

## A Message from the Commissioner



All around the country people are winding down and looking forward towards the Christmas break. Many take the opportunity to enjoy much needed rest, recreation and relaxation with family and friends.

For us in the sector though, the holiday season is a hive of activity and high alert as we all prepare to continue to ensure the

safety of the community.

Integral to this is community engagement, which is the strategic direction priority of focus in this edition. However, as most of you will agree, and as is demonstrated by this edition, we do not wait for any particular season to engage the community. Our everyday activities are geared towards ensuring that the communities are aware of and understand the risks - ensuring that they are prepared in times of emergency.

From helping a community to rebuild a forest that will help mitigate the risks from bush/scrub fire, to teaching essential life skills to migrant women - we are helping communities become more resilient and reducing the likelihood and impact of natural and man made disasters.

November 1 was the day of International Volunteer Managers. Often the community readily recognise the contributions of volunteers in sport, health, emergency services etc., but most times fail to appreciate that equally dedicated group of individuals who are responsible for the coordination, support, training, administration and recruitment of volunteers. This is their day and our chance to say 'thank you'.

This week we also recognise and celebrate the dedication and skills of our SES volunteers who are 'ordinary people doing extraordinary things'. I urge you to support this group who readily give of their time to the community, by joining them in their parade on King William Street on Saturday 15 November.

The CFS went live with their 'new look' internet site on 31 October. This is the first of the sector's revamped sites to be released for public viewing. I encourage you all to visit the new site and provide feedback so that any final improvements can be made before all the sites are jointly launched later this month.

On Friday 14 the CFS will announce the launch of the fire danger season for the remaining seven fire ban districts at Gums Reserve in the Belair National Park. This will be a joint event with the SA Police who will launch Operation Nomad, their annual operation to reduce arson related bushfires.

It also seems that other services are gearing up for the holiday season too - whether it is metropolitan, in the regions, in remote Aboriginal communities or in the waters:

- The Australian Volunteer Coast Guard launched their new search and rescue vessel *Intrepid* on Sunday, improving their ability to respond to marine emergencies off northern metropolitan Adelaide, the north of the Gulf of St Vincent and the Port Adelaide area
- On Friday 31 October, Emergency Services Minister Michael Wright joined Surf Life Saving SA President Bill Jamieson to officially mark the start of the summer patrol season with the launch of aerial patrol craft - helping to keep our beaches safe, and
- Nepabunna Aboriginal Community are now the owners of a new fire appliance - a move that will help to increase their capacity and capability to deal with the hazards of scrub/bush fires or house and other structure fires.

Last but not least, the Board, at its last meeting, endorsed and accepted the financial statements and annual report for the year ended 30 June 2008.

I wish to express my thanks to all staff within the sector who, I know, work at a great pace and long hours to ensure that both the financial and activity reports within the sector are presented to Parliament on time.

Thank you.



David Place

# From the Board

An update from the Board meeting held on 30 October 2008.

## GOVERNANCE

The SAFECOM Corporate Services team briefed the Board on the following financial activities for September:

- An overview of the capital budget for the sector including the procurement of nine cab chassis for the GP pumpers
- The three-year capital plan for the sector focussing on a three year plan for the acquisition of land and the purchase of vehicles and other equipment, and
- Progress on the FBT Review.

The Board also noted the Auditor-General's report for the year ended 30 June 2008 and approved the annual reports for the fire and emergency services sector including the Country Fire Service, State Emergency Service and the Metropolitan Fire Service.

Martin Smith provided the Board with an overview of the 07/08 reports against financial and non-financial targets. The Board noted the comments and approved the proposed implementation of sector-wide plans and progress reports against targets for 2008/09 and 2009/10.

The Board also agreed to the proposal to establish board committees, chaired by members of the Board and attended and supported by a SAFECOM Director. Cross-sector working groups and projects will need to report through the committees using standard reporting templates.

The Board determined that it wanted to review existing cross-sector Committees with a view to reducing them if appropriate.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

The Board noted the activities and statistics for September 2008. It was also noted that the position of Manager; Volunteer Strategy and Support Branch was being advertised.

## LOGISTICS FUNCTIONAL SERVICE

Brenton Keen presented to the Board on the transfer of Logistics Functional Services from the Department of Treasury and Finance to SAFECOM.

From 1 December 2008, this function will be the responsibility of SAFECOM.

The State Logistics Functional Service (LFS) supports other government agencies by organising goods, services and catering during major emergencies. The LFS is required to activate during major emergency incidents (most likely bushfires and floods).

The intention is to manage the provision of the LFS with a core group of SAFECOM personnel, supported by additional personnel from across Justice at times of peak activity.

The Board requested that they be kept updated on the progress of the LFS and Brenton will provide an update at the next Board meeting.

They also acknowledged and asked that their thanks be conveyed to staff who had volunteered for this activity.

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE & INJURY MANAGEMENT

The Board approved the following cross-agency policies relating to OHS & W issues:

- OHSW& IM Leadership and Commitment
- OHSW& IM Strategic Planning & Governance
- Implementing OHS Risk and Hazard Management
- Injury Management and
- Employee and Volunteer Welfare.

The policies have been forwarded to the Performance Standards for Self Insurers (PSSI) Steering Committee members for distribution throughout the respective agencies.

The policies will be accessible on the SAFECOM intranet in the near future.

## NEXT BOARD MEETING

The Board will meet next on Thursday 27 November in Murray Bridge as part of the Volunteer & Employer Recognition & Support Program where the Board will also meet with local stakeholders and volunteers and host a barbecue and presentation of Certificates of Recognition to volunteers and employers.

# Our Strategic Directions

## Community Engagement

Community engagement is an essential ingredient in developing community resilience.

It ensures that our communities feel empowered and confident that they can deal with emergency situations.

The very nature of emergency services demands that we actively engage with communities - listening to what they have to tell us and using their feedback to continuously improve our own processes.

Community engagement is also about ensuring that communities understand their risks and ways of mitigating these risks - enabling them to be prepared in times of an emergency.



Many communities are susceptible to natural hazard consequences. While the consequences themselves cannot be prevented, their implications for the rate of recovery within the community are influenced by the preparedness of the community and its capacity to mitigate and/or adapt to disruptive consequences (its resilience).

Emergency management has recognised the power of this resilience within a community and this has driven the momentum for change from a response-based approach to a risk management focus.

The implications of this change in approach to emergency management significantly impacts in the way we do business with regards to risk communication, hazard mitigation, community development and community sustainability.

We will be working with communities to identify how individuals, community and societal/environmental factors can be integrated to constitute a model of adaptive capacity (resilience) based on community engagement.

In engaging with the community we are also mindful of and respect the diversity of cultures in the communities of South Australia. We will target our community engagement interactions in culturally appropriate ways so that we can ensure that the emergency service sectors' messages are spread across the state.

---

## Cleve Field Days - and opportunity to engage the community

*From Therese Pedler  
CFS Community Education Officer, Region 6*



Cleve, on the central Eyre Peninsula recently came alive with the bi-annual Field Days.

This event is an ideal forum where we can engage with the community and pass on vital bushfire preparation information.

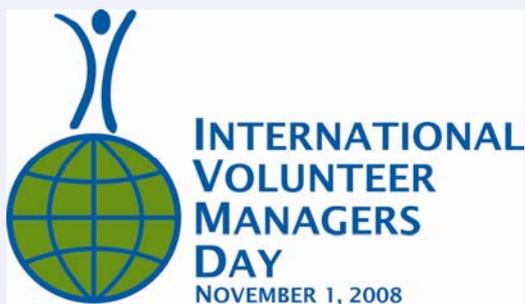
At this year's event, the CFS used the bright and colourful cubby house to demonstrate what it means to be 'Bushfire Ready'.

Visitors were given the opportunity to participate in a free raffle for a chance to win a bucket of 'Bushfire Ready' products including a fire blanket, smoke alarm and an extinguisher. They had to answer questions about the cubby house and how to make a home 'Bushfire Ready' to be eligible for the draw.

The display and show bags drew a large number of children (along with their parents) and provided an excellent opportunity to engage with the local community and promote the messages of the 2008/09 'Bushfire Ready campaign'.

The SES used the opportunity to promote safety messages as well as promoting the role of the SES within the community.

# Volunteers



## A Message from the Chiefs on International Volunteer Manager's Day

International Volunteer Managers Day is another opportunity for the sector to express our heartfelt appreciation for the dedicated and tireless work of our Volunteer Managers.

As Managers, you are adept at turning your passion into effective action, performing a range of duties to ensure that your communities continue to keep safe.

This special day is dedicated especially to you in recognition of the complexities of your roles. From managers to mentors and co-ordinators to administrators, you inspire others through your leadership qualities.

International Volunteer Managers Day helps us to focus on the important role you play in inspiring others through your leadership, and for this, we say a heartfelt 'thank you' – not just for one day in November, but all year round.

---

## National SES Week: 8 - 16 November 2008

SES Week is a national event that recognises the dedication and commitment of the thousands of men and women who selflessly volunteer their time and energy within their state or territory's State Emergency Service (SES).

The national theme for this year's SES Week is '*ordinary people doing extraordinary things*'.

The theme focuses on thanking volunteers for their service. The week is a fantastic opportunity for communities and residents alike to offer their thanks for the support SES volunteers have given to their local communities.

Within South Australia SES Week will celebrate the spirit of volunteering and salute the 1800 volunteers from across the 67 SES units that make up the South Australian SES.

SES units throughout Australia will be holding events to celebrate all that is great about SES volunteers. In Adelaide two highlights of the week are the **Rundle Mall (Gawler Place Canopy) skills showcase on Sunday, 9 November 2008** and a **parade down King William Street on Saturday, 15 November 2008**.

For further details and times visit the ses website at <http://www.ses.sa.gov.au/newmedia/sesweek08>



---

## Welcome - new volunteers



The Brigades of the Strathalbyn CFS Group have had a much welcomed boost to their operational crew numbers.

Twenty-nine new recruits, from the Brigades within the Strathalbyn Group and one member of the CFS Region One Operations Brigade, attended a new, condensed basic training format that was trialled for the first time.

The Basic Firefighter One course was both theoretical and practical and included response to wildfire; the use of various types of fire extinguishers and constructing a fire trail using a rake hoe.

Denys Clements, Strathalbyn Group Training Officer, declared the course an outstanding success. He said he was impressed by the trainees and praised the dedication and skills of the volunteer instructors.

With all of the trainees equipping themselves well, they have returned to their Brigades as competent firefighters ready for the approaching fire danger season.

# Building community resilience

## Fire safety for African women

From Francie Tonkin  
MFS Advisor, Community Education

Life in South Australia is proving less of a mystery for a group of African women as the result of *Oz Living*, a program aimed at bridging the cultural divide for African women.

The SA Metropolitan Fire Service was invited to participate as an important stakeholder in the federally funded program which covers essential life skills – everything from managing money, building local networks, and accessing community resources to fire safety in the home.

Many of the women come from rural societies and have spent long periods in refugee camps. Australian houses with electricity, gas and western style kitchens are far removed from their life experience, so the fire safety sessions with Station Officer Tom Hoey were embraced with much enthusiasm and even more laughter as the ladies practised what they had been taught.

“The workshops were a great learning experience for everyone, including those running the program,” said Tom who has run a number of sessions with the women, teaching them about kitchen fire safety, the importance of smoke alarms and how to make home fire escape plans.



## Improving a forest

From Allan McDougall  
SES Training Officer Disaster Management Services



In Wanilla Forest – L-R Peter Sheridan (EPNRM), Gaile Bobridge (EPNRM), John Probert (CFS), Haydon Davey (PLACC), John Chester (ALT), Allan McDougall (SES), Geraldine Turner (EPNRM) and Merrick Savage (EPNRM).

Wanilla Forest was part of the area that was incinerated in the Eyre Peninsula fires of 2005.

As tragic as these fires were, they have resulted in some positive outcomes for the environment and the community:

- the fires have triggered the germination of several endangered plant species within the forest
- the Eyre Peninsula Natural Resources Management Board (EPNRM) has commenced a program to eradicate pest plants such as Aleppo and Radiata pines, Cootamundra wattle, olives and poplars in the forest in a bid to strengthen the number of Ironbark, Jarrah and various pines, and
- significant mitigation works have been undertaken to reduce the bushfire risk in the forest.

Since 1990, Wanilla Forest has been managed by the Port Lincoln Aboriginal Community Council Inc. (PLACC), and Region 6 CFS Regional Prevention Officer John Probert and Allan McDougall, SES - Emergency Management, have been working with the Aboriginal Lands Trust (ALT) and PLACC to assist in progressing the required mitigation strategies in the forest.

In recent weeks, dead pines covering about 1 km<sup>2</sup> at the centre of the forest have been felled and shredded awaiting further disposal.

# Keeping communities safe

## Summer shark patrols gear up to guard our shores

A grant from the Community Emergency Services Fund will ensure that aerial patrols along South Australia's coast occur this summer.

Emergency Services Minister Michael Wright joined Surf Life Saving SA State President, Bill Jamieson, to officially launch the summer patrol season.

The State Government pledged \$140,000 towards the project taking the Government's total contribution to aerial patrols to \$320,000 for the summer.

The helicopter patrols will be supported by volunteer beach patrols, two jet rescue boats and four rescue jet skis.



Last year the Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter clocked up 336 operational hours performing routine beach patrols, shark warnings, preventative actions and rescue and assisting other patrol services in the water and on the beach.

The enhanced patrol capability will support the State's 6,500 surf life savers in patrolling our beaches from North Haven to the Murray Mouth this summer.

The Community Emergency Services Fund is administered and managed by SAFECOM.

---

## New vessel enhances SA's marine rescue capability

Australian Volunteer Coast Guard, a member of Volunteer Marine Rescue (VMR) launched their new search and rescue vessel 'Intrepid' on Sunday 9 November.

The new vessel is a 6.7 metre cabin cruiser fitted with an inventory of navigation electronics, radios and safety equipment. It will improve the Coast Guard's ability to respond to marine emergencies off northern metropolitan Adelaide, in the northern St Vincent Gulf region and the estuary environments of the Port Adelaide River as well as other areas of the State in support of operations as required.



This latest acquisition is yet another example of how grants from the Community Emergency Services Fund are contributing towards making our communities safer.

The Australian Volunteer Coast Guard has made a significant contribution to marine safety in South Australia for many years through the provision of a 24-hour search and rescue capability, public education and the monitoring of marine emergency radio frequencies.

The Coast Guard is run entirely by committed and professional volunteers and as the number of registered recreational vessels increases, and as mariners venture further out to sea in search of prized catches or cruising waters, the risk of incident or emergencies increases too.

The Australian Volunteer Coast Guard plays a significant role in ensuring that South Australia has an effective marine rescue capability.

## A fire truck for Nepabunna

The remote Aboriginal community of Nepabunna in the Flinders Ranges took delivery of their new fire truck recently.

The delivery of the truck was the culmination of long term negotiations and one of the initiatives undertaken by CFS Region 4 in implementing some of the objectives of the National Emergency Management Strategy for Remote Indigenous Communities: *Keeping our Mob Safe*.

Members of the Nepabunna CFS were given training on the appliance by Nik Ludborz and Lindsay Hincks who were assisted by five other members of the Stirling North CFS Brigade.

The day was an excellent opportunity for both brigades to establish a professional and social relationship, and was so successful that more training events are being organised for the future.



L - R: Wade Johnson, Dulcie Wilton, Judy Johnson, Geraldine Johnson, Kelvin Johnson (Captain) and Ian Johnson.



Kelvin Johnson (Captain of Nepabunna CFS), Nik Ludborz (CFS Regional Prevention Officer) and Sandy Paterson (CFS Manager Vehicles and Equipment).

The new brigade members also received their PPC and were quick to don them and pose with their new appliance for a photo opportunity.

The biggest hit of the day however, was the opportunity that brigade members had to frolic in the 'make believe' snow - the foam branch that was used as part of the training.

Nepabunna is a remote Aboriginal community located 70 kms north-east of Leigh Creek. It has a population of 70 and is one of the South Australian Aboriginal Lands Trust Properties.



Nik Ludborz points out some aspects of the pump and priming system on the appliance, under the watchful eye of Lindsay Hincks (CFS OHS&W Officer).



Brigade members take the opportunity to enjoy themselves with the foam.

# Seamless integration

## Joining forces to keep communities safe

*From Margaret Ludwig, Acting Volunteer Support Officer  
CFS Region 5, South East and SES East Region*



Mount Gambier SES Unit and Compton CFS Brigade recently held a joint training session with twenty-five personnel from both services participating in the demonstration.

CFS volunteers regularly assist the SES Unit with motor vehicle accidents within the Gambier District and this was an ideal opportunity for them to follow an extrication from start to finish, with some members fortunate enough to perform related tasks (size-up, first aid, etc) or to operate the tools under direction of the experienced SES crew members.

Many a joke and story was shared afterwards with the hot coffee with Cameron Yelland, Compton Brigade Captain

remarking that the demonstration filled in some knowledge gaps and gave the CFS a greater appreciation of why some rescues seem to take forever, especially if you are standing in the cold and wet.

---

## Local emergency services perform well in mock exercise

Emergency services were called to a plane crash at the Mount Gambier Airport on Sunday morning, which spiralled into a missing person search.

That was the scenario that faced emergency services crews from South Australia Police, South Australia Ambulance Service, Country Fire Service, Metropolitan Fire Service and the State Emergency Service when they headed to the airport for a training exercise in conjunction with airport personnel.

A simulated scenario had a plane landing but veering off the runway and bursting into flames.

While all the passengers survived the light plane crash, one fled the scene after becoming violent towards a second passenger, the Federal Treasurer. Another passenger also went missing sparking a police search.

Ambulance officers attended to the passengers, while MFS and CFS crews battled the blaze.

Exercise director and SAPOL South East Superintendent Trevor Twilley said the response produced pleasing results.

'It went very well, I was happy with the results,' Supt Twilley said.

The crews responded in real time to the scenario, with MFS SE regional manager George Rodis also praising the efforts of all involved, but did point out small improvements could be made.

'All went well and I think every outfit probably identified some small deficiencies', Mr Rodis said.

The scenario was designed as part of a Civil Aviation Safety Authority requirement, which requires scenarios such as that set out on Sunday be staged at least every two years.



MFS and CFS crews attend to the crashed plane during an exercise at the Mount Gambier Airport.

# Community Engagement

## Promoting Safety in the Kitchen

In an innovative approach to kitchen fire safety the Community Education Section of the MFS has run a competition for Housing SA customers in the winter edition of Housing SA's *Customer Chat* newsletter.

To enter the competition people had to find the answer to three kitchen fire safety questions from the fire safety article in the magazine.

The first prize was a \$100 gift certificate from Keith Bowden Electrical and four runner up prizes of fire blankets were donated by Chubb Fire.

A delighted Mrs Heidi Baumann of Whyalla Norrie, was the first prize winner and West Coast Regional Manager Darryl Horsell had the pleasant task of presenting Mrs Baumann with her prize at the Whyalla MFS Station.



## Primary contact

From Allan McDougall  
SES Training Officer Disaster Management. Services



SES volunteers from Sturt Unit demonstrate the range of equipment in their Unit's vehicle to Grade 3 – 4 students at Aldgate Primary School

Students at Aldgate Primary received their first demonstration under the Community Sub-Committees' training programme for primary schools.

Fiona Dunstan and Allan McDougall headed up the delivery of fire, flood and storm preparedness training on behalf of the CFS and SES.

The Sub-Committee views primary, rather than high school pupils as the "Trojan Horses" by which safety messages are most likely to be relayed to parents.

The children at Aldgate a delight to teach and were particularly responsive to the training programme. In addition to the classroom work, CFS and SES volunteers were also on hand to demonstrate the practical capabilities of each Service.

It needs to be said that there are some extraordinarily gifted trainers amongst the ranks of our volunteers!

# Other news

## Public Sector Week - Inside Out 2008: 15 – 21 November 2008

This year again public sector agencies are throwing open their doors to members of the community.

*Inside Out 2008* is all about changing the way people think about the South Australian Public Sector and the public will have the opportunity to participate in more than 100 tours and displays. There is something of interest to all people of all ages and backgrounds.

At a sector level, the Metropolitan Fire Service will be conducting tours of its facility in Wakefield Street and a number of key figures from SAFECOM, the CFS, the SES and MFS will become '*Living Books in Justice*'.

*Living Books in Justice* is a free event being presented by the Justice Portfolio for Public Sector Week to showcase the diversity of public service roles and the people that work within it. Just like a library, readers will be able to come in to the Attorney-General's library and borrow a book - however these books happen to be real people. Readers will be provided with the opportunity to share up to 30 minutes in a on-on-one conversation with their *Living Book* to discover the experiences that make up the 'book's life both inside and outside the public sector.

Our *Living Books* are:

David Place and David Norton from SAFECOM, Euan Ferguson from the CFS, Roy Thompson, Michael Morgan and Glen Benham from the MFS.

For detailed information on the specific tours and activities visit: <http://www.sa.ipaa.org.au/PSW/pswProgram.asp>

---

## CFS launches 2008/09 fire danger season for state's remaining districts

The 2008/09 fire danger season began on 1 November in eight of South Australia's 15 fire ban districts.

On Friday 14 November the CFS will announce the start of the fire danger season for SA's remaining seven fire ban districts starting on Saturday 15 November 2008.

This will place the entire state under fire restrictions until late March and the end of April 2009.

The CFS is anticipating a busy season with dry conditions influenced by below average rainfalls in most parts of the state during the spring season with weather bureau forecasts of above average temperatures in the weeks ahead.

The 2008/09 fire danger season is being supported by the 'Bushfire Ready' campaign that encourages all South Australians who live, work or may visit a high risk area to be prepared for the potential threat of bushfire.

The message is being reinforced through a concerted media and community campaign focussing on the importance of having a Bushfire Action Plan.

The campaign is the prime educational and promotional initiative for the bushfire season seeking to develop awareness, capacity and capability of individuals and communities, particularly those who live in bushfire prone areas.

Saturday 15 November will also coincide with the postal distribution to 43,000 households in designated high fire risk areas, of a new educational DVD that walks people through preparing, planning and practising their Bushfire Action Plans..

The campaign is also being promoted through the re-developed CFS website.

Friday's launch will also mark the start of Operation Nomad, the South Australian Police response to reducing the incidence of fires caused by deliberate and reckless human activity.

