

**OVERALL PLAN RURAL FIRE BRIGADE SPECIAL CHARGE**

<b>Objective Reference:</b>	<b>A190470</b> <b>Reports and Attachments (Archives)</b>
<b>Attachment:</b>	<a href="#">Rural Fire Brigade Budgets 2015-2016</a>
<b>Authorising Officer:</b>	<b>Linnet Batz</b> <b>Chief Executive Officer</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>Linnet Batz</b> <b>Chief Financial Officer</b>
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**PURPOSE**

To submit to Council for adoption the new Rural Fire Brigade Special Charge overall plan for the 2015-2016 financial year.

**BACKGROUND**

Council has in previous financial years contributed to each of the Southern Moreton Bay Island (SMBI) rural fire brigades by raising revenue through various Rural Fire Levy Special Charges.

This year the Rural Fire Service, a department of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), has been instrumental in forming a Local Area Finance Committee (LAFC) for the SMBI rural fire brigades. The LAFC comprises a representative from QFES, a nominee from each Island brigade and a representative from Redland City Council. The SMBI brigades will continue to operate individually but all revenue raised through a Special charge will be pooled in a central fund managed by the LAFC. The LAFC will be responsible for disbursement of funds to the Island brigades based on each Island brigade's budget and on a needs basis.

**OVERALL PLAN**

A rural fire service is provided in areas where there is no urban fire service and it is fully staffed by volunteers from the community.

In 2015-2016, the Rural Fire Brigade Special Charge will be levied on Karragarra, Lamb, Macleay, Perulpa and Russell Islands to contribute funding to the service, facilities and activities provided by SMBI Fire Brigades including:

- Responding to the outbreak of fires;
  - Working in conjunction with Rural Operations staff from the QFES undertaking a range of planning and preparation activities throughout the
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year to ensure communities are prepared for the fire season, which includes hazard reduction burns;

- Controlling the use of fire by providing authorised Fire Wardens to manage permits to light fires;
- Allowing brigade members to engage in delivering community education and awareness on fire behaviour and prevention.

The Rural Fire Brigade Special Charge is set in consideration of the annual budget 2015-2016 for each SMBI rural fire brigade (attached) and in consultation with the Southern Moreton Bay Islands Local Area Finance Committee.

The rateable land over which the Rural Fire Brigade Special Charge is levied is described as all rateable land on Karragarra, Lamb, Macleay, Perulpa and Russell Islands (Benefited Land) excluding land that is rated as rating category 10 for the purposes of levying the differential general rate. Land that is levied a Rural Fire Brigade Special Charge obtains a special benefit from the provision of the service, facilities and activities funded by the special charge because it funds the provision of a rural fire service to that Land, which a rural fire service would not otherwise be available.

For 2015-2016 the Southern Moreton Bay Islands Local Area Finance Committee requests a levy of \$20.00 per annum.

The charge of \$20.00 will be levied on a quarterly basis in the months of July, October, January and April and charged on a per lot basis on all rateable Benefited land.

The estimated cost of the overall plan is \$242,120.

The estimated time for implementing the overall plan is 1 year, ending on 30 June 2016.

## **STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**

### **Legislative Requirements**

Section 128A of the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 declares that a local government may make and levy special rates and charges and contribute the amounts raised to the rural fire brigades.

Section 91 of the Local Government Act 2009 (LGA) enables a local government to levy rates and charges on land and for a service, facility or activity that is supplied or undertaken by the local government or by someone on behalf of the local government.

Section 94(1) of the LGA, states that a local government may decide to levy a special rate or charge.

Section 94(2) of the Local Government Regulation 2012 (Regulation) requires that where a local government decides to levy special rates or charges the resolution

must identify the land to which the special rates or charges apply and the overall plan for the service, facility or activity.

Section 94(6) of the Regulation requires if an overall plan is for no more than 1 year it negates the need to also adopt an Annual Implementation Plan.

Section 96 of the Regulation requires if an overall plan is implemented and not all the funds levied are spent by the end of the overall plan the funds must be paid back to the current owners of the land on which the special rates or charges were levied as soon as practicable. There is no requirement to return any unspent charges from the previous Rural Fire Levy Special Charge, provided Council has discharged its duty by providing the revenue raised to each fire brigade in each financial year they were imposed. Council discharges its duty for the time limit for carrying out the overall plan by monthly payment of all revenue received from the special charge to each of the SMBI Rural Fire Brigade.

### **Risk Management**

Council annually reviews special charges during the budget process. For 2015-2016 Council has established a position that it will support the Southern Moreton Bay Islands Local Area Finance Committee by raising revenue through a special charge in order for the SMBI Rural Fire Brigades to continue to provide an essential service to the local community.

### **Financial**

The levy proposed for 2015-2016 is in response to the budgets prepared by the SMBI Rural Fire Brigades which are completed in consultation with the Area Director Rural Operations QFRS.

Based on the number of current rateable lots (12,106) it is forecast that \$242,120 will be raised in the 2015-2016 financial year.

### **People**

Nil impact expected.

### **Environmental**

The levy supports the SMBI Rural Fire Brigades to provide an essential service to their local communities. The activities undertaken by Brigades members include responding to the outbreak of fires within their local area and in surrounding areas in support of other rural fire brigades and emergency service workers.

The brigades work in conjunction with Rural Operations staff from the QFES undertaking a range of planning and preparation activities throughout the year to ensure communities are prepared for the fire season, which includes hazard reduction burns. They control the use of fire by providing authorised Fire Wardens to manage permits to light fires. Brigade members also engage in delivering community education and awareness on fire behaviour and prevention.

### **Social**

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Nil impact expected.

### **Alignment with Council's Policy and Plans**

Alignment to Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2020

- 7. Strong and connected communities
- 7.5 The community's preparedness for disasters is improved through community education, training and strong partnerships between Council and other agencies.

### **CONSULTATION**

The Overall Plan for the Rural Fire Brigade Special Charge for 2015-2016 is put forward for adoption after consultation with the Area Director Rural Operations QFES, the Southern Moreton Bay Islands Local Area Finance Committee, Councillors, Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Financial Officer.

### **OPTIONS**

1. That Council resolves to:
  1. Adopt the overall plan described in this report for the Rural Fire Brigade Special charge for 2015-2016; and
  2. Fix the Rural Fire Brigade Special charge for 2015-2016 at \$20.00 per annum to be charged on a per lot basis on all rateable land on Karragarra, Lamb, Macleay, Perulpa and Russell Islands excluding land that is rated as rating category 10 for the purposes of levying the differential general rate.
2. That Council resolves to not raise a Rural Fire Brigade Special charge for the 2015-2016 financial year, noting that without these funds the Rural Fire Brigades will be unable to provide a rural fire service for the Islands.

### **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION**

That Council resolves to:

1. Adopt the overall plan described in this report for the Rural Fire Brigade Special charge for 2015-2016; and
2. Fix the Rural Fire Brigade Special charge for 2015-2016 at \$20.00 per annum to be charged on a per lot basis on all rateable land on Karragarra, Lamb, Macleay, Perulpa and Russell Islands excluding land that is rated as rating category 10 for the purposes of levying the differential general rate.

SOUTHERN MORETON ISLAND L AFC 2015 - 2016	Ratable Properties	Brigade Classification	Number of Appliances	Number of Slip-on units or Trailers	Number of Stations	Number of Incidents last year (Jan - Dec)	Area serviced by the Brigade (Sq Km)		Total Station Operation Costs	Total Vehicle Operating Costs	Total Equipment Operating Costs	Total Personal Protective Equipment Costs	Total Public Relations Costs	Total Training Costs	Total Minor Equipment Costs	Total Administration Costs	Total Operating Costs	Bank Balance Operations AC	Total funds required for Operations	Total Vehicle Acquisition	Total Station Construction	Total Station Furniture and Storage	Total Capital Expenditure 2015-2016	Total funds required for Annually for capital works.	Total Funds Required 2015-2016 FY	Rates per property	TOTAL Collected for L AFC
Karragarra Island	272	Village	1	1	1	1		\$4,900.00	\$3,300.00	\$1,700.00	\$1,100.00	\$460.00	\$1,960.00	\$363.00	\$2,015.00	\$15,798.00	\$5,000.00	\$10,798.00		\$3,500.00		\$3,500.00	\$0.00	\$14,298.00	\$20.00	\$5,440.00	
Macleay Island	3772	iZone	4	0	1	6		\$23,000.00	\$3,164.00	\$3,600.00	\$700.00	\$1,200.00	\$7,600.00	\$657.00	\$4,580.00	\$44,501.00	\$10,000.00	\$34,501.00	\$30,000.00		\$10,000.00	\$40,000.00	\$28,600.00	\$74,501.00	\$20.00	\$75,440.00	
Lamb Island	763	Village	1	0	1	1		\$5,630.00	\$255.00			\$275.00	\$6,650.00	\$1,000.00	\$770.00	\$14,580.00	\$5,000.00	\$9,580.00		\$100,000.00		\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$109,580.00	\$20.00	\$15,260.00	
Russell Island	7475	iZone	3	0	1	15		\$10,704.00	\$11,000.00	\$1,500.00	\$2,590.00	\$2,000.00	\$4,250.00	\$2,171.00	\$4,515.00	\$38,730.00	\$25,000.00	\$13,730.00	\$30,000.00			\$30,000.00	\$24,000.00	\$43,730.00	\$20.00	\$149,500.00	
																\$113,609.00		\$68,609.00				\$173,500.00	\$152,600.00	\$242,109.00		\$245,640.00	
Average								\$11,058.50	\$4,429.75	\$2,266.67	\$1,463.33	\$983.75	\$5,115.00	\$1,047.75	\$2,970.00	\$45,443.60											
Total	12282							\$44,234.00	\$17,719.00	\$6,800.00	\$4,390.00	\$3,935.00	\$20,460.00	\$4,191.00	\$11,880.00	\$113,609.00	\$45,000.00	\$68,609.00				\$173,500.00	\$242,109.00				