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MEDIA RELEASE

YOUNG CFA VOLUNTEER LEADER WINS AUSTRALIA DAY AWARD

A young Yarrambat CFA captain who not only leads his brigade but inspires other young volunteers has been named Nillumbik's Young Citizen of the Year for 2019.

Cameron Sibeijn, 27, has been Yarrambat Fire Brigade captain for the past two years and is president of the local Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV) Youth Network. He was chosen for the award because of his record of leadership both within and beyond the CFA and his commitment to helping the community.

CFA District 14 president Mark Gravell nominated Mr Sibeijn, describing him as an inspiring example of a young person contributing to his local community and then encouraging others to follow his lead.

"Cameron became a volunteer as soon as he was old enough and was involved on Black Saturday not long after turning 17," Mr Gravell said.

"I'm a lieutenant in the brigade and have seen how hard Cameron has worked to achieve his goals. He leads from the front and his role as president of the Youth Network in District 14 helps to develop the next generation of volunteer firefighters," he said.

VFBV CEO Andrew Ford said Mr Sibeijn was an outstanding role model and his work with the VFBV Youth Network would engage more young volunteers and inspire others to join the CFA.

"The VFBV Youth Network supports tomorrow's leaders and provides a way for young people to get involved in their district councils and to inject fresh ideas into local brigades," Mr Ford said.

From an early age, Mr Sibeijn wanted to dedicate himself to the community by volunteering with the CFA.

"I love the idea of being able to be give back to the community and to help people when they need it," he said.

"I'm very passionate about public safety and hope I can inspire other young people to become volunteer firefighters."

Mr Sibeijn is a graduate of the VFBV leadership scholarship training program, where he completed his Certificate IV in Front Line Management and Business Management.

VFBV plays a vital role in advocating on behalf of CFA's 55,000 volunteers and advising CFA, Government and other decision makers to ensure the right fire service arrangements exist to encourage, maintain and strengthen the CFA's vital volunteer capacity.

"Young people are the future of CFA so having young leaders like Cameron as part of VFBV's Youth Network is a key priority for us and an essential foundation for the future success of Victoria's amazing volunteer-based CFA," Mr Ford said. "Understanding how to attract and keep younger people involved and motivated to serve their communities as volunteers is an investment in Victoria's future and the value of VFBV being able to hear directly from young leaders like Cameron about what works for volunteers cannot be underestimated."

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