

# Brigade

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## Young members take over the Volunteer Forum



Life-saving work of EMR brigades



Toast our latest brigade – Beveridge

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We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present.

**Useful resources**

**Brigade** [cfa.vic.gov.au/brigademag](https://cfa.vic.gov.au/brigademag)

[news.cfa.vic.gov.au](https://news.cfa.vic.gov.au)

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[x.com/cfa\\_updates](https://x.com/cfa_updates) (Twitter)

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Community engagement material:  
[cfa.vic.gov.au/cecontentportal](https://cfa.vic.gov.au/cecontentportal)

CFA templates for download:  
[cfa.vic.gov.au/templatetoolkit](https://cfa.vic.gov.au/templatetoolkit)



COVER PHOTO: TIAHN WRIGHT





Spring 2024

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## INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



# Robyn Harris

**As we prepare for the upcoming high Fire Danger Period, I encourage all members to be across the Chief Officer's expectations and the seasonal outlook – see pages 9 and 19 of this edition.**

Our volunteers and staff perform a variety of roles across the organisation in line with our mission, ensuring communities are prepared and brigades and groups are ready to respond. There is also a tremendous amount of work underway in fleet, logistics and infrastructure as well as community engagement.

I am honoured to be Interim CEO while a substantive appointment to the position is made. I am committed to continuing the programs of work we have underway.

In various ways during July we were pleased to publicly thank former CEO Natalie MacDonald for her significant contributions to CFA. I echo the words Natalie shared in her farewell message: "The journey to improve CFA continues, and the Board and senior leaders are deeply committed to the work program ahead, and to making CFA a great place to volunteer and work." It is fantastic for CFA that Natalie will continue as a volunteer with her local brigade.

A significant technology transformation that started recently was CFA's investment in a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution for Finance and Procurement and Infrastructure Services. The project will deliver a number of improvements over the coming year including:

- making it easier for members to seek reimbursement for expenses
- enhancing and improving the user experience with CFA Finance
- improving CFA's internal control environment
- streamlining our finance and procurement-related processes across CFA.

The program team will be focused on building the necessary knowledge, skills and training for our people to work effectively with the new system.

We have also progressed the development of options for the Contemporary Volunteer Membership Model (CVMM), which has been possible thanks to the enthusiastic engagement of members who have been providing valuable insights through various sessions and platforms. Our objective is to provide options for a more flexible CFA volunteer membership model, one that improves volunteer attraction, experience and retention, and underpins organisational sustainability.

I look forward to providing further updates on this important project for your review.

Thank you all for your support and dedication to our wonderful organisation.

## CHIEF OFFICER



# Jason Heffernan

**As winter comes to an end, we are preparing for spring and the looming fire season ahead.**

I have been watching the south-west and western parts of the state closely over the winter months with growing concern. AFAC's *Australian Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Spring*, released in early September, predicts an above-average risk of bushfire in the far west and south-western parts of Victoria.

Fire Danger Periods are expected to start earlier, during the spring period, without significant rainfall. Given the dryness, grass cutting in the south-west, which usually occurs in late November to early December, could begin in late October. With the anticipated earlier start to the fire season, now is the time for Victorians to prepare their properties, farms and businesses.

I would like to see our firefighters complete Hazardous Tree Awareness and Entrapment Drill training before Fire Danger Periods commence. More information about these two training needs is available from your local district office.

CFA is continuing to support our counterparts in Canada. In late July, public information officers were stationed out of British Columbia and four incident management team and aviation members travelled to Alberta to help manage the bushfires which spread across the western side of the country.

Five of our members returned from British Columbia and Alberta on Saturday 24 August, with the remaining coming home later in September. I would like to thank them for their efforts in such a large international operation and ensuring CFA is well represented on the international stage.

I would also like to congratulate the CFA members who participated in the 2024 Emergency Services Blood Drive, whose efforts have helped save lives across the country. At the time of writing, CFA wasn't far off making 1,000 donations, saving almost 3,000 lives which is an incredible effort.

Our 'Give us a hand' volunteer recruitment campaign is in its successful second year. We ran the campaign for the first time last year and as a result more than 1,800 new recruits signed up. A warm welcome to this year's new recruits who are no doubt working closely with their brigades to prepare for the fire season ahead.

Advertising has wrapped up for this year, but the campaign continues and Victorians can expect to see postcards in their mail boxes in areas of need. Brigades still need volunteers – not only in firefighting roles but support roles as well. Recruitment is a year-round mission for the future growth of our organisation and we will continue to support brigades across the state with this.

## DCO NORTH EAST REGION



## Ross Sullivan

**As the tell-tale signs of spring creep back into the landscape across Victoria, many CFA brigades turn their minds to what the coming fire season might bring.**

The last time I contributed to this magazine was also in spring, and it seems our seasonal predictions have become a bit more unpredictable. I am reflecting on October 2022 when floods severely impacted many communities and brigades across the north-east. I know those affected have continued to be on alert ever since.

These floods and devastating weather events have once again shown the incredible adaptability and willingness of our brigades to respond to emergency situations no matter what they might be. I continue to be inspired by the commitment and enduring dedication shown by the 14,500 volunteers in the north-east.

Our last fire season also proved to be unpredictable. It started strong in the north-east and then slowed down. Other parts of the state suffered greatly, particularly the west. Then, northern parts of our region became busy and remained busy well past the end of the Fire Danger Period.

Like all CFA regions, North East Region is diverse in its landscape and its people. Our communities are made up of people from all walks of life and nationalities. Like many volunteer organisations CFA is challenged with the continual need to keep its workforce strong and to ensure that it reflects the community that it seeks to serve. However, as many of our older members continue to remind us, to remain viable we must ensure we are attractive to younger members of the community.

For this reason, the North East Regional Leadership Team (RLT) has adopted a Youth Engagement Project, which will be managed by the North East Volunteer Sustainability Team. The project will capture and promote the great work already being done by many brigades to create a safe and welcoming environment for young people. It will work with those brigades that want to attract younger people but feel they need some support to get started. It will also adopt a range of leadership and development opportunities to encourage and develop our vital younger members.

In addition to this, I am excited to announce that work has begun to bring the very successful Women's Challenge Camp event to the north-east. The RLT recognises the need to continually grow initiatives designed to build and strengthen the number of women in CFA and this camp is one tool that can make that happen.

I urge everyone to make safety your first priority as you prepare for the fire season. Look after yourselves and look after your people.

Thank you for the great work you do.

## GROUP OFFICER, D12



## David Webb Ware

**There has been much discussion over the years about the role of the group in CFA. Every group will have different requirements depending on the mix of brigades.**

Yea Group, in North Central Victoria in District 12 consists of 13 brigades ranging from Class 1 to Class 3 risk.

There are significant small farms and rural residential development along with some larger commercial farming operations. Structural risks include the towns of Yea, Kinglake, Kinglake West, Toolangi and Flowerdale.

Yea Group has experienced some significant fires, most notably the Yea/Flowerdale fires in 1969, Homewood in 1981, Yea in 2006, Glenburn/Kinglake in 2006, and the Murrindindi and Kilmore fires in 2009. The hilly terrain and proximity to public land along the Great Divide makes the Yea Group an area with very high fire potential as well as a private, commercial and recreational vehicle accident risk.

In 2022 the group's brigades reviewed their commitment to the existing structure including the traditional group officer and deputy group officer model. The brigades unanimously agreed to retain a group structure but with significant changes, including a desire to have brigades more engaged with the group and be closer to group management.

The new model, developed with input from district staff and brigade members, includes all the Chief Officer's requirements, but it makes the captains the main drivers with support from DGOs when available. Captains are not required to do any group duty officer roles.

Group Management Team meetings changed to include captains, thus no longer requiring traditional group meetings. We meet as required with more meetings likely before a fire season. The preferred brigade delegates to group are captains and first lieutenants, with brigades having one vote.

The results of the change after two years have been very positive and we will continue with this model.

We have a group of highly engaged brigades. We have constructive round table discussions and excellent attendance at group training. To maintain brigade engagement, we make sure the training is innovative, interesting and attractive to members.

The success of the group is the result of our focus on what the brigades want – a simple, pragmatic operational structure that enables them to go to the fire, deal with it and go home. The group now has an effective local command facility structure, is undertaking pre-season scribe training for a number of people, and will run a program to develop future strike team leaders and sector commanders. Mentoring on and off the fireground will be a group priority.



# EMR IS SAVING LIVES

Emergency Medical Response (EMR) aims to improve survival rates by reducing response times. We talked to two CFA EMR responders.

Story by Carolyn Cole-Sinclair

**EMR started in CFA with a pilot program in 2007 and was expanded to include all integrated brigades (which had career firefighters as well as volunteers). Today there are six remaining volunteer-only EMR brigades that have 81 qualified responders between them. These are Berwick, Cranbourne, Edithvale, Mornington, South Morang and Whittlesea.**

Trained CFA EMR volunteers respond to 'Priority O' medical emergencies at the same time as Ambulance Victoria (AV) paramedics to improve the chances of patient survival. As a part of their role, these volunteers can expect to attend a range of medical emergencies including cardiac or respiratory arrest, stroke, drowning, anaphylaxis, asthma, choking and drug overdose.

Volunteers at a CFA EMR brigade who want to become EMR responders must complete a nationally-recognised Certificate II in Medical Service First Response. This training is complemented by six clinical education sessions each year, annual CPR reaccreditation and a three-yearly reaccreditation of skills.

We applaud the work CFA's EMR volunteers have done and continue to do for the communities they serve. The true 'beating heart' of the EMR program comes from the passion and dedication of the responders themselves.

We spoke to members from two of our EMR brigades about their experiences.

## SEAN MCGUCKIN, EDITHVALE BRIGADE

Sean McGuckin, captain and EMR responder at Edithvale Fire Brigade (pictured right), joined the brigade in 2021 after being a CFA volunteer at other brigades for more than 20 years. He decided to train as an EMR responder because he thought it would be good to help the community in more ways than just firefighting. Living near the brigade and having good daytime availability to respond was a bonus.

"I do EMR because I know I can make a difference," Sean said. "I have pride in knowing we are here for all emergencies. I walk around my community and they know I'm one of the people who is here for them."

Sean completed the initial EMR training in 2022 and has since attended about 15 to 20 EMR cases. Edithvale brigade, with 26 qualified EMR members, attends about 50 EMR cases each year.

"We do a lot of training but there needs to be," Sean said. "We're not providing basic first-aid. EMR is in a different league to that. Responders need to be prepared for that and willing to meet both the community's and CFA's expectations."

Some of the incidents Sean has attended have had successful outcomes. Sadly, many of the others have been unsuccessful, although Sean said that was not because of a lack of effort by the EMR responders.

"People in a life-critical situation such as those we respond to will more than likely die without assistance. As first responders we offer a chance to halt that process but sometimes death is inevitable with or without intervention," Sean said.

According to Sean his most interesting case was a call to assist a man found face down in the ocean. When he arrived on



scene, he found a member of the public performing CPR on an unconscious, non-responsive man in a boat. It was a dynamic situation and many factors influenced how it was managed.

"The complexities of this case included the instability of the boat for effective CPR, all types of fishing gear strewn around the boat, the difficulty of patient extrication and multiple distraught bystanders," Sean said.

Sean also recalled a local footy game that he and another EMR responder were attending as community members.

"A player went up for a big mark, received a knock to the head and came down hard. Trainers looked at us knowing we could help – and we did. We called our brigade to get EMR response and we assisted until AV arrived. In our local community we 'fly the flag' and our community recognises that."

Sean recognises the exceptional collaboration with AV.

"We see each case through to the end, assisting paramedics in any way including extrication and being gofers. We know the ambulance layout and can find equipment easily. We also provide solid handovers to paramedics to provide optimum patient care.

"I would always recommend EMR to volunteers, but they need to be mature and level-headed to do it. We're trained to deal with a body on the floor, but the grieving bystanders are often the hardest part of a callout. There is also a real likelihood of knowing the patient or having a connection to them in some way.

"Deaths can be disheartening but it only takes one successful save to reinforce that being an EMR responder is 100 per cent worthwhile."



## **RICHARD GARDINER AND DARREN SMITH, WHITTLESEA BRIGADE**

Whittlesea Fire Brigade Captain Richard Gardiner and EMR Coordinator Darren Smith (pictured above) have both been active CFA EMR responders since 2008. Whittlesea was the first volunteer brigade to get an EMR call – only two hours after going online – and Darren attended it.

Richard and Darren were already CFA volunteers at Whittlesea when EMR was introduced. They saw EMR as an evolution of the brigade and a logical use of skills to be able to further assist their community, – just like they do with fires, car accidents and other emergency calls.

Whittlesea attends about 15 to 20 EMR calls a year, and Darren and Richard attend most of them.

Given the often complex situations, it's not easy to define what a successful EMR case is. But Richard and Darren aim to assist with resuscitation to the point where they are able to achieve 'return of spontaneous circulation' (ROSC), allowing the patient to be transported to hospital by AV. The brigade has achieved this about a dozen times over the years. Both Richard and Darren recall one person who is still walking around town today thanks to their emergency intervention and care.

"Taking over emergency care and absolving the family or bystanders of this responsibility is very worthwhile," Richard said. Darren agreed adding, "sometimes our actions might not save the patient, but transport to hospital with ROSC might allow the patient's loved ones the time and opportunity to say goodbye".

Darren recalls his first EMR case, which had an emotional impact on him.

"I suppose I never expected to be called out to a young child with an earache and a viral infection, which ultimately caused their

death," Darren said. "That job was tough and made me wonder whether I wanted to continue with EMR."

He also recalled a case that needed more planning and thinking than emergency care.

"The patient was a hoarder and was in a house completely hidden by trees and undergrowth. When we arrived, we noticed all the doors to the house had about a two-metre drop to the ground, and inside there was a very narrow corridor. We had a choice of making a path outside using rake hoes and axes or trying to clear a path along the narrow corridor, which is the option we chose. Luckily, the patient wasn't too sick and we eventually extricated him to the ambulance. It was a challenging case, just not clinically."

One challenge for the brigade is maintaining EMR members for 24/7 availability.

"A low utilisation of the EMR skill set can cause responders to lose confidence," Richard said. "Also, there can be a perception that EMR training is sterile and different to EMR in real life. Members may be concerned about all the potential EMR scenarios they may face. Ultimately, these scenes are not that dissimilar to much of the other work we already do."

"Another challenge that can cause people to reconsider their EMR role is dealing with a grieving family and bystanders. It can be hard."

"The training needs solid commitment. It requires time and you must want to do it, but I've never heard anybody say the training was a waste of time," Darren said.

"EMR is about having the knowledge and skill set and applying it to the best of your ability to help people. We can't prepare for everything but we can try to make a situation better than how we found it."

"EMR saves lives," Richard said. "That's why I do it. I'd like someone to help me if I needed it, so I owe it to others to help them."





# Toast our new brigade

**Beveridge Fire Brigade officially became a standalone brigade in August 2024, following approval from CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan.**

Previously a satellite of Kalkallo brigade, establishing Beveridge as a standalone brigade addressed the service delivery demands in Melbourne's northern growth corridor along the Hume Freeway. What was previously farming land is now zoned as residential, and substantial housing estates are being built. It is proposed that Beveridge will also become home to Melbourne's Intermodal Precinct – a large freight and logistics hub – which will create thousands of jobs.

"It's important that we establish long-term sustainable fire and emergency services for the benefit of the Beveridge and surrounding communities," District 12 Assistant Chief Fire Officer Stephen Keating said. "Beveridge is one of the fastest-growing areas in the Mitchell Shire Council. Members of our newest brigade will see a dramatic change and influx of population, transport and commercial risk.

"We are excited to welcome Beveridge brigade into District 12 and the Mitchell Shire Group," Stephen added.

"I wish to thank members of Kalkallo Fire Brigade, Project Steering Committee, Volunteer Sustainability team, staff from Districts 12 and 14, and CFA Headquarters for their persistence, assistance and patience in seeing this project through to fruition. They have worked hard to ensure that the foundations are strong and the brigade can meet community expectations."

To ensure Beveridge Fire Station complied with CFA standards and was fit for purpose for the next five to 10 years, CFA refurbished the station at a cost of about \$640,000. Planning commenced in 2022 and building work started earlier this year with the removal of the old portable building. The new building has:

- a dedicated turnout gear room
- a large meeting/training room
- toilet/shower facilities
- kitchenette
- a drying room for wet turnout gear
- office space
- a breathing apparatus maintenance room.



The brigade now has a much-improved building, increasing the brigade's ability to respond to the community's needs now and into the future.

"It's an exciting time. Our 18 foundation members are enthusiastic about commencing operations and supporting our quickly expanding community of Beveridge," Beveridge Fire Brigade Captain Jason Smith said.

"It's also a great opportunity for community members to volunteer and be a part of something new," Jason said.

Inaugural brigade elections were carried out in May 2024. Congratulations to the following foundation members who make up the brigade's management team:

Captain: Jason Smith

1st Lieutenant: Simon Kolotelo

2nd Lieutenant: Carl White

3rd Lieutenant: Scott Hadler

4th Lieutenant: David Weedon

Community Safety Coordinator: Brad Dyson

Secretary: Brad Newman

Treasurer: Michael Soligo

This project demonstrates CFA's agility in planning for the future needs of communities in the changing fire services environment, with a focus on evidence-based decision making.

**STORY THERESE MORRIS**



# Spring seasonal outlook



## Victorians can expect an earlier start to the fire season because of a drier-than-average first half of the year.

There still remains a lot of uncertainty in terms of how the season may unfold, with the first part of this year one of the driest on record in the west, south-west and north-west of the state. Parts of the north-east and south-east have experienced below average rainfall.

The *Australian Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Spring* released in early September showed that the current level of dryness in the south-west, west and north-west without significant rainfall is likely to lead to an above average fire risk and an earlier start to the fire season during spring.

There is an increased level of fuel hazard due to an accumulation in the amount of dead plant material, resulting from below average rainfall in the areas identified as increased risk of fire.

Grassland curing in these areas is likely to advance earlier than normal in the absence of significant rainfall.

The fire risk for the rest of Victoria is normal, noting there is a chance that the fire season may also begin earlier than normal in areas dominated by drier forests, woodlands and heathlands (inland and coastal).

Emergency services remain well prepared for emerging risks associated with the potential for an earlier start to bushfire season and will continue to monitor conditions.

The *Australian Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Spring* is produced by the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) and supported by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) along with state and territory fire and land managers.

It's important for communities to understand their local risks. You can keep up to date with the Fire Danger Ratings on the VicEmergency app and VicEmergency website.



## Station facilities boost inclusion

**Providing inclusive facilities and physical spaces to train and volunteer is a key part of our ongoing commitment to welcoming diverse communities. A program of refurbishments and construction to upgrade our turnout rooms, change facilities and toilets is underway to support gender diversity, cater for young volunteers and support the inclusion of people with a disability.**

Through our Gender Diversity and Inclusive Facilities program CFA has received \$8.96 million to upgrade facilities at 41 stations and three training campuses.

The stations identified for new or upgraded facilities underwent a rigorous prioritisation process that considered CFA district, regional and statewide needs including member composition, community risk profile and service delivery needs. The program focused on locations where there were no toilet or turnout amenities or where the existing amenities needed to be significantly updated to provide members with comfortable and functional spaces.

The first of the upgrades was recently completed at Fish Creek Fire Station. Toilet facilities at the station were originally in poor condition, with only narrow passages for access and turnout and changing areas with minimal privacy. To address these issues, toilet facilities were upgraded with new fixtures and fittings to make them fit for purpose, and an adjacent office space was converted to a turnout room (pictured) to provide greater privacy and comfort for members.

Work has started at a further nine sites, with construction at Langley-Barfold Fire Station completed recently. A new design was recently completed at Stawell Fire Station and concept planning for Lurg Fire Station is being reviewed by stakeholders. Volunteers can expect to see further updates on the progress at these sites through Members Online.

A new program manager was recently appointed to oversee this work and lead the next phase of the program.

STORY CHARLOTTE RYAN

# A FORCE FOR PREVENTION

Prevention is vital in mitigating the devastating impact of bushfire in Victoria.

Story by Shaunnagh O'Loughlin

**Made up of more than 700 volunteers from brigades across the state, CFA's Planned Burn Taskforce (PBTf) is a critical initiative to reduce the severity of bushfire, and protect lives, properties and the environment.**

Established in 2021, the taskforce deploys available CFA volunteers to planned burns in districts in need of personnel, ensuring there is capability and support to implement the Victorian Joint Fuel Management Plan and increased fuel management activities.

Taskforce members have a variety of skills sets. Some have extensive burning experience and years of membership under their belts; others are newer CFA members who have recently completed their General Firefighter training.

At its core, the taskforce's efforts aim to reduce fuel loads, however the proactive, coordinated approach to the burns not only helps safeguard communities, but also preserves natural habitats and biodiversity, promoting rejuvenation and resilience.

Members interested in joining the PBTf must complete General Firefighter, Entrapment Drill and Tree Hazard Awareness and have their captain's approval. For more information scan the QR code or visit [members.cfa.vic.gov.au/planned-burn-taskforce](https://members.cfa.vic.gov.au/planned-burn-taskforce).



We spoke to four members of the taskforce to find out their motivations for joining and why they believe the taskforce is important.



## MICHELLE TIE, ROWVILLE BRIGADE

Rowville brigade firefighter Michelle Tie said being a member of the PBTf gave her the opportunity to be active across wider sections of the community.

A CFA member for five years and in the Planned Burn Taskforce for three, Michelle saw joining the group as an opportunity to get hands-on experience with fire after completing her General Firefighter training.

"I hadn't done any planned burning prior to joining the taskforce. It's a fantastic way to learn and build experience, and I have learned so much 'on the job'."

Michelle said she was initially nervous attending her first burn with the taskforce because she was the only member from her brigade, but she found the group to be incredibly supportive.

"By stepping outside of my comfort zone, I have learned so much about fire behaviour especially across different environments which are often very different to the usual callouts we get at Rowville," Michelle said.

"I came away from that first burn a much more confident firefighter.

"I love working with different brigades and members from across the state – the camaraderie makes me incredibly proud to be a part of CFA."

Michelle believes that the success of the PBTf lies in its ability to support brigades to achieve local and state goals.

"It's so vital that brigades have access to the support, skills and experience of the wider CFA community to manage their fire risk," she said.

"At the end of the day, this makes Victoria safer for everyone."



## TULLY MACHTYNGER, KALORAMA AND MT DANDENONG BRIGADE

"Joining the taskforce is a great opportunity to get hands-on experience and training on the tools especially for members of smaller brigades who may not get close to, and experience, fire prior to a campaign season," Tully Machtynger said.

"It also provides the opportunity to network with the broader CFA community, talk to people from other brigades and learn how they operate and train."

A firefighter and Junior leader, Tully has been a member of Kalorama and Mt Dandenong brigade for two years and a member of the PBTf for one.

"Being fairly new to CFA and the area, joining the taskforce was recommended by one of my assessors when I was going through General Firefighter as a great way to see and get used to fire in a controlled way," Tully said.

"I've been to six or seven burns across the state, predominantly in West Region. I hadn't done any planned burning prior to joining the taskforce, only responding with my brigade to a couple of escaped burn-offs conducted by local residents."

The taskforce is activated when districts are unable to fulfil needs locally. While it's a role that requires flexibility and the time commitment varies, Tully said she has learned so much working alongside experienced taskforce members.

"It's psychologically beneficial to know what you can face in practice, and the taskforce has definitely value-added to my volunteer experience," Tully said. "My sense of my own capability has completely changed. By my third burn I felt more confident turning out and in my ability to support my own brigade on the fireground."







## JOHN WELLS, AXE CREEK BRIGADE

A volunteer for 45 years, Axe Creek's John Wells joined the PBTF in mid-2021, seeing it as an opportunity to support other communities as well as enhance safety and benefit the environment.

"Planned burning is good for both fuel reduction and ecological management. Burning at the right time of year can reduce invasive weeds and grasses, giving native species better conditions for growth and improving habitat for native animals."

John says his volunteer experience across operational, training and leadership roles was useful background for being a member of the taskforce, where "there are always different jobs to be done".

"I have undertaken varied jobs from crew leader, driver, crew member, wetting down control lines, setting up water points, lighting up, patrolling, chasing break-aways and blacking out.

"The work may be with unfamiliar crews, in unfamiliar country but the project is always well prepared, the tasking clear and there is a will to do it thoroughly."

John believes in the power of the taskforce in providing training and experience to new and veteran firefighters alike.

"Weather, fuel and fire behaviour are always changing, so you are learning all the time, and it's stimulating to work with firefighters of varying levels of experience to achieve outcomes that can be clearly seen by the end of a shift.

"If you can find the time to turn out with the taskforce you will find it rewarding, whether you are new to firefighting or an old hand.

"Your fellow taskforce members will be there because they want to be, and will quickly form a team to which everybody contributes and from which everybody learns."



## ELVIS CROOK, BULLA BRIGADE

With 21 years of membership under his belt, a change in career gave Bulla Captain Elvis Crook more flexibility in his availability so he put himself forward for the PBTF.

"I've participated in a number of planned burns over the years. I thought the taskforce would be a good opportunity to network with members from across the state as well as keep my fireground skills sharp," he said.

"There is no better means of observing fire behaviour in a controlled environment which ultimately benefits your skills throughout an active fire season.

"An added benefit of having such a broad group of members together from across the state is being able to informally share information and ideas."

Elvis said that without the taskforce many critical burns wouldn't go ahead as regularly.

"I remember a burn earlier in the year

where I was on a local truck with the brigade captain. The rest of the crew was from the PBTF.

"He was very thankful that we were there to crew the truck as the burn we were doing would help protect his land and that of other community members."

Elvis says that if you are thinking of joining the taskforce – do it!

"The thing I enjoy the most is the camaraderie. The taskforce is like a family; I have made connections with other members who I now call friends.

"Attending a burn is also training in itself. I'd highly recommend any newer members who have not had a lot of fireground experience or might be with a brigade with low call numbers to join to build on their experience.

"I've been in the CFA a long time and haven't immediately felt so at home like I do with this crew."

# UPDATE ON MAJOR PROJECTS

In each issue we update the progress being made on a selection of our major projects. More information about all of our projects is on Members Online: [members.vic.gov.au/CFAProjects](https://members.vic.gov.au/CFAProjects)

## Crew and strike team leader training

We have developed new videos for the Strike Team Leader course. There are also new Tactical Exercise Without Troops (TEWT) maps for various leadership roles including sector command, strike team/ command leaders and operational incident management teams.

We have also extended the XVR products (that place crews in a wildfire scenario to assist in decision-making in a simulated environment) to add more scenes and scenarios for the Crew Leader and Strike Team Leader courses. We are also running eight Fireline Leadership courses by Red Flag Leadership this year.



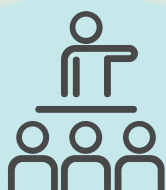
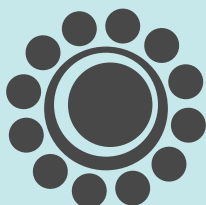
## Mobile Data Capability

There is a need for our members to access broadband data in the field. At the end of last financial year, we ordered 950 tablets. We are planning the rollout of tablets to pumpers and are sourcing specially-made brackets for this purpose.

Workshops were held to discuss security options to determine the best solution. We are looking at options to fit tablets in field command vehicles.

## Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

We have completed work to establish a First Nations Advisory Group, including carrying out an impact assessment and privacy evaluation, and considering child safety. The advisory group will provide strategic advice and cultural insights to enhance CFA's service and collaboration with First Nations communities to ensure respectful, inclusive and responsive operations, policies and programs. The next step is to select the membership of the new group and develop a training package.



## Volunteer Leadership Development

The Certificate IV in Leadership & Management course has commenced with 24 participants. The Women in Leadership Mentoring Program has launched its third intake for 2024-2025. In the months ahead

we are looking to expand leadership essentials, launch governance training scholarships and expand women's challenge camps to more regions.



We are working on further enhancements and new features to improve the user experience, efficiency and accessibility of the application. The dashboard is being updated to provide greater visibility about how an application is progressing. Working With Children Check (WWCC) improvements include system changes to handle WWCC requirements for those turning 18 years old before the finalisation of their application and automatic checks for WWCC number for transferring members before creating a database record. Changes to the admin portal and a new policy for system management (eg archive applications that are not progressing) are also planned.





# Q&A: New Training Pathway for volunteers

## What are the benefits of the new Training Pathway for members?

The Training Pathway aims to provide a clear career path for volunteers, outlining the training requirements needed to reach specific roles. It will ensure that all CFA members have the knowledge, skills and competencies needed to respond to emergencies effectively and safely. It provides clarity on skill progression and training options, helping members make informed decisions about their training. It also streamlines training by clearly defining prerequisites and assumed knowledge for each step.

## How was it developed?

CFA carried out extensive consultation with brigade captains, Assistant Chief Fire Officers, Deputy Chief Fire Officers, the Training Joint Consultative Committee (which includes VFBV representatives) and the AFAC Peer Review Training Framework Working Group. The pathways align with the recommendation to develop a comprehensive capability framework accessible to all CFA staff and volunteers.

## Where can members access the Training Pathway?

The Training Pathway will be made available to volunteers on Members Online. The Learning Hub will also be modified so the catalogue aligns with the Training Pathway.

## What does it include?

It includes a series of courses structured in a logical sequence to support skill development. Each step in the pathway serves as a prerequisite for the next, ensuring a solid foundation before advancing. The pathway also outlines training options that support members in completing tasks associated with various roles.

## Are there any electives?

Yes. All units are available as electives and can be undertaken based on the brigade's operational requirements. This lets members build their skills over time and in line with the specific needs of their brigade.

## Can units grouped under a task be completed individually?

Yes. Units that are grouped together under a task do not need to be completed together. They can be completed individually over time, allowing members to progress at their own pace.

## Is it mandatory to follow the Training Pathway in order?

Yes. Each step is a prerequisite for the next. Training and role progression must follow the pathway to ensure members have the foundational skills and knowledge required before advancing.

## How does it support brigade operational requirements?

It provides training options in a logical sequence that supports skill development tailored to the operational needs of the brigade. This ensures that the training is both accessible and relevant to the immediate needs of the brigade.

## How can members undertake training in the new pathway?

Follow the normal process through the Learning Hub. After finding courses in the Learning Hub, submit an expression of interest (sometimes called course nomination).

## I'm already operational for a role but I haven't completed the training. What do I do?

If you are already undertaking a role but you never completed the course or you didn't complete programs that are prerequisites, you are encouraged to undertake the training or complete a Recognition of Prior Learning application under the new streamlined process. You will not be stopped from being operational in that role.

## What if I think there is a course we need that isn't in the pathway?

A new training product request process has been developed. Contact [training.dd@cfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:training.dd@cfa.vic.gov.au) to discuss what you think is missing and we can get you started on the process. You will require support from your ACFO for the application.

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# YOUNG MEMBERS TAKE OVER THE

The August Volunteer Forum welcomed some younger members onto the panel to talk about youth initiatives including the new Juniors website

Story by Jen Clement

**CFA Juniors now have a dedicated online hub specifically for Junior members and Junior leaders. With its unique address ([juniors.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://juniors.cfa.vic.gov.au)), this platform gives easy access for Junior leaders and Junior members to resources and information such as the Juniors program, related links, CFA data and essential child safety resources.**

Each Junior brigade has its own homepage, where members can explore the latest updates, stories and highlights from their brigade. This platform also supports engagement and awareness, with key updates, feature stories and upcoming events and opportunities.

## YOUTH ENGAGE THE CHIEF

The CFA Juniors online hub was announced at the August Volunteer Forum where, in a ground-breaking event, young members stepped into the spotlight and took charge of proceedings.

Coinciding with YouthFest, which is a Victorian Government initiative dedicated to celebrating and empowering young people across the state, this dynamic forum showcased the talents and achievements of our youngest members.

Broadcast live from Beaconsfield Fire Station, the forum provided a vibrant platform for these young members to present their ideas, highlight their contributions, and engage more deeply with our organisation. Their leadership and enthusiasm brought a fresh perspective to the forum, marking a significant shift and celebrating the vital role they play in shaping our future.

The forum started with an in-depth look at CFA's Junior Volunteer Development Program, which is designed to cultivate our next generation of leaders and volunteers. The program focuses on providing young people with valuable skills, knowledge and experiences related to firefighting and emergency services.

The forum featured interviews with Juniors from Beaconsfield and Officer brigades, who shared their personal stories about why they joined and what they value most about the program. Hearing about their experiences at the forum offered a refreshing perspective and highlighted the enthusiasm and dedication of our youngest members.

Panellist Brooke McKenzie, a Junior at Beaconsfield Fire Brigade, was joined on the panel by her dad Jason who is a Junior leader.

"I joined the Juniors to have fun and learn about firefighting," Brooke said. "I love spending time with my dad, and it's something we can do together. I'd like to be CFA's first female Chief Officer one day."

Junior brigades participate in a wide range of activities designed to prepare them for long-term involvement with CFA. They practise essential skills such as hose work, radio communications, map reading and fire behaviour theory.

Many brigades also engage in running competitions and take part in demonstrations and State Championship events. This diverse and engaging program caters to various interests and skills.

An exciting component of the Juniors program is excursions to other brigades or emergency services organisations. These visits enrich the Juniors' overall knowledge and appreciation of the diverse roles within the sector.

At the forum, Juniors discussed how learning basic fireground skills – and end-of-year water fights – have been crucial in their development. Beaconsfield Juniors have visited Eildon Fire Brigade to learn about water rescue techniques and toured Moorabbin Air Base to see firefighting aircraft. Other Junior brigades have explored local VICSES units to understand their emergency response, community safety and volunteer work.

During the live broadcast some brigade members had to jump onto their trucks after a fire broke out in a nearby shed. Chief Officer Jason Heffernan seamlessly kept the forum going as the truck behind him pulled out of the station.

"No matter what is happening, our volunteers are always prepared and ready to respond to emergencies and protect lives and property," Jason said. "Even though we were in the middle of a live broadcast, crews quickly got their gear on and the trucks out. And, of course, the show must go on, so we continued broadcasting despite all the activity going on around us."

## WHEN I WAS YOUNG

A key highlight of the forum was a candid discussion where Juniors had the unique opportunity to interview senior leadership about their early experiences with the emergency services. During this engaging exchange, senior leaders shared personal anecdotes and reflections from their formative years.

"Being a Junior taught me more than just firefighting skills; it instilled in me values of teamwork, dedication, and resilience," Deputy Chief Officer, Trevor Owen said. "It was here that I learned how to rise to challenges, support my fellow members, and serve our community with pride. These early experiences shaped my path and helped me grow into the leader I am today."

This conversation not only provided a fascinating glimpse into their journeys but also underscored the critical importance of mentoring and supporting young people in the emergency services sector, to ensure they continue to play their part long into the future.

"Engaging and developing young members is essential because they are not only the future of our organisation but also the fresh minds and new energy that drive innovation and resilience. By investing in them today, we ensure a more capable, dynamic, and dedicated response tomorrow," Jason said.





# VOLUNTEER FORUM



## CADETS

Another key topic at the forum was how to transition Juniors to senior roles at age 16 years old. Beaconsfield brigade has seen notable success, with six Juniors moving up to Seniors last year. They reported that 31 per cent of their senior members came through the Junior program, including three of the current brigade management team, highlighting the program's impact on brigade sustainability.

The forum also featured the King family's story from Sale. With the father as captain and siblings Dana and Daniel having attended Cadet camp, their experiences showcase the importance of engaging with and developing our youngest senior members. The family talked about the opportunities offered by the brigade, as well as highlighting the Cadet camp's role in enhancing firefighting skills, practical training, and fostering teamwork and leadership among 16 to 17-year-olds.

In addition, Steve and Axel Martin from Beaconsfield Upper Fire Brigade shared their story. Axel joined the Juniors at Beaconsfield, inspiring his father to join Beaconsfield Upper. When Axel turned 16 years old, he transitioned to Beaconsfield Upper, and now the father and son serve together as senior members.

## YOUNG ADULTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Established in 2019, the Young Adults Advisory Committee offers a dedicated platform for CFA volunteers aged 18 to 30 years to interact directly with senior leaders and shape their volunteer experience.

Our young adult members are not only deeply involved but also hold impressive roles in their brigades. Many have already stepped into leadership positions, while others bring a wealth of experience from fields such as law, medicine, business, and corporate leadership. Their diverse expertise enriches both the committee and their brigades, reflecting a forward-thinking approach that ensures meaningful growth opportunities for young adults.

This was showcased at the forum through a video highlighting several current members and their various initiatives.

## AND THE WINNER IS...

The forum buzzed with excitement as young members and senior leaders faced off in a thrilling hose bowling competition. With cheers and laughter echoing through the air, the game was a spirited clash of generations. The Juniors, fueled by their boundless energy and enthusiasm, took on the seasoned senior leaders in a friendly yet fiercely competitive match.

The event was not just a test of skill but also a vibrant display of camaraderie and team spirit. In an impressive and jubilant turn of events, the Chief's team clinched victory, their triumph celebrated with high-fives and cheers all round, perfectly capturing the fun and unity of the evening.

Engaging our young volunteers does more than nurture future leaders – it infuses our organisation with fresh ideas and energy. By investing in their growth and giving them opportunities to excel, we secure a dynamic and sustainable future for CFA.

The forum showcased the transformative power of youth engagement, demonstrating that empowering our younger members not only enriches our organisation but also drives ongoing excellence and innovation.



# Developing a more flexible volunteering workforce



**It is important for CFA to create a more contemporary and sustainable organisation that can better support volunteers as they carry out their roles protecting communities. To achieve this, CFA initiated a review of its Operating Model, and through extensive feedback from members and key stakeholders in 2022, 29 initiatives were identified as priorities over the coming years.**

The Contemporary Volunteer Membership Model (CVMM) was one of the first initiatives to begin and will recommend a model for more diverse and flexible ways for people to volunteer at CFA. A more contemporary and flexible volunteer membership model will improve volunteer attraction, experience and retention.

“The recommended model will support how people are currently volunteering in CFA and how they could participate into the future including those who haven’t joined us yet,” DCO Operational Performance and Capability Kaylene Jones said.

“We know people don’t have a lot of spare time, so it’s also about ensuring CFA is recognised as a great place to volunteer.”

The aim is to develop options for an enhanced membership model that:

- create pathways to join CFA for members with a diverse culture or skill set
- improve volunteer sustainability including reduction of financial and regulatory barriers and improve access to training and safety, wellbeing and welfare support
- facilitate ease of movement between classes to accommodate volunteer needs throughout the volunteer lifecycle
- provide opportunities and pathways for members who are interested in contributing to a wide variety of services and activities, but also supports those with a more focused contribution
- are informed by experience and leading practice in other agencies and jurisdictions.

The project team is doing this by:

- researching and analysing various volunteering models across Australia and internationally
- evaluating how our current volunteer model is being implemented (including understanding the enablers and barriers experienced by our volunteers and potential members)
- recognising the diverse and flexible ways our members volunteer and how these options might be applied across CFA.

Project updates and opportunities for members to get involved have been provided throughout 2024 via the Members Online project page, Member News stories and member emails.

Members, including regional representatives from across the state, also shared their views and insights through meetings, workshops and focus groups at the CFA/VFBV State Firefighter Championships and through 'Your Say CFA' surveys.

“We have been hearing from our members about how they volunteer, what works well and what could be improved. I thank everyone who has participated so far and shared their valuable insights,” Kaylene said.

The project team has also met with district and regional leadership teams to gain a better understanding of the opportunities and things that may need to be considered for any enhancements to CFA’s membership model.

The project objective is to develop a proposal for enhancements of CFA's current membership model for consideration by CFA Executive and the Board. A separate project would be established to design and implement any options that are approved, with further opportunities for members to engage in this process in due course.

To find out more about the member engagement and external research, and to keep up to date with this initiative visit Members Online using the QR code.





# King's Birthday Honours

## Gavin Thompson AFSM

Across more than 35 years of exceptional leadership, innovation, operational skills and commitment to community safety, Gavin has performed various roles from firefighter through to his current role of Deputy Chief Officer of North West Region.



Gavin joined Bayswater brigade as a Junior in 1986 and transferred to Boronia Fire Brigade as a senior member in 1990. He rose through the ranks to become 1st Lieutenant in 1998 at the age of 23.

"At Boronia I was exposed to how well an integrated brigade can work. I had a series of mentors, both staff and volunteers, including senior leaders from across Knox Group."

In 2000, he joined CFA as a career firefighter and in the next eight years moved through the ranks at Shepparton, Chelsea, Patterson River and Dandenong.

He became an Operations Manager at Burwood HQ, providing leadership in the HR Planning space and then to the Volunteer Sustainability and Member Wellbeing pilots which were core to building ongoing viability for fire brigades and providing mental health support to members. In 2016, he was appointed DCO North West Region and is well respected for his passionate and supportive leadership and focus on developing and educating the next generation of leaders.

"It is imperative to continue to build and strengthen volunteerism and positive community outcomes," Gavin said.

## Stephen Hicks AFSM

For half a century, Stephen has dedicated his time to CFA and the community, mentoring members and campaigning for fire prevention. He joined CFA in 1974 aged 16. He was captain of Narre Warren North from 1981 to 1987 and captain of Pakenham Upper from 1993 to 2001.



He has been heavily involved in some of our worst bushfires including Ash Wednesday and the 2009 fires. During the 1983 Ash Wednesday fires he was captain of Narre Warren North brigade when the Belgrave South fire devastated Upper Beaconsfield. For the next 13 days, he and his wife Lisa took turns mopping up and supporting the surrounding communities.

Following the 2009 fires Stephen led a detailed discussion in the Cardinia Group that identified that further training was needed for future leaders to step into higher roles. The Future Leaders Program was established as a result.

Stephen has made outstanding achievements in fire preparedness, fire prevention and fire response, having worked with the Cardinia Shire and Cardinia Group of brigades on municipal fire planning, prevention and fuel reduction burning activities since 2001.

"I've learned so much from others, done so many different roles and learned skills along the way. It's great to be able to pass on knowledge to other people and watch them develop," he said.

## 2024 Good Friday Appeal



**CFA volunteers are the heart and soul of the Good Friday Appeal. This year, their unwavering dedication led to a record-breaking collection total of \$1,819,800, which represented 7.8 per cent of the overall appeal total of \$23,368,724.**

The Royal Children's Hospital thanks everyone who generously contributed their time, skills and resources. The hard work of our volunteers will make a

profound difference to the lives of many children and their families supported by The Royal Children's Hospital.

We now have the final figures for brigade donations and here are some highlights. Edithvale Fire Brigade members celebrated 70 years of supporting the appeal by raising \$22,001 this year, bringing their overall total to \$450,383. Eynesbury Fire Brigade members raised

\$37,850, a 354 per cent increase on last year. Adrian Kendall from Eynesbury brigade remarked, "We had an amazing result from a town of 3,000 people and two shops. Thank you from a very proud group".

Torrumbury Fire Brigade members raised \$18,885, marking a 56 per cent increase from the 2023 result. This is an impressive amount for a small town of 257 people.



# New Fire Safety Planning workshops

**An important part of a brigade's community engagement plan is deciding which CFA programs and services will be delivered to your community.**

Your brigade may choose to hold some Fire Safety Essentials sessions during the fire season. This one-hour session is designed to challenge participants to personalise their fire risk and to survive fire.

Another useful asset you may have used in the past was CFA's Bushfire Planning Workshop program. This has now been redeveloped and relaunched as Fire Safety Planning.

Fire Safety Planning is a three-hour session designed to help your community to make realistic and adaptable fire plans that consider their own personal circumstances.

The program provides the tools and knowledge that community members need to start their fire plan in the session and then continue their plan at home with all members of their household. Fire Safety

Planning can be delivered across all risk environments such as bush, grass, coastal and urban fringe areas and is delivered by trained CFA members.

This program is designed to be delivered to community well before the fire season to give them the time to put what they learned into action. This will give them more control and ultimately better outcomes in the event of a fire.

Participants begin to create their personal fire plan using a new planning publication called Our Plan (pictured). This is used during the session and guides community members through their planning process.

During our initial community testing of this program, we received a lot of positive feedback from participants including the following:

- "It gave me all the ingredients and allowed me to tailor it to my own circumstances. I could pluck out what would suit my property."

- "The session was great for confirming the actions in my plan and gave me ideas about how to improve my plan."
- "Definitely broadened our knowledge. We are filling in the book you provided for Our Plan."
- "We feel more confident with the approach of the fire season."

Information about the Fire Safety Planning program (along with all of CFA's programs and services) can be found on the Community Engagement Content Portal ([cfa.vic.gov.au/cecontentportal](http://cfa.vic.gov.au/cecontentportal)). We've also created promotional items that brigades can use on their Facebook page, or use as a flyer or poster (pictured below) to let your community know of any upcoming sessions.

For more information and to book a Fire Safety Planning session for your community, contact your district community engagement coordinator.

**STORY ELISSA JANS**



# QUARTERLY OPERATIONAL UPDATE



## Chief Officer's Message for spring

Over the next few weeks, we will start to see parts of Victoria enter the Fire Danger Period and fire restrictions. It is likely that this will be coupled with increased operational activity,

and it is vital that our members are appropriately prepared. This will include engaging in local training and briefings, and familiarising yourselves with operational concepts and practices that you may need to refresh.

The September Quarterly Operational Update has been published to assist with pre-season preparations, and will provide a timely update about some of the key issues members should be aware of throughout the season. This edition includes information on the following:

- Entrapment scenarios, and some of the lessons learned from previous incidents. This is a timely reminder following the entrapment incident that occurred earlier this year at the Pomonal fire.
- Fatigue management and hydration and the preventative measures you can put in place to mitigate fatigue and dehydration risks throughout the fire season. Although we would all like to be able to prevent any fatigue and hydration issues from arising, it is not always possible. The information sheet also outlines how you can monitor yourself and your crew, and the actions you can take if you are fatigued or dehydrated on the fireground.
- The third edition of our First on Scene series focuses on aircraft incidents. Even though we enter the fire season heavily focused on grass and scrub fire response, it is important that members remain aware of all hazards. This information sheet outlines the key actions you can take as a crew member and an incident controller when arriving first on scene at an aircraft incident.
- Case studies from two incidents: the Leopold aircraft accident, and an Emergency Medical Response (EMR) in Berwick. I encourage all members to read these and consider the application of the lessons identified in their own operational response, as they can provide valuable insights from incidents.

In addition to taking part in pre-season preparation activities, it is my expectation that all members responding during the summer bushfire season have currency in:

- **Minimum Skills/General Firefighter training.**
- **The annual entrapment drill as per SOP 9.32.**
- **Tree hazard awareness training.**

This season, I would like to bring an additional focus to the theme of communications. CFA is part way through replacing all radio devices and this rollout will continue over the summer. I expect that operational members at brigades that have received the updated Motorola radios have completed the associated user training and are familiar with the new devices' functionality.

Local communications plans are routinely reviewed by districts, and it is my expectation that all crew leaders and above have familiarity with, and appreciation of, local and district communications plans as these are essential for enabling safe and effective fireground operations.

It is always my expectation that members demonstrate our values and place their crew safety and personal safety above anything else. It is my highest priority that everyone comes home. At times, you may not feel comfortable with the tasking or direction you have been provided on the fireground and you may be reluctant to stop what you are doing and raise issues. But all members, crew leaders and strike team leaders are reminded that it is acceptable to stop any activity or tasking if you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, and raise any issues if there are concerns or unclear directions.

Across Victoria I know our members will rise to the task to protect their communities and do their utmost to reduce the impact on lives and property during the upcoming fire season. It's during this period when CFA, as a volunteer organisation, demonstrates its value and ability to respond in numbers when the state is experiencing a crisis, and I thank each and every one of you for the contributions and sacrifices you make throughout the year.

Please remember to take care of yourselves, your colleagues and your families as we enter the fire season. Seek out our wellbeing services if you need some additional support. They can be accessed 24/7 by calling **1800 959 232**.

Use this QR code to access the Quarterly Update, along with a number of other topics that may be of interest.



## First on scene series



### Responding to aircraft incidents

On average, CFA responds to an aircraft incident with our partner agencies about once a week. Within the emergency management community, when the term 'aircraft incident' is used most minds track straight to major incidents such as Lockerbie or 9/11. These incidents highlight the potential of aircraft incidents and the immediate strain they put on pre-plans and resources. Aircraft incidents are some of the most complex and dynamic situations that need to be escalated quickly.

By their nature, aircraft incidents attract a lot of attention and are resourced heavily on initial dispatch. The impacts of the incident can vary significantly depending on a number of factors. However, even minor aircraft incidents can be quite complex in nature and generally require a multi-agency response. In this issue, we look at what members should consider when arriving first on scene to aircraft incidents. This follows a scenario that is based on a real-life event.

### An example scenario

Picture this... your brigade has been paged to an incident in your response area. Due to the nature of the call, it has been paged out as a 'RESCC1 AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT AFPR (Ambulance, three CFA tankers, Victoria Police and VICSES Rescue are responding)'.

Your size-up should start as soon as you receive the pager message. You should be considering who is on the tanker, what skills will be present, what skills might be needed, the best way to the airport and the most appropriate access point. At this point, you should also be considering whether you are familiar with any pre-incident plans for the location.

On arrival you're the first emergency service on scene. It's a regional airport surrounded by cyclone security fencing so you meet at the designated primary access point – Gate 1. What are the next steps?

- Establish a control point (as per SOP 9.24): "Firecom Swan Hill Tanker on scene, now Airport Control Fireground ch 334".
- As you are the first on scene, put on the CFA Incident Controller tabard to clearly identify command and control functions.

During this phase, you should be considering the hazards and risks present. This will include whether it is safe to enter the airport grounds, the best way to the involved aircraft, whether there are aircraft still operating and whether there is any airport infrastructure that needs to

be isolated or de-energised. Despite the urgency of the incident, we cannot proceed until we are satisfied hazards such as these have been identified and mitigated.

Luckily, the Swan Hill Aerodrome Reporting Officer (ARO) was present for an inspection at the time of the incident and has given you the all clear. The ARO is an integral part of your incident management team (IMT) now. Keep them close by.

Thanks to the ARO, you've now made it to the aircraft incident. The ARO has an aviation radio and is broadcasting that the runway is closed and is keeping an eye out for silent aircraft. On arrival at the aircraft, you can see smoke from the engine, a heavily damaged fuselage and people are unaccounted for. As you step out of the tanker you see fuel has leaked during the accident and Victoria Police is arriving at Gate 1. What are your next steps?

- Site the vehicle with all lights on as best as possible to avoid any conflict with unintended airport traffic eg silent aircraft lands or moves.
- Conduct a size-up to gather information. Where possible and safe to do so, this should be the six-sided 360 degree walkaround. Look for what the task or objective is and hazards that might impact firefighters such as fire, fuel, and sharps. The next page has more information on these hazards.
- Use RECEO to prioritise fireground tasks - rescue being the highest priority.
- When you understand the hazards, undertake a dynamic risk assessment (DRA) - JSOP 08.02

When you have completed your size-up, conducted a DRA based on the tasks you've identified following RECEO, it's time to establish the strategy and tactics to be used. By doing this you've completed the requirements of SOP 9.28.

As part of your size-up you identified that there are two people trapped in the aircraft, there are ignition sources in the form of a hot and smoking engine and a considerable fuel leak. Police are now on scene and wanting information.

As per SOP 10.01 your next considerations will include the following:

- If available, have members in breathing apparatus (BA) wherever possible. If BA is not available, position CFA members in full PPC and P2 mask upwind and uphill of the incident.
- The primary role is to combat fire so members should have a charged 38mm hose and branch and 4.5kg Dry



Chem extinguisher by their side. They should remain clear of smoke but work to cool the engine.

- In this case, the vapour from the leaking fuel is a major hazard for everyone in the immediate area so you should work to suppress those vapours. Ideally, Class B foam is best suited but if none of the tankers has it, follow SOP 9.07 Foams and Wetting Agents by applying 1 per cent proportioned Class A foam using a low expansion branch to make a foam blanket. It is highly advisable to stop anyone from puncturing the blanket to avoid a sudden release of vapours.
- As you move about the aircraft, look out for tyres, compressed gases (oxygen stores/generators) and hydraulics. These can store a great deal of energy and when exposed to heat, if they let go they can have lethal consequences for nearby firefighters. Luckily, these types of system aren't common in small, general aviation aircraft and aren't fitted to the scenario aircraft.
- As your firefighters undertake the tasks you've assigned them, it is a good opportunity to provide a wordback and a sitrep: "Firecom Airport Control Wordback" – "Wordback from Lt Smith Incident Not Yet Under Control Swan Hill Airport – Sitrep to follow". "Firecom Airport Control Sitrep" – "Sitrep from Lt Smith light aircraft incident, two persons remain trapped, foam blanket laid for fuel leak working to enter aircraft, police on scene, oncoming enter via Gate 1 and park next to Swan Hill tanker, Respond Swan Hill pumper for Class B foam".

Now the immediate fire risk has been dealt with and you've identified the need for additional support, your attention turns to gaining access to the fuselage and providing medical assistance until further help arrives. The police on scene ask who is in charge and what they need. What are the next steps?

- Be sure the aircraft is stable and secure before adding weight. Like road accident rescue, minor movements to the aircraft can further injure patients, particularly if the aircraft shifts. Gaining access may be difficult with the limited equipment on the tanker and the added complexity of minimising the risk of sparks.
- As this is an aircraft accident and has a threat of fire, CFA is the control agency. However, when the fire threat has been mitigated, Victoria Police will take control and CFA will assume a support role. When this occurs, you will need to change your tabard from Incident Controller to Agency Commander, as per SOPs 8.01 and 8.02.

As other tankers and services arrive think about traffic management and where to park them. There are two main reasons for this:

- As soon as practicable, you will want to set up an inner exclusion zone with a 70-metre radius and an outer perimeter of 200 metres to preserve the scene and to allow ambulance and rescue vehicles ready access to the incident site.
- Consider the hazards and risks within the incident site. Refer to the airliner that landed short of the runway at San Francisco in 2013. Responding firefighters drove through what they thought was a debris field but ended up fatally injuring a passenger who was ejected from the crashed aircraft.

You've now been on scene for more than 15 minutes, the fire threat has been mitigated, and additional rescue units are on scene and preparing for the rescue.

As the incident progresses your role has changed to CFA Agency Commander and you are part of the IMT along with representatives from the other partner agencies and the ARO. Working with these partner agencies, you may

consider specialist advice from Air Services Australia that provides air traffic control, ATSB and CASA. The IMT will need to formulate a plan to maintain a log (SOP 9.13) and manage media (SOP 9.16).

CFA can assist VICSES during the rescue function so long as they work under the supervision of VICSES and you're satisfied the members aren't at risk. CFA members can also assist Ambulance Victoria with patient care and transport. CFA members can drive ambulances Code 3 adhering to CFA driving policies and procedures. You should notify the DDO/SDO before and as soon as possible after the trip.

## Aviation hazards

Other hazards you may come across at an aircraft incident may include:

**Carbon/glass fibres:** A P2 mask is the lowest acceptable level of protection. BA is preferred, especially if fire and smoke is present.

**Fuels:** There are three fuels commonly found at airports:

- Avtur or JetA1 is used by mid-sized charter and above including airliners and most helicopters. It's a more refined diesel/kerosene which is combustible but has a higher flash point than other aviation fuels. However once heat gets into JetA1, it emits a great deal of heat.
- Avgas is used by piston engine aircraft from small to mid-size and some light helicopters. It is more volatile than JetA1 and unleaded petrol. It has a low flash point and forms explosive fumes quickly.
- Mogas is essentially premium unleaded petrol but with some refinements.

All of the fuels are best extinguished by Class B foam, though Class A foam can be used in its absence. When Class B foam is delivered to the incident be sure not to place Class A foam over the Class B blanket as you will likely puncture it.

**Aircraft:** Sometimes aircraft are still moving around the airport when CFA arrives. Some airports are built in such a way you can't see the end of the runway from opposing directions. There have been many cases where aircraft have begun a takeoff roll only to find vehicles or obstacles on the runway. Jet blast/intake and hot surfaces are all things to consider when working around aircraft.

**Oxygen stores or generators:** These can come in several different systems such as stored O<sub>2</sub>, liquid O<sub>2</sub> generators found on military aircraft, or chemical O<sub>2</sub> generators. In a fire situation, all of these can cause harm.

**Safety systems:** Airliners have safety systems such as emergency exit slides which if opened or deployed unintentionally during an incident can cause injury because of the nature of their explosive release. These aircraft also carry BCF and halon extinguishment capabilities. We need to be certain that the environment is clear of these substances before allowing non-BA wearing members near the aircraft.

**Batteries:** These are becoming more prevalent on modern aircraft. For example, the Boeing 787 has a large bank of batteries scattered throughout the aircraft.

**Airport infrastructure and design:** There may be high intensity electromagnetic towers or three-phase power for lighting present, drains and culverts, and more. Where possible consult with the ARO as to the isolation/de-energising requirements.

**Military aircraft:** These pose a special hazard to members if involved in an incident. As soon as you become aware that the aircraft is military, request Firecom to contact the ADF Aviation Duty Officer for immediate advice.

# Fatigue and hydration

As the fire season approaches, the importance of health and safety cannot be overstated, particularly the management of fatigue and hydration.

These two factors play a critical role in ensuring the safety, wellbeing and effectiveness of firefighters on the fireground.

## Preventing fatigue

Firefighters are at increased risk of fatigue because of sleep disruptions and balancing volunteer work with paid work and family life. This risk is often increased during extended incident response or deployments that can happen during the summer months.

Fatigue can lead to headaches, dizziness, reduced concentration, irritability, blurry vision, hallucinations, muscle weakness and slowed reflexes and response rates. All these factors can increase the risk to yourself and those around you while on the fireground.

Managing fatigue will depend on the cause of fatigue, but there are a few things that can be done to help prevent or manage fatigue such as:

- getting as much sleep and rest as possible
- having time to yourself to do things you enjoy
- getting regular exercise (30 minutes of moderate exercise five to seven days a week)
- eating a well-balanced diet with plenty of fruit, vegetables, wholegrains and healthy fats and proteins and ensuring you eat enough food
- staying hydrated
- seeking help from healthcare professionals (your GP or other treating doctor or allied health professionals) to manage any health or medical conditions.

## Identifying fatigue risks during the fire season

There are a variety of factors that can heighten the risk of fatigue during the fire season that members should consider when assessing their fatigue levels. Working at times when you would normally be asleep or resting, fighting large or complex fires in your own community, driving long distances, working with high-risk equipment such as chainsaws, and working in smoke can all significantly affect your fatigue levels.

Some of the symptoms of fatigue you may experience when on the fireground include:

- increases in errors or near-misses
- being easily distracted
- slowing down
- becoming less accurate
- poor communication and difficult to understand
- missing important information or not spotting potential dangers
- reduced awareness of what is going on in your immediate surroundings.

It is vital that you act as soon as you begin to notice signs of fatigue in yourself. You should not continue working if you feel unsafe or uncomfortable, and you should ensure your crew leader is aware as soon as you begin to feel fatigued. In addition to informing your crew leader, you should consider taking the following actions:

- Ensure you take breaks
- Ask to rotate tasks
- Maintain hydration and nutrition
- If the work you are undertaking is moderate to high risk, you should also:
  - Move to lower risk tasks
  - Not undertake solo work
  - Increase the amount of breaks you take
  - Request to be stood down if required.

## Hydration

Keeping on top of your water consumption is important for general health and wellbeing, but this becomes even more important for firefighters in the warmer months.

Dehydration occurs when you don't have enough fluid in your body. Firefighting can increase the risk of becoming dehydrated because of the higher temperatures and physical exertion involved.

Dehydration can be dangerous, particularly in an emergency response setting as it can lead to:

- heat-related illnesses such as heat stress or heat stroke
- confusion
- dizziness or weakness
- unconsciousness.

Signs of dehydration can include feeling thirsty, headaches, nausea, dizziness, dry skin or mouth, dark coloured urine or urinating less often than usual.

In general, to keep hydrated and prevent dehydration aim to drink about two litres of water every day. On warmer days, days where you participate in physical exertion and during fire and incident response, you will likely need to drink more than two litres of water and you may benefit from electrolyte replacement drinks.

Members should pay particular attention to hydration on the fireground, and should use the following points to guide them:

- At the beginning of a shift, drink at least one bottle of water.
- If physical activity/shift lasts for less than an hour, it is best to drink only water.
- If physical activity/shift lasts for more than an hour, drink 600ml of electrolyte replacement drinks to 1200ml of water.
- If you notice any signs of dehydration, it's important to act quickly and drink an electrolyte drink followed by two bottles of water.

The hydration page on Members Online has information on electrolyte replacement drinks.

Guidance and specialist advice about nutrition, sleep and preventing and managing addictive behaviours is available through Nutrition and Lifestyle Assist which can be accessed through CFA's Member Assistance Program. Ring the CFA Wellbeing Support Line on **1800 959 232**.



# Entrapment

The Ash Wednesday fires of 1983 marked a dark period in CFA's history. Fourteen CFA volunteers and one casual firefighter tragically lost their lives when their tankers were engulfed by flames. Another heartbreaking incident occurred in 1998 during the Linton fire, where five of our volunteers perished after their tanker was trapped and consumed by fire.

In response to these devastating events, CFA has made significant strides to enhance our training programs and upgrade our equipment, and this has been instrumental in preventing similar tragedies.

It is imperative we continue with annual training to ensure the safety of all our members so that everyone returns home safely.

## Entrapment drill

Fire behaviour is hard to predict, so everyone needs to be prepared. There's no substitute for practising the entrapment drill. It is essential in preparing members so they know how to clearly communicate and maintain safety during an emergency situation. Seconds are critical. Repeated hands-on training on how to run an entrapment drill and perform it well could make all the difference for your and your crew's safety.

## Lessons identified from previous incidents

**Personnel capability:** Crew leaders and strike team leaders must ensure their crews are comfortable with their tasking and have the ability and necessary training to undertake the task. Crew members should inform their crew leader if they are uncomfortable or unable to undertake their assigned task.

**Radio communications:** If you are unfamiliar with the communication plan, ask questions at the end of the SMEACS briefing to clarify any points.

**Firefighter safety:** Monitoring your surroundings and constantly reviewing your assessment of the potential hazards is critical to safety. This includes identifying and reporting near-miss incidents. In previous entrapment incidents, wearing appropriate protective clothing contributed to the survival of impacted crews. Training on how to protect yourself in extreme fire behaviour is critical to firefighter safety. Situational awareness and familiarising yourself with the area is an important part of managing the risks of firefighting.

**Near-miss reporting:** By reporting near misses quickly through the incident organisation structure, incident controllers can provide important and timely advice about firefighter safety.

**Information flow:** The key role of all personnel is to manage information through the incident organisational structure and ensure they have what they need to make effective and appropriate decisions.

Everyone is responsible for passing on information about fire location and behaviour through the incident organisational structure. This is one of the most important tasks of all personnel at an incident.

**Firefighter welfare:** Fatigue and stress affect the quality of decisions made by firefighters and those managing the incident. Ensure you manage your fatigue and stress levels. If you think they are impacting your ability to complete your task, make your crew leader aware.



## Improvements implemented

CFA introduced crew protection systems, such as water spray deluge and radiant heat shield curtains in all new tankers with at least 1,000 litres of water in 2006.

In 2024 CFA began a retrofit program to fit a crew protection system in the fleet of ultralights, which includes a compressed air foam-based external deluge system (CAFS) and radiant heat shield curtains. They will also be provided internal cabin stowage for fire blankets, making them more accessible for protection in a burnover.

## Further information

### 9.32 Bushfire – Entrapment procedures for appliances SOP.

SOP 9.32 provides guidance to CFA members on what actions must be taken in preparation during a burnover in a CFA vehicle. It explains the requirements to maintain skills and currency, actions to be taken on the fireground, actions to undertake when a burnover is imminent and how to enable the crew protection system.

### 9.15 Mayday and hostile acts radio signals SOP

This SOP describes the situations that will prompt the use of mayday and radio signals and the actions that must be taken when a mayday or signal call is used.

### 9.37 Emergency evacuation signal SOP

The emergency evacuation signal ensures that CFA and other personnel are evacuated safely, effectively and efficiently from potentially harmful situations.

### 11.13 LACES (Lookouts, Awareness, Communications, Escape Routes, Safety Zones) SOP

As conditions change in some emergencies, firefighters rely on the use of safety zones and timely use of escape routes for safety. In these situations, LACES provides a system to maintain safety and should be used as a guide to help mitigate the risks that firefighters face, including burnover and entrapment during bushfire and planned burning operations.





# Leopold aircraft crash

## Summary

On 20 October 2023 a Cessna Caravan airplane took off from Barwon Heads airport carrying 17 people, of which 16 were intending to skydive. As the plane approached 500 feet, it lost power and was forced to make an emergency crash landing on the shoreline of Lake Connemurra. The plane remained upright but sustained damage to the engine and nose cone, and the wheels were torn from the fuselage. Due to the nature of the incident a multiagency emergency response was initiated to secure the scene and rescue, triage and treat the passengers.

## Incident overview

At 8am on Friday 20 October, emergency calls were made for what was thought to have been a plane crash at the end of Barwon Heads runway near Lake Connemurra. Crews from Connemurra and Grovedale brigades responded to the airport address along with support from FRV 64 (Belmont), FRV 66 (Ocean Grove) and FRV 63 (Geelong Rescue). Victoria Police, Ambulance Victoria (AV) and VICSES were also requested as it was not known whether anyone was trapped or whether they were injured.

District 7 Duty Officer (DDO) Commander Nick Callan was notified by the Fire Services Communications Controller (FSCC) of the incident and he monitored radio traffic while en route to the incident. It was at this time he noticed there was confusion about the exact location of the crash. The FSCC didn't know which side of the lake the plane had crashed.

Between 8.13am and 8.20am it was confirmed the plane had come down near Matthews Road, which was on the Leopold side of Lake Connemurra. As this was on the other side of the lake, the FSCC initially commenced redirecting brigades to the new location. This process was stopped by the D7 DDO who requested the FSCC to repage the incident stating the correct location. This action effectively prevented brigades travelling several kilometres through other brigade areas. Connemurra and Grovedale brigades were cancelled and a new page was sent out for the brigades at Leopold and Wallington. FRV, Victoria Police and VICSES were also redirected to the new location.

At about 8.33am CFA control was established with the Leopold pumper being the first CFA vehicle on scene shortly followed by Leopold Tanker 1 and Wallington field command vehicle (FCV). FRV, police and VICSES were also on scene to assist in the rescue.

As the crash site was at the foot of an embankment, vehicle traction and overcrowding near the crash site was a concern. It was decided that CFA's two-wheel drive vehicles would be staged at an elevated area about 200 metres from the accident location. It was decided that the Leopold tanker would be used for fire suppression while Wallington and Leopold FCVs would transport patients. AV triaged the passengers. Ten were uninjured and others had cuts and abrasions. One had suspected chest and spinal injuries.





After arriving on scene and donning the CFA incident controller tabard, the Leopold brigade captain sized up the situation with the priority being fire protection of the casualties, personnel and the crash site. The fire protection action also included positioning the tanker appropriately and having a B Class extinguisher and crew at the ready. The Wallington captain was asked to check the plane for any ignition source or fuel leaks. As the plane's pilot had extensive knowledge of the aircraft, he helped the with this task. The captain and pilot could smell fuel but couldn't locate a leak. Two batteries were isolated and the scene was cordoned off.

Incident emergency management team (IEMT) meetings were held to help coordinate agencies where combined tasks were required. An example of this occurred when AV was assessing a patient for transfer, who then needed to be evacuated by CFA and VICSES using vehicles, stowage and crews. In addition, there were discussions to decide what information should be given to the EPA, waterway authorities and aircraft investigation authority.

Several trips were made by CFA FCVs to transport patients to nearby ambulances and one patient was transported to hospital by air ambulance. As the last patient was taken and the site was cordoned off, it was declared safe at 10.11am and CFA crews returned to their stations.



### What worked well

- An investigation was undertaken on scene for leaking fuel as there was an odour close to the aircraft. However, no leak was found. Effective scene assessment ensured the safety of all on scene.
- A foam blanket was considered but not used because of environmental concerns. The landing site was within a state game reserve and crews took this into account.
- The site area was cordoned off for the safety of casualties and personnel even though a fuel leak was not confirmed.

### Lessons identified

- The tanker was positioned correctly to supply water if necessary, however it was discussed whether it would have been more efficient if a hose had been laid out as well.
- The CFA commander (DDO) wore an FRV badged tabard which caused confusion with other agencies as to who he was representing in the IEMT. This situation has since been rectified with District 7 commanders having a CFA tabard in their inventories.
- Although hot and cold zones were established, atmospheric monitoring could have been used to more accurately establish these zones.

### Conclusion

As a multiagency incident, there was strong coordination between all personnel involved which ensured a positive outcome. Agencies worked together to ensure the scene was safe and that all patients were assessed and transferred to waiting ambulances without issues.

All members are encouraged to continue displaying CFA's values in operational response, and work with our emergency services counterparts to respond effectively to the needs of our community.

If you have any lessons to share email

[Lessons-management-centre@cfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:Lessons-management-centre@cfa.vic.gov.au)



# Emergency Medical Response: a partnered approach

## Summary

Emergency Medical Response (EMR) has been in operation by selected CFA brigades since a pilot program began in 2007, and is currently operational at six brigades. CFA EMR crews are trained by Ambulance Victoria (AV) paramedics to treat a range of medical emergencies and respond to 'Priority 0' incidents – when a patient is suspected to be in or is likely to go into cardiac or respiratory arrest.

Earlier in 2024, Berwick Fire Brigade's EMR crew was dispatched to a patient who had suffered a cardiac arrest. When the pagers went off, volunteers were already at the station, having just completed a brigade management team meeting.

## Incident overview

When notified of the incident, a four-person CFA EMR crew immediately responded in an EMR vehicle, which is set up with all EMR equipment including oxygen and a defibrillator.

Both the CFA EMR crew and paramedics responded. The CFA EMR crew took a different route to the paramedics, and while minor it should be noted that paramedics may not know an area well and will usually follow their GPS. Paramedics arrived at the same time as the CFA EMR crew and they were directed to a garage on the property. The CFA EMR crew carefully positioned its vehicle off to the side of the street, leaving the driveway clear for the eventual transporting ambulance. This can make extrication much easier, though it may not always be possible.

The driveway was flat, and except for vehicles parked in the driveway, access was easy. The garage was adjacent to an undercover, unenclosed structure at the top of the driveway, which was only a few metres long.

Inside the garage, a person was carrying out cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on the patient. There was not a lot of room, so the patient was quickly moved by the CFA EMR crew and paramedics to the adjacent area. This allowed 360-degree access to the patient. This patient movement was conducted by a simple body drag, with the CFA EMR crew and paramedics using the patient's arms and a belt around the patient's waist.

When deciding to move a patient who is in a cramped or difficult area to access, it is important that CFA EMR crews undertake a dynamic risk assessment and use their judgement and training as to the reasons for the move, when and how to make it and what time may be lost.

Key considerations are the safety of personnel, safety of the patient, the risk of spinal, neck or head injuries, avoidance of manual handling injuries, the ability to safely defibrillate, and the ability to provide effective CPR if there is an imminent threat to life. Not all patients can be moved and situations may occur where resuscitation must occur in a compromised space.

The CFA EMR crew immediately commenced high performance CPR while paramedics connected their defibrillator and began setting up for airway and drug therapy and other advanced lifesaving measures. The CFA EMR crew brought in their oxygen kit and defibrillator, ensuring that any unexpected AV equipment issues would not result in delayed care of the patient as the crews could simply switch to the CFA equipment.

An additional CFA EMR crew that arrived shortly after the initial crew and paramedics undertook key actions that greatly improved the process including:

- establishing a queue of CPR providers, reducing changeover delays, crew fatigue, and promoting more effective CPR, leading to a greater chance of patient survival
- careful movement of a private vehicle to allow sufficient resuscitation space
- egress and extrication, and collection of gear as required by paramedics
- setup of battery-powered LED scene lighting
- cleanup of non-hazardous medical packaging waste
- comforting family and obtaining patient details.

CPR was provided continuously by CFA EMR crews for approximately 30 minutes. The patient was defibrillated numerous times by paramedics.

When a sustained return of spontaneous circulation (ROSC) was achieved, CFA EMR crews assisted with extrication of the patient who was transported by mobile intensive care paramedics (MICA) to hospital.

## What worked well

- The 'chain of survival' was followed, and this was the foundation to achieve the patient's positive outcome. The patient's collapse was heard by others who recognised the signs of cardiac arrest and immediately called Triple Zero. CPR was commenced by people on scene and continued until the first responders arrived. First responders were then able to continue the chain of survival (CPR, defibrillation and transport to hospital).
- Having numerous EMR-trained CFA volunteers at the station when the call was dispatched saved valuable time.
- Local knowledge played a big part in the response time. The CFA EMR crew knew the area and associated back streets which reduced the travel time by almost two minutes. Every second counts in a cardiac arrest. Reaching the patient sooner increases their chance of survival.
- Effective teamwork and communication between the entire team (including paramedics) was succinct, clear, and effective. This included 'closed loop' questions, a simple but effective concept when communicating critical information. Furthermore, CFA EMR crews were confident to address issues or queries with paramedics.



- CPR was efficient and effective. CFA EMR crews were able to rotate continuously and allow paramedics to manage other lifesaving tasks. High quality CPR is the number one determinant of cardiac arrest survival.
- In this instance, significant force, depth and effort was required to provide adequate CPR, and paramedics reported the CPR and the CPR changeovers between defibrillations was excellent. Put simply, a two-person paramedic crew would not have been able to provide 30 minutes of effective CPR on this patient, and the resultant outcome could have been much poorer.
- As the patient needed to be moved to a suitable area for resuscitation, a short delay in attaching defibrillator pads occurred. However, not moving the patient would have meant treatment was undertaken in the garage doorway, causing a compromised resuscitation.
- The compression range was well within the target range of 100 to 120 beats per minute with only a couple of instances of CPR being provided too quickly.
- Recoil velocity was also excellent (recent developments in resuscitation show that allowing the heart to adequately refill is a simple yet very important and previously underrated aspect of CPR). Recoil velocity is arguably the most difficult part of CPR to do correctly because it is the phase of the compression where the responder lifts themselves up and requires the most effort as they're moving against gravity. CPR compression depth can be effective only if hands are lifted off the chest enough.
- The CFA EMR crew had good knowledge of the ambulance internal layout and the location of equipment required by paramedics. Brigades are encouraged to approach AV for equipment and vehicle familiarisation as well as extrication practice.
- Extrication of the patient was thought about from the beginning, with considerations including clear and safe egress, location of the transporting ambulance, stretcher access, ongoing treatment required during extrication, and any associated equipment required for moving or lifting.

### Lessons identified

This is an exemplar case which can be used as a training opportunity for other CFA brigades and providers to show how to provide the best care for patients.

In this incident, as with all incidents, good local knowledge to reduce response times, good quality CPR, knowledge of equipment, good communication and approach to managing issues and areas of concern, and an overall professional demeanour and behaviour of personnel on scene, led to best practice and a high-quality response.

Paramedics stated that from their perspective CFA EMR crews could not have improved their performance.

Having a follow-up from paramedics was a great benefit. They advised that prompt attendance, prompt access (including quickly moving the patient to a location where efficient and effective resuscitation could be commenced) and continued high-quality CPR gave this patient the highest chance of survival. Where possible, it would be ideal if feedback from paramedics could continue to be provided to assist with ongoing CFA EMR crew development.

At the start of COVID-19, CFA EMR responses were limited to two personnel in a vehicle. To counteract this, the brigade involved in this case study has continued, where possible, to turn out the primary EMR vehicle backed by a second vehicle with additional CFA EMR crew that can be cancelled and returned to station if not needed. This approach allows CFA EMR crews to gain experience in patient care, and the running of a job (exposure is key). Not always having the same CFA responders also reduces burnout and fatigue.

From an AV and medical perspective, the primary CFA EMR vehicle should respond as soon as two CFA EMR crew members are at the station. They should not delay the response waiting for additional volunteers unless they need a Code 1 endorsed driver. A two-person CFA EMR crew will be sufficient to provide high quality CPR and defibrillation until further resources arrive on scene. Additional CFA EMR crew members responding in another vehicle should respond Code 3 if they are not Code 1 endorsed.

CFA volunteers from existing EMR brigades who want to undertake EMR training should have a frank and informative discussion with their brigade training team and fellow CFA EMR crew members about the realities of resuscitation from both a technical and emotional point of view. EMR is a significant departure from the traditional role of CFA brigades, and routinely attending injured or deceased people can have a significant mental and emotional toll.

### Conclusion

Cardiac arrest survival in Victoria is among the highest in the world. Every day about 20 Victorians suffer a cardiac arrest, but only 10 per cent survive. CFA EMR aims to improve cardiac arrest survival rates by reducing response times to patients. This case study showed that an early response and effective treatment initially by people on scene followed by CFA EMR crews and paramedics gave this patient the best chance of survival.

It's important to practise these skills, know the equipment, and train together as a team to learn how each other operates. This is invaluable experience when you are called to provide assistance, particularly in a cardiac arrest situation.





## Faces of CFA

LESLEY FORMAN, SOUTH WANGARATTA FIRE BRIGADE, DISTRICT 23

### What is your CFA role?

I'm involved in CFA in a few ways. Until June I was our brigade captain, a position I held for eight years. Now I'm Wangaratta group's first female DGO. I'm also involved in our District 22 and 23 Women's Network Group, the Captain's Peer Mentor program and district planning committee, and am a volunteer PAD Instructor. Over summer I'm busy as an aircraft officer and regional aviation resource coordinator.

### Why did you join?

My grandfather and father were heavily involved, so I grew up in CFA. Naturally I wanted to be a part of it to actively contribute to my local community. In the early 1980s women were mainly considered for auxiliary roles (something our brigade never had) or secretary, but I was determined to become a firefighter. After relentless badgering and assurance that I could cope with any negative attitudes that were likely to come my way, our brigade secretary eventually agreed (thanks dad). Along with the captain's daughters, South Wangaratta became one of the few early brigades to welcome women firefighters.

### What incident has had the greatest impact on you?

Every incident has some impact. Arriving in Sydney during the 2001-02 fires, seeing a mass of weary firefighters sleeping on the dining room floor of the accommodation and admiring their determination to get up and do it all again the next day is something I carry with me – to always be mindful of the wellbeing of those around me.

As a very new lieutenant, I was terrified at a small local job when our captain approached me to say he was leaving and I was now in charge. This experience led me to look for opportunities at callouts to step back and mentor up-and-coming brigade leaders.

The greatest impact on me was a car accident. I still hear panic in the voice of the driver walking helplessly around the scene. But to then crawl into the vehicle to help extract the passenger, discover they were one of my students, carry their lifeless body to the ambulance and then attend their funeral is something I

still relive. I'm very conscious of protecting crew members and the public whenever we are called to these types of incidents. I also use it in conversations with students in my work as a teacher, as they start out as drivers. I remind them that actions have consequences and impacts on family, friends, and first responders.

### Who have been your mentors in CFA?

Wherever I go there are mentors and if I name names, I'm sure to miss someone. However, I must thank past brigade captains Brian French, Graham Colson and Garry Nash for all having more confidence in me than I have in myself. From each I have learned so much, beyond firefighting techniques to being a brigade representative. And I can't forget my father, Gordon Kerris, from whom I am still learning.

### What have been the highlights of your time in CFA?

To contribute to my brigade, my neighbourhood and the wider community is the highlight. But one of the best is the annual Good Friday Appeal. Some driveways are incredibly long and there may not always be someone at the end of it, but the generosity of brigade members and the support from the community makes me proud to be involved.

### How do you motivate your brigade members?

Motivate? People who volunteer are already motivated. I'd like to think I've encouraged, supported and mentored others, and that by respecting and recognising the positives in people, they in turn will pass it forward.

### What lessons are you most keen to pass onto other members?

Every person can contribute something to their brigade and CFA, respect each other, train and learn as much as you can and make time to listen to and learn from others.

### What do you like to do in your spare time?

Spare time gets less and less but I do play a bit of hockey when I'm not working, volunteering or tripping interstate to see my children.



# Restoring CFA history

**Brett Eastwood and Eddie Tichelaar (pictured) first met in 1983 at Montrose Fire Brigade.**

"It's fair to say, we clicked pretty quickly. We didn't use the word mentor back then, but we supported each other in learning the ropes," Eddie explained.

In early 2020 Eddie shared a dream with Brett of finding and restoring an old fire truck, specifically an old Austin with a front-mounted pumper.

"I kid you not, within three weeks Brett tapped me on the shoulder and said 'I found one. We're doing it,'" Eddie said.

So began their journey with the 1956 Austin pumper they nicknamed 'Easteey'. What started as a passion project about four and a half years ago has become something much bigger than either could have imagined.

After Easteey the Austin's restoration was completed in November 2021, they soon launched into their next project – a 1976 International Acco 1910A Type 1 pumper, known in CFA circles as the 'Pink Panther' due to its distinctive orange-pink, fluorescent paintwork.

With these two restorations under their belts, and a visit to the 2023 State Championships, the pair then noticed something they hadn't anticipated – the pure joy the restored trucks brought to both CFA members and the general public.

"Seeing the fully restored trucks is giving people the opportunity to remember their past, but it's also engaging the wider community," Eddie said

Easteey Fire Trucks, as it's known, are now a team of six with Trevor Franklin, Greg



Chapman, Lex Wade AFSM and Jess Meilak joining Brett and Eddie to bring more than 240 years of CFA service to the cause. This year, Easteey Fire Trucks were invited back to the State Championships to lead the Torchlight Procession. The group has also struck up an informal partnership with the Fire Services Museum of Victoria in East Melbourne.

"A lot of the older members of the Fire Services Museum are not necessarily in a position to go out in the field, so we're doing the external stuff and they're doing the museum stuff; we're now supporting one another," Eddie explained.

Easteey Fire Trucks currently has another two restoration projects underway: a Hino Type 2 pumper and a 1983 International Acco 610A tanker. At the time of writing, they are both nearing completion. You can follow their progress by visiting [facebook.com/easteeyfiretrucks](https://www.facebook.com/easteeyfiretrucks).

While Easteey Fire Trucks doesn't currently have plans to restore more trucks, the team does have a grand idea to keep connecting with the CFA family.

"Because of what this has done for so many people – the excitement, the enthusiasm – the dream we're now thinking about is doing a state tour."

As Eddie and Brett reflect on their Easteey Fire Trucks journey so far, they remain committed to honouring CFA history and fostering community in all corners of the state.



STORY ALISON SMIRNOFF





## Happy couplings

**The COVID-19 lockdowns led to an exciting and fulfilling change of direction for CFA volunteers and married couple Greg Thorpe and Anne Tammesild. Instead of sitting idle, they both completed a Certificate IV in celebrancy, and now get a lot of joy from marrying people – especially fellow CFA volunteers.**

“I retired during the COVID-19 pandemic after being an air traffic controller for 43 years,” Greg said. “Anne saw me getting bored and suggested I find something new to do. I said I wouldn’t mind being a marriage celebrant, and Anne replied that she’d like to do that too.”

Greg and Anne both completed their certificate IV in about nine months, but because of COVID-19 they weren’t able to get their new business off the ground the way they had hoped.

Greg and Anne, who live in Hampton, are members of District 8 Headquarters brigade where they are learning new skills to work in an incident control centre. Before moving to Hampton, Greg had been a firefighter with St Andrews brigade since 2008, and the impact of the 2009 fires on Greg and those around him prompted him to become a peer.

“At St Andrews I got really interested in firefighting and learned a range of skills. Then after 2009 I also wanted to help fellow volunteers, so I trained to be a peer supporter.”

Greg and Anne love marrying people, and are happy to conduct weddings in addition to having daytime jobs.

“We aim to do 15 weddings a year in between my part-time job as the manager of emergency management and business continuity across 51 magistrates’ courts, and Anne’s full-time teaching role.”

Anne became a CFA member about a year ago after many years as a Life Saving Victoria volunteer where she was a district assessor and trainer. She now wants to contribute to the operation of CFA incident control centres.

Greg and Anne approach a wedding as a team. Although only one celebrant can legally marry a couple, they both attend the wedding.

“We do it together because we enjoy it so much,” Greg said. “If Anne conducts the ceremony, I’ll be the roadie and set everything up. It brings us a lot of joy. After the wedding, we walk away with a big smile. We’re not in it to make much money but to marry people and make them happy.”

“I see how much work CFA members devote to supporting their communities and we like to give back by marrying them for a reasonable fee. We’re not worried about travelling a long distance to marry CFA people – we just turn the occasion into a weekend away.”

One happy occasion was when Greg married CFA employee Jacinta McMahon and her partner Tim late last year in their backyard with about 30 guests. Their beloved dog Bundy was the ring bearer.

Greg and Anne discuss each wedding together and writing the couple’s love story is a joint effort.

“Having two celebrants who know all the documents and the members of the bridal party means that either of us can conduct the ceremony. If I was sick, Anne could take the ceremony and vice versa. Fortunately, that hasn’t been a problem,” Greg said.

**STORY DUNCAN RUSSELL**

# Reducing bushfire risk with mechanical treatments

What does a spider excavator (pictured right) and a goat have in common? Both can be used to effectively reduce fire risk through fuel reduction.

"With such steep hills throughout our district fuel reduction burning can be challenging or just too hard. That's why we are increasingly turning to machinery and other options to help reduce bushfire risk," District 10 and 11 Vegetation Management Officer Chris Lewis said.

The range of options available as non-burn fuel treatments includes slashing and mowing, mulching and grooming, the use of herbicides by licensed contractors, and grazing animals such as sheep, cattle and goats. Grazing animals have been used in rural areas as a reliable method to reduce fuel in pastures and roadsides, usually leading into summer.

Local governments and the Department of Transport and Planning, which are both responsible for roadsides, mow road sides as part of their seasonal fire mitigation activities.

"We have undertaken extensive fuel reduction works targeting woody weeds around Dargo township to remove weedy fuels and bring them to ground level," Chris said. "This dramatically reduces fire risk and can make future fuel reduction burning possible as part of a two or three-stage fuel reduction approach.

"Likewise, we have used mulching rather than burning in Longford where smoke was a potential issue within the town."

"As efforts increase to identify and reduce bushfire risk across our communities so the range of options to treat that risk also grows," Vegetation Management Team Leader Dan Idczak said. "Our planned burning program is very effective and easier in grassland and grassy woodland areas. However, in areas of woody weeds and excessive shrub growth and forested vegetation it may be safer and more effective to groom or mulch the growth down to ground level first, leaving desirable native trees and shrubs, and then following up with treating any weedy regrowth.

"Non-burn fuel treatments can be a key component in fuel management, providing advantages in planning and delivery, and to complement other fuel management activities," Dan said. "They



provide significant benefits in protecting assets and community value, increase the efficiency of burning programs, and can be a major aid in bushfire suppression."

"They can be tactical in scope, such as mulching or slashing, or spraying works adjacent to built assets. They can also be strategic such as the construction of landscape fuel breaks to provide pre-planned back burning lines for bushfire suppression."

While being costly, grooming or mulching produces almost instant risk-reduction impacts.

Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) is a prickly and dense plant that poses a serious threat to our agricultural land, native ecosystems and our bushfire safety. With its high oil content and strong, impenetrable growth, gorse creates extreme fire hazards as it takes over landscapes. Effective control is crucial to maintaining the health of our environment and to reduce fire risk.

In collaboration with the landholder and the Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT), CFA controlled gorse at a site in central Victoria to reduce its spread into the adjoining state park by mulching. This is an ideal first step to control gorse because it increases

access and reduces the need for herbicides, which are commonly sprayed on gorse when it regrows to 40cm high. For more information about gorse, go to [vicgorsetaskforce.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/VGT0020-Fire-Hazard-A4-v3.pdf](https://vicgorsetaskforce.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/VGT0020-Fire-Hazard-A4-v3.pdf)

STORY ANDREW GOVANSTONE





# RETAINING YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

As our workforce of seasoned and experienced firefighters decide to step down from the truck for the last time, a pressing challenge emerges: how do we develop the next generation of CFA volunteers?

Story by Elaine Hamilton

In the winter issue of *Brigade* magazine we looked at ways to attract and recruit younger members. In this article we explore some strategies brigades can adopt to help ignite young people's passion for a lifelong commitment to CFA.

Before you continue to read this article, it would be worth recalling a time from your youth when you felt fully engaged and when everything seemed to be going right. It could have been during your days as a CFA Junior or a young CFA volunteer, or perhaps an experience at school or on a sports team. What do you believe were the essential factors that made that period or experience so captivating to you?

The HeartWood Framework for Community Youth Development (developed by the HeartWood Centre for Community Youth Development in consultation with young people) has created positive experiences for young people and adults for more than 30 years. HeartWood first shared this framework with CFA in 2017 and it has helped us to better understand our young volunteers including their values and what drives them. It also gives us some strategies or 'tools for growth' that we can use to better engage with the next generation of volunteers.

## CORE VALUES

At the centre of the framework are the core values that young people have identified as essential for them to feel included in their community.

**Follow their passions:** The opportunity to explore and identify passions and then pursue them is crucial. Some young people may be unsure of their passions, so providing opportunities that spark their curiosity through diverse experiences and activities can help uncover passions they didn't realise they had.

**Make a difference:** Young people want to be actively engaged in activities that make an impact in a community.

**Taking action:** Young people are action-oriented and prefer actively participating in activities rather than merely discussing them.

**Connecting with others:** Most young people are keen to meet others and make genuine, meaningful connections.

**Having fun:** There needs to be an enjoyment factor for young people to feel engaged and connected.



## TOOLS FOR GROWTH

The framework provides us with some strategies that adults and leaders in a brigade can use to help young volunteers achieve these core values.

### Meaningful contribution (helping, serving in some way):

Young people volunteer because they want to be involved in an action or effort that significantly impacts and adds value to a group, project or community. Consider ways you can involve young members of your brigade in activities that are meaningful.

For example, Bamawm Extension Fire Brigade Captain George Calleja involves his younger members in their Annual Dinner Committee. "They transformed our annual dinner from a formal presentation night to a fun celebration of our brigade and the amazing contribution of our members," George said.

"The young members create a slide show and step into roles like MC. I can now sit back and enjoy the night and take pride in my brigade."

### Adventurous learning (exploration, excitement, challenge):

Young people like to engage in real life experiences that challenge them and push their limits in a safe way. CFA offers plenty of opportunities for adventurous learning experiences through brigade training nights using mobile training props, visits to various training grounds and taking courses that encourage young people to step outside their comfort zones.

The CFA Cadets Camp allows 16 and 17-year-old members to experience a weekend of challenge and adventure. Xavier Marshall from Springfield Fire Brigade gave a glowing report about the Cadets Camp he attended.

"A highlight of the camp for me was the search and rescue activity we did at VEMTC Sale where we went through a simulated house filled with smoke," Xavier said. "We used thermal imaging cameras to detect any trapped people. The weekend was the best thing I've ever done with CFA."

**Supportive peers:** Young people want to be able to interact in an atmosphere that gives them a sense of belonging. They want to feel appreciated and supported by other members. Relationships rooted in mutual support and acceptance help all brigade members nurture each other's strengths and encourage growth.

Merrigum Fire Brigade Captain Jesse Speed (pictured in the middle of the photo, left) shared a story about how the brigade's management team identified a young man in their community, Ayden Shepherd (pictured right in the photo), who had some skills they thought would be valuable as a CFA member. They invited him to join the brigade. To ensure he had another young person to connect with Jesse also persuaded his own daughter Kayla (pictured left) to join the brigade.

"The energy these young people bring to our brigade is incredible," Jesse said. "The two of them support each other and the banter between them is infectious and brings a fun aspect to our brigade again."





**Empowering culture:** As young people grow and develop they want opportunities for leadership and the freedom to exercise real control and power in a culture that practises trust, honesty and open communication. An empowering culture grants young members a sense of responsibility and control over matters that directly affect them.

Kurt Sorensen, a member of Chiltern Fire Brigade, actively participates in the District 24 Youth Reference Group. This forum is a space for young members to discuss issues that impact them, share ideas and express their opinions. Kurt also represented District 24 on the Young Adults Advisory Committee.

“Amplifying the voices of young people is crucial for shaping a positive future for CFA,” Kurt said. “Through these platforms, I have built strong networks, learned from others and deepened my passion for CFA. As a result, I have taken on leadership roles within my brigade.”

**Youth-adult partnerships (informally and formally):** This concept focuses on partnerships between young people and adults founded on mutual respect and shared learning. It transcends traditional roles such as coach or mentor by harnessing the skills and knowledge of young members and fostering an environment where adults and young members engage in reciprocal learning and growth.

Newly-elected Stratford Fire Brigade Captain Brent Barker will lead a young brigade management team over the next two years (pictured

above). He’s keen to start a buddy system at his brigade so that the experienced members can support the new recruits.

“You can get lost if you don’t have someone to help you,” Brent said. “On the flipside, the older members learn from the young ones as practices have changed since they completed their qualifications.”

It has been difficult to retain young members and Brent thinks creating more youth-adult partnerships will help with retention.

This framework might appear simple and straightforward, but there is a complexity in how we can use its components. The components are not isolated pieces. Instead they interact with each other, and it’s beneficial to use more than one tool at a time. The framework provides a method for considering what is necessary to create engaging experiences for both youth and volunteers of all ages.

Learn more about the HeartWood Framework by hosting a ‘Valuing youth and young adults as volunteers’ workshop. Contact your local Volunteer Sustainability Team to arrange a workshop.

## REFLECTIONS FOR YOUR BRIGADE

Did any elements of the framework stand out to you?

When you reflected on your experience as a young person did the essential elements that you identified appear anywhere in the framework?

Are there activities or initiatives you could introduce at your brigade to help young members experience a positive atmosphere?

# Supporting student learning

The Schools in Fire Country program is an education initiative for upper primary students, designed to support them to develop skills and knowledge to tackle bushfire-related issues in their local community. A successful pilot last year at Chewton Primary School highlighted the program's potential.

At Chewton the program was tailored to meet local needs, facilitated by classroom teachers with support from local fire agencies. This partnership enriched the learning experience and provided students with local knowledge and practical demonstrations. Chewton Fire Brigade Community Safety Coordinator Rob Smith hosted students at the fire station and demonstrated the burn table, giving the students a better understanding of fire dynamics and safety measures.

The impact on students was profound as they embarked on innovative projects addressing aspects of bushfire preparedness such as Fire Danger Rating communication strategies, property preparation and emergency management planning. Their achievements and newfound knowledge were shared with peers, parents and younger students at a final showcase event.

Reflecting on the outcomes, classroom teacher Scott Purdon emphasised the importance of brigade support.

"Having the support of the local CFA was fantastic," Scott said. "The students really felt part of something bigger than just the classroom. Our local brigade members were very enthusiastic, with great resources to inspire and engage the students in their learning."

The program enhanced students' practical skills, inspired them to take meaningful local action and empowered them with knowledge to mitigate fears and uncertainties associated with bushfires. It even resulted in some enquiries about how to join the local brigade.

Following Chewton's success, neighbouring schools in Newstead and Heathcote have embraced the program, collaborating with local brigades and community partners to support student-led projects.



Their positive experiences have sparked broader interest, with three additional schools slated to implement the program this term.

Overall, the Schools in Fire Country program exemplifies a proactive approach to bushfire education, fostering community resilience through experiential youth engagement. As more schools adopt and refine this model, facilitated by dedicated educators and supported by local leaders, the initiative has the potential to cultivate a generation better equipped to navigate the challenges posed by bushfire.

For more information about the program email [n.munro@cfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:n.munro@cfa.vic.gov.au).

STORY NEIL MUNRO

## New wellbeing workshops

**Six workshops are available as part of a suite of new mental health and wellbeing training designed for CFA by CFA.**

Designed to help you learn about how to have wellbeing conversations, recognise changes in your own and other's mental health, and build resilience and awareness of trauma, the one to two-hour, face-to-face workshops include videos, practical information and personal stories from CFA members.

**Mind Matters:** building resilience: Learn resilience building strategies and self-awareness techniques as well as positive psychology strategies including addressing mind traps and building five ways to wellbeing. Target audience: CFA members.

**Checking in:** wellbeing conversations: Understand the importance of mental health and wellbeing conversations. Learn how to prepare for and approach a supportive conversation. Target audience: CFA members.

**Leaders checking in:** wellbeing conversations: Understand your responsibilities as a leader to support psychological health and safety. Learn how to recognise changes, check in with your team members and provide support. Target audience: CFA leaders.

**Navigating trauma:** Gain awareness of trauma and how it can impact individuals, teams and communities. Recognise the signs and symptoms of trauma and learn how to support recovery. Target audience: CFA members.

**Navigating grief and loss:** Learn about the impact of grief and loss and recognise the signs and symptoms. Explore the concept of growing around grief and learn about available supports. Target audience: CFA members.

**Leading for wellbeing:** Learn about the importance of psychological health and safety and your responsibilities as a leader. Understand the benefits of leading with psychological safety front of mind and learn practical strategies to support members. Target audience: CFA leaders.

To book a workshop, email [wellbeing@cfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:wellbeing@cfa.vic.gov.au), call **1800 959 232** (option 4), or contact your district member wellbeing adviser.



# It's all about the passion



## South Morang Fire Brigade celebrated its 60th anniversary in July with an annual dinner.

"The night was extremely successful. It attracted the perfect mix of past and current members and allowed the brigade to reconnect with its history," Captain Brent Sandlant (pictured) said.

"Recruitment has been fantastic recently," Brent added. "We are going through a renewal process. Almost 30 community members have joined in the past 24 months and having so many new members has brought a number of new skill sets into the brigade. The excitement of the newer members has also helped reignite the passion of the older members.

"The new members just want to serve the community. They are fresh, eager and have no baggage."

South Morang has a predominantly young demographic, with many people in their 30s and 40s who now have children leaving high school or university.

"We are targeting young people with passion. We want to be in the position to challenge our new members to be the best they can be. Happily, whenever we present them with a challenge, the young members exceed all expectations," Brent said.

The area has seen dramatic population boom in the past few years, growing by 19 per cent between 2011 and 2021. South Morang brigade's management team flagged this as an issue, and in 2015 the brigade gained CFA career firefighters. To cope with the additional staff, the station was redeveloped to include sleeping facilities.

"The brigade has prided itself in adapting to the changing needs of the community of South Morang. This is why the brigade made the decision in 2009 to be part of the Emergency Medical Response pilot program and we are still providing the service today.

"Our EMR-trained members maintain their skills and are ready to respond throughout our area and support Fire Rescue Victoria as needed."

South Morang members are also specially trained to make LPG gas cylinders safe at incidents, and cover a large response area well beyond the urban sprawl in order to carry out LPG flare-offs.

Brent has been captain of South Morang since last year, after a 12-month handover from the previous captain.

"This was a really good mentoring process as the previous captain, Lindsay McHugh, had decades of experience which enabled me to hit the ground running," Brent said.

Brent is a fourth-generation firefighter and he has the passion to succeed. This was essential during the recent Fire Services Reform when once again South Morang Fire Brigade adapted to the changing needs of the community.

"Following Fire Services Reform and then COVID-19, we reassessed the brigade's role within the community and how we could support FRV effectively. We thought about what we wanted the brigade to be and one word kept being mentioned – passion."

Brent is keen for his members to pass on their passion to others.

"At South Morang we pride ourselves on being able to pass on knowledge and provide training opportunities to all our members with the expectation that in turn they help add their experience to the knowledge pool and pass it onto the next generation."

This passing on of knowledge underpinned a number of brigade service awards at the anniversary dinner, including Firefighter of the Year Mitchell Ferris (who also won the Peer Award) and Captain's Award winners Hayden Marshall, Stratos Tavambis and Vlasis Tavambis. This is the first time the brigade has issued the award to three people in the same year. Seven members received long service awards including Life Member Adrian Backx who received a 40-year award.

STORY DUNCAN RUSSELL



# New station for Mt Macedon



PHOTOS: CHRIS FLEMING

## **Mt Macedon Fire Brigade members celebrated the official opening of their new fire station at the end of June 2024.**

The local community, together with CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan, the Hon. Mary-Anne Thomas MP and Mt Macedon Captain Tim Slattery (pictured below right) gathered to mark the special occasion.

The \$4.04 million state-of-the-art station on Mt Macedon Road replaced the brigade's 42-year-old station.

Jason said the new station will provide modern facilities and features designed to improve service to the community.

"The new station features a three-bay drive-through motor room capable of storing modern firefighting vehicles," Jason said.

"It also has a rear training yard, a hose drying tower, men and women turnout facilities, a workshop, brigade office and communications room, a multi-purpose training room and kitchen.

"The station is a much larger facility for the brigade and its local community to use for many years to come."

Tim said brigade members were thoroughly enjoying their new home.

"It's incredible to see how far we've come from the early days where firefighting equipment was housed in a shed owned by the Water Trust board, to this modern fit-for-purpose facility," Tim said.

"This new station was a long time in the making. To assist Melbourne University architecture students with their academic requirements, we engaged with them in 2017 to produce some renovation designs for our previous station. This work became the champion to the brigade's cause to receive funding for a new station.

"The brigade was also able to contribute \$38,000 for improvements on the base design, using donations we generously received from the community over the years.

"Our brigade responds to more than 40 callouts each year and we have supported major incidents including the Ash Wednesday bushfires where 400 homes and seven lives were lost in the Macedon/Mt Macedon area. We also attended the February

2009 bushfires, the 2019-20 fires and flood and storm events in 2021 and 2022.

At the official opening ceremony the brigade also celebrated a combined total of almost 300 years of service from 14 members.

"I'm proud of our brigade's 40 members who are dedicated to protecting their local community and beyond, which they can now do from this incredible new station," Tim said.

Among those members receiving service medals were former CFA Board Chair and Mt Macedon captain Kerry Murphy and Christopher Fleming, who both received 50-year medals.

**STORY AMY SCHILDBERGER**



# Lend a hand in Mallacoota

**CFA is calling for interested members headed to Mallacoota this coming summer to lend a hand in the 'Vols on Hols' program, as tens of thousands of visitors are set to make their way to the region.**

Following a successful 2023-24 summer campaign which saw 20 CFA members on holiday in the area participate in the initiative, local members are enlisting further help to respond to the anticipated influx of callouts.

CFA Deputy Chief Officer South East Region Trevor Owen (pictured left in the photo) said while 2023-24 was a quieter bushfire season than usual across East Gippsland because of regular rain, CFA learned useful lessons implementing this pilot program.

"We've provided an additional tanker to Mallacoota given the increased number of volunteers, and it has been of great benefit to the community," Trevor said. "Some of the involved visiting members also took up the opportunity to actively participate in brigade training.

"We've really seen the social connection grow between CFA members, local Mallacoota residents and visitors to the region."

Mallacoota Captain Tracey Johnston (pictured right) is happy to invite those members who have extended an expression of interest to the station for a meet-and-greet before turning out.

"We're so thankful for the assistance from brigade members who come from across the state," Tracey said. "We like to give them a



run-through of our facilities and equipment before they jump in," Tracey said.

"It was also great to run some combined sessions where we worked on advanced pumping and attacking activities and boosting drills for car fires.

"From the feedback we've received, families of the members have been really supportive and understand how much CFA volunteering means to them. Some of their kids have also enjoyed coming down to the station to see the trucks and meet the local members."

If you're interested in taking part in the Vols on Hols program in Mallacoota, email [volsonhols.d11@cfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:volsonhols.d11@cfa.vic.gov.au) or phone D11 Headquarters on 03 5153 7400.

**STORY LUCY BISHOP**

## New BA exchange process

**CFA recently appointed a project manager to implement a statewide breathing apparatus (BA) cylinder exchange process.**

For many years BA cylinders have been allocated to a specific location, whether this be a district, brigade or training facility. This means volunteers spend many hours transporting cylinders to and from locations when recharging is required. Implementing an exchange process will enable empty cylinders to be easily exchanged with a full one without the need to return the same cylinder later, which will reduce the burden on volunteers.

One of the first tasks for the project will be to explore technologies and digital solutions that will allow CFA to accurately track cylinders.

"There are many organisations across the world tracking assets using technology," Head of Fleet and Protective Equipment Danny Jones said. "We must find a solution that fits best into our organisation.

This technology will enable us to locate cylinders for periodic servicing and testing."

When the BA cylinder exchange process is operating, firefighters can simply exchange cylinders on the fireground. The cylinders can then be scanned so that their new location can be recorded in the system.

By the end of 2024, 16 BA support vehicles will be in service at strategic locations across the state, and will be a key part of the exchange process. Each vehicle will carry 24 cylinders to support an incident and will have the capability to wash masks onsite if necessary. In some cases, the BA support vehicles will be located alongside a compressor so that empty cylinders can be recharged and stored for future exchanges.

If you have any queries about this project email [baexchange@cfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:baexchange@cfa.vic.gov.au)

**STORY STEVEN HILL**





# How community members use maps during bushfires

**During bushfires do Australians understand the maps shared by agencies well enough to take action to protect their lives and those of their loved ones? Following recent research, Australian emergency services now have new insight into how community members understand and use bushfire incident and fire spread prediction maps.**

Bushfire maps, including incident and fire spread prediction maps, are a critical tool to communicate life-saving emergency information to the Australian public during bushfires. However, limited evidence and guidance exist about the best way to design bushfire predictive maps and how they are used during active bushfires in Australia.

The new research provided insights from residents who recently experienced bushfires in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Tasmania and Victoria. This will inform future bushfire map design to benefit communities around Australia. For example, the research showed that people impacted by bushfire want two key items in a bushfire map – their location in relation to a fire risk and a clear indication of the direction of fire spread.

Lead researcher, Dr Erica Kuligowski, Principal Research Fellow at RMIT University, believes that this research will help ensure appropriate predictive map design by emergency management agencies, significantly improving their understanding and use by people under threat.

“When bushfire maps help people understand their location in relation to the bushfire risk, as well as other important information including direction of the fire spread and the location of the fire front, they are empowered to make the best protective action decisions for themselves and their loved ones,” Dr Kuligowski said.

Bushfire and other real-time weather and hazard tracking maps, including those created by local fire and emergency management agencies, the Bureau of Meteorology, Google or third-party weather or hazard mapping platforms, are a critical tool to communicate life-saving emergency information to people in the path of a bushfire.

Supported by CFA, Tasmania Fire Service, ACT Rural Fire Service, NSW Rural Fire Service and local shire councils, the research found that community members in areas of risk generally wanted, regardless of type, bushfire maps that provided information that enabled them to do one of three things: evacuate if safe to do so and show routes that are available; stay and defend; or follow actions specified in their household bushfire plan.

“Participants indicated the importance of maps communicating the direction of fire spread, as well as locations of fire activity so that they could understand the uncertainty and immediate and subsequent risk, enabling them to make informed decisions about when and how to avoid bushfire,” Dr Kuligowski said.

Findings highlighted the strong use of bushfire maps by residents in bushfire-affected areas as part of their overall emergency information sourcing, accessing maps frequently during bushfires. They also stressed the importance of timely and date-stamped information.

“Participants found the inconsistencies between information sources due to different maps updating at different times confusing, especially when the time of the last update wasn’t included,” Dr Kuligowski said.

The study also found that participants were more likely to trust the information expressed in bushfire maps if fire agency experts explained them in detail, such as at community meetings or face to face.

The research identified challenges that people face in comprehending bushfire maps, including ways to correctly interpret locations of highest risk.

“The meaning of warning polygons, the triangle symbols and the meaning of their location, and the risks associated with certain areas of maps – the burnt areas or the areas of potential fire spread - could be barriers to correct interpretation of bushfire maps.

“We also found that it was difficult for participants to identify the location of highest risk of harm, meaning additional work is required to ensure universal understanding of both incident and predictive maps.”

Marc Unsworth, Lead Officer Public Information Capability at Emergency Management Victoria, believes this research provides the evidence base needed to develop bushfire predictive maps that significantly improve the safety of all Australians.

“This research can assist us in designing and disseminating maps to guide safe and effective early protective action decision-making in affected communities, and in turn, better protect people from injury and loss of life,” Marc said.

Read more about the community’s use of maps at [naturalhazards.com.au/hazard-note-5](https://naturalhazards.com.au/hazard-note-5).

STORY JOANNA WOOD

The image shows a digital document titled "Hazard Note" from Natural Hazards Research Australia, dated July 2024. The article title is "Community comprehension, perception and use of maps during bushfires". It includes sections for "About this project", "Authors", "Summary", and "Findings". The "Summary" section discusses the use of bushfire maps during the 2019-2020 fire season. The "Findings" section is divided into two parts: Part 1 discusses mapping platforms used and when they were consulted, while Part 2 discusses the types of information used to improve map clarity. A photograph at the bottom shows a bushfire scene with a person in the foreground.

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## Hazard Note

Topics in this edition | communication | emergency management | planning | warnings

### Community comprehension, perception and use of maps during bushfires

**About this project**  
The way community members with experience of bushfires understood, used and took action in response to existing bushfire maps was investigated so that future maps can be better understood and utilised by members of the public. This project also supports the development of evidence-based principles to inform a nationally consistent approach to the future use of bushfire predictions in public communication during future emergencies. Predictions in Public: understanding the design, communication and dissemination of predictive maps to the public was undertaken by Natural Hazards Research Australia, RMIT University, Queensland University of Technology, Deakin University, Swinburne University of Technology, Country Fire Authority Victoria and Victoria's Department of Education.

**Authors**  
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Learn more about this project online  
[naturalhazards.com.au/predictions-in-public](https://naturalhazards.com.au/predictions-in-public)

**Summary**  
When asked about their use of bushfire maps during the 2019-2020 fire season, a participant from New South Wales recalled:  
“It’s, we were kind of living off them really. We’d see something on your go around to a neighbour’s place and see it from a different angle, and you’d go and check the app again, just trying to get our heads around exactly what was happening – we were really living off it. It was used more – those apps were used more than the phone feature on the phone over those days.”  
Maps are an important way to communicate spatial information and are increasingly distributed and used in natural hazards, like bushfires. The use of maps, and in particular, fire spread prediction maps that display the likely spread of fire over time, have become an important topic of interest for fire and emergency services agencies across Australia. Therefore, the Predictions in Public project turned to the public to explore how community members understood, used and acted on maps during bushfire emergencies, including incident and fire spread prediction maps.  
Three locations that experienced recent bushfires were identified: Castrolina, Victoria (the 2019 Bunyip Complex fires); southern Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and the Snowy Monaro, New South Wales (NSW) (2019-2020 Black Summer fires); and the Huon Valley, Tasmania (the 2019 Riveaux Road fire). Across these locations, in-person and online interviews with 94 participants were conducted between November 2022 and April 2023. The interviews explored community members’ comprehension, use and actions in response to bushfire maps in two parts:  
1. during their previous experiences in bushfires, and  
2. when shown two types of maps and associated warning messages with a location in their state during the interview.  
Part 1 findings highlighted the different types of mapping platforms participants used and why, when and how often they would consult these maps during bushfires. Researchers found that during a bushfire, participants used maps alongside many other types of information to make sense of the situation and decide what to do next. The challenges participants encountered in understanding bushfire maps were also collated, with participants’ recommendations for improvements.  
Part 2 findings identified the types of comprehension issues participants faced when viewing both incident and fire spread prediction maps, as well as the areas they assessed to be at highest risk. Participants provided suggestions for map improvements, highlighting the types of information to improve map clarity and better ways that complicated concepts on prediction maps could be communicated, such as the direction of fire spread and uncertainty.

**Above:** This research explored how people with previous experience of bushfire used bushfire incident and prediction maps during fires, as well as their understanding of key information. Photo: Zanna Lightart.



# New HQ brigade focuses on community safety

**South East Region recently created a Headquarters Fire Brigade with the sole purpose to deliver community safety programs and initiatives.**

The new brigade (known as the South East Region Community Safety Headquarters Brigade) commenced in October 2023 following a public meeting and endorsement by the Chief Officer. Thirty-seven people from both existing brigades and the wider community attended the public meeting and unanimously voted in favour of forming a new fire brigade.

“Fire prevention and community preparedness are some of the most important tools we have to reduce the number and impact of emergencies faced by our communities,” South East Region Deputy Chief Officer Trevor Owen said.

“While our operational response activities are at the core of what CFA does, this vision is achieved not only through responding to fires but importantly through working with our communities.

“We were really keen to do some fresh thinking about how our services could be delivered and what future brigade structures might look like.

“Many volunteers have expressed a strong desire to be involved in community engagement and fire safety activities, and not just in their own brigade area,” Trevor explained. “The new brigade will deliver engagement activities across the region.

“The brigade also offers an opportunity for volunteers who no longer wish to

respond to emergencies to stay actively engaged in CFA and make a meaningful contribution to community.

“We’re not trying to take away from what our brigades are already doing, but complement the existing delivery and fill the gaps where brigades are unable to do so.”

The brigade supports the work of the region’s 223 community-based fire brigades to educate and engage a highly-diverse range of communities spread from Melbourne’s south-eastern suburbs to remote Far East Gippsland. Members will work with local brigades to deliver preparedness activities and programs to the community including:

- bushfire and residential education sessions
- attending community events, including shows, markets and field days either with a stand/booth or with one of the mobile education units
- installing smoke alarms in homes of vulnerable and disadvantaged communities
- delivering important messaging during emergency events including planned burning
- providing surge capacity to brigades engaging with holiday makers in high bushfire risk areas
- supporting incident management activities during complex and longer duration campaign fires when additional community liaison and engagement capability is needed.

One of the brigade’s first activities was attending the Hawthorn versus Richmond AFL Emergency Services match at the MCG in August (pictured above with members of District 8 HQ brigade). Members of the brigade set up mobile education units outside the MCG to provide fire safety information to the football fans.

The brigade is supported by the region’s Community Safety team.

“The team will work closely with members of the new brigade to deliver the right training and mentoring to deliver engagement activities across the region,” South East’s Manager Community Safety Jude Kennedy said.

The brigade met in August to elect its inaugural brigade management team, with Paul Webster (pictured second from left) elected as the captain.

The brigade is seeking new members with a passion for engaging with the community. If you are an existing member of a brigade, you can join this new brigade while remaining a member of your local brigade. Members outside South East Region can also join, and people who live outside a CFA area, including those from Metropolitan Melbourne, are also welcome.

For more information or if you are interested in joining, email the captain at [sercommunitysafety.capt@members.cfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:sercommunitysafety.capt@members.cfa.vic.gov.au).

STORY ANDY OLDROYD





# Recruiting the family to serve the community

**When Tash Sinclair became a CFA volunteer with Kangaroo Ground Fire Brigade more than four years ago, she didn't imagine she'd end up serving the community alongside her family.**

"My family all see how passionate I am about being a CFA volunteer and how much I enjoy it, and that's contagious," Tash said.

"When I talk about what I get out of being a volunteer, people see the enthusiasm."

But her husband Clayton still needed some convincing to join up.

"I nagged my husband to become a volunteer. At the time he was already helping out with brigade events and I kept telling him he should become an official member. So he joined in October 2021.

"Both of us being brigade members is like having a hobby we can do together outside of our day jobs."

Tash and Clayton are both firefighters and often go out on the same callouts.

"It happens all the time. I've worked with him for 18 years running a business, so we naturally have good communication with each other before and during turnouts," Tash said.

Tash's nephew, Josh Dowling, joined the Juniors at Hoddles Creek, while his mum Jill (Tash's sister) joined Wandin brigade.

"Josh is an outdoorsy boy and is enjoying the practical skills he's learning at CFA," Tash said. He's proud to be a Junior and happy to help out at the station."

Tash's mum, Andy, had also been supporting the brigade with social events and was happy to become an official member when she moved into the area at the start of the year.

"My mum received her member number in the week of Mother's Day," Tash said. "I was rostered on Mother's Day to take the trucks out for their maintenance run and I asked my mum if she'd like a ride in a truck. She jumped at the chance and was very enthusiastic (pictured, right).

"She took photos and showed them to the children she teaches at an early learning centre."

Andy volunteers in a support role as one of the Friends of Kangaroo Ground fire brigade – the name given to the auxiliary – where she helps with social events and fundraising.

"Mum wants to relieve the pressure on operational members by doing tasks around the brigade."

Tash was the brigade's Community Safety Coordinator for two years and is currently the 5th Lieutenant. She is also one of 695 volunteers who are CFA staff members. Tash began working at CFA as a District Business Manager and has since progressed in her CFA career as Senior Manager Business Services, based at Burwood Headquarters.

"I really appreciate the contrast between my work in my employed role and volunteer role. Each presents unique challenges that engage my mind in different ways, and it's incredibly rewarding to know that in both capacities, I'm helping Victorian communities to prepare for and respond to fire.

"My family has a culture of helping people and as we are also outdoorsy types, we are all really enjoying volunteering."

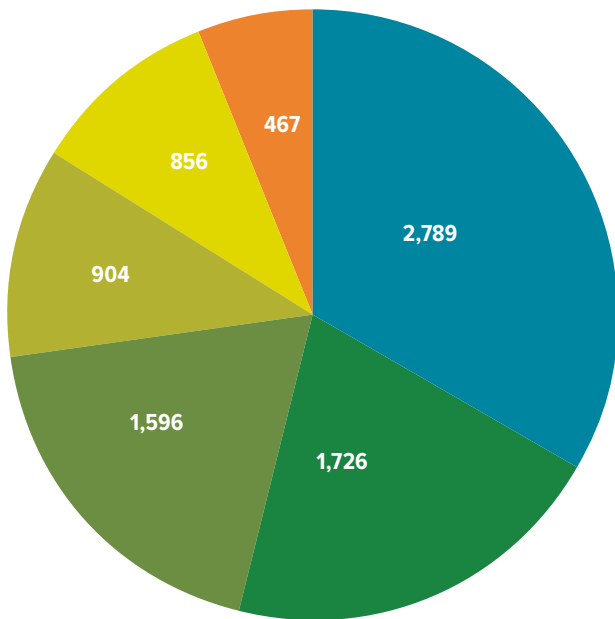
**STORY DUNCAN RUSSELL**



# Incident statistics

1 April 2024 – 30 June 2024

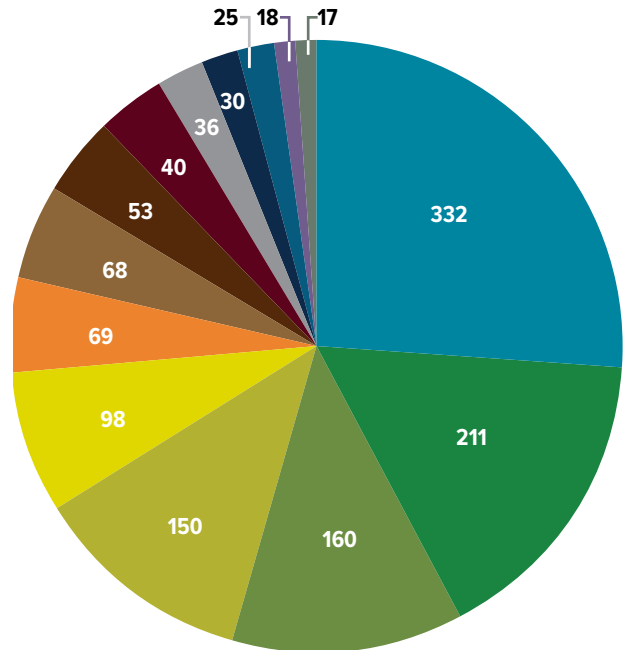
## INCIDENTS BY TYPE



Service calls*	
Fire and explosions	
Motor vehicle accidents/rescue/EMS calls	
Good intent calls	
False alarms/false calls	
Hazardous condition	

\* Includes 2,351 callouts supporting FRV, five supporting other agencies

## ORIGIN OF FIRE



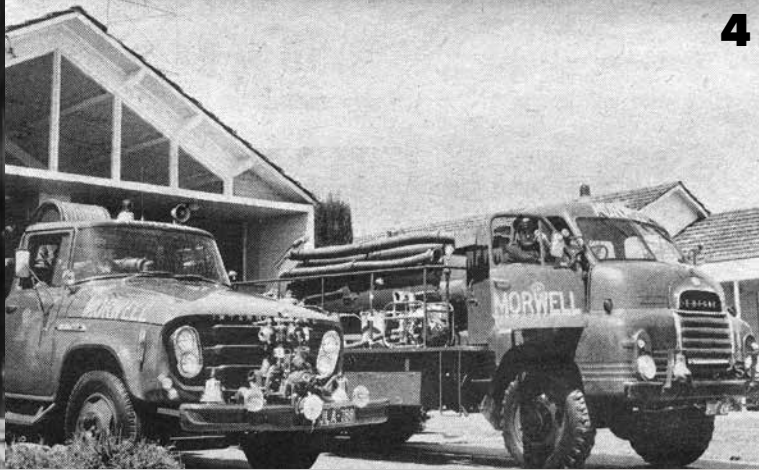
Paddock/open area/lawn	
Undetermined	
Scrub/bush area	
Road/car park	
Kitchen/cooking area	
Rubbish area/rubbish bin	
Engine area/running gear/vehicle wheel	
Area of a vehicle	
Chimney/flue	
Garage/carport	
Crops	
Lounge	
Court/terrace/patio	
Bedroom	

## INCIDENTS BY DISTRICT

SOUTH WEST		WEST		NORTH WEST		NORTH EAST		SOUTH EAST	
District	Incidents	District	Incidents	District	Incidents	District	Incidents	District	Incidents
4	64	15	543	2	472	12	270	8	1,993
5	185	16	183	14	1,306	13	684	9	269
6	162	17	147	18	220	22	409	10	152
7	500			20	257	23	292	11	169
						24	291	27	257



# Morwell Fire Brigade







- 1 Running team, 1960s
- 2 First fire station, 1918
- 3 Richard Noy (far right) captain from 1915 to 1933, 1926
- 4 Brigade vehicles, 1967
- 5 Church Street station, built 1953
- 6 Training night, 2024
- 7 Eastern District Fours Champs, 1992
- 8 Peter Keenan (first captain in 60 years) with Wayne Draper, captain since 2023
- 9 Traralgon incident, 1994
- 10 Vehicles at Church Street station, 2007
- 11 Current Maryvale Road station
- 12 Restored 1975 International 650, 2007
- 13 Maryvale paper mill fire, 1993
- 14 Original 1915 bell at the current station



# Emergency Memberlink

The Emergency Memberlink program is a way for us to recognise your commitment and contribution to emergency services and Victorian communities.

By using Emergency Memberlink, you can receive discounts and benefits on a wide range of products and services in Victoria and interstate.

Details of the offers and full terms and conditions are at [emergencymemberlink.com.au](http://emergencymemberlink.com.au)

To join Memberlink phone 1800 820 037 or register online at [emergencymemberlink.com.au](http://emergencymemberlink.com.au). You can also access your Memberlink card on the website.

The Memberlink team welcomes feedback about the program and your suggestions about benefits you think would be of value to you, your family and your colleagues. Phone the team or leave a message on the Emergency Memberlink Facebook page.



- Up to 10% off **eGift cards** including Bunnings, Coles, Woolworths, JB Hi-Fi, Endota Spa, EG Fuel Card and the Ultimate Gift Card range.
- **Westfund Health Insurance** offers a 5% discount plus two-month waiting periods waived on your Extras cover.
- 15% off travel insurance with **InsureandGo**.
- Exclusive pricing on all new vehicles and accessories at **Eastern Subaru**.
- **Subscribe offers** an extra 10% off the listed price of any magazine subscription including Better Homes & Gardens, National Geographic, Gardening, Home Beautiful and New Idea.
- \$300 excess reduction when you have your car repaired at **Sheen Panel Service**.
- **Experience Oz** offers at least 10% off attractions, zoos and aquariums, Queensland theme parks, and extreme activities.
- 30% discount on **pierre cardin** handbags, wallets, luggage and travel accessories.
- Exclusive discounts on home entertainment, audio, televisions, mobile phones, IT hardware, and fitness trackers through the **JB Hi-Fi Corporate Benefits Program**.
- You and your family members have access to discounts throughout the year at **Specsavers**.
- **Sixt Australia** offers members up to 20% off the best rate of the day on passenger and commercial vehicles.
- Generous savings on **Qantas Club** membership via the Member Benefits Corporate Scheme.
- 15% off the best available rate at **Best Western** Australian and New Zealand properties.
- **Device Deal** in collaboration with **Arlo** has up to 30% discount on Arlo wire-free security cameras and products.
- Special hotel accommodation rates throughout Australia and internationally with **Hotel Planner**.
- Commercial pricing on household appliances and electronics through **The Good Guys Commercial Division**.
- 25% off reset and private bathing, revitalise Bath House bathing and Moonlit bathing during off-peak periods (Mon-Fri outside of public and school holidays) at **Peninsula Hot Springs**.
- Up to 15% off the daily car rental rate with **Europcar**.
- Corporate rates at Melbourne's **Hotel Windsor**.
- **RSEA Safety** offers members 15% off full-priced items instore.
- Travel with **Spirit of Tasmania** and save 5% on adult Spirit and Flexi passenger fares.
- **Nissan Fleet** pricing and other benefits across a select range of new Nissan vehicles.
- Hire a **Britz** campervan and receive 10% off daily hire rates.
- A free small hot McCafe beverage, small soft drink or orange fruit drink with a minimum order of \$4 on presentation of your Emergency Memberlink Card at **McDonald's** restaurants in Victoria.
- 5% to 10% off the best unrestricted rate of the day at **Accor Hotels**.
- Preferred customer savings rate on accommodation at **Choice Hotels Asia-Pac** across Australia.
- **Searoad Ferries** has 10% discount on ferry travel between Sorrento and Queenscliff.
- 20% discount on unlimited ride tickets at **Luna Park Melbourne**.
- Exclusive pricing on household appliances and electronics through **Harvey Norman Groups & Associations Division**.
- Corporate leisure rates and reduced insurance excess on car hire with **Avis**.
- Up to 20% discount on the public website prices of the entire range of **Lenovo** Notebook and Desktop PCs, monitors and accessories.
- Take a further \$50 off the already discounted price on a **Driver Dynamics** Defensive Driving Course.
- 10% off Australian car rentals with **Budget**.
- **The Bridgestone Business Associates Program** has 15% off Bridgestone's website prices of the full range of car, SUV and light van tyres.
- New and existing customers have access to special offers on **Elgas** LPG bottled gas.
- **Infinity Celebrancy** has a 30% discount on all celebrancy services including weddings, commitment ceremonies and renewal of vows.
- 20% off flowers from **Petals Network**.



# Brigade

If undeliverable return to:  
D&D Mailing Services  
6/400 Princes Hwy  
NOBLE PARK NORTH VIC 3174

PRINT  
POST  
100010934

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