

Wednesday, 10 October 2012

### NATIONAL FIREFIGHTERS REMEMBRANCE DAY

The dedication and sacrifice of firefighters who have lost their lives in the line of duty will be honoured at a special National Firefighters Remembrance Day ceremony today.

Minister for Emergency Services Jennifer Rankine said it is a significant opportunity to pay tribute and remember the 10 MFS and 13 CFS firefighters who have lost their lives in South Australia.

“We will also reflect on those who have suffered injury, ill health or disability in order to protect and save others,” Ms Rankine said.

“It is a time to recognise all career and volunteer firefighters, whose courage has averted disasters and whose tireless hard work and dedication helps make South Australia a safer place.

“This day is a sobering reminder of the sacrifice our firefighters have made for the South Australian public.”

MFS Acting Chief Officer Mick Smith said a commemorative plaque for dogs and horses – once used by the MFS in the line of duty - will also be unveiled. The dogs were affectionately known as “ratters”.

“Traditionally, our firefighters would respond to fires via horse and cart, while the ratters would clear a path and protect the horses.

“The bond between firefighters and these animals was very strong. Whenever a serving horse passed away, its heart was buried in a memorial garden as a mark of respect,” he said.

CFS Chief Officer Greg Nettleton said in the honour of the fallen firefighters, the CFS will continue to work towards achieving greater bushfire awareness and safety.

“As we approach the 30th Anniversary of Ash Wednesday on 16 February 2013, we remember those 16 CFS and CFA firefighters who lost their lives that day, three were locals and 13 were from of Victoria.”

Across all MFS stations, firefighters will lower flags to half-mast and acknowledge a minute’s silence in recognition of National Firefighters Remembrance Day.

**The ceremony – which is also part of the MFS’s 150<sup>th</sup> year celebrations – will be held at MFS Headquarters on Wakefield Street at 10.30am TODAY**

