

Boost to firefighting in Maiden Gully

While the handover of a new fire appliance is a very special day for any community, 26 November was something special in Maiden Gully.

Captain David Mustey (Maiden Gully Fire Brigade) accepted the keys from local MP Maree Edwards to a CFA Light Pumper. "Having our own pumper fills a huge gap in our firefighting capability with regard to building fires. Our community is growing rapidly with two new sub-divisions underway, new and expanded schools along with the development at the Great Stupa.

"These structures and the residential homes will be better protected now we have this vehicle. Maiden Gully now has more than 5000 residents and will exceed 10,000 within 10 years."

The day marked the successful culmination of 10 years of negotiations, submissions, promises, disappointments and persistence by the brigade.

At the handover, Maiden Gully Brigade acknowledged the work of ACO Steven Smith who as District 2 Operations Manager recognised the need for a pumper at Maiden Gully and put together a practical plan to make this happen. ACO Gavin Thompson followed through with Steve's work. And it was recently appointed Operations Manager Bill Johnstone who got the allocation over its final hurdle.

The day was also the Annual Open Day with members being kept busy welcoming community members and showing off their station, vehicles and other facilities.



www.fire-wise.com.au

Support Fire Wise and keep up to date with fire service matters and what is happening at other CFA brigades.

You can do this by subscribing to a hard copy (\$34 per annum within Victoria) or viewing a free electronic version of 'Fire Wise' in PDF online at the website – visit www.fire-wise.com.au.

Payment of invoices via paypal can also be made here (don't forget your invoice number).

Your feedback is important to us . . . send your thoughts, ideas and any brigade information to gordon@fire-wise.com.au



THE CFA TRUCK SPECIALISTS.

No one understands more about the needs of the CFA and their trucks than the crew at Patterson Cheney. Hardly surprising given we've been assisting the CFA with all their truck requirements for over twenty years. So no matter what sort of truck you're after, talk to the CFA experts first.

Patterson Cheney
ISUZU

PATTERSON CHENEY ISUZU
200 Cheltenham Road, Dandenong, VIC 3175
Phone: 03 9215 2300 www.pattersoncheneytrucks.com.au

We share the load.

ISUZU
RELIABILITY IS EVERYTHING

Warm and wet start

by Commissioner Craig Lapsley,
Emergency Management Victoria

We are now officially in the summer period, however over the last few weeks Victorian communities have already experienced a taste of what's to come with above average temperatures during the day and warm conditions overnight.

Heavy rainfall in many parts of our state saw records broken in a number of locations, particularly in the north and north-east.

In some areas this was welcomed, but for many it was a reminder that we can still be exposed to challenging patterns of wet weather this late in the year.

The revised seasonal outlook describes a late transition to La Nina conditions which means there is uncertainty around the potential for rain as well as potential for more extended warm periods across Victoria in the summer months.

The whole outlook can be viewed here: <https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/news/warmer-temps-above-normal-fire-conditions>

ditions.

Last month the State Control Centre was activated for 12 days – 11 of those was at tier 1 (blue) for fire and severe weather, and one day at tier 2 (orange) when there was a Total Fire Ban declared in the Mallee.

The lead up to summer indicates a busy time for the sector in the coming months. We've already had fires, we've had storms and we've had flash flooding and a mix of hot days and hot nights.

Conditions tell us bushfires are likely, the forecast tells us we're going to have long duration heat events and even with this recent rain, we are already in it.

However, be assured we are prepared. We have experienced a varied season before and we are ready. The recently released Operational Review is part of an ongoing cycle of learning and improvement, and aims to highlight good practice, changes and improvements that have occurred across the Victorian emergency management sector during 2016-17.

Assurance activities occur throughout the year and the outcomes of these activities are then collated to analyse and identify good practice and opportunities for learning and improvement. These insights are then available to Departments, agencies, teams and committees to utilise the information provided in the Operational Review to inform continuous improvement activities.

This publication is available on the EMV website and I encourage you to see the great work of the sector does: <https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/publications/emergency-management-operational-review-2016-17>

We will soon see the launch of the Victorian government's summer fire campaign at the State Control Centre. You will start to see the rollout of advertising on radio, television and newspapers around the state. The campaign message is clear and consistent – there is a focus on leaving early, be aware of fire danger ratings and know where to get information.

There have been some great community days across Victoria in preparation for summer. The importance of getting together as a community and planning together should not be underestimated. In the last month I have attended Diamond Creek, Powelltown and Warragul for community days and have been impressed with the commitment the community has to be prepared.

For emergency services personnel, whether volunteer or career, taking care of your own health and wellbeing and those around you is an important responsibility we all share. We need to manage ourselves and share the message with the community.

We encourage everyone to take note of your wellbeing and put steps in place to ensure you are well rested. Those who may be working in operational roles need to ensure you are working reasonable hours and effectively manage any fatigue.

Additionally, take care of your mental health and be mindful of the mental health of your colleagues.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your efforts and hard work throughout the year. As a sector we have much to celebrate.

I wish you and your families a safe festive season. Enjoy your Christmas celebrations.

MY EXPECTATIONS

By Chief Officer Steve Warrington

On the eve of summer, CFA has again been front and centre in public conversation on a number of sensitive matters. Unfortunately some of this coverage has not been helpful and not a fair reflection of CFA today.

I am sick and tired of our great name being dragged through the mud.

More than 99% of our people do a terrific job and I've been frustrated that the focus remains on the handful of people who aren't.

I, along with others, will always recognise that issues and divisions of the past will continue to affect our people differently. We never intend to rake over the past.

CFA has acted on information received through a number of reviews, surveys and meetings and we continue to turn the corner. My focus is on the future and growing our organisation.

Change has started through strong leadership from the top and significant changes made. Most importantly, this includes a number of changes to our structure that puts inclusion at the forefront of our organisation, both in our thinking and our actions.

Where we need to take further action, we absolutely will.

I've been very clear with my expectations on conduct and behaviour and CFA takes the welfare of all of our people as a serious priority.

Let's get on with our good work in keeping Victorians safe and ensuring CFA remains the champion emergency services agency it is.

Amongst all this external noise, I have been pleased with your efforts in working together to ensure we are prepared for the season ahead.

Following the release of my expectations, staff and volunteers have familiarised themselves and taken actions to minimise risk for lives and property in Victoria.

As a reminder – my expectations are:

- 1 - Be ready
- 2 - Take care of yourself and your people
- 3 - Connect with communities before, during and after emergencies
- 4 - Tell those that need to know – communicate well
- 5 - Do what you can, where you are, with what you've got – hit fires hard and fast



6 - Demonstrate our values in everything you do:

- Put safety first
- Respect each other
- Act with integrity
- Work together as one
- Be adaptive and agile

7 - Everyone is responsible for safety – speak up

CFA provides a first-rate service to Victorians and central to that is our ability to work in partnership with the communities we serve, other emergency services and most importantly our own people.

Everyone has to be on their game this fire season - communities across Victoria rely on us to protect life and property. That's my focus and I know it is yours.

Thank you to all who have participated in the summer pre-season briefings, which covered topics that included:

- the seasonal bushfire outlook
- new training on hazardous tree awareness
- insights from previous years – using a dynamic risk assessment and a Swan Hill tanker burn under
- research on cropland and grassfire behaviour
- findings from the 2017 community survey
- reminders about health monitoring and rehab, fire scene preservation, working with aircraft and the use of private firefighting equipment

Finally, we also need to look after each other. As staff and volunteers of CFA we face many challenges every day.

It is therefore crucial that we look after ourselves and I ask that our leaders look out for members in their teams. Adopting this attitude will position us even more strongly to perform our duty to protect lives and property.

You're all a valued member of CFA and likewise, the community can be confident our people represent our values at all times.

2017 VFBV Volunteer Welfare and Efficiency Survey

The 2017 VFBV Volunteer Welfare and Efficiency Survey has now closed and analysis commenced.

VFBV is again pleased to report excellent participation, allowing for statistically robust results and would like to thank all those who took the time to provide feedback.

The survey is an extremely valuable tool to be able to inform CFA of what is going well, and what is causing dissatisfaction for volunteers.

As well as overall results, VFBV will report on the views of different cohorts who responded to the survey, including areas such as gender, brigade type, age and length of service. These results can also be looked at to compare amongst different regions.

An initial review appears to give indication, as with previous years, volunteers are much more satisfied with activities and actions at brigade level, and less satisfied with CFA Corporate/

CFA Management.

Again, VFBV has conducted the survey for fire services nationally, as well as for other volunteer emergency management agencies in Victoria. The response has been excellent, with the total number of participants exceeding the inaugural expansion across all the services since last year.

As has been the case in previous years, VFBV will prepare a report as soon as analysis has been completed.

facebook

Join our facebook page for more information and to make comments or suggestions.
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Fire-Wise/351678354181>