

A Message from the Commissioner



Welcome to the new year - and already what a year it has been!

We have 'jumped' in with our usual gusto and sense of community spirit to ensure that we help South Australians to keep safe during the sector's busiest season of the year.

Already, our agencies have responded to and attended over 3,100 incidents - an average of 100 per day!

The rapid coordinated responses to the Proper Bay fire and to the recent heat wave are evidence of the seamless integration of our services when responding to incidents.

We continue to form strategic partnerships and alliances to enhance our own services and knowledge as well as to benefit the community.

The partnership we have forged with the Indigenous community of Nepabunna will no doubt result in a win-win situation for our agencies and the community. This partnership has set the scene for the development of a sustainable model in taking emergency management to remote and Indigenous communities.

Additionally, we are continuing to work with a range of State and Commonwealth Government agencies in exchanging knowledge and best practice methodologies to ensure relevance and currency of our skills.

In other areas of our business we are engaged to the full with visiting speakers, attendance at conferences and other forums that facilitate the sharing of information - all creating an environment of learning and development.

We can proudly say that we are a sector that never takes a break and the efficiency with which we respond to and deliver on the challenges we are presented is a strong statement to the passion and dedication of our staff

... and to all of you I say 'thank you'.



Minister for Emergency Services The Hon Michael Wright and Chief Officers Euan Ferguson and Grant Lupton inspect the damage caused by the recent fires at Proper Bay, Port Lincoln

From the Board

Update from the SAFECOM Board meeting held on Thursday 29th January 2009.

CORPORATE SERVICES

In addition to the regular monthly corporate reports (Operating and Capital Budget Performance and Human Resource reports) the Board received reports and accepted recommendations regarding the 2009-10 Budget bi-lateral bids, stage three of the Building Replacement Review and analysis of leave liabilities.

1. 2009-10 Budget Bilateral Bids

The 2009-10 budget bilateral bids were developed with significant Board input and financial endorsement. Initial bids were presented at the November 2008 meeting, and refined on the basis of the Board's comments.

The sector has worked in close collaboration, recognising the prevailing economic environment and the pressures that this alone places on the State's finances.

2. Building Replacement Review

The Building Replacement Review was also discussed.

The Review was prompted by the necessity to ensure that the capital funding available to the sector is applied in a manner that delivers maximum value. It identified the building standards necessary for the nature of the services and associated staffing model at each site.

The review indicates that by adopting a standard approach. There are benefits that can enable a greater proportion of building upgrade replacement from the available funding.

The Board supported this approach and the next step is to develop a better understanding of the current condition of each building within the sector, so that our replacement/upgrade program targets the highest priorities.

3. Leave Liability

One of the areas that has been of concern to the Board is the growing leave liability. The Board has established a quarterly reporting system and was very pleased that the results from the December quarter indicate that action has been taken to reduce the liability and that plans are in place across the sector for the ongoing management of leave.

The target is to reduce the outstanding balances to a manageable level, which is in the order of a maximum of 20 days per full-time employee.

STRATEGIC SERVICES

1. Strategic Planning Framework

The Board has endorsed a Strategic Framework for the Sector. Under the Framework, which builds on the Strategic Direction, agencies will be able to demonstrate how their daily work dovetails with a sector-wide vision, goals and strategies.

The Framework, which was developed by a cross-sector planning team involving **David Launder** (MFS), **Mick Ayre** (CFS), **Matt Maywald** (SES), **Martin Smith**, **Mark Dawson** and **Cathie Brown** (all SAFECOM), has shared key focus areas, goals and strategies across all agencies. Agency success indicators have also been revised and many are common.

The vision, as written in the Strategic Direction document, has been enhanced to include the words 'more resilient' communities recognising the changing focus within the sector. The vision now is

Working together to build safer and more resilient communities.

The key focus areas and shared sector goals are:

Key Focus Areas	Shared Sector Goals
Direction	Develop and implement a common direction and shared goals based on community need
Prevention and Community Preparedness	Minimise the likelihood and consequences of emergencies through regulation, support and education
Operational Preparedness	Be prepared to provide excellent emergency services to the community
Response	Provide a response service that minimises the effects of emergencies on the community
Recovery	Provide a recovery service that reduces the social and economic impacts of emergencies
Business Excellence	As a sector, excel in service delivery effectiveness, innovation and efficiency.

All four agencies will be reporting to the Board on a quarterly basis against this framework, starting in February. The current agency monthly reports will no longer be needed and will be replaced by a brief highlight report.

The next steps will involve members of the cross-sector planning team explaining the framework within their agencies and working to integrate existing agency planning with the framework. There will also be wider communication of the framework across the sector in the coming months.

2. Board Committees

The Board has agreed to establish four committees to drive cross sector initiatives that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the sector.

The committees are:

- Strategic Thinking
- Prevention, Community Preparedness and Recovery
- Operational Preparedness and Response (with a sub-committee of Training)
- Business and People Excellence (with two sub-committees – Finance, and Audit and Risk Management)

The committees have been structured to broadly line up with the Key Focus Areas in the Strategic Planning Framework.

The committees won't perform agency work or be involved in matters which are agency-specific. Rather, they'll be forums where cross-sector issues can be discussed and actioned collaboratively.

Each Committee will provide a highlight report on its work to the SAFECOM Board on a quarterly basis and also provide papers and recommendations on specific issues when appropriate.

Each committee will be chaired by a member of the Board and provided with executive support by a SAFECOM Division. The Board will determine Committee chairs at its next meeting. Terms of Reference will be developed for each committee in conjunction with the Committee's chair.

Board update (cont)

STRATEGIC SERVICES (cont)

3. Emergency Service Delivery Standards

The Board has endorsed the project plan for developing Emergency Service Delivery Standards for the sector.

The Board recognises that the sector needs to allocate our resources and direct our prevention efforts on a risk rather than historical basis. Having Standards based on risk will enable Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery efforts to be targeted where they are most needed.

The project will be run over four stages with the key deliverables being as follows:

- Stage 1 - developing categories of common fire fighting and rescue scenarios
- Stage 2 - developing appropriate responses to common scenarios in terms of resources and prevention
- Stage 3 – determining where risks occur using mapping data and risk profiles
- Stage 4 – producing draft Emergency Services Delivery Standards on a Statewide Basis.

It is planned that Stage 4 will be completed by December 2009.

A working party with representatives from the CFS, MFS, SES and the associations and unions will provide advice to the project. The membership is currently being finalised and the plan is for the working party to start meeting in February.

The project is being managed by Cathie Brown, Strategic Services Director, SAFECOM.

Free Seminar

Reflections on Community Safety and Disaster Recovery in Canadian First Nations Communities

by

Mr Blaine Wiggins

Executive Director

First Nations Emergency Services Society

Staff interested in Emergency Management and remote indigenous communities are invited to attend a short seminar.

Blaine will be discussing aspects of community safety and recovery in the context of his work with Canada's First Nations Communities. Blaine leads an organisation that provides emergency services and planning advice to many remote communities across British Columbia. As such he is directly involved with working with First Nations on achieving their safety goals, before and after emergencies.

Wednesday 18 February

(9.30 am for 10.00 am start -12.00 noon

Radford Auditorium Room, SA Art Gallery

North Terrace in between Kintore Avenue and Frome Road

Welcome to the new additions to the team in January

Mark Groote

Manager, Volunteer Strategy & Support Branch



Mark has recently commenced as the Manager, Volunteer Strategy and Support Branch, SAFECOM.

Mark trained as a social worker, and commenced his career with The Salvation Army where he worked with young people, and went on to manage the Red Shield Housing Association. In this role Mark managed volunteers across administrative, governance, and service delivery areas.

He comes to SAFECOM from the Department for Families and Communities where he has extensive management experience, particularly in the housing sector where he managed the Housing Policy Units for the South Australian Housing Trust and the Aboriginal Housing Authority. Mark has also been responsible for the management of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program and Crisis Accommodation Program, and lead the creation of the Homelessness Strategy Team.

Mark is excited about the opportunities to contribute to the work of SAFECOM. "Volunteers play such a significant role in our agencies, and I'm thrilled to be leading the Volunteer Strategy and Support Branch. I'm also looking forward to getting out and about and meeting many of the people who volunteer their time for the SES and CFS".

Melissa Veale

Media Liaison Officer, Public Affairs Unit



Melissa joined the SAFECOM public affairs unit earlier this year.

Having recently completed studies in Public Relations, Melissa is keen to utilise these new skills and build

upon her government experience in communications and marketing by taking on the role of Media Liaison Officer.

Melissa previously worked for SafeWork SA, where she was responsible for a wide range of tasks including developing and reviewing publications, advertising, website administration, project management and internal communications.

Prior to this, she worked in both communications and project roles within government.

Melissa says "I am excited about the opportunity to work in such a fast paced and challenging environment. I love that I am part of an organisation that truly makes a difference to the South Australian community".

Haley Cahalan

Media Liaison Officer, Public Affairs Unit



The SAFECOM Public Affairs unit is now at full strength with the final team member, Haley Cahalan.

Haley brings with her media experience after working for most of the

past seven years as a journalist and most recently as the Editor of *The Murray Valley Standard* newspaper in Murray Bridge.

Her experience includes working as the Media Adviser to Federal MP Patrick Secker, and as a journalist for South Australian weekly agricultural newspaper, *Stock Journal*.

It was at *Stock Journal* that she reported on the Eyre Peninsula bushfires and developed a grounded understanding of how a community can be affected by disaster and the important role everyone from volunteers through to the media can play in such situations.

Haley is looking forward to working for the SAFECOM Public Affairs unit and in helping to keep our communities informed.

Volunteers

2009 Australia Day Honours List

Congratulations to our volunteers who have received special recognition in this year's Australia Day medals and awards.

Wayne Thorley - Australian Fire Service Medal



Wayne joined the Jervois Brigade in 1983 and has since devoted a huge amount of time and energy to improving the welfare of the volunteer firefighters within the South Australian Country Fire Service.

On joining the Brigade he assumed the operational leadership role of Lieutenant 2 and also took on the role of Brigade Administration Officer. His positive attitude and leadership in these positions has improved the Brigade's morale and its involvement in social and fundraising activities, enabling the Brigade to expand the size of its station and to house a Bulk Water Carrier and the Region's new Hook truck (pod system).

The Jervois Brigade and its many active members now provide much needed support in times of need to other brigades and Groups across the Region.

He was actively involved in the (then) Volunteer Fire Brigade Association, serving as Branch President of the Murraylands Branch for four years and as a Delegate to the Association's State Management Committee.

Since 2004 he has served as Vice-President of the South Australian Country Fire Service Volunteers Association, and his efforts have assisted with the establishment of positions of Volunteer Support Officers and Regional Business Support Officers. He now serves the Emergency Services Sector and its volunteers and staff as a member of the SAFECOM Board and was Chair of the Regional Volunteer Management Committee Region 3 in 2007.

He has also served on the Minister's Bushfire Prevention Advisory Board.

Despite this heavy involvement he still continues to serve the Swanport Group as an operational member as Deputy Group Officer and runs a dairy farm.

Robert Buttery, deceased - Australian Fire Service Medal

Mr Buttery was born in the United Kingdom and for some years was a volunteer with the British Fire Service in Essex before emigrating to Australia in the early 1970s.

He joined the Tea Tree Gully Emergency Fire Service; serving at various times with distinction as a Senior Firefighter, Fire Control Officer, Lieutenant and Brigade Captain. He also served as the Brigade Training Officer, Brigade Administrative Officer and Brigade Representative to the Mount Lofty Volunteer Fire Fighters Association.

Robert was very interested in training and established the first cadets in Tea Tree Gully. He became an instructor and spent many weekends training throughout the region, forming the first competition team in Tea Tree Gully and captaining the Tea Tree Gully team to become the best brigade in the South Australian County Fire Service.

He was the first Region 2 representative on the State Training Committee, and was a member of the Committee that organised the State Competitions and was also a Judge.

In the early 1990s Robert became a Deputy Group Officer within the Para Group, and served as Group Equipment Officer, Region Fire Investigator, and Chairman of the Finance Committee.

Sadly Robert passed away on 18 February 2008 and his award was received posthumously by his wife Patricia.

William (Stuart) Lambert - Emergency Service Medal



Stuart has dedicated 30 years to the SASES with the Barmera Unit.

During this time he has filled many roles within the Unit including Unit Manager, leading, mentoring and training members of the Unit to meet their response capabilities.

Over recent years Stuart has dedicated an extraordinary amount of time and effort into forwarding the Road Crash Rescue (RCR) training delivered to SES volunteers across South Australia, going beyond the normal duties of a volunteer. He has championed RCR training, encouraging the State to increase its focus and up-date training materials, practices and procedures. Stuart's passion in this area of training and an ethic of providing the best response has seen him give up many weekends. He also travels

around the State, delivering the latest in RCR techniques and training to SES volunteers.

Stuart has been a key figure in uniting SES units across the Riverland. With the introduction of centralised funding (via the community emergency service levy) and the break from traditional local government ties, he took the opportunity to consolidate the Riverland Units. Promoting a community-wide focus, he encouraged the surrounding Units to form a Unit Managers forum, to discuss issues common across all SES Units, equipment and training standards, creating a forum where volunteers could provide advice to staff and SES management.

This forum has successfully championed many new initiatives within SES and is now the basis for a new state-wide initiative to create volunteer advisory committees at regional levels, to allow greater local ownership and direction of SES between senior volunteers and local staff.

Stuart is a passionate and dedicated volunteer who also gives his time and the benefit of his experience to numerous state committees, including but not limited to, vehicle and equipments committees and a variety of Subject Matter Advisor Groups .

Daniel Schulz - South Australian Young Citizen of the Year



Photo: courtesy of Riverland Weekly

Daniel, 17, received the honour in recognition of his extensive volunteer work with organisations and events in Loxton and across the Riverland Region including the Loxton State Emergency Service and the Riverland Food and Wine Festival.

Danny Wood Loxton SES Unit Manager said "Daniel is a diligent and committed team member, whose positive attitude is a motivator to those he works along side".

In his duties with the SES Daniel is prepared to take on responsibility and is a keen ambassador for youth volunteering with the SES, which saw him participate as a youth ambassador for SES at the 2008 Riverland Field Days Careers expo.

Despite his youth, Daniel is also prepared to suggest alternative or new ideas to help his fellow team mates in training.

He has a strong sense of community and is a keen and committed hard worker in many areas of his local community.

Daniel's contributions to the SES have created a positive profile for the Loxton SES and shows him as a positive role model for young people who are interested in volunteering in their community.

Seamless integration

Proper Bay Fires

During major incidents the community requires assistance and isn't concerned which agency provides that assistance as long as they get the help they need. Hence, one of the priorities of the SAFECOM Board is seamless integration – agencies working as one team. The response to the Proper Bay Fire showed how well SAFECOM agencies can work together, and with other agencies, to assist the local community.



The teamed efforts of emergency services personnel and other agencies combine to minimise the impact of disasters and the loss to life, property and the environment (Photograph, courtesy of the CFS Promotions Unit)

No more was the seamless integration of our services displayed when the joint forces of our agencies battled recent fires in Proper Bay, Port Lincoln.

The fire that ripped through 280 hectares of scrub as temperatures in South Australia soared to 41 degrees.

The fire severely damaged two tuna processing businesses as it blazed within 300m of the Port Lincoln township on Tuesday 13 January causing millions of dollars damage to property and threatening the safety of residents.

In excess of 250 firefighters and 25 appliances from both the CFS and MFS, including eight aircraft worked throughout the night to control the fire in

extreme weather conditions of low humidity, strong winds and high temperatures. SES was involved assisting with servicing firefighting equipment, logistics support, controlling road closures and helping the Salvation Army provide meals to firefighters.

Emergency Services Minister Michael Wright praised the response from emergency and other services.

"The coordination of the CFS, MFS and the Department for Environment and Heritage was exemplary," he said.

CFS Chief Officer Euan Ferguson said a rapid response from firefighters and other emergency services had saved many properties.

Australian Tuna Boat Owners Association president Brian Jeffriess said whilst the damage would have an impact on the industry it could have been much worse.

"The concentrated efforts of emergency services played a big part in saving the other tuna processing operations that were at risk," Mr Jeffriess said.

SES Chief Officer Stuart Macleod said that the response to the Proper Bay bushfire was another outstanding example of cooperation between our emergency services.

MFS Chief Officer Grant Lupton said that it was tragic to see the significant fire loss and impact to the community; however, the rapid coordinated response and multi-agency intervention helped prevent further damage.

MFS and CFS will work alongside officers from SA Police to determine what caused the fire.

Flynn comes in

The state's fire-fighting capabilities were significantly bolstered with the addition of an air-crane water bomber called Flynn.

Named after John Flynn, the founder of the Royal Flying Doctor Service, this high volume aircraft is capable of carrying 7,500 litres of water. It was put to good use during the recent fire at Proper Bay near Port Lincoln where it was involved in 20 drops.

A local resident described Flynn's maiden performance in SA when helping to battle the fires that threatened the town.



"This magnificent machine filled up at DK Quarries in under a minute and extinguished the fire before it came down the hill and spread further," she said.

"For three hours it went back and forth - it was truly a sight to see... without the two planes and this godsend it would have been history repeating itself."

The Erikson Air-crane was commissioned by the Premier in late December and amongst a record fleet of 15 fire-fighting aircraft that will improve the capacity and flexibility of the fire services to respond to potentially threatening fires. This is the first time that the Erikson Air-crane has been based in South Australia during a fire season, without having to be flown in from interstate.

Heat wave - a different kind of operation

Everyone in the Sector is quite used to the State Emergency Service taking the lead role in storms and floods as they impact South Australia, but over recent days, the SES has been at the forefront of all activities relating to the heat wave. Normally SES volunteers are out there providing direct services to the public, but this time the main effort came from the small team of paid staff, while SES volunteers handled some 400 calls for damaged or fallen trees.

As the Control Agency for Extreme Weather, SES requested a State Emergency Centre (SEC) briefing on Wednesday 28 January; just ahead of the heat wave to ensure that agencies required to manage this event were working on the same 'sheet of music'. This strategy was supported by SA Police (SAPOL) and all of the other agencies, and significantly lifted the effort on public information, community advices and warnings.

By Saturday 31 January, everyone was on board with the strategies developed by a multi-agency planning team, and the full weight of Government and emergency services was very effective in getting strong and clear messages to the community through a broad range of media. Certainly for many South Australians, the heat wave was simply a normal summer, but for those at risk and vulnerable to such an event across Adelaide and the settled areas, the communication strategy was an important project.

Right now SES is leading a huge effort to rapidly develop and refine effective heatwave management arrangements and communication strategies as part of the Extreme Weather Plan. This would not be possible without the invaluable support of the other agencies such as Health, Community Services and Police, and the assistance of many other players.

SES is a small team for such a large challenge, but right from the very first SEC briefing, Commissioner David Place stepped forward to offer assistance, and the staff of SAFECOM rallied to help SES cope with the load. This response to a major community threat is a textbook example of the benefits of the Sector working together, and the support that SAFECOM can provide.

To David and all the staff at SAFECOM, a heartfelt thanks.

Stuart Macleod ESM
Chief Officer SASES

Building partnerships

Networks for learning



Putting theory into practice at Nepabunna

The establishment of a CFS Brigade at the Nepabunna Aboriginal Community and the resultant partnership that has developed between the CFS Region Four, the Stirling North Brigade and the community is creating a useful and interactive forum for learning.

In 2004 SAFECOM, the CFS and the Nepabunna Community undertook a risk assessment identifying several areas in relation to the emergency management needs of the community. The results of this assessment prompted members of the community to express their keenness and willingness to work with the CFS to build their own capacity and capability to respond to and recover from emergency incidents.

Beginning in 2005, training was delivered to members of the community in all areas of firefighting and incident response. Volunteer members from the Stirling North CFS Brigade, along with Regional staff visited the community to facilitate the training and to develop friendship and operational bonds between the two services.

The hard work done by both parties was celebrated with the delivery of the Nepabunna 24 tanker at the end of 2007 and a Brigade opening.

The latest initiative in this venture has seen a collaborative partnership between the Nepabunna Brigade and the Stirling North Brigade which is facilitating valuable learnings for members of both Brigades.

Under this initiative members from both Brigades visit each other twice a year participating in multi agency exercises. For members of the Nepabunna Brigade, it helps increase their knowledge and training in emergency management, whilst for members of the Stirling North Brigade, it is helping them to understand and learn more about the culture, language, customs and traditions of an Indigenous community.

"The establishment of a brigade within the community, the ongoing training, and now this latest exchange initiative has not only helped both Brigades to build their capabilities, but it has also created opportunities for the Brigades to learn more about each other as individuals," said Nik Ludborz, Regional Prevention Officer, CFS Region Four.

"This is giving the volunteer members of the Nepabunna Brigade the confidence to consider using their skills to look beyond the boundaries of their own community and to be able to help other communities in Stirling North and the Northern Flinders Ranges," Nik said.

The Nepabunna Brigade includes a team of 12 volunteers from the Nepabunna Community who are soon hoping to extend their skills beyond fire fighting capabilities with the provision of training from the CFS in first aid training, road crash rescue and response to hazardous chemical spills.

"This initiative has provided us with valuable learnings about the delivery of training in remote Indigenous communities and has provided a sound model for future training programs in this environment. It gives us a good base for implementing the objectives of the National Strategy: *Keeping our Mob Safe*," Nik said.

"We are extremely pleased Brigade members at the Nepabunna community are a valuable emergency management capability within this region."



Members of the Nepabunna Brigade practice their skills

A partnership to benefit the community



CFS data shows that up until 2007, an average of 60 fires each year have been started by harvesting operations putting lives and property at risk and generally resulting in significant losses to the community.

Unlike in other States, South Australian legislation does not prevent grain harvesting in adverse fire weather. A collaborative partnership between the CFS and the South Australian Farmers Federation has seen the development of a Grain Harvesting Code of Practice for the South Australian farming community.

After wide consultation with Regional Bushfire Prevention Committees, members of rural and regional farming communities and other stakeholders, a draft Code of Practice has been developed.

"The farming community is concerned with the number of harvesting fires but does not want to see the adoption of a 'one size fits all' solution," said Leigh Miller, Manager CFS Prevention Services.

"In order to accommodate this, the new Code is based around the actual Fire Danger Index measured in the paddock – not on the use of forecast fire weather. This will overcome issues with variation in local weather patterns which, in the past, have been of real concern to farmers.

"The Code is a good self-control measure as it allows farmers to self regulate and be in control of when they harvest.

"The Code will be reviewed prior to the 2009-10 fire season in terms of its success in reducing the number of harvest-related fires, and the ease of use by the farming community."

Thuggery in emergency services?

Is this photograph proof of thuggery in the Emergency Services?

So what's the story, how did SAMFS Training Officer Bobby Nairn end up being assaulted during a training course?

Well, looks can be deceiving - what seems like a hitherto hushed-up scandal is, in fact, nothing of the sort. The real story is that Bobby's "injuries" are simulated and are an excellent example of the skilful application of moulage.

Moulage is the name given to the application of simulated injuries to the human body to create a sense of realism prior to the commencement of emergency exercises. It involves using what looks like a heavy-duty make-up kit to apply simulated blood, bone fragments, shrapnel etc. and is used in an attempt to "battle-harden" responders. It also requires considerable artistic skill to make it look real.

The demonstration of moulage techniques formed part of a five-day Exercise Management course conducted in early December at the Thebarton Police Barracks. The course was designed to train participants in how to write and conduct multi-agency emergency exercises. Twenty-three people from SAMFS, SAPOL, Federal Police, SAAS, DTEI and DFC attended and judging by the feedback, the course was well received. A further course is planned for May.

The course facilitators were Allan McDougall, SAFECOM Emergency Management Services and Senior Sergeant Pat Lycett, Training Coordinator, SAPOL Emergency & Major Event Section.



SAMFS Training Officer Bobby Nairn looking somewhat worse for wear

Community resilience

Building the resilience of our communities ensures that they are prepared for, and have the capacity and capability to respond to and recover from emergencies. This resilience, in part is achieved by educating them about the possible risks they face, enabling them to make informed decisions about protecting themselves.



An innovative approach to build community preparedness

The SES have embarked on an innovative program to help residents of the southern metropolitan council areas increase the general understanding of their responsibilities in responding in the event of a flood.

The program will mutually benefit both the community and the SES, improving community preparedness and SES response.

Modelled on a similar successful program currently run by the New South Wales SES, FloodSafe is set to better prepare communities in southern Adelaide metropolitan Council areas to prepare for, respond to and recover from the effects of a flood.



The FloodSafe program team at a recent training day

FloodSafe is partly funded by the Federal Government through Emergency Management Australia with local funding also being contributed from Adelaide metropolitan councils including Adelaide, Mitcham, Marion, Unley, Holdfast Bay and West Torrens. It is being developed with support from the Bureau of Meteorology, Department for Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation (DWLBC), the NRM Boards and the management of the Brown Hill Keswick Creek Mitigation Project.

The focus of the program is on building the resilience of the community through community education rather than just the physical and planning elements which have been the focus of past programs.

Through a series of education initiatives such as community group meetings, street corner meetings, letterbox drops, school visits, Council newsletters, internet sites and brochures, residents will be provided with information to better understand the flood history of their property or local area.

These initiatives will make residents more aware of their roles and responsibilities in the event of a flood, such as checking their insurance policies to ensure that they are adequately covered, who to call if the floodwaters rise, how to protect their properties through sandbagging, how to care for and ensure the safety of elderly and infirm members of their community and general everyday housekeeping to ensure that the creeks within their local areas are kept free of garden refuse and debris.

Additionally, the program will also increase and improve the level of understanding between local Councils and their SES Units. Local SES volunteers too will increase their understanding of their own Council areas such as the flood history of the area, the properties likely to be most at risk and the particular services in each area such as aged care facilities.

The program was launched in November and already, 23 SES volunteers have been trained and allocated to Council areas, ready to start the community education process in February.

For further information contact:

Judith Bleechmore

Community FloodSafe Program Officer

Phone: (08) 8345 9100

Volunteer Consultation Policy

The signing of the Volunteers' Charters last year signified our commitment to communicating effectively with all our stakeholders.

This communication will be transparent and plays a vital part in building safer communities by breaking the barriers that restrict the flow of information.

SAFECOM agencies have developed a Volunteer Consultation and Referral Policy that builds upon the commitment agreed to in the South Australian Country Fire Service and the South Australian State Emergency Service Volunteer Charters.

It ensures that SAFECOM and the Emergency Service Organisations will consult with Volunteers about all matters which might reasonably be expected to affect them and to consider their views when approving or adopting new practices or policies.

The policy can be found on the SAFECOM Intranet. <http://esointra.esau.sa.gov.au/reference/policies/general.asp>
