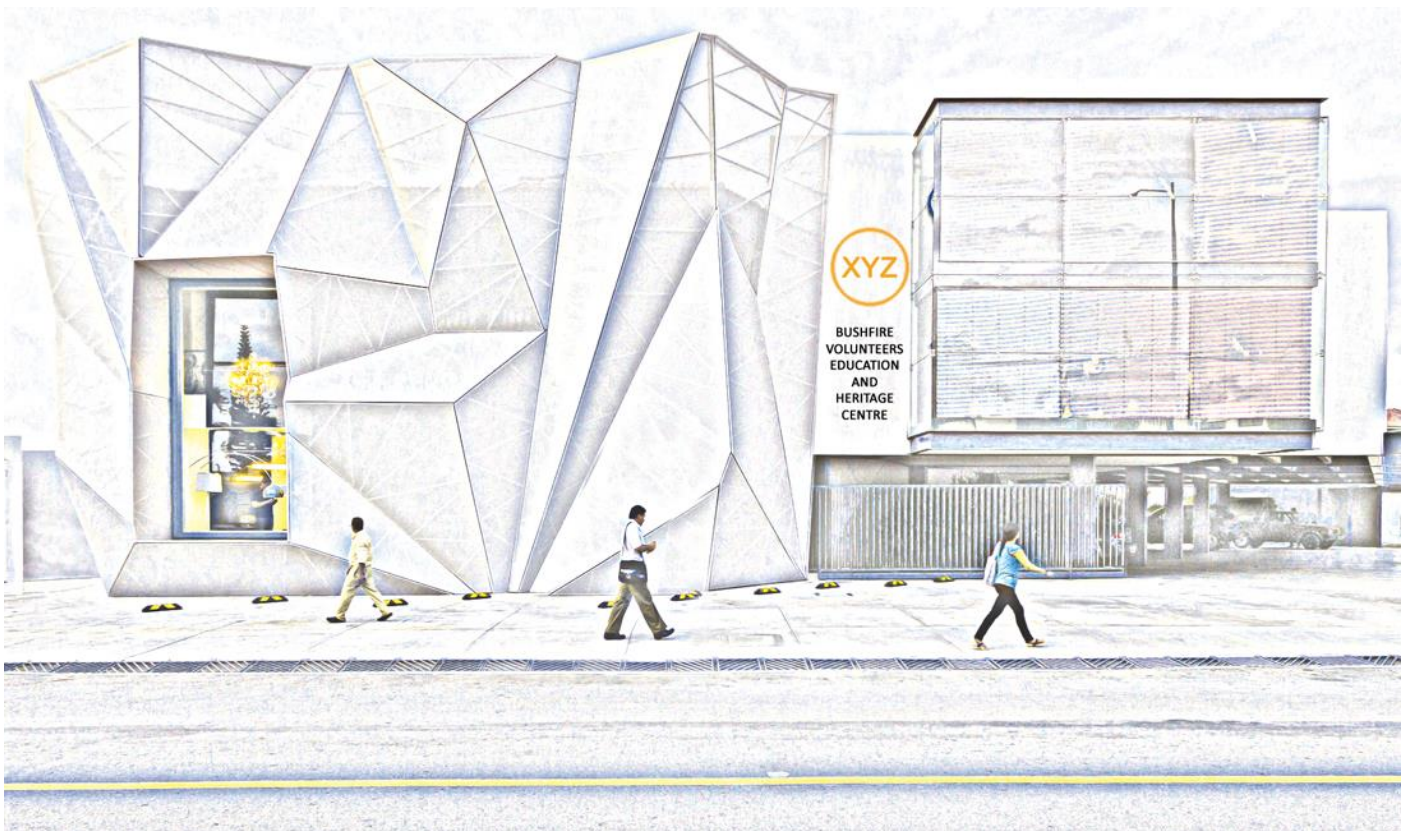




Subsidised lease or donation
of land and/or premises for the
Bushfire Volunteers
Heritage and Education Centre

– MARKET SOUNDING –



ARTISTS IMPRESSION: THE XYZ BUSHFIRE VOLUNTEERS EDUCATION AND HERITAGE CENTRE (BVHEC)

A unique, positive and long-term opportunity for a forward-thinking Local Government, Corporation or Philanthropist to invest in the history and future of Western Australia's largest emergency service.

OUR VISION

We are seeking a partner that will support us in creating a prominent and world-leading, volunteer-based heritage, education and administration facility to honour, support and develop the extraordinary women and men of Western Australia's largest emergency service - the Volunteer Bush Fire Service.

The ultimate facility will not only enable us to deliver an unprecedented level of direct services to our volunteer members and the broader community but importantly, also return new employment, tourism, heritage and education opportunities to the town or city in which it is built.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This Market Sounding aims to elicit an expression of interest from a property owner (most likely a Local Government, Corporation or Philanthropist) regarding the possible provision of either a long-term subsidised lease or donation of land and/or premises to the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA Inc (trading as *Bushfire Volunteers*) to use for the development of our innovative Bushfire Volunteers Heritage and Education Centre (BVHEC).

THE POSSIBILITIES

We accept that it might take some time to achieve the whole vision and are very open to ideas and proposals from left-of-centre, but right now here's what we are hoping to include in the facility we create together:

- Training and seminar facilities to enable professional development, workshops and information sharing for Bushfire Volunteers members
- A modern Museum featuring our fleet of up to 20 restored vehicles, various equipment, documents, memorabilia and other heritage exhibits that showcase the proud and successful history of WA's Volunteer Bush Fire Service
- Facilities to host meetings of related community groups
- External demonstration areas to enable equipment testing, exhibition, development and training
- Mechanical workshops and paint facilities for the maintenance, repair, restoration and preservation of historical vehicles and equipment (possibly in collaboration with local TAFE/Men's Sheds etc)
- The administrative headquarters of the peak body for Western Australia's 20,000+ registered Bush Fire Volunteers (base for up to 15 paid staff and 50 volunteers)
- A gift shop from which practical, symbolic and novelty items are sold and supplied
- Immersive education exhibitions and displays designed to deliver fire safety and pro-volunteering/community service messages to school-aged children visiting in organised groups
- Food preparation/service areas to enable catering of on-site meetings and functions

THE LOCATION

We will genuinely consider creating our vision anywhere in Western Australia.

The biggest factors in the decision of where we invest include what is being offered, the feasibility of the Museum and the functionality/effectiveness of the education services we will provide to our members, schools and the broader community from and at the BVHEC.

If you have land and/or a premise anywhere in WA and think we might be able to work together to create a world-leading facility worthy of our amazing volunteers (past, present and future), please talk to us now.

BACKGROUND

Bushfire Volunteers is the registered Charity that supports, promotes, informs and advocates for the 20,000+ women and men of Western Australia's diverse and invaluable Volunteer Bush Fire Service (VBFS).

Registered as the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA Inc in 1991, the not-for-profit peak body has worked tirelessly for three decades to ensure the incredible knowledge, wisdom, time and skills of the volunteers behind the State's largest emergency service are duly recognised and respected by decision-makers and members of the public.

Until June 2019, the peak body for WA's largest emergency service – the Volunteer Bush Fire Service - operated for almost 30 years without dedicated premises. Bushfire Volunteers currently has a short-term sub-lease of office space inside premises leased by another not-for-profit industry body.

Despite this, the incredible volunteers behind this charity over the past three decades have delivered many very significant resourcing, safety and policy outcomes for its members. Notably, our dedicated team have also procured and enabled the restoration of a large range of bush fire service historical items including irreplaceable vehicles, equipment, documents and photographs – which are currently stored at various homes and brigades of volunteers around WA.

Recent strong increases in community awareness of bushfire risk and subsequent need for volunteers to be represented to government saw Bushfire Volunteers hire its first ever full-time employee in May 2019 and a second FTE in September 2019.

These added resources have afforded the association its first opportunity to consider and plan for our long-term future and decide how best to build on the many positive outcomes we have delivered for tens of thousands of volunteers and hundreds of communities throughout Western Australia.

The two highest priority risks identified are interconnected:

- the dilution and eventual loss of the immense local knowledge, fit-for-purpose methodologies and local community resilience imbedded in WA's unique Volunteer Bush Fire Service as more Local Governments are encouraged to relinquish their local services to an expanded State Government Department, and
- the association's lack of suitable accommodation from which to build its long-term capacity to inform good decisions within Local, State and Federal Governments and support and grow the volunteer-base of Australia's only fire service that genuinely empowers local communities to self-determine.

It is evident that without strong and positive intervention, the current trends of a drying climate, reduced land-dependant employment and decline in organised voluntarism will likely impede the sustainability of WA's very successful Volunteer Bush Fire Service.

As the peak body for the tens of thousands of volunteers who understand the value of WA's current model, the Bushfire Volunteers Committee has identified the immediate need to establish a prominent physical base from which we can build capacity to ensure the long-term viability of our unique Volunteer Bush Fire Service.

WHAT WE DO

ADVOCATE

For the health, safety, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of Bush Fire volunteers, their Brigades and other valuable stakeholders.

SUPPORT

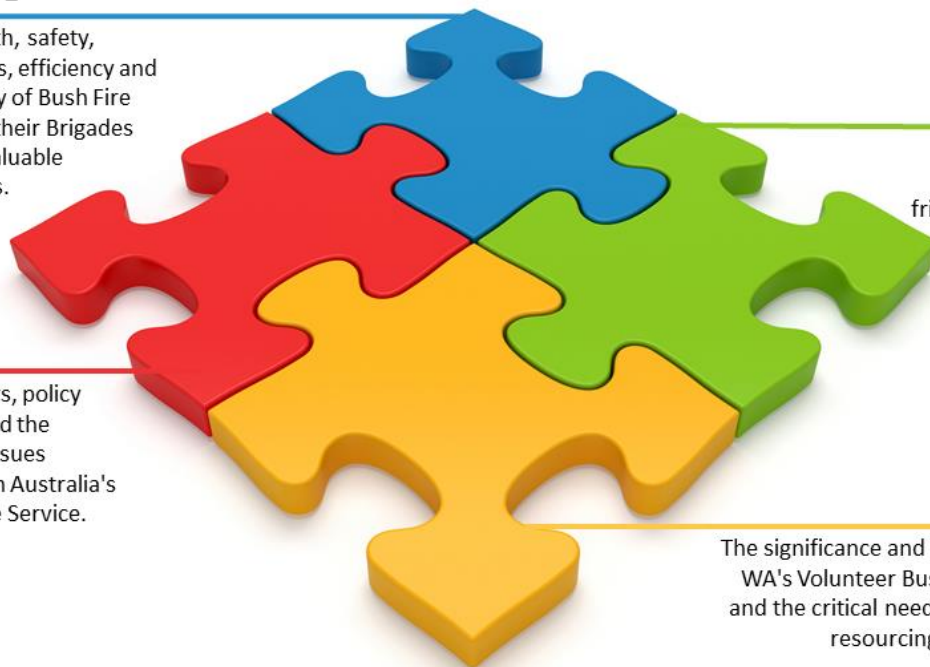
Bush Fire volunteers and the families, friends, employers and others who enable their incredible community service.

INFORM

Bush Fire volunteers, policy decision-makers and the broader public of issues relevant to Western Australia's Volunteer Bush Fire Service.

PROMOTE

The significance and importance of WA's Volunteer Bush Fire Service and the critical need for long term resourcing and support.



FUNDING OPTIONS

Bushfire Volunteers currently receives an annual operating grant of \$116,000 from the Emergency Services Levy (ESL). Over the years, this has paid for some part-time support staff and necessary expenses such as insurance.

As explained above, the recent dramatic increase in demand for our services prompted the association to hire our first ever full-time staff – who have been tasked with finding suitable premises from which to rapidly grow. The first thing we did was ask the State Government to consider adding value to their Centre of Excellence by including our museum and offices in the design, unfortunately without success.

We have also worked hard to define and package our value proposition to secure the sponsors and partners required to fund our ambitious operational growth plan - and this market sounding will help determine the capital required to create the facility from which we provide our exciting new services.

NEXT STEPS

We will work with those who express interest in this market sounding and carefully consider each offer in terms of any extra funding or support we need to ensure the long-term feasibility of each proposal. We will then develop partnerships and sponsorships to secure any capital, products or services required to build a new facility or renovate an existing one for opening as soon as possible.

MORE INFORMATION?

If you have under-utilised land and/or premises that you believe might help us create this wonderful facility to honour, support and develop WA's incredible Bush Fire Volunteers, call now for an initial confidential discussion.

Initial contact: Darren Brown, Executive Officer

Email: darren.brown@bushfire.org.au

Phone: 1800 23 8657 (1800 BF VOLS)

Bushfire Volunteers is a trading name of the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA Inc ABN 88 309 326 546

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