

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Representing Western Australia's Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services Since 1898

Welcome to the October edition of the "Voice of the Volunteers"

Operations Meetings Communications	2
Nominations Sought for Australian Honours / Results of Executive Elections	3
Update on Presumptive Legislation	4
Launch of Volunteer Hardship Assistance Scheme Wet Weather Gear	4
Things to Know Volunteer Fuel Card Scheme to be Launched Soon!	5
Life Memberships 2015 Junior Champs Next Exec Meeting	5
Congratulations	6

If you have any articles, photos or information you believe will be of interest to the VFRS family, or you just want to advise volunteers of family days, fun days or regional shows, please contact Jodie or Max at the Association office.

2015 Firefighter of the Year Awards



Congratulations to Deidre Marchese, super Secretary of Kambalda VFRS on being named the 2015 VFRS Firefighter of the Year at this year's Awards Breakfast.

Her citation reads:

Deidre displays outstanding commitment and willingness to do whatever is required, when required. In addition to being Secretary of the Kambalda Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service, she is also a Peer Support Officer for the Goldfield Midlands Region, and a member of the Kalgoorlie State Emergency Service Unit. She is a great motivator and role model, especially to other women who she actively encourages to become involved in the fire service.

Dates to Remember

- Competition Committee Meeting—
Friday 13th November 2015
- Association Executive Meeting—
Saturday 14th November 2015
- State Junior Championships @
North Fremantle—Saturday 28th
and Sunday 29th November 2015

Congratulations also to Matthew Holland, Captain of Witchcliffe VFRS, on being named the winner of the 2015 DFES Youth Achievement Award. A finalist in 2014, Matthew again impressed the selection committee with his commitment to the Witchcliffe VFRS and their members. Hopefully, we'll have a photo for the next edition of the Voice.

His citation reads:

Matthew has been an enthusiastic volunteer from a young age, starting as a Bush Fire Brigade cadet at 13, and he is also Captain of the newly formed Witchcliffe Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service. Matthew's knowledge and positive attitude towards training and skills development have made him a highly respected Captain.

Items Under Discussion—Operations Meetings

The Association meets with members of DFES Operational staff on a monthly basis to discuss issues affecting VFRS Members.

The following issues are currently under discussion:

- * Update of Alternative Energy Supplies training (photo voltaic cells) / rollout of revised training and DVD for refresher training
- * Admin guide for VFRS Brigades
- * VFRS Profiles
- * Provision of training for chainsaw operations to identified VFRS Brigades

- * Issues with Prescribed Burning Process
- * Lack of progress in updating important TRK's
- * AO/DO Brigade Visits
- * Administration Requirements at VFRS Brigades—are they becoming increasingly onerous?
- * Telstra priority listings for telecommunication faults
- * Generators for stations who experience frequent power outages

If your Brigade has any issues they wish the Association to raise on your behalf, please contact either your Zone representative, or the Association Office.

Communications

If your Brigade is having communications issues (whether it is supply of equipment or at an incident); please contact your Zone's communications representative:

Central Wheatbelt Zone	Stephen King – Merredin
Goldfields Zone	Ben Sowden – Kalgoorlie
Great Southern Zone	Wesley Beck – Mount Barker
Metropolitan Zone	David Flint – Kalamunda
North West Zone	Bob McKenzie – Newman
Northern Zone	<u>To be advised</u>
South West Zone	John Jonker - Manjimup

Any issues will then be raised at the appropriate level within DFES.



New Members

We are very happy to announce that Port Hedland returned to its VFRS roots earlier this year and are now members of the Association—welcome back!

In addition, Cowaramup VFRS and Witchcliffe VFRS have chosen to join the Association and we look forward to a long and productive relationship with them both. Thank you!

Welcome to you all!

Association Website

The Association's website (www.frsvols.asn.au) is undertaking a revamp and some functions are not yet re-established.

Please be patient whilst our very hard working Executive Member (and head of our Public Relations) Chris O'Connell gets it finished.

If you would like to order merchandise, please contact Jodie in the office at frsvols@bigpond.net.au

"What defines us is how well we rise after falling."

Nominations Sought—Australian Honours

Nominations are currently being sought for AFSM and Emergency Services Medals.

It may also be timely to remind everybody that the Honours and Award Panel can only recommend awards to people who have been nominated – so if you know of somebody who you believe is deserving of an AFSM or an ESM – please take the time to nominate them.

However, it should also be remembered that they are not intended simply as a reward for long service (there are Service Medals for that) but are judged on the following criteria:

- ♣ Prolonged service distinguished by exceptional performance in a particular area that has proved of significant benefit to fire services;
- ♣ Responsibility for, and management of, an outstanding or exceptional event that has proven to be of significant benefit to the fire service, the community or community safety generally.
- ♣ Development of a new system, procedure or technique that is unique and has made a significant contribution to the fire service, the community or community safety generally.
- ♣ Outstanding leadership in the encouragement and development of others, particularly youth, within the fire service, including fostering and furthering of the aims for the long term benefit of the fire service and the community.
- ♣ Demonstrated creativity in the development and implementation of innovative changes that have made a significant contribution to the fire service, fire operations or the interests of community safety.

If you have any queries please contact the DFES Rewards and Recognition Coordinator (rewards@dfes.wa.gov.au) your AO/DO/Regional Office, Zone representative or the Association office.



The more we sweat in
training, the less we
bleed in battle.

Results of Executive Elections for 2015-2017

Central Wheatbelt Zone	Paul du Boulay	Stephen King 2014-16
Goldfields Zone	Trevor Jones	Shane Munro 2014-16
Great Southern Zone	Rod Diery	Wesley Beck 2014-16
Metropolitan Zone	Neil Hawkins	Andrew Munro 2014-16
North West Zone	Michael Booth	Chris O'Connell 2014-16
Northern Zone	Frances (Fran) McAllen	Stephen Manning 2014-16
South West Zone	Tony Dodd	Robert Papalia 2014-16

Robert Papalia AFSM was re-elected as Vice President of the Association (with Trevor Jones) at the Executive meeting held 8th August.

Presumptive Legislation

As you know, the State Liberal Government (via then Minister for Emergency Services, Troy Buswell MLA) announced a raft of “welfare” initiatives for Western Australia’s emergency services volunteers in October 2012.

These initiatives included:

- * Presumptive Legislation for firefighters with cancer; which is to be based on the legislation passed federally, covering a total of 12 cancers that are more prevalent in firefighters than the general population. This announcement may be the most important one made in the last 10 years with regards to the care of our members.
- * Seed Funding for Welfare Fund – this has been under discussion for some time and will see the WAVFRSA Welfare Fund model expanded to cover all emergency services volunteers linked through DFES, via their Associations. See the Welfare Fund section for further information.
- * Insurance cover – this will tighten current insurance arrangements to ensure that all emergency services volunteers have access to the same cover across the services; and is seen to be a “best of the best” solution.

This announcement saw WA leading the way in providing welfare support systems for emergency services volunteers, however the process has stagnated due to delays within the Liberal Party and their National Party allies.

Whilst the \$1 million in seed funding has been received for the Western Australian Emergency Services Volunteers Hardship Assistance Scheme, legislation to implement the amendment to insurance cover arrangements and presumptive legislation for volunteer and post-separated career firefighters with cancer has been extensively delayed by what seems to be internal party politics.

Brigades are encouraged to discuss these issues with their local State members of Parliament and to reiterate their importance to Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service members.

If you need any further detail with regards to this issue, please contact the Association office or your Zone Representatives.

We have recently been advised by the Minister’s office that this very important legislation is very close to being sent to Parliament—fingers crossed!

Launch of the WA Emergency Services Volunteers Hardship Assistance Scheme

The Western Australian Emergency Services Volunteers Hardship Assistance Scheme was officially launched on Sunday 11th October by the Minister for Emergency Services, the Honourable Joe Francis MLA.

The Scheme was announced as part of the volunteer support package that includes presumptive legislation and “best of the best” insurance for the State’s emergency services volunteers.

Whilst the Scheme has been in place since 1st July 2014, a lack of useable funds (the \$1m provided by Government is seed funding only) has delayed the availability of funds to assist volunteers.

If you have any queries, the website is now live www.dfes.wa.gov.au/hardship.

Any Brigade who believes an individual within their ranks is struggling financially (for whatever reason) should contact the Association’s representative on the Scheme, Mr Robert Papalia AFSM .

Wet Weather Gear

Discussions between Operations Command and the Association have resulted in wet weather gear being ordered for those VFRS stations who wish to have them.

They are intended as “station issue” and should not be worn as a replacement for L1 or L2 tunics—they are purely wet weather protection.

This came about following the heavy storms last winter where a number of VFRS Brigades were mobilized to assist with storm damage and clean up, with no effective wet weather protection.

The jackets will also be of benefit to those members who end up undertaking “traffic management” at road crash rescue incidents during bad weather.

If you Brigade has not been contacted by your regional office, please let us know.



Things You Need to Know!

- ♣ Brigades are reminded that updated office bearers lists must be provided to your regional office and to the Association office so we know who to contact
- ♣ If your Brigade is having issues of any nature, please contact your Zone Representatives or the Association office.
- ♣ DFES are currently undertaking two projects—one looking at a heavy rescue air cache to assist in remote areas (funded by a Road Safety Commission grant) which should see equipment procured by the end of this year; and the other looking at the provision of a suite of lithium ion power tools to all RCR enabled vehicles throughout the State (this is being funded via a grant from the Road Trauma Trust Account. The RCR tools project should be finalised by June 2017. Further details will be provided as they come to hand.

Volunteer Fuel Card Scheme

The Volunteer Fuel Card Scheme announced at the last election is currently being finalised and Brigades will be able to apply for the card in the middle of November—an email will be sent to all Brigades when applications open.

Should you wish, you can register for updates at www.dfes.wa.gov.au/volunteers/pages/fuelcards.aspx

This \$2,000 fuel card is a “gift” to emergency services volunteers (including VFRS, BFS, VFES, VMRWA and St Johns Ambulance) and will be funded via the “Royalties for Regions” program. It is intended to be used by “actively contributing members within the Brigade” (meaning the card is not just for active firefighters).

There are some basic reporting requirements (tally sheet with name of member and amount used), but these will not be onerous and will ensure all members are aware of the arrangements.

Be on the lookout for our email so you can ensure your Brigade does not miss out; however you can contact the Association office if you have any queries.

Brigade Life Memberships

The following VFRS members have been recognised with Life Membership of their Brigades—unfortunately no pictures have been provided (maybe the next edition of the Voice)?

Glyn Potter	Tom Price VFRS	Michael Booth	Karratha VFRS
Neil Harvey	South Hedland VFRS	Robert Fry	South Hedland VFRS
Neil (Ned) Haywood	Exmouth VFRS	Patricia (Trish) Deering	Exmouth VFRS



2015 Annual Junior Championships

The 2015 Annual Junior Championships will be held on Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th November at Gil Frazer Reserve North Fremantle—come along and enjoy the competition and have a chat to members of other Brigades.

Nomination forms have been sent out to all competition brigades—registrations are due in the Association office by close of business Monday, 9th November.

“Individually we are one drop, but together we are an ocean”
- Ryuunosuke Satoro



Executive Meeting

The next Association Executive meeting will be held on Saturday 14th November 2015. If you have anything you wish raised on your behalf, please contact your Zone representatives or the Association office.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Mark Deering, son of former Captain of Exmouth VFRS (and former Executive Member for the North West Zone) Gary Deering and wife Trish (herself a member of Exmouth VFRS and former Secretary of the Brigade) on being named the winner of the John McMahon AFSM Dux Award for Firefighter School 77.

Congratulations also go to VFRS members Ryan Maughan of Roleystone VFRS and Darren MacGregor of Toodyay VFRS on their graduation during the same school.



Congratulations also to Secretary Brian Davy and Volunteer Eddie Hart on being awarded life membership of the Busselton VFRS at their annual dinner.

Brian Davy commenced with Collie VFRS in 1957 before moving to Katanning in 1965 and Kununurra in 1973; where he resigned. He commenced with Busselton in 1997 and became Secretary of the Brigade in 2000 (a position he still holds). He also assists in the timing stand for Easter Championships.

Edmund (Eddie) Hart commenced in Brunswick in 1972, moving to Busselton in 1996. He was Captain of Brunswick for 4 years, apparatus officer for a year and foreman for 3 years before moving to Busselton. He continues to assist with station maintenance and is a stalwart of our competition judges.

Congratulations to you both on your well deserved recognition.



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WHEN we can, WHERE we can
and to the VERY BEST of our ability.*

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SHOPRITE

Shoprite provides a discount buying service and other important services to union and association members. They now support over 170,000 members, who utilise ShopRite to benefit from discounts on a wide range of products and services.

VFRS members are able to access their services and membership cards and directories are now available from the Association office. Further details can be found at their website www.shoprite.com.au

Max will have copies of both with him during his Brigade visits, however, please contact Jodie if you wish to receive them earlier.

Brigade Visits

EO Osborn has been undertaking Brigade visits over the last few months in the Central Wheatbelt, Great Southern, South West and Northern Zones.

He has visited the following Brigades since July:

Esperance	Kulin	Mount Barker	Manjimup
Denmark	Dunsborough	Northcliffe	Dongara
Boyup Brook	Wongan Hills	Merredin	Kellerberrin
Ravensthorpe			



Have you logged on to Portal2Progress?

We have had some great ideas posted recently.
Portal2Progress is your opportunity to have a say in the future of DFES.

Visit the Volunteer Portal and click on the Portal2Progress link to post your ideas.
For more information email: portal2progress@dfes.wa.gov.au