

From The Chief Officer.....



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“Our mission is to protect lives and property”

3 December 2013

Regional Radio Dispatch Network:

Transition to the new digital radio dispatch network has been delayed until mid-2014. This has been brought about by the fact that the Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority (ESTA) needs to train VicFire operators to support the new digital network (including training in the duress function and “patching”). ESTA has advised that, due to industrial action, training and preparation for the transition is delayed. CFA has highlighted the importance of the RRDS transition and the consequences of any delay on CFA operations. In the meantime, CFA is working to prepare for the switch. This includes scheduling “Train the trainer” activities, coverage testing, brigade training and reflashing radios across the State. As a result of the delay some brigades will continue to operate on the Category 5 radio dispatch system, manage blackspots as per previous years and maintain the Group Communications Officer role. I thank these brigades for their ongoing support and cooperation. More information is available from Brigades Online, District Offices or the project team at rds@cfa.vic.gov.au.

Control Line 2013

The Bayswater Fire Brigade recently conducted its annual Control Line event with 260 people attending. Control Line 2013 marked the brigade’s 10th Anniversary of the event and had an extraordinary program of speakers with the theme being ‘Leaders of Leaders’. The 2013 keynote speaker was **General George W. Casey** former Chief of Staff United States Army (2007 – 2011), and Commander Multi National Force – Iraq (2004 – 2007). General Casey is one of the most influential and powerful leaders of the 21st Century and spoke about the **VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex & Ambiguous)** environment facing leaders. He then presented on the importance of; developing vision and strategy, creating unity of effort, continuous assessment and adaptation, influencing organisational culture, momentum and transitions, and sustaining yourself. GEN Casey stated when selecting Generals for promotion, the key personal traits he looked for were: **vision, courage and character**. Congratulations to **Captain Diana Ferguson and the team at Bayswater Fire Brigade** on the success of the event and their continued commitment to leadership development across the Emergency Management sector.

Chief Officer’s Leadership Program

Recently, we launched the inaugural **“Chief Officer’s Leadership Development Program”**. Each district has nominated one volunteer to participate in the twelve month personal development program. The objective is to enhance and broaden members’ understanding, capability and confidence as CFA leaders. Between the face to face sessions, participants will be undertaking further personal development activities, reading various articles and books and being engaged by teleconference for coaching and guidance. **District 23 member Lachie Gales** said – *“... the experience around the table was as considerable as it was varied. I had some great conversations that left me slightly in awe of the diversity of the brigades that comprise CFA as well as the mix of personalities and motivations of my colleagues. I think there’s a lot to learn from being part of a group drawn from all over the State. Although I’ve been a member for 27 years, time spent with my peers helps me realise my perceptions of our organisation are still relatively narrow and based very much on my experience in the North East. ...I’ve been very fortunate in my CFA career to undertake other courses that have helped me develop as a leader, but this one offers a rare chance to maintain an extended focus on how we can improve ourselves. To that end this will be very important for all the participants. For some it will be life changing”*. The calibre and enthusiasm of the participants was heartening. Special thanks to **Craig Ferguson, Sian Jepson, Leanne Wilson and Libby Symons** from OT&V.

“The Commander stands for the virtues of wisdom, sincerity, benevolence, courage and strictness.”

— Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*