



VFBV | VOLUNTEER FIRE
BRIGADES VICTORIA

ANNUAL REPORT | 2020 - 2021



JOHN AUSTIN

John was elected as a Victorian Urban Fire Brigades Association Executive Committee Member on 9th September 2007 and continued on as a VFBV State Councillor until he retired in September 2017.

Upon his retirement as a State Councillor John was awarded VFBV Life Membership. John also served a number of years as a District 9 Executive Member prior to being elected as the VUFBA Executive Committee Member for his District.

John served as a firefighter with the Drouin Fire Brigade in District 9 for almost half a century and was passionate about Community Safety which led to John serving as a VFBV delegate to the VFBV/CFA Joint Community Safety Committee for many years.

Fire Investigation was another one of John's passions. As a qualified fire investigator himself he championed volunteer involvement in fire investigation within CFA.

John was awarded a VFBV Gold Star for his involvement with VFBV and VUFBA in 2014 recognising his contribution for more than 30 years' service to both Associations.

John was a strong supporter of the association and will be sadly missed by friends and fellow firefighters from across the state.



VFBV | VOLUNTEER FIRE
BRIGADES VICTORIA

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc.

Reg No. A0057948T ABN 110 830 80403

Strong Volunteerism, Embraced to Build Community Resilience for a Safer Victoria

ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 2021

For the year ended 30 June 2021

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Some photographs courtesy of: *Fire Wise, Uniform Photography and Wayne Charlton Photography*

OVERVIEW

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV) is established under Victorian law, the Country Fire Authority (CFA) Act, to represent CFA volunteers on all matters that affect their welfare and efficiency. VFBV is an independent association operating autonomously from CFA, but at the same time working closely with CFA and other key stakeholders, to engage volunteers in CFA and other deliberations and provide advice on all matters affecting CFA volunteers. Demonstrating VFBV's conviction and support of its members, almost 95% of CFA Brigades elect to pay an annual financial affiliation fee that contributes to the running of VFBV and its services.

VFBV also represents Coast Guard Brigades in Victoria and has close working relationships with other emergency service volunteer associations across Victoria and Australia. VFBV and volunteer fire brigade associations in all states of Australia work together on issues of common interest and/or national relevance through the Council of Australian Volunteer Fire Associations (CAVFA).

VFBV is an organisation run by the CFA volunteers it represents. VFBV is an independent and united voice of volunteers and engages with the State Government, Emergency Management Victoria, the CFA Board and management, Members of Parliament, official inquiries, municipal councils and instrumentalities, business and the public to proactively shape the future of emergency management in the interests of efficient and effective fire services and positive community safety outcomes.

VFBV engages with the Government and emergency management agencies to ensure that volunteers and their communities remain actively involved in emergency management decision making at every level through day to day practical work in VFBV/CFA Joint Committees and the Ministerial-level Volunteer Consultative Forum, and by advocating for positive, practical results from reviews such as the Jones Inquiry, the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements and inquiries conducted by the Inspector-General for Emergency Management in Victoria.

Given VFBV's direct volunteer-based foundations and in-depth knowledge of successful fire prevention, protection and response approaches in Victoria, it's well-established local and state-wide networks and the breadth and depth of hands-on experience in matters affecting volunteers and the provision of a volunteer-based service model, VFBV is best placed to provide independent, unified and credible advice on matters affecting volunteers. VFBV facilitates regular state and local consultation forums and engagement activities to ensure that the views of volunteers are known and represented to stakeholders.

VFBV is independent from CFA but is an important part of CFA's foundation and future success. CFA is comprised of the community-based Brigades that form it. CFA management and staff provide the framework, governance, leadership, systems and expertise to direct, coordinate, support and empower this network of Brigades. Those CFA Brigades have built and delivered a remarkably successful and world-respected service to Victoria. VFBV is integral to enabling CFA to harness the leadership, knowledge and experience of volunteers and to engaging those volunteers in decision-making about matters that affect their welfare and efficiency. In a community and volunteer-based organisation such as CFA, genuine engagement with volunteers is vital. Robust, meaningful, respectful and honest communication and consultation is essential, and has been enshrined in the CFA Act through the Volunteer Charter as an obligation on CFA and the Government in any decisions that impact or have the potential to impact upon volunteers.

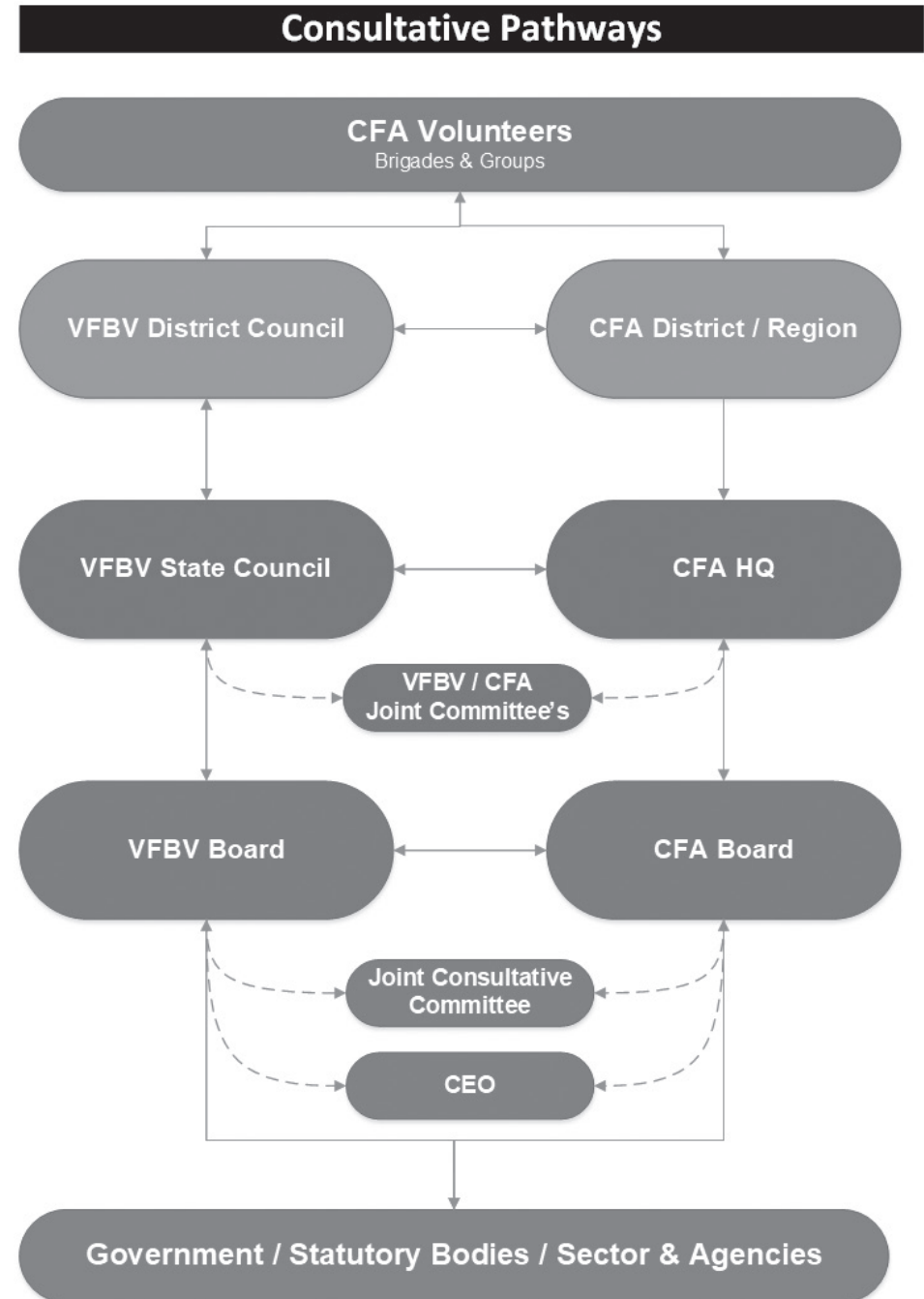
OUR VISION

Strong Volunteerism, Embraced to Build Community Resilience for a Safer Victoria

OUR MISSION

To achieve our vision we will:

- Be well informed of, and responsive to, grass roots volunteer needs, ideas and concerns;
- Represent volunteers and work with CFA and the Victorian Government to ensure ongoing commitment to the principles outlined by the Volunteer Charter;
- Be aware of strategic influences, opportunities and challenges confronting CFA volunteers, volunteerism generally and the decision makers who influence our future;
- Be proactive and prepared to lead and contribute, as volunteer advocates, to decision making and future planning processes at all levels;
- Build the profile and relationships required to position VFBV as an active and respected influence on decision making;
- Deliver communication, representation and decision processes that keep volunteers informed and provide opportunity for volunteers to be consulted on matters that impact on them;
- Resolve concerns and issues raised as quickly as possible;
- Work collaboratively with CFA management to achieve a CFA culture, structure, and operating context that treats volunteers fairly, justly and reasonably.





As I look back on the year just past, and reflect on this year and the previous couple, it is impossible to minimise the extremely tough and challenging environment that we have been operating in.

Significant more so when considering the extended period of time, and the sustained effort required to normalise what has been a tumultuous and unsettling period for many of our people. From reform implementation to a global pandemic, 'tough' does not seem to adequately describe it.

My overall reflection is no organisation like VFBV or CFA for that matter, could possibly navigate such challenging periods without it impacting on our people.

However, I continue to be humbled by the resilience of CFA volunteers and the strong foundations of our association as a whole. Despite the added challenges

and difficulties of operating in a COVID-19 setting, our people have just got on with it and made the most of what has been a pretty ordinary year.

But while humbled, I am not surprised.

I reflect back on the stories that my parents and grandparents used to tell when they spoke about the early years of fire brigade. These are generations that lived and worked through depressions, world wars and global conflict.

No matter how dark the setting of their stories, they always saw the good, the funny and the lighter side of things.

This provides me perspective and comfort knowing that most of the people I know who get involved and stick with fire brigade are all here for the right reasons, and because they just want to help people and make a difference. That is a strong motivation that unites us, and allows us to steer through the tough times.

VFBV relies on people coming together and discussing, debating and sharing their ideas and anecdotes about what needs fixing or how we can improve. I have missed this aspect the most during the last 12 months.

To have spent the whole of this year under some form of stay-at-home restrictions, and limits on public gatherings has really tested us. But - we have adapted.

And while I am over videoconferences and skype calls like I'm sure many of you are also, we have found a way to make it work. It's not perfect - but we are just getting on with it.

This will be the second year where we will need to plan for a fire season with COVID-19 as the backdrop. Thankfully, most of the discussions I have been involved in there is widespread recognition that we will just need to adapt. But this does not mean throwing out the baby with the bathwater. Thankfully, most acknowledge we shouldn't be blindly implementing policy or procedures that are just not fit for purpose in an emergency service like CFA or would never survive the practicalities of the fireground.

We continue to put our communities first - like we always have. And we have a job to do, and the Victorian public is relying on it. I have no intention of letting them down on my watch.

We will weigh the risks, and we will modify our procedures to best mitigate them. If that doesn't work, we'll try something else, and something else again until it does.

What the last couple of years has solidified for me, is my belief that our service relies on our self sufficiency and practical experience and outlook to make it all work.

We are a can-do volunteer fire-service. We always have been. We always find a way.

You never read in the media all the things that CFA volunteers won't do. All you hear are all the new jobs we have put our hands up for, and the other agencies, services or disasters we have stepped up to and helped or assisted.

And it is this that is often the most under-appreciated and under-respected part of what it means to be a true volunteer organisation.

When I look at what our people do on a daily basis, I never have to wonder what difference they made to their communities. It's obvious.

But I don't feel the same about some of the new policies, the new paperwork requirements, and countless new rules and regulations that never seem to stop and just keep making it all harder.

That is why I am approaching the journey ahead as an opportunity.

An opportunity to get back to basics, and focus on the things that actually make a difference to our communities.

This is the focus of the VFBV Board, and will continue to be where we focus our energies as we rebuild the CFA back to its pre-eminence as the jewel in Australia's fire services.

Vale

Sadly during the last 12 months we also acknowledge the passing of VFBV Life Member John Austin who passed away on 20th October 2020.

John was a long standing member of the Drouin Fire Brigade as well as serving as a VFBV delegate to the VFBV/ CFA Joint Community Safety Committee.

John was elected as a State Councillor for District 9 on the 9th September 2007 and retired in September 2017. He was honoured with VFBV Life Membership at the time of his retirement in 2017.

VFBV extends its sincere respects to John's family and fellow brigade members.

Thank-you

I would like to acknowledge and thank all our people who work so hard throughout the year to represent our fellow volunteers. Our delegates, our association office holders and our staff.

In particular, I want to recognise the work of our CEO, Adam Barnett. With all the changes to CFA's senior leadership over the past year, I have watched Adam rebuild and reset important relationships not just within CFA but across the sector.

His knowledge of CFA is unmatched. His ability to use that knowledge to represent volunteers, identify volunteer impacts and strongly advocate for improved outcomes for our people is one of the associations greatest strengths.

With many of these discussions and forums out of public view, it is easy to forget the work done behind the scenes by our CEO and staff on all our behalf. As Board Chair I am exceptionally proud of their work and am constantly impressed by their loyalty and dedication to our organisation.

I would also like to recognise our State Vice-President Samantha Rothman, whose support and perspective is always so valued. Since Sam joined the Board in 2015, I have watched her continually step up and push herself over the last few years, becoming Vice-President in 2017. I could not be prouder of her journey and contribution to our organisation's leadership.

And finally I would like to sincerely thank my fellow Board members, State Council, District Council members and all Brigade/Group delegates for your support.

They are the faces of VFBV at the local level, who in turn provide an immense capability and credibility to the issues that VFBV advocates for on behalf of all CFA volunteers.

And to my fellow volunteers, thank-you for all you have done to make not just our organisation the best it can be, but thank-you also for your service to CFA and your communities.

Nev Jones AFMSM
VFBV State President



Last year, I described the previous reporting period as difficult, complex and challenging. How then does one try to describe the preceding 12 months? I'll settle for 'unique'.

The COVID-19 pandemic had the potential to overshadow the entire year. But I am pleased to report that despite its best efforts, we refused to allow it to tighten its grip on us any more than it had to. While of course it had a significant impact on our operations, I am buoyed by our ability to adapt and overcome these challenges and continue the strong representation of our members, albeit in new and different ways.

We have continued our strong commitment to the fire affected areas impacted by the 2019/20 fire season. And while our on-the-ground recovery initiatives were significantly impeded by COVID restrictions, our trusts and charities adapted and implemented new remote verification techniques to ensure this critical support continued throughout the pandemic.

More than 200 individual volunteer firefighters and their families were supported over the course of the year, including 17 families that lost their homes during the 'Black Summer' bushfires. Since its inception in 2009 following the Black Saturday fires, the VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery trust has provided almost \$1.2 million dollars of support to CFA volunteers. This is in addition to the ongoing support provided by the VFBV Welfare Fund to support volunteers suffering from personal hardship, providing more than \$2.2 million in grants to 1,262 volunteers since its inception. Both of these trusts have continued our proud tradition of ensuring 100% of donated funds go directly to volunteers.

And while our delegates, brigades and staff have all gone above and beyond to facilitate our recovery work during what has been an extremely challenging couple of years, none of this of course would have been possible without the generous support from our donors. With so many private and corporate donors from not only Australia but across the world rallying to support our volunteers, it has been most rewarding to deliver targeted support to those volunteers who lost so much while they were out protecting others. To witness the incredible difference this support made to assist those that expected nothing in return from their service - but were so grateful to have assistance during what was a very miserable time for them has been truly humbling.

While all our donors are valued and appreciated, I do wish to acknowledge the Barlow Foundation, and its CEO Deborah Barlow in particular for their generous support to the VFBV Volunteer Support & Recovery Trust over the past two years. While there are no words that could adequately communicate the impact of their financial support to our volunteer firefighters in their time of greatest need, on behalf of all brigades and volunteers who have been beneficiaries of their donations, I wish to say a very heartfelt thank-you.

At the start of this reporting period, I also appeared as a witness to the Commonwealth Government's Royal Commission into National Natural Disasters. This followed VFBV's extensive submissions to both the Royal Commission and the Victorian Inspector-General for Emergency Management's inquiry into the 2019-20 Victorian Fire Season. During both these inquiries, VFBV strongly advocated for the respect and recognition of the fundamental importance of volunteers in disaster preparedness, response and recovery arrangements, and argued for strengthened and improved support for volunteer safety, consultation, support, training and Government recognition to be embedded into emergency management systems and processes.

The Royal Commission's final report was tabled on the 30th October 2020, with the Victorian IGEM Phase 1 report being tabled on the 31st July 2020, with the final phase 2 report handed down 12 months later. VFBV welcomed the reports, noting that many of the recommendations were strongly supported by VFBV's evidence, witness testimony and volunteer views that were put to each during their respective deliberations.

This year's financials continue to reflect the significant impact of COVID-19 restrictions, forcing the cancellation or postponement of many of our events and forums. The move to electronic meetings for committees and working parties for the entire year has also resulted in significant underspends due to lower than usual travel and meeting expenses. We have also carried a couple of vacancies within the staff team, recognising that the strict stay-at-home directions have made hiring and onboarding particularly difficult.

All combined, these significant underspends and lag in expenses have resulted in short-term operating surpluses, and we finish the year in a strong and secure financial position, having worked hard over the last several years to re-establish a strong and sustainable balance sheet. The VFBV Board and I have worked hard to carefully manage our cash flows. Budgets have been preserved to enable us to meet the inevitable demand that will be created during what is sure to be a catch-up year when restrictions finally start easing.

This year was also heavily impacted by changes to Victoria's EM arrangements, with July 1, 2020 marking the official commencement of the Government's controversial fire service reform implementation and the creation of FRV. Delegates

were tasked with ensuring any negative impacts or consequences were raised locally in the first instance before escalation to test and support the assurances given that reform would have no negative consequences on volunteers. Sadly, as predicted this has not been the case with volunteer morale and numbers continuing to decline.

State Council approved some changes to our internal processes to empower our District Council Executive committees to expedite issues of concern where local issue resolution processes were not adequate or didn't work and these new processes provided for fast and immediate State advocacy where required. These were important changes to adapt to the inability of brigades, groups and District Councils to meet face-to-face.

And while our expert advice and guidance was largely ignored during the rushed implementation, it is with mixed feelings that I acknowledge many of our initial concerns regarding fire service reforms have proven true. And while this vindicates the disciplined and evidence-based approach that VFBV took on all matters concerning reform, we have worked incredibly hard not to digress into cynical negativity.

We have diligently engaged constructively with all stakeholders to deliver on our promise and commitment to try and minimise the harm of reform, while seeking to identify new opportunities.

The destabilising of CFA's leadership was acutely observed with tensions over the Government's reforms continuing to lead to a revolving door of senior leaders and further resignations. CFA appointed Acting CEO, Catherine Greaves on the 29th June 2020 and Acting Chief Officer Garry Cook AFMSM on 1st July 2020 following Steven Warrington AFMSM sudden resignation. A new CFA Chair, Greg Wilson was appointed by the Government on the 21st July 2020 following the previous Government appointment Chair Greg Smith's resignation.

On the 2nd November 2020, the CFA Board appointed Jason Heffernan from NSW RFS as the new CFA Chief Officer, followed by the appointment of Natalie MacDonald as the new CFA CEO commencing on the 22nd February 2021.

It would be an understatement to describe this period as tumultuous and exhausting. Not just for association officials who have had to inject valuable time and energy into the changed leadership, but to CFA volunteers in general who have had to endure CFA leadership churn during one of the most important periods in our history. If nothing else, this period of CFA instability when compared to VFBV's stability and independence from Government interference highlights the incredibly important role that the association plays in times like this as the keepers and custodians of CFA's organisational memory.

VFBV has invested significant time, energy and good will to support each of these new leaders familiarise themselves with their new roles. If there is any silver lining to this period of great turmoil, it would be to acknowledge that I have been very fortunate to have worked alongside some very capable and talented people who came to work for CFA because of their love for our volunteers and the important role CFA plays in our communities. It would be remiss of me not to pay tribute to the terrific work that CFA's Acting CEO Catherine Greaves did during her short time with us, and similarly for Garry Cook as CFA's Acting Chief Officer. Both served with distinction during what was a very difficult period.

And as the new appointments of Greg, Natalie and Jason settled in, VFBV worked hard to engage the new leadership to ensure volunteers were reintegrated back into CFA's corporate DNA and continue our desire for CFA to use change as an opportunity for CFA to pivot to a more supportive and volunteer focussed community and emergency service for the benefit of our communities.

And while it is still early days, I continue to be cautiously optimistic that Greg, Natalie and Jason's approach will serve CFA well. While there is much to be done, I welcome the visible early signs of connecting the corporate CFA closer to the ground with its brigades and people out in the field. VFBV will continue to support this work, and while we won't always agree with every decision, we will always ensure that volunteer views and priorities are heard and represented to decision makers. My hope is that the new leadership will remain committed to rebuilding the trust and respect between CFA and VFBV and similarly towards its tens of thousands of dedicated volunteers who represent more than 1,217 communities across Victoria.

And finally, I want to thank and acknowledge the untiring efforts of our brigade and group delegates, District Councils, State Councillors, Board members and staff. These people continue to invest significant portions of their valuable time, energy and experience to ensure the voice and needs of volunteers is well understood and heard. While at times this can be a thankless task, no one should underestimate the incredible impact these people have not just on the future of CFA, but the safety and resilience of millions of Victorians. Thank-you and well done.

Adam Barnett
VFBV Chief Executive Officer

Despite a challenging year, VFBV continued to successfully advocate for CFA volunteers on various platforms and contribute to the continuous improvement of Victoria's fire services in many ways. While the year was dominated by the COVID-19 global pandemic and its subsequent impact and restrictions on VFBV, Brigades and members as well as the beginning of CFA's new era as a standalone volunteer only fire service following the implementation of the State Government's Fire Services Reform on 1 July 2020, VFBV has kept focus on all aspects of our portfolio and delivered pleasing results. In addition to the issues covered in detail elsewhere in this report, the following is a brief snapshot of some of the key issues for the year:

- VFBV's Welfare Fund distributed \$151,507 to assist 35 volunteers and their families during this financial year.
- VFBV continued to support volunteers in Districts 11 and 24 who were impacted by the 2019-20 Black Summer Bushfires with the *VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust* distributing \$272,000 in grants to volunteers and their families, this was possible in part due to a significant donation from the Barlow Foundation to the Trust.
- The annual VFBV Volunteer Welfare and Efficiency Survey had almost 2,700 CFA volunteer participants in 2020, with the results studied by VFBV, CFA and EMV to better understand volunteer opinions.
- VFBV Board, State Council, seven Joint VFBV/CFA Committees, 21 District Councils and numerous Working Parties continued their hard work and advocacy pursuing a huge range of issues impacting on volunteers' day to day work and our future success while also dealing with COVID-19 related restrictions.
- VFBV provided assistance to many Brigades and Groups applying for VESEP grants in both the 2020-21 and 2021-22 programs, with an updated Application Help Pack distributed for each program along with Case Studies of successful grants in previous years.
- COVID-19 restrictions continued to impact on VFBV activities, with the majority of meetings being held virtually during the last year. CFA Brigade and Group activities were also heavily impacted with Brigades maintaining their emergency response under the restrictions while also coming up with innovative ways to meet and conduct training virtually and in an engaging manner.
- VFBV continue to distribute the *VFBV Quarterly Supplement* in partnership with *Fire Wise* four times a year. The *VFBV Quarterly Supplement* is distributed to all Brigade Secretaries, Captains, Group Officers and Group Secretaries and includes 16 pages of relevant news, updates and information on current issues being pursued by VFBV on behalf of members alongside VFBV's popular Joint Committee Two-Minute Briefings.
- VFBV CEO Adam Barnett appeared as a witness to the Federal Government's *Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements* alongside other interstate volunteer association representatives.
- VFBV continued to monitor the implementation of the Victorian Government's Fire Services Reform and the subsequent creation of Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) on 1 July 2020. VFBV also continued to advocate for volunteers, particularly those volunteers at the former integrated, now Co-located Brigades.
- The Annual CFA Memorial Service was held in Melbourne, allowing attendees to visit the new Emergency Services Memorial in Treasury Gardens for the first time.
- VFBV welcomed Acting CFA CEO Catherine Graves and Acting Chief Officer Garry Cook AFSM in early July 2020, and farewelled CFA Board Chair Greg Smith AM in July. The Victorian Government subsequently appointed Greg Wilson as the new CFA Board Chair. Jason Heffernan was appointed as CFA's Chief Officer in November 2020 and Natalie MacDonald began her role as CFA's CEO in February 2021.
- Following the cancellation of the Combined Urban Senior and Rural State Championships in 2020, the combined event was run for the first time in 2021 in Mooroopna with the Urban Junior State Championship also being conducted in Mooroopna the weekend prior. There was also an impact on local competitions in the lead up to the State Championships with many being cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- VFBV compiled information and fact sheets listing Commonwealth and Victorian Government financial and other resources available to members who were impacted by both COVID-19 and the storm and flood event that affected parts of Victoria in June 2021.

Again in 2020-21 CFA Brigades and Groups have showed that it is more important than ever that volunteers have a strong, untied, independent and credible voice.

VFBV's Brigade affiliation rate remained at a high level in 2020-21 with 93% of Brigades demonstrating the strong support for VFBV's important work in representing and advocating for all CFA volunteers. VFBV also received strong support from CFA Groups with 80% of Groups choosing to affiliate with VFBV, which is VFBV's highest Group affiliation rate to date.

Four VFBV Districts achieved a 100% Brigade affiliation rate this year, with most Districts achieving an affiliation rate higher than 90% of Brigades. The strong support from Brigades and Groups which continues can be in part attributed to the hard work and good local representation of each VFBV District Council, Brigade and Group delegates and State Council delegates.

These high levels of affiliation are especially appreciated in a year that has been marked by COVID-19 restrictions. These restrictions impacted on Brigades and Groups being able to meet as some areas of the state are without reliable internet connections to allow for virtual meetings to take place. COVID-19 restrictions have also limited some Brigade's ability to fundraise within their local communities which has then in turn impacted on their ability to pay for any ongoing expenses that Brigades may have.

This high level of affiliation reinforces the importance of VFBV's legislated role in the CFA Act and our driving motivation to encourage, maintain and strengthen volunteerism and the capacity of volunteers to deliver CFA services. Good service delivery is a fundamental requirement to enabling a community to share responsibility for their own safety, to community resilience and, ultimately, to achieving a safer Victoria.

To thank Brigades and Groups for their support, all Brigades and Groups who paid their 2020-21 affiliation invoices prior to 30th June 2020 were automatically entered into a prize draw to win one of four prizes valued at \$3,660. The prizes were donated again in 2020-21 by GAAM Emergency Products and Powdersafe. VFBV acknowledges the kind and generous donations from GAAM and Powdersafe in support of VFBV and CFA Groups, Brigades and Volunteers.

The affiliation prize winners were:

Hose Roller donated by GAAM

Heywood Group, District 4

Root Soaker donated by GAAM

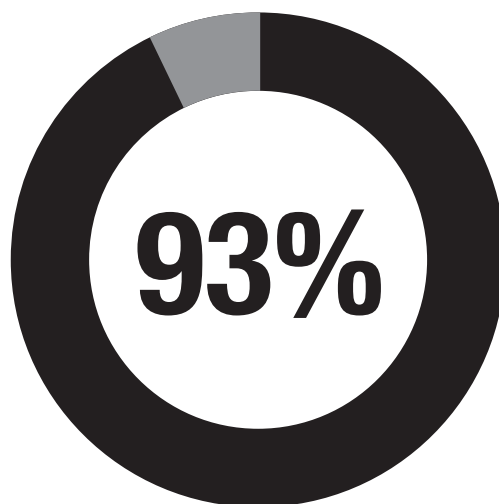
Mirboo North Fire Brigade, District 9

TFT Break Apart Nozzle donated by GAAM

Teddywaddy Fire Brigade, District 18

6 Pelican 3415M Torches donated by Powdersafe

Erica & District Fire Brigade, District 9



**of CFA Brigades affiliated
with VFBV in 2020-2021**

With COVID-19 impacts continuing through the 2020-21 year, VFBV continued to prioritise the VFBV Welfare Fund and put in place processes to ensure it continues to operate uninterrupted during various restrictions including lockdowns. All Welfare Fund operations and processes were maintained with the Welfare Fund Committee of Management continuing to meet regularly through virtual means.

Brigade subscription to the VFBV Welfare Fund has been maintained at a high level again in 2020-21, with 1,060 or 89% of CFA Brigades subscribing to the Welfare Fund. At the same time the Welfare Fund distributed \$151,507 in grants to assist 35 volunteers and their families who were experiencing personal financial hardship. The Fund's high approval rate of applications continued with 100% of applications submitted to the Fund being awarded a grant in 2020-21.

Since its creation in 1913, the Welfare Fund has assisted 1,262 volunteers with more than \$2.2 Million in grants distributed. The Fund was established to aid members who find themselves experiencing severe financial hardship and are unable to meet their essential living expenses.

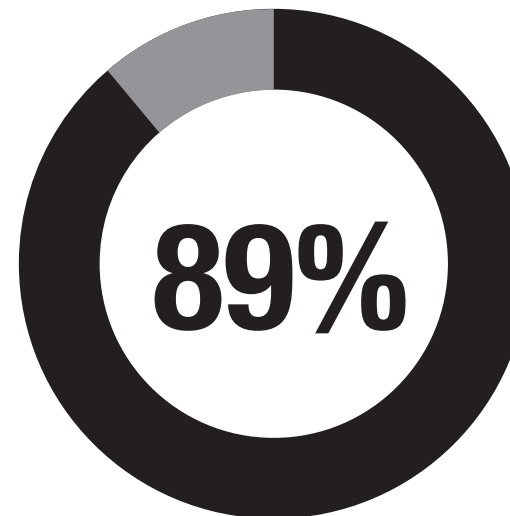
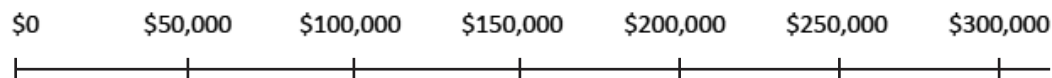
The Welfare Fund is run as a Government-approved charity under Australian Taxation Office rules with a Committee of Management comprising of six long-serving CFA volunteers. The Fund is independently audited annually, with all operating and administrative costs covered by VFBV. This ensures that every dollar earned by the Fund's investments and subscriptions goes to assisting volunteers in need. Grants from the VFBV Welfare Fund are financed by Brigade subscriptions along with interest earned on the Fund's invested capital, which ensures the Fund's capital base is maintained to support CFA volunteers in need for future generations.

In 2020-21 the Welfare Fund continued to support volunteers who have been impacted financially by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as volunteers who were impacted by the 2019-20 Black Summer Bushfires. Other more typical cases where grants were awarded included volunteers who were experiencing financial difficulty due to prolonged illness, bereavement, loss of earnings, house fire or costs associated with supporting a family member undertaking medical treatment or hospitalisation.

2019-20 - Highest Grant Distribution in last 10 years \$273,237

2020-21 - Grants Distributed this year \$151,507

2018-19 - Lowest Grant Distribution in last 10 years \$96,735



89%
of CFA Brigades are
members of the VFBV
Welfare Fund in 2020-2021

The VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust (VSRT) has been working alongside delegates and each of the VFBV District Councils in Districts 11 and 24 following the 2019-20 Black Summer fires to provide support and relief grants to those most heavily impacted and requiring additional support.

Immediately following the fires the VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust, in partnership with the VFBV Welfare Fund, provided over \$133,000 in emergency grants to support CFA volunteers whose primary residence were destroyed by the fires. These grants help support these members re-establish their homes or relocate should the memory of their loss be too great.

VFBV delegates were on the ground within days of the fires impacting volunteers and our emergency grants and application process was streamlined and expedited so that support could be provided quickly and without fuss to help those volunteers who lost their primary residence in the fires.

Over the proceeding months, VFBV worked with Captains and Group Officers to identify and reach out to others impacted. This process was made much harder by the subsequent COVID-19 lockdown and restrictions, but we determinedly pushed through and ensured these processes continued despite the COVID-19 challenges. Similar to the work conducted following the Black Saturday fires in 2009, members were supported through two main special grant initiatives. High Impact Support grants were provided to support volunteers with repairs to their damaged residences, outbuildings, machinery and help members recover from significant livestock, feed or fencing losses. Smaller general Support and Relief grants were provided to support volunteers with minor repairs or to help replace tools, equipment, pasture and smaller stretches of fencing.

While this work still continues, at the end of the financial year the VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust has paid out more than \$272,000 in grants, on top of the \$133,000 provided in emergency primary residence relief grants. This equates to over \$400,000 in direct support to CFA volunteers who were impacted by the 2019-20 bushfires from VFBV's Welfare Fund and Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust.

The Trust has now distributed close to \$1.2 million dollars since it was established over 10 years ago following the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires, which is a significant legacy. VFBV has also worked to ensure that 100% of the donations to the Trust are used entirely for grants to volunteers. VFBV covers all administration and expenses to ensure that each dollar received through donations is put to good use.

It goes without saying that the work the Trust would not have been possible without the wonderful and generous support of our donors which also reached new levels following the 2019-20 bushfires. The outpouring of support from the general public, international donors and corporate donors especially, was unprecedented.

VFBV also thanks those Brigades and individuals who made donations. In particular, VFBV wishes to acknowledge the Barlow Foundation. The Barlow Foundation was established by Beverley Barlow in 2014 and while Beverly passed away suddenly in 2017, she left a legacy and an inspiration that carries on through her multi-generational family today as demonstrated by the generous donation from the Foundation following the fires to the VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust. Thank you to the Barlow Foundation for their unwavering support for VFBV and CFA volunteers following the 2019-20 fires.

“Many thanks to the VFBV and the generous donors. This is a welcome surprise.”

Grant recipient

While no volunteer ever expects to be impacted by the very same fires they have routinely defended their communities against, which is what makes the work of our Trust so incredibly important when dealing with the fallout of large campaign fires that impacted our own. The compassion, empathy and dedication that Australians and international donors showed following the 2019-20 fires is not only humbling, but also truly inspirational.

*“I wish to sincerely thank you for consideration of this grant. The generosity of our volunteers is overwhelming.
Thank you very much.”*

Grant recipient

A big thank you to the VFBV delegates who serve as Trustees for the VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust and our Welfare Fund, the work that you do to selflessly support our members is incredibly important and much appreciated, especially in light of the increased workload as a result of the 2019-20 Bushfires.

“What a pleasant surprise!! My wife and I would like to thank the Trustees for this grant which is very welcome in these difficult times.”

Grant recipient

Overview

Some key issues that were addressed by our consultative forums and working parties during 2020-21:

STORZ COUPLING FUNDING

VFBV continued to express concern to CFA regarding the authority's refusal to properly fund the Storz coupling changeover. VFBV was disappointed to learn of CFA's attempt to use community donations money to try and avoid its responsibility to fund the changeover. Delegates to the Joint VFBV/CFA Equipment and Infrastructure and Operations Committees continued to express dismay that base Government funding is not being used to cover what can only be described as the most basic of fundamental equipment for a fire service – its fire hoses.

Storz coupling funding has been an issue since 2009 when CFA agreed to the AFAC position of implementing Storz fittings across Australia. CFA advised delegates that they would direct Districts to fund the coupling changeover and adopted the incremental approach using District funds to gradually convert Brigades to Storz. Recent data from CFA proves this system has failed with CFA figures indicated that less than one third of Brigades having completed the conversion to Storz couplings. Districts and Regions have quite rightly pushed back to say many of them do not have adequate budgets to cover the cost and have requested additional funding.

Over the last year, CFA has again attempted to divert this problem to volunteers and Brigades by requesting they use donations money to pay for the conversion. CFA continued to advise that it does not have the funding, and Brigades should use VESEP or donations programs to cover the cost. VFBV again rejected this call and expressed deep disappointment at this approach. VFBV has renewed its call for Storz changeover to be fully funded and rolled out as soon as possible and requested that CFA demonstrate to the Committees that it has a fully funded plan for its completion. VFBV does not accept that volunteers should have to tin rattle or direct previous community donations to cover the cost of essential operational equipment.

PROVISIONAL PAYMENTS SCHEME

VFBV was pleased that the Victorian Government's Provisional Payments Scheme was extended by 12 months. VFBV contributes to this pilot through the Department of Justice & Community Safety stakeholder steering committee. To date only a limited number of people have opted into the scheme resulting in an extension to ensure that adequate evaluation of the pilots objectives can be assessed. Delegates also requested fresh messaging through

CFA's communication channels to get this important message out to volunteers.

The scheme allows emergency volunteers and workers to access payments for medical treatment and services while their mental health compensation claim is being determined. The pilot scheme is open to CFA, Forest Fire Fighters, FRV, Victoria Police, VICSES, ESTA, public sector nurses and midwives, child protection practitioners, corrections Victoria, and youth justice employees.

CFA DISCIPLINE PROCESS

Throughout the year VFBV has continued to advocate for changes to the CFA Discipline Process through the Joint VFBV/CFA HR, Welfare and OH&S Committee. CFA committed to overhauling and improving the complaints process which would allow low level complaints to be dealt with at a local level and more complex and serious complaints to be investigated by external consultants and CFA's Integrity Unit.

The Committee members also worked with CFA to develop a "Customer Satisfaction Survey" which is provided to all complainants and respondents to comment on their experience of the complaints process. Themes identified for improvement include the consistency in provision of wellbeing services and the updating of volunteers throughout the process. Delegates to the Joint VFBV/CFA HR, Welfare and OH&S Committee will monitor the results of the survey and work with CFA to improve the discipline process for all members.

The Joint VFBV/CFA HR, Welfare & OH&S Committee also observed an increase in the number of discipline matters that have been escalated to a hearing process under Sections 49 – 57 of the CFA Regulations 2014. Delegates continue to raise concerns about the perception of an imbalance of power evident between the parties and are seeking a review of the hearing process to ensure volunteers are better protected and supported with due process and procedural fairness, as well as critical welfare and personal support during what can be a very stressful and confronting process for all parties.

VFBV will also continue to advocate to the State Government for the establishment of a dedicated Volunteer Ombudsman.

TRAINING COURSE UPDATES AND REVIEWS

VFBV continued to receive complaints from concerned members regarding some courses were not being delivered. VFBV contacted CFA regarding these matters and will continue to raise the concerns on a case-by-case basis as they arise. A trending theme of some course delivery delays is the upgrading of National Competencies which was required in 2019, upgrading PUA12 to PUA19 standards.

This has included mapping of courses, validating the course materials and assessment packages and where required changing packages to bring them in line with the revised national standard. This is required by Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) to maintain currency in the delivery of courses as a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). VFBV is continually working with CFA to ensure that courses are validated and updated in a timely manner so not to cause disruptions to the training schedules and members.

CFA volunteers were also notified that for several years CFA have been incorrectly awarding a national competency, Operate Pumps - PUAFIR309 as part of Minimum Skills – Bushfire Firefighter. This has been identified as being non-compliant as part of their obligations as an RTO. The non-compliance is due to Operate Pumps requiring a pre-requisite course; Prepare, Maintain and Test Response Equipment – PUAEQU001 which had not been adequately mapped in the CFA training or assessment package. VFBV has received a large amount of communication from concerned members after an initial email was sent out by CFA advising them that their training records have been changed. CFA has now replaced the national Operate Pumps competency with a CFA competency. CFA has agreed to a VFBV request that they release a formal plan and pathway to enable members to re-gain the national operate pumps qualification if they desire. VFBV delegates were engaged by CFA to assist in the process and development of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) packages for both Operate Pumps and Prepare, Maintain and Test Response Equipment which was a welcome development.

NEW LOOK WORKWEAR

VFBV welcomed CFA's announcement of progress on CFA workwear in January. A total of \$3 million in part funding for workwear was secured from the Victorian Government back in August 2017. After many years of delays and external interference, VFBV has been campaigning hard to see this project delivered.

The working party has worked in good faith with CFA during that period, providing input and ensuring volunteer feedback was constantly incorporated into CFA's final designs. In excess of 5,825 individual responses to surveys and requests for feedback have been considered by the working party demonstrating the interest and complexity in the design process. Given the broad and diverse, and sometimes polar opposite aspects of some of the feedback - this has been a challenging process, but also demonstrates the commitment to incorporate feedback. While CFA did not accept all of the working party's recommendations, we are pleased that the final design represents a smart and professional look and honours the majority of feedback received from the thousands of volunteers who

contributed to the discussions.

VFBV are also appreciative of the CFA officers who assisted with this process and supported the working party with technical knowledge. VFBV is continuing to advocate for additional funding to provide a more fair and equitable allocation across the State and we are seeking greater flexibility for Brigade and Group initial allocations to provide an opportunity for Brigade/Group management teams to have input into their respective allocations, as well as the ability for top-up orders. The workwear should begin rolling out to Brigades in late 2021.

VOLUNTEER RESIGNATIONS

VFBV have again expressed concern with CFA at the continued drop of volunteer numbers over recent successive years. The Joint VFBV/CFA Volunteerism Committee continues to review figures of volunteer resignations to gain a better understanding of why a member resigns and the key factors that contribute to members leaving the service. Delegates utilise the annual VFBV Volunteer Welfare and Efficiency Survey as well as CFA data to determine if there are obvious trends and issues. Delegates have requested updated figures and that CFA work with the committee to develop strategies and action plans to address declining numbers and key areas of concern.

VFBV continues to express great concern of the potential impact of losing members, experience and the ability to deal with major emergencies such as the recent 2019-20 bushfires and the flow on effects that this may have. The Committee is seeking further detailed information on volunteer numbers, resignations, new member applications, delay between signup and training and length of service to gain a further understanding of trends and factors affecting these. Delegates have requested CFA take a more proactive approach to ensuring the best and most up-to-date information is provided and there is a strategy to maintain volunteer numbers and satisfaction in the future.

SUPPLEMENTARY ALERTING SYSTEM (SAS)

Work continued for the VFBV delegates on the EMV led SAS working party with the first release of the SAS for Apple users occurring in September 2020. The volunteer delegates were heavily involved in the testing of the app. As the year went on, additional app updates were released to incorporate feedback from users.

Delegates to the Joint Communications and Technology Committee also escalated some privacy and security concerns expressed by some members and requested clarification or possible explanations

or fixes. It was also confirmed that no CFA medical data is shared through the platform, with any reference to medical data in the terms and conditions intended for Ambulance Victoria users and also to cover any data supplied in pager messages for Emergency Medical Response (EMR) calls.

While VFBV welcomed the release of the SAS app, volunteers are also reminded that the primary method of alerting volunteers is still the EAS pager due to its higher reliability than the mobile network.

ONLINE APPLICATIONS FOR FIRE PERMITS

VFBV has long advocated for a simple and streamlined system for the issuing of fire permits and the critical storage of this information in a centralised location for CFA, ESTA and other emergency services to access to deal with the increasing frequency of false alarms due to “smoke sightings” from legal burn-offs and planned burns.

The Joint VFBV/CFA Community Safety Committee welcomed the long awaited digital Fire Permits process that allows members of the public to apply for their permits online. The Fire Permits System is a joint system developed under the Safer Together Program between DELWP, CFA and FRV for the application and management of fire permits to improve the process across all land tenures and jurisdictions. The new system has enabled agencies to move towards a single electronic source of information that provides consistency of requirements for permitted use of fire during a restricted period or on a Total Fire Ban day.

FLEET UPDATE

Many appliance builds over the last 12 months have been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with delays not only with the local manufacturers but also with the supply chain for many of the materials and equipment required to come from outside of Australia. Despite these delays, delegates along with volunteer subject matter experts have been busy with working parties established for several new appliances.

A Light Tanker working party has been established after the Joint VFBV/CFA Equipment and Infrastructure Committee were advised by CFA that the current Light Tanker cab chassis is no longer available. This working party will work with CFA's engineers to develop and review alternate crew cab's. It is hoped that a redesign may increase the amount of water carried and also allow for a Compressed Air Foam Safety System (CFAS) to be incorporated into the design. A prototype Light Tanker Role Statement has been developed and a stowage list has been finalised with the working party now awaiting

the next steps to start the build of these much-awaited trucks.

The prototype Pumper Tanker has been completed and will undergo some testing by the working party before a state-wide tour commences. It is planned that the appliance will visit each Region to enable CFA members to be able to provide constructive feedback on the prototype vehicle.

The Ultra Heavy Tanker working party has completed the vehicle role statement and stowage list and are now awaiting a successful tender for the appliance build to be announced.

With CFA also advising the Joint VFBV/CFA Equipment and Infrastructure Committee that funding has been obtained to develop a new CAFS Tanker, a working party has been set up to develop an appropriate project plan and role statement to get this new vehicle build underway.

GROUND OBSERVERS

VFBV has continued to push for CFA to commit to making critical Ground Observer training and endorsement available to volunteers. VFBV delegates to the Joint VFBV/CFA Operations Committee have continued to highlight the lack of training and opportunity for volunteers to be endorsed as a significant emerging issue for coming fire seasons.

Strike team leaders and crew leaders would be well aware of the important role the Ground Observer plays in obtaining live incident intelligence. On the ground observations of the fire are communicated to the Incident Controller via the Situation Unit/Officer. Ground Observers traditionally provide IMT and ICC's with critical intelligence and observations of what is happening regarding weather, terrain, fire behaviour and resource allocation requirements.

Volunteers continue to report to VFBV that the Ground Observer role over time has been taken away from the volunteer ranks and barriers and lack of opportunity has frustrated and prevented volunteers from widely undertaking the ground observer role and training. CFA have acknowledged these concerns and have reported that they are engaging with Districts to gain an understanding on current ground observing capability. CFA have committed to VFBV that they are now assessing the current training package regarding its appropriateness and ability to deliver to the broader membership based on the capability required.

YOUTH CADETS

Delegates to the Joint VFBV/CFA Volunteerism Committee are progressing a pilot program for 16- and 17-Year old's in conjunction with CFA for a Youth Cadet Program. The Youth Cadet Program is developing best practice models and is close to being finalised with the pilot to commence in the second half of 2021. There will be a mix of online, face-to-face and residential components with the aim to facilitate a pathway through the organisation with a focus on leadership and team building skills. Other skills will relate to firefighting and how experienced members can support youth and vice versa. VFBV delegates have held concerns for some time relating to the drop in young members transitioning from Juniors to Senior membership in Brigades, and CFA data shows that 16- and 17-year-old members are resigning from Brigades at a rate 6.6 times faster than that of other Brigade members.

DONOR FUNDED TRAINING INITIATIVES

VFBV delegates to the Joint VFBV/CFA Training Committee have been formally engaged by CFA to be consulted on three new training initiatives which CFA are funding through donations following the 2019-20 bushfires. These projects include the further development of Crew Leader and Strike Team Leader courses, increased training capacity for new members and volunteer digital learning. Although these projects are broad VFBV is excited to enhance the training ability and capacity for all volunteers and will work collaboratively through sub-committees and other forums to ensure suitable outcomes for members. VFBV's annual Volunteer Welfare and Efficiency Survey consistently outlines volunteers concerns with training. These results have played a major part in assisting CFA to secure additional funding to rectify training issues and improve training for the future.

FIRECOM

VFBV expressed disappointment via the Joint VFBV/CFA Communications and Technology Committee about the very poor change management process involved in replacing CFA's VICFIRE callsign with FIRECOM and the lack of planning, consultation or training. Despite communications to the contrary, this was not an agreed or identified activity that was planned for or recognised under the fire services reform governance structure. The lack of change management, training and notice is a serious matter and resulted in a significant safety concern with its implementation being in direct conflict with operational doctrine and practice. VFBV escalated its concerns to the operational assurance group, with the intent to also raise the issue with the independent monitor

CFA ROADSIDE SIGNAGE

For a number of years now, VFBV delegates to the Joint VFBV/CFA Community Safety Committee have been concerned about the maintenance and upkeep of CFA's roadside signage across the state and the danger to members working alongside busy roadways or near blind spots while updating and maintaining various fire related signage.

The delegates have requested a systemic review of locations across the state, and for a maintenance program to be initiated to review any signs deemed as being positioned in high-risk zones, with the resolution being consideration of relocation to a safer or more accessible area, or replacement with electronic signage that can be updated remotely.

As a result of our delegates advocacy, a working group was formed to further escalate the issue to the CFA Health, Safety, Environment & Wellbeing (HSEW) Executive committee. Delegates will continue to monitor progress towards resolution, and will escalate further should progress again stall.

RESPONSE TABLE AMENDMENT REVIEW

VFBV has worked with CFA to provide input and review CFA's response table amendment process to ensure the mandatory consultation process with Brigades is met and documented when changes are proposed that impact upon Brigade response tables. Work on a broad response table review and a new review guiding principles document has been developed and is awaiting final Chief Officer review. Briefings on the new amendment process are planned to be delivered across the state with presentations already delivered to most of the Regions and some DPC's. CFA will be circulating the principles document, flowchart and change forms to all Brigades.

The new process includes support documents, the response and review guiding principles outline and an agreed signoff process for Brigade management teams to have input to any changes. This will ensure any proposed amendments are transparent and the consultation process has been clearly documented as part of the approval process.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PROJECTS

Delegates to the Joint VFBV/CFA Volunteerism Committee have been working cooperatively with CFA on a number of exciting recruitment and retention projects in collaboration with the volunteer support team. These projects are aimed to promote, encourage, retain and re-engage volunteer members to ensure the future sustainability of CFA.

One project that has been completed is the Information for Families Guide. This Guide is designed to support family members and/or caregivers of new members by giving them tailored information about what experiences and impacts volunteering with CFA may have on them and their families. Ensuring families are informed about what it means to be a part of CFA contributes to the health, safety, wellbeing, inclusion and ultimately retention of CFA members.

Other projects in progress are the Expression of Interest (EOI) portal. This EOI process is initially started when a member of the public registers on the CFA public web page wanting to join as a volunteer. Delegates have previously raised a number of concerns relating to the long delay from when a person first actually registers, and when they are eventually referred to the local Brigade. A system is being developed to improve this process and facilitate the timely notification to a Brigade that someone in their area is wanting to join. The project is still in the early stages and delegates are keen to receive any Brigade feedback on what other improvements you would like to see.

The Brigade Management App is another project being scoped to improve the recording of member activities and time spent on CFA related activities. This is useful information for areas such as nominations for awards, applying for grants and general promotion to the public of how much commitment is made by volunteers to their communities.

VFBV delegates are also collaborating with CFA on the design, development and implementation of CFA's Flexible Volunteering Models to assist with recruitment and retention with the understanding that a single model may not fit every Brigade's requirements. Workshops with volunteers were conducted throughout the year with many ideas and barriers to flexible volunteering identified. Delegates will continue to work in collaboration with CFA to develop pilot projects to trial and seek further feedback from members.

VFBV continues to build volunteer involvement across the emergency management sector. These connections complement VFBV's network of Board, State Council, District Councils, Group and Brigade engagement, which provides VFBV with unparalleled reach to the grass roots of CFA, ensuring VFBV representatives are well informed by rank-and-file members and local consultative forums. The VFBV framework makes for an extremely credible, knowledgeable and cohesive input into decisions.

VFBV/CFA JOINT COMMITTEES

VFBV/CFA Joint Committees are a critical part of the consultative framework, offering a direct line of communication between volunteers and state-level decision makers. Each Committee endeavours 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. Collectively the Joint Committees meet, on average, 28 times a year and involve over 80 volunteer delegates drawn from each of the 21 District Councils.

VFBV sincerely thanks all Joint Committee volunteer delegates for their time and contribution, which is instrumental for our consultative process. Their efforts make an immense difference to all volunteers across the state and to the effectiveness of volunteer input into CFA decision-making.

Committee	Joint Communications & Technology	Joint Community Safety	Joint Equipment & Infrastructure	Joint HR, Welfare & OH&S	Joint Operations	Joint Training	Joint Volunteerism
Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supplementary Alerting System Digital Radio Upgrades Advance Mobile Location Member portal upgrade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication reviews Community Engagement Activity Reporting Tool (ART) Mobile Education Unit Online application for fire permits Australian National Fire Danger Ratings Integrated Fire Management Planning guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storz Coupling Funding Light Tanker, Pumper Tanker and Ultra Heavy Tanker appliance builds Structural Helmet Storage Rescue and EMR brigade equipment updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CFA Discipline Process Child Safety New Medical Services Provider Provisional Payments Scheme Extension Assistance for members with Diabetes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-located brigade support Long term vacancies Response table amendment review Fire Investigators Ground Observers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AFAC Training Peer Review Recognition of Prior Learning Instructor Helmets Volunteer leadership programs General Thermal Imaging Camera training Loss of instructors to FRV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Cadets program Volunteer resignations COVID-Safe Championships Recruitment and Retention projects Information for families of new CFA volunteers National Emergency Medal
Committee Members	Dave Arnott Andrew Bath Shane Cramer Jac Dive Neil Irving-Dusting Nathan Jolly Mick Jones John Northey Jim Parsons David Sidebottom Gary Taylor Duncan Terry	Samantha Ackland Graham Cocks Mary Anne Egan Libby Hay Elissa Jans Bruce Jewell Phil Lind Maree Varley Darryl Wagstaff	Noel Austin Geof Bassett Mark Jones Stephen O'Keefe Gary Parlbay Bruce Pickett Phil Slender David Stephens Ben Stork Rob Waterson Peter White Jason Willis Trevor Wyatt	Steven Atkinson Robert Auchterlonie Kelvin Bateman Mark Gravell Ian Hannaford Vickie Linaker Michael O'Mara Lesley Read Eric Smith Howard Smith Bill Watson	Ron Cole Jan Cleary Andy Cusack Tim Desmond Rohan France Lachlan Gales Mark King Adrian Marshman Peter Shaw Peter Solley Leigh Tomlinson Greg Walcott David Webb Ware	Craig Aiton Noel Arandt Janet Auchterlonie John Davies Paul Denham Colin James Graeme Jilbert Harold Jochs Raymond McGeehan Greg McIntyre Rod Taylor Justin Wills	Malcolm Bishop Robert Clark Maurice Dumesny Neil Hillas Jeanene Howard Ryan O'Shannessy Julie Owens Samantha Rothman Roger Smith Simon Steele Bryan Walpole

VOLUNTEERS HAVE THEIR SAY

Through VFBV's network of 21 District Councils and elected volunteer representatives, VFBV maintains direct links with volunteers. VFBV's process of engaging with and seeking feedback from volunteers is vital in enabling VFBV to credibly advocate to CFA on behalf of volunteers.

VFBV sought feedback through its representative networks and encouraged all members to participate in discussions at the District, Group and Brigade level on a number of important issues during the last year:

Child Safety Policy Review

In late 2020, CFA commenced formal consultation on proposed changes to two CFA policies and one procedure relating to improving Child Safety within CFA. The draft proposals included a proposed requirement for members to complete a Working with Children Check as part of their application process when they join CFA and also a proposed procedure for when an adverse notice is received.

There was a high level of support and consensus for the majority of the proposed changes, with an overwhelming majority of support for the introduction of mandatory Working with Children Checks for all new CFA volunteers and staff.

There was however two aspects of the changes that received overwhelming negative feedback and criticism from volunteers. The first was that VFBV categorically rejects the proposed exclusion of FRV seconded personnel from needing to comply with the new Working with Children Check procedure. While acknowledging the difficult industrial relations environment present, volunteers were adamant that CFA has a moral as well as a legal responsibility to pursue other means of achieving organisation-wide child safe policies in line with child safe legislation.

VFBV also did not support the proposed procedure to deal with adverse notices, echoing concerns raised by volunteers about the lack of confidence in CFA's existing privacy and confidentiality process and also raising concerns about the lack of procedural fairness. CFA agreed to VFBV's request to form a small working party to work together on a revised procedure that addresses the shortfalls and provides a foundation for a new draft procedure to further consult on. This further demonstrates our approach and commitment attempting to work positively with CFA in the first instance to influence change.

AFAC Peer Training Review

In early 2021, the CFA Chief Officer commissioned a short peer review into CFA training to be conducted by representatives of AFAC and similar volunteer organisations including South Australian Country Fire Service and NSW Rural Fire Service. Volunteer and VFBV feedback on training has been consistent for many years, and part of this review will include a look at the outcomes of previous reviews and inquiries and how well those recommendations have been acted on. VFBV provided the review team with extensive background information covering extensive volunteer feedback from both the Garnock Training Review (2009) and the Jones Inquiry (2011). Data collected from the annual VFBV Volunteer Welfare and Efficiency Survey was also presented to the review team along with VFBV's submissions to the Fire Services Review (2015) and the more recent Commonwealth Royal Commission and state-based IGEM review into the 2019-20 fire season.

VFBV also facilitated approximately 60 volunteers from a diverse range of Brigades and Districts as well as representatives of the Joint VFBV/CFA Training and Operations Committees to meet with the review team across three focus groups. The review is an important opportunity to influence future priorities and action to improve CFA training, and while the review is intended to operate at a strategic level and its aim is to make positive recommendations for how CFA training can be best delivered going forward in the new environment. The review team have advised that the report delivered to CFA is not intended to be a list of things that don't work, but rather a list of observations and recommendations for how training should be managed and delivered into the future.

2020 VFBV VOLUNTEER WELFARE AND EFFICIENCY SURVEY

The annual VFBV Volunteer Welfare and Efficiency Survey opened in November 2020 and ran until early 2021, with almost 2,700 CFA volunteers taking part in the survey.

The annual VFBV Volunteer Welfare and Efficiency Survey is an initiative by VFBV designed by and for volunteers to help capture and communicate fundamental issues as volunteers see them. The survey contains 33 questions on topics chosen by volunteers.

The survey is critical and important tool that gives CFA and other decision makers clear feedback, directly from volunteers about the issues affecting them. It is a critical tool in monitoring short-and-long-term trends and the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at improving CFA volunteer engagement and wellbeing.

The survey is a reliable and important method that is used to capture the views of volunteers at a point in time while also tracking trends in volunteer opinion over the years. It is one of the largest surveys of its kind in Australia. As with previous years, VFBV supported other Australian States and Territory volunteer associations in running the survey within other fire services to gain a national perspective on volunteer views through the Council of Australian Volunteer Fire Associations (CAVFA). VFBV also worked with our colleagues from the Victorian SES Volunteers Association (VicSESV) in offering the survey to VICSES members in recognition of the shared respect between CFA and VICSES volunteers.

The survey results are used by VFBV to advocate on behalf of volunteers and also by senior leaders across the emergency management sector. The results go straight to decision and policy makers, within CFA, EMV and Government. It shapes and drives the important advocacy work that is done in the background to help volunteers.

It was clear from the number of responses to the 2020 survey that Brigades and Groups had worked hard to promote the survey and encourage members to participate, with the number of participants surpassing the 2019 survey. This is an outstanding result considering that COVID-19 related restrictions were in place that prevented a lot of in person interaction.

The results of the 2020 survey show that there has been a decline in volunteer satisfaction when compared to previous years across several key areas. The two worst performing areas contributing to volunteer dissatisfaction are again volunteer consultation (or lack thereof) and training.

More detailed results from the 2020 Survey can be found on pages 18 and 19 of this report.

VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY SERVICES EQUIPMENT PROGRAM (VESEP)

VESEP is an ongoing program funded by the Victorian Government. The annual program was established over 20 years ago after VFBV proposed an annual program to provide emergency services volunteer groups with grants. VESEP provides funding to assist emergency services volunteers in acquiring a wide range of ancillary equipment in recognition of their significant contribution in supporting Victorian communities in times of emergency.

The 2020-21 program was launched in late August 2020 with applications closing in mid-November 2020. The successful applications were announced in early April 2021, with 137 CFA Brigades and Groups sharing in \$10.3million in grants. Of the successful grants, 58 were for the replacement or upgrade firefighting or specialist vehicles, 32 for volunteer amenities improvements, 30 for minor works projects and 17 for operational equipment. In addition to the Brigade and Group grants, a further \$1.8million was awarded for state-wide initiatives which included 23 Road Crash Rescue Brigades receiving updated equipment. The 2021-22 program was announced by the Government in late April and applications closed in mid-June. The successful projects from this round of funding will be announced later in 2021.

As in previous years, VFBV has provided an Application Help Pack for both programs which includes Case Studies to assist Brigades and Groups in preparing their application for the program. The Help Pack includes practical suggestions to help with the application process and compiles CFA information sheets and application forms as a one stop shop of information.

VFBV SUPPORT OFFICERS

VFBV's team of five Support Officers cover the entire state and work directly with volunteers, Brigades, Groups and each of the 21 VFBV District Councils. VFBV Support Officers provide technical, administrative and leadership assistance and hands on practical support in each of CFA's five Regions. They are an important link in VFBV's Brigade and Group engagement and consultation network to volunteers, Brigades, District Councils and other local CFA committees and processes.

VFBV Support Officers are experienced CFA volunteers, many having occupied senior Brigade leadership positions. They work on state-wide projects in addition to providing localised support and engagement with volunteers.

VFBV CEO APPEARS AT COMMONWEALTH ROYAL COMMISSION

In early July 2020, VFBV Chief Executive Officer Adam Barnett appeared as a witness for the Commonwealth Government's Royal Commission into National Natural Disasters. Adam appeared at the Royal Commission alongside representatives from the Council of Australian Volunteer Firefighter Association (CAVFA), NSW Rural Fire Service Association (RFS), and Rural Fire Brigades Association of Queensland (RFBAQ).

Adam's appearance before the Royal Commission followed VFBV's extensive submission to the Royal Commission which advocated strongly for respect and recognition of the fundamental importance of volunteers in disaster preparedness, response and relief arrangements across Australia. VFBV also advocated for strengthened and improved support for volunteer safety, consultation, support, training and recognition.

The Royal Commission's final report was tabled in Parliament on 30th October 2020, and VFBV welcomed the report. The final report makes 80 recommendations to improve Australia's national natural disaster arrangements. The recommendations were welcomed by VFBV and are regarded as positive, pragmatic and common-sense recommendations that will serve Australia's disaster arrangements well. Many of the recommendations are strongly supported by VFBV's evidence, witness testimony and volunteer views that were put to the Commission during its deliberations. VFBV look forward to engaging with the relevant State and Commonwealth governments as the recommendations are progressively adopted and implemented.

CHILD SAFETY

As reported in previous years VFBV introduced a Child Safe Policy in early 2018. While VFBV's role as an organisation does not include the care or supervision of children as part of our primary function, it was important to lead by example and to recognise child safety not just as a legal obligation but also as a moral obligation.

Since then, the VFBV Board and CEO have worked with State Council to commit to an aspirational target of maximum density adoption of Working with Children Checks for all senior state level VFBV officials. The intent of this was to not only lead by example but to demonstrate that volunteers will always respond better to change when it is done respectfully and in partnership. By using a risk-based approach to identify those roles where it was essential (such as officials at our State Junior Championships) and implemented immediate checks for those roles over two years ago.

In late 2020, VFBV exceeded its target and achieved 100% result across all senior state level VFBV roles, which means that all VFBV Board members, State Councillors and VFBV employee's hold a valid Working with Children Check.

ZERO BLOOD ALCOHOL CONTENT

Changes to Victoria's Road Safety Act were announced via the Government Gazette dated Tuesday 30 March and proclaimed to come into effect just days later on 1st April 2021. Among the amendments to the Act, was a change to section 40 where "large vehicle" was changed to "heavy vehicle" having the effect of introducing a 0.00% Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) for any person driving a vehicle over 4.5 tonne GVM. This restriction had previously only applied to vehicles greater than 15 tonnes GVM.

With the new rule now applying for all vehicles over 4.5 tonne, it means that it now picks up almost the entirety of CFA's fleet of firefighting appliances, not to mention the impacts on the private sector, the transport industry and all interstate drivers where rules between states differ significantly.

Inexplicably there was no notice or public education campaign to educate the public about these significant changes prior to the proclamation of the legislation, and even CFA confirmation of the changes was not provided until after coming into effect on 1st April. This is a significant departure from standard practice. VFBV escalated this matter to the Minister seeking an explanation but was yet to receive a response by 30 June 2021.

While VFBV is not debating the merits of this change, to introduce a significant change without notice, without public education or the changes and without resourcing support for the change management journey required to mitigate the impacts on what is essentially a 24/7 on-call workforce like CFA and VICSES is unconscionable.

Both State Council and the VFBV Board discussed this issue and are calling on the Government to remove caps, limits and budgetary pressures currently in place that restrict CFA volunteers' ability to upgrade their licenses and access driver training. Significant investment is required to increase the driver capability and number of available drivers to account for the significant vigilance required to monitor zero BAC.

Volunteers faced significant challenges in 2020-21 with the creation of Fire Rescue Victoria from 1 July 2020 as a result of the Victorian Government's Fire Services Reform and the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

FIRE SERVICES REFORM

VFBV continued its considerable work to try and mitigate the consequences from the fire services reform implementation. It was a very difficult and negative environment to work within and we admire and respect those members and delegates involved in the discussions and negotiations. In particular, the Captains, Captain-elects, former 1st Lieutenants and all members of the former CFA integrated Brigades who had to deal with the stress and anxiety of trying to represent their Brigades and members through very unfair and inequitable processes.

Asset Allocation Statements

VFBV worked closely with each location to provide tailored support and advocacy for any issues that were raised. VFBV supported Brigades through the asset allocation process to identify which Brigade assets that will either remain with CFA or transfer to FRV. VFBV supported any Brigade that intended to dispute any item transferred to FRV and have worked with Government to provide a guarantee that no equipment that was paid for by volunteers would be transferred without volunteers agreeing to the transfer. If an agreement could not be reached VFBV successfully advocated for a full reimbursement provided to the Brigade to ensure the equipment could be replaced without volunteers being out of pocket.

Changes in CFA Leadership

Throughout the last year there have been a number of changes in CFA's senior leadership positions. Following on from Steven Warrington AFSM's resignation as CFA Chief Officer and CEO in late June 2020, Garry Cook AFSM was announced as CFA's acting Chief Officer and Catherine Greaves as the acting CEO, both of these announcements were for an initial 3-month period which were subsequently extended. VFBV welcomed these announcements and worked with both Catherine and Garry to navigate the early stages of the reform within CFA.

Shortly after the announcements of an acting CEO and Chief Officer for CFA, the CFA Board Chair Greg Smith AM announced his sudden resignation on 15th July. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services announced on 21st July that Mr Greg Wilson would be the new CFA Chair. Greg is currently the chair of the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) and the Victorian State Emergency Service

(VICSES) as well previously being employed as a former secretary of the Department of Justice and Regulation and Department of Sustainability and Environment.

Jason Heffernan commenced in the role as CFA's Chief Officer on 30 November 2020. Jason came to CFA from NSW where he was an Assistant Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service and has more than 20 years' experience as a volunteer firefighter. Jason came highly recommended by VFBV's fellow volunteer association in NSW and had demonstrated a proven track record in advocating strongly for volunteers and building sustainable volunteer capability and capacity.

CFA's new CEO, Natalie MacDonald commenced with CFA in late February 2021. Natalie came to CFA from La Trobe University where she held the role of Vice-President of Strategy and Development and has held previous roles in Queensland Government Departments and the Queensland Ambulance Service.

VFBV thanks Cath and Garry for stepping up and taking on leadership roles in CFA at a critical time and providing diligent and stable leadership during what could only be described as some of CFA's darkest days.

Fire Investigators

In the lead up to reform, VFBV warned CFA that arrangements within the interagency Fire Investigation Unit may hinder and prevent volunteer fire investigators from being responded or recognised. Despite assurances to the contrary and the service level agreement accommodating the continued use of volunteer investigators - it is clear from the work instructions that were issued by FRV that volunteers were being cut out of structural fire investigation.

Volunteer investigators (who have the exact same fire investigation qualifications as paid investigators) have conducted this role for decades and are amongst some of the most experienced investigators in the State. Volunteer and paid investigators have worked extremely well together and frequently expressed unity during recent changes proposed to fire investigator practices. Volunteer and paid investigators alike are distraught their good working relationships and mutual respect is being wedged apart by divisive and petty industrial positioning.

After strong representations by VFBV, CFA has reported that a 'status quo' arrangement is finally in place and volunteer fire investigators can and must be engaged to ensure service delivery is maintained. VFBV continues to point out that volunteer fire investigators undertake the same training and skills maintenance as their FRV counterparts, so

there is no legitimate reason why they cannot continue to undertake investigations, and not doing so is clearly discriminating against volunteers. VFBV will continue to pursue an outcome and will monitor progress.

Long Term Vacancies

VFBV delegates to the Joint VFBV/CFA Operations Committee were disappointed to hear that the number of Assistant Chief Fire Officers (ACFO) and Commander vacancies across the state have increased over the last year. VFBV have continued to advocate that these vacancies have a flow on effect by putting more pressure on other District staff to fill the workload void and ultimately more work is being pushed down to Groups, Brigade Captains and BMT's.

Delegates also requested that CFA develop a simple online portal where a volunteer can quickly look up online who their respective ACFO, Commander and district personnel are for the week or month ahead. This transparency for volunteers will help members to know in advance who they can talk to at a District level to get their queries answered and for Brigades to know who would be available to attend meetings or special occasions such as medal presentations or Brigade anniversaries.

Co-located Brigade Support

VFBV has continued to strongly advocate for Co-located Brigades across the state, with an opportunity provided in early 2021 for Co-located Brigade delegates to discuss and address issues of concern with the CFA Chief Officer directly.

Brigades are still reporting concerns about the lack of support and communication between Districts and the Brigades with some requiring additional assistance to work through tenancy agreement related issues with instances reported where the agreed status quo is not being observed. VFBV continues to advocate for more direct engagement and support to be provided to these locations.

In recent news, CFA have agreed to a request by Co-located Brigades for some additional support and direction for the future and working on plans for the Brigades into the near, medium and long term. CFA have reported that Co-located Brigades should now raise issues with their local District office and escalate to their DCO should they have further concerns, with each District now required to engage with each Co-located Brigade directly and assist with the development of Brigade specific forward looking support plans.

Instructor Helmets

VFBV representatives to the Joint VFBV/CFA Training Committee have continued to receive questions from volunteers in relation to CFA's reluctance to confirm the use of blue helmets worn by volunteer trainer and assessors at training grounds to identify them as trainers. In some instances, volunteers have been told that they can no longer wear a blue helmet because of supposed EBA stipulations and CFA's concern of industrial action. VFBV are advocating strongly to CFA that fire service reform and changes in legislation were supposedly designed to stop EBA's interfering with volunteers therefore VFBV does not accept any impacts on volunteer trainer and assessors wearing blue helmets when conducting training. CFA has committed to VFBV, a status quo arrangement until further consultation concludes, which means that those who currently have been issued with blue helmets can continue to wear them when conducting training including at a training ground. VFBV urged members who are told that they cannot wear blue helmets to make a formal complaint in writing to CFA and let VFBV know of the incident so that it can be followed up in a timely manner. VFBV will not accept volunteers being mistreated and disadvantaged and expect CFA to protect them from any unlawful discrimination or harassment.

Instructor Losses

The Joint VFBV/CFA Training Committee delegates have escalated concerns about the changes to CFA Instructor numbers that have been seconded from FRV. Vacancies and other matters have resulted in a loss of approximately five substantive instructor positions across the State, with other losses across the Districts that impact upon administration roles within the District training teams. Volunteers contacted VFBV to express deep concerns at these reductions claiming they will have a dramatic effect on CFA's ability to provide training to volunteers. Further impacts have been experienced with the changes to operational HQ positions embedded in the training department resulting in changes of consistency across portfolios. Further employment constraints have started to emerge as FRV seconded instructors have indicated they will not support online training.

Government Funded Campaign

VFBV heard from many members in November 2020 who were incensed at the TV and print media campaign launched and paid for by the Victorian Government on behalf of FRV. These ads ran over a couple of months stating that FRV is ready and prepared. The density of these adverts in areas predominately covered by CFA Brigades was considered by many to be offensive to the many CFA volunteers who have felt completely overlooked and have rightly asked why the

Government only funded a campaign for one fire service (FRV) and not a dual badged campaign letting all Victorians know their volunteer and career fire services are equally ready.

The volunteers who contacted VFBV were very clear that they don't begrudge their career counterparts and that they deserved some recognition, but the ads were clearly insensitive and offensive towards CFA and the vital contribution of over 55,000 hardworking CFA volunteers following one of Australia's worst fire seasons.

These ads reflected very poorly on the Government to be so blatantly one-sided and sadly was yet another example of the disdain and lack of respect for the incredible work being done by all firefighters (volunteer and paid) ahead of the fire season to train, prepare and plan.

Opposition Policy Announcement

On 1 July 2020, the Victorian Liberal-National Party Coalition announced, that if elected, they would restore CFA's independence and autonomy within the first 100 days of taking office. The opposition also committed to genuinely consult with VFBV and CFA volunteers to identify the essential powers, people and resources needed to rebuild and restore CFA's independence and standing. The policy announcement included strengthening the CFA Volunteer Charter and the formation of an independent Volunteer Ombudsman/Commissioner.

VFBV welcomed this announcement with CEO Adam Barnett describing these commitments as constructive reforms that strengthen and support our firefighters and truly modernise our fire services and allows each fire service to flourish and thrive. VFBV is continuing to pursue positive and constructive policy that takes us away from the destructive and chaotic changes that have recently been forced upon CFA and that sidelined, ignored and have taken for granted the selfless firefighters who Victoria depends on upon. VFBV will continue to call on all political parties to unite on this issue and support these initiatives.

COVID-19 IMPACTS

COVID-19 measures and restrictions continued throughout 2020-21. While these restrictions did not impede CFA Brigades and volunteers' ability to respond, with emergency plans activated and protocols in place to maintain emergency response continuity to Victorian communities.

For VFBV, the restrictions meant meetings of VFBV Board, State Council and State Council Executive continued to be held virtually, with meetings taking place either via videoconference or teleconference. District Councils also continued to meet using either videoconference or teleconference where suitable. There was a small period in April 2021 which allowed for meetings to be held in person. All seven VFBV/CFA Joint Committees also continued to meet using virtual means throughout 2020-21 with only a small number of meetings held in person in early 2021.

For VFBV's Secretariat it was business as usual with limited VFBV staff working from the office at any one time and all other staff working from home, this maintained VFBV's normal work practices and support to Brigades, volunteers and our membership.

COVID-19 restrictions also forced the postponement of VFBV's Annual General Meeting (AGM) from September to December 2020, more detail on the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions on VFBV's AGM can be found on page 25.

COVID-19 Impacts on Training Delivery

VFBV delegates to the Joint VFBV/CFA Training Committee continued to express concerns regarding the impact to training caused directly by the COVID-19 pandemic and CFA restrictions that have been in place that prevented Brigades from conducting face-to-face training and practical assessments. Delegates have cited examples raised by senior volunteers that illustrate a large backlog of courses which can only be partially completed electronically, and still require practical components to be completed. With the high uptake of e-learning courses during the pandemic, it is feared this backlog will have a significant impact on new skills acquisition training well into the coming years. CFA Training has accepted these concerns and has agreed to monitor and provide regular updates to the committee on prioritisation of training delivery state-wide and how the backlog is being managed. Delegates will also continue to advocate for greater participation and encouragement of volunteer trainer and assessors so that Brigade viability and operational capability is top of mind.

The annual VFBV Volunteer Welfare and Efficiency Survey attracted responses from almost 2,700 CFA volunteers when it was conducted in late 2020 and early 2021. The survey, in its ninth year, provides highly valid and credible results that are a true representation of the views of CFA volunteers.

The VFBV Volunteer Welfare and Efficiency Survey is an initiative by VFBV designed by and for volunteers to help capture and communicate fundamental issues as volunteers see them. It is conducted annually, with the first survey conducted in 2012. The VFBV Volunteer Welfare and Efficiency Survey is a critical and important tool that gives CFA and other decision makers clear feedback, directly from volunteers about the issues that are affecting their welfare and efficiency. For many volunteers this survey is one of the key opportunities to have their voice heard, both individually and collectively.

The survey measures volunteer opinions on what is important to their welfare and efficiency and how well CFA is performing according to what they are experiencing, the gap between the measurement of importance and performance is referred to as the Volunteer Welfare and Efficiency Level (VolWEL) outcome. A high VolWEL is a sign that things are not working well, and while a low VolWEL is a sign that things are working well. Any VolWEL over 2.0 indicates a large to critical gap is emerging and volunteers are highly dissatisfied with arrangements requiring priority attention.

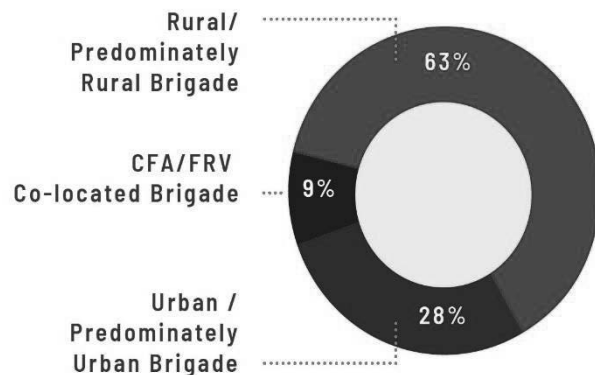
The 2020 survey was conducted later than usual, running between November 2020 and January 2021, to allow for the implementation of the changed structure of the fire services so that volunteers were able to observe the initial impacts from the changed environment and structures.



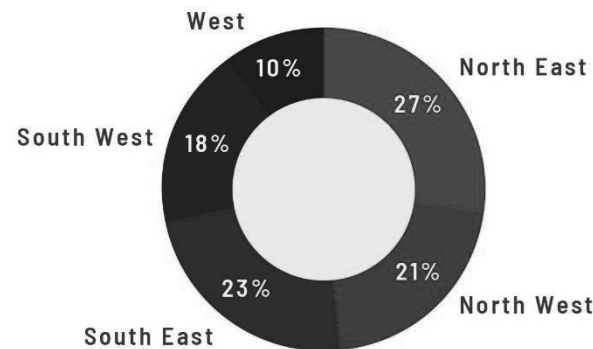
WE LISTENED TO
2693
CFA VOLUNTEERS

GENDER  15%  83%

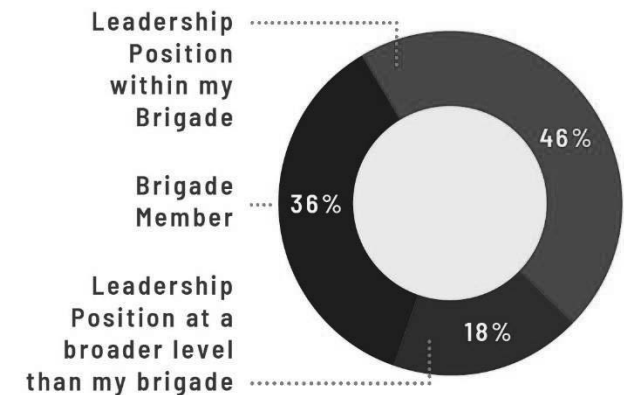
BRIGADE TYPE



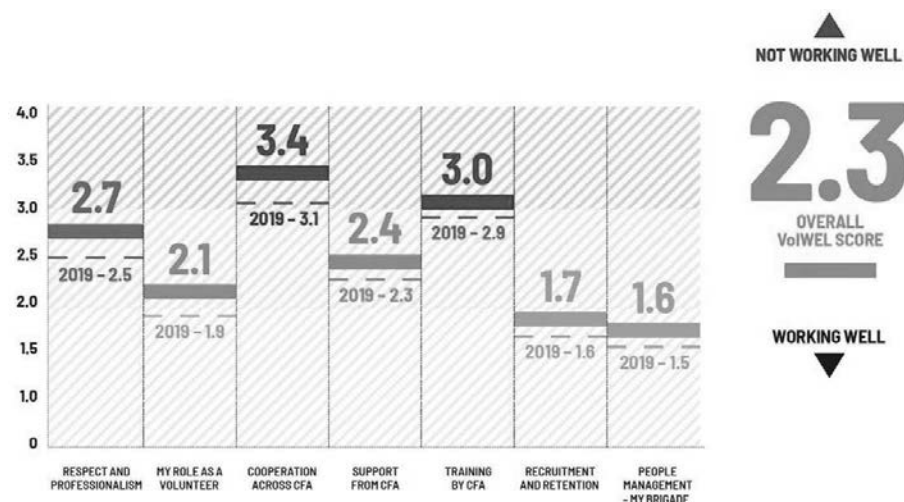
REGION RESPONSE



VOLUNTEER ROLE



VOLUNTEER WELFARE & EFFICIENCY LEVEL (VoIWEL) - OVERALL RESULTS



It is disappointing, but not surprising that again the survey results show that volunteer satisfaction, in most areas surveyed, has declined. This decrease in satisfaction is particularly evident in the Cooperation Across CFA and Training by CFA themes. The significant gap between what volunteers expect and the actual, lived experience of volunteers remains. The VoIWEL result for each of these themes indicate that priority attention is required to improve volunteer satisfaction.

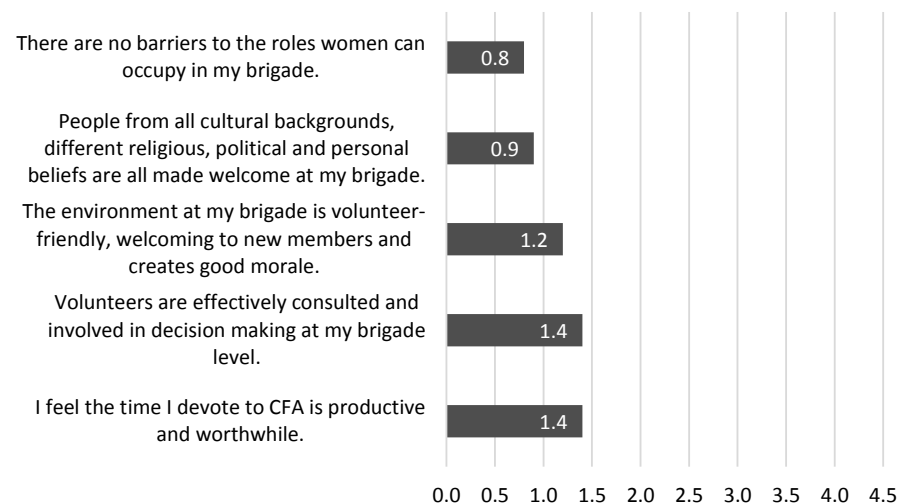
Conversely, the results also demonstrate that CFA provides a welcoming environment, that engagement and consultation at Brigade level is satisfactory, and that in spite of challenges, and low satisfaction levels, volunteers feel the time they devote to CFA is worthwhile.

The survey results indicate that volunteers have an enormous level of concern over matters such as effective consultation, corporate policies which support a volunteer based and fully integrated organisation and the provision of training opportunities that are aligned with volunteer requirements and expectations.

While a significant decline in volunteer satisfaction is evident, there is an opportunity for CFA, the Victorian State Government and VFBV to take into account the survey results to build on a more cohesive, supportive and well-resourced volunteer-based organisation, respecting its volunteer who give their time freely to protect their local communities as well as communities across Victoria and Australia.

MOST POSITIVE VoIWEL OUTCOMES

These statements have the smallest VoIWEL outcomes, indicating that CFA volunteers expectations are closer to being met on these topics.



POOREST VoIWEL OUTCOMES

These statements have the worst VoIWEL outcomes. These results show that volunteers are highly dissatisfied and that their expectations are not being met.



With COVID-19 restrictions in Victoria continuing through 2020, it was still unclear whether local competitions would be able to be conducted during the 2020-21 competition season or the State Championships in 2021. VFBV and CFA however planned for the best case scenario and that restrictions would ease in time for these events to go ahead, dependent on Government restrictions and the directions of the Chief Health Officer.

In September 2020 VFBV forwarded all competing Brigades a request that they indicate their intention to compete subject to Government advice and restrictions and the numbers of competitors and Brigade members potentially attending. With a good number of Brigade responses received, this information was used to support CFA's COVID-19 Plan that was required to be submitted as part of the application to Government for the State Championships to be conducted.

VFBV received formal advice mid November from the Horsham Fire Brigade that they did not wish to proceed with hosting the 2021 State Urban Junior Championship, due to the uncertainty around COVID-19, with both VFBV and CFA accepting the Brigade's decision.

VFBV and CFA management held initial discussions with the Mooroopna Host Committee regarding moving the Urban Junior Championship to Mooroopna at short notice, with the Committee given time to understand the additional workload. There were complex considerations the Committee needed to work through, including some child safety related matters which would take some time to evaluate the arrangements and requirements.

In a welcome move, the Mooroopna Host Committee agreed to save the event and take on the Urban Juniors in addition to hosting the Urban Seniors and Rural State Championships, with it being agreed to conduct the Urban Juniors the weekend before the combined event of the Urban Seniors and the Rural Championships to cater for the availability of the tracks and to support the Committee with the herculean task of hosting all State Championships on successive weekends. Brigades were advised late November of the change of date and location for the 2021 State Urban Junior Championship.

The State Championships were to be hosted under strict COVID-19 protocols and a comprehensive COVID-Safe plan, with both VFBV and CFA committed to the safety of all competitors, officials and supporters as our first priority. The workload involved was extremely difficult and time consuming to not only attain the necessary event approvals but satisfy the ever-changing health and COVID-19 restrictions, and there were a multitude of people involved in this work.

VFBV thanks the CFA and the CFA Events Team in the Volunteerism directorate, the Pandemic Management Team, the Child Safety team and especially the Mooroopna Host Committee who stepped up to every challenge and exceeded our expectations each and every time. These events don't just happen, and the incredible team work that went on behind the scenes was just incredible.

It was only a matter of weeks before the first event, the State Urban Junior Championship in mid-March, that final approval was received from the Victorian Department of Health for all 2021 State Championships to go ahead.

The inaugural combining of Urban Senior events and Rural events, Seniors & Juniors, at Mooroopna in March 2021 was an outstanding success. This was the first occasion in competition history that Urban and Rural Championships have been conducted at the same venue, at the same time, running alongside each other on their own traditional tracks.

Also for the first time, all four State Championship events were held at the same venue, at Mooroopna

Recreation Reserve on consecutive weekends with the Junior Urban Championship held 20th & 21st March 2020, and the Senior Urban Championship and Senior & Junior Rural Championships held the following weekend, 27th & 28th March 2020.

Numbers were significantly down from previous years at all Championships, primarily due to COVID-19 delaying the commencement of training and competitions. Over both weekends an estimated 3,000 people attended, with 161 teams comprising 992 individual competitors, and while the events were a closed CFA event due to restrictions, and interstate teams from both WA and NSW were unable to attend - the atmosphere was terrific.

VFBV passes on its appreciation to everyone involved, particularly the State Championship Committee which consists of CFA management, members of both VFBV Rural and Urban State Committees and staff for their work and efforts in the preparation and management of both weekends, added to which was the additional workload in ensuring the events complied with all COVID-Safe requirements and in having protocols in place to ensure the events were run in a COVID-Safe and child safe manner.

We pass on our sincere appreciation also to CFA management for their continued support and in acknowledging their renewed and strengthened commitment to State Championships.

VFBV thanks all those involved for their contribution and support in making these events so successful, and our sincere appreciation and thanks are extended to:

- CFA management and staff, particularly the DMO's and tower overseers for their work and efforts prior to, during and following the Championships;
- the Greater Shepparton City Council for their continued support of our Championships, this being the ninth occasion that our Championships have been held in the council;
- members of VFBV's state competition committees who seek ways to improve the events each year and oversee the rules, judges and officials;
- the over 220 volunteer track officials and judges who officiated and without whom these events could not be conducted;
- our major sponsor Hino and the many other sponsors and trophy donors for their continued generous support; and
- the Brigades, competitors, coaches, and the families and friends who support the competitors, ensuring the continuation of our Championships and competitions.

Planning is well underway for next year, which again will see the State Urban Senior Championship held in conjunction with the State Rural Senior & Junior Championships at Mooroopna on the weekend of 26th and 27th March 2022; and the State Urban Junior Championship at Mooroopna on the weekend on 19th and 20th March 2022.

VFBV hopes to build participation numbers for next year, and strongly encourages new and former competing Brigades to attend, to make next year's State Championships bigger, better and a showcase of our competition events, and of CFA, to the community.

URBAN CHAMPIONSHIP

Kangaroo Flat won its 10th Grand Aggregate title at Mooroopna by a significant margin with 124 points, from second placed Melton (55 points) and Wendouree third (54 points). Kangaroo Flat was also successful in B Section, with Kangaroo Flat B easily winning the B Section Aggregate with 74 points from Hoppers Crossing (39 points) and Pakenham/Narre Warren third with 35 points.

Jackson Dargaville (Kangaroo Flat) won the Ladder Race in a time of 6.58 seconds, his ninth win in this event over the last 10 years. Kangaroo Flat competitors also made a clean sweep of placings for the 2021 Champion Competitor, with equal winners Jamie Hart and Jon Murphy gaining 24 points, and third placed was Jackson Dargaville with 22 points.

Introduced this year were two new Appliance Aggregates for the highest points over all three appliance events: Pumper & Ladder; Hose, Hydrant & Pumper; and the Hydrant & Tanker. Also introduced were trial female Marshall One Competitor and Two Competitor events, which were won by Samantha White (Pakenham) in the One Competitor event, and Samantha White & Gabby Keats (Narre Warren) in the Two Competitor event.

Due to this year's COVID-19 restrictions the Discipline Contest was not conducted, and Saturday evening's Torchlight Procession was not held due to the weekend being a closed CFA event, not open to the public.

2021 AGGREGATE RESULTS**A SECTION**

1st	Kangaroo Flat A	124 points
2nd	Melton	55 points
3rd	Wendouree	40 points

A SECTION APPLIANCE AGGREGATE

1st	Melton	48 points
2nd	Morwell	20 points
3rd	Kangaroo Flat A	16 points

DRY AGGREGATE

1st	Kangaroo Flat A	24 points
=2nd	Kangaroo Flat B, Patterson River and Tatura	10 points

B SECTION

1st	Kangaroo Flat B	74 points
2nd	Hoppers Crossing A	39 points
3rd	Pakenham/Narre Warren	35 points

B SECTION APPLIANCE AGGREGATE

1st	Cohuna	32 points
2nd	Warrnambool	20 Points
3rd	Werribee	16 Points

WET AGGREGATE

1st	Kangaroo Flat A	96 points
2nd	Kangaroo Flat B	58 points
3rd	Melton	52 points

2021 GRAND AGGREGATE:

Kangaroo Flat A

2021 CHAMPION COMPETITORS:

Jamie Hart & Jon Murphy (Kangaroo Flat)

WA/VIC Challenge Event Winner:

Western Australia (held virtually due to COVID-19)



Grand Aggregate Winners - Kangaroo Flat A

**RURAL CHAMPIONSHIP**

Beazley's Bridge had two highly successful teams this year, with Beazley's Bridge A winning four of the six Division 1 events and the Division 1 Aggregate, and Beazley's Bridge B winning five of the six Division 3 events and the Division 3 Aggregate. Both Beazley's Bridge teams winning their Division Aggregates by a significant margin.

This is the second occasion that Beazley's Bridge have claimed the title of Champion Brigade, following their first victory in 2017.

Sedgwick dominated the Division 2 Aggregate, with Sedgwick B easily the winner after gaining 74 points after coming first place in three events, and Sedgwick A were second placed in Division 2 with 54 points.

In a rare feat, Beazley's Bridge B ran the fastest time across all three Divisions in Event 6, the Tanker Drawing Water from the Tank event.

Two Brigades who normally compete at both the State Rural Championships and the State Urban Championships, managed to juggle competing at both events on the same day – with Swan Hill competing in Division 1 and Osborne Park competing in Division 3 on the rural track on the Saturday, with Osborne Park gaining three placings.

2021 AGGREGATE RESULTS**DIVISION 1 AGGREGATE**

1st	Beazley's Bridge A	78 points
2nd	Eldorado A	32 points
3rd	Hurstbridge A	28 Points

DIVISION 2 AGGREGATE

1st	Sedgwick B	74 Points
2nd	Sedgwick A	54 Points
3rd	Springhurst B	26 Points

DIVISION 3 AGGREGATE

1st	Beazley's Bridge B	90 Points
2nd	Eltham A	48 Points
3rd	Rutherglen A	34 Points

CONDUCT AWARD:

Connewarre

WINNERS OF THE SPRINTS:

Female: Olivia Butel, Connewarre

Male: Connor Cryer, Springhurst



Division 1 Aggregate Winners - Beazleys Bridge A



URBAN JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP

Melton's outstanding success saw the team make a clean sweep of all the Junior Aggregates this year, winning the Melton's second State Junior Grand Aggregate title, which the competitors must have been overjoyed at following their very close second place to Harvey last year.

Melton's junior competitors won nine of the 18 events, five Under 14 Year events and four Under 17 Year events, giving them a significant lead in the Grand Aggregate points.

Saturday's first event, the Under 14 Years Hydrant Race was won by Melton in a time of 8.81 seconds which was announced as a New Record Time. Unfortunately, it was later found, that the Start Line for that event had been marked four metres short – so an announcement was made first thing Sunday morning that the Under 14 Years Hydrant Race times and placings would stand, but a New Record Time could not be recognised. The Melton competitors took it all in their stride.

2021 STATE URBAN JUNIOR AGGREGATE RESULTS

GRAND AGGREGATE

1st	Melton A	94 points
2nd	Drouin/Bunyip	41 points
3rd	Kyneton	40 points

UNDER 14 YEARS AGGREGATE

1st	Melton A	48 points
2nd	Kyneton	38 points
3rd	Kangaroo Flat A	25 points

DRY AGGREGATE

1st	Melton A	60 points
2nd	Drouin/Bunyip	22 points
3rd	Kangaroo Flat A	20 points

UNDER 17 YEARS AGGREGATE

1st	Melton A	46 points
2nd	Drouin/Bunyip	38 points
3rd	Kangaroo Flat B	20 points

WET AGGREGATE

1st	Melton A	34 points
2nd	Kyneton	26 points
3rd	Drouin/Bunyip	19 points



Junior Grand Aggregate Winners - Melton A



RURAL JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP

Strathmerton A won its second State Junior Championship title in a very close finish, winning the highest points in the overall Aggregate by a narrow margin of just two points.

At the commencement of the day's final event, there were only two points separating Strathmerton A on 50 points from Napoleons-Enfield A on 48 points, however with Strathmerton A winning the final event in the 11-15 years age group and Napoleons-Enfield A winning the final event in the 11-13 years age group, Strathmerton retained their two point lead to win the title of Champion Brigade.

Whilst Napoleons-Enfield were the clear winners in the 11-13 years age group with four first placings, the Brigade had no 11-15 years competitors to back them up. Strathmerton A however apart from their two first placings and two second placings in the 11-15 years age group, also had a second and a fourth placing in the 11-13 years age group giving them the advantage in the overall Aggregate points.

The two Junior State Championships, Urban and Rural, were a great display of thriving young volunteer competitors – tomorrow's CFA firefighters demonstrating their skills.

2021 AGGREGATE RESULTS

CHAMPION TEAM

1st	Strathmerton A	66 points
2nd	Napoleons-Enfield A	64 points
3rd	Springhurst A	48 points

11-13 YEARS AGGREGATE

1st	Napoleons-Enfield A	64 points
2nd	Beazley's Bridge A	24 points
3rd	Stuart Mill A	20 points

11-15 YEARS AGGREGATE

1st	Strathmerton A	52 points
2nd	Springhurst A	48 points
3rd	Eldorado A	26 points

VFBV STATE PRESIDENT ENCOURAGEMENT AWARD: Miners Rest A

STAN ROSS CONDUCT TROPHY: Gapsted

FIREFIGHTER SPRINTS

11-13 YEARS

Female: Josie Greenaway, Beazley's Bridge
Male: Ethan Kuchel, Napoleons-Enfield

11-15 YEARS

Female: Emma Beattie, Springhurst
Male: Lachie Lewis, Springhurst



Champion Team - Strathmerton A



AUSTRALIAN FIRE SERVICE MEDAL (AFSM)

This year 12 CFA members received the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM), the highest award for members of the Australian fire services, for their long and distinguished service.

Ross Coyle AFSM, Wodonga West - acknowledges his distinguished contribution and service to CFA and the community; outstanding ability and reputation as an extremely competent and capable fireground leader; exceptional leadership abilities in leading his Brigade through a period of significant growth; and also acknowledges his strong advocacy for rural and growing regional communities during his time as a CFA Board member.

Ian Hay AFSM, Gisborne - acknowledges his distinguished contribution and service to CFA and the community; exceptional service as a highly qualified and experienced leader; and also acknowledges his contribution not only to the Bullengarook and Gisborne Brigades, but more particularly his contribution to the Mount Macedon Group by demonstrating strong leadership skills in his role as Group Officer.

Greg Leece AFSM, Ocean Grove - acknowledges a distinguished career with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning as a prescribed firefighter and over 40 years outstanding service as a CFA volunteer; and also acknowledges his strong leadership in fire planning across Victoria and active involvement in refining and improving Incident Shift Plan templates to make them more usable and fit for purpose to support operations.

Mark Roberts AFSM, Cobden - acknowledges his exceptional leadership and outstanding service to CFA and the community; as an outstanding operational leader, Strike Team leader and Level 2 Incident Controller, displaying a high regard for his responsibilities for the safety of crews and the community; and also for his unique ability and willingness to develop and mentor young people into confident, team oriented, courteous and respectful young citizens and Brigade members who appreciate the importance of adding value to their community.

Leighton Wraith AFSM, Dunkeld - acknowledges his significant and outstanding service to the communities of South West Victoria as a member of CFA and in local Government; his exceptional persistence and leadership to achieve the establishment of the Hamilton Air Base and its facilities and through the recruitment, training and management of the extremely competent team of volunteers that staff and operate it so efficiently, which has contributed greatly to the sustainability and effectiveness of aerial firefighting operations.

Lesley Read AFSM, Hildene – acknowledges her contribution as a Peer and as a Coordinator of the District 12 Peer Team, in these roles she has provided psychological first aid to operational members assisting them to deal with mental stresses encountered at scenes of traumatic incidents. Her outstanding dedication and concern for the welfare of all members of CFA is of the highest order.

Peter Solly AFSM, Werap – acknowledges over 50 years of exceptional service to CFA and the communities of Wimmera region, as an outstanding leader with team building abilities, with a strategic approach and technical knowledge with incident management prowess which is recognised and valued across emergency services; and has led the development of strategies to address declining populations and increasing the average age of Brigade memberships in rural Victoria.

Brian Petrie AFSM, Gembrook – acknowledges his distinguished service as an outstanding leader, trainer and mentor; establishing himself as a role model for those who aspire to be officers and members within CFA; and also his efforts to continuously improve the level of competency and performance of key fire ground commanders at Sector Commander and Strike Team Leader levels.

Alen Slijepcevic AFSM, DCO – acknowledges his exceptional contributions to the management of bushfires and to incident management capability and for his efforts to improve safety and resilience of communities and the environment.

Garry Cook AFSM, DCO – for his strategic leadership whose commitment to the safety of the community of Victoria.

Peter Baker AFSM, ACFO – acknowledges his significant contribution to improved community safety and emergency management in Victoria.

Stephen Walls AFSM, ACFO -for his significant contribution to advance Incident Management, Command and Control Coordination of responses to major emergencies and development of standards of competency.

VFBV GOLD STAR AWARDS

Since first being introduced in 1969, there have been 1,501 Gold Stars awarded in recognition of 30 or more years' service to the Association.

This year, seven long serving volunteers from six Brigades were awarded the VFBV Gold Star, and congratulations are extended to:

Apollo Bay

R Mason

Koondrook

B N Archard

Koo Wee Rup

M Huxtable

Kyabram

P J Cooper

Pound Creek

H A Price

N B Smith

Riddells Creek

D Ciechomski



BOARD



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Board Member 2020-22
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State Vice President
Board Member 2019-21
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Greg Walcott
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VFBV BOARD APPOINTMENTS

With the state's COVID-19 restrictions continuing, the VFBV Board and the State Council Executive Committee agreed in August 2020 that under the directions at that time of the Chief Health Officer issued under Victoria's extended State of Emergency, VFBV's Annual General Meeting scheduled for 20th September could not be conducted as a face to face meeting, and the recommendation was to postpone the AGM until December 2020.

As reported to the Board, VFBV could proceed with the Annual General Meeting via teleconference or videoconference but the VFBV Constitution requires elections and voting to be conducted in person by secret ballot, and the Constitution does not allow proxy voting.

Consumer Affairs Victoria having provided a blanket three month extension until the end of 2020 due to COVID-19 for all companies and associations with AGM's scheduled, late August 2020 the VFBV Board in consultation with the State Council Executive Committee agreed to postpone VFBV's AGM and lodged a 3-month extension to postpone the 2020 Annual General Meeting until the 6th December 2020.

It was also agreed to extend the current terms through to December 2020 of the two State Councillors elected as ex officio members to the VFBV Board; the 18 members elected to the State Council Executive Committee; the four members elected to the Welfare Fund Committee of Management; as well as the current VFBV office holders of State President, State Vice President and Treasurer.

At that time it was hopeful that a face to face meeting in December 2020 may be possible, which would then allow VFBV's elections and voting to be conducted in person.

However by mid November with continuing restrictions in place, the State Council Executive Committee and the VFBV Board agreed that the AGM and State Council meeting 6th December 2020 would have to be conducted via teleconference.

An online election voting system was identified and following agreement by the VFBV Board, the system was implemented for the elections held during the State Council teleconference meeting 6th December 2020. The online system not only protected VFBV's election process and requirements for secret ballot voting, but also provided the ability for any member to nominate on the day.

At the VFBV Annual General Meeting held 6th December 2020, the Chair of the VFBV Board Interview Panel, State Vice President Samantha Rothman announced the appointment to the VFBV Board for two years of:

- Nev Jones AFSM
- Andy Cusack AFSM
- Bill Maltby
- Greg Walcott

State Council meeting on 6th December 2020 elected Graeme Jilbert and Howard Smith as the two State Council ex officio VFBV Board members for 2020-21.

VFBV BOARD ELECTIONS

At the first meeting of the VFBV Board held in December members elected Nev Jones AFSM as State President, Samantha Rothman as State Vice President, and Andy Cusack AFSM as Treasurer for 2020-21.

RETIRED VFBV BOARD MEMBER



Rob Auchterlonie was elected as a State Council delegate to the Board serving for three years, 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20. Rob, a farmer, is a member of the Dumbalk Brigade and currently a Peer Support Coordinator for District 9. Rob continues his contribution to VFBV as a District 9 State Councillor.

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

At the June 2021 State Council meeting four members were nominated by their respective District Councils for VFBV Life Membership. The four newest VFBV Life Members are State Councillors Robert Auchterlonie (District 9), Geoff Browning (District 2) and John Davies (District 17) along with VFBV State President Nev Jones AFSM (District 8). A presentation of VFBV Life Member plaques will be held at a later date when COVID-19 restrictions allow.

STATE COUNCIL RETIREMENTS

Firefighter Phil Hawkey AFSM (District 22)

A volunteer of over 40 years service, having been a member of the Rochester, Nathalia and currently Euroa Brigades, Phil resigned as a District 22 State Councillor in November 2020 having served five years on VFBV State Council which included service as a member of the State Council Executive Committee and as a delegate on the Joint Operations Committee.

Ex Captain Frank Tobin (District 2)

Frank resigned as a District 2 State Councillor in May 2021 after four years of service to VFBV State Council and the Joint Community Safety Committee. Frank has been a CFA volunteer for more than 40 years as a member of the Elmore and Winslow & Yarrupurk Brigades.

STATE COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The State Council Executive Committee makes recommendations to State Council on strategic and process matters and issues raised by District Councils.

Members of the State Council Executive Committee for the year 2020-21 were: Rob Auchterlonie, Geof Bassett, Malcolm Bishop, Sean Brittan, Timothy Desmond, Maurice Dumesny, Mary Anne Egan, Mark Jones, Vickie Linaker, Phil Lind, Bill Maltby, Greg Murphy, Bruce Pickett, Phil Slender, Eric Smith, Shaun Thompson, Leigh Tomlinson and Greg Walcott. The two State Council delegates to the VFBV Board, Graeme Jilbert and Howard Smith, also attend as ex officio members to this Committee.

DISTRICT COUNCIL RETIREMENTS

VFBV thanks the following retired members for their contribution to District Councils:

District 12	Vice President Matt Carlton (June 2021)
District 13	Secretary Gwen Corbett (May 2021)
District 23	President Jack Harrison (January 2021)

STATE COUNCILLORS	DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICERS	STATE COUNCILLORS	DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICERS
District 2 Ex Captain Geoff Browning Ex Captain Ron Cole Captain Neil Irving-Dusting Ex Captain Bill Maltby Captain Darryl Wagstaff AFSM	President Laraine Leask Secretary Peter Dillon	District 13 Firefighter Vickie Linaker Ex Captain Rod Stebbing	President Frank Whelan OAM Secretary Carolyn Moorshead
District 4 Captain Kelvin Bateman Captain Andy Cusack AFSM	President Gary Taylor Secretary Julie Bateman	District 14 DGO Sean Brittan Lieutenant Leigh Tomlinson	President Mark Gravell Secretary Leonard Mammoliti
District 5 Ex Captain Malcolm Bishop Ex Captain Greg Walcott	President John Mahoney Secretary Carolyn Bishop	District 15 Group Officer Shane Cramer Ex Capt Maurice Preston (<i>Acting</i>)	President Ron Head Secretary Kimberly-Rose Betts
District 6 Secretary Andrew Bath Ex Captain Mike Evans	President Bevan Deppler Secretary Terry O'Brian	District 16 Firefighter Peter Hannan Firefighter Jason Willis	President Peter Hannan Secretary Daniel Blight
District 7 Captain Robert Clark Ex Capt Bruce Pickett AFSM Lieutenant Rod Taylor	President Gerry Neyenhuis Secretary Eddy Rees	District 17 Ex Captain John Davies Firefighter Maurice Dumesny	President Garry Smith Secretary Bronwyn McIntyre
District 8 Captain Timothy Desmond Firefighter Stephen McDonald Ex Captain Bill Watson AFSM	President Eric Collier Secretary Max Johnson	District 18 Firefighter Graeme Jilbert Lieutenant Shaun Thompson	President Harold Jochs Secretary Kaylene Cossar
District 9 Lieutenant Robert Auchterlonie Ex Captain Darren Wallace	President Garry Morgan Secretary Dawn King	District 20 Ex Captain Greg Murphy Lieutenant Jim Parsons	President Greg Murphy Secretary Bryan Pickthall
District 10 Ex Captain Mark Jones DGO Bryan Walpole	President Mark Jones Secretary Terry King	District 22 Ex Captain Phil Slender <i>*currently vacant</i>	President Leonard Balfour Secretary Bill Stockdale
District 11 Ex Captain Geof Bassett Firefighter Philip Lind	President Graeme East Secretary Ian Ashcroft	District 23 Firefighter Mary Anne Egan Firefighter Mick Jones	Acting President Gary Nash Secretary Jim Buchan
District 12 Lieutenant Paul Denham Lieutenant Eric Smith	President Chris Lloyd Secretary Kathy Quinlan	District 24 DGO Neil Hillas Ex Captain Howard Smith	President Max Wood Secretary Graham Cocks
		District 27 Captain Mark King DGO David Farmer	<i>*currently vacant</i> Secretary Craig Griffiths

1946	M.W. Carver	1984	D.E. Gow (Leitchville)	2006	R. Hill (Paynesville)
1951	J.K. Stokes		K.W. Talbot OAM (Dandenong)		J.S. Kennedy (Loch)
1952	C. Ford (Miners Rest)	1985	R. Collier OAM (Portarlinton)	2007	G.N. Lyttle AFSM (Cardigan)
1953	D.M. Cameron		G.T. Evans OAM QFSM (Echuca)		S.M. O Callaghan (Warracknabeal)
1955	J.L. Allen		M.E. Johnson QFSM (Traralgon)	2009	T.J. Brodie AFSM (Longwood)
1956	W.B. Richardson BEM (Wangaratta)		J. McLeod AFSM (Boronia)		P. Downes (Mandurang)
1959	J.R.C. Plante (Lilydale)		P.G. Mullins QFSM (Maryborough)		O.T. O'Keefe (Winslow)
	M. Steward OBE (Warragul)		R.K. Patterson AFSM (Portland)		W.R. Rodda AFSM (Korumburra)
	J. Reilly (Tarndale)		H.W. Stewart (Broadford)	2010	J.I. Thomson (Sunbury)
	H.M. O'Rorke MBE (Lake Bolac)	1986	E.J. Baynes AFSM OAM (Indigo Valley)		B. Conboy (Mt Martha)
1961	H.W. Wade (Natimuk)		M.W. Dawson OAM (Avoca)		R. MacDonald (Carlsruhe)
1962	Hon. I.A. Swinburne GMC MLC	1987	L.J. Baillie (Warrnambool)		W.T. Pressey AFSM (Mortlake)
1966	W.H. Barnes OAM (Chelsea)		B.C. Condick AFSM (Tarnagulla)	2011	B.L. Vine AFSM (Tawonga)
	H. Brown (Golden Square)	1988	D.A. Austin QFSM ED	2012	B. Pyke (Whanregarwen)
	S.G.W. Burston OBE (Casterton)		L.V. Winsall AFSM (Warracknabeal)		P.R. Denham (Boronia)
	T.F. Hayes (Violet Town)	1990	G.H. Baxter AFSM (Freshwater Creek)		M.R. Jones (Stratford)
	W.J. Jones BEM AFSM (Moorooduc)		K.H. Larsen AFSM (Belmont)		R.B. Snell (Hamilton)
	L.J. Slattery (Kyabram)	1991	J.N. McEachern (Wodonga)	2013	A.J. Cusack AFSM (Mumbanner)
	A.E.J. Turton (Wodonga)		W.E. Davies AFSM (Walmer)		T.G. Desmond (Dromana)
1967	E.E. Allen (Kaniva)		W.H. Royal AFSM (Bairnsdale)		M.J. Evans (Barongarook)
	S.M. Begley (Colac)		M.J. Taylor AFSM (Mornington)		R.P. Lind (Mount Taylor)
	Hon. T.H. Grigg CBE MLC (Maldon)		L.L. Thomason AFSM (Woodend)		W.I. Maltby (Castlemaine)
	Dr P.S. Lang	1992	G.A. Ellis (Bendigo)	2014	C. Pomroy (Longford)
1968	F.C.B. Minchin	1993	M.J. Sanderson AFSM (Seymour)		C.W. Dennis (Frankston)
	J.S. Tabuteau (Moe)		Q.T. Turner AFSM (Creswick)		M. Nunweek (Stawell)
1970	D. Campbell (Springvale)	1994	P.R. Bishop AFSM (Mildura)		D.J. Wagstaff AFSM (Maryborough)
	S.C. Diffey MBE MC OAM (Springhurst)		G.C. Dare (Colac)		T.J. Wyatt AFSM (Murrayville)
	H. Lester-Smith MBE (Kerang)		R.D. Walker (Kerang)	2015	G.W. Bassett (Lakes Entrance)
	L.J. Maguire (Boronia)	1995	R.G. Jacobs AFSM OAM (Chelsea)		P.J. Slender (Tatura)
	W.M. Reid (Mooroopna)		B.M. Maher AFSM (Lubeck)	2016	F.J. Grove (Lara)
1971	H.L. King (The Fireman)		J.C. McMillan (Moe)	2017	J.M. Austin (Drouin)
1972	E.J. Barrett (Geelong City)		H.B. Morris (Avoca)		K. Clough (Lake Charm)
	R.A. Dore BEM (Carrum)	1997	R.D. Gartside (Castlemaine)		R.C. Cole (Romsey)
	W.H. Rowe (Maldon)	1998	A.J. Hooper AFSM (Winnindoo)		M.A. Egan (Mairdample)
1973	H.G. Kyle AFSM (Bengworden)		R.A. Horner AFSM (Sassafras/Ferny Creek)		A.J. Ford
1975	N.H. Jenkins (Kyneton)	1999	R.A.C. McDonald (Bowser)	2018	G. Neyenhuis (Wallington)
1976	C.J.H. Drife BEM (Clunes)	2000	D.W. Adams (Carrum)	2020	S.R. Brittian (Werribee)
	W.G. Wilson OAM (Shepparton)		R.E. Schultz AFSM (Benalla)		G.L. Fithall (St Arnaud)
1979	A.I. Laidlaw BEM AFSM (Willaura)		P.J. White AFSM (Casterton)	2021	R.M. Auchterlonie (Dumbalk)
	C.T.N. Stone (Diamond Creek)	2001	H.A. van Hamond AFSM (Wendouree)		G.I. Browning (Kangaroo Flat)
1980	R.J. Jilbert BEM (Swan Hill)	2003	P.E. Davis AFSM (Carrum)		J. Davies (Horsham)
	A.E. King AFSM (The Fireman)		L.C. Doye (Golden Square)		N.R. Jones AFSM (Moorooduc)
	D.J. McEachern OAM (Wodonga)		J.L. Laing		
1981	E.C. Caddy QFSM (Drouin)	2004	R.W. Waterson AFSM (Cohuna)		
	L.W. Peters	2005	B.A. Pickett AFSM (Geelong West)		
1983	R. Jones				
	D.H. Lade QFSM (Highlands/Caveat)				

District 2

Axe Creek
 Axedale
 Baringhup West
 Bealiba
 Bendigo
 Benloch
 Bolinda & Monegeetta
 Bowenvale
 Bullengarook
 Campbells Creek
 Carisbrook
 Carlsruhe
 Castlemaine
 Chewton
 Clarkefield & District
 Darraweit Guim
 District 2 Headquarters
 Dunolly
 Eaglehawk
 Elmore
 Elphinstone
 Eppalock Group
 Fortuna Group
 Fryerstown
 Gisborne
 Golden Square
 Goldfields Group
 Goornong
 Guildford
 Harcourt
 Heathcote
 Heskett-Kerrie
 Hunter-Diggona
 Huntly
 Junortoun
 Kamarooka
 Kangaroo Flat
 Knowsley
 Kyneton
 Lake Eppalock Coast
 Guard
 Lancefield
 Langley-Barfold
 Lockwood
 Macedon
 Maiden Gully

Maldon

Malmsbury

Mandurang

Marong

Maryborough

Metcalfe

Mia Mia

Moolort & Joyces Creek

Mosquito Creek

Mount Macedon

Mount Macedon Group

Mt Camel

Mt Cameron

Natte Yallock

Newham

Newstead & District

Oscar 1 Emergency

Response

Pastoria

Raywood

Redesdale

Riddell's Creek

Romsey

Romsey Group

Sedgwick

Spring Hill

Springfield

Strathfieldsaye

Sutton Grange & Myrtle Ck

Talbot

Taradale

Tylden

Walmer

Wareek & Bung Bong

Whipstick Group

Woodend

Woodvale

District 4

Bahgallah

Carapook

Cashmore

Casterton

Casterton Group

Condah

Corndale

Dartmoor

Digby

District 4 Headquarters

Drik Drik

Drumborg

Dunrobin & Nangeela

Glenorchy Estate

Gorae West

Grassdale

Heathmere

Henty

Heywood

Heywood Group

Homerton

Lake Mundi

Lindsay

Lyons

Merino

Merino Group

Milltown

Morven

Mumbannar

Myamyn

Narrawong

Nelson

Paschendale

Portland

Portland Coast Guard

Sandford

Strathdownie

Strathdownie Group

Tahara

Wallacedale

Wando Bridge

Wando Vale

District 5

Abbey Hills

Allansford

Ardachy

Ardonachie

Bainbridge

Balmoral

Balmoral Group

Belfast Group

Bessie Belle

Bochara

Branxholme

Broadwater

Buckley Swamp

Bulart

Burn Brae

Byaduk

Caramut

Cavendish

Codrington

Coleraine

Croxtan East

Cudgee

Culla

District 5 Headquarters

Dundas Group

Dunkeld

Ellerslie

Framlingham

Garvoc

Gazette

Glenthompson

Grange

Gringe

Gritjurk

Hamilton

Hawkesdale

Hawkesdale Group

Hexham

Hilgay Settlers

Hopkins - Curdies Group

Karabeal

Kirkstall

Knebsworth

Kolara

Konongwootong

Koroit

Laang

Linthgow

Macarthur

Macarthur Group

Melville Forest

Mepunga

Merri Group

Mirranatwa

Mooralla

Mortlake

Mortlake Group

Mount Rouse Group

Muntham

Nareen

Nareen Group

Naringal

Nirranda South

North Balmoral

North Byaduk

North Hamilton

Nullawarre

Orford

Panmure

Penshurst

Peterborough

Pigeon Ponds

Port Fairy

Purnim

Ripponhurst

Spring Creek

St Helens

Strathkellar

Strathmore

Tarrayoukian

Tarrenlea

Tarrington

The Sisters

Toolong

Vasey

Victoria Valley

Wando Heights

Wangoom

Warrayure-Moutajup

Warrnambool

Warrnambool Coast Guard

Willatook & District

Winslow & Yarrpturk

Woodhouse

Woolsthorpe

Wooriwyrite

Wootong Vale

Yambuk

Yulecart

District 6

Apollo Bay

Barongarook West

Barwon Downs

Beeac

Beeac Group

Berrybank

Birregurra

Bookaar

Boorcan

Bostocks Creek

Brucknell-Ayrford

Bungador

Camperdown

Camperdown Group

Carlisle River

Carpentait-Sth

Purrumbete

Chocolyn

Cobden

Cobden Group

Cobrico

Colac

Corangamite Group

Cororooke

Cressy

Darlington

Derrinallum

District 6 Headquarters

Dixie

Duverney

Ecklin & District

Forrest

Gellibrand

Gerangamete

Irrewarra

Irrewillipe

Jancourt

Kawarren

Larpent

Leslie Manor

Lismore

Lismore Group

Lower Heytesbury

Mingay & District

Nalangil

Noorat & District

Otway

Pomborneit & Dist

Port Campbell

Princetown

Scotts Ck-Cowleys Ck.

Simpson

Stonyford

Swan Marsh

Terang

Tesbury

Timboon

Timboon Group

Vite Vite North

Warrior

Weerite

Wye River

Yeo & District

Yeodene

District 7

Aireys Inlet
 Anakie
 Anakie Group
 Anglesea
 Bannockburn
 Barrabool
 Barunah Plains North
 Barwon Heads
 Bellarine Group
 Bellbrae
 Belmont
 Connewarre
 Corio
 Deans Marsh
 Dereel
 District 7 Headquarters
 Drysdale
 Freshwater Creek
 Geelong City
 Geelong Coast Guard
 Geelong Group
 Geelong West
 Gnarwarre
 Grovedale
 Highton
 Inverleigh
 Lara
 Leigh Group
 Leopold
 Lethbridge
 Little River
 Lorne
 Lovely Banks
 Mannerim
 Maude
 Meredith
 Modewarre
 Mount Mercer
 Ocean Grove
 Portarlington
 Queenscliff
 Queenscliff Coast Guard
 Rokewood
 Shelford
 St Leonards-Indented
 Head

Stonehaven
 Teesdale
 Torquay
 Wallington
 Werneth
 Winchelsea
 Wingeel
 Wurdale

District 8

Balharring
 Bass
 Bass Coast Group
 Baxter
 Bayles
 Beaconsfield
 Beaconsfield Upper
 Berwick
 Bittern
 Boneo
 Bunyip
 Cardinia Group
 Carrum Coast Guard
 Carrum Downs
 Casey Group
 Clyde
 Cockatoo
 Corinella
 Cranbourne
 Crib Point
 Dalyston
 Dandenong
 Devon Meadows
 District 8 Headquarters
 Dromana
 Edithvale
 Flinders
 Frankston
 Frankston Coast Guard
 French Island
 Gembrook
 Glen Alvie
 Hallam
 Hampton Park
 Hastings
 Heath Hill - Yannathan
 Kernot - Grantville

Keysborough
 Kilcunda
 Koo Wee Rup
 Lang Lang
 Langwarrin
 Main Ridge
 Maryknoll & District
 Moorooduc
 Mornington
 Mt Eliza
 Mt Martha
 Nar Nar Goon
 Narre Warren
 Narre Warren North
 Noble Park
 Officer
 Pakenham
 Pakenham Upper
 Patterson River
 Pearcevale
 Peninsula Group
 Phillip Island
 Red Hill
 Rye
 Safety Beach Coast Guard
 San Remo
 Shoreham
 Skye
 Somers
 Somerville
 Sorrento
 South East Group
 St Kilda Coast Guard
 Toomuc
 Tooradin
 Tyabb
 Tynong
 Warneet - Blind Bight
 Westernport Group
 Wonthaggi

District 9

Allambee
 Baw Baw Group
 Darnum & Ellinbank
 Drouin
 Drouin West

Dumbalk
 Erica & District
 Fish Creek & District
 Foster
 Hallora & District
 Hallston-Mt Eccles
 Hedley
 Inverloch
 Kongwak & District
 Koonwarra
 Korumburra
 Leongatha South
 Loch
 Longwarry & District
 Meeniyah & Stony Creek
 Milford
 Mirboo North
 Neerim South
 Nerrena
 Nilma North
 Noojee
 Poowong
 Pound Creek
 Ruby
 South Gippsland Group
 Strzelecki Group
 Tarwin Lower District
 Thorpdale
 Toora
 Trafalgar
 Trida
 Warragul
 Welshpool
 Westbury
 Willowgrove
 Yanakie
 Yarragon

District 10

Alberton West
 Avon Group
 Boisdale
 Briagolong
 Carrajung
 Clydebank
 Coongulla
 Cowwarr

Dargo
 Devon North
 Giffard West
 Glenmaggie
 Golden Beach
 Heyfield
 Jack River
 Licola
 Loch Sport
 Longford
 Maffra
 Meerlieu
 Munro
 Newry
 Perry Bridge
 Port Albert
 Port Albert Coast Guard
 Riverslea Group
 Sale
 Seaspray
 Seaton
 Stradbroke
 Stradbroke Group
 Stratford
 Tarra Group
 Tinamba
 Valencia Creek
 Willung
 Willung South
 Winnindoo
 Won Wron
 Woodside
 Woranga
 Yarram

District 11

Bairnsdale
 Bemm
 Bendoc
 Bengworden
 Bruthen
 Buchan
 Cann Valley
 District 11 Headquarters
 Ensay
 Fernbank

Flaggy Creek
 Gelantipy
 Glenaladale
 Goongerah
 Hillside
 Johnsonville
 Kalimna West
 Lakes Entrance
 Lakes Entrance Coast
 Guard
 Lindenow South
 Mallacoota
 Marlo
 Marlo Coast Guard
 Metung
 Mitchell Group
 Mossi - Tambo
 Mount Delegate Group
 Mount Taylor
 Newmerella
 Omeo
 Paynesville
 Paynesville Coast Guard
 Sarsfield
 Swift's Creek
 Tambo Group
 Toorloo
 Wairewa

District 12

Acheron
 Alexandra
 Alexandra Group
 Broadford
 Buxton
 Clonbinane
 District 12 Headquarters
 Eildon
 Flowerdale
 Glenaroua
 Glenburn
 Highlands-Caveat
 Hilldene
 Homewood
 Kilmore
 Kinglake District

Kinglake West
 Koriella
 Limestone
 Marysville
 Mitchell Shire Group
 Molesworth
 Murrindindi & Woodbourne
 Narbethong
 Nulla Vale
 Seymour
 Strath Creek-Reedy Creek
 Taggerty
 Tallarook
 Terip Terip
 Thornton
 Tooborac
 Toolangi
 Trawool
 Wallan
 Wandong
 Whanregarwen
 Whiteheads Creek -
 Tarcombe
 Yarck
 Yea
 Yea Group

District 13

Badger Creek
 Bayswater
 Belgrave
 Belgrave Heights & South
 Boroona
 Chirnside Park
 Clematis
 Coldstream
 Dandenong Ranges Group
 District 13 Headquarters
 Dixons Creek
 Emerald
 Ferntree Gully
 Gruyere
 Healesville
 Hillcrest
 Hoddle's Creek
 Kallista-The Patch
 Kalorama & Mt

Dandenong
Knox Group
Lilydale
Little Yarra
Macclesfield
Maroondah Group
Menzies Creek
Monbulk
Montrose
Mooroolbark
Mt Evelyn
Narre Warren East
Olinda
Reefton
Rowville
Sassafras & Ferny Creek
Scoresby
Selby
Seville
Silvan
South Warrandyte
The Basin
Upper Ferntree Gully
Upwey
Wandin
Warburton
Warrandyte
Wesburn-Millgrove
Wonga Park
Yarra Glen
Yarra Junction
Yarra Valley Group
Yellingbo

District 14

Arthurs Creek
Caroline Springs
Christmas Hills
Craigieburn
Diamond Creek
Diggers Rest
District 14 Headquarters
East
Doreen
Eltham
Epping
Eyensbury

Greenvale
Hoppers Crossing
Hume Group
Hurstbridge
Kangaroo Ground
Melton
Mernda
Nillumbik Group
North Warrandyte
Panton Hill
Plenty
Point Cook
Research
Rockbank
South Morang
St Andrews
Sunbury
Truganina
Wattle Glen
Werribee
Werribee Coast Guard
Whittlesea
Whittlesea/D. Valley Group
Wildwood
Wollert & District
Wyndham Vale
Yarrambat

District 15

Ascot & District
Bacchus Marsh
Ballan
Ballan Group
Ballarat
Ballarat City
Ballarat Group
Balliang & District
Blackwood
Bungaree
Buninyong Group
Buninyong-Mt Helen
Burrumbeet
Cape Clear
Cardigan & Windermere
Clunes
Creswick
Daylesford

Elaine
Eureka Group
Franklinford
Glen Park
Glendaruel & Mt
Beckworth
Glenlyon
Glenlyon Group
Gordon
Greendale
Grenville Group
Haddon
Hardies Hill
Hepburn
Invermay
Kingston
Learmonth-Addington
Leonards Hill & District
Linton
Mannibadar
Millbrook
Miners Rest
Molongghip
Morrisons & District
Mt Egerton
Mt Warrenheip
Musk
Myrniong
Napoleons-Enfield
Newlyn Dean
Parwan
Pentland Group
Porcupine Ridge
Rokewood Junction & Dist
Rowsley
Sebastopol
Smythesdale
Wallace
Wallinduc & District
Waubra
Wendouree

District 16

Amphitheatre
Aarat
Aarat Group

Avoca
Barkly & Frenchman's
Beaufort
Beaufort Group
Beazley's Bridge
Bornes Hill
Brewster
Buangor & Middle Creek
Burnbank
Callawadda
Carapooee
Carranballac
Chatsworth
Crowlands
Dadswells Bridge
District 16 Headquarters
Dundonnell
Elmhurst
Glenorchy & Riachella
Gre Gre Village
Great Western
Halls Gap
Joel Joel
Kooreh
Lake Bolac
Lake Goldsmith-Stockyard
Langi Kal Kal
Lexton
Marnoo
Maroona
Mininera
Moyston
Narrapumelap South
Navarre
Nerrin Nerrin
Pomonal
Pura Pura
Pyrenees Group
Redbank
Skipton
Slaty Creek
Snake Valley & District
St Arnaud
St Arnaud Group
Stawell
Stawell Group
Stoneleigh

Streatham
Stuart Mill
Tatyoan
Traynor's Lagoon
Wallaloo East
Warrak
Warrenmang & District
Westmere
Westmere Group
Wickliffe
Willaura
Yalla Y Poora

District 17

Antwerp
Apsley
Apsley Group
Areegra
Bangerang
Benayeo
Boolite
Brim
Brimpaen
Bringalbert South
Broughton
Cannum
Charam
Chetwynd
Clear Lake
Coromby
Crymelon
Dergholm
Diapur
Dimboola
Dinyarrak
District 17 Headquarters
Dooen
Douglas
Dunmunkle Group
Edenhope
Gerang
Goroke
Goroke Group
Green Lake
Gymbowen
Harrow
Horsham

Jeparit
Jilpanger Group
Jung
Kadnook
Kaniva
Kaniva Group
Karnak
Kellalac
Kenmare
Lah
Laharum
Langkoop
Lawloit
Leeor
Lorquon
Lowan Group
Lubeck
Miga Lake
Minimay
Minyip
Mitre
Murtoa
Natimuk
Natimuk Group
Netherby
Neuarpurr
Nhill
Noradjuha
North Wimmera
Ozenkadnook
Patyah
Peronne
Pigick
Pimpinio
Poolajelo
Propodollah
Rainbow
Rainbow Group
Rupanyup
Sandsmere
Sheep Hills
South Lillimur
Tarranyurk
Telopea Downs
Ullswater
Vectis
Warracknabeal

Werrap
Wilkur South
Willenabrina
Winiam & District
Woorak
Yanac
Yearinga - Yarrock

District 18

Annuello
Berriwillcock
Beulah
Beverford & District
Birchip
Boundary Bend
Buckrabanyule
Buloke West Group
Charlton
Charlton Group
Chinkapook
Cope Cope
Corack East
Curyo
Donald
Dumosa
Glenloth East
Goschen
Hopetoun
Hopetoun West
Irymple
Jeffcott
Kooloonong
Laen East
Lake Boga
Manangatang
Merbein
Mid Murray Group
Mildura
Mittyack
Murrayville
Narraport
Natya
Nullawil
Nyah Nyah West
Ouyen
Ouyen & District Group
Piangil

Red Cliffs
Reedy Dam
Robinvale
Robinvale & District Group
Rosebery
Sea Lake
Speed
Swan Hill
Teddywaddy
Tempy
Turriff
Ultima
Underbool
Waitchie
Walpeup
Warmur
Watchem
Watchupga
Wemen
Woomelang
Woorinen South
Wooroonook
Wycheproof
Yaapeet
Yeungroon

District 20

Appin South
Bamawm Extension
Beauchamp
Boort
Bridgewater
Campbells Forest
Cohuna
Colbinabbin
Corop
Corop West
Deakin Group
Echuca
Echuca Village
Fentons Creek
Gannawarra Group
Girgarre
Inglewood
Jarklin
Kerang
Koondrook

Korong Vale
Kotta
Kyabram
Lake Charm
Leitchville
Lockington
Loddon Vale
Macorna
Meering West
Mitiamo
Murphy's Creek
Murrabit
Newbridge
Northern Campaspe
Group
Pine Grove
Powlett-Salisbury
Pyramid Hill
Quambatook
Rheola
Rochester
Rushworth
Sandhill Lake & District
Stanhope
Tarnagulla
Terrick Group
Timmering
Tongala
Toolleen
Torrumbarry
Waranga Group
Wedderburn
Wedderburn Group
Woodstock West
Woosang
Yarrawalla

District 22

Almonds
Arcadia
Avenel
Baileston
Balmattum
Barmah
Boho
Branjee
Bundalong

Burramine
Caniambo
Cobram
Cobram East & Boosey
Cooma
Cosgrove & Pine Lodge
Creightons Creek
Currawa
District 22 HQ
Dookie
Drumanure
Earlston
Euroa
Euroa Group
Gooram
Kaarimba
Karramomus
Katamatite
Katandra
Katunga
Kelvin View
Kialla & District
Koonda
Kotupna
Locksley
Longwood
Marraweeny
Merrigum
Miepoll
Molka
Moorilim
Mooroopna
Muckatah
Murchison
Nagambie
Naring
Nathalia
Nathalia Group
Numurkah
Numurkah Group
NW Mooropna
Peechelba
Picola
Rigg's Creek
Ruffy
Shean's Creek
Shepparton

Shepparton East
St James & District
Strathbogie
Strathmerton
Tallygaroopna
Tatura
Toolamba
Tungamah
Undera
Upton Hill
Violet Town
Violet Town Group
Waaia
Wahring
Wilby
Wirrate
Wunghnu
Yabba North
Yalca & Yielima
Yarrowonga
Yarrowonga Group
Yarroweyah

District 23

Baddaginnie
Barjarg
Benalla
Benalla Group
Bobinawarra
Bonnie Doon
Boorhaman
Booroolite & District
Boweya
Bowman-Murmungee
Bowser
Carboor
Cheshunt
Chesney Vale
Devenish
Edi
Eldorado
Everton
Glenrowan
Glenroy & Merrijig
Goomalibee &
Upotipotpon
Goorambat Stewarton

Goughs Bay - Howes
Creek
Greta
Jamieson
Killawarra
Lacey West
Lima South
Lurg
Maindample
Mansfield
Mansfield Group
Merton
Milawa
Molyullah
Moyhu
Moyhu Group
Mt Buller
Myrree
Oxley
Oxley Flats
Samaria
South Wangaratta
Springhurst
Swanpool
Taminick & North Winton
Tarrawingee & District
Tatong
Thoonia
Tolmie & District
Wangaratta
Wangaratta Group
Wangaratta North
Warrenbayne
Whitegate
Whitfield & District
Whorouly
Winton
Woods Point

District 24

Allans Flat
Baranduda
Barnawartha
Beechworth Rural
Beechworth Urban
Berrigama
Bethanga

Biggara
Bogong Group
Bonegilla
Bright
Browns Plains
Buffalo River
Bullioh
Burrowye
Carlyle
Chiltern
Cornishtown
Corryong
Corryong Group
Cudgewa
Dartmouth
Dederang
District 24 Headquarters
Eskdale
Falls Creek
Gapsted
Gundowring
Harrietville
Indigo Valley
Kergunyah
Kiewa
Lake Hume Coast Guard
Leneva
Mitta Mitta
Mt Beauty
Mt Hotham - Dinner Plain
Mudgegonga
Myrtleford
Nariel Valley
Noorongong
Norong
Old Tallangatta
Ovens Valley Group
Ovens-Eurobin
Porepunkah
Rosewhite
Rutherglen
Sandy Creek & Charleroi
Stanley
Talgarno
Tallangatta
Tallangatta Group
Tallangatta Valley

Tawonga
Tintalra
Wahgunyah
Walwa
Wodonga
Wodonga Group
Wodonga West
Wooragee
Yackandandah

District 27

Boolarra
Callignee
Churchill
Driffield
Flynn
Glengarry
Hazelwood North
Hyland Group
Maryvale
Merton Group
Moe
Moe South
Morwell
Newborough
Tanjil
Toongabbie
Traralgon
Traralgon East
Traralgon South
Traralgon West
Tyers
Yallourn North
Yinnar
Yinnar South

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Directors' Report

30 June 2021

The consolidated financial statements include the consolidated results and activities for Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Welfare Fund (the Group). The board members submit the financial report of the Group for the financial year ended 30 June 2021.

Board members

The names of each person who has been a director during the year and to the date of this report are:

Name	Position	Appointed/Resigned
Nevyn Jones AFSM	State President	
Samantha Rothman	State Vice President	
Andrew Cusack AFSM	Treasurer	
Robert Auchterlonie		Resigned 6/12/2020
Janette Cleary		
Graeme Jilbert		
Bill Maltby		
David Sidebottom		
Gregory Walcott		
Libby Hay		
Howard Smith		Appointed 6/12/2020

Principal activities

The principal activities of the Group during the financial year were:

- To function as a non-profit association whose Members comprise Volunteer Fire Brigades registered by the Country Fire Authority under the Country Fire Authority Act (1958) and its Regulations.
- To liaise and consult on the operation of the "Volunteer Charter" in the interests of CFA volunteers about all matters which might reasonably be expected to affect them. The Volunteer Charter is an agreed tripartite commitment between the State of Victoria, the CFA and CFA Volunteers, committing the State of Victoria and the CFA to consultation with volunteers about all matters which might reasonably be expected to affect volunteers. VFBV represents its Members and CFA Volunteers in that consultation process.
- To assist in maintaining high morale, ongoing health and welfare of CFA volunteer members and their families.
- Support CFA volunteers experiencing personal financial hardship/crisis by providing small welfare grants that may assist in alleviating stresses impacting on the individual's ability to maintain their involvement as a volunteer.
- Preserve and strengthen CFA's community and volunteer based foundations by enabling members of CFA brigades to consider and bring to the notice of CFA all matters affecting their welfare and efficiency (other than questions of discipline and promotion).
- To promote to CFA volunteers the comprehensive support services available to them including but not limited to: legal assistance, OH&S, equity and diversity, counselling and welfare, training, employment support and compensation for accidents, injuries and illness.
- To develop awareness, respect and support for CFA volunteers and their fundamental and pivotal role in the CFA as a community based, volunteer based fire and emergency service of the people of Victoria.
- To take any other action as determined by the Association Board consistent with these purposes.
- To maintain and pursue a balanced focus on issues affecting CFA volunteers across all brigades from all risk profiles.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Directors' Report

30 June 2021

Significant changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Operating results and review of operations for the year

The surplus of the Group for the financial year amounted to \$ 594,383 (2020: \$1,472,977)

Signed in accordance with resolution of the Members of the Board:



Board member:

Nevyn Jones AFSM - State President



Board member:

Andrew Cusack AFSM - Treasurer

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

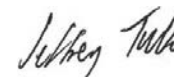
Auditor's Independence Declaration

In accordance with the requirements of section 60.40 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, as the auditor for the audit of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities for the year ended 30 June 2021, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the *Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit, and;
- no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



Seward Dawson



Jeffrey Tulk
Partner

Blackburn VIC

Dated: 8 October 2021

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Statement of Income and Expenditure and Other Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Income		
Affiliation Fees	187,885	196,210
Grants and Other Reimbursements	1,735,287	1,701,262
Championships	26,217	3,416
Interest Received	69,947	114,236
Special Projects Funding	-	60,396
Merchandise Sales	11,866	19,774
Donations Income	152,450	1,164,578
Other Income	-	39,243
Cashflow Boost Income	50,000	50,000
	2,233,652	3,349,115
Expenditure		
Employment Costs	1,015,599	924,177
Project Salaries and Other Project Fees	2,260	55,664
Welfare Grants	151,507	273,237
Travel, Accommodation and Meals	120,612	260,893
Office & Administration Expenditure	57,069	55,658
Advertising	20,364	20,375
Rent & Outgoings	84,199	77,881
Depreciation	54,921	49,530
Printing, Postage and Stationery	77,682	90,733
Communications	23,120	23,488
Accounting and Audit Fees	15,681	13,180
Championships & Championships Equipment	6,677	7,199
Merchandise	9,578	15,328
Other Expenses	-	8,795
	1,639,269	1,876,138
Surplus for the year	594,383	1,472,977
Other comprehensive income		
Other Comprehensive Income for the year	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	594,383	1,472,977

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	1,962,784	2,154,993
Trade and other receivables	4	126,038	145,994
Financial assets	5	6,260,381	5,434,941
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		8,349,203	7,735,928
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Plant and equipment	6	177,325	217,148
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		177,325	217,148
TOTAL ASSETS		8,526,528	7,953,076
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	7	152,916	143,874
Employee benefits	8	224,208	280,528
Deferred income	9	739,296	746,768
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		1,116,420	1,171,170
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Employee benefits	8	33,819	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		33,819	-
TOTAL LIABILITIES		1,150,239	1,171,170
NET ASSETS		7,376,289	6,781,906
MEMBERS' FUNDS			
Accumulated surplus		7,376,289	6,781,906
TOTAL MEMBERS' EQUITY		7,376,289	6,781,906

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

2021

	VFBV Inc.	Welfare Fund	Total
Note	\$	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2020	2,719,942	4,061,964	6,781,906
Surplus for the year	460,150	134,233	594,383
Balance at 30 June 2021	3,180,092	4,196,197	7,376,289

2020

	VFBV Inc.	Welfare Fund	Total
Note	\$	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2019	2,154,544	3,035,506	5,190,050
Retrospective adjustment upon first time adoption of AASB 15 1 (c)	118,879	-	118,879
Surplus for the year	446,519	1,026,458	1,472,977
Balance at 30 June 2020	2,719,942	4,061,964	6,781,906

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
Note	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Receipts from customers and government grants	2,366,160	3,447,100
Payments to suppliers and employees	(1,787,778)	(2,046,848)
Interest received	69,947	114,236
Net cash provided by operating activities	12 648,329	1,514,488
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchase of plant and equipment	(15,098)	(95,186)
Redemption/ (Placement) of term deposit	(825,440)	(401,493)
Proceeds from sale of plant and equipment	-	20,000
Net cash used by investing activities	(840,538)	(476,679)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
	-	-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	(192,209)	1,037,809
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	2,154,993	1,117,184
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	3 1,962,784	2,154,993

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial report is aggregated to include the numbers of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc. and Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Welfare Fund (the Group).

Other entities that are associated with the Group have not been included in this financial report and are reported independently are the VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund and Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria - Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses Awareness and Protection Fund.

This financial report is a special purpose financial statement prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (VIC), the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the basis of accounting and disclosure requirements specified by all Accounting Standards and Interpretations.

These special purpose financial statements do not comply with all the recognition and measurement requirements in Australian Accounting Standards. The recognition and measurement requirements that have not been complied with are those specified in AASB 16 Leases and AASB 10 Consolidation.

The board has determined that the not-for-profit Group is not a reporting entity.

The financial report with the exception of the cash flow statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where stated specifically, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise, have been adopted in the preparation of these financial statements.

(a) Income tax

The Group is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Welfare Fund are registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

(b) Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office.

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the statement of financial position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are presented as operating cash flows included in receipts from customers or payments to suppliers.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(c) Revenue and other income

The core principle of AASB 15 is that revenue is recognised on a basis that reflects the transfer of promised goods or services to customers at an amount that reflects the consideration the Group expects to receive in exchange for those goods or services. Revenue is recognised by applying a five-step model as follows:

1. Identify the contract with the customer
2. Identify the performance obligations
3. Determine the transaction price
4. Allocate the transaction price to the performance obligations
5. Recognise revenue as and when control of the performance obligations is transferred

Generally the timing of the payment for sale of goods and rendering of services corresponds closely to the timing of satisfaction of the performance obligations, however where there is a difference, it will result in the recognition of a receivable, contract asset or contract liability.

None of the revenue streams of the Group have any significant financing terms as there is less than 12 months between receipt of funds and satisfaction of performance obligations.

Operating grants and donations

When the Group receives operating grant revenue and donations, it assesses whether the contract is enforceable and has sufficiently specific performance obligations in accordance to AASB 15.

When both these conditions are satisfied, the Group:

- identifies each performance obligation relating to the grant;
- recognises a contract liability for its obligations under the agreement; and
- recognises revenue as it satisfies its performance obligations.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(c) Revenue and other income

Where the contract is not enforceable or does not have sufficiently specific performance obligation, the Group:

- recognise the asset received in accordance with the recognition requirements of other applicable Accounting Standards (for example AASB 9, AASB 16, AASB 116 and AASB 138);
- recognises related amounts (being contributions by owners, lease liability, financial instruments, provisions, revenue or contract liability arising from a contract with a customer) and;
- recognises income immediately in profit or loss as the difference between the initial carrying amount of the asset and the related amount.

If a contract liability is recognised as a related amount above, the Group recognises income in profit or loss when or as it satisfies its obligations under the contract.

Interest income

Interest income is mainly on interest-bearing cash and cash equivalent balances. It is recognised using the effective interest method.

Merchandise revenue

Merchandise revenue is recognised on transfer of goods to the customer as this is deemed to be the point in time when control of the performance obligations are transferred.

Affiliation fees

Affiliation fees are recognised as income over the life of the membership it relates to.

Championship revenue

Championship revenue is recognised when the event has occurred. When the event has not yet occurred, this will result in unearned income.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(d) Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment is carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

The depreciable amount of all plant and equipment is depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the Group commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

(e) Impairment of Assets

At the end of each reporting year, the Group reviews the carrying values of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying value. Any excess of the asset's carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the statement of income and expenditure and other comprehensive income.

(f) Employee benefits

Provision is made for the association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting year. Employee benefits have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

Employee benefits expected to be settled more than one year after the end of the reporting period have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may satisfy vesting requirements.

(g) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

(h) Leases

Operating leases - expense on straight-line basis over lease life

Lease payments for operating leases, where substantially all of the risks and benefits remain with the lessor, are charged as expenses on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease term.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(i) Financial assets

Held-to-maturity investments

Held to maturity investments are non-derivative financial assets that have fixed maturities and fixed or determinable payments, and it is the Group's intention to hold these investments to maturity.

(j) Comparative Figures

Where required by Accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform with changes in presentation for the current financial year.

2 Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgments

The directors make estimates and judgements during the preparation of these financial statements regarding assumptions about current and future events affecting transactions and balances.

These estimates and judgements are based on the best information available at the time of preparing the financial statements, however as additional information is known then the actual results may differ from the estimates.

The significant estimates and judgements made have been described below.

Key judgements - Performance obligations under AASB 15

To identify a performance obligation under AASB 15, the promise must be sufficiently specific to be able to determine when the obligation is satisfied. Management exercises judgement to determine whether the promise is sufficiently specific by taking into account any conditions specified in the arrangement, explicit or implicit, regarding the promised goods or services. In making this assessment, management includes the nature, cost, quantity and the period of transfer related to the goods or services promised.

Key estimates - receivables

The receivables at reporting date have been reviewed to determine whether there is any objective evidence that any of the receivables are impaired. An impairment provision is included for any receivable where the entire balance is not considered collectible. The impairment provision is based on the best information at the reporting date.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

3 Cash and cash equivalents

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
General Cheque Account	365,288	533,570
Travel reimbursement account	1,131	31,564
Debit card	4,774	3,318
Cash at call	117,680	96
Welfare Fund	339,527	273,974
Valuing Volunteers Cheque Account	34,384	34,360
Term Deposits	1,100,000	1,278,111
5a	<u>1,962,784</u>	<u>2,154,993</u>

4 Trade and other receivables

CURRENT

VFBV

Trade Debtors	58,123	43,746
Accrued Interest	21,291	25,861
Other Receivables	4,970	5,337
	<u>84,384</u>	<u>74,944</u>

Welfare Fund

Trade Debtors	20,790	43,116
Accrued Interest	20,864	27,934
	<u>41,654</u>	<u>71,050</u>
	<u>126,038</u>	<u>145,994</u>

5 Financial assets

CURRENT

Term Deposits - VFBV	(b)	2,391,825	2,110,524
Term Deposits - Welfare Fund	(c)	3,868,556	3,324,417
		<u>6,260,381</u>	<u>5,434,941</u>

a) In the current year, as the term deposit had a maturity period of 3 months or less, the term deposit has been classified in the statement of financial position as cash and cash equivalents.

b) In the current year, as the term deposit had a maturity period of 12 months, the term deposit has been classified in the statement of financial position as financial assets.

c) Welfare Fund operates on a capital balance from donated funds used to support volunteers in times of personal hardship/crisis.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

6 Plant and equipment

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Motor vehicles		
At cost	235,312	235,669
Accumulated depreciation	(100,991)	(55,312)
Total motor vehicles	134,321	180,357
Office equipment		
At cost	78,448	63,350
Accumulated depreciation	(35,444)	(26,559)
Total office equipment	43,004	36,791
	177,325	217,148

7 Trade and other payables

CURRENT		
Trade creditors	9,188	13,375
Other payables	143,728	130,499
	152,916	143,874

8 Employee Benefits

CURRENT		
Long service leave	148,759	222,220
Annual leave	75,449	58,308
	224,208	280,528
NON-CURRENT		
Long service leave	33,819	-

9 Income in Advance

CFA Grants	539,631	528,975
Deferred Affiliation Fees - VFBV	100,719	100,011
Income Received in Advance - VFBV	45,396	10,305
Deferred Affiliation Fees - Welfare Fund	53,550	107,477
	739,296	746,768

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

10 Capital and Leasing Commitments

Operating lease commitments

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Non-cancellable operating leases contracted but not capitalised in the financial statements.		
- not later than one year	36,098	65,720
- between one year and five years	6,345	42,443
	42,443	108,163

Operating leases have been taken out for the rental of premises and the rental of a photocopier. Lease payments for the premises are increased on an annual basis to reflect market rentals.

The 3-year premises lease was renewed for a further 2 years on 31 December 2019.

11 Related Parties Transactions

During the year, the Group entered into contracts with the following brigades of which Board members were also involved:

VFBV Board Member	Brigade	Membership Paid
Andrew Cusack	Mumbannar	Yes
Nevyn Jones	Moorooduc	Yes
Graeme Jilbert	Swan Hill	Yes
Samantha Rothman	Maryborough	Yes
Janette Cleary	Lakes Entrance	Yes
Libby Hay	Barwon Heads	Yes
Gregory Walcott	Dist 5 HQ	Yes
David Sidebottom	Mooroolbark	Yes
Bill Maltby	Castlemaine	Yes
Howard Smith	Barnawartha	Yes

All contracts for membership fees were provided at arm's length commercial amounts.

Board members are reimbursed for their travel cost incurred.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

12 Cash Flow Information

Reconciliation of net income to net cash provided by operating activities:

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Surplus for the year	594,383	1,472,977
Cash flows excluded from surplus/(deficit) attributable to operating activities		
Non-cash flows in surplus/(deficit):		
Depreciation	54,921	49,529
Profit on disposal of non-current assets	-	8,795
Changes in assets/liabilities		
- (increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	19,956	439
- increase/(decrease) in income in advance	9,042	12,310
- increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	(7,472)	(40,664)
- increase/(decrease) in provisions	(22,501)	11,102
Cashflow from operations	648,329	1,514,488

13 Events Occurring After the Reporting Date

Although the Group is unable to determine the full extent of the financial impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on the organisation at the time of signing, the Board believe that the funding from the Country Fire Authority will remain in place and do not expect a significant decline in income during the year ending 30 June 2022. On this basis, the Board are currently satisfied that the short term implications will not adversely affect the Group's ability to continue to operate as a going concern.

Except for the above, no other matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or could significantly affect the operations of the Group, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Group in future financial years.

14 Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc. Welfare Fund

(a) Statement of Income and Expenditure and Other Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2021

INCOME		
Affiliation fees	95,968	103,356
Interest Received	37,311	63,292
Donations	152,450	1,133,049
	285,729	1,299,697
EXPENSES		
Grants	151,506	273,237
Bank Fees	-	2
	151,506	273,239
Surplus from operations	134,223	1,026,458

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

14 Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc. Welfare Fund

(b) Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	339,527	773,974
Trade and other receivables	41,654	71,050
Financial assets	3,868,556	3,324,417
TOTAL ASSETS	4,249,737	4,169,441
LIABILITIES		
Deferred Income	53,550	107,477
TOTAL LIABILITIES	53,550	107,477
NET ASSETS	4,196,187	4,061,964
MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Accumulated surplus	4,196,187	4,061,964
Total Equity	4,196,187	4,061,964

15 Association Details

The registered office of the association is:

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities
9/24 Lakeside Drive
Burwood East VIC 3151

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

True and Fair Certification by Members of the Board

The Board has determined that the Group is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Board the financial report as set out on pages 4 to 17:

1. Give a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities during and at the end of the financial year of the association ending on 30 June 2021.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.
3. Satisfies the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Regulations 2013.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board and is signed for and on behalf of the Board by:

Board Member
Neve Jones

Board Member
[Signature]

Dated: 1 October 2021

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Independent Audit Report to the board of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report being a special purpose financial report, of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, the statement of income and expenditure and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the board's assertion statements for the Group.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (VIC), including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended on that date; and
- (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 to the financial statements, Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013 and the Association Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (VIC).

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Group in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the board's financial reporting responsibilities under the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (VIC). As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

ABN 11 083 080 403

Independent Audit Report to the board of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

Responsibilities of Board Members for the Financial Report

The board members of the Group are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (VIC) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The board members' responsibility also includes establishing and monitoring such internal control as the board members determine necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the board members are responsible for assessing the Group's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the board members either intend to liquidate the Group or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Group's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Group.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

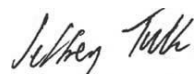
ABN 11 083 080 403

Independent Audit Report to the board of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc and Consolidated Entities

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Group's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Group's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Group to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.


Saward Dawson


Jeffrey Tulk
Partner

Blackburn, VIC

Date: 8 October 2021

VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund

ABN: 70 078 765 457

Statement of Income and Expenditure

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue		
Donations	293,447	309,155
Interest income	75	248
	<u>293,522</u>	<u>309,403</u>
Expenses		
Grant distributions	(272,000)	(17,500)
	<u>(272,000)</u>	<u>(17,500)</u>
Surplus for the year	<u>21,522</u>	<u>291,903</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund

ABN: 70 078 765 457

Balance Sheet

As at 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank balances	347,699	326,177
Cash on hand	100	100
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>347,799</u>	<u>326,277</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>347,799</u>	<u>326,277</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>347,799</u>	<u>326,277</u>
EQUITY		
Settled Sum	100	100
Retained Surplus	347,699	326,177
	<u>347,799</u>	<u>326,277</u>
TOTAL EQUITY	<u>347,799</u>	<u>326,277</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund

ABN: 70 078 765 457

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

2021

	Retained Surplus	Settled Sum	Total
	\$	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2020	326,177	100	326,277
Surplus for the year	21,522	-	21,522
Balance at 30 June 2021	347,699	100	347,799

2020

	Retained Surplus	Settled Sum	Total
	\$	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2019	34,274	100	34,374
Surplus for the year	291,903	-	291,903
Balance at 30 June 2020	326,177	100	326,277

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund

ABN: 70 078 765 457

Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Donations distributed	(272,000)	(17,500)
Donations received	293,447	309,155
Interest received	75	248
Net cash provided by operating activities	21,522	291,903
 Net increase in cash and cash equivalents held	 21,522	 291,903
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	326,277	34,374
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	347,799	326,277

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund

ABN: 70 078 765 457

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**(a) Basis of Preparation**

The Trustees believe the Trust is a non-reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial reports. These financial statements are therefore a special purpose financial report that has been prepared in order to meet the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, the trust deed and the information needs of stakeholders. The trust is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes under Australian Accounting Standards.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the mandatory Australian Accounting Standards applicable to entities reporting under the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the significant accounting policies disclosed below which the Trustees have determined are appropriate to meet the purposes of preparation. Such accounting policies are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated.

The Trust has concluded that the requirements set out in AASB 10 and AASB 128 are not applicable as the initial assessment on its interests in other entities indicated that it does not have any subsidiaries, associates or joint ventures.

These special purpose financial statements comply with all the recognition and measurement requirements in Australian Accounting Standards.

The financial statements, except for cash flow information have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs unless otherwise stated in the notes. The accounting policies that have been adopted in the preparation of this report are as follows:

(b) Income Tax

The Trust is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. The entity is a registered charity with the Australian Charity and Not-for-profits Commission. The Trust is endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient.

(c) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund

ABN: 70 078 765 457

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(d) Revenue and other income

Revenue from Contracts with Customers

The core principle of AASB 15 is that revenue is recognised on a basis that reflects the transfer of promised goods or services to customers at an amount that reflects the consideration the Trust expects to receive in exchange for those goods or services. Revenue is recognised by applying a five-step model as follows:

1. Identify the contract with the customer
2. Identify the performance obligations
3. Determine the transaction price
4. Allocate the transaction price to the performance obligations
5. Recognise revenue as and when control of the performance obligations is transferred

Generally the timing of the payment for sale of goods and rendering of services corresponds closely to the timing of satisfaction of the performance obligations, however where there is a difference, it will result in the recognition of a receivable, contract asset or contract liability.

None of the revenue streams of the Trust have any significant financing terms as there is less than 12 months between receipt of funds and satisfaction of performance obligations.

Donations which do not have an enforceable contract are recognised as revenue when received.

VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund

ABN: 70 078 765 457

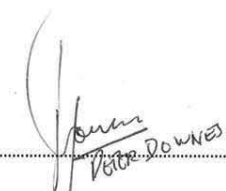
Trustees' Declaration

The Trustees declare that the Trust is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

The directors of the trustee company declare that the financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 1 to 6:

1. are in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards, as described in Note 1 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.
2. in the Trustees' opinion, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Trust will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Regulation 2013.

Trustee  Peter Downes

Trustee  Jeffrey Tulk

Dated 1 October 2021

Auditor's Independence Declaration

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2021, there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.


Saward Dawson

Blackburn VIC

Dated: 1 October 2021


Jeffrey Tulk
Partner

VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund

ABN: 70 078 765 457

Independent Audit Report to the members of VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund**Report on the Audit of the Financial Report****Opinion**

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report of VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund (the Trust), which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2021, the statement of income and expenditure for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the trustees' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Trust is in accordance with the Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the financial position of VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund as at 30 June 2021, and its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund in accordance with the auditor independence requirements and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 of the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report is prepared to assist VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund to comply with the trust deed's financial reporting responsibilities under the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund

ABN: 70 078 765 457

Independent Audit Report to the members of VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund**Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance**

The trustees of the Trust are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (ACNC Act) and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the trustees are responsible for assessing the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the Trust or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Fund's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by responsible entities.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Fund's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Fund's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Fund to cease to continue as a going concern.

VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund

ABN: 70 078 765 457

Independent Audit Report to the members of VFBV Volunteer Support and Recovery Trust Fund

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Saward Dawson
Saward Dawson

Jeffrey Tulk

Jeffrey Tulk
Partner

Blackburn VIC

Dated: 1 October 2021

The Trustee for the Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses (VFFOI) Awareness and Protection Fund

ABN: 30 120 187 964

Statement of Income and Expenditure

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue		
Interest received	18	179
Expenses	-	-
Surplus for the year	<u>18</u>	<u>179</u>
Retained surplus at the beginning of the financial year	25,937	25,758
Retained surplus at the end of the financial year	<u>25,955</u>	<u>25,937</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

The Trustee for the Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses (VFFOI) Awareness and Protection Fund

ABN: 30 120 187 964

Balance Sheet

As at 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank balances	25,955	25,937
Cash on hand	100	100
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>26,055</u>	<u>26,037</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>26,055</u>	<u>26,037</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>26,055</u>	<u>26,037</u>
EQUITY		
Settled sum	100	100
Retained Surplus	25,955	25,937
TOTAL EQUITY	<u>26,055</u>	<u>26,037</u>

The Trustee for the Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses (VFFOI) Awareness and Protection Fund

ABN: 30 120 187 964

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Basis of Preparation

The trustees believe the Trust is a non-reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial reports. These financial statements are therefore a special purpose financial report that has been prepared in order to meet the requirements of the trust deed and the information needs of stakeholders.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the significant accounting policies disclosed below which the Trustees have determined are appropriate to meet the purposes of preparation. Such accounting policies are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated.

These special purpose financial statements comply with all the recognition and measurement requirements in Australian Accounting Standards.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs unless otherwise stated in the notes. The accounting policies that have been adopted in the preparation of this report are as follows:

(b) Income Tax

The Trust is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. The entity is a registered charity with the Australian Charity and Not-for-profits Commission.

(c) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

The Trustee for the Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses (VFFOI) Awareness and Protection Fund

ABN: 30 120 187 964

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(d) Revenue and other income

Revenue from contracts with customers

The core principle of AASB 15 is that revenue is recognised on a basis that reflects the transfer of promised goods or services to customers at an amount that reflects the consideration the Trust expects to receive in exchange for those goods or services. Revenue is recognised by applying a five-step model as follows:

1. Identify the contract with the customer
2. Identify the performance obligations
3. Determine the transaction price
4. Allocate the transaction price to the performance obligations
5. Recognise revenue as and when control of the performance obligations is transferred

Generally the timing of the payment for sale of goods and rendering of services corresponds closely to the timing of satisfaction of the performance obligations, however where there is a difference, it will result in the recognition of a receivable, contract asset or contract liability.

None of the revenue streams of the Trust have any significant financing terms as there is less than 12 months between receipt of funds and satisfaction of performance obligations.

The Trustee for the Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses (VFFOI) Awareness and Protection Fund

ABN: 30 120 187 964

Trustees' Declaration


The Trustees declare that the Trust is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

The directors of the trustee company declare that the financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 1 to 4:

1. present fairly the Trust's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements;
2. in the Trustees' opinion, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Trust will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Trustees.

Trustee 

Trustee 

Dated: 1 October 2021

The Trustee for the Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses (VFFOI) Awareness and Protection Fund

ABN: 30 120 187 964

Independent Audit Report to the members of The Trustee for the Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses (VFFOI) Awareness and Protection Fund

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of The Trustee for the Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses (VFFOI) Awareness and Protection Fund (the Trust), which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2021, the statement of income or expenditure for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the trustees' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Trust gives a true and fair view of the financial position of The Trustee for the Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses (VFFOI) Awareness and Protection Fund as at 30 June 2021, and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with their accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial report.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Trust in accordance with the auditor independence requirements and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist The Trustee for the Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses (VFFOI) Awareness and Protection Fund to comply with the trust deed's financial reporting provisions. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

The Trustee for the Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses (VFFOI) Awareness and Protection Fund

ABN: 30 120 187 964

Independent Audit Report to the members of The Trustee for the Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses (VFFOI) Awareness and Protection Fund

Responsibilities of Trustees for the Financial Report

The trustees of the Trust are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the trustees are responsible for assessing the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the Trust or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Fund's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by responsible entities.

The Trustee for the Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses (VFFOI) Awareness and Protection Fund

ABN: 30 120 187 964

Independent Audit Report to the members of The Trustee for the Volunteer Fire Fighters Occupational Illnesses (VFFOI) Awareness and Protection Fund

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Fund's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Fund's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Fund to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.


Seward Dawson


Jeffrey Tulk
Partner

Blackburn VIC

Dated: 8 October 2021

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