

REPORT ON FIRES IN SOMERVILLE PLANTATION
ON 26.11.65.

Four fires occurred in the Somerville Plantation on the afternoon of the 26.11.65.

It is suspected that these were deliberately lit by person or persons unknown.

Hilton Park Police are making inquiries. Below find a summary of action taken and results.

14.20 hrs.

Somerville Towerman observed white smoke on a bearing of 58°. Como Tower's bearings at first indicated that fire was in private property adjoining plantation. Subsequently placed in Compartment 61.

14.25

Towerman notified Overseer Boyd by radio and also Como Office. O/Seer Boyd instructed Towerman to despatch two heavy duty pumpers, light duty gang truck and Somerville gang to fire. Como Office advised Melville Fire Brigade of Fire in Plantation.

14.40

Second fire reported from Somerville Tower, Bearing 28° - Collier 222 - Compartment 64.

14.45

Mr. van Noort and SFCF Ashcroft notified of fires.

14.48

Mr. Ashcroft left for Somerville. Somerville gang (Girando) reports (ZW) that No. 1 fire is being brought under control. Mundaring alerted. Hilton Park Police called in.

15.00

O/Seer Boyd one H.D. pumper and two men arrive at Fire No. 2. Fire No. 1 now under control. O/S Feast and two men with pumper leave Collier for Somerville.

15.10

F/C Forester Ashcroft arrives at fire No. 2. Mr. Eastman has been alerted and on way to Somerville.

15.15

Somerville Tower reports two more fires (No. 3) 356° and No. 4 358°. Compartment 62.

Mundaring sends gang and heavy duty pumper.

Central Fire Brigade 4 x 4 unit arrives at Fire No. 2.

Arrangements made with Fire Brigade unit to complete control of fire No. 2, and Ashcroft with O/Seer Boyd, H.D. pumper and two men left in search for fires 3 and 4.

15.18

Police arrive and start investigations at No. 2.
Ashcroft and Boyd locate fire No. 3, send in H.D. (now low in water) with two men, to attack this fire.

15.21

Ashcroft located fire No. 4 and finds two members of Melville Fire Brigade in attendance with knapsacks and shovels. The Brigade had a chipped trail almost around the fire.

These members were asked to continue their efforts until further help could be given them.

15.30

Fire Brigade 4 x 4 unit (less two men to mop up Fire No. 2) transferred to No. 3 to assist F.D. pumper now low in water.

O/S Feast in Collier pumper arrives Somerville and go to Fire No. 1.

● 15.40

C/S Feast with H/D pumper arrives from fire No. 1 now under control and sent in to fire No. 3 as F.D. unit now out of water and returns to HQs. to fill.

Mr Eastman arrives after viewing fires from Somerville tower.

Wanneroo H.D. pumper arrives at Somerville HQs. and sent to Fire No. 3 area.

15.45

Mr. van Noort, having arrived some minutes earlier at Fire No. 4 asks for help as fire running again on northern side, eventually stopped on extraction track.

15.50

F/G D, Walton and A.M.E. Reynolds arrived at Fire No. 3.

● 15.50

O/seer Lindley and Wanneroo gang of 7 men arrived N.W. corner of plantation and directed into Fire No. 4 and then re-directed to Fire No. 3 for mopping up operations as No. 4 now under control with O/seer Feast and pumper crew now in attendance.

Fire Brigade Units leave fire areas.

16.15

Mundaring gang arrive at Somerville Headquarters sent to No. 2 for mopping up operations.

Mr. Eastman left fire after conferring with police.

16.30

Mr. van Noort leaves for Wanneroo.

16.45

Mundaring H.D. arrives, directed to No. 1 for mopping up purposes.

All gangs eventually move to Fire No. 1 as each fire mopped up -- This fire in heavier tops requiring more work in cleaning up.

18.00

F/C Forester Ashcroft leaves fire.

18.10

Mundaring, Wanneroo and Collier teams leave for home, Somerville gang with O/seer Boyd do final patrols arriving at Headquarters approximately at 19.00 hrs.

Area of Pine Burnt $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres.

Fire No. 1	=	Cpt. 61	=	$1\frac{1}{4}$ ac.
No. 2	=	Cpt. 64	=	$\frac{1}{2}$ ac.
No. 3	=	Cpt. 62	=	1 ac.
No. 4	=	Cpt. 62	=	$\frac{3}{4}$ ac.
				<u>$3\frac{1}{2}$ acres</u>

MAN AND EQUIPMENT.

Somerville 2 Heavy Duty Pumpers
 1 Light Duty Pump and gang truck
 Overseer and five men plus assistance from
 a local resident.

Collier 1 Heavy Duty Pumper
 Overseer and two men.

Wanneroo 1 Heavy Duty Pumper (W.A. Pump).
 1 Light Duty Gang Truck
 Overseer and nine men.

Mundaring 1 Utility
 1 H.D. Pumper
 Six Men.

Fire Brigades. Four wheel drive pumper and five men
 Two wheel drive pumper and three men?

These Officers also attended:- Mr. Eastman, Mr. van Noort,
Mr. Ashcroft, Mr. D. Walton and Mr. J. Reynolds.

The Fire Brigade assistance was most valuable and appreciated. They virtually suppressed fire No. 4 and made significant contribution in suppressing Fires No. 2 and 3.

The Departmental gangs performed creditably in view of the multiple lightings and divergence of attack.

Como
30.11.65
AJA:RHS

A.J. ASHCROFT.
S.F.C.F.

SOMERVILLE PLANTATION FIRES - 26.11.65.

Weather data taken at the Perth Met. Bureau was obtained for the 26.11.65 and is given below:-

	Temp.F ^o	RH%	D.P.	Wind Direction	Wind Strength (Knots)
0900	67.3	69	56	S.E	03
1200	75.2	52	56	S.S.E.	05
1500	79.6	47	57	W	10

Fire No. 1.

Compt. No. 61 in which this fire occurred was planted in 1947 (Leira).

Site Quality 3.

Twice thinned - First thinning apparently very light. Recent thinning took place in 1961 and heavy slash remains.

Stocking of 200 trees per acre - 90 sq.ft. basal area.

Height of 45 ft.

Estimate of ground fuel 12 tons per acre.

Fire No. 2.

Compartment 64 (Leira) planted 1950.

Site Quality 3.

Pruned but unthinned, with a stocking of 500 trees per acre.

Estimate of ground fuel 7 tons per acre.

Fire No. 3.

Compartment 62 (Leira) Planted 1952.

Site Quality 2.

Pruned but thinned with a stocking of 500 trees per acre.

120 sq. ft. Basal Area - Height 35 ft.

Estimate of ground fuel 4 tons per acre.

Fire No. 4.

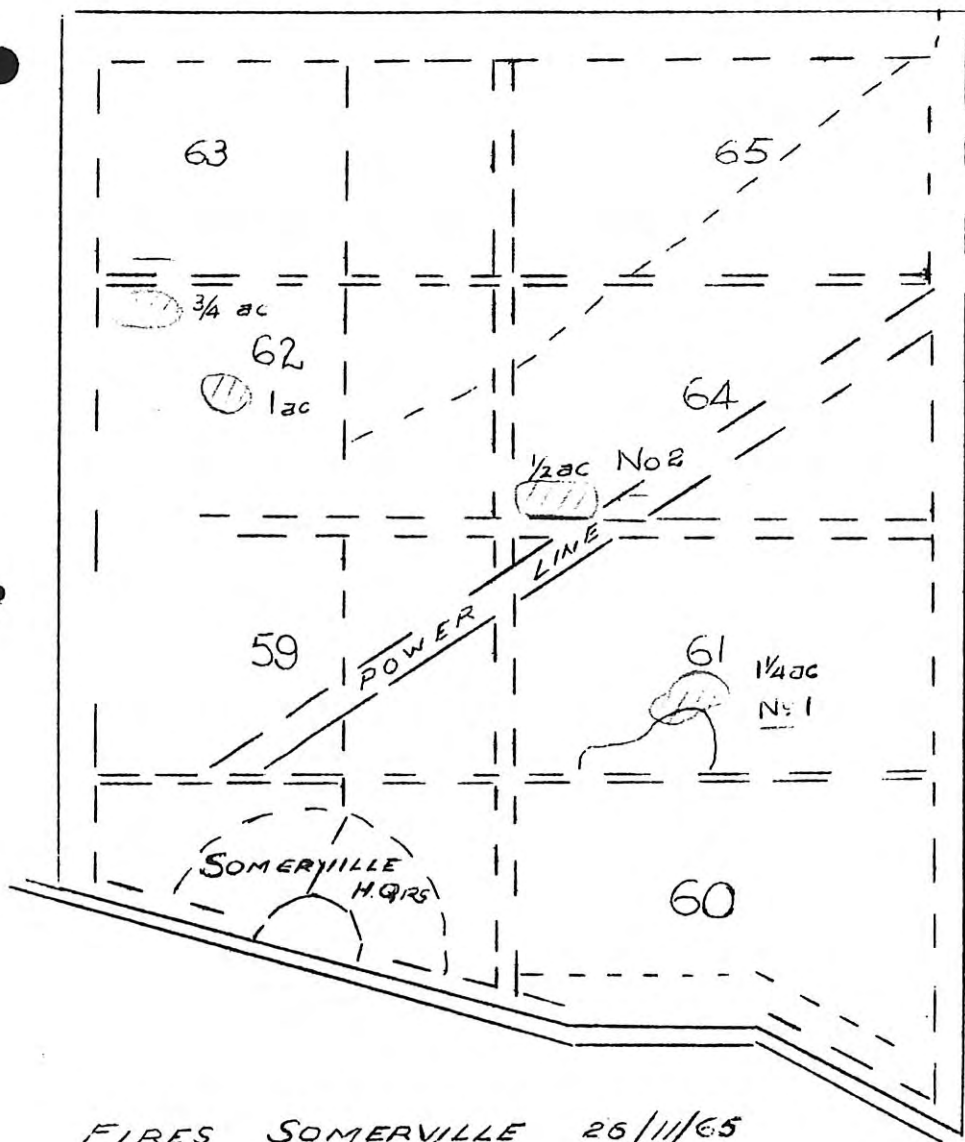
Compartment 62 (Leira) Planted 1952.

Site Quality 3.

Pruned but unthinned with a stocking of 500 trees per acre.

Height 30 ft. - Basal area of 75 sq. ft.

Estimate of ground fuel 4 tons per acre.



FIRES SOMERVILLE 26/11/65