Applicant: Karratha Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service
Project Title: Electric Gates – Karratha Volunteer Fire & Rescue

Description of organisation - The Karratha Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service (VFRS) is one of Western Australia's busiest volunteer fire brigades, responding to approximately 250-300 incidents annually. The brigade provides a 24-hour emergency response service, attending structure fires, bushfires, road crash rescues and other emergency incidents across Karratha and the surrounding region. In addition to emergency response, the organisation contributes to community safety through emergency preparedness initiatives, fire prevention education and community engagement activities.

Description of project – The project seeks funding to replace the station's existing manually operated gates with a modern automated electric gate system incorporating keypad and phone-controlled access. The current gates require volunteers to stop, exit vehicles and manually open and close the gates during emergency responses, creating avoidable delays and safety risks. The new system will improve emergency mobilisation times, enhance volunteer safety and ensure the station remains secure while crews are attending incidents.

Project Budget – Income (includes donations, volunteer labour, additional grant funding, organisations contribution)

City of Karratha Large Community Grant	Not Confirmed	$50,000
Karratha VFRS	Confirmed	$18,112.72
	INCOME TOTAL	**$68,112.72**

Project Budget – Expenditure

Electric Gates	$39,876.00
Concrete Works	$16,885.45
Electrical Works	$10,045.45
Preliminaries	$1,305.82
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	**$68,112.72**

City of Karratha Funding Received Last 3 years

	$0

Key Considerations

- The brigade responds to approximately 250-300 emergency incidents each year, making it one of the busiest volunteer fire brigades in Western Australia.
- Existing manual gates create operational delays by requiring volunteers to stop and physically open and close gates during emergency responses.
- The current arrangement leaves the station unsecured while volunteers attend incidents, creating an ongoing risk to vehicles, equipment and other emergency response assets.
- The applicant has committed a financial contribution of $18,112.72, representing approximately 27% of total project costs.
- The brigade has advised it will fund any remaining shortfall to ensure the project proceeds if additional external contributions are not secured.
- The project will be overseen by the Brigade Officer Group, with project delivery led by Trevor Cherry, and utilising suitably qualified local contractors where possible.
- Emergency Management has advised that funding for the proposed automatic gate installation cannot be sought through the DFES Local Government Grant Scheme (LGGS), as the project falls outside the scheme's eligibility criteria.
- The requested funding represents approximately 73% of the total project cost and will primarily support the gate infrastructure and associated electrical works.

Community Benefit

- Improves emergency response capability by reducing mobilisation delays during callouts.
- Enhances safety for volunteers by eliminating the need to manually operate gates during emergency responses, including night-time callouts and adverse weather conditions.
- Protects emergency response vehicles, equipment and station infrastructure through improved site security.
- Benefits the entire community by supporting a more efficient emergency response service across approximately 250-300 incidents annually.
- Strengthens community resilience and public safety by ensuring emergency service infrastructure operates efficiently and securely.
- Supports ongoing delivery of an essential volunteer emergency service relied upon by residents, businesses and visitors.

Strategic Alignment		
☐ Goal 1 - We resect Aboriginal peoples' Cultural Authority and Connection to Ngurra (Country) ☒ Goal 2 - Our community is welcoming, connected, vibrant, healthy and safe ☐ Goal 3 -. Everyone is included ☐ Goal 4 - Our places and spaces are functional, attractive and reflect our unique identity ☐ Goal 5 - We respect and care for the natural environment ☐ Goal 6 - The local economy is diverse and thriving, with opportunities for all ☐ Goal 7 - Our civic leaders are innovative, listening and balanced in meeting community needs.		
Project Total	$68,112.72	**Aggregated Assessment Panel Score (%)** 78%
Amount Requested From City of Karratha	$50,000	
Amount Recommended	***$50,000***	

RECOMMENDATION:

Officers recommend funding the full requested amount of $50,000 towards the installation of an automated electric gate system for the Karratha Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service (KVFRS).

The project demonstrates strong alignment with Council Plan Goal 2 by improving community safety and supporting the operational effectiveness of an essential volunteer emergency service.

The existing manually operated gates create avoidable delays during emergency callouts, requiring volunteers to stop and physically open and close gates. The current arrangement also presents security risks when the station is unattended. The proposed installation of automated gates will improve emergency mobilisation efficiency, reduce safety risks for volunteers and protect critical emergency response infrastructure.
The brigade provides an essential emergency service to the City of Karratha, responding to approximately 250-300 incidents each year. The proposed improvements will directly benefit volunteers while supporting the brigade's capacity to respond efficiently to emergencies.

Emergency Management has confirmed that the proposed automatic gate installation is not eligible for funding through the Department of Fire and Emergency Services' (DFES) Local Government Grant Scheme (LGGS) which is funded by the Emergency Services Levy (ESL). As a result, the KVFRS is seeking alternative funding assistance to undertake the improvements. The applicant has demonstrated its commitment to the project through a financial contribution of $18,112.72 towards the total project cost of $68,112.72 and has indicated it will fund any remaining shortfall to ensure project delivery.

Accordingly, officers recommend funding the application in full to support improved emergency response capability and community safety outcomes for the City of Karratha.