



2024

SA Country
Fire Service
Yearbook




Government of South Australia



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299
structure fires



2,050
rural fires

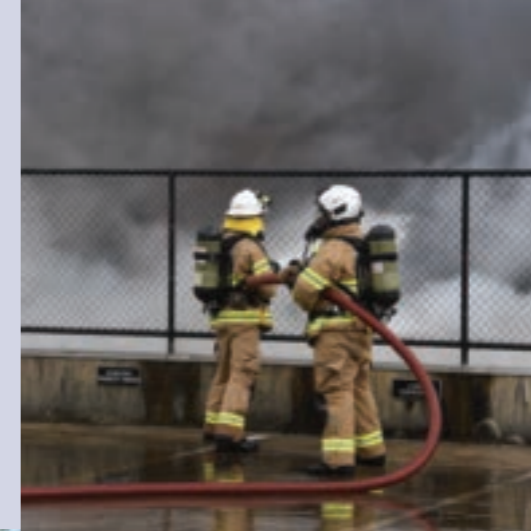
**“Amazing
work, all”**

“Well done to all the
courageous people who
serve in the SACFS”

9,470
incidents responded to



“Congratulations to all,
you are heroes to me”



“Thank you for your
service in being there
when we need help”

158
HAZMAT incidents



2,103
vehicle-related incidents



“Appreciate the
wonderful work of
the many brigade
volunteers”



2,484
special service incidents
(includes tree downs, flooding, severe weather, assisting other agencies)

“Thanks for your
commitment, hard
work and dedication”





Contents

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

CFS Yearbook has been compiled by CFS Communications Team.

Acknowledgement

In the spirit of reconciliation, CFS acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

Contributors

We acknowledge 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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A challenging season with fantastic outcomes



It is an immense privilege to write the introduction for the 2024 Yearbook, and a real challenge to try and capture all the amazing things that have occurred across our agency in only a few hundred words!

Across South Australia, and indeed the world, CFS continues to achieve incredible things in service to communities. As I have travelled around the state I am continuously impressed with the professionalism, dedication, and the ability for people to get the job done.

In terms of responding to emergency incidents, CFS has dealt with significant fires in both the rural and urban landscape. The 2023/2024 Fire Danger Season has been a very odd year in terms of the climatic conditions, fuel state, and fire behaviour that we have observed. We went into this season on the back of one of the driest springs on record, and we faced challenging conditions in early December with multiple areas forecast to reach catastrophic conditions.

On 8 December we saw thousands of dry lightning strikes, multiple areas of observed catastrophic conditions and, most pleasingly, no major fires thanks to quick responses and good local decision making. This was followed up by unseasonable, and unforeseen significant rainfall which made December and January some of the wettest months in recent time. The rainfall and re-greening was then followed by a very dry February, March, and April.

Despite the weather keeping us on our toes, the combination of our comprehensive pre-season training, smart doctrine changes, the largest aviation fleet in our history, great fireground leadership, and good local decision making has enabled us to reach the end of a Fire Danger Season without any homes or structures lost to a rural fire in South Australia. This is a very pleasing result and one that we should all be incredibly proud of.

I am continuously impressed with the professionalism, dedication and the ability for people to get the job done.

In the urban environment, we have seen significant structure fires and major rescue incidents in every corner of the state - with the largest being the Stirling Woolworths fire in November 2023. As we continue to promote that we are more than a bushfire service, I am pleased to have overseen the commencement of the Urban Uplift Project which, in conjunction with repairs to the Compartment Fire Cells, sees us on the path to more deliberate and complete urban training.

New and refurbished appliances continue to roll out across brigades, and I have been fortunate to attend a number of appliance handovers. I am always impressed by the dedication and knowledge in our small fleet team, and I know you will all agree that their knowledge when delivering and handing-over vehicles is second to none.

In terms of our fire stations, you will all know how eager I am to deliver tangible improvements in our planning, maintenance, and station delivery space. A dedicated team of volunteers have been working with Regional Volunteer Management Committees and the Chief Officer's Advisory Committee to develop standard station designs to help us ensure that our future builds are consistent, budgeted for, and planned in a more mature and transparent manner.

You will all know how eager I am to deliver tangible improvements.

This work is about providing brigades and groups with the facilities you need and deserve as you look after the state.

On the world stage, CFS deployed to Canada and is leading an ongoing development mission in Kiribati in the Pacific. Sometimes, when I look at our resources and infrastructure, I am reminded that in Kiribati we are using our old appliances to literally build a fire service in a country that until now has not had one.



Lastly, on behalf of the CFS, I want to welcome The Hon Dan Cregan MP to the Emergency Services portfolio. Through his role as Member for Kavel in the Adelaide Hills, Minister Cregan has seen firsthand the work that CFS and our partner agencies do when things are at their worst. I also want to acknowledge The Hon Joe Szakacs MP and thank him for his leadership and support over the past two years. Minister Szakacs is a passionate supporter of CFS, and emergency services and I know he will reflect on his time in the Emergency Services portfolio with pride.

As always, stay safe.

Brett Loughlin AFSM
Chief Officer



A year of innovation and excellence



It is testament to the skill and training of the SA Country Fire Service that I have stepped into this role following an incredible result – a Fire Danger Season completed without a single house or structure lost to bushfire across the state.

Our state had days of significant risk and one of the driest springs in many years and the agency's leadership and professionalism ensured rapid responses. As a result, lives and property were saved.

A bolstered aerial firefighting fleet – five more aircraft than the previous year, up from 26 to 31 as part of a \$26.7 million investment – demonstrated how important waterbombing and air surveillance were to support ground crews during the season.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work and advocacy of the former Emergency Services Minister, Joe Szakacs, to help secure this largest ever investment by the state in aerial assets. That investment will continue to make a difference to the CFS' ongoing and exceptional service delivery to the state.

I am acutely aware the CFS is the largest multi-hazard agency in SA, supporting our communities year-round with skill and agility. The CFS again showed innovation and excellence while carrying out these functions, responding to a vast array of tasks when called upon, including structure fires, HazMat incidents, and Road Crash Rescues, as well as playing a significant supporting role to other agencies.

I saw first-hand the positive impact the CFS had on the South Australian community during the 2019 Cudlee Creek bushfire, the worst natural disaster in my community since Ash Wednesday.

It is a privilege to take on the Emergency Services portfolio as Minister. I look forward to meeting volunteers and staff across the state, and working more closely with the organisation that so many South Australians rely on.

Dan Cregan
Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services 🇺🇦



Supporting volunteers in all emergencies



There have been many significant achievements from our CFS family during the past year.

“ We want all volunteers to come home safe so they need to have the tools and resources to achieve that. ”

The CFS Volunteer Association (CFSVA) is aware that the agency is evolving, enhancing and expanding. With that comes greater volunteer expectations and even higher community expectations.

CFSVA recognises that just 25% of the incidents CFS volunteers respond are grass, scrub and bushfires, but 75% is everything else. As an association we want to recognise that and ensure that your welfare is paramount before, during and after an incident.

We also want to make sure that all volunteers are provided the opportunity and time to access core training, so they are confident in their skills. The CFS has become the ‘go-to’ agency for all emergencies and it is increasing the workload for CFS volunteers and putting pressure on their home and work life. It’s important we get that balance right.

We’re proud of having one of the best vehicle fleets of any emergency services agency in the country and we want to match that with fantastic, fit-for-purpose facilities across the state as it gives you, our volunteers, a greater sense of feeling supported. We will continue to push for all brigades to have these facilities. We want all volunteers to come home safe so they need to have the tools and resources to achieve that. That’s our bottom line and what we strive to achieve every day.

We’re really proud that as association we have excellent return-to-work systems in place. There is still a long way to go, and we’d like to see more protections in place for volunteers’ mental health, in particular volunteers with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and ensure we are on par with other states for presumptive cancer legislation for firefighters.

Some emergency services in other Australian states and territories boast a higher staff-to-volunteer ratio and we would like to ensure that there is consistency across the board so that there is the same level of support and access to staff for all CFS volunteers.

After all, volunteers just want to experience the outcomes they deserve, and we will listen to you and fight for you.

Jeff Clark, David Lindner and Sonia St Alban
CFSVA President, Vice President and Executive Director



Major incidents



Stirling fire

At 2:01 pm on 15 October 2023, Stirling and Aldgate crews were notified of a fixed fire alarm going off at the Stirling Village Mall on Adelaide Road.

Three minutes later the response was increased to first, then second alarm and in less than 10 minutes the Incident Controller requested third alarm, after the Stirling Pumper arrived to find shoppers fleeing and smoke billowing from the complex.

It was apparent that the Woolworths supermarket was fully involved in fire. Crews quickly realised that they were unable to attempt an offensive attack due to its intensity, so they switched focus to protecting assets such as the neighbouring businesses in the Mall.

As the fast-spreading fire took hold, CFS created a Forward Command Point, brought in specialist equipment and were now supported by the Metropolitan Fire Service, SA Police and SA Ambulance Service.

With everyone safely out of the complex and behind police cordons, more than 100 volunteers worked hard and alongside our partner emergency services to reduce the fire, and warn and inform the wider community.

It took nearly seven hours for the fire to be declared contained, and then the mop up process began and continued into the night and the following day.

As the extent of the carnage became clearer, the damage bill kept rising until it reached \$25 million – one of the most significant and expensive commercial fires in the state's history.

And while the Stirling Woolworths was completely destroyed, the fast thinking and hard-working efforts of our volunteers prevented the fire spreading and impacting several neighbouring businesses.

The recovery and rebuilding process is now well underway for the owners and the Stirling community.

The CFS also completed an After Action Review (AAR), which was facilitated by experts from Victoria's Country Fire Authority.

The recommendations from the AAR and an implementation plan are being considered by CFS staff and will form part of the Urban Uplift Project (see page 16 for more information).

It is worth noting that the Country Fire Authority remarked that the initial actions of CFS crews were on par with the expectations of fire and emergency services across the country, career or volunteer, and crews performed exceptionally well.

Our thanks go out to all the volunteers who were involved in this event and bravely fought this fire.

If you or someone you know was impacted by this or any fire in South Australia, the SA Country Fire Service offers a free mental health and wellbeing helpline for volunteers, staff and their loved ones called SPAM (Stress Prevention and Management) on (08) 8115 3950.



Bindarraah train fire

At about 10:30 am on New Year's Eve, a horror crash between a truck and freight train claimed the lives of two Port Augusta locals at Bindarraah, near the South Australian border with New South Wales.

The impact of the crash caused the train to catch fire, with several carriages derailing, tipping over and blocking the Barrier Highway.

Such was the extent of the damage, the CFS required two days to deal with the fire and hazardous materials of the train and its freight. Cranes were also used at the scene to move the containers and debris from the road.

The CFS worked in partnership with the New South Wales Rural Fire Service and under the leadership of control agency, SA Police.

The deaths of the two men marked the 115th and 116th lives lost on South Australia's roads in 2023. A truly tragic year on our roads and our thanks go out to all volunteers who were involved and assisted with so many road crash rescues.

The Naracoorte fire through the eyes of First Lieutenant, Hamish Corcoran

My name is Hamish Corcoran and I'm the 1st Lieutenant, Naracoorte brigade. Even though I'm only 21-years-old, I've already attended some big fires. However, the Naracoorte Fire on 6 March was different to what I have experienced in the past. The fire had the potential to have a really big impact on life and property.

It started as a small grass fire in a paddock, but quickly grew as the hot winds carried the flames into dense scrub and towards a number of homes and farm structures.

I was the Incident Controller that day and my truck was the first of many to arrive near the perimeter. As soon as we realised how much the fire had taken hold, we made the conscious decision to focus on asset protection.



The next five or six trucks that joined us also went straight into defending homes and other structures, knowing we weren't going to stop the fire.

Luckily, many residents had already left the affected area - but there were two homes where we focused our efforts and where the owners had decided to stay.

I had a chat to one bloke who had actually taken a lot of measures to protect his home. We spoke about

taking shelter inside the home and that there are fireys from two trucks in your driveway here to help you and hopefully all will be ok.

Thankfully, our strategy worked, as did the aerial firebombing drops, and not a single home or shed was destroyed during that two day blaze. I put it down to a bit of luck and a lot of professionalism. I also want to acknowledge the support we received from the regional headquarters and our partner agencies.

Fires devastate APY Lands

Last year was a difficult time for the APY Lands and North-West Pastoral district after fires burnt through hundreds of thousands of hectares over several weeks.

CFS volunteers actively monitored and responded to the fires and fought hard to protect a number of sensitive areas, homelands and key infrastructure.

Firefighters also conducted back burns and patrolled more than 300km in the North-West Pastoral area, from the Western Australian border through to Pukatja (Ernabella).

It is believed the fires were caused by a band of dry lightning strikes and then quickly spread, fuelled by unseasonably large quantities of buffel grass.

One of the big risks associated with the fires was travellers and people transiting through the affected area. This prompted the CFS to issue a warning for everyone to remain vigilant and be mindful of the changing conditions.

It was a massive campaign and we are grateful that our volunteers were supported by SA Police, Regional Anangu Services Aboriginal Corporation and APY Land Management personnel.



Canada deployment

In March 2023, approximately 60% of Canada's land mass was unusually dry and facing severe drought in some regions. Temperatures were also much higher than normal, especially in the north. As the months passed, conditions worsened and by June, Canada was impacted by a record-breaking series of wildfires.

This saw a rapid rise of the Canadian Forest Fire Centre's (CIFFC) preparedness level to Level 4, resulting in the National Resource Sharing Centre (NRSC) within AFAC elevating its international deployment preparedness level to 'lean forward'. As a result, this placed all Australian and New Zealand jurisdictions on alert of a potential request to deploy resources.

On 17 May a formal request for assistance was received by NRSC, which resulted in over 198 incident management personnel and arduous firefighters (who need to meet fitness and endurance tests) and

overhead positions (including aviation) being sent on the initial deployment to Alberta province.

Every state and territory from across Australia answered the call, as well as crews from New Zealand.

South Australia initially sent five personnel to undertake the roles of Dozer Boss (Plant Manager) and Operations Branch Director (Division Commander).

Due to the distance required to travel, deployments to Canada required personnel to commit to being away from home for up to 35 days. This allowed for travel days and working rotation blocks of 14 days work, two days rest, followed by another 14 days work.

In total, between 17 May and 11 September 2023 Australia and New Zealand deployed 746 personnel. South Australia contributed 29 personnel from CFS, Department for Environment and Water

and Forestry SA, including a significant number of volunteers. While these numbers may seem low against the overall number, this is the largest deployment we have ever sent to Canada and the first time we sent ground crews.

For the CFS it was a significant achievement, resulting in many hours of coordination to ensure all international requirements were met and that our people were ready and educated for what to expect on deployment prior to being deployed.

Some of the other positions included fire behaviour analysts, air attack supervisors and logistics, resources and facilities officers.

We would like to thank everyone involved who took part and supported these deployments to assist our international communities in need. In addition, a special thanks to the families and friends who made it possible for crews to be away from home for such a significant period of time.

NT deployment

In August 2023, bushfires ravaged the Northern Territory, fuelled by three seasons of La Nina vegetation.

After averaging up to 30 fires a week, the Territory's fire crews were fatigued and stretched to capacity so made a formal request for help.

The CFS responded quickly to the worsening bushfire situation in the Barkly Tablelands by sending a fleet of vehicles and 20 volunteers.

It was our first deployment to the Top End since 2011, and a difficult one.

The fire front spread 60 kilometres and covered an area of approximately 400,000 hectares in size, or three times the size of the ACT. The fire threatened vast areas of bushland, pastoral properties, highways, and the town of Tennant Creek.

Our skilled and experienced crews were propelled into action and tasked with various roles, from field operations to radio communications.

To support us in this deployment we brought in a Special Operations paramedic and one prescribed burning specialist from National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) for each CFS strike team, to provide technical advice to crews around fuel reduction burning and back burning activities on active fire grounds.

It truly was a team effort.

When the teams arrived, they were overwhelmed by the sheer size of the fireground and the burning fuels were unlike anything seen in South Australia, according to NPWS crew member Rebecca Pudney.

"With three years of really good rains, the spinifex was at hip height in spots, while the buffel grass burnt with extreme heat. Adding in turpentine bush that loves throwing embers into the air when burnt made for some interesting fire behaviour," she said.

Eventually the fire would take 51 days to extinguish, providing much relief for Bushfire NT crew who expressed their gratitude for our help in managing this difficult campaign.

Lighthouse Café fire, Kangaroo Island

Shortly before 7pm on 21 September 2023, crews from Kangaroo Island Group responded to the Lighthouse Café in Kingscote. When crews arrived, they were faced with significant fire extension, including fire in the adjoining butcher shop, and worked well to prevent further extension into adjoining shops.

Crews extinguished the fire within an hour and were on scene for many hours assisting to make the scene safe.

Just two days later, firefighters were called out to battle another blaze at the Lighthouse Café and two adjoining shops. It took 24 volunteer crews on seven trucks an hour to control the fire.

The damage bill from both fires exceeded \$1 million.

“
The damage bill from both fires exceeded \$1 million
”



Interstate deployments

While South Australia was largely spared this Fire Danger Season from devastating fires such as those experienced in the 2019/20 season, our interstate colleagues had their work cut out across much of the country.

In August there were already 70 active blazes in New South Wales and multiple fires were burning through September and October in Queensland, destroying more than 50 homes.

Once again, national fire authorities called for reinforcements from other states and jurisdictions that had capacity to help, and once again the CFS responded.



Major projects

Spreading our wings

A record number of firefighting planes and helicopters took to the skies and played a pivotal role in fire suppression this Fire Danger Season, thanks to a recent injection of State Government funds to increase our aerial capabilities.

The \$26.7 million package over four years allowed us to expand our contracted observation and firebombing aircraft from 26 to 31.

The five new aircraft included:

- 2 x Single Engine Air Tankers (SEATs) with a 3,000L capacity for water, foam, water enhancer or fire retardant
- 2 x Blackhawk helicopters with a 4,500L capacity for water and foam
- 1 x Multi Mission Machine (Eurocopter B3 Squirrel) for air surveillance/ intelligence, strategic bucketing work, aerial incendiary ignition and firefighting crew transportation.

The expanded fleet made it easier for CFS to manage how our aircraft were deployed and stationed at our 42 recognised airbases across the state.

They were put to good use on many occasions by drastically reducing and suppressing several fires – particularly in high-risk areas of the Eyre Peninsula, Mid North and Lower South-East.

The aircraft were also valuable tools in firebombing recent blazes in the Adelaide Hills where there was difficult terrain for ground crews to access.



The expanded fleet made it easier for CFS to manage how our aircraft were deployed and stationed at our 42 recognised airbases across the state.

Rapid initial attacks – an aerial firefighting success story

Fighting and suppressing bushfires by air in the early stages of a blaze has been identified by many authorities as a critical tool to get the upper hand.

Five years ago, CFS established a 9,440 square kilometre Primary Response Zone (PRZ) in the Mid North where we can focus our attention on conducting drills, operations and even flying over past bushfire incident sites to learn from the past and look to future strategies.

CFS Commander Corey Dunn and the aviation team recently collated the findings of early and rapid air attacks and discovered there were many economic and environmental benefits with these operations in the PRZ including:

- Reduced fire damage to agricultural land and property and negative impacts of smoke taint on the quality of grapes used for wine production through a 92% reduction in average final fire areas from 342 hectares to 14 hectares, delivered at a cost benefit ratio of 1:3.
- Reduced volunteer time commitment on extended fire operations through successful containment of 94% of bushfires in less than 2 hours, and 100% in less than 4 hours. Additional analysis showed this was achieved with a 63% reduction in the number of personnel and firefighting vehicles required to achieve containment; and
- Reduced aerial firefighting aircraft operating costs, including:
 - › 67% reduction in average aircraft operating costs from \$23,000 to \$7,500 per response.
 - › 73% reduction in annual water usage for aerial firefighting of approximately 680,000 litres.
 - › Cost saving in aerial firefighting product usage (Class A foam) of \$750 per response or approximately \$16,000 per season.

These impressive results were recently published in the highly influential magazine, Asia Pacific Fire. Well done Corey and team!



Streaming from the sky

CFS' aviation fleet was bolstered with new capabilities and new live streaming cameras to gather intelligence and assist in strategic decision making.

The Air Observer Machine's camera provides us with access to high-definition imagery, augmented reality mapping to display road and track names, infrared penetration of smoke to detect the location of the fire edge and even hot spot detection.

It greatly improves the CFS' ability to make better informed strategic decisions based on the conditions, fire behaviour and potential infrastructure under threat, helping us provide greater protection to South Australians.

Based at Claremont Airbase, the Air Observer's camera was used during the summer on many instances, including fires at Belair and Highbury. It searched for hot spots so crews on the ground were able to confirm if the fires had been contained and not spread into the thick scrub nearby.



Urban appliances hit the road

A new generation of appliances are being rolled out across the state to enhance CFS' response to urban incidents. The fleet of Urban 34Ps are newly configured trucks that are purpose built to have critical urban firefighting tools and equipment as standard stowage items, better aligning our equipment to the incidents our volunteers respond to. The new trucks are being delivered to 13 brigades across the state to start the roll out and will continue to be provided to brigades responding to urban incidents, which don't have fit-for-purpose trucks.

The CFS recognises there is a need, in certain areas of the state, for firefighting equipment to be focused around the diverse urban incidents our volunteers respond to. These trucks will be the first in CFS to be fitted with a portable ground monitor, which enables

firefighters to operate a hose remotely and from a distance, reducing the amount of time firefighters are exposed to incidents like a structure fire, therefore reducing the risk of injury.

Standard equipment will also include new battery operated tools including angle grinders and quick-cut saws, for forcible entry into sheds, garages or through fences, and a battery operated positive pressure fan so firefighters can safely clear smoke from homes following a structure fire.

These new urban trucks are the first in a new generation of vehicles that will also have an attack and lay pack as standard. The attack and lay pack will include a hose folded in the Cleveland load method, which can be easily deployed when firefighters might be investigating reports of a fire in a commercial facility or high-rise building.

All these pieces of urban stowage equipment, coupled with enhanced vehicle features such as improved emergency warning lights and sirens, updated and improved cabin console layout, revised and updated work deck monitors and both Little Giant and 3-stage ladder stowage, will make these vehicles far more versatile for our volunteers in a range of environments.

As an all-hazards fire and rescue agency, the CFS is aware of the importance of adapting our firefighting equipment to suit the emergencies that can occur and we will continue to listen to your feedback to ensure you have the most appropriate tools to respond to unfolding incidents.

Urban Uplift Project

One of the key recommendations to emerge from the Stirling Woolworths precinct fire was an undertaking to review and improve the way the CFS deploys firefighting tactics in urban settings.

It is well known that urban fires often need to be treated differently to rural ones – particularly when attending residential home and structure fires.

Even though most of our firefighting efforts are in rural and regional South Australia, we are still an all-hazard agency, with around 20 percent of our incidents occurring in urban areas.

That is why there is a newly created team based at State Headquarters spending the next six months on the Urban Uplift Project.

Urban Uplift will shift the focus away from relying heavily on defensive responses and firefighting tactics at house fires and other urban incidents and give CFS the chance to explore more offensive tactics and how our methods and resources can be enhanced.

For example, if you have a fully involved house fire, a defensive strategy would be to 'surround and drown' - where you are outside the house lobbing water in. Offensive tactics would mean going into the house and conducting search and rescue operations and fire suppression on the internal structure – with the goal that the fire can be limited to a single room or part of the house.

This strategy will need resourcing and training, and we want to look at the best way to arm crews with the tools for offensive firefighting on a service level – particularly in urban centres of regional SA.

We will also look to partner with agencies like the Metropolitan Fire Service and Victoria's Country Fire Authority who conduct offensive strategies and a day-to-day basis.

Aside from uplifting skills, the project will look at purchasing and tailoring equipment and vehicles. We also hope to learn from major events and incidents from the past and put some of those learnings into practice.

This could place the CFS at the forefront of urban offensive tactics and firefighting in Australia and even overseas.

For people so used to defensive firefighting, it should not be the default mindset. Once we give people the qualifications, it gives them confidence and competence to work their training into their response drills for things like positioning a truck, running hose lines and other scenarios.

It's hoped that this project will lift our CFS capabilities at urban brigades to new standards of excellence.

Congratulations to all the cadets who trained hard and thanks to the team coaches and managers.



2023 Australian Fire Cadet Championships

Twelve cadets from across the state represented the CFS in the Australian Fire Cadet Championships in Sydney in October 2023, with two individual participants taking out first prize.

Jake Sinclair and Nick Blessing were first over the line in the Orienteering Challenge Course, with a winning time of 28 minutes and 21 seconds.

CFS entered two teams for the tournament- CFS Team Alpha and CFS Team Bravo.

Hosted by the NSW Rural Fire Service and NSW Rural Fire Association over four days, competing cadets were able to showcase their emergency management skills in eight competition events:

- Portable Pump Relay
- Two Lines, Two Lengths
- Hose and Hydrant Drill
- Light Tanker and Handtool
- Station Response and Knapsack Drill
- Tanker and Ladder
- Two Tanker
- Team Challenge

The participants were given opportunities for team building and leadership activities as part of furthering their networking skills with their national counterparts.

There were 21 teams from around the country and the CFS Team Alpha finished 10th and CFS Bravo in 13th place.

Congratulations to all the cadets who trained hard and thanks to the team coaches and managers who helped them get to Sydney and participate in such a significant event.

Winner, winner!

Last September, CFS was a proud winner of the 2023 SA Training Awards for the category of Large Employer of the Year in recognition of the high-quality Vocational Education and Training (VET) offered to volunteers and staff.

The award recognises a large business or enterprise that achieved excellence in the provision of nationally recognised training to their personnel.

Winning the award was a real testament to the passion, professionalism and dedication of CFS Trainer Assessor volunteers and staff from across South Australia. These individuals have contributed to the development, delivery, assessment, management, and administration of quality training for CFS members for many years.

Since 2000, CFS has been an enterprise Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and offers volunteers and staff nationally recognised training across six qualifications, three accredited short courses, and many units of competency, with the agency being one of the largest emergency service RTOs in South Australia.

The win meant CFS progressed to represent South Australia in the national titles in Hobart, where we were shortlisted from eight finalists.

The event included several days of professional development, networking and Ministerial engagements. It also provided an opportunity to highlight the incredible work of our CFS teams and internal partners to achieve amazing outcomes while promoting safety and confidence in managing emergency services and fire.

Finally, it was time for the awards presentation and on 17 November 2023, we were announced as the Bronze Recipient of the Large Employer of the Year category.

It was a fantastic achievement, and we'd like to thank our passionate volunteer and staff Trainer Assessors for the incredible contribution they make in ensuring our members know how to operate safely and provide the best possible service to the communities that they serve.



Region One



For those who don't know me I have been honoured and humbled to be handed the Regional Commander reins in February this year from my esteemed colleague Peter Philips. It has been a wonderful opportunity to be a part of the CFS leadership team and family and I want to acknowledge the legacy and tireless work of Peter who held the role over five years.

During this time, Peter built strong foundations for me to ensure the region is successful. Some of his key achievements included:

- Commanding and leading the region during the 2019/20 fire season where the Adelaide Hills saw the largest fire since Ash Wednesday and 40% of Kangaroo Island was impacted by fire.
- The establishment of a new Kangaroo Island Incident Control Centre/Group Base development project
- Numerous capital and refurbishment projects
- Region 1 COVID response.

Thankfully this year the Fire Danger Season didn't live up to the predictions that were forecast, that said, Region 1 brigades delivered exceptional service not only to our local communities but also nationally and internationally.



Region 1 brigades responded to countless incidents/events from structure fires, HAZMATs to road crash rescues. These included:

- Stirling Woolworths Shopping precinct fire
- Brown Hill Creek scrub fire
- Deployments to Northern Territory and Canada
- Strike Teams for Hermitage, Hallett Cove and Malinong fires
- Aldinga airshow fire/rescue support.

A dry end to the season has seen some abnormal fire behaviour with many small fires as a result of residents conducting pile burns and tidying their properties after the summer months. Crews responded quickly and ensured that the community impact was as limited as possible moving into the cooler months.

The region also delivered thousands of hours training at brigade level, maintained over 250 operational assets and conducted 92 community engagement sessions.

I thank each and every one of the volunteers, group officers, captains, staff and colleagues for the thousands of hours you put into our great agency. The biggest, fire, rescue, and all hazards agency for the state of South Australia.

Micheal Bohrsen ASM
Regional Commander 🇺🇦



Normanville house fire

On 16 July 2023, nine CFS crews responded to a large structure fire involving a three storey home at Normanville. Crews worked overnight to prevent the spread of fire to the neighbouring houses, only meters away from the blaze. All occupants and their pet dog were able to escape with only minor injuries. The damage bill was estimated at \$1.3 million.

Brownhill Creek fire

At just after 1:30 am on 20 February 2024, a bat flew into a power line sparking a fire at Brownhill Conservation Park. Our crews were faced with difficult terrain and a fire rapidly increasing in size. However, our hard-working volunteers were able to quickly get the one-hectare fire under control and remained onsite to extinguish hot spots.



Profile:

Tony Pratt



Tony and his son Will at a prescribed burn

When did you join the CFS?

I joined the Aldgate CFS in Oct 1998 – nearly 26 years ago and just before my first son was born. I’ve recently been made captain, and my two sons were both CFS Cadets through the same brigade.

Why did you get involved with National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)?

I was doing tree work for the Council when I saw a job advertised for Seasonal Fire Crew. I was only going to do one season as a fill in job but 18 years later I’m still here! I like the variety it offers, from chain sawing to drip torches and deployments, and working in our beautiful parks every day. It is the best office in the world.

How do you find balancing the two gigs?

I’m fairly established as a life member and lieutenant with the CFS and enjoy volunteering and giving back to the community since I saw my uncle doing it as a kid. I have no plans to quit. Actually, quite a lot of people in the NPWS Brigade have come from CFS, and around 80 of us are dual members.

What skills and training are transferrable?

It goes both ways – the skills and training from CFS helped me start out in my job as a NPWS fire, and now the training and skills I’ve learned at work are things I bring back to the Aldgate CFS. We are known as specialists in putting out hose lays, and the ignition work we do with NPWS is useful for backburning. There are also some synergies in gaining leadership skills and mentoring up-and-coming leaders and young firefighters at both the CFS and NPWS.



Profile:

Katrina Lloyd

What is your current role within the CFS?

I'm the captain of the Cape Jervis CFS in Region 1.

Why did you join the agency?

I come from a large and proud family of CFS volunteers – including my father, brother, husband, cousin and even son-in-law, but it was actually my neighbour who used to be the captain here and encouraged me to join 15 years ago. So, I thought, well, my youngest of three daughters had gone off to school, so why not?

What do you enjoy the most?

The group of people that I've got here are just a great bunch and really dedicated. A lot of them are older members and they respect what I do and share the same values of wanting to help the community. I used to say, "God, I could never do that", but with training and experience anyone can and that makes you feel good.

What do you do outside of volunteering for the CFS?

I like the fact that the CFS lets me have a good work life balance. So, outside of the CFS, I work for my husband's fisheries business, and on weekends I compete in Mounted Games – which is essentially

racing horses against other competitors through an obstacle course. We have 15 horses on our five-acre property to train with. I'm actually a two-time national champion and in fact all three of my daughters have competed across the country too.

Would you say you're competitive by nature?

Yes, my competitive streak often comes out – even when it comes to responding to a CFS callout. We get along just fine with the neighbouring brigades, but it's always a race to be the first one to respond and arrive at an incident – especially if it's in *their* area.

What types of incidents won't you attend?

I've never attended fires on Kangaroo Island because I don't float, and I don't like boats – even though my husband is a fisherman! I'm more than happy to respond to major campaigns and incidents on land and there've been quite a few but I always have the support of the group officer and regional staff. We have a nice bunch of brigades in our Southern Fleurieu Group and I'm proud to lead one of them.

Hindmarsh Valley fire

On 6 May, CFS volunteers responded to a large fire, which destroyed two cottages on a property on Victor Harbor Road at Hindmarsh Valley.

Firefighters on two CFS trucks and a Bulk Water Carrier, supported by a further two MFS trucks, were called to the incident at 5:30 pm and worked offensively to contain the fire to the cottages within 45 minutes of their arrival. The stone cottages were not the owner's primary residence, and no one was injured.





Support for the regions

As well as fighting fires within the Region, firefighters from Region 1 spent countless hours supporting other regions and the SA Metropolitan Fire Service by sending strike teams to areas where the borders of the two services meet.

This agreement is called Enhanced Mutual Aid and there were several examples of this throughout the year including on 22 March when we sent multiple strike teams to respond to a fire at Hallett Cove. The terrain required a large amount of offroad and rural capability to combat the fire which was threatening numerous homes in the area. Region 1 strike teams were also deployed to the Hermitage fire on 22 February in Region 2 and the Malinong bushfire, north-east of Meningie in the Coorong to take the pressure off local crews for overnight firefighting.

When did you join the CFS?

I was in my late teens when I joined the CFS in 2012. Some of my friends wanted to get involved and contribute to the sector and I thought why not?

How did you find it?

It was intense but really rewarding. Before Mt Barker established an MFS station, we would average around 400 callouts a year. Our brigade is also quite urban-centric, so we don't attend as many grass or scrub fires. That said, we still provide support for significant events like the Cudlee Creek, Pinery and Sampson Flat fires. My involvement for those was more of a mop-up role, but it certainly left a lasting impression and made me want to be part of the CFS even more. You'd drive down an affected road and one house is destroyed, the next is fine and it makes you wonder if you could have done more or differently or is it just the erratic nature of fires where some things just can't be controlled.

What other career pathways did you pursue while volunteering?

After uni, I embarked on a profession that had nothing to do with firefighting. I was in the insurance sector and then in IT as a project manager. Simultaneously, I was developing my CFS skills by completing courses in BA, Compartment Fire Behaviour Training and Road Crash Rescue.

I think professionally I couldn't see my career aligning with my CFS role. But when a new position was advertised for volunteers to join the staff at CFS State Headquarters as a Project Officer for an urban firefighting campaign, I jumped at the chance. It finally gave me the opportunity to combine my passion for firefighting in the urban context with my professional project management experience. If you can match your skills in your day job to a role at the CFS, I'd say go for it.

Profile:

Tom Phelan



Region Two



It's been a busy operational year for Region 2. While we haven't had large rural fires, we have still seen a high level of incidents requiring involvement from all 87 Region 2 brigades. I would like to thank the members of Region 2 for their diligent response to calls this year that have seen incidents normalised quickly to reduce the impact on the community.

This year Region 2 has welcomed new staff including our Regional Fleet Officer, Josh Jeffries; Regional Operations Planning Officer, Chadd Schwarz and Daniel Barnett who is backfilling the Regional Training Delivery Officer role. For the first time in a long time Region 2 is at full staff capacity.

This year we recognised a number of very well-deserving Region 2 volunteers during the Australia Day presentations and of note was Andrew Cadd who received his Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM). This is fantastic recognition for the hard work and dedication Andrew has put in during his almost 35 years of service with the CFS.

The year ahead will pose new challenges for us all. Thank you for your ongoing dedication, the support of your family and employers that allow you to continue helping the community in its time of need.

Steve Salamon
Regional Commander 🇺🇲

House fires at Barossa Goldfields and Williamstown

At approximately 8:30 pm on Friday 11 August, 2023, CFS crews from Concordia, Williamstown, Light Group, Barossa and Lyndoch Stations as well as three fire trucks from the MFS were called to a house fire on Woodlands Road at Barossa Goldfields.

When they arrived at the single storey isolated property the house was fully involved in fire and was subsequently destroyed. No one was injured and the occupants were accounted for. The damage bill was estimated at over \$200,000.

Meanwhile on 30 December at nearby Williamstown, CFS crews were called to a house fire, which was fully involved in fire, on Queen Street, Williamstown.

The home's occupants, a family of four, safely evacuated. Approximately 60 firefighters on 12 fire trucks and two Bulk Water Carriers attended the scene. Crews used defensive firefighting techniques and were supported by the MFS, SA Police and Ambulance Services, as well as SA Power Networks.

CFS crews were also able to save the family pet turtle, which has now been reunited with the family. The home was fully destroyed, with losses currently estimated at \$1.3 million.



Port Vincent house fire

On 9 September, CFS crews on the Yorke Peninsula were called to a house fire at Luxmore Street in Port Vincent.

Upon arrival they found a single storey home well involved in flames.

CFS crews wearing breathing apparatus got to work on extinguishing the fire and contained the fire to the home, however about 5 hours later, crews were called back to the house, as the fire was believed to have re-ignited.

Volunteer firefighters on 8 trucks and a bulk water carrier, found the home engulfed in fire and starting to spread to a neighbouring home and a food van business. The house was destroyed, but crews were able to limit the spread of the fire to the outside of the house next door. The total damage bill was estimated to be approximately \$600,000.



ANZAC Eve Youth Vigil 2024

The Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL) hosted an annual vigil to commemorate the sacrifices of those who participated in wars and conflicts for Australia. The 'Holding Ground' ceremony begins on ANZAC Eve and is the longest event on ANZAC Day. Youth representatives from many organisations come together to stand vigil at the National War Memorial in Adelaide. The solemn guard of honour takes place for a continuous twelve-hour period and ends when stewardship of the Memorial is handed to Australian Defence Force Members for the Dawn Service.

This year, Region 2 cadets and cadet leaders from Balaklava, Dalkeith, Lyndoch, One Tree Hill, Port Wakefield, Tanunda, Tea Tree Gully, Two Wells and Williamstown Brigades honourably contributed to the reflective ceremony.

The cadets had already trained and rehearsed drills for the event in their school holidays and one cadet, Aiden Yon, even featured on ABC radio in the lead up to Anzac Eve.

Another cadet, Noah Thomson, had a starring role in escorting Chief Officer Brett Loughlin AFSM at the vigil.



Yorke Peninsula Field Days through the eyes of Sonia Post and Bindi Hawkey

The Yorke Peninsula Field Days are the oldest in Australia, and this bi-annual event in late September attracts over 500 exhibitors and more than 20,000 visitors. CFS partnered with SAFECOM to present a colourful and engaging exhibit with a focus on bushfire safety and the 5 Minute Bushfire Plan, the Alert SA app and our fabulous CFS ambassador, Smokey.

Debuting at the event was "Smokey's Side Show Alley"- a series of engaging and educational hands-on games and supporting display panels. These were designed and hand made by Region 2's Sonia Post and Bindi Hawkey, with

creative input from Project Officer Alex Neailey and the woodwork skills of CFS volunteer John Paynter.

In addition, "Smokey's Strike Team" cardboard trucks were a hit with young and old who wanted to burn off excess energy around the marquee. To complement the theme of the exhibit "Smokey's Show" was written and performed by Region 2's Daniel Barnett aimed to help kids understand the new Australian Fire Danger Ratings.

More than 2,700 people visited the exhibit over the three days and 1,300 adults had quality conversations with Community Engagement Officers and

returned home to their communities with an increased understanding of bushfire awareness and safety.

One of the pleasures for CFS staff was talking to people who visited the exhibit over the years and then made changes and enhancements to their own Fire Danger Season preparation, emergency kits or bushfire plans. In the world of CFS community engagement, this is the reward we seek!

Overall, the CFS exhibit was a big success, proving once again to be a valuable method of engaging with the community about bushfire preparedness in a fun and positive way.

Profile: PM praises Port Wakefield



On February 29, 2024, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese addressed Parliament and welcomed the visiting President of the Philippines to Australia. In his speech, the Prime Minister referenced our two countries close ties, including, to everyone's surprise at the CFS, the Port Wakefield Brigade!

All of a sudden, international media outlets were contacting the CFS wanting to know more and share in our success story and how captain Warren Miller revived the ailing brigade by reaching out for new recruits in different sections of the community.

"I had asked everyone at the pub, the footy club, the RSL... I didn't know what else to do. So, I asked the local postie, 'Can you help me distribute flyers through town?' And thankfully, she was only too happy to help," Warren said.

He then played the waiting game until finally, one man answered the call, Samson Bucol who moved to the region 10 years ago from the Philippines.

"When I got the letter, I said woo! This is a really good opportunity, but I'm still a little unsure, however, my wife said, 'Just try it! You've been wondering for how many years about joining?'" Samson said.

Warren and the team worked hard to ensure Samson felt included and developed skills and confidence through structured training and support. Soon enough, more and more of Samson's friends, family members and Filipino community members came forward and signed up.

"Now our brigade is almost at capacity, and nearly 30% of our active members are Filipino and a further 50% make up our cadetships. We also have a really high female representation for the first time in Port Wakefield too.

"It's really enriching for us to get to know about each other's culture and we often catch up outside of work for beers and barbecues. It has really been fantastic," Warren said.

Success at Region 2 IMT Seminar

On 22 July, 2023, Region 2 hosted an IMT seminar for existing and aspiring volunteers who want to be involved in Incident Management. The day allowed existing Incident Management personnel to refresh their skills for the 2023/2024 Fire Danger Season along with experienced personnel the ability to pass on their skills and experiences to new interested volunteers.

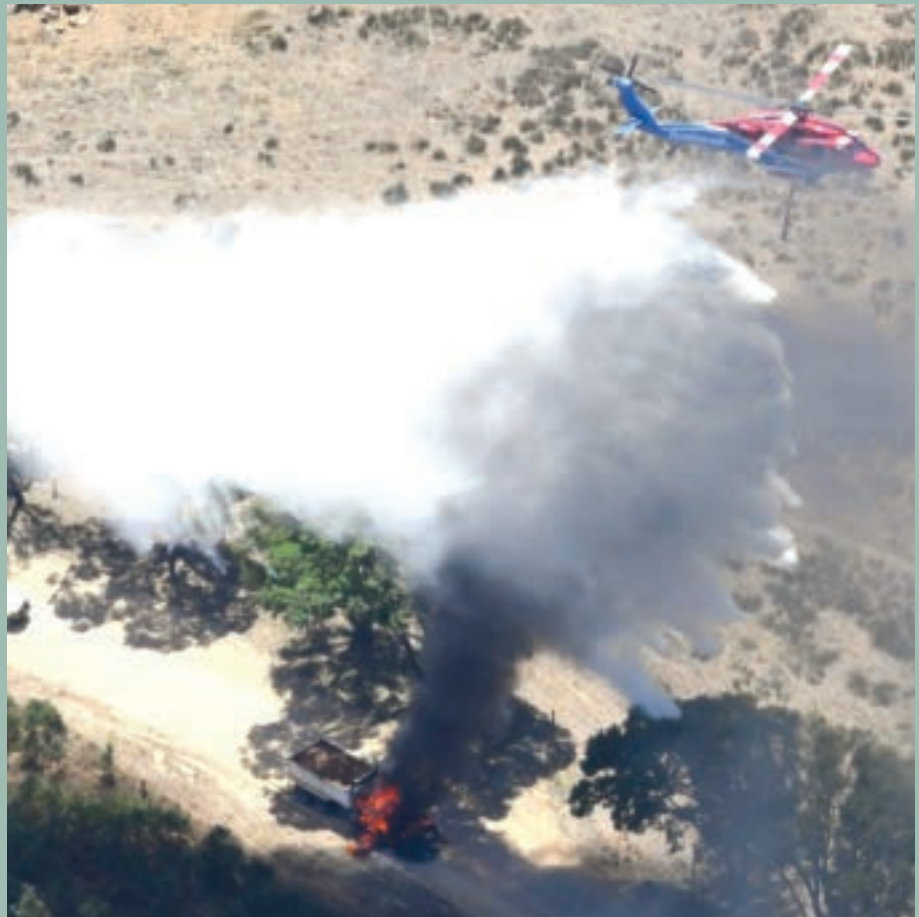
Potential new IMT personnel were given the chance to come and try an aspect of Incident Management to determine if they would like to become a member of the Region 2 Incident Management team.

The day was a huge success with 60 volunteers, from highly experienced to first-timers, getting involved. The day has resulted in twenty new aspiring logistics officers, planning officers, operations officers, CRIMSON operators, and other support roles.

The day wasn't only about finding apprentices for the future but looking back at the last 2022/2023 Fire Danger Season to discuss what worked well and what could be done differently. Everyone was enthusiastic about looking forward and what improvements can occur to improve the future of Incident Management in Region 2.



Region Three



Looking back over the last 12 months, I am immensely proud of what the volunteers and staff of Region 3 have been able to achieve this year. As parts of Region 3 continue to rebuild and recover from the River Murray Flood, and others continue to be impacted by rural retraction and the cost of living, we continue to see our volunteers going above and beyond every day to protect the lives and property of their communities.

Recognising rural incidents equate to only a quarter of the region's incidents each year, our region still activated for a total of 22 Fire Ban Days across our three districts this year. This included a number of multi-day incidents of note, all requiring our members to take valuable time away from work and their families to bring these incidents under control.

Leading up to the season a huge amount of work was put into preparedness by our brigades, groups and the region. We undertook more community engagement and collaborated more closely with Local Government and other

agencies within the region and across borders – more than has ever occurred in recent memory. This hard work has not gone unnoticed by our communities and has contributed to the success of this year's Fire Danger Season.

Further, I'd like to recognise the hard work put in by many across the region to continue to grow the region's cadet programs. It was fantastic to see the smiles on our cadet's faces as they competed at the region's cadet championships this year, and I am looking forward to once again spending the day with our cadets and supervisors at this year's Cadet Fun Day in Adelaide. Our cadets are the future of the CFS, so it's great to see such a strong program within the region.

I'd like to thank the Region 3 volunteers and staff for everything you have done for the CFS and your community this year, and a further big thank you to the families of our members for supporting them to do so.

Shane Clinch
Regional Commander 🇺🇲

Snapshot of incidents across Region 3 this year

Calperum / Gluepot Fire

When: 12 December 2023

Size: 3,574 hectares

CFS, National Parks and private heavy machinery crews worked incredibly hard, in remote conditions to bring the Calperum Fire under control. Initially started by dry lightning, firefighters worked for three days to control the fire and protect the natural habitat of the Black-eared Miner and Mallee Striated Grasswren, two endangered bird species which reside within the area. A SAPOL aircraft conveniently flying over the area at the time was able to provide valuable intelligence to crews to allow them to develop a timely suppression plan and get on top of the fire early. Firefighters spent several days working on the fireground monitoring the area for flare ups and putting out hot spots. The fire did not impact the Gluepot Reserve, Danggali Conservation Park or Chowilla Regional Reserve.

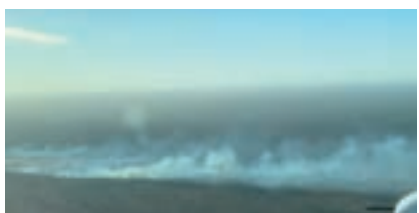


Taylorville Fire

When: 13 February 2024

Size: 200 hectares

A band of dry lightning started a scrub fire on Taylorville Station, north east of Waikerie. Six CFS appliances, supported by National Parks crews and private heavy machinery attended the fire which was burning in remote scrub and hard to access terrain. 18 firefighters worked for two days to bring it under control, containing the fire to 200 hectares, in trying conditions.



Palmer Fire

When: 21 February 2024

Size: 50 hectares

CFS crews responded to reports of a grassfire at Randell Road in Palmer at 6:58am. First arriving crews were provided with information that the fire was burning quickly up steep terrain towards a number of houses and would soon threaten a critical SA Water Pumping Station, along the Mannum to Adelaide Pipeline. 30 CFS firefighters worked hard to protect assets and bring the fire under control, with the total area burned equating to 50 hectares. Seven aircraft supported firefighters dropping 24 loads of water to help extinguish several hotspots burning in inaccessible terrain.



Fisher Fire

When: 28 February 2024

Size: 128 hectares

CFS responded to a fire burning in inaccessible mallee scrub near Swan Reach, threatening a number of assets. With a predicted strong wind change later that afternoon crews engaged heavy machinery to create an access track to the fire, and later fully track the perimeter to create a containment line.

This fire demonstrated the effectiveness of the Blackhawk aircraft, with a plentiful water source in the River Murray. Within a couple of kilometres of the fire, one Blackhawk was able to make 35 drops, equating to 105,000 litres, in four hours. In comparison, five SEATs made 33 drops, totalling 91,000 litres, in the same time period. The work of aircraft in supporting ground crews during this fire was pivotal in saving a number of assets and bringing the fire under control within a day.



Malinong Fire

When: 23 April 2024

Size: 535 hectares

The Malinong Fire, near Meningie in South Australia's Coorong, was the largest of four fires that occurred within 100kms of each other in a one hour period on this day. All four fires occurred outside of the Fire Danger Season, as a result of landholders burning vegetation.

CFS volunteer firefighters on 17 trucks were supported by local Farm Fire Units and seven aircraft, which all helped to halt the forward rate of spread within approximately three hours. The efforts of all crews from Regions 3, 1 and 5 across two days resulted in firefighters successfully saving two properties and a significant amount of farming land from damage.

Heavy machinery was used to construct mineral earth breaks in scrub patches, to assist ground crews in blacking out and mopping up effectively. High overnight relative humidity and favourable weather conditions on 24 April helped crews to get the upper hand.

Fed by a strong wind change over the fire ground, the fire burnt 7.5km from head to heel in just under 90 minutes, burning a total of 538 hectares of private farmland, with a perimeter of around 14kms.



Profile:

Three's company at Monash



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Every time a CFS truck whizzed past the Telfer's General Store or one of the crew came in for a snack, the family would get 'firey envy'.

"When the siren would go off, I used to hate missing out," daughter Lara said.

Colleen and her two daughters moved to Monash from Mildura a couple of years ago for a better work life balance, and soon the allure of joining the brigade and attending incidents overcame them.

Colleen and her eldest Lara were the first Telfers to sign up, followed recently by 18-year-old Sophie - becoming just the second group of three women from the same family to volunteer together at a CFS brigade.

Passionate about the CFS, Colleen and Lara have already completed several CFS courses and taken on additional responsibilities - including obtaining a heavy vehicle licence.

"There's also a little bit of friendly competition between us ... but it's all in good fun and the experience has actually brought us closer together."

While Colleen understands the dangers volunteers face when attending fires and other incidents, she loves the feeling of protecting the community and says she's grateful for the help and support of the crew.

Surprisingly though, they're not the only family trio at Monash. The de Grancys are another well-known name in CFS circles. Raoul Otto de Grancy is a veteran volunteer who helped build the station and earned the National Medal for 15 years of meritorious service with three clasps representing 45 years. His wife Lorraine is also an active member and son Dave, captains the brigade.

Colleen and her eldest Lara were the first Telfers to sign up, followed recently by 18-year-old Sophie - becoming just the second group of three women from the same family to volunteer together at a CFS brigade.

Profile:
**From
Fiji to
Waikerie**



When Fijian friends, Lui Tawake and Luke Bola first arrived in the Riverland they were expecting to spend most of their time picking citrus fruit and enjoying the country life.

“The first building I saw when we arrived in Waikerie was the CFS station and I said to Luke I have to join straight away. I was already trained as a firefighter in Fiji and loved it, and even though Luke didn’t have any experience said, ‘Hey mate, can you ask for me too?’” Mr Tawake said.

The pair were greeted with open arms and after going through the recruitment process, they wasted no time, attending the training nights and signing up for the Basic Firefighter 1 (BF1) course.

“BF1 was very thorough, and I learnt about many different types of incidents

in South Australia. For example, in Fiji we might attend a grass fire or a road crash rescue like you would for the CFS, but then we will also respond to floods, and we don’t really have the climate for bushfires like in Australia, so the trainers explained everything really well to make sure we got through the assessment,” Mr Tawake said.

One year on, and there’s no looking back for Lui and Luke. They have already attended several challenging incidents including a recent fire at Swan Reach as well as being part of a night crew responsible for mopping up at the Waste Transfer Station fire near Waikerie during February 2024.

“I really enjoy volunteering at the CFS and being part of a team,” he said.

“I also like to work with the older crew members because they are supportive, good teachers and have a lot of experience and stories to tell. Sometimes you witness things that are difficult, but I don’t get scared when I know I have a job to do and the more skills I learn the more confident I will feel.”

“ I really enjoy volunteering at the CFS and being part of a team. ”



Region Four



As yet another year passes, I reflect on the past 12 months and the events that shaped it and the people in Region 4 who I continue to hold in such high regard - especially when I see their hard work and dedication in representing our agency. Everyone is so committed to serving our community with professionalism, courage, and dedication.

2023/24 has been another challenging one for our Region 4 team and incredibly tough in that unfortunately we lost several individuals who were very close to us. During times like this we all tend to rally around each other to ensure that we are asking the important questions about helping ourselves and looking after others. After all, it is so important for us all to be able to be the best version of ourselves.

From battling bushfires in remote parts of the state, to volunteering for deployments, urban house fires and HazMat incidents on our major

highways. We have a very large complex and challenging region but it is a region that I love and have the joy of working alongside so many fantastic volunteers and staff members.

There were a number of fires on Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating days including in the Gammon Ranges, at Melrose and near the townships of Snowtown and Burra.

We have had some amazing wins and achievements too over the past year which also deserves celebrating. Our colleagues at Terowie celebrated the opening of a brand new fire station which was attended by a number of dignitaries and made headlines in the media.

I am proud to be a part of this team and honoured to have the opportunity to share their stories. On behalf of our entire agency, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all of you. Enjoy the Yearbook!

Sindy McCourt
Regional Commander 🇺🇦

Multiple fires in the Mid North

A Total Fire Ban Day was declared for 8 December in Region 4 and sure enough there were multiple ignitions through the Mid North along the Flinders Ranges from Mambray Creek to Snowtown.

Local CFS brigades responded swiftly and with the support of firefighters from the Department of Environment and Water (DEW).

An aviation team was already stationed at Port Pirie aerodrome as part of our aerial strategies during the Fire Danger Season and we were able to quickly and effectively send firebombing aircraft to the fires.

This level of support to our ground crews led to a significant decrease in firefighter hours spent on the fire ground, and without it we would have been managing these fire for days to come in this terrain, a view shared by DEW.



More fires on 8 December

While our Mid North crews were battling blazes, 8 December also resulted in multiple lightning strikes and grass fires further north from Port Augusta to Roxby Downs and along the Stuart Highway.

While most of this area is remote pastoral grazing country, it is also the travel and infrastructure road corridor to the Northern Territory.

So, the decision was made to “burn and monitor” and provide targeted warnings on a number of electronic billboards to capture the attention of tourist, transiting drivers and local residents.

Profile: **Steve Joyce**



Steve Joyce can attest to how critical CFS aircraft are in reducing the fire intensity and slowing the spread of a bushfire.

“I took over the management of Port Pirie Regional Council’s aerodrome and adjoining homestead 28 years ago, but for the most part, I was mainly tasked with making sure the site and runways were well maintained for private and charter planes. However, in 2014 when the region was affected by the month-long Bangor bushfire, it was a wake-up call as it came so close to Pirie,” Mr Joyce said.

Over the next decade, Steve played a pivotal role over the past decade – helping transform the site into a CFS airbase and command centre during major fires and emergencies. In fact, he developed such a rapport with the aviation team, that he ended up joining them!

“I love it. I am now a trained re-fuelling captain – and I have also helped spread the word to the local community which has resulted in an uptake of 15 dedicated aviation volunteers on the books – including farmers and local families.”

As the aviation team continues to evolve and expand, Steve is there to help meet the agency’s objectives – including the recent installation of a welfare hub for crews to relax, cool down or de-stress during campaigns.

“There have been many learnings along the way, from the many roles and responsibilities to understanding different fire suppressants – and if we’re ever unsure, we can call on management for support. We’re like a big family now and we all get on. It’s such a good organisation for a person like me who was looking for that something more.”

“
**We’re like a big family
now and we all get
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something more.”**

”

Redhill Wind Tower Fire

On 7 February 2024, the Spencer CFS Group was called to respond to a fully engulfed fire at the Redhill wind tower farm. The burning tower was dropping debris and that started a grass fire below it. As a result, the site management and the CFS incident controller established a 400 m exclusion zone.

Crews faced a tactical challenge as the seat of the fire was 120 metres in the air with no way to safely access it. The incident action plan was to burn out the bottom of the wind tower. This would allow the tower to burn out and potentially fall without causing further grass fires that could threaten the community.

CFS, and with the support of Farm Fire Units (FFUs), successfully burnt out 40 hectares of surrounding land and incredibly the operation was completed within four hours from the time of the call.

All crews remained safe from falling debris and learned a lot from this unique incident including:

- Responding to wind tower fires should be based on the rural fire risk of the day.
- Communication and compliance with FFUs regarding the exclusion zones and the risk of falling debris was challenging.
- The surrounding terrain and steep hills posed tactical challenges in burning out tactics.
- Dealing with significant media interest was challenging.



Profile: Tobi-Jane Spiers

When do you first join the CFS and why?

I first got involved with the CFS in 2008 when I moved up from Jamestown to Roxby Downs and I thought 'Oh why not, I'll give it a whirl!'. At the same time, I took on a role as an emergency service volunteer at BHP to train people on how to deal with emergencies and respond ourselves to any mining-related incidents. So, whether it's CFS or BHP, if I get a call out, I help out.

How do you manage your time?

It can be a bit of a juggling act, but I work one week on and one week off at Olympic Dam, so I handle it pretty well. I love working in emergency services and the variety of incidents. When the CFS pager goes off, we could be responding to truck fires, vehicle accidents, stranded tourists along the highway or a bushfire – you name it. Sometimes that means two and a half to three hours, just to get to a job.

What training and roles have you had in the CFS?

I have done Road Crash Rescue, BA (Breathing Apparatus), HazMat and now I'm a Lieutenant 1 and do a bit of admin as well. Having these skills under my belt has meant I could move up the ranks and be part of bigger events and campaigns and I've now gained a lot of experience attending incidents. I've been part of a strike team that was sent to fires in the APY Lands for several days and assisted the crews out there. We also assist our colleagues at Coober Pedy and Andamooka too.

Region Five



Our region was flagged by national authorities as an area to watch for heightened bushfire activity in the 2023/24 Fire Danger Season – particularly near the border with Victoria.

There had been higher than average rainfalls across the Limestone Coast which saw increased fuel loadings. All this had the potential, when fully cured in the summer months, to make the seasonal fire predictions a reality.

Unseasonal rains continued right through November and into December – even resulting in some localised flooding. The unexpected weather events saw isolated severe wind events which were likened to mini tornadoes around Millicent.

When the hotter, drier conditions came into effect, there were only a few noteworthy fires in Region 5 including:

- Mount Benson and Honans Scrub (caused by lightning strikes),
- Keilira and Avenue Range (faults with mechanical equipment),
- Bingham (accidentally sparked by a chainsaw) and
- Naracoorte (believed to be caused by a car exhaust).

I am constantly proud and impressed of the dedication and commitment you our members make to the CFS and communities of the South East.

I would also like to personally thank the members of the Naracoorte Group who once again answered the call and attended a large structure fire on Christmas Day. This was the second year Naracoorte Group members missed Christmas with their families and loved ones.

Finally, congratulations to the team at Yahl who moved into a brand new station in July 2023. The old station consisted of a single bay shed, however the new station is bigger and better with two vehicle bays, a training space, kitchen and toilet facilities and a utility area for recommissioning breathing apparatus and other functions- such as servicing chainsaws.

“If we manipulate people, they will give us exactly what we pay for. If we inspire people, they will give us more than we ask for” - Major General Harsha Kakar.

Jason Druwitt
Regional Commander 🇺🇲

Mt Gambier Ground Observer

The Incident Management and Leadership training team have taken a proactive approach to expanding the Ground Observer course to regional locations across the state, including Region 5. This not only enhances the accessibility of the training but also provides learners with exposure to a variety of terrain and fuel types, thus enriching their experience and skills.

The initiative taken by State Training Officer Cameron Dangerfield and long-time volunteer Wayne Richardson to map out the course in the Lower South East nature reserves demonstrates dedication and thorough planning. Their efforts in validating the sites for use and updating maps reflect a commitment to ensuring the quality and effectiveness of the training program.

Completing over 300km of driving to scope out the sites indicates the meticulous attention to detail and the comprehensive approach taken in selecting appropriate locations for the course. By validating building defendability and burn scars, the training team ensures that the simulated fires provide realistic scenarios for the learners to navigate and learn from.

Overall, the efforts put forth by the team in expanding and enhancing the Ground Observer course are commendable, and it is clear that they are dedicated to ensuring valuable and impactful training experiences for volunteers, staff, and partner agencies across the state.



Profile:

Mariska Hawke

How did you get involved with the CFS?

I'm the fifth generation of my family to grow up in Kalangadoo and I had no intentions of joining the CFS and knew absolutely nothing about it. But when my husband started work at a regional timber mill, one of his co-workers who is a CFS captain told us that their volunteer numbers were down and encouraged us to join. So, we both signed up at the same time and that was nine years ago.

My husband then went on to become a lieutenant and about 2 years in I was asked to be captain at Kalangadoo. The former captain said he needed to move on and do other things and he thought I'd be great.

What was it like taking on a leadership role?

I really enjoyed being captain and over time our brigade grew from four or five people to more than a dozen regulars. We developed a really good culture and word of mouth helped too.

The last couple of recruits who moved to town approached us, we don't even need to proactively recruit volunteers anymore. And we were like great, come on down.

Six months ago, the Wattle Range Group Officer asked me to nominate for the Deputy role which provides support to both the Group Officer and directly to the regional brigades in human resources, finance, logistics and the broad spectrum of incidents - from minor right through to large bushfires. It's basically helping the brigades help themselves so that everything runs smoothly.

For someone who had no intention of joining the CFS it's amazing how things change!

So, I'm Deputy Group Officer today, perhaps Chief Officer tomorrow... but only if they move the State Headquarters to Kalangadoo!

Limestone Coast Councils and CFS

In September 2023, Region 5 hosted chief executives and mayors from the Limestone Coast Councils for a CFS Information and Briefing session. Guest speakers provided educational talks for all that attended, to encourage open communication between CFS and local councils.

The first speaker was Simeon Telfer, who took attendees through the AFDRS methods of collecting curing data and the role of Fire Prevention Officers for determining ratings.

Attendees of the Information and Briefing Session also heard from Phil McDonough and Aiden Galpin. Mr McDonough provided an overview of the Councils Responsibilities under legislation and answered questions in regards to interpretation of the Fire & Emergency Services Act. Aiden Galpin spoke in regard to the Limestone Coast Bushfire Management Committee and membership and roles going forward.

Regional staff then gave an overview of the upcoming Fire Danger Season, as well as letting the councils know how CFS Community Engagement can work with their staff.

The Briefing session was well accepted by the attendees, with Region 5 hoping to continue to hold these events to encourage communication between CFS and Councils at an executive level.

2024 South East Field Days

The 2024 South East Field Days were a great success for Region 5.

The Field Days team recorded over 1,700 conversations with residents and travellers throughout the two days, with many more people coming in to visit the site.

The site had an overall Bushfire Ready theme, with displays including where to get information, embers, emergency kits and Bushfire Safer Places. The Region 5 team were also joined by personnel from MFS, Alert SA and Disaster Legal.

There were many activities available for young and old, with the electronic fire extinguisher prop being a popular drawcard once again with Squirt the mini fire truck and visits from Smokey also being popular.

Several competitions were also held over the weekend, with raffles for adults and kids and a colouring competition.

Region 5 wishes to thank the staff and volunteers who travelled from across the State to assist with the Field Days.





Loss of Region 5 SCBA Training Room – Christmas Day 2023

Christmas Day 2023, just as many were sitting down to enjoy Christmas lunch with families/friends/loved ones, once again paggers of the brigades within the Naracoorte Group chirped their response tone.

As diligently as ever, members put down their plates, made apologies to family and loved ones and responded to assist in a time of need.

What made this response different this time, our members were responding to reports of smoke issuing from the SCBA Training Room at the Region 5 Training Centre.

The first arriving crew confirmed the structure was on fire and quickly upgraded the alarm. This response and their offensive firefighting techniques limited the spread of the fire.

Region is actively working with CFS HQ to get the training room rebuilt, with focus on ensuring the new facility will meet current and future urban training needs.

Significant work has been undertaken by staff and volunteers, who have worked tirelessly to restore the centre to operational status, and to those who continue to offer their assistance.

An extra note from the Regional Commander:

This is an opportune time to express my gratitude to you our volunteers, your families/friends/loved ones who have sacrificed their time with you and missed events. Whilst we do not directly acknowledge the service our families/friends/loved

ones provide to the CFS, I appreciate and recognise the vital role they play in enabling you to serve. I also extend my appreciation to the employers of our volunteers for their understanding and support.

Jason Druwitt
Regional Commander 🇺🇦

Region Six



What a year it has been for Region 6. I would like to acknowledge the outgoing Commander, Brendan Saers for his diligent service, and I feel privilege to represent the CFS as the incoming Region 6 Regional Commander.

To say it has been a quiet Fire Danger Season would be inaccurate. Every day CFS volunteers attend incidents such as road crashes, hazardous material jobs, building alarms or structure fires – just to name a few. In fact, this year, our crews were protecting the community from the very thing that they usually use to extinguish a fire - water! Severe and frequent storms meant Region 6 attended more trees down, flooding and storm incidents than usual, helping our colleagues from the State Emergency Service (SES).

Since January, I've taken the opportunity to travel the region and engage with our senior volunteers, where it was evident that the passion and dedication of our volunteers to service the community cannot be underestimated. Region 6 is privileged to have volunteers and staff who continue to deliver a first-class service to communities regardless of the challenges.

Looking to the future, Region 6 will have more of an emphasis on recruitment and volunteer development. We already have a comprehensive recruitment program; however, with the support of the Regional Volunteer Officer we can always improve on giving our volunteers the support they need. Another major focus is firefighter mental health and wellbeing, providing the opportunity for our volunteers to be familiar with the services provided by the CFS.

The Region 6 team and I look forward to the future, and enhancing the Region 6 profile across the state, by leading volunteer recognition and creating an inclusive culture. To all the volunteers, staff and their families, thank you for the time you give so selflessly to keep the community safe.

Stephen Boucher
Regional Commander

Firey Women

Women throughout Region 6 are continuing to develop a strong awareness of fire through the Firey Women workshop. Programs held in our region have helped women to develop confidence through the diverse workshop material and group discussions, where people who have come face-to-face with rural fires have shared their lessons learnt and life experiences.

Learning bushfires behaviour, fuel types, weather influences and bushfire planning has made a marked improvement on the way community members who have taken part in the Firey Women workshop now prepare, protect and recover from bushfire.

Women who have attended workshops across the Eyre Peninsula and West Coast have also helped to influence

others by proactively promoting bushfire safer communities and speaking with confidence on how others can prepare their property.

These women have also said they are not afraid to take control of the family property if their significant others are on a farm fire unit or CFS truck.

A successful program with simply inspiring outcomes.



Ceduna CFS punched above its weight

As one of the busiest brigades in the state's far west, Ceduna responded to more than 122 incidents in the past year – or one every three days.

That's despite the fact there are only about 5 or 6 active members, according to Captain Travis Goodwin.

“We are a small, but dedicated team, and yes, it's fair to say we are extremely busy as we respond to everything from grass fires to road train rescues along the Eyre or Flinders Highways.”

While some of the vehicle fires on those highways caused significant damage, the Ceduna crew also had a number of significant saves of precious cargo during the season.

“We've saved several prime movers and B double loads filled with expensive mining equipment.”

Travis and the team even managed to send a truck and crew to Sheringa, some 275 kilometres away, when their colleagues needed support fighting a bushfire late last year.

We are a small, but dedicated team, and yes, it's fair to say we are extremely busy.



Mena Road Fire through the eyes of Kylie Kleinig, Port Lincoln Brigade

On 28 December 2023, a lightning event swept through the West Coast and Upper and Lower Eyre Peninsula sparking multiple fires.

Approximately 150 CFS volunteers responded to 35 incidents focusing on containment efforts and monitoring into the long weekend.

For one fire, north of Wangary, the arrival message on the pager simply read, 'going fire, Mena Road'. When crews arrived, they noticed the vegetation was up to 2.5 metres high in thick heath swamp and covered several hundred hectares. Thunderstorms were still raging across the area, fanned by strong winds and high temperatures - adding to the complications and increasing the fire activity. Coffin Bay, Coult, Wangary Brigades, LEP Logistics and 8 Farm Fire Units attempted to access the fireground but had nowhere to go due to the swampy conditions.

The day was not looking good.

Crews made the call to upgrade the alarm and asked for aerial support, however the aircraft were already deployed at a fire near Mt Hope. Three Single Engine Air Tankers (SEATs) finally got to work, slowing the forward rate of spread and using foam in the first few drops before reverting to gel for effective suppression.

After consultation with Incident Control and the Air Attack Supervisor, it was decided to deploy the Blackhawk. A soak or waterhole was identified 50 metres from the southern perimeter of the fire, which meant the Blackhawk could refill every four minutes. However, the 37 drops had limited success as the choppers' rotors were too close to the fire's edge and fanned the flames.



Eventually, the IC and Air Attack Supervisor decided to bring in more back up in the form of additional SEATs from Adelaide loaded with gel which could be used in quick succession... and it worked.

Aerial firefighters got the upper hand and eventually the Mena Road fire was under control, allowing ground crews to come in and use excavating equipment including a backhoe and a loader, to access the perimeter and work their way through the swampy terrain.

It was an extraordinary effort by the three SEATs and Blackhawk to suppress this potentially threatening fire, and all made possible by outstanding communications from ground crews, coordinated by the Incident Controller.

CFS crews and FFU operators were also given an opportunity to witness the magic of our aerial fleet and the effective communications from the Incident Controller on the ground to assist them. It was an opportunity for spectacular viewing with the fire edge, water sources, a working Blackhawk and three SEATs all within a proximity of 100 metres of each other.

A success story of ground to air communication, coordination and a team of skilled aerial crew.

“ A success story of ground to air communication, coordination and a team of skilled aerial crew. ”

These brigades continue to demonstrate the agency's true capability of 'more than just a bushfire service'.



Heavy vehicle related incidents

With the closure of the rail corridor across the West Coast and Eyre Peninsula, traffic on the Eyre Highway increased by 32% from 1,800 vehicles to 2,376 according to the Annual Average Daily Traffic data. Consequently, CFS brigades located on or adjacent to the Eyre Highway are frequently responding to heavy vehicle related incidents.

In recent times, a collection of brigades have attended incidents ranging from hazardous material recovery and clean up, first arrival extractions in complex situations and assisting SA Ambulance Service with equipment for lift and extractions. These brigades continue to demonstrate the agency's true capability of 'more than just a bushfire service'.

Volunteer exposure and fatigue attending multiple incidents, some being hours apart of each other, are challenging yet their commitment to community can never be questioned or underestimated.

What's life like for a CFS captain in Region 6?

I live on a farm at Wanilla on the Lower Eyre Peninsula, it's a high bushfire risk zone where we live and we often see thunderstorms and wild weather approaching our farm.

My parents and husband are also CFS volunteers here. Dad's been in it for 40 years and then I joined him and then Mum. We make sure we're not all on the fireground together, so if it looks like a bad blaze hubby will stay home with the kids.

What's an incident you'll never forget?

The Black Tuesday Wangary bushfire in 2005. Our family farm was in the path of the fire and we lost stock and fencing, but bare ground around the three houses on our properties saved us.

I wasn't actually there at the time; I was in Alice Springs working as a wool classer and received messages from my Mum. When I finally came home I saw a black landscape upon our approach and it was pretty eye opening.

How do you educate your three children to deal with fires?

Our young daughter would often become upset when the family heads out to fight fires so a couple of years ago, she attended a series of workshops to prepare physically and emotionally for bushfires.

The older two know how to start water pumps and we've also got a little fire cupboard. They pack their own bags with spare clothes, with their teddy, stuff that they think is important and every year we'll go through the bag and update it.

What is the future looking like for firefighting in your region?

Well, numbers have dwindled, and Wanilla in particular has become a real small community. Members are slowly going because some of them have moved out and there's no one coming in to replace them. Hopefully we can bring more people in soon.



Profile:

Ros Hocking



State projects

From the Deputy Chief Officer



In a busy agency like CFS, it is often too easy to focus our attention forward to the next challenge or opportunity on the horizon, but I think it's important we all take a moment to look back and reflect on what we have achieved with our State Projects in 2023/24.

Firstly, you may recall, we flagged our excitement last year about some new processes and projects in the pipeline to ensure CFS remains a contemporary powerhouse. A key one of those projects is EM Merge, a crucial tool for effective communication and coordination during emergency situations. However, all change can hold a balance of excitement and nervousness. The introduction of EM Merge will result in a significant uplift of CFS' operational processes, reduce the time it takes for information on the ground to make its way up through all appropriate levels and facilitate efficient decisions. I'm sure EM Merge will help future-proof the CFS by responding more efficiently and by sustaining multiple incidents for longer durations.

As part of our ongoing commitment to community and public safety, this year CFS worked with Verian (an independent research agency) to understand 'Bushfire Preparedness Archetypes' designed to be a snapshot of community experiences and views to help CFS optimise engagement and increase levels of community preparedness.

A few months ago, we re-booted our relationship with our Pacific Island partner, Kiribati, by sending two more fire trucks from regional South Australia over land and sea to the island nation, with the support of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Australian Defence Force. In addition to sending the trucks, several personnel spent one month on Kiribati to teach initial training including BF1, Operate Pumps and Defensive Fire Suppression, along with appliance familiarisation training. These efforts made a significant impact to the local communities, and we're proud to support our neighbours as they face some truly challenging times through climate change.

In September 2023, the CFS won the prestigious prize of Large Employer of the Year at the 2023 SA Training Awards for the excellent provision of high-quality Vocational Education and Training to our volunteers and staff. CFS then went on to represent the state in the National Training Awards. The achievement highlights the incredible work of CFS volunteer trainers, the Learning and Development Team, and internal partners deliver in unique experiential learning across the regions and at the State Training Centre. It is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our members. Your commitment to training and professional development has not gone unnoticed, and we should all be proud of these efforts.

Furthermore, I want to acknowledge the collaborative efforts of our fellow emergency service agencies, including the SES and MFS. Working together on significant jobs such as the Stirling structure fire recently has strengthened our partnerships and enhanced our ability to respond effectively to emergencies.

Looking forward, CFS has some exciting projects on the horizon, many of which are staggered over a number of years. We are excited to invest in the Urban Uplift for our volunteers and we're also reviewing and increasing our training programs and skill base. CFS continues to progress the work of a replacement for CRIIMSON, which is at end of life. The development and introduction of a new incident management system over coming years will enable us to use intelligence from the fireground and better inform our responses.

Lastly, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you for your unwavering dedication and commitment to serving your communities. The untrained eye might suggest CFS had a benign season, yet we know that our crews were kept incredibly busy throughout the Fire Danger Season, attending 2,050 rural fire incidents. Your tireless efforts do not go unnoticed, so thank you again for all that you do.

Georgie Cornish
Deputy Chief Officer

EM Merge

In an effort to address major incident reviews and member feedback, CFS is seeking to overhaul incident management arrangements to ensure we make the best possible use of our limited resources.

In response to the clear need for change, the EM Merge Project Team was formed in 2023 and tasked with delivering the most significant change for the CFS in a generation. Through EM Merge, current incident management arrangements will be streamlined on activation days and during major incidents to support fatigue management, resource utilisation will be improved, and incident response will be efficiently delivered. In conjunction with this improvement, state and field command will be better defined and integrated into the incident management arrangements.

Through collaboration and consultation with our volunteers, staff and stakeholders, harnessing valuable real-world experience and insight, EM Merge is well-equipped to successfully deliver the future structure, aligning our approach with the Australasian Interagency Incident Management System (AIIMS) for consistency and increasing the capability for cross-agency emergency response.

The EM Merge model will compress the layers of operational command from three to two levels, with Incident Management Teams reporting directly to the State Command Centre. It will embed AIIMS four into the Regional Incident Control Centres, increasing opportunities for volunteers and members of aligned agencies to perform roles historically held by regional staff only.



These changes alleviate pressure on the small group of trained members who do most of the heavy lifting. There will be significant expectations on all CFS staff - and opportunities for all volunteers who want to be involved in Regional Incident Command Centres - to be involved in training, development and exercising.

EM Merge also aims to deliver significant improvement in how we can respond to emergencies by enhancing and resourcing field-based command and control by better capturing and sharing information, which will streamline and accelerate information flow to ultimately increasing safety in our firefighting operations. Logistics will be a key focus, with options to be developed for local, regional and state-based support mechanisms to ensure crews are better catered for.

This project is a significant challenge that will have a substantial impact on senior roles and the way they contribute to operations. For most members, the

impact will be very minimal, if anything, however the benefits will be seen by every member through the provision of better logistics and information during major incidents. The Steering Group is committed to high-quality engagement, via a strengthened engagement framework, to do better listening for this and future projects with agency-wide impact.

By staying flexible and applying evidence-based learnings, we will be better prepared for major accidents and on activation days. As the project comes to life, we are also confident this will give you an opportunity to grow and learn new skills in your professional development journey. We understand that any change in incident management is a lot to take in and we ask you to work with us to ensure its success and apply an approach that works for our whole agency.

The EM Merge team are consistently keeping updates available on the Volunteer Portal and the team is happy to answer any questions or receive feedback at cfs.emmerge@eso.sa.gov.au.

Farewell Pixie

This year we bid farewell to one of the most enigmatic trailblazers of the CFS, Yvette (Pixie) Dowling AFSM.

Originally trained as a nurse, Pixie spent more than two and a half decades with CFS after joining as a volunteer in 1966 and as a staff member in 2000.

Pixie worked her way through the ranks to become Assistant Chief Officer, Manager Operations Systems and was CFS's first female State Duty Commander. In 2014 Pixie was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal.

Pixie had a huge impact on CFS and her role grew in recent years to be one of critical importance, covering a broad range of areas of responsibility including ICT, State Command Centre, Bushfire Investigations and CRIIMSON. We are grateful to her for developing so many systems and processes that are central to CFS operations today.

While we are sad to see her go, Pixie will now be embarking on an exciting new adventure in Emergency Management at SA Health.



Project Kiribati

Since 2014, the CFS has proudly partnered with the Pacific island nation of Kiribati to provide support, training and emergency service resources.

After a post-COVID assessment of current and future priorities for the country, the CFS recently delivered two trucks fire to bolster Kiribati's fire and emergency response capabilities.

It was a thrill to see the ex-Wilmington 14 and ex-Riverton 24P reach our Pacific neighbours at Kiribati Police Service in the main city of Tarawa in April 2024, after a lengthy journey by road and onboard the Australian Defence Vessel, *Reliant*.

To make this happen took a small army of logisticians and government support officials, including Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Senator Penny Wong, AFAC, Pacific Island Emergency Management Alliance and RMB Service Group.

Once the trucks arrived, all we needed to do was follow it up with training for the island's new and existing crews.

Project leader, Matt Davis, and a team of three CFS crew members recently travelled to Kiribati for a month-long training trip, to educate Kiribati's fire and emergency personnel. The training included demonstrations on the features of the two trucks, ongoing mechanical support during the transitional period and refresher firefighter training for Kiribati's crews to help strengthen their 'all risk and all hazards' approach to emergency management.



South Australia's newest CFS brigades in years

The state's largest volunteer agency just got a little bit bigger with the establishment of two new operational support brigades in June – the first to be formally gazetted since Para Reserve in 2016.

The Sturt and Southern Fleurieu Operational Support brigades will provide critical back-of-house support during incidents and emergencies.

Volunteers within the brigades will also assist with radio communications and logistical assistance during major incidents.

The decision comes after extensive consultation with CFS Groups and State Headquarters about the need to further protect the bushfire prone regions of the Adelaide Hills and Fleurieu Peninsula.

The brigades also provide an exciting opportunity for volunteers to increase their skills and expand their career horizons by learning new tasks or taking on different roles.

Already there has been quite a buzz and numerous expressions of interest for new and existing members to join the brigades, with the final placements to be filled by September.

Developing South Australian youth

In May 2024, Australian Red Cross launched a new program aimed at empowering young people and enhancing their disaster preparedness.

The Youth in Emergencies Development Program is designed by young people – including our very own CFS cadets – for young people. CFS, along with other stakeholders, such as the Commissioner for Children and Young People, have been supporting Red Cross to develop this innovative pilot.

More than 50 young people have signed up to take part. It's hoped the program will teach the young participants about natural hazards and protecting communities while also working towards The Duke of Edinburgh International Bronze Award.

Through months of facilitated co-design workshops with young people across the state and cadets across several brigades, the valuable insights and input provided was captured and built into a program tailored to their curiosities and appetites.

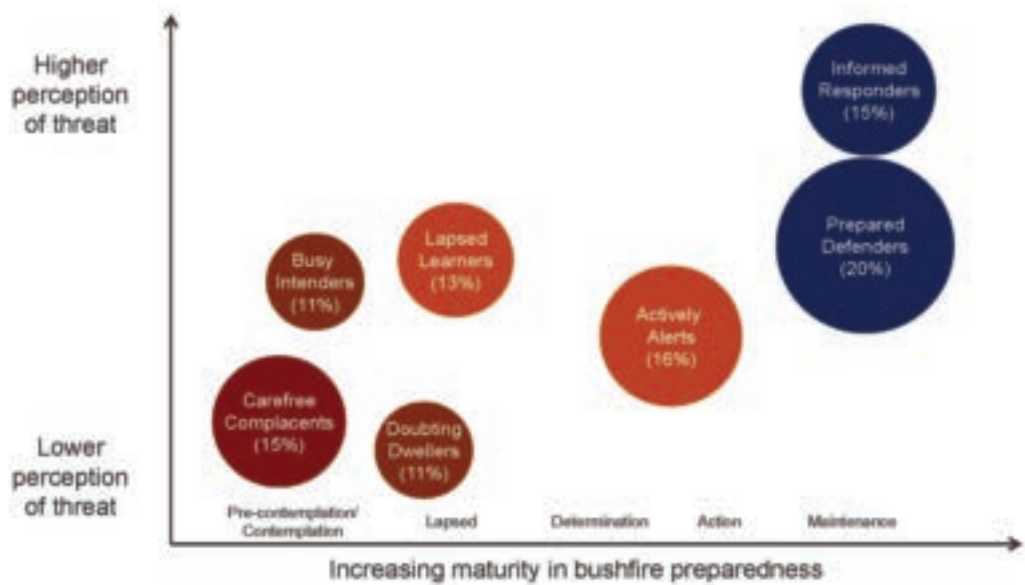
The program will also create more opportunities for students in years 9-12 to have a say in decisions that impact them, their families, and their communities.

We have enjoyed collaborating with the Red Cross and other stakeholders on this project, to ensure accurate, engaging, and empowering information is provided to the participants on emergency management, bushfire risk, preparedness, and mitigation. We look forward to attending the graduation event in November 2024 and seeing the progress made by these students and the impact the project has had on them.

The program will also create more opportunities for students in years 9-12 to have a say in decisions that impact them, their families, and their communities.



Regional Bushfire Preparedness Archetypes



Bushfire Archetypes

In a bid to empower and engage with South Australians during the Fire Danger Season, the CFS's Community Risk Reduction and Partnerships team brought in research consultant, Verian, to develop a bushfire behaviour project.

The Bushfire Archetypes Project was designed to capture how different groups within the community prepare and respond to bushfires, how they are motivated, and which engagement activities are likely to resonate best with them. After collecting survey data from 1,895 people from across the state, eight bushfire preparedness archetypes were developed. Each archetype represents a level of maturity to perceive, prepare and respond to different bushfire threats. The types range from (lowest to highest):

- Urban transistors
- Carefree complacents
- Busy intenders
- Doubting dwellers
- Lapsed learners
- Actively alerts
- Prepared defenders, and
- Informed responders.

In addition, the eight types were also mapped against where they lived in order to analyse and collect critical geographical, social, and environmental data.

It is the first time a CFS-backed project has sought to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the unique needs of each of our diverse communities is required. Ultimately, the intention is for the results to impact changes in behaviour and empower communities to be better prepared.

The findings of the Archetypes Report will also provide CFS with practical and focused tools to deliver tailored community engagement. It will also assist CFS in developing engaging messaging that reflects community values, beliefs, strengths, deficits and learning preferences to motivate positive cultural change toward bushfire preparedness. The recommendations within the report will be implemented over the next few years as a crucial step towards normalising disaster preparedness and developing safer and more resilient communities.

Bushfire Archetypes

Urban transistors

Carefree complacents

Busy intenders

Doubting dwellers

Lapsed learners

Actively alerts

Prepared defenders

Informed responders

Learning and Development



Burn table training on BTN

In October 2023, a crew from ABC's Behind the News (BTN) came to the State Training Centre for a story on the science of bushfires.

The crew spoke with Rural and Incident Management training teams as well as volunteers to highlight how we use burn tables to demonstrate fire behaviour. Team Leader Rural Training, Robin Geytenbeek, led the crew through the development of a fire burning in a neat circle due to the absence of wind and on flat ground.

The next demonstration was applying an uphill slope, which showed how topography impacts fire behaviour, particularly forward rate of spread (FROS). State Training Officer Incident Management, Phil Hosking, then ran the burn table demonstrating the use of tactical backburning to protect assets, using toy fire trucks and houses to simulate a rural property fire. The episode can be viewed on the ABC BTN website.



Basic Wildfire Awareness course

The Learning and Development team recently collaborated with the Department of Environment and Water (DEW) and our Aviation team to develop an online version of the Basic Wildfire Awareness course.

DEW's need to train non-firefighting members on fireground safety was the driving factor behind this request. Given the unpredictable nature of bushfires and the potential risks associated with them, it is essential for all personnel involved in fire-related operations to have a solid understanding of safety, strategies, and procedures.

This training not only enhances team safety but also contributes to the overall effectiveness of fire management efforts. It demonstrates a proactive and consistent approach to preparedness and risk mitigation, which is crucial in the face of bushfires.

The two-hour course is designed for a broad range of personnel including pilots, wildlife carers, police and even tourist park operators. The CFS has also shared the training package with the Local Government Association and the SA Ambulance Service.

The course also works well for Brigade Operational Support crews who are not required to undertake Basic Firefighting 1 and they have wholly and enthusiastically supported this.

Consultation also resulted in the addition of basic map reading and communication training being added to the package. For anyone interested in gaining a better understanding of bushfire, you can find this course available for self-enrolment in the Online Learning Hub.



Road Crash Rescue – year of the battery tools

CFS has invested heavily into new battery operated tools, which has enhanced volunteer response to Road Crash Rescue (RCR) incidents. Following this change, the State Training Centre is now incorporating the use of these tools into our training.

Throughout 2024, the inclusion of both Lukas E3 and Holmatro Pentheon Battery tools will be tried and tested during training courses. Their inclusion in training delivery has already had some huge benefits to RCR services, with a reduction in the overall noise during training and the risk of trips and slips has also been minimised as there is no longer a need for hydraulic hoses on scene.

While slightly heavier than traditional tools, the benefits of their portability and enhanced features outweigh this issue. Many of the tools will be operational for close to two hours before requiring a battery change and, conveniently, each kit has one more battery than rescue tool.

Volunteers have also discovered that some of the tools are quicker, apply more force, and, with an extension attached, the rams now reach a massive 1800mm - an increase of approximately 300mm compared with traditional hydraulic tools.



Digital training collaborations

As an all-hazard agency, CFS has thousands of volunteers who train hard and consistently throughout the year and risk their lives for their community. To enhance this training, CFS and UniSA have developed a new unique course using virtual reality to immerse volunteers in challenging scenarios within a safe, realistic learning environment.

In the course, which has caught the attention of interstate and international emergency services, firefighting equipment is replaced by a virtual reality headset and joystick to provide trainees the opportunity to battle different types of fires and respond to a range of other incidents. The UniSA developed-technology is a game-changer for improving the accessibility of training in a risk-free environment.

For example, in one program, participants are required to respond to a fire approaching a peri-urban area and, as part of their assessment, they need to speak to witnesses and relay important information about a suspected arsonist. All the avatars

featured in the program are actually played and voiced by trained CFS officers in a nearby control room.

ACT Rural Fire Service recognised the benefits of this dynamic and user-friendly technology and sent a delegation to South Australia to experience the training. Feedback from the ACT participants was that these simulations will help crew leaders improve their cognitive abilities and situational awareness - from first response to getting to an incident and taking command and control.

SA Ambulance Service and SAFECOM teams have also visited the State Training Centre to review these products and we even received interest from emergency services in Tasmania and New Zealand.



Youth Advisory Council (YAC)



The Youth Advisory Council (YAC) is a group of CFS members from across SA aged 18-30 who aim to speak on behalf of the youth in their region.

A highlight from this year was writing an abstract for and being accepted to present at the AFAC conference in Brisbane. Our chairperson, Kimberley Day, travelled to Brisbane and presented at the forum *Presenting Emerging Leaders: Driving Change Through a Youth Centric Approach*. Focusing on the opportunity to develop up and coming leaders in the emergency services sector, Kimberley promoted healthy communication and equal consideration as cornerstones for overcoming barriers for youth members seeking and developing leadership skills. Since the presentation, there has been an emergence of similar YACs across Australia.

The YAC training programs continue to be well received, with the State Training Centre hosting the Rural and BA training courses. They are an excellent opportunity to network and socialize with other youth members from around Australia.

If you are aged 18-30, passionate about the CFS and making change, then consider following the YAC on Facebook.

YAC Rural Week

In October 2023, CFS Learning and Development held their annual Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) Rural Week. This is a week-long residential program held at the CFS State Training Centre where 18-30-year-old members have the opportunity to learn and network with their peers from across the state.

The program consists of the formal courses Rural Fire Suppression, Pumping Operations and Defensive Fire Suppression. The courses also gave the trainers time to expand on the core topics of the course using burn tables and other practical experiments to bring the topics discussed to life.

Other activities organised in the evenings were access to virtual reality (VR) equipment, and VR simulations where skills in crew leading and public information were shown. An offsite visit to Adelaide Fire and the CFS State Operations Centre was also arranged. This gave an appreciation of how the flow of information from the fire ground effects many decisions such as community warnings and incident or resource escalation. On the final evening, a formal dinner with Chief Officer, Brett Loughlin, gave the participants an opportunity to talk openly with the Chief and ask many questions. The program created strong links and generated new friendships across SA's regions.



CFS Foundation



A word from CFS Foundation CEO

Our CFS volunteers never cease to amaze us as they give so much of their time to make others safe, keeping our state protected and lending a hand interstate and overseas when called upon.

Reflecting on the sacrifices they make in time alone, with the support of the families and employers, we are in awe of the economic value and community benefits. It makes us wonder where South Australia would be without CFS volunteers?

The primary purpose of the CFS Foundation is to provide CFS volunteers with the same unflinching support they give our entire community every day. The support we receive from individuals and the community is vital to ensure we can continue to assist our volunteers now and into the future.

To our valued CFS volunteers, we extend our heartfelt gratitude. Your selfless dedication is the cornerstone of our safety and resilience.

Gloria Berni
Chief Executive Officer

Inaugural Emergency Services Round

The State Government, in conjunction with the Adelaide Football Club, staged the second Emergency Services AFL round to thank our emergency service personnel.

Thousands of volunteers, who had won free tickets through a ballot, attended the match at Adelaide Oval on Mother's Day when the Adelaide Crows played the Brisbane Lions.

The CFS Foundation along with SA Police Legacy and the Australian Professional Firefighters Foundation joined forces to fundraise for charities that support our members.

A heartfelt thank you too to our Ambassador Nathan Van Berlo who provided CFS volunteers with tickets and behind-the-scenes access to several home games and even meet and greets with players.





Rex Hall's Book

The late CFS volunteer and historian, Rex Hall AFSM, dedicated a lifetime of service to our agency. He also established the SA Volunteer Firefighters Museum in Naracoorte and wrote several books on our history.

Sadly, Rex passed away just before finishing his last book, "Volunteer Firefighting in South Australia." The CFS Foundation proudly took on the task of printing and funding the publication, which was unveiled at Rex's memorial service in Naracoorte last Spring.

Thanks to Alan Hall and Karen Bath who helped finish and edit Rex's book.

Rollout of atmospheric monitors

CFS Foundation provided new atmospheric monitors to CFS brigades. These monitors can detect and measure oxygen, flammability, carbon monoxide, hydrogen cyanide, and hydrogen sulphide and are vital in ensuring the air is safe to breathe in areas where crews are not wearing breathing apparatus. The new monitors are being provided to brigades that specialise in Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus to assist in their response to urban fires and complex incidents that are not hazardous materials.

The initial rollout of atmospheric monitors was to Morphett Vale, Tea Tree Gully, Belair, Blackwood, Happy Valley, and Aldinga Beach brigades, with more to come later in 2024.

CFS Foundation has purchased vital equipment for local CFS brigades over the years, including the new atmospheric monitors, thanks to ElectraNet's sponsorship.



Floods + family fun day in Waikerie

South Australia experienced a different kind of disaster last year when flooding took a toll at numerous towns along the River Murray. CFS volunteers worked alongside other emergency agencies to build levies, fortify homes with sandbags, and went door-to-door to warn the community of the impending danger. Some of these selfless volunteers had their own homes destroyed or damaged and were given financial assistance from the CFS Foundation. These volunteers are a testament to the spirit of selflessness that underscores their hard work. To thank them the CFS Foundation organised a Family Fun Day in Waikerie.

SAFECOM Mental Health & Wellbeing



The past year has been incredibly exciting in the Mental Health and Wellbeing space, with significant achievements and milestones in training and awareness campaigns.

The team has felt the benefits of the State Government funding, which enabled the recruitment and onboarding of additional team members within the broader SAFECOM team. The positive impacts of this extra resourcing have already been felt, with their ideas, insights and support an invaluable asset to the team and wider agencies. Consequently, we have built a team that is achieving great results and, most importantly, feels privileged to work in a field that provides a platform for development and growth.

A significant milestone has been the successful launch of a self-paced, interactive Mental Health and Wellbeing Course now available to all agency personnel in the awareness section of the Online Learning Hub.

In the training space, we have seen an overwhelming uptake of Mental Health First Aid® training, with over 250 volunteers having completed the course in the last 12 months alone. This obvious need and desire for education has led to an extension in funding for the CFS Wellbeing Project by the CFS Foundation.

Several charity, fundraising and awareness campaigns were also undertaken over the past year, including Mental Health Awareness Month, RU OK day, Movember and the Melbourne Stair Climb. Wellbeing initiatives were explored and trialled across the sector, and the team is dedicated to continuing this moving forward.

In the coming 12 months, we look forward to providing and advancing our support and training.

Our wish-list is long, our to-do list extensive, but we have an amazing team to achieve this and the volunteers are our motivation.

Peer Support Officers

Peer Support Officers are the cornerstone of the work undertaken by the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team. All peers are active volunteers, facing similar operational stressors as other members and can therefore provide support at a level that may not be possible for a staff or mental health professional. It is this shared experience that can facilitate conversations and enable recovery.

Their involvement is varied; from running training sessions, having a presence at base camps and facilitating follow-up phone calls to supporting critical incident debrief sessions. Whilst the team is a mix bag of personalities, experiences and insights, everyone shares the same genuine desire to provide support and care to others.

Peer Support Officers receive additional training to be equipped with skills to provide support in a safe and appropriate manner and, whilst they do not replace or step into the role of a mental health professional, they can act as a bridge between informal and professional help.

We have dedicated and engaged peers in all six regions, and whilst most stay within their local area we have some that travel to neighbouring regions to offer support. In addition to regular online training, peers come together for a weekend once a year to network, train and learn together. These weekends always highlight what a dynamic and passionate group of people we have and how fortunate we are.

If you wish to connect with a peer in your region, please contact the SPAM line (8115 3950). Remember that support is always completely confidential and free.

SA Volunteer Fire Fighters Museum



After many years of hard work under the guidance of Rex Hall, Russell Branson and the dedication of our volunteers, the South Australian Volunteer Firefighters Museum (SAVFFM) has a very moving, permanent memorial site and an amazing collection of equipment. We have also completed stage one of the Museum complex, which includes purpose-built appliance storage and display buildings.

The Museum is investigating fundraising options for completing stage two of the upgrades, which will include an interpretative centre with a mini theatre, public amenities and a small shop. Once complete, this building will allow us to display the huge amount of memorabilia currently in storage.

The memorial site on Kingston Ave East in Naracoorte is open for visitors at any time and no bookings are required. Our vehicle display is open for visitation by appointment, and we welcome anyone who wishes to pay us a visit to get in touch via our social media, emailing us at info@savffm.net.au or by phone 0417 820 134.

Annual Memorial Service

The 9th Annual Memorial Service held on 13 April, 2024 was well attended, with approximately 100 people attending the service to pay tribute and reflect on the lives of the volunteers who have died in the line of duty.

This years' service was particularly sombre without the physical presence of the late Rex Hall. However, we knew he would be watching over the proceedings in spirit. Rex's son, Alan, has taken the reigns of the SAVFFM as Chairperson and welcomed dignitaries, visitors, family, and friends to the memorial.



During the service, CFS Chief Officer, Brett Loughlin AFSM, spoke of a further name to be added to the memorial wall. Ray Cutting has been accepted by presumptive legislation as a loss of life caused from his duty as a fire fighter. Ray unfortunately died due to a cancer that has been linked to carcinogens from fighting fires. There was a special service held to commemorate Ray's legacy with extended invitation to family and friends.

During the closing of the service, SAVFFM Chairperson Alan Hall presented Russell Branson with the second Life Membership for the Museum. Russell and the late Rex Hall toured New Zealand some 20 years ago while attending a volunteer conference and viewed their preservation of fire history in Christchurch. They came away from that visit asking each other, how about this, when are we going to do this? So, the journey began and the seed for the museum was planted.

CFS Volunteers Association turns 40!



This year marks the 40th anniversary of the CFS Volunteers Association (CFSVA), which emerged after the 1983 Ash Wednesday bushfires.

Over the years, the CFSVA has played an important part in getting the voices of volunteers onto the table and, where necessary, developing volunteer charters, legislation or increased funding and protections in health and wellbeing.

It can be a slow process at times when your persistence meets resistance. But your association keeps chipping away until we get results and, when we do, that's worth celebrating. Therefore, to mark this anniversary, we'll host a celebratory event later in the year.

I really enjoy and am committed to what I do and, as a united team, the CFSVA has come a long way. To celebrate, current and some of our former CFSVA leaders have provided their reflections on the past 40 years.

Jeff Clark
CFSVA, President 🇺🇦

CFSVA Reflections — Sonia St Alban — CFSVA Executive Director

Proud: We're immensely proud of what we have achieved to ensure volunteer voices are heard.

Resilient: We strive to be resilient and that volunteers return home safely to their families by setting protections in place while they serve and defend South Australian communities.

Inspirational: CFSVA takes inspiration from our volunteers to lead and protect those who, without question, risk their own lives to protect so many others.

Determined: We work with tenacity and determination until good outcomes are achieved.

Exceptional: We represent amazing volunteers who continue to give without bounds.

Congratulations and happy 40th to the CFSVA and thank you to all the tremendous volunteers who contribute towards making CFS and the CFSVA a safe and proud place to be part of.

Cam Stafford CFSVA President 1995-2003 / Ken Schutz CFSVA President 2004-2010

Career highlights included:

- Provided emotional and legal support to volunteers who lost loved ones and assets during the Wangary Fire and the subsequent Wangary enquiry.
- Initiated the CFS Volunteer Charter.
- Campaigned for blue lights and red flashing lights.
- Initiated the 40km/h past red and blue lights (1st in Australia) and in 2013 the CFSVA successfully lobbied to have the speed reduced to 25km/h (1st in Australia).
- Had a major role in supporting CFS to bring in (at the time) WH&S now OH&S.
- Campaigned for the establishment of SPAM support for volunteers.
- Changed the name from Volunteer Fire Brigades Association to the now CFSVA.



Andy Wood CFSVA President 2016-2021

During my time as President, I believe we built a very good Executive Team and always worked with the objective of ensuring the CFSVA was relevant and represented volunteers' best interests.

We had some significant wins too, including the change to reduce the speed to 25km when driving past emergency vehicles, presumptive cancer legislation, return to work amendments which align volunteer benefits with employees and also enshrining the Volunteer Charter.

The offset to those wins was without doubt the enormous amount of time and effort spent on dealing with politically motivated sector reform agendas, which stretched the association's resources and the ability to work directly with the membership.

When I joined the CFSVA I had no idea of where it would lead me. It was a privilege to be involved through such interesting times, and I wish the current team all the very best.

CFSVA Trauma Teddies

The CFSVA Trauma Teddies were born around 20 years ago to reflect the confronting situations volunteers face and to provide some comfort to those who are affected by an emergency.

The original Trauma Teddies were in fact 'teddy bears' but over time evolved into koalas to align with CFS Smokey mascot.

The CFSVA Trauma Teddies are not just well recognised but also well-travelled and have been to many places around the world. They were even the mascot for the CFS Cadet Championships, and everyone loved them so much, they'll be back again for this year's event.

The CFSVA, through the trauma teddies, is proud to bring some comfort under difficult circumstances, with all proceeds from the sale of the trauma teddies invested back to our volunteers.

Honours

A huge thank you and
congratulations to the latest
recipients.



Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM)

The Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) is a peer-nominated medal that recognises distinguished service by members of an Australian fire service.

The Governor-General awards this medal on the recommendation of the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services.



Robert “Andrew” Cadd (AFSM)

As a CFS volunteer with 34 years’ experience, Mr Cadd has demonstrated distinguished, exceptional service and commitment to the CFS.

Having attended more than 200 incidents in the last decade, Mr Cadd has proven leadership on the frontline and has led strike teams into some of the state’s most harrowing incidents, including Pinery, Cudlee Creek and Kangaroo Island.

In addition to frontline leadership, Mr Cadd has sat as a senior volunteer on regional committees and is a member of the State Bushfire Coordination Committee, whose primary role is to promote the coordination of activities of agencies responsible for bushfire management.

Mr Cadd has led the improved working relationship between SACFS and Farm Fire Units (FFUs) and has driven improvements in a closer working relationship for enhanced interoperability and safety. He continues to support the Volunteer’s Association in the development of a position on FFUs.

Mr Cadd has been pivotal in understanding and developing a community-led practice for monitoring grain harvesting conditions and has assisted in the development of a text-based system to give farmers early information in relation to grass fire danger indexes and fire starts.



James Ernest Keatch AFSM

Mr James Keatch has undertaken nearly thirty years of volunteer service to the SA Country Fire Service, including current leadership roles in two brigades and was a deputy group officer for seven years.

Mr Keatch also has six years of air operations service and has attended more than 300 incidents, including being on the frontline as a firefighter for building fires, grass and stubble fires, hazardous materials incidents and road crash rescue incidents.

Mr Keatch has been a member of the Stress Prevention and Management (SPAM) team for 26 years as a trainer of peer support personnel and counsellor. He spent many hours helping SPAM members improve their communication and empathy skills and understand the nature of loss and grief in the line of operational work. More recently, he assisted the CFS after the death of a fellow SPAM team member and volunteer. He later spoke at the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council's annual memorial service in Canberra for emergency services workers who have died in the line of duty.



Phillip John McDonough AFSM

Mr Phillip McDonough has a 45-year history of exceptional service. This is distinguished by a demanding combination of regional operational roles and strategic management roles at State Headquarters, which support both the agency and the safety of South Australian communities.

Since joining the State Emergency Services as a cadet, Mr McDonough then joined the CFS and worked up the ranks to become a CFS captain and is currently a Commander.

Mr McDonough has developed fire control and prevention expertise in response to many significant fire events. In addition, his steadfast efforts behind the scenes demonstrate personal leadership in striving to meet his own high standards, while helping others to meet theirs. Mr McDonough displays persistent courage to challenge himself and question how he can bring about improvements. His willingness to serve beyond the norm supports the growth of capability in others and increases the capacity of CFS to serve the community.

This is achieved through the application of his unique combination of deep operational volunteer knowledge, corporate expertise, outstanding work ethic and loyalty to the fire service in South Australia.

SA Emergency Service Awards

SA Emergency Services Medal & Ministerial Commendation

Established in 2001, the SA Emergency Services Medal (SAEMS) recognises the tireless and extraordinary work of persons contributing to community safety through operational emergency service organisations and associated agencies.

This medal is given to an individual or group who has demonstrated “distinguished and/or meritorious services of the highest order” in recognition of 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”.

Ian Bailey
Lieutenant Four
Piccadilly CFS

Tyron Cummings
Captain
Wudinna CFS

Phil Harvey
Brigade Firefighter
Oakbank/ Balhannah CFS

Mark Hewitson
Brigade Firefighter
Ceduna CFS



CFS 60+ Year Service Medals

There are eleven dedicated volunteers who recently hit a significant milestone – 60 years of service to CFS.

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

Frederick Ewing

71 years, 8 months
Region 1/ Mount Lofty
CFS Group
Mylor

Trevor Bennett

60 years, 8 months
Region 1/ Southern Fleurieu
CFS Group
Cape Jervis

Robert Stapley

60 years
Region 2/ Yorke Valley
CFS Group
Ardrossan

Weston Smith

60 years, 8 months
Region 2/ Southern Yorke
CFS Group
Minlaton

Raymond Squires **AFSM**

60 years, 7 months
Region 3/ Coorong CFS Group
Meningie

Ian Millington

60 years, 8 months
Region 4/ Blyth/Snowtown
CFS Group
Blyth

Maxwell Slee

76 years, 9 months
Region 4/ Mount Remarkable
CFS Group
Wilmington

Geoffrey Smith

60 years
Region 4/ Spencer CFS Group
Crystal Brook

Mervyn Robinson

60 years
Region 4/ Hallett CFS Group
Whyte Yarcowie

Trevor Clements

60 years
Region 4/ Bundaleer
CFS Group
Narridy

Graeme Stirling

60 years, 8 months
Region 6/ Tumby Bay &
District CFS Group
Region 6 Air Support

“ Your dedication and commitment to the Service will inspire the next generation of volunteers to walk in your footsteps. ”



Chief Officer's Unit Citation for Service

Stirling CFS Pumper Crew and Mt Lofty Deputy Group Officers

Trent Murphy and Grant Davis

On Sunday 15 October 2023, the CFS was called to a major fire in the Stirling Village Mall which destroyed the Woolworths store and considerably impacted other businesses within the mall. Stirling and Aldgate Pumpers responded to a Fire Indicator Panel Alarm activation at the Stirling Village Mall on Adelaide Road, Stirling. Stirling Pumper was mobile within five minutes and observed copious amounts of smoke pouring over the road, immediately confirming to others it required escalation.



Members of the Mount Lofty CFS Group were called upon to respond and led the response of more than 100 personnel from multiple agencies, including SA Metropolitan Fire Service, SA Ambulance Service, SA Police and SA State Emergency Service. Initial observations and actions by the first arriving Stirling CFS pumper crew, ensured that incoming crews had defined tactics to manage and contain the fire to the Woolworths store, reducing damage to remaining stores.

The incident attracted significant media coverage and high-level interest and under significant scrutiny, the crews in attendance represented CFS with incredible professionalism, composure and leadership across engagement with multiple agencies.

Chief Officer's Unit Citation for Service

Red Hill CFS Brigade

On Sunday 8 October 2023, CFS volunteers responded to a light plane crash at Mumford, Road, Merriton.

The two occupants in the light aircraft were members of the CFS Redhill Brigade, a brigade within the Spencer Group.

The Redhill Brigade responded to the incident, with members understanding they were responding to an aircraft incident, on one of their members properties.

Members of the Redhill Brigade attended the incident and worked to save the individuals, sadly the 24-year-old passenger died at the scene, while the pilot died hours later at Royal Adelaide Hospital.

The members of the brigade showed outstanding and diligent service, and compassion to one another, the family and community, whilst they managed the crash scene and extinguished the fire, that resulted from the crash.



Chief Officer's Certificate

R6 Volunteers and Staff for the Lightning Complex

On 28 December 2023, a lightning band swept across Region 6 and started a complex of over 50 fires across the Eyre Peninsula. The Region 6 staff and volunteers worked together to respond quickly to an array of fires. More than 150 volunteers from across the West Coast, Upper and Lower Eyre Peninsula responded to the fires during peak holiday time showing significant commitment to their communities. CFS Region 6 staff promptly and professionally supported volunteers on the fireground despite being very short staffed at the time. The staff and volunteers of the region are commended for their professionalism and commitment to their community.



National Medal Benjamin Pettman

National Medal 1st Clasp Nicholas Stanley Corey Dunn



Chief Officer's Commendation for Service



Geoff Smith
Group Officer
Redhill Brigade

In addition to the Redhill brigade and others from within the Spencer Group, on Sunday, 8 October 2023, Group Officer Geoff Smith responded to a light plane crash at Merriton. When responding, GO Smith knew he was responding to assist friends and fellow CFS members that were involved in the crash. GO Smith ensured he reduced the exposure of others as much as possible and provided proactive and considered SPAM and mental health support to members in attendance. GO Smith demonstrated outstanding service and leadership through his support to the family, Redhill Brigade and others within the Spencer CFS Group.

This is the second significant incident over recent years that GO Smith has attended, noting his crew was also responded to the shooting of Police Officers at Crystal Brook in 2022. In both instances, GO Smith has led with compassion and support for his crew in what have been incredibly personally and professionally trying incidents. GO Smith's composure, compassion, and leadership is to be commended and acknowledged.



Thomas Fairbrother
Captain
Stirling Brigade

On Sunday 15 October 2023, the CFS was called to a major fire in the Stirling Village Mall which destroyed the Woolworths store and considerably impacted other businesses within the mall. Stirling Captain, Thomas Fairbrother, was the first arriving officer and initial incident controller during the impact phase of the fire operations. Captain Fairbrother demonstrated outstanding service in the management of the incident during its escalation phase including the integration of CFS and MFS personnel and equipment, working with SA Police and Adelaide Hills Council to establish safe areas and to ensure the gathering crowds of onlookers were not impacted by the fire, nor did they hamper firefighting operations. Working with the first arriving crews, Captain Fairbrother prioritised a series of strategies and tactics that could be implemented by the oncoming firefighting personnel and also ensured that fire did not spread to adjoining shops within the complex or neighbouring business within Stirling.





Warren Miller
 Captain
 Port Wakefield Brigade

Port Wakefield Brigade has flourished under Captain Miller's leadership. When he took on the role, the brigade was struggling to survive due to declining membership and culture challenges. Captain Miller worked tirelessly to reverse this situation by demonstrating initiative and proactively seeking community members who would be a good 'fit' for the brigade. Captain Miller's approach proved to be a successful strategy as new members were recruited and happily, encouraged others to join.

In addition to becoming CFS members, the Port Wakefield recruits were members of the local Filipino community. Captain Miller actively created an inclusive environment by encouraging existing brigade members to learn more about Filipino culture, including the language. The brigade provided supportive structured training which led to strong skill development and increased confidence amongst new members. An unanticipated flow-on effect of Captain Miller's approach was a boost to Port Wakefield cadet numbers as new members promoted CFS cadet opportunities to their children. Another result of Captain Miller's success has been increased brigade socialisation which has also strengthened the team.

Captain Miller's work is a credit to his leadership and a source of pride for not only the Port Wakefield Brigade, Wakefield Plains Group and CFS Region 2, but the service as a whole.

The story of the rejuvenation of the Port Wakefield Brigade has been profiled in the local paper, on CFS platforms and on the ABC State and National News.



Kathie Callaghan
 1st Lieutenant
 Port Wakefield Brigade

Lieutenant Kathie Suzanne Callaghan displayed great loyalty, empathy, courage and professionalism in single-handedly managing a serious threat to life until she was able to hand the control of the situation to a senior clinician. Lieutenant Callaghan then assisted the clinician in the treatment of the patient until ultimately handing control to SA Ambulance Service (SAAS) Paramedics, actions that saved the individual's life.

Lieutenant Callaghan was working with the 43-year-old female when they appeared to suffer a severe asthma attack. Utilising her First Aid training, Lt. Callaghan assisted the patient with the delivery of their asthma medication using a spacer. The patient's condition rapidly deteriorated as she lost consciousness, stopped breathing and went into cardiac arrest. Lt. Callaghan immediately applied CPR, ensured a triple zero call had been made to respond SAAS, and attached an AED to the patient. Using the AED, a shock was delivered to the patient to which she responded positively with a return of spontaneous circulation. Upon arrival of Port Wakefield 34P, Lt. Callaghan handed control of the patient to Firefighter Lincoln Watts, a RAAF ED Nurse, who was crewed on this appliance. Lt. Callaghan provided him with a thorough briefing as to the condition of the patient and the treatment she had provided. Upon SAAS arrival at the scene, 30 minutes after time of call, Firefighter Watts handed control to them. Lt. Callaghan single-handedly managed the situation, treated the patient, saving her life in the process and handed control to a senior clinician, whilst remaining calm and displaying all virtues of the CFS.



Melvin Charlton
 Air Support Brigade Captain
 Region 6

Melvin 'Chatters' Charlton has served the South Australian Country Fire Service and Eyre Peninsula community for over 45 years in both the Butler and Region 6 Air Support Brigades. During this time, he has completed specialist training to undertake roles of Airbase Manager and Firebombing Load Supervisor to support the delivery of vital aerial firefighting capabilities in the region.

As the Captain of the Region 6 Air Support Brigade, 'Chatters' has managed several highly complex airbase operations to support major bushfires on the Eyre Peninsula including Wangary (2005), Proper Bay (2009), Tulka (2012), Winters Hill (2012), Coomunga (2012), Duck Ponds (2019) and Stamford Road (2023). During the 2019/20 Fire Danger Season he also deployed to Kangaroo Island to provide critical airbase management support to the complex of fires that severely impacted that community.

Chief Officer's Advisory Council



The Chief Officer's Advisory Council (COAC) is celebrating 20 years of providing volunteer focussed strategic direction to the CFS Chief Officer.

One of the cornerstones of the Council's work is the collaboration and advocacy on behalf of regional volunteer leadership to inform the future planning of the agency. From the 'Defining Our Future' papers in 2005 to the Reporting Outcomes Framework underway in 2024, the COAC has contributed to almost every aspect of CFS advancement. The Council has also had a voice in improving the Standards of Fire and Emergency Cover (SFEC), group and brigade budgets, SOPs, SAPs, Farm Fire Units, RCR equipment, structural firefighting best practice, cadets and 17-18-year-old firefighters and how many people can sit in a Bulk Water Carrier.

The COAC serves as the nexus for regional and state advisory committees, with every discussion, paper and working group serving as a roadmap for our agency, guiding our efforts, and ensuring that we remain focused on our mission of delivering exceptional fire services to our community.

The 40 odd regional and state advisory committees and the collective knowledge, experience, and guidance that the volunteers provide through these groups reflects the diversity and professionalism of the CFS, for which we are extremely grateful.

It is important to recognise and celebrate the outstanding contributions of members, past and present, on all CFS committees and councils, whose collective efforts not only strengthen our fire service delivery capabilities, culture, and direction but also make a positive impact on the safety and well-being of our communities. We look forward to building on this momentum in the year ahead and continuing to deliver exceptional fire services that our community deserves.

Retirements



Richard Wald

Beginning his CFS career more than 25 years ago, Richard held varied roles within the agency, ranging from assisting brigades in a Business Service Officer role to working on the Bushfire Safer Place Project. Richard was a large contributor to the Bushfire Safer Place Project and was instrumental in ensuring its success.

Richards's loyalty and vast knowledge of the CFS will be missed as he transitions into retirement from the agency.

Richard also contributed to Incident Management and was deployed to many incidents within South Australia and across the country during his time working for the CFS. Richard's experience and dedication to the agency also had him assisting in training up-and-coming Logistics Officers, which was of great value to CFS and all who were trained by him. Richards's loyalty and vast knowledge of the CFS will be missed as he transitions into retirement from the agency.



Sandy Pope

Commencing with the CFS in 2013, Sandy has been the driving force behind many projects completed in the last ten years by the Contract Management and Delivery directorate. Sandy's attention to detail and dedication to providing high-quality stations, group control centres, and regional headquarters will be missed. Sandy also contributed many hours within operations while performing the logistics function within Incident Management at many incidents over her years, including mentoring up-and-coming Logistics members. Sandy's vast knowledge and professionalism was greatly appreciated and will be missed as she transitions into retirement.

Sandy's attention to detail and dedication to providing high-quality stations, group control centres, and regional headquarters will be missed.



Lee Watson AFSM

Lee joined the CFS as a volunteer in the Adelaide Hills more than 40 years ago while juggling his working life with Adelaide bus service company TransAdelaide.

In 1999, Lee took on a staff role as a trainer across a number of areas – from GRN pager training to Quality and Assurance and was instrumental in establishing and maintaining the State Training Centre as a 'RTO' or Registered Training Organisation.

In 2021, Lee was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal.

After the devastating Wangary bushfire of 2005, Lee was a key player in Project Phoenix, a taskforce established to help the CFS develop new and enhanced changes to its operations, planning, training and community awareness of bushfire incidents.

In 2021, Lee was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal.

In an operational capacity, Lee held roles as a Logistics Officer for Level 3 Incident Management Teams and on a state level, and it was his love of transport that saw him close out his final years at the CFS as Director of Operational Infrastructure and Logistics.

Obituaries

Janice Baker

1942 – 2023

Janice dedicated nearly 25 years in the CFS. She was part of Region 4, starting out in Spalding, Burra, and Region 4 Ops before transferring to Region 3 Ops in 2004.

Janice had many roles in her career from Group Logistics support, Brigade Logistics support, Communications, Admin and Equipment officer.

She held the rank of Lieutenant 3, 2 and 1 over the years. Janice received her 20-year clasp in 2009 and Life Membership in 2010.

Kevin Baker

1966 – 2023

Experienced CFS volunteer and train driver, Kevin Baker was sadly killed in the Bindarra tragedy on New Years Eve.

He was a member of Stirling North Brigade from 01/04/2014 to 14/09/2022 and the partner of Peatra Ellis who volunteered with Stirling North CFS and worked in Region 4 as a Regional Administration Officer.

Our deepest heartfelt thoughts are with Peatra and her family.

Leonard Barnes

1940 – 2023

Leonard was a dedicated member to Barmera CFS for more than 49 years. He lived and breathed CFS and cared greatly for those he served with on and off the fireground.

Leonard was a great leader and an exceptional radio operator. He was a firefighter from 1957 – 1999, and Ops support for many years. He undertook the roles of Logistics support, Admin and Comms.

Leonard was awarded the National Medal in 1978 and first clasp in 1986, he received Life Membership in 2021.

Andrew Boothby

1960 – 2023

Andrew served as a dedicated volunteer for almost 27 years, including service at Port Neil, Riverland, Cleve Brigade and Arno Bay brigades.

During Andrew's volunteering service, he was Brigade Lieutenant 2 for Arno Bay 2009-2012, Arno Bay Brigade Captain 2011-2019 and Deputy Group Officer 3 for EEYG 2018 till his passing.

Andrew's legacy was the ability to successfully manage complex incidents while driving fire trucks, and it is still spoken about today.

Recognised for his service, Andrew was awarded CFS Service medal 10 years 2009, National Medal in 2015 and 20-year CFS service clasp in 2016.

Barry Buttfield

1946 – 2023

Barry devoted over 50 years to the CFS and helped build the Edithburgh CFS Station. He selflessly placed himself in harm's way to protect and serve his community.

Barry's passion for helping others led him to assist with Ash Wednesday and Flinders campaigns. He also generously helped other communities in times of need, both within South Australia and nationally.

Barry's dedication and bravery were an inspiration to his fellow volunteers and a testament to his character. In appreciation, he is a Life Member of both Edithburgh and Murray Bridge Brigades.

Barry was farewelled in true CFS spirit, with both new and old Edithburgh CFS trucks, followed by a wake at the Edithburgh CFS Station.

Vince Cozzitorto

1950 – 2023

Vince Cozzitorto was an outstanding contributor to the One Tree Hill CFS Brigade. A Life Member, he joined in 1977 and served for almost 50 years.

At various times Vince held positions of Brigade Lieutenant, Captain, and President. Highly regarded within the Brigade due to his many abilities, Vince is fittingly listed on the One Tree Hill CFS Brigade Honour Roll as Captain, President, and Life Member.

Vince was an Arborist in private life. He was very skilled in chainsaw operation and frequently taught this skill to Brigade members.

A dedicated family man, Vince loved to cook a BBQ whilst drinking his home-made wine. Captain, President and Life Member. Vince will not be forgotten.

Jim Davis

1959 – 2023

Jim began his CFS career as a firefighter with Coonalpyn in 1984, he was involved for over 28 years.

From 1995 – 2009 he held the rank of Lieutenant 4, 3 and 2. Jim was well known for his contribution to road crash rescue training at a state level for over 10 years.

Jim received his 10-year service medal in 1997 and 20-year clasp in 2009.

Jim's son Andrew has followed in his father's footsteps with currently 16 years in the CFS.

Henry 'Joe' Hole

1939 - 2024

Joe started his CFS career with the Roseworthy Campus brigade, before moving to the Mount Light and then Hynam brigades. He completed terms as both president and captain of Hynam.

He completed seven years as a Deputy Group Officer and 18 years as Group Officer for the Naracoorte CFS Group.

During his time as Group Officer, Joe was continuously voted in as Chair of the Regional Volunteer Management Committee (RVMC) and Region 5 representative for the Chief Officer Advisory Council (COAC).

His ability to share information and his ongoing passion for learning made him a well-respected volunteer and mentor for approximately 63 years.

Allen Hurst

1923 - 2023

Allen was a valued member of Crystal Brook CFS for many years and a well-respected member of the Crystal Brook community.

Ron Johnson AFSM

1933 - 2023

Beginning with the Mount Gambier Bushfire Firefighting Association in 1948 before being a member of the CFS Moorak and then Mt Gambier Operations Brigade, Ron gave outstanding service in the field of communications with his dedication being recognised in 2004 with an AFSM.

Ron's guiding force within a number of initiatives has shaped CFS communications today with systems he developed spreading across the state.

His service time fell just short of 70 years in the emergency services sector.

John Lindner

1933 - 2022

John Lindner was a founding member of Morgan CFS when it first began in the 1950s.

He was the president of the management committee for many years and was the driving force in the community to establish Morgan's new station and first truck in 1988.

John was awarded Life Membership in 2011, and he committed over 48 years to the service.

Three generations of the Lindner family are involved with the CFS: John, his two sons Will and David, grandsons Alistaire and Cameron.

Tony Martin

1952 - 2022

Anthony Martin served nearly 12 years in the CFS, with 2 years at Belair before moving to Geranium. Here he undertook many roles from Brigade Equipment and Communications Coordinator.

He held the rank of Lieutenant 3 for 2 years before undertaking the rank of captain.

Quote from Tony's wife, "Tony believed that when you live out in the bush it's a responsible thing to do! He was an active member in Geranium CFS, and nothing was too much trouble, he just got on and did things".

Tony was issued his 10-year service medal in 2021.

Graham Milich

1951 - 2023

Graham served over 43 years in the CFS at Lyrup Brigade. He began his career in 1980 as a fire fighter.

Graham held the rank of Lieutenant 3 for 18 years, and Senior Firefighter for 4 years. He was awarded Life Membership in 2019 and issued his 40-year clasp in 2020.

Andrew Mills

1950 - 2022

Andrew served 12 years as a fire fighter in the CFS, 2 years at Monarto before transferring to Rockleigh CFS. Here he held the role of brigade training coordinator and rank of Lieutenant 2 for 4 years.

Andrew was a valued member of the Rockleigh support group who have been an integral part of assisting Rockleigh with fundraising.

Andrew was highly regarded and has been honoured with a memorial plaque at Rockleigh station. In 2020 he received 10-year service medal.

Charlie Mumford

1999 - 2023 and

Ben Mumford

1973 - 2023

50-year-old father Ben and 24-year-old son Charlie were tragically killed in a light plane accident near Merriton in the state's Mid North last October.

Both were long time members of the Redhill brigade and over the years Ben took on additional roles in Work Health Safety, as an Equipment Coordinator. Ben was also awarded CFS 10-year service medal and 20-year clasp in 2009, 30-year clasp awarded in 2022.

Their loss has had a profound effect on the Region 4 community and our deep condolences go out to their family and CFS family.

Don Nicholl

1959 - 2023

Don joined Blewitt Springs CFS in 2008 and during his time with the brigade he served as Training Co-Ordinator Equipment Officer Lieutenant and ultimately became Brigade Captain in 2022.

Don is remembered for his enthusiasm and willingness to be part of the team.

Obituaries

Anthony Noble

1975 – 2023

Anthony served and was a valued member of the CFS for more than 17 years at the Mount Burr brigade.

He was also awarded the National Medal in 2022.

Ray Owen

1941 – 2024

Ray was a member of the Region 4 Operations Brigade from 06/03/2016 to 30/04/2023.

He also was a member of the SES and during this time received a Chief Officer commendation, Minister's commendation and a National Medal plus 1st and 2nd clasps.

Daniel Page

1992 – 2023

Daniel Page joined Salisbury CFS in 2017. He rose to the rank of Lieutenant and was a much loved and respected member of the brigade.

In addition to his CFS service, Daniel worked as an Emergency Support Services Ambulance Officer within the SA Ambulance Service. He was a remarkably generous person who aimed to help as many people as possible.

In his free time, Daniel had a passion for working on cars and taking in the wonders of nature. He enjoyed travelling Australia in his beloved LandCruiser and was caretaker of the treasured Truck 58.

Daniel is dearly missed by his family, friends and the many CFS and SAAS members who served alongside him.

Michael Philpot

1959 – 2023

Michael began his CFS career in 1985 at Barmera and was involved for 14 years. In that time held positions of Brigade Training Coordinator, Logistics Support and Admin, as well as Group Training and Admin Officer.

Michael was extremely knowledgeable about fire and was a great leader to learn from. He was a real community man at heart.

He held the rank of Brigade Captain in and Lieutenant 1 at Barmera. Michael transferred to Mount Lofty Tower in 2000, where he contributed his service until 2008.

Gilbert "Burt" Pilgrim

1936 – 2023

Burt served 44 years in the CFS with 25 of those as an active fire fighter. Burt was a very dedicated member of Paringa CFS; nothing was too much trouble.

Burt planted and took care of the beautiful CFS roses outside the station which are still flowering today.

Burt held the rank of Lieutenant for many years and undertook the role of Brigade Equipment Officer from 1979 – 1998.

He received the National Medal in 1996, with his first clasp in 2005. Burt was issued his 40-year service clasp in 2019.

Leon Roberts

1940 – 2024

Leon served with SACFS Wirrulla & Districts brigade, joining in 1966 with active service for 57 years.

During Leons service he held position as Streaky Bay Group, Group Officer for 24 years, Deputy Group Officer for almost 10 years. Leon was instrumental with the introduction of the UHF radio to the Streaky Bay Group, now known as Western Eyre Group.

Daniel Roe

1986 – 2024

Daniel was a member of Dalkeith CFS for more than 15 years. He was a highly valued Lieutenant, greatly admired by both brigade members and the wider CFS community.

Among his many firefighting aptitudes, Daniel was a skilled HazMat Operator. He was well respected in the CFS HazMat space and heavily involved in HazMat training. Daniel shared his expertise with members of Dalkeith CFS, and regularly contributed to State Training Centre courses.

In conjunction with generously serving his community, Daniel enjoyed spending time with his family and camping with friends.

Daniel is profoundly missed and will be forever cherished by his loved ones and CFS colleagues.

Maxwell Slee

1928 – 2023

Maxwell was a member of Wilmington Brigade from 24/11/1946 to 25/06/2023. He spent many years as a firefighter and then took on an auxiliary/ operations support role for his remaining 11 years with the CFS.

Maxwell was awarded the CFS 10-year service medal plus 20, 30, 40, 50 and 60-year clasps in September 2009. Finally, he was presented with the CFS Life membership award in November 2003. He also received the National Medal plus 1st clasp awarded in June 1978.

Peter Smelt

1940 - 2023

Member of the Yahl brigade for 22 years & 11 months. Served as Brigade Captain for 4 years and as a Lieutenant for nearly 11 years. Also spent more than 10 years as the Brigade Equipment Officer.

Awarded the National Medal in August 2003.

Anthony “Stocky” Stockham

1959 - 2023

Stocky served as SACFS Regional Training Officer for 11 years, and SES volunteer in Port Lincoln for 17 and a half years, with a passion for road crash rescue.

During Stocky’s service he was a ranking CFS Deputy Commander, Regional Duty Commander, Level 2 Incident Controller, Level 3 Logistics Officer, Regional Warnings and Situation Officer.

Stocky’s dedication extended beyond South Australia, as he was deployed to Tasmania in 2019, Victorian floods in 2010 and 2022, Victorian Fires in 2009.

Stocky was a mentor and friend to many CFS staff and volunteers, sharing his experiences and knowledge with integrity and infamous humour.

Stocky was awarded CFS Service medal 10 years in 2020 and National Medal in 2021.

Robyn Squires

1964 - 2023

Robyn was an enthusiastic member of the Region 2 Operations Brigade for many years.

Prior to joining the CFS, she was a St John Volunteer Ambulance Officer and a SES Volunteer.

Robyn was committed and reliable and took on a variety of CFS roles including Brigade Equipment Coordinator and CFSVA Representative. In addition, she frequently contributed to Cadet activities in the region.

Though Robyn’s health declined in recent years, impacting the range of tasks she could undertake, Robyn continued to attend training.

She was also actively involved in succession planning and instructed others so they could take on her roles. Even in the last week of her life she was in contact with the Brigade to ensure her responsibilities were covered.

Ian Taverner

1968 - 2023

“Tav”, as he was affectionately known as, served the CFS with distinction for 50 years. As a member of the Morphet Vale CFS and then ultimately as a DGO with the Mawson Group he is remembered as a mentor to both new and seasoned volunteers.

Ian served with distinction on both Group, Regional and State Committees where his passion for Work Health and Safety was always on display.

Over Ian’s time in CFS he received Life Membership of both CFS and Morphet Vale Brigade, National Medal, Emergency Services medal and was the recipient of the Order of Australia Medal.

The service and the community have lost a good man.

Syd Villis

1923 - 2022

Syd was a founding member in establishing Moorook CFS and dedicated 62 years of his life to CFS.

For 32 of those years, he was a firefighter actively supporting his community. Syd contributed as Ops Support for a further 30 years.

In 1986 Syd was awarded the National Medal, in 2008 he received 45 years of service, 2015 Life Membership and in 2021 he was issued the 60-year clasp.

Larry Young

1954 - 2024

Larry became a member of CFS in 1984 with Franklin Harbour CFS, now known as Cowell, where he held positions including Group Administration Coordinator and Group Training Coordinator.

During Larry’s 40-year service, he was captain of Cowell from 1987 till his passing in 2023, and from 2005 a cadet supervisor alongside his wife June.

Larry was an active firefighter for the duration of his career and was deployed to many campaign fires.

Recognised for his service, Larry was awarded CFS Service medal 10 years, 20- and 30-year CFS service clasps, National Service medal in 1999, National Service medal first clasp 2010, Joint recognition with his wife June as Cowell Citizen of the Year, for his commitment to CFS and the Cowell community and National Emergency Medal during the 2019/2020 fire season.

Larry has been awarded Life membership of the South Australian Country Fire Service.

Contacts



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Region 2

Upper Mount Lofty Ranges, Yorke Peninsula and Lower North

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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

Community Engagement

Phone 08 8115 3319
Email CFS.CommunityEngagementSupport@eso.sa.gov.au

Stress Prevention and Management (SPAM)

Contact Health and Wellbeing for referrals for individual counselling and group sessions following traumatic events.

SPAM Helpline on 08 8115 3950.

Volunteer Services

Providing advice and services in volunteer management including recruitment and retention, non-operational training, youth programs and legislative/policy advice.

37 Richmond Road, Keswick SA 5035
Phone 1300 364 587
Postal GPO Box 2706, Adelaide SA 5001
Email vsb@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 PO Box 2468, Adelaide SA 5001
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