

2025

SA Country
Fire Service
Yearbook





331

structure fires



1,941

rural fires



10,105

incidents
responded to



169

HAZMAT incidents



2,229

vehicle-related incidents



3,064

special service incidents

(includes tree downs, flooding, severe weather,
assisting other agencies)

Contents

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Views and opinions expressed through the contributions in this publication are not necessarily those of the CFS or Government of South Australia.

CFS Yearbook has been compiled by CFS Communications Team.

Acknowledgement

In the spirit of reconciliation, the CFS acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

Contributors

We acknowledge CFS Promotions Unit as the source of many of the photos in this year's publication and thank everyone who shared their photos and stories.

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The year that rain forgot



The 2024/2025 year will be remembered as one of change for the SA Country Fire Service – and for the drought that has gripped our state.

I want to start by acknowledging the Emergency Services Minister the Hon Emily Bourke MLC, who joined us at a time of heightened operational activity. I know Minister Bourke is proud of the work of the CFS and its volunteers and aims to meet as many of you as she can. I would also like to acknowledge the support and leadership of the Hon Dan Cregan during his tenure as Emergency Services Minister.

I also thank former Deputy Chief Officer Georgie Cornish for her leadership and significant contributions to the CFS. We all wish her success at the Department of Primary Industries and Regions South Australia. We have welcomed Deputy Chief Officer, Paul Seager, to our team. Paul is a proud South Australian who has experience working and volunteering across SA and New South Wales, and I am excited to have him in this critical role.

The past year has shown our agency's broad reach, with CFS personnel deployed within Australia and overseas. Our people supported fire responses in Canada and the United States – as well as flooding in Queensland and fires in Tasmania, Victoria and the Northern Territory. Whenever we send people on deployments, I am always impressed by the way they so admirably represent our organisation.

Here at home, extreme dryness and record-low rainfall have taken a serious toll. Adelaide saw only 22mm this summer, with January and February receiving just 6mm combined. The soil dryness index has hit unprecedented levels, deeply affecting our regional and farming communities. Until meaningful rain arrives, please look after yourselves and each other. It's okay to speak up – your wellbeing matters. The drought is taking a toll on so many people, and I remind you that it is not weak to speak. Know that we stand beside you and that we understand that a strong regional SA is critical to the state and the CFS.

The drought is taking a toll on so many people, and I remind you that it is not weak to speak.

The dry conditions influenced major fires at Wilmington, in the South East and the Lower South East Complex. As always, the CFS has ensured that the losses and impacts of these fires were significantly minimised. Your work's success is perhaps captured best by acknowledging major events of our past. This year marks the 20th anniversary of Wangary and the 10th of Pinery giving occasion to reflect on both the past and how far we've come as an agency.

Beyond major fires, your daily responses to structure fires, car accidents and other emergencies carries a cost. Each response is time away from your jobs, family and other commitments and, at times, results in exposure to trauma and stress. In addition, we have seen physical injuries to some of our volunteers. Firefighting is dangerous, and I urge you to prioritise your health and wellbeing when attending an incident.

I am incredibly grateful for your continued hard work, dedication, and professionalism and remain proud of all you have achieved this year.

Thank you and, as always, stay safe.

Brett Loughlin AFSM
Chief Officer



I am incredibly grateful for your continued hard work, dedication, and professionalism and remain proud of all you have achieved this year.



Protecting what matters most



Growing up on a farm on the Yorke Peninsula, I saw first-hand how vital the SA Country Fire Service is to our local communities.

Time and again, I watched neighbours come together through the CFS to protect what matters most, our families, our homes, and our community.

Now, as the Minister for Emergency Services, I'm deeply honoured to support this incredible organisation and the dedicated volunteers who form its backbone.

Within the first three weeks of taking on this role, I had the privilege of speaking at the annual Bushfire Resilience Day. It was a moment to honour those we have lost, reflect on the far-reaching impacts of bushfires, and recognise the enduring strength and resilience that define the CFS.

South Australia leads the nation in bushfire preparedness. We have deployed our largest-ever aerial firefighting fleet, and recent upgrades to CFS trucks and equipment mean we are better resourced than ever before. Our 13,500 volunteer firefighters embody courage and commitment, as demonstrated during the Mount Remarkable National Park fire near Wilmington, the first Level 3 Incident since the 2019/20 season. The terrain was challenging, but the response was swift, professional, and inspiring.

We also continue to learn from each bushfire event. Every incident brings new insights for government, emergency services, and the broader community, helping us refine our strategies and improve our preparedness.

Yet, while the CFS stands ready, bushfire safety is a shared responsibility. Each of us plays a role in preparation. Complacency can be our greatest threat, and being proactive is key to protecting lives and property.

I would like to sincerely thank the former Minister for Emergency Services, Dan Cregan MP, for his dedication and service in this role.

This portfolio is deeply personal to me, and I want our CFS volunteers and staff to know my door is always open. I look forward to continuing to meet with brigades across the state, listening, learning, and supporting the vital work you do.

Stay safe, stay prepared, and stay connected. Thank you.

Emily Bourke
Minister for Emergency Services
and Correctional Services

Busy year or not a busy year, that is the question



Over the years, a busy fire season was benchmarked by the number of grass, scrub and bushfire responses by our dedicated volunteers.

However, things have changed. CFS volunteers are highly active every day of the year, whether it be training, maintenance, administration duties, attending responses that fall within our core business as a fire and rescue agency or, increasingly, supporting other emergency services organisations.

The 2024/25 fire season presented some challenges. In addition to the day-to-day operations, volunteers shouldered the load of campaign fire events in Regions 4 and 5, whilst other regions dealt with protracted incidents and provided strike teams to assist our colleagues.

As CFS volunteers, you should be proud of your achievements and the value you bring to your communities. The enormous social and economic benefit you provide South Australia is irreplaceable. The value of lives, assets, structures, and the environment that you have saved is immeasurable.

The CFS Volunteers Association (CFSVA) extends its sincere gratitude to family members and employers who selflessly support our volunteers, and for the self-employed that put their businesses on hold to attend incidents. Without this network there would be no CFS.

CFSVA works closely with the CFS Executive Leadership Team (ELT). Deputy Chief Officer Georgie Cornish, Executive Director Business Tammy Moffatt and Executive Director Operations Cameron Devey have all left the CFS this year and we thank them for their tireless efforts and commitment to the CFS.

Mid 2024, the CFSVA Executive met with Chief Officer Brett Loughlin AFSM and conveyed the volunteers' concerns relating to the structure of the CFS, the feeling that the CFS was seen as a government department, with an increasing corporate prominence. The chief and the ELT listened, recently releasing a revised structure, clearly identifying operations as the primary focus, inclusive of realigning training into the operations stream.

We welcome Deputy Chief Officer Paul Seager back to the CFS. We look forward to working with him to further enhance the new structure and the CFS' support to volunteers.

After strong lobbying by the CFSVA, Government of South Australia provided \$817,000 for a full building audit of CFS locations across the state. This will enable a comprehensive and factual database of the status of current facilities. This information will form the basis for future upgrades and station replacements, a long overdue project.

The CFSVA continues to meet with the CFS executive and the Emergency Services Minister's office monthly. This open communication creates an effective and timely communication process on matters raised through our branches which impact our front-line volunteers. As an example, previous discussions have centred around training, facilities, support mechanisms for volunteers and future strategies to ensure a sustainable volunteering environment.

The association recognises the importance of appropriate training and has been working closely with the CFS to implement a structural training package as a priority, in line with our legislated responsibilities.

CFS volunteers do inherently dangerous and demanding tasks. They must be supported by a well-funded organisation. The CFSVA has been benchmarking SA against the best practice standards of sister agencies in Australia. Evidence shows SA is falling behind in both funding and staff-to-volunteer ratios. We are concerned by this trend and are working to implement strategies to ensure future growth and success of the CFS to support volunteers and the community.

Jeff Clark
CFSVA President 🏠



Major incidents



Wilmington fire

The Wilmington fire, which began at about 4:30 pm on 3 February 2025 in the Flinders Ranges, marked South Australia's first Level 3 incident since the devastating fires of the 2019/2020 Fire Danger Season.

The fire burned 5,414 hectares in steep, hard-to-reach areas of Mount Remarkable National Park. Sparked by a lightning strike, dry conditions saw the fire take off quickly in the rugged terrain and it was clear aerial support would play a major role in the fire's management.

A total of 1,190 personnel from the CFS, Department for Environment and Water (DEW), local Farm Fire Units (FFU) and other partner agencies worked tirelessly to control the fire. To support firefighting efforts, a locally based Incident Management Team was implemented for 12 days.

The tireless efforts of firefighters who were working in challenging conditions were bolstered by the work of CFS aircraft, which conducted 554 drops, totalling 1.4 million litres of water and retardant.

Through the hard work of everyone involved, the fire was mostly contained within the park's boundaries with no structures lost. Meanwhile, inside the park, thanks to the hard work of volunteer firefighters the accommodation facility at Alligator Lodge was spared, with only a toilet block sustaining damage.

As cooler weather and increased humidity arrived, firefighters reinforced the fire's perimeter and, under these favourable conditions, it was slowly brought under control and handed over to DEW on 25 February.

Throughout this challenging time, the support from the local community was overwhelming. Donations and supplies poured in from the Wilmington community and surrounding areas, helping to sustain the efforts of those on the frontlines.

The community's gratitude for the firefighters was evident, as was their appreciation for the public updates provided through the special Wilmington webpage set up by the CFS, which kept everyone informed throughout the crisis.

The outpouring of support from the Wilmington and surrounding communities was greatly appreciated by our firefighters who worked long hours in tough terrain and hot weather.



Lower South East complex

A major lightning event on Monday 10 March, sparked over 180 fires across the south east, including the significant Fox and Woolmit Fires. Around 880 volunteers responded, working continuously for over two weeks.

The Woolmit Fire ignited near Reedy Creek on Tuesday 11 March in dense scrubland, posing access and containment challenges. Approximately 65 CFS firefighters, supported by National Parks and Wildlife Service staff and Farm Fire Units, tackled the blaze with assistance from six aircraft and heavy machinery. The fire was contained by the evening of 13 March, after burning about 130 hectares of native scrub.

The Fox Fire, the largest in the complex, began on 15 March in private native scrubland. Strong dry winds drove rapid fire spread. More than 100 firefighters from across SA and Victoria responded, including personnel from the CFS, Country Fire Authority (CFA), Department for Environment and Water (DEW), Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS), Forest Industry Brigades, and Farm Fire Units. Support came from two Large Air Tankers from NSW and Victoria, along with SA-based aircraft. Favourable weather conditions helped crews strengthen control lines. The fire was contained on 17 March, having burned around 600 hectares and impacted one uninhabited dwelling.

A Level 3 Incident Management Team (L3 IMT) was established in Naracoorte, the second L3 IMT of the fire season, marking the highest level of operational activity in South Australia since 2019/2020. Strike teams also arrived from interstate, the first such large-scale support in a decade.

SA State Emergency Service set up accommodation for over 100 people at the Naracoorte Showgrounds, including tents and stretcher beds. The Salvation Army provided meals and rest facilities, while St John Ambulance delivered onsite first aid support.

All fires were declared controlled on 20 March. The commitment and teamwork demonstrated during this extended emergency were vital in protecting communities and are deeply appreciated.

Ngarkat fires

On the 10 March 2025 a band of lightning moved across the south east of South Australia. At 9:49pm there were reports of a grass fire started by lightning in the Ngarkat Conservation Park. Due to the location, crews had difficulty in accessing the fire overnight. Despite that, it was determined early on that there were two fires burning in the Ngarkat Conservation Park, which were consequently named the Mount Rescue Fire and Piggery Track Fire.

Heavy machinery was engaged as soon as possible to assist with operations. A reconnaissance flight was also planned for the morning of 11 March to assist with intelligence gathering. Once the reconnaissance flight was overhead, further aircraft were requested and dispatched, assisting ground crews throughout the duration of the fires.

A Level 2 Incident Management Team was formed and worked out of Region 3 Headquarters for the duration of the incident, working alongside the Regional Command Centre.

After six days of hard work by CFS volunteers, National Parks and Wildlife Service personnel, heavy machinery and CFS Aviation, the Ngarkat fires were declared as contained on the 16 March 2025. As a result of this hard work, the fire was limited to 9,423 hectares, and crews were successful in protecting the habitat of the nationally endangered Mallee Whipbird and Mallee Emu Wren.

Thank you to volunteers from across the state who deployed to assist Region 3 with the Ngarkat fires.



Penfield fire

A fast-moving grass fire ignited at Penfield, near the Edinburgh Royal Australia Air Force (RAAF) Base under hot, dry, and windy conditions on Saturday, 2 November.

Fire crews from the CFS, MFS, and the RAAF responded quickly to mitigate the risk to locals and a 'Watch and Act - Leave Now' alert was issued.

The Penfield fire provided various challenges for firefighters who were concerned about nearby residential properties, a retirement village, glasshouses, and RAAF Base.

Black smoke from burning plastic impacted firefighter visibility, while Region 2 Operations and Air Operations Brigades provided additional support, indicating the seriousness of the risk.

Region 2 Regional Command Centre, already activated due to Total Fire Bans, assisted in supporting firefighters with the challenges this fire created.

Due to the Northern Community Residential Village's proximity to the incident, residents were advised to shelter in place. There was some initial confusion and concern among residents and their families, however the CFS, SA Ambulance Service and SA Police provided updates to 150 village residents at a community meeting to reassure them.

Despite initial frustrations, many residents expressed gratitude for the emergency response and protection provided to them.

The Penfield fire was attended by 38 trucks and received significant media coverage, putting our strong volunteer response in the limelight.

By 6pm, having burnt 32 hectares, the fire was contained. Crews remained on scene to monitor hotspots overnight, with some flare-ups and even a bee swarm complicating the concluding efforts.

Noting some preparedness issues among residents, Region 2 staff later hosted a Bushfire Ready session at the retirement village attended by 70 residents. Further workshops are planned prior to next Fire Danger Season.



Mitre 10 fire

On Saturday 5 April 2025, 55 CFS volunteers responded to a significant commercial structure fire at the Tumby Bay Mitre 10 on South Australia's Lower Eyre Peninsula.

Crews were called to the scene just before 3pm, deploying 9 trucks and working closely with the Metropolitan Fire Service, SA Police, and SA Ambulance Service.

Thanks to the quick and coordinated efforts of all responders, the fire was contained before it could spread to neighbouring properties. Firefighters also protected a 150-square-metre section of the timber yard at the property's rear, limiting damage and preventing further disruption to local businesses.

Hazardous Materials (HazMat) crews monitored air quality and managed fire water run-off, while breathing apparatus operators worked inside the structure under dangerous conditions, using self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) to ensure their safety.

This incident serves as a testament to our volunteer firefighters' skill, professionalism, and commitment during a critical response. Their ability to respond rapidly, manage complex hazards, and work seamlessly with other emergency services was critical in containing the situation.

Following the fire, an After-Action Review was conducted to refine response strategies and strengthen future operations.



International deployments

Escalating wildfires in the USA and Canada in 2024 prompted a call for assistance, with South Australian emergency services answering the call.

Canada

Twelve skilled personnel from the CFS and Department for Environment and Water were deployed to Alberta and British Columbia in July, supporting incident management and fireground leadership amid hundreds of active fires. Among them was Divisional Commander Phil Tapscott from Region 4 Operations, who described the experience as an honour.

“These opportunities reaffirm the high quality of what we do in the CFS,” he said.

“I was humbled to support Canadian firefighters and apply the skills I’ve gained while also learning new ones.”

United States of America

In August, the CFS deployed an eight-member crew to the USA—the first such deployment since 2018. Joining a contingent of 66 Australian firefighters, they supported the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) across Oregon and Washington. Working for up to 40 days in challenging desert and mountain conditions, crews assisted in managing around 100 fires, over 80 of them uncontained.

Chief Officer Brett Loughlin AFSM said the deployments not only offered vital international support but also enriched local expertise.

“Our members are highly regarded worldwide, and their experiences overseas directly benefit our communities,” he said.

“

A special thank you to the families and loved ones of those deployed. We understand these deployments can be challenging, and your support plays a crucial role in making this possible.

Interstate deployments

South Australian volunteers and staff were deployed across Australia this year to assist with flooding in North Queensland and fires in Victoria, Tasmania and the Northern Territory.

Deployments began with CFS staff and volunteers supporting the Northern Territory’s Incident Management Team, with seven deployments from June to October 2024.

Then in February 2025, CFS brigades provided cross-border support to our Victorian neighbours, including battling a blaze in the Little Desert National Park. Firefighters from the state’s South East and Department for Environment and Water (DEW) assisted Victorian crews, supported by State Emergency Service (SES) crews who helped manage staging areas.

At the same time, two CFS deployments, comprising of 10 personnel went to Queensland to assist with emergency response and recovery efforts to parts of the state impacted by flood waters. There were two further Queensland deployments of 38 volunteers in March.

Tasmania’s call for assistance arrived in early March, with a volunteer and then a staff member deployed to assist with a significant bushfire in the state’s west caused by lightning strikes the month prior.

South Australian CFS members should be incredibly proud of their dedicated service, providing crucial assistance to communities in need.

– Brett Loughlin

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Major projects

Strengthening incident management across SA

Over the past year, the EM Merge team has progressed development of a more consistent and capable incident management approach for the CFS. Focused on improving coordination, communication, and capability, EM Merge is shaping how the service prepares for and responds to major incidents.

Regional visits have been vital, with the team engaging Group Officers, Volunteer Management Committees, and Incident Management Team (IMT) volunteers. These sessions sparked feedback and reinforced support for the EM Merge model across South Australia.

In Region 3, 18 Group Officers joined regional staff and Department for Environment and Water personnel to explore the current and proposed models, leading to discussions on incident control handovers and communications.

A workshop in August combined more than 40 members to test ideas and recommend improvements, followed by an online session to include more volunteers.

Region 1 hosted a Regional Incident Command and Control (ICC) trial in March 2025 under EM Merge, highlighting the value of clear command structures, coordinated roles, and strong information flow. Lessons from this led to a Region 5 exercise in June, where volunteer input was again proved essential.

Behind the scenes, three working groups - Intelligence and Information Systems, Field Command, and Incident Management - have been refining the model. Their efforts have enhanced frontline communication, clarified field roles, and helped define ICC structures for Total Fire Ban days.

Looking ahead, updated training, doctrine, and development plans will support future Regional ICC teams as EM Merge moves toward implementation in the 2025/26 Fire Danger Season.



New trucks rolled out

A major boost to emergency response was delivered across South Australia in the past year with two new purpose-built fire and rescue trucks rolled out to CFS brigades.

Designed to enhance the capabilities of volunteers and update equipment to expected standards, the new 24P and 34P appliances provide a significant upgrade in safety, technology, and efficiency.

The rollout included 13 new Urban 34P trucks equipped specifically for urban incidents.

These new 34Ps were delivered to brigades in Eden Hills, Nairne, Littlehampton, Angaston, Kapunda, Port Broughton, Coffin Bay, Tumby Bay, Keith, Mil Lel, Cadell, McLaren Vale, and Port Elliot.

The CFS also introduced 10 state-of-the-art 24P dual-cab 4WD urban fire and rescue trucks, replacing outdated single-cab units, including some that had been in service for over 30 years.

Brigades in Mannum, Williamstown, Parndana, Eudunda, Cummins, Meadows, Ororoo, Cowell, Hamley Bridge and the State Training Centre at Brukunga received these vehicles.

“These trucks are a game-changer for our volunteers and the communities they protect,” CFS Chief Officer Brett Loughlin AFSM said.

Williamstown Brigade Captain Steve Elliott echoed this sentiment, calling the new 24P truck “an important asset” that significantly boosts local emergency response capabilities.

Next Generation Operational Systems

The Next Generation Operational Systems project aims to improve our operational systems by connecting and streamlining different tools and data resources while providing additional features and functionality. Using a holistic approach to operational systems, the current incident and information system, CRIIMSON, is just one part of the bigger picture.

We acknowledge the legacy of our current operational systems and the tireless efforts of dedicated CFS staff, volunteers, and technical staff over many years. We seek to deliver enhanced features, functionality, and workflows – ultimately supporting CFS members and our external agency partners to improve performance and decision-making during incidents.

A workshop was held with the Project Reference Group in December 2024 to identify what is working, what is not, and how it can be improved through future operational systems. The outcomes of this workshop will feed into system design and development.

Working groups are being formed to progress specific elements of the project. At the time of publication, the target date for implementation is July 2026.

Key systems

We are working to integrate the central operational system with other key systems, such as:

- Geographic Information System (GIS) - ESRI Enterprise Portal: Used to manage CFS spatial (mapping) data and the GeoHub, which provides services such as the 'CRIIMSON Secure Viewer'.
- Resource management – ROSE: Used for rostering, availability, and team building (e.g. state and region structure, strike teams, IMT structure).
- Tactical mapping – FireMapper trial: Trial undertaken during the 2024/25 Fire Danger Season for tactical mapping on the fire ground (e.g. to map fire perimeter, hot spots, area of origin).
- Aviation management – ARENA: Used by CFS Aviation and the National Aerial Firefighting Centre to manage aviation operations, including aircraft availability and dispatch.
- Membership and role management - EMERALD: Used to manage CFS member and training records.

By taking a holistic approach, we will ensure smoother access to information across these platforms, making our operations more efficient.

We are also collaborating closely with the EM Merge program, with both Project Managers regularly communicating to align efforts.

Project team

Nicholas de Rozario
Project Manager

Gavin Klose
Senior Business Analyst

Natalia Tanti
Senior Project Officer

Regional service delivery review

In 2021, a working group was formed to address growing concerns about the long-term viability of various rural CFS brigades. These concerns were driven by challenges familiar to many rural and regional communities, including increasing volunteer workloads, declining populations in transient communities, rising demand across volunteering sectors and demographic shifts.

An in-depth analysis into sustainable service delivery options for at-risk rural brigades commenced in 2024. This project involved reviewing historical and current feedback from key stakeholders, including volunteers, regional leadership, and Learning and Development teams.

The process also included researching national brigade model comparisons, conducting community risk assessments in key areas, and analysing legislative compliance requirements relevant to the CFS.

From this work, the Community Responder Brigade (CRB) model was developed. It presents a versatile, minimum viable framework for communities where traditional brigade structures may no longer be sustainable.

For rural volunteers, the CRB aims to reduce training and administrative requirements while maintaining a highly valued, locally driven firefighting presence within regional communities.

As the model progresses through final review, communities may begin to see the CRB framework piloted or adopted in select brigades from 2025/26, offering a practical pathway to strengthen local response capability and safeguard brigade presence into the future.

Statewide facilities audit

The CFS is undertaking an audit to capture data on the vast array of facilities across the state to support future maintenance, refurbishment, replacement and brigade needs. Various stakeholders including local councils, volunteers, and community groups have built and maintained CFS facilities in the past.

Through support from the CFS Volunteer Association, the CFS received budget to undertake a statewide data capture for all its facilities. Within the audit, some key information we aim to collect will give the CFS access to critical data as an initial reference point or to capture a baseline, thereby setting minimum standards for the future.

The CFS aims to gather data on our facilities across the state to move us toward a systematic and planned approach to facilities management.

The statewide audit, which is being undertaken by the Infrastructure and Logistics team, will be imperative to maintaining facilities into the future and will help the CFS move toward a systematic and planned approach to facilities management.

The stakeholder group providing insight and direction for the audit is: Para GO Thomas Walsh, Mawson GO Peter Venning, Northern Yorke GO David Bussenschutt, (Ret.) Heysen former GO Nathan Watts, A/Director Regional Services and Operations, Steve Salamon; WHS Coordinator, Maurice Dunstall; Director Contract Management and Delivery, Jason Kleemann, Manager Infrastructure, Sandy Pope, and CFS Volunteer Association Chief Executive, Sonia St Alban.

Urban Uplift

Urban firefighting presents unique risks, and the Urban Uplift project is a significant step toward making it safer and more effective. Focused on improving training, equipment, and systems, the project is designed to better prepare firefighters for responding in built-up environments.

The project began with a comprehensive review involving volunteers, operational staff, leadership teams, and partner agencies. The final report was shared with the Chief Officer, Executive Leadership Team, and Regional Volunteer Management Committees for endorsement.

While many strengths were identified, key improvements, particularly in training, were highlighted. As a result, firefighters will now complete the Defensive Fire Suppression (DFS) course before beginning Breathing Apparatus (BA) Operator training, starting at the end of the 2024/25 Fire Danger Season. This change has received strong support and aims to improve safety and operational readiness.

We're investing in upskilling our people, including staff and volunteer trainers, to deliver the revised DFS and new Structural Firefighter Development Program content, such as hands-on sessions using the 'Doll's House' burn structure. Updated materials and clear guidance will ensure consistency across regions.

This uplift goes beyond training; it is about ensuring our firefighters are equipped, supported, and confident on the fireground. With continued collaboration and support, we're building a safer, stronger future for urban firefighting.



Inclusive fits for PPE

In 2024, the CFS joined 'Making PPE/PPC Fit for Everyone', a sector-wide initiative to ensure PPE and PPC meets the needs of all emergency services personnel.

Led by the Fire and Emergency Champions of Change group, the project brings together 11 agencies across Australia and New Zealand to improve the design, distribution, and maintenance of PPE and PPC to enhance safety, comfort, and performance.

Nearly 270 CFS members contributed to national consultations and their feedback is helping to drive practical improvements in gear fit, comfort, and accessibility.

Historically, PPE and PPC have been based on limited sizing models. As our workforce becomes more diverse, agencies are updating procurement processes, broadening supplier engagement, and offering better fit options to reflect real needs.

This work is already delivering benefits. Insights from personnel, experts, and international partners are shaping ongoing improvements.

Beyond equipment, this is about creating a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment. CFS is proud to be part of this important step forward in building a stronger, more inclusive emergency service sector.

FireMapper in action

The FireMapper trial ran during the 2024/25 Fire Danger Season, supporting crews on the ground, in the air, and in command centres across South Australia. FireMapper delivered on its promise to improve real-time communication, coordination, and situational awareness.

Over 240 maps were produced during the three-month trial, with the app providing live data that helped crews identify hazards, hotspots, and fire edges during fast-moving incidents. FireMapper proved valuable during the Wilmington fire, where the program helped crews identify red flag warnings, points of interest and the fire edge.

A touch screen display of FireMapper was integrated into daily briefings in the Incident Management Teams for both the Wilmington and Lower South East Complex fires. Information from aircraft and Ground Observers was uploaded directly to the app and used immediately by decision-makers.

The app also played a key role in other fires, including Onkaparinga Hills, Mount Torrens, Joanna, and Western Flat, by allowing faster, safer, and better-informed decisions.

Beyond the fireground, FireMapper was trialled during the Tour Down Under, with 9 stages mapped in the system, highlighting critical areas such as tight turns, hazards, and incident-prone sections. Live data from CRIIMSON was also fed into FireMapper to support emergency coordination.

Volunteer and staff feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, all of which have been considered in the final trial report.

Thanks to the EM Merge Intelligence and Information System Working Group, specifically the FireMapper support team, for their commitment throughout the trial: Carol Yokowo, Samuel Koerner, Philip Richards, David Bradshaw, Richard Morrall,

John McMahon, Jack Booker, Mitchell Fitzgerald, Alex Thompson and Simeon Telfer. Their work on this project earned them the Chief Officer's Unit Citation for Service.

The FireMapper trial reflects our ongoing commitment to improving operational tools and strengthening support for frontline firefighting efforts.



Improving crop fire modelling

A major research project is underway to improve fire behaviour prediction models in crop fuels like canola and legumes, common across SA but under-represented in current fire models.

The Canola and Alternative Crop Experimental Burn project is a collaboration between the CFS, Country Fire Authority, and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation.

Existing models often overestimate fire spread in these crops, impacting suppression planning and public warnings. While a sparse grass model exists, it has not been properly tested in open agricultural landscapes.

To address this, the project team conducted experimental burns near Ungarra on the Eyre Peninsula in 2024. These burns confirmed current models do not align well with real-world fire behaviour in sparse stubble.

While valuable data was gathered, 30 to 40 burns are needed to develop a reliable, evidence-based model.

In 2025, the team returned for further testing, focusing on canola burns under high fire danger conditions. Future burns will target legumes under more extreme conditions. All burns are conducted safely, with required permits and extra precautions.

CFS volunteers played a crucial role in burns by ensuring the fires were extinguished and as live-fire training exercises.

After each burn, researchers and firefighters reviewed expectations versus actual fire behaviour. The data will inform improved fire simulations, messaging, and suppression strategies. Tools like new crop fuel maps will also help crews make safer, more informed decisions during fire events.



Region One



Reflecting on the 2024/25 year, I'm proud of Region 1's achievements.

Firstly, I want to thank all teams, brigades, and groups across the state for delivering a world-class fire and rescue service to South Australia.

This year, Region 1 deployed staff and volunteers throughout the state and to Queensland, the Northern Territory, the United States and Canada.

We also supported numerous strike teams across our region while protecting our local communities at fire incidents such as Langhorne Creek, Onkaparinga Hills, Strathalbyn, Bull Creek, Paris Creek, Mylor and Charleston.

Thankfully, despite the extremely low rainfall and some of the driest soil moisture statistics on record, the Fire Danger Season (FDS) didn't meet forecast predictions. However, the dry conditions prompted extensions to both the FDS and aerial firefighting contracts, along with the new challenge of water access.

This season again reinforced that change remains constant and that we must always adapt, adjust, and refine our tactics.

Beyond responding to calls, we continue to prioritise training, planning, and maintenance to ensure we are prepared for any incident that arises. Key achievements in these areas across the past year included gazetted two new Operations Brigades (Southern Fleurieu and Sturt), more than 65 region-led training sessions, facilitating 70 community engagement events, completion of more than 40 facility improvement projects and ongoing work with LGA Fire Track Review/Projects.

Operationally, Region 1 responded to more than 400 medical assists, 130 structure fires, 145 road crash rescues, 350 vehicle accidents, and 50 HazMat incidents.

These achievements are not possible without the dedication of our volunteers and staff. I thank each of you for the countless hours you contribute to our agency. Your commitment and professionalism do not go unnoticed. Our communities are grateful for your service.

Micheal Bohrsen ASM
Regional Commander 🇺🇦



Paris Creek grass fire

At approximately 1:10 pm on Saturday, 22 February 2025, the CFS was alerted to a grass fire on Paris Creek Road at Paris Creek.

Resources from Meadows, Macclesfield and Strathalbyn brigades, along with aviation resources, were quickly dispatched.

By 1:36 pm the incident had reached a fourth alarm and by 2:50 pm had become a Level 2 incident with the Incident Management Team working out of Region One Headquarters.

Forest Range HazMat

At approximately 7:10 am on Sunday, 6 April 2025, the CFS responded to a report of ammonia leaking from inside a premises on Plummers Road at Forest Range.

Crews arrived to find ammonia had leaked from inside a storage facility and was spreading into the surrounding area.

Volunteers on six trucks attended the incident and conducted ventilation and atmospheric monitoring around the facility and adjacent valley until the chemical had dispersed sufficiently.

Local resources including Balhannah, Lenswood/Forest Range and Basket Range were supported by HazMat technician brigades from Burnside and Murray Bridge to manage the incident.

SA Ambulance provided support for this incident.

Onkaparinga Hills grass fire

As the Southern Adelaide communities of Woodcroft and surrounding areas prepared for Christmas, a grass fire broke out in the Onkaparinga Hills at around 5 pm on Monday, 23 December 2024, quickly putting nearby homes at risk.

CFS crews, consisting of approximately 50 volunteers on 15 trucks, worked to contain and actively monitor the fire overnight. Aircraft also supported the effort, making 12 retardant drops to assist ground crews.

The fire burned through a nature strip behind the suburb, where dense scrub and shrubby trees fuelled its spread. At its peak, two houses were under threat, with embers spotting from Amata Road to Education Road.

The fire was marked as contained at approximately 8:30 am on 24 December 2025 with crews mopping up for the rest of the day.

Local Region 1 crews continued monitoring the fire amid the elevated fire danger during the festive season. Thank you to everyone who gave up time with family and friends to help manage this incident during the holiday period.

“

I just want to acknowledge and thank the actions of your teams in preventing damage to our property at 12 Pritchard Grove, Pasadena, yesterday.

Being away from home for the weekend we were alerted and continually updated by neighbours of the actions being taken to quell the outbreak.

Again, many thanks. Please pass on our gratitude to those officers involved, giving up their holiday to protect others”.

– R. & S. Richter

”



Profile:

Matt Williams

In November 2024, our YAC Region 1 Proxy Matt Williams was interviewed by *The Post*, a platform providing information on decisions and policies that affect young South Australians.

Matt spoke about his journey as a volunteer and shared advice on how others can stay safe during bushfire season.

The interview provided him a chance to reflect on his progress within the CFS, from having watched the devastation of the Cudlee Creek bushfires in 2019 to becoming a volunteer who helps others prepare, respond, and rebuild.

Through it all, Matt says the biggest takeaway has been growth, stepping outside his comfort zone, building life skills, and knowing that even as a young person, he can have a real impact.

Port Elliot structure fire

Just after midnight on Thursday, 17 April 2025, Port Elliot CFS, with support from Victor Harbor Metropolitan Fire Service, responded to a report of a fire at a commercial premises on Hill Street at Port Elliot.

On arrival, crews found the commercial premises well alight, and the incident was quickly upgraded to a second alarm.

Six trucks and 23 firefighters remained on scene much of the morning to extinguish the fire, which caused approximately \$1 million damage.

Wattle Flat heavy rescue

At approximately 12:15 pm on Monday, 4 November 2024, Aldinga Beach and Yankalilla brigades responded to a heavy rescue incident on Main South Road at Wattle Flat.

Upon arrival, Yankalilla members found that a truck had collided with multiple cars and tipped over, entrapping the occupants.

The incident was upgraded to a second alarm, requiring additional resources from Hay Flat and Myponga brigades and support from the Metropolitan Fire Service.

Crews worked to extricate trapped victims and render the scene safe.

Two new Operational Support brigades

A major milestone for emergency response in the Adelaide Hills and Southern Fleurieu was marked in 2024, with the establishment of two new CFS Operational Support Brigades in Region 1.

The Sturt and Southern Fleurieu Brigades play a crucial 'back-of-house' role, providing essential services during incidents, including communications, logistics, catering, and peer support. These roles are key to helping frontline crews respond effectively to over 200 incidents a year in peri-urban areas.

"We know there are increased fire risks and hazards in the Adelaide Hills and beyond and given there's a growing population in these peri-urban areas, it's really important we bring in these additional support services," Regional Commander Micheal Bohrnson said.

"These brigades will consist of volunteers who will be professionally trained to provide radio communications, logistics and other key requirements for ground crews."

The Sturt Brigade, serving Belair to Eden Hills, and the Southern Fleurieu Brigade, based in Yankalilla, are the first of their kind since 2016 and were formed after extensive consultation with CFS staff, volunteers, and local communities.



Profile: Rob Perry

Rob's green thumb grows pride

Morphett Vale Brigade volunteer Rob Perry has been honoured with an Australian Government Volunteer Service Award, thanks to his green thumb.

Rob was recognised by local Federal MP Amanda Rishworth in 2024 for the incredible time and effort he dedicates to the CFS each week, particularly his work in transforming the Morphett Vale fire station garden from bare land into a thriving green space.

He secured funding, coordinated materials, worked with others on the construction, and continued maintaining the gardens.

Rob, who also works for the CFS as a Community Risk Reduction Project Officer, said it's not just the garden that benefits.

"Part of the motivation behind the work was to aid my mental health recovery from a situation that occurred at the Coles fire," he said.

Rob said he became driven to generate further pride in the Morphett Vale Brigade's surrounds and lift the Mawson Base's exterior façade over time.

"My fellow members embraced the project, with pride growing along with many positive comments from the local community complimenting the improvements to the presentation of the grounds," Rob said.

"It achieved the council's desires of providing habitat and attracting birds, bees, and butterflies with native plantings to compliment the area."

Rob also serves as the Brigade Training Coordinator and Brigade Finance Coordinator and is a regular responder to emergency incidents.



Months of fun at Hahndorf

In September, Hahndorf CFS Brigade celebrated its 75th anniversary and, to commemorate the occasion, created an Icons of Hahndorf calendar.

The calendar starred Hahndorf's dedicated firefighters posing at various iconic attractions in the popular tourist town.

Not only did the calendar strengthen the brigade's relationship with the community, but Captain Ros Smith said it was also an incredibly positive experience for the brigade's firefighters.

"We've seen attendance at training and call outs rise since we started the photo shoots," she said.

"It's been wonderful to see everyone reacting to each other's images. There's a real pride in what we've created here."



Region Two



Region 2 has had an exceptionally busy 12 months, with countless hours dedicated to responding to incidents of all hazard types. Our volunteers and staff also supported other regions and participated in interstate and international deployments.

Our volunteers have remained committed to training at brigade, regional, and state levels. They've participated in exercises and community engagement activities, while also investing countless hours to ensure our brigades and groups are managed smoothly and effectively.

These activities take us away from our loved ones and events and, as a region, we are extremely grateful for our members' dedication and the community support they provide.

The 2024/25 fire season kept us on our toes with multiple Total Fire Ban days, while incidents such as Buchfelde, Penfield, Agery, Grace Plains, Williamstown and Mount Torrens served as a reminder of the risks we face across the region. The drought has changed our landscape and increased fire season risk factors. While these changing weather conditions present challenges to fire prevention and management, our thoughts are, most importantly, with the members of our community facing drought.

As a region, we have seen some staffing changes across the year, with personnel taking on new CFS roles, as well as pursuing external opportunities. Our volunteers have been very supportive of the staff during this period and that has been greatly appreciated.

On behalf of the CFS, I'd like to thank Steve Salamon, Ben Pettman and Jason Druwitt for their support of Region 2 throughout the year.

Finally, a sincere thank you - not only to each of you, but also to your families and support networks who make it possible for you to be part of our organisation. Your dedication means the world to us.

As you read this publication, please take time to reflect on your achievements this year. Every hour dedicated to supporting our communities, whether responding to incidents or supporting our brigades and groups, provides an immeasurable impact on someone else's life.

Matt Davis
A/Regional Commander 🇺🇲

Mount Torrens scrub fire

On 12 February 2025 crews responded to a grass/scrub fire at Mount Torrens in the Adelaide Hills.

The 18 hectare fire was brought under control by 70 volunteers on 15 CFS trucks, who were supported by aircraft, and crews from Department for Environment and Water (DEW).

DEW assisted CFS crews with removal of dangerous trees the following day.

The fire's cause was a saw that was mounted on a trailer.



Flaxman Valley house fire

At midday on 30 August 2024, CFS were called to a single-storey house that was fully involved in fire at Craneford Road, Flaxman Valley, located just south of Angaston.

Twenty-five CFS personnel attended on four trucks and two bulk water carriers.

Firefighters used defensive strategies to prevent the fire from spreading to a nearby building and other storage facilities.

Throughout the incident volunteer personnel faced high winds, which resulted in roofing sheets becoming airborne.

Despite the challenging conditions, CFS personnel controlled the fire in an hour. The damage bill was estimated at \$300,000.

Williamstown forest fire

On the 19 March 2025, CFS crews responded to a 10 hectare forest fire that started in a pine-slash pile at the South Para Reservoir, near Williamstown.

The main fire was four hectares in size, while a further spot fire that developed was six hectares.

A total of 75 personnel on 18 trucks attended the incident, with aircraft, Department for Environment and Water (DEW) and Forestry SA resources providing assistance.

DEW remained on scene overnight and into the early hours of the morning to extinguish any hotspots.



Virginia house fire

At 1:30 pm on 22 July 2024, CFS crews were alerted to a house fire in the market garden district of Virginia, north of Adelaide.

Six trucks, including two bulk water carriers and two MFS crews, arrived to find the weatherboard home engulfed in flames.

CFS Hazardous Material specialists were also called in to conduct atmospheric monitoring and ensure those living in the area were not exposed to any harmful chemicals.

Thankfully, no one was injured in the blaze which caused \$80,000 damage.

Reeves Plains truck fire

Crews responded to a fire on a B-double truck loaded with hay at Redbanks Road, Reeves Plains, near Mallala, on 7 November 2024.

Thirty CFS personnel on five tankers spread the hay utilising heavy machinery and then extinguished any hotspots.

The fire also extended to surrounding grass and was quickly contained by local Farm Fire Units.

The prime mover was not impacted and was detached from the trailer, which was a total loss.

Aircraft support was also provided, with three drops over the fire.

Redbanks Road was closed for several hours while the hay was burnt out in the paddock and on the road. The prime mover was saved.

There was approximately \$200,000 worth of damage.



Curramulka farm machinery

On 1 August 2024, CFS crews attended a farm machinery fire at Curramulka on the Yorke Peninsula.

The grader was fully involved when firefighters arrived and they were unable to prevent the equipment being destroyed. The damage bill was approximately \$300,000.



Profile:

Rebecca Lawton

Rebecca Lawton began her CFS volunteering journey as a firefighter with the Roseworthy Brigade in December 2023.

As the mother of two young children, Rebecca has enjoyed her CFS journey because of the level of understanding provided by brigade leadership.

“The support, encouragement, and empowerment I’ve received from the Roseworthy Brigade and its leadership have been invaluable to my growth,” Rebecca said.

“Their guidance has been vital in my training and boosting my confidence as a volunteer and in other aspects of my life.”

Rebecca has also become a member of the Australasian Women in Emergency Services Network through the CFS, providing a further boost to her skills and development.

Auburn caravan

On March 4 2025, CFS crews in the Mid North attended a caravan fire started by lithium-ion batteries in Auburn.

The fire was reported by the caravan’s occupants after they spotted smoke coming out of the batteries. The occupants immediately exited the caravan and were uninjured.

The fire completely engulfed the approximately 12-month-old caravan, causing an estimated damage amount of \$175,000.

The caravan had an off-grid setup with solar panels on the roof to charge the two 200a/hr lithium-ion batteries that were built into the vehicle.

When CFS crews arrived, they observed high intensity jet-like fire behaviour and thick black smoke being emitted from the caravan.

They also heard loud hissing and popping noises coming from the caravan, which was the battery vent valves opening to release the pressurised toxic and flammable gases that had occurred from the thermal run-away event.

With no adjacent exposures or assets, a defensive strategy was adopted until the erratic fire behaviour had reduced and crews had confirmed that all hissing and popping had ceased. Once the area was safe to approach, a full overhaul was completed by crews wearing self-contained breathing apparatus.

This incident generated much interest and debate from the caravanning community. In response to this attention to the incident, the CFS used the opportunity to educate the community on the importance of alerting Emergency Services if they notice smoke coming from lithium-ion batteries.



Lyndoch celebrates 50 years

In May, the Lyndoch CFS Brigade celebrated its 50th anniversary with a formal dinner.

Around 90 people attended a dinner held at Barossa Park at Lyndoch.

CFS Chief Brett Loughlin, staff from the CFS Region 2 office, Group Officers from Barossa CFS Group, Lyndoch brigade members, families and supporters and brigade captains from adjoining brigades all attended.

All three captains of the Lyndoch Brigade were part of the celebrations.



Profile: Yvonne's journey



Among the CFS' many current volunteers is Yvonne Helps, a woman whose extensive CFS service has left a lasting impact.

Yvonne's firefighting journey began with the Hahndorf Brigade in the late 1980s. After a 25-year break, she then returned to service with the Yorketown Brigade following the 2019/20 bushfires.

Reflecting on her early days, Yvonne recalls balancing her volunteer work with family life, particularly as a new mother.

"I started helping with the local station's emergency stickers, which brought me out of my shell," she said.

Over the years, Yvonne's role grew, leading her to pursue a degree in psychology and a career in peer support. She pioneered trauma support for emergency responders, creating the joint CFS, Metropolitan Fire Service, and St John Ambulance team for Critical Incident Stress Management, which later became the confidential Stress Prevention and Management (SPAM) program.

Her influence has extended beyond her own experience and into her family.

"My daughter once said she wanted to be a nurse and a firefighter so she could save people from fires and then treat them. Her grandmother told her, 'Women aren't firefighters,' to which my daughter replied, 'Well, Mum is.' Her grandmother said, 'Well, she's different'."

Yvonne's daughter is now on the waitlist to join the local brigade and hopes her granddaughter might also join as a cadet, which would further emphasise ongoing change within the organisation.

"When I joined, I was the first female in Hahndorf. Now, women of all ages are taking on active roles," she said.



Mount Pleasant's future in good hands

Mount Pleasant residents can rest assured knowing their local CFS brigade's future is in good hands, thanks to its highly engaged cadets.

According to Barb Hoffman, a Brigade Operational Support member, the Mount Pleasant cadets are an inspiration to all around them.

"We have a really strong connection with the young people in our community and it's great to see our cadets progressing and also helping the next group along," Barb said.

"We have an excellent success rate of cadets starting off at 12 or 13 and then graduating to become firefighters. They're really showing that young people can make a difference."

Mount Pleasant's cadets participate in local events such as Anzac Day services and the town's annual Christmas parade. Importantly, they also engage with the community by sharing preparedness messaging at the town's markets and perform vital liaison roles with community Farm Fire Units.

While that community involvement is invaluable, Barb said it is the cadets' interactions within the brigade that are most welcomed.

"The value for us is that the older people in the brigade get to share our experience and knowledge and it's pleasing for us to know that our commitment is valued," Barb said.

"To be able to instil that in the cadets and have that embraced by them so they can continue to support the community that we love is incredibly gratifying, we know the future of Mount Pleasant is incredibly bright."



Region Three



As I reflect on the past year, I want to sincerely thank each of you for your unwavering dedication to protecting our communities.

Despite the challenges of ongoing drought and our changing communities, your commitment to CFS has been remarkable, and I am deeply grateful.

While the region has many priorities, a key focus this year has been finding innovative ways to boost recruitment across all groups and help them do what they do best. Supporting brigades and groups to thrive remains central to our efforts and will continue for the foreseeable future.

We also implemented a comprehensive fleet and facilities plan, working closely with groups to forecast needs for the next five-plus years. This strategic approach considers growth and change across communities, helping us address shortfalls, resolve long-standing issues, and enhance brigade capability through better fleet and facility allocations.

Looking ahead, the EM Merge project will be a major focus for regional leadership and our incident management personnel. While it may bring changes to how we've traditionally managed large-scale incidents, I believe it will lead to stronger outcomes for both our members and communities. I encourage you to get involved, engage with the process, ask questions, and consider whether incident management might be a good fit for you.

Once again, thank you for your extraordinary efforts throughout the year. I look forward to visiting more of you in person over the coming year to show my gratitude directly.

Shane Clinch
Regional Commander ■■

Katarapko fire

While still engaged with the Ngarkat fires and supporting the South East complex fires, Region 3 responded to multiple fires on Katarapko Island, near Berri in the Riverland, on 16 March.

Being on an island, accessibility was difficult, and firefighters were deployed to the incident via boat. Ground crews from CFS and Department for Environment and Water (DEW) extinguished the fires via dry firefighting and with support from aerial bucketing operations.

After multiple days of hard work to control the fires, CFS handed the site back to DEW to patrol and monitor.



Are you bogged mate?

On 11 March, Region 3 held an informative and engaging event at the Lameroo Sports Club for rural farmers to learn about the various supports available to them.

Given that many CFS volunteers were committed to the Ngarkat fire at the time of this event, there was still a good turnout on the night.

It was a great opportunity for farmers to connect with others, meet industry experts and ask questions about support services in their area.

The guest speaker for the evening was Mary from Are You Bogged Mate?. Representatives from Livestock SA, Rural Business Support Services and StandBy Support were also present.

Our top citizens

Several CFS Region 3 members received Australia Day Awards for their outstanding contributions to their communities in 2025.

Partners in life and service, Leanne Kruger and Jeff Stone, were named joint winners of the Karoonda East Murray Citizen of the Year award for their leadership, dedication, and long-standing commitment to the CFS. Leanne is Karoonda CFS Brigade Captain and Jeff is the CFS Mallee Group' Group Officer.

Meanwhile, Tarryn Turner received the Karoonda East Murray Young Citizen of the Year for his work with the Karoonda Brigade. Tarryn's CFS commitment is inspired by his family, with his father, brother, sister, and brother-in-law all involved.

Finally, Louise Sanders, received Narrung Citizen of the Year for her devotion to her local brigade as a firefighter and for her work in administration.



Profile:

Dylan Robertson

Cooke Plains Brigade

Why did you join the CFS?

I joined the CFS so I can meet new people and help people in need, especially living locally.

How flexible have you found your volunteer role?

I am a father of one and enjoy my weekends spent with my daughter and camping. I'm also a die-hard LandCruiser enthusiast and have found CFS is very accommodating to the needs of volunteers as most of us have full-time commitments and families.

How do you enjoy the training aspect?

Cooke Plains and Taillem Bend have formed a closeness within the brigades and have been working together on trainings. I also dual respond with Taillem Bend.

What is a rewarding aspect of your role?

I have been fortunate to be a part of the Youth Advisory Council this year as well as helping with the Taillem Bend Cadet Program. Working with younger members is very rewarding.

Anzac Day Youth Vigil

Region 3 cadets represented the CFS at this year's Anzac Eve Youth Vigil, marking the start of the annual remembrance event in Adelaide.

Eight cadets (two of which came from Region 1), and seven supervisors (including one from Region 1 and one from SAFECOM VSB) participated in the Holding Ground Ceremony at the South Australian National War Memorial, which involves maintaining a guard of honour through the night.

The cadets were joined by young South Australians from various youth groups, such as the Scouts and Guides, before stepping down ahead of the Anzac Day Dawn Service.



Electric vehicle information session

On Wednesday, 26 March, volunteers from the Coorong Group attended an electric vehicle information session held at the Coonalpyn Football Club.

Representatives from CFS Technical Operations and SAFECOM Mental Health & Wellbeing were present to share the latest information on electric vehicle incidents. They also provided valuable resources and tools to support volunteers in managing challenging situations.

The session was well received by the approximately 40 volunteers who attended.



Regional cadet fun day

A team building exercise was held for Region 3 cadets to provide a different and fun atmosphere for them to build new friendships from across the entire region. Thirty cadets and 13 cadet leaders from the Riverland and Murraylands districts of Region 3 joined Regional Commander Shane Clinch and Regional Volunteer Officer

Michelle Egel for a fun-filled day in Adelaide on Sunday, 26 May.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the rope climbing and team building activities at TreeClimb Adelaide and an educational tour of Adelaide Fire and the SA Metropolitan Fire Service's Wakefield Street fire station in the afternoon.



Tailoring training to a rural community

Farming communities often struggle to commit to standard training programs, due to their seasonal and family commitments. In response to this, the Region 3 training team arranged a special training program to fit the needs of the Southern Coorong Group to be able to attend the Pumping Operations Course in 2024. Staged over three Wednesday nights and a Saturday during the spring, nine volunteers completed the course at the Tintinara Town Hall and Coombe CFS Station.

From a group perspective, this is the best turn out to training of local members for many years. Plans are now being developed to provide a Defensive Fire Suppression course with the same group due to its success.



Profile:

Shaun Mitton



Reallocation of appliances

Region 3 has successfully reallocated several appliances to better meet operational needs over the past year.

Paringa Brigade received an Urban Rural Pumper, the first in Chaffey Group, enhancing its response to local agricultural and industrial facility incidents. This allowed Glossop Brigade to receive Paringa's former 34P, boosting their capacity to support large sites such as Accolade Wines.

Region 3 Training Team supported the reallocation with a hydrant booster session. Glossop's previous 34 was reassigned to Moorook Brigade, enhancing their capability for industrial incidents, while Moorook's 34 has become a regional reserve.

Mannum Brigade received Region 3's first new 24P Rescue appliance, with the handover attended by the Chief Officer, Regional Commander, and more than 20 volunteers. During the event, both Mannum appliances responded to a call-out. That appliance has since been reallocated to Mypolonga to support the expanding Thomas Foods facility.

Tailem Bend Brigade

Why did you join the CFS?

I joined CFS not long after visiting my brother-in-law where I helped him fight a fire on a farm fire unit supporting the CFA. I was also looking for a community that I could be a part of that also included my family in some capacity. CFS is exactly that for me.

What do you like about the CFS?

I enjoy the social side of being a member, whether it is at training nights, social gatherings with our families or rushing to a job because you are around like-minded people who also want to give back to the community.

What is a rewarding aspect of being in the CFS?

Being part of the cadet program with other passionate volunteers and watching the cadets grow has also been very rewarding.

How flexible do you find volunteering with CFS?

As a busy father of 5 and working in the local area, I have found CFS to be flexible. I can respond to callouts when I'm available and all training is offered in advance at no cost to me.

Region Four



Thank you to Region 4's incredible volunteers and dedicated staff for your unwavering commitment over the past 12 months. Your hard work and passion have truly helped to protect our communities, and we couldn't have achieved this success without you.

Your invaluable contributions - whether supporting local communities or coordinating an emergency response - have made a profound impact.

I am always incredibly proud of our region, together we have faced challenges, but we have also celebrated numerous achievements. I am continually surprised by what we achieve together.

The 2024/25 Fire Danger Season was very dry, and we have everything crossed that we see good rains to turn this around in time for the next one.

Recognising that rural incidents equate to only a quarter of the region's incidents each year, we still activated for several Fire Ban Days across the districts this season. This included several multi-day incidents of note (including the Wilmington fire), all requiring our members to take valuable time away from work and their families to bring these incidents under control.

Whilst we do not directly acknowledge the service our families, friends, loved ones and employers provide to the CFS, we certainly appreciate and recognise the vital role they play in enabling our members to serve

Sadly, I don't get enough time to spend with group and brigade members, I am really pleased when I hear of the great work being undertaken, cadet programs going from strength to strength, and the volunteer trainers and committee delegates who dedicate significant time to Region 4. Thank you and stay safe.

Sindy McCourt
Regional Commander

Shed fire at Canowie Belt

Eight CFS trucks carrying 30 volunteers responded to a structure fire at Canowie Belt, east of Jamestown, in the state's Mid North at 10am on 14 May 2025.

Firefighters arrived at the fire, which was in a shed on a farming property, to find the structure well involved.

With the support of several Farm Fire Units, firefighters used defensive tactics to prevent the fire from spreading further into the shed. Crews utilised breathing apparatus to enter the structure to smother any hot spots and ensure the fire was completely extinguished.

As a result of their efforts, 4 trucks, a caravan and air seeder that were inside the structure, were saved. However, the shed was destroyed in the fire, along with 3 trucks, a workshop and its associated equipment.

The damage cost was estimated at \$1m dollars.



House fire at Stirling North

CFS firefighters rescued two dogs from a fire which started in the kitchen of a home in Stirling North on 5 December 2024.

The quick response by firefighters, who were working on a hot, 37 degree day, contained the blaze to the kitchen, limiting the damage to the rest of the home. No occupants were home at the time of the fire. Total losses are estimated to be \$50,000.

Structure fire at Coober Pedy

At 9:40pm on 28 October 2024, 2 trucks carrying six firefighters attended a single-storey structure fire at Hutchison Street, Coober Pedy, in South Australia's Far North.

Upon arrival, volunteer firefighters found the abandoned building partially involved in fire and utilised breathing apparatus to conduct internal and external attacks on the blaze.

The quick action of volunteers saw the fire contained to 2 rooms of the building and prevented it from spreading to neighbouring properties.

Damage to the property was estimated at \$75,000.



Truck fire at Miranda

CFS crews attended a truck fire on the Augusta Highway at Miranda, approximately 40 kilometres south of Port Augusta, at about 7:20am on 22 April 2025.

Eight firefighters on three trucks, including a bulk water carrier, arrived to find the rear of the prime mover alight. The truck was not transporting any trailers.

CFS crews were supported by SA Police, who closed the highway for a short period of time.

CFS firefighters wearing breathing apparatus extinguished the fire, which was believed to have been started by the truck's brakes. The damage bill was estimated at \$150,000.

Personnel deployed

Region 4 had a few deployments throughout the year, but it would be remiss not to mention that we sent personnel to the United States of America, Canada and Tasmania, as well as to the Lower South East complex and Innamincka to fight fires and be part of Incident Management Teams.

Working alongside our partner agency, Department for Environment and Water, we deployed a crew to Innamincka to face a very different environment, where water was extremely sparse and dry firefighting tactics were utilised to halt a fire ignited by dry lightning.

Award for Graham

Region 4 is proud to acknowledge Graham Sims, Jamestown Brigade Captain, for receiving a CFS Chief Officer's Commendation for Service.

Graham has gone over and above in his service within urban training as a SCBA Trainer-Assessor and has been instrumental in the continued success of the training area at the Jamestown Brigade.

Meanwhile, much hard work went into the final touches of Terowie Brigade's new station, which was officially opened in late April 2024.

The opening was attended by our Chief Officer Brett Loughlin AFSM, The Hon Geoff Brock MP and Penny Pratt MP, along with many former members who returned to enjoy the day. It was also the perfect opportunity to acknowledge brigade members who received National Medals and life memberships.



Cadet success

We have every reason to be proud of our cadets, who represented Region 4 at the revitalised State Cadet Championships. They demonstrated exceptional qualities: tact, loyalty, skill, keen observation, empathy, clarity, bravery, and perseverance - embodying the values of the Fire Service Star.

Their determination, strong work ethic, politeness, and overall tenacity were truly commendable, reflecting the high standards we uphold as a region. The benefits of their participation have been clearly demonstrated at their brigades, with leaders reporting increased leadership qualities and a growing sense of pride among the cadets as they support one another in learning proper techniques during exercises.

A heartfelt thank you to Justin Aitchison, Hayden Prior, Lachie Hanson, Shakira Linke, Tom Campbell, and 'Flipper'. Their leadership was instrumental in making this event a success.

On a celebratory note, one of our two teams of six secured gold in the Knapsack Response Relay and bronze in the Portable Pump Relay. We were thrilled to witness their individual growth and development as a cohesive team.



Students' firefighting interest

February's Wilmington fire sparked an interest in firefighting from Stirling North Primary School students, local CFS brigade members were only too happy to meet them and showcase the work our volunteers do in their community.

In April 2025, students visited the Stirling CFS Brigade station and saw the trucks, clothes and equipment our volunteers use to protect their community.

Following the visit, the students decided they wanted to thank the CFS for fighting fires and keeping them safe, and hosted Stirling North volunteers at their school.

A barbecue was organised by students and small presents and a dance were prepared, on what was a very special afternoon.

Stirling North volunteer Alisha Clark was among the CFS visitors to the school and was appreciative of the "kind words and special treats from the students".

"We really wanted to show that we are friendly, helpful people and a part of the community, just like their parents. If that ends up with them wanting to join the CFS in the future, that's something really special," Alisha said.



Family fun day

Region 4 held its Family Fun Day in June 2024, an enjoyable day where Region 4 was able to highlight the valued commitment of our volunteers.

During the festivities, the Chief Officer attended and presented medals to the region's members who had reached CFS service milestones.

There was even time to be able to have Regional Commander, Cindy McCourt and the Chief Officer have a bit of fun on the tools, utilising some of the equipment used within Jamestown's community engagement cache.



Profile: Geoff & Lynda Hitch

During the Wilmington fire, the local brigade led by Captain Geoff Hitch and fellow brigade member and wife Lynda Hitch, exemplified the CFS spirit and were vital in supporting firefighting efforts.

The Wilmington Brigade responded quickly at about 4:30pm on 3 February, 2025 when a lightning strike started the fire in Mount Remarkable National Park.

First on scene, the brigade worked with local Department for Environment and Water crews to manage the fire, with the challenges of the hard-to-access terrain immediately evident as they fought the blaze into the night.

The resilient nature of this brigade saw them back on the fireground the next day undertaking asset protection on Alligator Lodge within the Mount Remarkable National Park, which was primarily saved thanks to their heroic efforts.

As additional firefighters arrived, Geoff and Lynda continued supporting the effort, staying late at their local mechanic and petrol station to provide fuel for crews, clean air filters, and fix vehicles that had been damaged on the fireground.

The Wilmington crew were ever-present throughout the fire's duration and were thankful for the support provided by other firefighters from across the state who came to support their community in its time of need.

Region Five



As we reflect on another year of service, I extend my sincere thanks to the dedicated volunteers and staff across Region 5. Your commitment, professionalism, and passion continue to define the strength of the South Australian Country Fire Service.

Throughout the year, you've responded to a wide range of incidents, often in difficult conditions, to protect our Limestone Coast communities. Whether on the fireground, supporting operations behind the scenes, or contributing through training and community engagement, your efforts have been outstanding.

To the families, partners, and friends who support our members, thank you. Your patience, understanding, and sacrifices make it possible for our volunteers to do what they do best, protect lives, property, and the environment.

Behind the scenes, Region 5 is preparing for the implementation of EM Merge, with exercises scheduled this winter to ensure readiness for the 2025/26 Fire Danger Season.

Our close operational partnership with Region 3 continues to grow. A highlight this year was the successful Level 2 Incident Management Exercise at Coonalpyn in mid-2024, with another joint exercise planned for later this year.

We also welcome new staffing within the Infrastructure Team of the Contract, Management and Delivery Directorate. This will support critical regional projects, beginning with station replacements at Bool Lagoon and Kalangadoo. These developments, now in the scoping phase, will help future-proof both brigades.

This yearbook celebrates your dedication, achievements, and the vital role you play in keeping our communities safe. Thank you.

Jason Druwitt
Regional Commander

Fire response in the Little Desert

On 27 January 2025, a series of dry lightning strikes ignited fires in two sections of the Grampians National Park and at the Little Desert National Park.

The Little Desert fire spread rapidly in the initial days, eventually burning over 95,000 hectares of land, with significant damage to both a property and a business in the affected area. Calculations suggest the fire ran 18 kilometres in a two-hour period, underscoring the speed and intensity of the blaze.

The CFS responded without hesitation to assist our Victorian colleagues, deploying crews from the Tatiara Group for asset protection in Dimboola on the same day the fires began. These initial efforts marked the start of a multi-agency and regional response as the fire grew in size and intensity over the following days.

As the fire continued to spread, additional crews were sent from across the region, with multiple teams contributing to the ongoing firefight. The combined efforts of these dedicated crews helped prevent the loss of life and property, despite the fire's rapid expansion.

Meanwhile, a second fire ignited just next to the border, burning 754 hectares. The CFS responded quickly by sending the Tatiara skidders and volunteers to assist with this blaze.

With incoming weather conditions threatening to push the fire across the border into South Australia, significant planning, predictive modelling, and strategic efforts were undertaken in preparation, should the fire cross over. Thankfully, the fire remained contained and did not make it into SA.



Joanna Fire

It was a case of new year, new fire when the Joanna Fire started south-east of Naracoorte on 1 January, 2025.

The fire started in heavy scrub and had the potential to impact nearby properties, including multiple homes, forest blocks in pine plantations and the Naracoorte Caves National Park. In addition to the immediate threat posed, escalating fire weather was forecast for the remainder of the week.

CFS crews, supported by Department for Environment and Water and Forest Industry Brigades, performed extensive work to reduce the risk of this fire spreading into the surrounding forest, which included heritage listed native scrub, pine plantations and endangered habitats.

Thick scrub on the eastern and southern sides of the fire created challenging firefighting conditions. To support personnel, a bulldozer and multiple aircraft were used to strengthen the control lines.

Additional aircraft were stationed at Naracoorte and Mount Gambier to assist with the fire as necessary.

Due to the incredible efforts from everyone involved, the fire did not escape and the three houses, pine plantations and heritage scrub at risk were not impacted.

The bushfire was contained the following day having burnt 50 hectares of private land.



Profile: Brooke Nicholson

CFS Week and Family Fun Day

During the October 2024 school holidays, Region 5 hosted CFS Week at the Naracoorte Town Library.

The week consisted of CFS-themed crafts, Smokey's treasure hunt and a colouring competition. With assistance from library staff, fire-themed story times were also hosted which allowed parents to attend information sessions.

The week finished with a CFS Family Fun Day in the Naracoorte Town Square, which was extremely well attended by the community.

The day was supported by brigades from the Naracoorte and Lucindale CFS Groups and the Region 5 Operations Brigade.



Wattle Range Operations Brigade

My dad was a member of the Victorian CFA when I was a child and at 16, I keenly climbed on to my first fire truck as a firefighter. At 19, I joined the CFS with the Nangwarry Brigade, along with my partner until being heavily pregnant with my daughter.

When Amber, our daughter, was 5 months old, I joined the Wattle Range Operations Brigade. The Wattle Range Operations Support role involves communicating on the radio between fire trucks, incident controllers, Adelaide fire and other individuals involved.

South East Field Days

The South East Field Days were in Lucindale in March 2025 and showcased the community's strength and resilience in the face of challenging circumstances.

The event was vibrant and engaging, especially on Saturday, with crowds gathering at the site to see the CFS fleet, Squirt the Fire Truck and to engage with our VR headsets and interactive displays.

Region 5's approach to community engagement featured impactful messaging around weather patterns and home preparedness for fire season. The inclusion of updates on the recent Fox and Woolmit fires kept the display timely and highly relevant.

Even though resources were stretched due to the Lower South East Complex Fires, the team provided strong support. The additional sites allocated to Region 5 allowed for an expanded emergency services hub, bringing together the CFS, SA State Emergency Services, and other key agencies.



Compton Brigade's stair climb

Exceeding already lofty expectations, Compton CFS Brigade raised \$33,000 for charity as part of the Melbourne Firefighter Stair Climb during 2024.

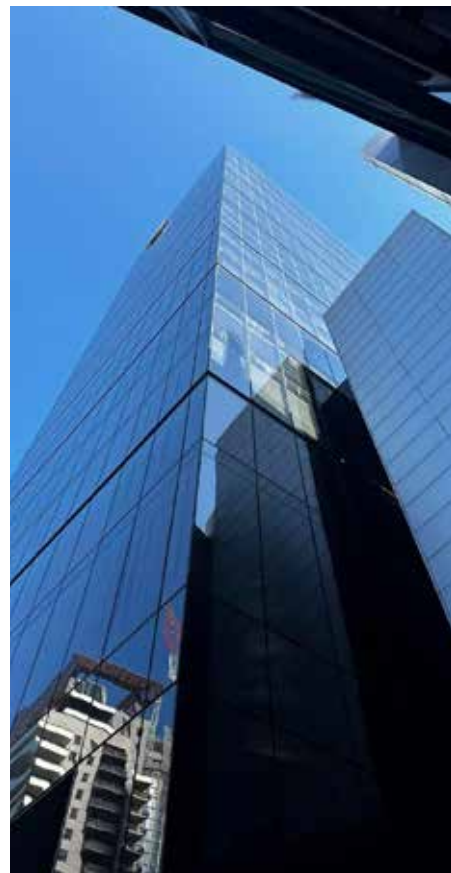
After completing the event in September, stair climber Corey Crafter told local newspaper SE Voice that he was proud of his brigade for their efforts and thankful for the support they received from the community.

"I am so damn proud of our 2024 Compton CFS Brigade Melbourne Firefighter Stair Climb team," he said.

"A massive thank you goes out to each and every single person that donated or helped out along the way to reach this goal, wished us good luck and helped push us right to the end."

The event saw teams ascend 28 floors of Melbourne's Crown Metropol wearing 25 kilo-grams of firefighting kit in what was a truly challenging feat.

Compton volunteers were among several CFS brigades participating in the annual event and, in a truly remarkable effort, they topped the fundraising charts for the climb.



People in the community who help us

Region 5 Community Engagement partnered with SA Police, SA Ambulance Service and local medical personnel to visit reception to year two students at Naracoorte Primary School to introduce them to 'people in our community who help us'.

Along with Naracoorte CFS Brigade members, several Region 5 staff attended and showed the kids our different uniforms and equipment and talked about how and when to call 000.

It was an especially special visit for Danny Crozier, Kathleen Wright and Megan Hurrell from Region 5 as their children were in attendance.



Region Six



Throughout the past year, Region 6 has made volunteer engagement a top priority. Highlighting this priority was our Captain's Seminar in Port Lincoln, where 42 captains, partners, and staff came together for a dynamic event centred on leadership and operational excellence.

The region endured an early start to the Fire Danger Season, with below-average rainfall and above-average temperatures. The outcome of the Level 2 Wudinna Complex fires within the Caralue Group in November 2024 was a testament to all who attended. The complex resulted in four fires being managed by a single Incident Management Team. The tireless efforts of our volunteers, coupled with a shared goal ensured the successful outcome of only 50 hectares of cropping land impacted.

Our dedicated volunteers were deployed to Wilmington and Naracoorte to provide vital support during their time of need. Closer to home in Region 6, our crews continued to exceed expectations - most notably during the commercial fire at Tumby Bay Mitre 10 in April, an incident that significantly impacted the local community's social economics.

Incidents like these serve as a powerful reminder that the CFS is much more than just a bushfire service.

Moving forward, we continue to invest in our infrastructure to ensure that stations are places volunteers are proud of. We are also continuing to focus on deploying innovative solutions that streamline the support we provide our Farm Fire Unit community.

I extend my sincere thanks to all volunteers and staff for their invaluable contributions throughout the year. I also want to acknowledge the unwavering support and encouragement of our families, who make it possible for us to be part of the CFS family. This gratitude extends to the hundreds of Farm Fire Units whose support makes our work significantly easier. Together, we all contribute to making our community safer.

Stephen Boucher
Regional Commander

Wudinna Complex

On Tuesday, 5 November, a Total Fire Ban was declared for the West Coast fire ban district due to hot, dry conditions and forecast thunderstorms. The Regional Command Centre was activated from 10am in anticipation of fire activity.

The precautions were warranted, as CFS volunteers soon responded to eight rural incidents across Region 6, several sparked by lightning strikes.

A grass fire in Caralue Bluff Conservation Park near Kimba prompted a response involving CFS volunteers and Department for Environment and Water (DEW) firefighters, along with aircraft, and plant equipment. At the same time, volunteers battled a bushfire in the rugged terrain of Pinkawillinie Conservation Park near Wudinna.

By 4:30pm, the Wudinna Complex Incident Management Team (IMT) was formed to coordinate efforts across multiple fires, including Caralue Bluff, Pinkawillinie, and Buckleboo, amid concerns over an approaching wind change.

Additional fires were also being managed at Waddikee, Rudall, Penong, and Ironstone Hill.

With the IMT in place, ground resources at Caralue Bluff were increased as the fire grew to 420 hectares. Strike Teams from Eastern and Western Eyre worked through the night to contain it. Reinforcements from Region 1 and Region 4 arrived the next day, along with additional heavy machinery.

By Wednesday afternoon, 6 November, the Caralue Bluff (543 hectares) and Buckleboo (10 hectares) fires were contained. Pinkawillinie (915 hectares) was controlled by 7 November.

In total, 145 volunteers and seven aircraft contributed to the effort. Only five hectares of cropping land were affected, with no structures lost, a strong result under challenging conditions.



Grass fire at Hawson

CFS crews attended a grass fire near Port Lincoln on Monday, 18 November 2024, which ignited due to a slowly smouldering tree that was hit by lightning several days prior.

At 3:55 pm, CFS volunteers were called to the fire, which was located on the Western Approach Road at Hawson, 12 kilometres west of Port Lincoln.

The incident was contained by firefighters within two hours, impacting one hectare of surrounding land.

Four fire trucks carrying approximately 18 firefighters attended, while aerial support was also provided to combat the fire with a total of 14 drops made by 5 aircraft.

Truck fire on Lincoln Highway

Four CFS crews with approximately 17 firefighters extinguished a truck fire on the Lincoln Highway between Cowell and Whyalla on 28 April 2025.

Thankfully the driver left the vehicle safely before the fire engulfed the cab of the truck.

Firefighters contained the fire to the cab, saving the connecting trailer which was transporting two cars. Crews used specialist equipment which aerates foam to extinguish the fire which kept relighting due to heat.



Profile:

Sam Bennett

A CFS volunteer since 2021, Sam has been Yalanda James Captain for one year and has already made a significant contribution to his local community.

At a time when Yalanda James Brigade nearly closed, Sam took the threat of potential bushfires to his community and expressed the importance of a brigade serving and protecting the local area.

Passionate and dedicated, Sam bought a Basic Firefighting Level 1 training course to his brigade for his new volunteers, providing a solution before the time of need.

His commitment to Yalanda James continued with the reconfiguration of brigade trucks, welcoming two single-cab 14s to strengthen their response to the area.

Sam's future aspirations are in Caralue Group leadership roles.



Profile:

Danielle Boothby

Arno Bay Brigade member of 22 years, Danielle has dedicated positive and inclusive leadership, commitment and passion to secure the return of the Arno Bay Cadet program.

Regular recruitment activities within the Arno Bay community and across the Eastern Eyre Group have been a big success.

Danielle's dedication to invigorating regular cadet training nights, a combined Arno and Lincoln training day, and her motivation of cadets, supervisors and leaders has been integral to her brigade's success.

Truck fire on Eyre Highway

CFS crews extinguished a truck which caught alight on the Eyre Highway at Puntabie, 45 kilometres east of Ceduna, on 9 November 2024.

The five CFS crews that arrived on scene witnessed significant fire behaviour coming from the truck, including large flames which extended into the surrounding grass and explosive fire behaviour.

Volunteer firefighters quickly contained the grass fire and used foam induction cannons to control the blaze within the truck trailer.

The prime mover was not impacted and was safely detached from the trailer which was a total loss. The estimated value of the damage to the truck and its contents was \$200,000.

Structure fire at Minnipa

Five CFS trucks carrying 21 firefighters, supported by 20 farm firefighting units, responded to a grass fire at Minnipa on the state's West Coast on 16 November 2024 at 12:55 pm.

Upon arrival firefighters discovered the grass fire had spread to an implement shed on the farming property, which was ultimately destroyed. Volunteers worked hard to contain the fire to 95 hectares but unfortunately a second structure, a shearing shed, was impacted.

The combined efforts of CFS volunteers and Farm Fire Units protected the farmhouse and various other assets valued at \$500,000.

The estimated cost of the property impacted by fire was \$200,000.

Out and about with Community Engagement

Driven by a deep passion for prevention, preparedness, and community safety, the past year has been a journey of connection, education, and building resilience across the stunning landscapes of the West Coast and Eyre Peninsula.

Serving a population of approximately 33,000 people across 188,000 square kilometres of urban and rural communities, our mission has been clear: fire does not discriminate - preparedness saves lives and property.

Community engagement has been guided by consistent messaging: it takes a community to protect a community. If you're leaving, leave early.



Community Engagement highlights:

- Ronald McDonald House visit
- Cleve Field Days and Ceduna Oyster Fest
- Firey Women workshops in Poochera, Wudinna, and Minnipa
- Port Lincoln Community Fire Safe groups
- Local Government Association engagement
- RAP and PARTY programs – supporting our partner agencies deliver safety messaging to our youth
- School visits and local media outreach



Outback familiarisation

A standout experience this year was the opportunity for past and present Regional Prevention Officers to deepen their understanding of the outback landscape and its fire behaviour by touring the region.

Departing from Port Lincoln, we travelled across inland and coastal areas, visiting local councils, engaging with key stakeholders, and exploring some of the most remote parts of our region.

A particular highlight was meeting with the Koonibba, Scotdesco, and Yalata Aboriginal communities and corporations. These visits marked the beginning of important relationships, laying the groundwork for future bushfire preparedness initiatives built on trust, collaboration, and cultural insight.

Beyond engagement, the journey provided a valuable perspective on how our diverse and often challenging terrain shapes bushfire risk and behaviour.



Profile:

Liam Sharp

Streaky Bay Brigade member since November 2022, Liam is a dedicated, reliable, jovial and empathetic volunteer on and off the truck.

Liam has a natural mindset and approach to incidents and operations in road crash, grass fires and assisting SES with searches, as well as during numerous intrastate deployments.

Liam committed 5 days at the Region 5 Fox Fire in Naracoorte and 2 deployment rotations to the Wilmington Complex Fire.

Western Eyre CFS Group Officer Anthony Rosenzweig said “Liam shows strong leadership potential for group leadership roles in the future, always willing to help others and assist where tasked”.



Cadets join forces for leadership and learning

In March, cadets from Arno Bay and Lincoln came together for a dynamic training day focused on learning, leadership, and skill development.

With 12 cadets and 10 dedicated supervisors, including brigade captains, Region 6 Regional Commander Stephen Boucher, Aerotech pilots, and fireground specialists, the day was packed with hands-on experiences.

Cadets participated in hose drills, including a simulated grass fire exercise using water and foam and aircraft familiarisation and the Port Lincoln CFS Air base. The day concluded with a tour of the regional headquarters, offering a behind-the-scenes look at emergency operations.

This event was a powerful reminder that today's cadets are tomorrow's volunteers, leaders, and emergency responders.



Across
the state

From the Deputy Chief Officer



It is my great privilege to serve as your Deputy Chief Officer. Having lived and worked across South Australia for the first half of my career, I'm delighted to be back. I've had a long connection with the CFS, and I look forward to renewing old relationships and building new ones.

I travelled around the state during my first few weeks and saw first-hand how the role of the CFS has grown to include expanded road crash rescue, hazardous materials and medical assistance services.

Prior to returning to SA, I was Assistant Commissioner, Director Learning and Development with the NSW Rural Fire Service. I also led development of the RFS Memorial Garden for fallen firefighters and air crew in 2022 and the \$8m RFS Aviation Centre of Excellence project during 2023.

My incident management career started in the Mount Lofty Fire Tower and included volunteer service and training with the CFS in Regions 1, 6 and 3. Following AIMS training, I was deployed to many major fires across SA, primarily as Planning Officer. After moving to NSW, I progressed to be a Strategic Planner and a Level 3 Incident Controller. I have completed seven interstate deployments, including to Queensland in 2023, Sampson Flat in 2015 and the 2009 Victorian Black Saturday fires. Last year I led an Australian multi-agency Incident Management Team to British Columbia, Canada.

As Deputy Chief Officer, I look forward to supporting the important priority work already underway including progressing the new executive structure, EM Merge, Urban Uplift, the Bushfire Management Area Plan, standard station design and the development of a new operational management system.

My aspirations include strengthening the CFS culture by fostering collaboration and upholding high standards of professional behaviour. I'm keen to ensure our strategic planning sets us up for future success. I'm excited to work closely with the CFS Volunteers Association and CFS Foundation to continue to extend our support and build community awareness for the critical services we provide. I'm also committed to recognising and celebrating the outstanding work that we do - including our internal awards and medal presentations, and championing the CFS in national and international forums.

Thank you for the honour of being part of your Executive Leadership Team. If I haven't met you already, I look forward to meeting you soon.

Paul Seager
Deputy Chief Officer 🇦🇺

I've had a long connection with the CFS, and I look forward to renewing old relationships and building new ones.

Airbase infrastructure boosts responsiveness

State Aviation Operations has been busily upgrading several airbases across the state, including Turkey Lane on Kangaroo Island and at Second Valley on the Fleurieu Peninsula, while also establishing a new airbase on the Eyre Peninsula.

The upgrade to facilities will ensure the airbases are fit for purpose into the future and will become a model for airbase upgrades at other locations. The upgrades also address a recommendation from the Independent Review into South Australia's 2019-20 Bushfire Season regarding the use of aviation assets and facilities.

The Turkey Lane airbase was upgraded as it was directly impacted by the Ravine fire of 2020. Meanwhile, the Second Valley infrastructure and equipment upgrade was completed in December 2024.

The establishment of a new airbase at Elliston Airfield occurred after a review of two local major bushfires, Mount Wedge in 2022 and Sheringa in 2023, both highlighted a capability gap in air tanker reloading facilities in this area of CFS Region 6.

A collaborative effort between the District Council of Elliston, CFS Region 6 Headquarters and State Aviation Operations enabled this airbase to officially open in December 2024. The airbase is fitted out with onsite infrastructure, including a 45,000-litre water supply and storage container facility stowed with new reloading equipment.

A core group of firefighters from Elliston CFS Brigade and surrounds have also been trained as Airbase Operators to facilitate initial reloading operations until Region 6 Air Support personnel arrive.

Meanwhile, Pallamana, near Murray Bridge, Jamestown and Port Lincoln airbases also received upgrades to crew welfare facilities across the year.

This financial year, the CFS will be looking to establish airbase facilities in the Riverland at Renmark, along with undertaking infrastructure improvements at Stonefield, near Blanchetown, and Malinong, near Meningie.



Lithium-ion batteries: risks, hazards, and training

As CFS attends more fires involving lithium-ion batteries, more information is being provided to volunteers to help them manage these incidents safely and efficiently.

Incidents involving lithium-ion batteries are increasing across South Australia due to the use of convenient cordless devices, the uptake of electric vehicles, plug-in hybrid electric vehicles and micromobility devices (e-scooters, bikes and skateboards), and growth in the installation of home and commercial solar systems.

There are a variety of reasons we are seeing increased lithium-ion fires and CFS volunteers will need ongoing training and equipment to safely combat these incidents when protecting the community.

In line with this, the CFS has implemented various measures to grow our understanding of these fires and to protect our volunteers and the community. These measures include online learning packages, Operational Bulletin 92, an online thermal imaging camera course, equipping HazMat brigades with atmospheric monitoring tools, a new lithium-ion battery incident reporting form, and monthly reports that are being developed into case studies for ongoing learning.

CFS subject matter experts (SME) are also available to attend brigade and group meetings to answer questions about lithium-ion fires.



The CFS generates further information to develop policy and procedures in this area via the AFAC Alternative and Renewable Energy Technologies Technical Group, which has representatives from all fire agencies in Australia and New Zealand. This group of SMEs provides advice in the development of policies and procedures to fire agencies for the safety of first responders. It also shares how each agency is managing these incidents and the learnings gained from attending these incidents.

Automated external defibrillators

The entire fleet of CFS vehicles is now fitted with automated external defibrillators (AED), in line with the requirements of the Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Act 2022.

In November 2024, the CFS contracted Fire Rescue Safety Australia (FRSA) to purchase, deliver, and install AEDs into all CFS vehicles statewide that did not yet have one. The ZOLL AED 3 was installed in all light and heavy vehicles and key facilities including Regional Headquarters, State Headquarters and the State Training Centre. Brigades with an existing AED will continue to use their current device until it reaches its end of life.

The CFS completed this important project before the legislated deadline of 1 January 2025 thanks to the outstanding teamwork between our volunteers, regional and state staff, and FRSA.

The ZOLL AED 3 is already in use with the Metropolitan Fire Service and have been fitted to their frontline vehicles for several years, where they have performed well across a range of operational conditions.

The new AEDs do not require training to use as the devices are automated with inbuilt voice instructions. Voluntary training and device information is available on the CFS volunteer portal and AED awareness training material is available on the Online Learning Hub.

With AEDs now installed across our fleet, the CFS is better equipped to respond to emergencies across South Australia and provide increased support should our own people require it.

Fighting fire with fire

National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Fire Management is often asked about its prescribed burn program: "Does it work? Do your prescribed burns really make a difference?".

The bushfire at Wilmington in February 2025 provided a great example of just how effective a well thought out program of fuel reduction works can be.

The bushfire started on a hot and windy Monday, 3 February, in Mount Remarkable National Park. The fire quickly grew intense in rocky, steep terrain with limited tracks to work from. A bushfire in a large, drought-affected national park during February with hot, windy weather on the way was a worst-case scenario and the CFS was quick to declare the bushfire a major incident.

A combination of control strategies were used to contain the fire to the north of the reserve including aerial bombing and retardant lines, dozer lines and backburns. The success of the backburns was due to the most recent NPWS prescribed burns (2021, 2022 and 2023) which provided low fuel areas to work from.

In some areas the fire ran into reduced fuel loads from prescribed burn scars and self-extinguished. In other areas the burn scars reduced the fire intensity enough to give firefighters and IMTs an opportunity to plan and act.

These historic burns are part of a long-term strategy to help stop bushfires burning the entire park in a single event.

Thanks to the mammoth efforts of hundreds of firefighters and support crews, who persevered even when temperatures reached the mid-40 degrees, the fire was declared contained after 13 long days.

Less than a third of the park was affected, with communities and threatened species protected. The management of the Wilmington fire proves that, with careful planning, prescribed burns can make a difference.

Story and photos provided by National Parks and Wildlife Service Fire Management



Football fun for volunteers

Thousands of CFS volunteers received tickets to an AFL match at Adelaide Oval for the Emergency Services Round in late March 2024.

In the event's third year, volunteers were joined by representatives from the MFS, SA SES, SA Police, SA Ambulance Service and South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission.

CFS volunteers from Eden Hills, One Tree Hill, Region 2 Operations, and Burnside attended and displayed different types of trucks outside the oval.

Smokey, of course, also attended – never shying away from a photo opportunity. The weather was quite warm and sunny, so Smokey also enjoyed some R&R before joining One Tree Hill crew members for the on-field guard of honour for the Adelaide Crows.

It was a fantastic day to celebrate SA's emergency services and show appreciation to the volunteers who protect our communities.



Last single-cab truck retired

Mount Damper Brigade played a part in CFS history in December, 2024 when the last of the agency's Hino single-cab trucks retired from operational service.

The 24 and 34 single-cab trucks, some of which were 30 years old, are being replaced with trucks that have modern safety systems, such as airbags, radiant heat shields, cabin deluge systems, in-cab pump controls and in-cab breathing.

The trucks have been phased out as part of the normal fleet regeneration process. They have a long and important history within the CFS having been injected into the fire truck fleet following Ash Wednesday in 1983.

At the time, it was deemed that the age and maintenance of the vehicles in many CFS brigades meant they did not meet the standards of a modern firefighting force and the Hinos were introduced into service across the state, beginning a long and fruitful partnership.



Memories of the Hinos

Man, they went anywhere and everywhere, great rural trucks, basic and idiot proof.

– Darren van Elk

Best truck CFS ever had, could've done with a turbo on them but what they lacked in power to the job, they more than made up for in off-road capability and reliability.

– Thomas Wooldridge

A damn good machine, no matter whether it was 5 speed or 6 speed, reliable, solid, and so many memories and jobs. So many homes and lives saved with the Hinos.

– David Richardson

More trucks to Kiribati

Two fire trucks are finding a new lease of life in the Pacific thanks to a donation from the CFS to the Republic of Kiribati earlier this year.

The trucks were delivered to the Republic of Kiribati via Australian Defence Vessel (ADV) Reliant on 30 January 30, 2025 before being transported to Kiritimati Island, one of the 33 islands of the Republic of Kiribati, where they will stay. The trucks are the Kiritimati Island community's first-ever fire and rescue vehicles.

The CFS has an ongoing relationship with the Republic of Kiribati that commenced in 2017 to support the country in developing a self-sufficient fire and emergency service.

Deliveries also includes vital firefighting equipment, uniforms, and training resources that will help the people of Kiritimati Island manage emergencies within their community.

The CFS was thankful for the support of the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Australian Defence Force, and the Australian High Commission in Kiribati to make this significant contribution possible.



Kiribati facts

Republic of Kiribati is made up of 33 islands, with total population of 133,515 (2023)

Kiritimati's population 7,369 (2020)

Kiritimatic has an arid climate, despite its location close to the equator.

AFAC 2024

Six volunteers and one staff member attended the 2024 AFAC Conference: Innovation and Disruption - Designing the Future of Our Sector in Sydney in September 2024.

Recaps from some who attended: Rosalyn Smith (Hahndorf) attended several talks on innovation, including how AI is improving incident preparedness and management. Rosalyn learned how AI can enhance decision-making and provide insights for effective emergency responses.

Brody Batty (Barmera) discovered the capabilities of drones in emergency response, particularly Fire and Rescue NSW's use of the technology, including their ability to provide real-time imagery, thermal and night vision.

Leila McEgan (Aldgate) learned about the challenge of working across various sectors, especially when no single agency holds responsibility for outcomes.

Leila shared an example from NSW, where city-scale planning for a heatwave required diverse groups to work together despite lacking a formal collaborative mandate.

Alex Giles (Region 4) was inspired by the New South Wales Rural Fire Service's school program, which engages the next generation of emergency services volunteers.

Reviewing Bushfire Safer Places and Last Resort Refuges

A review of Bushfire Safer Places (BSP) and Bushfire Last Resort Refuges (BLRR) is underway to ensure these locations remain fit for purpose.

The project team has been visiting and assessing sites, with the review focusing on determining the radiant heat levels experienced at these sites. For BSPs, the team confirmed the areas can withstand a maximum level of radiant heat of 7.5 kilowatts per square metre along the boundary, which is vital for protecting people during extreme bushfire conditions.

Different standards apply for BLRRs. Open areas must be able to withstand a maximum of 2 kilowatts per square metre, while buildings must endure 10 kilowatts per square metre.

At their visits, the team also inspects signage to ensure it is visible, clear, and undamaged, particularly in areas affected by weather conditions.

So far, all BLRR sites have been assessed. Nearly half of the sites are fit for purpose, while 30% require minor improvements, such as vegetation maintenance or signage repairs.

Feedback from local councils and the community has been positive, with many site managers and residents expressing relief that this important project is being undertaken.



CMD returns to Infrastructure and Logistics

With the recent management structure review in the CFS, the Contract Management and Delivery directorate (CMD) has returned to the title of Infrastructure and Logistics (I&L).

The directorate has for many years, focused on 4 key areas which include telecommunications, fleet, equipment and the infrastructure of CFS facilities. Recently, there have been several additional roles injected:

- Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Officer to improve communications on various I&L projects and initiatives.
- Increase of Infrastructure Team (previously Operational Facilities) to 7 staff to provide better service delivery on facility renew projects (FRP) and new station builds, including forward planning of land purchasing.

- A focus on strategic planning through the Manager Asset Strategy, supporting the regions with forecasting future projects and asset replacement programs.
- A project manager to progress several key projects to formulate new contracts for VHF radio replacement, fire appliances and light fleet.

In the coming year, I&L will continue to focus on refreshing its key communications hub on the Volunteer Portal, inclusive of project updates, vehicle and equipment specification sheets, training materials, FRP and station builds. The I&L Portal page will also include a section called 'Infralog', which will provide key reports distributed by COAC and the State I&L Committee.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge and thank, Paul Bebbington for his tireless dedication to CFS as a long-time volunteer and for his time as a staff member with I&L as the Telecommunications Technical Officer. We wish him all the best in his retirement.



Youth in Emergency Development Program

CFS' Community Risk Reduction Partnerships team collaborated with the Australian Red Cross and the Commissioner for Children and Young People SA to launch the first-ever Duke of Edinburgh International Award (Bronze) program, called the Youth in Emergencies Development Program (YEDP).

This program empowered 36 students aged 14 to 18 from across South Australia - including three CFS Cadets - to become disaster-ready in 2024 and beyond.

YEDP is designed to teach essential emergency preparedness skills while also supporting students' personal growth. Many participants developed a stronger interest in emergency management, and parents noticed increased confidence, responsibility, and valuable life skills in their children.

These students are encouraged to stay involved by becoming leaders in their communities and having a voice in decisions that shape emergency preparedness in South Australia.



Youth Advisory Council (YAC)



Cadet Championships

In October 2024, cadet teams from across SA came together for the newly formatted State Cadet Championships, competing for a spot in the 2025 Australian Fire Cadet Championships.

Over the weekend, cadets aged 13 to 17 showcased their skills in drills like hose and hydrant, knapsack response and portable pump relay, putting training into action and celebrating the teamwork, dedication, and spirit of our future firefighters.

Congratulations to the overall winners - Region 1 Team Bravo and well done to all who participated.

A big thank you to the local brigades, sponsors, SAFECOM Volunteer Services, the SA Volunteer Fire Fighter Museum, and the CFS Volunteer Association for your support in making the event a huge success.

Other activities organised in the evenings were access to virtual reality (VR) equipment, and VR simulations where skills in crew leading and public information were shown. An offsite visit to Adelaide Fire and the CFS State Operations Centre was also arranged. This gave an appreciation of how the flow of information from the fire ground effects many decisions such as community warnings and incident or resource escalation. On the final evening, a formal dinner with Chief Officer, Brett Loughlin, gave the participants an opportunity to talk openly with the Chief and ask many questions. The program created strong links and generated new friendships across SA's regions.

Rural Week

In October 2024, 12 passionate members from Regions 1, 2, 4, and 5 joined for Youth Advisory Council (YAC) Rural Week, a multi-day residential program focused on hands-on learning and leadership development.

Participants, aged 18 to 30, undertook training in Rural Fire Suppression, Pumping Operations and Defensive Fire Suppression, gaining practical experience and expanding their capabilities. Activities also included a simulation exercise, a field trip to Adelaide Fire, a visit to State Headquarters, and a dinner with the senior CFS staff.

Feedback highlighted the value of the training, the insight into career and volunteer pathways within the CFS, and the lasting friendships formed throughout the experience.



2025 SA CFS YAC Emerging Leaders Program

By Sharna Juett, 2025 YAC Emerging Leaders Development Team Leader

When I saw the email invitation to join the Emerging Leaders Development Team, I knew it was an opportunity I couldn't pass up. I've attended previous leadership programs, starting with the pilot in Region 1, and the Emerging Leaders Program was developed from YAC in 2023. I've also participated in other leadership programs and conferences outside the CFS space. This felt like the perfect opportunity to bring all that experience together to help develop this program, alongside six other incredible volunteers and YAC.

The Emerging Leaders Program, proudly supported by the CFS Foundation, is designed to empower young and aspiring leaders within the CFS by providing a platform to enhance their skills. The program focuses on developing leadership capabilities on and off the fireground but also emphasises professionalism, teamwork, networking, and communication skills.

The agenda was created with a clear purpose: to give attendees a set of tools and skills they can take back and use to develop their own leadership journey.

By attending the program, we hope every participant takes away at least one skill or experience they can build on in their own brigade or personal leadership journey.

Learning & Development



Awarding member qualifications

The Learning & Development team develop the skills and confidence of our CFS members and partner agencies to enable safe and professional operational responses to local communities across South Australia.

We do this by designing, developing and delivering high-quality training experiences based on operational needs, research and development and data, and tailored to local and regional contexts.

We work with volunteer, staff and external trainers to deliver a range of course for our members. In the past year, 198 individual trainers (volunteers and staff) were involved in running courses.

The table shows the types of courses we held over the past year, along with the number of participants:

Training sessions	Participants
Bushfire	3,500
Road crash rescue	1,200
Structural	600
HazMat	350
Leadership	400
Incident management	650
Aviation	800
First aid	1,200
Appliance/ driver training	250
TOTAL	26,000

Volunteer Trainer Support – Urban Training Team

A dedicated team of volunteer trainers have worked tirelessly throughout 2024 to enhance the Structural Fire Behaviour Training (SFBT), formerly known as Compartmental Fire Behaviour. Their work included updating training materials, drills, and equipment, and collaborating with the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service and industry experts.

With support from Learning & Development (L&D) staff, the team has delivered three successful SFBT courses, receiving excellent feedback on both design and delivery.

To ensure the sustainability of this vital program, L&D undertook an expression of interest in March 2025 to recruit new volunteer trainers. A strong response followed, with 23 volunteers expressing interest, highlighting the commitment within our membership to support urban training initiatives.

Volunteer preferences span key areas with some wishing to focus on Breathing Apparatus (BA) training, others on SFBT, and many who are open to supporting both. This flexibility will be crucial in meeting the growing demand for urban training and in implementing initiatives like Urban Uplift.

Building trainer capability is a top priority. L&D will invest in developing these trainers to a high standard, ensuring a strong foundation for dynamic course delivery. Their willingness to assist across multiple programs will be especially valuable during peak activity or changing priorities.

Brigade-based online learning

The Learning and Development Digital Learning Team (DLT) has made significant strides this year in improving access to flexible, inclusive training across the CFS.

Working closely with operational and training stakeholders, DLT has expanded online learning options with a strong focus on group-based delivery at the brigade level.

More courses are now available for brigades to complete together via the Online Learning Hub, including the CFS Induction and GRN training. These courses can be bulk signed off by authorised personnel, making training easier to manage and more accessible, regardless of location or individual digital skills.

Mount Pleasant Brigade Captain David Kuchenmeister said the bulk sign-off process made training more accessible for all involved.

“Mount Pleasant has fantastic training attendance year-round, and bulk sign-off for online training is a great way to keep skills current,” Captain Kuchenmeister said.

“It’s a perfect winter training activity and encourages volunteers to engage with topics they might not otherwise find time for.”

This approach removes barriers and fosters team-based learning in a familiar, supportive environment. It ensures that all members, regardless of digital literacy, can stay current with essential knowledge and practices.

By aligning training delivery with how brigades function, we’re making it easier for members to learn, grow, and contribute effectively.

This initiative reflects the CFS value of knowledge and ongoing learning, and we’re proud to support our members through relevant, accessible training that meets operational needs across SA.



Awarding member qualifications

The recognition of CFS Volunteers' training achievements has significantly improved with the EMERALD system enhancement completed in December 2024. EMERALD now tracks volunteers' completion of nationally accredited public safety training, enabling Learning and Development (L&D) staff to validate and issue qualifications efficiently via email.

CFS courses, while focused on operational skills, often include formal units of competency aligned with national fire service standards through AFAC. Qualifications are awarded based on a specific combination of mandatory and elective units. Volunteers can tailor their learning through a broad selection of electives based on their roles and interests.

For example, a widely achieved qualification is the PUA20719 Certificate II in Public Safety (Firefighting Operations), which requires four core and seven elective units. The Basic Firefighting 1 (BF1) course covers all core units and prerequisites, so volunteers need only complete seven electives, choosing from over 25 options. Common electives include First Aid and Breathing Apparatus, though specialised units like Rappelling from Helicopter are also available.

Beyond processing new qualifications, the L&D team has reviewed historical training records, resulting in the retrospective awarding of qualifications to 365 members in 2024 and 826 in 2025. This ensures recognition of longstanding contributions.

We thank members for their patience during this process. This milestone highlights our commitment to formally acknowledging the skills, service, and dedication of our CFS Volunteers. Congratulations to all members who have now received their nationally recognised qualification.

Volunteers can tailor their learning through a broad selection of electives based on their roles and interests.

CFS Foundation



As the volume and variety of incidents the South Australian Country Fire Service volunteers respond to expands, so too does the CFS Foundation's role.

For over two decades, the CFS Foundation has supported CFS volunteers via our clear mission: to provide immediate financial support to volunteers and their families when they are injured, lose their homes or livelihoods, or face other hardships because of their service.

Since our 2001 inception, the CFS Foundation has provided more than \$3.7 million in direct financial support to CFS volunteers. In addition to individual assistance, we invest in equipment, resources, and wellbeing initiatives that empower CFS volunteers and brigades across the state to operate safely and effectively.

None of this would be possible without the incredible generosity of our donors, sponsors, and community partners who continue to invest in the safety and resilience of our volunteers. As the needs of our volunteers grow, so too does our resolve to meet them.

Gloria Berni
Chief Executive Officer

CFS Wellbeing Officer

One of our most significant initiatives was the funding of a dedicated CFS Wellbeing Officer, Jana Wurriehausen, with the support of SA Power Networks in 2022 – a role we identified as critical to supporting the mental and emotional health of our volunteers.

One of Jana's key responsibilities is delivering mental health first aid training to volunteers. Given their exposure to traumatic events, cumulative stress, and the pressures of balancing emergency response with everyday life, this program is designed to empower volunteers with the skills to look after their own mental well-being while also enabling them to provide informed support to their fellow volunteers.



CFS softball round

A big thank you to the Hills Heat Softball Club for hosting the CFS softball round at Anembo Park as part of the statewide CFS Softball Round in February.

CFS Foundation CEO Gloria Berni was joined by CFS Chief Officer Brett Loughlin AFSM, Emergency Services Minister the Hon Emily Bourke MLC, and Mount Barker District Council elected member Jess Szilassy in the VIP hit out competition, which was sponsored by the Arkaba Hotel and raised \$500.

It was a fun night for the whole family, with two great games of softball and a huge \$1,000 donation from the NFA Pirates Softball Club.



CFS training team polo shirt launch

We are proud to have developed a partnership with Flinders Port Holdings, whose sponsorship includes providing CFS Training Team members with distinctive polo shirts. These shirts will provide well-deserved recognition for our more than 300 CFS volunteer trainers as they deliver critical training to fellow brigade members.

Presentations of the polo shirts have been held in various locations around SA and we thank Flinders Ports for recognising the importance of our CFS Training Team volunteers.

Parliamentary morning tea

The CFS Foundation, alongside South Australian Police Legacy and the Australian Professional and Firefighters Foundation addressed SA Members of Parliament at a special morning tea.

During the event, we outlined our mission and highlighted the challenges we face amid tough economic conditions. A key focus was the CFS Foundation's dedication to supporting CFS volunteers who selflessly put their lives on the line to protect their communities.

Kevin Maciunas from the Ironbank Brigade shared his deeply personal story as he recounted his journey of recovery after sustaining severe injuries during the 2022 Coles (South East) bushfire. His testimony highlighted the impact of the support provided by the CFS Foundation, which helped he and his family rebuild their lives.

This event offered MPs a valuable opportunity to gain a deeper appreciation for the essential services provided by our charities and reinforced the vital importance of ongoing support for our volunteers.



New comfort koalas

Thanks to the generous support of Stewart & Heaton Clothing Company, 500 Comfort Koalas have been donated to the CFS Foundation. These Comfort Koalas will be distributed to CFS brigades to keep on board their trucks, ready to bring comfort to children during emergencies. Officially launched at the AFL Emergency Services Round at Adelaide Oval in March, these cuddly companions, named Smokey after the CFS mascot, are designed to ease distress in difficult moments for children.

Special thanks to Emergency Services Minister the Hon Emily Bourke MLC, Chief Officer Brett Loughlin AFSM, CFS Foundation Ambassador Nathan van Berlo, and all the brigade members who participated in the successful launch.

SAFECOM Health & Wellbeing



This year has been incredibly productive with an expansion of our allowing us to tackle numerous projects.

Remember that
you are not alone
in whatever
situation you may
find yourself. There
are people who
care and want
to help.

Emergency Services Sector Suicide Prevention Plan

A major milestone for South Australia was achieved in 2021 with the passing of the national *Suicide Prevention Act 2021*. This landmark legislation laid the foundation for a long-term, statewide approach to reducing suicide and its impacts.

SAFECOM nominated to be one of 10 prescribed agencies tasked with developing a public sector-wide Suicide Prevention Plan. This year has seen the development and commencement of associated actions of *With Our People*, the Emergency Services Sector Suicide Prevention Plan. Designed to support our volunteers, staff, and the broader South Australian community, the plan sets a clear and compassionate direction for suicide prevention across our agencies.

Training and support

Highlighting the efforts of the SPAM team's achievements over the past 12 months are the following statistics:

- 15 Stress, Trauma and Suicide training sessions were delivered to volunteers across the state.
- 9 Standard Mental Health First Aid courses were also delivered with 700 enrolments.
- A total of 873 calls were registered to the SPAM line in the past year, which surpasses the previous total of 580. This highlights the need for a 24-hour, free and confidential service available to our members.

We would like to thank everyone who has helped the team achieve these outcomes.

Remember that you are not alone in whatever situation you may find yourself. There are people who care and want to help. If you need support, please do not hesitate to connect with SPAM (8115 3950).

SA Volunteer Fire Fighters Museum



This year marked the 10th annual SA Volunteer Fire Fighters Museum Memorial Service in Naracoorte, honouring firefighters who have lost their lives in the line of duty. Held on Saturday, 12 April 2025, the ceremony was attended by more than 150 people.

The 10th/27th Battalion Royal South Australia Regiment Band provided background music prior to the ceremony, as well as performing the Last Post and the Australian national anthem.

The service was also attended by Tea Tree Gully and One Tree Hill CFS cadets, both part of the Para CFS Group. The cadets formed a guard of honour at the memorial and lowered the flags during the Last Post.

Ray will be remembered for his quiet and calm presence in the face of emergencies, as well as his generous spirit in sharing knowledge and mentoring others.

Honouring Ray Cutting

During the memorial service a plaque was unveiled honouring Raymond (Ray) Cutting. Ray served with the Salisbury CFS Brigade from 1974 until his passing due to brain cancer in 2021. His illness was attributed to his long service with the CFS.

During his time with the CFS, Ray responded to more than 2,340 call-outs, including major fire events such as both Ash Wednesday Fires, Kangaroo Island, Sampson Flat, and Pinery. He served as a lieutenant with Salisbury for at least 27 years and was highly respected by his fellow firefighters and emergency services colleagues.

Ray will be remembered for his quiet and calm presence in the face of emergencies, as well as his generous spirit in sharing knowledge and mentoring others.

Memorial history

- The Memorial to Fallen Firefighters was the first permanent structure installed at the South Australian Volunteer Fire Fighters Museum in Naracoorte.
- It was officially opened in 2016 by the then SA Minister for Emergency Services, Peter Malinauskas, now the state's premier.
- The memorial features a stone wall with a central plaque that reads: *'In memory of those members of the Country Fire Service who gave their lives in the call of duty for South Australia'* — Honour Roll.





Honours

A huge thank you and congratulations
to the latest recipients.

Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM)

The Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) is a peer-nominated medal that recognises distinguished service by members of an Australian fire service.

The Governor-General awards this medal on the recommendation of the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services.

SACFS Australian Fire Service Medal Association

The South Australian Country Fire Service Australian Fire Service Medal Association (SACFS AFSMA) was officially launched on Saint Florian's Day and International Firefighters' Day, on 4 May 2025 at the Vine Inn Barossa, Nuriootpa.

The event was attended by the association's patron, Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia.

The formal launch marked a significant milestone for the association. Established in December 2023, the association was formed to foster greater connection among AFSM recipients and to create a forum where members can use their expertise to support CFS volunteers and the broader CFS community.

The association made remarkable progress in the past year - drafting a constitution, electing a management committee, and finalising its name. Its first annual general meeting was held at SA CFS Headquarters on 21 September 2024. At this meeting, the Governor's appointment as patron was formally announced, and Vince Monterola AM AFSM was recognised for his outstanding efforts in establishing the association.

The association also celebrated the addition of two new AFSM recipients to its growing membership, James 'Jim' Keatch AFSM and Phillip 'Phil' McDonough AFSM, who were honoured in the King's Birthday Awards in July 2024.

The SACFS AFSM Association looks forward to continuing its mission of service, fellowship, and support for the CFS community.



Gregory Robert James AFSM

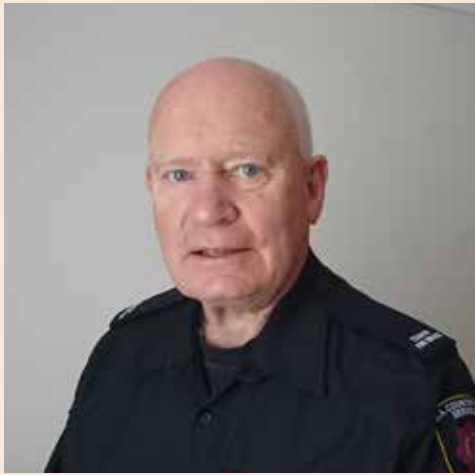
Gregory Robert James has been a dedicated CFS volunteer since December 31, 1975, serving nearly 50 years in a range of leadership and operational roles. He spent 22 years as Lieutenant with the Oakbank/Balhannah Brigade, served as captain (2002-2009), president (1986-2002), and twice as administration coordinator. Since 2009, he has been deputy group officer for the Onkaparinga Group and its finance coordinator since 2017.

Mr James has led on the frontline and driven innovation in fireground operations. His leadership ensured Oakbank/Balhannah remained emergency-ready, and he has mentored future leaders while promoting technology to enhance safety and efficiency.

A key contribution is his pioneering role in developing the Bushfire Analysis and Response Tool (BART), which he began trialling in 2015. His advocacy for features like satellite imagery and location tracking has helped make BART indispensable to more than 7,000 CFS volunteers statewide.

He has also championed operational improvements, including GPS-enabled tablets and Thermal Imaging Cameras (TICs) for fire appliances. His commitment to advancing CFS technology, improving practices, and mentoring others underscores a legacy of innovation and service.

Mr James' leadership and dedication have had a transformative and lasting impact on the CFS and its volunteer community.



Gordon James Sandford AFSM

Mr Gordon Sandford has served the Tea Tree Gully Emergency Fire Service since 1967, demonstrating a lifelong commitment to protecting his community. Over nearly five decades, he has held key leadership roles including senior firefighter, lieutenant, captain, group captain, and became the inaugural Para CFS Group Officer in 1989.

His career is distinguished by technical expertise, innovation, and leadership in firefighting and bushfire investigation. Following the 1983 Ash Wednesday fires, Mr Sandford led the replacement of a destroyed fire truck with the then-controversial RFW (Robert Whitehead) design, later proven visionary and used for 25 years.

Endorsed as a fire investigator in 2015, he has led complex investigations across multiple regions, some resulting in criminal charges, while mentoring new investigators and raising professional standards. He also served on Level 3 Incident Management Teams for nearly a decade, including during major fires across South Australia and Victoria's Black Saturday fire.

Beyond the frontline, Mr Sandford has been a dedicated member of the CFS Volunteers Association, championing volunteer needs in key initiatives like the SA Computer Aided Dispatch System and new communication radio selection. His contributions have significantly enhanced volunteer safety, efficiency, and support across the CFS.



John Robert Wright AFSM

Mr John Wright has demonstrated 45 years of exceptional volunteer service with the CFS, marked by innovative leadership in training, incident management, and operational firefighting. Beginning in 1980 with the Summertown Brigade, he was a founding member of the Greenhill CFS and later contributed significantly to the Mount Lofty Ranges Brigade and the formation of the Region 1 Operations Brigade.

As the inaugural captain of Region 1, Mr Wright helped establish it as a key incident management resource, pioneering the use of the Australasian Interservice Incident Management System and early computer technology. His forward-thinking approach advanced brigade capabilities and set new standards in incident coordination.

In the 1980s, Mr Wright led the creation of the Mount Lofty Training Centre, which evolved into the State Training Centre. He also developed the Incident Management Exercises program, now the Functional Management Development Program, a cornerstone of current CFS training.

He has played a vital role in developing incident management systems, procedures, and Level 2 and Level 3 teams at state and regional levels. Mr Wright has contributed to numerous deployments across Australia and internationally.

His legacy is defined by enduring contributions to training, systems development, and operational excellence within the CFS.

SA Emergency Service Awards

SA Emergency Services Medal & Ministerial Commendation

Established in 2001, the SA Emergency Services Medal (SAEMS) recognises the tireless and extraordinary work of persons contributing to community safety through operational emergency service organisations and associated agencies.

This medal is given to an individual or group who has demonstrated “distinguished and/or meritorious services of the highest order” in recognition of significant contribution to the emergency services in South Australia.

The Ministerial Commendation recognises significant effort, bravery or service and is awarded for “meritorious or courageous action”.

Kevin Elson - Medal

Firefighter
Strathalbyn CFS

Sindy McCourt - Commendation

Regional Commander
Region 4

Peter Ikonomopoulos - Commendation

Regional Officer
Region 4

David Lindner - Medal

Firefighter
Strathalbyn CFS

Neil Ellis - Medal

Firefighter
Strathalbyn CFS



National Medals

National Medal

Steven Jonathon Allen	Clayton Ellis	Jason Kleinig	Brett Rumball
Steven Paul Allen	David Fitch	Matthew Koch	Bruno Santalucia
June Andrew	Kevin Fitzgerald	Trevor Kriesl	Ian Sargent
Paul Attwood	Rosemary Fitzgerald	Margaret Krueger	Trent Scholz
Geoffrey Axford	John Fitzgerald	Michelle Kruger	Tamika Schutz
Adam Baker	Lesley Garlick	Brendan Laskey	Jeremy Schutz
Grant Bates	Oskar Gegenhuber	Kim Lau	Daniel Seidel
Jayden Beaven	Graeme Geldard	David Lehmann	Wade Sellick
Darren Beck	Samuel Gibb	Peter Litchfield	Peter Sims
Trevor Beerens	Shelagh Gibbs	Darren Longmire	Mark Sims
William Bennett	Travis Gilbert	Benjamin Lupo	Lynda Smith
Benjamin Beviss	Jon Gill	Philip Luxford	Dawn Stewart
Christopher Blasche	Donna Gordon	Daniel Marron	Craig Stringer
Keith Blieschke	Michael Gore	Ian Marschall	Kelvin Stringer
Matthew Blieschke	Zahn Gotch	Andrew Martin	Hayden Stringer
Dennis Bonney	Rebecca Gould	Wendy Martin	Andrew Stringer
Andrew Bowley	William Graetz	James Matters	Michael Swayne
Julianne Brewster	Philip Graetz	Gavin Malycha	Debra Thornton
Alice Burdett	Timothy Hage	Susan McCallum	Glen Trengove
Nathan Burgess	Warren Hannaford	Ian McFetridge	Andrew Trott
Roger Burt	Tony Hean	James Meyers	Ryan Turner
Neil Butler	Paul Heath	Robert Middleton	William Underwood
Mark Cameron	Paul Height	Simon Mildren	Jake Verran
Edward Carver	David Hemsworth	David Mildren	Darren Wake
Stephen Cheffirs	Peter Hewett	Shane Miller	Kenneth Walter
Paul Cheffirs	Dale Hilder	Eli Modra	Paul Warren
James Clark	Richard Hirstle	Lorraine Moore	Helen Waterman
Christopher Clarke	Linda Hitch	Shane Mudge	Michael Watson
Barry Clifford	Michael Hollitt	Shirley Munn	Peter Webbe
Matthew Collins	Dianne Horsnell	Sean Nancarrow	Peter Whaley
Jason Collins	Ian Hunter	Debra Newell	Simon White
Bradley Cook	Megan Hurrell	Phillip Nottle	Shane Whitelaw
Matthew Coombe	Colin Jamieson	Aaron Oates	Bradley Wilkinson
Timothy Correll	Craig Jenzen	Denis O'Dea	Randall Wilksch
Ernest Cotton	Graham Johnson	Todd Orrock	Nigel Williams
Matthew Crosby	Mark Jones	Dean Paul	James Wilson
Kent Dalling	Shandel Juett	Christopher Paunola	Mark Wilton
Jason Dalling	Feyne Kaesler	Nicholas Petrakis	Sarah Wiltshire
Michael Daniels	John Kain	Bradley Pfeiffer	Paul Wood
Bruce Donaldson	Lynette Kelly	Keith Pluckrose	Michael Woodcock
Nerida Edge	Jamie Kerley	David Prosser	Craig Woolford
Michelle Egel	Robert Khan	Peter Roberts	Yvonne Wurst
Alex Eime	Trevor Kirk	Ian Roberts	Trevor Zbierski
Shannen Ellis	Rebecca Kirvan	Darren Robinson	Alan Zubrinich

National Medal 1st Clasp

Bradley Agars
Steven Allen
June Andrew
Brett Atkins
Geoffrey Axford
Keith Blieschke
Dennis Bonney
Andrew Bowley
David Bradshaw
Matthew Brooks
Lynette Burbidge
Neil Byerlee
Rex Carman
Anthony Casey
Hugh Childs
Christopher Clarke
Noel Curtis
Jason Dalling
Bruce Donaldson
Bruce Dutschke
Michelle Egel
Benjamin Faber
Shane Fantinel
Kevin Fitzgerald
Ricardo Fredes
Oskar Gegenhuber
Graeme Geldard
Samuel Gibb
Jon Gill
Philip Graetz
Christopher Green
Adrian Green
Warren Hannaford
Scott Haynes
Peter Hewett
Cameron Hook
Peter Hunter
Colin Jamieson
Craig Jenzen
Mark Jones
James Keatch
Lynette Kelly
Jamie Kerley
Robert Khan
Trevor Kirk
Andrew Kitto
Jason Kleinig

Byron Krop
David Lehmann
Darren Longmire
Christopher Macdonald
Ian Marschall
James Matters
Gavin Maylcha
Susan McCallum
David Mildren
Anthony Moore
Barry Mudge
Shirley Munn
Dianne Neill
Phillip Nottle
John O'Loughlin
Todd Orrock
Dean Paul
Keith Pluckrose
David Prosser
Peter Roberts
Darren Robinson
Simon Scholtyssek
Craig Schultz
Kenneth Schutz
Peter Sims
Mark Sims
Kevin Sizer
Terry Smith
Lynda Smith
Richard Steel
Trevor Stevens
Vicky Stevens
Craig Stringer
Kelvin Stringer
Hayden Stringer
Andrew Stringer
Ilen Trengove
Kenneth Walter
Paul Warren
David White
Shane Whitelaw
Damon Whitwell
Randall Wilksch
Richard Williams
Nigel Williams
James Wilson
Craig Wilson
Paul Wood
Alan Zubrinich

National Medal 2nd Clasp

June Andrew
Graham Ash
Leonard Barnes
Colin Becker
Christopher Bird
Keith Blieschke
Trevor Bornholm
Stacey Bradtke
Grant Breeding
Warren Breeding
Lynette Burbidge
Andrew Burford
Jeffrey Cradock
Phillip Dabinett
Trevor Daniel
Philip Driver
Justin Duffy
Thomas Flavel
Kym Fromm
Jon Gill
Michael Gordon
Philip Graetz
Peter Hewett
Geoffrey Hitch
Lyndon Jacka
Colin Jamieson
Karel Jansen
Robert Khan
Trevor Kirk
Sydney Lane
Steven Lane
Timothy Lehmann
Darren Longmire

Michael Marks
Russell Martin
Gavin Maylcha
Susan McCallum
Simon Mcnamara
David Mildren
Peter Murdock
Terry Murphy
Phillip Nottle
Allan Nutt
Kevin O'Dea
Dean Paul
Keith Pluckrose
Christopher Pole
David Prosser
James Reese
Graham Rehn
Peter Roberts
Darren Robinson
Ronald Rutte
Jason Sabeeney
Neville Schultz
Kenneth Schutz
Terry Smith
Lynda Smith
Craig Stringer
Kelvin Stringer
Hayden Stringer
Phillip Tapscott
Frank Wallace
Kenneth Walter
Steven Welke
Michael Wigg
Richard Williams
James Wilson

National Medal 3rd Clasp

Graham Ash
Keith Blieschke
Peter Bonython
Kenneth Campbell
Philip Driver
Shane Francis
James Gerhardy
James Graetz
Frederick Groom
Sydney Lane
Peter Lehmann
Anthony Mannion
Colin Mccoll
Anthony Moten
Terry Murphy
Modris Ozolins
Gregory Pech
Michael Redden
Kymlie Redman
Graham Rehn
Peter Roberts
Raymond Screen
Peter Smallacombe
Lynda Smith
John Tenney
Mark Tuckwell
Kenneth Walter
Richard Williams

National Medal 4th Clasp

Robert Davis
Robert Green
Graham Rehn
Graham Thomas

There are 12 dedicated volunteers who recently hit a significant milestone – 60 and 70 years of service to CFS.

A huge thank you and congratulations to the latest recipients of CFS 60-Year Service Medal - your dedication and commitment to the Service will inspire the next generation of volunteers to walk in your footsteps.

“Your dedication and commitment to the Service will inspire the next generation of volunteers to walk in your footsteps.”

CFS 70+ Year Service Medals

Frederick Ewing

Region 1 / Mount Lofty CFS Group – Mylor

CFS 60+ Year Service Medals

Harold Grivell

Region 1 / Heysen CFS Group – Hahndorf

Graham Rehn

Region 2 / Gumeracha CFS Group – Kersbrook

Graham Pritchard

Region 2 / Gumeracha CFS Group – Cudlee Creek

Trevor Clements

Region 4 / Bundaleer CFS Group – Narridy

Mervyn Robinson

Region 4 / Hallett CFS Group Whyte – Yarcowie

Geoff Smith

Region 4 / Spencer CFS Group – Crystal Brook

Brian Wiese

Region 5 / Tatiara CFS Group – Mundulla

John Ettridge

Region 6 / Western Eyre CFS Group – Smoky Bay

Eldon Glover

Region 6 / Lower Eyre Peninsula CFS Group – Yeelanna

Peter Meaney

Region 6 / Lower Eyre Peninsula CFS Group – Mount Hope

Peter Doudle

Region 6 / Lower Eyre Peninsula CFS Group – Coult

2025 SACFS Chief Officer Awards

Chief Officer's Unit Citation for Service

Naracoorte Brigade



The Naracoorte Brigade responded to a critical rescue operation following a vehicle collision on 18 July 2024. Upon arrival at the scene, the crew acted swiftly and professionally, quickly assessing the situation and working in close coordination with the SA Ambulance Service (SAAS).

A female driver was found heavily trapped and in a life-threatening condition. With precision and teamwork, the crew undertook a complex extrication, carefully removing the front door, cutting the B pillar, and using hydraulic rams to free her from the severely damaged vehicle.

Despite the urgency and challenging conditions, the team remained focused and composed. When the driver stopped breathing during the extraction, they continued their rescue efforts with determination, successfully removing her from the vehicle and assisting SAAS in transferring her to the ambulance stretcher.

Their professionalism, teamwork, and unwavering commitment were critical in saving a life that day. Their actions reflect the highest standards of the SACFS and the true spirit of service in life-and-death situations.

Recipients: Shane Smith, Brett Rumball, Allan Marshall, Paul McRostie, Daniel McRostie, Andy Bartosek, Scott Murray, Steve Hosking, Beth Warwick, Connor Clark-Murphy, Jacob Edwards

Swan Reach and Blanchetown Brigades



On December 20, 2024, at approximately 10:40 pm, the Swan Reach and Blanchetown Brigades responded promptly to a vehicle collision with a tree involving an unresponsive and non-breathing driver.

The members performed CPR for approximately one hour under physically demanding and emotionally charged conditions.

Despite the challenging circumstances, their determination and calmness were instrumental in sustaining the patient's life until SA Ambulance arrived.

Their exemplary professionalism, dedication, and composure under pressure were critical in this life-saving operation.

Recipients: Haley Carter, Gregory Soares, John Hutchinson, Andrew Mustard, and Gregory Bishop.

Chief Officer's Certificate of Commendation

FireMapper Working Group

The FireMapper Working Group was awarded for their outstanding contributions to the successful trial of the FireMapper application during the 2024/25 Fire Danger Season.

The team developed this project as part of the broader EM Merge program - an impressive display of initiative and innovation. This groundbreaking tool has significantly enhanced intelligence workflows, situational awareness, and the common operating picture, from routine Level 1 incidents to the complex Level 3 Wilmington fire.

The trial's success directly reflects the dedication and commitment of this exceptional group of volunteers and staff, who went above and beyond in their service. Their exceptional contributions included hundreds of hours spent planning and implementing the trial.

Their commitment to enhancing the SACFS's operational capabilities has been exemplary, and the positive feedback received from Deputy State Controllers, Incident Controllers, and fireground personnel speaks volumes to the success of their efforts.

Recipients: Mitchell Fitzgerald, Simeon Telfer, Alex Thomson, Jack Booker, Samuel Koerner, Carol Yokowo, John McMahon, David Bradshaw, Phil Richards, Richard Morral.



Emily Mace Fleet Officer, Region 1

Over the past five years, Emily Mace has demonstrated outstanding innovation and professionalism in Region 1.

As Fleet Officer, she transformed fleet management by introducing local ownership of service records, ensuring quality and cost-effective maintenance. Emily led the development of a tender process for service agents, now adopted across all regions, and pioneered random audits to ensure vehicle safety.

She has also supported operational readiness by advocating for specialised equipment, setting new benchmarks across the service. Known for her integrity and respect for volunteers, Emily's contributions have had a lasting impact.

Graham Sims Captain, Jamestown Brigade

Graham Sims has devoted 27 years of exceptional service to the SA Country Fire Service, dedicating half his life to protecting his community. As Captain of the Jamestown Brigade, Graham has not only contributed over 530 logged attendances and completed 344 units of training, but he has also driven innovations in firefighter safety.

His vision for the new Jamestown station led to the creation of a versatile SCBA training facility, which has since become a benchmark in Region 4.

Graham's commitment extends beyond typical volunteer duties; he ensures training courses are properly equipped, manages logistics, and steps in to maintain the highest standards of safety and professionalism.

June Young Lieutenant 1, Cowell Brigade

Since joining the Cowell Brigade in 1988, June has exemplified unwavering dedication, leadership, and community spirit. From her early days as an auxiliary member to becoming a firefighter in 1994, she has continuously supported the brigade.

As Cadet Coordinator since 2001, June has nurtured the next generation of volunteers, advocating for their training, fundraising for essential gear, and proudly representing the brigade at events such as the Anzac Day vigil.

Her commitment extends beyond firefighting, strengthening ties with the community and keeping the brigade vibrant and welcoming.

Kailee Ingham

A/Incident Management Coordinator

Kailee Ingham has demonstrated outstanding leadership, initiative, and commitment in her role as Lead State Resource Officer, going above and beyond the significant demands of her primary role.

In the absence of clear guidance, Kailee shaped the role by developing training programs, mentoring new team members, running exercises, and creating a supportive team culture.

Her selfless dedication—adjusting personal commitments, attending additional activations, and even baking for team meetings—has built confidence, competence, and camaraderie across the State Command Centre.

Through her innovative approach and strategic insight, Kailee has enhanced the State Resource Officer role and strengthened relationships with key operational partners. Her tireless efforts, both seen and unseen, are a shining example of service, leadership, and passion in action.

Steve Batson

Lieutenant, Concordia Brigade

Lieutenant Batson is recognised for his 33 years of exceptional service. A highly respected member of the Concordia Brigade, Steve has held various leadership roles, including Brigade Captain, Brigade Training Coordinator, and Cadet Coordinator, while also serving as a SACFS trainer/assessor.

His dedication to mentoring, training, and incident response has had a lasting impact on the brigade and broader SACFS community.

His commitment to the SACFS and mentorship of multiple generations of cadets, including his son, Sam Batson, exemplifies the values of the service.

Robert ‘Bob’ Cooke

Region 6 Operations and Logistics Support Brigade

Bob Cooke is recognised for his exceptional service to the SACFS and the Region 6 Operations and Logistics Support Brigade. Bob’s unwavering dedication and reliability make him an invaluable asset to both the Region and the SACFS.

With more than 30 years of service, he has consistently gone above and beyond – from assisting with critical communications on total fire ban days to maintaining the Region 6 Headquarters and ensuring operational fleets are always ready for deployment.

His tireless efforts, whether transporting catering to firegrounds, delivering stock, or providing logistical support during emergencies, ensure seamless operations behind the scenes.

Bob’s commitment, initiative, and selflessness set a standard of excellence within the SACFS, and his contributions are invaluable.

John Uniacke

Senior Firefighter, Piccadilly Brigade

Since joining the SACFS in 1980, John has dedicated more than four decades to protecting his community through tireless service, leadership, and advocacy.

A driving force behind the development of the new Piccadilly Brigade, John’s vision and commitment ensured the brigade had the facilities and capability needed to meet modern demands.

His guidance and mentoring have been instrumental in shaping a strong and capable team. At the same time, his continued roles as Equipment Coordinator and Health and Safety Representative for East Torrens Group highlight his ongoing commitment and unwavering dedication to the values of the SACFS.



Chief Officer's Commendation for Service

Michael Amos

Regional Prevention Officer
Region 3

Michael Amos has consistently demonstrated outstanding leadership, innovation, and commitment to the SACFS.

His development of the annual Risk Landscape Briefing and contributions to parliamentary-level briefings have set new standards in strategic communication.

Michael has significantly strengthened stakeholder relationships and enhanced public safety through initiatives such as the Regional Fire Prevention Officer Reference Group, QR-coded community outreach, and the revival of pastoral engagement.

His leadership in rolling out modern, targeted community engagement programs has transformed the region's relationship with high-risk communities.

Michael's dedication extends beyond duty, from launching educational tools to representing CFS internationally.

Ian Davey

Deputy Group Officer 1
Caralue Group

Fondly known as 'Pump', Ian has dedicated over 35 years of outstanding service to the SACFS, holding key roles including Brigade Captain and Deputy Group Officer.

A pillar of the Kimba Brigade and Caralue Group, Ian is known for his tireless reliability, mentoring of cadets, and unwavering presence at incidents.

He's been instrumental in enhancing logistics support and developing a deployable catering trailer and a custom logistics vehicle to serve volunteers better in remote areas.

With 378 recorded incidents and a strong record of service across the state, Ian leads by example—always the first to arrive, the last to leave, and the quiet force ensuring everything runs smoothly.

His dedication, leadership, and behind-the-scenes work make him invaluable to the SACFS and the broader community.

Lindsay Hincks

Peer Support Officer
Happy Valley Region 1

For 24 years, Lindsay Hincks has shown unwavering dedication to the SACFS, serving as a committed firefighter and a Volunteer Peer Support Officer.

Over the past 22 years, Lindsay has provided compassionate support to countless members, offering empathy, guidance, and strength during times of need.

Following the tragic loss of his wife, Louise Hincks, a fellow SACFS volunteer, Lindsay continued to support others selflessly, embodying resilience and honouring her legacy through the creation of the Therapy Dog project with SAFECOM.

With therapy dog Maxi Hincks now supporting members across the service, Lindsay's efforts have left a lasting impact on the well-being and spirit of the SACFS community.

His contribution is a powerful testament to compassion, courage, and service beyond measure.

Dianne Neill

Peer Support Officer

Di Neill has dedicated 26 years to the SA Country Fire Service, serving as a committed firefighter and Peer Support Officer for more than 20 years.

Her compassion, strength, and unwavering commitment to the well-being of others have made a profound impact on volunteers across the state.

Whether supporting crews after major incidents, mentoring new peers, or delivering critical training on trauma and resilience, Di consistently goes above and beyond. Di embodies the values of the SACFS and continues to inspire all who work alongside her.

Trevor Zbierski

Lieutenant
Swan Reach Brigade

Trevor Zbierski is recognised for his exceptional response and life-saving actions during a medical emergency on 4 May 2024, St Florian's Day.

When paged to assist the South Australian Ambulance Service with a 51-year-old male who had collapsed, Trevor responded promptly from his home, arriving swiftly at the scene.

Upon arrival, he took over CPR from the patient's wife and his determination and expertise led to the successful revival of the patient after approximately 15 minutes of CPR.

Trevor's swift action and unwavering commitment to saving lives were instrumental in the patient's survival. His exceptional service exemplifies the highest standards of SACFS.

Susan Leslie

Peer Support Officer & former captain of Clarendon Operational Brigade

Sue Leslie is recognised for her exceptional 21 years of service to the South Australian Country Fire Service. Joining the CFS in 2004, Sue has attended over 300 incidents and has served as a Peer Support Officer for 20 years, providing invaluable support to colleagues facing traumatic events.

Her compassionate nature and unwavering dedication have had a profound impact, particularly during her time as Captain of the Clarendon Brigade.

Sue has consistently offered one-on-one support, managed welfare checks, and provided peer support during major intrastate and interstate deployments.

Her selflessness and commitment to the well-being of fellow volunteers have made her a highly respected member of the CFS.



Chief Officer's Advisory Council



The Chief Officer's Advisory Council (COAC) is a platform for our volunteers, the Youth Advisory Council, the State Volunteer WHS Committee, and the CFS Volunteers Association to share their insights and expertise on strategic matters, influencing key decisions that shape the CFS' future.

Over the past 12 months, COAC has contributed valuable input toward enhancing AVL, PPC decontamination and the AED roll-out, as well as supporting projects such as the Building Officer Leadership and Development (BOLD) program, EM Merge, Urban Uplift, and driving policy considerations around vehicle self-recovery proposals, medical incident responses, and rural service delivery options.

David Bamford has joined COAC as the impartial chair, bringing a wealth of experience as a volunteer across the CFS and from his work as a lawyer, professor and Dean of Flinders University School of Law.

COAC serves as the nexus for many CFS committees, and the chair of these committees is a facilitator and leader, ensuring meetings remain productive, run efficiently, and order is maintained; guiding passionate members committed to achieving the best outcomes.

An effective chair is impartial, fosters collaboration, inclusivity, clarity, and productivity, ensuring all voices are heard - an often-challenging task when discussions involve their own region, group, or brigade.

With more than 40 committees, councils, and working groups within the CFS, we extend our gratitude to each chair for their diplomacy, leadership, and ability to mediate robust discussions with fairness and tact.

Finally, the CFS acknowledges the significant time and effort contributed by members across all committees, councils, and working groups.

Their continued dedication and their willingness to share their diverse perspectives, from frontline firefighters to volunteer leadership, alongside their personal expertise, actively shapes the future of the CFS. Enhancing firefighting, operations, business and project management practices to drive meaningful improvements in the way we deliver our service and keep our community safe.

David Bamford

First joining Summertown CFS Brigade in 1980, David Bamford rejoined the agency after some time away and has now completed 27 years of service as a volunteer firefighter.

His knowledge and experience include 12 years as a Captain and Deputy Group Officer, a Level 2 Incident Controller, and Deputy Incident Controller and Deputy Operations Officer with Level 3 Incident Management.

You may have also seen David assisting the State Training Centre in the delivery of Tactical Command Courses across SA.

Retirements

Paul Bebbington

Paul Bebbington has retired from CFS after seven years of service as Telecommunications Technical Officer in Contract Management and Delivery.

Paul's work has delivered a range of cost-efficiency initiatives throughout his time with CFS and his approach has enhanced service delivery across the agency.

He has led and supported the implementation of several major ICT infrastructure projects featuring the deployment of secure, high-speed fibre connectivity to key CFS sites, significantly improving organisational and operational communications.

This has been achieved across multiple layers of telecommunications, including Land Mobile Radio Systems, Paging Infrastructure, Mobile Services, PC and Hardware Replacement Programs and Digital Transition Projects.

Well-liked by all, Paul will continue as a CFS volunteer with the One Tree Hill Brigade, where he is Brigade Operational Support, and is hopeful to continue his role with Aviation as an Aircraft Officer.

Margaret Carter

Margaret Carter retired from CFS after eight years of dedicated service, finishing her career as a Staff Officer in Community Risk Reduction Partnerships.

She began in 2017 with the Development Assessment Service and went on to play key roles in Logistics Support and State Command.

Margaret was known for her passion, professionalism, and warmth, leaving a lasting impact on her teams and everyone she worked with.

Her contribution to both operational support and volunteer engagement was deeply valued.

Margaret's presence is greatly missed, and we wish her the very best as she travels the world in retirement

Mark Gloster

Mark Gloster retired from his role as Breathing Apparatus (BA) State Training Officer in December 2024, after more than a decade of service.

Mark led significant improvements in BA training, including the redevelopment of the State Training Centre BA complex and the creation of a new facility in Jamestown. He also helped revitalise the Region 5 Training Centre.

Mark's legacy includes a strong team of volunteer trainers and a lasting contribution to the capability of the CFS.

His leadership and dedication shaped the BA program for the better, and we thank him for his outstanding service.

John Probert

After nearly 26 years of service, John Probert has signed off as a CFS staff member.

John commenced his volunteer journey with the State Emergency Service at Mount Gambier in 1981 before joining CFS as both a volunteer and staff member in 1999, transitioning from a highly successful career in the agricultural sector, where he specialised in seed cleaning.

Throughout his time with the CFS John has served in a wide range of roles, including Regional Commander in both Region 1 and Region 5. His CFS experience also includes appointments as Regional Volunteer Officer, Regional Prevention Officer, Regional Operations Planning Officer and, most recently, Industry Brigades Project Officer.

In addition to his staff roles, John has also continued his commitment as a volunteer with Naracoorte, North Shields and Morak brigades, along with Mount Gambier District Group, adding significantly to his broad contribution to the CFS.

Outside of the CFS, John is an adventurer. He enjoys trekking, motorcycle riding and even rock climbing. He is also passionate about humanitarian work and has been actively involved in aid projects in Africa.

John's commitment to the CFS has been exemplary and we are sure he will remain involved with the organisation in the years to come.

Farewells

Georgie Cornish

Deputy Chief Officer Georgie Cornish completed her time with CFS after nearly a decade of service.

Starting in 2015 as Director, Operational Capability Planning, Georgie held several key leadership roles and briefly worked with State Disaster Recovery.

Georgie's hard work, fresh ideas, and commitment supported the growth and development of the agency and made a lasting contribution to the CFS.

Her insight and ability to tease out a solution in an operational setting was highly regarded by colleagues.

Georgie is now the Executive Director of Biosecurity at Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA), with whom CFS has a strong history of working with on incident management.

Scott Turner

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Scott Turner left the CFS to become Deputy Chief Officer with Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVIC).

Scott served CFS professionally for more than 20 years and volunteered for over 30 years.

He brought deep operational experience and leadership to the organisation, especially in volunteer training and regional support where his dedication was well received by members and staff alike.

Scott was involved in numerous Incident Management Teams where his professional and thorough nature ensured a highly coordinated response.

His experience is an asset that will serve FFMVIC well for the duration of his employment with that organisation.

Obituaries

Jeremy Allport 1952 – 2024

Jeremy spent much of his time overseas working as a geologist. However, during his 33 years of service he was always available to support the Waitpinga Brigade when at home.

A great character, Jeremy always had a smile on his face. He was known for his great sense of humour and his love of red wine.

Jeremy recently received life membership of the Waitpinga Brigade, of which he was very proud.

He held positions as Firefighter Bute Brigade (1986 to 1988), Waitpinga member (1993 to 2025), Brigade Comms Operator, Senior Firefighter (2006 to 2007) and Lieutenant (2017 to 2025).

Allen Bell 1942 – 2024

A Kingscote Brigade member of 57 years, Allen's unfaltering service to the CFS, formerly EFS, was remarkable.

He was a founding member of the Kingscote Brigade in 1958 and forged the brigade into the professional outfit we see today.

Allen filled many positions within the brigade, including Senior Firefighter (2004 to 2005), Brigade Logistics (1958 to 1993 and 1997 to 1999), Brigade Communications Officer (1958 to 1997 and 2000 to 2003) and Kangaroo Island Group Communications Officer (1992 to 2020).

Trevor Crouch 1941 – 2024

Trevor served with the Aldgate Brigade for 59 years and was previously the Brigade Captain. He also held positions of Brigade President (2008 to 2020) and Lieutenant (1963 to 1996).

Trevor attended hundreds of calls throughout his service with the CFS and was heavily involved in the 1983 Ash Wednesday Fires that swept through the Adelaide Hills and South East.

Steven Gazzola 1964 – 2024

Steven Gazzola was a member of the CFS for 42 years, having commenced with the Jervois Brigade in 1983. He was 59 when he passed.

He filled the position of Brigade Captain for 4 years from 2001 and then again for a brief period in 2021.

During his service to the community of Jervois CFS he was also Brigade Lieutenant and Senior Firefighter.

Willis Gowling 1982 – 2025

A well-known member of the Mallee community, Willis had 25 years of experience with the CFS, joining at 17 years of age.

Having commenced with the CFS at Karoonda, Willis briefly transferred to Tintinara before becoming a long-term volunteer at Coonalpyn, where he held the position of Brigade Lieutenant.

Alexander 'Sandy' Haig 1933 – 2024

Alexander, known as Sandy, served the CFS for 69 years and months with the Yahl Brigade and Mount Gambier Operations Brigade.

Sandy was awarded the CFS 60-Year Service Medal in 2018 and the National Medal with 3rd Clasp in 2003. He will be missed by his family, friends, and colleagues.

Malcom Hale 1939 – 2024

Malcolm was a long serving and valued member of the Bradbury Brigade, with 48 years of service. Over his many years, Malcolm held numerous positions within the brigade, including Firefighter, Senior Firefighter (2005 to 2007), Brigade Training Officer (2004 to 2011) and Brigade Vice Present (2019 to 2021).

More recently, he supported the brigade in an operational support role. Malcolm will be fondly remembered by many members for his in-depth training sessions, kind heart and smile.

He was a good friend to many, not only within the brigade, but also the wider communities of Longwood, Bradbury and Scott Creek with his involvement with the local progress association, agricultural bureau and his drive to increase community preparedness and resilience with the establishment of Community Planning for Recovery.

Luke Hynes 1975 – 2025

The serving captain of Bowhill and District Brigade, Luke contributed nearly 25 years of service with the CFS.

He initially joined the Mannum Brigade in 1989 and served there for seven years before transferring to Bowhill in 2007.

Brynn Ingrames

1979 – 2025

Brynn commenced with the Owen CFS Brigade in 2008 and was a Brigade Firefighter for 7 years.

He had only recently returned to service with the Owen CFS when he tragically passed in May.

Stuart MacIntyre

1981 – 2024

An active member of the Eden Hills Brigade at his passing, Stuart served at numerous stations within the Sturt Group, including a short stint in Burnside Brigade, during his CFS career which commenced in 2006.

Stuart dedicated his life to the fire services as a Metropolitan Fire Service member and shared his knowledge and experience to brigade members, enhancing the skills and capabilities of personnel.

Stuart held the positions of Senior Firefighter at Eden Hills (2014 to 2022) and Volunteer Compartment Fire Behaviour Trainer since 2024.

Terry Mellors

1951 – 2025

Terry joined Kangarilla brigade in August 1989. He left Clarendon in September of 2018 and moved to Moana. It was during this time that we learned of Terry's battle with cancer.

Terry held many roles within the Moana Brigade, including as WHS representative for 7 years. Safety was always Terry's primary concern, and all issues were promptly addressed.

Further roles Terry held included Equipment Coordinator, Lieutenant 4 and Senior Firefighter.

Records indicate that Terry attended more than 200 incidents as a volunteer. He received a Service Medal and 20-year clasp, National Medal and 1st clasp, while he was also presented with Life Membership in 2015.

Terry's memorial service was well attended by CFS with representatives from Region1, Mawson Group, Clarendon and Kangarilla Brigade members, past and present.

Adrian Muldoon

1962 – 1925

An active member of the Littlehampton Brigade for more than 30 years, Adrian passed away peacefully on 2 March 2025. A leader in Radio Room Operations, Adrian spent the evening prior to his passing providing communications for a structure fire in Nairne.

Adrian was a brigade firefighter and CFS Volunteers Association representative from 2019 to 2025, with his past few years focusing on being the brigade's regular Communications Operator.

Adrian was a character of the brigade, and his passing will be a huge loss, not only to Littlehampton but the Heyesen Group.

Mary Page

1929 – 2024

Mary Page was a life member of the CFS, with more than 21 years of service with the Brukunga Brigade. Mary was strongly connected to the State Training Centre, spending hundreds of hours assisting with training CFS members.

Her knowledge and experience assisted many volunteers from across the state achieving their skills and qualifications so they could support their communities.

Philip Parker

1958 – 2025

Philip was a lifetime member of the Watervale CFS, holding the roles of Brigade President, Captain and Deputy Group Officer.

He initiated a cadet group in the brigade and championed the brigade's success at the CFS Competitions during the late 1980s and early 1990s.

A staunch advocate for fellow CFS volunteers, Philip was President of the Lower North Branch of the CFS Volunteer Association in 1989 to 1992 and again from 2002 to 2007, as well as being elected as Region 2 OHS&W Committee Chairman and serving on the State OHS&W committee for 15 years (1992 to 2007).

Philip received the National Medal and CFS Life Membership for his service.

Obituaries

Paul Pegler 1953 – 2024

Paul was a member of the CFS for over 21 years, serving in many brigades across the state including the Volunteer Marine Rescue in Port Victoria.

Paul served with Strathalbyn, Port Victoria, Coomandook and Mt Gambier Group Operations Brigades before moving to the Region 1 Operations Support Brigade.

Paul held numerous positions, including Yorke Valley Group Finance Officer (2013 to 2015), Port Victoria WHS Representative (2011 to 2015), Brigade Administration Officer Strathalbyn (1986 to 1995) and Port Victoria Brigade Lieutenant (2011 to 2015).

Freeman Puckridge 1952 – 2024

Freeman served with the Wangary Brigade, joining in 1970 he provided 54 years of active service.

During Freeman's tenure, he held the position of Lieutenant 4 for 5 years, Lieutenant 1 for 3 years and dedicated 12 years as Brigade Captain from 2010 to 2023.

Freeman received the CFS Service Medal 10 years and service clasps up to 50 years.

As well as his CFS service, Freeman was a dedicated member of the Wangary community and patron to the Marble Range Football Club.

Sasitorn 'Luna' Saephang 1978 – 2024

Luna had just joined the Balaklava Brigade as a firefighter when she unfortunately passed.

Robert 'Bob' Sadleir 1944 – 2025

Bob was a very active member of the Kangarilla Brigade who responded to his final callout a month prior to his passing, wearing BA at a structure fire in Meadows.

Bob joined the CFS at Echunga in 1974, transferred to Macclesfield in 1987 and then moved to Kangarilla in 1998.

Bob held positions of Senior Firefighter, Lieutenant, BA Operator, Chainsaw Operator, Kangarilla's Driver Training Officer, CFSVA Representative, Trainer Assessor and was the current Kangarilla Vice President.

Throughout his involvement, Bob participated in all aspects of brigade life, always gave a helping hand, was a mentor, gave guidance and was a true friend.

Mark Scobie 1961 – 2024

Mark joined the CFS in 1979 as a teenager and remained with the Salt Creek Brigade for 44 years.

His time with the CFS included a 5-year period as Salt Creek Brigade Captain from 2011.

Mark was from a farming family, was active within his local community and a volunteer with multiple organisations, including the Meningie Area School, Meningie Hospital and as a volunteer with the SA Ambulance Service.

Howard Graham Terry 1946 – 2025

Graham joined the CFS in October 1996 and was a member of the Walker Flat Brigade.

He was a lieutenant with Walker Flat, as well as Deputy Group Officer of Ridley CFS Group for 5 years from 2012.

Bob White 1936 – 2024

As a long-serving member of the Victor Harbor Group's Lower Inman Brigade, Bob volunteered for more than 68 years.

Bob was the captain of Lower Inman Brigade from (1954 to 2002), Senior Firefighter (2006 to 2012) and the Brigade Logistics Officer (2002 to 2004).

A respected man with an incredible record of service to his local community.

Arnold Wilson 1922 – 2025

Arnold was the inaugural captain of Barossa District/Williamstown Brigade in 1947 and passed away on March 11, 2025, at the grand age of 102 years.

Arnold, a World War II veteran who served in New Guinea, drew on his military experience to help the fledgling brigade support the local community.

Well-known and respected within his community, Arnold was active in various organisations and has left a wonderful legacy in Williamstown.

John Woods 1961 – 2025

John served with Palmer Brigade from 1991. He twice served as Palmer Brigade Captain, which included a 6-year stint from 2000.

AFAC Memorial

In May 2025, the Australasian Fire Authorities Council held the National Memorial Service in Canberra to honour fire and emergency services personnel who have died in the line of duty.

Among the 25 individuals commemorated at this event were two CFS members, Troy Kinslow (1973 – 2024) and Neil Adams (1962 – 2024), whose passing was recognised under the presumptive cancer legislation.

Their families received Memorial Medallions, supported by Chief Officer Brett Loughlin, Deputy Chief Officer Paul Seager and CFS nominated Agency Liaison Officer Jim Keatch AFSM, and their names inscribed at the National Emergency Service Memorial.

Neil Adam

Neil Adams, known by many as 'Wazza', was a CFS member of 39 years, starting with the Waikerie Brigade in 1985.

In keeping with his love of community, his funeral service was held at the Waikerie CFS station.

Troy Kinslow

Troy Kinslow was a CFS member of 10 years, who had been a member of Nairne, Hermitage and Salisbury brigades. Upon moving to Victoria in 2014, he continued to volunteer with the Country Fire Authority in that state.



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Upper Mount Lofty Ranges, Yorke Peninsula and Lower North

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South Australian Country Fire Service Promotions Unit

Postal PO Box 73, Basket Range SA 5138

Email info@fire-brigade.asn.au

Web fire-brigade.asn.au

Volunteer Services

37 Richmond Road, Keswick SA 5035

Phone 1300 364 587

Postal GPO Box 2706, Adelaide SA 5001

Email vsb@safecom.sa.gov.au

Country Fire Service Volunteer Association (CFS VA)

Suite 3, Transport Training Centre, 17 Wirriga Street, Regency Park SA 5010

Phone 08 8244 6500

Postal PO Box 2359, Regency Park SA 5942

Email admin@cfsva.org.au

Web cfsva.org.au

Community Engagement

Phone 08 8115 3319

Email CFS.CommunityEngagementSupport@eso.sa.gov.au

Stress Prevention and Management (SPAM)

SPAM Helpline on 08 8115 3950

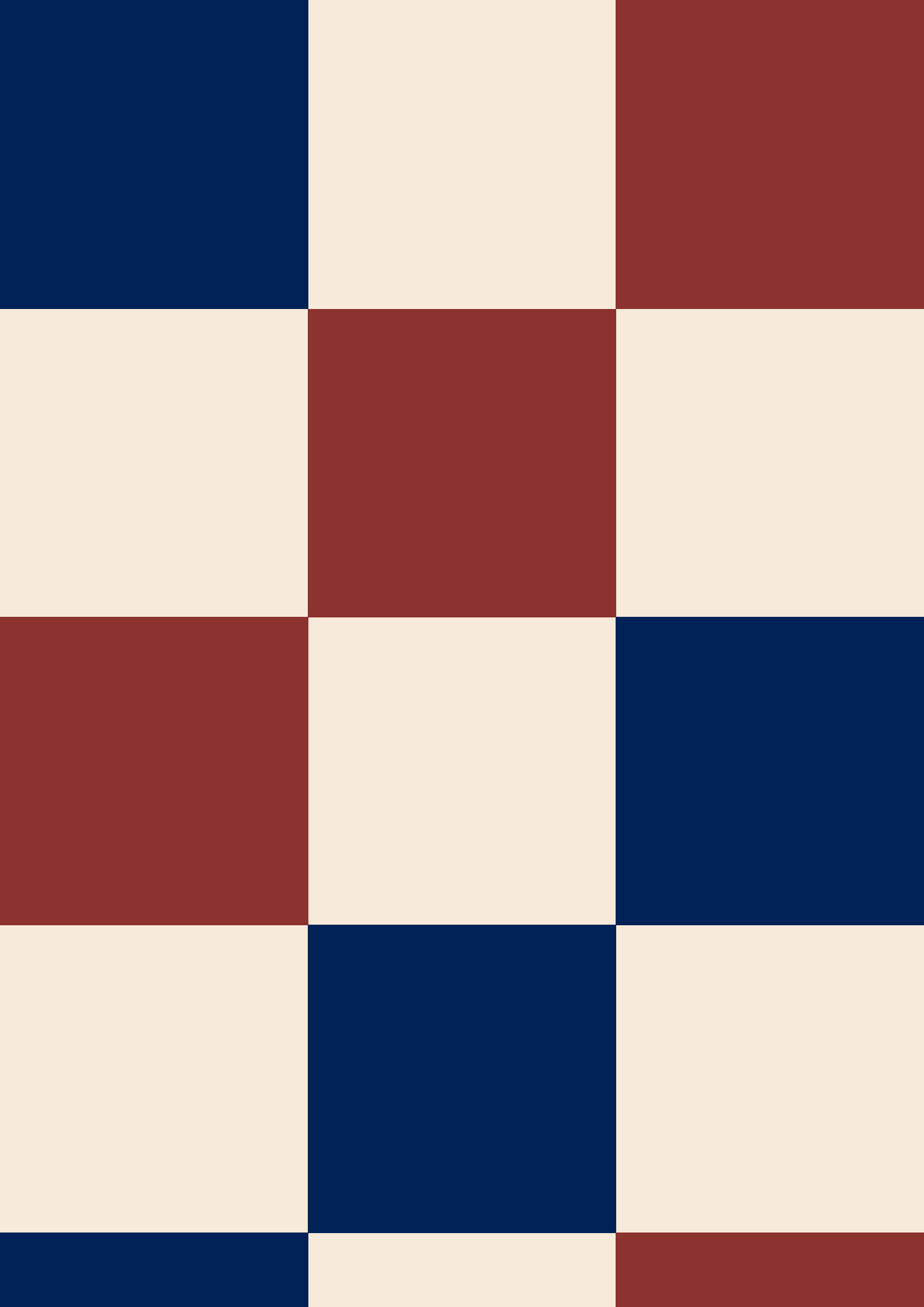
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