

Government
of South Australia



In 2021-22,
CFS responded to a
total of **9,241** incidents
resulting in **652,119**
volunteer hours.
This included:



1,569
Grass/stubble fires



287
Structure fires

146
HAZMAT incidents



2,076
Vehicle-related incidents

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Views and opinions expressed through the contributions in this publication are not necessarily those of the CFS or Government of South Australia.

The CFS Yearbook has been compiled by the CFS Media and Communications Team.

CFS Media Line (08) 8115 3531

Acknowledgement

In the spirit of reconciliation the CFS acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

Contributors

We acknowledge the CFS Promotions Unit as the source of many of the photos in this year's publication and thank everyone who shared their photos and stories.

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South Australian
Country Fire Service

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Respecting remarkable dedication

Mark Jones QFSM



Welcome to this year's CFS Yearbook! 2021 was a busy year – although it was by no means normal in terms of large bushfires, demand for other services remained high.

Even in a La Niña year we have had some significant fires and, tragically, we lost one of our own when Senior Firefighter Louise Hincks was cruelly taken from us at the Coles Fire in the south-east of the state. The response by all involved, and the way our CFS family pulled together through those dark days, was inspiring.

My most sincere thoughts remain with Louise's colleagues and loved ones as well as with Firefighter Kevin Maciunas and his family as his recovery continues.

“Those events, and the numerous less serious injury outcomes endured by many more firefighters, remind us all of the risks we face in our profession and the sacrifices that are endured for the greater good.”

They also remind us of the sacrifice made by our families who support us so well through the emergencies we deal with.

The volunteer firefighters of this state provide the equivalent of nearly 6,000 paid staff in their annual working hours contribution. The difference made in terms of lives saved, properties protected, and businesses preserved is not measured but is massive by any calculation. We attended nearly 3,000 road crash incidents and hundreds of calls to assist SA Ambulance Service, undertaking hundreds of rescues and emergency interventions. Added to that, we delivered many of the incidents the SES received and stood side by side with our brothers and sisters of the MFS at countless fires. As I have said before, the CFS is comprised of “ordinary people achieving remarkable outcomes for South Australians”.

It's an exciting time for the CFS – we have settled into the new Headquarters and the roll out of the Automatic Vehicle Location is underway. The addition of two Black Hawk helicopters to our fleet has created a massive capacity boost and the new Retardant Mixing Plant based at RAAF Edinburgh adds a much-needed improvement in the speed



of reloading when we are using aerial tankers of all sizes. Nationally, we are working on the implementation of a refreshed Australian Fire Danger Rating System, which aims to create national consistency and simplicity for the users. Emerald is improving steadily and hopefully will soon provide the training platform that is required, and the soon-to-be implemented new Asset and Fleet Management System will give volunteers and staff ready access to fleet and equipment details.

Once again, our CFS volunteers rose to the needs of others and responded to the floods that badly affected South Australia and the Eastern States with a strong and sustained effort. The impacts of COVID-19 have been severe across the nation but our service response capacity was rarely restricted due to the high levels of commitment shown by our volunteers – well done to everyone!

For South Australia to have endured two La Niña years in succession is rare but, as I travel around the state, I note high fuel loads that will create extreme conditions when the weather returns to its more normal patterns. We will work hard to encourage land holders to control risks and maintain vegetation, keeping it a safe distance from their home. However, our previous experience tells us that many people simply won't take on this message and it's certain that high risk situations will be a routine challenge for us.

We continue to have needs for capital investment in our fleet and buildings – emergency service funding is always a challenge in any jurisdiction – but we will use all fair means to impress upon the Government the Service's needs and our desire for a fair settlement. The new Government has started delivering its agenda, which includes some commitments towards the CFS.

Senior management will continue to try and gain improved staff-to-volunteer ratios so that the professional efforts of our volunteers are supported as they deserve.

“ We have had many staff retire and therefore engaged several new people, and I remain impressed with the energy and enthusiasm of the staff as they engage with the volunteers. ”

As COVID-19 risk abates and we learn to live with this disease, I am sure new challenges will present themselves. I am equally sure that the staff and volunteers of this great service are adaptable and dedicated enough to overcome whatever is thrown at us.

I thank you all for your commitment to the community and for the ongoing and remarkable dedication you and your loved ones give to others at risk and in need.

Mark Jones QFSM
Chief Officer

Minister for Police, Emergency
Services and Correctional Services

Immensely valuable volunteers

The Hon. Joe Szakacs MP

Following my recent appointment as Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services in March 2022 I am pleased to contribute to the South Australian Country Fire Service Volunteer Yearbook for 2022.



In my first few months in this role I welcomed the opportunity to visit various CFS brigades across the state including those in Mount Gambier, Mannum, Naracoorte, and Port Lincoln, which has enabled me to meet with numerous volunteers and personnel. These visits and discussions have reinforced my appreciation of the immensely valuable contribution of CFS personnel and volunteers across the state, which cannot be overstated.

I believe the dedicated and highly skilled staff and volunteers of the CFS are the backbone of our communities and often carry out their duties under very challenging and demanding circumstances.

When meeting with volunteers I am always impressed, but not surprised, to hear about the huge efforts CFS volunteers make to keep our communities safe in assisting with bushfires, structure fires, vehicle-related incidents and hazardous material spills.

Similarly, the capabilities and skills of our CFS volunteers and staff are demonstrated in the ongoing support CFS provides to partner agencies. This was recently on show on a national level when CFS assisted the State Emergency Service (SES) with recent flood and storm damage across Queensland and northern New South Wales.

Firefighting is inherently dangerous; we were reminded of this and the sacrifices of CFS volunteers recently when our state memorialised Happy Valley Brigade Senior Firefighter Louise Hincks, whose life was tragically cut short earlier this year while attending a fire in the State's South East.

Considering this, the Malinauskas Labor Government is committed to the safety of firefighters and communities alike. That is why the government will change the law to enable the electronic monitoring of convicted arsonists during the bushfire season. This will mean the approximately 100 people known to pose the greatest risk to the community in starting bushfires will now be heavily monitored to reduce the risk they pose to all South Australians.

This Government is also committed to instituting a new grant program to fund \$2 million for Farm Fire Units. We recognise the significant role that farmers play in rapidly responding to fire emergencies on their properties, their neighbour's properties, and public land. The coordination and cooperation between farm firefighters and local brigades adds significantly to the safety of local communities.

Finally, on behalf of the Malinauskas Labor Government, I would like to thank you for your ongoing commitment to the safety of the South Australian community. I'm very much looking forward to meeting with you in the course of the year and thanking you personally.

The Hon. Joe Szakacs MP
Minister for Police, Emergency
Services and Correctional Services

CFS Volunteer Association

Achieving our shared ambition

David Lindner

We must acknowledge the time, effort, and personal sacrifice CFS volunteers put in, not only serving their local communities in emergency situations but helping other brigades – often long distances from home – to combat disastrous situations.



The sad loss of Louise Hincks epitomises this dedication and, in many ways, rocked the entirety of CFS. We hope her family can draw on the strength from fellow volunteers. A death should not overshadow those who get injured either; we recognise your sacrifices and those of Kevin Maciunas. The CFS Volunteer Association (CFS VA) does what it can to support people in these tough times by checking that systems are in place, which are being implemented and periodically reviewed.

In October 2021, I stepped up to be elected the President of the CFS VA. I am a member of the Morgan Brigade in the Riverland region, a Deputy Group Officer in the Mid Murray group, and over my 40 years as a CFS member I have been involved in many facets of the organisation. I acknowledge and thank Andy Wood and Jeff Clark for the time and effort they put into representing the volunteers over several years and especially in their leadership roles as President and Vice President. As a team we discussed the direction of the Association and felt that a review into how things operate is required.

We are starting to implement a slight change of direction with the passing of a new constitution at the April 2022 General Meeting. This will modernise the Association's structure and improve our governance, along with giving the branches the flexibility to operate how it suits their needs, and I encourage you to be involved in and support your local branch. The aim is to give more volunteers right across the state the chance to be involved in the Association to influence desired outcomes.

CFS has released a strategic plan, which we fully endorse. To be the best volunteer firefighting service in the world is a great aspiration. I believe we have many of the skills out there already to achieve this ambition, but we do have a few hurdles to jump.

“ In many regional areas there is a great challenge of maintaining membership and being a reliable community emergency service. ”

In all areas we must attract more people to become involved, especially younger members, then retain, encourage, and mentor them into being our future leaders. Overall, CFS membership has not changed greatly over the past decade, which is concerning. The Association is looking at the barriers to membership of CFS. One highlighted aspect is that CFS has had a major focus on providing up-to-date equipment and upgrading stations where it can but has lost focus on its most important asset – its people, especially volunteers.

Staffing levels that support volunteers is one recognised shortfall, but there are many other pieces to this puzzle which the CFS VA is collating to put forward, such as the impact volunteer ownership has in CFS.

The volunteers are the ones doing the work on the ground. They provide emergency service, maintain their equipment, and spend many hours training, so they must have more involvement in the decision making of how things happen at brigade level and on the ground.

We thank all the volunteers for the time and energy they put into CFS activities and CFS VA involvement. If it wasn't for the CFS volunteer, there would be no CFS. Think of the implications of that scenario – the Association does.

David Lindner
President, CFS Volunteer Association

Louise Hincks

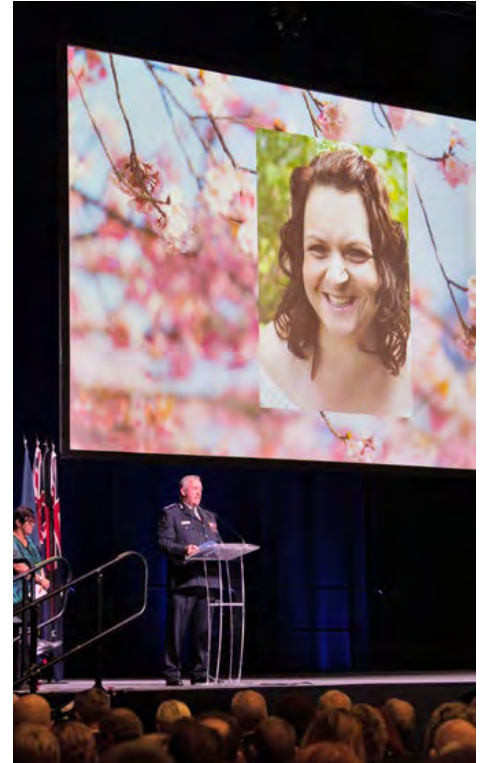
Firefighter's Poem

When fires and storms, crashes or floods place people in harm's way,
South Australia's firefighters are never far away,
Bravely performing their duties, when people are in need,
Rarely thinking of themselves – a truly selfless breed.

We're drawn to risks and dangers that other people fear,
But we go each time they call us out – it's our calling – why we're here,
We accept that the next call might always be our last,
But we respond and turn out anyway – determined and steadfast,
For whatever dangers face us, nothing will change our heart,
Because we're firefighters to the end and will always play our part.

Firefighters seek little honour whilst they're here to hear the praise,
But we should pay them homage at the ending of their days,
Perhaps in tomorrow's newspapers, the headlines might just say:
"Australia – be in mourning! We lost a firefighter today".

Chief Officer Mark Jones et al.



Louise's family comments

On 21 January 2022, our beautiful ray of sunshine Louise Hincks tragically passed away. The wife, mother, daughter, sister, and aunty that we've always known to do anything for her family and friends, heroically paid the ultimate sacrifice protecting the fellow members of her community.

As a teenager, Louise was destined to become an integral part of the South Australian Country Fire Service. We had all become accustomed to the sound of Louise's pager, followed by rushed footsteps out the door in ambition to serve and protect the local community. The Eden Hills and Happy Valley Brigades provided Louise with an outlet to bravely support the greater community through any incident, big or small. The resulting sense of beaming pride and knowing the positive contribution to society she provided not only fueled her passion to support those in a time of need, but developed a lifetime of companionships, bonds, and an everlasting matrimony with her husband Lindsay.

It didn't take long for Louise to make an active contribution to ensure the health and safety of her fellow volunteers was paramount. Early in her CFS career Louise experienced the tragic loss of a community

member whilst attending an incident. Whilst this is undoubtedly traumatising for anyone, Louise continued to bravely support her community on the frontline, whilst creating a career to aid others, through her mental health support. Her kindred spirit to protect and serve her beloved volunteers in their time of need developed into a legacy of which we will forever be proud.

The outpouring of emotion, support and compassion provided to our family by those within the CFS has us in awe of this great organisation of which Louise was such an integral part. Not only have we felt the collective arms of the entire organisation around Lindsay and our whole family during this devastating time, we also know Louise's legacy to protect the community with such passion will continue through the ambition of her daughters Alice and Adelaide.

A sincere thank you to all the CFS heroes for not only protecting the community but continuing to display the bold courageousness and loving nature Louise embodied. You all provided Louise with a platform to become the beautiful soul we will continue to love, remember, and hold dear to our hearts.

Tony Brown
Louise's very proud brother 🇺🇦

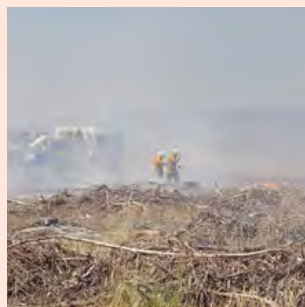
South Australian
Country Fire Service

Major incidents

2021-22



Despite a 'quiet' year,
thousands of CFS members
responded to several major incidents
across the state during the
Fire Danger Season.





Coles Fire

At 1:06pm on Wednesday, 19 January 2022, a grass fire in the area of Elad Road, Coles, in the south east of the state was reported. The fire was being driven by an easterly wind through blue gum, blue gum slash and grass land. CFS crews, supported by Farm Fire Units and firebombers, were quick to respond and began conducting a direct attack on the fire.

The terrain made it hard for ground crews. Despite their best efforts, the fire couldn't be stopped and had burned 300 hectares within the first three hours. Multiple spot fires started, with spotting five kilometers ahead of the fire.

By 4pm, the fire had been declared a level two incident, with a Level Two IMT set up by Region 5 at Lucindale, providing support to firefighters on the ground. This would soon be upgraded to a Level Three IMT.

Numerous strike teams from Region 1 and 2 had begun arriving, with further requested for night shifts and from Region 3 for the following days. The calls for help extended off the fireground, with the Salvation Army helping to set up staging at the Lucindale Field Days site and the State Emergency Service (SES) assisting with a base camp at the Lucindale Area School.

By 6:19pm that evening, crews had halted the forward rate of spread with advice messages downgraded. More than 165 firefighters worked during the night to halt the spread of the fire with the assistance of heavy plant machinery, which was used to create mineral earth breaks around the fire's perimeter.



Taking advantage of the overnight cooler conditions, crews had worked hard to create containment lines. Despite the fire making several runs to the north during the night, as day broke on Thursday, 20 January, the fire was burning mostly within containment lines. Further strike teams and specialised heavy machinery were brought in to assist.

At 6:30pm on Thursday, the fire broke containment lines, with multiple spot fires burning to the west of the fire. Conditions were tough on the fireground and would only get worse as the fire began burning under extreme conditions, with spotting 8 - 15 kilometres from the fire. The first Emergency Warning Message was issued just before 8pm. CFS crews continued to be supported by Forestry Industry Brigades, Department for Environment and Water (DEW), and Farm Fire Units, with the additional support from the Victorian Country Fire Authority (CFA).

Despite overnight conditions easing slightly, crews were preparing for a likely deterioration in fire behaviour on the third day, with the wind and temperatures expected to increase. The fire continued to burn in a south-westerly direction, with erratic fire behaviour and localised spotting occurring from ribbon bark embers close to the fire edge. By 9:30am on Friday morning, a Level 3 incident had been declared with 4,138 hectares burned. 150 firefighters remained on the fireground and continued to work on numerous spot fires, with about 40 spot fires contained west of Callendale Road.

It was on this day at about midday, when the first reports of an incident involving firefighters occurred. It was soon to be determined two SA Country Fire Service members were involved in a falling tree incident, resulting in one fatality and one serious injury. The seriously injured CFS member was taken to hospital for further treatment and crews involved returned from the fireground for support from SPAM. The family and other personnel were informed and were being offered support.

Thankfully, conditions on the fireground had reduced and the forward rate of spread had been halted late on Friday. Crews conducted back burning and continued to consolidate control lines to the west of the fire along its edge.

The fire had burned 3,877 hectares and was declared contained at 3:50pm on Saturday, 22 January. It was deemed safe two days later, with no further fire spread expected.

It would later be revealed that Senior Firefighter Louise Hincks had been killed and firefighter Kevin Maciunas was seriously injured. The CFS is continuing to provide support to the families and brigades of the two CFS members who were involved in the incident at the Coles Fire. CFS Stress Prevention and Management services are always available for those who need support: 08 8115 3950. ■■





Wrattobully Fire

It wasn't the start to 2022 that anyone along the South Australian-Victorian border was hoping for. At 1:09pm on New Year's Eve, Emergency Victoria called for CFS crews to attend a car fire, which had quickly spread to grass. Weather conditions caused the fire to spread in an easterly direction into Victoria and within minutes the fire had raced across the border.

Fire crews from CFS, Forest Fire Management Victoria, and Country Fire Authority worked together, supported by aircraft and heavy machinery that continued to work on containment lines to stop the fire from spreading. Despite their hard work, the fire continued to burn out of control. Within the hour an Emergency Warning Message had been issued.

Overall, 20 CFS crews and one Bulk Water Carrier assisted Farm Fire Units and attempted to slow the fire as it raced across the border. Six CFS fire bombers worked with multiple CFA fire bombers and two CFA large air tankers to attempt to control the blaze. CFS fire bombers completed 68 drops during the afternoon.

The fire was classified as contained on 1 January 2022, at 10:10am on the South Australian side, but continued to burn uncontrolled through Victoria.

It impacted the small farming community of Poolajelo, south-west of Edenhope in the Wimmera. It is estimated that at least 4,500 livestock died in the fire, with more than 7,300 hectares burned. Wildlife losses were also reported, affecting old native forest, famous for its Red-tailed Black Cockatoos. ■

Gould Creek Power Substation Fire

On 4 January 2022, CFS and MFS responded to the Gould Creek power substation, with reports of an explosion.

On arrival CFS and MFS crews were confronted with a transformer containing around 13,000 litres of transformer oil fully involved in fire.

The CFS Incident Controller and Regional Duty Officer, in consultation with the Electranet on-site duty officer, developed a plan on how to extinguish the fire quickly and efficiently without creating further hazards.

The fire took around four hours to control, with a total of 13 CFS tankers and the Region 2 Incident Support Vehicle in attendance. MFS were released from the incident to allow coverage to the urban areas. ■



KI Lightning Complex Fires

In the early evening on 17 December 2021, a band of lightning started a series of eight grass/scrub fires across the eastern end of Kangaroo Island. Quick response by CFS, DEW and private landholders contained six of these fires to around one hectare in size. However, two of the fires continued to present greater concerns. The Starrs Road fire burnt approximately 100 hectares, and caused around \$50,000 damage to fencing and pasture, whilst the Seagers Road fire burnt 40 hectares and caused around \$5,000 damage to fencing.



These two fires required several days of firefighting efforts to control and declare safe. A composite strike team from Region 1 was dispatched to assist local crews over the weekend.

The Kangaroo Island Group worked effectively, establishing a Level 2 Incident Management Team at Kingscote Station to provide timely, accurate and detailed information back to the region. The skills learned and practiced after the 2019/20 fire season, and the increased involvement with regional staff including a full-time staff member on the Island, proved invaluable during this incident. ■

East Coast flooding deployments

From late February, the east coast of Australia endured three intense weather systems that led to flooding in New South Wales and in Queensland, forcing thousands to flee their homes. The first week in March brought Southern Queensland and Northern New South Wales more than a year's worth of rainfall in a week. The second evacuation happened on 30 March 2022 when a low-pressure system hit the east coast causing more heavy rain.

South Australian emergency services were deployed to assist the east coast, with volunteers and staff from the CFS responding alongside the SES and MFS. In total the CFS sent five deployments of 28 volunteers and 12 staff to support the flooding and storm damage in NSW and QLD. Crews were deployed on 7 March 2022 and the final crews returned on April 11.

A great example of interstate and inter-agency teamwork by all. ■



South Australian
Country Fire Service

Major projects

2021-22

These significant
projects will have a positive
impact on CFS members
around the state.





SAGRN Terminal Replacement Project

The CFS currently utilises SAGRN UHF fixed, mobile and portable radios to provide command and control communications at incidents. These radios have been in service for over ten years and are at the end of their operational and economic life. Consequently, an Invitation to Supply (ITS) was issued to the market by the CFS on 19 August 2020 for them to be replaced with new compliant equipment. The ITS closed on 28 September 2020, at which point evaluation of the responses to the ITS commenced. The evaluation process ensured that the equipment being offered met the technical and operational requirements of the CFS and provided a value for money solution.

A short list of suppliers was developed, and independent testing was undertaken to ensure that the technical specifications were met.

This was followed by field tests involving a group of volunteers and operational staff, who undertook testing of the equipment, with CSE Crosscom Pty Ltd being chosen as the preferred supplier.

As a result of this negotiation process a contract with CSE Crosscom Pty Ltd was signed in April 2021 for the supply, installation, and ongoing support of Motorola APX6000 portable radios and Motorola APX6500 mobile and fixed radios and associated accessories. Equipment was ordered through this contract, with the first batch delivered in June 2021.

CSE Crosscom commenced installation in July 2021 and completed working through Region 3 and Region 6 by October 2021. Pre-rollout preparation for Region 2 and Region 4 then commenced. All Motorola radios required to fulfill the contract have already been ordered by CSE, all of which will be in CSE's possession in SA or VIC by the end of March 2022.

Installation will occur outside of the fire season and be spread over a period of up to two years. The installation will be undertaken on a region-by-region basis with discussions being held with each to establish an agreed installation schedule.

As part of the contract, CSE Crosscom are also providing:

- ongoing support and maintenance of the new radios for the term of the contract, which is up to ten years
- the provision of Asset Management and Helpdesk Services
- the implementation and operation of Radio Manager to provide for remote updating and programming of the SAGRN radios
- an inspection of all radio installations (SAGRN, VHF and UHF CB) in appliances and stations during installation of the new radios. Where issues are identified, CFS will liaise with CSE Crosscom on repairs
- regular three yearly radio checks, following installation, of not just the new SAGRN radios but the VHF Tactical radios as well as the UHF CB radios
- establishment of training materials for the new equipment.

This will provide the following operational improvements:

- the periodic checks will provide volunteers and operational staff with the confidence that their radios are operating correctly and, as a result, will provide for improved safety at incidents
- Asset Management will improve the ability to keep track of the radio equipment to ensure that it is available when required
- Radio Manager will ensure that the radios will have the latest software upgrades
- Helpdesk will make it much easier to have issues and faults rectified and recorded
- a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) was made available on the volunteer portal from the end of May 2021. ■

Automatic Vehicle Location Project

Following a rigorous procurement process, Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) technology is being progressively rolled out in CFS vehicles region-by-region and will be complete for the 2022/2023 Fire Danger Season.

There are three key aims of the AVL technology, which is being implemented for CFS, SES, and MFS vehicles. The primary outcome is increased safety for firefighters. AVL will increase the safety of crew members in the form of an easily accessible duress system, with accurate locations and back up contingencies in place. An SOS button will be installed into each vehicle that, when hit for four seconds, will send an alarm to those monitoring the AVL Portal, e.g. Adelaide Fire and Incident Management Teams (IMT). From activation of the SOS button, CFS standard operating procedures will activate. However, the added benefit will now be that Adelaide Fire and IMT will be able to see the location of a vehicle and be able to send support directly to that spot.

It will also be used to enhance operational capability, creating better situational awareness and a common operating picture. Incorporating a sector wide approach will mean that inter-agency operations will be significantly more cohesive and efficient.



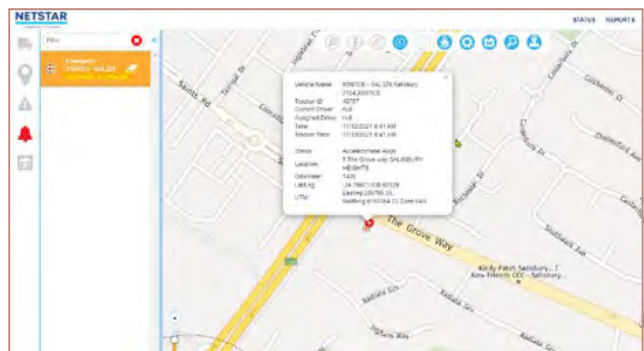
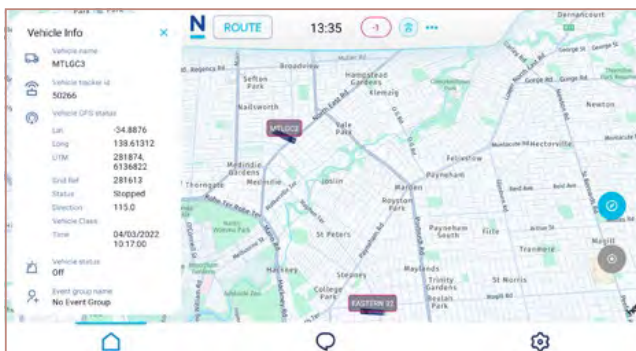
“The technology will enable IMTs to respond and coordinate resources in bushfires and other fire emergencies across South Australia at the same time.”

CFS crews will be able to see on their in-vehicle tablets not only colleagues' vehicles from CFS but also those from other agencies including Forestry SA, MFS and SES – enabling greater collaboration than ever before.

How did we get here?

Emergency services staff and volunteers from all agencies participated in developing the initial requirements. This formed the basis for the Expression of Interest that was published and released to market in November 2020. In January 2021, field trials with the shortlisted vendors were conducted across the state. The field trials included both staff and volunteers who visited Mt Lofty, Kangaroo Island, the West Coast, Yorke Peninsula, and the South East. CFS staff and volunteers rigorously evaluated the different options as they drove around the state, narrowing this down to two vendors before arriving at the decision and vendor we have now, Netstar Australia.

The project team conducted an installation pilot that evaluated 60 vehicles from Forestry SA, MFS and SES from November 2021 to February 2022. During this time, the development of the AVL application and detailed rollout planning with each agency continued. ■



PPC laundering and maintenance roll out

It is well documented that firefighting is a dangerous and demanding occupation. Whether you are a volunteer or career firefighter, these hazards remain the same. Whilst the immediate danger of an incident is obvious, the far-reaching impact of toxic contaminants that remain on your gear are likely not in the forefront of everyone's mind.

Firefighters are often depicted in popular media post-incident, covered in soot with a scorched helmet. In recent history this was sometimes a reality and worn as a badge of honour. However, as we evolve as a service and an industry, scientific studies have afforded us the knowledge that this is not a look conducive to the long-term health of a firefighter – nor is it a professional image.

The industry in its entirety is quickly evolving in this space and this has seen a new International Standard being developed, with notable input from the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC), which includes several CFS members. The new standard (ISO 23616) relates to cleaning, inspection, and repair of firefighters' PPE.



“
Whilst the immediate danger of an incident is obvious, the far-reaching impact of toxic contaminants that remain on your gear are likely not in the forefront of everyone's mind.
”



What is the CFS doing to support me through this process as a volunteer?

Our involvement with the relevant AFAC committees often prompts us to look at our existing practices before a new standard is released, to ensure we remain compliant with best practice. Our pre-existing contract arrangements for laundering and maintenance of structural garments (Category 3) were also ending. As a direct result of these considerations a collaborative approach to the market was made with MFS and a tendering process identified Industrial Decontamination Services (IDS) as the preferred supplier. The contract with IDS commenced in November 2021.

“
IDS has a newly established premises with a state-of-the-art plant facility in Wingfield, which surpasses all legislative and industry requirements.
”

The second phase to this service was the introduction of collection/drop off facilities in the form of steel locked boxes, which have been installed outside of various key CFS locations across the state. Strategies to further support this are being arranged, with more boxes to be installed, providing even greater coverage to increase convenience for volunteers.

As a volunteer, all you need to do is place your PPC in the locked box, arrange a pickup through the DECON Connect mobile phone application or alternative email/phone number, and IDS will do the rest. There are no limitations to how many times you can have items laundered. We encourage PPC to be laundered after every incident where contaminants are found (smoke, biological, asbestos or anything else you may come in contact with). Even if your gear looks dirty simply through training, send it in for a clean!

“
This is inclusive of structural and wildland gear and is not limited to hazardous or toxic contaminants.
”

This is a quickly evolving space and it is likely that further items like helmets, harnesses, and other personal equipment may require more stringent decontamination in future. Updates on these practices will be made available on the portal. ■



Delivery of new trucks

During 2021/22, CFS secured 11 Quick Response Vehicles (QRVs), which have been based on the New South Wales Rural Fire Service design. The new QRVs feature a significant investment in upgrades including true-track correction, all-terrain tyres, suspension upgrades and a long-range fuel tank to further enhance what a lot of people consider a premium in the off-road light vehicle space. They come fitted with a pump, 600 litre water tank, cabin deluge, In-Cab Breathing System (ICBS), radiant curtains, small fridge, battery chainsaw and basic rural stowage.

Out of 22 14s on order, CFS has received the first 12, five of which will come with specialised tyres for sandy terrain. These are a quality light tanker with Automated Manual Transmission (AMT) and a 1,600 litre water capacity. This new 14 has been successfully used to trial a bumper monitor, similar to those in the heavy tanker fleet. It is anticipated this will become standard for future builds.

The 34P has undergone some feature enhancements to better accommodate the functions of a multi-purpose fire apparatus that meets CFS' needs. Whilst the re-design has necessitated a reduction in water to 2,000 litres, the additional features designed to increase stowage space for Road Crash Rescue (RCR) kits and urban firefighting kits are vital.

These enhancements in designs will better cater for the needs of Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA), RCR and HazMat brigades, and give rural brigades standardisation for the longer term.

“ This will go a long way to ensure that CFS is providing the best possible vehicles and equipment for an all-hazards fire service. ”

The BW10 Compressed Air Foam Systems (CAFS) have been well received. There are three tankers: a 34P, a 34, and a 44 that have been delivered; with a further two 34s and one 44 still being manufactured. This will leave one BW10 CAFS for Region 5 and one for Region 6 to complete the CAFS trial rollout.

After four years, the Fire Truck Safety Systems (FTSS) project is nearing completion with only a handful of BWCs requiring attention, and a handful of tankers still needing pump start kits to be installed. This project aims to be inclusive of the single cab 14s and some of the newer QRVs where a solution has been made possible for the installation of ICBS. ■





Black Hawks arrive

Two Sikorsky UH-60A Black Hawk helicopters joined the CFS’ aircraft fleet for the 2021-22 Fire Danger Season, boosting the Service’s state-wide response.

The CFS has utilised helicopter firebombing aircraft since 2006 and the Black Hawks are the next generation in this field, with the speed of response and flexibility of the Black Hawks providing greater capability for our other 25 aircraft across South Australia.

The Black Hawks, operated by South Australian company Aerotech Helicopters, are based in Adelaide and can be available for recall outside of their standard contract for firefighting as required.



“ The pair were used to great effect this year at many incidents across the state, with noticeable impact at the Springton, Sampson Flat, and Mount Gambier Crater Lake fires. ”

The Black Hawks will be based in the Adelaide Hills and contracted to the CFS on an 84-day period for the next three years, with the option to extend for two years. Starting dates for each year will be decided through a risk assessment process. A call-when-needed option is also available outside of the contracted periods for singular days of high risk. ■

Fast facts

Airborne within 5 minutes of dispatch call

Tank capacity of 4,500 litres each

Can refill, via a snorkel, in less than 60 seconds

Top firefighting speed of 230kph

Can fly for up to 2.5 hours without refuelling

Will operate primarily as a pair but can be separated for major fires in different locations.

Australian Fire Danger Rating System

The CFS is working with all the Australian states and territories to implement the new, nationally consistent Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS). The AFDRS will enhance public safety and reduce the impacts of bushfires by improving the scientific accuracy behind fire danger predictions and how fire danger is communicated to the public.

The AFDRS at a glance:

- The current fire danger ratings system is largely calculated based on science that is over 60 years old, not updatable, and only takes into account two vegetation types (and their two corresponding fire behaviour models, GFDI and FFDI) which represent only a third of the Australian continent.
- The new AFDRS takes into account eight fire behaviour models, which includes modifications to expand their use to 22 fuel types, is now based on a Fire Behaviour Index (FBI) (no longer Fire Danger Index (FDI)) that will support agency and industry decision-making processes seamlessly across all Australian landscapes.
- Across Australia, states and territories have always had inconsistent terms and interpretations for the public facing fire danger ratings. The new system will bring all jurisdictions in line with one another using nationally consistent iconography and messaging.
- National research found the need for a simpler, community-focused fire danger rating system, which is more action-oriented with fewer levels.

The AFDRS will go live 1 September 2022, bringing with it a consistent, science-based set of fire danger ratings across Australia.

Four ratings of Moderate, High, Extreme and Catastrophic have been agreed to, with the Fire Behaviour Index range also locked in. The AFDRS will also introduce 'off' or 'no rating' for days where there is an FBI of 0-11, creating a more action-oriented set of ratings.

In April 2022, after months of deliberations, the AFDRS Program Board signed off on the final look and feel of the AFDRS device and accompanying high-level messaging.

This will mean that wherever people are in Australia, whether they are at home or travelling, the community will see, or be able to access, a similar sign/icon with consistent advice on what to do at each level, while also allowing enough flexibility for agencies to meet the needs of their communities.

Who is involved?

The NSW RFS are leading the overall project and the technical build, with AFAC coordinating the implementation.

The AFDRS is being overseen by a National Program Board, with Deputy Chief Officer Georgie Cornish acting as the South Australian representative.

CFS Commander Gavin Wornes is leading the South Australian project team, which includes Farhana Fadjjar (Stakeholder Relations), Clara Bartlett (Policy Advisor), and Stevie Swan (GIS Officer).

For further information contact the SA AFDRS Implementation Team:

CFS.AFDRSImplementationTeam@eso.sa.gov.au

Rating	Fire Behaviour Index	Agreed high-level calls to action
MODERATE	12 – 23	Plan and prepare
HIGH	24 – 49	Be ready to act
EXTREME	50 – 99	Take action now to protect life and property
CATASTROPHIC	100+	For your survival, leave bushfire risk areas

Profile

Leah Salamon

Region 1



When did you join as a volunteer, and what roles have you had?

I joined in March 2013. Since then, I've been a firefighter, Brigade Administration Coordinator, OHS&W, Communications Coordinator, and Group Cadet Coordinator. I stepped into each role without really knowing much about them, but over time I grew a solid appreciation for the work involved.

What was it that made you join?

My husband and I moved into the Adelaide Hills with very little knowledge of the bushfire risk in our area. We joined CFS initially to gain an understanding of our risks, but it didn't take long for us to be hooked. Together we stumbled into an adventure that's led us from our local station, across the state, interstate and overseas. We've each seen the service from different angles, and it would be hard to imagine life now without it.

What do you think can be done to recruit more female volunteers?

Targeted recruitment for females and for diversity starts at brigade level. If most of a brigade is open to increasing diversity, for more than just filling auxiliary roles, then that is half the battle. From there it can be as simple as starting a conversation with someone that doesn't fit the typical 'firefighter' image.

How can we better the culture in CFS to champion women in leadership roles?

To change culture there needs to be agency for change from those at the top, and from those on the ground.

“ Every person needs to feel enabled and safe to call out behaviour, to speak up for others, and to celebrate achievements.”

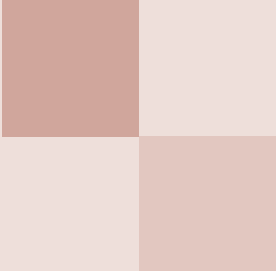
A state structured mentoring system for women at all levels would be very helpful. Formal or informal mentoring provides the ability to sound out ideas, troubleshoot problems, or raise concerns of behaviour with someone separate to the daily grind.

As a female, what do you think CFS has done well in this space?

Whilst there are still barriers, the numbers of females involved with CFS is quite strong. Roughly one quarter of our members are women, and we have 28 female captains out of approximately 425 brigades. It is very difficult to shift values that are entrenched with tradition, so change can be hard to see at brigade level. However, CFS as an agency now has more women in senior state roles than ever before. Policy is shifting, with clearer accountability for behaviour, and new Professional Standards Officers.

What opportunities has CFS provided you?

From the first ride in a fire truck to obtaining my MR licence, there have been so many opportunities with CFS that I am grateful for. In 2018 I was selected to attend the Women and Firefighting Australia (WAFWA) conference in Wellington, New Zealand. I was also selected for the national 'Are They Triple OK?' campaign in 2019 and went to NSW to meet representatives for each national emergency services agency. I look forward to the next adventure with CFS. 🏠



Region One

From the Regional Commander
Peter Phillips



Welcome from the Regional Commander

The community rightly praises the service we provide when they see us out in the field, but I doubt they fully understand the commitment and dedication it takes to be part of the CFS, or the multitude of different roles we undertake.

You volunteer your time and skills during incidents but just as important is the time you all sacrifice for training and developing your skills or training others. Many of you also participate in IMTs or manage and lead our brigades and groups in a multitude of roles.

Many people have commented to me that last year was quiet and, whilst it was from a rural fire perspective, the region still responded to 4,200 incidents across the range of emergencies we respond to and the diversity of services we provide.

You have not just helped your local communities but, when asked, you have provided your service to other communities across the country.

I thank each of you, volunteer or staff, for your commitment and service. I also ask that you thank your family and employers for their ongoing support.

Peter Phillips
Regional Commander

Paechtown Fire

At 10:26am on 6 February 2022, Adelaide Hills CFS crews were called to a grass fire in a paddock on Yantaringa Road in Paechtown, near Hahndorf and Echunga.

The fire was burning in a south-westerly direction in low stubble and scrub with several structures nearby. Ground crews worked hard to protect the nearby properties and saved three structures.

In total, 75 personnel in 12 tankers and 3 bulk water carriers, with the support of 25 drops from firebombers, halted the forward rate of spread within two hours of the initial call.

However, crews remained on the scene well into the afternoon and evening to mop up and black out, ensuring hot spots throughout the scrub were extinguished.

In total, 12 hectares of grass and scrub was burned, with the cause believed to have been started by a grass slasher.





Milang Brigade

The Milang Brigade has had a very successful last few months, culminating in the brand new station and surrounding grounds.

It all started in 2017 when the old station/shed had a major overhaul and the walls were re-sheeted, thanks to funding from region and the brigade. At this time we knew that a move to a different site with a new station wasn't going to happen, so in 2018 a new ablution block was constructed at the rear of the station. This provided greatly needed and appreciated shower, toilet and clothes washing facility. The funding for this was again region and brigade.

Then, in 2020, the brigade learned that a new larger station shed was to be built adjacent to the old shed, funded by a State Government Project Renew initiative. The new shed was bigger, cleaner, and housed all that was needed for brigade operations.

The old shed still housed the meeting room and the radio room so was still being used.

“ In a community gesture, the truck bay of the old shed was made available to the Milang Water/Sea Rescue Group to house their rescue boat.

The large boat fitted 'centimetre perfect' into the shed and stayed for several months.

In May 2021, State Government funding enabled the brigade to take possession of a brand new 34 truck. The truck – fitted with in-cab pump start, air ride seat for the OIC, locker space for equipment (now considered standard stowage), bull-bar monitor, chain-saw, fridge, and driver spotlight – is a big improvement on the older truck, with many new additions making operations much easier.

Finally, in 2022 the surrounds of the new shed were completed with an extended concrete 'apron' at the front and asphalted car-parking space and gravel driveway. Project Renew funded the asphalt, and the brigade funded the concreting.

A remarkable effort from a dedicated and supportive team of volunteers in the CFS. ■■

Willunga Brigade's Prizi 60 years of service

In February 2022, the Willunga Brigade formally recognised the over 60 years of service of Mr David Prizibilla to the Country Fire Service. 'Prizi', as he is known around the brigade, received his 60-Year Service Medal from the Minister for Emergency Services in recognition of his commitment to the Willunga Brigade and the wider CFS over more than six decades.

As has been noted, Prizi was the captain before some of our current members were born! We are privileged to have him around the brigade to share his firefighting experience and wisdom. ■■



Mount Barker Show success thanks to *Little Murphy* the donkey

The sun shone, the donkey brayed, and the crowds arrived! The Mount Barker Show was back in full swing and it was packed with action.

With competition entries for the best poultry, cattle, and goats to prize-winning fruitcakes, eggs, and mud pies on display, the Mount Barker Show delivered a fabulous repertoire of things to see and do.

Keeping the agriculture theme in mind, and wanting to encourage the public to think about their Bushfire Survival Plans, Community Engagement Officers' Natasha Huber and Sarah Harris staffed a display with a difference this year by including a young donkey called 'Little Murphy' in their display, who worked just like 'click bait'.

While Donkey and Mule Society of SA members and CFS volunteers, Paul and Kristen Adkins, handled Little Murphy, Natasha and Sarah were able to hand out brochures and speak to over 100 people about their Bushfire Survival Plans, reminding residents and property owners to include their pets in their plans.

Information also focused on the difference between a Bushfire Safer Place and Bushfire Last Resort Refuge. Smokey made an appearance and we thank Cadet Jett Bellman for being brave enough on a warm sunny day to help us out. Our thanks too to the Mt Barker Brigade for attending and adding interest to the display. 🍌



An unexpected honorary trainer

My 11-year-old son, Lucas, came down to the station with me to complete annual Skills Maintenance Drills (SMDs) for the Mawson Operations Support Brigade prior to the fire danger season.

Even though we are an Operations Support Brigade, it is vital that we still undertake SMD training as we facilitate driving, scribe, and ground observer duties on the fire-ground. Instead of sitting on the sidelines, the facilitator and crews included him in the training, making him an honorary trainer and firefighter for the session.

Not only did this present a positive experience, it was also a good opportunity for him to learn about what to expect and what we do if caught in a burn over. We discussed and practiced what to do in an appliance and what we could also do or use if we were in an ordinary car or 4wd on a country road. Lucas walked away from this session confident and reassured that the equipment provided by the CFS offers the best protection possible. Therefore, if I or any of my CFS family was ever caught in a situation involving a burn over, we know we would come home safe and sound.

Nicole Vlant

Lieutenant 2 Mawson Operations Support Brigade 🍌



Waitpinga Brigade 70th Anniversary

On Saturday 16 October 2021, the Waitpinga Brigade and the local community celebrated the 70th Anniversary of the formation of the Waitpinga Brigade. The celebration was held at the Waitpinga Station with a community BBQ, bonfire and cake and attended by Waitpinga Brigade members and the local community. Barry Jagger of the Waitpinga Brigade addressed all those who gathered for this celebration. Barry gave a brief but very informative speech about Waitpinga Brigade's history, fire safety, being prepared in the event of a fire, and what we should be all aware of if we were confronted with a major fire in our community. A nice, relaxing and informative day was had by all those that attended.

“ In the early 1950s, a group of local Waitpinga men, mainly ex-service war veterans, got together to establish a firefighting service for the area, which was formed under the banner of the EFS (Emergency Fire Service). ”

Three of the most prominent contributors who helped establish this group were Tony Henderson, Roger McKnight and Garnett Parsons, who used their military training and expertise to train and guide others in firefighting techniques. Back in those early days, amongst the equipment they used were many farm-manufactured and farm-based appliances, including a truck with a 500-gallon tank that had a manually operated hand pump mounted on the back. There were no government grants in those days, so most of the equipment that was used was ex-army gear or had been self-manufactured on farms in the area. At times, to raise money for gear and equipment they would burn off small areas and urban blocks for a small fee.



Moving forward to around 1965, State Council bodies became responsible for fire safety in their area. The Waitpinga EFS operated out of a small shed still located on the current grounds where our current station is located. Many of the appliances were still being built and purchased by volunteers around the Victor Harbor/Waitpinga district. In approximately the early 1980s the EFS became the CFS (Country Fire Service) and the State Government then became the financing body, not the Council. Formal CFS training for brigades commenced somewhere between 1980-1985. Today, the Waitpinga Brigade has a membership of 30 people with another two about to do their firefighting training in the next few months. ■

Stirling Community Shop thanked

The Upper Sturt Brigade receives wonderful donations of materials and financial support from the community. The funds help the brigade to purchase necessary items that increase our operational efficiency but are not funded by CFS. Items such as Floto-pumps, thermal imaging cameras and in-cab tablets make up part of a substantial list.

The photo shows four of the friendly staff of the Community Shop, Lois, Brenda, Felia and Kay with Captain Moose and Lieutenant Andrew and the Certificate of Appreciation awarded to the shop for their great support over many years. The most recent assistance has enabled the brigade to motorise the station roller doors, a most welcome change according to our smaller members who struggle with first-generation doors. ■



Athelstone Brigade's 60th Anniversary

Athelstone Brigade celebrated its 60th Anniversary on 6 November 2021, with the community and past and present brigade members. The celebration was held at Saint Ignatius College's Dennett Centre in Athelstone with a tour of the station and a sit-down lunch to follow. Members of the brigade had worked hard to pull together the day of festivities, with the station's air raid siren put on display in its former glory, after many hours of hard work.

It was the brigade's belief that all should gather once again with the siren as the town crier, as it was this siren that brought everyone together as a call to arms for fire and emergency response calls.

“ **The siren was Athelstone's second unit, as the first siren fitted to the tower, was deemed not loud enough for all members and the community to hear. The siren and tower collective are now located at the South Australian Volunteer Fire Fighters Museum at Naracoorte.** ”

The brigade's first meeting was held on 7 September 1961 at the Community Hall in Athelstone and was opened by the Hon Mayor Mr Wadmore and approximately 40 residents of Athelstone.

Mr. Tony Geesling represented EFS HQ where he outlined the purpose and general management of the EFS in rural areas – yes, Athelstone was considered rural.

On 14 November 1961, a block of land was made available by the Council, which to this day remains the current site. Drill nights were set as Wednesday nights, the 15 x 30 galvanised iron shed was ordered and the required equipment was outlined as a Blitz truck and 500-gallon tank from council. The Blitz would later be replaced by the Bedford 4x4 diesel truck cab. The first official drill night was held on 6 December 1961.

Past and present members were advised on the day that the management committee of 2019/21, when discussing a 60th anniversary celebration, believed a medallion or like should be created to acknowledge and recognise dedication of past, present and future members serving the community in the Athelstone Brigade. CFS service recognition begins at 10 years and National recognition at 15 years. We know that the average commitment time for a volunteer is about seven years. With this in mind the Athelstone Brigade decided to officially recognise serving members with five years' dedicated service, performing the responsibilities required by today's national fire service standards, would be awarded with a small token of our appreciation for their service and for the family support given to the brigade and the South Australian community. ■



Happy 100th Birthday Jack Walker

Jack was a foundation member of the Emergency Fire Service's Port Noarlunga/Christies Beach/Moana branch, which was founded in February 1952.

When Jack commenced with the EFS (now the CFS), there was no fire station, and the only equipment available was a trailer with 44-gallon drums of water and a pump which enterprising local businessmen put together – how times have changed!

Here is Jack with his 25 year service trophy, which he received in 1977. ■

Profile

Kirstie McGarrity

Region 1



When did you join the CFS?

My Dad joined the CFS within a few months of us moving to Morgan, and I wanted to join at the same time. It took some pestering on my behalf but after a year of asking, I joined as a cadet in 2005.

What has been your biggest highlight/achievement as a volunteer with the service?

There are two highlights that come to mind for me. The first is having the opportunity to be the Cadet Coordinator for Morgan CFS and seeing cadets transition to becoming firefighters who are still with the service now. Another highlight would have to be attending a youth reception in Adelaide with the YAC to meet with their Royal Highnesses, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

What development opportunities has CFS provided you through volunteering?

Being the Region 3 representative on the YAC for five years afforded me the opportunity to broaden my experiences within CFS as a whole. Not only did I learn more about myself, but I was also able to meet and network with other like-minded volunteers across the state. Through my involvement with YAC, I was given the opportunity to present at the 2015 AFAC Conference with

two other representatives about the importance of engaging and empowering young people in the emergency management sector.

What do you think the service can do to ensure we continue the legacy of the CFS through our cadets?

I think we need to continue to invest in and champion the cadet program across the service (at state, regional, group and brigade levels). Cadets can play a significant part in the longevity of brigades in smaller communities, which was certainly my experience in my previous brigade with half of the membership having been a cadet. It is important to mentor cadets so that this continues in the future. Even though I'm no longer a cadet or on the YAC, I still have a mentor that supports and encourages me with my development within the service.

What keeps you involved as a volunteer?

I really enjoy the opportunity that volunteering gives me to support the community. I also enjoy the camaraderie within my brigade/group and all the opportunities I get to meet new people. I have been very fortunate with the experiences that I have had within the service so far. ■

Profile

Geoff Weidenhofer

Region 1



What's your advice to others looking to go into leadership roles?

The CFS is like anything else, it needs leaders. While it has gotten tougher over the years, there's lots of support from groups, other captains and officers so don't be afraid to ask for help. There are a lot of people-skills involved but it can be extremely rewarding.

Why do you believe people should volunteer with the CFS?

It's a win for the community and it's a win for yourself! I'm quite confident that anyone who joins up will get a sense of pride at giving back, achieving something and meet a fantastic bunch of volunteers. The transferable skills you learn at incidents and in training can be taken to the workplace and into other parts of your life.

What's your passion within the CFS?

Road Crash Rescue (RCR) has been a passion of mine, it is very rewarding. While it's confronting, along with fires, I love the feeling that you've done your absolute best to help a member of the community when stumps are down, and they really need help.

Do you have any advice to other volunteers around Road Crash Rescue (RCR)?

RCR is not for everybody, but there are many other jobs that can be done like traffic control, so if you're hesitant it can be best to start off there and work your way up to things. RCR can be very rewarding, and it's a great challenge keeping up with the latest technology, equipment, and techniques.

What makes your Group different from others?

The way our Group works together is something I regard very highly, particularly being a small Group with just four brigades, we support each other, and the Group works together to get the best outcome for a brigade if they're pursuing an issue. ■

Region Two

From the Regional Commander
Garth Hogarth



Welcome from the Regional Commander

Region 2, like all other regions, has faced many challenges over the past 12 months. Whilst the 2021/22 Fire Danger season was below average for Total Fire Ban activations, COVID-19 has challenged volunteers and staff in their daily business and when responding to incidents. As Acting Regional Commander, I am immensely proud to have been able to lead the 2,783 volunteers and 15 staff of Region 2 through these difficult times. The consistent level of professionalism demonstrated by all Region 2 people who hold a leadership position is to be commended and I thank you all.

I would also like to acknowledge all the medal recipients who received awards at one of our three medal presentations this year.

“ **The culture of our brigades and groups is strong and the evidence of that is when you recognise nearly 2,500 years of long standing, dedicated service our volunteers have committed to their communities and the CFS - thank you.** ”

In March 2022, Region 2 was successful in securing two positions on the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) Volunteer Leadership Program in Mount Gambier. The selection committee was impressed with the motivation and vision for the emergency management sector's future that had been expressed by the two applicants.

Region 2 was proud to be represented by Senior Firefighter Hayley Slater and Firefighter Lisette Hutchins from Salisbury Brigade in the Para Group. Both attendees reported the program was beneficial and provided them the opportunity to develop their leadership skills and confidence, which in turn will benefit all volunteers in the CFS.

The program provides leadership and management strategies in the context of volunteering, including:

- leading change in an organisation
- building and maintaining motivation
- identifying and working with different personality types
- resolving conflict, addressing performance issues and giving constructive critical feedback
- stress and self-care strategies
- contemporary issues facing the emergency management sector.

I look forward to the opportunities that will present in the coming year for Hayley and Lisette to share their learnings and provide opportunities to mentor members of the CFS in leadership.

Garth Hogarth
Regional Commander



Yorke Peninsula Field Days

The Yorke Peninsula Field Days are acknowledged as the oldest in Australia. The three-day biennial event has a major focus on agriculture and the future. It attracts up to 5,000 patrons daily and is designed to be of interest to both rural and urban families.

CFS had an extensive exhibit in September 2021 on two sites – the CFS Main Exhibit in a 30m x 15m site and an additional 15m x 15m outdoor site opposite to accommodate the Farm Fire Unit and CFS appliance exhibit.

The CFS exhibit averaged over 900 visitors each of the three days and 85 families updated or formulated their first 5-minute bushfire plan.

CFS Community Engagement Officers from around the state as well as Region 2 volunteers and staff enjoyed working together over five days to set up, run, and pack down the site. Another successful CFS exhibit. ■



New brigades

Over the last year Region 2 has seen the growth of two new Operational Support Brigades in the Northern Yorke Peninsula and Gumeracha, increasing the total number of brigades to 85.

Both Group Officers have been extremely passionate about the creation of these brigades, as well as the recognition that not everyone wants to be firefighters on the ground but still have a passion to help and give back to their communities in other ways.

Northern Yorke Group Officer, David Bussenschutt, said it's fantastic to see the enthusiasm from those who have joined.

"We lacked those people who could do the non-firefighting roles but still bring a wealth of life experience, diverse skills, and are happy to not be running around on the fireground but to support those out there."

Since 2014 David has been working to develop a brigade of people that can help the group with running group bases for incidents. Having extra hands that can assist with filling BA cylinders, organising servicing of the firefighting fleet, stocking brigades with food and water, and air support for firefighting aircraft and management of the air strips. These are jobs that the firefighters would do when they got back from a fire or had to source during an incident. What started from two has grown from there.



Gumeracha Group Officer, Rick Drury, said the new Operational Support Brigades also provide an opportunity for those that want to step off the fireground but not out of the service.

"There are lots of firefighters that have years of experience but can't be on the fireground and we don't want to lose them. We need to keep that experience in the service," he said.

We need more people to do less rather than less people to do more.

Rick also noticed that there are a range of people that are not close enough to brigades to respond to fires but still wanted to contribute their skills and this was an ideal opportunity to do so.

"This also gives us people to fall back on when we are at a fire to provide support to the field like group base radio operators, sourcing heavy machinery, entering critical logs about the incident, supporting incident management teams and the general run around jobs that go unnoticed but are critical," Mr Drury said. ■



Region Two medal presentation days

In May, September and October 2021, Region 2 held three award presentation ceremonies at the Novotel Barossa Valley Resort and Barley Stacks Wines on the Yorke Peninsula.

There were 12 National Medals and 6 Clasps presented, along with 15 x 30 Year CFS Clasps, 25 x 40 Year CFS Clasps and 13 x 50 Year CFS Clasps presented totaling 2,470 years of service.

It was great to see so many long-serving Region 2 volunteers receive their awards at these ceremonies in front of their families and peers.

Region 2 Headquarters would like to congratulate these members and thank them for their lengthy and dedicated service to the CFS. ■

12
National
Medals

6
Clasps

15
30 Year
CFS Clasps

25
40 Year
CFS Clasps

13
50 Year
CFS Clasps

Our future is looking bright

Trying to attract new members can be challenging. Between work pressures, family, and sporting commitments, it's hard to get people to commit to something else. In Region 2, our brigades have actively been recruiting and have added yet another string to their bow, recognising the significant value the younger members of the community bring.

Several brigades have either reinvigorated or commenced a new cadet program and we've recently welcomed new CFS cadets at Port Wakefield, One Tree Hill, and Bute. Region 2, along with our dedicated Cadet Coordinators and supervisors across the region have invested heavily in our cadet program.

Acting Regional Commander Garth Hogarth said that, thanks to the generosity of the Gilbert Group, the cadets now have a fully refurbished trailer that will be used for cadet camps or for inter-group cadet training events.

"Supporting the refurbishment of the trailer is a great investment in our next generation of firefighters," said Mr Hogarth.

Cadets represent the future and the involvement of younger people in the emergency services helps to keep us grounded, relevant and connected to the wider community.

Region 2 currently has 274 cadets and with the excellent support the region receives from the Volunteer Services Branch, combined with the drive and determination set by our cadet coordinators and support from the region, it can only mean a bright future in this space. ■

Profile

Ann Letcher

Region 2



How long have you been with the CFS and what roles have you held?

I started in 1999 as a volunteer in the Lincoln Brigade and have since moved to Clare. I have held many roles including Radio Operator, Level 2 Planning Officer, Level 2 Incident Controller, Level 3 Deputy Incident Controller and Deputy Group Officer.

Earlier this year I was contacted by the CFS and provided the opportunity to do the Incident Commander Major Incident Training, which is run by NSW RFS, and is the training in the lead up to be a Level 3 IC. As much as the idea of being ultimately responsible terrifies me, at the same time we've never had a woman signed off as a Level 3 IC.

What keeps you involved as a CFS volunteer?

It is a combination of discovering I am good at firefighting and enjoy it, while also getting a sense of purpose and value.

“The fire service now is very different to when I joined, and that's a great thing. It's not as male-dominated and there are opportunities for support. When I signed up at the Lincoln Brigade, they didn't care that I was a woman, but back in 1999 that was an issue in a lot of brigades.

It was a fantastic and welcoming place – they became my family.

What advice would you give to other women in CFS looking to take on leadership positions?

If someone is saying they think you could have a go, have a go!

Not long after I joined the CFS we had a run of significant fires on the Eyre Peninsula, so I got a massive amount of fire experience by the pure fluke of my location. I was a BA Operator, a HazMat Operator and I had done up to Level 3 firefighting training. So, when I moved from Lincoln to Clare, they asked me if I wanted to be a DGO and I laughed in the face of the captain that said that to me because I thought he was joking. I didn't expect that someone would be considering my skill set and that it was of a high level. I had internalised this idea that because I wasn't a 60-year-old man that I couldn't be a DGO. Instead of realising that as a 30-year-old I had more fireground experience than the majority of the people.

What advice would you give to others looking to or involved in leadership positions?

I see a lot of people coming into leadership roles, like lieutenant, captain, DGO, thinking they must do it the same way as the person before them did. It's your job, make it your own! While there are key things you must do in these roles, by being genuinely yourself and focusing on what skills you bring to the role you will be more effective than if you try to do it the way the person before you did.

It's also important to note, while I have been a staff member it's not the pathway as to how I became a DGO. The pathway should be based on your skills, what the best mix for your Group is, and ensuring we reflect the communities that we serve. I bring a different set of skills as a DGO than someone else and that's ok. I thought about the skills that I have and are strongest in and leveraged those. We all bring something, and it doesn't need to be the same. 🟡🟠

Region Three

From the Regional Commanders
Ray Jackson and Scott Turner



Welcome from the Regional Commanders

Region 3 has continued to grow and build solid partnerships with our communities whilst identifying the new normal after coming out of COVID-19. While the region experienced a slower fire season this year, the professionalism and commitment of volunteers was visible through support to other regions and in responding to lightning strikes across the north.

Region 3 has seen the acknowledgement and celebration of service with a number of Groups holding local award ceremonies, recognising the exceptional service our members are providing across the region, state and country. Concurrently, the region has lost a number of stalwarts and in remembering their service and legacy to their brigade and group, we thank their families for allowing them to be key members of the CFS.

Region 3 has continued to embrace emerging technologies, with the successful transition to the new GRN radios and the commencement of the AVL implementation – positive benefits to our frontline personnel in supporting their communities. Strong support for the regional committees focusing on OI&L, training and cadets are seeing the region provide positive influence in CFS direction, including the review of QRVs, greater focus on localised training,

and critically, the creation and celebration of a number of Group cadet initiatives. Combining these with a renewed focus from the RVMC with an updated Terms of Reference and membership, the employment of a Regional Volunteer Officer and the production of a Regional Service Delivery Plan, means the region has a solid foundation moving forward.

“**We’d like to thank the efforts of everyone within Region 3 and especially recognise those who we may not see on the frontline, yet they keep the brigades, groups and region moving forward.**”

These support roles and leadership roles allow us all to focus on service delivery to our communities, whilst they deal with the day-to-day business of CFS - the management and leadership of people, overseeing our safety, and the administration of bureaucracy and changes from outside of the CFS.

Finally, to those who lead us operationally in the local IMTs and the RCC, thank you for your dedication, support, and broad shoulders in providing command and control roles to support our frontline responders.

Ray Jackson and Scott Turner
Regional Commanders



Swanport Group medals presentation

The Swanport Group held a medal presentation night to recognise the many years of service of volunteers, with service ranging from 10–50 years.

There were 11 members from all nine brigades within the group and the Region 3 Operations Brigade were presented National Medals and Clasps by Chief Officer Mark Jones, Adrian Pederick MP for Hammond, and Regional Commander Ray Jackson. The event was held at the Mypolonga Sports Club and was well attended by medal recipients and their families. Thank you to the Mypolonga Football Club for the wonderful catering.

Swanport Group Officer, Terry Schutz, said there was over 1,000 years of firefighting experience on stage on the night.

“Over the last 10 years alone these people have responded to an average of 470 incidents each,” he said.

Mr Schutz said each of the firefighters must be shown gestures of thanks and appreciation.

“We have years of these firefighters putting themselves out in danger and at risk.

“Putting out grass fires, bushfires, pulling people out of crashed cars, fighting structure fires, or containing hazardous materials. We have years of members managing and leading others through the incidents while working in the scorching heat, in the dust, in the flames, sometimes in the dark and in the crud.

“We have fought the battles and we have fought them with professionalism and honour. This is not our job, this is us volunteering for our community, volunteering to keep our community safe.

“I hope you accept the gratitude being shown and as I said earlier – own it – you deserve it and more.”

Chris Bastian awarded OAM Australia Day

In the 2021 Queen’s Birthday Honours and Awards, Region 3 Operations Manager Chris Bastian was awarded an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for his service to youth. A little-known secret among us is that Chris commenced working with South Australia’s youth as a police officer with the Australian Army Cadets (AAC) in Woodside back in 2001. He progressed his service through to a national posting redesigning and implementing a change to the national curriculum. He was also awarded a Chief of Army Gold Commendation for his efforts, which he shares with his team.

He has since moved to the Australian Navy Cadets (ANC) to undertake a similar role as the Director of Youth Development. Chris, changing uniforms from Lieutenant Colonel with the AAC to Commander with the ANC, provides opportunities for children from all walks of life, and he is grateful for the support that the CFS provides him to achieve success for youth across our country.





Tailem Bend Station opening

The newly built Tailem Bend Station at Golf Course Road was officially opened by the Honourable Vincent Tarzia MP on Saturday 1 May 2021.

“The four-bay station was purpose built to support the Tailem Bend Motorsport Park, as well as many other risks in the area including the Dukes Highway.

The day was well attended and included Chief Officer Mark Jones, former CFS Chief Officer Greg Nettleton, and former Director of Regional Operations, Ken Hall. Other VIPs who attended included Coorong District Council Mayor Paul Simmons, Chief Executive Bridget Mather, Local Member for Hammond Adrian Pederick MP, previous Swanport Group Officer Wayne Thorley, and current Captain Dwayne Martin.

Invited back was previous captain Mike McEntee who held this position from 2004 to 2019 (15 years) and was heavily involved in the planning of the new station. Mike was honoured to attend this day and, as you can see from the photo, was delighted to assist in the cutting of the cake. 🍷



Region 3 Cadet Championships

The Region 3 Cadet Championships were held at Waikerie on 31 October 2021. Cadets varied in age from 11 years to 16 years and participated in four drills for the day, consisting of hose drills, draughting drills, elephant walk and burnover – all drills aligning with CFS fireground practices.

“Teams travelled from Tailem Bend and Mannum in Swanport Group along with teams from Morgan and Waikerie to participate on the day.

Commander Ray Jackson presented the medals to the winning teams on the day. All cadets worked very hard and should be congratulated on the efforts they put in as they are the future of the CFS. 🍷



Profile

Abbey Durdin

Region 3

What keeps you volunteering for the CFS?

It's a good way to give back to the community and build on your existing skills, while also gaining some new ones. It's also a great way to meet new people.

What roles do you hold?

I'm the captain of the Chaffey Operational Brigade, the Group Health and Safety Representative, and a Senior Firefighter at Brownswell Brigade.

“Being behind the scenes gives a really different perspective. From a public viewpoint, everyone sees the fire trucks, but there's a lot more to it than that.”

Any advice for other volunteers looking to get into leadership roles?

Go for it, don't be afraid to put yourself up for election! I threw myself into every course that I could to build up further theoretical knowledge. Don't be afraid to ask for help if you're unsure on anything.

What are responding to incidents like as part of an Operations Brigade?

It can be challenging at times; we have lots of different roles as part of the Ops Brigade. Crews need to be fed and we need to get that food from somewhere, so sometimes we put it together ourselves or we will pick it up from businesses. We also ferry crews around for shift changes and we have trained radio and CRIIMSON operators.



What are some of the challenges you've faced?

We had three engagements this year including a haystack fire in December, which I ended up running. It was the first time I'd run anything relatively big; it was a good learning experience and we all worked together to get the job done. You're not just worrying about being in the front left of your truck as a crew leader, you're worried about what everyone's doing. 🟡🔴

Profile

Steve Carn

Region 3



How long have you been in the CFS?

It's been a long time, I started in Bordertown in 1983 and now I'm a First Lieutenant at Parilla. Over the years I've been heavily involved in the CFS, as a Logistics Support Coordinator for the brigade and now group, and also a representative on the Volunteer Association.

What advice would you give to anyone who holds a leadership position?

In a leadership role, it's the soft skills, like listening, that are most important. The way to be a leader is to listen and then assess opinions. There can be polarising views on any topic, so it's important to hear both sides of the argument and then assess.

How have you made an impact in the CFS?

With the help of the Mallee Group's 10 brigades, I put together a comprehensive map identifying water points. The map has numbered yellow dots identifying where the water point is, a table with details on the type of water source, volume of water, grid reference, contact details for the farmer/property owner, and the rural property address.

By creating this resource it's meant trucks get back on the fireground quicker, the chatter has been taken out of the radio, and it allows the Incident Controller to focus on the fire.

What's an incident you'll never forget?

The day of Pinery, I was sitting at home ready in case of a call out. I can still remember watching the scanner as the cascading strike teams were deployed to the fireground and every seat was rolled out of the Adelaide Hills - you know we're in trouble when every aerial asset is being deployed. At 1:30pm our pager drops with a haystack fire, and it just bolted, and I mean bolted. Region told us we had 20 minutes before it hit Ngarkat, and the Mallee Group managed to pull it up. If that fire had reached Ngarkat we would have been in trouble. I was so proud of everyone that was there that day. 🟡🔴

Region Four

From the Regional Commander
Sindy McCourt



Welcome from the Regional Commander

I am immensely proud of the efforts of the staff and volunteers who continue to deliver first-class service to the communities we serve – regardless of the extreme challenges. The past 12 months, whilst quieter than the previous, has demonstrated your tremendous ability to resolve the rural, structural, and technical incidents this region throws up!

“ I’d like to thank the efforts of all Region 4 members, with a particular focus on the unsung heroes who often don’t get the accolades they deserve.

Firstly, to those in support roles, those members who are rarely seen but keep things moving, to those in leadership roles who deal with both the bureaucracy and the challenges of leading people, and finally to the members of the Regional Command Centres and IMTs who open themselves up to criticism from many in performing a management role in support of crews on the ground.

Thank you one and all.

Sindy McCourt
Regional Commander 🇺🇦

Life Membership presentations

On Saturday 4 December, Region 4 had the honour to award Life Memberships to four members of the Terowie Brigade.

Ross Haustorfer, Jan Haustorfer, Trevor Huddleston, and Des Sleep were presented with their Life Memberships by Hallett Group Officer Merv Robinson and Regional Volunteer Officer Ben Pettman. Jan was also awarded with her 20-year Clasp.

Region 4 would like to congratulate all recipients from Terowie Brigade, who together clocked up over 135 years combined service to their community. 🇺🇦





Andamooka Structure Fire: Opal Hotel

After Andamooka and Roxby Downs attended a large structure fire (shed and equipment) on 20 December 2021, Andamooka CFS was again alerted to a structure fire by a CFS member at 1:15am on 21 December.

On arrival, crews from Andamooka CFS found the Opal Hotel alight and quickly upgraded to a second alarm, with Roxby Downs CFS also raising the alarm level again on their arrival. A request for assistance was also sent to BHP-Olympic Dam Emergency Services, who responded with a tanker and a contractor with a bulk water carrier. Crews from Stirling North and Wilmington were responded to the Opal Hotel incident to assist with BA, with these crews conducting overhaul.

However, at 2:10am, whilst crews were engaged in combating this fire, another structure fire was noticed approximately 500 metres up the hill. Two firefighters attended the second fire, with the assistance from a member of the public, and quickly put out the fire with extinguishers before it could cause too much damage.

In total 25 CFS crews with four tankers, a BWC and a Logistics Vehicle, four BHP emergency service personnel with a tanker, and a contractor with a BWC attended and extinguished the fire. All crews had left the scene by 7:30am with Fire Cause Investigators attending all three fire scenes later that day.

The approximate damage of the Opal Hotel was \$250,000. Crews were able to save the majority of the accommodation blocks to the rear of the hotel, preventing approximately \$100,000 damage. Although the Opal Hotel had been closed for some time, it was in the process of being renovated to be reopened in the near future. The building had several historical paintings on the inside and outside walls and the loss of the hotel will be felt by all in the community. ■

OBAOC course Jamestown

Jamestown Brigade first built an Operate Breathing Apparatus Open Circuit (OBAOC) training facility/shed more than 10 years ago. The facility was designed so that the layout could be changed in more than 60 different ways within a few minutes. At least 10 were on a regular basis, including introducing heating and smoke to make the scenarios quite realistic.

The shed has worked well over the previous years, holding up to two initial OBAOC courses each year and many other exercises including Skills Maintenance Drill 3 (SMD 3), which is the annual BA skills maintenance/revalidation.

After the last initial OBAOC course held at Jamestown in 2021, Brigade Captain Graham Sims and other members from the brigade decided on an upgrade as new initiatives were required.

“ The initial OBAOC training course from 25-27 March 2022 was the first trial for the new look and layout of the shed. In the words of the trainees and trainers, what a fantastic setup!

Graham, with a team of helpers, is now planning to improve the heat and smoke induction systems to try to get this as close to realistic as possible. Congratulations Graham and Jamestown, a fantastic course with fantastic facilities. ■

Profile

Tim Cooper AFSM

Region 4



How long have you been with the CFS?

I joined the Jamestown Brigade 42 years ago and have remained with them ever since – I've never been with any other brigade!

In my time with Jamestown CFS I have been an admin coordinator, a lieutenant, and a captain. I was also Deputy Group Officer for Bundaleer Group and have been a part of the Level 2 IMT for Region 4.

“ I have been involved with training in the region for the past 36-37 years, and still ride the truck when I can.

How did you become involved in training volunteers in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands?

It was some time ago that Peter Heylen identified a need to set up CFS brigades in the APY Lands, and a lot of work was undertaken in that space prior to my involvement.

Both myself and Rosco (Ross Haustorfer) were fairly regularly involved in training in Region 4, and that's where it started off. There was one brigade that was set up before I was ever involved – Pukatja/Ernabella – but we were brought on to undertake the initial training and setting up of the other brigades in 2014.

What is the biggest difference in training volunteers in the APY Lands vs other regions?

It's absolutely amazing what these trainees already know, but it is an interesting mixture in the APY Lands – some of the trainees are of Anglo-Saxon origin and generally have good literacy skills, then you have the Aboriginal people, some who have really good literacy skills and some who do not have a good understanding of the English language.

To work around this, we have to judge the students' skills and then tailor the training accordingly. The standard way of delivering a BF1 course is PowerPoint presentation, with some practical skills teaching as well. With some of the BF1 units that are fairly heavy on PowerPoint, we will go out and sit on the bank of a creek and ask questions to draw out that knowledge.

Have there been any amazing stories come out of your training sessions?

We were teaching the turnover drill as part of a BF1 course in Pukatja/Ernabella and we thought we would give the vollies who did the course last year the opportunity to teach the new trainees the drill.

We talked about the necessity of the drill and went through the basics and then stood back whilst the crew from 12 months ago demonstrated it. We were really impressed with the standard – it was as close to perfect as you ever see.

Then the new students, having seen it done once, did about a 98% copy of what they had just seen – an absolutely incredible standard. That's really good when you can see things like that sink in and are done so well.

What makes you get out of bed every morning to continue doing what you do with the CFS?

I enjoy meeting lots of interesting new people, and being able to use the skills I've learnt over the years to teach other people.

It's also great to see the countryside. That's one of the good things about being a CFS member, you see parts of the country that the general public never see. ■

Profile

Dudley Dagg

Region 4

How long have you been with CFS?

Since Pukatja/Ernabella Brigade's inception, around 10 years I think – maybe a bit longer.

How did you fight fires before CFS came to the APY Lands?

We kept pursuing a fire truck and ended up with a decommissioned CFS truck from Marla. It didn't last very long but we also had a trailer supplied by the APY Lands, which helped us get started.

Everybody came to the party when we lost our medical clinic to a fire in 2006. Peter Heylen helped us to get another truck and get registered as a CFS brigade.

Most country towns will find a way to look after themselves when it comes to fighting fires – you always fight fires in the bush.

What makes your brigade/region/area different?

We have a big turnover of people in the APY Lands – they might be here for only a week or two then unbeknownst to us, they go. Very few people stay for long periods.

What sort of call-outs does your brigade respond to? Are you a busy brigade?

In a year we probably average between 15-30 incidents. We have a lot of grass fires, and a lot of arsonists burning cars. We get a few house fires too, and also respond a lot of vehicle accidents in the area.

We also help locals rescue animals that are caught in fences and things like that. There are some really funny things that happen up here.

What are some of the challenges of being a remote brigade?

The biggest challenge would be the distance. We had a rollover recently, and the call from 000 said the accident site was 10kms out of Ernabella. We got 30kms out and there was still no sign of the vehicle, so we contacted Adelaide Fire to find out the exact location, and it was a further 60kms away.



Because of the distance, the response time getting to some of these incidents can be really hard. We try to get there as quickly as possible – that poor lady from the rollover was upside-down for more than an hour because it took us so long to get there.

What's an incident you'll never forget?

We've had some hair-raising experiences. There was one time where we were doing preventative burning around one of the homelands which is about 20kms away. We had just started putting a break around the house and the wind changed 180 degrees and we had to quickly change our tactics. About halfway through that we were alerted to a fire coming at us from the south at about 40 knots and it was only a kilometre or so away.

“I was the Incident Controller and I said to one of the senior firefighters “get your guys and get the hell out of here as quick as you can”.

The wind was so strong that the fire actually overtook the vehicle on their way out of the area. Thankfully there were no lives lost that day.

What have you learnt from volunteering with the CFS?

Teamwork. We've got a good crew here and I have a good voice for authority. If I tell you you're on traffic control with the lollipop stick – that's your position and that's where you'll stay.

What keeps you involved?

It's a love of helping people and looking out for my community, but I'm 84 years old and still an active captain, so it's time I started slowing down and get somebody else ready to take over.

I have been challenged, but I'm still here. I think I'm one of, if not the, oldest captains in the CFS. 🍷

Region Five

From the Regional Commander
Jason Druwitt



Welcome from the Regional Commander

Once again, Region 5 was placed on the map for the wrong reasons. The 2021/22 Fire Danger Season was an incredibly busy year for the region with a multitude of jobs and back to back activations of the RCC.

I am immensely proud of the cohesion displayed across the region. I asked a lot of our volunteers and staff and, despite the high level of operational activity and fatigue, everyone 'dug deep' and continued to rise to the occasion.

The level of commitment our wonderful members have for the CFS and communities of the South East continually astounds me.

Our focus over the past year has been around the ongoing support of our members as we emerge from COVID-19 restrictions and try to establish what the new 'normal' will be. Next year our focus will be on increasing membership, and strengthening our regional cadet programs.

Finally, I would like to thank regions and state for the support provided to Region 5 over the 2021/22 FDS. In a testing FDS there was nothing more humbling than the calls, emails and visits we received from everyone.

Jason Druwitt
Regional Commander

Region 5 summary

Fire Season started in early October with a grass fire at Beachport, and then continued over the following five months.

Early indications highlighted there was a high likelihood the FDS would be above average.

A grass fire at Bordertown was followed by a number of fires including Tilley Swamp, Wandillo and Nangwarry, with fires continuing through the tragic events of the Coles Fire and the two fires at Glenburnie, plus assisting MFS with a fire in the Mount Gambier Crater all kept our staff and volunteers busy for the whole season.

“ It was noted that all the fires started on non-fire ban days and travelled quickly under “very high” conditions.

Our volunteers have been responding almost continuously, with the added complexity of COVID-19, and after major fires for the last number of years, everyone in the region – staff and volunteers alike, have the right to feel tired but with the knowledge they have done the very best for their communities. ■



Office movements

We have been grateful for the new staff coming on board, with Stephen Miles joining as the Regional Operations Planning Officer, Amelia Holloway as our new Regional Admin Officer, Damon Whitwell as our Regional Volunteer Officer and of course we welcomed Jason Druwitt's promotion firstly to the position of Regional Operations Manager and now going forward as the Regional Commander. Each has brought their own strengths to the team.

The Regional Prevention Officer has been working tirelessly developing our Council Fire Prevention Officers and mentoring them in their roles. Her consultative manner with our Bushfire Management Committee (BMC) members has greatly assisted in them coming onboard. The changes to the manner in which BMCs operate has also meant an education piece for the members of that committee.

“The Regional Operations Fleet Officer has been operating at full throttle undertaking work on purchasing and then writing Fire Ground Practices for a new high-volume compressor for the region, which is a very welcome addition for our volunteers.”

This is over and above the work he undertakes in arranging servicing of trucks as well as the many repairs required after such a busy season.

Our Business Services Officer has been extremely busy with her Air Observer role, operating almost continuously on call over the fire season and working on some very difficult fires. It is amazing how she still manages to keep on top of her day-to-day work in the operational tempo we've just been through.

Our newest staff members came on board during this busy time, with the Regional Operations Planning Officer leaving the police force after many years of service. Our new Regional Volunteer Officer joined us after a very long role in volunteering with Road Crash Rescue and then as Brigade Officer with Moorak Brigade, and has found the transition challenging but rewarding with many volunteers now going to them for advice in numerous areas.

The new admin officer came to us from Housing SA and has been “thrown in the deep end”, undertaking a support role in the Regional Command Centre within two weeks of starting. Our more experienced staff have been instrumental in helping them come on board and this is testament to the strong team that the region is.

The region has been working closely with the Forest Industry in the Limestone Coast in responding to fires both in the forested areas and outside of them. This a valued relationship that is working well with the Forest Industry being very active and is very much appreciated by the community. ■



Crater Lakes Fire

The Haig Drive Fire, commonly known as the Crater Lakes Fire, started at approximately 2am on 25 January 2022, in suspicious circumstances.

It occurred in an MFS area but was supported from the start by CFS crews. The fire was burning near Centenary Tower and Valley Lake at Mount Gambier, with about 150 firefighters working to contain the bushfire. It was a great example of all the emergency services working together, with MFS, CFS and Department of Environment (DEW) crews dragging hoses up and down very steep slopes, with SES providing logistical support, SA Police keeping the crowds at bay and SA Ambulance Service looking after everyone concerned. Firefighting conditions were tough with ground crews not only battling difficult terrain, with thickly vegetated hills, but also hot and humid weather conditions.

The IMT was set up at the level three centre in the Emergency Services Complex, with the Coles IMT having just disbanded. In another example of working together, we had Forestry personnel working in planning and other functions in the IMT, with our Aviation team undertaking some very visible and important work on the fire with the fixed wing bombers working the outside of the crater and the Black Hawks and bucketing helicopters working within it.

“ Aircraft were released after completing 340 drops, with more than 500,000 litres delivered to the fireground.

The fire was stopped before reaching the golf course and at the bottom of the slope inside the crater area, and with the help from rain across the area ground crews were withdrawn. It was a huge effort from tired crews and our volunteers yet again showcased their commitment to the community. 🇺🇲

Profile

Grant Fensom

Region 5

How long have you been in the CFS?

I was involved from 18 and I properly signed up within a few years, so nearly 30 years now.

What roles have you held?

I've had quite a few - Brigade Lieutenant, Brigade Captain, Brigade and Group Training Officer, Group Officer, and Regional Training Instructor. I have also been involved with the construction of the 'Mad Rabbit' device and the school basic fire course for 10 years and have also overseen work on group/brigade station upgrades with fundraised funds.

What has been the biggest change you've seen over your time with CFS?

The service has had to keep up with the ever-changing face of community expectation.

“ So, from what used to be a fire service, we are now a multi-faceted agency dealing with all sorts of emergency issues. That is a huge task and change from when I first got involved.

We seem to be moving into new territory and now managing ourselves like a business, which can seem great, but the downside is not remembering or being able to service the core needs of our biggest asset - the volunteers.

What has been the biggest challenge?

Accepting that maybe I can't solve all the problems or issues facing us.



What's a positive experience that has stayed with you?

My first trip interstate to NSW. We sat around for a week and in the end, I felt we contributed nothing. It did not sit well with me that people were calling us heroes etc. However, when leaving for home, I spoke to a local who thanked us. In response I said, "we did not do anything, save it for your local firefighters." But then she said "no, by being here we felt safe, and knew you were ready for the fight, ready to tackle anything you were asked to do without being paid." So sometimes just being there can be enough. If that had not been said to me, I would have come home and possibly never done much again.

What makes your brigade/community/area different to the others?

Our area is definitely unique - we are green 10 months of the year. Fuel loads are high, but our danger period is small compared with other areas. We have the biggest fire break to the south in the Southern Ocean, so fires can only burn so far. Our brigades are small in numbers but give where they can, and our volunteers are happy to put themselves forward for deployments knowing it is part of who we are.

What keeps you involved in the Service?

Someone must wave the flag. We live in a lucky country and it's the Aussie way to help others. I have met some incredible people, seen some incredible moments and places, and some disturbing things as well. I try to be a mentor to the new ranks too. I don't know what keeps me in it as much as I do - now that's insane. 🇺🇦

Region Six

From the Regional Commander
Brendon Saers



Welcome from the Regional Commander

Region 6 has experienced its fair share of changes during 2021 and 2022. Staff have come and gone from HQ, starting with outgoing Regional Commander, Gavin Wornes, who left in early 2021. Gavin's work within the region over the past five years has got us to where we are today and has provided the foundation for the region to keep moving forward in the ever-changing environment of emergency services. Other staff that have left Region 6 HQ this year include Regional Prevention Officer, George Kozminski, Regional Administration Officer, Jane Hart, and Regional Community Engagement Officer, Therese Pedler. A special thank you should be given to each of these individuals on behalf of the region for their efforts over the years.



Staff moving on from the region presented an opportunity for us to build a new team, with myself shifting across to the Regional Commander role. I have made it my priority to build a strong new team to ensure we have the right people to service our volunteers and the community.

Region 6's volunteers continue to go above and beyond in their efforts to make the community a safer place. This year has been a milder year on the fire front but our volunteers continue to support other emergency services during times of need. From fire to flood, Region 6 CFS has been here for our community, be it fighting the Edillilie – Marble Range South Block fire in December, to undertaking over 750 volunteer hours across the region in response to the local flooding in January.

A very big thank you to all who volunteered their time this year. You are the heartbeat of the service and South Australia is a better place for it.

Brendon Saers
Regional Commander



Eyre Peninsula lightning event

Mother nature kept Region 6 busy over the 2021/2022 fire danger season.

On 17 December 2021 the Eyre Peninsula experienced a lightning event, which caused multiple fires over the landscape.

“ **The main ignitions were located in the Gawler Ranges National Park, Bascombe Well Conservation Park, and on private land west of the township of Edillilie.** ”

Joint CFS and National Parks and Wildlife Service SA (NPWSA) operations were successful in controlling the fires within the parks, however, the Edillilie South Block fire posed some challenges for CFS crews and Farm Fire Units due to the terrain. The block was eventually burnt out and controlled before the busy Christmas period thanks to a combined effort of the local Farm Fire Units, CFS and NPWSA crews. ■



Eyre Peninsula flooding event

On 22 January 2022 the Eyre Peninsula experienced the beginning of an unseasonable rain event that caused major flooding across the region, with multiple townships effected and requiring support from the emergency services.

Our volunteers provided over 700hrs of support assisting other emergency services and the community during the event. Streaky Bay, Kimba, and Cummins were the townships mainly effected by the flooding and volunteers spent countless hours assisting in everything from sand bagging to providing transport using our 4x4 vehicles. ■



Adelaide ANZAC Eve Youth Vigil

Three Region 6 Cadet Brigades were involved in the Adelaide Anzac Day Vigil which was held on ANZAC Eve at the South Australian National War Memorial. Region 6 was represented by eight cadets:

- Cowell x 2 – Hamish Russell & Caitlin Foster Borg
- Ceduna x 4 – Saffire Duffield, Mia Roberts, Mack Thompson & Joseph Birkin
- Lincoln x 2 – Malachai Fatchen & Nicholas Kleinig.

“ **The cadets were standing on guard overnight for the vigil, with a nominated cadet, Nicholas Kleinig, addressing the Governor.** ”

The CFS cadets joined youth and leaders from Australian Army Cadets, Australian Airforce Cadets, Boys Brigade, Australian Navy Cadets, Girls Brigade, Girl Guides, Scouts, SES Cadets, St John Ambulance Cadets, and Surf Lifesaving. There were also numerous other youth representatives from other organisations involved in laying tributes during the Dedication Ceremony. ■

Profile

Melvin Charlton

Region 6



What has been your involvement with the CFS to date?

I joined the CFS 43 years ago, back when it was the EFS. I was a lieutenant with the Butler CFS, and I also helped in fire prevention, allocating permits within certain districts.

In 2000 I started helping with aviation and did my Air Base Manager's course in 2001. Then in 2008 I became captain of Region 6 Air Support, which is the role I am still in today!

What's involved as the captain of Region 6 Air Support?

I am looking after all the airbases in Region 6, along with the personnel who crew them. I organise the logistics and ensure that all airbases are crewed appropriately so there are no shortfalls in the event of a big fire.

I also try and take people from my area to different airbases because you don't know where you could be deployed to. If you must go to another airbase and you don't even know where you're going or what the setup is, it can take you a while to really get into it.

Why did you join the CFS?

I just think it is a part of what you do when you live in a country town. My brother was involved with CFS before me and I had someone, an older guy, ask me if I wanted to join and so I just went ahead and joined!

What has been a personal highlight from your time with the CFS?

Probably getting the SA Ministerial Commendation last year. Only two of us in aviation got it that year - Gary MacRae and me. Being recognised with all the other volunteers that day was a bit of a shock to the system. I had to do a bit of investigating to find out who nominated me, but I tracked him down in the end.

What changes have you seen in your time with the service?

Things have come a long way. When I started with the service, we had a vehicle and a trailer and now we've all got trucks. Radios and trucks have also changed a lot over the years. For the most part it is for the better, but of course sometimes you think you can design them better than they are, especially with the higher trucks that are carrying more water.

Do you see the service facing any challenges in the future?

Recruitment of volunteers would be the biggest challenge, particularly in the aviation field. You need the younger people on trucks and out on the fireground, but with aviation, it's different.

“ We need the people who don't want to be in a truck anymore to think about getting into aviation, because our biggest problem is crewing the airbases - there just aren't enough people in these regional towns to do the jobs.”

What keeps you involved after 43 years?

You've got to have a passion for it. I'm over 70 and I still enjoy it. Loading aircraft is a dirty, dusty job but I love aviation and I love the people I work with in aviation - that's what keeps you going.

You're only as good as the people around you, and they help you out. Hopefully I'll keep going for a couple more years, then we'll see what happens. ■

Profile

Anthony Rosenzweig

Region 6



When did you join the CFS, and what roles have you had in your time with the service?

When I first joined the Greenock Brigade about 20 years ago, I had the roles of Brigade Training Coordinator, Lieutenant 4, and Logistics Coordinator.

After seven years I moved to Streaky Bay and in less than six months I was asked to be the Brigade Captain. I then stepped up to the role of Deputy Group Officer and eventually Group Officer, which is a role I have been in for two years now. I have also been on the OI&L Committee and had the role of Group Training Coordinator and Training Assistant.

What made you join the CFS?

I was regularly visiting Jess, my (now) wife in the Clare Valley, where she lived with her parents at the time. One day there was a grass fire near Rhynie, and I was just amazed at the coordination between the two trucks, and I just thought “well that might be something I’d like to do” so, I investigated. At that stage we had friends down the road in Greenock and their son had joined up as a cadet, so we spoke to him about it and then went down and made an appearance and the rest is history!

Your wife Jess is the captain of Streaky Bay CFS, how do you balance your home lives with your volunteering commitments?

We do have our arguments about it, but most of the time it’s constructive. Jess is great to bounce ideas off because she’s been in it for quite some time as well. It can be hard to leave everything at the door when you get home.

“The hardest part is probably when you think “right, we’re just going to have a night of no CFS phone calls or anything like that” and then things start cropping up and it changes.

Then there is also trying to balance all the meetings you have with being home as much as possible. After a few years you learn when you’ve overstepped the mark!

What has been a highlight of your time with CFS?

There is a quote that I heard about 10 years ago, which is “the best thing an old firefighter can do is teach a young firefighter how to be an old firefighter”. That, coupled with being involved in training and assisting with delivering basic firefighting courses, really rings true to me.

When I started out there were a lot of knowledgeable people that gave me their time and answered all of my questions, so I sort of made it my point that I would do the same. I try to take that on as a mentor, and I really enjoy seeing people progress through courses and do a good job on their own.

What has been the biggest challenge?

My biggest bugbear is the unwillingness of younger people these days to step up and join the service. It’s frustrating when you want to share the knowledge. Streaky Bay only has a couple of thousand people in the town, and it has that small community feel to it. You walk down the street, and you see people and you talk to people, and you think “you’d be perfect”, and they just seem to be either not educated enough about the service or they just don’t want to do it.

What the most valuable skill have you gained from being with the CFS?

It would have to be confidence to step outside your comfort zone. Every time you roll out to a job it’s something different and it’s the unknown. Whilst you are proficient at your job that you do within the CFS, no two jobs are ever alike, and you must change your way of thinking and have that ability to be more diverse in your thought processes.

What keeps you involved in the service?

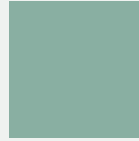
Sometimes you can’t remember why you still do it, but then you get the self-gratification that you have helped someone out. Not that you do it for praise but knowing that you have been able to help someone out when they really need it – in the 20 years I’ve been doing this, that hasn’t gotten old.

Our son has also just joined as a cadet, and that has given me a new lease on life within the service as well, seeing his enthusiasm and love for it reminds me of why I do it. 🍷

South Australian
Country Fire Service

State updates

2021-22



2022 has been a year
of achievements and it's a
great chance to celebrate what
we have achieved as a service
over the last year.





Year in review

Despite COVID-19 border challenges, we saw 28 CFS volunteers and 12 staff members deploy to NSW and Queensland to support our fellow emergency services in responding to the storms and floods. Our service and deployment provided significant assistance to impacted communities, and it also provided us an opportunity to showcase our breadth of expertise in assisting impacted communities.

Expertise and service from CFS members across the state has also been recognised in the five recipients of the Australian Fire Service Medal and I congratulate Tim Cooper, Malcolm Amos, Fiona Dunstan, Nathan Watts and Brendan McEvoy on well-deserved recognition. All have placed considerable effort in supporting their communities and contributing to a safer South Australia.

The criticality of the work delivered by our volunteers was cemented through the signing of the updated Volunteer Charter during National Volunteer Week in May 2022. The Charter reaffirms how we value and the way in which we strive to engage with our volunteers. The CFS Volunteer Association (CFS VA) has been a driving force to finalise this charter and I commend the CFS VA for their work in representing our volunteers.

CFS is committed to supporting the younger members and future leaders of CFS and it is important I take the opportunity to highlight the commitment and activity of the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) that has been a driving force behind the creation of the Emerging Leaders Forum, where this year approximately 50 members under 30 years of age attended State HQ. It was a wonderful opportunity to encourage and support our younger members and future leaders of CFS to build on their existing skills, knowledge, and networks.

In addition, along with the Chief, I visited several dedicated cadets and cadet coordinators who committed long hours at Anzac Eve vigils across Adelaide. I know there were many more across the state, so for those involved in the cadet vigils – thank you for your time and service – CFS was well represented by some incredible future leaders.

“One CFS family has routinely reminded me of the pride and honour that comes with service to CFS. This year the loss of Senior Fighter Louise Hincks was extremely challenging and the ability to recognise and commemorate the generous and incredible service by Louise, both as a firefighter and a peer support officer, is important.”

We continue to work hard to progress our technological needs across the state, and while this service is sometimes a victim of fiscal limitations, the GRN upgrade and Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) roll outs are well underway, with Regions 3 and 6 progressing currently.

I have been excited to herald in the introduction of Super Sundays, which has provided opportunities for cross-pollination with our State Advisory Committees. Many of our committees have valued the chance to meet a few extra people and have some learning opportunities in the day too. We'll continue to work with the Super Sunday members to make the day valuable to all as it provides a great opportunity to bring people together, not only for established groups but also for one-off or limited period groups.

Over the last 12 months, the CFS has welcomed a high calibre of new staff, so you might see some new faces or names around the place. I encourage you to get to know them and share your stories.

CFS is committed to engaging directly with our communities and communicating with our volunteers so we can all have a shared vision of how we actively support our communities. CFS is also committed to working with our volunteers to continuously improve our support and delivery of service to our communities across the state and while I know there's plenty to be done, when I look at what we have collectively achieved over the last year I think we've done a great deal.

A CFS that has a firm focus on supporting our communities through understanding our role in risk reduction and maintaining strong engagement with our volunteers for incident response is an asset worth challenging ourselves for - I hope you all embrace that challenge and see yourselves as part of that future or supporting others in that future.

Georgie Cornish
Deputy Chief Officer





New Headquarters

The Emergency Services Sector Headquarters (ESS HQ) is designed to provide a sense of home for the whole sector, welcoming staff and volunteers from across the state. For the first time in the state's history, the executive and senior management teams of the CFS, SES, MFS, and SAFECOM are co-located in a single facility providing a permanent home for over 300 employees.

The new ESS HQ is a purpose-built facility for South Australia's emergency services, and has been gifted the Kurna name 'Kumatpi Trruku' (Emergency Centre) by Kurna Warra Karrpanthi (KWK), who provided their cultural consent for the use of this name. KWK are the leading group dedicated to Kurna language revitalisation of the traditional lands and language of the Kurna people.

The earthquake-resilient building offers unprecedented command and control capabilities with technology redundancies, backup power, water, and wastewater storage. The building can also be accessed and remain fully operational

as a post-disaster recovery facility, capable of operating in 'island mode' when services are temporarily disrupted due to external events.



The new ESS HQ precinct includes the main building, a warehouse and hardstand area, and secure fleet parking facilities. The building includes breakout spaces, training rooms, end-of-trip facilities and an outdoor barbeque. A multi-level public carpark is adjacent to the main building.

The building was designed to maximise natural light and visibility of the hills and surrounding views, with the intention to be a vibrant central hub for the whole sector, particularly volunteers.

The ground floor is home to the CFS Volunteers' Association, CFS Foundation, and the CFS State Operations Support Brigade, which will operate a State Ready Reserve Strike Team from the new facility. It also accommodates a purpose-built media room.

CFS staff are located primarily on level one, with a small team also on level three. Facilities for staff include a range of different open plan workspaces, offices for executive leadership, meeting rooms, quiet rooms and collaborative spaces. The corporate network allows staff to work seamlessly across these workspaces, choosing the best space for their activities.



Level three has a dedicated State Control Centre, training rooms, call centre and CFS State Operations Centre (aircraft operations), allowing operational staff to efficiently respond to multiple major events simultaneously.

Volunteers visiting the building have access to 20 short-term visitor parking spaces at no cost, located at the front of the building. For attendances longer than the posted time limits, vehicle parking is available in the multi-level public carpark behind the building and, while fees apply, they can be reimbursed.

“Volunteers will have access to facilities including training, meeting and quiet rooms, breakout spaces with kitchen facilities, outdoor areas, and end-of-trip facilities.”

The multi-purpose warehouse facility supports the functions of on-site emergency response vehicles and stores deployable operational resources and consumables. The warehouse compound is a traffic circulation area that provides access to the warehouse, goods receiving area, loading bay, refuse area and other building-related services areas. CFS fleet vehicles are housed in allocated parking bays within the secure emergency-services-only parking area, which is below the first level of the public carpark and in the open space next to the ESS HQ. Access is via the north-west roller door using the authorised access card assigned to each fleet vehicle. 🟡🟠



Super Sunday

Held quarterly in February, May, July, and October, Super Sunday sees approximately 60 volunteers from across the state converge with CFS staff at the ESS Headquarters in Keswick to collaborate, exchange ideas, and progress important matters through the following State Advisory Committees:

- CFS Cadet Committee
- CFS Youth Advisory Council
- State Operational Infrastructure & Logistics Committee
- State Communications and Technology Committee
- State Volunteer Training Committee
- State WHS Committee.

Developed to build greater coordination between the six committees, Super Sunday is an opportunity for volunteers to connect with a broad range of peers from across SA, as well as help each committee provide synchronised updates to the Chief Officer’s Advisory Council (COAC). The presentations and Q&A sessions at the beginning of the day are also a chance for volunteers to meet with the various parts of the CFS organisation.

“Deputy Chief Officer Georgie Cornish said Super Sunday is an important event as it gives volunteers an opportunity to be involved in deciding the future direction of the service.”

“It allows volunteers to have a say and brings greater transparency to the decision-making process. Future Super Sundays will also see training and development opportunities for volunteers,” she said.

“Thank you to all the volunteers who have made Super Sunday into the successful event it has become. We are looking forward to seeing these become a staple event in the CFS calendar.” 🟡🟠

Youth and cadets

CFS continues to be very proud of the cadets who serve in brigades across the state. CFS cadets are young boys and girls between 11-18 who join a cadet program run by brigades and groups in locations all over SA.

Cadet leaders help teach the basic firefighting and teamwork skills in a fun and interactive environment, with the aim of helping to develop future generations of CFS leaders.

The cadet program has served CFS well, with many staff and volunteers across the agency able to trace their passion for the CFS back to being involved in cadets, the start of their CFS journey. CFS members, especially those in brigades/groups with cadets, are encouraged to contact the Cadet Supervisors and offer to assist and help pass on knowledge and skills to our next generation.

“Working with cadets is a rewarding experience and an important way to help cadets prepare for their future, both in CFS and in their broader lives.”

Cadets are issued with uniforms and train at stations or group bases using the appliances and equipment that form our frontline response requirements. In addition, cadets compete in Regional and Intra-Regional competitions where they continuously demonstrate skills that would test even the most experienced senior members.

CFS cadets also assist with important ceremonial duties, such as the ANZAC Youth Vigil, and providing flag bearers and honour guard at the annual Fire Fighters Memorial at Naracoorte. During the recent Fire Fighter Memorial Service on 22 April 2022, the cadets from Happy Valley and Naracoorte did the CFS proud with their professional and dignified conduct during this solemn event.

The CFS legacy of service and sacrifice will be our cadet members' to inherit and maintain. As they continue to volunteer in the CFS they will do so standing on the shoulders of all who have served before, and it is clear from their continued examples that the future of CFS is in good hands. 🇺🇦



New HazMat Operator course

Last year saw the release of a new HazMat Operator course in CFS and 63 new volunteer HazMat Operators trained.

It is the first time in many years that the CFS has developed a new HazMat training course. HazMat Operator course replaces the previous HazMat Combatant course and issues the national 'Employ personal protection at a hazardous materials incident' unit of competency and the CFS service level unit 'Atmospheric Monitoring and Operate MultiRAE Lite'.

“Run over two days, this newly developed course brings together months of collaborative work between Technical Operations and Training to deliver a program that accurately reflects the way we operate at HazMat incidents operationally.”

The course has a focus on:

- utilising atmospheric monitoring to establish the scene, delineating our zones to assess the effectiveness of decontamination, and safely undressing out of Chemical Protective Clothing
- selecting and safely donning chemical protective clothing including Level A, B, C, D, and our new Negative Pressure Respirators
- undertaking tasks down range in the hot zone as directed by Technical Advice
- undergoing/taking decontamination.

The new HazMat Operator course is about trying to de-mystify HazMat, understanding the principles of safe operation and then being heavily supported in tactical decision making by technical advice through the on-call HazMat/CBRNe Officer. ■



Multi-agency CBRN exercise

As one of the two control agencies for Hazardous Materials emergencies in the state, CFS plays a key role in supporting the response to Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) incidents that occur as a result of criminal or terrorist actions.

In mid-April 2022, the CFS State Training Centre played host to a multi-agency CBRN exercise, with personnel from CFS, MFS, SAAS, and SAPOL exercising different scenarios for response to chemical incidents in particular.

“14 CFS volunteers from Oakbank/Balhannah HazMat Brigade, and Nuriootpa and Burnside HazMat Technician Brigades, along with four CFS staff members attended to improve CFS' HazMat capability.”

The exercise involved the CFS deploying HazMat Operators in structural firefighting PPC to undertake a response to a simulated fire and explosion, which then escalated into a HazMat operation involving the use of Level A Chemical Protective Clothing, atmospheric monitoring, and radiation detection equipment.

CFS Manager Technical Operations, Commander Tim McNeilly, noted that, whilst there was always room for improvement in these sorts of exercises, the CFS proved once again that its capability in this space is of an exceptionally high standard.



“The feedback we have received so far has been overwhelmingly positive and we have captured some great observations out of the day, which will support our need for the program and for HazMat Operator refresher training into the future.”

“We are looking forward to keeping the momentum going and continuing to grow in the HazMat space,” Commander McNeilly said. ■





Farewell to our Chief Officer

Arriving in 2019 to the unprecedented bushfire season that devastated parts of South Australia, Chief Officer Mark Jones stepped into his new role with ease. His operational experience and passion for the CFS helped him to immediately address the challenges posed by the 19/20 bushfire season. In addition, during his three-year tenure, Chief Officer Jones guided CFS staff and volunteers through challenging times whilst championing the economic value the CFS provides to the state.

Chief Officer Jones came to South Australia for both a professional challenge and an adventure, and he found both in abundance.

“ He has been humbled and inspired in equal measure by the efforts of volunteers and staff daily.

Chief Officer Jones noted the CFS will always feature among my most treasured professional roles and said his decision is based upon the separation from loved ones forced by COVID-19 restrictions. He said he will always remember the resolute way CFS firefighters tackle whatever is thrown at them and their grim determination to fight for the community, even in the most dangerous circumstances.

“ Chief Officer Jones also noted that the staff and volunteers of this great service are truly remarkable people, and South Australia is blessed to have you.

As a staunchly proud Scotsman with quick-witted humour and a plethora of anecdotes up his sleeve, there was certainly never a dull moment when Mark was around.

Mark, the CFS thanks you for your service and for the commitment you have shown to making the CFS the best volunteer fire service in the world. 🇺🇦

Safety Coordinator

As part of our commitment and drive to further progress the safety and health of our firefighters and support staff, the CFS has recently created the specialist role of Safety Coordinator to assist the agency in its ongoing development in this dynamic and challenging space.

The role provides WHS advice and support to managers and coordinates the WHS functions that SAFECOM delivers to the CFS.

As potential WHS risks could occur in any of our agency's activities, the Safety Coordinator role has been engaged in several directorates across the CFS to embed a more progressive WHS culture. The Safety Coordinator has also

assisted with the introduction of WHS reporting system Gov Safety into the CFS, engaging with partner agencies to ensure we share best practise around the WHS space, and further developing the WHS services delivered to the CFS by SAFECOM to fit the needs of the agency.

This role has also been involved in the procurement of operational equipment and appliances, including the procurement of both new structural and rural fire helmets, improvements for the safety of future fire trucks and light fleet, in-cab deluge systems, and potential improvements to turnover protection to command cars. 🇺🇦

Incident Management and Leadership training

State Training Officer Steve Goodrich was appointed to his role in mid-2021. Instead of being a specialist in one of the state training teams, Steve was employed as a generalist trainer – a reasonably new concept at the State Training Centre. He supports both the Rural and Incident Management State Training Teams with a range of courses. On behalf of Incident Management, Steve is the Project Manager of the Course in AIIMS and the Frontline Leadership program.

After BF1, AIIMS courses are the next most in-demand courses in CFS. So far in 2022, Steve has scheduled over 250 people on AIIMS, and more than 50 people onto Frontline Leadership courses. In doing so,

Steve has significantly reduced the waiting time for members who nominate for Frontline.

“Frontline is a course designed to provide current and emerging leaders with tools to build and maintain cohesive teams, develop principles for people management, leadership, and mentoring.

Steve works patiently with CFS volunteers and our external training provider to match course dates and locations to best suit those who have requested this training. ■



Firefighting Foam and Compressed Air Foam Systems

The CFS Rural Firefighting Training Team, in partnership with CFS Operational Infrastructure and Logistics, have developed a training package that is being rolled out to brigades receiving tankers and bulk water carriers with Compressed Air Foam Systems (CAFS). Thanks to the Sturt Group and Tea Tree Gully Brigade for their assistance in the development of this course.

This course includes the national accredited unit ‘Use Class A foam in wildfire operations and non-structural applications’ (PUAFIR202). Learning outcomes include an introduction to foam and foam equipment, compressed air foam systems, preparing to deliver Class A foam, using Class A foams on Class B fires, safety, communication, environmental considerations, and maintenance.

The CFS Rural Training Team is also working with CFS Technical Operations on a CAFS awareness program designed to increase awareness of regional staff and senior volunteers as to which types of incidents CAFS should be considered and requested for. ■



CFA Burn Camp

In late March 2022, State Training Officers Phil Hosking and Bevan Deppeler were approved to attend a Country Fire Authority (CFA) Burn Camp being held at Little Desert Conservation Park near Nhill, Victoria. Bevan has strong ties to the CFA, having previously worked for Forest Fire Management Victoria and being a long-time CFA volunteer before moving to SA.

“A CFA Burn Camp is four days of intensive, hands-on planned burning activities on a range of sites, led by experienced mentors in vegetation management.

It provides participants with an opportunity to maintain existing skills and acquire new skills in order to conduct planned burns.

The purpose of the CFS visit was to look at how other states manage simple prescribed burning practices and to increase knowledge and cooperation between the fire agencies. These camps help the CFA provide practical skills following their Crew Leader and Strike Team Leader courses. Phil and Bevan also shared details of CFS training programs, including our Tactical Command and Control course, which includes our Crew Leader and Level 1 Incident Controller training. ■



CFS as a hazard leader and risk reduction

As rural fire hazard leader for the state, CFS has the lead role in bushfire risk reduction and readiness planning. The Government's response to the *Independent Review into South Australia's 2019-2020 Bushfire Season* has seen commencement of some major long-term reforms to the work that CFS delivers in this area.

CFS is responsible for the provision of executive support to the State Bushfire Coordination Committee (SBCC) and the nine Bushfire Management Committees (BMCs) based in South Australia's regions. These committees include over 350 individuals who are representatives of Commonwealth and state agencies, local government, and non-government organisations.

“ Significant work is underway to improve the governance of these committees to support improved coordination of bushfire management activities in the state.

This includes four additional staff based in State Headquarters in the Bushfire Management Planning Unit – which now has a total of six staff members – who support CFS Regional staff and the BMCs, as well as the SBCC.

To reflect the broad membership base of the SBCC and BMCs, new branding has been developed for the SBCC and BMCs. A new website was also developed and this has launched in June. The website provides a platform for the SBCC and each of the BMCs to share information about their meetings and projects and will increase transparency of their activities.

As required under the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005 (SA)* ('the FES Act'), in 2021 the SBCC developed South Australia's first *State Bushfire Management Plan 2021-2025 (Plan)*, and this was approved by the Minister. The Plan sets out a roadmap to implement the longer-term reforms recommended by the *Independent Review*. Many of these reforms are far-reaching, including a major overhaul of governance for the SBCC and BMCs, and development of a new generation of Bushfire Management Area Plans (BMAPs).



Last year the CFS was successful in securing funding through the National Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (NDRRF) to support the acquisition of a new online system to support the development, maintenance, and reporting on the next generation of BMAPs.

“ A project is currently underway to develop a new, best practice system to assist all agencies with responsibilities to deliver bushfire risk reduction activities to plan and report upon their delivery.

This is a process that many other states are also undertaking, following the outcomes of the National Natural Disaster Royal Commission, which identified that all jurisdictions needed to improve their reporting on bushfire risk reduction activities.

Ahead of the new system being in place, and following changes to the FES Act in 2021, the SBCC and BMCs have commenced reporting directly to the Minister and State Parliament on their activities. The first SBCC annual report was tabled in Parliament in October 2021. To prepare this report, the first ever reporting data was gathered from BMC members regarding their delivery of bushfire management activities.

There is a great deal of work yet to do in partnership with many agencies, businesses, the non-government sector, and the community. However, it is certainly an exciting time for bushfire management in South Australia, with the CFS taking its role as rural fire hazard leader to a new level through this reform process. ■■



Bushfire Safer Places and Bushfire Last Resort Refuges review

The CFS is seeking to undertake a review of Bushfire Safer Places (BSPs) and Bushfire Last Resort Refuges (BLRRs) throughout South Australia. The ultimate purpose of the review is to put in place processes to provide confidence to the CFS, agencies managing these areas, and to the community.

BSPs and BLRRs were originally assessed and established in 2010 following a national commitment to implement recommendations from the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission. There has been no comprehensive audit of these locations undertaken since their establishment as the agency has not had the resource capacity to undertake this work.

“ With over 300 existing BSPs and BLRRs around the state, undertaking an on-ground audit is a significant exercise.

At present there is also no formal annual review of, or reporting upon, the status of the locations and sites to provide assurance regarding their ongoing suitability for their intended purpose – which is to support community safety during bushfire incidents. This information and knowledge is critical to enhance efforts to promote understanding and use of these locations and sites within the South Australian community.

There is also a need to review the current legal and management arrangements supporting the maintenance and use of BSPs and BLRRs. This includes addressing the indemnity of the landowners and managers where these sites are located, and putting in place formal processes to support the management and use of these areas.

There also needs to be formal integration of BSPs and BLRRs into emergency management planning, response, and recovery arrangements. This includes establishing policy and processes to support the identification, endorsement, amendment, and management of these locations into agency governance arrangements. There are many areas of high bushfire risk around the state that do not currently have BLRR areas in place. This will also need to be addressed during the review, with additional locations identified and appropriate management arrangements put in place.

As the rural fire hazard leader for the state, CFS needs to be assured that BSPs and BLRRs are available and maintained in a fit-for-purpose state across high bushfire risk areas, so they can be effectively promoted in community readiness planning and action when there are days of heightened fire danger, or during a bushfire incident. ■



RDO workshop

The second and third Regional Duty Officer workshops were held during 2021-2022 and, despite having to navigate a statewide lock down and COVID-19 restrictions, these workshops were a huge success.

The Regional Duty Officer workshops provide lectures and training using simulation software and task-based scenarios to teach and assess staff so that they are better prepared to take on the challenging role of a Regional Duty Officer (RDO). The program is delivered by senior operational staff and subject matter experts to cover off on topics like the chain of command, RDO responsibilities, WHS, SPAM, HazMat, structure fires, RCR, and rural incident appreciation and warnings.

“The workshops include evening sessions to review real incidents that have occurred so that participants can learn from these experiences.”

Participants from the workshop come from across the state, and in the March 2022 workshop the course was fortunate to have a Group Officer participate to help offer insight and validate the program.

CFS has been determined to develop a robust training framework for operational staff so that they can be trained and assessed to undertake the specific roles they are called upon to complete. Staff rank and promotion will be linked to successful completion of these programs to provide a more structured environment. As well as the Regional Duty Officer workshop, a Regional Duty Commander (RDC) course is being run for the first time in September 2022. The RDC course will build upon the RDO workshop and candidates will undertake numerous assessments and development opportunities to prepare themselves for the high-pressure role of coordinating a Regional Command Centre during a major incident.

CFS is proud of the staff who have completed the RDO workshop so far and is looking forward to working with other staff on courses later in 2022. 🇺🇦



Cadet Profile

Lily Mathews

Padthaway CFS
Region 5

Why did you join the CFS?

I joined the CFS because I saw the impact the Keilira fires had on our community during 2019/20 and I wanted to learn how to evacuate safely when needed and not have to worry about being trapped.

What do you do when you're not volunteering?

When I'm not volunteering, I go to school, work at the local deli, play netball for my local team and chill with friends and family.

What has been your highlight of being involved with the CFS to-date?

The best part of the CFS so far has been the opening of our new fire station. I enjoyed meeting the CFS Chief Officer, Mark Jones, and learning about his role.

What would you like to achieve whilst in the CFS?

Whilst in the CFS, I would like to learn about how to back burn safely like they do in Darwin, as I believe it is a technique that will be better and safer for our community.

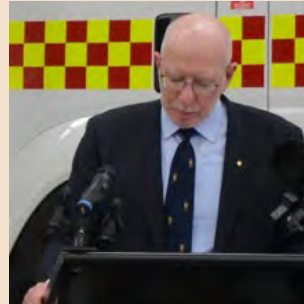
Who is your hero in the CFS?

I don't have a particular hero. I believe that the whole CFS crew are heroes as they need each other's support while dealing with incidents. 🇺🇦

South Australian
Country Fire Service

Honours

2021-22



Congratulations
to all CFS volunteers
and staff who have been
recognised with awards.



Honours

SA Emergency Service Medal and Ministerial Commendation

The SA Emergency Service Medal and Ministerial Commendation were established in May 2001 to recognise the tireless and extraordinary work of persons contributing to community safety through operational emergency service organisations and associated agencies.

The SA Emergency Services Medal (SAEMS) is given to an individual or unit who has demonstrated distinguished and/or meritorious services of the highest order in recognition of their significant contribution to the emergency services in South Australia.

The Ministerial Commendation recognises significant effort, bravery or service and is awarded for meritorious or courageous action.

On 15 October 2021, The Hon Vincent Tarzia MP, former Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, presented the latest round of medals and commendations. ■■



Ministerial Commendations

David Hobbs

Lucindale Brigade

Gary MacRae

Aldgate Brigade/Region 2
Air Ops Brigade

Geoffrey Hitch

Wilmington Brigade

Margaret Ludwig

Region 5 Ops Brigade/
Regional Admin Officer,
Region 5 (Ret'd)

Melvin Charlton

Region 6 Air Ops Brigade

SA Emergency Service Medals

Allan McGough

Upper Sturt Brigade

Brenton Hastie

Director Strategic Operations

Christopher Bowey

Waitpinga Brigade

Gary Bau

Littlehampton Brigade/CFS State
Planning Officer CRD (Ret'd)

John Kallin

Mount Lofty Operations
Support Brigade

Karen Philp

National Parks, Adelaide
Mount Lofty Ranges Brigade

Peter Ikonmopoulos

Regional Officer
Outback Areas, Region 4

Ray Jackson

Director Contract and Delivery

Richard Drury

Paracombe Brigade

Rob Sandford

Tea Tree Gully
Brigade/Deputy Chief
Officer (Ret'd)

Robert (Andrew) Cadd

Weetulta/Nalyappa Brigade

Danny Crozier David Errington Joseph Bongiorno Tyler Slater Yanni Carapetis

Seaford 34

Sheryl Collins

Mount Torrens Brigade

Honours

Australian Fire Service Medal

The Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) is a peer-nominated medal awarded by the Governor-General that recognises distinguished service by a member of an Australian fire service and is awarded twice a year – in January and in June.

Since its inception in 1988, 108 CFS members have been awarded the AFSM, and in 2022, five additional names were added to the list of proud recipients of one of Australia's most prestigious awards.



Malcolm Amos AFSM

Malcolm joined the CFS in 1976. As part of his 45 years of exceptional service, he held the position of captain of the Eden Hills Brigade for eight years before moving to key roles in the State Incident Management Team.

Malcolm has a broad range of abilities, which, combined with his wisdom and interpersonal skills, have made him an outstanding leader and mentor across the Service. He is a vital member of the State Incident Management Team and has undertaken countless deployments to many of Australia's most significant emergencies.



Tim Cooper AFSM

Tim has served in the CFS for over 41 years. Throughout his distinguished career he has delivered countless training courses at both regional and state level and gained his Certificate IV in Training and Assessment in 2009. He has held the position of Group Training Coordinator with the Bundaleer Group since he joined CFS and has been a part of the Regional and State Volunteer Training Committees since their inception in 1997.

Tim is also an active member of the CFS Volunteer Association, serving as president of the Northern branch for the past 20 years.



Fiona Dunstan AFSM

Fiona was a part of the CFS State Public Information team for 18 years and has been regarded as a national leader in community safety and engagement.

Fiona helped drive the establishment of the new Australian Warning System and also led the community safety messaging for the new Australian Fire Danger Ratings System project to implement a nationally consistent and modern Fire Danger Ratings system.

Fiona was deployed to numerous significant local and interstate fires and emergencies and led the SA Health Emergency Management Team Public Information cell during the initial response to COVID-19.



Brendan McEvoy AFSM

Brendan has made an outstanding contribution to the CFS and the South Australian community for nearly 40 years, undertaking many operational and administrative roles at both local and state levels within CFS.

Through his provision of high-quality training, he has overseen hundreds of courses on a broad range of specialist subjects including specialist rescue and HAZMAT.

Brendan's knowledge of the management of dangerous goods has been an asset to emergency agencies of South Australia. He has also contributed to fire prevention at a local level, through the formulation of local community fire safety programs promoting self-reliance and resilience.



Nathan Watts AFSM

Nathan exemplifies service to the community and has steadfastly set examples for others to follow. He has shown dedication and concern for those he leads and serves as a high-profile advocate for volunteer firefighters across South Australia.

Throughout the Cudlee Creek fire in 2019/20, he led several fire missions which contributed to the safety of South Australians and the saving of their homes and businesses.

Nathan has dedicated himself to improving the system for volunteers to make them safer and more successful. He offers his ideas and views for improvement with intellect and passion which has ultimately led to improved public and firefighter safety. ■

Honours

Sixty Year Service Medal

There are 12 dedicated volunteers who recently hit a significant milestone: 60 years of service to the CFS.

A huge thank you and congratulations to the latest recipients of the CFS 60-Year Service Medal – your dedication and commitment to the Service will inspire the next generation of volunteers to walk in your footsteps. ■

Please note, due to COVID-19 restrictions, not all medals have been presented. SAFECOM's Volunteer Services Branch are working on the distribution of these.

Syd Villis

Moorook Brigade

David Przibilla

Willunga Brigade

Norman Paterson

Cooke Plains Brigade

Brian Wilson

Two Wells District Brigade

Leon Shillabeer

Mount Barker Brigade

Mike Arnold

Waikerie Brigade

Alister Hope

Clare Brigade

John Kallin

Stirling Brigade

Brenton Berkefeld

Mount Schank Brigade

Rex Hall

Naracoorte Brigade

Roger Berkefeld

Mount Schank Brigade

Des Stanbury

Lobethal Brigade

Honours

National Emergency Medal

The 19/20 bushfire season will forever serve as a stark reminder of how bad things can get, with the fires ravaging close to a quarter of a million hectares across the state.

Thousands of CFS volunteers took up the call to respond not only in South Australia but interstate as well. The service of these volunteers has been recognised nationally through the National Emergency Medal with Clasp 'BUSHFIRES 19-20', which is awarded to those volunteers who met certain pre-determined criteria in the 19/20 bushfire season. In total, almost 2,500 CFS volunteers and staff will receive this medal.

In February 2022, 105 peer-nominated CFS personnel were lucky enough to receive their medal from the Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd), who visited South Australia to award and recognise the hard work of not only these recipients, but all CFS volunteers across the state.





Adelaide Hills Ceremony

Tilbrook Estate, Lobethal

Having recently rebuilt their winery after the devastating Cudlee Creek fire, James and Annabelle Tilbrook graciously hosted the CFS for the first of three ceremonies to be held across the state and, as the Governor-General so aptly put it, there was no better setting to hold such an occasion.

Against the backdrop of a blackened landscape striving to regenerate, 38 volunteers from across Region 1 were presented with their National Emergency Medal for their roles in containing the Cudlee Creek fire, with Chief Officer Jones and The Hon Vincent Tarzia MP, former Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services also in attendance to recognise the tireless efforts of all involved.



Adelaide Ceremony

ESS Headquarters, Keswick

A change of scenery for the second ceremony saw 26 volunteers and 16 CFS staff presented with their medals in front of friends and family in the spacious warehouse at the new Emergency Services Headquarters 'Kumatpi Trruku' in Keswick.

Awarded not only for their efforts here in South Australia, a number of recipients were recognised for their hard work supporting east coast emergency services on interstate deployments throughout the 19/20 bushfire season.

Following the ceremony, Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley, with her passion for singing, lead the makeshift choir of recipients in a rousing rendition of 'You Are My Sunshine'.



Kangaroo Island Ceremony

Kangaroo Island Community Education, Kingscote Campus

There is no doubt that the Kangaroo Island fires of 19/20 will leave a deep scar in the community long after the landscape has healed. Burning through 211,474 hectares, the impact was felt nationwide, which is why the Governor-General wanted to make a special trip to the Island to recognise a handful of local volunteers who risked everything to save their tight-knit community.

There were 25 CFS volunteers from brigades across the Island, who were joined by a number of their SES counterparts at a low-key ceremony held in the school hall at Kangaroo Island Community Education in Kingscote, followed by an afternoon tea with the Governor-General and Mrs Hurley.

After everything the Island has been through, it was fantastic to see everyone come together to celebrate the achievements of their peers. ■

Open Letter



In May 2022, I was presented with a CFS 10-year Service Medal and a National Emergency Medal. Dozens of other firefighters from Region 4 were also presented with medals and Clasps in front of all of our family and friends. More importantly, we were presented with these medals while surrounded by the firefighters we earned them alongside. Among these people are crew leaders and strike team leaders I've worked under, firefighters I've worked alongside and firefighters I've led. Trainers that I've been taught by and taught with. There are people I've met on training courses, fire grounds, staging areas, and deployments. These are my mentors and my role models. They believed in me and gave me a chance to prove myself. They realised what I might be capable of well before I figured it out for myself. They inspired me to work harder and to push my limits.

I've seen these people exhausted after a day of hard work on the fire ground, seen them covered in dirt, sweat and ash, travelled hundreds of kilometres in trucks with them, flown across the country with them and stayed in base camps with them. I've had to trust these people with my life, despite often not knowing them the day before. I've seen horrific scenes with these people by my side. I've listened to them tell me countless, heartbreaking stories of the days they didn't think they'd live to see the end of.



For many of us, two years ago we went through our worst fire season yet, and we only made it out because of the people standing either side of us. Some of these people could easily be the reason I'm still alive today. They watched my back and looked out for me on some of my worst days and I did the same for them. Some of these people are the reason I made it out of some really tough shifts without completely giving up or curling up into a ball and crying. I'll admit it was tempting on more than one occasion. They made my worst days bearable. They might joke about the fact I can't reach the top shelf of the truck lockers, or ask me if I'm tall enough to work on a 44, or (try to) forbid me from using a rake-hoe, or insist a 20 plus-year-old 14 is my favourite truck, but they all know I'll climb anything and everything to reach the top shelf. There's two rake-hoes on each truck for a reason and I'll work on any truck as long as I have these people by my side.

The medal presentation may have only involved CFS members from Region 4, but I have worked with incredible people from every region, as well as other organisations, and even other states. I would not be the person or firefighter I am today without the influence of all of these people. I know some of you don't want a medal. Some of you don't like public recognition, others don't think you deserve it. However, at a time when everyone felt so helpless, you stepped up and did something.

“No matter how small you feel your contribution was, it was important. What we did mattered. I know some of you are likely still struggling with what we went through.”

Know this: you weren't alone on the fire ground, and you aren't alone now.

You're not the only one who is still struggling.

You're not weak or less-than because you're still struggling.

You don't have to go through this alone – reach out.

You are all so deserving of the medals and recognition you received. I'm so proud of all of you, and incredibly grateful that I have the privilege of knowing and working with so many of you.

Bec Hitch Region 4 ■■■

South Australian
Country Fire Service

Youth Advisory Council

2021-22



The CFS Youth Advisory Council (YAC) is a group of volunteers aged between 16 and 30 from across South Australia, who share a passion for young people and volunteering in the emergency services.

“**The YAC provides a great opportunity for young volunteers to become more involved in the service, where they can be heard by staff, develop skills, consult with the wider CFS community, and influence high-level decision making.**”

The YAC meet six times a year and are represented on various other committees including the Chief Officers Advisory Council, each of the Regional Volunteer Management Committees, the State Training Committee and the Operations, Infrastructure and Logistics Committee.



The YAC play a vital role in promoting youth and the benefits of young volunteers in the CFS. We are known for holding several week-long courses, targeted to specific pathways. These include the YAC Rural Week held in July each year and the Urban Week held in October each year.

This year we are trialling two new additional courses to give youth more training opportunities. These include the two-day Frontline Leadership course and the week-long Leadership and Incident Management course; both being held in July. YAC training courses have been popular as it allows students to attend a whole suite of courses during their school holidays.

The YAC has been working towards hosting an Emerging Leaders Program for CFS members, and we are very proud to announce that it has come to fruition and was run with great success at the end of May 2022. Nominations were open for all the youth across the state and 60 participants attended, with representation from all regions. The program included leadership scenarios, presentations from leaders within the CFS, and presentations on the roles of leadership.

The YAC is continually working on new projects and some of these will be presented soon. We are always interested in hearing your ideas and suggestions for our committee. If you have any queries regarding the YAC or want to contact your regional representative on the committee to raise any local issues regarding young people, please email: CFS.YouthAdvisoryCouncil@sa.gov.au 🇦🇺

CFS Foundation

From the CFS Foundation
Chief Executive Officer **Gloria Berni**

The CFS Foundation has supported CFS volunteers and their families for over 21 years, including the families recently affected by the tragic incident on the Coles fireground near Lucindale.

Much loved and dedicated CFS volunteer Louise Hincks sadly lost her life in a heartbreaking incident on 21 January 2022. Another CFS volunteer was seriously injured and hopefully will make a full recovery.

The CFS Foundation provided immediate cash grants to these families as we know from experience that these funds are critical when a loss occurs and can help ease some pressure and provide a modicum of certainty during the most difficult of times.

Due to the generous support of the community and businesses, the Foundation can respond in an immediate and practical way, not only in the short-term but also to provide long-term care and assistance as people rebuild their lives following a tragedy.

Every dollar donated to the Foundation goes directly to supporting CFS volunteers because of our efficient operating model, and that is something we are proud of and will work hard to maintain.

Gloria Berni
CFS Foundation Chief Executive Officer

Mourning the loss of a very special CFS volunteer



The tragic loss of Louise Hincks was felt by so many volunteers. Not only was Louise a beloved member of the Happy Valley Brigade where her daughters are cadets, she was a staff member of South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM), where she delivered the mental health first aid training program across the state.

The CFS Foundation provided immediate financial assistance to Louise's family to help give them some level of certainty following the shock of such a tragic loss. In liaison with the CFS VA and SAFECOM, we are working together to ensure the family is cared for now and in the years to come.

Louise was a mad Adelaide United Football Club fan and, in conjunction with Louise's brother Tony Brown and the club, we assisted in dedicating their game against the Newcastle Jets on 13 March 2022 to her memory.

Louise's love of Adelaide United FC (AUFC) was almost as big as her love for the CFS, and the club ensured it was a special event. AUFC donated 200 tickets to the game, which were given to CFS volunteers. There were many special moments during the game honouring Louise, including a guard of honour made up of volunteers from the Happy Valley Brigade and members of her family. Louise's daughter Addie was given the opportunity to bring the ball to the centre at the start of the game. This event was a wonderful way to honour the life, love, and legacy of our very special CFS volunteer Louise Hincks. ■

CFS Foundation visiting the regions



Parndana Show

The CFS Foundation proudly participated in the Parndana Show on Kangaroo Island in November 2021.

The Parndana Show is a true example of a small rural show involving the whole community. There were many activities including a shearing competition, dog jumping and young farmer challenge, plus a variety of food and produce stalls. We joined the CFS marquee and, through the generosity of our sponsors, gave away a variety of merchandise that were appreciated by the children and adults at the show.

It was a perfect way to mingle with local CFS volunteers and to catch up with those assisted by the Foundation after the devastating 2019/20 bushfires. Special thanks to the CFS volunteers who assisted during the day and to Nicoli Ackland, Region 1 Regional Volunteer Officer, for organising it all. 🇺🇦



South East Field Days at Lucindale

After a two year hiatus due to COVID-19, the community was excited about the triumphant return of the South East Field Days in Lucindale in March 2022. The weather in Lucindale was perfect and attracted a bumper crowd, which ensured a spectacular event.

It was an ideal opportunity for CFS Foundation Chief Executive Officer, Gloria Berni and Board Member, Andrew Lawson to connect with the volunteers from the South East region and raise awareness of the work undertaken by the Foundation.

“ The CFS marquee was popular with families wanting more information on fire safety and the giveaways from our sponsors, including money boxes and stubby holders from PCU, were well received.

Once again, it was wonderful to meet some of the volunteers who were assisted by the Foundation over the last couple of years and hear stories of their recovery.

Special thanks to Claire Simcock, John Probert, Megan Hurrell, and the team at Region 5 for all their support. 🇺🇦

Valentine's Day brownies

Valentine's Day was extra sweet this year with a special delivery to headquarters. A huge thanks to our incredible sponsors at Police Credit Union who organised the special delivery for all our Emergency Services employees at headquarters including CFS, MFS, SES and SAFECOM staff. A delicious brownie was enjoyed by everyone for morning tea! 🇺🇦



“ Louise's love of Adelaide United FC was almost as big as her love for the CFS, and the club ensured it was a special event ”



SPAM

Stress Prevention and Management

SAFECOM Health and Wellbeing Consultant **Jane Abdilla**

Louise Hincks was a very passionate member of our Stress Prevention and Management program, first as a volunteer Peer Support Officer, then later as a mental health professional.



We came to know her as a professional colleague, workmate, and close friend, with more than 26 years' experience working in crisis intervention, trauma, suicide prevention, bereavement counselling, and peer support training. Louise was one of the longest serving members of the team and we all know she loved a challenge.

Louise was about 19 when she joined our volunteer peer support team. At that time, she was a volunteer member of the Eden Hills Brigade. Even at such a young age she showed huge compassion for others, high energy, and care for her fellow volunteers and a commitment to the CFS volunteer life. It was felt at the time that Louise was too young to take on such a responsibility, however she proved she could and later she became a mental health professional with the program.

During the time I knew her, Louise had a huge appetite for learning and gaining knowledge in her field. She had successfully gained a psychology degree, a Masters in Social Work and several graduate certificates, as well as becoming an accredited Mental Health First Aid Instructor when she was employed with SAFECOM.



Louise initially came to work at SAFECOM in about 2015 for a six-month placement as a student under my supervision and she also assisted me with the on-call duties of the 24/7 SPAM helpline. In 2017, Louise again worked with me at SAFECOM, this time as a Project Officer to pilot the Mental Health First Aid training for volunteers of the CFS and the SES.

In the training she was able to use many examples from her own personal experience as an operational CFS volunteer, and her special knowledge of mental health. Louise also mentored other trainers to deliver the program. This three-year project was such a success that the training program has now become a central element of our efforts to build the emotional resilience and personal resources of all our volunteers. During her time at SAFECOM, Louise also developed the latest SPAM brochures and posters we are using today, which are hopefully on display in all brigades.

In the past few years, Louise was employed at Flinders University as the Duty Counsellor, and was working daily with students in crisis. The crisis intervention role provided her with a dynamic work environment that kept her busy and responsive to individual needs and fulfilled her love and belief in the importance of social work.

“The loss of Louise was felt by the wider emergency services community across the nation but especially by those who were involved with the Coles Fire response.”

Following the Coles Fire, the SAFECOM Health and Wellbeing Team, including the Stress Prevention and Management Peer Support Team, conducted 400 individual welfare checks, coordinated 10 critical incident group sessions, and four grief and loss sessions for volunteers and staff. We also attended a group session with a Mental Health Professional to give us the opportunity to express our emotions and work through the grief of the loss of our dear friend. Louise's legacy will live on through her dog Maxi who is being trained to become a therapy dog for emergency service agencies. The welfare response is still ongoing.

Jane Abdilla
SAFECOM Health and Wellbeing Consultant

SAVFFM

South Australian Volunteer Fire Fighters Museum



Exciting times at the South Australian Volunteer Fire Fighters Museum

The last 12 months have seen many changes at the museum and progress has been steady - if not full on. After nearly 20 years we now have all our appliances housed in our bespoke warehouse and an extensive collection of fire service memorabilia stowed at the museum site in Naracoorte. We're eagerly looking forward to the time when we can take these items out of storage for display to the public.



During the year we have welcomed many visitors to the museum on a by-appointment basis. COVID-19 regulations severely limited our ability to welcome guests on a broad scale. However, as restrictions abate we are excited at the opportunity to welcome more guests to the site.

Plans for the final phase of the museum - the Interpretive Centre - are complete and have been quoted. These plans have been submitted to both State and Federal Governments seeking their support to

help us achieve our goal of completing the site. We look forward to working together as the country recovers from the recent challenging times to secure the funding required to complete our important work.

“ The annual Memorial Service held on 9 April 2022 was extremely well attended, with numbers up on previous years.

This year's service was particularly poignant. For the first time since the unveiling of our memorial wall we sadly added a name to the elite group of CFS volunteers and Forestry Firefighters who have made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting the lives and property of their local and broader communities. The service was followed with a BBQ lunch wonderfully catered by the Naracoorte CFS Auxiliary.

On the same day as the Memorial Service we held our Annual General Meeting, which was very productive. Our constitution was updated to fall in line with contemporary changes that have occurred. We also welcomed several new members to our Executive Committee and we look forward to working as a team to continuing to champion our goals of researching, recording, and promoting the history of the CFS.

The management committee of the SAVFFM always welcomes new members, items of memorabilia, and visitors to the museum in Naracoorte.

Visit our website at savffm.net.au for more information. ■

South Australian
Country Fire Service

Retirements

2021-22

With more than 130 years of service between them, we want to acknowledge the tremendous contributions of the following CFS staff members, all of whom have recently hung up their Akubras and retired.

Gary Bau

A former radio broadcaster, Gary joined the CFS in 2003. Volunteers across South Australia would have recognised Gary as the voice on the other end of the radio at Adelaide Fire.

Sophia Chumak

Sophia was an integral part of the Operational Capability Planning team for 23 years and was a key figure in the development of the CFS Annual Report.

Sharon Cinnamond

Sharon began on the reception desk at the old CFS HQ in Keswick in 2001. In her time with CFS she always greeted visitors with a smile and was in many ways the public face of the agency.

Jane Hart

Joining the CFS in 2016, Jane provided administrative support and cheeky English humour to the staff and volunteers in Region 6.

Peter Heylen

Peter joined the CFS in 1991 and held a number of roles before joining Region 1 as a Regional Operations Planning Officer in 2014. Peter provided a wealth of knowledge and experience to the region and now contributes to the region as a volunteer with the Region 1 Operations Brigade.

Gill Hodge

Joining the CFS in 2008, Gill was the Business Services Officer at Region 1 for 14 years. Gill will be remembered for the many years of dedication, the long hours, and the passion that she gave to the CFS, particularly in supporting the volunteers.

Dawn Hunt

Dawn joined the CFS in 1997 and became the first female Compartment Firefighting Instructor in Australia in 2001. Dawn went on to undertake a number of roles in Incident Management at both regional and state level.

George Kozminski

George was a part of the team in Region 6 for over 14 years, most recently as Regional Prevention Officer. George had a vast knowledge of the region, and a love for fine wine and cheese.

Margaret Ludwig

Based in Region 5, Marg was the go-to for all things National Medal. Her valuable knowledge and professional assistance to all regions with the processing of these was greatly appreciated by all.

Therese Pedler

As the Community Engagement Officer for Region 6, Therese was known for her colourful hair and was the point of contact for so many communities in the Eyre Peninsula and across the West Coast.

Gill Tiede

Joining the CFS in 2001, Gill was with CFS' Development Assessment Services team since its inception. With so much critical knowledge, Gill played a vital role in shaping the direction of the unit.

Grantley Walker

Grant served as the Technical Support Officer for the State Training Centre for 16 years. During this time, in addition to preparing training resources, Grant was instrumental in the development of the grounds.



Rob Sandford AFSM

A stalwart of the CFS, Rob Sandford joined the service as a volunteer in 1982, following in the footsteps of his mother and three brothers. It didn't take long for Rob to fall in love with the CFS, and in 1991 he was fortunate enough to turn what was quickly becoming his passion into a career, joining the team in the Mount Lofty Fire Tower, before later progressing to a role in the State Operations Centre.

On his transition from volunteer to staff member, Rob recalls "when I joined the CFS I only ever had one goal – I wanted to be a State Training Officer. It's the one thing I've never been in CFS."

After 30+ years of service, Rob was a wealth of knowledge, and always made himself available to anyone wanting to pick his brain. Rob got a great deal of pleasure out of sharing skills and knowledge with new people in the CFS, something he was very passionate about.

Taking people from the unknown to the known, there is great satisfaction in seeing people develop those skills in firefighting and everything else we do.

Rob ended up becoming far more than a State Training Officer within the CFS. Finishing his career as Deputy Chief Officer, Rob was also a mentor, a leader, a friend, and someone for people in CFS to look up to. Rob's contribution to the service will not be forgotten, and we look forward to seeing him around the place as he continues on as a volunteer in his local brigade.

“ I hope I've set the challenge for the next round of leaders in the CFS to take the agency forward and to continue to make a difference for the community. ”



Brenton Eden AFSM

When Brenton Eden graduated from Flinders University with a Bachelor of Arts, he never planned to take his career from the education sector to the emergency services.

It all began in 1979 when, whilst living in Elliston as a teacher, Brenton joined the local Elliston Brigade because, according to him, when living in the country it was 'virtually compulsory' to be a member of your local brigade and was seen as a 'rite of passage'.

Later joining the Stirling North Brigade, Brenton held positions such as Logistics Support Officer and Training Officer, later becoming the Group Training Officer for the Flinders Group. Whilst at Stirling North, Brenton rose through the ranks, to become a Brigade Lieutenant and later a Group Officer.

“ In 1995, Brenton was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal after managing the complex return of volunteers and resources after one of the CFS' first interstate deployments to the NSW bushfires in 1994. ”

Brenton was recruited to the position of Manager of Training in 1998, and it was then that he began to shape the State Training Centre (STC) that we know today. When Brenton began, he had only two staff members at the STC. The STC now has over 20 staff, multiple buildings, stunning gardens, onsite accommodation, and dining and kitchen facilities. This has provided a safe training space where thousands of CFS volunteers, staff and other agency members have walked through its doors to receive high-quality training of a national standard.

With over 40 years of service to the agency, Assistant Chief Officer Eden's quick-witted humour and dedication to providing high-quality training will certainly be missed, and his legacy will remain through the grounds of the STC, which have been colloquially dubbed the 'Garden of Eden'. **”**

South Australian
Country Fire Service

Obituaries

2021-22



Thomas 'Paddy' Wilkinson

1944 — 2022

Paddy gave 33 years of volunteer service to the community through the Willunga Brigade, most of that time as an active firefighter. He was also the Brigade Administration and Finance Coordinator for many years and was a keen fundraiser for the brigade. The extended facilities Willunga now enjoy are the fruits of Paddy and his colleagues' labour over decades of fundraising.

When it came time for Paddy not to go out on the truck anymore, he transitioned to Operations Support where he was the radio operator for the brigade and at Kyeema Group with the Incident Management Team.

“ He remained an Honorary Member of the brigade until his passing and was a kind and welcoming friend to all, especially new members to the brigade. ”

Paddy's loving wife Ann and his children will always be part of the CFS family, and we extend to them our love at this sad time.

Rest in Peace Paddy and thank you for your service. 🇺🇦



Dean Spencer Elliott AFSM

1932 — 2022

Dean was born on 19 July 1932, the son of a dairy farmer at Gawler River. He met and married Doreen and they moved to Coonalpyn with two children in April 1961. Two more children came along during which time they cleared a part of their property and began farming. Dean joined the Coonalpyn Emergency Fire Service (EFS) Brigade in 1961, attending a Fire Control Officers training course at the Thebarton Police Barracks, after which his membership was recognised.

He became involved in the formation of the Coonalpyn Downs EFS Association, being appointed the Supervisor of Fire Control Officers in the Coonalpyn Downs Area. Dean joined the newly transitioned EFS in May 1963, forming the Coonalpyn Downs EFS and subsequent CFS Group and holding Fire Control Officer and Group Officer positions from 1963 to 2004. He oversaw the building of a joint Ambulance and CFS Station in Coonalpyn and appliances such as a Blitz, Bedford and Landrover. Dean led the Group through two more amalgamations to become the Coonalpyn CFS Group in 1988 and Coorong Group in 2005.

The little spare time he had was occupied with the establishment of Fire Prevention Committees at Group and Regional levels, lobbying on the Natural Vegetation Authority Committee to achieve realistic fire breaks around Heritage Agreement allotments, Chairman and member of the Murraylands Volunteer Fire Brigades Association, representative on the Vehicle and Equipment Committee, supporting the development of dry firefighting equipment, and the establishment of the South Australian Volunteer Fire Fighters Museum.

“**Dean’s philosophy on training was ‘you are never too old to learn’ and he demonstrated that by completing many CFS courses and supporting the Coonalpyn Brigade at the Fire Fighting Drills Competitions.**”

He led a group of volunteers to the 1994 deployment in the Blue Mountains and was deployed to NSW again in 2002. He mentored many volunteers in local brigades, pushing them to challenge themselves, undertake training, and to be professional in their roles with CFS. His involvement, passion, and commitment to the CFS and its relationships within our community was exemplary.

Dean was awarded the National Medal in 1982, the AFSM in 2007, a CFS 40 year Service Medal in 2009, and Life Membership of the Coonalpyn Brigade in 2017.

Dean passed away surrounded by loved ones on 3 April 2022.

Rest in Peace. 🇺🇦



Sandy Patterson

1954 – 2021

Sandy was a much-loved member of the CFS family ever since he joined in 1970, on his 16th birthday. Starting as a firefighter at Burnside, he moved to Kingoona Firefighting Association and then to Willunga in 1980 where he remained until his passing in 2021.

“**Sandy held almost all senior roles in Willunga, including two stints as captain. He founded the Cadet Program at Willunga and devoted thousands of hours to training the next generation of firefighters.**”

He fought the Ash Wednesday Fires in 1983 at Kuinto and went interstate many times, including to Sydney in 1999.

Outside of his commitment to the Willunga Brigade, Sandy was also the Kyeema Deputy Group Officer, an instructor with South Coast Training Centre where he trained firefighters and drivers, President of the Mount Lofty Volunteer Fire Brigades Association (VFBA)

where he was also on the State VFBA committee, as well as Chairman of the State Vehicle and Equipment Committee. In the 1980s, when trucks were using petrol and brigades had issues with fuel vaporisation, Sandy came up with a technique that was tested by the CSIRO and adopted by many brigades.

In 2002, Sandy joined CFS staff as the Manager of Operational Vehicles and Equipment, where he continued to contribute his professional experience as an automotive mechanic and his many decades of experience as a firefighter.

Sandy's loving wife of 43 years, Julie, and their children will always be part of the CFS family, and we extend to them our love in their grief. All members of the Service who had the pleasure of working with Sandy would remember his ability to make firefighters feel safe and valued. He always spoke to others in a kind and gentle way, even under extraordinary pressure. The most important thing to Sandy was that everyone got home safely.

Rest in Peace Sandy and thank you for your service. ■■



Karl Kehl

1951 – 2021

Born in Germany in 1951, Karl arrived in Australia with his parents and older sister in early 1953. The family grew and moved around country South Australia before, in the late 1950s at the age of eight or nine, Karl settled with a lovely foster family in Lameroo, SA. The Mallee would remain Karl's home for the rest of his life, where he married, raised a family, and established his own painting and decorating business.

In November 1969, just before turning 18, Karl joined what was then the Emergency Fire Service (EFS) as a firefighter. This was the beginning of over 50 years of service to the Pinnaroo community.

Karl went on to fulfil many roles within the Pinnaroo Brigade, including Captain, Senior Firefighter, Treasurer, Authorised Officer and OH&S representative. Karl was the District Supervisor when the EFS became the CFS. During this time the Pinnaroo and Lameroo Brigades amalgamated to become Mallee CFS and Karl was elected Deputy Group Officer, a position he held for more than 15 years.

Karl was a very active member of the CFS, rarely missing a training session or a meeting, even cutting his honeymoon short to be back in time for fire training. At various times he was also part of many committees including the State Volunteer Management Committee, Regional Bushfire Prevention Committee and Murraylands Volunteer Fire Brigades Association.

Karl was committed to the progress of Mallee CFS, working hard at fundraising events and was a keen organiser of working bees. He completed many qualifications such as Incident Control Systems, Road Crash Rescue, GPS, ALERTS and Senior First Aid, to name a few. In 1994, he attended the NSW bushfires as part of the strike team from SA.

“**Karl received considerable recognition during his CFS membership including Long Service recognitions, Life Membership in 1993, a Ministerial Commendation for his service as the OH & S Representative in the Pinnaroo CFS in 2004, and most recently 50 years of service (posthumously).**”

Karl passed away suddenly at the age of 70 in December 2021. The Pinnaroo Brigade have since honoured Karl's service to the CFS by planting a tree at the Pinnaroo Fire Station. The tree is a memorial to all long serving local members and a great reminder of the significance of their contributions. 🇺🇦

Contacts



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Spurling Circuit off Mudla Wirra Road,
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Postal PO Box 1506, Willaston SA 5118

Email CFSRegion2@sa.gov.au

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Flinders, Mid North and Pastoral Areas

40 Flinders Terrace,
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Phone 08 8642 2399

Postal PO Box 2080,
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Email CFSRegion4@sa.gov.au

Region 6

Eyre Peninsula and West Coast

32 Matthew Place,
Port Lincoln SA 5606

Phone 08 8682 4266

Email CFSRegion6@sa.gov.au

Country Fire Service Volunteer Association (CFS VA)

Suite 3, Transport Training Centre,
17 Wirriga Street,
Regency Park SA 5010

Phone 08 8244 6500

Postal PO Box 2359,
Regency Park SA 5942

Email admin@cfsva.org.au

Web cfsva.org.au

South Australian Country Fire Service Promotions Unit

Raising awareness of the roles, training, and activities of CFS Volunteers statewide.

Postal PO Box 73,
Basket Range SA 5138

Email info@fire-brigade.asn.au

Web fire-brigade.asn.au

Stress Prevention and Management (SPAM)

Contact the SPAM Helpline on 08 8115 3950.

Volunteer Support Branch Volunteer Recruitment

37 Richmond Road,
Keswick SA 5035

Phone 1300 364 587

Postal GPO Box 2706,
Adelaide SA 5001

Email volunteernow@safecom.sa.gov.au

CFS Foundation

Providing immediate financial assistance to CFS volunteers and their families in the event of death, injury or loss of property while engaging in their community service.

Phone 1300 270 278

Email admin@cfsfoundation.org.au

Postal CFS Foundation Inc
GPO BOX 2468, Adelaide SA 5000

Web cfsfoundation.org.au

Located Ground Floor in the
ESS State Head Quarters Building



What are you the first at?

Here's what some of the women volunteers across the CFS shared as part of this year's International Women's Day. #BreakTheBias

I'm the first female captain at Coober Pedy CFS and my best friend Alyssa is the first female LT1
#whoruntheworld

Abbey Rayner

I can't think of anything I'm first at, and honestly that's a good thing! I'm not blazing a trail, I'm treading a well-trodden path, and the credit for that goes to the many amazing female firefighters who came before me!

Edwina Virgo

I am the first female firefighter in my family and the first female truck driver at Greenhill CFS.

Leah Salamon

First (full stop) in my family to join and the first woman to lead an all women crew!

Tahlia Wolverson

I was the first female member of our brigade and been an active member for 25 years.

Rae Cleggett

I'm the first firefighter in my family, full stop! I'm the youngest woman in my brigade (at 41).

Robyn Haywood

The first ever female at my brigade, breaking the boys club up wasn't easy. The first to get BA, be a Senior Firefighter, go on strike teams, reach 10 and 20 years.

Louise Smith

I'm not the first. But I'm a long-standing and persistent driver, BA/Hazmat/RCR operator & noisy advocate for "making stuff better" in my brigade.

Liz Raymond

In 1994 I was the first female cadet at Greenhill CFS. In the mid-late 90's I was the youngest member to train and join Region 1 Ops and pretty sure the youngest committee member of the Women of the CFS.

Kelly Richardson

I am the 1st female chainsaw operator in our brigade.

Kerry Munchenberg

I was the first radio operator at our brigade and still doing it 55 years on.

Lois Allen

I'm the first female BA operator and first female truck driver at Woodchester CFS.

Lisa Kerslake

First female Lieutenant and driver in Montacute!

Brianna Green

