

CFA, FFMVic respond to 1141 bush/grass fires in March

Comments from Emergency Management Commissioner Andrew Crisp

I would like to start this month by sending my deepest condolences to so many across the emergency management sector, who were impacted by the death of two Life Saving Victoria and SES volunteers at Port Campbell recently.

The circumstances of their deaths was tragic, and sent shock waves throughout many communities. The loss of any life is devastating, but to see that a father and son died while doing what they loved, serving their community, was harrowing.

I am thankful to all those community members and people from across the emergency management sector who have rallied together to support one another. As with all incidents such as this, the circumstances will be investigated and we will do what we can to learn from this tragedy.

I am pleased to hear that the boat's Skipper, Port Campbell Fire Brigade Captain Phil Younis, is recuperating well. But no doubt it will be a long road to recovery. We will continue to support those impacted and the communities in the south west.

Now that the fire danger has started to ease for the 2018/19 season, it is time to look again at what we can learn, and areas for improvement ahead of next year.

Each year the length of time that the community is experiencing fire danger is extending, and we saw that again this year. CFA and FFMVic responded to 1411 bush and grass fires in March alone, more than any other of the summer months. There were 968 warnings and advice messages issued, also more than in the summer months. Even into April we saw a significant fire at Mount Clear destroy one house. This shows how much work we have to do outside of the traditional summer period.

At a state level, the State Control Centre in Melbourne was activated every day throughout January, February and March, supporting incidents, deployments and recovery efforts.

As we do after each sum-

mer, there will be debriefs conducted at an incident, regional and state level and across the functions of the emergency management system. We are committed to this again this year, and to continuing to learn.

We have already seen that

CFA leads way in RGH Appeal

– from front page than \$30 million raised.

“Last year was an amazing effort with CFA collecting more than 10 percent of the overall money raised for the Appeal,” he said.

“I am extremely proud of all our CFA members involved in this incredible cause and I hope our efforts are making a difference to those who need it most.

“CFA serves and protects the community on a daily basis and what better cause than helping the most vulnerable members of our community – our children.

“CFA brigades take great pride in raising this money and they look forward to continuing to work with the Good Friday Appeal for many years to come.

“We thank the community for their ongoing support to us in raising these important funds for the Appeal.”



we have had the driest start to autumn on record, so we know going into next summer we need to be prepared for what that means for fuel loads and the landscape, and ultimately what it means for communities and managing emergency risks.

Thank you to all Victorians who have, and continue to, dedicate their time to managing emergencies, from response through to recovery, not just over summer but year round.

Having recently returned from a few weeks leave, I can't stress enough the importance of taking time out to reset and recharge. I hope everyone who has been involved in emergency management over the last few months will consider this, and take some time out to rest.

While I was away, **Stephanie Rotarangi** stepped in as Emergency Management Commissioner and did an excellent job during some challenging operational events. I thank Steph so much.

She has now returned to CFA and EMV has welcomed **Deb Abbott** as the Acting Deputy Commissioner and Director, Capability and Response. Deb, an Assistant Commissioner from Victoria Police, joins us on secondment and we look forward to working with her.

Thank you and take care,

PUMP GIVE AWAY COMPETITION

For a chance for one lucky brigade to win a pump – an Aussie Fire Captain – generously donated by Australian Pump Industries please turn to page 5 of this edition and follow the competition details.

Crews continue to respond quickly and efficiently

Comments by Acting Chief Officer Gavin Freeman

As Acting Chief Officer, it was with great pride that I presented CFA's contribution to the Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal.

As an organisation we collected and raised a total of \$1,612,671. Once again, I found myself to be blown away by the generosity of Victorians, and the efforts of our people.

Across the State CFA members rattled tins, baked cakes, held raffles, sizzled sausages and much more, all in the name of a terrific cause. Every little bit counts and together, it certainly all adds up.

Money raised from the Good Friday Appeal goes towards ensuring The Royal Children's Hospital continues to offer world-class care, the latest equipment and research to help sick children have the best start in life.

CFA were once again the main contributor to the overall tally raised for the Good Friday Appeal, which totalled \$18.1 million – a new record.

I started the Easter weekend on the Thursday with my MFB counterpart **Dan Stephens** at the CFA-MFB 14 hour treadmill challenge. A total of 270 kilometres was run, and over \$8,000 raised at this wonderful event.

On Good Friday I had the pleasure of checking out the Good Friday Appeal Kids Day Out, a wonderful initiative that CFA is lucky to be a part of. Not only were more funds raised, but we were also able to pass on some valuable fire safety information to kids and parents, and hopefully attract a few future firefighters as well. Walking around the event I was proud to see almost every second person wearing a plastic CFA helmet, this is testament to the high regard you are all held within the community, we should never lose sight of that and remain focussed on what it is we exist for, serving Victorians.

Once again, congratulations and well done to all involved in the Good Friday Appeal – a job well done. I hope everyone was able to enjoy some family time over the long weekend.

With the winter months approaching, many of you will be taking the opportunity to refresh your skills, I would

like to reinforce the importance of safety at all times.

We train to ensure we stay safe at incidents, however, we must remember to stay safe when training.

Training is a big part of what we do, while we should not injure people during training, unfortunately we do so too often for my liking.

Please, ensure you risk assess and fully understand all of the safety requirements before undertaking training, regardless of where the training is happening.

Most importantly remember to wear all of your PPC during training as you would at an incident, we need you in good condition and ready to respond when the community needs us most.

On a more sombre note, I'd like to offer my sincerest condolences to Life Saving Victoria, the Victoria State Emergency Service, and the families of those involved in the tragic incident at Port Campbell over the weekend.

There were two lives lost in the operation to rescue a distressed swimmer, with CFA Port Campbell Brigade Captain **Phil Younis** also involved, suffering serious injuries in



the incident in his role as a LSV volunteer.

This is an extraordinarily tough time for family and friends of those volunteers, who were risking their lives to serve their community, just as our volunteers do.

Our thoughts are with all affected.

CFA has a range of wellbeing support services available to all volunteers, employees and their immediate family members. When you contact any of these services, make sure you identify yourself as a CFA member, partner or family member of a CFA volunteer or employee. For assistance call 1800 959 232.

Chief Executive Officer leaves CFA

CFA Chief Executive Officer **Paul Smith** has resigned following 14 months in this position.

Paul was appointed to lead the organisation as CEO in February 2018 and has been responsible for continuing the implementation of a range of improvements to modernise the organisation and enhance support for volunteers and staff.

Under his leadership, CFA has overhauled wellbeing and member support services, implemented stronger governance and integrity measures, introduced programs to improve diversity and inclusion within CFA and begun the rollout of a child safety framework.

Paul will take up a new role



as Chief Advisor Climate Change in Industry Transition within the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions.

INVITING APPLICANTS FOR CFA BOARD

The CFA legislation recognises that it is important that the CFA Board has strong volunteer expertise, knowledge and an understanding of CFA volunteers. To support this, CFA legislation provides for four of the CFA Board's Members to be appointed from a panel of names submitted by **Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria**, two being representatives from brigades predominantly serving urban communities and two being representatives from brigades predominantly serving rural communities.

The terms of CFA Board Members Hazel Clothier, Lynda Hamilton, Peter Shaw and Tim Young expire 19 July 2019, triggering the need for VFBV to seek applications for a panel of names to be nominated for the next term commencing 20 July 2019.

VFBV is seeking applications for volunteers interested in filling one of the four VFBV nominated positions on the CFA Board.

CFA volunteers who believe they have the skills, experience and capacity to make a contribution to the Board of the CFA, are invited to apply for nomination to the CFA Board. In addition to volunteer experience and knowledge, selection will have regard to any of the following: knowledge of, or experience in, commercial, technical, operational, legal or financial matters; or expertise in fire or emergency management, land management or any other field relevant to the performance of the functions of the CFA.

From applications received and following interviews, VFBV will submit a panel of names to the Minister for Police & Emergency Services.

The CFA Board meets on a monthly basis and also operates a committee system which could require a commitment of one half day per month. Attendance at official functions is also expected.

The appointment to the CFA Board would be for a period of up to three years; the retiring members are eligible for re-appointment.

CFA Board Members current annual remuneration is \$58,598 (including Superannuation).

A Role Statement is available on the VFBV website or available from the VFBV office. For other relevant information, interested volunteers should contact VFBV – contact details below.

Applications including a current resume must be emailed or faxed to VFBV by COB on Friday 24 May 2019 to:

Email: j.laing@vfbv.com.au or Fax 03 9886 1618



Help us support and represent CFA's volunteers

POSITION VACANT

VFBV EXECUTIVE OFFICER

VFBV is seeking a talented and motivated person for the position of Executive Officer to work full-time based at our Burwood East office.

Reporting to the CEO, this senior position involves working in a team environment to address issues impacting on all volunteers and representing VFBV on committees and working parties. You will work actively with VFBV State Council and District Councils with an aim to ensure volunteers' views are understood and that issues of concern can either be resolved locally or escalated through appropriate channels.

The role has responsibility for the provision of expert technical, practical and strategic advice on matters affecting CFA volunteers. The role provides important leadership support to VFBV's network of consultative forums, committees and working parties, as well as providing senior level support to the CEO in developing and managing relationships and partnerships with key stakeholders. We need a person who can effectively represent volunteers within CFA, to Government, to other organisations and the general public. The role involves considerable liaison with CFA at Executive and senior management levels; working closely with brigades and District Councils; and influencing external decision makers. Strong interpersonal, verbal and written communication skills is essential.

Applicants need to have an understanding and appreciation of issues relevant to CFA brigades and volunteerism in general. You need to be able to demonstrate an ability to establish productive relationships within our own membership base and also with people who influence decisions about matters affecting volunteers. It is important that you are a self starter and can demonstrate success while managing multiple concurrent issues and challenging work demands. You need to be a good communicator and someone who understands how to lead and influence others to achieve outcomes.

This is a permanent position, based at our Burwood office. Recognising that the position supports brigades across Victoria, the position involves considerable travel including weekend and evening work required to support our volunteer membership base.

All applications must include current resume and cover letter addressing key selection criteria outlined in the Position Description found on our website. Contact Cathie Smith for any queries by phone 03 9886 1141 or via email c.smith@vfbv.com.au.

APPLICATIONS CLOSE FRIDAY 24th MAY