

Joint Committee Highlights

Summary of recent Joint Committee Meetings

A brief summary of the most recent "2 Minute Briefings" which are produced after each Joint Committee round for each of the 7 Joint Committees. Please refer to the full "2 Minute Briefing" documents attached and available from the VFBV Website for more detailed information. Printed copies are also available from the VFBV office. You can request a copy by calling (03) 9886 1141

2 Minute Briefing Issue / Date:

Issue 15, December 2015

JOINT COMMUNICATIONS & TECHNOLOGY

- **Listening Sets:** A reminder that brigades & groups only have a few weeks left to submit their Tier 1 and Tier 2 orders. Orders are due by **January 15, 2016** at the latest. Any scanners left over after this time will be sold.
- **Pager and Digital Comms:** The committee has for some time been reporting concerns regarding diminished pager and radio reception issues amongst new fire station builds. Due to the current design and construction, there is an increasing incidence of a faraday cage phenomenon, blocking radio signals.
- **New flexibility in pre-determined strike team dispatch:** CFA and ESTA have finalized additional flexibility to cater for pre-determined strike team dispatching. Last year the committee raised concerns about some Districts reverting to District wide paging of all brigades to activate strike teams under the mistaken belief it was not possible to customize CAD rules.

JOINT COMMUNITY SAFETY

- **Fire Safety Pledge:** The Pledge ran for 8 weeks from October 8th to December 3rd. Between 1000 and 1500 people visited the webpage each day. Over the course of the campaign, almost 13,000 Victorians had visited the site and chosen to take the pledge.
- **CFA is a highly trusted & respected Emergency Service:** The results from this year's market research is in, with 94% of respondents considering CFA to be a highly trusted and respected emergency service.
- **Windrows:** Alarming, many property owners are not aware of the substantial penalties which exist under

the Summary Offences Act, which could apply to residents whose fires do not comply with their permit. Fines of as much as \$18,000 can be issued and there are reports of police showing 'zero' tolerance in some areas.

- **Tyre Stockpiling:** The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has introduced new legal requirements for storing waste tyres.

JOINT EQUIPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Fire Station Modifications:** Responding to feedback from brigades contemplating minor works, alterations or additions to fire stations through the VESEP program, the committee has endorsed a new registration process that will now be available year round & apply to all proposed works up to the value of \$75,000.
- **Ultra-light & Slip-on crew protection systems:** The committee continues to work on investigating efficient and effective crew protection systems for CFA's light vehicles. There are over 150 ultra-light tankers and slip-ons vehicles that were not covered under the crew protection system retrofit program due to a lack of an appropriate protection system for small vehicles.
- **15/16 Financial Year Fleet replacement program update:** The 15/16 Fleet Capital Replacement Program is on target, with all production lines well progressed and on target for completion this financial year.
- **Cold climate jacket progress:** Development on the Cold Climate jackets is well progressed, with results from the state-wide field evaluation being considered by the committee. 84 evaluation jackets were sent out (4 per CFA District) for evaluation. Over 100 individual evaluation responses has been received and studied, with feedback overwhelmingly positive.

JOINT HR, WELFARE & OH&S

- **Training related injuries:** The most common mechanisms of injury are reported as *hit by moving objects, fall/slip on the same level, and muscle stress while lifting and/or carrying. Hose lines and branches*

and training props are the most common agency of injury.

- **Volunteer Discipline Processes & Procedures:** Delegates have requested that CFA prioritize performing a review of CFA's discipline processes and procedures with a view to working with the committee to explore a fairer and more streamlined process.
- **Resolving conflicts within Brigades:** VFBV has developed a simple handbook for delegates on resolving conflicts within brigades. This handbook is designed by volunteers for volunteers, as a helpful tool and an easy to read guide to assist delegates to help Captains and volunteers to the respectful and timely resolution of conflicts within the brigade, which may include bullying, discrimination or harassment.

JOINT OPERATIONS

- **Role of group:** The Committee was advised that the new Chief Officer has requested that the Role of Group publication that was due to be distributed to brigades be put on hold whilst he conducts a review.
- **Sector Commander Course:** CFA has agreed to rework and rewrite the course, with the intent to break the course into four distinct modules, with duplication to be removed. This will assist members who may already hold existing units that can be mapped to parts of the new course and allow members to undertake just those parts they do not currently hold.
- **Fatigue Management:** The Committee has requested that state-wide guidelines be developed and communicated to the field which amongst other things outline crew changeovers, appropriate rest periods between deployments and long haul strike team travel arrangements, including the use of coaches and/or fresh drivers to return appliances to their home locations.
- **Volunteer utilisation in IMTs:** The Committee has reinforced the need for proactive and deliberate action to be taken to encourage, and strengthen the use of volunteers in IMTs. The critical importance of planning and the effects that poor or last minute planning has on volunteer utilisation is well known and the committee has requested that the Chief Officer lead this work amongst the agencies this fire season.

JOINT TRAINING

- **Recognition of Medical practitioners, Paramedics & Nurses:** The Committee has for a number of years been pursuing the recognition of volunteer members who are current medical practitioners, paramedics and nurses and hold the relevant qualifications. In the past, CFA has been unable to accept these qualifications and provide credit for national units without provision of an adequate evidence portfolio and assessment to ensure CFA meets its Registered Training Organisation requirements.
- **Brown coal mine firefighting training:** The Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry made recommendations for the introduction of critical safety concepts specific to the risks presented by brown coal mine firefighting. CFA have been leading the development of delivery and assessment materials that further enhance and support CFA's capability and capacity to respond to fires within Victorian coal mines.
- **CFA F&EM Training Strategy survey 2015 results:** The Committee is reviewing the results from this year's Training Strategy Survey. Whilst there has been a slight improvement overall when compared to the 13/14 results, the results clearly identify access to training as the single biggest frustration and area of complaint amongst members.

JOINT VOLUNTEERISM

- **CFA Volunteerism Strategy Implementation:** The Committee reviewed CFA's implementation progress of the Volunteer Strategy across CFA. The new Volunteer Support Model was presented, which sees Regional BASOs being appointed to implement the programs of the Volunteer Support Program.
- **Latrobe University Aspire early admissions program:** CFA have partnered with the Latrobe University Aspire program, which provides year 12 students who are also CFA volunteers with priority access to their chosen course at Latrobe.
- **Junior members service recognition:** The committee has been asked to look into the possibility of Junior Members having their service included in their overall service for the awarding of CFA Service Awards.
- **Junior Member ID cards:** A reminder that Junior Member ID cards are available. So far, since the start of the program only 35% of Juniors across CFA have obtained an ID.

Joint Communications and Technology

2 Minute Briefing



Issue 15: December 2015

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions worked through at the most recent Joint Committee meeting between CFA and VFBV. (Meeting held 28/11/2015)

LISTENING SETS

A reminder that Brigades & Groups only have a few weeks left to submit their Tier 1 and Tier 2 orders. Orders are due by **January 15, 2016** at the latest. Any scanners left over after this time will be sold. Order forms and advertising of the subsidy program commenced on the 16th October, giving brigades over 90 days to lodge their orders.

As at writing, over 800 brigades and 70 groups have placed their Tier 1 & 2 orders, representing orders for almost 8,000 digital scanners. Under the Tier 1 program, every Brigade is entitled to a minimum of 8 guaranteed units at the subsidized price. On average, Brigades are ordering 3.5 units on their Tier 1 orders, with Groups on average taking up 1 of their guaranteed minimum of 2 units.

VFBV is providing the logistical and administrative support for the ordering process and is currently processing orders and forwarding to CFA for dispatch within 24 hours of receiving your brigade/group orders.

PAGER AND DIGITAL COMMS

The committee has for some time been reporting concerns regarding diminished pager and radio reception issues amongst new fire station builds. Due to the current design and construction, there is an increasing incidence of a Faraday cage phenomenon. A Faraday cage or shield is essentially an enclosure formed by conductive material that is used to block electric fields. It is commonly used to protect sensitive equipment from radio frequency interference etc and as many of our stations are essentially large metal boxes – this unintended effect is leaving some Brigades being unable to receive any pager messages when members are inside the station. CFA representatives have raised the issue with CFA Building and Property requesting design modifications that will help minimize the problem. Comms is currently investigating technological solutions to existing stations that are impacted by this problem, with the committee being briefed on two solutions currently being explored.

Members should also be aware, that the committee is investigating some anecdotal evidence that this Faraday cage phenomenon may also be occurring under certain conditions when members are inside vehicles, including fire trucks. A related but similar issue is being explored with a report of decreased performance of a portable radio when operating within the cabin, and in cases where all the windows are tinted (with some window types being metalized.) In one example, portable reception was restored by simply opening the appliance's windows. This is a good example of the importance of Brigades using observation reports to report issues which allow trends and issues to be identified.

NEW FLEXIBILITY IN PRE DETERMINED STRIKE TEAM DISPATCH

CFA and ESTA have finalized additional flexibility to cater for pre-determined strike team dispatching. Last year the committee raised concerns about some Districts reverting to District wide paging of all Brigades to activate strike teams under the mistaken belief it was not possible to customize CAD rules. This can have a significant impact on members across an entire district being unnecessarily woken during the night for the dispatch of strike teams that having nothing to do with them.

Regional and District Duty Officers now have an improved ability to advise ESTA of day by day strike team configuration, including individual appliances and Brigades, which also caters for cross crewing etc so paging of strike teams can be isolated to only those Brigades and personnel that need to be notified. All OM's and OO's have been advised of the new system via CFA's Operational Communications department.

Joint Community Safety

2 Minute Briefing



Issue 15: December 2015

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions worked through at the most recent Joint Committee meeting between CFA and VFBV. (Meeting held 28/11/2015)

FIRE SAFETY PLEDGE

The committee discussed the resounding success of the inaugural Fire Safety Pledge. The Pledge ran for 8 weeks from October 8th to December 3rd. Between 1000 and 1500 people visited the webpage each day. Over the course of the campaign, almost 13,000 Victorians had visited the site and chosen to take the pledge. This was an innovative approach to enabling the community to commit to improved personal fire safety. As part of the pledge, there was a Brigade competition element where people taking the pledge could nominate the Brigade they wished to support, therefore creating a connection between them and their Brigade. Point Cook, Parwan and Dartmouth have taken out the Brigade prizes. The committee supports this initiative and the running of the fire safety pledge in coming years.

CFA IS A HIGHLY TRUSTED & RESPECTED EMERGENCY SERVICE

The results from this year's market research is in, with 94% of respondents considering CFA to be a highly trusted and respected emergency service. In its second year, this year's quantitative research was conducted by computer assisted telephone interviewing which was completed by 2,503 Victorians aged 18 and above, with minimum quotas based on ABS 2011 figures on age and gender obtained, providing a very robust sample size. The survey is designed to address several key research questions including; what people feel are the most important CFA services, what are people's expectations of CFA and CFA key services and what are people's perceptions of current service delivery. In total, 14 service areas were measured, and pleasingly all were seen as performing well, with the top ranked being *fighting bushfires and grassfires* (95%) and *fighting house and building fires* (92%). Reinforcing the high impact CFA's volunteer and community based model has on its community, 82% of respondents rated they had a high level of 'connectedness' with CFA.

WINDROWS

There was robust discussion from the committee around the need for better education of property owners who burn off on their properties with stubble burns etc. but also those who construct and burn windrows. The discussion included the inherent problems of long duration burns and the inability of many property owners to plan for or mitigate these long burns when fire danger ratings change from day to day. Alarming, many property owners are not aware of the substantial penalties which exist under the Summary Offences Act, which could apply to residents whose fires do not comply with their permit. Fines of as much as \$18,000 can be issued and there are reports of police showing 'zero' tolerance in some areas. The committee has stressed the need for property owners to be advised of the risks and assisted/supported to administer their burns safely and legally to avoid fines. The committee suggested an awareness campaign be launched to address these and other issues with a request for a new "Think Before you Burn" brochure. The committee has agreed to further workshop these ideas at its April 2016 meeting, and encourages members to discuss their concerns or suggestions with VFBV District Councils so it can be passed onto committee members for consideration.

TYRE STOCKPILING

In 2012-13 almost 50,000 tonnes of waste tyres (around six million car tyres) were stockpiled or dumped in Victoria. The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has introduced new legal requirements for storing waste tyres. Existing and new sites that store more than 40 tonnes (or 5,000 equivalent passenger units (EPU) of whole tyres) at any time, need an EPA works approval before they are built or modified, as well as an EPA licence to operate. Be aware that 5,000 EPU represents about 5,000 car tyres, 10,000 motorcycle tyres, 1,000 truck tyres or a mix of tyres that equates to 5,000 EPU. If your Brigade turns out to an incident at a site that is stockpiling more than 5,000 (EPU) please ensure the incident is reported through FIRS and the chain of command. If Brigades have identified stockpiling sites or require more information, contact Matt Allen (Dangerous Goods Unit) on m.allen@cfa.vic.gov.au or phone 5240 2713.

Joint Equipment & Infrastructure

2 Minute Briefing



Issue 14: December 2015

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions worked through at the most recent Joint Committee meeting between CFA and VFBV. (Meeting held 21/11/2015)

FIRE STATION MODIFICATIONS

Responding to feedback from Brigades contemplating minor works, alterations or additions to fire stations through the VESEP program, the committee has endorsed a new registration process that will now be available year round & apply to all proposed works up to the value of \$75,000. (Or over if the Brigade proposes to fully fund the initiative) Due to the long lead times to get accurate quotes and approvals, Brigades can now register and plan for minor works well before they apply for a potential grant. The registration process involves the Brigade providing a brief description of the proposed works, an estimate of the cost, funding source and nomination of a Brigade contact. CFA Land & Building will then work with the Brigade to undertake an initial desk top review of the proposed scope of works, undertake a site inspection where required, and a cost assessment prior to the Brigade seeking local approval to proceed. Brigades wishing to register a project or simply seek assistance in planning a project can contact CFA's Bruce Rowley who is the VESEP Minor Works Project Manager on (03) 5833 2425 or b.rowley@cfa.vic.gov.au Start planning for next year's VESEP round now!

ULTRA-LIGHT & SLIP-ON CREW PROTECTION SYSTEMS

The committee continues to work on investigating efficient and effective crew protection systems for CFA's light vehicles. There are over 150 ultra-light tankers and slip-ons vehicles that were not covered under the crew protection system retrofit program due to a lack of an appropriate protection system for small vehicles. Therefore, crews of these appliances have very limited protection against radiant heat and direct flame contact in the event of a burn-over. Two new products are now being evaluated which includes a Polymer Gel System and a Compressed Air Foam System. Both products have shown very promising early signs, with experimental testing during field burn-overs in moderate bushfire intensity conditions planned for early Autumn 2016. The committee will continue to update members on developments.

15/16 FINANCIAL YEAR FLEET REPLACEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

The 15/16 Fleet Capital Replacement Program is on target, with all production lines well progressed and on target for completion this financial year. (Base, VESEP & Special) This year's program is delivering; 40 Heavy Tankers, 28 Medium Tankers, 12 Medium Pumpers, 10 Light Tankers, 7 Ultra-light Tankers, 3 BigFills, 2 Replacement Tech Rescue Cab Chassis, 2 prototype Bulk Water carriers, 1 Medium Rescue, 1 Prototype BA Van, and 1 G Wagon (DELWP).

COLD CLIMATE JACKET PROGRESS

Development on the Cold Climate jackets is well progressed, with results from the state-wide field evaluation being considered by the committee. 84 evaluation jackets were sent out (4 per CFA District) for evaluation. Over 100 individual evaluation responses has been received and studied, with feedback overwhelmingly positive. The committee has endorsed the jackets now progressing to Stage 1 implementation, with 2 minor changes made to the specification.

Some feedback indicated that there was some unwanted tightness in the sleeves. The specifications have now been updated to provide a more relaxed fit in the sleeves. There was also considerable feedback that the jackets were sometimes mistaken for the green nomex structural jackets, so orange reflective tape has now been added to the jacket to make it visually easier to identify these as cold climate jackets.

The committee has endorsed the revised specifications with the jacket now to proceed to tender. Full details of the Stage 1 implementation will be made public in early 2016, with delivery and rollout expected to be completed by June 2016. Stage 1 of this program is being funded through a successful joint CFA/VFBV State Initiative through the 2015 VESEP program and is being conducted in collaboration with the State PPE & C Consultative Committee.

Joint HR, Welfare and OH&S

2 Minute Briefing



Issue 15: December 2015

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions worked through at the most recent Joint Committee meeting between CFA and VFBV. (Meeting held 29/11/2015)

TRAINING RELATED INJURIES

Early in the year, the committee requested that CFA provide an analysis of the last five years' worth of injury reports to identify trends and issues that could be targeted for improvement. The committee has received the first report, which has identified the most commonly reported activity where an injury was incurred involved training activity, with 840 incidents logged as occurring during training.

The most common mechanisms of injury are reported as *hit by moving objects, fall/slip on the same level, and muscle stress while lifting and/or carrying*. *Hose lines and branches and training props* are the most common agency of injury.

Of the 840 reports attributed to training, 319 of these occurred at training campuses with the remaining spread over other location categories, most commonly at fire stations.

Training is a high frequency and important activity performed across CFA, and it is recognized that a range of training scenarios need to be undertaken to enable members to be able to perform safely when confronted with real situations. Whilst it is important to allow members to experience real conditions in a controlled training environment, it may still be possible to conduct training with modified conditions, whilst still allowing relevant exposure and experience in a given scenario to reduce the risk for members.

The level of risk control that can be implemented in a training situation should be higher than that which occurs in a dynamic emergency incident. Members are encouraged to review your Brigade training and look for opportunities to further apply risk controls to reduce the potential for injury.

Significant improvements are now occurring across all training campuses, which include the introduction of standardised PAD briefs that incorporate safety and environmental considerations. The committee is reviewing the awareness and use of the comprehensive Skills Maintenance Drills Manual that was produced for Brigades in 2012. Let your VFBV District Council know if your Training Officer does not have access to the Skills Maintenance Drills folder. (It's purple)

VOLUNTEER DISCIPLINE PROCESSES & PROCEDURES

Delegates have requested that CFA prioritize performing a review of CFA's discipline processes and procedures with a view to working with the committee to explore a fairer and more streamlined process. Delegates discussed examples where the process could be perceived as being extremely drawn out, where members have not been provided natural justice and there were questions around procedural fairness. CFA has agreed to prioritise this work, with the committee agreeing to flag it as the number one item for progress next year.

RESOLVING CONFLICTS WITHIN BRIGADES

VFBV has developed a simple handbook for delegates on resolving conflicts within Brigades. This handbook is designed by volunteers for volunteers, as a helpful tool and an easy to read guide to assist delegates to help Captains and volunteers to the respectful and timely resolutions of conflicts within the Brigade, which may include bullying, discrimination or harassment. Our ultimate objective is to create and maintain healthy, productive and mutually respectful Brigade environments and see that all people involved in disputes and conflicts are treated fairly. The handbook is aimed at complementing CFA's tools and guides, and gives all parties involved and some common sense advice and guidance on how to deal with conflict, but more importantly, to find resolution. The handbook is just completing a final volunteer feedback round, and is hoped to be updated and produced for delegates for release in the first half of 2016.

Joint Operations

2 Minute Briefing



Issue 15: December 2015

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions worked through at the most recent Joint Committee meeting between CFA and VFBV. (Meeting held 29/11/2015)

ROLE OF GROUP

The committee was advised that the new Chief Officer has requested that the Role of Group publication that was due to be distributed to brigades be put on hold whilst he conducts a review. The committee has been provided with a much condensed version for feedback. Whilst members will no doubt be disappointed with yet another delay, the committee will work with the new Chief Officer to try and resolve the current impasse affecting this long delayed project.

SECTOR COMMANDER COURSE

The Sector Commander course was developed by the IMTTP team and originally released for delivery in 2014. The course was written with the assumption that a student undertaking the course has no prior knowledge of the subject matter. Feedback from students is that the course is quite lengthy and duplicates material that is covered in earlier courses such as crew leader. Exacerbating the problem, there were restrictive pre-requisites to undertake the course. CFA has decided to conduct a full review of the course, with the State Incident Management Training Delivery Project Steering Committee to oversee the course review.

The committee has highlighted to CFA that the course was originally designed to be delivered in unique modules, yet all CFA delivery to date has been to deliver all modules consecutively which has frustrated students, and led to courses running over consecutive 3 or 4 full weekends, causing understandable member backlash. CFA has agreed to rework and rewrite the course, with the intent to break the course into four distinct modules, with duplication to be removed. This will assist members who may already hold existing units that can be mapped to parts of the new course and allow members to undertake just those parts they do not currently hold. A reworked assessment will ensure all members exit the course with standardized learning outcomes. It is anticipated that this may reduce the Sector Commander course to one night and 2 days. Piloting of the new course is anticipated early in 2016.

FATIGUE MANAGEMENT

The Committee has for some time been reporting the District and Regional variances in how fatigue management is implemented, especially for larger incidents. Examples of two neighbouring districts implementing completely different fatigue guidelines for strike teams dispatched to the same job provided a case study of the issue. The Committee has requested state-wide guidelines be developed and communicated to the field which amongst other things outline crew changeovers, appropriate rest periods between deployments and long haul strike team travel arrangements, including the use of coaches and/or fresh drivers to return appliances to their home locations.

VOLUNTEER UTILISATION IN IMTs

The committee has reinforced the need for proactive and deliberate action to be taken to encourage, and strengthen the use of volunteers in IMTs. The critical importance of planning and the effects of poor or last minute planning on volunteer utilisation are well known and the committee has requested that the Chief Officer lead this work amongst the agencies this fire season. The view amongst some senior leaders over previous seasons has been that there is very little volunteer interest, yet discussions with the field constantly highlight not only high interest, but that many volunteers were either unaware of any requests or only requested on extremely short notice (sometimes with less than four hours' notice) which makes it difficult for them to arrange availability with their employer. Short notice also ignores that many volunteers qualified in IMT roles will commit to other Brigade or District roles in the absence of any request for their services in IMT roles. The committee has requested a robust system be developed to ensure transparency and accountability is maintained in requests for resources, including sufficient planning and flexibility that supports volunteer participation.

Joint Training

2 Minute Briefing



Issue 15: December 2015

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions worked through at the most recent Joint Committee meeting between CFA and VFBV. (Meeting held 22/11/2015)

RECOGNITION OF MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS, PARAMEDICS & NURSES

The committee has for a number of years been pursuing the recognition of volunteer members who are current medical practitioners, paramedics and nurses and hold the relevant qualifications. In the past, CFA has been unable to accept these qualifications and provide credit for national units without provision of an adequate evidence portfolio and assessment to ensure CFA meets its Registered Training Organisation requirements. Qualifications for these members has been obtained through the higher education sector and are subject to a different accreditation process that usually involves either central or self-accreditation. The medical practitioner, paramedic and nursing qualifications were not developed, validated or assessed against agreed vocational education and training standards which are required for the awarding of CFA's national competencies. This has resulted in these highly qualified and experienced members having to regularly re-sit basic first aid courses in order for their skills to be recognised and approved by CFA.

A proposed solution has now been developed that will involve the creation and issuing of a new enterprise (CFA) competency (not a nationally recognized competency unit) which will be called "Eligible to provide first aid in the workplace". This will be used to record those members who have evidence of formal and current qualifications as a medical practitioner, paramedic or nurse. This new enterprise competency can then be considered as satisfying the CFA skills profile requirements for first aid for those members. Consultation with key stakeholders has now commenced seeking their support prior to official approval being sought. Members will be kept updated on progress.

BROWN COAL MINE FIREFIGHTING TRAINING

The Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry made recommendations for the introduction of critical safety concepts specific to the risks presented by brown coal mine firefighting. CFA have been leading the development of delivery and assessment materials that further enhance and support CFA's capability and capacity to respond to fires within Victorian coal mines. These materials have been developed in collaboration with the MFB and will be shared with other fire agencies to meet their specific training needs. The delivery and assessment materials have been drafted and will shortly be ready for piloting. The draft program consists of six modules consisting of; About the coal mine industry, Coal fire behaviour & development, Extinguishing methods, Importance of safety, Maintaining situation awareness and Command & control. A pilot is being planned for early next year, with the aim being to evaluate the content and activities and then confirm the time required for each session. At the end of the pilot final refinements will be made and will then be submitted to the Chief Officer for approval.

CFA F&EM TRAINING STRATEGY SURVEY 2015 RESULTS

The Committee is reviewing the results from this year's Training Strategy Survey results. Whilst there has been a slight improvement overall when compared to the 13/14 results, the results clearly identify access to training as the single biggest frustration and area of complaint amongst members. In the worst performing question across the whole survey, over 51% of respondents either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement "*The number of training programs and resources available in their Districts is fair and reasonable*". There were very high dissatisfaction levels with the statement; "training is available in locations that are easy to participate" with dissatisfaction surging 10% over the previous year to now 35% dissatisfaction, with courses seen as too long, or located too far away with the closure of Fiskville being a significant contributor. Only 44% of members agreed that "training is available at times that are easy to participate in." The committee has urged CFA to develop a full action plan across all key result areas that will drive improvement and performance. The committee was pleased to hear that improving the training experience for members is new CFA CEO Lucinda Nolan's top priority for the coming year. The Committee stands ready to assist.

Joint Volunteerism

2 Minute Briefing



Issue 15: December 2015

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions worked through at the most recent Joint Committee meeting between CFA and VFBV. (Meeting held 22/11/2015)

CFA VOLUNTEERISM STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The Committee reviewed CFA's implementation progress of the Volunteer Strategy across CFA. The new Volunteer Support Model was presented, which sees Regional BASOs being appointed to implement the programs of the Volunteer Support Program. VFBV highlighted the importance of the original BASO program and the need to continue their direct support of Brigades, reconfirming their critical importance as one of the most trusted and respected resources CFA can provide to assist and support Brigades with their ever increasing administrative and logistical workloads.

The new Regional BASOs have been employed full time and are ongoing in these roles providing much needed stability. The Committee will be continuing to watch the implementation of the Regional BASOs and asks Brigades to provide feedback on the programs and ensure that direct support to Brigades is not only maintained but enhanced & increased.

The Leadership and Management Development Program for Volunteers framework has been developed and presented to the committee. This program is a key priority of the Volunteer Strategy and we look forward to this being developed across the state for the benefit of our leaders and brigades.

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY ASPIRE EARLY ADMISSIONS PROGRAM

CFA have partnered with the La Trobe University Aspire program, which provides year 12 students who are also CFA volunteers with priority access to their chosen course at La Trobe. This includes being offered a place prior to exams, acceptance of a lower ATAR score, access to on campus accommodation, participation in the Enrichment Program and capped fees. This is a great opportunity for our younger members and please ensure that members intending to go to university know of this opportunity, more information can be found at <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/study/aspire>

JUNIOR MEMBER SERVICE RECOGNITION

The committee has been asked to look into the possibility of Junior Members having their service recorded to be included in their overall service for the awarding of CFA Service Awards. The committee has been advised by CFA that there are no barriers for this to occur. The next step will be to gain feedback from members across CFA as to whether their service should be included. The survey commenced in December and closes 29 February 2016. Members are encouraged to complete the survey online at <http://cfa.engagementhq.com/> or a hard copy can be obtained from CFA.

Recognising Junior Service in a members overall service will only apply to the awarding of CFA Service Awards and not external awards i.e. National Medal etc.

JUNIOR MEMBER ID CARDS

A reminder that Junior Member ID cards are available. So far, since the start of the program only 35% of Juniors across CFA have obtained an ID. Brigades are encouraged to obtain ID cards for their Junior Members and if there are any issues with the cards or system, please feed back the information. Brigades can use Brigades Online to order individual cards.

BUSHFIRE NATIONAL HAZARDS CRC – VOLUNTEER RESEARCH

The committee is monitoring relevant research from the Bushfire & Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre. Two topics of particular interest are 'Out of Uniform – Building resilience through non-traditional emergency volunteering' and 'Improving the retention and engagement of volunteers in emergency service agencies'. Updates will be provided as the projects develop as it is hoped this kind of research supports & contributes to build long-term volunteer sustainability.