

VALE PETER LUKAS: “A CARER OF CARERS”

CFA members are deeply saddened by the passing of Commander Peter Lucas. ‘Lukey’ was highly respected and extremely popular within the organisation with which he spent 46 years as a valued staff member.

He passed away on 28 November after a battle with illness.

Peter joined CFA career staff as a 19 year old in 1975, this being after spending four years in junior and senior ranks at Ferntree Gully Fire Brigade.

During his early years on staff he worked at numerous stations including Boronia, Bendigo and Dandenong.

In 1981 he was promoted to the rank of Senior Station Officer and appointed to Frankston, and transferred to Boronia two years later.

Peter spent two years as an Instructor at Fiskville (1986-1988) before returning to station at Dandenong in 1988, where he served with distinction for the following 12 years.

A promotion in 2010 to the rank of Operations Officer in District 8 came and in 2015 he transferred to HQ as the State relieving Operations Officer.

Lukey performed many, many roles during this time and was able to achieve the designated outcomes required, this being in a large part due to his expansive



knowledge, strong leadership qualities and the high esteem in which he was held by others.

With an infectious nature and character, Peter developed an excellent rapport with all fire service personnel, both volunteer and career. These relationships lasted a life time and Peter was extremely popular with all whom he came into contact with.

His exceptional experience, knowledge and leadership qualities made him an ideal mentor figure to many.

His concern for the welfare of his fellow firefighters was exemplified in his work over

many years as a CIS Peer. He was a pioneer in peer support programs.

He gave a huge amount of his own time to assist brigades and individual firefighters who had been, or who were likely to be, affected by stress following operational incidents.

Peter twice received the Chief Officer’s Commendation (1991 and 2015). He was also awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) in 2004, this being the highest honour that can be bestowed upon a career or volunteer firefighter.

CFA Acting Chief Officer Garry Cook best described Lukey as a “carer of carers.” He said Peter was always caring for the CFA people who, in turn, were caring for their communities.

Peter was posthumously awarded the CFA Outstanding Service Medal in recognition of his huge contribution to CFA spanning 50 years.

Peter will be greatly missed by the entire organisation but has also left CFA in a much better position thanks to his work.

Vale Peter Lucas.

OPERATIONAL QUARTERLY UPDATE

Update by Chief Officer Jason Heffernan

Now that we are in the midst of our fire season, it’s important to remind members of the need to maintain safety as well as look after yourselves.

I appreciate that for many it has been a wet start to the season, however whether it be fire-related or assisting our partner agency with flood, storms or tempest the fundamental principles remain the same.

In the summer edition of the Quarterly Operational Update available on Members Online, we are sharing information about:

- Safety shares generated from current CFA safety issues
- Aviation – water bombing impacts
- Health and safety concerns
- Prevention of slips, trips and falls
- Reminder of the Chief Officer Expectations for the 2021-22 fire season
- Other operational topics of interest: causation of vegetation fire trends, Bushfire Outlook and many more topics in the library of operational topics.

We have available safety shares that cover off three topics: Side-by-side burn-under relating to a pre-planned roadside burn incident; working safely on the deck of tankers; and near miss rural urban interface.

In the side by side burn-under relating to a pre-planned roadside burn incident we address items such as:

- All members should remain vigilant for hazards in long grass (i.e. hidden rocks, holes and drains).
- All members should consider suitability of vehicle and equipment as part of their risk assessments based on the site-specific hazards.

In Working safely on the deck of tankers we advise actions such as:

On the deck brace yourself against the heat shield or perimeter structures to maintain balance and position when travelling across uneven terrain.

- Avoid free standing in the middle of the deck whilst fire-fighting.
- Always remain on the deck floor - do not stand on elevated surfaces such as lockers or water tank.

In the Near Miss Rural Urban Interface we cover off items such as:

- Situational awareness and a clear appreciation of you and your crews surrounding environment is critical to safe operations, especially in the Rural Urban Interface.
- Mayday calls made on fire-ground channels should always be passed up the chain of command in a timely manner to ensure those in control are immediately aware of such issues happening on the fireground.

In regard to Aviation, the information is all about fire-bombing safety and awareness for everyone on the fire-ground; includes checklists, retardant use in grasslands,



helicopter safety considerations and case studies.

I encourage everyone to pay particular attention to the fatigue and safety information included as part of the quarterly update. Fatigue poses a high risk, particularly over summer when workloads increase.

The safety of our people is of utmost importance and it’s vital our members are equipped with the skills to manage fatigue throughout the season and limit the incidents where fatigue is a contributing factor.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the valuable work that each of our members contributes during what can be extremely difficult circumstances and acknowledge the impacts that these contributions have on them and their families.

Thank you to all our members for their continued commitment. Stay safe and look after each other.

INVITING VOLUNTEER 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 Dawn Hartog, Kent Griffin, Beth Davidson and Peter Shaw are due to expire in mid 2022. All four members are eligible for renomination, but will be required to re-apply for nomination. As part of VFBV’s application process, we are now seeking further applications from any CFA volunteer interested in applying for any of the volunteer 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. 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 a selection process that may involve interviews, VFBV will submit a panel of names to the Minister for Emergency Services. The CFA Board meets on a monthly basis, usually on a Monday and also operates a committee system which could require an additional commitment of at least one day per month. Regular attendance at official functions and brigade/group events is also expected. The appointment to the CFA Board would be for a period of up to three years. The CFA Board Charter and further information on the application process is available from the VFBV website or office. Applications must include a current resume and referees. For other relevant information, interested volunteers should refer to the website or email k.bishop@vfbv.com.au

VFBV is seeking gender and culturally diverse candidates, in addition to a diverse range of skills and experience including applicants from diverse brigade type and classifications.

Applications close Tuesday, 1st February 2022



FIRE WISE

Four editions of Fire Wise will be printed in 2022 and the other eight electronic versions available to subscribers on-line at <https://www.fire-wise.com.au/on-line-fire-wise-news-paper> Subscribers who have provided their email address will be sent a PDF version. If you haven’t provided your email address please do so by email: gordon@fire-wise.com.au

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