

media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



MFS firefighters share the Christmas spirit

Friday, 15 December 2017

Adelaide Fire Station will be transformed into a children's fairground today as Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) firefighters share their Christmas celebrations with South Australian families.

Firefighters and their children will attend the MFS Children's Christmas Party at **Adelaide Fire Station**, along with families from charities The Smith Family, Interchange SA and Junction Australia.

Up to 500 children will enjoy face painting, bouncing castles, slides, ice creams and entertainment before Santa arrives quite spectacularly, descending seven floors from a fire truck's carry cage.

Background

Believed to have started in the 1960's, the Children's Christmas Party is organised and funded by firefighters who volunteer their time and donate money from each pay.

Firefighters sponsor their own children and local families to attend, meaning up to 150 children from The Smith Family, Interchange SA and Junction SA can enjoy a very special Christmas celebration.

The event is further supported by the Fire Service Credit Union, Fire Service Fund, United Firefighters Union (UFU) of South Australia, Australian Professional Firefighters Foundation (APFF), Health Partners and Bailetti Sports.

Retired firefighters assist with organising the event and attend with their grandchildren. Guest MFS Road Awareness Program (RAP) presenters who've survived road trauma also bring their families.

Santa's spectacular arrival

Santa arrives quite impressively; descending seven floors from the top of the fire tower via the Bronto aerial fire truck, to the delighted cheers of hundreds of children. Every child receives a present.

Quotes attributable to MFS Chief Officer, Greg Crossman

The MFS Children's Christmas Party is an annual tradition that is held in the true Christmas spirit of giving. I have very fond memories of attending the party as a child as my father was a firefighter.

I'm proud that the MFS continues to share this unique experience with local families and charities. On behalf of the MFS, I wish all South Australians a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Quotes attributable to event organiser and MFS Station Officer, Adrienne Clarke

My father and grandfather, who were both firefighters, took me to the Children's Christmas Party as a child. For me, it was the highlight of my year – and still is for the children who attend today.

Children of firefighters often miss out on a traditional Christmas day with family due to shift work, so through this special annual tradition they can enjoy a magical festive experience.

Our firefighters and staff have fully sponsored up to 150 children from The Smith Family, Interchange SA and Junction SA to share this very unique Christmas party with us.

Quotes attributable to SA General Manager of The Smith Family, Graham Jaeschke

We're incredibly grateful for the generosity of the MFS in sharing their Christmas with our students and families.

For media enquiries please telephone the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770

www.mfs.sa.gov.au

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While our year round focus is on providing long-term educational support for disadvantaged children, Christmas is central to The Smith Family's heritage as we were founded in 1922 when five businessmen donated gifts to orphans on Christmas Eve.

But supporting education is about more than just what happens in the classroom – it's also about enabling positive experiences in the home and community which allow young people to feel included – and that's why we're so grateful to provide our families with opportunities like this.

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