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WELCOME TO VOLUNTEER MAGAZINE

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Front cover image taken by Emmanuel Cusack, Littlehampton CFS during a fire at Willunga.

Managing Editor: Lisa Lalic Tel 08 8463 4214 **Editor:** Krista St John Tel 08 8463 4289 Assisted by: Brenton Ragless. If you would like to contribute to *Volunteer*... **Send your photos and stories to:** The Editor, Volunteer Magazine, GPO Box 2468, Adelaide SA 5001 or email: publicaffairs@cfs.org.au Don't forget to include your name, address or brigade and a contact phone number. Photographs can be supplied digitally (min 1024x768 @ >300dpi) or as original prints, negatives or slides. Text can be supplied as hard copy or electronically as a Microsoft Word or Notepad document. **Deadline for next issue: 3 July 2006.** *Volunteer* is published by Boylen Publishing. Comments and opinions expressed in *Volunteer* do not necessarily represent the views of the CFS. *Volunteer* is free to all CFS volunteers. To subscribe email your name and address to publicaffairs@cfs.org.au We make every effort to credit the photographers or the authors of articles published in *Volunteer*.



Welcomes

[CHIEF OFFICER EUAN FERGUSON]



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VOLUNTEER - WELCOMES

Mid-December saw many of us expecting and looking forward to a fairly 'average' fire danger season. However the period from mid-December through til late January turned out to be one of the busiest in CFS history.

A series of lightning storms across much of the state caused a number of fires with a total of 36 significant bushfires in a little over five weeks. The intensity of on-going activities was exhausting for staff and volunteers. Efforts in battling these fires were exceptional given the extreme conditions.

It should be noted that, despite dealing with such a number of large and going fires on days of upper extreme fire danger, losses and injuries have been kept to an absolute minimum. This is a credit to you and your professionalism and dedication.

Many of you - along with volunteers and personnel from Department For Environment and Heritage (DEH), ForestrySA, SA Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS), SA Police (SAPOL), SA Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM), State Emergency Service (SES), St John, Red Cross and Salvation Army - sacrificed precious time with your families over Christmas, New Year and school holidays to protect their communities.

After about three weeks of almost continuous firefighting, in a 'first' for South Australia, we sought and received assistance from interstate fire services in fighting our fires.

Aircraft and crews came from the NSW Rural Fire Service and aircrew came from Queensland Fire and Rescue Service.

The response by all those services, working and fighting alongside South Australian CFS, DEH, ForestrySA and MFS firefighters was magnificent.

Tragically, this fire season saw three fellow firefighters, Trevor Day and Rebecca Helwig from CFA, and Brad Pead from NSW pass away in the line of duty during the spate of

vicious bushfires experienced in NSW and VIC. Our thoughts are with the families and friends of these firefighters.

These tragedies provide a stark reminder of the risks we face every time we go out to fight a fire or respond to any incident. There are inherent risks in responding to emergencies and it is important that as a team we do our best to manage and minimise those risks so we can all 'come home safe'.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome the Hon Carmel Zollo back as Minister For Emergency Services. Carmel was re-elected to Parliament during the state election on 18 March and has retained her Emergency Services portfolio. I know she has enjoyed meeting many of you as she has attended various functions and events in the past 12 months.

I'd also like to congratulate the CFS volunteers and staff who participated in the SAPES Games. It was a fabulous week with some great wins for CFS competitors and a great atmosphere at many events.

The founder of the Ford Motor Company, Henry Ford was once quoted as saying, "If we have a tradition it is this: Everything can always be done better than it is being done". This is also a firm belief of mine, and in past *Volunteer* magazines and in many forums you have heard me speak on the need to look forward to the future and of striving to find a better way.

One of the ways that I see the CFS moving forward is through increased engagement with you as volunteers and the community. CFS is a volunteer based organisation and wants your input into projects and your views on the future of the CFS.

The changing role and increasing input of the State Volunteer Management Committee into CFS activities is one of the changes we are implementing. This will ensure volunteers have an increased opportunity to be heard on issues concerning them.

A number of research projects focused on fatigue and volunteer workloads are also underway or in their final stages of planning, and we are looking forward to receiving the final reports.

Additionally, CFS is holding a major 'Volunteer Summit' in July to identify volunteer recruitment and retention issues and options for moving forward in the future.

Representatives at this two-day summit will come from a vertical slice through the organisation, with input from Women of the CFS, youth, group officers, brigade captains etc. More information about the Summit is available on page 26.

We're hoping that these initiatives will assist CFS in moving into the future as a strong and resilient emergency service that we can be proud of.

CFS is also increasing our focus on community engagement with additional community fire safe meetings being held in the early parts of fire season. This increased engagement is also flowing through to include community meetings, which were held in conjunction with DEH after the fires at Ngarkat.

These meetings were well attended and gave the community the opportunity to work through their thoughts on the fire and develop a

greater understanding of CFS and our fire management. Meetings such as these can only help to bring the community and the CFS closer together to help in developing strategies and understandings for the future.

Another element of community engagement which CFS is keenly studying is the use of public meetings which are held during major fires, such as the case in Victoria over Christmas. This 'real time' community engagement is the way of the future.

These projects and developments will all tie in with the report that we are looking forward to receiving from the Coroner when he delivers his findings. As most of you would be aware, the Coronial Inquiry into the fires on the Lower Eyre Peninsula is moving to Adelaide in May and at this stage it is expected to finish in a few months.

It has been a difficult time for many volunteers, however as always we have an important job to do. It is a job that you, we do very well. In times such as this, when the going gets tough, you need to have confidence in yourself. You need to be assured by the good and the worth of what you do.

I wish you a safe and quiet few months.



▲ The Chief Officer at Burra under the watchful eye of the Operations Support Officer.



MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES Hon. Carmel Zollo

What an extraordinarily busy few months since I last wrote to you.

An election is an important event and I am delighted to be returning as Minister for Emergency Services and to continue the Rann Government's commitment to the State's many dedicated volunteers.

This past summer was a testing time for you, our volunteers, with an extreme fire danger season.

As 2005 ended and the New Year rolled in, most South Australians enjoyed Christmas barbecues and long lunches.

Unbeknownst to them, South Australia was experiencing extreme weather conditions that ignited a series of devastating fires.

With unpredictable belts of lightning, heat waves and the disappointing ignorance of those who have not maintained their properties, the fires could have had disastrous effects.

Your efforts averted the tragedy. You have my and my Government's heartfelt thanks.

I have nothing but praise for our State's volunteers. Working 24 hours, in all sorts of terrain in the stifling heat in life threatening conditions, yours is heroism at its most selfless.

Most recently, firefighting operations were undertaken on Kangaroo Island. Working intensely for five days, more than 70 fire fighters battled blazes that scorched 3,200 hectares of scrub.

So intense were the fires, Adelaide was shrouded in a blanket of grey smoke. For many 'city folk' it was a brief insight into the widespread effect bushfires have.

Victoria also recently experienced devastating blazes where, tragically, three lives were lost.

Fortunately, instead of letting each State battle it out on its own, the nations' resources were shared.

The sharing of crews and equipment was successfully demonstrated by New South Wales's

Rural Fire Service's arrival in the State's Southern Mallee District in mid-January.

The strike team, made up of five small tankers and 20 fire fighters, helped local volunteers fight two large fires in the Ngarkat Conservation Park.

Working together worked wonders and the fire was controlled.

Once again, I would like to thank all volunteers, from SA and interstate, who took part.

I am pleased to announce volunteers in this State now have a stronger platform to voice their concerns, offer advice and share ideas.

As part of the enactment of the Emergency Services legislation last October, the SAFECOM (South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission) Advisory Board was established.

The Advisory Board is comprised of a prominent senior legal expert and representatives from SA's State Emergency Service Volunteer Association, the SA Volunteer Fire Brigade Association, the United Firefighters Union of Australia and the Local Government Association.

The board is an innovative method of involving volunteers in the decision making process for the emergency services sector. It is able to give advice to the SAFECOM Board and potentially to myself as Minister.

This year, all of South Australia's Country Fire Service volunteers will be outfitted with the latest Personal Protective Equipment, at a cost of almost \$2 million dollars.

More than 1,500 CFS volunteers will receive new protective clothing. It is imperative that the State Government provides the resources to make your jobs easier and safer.

In December, I officially opened the \$200,000 Mount Crawford Airstrip. Constructed as a base for fire bombing activities, the 1.6km by 40m airstrip is another force in the fire fighting battle.

The airstrip, located directly behind the Mount Crawford Ranger Station and Depot on the Williamstown to Mt Pleasant Rd, is a safer alternative to the privately owned airstrip that was previously used.

From improved airbase management, greater safety to aircraft operators and ground support crews, and support for ground based firefighting crews, there will be many significant advancements as a result of the airstrip.

I attended the launch of the airstrip and witnessed first hand the ability of the State's new fire fighting fleet, the \$3.5 million Agusta A119 heli tankers.

Also known as 'Koalas', the multi-functional heli tankers are fitted with a 1,200 litre belly tank 'Simplex' fire bombing system, can self-fill as well as fill from any open water source and are safe to operate near houses due to their slower speed and accuracy.

Each aircraft cost \$293,000 and the State and Federal Government's have equally split the cost. The Rann Government is meeting the additional operating expenses of \$1,000 an hour.

This is just part of the State Government's \$2.4 million dollar commitment to boost aerial fire fighting resources.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the stress and anguish that many would be feeling following the Eyre Peninsula bushfire tragedy last January in which nine people lost their lives. I attended the memorial service in Wangary on 11 January. It was an emotional experience and one not easily forgotten.

As you all know, the coronial inquest is currently being held and is expected to finish mid year.

In light of the tragedy, I am committed to ensuring that fires in South Australia are fought using the best equipment combined with the most up-to-date techniques.



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VOLUNTEER - WELCOMES



SAVFBA PRESIDENT Ken Schutz AFSM

In February I received a letter from Allan Holmes, Chief Executive of the Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) wishing to express his thanks to you through the SAVFBA.

He wanted to say thank you to you as CFS volunteers for providing willing support and assistance in the fire suppression activities during the fires in the Ngarkat and Danggali Conservation Parks.

Allan also acknowledged in his letter the cooperative way that CFS volunteers worked with DEH staff and the wide range of organisations assisting with the fire suppression activities.

As the President of the SAVFBA and as a member of the Ngarkat Incident Management Team (IMT), I would also like to thank all CFS volunteers and staff, DEH staff, personnel from the other Emergency Services (SA Police, State Emergency Service, SA Ambulance, St John, Salvation Army etc.), local businesses, local farmers, the council and other members of the community for a joint effort in fire suppression and community safety.

I would also like to thank the crews from New South Wales (NSW) and Victoria (VIC) as their help was greatly appreciated by CFS volunteers.

Despite significant fencing and pasture losses, there was no loss of life, stock or built assets such as sheds and houses etc. I, together with Allan Holmes, believe this to be a credible outcome considering the extreme weather and fire danger levels during this period.

From mid-December 2005 through to the end of January 2006 was an extremely busy time for CFS volunteers with an unusually large number of incidents.

Nearly twice as many volunteer hours were spent attending incidents during this period of time

as compared to the same period last year, and two and a half times as many hours as the year before that.

This put brigades, groups, regions and headquarters under extreme pressure, especially when the state had two simultaneous campaign fires, with one on Kangaroo Island and the other in the Ngarkat Conservation Park, in addition to other smaller fires in most regions around the state.

By this stage of the fire season many volunteers could not spend any more time away from work, were physically worn out, had already been involved in strike teams and were worried that their own area was still at high risk.

This made it challenging for IMT's to find adequate numbers of volunteers to fill strike teams and also volunteers who were capable of running strike teams and divisions.

This is a scenario that I probably thought South Australia would never face as most of our campaign fires tend to be in areas with limited assets that require protection and also as most of our fires tend to be highly damaging and intense short-term impact fires.

The January 2006 period has highlighted two new issues to the CFS. With a decreasing number of active volunteer firefighters and an increasing workload on volunteers, volunteers are now saying NO when asked to attend strike teams for deployment within the state.

This therefore brings the necessity for interstate strike teams to be brought in from VIC and NSW.

Strike teams from both these regions were brought in to assist with the Ngarkat fire and while they thought we looked after them very well, more local resources were needed to support the interstate crews than are needed for strike teams from within our own state.

Although this took away the pressure of finding firefighting crews, it added to the pressure of crew support for the IMT.

We need to embrace the idea of crews from interstate, however I would suggest that many logistic plans around the state might need to be upgraded and expanded to support interstate crews.

When you consider the large fuel load that was around the state and the extremely severe weather conditions we have endured during the summer, it is great that we have got through this year without a major disaster.

The SAVFBA would like to again thank all CFS volunteers for their tireless efforts throughout the fire danger season.

WELCOMES [FROM PUBLIC AFFAIRS]

] LISA LALIC
] KRISTA ST JOHN
] BRENTON RAGLESS

Like many of you, CFS Public Affairs has been extremely busy of the last few months, dealing with an extraordinary number of media enquiries and balancing other projects and everyday work.

One of the projects we mentioned in the last magazine was the redevelopment of the CFS website. This project is well underway. Thank you to those of you who have provided feedback. The site will be completed over the coming months and launched prior to the next fire danger season.

We have also had a significant response to the 'Plan to Survive'

campaign, which features James Blundell. The CFS website is heavily promoted in the campaign and in the first month of the campaign received 629,612 hits and 26,237 visitors, that figure has increased by more than 504,000 hits and 20,000 visitors as compared to December 2004. The CFS hotline has also been busy fielding enquiries from the campaign.

Public Affairs is also looking at new ways in which we can communicate to the community and media and looking at various technology to include sms, email and landline.

Many of you have been asking

whether CFS will be participating in the Main Arena of the Royal Adelaide Show this year. The event last year generated a significant amount of exposure and there's been talk amongst many of you about catching up again this year.

The answer is yes, however the format and the exact details are yet to be established.

Enclosed in this magazine is a readership survey. The last edition of *Volunteer* magazine had a new look and feel, and the style has changed in the past few years and we'd like to know what you think. Don't forget to get the survey into us before 19

June to go into the draw to win a \$250 SA Shorts travel voucher.

Speaking of travel it's time for the Public Affairs team to have a break. Krista St John has just spent 10 days relaxing in Perth and Lisa Lalic is set to embark on a 6 week European adventure. Let's just hope her husband doesn't drive like Chevy Chase for those of you familiar with the National Lampoon Movies. Brenton Ragless has also had some time off using it to settle into his new home.

Until our next edition take care.



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VOLUNTEER - WELCOMES

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[MEET THE] DEPUTY CHIEF!

After more than 25 years of involvement with the CFS, Andrew Lawson (AFSM) was appointed to the role of CFS Deputy Chief Officer in January 2006.

To help our readers gain an insight into our new Deputy Chief, Krista St John spent a few minutes chatting to him.

Q: How did you feel when you found out you'd been successful in getting the job?

A: I was honoured to find out that I'd been appointed CFS Deputy Chief Officer.

To be honest, I'm a little daunted by the challenges and tasks which lay ahead but at the same time there are so many good people, both staff and volunteers within the CFS, that there's not a doubt in my mind that we have a bright future.

I'm pleased I can be involved in this capacity.

Q: How long have you been involved with the CFS?

A: I originally joined Bordertown CFS as a firefighter in 1979 and eventually became Brigade Captain in 1981 - a role I held for six years then I moved to Naracoorte to join CFS as a staff member.

Q: It seems as though your time with the CFS has taken you to different parts of the state and beyond.

A: That's right, I've been fortunate to work in a few different parts of the state including the Murray Bridge area, Riverland, Murraylands and the South East in a variety of roles.

I've also been involved in the planning and infield command of international and interstate support forces including the 1997 Indonesian bushfire crisis, the 1994 and both 2003 Sydney deployments and the 2003 Victorian bushfire.

Q: What are your responsibilities now as Deputy Chief?

A: As Deputy Chief I take on the role of Director of Operations. In essence this means that I'm directly responsible for the strategic and day-to-day operations of the CFS and for the management and coordination of CFS operations with the assistance of all regional and state headquarters staff.

I also represent CFS on a number of committees including, the Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) Operations Services Strategy Group, and the State Emergency Management Committee Response Advisory Group.

Within CFS I am the Chairman for the OHS Compliance Committee, the Centre For Lessons Learnt and the State Volunteer Management Committee (SVMC).

The SVMC is one of the most important committees I'm involved in as it provides vital opportunity for volunteers to be part of the communication, consultation and decision making processes within the organisation.

Over our last few meetings we've been discussing the future direction of the committee, with the view of re-establishing the committee as the Chief Officers Advisory Council (COAC). As a group we strongly believe it will ensure continuous improvements in ongoing consultation, communication and decision making within the service.

Both the Chief Officer and I see the re-emergence of the SVMC as the

COAC as an important shift and will consolidate its role as one of the peak forums within the CFS.

With the CFS Board no longer in place, the COAC from a volunteer perspective and the Strategic Leadership Group (SLG) from a staff perspective, will become equally important forums in helping guide CFS as an organisation into the future.

Q: When I'm not involved with CFS activities you can find me...

A: Spending time with my wife and kids primarily, but I also really enjoy fishing and restoring old vehicles.

I'm a mechanic by trade and still enjoy getting into the garage and working on old vehicles.

I've restored a number of cars over the years and my two favourite projects have been turning a beat up HG Holden and WB Ute into slick street machines.

My next project is likely to involve restoring a Land Rover but I'm struggling to find one in a reasonable condition.

Q: What's your favourite aspect of the CFS?

A: Without a doubt it is the people. Although I have been involved with the CFS for many years, the people that make up this organisation continue to be our strength.

Everyone within the organisation, both volunteers and staff are dedicated, professional, and always seem willing to give that little bit more.

Q: What's your vision for the future of the CFS?

A: By 2015, I see the CFS working closely with other agencies, industry and communities to reduce the risks they face. In 2015, CFS will continue to be a true community based fire and emergency service able to quickly respond to the changing needs of the community.

Q: Your received your AFSM in 2003 - How would you describe that moment?

A: It was a proud moment, a genuine surprise and I'd still like to know who nominated me for it.

It was marvellous to be recognised for the work that I did with the mapping project but there is no way that a project of that magnitude could have taken place without the assistance and support of many other people.

Q: Yes, we hear you're big on 'maps'. Why so?

A: I believe maps are essential tools for firefighters. Maps provide information to firefighters that help do the job. If you've got a good map, it certainly makes life easier!

Q: Finish this sentence, I am passionate about...

A: Safety. I really believe that if we have a strong focus on the safety and well being of our volunteer firefighters, then everything else will naturally fall into place. Our first and foremost objective is to ensure our volunteers come home safe,

hence the introduction of the phrase 'Safety First – come home safe' into our mode of operation for this fire season.

Q: My ideal Saturday night is spent...

A: Cooking a Coorong Mullet on a BBQ whilst chatting and enjoying a drink with my mates and family.

Q: If someone offered to buy me a drink I'd order a...

A: West End Light.

Q: We hear you and the Chief donned the yellows and helped out on the fireground at Burra on Christmas Eve.

A: That's right, getting out on the fireground gave me an opportunity to spend time with the people who really do the work. It was a valuable chance to reconnect with how things are done, including reacquainting myself with the rakehoe.

Q: So how'd you pull up the next morning?

A: Surprisingly okay. But I did feel for those who'd been out doing the hard yards on the fireground for the best part of the day and night. There were quite a few volunteers and cockies doing it tough out there.

Q: Everyone has an embarrassing story to tell – what's yours?

A: When I was working as a Regional Officer in the old Region 7, I went to a houseboat fire at Lyrup.

The houseboat was burnt out on the southern side of the river but as there was no infrastructure, nothing there but dirt, the houseboat was moved to the northern side of the river after it was extinguished.

All the CFS brigades and other emergency services that were involved knew about the move, except for me. As Regional Officer, I arrived at the scene on the southern side and promptly had to turn around and drive around 25km back to Berri to cross over the river.

As I turned the car around, I somehow managed to get it bogged up to the axles in soft sand.

Amidst jibes and the hysterics from the volunteers on the other side of the river, Monash CFS kindly turned out their land cruiser to help me with my 'situation' and promptly bogged that in a similar state.

The brigade responded their larger 34 style appliance to assist us out of our 'predicament' and had just commenced towing us out when the Channel 9 helicopter flew over, and

filmed the whole debacle. It was an interesting wait to see if it made the news that night. Luckily it didn't.

Q: What's the most important thing to you in the world?

A: Without question, my wife, Julie and my daughters Sarah and Kate.

Q: What is the best thing you've done within the CFS?

A: It would have to be working on the Mapping project and developing the current range of map books.

Q: What are the biggest changes you've seen in the CFS since joining?

A: The significant advances in firefighter safety and the move from petrol driven appliances.

Q: We hear you're a pretty approachable chap?

A: Well I'd like to think so! I'm here to listen and my door is always open for both staff and volunteers.

I'm happy to hear about the challenges people are facing and assist where I can, but at the same time, it'd be great to have a balance and be able to hear and share people's joys, successes and achievements.

Q: As Deputy Chief, do you have a message for volunteers and staff?

A: I do and it's a pretty simple one – *be kind to each other.* We're all part



^ Andrew Lawson has been appointed the new CFS Deputy Chief.

of the one organisation and we can't afford to beat each other up.

Whether you work or volunteer for CFS your contribution is valued and we're all focused on making this the best volunteer based firefighting organisation possible.

It is important that we support and enjoy each other's company and respect the contributions that are made.

Let's work together to make this an even stronger organisation moving into the future.

BRIEF HISTORY

1978

Joined Bordertown SES as Transport Officer

1979 – 1985

Diesel Mechanic with Tatiara District Council

1979

Joined Bordertown CFS Firefighter, Lieutenant and Captain

1980 – 1985

Member Tatiara Fire Fighting Association, Equipment Committee

1985

Assistant Regional Officer (Naracoorte)

1986

Regional Officer in charge of Riverland based at Murray Bridge

1986 – 1991

Regional Officer in charge of former regions 7 & 8 (5 years in Murray Bridge, Riverland & Murraylands Regions)

1991 – 2000

Regional Commander (Naracoorte)

2000

Project Officer Mapping working on the State Enhanced Mapping Project

2002

Manager Operations Planning

2003

Joined Littlehampton CFS

2004

Manager Strategic Services

2005

Appointed CFS Deputy Chief Officer



SOUNDING THE SIREN

— A COMMUNITY DECISION

By: Rob Sanford, Manager Operations Planning

Sirens have been used by CFS brigades for many years to alert volunteers when a response is required and to warn the community of potential danger.

With the shift to GRN paging and other alerting systems, the use of the CFS siren has decreased.

Contributing to this decrease have been alterations to our business and methods of operation and changes in community opinions.

The increase in residential housing adjacent to fire stations, changing demographics and a greater awareness of noise effects on the environment has also impacted on the use of the CFS siren.

It has become apparent that many communities now wish to re-establish the use of the CFS siren to warn them of a potential danger.

This community desire is supported by recommendations from the Project Phoenix report which recommends, "CFS investigate the development of a plan to use multiple channels (eg radio, TV, web, SMS, sirens etc.) to provide the public with bushfire information."

With this in mind the Siren Policy, endorsed by the CFS Board in 1998, was reviewed in mid-2005 and the updated policy released in mid November 2005 following consultation across a number of stakeholder groups.

Not every CFS brigade has a siren at their station, and it is not envisaged that every brigade will have one, nor will each brigade and community establish exactly the same guidelines for use.

Local conditions and situations need to be applied to establish the most effective way of using the siren for each brigade and their community.

To establish guidelines for using sirens, brigades need to engage with their local community in a

partnership approach. CFS supports the use of sirens for community warning and alerting where required.

It is also important to recognise that the use of a siren should not be restricted where a genuine threat to life exists.

The following parameters need to be applied when developing your brigade siren guidelines.

TIME OF DAY:

As a general rule, the siren shall only be used between 8am and 8pm on any day. However, if both the brigade and local community agree, there is scope for this time frame to be extended.

DURATION:

The length of time the siren is sounded for shall be kept to a minimum, and under normal circumstances it should sound for no longer than one minute. If the siren is located close to homes this duration can again be further reduced.

If the siren is located in a sparsely populated area, a longer run time can be negotiated with the agreement of the community.

The control system may include a timer which will restart the siren (for another run time) after a further four minutes, unless it is manually reset by the first arriving member.

PATTERN:

The pattern (ie: wail or steady tone) used by the siren needs to be agreed between the brigade and the community and should take into consideration the local geography and conditions.



^ The CFS siren may sound again in many communities.

DELAY IN OPERATION:

Where operation is restricted because of local conditions or requirements of this policy, and where an alternate primary alert system (eg pagers) is used, then a siren delay device may be fitted. This device will allow the siren to operate after a four minute delay, if not reset by the first arriving member.

This assumes that the siren is not the primary or only turnout system for that Brigade.

TESTING:

The siren should be tested on a monthly basis as a minimum, with the siren sounding at full speed for up to five seconds.

Should a complaint be lodged, the minimum test duration shall be applied.

SOUNDING 'ALL CLEAR':

Sounding 'all clear' is not an endorsed practice.

Notwithstanding the above parameters, the use of a brigade siren is permitted should circumstances determine its need. Such circumstances include the need for additional response of members, or as a community warning mechanism.

If your brigade does not have a siren, and would like to establish one, funding for it will need to be considered in partnership with the community and CFS.

No specific or additional funding is available for the provision of community warning sirens.

For further information, contact your regional office.

CFS PURCHASES [PORTABLE AUTOMATIC WEATHER STATIONS]

**By: Rob Sandford, Manager
Operations Planning.**

To assist in obtaining accurate current as well as forecast weather during an emergency incident, the SA Country Fire Service (CFS) has purchased four Portable Automatic Weather Stations (PAWS) for use across South Australia.

These PAWS are designed to complement the network of fixed Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) operated by the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) that are used by CFS on a daily basis to provide data during bushfires and other emergencies.

Whilst the BOM has for some time had a PAWS that is maintained and deployed by their staff, the unit has had a long history of modifications and development. With only one unit available to service the entire state, it was decided to investigate the purchase of some additional units.

In April 2005, CFS approached the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) via the BOM and requested the deployment of a new style of PAWS these organisations had developed to support fires burning on Kangaroo Island.

Following the success of this deployment, CFS and the BOM obtained information on the Victorian PAWS model to consider how this may be utilised in SA.

Working with the Government Agencies Fire Liaison Committee (GAFLC) it was determined that the units must:

- Be lightweight and portable;
- Be self-contained and only occupy a minimum of space (*compact*);
- Be capable of being deployed via standard passenger vehicles or by aircraft;
- Be easy to set up and be operated by non-technical personnel;
- Be rugged enough to withstand country roads and remote tracks yet provide precision instruments



▲ PAWS in use at the Pinkawillinie fire on Eyre Peninsula in December 2005.
▲ Photo: Mark MacDonald

normally associated with traditional fixed AWS sites:

- Operate autonomously without an external power source;
- Utilise hardware and communications to operate at all possible locations, with minimal site-specific considerations or fixed telephone lines.

Agreement was reached between the GAFLC members on these requirements with CFS and BOM taking the lead in purchasing four PAWS which were delivered in late 2005.

Since the purchase of the units, they have been deployed to fires in almost all regions.

Why do we need PAWS?

Both current and forecast weather conditions are of paramount importance to all emergency managers.

While the existing BOM network of fixed location AWS provide a good indication of weather conditions in the vicinity of the stations, weather conditions at an incident can be significantly different. PAWS provide a valuable tool in obtaining critical real-time weather information at or very near the incident.

Localised weather conditions can affect fire behaviour quite dramatically. Dry, windy, hot conditions are favorable for fire spread and unstable meteorological conditions encourage dangerous fire behaviour.

Local weather effects such as katabatic and anabatic winds, sea breezes and inversions can be critical in determining the threat presented by a bushfire.

The same is true for a wide range of other emergencies including chemical incidents (ie: CBR) and animal health incidents (ie: *exotic diseases*).

As such CFS and other agencies saw a need to invest in the purchase of these initial units.

How do PAWS work?

The PAWS units provide information about air temperature, relative humidity, mean wind speed, gustiness, wind direction, barometric pressure and rain.

These units are portable, and while they are housed in trailers for ease of storage, they can be deployed in the boot of a vehicle, in an aircraft or in the trailer.

They use satellite telephone technology to provide live data to the BOM, where it is uploaded automatically every 10 minutes to the BOM website.

The units are powered through a combination of battery and solar panels and can be set up near an incident to provide increased level of accuracy for planning and incident management.

Using the PAWS units

Standard operating procedure 9.2 has been developed for the deployment and use of the PAWS.

With the units currently stored at Region 1 Headquarters and at DEH House at Keswick, this procedure details the process for deployment.

In most instances requests for deployments are to be made through either the relevant CFS regional headquarters or Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) district office.

To support this initiative CFS and DEH sought interested people to be trained in the deployment of the PAWS when required for incidents. An initial group of people have undertaken this training, with additional training planned later in 2006.

Designated as Field Weather Intelligence Officers, people trained in PAWS also receive additional training in fire weather and become part of the incident management team (IMT) once the PAWS has been deployed.

They will provide support to the IMT for provision of information on what the weather is doing and act in a liaison role on behalf of the IMT with forecasters in BOM.

[NEWS & UPDATES FENCING RESEARCH HEATS UP]

By: Bushfire CRC

Research undertaken by the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) has confirmed that different types of fencing can play an important part in defending homes against the threat of bushfires.

Based on the theory that steel fencing offers greater protection to residential housing against bushfire than alternative materials because of its non-combustibility, the experiments investigated the effects of typical Australian bushfire exposures on everyday fencing.

As part of the experiment, scientists tested 1.3km of fence materials to observe the performance of house fences during simulated bushfire attacks.

The treated pine, hardwood and steel fences were tested in 23 different fire experiments including ember attack, flame attack, radiant heat attack and leaf litter attack.

The results

The results from this six-month study confirmed that a solid steel or hardwood fence provides better protection against bushfire attack than that of treated pine or open slatted fences.

CSIRO's lead bushfire researcher, Justin Leonard said the study showed that solid fences made from steel or hardwood timber were seen to be effective at stopping the transfer of both fire and radiant heat, offering increased protection for homes.

"This is critical because our post-bushfire survey results show that the majority of houses actually survive the first fire front, but burn down during the following few hours from ignition caused by burning debris or ember attack which may come from vegetation or combustible items within the urban environment," Mr Leonard said.

"In our study solid steel fences did incredibly well at repelling fire and radiation attacks. The protection may be enough to prevent combustible items near the fence from igniting, thus reducing the chance of fire spreading into the inside of the property boundary."

The steel fence survived all experiments with its structure intact, despite the buckling and separating of joints of panels and posts and scorching of the fence's surface coating.

"Closed slatted hard wood fences also provided a solid barrier to fire radiation, and survived the majority of tests with only minor charring without becoming significantly involved in flames," Mr Leonard said.

"The proviso for hardwood fences is that people need to ensure there are no combustible materials near the hardwood fence – such as combustible ground cover, play equipment, sheds or cars.

"If these elements burn, the fence may act not as a barrier but as a flame source, becoming far less effective and part of the problem.

"Hardwood fences also struggled during the structural fire exposure experiments. When the fence was exposed to direct 2.5m high flames for 30 minutes the hardwood palings started to burn through after only five and a half minutes.

"This suggests that these types of fences may not be effective in limiting house-to-house fire spread in large fires, supporting our observations from the Canberra bushfires."

It was also found that hardwood timber fencing systems with open slats did not perform as well as solid fencing systems, with the slats leaving houses exposed to wind blown embers and radiant heat, offering little resistance to the passage of flame.



^ Hardwood and solid steel fencing provide better protection against bushfire attack.

Photo: Bushfire CRC



^ Fencing can play an important part in defending homes against the threat of bushfire.

Photo: Bushfire CRC

Treated pine's performance as a heat barrier was good until ignition of the fence occurred.

"Treated pine ignited and burnt to completion in all experiments, including the experiment where leaf litter - which readily accumulates at

the base of fences - was ignited," Mr Leonard said.

"This would mean a higher risk of house loss through thermal exposure, wind blown embers and the mechanical impact of the fence falling."



LEVEL OF EXPOSURE	STEEL	HARDWOOD	TREATED SOFTWOOD (PINE)
1. Litter Ignited Leaf litter was placed typically on fence rails and around fence posts and ignited to investigate and observe the influence of this ignition, a simulated ember attack.	No structural failure of fencing system.	No structural failure of fencing system.	Burnt to completion in 1 to 2 hours during testing.
2. Litter Ignited + Pre-Radiation Typical of an advancing bushfire occurring on a day with a fire danger index of 40, but with sufficient clearing to avoid direct flame contact with the fence.	No structural failure of fencing system.	Structural failure of fencing system in sections.	Burnt to completion in 1 to 2 hours during testing.
3. Simulation of Structural Fire Full continuous flame immersion for a period of 30 minutes. Designed to simulate a worst case structural fire where the fencing system may increase or decrease the risk of adjacent house ignition.	No structural failure of fencing system.	Structural failure of fencing system in sections.	Not tested because exposure levels: 1. Litter ignited; 2. Litter ignited + pre-radiation; and 3. Simulation of bushfire passage; burnt down the fencing system to completion.
SUMMARY	Of the different materials tested, the prepainted and metallic coated sheet steel fencing (in this case made from COLORBOND® steel) performed best under all exposure conditions. In particular when faced with a 30-minute flame immersion test used to simulate potential effects of an adjacent house fire, a common event during bushfires.	The hardwood timber fencing systems performed better than the treated pine timber, supporting flame spread during the radiant heat and flame contact phases in exposure levels two and three. However, when faced with the 30-minute flame exposure test of level four, the hardwood timber fencing systems resulting in fence collapse within some minutes.	Treated pine timber fencing systems burnt to completion when subjected to the level one exposure (ember attack), and collapsed in sections during these exposures. This resulted in the breakage of window glass on the simulated house placed at the minimum allowable separation distance from a fence boundary in accordance with the Building Code of Australia.

NEWS & UPDATES

[WEATHER HISTORY POINTS TO CHANGING BUSHFIRE SEASONS]

The CSIRO, Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) and Australian Bureau of Meteorology have released new research which confirms what many have suspected for some time – that the severity and timing of the bushfire seasons is changing and will continue to change in coming years.

Using historical data from and research supported by the Bushfire CRC, the CSIRO was able to model potential changes in fire weather over southeast Australia under climate change scenarios.

The study looked at fire weather risk in South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania and found that the number of very high

and extreme fire weather days could increase by between 4-25 per cent by 2020 and 15-70 per cent by 2050 across parts of South Eastern Australia.

The changes would be greatest inland and relatively less along the coast and in Tasmania.

The report indicates that climate change may see bushfires become an even more regular feature on the Australian landscape.

The study also found that the window available for prescribed burning may shift and narrow with higher fire weather risk in spring, summer and autumn shifting the periods suitable for prescribed burning more towards the winter months.



^ We could see the number days of extreme fire danger rise by up to 25 per cent by 2020.



www.bushfirecrc.com/news/releas/index.html
for the full report.



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VOLUNTEER - NEWS & UPDATES

GUIDELINES RELEASED FOR [PEOPLE IN VEHICLES DURING BUSHFIRES]

By: Australasian Fire
Authorities Council

The Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) has released best-practice guidelines to give the general public a greater understanding of how they can increase their level of safety if they are caught in a vehicle during a bushfire.

Whilst the emphasis is still strongly focused on making an early decision to either stay and defend or leave early on days of high fire danger, members of the community may find themselves on the road during a bushfire.

Research conducted by AFAC, its member fire agencies and the CSIRO has found that in this situation, the chances of survival are increased if they shelter inside their vehicle rather than flee on foot.

The study looked at a number of fires where fatalities occurred when members of the public attempted to flee during a bushfire. These include the 2005 Eyre Peninsula bushfire and the 1969 Lara bushfire in Victoria where a significant number of people perished, whilst others who sheltered in cars survived.

The following general guidelines should be followed to minimise the risk:

- When travelling, dress in suitable non-synthetic clothing and shoes and always carry woollen blankets and a supply of water;
- Know the local bushfire warning system (such as your local ABC radio station) and tune in accordingly when travelling;
- If you see a bushfire in the distance, carefully pull over to the side of the road to assess the situation. If it is safe to do so, turn around and drive to safety;
- If you have been trapped by the fire it will be necessary to find a suitable place to situate the car and shelter from the intense



Research has found that the chance of survival in bushfire is increased by sheltering in a car, when compared to fleeing on foot.

- radiant heat. Find a clearing away from dense bush and high ground fuel loads. If possible, park behind a natural barrier such as a rocky outcrop. Position your vehicle facing towards oncoming fire front. Park your vehicle off the roadway to avoid collisions in poor visibility. Don't park too close to other vehicles;
- Stay inside your vehicle – it offers the best level of protection from the radiant heat as the fire front passes;
- Turn headlights and hazard warning lights on to make the vehicle as visible as possible;
- Tightly close all windows and doors;
- Shut all air vents and turn the air conditioning off;
- The engine may be left running to enable the headlights to continue to operate and not flatten the battery;

- Get down below the window level and shelter under woollen blankets;
- Drink water to minimise the risk of dehydration;
- Stay in the vehicle until the fire front has passed and the temperature has dropped outside;
- Fuel tanks are very unlikely to explode;
- As the fire front approaches, the intensity of the heat will increase along with smoke and embers;
- Smoke gradually gets inside the vehicle and fumes will be released from the interior of the car. Stay as close to the floor as possible to minimise inhalation and cover your mouth with a moist cloth;
- Tyres and external plastic body parts may catch alight. In more extreme cases the vehicle interior may catch on fire;

- Once the fire front has passed and the temperature has dropped, cautiously exit the vehicle. (Be careful - internal parts will be extremely hot.)
- Move to a safe area, eg a strip of land that has already burnt;
- Stay covered in woollen blankets, continue to drink water and await assistance.

A complete version of the AFAC Best Practice Guidelines for People in Vehicles During Bushfires is available from the AFAC website www.afac.com.au



NEWS & UPDATES

[AFAC RELEASES POSITION PAPER ON STAY AND DEFEND OR GO EARLY]

The Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) in collaboration with the Australian State and Territory fire agencies, has released a paper on the 'Stay & Defend Or Go Early' position.

This paper is based on available evidence and experience at this time and confirms a national position and promotes good practice guidelines for creating and maintaining bushfire-safe communities throughout Australia.

Designed to ensure consistent messages are given to communities across Australia, the paper provides a guide for the community on whether, in the event of a bushfire, they should stay and defend their homes or go early.

The paper is consistent with a number of the bushfire safety principles the SA Country Fire Service has been advocating for some years.

The paper supports the following statements:

- Bushfires are a common and normal occurrence;
- Bushfires can cause death and injury to people and animals and damage to property, the natural environment and other community assets;
- Losses can be reduced, not all will be saved;
- Managing risk and reducing loss is a shared responsibility between government, householders and land managers;

- The decision whether to order evacuations should be made by the lead fire control agency;
- Road access must be carefully managed during fire events;
- It is essential for people in threatened communities to have ready access to accurate information to assist in decision making;
- Fire emergency plans should be developed for all areas with a bushfire risk;
- Land use planning should be used to enhance community resilience to bushfire;
- Fire agencies should support community recovery.

The paper provides the following guidelines for the community:

- Prepare your properties well before a bushfire arrives;
- Appropriately prepared and constructed buildings offer protection to people during bushfires, reducing the likelihood of bushfire-related injury and fatality;
- Firefighting resources cannot always protect every property; therefore people planning to defend their properties must be prepared to be self-sufficient;
- People need to prepare, then stay and defend their property, or leave early;

- If planning to leave early, people must decide where they will go, how they will get there, and what trigger they will use to initiate their plan;
- People who cannot cope with bushfire should relocate well before the fire impacts their location;
- Evacuation at the last minute ahead of a bushfire is dangerous;
- Large scale, mass evacuations of entire suburbs or communities requires significant lead times and are unlikely to be conducted. Staying with an adequately prepared property or leaving early before the fire approaches are safer options than waiting for authorities to conduct evacuations.

The full paper is available from the AFAC website www.afac.com.au under position papers.



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[AIR OPERATIONS ACTIVITIES]

By: David Cant, Manager Aviation Services

The CFS air operations and air support crews were extremely busy over December and January, assisting at 17 of the 36 major incidents during that time.

All up, the fire bombing aircraft alone spent in excess of 250 hours of flight operations, assisted by numerous air support crews and surveillance aircraft across the state.

Although activity for fire bombing within the Primary Response Zones of the Mt Lofty Ranges, Lower Eyre Peninsula and Lower South East was relatively quiet, fire bombing aircraft were used extensively outside these Zones in Regions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6.

Fire bombing was undertaken at fires near Murray Bridge, Burra, Robertstown, Clare Valley, Halidon northeast of Karoonda, Horrocks Pass near Wilmington, Hawker, Coomandook, Ngarkat Conservation Park, the Dudley Peninsula on Kangaroo Island, and the Middlecamp Hills area between Cowell and Cleve.

Bushfire CRC Research

While up in the air, undertaking firebombing supervision, the CFS Air Attack Supervisors (AAS) have been collecting data to help the Bushfire CRC with their Aerial Firefighting Suppression project.

The study aims to provide information to firefighting agencies, which covers:

- the key factors that contribute to the effectiveness of aerial and ground suppression;
- verification of the effectiveness of aerial suppression drops to increase fire fighter safety;
- assessment of the overall efficiency of fire fighting operations;
- The development of methodology for the evaluation of new generation suppression resources such as new aircraft platforms and ground equipment.

The study will also allow for the production of guides for aerial firefighting operations, and the development of best practice standards for the use of aircraft in

firefighting operations.

While the study is still in its infancy, the data and photos collected will help give researchers perspectives on the use of aerial firefighting, which they can supplement with interviews, surveys and experimental evaluations that also form part of the project.

SA hosts QLD Air Attack Supervisors

With the expanded fire bombing capacity CFS has across South Australia and the establishment of a new Primary Response Zone for fire bombing on the Lower Eyre Peninsula, the number of accredited Air Attack Supervisors the CFS had at its disposal to cover all of South Australia was limited.

In late 2005, CFS through the newly formed AFAC Wildfire Aviation Technical Group, requested support for the provision of additional Air Attack Supervisors for the fire danger season. This complements the activities of the National Aerial Firefighting Centre where cooperative strategies between Australian bushfire agencies are encouraged.

Air Attack Supervisors (AAS) undertake a complex and demanding role during bushfires where they control and guide the effective use of fire bombing aircraft and ensure tactical integration of these aircraft with the overall incident action plan for a fire.

The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS), through their Manager Aviation John Gresty, came to the assistance of CFS, by deploying five AAS from Queensland on a rotational basis operating out of Port Lincoln. Mr Gresty seized this opportunity of diversifying the experience of the QFRS AAS in fixed-wing fire bombing operations, where they principally use helicopters with fixed belly-tanks, around south-eastern Queensland.

The first QFRS AAS arrived in late December and although the terrain and types of vegetation in South



Photo: The Advertiser

Australia are vastly different to that in Queensland, the AAS have provided invaluable support during the Middlecamp Hills fire, regional activities and at other fires.

Newly trained volunteer Air Observers, Vaughan Habner and Neil Acland, support the QFRS AAS with the provision of local area knowledge and ground fire fighting and fire behaviour experience in the local vegetation types.

CFS plans to further develop its staff and volunteer personnel to become self-sufficient in supervising fire bombing operations in all Primary Response Zones.

A special thank you to Region 6 for their support of these operations, and particularly to Stephanie Collins

for organising accommodation and looking after our QFRS friends.

Aircraft Familiarisation

With aircraft playing an increasing role in firefighting operations, particularly outside of the Mount Lofty Ranges and South East primary response zones, a training program has been developed by the CFS Training Department to assist volunteers to become familiar with aircraft operations.

More details on the course are available on page 50.

The Lower Eyre Peninsula and Tumby Bay group have been the first to see the course, with delivery on 21 February 2006.



^ QFRS Air Attack Supervisors with their certificates of appreciation.

NEWS & UPDATES

[Adelaide Bank Rescue Helicopter Service]

The Adelaide Bank Rescue Helicopter has been a familiar sight to CFS volunteers for many years.

This often life saving service has been expanded to include four helicopters over the summer months, including one water-bombing aircraft.

The new and improved service commenced on Monday, 12 December 2005 with a spectacular launch at Adelaide Oval.

Each year the service performs over 700 missions, including getting medical teams to crash sites, transporting seriously ill country patients to city hospitals, tracking down cars in high speed chases,

searching for people, boats and drug crops and spotting, mapping and water bombing fires.

The new contract has a seven-year span and is operated by an Australian-owned company, Australian Helicopters, with sponsorship from Adelaide Bank.

The new service will be operate out of a purpose-built facility at the Adelaide Airport, which will also serve as a base for the crew of 17, made up of pilots, crew, engineers and administrators.

With the services expansion, the CFS has a greater access to aircraft for water bombing and air observation purposes.



The Adelaide Bank Rescue Helicopter Service now has an increased involvement with the CFS.

NEWS & UPDATES

[MOUNT CRAWFORD AIRSTRIp LAUNCHED]

The Minister for Emergency Services, Carmel Zollo, officially opened the \$200,000 Mount Crawford Airstrip on 19 December 2005.

The 1.6km by 40m airstrip is located directly behind the Mount Crawford Ranger Station and Depot on the Williamstown to Mt Pleasant Road, and has been constructed as a base for fire bombing activities within the Mount Lofty Ranges.

With the opening of this airstrip, CFS air operations at the Kersbrook airstrip will cease.

Although the Kersbrook airstrip has served CFS well for many years, in the past it has been at times unsafe for larger aircraft to operate from.

The airstrip is an initiative of the Government Agencies Fire Liaison Committee, and developed by ForestrySA with funding from SA Water, Department for Environment and Heritage, Country Fire Service and ForestrySA.

Supported by volunteers from Kersbrook CFS, it has been used on a regular basis over the summer.



INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

By: Leanne Adams, Incident Management Project Officer

✓ Incident logs such as this are available to use.



▲ One of the level three teams holding a planning meeting.

KEEPING A LOG?

One of the most valuable things you can do during an incident is to keep a record of your activities.

This can be as simple as making a few notes in your CFS field notebook on the location of a hot spot, suspicious bystanders or recording instructions at a briefing.

It is recommended that every person at an incident carry a CFS field notebook and pen (these notebooks are available from your Region).

If you are in the role of a Sector Commander, Radio Operator, Strike Team Leader, Incident Controller or any other position in the Australasian Interservice Incident Management System (AIIMS) structure it is crucial that you keep a log that includes records of time, date, method of communication, conversations, instructions, observations, contact details and your actions.

This will help you manage the incident by providing you with a reference of important information such as helping you recall instructions given to or by you, the number of resources you have available, safety requirements or how long since you asked for some food!

You should record your logs on the Unit/Incident Logs, which are available in A4 and A5 size pads, or in an Occurrence Book.

Some guidelines for keeping logs are:

- Ensure the logs identify who has written them (your name and position);
- Always use pen (not pencil);
- Include the date on every page;
- Include the time on each entry;
- Include information such as;
 - Actions taken.
 - Faxes sent (time, date, who to & topic).

- Sitreps provided - with brief of content.
- Decisions made.
- Requests made.
- Red Flag Warnings.
- Any changes.
- Problems being experienced.

- Ensure all entries are clearly legible, accurate and complete;
- Keep entries in sequence and ensure pages are numbered;
- Do not erase entries so that the original is illegible. If a mistake is made draw a single line through the entry;
- Initial and date corrections or additions to notes;
- Don't leave gaps/blanks in your logs. If you intend to leave a page incomplete, strike the remainder of the page out (eg use a zig-zag or diagonal line so the page is unusable);
- Empty spaces at the end of each line should be ruled off so nothing can be added later;
- Do not remove/rewrite notes at a later date;
- If the log is a unit log (eg Sector Commander, Staging Area Manager or Operations Officer) ensure the log is handed over to the next person at changeover;
- If the log is a personal log eg in a personal occurrence book, ensure the log is copied and handed over to the next person at changeover;
- All logs taken at an incident need to form part of the final documentation for an incident.

Some helpful abbreviations are:

tx	transmit
wx	weather
rcvd	for received
fwd	for indicating forwarding on info
GRN ###	to indicate the Talkgroup
To	outgoing message
Frm	incoming message.

The Glossary of the Chief Officer's Standing Orders and Standard Operating Procedures contains other helpful acronyms.

CFS STATE LEVEL 3 INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAMS

The Level 3 Incident Management Teams (IMTs) that were established before the most recent fire season have seen quite a lot of activity, with responses by team members to incidents at Middle Camp on the Eyre Peninsula, Burra, Horrocks Pass and Mouth Flat on Kangaroo Island.

Local incident management personnel have also been extensively involved for all of these incidents, and their expertise, local knowledge and inclusiveness have been fantastic.

The composition of the Level 3 IMTs is approximately 47 per cent CFS volunteers (and increasing), 25 per cent CFS staff, 20 per cent Department of Environment and Heritage, 4 per cent SAFECOM, 1 per cent ForestrySA, 1 per cent SES and 1 per cent SAMFS.

If you are interested in being involved in the State Level 3 IMTs in the future, please contact Leanne Adams by emailing adams.leanne@cfs.org.au or 8463 4236 to discuss how you could become involved.

NEWS & UPDATES

[2006 FIREFIGHTING COMPETITIONS]

By: Augie Gray, SAFECOM Competitions Coordinator

This year's Firefighting Competitions will be held at Goolwa, on the South Coast, and will be proudly hosted by Mundoo Group.

The date for your diaries is **Sunday, 15 October, at Goolwa Oval.**

Nomination forms will be circulated nearer to the event and will also be available for downloading from the CFS website.

This year the Competitions Committee is considering the introduction of several new events,

together with the reinstatement of a modified One Person event, and more Cadet activities. Stay tuned for further details in the next issue of *Volunteer*.

There is a wonderful variety of accommodation options all along the South Coast from Victor Harbor to Goolwa, and plenty of things to see and do, so why not make a weekend of it – enjoy the hospitality of the South Coast with all its attractions on Saturday and the competitions on Sunday.

NEWS & UPDATES

[BLACK TUESDAY ANNIVERSARY]

Twelve months on from the devastating Eyre Peninsula bushfires, around fifteen hundred people gathered at a ceremony to remember those who died.

The communities on the Eyre Peninsula along with many people from across the state, gathered at Wangary Oval on Wednesday 11 January 2006 to reflect on the events that occurred one year earlier.

Premier Mike Rann spoke solemnly about the events, with

many friends and family of those affected by the bushfires gathering and speaking of the need to move forward.

CFS Chief Officer, Euan Ferguson, joined other emergency services leaders in attending the ceremony and reflecting on the events that affected so many South Australians, including CFS volunteers and emergency service personnel.



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NEWS & UPDATES

[MCDONALD'S FIRE ESCAPE PLAN DAY]

By: Leigh Miller, Manager Prevention Services

McDonald's and fire services throughout Australia have established a partnership through the Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) to conduct a national program to reduce deaths in house fires. The program is called "Fire Escape Plan Day".

What is Fire Escape Plan Day?

Fire Escape Plan Day will be a national event occurring on the same day across the country. Its objective is to encourage all Australians, particularly children, to develop and practice an escape plan which could save their lives in the event of a house fire.

With most house fire tragedies occurring in winter, Fire Escape Plan Day has been scheduled for Saturday 3 June - the first Saturday of winter - to remind people of the

need to be prepared.

Why have fire services teamed up with McDonald's?

Research undertaken by both organisations indicates a similar target audience. By sharing credibility and resources, the AFAC believes it can reach that target audience in a very cost-effective way and increase the opportunity to influence behavioural change.

Why must something be done?

More than 11,000 house fires occur in Australia each year, which on average result in the deaths of approximately 120 people, often children. Even if no one is hurt, the emotional cost of losing a home, with cherished possessions and memories, is traumatic.

When asleep, our sense of smell is largely diminished and we're

unlikely to smell smoke. The smoke also puts occupants into a deeper sleep. It is important that when the smoke alarm wakes occupants, people are well prepared - even when disorientated by smoke and/or fire - with a well-rehearsed escape plan, which can reduce confusion and help to save lives.

What does the event involve?

The event will be held on one day a year with fire crews volunteering their time on the day to assist with promotion of the event at their local McDonald's outlet. They will help customers fill out their escape plans, which will be mass produced by McDonald's as tray mats.

Relevant brigades will be contacted by the Manager of each McDonald's to arrange attendance for up to two hours from 12pm-2pm. If the

location lends itself, fire appliances may be on display.

The advertising and publicity campaign to promote the event runs over a two-week period, from 21 May 2006 to the end of the event on Saturday 3 June 2006.

There are 47 McDonald's restaurants in SA and a number of them are located within CFS areas.

Attendance at McDonald's outlets will be at the discretion of the local brigade, but let's take this opportunity to educate our children so they can survive house fires.

TAKING UP THE CHALLENGE

By: David Goodwin, Community Education Officer



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VOLUNTEER - NEWS & UPDATES

How can community education be relevant, local and interesting?

How might we encourage residents in high fire risk areas to keep up to date with bushfire safety information and motivated to prepare their household against the threat of bushfire?

Such is the challenge for Community Education Officers and CFS brigade members involved in the Community Fire Safe program.

For residents of high bushfire threat areas, the challenge is to develop strategies that will protect their household against bushfire. Realistically, this needs to be undertaken within a timeframe, reasonable budget and in tandem with lifestyle choices.

One idea is the 'Challenge' that has been developed and used in parts of the Mount Lofty Ranges this year.

The Challenge is an appropriate name for this event that brings together the community, their local CFS brigades and the Community Fire Safe program.

The first of the challenges were held in early February and were known as the Stirling Challenge, Bradbury Challenge, and Upper Sturt Challenge.

The challenge involved a two-hour weeknight mini-workshop, with residents divided into groups, spending time at four different workstations.

At each station, Community Education Officers and local brigade members were ready to lend a hand, however the challenge was for the groups to use their knowledge, the props and - if needed - the expertise of the attendants to fill in the worksheets.

This in turn generated considerable discussion and sharing of ideas amongst the community.

The workstations reflected some basic ideals of the Community Fire Safe program:

PLANNING AND PREPARATION THAT MATCH THE LEVEL OF THREAT.

Using 'steps to survival', this workstation focused participants on identifying what they can do to raise their household levels of preparedness to match the annual cycles of property improvement, fire season readiness and preparation on days of high fire danger.

It encouraged them to link these elements into an action plan, taking into consideration response and recovery.

MAKING APPROPRIATE SURVIVAL DECISIONS.

Participants discussed what different information they required, how and when they could obtain it, and how it fits into their action plan.

The brigade radio rooms provided a useful example, with many ways of sending and receiving information.

PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE OF WATER SUPPLY AND PUMPS.

CFS volunteers particularly provided their expertise at this workstation, and it was greatly appreciated by all.

This workstation was extremely valuable for those who plan to 'stay and defend' on days of high fire danger. It provided them with equipment-related information, and highlighted how critical having pumps and an independent water supply are in property protection.

This session focused on pre-season maintenance of all components and periodic testing and troubleshooting throughout the fire danger season.

It also reinforced the risks associated with the failure of these systems, and the dangers of making poor survival decisions, including the fatal decision to leave late.

PERSONAL SURVIVAL – LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF AND OTHERS.

With a backdrop of brigade protective equipment and first aid kits the participants were prompted to identify the types of injuries they might sustain preparing and protecting their family and property.

Trained CFS first aiders led discussions about minor burns, sprains, eye irritation, dehydration, heat exhaustion and stroke, and shock.

The focus was on developing a survival kit and taking preventative measures to avert what can become a medical emergency.



^ The forum was an excellent opportunity for discussion about bushfire safety.



^ Attendees were given specific information about equipment and other fire safety tips.

Feedback from the community was very positive, with many of the participants commenting how they were now motivated to get a plan together and organise their equipment.

Those who already had been exposed to the Community Fire Safe program enjoyed the opportunity to mix with other like-minded people in their community.

The challenge also provided a valuable opportunity for the community to meet members of their local brigade and see who and what is behind the roller doors.

Putting a face to the CFS will also assist community members in developing a local linkage, giving the opportunity for greater interaction between brigade and the community in the future.

If you would like assistance to run a similar event at your brigade please contact the Community Fire Safe program at State Headquarters on (08) 8463 4200.

Many thanks to the volunteers who again cheerfully and capably served and supported their community and made this the successful event it was.

NEWS & UPDATES

[ENGAGEMENT FOR SAFER SA COMMUNITIES]



^ A mix of speakers and workshops kept attendees focused.

By: Fiona Dunstan, CFS Community Education Officer

The issues of how to successfully engage the community, what works and what doesn't were the focus of a workshop facilitated by the CFS on Friday, 24 February.

The aim of the day was to provide networking opportunities and a forum where community facilitators could explore and discuss models of community engagement, with a focus on community safety.

The workshop provided the opportunity for those involved in

community safety positions to observe and discuss existing programs from various community safety groups.

Funded by the State Emergency Management Office, the CFS, and the Commonwealth Disaster Mitigation Fund, the forum specifically targeted community safety facilitators.

The workshop featured a number of guest speakers, including; Jeff Tryens, Executive Director of the

SA Strategic Plan - Community Connection, who set the challenge for participants to develop a community safety engagement strategy, which connected to the State Plan.

Nicole Hunter, Project Manager - Community Engagement in Fire with the Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria. Nicole gave an informative presentation entitled 'Where There Is Fire There Are People' which was particularly

relevant for the CFS personnel in attendance.

The more than 50 people who attended left with a sound understanding of community engagement models and concepts, and some new ideas and approaches to community engagement and strategic planning.

The presentations and outcomes of the workshop are available at www.essacworkshop.org for viewing.

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\$50⁰⁰

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[BUNNINGS AND DULUX SUPPORT EMERGENCY SERVICES]

SA Country Fire Service volunteers were on hand to help launch the summer campaign for Dulux and Bunnings at the Bunnings Warehouse, Noarlunga on 3 January.

Both Dulux and Bunnings have established a strong relationship with the Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) over the last few years, with funds from the purchase of certain items put towards the cost of training and equipment for emergency service workers across Australia.

As part of the launch, volunteers from Morphett Vale and Seaford demonstrated their skills in road crash rescue. The Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS), and representatives from Dulux, Bunnings, AFAC and CFS were also in attendance.

Salisbury Captain, Rob Styling, and Basket Range Captain, Pip McGowan, are two CFS leaders recently sponsored by Dulux and Bunnings to participate in the AFAC Volunteer Leaders Program.

Both captains attended the launch and were invited to speak on their experience.

Ron said the Volunteer Leaders Program highlighted the important differences between management and leadership.



^ CFS Volunteers demonstrate their skills in Road Crash Rescue.

"Management is about systems, controls, policies, procedures and structure, whereas leadership is about trust and interacting your people into the management processes. Management is about efficiencies and leadership is about

effectiveness," he said.

Pip agreed that the program was very worthwhile, not only for self-development but also as a life experience.

"I feel the program has not only equipped me for CFS management

and leadership but has also had a positive influence on my attitude to others areas of my life," she said.

Thank you to Bunnings and Dulux for their support of CFS through this initiative.

NEWS & UPDATES

[BATON CARRIED BY CFS VOLUNTEERS]

By: Brenton Ragless

Several SA Country Fire Service volunteers were honored to have been chosen to carry the baton for the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay.

South Australia's leg of the relay started in Adelaide on Sunday, 12 February and spent four days in the State, visiting towns in the Mount Lofty Ranges, Mid North, Riverland, and Fleurieu Peninsula, before travelling into Victoria.

All participants in the relay were nominated for the valuable contribution they've made to their local communities.

CFS Acting Deputy Chief Officer, Rob Sandford, said it came as no surprise that CFS volunteers were nominated and that it did the

service proud to see members participate.

"CFS volunteers are dedicated to protecting the life and property of South Australians. They deserve to be honoured for their efforts and this relay offers an exciting platform for specific individuals to be recognised," he said.

One of the participants was Riverton CFS Brigade Captain, Peter Shearer, who had his share of the relay as the baton passed through the main street of Clare in the State's lower north.

"It was a privilege to be nominated," said Peter, who has been a member of the Riverton CFS Brigade since 1972.

"You don't ever expect opportunities

like that to come about and I would have said that there are lots of other people who deserved it more than I do. But I'm most grateful and it was a once in a lifetime opportunity that I won't forget in a hurry," he said.

Peter was one of several CFS members known to have run in the relay, which also included Steve Chilton of Littlehampton, David Hamilton of Goolwa, Nicole Lambert of Palmer, Linda Green of Mount Torrens, Brian Menadue of Salisbury and Roderick Cunningham of Mintaro.

The Queen's Baton Relay is the world's longest, most inclusive relay, travelling more than 180,000 kilometres and visiting all 71 nations of the Commonwealth in one year and a day.

The relay symbolises the gathering of people from across the Commonwealth and traditionally begins with a commencement ceremony at Buckingham Palace, London. There Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II entrusts the baton containing Her 'message to the athletes' to the first honorary relay runner.

The relay concluded at the Opening Ceremony of the 2006 Commonwealth Games inside the Melbourne Cricket Ground on 15 March. As the final relay runner handed the baton back to Her Majesty, the message was read aloud to officially open the Games.

CFS COMPETES IN SAPES GAMES

The South Australian Police and Emergency Services (SAPES) Games were held in early March, with 37 CFS volunteers and staff competing in a range of events including dragon boating, indoor rowing, athletics and shooting.

Held every two years, the Games are designed to promote a healthy lifestyle, encourage teamwork and foster partnerships between emergency service organisations.

Despite only making up a small portion of the entrants over the week-long competition, CFS won a total of 19 medals in dragon boat racing, indoor rowing, shotgun (trap and skeet), swimming, table tennis, tennis, track and field and triathlon.

Competing in the SAPES Games for the first time was Paul Reeves from Paracombe CFS.

"I saw a write-up on the Games in the last Volunteer magazine and thought I'd give it a go," said Paul. "I'd been training for football and enjoy running so I entered in a few of the athletics events. It was great fun competing against people from other agencies - I was the only CFS person there competing, but everyone was pretty friendly, relaxed and welcoming."

"I ended up being able to join a SA Police relay team for the 4 x 200 relay and we finished second. At the end of the competitions I had collected six medals. Although I hoped I'd do okay, I didn't expect that."

Congratulations to CFS medal winners Leanne Adams, Leslie Butler, Lisa Coles, Yvette Dowling, Euan Ferguson, Heidi Geytenbeek, Ian Hopton, Natasha Huber, Marilyn Hughes, Lisa Lalic, Lachlan Macmillan, Sonia Post, Narelle Rawnsley, Paul Reeves, Wendy Shirley and Krista St John.



^ The CFS getting in some practice before the tug of war at the opening of the SAPES Games.
Photo: SAPES Office



v The CFS 'Fire Dragons'.
Photo: Ross Jones

[CFS MEDAL TALLY]



[PEER SUPPORT GRADUATION]

**By: Trudy Whelan,
SPAM Team Coordinator**

An additional three members of the Stress Prevention and Management (SPAM) team have completed their Certificate Three in Community Studies/Critical Incident Stress Management/Peer Support.

John Forster (Echunga CFS), Rebecca Klitscher (Mt Pleasant CFS) and Lindsay Hincks (SAFECOM) were presented with their certificates by CFS Chief Officer, Euan Ferguson, at a

graduation dinner on Saturday, 11 February.

As part of their involvement in the SPAM program, peer supporters are required to complete Certificate 3, to equip them to provide support and assistance to their peers.

This support and assistance may be at a critical incident stress debriefing, providing pre-incident training or simply being a 'listening ear' to their fellow volunteers who, in

the course of their CFS duties have been involved in difficult rescues or incidents which may have had an adverse affect on their wellbeing.

Certificate 3 is a nationally recognised course with a mix of written assignments and on-the-job training, which takes around two years to complete.

Congratulations!



^ Congratulations to the new graduates.

NEWS & UPDATES

STRESS PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT (SPAM)

By: Trudy Whelan, SPAM Team Coordinator

The SPAM Team has maintained a presence in Region 6 since the Wangary fire, supporting the CFS volunteer community during these difficult times.

Led by CFS Consultant Psychologist, Jill Scott, the team of professional and peer

supports officers will continue to provide this support during the entirety of the coronial enquiry.

All volunteers and their immediate families will continue to have access to the SPAM team throughout the enquiry, and beyond on a 24-hour basis.

The SPAM team can be accessed through the;

- State Operations Centre – **8463 4222**.
- SPAM Team Coordinator, Trudy Whelan - pager **8273 2411** or mobile **0409155181**.
- Consultant Psychologist, Jill Scott - pager **8273 2399**.
- Regional Offices.

NEWS & UPDATES

[NEW FOLLOW UP PROCESS AFTER CRITICAL INCIDENTS]

**By: Dr Michelle Tuckey,
Peer Supporter and volunteer with Happy Valley Brigade**

The Stress Prevention and Management (SPAM) Team has introduced a new follow-up process to supplement the services provided to CFS volunteers.

Annually, the team responds to over 50 requests to conduct debriefing sessions for CFS volunteers who have attended potentially traumatic operational incidents.

Follow-up phone calls are typically made around two to four weeks after the event, and are an essential component of the support process following a debriefing session.

The SPAM Team is always working towards continuous improvement and, as a result, an additional strategy has been developed to supplement

the existing follow-up procedure.

This strategy has been successfully trialled over the last few months and will now be introduced permanently.

The new follow-up process involves the use of a short checklist called the *'Impact of Events Scale'*.

The checklist will be introduced and explained during the final stages of all group debriefing sessions.

Volunteers will take a copy of the checklist home with them to complete it in 10-14 days after the group session and fax it to Jill Scott, consultant psychologist for the CFS.

If no group process has been initiated after a critical incident, individuals may be asked to complete the checklist.

Volunteers can be assured that the information they provide is always treated confidentially.

CFS volunteers may be psychologically affected by the work they do, particularly after fatal vehicle accidents and fires.

The *'Impact of Events Scale'* is a reliable way of assessing how an operational incident may be affecting CFS volunteers.

By reviewing responses, the SPAM team will be able to make better decisions about the stress prevention and management services they offer, and ensure that volunteers continue to receive support until they have recovered.

The SPAM Team continues to

provide a comprehensive range of services for CFS volunteers and their immediate families, including individual and family counselling and training to recognise and manage the symptoms of stress, trauma, and grief.

The SPAM Team may be contacted via the Coordinator, Trudy Whelan on **8463 4141** during business hours, or via the State Operations Centre on **8463 4222**.

NEWS & UPDATES

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

[HARASSMENT CONTACT OFFICER?]

Harassment and Bullying -

not in my brigade!

By: **Adaire Palmer,**
SAFECOM Volunteer Management Branch

The SA Country Fire Service is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, sexual offences and other unacceptable behaviour.

All volunteers have a basic right to work in an environment free from harassment and discrimination, and have an individual responsibility to treat others fairly.

If a volunteer is told their behaviour is offensive or discriminatory to another person or persons, then the behaviour must stop immediately.

To support this, the CFS has developed policies and procedures to deal with discrimination, harassment and bullying.

Workplace Dignity Training is available to all brigades to inform volunteer members about safe work practices and how the policies and procedures work.

Volunteer Harassment Contact Officers (HCOs) have also been established within the service. These people have been trained and are available to support volunteers experiencing discrimination, harassment or bullying.

HCOs are usually the first point of contact should you want support in these areas.

HCOs will focus on resolving the issues, providing support to the volunteer in determining the most appropriate course of action and can also assist in referring the volunteer to other services, such as the SPAM team.

HCOs are to act as role models and champions of the principles of safe work practices. They must remain impartial (not taking sides) and maintain confidentiality, except when the issue affects the safety of the public and/or other members of the emergency service organisations.

What is discrimination?

Discrimination is any practice which makes a distinction between

individuals or groups so as to advantage some and disadvantage others, as outlined in the Equal Opportunity Act 1984.

What is harassment?

In general, harassment is behaviour that is uninvited and unwelcome, and is likely to cause a hostile or uncomfortable workplace by making a person feel:

- Humiliated (put down) and/or
- Seriously embarrassed and/or
- Offended and/or
- Intimidated.

What is bullying?

Workplace bullying is the unwelcome, persistent ill-treatment of an individual by one or more members of an organisation. This treatment has a negative effect on the individual's health, productivity or relationships inside or outside the workplace.

Bullying occurs when someone inappropriately uses threat or physical force and can include;

- Isolating someone
- Intimidation
- Spreading false rumors
- Verbally abusing team mates or subordinates.

HCOs can provide information in relation to discrimination, harassment and bullying.

So are you interested in becoming a HCO?

The Volunteer Management Branch is currently calling for applications for a HCO within each CFS region.

To become a HCO you will need to make an application and go through an interview process before appointment. Training will be provided over an initial two-day weekend in August, and will be followed up with networking and training day every quarter.

You will also receive full support from the Volunteer Management

Branch including, payment for travel, accommodation and training expenses, and a central phone number for confidential referrals managed by the Volunteer Management Branch to protect your privacy.

Volunteer Support Officers will also be available for ongoing support following training, including Workplace Dignity Training in brigades which supports your role, as well as posters, brochures and

business cards for each brigade and volunteer.

For a Role Statement and Application Form, please contact your Volunteer Support Officer through your Regional Office or Adaire Palmer of the Volunteer Management Branch on **8463 4101 / 0408 792 762** or by email palmer.adaire@safecom.sa.gov.au
Applications close Friday, May 19 2006.

CFS CREW BAG



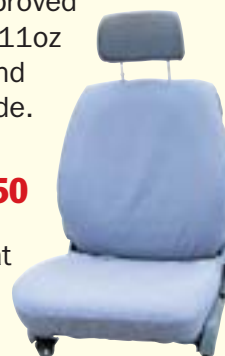
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NEWS & UPDATES THE 2006 [VOLUNTEER SUMMIT]

By: Mick Ayre, Manager Strategic Services

The 2006 Volunteer Summit will be held at the SA Police Academy during the weekend of 1-2 July.

We are all aware that volunteers play an extremely important role in maintaining the safety of our communities, but are we thinking about the changing drivers that will shape how we deliver the services to the community in the future?

Over the past few years, we have seen the world's security impacted by terrorism and several western countries with political systems and values similar to ours have suffered significant unrest. Will Australia eventually experience terrorist actions? *Should the CFS be prepared for this possibility?*

Avian influenza is progressively developing into a major epidemic in many countries and may reach pandemic proportions within months, potentially impacting upon up to 25 per cent of populations and resulting in illness and death on a scale greater than anything we have ever experienced. *Is this an issue that the CFS needs to plan for?*

Volunteer recruitment and retention is a critical issue for the CFS. *How do we recruit more women, young people and those willing to participate in the CFS in specific roles, be they operational, administrative or support roles, to ensure sustainability of our services and the CFS?*

The community now expects more

from Government, demanding greater transparency in its undertakings, more accountability for its expenditure, and higher levels of service. Organisations such as CFS are not immune from scrutiny of its business operations, and must prove that it has proper financial systems in place. CFS volunteers are given responsibility for expenditure of taxpayers' dollars. *Is it unreasonable that they be required to manage those funds under Government policy and procedures and be subject to the checks and balances that apply to public servants?*

The Eyre Peninsula fire of 11 January 2005 precipitated the current Coronial Inquest. We will need to consider how the CFS will respond to the recommendations of the Inquest and make improvements to our systems and procedures to minimise future losses. *What ideas can volunteers provide to assist in improving the CFS as a community organisation?*

The Chief Officer has regularly promoted the concept of communities being responsible for their own safety from bushfire. Whether it be through taking reasonable steps to prevent fire on their property or to develop a bushfire action plan that prepares families to stay or go on a day of extreme fire danger, these actions

work to mitigate risk and reduce the reliance of communities on the CFS. Today's CFS volunteers undertake a wide range of activities, from fire-fighting to hazardous material clean up. *How can CFS volunteers engage more effectively with their communities to promote better prevention and preparedness?*

These challenges must be met if we are to move forward in an ever-changing world and continue to provide appropriate and effective services to our communities. CFS management cannot plan for the future without the support and commitment of volunteers in meeting these challenges.

What better way to identify, discuss and determine the way forward than by bringing representatives of all key interest groups within the CFS together over two days? The Chief Officer has requested that this be arranged over a weekend in early-July.

The 2006 Volunteer Summit will be held at the SA Police Academy during the weekend of 1-2 July.

Around 150 volunteers will be invited to participate in this important event, with a program of invited speakers presenting to the Summit at morning plenary sessions, before delegates break into up into several workshops on specific topics and work through

issues of concern to volunteers and suggest potential solutions for inclusion in the CFS planning processes over the next four years.

Through this process, CFS volunteers can have a direct say in the future planning and direction of the CFS.

A small committee has been established to organise this event and is working with the VFBA, the State Volunteer Management Committee and the SAFECOM Volunteer Management Branch to organise this important event.

The organising committee will ensure that all volunteers are advised of progress as the program develops and speakers are identified. In the interim, any volunteer wishing to put forward ideas for potential inclusion on the program, or willing to assist in the organisation and/or conduct of the Summit would be most welcome.

For more information on the 2006 Volunteer Summit, please contact Mick Ayre, Manager Strategic Services, on:
Tel: 8463 4120 / 0407 466 630
Fax: 8463 4162
E-mail: ayre.mick@cfs.org.au

NEWS & UPDATES

[RESEARCH INTO RESOURCES FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS]

Ever feel tired and worn out by your CFS work? Wish you had more members to share the load, better equipment, or more admin support? Or are you enjoying the time you spend at CFS and can't wait for the next call?

These issues, as well as a range of others, are being addressed in a research project scheduled to commence in April 2006. The project is being conducted by Dr Michelle Tuckey, who is a Lecturer at the University of South Australia and a CFS volunteer with Happy Valley Brigade.

The aim of the project is to identify strategies to better support CFS firefighters and Captains in their demanding role. To achieve this aim, volunteer support for the project is essential. A high level of participation will ensure that accurate and reliable information is collected, so that better resource

and support mechanisms can be implemented.

As part of the project, a survey will be sent out to a random selection of CFS volunteers in May and June. The first outcomes of the project are expected in July, where Michelle will provide an update for the Volunteer Summit (1-2 July at the

SA Police Academy).

If you receive a survey in the mail, please take the time to fill it in. Let your knowledge and opinions about these important issues be heard! Make a difference towards improving support for volunteers so that we can improve our service to the community.



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VOLUNTEER - NEWS & UPDATES

[WILLIAMSTOWN CFS....]

FOCUSED FIRMLY ON THE FUTURE

By: Peter Roberts, Second Lieutenant Williamstown CFS

Not long ago, Williamstown CFS was nearing crisis point, with a declining membership, low morale and little recognition from the community.

Realizing they needed to make changes to survive, the brigade developed a long-term strategy for recruitment and the building of a solid relationship with their local community.

They looked at why their numbers were down, what they could do about it and identified room for improvement in a number of other areas including management, communication, training, and development of community links

One of the big mind shifts has been recognising that no one person is responsible for the brigade; the success of the brigade requires teamwork and group input.

Now, the brigade has a strong membership with 53 members on the books, a good turnout to incidents and training and a strong family feel.

The brigade also boasts a strong auxiliary membership, with these volunteers never failing to provide catering and assistance when needed.

The brigade and the volunteers that make it up have a strong sense of credibility and an honest reputation. It gives the community something to be proud of, admired in some circles and therefore supported.

Management

The brigade identified a number of areas within their own management systems that, if altered, would assist in retaining members and developing a team feeling within the brigade.

- Developing brigade job descriptions gave volunteers a greater understanding of others' workloads and goals, they also ensured that the workload was spread and involved more people in the running of the brigade;
- Giving full support to those volunteers who accept roles with large workloads such as the

Finance and Administration Officer;

- Developing 'Brigade Rules' which give definition and purpose, making sure that all volunteers are aware of the rules, which cover training, behaviour, and other critical areas;
- Regular management committee meetings, and recognising operational issues need to be kept separate and addressed in another forum;
- Recognise when people reach their limit and support them – encouraging them for the future;
- Be tolerant, within a brigade there are many different personalities, 'stirrers' and 'fence sitters' all help to create a balance;
- Recognising the importance of teamwork, setting common goals, and progressively moving towards them;
- Succession Planning has contributed to the success of the Williamstown brigade. Having a succession planned ensured that members knew that there were opportunities in the future, and that they may have the chance to take on different roles in the brigade. Remember 'same old, same old' can breed discontent.;
- Saying *thank you*, and remembering to thank everyone who put their hand forward and not to expect that they will do it time after time. Don't be too proud to ask for help – the regional Volunteer Support Officer is an important resource for any brigade (our's has been a major contributor to the brigade's success.)

Communication

Communication within the brigade, like any organisation, is critical to its ongoing success:

- It is important to ensure that all information is communicated to all members;
- Give compliments but also constructive criticism, compliments always give pride, but constructive criticism can



^ The Williamstown brigade is now strong and confident in all it takes on.

also. However any criticisms need to be assessed and worded correctly by more than one person, before delivery to brigade.

Recruitment

You need to recruit right - by recruiting the right people, you can avoid issues and problems in the future:

- Recognising that although they may be new to the brigade, new members have a wealth of experience to offer the brigade;
- Ensure when new people join, they receive a proper induction so they know where they fit into the brigade and the CFS;
- Allocate new people a friendly and experienced buddy so the new-comer has a contact for future questions;
- With a large membership base, things become easier as the workload can be spread giving more people a rewarding involvement;
- Word of mouth is a great way to recruit new members as is welcoming new people to the area and giving them the opportunity to get involved and make new friends.

Training

- Ensure all brigade members undertake Workplace Dignity Training to give them a sound

base on how to act and how to expect others to act;

- Ensure training is up-to-date, well constructed and varied and be conscious that the Training Officer may need a hand to develop programs and come up with fresh ideas;
- Encourage as many people as possible out to training, use small groups and mix things up a bit. This allows more experienced members to put their hand forward, and can change to focus from a stale repetitive event to a fresh and purpose filled one.

Developing community links

- With the introduction of pagers and the silencing of the siren, the community forgot that we were here;
- We started to wear CFS clothing when we were out and about as a reminder to the community and to also give our members a feeling of unity and pride;
- We had a fundraising BBQ in the main street;
- Train in more public places;
- Holding social activities and bringing families back to the brigade, providing strength and backing as the families have a greater understanding of 'what we do out there' and they bring their friends.



NEWS & UPDATES

[SACAD UPDATE]

By: Gary Bau, CFS Communications Coordinator

The transition of CFS brigades to a centralized 000 Call Receipt and Dispatch (CRD) is on target, with the collection of data for use in the South Australian Call and Dispatch (SACAD) system underway.

A Service Level Agreement (SLA) has been established with the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) for the management of CRD for CFS brigades. This agreement will soon be available to volunteers for comment.

The transition plan to 000 has been finalized and will impact on all CFS brigades and groups across the State.

Before any changes take place, the transition team (involving CFS staff, a SACAD Project Officer and a GIS expert) will visit groups to establish brigade response areas, verify street data and ask any questions in relation to the transition.

The first brigades to make the transition are from the Mount Lofty, Sturt, Heysen, Mawson and East Torrens groups, with the change to occur from April 2007.

Brigades who are currently dispatched through the MFS communications centre will also be

involved with the transition meetings.

As part of the transition process the only response number that should now appear on fire stations, fire trucks, newsletters, websites and any publications is 000.

The State Operations Call Centre (formally SOC) will still operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week and will continue to communicate with brigades as they do now, with the alters system remaining albeit in an altered configuration.

MONARTO ART EXHIBITION SUPPORTS CFS

If you are heading to Monarto, take the time to visit the "Two Rooms" art exhibition at Reilly's Cellar Door and Restaurant.

Artist Kay Cunningham is donating part proceeds from sales to the local CFS.

NEWS & UPDATES

[PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES BANNED IN PRISONS]

The Department for Correctional Services has placed a ban on portable electronic devices being taken into South Australian prisons.

Portable electronic devices covered by this ruling include:

- Hand-held PC's;
- Flash Drives;
- iPods;
- Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs)

which can typically function as a mobile phone, fax sender, Web browser and personal organizer;

- Any device containing digital camera, video camera or scanner capabilities;
- Any digital or memo style recording device;
- Any portable device that has computing, telephone/fax, Internet, networking and audio recording features;

- Any other device that enables any form of communication externally.

These technological developments are deemed to pose a security risk within the correctional environments.

Please ensure you adhere to this ban when you are visiting prisons whether it be for operational planning or response purposes.

This ban is effective immediately.



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VOLUNTEER - NEWS & UPDATES

[CFS STATE COORDINATION CENTRE AND INTELLIGENCE CELL]

By: Yvette Dowling, State Operations Planning Officer Analyst

CFS has redeveloped its State Coordination Centre (SCC) to include a new Intelligence Cell.

Located at 60 Waymouth Street, the CFS SCC and Intelligence Cell will be managed on a day-to-day basis by Operations Services.

It is a fully equipped coordination centre designed to provide greater coordination support for major events, operations and emergencies that cannot be effectively managed within Regional Coordination Centres.

The CFS SCC may become operational for a planned event (on a day of extreme fire danger), an unplanned event (unexpected significant fire) or in the event of a terrorist incident.

The role of the CFS SCC is to maintain a strategic overview of emergencies or potentially disastrous situations and on a needs basis undertake coordination activities, support regions, facilitate requests for resources and liaise with the State Emergency Coordination Centre (SECC) and other agencies.

When the CFS SCC is operational, staff and volunteers covering the following roles are located within the SCC:

- State Coordinator;
- Deputy State Coordinator;
- CFS SCC Manager;
- Liaison officers from external agencies, if appropriate;
- Systems technical support.

The Intelligence Cell is home to the following roles:

- State Information Officer;
- Personnel to support intelligence, planning, operations, resource and media functions;
- Support team to assist with information management;
- Hotline staff to assist with enquiries from the general public;

The SCC and Intelligence Cell primarily focus on the:

- Coordination of resources;
- Provision of important information to relevant stakeholders, groups and individuals;
- Coordination, provision and facilitation of logistics requests;
- Provision and coordination of fire fighting aircraft;
- Provision of information to the media and to the community;

- Liaison and collaboration with other agencies and emergency services. That high-level state-wide focus allows for the SCC and Intelligence Cell to undertake their specific functions as follows:

The SCC is designed to:

- Ensure that the CFS State Coordinator (State Controller - Bushfire) is aware of any bushfire situation which may lead to the declaration of a Major Incident, Identified Major Incident, Major Emergency or a Disaster under the provisions of the State Emergency Management Plan;
- Coordinate and prioritise the allocation of all CFS resources but especially State-controlled resources, i.e. aircraft;
- Support Regional Coordination Centres in their efforts to support Incident Management Teams;
- Ensure that responses to fires and other emergencies is safe, effective and efficient, and is integrated with other agencies;
- Coordinate special activities such as accident investigation.

The specific function of the Intelligence Cell is to:

- Provide a focal point at the CFS SCC for the collection and collation of emergency-related information and dissemination of intelligence to the SECC, Police Operations Centre, control agencies and support agencies;
- Provide accurate and timely advice to the public, via the media, in accordance with established procedures;
- Collect, process and communicate important information to CFS personnel so they can prepare for and respond effectively and efficiently;
- Transmit information to the community to empower them to make decisions about their own safety;
- Provide information for media briefings.

If you would like to have a tour of the CFS State Coordination Centre and Intelligence Cell, contact Yvette Dowling on 08 8463 4218.



^ The new CFS intelligence cell.



^ The new CFS State Coordination Centre.



^ The new CFS State Coordination Centre.



FOAM VS WATER?

By: Malim Watts, Manager Operations Services

Class A foam is commonly referred to as bushfire fighting foam and often used by CFS in bushfire suppression.

This foam is more effective than water alone as it lowers the surface tension of water, allowing it to penetrate fuels more easily and clings as bubbles to vertical surfaces, reducing waste through run-off.

Another benefit of foam is that it is visible when applied, allowing firefighters to avoid under or over-

application of suppressant, enabling fire to be put out more efficiently and maximising the heat absorption properties of water.

Class A foam concentrate is a powerful detergent with corrosive properties that can have a detrimental effect on the environment (specifically watercourses).

In aerial fire bombing operations, the corrosive properties can also have an effect on the magnesium components of tail rotors in

helicopters. It is not a critical issue for our fixed wing operations.

CFS is a signatory on a national level to a commitment to using Class A foams scheduled on the USDA list of approved wildland firefighting chemicals.

There are a number of products available in south Australia that are awaiting USDA approval.

Please ensure you contact your Regional Office for further advice before considering your next Class A foam purchase.



^ Foam is more effective in suppressing bushfires than using water alone.



USDA Forest Service

Washington Office

Fire & Aviation Management

2/6/06

CLASS A WILDLAND FIRE FOAM

Qualified and Approved by USDA Forest Service In Accordance with Forest Service Specification 5100-307, As Amended

The listed products are qualified and approved for use only at the specified mix ratio range and only with the indicated application equipment

Consult individual agencies for specific policies relating to wildland fire foam use.

Chemical	Mix Ratio	Qualified/Approved Applications ¹					
		Fixed-Wing Airtanker ²	Fixed-Wing Water Scooper	SEATS	Fixed-Tank Helicopter	Helicopter Bucket	Ground Engine
Annul Silv-Ex	0.1-1.0%	*	*	*		*	*
Fire-Trol FireFoam 103	0.1-1.0%	*	*	*		*	*
Fire-Trol FireFoam 103B ³	0.1-1.0%	*	*	*	*	*	*
Phos-Check WD 881 ³	0.1-1.0%	*	*	*	*	*	*
Fire-Trol FireFoam 104	0.1-1.0%	*	*	*		*	*
Angus ForExpan S	0.1-1.0%	*	*	*		*	*
Pynocap B-156	0.1-1.0%	*		*		*	*
Fire Response Systems Fire Check ⁴	0.1-1.0%	*		*	*	*	*
Phos-Check WD 881-C ⁵	0.1-1.0%	*	*	*		*	*
Phos-Check Anchor Point	0.1-1.0%	*		*		*	*
National Foam KnockDown	0.1-1.0%	*	*	*		*	*
Summit FlameOut	0.1-1.0%	*		*		*	*
Angus Hi-Combat A ⁵	0.1-1.0%	*	*	*		*	*
Buckeye Platinum Class A Foam	0.1-1.0%	*	*	*		*	*
Chemguard First Class ⁶	0.1-1.0%	*	*	*	*	*	*
3M Fire-Break BFFF	0.1-1.0%	*	*	*		*	*

¹ * Fully Qualified (Product complies with all requirements of a formal specification.)

* Administrative Approval (Product complies with all requirements of a formal specification or administrative work plan.)

² USDA Forest Service does not allow application of foam from fixed-wing airtankers.

³ Administrative approval has been granted for application from fixed-tank helicopters. No further approvals are needed.

⁴ This product was evaluated and qualified under the name TCI Fire Quench.

⁵ This product was evaluated and qualified under the name KnockDown Plus.

⁶ This product was evaluated and qualified under the name Chemguard #121802.

Remember your safety is critical -
SAFETY FIRST.

- Do not drink water mixed with either wetting agents or foams;
- Wear correct PPC when using or decanting Class A foam, or wetting agents;
- Follow the manufacturer's recommendations on handling and clean-up after use;
- Make sure that firefighting equipment is flushed out after using foam, as residue is likely to cause corrosion.

NEWS & UPDATES

[Cadets count BFF1 towards their SACE]

By: Julie Francis, Youth Programs Officer

2005 was the first school year that CFS Cadets could use their BFF1 course towards their South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) with the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia.

Statistical information, collected for the 12-month period of 2005 indicate that 47 Cadets have been granted recognition for two SACE units each, giving a total of 94 units granted.

Out of the 10 organisations currently participating in the community learning project, CFS is ranked with the second highest number of units being claimed, with

the Duke of Edinburgh's Award being granted 97 units.

Congratulations and well done to our Cadets and Cadet Leaders!



NEWS & UPDATES

[NEW 'HAG' FORMS]

New Hazard Assessment Guides, commonly known as HAG forms, have been developed and were issued to all brigades in February 2005.

While the changes to the forms are minimal, it is important that all brigades use this new version.

For further information, contact your regional headquarters.

NEWS & UPDATES

[GIVE SOMEONE A SECOND CHANCE OF LIFE]

Each year hundreds of South Australians are diagnosed with leukaemia or other fatal blood disorders. Less than half these people will find a donor within their family; most will rely on finding a match with a stranger.

The Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry (ABMDR) is a register of

people who are willing to donate their bone marrow (or stem cells) if they are found to match a patient needing a bone marrow transplant.

The ABMDR is desperately seeking to recruit 400 young donors before the end of June 2006.

A particular focus is on recruiting males under 35 and individuals

from ethnic minorities, because a patient's greatest chance of finding a matched donor is within their own ethnic group. However, anyone in good health and between the ages of 18 and 40 is encouraged to register.

To register, you will be required to make a donation of blood through the Australian Red Cross Blood

Service. To find the location of your closest mobile unit call **13 14 95** (free call).

More information about the ABMDR and the donation process is available at the ABMDR website **www.abmdr.org.au**, or telephone the ABMDR Coordinators on **13 14 95**.

NEWS & UPDATES

[DID YOU CHANGE YOUR]

SMOKE ALARM BATTERY?

Duracell once again launched its national "Change your clock, change your smoke alarm battery" campaign, joining forces in South Australia with CFS and MFS.

In 2006, the campaign focused on educating the community that "smoke is the killer" and used a mix of print, radio and public relations activities to communicate the message.

The campaign seeks to encourage every household to routinely change smoke alarm batteries at the end of daylight saving each year.

According to research, 49 per cent of South Australian householders surveyed replace the batteries in their smoke alarms routinely. Are you one of these people?



With fire services in SA responding to more than 1,000 domestic fires in SA each year, this is a worrying statistic.

Even though many CFS volunteers have been busy looking after their community, please remember to change your smoke alarm battery and look after yourself and your family as 'only a working smoke alarm can save your life.'

1 Quantum Market Research, Duracell Home Safety Appliance Research, January 2005.

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NEWS & UPDATES [PURCHASING IT EQUIPMENT]



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VOLUNTEER - NEWS & UPDATES

CFS has introduced a policy on the purchasing of information equipment, which will assist in establishing organisational efficiencies in this area.

A strong focus of the policy is the adoption of standards in the make and model of the equipment. This will lead to an increase in the consistency of resources and allow for maximum support.

The business need is the primary driver for IT procurement, and if the standard equipment does not meet the need of the brigade, alternative options can be sourced.

The policy applies to situations where CFS funds are being used to

purchase the equipment and covers items such as desktop PCs, laptop PCs, tablet PCs, printers, Microsoft software, screen projectors, digital cameras and PDAs.

If brigades purchase equipment with non-CFS funds or against the advice of the SAFECOM IT Helpdesk, CFS is unable to accept any ongoing liability for maintenance and repair, unless specifically authorised by a Regional Commander or the Deputy Chief Officer.

If you are looking to purchase IT equipment, please ensure you seek advice from the SAFECOM IT Helpdesk and follow the following process.

Before you contacting the helpdesk you need to identify what your business requirements for the equipment are (ie what do you want to do with the equipment) including use of any particular software and/or connection with other IT hardware or infrastructure.

The Helpdesk can provide advice regarding options.

If the SAFECOM helpdesk determines that the CFS standard equipment model will meet your needs, they will recommend this option to you and provide a quote.

However, where no standard has yet been determined, or where the

standard does not meet the specified needs of the brigade, alternative options will be sourced and a quote provided.

If the brigade or CFS member then decides to purchase the equipment, they should advise the Helpdesk to proceed with the procurement and provide an appropriate CFS budget line and contact person. This advice should be by either fax or email.

From there Helpdesk will facilitate the purchase of the item and provide an estimated delivery date to the contact person.

The SAFECOM IT Helpdesk can be contacted on **08 8463 4125**.

NEWS & UPDATES [STATUS OF INCIDENTS]

Over the last few months a range of terminologies have been used to describe the status of fires, including the use of the word 'containment line'.

It is important to be ever vigilant that all volunteers and staff are using the same terms, using the terms correctly and have a common understanding of the meanings.

When providing situation reports, please ensure the following definitions of the status of incidents are used.

GOING:

Any fire expanding in a certain direction or directions. Any incident that is expanding or continuing to require **an active** or escalated **response**.

CONTAINED:

A fire is contained when its **spread has been halted**, but it may still be burning freely within the perimeter or **fire control lines**. Other incidents are contained when the spread or growth of the incident has been halted.

The CFS fire management terminology does not contain the term containment line, rather the terms control line, fire line or fire break should be used.

CONTROLLED:

The time at which the **complete perimeter of a fire is secured** and no breakaway is expected. For other incidents, the time at which the incident is secured and there is no possibility of extension or growth of the incident.



⚠ Using the correct terminology is particularly important when speaking with the media.

Photo: Ashley Hosking

COMPLETE:

This is for non-fire and other incidents. It is the time at which the incident is secured and there is no further need for CFS involvement. Other services (eg: Police etc.) may still be involved in response or recovery operations.

SAFE:

The stage of **fire** suppression, prescribed burning or incident

response when it is considered that no further suppression or **control action or patrols** are necessary.

For further information, please refer to the AFAC Glossary of Rural Fire Terminology available from the CFS website or the Respond to Wildfire (Part 2) Module from Basic Firefighter 1.

[GAWLER RIVER'S YOUNG ACHIEVER]

Colette Auger, one of the State's youngest female CFS firefighters, has been recognised for the valuable contribution she's made to her local community after receiving the Gawler Young Achievers Award in 2005.

The 17-year-old from Kangaroo Flat was nominated for the award by Anna White from Greet Incorporated – an organisation committed to furthering the ambitions of young Australians.

Colette, a member of the Gawler River CFS Brigade of which her dad, John, is the Captain, is completing her final year at Gawler High School while attending Monday night training sessions and responding to local call outs.

"It's become a big part of my life. It always was with dad being involved anyway, but now it's something I personally take a lot of pride in being a part of," Colette said.

"Growing up and working on a farm I appreciate how bad it would be to have your crops and home destroyed by fire, so it's about pitching in to help each other.

"The brigade is a friendly environment and I feel very welcomed," she said.



Colette also juggles her study and firefighting with several hours working on a chicken farm and playing sport.

The only time Colette's brigade pager is not carried with her is when

she's on the court playing tennis and netball.

Colette is considering a career in childcare after finishing year 12 studies at the end of 2006.

▲ **Gawler River's Young Achiever**
Colette Auger.
Photo courtesy of the Sunday Mail.



[BOB KEARNEY, MEDAL OF VALOUR RECIPIENT]

CFS State Training Officer Bob Kearney was awarded the inaugural Department of Corrections Medal of Valour at a ceremony in January.

Bob received the award for his role

during the Yatala prison riot and hostage situation on May 6 1996 in which four staff were taken hostage.

During this incident, a small group of prisoners, holding influence over a number of others, barricaded

themselves into the B-Top West wing of B-Division and resisted efforts to a peaceful solution until their grievances were aired in the media.

The incident lasted approximately 11 hours, during which time the

hostages were assaulted.

The citation reads that 'Bob Kearney demonstrated exemplary leadership, quick thinking and bravery in a most difficult situation.'

Congratulations Bob.



^ L - R

Jeffery Benham - Lieutenant Kangarilla CFS,
Kenneth Best - Captain Kangarilla CFS, Euan Ferguson - CFS
Chief Officer, Terrence Beeston - East Torrens Group Officer,
Tony Wege - Angaston Deputy Group Officer.
Missing: David Lynch and Sandy Paterson.

NEWS & UPDATES

[2005 EMERGENCY SERVICES AWARDS AND MINISTERIAL COMMENDATIONS]

The 2005 Emergency Services Medal and Ministerial Commendations were announced at a ceremony at the Radisson Hotel, Adelaide on Thursday, 17 November 2005.

The Hon. Carmel Zollo provided seven volunteers and CFS/SAFECOM staff with Medals and Commendations in recognition of their outstanding contribution to the CFS and, in turn, the community.

The SA Country Fire Service as an organisation - along with SA Ambulance Service, SA State Emergency Service and SA Metropolitan Fire Service - also received Ministerial Commendations for the tireless efforts of volunteers and staff during and after the fires on the Lower Eyre Peninsula.

The following CFS volunteers and staff received awards.

] Ministerial Commendations [



TERRENCE BEESTON
East Torrens Group Officer

Terry has provided leadership to the East Torrens Group for 33 years. During this time he has guided the group through a number of changes, whilst maintaining stability and

harmonious personnel relations.

Terry is also the head of operations within the group and has always focussed on maintaining a high level of group response.



JEFFERY BENHAM
Lieutenant, Kangarilla CFS

A dedicated member of the CFS since 1989, Jeff has served as a Training Officer for 10 years.

The exceptionally high level of training in the Kangarilla brigade is a direct result of Jeff's efforts.

With a belief that any firefighter should be able to step into any role at an incident, he has developed training programmes at group/brigade/individual level, supplementing these duties with a continuous and stimulating series of practical sessions.

These sessions are part of his strategy to protect new and experienced firefighters by exposing them to the realities of CFS activities in a safe and controlled way.

Jeff has demonstrated initiative and exemplary leadership abilities, often under difficult conditions in addition to maintaining his unwavering commitment to CFS members.

] Emergency Services Medal [



TONY WEGE
Angaston Deputy Group Officer

Tony has a long and dedicated career with the CFS.

As a Staff Officer in the Training Department he was instrumental in writing and assisting in the writing of firefighter training manuals.

As a valued member of the Region 2 Australasian Incident Reporting System (AIRS) team who provides both leadership and mentoring to staff and volunteers, he has assisted the State Training Section in writing the current AIRS training

package to be utilised by emergency services organisations.

Tony has been instrumental in upskilling members of the Angaston Group in Incident Management under the AIRS principles, with staff from Region 2 using the model as a benchmark for all Region 2 Groups to attain.

He has held senior planning roles interstate (VIC and NSW) and currently holds the volunteer position of State Planning Officer within the CFS.



KENNETH BEST Kangarilla brigade Captain

Ken has been brigade Captain for 20 of his 25 active service years with the CFS, and is held in high regard by his colleagues.

He has used his role to foster a culture of team spirit and leadership development, working tirelessly to promote the CFS at the heart of the community.

His seven-day, 24-hour availability is legendary - when the alarm goes off, Ken drops everything and responds to the service of the community.

An example of his extraordinary

commitment was evident when a number of years ago when Ken, although incapacitated for field service, came from his sickbed to provide Incident Control from the radio room in response to a major vehicle accident where adults and children were critically injured.

Ken was involved in providing counselling to volunteers and the local community after vehicle fatalities, prior to the establishment of the Stress Prevention and Management Team (SPAM).



DAVID LYNCH Project Manager – SAFECOM

Since taking responsibility for CFS's capital works building program, David's vision has been to provide fit-for-purpose, cost effective facilities in a timely manner.

His dedication, exceptional work ethic, vision and commitment to continuous improvement underpinned by broad knowledge of the building industry have seen this initial goal achieved.

An independent audit to verify the outcomes from both a technical and end user perspective resulted in commendable financial and operational outcomes.

David continues to build on that initial success and continually strives to seek opportunities for further improvements within an already sound model.



SANDY PATERSON CFS Manager, Vehicles and Equipment

Sandy is the Manager, Vehicles and Equipment for the CFS and a long-term CFS volunteer.

As the person responsible for the CFS appliance replacement program, his commitment, dedication and enthusiasm to his job - underpinned by operational knowledge and experience - has seen continuous improvement in the design and operational effectiveness of CFS appliances without a compromise in their cost effectiveness.

A significant amount of Sandy's

focus has been on improving firefighter safety and reducing the potential for injury associated with the manual handling of equipment.

The positive outcomes achieved by Sandy have been recognised by our sister organisation the Country Fire Authority (CFA), who are impressed by CFS's innovative approach to appliance design and cost effective outcomes.

Sandy was unable to attend the presentations.



SA COUNTRY FIRE SERVICE

Both volunteer and career staff of CFS and the other emergency services receiving this commendation were all involved in the response to the tragic fires that occurred in and around Port Lincoln on 11 January 2005.

All emergency service agencies are worthy recipients of this award due to the severity of the disaster and the extreme conditions they were required to work in.

Many of those who responded were working in not only their capacity as agency personnel but also as members of their community, with some personally affected by the devastation.

Those who responded to the disaster on the day literally put their lives on the line to help others in need and worked extremely well in conjunction with the other emergency services.

NEWS & UPDATES

CFS VOLUNTEERS WIN AUSTRALIAN FIRE SERVICES MEDAL

Two CFS volunteers were honoured with Australian Fire Services Medals (AFSM) in the 2006 honours list announced by the Governor-General on Australia Day.

Congratulations to Kyeema Group Officer David Przibilla and Salisbury brigade Captain Rob Styling.

David has been a member of the SA Country Fire Service for more than 40 years and for the past 20 has been the Kyeema Group Officer.

Described as a highly professional operator with an ability to understand and empathise with all people within his span of influence, David has significant experience in the management of incidents, bringing a wealth of knowledge to any incident management team he participates in.

David has given selflessly to the community over the past 40 years and continues to do so in his quiet, calm and professional manner.



DAVID PRZIBILLA,
Kyeema Group Officer

Rob has been a member of the SA Country Fire Service for more than 30 years, taking on the role of Salisbury brigade Captain in 1994.

Described as a highly strategic operator with the ability to clearly think through and analyse a situation before selecting the right approach to achieve the desired result, Rob has a non-assuming demeanour and the ability to subtly mentor people with his vast knowledge.

Under his leadership, the brigade has grown in its proficiencies and is always looking to expand and take on new challenges and opportunities.



ROBERT STYLING,
Salisbury brigade Captain





[BURST OF ACTIVITY DURING FIRE SEASON]

By: Lisa Lalic, Manager Public Affairs

The early onset of the autumn weather has been a welcome relief following the intense beginning to the 05/06 fire danger season which was the busiest we've experienced.

During the Christmas and New Year period more than 36 major bushfires occurred across the state. This is compared to four major bushfires recorded for the same time last year.

Lightning strikes sparked several bushfires in Conservation Parks including Ngarkat, Pinkawillinie, Carrapee Hill, Middlecamp Hills, Hambidge, Cocata Hill and within the Billiatt Conservation Park in the Murraylands, while sparks from farm machinery or power lines caused many other bushfires across the state.

The intense activity began five days before Christmas, with several significant bushfires signalling the definite arrival of the fire season.

More than 25 fire incidents were reported on the same day across the state on 20 December, with the seven most significant bushfires reported in Cummins on the Lower Eyre Peninsula, Curramulka on the Yorke Peninsula, Freeling near Gawler, Bordertown, Murray Bridge, Yankalilla and Naracoorte.

More than 60 volunteers from local brigades, in addition to private farm fire units, battled a blaze at Cummins and were supported by three fixed wing bombing aircraft, a rotary water bomber and a fixed wing operator. Volunteers undertook direct asset protection to a structure and were able to save the farm homestead from flames and soon had the bushfire under control. About 180 hectares of grass and stubble was burnt.

Around the same time that the Cummins fire occurred, more CFS volunteers responded to a fire to the north of Curramulka on the Yorke Peninsula. The fire, which was believed to have started by a harvester, burnt 150 hectares of scrub and grass.

Strong winds, combined with hot temperatures, made containing the fire difficult. Activities continued

across the state with fires in Murray Bridge, Bordertown, Yankalilla and Naracoorte causing concern. The fire at Murray Bridge caused the greatest concern as it burnt in scrubland behind the township.

At mid-afternoon, the fire was burning south of Maurice Road towards the Old Princes Hwy. The CFS issued a bushfire warning message to residents in the area, however a reduced threat bushfire information message was later issued. Water bombing aircraft worked with ground crews to suppress the fire.

The fire at Bordertown also raised concerns with the blaze burning on the south side of the Dukes Hwy. More than 20 appliances and 100 volunteers attended the scene and were assisted by Country Fire Authority crews from Victoria. The fire burnt around 615 hectares.

Manager Operations Planning Rob Sandford said this was the beginning of the long four-week stretch, which seemed to take many by surprise.

"Each year we know that there will be at least 10 extreme days where weather conditions will be at its worst for bushfires. Usually these days occur over several months, however this year was a little different," Rob said.

Rob recognised that the heightened activity was exhaustive and praised the efforts of volunteers, staff and other agencies involved.

"We have not before experienced such intense activity condensed in to such a short amount of time. In the time over Christmas and New Year more than half of our brigades were involved in responding to these 36 significant bushfires, with others kept busy responding to other emergencies.

"Nearly every area of the state experienced multiple, long duration fires under very exhausting and extreme conditions, including the Eyre Peninsula, Yorke Peninsula, Flinders, Mid North, Murraylands, Fluerieu Peninsula, Kangaroo Island, Mount Lofty Ranges and the South East.

"A combined effort resulting in

100,000 volunteer hours was dedicated to these major incidents which is an outstanding testament to the commitment of all our volunteers," Rob said.

"Although significant bushfires were also being experienced interstate, these events signified a significant point in our inter-service relationships with CFS calling on the assistance of Country Fire Authority (CFA), NSW Rural Fire Service (NSWRFS) and Queensland Rural Fire Service (QFRS) to provide additional and relief crews, air attack supervisors and aircraft," he said.

NSW RFS provided 131 personnel along with 23 tankers, four aviation specialists and four incident management personnel, with QFRS providing specialised air attack supervisors and CFA assisting with the fire at Bordertown.

"The ongoing activities along with the extremely dry and hot weather no doubt had its impacts on local resources, so assistance is always appreciated," Rob said.

CFS Chief Officer Euan Ferguson said that CFS brigades dealt with multiple, long duration fires under very exhausting and extreme conditions.

"Many CFS volunteers gave up their annual leave over the Christmas and New Year period and time with their family to assist in bringing the bushfires under control," Euan said.

"Many CFS volunteers have reported back to me saying that had it not been for the support of their employers they would have been unable to offer any assistance."

The activities continued in the days after Christmas with CFS responding to more than 100 emergency incidents on 28 December, including 60 grass and scrub fires, caused by lightning strikes.

According to the Bureau of Meteorology's website, the state has been impacted by more than 14,500 lightning strikes that day.

The worst hit areas included the state's southern and eastern Mount Lofty Ranges, Eyre Peninsula, Yorke Peninsula, and Lower North.

"Once lightning strikes in many of the areas which primarily included in and around Conservation Parks, these fires will usually continue for days which was the case in during these four weeks.

"Our crews along with other personnel from various agencies and aerial support, worked day and night to bring these campaign fires under control," Rob said.

"On one particular day there were more than 500 CFS volunteers active across the state responding to fires ranging in size from a few square meters to several hundred hectares," he said.

"Added to this, the State's aerial firefighting support, including helicopters and fixed wing water bombers, were exceptionally active. After putting into place the funding support of the State Government and a revision of the National Aerial Firefighting Centre arrangements there was a minimum of eight aircraft available on a daily basis throughout the aerial primary response zones in South Australia. However, the new arrangement also allowed CFS to release aircraft outside of the primary response zone and attend fires such as Horrocks Pass and Middle Camp," he said.

"Of the 36 significant bushfires, aircraft were used extensively from beyond initial attack to help control and contain fire perimeter spread in support of volunteer firefighters."

Thankfully, the past few weeks we have experienced significant rainfall in a number of areas, with the prediction from the weather bureau being for a mild and wet autumn.

"It's incredible to think that last fire danger season we were experiencing bushfires right up until June. Thankfully this year things have been a little different," Rob said.

In recognition of the commitment of CFS volunteers especially during this time, Euan wrote a letter of thanks, (page 37), to all CFS volunteers which was distributed to brigades in early April.

Dear fellow member and supporter of the SA Country Fire Service (CFS),
I am writing to say "thank you!" for your ongoing support of the CFS and the South Australian community.

The Fire Danger Season is not yet over, but it is appropriate to pass on our appreciation of your contribution and sacrifice during what was an extremely busy summer period for our organisation.

More than 200 of the state's 434 CFS brigades responded to 36 major incidents over the Christmas and New Year period. This is nine times the number of major bushfire incidents for the same time last year.

Nearly every area of the state experienced multiple, long duration fires under very exhausting and extreme conditions, including the Eyre Peninsula, Yorke Peninsula, Flinders, Mid North, Murraylands, Fluerieu Peninsula, Kangaroo Island, Mount Lofty Ranges and the South East.

It is estimated that CFS volunteers, such as yourself, dedicated over 100,000 hours in dealing with these major incidents alone during this time. In addition to this, you also provided thousands of hours responding to other incidents such as road crashes, hazardous chemical spills, rescues, house fires and alarms, not to mention, "preparing for the next fire".

You sacrificed time with family and friends during the Christmas and New Year period to assist in bringing the many bushfires under control.

CFS volunteers are dedicated individuals who are part of a dynamic team and strive to achieve one common goal, which is to protect life, property and the environment.

You have earned huge respect within the community, government and within CFS and with that respect comes a warm appreciation of a grateful community.

It is your commitment that allows us as an organisation to continue to deliver a vital service.

Please pass on my thanks amongst volunteers in your CFS brigade and group.

We are justifiably proud of your efforts and to help spread our words of thanks, enclosed with this letter are flyers to be posted at CFS stations and bumper stickers to be distributed amongst the volunteers.

Yours sincerely,

Euan Ferguson

Chief Officer

SA Country Fire Service



Firefighters battled fierce flames on Kangaroo Island.
Photo: Lee Russell



^ The fires in Ngarkat kept firefighters from different agencies busy for days.
Photo: Rex Hall.

thank you CFS VOLUNTEERS

...for all your hard work, commitment and selfless efforts during an extremely busy summer.

We recognise that you sacrifice time with family and friends to ensure that South Australia is kept safe from fire and other emergencies.



Photo by Emmanuel Cusack

"JOB WELL DONE!"



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VOLUNTEER - STATEWIDE

[REGIONAL ROUND-UP]

[SUMMERTOWN CFS VISITS ASHTON KINDERGARTEN]

By: Heidi Geytenbeek, Summertown CFS

In mid-December 2005, CFS Volunteers from Summertown were invited to visit Ashton Kindergarten.

In what is becoming an annual event, the children are encouraged to become familiar with the trucks, lights, sirens and the firefighters to reduce the level of anxiety they experience if they come across them during an emergency situation.

Over two visits, around 40 four-year olds had the chance to listen to the firefighters talk about what they do, and the children were able to ask questions about firefighting, and meet Smokey.

After the talk, the children were able to play with the hoses, climb aboard Summertown 14 and 34 and put on the firefighters clothing.



^ It was a fun session for all involved.
Photo: Pip McGowan

[CLOSE CALL AT SELICKS HILLS]

Around 300 firefighters battled a scrub and grass fire which burnt more than 100 hectares at Sellicks Hill, Willunga on Monday 16 January.

Reported to CFS around 1.30pm, the fire produced a large smoke plume, generating more than 50 calls to CFS from concerned locals.

The fire was burning in steep and at times inaccessible terrain off Range Road West, about a five-minute drive from the town of Willunga.

More than half-a-dozen strike teams from across regions 1, 2 and 3 assisted local firefighters as firefighting activities continued into the night with monitoring continuing the next day.

At the height of the blaze, around 50 fire trucks were at the scene to provide protection to more than 20 homes in the area.

Seven aircraft, including three fixed-wing, two helicopter water

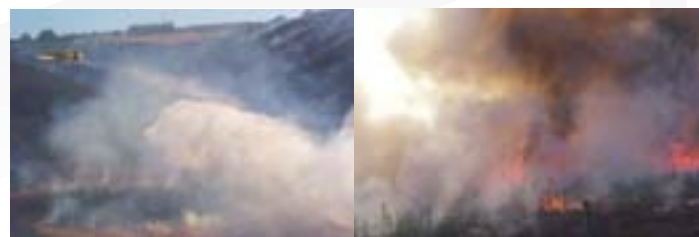
bombers and the Adelaide Bank Rescue Helicopter, supported ground crews and the hills were painted with retardant in an attempt to contain the blaze.

Fanned by northerly winds, the fire moved in a southerly direction towards Pages Flat Road. With a predicted wind change to the south due late in the day, concerns were held for homes and property on Delabole Road and Range West Road.

A number of backburns were attempted along Range Road West, and a 1.5km burn along Delabole Road was successful in assisting firefighters to contain the blaze.

Three Bushfire Information Messages were issued, and several roads were closed during the six hours it took to contain the blaze.

Volunteers worked long into the night and a number returned to the site to patrol the next day.



[SELICKS CFS RESCUES ONE OF THEIR OWN]

**By: Daniel Tinker
Sellicks brigade**

The latter months of 2005 were a very trying time for the Sellicks brigade with many wondering if we were cursed, with members of our brigade involved in seven road accidents, and one member having the misfortune to be involved in two accidents.

Fortunately none of these incidents had involved any serious injury, until our Captain, Richard Brookes, broke his leg in a collision with a truck in early December. This was quite a set back for the brigade as we prepared for the fire danger season, but worse was to come.

On Monday 19 December, firefighter Troy Holmes was involved in a head-on collision with another car on Main South Road at Pedler's Creek, just south of Seaford.

While the occupants of the other vehicle walked away with only minor injuries, Troy was trapped for some time, as rescue crews from Aldinga Beach worked to release him.

He was transported to the Flinders Medical Centre in a critical condition with injuries to the head, left arm and both legs. All we could do was wait, and hope and pray that Troy would pull through.

Troy spent 10 days in Intensive Care, on life support and in an induced coma. When he woke up on Christmas day his first words were 'I am Troy Holmes. I am a member of the Sellicks CFS.'

While he could remember nothing of the day of his accident, he was able to quote his member number to

the nursing staff. Unable to speak, Troy had to communicate with written notes and hand gestures.

In early January 2006, Troy was moved to the High Dependency ward before being moved again to the orthopaedics ward in mid-January. He underwent further surgery, including surgery to his eyes making his stay even less bearable as he was not allowed to watch TV nor listen to the radio to pass the time. All Troy could do was look around his room — he can now tell you exactly how many little squares are on the ceiling tiles of room 1, ward 5E.

To continue the recovery process, Troy was moved to Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre on 1 February. While he has a lot of rehabilitation work to do he has already started in part by having his guitar beside his bed, playing it whenever he can. The guitar is also a reminder of everyone who has been to visit. No one can see Troy without being asked 'have you signed the guitar yet?'

Troy would like to send a personal thank you to the Aldinga Beach CFS crews who responded to his accident in December, as well as everyone who has helped in his recovery, including all those people who have called to speak to him and visited him in hospital.

The Sellicks brigade would also like to thank everyone who responded on that day, as well as the doctors and staff at the Flinders Medical Centre. Thank you for taking good care of our Troy.



**Aldinga Beach CFS worked
to cut Troy out of the car.**

[LEAKING BULLETS ALMOST END CHRISTMAS LIGHTS]

Firefighters from six CFS brigades, including Hazmat crews, responded to the Lobethal Abattoirs after a report of a major gas leak on Sunday 11 December, as the famous Lobethal Christmas Lights were well underway.

The leak, reported to CFS just before 10pm, resulted in a series of road closures and traffic diversions, forcing the evacuation of a number of homes as volunteers attempted to contain the leak.

Wearing breathing apparatus, volunteers used a power cone spray to assist in dispersing the gas and attempted to confirm the source of the leak, identifying at-risk areas for surrounding residents using specialist atmospheric monitoring equipment.

The Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) was found to be leaking from eight interconnected gas bullets that were maintained at near 80% capacity to service the high demand of the abattoir, and which after around an hour of venting were still near maximum capacity.

An engineer was called in to assist in identifying where the LPG needed to be isolated from, as firefighters continued to disperse the gas.

The gas leak was isolated after around 40 minutes and firefighters undertook further atmospheric monitoring until the area was declared safe, with the last brigade members leaving the scene just after 2am.



A power cone spray was used to help disperse the gas.
Photo: CFS Promotions Unit

[LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARDED]



▲ Mark Thomason, Regional Commander and Brendan McEvoy, (right).

By: Andrew McEvoy

Upper Sturt brigade Captain Brendan McEvoy was recently awarded life membership of the brigade along with his 20-year service certificate by Mark Thomason.

Brendan has been Captain of the Upper Sturt brigade for 10 years and served with the CFA in Victoria before living in the Adelaide Hills.

Many CFS personnel know Brendan and his wife Michelle though their business, Fire Training and Safety services which has supported the CFS for many years.

[FIRE AT CALLINGTON THREATENS HOMES]

Outstanding firefighting by volunteers prevented the loss of three homes at Callington on the 19 January.

Reported to CFS around 3.30pm, the fire had started on a paddock near the Princes Highway around halfway between Callington and Kanmantoo.

With an initial report back to headquarters that the "fire was uncontrolled and heading towards a number of houses", additional fire trucks responded and bomber 581

and 582 were despatched to provide aerial fire support.

More than 70 firefighters in 17 appliances undertook direct firefighting strategies in hot and dry conditions and were able to contain the fire just before 4.30pm.

The fire came within 20 metres of homes, with volunteers required to undertake asset protection.

Fire Cause Investigators were unable to determine the cause of the blaze which destroyed 40 hectares of scrub.

[YANKALILLA BUSINESS DESTROYED BY FLAMES]

Fire destroyed an electronics business and caused significant smoke and water damage to a printing business, operating out of the same premises at Yankalilla on 14 January 2006.

Volunteers from four CFS brigades responded to the fire on Main Road around 3am.

When volunteers arrived at the property, flames could be seen coming from the front of the building.

The building contained polystyrene insulation, and produced thick smoke forcing firefighters to wear breathing apparatus to fight the fire.

A person residing in building was taken to hospital suffering smoke inhalation.

The resident has since credited his dog with altering him to the fire by jumping on him and barking until he woke up and was able to get to safety.

Once outside, he realized his dog was missing, and alerted firefighters who re-entered the building to save the Welsh Springer Spaniel.

Damage was estimated at \$200,000 and Fire Cause Investigators were unable to determine the cause of the fire.

[SCHOOL STUDENTS DECORATE CFS SHOP]

The Bridgewater CFS opportunity shop now boasts some colourful decorations after students from the local high school painted murals.

Two murals, depicting the history of the Bridgewater CFS brigade were

painted and given to the shop in November 2005.

Designed by Active8 students from Heathfield High School, the murals were created from pictures and historical newspaper clippings of events such as Ash Wednesday.

✓ The murals are now proudly on display. Photo: Peter Dawson



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VOLUNTEER - STATEWIDE - REGION 1

EDITORIAL**[OUT OF THE ASHES COMES THE TRUE AUSSIE SPIRIT]****By: Terry Williams, Editor Plains Producer**

The flames had been all but tamed by the time I wound my way along the bush track at Pinery.

But the blackened ashes of the roadside weed growth and the charred scrub were grim evidence of what had occurred on this warm Wednesday afternoon.

The CFS brigades - it would be unfair to single any out - had performed another of their miracles, saving a house from almost certain destruction but losing the outbuildings to the blaze.

There were spot fires. And the hayshed was gone, its contents still flaring and smoking. It would take some time and effort to get that out. The local farmers who had rushed to the scene with their water tanks by now were gathering in groups, still putting out spot fires but not far away from returning to the reaping.

They were, to me, strangely calm about the whole event, standing in small groups in almost mute acceptance of what had occurred. Been there. Done that.

They knew this had been a very, very near thing. If there had been any sort of wind, they probably would have lost the lot and more. So there I was striding across a

blackened, burnt paddock to find a police officer who might know how it all came to this. Conscious of not getting in the way of the CFS crews, there remained a necessity to do what the newsman must; to record the event.

The camera worked overtime until I ran into Ray Bennett, the owner. Ray appeared to be coping with what was before him; controlling his emotions but looking about in utter disbelief. The despair and the shock would come later.

Right then with the thick white smoke swirling about us, I couldn't bring myself to take a picture of him. It didn't seem the right thing to do.

Years ago, as a young reporter, I would have had no qualms about asking a mourning mother or father for a photograph of their son or daughter who had been murdered or been taken by some other tragedy. People are strangely co-operative in that period before the cold, hard facts sink in. But you wanted to know what the dead person looked like, didn't you? No, be honest, didn't you?

Not so now. Life at a country newspaper is much more personal. No anonymity. And our readers (usually) are our friends.

I knew Ray mainly as the bloke who gives up much of his time to organise the local basketball comp. Ray's wife Merry runs the CHAP branch. Nice people. We exchanged a few words; me saying something like how tough this was, how it seemed so darned unfair, how people work to get things and how they didn't deserve this to happen.

Ray kept looking across at the mangled and bent remains of the iron sheds. Who knows what he was thinking. Then he said; "It's lucky I didn't start rebuilding them. I had the iron there (he points to a pile of tin sheeting on the black earth). It could have been worse."

Strange what comes out of people in moments of adversity.

Indeed, it could have been worse. The flames came within metres of the old farmhouse and but for some heroics of someone with a hose, it probably would have gone.

We parted company as the CFS crews went about their mopping up.

One, from Woolsheds-Wasleys, was photographed by me only a few weeks ago working feverishly sandbagging around a house threatened by the Virginia floodwaters.

Now here they were hard at it dousing spot fires.

Most from the various CFS units had leapt from the header or rushed from their workplace to answer that dreaded wail of the CFS siren. And when duty is done they must go back to work to catch up where they left off.

Is this what being an Aussie is all about? Fairly close, mate. Fairly close. The CFS, with its roots entrenched in local communities, probably reflects the spirit of real Australia, of looking after your mate, more than anything else in the modern day.

So on behalf of all those who were assisted by the CFS and farmers on that recent Wednesday and for those in the future, I simply say: Thanks, Mate.

[GREAT SAVE AT PINERY]

Around 2pm on 30 November, the CFS was alerted to a grass fire at Pinery in the State's Lower Mid North.

With six brigades in the initial response, volunteers arrived to find the fire travelling in a south westerly direction and several sheds, including a three-bay implement and hay shed, were ablaze.

Additional strike teams immediately responded as the flames threatened a home on Ford Road.

Firefighters concentrated their efforts on saving the home and

by 4pm more than 90 firefighters, including a large number of farm units, were attacking the blaze.

The fire was eventually contained just before 5pm, however by this time a total of four sheds, farm machinery and equipment, as well as around 1000 olive trees and irrigation systems, were destroyed.

It was a great save for volunteers who were working in 34C heat battling structure and grass fires.

The last volunteers left the scene just before midnight after mopping up was completed.

>> Four sheds were consumed in the blaze.
Photo: The Plains Producer



✓ Firefighters battles both grass and structure fires.
Photo: The Plains Producer



[FIRE AT ROBERTSTOWN]

A fire at Robertstown kept CFS volunteers busy for three days and burnt around 600 hectares in late January.

Reported to CFS around 6.30pm, the fire was burning near the Emu Springs and Burra Roads and moving quickly into inaccessible terrain.

With volunteers from that area already having been involved in fighting fires in other parts of the State, this time they were responding to a fire closer to home.

By 8.30pm, more than 100 firefighters were on the fireground, forced to wait for the fire to come out of the hills, as it burned through inaccessible terrain approximately eight kilometres from the firefighters.

Helitack 533 and 534, under the supervision of Adelaide Bank Rescue Helicopter 52, supported the on-ground operations, dropping foam onto the fire as it moved into more accessible terrain.

Graders were brought in to

establish control lines and backburns were undertaken to strengthen them, to stop the spread of the fire as it burned in the Tothill Gap and Black Springs area.

Bushfire Information Messages were issued to alert residents of the potential risk and to ease the concerns of residents in the Clare area, as smoke from the fire was drifting over the town.

Concern was held for a number of homes in the area and SA Police undertook doorknocking to warn local residents of the potential danger.

Additional resources arrived on the

second morning with volunteers from the NSW Rural Fire Service brought in to assist volunteers.

After a solid day of firefighting, the fire was declared contained around 11.30pm on 22 January.

The efforts of firefighters did not stop there, as volunteers continued to mop up and extinguish hot spots and trees. More than 400 firefighters put their hand up to be involved over the three days.

Local volunteers continued to mop up and patrol the area for several days.

[\$150,000 DAMAGE TO MINTARO HOME]

SA Country Fire Service volunteers responded to a house fire at Mintaro near Clare in the early hours of 16 November.

Reported by a neighbor around 1am, volunteer firefighters from Mintaro, Clare, Sevenhill/ Penwortham and Watervale CFS arrived to find the Hill Street property well involved in flames.

The roof of the slate-constructed property collapsed prior to the arrival of firefighters, forcing them to fight the fire from outside the home.

The fire was contained within about 30 minutes with damage estimated at \$150,000.

Fire Cause Investigators attended the scene and have listed the cause of the fire as deliberate.

Volunteers eventually left the scene around 6:30am.



^ Fire destroyed the home.
Photo: Tanya Wutke

[BEES CAUSE HAVOC AT HOUSE FIRE]

Country Fire Service volunteers responded to a house fire at Penfield to the north of Adelaide around 11.30am on 6 December 2005.

When volunteers arrived at the Heaslip Road property, they found it engulfed in flames.

Thick black smoke could be seen billowing from the fibreboard house, with the smoke plumes visible from several kilometres away.

Volunteers from Salisbury and Virginia CFS used multiple Breathing Apparatus (BA) cylinders and high pressure lines as they fought the fire.

Swarms of bees upset by the smoke and fire posed a hazard for firefighters as they fought the blaze, with

several firefighters bitten by bees.

A combination of structural instability, bees and asbestos meant that Fire Cause Investigators were unable to determine the cause of the blaze.

Damage was estimated at more than \$50,000.

Firefighters from the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) also attended the incident.

>> Firefighters contained the fire in 15 minutes, however the house was gutted.

Photo: Matt Bonser



[GRASS FIRE WITH A TWIST]

What started as a grass fire turned into a HAZMAT incident for volunteers at Nuriootpa in the Barossa Valley on 10 January 2006.

Around 40 firefighters from Nuriootpa, Kapunda, Angaston and Tanunda CFS were fighting a grass fire on Schultz Road opposite the Barossa Valley Golf Club when they noticed an old chemical drum in the middle of a field.

The grass fire was contained to seven hectares as HAZMAT-trained volunteers from Nuriootpa turned their attention to the fire-damaged drum.

A number of volunteers continued to mop up the grass fire and the

Angaston Group established an IMT, each with its own AIMS structure, to manage the two incidents.

Located on a rural property and in amongst a treed area that had been used as the "dumping or storage" area for the property for many years the drum was found to be very old, with imperial measurements on its side.

With no United Nations number (UN) on the drum, identifying the powdered chemical was difficult, however it was eventually identified at Co-thion, an Azirphos metal insecticide.

After liaison between the CFS on call HAZMAT Officer and a Technical Advice Consultant (TAC), volunteers

donned splash suits and breathing apparatus and sealed the drum.

The drum was left on site for the owners to remove.

Firefighters eventually left the scene shortly after 6pm after an eventful day.



^ Volunteers sealed the drum and prepared it for disposal.
Photo: Sonia Post

[REGIONAL ROUND-UP]**[WALKER FLAT CFS]**

Walker Flat CFS has come a long way in the last 15 years.

Faced with the council removing the area's fire truck, several locals got together and organised a public meeting to establish their own CFS brigade.

Held at the Walker Flat Hall, a large number of locals turned up and a resolution was passed to establish the Walker Flat CFS.

A committee was formed and within two months, the first elections for office bearers were held and the brigade was officially registered on 2 October 1990.

To get the brigade up and running as quickly as possible, fundraising to purchase overalls, boots, helmets and other equipment had already begun and the brigade had negotiated with the local council to purchase a kit form shed, that they would construct themselves for their station.

To save time and money the brigade negotiated with the committee for the local hall to share their kitchen and toilets.

The concrete slab was finally laid in April 1991, and after many working bees and the brigade funding their own electrical work the station was ready to receive their

appliance in July 1991.

The first fire truck, an International ACCO, arrived at Walker Flat CFS on 22 August 1991, and was put into use just 18 days later. They have now attended 222 incidents, including structure, grass, boat and car fires, motor vehicle accidents and are happy to put their hand up to participate when possible in strike teams.

For a small country community, Walker Flat CFS have played a commendable role in protecting and assisting their community in time of need.

The station has recently had some extensions with members now having their own toilets and a larger meeting room.

The brigade celebrated the opening of these facilities on 23 October with a tree planting ceremony attended by local dignitaries and CFS Chief Officer Euan Ferguson.

The ceremony also provided Euan Ferguson the opportunity to present Chris Bond, brigade Captain, and Alan Scott, brigade Equipment Officer with their National Medals.

A barbeque was held after the opening for both current and former members and representatives from the Ridley Group and Mid Murray Council.



^ Chief Officer Euan Ferguson congratulates Chris Bond, Walker Flat Captain on the opening of the stations' extension.

Photo: Doug Smith

[FIRE CAUSES ALARM AT MURRAY BRIDGE]

CFS volunteers were called into action when a fire broke out on Maurice Road at Murray Bridge just after 4pm on 20 December.

Volunteers from the Swanport group quickly responded to the incident and two fixed wing water bombers provided aerial support, as 50 firefighters attempted to stop the fire as it moved quickly towards the Old Princes Highway.

A bushfire warning message was issued to alert residents in the area as the firefront, fanned by strong winds, headed towards the local caravan park and the Mobilong Prison.

With additional strike teams en route, the head of the fire was contained around 6pm.

Adelaide Road and the Princes Highway were closed to traffic as firefighters worked to contain the western flank using mineral earth breaks and backburns.

The fire was considered contained

on the Adelaide Road side of the fire by 7pm, however it was still burning freely in dense scrub on the eastern flank.

With more than 220 firefighters on the fireground, a backburn helped control the blaze on the eastern flank and just before 10pm the fire was declared contained.

Ten appliances and around 60 firefighters spent the night mopping up and blacking out, and local crews returned to monitor the area over the subsequent days.

The fire burnt around 472 hectares and damaged around \$30,000 of crops and fences.

The incident was the first significantly large fire to make use of the two 1200 litre Agusta A119 'Koala' Heli-tankers, which were launched the day before at the new Mount Crawford Air Strip.

Fire Cause Investigators were unable to determine the cause of the blaze.

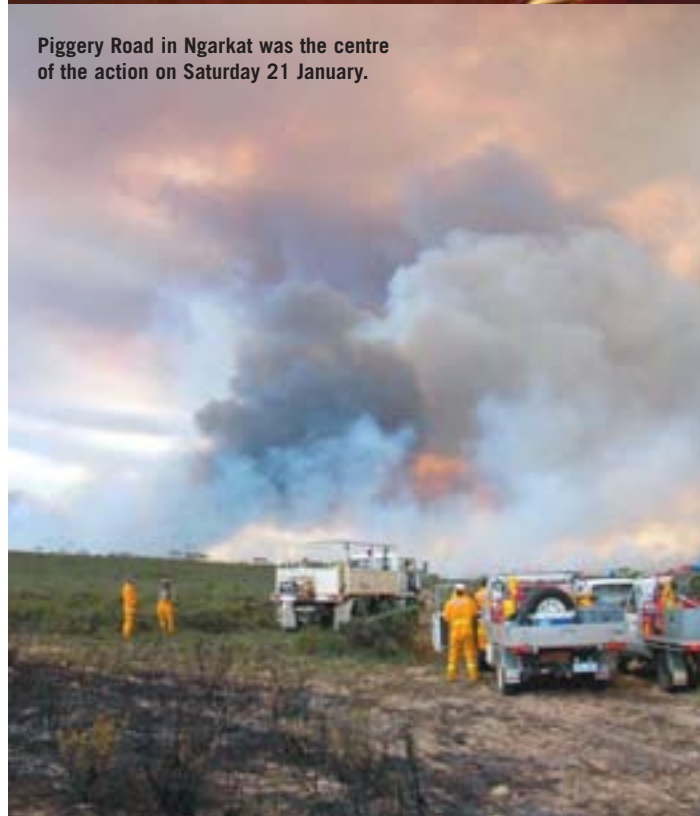


Bright red flames fanned the evening sky.
Photo: Roy Jackson





The fire in Ngarkat provided a vivid display of colour.



Piggery Road in Ngarkat was the centre of the action on Saturday 21 January.

[LIGHTNING] LIGHTS UP REGION 3

Lightning was once again the cause of many grass fires over the summer throughout Region 3. On Tuesday 27 December 2005, lightning caused several fires in the space of an hour.

The largest started shortly after 3pm and burnt 732 hectares of grass and scrub at Charleston. Close to one hundred CFS personnel brought the fire under control with the support of four aerial water bombers. Another 70 CFS volunteers brought another fire at Billiat near at Karoonda under control, with only a 50 hectare (ha) area burnt.

On Friday evening, 20 January 2006, a band of lightning caused several other outbreaks. CFS volunteers responded to fires in the Dangdali Conservation Park, north of Renmark (200ha), and at Coomandook (1750ha).

The same stretch of lightning passed over the infamous Ngarkat Conservation Park, and sure enough smoke was sighted in the park just after 7.30pm.

After further investigation it was

discovered that there were three separate fires, which would later join to become one significant fire front.

Fire crews and Incident Management Teams from the CFS, Department for Environment and Heritage, and a special task force from the NSW Rural Fire Service spent seven exhaustive days creating control lines and preventing flames from reaching the townships of Lamerook and Keith.

Large plumes of smoke blanketed the area. On Sunday, police closed about 45km of the Dukes Highway between Keith and Tailem Bend due to poor visibility.

By the seventh day, the fire was finally declared safe having burnt 79 200 hectares of grass and scrub.

Over the course of the week, more than 300 CFS personnel, 68 trucks and five aircraft were committed to the blaze. A number of private firefighting units were also deployed.

Several debriefs have followed the incident to address the ongoing threat of bushfires within the park.

[CUTTING IT FINE AT CAMBRAI]

Sparks from a cutting tool was the cause of a large grass fire west of Cambrai and Sedan in the northeastern Mount Lofty Ranges on Wednesday 11 January 2005.

Shortly after 12.30pm, sparks from an angle grinder ignited an area of grass off Pinehut Road sending fire towards the Angaston to Sedan Road.

At the peak of the blaze, around 150 CFS volunteer firefighters, 26 appliances and seven aircraft responded to the blaze.

Many of the crews fought the fire by foot using rake hoes and knapsacks

as steep terrain made it difficult for trucks to access the fireground.

The fire did not pose any direct threat to property but generated significant amounts of smoke to settle in the Graetstown and Keyneton townships.

A decrease in wind and temperature overnight allowed fire crews to safely conduct a back burn and contain the fire by early morning the next day.

The fire covered about 1 600 hectares of grass and scrub, which also included several kilometres of fencing.



^ The fire generated a significant amount of smoke, darkening the sky in the area.

[REGIONAL ROUND-UP]**[DEVASATION AVERTED
AT WILMINGTON]****By: Geoff Slee, Mount Remarkable Group Officer**

Around 9am on New Years Eve, what Wilmington residents have feared for 17 years became a reality when a fire was reported in Horrocks Pass between Wilmington and Port Augusta.

Mount Remarkable Group Officer Geoff Slee arrived at the scene within minutes and immediately knew this fire was intense, with the potential for widespread devastation.

It was a total fire ban day, with an estimated maximum temperature of 42C, a predicted wind speed of 40kph from the northwest, and an expected Fire Danger Index (FDI) of 81.

By 9am the winds could only be described as 'wild', in excess of 50kph, and rapidly fanning the fire in a southerly direction into very steep rough terrain covered by up to one-metre high wild oats.

Wilmington QAV and 34 were the first at the firefront, with Melrose 34 arriving shortly after.

Fearing the worst, another eight appliances from Booleroo Centre, Appila, Wirrabara, Port Germein, Mambray Creek, Stirling North, and Quorn had also responded.

A request for water bombing aircraft was made to the region and the Group Logistics Officer, Robbie Robinson, mobilised both Mount Remarkable District Council graders and three private dozers to start making firebreaks.

By 10.40am the fire was burning on a 2km front, fanned by the searing northerly winds.

With only one track completely traversing the ranges between the fire and the Horrocks Vale Homestead, access for firefighters was difficult. Adding to concerns was the 5km distance to the best possible established firebreak, the Hancocks Lookout Tourist Road.

Volunteers commenced a backburn at 1.30pm along the 'Optic Fibre' track, however wind gusts over 100kmh saw fire balls literally jump over the 20m wide backburn.

The inferno accelerated at a rate never seen before by local experienced firefighters, with four firefighters receiving slight burns to their face and hands as they desperately tried to hold the fire.

All units then relocated to the Horrocks Vale Homestead and with the assistance of a grader and many local farm units, prepared to protect the homestead as flames approached.

With the fire racing towards them on three sides – west, north and east – a mammoth effort was put in by all present, resulting in a great save with no asset damage despite the fire spotting into the house garden area and sheep and cattle yards.

All available resources then shifted to the Hancocks Lookout Tourist Road, which had already been widened by the council graders and dozer.

The fire took only 90 minutes to travel the 5km to this road and by 8.30pm had impacted along 4km of that road as well as burning back into the wind along the Horrocks Pass Road.

Crews worked tirelessly to stop the fire jumping Hancocks Lookout Road, knowing that if it had, then the Mount Remarkable National Park was only 1km away.

Recognising the severity of the situation, additional assistance arrived from within region 4 as well as strike teams from regions 1 and 2, with these volunteers giving up New Years Eve with their family and friends to assist in our plight.

The new crews from Port Germein, Gladstone, Caltowie, Narridy, Stirling North, Wilmington, Melrose, Jamestown, Terowie, Wirrabara, Appila, Booleroo Centre, Mambray Creek, and Quorn arrived late in the day.

The region 1 and 2 strike teams with appliances from Hahndorf, Morphett Vale, Coromandel Valley, Aldinga Beach, Basket Range, Kadina, Paskeville, Greenock, Gawler River and Roseworthy, along with four command cars and four MFS units, were not far behind.

Their arrival was a welcome sight for the now weary day shift volunteers who had been working in indescribable conditions since early morning.

The planned open-air cabaret to be held on New Years Eve at the Wilmington Oval was cancelled as the oval and sporting complex became the staging area and food preparation centre.

Community spirit was amazing with the whole town rallying together, to either be at the fire front, in the radio room, helping to organise food or anything else that needed to be done.

An Incident Management Team (IMT) was set up at Region 4 headquarters in Port Augusta as the night shift crews – under the command of Black Rock Group Officer Geoff Gibb and Hallet Group Officer Merv Robinson – prepared to spend their busiest night ever.

A predicted wind change around 11.30pm saw the winds switch to the west, pushing the fire back onto the eastern end of the Hancocks Lookout and Horrocks Pass Roads.

Had the fire jumped these containment lines, the township of Wilmington would have been threatened, with the fire potentially spreading into steep rugged country towards Mount Brown and Quorn.

All who spent the night battling the firefront still wonder with amazement how they stopped the fire.

But they did stop it, and each and every one involved in this fight deserves a pat on the back for the huge effort they put in.

With a mid morning temperature of 38C and 40kph north-westerly winds, the traditional New Years Day at the beach was forgotten for the Mount Remarkable District Council area residents.

Although the fire was now contained, ground crews were still busy with numerous hot spots and hundreds of large gum trees still burning close to the fire edge.

Wilmington CFS units patrolled the fire edge every day for another two weeks until the fire was finally declared safe on 16 January.

A total of 2,526ha of land was burned, with a fire perimeter of 27km.

In all, 36 CFS units attended the fire; nine command cars, five tankers, three dozers, two graders, two fixed wing aircraft, one

helicopter and 35 private units.

Some 390 individual fire fighters volunteered their time, with 103 CFS and 50 private persons on the fireground on New Years Day.

These figures do not include our radio operators, IMT members, catering personnel and numerous other people who helped out in various ways.

On behalf of myself as Group Officer, and the Wilmington CFS brigade, I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone involved in containing this terrible fire.



▲ The fire tore through challenging terrain - it was a hard battle for firefighters.

Photos: Geoff Slee & Jeff Bowey

[WILMINGTON QAV – VIRTUALLY UNSTOPPABLE]

Wayne Ellard, Mount Remarkable Deputy Group Officer commented to Euan Ferguson, Chief Officer on the recent fire at Horrocks Pass:

"We had a lot against us in difficult terrain, it was our turn to experience it and see it first hand," Wayne said.

"Fire, difficult terrain and 80 km/hr winds equals potential disaster.

"Just a thought for you related to Land Rovers, one person who

returned from the fireground the other day after driving the QAV (Wilmington's 130 dual cab) wrote in his hand over comments,

"If you drive it like you have just stolen it, the vehicle is unstoppable"



>> Chief Officer Euan Ferguson with the 'unstoppable vehicle'.

[B DOUBLE ROLLOVER AT PIMBA]

By: Matt Wasley, Woomera CFS 2nd Lieutenant

Woomera CFS, SA Ambulance and SA Police attended a truck rollover just after 11.30pm on 23 October 2005.

The rollover occurred 6km west of Woomera on the corner of the Stuart Highway and Pimba to Woomera Rd, directly opposite Spuds Roadhouse at Pimba.

Upon arrival, crews were faced with a B-Double on its side, which was blocking 95% of the road and gushing diesel.

Volunteers from Woomera CFS worked to minimise the fuel leak and after a brief discussion created a small road along the shoulder, just wide enough to allow road trains and buses to pass through.

Despite the damage, both occupants of the B-Double escaped with only minor scratches and bruising.

With the valued assistance of local transport company Bannerman's Transport and guidance from the Truckfactory's Salvage Co-ordinator, the prime mover and A-trailer were separated from the B-trailer and righted, before being towed to a secure location.

Once the prime mover was righted, CFS Volunteers undertook sweeping of the road to enable it to be reopened for normal traffic flow.

The remaining trailer was recovered by Truckfactory in the morning, with damage estimated at approximately \$200,000.

[ANDAMOOKA AREA SCHOOL DESTROYED]

For the third time in as many months, the Andamooka Area School in the state's mid north was destroyed by fire.

The latest attack occurred on 26 March and caused an estimated \$200,000 damage. The blaze started just before 10am and destroyed the only remaining building on the school site.

CFS volunteer firefighters from the Andamooka and Roxby Downs brigades remained at the scene for several hours to fully extinguish the blaze and assist students and staff to salvage project work and equipment.

Only a few weeks prior to the latest event, brigades from Andamooka

and Roxby Downs were called at 5.30am on Wednesday 18 January, to a structure fire at the school.

Volunteers arrived to find much of the school which also housed the local kindergarten well involved in flames.

Volunteers wearing compressed air breathing apparatus contained the blaze which started in the Administration Block.

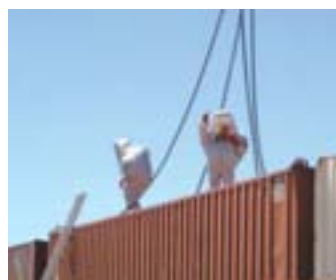
That fire destroyed the administration block, the principal's office, computer room, classrooms and a number of storerooms.

Heat from the blaze melted several air conditioning units, causing them to fall through the roof.

[CHEMICAL SPILL STOPS GOODS TRAIN]



^ CFS and MFS crews preparing to send crews into the incident.



^ Hazmat operators dressed in splash suits hooking chains to the container for removal by the crane.

CFS Hazardous Material (HASMAT) brigades from Burra, Jamestown and Stirling North, along with Peterborough CFS, responded to a hazardous material spill around 25kms east of Peterborough at 5.00pm on Sunday 5 February.

The chemical was in a container on a goods train on its way to Perth.

Access to the carriage was difficult for the volunteers wearing splashsuits, as the train was 30 metres above the ground.

Around 10pm a crane was used to move the affected carriage onto a goods link on the outskirts of Peterborough and secured, with the remainder of the train continuing to Perth.

The next morning CFS Hazmat crews along with SAMFS Hazmat crews removed the contents of the mixed load. They were able to isolate the pesticide Mesuro from the remainder of the load which was repacked and returned to Adelaide by road.



Diesel was gushing from the B-Double when volunteers arrived.

Photo: Matt Wasley



^ The admin building was destroyed for the second time in 18 months.
Photo: Naomi and Nigel Campbell

^ Captain of Andamooka CFS extinguishes a hot spot during overhaul operations.

Fire cause investigators from Adelaide attended and determined that the fire was started as the result of an electrical fault.

The fire caused in the vicinity of

\$1.5 million dollars.

A previous fire at the Andamooka Area school destroyed the administration block and library.



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VOLUNTEER - STATEWIDE - REGION 4

[REGIONAL ROUND-UP]

[THE BORDER
HOLDS NO BARRIERS]

By: Phil McDonough, Regional Prevention Officer

In 2003, the volunteer fire brigades associations from Victoria and South Australia got together in an effort to strengthen local work in streamlining working relationships between the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and CFS.

Some of the difficulties that local crews had experienced in the past included differences in training standards, communications between services and the compatibility of water connections.

To address these difficulties, arrangements were put in place in 2003 and a spate of fires caused by lightning in January put them to the test.

The arrangements have included local adjoining CFS/CFA brigades

attending each other's meetings, adaptors have been made and are carried on all appliances and communications plans have been adopted.

During January, the CFS was called upon to assist the CFA with fires in Edenhope, Harrow, Heywood, Langkoop and Hynam - and it was apparent that real progress has been made.

The recent fires showed that these steps have contributed to a better and more harmonious working relationships, with crews working together as if they were one fire service.

The community saw an integrated fire service working hard to protect the community.

This is just a step forward and more progress will continue to be made as long as we are all focused on the same outcome of "protecting the community".

Congratulations to all those who have been involved.

<< It was a busy January for both CFS and CFA firefighters.

>> Arrangements put in place by local crews had ensured a smooth response to incidents.

Photos: Rex Hall

[TRACTOR SPARKS \$50,000 FIRE]

A tractor sparked a fire on farmland near Penola on Wednesday 14 December 2005, causing around \$50,000 damage.

The fire started in the engine compartment of a tractor on the Robe to Penola Rd, 20km west of Penola, before moving to bailing machinery and surrounding paddocks.

The blaze destroyed close to three hectares of land and several bales of hay.

Volunteers from Maooupe, Monbulla, Mount Graham, Penola and Wattle Range CFS brigades responded to the blaze around 7pm, and contained it within 20 minutes.

[CFS CREWS LEND
A HAND IN VICTORIA]

By: Bill Corcoran, Naracoorte CFS

>> Firefighters waiting for the fire to come out of the dense scrub.



<< The blaze generated thick colourful smoke.

Shortly after 9.30pm on 19 January, the Naracoorte group were asked to send a strike team over the border to help the Apsley Country Fire Authority (CFA) group, where a number of fires were burning after a lightning storm had passed through the region.

CFS volunteers from Kybybolite, Joanna, Hynam and Naracoorte with their 3-4 appliances were escorted by the Naracoorte Command Car and responded to a fire on Langkoop Road.

While en route to the fire just after 10pm, the strike team received a stop call and the crews headed for home, when they received another call for help through the Region 5 headquarters.

Edenhope CFA was requesting assistance with a large scrub fire that was burning. Volunteers quickly travelled to the area where they were involved in asset protection and backburning operations before arriving home around 5am the next morning.

Rest was short lived as around 10.45 that day CFS received a request for a strike team to return to Edenhope. Volunteers from Joanna, Kybybolite, Binnun and Naracoorte

again travelled over the border to Edenhope, where they helped mop up.

While mopping up, another fire was reported burning in thick scrub within the fire area.

CFS volunteers were positioned to tackle the fire once it came out of the scrub into grass land, with firefighters putting all their energy into fighting the fast moving fire.

Both CFS and CFA crews did an excellent job in stopping spot fires, crews were returned to their stations at around 8pm that evening.

Since then the Naracoorte group have sent crews and appliances to help fight blazes at Ngarkart, Lameroo, and again to Edenhope on 22 January.

While volunteers were away Naracoorte brigade manned their base and attended a number of small call outs around the town.

The Naracoorte group is proud of their sound working relationship with the CFA, and are often called to help each other out on both sides of the border.

Thank you to everyone and their families for their help with the strike teams and their ongoing commitment.



[CANAWIGARRA FIRE]

The CFS was alerted to a fire near Bordertown at 3.50pm on 20 December and five brigades responded to the blaze.

The fire was burning in crops near the corner of the Dukes Highway and Pinaroo Road, and upon arrival, firefighters requested the assistance of strike teams from the neighbouring Coonalpyn and Naracoorte groups.

As these volunteers made their way to the fire, firefighters in 17

appliances attempted to hold the blaze as it headed towards Canawigarra Road.

Graders worked to establish control lines on the eastern flank and the fire was contained just after 5.30pm.

Volunteers continued to work on mopping up and extinguishing a number of trees which were still burning within the control lines.

The fire, believed to have been started by a header, burnt a total of 615 hectares and destroyed fencing.

[10 HECTARES OF PINE FOREST BURNT]

Volunteers from 14 brigades were alerted to a fire in a pine forest just after 9pm on 27 December.

Believed to have been started by lightning, the fire burnt around 10 hectares of pine trees and was contained just after 10pm.

A bushfire information message was issued to warn residents in the Stotts Lane area, as the fire moved in a southerly direction.

Management of the fire was handed to Forestry SA, however volunteers returned the next day due to a rekindling of the blaze.

[NARACOORTE CFS RECOGNISES FAMILY SUPPORT]

By: Allan Marshall, Naracoorte CFS

Naracoorte held their annual brigade Christmas party in late December.

The partners of all brigade members were presented with a small memento to signify their involvement in the brigade.

As well as a posy of flowers, all females at the party were presented with a cloth lapel badge made by one of the brigade members.

The badge featured the Australian flag as a background, with a button (to signify the ladies who hold everything together), a safety pin (to acknowledge the very young within

the brigade's families), two small rings (unity between partners) and a small chain (to bind everything together).

This small memento was received with a certain amount of emotion by those present, as Denise Francis, the wife of our First Lieutenant Shane Francis had been brought to the party by ambulance. Denise had been confined to hospital with terminal cancer and the Naracoorte ambulance crews had offered their services so that she could spend some time with brigade members.

>> These badges were received with emotion by those present.



[BURNING TURBINE LEAVES \$3 MILLION DOLLAR DAMAGE BILL]

As temperatures in the South East hovered around 40C on 22 January, CFS volunteers responded to a fire at the Lake Bonney Wind Farm, Tantanoola.

The fire was reported around 3pm and volunteers were able to see the fire burning 70 metres above the ground from a significant distance away.

The turbine was fully ablaze when volunteers arrived and while the firefighters were unable to reach the turbine to extinguish it, they were kept busy putting out numerous spot fires that had started as a result of falling debris.

Eight brigades and 30 firefighters were involved in the incident, which is believed to have been one of the first such fires in Australia.

Concern was held for firefighter safety because although they were stationed 400 metres away from the burning turbine, the volunteers were showered with pieces of aluminium, oil and fibreglass as they battled the grass fires.

All turbines in the wind farm were shut down due to the risk of electrocution, however the firefighters were conscious of the risk of the automatic brake on the burning turbine failing, and the 40-metre long burning blade starting to rotate.

The turbine eventually burnt itself out and volunteers returned home around 9.30pm.

The fire, which left a damage bill of around \$3m, is believed to have started as a result of an electrical fault.

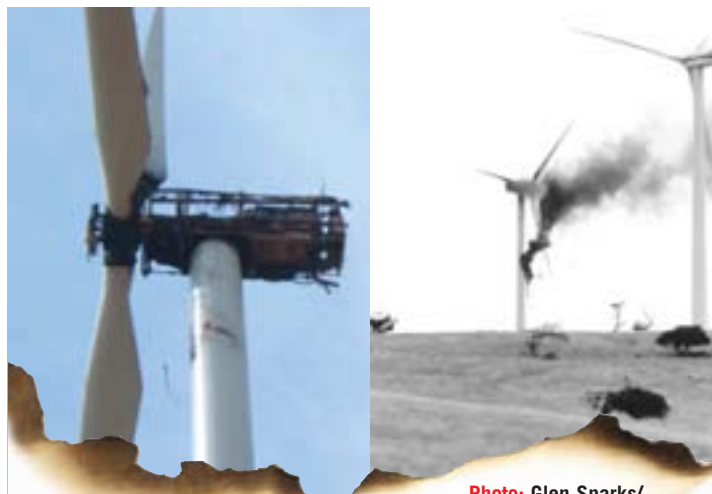


Photo: Glen Sparks/
South East Times

[DRIVER HAS A LUCKY ESCAPE]

A 20-year-old woman was lucky to escape with minor injuries after her vehicle collided with a tree on 6 December.

Reported to CFS around 2pm, volunteers from Naracoorte CFS responded to the crash on Cadgee Road.

Upon arrival, CFS volunteers found the driver trapped, with the car resting on its side, having suffered significant damage.

The driver was trapped for around 35 minutes, before volunteers used heavy rescue equipment to remove the roof of the vehicle.

[PASSENGER TRAPPED IN VEHICLE ROLLOVER]

CFS volunteers worked for more than an hour to free a person trapped after a station wagon rolled around 30km north of Millicent on 26 December.

Reported to CFS around 6.30pm, volunteers from Wattle Range, Argyle and Millicent responded to

the crash on the Princes Highway.

Two other people in the car suffered minor injuries, with damage estimated at around \$10,000.

A crane was brought in to remove the car, and the Princes Highway was reopened after around 90 minutes.



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VOLUNTEER - STATEWIDE - REGION 5

[REGIONAL ROUND-UP]

[REGIONAL REPORT]

By: Kevin May, Acting Regional Commander



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VOLUME 1 - STATEWIDE - REGION 6

The last few months have been a busy time for both volunteers and staff within the region with a number of significant events.

Before Christmas the Lower Eyre Peninsula Group was kept busy responding to a number of fires caused by lightning and were assisted by two water bombers and an additional Air Attack Supervisor in the aircraft.

The Tumby Bay Group successfully battled and managed operations at a fire at Cockaleechie. Water bombing aircraft and Air Attack Supervisors again assisted with this blaze, as did the Lower Eyre Peninsula Group. The Cleve Group had brigades on standby in case they were required.

Local farmers supported fire operations with farm units and the local landholder completed a fire hazard reduction burn on his property. Local government was also involved with plant machinery.

On Tuesday 27 December, 26 lightning strikes across the regions started fires, with the first one reported around 4.45am.

The Elliston, Lower Eyre Peninsula, Le Hunte, Kimba, Cleve and Tumby Bay groups all responded to fires over this period.

Firefighters spent the best part of five days battling some of the fires, with the assistance of private farm units and council.

The support both within the groups and between groups has been excellent, with the sharing of resources including bulk water carriers from council and private contractors. Also used were heavy plant and equipment such as graders, front-end loaders and bulldozers as part of the fire management strategy.

All groups involved in the fires of 27 December received tremendous support from farm fire units, with their assistance proving invaluable with the management of the incidents.

All groups were fully committed on

that day, with farm fire units supporting incidents which in some instances only had one CFS unit in attendance.

Hard work by firefighters saw only three fires of concern in the region by 28 December.

Every effort was made to contain these fires as quickly as possible, with the prediction of more extreme fire danger weather to come, the very rough terrain the firefighters were working in, the scrub type and distances to travel to these blazes.

The Cleve group hosted fires at Middle Camp and Carrappee, which were primarily on land managed by the Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH).

DEH staff were involved in both the management and fighting of these fires and water bombing aircraft also assisted the ground efforts. These bombers were supported by Air Attack Supervisors from SA and Queensland.

The Region 6 Air Observer flew over both of the fires and plotted each one, reporting concerns when the wind picked up and changed direction.

Recognising the long duration of these fires and wanting to rest volunteers and get them home to their families as quickly as possible, members of the State Level 3 Omega Incident Management Team came into assist, with Mark Thomason taking on the role of Incident Controller.

This released a number of local volunteers, allowing them to focus on fighting the fire, and leaving the Level 3 Team to set up all the paperwork which worked well from then on.

The Lower Eyre Peninsula, Tumby Bay, Elliston and Streaky Bay groups supplied both strike teams and additional resources until the fire was declared safe.

Volunteer strike teams from Regions 1 and 4 worked several two-hour shifts on the fireground, with the firefighters from Region 4 returning home to fight their own fire at Horrocks Pass.



The fire at Pinkawillinie spotted onto private land on the Buckleboo side.

Stirling North CFS supplied a mixing crew to support the water bombers and the region 6 mixing crew, with the bombers operating from Cleve and Cowell.

One of the big reinforcements for everyone in the region was the reminder that water bombing aircraft and ground crews need to work together as a team, and that water bombing aircraft cannot do the job alone.

Rain was a welcome sight to all, and assisted crews with containing these fires, with everyone returning home on 1 January 2006.

The Carrappee fire burnt 2 650 hectares and the Middle Camp fire destroyed 3 015 hectares.

The fire in the Pinkawillinie Conservation Park was managed by the Le Hunte and Kimba Groups, with assistance from DEH, local farmers and a strike team from Region 2.

Firefighters and local farmers used dozers to establish control lines on private lands to the east and south east of the park as CFS and DEH crews worked along the western and northern end of the fire using tracks already in place.

The fire was flown each day and plotted by our regional Air Observers and the information was transferred from GPS to map on ground.

Rain also assisted at this fire and allowed all crews to return home on the 1 January 2006.

The region benefited from a rolling shift of Air Attack Supervisors from Queensland.

CFS did not have the extra personnel required to manage the additional bombers placed in the Region 6, and a request was made for assistance, with Queensland being able to supply a number of Air Attack Supervisors.

These personnel lived in Port Lincoln one at a time until the bombing contract ended in early March.

Well done to everyone from within the Region and those who supplied resources from Region 2, Region 4, Region 1, Air Operation, A.M.R. Contractors, Malcolm Catt Aircraft Management Team, Salvation Army, St Johns, SES and Port Lincoln and the Whyalla local police.

Thank you to the staff in Region 6 and to all of agencies involved at the incidents, well done.

[FIERCE BLAZE AT COCKALEECHIE]

Volunteers from six CFS brigades immediately responded to a report of a fire at Cockaleechee, near Cummins on 20 December.

Called into the CFS just before midday, volunteers arrived to find four-metre high flames, fanned by strong winds, literally 'flying' across paddocks.

With a number of farmhouses under threat, a Bushfire Information Message was issued for residents to the west of Cockaleechee, near Tatiara, as the fire travelled in a southerly direction.

The number of CFS volunteers on

the fireground quickly grew to more than 60 as they battled the blaze in temperatures in excess of 40C.

With the Lower Eyre Peninsula group on standby, volunteers, private farm units and three water bombing aircraft worked for more than an hour to control the blaze.

The blaze was declared contained at 1.15pm, having burnt around 180 hectares of land, destroying one hayshed and some fencing.

A CFS appliance was involved in a burn over during the height of the blaze, which started when a pile of previously burnt trees rekindled.



^ The flames literally 'flew' across the paddocks.
Photo: Corey Dunn

[WATER TANK COMMISSIONED AT NYROCA SCOUT CAMP]

The Nyroca Scout Camp played host to the Governor, Marjorie Jackson, and other dignitaries

on 11 January for the commissioning of a fire protection tank.

The tank, based at the scout camp, is one of 14 water tanks donated by the Freemasons after the fires of 11 January 2005.

The Governor made a short speech before unveiling the plaque on the tank.

<< CFS Chief Officer Euan Ferguson was amongst other dignitaries at the tank commissioning.

Photo: Brian Treloar

[TRAGEDY AT MUDLAMUCKLA]

Volunteers from Ceduna, Nunjikompta, and Wirrulla responded to a building fire at Mudlamuckla about 35km east of Ceduna on 19 January.

Reported to CFS shortly after 8.30am, the home on Branden Road was engulfed in flames when fire crews arrived.

Thick smoke forced firefighters to wear breathing apparatus as they battled the blaze, which caused \$200,000 damage to the home.



^ The fire gutted the isolated home.

CFS crews remained on site to preserve the scene as Fire Cause Investigators travelled to the scene.

[FIRE AT FISHERIES BAY]

By: Kieran O'Rourke, Port Lincoln CFS

Fire caused significant damage to a toilet block at the Fisheries Bay Campsite on 1 December.

The fire was reported to CFS just before 1.30am, with volunteers from Port Lincoln CFS attending.

Around 15 firefighters arrived to find the toilet block well ablaze, and donned Breathing Apparatus as they fought the fire.

Volunteers were at the scene for several hours, ensuring it was fully extinguished and waiting for SA Police attendance.

Damage to the toilet block was in excess of \$10,000

While in the area, firefighters discovered a small campfire still alight and quickly extinguished it.

THANK YOU By: Kevin May

On 19 January 2006, the Ceduna brigade and Group suffered a tragedy with the loss of several family members of a brigade volunteer.

Assistance was requested to give the brigade a break from call outs for a five-day period.

Region 2 and State Logistics assisted, with five volunteers from Dalkeith and Nuriootpa CFS travelling to the region. These volunteers were qualified in Road Crash Rescue, Breathing Apparatus, and HAZMAT and provided support to the local brigade.

I know Region 6 personnel would have answered the call for assistance, however as all brigades had been very busy for quite a few days and with the specific skills, it would have made the Region short.

Thank you to the brigade officers and staff who worked hard to complete the task.

From Ceduna brigade Group and Region 6 brigades and staff thank you for your help in our time of need.
Yours sincerely
Region 6



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VOLUNTEER - STATEWIDE - REGION 6

TRAINING COURSE CONFIRMATION

By: Lee Watson, State Training Officer –
Quality Systems & Professional Development

The start and success of many training courses are often jeopardised by volunteers who fail to notify Course Coordinators that they are unable to attend.

This is becoming an issue across all regions and at the State Training Centre.

Many courses fill quickly and most

have waiting lists. The 'CFS Training Course Information Guide' outlines the specific number of participants required for each program.

Courses that feature practical training have specific drills or activities, which require a set number of participants. If insufficient numbers of people

attend, it can jeopardise the demonstration and assessment of some competencies.

If you are booked into a training course, please ensure you confirm your attendance as soon as you receive the pre-course information for it. If you are unable to attend, please advise the Course

Coordinator as soon as possible, and definitely prior to the day of the course.

This will help to ensure that all scheduled training courses maximise the opportunity for volunteers to attend.

WORKING WITH AIRCRAFT TRAINING PACKAGE

By: Corey Dunn, Senior Curriculum Development Officer (Operations),
Air Attack Supervisor

The SA Country Fire Service (CFS) Training Department will soon release a new training unit focused on *Working With Aircraft*.

The unit is primarily aimed at group and brigade level officers and incident management personnel who may be involved in bushfire suppression activities involving the use of firebombing, reconnaissance (fire spotting) and air attack aircraft.

Taking around 2.5 to 3 hours to complete, the unit is designed to give personnel an understanding on how air operations work within CFS, what aircraft are available and their capabilities and limitations, and how best they can use aircraft to achieve suppression strategies.

The unit specifically covers:

- CFS Air Operations Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's).
- Aircraft and firebombing safety.
- Aircraft types and capabilities.
- Air operations limitations, effectiveness and firebombing strategies.
- Air operations integration into AIMS.
- Air operations communications.

Delivery is by CFS Air Attack

Supervisors, Air Operations Managers or the Manager Aviation Services, who will use their personal experience in both aerial and on-ground firefighting to help attendees gain a greater appreciation of the management and use of aircraft to achieve bushfire suppression strategies.

The unit may also provide a stepping-stone for CFS personnel who wish to participate in further training for specific CFS Air Operations roles such as Air Observer, Air Attack Supervisor, Air Operations Manager, Airbase Manager and Airbase (foam/retardant mixing) Crew.

The *Working With Aircraft* unit incorporates the knowledge, skills

and assessment required to complete the Public Safety Training Package unit *Work safely around aircraft (PUAFIR209A)*.

Although not compulsory, those undertaking the training unit may choose to complete the associated assessment material in order to receive a nationally accredited certificate for the *Work safely around aircraft (PUAFIR209A)* unit.

For those choosing not to undertake the assessment, completion of the training session will be added to their personal training record within TAS.

On 21 February 2006, a 'pilot' *Working With Aircraft* training session was held at Cummins, on the West Coast.

Around 60 firefighters from a number of groups across Region 6 within and outside the Lower Eyre Peninsula Primary Response Firebombing Zone attended the session.

Preliminary feedback from those attending the session has been positive, with attendees gaining a greater appreciation of what firebombing aircraft can do and how they can incorporate air operations into their bushfire suppression strategies and plans.

It is envisaged that the final version of the training package will be completed by the end of March 2006.

Groups who wish to undertake the training should request a session through their relevant Regional Training Officer.



Working with aircraft has been a new experience for some CFS volunteers this summer.
Photo: Kimberley Handke



[EQUIPMENT NEWS]

\$1.95 MILLION [TO UPGRADE PPC]

To ensure CFS volunteers have the best possible protection while attending emergency incidents, Premier Mike Rann has announced that all CFS volunteers will be equipped with Personal Protective Clothing (PPC) which meets current recognised standards.

The upgrade, at a cost of \$1.95 million, will provide updated PPC to around 1,500 CFS volunteers who are currently using outdated or 'older style' equipment and clothing.

The need to upgrade this essential equipment was identified both during the Project Phoenix Review and after several volunteers suffered burns whilst wearing the old style clothing.

As a result a submission was prepared for State Cabinet and tabled in December 2005, seeking additional funding for this vital upgrade.

CFS Chief Officer, Euan Ferguson, said up-to-date clothing and equipment will maximise the personal safety of volunteer firefighters.

"Volunteers need this upgraded protective clothing to minimise the risk of physical injury and harm

when responding to incidents, particularly as the risks they face are continually changing," he said.

"Over recent fire seasons we've had four firefighters suffer burns to the neck, ears or face, because they were wearing 'old style' protective clothing when caught in extreme radiant heat situations.

"One of these burns occurred on 11 January where a firefighter received serious burns whilst wearing old style overalls instead of the two piece proban PPC.

"This update sends a message that the State Government, the CFS and the fire industry are serious about safety."

The \$1.95 million will enable 1,574 firefighters to receive upgraded Proban Wildland PPC and 1,230 firefighters to receive the latest structural PPC (with flash hoods).

This funding is in addition to, not in lieu of Group managed annual replacement expenditures for PPC, with garments being replaced on a one-for-one basis.

The PPC is expected to be delivered by the end of the financial year.

[THE SAGRN HELPDESK]

By: Gary Bau, CFS Communications Coordinator

Volunteers need to be aware the SAGRN Helpdesk, also known as the Telstra NOCC, has changed slightly with staffing.

For any operational issues with GRN voice and paging coverage and GRN network issues, contact **1300 130 495** (24 hours, seven days a week)

For GRN administrative issues such as checking radio id's aliases, pager

id and aliases, P03 and V03's, please contact the SAGRN Helpdesk Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm hrs on **1300 130 495**.

Only technical people will staff the Helpdesk after hours.

Should you have any queries regarding this, contact Gary Bau CFS Communication Coordinator on **(08) 8463 4200**.



^ Volunteers from Salisbury CFS modelled the new PPC at the press conference.

Photo: Salisbury CFS

[CONTACTS FOR FAULTS WITH CFS COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT]

By: Gary Bau, CFS Communications Coordinator

If you have a fault with CFS communications equipment, please adhere to the following processes:

For GRN Radios (both vehicle and station radios)

- Contact your GRN approved service provider for a changeover radio. The Regional office will have a list of service providers and telephone numbers.
- If it is a portable radio, please send it direct to Motorola Attention to Liz Phillips, Customer Services Administrator, Motorola Australia Pty Ltd, CGISS — Adelaide, No. 2 Second Avenue, Technology Park, Mawson Lakes SA. Phone **(08) 8168-3113**.

For VHF Radios (both vehicle and portables)

- Contact Tetracom P/L **(08) 8357-1500**.

For Fire Station Interface Units and Alpha off air paging decoders

- Contact AEC Products P/L **1800 724 464**
- If you need to send the Alpha into AEC, label with brigade name and send to 10 William St Norwood 5067.

For any fixed phone problems

- Call Telstra **132255**.

For any CFS mobile phones problems

- Call Optus **1300 303 724**.

If you have communications problems during an operation ring the CFS SOCC **(08) 8400 1966**.



ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICANS AUSTRALASIA CONFERENCE

By: Janine Fletcher, Manager Technology Integration



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VOLUNTEER - EQUIPMENT & TECHNOLOGY



>> A diverse range of products were available for viewing at the conference. Photo: APCO Australasia

The Association of Public Safety Communicans Australasia Conference (APCOA) conference was held in Queensland in February 2006.

South Australia was represented at the conference by members from the Justice Department, South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM), State Emergency Service (SES), Country Fire Service (CFS), SA Police (SAPOL) and Department for Administrative Information Systems (DAIS).

APCO Australasia is the premier public safety, communications and IT forum in the Australasian region, and is a chapter of APCO International.

With more than 16,000 members around the world, the APCO network exists to serve the people who manage, operate, maintain and

supply communications systems used to safeguard the lives and property of citizens everywhere.

This conference continues to grow in strength as it provides a specific focus on an important area of the emergency services organisation business.

It provides an excellent opportunity to network with other emergency services organisations with like responsibilities and suppliers within the public safety technology environment.

Key themes mentioned in most presentations were "interoperability" and the rapid advances in technology.

Interoperability is the ability to talk to other agencies in real time at an incident and is an openly talked about but rarely actioned concept in most states.

Many other organisations in other

states have various communications which do not allow for interoperation between agencies.

In South Australia we are fortunate that our Government Radio Network (GRN) has the ability for us to do this, and it occurs quite regularly through the use of Multi Agency Talkgroups.

Given the information from various speakers we need to take a proactive approach and make interoperability genuinely work rather than continuing to put it in the 'Too Hard' basket.

This will require a change of mindset by not only CFS but also other emergency services organisations.

Advances in technology places us in a position to be able to create a vision for the future and expect technology to immediately deliver on our expectations.

This creates a challenging environment, as it is too easy to sit back and do nothing whilst waiting for the next advance. But at the same time it also creates a challenge to address the way we conduct our business today and how we might in the future.

We live in a mobile world and most things that we currently do in fixed locations can be conducted whilst mobile using the new and emerging technologies.

We need to make a conscious decision to continue as we are - or embrace new technology and find new and better ways of doing our business.

It is difficult to present a briefing on all the presentations in this article, however here are some points of interest and relevance.



HURRICANE KATRINA

**Mr Willis Carter, Chief of Communications,
Sheveport Fire Department, Sheveport LA**

This was an interesting presentation as it highlighted how well we do things and how lucky we are in South Australia when compared to what occurs in many areas of the USA.

It appears that each parish, or council as we know them, operates in isolation in relation to telecommunications.

This is problematic in itself, especially as within each parish each emergency service uses and operates their own individual radio

system. Consequently interoperability is nigh on impossible.

The key information from this session was:

- The need for interoperability and common radio systems;
- Appropriate disaster planning in advance;
- Common incident command including a pre plan as to who is in charge;
- The need for adequate funding for communications systems.

COMMUNITY INCIDENT WARNING SYSTEM (CIWS)

**Mr Tony Pearce, Director – Emergency Management
and Security, Office of Emergency Services Commissioner
(Victoria)**

This presentation was on the SMS messaging trial currently being conducted in Victoria in conjunction with Telstra.

It was portrayed as a process rather than a product, with the intent of developing community partnerships with the community being an active participant, not a passive one.

The longer-term intent is for this to be part of an integrated system for all hazards to the community. The first challenge was getting acceptance of the underpinning technology and associated issues such as privacy.

The results of this trial are currently being tabulated and are due shortly.

If this were to become a viable option for all the community a change in political will would be required so that access could be gained to the Integrated Public Number Data Base (the telephone numbers of individual residences), and the cost of telephone calls would need to be significantly reduced.

CFS has built a relationship with the Office of Emergency Services Commissioner (Vic) and will be assessing the results from the trial.

Further information can be gained at: www.justic.vic.gov.au then follow links – Safety – Emergency Management – Research in Emergency Management

COMPLEMENTARY DEVELOPING TECHNOLOGIES AND THEIR RELEVANT TO EMERGENCY SERVICES VPAC

This presentation concentrated on the use of near real-time, high-bandwidth high-availability integrated solutions.

The initial part of this session focused on the use of 'Sensor Networks' that have the ability to monitor our surroundings.

In the case of bushfire, sensors could be used to provide wind

speed, direction and humidity.

This is a key initiative that is being further investigated by CFS today.

The other area of interest was 'Grid Computing' which is about the ability to share major computing resources.

Further information can be gained at: www.Vpac.org and www.gridcomputing.com/gridfaq.html

LONDON'S RESPONSE TO THE JULY 2005 BOMBINGS

**Mr Janson Killens, Operations Manager,
London Ambulance Service (LAS)**

This was an extremely interesting presentation, which highlighted the challenges faced on that day and in the following weeks.

Positive lessons learned from the incident were:

- The value of tried and tested procedures;
- Established cross agency relationships;

- Defined command structures;
- Staff welfare and resilience planning.

What didn't go well:

- Communications, both external and internal;
- Information management;
- Ability to manage expectations.

TELSTRA 3G – THE NETWORK OF THE FUTURE

**Mr Michael Swadling –
Technology Infrastructure Manager, Telstra 3G**

This was another interesting presentation that gave an overview of where mobile networks are heading and their ability to transfer significant amounts of data quickly.

Currently Telstra has three networks, which we know as CDMA, GSM and a 3G network that is shared with Hutchinson Telcoms.

This is poor use of infrastructure.

as much of it is duplicated.

In moving to the next generation of technology, 3G Telstra will roll out their own network on a lower frequency band to the network that they currently share.

3GSM is similar to existing CDMA and rollout will be completed by end of year 2006.

THANK YOU



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VOLUNTEER - THANK YOU CFS

Bushfire assistance - thanks

Many thanks to all those involved in our recent property fire on Friday, 20 January.

With the dedicated efforts of friends, neighbours and numerous Country Fire Service units, a major disaster was avoided.

Special thanks to those who contacted Margaret expressing their concern and offering assistance.

Contrary to some reports the lightning strike was witnessed at approximately 11.50am on the "Wauraltee" property, from where the fire spread rapidly to the Weckerts, Seidels, Hansens and scrubland.

Brian and Margaret Appelbee, "Wauraltee", Yumali.
(Murray Valley Standard, 2 February 2006)

CFS Protectors

My family and I would like to extend a huge thank you to all the amazing CFS personnel who protected our lovely Baudin Beach on Sunday 22 January.

Your skill and dedication is greatly appreciated.

It is unfortunate there is criticism in the community regarding some of the tactics employed during the Dudley fire.

While constructive criticism is

always valuable it is important to look at the bigger picture.

The fire raged for over a week in difficult terrain, and with challenging weather; and not one property or life was lost.

You are definitely all Australia Day heroes to us.

Natasha Kearslake and family
Baudin Beach
(The Islander, 2 February 2006)

CFS heroes

The Australia Day honors award should go to the bravest people I know – namely the CFS members who risk their lives daily in our fire-prone state.

Pam Waugh, Rostrevor
(The Advertiser, 27 January 2006)

City firefighters

I pay tribute to the selflessness of the people from the suburbs of Adelaide, who went to Cowell to fight fires and then to the Flinders Ranges, at a moment's notice last week, and stayed as long as they were needed, missing out on all the celebrations.

Many of these volunteers were young folk who had given many hours learning to be firefighters. They give many hours to

practicing for such emergencies, just trying to make a difference in the community.

I take my hat off to the much maligned CFS, and I hope this time the people they went to help appreciate that all their efforts are voluntary and out of concern for their fellow men.

Eileen M Christison
Hackham
(The Advertiser, 5 January 2006)

CFS volunteers to the rescue

**By: Leanne Adams,
CFS Incident Management Project Officer**

There are not too many things more stressful than breaking down during peak hour traffic and it happened to me twice in 15 minutes.

I was travelling in my private vehicle from a course at Brunkunga, and as I was coming towards the city I noticed my gauges were not functioning. At the toll-gate intersection the car stalled and refused to start.

During a panicked mobile phone call to my husband I recognised the face a smiling CFS volunteer (Chris Kiessling from Burnside) offering help. After getting me out of the intersection and getting my car started again he sent me on my way to travel the short distance home.

However, I was soon in trouble again at another major intersection only to be assisted by James Pinkerton (who I later discovered is a CFS volunteer at Bridgewater) who got me off the road again and got the car started (which was later towed away).

I was struck by the coincidence of being rescued by two CFS volunteers but not at all surprised that the two people that offered assistance were CFS volunteers.

Thanks so much to those two specific volunteers and to volunteers who go out of their way everyday to help people on and off CFS duties.

A huge thank you

A huge thank you and well done to all those who were in any way involved in fighting the recent fires on Dudley Peninsula.

It was a heroic effort under terrible conditions.

One firefighter I spoke to modestly shrugged it off and said, "We were only doing what we're trained to do; it's the community who deserve the

thanks for all the support they gave us."

But, as relative newcomers to KI, we were in awe of the way everyone, fire crews and community alike, swung into action and did the job. You *all* deserve a medal.

Less Montanjees and Pat Goodwin
Penneshaw
(The Islander, 2 February 2006)

A final thank you to CFS

Dear Editor,

I know that you have already received letters from many people expressing their thanks for the heroic and prolonged efforts of the CFS, both local and from the mainland in dealing with the spreading fire from Mouth Flat.

Because of the fickle changes in winds over the week, the blaze threatened a number of houses and the lives of humans and of livestock not to mention fencing and pasturing, sheds and machinery.

However, I would on behalf of our family, like to add my thanks and express our admiration of the CFS – at times protecting others properties when their own were endangered – and for the wonderful community support for the firefighters maintaining communications, providing food, and in many other ways at a very worrying and trying time.

Dick Rischbieth
American Beach
(The Islander, 23 February)

CFS action praised

We would like to thank all the farmers and CFS volunteers who helped to fight the fire started by lightning at Apoinga (via Robertstown) on 21 and 22 January.

Their prompt action and efforts in the extreme weather conditions

and their continued vigilance for several days after the fire had been contained ensured our safety and protected the properties of the people of our districts.

David and Lyn Nicholls
Black Springs
(Stock Journal, 16 February 2006)

Thank you to all CFS volunteers

We are the owners of Lot 101 Delabole Road, Willunga which was sadly burnt on Monday 16 January 2006.

We would like to pass on our sincere thanks to each and every person involved including, all volunteer firefighters, aircraft pilots, coordination departments, officials in charge, machinery operators, police and all locals that came to offer help and support.

It was a truly inspirational sight to see land and aircraft from all over Adelaide working side by side.

Having not actually witnessed a bushfire before we were speechless at the number of volunteers that attended the blaze. All with kind words both during and after the blaze was contained.

It was unfortunate that the fire jumped into our property, especially on such an inaccessible piece of land. Sadly we did lose most of our feed, but with no stock losses we feel extremely lucky.

Our two young boys think of you all as heroes because you saved 'their boys' (our steers)

So please take care out there and keep up the 'amazing' job you all do – you are all heroes to us.

I know the neighbours around our farm feel the same way if not more because you saved their homes.

It seems such a little word, but from our family to you all –

THANK YOU

Kind Regards,
Robert Minnis and Cheryl Nash

Fire thanks

Sir:- May we, through *The Courier*, thank all those who fought the fire which broke out on our neighbour's property at Kanmantoo on Thursday 19 January.

Due to their combined efforts, property and stock losses were avoided. The pinpoint work of the water bombers and the response of the CFS were great for morale

during the crisis, but we would like to offer special thanks to the local farmers who arrived quietly, did a sterling job and quietly faded away when the work was done.

Thanks neighbours.
Roz and Neil Manuel
Kanmantoo
(The Courier, 25 Jan)

Thanks to firefighters

We would like to express our sincere thanks to all firefighters involved in battling the recent crop fire at Reeves Plains.

Although it was unfortunate our neighbours lost a crop, it is certain that prompt action saved houses and livestock nearby.

It was reassuring to us all in the Reeves Plains district to witness such a rapid and comprehensive response by so many CFS units and well

prepared, willing neighbours.

As adjacent landowners we were at risk of losing crops, livestock, homestead, sheds and a sanctuary of rare native plants if the wind had changed and/or the fire had spread.

Our grateful thanks to everyone involved.

Neil Gregor Nancy & Allan Bennett
Reeves Plains
(The Bunyip, 21 December 2005)



FACES IN THE CROWD

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VOLUNTEER - FACES IN THE CROWD

SPEAKING WITH [JULIE LOVETT]

Julie Lovett was one of the first females to join the Burnside brigade more than 30 years ago. She recently shared a few of her thoughts with *'Volunteer'*.



As a 15 year old, just out of school Julie was seeking direction in her life and she thought the CFS would be a bit of fun.

"I used to ride my horse up and down the street past the parade at the station on a Thursday night," Julie said.

"I was looking for some direction and purpose in my life at the time and the brigade helped steer me down the right path.

"Even back in those days this brigade was quite progressive, most brigades were directing women to the kitchen but I was able to assist in the communications room.

"I wasn't allowed to go on the appliances until I was 18, so I

specialised in the radio room for a number of years."

On a changing brigade

Julie says the brigade has always blossomed with a younger membership.

"Burnside has always been different in that regard. Most brigades tend to have a larger proportion of older members, whereas even when I joined, we had a large number of young people," she said.

"It is good to see some keen young people around willing to keep the brigade moving forward.

"We've always prided ourselves on looking at equipment above the standard level, the Volvo appliance

(Burnside Pumper) is a perfect example of that.

"In 1982 it was the best money could buy, some people criticised us for purchasing such a state-of-the-art appliance, however it's stood the test of time, it's still going strong."

The State HAZMAT role is one that also continues to change.

"HAZMAT started out as a small state support function but it has now evolved to be a highly specialised role requiring a big commitment to training and operations," Julie said.

"We have a few members that concentrate on it whilst everyone else provides support.

"The increased CBR threat means that everyone has to be familiar with new techniques and training to ensure we are ready for any scenario."

On 11 January

Burnside were first on the scene at the Mount Osmond fire, and their

actions helped save a number of houses.

"The fire at Mount Osmond was a huge save, the conditions that day were similar to what we saw on Ash Wednesday, if it wasn't for some great work by CFS crews who were very quickly on the scene and the heli-tankers we could have had a significant problem," Julie said.

"It was a boost to brigade morale, our guys really felt like they made a difference that day, although responding back to smoking stumps and trees for weeks after got a bit tiresome."

Julie also spends many hours as a Senior Firefighter with the Region 1 Operations brigade.

"In 1994 when we sent crews to New South Wales I was asked by our Group Officer to assist in the Regional Office with organising the deployment.

"This was my first taste of incident

management and it was something I enjoyed," Julie said.

"I then joined the Operations brigade and haven't looked back since.

"The brigade has come along way since then, initially we were just answering telephones in the office, now we have significant incident management roles during incidents.

"During the fire season I equally share my time between Burnside and the Operations brigade."

On the VFBA / WOCFS

As a delegate for the VFBA for 15 years and a member of the Women of the CFS (WOCFS) committee, Julie says things are looking good for the future of the service.

"The VFBA is looking strong, and is pushing us forward in a positive direction - there are some good initiatives being developed.

"We just need to try to get everyone looking at the bigger picture, rather

than just concentrating on their own small patch.

"The Women of the CFS committee has been instrumental in pushing forward issues affecting females, and the results are starting to become clear when you compare us to some of the fire services interstate, we are a long way ahead

"Things have come a long way from the days when women remained in the kitchen making sandwiches.

"These days, it's great to see both men and women working equally on the fireground and in operational support roles," Julie said.

As a self-employed mobile hairdresser, Julie has now found a good balance in her life.

"I've got a good balance between my work, volunteering and sporting life. I think it's an important thing to have to keep an even focus on things so that you don't get burnt out."



SPEAKING WITH

[PETER SMALLACOMBE] AFSM

A desire to "put something back into the community" saw Peter Smallacombe join the Gladstone brigade in 1978. And with a strong belief that in small towns everyone helps out in some way, he is still helping as a member of the CFS, 27 years later.

Peter grew up in the Gladstone area, completing an apprenticeship as a fitter and turner at the Port Pirie BHP smelters in the 1970s. He

then repaired farm machinery for a short while before moving to the Laura Hospital where he has worked for the last 22 years as a maintenance officer. He is married to Heather and together they have three children.

In 1984, Peter as a firefighter skipped the ranks to be elected as brigade Captain. Throughout his time with the Gladstone brigade he attended many incidents and had ▶



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VOLUNTEER - FACES IN THE CROWD

FACES IN THE CROWD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 57



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VOLUNTEER - FACES IN THE CROWD

the opportunity to participate in a variety of training courses, including Breathing Apparatus and Hazmat.

Peter was elected Group Officer of the Rocky River Group in 1994, and when they amalgamated with the Jamestown group in 1997, Peter became the Bundaleer Group Officer - a position he holds with pride today.

Peter says the "CFS has had many great moments, the opportunity to travel to New South Wales in the summer of 2002 and to Victoria in 2003 was one of the biggest highlights."

"The CFS really showed how professional we are and it was an honour to work with the crews on those deployments."

On receiving awards

Peter is also very proud of the two commendations he has received from his work with the CFS.

"In 2003 I received a ministerial commendation, and in January this year I was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM). That holds pride and place above everything, it's just a huge honour to have that awarded to you," he said.

Peter also received the Gladstone Community Senior Award in October 2005, as a part of Gladstone's

125th birthday celebrations.

"People don't join the CFS for the awards and accolades, but when you receive something like the AFSM you can't knock it back, it makes me very proud."

On changes in the CFS

Peter believes the amount of changes and training that occurs within the CFS does sometimes make it difficult for volunteers.

"Most people however do understand that change is necessary to increase our safety on the fireground," he said.

"It can be a challenge to keep the crews adequately trained to the required standards, and since I joined in all those years ago, the CFS has undergone enormous change.

"We have transformed from a rural fire brigade with little command and control, to a professional organisation who continues to offer great service to the community.

"I do think we have to be careful not to overload the volunteers, it's often hard to absorb continual change and we need to ensure that people don't burn out. There are only so many people in country towns.

"Every now and then we lose a couple of members due to people

moving on but then it sorts itself out as someone else moves into the town and joins the brigade.

"All the brigades in our group work hard to meet the Standard Fire Emergency Covers for membership. Our fire fighters are committed to the job and know they have a big responsibility.

"During the fire season we always respond two brigades to an incident, we have a very high fuel load in the Bundaleer forest as well and there is always the potential threat to local crops.

"We can't afford to be complacent in our response. When the pressure is on everyone pulls together and performs."

On the CFS doing well

Peter believes that the CFS has a solid ethic of openness and transparency.

"I believe the CFS is up front and open. If there is an issue that needs to be addressed they do their best to resolve it," he said.

"That really stands out as important to me, and it's a philosophy that I like to maintain in my own life.

"I am also a firm believer in praise and accolades being handed around, it's the guys on the frontline that are putting themselves in danger, they're

the ones who deserve the awards."

Peter is also pleased to see new equipment coming into the region and the group.

"Brigades in Region Four are now beginning to replace their old vehicles with refurbished appliances," he said.

"Our group would have no problems receiving a vehicle that has spent time in a busier brigade, it just makes sense."

Another area which just makes sense to Peter is a sound relationship with other emergency services in the area.

"We have a great working relationship with the other emergency services in the area.

"We work very closely with the Laura SES at motor vehicle accidents, everyone just gets on with the job and there is never a problem.

"We're all people often doing a very similar job, but just arriving in different trucks and wearing different colour turn-out gear.

"We are in a small community and everyone has to support each other, so there is no room for inter-service rivalries, at the end of the day we're all just neighbours helping each other out," Peter said.

SPEAKING WITH

[BOB DAVIS]

By: Brenton Ragless

Bob Davis, Captain of the Mount Gambier and Port MacDonnell Group Operations and Logistics brigade, has welcomed the arrival of the brigade's new Toyota Cruiser Operations vehicle.

"It's a far cry from the first vehicle I ever went on," said Bob as he recalled the days of responding on the back of the district fire unit.

At 59 years of age, Bob still lives on the OB Flat property that was first established by his Great Grandfather in 1858.

"Attending to bushfires with my

family was just a normal part of growing up on the farm. It's the very culture of the rural lifestyle, and once it's part of who you are, it remains a part of your personality forever," Bob said.

"But the personality of the CFS has definitely changed," he continued. "Originally we'd respond to two or three bushfires a year, have an annual meeting and there'd be no paper work. As we all know, the role has changed dramatically since then!"

Bob is a retired dairy farmer but has no intention of retiring from his



CFS commitment. In 2005, he completed his 40th year as a CFS volunteer.

"It goes beyond just a community service. When the brigade gets together for training, incidents or other meetings, it's not out of obligation, it's out of friendship and a sense of family involvement," Bob said.

"I enjoy what I do and consider it a privilege to be the Captain of a brigade."

From the Witness Stand

Bob recalls how he spent two days on the witness stand during the enquiry into the Ash Wednesday bushfires of 1983.

"We didn't have any legal representation back then so we really didn't know what to expect or how to really answer the questions. But I distinctly remember looking around in that court room and it was obvious that most people had no real comprehension of what I was explaining to them what I saw," Bob said.

"I'd tell them how the flames were 600 to 800 feet high in the air, that the fire was in complete control and

there was nothing mankind could do to stop it. But their response was no different to if I had told them I witnessed a car accident."

"I've been watching with interest the progress of the current Coronial Investigation on the Eyre Peninsula. I can see more and more people wanting to be compensated after events like this and perhaps its something that we as an emergency service need to come to expect in this current day and age."

"I don't think people will stop volunteering their time for fear of being sued. There just needs to be the support and perhaps even the training and education that the potential for litigation is very real and we need to prepare against it with every job we respond to," Bob said.

Pagers - A blessing or a curse?

"While I think technology is great, I do wonder what our volunteer callout numbers would be like if we didn't have the pager messages that provide us with text," said Bob.

"For most of my years as a member of the CFS, the telephone and fire stations sirens have been used to

alert volunteers to a brigade response.

"It was only about a dozen or so years ago that we were issued pagers that just 'beeped' to alert us to a brigade response. That was good because we always had fire fighters who enthusiastically responded to the station," he said.

"But with the current pager system, which is text based, members can read what the incident is and therefore can choose if they want to respond. If it's nothing more than a fixed alarm or a rubbish bin fire, it's harder to get people responding to the station. People are more limited with their availability these days so they have to make those choices.

"On the other hand, it obviously helps us as volunteers to prepare for what we might encounter on the fireground not to mention obtaining critical information such as fire bans and severe weather forecasts.

"So, I don't really know what the answer is. However, text-alert pager messages have certainly meant that all members are better informed of CFS activity than we ever have been," Bob said.

Recruiting new volunteers

"The CFS is one of a hundred or so volunteer-based organisations in SA that people could choose to join if they wanted to," Bob said.

"Most of those organisations will have you involved on the front line straight away. In turn, the volunteers feel like they're making an immediate contribution and are more enthusiastic with their involvement.

"As for the CFS, it's six months or more before the probationary period is finished, the police check is complete, the members have completed their first training course, received all their personal equipment and be able to ride in the fire truck cabin.

"Everyone agrees it's a real privilege being a CFS member and it's a huge responsibility. Obviously there are requirements that need to be met but it's a fairly involved process to become a CFS volunteer and I wonder if this process was streamlined whether we'd have recruits stick around for longer," he said.



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VOLUNTEER - PHAMOUS PHOTOS



<< Dusk on the northern sector at the Robertstown fire, Sun.

Photo: Alan Julian, Cherry Gardens



<< After a hard fight at Willunga.

Photo: Emmanuel Cusack of Littlehampton CFS

✓ BELOW LEFT:
Bomber appearing out of dust storm created by other bomber taking off at Burra Fire - Dec 05.

Photo: Stephanie Thomas, Stirling North CFS

✓ BELOW:
Aldgate CFS crew pumping out the flooded cellar of a local business during the flooding in November 2005.

Photo: Tina Stoeger, Bridgewater CFS



KEEP THOSE CAMERAS SNAPPING!

Send your photos into Volunteer and help everyone reminisce, laugh and show the CFS at its best.

You could win a mystery prize to the value of \$50 by entering the Volunteer photo competition.

PHAMOUS PHOTOS

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY:

1. The competition is open to amateur photographers only.
2. Photographs may be of any subject but must either include CFS personnel in turnout gear or uniform, or include CFS events or incidents attended by CFS brigades.
3. Photographs must have been taken by the entrant and the photograph or its negative must not be enhanced by computer or other means.
4. The size of each photograph must not exceed 210 x 295mm (A4 size).
5. Only one entry per person per quarterly competition.
6. All entries become the property of the CFS. The CFS may use the entry for any of its non-profit publications or displays with due acknowledgment made of the photographer.
7. Please enclose your name, address, brigade (if applicable), telephone number and a description of the photo on a separate sheet of paper.



^ CFS involved in back burning operations at Western Flat.
Photo: Rex Hall

<< Air Base Ops - Burra Fire.
Photo: Stephanie Thomas
Stirling North CFS

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VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT BRANCH
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CONTACT DETAILS

OBITUARY

IRENE WILSON ANDERSON

In memory of firefighter Irene Wilson Anderson (formerly Semmler).

Born 4 August 1935. Irene passed away peacefully on 7 September 2005 and was a past member of Echunga CFS and the past Secretary and President of what was Mylor brigade.

OBITUARY

JOSEPH MICHAEL KAVANAGH

In memory of Joseph Michael Kavanagh.

Born 1st January 1949 and passed away on 20 February 2006. Joseph is formerly from Echunga CFS and was the past Fire Control officer and Lieutenant.



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Supplying Essential Safety Equipment

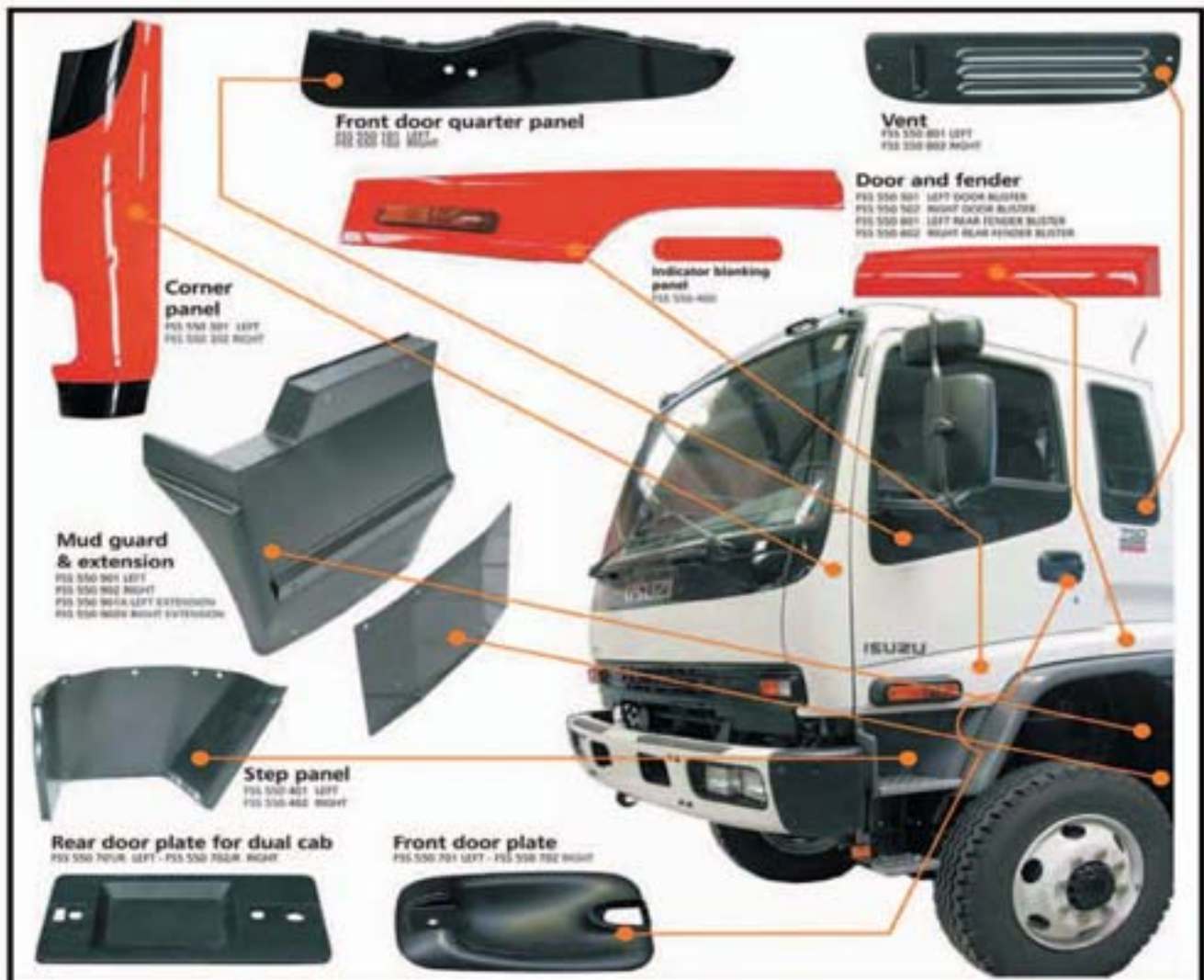
Aluminium Replacement Safety Panels For Isuzu & Mitsubishi Canter Trucks

Why install aluminium replacement safety panels ?

Plastic panels are commonplace on most modern day commercial vehicles, however under adverse conditions they have proved to be inadequate in situations of extreme heat. In these situations (eg attending bush fires), vehicle losses have occurred because the original plastic door handle plates have become distorted, i.e. warped to such an extent that opening the doors to gain entry to the vehicle became impossible. Other parts like door blisters and vents have become unusable and non serviceable after only a short time in use necessitating expensive replacement of the parts which only results in them suffering the same fate as their predecessors.

Newlans Coach builders have a solution to this problem in the form of exact fitting reproductions of the original plastic parts in lightweight aluminium. Fitting them to a vehicle is a one time investment which will reduce the risk of injury and vehicle losses due to users not being able to access the vehicle due to heat damaged door panels etc. Newlans panels are more resistant to heat and once correctly fitted have to our knowledge never required replacement. Also being aluminium they will not rust. Even in an accident situation where an Aluminium Panel is damaged from impact it can be repaired where the original plastic panel usually can not.

Our panels are provided already painted in fleet colours such as, Signal Red, Coach White, and N.S.W. Rural Fire Service Orange. Newlans Replacement Aluminium Safety Panels are already in use by fire attending crews and other field service groups Australia wide.



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