

BUSHFIRE

BULLETIN



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Cover photo by Rolf Poole



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COMMISSIONER'S FOREWORD

Whatever happened to periods of respite between fire seasons? Perhaps they never existed. Perhaps fire seasons are starting earlier and ending later. Perhaps I'm just getting older.

Perception or otherwise, it appears that we have barely emerged from the 2001/2002 campaign before preparing for what might well be another testing season.

Having said that, we are better prepared than we were this time last year. More new equipment has been provided, training has continued at a high level, legislation governing fire suppression and prevention activities has been amended and, to one extent or another, the restructuring in which we continue to be engaged is beginning to yield improved production and greater cohesion.

Nevertheless, it behoves us to be vigilant and to be ever mindful of how quickly a seemingly benign fire situation can test even the most stoic resolve.

The organisation is in good shape, the Government has provided yet another record budget, the redistribution of staff through zoning and staff consolidation is providing a more skill-based distribution of resources to support our volunteer firefighters, our membership remains reasonably static and becomes more skilled by the day and technologies and equipment continue to improve.

Granted, not all brigades realise the benefits of a growing organisation immediately. The reality is that we must prioritise and plan with a goal of ultimately having a universally well trained and well equipped firefighting force.

The RFS will not resile from the challenges that lie before it and, in so doing, values above all the volunteer nature of our enterprise.

In this context, I am pleased to announce that what I speculated upon earlier has come to pass. The Manager Volunteer Relations is due to start during this month and I am particularly pleased that the position has gone to a serving RFS volunteer. Martin Surrey has had some 17 years as a volunteer in the RFS, the last three and a half as Captain of the Heathcote Headquarters Brigade. Martin brings to the RFS a strong project management background and coupled with his undeniable commitment to volunteerism, is more than adequately equipped to take on the role of enhancing the relationships within our organisation.

The legislative amendments to both the *Rural Fires Act and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* are critical to the long-term enhancement of fire management in this State. There is insufficient opportunity in this article to examine all of the implications, that will be done elsewhere.

Suffice it to say that the new legislation has three principal objectives. Firstly, to lay a firm foundation for development planning with bushfire risk a significant factor, secondly, to streamline the procedures needing to be observed in order to engage in hazard reduction, particularly prescribed burning and thirdly, to provide a more comprehensive and cohesive system to ensure that hazards on all parcels of land are managed and minimised to the best of the ability of responsible entities. A detailed examination of the provisions will demonstrate that the RFS is a pivotal agency and will provide the catalyst for improvement to the way in which wildfire is managed in the future.

The RFS will work closely with all land management agencies and other Government entities as well as the private sector to ensure appropriate outcomes in both development planning and fuel management.

Stay safe this coming season.

Phil Koperberg





1 GENERAL NEWS



HAWKESBURY HOTEL FIRE



Mid afternoon 25 March 2002:

About 20 people had settled in for drinks at the Tropicana Hotel Wilberforce (Hawkesbury District). Most patrons were unaware of the electrical work being carried out in the hotel's main switchboard. Without warning a large explosion is heard and fire breaks out from the switch room.

At 1410hours NSW Fire Brigades Sydney Communications sent the first call to Hawkesbury Fire Control following numerous 000 phone calls. The first fire truck on scene was Wilberforce 1 with a crew of 4. The Officer In Charge (OIC) of Wilberforce 1 began sizing up the situation.

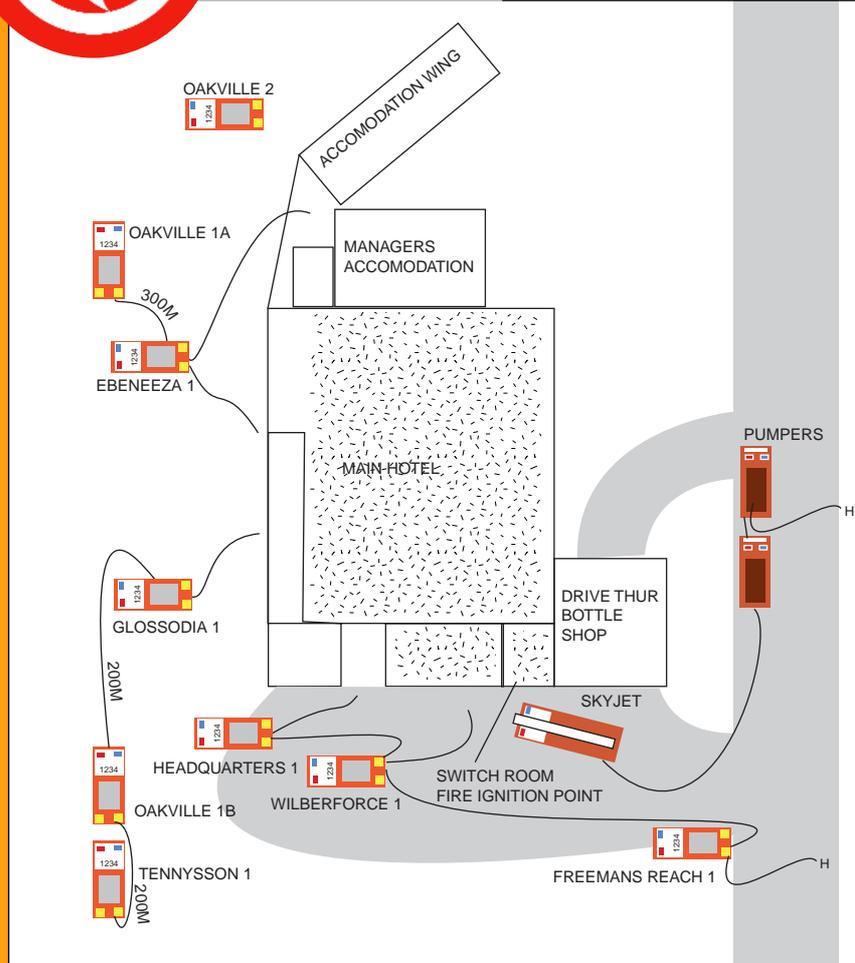
The Senior Deputy Capt of Wilberforce 1 took charge of the firefighting operations on the scene. On first inspection, the Senior Deputy noticed that the original fire had spread to the ceiling of the main section of the hotel. The call went out for an additional 5 units.

After confirming that the Hotel had been completely evacuated, the crew of Wilberforce 1 went to work on trying to limit the spread of the fire. Freemans Reach 1 was the second unit to arrive at 1425 and their crew worked on a water supply from one of two hydrants in the street. They also took on the initial protection of the highly exposed drive-through bottle shop.

Hawkesbury Headquarters 1 and Tennyson 1 were next on scene closely followed by retained NSW Fire Brigades crews from Windsor 82 and Richmond 83. Hawkesbury Headquarters 1 crew assisted the Wilberforce and Freemans Reach crews. With Oakville 1A and 1B, Glossodia and Ebeneza tankers on their way, Tennyson 1 crew began the set up for a relay from one of two dams nearly 400metres away.

The building was loosely sectorised with NSWFB taking the front part, which consisted of the drive- through bottle shop and the switch room. Crews using breathing apparatus were able to protect the bottle shop from the fire. The two pumpers were using the second hydrant in the dead end street. Water was going to be a problem.

Wilberforce 1, Hawkesbury Headquarters 1, Freemans Reach 1 took up positions that allowed for defensive structural firefighting at the side of the complex. Glossodia 1 and Ebenezer 1 were at the end of the relay from



both dams and commenced defensive firefighting on the rear section of the building.

At stake was the hotel manager's residence, which was attached to the main hotel, and 12 separate rooms of an accommodation wing.

Oakville 1A pumped directly from a second dam to the Ebeneza tanker. Oakville 1B was the middle pump in the original relay started by Tennyson 1. Oakville 2 was also on scene but remained on standby to respond to any other incident that may have occurred in that part of the district.

The Hawkesbury Group Captain had by now assumed the role of Incident Controller and, after a quick assesment of the situation, radioed a request for an aerial appliance. NSWFB Station 86 Penrith Skyjet was responded.

About an hour into the fight, the roof of the main building collapsed and there was a large amount of damage to the interior. Water was being pumped onto the roof and into the centre of the fire from the rear of the complex by RFS crews. The front section, including the bottle

Continued over



shop, had been saved. The manager's residence had mild water and smoke damage but the majority of the rooms and the belongings of the manager and his family had been saved. The accommodation wing was also protected.

After approximately 2 hours of firefighting, RFS crew were able to enter the building and extinguish any remaining pockets of fire. The entire roof had fallen into the centre of the complex. The Skyjet was used to completely extinguish the switch room and some of the roof areas that were inaccessible to the ground crews.

Even though the a "stop" message was sent at 1640 hours, it was several more hours before the last tanker left the scene. The coordination of resources had resulted in the bottle shop, accommodation and residence being saved. The hotel owner was able to trade from the bottle shop later that evening and, because this was the only pub in the area, no one was more grateful than the locals.

Story and photos by Cameron Wade

TWO RELAY LINES, OF SOME 400 METRES EACH, WERE PUT IN PLACE WITH 65MM HOSE LAY FEEDING THE TANKERS ON THE FIRE GROUND.



BACK TO THE DAYS OF STEAM

Those of our older members will remember the days of steam locomotives (that was when the firefighting was done with wet bags and tree branches). The locomotives would regularly drop burning embers into grass along side the tracks and yet another fire would start.

The same problem occurs at the Illawarra Light Railway Museum fairly regularly, so some of the members approached the Kiama-Shellharbour and the Wollongong Rural Fire Districts for a solution. An old tank, pump and hose reel that needed repair were gathered together and the members constructed and painted a rail wagon to be hauled around the

rail circuit as required.

At present it is hauled by one of the working steam engines, with a diesel locomotive presently being refurbished and painted in the correct colours to make up a complete fire train.

The unit is a popular talking point for the many visitors to the site and allows access to an area where fire appliances have difficulty.

The locomotive in the picture spent many years hauling coal around the coalmine railways in the Illawarra.

Story and photos by Andy Jaffray

BASIL SMITH CALLS IT A DAY

After thirty years in the Service where he started as a volunteer in 1973, Basil Smith, Superintendent at Wingecarribee, has decided



to hang up his uniform.

Basil was born in 1939 at Pretty Beach on the Central Coast of NSW. After working as an Apprentice Fitter with the NSW Government Railway

he moved into the refrigeration business, where he stayed for 23 years, with 13 of those years being as a self employed person.

Basil joined the Mittagong Bushfire Brigade as a volunteer in 1973. He progressed to the position of Deputy Fire Control Officer and in 1996 he became a Fire Control Officer.

Basil leaves the Service after overseeing the largest emergency operation his District has ever had to deal with.

In his retirement Basil and his wife will go to Perth for a holiday before caravanning wherever the mood takes them.

Have a good one Basil!

"YELLOWWS" ON PARADE

More and more RFS members in their "yellows" are being seen at activities where fire is not a factor.

Attendance at fetes, giving lectures and demonstrations at schools and getting across the fire safety "message" are among the roles now conducted by RFS volunteers.

This year increasing numbers of members joined other community groups to remember those who had served and fallen in war. They attended ANZAC services prior to April 25, or marched in ANZAC Day parades.

Our picture, taken by Mrs Sandra Dean of Asquith shows an RFS volunteer, along with representatives of many other organisations, about to lay a floral tribute on the war memorial at Hornsby.

"Les We Forget" the "furies" aren't.

Story and photo by Graham Davis



Volunteer at Hornsby ANZAC memorial service.



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HAZELBROOK BASH

Early in the year 2001 someone at Hazelbrook Rural Fire Brigade probably the Captain, came up with an unusual idea. It was to enter the NSW Variety Club "Bash" from Beverly Hills to Broadbeach in QLD.

A few other members thought "what a great idea! But won't we need a car?" That caused a bit of head scratching till someone, probably the Captain, remembered that there was a 1943 Model Chevy Blitz sitting in a shipping container out the back of the fire station.

The vehicle was a restoration project, which had sought of slowed to a halt. Phone calls were made and letters written seeking permission to use the old Blitz in the "Bash", having gained approval, and with the "Bash" starting in August there was a bit of work to do.

The vehicle had a great deal of history attached to it, being built in Canada for the military, it was also believed to have served the Royal New Zealand Air Force. It was privately purchased following WWII and was used to cart timber in the Megalong Valley. Its purchase and conversion to a Bush Fire Tanker by Megalong Valley Brigade took place in the 1950's. It then became the first tanker purchased by the Blue Mountains Council. The Blitz finished its operational life with Mt Tomah Brigade.

Getting the vehicle ready to travel a few thousand kilometres on some ordinary roads

was not the only challenge facing Hazelbrook; there was also the small problem of raising the required amount of \$8,000 to make the starting line. The money went directly to the Variety Club to fund their work in helping disabled and disadvantaged kids.

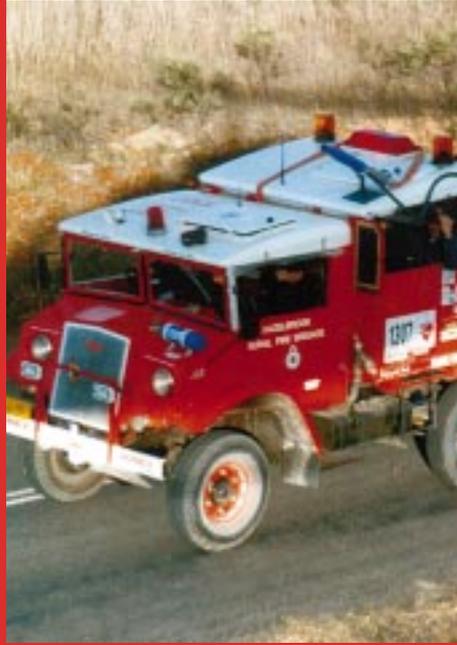
Further figures were done on the amount of fuel required to get from Sydney to Broadbeach via Lightning Ridge, Cania Gorge and Yeppoon, and people starting getting nervous.

While some members worked day and night on the truck, basically rebuilding it from the chassis up, others set about raising funds and some did both!

Hundreds of letters, Faxes and Emails later, sponsorship began to trickle in and it was looking a lot better. A few fundraising evenings were organised and by July it was looking very good indeed. The vehicle was still to pass a blue slip and a rear cabin had yet to be built, time was getting a little short, as were a few tempers, but everyone pressed on.

One of the fundamental requirements of all "Bash" vehicles was the need for two spare tyres. Strangely this was to prove quite a problem. Our Blitz was one of we believe only ten short wheel base models with sixteen inch rims, which came into the country. Trying to find another spare took months, and caused a bit of stress, but one finally turned up.

THE VEHICLE HAD A GREAT DEAL OF HISTORY ATTACHED TO IT, BEING BUILT IN CANADA FOR THE MILITARY, IT WAS ALSO BELIEVED TO HAVE SERVED THE ROYAL NEW ZEALAND AIR FORCE.



THE BLITZ IS CURRENTLY UNDERGOING ANOTHER RESTORATION THIS TIME BACK TO ITS ORIGINAL CONFIGURATION, AND WILL BE USED IN CEREMONIES AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES.

The vision was to end up with a vehicle that would not only do the distance carrying a crew of 5 in relative comfort (well as comfortable as a fifty year old ex military truck could get), but also retain its firefighting capabilities. Armed with a borrowed tank and pump a foam nozzle and a large quantity of donated shampoo, the Blitz was soon to become greatly feared by other "Bash" competitors.

The start date of August the 11th arrived and having raised the \$8,000 and quite a bit more, the Blitz took its place on the starting line at Bankstown Square along with about a hundred and ten other entrants. Some of the work that had gone into some of the entries was very impressive, but there was only one Blitz and it stood out from the crowd.

The crew of Allan Catt, Cris Hofland, Barry Gordon and Trevor Lang, all of whom were already gripped by mid life crises of varying degrees, became worried, not that the truck wouldn't make the distance, but that they would be slowed up to such a degree beating off the estimated thousands of women who would be drawn like a magnet by the Blitz's sleek lines and raw power, that they would take weeks to complete the journey. Luckily their fears were unfounded, with the support crew of Robyn Catt and Alan Robinson not needed for crowd control at any stage.

The week long trip to Broadbeach was slow but mechanically the Blitz performed magnificently, with only one major problem, that being a shot water pump near Tenterfield. The local FCO came to the rescue and a new pump was located in town. The resulting delay meant the crew missed the next overnight stop in Chinchilla they just kept driving through. The weather was fairly kind although with no side windows in either the front or back, it was a bit chilly.

On Saturday 18 of August the Blitz rolled into Broadbeach having done the distance and time. Because of the Blitz's lack of top end speed, the crew missed a few dinners, parties and a bit of sleep, but they made up for that in the next few days!

The end result was the resurrection of a fine old firefighting vehicle, the creation of a few tales both tall and true and nearly \$14,000 raised to help make the lives of some NSW kids a little brighter. It was an effort that all in the Brigade that played some part, were justifiably proud of.

Hazelbrook would like to thank everyone who assisted with sponsorship, materials and help in any way. There were too many to list here.

Ian Woodham
Hazelbrook Rural Fire Brigade

RECORD BLUEY DAY DONATION TO KIDS HOSPITAL



The Children's Hospital, Westmead was the site of the Bluey Day cheque handover again this year.

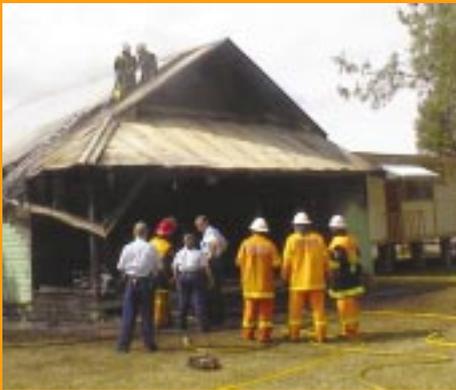
The Service raised a record amount for the Intensive Care Unit thanks to the efforts of 40 individuals who chose to have their hair cut rather publicly. Added to this was money raised at the Community Education Conference and other donations.

The Hospital is one of two recipients of support from the Service, as we believe that it is in the interest of all members to have a viable ICU for the benefit of our extended families and the general population, (the other one is the Burns Unit Concord Hospital).

The Service's participation in this event was recognised when Mark Fullagar became the State Co-ordinator for the event, the first time that the office has been held by someone other than a Police Officer.

The Service's Senior Chaplain Ron Anderson, is just one of the many people who have registered to take part in this year's event. He will be 'scalped' by Ian Stewart of the Region West Office using his racing axe! More on that in another edition!

We are hoping to raise even more this coming year so why not register as a Bluey Day participant. Simply contact Mark Fullagar at Head Office, 02 9684 4411.



LISMORE BRIGADES SAVE SCHOOL



On 8 April a fire, believed to have been caused by an electrical fault, severely damaged a heritage listed school building at Blakebrook, 11km north west of Lismore.

During "Play Lunch" a large plume of smoke emanated from the rear of the classroom while most of the children were assembled in a nearby covered area. The children were very quickly moved to the designated evacuation area and all accounted for.

The sudden black thick smoke is believed to have been caused by the fire initially burning in foam exercise mats.

A 000 call was passed to the Lismore Rural Fire District.

The first responding Brigade was Goolmangar with a Cat 7 tanker that was on scene in under 10mins of being notified. Resources were further bolstered with the arrival of two appliances from Tuncester Brigade two minutes after the arrival of Goolmangar. Nimbin Brigade was also responded to provide additional bulk water.

On arrival the Goolmangar Brigade found

the almost 100 year old building well alight. The storeroom, office and classroom were fully involved with fire which extended through the ceiling into the roof area. Brigades immediately began defensive firefighting.

With all children accounted for, a fleet of three ambulances and an Ambulance Service Superintendent arrived and checked a few children with minor respiratory complaints caused by the instant thick smoke which drifted towards the other buildings. Of the 80 children, three were checked further at hospital and released a short time later.

The local RFS Community Education Team had visited the school a few weeks previously during Term 1 and the fire had enabled a

**BRIGADES
IMMEDIATELY
BEGAN DEFENSIVE
FIREFIGHTING.**

validation of their program. Many children explained to firefighters what they were taught after the fire was extinguished.

With the fire extinguished and the realisation that all of their work was destroyed, the excitement for the children the school Principal and staff lessened. Many years' teaching aids were also destroyed.

The building was extensively damaged but not beyond the point of total destruction. It is being rebuilt with a great deal of the outer structure and floor still in place and in reasonable condition thanks to the swift and professional actions of the attending brigades.

On 10 May 2002, the attending RFS Brigades, Superintendent Ray Collyer (Lismore FCO), Superintendent Boyd Townsend (Richmond Valley FCO, Acting FCO for Lismore at time of incident) and the "Community Fireguard" team were invited back to the school for a thankyou presentation and sausage sizzle. Superintendent Boyd Townsend presented the School captains with an RFS Plaque as a "Fire Safety Award".



2002 Region East Championships held at Wyong. Photos by John Winter



QUEENS BIRTHDAY 2002 HONOURS RECOGNISE SERVICE MEMBERS

The NSW Rural Fire Service congratulates the following Service members on receiving the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) in The Queens Birthday 2002 Honours:

- > Group Captain Warren Bradley ARNOTT (Campbelltown District)
- > Deputy Captain Donald George DUFFY (Murrurundi District)
- > Superintendent Karen HODGES (Hawkesbury District)
- > Superintendent John Garry HOJEL (Baulkham Hills District)
- > Superintendent John William JENKS (Dubbo District)
- > Superintendent Peter John KEARNEY (Wentworth/Balranald District)
- > Group Captain Norman Francis MANN (Evans/Bathurst District)
- > Senior Deputy Captain Ian McCROHON (Canobolas Zone)
- > Captain Ronald Owen ROLLINSON (Shoalhaven)
- > Assistant Commissioner Ross SMITH
- > Inspector Frank Colin TURNBULL (retired – Cessnock District)

Regrettably, Col Turnbull passed away only a few weeks after receiving this distinction.

Australian Fire Service Medal was established in 1988 to recognise distinguished service by members of Australian fire services. Recommendations are made by the responsible Minister in the Commonwealth and each State and Territory 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".

SERVICE AWARDS 2002



The Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service, in recognition of acts of bravery and service, and as authorised under the Rural Fires Act 1997 and accompanying Regulation, established an internal Awards System on 1st February, 1999. The Awards Ceremony is held annually on 4th May, being the Feast Day of St Florian, Patron Saint of Firefighters.

The venue for this year's Awards was Old Government House, Parramatta with awards being presented to five recipients for their meritorious actions (John Waters was unable to attend the ceremony). The Service commends all six recipients for the example that they set for all Service members.

RECIPIENTS FOR 2002

Captain John Waters
Cowra Headquarters Rural Fire Brigade
(Cowra Rural Fire District)

Commissioner's Commendation for Service
Captain John Waters is an extraordinary individual. Not only has he been an active member and officer of the NSW Rural Fire Service for 35 years, but he has also made lasting and important contributions to the Service in a wide range of areas. Of particular significance was his selfless dedication and hard work, against some personal odds, to build a mobile smoke house for use in structure fire training across the region. This mammoth task, now successfully completed, involved over \$15,000 of his donated labour and saw the construction of both the smoke house and a trailer to transport it. This resource is now widely used and is a significant contribution to both training and community safety in western NSW. Captain Waters has brought himself great honour through this selfless contribution to the NSW Rural Fire Service.



Captain Colin Noon

**Carolyn Noon
Michelle Noon
Woolbrook Rural Fire Brigade
(Oxley Zone)**

Commissioner's Commendation for Service

A man owes his life to Colin, Carolyn and Michelle Noon. At about 0900 hrs on 6th July 1999 a neighbour of the Noon family was critically injured after being struck by a rotating aeroplane propeller. Using first-aid training learnt through the Rural Fire Service, Captain Noon and his wife Carolyn stabilized the patient, whose injuries were so bad that his life was in the balance, while the paramedics were being responded. Because of the remote location, the ambulance became lost and was guided to the accident by the prompt and steady assistance of Captain Noon's daughter Michelle. Without the professional and dedicated intervention by the Noon's, the patient would surely have died of his injuries, which were so severe that he eventually lost his arm. The commitment and expertise demonstrated by Colin, Carolyn and Michelle brought themselves great credit. The NSW Rural Fire Service is justifiably proud of them.

Captain Philip Bramich

**Tumbarumba Rural Fire Brigade
(Tumbarumba Rural Fire District)**

Commissioner's Commendation for Service

At 2210 hrs on Sunday 25th February 2001, Captain Philip Bramich and a crew of four Rural Fire Service members responded to a State Emergency Service search for three lost bushwalkers in the Tumbarumba District. After an extensive search in precipitous terrain and dense bushland, Captain Bramich and his crew successfully located the lost walkers who by this time had succumbed to exhaustion and extreme emotional distress. Unable to return to a known path and presented with a tense and agitated group, Captain Bramich displayed discipline, resourcefulness and courage by establishing a night camp for them and keeping them calm and confident until an air evacuation could be undertaken at first light. The crisis was successfully concluded at 1400 hrs on the following day with the extraction of the rescue team. Captain Bramich brought great credit to himself for his leadership and to his team for their professional and effective execution of the rescue operation.

Ian McCrohon

**Summer Hill Creek Rural Fire Brigade
(Canobolas Zone)**

Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation

Mr Ian McCrohon has been an active member of the Summer Hill Creek Brigade since 1995. For the past four years he has also held the important post of Orange District Training Coordinator, a role in which he has distinguished himself for his dedication and enthusiasm. Due to his untiring efforts, training has become central to the activities within the entire District. In recognition of his outstanding skills in the organisation and management of training at a District level, Mr. McCrohon was also invited to join both the Regional and State Training Committees. Mr. McCrohon's selfless dedication and commitment in the area of training has not only brought great credit to himself, but has also greatly improved community safety within his District and beyond.

THE COMMISSIONER OF THE NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE, IN RECOGNITION OF ACTS OF BRAVERY AND SERVICE, AND AS AUTHORISED UNDER THE RURAL FIRES ACT 1997 AND ACCOMPANYING REGULATION, ESTABLISHED AN INTERNAL AWARDS SYSTEM ON 1ST FEBRUARY, 1999.

THE AWARDS NOMINATION PROCESS

Eligibility for these Awards is extended to all members of the Service.

The nomination sequence encompasses all levels of management or command. For example, in the case of a nomination being generated by a brigade, the captain of that brigade must endorse the nomination form. The nomination must be forwarded to the next level of command, being the Fire Control Officer who must also endorse the nomination and then forward it to the Regional Manager. This final nomination endorsement allows the form to be sent to the Awards Assessment Committee for evaluation and recommendation to the Commissioner.

The Awards Assessment Committee consists of representatives from the volunteers and salaried staff of the Service and is required to fully examine each nomination for eligibility. Once a nomination has been assessed and deemed to be eligible, the Committee then makes a formal recommendation to the Commissioner. If a nominee accepts the nomination, full details of the incident or action for which they are being recognised are then officially listed in the RFS Awards Register. Individuals may be nominated for the Medal for Valour, Commendation for Service or Bravery or the Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation. Brigades or formally comprised

units may be nominated for Unit Citations for either Bravery or Service.

Nominations must be lodged on the prescribed nomination forms that are available from Fire Control Centres, Regional Offices and the Head Office of the Service.

All nominations are held in strict confidence. Nominees are advised once a nomination has been approved, though at no time is the nominee advised of the origin of this recommendation.

SERVICE MOVED BY BRITISH GIFT



As a gesture of friendship, and as a mark of the admiration of the British people for the efforts of Service firefighters during the Christmas bushfires, the British Government has presented a Toyota minibus to the Service.

The vehicle, carrying the message "a gift from the people of Britain to the people of NSW" was formally handed over to Commissioner Phil Koperberg by the British High Commissioner, Sir Alastair Goodlad.

The presentation took place on 9 May, and Sir Alastair commented "we wanted to make a donation to the Rural Fire Service for the work of all those involved in fighting the terrible bushfires."

"After discussions with the Service it was decided we would pay for the purchase of a people-mover to transport volunteers, whose contribution to fighting the fires so caught the imagination of people in Britain."

Note: Districts wishing to avail themselves of the use of the minibus should contact the Service's Fleet Officer, Donna Christopher on 8845 3579.

LEETON "TRAINING" GETS WHOLE NEW MEANING!



On the afternoon of April 5 this year Yanco/Wamoon Brigade was on a training exercise. At about 1420 Leeton Fire Control received a call to a train crash on McKellar Road, 17kms East of Leeton. When the crews from Yanco/Wamoon arrived they were confronted with 5 locomotives and 8 carriages derailed and a fully laden garbage truck in three pieces spread over the nearby paddock.

Yanco/Wamoon 1 and 2 as well as East Group striker responded to the scene. A garbage truck had crossed a level crossing and been hit by the 45 carriage wheat train. The accident occurred on the main SouthWest rail line, which runs between Sydney and Griffith. The empty wheat train had left Junee earlier that day after refuelling the 5 locomotives with 26000 litres of diesel.

The driver of the garbage truck was seriously injured and taken by ambulance to

Wagga Base hospital. Two of the locomotives were leaking diesel with potential for the other 3 to do the same. NSWFB retained Brigade 360 Leeton was asked by the RFS to attend as a massive clean up operation was expected.

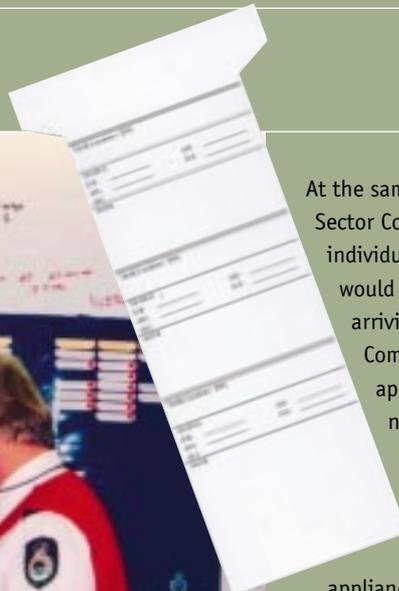
Both fire services worked together to stop the leaking trains. NSWFB 360 crew went back to Leeton after about an hour on the fireground. The 8 crew from Leeton RFS remained on scene for fire protection until 2200 that night while the fuel from the locomotives was decanted into a semi-trailer tanker that had to be driven in from Wagga. The local Salvation Army answered the call for assistance with feeding all of those involved.

With the fuel decanted successfully the crews from Yanco/Wamoon were able to return home. The rail line was closed for 5 days. It was certainly a very interesting training day for the Brigade.





THE T-CARD



At the same incident it is probable that each Sector Commander would keep their own individual T-Card folder, but their T-Cards would be those provided by the OICs of arriving tankers. This enables the Sector Commander to keep tabs on the type of appliances he/she is deploying and the number and names of the crew and any specialist skills.

Scenario 3

Large incident (100 personnel – 19 appliances on scene, 6 other appliances en-route) with the IC located at the Fire Control Centre, a forward control point being run by a Group Officer at the incident site and 5 Sectors, each under the control of Sector Commanders. Without the means of recording crew tasks and locations, an incident such as this could easily become unmanageable. Let's look at a proven recording method using T-Cards. It is probable that total numbers of appliances deployed to the scene would be listed on the situation board at the Control Centre, but not the detail of their task or actual location, this is where T-Card Folders and T-Cards are most valuable.

The forward control point would have a 180 Slot Flexible T-Card Board. The Group Officer controlling the incident would use T-Cards to list Sector Commanders, the numbers of appliances in each Sector and the location details of the Sectors.

The person that requires more detail is the Sector Commander and it is most probable that he/she would have a two or three fold T-Card Folder with T-Cards showing each appliance with the OIC's name and the names of each member of the crew and any specialist skills.

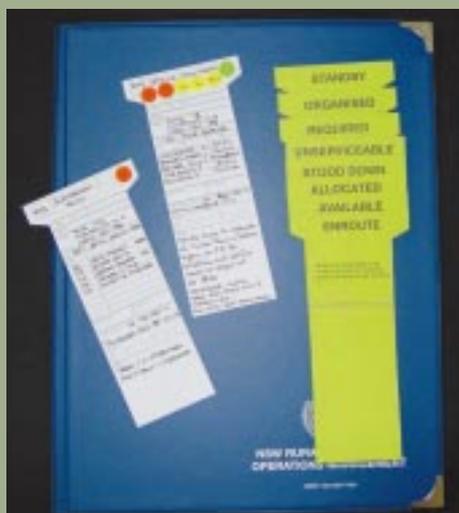
Scenario 4

Very large incident (500 or more personnel). This may well be a Section 44 declaration when a number of strike teams are deployed to the incident. The strike team resource card would be used showing the strike team leader and the appliances, any specialist equipment and/or any specialist personnel.

Since the Service started using the Incident Control System (ICS), the management of fire fighting resources has been significantly streamlined.

One of the benefits to flow from the adoption of ICS is the increasing use of T-Cards to oversee the deployment of all types of resources.

These days it is standard procedure for the Officer in Charge of a responding appliance to be asked to provide a completed T-Card when attending a major incident. The cards are usually collected when arriving at the incident or at the designated staging area.



WHAT HAPPENS

What happens after the T-Card has been collected depends on the scale of the incident and how the incident is being managed. Let's look at a number of common scenarios.

Scenario 1

Small incident (20 personnel – 5 appliances) being controlled by the local Captain.

It is probable that the local Captain would benefit from the use of a T-Card folder to keep track of arriving appliances and their deployment. It is easy to lose track of arriving appliances and where they have been deployed and to what task, especially if fire behaviour dictates rapid deployment of resources.

Scenario 2

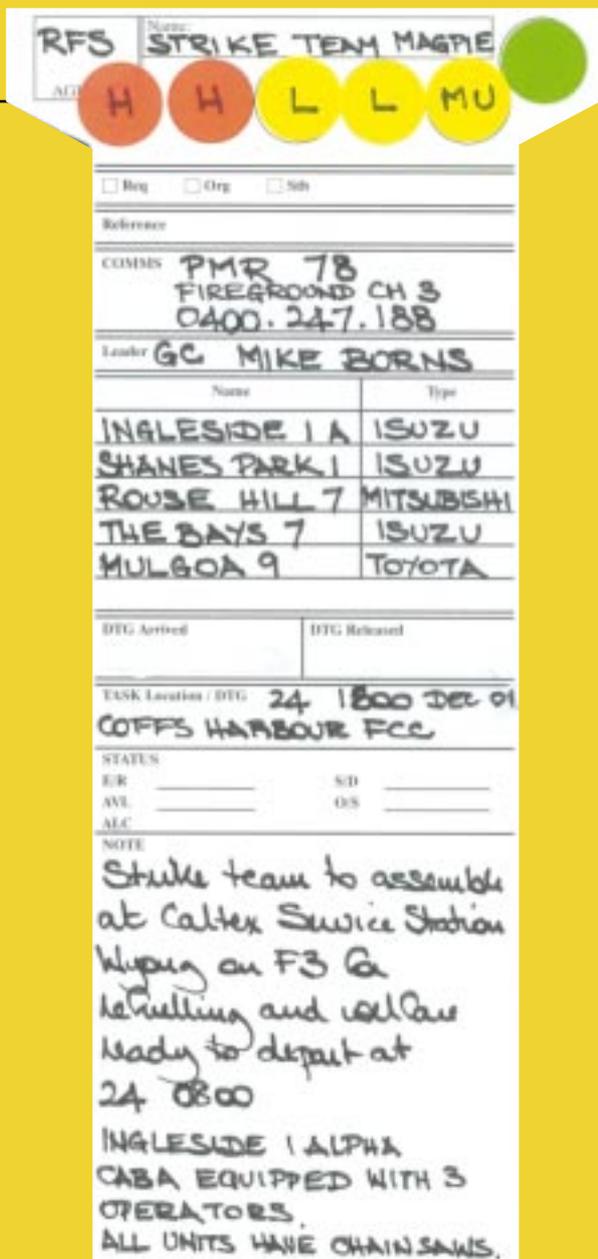
Medium incident (40 personnel – 10 appliances) with the overall scene being controlled locally by a Group Officer as the Incident Controller (IC) with other Officers acting as Sector Commanders.

It is probable that the IC would fill out and use his own T-Cards and his own T-Card folder to keep track of appliances arriving and where he/she is deploying them. All that is required is the name of the appliance and the sector to which it is deployed.

COMPLETING A T-CARD

THE STRIKE TEAM T-CARD

Typically, the T-Card provides details of the vehicle, Agency, Name (strike team name), Circles (for the addition of coloured dots), COMMS (Main radio and/or fireground channel/frequency, mobile telephone number), the Leader (strike team leader) and lists the appliances by Name and Type. NOTE – This can include specialist skills of crew, indicate whether appliances carry CABA or other specialist equipment, where the crews assembled, when the crews were last fed, etc.



RFS STRIKE TEAM MAGPIE

Agency: Req Org Stb

Reference:

COMMS: PMR 78
FIREGROUND CH 3
0400.247.188

Leader: GC MIKE BURNS

Name	Type
INGLESIDE 1 A	ISUZU
SHANES PARK 1	ISUZU
ROUSE HILL 7	MITSUBISHI
THE BAYS 7	ISUZU
MULGOA 9	TOYOTA

DTG Arrived: _____ DTG Released: _____

TASK Location / DTG: 24 1800 DEC 01
COFFS HARBOUR FCC

STATUS:

ER: _____ SD: _____
AVL: _____ OS: _____
ALC: _____

NOTE:
Strike team to assemble at Caltex Service Station Wuyang on F3 G, refuelling and roll out ready to depart at 24 0800.
INGLESIDE 1 ALPHA CABA EQUIPPED WITH 3 OPERATORS.
ALL UNITS HAVE CHAINSAWS.

THE SINGLE RESOURCE T-CARD

Typically, the T-Card provides details of the vehicle, Agency, Name (callsign), Type (vehicle make), Circle (for the addition of coloured dot), COMMS (Main radio and/or fireground channel/frequency, mobile telephone number), the OIC (officer in charge) and lists the crew by rank and name.



STATUS:

- REQUIRED (REQ) A particular resource or resources, is required or requested by a unit.
- ORGANISED (ORG) The required resource has been organised, or arranged.
- STANDBY (SB) The organised resources have been placed on standby.
- ENROUTE (ER) Resources dispatched to an incident (usually an Assembly Area), that have not yet checked in.
- AVAILABLE (AVL) Resources at an incident and available at short notice.
- ALLOCATED (ALC) Resources working at an incident.
- STOOD DOWN (S/D) Stood down from the shift.
- UNSERVICEABLE (U/S) Resources at an incident unable to respond for mechanical, rest or personal reasons.

- > DTG - Date Time Group – DTG refers to Date Time Group which uses the two digits for the date and 24 hour time, eg 10:51hrs on 4 November, 1999 would be: 04 1051
- > The full DTG would be: 04 1051 NOV 99
- > Which includes the date, time, month and year
- > TASK Location/Date Time Group (DTG) – this allows for the recording of a number of different tasks

APPLIANCE CATEGORY IDENTIFICATION – EFFECTIVE 1 OCTOBER 2000

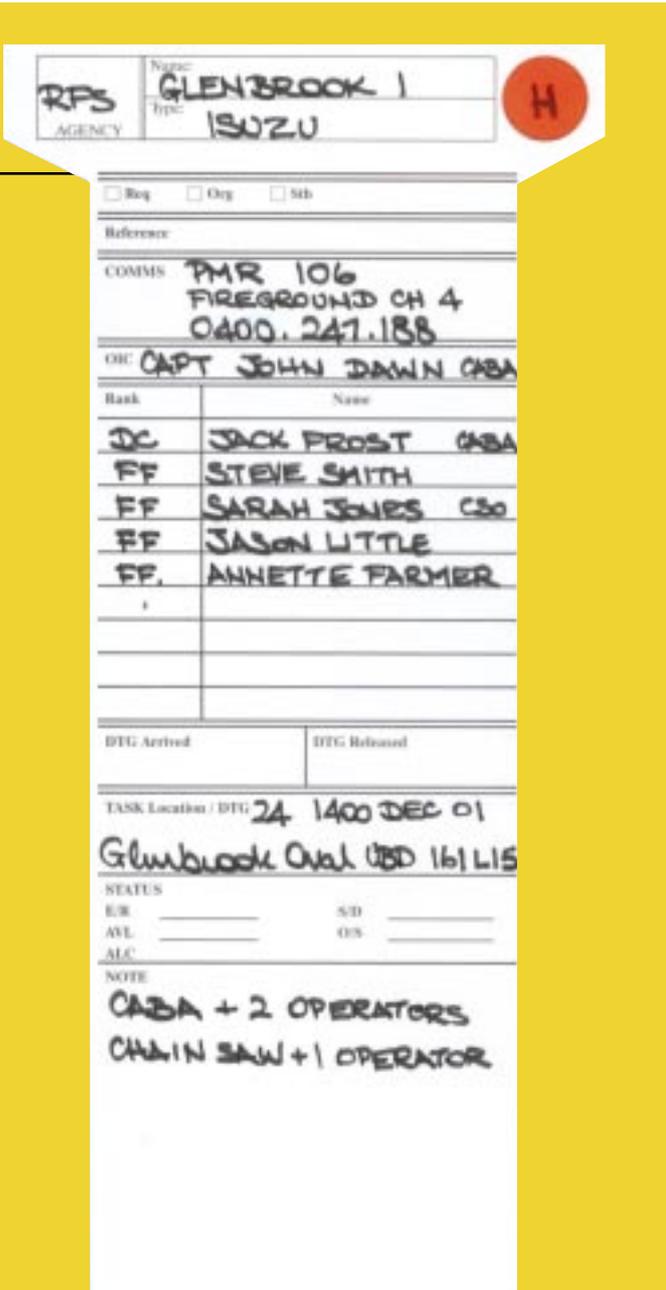
CATEGORY	MAIN IDENTIFICATION	SUB IDENTIFICATION
----------	---------------------	--------------------

Category 1	Heavy Fire Appliance AWD 3,001L - 4,000L	B - V - F - G / D - S
Category 2	Medium Fire Appliance AWD 1,601L - 3,000L	B - V - F - G / D - S
Category 3	Heavy Fire Appliance 3,001L - 4,000L	B - V - F - G / D - S
Category 4	Medium Fire Appliance 1,601L - 3,000L	B - V - F - G / D - S
Category 5	Heavy Fire Appliance AWD 4,001L +	B - V - F - G / D - S
Category 6	Heavy Fire Appliance 4,001L +	B - V - F - G / D - S
Category 7	Light Fire Appliance AWD 801L - 1,600L	F - G / D - S
Category 8	Light Fire Appliance 801L - 1,600L	F - G / D - S
Category 9	Mop Up Fire Appliance AWD 350L - 800L	D - S
Category 10	Urban Fire Appliance 1,601L +	B
Category 11	Urban Fire Appliance AWD 1,601L +	B
Category 12	Personnel Transport	
Category 13	Bulk Water Carriers	
Category 14	Mop Up Fire Tanker Trailers	
Category 15	Boats	
Category 16	Command Vehicles	
Category 17	General Cargo Vehicles	
Category 18	Catering Vehicles	
Category 19	Communication Vehicles	
Category 20	Other Appliances/Vehicles	

Key: AWD = All Wheel Drive, B = BA Equipped, V = Village (No BA),
F = Forest, G = Grassland only, D = Dual/Crew Cabin, S = Single Cabin

Radio callsigns use numbers up to Category 9 and after Category 9, the callsign consists of a suitable one word descriptor, for example "pumper".

Callsigns shall include the category number which nearest matches the vehicle or a suitable one word description, such as "slip-on", "trailer", "carrier", "support", "canteen", "boat", etc. It is intended that 4x2 and trailer type bulk water carriers be described as "bulk water".



RPS AGENCY

Name: **GLENBROOK 1**

Type: **ISUZU**

H

Reg Org Std

Reference:

COMMS: **PMR 106**
FIREGROUND CH 4
0400. 247.188

Off: **CAPT JOHN DAWN CABA**

Rank	Name	
DC	JACK FROST	CABA
FF	STEVE SMITH	
FF	SARAH JONES	CSO
FF	JASON LITTLE	
FF.	ANNETTE FARMER	

DTG Arrived: _____ DTG Released: _____

TASK Location / DTG: **24 1400 DEC 01**
Glumbrook Oval USD 161 L15

STATUS

ER: _____ SD: _____

AVL: _____ OS: _____

ALC: _____

NOTE

CABA + 2 OPERATORS
CHAIN SAW + 1 OPERATOR



OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

6.13.01 RESOURCE T-CARD COLOUR CODING IDENTIFICATION

FIRE APPLIANCE - HEAVY	 L	AWD Cat 1 3001L – 4000L Cat 5 4001L +	 H	4x2 Cat 3 3001L – 4000L Cat 6 4001L +
FIRE APPLIANCE – MEDIUM	 M	AWD Cat 2 1601L – 3000L	 M	4x2 Cat 4 1601L – 3000L
FIRE APPLIANCE – LIGHT	 L	AWD Cat-7 801L – 1600L	 L	4x2 Cat-8 801L – 1600L
FIRE APPLIANCE – MOP UP	 MU	AWD Cat 9 350L – 800L		
URBAN FIRE APPLIANCE	 	AWD Cat 11 1601L +	 	4x2 Cat 10 1601L +
BULK WATER CARRIER	 	Cat 13		
VEHICLE	 	Command Cat 16 or Communications Cat 19		
PERSONNEL TRANSPORT	 	Cat 12		
MACHINERY	 	Dozer	 	Grader
AIRCRAFT	 	Helicopter H - Heavy M - Medium L - Light	 	Fixed Wing H - Heavy M - Medium L - Light
OTHER	 			

ON A CLEAR DAY... YOU CAN SEE DUNGOG!!

Sunday April 28 dawned bright and clear over the Girl Guides Association camp at Callemondah, 10 km north west of Clarence Town, in Dungog Shire. A perfect day for a major hazard reduction burn and training exercise. Group Captain Joe Howard and DFCO Inspector Bob Gaston surveyed the early morning scene and declared the burn "a goer", heralding one of the largest combined exercises to be undertaken by Dungog brigades this year. Eleven tankers, 45 personnel, a full IMT, and two trainee Crew Leaders all assembled at lunchtime to implement the burn plan developed by GC Joe Howard a few weeks earlier. It was also a great opportunity for the two newest CL trainees to complete the practical side of their Crew Leader assessment. Deputy Captain Jo McDonald of Wallarobba Brigade and firefighter Jo Chevalley of Paterson Brigade had recently completed their CLW training at Cessnock, and were each given command of a sector as part of their practical assessment. "This was an important step in the development of

training for Dungog," said FCO, Supt. Alan Gillespie. "Our SOP 8 accreditation for CL is pending, however a joint training initiative with Cessnock District has enabled us to commence our CL training program." He said. According to DGC Darryl Jordan, both trainees performed very well during the exercise, which also saw a number of new recruits "smell smoke" for the first time since completing their BF. Operations Officer for the burn, DGC Mark Bennett, explained that the burn area was divided into two sectors, east and west of the camp access road. Each sector was allocated 5 appliances, with a bulk water tanker stationed at the entrance to the camp. "Safety was our number one priority" said DGC Grahame Chevalley. "This was an idea opportunity for us to reinforce those skills learned during theory training, and to hone then under controlled conditions those practical skills so necessary for combating a wildfire," he said.



"COME AND GET IT" AT LUGARNO



Deputy Captain John Koole heads the food line with members of the Illawong Brigade.

Men and women, from the Ilawong Brigade (Sutherland RFS) swapped their stout leather gloves for sterile rubber hand protection when they turned out to a call with a difference earlier this year.

The Lugarno Lions Club invited the Brigade to provide the hot food for its "Jazz in the Park" concert at Evatt Park, Lugarno and use the event as an equipment fundraiser.

Nearly 20 firefighters took up the invitation and were soon cooking sausages, kebabs and onions.

More than 2000 people attended the concert and the Brigade raised several hundred dollars.

Graham Davis

SERVICE A MAJOR SUPPORTER OF CHILDRENS HOSPITAL FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

The NSW Rural Fire Service was honoured to be asked to participate in the current Children's

Hospital Westmead Fundraising campaign. The theme of the campaign that depicted NSW Rural Fire Service and NSW Fire Brigades firefighters with some of the Hospital's young patients was the simple but moving line "You think we're brave... You ought to meet some of the sick kids that we support at The Children's Hospital Westmead". If you would like to support the Children's Hospital you can send a tax deductible donation to the Fundraising Department, The Children's Hospital at Westmead, Locked Bag 4001, Westmead NSW 2145.





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SUPPLIED THROUGH GAAM PUMPS

PHOTO COMPETITION RESULTS

With a total prize pool of \$4,000, the 2nd NSW Rural Fire Service Photo Competition drew a good response from Service members across the State. The Judging Panel from the Service's Community Education Unit pondered category winners and honourable mentions amongst six categories:

- a. Firefighting operations
- b. Other operational activities
- c. Safety and welfare
- d. Training
- e. Education
- f. History of the Service

The Overall Winner was submitted by Helensburgh Rural Fire Brigade (Sutherland District) in the category of History of the Service. The photographer, the late Grace R Edwards was the Brigade's secretary for 16 years. The photo, titled "Ready for Action" was taken during the 1950's and shows the Brigade's first truck that was supplied in parts by Bulli Council. Helensburgh RFS receive the winner's prize of \$1,000.



Other category winners received \$500 and these included:

Category A

Photograph by Ian Dicker (Formerly Region South) showing a prescribed burn in Jasper National Park, Alberta Canada during May 2001. The photo was taken using a Minolta SLR, Fuji 200ASA print film with a Vivitar 70-210mm lens.

Category B – Winner

Photograph by Kathleen Davies of Lawrence Brigade (Maclean District) described as "a dirty job – but someone's gotta do it". Lawrence RFS members cleaning flood mud from sealed roads, Rutland St, Lawrence, February 2001. Kathleen used a Ricoh XR10M with 400 ASA film for her photo.

Honourable Mention

Another photo by Ian Dicker, showing a Firecat/Grumman Tracker fire bomber drop in British Columbia during May 2001 as part of an air attack training course. Ian took this photo with a Ricoh RDC-7 digital camera at a resolution of 2.1 mega pixels.

Category C – No winner

Category D – Winner

Last photo competition's winner, and regular photo contributor, Rolf Poole (Berowra Rural Fire Brigade) was back again with a winning entry in the training category. The photo shows map reading and was taken with a Canon T50.

Honourable Mention

Evan Mellevis of Copacabana Rural Fire Brigade rated an honourable mention for his photograph "On a Roll" taken at the Cessnock Field Day with a Canon EOS 5000.

Honourable Mention

Leslie Riddle of Euston Rural Fire Brigade took these photos "Three Generations" showing her son, his son and her at the Euston Rural Fire Brigade station.

Category E – Winner

Margaret Simmonds the Brigade historian for Shoalhaven Heads Rural Fire Brigade submitted a range of photos including the winning entry depicting the Brigade at the Olympic Torch Relay Day on 10 September 2000.

Category F – Honourable Mention

"The Old and the New" was again submitted by Leslea Riddle, our Category D Honourable Mention recipient. This photo was snapped by Wentworth Balranald FCO, Peter Kearney and shows her 2 year old grandson.



PROVING THAT EXERCISE IS GOOD FOR YOU!



The weekend of 16-17 March 2002 saw the second Region North Operational exercise "Northern 2" run at Hawthorne Park in South Grafton. Vehicles and crews from as far away as Moree and Warringham converged on Grafton to participate in the weekend, which involved 38 tankers, 30 support vehicles and 350 personnel.

The exercise was an outstanding success, with crews completing a variety of simulations including:

- > Pumping Event
- > Car Wrecking yard fire scenario
- > Mapping
- > Prescribed Burning
- > Motor Vehicle Accident Scenario
- > Fire Over-run Scenario
- > Conducting a Hazard Reduction
- > Communications S.O.P workshop
- > Fire Investigation
- > Service Standards Workshop
- > Hazardous Materials Incident
- > Land Search
- > Meeting Procedures workshop
- > Structural Fire Scenario
- > RAFT Exercise
- > Air Base Exercise
- > Championships Event

"Northern 2" was run as a mock Section 44 incident, with a full Incident Management Team put in place. This gave personnel the opportunity to try their hand at being involved in an IMT, as well as allowing others to brush up and develop existing skills in this area.

The IMT personnel had to have all systems in place prior to the arrival of tankers and personnel who were operationally involved in the weekend. This meant the exercise commenced at 1200 hours on Friday 15 March for IMT. The tankers and crews began their activities following the 0800 hours briefing on the Saturday.

The events were divided into 4 divisions, with 4-5 events in each, together with a divisional commander, a deputy and an assistant who were appointed to each area. It was their responsibility to ensure all resources sent to them utilised and effectively deployed.

An airbase was set up at the Grafton Gliding Club, to the West of Grafton and was used by an Air Tractor, a Dromader and a BK117 helicopter that were supplied by the Service's aviation section to participate in the weekend.

RAFT teams from Clarence Valley and Oxley Zones were deployed into the bush on Friday afternoon by helicopter to test their training in survival and navigation skills. The RAFT teams had performed well when they were picked up on Sunday morning.

This year also saw a "basecamp" established at Hawthorne Park for crews to bed down. While some personnel supplied their own tents, a "Hocka" capable of sleeping 120 personnel was erected and used by the majority of personnel. A mobile toilet block which was brought in to assist with infrastructure necessary to run an exercise of this scale.

Catering was provided by a very dedicated crew, who endured very little sleep due to their 0400 hours start time each morning. They worked tirelessly to serve some 1,600 meals to the very hungry and appreciative troops.

As an alternative to running regional championships this year, "Northern 2" organisers ran a championship lane at the exercise for any crews wishing to compete to represent the region at the State Championships. This lane focused on testing "back to basics" skills of firefighters that we so often overlook or forget.

Congratulations to the teams from Lismore, Clarence Valley Zone and Tweed, who will go on to represent Region North at the State Championships to be held 20-22 September 2002 at Penrith.

The exercise was an outstanding success with all participating teams enjoying themselves, while learning or refreshing fire fighting and administrative skills. All of this helps us to provide a better and stronger Rural Fire Service.

Inspector Matthew Inwood
Richmond Valley District

Photos by Cameron Wade



ALL OF THIS HELPS US TO PROVIDE A BETTER AND STRONGER RURAL FIRE SERVICE



DEPOT BEACH SAYS THANKYOU

On Sunday 21 April 2002, this Brigade awarded its first-ever Life Membership to Beverlie and Raymond Mates who are both members of the Depot Beach Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade (Shoalhaven). The award was presented to Bev and Ray at the Brigade's AGM by Group Officer John Ashton on behalf of the Shoalhaven and the President of the Brigade Stuart McFarlane. Both Bev and Ray have been very active over the years in the Brigade's fund raising activities especially at Easter and Christmas.

With the funds they have raised, the Brigade is able to purchase the best and most up to date equipment available, e.g. GPS and fireground radios. We thank them very much for their hard work and dedication over the past 20 years.



Pictured with Bev and Ray Mates are Group Officer John Ashton, Captain Stuart McFarlane and sons Bob and John Mates.

NATIONAL MEDALS GALORE AT MULLAMUDDY

On May 11, 2002 the Mudgee Bowling Club was packed with one hundred and thirty members of the Mullamuddy Brigade, their families and colleagues, as Acting Commissioner Mark Crossweller presented thirty-three Brigade members with the National Medal.

Representing nine hundred and sixty-five years of Service to the community the recipients were congratulated by Mark who told them that their efforts during their service could never be under-estimated and that the community was in their debt. Ages of those present at the ceremony ranged from infancy to over ninety years. Mark paid tribute to the support given to the firefighters by their wives and families who had been especially invited to be present, several of whom had travelled long distances to be at the ceremony. Some families were represented by four generations of Brigade members.

Other speakers on the night were George Souris MP, Member for Upper Hunter and Councillor Denis Yeo, Mayor of Mudgee. Guests included NSW Police Mudgee Commander, Superintendent John Honeysett; RFS Regional Manager, Ian Gibson; FCO Kevin Gibson; DFCO John Parnaby; and GC Alan Selman.

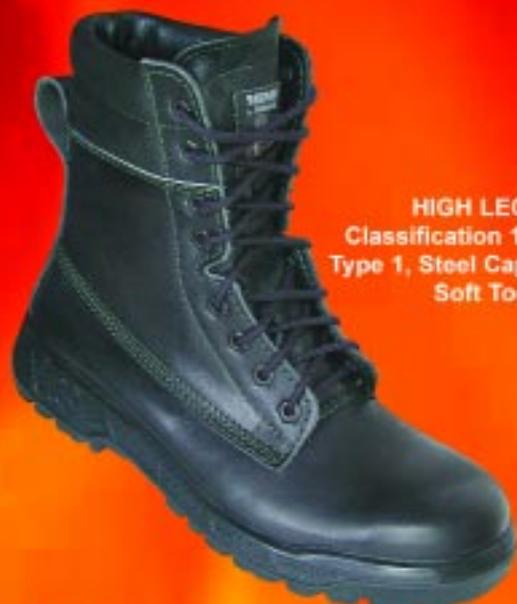
Eight Brigade members received medals for 50 years of service; five received 35-year medals; nine received 25-year medals and eleven received 15-year medals.



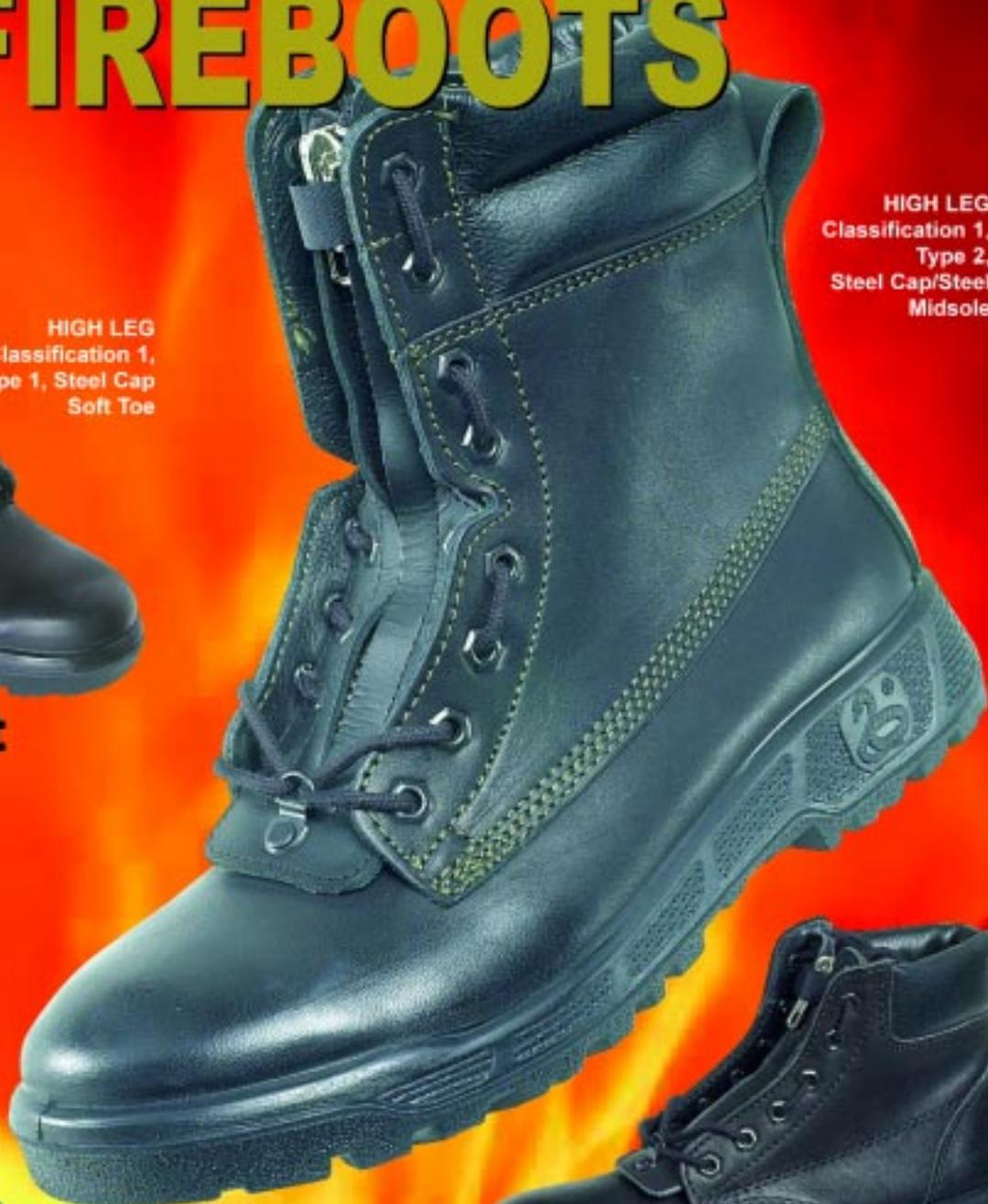


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BURNING FIRE TRUCKS – DELIBERATELY!

A combined initiative of the NSW Rural Fire Service and the Country Fire Authority of Victoria (CFA), in conjunction with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), will see a number fire trucks burnt in a simulated bush fire overrun.

"This research into tanker overruns is being carried out as part of an ongoing commitment to improve firefighter safety," said David Nichols, CFA's Manager Research and Development.

Richard Donarski, former RFS Manager of Engineering Services said, "The majority of fire services have had specific training, protective equipment and tanker protection spray systems for years. This project has enabled us for the first time to test and evaluate the tanker protection spray systems and eventually ensure that these systems are the most effective we can provide."

The expertise of the CSIRO has been commissioned to ensure that the most accurate data available on the impact of a bushfire on a fire truck can be obtained, analyzed and utilised

to improve on spray protection systems used on these vehicles.

"The fire is quite dramatic and spectacular as it impacts the test vehicles. Flame actually builds up and envelops the cab. We generate a fire using a calibrated array of gas fires that have the ability to simulate a specific intensity of bushfire. Within the vehicle over fifty sensors measure everything from radiant heat to what type of gases are produced during the fires impact," said Ian Knight, CSIRO's scientist coordinating the experiments.

Tests are currently being carried out on old Bedford and International decommissioned fire trucks. This enables assessments to be made of a number of different tanker protection spray systems. Eventually it is hoped that a new Isuzu Cat 1 can be tested in a real fire situation with the best spray system chosen from the series of tests being undertaken.

The test site is at the RFS Hot Fire Training Facility at Mogo (10km South of Batemans Bay). Tests were conducted over a number of weeks in March and April with weather playing a vital role in achieving the right testing conditions. The next tests are scheduled for September and October.

Story and photos by Cameron Wade



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Kit Bag - Fire 000 - Large enough to fit your helmet,
hard hat, boots, socks, spare overall,
and all your various bits and pieces of
fire fighting equipment. Australian made.
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RFS Mug - NSW Rural Fire Service emblem. Mug is
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- \$28.95 (Clamp)

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Name or unit: _____ Type of card: _____
Signature: _____ Name: _____



4

FIRE INVESTIGATION

FIRE INVESTIGATION WITHIN THE NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE

The aim of Fire Investigation

The cause of all fires both large and small needs to be determined. The role of fire investigation has in recent times been heightened to focus on prevention strategies throughout the Service's area of responsibility. This role will also assist in providing valuable data to enhance the role for research and public awareness projects and to assist in the public education/fire awareness field.

It allows us to have a:

- > More thorough appreciation of fire causes. This will enable fire prevention programs that can better target local circumstances.
- > More accurate determination of the origin and cause of fires. This will assist in the apprehension and prosecution of persons who negligently cause fires and those who deliberately light them.
- > More thorough appreciation of the nature of fire events in time and space. This will provide a basis for the conduct of better debriefs and better operational performance evaluation.
- > More comprehensive appreciation of the factors that contribute to incidents which compromise firefighter and/or community safety.

The information obtained from fire investigation will allow for:

- > Establishment of profiles of a community's fire problems.
- > Identification of areas requiring immediate action to prevent further incidents occurring.
- > Support to changes in regulations, ordinances etc.
- > A basis for future prevention/education programs and evaluate existing prevention information.

How are fires investigated?

A three level approach:

1. Brigade Officers

- > Officer in charge of the fire crew determines the cause of most accidental fires

2. District/Regional Fire Investigation Teams

- > investigate more complex accidental fires
- > attend all serious injury/fatal fires or where moderate damage has occurred
- > where the officer in charge of a brigade is unable to determine the cause
- > suspicious fires - when requested to assist other agencies

3. Manager Fire Investigation

- > manages fire investigation for the Service
- > coordinates policy and SOP development
- > assists in the investigation of fires involving serious injury or where fatalities or where significant fires result
- > assists in the investigation of suspicious fires if requested by Regional Units
- > collates reports from investigations and analyses information
- > reviews trends in fire investigation findings
- > prepares reports for input into prevention and awareness programs
- > liaises with other agencies in relation to fire investigation issues
- > provides advice to Investigation Teams
- > coordinates training packages for fire investigation
- > participates in post-fire analysis

Fire Scene Investigation Protocol:

A 'tri-Service' Fire Scene Investigation Protocol has been established to provide an agreement across the NSW Police Service, NSW Rural Fire Service and NSW Fire Brigades, identifying responsibilities and roles in fire investigation. The document further enhances co-operation on the fireground in determining the origin and cause of fires within New South Wales.

How do I Get Involved with Fire Investigation?

Any persons wishing to become involved in Fire Investigation must approach their Fire Control Officer to determine if they are suitable for fire investigation training. If the person meets the pre-requisites for training, an Expression of Interest should be completed and authorised by the Fire Control Officer and forwarded to your Regional Operations Officer.

Story by Richard Woods

FIRE INVESTIGATORS ATTRACT GLOBAL DOLLARS!

Richard Woods, Manager Fire Investigation, NSW Rural Fire Service, received a grant of \$2,800.00 from the FM Global Insurance Company on 11 February in Melbourne on behalf of the Service. The grant is for the purchase of a 35mm digital camera to assist the NSW Rural Fire Service's investigations into the bushfires that devastated so many areas of NSW over the Christmas/New Year period and supplement a State Investigation Kit held in the Unit.

The grant has come about as a result of FM Global (one of the worlds leaders in property loss prevention) setting up an Arson Fund as part of their Arson Prevention Programme, which was launched in 1990 in response to the increasingly serious number of arson-related fires occurring in the Asia/Pacific region. The primary purpose of the Arson Fund is to provide monetary grants for projects and equipment to non-profit organisations and agencies whose work directly relates to reducing arson. After submitting an application, the Fire Investigation Unit was successful in being selected for the 2002 grant.

Richard said at the presentation that "this funding will provide us with essential camera equipment that in the past has not been able to be purchased and will form part of the State's Fire Investigation Kit which will be available for use by all investigators across NSW".



FM Global Engineer Michael Stuckings proudly presenting the cheque to Richard Woods at the FM Global Sydney office.

NSW NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE AND
NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE **JOINT STATEMENT**



The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service is delighted to announce that all active members of the NSW Rural Fire Service will be entitled to receive a free All Parks Pass each year. The Pass will entitle each active volunteer free entry to all NSW National Parks, including Kosciuszko National Park, for one vehicle. This offer is made in recognition of the ongoing support and efforts of volunteer rural firefighters in protecting NSW National Parks from bushfires. Commencing early 2002, it is proposed that active volunteers within the NSW Rural Fire Service will be issued NPWS All Parks Passes, valued at \$80.00, through Fire Control Centres. The pass will be required to be signed for by the member and the registration number of the volunteer's vehicle recorded. The passes will be

valid for twelve months, after which replacement passes will be issued. The issuing of All Parks Passes replaces the interim system adopted for the last two years requiring the production of a Brigade letter or other form of identification at the point of entry. The issuing All Park Passes is a more formal system and also addresses the issue of using vehicles in Pay and Display parking zones within NSW National Parks. The NPWS recognises that RFS volunteers commit substantial effort to support the prevention and suppression of bushfires within National Parks. The close, ongoing relationship between the two Services is also recognised as an important asset. The issuing of these All Park Passes is a token of this partnership. Both the

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and the NSW Rural Fire Service thank all volunteer rural firefighters for their commitment and support. Yours sincerely

Phil Koperberg
Commissioner
NSW Rural Fire Service

Brian Gilligan
Director General
NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service

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NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE ASSOCIATION



YORKE CALLS FOR MORE PARTICIPATION AND UNITY IN RFSA

President Steve Yorke
Secretary Warwick Roche
Executive Officer Keith Jordan

I HOPE THAT OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS I WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY OF VISITING YOUR DISTRICT TO DISCUSS WITH YOU THE ISSUES AFFECTING YOUR AREA.



Firstly may I say that I am honoured to have been recently elected as the President of the NSW Rural Fire Service Association and wish to take this opportunity of thanking the outgoing members of the State Executive, in particular the former President, Don Luscombe, for their tireless efforts on your behalf.

I hope that over the next 12 months I will have the opportunity of visiting your District to discuss with you the issues affecting your area. It is imperative that the Executive and I have a clear understanding and a direction from you the members of the Association as to the policies that need to be formulated for the future and that these initiatives are communicated through the Association to the Service.

It is fair to say that the development of policies and the achievements of the Association in the past have not been communicated as well as we would have liked throughout the organisation. It will be my responsibility as President and that of the Executive to see that all members, both salaried and volunteer, have the opportunity to participate in the development of policies and therefore the direction of the NSW Rural Fire Service. The Association has much to offer the Service in this regard and while a close relationship currently exists, it is essential that this be strengthened to ensure that when policies are implemented they will improve the environment in which we all operate.

I encourage your representatives at District and Regional level to contact me or any member of my Executive on any issues that they feel is important. As President I will ensure that these issues are directed to the relevant personnel within the Association and or the Service and that a response is effected.

I am mindful of the increased workload and pressures being placed on both volunteers and salaried staff of the Association, however I would encourage you as members to nominate and actively participate on the various policy committees established by the Service. The Association has, over the years, worked closely with the Service on the development of policies, which have benefited all members, and your input is vital.

With the recommendation from the Parliamentary Inquiry and new Environmental Assessment Legislation amendments recently approved by Parliament we are entering an exciting and challenging time for the Association which will necessitate consultation at all levels. It is imperative that the Association is cohesive and united in its approach to the many challenges that will inevitably have to be met.

I look forward to working with you in the future and I trust that together, we will build a stronger and more influential Rural Fire Service Association.

Steve Yorke
President
NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE ASSOCIATION

RFSA STATE EXECUTIVE ELECTION

The election for the State Executive was changed this year to a postal ballot held in the month prior to the Annual General Meeting. The Association contracted Metropool a company that specialises in polling and elections to conduct the ballot the results were presented to the members at the AGM in Bathurst.

President

Steve Yorke Business mgr Region East

Vice-Pres (Vol)

Don Luscombe Group Capt Blue Mountains

Vice-Pres (Sal)

Peter Kinkead FCO Singleton

Secretary

Warwick Roche FCO Coffs Harbour

Treasurer

Frank Gannell Group Capt Tallaganda

Members

Chris Anderson DFCO Baulkham Hills

Ian Rogers Group Capt Kyogle

John Parker FCO Oxley Zone

Chris Lord Capt Bulgadie RFB

Andy Jaffray Group Capt Kiama-Shellharbour

RFSA REGIONS

The Constitution was changed at the Annual General Meeting to allow for the RFSA to determine the make up of the Association's Regions and not be tied to those instituted by the Service. This was to ensure that all members had access to local Regional Meetings. The current eight Region configuration will remain.

RFS OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

The RFSA has successfully persuaded the RFS to form a State Operations Committee. This Committee will complete the Service's Standing Committee structure and match its functional areas – the others being the Technical Services, Community Education, and Training Committees. It is expected that the current Communications and Aviation Committees will become sub-committees of the State Operations Committee.

The State Operations Committee will have one salaried and one volunteer representative from each of the eight RFSA regions, and will be structured the same as the other standing committees with the representatives elected by the RFSA Region Conferences and Committees.

Whilst a Charter is yet to be developed for this Committee it is envisaged it will consider all matters operational – such as the application of ICS at all incidents, Region Response Groups, preparedness planning, Base Camp operations and Standard Operating Procedure's.

Membership of this committee is now being sought from each RFSA Region.

The Service is to be congratulated for its foresight in putting into place an appropriate consultative group to address the issues that affect the core business and the members of the Service.

AMENDMENTS TO THE RURAL FIRES ACT

Recent amendments to the *Rural Fires Act 1997* will result in a more streamlined approach to hazard reduction assessments and approvals. These changes give the Commissioner the responsibility for putting into place a Code of Practice for assessing environmental factors. This Code will provide those undertaking environmental assessments with a "one stop shop" for making their determinations instead of the need to consult numerous pieces of legislation in many different Acts.

A small committee has put together a draft Code for wider consultation. Don Nott, a senior volunteer from the Blue Mountains, and John Sanders, DFCO Eurobodalla, represents the RFSA on this committee.

RFSA WEBSITE

The RFSA has a web site at www.rfsa.org.au. If you access this site it has information on the committee representatives from your RFSA region, the RFSA constitution, and the link to the online shop.

The Association has arranged with our web server provider to host brigade sites free of charge, you have to decide your site name in the format www.brigadename.rfsa.org.au and a password. Advise our server owner Eric Berry at eric.berry@Pollack6.com that you would like to set up the site, it's that easy. The advantage of this method is you don't have to have all the unwanted advertising around the site. For more information contact the Executive officer.

Since the last article in the 'Bulletin' we have had plenty of interest in the Association's E-Groups and this has proven a great method to provide information quickly and to receive feed back from our members. If you are not

already an E-Group member why not join now? The site is now advertising free.

To join an E-Group go to the Association Webb site www.rfsa.org.au and click on the appropriate subscribe E-Group for the Region you are in, type your name, brigade and district in the body of the message and then click send. A return Email will arrive shortly from Yahoo asking you to confirm your request. Within a couple of days you will receive an Email from the Association Moderator confirming he has attached you to the appropriate group.

In your Brigade do you have anyone with Email facilities? Why not talk to them about joining the E-Group system and passing the information on to the other brigade members. With the minimum of one member in every brigade in an E-Group we would be able to distribute information and receive any comments you have very quickly.

RFSA MERCHANDISING

The Association operates an online shop accessed through the web site, with a range of items from PPE to Gifts and Uniform items. With the help of some of our members during the last year, the shop has travelled to many field days and other functions around the State. The profit is used to finance the Association activities, if you would like the shop to attend at a function please contact the Executive officer for information.

ASSOCIATION CONTACT

The Association has a part time Executive officer for any information or help with Association business please contact.

RFSA Executive officer

Keith Jordan Phone 0500 532 211
02 9653 2211
Fax 9653 2987
Email bindene@tig.com.au

DATES TO REMEMBER

Sat. 24th August 2002	State Council Meeting	Wagga Wagga	1000hrs
Sat. 23rd November 2002	State Council Meeting	Narrabri	1000hrs
Sat. 15th March 2003	State Council Meeting	Wollongong	1000hrs
Sat 14th June 2003	RFSA AGM	Bathurst	1000hrs

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Polo Shirt - Lemon(L), Navy(N), White(W)	\$29.00				
T-Shirt - White(W), Navy(N)	\$18.00				
Sloppy Joe	\$29.00		Navy		
SPECIAL! 12 or more garments, Brigade name embroidered under logo for FREE!					
AVAILABLE SIZES	S M L XL XXL 3XL – 6XL	For large orders please add clearly printed lists as required			
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Brushed Cotton Cap <small>(25+ Caps \$8.00 ea., 100+ Caps \$7.50 ea.)</small>	\$8.50		Navy		
Large Kit Bag Individual/Brigade names <small>(printed on separate sheets)</small>	\$45.00 plus \$8.00		Navy	Length 93cm Height 33cm Width 31cm	
Medium Kit Bag Individual/Brigade names <small>(printed on separate sheets)</small>	\$35.00 plus \$8.00		Navy	Length 50cm Height 30cm Width 20cm	
Plus postage & packing per address <i>(Includes badges if part of order)</i>					6.60

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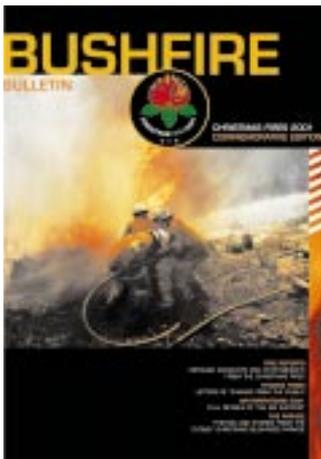
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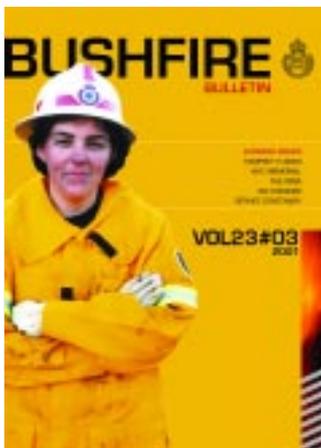
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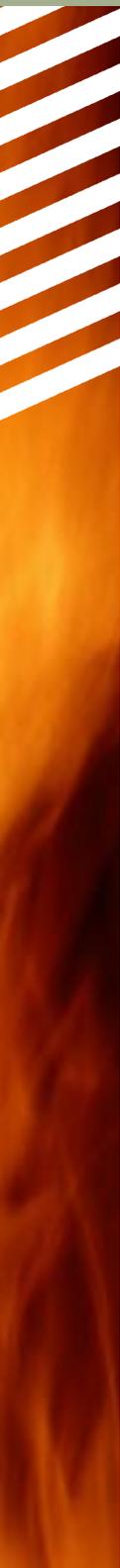
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BUSHFIREBULLETIN
VOL24#2

PUBLISHER NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE
EDITORS JOHN WINTER/MICHAEL WATTS
ADVERTISING SALES NICHOLE INGRAM
DESIGN VERSA WWW.VERSACREATIVE.COM.AU

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