In the heat of the moment...

You rely on your mates ... and reliable, hassle-free communications.

That’s why the superior Tait Orca 5000 portables are a vital part of the way you deal with fire incidents.

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The views expressed in articles in the Bushfire Bulletin do not necessarily reflect the views of the policies of the NSW Rural Fire Service.

In one of the longest fire conducive periods in a long time, our volunteer firefighters travelled extensively throughout NSW. They often endured inconvenience and discomfort to provide support to their colleagues in fire threatened areas.

During these long campaigns, brigade members have, from time to time, questioned issues of deployment and resourcing. Despite the best of intentions, in an arena of rapidly changing circumstances it is, often the case that things don’t always quite go according to plan. That is why it is vitally important to have issues such as these thoroughly ventilated in post-fire debriefings.

We are fully committed to ensuring the smooth conduct of operations with the welfare and safety of firefighters being paramount. Nonetheless, we accept that there is always room for improvement.

One of the most common issues raised, particularly in country NSW, relates to the perceived lack of appreciation and utilisation of local knowledge. This is despite the fact that Incident Management Teams (IMTs) are required to have a local brigade member or landholder on the IMT and this requirement will be reinforced with Incident Controllers.

I have recently asked that a further measure to ensure local input of an appropriate order be taken. A program will shortly be available to interested volunteers to gain the necessary skills and competencies to fill the various key roles on IMTs. Once districts have suitably qualified volunteers who are prepared to participate in key IMT roles it will be a further requirement that they are engaged on the teams.

In a similar vein, the Service will continue to do everything it can to encourage public land managers to enhance cooperation between local landholders and brigades in the formulation of fire management plans for publicly owned estates.

In recent weeks there has been a deal of concern expressed over a variety of issues, not the least being the issue of local involvement. While I am anxious to ensure that all such issues receive a proper hearing, it is nevertheless important to point out that the Incident Controllers are, in the majority of cases, local people who have been nominated by Bush Fire Management Committees for appointment. This is particularly so in the case of S44 incidents.

It is also a fact that Bush Fire Management Committees are required to have as one of their numbers a local volunteer firefighter to ensure that planning arrangements benefit from the views, knowledge and experience of the local brigade membership. It is important that our members recognise and take advantage of this provision.

The Service’s role is both changing and expanding and I have always placed great store on the benefit of volunteer input into the formulation of policy and operations. If the Service needs to further refine this process, I will be happy to explore ways of doing so.

However, I do urge brigade members who have issues to pursue them vigorously through the normal processes. In the first instance this should be with District staff, with resort to other levels if required.

With the advent of winter and spring, the Service will operationally focus on hazard reduction and do so in close concert with other agencies particularly bearing in mind our increased responsibilities under recently enacted legislation.

Brigade members, and indeed firefighters from across the board, have every reason to be proud of their efforts during the last season. While we regret deeply the loss of life and property, we must also acknowledge that there were many occasions on which the prevailing conditions simply overwhelmed our collective capacity. We will watch with interest the process of inquiry now in place and, as is always the case, benefit from lessons learnt.

Phil Koperberg

RSF
During the Christmas fires of 2001 Shoalhaven District suffered its fair share of the bushfire destruction. The Hyland Fire burnt out 83,866 hectares and had a perimeter of 338 kilometers. Many would say that was the Shoalhaven’s ‘big fire’ for the next 4 or 5 years, and we can see. Nothing would be further from the truth.

On 6 November 2002, a fire started in gorge country to the west of Nowra near a property called Tolwong. The first report of the fire was made to Tallaganda Fire Control and its location was described as South of Tolwong property on the road to the Touga property.

So came about the Touga fire. For 42 days firefighters from all over NSW were once again dealing with major fire activity in the largest eastern seaboard district.

9 NOVEMBER

The fire started around midday in the Tolwong area of the Morton National Park. Due to the number of fire trucks driving through the area in the ensuing days point of origin evidence was difficult to assemble. The RFS Fire Investigation Unit narrowed the origin down to a 20 metre circle of dry grass off the side of the trail that runs between Tolwong property and Touga property (25 km south). Two NPWS ranges working in the area noticed a vehicle drive up the trail towards Tolwong property and an hour later back down. Tolwong property had no visitors that day.

Initially 10 units and 40 firefighters from Shoalhaven District took the minimum two hour journey to the fire front but access to the fire was restricted by the rugged topography. The fire had spread under the influence of a westerly breeze and the Ettrema Gorge. A Section 44 area was declared.

9 NOVEMBER

Nearly 180 campers were evacuated from Coolindilli, Poole and SES door-knocked residents of Burrier and Badging, campers at Grady’s riverside retreat were put on standby. The fire made little progress but was still burning out of control in the Elliotts Gorge. Strategies were put in place to work on the northern edge that was expanding towards Billy Bullios and Talawin. Residents of Wingello were made aware of the situation although there was no major threat at that stage to that community.

10 NOVEMBER

The Touga Fire remained on the floor of the Ettrema Gorge. Helicopters were dispatched to the fire in an attempt to water-bomb the edges and establish containment. The gorge was so steep and water so sparse that the lighter helicopters were unable to lift water out of the gorge. An Erickson Air-Crane was the only aircraft able to lift water out of the gorge. However, down wash and the steep terrain meant that water-bombing started to spread the fire rather than contain it.

11 NOVEMBER

The Touga Fire had burnt approximately 6000 ha. It was not contained but posed no threat to property or assets. With the fire’s potential to spread, the Section 44 was extended to take in parts of Mulwaree and Tallaganda Districts. Fifty personnel worked on the Mulwaree section of the fire and 40 RFS, NPWS and State Forests personnel were working in Shoalhaven District.

During the next few days a number of burning trees on the edge of the gorge fell and rolled the 400 metre or more to the bottom starting numerous new fires. Then the weather on the 13th turned bad.

19 NOVEMBER

The Touga Fire had reached its 12th day and continued to challenge the expertise of firefighters. By the end of this day over 22 500 ha had been burnt out. Under the influence of strong gusty winds the fire stretched southwest toward Touga and northeast to the Shaloahen River. A spotfire occurred over the river at a place called Horse Show Bend. Good work by the Mulwarea Remote Area Firefighting Team contained the spot over and the river held as the northern containment line. Weather conditions over the next three days were not any better.

24 NOVEMBER

The fire had been extremely active to the south. Crews including out of area task forces were protecting property at Touga, Burlee and Coolumbura. Tallaganda crews looked after properties around Douglas Paddock. A staging area was set up at Douglas Paddock to try to reduce the travelling time for fire trucks. The Touga Fire was into its 17th day and broke containment lines near the Ettrema fire trail. It threatened rural and residential properties in the Sassafras area. The fire had now burnt out 35,000 ha and had a fire edge extending over 213 kms. Over 180 personnel continued to work on the blaze with 25 RFS units, 10 NPWS, three dozers, one Air-Crane and eight other helicopters.

25 NOVEMBER

The total area burnt out reached 38500 ha. Another fire started at Whiting Beach in Booderee National Park, Jarvis Bay and was contained quickly by the Booderee NPWS staff and Wreck Bay Rural Fire Brigade personnel. The Touga Fire jumped the Braidwood Road. This was the planned Southern containment line. The south side of Braidwood Road was also an area that had been burnt out less than 12 months earlier by the Hyland wild fire. The Touga fire just kept burning right through the previously burnt country. The population of Nerriga were put on alert. Sassafras was still in danger.

28 NOVEMBER

Fire impacted on properties around Sassafras and Douglas Paddock. Over 100 personnel were in attendance. A number of task forces from Waggie Waggie, Tumut and Tumbarumba had arrived and were immediately put to work. Total area burnt by Touga Fire reached 50,000 ha, with 12km of burning edge remaining. The wind was tending to change direction and forecast to become West NW in a week’s time.

29 NOVEMBER

It rained. Good rainfall curtailed fire and fire fighting activity, however, only terrain is recorded in Yarrawarra. Riverina task forces return home, however Yarrawarra brigades remain. In 22 days the fire had burnt out 53,000 ha. The fire was about to take one last run and this run would be the worst.

4 DECEMBER

Strong westerly winds forced the northern end of the fire to run to the east. In the way were Danjera Dam, Yawal and eventually Nowra. The fire jumped the Danjera dam and destroyed a number of houses and sheds in the area. Over 62,000 ha. A new fire at Shoalhaven Heads began. Kiama and Wollongong units were tasked to this fire.

For the next four days the conditions caused erratic fire behaviour just a few kilometres from Nowra. There was still activity in the south near Sassafras but the focus had moved to the population west of Nowra and HMAS Albatross.
Sydney’s Nova 96.9 FM recently ran a competition for listeners to do their dream job for a day.

We figured that it was the perfect opportunity to tell people that you can have your dream job and keep your regular job as well – you just volunteer in the RFS!

Dean, the lucky winner of the promotion, was taken through the State Operations Centre and shown how we co-ordinate major fires across the State, before being taken to the Blacktown District to be shown how to put the “wet stuff on the red stuff”.

After a quick training session Dean was taken out to do hydrant inspections by the members of Blacktown District’s Plumpton Brigade. This was followed by some basic hose drills, before getting stuck into the firefighting!

Dean learnt to attack a car fire, then was taken through a two-line gas fog attack before being sent into a hot fire cell in breathing apparatus. A very tired, but very happy, radio contestant ended the day by vowing to join his local brigade!

Story and photos by John Winter

NOVA 96.9 FM – “FIREFIGHTER FOR A DAY”
The major thrust of this course is to bring the competence of existing brigade officers up to a standard level. To achieve this, the officers are assessed to ascertain their current skills. Any missing skills, identified in this way can then be presented at a training session. At that training session the relevant topics from the CLG Manual are delivered to complete the competency requirements. This training is usually completed in two days, and in some cases a single day. The exercise at the end of the training session provides some of the direct evidence regarding competence in bush fire behaviour, bush fire suppression, the incident control system (ICS) and mapping skills.

The fire behaviour topic looks at the variables that effect the rate of spread of a fire under high to extreme fire danger periods. It also examines how to identify and predict these conditions.

The fire suppression topic concentrates on local fire fighting methods and the different approach to safe fire fighting that is required when comparing grass and forest fire fighting. It develops the team work approach that is so essential to efficient suppression. Local pre-planned response and suppression procedures are examined and discussed.

The topic on the incident control system (ICS) provides an overview of the system and examines how the captain and deputy fit into the process of delegation that is one of the basic tenets of ICS.

The mapping segment for officers in grassland brigades concentrates on each aspects such as reference, risk identification, water points and basic map marking for situation reports.

In conjunction with this course a pocket book has been produced for crew leaders in grassland areas. This pocket book reinforces the content of the course and provides prompts and useful information that is relevant to grass fire fighting.
In January 2003 eight members of the RFS were awarded Australian Fire Service Medals (AFSM) for their exemplary leadership, dedication, commitment and promotion of the Service.

In 1986 the AFSM was established to recognise distinguished service by members of the Australian Fire Service.

The responsible Ministers in the Commonwealth, States and Territories make recommendations for the medals to the Governor-General for approval. Only one award is ever made to an individual and recipients are entitled to use the post-nominal letters “AFSM”.

AUSTRALIAN FIRE SERVICE MEDALS - JANUARY 2003

CHlorine in it. placed operationally ready on the truck and structure gear was taken home to be cleaned. For days afterwards the station had a faint smell of

1431 HOURS WEDNESDAY 13 NOVEMBER

Wee Jasper and Baulkham Hills Districts played a pivotal role in a fairly unique Hazardous Materials incident. What originated as a call to Stuar Park Fire involving chemicals ended up in a 4 hour long callout and an worthwhile multi agency learning experience.

1442 HOURS - ONSCENEC

...was an active member of the RFS since 1974 and has held positions of foundation member, President and Captain of the Wondai Brigade.

SUPERINTENDENT RAYMOND COLLYER

Fire Control Officer, Lismore

Ray has been an active member of the RFS since 1974 and has held positions of Deputy Captain, Treasurer and President of the Wondai Brigade. In 1987 Peter was appointed Fire Officer in Stinger and has held that position for 15 years. As Fire Control Officer, Peter has modernised the District’s training and equipment. Through negotiations with Stinger Council, Peter has increased the budget for the District from $500,000 to more than $1,000,000.

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Many fires remain in our memories when we think of the 2002/03 bushfire season. One crisis that has revolutionised the way fires are managed was the Cessnock Cluster Section 44.

The Cessnock Cluster S.44 was unique due to the huge number of fires involved and as the first Cluster of Class 3 fires. The declaration spanned six Rural Fire Districts (RFDs) and lasted almost two months from 21 October 2002 until 12 December 2002.

One hundred and seventy-one individual fires impacted upon the Cessnock, Gosford, Hawkesbury, Hunter, Singleton and Wyong RFDS during the declaration. Each of these areas are extremely vulnerable to wildfire and the fires affecting them were intense and widespread, resulting in huge logistical and resourcing challenges for their respective Incident Management Teams (IMTs). To address these challenges, allocation and coordination of resources was centralised and based at the Cessnock Fire Control Centre. Assistant Commissioner Rob Rogers assumed the mammoth task of coordinating the resourcing, planning, operations and logistics of all fires in the Cluster as Incident Controller.

“The idea behind the Cluster was that there would be no wasted resources as they would be allocated on a daily basis to cater to changing fire activity. It allowed for out of area crews, particularly the EPA (Country Fire Authority, Victoria) and CFS (Country Fire Service, South Australia), to be kept busy and mobilised,” reflect Rob Rogers.

During the Cluster, new fires started regularly and some were extinguished within several hours, on the other hand the Bala Range fire, the main fire in the Cluster, lasted 77 days. Lightning storms along the Bala Range in Yengo National Park on 5 October 2002 are believed to have ignited a fire that would lead to weeks of challenging fire suppression operations. At the time, National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Central Coast/Mount Rothwell regional staff managed four remote fires from their Bulga office.

With more than 120 km between each fire, a number of NPWS specialist RAT crews were deployed in an effort to access the fires and extinguish them. RATs (Remote Area Fire Teams) are specially trained firefighters, deployed to remote, inaccessible terrain to carry out firefighting duties by direct attack. These firefighters are flown in by helicopter and are either winched down to the fireground, or win the helicopter whilst it is hovering above a rock shelf.

NPWS crews worked to contain the fire at Bala Range and by midday 8 October 2002 predicted it would be contained within two-hours. Severe fire weather conditions affected the fireground, plummeting relative humidity to below ten percent, increasing the temperature and bringing strong winds. Many of the helicopters and RATs were forced from the fireground. This marked the turning point of the Bala Range fire.

Fire conditions deteriorated so severely on this day that one section of the fireground supported wildfire on three occasions. The fire raged through previously burnt scrub layers and returned to the crown layer some time later.

With numerous fires affecting areas across NSW and the Bala Range fire increasing in size and moving towards the Higher Rothwell and St Albans areas, the Bala Range fire was declared a S.44 on 10 October 2002. The IMT was moved from Bulga and established at Hawkesbury Fire Control Centre with Superintendent Karen Hodges as Incident Controller and RAT crews assuming a leading role in the mitigation of the fire.

Fire activity varied greatly for the duration of the declaration, at times crews were linked to step up and patrol and at other times to intensive property protection. One of the most active days was 19 October 2002 when several new fires impacted upon property near Abernethy and resulted in the death of an elderly man, trapped in his car and the destruction of several houses near Cessnock.

Fire regularly threatened property in many areas in the Cluster at Abernethy, Borree, Cessnock, Little Borree, Coxs River, Lake St Clair, Little Wallabadah, Mangrove Mountain, Melan Creek, Millbillidale, Mount Royal, Mount View, Narara, Stokes Estate, Wallabadah, Woombye Creek and many remote rural, residential properties.

Access to the fireground proved to be a major challenge. Even having to report to the Cluster Incident Control Centre often had to travel up to three hours each way to and from operations. The fires in the Cluster affected a total of 33,463.37 hectares of national park, State forest and private land. Twenty-five firefighters sustained reportable injuries such as heat exhaustion and 54 John first aid volunteers treated approximately 123 firefighters for minor injuries such as eye irritation and minor burns.

As the first Cluster Section 44, ground crews and IMT staff learnt a great deal about how to improve the coordination of multiple fires across Local Government boundaries. Whilst there were initial teething problems with the structure, most of the Incident Controllers and Deputy Incident Controllers agreed that the Cluster was a great idea and with a bit of fine-tuning, could herald a new era in bushfire mitigation.

Thanks to Rob Rogers, Andrew Welch, Karen Welbourn, Karen Hodges, Olivia Divrrostra, Paul Jones, Christine Pender, Stephen Hancox, Arthur Owen and Barry Foul.

### S44 QUOTES

“I will always admire the crews for their determination to maintain containment lines in the middle of nowhere. They held the fire when others betted they wouldn’t.”

“Some of the terrain was so rough that the crews would get sick on the way there in the tankers.”

Superintendent Karen Hodges, Incident and Deputy Incident Controller, commenting on the remote locations of fires.

“We were stressed to the max. This was probably the first time that every active firefighter in Singleton has had a run since the 1994 fires.”

Superintendent Andrew Welch, Incident and Deputy Incident Controller

“Within 15 minutes of being appointed Incident Controller, I had two fires impacting upon property and within an hour a fatality, 7 houses and numerous other buildings destroyed.”

Rob Rogers, Cluster Incident Controller.

“It was 64 days of pure hell.”

Tom Bagnet commenting on his involvement in the Cluster as Incident Controller and Deputy Incident Controller.

### CESSNOCK CLUSTER REVOLUTIONIZES FIRE MANAGEMENT

The Cessnock Cluster was unique due to the huge number of fires involved and as the first cluster of class 3 fires.
On Monday 21 October 2002, two days after the Alcan and Racecourse Fire took their run, the Geographical Information System (GIS) team arrived at Cessnock Fire Control to establish the mapping service for the fires in the Cessnock Section 44. 

Once the team of three GIS contractors arrived with a set of topographical and scale maps they set about locating available data on the existing GIS system; such as land ownership details, building locations and aeronautical photographs of the firegrounds.

Two GIS officers worked in the Incident Management Team (IMT) and one worked in a helicopter to fly over the edges of the fires to get highly accurate data including photographs and videos of the fire activity. This data was used to generate maps and other products to indicate where the fire was, what it looked like and what it was doing.

A wide range of maps was produced for different groups within the Service. Statewide maps were produced for State Operations to give a general indication of the fire locations across the State. Localised maps were produced for each individual fire within the Cluster using standard Incident Control symbols for use by incident control, planning and operations personnel. Aviation required similar products that also included latitudinal and longitudinal references, and smaller A3 versions of maps were given to ground crews and pilots to be used in specific operations.

GIS worked from 5am till 2am each day from 21 October 2002 until it rained and produced maps daily to accurately locate the fire edge and where property was threatened.

Network connection proved to be a huge challenge for GIS who resolved to install their own server and printers, and even then it could take more than three hours to download a line-scan file from the RFS K-drive.

"We had a hard slog. There were many people from many agencies working in the GIS function, and without them it just wouldn’t have happened." Steve Wilkes, GIS Contractor.

Story and photos by Zoé Townsend

**MOVING SERVICE REMEMBERS VOLUNTEERS LOST AT GRAYS POINT**

Improvements to equipment and technology resulted from the deaths of three RFS volunteers at Grays Point 20 years ago, attends at a memorial service heard on 31 January.

Healthcote Rural Fire Brigade Captain Keith Campbell, Deputy Captain Tom Bielecke and firefighter Greg Moon died on 9 January 1983 when a bushfire trapped their tanker as it swept up Anana Hill in the Royal National Park.

"They didn’t die in vain," said former Sutherland Rural Fire District Fire Control Officer (FCO), Superintendent Brian Parry, in a eulogy remembering the lost firefighters and their six injured colleagues.

"As a consequence of their deaths dual cabin fire tankers had been developed which provide refuge," said Supt Parry, who is currently Shellharbour FCO.

Personal protective clothing and communications equipment had been improved and satellite vehicle tracking is now used.

A Healthcote Rural Fire Brigade tanker provided the backdrop to the moving service held outside Grays Point School.

About 200 people, many wearing RFS yellows, attended the service conducted by Sutherland acting FCO Superintendent John Wood, RFS chaplain Captain Ron Anderson and Sutherland Shire Mayor Phil Blight.

Key wreath layers were Keith Campbell’s daughter, Senior Deputy Captain Sharon Campbell, and Deputy Captain Jim Fowler who both survived the fire.

One minute’s silence was followed by a lone piper’s rendition of Amazing Grace.

Visitors were then invited to travel by four-wheel-drive to Anana Hill to place a wreath flower on a brass plaque marking the place the firefighters died.

"As a consequence of their deaths dual cabin fire tankers had been developed which provide refuge," said Superintendent Parry.

The deaths of the firefighters were subject to a 255-day long coroner’s inquest, which produced 113 recommendations. Actions resulting from these recommendations have improved the safety standards of Firefighters in NSW.

While all Australian states experienced severe weather and significant fire seasons, NSW had the most protracted season. ‘’While all Australian states experienced severe weather and significant fire seasons, NSW had the most protected season.''

Sixty-one section 44s were declared since 27 September 2003 until the declaration covering Kosciuszko National Park was revoked on 24 February 2003.

“This has been a record breaking season in terms of length and resources used,” RFS Commissioner Phil Koperberg said.

“The protracted season has been a real challenge for RFS volunteers and incident management team members from all agencies. They have proven their skills and commitment in extraordinary circumstances and I commend and thank them for their hard work."

"Out of area crews supported local brigades under extraordinarily difficult circumstances."

"While all Australian states experienced severe weather and significant fire seasons, NSW had the most protected season."

Drought contributed to extending the season, often in rugged inaccessible terrain, with hundreds of homes potentially affected, but millions of hectares directly threatened.

Drought contributed to extending the season, with the first incident occurring in Richmond River in July and the last Section 44 revoked on 24 February 2003.

Fire destroyed 84 homes since 8 October 2002, compared with 109 during the 2001-2002 season. The majority of homes were destroyed in the Baulkham Hills, Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai Section 44s in December 2002 when 50 were lost to fire. Sutherland lost ten and nine were lost in both Gosnott and the Clarence Valley.

Another 30 residential homes were damaged during this season, with 40 affected by fire last year.

Nearly 750,000 ha was burned in 2001-2002, the majority in the three weeks between 24 December 2001 and 24 January 2002.

About 1.465 million ha, with a 10,340 km perimeter, was burned this year in fires that stretched from the Queensland border to the Victorian border.

Drought contributed to extending the season, with the first incident occurring in Richmond River in July and the last Section 44 revoked on 24 February 2003.

In the 2001-2002 season focused on three weeks of intense urban interface firefighting with thousands of homes threatened.

"We had a hard slog. There were many people from many agencies working in the GIS function, and without them it just wouldn’t have happened. " Steve Wilkes, GIS Contractor.

Story and photos by Zoé Townsend

**FACT BOX**

**2002-2003 FIRE SEASON**

- 11,081 personnel involved in task forces
- 53 mulletgrass task forces deployed on one day at height of activity
- 103 aircraft deployed on one day at height of activity
- 2421 notifiable incidents
- 102,423 firefighter days expended on notifiable incidents
- 22,783 brigade attendances at premises incidents

**A LONG 2002-3 FIRE SEASON**
THE NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE, STRATEGIC PLAN 2003 – 2005 HAS BEEN RELEASED FOR IMPLEMENTATION.

Like most organisations, the RFS needs a clear road map to help plan our activities over the medium to long-term. The Strategic Plan is designed to help provide this direction for the Service’s staff and volunteers, along with the community we serve need to have a clear understanding of:

- The mission of the RFS and our vision for the future
- The way we will conduct our activities
- The programs and actions we will implement to achieve our desired outcomes
- The relative priorities accorded to each program or action
- The way we will measure our success
- Who is responsible

The structure of the Strategic Plan cascades from a broad statement of the Service’s overall direction all the way down to specific actions designed to show how we will achieve our targets.

The information contained in the Strategic Plan links into other RFS planning and management systems such as:

- Implementing the District Service Delivery Model and Region/Head Office business planning
- Developing and implementing new policies and systems
- Ensuring the effective allocation of equipment and resources
- Establishing/Allocating tasks to appropriate personnel

The diagram below shows how the major components of the Service’s planning and management systems link to each other.

MAIN INITIATIVES FOR 2003 – 2005

There is a wide range of outcomes detailed in the Strategic Plan, these are a few:

- Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operational management
- Provide a fostered learning environment for all Service personnel
- Promote community awareness and support for the Service
- Minimise the likelihood and severity of fires through the further implementation of community-based prevention and mitigation campaigns
- Support the delivery of the Service’s business and operational outcomes
- Improve the Service’s decision-making through the use of information systems and technology
- Improve the operational effectiveness of Brigades by developing, deploying and maintaining appropriate fire-fighting equipment

INVOlVEMENT

Ultimately, all RFS personnel, both salaried and volunteers, will be influenced by the contents of the Strategic Plan. The personnel in the Service Delivery Model and District Service Delivery Model Planning Teams will certainly be guided by its contents.

It is also planned to consult a broader audience in the preparation of future versions of the Strategic Plan and thus there is likely to be an opportunity for involvement in most areas of the state.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The Strategic Plan has a 3-year outlook, but will be reviewed annually. This will ensure the Service maintains a long-term view of future trends while addressing more immediate developments and needs.

Along with other RFS systems such as the Service Delivery Model, Service Level Agreements etc, the Strategic Plan will become more closely integrated with other components of our management and planning processes. In particular, there will be an increasing use of technology to conduct our business as well as a greater emphasis on monitoring and managing performance.

FURTHER INFORMATION

A summarised version of the Strategic Plan will soon be widely distributed throughout the Service. For those who wish to read the detailed version of the Strategic Plan, each District Office has a copy or you can download your own copy from the Service’s web page if you desire.

Further information can also be obtained from the Corporate Planning and Performance Section of Head Office or by email at SDM@rfs.nsw.gov.au
The Commissioner has signed off on an agreement with the Australian Federal Police for the Fire Investigation Unit to ... in the ACT. This is the first request "outside NSW" where our Service have been requested to assist in fire investigation.

**FI STATISTICS**

- Deliberate Ignitions (224) 61.3%
- Burning Activity (25) 6.8%
- Campfire/BBQ (8) 2.1%
- Electrical/Power Lines (10) 2.6%
- Lightning (62) 16.9%
- Machinery/Equipment (10) 2.7%
- Spotfire/Re-ignitions (8) 2.1%
- Undetermined (8) 2.3%
- Investigations have undertaken 2,543 hours

**CORONIAL INQUIRY UPDATE**

Several Coronial Inquiries have now been held around the State on the 2001/2002 Christmas Fires. Enquiries have been heard on the Gippens Complex fires, the Main Road, Thirroul, Toms and the 24 March 2003, the Coroner will commence the Inquiry into the Blue Mountains Fires (Mt Hutton, Lawson Road, Grandview, Blue Pool, Wentworth Falls) and on the 25 March 2003, the Inquiry into the Hawkesbury Fires (Grahams Creek, Lithgow Hill and Vale of Avoca) will be heard.

**Criminal Charges**

Since Tronto has re-formed, 15 people have been charged with illegally lighting fires with several more charges pending. Many of these were as a direct result of RFS Investigators involvement in the process.
North Coast Brigade Copmanhurst undertakes regular Community Education activities during the year. One of the highlights of which is their participation in Grafton’s annual Jacaranda Festival, TAFE Markets and Street Parade. Joining forces with the local SES, in which most are also active members have a busy time at the markets sharing their experiences and answering a great variety of questions from visitors to their display.

Following their day at the recent markets, members pictured above, were all fired up for the evening street parade during which they received a terrific welcome from the huge crowd assembled in Grafton’s Prince Street.

Left to right: Dave Fischer, Wendy Hay, Sue Fischer, Wendy Kearns (SES) and Roy Ford.


On Sunday 2 February 2003, a group of almost 100 bikers left Sydney and invaded Lithgow. It was not a case of ‘lock up your daughters’ and the town welcomed the huge influx of bikers of the inaugural ‘Bike Biz Biker Back the Rural Fire Brigades’ motorcycle ride to raise money for the Lithgow Rural Fire District.

The event was organised by the BOAB motorcycle club and Bike Biz Yamaha of Parramatta. Many motorcycle clubs took part in the ride including the Star Club of NSW, TERE and ISRA motorcycle clubs.

Organiser, Ray Robinson said “the ride today is to support the many volunteers who give their time and sadly at times their lives to make the pristine bushland countryside that we as motorcyclists travel through, in our escape from the cities and the hectic pace, remain safe. We often take for granted the time and huge sacrifices that our RFS volunteers make. This is our way of saying thanks and we do realise the effort that each of you make.”

Almost $1,000 was raised when a bucket was taken around the group after a barbecue lunch, supplied by Bike Biz in Queen Elizabeth Park, Fire Control Officer, Lithgow Rural Fire District.

The money was presented to Superintendent Jeff Oliver (Lithgow RFS) at the lunch stop.

Ray Robinson further said “this is the First of an annual event and I hope that motorcycle riders all over Australia will jump on the bandwagon next year and hold similar runs in support of the RFS.”

If anyone wants any information on holding a similar event next year, please contact Ray on email rob@bigpond.com or mobile telephone 0438 227 678.
Dear NSW Rural Fire Service,

Just a note to thank the members and supporters of the NSW Rural Fire Service for their kind and very generous donation of Christmas gifts for the children at The Children’s Hospital Westmead.

Gifts like these help to put a smile on the faces of the children who are there to join their families at home for Christmas Day and instead spend the day here with a visit from Santa and his helper! Once again, thank you for your support. It is much appreciated.

Much love,

Gilly Panton
Manager
Public Relations
The Children’s Hospital at Westmead

Our Firefighters to the Rescue

Although not widely published the train crash at Waterfall in the early hours of Friday 1 February was a major incident for the NSW Rural Fire Service. Besides being one of the first emergency services on scene the Service played a major role in the rescue of over 40 survivors and supported the other emergency services in operations that went for three days.

NSW Rural Fire Service firefighters from Sutherland and Wallingong Districts played vital roles in the treatment, comfort, fire protection, rescue and removal to hospital of over 40 survivors of February’s Waterfall train crash.

The emergency, which saw seven people die and at least 51 injured, led Sutherland District Fire Management Plan to the last… and it didn’t fail.

Coming to be a great credit was the crew on Sutherland RFS Fire Prevention Crew which was out of its station in 62 seconds and in two all-wheel-drive vehicles was on the scene of the accident, four kilometres south of Waterfall, in ten minutes.

They were joined minutes later by two heavy four-wheel-drive appliances from the Waterfall RFS Brigade and later by tankers of the Helensburgh, Stanwell Park, Oxford and Hauchope Brigades which had driven up the tracks from the south.

There was even more commitment from Sutherland when it was realised that only four-wheel-drive personnel carriers were capable of going through the bush down a very steep graveled slope, across the rails and on to the casualty clearing area near the wreckage.

A call went out to brigades across the shire to respond and nine PCs were soon in use shuttling personnel and equipment back and forth...and two rescue helicopters waited.

Fire Control Officer for Sutherland, Superintendent John Wood, was at his home when at about 7.30 am he received a call, stemming from a “Triple 0” report, that there was a train derailing at Waterfall.

“I’ll know our team of District Field Officers (once known as the Fire Prevention Crew) were starting work at that time so I put a call through the Fire Control Centre at Heathcote asking them to respond,” Supt. Wood said.

Although paid fire prevention workers the six are also volunteer members of brigades in the shire, some have officer ranks and up to 25 years experience.

As well as dispatching the Evening Event, Supt. Wood activated the pager of the Waterfall Brigade which soon had two heavy appliances and a PC rolling from its station.

The field team’s members, using their intimate knowledge of the area, went to the Cawley Fire Trail, identified the scene of the accident, a couple of four kilometres south of Waterfall, and immediately identified another track heading right across the steep slope, across the rails and on to the casualty clearing area near the wreckage.

Firefighters were joined by three ambulance officers and some police. One of the ambulance officers was driving Sutherland RFS Hence, a female who is also Group Three for the Sutherland Rural Fire Service。“Hence” is the initial ambulance commander.

Meanwhile Waterfall crew had found a spot where radio and cellphone communications worked and so they were able to communicate an immediate assistance including Rescue and Multiple Ambulance。”

Sutherland FD22 responded with its men and women and the limited other emergency personnel by 7.30 am. FD22 became the RFS commander.

Discussions took place between the RFS Commander, Ambulance Commander and Police Commander and it was agreed that the RFS do an initial assessment and report back to the Ambulance commander.

The disaster scene was described as follows by Sutherland FD22 “What was so significant was that there were no sounds. There were no passengers about... and at that stage few emergency people. I walked beside carriages four and five and asked them to look inside near the wall of the cliff. Their sides had been torn away. The damage between two and one was the worst. I counted four deceased. Many injured were still in their seats. At the time the overhead wires were down. We didn’t know if they were still alive.

We also didn’t know if the train would catch alright so a tanker was positioned at the top of the cliff and a line of 30mm run out.”

FD22 gave his assessment of the situation and more assistance was called for. Wallingong brigades, and Helensberg were responded to the scene.

Firefighters from Waterfall and Hauchope climbed into one of the open carriages and began comforting the injured while others worked outside the carriage handling up equipment.

The ladder from Hauchope 7A was used to climb on to the carriages while our helicopter tools were used to prize away metal and glass and smash open some of the window to allow cool air into the carriages.

In firefights along with the ambulance officers and police also began removing objects which were trapping people.

The Ambulance commander realised that to get the injured away from the train, the very steep incline into the rail embankment and the embankment’s cliff and Careflight helicopters, he would need a fleet of “go anywhere” personnel carriers. He knew where to look… one of which was Sutherland and Wallingong’s Brigades has such a vehicle.

Within minutes nine were responding to the scene from all points.

For the next three hours RFS PCs carried passengers from the tracks up the 700 metre long cliff and on to a railway yard to waiting two-wheel-drive ambulances.

The last passenger was taken off the disaster scene at about 11.20 am. In all at least 40 passengers to the ambulances.

The role of the RFS did not end with the final patient transfer. A Sutherland RFS vehicle was used to take the Deputy NSW Coronor, to the scene. Other PCs took in equipment and other personnel from all agencies to the train wreck. The tankers from Wollongong RFS were driven along the tracks from the south to help with rescue and provide additional fire protection.

A crew from the National Parks and Wildlife Service cut an emergency helipad.

Back at the Sutherland Fire Control in Wilson Parade, Heathcote the Shire’s disaster plan had been activated. By 8.00 am the Emergency Operations Centre was filled with multi agency emergency co-ordinators. There was great co-operation and the plan went very smoothly.

The RFS quickly realised that firefighters involved in the succour and rescue of victims might need some critical incident support, and moved quickly to activate CIDSS.

Because Ron Anderson, the RFS Senior Chaplain was sitting in the Minto fire scene (Ron arrived at 3.00 pm) RFS Chaplain, Colonel Don Woodland took his place talking with firefighters. He was supported by Paul Scott, a senior CIDSS debriefer from Newmarch and two peer debrievers.

RFS volunteers and paid staff continued working throughout the day.

The last appliance returned to station at 11.20 pm and the network’s last radio transmission was at 1.15 am.

In all more than 50 RFS personnel, 25 from each district, were involved in the first four hours of the emergency. The RFS involvement continued for a further two days as the damaged carriages were transported and downed stanchions and wires cut and removed.

Because cutting equipment was in use and should not be producing the RFS provided extensive fire protection.

Over the three days a total of 150 RFS personnel, 70 from Sutherland were involved in the incident.

“All firefighters, particularly the District Field Officers, did an outstanding job on what was a sad day,” Superintendent Wood said later.

HEROES

Letters and drawings from the Children of New South Wales

“YOU’RE MY HEROES”

Story by Cameron Walsh and Andrew Playfair

Photos by Andrew Nolan

RFS Corporate Communications has released the new look and major upgrade to the service’s web page.

New features include substantial improvements to the user interface. Extensive new information has been added and will continue to be expanded.

The information provided on the new site is focused towards what we believe the general public and our members are most likely to need.

The front page shows a summary of what is new on the site at any time, alerting you to news and events the moment you log on.

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CRASH LANDING AT PENRITH

On 15 February 2003 a Robin R-2160 crashed into a CSIRO paddock on Elizabeth Drive near Liverpool.

The pilot was having difficulty and tried to land on a dirt road but did not see a brown gate in the way and crashed into it.

The RFS assumed the worst and responded with five heavy tankers and two Group Officers.

When the call came through there was no indication of the type of aircraft and number of people on board. RFS assumed the worst and responded with five heavy tankers and two Group Officers.

There were no casualties, however there might have been a bit of claustrophobia with the amount of people with volunteers from Cumberland, Regentville, Orchard Hills, Erskine Park, Hoxton Park and Luddenham.

DEHYDRATION CONCERNS

In recent operations a number of firefighters as well as aviation specialists and support personnel have been treated for dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stress due to high temperatures, low humidity and fatigue.

As our firefighters become weary with the prolonged fire campaign, the incidence of minor injuries and exhaustion are becoming more prolific. It is therefore incumbent on all levels of management including crew leaders to ensure that all firefighters are having adequate rest and are drinking an adequate amount of fluid. It should be noted that caffeinated drinks and alcohol consumed after a long or hard shift on the fireground can be a contributing factor to dehydration, so moderation should be observed.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Caffeinated drinks and alcohol dehydrate – limit your consumption.

You can have a sport drink to supplement electrolytes. They should be taken at the ratio of 1 sports drink to 10 equivalents of water. As a guide, for frontline firefighting, one litre of fluid should be taken every hour.

Guidelines produced in relation to recommended fluid intake, indicate that for front line firefighters at least one litre of fluid should be taken every hour.

Guidelines produced in relation to recommended fluid intake, indicate that for front line fire fighters at least one litre of fluid should be taken every hour. This is a guide only and in some instances more fluids may need to be ingested, in direct relation to an individual’s physical characteristics.

The detachable chart is a good indicator of how “hydrated” a person may be. It is based on a simple self analysis of the colour of your urine. This is to be distributed to all fire fighting personnel within your District.

Dehydration is not something that is easily recognizable, so prevention is better than cure. Many professional athletes indicate that when they reach a point of feeling thirsty, it is already too late, so maintaining a regular intake of fluid is extremely important.

Nothing can replace clean drinking water. It is important that enough water be provided on all Rural Fire Service vehicles, to accommodate the needs of all crew members, for a period of 24 hours.

Chief Superintendent Alan Briknerth
AFSM, FRES, AADIS, ACAIRB
Manager State Operations

DARK YELLOW
> Highly dehydrated.
> Go drink a large bottle of water immediately!!

BRIGHT YELLOW
> You are still seriously dehydrated.
> Drinking more now will make you feel a lot better.

YELLOW
> Moderately dehydrated.
> You lose fluid on a regular basis throughout the day. Drink more water to get hydrated.

LIGHT YELLOW
> Almost there.
> Get some more water into your system. Stay hydrated and healthy!

CLEAR
> Great job.
> Now don’t let yourself get dehydrated. Drink at least 8-12 large glasses of water throughout the day.

Urine colour dark yellow

Urine colour bright yellow

Urine colour yellow

Urine colour light yellow

Urine colour clear

HOW DEHYDRATED ARE YOU?

Urine colour dark yellow
> Highly dehydrated.
> Go drink a large bottle of water immediately!!

Urine colour bright yellow
> You are still seriously dehydrated.
> Drinking more now will make you feel a lot better.

Urine colour yellow
> Moderately dehydrated.
> You lose fluid on a regular basis throughout the day. Drink more water to get hydrated.

Urine colour light yellow
> Almost there.
> Get some more water into your system. Stay hydrated and healthy!

Urine colour clear
> Great job.
> Now don’t let yourself get dehydrated. Drink at least 8-12 large glasses of water throughout the day.

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Endorsed by the Ambulance Service of NSW
The Christmas 2001 bushfires highlighted the need to ensure more appropriate development in areas that may be affected by bushfires. With the application of sensible planning precautions and appropriate design features, it is possible to significantly reduce the impact that a bushfire will have on residential properties.

The Government introduced legislation to bring about a more sensible development regime in areas of high bushfire risk. The new legislation will ensure that:  
1. Residential and other developments are not unduly exposed to risk from high intensity bushfires.
2. The changes are not confined to residential property but also affect developments such as aged care facilities, child minding facilities, educational institutions, hospitals, nursing homes and subdivisions that are planned in bush fire prone areas.

Planning for Bushfire Protection 2001 is a guide for the designing and building in bush fire prone areas, produced by the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) and Planning NSW. Planning for Bushfire Protection 2001 assists all those involved in the development process in helping to reduce bushfire risk. The changes to planning laws will ensure that these guidelines are taken into consideration in the approval process for all future developments in bush fire prone areas.

The following questions and answers are part of a document produced for the benefit of those wishing to carry out building or development works in a bushfire prone area. As Brigade members may, from time to time, get inquiries from members of the public, these are reproduced for your general information. Specific inquiries should be addressed to your local council offices.

What is bush fire prone land?
Bush fire prone lands are generally those forest or grasslands that, by virtue of their bushfire hazard and proximity to existing and proposed development, hold a significant risk to property in bush fire prone areas, such as bushfire grasslands that, by virtue of their bushfire hazard and proximity to existing and proposed development, hold a significant risk to property in bush fire prone areas.

Deputy Fire Control Officer Hornsby has conducted all five, two-hour classes since they started in October 2002. The 100 professional firefighters have learnt about the corporate and operational structure of the RFS, the RFS. We’re trying to break down some barriers because both organisations work toward the same goal and work best together with understanding and respect for each other,” said Inspector Eggleston.

How do I know whether or not my land is in a bush fire prone area?
Bush fire prone area maps for all local government areas are to be made available for inspection at council offices. Under the transitional arrangements, councils have up to 12 months from 1 August 2002 to prepare maps indicating which lands within their precincts are bushfire prone. These maps, prepared in consultation with the NSW Rural Fire Service, will need to be endorsed by the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Additionally, Section 149 Certificates (a certificate that identifies relevant town planning factors that apply to a parcel of land) issued by local councils will identify whether or not the land for which the Certificate is issued is in a bushfire prone area.

If the land on which I want to build a house is in a bushfire prone area, will I be able to develop the land as I had proposed?
The guidelines in Planning for Bushfire Protection 2001 require certain protective measures to render a building less susceptible to damage or destruction from bushfires.

If the siting and nature of the building being proposed does not meet the minimum standards as contained in the guidelines, councils need to refer the application to the NSW Rural Fire Service. Generally, it is not the intention of the new measures to prevent the development of land in bush fire prone locations. However, in order to provide adequate protection from bushfires, it may be necessary to modify the site, construction material or siting of a building. Any modification required to ensure a structure meets the necessary standards will be the subject of negotiation between the developer and the relevant authorities.

Is the NSW Rural Fire Service the ultimate consent authority for residential development?
Infill development such as the construction of a single residential dwelling amongst existing structures will only need to be referred to the NSW Rural Fire Service if the planning criteria are not met. The NSW Rural Fire Service will provide advice to local councils about the measures that might be taken to render the development acceptable. Councils remain as the consent authorities for these types of developments.

Where integrated development such as large residential estates and other facilities such as aged care, schools and hospitals are intended, the NSW Rural Fire Service is required to provide a Bush Fire Safety Authority.

In any event, all proponents of development have the right of appeal to the NSW Land and Environment Court.

Is it mandatory for someone to include an assessment of the bushfire risk in a development application?
While it may be a requirement of individual councils it is not a requirement for every application. Your local council and the NSW Rural Fire Service will provide you with information and guidelines relating to your particular property and what measures need to be taken to ensure your development proceeds.

Will these new requirements delay the processing of development applications?
Even where the development application has been referred to the NSW Rural Fire Service, the Service will generally process it within 14 days.

If I want to extend my house, make external modifications or sub-divide the block to accommodate a new residential dwelling, how will the new provisions affect me?
If your property falls within a designated bush fire prone area, such proposals will generally be subject to the new planning provisions.

If I want to sell my existing dwelling, will its sale be affected by the new legislation?
There will be no restriction placed upon the sale or purchase of a property; however, the Section 149 Certificate issued by the council may identify the property as being in a bushfire prone area. As a consequence future alterations, renovations or additions to the property will be subject to the new planning provisions.

Is the NSW Rural Fire Service the ultimate consent authority for residential developments?
Infill development such as the construction of a single residential dwelling amongst existing structures will only need to be referred to the NSW Rural Fire Service if the planning criteria are not met.

What are the bushfire protection requirements that need to be addressed in a development?
Factors that will be considered by the NSW Rural Fire Service when providing advice to councils on developments in bush fire prone areas will include: 
1. access to and from the property for evacuation and firefighting 
2. provision of an adequate water supply for firefighting 
3. building setbacks, including the provision of ‘Asset Protection Zones’, and 
4. construction standards.

Asset Protection Zones provide a buffer around residential properties by requiring that bushfires be progressively reduced as they get they closer to the dwelling. Asset Protection Zones therefore made up of sections described as inner and outer protection areas. These areas allow significant flexibility in the design and construction standards that might apply.

These requirements are set out in full within Planning for Bushfire Protection 2001.

I own a parcel of land that I want to subdivide. How does the new legislation affect me?
If the land is within a bush fire prone area and is being subdivided for residential (including rural residential) purposes, the development is classed as integrated development and must be referred to the NSW Rural Fire Service for assessment. The NSW Rural Fire Service will assess the proposal against the performance criteria of Planning for Bushfire Protection 2001.

Design of the development should also consider the following points: 
1. provide refuge for evacuation 
2. avoid isolated developments 
3. subdivision patterns with good access 
4. avoid ridge tops and steep slopes 
5. ensure the provision of water for firefighting 
6. include adequate asset protection zones within property boundaries 
7. use level ground where possible 
8. locate habitable building near access/egress points 
9. locate services underground

Where can I get more information?
You can download a copy of Planning for Bushfire Protection 2001 at the NSW Rural Fire Service website (www.rfs.nsw.gov.au) or can be purchased from Planning NSW if you do not have access to the Internet. You may contact your local NSW Rural Fire Service office or local council for further assistance.
MEMORY OF BLACK CHRISTMAS

The lengthy 2002-2003 fire season brought back memories of Black Christmas for many volunteers who took part in task forces in 2002-2003. As fire affected northern Sydney, the Blue Mountains and the Shoalhaven last December, Kelly Mackellar’s thoughts flew back to Christmas 2001.

“I was watching the national news and began thinking back to last Christmas Day (2001). I remember my step mum said “if you need to go, just ring me’’ .

On that note, I rang our brigade duty officer to let him know that if a crew was to go away to help fight the fires, both Justin, my husband, and I were right to go.

That was over a year ago, and as I watched the news last December, I felt tears creep down my face as I thought “I should be there helping, not sitting here doing nothing’’.

You just can’t explain how it feels to someone who hasn’t been in a situation like Justin and I.

Our three day tour turned into five days. But I let him know that if a crew was to go away to help fight the fires, both Justin, my husband, and I were right to go.

This funding could be better used to equip and train volunteers.

The Rural Fire Service has embarked on a new project entitled the Brigade Administration Manual. The Manual will be designed to assist salaried and volunteer officers to effectively manage their brigades.

The Manual will consist of way to follow references to existing documentation and services provided by the RFS. Assistance with finance, business management, SOP and service standards are covered in the Manual. A guide to the service structure will provide a reference for sourcing information and support to the issues, which arise within your brigade, as all Head Office Management groups will be contributing to the Manual.

Updates on progress will be posted on the RFS web page with plenty of opportunities for volunteer input.

If you have any questions regarding the Manual please contact Volunteer relations on 8845 3743.

TO ASSIST IN EFFECTIVELY MANAGING BRIGADES

A PLACE TO RELAX

NOW NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE LIBRARY - A PLACE TO RELAX, READ, RESEARCH AND LEARN.

The RFS Library - what resources will you find there?

- More than 3000 publications and reports
- 600+ videos
- Training resources (UTN, AVAC, NSWFRS, etc)
- Media clippings, press releases and transcripts related to Rural Fire Service back to 1991
- Photos
- Brochures
- Documents
- What subjects are covered?
- All fire-related information - prescribed burning, fire safety education, firefighting, etc
- Environmental planning and management
- Safety, health and welfare
- Legal services
- Management
- Emergency services
- Other relevant subjects

What services does the Library provide?

- Research assistance - ask the librarian to help you track down the most useful information for your project or report
- Loans - books and videos may be borrowed by members of the Rural Fire Service, or used in your library
- Current awareness - new books and journals are on display for a short period and then available for loan
- Equipment and facilities - for study and viewing videos. There are desks, computers, chairs, tables and sofas

Who can visit the library?

All members of the NSW Rural Fire Service are welcome to visit the library for browsing and study.

The library is also open to members of the public accompanied with a librarian.

Where is the library located?

The library is located at the Rosehill offices of the Rural Fire Service, 175-179 Great North Road, Rosehill. The library occupies the ground floor of Unit 3.

Visitors are required to go first to Reception, Unit 3, to sign in and obtain a Visitors Pass.

How to arrange a visit:

Contact - The Librarian, Barbara Goss, on 8845 3625, or by email: barbaragoss@rfs.nsw.gov.au

Hours of opening:

Monday - Friday - 8 am - 4.30 pm
Saturdays by arrangement.

Brigade visits:

If you would like to organise a brigade visit to the library on a Saturday, or even during the week, please contact Barbara to discuss.

A PLACE TO RELAX

AUSLAN INSTRUCTORS COURSE AT COFFS

AUSLAN INSTRUCTORS COURSE

Coffs Harbour August 2002

The RFS recently conducted a small group instructor course with the Coffs Coast Deaf Community. The entire course was taught with

AUSTRAL ASL

AUSLAN sign language interpreter.

At least one week prior to instruct, the instructors were required to use ASL sign language in a variety of contexts.

Although the aim of the course was to teach people to train small groups more effectively, the course has inspired the development of fire safety training programs for hearing impaired students.

“...the course was a great example of how the RFS helps the community in a variety of ways not normally associated with firefighting...” said Ron Collingridge.

A GUIDE TO THE SERVICE STRUCTURE

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ANCILLARY AND LEISURE APPAREL

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SPECIAL! 12 or more garments, Brigade name embroidered under logo for FREE!

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For large orders please add clearly printed lists as required.

Brushed Cotton Cap
(25 Caps $8.00 ea., 100+ Caps $7.50 ea.)

$8.50

Large Kit Bag
Individual/Brigade names (printed on separate sheets)

$45.00

Navy

Length 90cm
Height 33cm
Width 33cm

Medium Kit Bag
Individual/Brigade names (printed on separate sheets)

$35.00

Navy

Length 50cm
Height 30cm
Width 20cm

Plus postage & packing per address (includes badges if part of order)

$6.60

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