



Government  
of South Australia



# *the* VOLUNTEER YEARBOOK ■ 2015







# **SA Emergency Fire Service & SA Country Fire Service together with the SA Volunteer Fire Fighters Museum**

*cordially invite*

**past and present EFS/CFS volunteers,  
staff and families to join them at the**

## **2015 CFS Reunion**

**October 3rd, 4th & 5th, 2015 at Naracoorte Showgrounds**

**Reunion dinner to be held  
Saturday evening – \$35p/h (semi-formal)**

**Sunday 8am – breakfast**

**9am – Blessing of the fleet and volunteers**

**10:30am – Vehicle parade**

**11:30am-1pm – Lunch**

**1-4:30pm Competition Demo & Trade Displays**

**6:30pm – BBQ tea around the stump fire plus entertainment**



**Expressions of interest to Rex Hall prior to September 11, 2015  
Email [gadang@rbm.com.au](mailto:gadang@rbm.com.au) or PO Box 1222, Naracoorte SA 5271  
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Volunteer Yearbook is an annual publication which captures significant CFS activities and incidents from the past 12 months.

The views and opinions expressed through the contributions in this publication are not necessarily those of the SA Country Fire Service or of the Government of South Australia.

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WELCOME:  
*Chief Officer Greg Nettleton*



Across South Australia the CFS station is often the revered structural centrepiece for many to gather for the shared experience of serving the community.

Over a year, many journeys are made by individuals and collectively as a brigade.

More broadly the CFS as an organisation faces challenges, setbacks and triumphs, and the last 12 months have been no different.

Notably the CFS mourned the loss of two extraordinary volunteers Brian Johnston and Andrew Harrison who were killed in separate incidents on the fire ground both in the act of protecting the community.

We continue to remember and take inspiration from their devotion and service for the community- our thoughts remain with their family and friends.

The last 12 months also saw tragedy met with triumph as the CFS responded to two major incidents simultaneously early in 2015.

A fire on the doorstep of metropolitan Adelaide (Sampson Flat) and another down south (Tantanoola) had the potential to be a major disaster. Previous efforts and lessons learned during major incidents of Eden Valley, Bangor and Cherryville, as well as our assistance interstate had us well prepared for the fight.

The world tuned in as we collectively put day jobs, family time, summer holidays and other responsibilities aside to respond.

We had hundreds of volunteers on the ground and drew upon resources from interstate, we had twice the usual number of aircraft operating and for the first time utilised two large air tankers working out of Edinburgh.

Within a week both fires were contained and despite 24 homes being lost, thankfully no lives were taken - a proud achievement considering the number of people at risk.

It was a triumph for all involved from those actively fighting the fire and others providing cover for those to attend. I also acknowledge the often unheralded Community Engagement Team and their work put in over the years preparing the community to respond to such a dangerous situation.

There were of course many other incidents we attended and faced triumphantly, I thank

each of you for every occasion you gave up time to put on the overalls and place yourself in harm's way all for the benefit of the community.

Congratulations also to those receiving Australian Fire Service Medals (Greg Napier, Darren Chapman, Graeme Ward), individual accolades are cherished and serve as inspiration to others. They are well deserved and hopefully reflected upon fondly in years to come.

As you read through the images and stories of the year past I hope you can remind yourself on the great service you provide and find a moment to reflect upon your effort and achievement of the last year.

As we look ahead, we look forward to the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC) conference in Adelaide this year which will see a Youth Advisory Council paper accepted.

We will continue to see the rollout of new breathing apparatus (BA) sets, new VHF radios delivered, GRN upgraded, and new structural Personal Protective Clothing (PPC) coming into brigades.

No doubt the next year will present great challenges as we continue to respond to incidents and find balance in our often hectic lives.

Despite the challenges I'm sure all of you will continue to serve the community with the esteem and heroism you are highly regarded for.



WELCOME:  
*Minister for Emergency Services Hon. Tony Piccolo MP*

This past Fire Danger Season brought with it a bushfire South Australians hoped we would never need to confront again – a major blaze through the Adelaide Hills which will be known in the State's history simply as the Sampson Flat bushfire.

As Emergency Services Minister, I watched with both concern and admiration as Country Fire Service brigades responded from surrounding districts, then from other parts of the State and indeed from other parts of the country all fought to control the fire.

Before the fire was declared contained some six days after it commenced, more than 3,500 firefighters backed up by the SES, MFS and SAPOL had given their all to save lives and reduce losses.



It is important to note that while some 12,500 hectares was consumed by fire, it is remarkable that not one life was lost and property loss was kept relatively low. This is a direct result of the outstanding professionalism and commitment of our emergency service personnel.

Everyone marvelled at the capacity, co-ordination, courage and compassion exhibited by the CFS and other emergency services as they went about their duties.

I commend all volunteers and staff from across the sector for their tireless efforts and professionalism when it comes to protecting their communities, their colleagues and the State.

To all in the CFS, thank you.

WELCOME:  
*President, Country Fire Service Volunteer Association - Roger Flavell*

The 2014-15 year has been an extremely busy time for your association with the Sector Reform Proposal taking up many hours of volunteer's time, travelling, being represented at meetings and thinking about how the reforms or structural changes would affect the outcome of service delivery to communities across the state of SA. Minister Piccolo is to be commended on recently realising that there will need to be a reassessment on how best to manage any reform within the sector. While we as the association have agreed there is some reform that could and needs to be achieved, the process over the past few months has not been acceptable, and there is need of some careful consideration about the best way forward. We thank those people who have helped with the process to this point, there have been many excellent suggestions and ideas.

Some senior staff have made the decision recently to either retire or move on, and we thank them for their contribution to volunteers and the service and wish them a happy and healthy retirement from the paid side of the service and if any wish to continue in a volunteer capacity, we welcome their contribution.

This past year has seen the loss of two valuable volunteers at incidents, and our thoughts are continually with the partners and families of those left behind. I had the privilege of attending the very large funerals which demonstrated the respect both



had within their communities and inaugural AFAC National Memorial Service for Fire and Emergency Services personal in Canberra, where the Prime Minister and Governor General presented the families with Medallions in remembrance of those no longer with us. Thank you to all who have had a part in supporting those involved with these tragic incidents, and I know you will continue to stand alongside those who need your help and support to see them through to better days.

Another dry spring and summer meant some significant fires again this past season, and there were many thousands of hours supplied by volunteers to suppress these fires and keep their communities as safe as possible from wildfires. There is also the many other emergency incidents we attend, as well as the significant time spent training to provide a good service across the state.

Well done to all those who have and are committed to the Country Fire service, the people of South Australia appreciate your efforts and the service you provide in rescuing them and their loved ones from emergency situations across most of the state.



## DOCTRINE

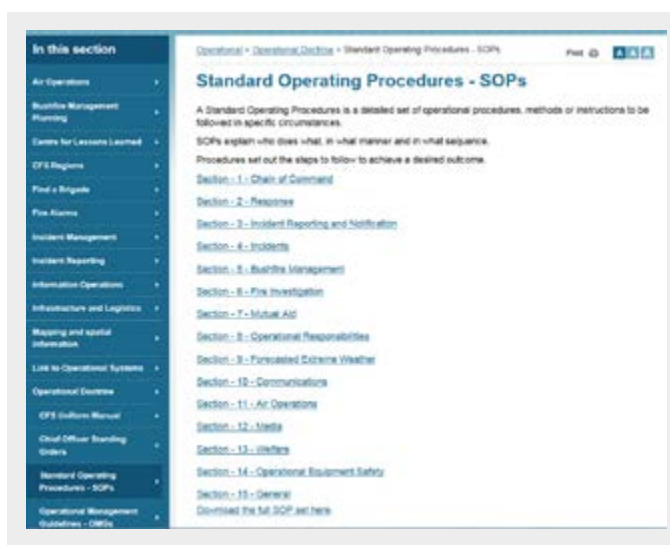
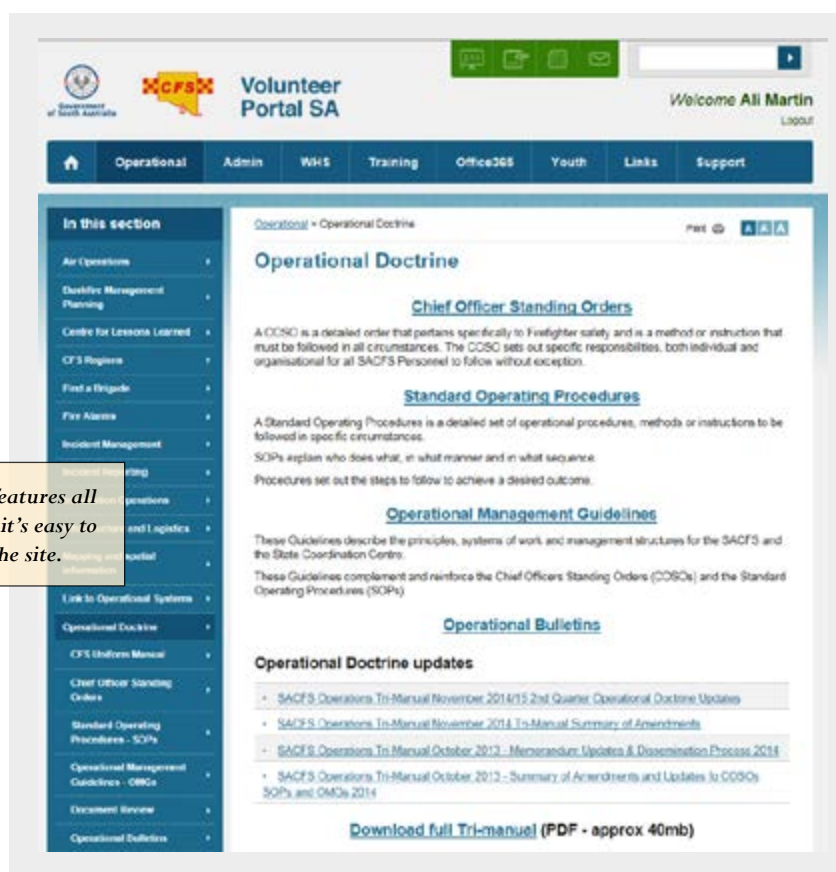
The SA Country Fire Service, Operational Doctrine team will be looking at new ways to distribute changes in doctrine before the next Fire Danger Season.

All Chief Officer Standing Orders (COSO), Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Operational Management Guidelines (OMG) are currently available in an easily navigated format on the Volunteer Portal.

Changes to Doctrine which have occurred in the last 18 months have been emailed to Volunteer's personal email addresses, and posted in a tri manual release of changes document which can also be found under Operational Doctrine on the Volunteer Portal.

Recent changes to doctrine saw a large portion of forms and other information, be uploaded and located on the portal for easy and up to date access for all members. This means all forms used at incidents are the same across the state and information is distributed in a timely manner.

*The Volunteer Portal features all updated doctrine, and it's easy to navigate through the site.*



change in legislation or issues regarding safety, nil or minimal consultation may occur.”

The team is also in the process of seeking feedback on developing a new A4 Manual which means as changes come about and are distributed, brigades can simply replace the old doctrine with the new.

“We hope this process will allow volunteers to note any changes to doctrine, but also mean an up to date guide housed at each brigade.”

“As part of the need to develop new procedures, update training and keep our volunteers safe, doctrine is being continually updated,” said Wayne Atkins, Manager, Operational Doctrine.

“Operational Doctrine are committed to seeking feedback on Operational Doctrine changes however, in some cases



## LESSONS LEARNED

*Mark Thomason, Manager Risks and Lessons Management*

More than 2,500 observations were collected from CFS volunteers and staff following the Sampson Flat, Nantawarra and Tantanoola fires this season.

An analysis team featuring representatives from the Attorney General's office, Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO), NSW SES, Brisbane City Council, and the Centre for Army Learning reviewed and analysed the data for a couple of days.

From there they developed major themes and trends for both operational and strategic issues which will be further worked upon to understand the context and root cause.

We've captured a number of positives out of these three fires, but have also identified some lessons, namely in intelligence, information sharing, freelancing, resource management, staging areas, Incident Control Centre facilities and fatigue management.

Now the initial report has been compiled, we will work with staff and volunteers to further analyse the themes and trends and get a better understanding of root causes.

It's important to look at the root cause in these instances so we're not just fixing the problem we're fixing its cause.

We all need to understand the lessons learned to put in a triple loop learning format for short, medium and long term changes. This ensures that the lessons are embedded in our systems of work.

Short term lessons will include newsletter items and five minute lessons so volunteers can easily access them.

For medium term lessons we may hold workshops and do exercises to adjust behaviour, while long term changes will look at doctrine, training and overall behaviours.

*After each of the thousands of incidents CFS attend every year there are lessons we can learn from our actions.  
What worked, what didn't and how can we improve.  
CFS wants to hear your thoughts, so we've set up a dedicated email account:  
lessonsmanagement@cfs.sa.gov.au  
so after road crashes, structure fires and Hazmat we can find out how we can make the next response better.  
We're leading the way by having online debriefs after major incidents and with the introduction of this new reporting service.  
In the past we've ensured the lessons from major bushfires are documented, but we want to get better at the smaller incidents.  
One of the examples which demonstrates how an incident can enact change is a photograph taken at a Road Crash Rescue showed the cutters weren't up to standard. This was identified as high risk and therefore all cutters throughout the state were upgraded.*

## SACAD UPGRADE

CFS dispatch system - SACAD has been upgraded to integrate a system known as InterCAD.

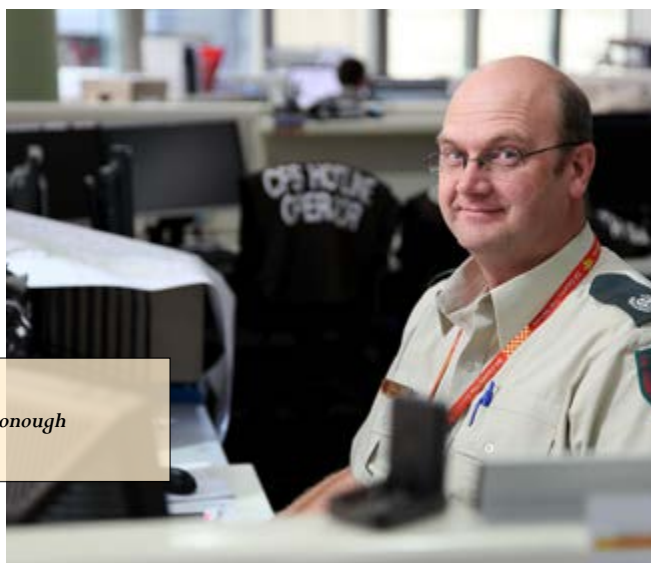
InterCAD allows SA Police and SA Ambulance to share information which becomes vital for crews and other emergency services responding to the same incidents.

Now no matter what agency arrives first to an incident intelligence such as location and incident severity can be provided to crews en route or additional resources can be deployed.

Manager of Risk and Response Planning, Phil McDonough said the system has been years in the making and came about thanks to a collegiate approach from emergency service providers.

"It makes sense to utilise our information across organisations, to a degree we did this already but the system means we have a formalise communication between the agencies," he said.

*Phil McDonough*



"Having more intelligence shared allows for crews to respond with greater vigour and readiness."

## URBAN RESPONSE TRIAL

**M**ount Barker CFS Brigade will trial an enhanced Urban Fire and Rescue Service trial over the next 12 months.

The trial came about after Emergency Services Minister Tony Piccolo asked MFS and CFS Chief Officers to consider this new service delivery.

They agreed and so did the Heyson Group brigade.

“MFS has provided the brigade with two appliances, one urban pumper and one pump rescue to be used by the brigade as part of the trial,” said Assistant Chief Officer, Mick Ayre.

The trucks will remain red but will be badged with CFS identification. Initially they will be stowed with CFS resources, but this will be further considered as the trial progresses.

Although the brigade will be equipped for more urban responses, they will still be able to attend rural fires.

“It should be noted that the type two pump and 34P currently in operation will be removed and redistributed, leaving them with a 24 appliance for rural firefighting and a 34 appliance by the next Fire Danger Season.”

Terms of Reference have been developed for the trial and the brigade, MFS and CFS staff in consultation with volunteers in the Heyson Group, for which the Mount Barker Brigade is a part

of have agreed on them.

“They will now need to consult with other brigades in the group to amend emergency services zones, and response arrangements.”

The brigade will also undergo further training in Urban Fire Response with both CFS and MFS working together on the provision of this training.



*The Mount Barker CFS station where the trial will take place.*

“The trial may indicate, on evaluation, that the CFS Standards of Fire and Emergency Cover (SFEC) for growing urban residential and commercial developments will need to be considered. However, it should be noted that MFS have no current plans to establish their own station at Mount Barker,” Mick said

“The brigade accepts that to successfully carry out this trial the brigade members have to give a guarantee they can respond to every incident – this is a significant commitment from the volunteer members.”

“There are to be regular progress reports to the project sponsors for CFS and MFS ACOs and at the end of the 12 months a full evaluation and report will be completed independently to determine the trials success.”

**As at 8 June 2015 when this publication went to print.**

## REGION 1 CLASPS



*Lyndell Oates (left), Jennifer Oates (middle), Kym Oates (right)*



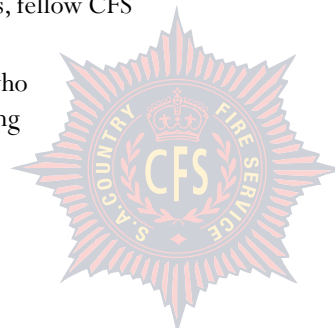
*Harold Grivel (left), Sheryl Stanbury, Rob Possingham, and Trevor Crouch (front).*

**R**egion 1 held a presentation in Echunga recently to recognise the many years of service its volunteers have given.

There was plenty to celebrate for four CFS members in particular. Harold Grivel, Sheryl Stanbury, Rob Possingham, and Trevor Crouch, all pictured, have each dedicated half a century to the CFS.

Other members celebrated their 15, 25, 35 and 45 years of service with a National Medal including Jennifer Oates who is pictured with her parents, fellow CFS volunteers.

Congratulations to everyone who received a medal and clasp, your long term dedication is appreciated.





## WAROOKA MEMBER AMONGST R2'S NATIONAL MEDAL AWARD RECIPIENTS

One of Region 2's best known and most enduring CFS stalwarts has had his long service and selfless devotion to his community recognised at the Region 2 National Medal Awards Night.

Graham Murdock received a clasp to his CFS Medal for 50 years of service.

Graham and his family are known and recognised in the Warooka district as dedicated community people who are always at hand to provide comfort and support to people in the community.

Graham's wife Helen is not an official member, but has been a part of the local CFS many years providing radio support from their family home on top of the hill.

Graham followed in his father's footsteps and commenced his firefighting career in 1963 on a Chev Blitz four wheel drive.

Over the years, Graham has hardly missed attending the Station when the siren sounded and was 'first man on call' for many years.

Graham was the Brigade Captain for 12 years and remains the Warooka Brigade's longest serving Captain, and the longest serving member of the Brigade.

A tremendous source of pride for Graham is that his son has been a long time CFS member, and more recently his grandson has joined the brigade to support the community.



**BACK Row (L to R):** Trevor Bowden, Weetulta/Nalyappa Brigade; Andrew Cadd, Weetulta/Nalyappa Brigade and Yorke Valley Group Officer; Rudolph Piek, Marion Bay Brigade; Lyndon Polgreen, Weetulta/Nalyappa Brigade; Lina Warren, Yorketown Brigade; Paul Chapman, Weetulta/Nalyappa CFS Brigade; John Warren, Yorketown Brigade and the Region 2 Air Operations Brigade; Dennis Ford of the Weetulta/Nalyappa CFS Brigade and Yorke Valley Deputy 1 Group Officer; Malcolm Grundy of the Yorketown Brigade

**FRONT Row (L to R):** John Hutchins, Region 2 Commander; Greg Nettleton, CFS Chief Officer; Tony Piccolo, Minister for Emergency Services; Graham Murdock, of the Warooka Brigade



**(L to R):** Greg Nettleton CFS Chief Officer; Helen Murdock; Graham Murdock; Andrew Lawson CFS Deputy Chief Officer. Graham's award was presented by Andrew Lawson.

## COORONG GROUP LIFE MEMBERSHIPS



*Bob Lloyd and Doug Spry receive their Life Memberships from CO Greg Nettleton. Peter Lauterbach was absent.*

Three Coorong Group members were awarded with Life Membership in May.

Doug Spry, Bob Lloyd and Peter Lauterbach have all given decades of service to the CFS and were recognised for their efforts. These three members history shows they are not only committed to attending incidents but have a drive to improve the CFS.

Doug started with the Netherton Brigade in 1970 and was immediately elected captain, a position he held for 22 years, along with the Brigade Training Coordinator role.

Since then he has served as Deputy Group Officer (DGO) for 24 years as part of the Peake Group, and

then Group Officer (GO) until the group merged in 1999 with Coonalpyn. He took on the DGO role then and was elected GO before another merger saw him become GO for the Coorong Group in 2005.

Bob joined the Coomandook Brigade in 1980 and has served as captain since 1996, also serving as DGO for three years. He has always been a proactive member who enjoys training and encourages others with his thirst to learn.

One of his major achievements was after the closure of the KiKi Brigade due to lack of numbers, the KiKi appliance was rebadged Coomandook 24 and the remaining members joined Coomandook, leaving Bob with a brigade of 30 members and three appliances including Coorong BW9.

Peter joined the Peake Brigade in 1980 has been Captain ever since.

He's also spent 18 years being Brigade Training Coordinator - a role he resumed in 2005.

He took on the Group Training Coordinators role for Peake Group, and held that position for 18 years, continuing in 2001 when the Group merged with Coonalpyn Group and a further merger with Coorong Group has seen him continue that commitment.

Once again congratulations to these volunteers for their wonderful efforts and commitment to their local brigades, groups and CFS.

## CFS CREW BAG



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## FIRST TIME RESPONSE FOR AMATA CFS

Firefighting is hard enough where resources and back-up are just minutes away, but for new volunteers in the most remote regions of the State, fighting fires where serious back-up isn't available – and where reliable communication is non-existent – is doubly difficult.

Just ask the new volunteers of the recently formed Amata CFS Brigade who were called out to a serious grass fire in November on Anangu Pitjantjatara Yankunytjatara land in the Far North, which threatened their community.

Amata sits at the base of the Musgrave Ranges approximately 250 kilometres west of the Stuart Highway and 1400 kilometres north of Adelaide – about as remote as you can get.

The newly formed Brigade, supported by other community members, immediately responded to protect their community as the fire broke out. Despite their lack of experience, the crew took charge and fought the fire in extreme conditions for six and a half hours.

Jeremy Gaynor, the Manager of the Amata Family Wellbeing Centre, reported that the fire truck, equipment and crew were truly tested as the fire burnt quickly south eastward toward Amata's Family Wellbeing centre.

"I was alerted by the siren on the truck and was pleased and reassured by the diligent work of RASAC (Regional Anangu Services) in maintaining our firebreaks around the community and the swift presence of the crew led by Nick Ngatai, John Campbell and the Pool Manager, Randall Hommelhoff and the young crew members aboard the truck," Jeremy said.

"I was also impressed with Nick's recognition of the need to manage public concern through his personal visit to the school

(during the fire period) to provide a calming message and rational clear advice to the students, teachers and families."

CFS Region 4 Regional Commander Bluey Devine commended the Brigade and supporting personnel.

"Like all volunteers these brand new firefighters put their own lives at risk to protect their community from the impact of fire under very difficult circumstances," Bluey said.

"I would also like to acknowledge Regional Anangu Services Aboriginal Corporation for the prevention work that they have done in maintaining fire breaks and preparing the community to reduce the impact of fire.

"Might I also make special mention of Hadley Brady's intelligent and professional work on the big road Grader in working with Nick and John to identify best use of the blade at the height of the fire."

Chairman of the Amata Health Advisory Council and its Executive Committee, Mr Lee Brady, said the Amata community was extremely grateful for the training and support offered by the CFS training team who attended Amata in August 2014 and trained the new CFS Brigade team.

"It has already proved its worth and we commend your trainers," Lee said.

Phil Dunkley, CFS Regional Coordinator for Outback Areas, reported that the local TAFE Manager, Bonni Yeatman, as the new CFS Administrator Coordinator for the Amata Brigade performed magnificently as a Communication Officer for the fire by providing valuable situation reports to the Regional Coordinator at Port Augusta.



*Amata CFS in action*

## VOLUNTEER TRAINERS RECOGNISED

Congratulations to Region 4's Volunteer Trainer Assessors who were finalists in the 2014 South Australian Regional Awards.

The experienced volunteers are accredited with Certificate 4 in Training and Assessment, as well as having highly developed operational experience and service close to 67 per cent of the state.

"They've dedicated countless hours over weekends, away from family to grow the wealth of knowledge and skills of the membership internal to the service," said Region 4 Training Officer Phil Tapscott.

Over the 2013-14 Fire Danger Season, Region 4 saw an influx of 130 new recruits, mainly as a result the Bangor fire, meaning many attended Basic Firefighting (BF1) courses.

A core group of the volunteer trainers assessors travelled to newly established remote brigades in the Anagu Pitjantjara Yankunytjara (APY) lands.

"The volunteers have now helped new brigades in Ernabella, Mimilli, Amata and Pip-Kalka become qualified firefighters."

"Volunteers travelled about 3,200 kilometres during the week to visit these remote brigades and conduct the BF1 course."

"This training was particularly rewarding for the volunteers as the Ernabella and Amata brigades have since had significant fires which the local brigades were able to control."

The trainer assessors have now been trained in Defensive Fire Suppression and Rural Fire Suppression courses and are helping to qualify their colleagues throughout their region, with plans to conduct this training in the APY brigades as well.

"Without the help of these volunteer trainer assessors, CFS would not be able to provide such intensive training to all of the new volunteers we've attracted. It's just another example of our volunteers being the backbone to this organisation."



*Roxby Downs Volunteer Trainer Assessor Brett Atkins receiving the finalist award.*

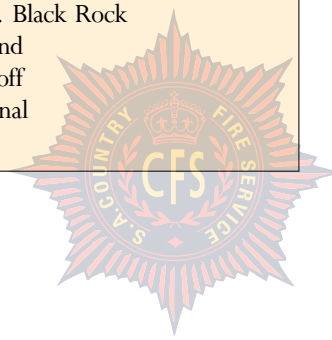
## CFS VOLUNTEERS HONOURED



In 2009, several CFS volunteers were hand picked to assist the Country Fire Authority (CFA) in Victoria with the monstrous task the Victorian bushfires created.

It was part of a new trend where interstate agencies attended major incidents, which we saw this year when the CFA and NSW's Rural Fire Service assisted the CFS at Sampson Flat.

Two Region 4 volunteers were recognised recently for their assistance in the 2009 fires. Black Rock Group Officer Ken Campbell and Wilmington Brigade Captain Geoff Hitch were presented with National Emergency Service Medals.





## SA FIRE MUSEUM A STEP CLOSER



*SAVFFM's Roger Bennett and Rex Hall their 1943 Ford Blitz fire appliance to be featured in SA first Fire Fighters Museum*

The SA Volunteer Fire Fighters Museum is a step closer, after land was secured at Naracoorte.

SAVFFM chairman Rex Hall said the building plans have been completed and with planning approvals pending is now hoping for South Australians and private businesses to help kick-start its construction.

"This is a private project driven by a small group of CFS volunteers for the benefit of South Australians to preserve the state's fire fighting heritage for future generations," Mr Hall said.

"We're relying on support from private donations and the private business sector which will be greatly appreciated for this museum to be the first of its kind in South Australia."

The committee's goods will be on display this year when they

host a CFS reunion in October, with a dinner on the Saturday night and parade on the Sunday.

"A parade of firetrucks including the horse drawn firefighting equipment, early fire fighting appliances, and the newly delivered fire trucks will take place on Sunday, followed by a day of trade displays and events at the Naracoorte Showgrounds," Mr Hall said.

If you would like to donate to the museum building, tax deductible donations or sponsorship for the project can be forwarded to PO Box 1222, Naracoorte, SA. 5271 or visit the SAVFFM website at [www.savffm.net.au](http://www.savffm.net.au) for more information.

## SHAUN AND HIS SAUSAGES

Readers of the May Volunteer E-News will recall volunteer Shaun Watson, Australia's official 2015 Winner of the nation's most prestigious 'Sausage King' competition run by the Australian Meat Industry Council – and a proud member of the tiny Hynam Brigade on the Wimmera Highway in the South East.



*Shaun making his award-winning sausages*

Shaun's sausages are legend in Naracoorte and all points of the compass in the South East, particularly when it comes to Brigade sausage sizzles. Shaun's mouth-watering BBQ Butchers' Sausages are the rage – as are his 'new age' Lamb, Fetta and Spinach Sausages, which also won him an AMIC Award this year.

We thought it appropriate to celebrate Shaun's awards with a 'Masterchef' style recipe – so we put the challenge to our resident chef (who shall remain nameless!) – and this is what she came up with:



*Shaun's sandwich, ready to eat*

### *Shaun's Mediterranean Sausage Sandwich with Sweet and Sour Onions with Aoili\**

(serves 12)

What you'll need:

2 tablespoons of Olive oil,  
4 large onions, thinly sliced,  
½ cup of balsamic vinegar,  
2 tablespoons brown sugar,  
River Murray Gourmet Pink Salt,  
12 of Shaun's Lamb, Fetta and Spinach sausages (it'll work with other sausages as well, if you're not near Shaun's Tender Cuts shop in Ormonde St Naracoorte),  
2 loaves of Turkish bread,  
4 red capsicum, chopped into slivers, seeded and grilled until blackened,  
½ cup of (good quality) mayonnaise,  
1 clove of garlic, crushed.

#### **How to do it:**

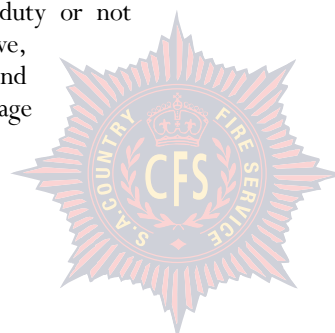
Make your Aoili by combining the ½ cup of mayonnaise with the clove of crushed garlic. Put to one side. Chuck the Olive oil in a frying pan, add the onions and cook on a medium heat for about 5 minutes. Add the vinegar to the pan, cover and let cook for about 20 minutes or until the onions are very soft. Throw in the sugar and stir the lot up for about 2 minutes on high heat or until the mixture caramelises. Season with the River Murray Salt and freshly ground black pepper. Let the lot cool as you place Shaun's sausages into a saucepan, cover them with water and bring to the boil. Drain and cool the sausages, then 'butterfly' them and cut in half widthways. Cook them in a pan with 2 teaspoons of olive oil and cook in batches until they're browned on both sides.

Cut your Turkish bread into 10cm bits. Cut them through to make 'sandwich' bread, then toast them. Divide the sweet and sour onions over the bread bases, then add the capsicum, then the sausages. Spread the aoili over the underside of the top bit of Turkish bread, and place that on top of what you've just done.

(This next bit is optional if you have a flat-bed toaster – pop the lot on to the base plate, lowering the toaster lid without squashing the sandwich too much. Toast for a couple of minutes. Gently remove the sandwich from the toaster.) Slide some cooking string underneath, then loop to the top and tie off, just to keep the lot together.

If you're not on duty or not intending to drive, crack open a coldie and hop into Shaun's Sausage Sandwich! Bliss!

(\* Recipe base from: Australian Gourmet Traveller)





## BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT PLANNING

*Paul Saffi, Bushfire Risk Management Facilitator*

The SACFS Bushfire Management Planning Unit (BMPU) is all systems go in the Lower Eyre Peninsula (LEP).

The LEP Fire Ban District BMPU is now out for public consultation.

Late last year through Disaster Resilience Grant Funding, we were able to employ extra people and develop software that will enable us to undertake bushfire risk assessment across the State.

We will be working with Bushfire Management Committees, the State Bushfire Coordination Committee, CFS Groups and Brigades, Local Councils and others to create nine Bushfire Management Area Plans across South Australia.

These Bushfire Management Areas include:

- Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges
- Fleurieu
- Flinders, Mid North, Yorke
- Kangaroo Island
- Limestone Coast
- Lower Eyre Peninsula
- Murray Mallee
- Outback
- Upper Eyre Peninsula

Our Facilitators will be conducting workshops with key people from CFS groups and brigades to gather information about the likelihood and impact of bushfire across all areas of the state.

We are looking forward to getting out and about to meet with our CFS colleagues so we can gather information about the impact of bushfire in their Group areas.

Some of the information we will gathering includes:

- Vegetation fuel types, - grass, scrub, forest
- Hazardous areas in the landscape – areas of poor access rough terrain, swamps, mine shafts, etc
- Potential ignition sources/ fire causes
- Existing bushfire prevention treatments

This information will be used to calculate the risk of bushfire impacting assets and the appropriate bushfire prevention treatments to reduce the impact of bushfire to a particular asset.

We will be working with local councils and other key



*Richard Wald and his team are speaking with communities about how their major assets can be protected.*

organisations to gather local knowledge of assets and the importance of these assets to the community, and the susceptibility of life and property from a bushfire impact.

A pilot of this program has been undertaken in Kangaroo Island. This has been amended and is currently being rolled out in the Lower Eyre Peninsula and Limestone Coast Bushfire Management Areas.

The Kangaroo Island Bushfire Management Area Plan pilot program is due to be reviewed.

The prevention treatments are being assigned to assets so that the Limestone Coast Bushfire Management Area Plan can also be put out for public consultation. We would encourage everybody to look at their Bushfire Management Area Plan when it is released for public consultation and provide comment/feedback.

We have started the planning process in the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges Bushfire Management Area using updated versions of our software and documents. The planning will be done on a council by council basis, starting with Onkaparinga and Tea Tree Gully councils. Once the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges Plan is complete we will then commence in the Kangaroo Island and Fleurieu Peninsula Bushfire Management Areas.

If you require additional information, please contact the Bushfire Management Planning Unit

Email: [BushfireManagementPlanning.CFS@cfs.sa.gov.au](mailto:BushfireManagementPlanning.CFS@cfs.sa.gov.au)

Phone: (08) 8463 4151

## SMOKEY THE KOALA RELEASED

Many people would remember seeing a koala being bundled up by two CFS volunteers during the Sampson Flat fire. Named Smokey after the CFS mascot the koala has spent several months in rehabilitation at the Adelaide Animal Hospital.

At the end of May the volunteers who saved her, Dave Cristanti and Tom Lea released her back into the wild alongside another rescued koala.



*Sitting pretty back in the wild*

*Photo: Russell Stiggants*



*Smokey is released by one of the men who saved her.*

*Photo: Russell Stiggants*



*Dave Cristanti and Tom Lea see a recovered Smokey.*

*Photo: Russell Stiggants*





### REDUCE SPEED TO 25KPH



*CFS Athelstone Brigade members joined other emergency services personnel to launch the flashing lights 25kph campaign*

New laws came into effect last year which will require all road users to travel at 25kph past any emergency services vehicle when its flashing lights are activated.

The Minister for Emergency Services Tony Piccolo said when you see a stationary emergency vehicle with red or blue flashing lights, you must slow down to at least 25kph.

“Whether it’s an ambulance, CFS MFS, SES or police vehicle it’s our responsibility to protect those who are protecting us,” he said.

“Our volunteers and emergency services staff are often called on to provide lifesaving assistance at roadsides and by slowing down, we can help them to safely get on with the job.”

### REFORM UPDATE

Emergency Services Minister Tony Piccolo made the following statement regarding reform on May 16:

Following feedback from the sector, I realised that the structural reform was a barrier to achieving the object of the reform, which is closer collaboration between the services and efficiencies reinvested in front-line services.

Throughout this process, all stakeholders agreed that some reform was needed but reforms of this nature can only succeed with the support of the people who work in the sector.

Today I have announced that:

- a Commissioner for the sector will not be appointed;
- the proposed structural reforms will be put aside;
- the 13 working groups that have been established will continue. Their purpose will now be to inform the longer-term structural and organisational changes that are required.

There are many opportunities where increased collaboration between the Emergency Services can lead to a better service to the community and more resources for our personnel.

Through the working groups, I am certain we can achieve our common goal.

## CHRIS MARTIN HANGS UP THE BOOTS

Region 1 Commander Chris Martin is set to retire from the CFS after 30 years employment and 49 as a volunteer.

Beginning as a volunteer at 16 with the Eden Hills Brigade, he made some lifelong friendships and discovered his love for the service.

After moving to Ardrossan with wife Jen, he served the local brigade as captain and was also an elected councillor.

In 1985 Chris sold his Ardrossan business and took up a position with the CFS within the Communications Centre.

From there he moved to Region 1, based at the Stirling Brigade acting as the Assistant Regional Officer under Russell Greer.

Acting as Regional Officer (RO) for 11 months and securing the Assistant role on Mr Greer's return, Chris moved to Port Lincoln as RO.

Working with Region 6 Administration Officer Jan Dolphin, who has also just retired, it was just the two of them in the office.

"We had the whole of the West Coast to look after with just the two of us. There were no mobile phones so if you were out of the office, you were out of the office. It was just a different world," he said.

After three and a half years he moved to Region 7.

"We used to have 9 regions, so Region 7 was the Riverland, Region 8 was the Murraylands, Kangaroo Island and the Yorke Peninsula was Region 3 and the Pastoral districts were Region 9."

He was later employed as a Zone Training Officer and also worked at the State Training Centre.

"One of the things that I'm particularly proud of was working with the then Brigade Captain of the Mount Lofty Training Centre, we actually wrote the proposal to buy Brukunga and establish what is now the State Training Centre."

Still on his tour of the state though, Chris moved to the Region 4 Commander's role and then came back to Region 3, while also doing a couple of acting periods in Region 2.

"I've never worked in the South East in Region 5 believe it or not. It's the only region in the state I haven't been in charge of or acting in charge of."

By working in different areas of the state, Chris said you get broad experience, not only with the type of incidents but also the volunteers.



"Each region has its own thing, Region 5 has pine forest. Region 3 has every highway going in and out of the state going through it, you've also got a river which is the only major river in the state, you've got a massive potential in houseboat fires there."

"Region 4 and Region 6 you've got major highways and the tyranny of distance. You drive from Port Lincoln to Ceduna and it takes you two thirds of the day to

get there. But you've got to go and do those things to get your job done."

Chris has been Regional Commander for Region 1 since 2008.

Throughout his career, he has plenty to be proud of - he was especially humbled when receiving an Australian Fire Service Medal. He was instrumental in the formation of the Business Service Officer role and has attended strike teams in Indonesia, New South Wales and Victoria.

But he hopes it is his dream of a Firefighters Memorial that he will be remembered for. The idea came about 15 years ago and Chris hopes his retirement will give him the time to attract the funding needed.

He's already got a spot picked out at Brukunga to give those training somewhere to contemplate their thoughts.

"I've a theory that it shouldn't be in the main thoroughfare of things, that it should be somewhere that people can go and sit quietly."

He's also going to help the South Australian Volunteer Fire Fighters Museum gather historical items.

Finally Chris said he could not have been such a strong supporter for the CFS without the help of his family, staff and of course the many volunteers he's worked with.

"I joined when I was 16 and met Jen when I was 19 so for 45 years she's been as much a member of CFS as I have."

"She's never been part of a brigade but she's had the pager going off and phone calls come in when I've been on call."

"I've worked in a number of regions and I've always been blessed with good volunteers and staff, their support makes the job a lot easier than it could have been at various times."





## ARTHUR TINDALL RETIRES

When next you pull on your Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and jump into the air-conditioned cabin of your pumper with its built-in fire safety features, think of – and thank – Arthur Tindall, the CFS's recently retired Director Operational Infrastructure and Logistics.

Before becoming a staff member, Arthur was a 20 year volunteer veteran - first with the Hope Valley Brigade and then with the Tea Tree Gully Brigade - where he saw action on Ash Wednesday 1 in 1980, then with Ash Wednesday II in 1983 – along with innumerable other fires both here and interstate.

With a professional background in engineering, Arthur was able to pass a critical eye over gear and equipment, and in 1998 when the job of Manager Technical Services popped up, Arthur jumped at the chance of being able to make real change for the better for brigades and their volunteers.

Seventeen years later, Arthur is stepping down having fulfilled his promise to himself that he would make the CFS a safer place where it matters the most – on the ground, in front of the fire.

Arthur's the man we can all thank for ending 'single cab' fire appliances where firefighters would stand on the back of their tenders, often exposed to life-threatening conditions going to a fire and fighting it.

Today's modern trucks are 'dual cabs' with a seat inside for everybody, in air-conditioned space, able to withstand burn-overs



with deluge spray systems, heat reflective pull-down blinds and masks to provide breathable air should the worst happen.

As a result of his fire-fighting experiences with units from other States, Arthur was responsible for the development of a standardised fire hose coupling model which was later to be recognised by AFAC.

For the safety improvements on fire trucks, the CFS was awarded 2006 National Award for Vehicle Safety.

Arthur's passion for fire-ground safety also saw him develop 'new generation' wildland PPC - the vital last line of defence for firefighters facing raging bushfires.

Prior to retirement Arthur was responsible for the CFS's capital budget, operation requirements, fire stations and trucks, BA equipment, communications and PPE acquisition – in fact anything to do with physical resources.

While Arthur has 'left the building' he is continuing his involvement with rural fire fighting by retaining senior committee positions with AFAC. He will also be travelling overseas immediately post-retirement to check on the very latest firefighting trends and attending discussions on firefighter PPC.

Along the way, Arthur has built his own motorhome and he and his wife will be travelling Australia in the months to come – but always with his eyes on the horizon for that waft of smoke.

All the best, Arthur – and a heartfelt thanks from us all.

## CFS FAREWELLS A VETERAN

The CFS would like to congratulate Jan Dolphin who has retired after 26 years.

The Region 6 Admin Officer is a well-known face at the Port Lincoln Headquarters and will be greatly missed.

On her final day in March, Jan said she'd loved interacting with and helping the volunteers.

In her almost three decades at the CFS, Jan has seen many incidents and changes, including moving headquarters three times.

She was deployed to help in the Incident Management Teams at fires in New South Wales twice and also Victoria, and more recently helped at the Sampson Flat fire. Jan was also heavily involved in the Wangary Coronial Inquest.

To celebrate her retirement Jan will travel to Italy for two weeks, then she and her husband will become grey nomads and tour Australia.

The CFS staff and volunteers thank her for her dedication and all wish Jan and her family all the very best.



*Jan Dolphin with four of the former Region 6 Regional Commanders Neil Ellis, Kevin May, Chris Martin and Robin Marlin at one of her farewells.*

## SCOTT BAU - UMPIRE



*Scott Bau umpiring in the SANFL*

*Photo: Flashgordon Photography*

Littlehampton Brigade's Scott Bau is making a name for himself on the football field, as one of the SA National Football League's (SANFL) umpires.

He began his career in white (now green) at the Hills Football League in 2008 umpiring the junior and senior colts and later that year was asked to do a league game.

"I did about eight A grade matches in that first year and then they asked me to trial with the SANFL to do an Under 15 Championships," he said.

So impressive were his performances he was chosen to umpire the Grand Final at AAMI Stadium as a curtain raiser to an Adelaide Crows match. Since then he's gone from strength to strength.

"The next year I was selected to join the academy with the SANFL and have progressed from there."

His achievements in the next couple of years include umpiring the Under 17 Grand Final on Adelaide Oval and then asked to take on Reserves matches.

Although he'd filled in for injured umpires last year, this season he's been chosen to take on the League matches.

"There was a bit of pressure but it was enjoyable to finally get to that level and achieve what I did."

As for the future, Scott's heading to Melbourne to umpire the Australian Football League's (AFL) Under 18 Championship later this season.

Although his next step is to umpire in the AFL, he's happy working as a police officer and said it would be difficult to relocate to Victoria to train there.

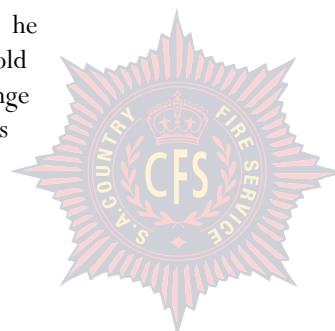
"It just keeps me fit, it's still part of football and there's

opportunity to go umpire different levels and clubs, especially with reserves and league matches you're dealing with AFL listed players so you get exposed to them."

Scott's been part of the CFS since he joined Norton Summit as a 12 year old cadet. He then spent time at Basket Range and has been part of Littlehampton's Brigade since he moved to the area about seven years ago.



*Scott at the Littlehampton CFS brigade*





## GEOFF HITCH - MECHANIC

Captain of the Wilmington Brigade, Geoff Hitch has been a dedicated volunteer for 35 years.

He loves being part of the service, was hand picked to attend the 2009 Victorian bushfires twice, and recently received a National Emergency Service Medal for his actions (more on page 10).

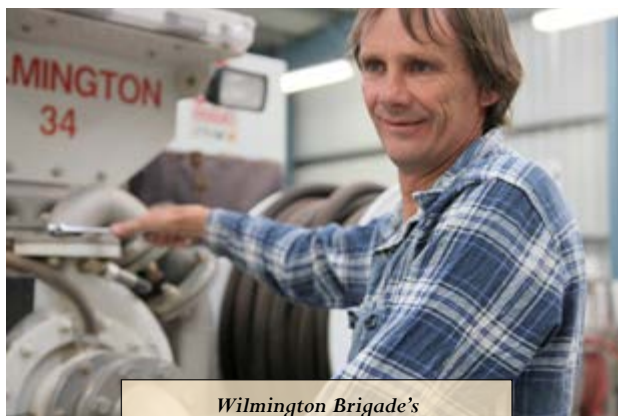
“We did three days over there, most of it was mopping up and containing spot fires, one spot fire was something like 20 kilometres from the main fire in quite a large area and we spent quite a long time containing that,” he said.

He then returned for a second crack leading Quick Attack Vehicles (QAV).

But Geoff’s dedication doesn’t stop when he packs up the hose. With his trade in mechanics, Geoff has a successful business right across the road from the Wilmington station (reopened in 2009 after major renovation).

“It’s all I’ve done since I left school at 15. I’ve been fixing cars, trucks, motorbikes and anything in between,” he said.

The community regularly bring him a challenge, which he’s usually able to fix.



*Wilmington Brigade's  
Geoff Hitch*

As the Region 4 brigades learned of his skills, more and more have been bringing him their trucks to service, knowing the dedicated CFS volunteer will get their trucks back in the best working order.

“I think it was nearly 30 fire trucks (I serviced) last year but that’s spread over a long time.”

Among those 30 there’s plenty of differences.

“The cab chassis are identical because that’s what they are, but CFS put extra things on the back and add things inside the cabin but all of the crew decks are all different - they’re not even the same colour white.”

“It’s sort of sad in a way because you try to train people and you do your training on a particular truck then you go back to your brigade and you think ‘wow it’s all different’, so then you have to familiarise yourself with where it all is.”

Training’s something Geoff is very familiar with, being a volunteer trainer for Region 4.

“I always say people are there because they want to be there, everybody is so friendly and they’re all thankful that you’re helping them and showing them it’s just an enjoyable atmosphere.”

## DAVID CHAPMAN - OLYMPIAN

When David Chapman isn’t busy as CFS Blyth/Snowtown Group Officer he’s training for the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro next year.

The pistol shooter won gold at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games in 2014

David also made history by competing in the same event with his daughter Hayley, becoming the first father-daughter combination at a Commonwealth Games to represent Australia in the sport. He also accomplished the same feat at the Olympic Games in London 2012.

David described his recent achievement as a great family experience that was ‘really special’ after his third attempt to win a gold medal.

The 49-year-old broad-acre crop farmer from Hoyleton in the Clare Valley had previously won silver in the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne in 2006 and in addition to London, also competed in the Sydney Olympics.



*CFS Blyth/Snowtown Group Officer David  
Chapman wins gold in the 25m rapid-fire pistol  
event in Glasgow.*

*Photo: Getty Images – Julian Finney*

# INCIDENTS

## OVERVIEW



This Fire Danger Season saw the SA Country Fire Service (CFS) respond to fewer incidents than it has for five years but notably attended two major incidents at Sampson Flat and Tantanoola.

Despite the smaller number, CFS volunteers still attended to more than 4,000 incidents including: bushfires, road crashes and structure fires.

There were a total of 9,292 brigade turnouts and 1,512 rural incidents, both of these numbers were also down on the previous five year average.

*Stunning shot of firefighters with flames*

*Photo: Greg Mitchell*



*Fire with CFS volunteer in the Kersbrook area*

*Photo: Craig Tyson*



## SAMPSON FLAT THE LARGEST FIRE NEAR ADELAIDE IN 30 YEARS

The Sampson Flat Fire was the most devastating fire event in the Adelaide Hills for 30 years.

Almost nothing about the fire event was ordinary, from the Catastrophic conditions fuelling its devastation, to the damage it caused and the world wide attention it created.

The incident was reported on Friday, January 2 at 1230 and was considered contained shortly after. At 1415 however several spot fires were detected in heavy scrub and moving into steep and difficult terrain beyond control lines, and thus began the fires destructive path through northern parts of the Adelaide Hills.

As early evening approached thousands of homes in suburban Adelaide and the Adelaide Hills were under threat with about 1,500 hectares burned by 7pm.

By Saturday morning at 10am the burnt area had tripled with about 5,000 hectares scorched as 800 firefighting personnel battled the blaze and the Police Commissioner activated the State Emergency Centre.

Towns threatened included Kersbrook, Gumeracha, Millbrook, Cudlee Creek and Houghton.

Later in the day conditions eased slightly, and crews would see the task before them. But it would be days and monumental efforts by more than 3,500 firefighters in 1,164 appliances (with 25 aircraft) working exhaustively day and night, before they would say there were getting on top of the fire.

On Thursday January 7 at 1030, the Sampson Flat fire was declared contained. It burnt 12,579 hectares, destroyed 137 structures including 24 houses and had a perimeter of 240 kilometres.

Recovery teams continue to provide support for residents living in the fire affected area.



*CFS Volunteers with helicopter landing in background*

*Photo: Ashley Hosking*



*South Australian Premier Jay Weatherill thanks CFS Volunteers*

*Photo: Russell Stiggants*



*CFS firefighters attempt to control the fire.*

*Photo: Pip McGowan*



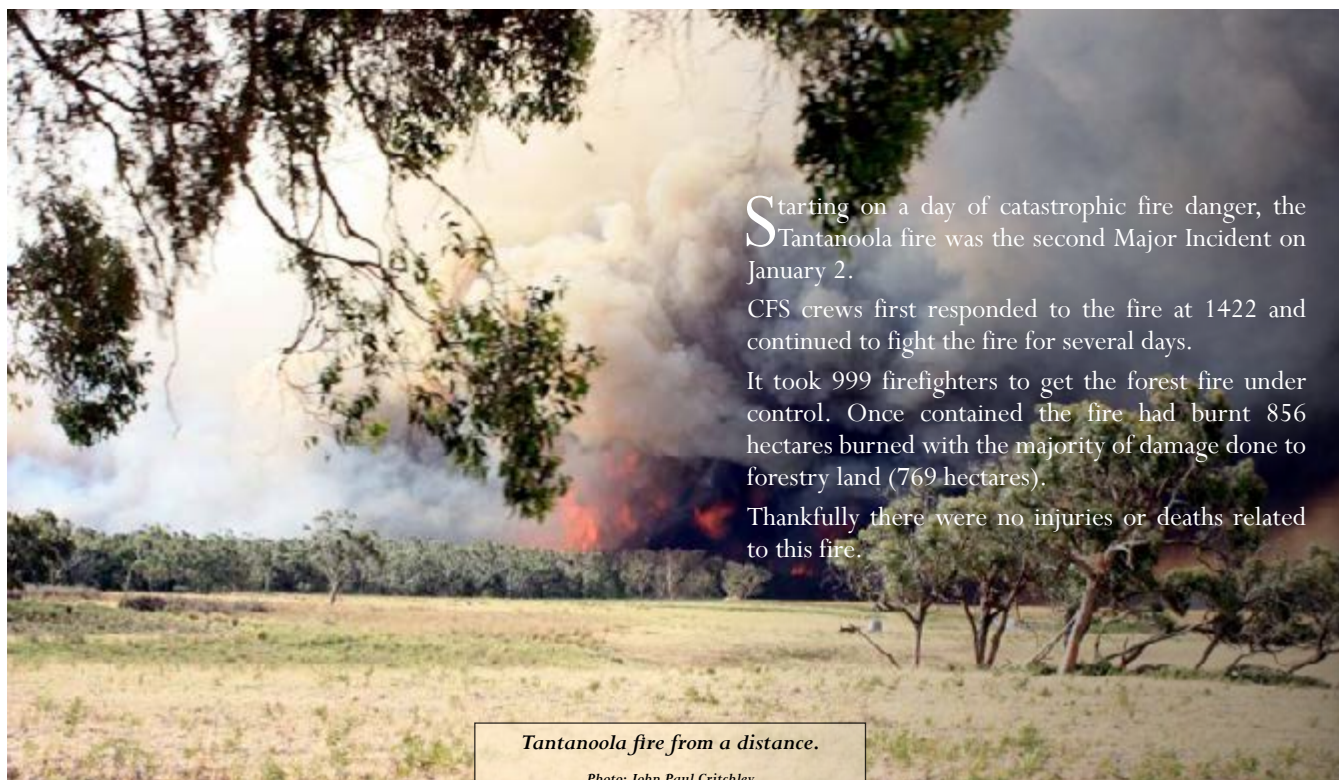
*Prime Minister with Deputy Group Officer Gerry Thompson.*

*Photo: Russell Stiggants*



## INCIDENTS

### TANTANOOLA



Starting on a day of catastrophic fire danger, the Tantanoola fire was the second Major Incident on January 2.

CFS crews first responded to the fire at 1422 and continued to fight the fire for several days.

It took 999 firefighters to get the forest fire under control. Once contained the fire had burnt 856 hectares burned with the majority of damage done to forestry land (769 hectares).

Thankfully there were no injuries or deaths related to this fire.

*Tantanoola fire from a distance.*

*Photo: John Paul Critchley*

### NANTAWARRA

The Nantawarra fire was the first of two sad days for CFS this season.

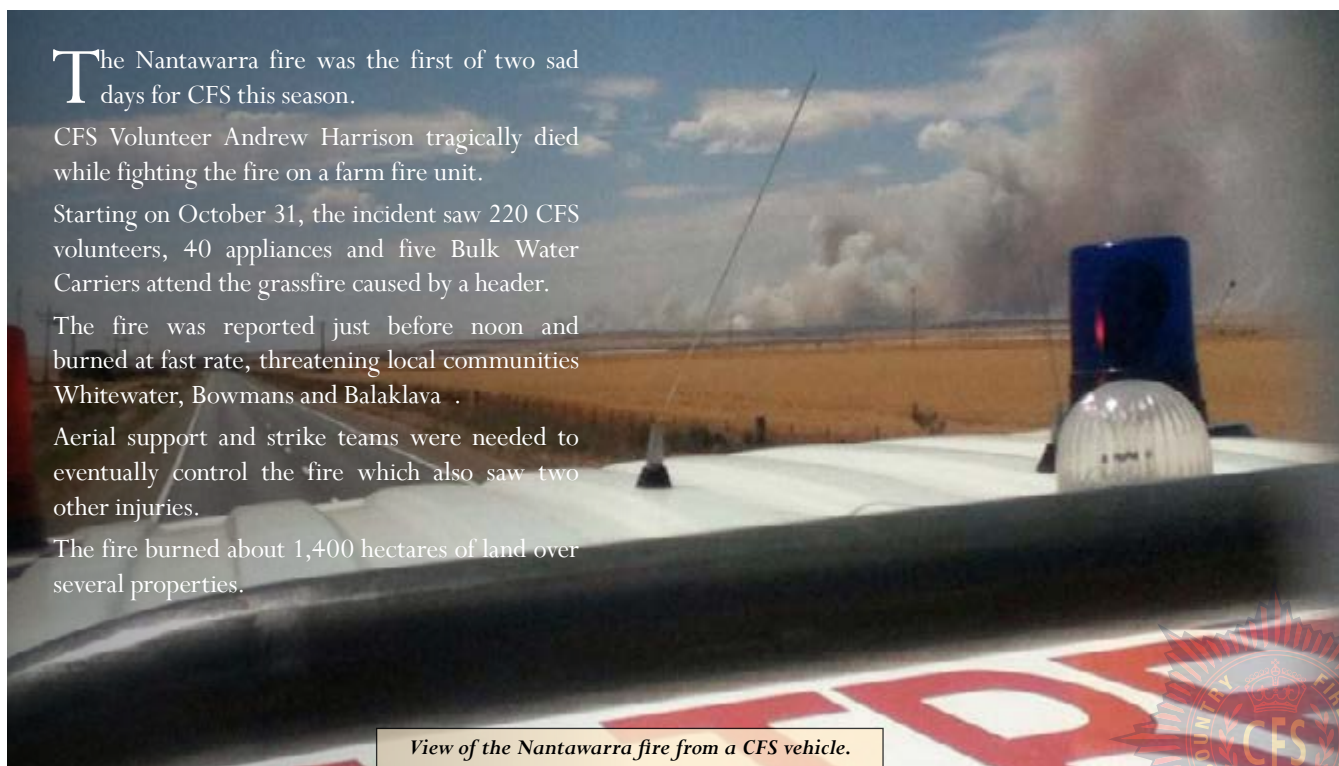
CFS Volunteer Andrew Harrison tragically died while fighting the fire on a farm fire unit.

Starting on October 31, the incident saw 220 CFS volunteers, 40 appliances and five Bulk Water Carriers attend the grassfire caused by a header.

The fire was reported just before noon and burned at fast rate, threatening local communities Whitewater, Bowmans and Balaklava .

Aerial support and strike teams were needed to eventually control the fire which also saw two other injuries.

The fire burned about 1,400 hectares of land over several properties.



*View of the Nantawarra fire from a CFS vehicle.*

*Photo: James Baillie*



## YAC - OVERVIEW

The Youth Advisory Council (YAC) continues to provide a great opportunity for young volunteers to become involved in the CFS.

Stewart Germaine from Minlaton Brigade continued to chair the group with the support of Norton-Summit/Ashton's Scott Kennedy as Deputy and Jamie Partridge (Greenways) as Communications Officer.

This year they've had many achievements, including working with the CFS Foundation to provide a Future Leaders Course which will give people between 18 and 30 years the chance to complete a Frontline Leadership Course.

Later this year they will present at the AFAC Conference held in Adelaide, with the topic 'Supporting Our People – Challenging Our Culture'.

The YAC met with Emergency Services Minister Tony Piccolo several times to discuss Sector Reform and has also had several visitors from the CFS, SAFECOM and CFS Foundation to its meetings.

All members are welcome to contact the YAC to raise any issues:

Email: [yac@cfs.sa.gov.au](mailto:yac@cfs.sa.gov.au)

Phone: 08 8463 4106 (SAFECOM Youth Development Officer)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com.au SACFSYouthAdvisoryCouncil](http://www.facebook.com.au/SACFSYouthAdvisoryCouncil)

## ANZAC VIGIL

*Larry Young, Cowell Captain*



CFS cadets from across the state attended both the Whyalla Vigil and the South Australian Vigil in Adelaide to commemorate ANZAC Day.

They were joined by SES Cadets, Scouts, Girl Guides and St Johns Cadets, starting at 6pm on Thursday, April 4 and finishing before the ANZAC Dawn Service at 5am on Saturday when Army Cadets did the final stage.

During the vigil Cadets took part in rotations of marching on then standing at ease with their heads lowered to mark respect for the fallen. Each rotation was 15 minutes with the Cadets taking part in 13 or more throughout the vigil, some even helping others complete theirs.

## CADETS TOUR FORESTRY HQ AND WOODSIDE AIRBASE

*Andrea Finlay, Cadet Leader  
- Concordia Brigade*



Barossa Group Cadets got an insight into forest firefighting and aviation this season.

The group of 30 cadets held a training session at Forestry HQ, Mount Crawford with ForestrySA Coordinator Operations Martin Winters who taught them about firefighting from a forestry perspective.

Mr Winter explained the features of their Fire King Vehicle, which are purpose built to withstand extreme heat and tough conditions. These units allow Forestry firefighters to go deep into the fire ground.

He and CFS member James Tomlinson, took the cadets, on a tour of the Forestry grounds, testifying the tremendous agility and power of these magnificent machines.

The Cadets also toured Woodside Air Base for a training session learning about firefighting from the air.

CFS Manager State Aviation Operations David Pearce, State Training Officer Corey Frazer and pilot, Carl provided an information session on the firefighting aircraft.

The Cadets were able to see the planes close up and understand the roles they play on a fire ground.

## VOLUNTEERS CRITICAL TO EFFECTIVE BOMBING

*David Pearce, Manager State Aviation Operations*



Over the past fire season, aircraft have attended numerous incidents with great success.

CFS airbase personnel loaded aircraft on 1,310 missions, enabling fixed wing firebombing aircraft to drop more than 3.9 million litres of fire suppressant and retardant during the Fire Danger Season. Of this 1.8 million litres was used during the Sampson Flat and Tantanoola fires.

These outstanding operational outcomes are not possible without the dedicated work of the Air Operations Support personnel at every airbase across the State. The work they undertake in hot, trying and difficult conditions filling aircraft is rarely acknowledged adequately.

State Aviation Operations and its successes are totally reliant on the committed work undertaken by Air Base Managers, Firebombing Load Supervisors and Airbase Operators.

CFS State Aviation Operations has support from 21 Air Ops Brigades and Air Support Brigades located at Athelstone, Kangaroo Island, Seaford, Cape Jervis, Myponga District, Cherry Gardens, Region 2 Air Operations Brigade, Stansbury, Lamerou, Jervois, Hoyleton, Stirling North, Region 5 Operations Brigade, Lucindale, Coonawarra, Maaoupe, Millicent, Cummins and Region 6 Air Support (Tumby Bay).

The SES also supports air operations during incidents with logistics state-wide and local airbase support.

Many of the CFS members supporting air operations have retired from the rigors of riding fire trucks all year round, and have settled for this summer time only activity, to stay involved in supporting the community.

Anyone who would like to become involved in State Aviation Operations Air Support can email at [CFSAirOps@cfs.sa.gov.au](mailto:CFSAirOps@cfs.sa.gov.au) and we can pass your contact details on to the relevant Airbase Manager.



*Air Operations at the Gawler Airfield during the Sampson Flat fire.*

*Photo: Andrew Welch*





## COMMUNITY FIRE SAFE ROLE IN SAMPSON FLAT

CFS Community Engagement Officers have held Community Fire Safe Groups throughout the state. For many years they've gone into residents homes with their neighbours to talk fire safety. After two initial meetings explaining bushfire behaviour, Fire Danger Ratings, emotional preparation and equipment use, most groups then continue to meet independently.

In the Mount Lofty Ranges, Community Engagement Officer Penny Kazla has about 45 of these existing groups, some of whom have been meeting for a decade.

In January, they put their Bushfire Survival Plans into place and tested their fire knowledge.

Some residents stayed to defend their homes.

"They tended to be those very confident with their preparation and planning," she said.

"They had all of the right equipment, and a written and practiced Bushfire Survival Plan. They understood the Fire Danger Rating and potentially Catastrophic conditions."

Other residents conducted passive preparation – filling their gutters with water and clearing around their property. Their plan was to leave early, with some leaving before the fire even started.

As part of their passive preparation they had signs pointing to fire pumps, pools and general information which then helped CFS volunteers when they arrived at a property. CFS is unable to get a fire appliance to everyone's home, the Community



*Community Fire Safe groups are conducted throughout the state.*

Engagement Officers encourage people to be self-reliant and ready for bushfires. This preparation was evident in many homes throughout the region during the Incident.

Feedback from members of those groups has been positive, as the incident Public Information Officer, Penny spoke at the community meetings, which gave them confidence, seeing a familiar and trusted face.

Since the Sampson Flat fire the community interest in holding Community Fire Safe Groups has increased exponentially. Throughout the next few months, Community Engagement Officers will meet with these community members.

## LEARNING FROM SAMPSON FLAT

*Tracy Grime, Community Engagement and Program Co-ordinator*

Catastrophic conditions and an out of control bushfire is bearing down on your home - it's a situation many in the Adelaide Hills dread. Many are forced to enact their bushfire plans to either stay and defend the home or leave.



*Jeff Ayres showed the team around his Millbrook property.*

*Photo: Russell Stiggants*

During the Sampson Flat fire a number did stay, and were faced with a frightening wall of fury as they scrambled to defend.

Thankfully no lives were lost and as the ash settled the CFS Information Operations team were interested in learning from the experience facing those who defending their property from bushfire.

The team met John McMahon at Inglewood who used his own equipped firefighting unit and extensive sprinkler system before leaving at the last safe moment.

Jeff Ayers at Millbrook then described how he and wife Andrea utilised teamwork to prevent the fire from destroying his home.

Finally Paula told the team how she worked with her son to deflect flames away from the home as the fire raged uphill towards them.

All say they had a little luck on their side but due to their extensive preparation and the availability of information they increased their chances of protecting the home.

The team will be able to relay the insight and lessons learnt at future planning events and meetings and also shape the advice given to those who plan to defend their home in a bushfire.

## NO HORISING AROUND

*Penny Kazla, Community Engagement Officer*

The CFS Community Engagement Unit and Horse SA have teamed up to encourage horse owners to prepare for a bushfire in their area.

For several years they have held Horses and Bushfires Safety Workshops with hundreds of horse owners South Australia.

For those who had a plan, many horses were successfully moved out of the Bushfire area on the days before and of the fire.

The first 'After the Fires' recovery session was held on 15 January and has been actively supporting the horse community impacted by the fires, hosting many similar events since.

As a horse owner, I know that bushfire preparation for horses takes some time and effort, it's not as if you can pop them in the front seat and head off.

We really push that 'leave early' message with horse owners, because leaving after a fire has already started is very dangerous.

Horses that would normally float well won't, horses that are easy to catch won't be caught, owners should never put themselves at risk by being caught out, outside dealing with horses during a bushfire.

For those who don't own a float, making arrangements with nearby local landholders can be an option. Otherwise, opening all internal gates on the property and letting them run free within the property is often another safer option.

Community Engagement Officers will continue to educate horse owners at these workshops to ensure they have a plan for future fires.



*CFS is working with Horse SA to make sure owners are bushfire ready.*





## FRONTLINE SERVICES: *Community Engagement*



*Community Engagement officers Helen Hennessy, Carly McCelland and Tracy Grime keeping warm around the 'fire' at the Caravan and Camping Show*

## AROUND THE CAMPFIRE

The Community Engagement Unit packed up their swags and headed to the Caravan and Camping Show at the Adelaide Showgrounds from February 19 to the 23 to sit around their 'campfire' to tell tales loud and long about the dangers of bushfires for travellers, caravan fire safety and bushfire safety in the Outback.

Over the four days, the team spoke with hundreds of the 26,000 people who attended the Show. They were in prime position at the southern entrance to the Jubilee Pavilion, just a hamburger's throw away from the popular food court.

Smokey the CFS koala was on hand to entertain the children, and a 'false fire' at the centre of the exhibit was a great talking point, particularly with the temperature outside reaching 40 degrees on the Sunday!

Community Engagement Co-ordinator Tracy Grime said the event was a great success and the 'bushfire safe' message was at the top of minds with thoughts fresh of the Sampson Flat fire just a month earlier.

"We really were able to drive home the bushfire traveller safety message as Sampson Flat really made caravanners in particular think about planning their trip wisely in bushfire season, and to ensure they kept up to date with the latest weather and bushfire warning messages.

"They recognised the potential danger of taking their caravans unknowingly toward bushfires, and the importance of being 'situationally aware,'" Tracy said.

The potential dangers of outback travel during Fire Danger Season was also a hot topic of discussion.

"If it is hard enough dealing with a caravan in bushfire prone areas in moderately populated rural areas, it would be a nightmare should a bushfire be encountered in the sparseness of the outback," said Tracy.

"Travellers were really after advice, and it was pleasing to be able to give it to them."

## CAMPAIGN 2014/15: INTRODUCING SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S ULTIMATE FIRE FIGHTERS

*Neil Charter, CFS Principal Communications Officer*

The 2014/15 bushfire season has seen the largest increase in the percentage of general public acknowledging their fire risk, understanding that risk and having a plan that the state has seen in many years (McGregor Tan Research May 2015).

The delivery of an effective campaign is highly strategic within a complex, ever changing environment. The CFS campaign aims squarely at saving community lives and reducing the threat to volunteers through placing themselves in unnecessary danger by not knowing what to do.

Since the Victorian fires of Black Saturday the Country Fire Service Communications and Community Engagement staff have undertaken some of Australia's most extensive research into better understanding how the CFS can influence behavioural change amongst bushfire risk communities.

This research has led to a focus on the following approach to gaining people's attention:

- Use simple and achievable advice
- Build community responsibility
- Shift contemplation to action

There's a need to further simplify messaging and focus on grass roots community marketing in order to gain more uptake of community understanding and acceptance of the need for bushfire preparedness. We operate in a market competing for people's attention; where most avoid complexity in favour of convenience and simplicity.

This year's campaign strategically employed a three tiered strategy:

- Multi-media awareness campaign
- Community Partnership Project (Adelaide Hills)
- Community Engagement Programs

Research has clearly shown there needs to be a shift away from complex Government instruction in favour of clear, simple information on what to do. There is also a need to provide a sense of achievability in all messaging so the public are not dissuaded from doing simple things that could save their lives.



The Sampson Flat fire certainly heightened people's awareness to the risk and consequences of fire. However, getting people from a state of heightened awareness to taking the appropriate measures to be prepared can be attributed significantly to the ongoing delivery of key messaging through the combination of advertising, community engagement, media and CFS brand ambassadors. This is further supported by the critical role the CFS website plays as both a warning and educational platform for the SA public.

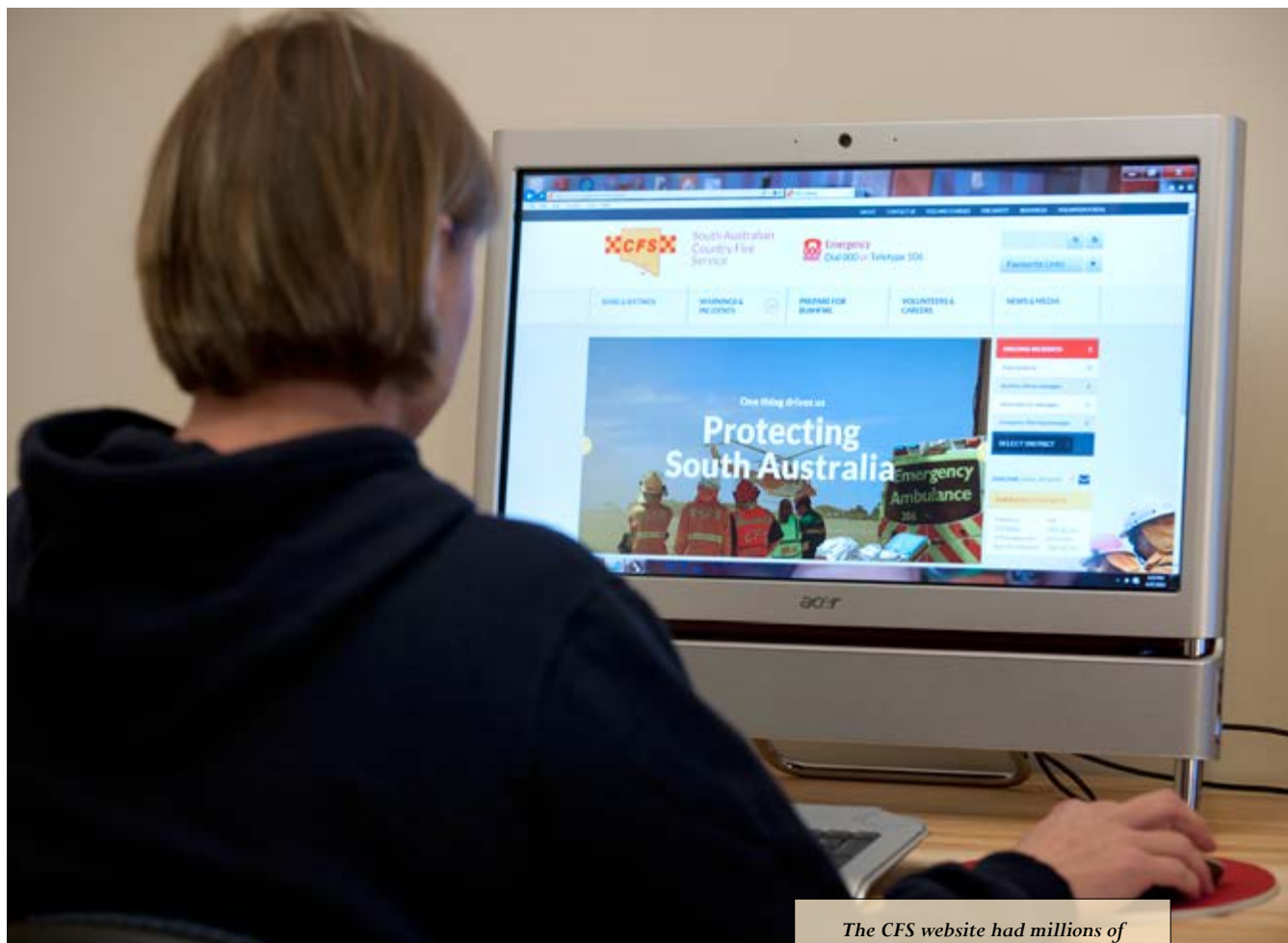
The challenge going forward into 2015/16 will be to maintain the community's level of engagement. It will also be imperative to continue to promote that at the end of the day they may have to be their own Ultimate Fire Fighter in an event and through their own simple preparedness measures can realise it's not that hard to be bushfire ready.





## WEBSITE FIRST POINT OF CALL DURING INCIDENTS

*Peter Freeman, Web Design Manager*



*The CFS website had millions of people log on during the Sampson Flat fire.*

Information Operations has become the fourth dimension to fighting fires, adding another layer to on ground attacks, aviation and operations.

There was an information explosion during the Sampson Flat bushfire, with unprecedented visits to the CFS website and Social Media platforms.

The role of websites, social media and Apps was imperative to informing the community and maintaining their safety in the largest incident near Adelaide in 30 years.

During the event there were more than 6 million page views (6,371,971) on the website. The Major Incident page, created to better inform the public of information surrounding the fire, was the second most accessed page.

On Saturday, January 3 there were 10,000 concurrent users on the CFS website. This traffic caused some issues, but they were quickly rectified through redesigning some page items. The use of the site peaked at 267 page views per second!

The CFS Phone App was downloaded 35,774 times during January - more than the total downloads since its inception in October 2011.

A recent agreement with Google Public Alerts also meant information was distributed through the ubiquitous Google Maps and search interfaces. This means during the incident if anyone Google searched Kersbrook for example, the first result would be information on the fire.

Page likes on Facebook increased by more than 46,000 with over 3.3 million impressions on the CFS Incidents Page, while the CFS page received almost 58,000 new page likes and almost 5 million impressions.

Twitter was also a useful information tool with a total of 9 million impressions during the incident.

Views on the website were mainly on mobile devices, and the most viewed page was the Warning and Incidents page.

These figures highlight the importance of information distribution through a range of outlets.

## MEDIA AND THE ANGRY PLANET

*Russell Stiggants, Media and Communications Officer*



Dealing with questions from the sublime to the ridiculous is every day fare for the CFS Media Unit in Waymouth St as ‘traditional’ media seek clarification on matters from rescues to rubbish fires.

Depending on activity, the Unit might take a dozen or so calls a week – but on incidents like the Sampson Flat fire, call volume can rise to hundreds over a 24 hour period.

As might be expected, the unit was slammed over the first week of January as the media sought the very latest information on the Sampson Flat fire on an hour-by-hour, minute-by-minute basis.

Most of the queries came from local media, but as the fire grew in intensity, so did the intensity of media queries, from interstate initially – and then from media around the world.

As emotive images of kangaroos being hugged and singed dogs, cats and koalas being rescued by our crews were published at light speed by newspapers and television stations across the globe, there was international fear that, as one international journalist put it to us... “is all of Southern Australia ablaze...?”

Putting out ‘spot fires’ of misinformation like that kept the media unit frantically busy as calls – and crews – flooded in from media outfits like Al Jazeera, CNN New York and BBC World Service as well as crews from Dutch, French, German, Danish, Swedish, Chinese, Hong Kong and New Zealand television stations.

For one international crew, however, ‘bushfire coverage’ took on a whole new meaning as a tour to illustrate the potential for

bushfire in the Adelaide Hills became real with the outbreak of the Sampson Flat fire.

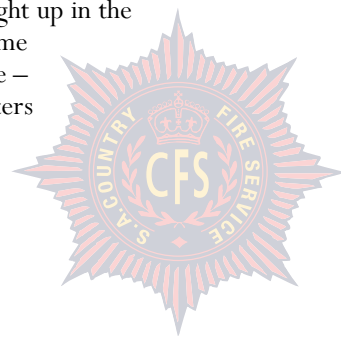
A Canadian film crew from the popular series ‘Angry Planet’ had pre-arranged a visit to Adelaide in late December and were hooked up with DEWNR’s Fire Management team to take a look at what ‘bushfire response’ meant in South Australia.

They had just been fitted out with their PPE (after CFS Media Training in Adelaide) when their first look at the Hills with DEWNR’s Regional Fire Management Officer Ian Tanner took them to the real thing – and on-going coverage on the fireground with Ian for the next four days.

The resulting documentary with outstanding coverage of the terror and sheer magnitude of Australian bushfires led Angry Planet’s 2015 documentary season and was broadcast in North America and Europe in April and May.

The Angry Planet team, led by well-known presenter George Kourounis, couldn’t believe that they just happened to be in South Australia when the worst near-city bushfire in 30 years erupted right before their cameras.

George said later that he and his crew felt deeply for those South Australians who were caught up in the fire and hoped his documentary in some small way paid tribute to their struggle – and the herculean efforts of all firefighters who fought and overcame massive odds to bring the Sampson Flat fire under control.





## FIRE AND NATURAL HAZARDS PROGRAMMED FOR ADELAIDE

More than 1,000 delegates will gather in Adelaide in September to discuss the latest challenges and trends in emergency management at the region's major all hazards conference - the AFAC and Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC annual conference.

With leading national and international speakers presenting in more than 90 sessions over four days, Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) Chief Executive Officer, Stuart Ellis, said this year's conference theme 'New Directions in Emergency Management' was an opportunity for delegates to hear speakers from a broad range of industries and research organisations.

"Natural and man-made disasters strike all countries; particularly in our region. Examining how emergency management services, land managers and communities prepare, respond to and assist with recovery is vital to developing evidence-based policy and practice," Mr Ellis said.

"This conference is designed to bring together and share the combined wisdom of experience, research and analysis from across the sector to enable a deeper understanding of the approaches needed to secure the region's future and prosperity."

Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) Chief Executive Officer, Dr Richard Thornton, said the conference and the Research Forum day will show why research and innovation are more important now than ever.

"With an emphasis on the research being conducted across all hazards, the science on show across the week will highlight the diverse work being delivered to emergency service agencies. The conference and Research Forum present a great opportunity for all emergency management practitioners to learn what we are discovering about the biggest challenges in emergency management across Australasia, and finding ways to use this knowledge every day to make our communities safer," Dr Thornton said.

South Australia State Emergency Service Chief Officer, Chris Beattie, welcomed the opportunity to host the conference in Adelaide on behalf of all the South Australian based emergency service agencies.

"Adelaide has much to offer as this year's conference destination and we are looking forward to being joined by so many of our industry peers. The newly developed conference facilities are state of the art and the iconic location on the banks of the River Torrens will provide easy access to many of the city's cultural



gems as well opportunities to experience all that the vibrant city of Adelaide has to offer."

"This conference will provide an opportunity to discuss and share new approaches in an all-hazard emergency management environment, and work together to examine sector reform, the challenges and opportunities of 'Shared Responsibility', and seek out new and engaging ways to partner with the community, researchers and the sector to foster and build disaster resilience," Mr Beattie said.

Delegates will hear from a number of leading international and Australian experts including:

- Margareta Wahlstrom – Special Representative for the United Nations Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction
- Dr Mark Finney – Research Forester, US Forest Service
- Dr Rowan Douglas – CEO, Capital Science and Policy Practice, Willis Group (UK)
- Trefor Munn-Venn, COO Rhapsody Strategies (Canada)
- Dr Alex Zelinsky, Chief Defence Scientist, DSTO
- Dr Paul Willis, Director, RiAus
- Iain MacKenzie, Inspector-General Emergency Management, Queensland
- Dr Bill Griggs, Director Trauma Service, Royal Adelaide Hospital

Key activities over the week include:

- 1-day, all hazards Research Forum: 1 September
- 2-day conference: 2-3 September
- 6 Post conference development sessions and field trips: 4 September

For the full conference program and registration details go to the conference website.

## NEW CODES OF PRACTICE TO PREVENT OUT OF SEASON FIRES

*Leigh Miller, Director Preparedness Operations*



New Codes of Practice for Broad Acre Burning, Vegetation Pile Burning and Use of Metal Cutting Tools and Welders have been adopted by the State Bushfire Coordination Committee (SBCC).

It's hoped the new codes will decrease the more than 300 out of Fire Danger Season incidents CFS attends each year.

No restrictions under the Fire and Emergency Services Act apply to the lighting and maintaining of fires or the use of tools capable of starting a fire outside the declared Fire Danger Season.

These codes will give the community guidance on safe land management practices for broad acre and vegetation pile burning and hopefully reduce the number of fires caused by these activities.

The use to tools such as angle grinders can ignite a fire, no matter what time of year. These new codes encourage people to be prepared if an ignition does occur so it can be extinguished quickly, or prevented completely.

The codes were adopted after consultation with the public, Primary Producers SA, Grain Producers SA and PIRSA, as well as Regional Prevention officers, Bushfire Management Committees and the State Fire Prevention Officer Reference Group.

It's hoped by adopting these new Codes of Practice the public can be better educated in fire prevention, which will result in fewer incidents.

The codes come in place from April 17 for a 12 month trial.

To view copies of the three Codes of Practice visit the CFS website ([www.cfs.sa.gov.au](http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au)).





## EMBEDDED METEOROLOGISTS PROVIDE CRITICAL INFORMATION

A crucial determinant in successfully fighting bushfires is to have an accurate understanding of the weather – and this year for the first time, weather information was fed into the firefighting equation quicker than ever before, thanks to an agreement with the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM).

Getting critical information and intelligence about weather patterns during the fire season was made easier for teams in the State Coordination Centre (SCC), following an agreement with the Bureau to place expert meteorologists in the SCC over summer.

The agreement was ratified in October when Chief Officer Greg Nettleton and the Acting Regional Director (SA) of the BOM, John Nairn met in the SCC to discuss the role of meteorology in major fire events.

The result was that for the 2014/15 fire season, an Out-Posted Meteorologist (or OPMET) was on hand to provide the SCC with details of weather changes and weather behavior predictions.

As the new OPMETs settled in to their new desk in the Intelligence Centre alongside the SCC, no-one had any idea what their baptism of fire would be.

The first week of January saw them ‘slammed against the wall’ as the worst of summer weather with its dryness, its heat and its

winds whipped up the worst near-city fire in 30 years.

For Intelligence Cell Co-ordinator Phil McDonough, having direct access to BOM experts in the room meant greater situational awareness of meteorological variables, which were influencing the fire as it progressed.

“Having the meteorologists in the same room with us meant that live data could be fed into our modeling which in turn resulted in better fire behaviour analysis,” he said.

“All the key players were in the same room which meant they could see the sort of information we needed and we could see information from automatic weather stations in real time.

“This shared information gave us greater clarity in weather behavior which meant reduced delays in response planning.”

For the OPMET officers, their role in the Sampson Flat fire is something they will never forget.

Chief Officer Nettleton praised the officers and said they played a crucial role in battling the blaze.

“We expect that having BOM personnel embedded in our State Co-ordination Centre will continue in the years ahead and they will play an increasingly vital part of the CFS firefighting efforts into the future,” Chief Officer Nettleton said.



*OPMETs with CFS Staff*

*Photo: Russell Stiggants*

## 2015 RESEARCH BEGINS

*Peta O'Donohue, Project Manager, Partners in Bushfire Safety*

Research surrounding the Sampson Flat fire will investigate two main activities during the January incident from a community perspective.

The first is if the Community Engagement program – Community Fire Safe has had a measurable effect on improving community safety, survival, recovery and resilience in the Sampson Flat fire area.

The other is if the information and warnings provided to the communities was considered sufficient to help individuals and groups make informed decisions about their safety.

This research aims to get the communities' perspective of CFS information Operations activities and see if there are opportunities to improve – either in what CFS does as an organisation or what the community does.

The Sampson Flat Fire affected an area where CFS has helped form and supports many Community Fire Safe Groups over the last 15 years. This fire provides CFS with an opportunity to hear from the communities' perspective whether this actually made a real difference to the way they prepared for and survived a major bushfire.

CFS is working with the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC and the Adelaide campus of Central Queensland University to finalise the research plan at the moment. It will involve a combination of online, phone and written surveys targeting particular areas and communities in and around the fire affected area, in addition to a number of more detailed interviews with community members and CFS personnel.

The research is expected to be completed by September 2015.

## FINDINGS FOR BANGOR, EDEN VALLEY AND ROCKLEIGH FIRES

*Peta O'Donohue, Project Manager, Partners in Bushfire Safety*

After the Bangor, Eden Valley and Rockleigh fires of January 2014, CFS and the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Co-operative Research Centre (CRC) conducted a report into the local communities.

A major finding from the Capturing Community Experiences, South Australian Bushfires 2014 report showed home owners in bushfire prone areas are still ignoring or are unaware of bushfire safety messages leading up to and during the fire danger season.

The 2014 fires provided a research opportunity to investigate bushfire risk perceptions, decision-making processes and behaviour of residents across three very different events: a rapid-onset fire (Eden Valley); a long-campaign fire (Bangor); and repeat fire incidents (Rockleigh).

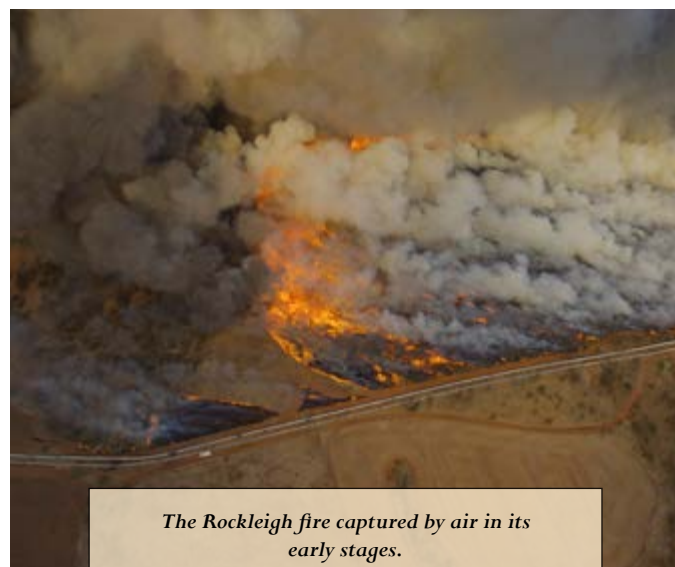
It shows that while the CFS's community awareness and engagement practices were adequate and on-going, many members of the communities under-estimated or were otherwise unprepared for the impact of bushfire.

The report showed that as the land use and lifestyles of the communities interviewed differ, so too does their demand for information.

The findings show that many residents delayed critical decision-making with regard to leaving their homes, potentially endangering their lives.

This was despite on-going and wide-spread information promoting the 'leave early' message in the lead up to and during the bushfire season.

Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC lead researcher Dr Kirrilly Thompson of the Appleton Institute at CQ University said only



*The Rockleigh fire captured by air in its early stages.*

*Photo: Aviation Operations*

10 per cent of interviewees had a written fire plan to guide their decision making.

Analysis of the data confirmed that fire agencies need to carefully tailor their fire prevention strategies and community engagement programs for specific communities.

The quality and content of our bushfire action messages are good, but we must re-double our efforts to break through the 'information clutter' to ensure those messages hit home.

A 'one size fits all' approach in providing warnings and information to the community during fires is no longer appropriate, and we will be continuing to work with communities across South Australia to ensure the content of our messages and the ways they are delivered are relevant to everyone.

To find out more visit the CFS website  
– [www.cfs.sa.gov.au](http://www.cfs.sa.gov.au)



## FRONTLINE SERVICES SUPPORT: *Equipment*

### TELECOMMUNICATIONS: NEW RADIOS FOR ALL BRIGADES

*Mario D'Agostino, Manager, Telecommunications*

CFS brigades throughout the state will begin receiving new Tactical Communications radios from June.

The new state-of-the-art TP9400 portable and TM9400 mobile radios will provide superior audio for line of sight communication and will improve reliability to on-ground tactical radio communication during fires and other incidents.

GPS technology will improve efficiency and assist in locating fire fighters who have initiated an emergency call.

This feature is crucial when volunteers are working in the dense smoke on a fire ground, it will assist our volunteers with safety.

Volunteer safety and effective communications on a fire ground are imperative and cannot be underestimated.

The upgrade is interoperable with other agencies, this is imperative when working with other fire agencies in major incidents such as the Sampson Flat fire, where support from the Victorian Country Fire Authority and New South Wales Rural Fire Service were necessary.

The \$7million contract with Tetracom will see all brigades receive new radios over the three year roll out. It comes after the State Government announced a \$175 million upgrade to the South Australian Government Radio Network (SAGRN).

The SAGRN provides Command and Control communications to fire fighters, while this upgrade to the tactical command radios will benefit fire fighters working together on the fire ground.



*All CFS brigades will receive new radios this year.*

### UPDATED BA FOR ALL BRIGADES

*Rob Sandford, Assistant Chief Officer*

Breathing Apparatus (BA) qualified brigades have started to receive their new sets as part of a whole of state roll out.

The new Draeger PSS5000 complete with FPS7000 Full Face Mask have nine litre, 300 bar carbon composite cylinders.

This means a modification for approved compressors across the state to allow them to fill to the 300 bar requirement, meaning several compressors will need to be replaced to meet the new requirement.

The In-Cab Breathing Systems (ICBS) will also be updated to allow the use of the 300 bar cylinders, and each ICBS will be allocated two cylinders to ensure operational capability when the system is used.

The CFS will also be moving to a new Entry Control Board system, which allows records of entry to be kept as part of the incident records. This new system will be rolled out with the new sets.

Draeger will provide an awareness session for those Brigade SCBA operators present, this will focus on the minor differences between the current sets and the new sets.

To allow operators to become familiar with the new set, all currently accredited SCBA operator will be asked to complete the updated Skills Maintenance Drill 3 (SMD 3), which is the annual BA skills maintenance/revalidation and covers, donning, starting up, doffing, carry a cylinder, change cylinder and recommissioning.



*BA units used here at the Mount Pleasant house fire will soon be replaced*



## RECORD RECRUIT TRAINING LEVELS

The CFS Training Department saw a record number of new volunteers complete their Basic Firefighting 1 (BF 1) Course this season, surpassing the previous record set last year. The recruitment numbers were so large six casual trainer assessors were employed to deal with the influx.

“Trainer Assessors were conducting courses every weekend before the end of June to try and ease the backlog of those waiting to be able to get on an appliance,” said CFS Director Training and Professional Development Brenton Eden.

Since January, at any one time, the Training Department has had a backlog of almost 300 volunteers throughout the state waiting to participate in their required recruit training.

“During this time those probationary members are all part of a brigade so they’re able to do brigade training and be engaged with fellow firefighters, but aren’t able to attend incidents yet.”

One of the biggest recruitment periods was in March and April where three volunteers signed up every day - a total of 196 in the 60 days.

“The bulk of recruits are in Region 1 and 2 but we should remember that those regions account for 50 per cent of our volunteer base, so there are still many signing up in regions throughout the state.”

He said the recruitment rise has come after the fires of Bangor in 2014 and Sampson Flat earlier this year.

“In 2010/11 we trained 822 recruits in Basic Firefighting One, this figure is expected to reach 1,200 this financial year.”

“There’s a good range of ages throughout the service as well with the average age of an active firefighter being 43 years.”

“The 16-30 year group is also quite strong, which means we’re in a good position for the future.”





## VOLUNTEER SERVICES: *Recruitment and Retention*

### TARGETED VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PROJECT

The Volunteer Services Branch, SAFECOM was successful in securing funding through the Natural Disaster Resilience Program (NDRP) to conduct a project to recruit and retain emergency services volunteers in the CFS and SES.

The aim of this project is to raise awareness of the different roles available to people within the emergency services, so we can recruit people that traditionally have not considered volunteering with the CFS or SES.

The project includes production of recruitment television commercials, documentaries and print resources to promote volunteering in the CFS and SES.

The project focuses on recruiting people that do not traditionally volunteer for the emergency services, including young people, women, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people who want to volunteer in non-operational roles.

In addition the project will also look at building closer relationships with employers so we can better support volunteers and highlight the important work they do.

The television commercials and documentaries will be filmed in regional areas including Waikerie, Coober Pedy, Naracoorte and Kimba and will feature current CFS and SES volunteers. Filming is due to begin in June.



*One of the areas the new campaign focusses on is trying to recruit women to the CFS.*

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# HONOURS

## AFSM

### *Darren John CHAPMAN AFSM*



*Darren Chapman after he was presented with his AFSM.*

*Photo: Michaela Chapman*

**A** humbled Darren Chapman received an Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) after serving the community for more than 38 years.

Starting as a CFS Cadet in 1975, Mr Chapman joined the Army and then returned as an active adult fire fighter.

"I was then engaged as a volunteer instructor and that's what led me down this path to become a career officer with the CFS," he said.

In his role as a State Training Officer in Specialist Firefighting, Mr Chapman has extensive experience working with interstate fire services in the structural firefighting discipline and is recognised as an industry expert in this field.

"The volunteers themselves are what keep me going. It's their passion to want to learn, their passion and drive to seek information in firefighting," he said

"Most people see the CFS as fighting fires in the wild land environment, my world is outside of that. The amount of enthusiasm these guys have goes beyond the general perception the community has of the CFS."

Mr Chapman was awarded an AFSM because he takes a disciplined and professional approach to personal development and training for all firefighters, which has enabled the CFS to progress qualifications for its members across all areas of the Public Safety Training Package.

"I would like to publically acknowledge the fact that my award was based on the influence and support of hundreds of volunteers and paid staff across not only South Australia but other fire agencies throughout my career," he said

"This award would not have been possible without the ongoing support and encouragement of those people."

### *Graeme Dudley WARD AFSM*

**G**raeme Ward has been a member of the Waikerie CFS for more than 37 years, including 23 years as Captain and was awarded the AFSM on the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2014.

His outstanding leadership has built a strong brigade that is able to combat emergency situations using the highest of disciplines of Road Crash Rescue and HAZMAT.

"I believe if everyone put a bit back into the community for free then the whole community thrives," he said.

Mr Ward had had success in fire service competitions at state and

### *Gregory Ronald NAPIER AFSM*



*Lincoln Brigade Captain Greg Napier AFSM, with son Lachlan and wife Nikki.*

*Photo: Robert Lang*

**G**reg Napier became a member of the Coffin Bay CFS Brigade in 1998 because of a desire to give back to the community.

"It starts out as a community need, you recognise that you've got to step up to the plate and have a go," he said.

"As you develop in the industry it becomes a passion, you become more cognitive that there's a need."

He's now Captain of the Lincoln Brigade and has been actively involved in all aspects of the Country Fire Service including as a front-line firefighter, trainer and brigade manager.

"The level of training you get exposed to, that all helps fuel the passion and in my case it's the people that are also involved with me, it's the brigade as much as the community need."

"With the brigade it's training them to not only be safe but to be better in the community." The support of our immediate families and the support of our local employers to our brigade members is paramount to our members ability to respond. Without this support from our 'silent volunteers' our capacity to respond to incidents and train people for these incidents would be greatly reduced.

Mr Napier committed to the Fire Service's principles and has earned the respect, trust and admiration of brigade members. Under his leadership and guidance the Lincoln Brigade is one of the best trained and most effective brigades in the state.

"I really enjoy the Captain role and working with a brilliant group of people, they make up a very good brigade and I'm very proud of them. Our motto is - keep training, if we stay ready we don't need to get ready."

His son Lachlan is also in the Lincoln brigade, something Mr Napier is very proud of.

national level as well as in New Zealand where his exemplary leadership and personal abilities were put on display.

"Waikerie always went along to the competitions. It was one of the best forms of training," he said.

In fact the brigade is planning to compete at the Australasian Firefighter Championships in Echuca this October.

Mr Ward also volunteers giving fire protection at various car race meetings throughout the country.





## HONOURS

### CFS VOLUNTEERS HONOURED

Congratulations to Dalkeith Brigade's Andrew Hogg who was presented with the SA Emergency Services Medal last year.

Andrew is chairman on the State Infrastructure and Logistics Committee and is continually promoting vehicle and equipment concepts from their inception through to implementation.

"Andrew is a wonderful example of the many dedicated volunteers who go above and beyond to ensure we have the best equipment and facilities possible," said CFS Chief Officer Greg Nettleton.

Also recognised last year with Ministerial Commendations were:

John Giddens for his 33 year service, which is not confined to the truck. He's also used his computer skills to develop systems which allow CFS to review the Fire Danger Ratings and in conjunction with other criteria, alter the level of preparedness required to meet current conditions.

Fifty year veteran, Robert Stapley was also given commendation for this service to the Cudlee Creek Brigade in particular.

Robert Ellis from Kingscote is a Level 3 Incident Controller and has put his skills to the test at several large and complete incidents.

Raymond Allen is a founding member of the Bradbury Brigade (est 1955) and is still in the top five most frequent responders.

Peter Kemp has had many leadership role at the Sheoak Log Brigade and now Roseworthy. He's been part of the strike team for many incidents and was instrumental in raising funds for the victims of the Black Saturday fires in Victoria.

John Wright is a volunteer who has worked tirelessly assisting with the development and facilitation of Incident Management training.

### CFS TAKES OUT COVETED NATIONAL TRAINING AWARD



*Award recipient David Campbell, who operates from the State Training Centre in Brunkunga.*

David Campbell, Senior Curriculum Development Officer – Incident Management, was announced as the winner of the National Emergency Services Training Award during the National

Emergency Services Training Officers Conference in Tasmania last year.

This prestigious and highly sought after award recognises those in the emergency services environment who are at the leading edge of training development and delivery.

David's work in developing and delivering the Incident Management Exercise Program (IMEX) was recognised, which aims to bring together incident management team members to actually work together in building capability.

The results were immediately seen during the 2013/2014 fire season, where Regions demonstrated the capability to deploy trained personnel to manage incidents.

While the IMEX program is a team event in terms of delivery, David was awarded for his pivotal role in the development of this outstanding program.

This award has positioned the CFS in the ongoing advancement of Incident Management Training.



*About 60 CFS Volunteers who spent time at the Tantanoola and Sampson Flat fires were invited to a Royal reception at Government House to meet His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent in April. Pictured are Caleb Thomas (Wirrulla Brigade), Craig Penna (Mount Wedge Brigade), Tristan Baldock (Caralue Group), Trevor Clifford (Kimba Brigade), Sam Siviour (Arno Bay Brigade).*

## MEMORIAL FOR HARRISON AND JOHNSTON

South Australian Country Fire Service (CFS) volunteers Andrew Harrison and Brian Johnston were honoured at the inaugural National Memorial Service for Fire and Emergency Services Personnel.

The service, held at Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra, was attended by the families of Andrew and Brian who tragically lost their lives this season whilst fighting fires for the CFS.

A Lieutenant and active officer of the Mount Templeton Brigade, Andrew lost his life in the Nantawarra fire on Friday October 31.

Andrew's death was felt deeply across his local community and by fellow CFS volunteers across the State. Volunteers describe Andrew as a really nice bloke who was always at the station first whenever he was needed.

Wattle Range Deputy Group Officer (DGO) Brian Johnston was fatally injured late afternoon on Tuesday 9th December 2014 following a collision between his stationery vehicle and an appliance responding to a fire near Rendelsham in the state's south-east.

Brian joined CFS in 1965 and served his community as a CFS volunteer for 49 years. He was a highly experienced officer and firefighter and a member of the Millicent brigade and was also a DGO with the Wattle Range Group. He was an active and well respected member of CFS and the broader Millicent community

"It was with great sadness that two of our dedicated volunteers



*Andrew Harrison*



*Brian Johnston*

lost their lives at the beginning of this year's Fire Danger Season," said CFS Chief Officer Greg Nettleton who attended the service.

"The Mount Templeton and Millicent Brigades each continue to mourn their loss, but it was particularly touching and poignant that the families of Andrew and Brian could be at the memorial to experience the deep regard and sadness of not only their

communities but of the nation, to the loss of their loved ones."

Mr Harrison's wife Kellie and two sons, Thomas and Henry, and Mr Johnston's sons, Daniel and Jeremy, were presented with Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) Memorial Medallions by His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia. Prime Minister, Tony Abbott also attended the ceremony.

"I hope that in some way the recognition of their loved ones' service give the families some comfort and that they know not only the CFS, but the emergency services sector across the country acknowledges their loss and offers support."

A new CFS appliance participated in a parade of emergency services vehicles marking the first of the annual memorial services.

Emergency Services Minister Tony Piccolo has announced that from next year an annual South Australian Memorial will be held on May 4 – St Florian's Day, the Patron Saint of Firefighters.



*CFS Chief Officer Greg Nettleton with Andrew Harrison's wife Kellie and sons Thomas and Henry, Brian Johnston's sons Jeremy and Daniel with CFS VA Chairman Roger Flavell after the ceremony.*

*Photo: ACT Rural Fire Service*



*Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Governor General Sir Peter Cosgrove were on hand to present the AFAC Memorial Medals.*

*Photo: ACT Rural Fire Service*



## OBITUARY

### GEOFF ARTHUR



*Geoff Arthur*

Melrose Brigade farewelled a veteran earlier this year, after the passing of Geoff Arthur.

Geoff was part of the brigade for 43 years, with 23 of those spent as captain.

In his later years, Geoff was not an active member but was on hand for larger fires, including Bangor in 2014 to assist and help with his vast experience.

Living in Melrose all of his life, Geoff was a generous person who was on hand to help anyone who needed it.

Current Melrose Captain Phil Nottle said the farmer was often seen flying over the town and in the main street with his dog Sooty in the front seat of his Landcruiser.

He said Geoff always had time for a chat and wanted to catch up on what everyone was doing.

CFS volunteers and staff offer their condolences to his family.

### TED CRISPIN



*Ted Crispin*

Edward (Ted) Crispin began firefighting when the organisation was known the EFS.

Ted was a valued member and for 49 years loaded aircraft out of the old Kersbrook airstrip, then later at Mount Crawford and Gawler.

Ted achieved many awards and acknowledgments during his service, testament to his commitment and his willingness to volunteer and help out even while battling illness.

Had been presented with Life Membership, a National Medal in 1986, second and third clasp medals.

He embodied what it means to volunteer, to give yourself for the benefit of others. He spent many days throughout his seven decades protecting the community, and lending his effort wherever he was asked or needed.

Ted will be missed by his family and friends and leaves behind a legacy future generations of CFS volunteers will aim to replicate.





## ASHES TO ASHES

*Georgette Newcombe-Hobby*

**G**uilty giggles interspersed between solemn sighs. About ten metres ahead of my brother and me, my parents gently walked side by side, arms around each other's waists. Every now and then, one of us would stumble on a hidden rock. I would giggle, and my brother would nudge me, reminding me of the gravity of the moment.

My garden looked like an elaborate movie set, a colossal campfire.

We had been away for a day. We had one day of lazy peace... sand squelched through our armour, weakening it; languid laps of water eroded our worries. On the second day, a fire was threatening our home. Dad had rushed into the fire-station, transformed his ordinary clothes into silver armour, clad for battle against an unconquerable beast. One section vanquished, and another two grew in its place.

My mind meandered, and I pictured standing in the same place four days earlier.

The flames, ten metres high, would have shot up the steep incline like a hungry crowd roaring for more, insatiable, never satisfied with what the performer was willing to give but simply demanding more, more, more fuel for their fire. Completely unapologetic and devoid of remorse for the possible damage they were causing.

I felt like a perverted tourist, looking at the broken bones of a civilization, revelling in a long-lost culture. My father took us to the next point on the tour, the balancing tree. The majority of my childhood was spent on the balancing tree. It was a long, gangly log, but sturdy enough to carry the weight of a bumbling toddler. It touched the ground on both ends and was curved upwards in the middle, its apex a metre in the air. I had spent countless days on the balancing tree, learning to walk and trust. Our one-and-a-half year old cousin had toddled in our literal footsteps only weeks before, and the sensation of being the leader and not the led was startling. No longer was I tottering, I was sure-footed. I suddenly realised what the balancing tree would have meant to our parents – childhood innocence.

There was nothing left.

A pile of ashes, only centimetres high, ran like a shadow underneath the balancing tree, but there was nothing there to cast it. Even as I watched, the pile became smaller and smaller as gusts of wind forced ash to drift forlornly into the valley. It was drifting, and growing apart.

I felt nauseous and looked to the horizon, but all I saw were hill after haunting hill of upright skeletons. No verdancy, no life.

We moved on again, none of us able to bear looking at the debris for much longer. We moved down into the valley, into what was left of Andrew's Garden.

Andrew's Garden was planted by my parents after my brother, Andrew, had died when he was only 3 days old. Native fauna, a chair, and a tiny pot that contained Andrew's ashes.

My brother and I awkwardly stayed back, and watched tears fill my parents' eyes.

They both leant down and touched something simultaneously: what used to be a navy blue pot the size of a toddler's shoe.

A tiny, mournful, broken pot.

I had thought about Andrew more in the past ten minutes than I had for most of my entire life. It was a taboo subject for my parents, but one my brother and I never spared a second thought. We had never known Andrew. We felt nothing for the reality, yet now I felt something for the potential of love and life. The potential of love is not as powerful as the reality of love, yet it is heartbreaking when you realise you lost it. I could have had a brother, and Andrew could have had a life.

I looked up into the cloudy sky – a strange juxtaposition to the burnt expanse behind me, and felt a miniscule rain droplet land on my knuckle. An electric current zipped up my spine, the sensation catching me unawares, and the smoke was already wafting away. I grinned, stuck my tongue out as far as it could go, and caught a dozen more droplets.

They were coming hard and fast now, my hair was sticking to my forehead and my eyes could barely keep open and I was starting to wish I'd worn a jacket.

There was a laughing sound to my right, my brother was frantically using his wind-screen wiper fingers to rid his eyes of the rain as it was pouring down on his face and outstretched tongue.

My mother and father each held a half of the unearthed ancient artefact in their arms. Each of them were, unconsciously and not looking at the other, tenderly cradling it like a shard of that which cannot be touched too forcefully. They looked at Mitchell and me, and a smile touched their eyes.

It occurred to me in that single instant, the very worst thing to happen to our family just might be the thing to bring us all together. Even those family members I didn't know.





# THANK YOU CFS

*The community held an event at Williamstown to thank all of the CFS volunteers.*





## THANK YOU CFS

*Throughout the years CFS receives many thanks from many different places, here are a selection, including some paintings from 2 year olds.*





# THANK YOU CFS





# THANK YOU CFS





# THANK YOU CFS



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