



VFBV BOARD VACANCIES

Invitation to ALL CFA Volunteers to apply

Closing date for written applications is 28 August 2023

VFBV advances the interests of all Victorian fire brigade volunteers and VFBV BOARD POSITIONS

Vacancies on VFBV Board will arise when the terms of four VFBV Board members expire on 1 October 2023. Of the four members whose terms are expiring, two are eligible for reappointment. VFBV invites applications from any CFA volunteer who is motivated by the prospect of making a difference and believes they have the skills to contribute to the VFBV Board.

The role of a board member involves contributing to VFBV direction, policy determination and monitoring the performance and governance of the Association. This includes actively contributing to policy discussion, consulting with CFA volunteers and contributing to the identification and management of strategic issues.

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

Members should familiarise themselves with the VFBV Board member role statement and key selection criteria available from the VFBV website or via the office at (03) 9886 1141.

Applications close on Monday 28 August 2023 and must be lodged to VFBV, 9/24 Lakeside Drive, Burwood East 3151; email vfbv@vfbv.com.au; telephone 9886 1141; fax: 9886 1618.

WWCC feedback to VFBV requested

Formal consultation has commenced on amendments proposed by CFA to its policy for Work with Children Clearances (WWCC).

The proposed draft policy is available for download from the vfbv website <https://www.vfbv.com.au>

Whilst the majority of roles in CFA do not require a WWCC under the Worker Screening Act, CFA is proposing to require all staff and volunteers to have a valid working with children check even if not legally required to.

The policy proposes a phased approach, requiring all BMT members and various other roles to hold a WWCC by June 2024.

The policy then extends this requirement to all group and deputy group officers, as well as all members of a brigade that has members under 18, requiring them to hold a WWCC from June 2025.

The final phase requires every volunteer to hold a WWCC from June 2026 as a condition of membership.

Members are encouraged to review the proposed draft policy and provide any feedback/suggestions/amendments including indicating support/non-support for the proposed policy.

Feedback can be provided by individuals, brigades and groups. All feedback is used to inform and influence formal VFBV positions as well as used to influence CFA positions and thinking during the deliberative process.

VFBV encourages members not to wait until deadlines to provide feedback, but rather provide it as early as possible to provide the chance

to conduct further research that may assist in being able to advocate more strongly for your desired outcome.

Feedback is due by **Monday 14th August, 2023.**

All members are welcome and encouraged to provide feedback. If you have any questions, please contact your local State Councillor or VFBV Support Officer in the first instance.

How to provide feedback

It would be preferred that members provide feedback ASAP, so it can be received incrementally, allowing VFBV enough time to consolidate, identify trends and research issues raised by members.

Feedback can be provided by emailing to feedback@vfbv.com.au; your local VFBV District Council or your local VFBV Support Officer or by post to 9/24 Lakeside Drive, Burwood East 3151 or fax (03) 9886 1618.

Feedback does not need to be long or detailed, but if you do have the time to make substantive comment that is always welcome.

If you generally support a principle or policy, then a quick note letting VFBV know would also be helpful. Similarly, advise if you do not support it, or which aspects of it you don't support.

Where indicating non-support, it would be helpful to understand the key reasons why, and brief bullet points would be adequate. Likewise, if you would prefer to provide a more detailed response, or

mark-up and suggest changes to the documents, that is welcome.

Your feedback will assist to form a position and response to the proposed changes and help VFBV advocate on behalf of CFA volunteers.

Remember to provide feedback in support as well as against. If VFBV only hears from those who are against, it can be harder to determine the general comfort level of members with the proposals.

PLANNED BURN TASK FORCE END OF SEASON REVIEW

Members of CFA's Planned Burn Task Force (PBTf) came together in Geelong recently to undertake a seasonal review of the 'burning season that was.' Forty-five task force members and several support staff attended the afternoon event, including Deputy Chief Officer Alen Slijepcevic and Acting Assistant Chief Fire Officer Ian Beswick.

During the 2022-23 burn season the Planned Burn Task Force provided 146 volunteers to support 36 planned burns over a number of regions, adding significantly to CFA's capacity to deliver burns.

This was the first opportunity for active members of the Task Force to come together Post-Covid. The seasonal review identified a number of actions to enhance and improve the Task Force's contribution, supporting brigades across Victoria as they implement their planned burning activities.

Some of the discussion points captured at the review included:

- starting activities earlier in the day of a planned burn to reduce 'waiting time' before ignition.
- raking out accumulated fuels from under veteran trees prior to ignition to reduce time spent blacking out after the fire had passed beneath the tree.
- Improving the consistency of pre-ignition (SMEACSO) briefings, as these varied greatly (ie: consistency and quality to ensure planned burners are fully aware of the burn objectives, ignition procedures, and what their role is)
- Tankers and other appliances need to be ready and fully functional before the event
- Burn camps and other training activities provide important opportunities to learn and improve, and gain accreditations.
- Quality assurance and inspection of private appliances that are used at planned burns.
- Accommodation standards



Planned Burn Task Force leader David Robertson, David Toohey and David Muir at a planned burn at Point Wilson.

for PBTf members were good, but should be as close as possible to burns to minimise travel times.

One of the highlights of the day was a talk by **David 'Robbo' Robertson**, a Task Force Leader, who spoke of the benefits members gain from participating with the Task Force.

Some of the benefits David Robertson spoke about were:

- it builds our skills
- PBTf members are needed to fill the gaps when brigades struggle to get the numbers to burn
- To remain fit, both physical and mentally



Winter Campaign launched

by CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan

We're now in the depths of the chilly season and our winter home fire safety campaign is in full swing. We launched the campaign in May with a case study of a family who escaped their burning home at Belgrave Heights in the Dandenong Ranges, thanks to their working smoke alarms.

Throughout the campaign we have been strategically choosing key topics to focus on each fortnight such as kitchen safety, heating and burns awareness with more to come throughout July and August.

Last month, two of our well-regarded CFA members were awarded an Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) as part of the King's first Birthday Honours List. Congratulations to Paul Denham from Buxton Fire Brigade and Dawn Hartog from Toolangi Fire Brigade who is also a current CFA Board Member.

These two members have more than 58 years of service between them and have made a tangible difference to CFA and their communities. I also want to recognise CFA volunteer Leslie Kelly from District 7 Brigade, who was awarded the prestigious Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM). AFSMs and OAMs are highly regarded awards and I'm incredibly proud to see our members recognised for their

outstanding dedication and contribution to CFA and the Victorian community.

The Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) recently released the Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Winter 2023 which forecasts a drier winter with warmer conditions than average over the next few months, possibly resulting in drier than average soil, when El Nino conditions are forecast to develop.

This reiterates the importance of continuing our work with partner agencies throughout the cooler months and leading into the next fire season. I encourage you all to keep engaging with your local communities and help them plan and prepare for the fire season ahead.

While we're in the depths of winter here, our partners in Canada are facing one of their most challenging fire seasons. More than 400 firefighters from Australia have been deployed to assist our Canadian colleagues, over 100 of those are from Victoria. We are always willing to help our international partners and it's great to see our expertise and skills being utilised in these extremely challenging wild-fires. I'm proud of all our members on deployment and I wish them all a safe return to Australia.

CFA has a rich history of

supporting many good causes throughout the year. CFA is currently supporting the 2023 Emergency Services Blood Drive and I encourage our members and their families to roll up their sleeves for this incredible cause.

The annual Blood Drive, held by Australian Red Cross Lifeblood, kicked off on 1 June and will run through to 31 August. We can all make a significant contribution to those in need by donating blood or plasma.

You can register to donate at www.lifeblood.com.au. To find a donor centre near you, visit www.lifeblood.com.au/donor-centre. Donations only take around one hour of your time so I hope our members can get behind the challenge once again this year and help save lives.

FOR SALE: Expressions of interest



2017 Toyota Crew Cab; FCV; 14,000 kilometres; Excellent condition (as new); Full service history; Fully fitted; Four Wheel drive; Fridge, white boards, excellent stowage.

Would suit a multitude of purposes. Has been housed indoors.

Contact Lilydale Fire Brigade: lt3@lilydalecfa.com



Right: Some of the Planned Burn Task Force members – Back: Marc Graesser (Natimuk), David Freeman (Leopold), Evan Belfrage (Gnarwarre), Hardy Clemens (Bainbridge), Richard England (Creswick), Adrian Ritchie (Cororooke). Front: David Robertson (Cobden) and Kerryn Tait (Wonga Park).