

From The Chief Officer.....



Number 72

"Our mission is to protect lives and property" 7th March 2013

Fire Season Not Over yet:

Many parts of Victoria have had showers of rain from last week's cool change and thunder showers. Whilst it is nice to have a respite from the more or less constant fires, the fire season is not over yet. Strong easterly winds last weekend have dried grasslands and coastal heaths. Above 30's temperatures has warmed and dried elevated and north and west facing fuels. We can still expect to get fires burning under difficult conditions for the foreseeable future. Use the respite to good effect. To quote a favourite saying from **Brigadier Eason: "Take advantage of the lulls"**. Rest, recover, recuperate and repair.

Keep Our Priorities Front Of Mind:

History shows us that it is often towards the end of the fire season that we suffer accidents and injury. We need to recognise that fatigue and complacency can creep up on us unexpectedly. Keep in mind these things:

- Protection and preservation of **life is paramount**.
- **Community warnings** should be issued in a manner that is timely, relevant and tailored.
- **Protect property** and those things that are important to the community.
- **Attack fires hard and fast**, but always **allow for safety first**.
- **Work together as one integrated fire and emergency team**, with community, business and government.
- Demonstrate **empathy and respect** to those who we serve and to all who we work with.
- **Take care of each other**.
- **Do your best**.
- **Stay positive**.

Medium and Heavy Tankers Roll Out:

It has been pleasing to see new medium and heavy tankers rolling out to Brigades. CFA is manufacturing 10 heavy tankers on an Iveco cab chassis. The Iveco allows 4,000 litres of water to be carried and has enhanced power and braking capabilities. These 10 tankers are based on the "concept tanker" design and have a front mounted monitor and two side mounted monitors. There is no crew deck and no access onto the back of the vehicle. The ten heavy tankers are intended to be a 'proof of concept'.

International Women's Day:

Thursday is **International Women's Day**. It is a day that we recognise the significant role that women play in all aspects of work, government, community and family. In CFA we have around 21% of our volunteer membership are women. If we take our support and administrative staff, women comprise around 50%. On station, and in the operational part of our business we have too few women. However it is very pleasing to see that women are playing important leadership roles in CFA and in many forums that CFA is part of.

Debrief Process:

The **State Control Team** has met to discuss a process for debriefing for the fire season. This will be in addition to various reviews, reports and investigations that are already under way into major fires and a number of vehicle accidents. A tiered debrief process that will focus on "What went well?" and "Where are the opportunities for improvement?" will be circulated soon. There will also be a more focussed analysis of a number of themes and priorities including warnings, evacuation, transfer of control, aircraft, incident management team readiness and community messaging.

"Goats die up there. Even the ants walk around in poverty."

- Colin Brown, Corryong Group Officer