



NSW Rural Fire Service

Awards

Ceremony

2008

The NSW Rural Fire Service Awards

The Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service, in recognition of service and acts of bravery, has established an internal awards system. The Awards were instituted on 1 February 1999. The establishment of an internal awards system is authorised under the Rural Fires Act 1997 and accompanying Regulations. Eligibility for these Awards is extended to all members of the Service as defined within the Act and Regulations.

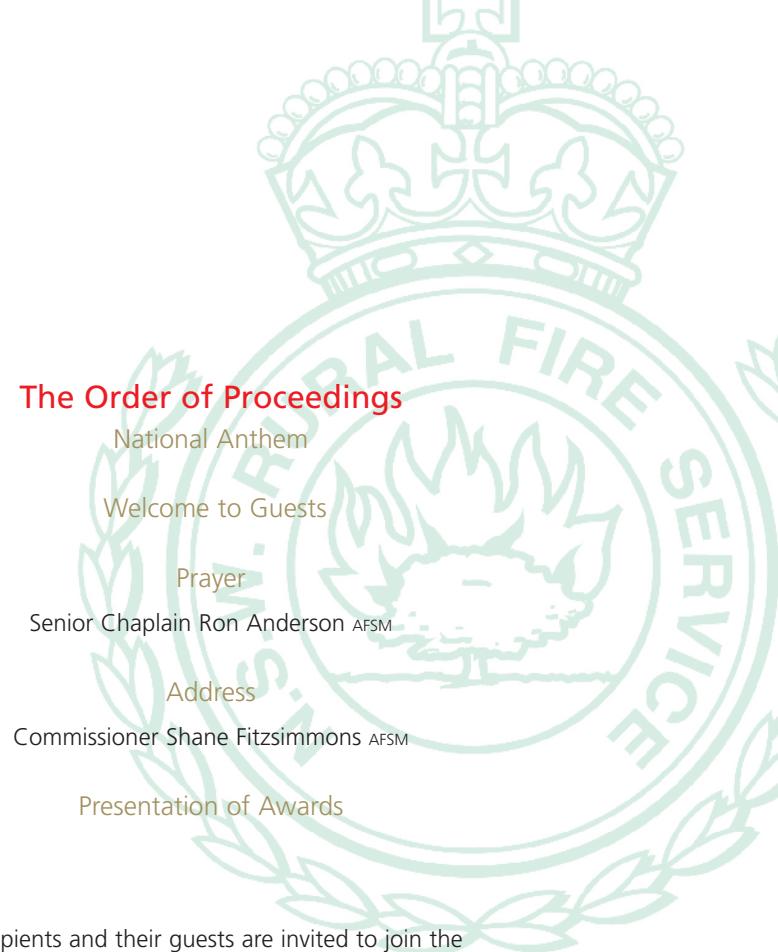
Nominations for awards must be in accordance with the guidelines and on the prescribed nomination form. Nominations for internal awards close annually on 1 October for presentation on St Florian's Day, 4 May in the following year.

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

The functions of the Awards Committee notwithstanding, the Commissioner of the Service may award an Internal Bravery or Service Award to any member of the Service at any time.

At the Awards Ceremony on 4 May 2008, 18 individual and 5 group recipients are to be acknowledged by the Commissioner. Drawn from the Service's Regions and Headquarters these recipients are presented with Awards in recognition of outstanding valour, bravery or service. The fourth of May is chosen each year for the Awards Ceremony as it is the Feast Day of St Florian, Patron Saint of Firefighters and International Firefighter's Day.





The Order of Proceedings

National Anthem

Welcome to Guests

Prayer

Senior Chaplain Ron Anderson AFSM

Address

Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons AFSM

Presentation of Awards

Recipients and their guests are invited to join the
Commissioner for a light lunch

Official photographs of each recipient will be taken during
the presentation. Unit recipients can be photographed following
the conclusion of proceedings. Every recipient will receive a
complimentary photograph.



The Commissioner's Commendation for Bravery

Awarded to recognise an act of courage under hazardous circumstances where the risk to life has not been as significant as to warrant the Commissioner's Medal for Valour but is worthy of recognition.

Roy Norman Ferguson

Canobolas Zone

On Sunday 31 July 2005 two four wheel drive vehicles collided head on near Royalla on the Monaro Highway. Superintendent Ferguson was off duty and he and a travelling companion were travelling on the Highway when they noticed smoke ahead and arrived upon the accident scene. One vehicle was on its side and in flames with two deceased persons and the other was upright with two children still on board. Hearing frantic calls from the parents who had managed to vacate the vehicle and without regard for his own safety, he instinctively gained access to the upright vehicle and found two young children still strapped in by their seatbelts which were unable to be released. The heat from the other burning vehicle beside them was intense and flames from the burning vehicle were now impinging on the vehicle. Another person had also gained access and cut the seat belts and together they passed the children through a smashed near side window to others outside the vehicle. After ensuring no others persons remained in the vehicle he climbed out and assisted further at the scene. Both vehicles were subsequently destroyed by fire. Although off duty, his conduct and actions on the day were of the highest order and brought great credit to himself and to the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Robert Karl Pinter

Monaro Team, Bredbo RFB

On Sunday 31 July 2005 two four wheel drive vehicles collided head on near Royalla on the Monaro Highway. Fire Fighter Pinter was off duty and happened upon the scene soon after the collision. One vehicle was on its side and in flames with two deceased persons and the other was upright with two children still on board. He grabbed his on board fire extinguisher and proceeded to attack the flames coming from one of the vehicles and assisted in the removal of Mr Higgins from this vehicle in which there were also two deceased persons. He then went to the other vehicle in which Superintendent Ferguson was endeavouring to free two trapped children. Without regard for his safety he smashed the near side window of this vehicle and assisted in the removal of the children from the vehicle to a safe area. Both vehicles were subsequently destroyed by fire. Although off duty, his conduct and actions on the day were of the highest order and brought great credit to himself and to the NSW Rural Fire Service.



The Commissioner's Certificate for Commendation (Individual)

Awarded to recognise service or outstanding actions in relation to fire service duties, administrative leadership, or exemplary performance of a specific project or task. The Certificate of Commendation may be awarded to an individual or Unit for service beyond the scope of responsibility normally expected of that person or Unit in their assigned duties and is therefore worthy of acknowledgement and commendation.

David Miller

Hornsby/ Ku-ring-gai

Fire Fighter David Miller joined the NSW Rural Fire Brigades in August 1961 at Berowra. He has been an active member of the Berowra and Cowan Rural Fire Brigades and the Hornsby Headquarters Brigade and Communications Brigade through to the present day. He has held the positions of Deputy Communications Officer, Senior Deputy Communications Officer, Berowra Senior Deputy Captain and Deputy Captain, Headquarters Brigade and Communications Brigades Treasurer and he is currently the President of the Cowan Rural Fire Brigade and has been awarded Life Membership of the Communications Brigade. He is also heavily involved in both St John Ambulance and with the Rural Fire Service at large in the areas of first aid and advanced oxygen resuscitation training. He is an extremely valuable Rural Fire Service member in the Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai District and his contribution to the District and to the Rural Fire Service is of high value.

Vivienne Miller

Hornsby/ Ku-ring-gai

Fire Fighter Vivienne Miller joined the NSW Rural Fire Brigades in August 1973 at Cowan. She has been an active member of the Cowan Rural Fire Brigade, the Hornsby Headquarters Brigade and Communications Brigade through to the present day. She has held the positions of Deputy Captain of the Cowan Rural Fire Brigade and has been the President of the Communications Brigade. She is also heavily involved in both St John Ambulance and with the Rural Fire Service at large in the areas of first aid and advanced oxygen resuscitation training. She is an extremely valuable Rural Fire Service member in the Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai District and her contribution to the District and to the Rural Fire Service is of high value.

Captain Ronald Jollow

Wendoree Park

Captain Jollow joined the Wendoree Park Rural Fire Brigade in June 1967. At this time there was only access by water to the area and members would use their own boats to respond to fires in remote locations. In 1969 four wheel drive road access was provided from work largely undertaken by the local Roads Committee and the selfless donation of funds, labour and equipment by Captain Jollow. The road was upgraded over the next ten years during which Captain Jollow held most of the brigade executive positions and Progress Association positions. He was the Senior Deputy Captain of the brigade from 1971. Following donations of other equipment, vehicles and labour to various projects, in 1977 he was elected and appointed Brigade Captain, a position he held until June 2006.

Captain Jollow commanded and controlled the brigade during the disastrous bush fires in the Mount White area in 1979. In combination with the hazard reduction work undertaken under his direction prior to the fires and because of his direction during those fires, Wendoree Park suffered no property loss. He has been instrumental in the acquisition of other vehicles and equipment for the brigade over a number of years.

During the 1994 bush fire emergency in the Gosford area, Wendoree Park was again isolated and he again commanded and controlled the activities of the brigade for the entire western fire front for three days. As a result of his work and representations a second tanker was acquired for the local community.

Since 1989 he has voluntarily manned the Gosford Equipment store for up to three days per week providing much needed support to other brigades in the area. He also assumed the role of Senior Deputy Captain from June 2006. He has worked tirelessly in his efforts to improve the ability of the brigade to service the community and has wholeheartedly devoted his personal efforts, time and monies to his community. He is an inspiration to others and is most deserving of recognition through the award of the Commissioner's Commendation..



The Commissioner's Unit Citation for Service

Awarded to crews, brigades, groups or organised units to recognise outstanding service of a meritorious nature, such as group actions in relation to fire service duties, group work performance, or other outstanding or meritorious service not involving bravery.

Buxton RFB

Graham Whitley, Russell Hill and Jacqueline Gibson
Wollondilly

Buxton Rural Fire Brigade with crew members Captain Graham Whiteley, Deputy Russell Hill and Fire Fighter Jacqueline Gibson on board responded to a motor vehicle roll over in East Parade, Couridjah at 1855 hours on 2 June 2006 and whilst in attendance at that scene, the crew heard a huge impact some 100 metres west of their location. The crew made safe the first incident site and immediately responded to the second incident. On arrival, the crew found a serious two car motor vehicle accident with both drivers still in the vehicles and both unconscious with serious head and chest injuries. The most serious of the injured had a very weak and fading pulse. In order to successfully treat the victim, it was essential to first remove the victim from the vehicle. With no professional medical assistance available on site, the crew did this and applied other first aid measures to both injured drivers. According to the opinion of the paramedics who subsequently attended the scene, the actions taken by the crew of the Buxton Rural Fire Brigade greatly contributed to the saving of life at the scene. The actions taken by the crew of the Buxton Rural Fire Brigade brought great credit to themselves and to the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Crookwell RFB

George Shepherd, Garry Kadwell, Damon Allport, Mark Owen, Norman Fountain and Kevin Clarke – Southern Tablelands Zone

On 11 March 2007, Fire Fighter Kim Cahalan, a member of the Crookwell Rural Fire Brigade, suffered a heart attack en-route to a fire at Goulburn. His other crew members, Deputy Captains Fountain and Clarke removed him from the vehicle, called for assistance and commenced CPR. Within a short period of time, they were joined by off duty members, Deputy Captains Owen, Allport, Group Captain Kadwell and Inspector Shepherd all also members of the Crookwell Rural Fire Brigade and who, in relay, continued to carry out CPR until the arrival of the ambulance. The subsequent report from the Ambulance Service indicated that in the opinion of the attending officers, Fire Fighter Cahalan's life was saved that day due to the swift and direct actions performed by members of a cohesive and well trained unit. The conduct and actions of the on duty and off duty members of the Crookwell Rural Fire Brigade in attending to Fire Fighter Cahalan brought great credit to themselves and to the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Dural RFB

Arnold Teuben, Erico Kusnander, Jarryd Barton and John Fallon
Hornsby / Ku-ring-gai

On 21 July 2007 at 1130 hours, the crew of Dural Rural Fire Brigade was returning to station at Dural via the Galston Gorge. Whilst ascending the western side of the gorge, they came across a motor vehicle accident which had just occurred. The accident involved a collision between a motorcyclist and a small truck and resulted in the motorcyclist having his right leg completely severed just below the knee and the leg was lying some distance from the motorcyclist who was bleeding severely. The crew immediately commenced stabilisation of the patient, with Fire Fighters Fallon and Barton and Deputy Captain Kusnandar stemming blood flow and treating the patient for some 20-25 minutes until the arrival of the ambulance. The crew also assisted a number of other motorists who were in shock. Deputy Captain Teuben, after securing the scene, made phone contact with the Ambulance Service and provided them with a detailed situation report on the patient and on the scene. His report enabled the Ambulance Service to dispatch a helicopter with a doctor on board rather than a road ambulance. Upon arrival at the scene, the medical staff made comment that the crew of Dural Rural Fire Brigade had done a marvellous job to keep the motorcyclist alive and in good condition. Fire Fighter Fallon had been particularly tenacious in his efforts to maintain the consciousness of the patient. The actions of the crew at the scene of this motor vehicle accident were instrumental in the saving of life and in so doing, brought great credit upon themselves, their brigade and to the NSW Rural Fire Service.



The Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation (Unit)

Awarded to recognise service or outstanding actions in relation to fire service duties, administrative leadership, or exemplary performance of a specific project or task. The Certificate of Commendation may be awarded to an individual or unit for service beyond the scope of responsibility normally expected of that person or Unit in their assigned duties and is therefore worthy of acknowledgement and commendation.

**Glenugie RFB
Halfway Creek RFB
Ulmarra RFB**

Clarence Valley Zone

During 2006/2007 in excess of forty (40) serious accidents occurred on the Pacific Highway in the Clarence Valley. All of these accidents were attended by the Glenugie, Halfway Creek and Ulmarra Rural Fire Brigades. The accidents often involved heavy transport vehicles and a significant number of fatalities and serious casualties were involved. The accident scenes were often gruesome, and the crews of these brigades were exposed to these scenes for lengthy periods assisting with rescue, vehicle recovery and Police accident investigations. The commitment of the brigades in dealing with these incidents and the willingness of the crews to continue to respond over the period have been remarkable and the frequency and extent of their exposure to motor vehicle accident scenes has exceeded any reasonable expectation. All three brigades have continued to perform with distinction in the most trying of circumstances and in so doing, have brought great credit upon themselves and on the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Illawarra Community Safety Brigade

Members of the Illawarra Community Safety Brigade have been active over the past six years in all areas of community safety and in the conduct of safety programs such as Firewise for Kids, Street Meetings, Farmwise and the Installation of Blue Hydrant Markers. They have also designed and constructed a community education trailer and been instrumental in the acquisition of a Toyota van to transport members and equipment to activities. The members have conducted many displays at community events such as the Illawarra Caravan and Camping Show, local agricultural shows, Kids Earth Program and Bunnings hardware stores and has also conducted numerous street meetings. The Brigade also has a commendable working relationship with the local councils in the Illawarra area. The Brigade's efforts and accomplishments have been many in the education of the community and in the delivery of fire safety messages to residents, property owners and visitors in the Illawarra. Their performance as a Community Safety Brigade has brought great credit to themselves and to the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Warringah Pittwater District Course Coordinators

Warringah Pittwater

The Rural Fire Brigades within the Warringah/Pittwater District are made up of members who have a high level of commitment to training. Within the district, training is provided and utilised by brigades to assist in the maintenance of morale and to enhance the capabilities of brigades to assist the community. The course coordinators work closely with the Learning and Development Officer in the district in the planning, delivery and evaluation of training. Their role and responsibilities encompass the coordination of instructors, assessors and the logistical arrangements for the courses being conducted. The course coordinators are all active members of Rural Fire Brigades and they perform their training functions in addition to their brigade duties. The training demands within the district require an extraordinary level of commitment and this challenge is met positively and with enthusiasm by the Course Coordinators who perform beyond the expected level returning significant benefits to their fellow members of the Service and they bring and continue to bring great credit upon themselves and the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Nominations

Nominations must be lodged in accordance with the guidelines and on the prescribed nomination forms. The guidelines and nomination forms are available on the Rural Fire Service intranet and public websites. Copies of the guidelines and nomination forms are also available from Region and District Offices.

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

All nominations are held in strict confidence. Nominees are advised in writing once a nomination has been approved by the Commissioner, though at no time is the nominee advised of the origin of nomination. The Executive Officer of the Awards Committee will also acknowledge to the nominator the receipt of the nomination for an award by the Awards Committee.

St Florian's Feast Day, the Fourth of May

Firefighters in most European countries celebrate 4 May as St Florian's Feast Day as well as International Fire Service Day. This has been a tradition in central Europe for more than 150 years.

Born about 250AD in Cetium (now in Austria), Florian joined the Roman army and angered the Emperor Diocletian when he refused to persecute Christians in the area. Florian gave himself up to the soldiers of Aquilinus, the governor, when they were rounding up the Christians. He was twice scourged, half-flayed alive and sentenced to be burnt alive. While being set on fire he challenged the Roman soldiers to light the fire, saying "If you do, I will climb to heaven on the flames". As the soldiers were apprehensive, they took another path and threw Florian into the river Enns with a stone around his neck.

About 600 years later, in approximately 900-950AD a monastery was built near Florian's tomb, and the village of St Florian grew around it. St Florian was adopted as the Patron Saint of Poland, following an incident when a person was saved from a fire by invoking St Florian's name. Since then, St Florian has been invoked against fire and has been generally regarded in most countries as the Patron Saint of Firefighters.

St Florian's Day

4 May 2008

Headquarters, NSW Rural Fire Service

15 Carter Street, Homebush Bay