

# 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 18, October 2017

## JOINT COMMUNICATIONS & TECHNOLOGY

- **Resource Tracking System:** CFA is in the process of installing modem's into FCV's that are required for tracking on fire ground channels, and will poll vehicles within close proximity and report vehicle locations.
- **NBN Transition:** Brigades/Groups are recommended to adjust their Comms plans accordingly, ensuring redundant communications methods are identified and planned for on pre-plans.
- **Victorian Radio Network:** Part of this project is the long awaited upgrade to the outer metropolitan network (Districts 7, 8, 13 and 14) which are still operating on the old analogue network, will finally migrate to the digital system as part of these changes.
- **Emergency Alerting System:** CFA advised that EMV have determined to proceed with a three to five-year extension of the current EAS contract – which covers pagers

## JOINT COMMUNITY SAFETY

- **Cladding:** The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) advised of an estimated 5,500 buildings that may have non-compliant cladding installed.
- **Hoarding:** To assist with firefighter safety when responding to these locations - Brigades can now register individual addresses identified as having high hoarding/clutter activity that will create a note in CAD so future crews responding to those locations will be notified en route to the incident as well as appending a notification to the ALERT message.
- **Grain Harvesting – Update:** The committee continues to advocate for the support of the Voluntary Grain

Harvesters Code of Practice that was developed in partnership with the Victorian Farmers Federation.

- **Residential Sprinkler – Update:** The committee continues to try and gain greater CFA support in researching and supporting residential home sprinkler installations.

## JOINT EQUIPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Medium Tanker Evaluation Survey Now Open:** The purpose of the survey is to gather feedback from Brigades who have been issued with (or have familiarity with) the Medium Tankers and assess how the cab chassis, locker configuration and base equipment is operating, and if there are any areas of improvement that could be suggested for future builds
- **Fleet Funding Disappointment:** Volunteer delegates to the Committee expressed their disappointment at CFA's public comments concerning recent coverage of CFA's inadequate fleet funding.
- **Concept Heavy Tanker with Crew Pod:** The Committee was pleased to note CFA's agreement to VFBV's request for the Concept Heavy Tanker with a rear Crew Pod to be made available for a State Roadshow.
- **VESEP Update:** VFBV has requested Brigades/Groups be provided some additional flexibility on large projects that may find it hard to be completed by 30 June next year.

## JOINT HR, WELFARE & OH&S

- **Diesel Exhaust Emissions:** Earlier this year, CFA agreed to a VFBV request to carry out atmospheric monitoring to assess the potential exposure of members to diesel exhaust gases and diesel particulate matter at Fire Stations following a typical "turn-out" event.
- **Complaints and Disputes Management Review:** The committee continues to advocate for the improvement of Complaints and Disputes Management within CFA.

## OPERATIONS

- **Low Voltage Fuse Removal:** VFBV have again requested the Chief Officer to urgently escalate the priority of addressing the significantly reduced levels of training in Low Voltage Fuse Removal.
- **CAD-Response Boundary Analysis:** The Chief Officer advised that there are over 4,900 assignment areas across CFA, and a recent analysis of those areas had identified improvements to service delivery capability.
- **IMT Availability Tool:** The Committee was advised that all IMT endorsed members should have access to the tool via Brigades Online, with CFA ICT Services working to improve the uploading of endorsement lists that trigger access to the tool.
- **2017/18 Chief Officer Summer Fire Season Expectations:** The Chief Officer has issued this year's Chief Officer's expectations.

## JOINT TRAINING

- **Learning Management System/Learning Hub Rollout:** The LMS Learning Hub has been designed to provide members access to their training records, as well as the ability to electronically register for upcoming training courses, or to undertake digital learning courses as they become available.
- **Hazardous Tree Management:** The Chief Officer has advised he expects all CFA members to complete the Hazardous Tree Management course prior to this year's Fire Season.
- **District Training Budget Myth Busting:** Delegates were advised that training budgets were all in healthy states and there is sufficient budgets for all reasonable requests for training and access to training grounds, with some budgets being underspent.
- **Instructing at Training Grounds:** DCO Training has confirmed that unless students are undergoing formal skills acquisition requiring formal assessment, Instructors are NOT required to hold assessing qualifications to instruct all other training, including skills maintenance at Training Grounds.
- **Bushfire Firefighter Manual – Reprint:** CFA has confirmed an additional re-print of 5,000 manuals has been placed, and manuals should now be available again.

## JOINT VOLUNTEERISM

- **Youth Engagement Progress:** VFBV presented an update on the VFBV Multi-Agency Youth Network which now includes over 130 young members (18-35yo) who have formally joined our Youth Network.
- **Travel Reimbursement:** VFBV delegates continue to strongly advocate that no volunteers ought to be out of pocket for their CFA activities.
- **Exit Surveys:** The Committee discussed ways to improve responses to the current CFA exit surveys, which currently has a very low response rate.
- **CFA Annual Plan 2017-18:** CFA presented the CFA Annual Plan 2017-18 which was released by CFA earlier in the month. The Committee discussed those items that had the most relevance to the Volunteerism Committee and requested specific detail around some of the initiatives.

# Joint Communications and Technology

2 Minute Briefing



Issue 18: October 2017

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions worked through at the most recent Joint Committee meeting between CFA and VFBV. (Meeting held Saturday 16/09/2017)

## RESOURCE TRACKING SYSTEM

The Committee continues to discuss the functional Resource Tracking system with the major issues being contractual issues and the revamp of policies throughout CFA involving advising members that their location is being Tracked via radio over the Dispatch channel. CFA is in the process of installing modem's into FCV's that are required for tracking on fire ground channels, and will poll vehicles within close proximity and report vehicle locations. This will alleviate the need for vehicles to constantly remain on the Dispatch channel for location data to be transmitted. OM's have received a request to identify FCV's for modem installation, with priority those that are frequently engaged in Strike Team activity. VFBV has requested Brigades be provided notification of FCV works as early as possible so that access to the vehicles for modem installation can be carried out at times suitable to the Brigade/Group. CFA advises the project is fully funded and will see resource tracking data provided to EMV's EMCOP and eMap.

## NBN TRANSITION

CFA have identified approximately 150 CFA sites will be transitioning to the NBN by end of this year, with 20 done so far. When a Brigade/Group location is affected, the Brigade is contacted via the District, and CFA Communications will then liaise with Telstra, NBN Co and the Brigade/Group as the work progresses. Frequently, a CFA Comms person will need to be available in person on the day of the works. CFA Comms are currently working on a FAQ to assist affected locations. Brigades who have arranged their own internet access need to be aware that they will have to liaise with their current Internet Service Provider (ISP) to arrange transfer. Brigades and Groups should also be aware that once a site is fully switched over to NBN – the loss of power to the exchange can result in all communications (including phones) going offline until power is restored. (This applies for "fibre to node" installations) Brigades/Groups are recommended to adjust their Comms plans accordingly, ensuring redundant communications methods are identified and planned for on pre-plans. The Committee has requested CFA escalate the issue with EMV in order for a sector wide approach, as this issue would also have a significant impact on the general public who may also lose their telephone lines in times of emergency, which would impact on the emergency warning system etc.

## VICTORIAN RADIO NETWORK

The Committee discussed progress on the new network that will sit over the top of the existing radio network called the Victorian Radio Network. CFA has confirmed there will also be a multi-agency Op Tech advisory group (OTAG) set up to ensure all users have input into the new system, which the Committee is hopeful will go some ways to delivering on VFBV's advocacy since the current pagers were introduced, of the importance of ensuring volunteer feedback, evaluation and needs are identified and addressed early in the process, so the mistakes of that rollout are not repeated.

As previously advised, as part of this project the long awaited upgrade to the outer metropolitan network (Districts 7, 8, 13 and 14) which are still operating on the old analogue network, will finally migrate to the digital system as part of these changes. The Committee is currently reviewing capacity requirements, with learnings from a similar network recently rolled out in Queensland providing some confidence in the capacity of the network to manage congestion between agencies.

## EMERGENCY ALERTING SYSTEM (SOLE SOURCE EXTENSION NEGOTIATION)

CFA advised that EMV have determined to proceed with a three to five-year extension of the current EAS contract – which covers pagers. VFBV has again advocated and requested escalation to EMV on the importance of end user involvement in discussions and on working parties which has sadly not been evident to date.

# Joint Community Safety

2 Minute Briefing



Issue 18: October 2017

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions worked through at the most recent Joint Committee meeting between CFA and VFBV. (Meeting held 16/09/17)

## CLADDING

A Victorian Cladding Taskforce was established in July, 2017. The Taskforce is due to deliver an interim report to the Minister for Planning on the 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2017. The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) advised of an estimated 5,500 buildings that may have non-compliant cladding installed. This determination was made using the same criteria as used in the initial auditing of buildings in the City of Melbourne, following the Lacrosse fire. The Taskforce has developed a visual building inspection pilot program which will help determine the extent of aluminium cladding across Victoria. The pilot audit conducted in August involved Dandenong, Moreland, Monash, Port Phillip and Whittlesea Councils targeting buildings constructed from 2005 until now. Inspections have been undertaken by local municipal building surveyors and their staff. CFA advises it has not been approached to assist in these inspections. The Taskforce is seeking expert advice from government authorities, key agencies and industry professionals and where detailed further inspections are required, the Taskforce expects that both MFB and CFA will provide support to those inspections. The inspections will determine risk - based on fire safety systems with the building, type of building, number of occupants and design of the cladding. AFAC, with advice from CFA, is currently drafting a letter to the Taskforce to outline its concerns with non-conforming cladding.

## HOARDING

People with hoarding behaviour live with a higher risk of starting a fire or being trapped in the event of a home fire. Locations of high clutter and hoarding can also pose a risk to firefighters due to the elevated fuel loads and compromised access and egress risks. CFA informed the committee the "Recognising and Reporting Problematic Residential Clutter" poster was finalised, along with a corresponding Operations Bulletin that will be going out shortly. The poster provides 9 images of a typical residential room with increasing levels of clutter. Each image is sequentially numbered one to nine – with images five through to nine representing high levels of clutter that should be reported.

To assist with firefighter safety when responding to these locations - Brigades can now register individual addresses identified as having high hoarding/clutter activity that will create a note in CAD so future crews responding to those locations will be notified en route to the incident as well as appending a notification to the ALERT message.

Brigades can report locations with high levels of clutter on Brigades Online. Go to: Fire & Emergencies > Incident Management > Report High Levels of Clutter. Members of the Community Safety team will review and process the incoming forms and will also ensure privacy is maintained when adding a property to the system. The poster and Operations bulletin also provide additional information on how to identify and respond to locations with high clutter, including safety advice. Brigades are highly recommended to run awareness sessions to educate members on hoarding.

## GRAIN HARVESTING - UPDATE

The committee continues to advocate for the support of the Voluntary Grain Harvesters Code of Practice that was developed in partnership with the Victorian Farmers Federation. CFA confirmed that with budgetary support by CFA's North West Region, it will be running an insert in an upcoming Weekly Times to promote the initiative.

## RESIDENTIAL SPRINKLER - UPDATE

The committee continues to try and gain greater CFA support in researching and supporting residential home sprinkler installations following the significant findings from the 15 year study conducted by the City of Scottsdale, Arizona.

# Joint Equipment & Infrastructure

2 Minute Briefing



Issue 18: October 2017

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions worked through at the most recent Joint Committee meeting between CFA and VFBV. (Meeting held 26/08/2017)

## MEDIUM TANKER EVALUATION SURVEY NOW OPEN

The Medium Tanker survey is now open. The purpose of the survey is to gather feedback from Brigades who have been issued with (or have familiarity with) the Medium Tankers and assess how the cab chassis, locker configuration and base equipment is operating, and if there are any areas of improvement that could be suggested for future builds. The Committee is keen for feedback from any members who wish to provide their thoughts and experiences of how the Medium Tankers are working in the field. If you have any feedback or design ideas that you think would benefit future builds – please get involved. The survey can be found on the VFBV website; [www.vfbv.com.au](http://www.vfbv.com.au)

## FLEET FUNDING DISSAPOINTMENT

Volunteer delegates to the Committee expressed their disappointment at CFA's public comments concerning recent coverage of CFA's inadequate fleet funding. Delegates views were that CFA's reported comments were dismissive of the concerns, and grossly uninformed and contrary to the extensive knowledge and evidence sitting within the Committee. To reinforce this point; Quoting directly from page 19 of CFA's formal submission to the 2015 Fire Services Review:

*"A review undertaken by the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF) in 2012 acknowledged that CFA's base funding was insufficient for the renewal of assets. Successive Governments have not provided sustainable base capital funding to underpin an effective asset maintenance and replacement regime. Historically capital funding has been uneven (and often linked to election cycles) resulting in uncertainty and deteriorating capacity and condition of assets. As a result, CFA is faced with delivering a fire response with an increasing number of ageing tanker appliances. Approximately 500 tankers are older than 20 years of age and 150 are older than 25 years."*

Volunteer delegates to the Committee have requested the matter be escalated to the CFA Board, with particular reference to the attestation that will need to be made by the CFA CEO in June 2018 that all of CFA's assets are compliant with Department of Treasury and Finance Asset Management Accountability Framework, where it is likely the inadequacies of CFA funding for its truck and infrastructure assets will again be highlighted. The Committee continues to advocate the seriousness of the budgetary shortfalls, and notes also that the \$4 million reallocated to cover transport fleet vehicles last year had not be reinstated to the 2017/18 base firefighting appliances capital program - causing further strain.

## CONCEPT HEAVY TANKER WITH CREW POD

The Committee was pleased to note CFA's agreement to VFBV's request for the Concept Heavy Tanker with a rear Crew Pod to be made available for a State Roadshow. This concept vehicle was developed by Bell Environmental and built on a Isuzu 13.9 GVM single cab chassis, with a fully enclosed rear pod unit designed to carry 3 crew which allows full door access (hatch) to the rear deck area without having to leave the appliance. This concept vehicle delivers on many years of advocacy by the Committee for rear deck crewing with improved crew comfort, safety and communications. It incorporates all the safety advantages of a crew cab while delivering on much improved deck access that was lost when CFA discontinued external ROPS. Bell have generously made the truck available to CFA for the duration of the State Roadshow over the next few months. Members are encouraged to arrange inspection and provide feedback. Committee member Toddy Small will be conducting the roadshow. His contact details are available via the VFBV office on 9886 1141

## VESEP UPDATE

Despite recommendations being submitted to the Minister by the All Agency EMV Committee on the 30<sup>th</sup> August – this year's grants program will be the latest announcement in the program's history. VFBV has requested Brigades/Groups be provided some additional flexibility on large projects that may find it hard to be completed by 30 June next year.

# Joint HR, Welfare and OH&S

2 Minute Briefing



Issue 18: October 2017

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions worked through at the most recent Joint Committee meeting between CFA and VFBV. (Meeting held 17/09/2017)

## **DIESEL EXHAUST EMISSIONS**

Earlier this year, CFA agreed to a VFBV request to carry out atmospheric monitoring to assess the potential exposure of members to diesel exhaust gases and diesel particulate matter at Fire Stations following a typical “turn-out” event. The aim of the monitoring was to measure the exposure of members to diesel particulate matter, measure carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxide concentrations and then assess these measurements against Safework Australia exposure standards and subsequently assess any potential adverse health impacts of the results.

CFA commissioned an independent certified Occupational Health & Safety Hygienist to conduct the monitoring. Three locations were selected by local volunteers as representing a range of “typical” one to two bay stations for initial tests. Results indicate the average concentrations of diesel particulates measured at all locations were well below the guideline figures specified by the NSW Minerals Council and the proposed eight-hour time weighted average exposure standard supported by the Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists. Carbon monoxide and nitrogen dioxide levels were also well below the eight-hour time weighted average levels.

The hygienist reports concluded that members should not suffer any adverse long-term or short-term health effects due to exposure to diesel particulates and levels were not considered to pose a risk of adverse health effects under the conditions of monitoring. No further control measures were considered necessary to reduce the levels of diesel engine exhaust emissions at two of the three locations. However, at the third location, short-term exhaust emissions carbon monoxide and nitrogen dioxide levels were all elevated following the trucks egress from the station which indicate there is a possibility of short-term transient effects such as eye and upper respiratory tract irritation. A significant contributor appears to be an older-type vehicle, re-enforcing VFBV’s long advocacy for reduction of the tanker fleet age.

In the short-term, Brigades are reminded to minimise the time spent in engine rooms while engines are running or have recently run, and move vehicles out of engine bays onto external areas/aprons if available - as quickly as possible.

The Joint HR, Welfare and OH&S Committee will continue to advocate for wider testing, and monitor additional control measures that may be necessary at some locations to reduce exhaust levels. This may include the provision of mechanical ventilation to more effectively ventilate engine bays. Early indications are that extraction- type ventilation in smaller sheds would not be effective, with better results being achieved by mechanical ventilation sourced from the rear of sheds which would force exhaust gases out of the larger front engine bay doors. The Committee will continue to investigate and monitor.

## **COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES MANAGEMENT REVIEW**

The committee continues to advocate for the improvement of Complaints and Disputes Management within CFA. Results from an external review have validated feedback provided by VFBV and volunteers including instances of; complaints and disputes that have been inconsistently managed and are being handled inconsistently and concurrently by different parts of CFA; complaints not being managed fully in accordance with legislation, policies & procedures; extended time to resolve complaints; and limited visibility of the scale, type and status of complaints and disputes.

These issues have the potential to affect the delivery of procedural fairness and natural justice and are of great concern to VFBV. CFA have committed to improving its complaints & dispute process and are establishing a dedicated Complaints Management Team within CFA’s Workplace Relations Team. VFBV has supported a comprehensive review of current regimes and design of complaint procedures and is keen to be working with CFA to identify opportunities for improvement in CFA’s handling of complaints and disputes. Updates will be provided as this work progresses.

# Joint Operations

2 Minute Briefing



Issue 18: October 2017

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions worked through at the most recent Joint Committee meeting between CFA and VFBV. (Meeting held 17/09/2017)

## LOW VOLTAGE FUSE REMOVAL

VFBV have again requested the Chief Officer to urgently escalate the priority of addressing the significantly reduced levels of training in Low Voltage Fuse Removal. Due to the lack of delivery of courses, and skills maintenance training – the numbers of trained personnel has plummeted from approx. 5,000 to an all-time low, with only a handful of members across the state remaining current. Since 2008, VFBV has been advocating for many years the importance of this training for the safety of members and reducing the risks of electrocution hazards, as well as address the non-standard, outdated and untested equipment prevalent across the State and inadequate stowage of removal sticks on vehicles. CFA advised VFBV last year that it had completed and submitted a Business Case to Government for funding of a program to replace untested and dated equipment as well as address the urgent need to re-establish skills maintenance and skills acquisition training across the State. VFBV investigations reveal this request for urgent funding was unsuccessful and has resulted in the project going nowhere. Given recent grants and funding programs provided to CFA, VFBV has requested CFA prioritise this work. Delegates have requested the Chief Officer escalate the issue and have the matter addressed as a matter of urgency. The Committee continues to try and inform and advocate to CFA on the serious risks both to members, and the organisation the current situation is resulting in.

## CAD-RESPONSE BOUNDARY ANALYSIS

The Chief Officer advised that there are over 4,900 assignment areas across CFA, and a recent analysis of those areas had identified improvements to service delivery capability. Noting that local knowledge, vehicle typology and local topography heavily informed CAD tables, delegates requested that any analysis and road modelling be provided to Brigades so that Brigade Management Teams could study this data and identify if CAD response tables needed to be updated. Delegates explained that road modelling data in isolation may not present the full story, as factors such as vehicle typology, mains water availability and road network restrictions (brigade limits etc) can all be major contributing factors to response table development. Commentary that brigades have not optimised response tables is most unhelpful, if the very data CFA collects to optimize them is not provided to Brigades in the first place. The Chief agreed that local consultation with Brigades was both necessary and desirable, and committed to ensuring this information was made available to each Brigade for local discussions. The Committee will monitor.

## IMT AVAILABILITY TOOL

Responding to a request by the Committee to confirm the availability of the online IMT availability tool that was trialled last year, the Committee was advised that the Chief Officer provided direction to OM's in December last year that it was his expectation that the tool be used by districts to support their IMT planning process. The Committee was advised that all IMT endorsed members should have access to the tool via Brigades Online, with CFA ICT Services working to improve the uploading of endorsement lists that trigger access to the tool. Any endorsed members unable to access the tool should escalate the issue through their chain of command so that any access errors can be resolved prior to the Fire Season.

## 2017/18 CHIEF OFFICER SUMMER FIRE SEASON EXPECTATIONS

The Chief Officer has issued this year's Chief Officer's expectations. These expectations include; Be ready; Take care of yourself and your people; Connect with communities before, during and after emergencies; Tell those that need to know – communicate well; Do what you can, where you are, with what you've got – hit fires hard and fast; Demonstrate our values in everything you do; Everyone is responsible for safety – speak up.

# Joint Training

2 Minute Briefing



Issue 18: October 2017

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions worked through at the most recent Joint Committee meeting between CFA and VFBV. (Meeting held 27/08/2017)

## LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM/LEARNING HUB ROLLOUT

CFA's new Learning Management System (LMS) has been available since July this year. The LMS replaces the old TRAIN and webTRAIN systems. The LMS Learning Hub has been designed to provide members access to their training records, as well as the ability to electronically register for upcoming training courses, or to undertake digital learning courses as they become available. Captains, Group Officers and Training Officers can also use the system to access various reports that will assist in managing the Group/Brigade training records and member competencies. The LMS Learning Hub can be accessed by logging into Brigades Online, and clicking on the red rectangle "learning Hub" which is displayed on the home screen just under the round quick links. Alternatively, click on apps/systems at the top of the page, and you will find Learning Hub under the Training section. VFBV has requested that training and support for BTO's in particular be offered for those that need assistance learning how to use and get reports out of the new system.

## HAZARDOUS TREE MANAGEMENT

The Chief Officer has advised he expects all CFA members to complete the Hazardous Tree Management course prior to this year's Fire Season. Brigades have been posted an Information Package including posters and a DVD and Brigade Captains can sign off members who have watched the DVD and successfully completed the quick quiz at the end. Individual members can also complete the package themselves in their own time, by logging into the Learning Hub (as above). The Tree Hazard Online course will appear on the homepage. You can complete the online course and the quiz all in the learning hub, and at the end, your training records will automatically be updated to show you have successfully completed the Hazardous Tree Management course.

## DISTRICT TRAINING BUDGET MYTH BUSTING

DCO Training has advised that no members should be hearing that training or access to training grounds is being restricted due to budget constraints. Delegates were advised that training budgets were all in healthy states and there is sufficient budgets for all reasonable requests for training and access to training grounds, with some budgets being underspent. If your Brigade/Group has not recently approached your District for training access or resources because you have been told "no" in the past – you are highly encouraged to re-approach your local Manager Learning & Development who should now be able to accommodate your request. If you have any issues accessing additional training resources, please raise with your local State Councillors who can assist you escalate the issue.

## INSTRUCTING AT TRAINING GROUNDS

The Committee has re-requested an error identified in the Field Training Ground Manual that was raised early last year be urgently corrected. The Field Training Ground Manual incorrectly asserts that instructors instructing at Training Grounds require Trainer & Assessor qualifications. DCO Training has confirmed that unless students are undergoing formal skills acquisition requiring formal assessment, Instructors are NOT required to hold assessing qualifications to instruct all other training, including skills maintenance at Training Grounds. DCO Training has advised that an update will be sent to all Training Grounds highlighting the error and directing endorsed instructors not be excluded from instructing at training grounds should they not also hold assessor qualifications. It was most regrettable that volunteers were again recently prevented from instructing due to this inconsistency in the old manual, and the Committee is hopeful of a quick fix.

## BUSHFIRE FIREFIGHTER MANUAL - REPRINT

Delegates escalated the issue of a shortage of current Bushfire Firefighter Manuals, with reports of manuals not being available for recent recruit courses, with Brigades requesting members return their old manuals for use by new recruits. CFA has confirmed an additional re-print of 5,000 manuals has been placed, and manuals should now be available again.



# Joint Volunteerism

2 Minute Briefing



Issue 18: October 2017

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions worked through at the most recent Joint Committee meeting between CFA and VFBV. (Meeting held 27/08/2017)

## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PROGRESS

Continuing work engaging our younger volunteer members is happening across the state, with delegates suggesting to CFA that targeting declining communities would be advantageous, especially when coupled with the provision of support and information at a district level.

VFBV presented an update on the VFBV Multi-Agency Youth Network which now includes over 130 young members (18-35yo) who have formally joined our Youth Network. This includes 13 volunteers from other emergency service agencies. These young members are being supported by 34 Champions across 20 districts, with only one District to go. Their first interaction is occurring at a District Council level, with further representation being built at the State Council and Board levels. It is also exciting to see that the youth now have a meaningful voice on some of the Joint Committees, with this year being the first year that VFBV targeted and requested expressions of interest from young members to join the Committee's. Across the state, the Youth Network delegates are undertaking many projects including training, recruitment and engagement, technology and mentoring. Through these projects, youth network delegates are exploring the issues and initiatives that excite them, and sharing those ideas and suggestions with their District peers at District Council. Well done to all the youth delegates and champions on the progress to date.

CFA reported that it has developed a Junior Leader Online Role Awareness Package which will be launched in September at a State-Wide Juniors Leader forum. This forum will also provide participants with up to date information around Child Safety, networking opportunities and encourage participants to provide feedback regarding how well the launched program will meet their needs.

## TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

VFBV delegates continue to strongly advocate that no volunteers ought to be out of pocket for their CFA activities. CFA provided a status update on the work they are doing with CFA's finance department to understand budgetary implications of setting a state-wide CFA policy on reimbursing travel expenses incurred by volunteers by way of their service/roles with CFA, including attendance to training etc. The Committee is hoping this work will be well progressed by the next meeting.

## EXIT SURVEYS

CFA has acknowledged that there is little data available around why volunteers leave the CFA. The Committee discussed ways to improve responses to the current CFA exit surveys, which currently has a very low response rate. CFA have agreed to investigate the use of FIRS call takers as a pilot - utilising time between taking calls to conduct EXIT surveys on those who have resigned their membership. VFBV supports and commends any initiative that will assist CFA understand the reasons volunteers are leaving the service and how retention strategies may make a difference.

## CFA ANNUAL PLAN 2017-18

CFA presented the CFA Annual Plan 2017-18 which was released by CFA earlier in the month. The Committee discussed those items that had the most relevance to the Volunteerism Committee and requested specific detail around some of the initiatives. Delegates expressed their hope and desire that the plan would translate to practical and tangible outcomes at Brigade level, and in this vain requested regular reporting and status updates throughout the year. The Committee has requested more proactive engagement and collaboration in relation to matters in the plan that relate to volunteerism, and was encouraged by CFA's commitment that this would occur.