

A Summary and  
Explanation of the  
Bush Fires Act  
and Regulations

# FIRE LAW

**1971 Edition**



Issued by the Bush Fires Board

# **FIRE LAW**

**1971 EDITION**

**BUSH FIRES BOARD**  
COMMERCE HOUSE 664 A MURRAY STREET  
WEST PERTH W.A. 6005 PHONE 21 4861  
AREA CODE 092

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The present Bush Fires Act was passed by Parliament in 1954 and came into operation in April, 1955. This Act constituted the Bush Fires Board, the membership of which includes six representatives of the Local Authorities, each one being nominated from a different ward of the Country Shire Councils' Association. Other members of the Board are representatives of the Underwriters' Association, the Forests Department, the Department of Agriculture, the Railways Department, the Associated Sawmillers and Timber Merchants Association, the Commissioner of Police, with the Under Secretary for Lands as Chairman.

The Bush Fires Board regards as one of its most important responsibilities the provision of every possible assistance to Local Authorities, to the volunteer Bush Fire Control Officers and bush fire brigades as well as any person or organisation interested in fire prevention and control. It is the duty of the bush fire wardens appointed by the Bush Fires Board to advise, assist and encourage the voluntary organisations and interested individuals in every possible way. It is not the function of these officers to exercise direction over brigades but they have authority to enforce the Act and to make inquiries regarding offences. They are also required to inspect and report on the efficiency of districts which are "approved areas".

Neither the Bush Fires Board nor any other organisation concerned with fire prevention can fully succeed in its aims unless it has the co-operation, not only of all sections of the community, but of every citizen of the State. Every one of us, is, therefore, called upon to do his best in furthering the work of fire prevention and control. The reward is the satisfaction to be gained in performing a service of the greatest importance to the individual, the community and the State, all of whom stand to lose so much by every serious fire.

The summary of the Bush Fires Act in this pamphlet is similar in many respects to that issued previously but it includes the more important amendments which have been made to the Act. It does not cover all the provisions of the Act, but reference is made to those matters with which the majority of people will be concerned.

Further information on any matter regarding the Act or any aspect of fire prevention and control will gladly be supplied on reference to the Bush Fires Board, Second Floor, Commerce House, 664A Murray Street, West Perth.

Every endeavour will be made to arrange for an officer of the Board to attend any meetings of bush fire brigades or control officers, provided reasonable notice of the date of the meeting is given.



## **BUSH FIRES ACT**

### **PREVENTION OF BUSH FIRES**

#### **Prohibited Burning Times (Section 17)**

The lighting of fires is prohibited during certain times of the year in all districts throughout the State. To secure some uniformity, the State has been divided into zones, and the periods vary in each zone. Residents are strongly urged to acquaint themselves with the prohibited burning times fixed for their district. This information may be obtained from the Local Authorities or from the Bush Fires Board.

Powers have been given to the Local Authorities to vary the date declared for the **commencement** of a prohibited burning time by up to 14 days either way. A Local Authority which varies any declared prohibited burning time date must publish in its district, details of the changes it has made and must immediately notify the Bush Fires Board of the variation. The conclusion of a prohibited burning time may be postponed in a similar way but the Local Authority does not have power to authorise a prohibited time to end at an earlier date than that declared. In other words, it may delay the commencement of burning off at the end of the summer period, but it cannot allow burning earlier than the date declared. Where there is Forests Department land in a Shire a Forest Officer must be consulted before a Council exercises any of its authorities to amend dates. A Local Authority may apply to the Bush Fires Board for a suspension of prohibited burning times beyond the fourteen day period or for other variations which it cannot make itself.

A limited amount of burning for special purposes may be carried out during the prohibited burning times under special conditions, which are set out later. In addition to the special conditions laid down for such burning the provisions of Section 18 of the Act must also be carried out. Requirements of Section 18 are hereunder.

The penalty for illegally lighting a fire during prohibited times is \$400 and/or imprisonment for six months.

#### **RESTRICTED BURNING TIMES (SECTION 18)**

##### **Conditions for Burning Between October and May** **(Not Including Prohibited Burning Times)**

Restrictions apply to all burning between the 1st October and the 31st May in the following year. In most districts the prohibited burning times fall between these dates, therefore burning under Section 18 may only be carried out between the 1st October and the beginning of the prohibited time for the district and from the end of the prohibited time to the 31st May.

A Local Authority may apply to the Bush Fires Board for variation of any of the conditions required for burning in restricted times. The usual change made is to dispense with the necessity for a permit to burn. Applications for these variations must be made by the Local Authority to the Bush Fires Board before each period of suspension required. The variations approved apply only for the period concerned in the one year.

Any person wishing to burn during restricted times should contact the local Shire Council or a bush fire control officer to ascertain any special local rules for burning. The following are the minimum conditions laid down in the Bush Fires Act and these must be carried out:—

1. Give at least four days' notice in writing of his intention to burn, to be delivered to all the following:—

- (a) To each adjoining owner or occupier.
- (b) The Clerk of the Local Authority.
- (c) A Bush Fire Control Officer of the Local Authority.
- (d) A Forest Officer if the land is within two miles of a State Forest.

2. The notice must contain full particulars of the locality of the bush to be burned and must give the dates of the day or days when the burning will be done. These dates must not be more than 28 days from the date of the notice.

3. Written permission to burn must be obtained from a Bush Fire Control Officer, or if there is no control officer appointed, from the Clerk of the Local Authority. The permit issued may contain further conditions or requirements stipulated by the issuing officer and these must be complied with. The additional conditions or requirements can cover anything or any steps considered necessary to make the burning safe, i.e. wind direction, firebreaks of a greater width than stipulated in the Act; more firebreaks may be ordered, more men and equipment required than the minimum stipulated in the Act, etc. The Act does not authorise the captain or lieutenant of a bush fire brigade to issue these permits unless the Local Authority has also appointed him as a bush fire control officer.

It is illegal for a person who has applied to a bush fire control officer for a permit to burn and been refused or given a permit which is subject to special conditions, to make another application concerning the same burning to another control officer. A person refused a permit to burn, however, may appeal to the Local Authority against the refusal of the permit or the conditions imposed.

**VALIDITY of PERMITS:** Permits to set fire to the bush are valid for the date shown on the permit and not for any other period. More than one date can be shown on the permit but control officers issuing permits should not give them an indefinite validity such as "for burning on the 17th to the 20th February or a suitable day thereafter." It would be possible for a person given a permit worded in this indefinite way to use it at any time after the date quoted in the permit. Because the validity of a permit to set fire to the bush has no relation to the minimum of four days and maximum of 28 days' notice which must be given to neighbours and a bush fire control officer, the permit must include specific dates or a period with the dates of commencement and end clearly specified. Provided the requisite minimum four days' notice has already been given a permit to burn can be obtained at any time right up to immediately before the fire is to be lit.

4. The area to be burned must be surrounded by a fire-break, ploughed or cleared of all scrub, stubble or inflammable material to a width of at least ten feet, or such greater width as is specified by the Bush Fire Control Officer in the permit to burn.

5. At least three men must be constantly in attendance from the time the fire is lit until, in the opinion of a Bush Fire Control Officer or Bush Fire Brigade Officer, it is safe to leave.

6. The fire must not be lit on a Sunday.

7. The fire must not be lit on a day when the fire hazard forecast by the Perth Bureau of Meteorology for the locality is "dangerous", but may be lit on the first day afterwards when the fire hazard forecast is below "dangerous".

### **FIRE WEATHER OFFICERS**

A local authority may nominate a person for appointment as a fire weather officer. These officers can allow burning to proceed on days when a "dangerous" fire hazard is forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology. It is not their function to issue permits to burn, but they may validate permits already issued for days when a "dangerous" fire hazard is forecast. Only one fire weather officer can normally be appointed in a municipality. One deputy can also be nominated. The Bush Fires Board can now make special arrangements for more than one appointment.

The foregoing are the only functions of a fire weather officer set out in the Act. Any other duties such as banning harvesting or carting etc. are as laid down by the Shire Council.

## **PROGRAMMED BURNING**

### **Clearing Burns.**

It is provided under the Bush Fires Act that the Local Authority may programme burning for the purpose of clearing or developing land. When a Local Authority decides to programme burning a person who may wish to carry out a clearing burn must notify the Local Authority by the first of September of the season in which it is desired to burn. If a person finds out after the first of September that he may wish to have a clearing burn then the Local Authority is authorised to accept a late application. The Local Authority must determine a programme for the clearing burns to take place after the end of the prohibited burning time. It could do this by requesting its control officers to submit recommendations or it could refer the matter to its advisory committee or to a meeting of control and brigade officers. How this is actually done is left entirely in the hands of the Local Authority and it does not necessarily mean that control is taken out of the hands of local officers. This roster or programme may be changed or modified at any time by the Local Authority or this could be left in the hands of local Control Officers to act in the light of conditions at the time of burning subject to any conditions imposed by the Local Authority. In practice all the Local Authority is required to do is to vet and co-ordinate a roster for burning to ensure that there are not too many fires in the district on the one day. The provisions are purely for the purpose of co-ordinating burning-off activities in the district as a whole. Persons burning must comply with all the normal requirements of the Act regarding firebreaks, obtaining permits and notification to neighbours. If, because of weather conditions, it is necessary to postpone any actual burns or to rearrange the rostered burns, authority is given to dispense with four days' notice to neighbours for any amended date provided the notice is given before the fire is lit.

### **DELIVERY OF NOTICES (SECTION 19)**

Delivery of the notices required under Section 18 may be made in the following ways:—

1. Personally or in writing so that every owner or occupier is aware of the intention to burn and the date and time.
2. By delivering the notice at the premises where the person lives or carries on business, or by leaving the notice with a person apparently over the age of 16 years who lives at or is employed on the premises.

3. Notice to absentee owners or occupiers may be given by posting the notice not less than eight days prior to the first day on which it is intended to burn.

Legal notices must not be addressed to Post Office boxes.

### **EMERGENCY PERIOD (SECTION 21)**

#### **(Total Bans)**

Where very serious weather conditions exist or where extensive fires are burning, the Minister may declare an emergency period for a defined area. When such a declaration has been made, no person may light a fire in the area without the permission in writing of an officer authorised by the Minister. The Minister may also appoint a person to take charge of fire fighting operations in the area affected. Information regarding the declaration of an emergency would be given over the wireless or by any other means available.

### **BURNING WHICH MAY BE DONE IN PROHIBITED BURNING TIMES**

#### **Burning of Railway Reserves (Section 22)**

The Minister may suspend the operation of the prohibited burning times to enable the burning of railway reserves and for protection in State Forests to be completed. When a suspension for this purpose is operating and only at the same time as the Railway authorities or Forest Officers are burning, the occupier of any land adjoining the railway reserve or forest land may burn a firebreak on his own land up to three chains in width from the railway or forestry boundary. Adjoining land includes any land which is only separated from the railway reserve or forest by a road, railway or water course. So that if there is a two chain road between land and the railway or forest boundary, the owner or occupier of the land may burn a firebreak up to one chain in width on this land. Before doing this burning, written approval must be obtained from the Local Authority and a firebreak must be prepared at least 10 feet wide not more than three chains distant from the railway or forest boundary. Provisions of Section 18 (set out before) must also be observed. Many local authorities, with advantage, organise this burning as a co-operative undertaking between the Railway Department, the local brigades and the adjoining occupiers. The Local Authority may make the provision of these firebreaks compulsory on the land adjoining railway or forest land. It can do this either under Section 22 itself, or under Section 33, dealing with firebreaks generally which is explained later in this pamphlet. When the provision of these

breaks has been made compulsory and a Bush Fire Brigade is burning breaks in conjunction with the railway or forest authorities, a Bush Fire Control Officer or an officer of the Bush Fire Brigade, may enter the adjoining land and set fire to the bush and the owner or occupier is required to assist in the burning.

### **BURNING BY LOCAL AUTHORITY (SECTION 17)**

A Local Authority may apply to the Minister for suspension of the prohibited times in respect to any specified area to enable burning to be carried out by the Local Authority to reduce a fire hazard which cannot be removed other than by burning.

### **BURNING TO PROTECT A DWELLING HOUSE (SECTION 23)**

Throughout the whole of the prohibited burning times a firebreak may be burnt to protect a dwelling house or other building, or a haystack, provided the written permission of the Local Authority is first obtained. The Local Authority must specify in the permit it issues the time of burning between 4 o'clock in the afternoon and midnight of the same day. A Local Authority may delegate power to issue these permits to any selected bush fire control officers and may give them instructions as to the conditions which are to apply to such permits. Two plough or spade breaks must be provided, the outer one being not more than five chains from the property to be protected. The area between the breaks may be burnt off on compliance with the above conditions but the fire is also subject to compliance with the provisions of Section 18.

### **BURNING ROAD RESERVES AND BURNING TO PROTECT PASTURE OR CROP (SECTION 23)**

Local Authorities may direct control or brigade officers to carry out protective burning on roadsides. The officer so directed does not have to carry out the work unless he thinks fit. The purpose of this provision is that where such a direction has been issued and a control officer or brigade officer does carry out any protective burning on the roadside reserves, etc., then in doing this work he is carrying out a direction of the Local Authority. This gives him legal protection under the Act.



During that part of a prohibited burning time which occurs before the 15th of December, or during the first fourteen days of the prohibited burning time in those cases when it commences on or after the 15th December, it is permissible, with the written approval of the Local Authority:—

- (a) To burn the bush on any road reserve between the constructed part of the road and an established fire-break. (This burning may also be done in restricted burning times, subject to compliance with Section 18.)
- (b) To burn the bush up to one chain in width on any grassland on the land of the owner or occupier for the purpose of protecting pasture or crop from damage. This burning may only be undertaken between two firebreaks, each not less than six feet wide.

In both these instances the burning must be carried out at a time between 4 o'clock in the afternoon and midnight of the same day as specified in the written permit to burn which must be obtained from the Local Authority. Conditions of Section 18 of the Act must also be complied with as well as any additional conditions specified by the Local Authority.

The Bush Fires Act does not authorise "clearing" of fire-breaks on road reserves. It only allows burning on roadsides under conditions set out above.

### **BURNING TO COLLECT CLOVER BURR (SECTION 24 REG. 18.)**

On payment of a fee to the Local Authority, a permit may be obtained from specially authorised officers to burn clover during the prohibited burning times to assist in the collection of clover burr. A bush fire control officer has no authority to issue a special clover burning permit unless he has also been appointed by the Bush Fires Board as a clover burning officer. The Clerk of the local authority is automatically an "authorised officer" and can issue clover permits.

The area which may be burnt at any one time must be fixed by the officer issuing the permit after he has inspected the area. Not more than 75 acres on any one property may be burnt under one permit at any one time. A permit may be issued covering more than one burn of 75 acres, provided that not more than 75 acres is burnt at the one time. A fire-break must surround the area to a width of not less than ten feet.

The area must be grazed off in the growing period and if there are any standing trees, any grass and debris must be raked not less than six feet from the base of each tree. Application for the permit must be made at least seven days before it is intended to commence burning and at least four days' notice must be delivered to each owner or occupier of all adjoining property on which the burning is to take place. If within two miles of a State Forest, the Forests Department must be notified.

The burning may only be carried out between the hours of 4 o'clock in the afternoon and midnight of the same day. The permit should specify the number of men to be constantly in attendance at the fire and the fire fighting equipment considered necessary. The Local Authorities may refuse to issue a permit.

Local Authorities may specify a time between 4 p.m. and midnight before which permits to burn clover may not be granted in their district. Alternatively they may stipulate a period or part of the prohibited burning time during which the later commencing time shall operate. A Local Authority can also require additional conditions to be complied with and authorising officers must, if directed, insert these conditions on the permit. Clover burning may not be carried out on a Sunday.

## **OTHER BURNING PERMITTED (SECTION 25)**

### **Camp or Billy Fires**

Camping, cooking or billy fires are prohibited on any day when a "dangerous" fire hazard has been issued for the district by the Perth Bureau of Meteorology, unless the written permission of the Local Authority has been obtained. On other days when the fire hazard forecast is below "dangerous", a fire for cooking or camping may be lit, provided it is not within ten feet of any log or stump and at least ten feet around the fire must be cleared of all inflammable material. The fire must not be left unattended and the person lighting the fire or a person left in charge of it must completely extinguish it with earth or water before leaving it.

## **BURNING NOXIOUS WEEDS (SECTION 26 REG. 33)**

Because a plant has been declared a noxious weed does not authorise it to be burned in prohibited burning times. It must also be a plant which is proclaimed under the Bush Fires Act. Plants at present proclaimed are BATHURST BURR, CALTROP and SAFFRON THISTLE.

Special permits are required and may only be obtained from specially authorised officers or the Shire Clerk.

### **FIRES FOR OTHER PURPOSES (SECTION 26 REG. 26)**

Special permission may also be obtained to light fires for the purpose of disposing of tomato and potato tops, flax stubble and other plants which may be proclaimed. The conditions applying to burning for these purposes can be ascertained from the Local Authority or the Bush Fires Board, 664A Murray Street, West Perth.

### **CARCASSES OF ANIMALS (SECTION 25)**

A fire may be lit to dispose of the carcass of a dead animal provided that before lighting it notice of intention to do so has been given to all neighbours occupying land adjoining the property on which the burning is to take place. A space of ground around the perimeter of the fire must be cleared of all inflammable material for a distance of at least 20 feet and the fire must not be lit within twenty feet of a standing tree. One person must remain in attendance constantly at the fire until it is out and any directions issued by a warden or Bush Fire Control Officer must be obeyed. It is necessary to notify a local control officer, but a written permit is not necessary. The fire may only be lit between 6 p.m. and 11 p.m.

### **BURNING OF GARDEN REFUSE AND RUBBISH INCINERATORS (SECTION 25)**

A fire for the purpose of destroying garden refuse or rubbish may be lit:—

- (1) At any time of the day provided it is in a properly-constructed incinerator designed to prevent the escape of sparks or burning material. The incinerator must be situated not less than six feet from any building or fence and there must be a cleared space of at least six feet around the incinerator. Rubbish which is to be burnt must be kept at least six feet from the incinerator. A local authority may, upon being satisfied that no fire hazard is likely to occur, give permission in writing for a particular incinerator to be situated at a lesser distance than 6 feet from a building or fence.

- (2) Upon ground from which all inflammable matter has been thoroughly cleared within 15 feet at all points of the site of the fire, provided in this case it is lit only between 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. and the fire is extinguished by midnight of the same day.

### **SAWMILLS—BURNING AT (SECTION 25)**

The occupier of a sawmill is responsible for complying with the local authority's general firebreak notice under section 33. The local authority can also issue special notices on a sawmill under section 33 for clearing of firebreaks or removal of inflammable material.

The Act allows the occupier of a sawmill to maintain a fire on the premises to dispose of sawdust and waste timber provided that reasonable precautions are taken to prevent the escape of fire. A bush fire control officer or a bush fire warden has power to issue a requisition on the occupier of a sawmill requiring any steps considered necessary to be taken to make these fires safe. Officers can require provision of an incinerator; special fences; clearing of special firebreaks, etc. The requisition should be given by the control officer in writing and unless the requirements are carried out then it is no longer permissible to maintain the fire during restricted or prohibited times. Unless a requisition has been issued the fire may continue burning subject to what the occupier considers reasonable precautions.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS**

A Bush Fire Control Officer has very extensive power to take any measures he considers necessary for the prevention of bush fires. In this he is subject to any directions given by the Local Authority, but among other things his authority includes power of direction regarding the operation of any vehicles or machinery and stipulating conditions under which they can be used, i.e., the operation of harvesting machines may be prohibited on days of dangerous fire hazard, as follows.

### **OPERATIONS OF TRACTORS (SECTION 27 REG. 37)**

A tractor must not be operated between the 1st October and the 30th April unless:—

- (a) A knapsack spray filled with water is carried on the tractor.

- (b) The exhaust pipe is vertical and the exhaust system including the pipes maintained in a sound condition.
- (c) The exhaust pipe is fitted with an efficient spark arrester (no particular type of arrester is prescribed. It is the responsibility of the operator to ensure that the appliance fitted is efficient and in good condition).

A tractor firefighter consisting of a tank and pump with a minimum capacity of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  gallons of water is accepted in lieu of a knapsack spray and a similar position applies in regard to harvesting machines.

A Bush Fire Control Officer may ban or restrict the use of tractors in the same way as for harvesting machines.

### **OPERATION OF HARVESTING MACHINES (REG. 38)**

A knapsack spray, filled with water, must be carried on any harvesting machine when it is operating in any crop.

A Bush Fire Control Officer, subject to any directions which may be issued by the Local Authority, may prohibit the operation of harvesting machines on any day when it is considered the machinery is likely to cause a fire. A Local Authority may arrange for the banning of harvesting operations to be made by one officer for the whole district. Orders restricting the use of harvesting machines can be applied similarly. A ban or restriction on harvesting may be announced by a wireless broadcast.

A Local Authority may apply to the Bush Fires Board for the declaration of its district as one in which harvesting operations may not be carried on in that district on Sundays or public holidays. In a district so declared it is illegal to harvest on Sundays except with the written permission of a bush fire control officer. The Local Authority can issue directions to the control officers as to the policy to be followed in permitting harvesting on Sunday in such declared districts. In districts which are not so declared, Bush Fire Control Officers may ban harvesting on individual Sundays in the same way as any other day of the week.

### **OPERATION OF VEHICLES (CARTING BANS) (REG. 38A)**

A motor vehicle which is driven on any land which is under crop or pasture or stubble must have the exhaust pipes in sound condition, free from leaks. It is an offence to operate a motor vehicle which emits any carbon, sparks or oily substances.

The Local Authority or a Bush Fire Control Officer may issue a requisition on any person operating a motor vehicle within the district requiring compliance with any conditions laid down.

Prohibitions or restrictions on the use or operation of vehicles on land which is under crop or pasture or stubble may be imposed by a general ban announced in the same way as a ban on harvesting. A harvest ban does not automatically apply to motor vehicles which must be specifically mentioned in the announcement if the ban is intended to apply to them.

### **GRAIN BINS**

The towing of bulk grain bins on metal skids may be banned or restricted in the same way as motor vehicles. The bins must be specifically mentioned in the announcement of the ban.

### **BULK GRAIN BINS AT SIDINGS**

By arrangement with Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd bulk grain bins at sidings may be closed to receivals of grain during harvesting or carting bans. The Local Authority must nominate a bush fire control officer for each siding before each harvest season. The nominated officer will be supplied with forms to hand to the bin attendant to authorise closure. After the form is given to him the bin attendant will accept only one further load from each grower. This action is not covered by the Bush Fires Act but is an arrangement to assist in the enforcement of harvest and carting bans.

### **OPERATION OF CHAFF-CUTTING PLANTS**

A knapsack spray, together with a container, holding not less than 40 gallons of water must be provided at the site where any chaff-cutting plant is operating. A Bush Fire Control Officer may make any other conditions which must be carried out by the operator.

### **OPERATIONS OF AEROPLANES (REG. 39B)**

Where aeroplanes are being used for agricultural purposes, such as crop dusting, it is necessary to have a knapsack spray and at least 30 gallons of water at the site of landing and taking off and the area must be surrounded by a firebreak to the satisfaction of the Local Authority. A Bush Fire Control Officer, subject to the directions of the Local Authority, may



issue a requisition on the person operating an aeroplane, requiring compliance with any other conditions stipulated as to arrangements on the ground. An order under section 33 may be issued regarding clearing of the landing strip.

### **USE OF EXPLOSIVES, CONTROL OF POWER SAWS, BAG LOADERS, WELDING APPARATUS, ETC. (REG. 39C)**

**EXPLOSIVES**—A person using explosives must clear all round the site of the explosive or fuse to a distance of 10 feet and a knapsack spray must be provided at the site to be ready for immediate use.

**WELDING APPARATUS (Reg. 39D)**—Welding apparatus must not be used on any land which is under crop, pasture or stubble unless a knapsack spray is available for immediate use. A Bush Fire Control Officer can issue any directions he considers necessary to prevent the possibility of fire.

**POWER SAWS, BAG LOADERS, ETC. (Reg. 38A)**—A Bush Fire Control Officer may issue directions to any person regarding the operation of any small machines and can forbid their operation unless specified firefighting equipment is available at the site. These directions may be made generally throughout a Local Authority's district. The use of power saws, bag loaders and other plant operated by internal combustion engines on land under crop, stubble or pasture can be prohibited or restricted in the same way as a harvesting ban, but there must be specific reference in the announcement to the machinery or plant or equipment to which the ban or restriction is to apply.

### **CLAIMS FOR DAMAGES (SECTION 51)**

Although burning may be permitted by the Bush Fires Act and all conditions may be complied with, the person carrying out the burning is still liable to claims for damages for loss or injury sustained by any other person in consequence of such burning operations. It is not a defence to such claim that the provisions of the Bush Fires Act were carried out.

### **OCCUPIER TO EXTINGUISH FIRES FOUND BURNING ON HIS LAND (SECTION 28)**

It is provided that whenever a fire is burning on any land at any time between 1st October and 31st May (unless the fire has been lit under the provisions of the Act), the occupier of the land must take steps to extinguish the fire and if he needs assistance he must inform the nearest Bush Fire Control Officer or an officer of a Bush Fire Brigade. Penalty, \$200.

### **FIREBREAKS (SECTION 33)**

A Local Authority may require firebreaks to be prepared and maintained as wide and in any position considered necessary and may direct any owner or occupier of land by notice to prepare such breaks within a time specified in the notice. Similarly the removal or clearing up of any fire hazard may be ordered. If the owner or occupier fails to carry out the work, the Local Authority may enter the land and prepare the firebreaks at the cost of the owner or occupier. The Local Authority may give the notice in writing and/or it can give a general notice to all occupiers of land in the district by a notice published in the "Government Gazette" and in a newspaper circulating in its district. The Bush Fires Board will assist Local Authorities to draft notices. Firebreaks must not be cleared by burning, unless the burning complies with the requirements of the Act.

All notices requiring firebreaks should include a provision requiring the firebreaks to be maintained until a specified date, clear of all inflammable material. This provision is essential if legal action for enforcement is taken in court. Normal orders require provisions for clearing of firebreaks by a stipulated date. The inspection is usually carried out some time later and no direct evidence is then available that firebreaks did not exist by the date required by the order. If provision is made that firebreaks must be "maintained clear of inflammable material until the ..... day of ..... 197....", then the inspection can be carried out at any time within the period and if firebreaks are not in evidence a prosecution will normally succeed.

### **LIGHTED CIGARETTES (SECTION 30)**

It is an offence to throw a lighted cigarette, tobacco, or a match, from a vehicle or, if not in a vehicle, to dispose of any of these things in a way that is likely to set fire to the bush. Penalty, \$100.

### **WILFULLY LIGHTING A FIRE (SECTION 32)**

A person who wilfully lights a fire (or attempts to do so) which may injure a person or property is liable to a fine of \$1,000 or imprisonment for five years.

### **BURNING ON CROWN LAND (SECTION 34)**

The occupier of land which abuts on Crown land, a reserve or abandoned land, may enter it for the purpose of clearing a firebreak not more than ten feet wide, not more than ten

chains from the common boundary. The area between the firebreak and the common boundary may then be burned provided a permit is first obtained from a Bush Fire Control Officer. The control officer can stipulate the width of break which may be burned up to a maximum of ten chains. This protective burning is also subject to all the other provisions of the Bush Fires Act (Sections 17 and 18).

A Bush Fire Control Officer, subject to provisions regarding prohibited times and those of Section 18, may enter any Crown land or reserve with such workmen and vehicles, etc., as may be necessary and may burn the bush in order to reduce a fire hazard which cannot be removed in any other way.

### **CONTROL AND SUPPRESSION OF BUSH FIRES APPOINTMENT OF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICERS (SECTION 38)**

A Local Authority may appoint any person to be a Bush Fire Control Officer. The appointment must be notified to the Bush Fires Board for recording and publication in the "Government Gazette." The Local Authority must also advertise the appointment in a newspaper circulating in the district and may determine the seniority of the officers appointed by it. It is compulsory for a Local Authority to appoint a Chief Bush Fire Control Officer and a Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer. No special powers are stipulated in the Bush Fires Act for these two officers and they have the same authority as any other bush fire control officer under the Act. The Local Authority may lay down the special powers and duties to be carried out by the Chief Control Officer and his Deputy. Although a volunteer, a Bush Fire Control Officer is an officer of the Local Authority and is thus subject to its general direction, i.e. a Local Authority may arrange for a Control Officer to be the senior for a particular section of the District and to be the only one who will normally issue permits to burn for that section. The second and third officer for the section would then only actually exercise this function if the first were absent or not available. **These are all matters of local arrangement.** It should be noted that registration as the captain or lieutenant of a bush fire brigade does not automatically make them Bush Fire Control Officers. These are two separate appointments although one man can hold both if the Local Authority so desires.

A Bush Fire Control Officer has very wide powers and is not liable for any damages, loss or injury, caused as a result of the exercise of these powers in good faith.

## **DUTIES AND POWERS OF BUSH FIRE CONTROL OFFICERS (SECTIONS 38 AND 39)**

Every Bush Fire Control Officer appointed may, subject to directions given by the Local Authority, take any measures he considers necessary and practicable for:—

- (a) The prevention of bush fires.
- (b) Protecting life and property in the case of an outbreak of a bush fire.
- (c) Carrying out any duty or exercising any authority referred to in the Bush Fires Act.
- (d) Procuring the due observance of the provisions of the Act. (For this purpose it is his duty to demand the name and address of any person committing an offence against the Act and to report the circumstances and name to the Local Authority.) Any person refusing his name to a Bush Fire Control Officer may be arrested without warrant. Penalty, \$100.

**OBSTRUCTIONS (Section 57).** It is a serious offence to obstruct, hinder, resist or oppose a member or officer of the Bush Fires Board or a Bush Fire Control or brigade officer who is exercising an authority or duty under the Bush Fires Act. Penalty is a term of imprisonment for three months or a fine of \$200.

**POWERS.** To enable Bush Fire Control Officers to carry out their duty, extensive powers have been conferred on them. They may, after consulting the occupier of land, if present, do all or any of the following things. (Section 39).

- (a) Exercise any of the appropriate powers of the Chief Officer of Fire Brigades so far as may be necessary for extinguishing a bush fire which is already burning or for preventing its spread.

(He may cause electricity, water, gas, etc., to be shut off. He may close any street, road, right-of-way against traffic. He may remove or order police to remove any person or any thing which interferes with the operation of a brigade. He shall have control and direction of any brigade or brigades and any person who voluntarily places his services at his disposal. He may take or direct any measures considered necessary for protection of life and property. He may cause any premises to be entered or pulled down.) These powers only apply when dealing with a fire which is out of control.

- (b) Enter any land or building whether private property or not.
- (c) Pull down, cut, remove fences on any land, cause fire-breaks to be ploughed or cleared.
- (d) Take and use water except water for use by a school or an occupier's domestic supply in a tank at his dwelling.
- (e) Take charge of and direct any Bush Fire Brigade present.
- (f) Do any other thing he considers necessary in the exercise of above powers.
- (g) Employ any person or use the voluntary services of any person.
- (h) He may prohibit, or postpone, the lighting of any fire if he considers it may escape and may direct any steps to be taken to extinguish or control any fire. (Section 46). This power to prohibit or give orders to extinguish relates to any fire, whoever may have lit it and whether they have a permit to do so or not.
- (i) He may enter a building he believes to be on fire and take any steps he considers necessary to control the fire. This power may only be exercised in an area in which no brigade has been formed under the Fire Brigades Act.

A bush fire control officer also has many special powers regarding the control of machinery and vehicles; banning harvesting, burning on Crown lands—reserves etc; burning at sawmills etc. (see separate Sections under these subjects.)

A bush fire control officer has **no** authority to take or commandeer privately owned equipment or vehicles without the consent of the owner.

### **FOREST OFFICER TAKES PRECEDENCE (SECTION 45)**

If a bush fire is burning in or near a State Forest or on Crown lands the foregoing powers and duties vest in any Forest Officer **who may be present at the fire**. In such a case the powers cannot be exercised by a Bush Fire Control Officer except under the direction of the Forest Officer. If a Forest Officer is **not present** a Bush Fire Control Officer may exercise any of the authorities conferred by the Act until a Forest Officer arrives. Except in the localities mentioned a Forest Officer is only a private individual and cannot take charge of operations if the fire is not on or near a State Forest or on Crown lands.

"Near". The interpretation of "near" is at the discretion of the Forest Officer and it means sufficiently close to be a threat to the Forest under the circumstances existing.

### **BUSH FIRES BRIGADES (SECTIONS 41, 42, 43, 44)**

A Bush Fire Brigade may be established in any district and there is no limit to the number of brigades which may be formed. As the Local Authority has responsibility in regard to the brigades for the purpose of co-ordinating their activity, it is desirable that the formation of a brigade should be carried out in consultation with the Local Authority. Before a brigade may be registered, it is necessary for the Local Authority to have by-laws governing the operation of brigades. It is important that all brigades should be properly registered by the Bush Fires Board, otherwise they cannot be recognised as brigades under the Act and the officers are not entitled to exercise the authority or enjoy the protection conferred by the Act. It is only necessary to register the names of OFFICERS of a brigade. Details regarding the other members should be kept by the Local Authority. A Bush Fire Brigade is subject to direction by a Bush Fire Control Officer. Appointment as Captain of a brigade does not automatically make the Captain a Bush Fire Control Officer, although many Local Authorities also appoint the Captains of brigades as Bush Fire Control Officers. A Captain or a Lieutenant of a bush fire brigade is not automatically appointed a Bush Fire Control Officer. The appointment of a Bush Fire Control Officer must be made by resolution of the Local Authority. Brigade officers who do not hold appointment also as Bush Fire Control Officers are not authorised by the Act to issue permits to burn. There is nothing to prevent Bush Fire Brigade Officers also being appointed Bush Fire Control Officers.

**For the purpose of extinguishing or preventing the spread of a bush fire,** the Captain, or, in his absence, the next senior officer of any Bush Fire Brigade may exercise the following powers—

- (a) Control and direction of the brigade and any persons who voluntarily place their services at his disposal.
- (b) Authority either alone or with others under his direction to enter any land or premises which may be on fire; he may take any action which he thinks necessary to protect lives and property and may cause fences to be pulled down and any inflammable material to be burnt or removed. He may enter or direct the entering of any land or premises or take water from any



source other than from a school or domestic supply in a tank. If a Bush Fire Control Officer is not present the brigade officer may exercise any of a control officer's powers which he considers necessary.

- (c) He may enter a building which is on fire and take any steps he considers necessary to control the fire. He cannot exercise this power in an area in which there is a fire brigade under the Fire Brigade Act.

If the fire is burning in or near any State Forest or on Crown lands, these powers may be exercised by a Forest Officer who is present and who is entitled to take supreme control of all operations.

A Bush Fire Control Officer may prohibit or postpone the lighting of any fire if he considers there would be a danger of the fire escaping and may direct any steps to be taken to extinguish or control any fire. (Section 46.)

Bush Fire Control Officers and officers, members and persons assisting a bush fire brigade are not liable for any loss or damage caused in good faith when fighting a fire. (Section 63.)

### **JOINT REGISTRATION OF BRIGADES AND OFFICERS**

A Bush Fire Brigade can be registered in more than one Shire District. The Shire Council which forms and registers a Bush Fire Brigade can arrange with an adjoining Shire Council also to register the same Brigade. Bush Fire Control Officers can similarly be joint registered for more than one district, if both Shire Councils agree. Joint registration is most important for those Brigades which operate in areas close to the border between Shires.

Even if not dual registered, a Bush Fire Brigade has authority to operate in an adjoining Shire, and Officers can exercise all their normal powers provided that an Officer or **member** of a Brigade of the Shire in which the fire is burning is not present. In this case a member (not necessarily an Officer) of the "Home" Brigade takes charge and can give instructions to Brigades (including the Officers) coming in from adjoining areas.

### **INSURANCE OF PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT (SECTION 37)**

It is compulsory under the Act for a Local Authority to insure its bush fire control officers and the officers, members, and persons assisting a Bush Fire Brigade. The fire fighting equipment used must also be insured whether privately owned

or owned by the Brigade. The State Insurance Office and the various underwriters issue a standard policy for this Bush Fire Insurance. The standard policy refers only to injury or damage incurred when fighting a bush fire. Special extensions are available to the standard policy and these extensions cover Bush Fire Control Officers, etc., when carrying out inspections and other fire prevention work. The extensions are not compulsory under the Act but the majority of local authorities take out the additional cover in order to give better protection to their officers. The standard policy covers firefighters and equipment from other districts brought to assist at a fire. It also covers persons assisting to fight a fire provided the firefighting is under the control at least of a member of a bush fire brigade. If no authorised person is in charge of the operations then the benefits of the insurance policy do not apply. A Local Authority which arranges for increased benefits for its own officers and members can also arrange for these increased benefits to be payable when its officers and members operate in other districts.

### **REDUCTION OF CROP INSURANCE PREMIUMS (SECTION 52)**

A Local Authority for any district which has a registered Bush Fire Brigade may apply to the Minister for Lands for declaration of the area as an "approved area". The applications are considered after investigation by an officer of the Board, and if it is considered a sufficiently high standard of protection is afforded and the district is declared, crop fire insurance premiums must be reduced by all insurance companies by 25 per cent.

### **BURNING BACK (SECTION 47)**

Lighting a fire to burn a break to assist in controlling a bush fire is prohibited unless ordered by a Bush Fire Control Officer, or in his absence the Captain of a brigade. If there is no Captain present, a Lieutenant, or in the absence of an officer, a brigade member may direct the lighting of a back fire.

### **GENERAL COMMENTS ON FIRE PREVENTION MEASURES FIRE BREAKS**

The provision of properly cleared or ploughed breaks around all cultivated areas or pastures is a most important protection. Breaks should be as wide as practicable, but the width and nature of the breaks will be dictated by the source of the greatest danger, with which all farmers will be familiar in their districts.

Two parallel breaks up to a chain apart will afford good protection and the intervening areas may best be burned, prior to the prohibited time, to afford a greater degree of safety. Breaks should be planned and provided early, particularly in the vicinity of areas of the greatest danger. Protection of houses, buildings, and hay stacks is of the greatest importance.

### **PROTECTIVE BURNING**

Much can be done by the Local Authorities and farmers to reduce fire hazards by a regular programme of protective burning carried out each year before the prohibited burning time commences, on all uncleared or partly cleared land. All grass and debris should be removed from around buildings, houses, hay stacks, etc., and disposed of in suitable weather. Any such burning should, of course, comply with the requirements of the Bush Fires Act. Burning the roadsides not only reduces the likelihood of fires occurring along the roads, but also increases very greatly the value of the road as a firebreak. Burning along roadsides needs to be carefully organised and planned to avoid damage to valuable growth of trees and flora.

### **FIRE FIGHTING EQUIPMENT**

All fire fighting equipment should be overhauled and tested well before the hot weather commences and be ready for immediate use. This testing could well be carried out during the protective burning mentioned above. It should be placed where easily accessible. Advice on any aspect of fire fighting equipment is readily obtained from any officer of the Bush Fires Board, or will be supplied on direct application to the Bush Fires Board, Perth.

### **ON OUTBREAK OF FIRE**

The local Bush Fire Control Officer, and an officer or member of a Bush Fire Brigade, or the Local Authority, should be notified immediately any fire is seen burning during the prohibited times, whether it is on private property or not. The first arrival at the fire should make a rapid, but as careful an inspection as possible of the extent, direction and rate of spread of the fire so that when assistance arrives, plans can be rapidly prepared as to the best method of suppressing the fire.

It is important that everyone in the district should know who the Bush Fire Control Officers are, whom they should notify and what they should do in the event of a fire. The Post Office authorities will co-operate in making fire calls and it is

suggested the matter be discussed with the local postmaster. It is a considerable advantage, however, if all settlers, particularly those on the phone, are given a list of the Bush Fire Control or Brigade Officers and their telephone numbers.

### **DISTRICT ORGANISATION**

The points mentioned in the last paragraph are concerned with the general organisation of the Bush Fire Brigades in the district. The organisation of a district need not be complicated. All that is necessary is that a committee of brigade and control officers should work out a definite plan and ensure that everyone knows what they are expected to do. Quite simple arrangements can be effective, but not quite so simple as "when there is smoke in the district everybody turns out". The latter arrangement has been a frequent cause of severe losses as when there are a number of smokes there is a good deal of confusion and waste of manpower. The arrangements made must be practicable and the brigade officers and settlers generally must have enough confidence in the strength of the district organisation to know that when called on to fight a fire outside their own section they can leave their area with safety. On the other hand a brigade fighting a fire must be assured that if help is needed it will be readily available. Arrangements on these lines save a tremendous amount of everyone's time. If the people in a sector can handle a fire no-one else in the district should have to worry about it unless called. This happy position has been attained in many districts, but there are others where considerable improvement could be made.

### **ADVISORY COMMITTEES (SECTION 67)**

A Local Authority may, with the approval of the Bush Fires Board, appoint an Advisory Committee consisting of Bush Fire Control Officers or members of a bush fire brigade. The function of such a Committee is to advise the Local Authority on all bush fire control and prevention matters, the firebreaks required in the district, recommending prosecutions and assisting to organise the co-operation and co-ordination of bush fire brigades in the district or in adjoining districts. The Local Authority must nominate one member of its Council to be a Member of the Committee and a Chairman is to be elected by the members of the Committee. The Committee may consist of any number of members. Advisory committees have been formed and are operating in many districts. They are assisting local authorities by handling the day to day detail and their

recommendations to the local authorities simplify the task of the council. The result has been a marked improvement in the overall efficiency of the district organisation.

### **SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

It is not possible here to deal with safety precautions at length, but all concerned with fire fighting are urged not to take undue risks. Do not enter gullies or valleys which are on fire or in the path of a fire or get in a position where the fire can burn uphill towards you. It may seem unnecessary to stress these matters, but where there is property or stock involved there is a strong temptation to make an endeavour to effect a "save". A number of brigades have also been noted taking a course of action which places reliance for safety solely on the fire fighting equipment. These brigades may certainly get results, but such actions can also be extremely costly in men and equipment.

There are also considerable dangers in lighting back fires or burning back in advance of a fire. This method may effect some spectacular "saves," but it can also lead to serious tragedies. This method of fighting fires should seldom be used in the day time and in any case only by very experienced persons. The lighting of a back fire except under the direction of a Bush Fire Control Officer or in his absence an officer or member of a Bush Fire Brigade, is prohibited by the Bush Fires Act.

All fire fighters should ensure that a fire once under control is not permitted to start up again. When the major danger is passed arrangements should be made for the patrol of the area to ensure that further outbreaks are prevented. There is a natural tendency, when victory has apparently been gained, to relax after the severe exertions involved. Failure to arrange for patrol may involve many more hours or days of heartbreaking effort. Records indicate that it is unfortunately true that many fires which cause serious damage had been at some stage considered completely under control.

Patrol should not be confined to the day of the burn, but should be repeated if bad conditions recur, even after light rain, for although rain will stop a fire, it will not necessarily extinguish burning logs or spars.

**FIRST AID.**—First Aid covers quite a big field but the following brief information will assist in caring for firefighting casualties. It should be appreciated that first aid methods are constantly being revised and improved. Anyone in possession

of First Aid Certificates more than two years old would be well advised to refresh their training by completing another First Aid course with the Red Cross Society or St John Ambulance Association.

First Aid for firefighters requires prompt action in the particular hazards of burns, asphyxia, heat exhaustion and eye irritation.

**BURNS.**—Burns create severe pain, extreme shock and probable infection. Pain increases with the depth of the burn and the destruction of the skin and injury to the deeper tissues, blood vessels and exposure of nerve endings. Pain is often reduced where burns are excessively deep and this is due to the death of nerves causing loss of feeling. Extreme shock develops in burn cases from a combination of pain, chemical agents (toxin) produced by the burnt tissue, and from loss of blood volume (plasma) to the burnt area. Infection is a constant hazard in open burns as the injured burnt tissue is much more compatible to the development of bacteria than is healthy tissue injured in other ways.

## **TREATMENT FOR BURNS**

1. **Prevent Infection:** Cover the burnt area as soon as possible with a clean dry cloth or clean piece of plastic to exclude the air. Tie or bandage lightly to keep in place.

2. **Limit Movement:** Movement creates further pain and shock, so avoid touching the area. Gently immobilise the area and keep it in a raised position if possible. This will limit swelling and loss of body fluid to the injured area.

**TREAT FOR SHOCK.**—Lay the casualty down, loosen tight clothing around the neck, chest and waist to assist breathing and provide fresh air. Raise the legs if possible or place the body with head slightly down hill if there is a slope. This will encourage an adequate blood supply to the head and chest. Medical aid must be obtained as quickly as possible so that fluid loss may be replaced by transfusion.

Further assistance can be given in burn cases by carefully protecting any blisters present as the fluid is an ideal sterile dressing and protects the injured area. If clothing is stuck to the burn gently cut around it a half inch outside the edges of the burn before covering the wound and adherent clothing with a clean cloth or plastic. The adherent clothing is temporarily germ free from the heat that caused the burn. The casualty



should be denied fluids by mouth unless medical aid will be unavailable for some hours. In the latter case give a glass of water slowly every half hour with a half a level teaspoon of salt dissolved in it. Do not give alcohol in any form.

**ASPHYXIA.**—The major cause of asphyxia in fires is a lack of oxygen, or smoke and heat affecting the airway. The casualty's breathing is short, noisy, gasping, and his face goes blue. He will become unconscious and might stop breathing unless his condition is corrected.

#### **Treatment for Asphyxia:**

1. Remove the casualty to fresh air.
2. Make sure the airway is unobstructed. (Check mouth, undo clothing at neck, chest and waist).
3. Place in the coma position (half way between face down and on his side) for easier breathing.
4. Watch continuously for breathing failure; if breathing fails immediately apply resuscitation.

#### **Mouth to Mouth (and Nose) Resuscitation:**

1. Remove obstructions in airway (use fingers).
2. Extend the head to prevent the tongue from blocking the airway. (If will assist if a folded coat or bag is placed under the shoulders, pull the chin and head well back).
3. Inflate the lungs (seal the nose and breathe into the mouth or seal the mouth and breathe into the nose).
4. Make sure the chest rises after each inflation (proving the airway is unobstructed). If chest does not rise check again for obstructions and again make sure head is pulled well back.
5. Persist until casualty breathes normally.
6. When breathing recommences place in the coma position.

**HEAT EXHAUSTION.**—The normal evaporation of sweat from the skin and moisture from the lungs during breathing are the two main ways of regulating body temperature. Heat exhaustion is a common hazard in firefighting because hot air prevents the body from losing its heat. The loss of salts due to excessive sweating increases the danger. A casualty from heat exhaustion feels hot, giddy, exhausted, stifled, has a headache and sweats freely. He may also suffer cramp caused by excessive loss of salts from heavy sweating.

**Treatment for Heat Exhaustion:**

1. Remove the casualty to a cool area with ample air circulation (in a breeze if possible).
2. Sprinkle with water or wipe with wet towel (the breeze will evaporate moisture and cool the casualty).
3. If conscious give frequent drinks of cool water (half a level teaspoon of salt per glass), to replace fluids and salt lost through sweating.
4. Obtain medical aid if casualty's condition fails to improve or if it deteriorates.

**HEAT STROKE.**—Heat stroke is a more dangerous condition and may follow heat exhaustion. The patient is generally unconscious and the skin is hot and dry. The patient will have a very high temperature. Remove casualty to as cool a place as possible and treat as for heat exhaustion by stripping off or releasing clothing and covering with a wet sheet or cloth and fanning. It is essential the casualty's temperature be reduced and the treatment of wet cloth and fanning must be continued until hospital is reached.

**EYE IRRITATION.**—Smoke affected eyes is another hazard of firefighting. A good deal of trouble is due to sweat running into eyes and carrying irritating material. Prevent this as far as possible by tying cloth or handkerchief around forehead. Commercial type eye irrigators provide effective relief. If an eye irrigator is not available the old type of eye bath will help. The saline solution for use in the irrigator or eye bath is prepared by adding one level teaspoon of salt to each pint of boiled water. The proportions are important and the solution must be made up accurately to avoid possible injury. Caution must be exercised in using an eye irrigator to ensure only gentle pressure when squeezing the bulb or bottle in order to avoid injury to the delicate surface of the eye.

**FIRST AID KIT**

Items which are desirable in a first aid kit for bush fire brigade use are as follows:—

A packet of bandaids.

One roll of Elastoplast Adhesive Dressing strip (2½ in. x 1 yard).

One roll of Elastoplast Adhesive Plaster (2 in. x 1 yard).

Two or three Sterile field dressing packs (Army disposal).

- Six Sterile Gauze Dressings (3 in. x 3 in.).
- Two triangular bandages.
- Two gauze rolled bandages (1 in. x 6 yards).
- Two gauze rolled bandages (2 in. x 6 yards).
- Two gauze rolled bandages (3 in. x 6 yards).
- 1 packet safety pins (assorted sizes).
- 1 roll cotton wool.
- 1 packet gauze.
- 1 pair scissors.
- 1 pair tweezers.
- 1 packet needles.
- 1 packet stainless steel razor blades.
- 1 eye bath.
- 1 bottle aspirin.
- 1 bottle of Acriflavine (4 fluid ozs.)
- 1 small bottle of Dettol (4 fluid ozs.).
- 1 jar of salt.
- 1 small jar of Bicarbonate of soda.
- 1 tube "Paxyl" ointment.

If space is available, the following are frequently useful additions to the above:—

1 eye irrigator. (This is a plastic bottle with an eye piece to wash eyes). There is a plastic tube for water to run away. Sterile saline solution is required for the irrigator and this is a level teaspoon of salt in a pint of boiled water. These are very efficient in relieving eye irritation, but take up a fair amount of room. Although not quite as efficient, an eye bath used with sterile saline solution is reasonably satisfactory.

A sterile shell dressing from Army disposal, which is a larger version of the field dressing is also useful. A cake of hand soap and a few paper towels are also extremely valuable in the field; as is a small plastic kidney dish.

A packet of cotton wool buds is also extremely useful, but of course these can be manufactured quite readily from small pieces of cotton wool twisted on the end of a match.

If too much is carried in a first aid kit, there is a tendency for items to be knocked about. If items are used or damaged see they are replaced at the earliest possible moment.