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MEDIA RELEASE

VOLUNTEER WEEK HIGHLIGHTS IMPORTANCE OF CFA BRIGADES

CFA volunteers have saved lives and property for decades and while the faces might be changing and the service evolving to meet changing needs, they remain an essential part of our community.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria CEO Andrew Ford says the value and professionalism of volunteers make them a vital part of every regional Victorian community.

“The system works remarkably well and is always evolving to meet the growing and changing needs of today’s communities,” he said.

A newly edited video shows how CFA volunteer strength in numbers protects Victoria in times of need. The video demonstrates how volunteer surge capacity defends one of the world's most fire prone areas. It is on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/LmgbohOEBwk>.

Mr Ford said some people might not appreciate the diversity and professionalism of the modern volunteer system.

“Gone are the days when firefighting was a role for just men,” he said. “Today we have highly experienced and qualified people from all ages, gender, backgrounds and demographics performing front line firefighting roles, operational leadership roles and support roles.

“When we are saving your property or helping in your time of need, you don’t care whether we’re male or female, paid or volunteer, or what our race, religion or sexuality we might be; you just appreciate volunteers are there with their local knowledge, experience, training and professionalism.”

Mr Ford said volunteers also benefit by giving back to their communities, learning new skills, developing leadership qualities and making new friends.

The VFBV continues to encourage everyone to become CFA volunteers to help protect their communities through a broad range of roles.

“As one of the most fire-prone places in the world, Victorians can be confident that with almost 60,000 volunteers and 1000 paid firefighters, we’re professionally trained and equipped for all fire risks and our huge volunteer numbers mean we have the ability to step up and respond anywhere in the state in times of disaster,” he said.

“Volunteer Week is the perfect time to recognise and thank volunteers for their dedication, professionalism and commitment, and to thank the people, families and employers who work with and support us, and the communities who have confidence in what we do and know how vitally important CFA is.

“Particular thanks goes to all of our CFA volunteers, to volunteers across other emergency agencies and to the many volunteers who provide valuable and dedicated services across a whole range of community needs – well done, celebrate your efforts with a deep sense of pride. You are the spirit and foundation of community.”

People interested in volunteering can contact their local brigade or visit www.vfbv.com.au

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
ANDREW FORD 0407 681416**

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