



# VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADES VICTORIA

## News Note

**8 November 2018**

**Note to members (please read, circulate and discuss widely)**

### **CALL FOR COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT CFA VOLUNTEERS**

This news note is to inform you of some public messaging just launched by VFBV.

The messaging is part of a range of things being progressively developed by VFBV to help the public:

- better understand the range and extent of the work CFA Volunteers do to keep our community safe,
- learn about how they can help CFA Volunteers by being prepared in case of emergency, and
- have more “skin in the game” by actively engaging with us as Supporters of CFA Volunteers.

As CFA members already know, predictions are that we are facing a very challenging fire season. Many Brigades have already attended more incidents than usual for this time of year and assuming that trend continues over the next few months, it is important to use every available tool to raise public awareness of the heightened fire risk.

Like every year, VFBV encourages our community to ‘think like a volunteer’ and ‘do their bit to support CFA’ by being prepared and staying vigilant over the hotter months. This year, we have produced two audio messages voiced by VFBV State President Nev Jones that will be played on various radio stations across Victoria until summer. If you would like to listen to them now, please click the images below (or use the links at the bottom of the news note):



Please tell your colleagues and networks that these messages are playing on radio and circulate the links above to ensure everyone is aware and can positively reinforce Nev's messages whenever possible.

As well as the safety messages that are critical at this time of year, we can't ignore that Victoria goes to the polls on 24 November. VFBV isn't political in that we don't "pick sides", but we do have a very important role in making sure that any proposed policy is in the best interests of the safety of our communities.

Because of that, it is also important for all of us to remind the community about the capacity, value and essential nature of CFA volunteers and the current CFA model.

The CFA community embedded and volunteer based model, with volunteers and paid CFA staff working together as one team is the best model for Victoria. As CFA volunteers we also know the current CFA model is the only model capable of mobilising the enormous resources required to deal with major, concurrent and long duration fires experienced almost every Victorian summer.

The fact is that all major fire services reviews, including the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, recognised the vital importance of the current CFA model, and in particular, the importance of:

- the flexibility and capacity of CFA that exists because of its fully integrated paid and volunteer model, to continually evolve and adapt to meet changing risk circumstances and growing community service demands;
- CFAs highly trained and prepared volunteer surge capacity able to be mobilised from volunteer brigades across Melbourne's outer metropolitan area, provincial towns and CFAs network of almost 1200 brigades;
- the value of CFA's major incident management experience and local knowledge that exists within CFA's vast volunteer resource;
- the importance of the CFA model as a fundamental foundation of community capacity and resilience; and
- the importance of respecting and recognising the value and professionalism of the work performed by CFA volunteers.

Unfortunately, some politicians and others with influence over them, have spent much of the past four years repeatedly telling the public that the CFA model no longer works, is stuck in the past, is outdated and somehow second-rate compared to a paid firefighter model.

While it's obvious to us that it is not the model that needs to be changed, the repetition of this spin and political argy-bargy has left much of the public confused and with less confidence in our incredible service.

In the coming days we will provide a further update about the election in relation the CFA and CFA Volunteers, including tools and information for the public to use to understand the key issues for CFA Volunteers.

In the meantime, please encourage your colleagues and friends to visit [www.SupportCFAVolunteers.com.au](http://www.SupportCFAVolunteers.com.au) and register as a Supporter of CFA Volunteers to ensure they are kept informed of issues of importance to us as they evolve in the months and years ahead.

**Links to Nev's audio:**

<https://supportcfavolunteers.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Nev181025A.wav>

<https://supportcfavolunteers.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Nev181025B.wav>



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