



VFBV

VOLUNTEER FIRE  
BRIGADES VICTORIA

## **2 Minute Briefings March 2024**

The 2 Minute Briefings are a quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions from recent Joint Committee discussions between CFA and VFBV.

They are intended to update members on key issues that have recently been discussed. Effort is made to include any related items that may have been progressed out of session or through other avenues that are related to each committee's subject matter. Priority is given to topics where recent progress has been made. Topics where no progress has been made or where there are differences of opinion are sometimes included to ensure members are aware of VFBV efforts in continuing to advocate for progress or outcomes.

Joint Committees are formal committees between CFA and VFBV made up of VFBV delegates appointed by VFBV State Council, and CFA management representatives appointed by CFA. They are a critical loop in our consultative structures. They endeavour to work collaboratively and cooperatively on issues but may also be required to escalate issues where resolution or common ground cannot be found - requiring executive attention.

# Joint Community Safety Committee

2 Minute Briefing



March 2024

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions from discussions between CFA and VFBV.

## CROP FIRE BEHAVIOUR RESEARCH

CFA in partnership with the CSIRO has been conducting research into the behaviour of fire in crops. Experientially it has been understood that fire behaves differently in crops but there has never been a model that has been specifically designed to understand how fire will behave in crops. Previously all assumptions on fire behaviour in crops are based upon how fire behaves in grasslands regardless of the type of crop being grown.

Crop fires are a significant risk to the agricultural sector and local communities. In 2015 a fire caused by lightning near Esperance in Western Australia burned through 100,000 hectares in a single day and led to a loss of four lives and estimated half a billion tonnes of grain. In the same year, an 85,000-hectare fire in South Australia resulted in 2 fatalities and the loss of 100 million tonnes of agricultural crops in a single afternoon.

Initial experiments have been conducted on wheat crops at a property near Wallinduc, Southwest of Ballarat. A paddock was divided into 50 x 50 metre square blocks with fuel prepared to replicate a range of crop conditions (i.e. harvested, unharvested, and harvested and baled). These were then burned under a variety of different fire weather conditions and with fuel density and fuel moisture content being recorded before each burn. During each burn the flame height and rate of spread was recorded. In total 53 burns were conducted and 45 used for analysis by the CSIRO.

The three most common crops in Victoria are wheat, canola and barley. Research experiments have recently been conducted on canola with further experiments to be conducted in the future.

It is hoped that this research will help guide farmers on harvesting best practice as well as help determine Fire Danger Ratings and support analysis when deciding on Total Fire Bans during the Fire Danger Period.

This research will also in turn provide for better understanding on how to best to control fires when they occur in crops and allow better information and warnings being able to be issued to the community.

## JOINT FUEL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Joint Fuel Management Program for 2023-25 was endorsed by the Chief Officer in September 2023. The program is a collaboration between CFA and Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMVIC) for the fuel management on both public and private land. The program's aim is to burn 28,000 Hectares of land over the next three years.

The program has been developed by CFA and FFMVIC in consultation with landowners, businesses, communities, traditional owners, and other key stakeholders. The purpose of these burns will vary and include reducing bushfire risk, regeneration, agricultural purposes and cultural heritage. The majority of CFA led burns will be roadside burns with an estimated 600km to be targeted.

The program is available for public access by visiting <https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/bushfire-fuel-and-risk-management/joint-fuel-management-program>.

## DELIVERY OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION IN FRV FIRE DISTRICTS

In June last year we reported that the Chief Officer released an Operations Bulletin (2023/001) for co-located and surrounding brigades wishing to conduct community engagement activities or programs within Fire Rescue Victoria areas. This Operations Bulletin is intended to provide clarity to brigades on the process for them before delivering activities within FRV areas as well as the responsibility of FRV to communicate with brigades if FRV also have plans to deliver a similar community engagement activity within a similar timeframe. VFBV is continuing to monitor the practical implementation of this and is seeking feedback from brigades on how these processes are working.

# Joint Equipment and Infrastructure Committee

2 Minute Briefing



March 2024

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions from discussions between CFA and VFBV.

## PUMPER REFURBISHMENTS

CFA have revealed that the proposed refurbishment program for the old-style type 3 pumpers is in doubt after preliminary investigations determined it will be too expensive. Delegates were disappointed to also hear that the 6 ex NSW fire Mercedes Atigo cab chassis that CFA purchased with the intent on replacing six old pumper cab chassis' are also unsuitable due to height issues which would flow onto stations also needing modification to fit them in. The project will be reviewed internally at CFA and an assessment will be made on whether refurbishment of appliances is a viable option, prior to a decision being made. Brigades earmarked to receive the refurbished pumpers will be disappointed if the outcome of refurbishments doesn't proceed as it was seen as a viable solution to the aging fleet concerns. CFA stated that this will also be taken into consideration on the costings and once there is an outcome, communications will be distributed to answer any anticipated concerns. CFA also noted that the cab chassis already purchased for the refurbishment project may be suitable for other programs of work in the near future, but further work would need to be undertaken to assess suitability. The committee will continue to monitor.

## WORKWEAR ORDERING

Delegates have continued to raise with CFA the question of when members can finally order workwear through the State Logistics Centre (SLC). While the initial rollout provided a set number of sets per brigade, feedback continues to demonstrate there is high demand for additional sets and especially for new members who missed out on the initial rollout. Delegates have also passed on the feedback from existing members who received the initial set who are also requesting a process for the required replacement of the issued workwear through damage, fading or just worn out from use as it now forms an integral part of interstate deployments, training activities and community facing meetings.

While there were some volunteers who were sceptical of the new workwear at first, it is pleasing to see workwear has been embraced across all parts of the State and justifies VFBV's very long campaign to achieve it. From the Chief down, workwear is the same no matter if you are paid or not and provides a unified look that ensures all CFA members are seen as highly trained and professional, achieving our aim of unifying all CFA members to our common purpose.

CFA advised that an ordering process is a high priority for them and work is underway that would allow orders to be placed with the SLC, but because of the growing interest, supply has been a huge challenge, with some elements of the initial rollout still impacted by supplier constraints. Also based on member feedback, VFBV has supported CFA's intent to introduce an alternate female trouser design, and CFA advised that trials are also being conducted to explore adding a skirt to the workwear range in the future depending on member feedback.

## STREAMLINING BRIGADE PROJECTS PROCESS

VFBV frequently receives feedback from members about how hard it can be to navigate brigade led major and minor works projects and the required approvals etc. with our observation that some brigades struggle because the process is not well documented or understood including at times within CFA. Delegates have requested a streamlined process specifically for brigade projects that would provide better guidance of what is required and how to go about it. CFA has agreed to review its process, but also reminded members that brigades should nominate a contact person who can liaise with the regional project coordinators in the first instance. Every project is allocated to these regional staff who can communicate the status of specific projects back to the brigade and source any further information required.

CFA are now working on drafting a new guideline manual with explanations and definitions for each type of works, both major and minor. The manual will include advice on how to approach contractors, District HQ responsibilities and a step-by-step procedure and checklist that brigades can use throughout the planning and works process to gauge progress and the next steps required to be taken. We will advise of progress as the draft proceeds through initial consultation.

# Joint Member Services Committee

2 Minute Briefing



March 2023

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions from discussions between CFA and VFBV.

## VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT HUB

Volunteers are seeing the benefits of the changes to the Volunteer Recruitment Hub (VRH) implemented in December but are looking forward to continued performance improvements. The main areas of concern come from those parts of the State with poor internet coverage. Improved Brigade Captain/Secretary visibility and email advice has seen an improvement in application movement. The progression past the current 'blockers' e.g. WWCC (now able to progress to 'Fit for Work' without waiting for the WWCC number) has improved the process.

Transfers between Brigades remain problematic with further investigation at State, District, and Brigade level required, which the committee is monitoring. CFA has reported that further enhancements will follow with a further version 4.2 rolling out in April/May 2024. Captains and Secretaries are requested to continue to monitor these upgrades and any future changes and report any issues to the VRH team at [volrecruithub@cfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:volrecruithub@cfa.vic.gov.au)

## 2024 CHAMPIONSHIPS

With the 2024 State Firefighting Championships just around the corner, delegates continue to call for the dissemination of the 2023 State Firefighter Championships Review Report. CFA have been advising the committee for some time that the 2023 report is 'almost completed', however delegates wonder of the value of the report given that planning for 2024 is in its peak and that lessons from last year's event will not be able to be implemented before this year's event in March.

In the meantime, the Urban Competition Committee and Rural competition committees are focused on making the event more successful and enjoyable than ever with a great deal of work being done to ensure that the events are relevant to fire ground practices so that members gain skills they can use back at their brigades to protect their communities.

VFBV encourages volunteers and their families to come along to Mooroopna for the State Junior Urban Championship on Saturday 16 and Sunday 17th March and for the State Urban Senior and State Rural Junior and Senior Championships on the weekend of March 23 and 24. For more information head to the VFBV website <https://www.vfbv.com.au> or CFA's webpage - <https://www.members.cfa.vic.gov.au/resources/events/firefighter-state-championships/2024-state-championships-mooroopna>.

## CFA SERVICE AWARD UPGRADE KITS

Late last year CFA sought VFBV views on a CFA proposal to discontinue the awarding of full-service medals, and a plan to only award 'upgrade kits' for each 5 yearly service award anniversary after 10 years. The intent was for members to remove their old ribbon bar from their existing medal, and sew the new ribbon bar in the upgrade kit to their own medals.

VFBV advised CFA it did not support this proposal, and reminded CFA that the change to full-service medals was done in 2008 to address volunteer complaints about CFA removing the free upgrade service that CFA used to provide for members to have their medals professionally upgraded. We also advised CFA of the potential blow back that would occur in what would clearly be seen as a cost saving exercise to the only internal system of recognition in place for volunteers completing 10 or more years of voluntarily service.

Following deliberation, CFA have recently advised that the CFA Honours, Awards and Remembrance Board Committee had reconsidered their proposal, and decided not to proceed with any changes based on the feedback received. This is a good outcome and ensures volunteers will continue to be recognised with full-service medals. Volunteers who would prefer just the upgrade kit may specifically request a kit instead of their medal prior to their anniversary should they wish.

VFBV has also requested CFA advocate to the federal government to provide an upgrade service for volunteers receiving additional clasps to their National Medals and the National Emergency Medal. CFA have consented to providing this advocacy and will keep us informed of progress.

# Joint Operational Capability Committee

2 Minute Briefing



March 2024

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions from discussions between CFA and VFBV.

## PUMPING PITS DECISION

Delegates have been waiting for CFA to communicate their future plans for the use of pumping pits. Previous VFBV 2 minute briefings have kept members updated on the progress of Pumping pits since CFA issued a Safety Alert in 2015 suspending their use. VFBV has continued to advocate that rather than ban the use of Pumping pits and disadvantage brigades that use them for training that a maintenance program to ensure they are safe to use is the best option.

CFA has determined that the 58 pumping pits across the state are non-compliant and will not be reinstated, claiming there are no cost effective means of rehabilitating them. CFA advise they are currently looking at an alternative solution of providing brigades with a 2000lt collar tank. Delegates have expressed their disappointment in the decision and asked CFA to ensure that adequate training and communication be provided to ensure the safe use, maintenance and storage of the collar tanks before brigades use them. CFA has agreed to formally write to all brigades who have a pumping pit advising them of the decision and the results of the testing and what the proposed solution is moving forward. VFBV has also raised concerns with the manual handling implications of using collar tanks regularly for training and will continue to monitor. Brigades are requested to contact us once they receive CFA's formal communication with any concerns.

## ELECTRIC VEHICLE RESPONSE

For some time now delegates have been raising the regular requests from volunteers for CFA to update training and protocols to deal with the ever-changing scenarios on alternative fuels and electric vehicles in particular. With more and more electric vehicles on the roads brigades are being exposed to scenarios that involve electric vehicles more often than in the past. In pleasing progress, CFA have introduced six new videos on the intranet that assist members to identify, immobilise and isolate electric vehicle in emergency situations. It is worth noting that while there is information available to identify and assist in electric vehicle scenarios there has been no complete extinguishment methods for electric vehicles approved in Australia to date. CFA is developing a range of electric vehicle and battery fire SOP's and will release them for consultation when drafts are completed. Interested members can type in 'electric vehicles' into the members online search field to access the videos.

## CFA OPERATING MODEL

CFA commenced work back in 2022 to identify what improvement opportunities there are to CFA's Operating Model. Statewide workshops were conducted, and a roadmap of initiatives was developed. 29 initiatives have been included in the roadmap and have been divided into a phased 3-part program. Stream 1 has six key initiatives aimed at improving the experience of brigades and groups. Stream 2 has nine initiatives aimed at District, Region and State delivery and Stage 3 includes 14 initiatives aimed at overall Organizational Reform. Committee delegates have asked CFA to keep them informed as the progress of the 29 initiatives is progressed and we will keep members informed of the progress. Members can find out more information by typing 'operating model' into the search function in the members online search field.

## PPC TRAILS FOR 2024

New PPC trials will commence in 2024 for various items where the current supplier contracts are expiring. CFA have now committed to volunteer field trials to review new structural firefighting gloves. VFBV has in the past received a lot of criticism relating to the current structural gloves in regard to sizing and dexterity and is pleased to observe there are many new gloves now on the market. While loss of dexterity compared to the previous FirePro 2 glove was a result of modified performance standards, when CFA originally went to tender for the current glove there was very few options available. Over the past few years this has changed and there is now a greater choice of glove manufacturers on the market, which provides an opportunity to compare next generation gloves for dexterity and tactility, while also ensuring CFA can explore a greater size range to cater for all firefighters.

# Joint Operational Performance Committee

2 Minute Briefing



March 2023

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions from discussions between CFA and VFBV.

## DPC INCONSISTENCIES

Delegates have been raising the concerns raised by some Group Officers regarding the inconsistencies with the DPC process across the State. While many districts offer a District Planning Committee structure with good consultation and processes for volunteer input there are also many that reportedly operate in an environment of secrecy and little genuine consultation or communication to the members they affect the most - volunteers. Many years ago, as a part of the Chief Officers 5 priority projects a pilot DSAT (District Strategic Advisory Team) was trialled in place of the DPC process in 3 Districts. While this only lasted briefly in 2 districts there is still one district running this project and there has been no review or report to show its effectiveness (or not). Group officers have recently raised concerns with VFBV that they feel there are changes being made to DPC's that potentially water down the input from volunteers and have the potential to operate more as a rubber stamp. CFA has agreed to explore these reports and work with the committee to review the DPC processes across the state and highlight any inconsistencies, including identifying the areas that are working well and those that are challenging.

## SDRC SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

Delegates have participated in a recent workshop with CFA on ways to improve the volunteer experience when making fire reports to the Service Delivery Reporting Centre (SDRC). The workshop was requested to address recent volunteer complaints and sought to seek ways that would improve the volunteer experience when reporting incidents and brigade activities. In the second half of 2023 CFA reduced the hours of operation for the call takers at the SDRC advising that the improvements to the online reporting system had meant that the call takers were taking less and less calls. This resulted in volunteers only being able to call the centre mon-fri during business hours.

During discussions, CFA has reiterated it is keen to look at ways to improve the volunteer experience in a range of fields by reducing paperwork, bottlenecks and administrative tasks for BMT's. Delegates have highlighted many ways to reduce the impact and time taken in filling out forms for items such as volunteer status forms, hose testing, skills maintenance, chemical registers and online booking systems for meeting rooms and facilities. VFBV will continue these conversations and our advocacy is to ensure the volunteer experience is always at the forefront of any changes to the system.

## POST INCIDENT AAR'S

As members would be aware, VFBV has been advocating the importance of volunteer involvement in after action reviews. And while initial focus has been on cross-agency debriefs, the same principles apply for internal AAR's that frequently occur after incidents.

Delegates have raised concerns that it is taking considerable time to action AAR's and for reporting of the outcomes. CFA has advised committee delegates that they are not able to process post incident After Action Reviews any faster than is happening now.

Delegates have stressed that volunteers are providing feedback to CFA after an incident in the hope that improvements can be raised and implemented as quickly as possible to improve the outcomes for everyone. CFA have employed a new staff member in the hope that the quality of information is improved with the intent that members can then focus on building a better process and that the outcomes and suggested improvements can be made as soon as possible. VFBV has also highlighted to CFA that often cross agency AAR times are not volunteer friendly. Again, volunteers have suggested that a consistent standardised approach could be developed to ensure that the right information is captured, and changes reported immediately. CFA has agreed to report to the committee on the status of AAR's and activity at the next meeting.

# Joint People, Culture & Safety Committee

2 Minute Briefing



March 2023

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions from discussions between CFA and VFBV.

## CFA COMPLAINTS PROCESS (HR BUSINESS PARTNERS)

The committee have discussed potential changes to the structure of the CFA HR Department that CFA is considering and have outlined the impact those changes could have on the complaints process and the experience of volunteers. The final arrangement is yet to be decided. VFBV maintain that further and ongoing training & development for HR Business Partners is crucial to the level of service provided to members and should be considered by CFA in whatever decision is reached regarding the HR Department. HR Business Partners play a pivotal role in the initial stages of all complaints but more so in informal matters. These informal matters are many and they are complex and challenging and in delegates view the better trained and equipped HR Business Partners are, the better and more effectively these matters will be dealt with.

Delegates also pursued the issue of what data was being recorded in LawVu around informal complaints. In order for VFBV to better monitor the effectiveness of CFA's dealing with informal complaints, VFBV requested that CFA consider the following information be collected and reported on:

- Start date of complaint – when CFA District/HR is first alerted to a concern/complaint
- The incident (interpersonal conflict, conflict with District, incident on fire ground, complaint/comment by member of the public)
- Action taken – what action is taken at each juncture along the journey of the complaint, i.e. Captain intervention (i.e. conversation with parties), District (i.e. Preliminary Assessment) , HR Bus Partner (i.e. Facilitative conversation/mediation), Resolution Support (i.e. Support or Advice) and what Case Management is provided to the member (how is the complainant/respondent/others informed of the progress of the complaint/matter)
- Is/are member(s) suspended/stood down and by whom
- Who, if any one person maintains ownership/management of the complaint

These discussions are to continue and the VFBV/CFA working group will work closely to monitor informal matters and continue to try and improve the process for volunteers.

## DISTRICT OH&S COMMITTEES

The committee was updated on the Terms of Reference developed by the VFBV/CFA working group for District OH&S Committees. Overall delegates were happy with the document, but VFBV identified a number of concerns around wording of the document and how it could be considered restrictive to some committees. In order to address those concerns, CFA responded that they would word the Terms of Reference to allow for flexibility in the way that Districts conducted their committees and encourage those existing committees who are meeting regularly and working effectively to continue to do so in a way that suits their members and District. CFA have advised they don't wish to override these committees. CFA do however wish to encourage other Districts who are yet to establish District OH&S Committees to adopt the Terms of Reference as a foundation and to guide their local processes.

## BRIGADE HEALTH AND SAFETY CO-ORDINATORS

CFA have established that the role of Brigade H&S Co-ordinator lacks profile and role clarity. Delegates agreed and stressed that in order to attract more members to the role, CFA might consider making the role part of the BMT or part of a lieutenant's duties and not just default to the Captain, as is currently the case in many brigades. Delegates also suggested online learnings that explain the role requirements and ongoing training and development for members would be beneficial. CFA could also consider raising awareness of the purpose and use of CFASafe, and continue to provide hardcopy methods of reporting. Also suggested was that this role could potentially be shared by a number of members and not just fall to one volunteer. The VFBV/CFA working group will contribute to developing this role.

# Joint Technology & Innovation Committee

2 Minute Briefing



March 2023

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions from discussions between CFA and VFBV.

## 3G TELEPHONE NETWORK

CFA has advised members of the committee that the 3G mobile telephone network is being phased out by the telcos over the next 12 months with Vodafone having commenced decommissioning in December 2023. Telstra will follow in June 2024 and Optus in September 2024. CFA believe this will not be an issue moving forward as the respective telecommunications providers are expected to ensure there is sufficient phone coverage under 4G as a minimum before turning off their 3G network. If members are using an old 3G handset they will need to upgrade their handpiece before the shutdown dates. The biggest concern is the various modems and items such as community alert sirens to ensure they are compatible with the system changes and brigades are encouraged to identify any older devices as soon as possible. Brigades concerned about coverage are encouraged to contact their Federal Parliamentarian to advocate increased coverage under assistance programs such as the Black Spot Program, the Regional Connectivity Program (RCP) or the Peri-Urban Mobile Program (PUMP).

## RADIO REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

Delegates have asked CFA as to whether a bag radio was being offered as part of the radio replacement program and has been confirmed that it will be available. When pressed as to whether the results of the VFBV's survey conducted back in 2020 had been considered which recommended a smaller footprint for better flexibility and single cab vehicles, CFA advised that due to the requirements under the Australian Design Rules (ADR's) it was not possible to use a smaller backpack unit. The other deciding factor is that the Motorola radio is approximately one third larger than the current Tait radios and that the original space is almost taken up. The new radios would include duress alarms, enhanced coverage, clearer audio quality, radio identification and reduced interference which will be consistent across all CFA districts. CFA has also advised members that the training packages for the new radios will involve both an online version and face to face version.

## MOBILE DATA CAPABILITY

Brigades wishing to purchase or upgrade their existing tablets will be pleased to know that CFA is designing a process and specifications advice as to the type of approved tablet. The CFA advised delegates that the project is investigating the possibility of Brigades purchasing their own tablet provided it meets the specifications developed by CFA. In addition to the specification's requirement, the device must be purchased through CFA ICT, at the Brigade's cost, and have the SOTI application (an enterprise mobility solution to manage the applications on the device) installed. As soon as the specifications are developed, we will advise where the documentation is available.

## NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY MOBILE BROADBAND (PSMB)

The Committee was informed by CFA that the earlier discussion at the Federal Government level on the dedicated National Public Safety Mobile Broadband is back on the agenda again, however not under the same plan as previously. The Federal Government Department NEMA (led by CFA ex-Chief Officer Joe Buffone PSM GAICD) is leading the project with EMV and with Department of Treasury involvement. The PSMB will provide emergency services with critical interoperability between agencies and access to reliable and modern communication technology. The latest technology introduced includes an option to use the Low Earth Orbiting (LEO) satellite system (along the same lines as Starlink) as a possibility for being the building blocks for the "new" paging system and mobile data of the future.



# Joint Training Committee

## 2 Minute Briefing



March 2024

Quick snapshot of the priority issues and actions from discussions between CFA and VFBV.

### MOBILE PROP AVAILABILITY

Delegates have been receiving reports of Brigades being told by their District staff that they can no longer access mobile props for training at their Stations. The reason given has been that they are within 100 Km of a CFA Training Ground and, as such, must now use the Training Ground. This presents Brigades with the obvious problems of extra time and work involved in booking, travelling to and from and checking in and out of the Training Ground as well as appliances being used out of their response areas. Brigades had also raised operational impacts where they would have to be stood down while out of town attending a Training Ground and other brigades having to cover while training occurs.

Delegates have raised this issue with CFA and it has been communicated that they are indeed trying to encourage increased use of the Training Grounds as they have better facilities and training available when compared to the mobile props. CFA has committed to Brigades still being able to utilise mobile props where they have a specified need or genuine reason. Brigades that require props should apply for them through the existing process, ensuring to clearly detail their reason for needing the prop at their Station. VFBV supports all brigades having access to mobile props.

### STRIKE TEAM LEADER COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Delegates to the committee are acutely aware of the problems that not having the Strike Team Leader training available to members for several years is causing. The Committee has been continuously pursuing CFA over getting the new Strike Team Leader course completed and available to members. CFA released a draft of the course in May 2023 with committee members and other volunteer SMEs providing feedback and participating in Working Group sessions. Members involved in the consultation sessions were pleased that the materials were quite good and there were only some relatively minor changes to be made as well as the addition of some sections covering the “people management/soft skills” essential for a good Strike Team Leader.

CFA have since been reworking the course to include both the feedback from committee members and some substantial additions being made from internal CFA feedback. CFA are hoping to have the course available to members well before the next fire season. Delegates will be closely monitoring this progress and pushing CFA to meet this deadline in an effort not to cause any more operational issues for Brigades and Groups through not being able to train new Strike Team Leaders.

### GAS FLARE-OFF TRAINING

CFA has previously advised delegates that the props used in the Gas Flare Off training need to be upgraded to meet changing OHS standards. This has resulted in Brigades not having access to Gas Flare Off training for an extended period of time. Members of the committee have been pushing CFA to rectify this and the committee have been advised by CFA that the gas flare-off props are currently being upgraded to the new specifications by an external contractor. Two sets of props are being upgraded with plans to initially locate them at the Training Grounds at Bangholme and Huntly with the ability to relocate them to other grounds as required. CFA are hoping to have this work completed and training available to members in the 2nd quarter of this year.

### DRIVING INSTRUCTOR COURSES

In an effort to maintain and hopefully increase their Driver Training capacity, CFA are planning to conduct three Driving Instructor courses this year. One of these courses will be a dedicated female only course with the intent to bridge the gap that exists in female Driver educators. Any member wishing to become a Driving Instructor should contact their District Coordinator of Learning Development for more information and to register their interest in attending one of the Driving Instructor courses.