

## Hon Peter Malinauskas MP

Minister for Emergency Services

Wednesday 1 June 2016

### **MFS welcomes 18 graduates ahead of winter house fire season**

The first day of winter (1 June) marks the beginning of house fire season, and the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) is reminding South Australians to be cautious with heaters, electric blankets, open fires and when cooking.

The warning comes as 18 new recruits today graduate and join the MFS. The graduates hail from varied backgrounds, including a former chef, lifeguard, plumber, fitness coach, Army reservist, police officer, mechanic, forester, barber and schoolteacher.

Cooking mishaps account for around 70% of winter house fires, with South Australian firefighters having battled 1,080 cooking related house fires in the past 2.5 years.

### **Background**

The recruits are the last group to graduate from the 2015 firefighter recruitment and selection process. They were selected from a competitive field of more than 1,200 applicants and have undertaken a demanding 14 week training course.

In any given shift MFS firefighters respond to house fires, road crashes, gas leaks, chemical spills and rescues.

The MFS aims for its future workforce to be as diverse as the community it serves. The MFS strongly encourages all members of the community who are interested in a career in firefighting to apply for any future firefighter recruitment and selection process.

### **Quotes attributable to Emergency Services Minister Peter Malinauskas**

These new recruits join the Service as the temperatures drop and we enter house fire season. During the winter months the community turns to comforts such as heaters, electric blankets, warm food and open fires. Statistically, the key house fire danger over winter is cooking fires.

Over the past two and a half years, South Australian firefighters have battled 1,080 house fires caused by cooking mishaps. I urge the community never to leave cooking unattended.

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## **Quotes attributable to MFS Chief Officer Greg Crossman**

No one can underestimate the importance of emergency services workers to the community. These recruits will immediately start protecting South Australian lives, homes, businesses, infrastructure and industry.

I commend the new recruit firefighters on their tenacity and teamwork over the past 14 weeks to reach graduation day.

Throughout their careers, I encourage these recruits to explore the many specialist opportunities available to them. These include community education, training, fire cause investigation, built environs, triple zero, Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) and Hazmat.