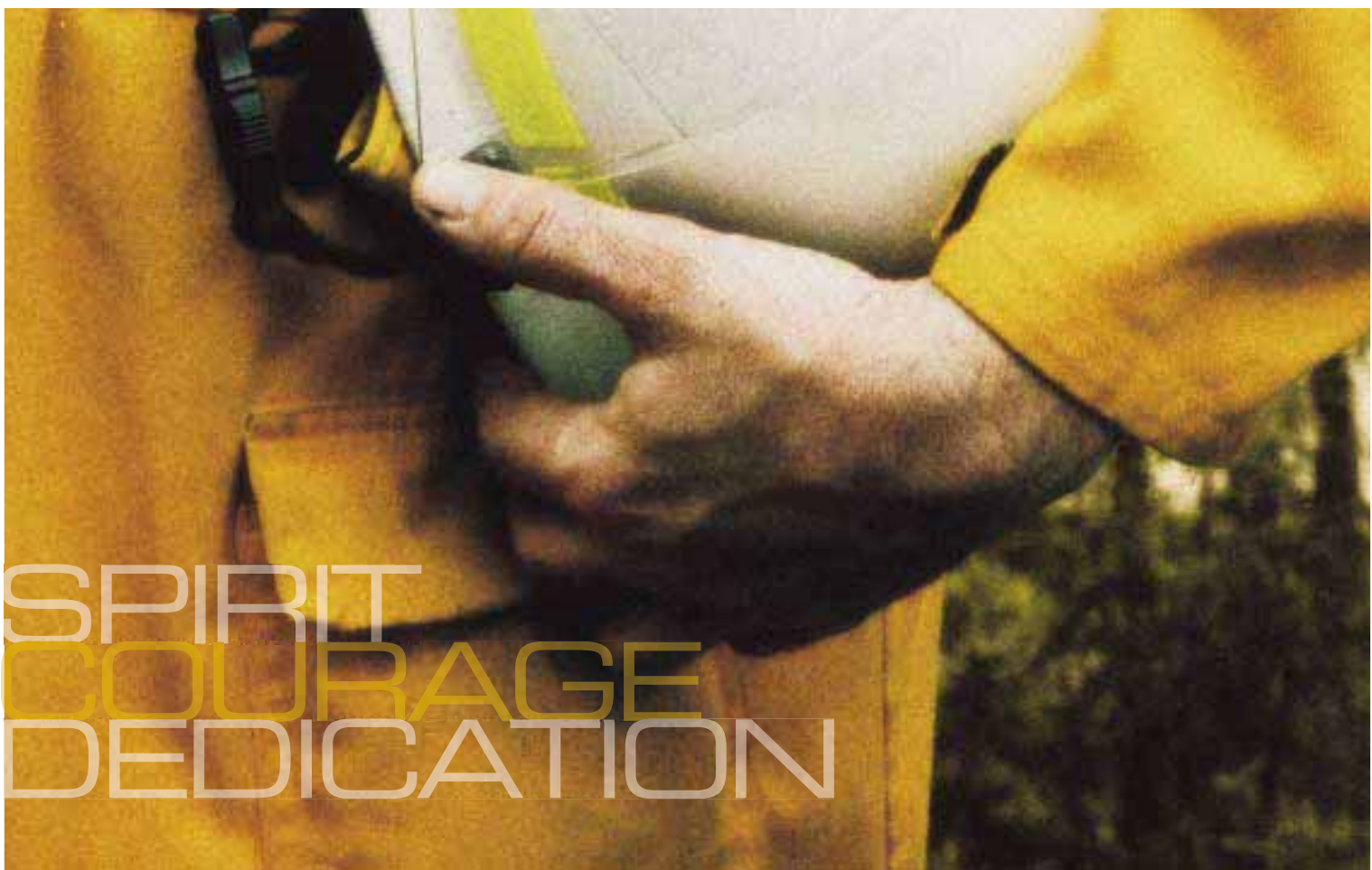




04



NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2003-2004



SPIRIT
COURAGE
DEDICATION



The Hon Tony Kelly MLC
Minister for Emergency Services
Level 34, Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place, SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister

Pursuant to the provisions of the *Annual Reports (Departments) Act 1985*, I have pleasure in presenting to you, for submission to the Parliament, the Annual Report of the NSW Rural Fire Service for the year ended 30 June 2004.

Highlights for the year include:

- 12.1% increase in volunteer training activity
- Mutual Aid Agreements in place in 90% of rural fire districts
- Rollout of electronic version of Service Delivery Model (eSDM) to all districts
- Turnaround time for development applications reduced
- Implementation of streamlined Hazard Reduction Certificate Process
- 141 Bushfire Prone Land maps produced
- All Bush Fire Management Committees have Bush Fire Risk Management Plans in place
- 78.4% hazard complaints resolved
- 38% increase in number of secondary schools visited for FireWise educational programs
- Development of Firescan capabilities
- Launch of volunteer recruitment program.

Other highlights are contained throughout this Report, which I commend to you.

Yours sincerely

Phil Koperberg AO AFSM BEM
Commissioner

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THE NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE (RFS)

Now, more than 100 years old, the Rural Fire Service is charged with protecting the people of NSW from bushfires. It is one of the best trained and equipped fire services in the world. It is also one of the world's largest fire services.

The heart of the RFS is its 69,375 volunteers who form 2094 front line brigades protecting 1,200 towns and villages throughout NSW. Our brigade members come from all walks of life. They are community-minded, having the volunteer spirit of service combined with a professional approach to the protection of life and property within the community.

While bushfire fighting, prevention and mitigation are the RFS primary roles, the Service is involved in other critical

community safety activities. These include:

- Fighting building and structure fires
- Fire safety education
- Motor Vehicle Accidents
- Search and rescue operations
- Storm and flood recovery

Additionally, salaried staff are employed to manage the day to day operations of the Service at Headquarters, Regional Offices and District Fire Control Centres.

Our staff carry out a variety of roles including operational management, administration, finance, planning, assessment of development applications, training, hazard reduction management, media and public affairs, community education and engineering.

The Service is dedicated to serving the general community of NSW. To do this we have a range of consultative groups, which include representation from volunteers, other government agencies and the wider community.

We also work closely and collaboratively with the media, government departments, rural land managers and landholders, local government and schools.

“Spirit, courage and determination help drive our initiatives.”



“Our volunteers are our greatest asset. They are everyday people with exceptional commitment and dedication to make our community a safer environment.”

Our values underpin all our actions



RFS

Our Vision

To provide a world standard of excellence in the provision of a community-based fire and emergency service.

Our Mission

To protect the community and our environment, we will minimise the impact of fire and other emergencies by providing the highest standards of training, community education, prevention and operational capability.

Values

The values that underpin all our actions are:

- **Our People**
Volunteerism and commitment
- **Professionalism**
In all we do
- **Community**
Mutual assistance
- **Quality Customer Service**
Internal and external
- **Continuous Improvement**
Measurable improvement
- **Co-operation**
Working together
- **Honesty, Integrity and Trust**
Ethical standards and behaviour.



02

FIRE SAFETY TIP 1

personal protection



“Wear a bandana to protect airways from smoke and hot air.”



“The heart of the RFS is its 69,375 volunteers who form 2,094 front line brigades protecting 1,200 towns and villages throughout NSW.”

Professionalism in all we do



01

the year in brief

Commissioner's
Foreword

Commissioner's Foreword

The past year has presented a number of significant new challenges for the NSW Rural Fire Service, both with administering new aspects of legislation and consolidating the many projects in which we are engaged.

Once again, our volunteers have demonstrated an outstanding capacity to deliver services to their communities. Every year

One hundred and seventy of our senior volunteers were trained for service on Incident Management Teams, ensuring that volunteers remain directly involved in all levels of firefighting.

Over the course of the year, in support of the Service's commitment to consult with its volunteers I have made around 100 visits to brigade and volunteer functions. These visits to our brigades, coupled with many similar visits by my senior staff,

aerial firefighting nationally. In my current role as Chairman of the National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC), I am committed to ensuring the continuing development of aerial firefighting expertise, both in NSW and across Australia.

We are also very active partners in the national Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre (CRC), jointly funded by both the states and the Federal Government. As a member of the board of the CRC I am confident that the research



“Once again, our volunteers have demonstrated an outstanding capacity to deliver services to their communities.”

I recognise the impact and role of our volunteers in terms of their commitment to the local communities, however the true value of the spirit of volunteerism to the NSW economy can never be overstated. Over 69,375 people volunteer their time to our Service and I recognise that many of those same people are actively engaged in other voluntary pursuits. It is this core of committed people in NSW we rely on.

I am particularly impressed with our capacity to increase the level of training offered to our brigade members. During 2003/04 the level of training increased by 10 per cent, further building our professional base, but let me say professionalism is really a state of mind- not an issue of remuneration.

have served to further enhance the consultative process which sees over 200 volunteers participate in the Service's policy committees and working parties.

The drought continued across most of NSW with little respite, ensuring ongoing fuel volatility. While this situation is expected to continue over coming months, it is with some pride and I can report the Service's level of preparedness remains high, despite a relatively quiet season over the summer of 2003/04.

Over the last year, 210 new and refurbished tankers were delivered to our brigades throughout NSW, significantly enhancing our firefighting capabilities. In addition, the RFS has taken a lead role in

being conducted under its auspices will not only deliver quantitative and qualitative benefits to the community, but will set world's best practice in bushfire prevention, mitigation and suppression.

Following the introduction in July 2003 of the new streamlined process for hazard reduction approvals, over 3,800 certificates were issued under the Bush Fire Environmental Code.

Likewise, with our new legislative responsibilities with regard to Development Applications, the RFS saw a significant increase in referrals of 287 per cent. This equates to the Service processing 4,287 applications under section 100B of the *Rural Fires Act* and 10,334 under Section 79BA of



the *Environmental Protection and Assessment Act*. Of those proposed developments the Service identified 401 as posing significant bushfire risks, and these proposals could not be approved in their original form.

Through the course of the year we have been preparing for the move to our new Headquarters, in Homebush Bay. Construction is progressing well and we expect to be able to relocate in September 2004. The new headquarters will include a purpose built state-of-the-art operations centre which dramatically improves our ability to coordinate the efforts of our thousands of volunteers as well as deploying tankers, aircraft and other resources where they are most needed.

Apart from being a year of consolidation, improvement and greater financial support from the State Government, 2003/04 has seen the RFS meet its obligations under its legislative role to take the lead in the protection of the community from the ravages of bushfires.

I would like to thank the Minister for Emergency Services, Tony Kelly MLC, for his continued support and faith in the Service. I would also like to thank the Minister's staff, and the Director of the Office of Emergency Services, Richard Lyons, and his staff.

As always the Rural Fire Service Association has been a great source of assistance, advice and support and has done an outstanding job representing the interests of all its members.

The Rural Fire Service relies heavily on a number of other government agencies, particularly other firefighting authorities. I acknowledge the assistance and cooperation of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, now part of the Department of Environment and Conservation, State Forests, NSW Fire Brigades and the Bureau of Meteorology, as well as all the agencies represented on the State Emergency Management Committee.

I also wish to thank the Service's salaried staff for their outstanding efforts during the year. Their commitment, drive and enthusiasm is critical in keeping the Rural Fire Service as one of the world leaders in wildland firefighting.

But most of all I thank our volunteers; whose spirit, courage, dedication and skill are the heart and soul of the Service.

Phil Koperberg AO AFSM BEM
Commissioner



FIRE SAFETY TIP 2

06

when fire approaches

“Activate any
sprinkler
systems and
take your
hoses inside.”



“Our brigade members are community-minded, having the volunteer spirit of service combined with a professional approach to the protection of life and property within the community.”

Quality customer service internal and external



02

structure and management

Role and Functions

Organisation
Structure

Corporate
Executive Group

Rural Fire
Regions and Office
Access Details

Role and Functions

The fire management and fire protection responsibilities of the NSWRFs arise from the *Rural Fires Act, 1997*.

They can be summarised as follows:

- Protection of life and property for all fire related incidents within all rural fire districts in the State
- Safety and welfare of all volunteers
- Provision of effective training and resources to rural fire brigades
- Provision of emergency assistance to other emergency service organisations.

The Service provides the Secretariat for the Bush Fire Coordinating Committee, the peak planning body for bushfire management in NSW. The Commissioner has an overarching co-ordinating role and chairs the Coordinating Committee.

Organisation Structure

The functional organisation chart is shown at Appendix 'A'.

Minister for Emergency Services

Commissioner

Salaried Staff

Fire Control Officers

Rural Fire Brigades (2094)

Group Captains

Captains

Senior Deputy Captains

Deputy Captains

Members (Volunteers) (69,375)



“Over the last year 210 new and refurbished tankers were delivered to our brigades throughout NSW, significantly enhancing our firefighting capabilities.”

Corporate Executive Group

Commissioner

Phil Koperberg AO AFSM BEM

Mr Koperberg joined the Service in 1967 as a volunteer in the Blue Mountains and progressed through the ranks to become Fire Control Officer in 1970, a position he held until 1982. He was appointed Emergency Services Policy Analyst to the then Minister for Police and Emergency Services before being appointed Chairman of the Bush Fire Council of NSW and Executive Officer of the Bush Fires Branch of the Minister's office in 1985.

In 1989 he was appointed Director-General of the Department of Bush Fire Services and in 1993 he was appointed Commissioner of Bush Fire Services. In January 1994 he was appointed overall Emergency Controller for major bushfires burning in eastern NSW and, in September 1997, following the proclamation of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*; he was appointed Commissioner and Chief Executive Officer of the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Among his many roles, the Commissioner is Chair of the NSW Rural Fire Service Advisory Council, Bush Fire Coordinating Committee and the State Rescue Board.

He was awarded the British Empire Medal in 1978, made a Member of the Order of Australia in 1994, awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal in 1995 and made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2003.

Acting Chief of Staff

Wendy George

As Chief of Staff to the Commissioner, Ms George manages the operation of the Office of the Commissioner, providing expert advice and support to the Commissioner and Executive Directors in the management and resolution of critical policy and operation issues impacting on the Service, and advice to the Government.

Prior to joining the Service Ms George was Corporate Affairs Advisor at News Limited, advising the Chairman, CEO and senior executives on a range of issues.

During her employment at News Limited, She was also CEO of the Farmhand Foundation, which raised in excess of \$25M for drought stricken farming families. Foundation members include senior executives of News Limited, CPH – a Packer family company, Telstra, Macquarie Radio and Visy Industries.

Between 1995 and the end of 2000, she worked as a senior media advisor to the Premier of NSW, the Hon Bob Carr MP, and the former Minister for Emergency Services, the Hon Bob Debus MP. She worked as a radio and television journalist prior to 1995 in both Sydney and Brisbane.

Executive Director Operations and Regional Management

Mark Crowweller AFSM

Mark has 19 years' Service experience at all levels from firefighter to Assistant Commissioner.

Mark has held various positions associated with the Service. He was a member of the Review Sub-Committee of the Fire Services Joint Standing Committee; a State Council and Executive member of the NSW Rural Fire Service Association; a member of the State Executive of that Association; and a member of the NSW Bush Fire Coordinating Committee. Mark has represented the Service on international projects in Malaysia, Indonesia and China.

Prior to joining the Service, Mark was employed in the consulting engineering industry. Mark holds a graduate certificate, graduate diploma and Master of Management Degree.

In 2003 Mark was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal.

Executive Director Strategic Development

Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM

Shane has been a member of the Service since 1984 when he joined the Duffy's Forest Brigade where he remained a member for 10 years and held the positions of Captain and Deputy Group Captain. He was an active participant in district training, especially in the areas of CABA, 4WD and chainsaws.

In 1994 Shane was appointed Regional Planning Officer in Central East Region and eventually progressed to the position of acting Regional Co-ordinator before joining Rosehill staff as State Operations Officer. In 1998 Shane was appointed Assistant Commissioner Operations.

Shane has represented the Service at international meetings in the United States, Singapore and Malaysia. He was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal in 2001.



Corporate Executive Group

Executive Director Risk Management

Rob Rogers AFSM

Rob joined the Service in 1979 as a member of the Belrose Brigade in the Warringah-Pittwater District, where he remained until 1995. During that time he held various brigade positions including those of training officer, Deputy Captain and Captain.

In 1995 Rob was appointed Deputy Fire Control Officer for the Greater Taree District, a position he held until 1998 when he was appointed Fire Control Officer for the Cessnock District. In 2002 Rob was appointed Executive Director for Regional Management but later that year he transferred to the newly created Risk Management Directorate that had been formed as a consequence of new legislative responsibilities that had been devolved to the Service.

As Executive Director Risk Management Rob's responsibilities encompass hazard complaints, audit and compliance, planning and environment – including the new hazard reduction certificates, development control and business development, along with community education.

Rob has represented the Service in international projects and firefighting operations in the United States, Singapore and Malaysia.

He was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal in 2004.

Executive Director Operations Support

Tony Howe AFSM

Tony joined the Service in January 1999 as Assistant Commissioner Operations Support. In this role he is responsible for the Service's firefighter support programme including engineering services, training, firefighter health and safety and the Service's involvement in the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre.

Prior to joining the Service Tony was employed as a forester by the NSW Forestry Commission, with extensive experience in forest and land management across NSW in native eucalypt forest, rainforest, exotic pine and eucalypt plantations in Tumut, Grafton and Eden. He was involved in practical fire management for over thirty years and was responsible for the Commission's statewide fire policies and strategies.

He was the Commission's representative on the State Bush Fire Coordinating Committee and the Bush Fire Council and has been an appointee under Section 44 of the *Rural Fires Act, 1997*.

Tony holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Forestry.

He was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal in 2004.



Executive Director Corporate Services

Trevor Anderson PSM

Trevor entered the NSW Public Service in 1966. In 1979 he was appointed Secretary of the Bush Fire Council, which, at that time, was a branch of the Department of Services. He later transferred to the Office of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services as a result of a number of State Government administrative changes. Following the establishment of the Department of Bush Fire Services as a separate department Trevor was appointed Assistant Commissioner Corporate Services and later Executive Director of Corporate Services. He is responsible for the finance, administration and human resources functions of the Service.

In 1995 Trevor was awarded the Public Service Medal for outstanding service.

Director of Finance

Peter Hennessy

Peter has been employed in the NSW Public Service since 1969. Most of his positions have been associated with financial budgeting and monitoring.

Prior to joining the Service in 1988 as an accountant Peter spent nineteen years in the Department of Health and one year in the Department of Lands.

He is currently Director of Finance with responsibility for the financial and accounting functions of the Service.

Director of Corporate Communications

John Winter

(until November 2003)

John joined the Head Office of the Service in October 1999 as Senior Media Officer. He has been an active volunteer in the Warringah-Pittwater Headquarters Rural Fire Brigade since 1995 having also been Deputy Captain of that Brigade.

John served on the State executive of the NSW Rural Fire Service Association from 1998–1999 and was Chair of the Warringah-Pittwater Branch. He also served as a councillor on Pittwater Council between 1992–1995 including terms as Deputy Mayor and Chair of the Warringah-Pittwater Joint Bushfire Committee.

Before joining Head Office he ran his own media consultancy for several years. This followed a career in human resources at two levels – public relations and as head of economic research for one of Australia's leading consultancies.

John was appointed Director of Corporate Communications in 2001 and is responsible for all aspects of the Service's media relations, internal communications, marketing, advertising and promotion.

John holds the Degree of Bachelor of Commerce in Economics and Finance.

Corporate Executive Group

Director Business Development

Duncan Sutherland

(until February 2004)

Duncan joined the Service in 1998 as Policy Officer and was given responsibility for the development of a policy framework for international projects. A key focus of the international projects is to open up the Service to a worldview of forest fire management and to encourage professional growth for Service members.

Duncan joined the NSW Public Service in 1973 as a teacher of agriculture. He has worked as an Inspector of Schools, curriculum designer and publisher as well as marketing NSW education overseas. He is a member of the State Emergency Service and St John Ambulance and has strong links with the farming community.

In 1999 Duncan was awarded the Malaysian Fire Service Medal for his work in the strengthening of the relationship between the Fire and Rescue Department of Malaysia and the Service. In 2001 Duncan completed a Graduate Diploma in International Studies specialising in Chinese language and culture.

Duncan holds a Masters Degree in Education Administration and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture.

President NSW Rural Fire Service Association

Steve Yorke

Steve joined the Service in 1972 as a member NSW Bushfire Service, 'Support Group' and during his years of service has held the voluntary positions of Deputy District Training Officer for Warringah Pittwater. An active member in the Evans and Warringah Pittwater Districts, he has also occupied the positions of Captain, Senior Deputy and Deputy Captain.

He joined the salaried ranks of the Service in 1999 and is currently the Regional Business Manager, Region East, a position he has held since the 1 July 2001.

Prior to 2001 Steve held the position of Fire Control Officer, in the Blacktown/Fairfield District and Deputy Fire Control Officer, Training and Development, for the Warringah Pittwater District.

In 2001 he was elected Chairman of the Central East Region, RFSA. In 2002 he was elected as the State President of the Association, a position he continues to fill.



“The Rural Fire Service Association has been a great source of assistance, advice and support.”

Vice-President (Volunteers) NSW Rural Fire Service Association

Andy Jaffray

Andy joined the CFA in 1965 as a member of the Mt Eliza Brigade, moving to NSW in 1974 where he joined the Oaks Flat (Kiama Shellharbour) Brigade. He is a current Life Member of the brigade.

He was Deputy Group Captain from 1981–1982 and has been a Group Captain since 1982.

Following the formation of the NSW Rural Fire Service Association in 1996 Andy was elected to the Region East Executive and was elected to the State Council in 1997. In 1999 Andy was elected to the RFSA State Executive and in 2003 he was elected Vice President (Volunteers) a position he still occupies.

Andy has been the recipient of the National Medal, the Centennial Medal and several Commissioner's awards.



Rural Fire Regions and Office Access Details

Region East

Suite 5
235–239 High Street
Penrith NSW 2750
Tel: 02 4722 8444
Fax: 02 4722 9414 or 02 4722 8588

Relocating September 2004 to:
15 Carter Street
Homebush Bay NSW 2127

Region West

Shop 3, Lovell Place
Lovell Street
Young NSW 2594
Tel: 02 6382 5677 or 02 6382 5678
Fax: 02 6382 1731

Region North

Level 4
State Office Block
Victoria Street
Grafton NSW 2460
Tel: 02 6643 2512 or 02 6643 2514
Fax: 02 6643 2515 or 02 6643 4965

Head Office

3/175 James Ruse Drive
Rosehill NSW 2142
Tel: 02 9684 4411
Fax: 02 9638 7956
Relocated September 2004 to:
17 Carter Street
Homebush Bay NSW 2015
Tel: 02 8741 5555
Fax: 02 8741 5550

Region South

7–9 Kylie Crescent
Batemans Bay NSW 2536
Tel: 02 4472 4615 or 02 4472 4129
Fax: 02 4472 4126 or 02 4472 4401



FIRE SAFETY TIP 3

14

as the fire passes over

“Inspect windows to determine if they have shattered and embers have entered.”



“The Service is responsible for the protection of more than 1,200 towns and villages across the state.”

Continuous improvement measurable improvement



03

performance

Department Performance Results

- Management
- Community Safety
- Operations

General

- Service Provision
- Contract and Market Testing
- Overseas Visits
- Consumer Response
- Privacy and Personal Information
- Regions

Department Performance Results

The NSW Rural Fire Service has a comprehensive Strategic Plan that guides our performance and is based on continuous improvement.

This plan aims at achieving across four key result areas. These are:

- **Management** – Managing our human, financial and physical resources in a competent and accountable manner
- **Community Safety** – Providing a range of prevention and mitigation services to increase community awareness of risks, and involvement in their reduction
- **Learning and Development** – Competent and productive leadership, management by people who are committed to our mission
- **Operations** – Ensuring rapid and effective response to emergency incidents and to prevent injury and loss

This section of the Annual Report details the Service's performance against these critical areas.



The NSW Rural Fire Service has a comprehensive Strategic Plan that guides our performance and is based on continuous improvement.

Management

“Managing our human, financial and physical resources in a competent and accountable manner.”

GOAL	WHAT WE DID	MEASURE	NEXT YEAR
Relocation of Head Office	Project-managed fit out of the new building and facilitated full staff consultation	Fit out program on time and staff fully advised	Ready for occupation in September 2004
Ensure plant and capital items of equipment have comprehensive maintenance agreements	Subscriptions for fee for service items paid in accordance with contractual arrangements	Immediate responses to all equipment faults or breakdowns	Ensure maintenance agreements provide the necessary service required and are cost effective
Ensure compliance with government energy reduction targets by demonstrating nett overall reduction in energy usage	Purchased electricity under State Contract 777. Prepared Annual Energy Management Plan Purchased energy efficient equipment	Government's energy reduction targets met. All new equipment purchased energy efficient	Ongoing monitoring and reduction of energy consumption Increased consumption of green power
More efficient bulk materials storage, printing and distribution	CM Solutions (Department of Commerce) engaged to manage the RFS bulk storage, printing and dispatch services	Over \$100,000 saved	Further reductions of over \$50,000
Compliance with Government Waste Reduction and Purchasing Policy	Introduced paper avoidance strategies through the extensive use of email, computer generated forms and the internet Ongoing compilation of data on the amount of paper recycled and office equipment wastes, including toner cartridges and printer ribbons Purchased facsimile machines and photocopiers able to use recycled toner	Government's Waste Reduction and Purchasing targets and guidelines met	Ongoing development of the Waste Reduction and Purchasing Program and identification of new and improved methods to ensure the continued success of this initiative
Upgrade Security of the Head Office to Concept 4000 system in accordance with Government Directives	Optimised photo ID and Proximity Access Card system for all staff and visitors	Maintain and enhance the interactive data based security and monitoring system for Rosehill that has greatly improved the safety and security of all staff and visitors	Continue to update and refine the database and introduce a standard security platform to be adopted by all Regional Offices and District Offices throughout NSW



Emergency Procedures Manual

The Emergency Procedures manual was published. A comprehensive training program for staff on fire evacuation procedures and First Aid was introduced.

Code of Conduct

The Service maintained its commitment to the Code of Conduct with all new staff being briefed at induction and provided with a copy of the Code or electronic access to it. There were no amendments to the Code during the year.

Waste Reduction

The Service continued initiatives to strengthen waste reduction and purchasing strategies. Those included:

- Introduction of paper avoidance strategies through use of email, internet, double sided printing and computer generated forms
- Data collection on usage of recycled paper and office equipment waste
- Purchase of environmentally friendly laser printers.

Ethnic Affairs

The Service has undertaken a major review of its general publications concerning Fire Risk and Fire Safety warnings and instructions to the

general public. This will culminate in 2004/05 in the production of Fact Sheets in a number of identified community languages. The number and identity of the languages is still being determined.

These Fact Sheets will address both bush and house fire issues and will be developed and distributed in conjunction with the NSW and ACT Fire Brigades.

RFS Spokeswomen's Program

Thirty thousand dollars was provided to the Spokeswomen's Program. This money was utilised primarily for training. The primary focus for this program is to provide the skills and qualifications required for women to carry out their duties and strive for higher salaried positions within the RFS.

In conjunction with head teachers at the Cootamundra/Young campus of TAFE, the Service is planning to run a Certificate Three in Business Administration via correspondence.

Also, in conjunction with NSW Premier's Department – Spokeswomen's Program Unit – NSW Police and NSW Ambulance, the Service is currently planning an Emergency Services Networking Forum for Women to be held in the Sydney Metro area in September 2004.

Networking is a strategy which facilitates the recruitment and retention of women – in particular for those in non-traditional areas of employment and in remote work locations. This forum will provide participants with an opportunity to learn about the benefits of networking as a career development activity.

Women attending this activity will:

- Gain an understanding of networking – in and outside the workplace
- Know how to identify and manage contacts
- Become more confident at networking functions
- Identify individual networking strengths and areas for future development.

Following the forum, sponsoring agencies will develop a networking framework and strategies for implementation within agencies in the Justice and Emergency Services portfolios.

Disability Action Plan

The Disability Action Plan has been revised with a greater emphasis placed upon training of all staff in disability awareness issues and a focus on increasing the representation of people with a disability within the Service.

Corporate Planning and Performance

GOAL	WHAT WE DID	MEASURE	NEXT YEAR
Undertake an annual review of the Service's Strategic Plan	Developed the Service's 2004/06 Strategic Plan	All planning activities completed by target dates	Undertake annual review of the Strategic Plan
	Undertook a Guided Self Assessment (GSA) and an External Environmental Scan	Reduction in Key Strategies from 26 to 20 Better targeted Strategic Plan. Improved data led to a more informed Strategic Plan Able to use the GSA and Environmental Scan to measure performance trends	Improve development of organisational performance indicators
Develop and implement a performance management and development system to monitor and support the performance of staff	Continued, audited and reviewed implementation of Personal Management, Planning and Review System (PMPRS) for Head and Regional Office Staff	75% compliance by Head and Regional Offices IAB Audit completed Greater unity of purpose by staff Improved recognition and management of performance	Review and if necessary implement enhancements to the PMPRS system Strengthen the development planning system Continue to facilitate the implementation of PMPRS in Districts
	Commenced implementation of PMPRS for District staff by incorporating it in the e-SDM application	Improved planning and delivery of development opportunities	
Develop and commence implementation of the Brigade Classification Model	Model further refined and pilot project commenced Service Standard approved	Targeted provision of training Improved service levels to the community through better allocation of resources to meet identified risk	Assess outcomes of pilot projects, modify the system if necessary and commence full implementation

Service Delivery Model (SDM) and Electronic Service Delivery (eSDM)

Introduced in 2003, the Service Delivery Model (SDM) is a process guiding a standardised approach to business planning and management across the Service.

The SDM is also a performance management tool that will set clearer priorities and define responsibilities enabling the achievement of corporate activities and objectives.

The SDM uses the process of risk management to identify those issues that will impact on the activities of the Service as well as potential areas for improvement

e-SDM is an electronic Service Delivery Model providing a standardised business planning and management system for the basis of resource allocation and performance management helping the Service achieve its corporate activities and objectives.

In April 2004, a newer version of the programme enabled better reporting of progress and an internal audit process was developed.

In 2004 a system for District Service Agreement quarterly reporting and a streamlined reporting structure for RFS Regions were implemented.

Information Technology Services

GOAL

Effective human resource management

WHAT WE DID

Competency requirements for Information Services staff and implemented development programs where required

MEASURE

100% compliance with PMPRS requirements

NEXT YEAR

Continue with performance management and professional development processes

Improved Wide Area Network

To better provide information management and technology services to RFS regional, zone and district offices, the Service will be upgrading the wide area network to 98 locations around New South Wales.

2004–2007 Information Management Strategic Plan

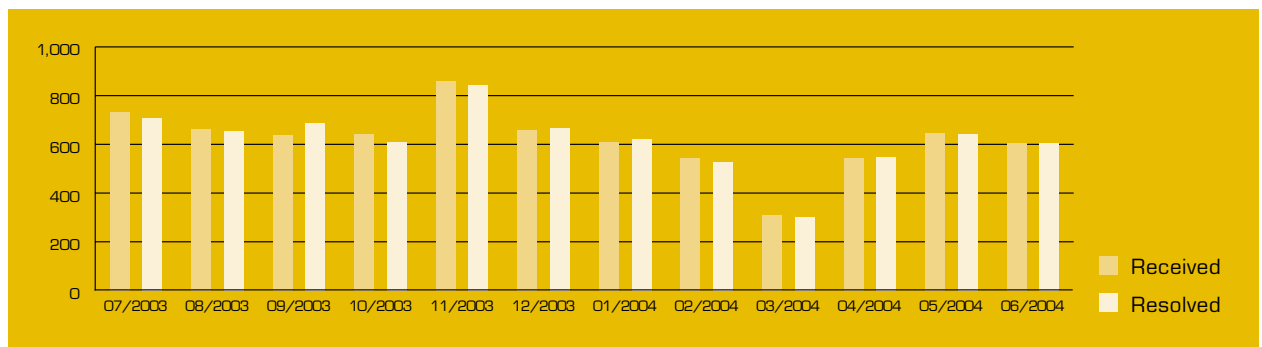
During early 2004 a considerable amount of time was spent gathering information for the draft 2004–2007 Information Management Strategic Plan which will be presented as the strategic blueprint for information management in the Service over the next three years.

Help Desk Activity 2003-2004

The IT Help Desk has continued to provide assistance to staff throughout 2003–04, registering 7,444 requests for assistance and resolving 7,417 of those, a clean up rate of 99.6%.

There were 600 registered users across the state.

Help Desk Calls



NOTE: Some calls registered in one month were resolved in the following month, giving an imbalance in the received/resolved figures.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

In 2003/04 Geographic Information Systems:

- Expanded to eight Customer Support Centres (CSCs) to allow close liaison between the GIS branch and local clients. CSCs now are located in Wagga Wagga, Dubbo, Orange, Wauchope, Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Hornsby, and Sutherland.
- Provided mapping support to Incident Management Teams at Raymond Terrace, Tenterfield and Dubbo.
- Commenced capturing RFS specific jurisdictional data on brigade boundaries and brigade locations.
- Reviewed database technology and installation of new database software.
- Continued production of bushfire prone land maps.



Planning and Environment Services

GOAL	WHAT WE DID	MEASURE	NEXT YEAR
Report to the Coordinating Committee on BFMC progress in preparing or reviewing the Bush Fire Risk Management Plan	Report provided	100% compliance	Program will continue
Report to the Coordinating Committee on BFMC progress in preparing or reviewing the Operations Plan	Report provided	100% compliance	Program will continue
Establish and implement a revised system for permit issue and hazard reduction functions in line with the <i>Rural Fires Legislation Amendment Act</i>	System established and operating in accordance with planned timeframe	System achieving improved results	Program will continue

21 performance

Occupational Health and Safety

There were twenty recorded workers' compensation claims for staff but no prosecutions under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act, 2000*.

The Safety and Welfare Unit was established and will be fully operational next year. The Service

continued to work closely with WorkCover and kept its legislative responsibilities under constant review.

Where OH&S committees could not be established alternative consultation systems were established.

Business Development

For the review period, Business Development was focussed on new market opportunities to broaden the scope of the program to include Brazil and Chile. As a result of the reduction in the incidence of the SARS virus, interest from Asian countries has strengthened, especially in projects with China.

The international program has contributed in a significant way to the professional development of the members involved and continues to give the Service access to international developments in wildland fire management, as well as sharing its own considerable expertise.

The Service contracted to supply seven fire tankers for the Australian Federal Police, destined for the Solomon Islands, with the possibility of further sales in Papua New Guinea.

In conjunction with Australasian Fire Authorities Council, the Service hosted the 3rd International Wildland Fire Conference and Inaugural Summit held in Sydney in October 2003.

This Conference brought some 1,150 national and international delegates to Sydney for a period of five days, with an additional 700 people attending the accompanying commercial exhibition. The Summit established the framework for a program to assist developing countries with their fire management strategies.

The Service was invited to work in consortium with the University of Western Sydney to develop a junior officer advancement program for consideration by fire services in Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei. It is anticipated that this course will commence in the 2005 academic year.

Vietnam sought assistance from the RFS to develop its own capability to detect and monitor wildfires using remote sensing technology. Negotiations on this project are ongoing.

Likewise, South Korea also indicated a strong interest in forming a close professional relationship with the Service. Areas of common interest include the use of aircraft in fire management, fire mapping and intelligence gathering using aerial scanning, incident command systems and protective clothing.

Business opportunities within NSW include training programs in fire-related issues such as fireground safety and use of fire extinguishers. The Service will seek to expand this area of activity in the coming year.

Volunteer Relations

GOAL	WHAT WE DID	MEASURE	NEXT YEAR
Maintain an informed Service on Volunteer Management Practices	Australian Catholic University (ACU) Volunteering for the 21st Century (V21) Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four (4) Service Focus groups conducted > 3 x volunteers > 1 x salaried officers Analysis of transcripts complete Statewide survey 20% developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out analysis of returned V21 data Commence development of V21 deliverable tools
	Brigade Reference Guide Online Membership Interest Contact Point established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First draft completed 1,676 membership enquiries received and forwarded to relevant districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of Guide Refine process to membership trends

V21 (Volunteering for the 21st Century)

The Volunteer Relations Unit continued its partnership with the Australian Catholic University, The Benevolent Society and St Vincent de Paul in the research project entitled V21 (Volunteering for the 21st century). This project is expected to deliver future strategies on volunteer recruitment, engagement and retention.

Arising from specially convened focus groups involving volunteers and salaried staff, a survey and data collection process has been

developed to collect information to assist implementation of these strategies. This survey will involve 250 participants across the Service, with the combined results expected from the researchers in 2004/05.

Brigade Reference Guide

A draft Brigade Reference Guide has been developed to capture basic information required by brigades to ensure streamlined reference to all Service documentation.

Further consultation with stakeholders will refine the draft,

then a delivery strategy to be developed.

Online Membership

An online membership interest form has been produced and has met with considerable success. Over 1,600 expressions of interest have been received and forwarded to the appropriate District/Zone/ team for contact.

Future development will include database information capture and tracking of EOI locations for the analysis of membership trends.

“An online membership interest form has been produced and has met with considerable success”



Welfare Services

Critical Incident Support Services (CISS)

This program is available to all members of the RFS on a 24hr/7 day per week basis. Every aspect of the work involved is strictly confidential and assistance is provided through Peer Support and trauma specialist interventions.

Services provided include: pre-incident information/education sessions; group processing sessions such as defusings, debriefings, and demobilisations; on-scene support; one-to-one assistance either face-to-face or by telephone; follow up contact; and referral to psychological assistance.

The first stage of a review of CISS standing protocols was undertaken involving a benchmarking with other emergency services teams and programmes. Emphasis was focussed on team structure, recruitment and training. The second stage will commence in September 2004 with a focus on

a review of policy and procedures and further development of the strategic plan.

A geographic needs analysis and gap analysis was undertaken and identified future Peer Supporter recruitment opportunities. This will assist with possible recruitment initiatives in 2005.

Having fulfilled the necessary requirements, an additional six Peer Supporters have gained full accreditation to the team during this year.

Future goals include:

- Introduction of joint training with other emergency services teams
- CISS Peer Supporter recruitment, continuation of revision of standing protocols
- Review of the CISS Strategic Plan
- Needs analysis focussing on trends in CISS activations
- Use of on-scene support strategies.

Member Assistance Program (MAP)

The Service continues to recognise the need to support our volunteer members who may be affected by a situation not directly relating to their operational involvement. In these cases, a referral and assistance service is available, which helps members and their families locate an appropriate practitioner within their geographical location if possible.

Comparative analysis indicates a stable utilisation of the referral service. A preliminary review of the program was undertaken involving a cross sectional interview-style survey and results indicated that the provision of such a program was perceived as highly valuable.

This service was established to provide a safety net for members experiencing acute crisis without knowledge of alternate options available to them. Continued monitoring of the Member Assistance Program will occur throughout 2004/05.



Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

This counselling service, available to employees and their families, is provided through a dual mechanism of internal provision by specialist staff and an external contracted agency of qualified Psychologists and Practitioners.

Overall, there has been a reduction in the number of people accessing the service and this may be due to a decrease in operational demands compared to previous years. However, through better promotional efforts an increase in those utilising the external provider was achieved.

A critique of the referral mechanisms to the external provider was undertaken to make the referral process easier to manage. A review was also undertaken of the locations of external providers throughout NSW, and this shows a wider spread of providers than last year, thereby making it easier for individual referrals to 'local' providers.

Future goals include a review of promotional materials and an evaluation of educative processes for both employees and managers.

Chaplaincy

During the year 14 chaplains were inducted into the Service and, following clergy transfers, eight chaplains relinquished their roles.

Current establishment consists of a Senior Chaplain, Senior Family Support Chaplain, 52 volunteer District Chaplains and eight family support volunteers. In 2004–2005 there will be a Chaplains' Conference that will look at issues affecting Chaplaincy in outback New South Wales and links with the Aboriginal culture.

Full details of the activities of the Chaplaincy and Family Support Network are included in Appendix B.

	CISS			MAP	EAP	
	Requests	Personnel assisted	Hours	Requests	Assistance by internal provider	Assistance by external provider
2003–2004	295	2,181	4,842	284	118	21
2002–2003	314	2,507	6,819	316	189	8
2001–2002	286	2,330	4,577	338	133	14

The number of hours relating to CISS does not account for training and supervision of CISS personnel.
 NB: These figures do not account for pre-incident information / education sessions provided throughout the year.

Community Safety

“Providing a range of prevention and mitigation services to increase community awareness of risks, and involvement in their reduction.”

Planning and Environment Services

GOAL	WHAT WE DID	MEASURE	NEXT YEAR
Prepare and implement a District Community Education Strategy in line with Service Standard using the electronic Service Delivery Model (e-SDM) application	Aligned all Community Education strategies to Risk Management Plans	100% of districts submitted Community Education strategies	Maintain level of compliance
Audit District education resources in line with Service Standard	Audited district education resource usage	100% completed	Maintain level of compliance
Establish Community FireWise Groups in areas of potential bushfire impact	10 additional districts established FireWise Groups, bringing this to a total of approximately 370 groups	150 FireWise street meetings held across the state to initiate the formation of groups	Establish and maintain groups in all areas of need
Establish Bush FireWise program within District/Zone	All districts utilising FireWise approved messages and logo on all education materials and advertising	100% take-up rate	TV advertising campaign to alert public to FireWise program
Conduct Community Fireguard For Kids groups in areas of potential bushfire impact	100 schools targeted as identified in Bush Fire Risk Management Plans	All schools identified visited by Community Fireguard for Kids teams	Maintain level of compliance
Conduct public awareness campaigns throughout NSW on deliberately lit fires	Maintained relationships with Crime Stoppers and NSW Police	Poster, stickers and signs produced to market the campaign to the public Amended Vehicles Marking Policy for anti-arson signage on all fire appliances	Continue program

‘Firewise’

The creation of the ‘FireWise NSW Project’ has seen 22 government, non-government and corporate organisations utilise their expertise and resources to provide the people of NSW with the most advanced fire safety and education service in the world.

The FireWise project has been recognised nationally as a benchmark by other agencies and

has been adopted by the ACT, Queensland and Western Australia fire services. One of the tangible outcomes was the introduction of joint fact sheets by the RFS, NSW Fire Brigades and the ACT Emergency Services Bureau.

Five fact sheets have been produced for the information of the public and will be available on each of the Services’ web sites and in hard copy.

Youth Programs

The Service’s focus on youth programs resulted in the development of a Cadet Leader Training Program. One of the partnerships that the Service has formed, with the Department of Rural Affairs, will see this program delivered to youth at risk or who live in disadvantaged areas in rural and regional NSW.



“Brigade members are all volunteers and come from all walks of life”

Safer Towns

Participation in the Safer Towns program in Orange and Bathurst sought to reduce the incidence of fires in these areas.

The Service also participated in a community project aimed at the indigenous community within the Shoalhaven.

New publications were developed about hazard reduction management and permit requirements. A Fire Preparedness checklist was designed for home owners to complete and the FireWise NSW Project was initiated to extend the reach of FireWise programs.

As part of an ongoing program to identify water sources for fire fighting, blue hydrant markers and Static Water Supply (SWS) guidelines were developed. Community Education also

produced a video presentation on evacuation and the role of the NSW Police in major fires.

Fire Education Centres continue to attract increasing numbers of members of the public interested in the Service’s programs to enhance community awareness of the threat of bushfires, and how best to prepare and defend properties from bushfire threat.

Development Control Services

In 2002 the NSW Government amended the *Rural Fires Act and Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* to give the Rural Fire Service a role in approving new developments in bushfire prone areas. Development Control Services was formed in May 2003 to manage this process.

In 2003/04 the number of development applications referred to RFS has increased by 287 per cent over the 2002/03 figures.

From 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 Development Control Services processed 4,287 applications under section 100B for the *Rural Fires Act* and 10,334 under Section 79BA of the *Environmental Protection and Assessment Act*. Of those proposed developments the Service identified 401 as posing significant bushfire risks, and these proposals could not be approved in their original form.

Planning and Environment Services

GOAL	WHAT WE DID	MEASURE	NEXT YEAR
Track and report on the number of fire permits issued for the year	Report tabled within specified timeframe	Report prepared on the number of fire permits issued for the year	Prepare a report on the number of fire permits issued for the year
Establish and facilitate a working group for the review of the Bush Fire Environmental Code	Deferred to allow full implementation of the Code throughout NSW, providing qualitative data for review	Data available to commence the review in 2004/05	Establish and facilitate a working group for the review of the Bush Fire Environmental Code
Complete assigned projects from BFCC related to bushfire	Commenced project management of all outstanding issues from BFCC	Active project management of issues raised by BFCC to deliver completed outcomes	RFS providing ongoing support and project management in a timely fashion
Revise and update the model BFMC plans. Model operations plan and risk plan updated	Interagency working group completed draft Operations Plan Mapping component still being developed Review of Risk Management Plan underway	Ongoing process of ensuring plans meet legislative requirements for review periods achieved	Revise and update the model BFMC Plans. Model operations plans and risk plan updated
Assist in the production and completion of bush fire prone area maps by local government	Produced draft maps for local government areas	141* maps completed	Assist in the production and completion of bush fire prone area maps by local government

*It should be noted that during this period that local government amalgamations occurred which may affect the final number of maps produced.

Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code

The Code, which came into effect on 1 July 2003, provides a streamlined environmental approval for hazard reduction activities, through the Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Certificate process.

During the year under review, a total of 4,841 Hazard Reduction Certificate proposals were received, and of these, 3,866 were approved, 79 were still being assessed as at 30 June 2004, and 896 were cancelled or denied (proposed activities were outside

the requirements of the Code). Ninety five percent of total Hazard Reduction Certificate proposals received were for private land.

Two formal Certificate Issuing Officer training courses were held in the last twelve months, and as a result, the Service now has in excess of 90 staff certified as Certificate Issuing Officers. In addition, a further 17 internal staff workshops have been held to ensure that district, regional and Head Office staff are familiar with the approvals process under the Code.

The Service has also conducted eight workshops or conferences tailored to meet the needs of local and state government agencies including NSW Fire Brigades, Department of Environment and Conservation, State Forests of NSW, Department of Lands and local councils.

A review of the Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code will begin in November 2004 having been postponed in 2003/04 to allow for qualitative data to be collected to enable a proper review to occur.



Training Courses - Fire Ecology & Prescribed Burning

Internal training courses in fire ecology and prescribed burning are scheduled for implementation in 2004–2005.

The main objective of this training is to build upon the knowledge and skills gained through participation in the Hazard Reduction Certificate Issuing Officers' course. These programs are currently under review.

Operations Plans

The Bush Fire Coordinating Committee approved 81 operations plans prepared by bush fire management committees under section 52 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*. Service staff assisted the committees in preparing these plans by project managing the plan preparation process and providing technical support in the development of maps.

The model operations plan is currently under review, with a revised format being approved this financial year.

Fire Mitigation Works Fund

The Fire Mitigation Works Fund is provided annually to assist districts with fire prevention and mitigation measures. The Bush Fire Coordinating Committee approves the allocation of funding for the projects. The majority of works funded by the scheme are on Crown Land managed by the Department of Lands.

Projects funded by the scheme include maintenance of firetrails, establishment and maintenance of asset protection and strategic fire advantage zones by mechanical means or burning and firetrail maintenance and construction. All projects must have the appropriate environmental approvals before work can commence.

Projects totalling \$1.03 million were completed, primarily on Crown Lands during the financial year.

Bush Fire Prone Land Mapping

As part of its ongoing reform of bush fire prevention and management in this State, the Government in 2002 introduced significant legislative reforms to

improve planning and development in bushfire prone areas. The fundamental aim of these reforms was to make NSW bushland communities safer places in which to build and live and to better protect the firefighters.

A key to this has been the requirement for councils to prepare maps identifying bushfire prone land. These maps help councils to provide a streamlined process for assessing development applications to ensure that proposed developments are not subjected to undue bushfire risk. These measures are designed to ultimately ensure that communities and firefighters are made safer as a result of appropriate development standards.

During the reporting period councils were required to prepare bush fire prone land maps. 141 of these maps were completed, with 130 of these being produced by the RFS on behalf of local government.

Review of Planning for Bush Fire Protection

The revised Planning for Bushfire Protection 2001 guidelines provide local government planners and decision makers, the building industry and the public with advice about bushfire protection strategies and requirements.

The guidelines were developed by the Service in close consultation and collaboration with the former Planning NSW (now Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources). They are intended for use by councils, fire authorities, developers, planning consultants, building practitioners and home owners. The document outlines the bushfire planning matters which need to be considered at various stages of the planning process.

The document also addresses the uniqueness associated with infill and special fire protection developments that were not addressed in the earlier document.

A review of the Planning for Bushfire Protection guidelines is now under way. It is envisaged that the review will be completed in the first half of 2005.

Fuel Management Reports

The *Rural Fires Act 1997* requires that local authorities and other public authorities report to the Commissioner on the implementation of hazard reduction activities each financial year.

A document-based reporting system was used to collect the hazard reduction figures from land managers through bush fire management committees for the previous years. With the introduction of the Bushfire Risk Information Management System (BRIMS), a reporting system was introduced that allows land managers to report for the 2003/04 financial year using either a document-based system or BRIMS.

The complete reports are set out in Appendices C and D.

Fire Investigation

Results

GOAL	WHAT WE DID	NEXT YEAR
Introduce new performance audits	Performance audit conducted annually on all investigators	Appoint two additional permanent regionally based investigation coordinators
Appoint two permanent regionally based investigation coordinators	Fire Investigation Co-ordinators appointed in Region East and Region West in February 2004	Appoint a research and administration officer
Develop training packages in accordance with investigation units of competency in public safety training package	Wildfire investigation training package developed and pilot to be tested in September 2004	Gain national accreditation to deliver and certify wildfire investigation training package, and promote to other agencies
Increase number of investigators	14 additional investigators appointed in Wildfire Investigation 11 additional investigators trained and appointed in Structural Investigation	Provide training to increase the number of investigators across the Service
Develop parameters for computer based reporting system	Completed	Develop and introduce a computer based fire investigation reporting system

Development of the Bushfire Risk Information Management System (BRIMS)

The Service headed up a group of agencies which developed the BRIMS system as a centralised recording and reporting application for a range of bushfire hazard management activities. NSW Fire Brigades, Parks and Wildlife Division (DEC), State Forests, Department of Lands, Sydney Water, Railcorp

and Sydney Catchment Authority are all using the BRIMS system for reporting such activities.

Over 50 local councils also have access to BRIMS. The system provides the users with an overview of bushfire hazard management as well as annual reporting information. The implementation of BRIMS is expected to be completed in December 2004.

As at 30 June 2004 three of eight modules had been released to 1,100 users. These were:

- Referral of Development Applications
- Fire permits
- Hazard Reduction.

The final five modules will be released by the end of 2004.



“The Service continues to recognise the need to support our volunteer members.”

Bushfire Risk Management Plan Performance Audits

Bush Fire Risk Management Plans (BFRMPs) are developed by local Bush Fire Management Committees, and approved by the Bushfire Coordinating Committee. This provides a comprehensive set of strategies for the reduction and mitigation of bushfire hazards in the local committee area over a five year period.

Performance audits are conducted based on a Strategic Audit Plan which resulted from the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on Bushfires 2002.

Auditing of BFRMPs, in accord with the recommendations from the Select Committee has commenced, but so far the results indicate it

is difficult to obtain meaningful performance based on audit measures. The risk management planning model is being reviewed to ensure that the planning process targets consistent and measurable performance based outcomes that lend themselves to performance based auditing.

In 2003/04 fifteen bushfire risk management plan audits were conducted.

The plans were evaluated on the percentage of strategies implemented compared to the percentage the plan was through its full five year term. The following summarises the performance results:

- The percentage of strategies implemented at the time of audit ranged from 26.9% to 76.7%

- The gap* ranged from Nil% to 43.1%, with the average being 15.8% for all plans being audited. It should be noted that two plans exceeded the percentage required for strategy implementation.

- The average number of strategies over the fifteen plans was 1479, with the spread being 51 to 270.

* The gap refers to the difference between the percentage of strategies that could be implemented over the full term of the plan (five years) and the actual percentage implemented at the time of the audit.



BUSH FIRE RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN AUDITED	TOTAL NUMBER OF STRATEGIES	PLAN % OF FULL TERM @ AUDIT DATE.	TOTAL STRATEGIES IMPLEMENTED @ AUDIT DATE. %	IMPLEMENTATION GAP %
Bega Valley	126	55	50.5	4.5
Blue Mountains	221	71	40.8	30.2
Byron	144	60	33.7	26.3
Cessnock	119	65	44.6	20.4
Dubbo	165	70	64.3	5.7
Narrabri	51	70	26.9	43.1
Parry/Tamworth	68	70	28.4	41.6
Port Stephens	71	60	52.8	7.2
Snowy River	258	70	73.8	Nil
Tumbarumba	204	50	44.9	5.1
Tumut	174	70	55	15
Warrindah/Pittwater	98	75	56.5	18.5
Wollondilly	270	63	56.4	6.6
Wollongong	167	76	63.2	12.8
Wyong	82	50	76.7	Nil
Averages	147.9	65	51.2	15.8

The strategies contained within Bush Fire Risk Management Plans have five levels of risk, from extreme to insignificant, and define community assets such as houses, schools and hospitals and environmental assets such as threatened species and cultural heritage.

The strategies cover prevention activities, community education, hazard reduction works, arson reduction activities and response planning.

The current planning arrangement was established in 1997. These plans were not designed to be

audited and as such have extreme limitations in being able to provide an accurate measure of success. A review of the existing bushfire risk management planning model is currently underway which will lead to a more performance based planning approach and will facilitate future performance auditing.

Operations

“Ensuring rapid and effective response to emergency incidents and to prevent injury and loss.”

GOAL	WHAT WE DID
Enhanced Aviation Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of Aviation Training to volunteers and staff • Development of joint fire agency Aviation Standard Operating Procedures • Provision of timely, safe, effective and efficient aviation support to firefighting activities • Participation in National Aerial Fire Fighting Centre
Enhanced Operational readiness and preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided access to lightning tracking and other weather data • Commenced development of an Operational Management System • Participated in the national review of AIIMS/ICS • MOU with the Australian Capital Territory Emergency Services Bureau • Commenced a comprehensive review of the s52 Plan of Operations
Effective Incident Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing review of Incident Management Procedures and Operational Management Procedures • Development and distribution of pocket books • Expand Remote Area Firefighting Team capability
Improved Inter-Service Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Mutual Aid Agreement (MAA) and Operational Communications Service Level Agreement (OCSLA) between the Service and NSWFB forwarded to Fire Services Joint Standing Committee (FSJSC) for endorsement
Improved community relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review gazetted total fire ban exemptions and review areas for total fire ban declarations

MEASURE

NEXT YEAR

- Training provided for Air Observers, Air Base Operators, Aircraft Radio Operators, Aircraft Officers and Air Attack Supervisors, Crew Resource Management
- Aviation Exercises held in all Regions
- Learning and Development Systems producing aviation training materials for respective courses
- On target to be self sufficient by 2007
- Active membership of AFAC Aviation Training Committee

- Aviation Section to be accredited as an RFS training provider
- Coordinate Aviation Industry and fire fighting authority conference

- Aviation SOPs agreed to by RFS, DEC (NPWS), NSWFB and accepted by the BFMC

- Develop additional SOPs as required

- State Air Desk staffed for fire season
- Aviation duty officer contactable at all times

- Expand State Air Desk to include capacity for tasking for SES operations
- New aircraft contracts for 05/06 fire season to be completed

- Used 2 x heavy helicopters and 2 x medium helicopters from the National Fleet

- Participate in tender process of new contracts for NAFC aircraft
- Continue to ensure National aircraft based in NSW

- All identified Districts/Teams/Zones have access

- System be made available to the broader organisation

- Working party formed

- Release of stage 1

- Review conducted in conjunction with AFAC

- Results to be included in IMX/IMW

- MOU completed and signed

- Review as necessary

- Multi agency steering committee formed and outcomes agreed

- Finalise documents, mapping spatial components and implement

- Changes promulgated to all stakeholders and procedures posted to the Intranet
- Draft pocket book completed and disseminated for final comment

- Ongoing development, additional procedures and review of existing procedures
- Finalise graphics, print and disseminate pocket books

- Personnel identified, medical and fitness testing procedures finalised and operational doctrine completed and disseminated

- Medical and fitness testing to be completed and winch training for selected groups to be implemented

- MOU submitted to FSJSC for October meeting. MAA and OCSLA completed

- Submit MAA and OCSLA to FSJSC for endorsement

- Gazetted total fire ban exemptions review endorsed by Commissioner and implemented. Review of areas for total fire ban declarations 50% completed

- Finalise and implement NSW Fire Areas for total fire ban declarations

Although the last fire season was relatively quiet in comparison to previous seasons, all facets of the Service's response capability continued to exceed expectations.

Significant early fire activity in the North of the state put enormous pressure on volunteer resources with brigade personnel from across the state rallying to combat these on the back of the 2002/2003 season which by any standards was severe. Nonetheless, the combined

volunteer and salaried workforce continued to provide the level of operational efficiency that has become the benchmark for other fire services.

There were increased levels of co-operation between agencies particularly in the areas of communications infrastructure, incident management and the delivery of aviation services.

The year saw the implementation of the Operations Directorate

Business Plan, which has provided a more focussed approach to many key areas of our business.

The Directorate now comprises Operations, Policy and Standards, Operational Communications, Aviation and Operational Planning and Development. There has also been a refocusing of the Service Support Centre which sits under Operational Communications and is now called the Operations Customer Service Centre.



“The Service's focus on the youth programs resulted in the development of a Cadet Leader Training Program”

Aviation

Fixed wing and rotary aircraft supported field personnel throughout the fire season by providing tactical water bombing, transport of personnel, reconnaissance and mapping of fires. Aircraft obtained through the National Aerial Firefighting Centre, Service contracts, land management agencies or general aviation operators were required to meet minimum standards before being able to work for the Service. The Service continued to liaise closely with CASA and aviation industry representatives providing presentations to key conferences and aviation forums.

Operational hours flown reflect the quieter fire season; however 2,207 hours were flown by helicopters and 529 hours by fixed wing aircraft in support of Service activities.

Operational Planning and Development

Previously Aviation and Operational Development were part of the same section. The development of the Business Plan recognised that Aviation needed to be a separate section and that there was a need to provide greater focus on the areas of operational planning and development.

The section's main focus is in providing those products and services that enhance the Service's operational capability and readiness. It also provides operational input into other areas of the Service and provides a catalyst for continuous improvement in the operations area.

Operations, Policy and Standards

The State Operations Centre (SOC) is responsible for the coordination,

dissemination and display of operational intelligence for fire and emergency incidents across NSW and provides operational, logistics and resource support to Rural Fire Districts. During the year the centre was responsible for the overall coordination and management of 10 Section 44 Declarations involving 23 Local Government Areas, which resulted in approximately 57,600 hectares of land, of all types, being burnt. Total fire bans were declared on 53 days.

The SOC is a focal point for senior personnel from other fire authorities as well as liaison staff from Police, Ambulance, State Emergency Service, Bureau of Meteorology, Department of Defence, infrastructure (such as Department of Commerce, Water and Electricity authorities) and welfare providers (such as DOCS and Salvation Army).



Operational Communications

Operational Communications is responsible for the development and implementation of the various communications infrastructure within the Service. This primarily incorporates the wireless communications systems such as GRN and PMR, fireground networks, paging services, weather stations and other mobile voice and data requirements.

Its roles can be described in three primary areas:

State Paging Networks

The Service uses Basepage as the proprietary software for paging messaging enabling time critical messaging to many areas of NSW. During this period the Service finalised agreements with SES to share paging infrastructure located across NSW.

Proposals for paging simulcasts in the greater Sydney basin were progressed; effectively meaning paging messages dispatched from a single Zone/District Control Centre will be able to be heard across the entire Sydney basin. In an era where time-convenient messaging using SMS has become prominent and the norm for most households, the Service is today

the largest paging provider in NSW; ensuring time critical alerting systems remain available for emergency dispatch into the future.

Radio Communications

The Service network of PMR sites consists of 371 locations across NSW as well as 150 Strategic Network (Stratnet) sites, some co-located with PMR sites. A significant issue was the design and implementation of a linking strategy, to enable newly formed Zones and areas that have been subject to local government amalgamations to function effectively. Work on this project is still underway.

The Strategic Network will be strengthened next year and focussed on service delivery to all primary Zone or District control centres across NSW.

The relocation to a new head office at Homebush will provide opportunities to modify existing networks enabling efficiencies and improvements into operating systems, strategic network and redundancies. The Service will operate from Homebush with digitally capable network infrastructure supported by both terrestrial and microwave redundant paths for radio communications.

Operations Customer Service Centre

In early 2004 the Operations Customer Service Centre took over the business ownership of the Firezone operational management systems, incorporating the FIRS (Fire Incident Reporting System) and the RMS (Resource Management System) Modules.

The Operations Customer Service Centre operates on a 24 hour basis 365 days of the year providing data entry for post incident reporting systems, collation and dissemination of significant operational and incident related information.

It is the central point of contact for the Service, other combat and support agencies and members of the public. Further, during this period the customer focus for the environment was strengthened to ensure optimum results for primary customers – our volunteers.



Engineering

36 performance

GOAL	WHAT WE DID	MEASURE	NEXT YEAR
Efficient supply of tankers	<p>New inspection system and quality control program implemented to ensure delivery of tankers to agreed timeframes</p> <p>Provided inspections and reports for entire 2002/2003 replacement program</p> <p>Conducted 34 audit inspections of replacement program tankers</p>	<p>Reduction in number of fault notifications</p> <p>Newly constructed tankers have been presented to districts</p> <p>Conduct audit inspections</p>	<p>Maintain quality control program to ensure that fully functional and operational tankers/appliances are delivered</p> <p>Continue on time delivery of tankers</p> <p>Continue audit inspections</p>
Research and development	<p>Extensive research with CSIRO into fire appliance spray protection systems</p>	<p>Completed second stage testing at Mogo facility. Results warrant final stage testing</p>	<p>Continue research and testing</p>
Gather and evaluate feedback from field use of Service equipment	<p>Ensured feedback from field use of Service equipment is used as basis for ongoing R&D</p> <p>Designed new fault reporting system</p>	<p>Consulted with end users and suppliers</p> <p>Implemented new fault reporting system</p>	<p>Continue data gathering and problem solving</p>

Category 1 and Category 2 tankers

A significant number of the Service's Category 1 and Category 2 tankers are built on Isuzu 4x4 cab chassis. In 2002 cracking was found in the chassis of some of the larger FTS model tankers.

Following discussions with Isuzu, a repair program was put in place to strengthen the rear parts of the chassis. This program will ensure that if inspections identify any further chassis cracks, repairs will be carried out immediately.

Other Performance Indicators

Guarantee of Service

The Service's customer service Vision Statement remains:

'To consistently deliver to our customers the highest possible levels of service.'

Underpinning the Vision is our Customer Service Commitment, which is to:

Listen

to the needs of our customers and stakeholders

Respond

to needs and concerns by finding and implementing the most cost effective and environmentally acceptable solutions

Inform

the community to the fullest extent possible of bushfire prevention, protection and safety measures available to assist in reducing the threat of and potential losses from fire, and,

Deliver

our services in a manner that ensures we provide value for money in the operations and management of a rural fire service.

The Guarantee of Service itemises measurable commitments and constant monitoring of them has enabled the Service to identify and improve its customer service.

"Fire Education Centres continue to attract increasing numbers of members of the public."



Statement on Standards for the Provision of Services

Service provision is in accordance with the commitments and criteria as detailed in the Strategic Plan, copies of which can be obtained free of charge from the Service's website, Head and regional offices, or by phoning 02 9684 4411 (02 8741 5555 from September 2004).

Contract and Market Testing

Policies and action plans have been developed to address issues of contract and market testing in areas of equipment supply, training and community education.

The Commissioner and senior staff of the Service undertake a regular program of regional visits during which valuable feedback on service provision is obtained.

Overseas Visits

Details of overseas visits by Service staff are set out in Appendix M.

Consumer Response

The Service continued to be well regarded by its customers and stakeholders.

The Guarantee of Service encourages the lodgement of complaints where this is considered justified and provides detailed information as to how this should be done.

Any complaints received are given attention and resolved at the earliest opportunity.

Privacy and Personal Information

In response to the requirements of the *Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998*, the Service has developed a Service Standard that specifies requirements for the handling of personal data collected in the course of non-operational activities. This includes the personal particulars of Service members and recordings of non-operational telephone and radio calls.

The Service Standard provides for a confidentiality undertaking by officers with access to personal information including the Service's database 'Firezone'. Protocols and procedures for access to the 'Firezone' database are also in place.

Regions

Region East

Regional Manager

Bruce Holz

Office Details

Suite 5
235–239 High Street
Penrith NSW 2750
Tel: 4722 8444
Fax: 4722 9414

Relocating September 2004 to:

15 Carter Street
Homebush Bay NSW 2127
Tel 8741 5555
Fax 8741 5550

Statistics

Districts	35
Zones	10
Brigades	456
Volunteers	20,906
Full time staff	190
Area	52,559 sq kms

Description

By virtue of its size, geography and demographics Region East provides the Service with its greatest challenge in its mission to protect life, property and the environment. It encompasses the densely populated Sydney Basin, the coastal zones north to Taree and south to Kiama, and stretches inland to Bathurst, Muswellbrook, and Merriwa. Containing major industrial, commercial and residential zones and areas of significant natural beauty, the Region is vital to the NSW economy. These factors also make it susceptible to a broad range of fire risks.

Total Incidents 2003/04

Bushfire	775
Grassfire	1,780
Building Fire	119
Vehicle Fire	970
Motor Vehicle Accident	1,546
False alarms	878
Other incidents	4,360
Total number of incidents	10,428

Key Achievements during 2003/04

- 100% Bush Fire Risk Management Plans approved by Bush Fire Coordinating Committee
- Regional community education conference held
- 100% community education strategies and resource orders completed
- All Bush Fire Management Committee fire mitigation funding requests processed and 92% of funding requests allocated
- All District Operations Plans completed in line with Service policy
- 95% of District Mutual Aid Agreements with NSW Fire Brigades approved or awaiting approval
- Opportunities for improved operational performance by districts identified and facilitated
- 90.5% of regional staff accredited to conduct and supervise prescribed burns
- Two incident management workshops/incident management exercises held with 114 staff participating
- Learning and Development Officers attended training workshops on newly developed Bush Firefighter and Advanced Firefighter principles
- 45% of operational staff possess Certificate IV in Firefighting Supervision – up 17% on last year.

Significant incidents in 2003/04

The Region experienced only a moderate season with five Section 44 declarations over five Rural Fire Districts, covering a total of 25 days.

Reported losses were to minor assets only and no fatalities or significant injuries to firefighters or members of the public were reported.

Key projects for 2004/2005

- Implementation of RecFind (Records Management) and tracking system across the Region
- All district budgets to be submitted within Service Guidelines
- Four Community Safety Officer forums
- Regional Community Education Conference
- Review Memoranda of Understanding with NSWFB.

The work of volunteers during the year cannot be understated. Without their commitment, dedication, good humour and a constant determination to excel, the Region would not have been able to perform as it did.

Region North

Regional Manager

Ian Thomas

Office Details

Level 4, State Office Block

Victoria Street

Grafton NSW 2460

Tel: 6643 2512 or 6643 2514

Fax: 6643 2515 or 6643 4965

Statistics

Districts	29
Zones	6
Brigades	591
Volunteers	14,871
Full time staff	97
Area	157,170 sq kms

Description

Region North, located in the north eastern corner of the state, comprises 29 local government areas covering an estimated 157,170 square kilometres, of which 97% is gazetted as rural fire districts.

The region is located almost entirely within the sub-monsoonal area of NSW and with the exception of El Nino/ Southern Oscillation events generally experiences moderate bushfire seasons due to high summer rainfall. The topography and major vegetation types are diverse ranging from cropping and flat grassland, coastal heath to mountainous dry sclerophyll, and includes areas of rainforest. Significant areas of remote rugged forest areas have been incorporated into National Parks, with other smaller reserves created to protect natural or cultural assets in the region.

The region includes the heavily populated coastal tourist areas of Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour, Ballina and the Tweed Coast, the large inland cities of Tamworth and Armidale, and the rural centres of Lismore, Tenterfield, Narrabri, Gunnedah, Inverell, Scone, Coonabarabran and Moree, and is dissected by the busy Newell, New England and Pacific Highways.

Total Incidents 2003/2004

Bushfire	488
Grassfire	853
Building Fire	36
Vehicle Fire	207
Motor Vehicle Accident	743
False alarm	148
Other incidents	1,094
Total number of incidents	3,569

Key Achievements during 2003/04

- Service Delivery Models, linked to business plans and the estimates process completed for all districts
- Station and tanker procurement programs completed for all districts
- All applications for hazard reduction complaints and section 79BA development applications processed within timeframes
- All districts working within Zones or teams with all Team Managers appointed
- All annual boundary reviews completed with NSW Fire Brigades
- Twenty-two task forces involving 92 appliances and 276 personnel working 9,156 hours deployed to assist in emergency declarations across the state
- Construction of eighteen fire stations and two fire control centres completed
- Two day conference for volunteer community education coordinators
- Community Fireguard for Kids delivered at 70% of schools within Region
- Seventy-four volunteers trained as community education facilitators
- Implementation of programme for fire asset protection zones for managed land adjoining isolated villages. Village protection strategies completed for 9 areas with a further 18 in progress

- Ninety percent (90%) active firefighters accredited to Basic Firefighter level

- 37 new and 14 refurbished firefighting appliances with 11 support vehicles provided to districts.

Significant incidents in 2003/04

Four declarations under section 44 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* covering nine local government areas.

Key projects for 2004/05

- Implementation of procurement programs into estimates and business planning processes
- Continue liaison for agreement with councils for 5-year procurement programs
- Continuation of staff annual conferences
- Delivery of education package to all schools in rural fire districts
- All isolated villages to have agreed fire management plan and established fire protection zones on adjoining managed land
- Continuation of tanker replacement programs to provide modern first attack firefighting capability across the region
- Conduct joint training exercises to test effectiveness of border plan and establish communications plan for border operations
- Annual exercise to provide accreditation and maintain competency of personnel identified for Incident Management Teams
- Annual exercise for RAFT crews.

The volunteers of Region North provided inspiration for the community and other members of the Service. It is to their continuing credit that the Region's performance maintained the previous high standard.



Region South

Regional Manager

Peter Ryan

Office Details

7-9 Kylie Crescent

Batemans Bay NSW 2536

Tel: 4472 4165 or 4472 4129

Fax: 4472 4126 or 4472 4401

Statistics

Districts	36
Zones	11
Brigades	483
Volunteers	18,329
Full time staff	91
Area	169,116 sq kms

Description

Regarded as fire prone by world standards, Region South takes in the South Coast, Southern Tablelands and the western areas of the Riverina. It controls most of the NSW/Victoria border, surrounds the ACT and includes areas such as the Bega Valley, the Snowy River, and Wagga Wagga.

Traditionally, the annual bushfire season begins along the coast in Spring and closes in the Riverina in Autumn. Fire managers are mindful of heavy concentrations of native and plantation forests, fragile coastal health communities, alpine pastures and sweeping plains of crops and natural rangelands.

Total Incidents 2003/04

Bushfire	371
Grassfire	802
Building Fire	31
Vehicle Fire	204
Motor Vehicle Accident	591
False alarm	197
Other incidents	1,098
Total number of incidents	3,294

Key Achievements during 2003/04

- Completion of formal zoning arrangements for the creation of the MIA and Mid Murray Zones. There are now seven formal Zones within Region South
- Each paid member of staff formally assigned to one of the Service's four functional areas:
 - > Management
 - > Community safety
 - > Learning and Development
 - > Operations
- Regional Incident Management Exercise held in Yass
- Joint Regional Exercise held in Gundagai
- Community Education forum held in Yass
- Implementation of Regional Human Resources and Systems Audit program began and now 40% complete
- Setting up of informal OH&S networks within zones
- 82% of appropriate staff completed Certificate IV requirements.

Significant incidents 2003-04

Region South had a quiet fire season compared with previous years, with only one Section 44 declaration in the Region. This S44 was over a two day period and required only minimal assistance from other areas. There was no significant property loss or injuries to the public or firefighters.

Key Projects – 2004/2005

- Further development of zones across the region
- State Championships – Queanbeyan
- Group Officers Forum – Narrandera
- Community Education Co-ordinators Conference – Gundagai
- Joint Regional Exercise
- Regional Incident Management Exercise – Queanbeyan
- OH&S structures within Region and zone offices to be completed
- Staff development program for administration officers
- Completion of Certificate IV requirements for remaining appropriate staff.

Once again, volunteers of the Service performed to the highest standard whilst on call and gave of their time willingly to increase their skills and abilities to meet the professional standard of service delivery that the community has become accustomed to.

Region West

Regional Manager

Paul Smith (Acting)
(until 22 February 2004)

Dominic Lane
(appointed 23 February 2004)

Office Details

Shop 3, Lovell Place
Lovell Street
Young NSW 2594

Tel: 6382 5677 or 6382 5678

Fax: 6382 1731

Statistics

Districts	32
Zones	10
Brigades	564
Volunteers	15,269
Full-time staff	70
Area	422,614 sq kms

Description

Region West covers 53 per cent of the state, from Mudgee in the east to the South Australian border in the west.

The Region has a variety of landscapes from the hilly, timbered tablelands in the east to the vast western plains. Although agriculture is the main land use, the rural sector has been significantly affected by the worst drought in 100 years.

The Region has major rivers, including the Lachlan, Murrumbidgee and Darling, as well as major transport routes including the Newell and Hume Highways and the Great Southern rail line.

During the year under review and due to the drought and low grassland fuel loads, the major fire risk was to the forested areas.

Total Incidents 2003/04

Bushfire	130
Grassfire	409
Building Fire	20
Vehicle Fire	110
Motor Vehicle Accident	272
False alarm	48
Other incidents	532
Total number of incidents	1,521

Key Achievements during 2003/04

- Hazard reduction related training for:
 - > Twenty staff as certificate Issuing officers
 - > Thirty-five people in the Bushfire Risk Information Management System (BRIMS)
 - > Forty staff and volunteers trained as prescribed burning supervisors
- Assistance to councils on the new bush fire code
- Twenty-one regional and district fire control staff trained at Riverina TAFE in new public safety system
- Twenty-six regional and district staff completed Certificate IV in firefighting supervision
- Canobolas mapping project implemented
- Regular captains and Group Captains forums
- Conduct of Region's first incident management exercise
- Meeting protocols/procedures restructured to better align with the Service's corporate objectives and key result areas.

Significant incidents in 2003/04

- Section 44 emergency declaration for fire in Goonoo State Forest near Dubbo in January

Key projects for 2004-2005

- Engagement of Riverina TAFE to commence professional development plans for each staff member
- Facilitate linking of PMR radio systems across teams and zones
- Assessment of Captains' competencies and introduction of any necessary bridging training
- Regional field exercise at Lake Burrendong
- Review of brigade stations within each Team/Zone.

It is timely to place on record the Region's recognition of the work carried out by the volunteers. They have upheld all the traditions and expectations of the Service to the highest possible levels and it would be remiss not to recognise their efforts.



42 FIRE SAFETY TIP 4

after the fire has passed



“Check the roof and roof spaces for fire”



“Our Volunteers performed to the high standard expected of them and gave their time willingly to increase their skills and abilities.”

Co-operation working together



04

2004 financials

Independent
Audit Report

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Audit Report

Commissioner's
Statement

Statement of Financial
Performance

Financials

- Annual Report Costs
- Engagement of Consultants
- Payment Performance
- Sale of Property
- Major Assets
- Grants to Outside Organisations
- Executive Remuneration



GPO BOX 12
SYDNEY NSW 2001

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT
NEW SOUTH WALES RURAL FIRE SERVICE

To Members of the New South Wales Parliament

Audit Opinion

In my opinion, the financial report of the New South Wales Rural Fire Service:

- (a) presents fairly the New South Wales Rural Fire Service's financial position as at 30 June 2004 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year ended on that date, in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia, and
- (b) complies with section 45E of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* (the Act).

My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

The Commissioner's Role

The financial report is the responsibility of the Commissioner of the New South Wales Rural Fire Service. It consists of the statement of financial position, the statement of financial performance, the statement of cash flows, the program statement - expenses and revenues, the summary of compliance with financial directives and the accompanying notes.

The Auditor's Role and the Audit Scope

As required by the Act, I carried out an independent audit to enable me to express an opinion on the financial report. My audit provides *reasonable assurance* to members of the New South Wales Parliament that the financial report is free of *material* misstatement.

My audit accorded with Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards and statutory requirements, and I:

- evaluated the accounting policies and significant accounting estimates used by the Commissioner in preparing the financial report, and
- examined a sample of the evidence that supports the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report.

An audit does *not* guarantee that every amount and disclosure in the financial report is error free. The terms 'reasonable assurance' and 'material' recognise that an audit does not examine all evidence and transactions. However, the audit procedures used should identify errors or omissions significant enough to adversely affect decisions made by users of the financial report or indicate that the Commissioner had not fulfilled his reporting obligations.

My opinion does *not* provide assurance:

- about the future viability of the New South Wales Rural Fire Service,
- that the New South Wales Rural Fire Service has carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically,
- about the effectiveness of its internal controls, or
- on the assumptions used in formulating the budget figures disclosed in the financial report.

Audit Independence

The Audit Office complies with all applicable independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements. The Act further promotes independence by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General, and
- mandating the Auditor-General as auditor of public sector agencies but precluding the provision of non-audit services, thus ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office are not compromised in their role by the possibility of losing clients or income.

D A Jones FCA
Director of Audit

SYDNEY
20 October 2004



GPO BOX 12 9275 1153
SYDNEY NSW 2001 Z346/

Mr P C Koperberg AO, AFSM, BEM
Commissioner
New South Wales Rural Fire Service
Locked Bay 17
GRANVILLE NSW 2142

20 October 2004

Dear Mr Koperberg

STATUTORY AUDIT REPORT
for the Year Ended 30 June 2004
NEW SOUTH WALES RURAL FIRE SERVICE

I have audited the accounts of the New South Wales Rural Fire Service as required by the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* (the Act). This Statutory Audit Report outlines the results of my audit for the year ended 30 June 2004, and details any significant matters that in my opinion call for special notice. The Act requires that I send this report to the Minister and to the Treasurer.

This report is not the Independent Audit Report, which expresses my opinion on the New South Wales Rural Fire Service's financial report. The Independent Audit Report, together with the Service's financial report, is attached.

Audit Result

I expressed an unqualified opinion on the Service's financial report and I have not identified any significant matters since I wrote to you on 20 October 2003. My audit is continuous and I may therefore identify new significant matters before the Auditor-General next reports to Parliament on the agency's audit. If this occurs, I will write to you immediately.

Auditor-General's Report to Parliament

Comment on the Service's financial operations will appear in the Auditor-General's Report to Parliament. I will send a draft of this comment to you for review before the Report is tabled during December.

Scope of the Audit

As advised in the Engagement Letter, my audit procedures are targeted specifically towards forming an opinion on the Service's financial report. This includes testing whether your agency has complied with key legislation that may materially impact on the financial report. The results of the audit are reported in this context.

Each year, the Audit Office also selects various 'non-key' legislative requirements, government policies and practices (eg Premier's Circulars) and tests whether your agency has complied with them.

This year, I examined Payment of Accounts. The result of my review was satisfactory.

Acknowledgment

I thank the New South Wales Rural Fire Service's staff for their courtesy and assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David Jones'.

D A Jones
Director of Audit

cc The Hon A B Kelly MLC, Minister for Emergency Services
The Hon M R Egan MLC, Treasurer

All communications to be addressed to:

Head Office
NSW Rural Fire Service
Locked Mail Bag 17
Granville NSW 2142

Telephone: (02) 9684 4411

Facsimile: (02) 9638 6645



**NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR
ENDED 30 JUNE 2004**

Statement by Commissioner

Pursuant to Section 45F of the Public Finance and Audit Act, 1983, I state that:

The accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Public Finance and Audit Act, 1983, the Financial Reporting Code for Budget Dependent General Government Sector Agencies, the applicable clauses of the Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2000 and the Treasurer's Directions;

- (b) The statements exhibit a true and fair view of the financial position and transactions of the Service for the year ended 30 June 2004; and
- (c) At the date of this statement there are no circumstances which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.


P.C. Koperberg AO, AFSM, BEM
Commissioner

19 October 2004

Statement of Financial Position

as at 30 June 2004

	Notes	Actual 2004 \$'000	Budget 2004 \$'000	Actual 2003 \$'000
ASSETS				
Current Assets				
Cash	8(a)	22,952	21,315	25,534
Receivables	9(a)	2,645	14,075	14,075
Other	9(b)	690	377	540
Total Current Assets		26,287	35,767	40,149
Non-Current Assets				
Plant and Equipment	10	11,965	13,634	6,368
Total Non-Current Assets		11,965	13,634	6,368
Total Assets		38,252	49,401	46,517
LIABILITIES				
Current Liabilities				
Payables	11	10,734	22,703	22,185
Provisions	12	5,217	5,256	4,956
Total Current Liabilities		15,951	27,959	27,141
Non-Current Liabilities				
Provisions	12	5,508	6,391	4,991
Total Non-Current Liabilities		5,508	6,391	4,991
Total Liabilities		21,459	34,350	32,132
Net Assets		16,793	15,051	14,385
EQUITY				
Accumulated Funds	13	16,793	15,051	14,385
Total Equity		16,793	15,051	14,385

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Statement of Financial Performance

for the year ended 30 June 2004

	Notes	Actual 2004 \$'000	Budget 2004 \$'000	Actual 2003 \$'000
Expenses				
Operating expenses				
Employee related	2(a)	44,671	45,960	39,321
Other operating expenses	2(b)	12,088	10,251	10,939
Maintenance		252	–	198
Depreciation and amortisation	2(c)	2,259	1,990	1,158
Grants and subsidies	2(d)	77,296	67,668	185,261
Borrowing Costs	2(e) 8(b)	57	–	51
Other expenses	2(f)	4,451	3,810	4,061
Total Expenses		141,074	129,679	240,989
Less:				
Retained Revenue				
Sale of goods and services	3(a)	278	–	352
Grants and contributions	3(b)	116,960	108,786	222,241
Other revenue	3(c)	6,963	2,350	2,146
Total Retained Revenue		124,201	111,136	224,739
Gain/(Loss) on Disposal of Non-Current Assets	4	41	–	(50)
Net Cost of Services	17	16,832	18,543	16,300
Government Contributions				
Recurrent appropriation	5	18,898	18,898	18,023
Capital Appropriation	5	250	311	–
Acceptance by the Crown Entity of employee benefits and other liabilities	6	92	–	151
Total Government Contributions		19,240	19,209	18,174
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES				
		2,408	666	1,874
TOTAL REVENUES, EXPENSES AND VALUATION ADJUSTMENTS RECOGNISED DIRECTLY IN EQUITY				
		–	–	–
TOTAL CHANGES IN EQUITY OTHER THAN THOSE RESULTING FROM TRANSACTIONS WITH OWNERS AS OWNERS				
	13	2,408	666	1,874

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2004

	Notes	Actual 2004 \$'000	Budget 2004 \$'000	Actual 2003 \$'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Payments				
Employee related		(44,644)	(44,097)	(34,295)
Grants and subsidies		(92,858)	(53,967)	(188,839)
Other		(18,216)	(32,344)	(16,580)
Total Payments		(155,718)	(130,408)	(239,714)
Receipts				
Sale of goods and services		109	–	352
Grants and Contributions		109,195	92,155	105,197
GST Receipts		6,422	–	14,327
Other		6,562	24,081	2,195
Total Receipts		122,288	116,236	122,071
Cash Flows from Government				
Recurrent appropriation		18,898	18,898	18,023
Capital appropriation		250	311	–
Cash reimbursements from the Crown Entity		19,515	–	111,474
Net Cash Flows from Government		38,663	19,209	129,497
NET CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	17	5,233	5,037	11,854
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES				
Proceeds from sale of Plant and Equipment	10	924	5,120	511
Purchases of Plant and Equipment	10	(8,739)	(14,376)	(5,858)
NET CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		(7,815)	(9,256)	(5,347)
NET INCREASE / (DECREASE) IN CASH		(2,582)	(4,219)	6,507
Opening cash and cash equivalents		25,534	17,267	19,027
CLOSING CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	8	22,952	13,048	25,534

The accompanying notes form part of these statements.

Program Statement – Expenses and Revenue

for the year ended 30 June 2004

SERVICE'S EXPENSES & REVENUES	Program 1*		Program 2*		Program 3*		Program 4*		Not Attributable		Total	
	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
Expenses												
Operating expenses												
• Employee related	41,573	36,779	485	459	613	578	2,000	1,505	–	–	44,671	39,321
• Other operating expenses	9,642	8,614	702	678	890	977	1,106	868	–	–	12,340	11,137
Depreciation and amortisation	2,259	1,158	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2,259	1,158
Grants and subsidies	76,035	184,413	–	–	–	–	1,261	848	–	–	77,296	185,261
Borrowing Costs	57	51	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	57	51
Other expenses	4,451	4,061	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4,451	4,061
Total Expenses	134,017	235,076	1,187	1,137	1,503	1,555	4,367	3,221	–	–	141,074	240,989
Retained Revenues												
Sale of goods and services	278	352	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	278	352
Grants and contributions	116,735	222,241	–	–	–	–	225	–	–	–	116,960	222,241
Other revenue	5,827	1,175	–	–	–	–	1,136	971	–	–	6,963	2,146
Total Retained Revenue	122,840	223,768	–	–	–	–	1,361	971	–	–	124,201	224,739
Gain/(loss) on disposal of non-current assets	41	(50)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	41	(50)
NET COST OF SERVICES	11,136	11,358	1,187	1,137	1,503	1,555	3,006	2,250	–	–	16,832	16,300
Government contributions**	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	19,240	18,174	19,240	18,174
NET EXPENDITURE/ (REVENUE) FOR THE YEAR	11,136	11,358	1,187	1,137	1,503	1,555	3,006	2,250	(19,240)	(18,174)	(2,408)	(1,874)

* The name and purpose of each program is summarised in Note 7.

** Appropriations are made on an agency basis and not to individual programmes. Consequently, government contributions have been included in the Not Attributable Column.

Summary of Compliance with Financial Directives

for the year ended 30 June 2004

	2004				2003			
	Recurrent Appropriation	Expenditure/ Net Claim On Consolidated Fund	Capital Appropriation	Expenditure/ Net Claim On Consolidated Fund	Recurrent Appropriation	Expenditure	Capital Appropriation	Expenditure
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
ORIGINAL BUDGET APPROPRIATION/ EXPENDITURE								
• Appropriation Act	18,632	18,632	311	250	17,378	17,378	-	-
	18,632	18,632	311	250	17,378	17,378	-	-
OTHER APPROPRIATIONS/ EXPENDITURE								
• Treasurer's Advance	266	266	-	-	645	645	-	-
	266	266	-	-	645	645	-	-
Total Appropriations/ Expenditure/Net Claim on Consolidated Fund (includes transfer payments)	18,898	18,898	311	250	18,023	18,023	-	-
Amount drawn down against Appropriation		18,898		-		18,023		-
Liability to Consolidated Fund		-		-		-		-

The Summary of Compliance is based on the assumption that Consolidated Fund moneys are spent first (except where otherwise identified or prescribed).

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2004

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Reporting Entity

The NSW Rural Fire Service, as a reporting entity, comprises all the entities under its control.

The reporting entity is consolidated as part of the NSW Total State Sector and as part of the NSW Public Accounts.

(b) Basis of Accounting

The Service's financial statements are a general purpose financial report which has been prepared on an accruals basis and in accordance with:

- applicable Australian Accounting Standards
- other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB)
- Urgent Issues Group (UIG) Consensus Views
- the requirements of the *Public Finance and Audit Act* and Regulations; and
- the Financial Reporting Directions published in the Financial Reporting Code for Budget Dependent General Government Sector Agencies or issued by the Treasurer under section 9(2)(n) of the Act.

Where there are inconsistencies between the above requirements, the legislative provisions have prevailed.

In the absence of a specific Accounting Standard, other authoritative pronouncements of the AASB or UIG Consensus View, the hierarchy of other pronouncements as outlined in AAS 6 "Accounting Policies" is considered.

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention.

All amounts are rounded to the nearest one thousand dollars and are expressed in Australian currency.

(c) Revenue Recognition

Revenue is recognised when the Service has control of the good or right to receive, it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the Service and the amount of revenue can be measured reliably. Additional comments regarding the accounting policies for the recognition of revenue are discussed below.

(i) Parliamentary Appropriations and Contributions from Other Bodies.

Parliamentary appropriations and contributions from other bodies (including grants and donations) are generally recognised as revenues when the service obtains control over the assets comprising the appropriations/contributions. Control over appropriations and contributions is normally obtained upon the receipt of cash.

An exception to the above is when appropriations are unspent at year-end. In this case, the authority to spend the money lapses and generally the unspent amount must be repaid to the Consolidated Fund in the following financial year. As a result, unspent appropriations are accounted for as liabilities rather than revenue.

(ii) Sale of Goods and Services

Revenue from the sale of goods and services comprises revenue from the provision of products or services, ie user charges. User charges are recognised as revenue when the Service obtains control of the assets that result from them.

(d) Employee Benefits and other Provisions

(i) Salaries and Wages, Annual Leave, Sick Leave and On-Costs

Liabilities for salaries and wages (including non-monetary benefits), annual leave and vesting sick leave are recognised and measured in respect of employees' services up to the reporting date at nominal amounts based on the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled.

Unused non-vesting sick leave does not give rise to a liability as it is not considered probable that sick leave taken in the future will be greater than the benefits accrued in the future.

The outstanding amounts of payroll tax, workers' compensation insurance premiums and fringe benefits tax, which are consequential to employment, are recognised as liabilities and expenses where the employee benefits to which they relate have been recognised.

(ii) *Accrued salaries and wages-reclassification*

As a result of the adoption of Accounting Standard AASB 1044 "Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets," accrued salaries and wages and on-costs has been reclassified to "payables" instead of "provisions" in the Statement of Financial Position and the related note disclosures, for the current and comparative period. On the face of the Statement of Financial Position and in the notes, reference is now made to "provisions" in place of "employee entitlements and other provisions." Total employee benefits are reconciled in Note 12 "Provisions."

(iii) *Long Service Leave and Superannuation*

The Service recognises liabilities for long service leave and superannuation for all employees, except for those of the Office for Emergency Services. The liability in relation to the Office for Emergency Services is assumed by the Crown Entity, and the Service accounts for the liability as having been extinguished resulting in the amount assumed being shown as part of the non-monetary revenue item described as "Acceptance by the Crown Entity of Employee Benefits and other Liabilities."

The Superannuation liabilities are assumed by the Service as required by Treasury. The Superannuation Schemes relating to the employees of the NSW Rural Fire Service are: the State Super Scheme; the State Authorities Superannuation Scheme; the State Authorities Non-Contributory Superannuation Scheme (Basic Benefits Scheme) – these funds are now closed to new entrants; the First State Super Scheme, the Public Sector Executives Superannuation Scheme and the Local Government Employees Superannuation Scheme. Details of the reserves, assessed liabilities, overfunding and provisions are shown in note 21.

(e) *Borrowing Costs*

Borrowing costs are recognised as expenses in the period in which they are incurred.

(f) *Insurance*

The Service's insurance activities are conducted through the NSW Treasury Managed Fund Scheme of self insurance for Government agencies. The expense (premium) is determined by the Fund Manager based on past experience.

(g) *Accounting for the Goods and Services Tax (GST)*

Revenues expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except:

- the amount of GST incurred by the service as a purchaser that is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of an asset or as part of an item of expense
- receivables and payables are stated with the amount of GST included.

(h) *Acquisitions of Assets*

The cost method of accounting is used for the initial recording of all acquisitions of assets controlled by the Service. Cost is determined as the fair value of the assets given as consideration plus the costs incidental to the acquisition.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and revenues at their fair value at the date of acquisition.

Fair value means the amount for which an asset could be exchanged between a knowledgeable, willing buyer and a knowledgeable, willing seller in an arm's length transaction.

(i) *Plant and Equipment*

Plant and equipment costing \$5,000 and above individually are capitalised. In addition and in accordance with Service policy some assets costing less than \$5,000 and forming part of a network are capitalised.

(j) *Depreciation of Non-Current Physical Assets*

Depreciation is provided for on a straight line basis for all depreciable assets so as to write off the depreciable amount of each asset as it is consumed over its useful life to the entity. Plant and Equipment and Fitout are depreciated at the rate of 20%, computer equipment at 33.3% per annum.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2004

(k) *Maintenance and Repairs*

The costs of maintenance are charged as expenses as incurred, except where they relate to the replacement of a component of an asset, in which case the costs are capitalised and depreciated.

(l) *Leased Assets*

Operating lease payments are charged to the Statement of Financial Performance in the periods in which they are incurred. There are no finance lease arrangements.

(m) *Rural Fire Fighting Equipment*

The ownership of all fire fighting equipment purchased by the Rural Fire Fighting Fund is vested in the relevant local government council. The cost of such equipment is, therefore, expensed by the Service in the year of purchase.

(n) *Funding – NSW Rural Fire Service*

Under the Rural Fires Act 1997 the contribution from Local Government is 13.3%, Treasury 13% and the Insurance Industry 73.7%. In addition, \$ 0.7 million was received as supplementation from Treasury.

		2004 \$(M)		2003 \$(M)
Local Government	13.3%	16.6	13.3%	16.1
Insurance Industry	73.7%	92.2	73.7%	88.9
Treasury	13.0%	16.3	13.0%	15.7

Contributions are recognised when invoices are raised.

(o) *Receivables*

Receivables are recognised and carried at cost, based on the original invoice amount less a provision for any uncollectable debts. An estimate for doubtful debts is made when collection of the full amount is no longer probable. Bad debts are written off as incurred.

(p) *Other Assets*

Other assets including prepayments are recognised on a cost basis.

(q) *Payables*

These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the service and other amounts including interest. Interest is accrued over the period it becomes due.

(r) *Budgeted Amounts*

The budgeted amounts are drawn from the budgets as formulated at the beginning of the financial year and with any adjustments for the effects of additional appropriations, s 21A, s 24 and/or s 26 of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*.

The budgeted amounts in the Statement of Financial Performance and the Statement of Cash Flows are generally based on the amounts disclosed in the NSW Budget Papers (as adjusted above). However, in the Statement of Financial Position, the amounts vary from the Budget Papers, as the opening balances of the budgeted amounts are based on carried forward actual amounts i.e. per the audited financial statements (rather than carried forward estimates).

	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
2. EXPENSES		
(a) Employee related expenses		
Salaries and wages (including recreation leave)	37,970	31,563
Superannuation	3,474	4,937
Long service leave	697	1,008
Workers' compensation insurance	320	187
Payroll tax	2,210	1,626
	44,671	39,321
(b) Other operating expenses		
Auditor's remuneration		
– audit of the financial report	78	67
Operating lease rental expense		
– minimum lease payments	1,337	1,135
Travel	1,260	1,132
Telephones	1,222	966
Fees for service	711	1,021
Printing and stationery	1,006	1,042
Consumables	387	470
Vehicle operation	669	424
All outgoings – buildings	366	386
Other expenses	5,052	4,296
	12,088	10,939
(c) Depreciation and amortisation expense		
Depreciation		
Computer equipment	237	316
Other property, plant and equipment	2,022	842
	2,259	1,158
(d) Grants and Subsidies		
Volunteer Rescue Units	947	848
Regional Fire Associations	1,058	771
Payments for Council costs associated with Rural Fire Fighting activities and equipment	61,818	61,264
Emergency Fund – Natural Disasters	13,053	121,803
Other	420	575
	77,296	185,261

Expenditure on Natural Disasters including the 2003–04 bushfires totaled \$13.053M (\$8.767M in excess of Budget). There was no effect on the Net Cost of Services as the surplus expenditure was reimbursed by Treasury from the Natural Disaster Fund.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2004

	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
2. EXPENSES (cont)		
(e) Borrowing costs		
Interest on short-term borrowings	57	51
	57	51
(f) Other Expenses		
Workers' compensation insurance	2,004	2,000
Public liability and other insurance	1,187	742
Aerial support	1,260	1,319
	4,451	4,061

3. REVENUES

(a) Sale of goods and services		
Rendering of services	278	352
	278	352
(b) Grants and contributions		
New South Wales Fire Brigades	225	225
Insurance Company Contributions	92,155	88,979
Local Government Contributions	16,631	16,057
Natural Disaster Welfare Relief*	7,949	116,980
	116,960	222,241

* Natural Disasters Welfare Relief is restricted to emergencies that are declared under Section 44 of the Rural Fires Act.

(c) Other revenue		
Sale of equipment	302	165
Other	6,661	1,981
	6,963	2,146

In accordance with Section 119(4)(b) of the Rural Fires Act, distribution of proceeds from the sale by Councils of fire fighting equipment between the Service and the Councils is in the same proportion to each body's contribution to the purchase of equipment as shown above. The Service's share of such proceeds totalled \$302,036 (\$164,645 in 2002/03).

4. GAIN/(LOSS) ON DISPOSAL OF NON-CURRENT ASSETS

Plant and Equipment	41	(50)
	41	(50)

	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
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5. APPROPRIATIONS

Recurrent Appropriations

Total recurrent drawdowns from Treasury (per Summary of Compliance)	18,898	18,023
	18,898	18,023

Comprising:

Recurrent appropriations (per Statement of Financial Performance)	18,898	18,023
Capital Appropriations	250	–

6. ACCEPTANCE BY THE CROWN ENTITY OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS AND OTHER LIABILITIES

Long service leave	92	151
	92	151

Also refer to Note 1(d) (iii)

7. PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES OF THE SERVICE

(a) Program 1 Funding and administration of Rural Firefighting Services

Objectives: To promote effective rural firefighting services within the State, including the co-ordination of bush fire fighting and prevention activities.

(b) Program 2 Training of Volunteer Bush Fire Fighters

Objectives: To facilitate and promote the training of bush fire fighters.

(c) Program 3 Public Education and Information Services

Objectives: To promote community awareness of bush fire issues and generally educate the community in bush fire prevention, protection and safety.

(d) Program 4 Planning and Co-ordination of Rescue Services and Emergency Management

Objectives: To ensure the provision of comprehensive, balanced and co-ordinated rescue services and emergency management throughout New South Wales.

8. CURRENT ASSETS – CASH

(a) Cash

Cash at bank and on hand	22,952	25,534
	22,952	25,534

(b) Financing Facilities Available

The Service has a financing facility available through NSW Treasury Corporation to facilitate cash flow until Statutory Contributions are received. During the year amounts totaling \$10M were borrowed and fully repaid.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2004

	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
9. CURRENT ASSETS – RECEIVABLES		
(a) Grants and contributions	84	269
Less: Provision for doubtful debts	2	2
	82	267
Natural Disaster Fund	–	11,565
Other	2,563	2,243
	2,645	14,075
(b) Prepaid superannuation contributions (refer note 21)	366	303
Other Prepayments	324	237
	690	540

	Computer Equipment \$'000	Plant and Equipment \$'000	Fitouts \$'000	Total \$'000
10. NON-CURRENT ASSETS – PLANT AND EQUIPMENT				
At Fair Value	1,560	15,404	641	17,605
Less Accumulated Depreciation	1,320	3,679	641	5,640
Total Plant and Equipment at Net Book Value	240	11,725	–	11,965

Reconciliations

Reconciliations of the carrying amounts of plant and equipment at the beginning and end of the current and previous financial year are set out below.

2004

Carrying amount at start of year	393	5,975	–	6,368
Additions	85	8,654	–	8,739
Disposals	95	788	–	883
Depreciation expense	143	2,116	–	2,259
Carrying amount at end of year	240	11,725	–	11,965

	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
11. CURRENT LIABILITIES – PAYABLES		
Accrued salaries, wages and on-costs	1,426	1,498
Other operating expenses	1,947	1,316
Grants and subsidies		16,384
Other expenses	49	716
G.S.T	601	331
Unfunded Superannuation	1,503	1,940
	10,734	22,185

12. CURRENT LIABILITIES/ NON CURRENT LIABILITIES – PROVISIONS

Provisions

Employee benefits and related on-costs

Recreation leave	4,605	4,152
	4,605	4,152
Long service leave	6,116	5,187
	6,116	5,187
Payroll Tax	4	585
Other Oncosts	–	23
	4	608
Total Provisions	10,725	9,947

Aggregate employee benefits and related

On-costs		
Provisions – Current	5,217	4,956
Provisions – Non-Current	5,508	4,991
Accrued salaries, wages and on-costs (Note 11)	1,426	1,498
	12,151	11,445

13. CHANGES IN EQUITY

Accumulated Funds

Balance at beginning of the financial year	14,385	12,511
Changes in equity – other than transactions with owners as owners		
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	2,408	1,874
Balance at end of the financial year	16,793	14,385

There were no transactions with owners as owners

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2004

	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
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14. COMMITMENTS FOR EXPENDITURE

(a) Other Expenditure Commitments

Aggregate other expenditure for the acquisition of equipment contracted for at balance date and not for:

Not late than one year (including GST)	20,643	18,372
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The Service includes as commitments all outstanding amounts identified in councils' estimates for specific projects that are not at this stage completed. Whilst some of these are covered by contractual obligations and/or unfulfilled purchase orders, others relate to circumstances where contractual obligations have not been formalized. The Service did not have open orders at balance date.

Other Expenditure Commitments include input tax credits of \$746,455 (\$367,275 2002/2003) that are expected to be recoverable from the ATO.

b) Operating Lease Commitments

Future non-cancellable operating lease rentals not provided for and payable

Not later than one year	2,306	1,104
Later than one year but not later than five years	9,131	7,893
Later than 5 years	8,271	10,228
Total (including GST)	19,708	19,225

Operating lease commitments comprise of motor vehicles, information technology equipment and premises for Regional Offices.

Operating Lease Commitments include input tax credits of \$1,791,589 (\$1,747,676 in 2002/03) that are expected to be recoverable from the ATO.

15. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

Contingent liabilities

At balance date the Service had no contingent liabilities.

16. BUDGET REVIEW

Net Cost of Services

The actual net cost of services was favourable by \$1.711M. This variation relates primarily to excess revenue generally.

Assets and Liabilities

Current Assets were \$9.480M below budget due to decreases in Cash and Receivables. The decrease in Cash results from a significant decrease in payables. The decrease in receivables relates primarily to Natural Disaster claims. Several agencies tardy in submitting claims in 2003 reversed that trend in this financial year.

Current Liabilities were less than budget by \$12.008M. This resulted primarily from agencies and suppliers in general submitting claims within a reasonable time frame. Improvement in purchasing procedures assisted in achieving this result.

Non-Current Assets were below budget by \$1.669M solely as a result of delays in the completion of the Homebush Bay Complex. The expected completion date is now late August 2004.

Non-Current Liabilities were below budget by \$0.883M due primarily to a lower accrual of Long Service Leave at 30 June 2004.

Cash Flows

Total payments exceeded budget by \$25.310M primarily due to the additional expenditure associated with the 2003–2004 bushfires and a decrease in the amount of payables \$11.451M. Overexpenditure in other areas is offset by excess receipts.

Total receipts were \$6.052M in excess of budget.

Cash reimbursements from the Crown Entity totaled \$19.515M and related to both the 2002–2003 and 2003–2004 bushfires.

	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
17. RECONCILIATION OF CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES TO NET COST OF SERVICES		
Net cost of service	(16,832)	(16,300)
Cash Flows from Government	19,148	18,023
Acceptance by the Crown Entity of employee benefits and other liabilities	92	151
Depreciation	2,259	1,158
(Decrease)/increase in provisions	778	2,202
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments and other assets	11,280	(6,699)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(11,451)	13,269
Net loss/(gain) on sale of plant and equipment	(41)	50
Net cash provided by operating activities	5,233	11,854

18. NON-CASH FINANCING AND INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES

Long service leave liability assumed by Crown Entity	92	151
	92	151

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2004

19. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

(a) Interest Rate Risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the value of the financial instrument will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. The Service's exposure to interest rate risks and the effective interest rates of financial assets and liabilities, both recognised and unrecognised at the balance date are as follows:

	Floating interest rate	Non-interest bearing	Total carrying amount as per the statement of financial position	Effective interest rate
	\$000	\$000	\$000	%
2004				
FINANCIAL ASSETS				
Cash	0	22,952	22,952	0
Receivables	0	3,335	3,335	0
Total financial assets	0	26,287	26,287	
FINANCIAL LIABILITIES				
Accounts payable	0	7,805	7,805	0
Total financial liabilities	0	7,805	7,805	
2003				
FINANCIAL ASSETS				
Cash	0	25,534	25,534	0
Receivables	0	14,615	14,615	0
Total financial assets	0	40,149	40,149	
FINANCIAL LIABILITIES				
Accounts payable	0	18,747	18,747	0
Total financial liabilities	0	18,747	18,747	

(b) Credit Risk

Credit risk is the risk of financial loss arising from another party to a contract/or financial position failing to discharge a financial obligation thereunder. The Service's maximum exposure to credit risk is represented by the carrying amounts of the financial assets included in the statement of financial position.

(c) Net Fair Value

The net fair value of cash and cash equivalents and non-interest bearing monetary financial assets and financial liabilities approximates their carrying value.



20. CONSULTANCIES

Consultancy fees paid for the year totaled \$ 1,530,143 (\$732,308 in 2002–03).

21. SUPERANNUATION

The assessed liability for the NSW Rural Fire Service at 30 June 2004 and funds held in reserve accounts at the Superannuation Administration Corporation (trading as Pillar Administration) (including accrued interest) and prepaid superannuation were:

Calculation of the 30 June 2004 superannuation position has created movement in the accrued superannuation liability. Thus, the superannuation funding position as at 30 June 2004 has changed from 30 June 2003 to the extent that the Service is now in deficit to the extent of \$1,137,829. The financial assumptions that have been applied for 2004 and thereafter are:

	%
Rate of Investment return	7.0
Rate of Salary increase	4.0
Rate of increase in CPI	2.5

	Accrued Liability		Reserve Account		Net Liability/ (Pre-paid Contributions)	
	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
SASS	2,454	1,710	2,664	1,904	(210)	(194)
SANCCSS	1,229	961	1,384	1,070	(155)	(109)
SSS	10,442	9,748	8,939	7,808	1,503	1,940
	14,125	12,419	12,987	10,782	1,138	1,637

The liability for the State Superannuation Scheme has been determined by the Fund's Actuary as at 30 June 2004 using the government bond rate.

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2004

22. ADOPTION OF INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS

The agency will apply the Australian Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards (AIFRS) from the reporting period beginning 1 July 2005.

The agency is managing the transition to the new standards by allocating internal resources to analyse the pending standards and Urgent Issues Group Abstracts to identify key areas regarding policies, procedures, systems and financial impacts affected by the transition.

As a result of this exercise, the agency has taken the following steps to manage the transition to the new standards:

- The agency's Audit Committee is overseeing the transition. The Manager Accounting Services is responsible for the project and reports regularly to the Committee on progress against the plan.
- The following phases that need to be undertaken have been identified:
 - Establish Balance Sheet @ 1 July 2004 in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards.
 - Attend relevant information sessions.
- To date one information session has been attended and relevant advice from CPA Australia obtained.

NSW Treasury is assisting agencies to manage the transition by developing policies, including mandates of options; presenting training seminars to all agencies; providing a website with up-to-date information to keep agencies informed of any new developments; and establishing an IAS Agency Reference Panel to facilitate a collaborative approach to manage the change.

23. DIFFERENCE IN ACCOUNTING POLICIES – INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNTING STANDARDS

The agency has identified a number of significant differences in accounting policies that will arise from adopting AIFRS. Some differences arise because AIFRS requirements are different from existing AASB requirements. Other differences could arise from options in AIFRS. To ensure consistency at the whole government level, NSW Treasury has advised the agency of options it is likely to mandate, and will confirm these during 2004–05. This disclosure reflects these likely mandates.

The agency's accounting policies may also be affected by a proposed standard designed to harmonise accounting standards with Government Finance Statistics (GFS). This standard is likely to change the impact of AIFRS and significantly affect the presentation of the income statement. However, the impact is uncertain, because it depends on when this standard is finalised and whether it can be adopted in 2005–06.

Based on current information, the following key differences in accounting policies are expected to arise from adopting AIFRS:

- *AASB 1 First-time Adoption of Australian Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards* requires retrospective application of the new AIFRS from 1 July 2004, with limited exemptions. Similarly, *AASB 108 Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors* requires voluntary changes in accounting policy and correction of errors to be accounted for retrospectively by restating comparatives and adjusting the opening balance of accumulated funds. This differs from current Australian requirements, because such changes must be recognised in the current period through profit or loss, unless a new standard mandates otherwise.
- *AASB 116 Property, Plant and Equipment* requires the cost and fair value of property, plant and equipment to be increased to include restoration costs, where restoration provisions are recognised under *AASB 137 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets*.

Major inspection costs must be capitalised and this will require the fair value and depreciation of the related asset to be re-allocated.

For profit entities must account for asset revaluation increments and decrements on an individual asset basis, rather than on a class basis. This change may decrease accumulated funds.

- AASB 117 *Leases* requires operating lease contingent rentals to be recognised as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term rather than expensing in the financial year incurred.
- AASB 119 *Employee Benefits* requires the defined benefit obligation to be discounted using the government bond rate as at each reporting date rather than the long-term expected rate of return on plan assets. Where the unfounded superannuation liability is not assumed by the Crown, this will increase the amount and the future volatility of the unfounded superannuation liability and the volatility of the employee benefit expense.
- AASB 123 *Borrowing Costs* provides the option to expense or capitalise borrowing costs. NSW Treasury is likely to mandate expensing of borrowing costs to harmonise with GFS. NSW Treasury is likely to mandate that any investment property interest held by a lessee under an operating lease should be classified and accounted for as investment property. Previously such operating lease payments were accounted for as an expense over the lease term based on the pattern of benefits.

– End of audited financial statements –

Financials

ANNUAL REPORT – EXTERNAL COSTS AND AVAILABILITY

The total external costs incurred in the production of this Report were \$41,000. The Report is accessible on the Service's website www.rfs.nsw.gov.au and copies can be obtained from the Service's Head Office at Rosehill.

ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANTS

Fourteen consultants were retained during the year at a total cost of \$1,530,143.

Consultancies equal to or more than \$30,000 were as follows:

Personnel and Industrial	\$
Diplomacy Management Consultants (Industrial relations advocacy service)	48,400
Information Technology	
Incheck Systems (General support and development of Bushfire Risk Information Management System)	258,174
Lagan Spatial(G.I.S.) G.I.S. Support	58,201
Rapid Map Global Pty Ltd (Mapping- general support)	292,882
Logic Space Consultancy (General Support)	51,543
Data 3 (General Support)	222,324
Management Services	
Global Fire (including Assistance for Coronial Inquiries and research)	58,264
Intelligent Outcomes Group (Risk Assessment – Critical Infrastructure Review Group Planning)	44,954
Legal	
Clayton Utz (General Support)	229,772
Consultancies less than \$30,000:	
Management Services	23,595
Information Technology	12,900
Total	1,301,009

Office for Emergency Services Consultancies

Sun Microsystems (Website development for Office for Emergency Services)	142,619
IPP (Computer aided despatch project – Office for Emergency Services)	86,515

Comparative figures for all consultancies for the two previous years were for 2001/02 \$840,592 and 2002/2003 \$732,308.

With the added legislative responsibilities impacting the Service has come the need to improve information technology capabilities. This enhancement enables the Service to assist councils in the production of bush fire prone land maps and to provide other land management agencies with a common database for the collection of information gathered through local Bush Fire Management Committees.

Other areas of information technology such as computerised spatial mapping systems, database production and maintenance, improved computer networks and communications across NSW are also being enhanced.

SALE OF PROPERTY

The Service does not own any property or land.

PAYMENT PERFORMANCE

A summary of the Service's payment performance for the year under review and the two previous years is set out in Appendix N.

The Service has increasingly been able to meet targets set for payment performance by greater use of direct bank deposits. There was no interest paid for late payments.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE – RURAL FIRE FIGHTING FUND

Following the Royal Commission into the collapse of the HIH Insurance group a number of recommendations were tabled as part of the Commission's Report. One recommendation in particular called for the abolishment of fire service levies on Insurers.

In August 2003, the Treasurer requested the NSW Public Accounts Committee to undertake a review of current and alternative funding arrangements for the State's fire fighting services.

The Committee is expected to present its report to parliament in the coming months.



MAJOR ASSETS

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Computer Equipment	474,000	393,000	240,000
General Equipment	7,755,000	5,975,000	9,725,000
Fitout	–	–	2,000,000

GRANTS TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

	2001/02 \$	2002/03 \$	2003/04 \$
Nature Conservation Council	65,000	70,000	83,700
Volunteer Rescue Units (through State Rescue Board)	600,000	848,000	947,000
Rural Fire Service Association	38,164	61,869	70,000
Total	703,164	979,869	1,100,700

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financials

EXECUTIVE REMUNERATION

In light of the recognition by the State Government that the public has the clear right to know how much senior public servants are paid and the need for more transparency in the reporting of senior executive salaries level 5 or above, the following information is provided:

Position	SES level	Total Annual Remuneration
Commissioner Mr P C Koperberg	6	\$247,100

For further financial details, please refer to Appendix I.



FIRE SAFETY TIP 5

68

when to evacuate



“Evacuate if you are confident that your house is not prepared to withstand a bushfire.”



"The FireWise NSW Project was recognised as a national leader by other agencies and has been adopted by the ACT, QLD and WA fire services."

Honesty, integrity and trust Ethical standards and behaviour



05

appendices

Appendix A Organisational Chart

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE										
Executive Directorate Strategic Development	Executive Directorate Operations Support	Executive Directorate Administration & Finance	Chaplaincy Services	Executive Directorate Risk Management	Executive Directorate Corporate Communications	Executive Directorate Operations & Regional Management	Operational Communications Customer Service	Operations' Policy and Standards	Operational Planning & Development	Aviation
Information Services	Health, Safety & Welfare	Financial Services		Hazard Management Services	Media & Public Affairs	Director Regional Management				
Corporate Planning and Performance	Engineering Services	Staff Services		Business Development	Fire Investigation	Service Membership Unit				
Strategic Project Office	Learning & Development Systems	Administrative Services		Planning Environment Services	Ministerial Liaison	Region North Grafton & Narrabri				
Strategic Policy & Standards				Community Education	Volunteer Relations	Region South Batemans Bay & Albury				
				Development Control	Executive Committees	Region East Penrith <i>(relocating to Homebush Bay September 2004)</i>				
						Region West Young & Cobar				

Appendix B

Chaplaincy and Family Support Network Activity Report

Chaplaincy Activity	Totals Carried Forward January 1997 to June 30 2003	Senior Chaplain & Family Support Chaplain 2003/04	50 Volunteer Fire District Chaplains 2003/04	Totals January 1997 to June 30, 2004
Visits to Rosehill Headquarters	948	189	9	1,146
Visits to Fire Control Centres	2,316	203	527	3,046
Visits with Fire Control Officers	2,387	164	216	4,192
Visits to Rural Fire Brigades	1,652	131	420	2,203
Regional FCO'S Conferences	32	2	2	36
State Management Conferences	7	1	0	8
Brigade Captains Meetings	226	13	121	360
Seminars & Conferences	132	4	14	150
Station Openings & Dedications	117	5	14	136
Fire Fleet Blessings & Services	164	16	21	201
Personal & Family Counselling	2,114	32	327	2,473
Telephone Support & Counselling	1,210	234	89	1,533
Home Visits-Members & Family	1,604	197	428	2,229
Hospital Visitation-Members	824	43	83	950
Funeral Services Conducted	207	16	31	254
Infant Christenings/ Dedications	120	11	23	154
Service Weddings	112	4	11	127
Rural Fire Service Callouts	1,145	52	288	1,485
Police Service Callouts	71	2	4	77
NSW Fire Brigades Callouts	46	0	6	52
Parks and Wildlife Division (DEC) Callouts	52	11	0	63
Salvo Care Line Callouts	81	9	0	90
Respond to Actual Suicides	31	1	3	35
Championship & Field Days	68	3	6	77
Critical Incident Support	76	8	19	103
Work Cover and other meetings	81	11	22	114
Total Kilometres Travelled	499,275	52,692	28,698	580,665

Appendix C

Bush Fire Risk Management Plan Report

For the year under review Bush Fire Management Committees (BFMCs) reported hazard reduction activities covering 622,321ha consisting of 178,776ha by strategic burning or mechanical means, 443,546ha by grazing. 8,166kms of trail work was carried out along with 50,965kms of lineal features treated.

For this reporting year land managers had the option of providing bush fire hazard information through Bush Fire Management Committees or through the recently developed Bushfire Risk Information Management System (BRIMS).

Table 1 Hazard Reduction Figures by RFS Regions

Region	Hazard Reduction (ha)			Trail Work (km)	Lineal Feature (km)
	By Burning or Mechanical Means	By Grazing	Total		
East	43,717	51,057	94,774	2,176	8,257
South	64,748	92,857	157,605	3,132	7,030
West	33,516	77,960	111,476	912	20,443
North	36,794	221,672	258,467	1,945	15,236
Total	178,776	443,546	622,321	8,166	50,965

The hazard reduction figures shown above have been provided from BFMC reports submitted under Section 51(1A) of the *Rural Fires Act, 1997* for the reporting period.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of reported figures, the combination of new and old reporting systems may lead to some irregularity.

It is expected that the new integrated Bushfire Risk Information Management System (BRIMS) will provide a single, consistent means for all land managers to collect, enter, and report bushfire hazard reduction data, thereby removing anomalies. Hence, the reporting regime for the financial year 2004–2005 will be improved. The Commissioner will continue to undertake performance audits under Section 62A(3) of the *Rural Fires Act, 1997* of bush fire management committees implementation of their risk management plans.

1. PERMITS REPORTS

Table 2.1 Permits Issued by the Service under the *Rural Fires Act 1997*

Region	Number of Permits Issued		Number of Fire Escapes		Percentage of Escape (%)	
	2002/03	2003/04	2002/03	2003/04	2002/03	2003/04
East	3,766	4,134	13	6	0.35	0.15
South	1,924	7,257	3	2	0.16	0.03
West	869	2,229	5	0	0.58	0.00
North	5,483	9,310	38	4	0.69	0.04
Total	12,042	22,930	59	12	0.49	0.05

The figures in the above table are number of burning permits issued by the Service under the *Rural Fires Act, 1997* while the figures in the following table represent the number of burning permits issued by the NSW Fire Brigades under the *Rural Fires Act, 1997*. The figures for the 2002/03 period are included for comparison.

Table 2.2 Permits Issued by the NSW Fire Brigades under the *Rural Fires Act 1997*

Region	Number of Permits Issued		Number of Fire Escapes		Percentage of Escape (%)	
	2002/03	2003/04	2002/03	2003/04	2002/03	2003/04
East	4	88	0	0	0.00	0.00
South	268	12	0	0	0.00	0.00
West	87	11	0	0	0.00	0.00
North	167	322	0	0	0.00	0.00
Total	526	433	0	0	0.00	0.00

2. SECTION 66 AND SECTION 70 REPORT

Region	Inspected		s66 Issued		s70 Works	
	2002/03	2003/04	2002/03	2003/04	2002/03	2003/04
East	4,138	2,674	982	873	69	86
South	2,674	1,934	1,210	1,383	87	23
West	323	1,059	211	29	26	7
North	273	401	43	19	3	1
Total	7,408	6,068	2,446	2,304	185	117

The figures shown in Table 3 represent the number of inspections, Section 66 notices issued and Section 70 works reported under the *Rural Fires Act 1997* by Bush Fire Management Committees.

A Section 66 notice is issued to a private landholder to clear hazard on their property. Section 70 refers to works undertaken by the Service in default of the Section 66 hazard reduction notice to clear fire hazards. Last year's figures are included for comparison.

Appendix D Managed Land Hazard Reduction Reporting

In accordance with the requirements of Section 74 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*, to report annually to the Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service, the major State landholders (listed below) have reported the following figures, independent of those provided via BFMC reports.

These figures include activities that are undertaken at a local level by agencies to meet their own land management responsibilities and therefore may not be included in the BFMC reported works program.

Department of Environment and Conservation – Parks and Wildlife Division

- 65,451 (ha) of prescribed burning and fuel reduction on parks and reserves
- 4,144 (ha) hazard reduction activity on park neighbours land
- 7,405 km of fire trail work on parks and reserves.

Department of Lands

- 2,801 (ha) by burning or mechanical means
- 438,538 (ha) of grazing
- 272 km of fire trail work
- 194 km of lineal features.*

Department of Primary Industries – Forests NSW

- 75,540 (ha) by burning or mechanical means
- 619,801 by grazing
- 1,380 km of fire trail work
- 3,801 km of lineal features.*

From 2004/05 and beyond, all agencies will report through a centralised fuel management reporting system (BRIMS), which will encompass all works by agencies.

* Lineal features include mechanical works undertaken for the purposes of creating fire breaks.

Appendix E Review of Use of Credit Cards

No irregularities in the use of corporate credit cards have been recorded during the year.

I certify that credit card use in the NSW Rural Fire Service has been in accordance with Premier's Memoranda and Treasurer's directions.



Phil Koperberg AO AFSM BEM
Commissioner

Appendix F Equal Opportunity Statistics

Representation and Recruitment of Aboriginal Employees and Employees with a Physical Disability

2001/02	Total Staff	Aboriginal Employees	PWPD
Total Employees	490	0	1
Recruited in year	378*	0	1

*308 council fire control staff from 143 local government councils were transferred to the NSW Rural Fire Service (i.e. State government employment) on 1 July 2001.

2002/03	Total Staff	Aboriginal Employees	PWPD
Total Employees	570	3	1

2003/04	Total Staff	Aboriginal TSI Staff	Staff with English as a second language	PWPD
Total Employees	619	0.48%	2.2%	4.5%

Appendix G Human Resources

Human Resources

	2001/02	2002/03	Staffing Number 2003/04
Comparative figures for the past three years	477	570	EFT – 601

Equal Employment Opportunity Statistics 2003/2004

Trends in EEO Representation

LEVEL	TOTAL STAFF	Respondents	Men	Women	Aboriginal People & Torres Strait Islanders	People Whose Language First Spoken as a Child was not English	People with a Disability
< \$30,146	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
\$30,146 – \$39,593	26	26	15	11	1	0	1
\$39,594 – \$44,264	87	87	12	75	0	2	4
\$44,265 – \$56,012	164	164	102	62	0	3	8
\$56,013 – \$72,434	241	241	204	38	2	6	13
\$72,435 – \$90,542	61	61	54	7	0	1	2
> \$90,543 (non SES)	18	18	16	2	0	1	0
> \$90,543 (SES)	3	3	3	0	0	1	0
TOTAL	601	601	406	195	3	14	28

Appendix H Freedom of Information Statistics

1. Number of new requests received	18	10. Calendar Days to Process applications	
2. Results of requests			
• Number granted in full	12	Elapsed Time	Personal Other
• Number granted in part	4	0–21 days	14 2
• Number refused	2	22–35 days	1 Nil
• Number deferred	Nil	Over 35 days	1 Nil
3. Ministerial Certificates issued	Nil	Totals	16 2
4. Formal consultations	Nil	11. Processing Time for Completed Requests	
5. Amendment of personal records	Nil		
6. Notation of personal records	Nil	Processing Hours	Personal Other
7. Requests granted in part or refused	6	0–10	13 2
8. Costs and fees of requests processed during period		11–20	1 Nil
• <i>Application fees received</i>	\$570	21–40	1 Nil
9. Discounts allowed	\$30	Over 40	1 Nil
		Totals	16 2
		12. Reviews and Appeals	
		• Number of internal reviews finalised	1
		• Number of Ombudsman reviews finalised	Nil
		• Number of District Court appeals finalised	Nil

Appendix I

Financials

Allocations to Councils 2003/2004 in regional order

REGION EAST	\$	REGION SOUTH	\$
Baulkham Hills	\$2,382,637.90	Albury City	\$362,973.41
Blacktown City	\$909,946.67	Bega	\$1,306,799.26
Blue Mountains	\$2,706,368.74	Berrigan	\$511,875.10
Camden	\$779,219.17	Bombala	\$453,481.09
Campbelltown	\$990,428.91	Conargo	\$517,880.52
Cessnock	\$2,055,468.39	Coolamon	\$849,059.38
Dungog	\$928,977.34	Cooma-Monaro	\$711,910.43
Evans	\$789,139.31	Corowa	\$509,489.55
Fairfield	\$59,268.20	Crookwell	\$1,001,234.99
Gloucester	\$944,397.08	Culcairn	\$518,068.64
Gosford	\$2,048,995.28	Deniliquin	\$212,133.20
Great Lakes	\$1,507,038.02	Eurobodalla	\$2,348,594.85
Greater Taree	\$1,231,191.06	Griffith	\$878,994.84
Hawkesbury	\$2,660,523.38	Gundagai	\$523,422.89
Hornsby	\$2,429,456.95	Gunning	\$785,645.00
Kiama	\$715,549.08	Holbrook	\$556,599.32
Ku-ring-gai	\$180,543.25	Hume	\$679,756.09
Lake Macquarie	\$2,193,443.34	Jerilderie	\$379,176.41
Lithgow	\$1,308,595.31	Junee	\$560,353.30
Liverpool	\$722,341.65	Leeton	\$485,175.74
Lord Howe Island	\$27,350.82	Lockhart	\$532,011.42
Maitland	\$687,135.04	Lower Western Zone	\$1,342,579.76
Merriwa	\$734,136.54	Mulwaree	\$1,044,625.55
Musswellbrook	\$1,011,628.73	Murray	\$897,974.52
Oberon	\$684,058.92	Murrumbidgee	\$558,475.78
Penrith	\$1,317,165.27	Narrandera	\$520,900.49
Port Stephens	\$1,345,751.44	Queanbeyan	\$210,370.09
Shellharbour	\$529,290.35	Shoalhaven	\$2,883,037.43
Singleton	\$1,483,842.20	Snowy River	\$835,496.72
Sutherland	\$2,741,610.14	Tallaganda	\$696,949.10
Warringah	\$2,597,148.63	Tumbarumba	\$523,880.55
Wingecarribee	\$1,601,066.57	Tumut	\$807,049.30
Wollondilly	\$1,459,684.50	Urana	\$429,448.92
Wollongong	\$1,690,811.21	Wagga Wagga	\$1,382,328.02
Wyong	\$1,813,487.49	Wakool	\$657,271.42
Region Total	\$47,267,696.88	Yarrowlumla	\$1,167,720.90
		Yass	\$1,020,407.76
		Region Total	\$29,663,151.74

REGION NORTH	\$	REGION WEST	\$
Armidale/Dumaresq	\$902,868.53	Barwon Darling Zone	671,057.85
Ballina	\$658,779.31	Bland	\$1,183,118.83
Barraba	\$386,128.69	Bogan	\$301,583.26
Bellingen	\$1,221,168.24	Canobolas Zone	\$2,733,721.76
Bingara	\$465,591.71	Carrathool	\$637,895.36
Byron	\$605,380.06	Central Darling	\$503,459.44
Clarence Valley Zone	\$3,118,209.45	Cobar	\$578,686.15
Coffs Harbour City	\$1,607,338.81	Coonamble	\$855,523.31
Coolah	\$591,093.95	Cowra	\$941,762.47
Coonabarabran	\$729,777.29	Dubbo City	\$922,197.78
Gilgandra	\$547,102.15	Forbes	\$864,987.15
Gunnedah	\$564,351.30	Hay	\$539,128.97
Guyra	\$515,141.94	Lachlan	\$1,152,113.93
Hastings	1,688,367.49	Mudgee	\$1,341,454.44
Inverell	\$528,586.51	Narromine	\$681,798.20
Kempsey	\$839,846.21	Parkes	\$677,858.57
Kyogle	\$653,912.68	Rylstone	\$894,073.50
Lismore	\$923,800.45	South West Area Group	\$2,192,136.11
Manilla	\$177,125.25	Temora	\$1,096,917.20
Moree Plains	\$1,029,385.61	Walgett	\$340,510.17
Murrurundi	\$408,164.02	Warren	\$391,291.03
Nambucca	\$933,361.50	Weddin	\$624,733.21
Narrabri	\$992,233.10	Wellington	\$965,835.67
Nundle	\$230,297.40	Region Total	\$21,091,844.36
Parry	\$725,614.01		
Quirindi	\$468,553.92		
Richmond Valley	\$949,531.52		
Scone	\$723,154.61		
Severn	\$823,001.29		
Tamworth	\$219,260.60		
Tenterfield	\$653,446.76		
Tweed	\$969,670.65		
Uralla	\$449,609.06		
Walcha	\$475,382.92		
Yallaroi	\$243,070.03		
Region Total	\$27,018,307.02		

Payment Performance

Quarter	Current (ie within due date)			Less than 30 days overdue			Between 30 & 60 days overdue			Between 60 & 90 days overdue			More than 90 days overdue		
	03/04	02/03	01/02	03/04	02/03	01/02	03/04	02/03	01/02	03/04	02/03	01/02	03/04	02/03	01/02
September	443	134	375	9	-	23	19	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-
December	45	260	334	-	3	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
March	1,562	267	365	209	-	1	85	50	2	5	-	31	-	-	4
June	632	1022	461	7	4	87	1	8	-	-	38	-	-	-	-

Risk Management And Insurance

The NSW Rural Fire Service is a member of the NSW Treasury Managed Fund that provides all the insurance requirements for most public sector agencies in this state. Total deposit premiums paid to the Treasury Managed Fund (with comparisons from the last two financial years) are set out below.

Coverage	2001/02 \$	2002/03 \$	2003/04 \$
Workers Compensation	206,316	332,442	302,220
Motor Vehicle	64,911	67,694	61,540
Public Liability	747,868	1,009,624	917,840
Property	12,859	6,743	6,130
Other	6,600	7,700	7,000
Totals	1,038,554	1,424,203	1,294,730

Appendix J

Current Publications

Activity Sheet – Word Search
Activity Sheet – Word Puzzle
Annual Report
Application Institutions for a Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Certificate
Before You Light that Fire...
Bookmarks
Bushfire Alert booklets
Bushfire Bulletin
Bushfire Environmental Assessment Code
Bush FireWise 1
Crime Stoppers Poster
Crime Stoppers Stickers
Cut Out Tankers
External Water Sprinkler leaflets
Firesafe 1 for K-6 Teachers
Firesafe 2 for K6 Teachers
Firesafe 3 for K6 Teachers
Fire Science Workbook
Fire! The Australian Experience
FireWise Magnets
Guidelines for Asset Protection Zones
Guidelines for Low Intensity Bushfire Hazard Reduction Burning
Guidelines for Permit Issuing Officers
Guidelines for Pile Burning
Jigsaw Puzzles
Kids Activity Books (8+ yrs)
Planning for Bush Fire Protection
Regulation of Open Burning in NSW
Smokey's Activity Books (5-8 yrs)
Static Checklists
Street Meeting signs
SWS Signs
Temporary Tattoos
50 Years of Fire Booklet

Appendix K Statement of Performance of Commissioner

The relatively quiet bushfire season in the past year still gave rise to 53 days of total fire bans and of the fires that were fought, 10 resulted in emergency declarations being made pursuant to Section 44 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997*. The Commissioner and the volunteers and staff of the Rural Fire Service (RFS) he leads, kept life and property losses to a minimum during this time.

Commissioner Koperberg continues to ensure:

- the preparedness of the Rural Fire Service and the community through increased training of the RFS volunteers, increased community education and the continued administration of bushfire legislation, and
- that land managers across NSW carry out vital bushfire hazard reduction work.

The responsibility of the Service to provide advice in relation to development in bush fire prone areas continues to grow with over 14,000 development applications reviewed in the past twelve months.

The Commissioner and the Rural Fire Service has taken a lead role in the development of the agency 'Bushfire Risk Information Management System' (BRIMS) which records and reports upon a range of bushfire hazard management activities including hazard reduction, fire trail maintenance and community education.

Commissioner Koperberg is the Chairman of the National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC) which ensures that all Australians are better protected through improved co-ordination of aviation resources. He is also a board member on the National Bushfire Co-operative Research Centre (CRC) a body which is responsible for the conducting of research into bushfire behaviour, suppression and mitigation.

Similarly, the Commissioner continues his vital role as Chairman of the State Rescue Board which ensures the maintenance of effective rescue services throughout NSW.

In the face of continued drought conditions and significant legislative change, the Commissioner has continued to exercise strong leadership, for which he is recognised throughout Australia.



Tony Kelly
Minister for Emergency Services

Appendix L Committees

Rural Fire Service Advisory Council

The Rural Fire Service Advisory Council (RFSAC) met on two occasions during the year.

Commissioner P C Koperberg AO AFSM BEM (Chair)

Mr A Brown (NSW Farmers)

Councillor K Gallen (Local Government Association – resigned November 2003)

Mr F Gannell (RFSA)

Mr A Hansell (Insurance Council of Australia)

Mr B McKinlay (RFSA)

Mr R Pallin (Nature Conservation Council)

Councillor R Panton OAM (Shires Association)

Superintendent W Roche (RFSA)

Councillor A Smith JP (Local Government Association – appointed April 2004)

RFSAC has the following functions:

- advising and reporting to the Minister and the Commissioner on any matter relating to the administration of rural fire services under the *Rural Fires Act 1997*
- advising the Commissioner on public education programmes relating to rural fire matters and on the training of rural firefighters
- advising the Commissioner on the issue of Service Standards; and
- such other functions as may be conferred or imposed upon it by or under the *Rural Fires Act, 1997*.

RFSAC may give advice and make reports whether or not the advice or reports were requested.

Bush Fire Coordinating Committee

The Bush Fire Coordinating Committee (BFCC) met on five occasions during the year.

Commissioner P C Koperberg AO AFSM BEM (Chair)

Inspector C Anderson AFSM

Assistant Commissioner J Anderson AFSM

Mr A Brown (NSW Farmers)

Mr R Conroy

Mr P de Mar

Mr S Frost

Councillor K Gallen (Local Government Association – resigned November 2003)

Inspector W Laycock (NSW Police)

Mr R Pallin (Nature Conservation Council)

Ms A Reeves OAM

Councillor A Smith JP (Local Government Association – appointed April 2004)

Mr T Wilkinson

The BFCC is responsible for planning in relation to fire prevention and coordinated bush firefighting as well as for advising the Commissioner on bushfire prevention, mitigation and coordinated bushfire suppression. The committee has such other functions as are conferred or imposed upon it by or under the *Rural Fires Act, 1997*. In carrying out any function that affects the environment the Committee must have regard to the principles

of ecologically sustainable development described in section 6(2) of the *Protection of the Environment Administration Act, 1991*.

Additionally the committee must report to the Minister on any matter referred by the Minister and may report on any matter relating to the prevention and suppression of bushfires, whether referred to it or not. Further the committee may enter into arrangements with the Minister for Land and Water Conservation or any public authority with respect to the reduction of bushfire hazards.

Fire Services Joint Standing Committee

The Fire Services Joint *Standing Committee Act, 1998* provides legislative support for the work of this Committee.

The committee's work of co-ordinating the activities of the fire services was supported by the Service's representatives Commissioner P Koperberg AO AFSM BEM and Superintendent S Midgley AFSM. Mr S Yorke represented the NSW Rural Fire Service Association.

Corporate Executive Group

The Corporate Executive Group (CEG), the Service's senior policy making committee, met on seven occasions in 2003–2004.

Commissioner P C Koperberg AO AFSM BEM (Chair)

T Anderson PSM – Executive Director Administration & Finance

M Croweller AFSM – Executive Director Operations and Regional Management

S Fitzsimmons AFSM – Executive Director Strategic Development

Ms W George – A/Chief of Staff

P Hennessy – Director Finance

T Howe AFSM – Executive Director Operations Support

A Jaffray (NSW Rural Fire Service Association)

R Rogers AFSM – Executive Director Risk Management

S Yorke (NSW Rural Fire Service Association)

Other

The Service is represented on a number of external organisations by various staff members.

Representatives sit on:

- Association of Environmental Education (NSW)
- Australasian Fire Authorities Council and its strategy groups, working parties and sub-committees
- Border Liaison Committees
- Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre
- District Emergency Management Committees
- District Rescue Committees
- Emergency Services Communications Working Party
- Emergency Services Industry Reference Group
- Emergency Services Personnel Support Advisory Group
- Environmental Education Officers' Group
- Fire Awareness Week Committee (NSW)
- Fire Protection Association
- GRN Joint Management Board – Department of Commerce
- Museum Education Officers' Group
- National Aerial Fire Fighting Centre
- NSW Health Disaster Management Committee
- Public Sector Occupational Health and Centre Group
- Roadside Environment Committee (NSW)
- Standards Australia – various committees
- State Emergency Management Committee
- State Rescue Board

Appendix M International Travel for Business Development

Date	Destination	Personnel	Purpose
4–10 August 03	China and Korea	Duncan Sutherland, Director, Business Development	Negotiation of a MOU with China's State Forestry Administration. Discuss International Wildland Fire Conference for Sydney, October 2003.
4–12 November 03	Japan and Korea	Duncan Sutherland, Director, Business Development	Attend International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) meeting to promote International Wildland Fire Conference. Negotiate business opportunities in Korea.
7–20 December 03	The Philippines	Duncan Sutherland, Director, Business Development. Superintendent Bruce Arthur	Undertake review of wildland fire management in The Philippines on behalf of ITTO.
5–6 March 04	Korea	Duncan Sutherland, Director, Business Development	Attend inaugural meeting of NE Asia Wildland Fire Network Meeting.
16 March – 22 April 04	Bhutan	Russell Taylor, Manager, Community Education Brad Davies, Community Safety Officer, Region North	Undertake community education project with Royal Forest Department of Bhutan.
5–10 April 04	China	Commissioner Phil Koperberg Assistant Commissioner Rob Rogers Chief of Staff Wendy George Duncan Sutherland, Director, Business Development	Accompany Minister on official visit to China. Sign MOU with China's State Forestry Administration.
5–4 May 04	Thailand	Duncan Sutherland, Director, Business Development	Attend meeting of the US-ASEAN Cooperation on Disaster Management.
15–19 June 04	Brazil, Chile	Commissioner Phil Koperberg Assistant Commissioner Rob Rogers Duncan Sutherland, Director, Business Development	Signing of MOU with Rio de Janeiro Fire Service and investigation of business opportunities.

Glossary

AFAC	Australasian Fire Authorities Council
AIIMS	Australian Inter-agency Incident Management System
BCM	Brigade Classification Model
BFCC	Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee
BFMC	Bush Fire Management Committee
BFRMP	Bush Fire Risk Management Plan
BRIMS	Bushfire Risk Information Management System
CASA	Civil Aviation Safety Authority
CFA	Country Fire Authority of Victoria
CISS	Critical Incident Support Services
CRC	Co-operative Research Centre
CSC	Customer Support Centre
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DEC	Department of Environment and Conservation (NSW)
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunities
e-SDM	electronic Version of Service Delivery Model
FIRS	Fire Incident Reporting System
FSJSC	Fire Services Joint Standing Committee
GIS	Geographic Information System
GSA	Guided Self Assessment
ICS	Incident Control System
IS	Information Services
LGA	Local Government Area
Lineal features	Lineal features include mechanical works undertaken for the purposes of creating fire breaks.
MAA	Mutual Aid Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NSWFB	New South Wales Fire Brigades
OCSLA	Operational Communications Service Level Agreement
PMPRS	Performance Management and Personal Review System
PMR	Private Mobile Radios
PWPD	People with a Physical Disability
RAFT	Remote Area Firefighting Teams
RFS	NSW Rural Fire Service
RFSA	Rural Fire Service Association
RFSAC	Rural Fire Service Advisory Council
RMS	Resource Management System
SDM	Service Delivery Model
SES	State Emergency Service
SOC	State Operations Centre
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SWS	Static Water Supply

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