individuals to contact their local Neighbourhood Phone Tree Coordinators if they wish to be added to their list. It needs to be very clear that mobile phones and landlines services can be lost at any time and they must not rely on the Phone Tree during emergencies.

When Activated – Instruction for Phone Tree members.

It is vital that information issued is accurate. Only pass on information that you receive from a reliable source.

The following levels are used in the current Bushfire Warning System (current as at October 2024).

ADVICE	An incident is active but there is no immediate threat to lives or homes. Be aware and keep up to date. • Prepare now • Stay informed • Monitor conditions • Stay informed • Avoid the area • Return with caution • Avoid smoke • Threat is reduced
WATCH AND ACT	There is a possible threat to lives or homes. Take action now to protect yourself and others. • Prepare to leave/evacuate • Leave/evacuate now (if you are not prepared) • Prepare to take shelter • Move/stay indoors • Stay near shelter • Monitor conditions as they are changing

	• Be aware of ember attack • Move to higher ground (away from creeks/rivers/coast) • Limit time outside (cyclone, heat, asthma) • Avoid the area/avoid the flooded area • Stay away from damaged buildings and other hazards • Prepare for isolation • Protect yourself against the impacts of extreme heat • Do not enter floodwater • Not safe to return • Prepare your property (cyclone/storm)
EMERGENCY WARNING	There is a threat to lives and homes. You may be in danger and need to take immediate action. • Leave/evacuate (immediately, by am/pm/hazard timing) • Take shelter now • Shelter indoors now • Too late to leave

When you are passing information on:

1. Know *where* you are calling. The person you are speaking to may be closer to the fire and know better than you what is happening. If this is the case, change it to "are you OK?" and ask if they need any information.

2. Make sure you a reading from a written statement and, if the person receiving it is going to pass it on to someone else, make sure they are writing it down.

3. Do not give any additional information (as people tend to misinterpret).

4. Do not offer advice/make recommendations.

5. Remind them that the electricity might go off and they must not rely on phone warnings.

6. Suggest they check the Emergency WA website for warnings www.emergency.wa.gov.au or check ABC radio on their car radio every 30 mins.

7. Inform them if the Recreation Centre is open as a Support Centre (CISCO) where they can go to if they need support (lighting/ heating/ cooling, communication through internet/phone, food and advice). They need to take their medication. Explain that pets can come too - but they will need to remain outside (shaded area) so need to have food and leads for tethering.

It is their decision whether to stay or go.

If you cannot contact someone, or the telephones are not working, it is not your job to go out looking for neighbours. Put your own safety first.

DFES advise that, if a person does not have a plan, their plan **should** be to leave.

If it is too late to leave some practical advice would be:

- Make sure you are wearing long trousers, sleeves, gloves, goggle and a mask. All clothing to be natural fibre eg wool, cotton and not synthetic.
- Turn off the airconditioner
- Close all external and internal windows and doors.
- Remove curtains.
- Put wet towels under doors.
- Take the hoses inside (so they don't burn in the fire).
- Keep mop and buckets of water at hand.
- Fill up all buckets, bath and sinks available (also fill wheelie bin if possible).
- Move all flammables away from house.
- Turn gas cylinders off and, if possible, keep water running on them. Leave upright and point pressure relief valve away from the house.   Put them on the side of the house away from the fire.
  Take step ladder into the house (so you can check the roof space).
- As the fire approaches, turn off the electricity.
- Wait for the fire to go over the house (this will take 5 – 15 mins) continually checking for ember attacks and spot fires.
- When the fire front has passed, walk outside into the burned area and start fighting any fires.

General Notes

When people ring from outside the area (eg Perth), suggest that they check the Emergency WA website.

For community emergency updates, see www.emergency.wa.gov.au

Information for Balingup Neighbourhood Emergency Phone Tree Coordinators

Setting Up a Phone Tree

Step 1

Draw up a list of people in your area (zone). This list should contain:

- Name
- Phone No (home and work)
- Email
- Local address – Rural Road Number

Decide who will take on the role of Phone Tree deputy (if/when you are away). Provide these details to Balingup Progress Association Phone Tree Coordinator. The Coordinator will pass the information on to the Bush Fire Ready Coordinator.

Step 2

 If your neighbourhood does not have a Bush Fire Ready Street Coordinator it would be great if you could hold a meeting and:

- Explore various emergency exit routes, depending on where fire/danger is coming from.
- Determine if there is a safe house in the zone (bear in mind it may be safer for people to stay in their own home).
- Discuss individual action plans.
- Agree how to evacuate elderly and infirm (make sure they know to take their medication with them).
- Agree what to do with children and pets.
- Determine if there are any First Aiders in your neighbourhood.

Step 2 is optional – but it's a great way to get to know your neighbours and is highly recommended.

Important Note

Phone People may:
- Choose to phone everyone on their list themselves, OR
- Split it over a number of people in their zone who can phone it through on their behalf.

If the second option is chosen, it is important that the message is written down by the person receiving the information, so the "Chinese whispers" syndrome does not come into play!