

# Council wants another report

By DEBBIE SCHIPP

The Lismore City Council wants to know what its volunteer bushfire fighters need to bring their resources up to scratch.

Investigations began in February, in the wake of bushfires which devastated large parts of the state.

Councillors were concerned by reports of a lack of basic safety of equipment, problems with radio communications, and poor quality equipment.

On February 1 they asked fire control officer John Moehead to prepare a report on the level of services and support available.

They asked what equipment each brigade had, and wanted brigade captains to list what was needed to bring equipment supplies to a satisfactory level.

They also asked how resources were allocated, what funding was available annually and where funds came from.

An initial report was presented to a meeting on April 5, but councillors requested more information.

Another report came before the latest meeting at Bexhill, where councillors voted 8/3 to ask for further information.

During public access, volunteer fire fighter John Cade attacked the organisation of the council's brigades.

He said some volunteers, in-

cluding himself, had fought fires without adequate equipment, and said questions he had asked about the organisation since then had gone unanswered.

Another volunteer, John Mace, said the standard of equipment and training for bushfire brigades in the Lismore City Council area had 'improved threefold' since 1985.

Mayor John Crowther's comment that the whole issue had developed into 'nothing more than a beat-up on the fire control officer', drew an angry response.

Cr Peter Larsen: "This is not a beat-up . . . we are just asking for questions to be answered."

Cr Crowther: "This is the third time this has come back to the council."

Cr Larsen: "Well, he should get it right."

Cr Diana Roberts: "I want to know where it (funding) comes from, why we don't get enough (equipment) from Sydney and how resources are allocated. I don't want to get Mr Moehead."

Cr Ros Irwin said she found it offensive that a councillor could suggest other councillors were 'out to get' a member of staff.

"We have asked for specific information and it has not been provided," she said.

"This needs to go back to get that information."



MASTER  
Extn Com Dept  
✓ Booby  
✓ Blower  
✓ Eddie

## THE CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDINGS IN FIRE PRONE AREAS - AS 3959

1. The floor level to be greater than 600mm above the finished ground level. Or
2. Where the floor level is less than 600mm above the finished ground level, the flooring, bearers and joists are to be treated with a suitable fire retardant. Or
3. Provide a suitable non-combustible material to enclose the under-floor area to a minimum height of 300mm above the finished ground level. Provide close-weave bronze spark mesh to the under-floor ventilation openings.
4. External columns or posts to be non-combustible. Or
5. Provide metal sheathing to external timber posts, a minimum of 0.6mm thickness, extending a minimum of 300mm above the finished ground level. Or
6. External columns or posts to be treated with a suitable fire retardant. Or
7. External columns or posts, mounted on metal shoes shall have a minimum clearance of 100mm from the finished ground level.
8. Provide a breather-type sarking to the external wall framing complying with BS 4106, with a maximum flammability of 5, installed immediately behind the external cladding.
9. Where the external cladding is combustible, provide protection a minimum of 300mm above the finished ground level. Note: Rough-sawn timber is more vulnerable and it is preferable if the cladding is painted or coated with a varnish.
10. Provide weather strips to external doors.
11. Provide screens with metal mesh, having a maximum aperture of 2mm, to all windows and external doors.
12. Provide metal mesh to all weepholes and vents.
13. The junction of the roof and external walls shall be sealed.
14. The gaps created by the corrugations or ribs of the metal roof sheeting shall be sealed or protected using flashing, wire mesh, neoprene seals, compressed mineral wool or similar.
15. Provide a minimum gap of 8mm between decking floor timbers and provide ready access to the underfloor area.
16. Exposed water and gas piping is to be metal and any other pipe materials are to be buried a minimum of 300mm.



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