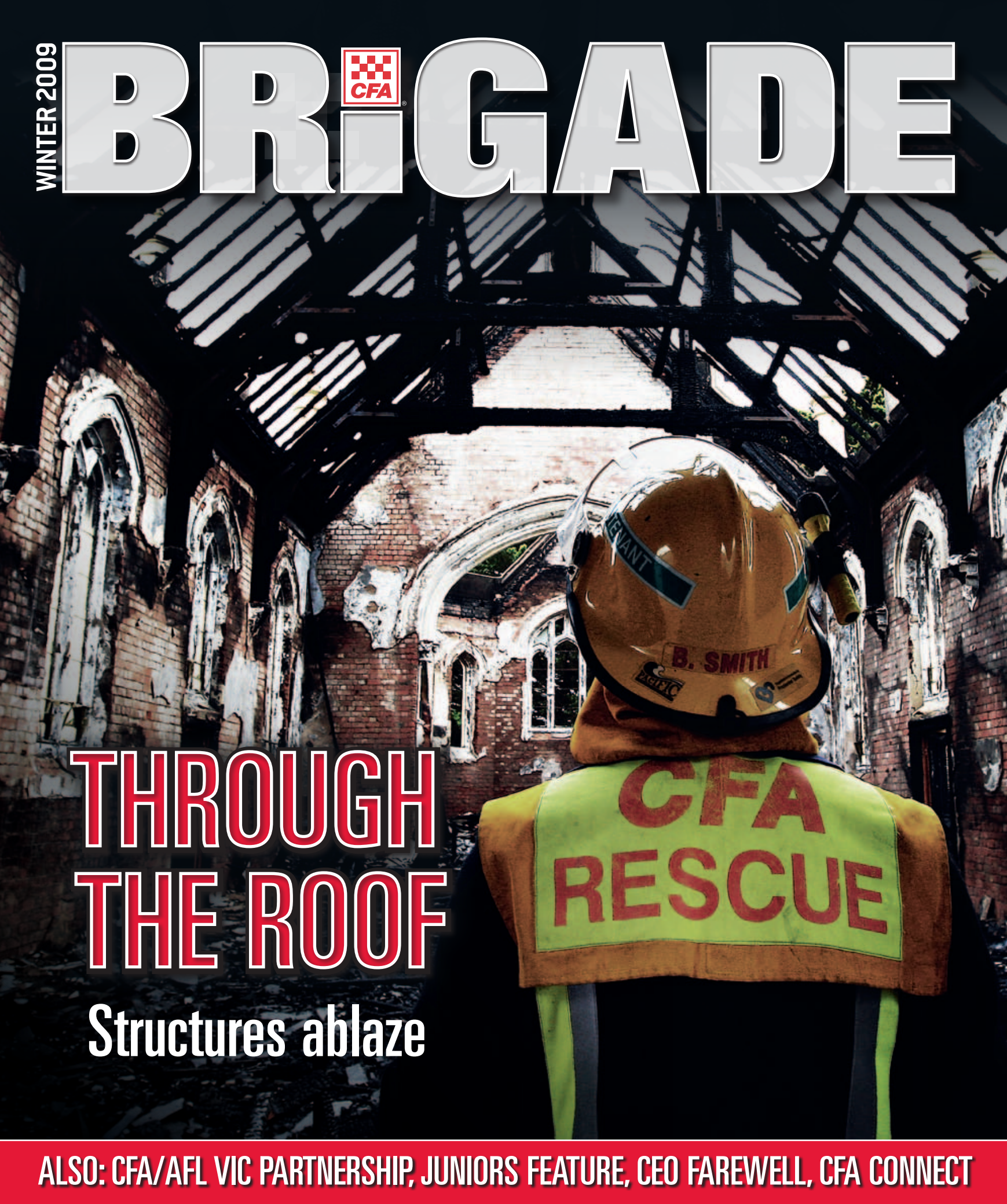


WINTER 2009

BRIGADE



THROUGH THE ROOF

Structures ablaze

ALSO: CFA/AFL VIC PARTNERSHIP, JUNIORS FEATURE, CEO FAREWELL, CFA CONNECT

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Kerry Murphy PSM AFSM



From the Chairman

We are now well into the Royal Commission which is examining the fires of 2009.

The Royal Commission is directed to make recommendations that will identify the changes that are necessary to better protect the Victorian community. CFA fully supports that objective. And as at the end of every fire season, it reviews and examines all aspects of its performance during the fire season. This is to identify ways to minimise the impact of bushfires and improve preparedness, prevention, and response methods.

Lessons learnt from both the events of 7 February and the whole 2009 fire season will hopefully shape and influence how CFA and the wider community prepare for, respond to and recover from bushfire events in the future.

When inquiries such as this are conducted, there is a great deal of media attention and public comment made that may revive painful memories and frustration.

Some of the media reporting of the Royal Commission hearings has not presented the full story as some of the reports are out of context of the wider and unprecedented conditions we experienced during the fires. It is difficult for non CFA people to understand the complexity of fire behaviour. As a result many of our members are feeling hurt and distressed. Ultimately what matters to CFA most is not what the media says, but that we and the community can learn from the Royal Commission.

Let me again convey the heartfelt thanks of the CFA Board for your extraordinary efforts during this past fire season. In these circumstances we have lived through a unique and devastating event in the history of Australia.

People often ask me how the fires in 2009 compared with the fires in 1983. Our processes and ways of undertaking tasks have moved substantially over 26 years – in that we have new systems, improved training and new technology. We don't turn out in petrol trucks any more; we didn't have heat shielding in 1983; we have protective clothing which is much, much better than it was in the Ash Wednesday era; and the technology has helped save a vast number of lives.

We now have compulsory training to ensure safety on the fireground. And all these improvements and innovations have been made within the framework of co-operation between agencies.

With the benefit of hindsight and simultaneously looking to the future, it is clear – at least to me – that in the future we won't be fighting fires in the way we did this year.

There are great opportunities in a range of areas that we should take on board and show our willingness to advance with the times. Some of these opportunities for improvements come from advances in technology; some from the routine end-of-season debriefings where we internally analyse how we prepared; and other opportunities are derived from external sources.

CFA has a history of willingly embracing opportunities and will do so again now. At the heart of this preparedness to change and develop is the innovation of our volunteers and career staff, examples of which I see in abundance in my travels around the state.

Recently I had the pleasure of opening the new Traralgon Fire Station. This is the new generation of fire stations for CFA – with new standards – and it is a fine example of advances in CFA introducing new technology.

One thing that hasn't changed over time is the need for CFA to have the support of the wider community, particularly the support we get from employers of CFA volunteers. Ford Australia is one such employer that has been very accommodating of CFA in a number of ways. While the Ford Motor Company has not only generously provided a number of vehicles to CFA (see p. 27), it has also assisted communities in practical terms by ensuring that Ford staff who are brigade members were looked after in the aftermath of the fires.

The 2009 fires affected us all in different ways. It is important to recognise the impact of such an event and the way it affects each person. We are now just over three months since the fires of 7 February and this is a critical time for everyone to be looking out for and looking after each other. I would ask that you care for your health and that of your colleagues.

We have much to be proud of and we should and must continue our important work, particularly in helping our communities recover from the devastating affects of the 2009 fires and preparing for whatever may come. ■

Kerry Murphy PSM AFSM
Chairman



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(see story page 7)

Change of address

If you need to update your address details to receive *Brigade* magazine, please phone the FIRS RMS Project Officer on 1800 62 88 44.

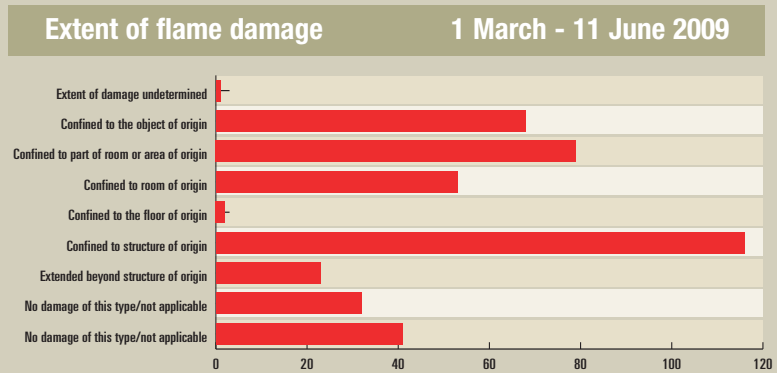
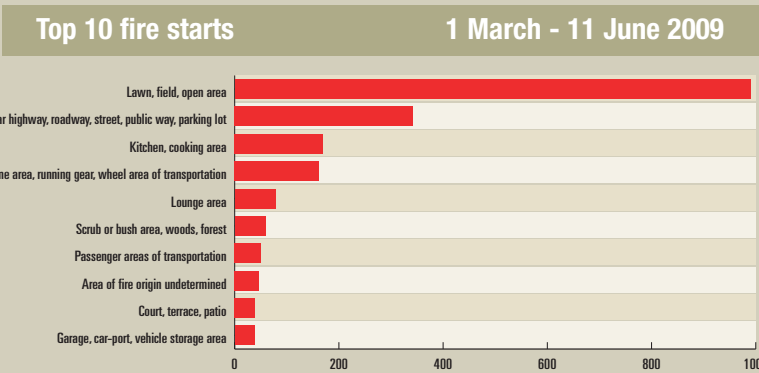
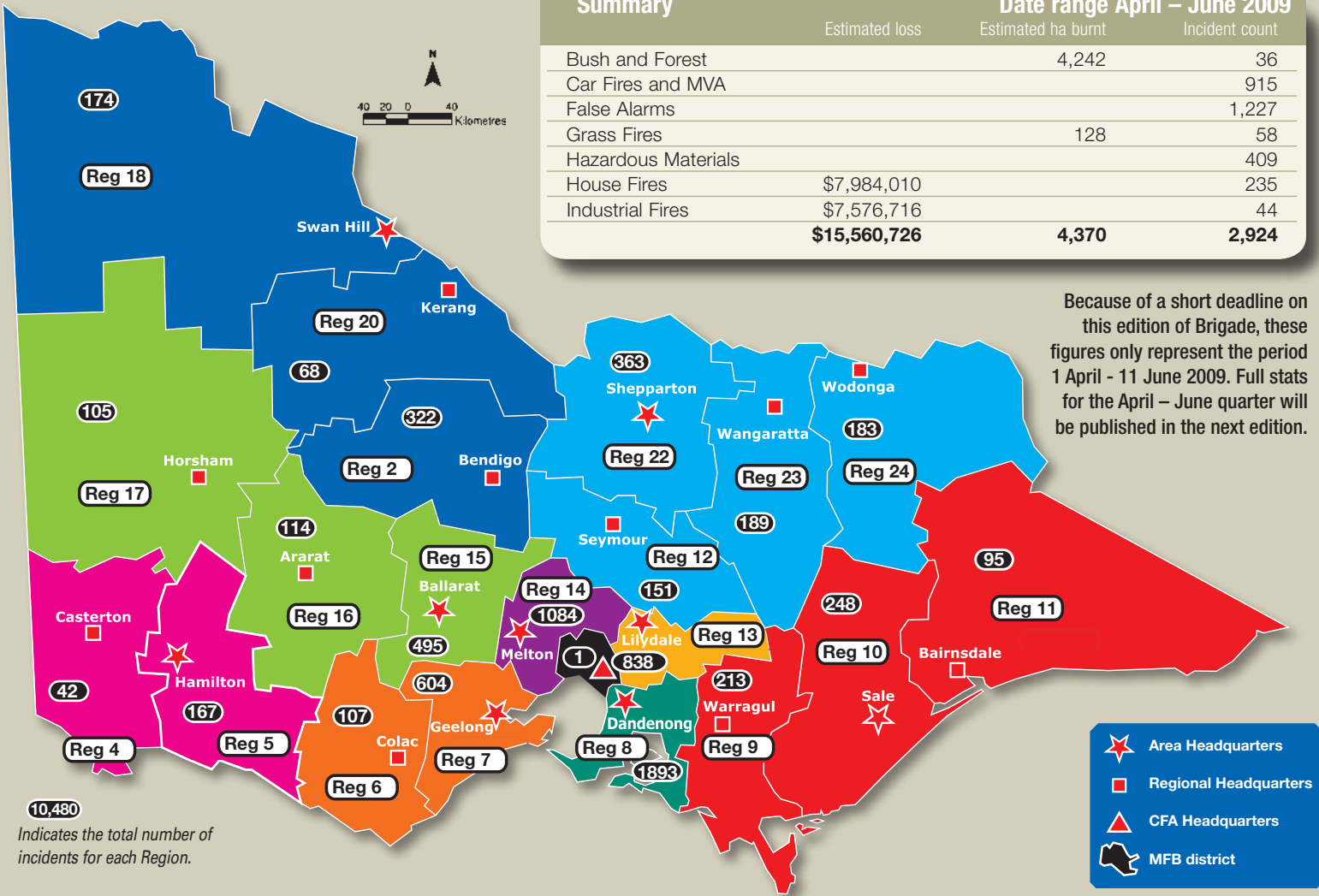
Articles reflect the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of CFA. The Editor reserves the right to refuse or edit articles.

In this section of Brigade, we summarise CFA incidents and examine the total number of incidents for each region. All statistical information has been extracted from CFA's Fire and Incident Reporting System (FIRS).

Brigades are reminded to submit their fire/incident report details as soon as possible after their attendance at an incident. Brigades on strike teams also need to submit a report. FIRS Call Centre open 8am - 11pm, 7 days **1800 628 844**

Summary	Date range January - March 2009		
	Estimated loss	Estimated ha burnt	Incident count
Bush and Forest		37,770	172
Car Fires and MVA			1,161
False Alarms			1,784
Grass Fires		43,774	257
Hazardous Materials			628
House Fires	\$12,660,820		319
Industrial Fires	\$10,707,150		60
	\$23,367,970	81,544	4,381

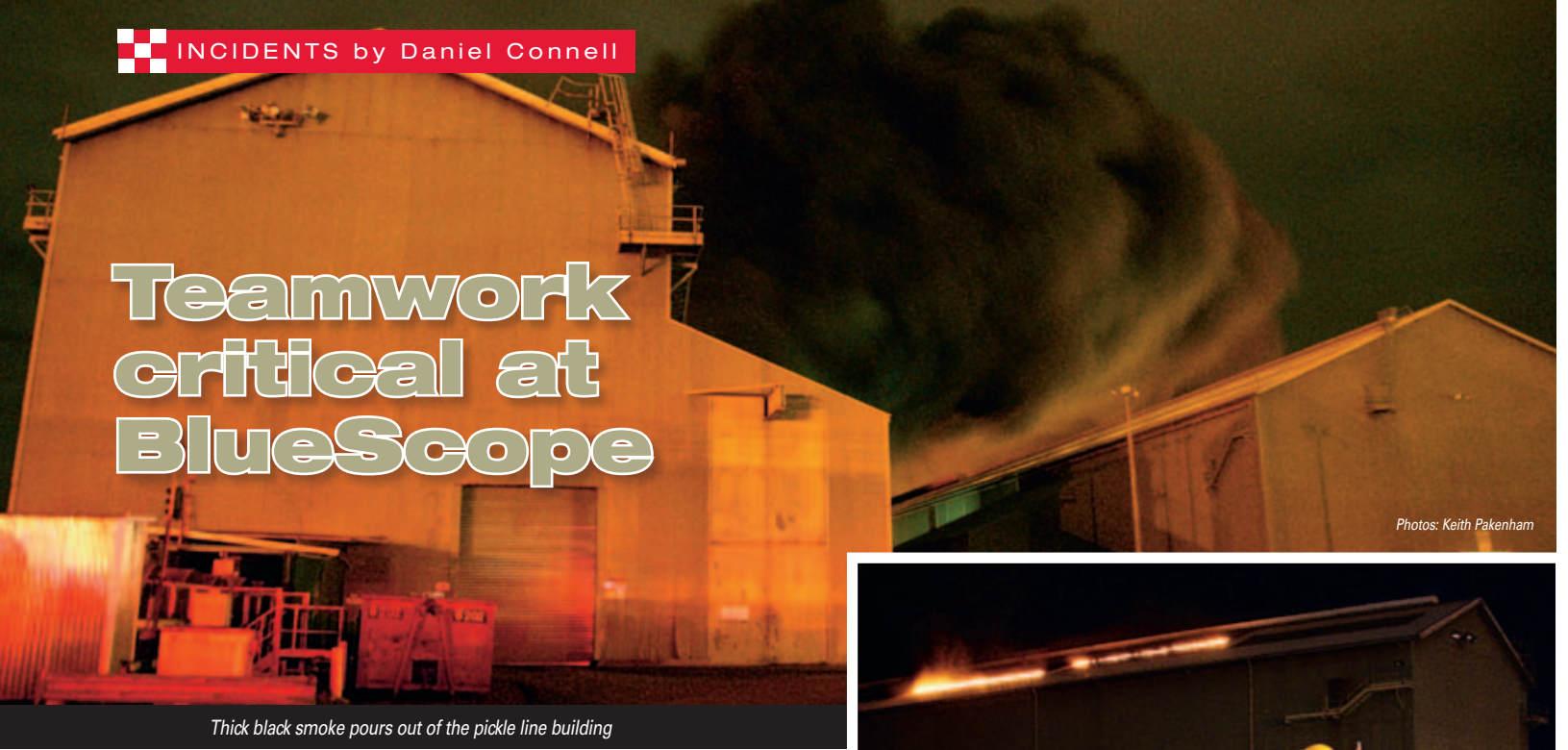
Summary	Date range April - June 2009		
	Estimated loss	Estimated ha burnt	Incident count
Bush and Forest		4,242	36
Car Fires and MVA			915
False Alarms			1,227
Grass Fires		128	58
Hazardous Materials			409
House Fires	\$7,984,010		235
Industrial Fires	\$7,576,716		44
	\$15,560,726	4,370	2,924



Please note these stats only include incidents up to 11 June 2009.



Teamwork critical at BlueScope



Photos: Keith Pakenham

Thick black smoke pours out of the pickle line building

Incident name: BlueScope Steel plant fire

Region: 8

Date: 13 May 2009

Brigades: Hastings, Baxter, Bittern, Dandenong, Frankston, Langwarrin, Moorooduc, Mornington, Mt Eliza, Mt Martha, Patterson River, Pearcedale, Red Hill, Rosebud, Scoresby, Somerville, Tyabb



Teamwork between CFA, MFB, and the BlueScope fire team was crucial in a complex firefight at the BlueScope Steel plant in Westernport.

Approximately 80 staff members from Westernport BlueScope Steel were evacuated in the middle of the night when fire caused a tank carrying 500,000 litres of hydrochloric acid to leak.

Four overhead tanks within the plant's pickle line were damaged in a fierce blaze, which left two firefighters with minor acid irritation.

"The BlueScope fire team, which is partly made up of CFA volunteers, helped make the integration process a lot easier. We were able to combine their in-depth knowledge of the plant with their familiarity with our systems and processes, which helped immensely," Westernport Operations Manager Trevor Owen said.

Once on scene, brigades were confronted with more than half the 300 by 15 by 20 metre building ablaze and flames roaring through the roof. Three aerial appliances were needed to tackle the fire from the roof of the building, with MFB support also required. Crews went into asset protection mode until they had most of the appliances on scene.

The possibility of a chemical reaction between the water and hydrochloric acid made this a very difficult firefight because there was potential for a chlorine by-product to impact upon firefighters. The one million litre underground emergency tank, which captures leaking acid, became full with a combination of acid and water.

Trevor said that while aerial appliances are usually used as a support in



firefighting, the dangerous conditions meant they were relied upon more heavily than usual.

"We (were) only able to access the fire from above and that made fighting it very difficult," he said. "We had to use the aerial appliances as the primary suppression tool because we couldn't let our firefighters on the ground get too close to highly toxic chemicals."

There were approximately 150 fire fighters from CFA, MFB and BlueScope Steel's fire team who fought the fire. The fire was contained at approximately 5:30am.

"The integration between our career staff and volunteers was of the highest level. Overall, the integration between all agencies, including Victoria Police and Ambulance Victoria, was outstanding," Trevor said.

CFA and the Environment Protection Authority conducted air and water monitoring to ensure safe levels were maintained.

The injured firefighters suffered some slight acid irritation to the hands, but after being treated on scene they were released to go home

The damage bill is estimated at \$50 million. ■

Water access a challenge at shed fire



Crews begin external attack on the shed



Workers view the fire in its early stages

Incident name: Huntly Chicken Shed fire

Region: 2

Date: 9 April 2009

Brigades: Huntly, Bendigo, Strathfieldsaye, Golden Square, Junortoun, Eaglehawk, Goornong



A large two-storey shed was completely destroyed by fire on a Huntly chicken farm, which housed more than 4500 breeding chickens imported from the USA.

Region 2 Operations Officer John Cutting said brigades were called to the chicken shed fire at Hy-Line Australia on the Midland Highway just before 2.30pm. The accidental blaze ripped through the 50 by 15 metre poultry shed.

Initial appliances arriving on scene were confronted with flames showing from the roofline of the building.

The location of the farm presented crews with some difficulties to water access, with the nearest water source being a dam some 800 metres away. Using the Eaglehawk pumper and several tankers, the water was relayed via 64mm hose lines across paddocks to the remaining tankers around the structure.

Huntly brigade Lieutenant Jason Scott, the Incident Controller on scene, identified fibreglass feed silos, poultry sheds and the dry grassland as the building exposures that needed priority protection. All attacks were performed externally using 38 mm hose lines.

The fire was contained within an hour and overhaul of the property went well into the afternoon. Worksafe was notified of the call because a site manager suffering smoke inhalation was taken to Bendigo Base Hospital for treatment.

The structure and the chickens could not be saved. The cause of the fire was deemed not suspicious, with maintenance work around the shed being the likely cause. The damage bill was estimated at around \$1 million. ■



Factories ablaze in Region 8

Photos: Keith Pakenham

Crews black out pockets of the fire

INCIDENT NAME: Timber factory fire
REGION: 8
DATE: 14 May 2009
BRIGADES: Springvale, Noble Park, Patterson River, Frankston, Dandenong



Thirteen workers were evacuated safely from a timber factory fire (above) that started a busy day for Region 8 brigades in May. The timber warehouse, approximately 15 by 50 meters, was heavily involved in fire just after 1:30pm. Multiple exposures were identified. Springvale Fire Officer Barry Nash said the integrity of the wall was the main concern. “We had to position ourselves outside the factory. It looked like it could cave in, so it was a major safety concern for our firefighters.” There was an adjoining factory at the rear of the timber manufacturer, and with flames melting skylights in the timber factory itself, there was potential for the fire to spread next-door. Dandenong platform was positioned around the back of this building to supply fire protection, which ensured the adjoining factory was not affected. The fire was under control after an hour and a half of firefighting. Crews worked into the night to make sure the area was safe. ■

Meanwhile, another factory fire started in Dingley Village later that day only kilometres down the road (right). Firefighters arrived at a vacated Ingham’s Chicken plant to find a cool room alight. The polystyrene sheets sandwiched between the aluminium panelling were on fire. Crews from Springvale, Dandenong, Noble Park and Frankston were on scene, as well as additional support from MFB. The room, approximately 80 by 80 by 30 meters, was brought under control within the hour. ■



Crews commence external attack on the cool room

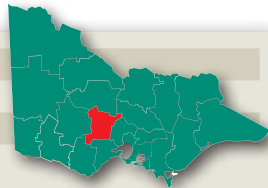


Dandenong Pumper 2 outside the disused Ingham chicken plant



School saved as historic church burns

Incident name: Ballan Church fire
Region: 15
Date: 8 April 2009
Brigades: Bacchus March, Ballan, Ballarat City, Gordon, Greendale, Wallace



Firefighters managed to save the St Brigid's Catholic Primary School in a difficult firefight that saw a 100-year-old church completely destroyed by fire.

The St Brigid's Catholic Church was fully involved in fire when crews arrived on scene at around 3:00am. The adjoining primary school was identified as the main exposure needing protection.

Region 15 Operations Manager Alfred Mason said firefighters fought all night to stop the fire, which was shooting out of the church, from spreading into the school.

"Due to the build of the church, the firefight was essentially an external attack. The firefighters formed a protection line and worked very hard, so the positive was the school wasn't damaged," he said.

Ballan brigade put out the call for additional resources to assist its four tankers and two pumpers on scene. An aerial appliance, also used as an observation tower during the firefight, was brought in from Ballarat City brigade. Firefighters were placed on the roof of the church and protection lines were built to prevent the flames spreading laterally into the school.

The red brick walls were the only part of the church left standing after a fire tore through the building, gutting the wooden floor, pews and roof.

It took five hours of firefighting for the situation to be deemed safe. Roads were closed during the firefight. Three trucks, two pumpers, one aerial appliance and one rescue vehicle attended the scene.

Damage to the church is estimated to be \$1 million.

The local community held a prayer service on the grounds of the church on Good Friday, as patrons continued to celebrate Holy Week. Makeshift celebrations included using a trestle table as a substitute altar, with a cross made out of blackened beams from the burnt church standing behind it. ■



Photo: Mark Smith, courtesy of News Limited

Ballan brigade Second Lieutenant Billy Smith looks at the destruction inside the church



Kicking goals for the community

BY DANIEL CONNELL



CFA has entered into an exciting new relationship that will see it become AFL Victoria's flagship league, Victoria's state football league and the VFL's community partner.

CFA has a proud history of uniting with community brands and this is another opportunity to raise awareness among communities of the commitment of CFA members across the state.

Under the arrangement, the front of all VFL Guernseys will be adorned with the CFA logo, as will billboards and signage around VFL venues. AFL Victoria will also use its communication network of leagues and clubs across the state to support CFA strategies.

AFL Victoria is an independent body that oversees, supports and guides all football in this state. Under its umbrella are 115 member football leagues including the Victorian Women's Football League. AFL Victoria directly manages the state's Premier League the VFL, and the state's under-18 competition, the TAC Cup. All other leagues work under a membership arrangement. This includes the VCFL (Victorian Country Football League), which incorporates 880 clubs with a total of 2648 teams.

AFL Victoria oversees all development activities in the state, coaching, schools, community club development, and manages the successful and popular junior program, NAB AFL Auskick, which originated in Victoria as VicKick.

CFA CEO Neil Bibby said AFL Victoria is a like-minded organisation that understands the importance of volunteerism in the community.

"We know that sports clubs, and more

specifically football clubs, are in many ways the lifeblood of communities both in regional and metropolitan Victoria," said Neil.

"That is so similar to CFA. We know the value of strengthening communities, of having people involved at all levels coming together for a like-minded cause, and that's why we are so excited to be involved in this relationship."

Peter Schwab, CEO of AFL Victoria, said AFL Victoria's grassroots relationship with communities across the state, led by its flagship competition the VFL, made this an ideal partnership.

"Our links with CFA are very strong, and we are excited to work together in building strong relationships with the community," Peter said.

"Football across the state has an army of volunteers donating their time for the betterment of their local communities. As they are for brigades across the state, volunteers are the lifeblood of football. Without them, clubs simply wouldn't exist."

"We look forward to a long and rewarding partnership with the broad CFA community – a community which does so much for the state of Victoria."

AFL Victoria and its member leagues supported, and are still supporting, many communities impacted by the 2009 Victorian bushfires through its clubs and members.

Take some time to have a look at the wide range of activities AFL Victoria is involved in by logging onto www.aflvic.com.au. Once in the site you can gain easy access to all member league sites. ■



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Neil G Bibby AFSM



From the CEO

After ten years with CFA I have mixed feelings about saying goodbye – or maybe ‘See you later’. The friends I have made in CFA will be missed although I will stay in contact with many. The challenges we have faced as an organisation have not all been completed but many have, and we can stand tall when we look back. A number of these are shown in other parts of this edition of Brigade.

Watching over the build-up to and the eventual reality of the major fires during my time, I have seen the self-sacrifice made by all CFA members to try to protect the communities of Victoria. You cannot begin to describe the dedication of CFA members - you see it, experience it and feel it in your bones - there is no other way. Outsiders see only the tip of the iceberg.

In times like now, when we are being questioned about our fundamental beliefs with a small number of us taking the brunt, it is important that we do two things. First, remember and remind people again and again and again of the good things we have achieved. Second, if things need to change, accept the change, move quickly and embed it into our ‘iceberg’ to protect the communities that depend upon us.

I have spent 36 years of my life in emergency management and not one second have I regretted. CFA is a great organisation – thank you all for being part of this chapter of my life.

Cheers, and remember the glass is always half full. ■

A legacy of CHANGE

When CFA Chief Executive Officer Neil Bibby leaves CFA this year, he will be remembered as the career firefighter who enabled change. In fact, his legacy will be seen in almost every home and office building in Victoria in the form of the smoke alarm – a safety initiative Neil spearheaded.

Neil made his way up through the ranks. He was the first fire officer to make the transition from MFB to CFA – a move strongly encouraged 10 years ago by Len Foster who was then CFA’s CEO and Chairman.

The CFA Community Safety area, a department that Len had set up, was in its infancy and needed someone with the skills to run it. Len knew that Neil, as MFB’s Director Risk Management and Commercial, and an expert in fire prevention and safety, had the best reputation in area in this regard - but the only problems Len could see were significant cultural differences between MFB and CFA.

“I decided that Neil was the right person to make the transition and bring a statewide awareness to community safety,” Len says. “We had lunch, discussed the idea and he agreed after 30 seconds. He could see all the advantages and he proved to be the bridge we needed between CFA and MFB.”

“As time went by and Neil became CEO, he demonstrated that he was the best example of radical change I could have had. He had the strengths we needed; he was very analytical, very strategic, understood the politics and had the ability to cut through waffle and get to the core issue.”

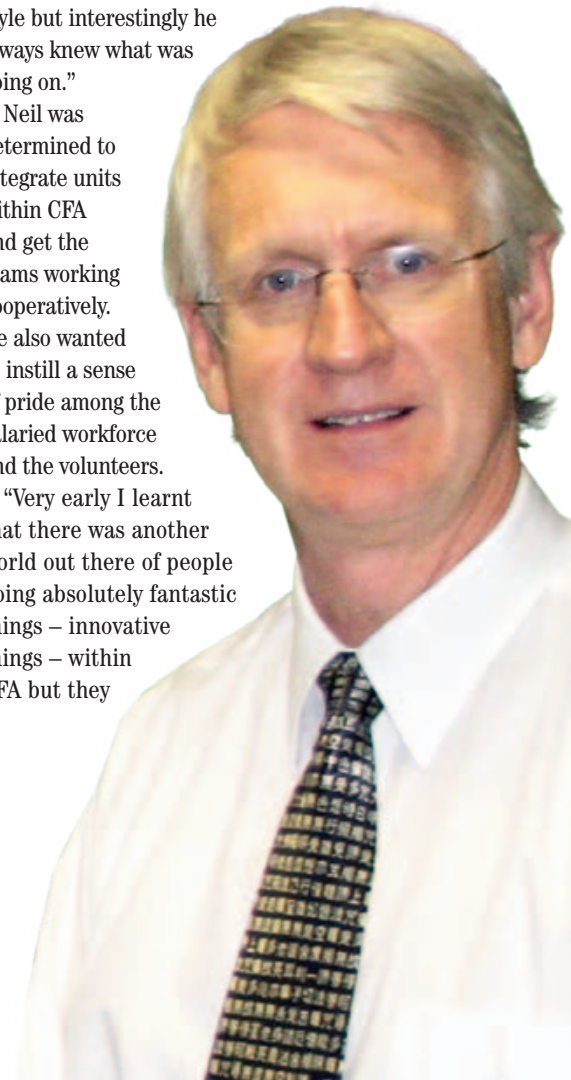
CFA Board member Frank Zeigler believes Neil’s appointment was, in every way, to the benefit of an extremely complex organisation. “Neil brought his extensive and realistic knowledge of firefighting and community involvement to CFA.”

Frank also points to Neil’s particular understanding of volunteers. “Neil always strived to protect the volunteer culture above all else.”

Former CFA Director Community Safety Naomi Brown, who is currently CEO of the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council says: “Neil’s strength is his ability to get above it all, not get too excited and to allow people to do what they were employed to do. A hands-off style but interestingly he always knew what was going on.”

Neil was determined to integrate units within CFA and get the teams working cooperatively. He also wanted to instill a sense of pride among the salaried workforce and the volunteers.

“Very early I learnt that there was another world out there of people doing absolutely fantastic things – innovative things – within CFA but they



weren't singing their own praises – and no one was doing it for them," Neil says.

Neil's role for the first two-and-a-half years was as Director Community Safety and Commercial. He was responsible for the development and implementation of fire prevention policy for Victoria and steered the rebuilding of CFA's commercial business. Under his watch it grew from \$6 million to \$15 million.

Neil remembers that the five deaths in the Linton fire had affected the organisation greatly – internally, externally and politically – and one of his first priorities was to give the prevention arm the resources and visibility it needed so badly.

"It was a huge cultural shift and there was some resistance but we bulldozed through. We had the support of the senior management and, importantly, Len Foster who was highly respected.

Neil's career has focussed on the challenges of improving all aspects of fire safety: from fire prevention through better planning and construction to education courses for the community and increased resources for better-equipped and skilled fire services.

Under Neil's leadership as chair of the National Fire Prevention Group, Australians have seen the instigation and implementation



Neil with Minister for Police and Emergency Services Bob Cameron

of new standards as well as state and national regulations to better protect lives and property.

Examples of his work include the introduction of smoke alarms in Australia and residential/domestic sprinklers. Neil also initiated many of the fire prevention programs that now run in Australia, including programs for school children, the elderly, ethnic groups and rural communities. His work in rural communities was recognised as best practice in the Bushfire Inquiry into the ACT fire. Other programs have won national

and international recognition and awards, including the International Association of Fire Chiefs award in 1990.

Frank Zeigler describes Neil as "passionate about his work, his family and the service – his skills are exceptionally noteworthy – his ability outstanding and his career a credit to the service and those who have been fortunate to have known and served with him."

Despite the pragmatism, the cool head, the ability to generate ideas and think swiftly, Neil was deeply affected by the Black Saturday fires.

AT A GLANCE:

The Bibby CFA legacy • 1999-2009

- Taking CFA from a rural fire service to a highly respected integrated emergency service, admired by peers throughout the world.
- A total rebuild of the ICT network and the asset management systems.
- Gaining a 40 per cent increase in budget.
- Developing a strategic planning system to move CFA forward.
- Overseeing major asset projects including a \$35 million building program, \$32 million truck assembly program, \$150 million communication upgrade and a \$15 million IT renewal.
- Significantly increasing sponsorship income.
- Developing a number of multi million dollar industries from an initial 'no-demand-no-supply' market – for example, creating the smoke alarm and residential sprinkler industries in Australia as a first alert warning in every home.
- Continuing to develop strong relationships with volunteers across Victoria, introducing the next generations – X and Y – to the volunteer ranks, to follow in the footsteps on the baby-boomers.
- Bringing breadth and depth of fire research knowledge to CFA through the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre as a director and board member; and incorporating the value of engineering innovation through the Warren Centre as governor.
- Ensuring aviation remains an integral part of CFA planning and operations by close involvement with the National Aerial Firefighting Centre – currently chair of the board which is responsible to the federal government for the leasing and placing of aircraft during the Australian fire season – activities requiring a high level of governance and probity.

Presenting at a Fire Ready Victoria meeting at CFA HQ

Accepting a cheque from IGA

But when the fires were at their worst, there was no room for emotion. There would be a time and place for this later.

For Neil the time was Sunday 22 February and the place was the Rod Laver Arena: Australia's National Day of Mourning. Neil shed tears.

"Yes, I hit the wall that day," he says. "We had the best of the best but still 173 died and thousands were made homeless."

The answer, he says, is not simply more red trucks and more firefighters as some people may think. "We are seeing physical changes - in climate and weather patterns... and these impact upon the landscape. The result this summer was far greater fire intensity than we have seen before."

Neil says effects of global warming mean it's not just about dousing flames anymore. "We have all moved beyond that era. Now, more than ever, it's about responsible authorities working together in prevention, planning and building controls because nature and human impact have to be considered as a whole.

Neil is proud of the changes he has initiated and overseen - changes that have helped to lift the organisation and make it more efficient and prevention-focused.

"The CFA attitude to volunteers used to be 'provide a shoestring'. Now it's 'provide them with everything a career firefighter gets except their wage'. They are seen as equals - not the supplementary part of the organisation. They are the organisation." ■



Neil Bibby: A SNAPSHOT

- **My first memory was**
...the hole in the fence through to the swings and having my tonsils out
- **The people who inspired me most in my life**
...my parents
- **My happiest moment was when**
...my children arrived
- **My saddest moment was**
...the death of my father
- **The best book I ever read**
...anything by Douglas Adams
- **I am motivated by**
...positive people
- **Leadership, to me, means**
...having a direction but being adaptive to the situation
- **Leaders I admire are**
...Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King
- **Four people (alive or dead) I would invite to a special dinner party**
...Adams, Isaacs, Clark and Herbert to talk about sci-fi concepts
- **The mark I want to leave in life**
...to make a difference for my grandchildren in climate change
- **Bach or Beatles?**
...Bach
- **Fire is**
...part of life
- **The three greatest challenges facing Plant Earth are**
...water, people, climate
- **My hope is that**
...people will think beyond next week and work towards long-term improvements
- **Today's young people are**
...fantastic
- **Dogs or cats?**
...dogs
- **The last time I cried was**
...the Black Saturday memorial service
- **Tattoos or piercings?**
...neither – but a piercing if I must
- **Australia is**
...the very, very lucky country
- **My mother always told me to**
...be happy
- **Summer or winter?**
...summer
- **My grandchildren's Australia will be**
...fully integrated

A time to REMEMBER

BY DANIEL CONNELL

It was a call to arms that resounded strongly with the crowd at the annual CFA memorial service for fallen firefighters – “Your state needs you.” Victorian Premier John Brumby’s delivery of this heartfelt message emphasised the sacrificial spirit of those firefighters who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Joseph Shepherd, from Arthurs Creek Rural Fire Brigade, died in the 2009 Victorian bushfires. His wife Dini said the service was an appropriate honour for her late husband. “It is very, very comforting to have his sacrifice recognised,” she said. “He certainly deserved this – his sacrifice trying to help the community speaks for itself.”

Joe joins the list of 65 Victorian firefighters who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defending their communities. David Balfour from the ACT Fire Service, who died while assisting Victoria’s emergency services in the 2009 fire (see story next page), and ten members of the Tarrawingee Fire Brigade, who

died in 1943 defending their communities from fire, were also honoured with the unveiling of commemorative plaques.

Hundreds gathered at CFA’s Training College at Fiskville to honour the sacrifice made by each fallen firefighter over the past 70 years.

The Laying of the Wreaths ceremony was a touching procession – behind the scenes each flower was frequently watered throughout the ceremony to maintain its vibrant colours by juniors from Bacchus Marsh brigade. Relatives of the fallen, accompanied by members of Tarrawingee brigade, were able to lay their own flowers to pay respects to their loved ones.

Zayne Aicher proudly wore the turnout jacket of his Uncle Matthew Thomas, a firefighter from Hurstbridge Rural Fire Brigade who passed away on 26 November 1998. Zayne drew a warm reception from the crowd when approaching the memorial wall with his grandparents.

CFA Chief Officer Russell Rees led the Roll Call as the fire bell tolled 65 times in all, each sharp ring equally important as the last.

Anglican Diocese of Ballarat Bishop Michael Hough, a volunteer firefighter from Ballarat who fought on the front line in the 2009 Victorian bushfires, closed proceedings with a fitting speech centred on the values of sacrifice and togetherness within a community.

This was a day to acknowledge the courage, sacrifice and selflessness of all CFA members. Yet most important of all, it was a day to remember.

Premier Brumby was joined by Minister for Police and Emergency Services Bob Cameron, Victoria Police Chief Commissioner Simon Overland and CFA leaders in honouring the bravery of firefighters who died in the line of duty.

Other speakers on the day included CFA Chairman Kerry Murphy, Department of Justice Secretary Penny Armytage, CFA Chief Officer Russell Rees, Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria President Gary Lyttle, Fire Officer Fiskville Ralph Cullum and Hoppers Crossing Leading Firefighter Matthew Kneebone. Geelong City Leading Firefighter Adam Shearer rang the fire bell for each fallen firefighter. ■



Victorian Premier John Brumby and CFA Chairman Kerry Murphy take part in the Laying of the Wreaths ceremony

Photo: Malcolm Brownlee

Relaying their support

BY DANIEL CONNELL

This was inter-agency cooperation at its finest – brigades around Australia harnessing their collective goodwill to support a fallen comrade and his family. ACT firefighter David Balfour died tragically while assisting Victoria's emergency services in the 2009 firefight.

The planning behind the David Balfour Memorial Run sounds straightforward; get a group together for a charity run to raise funds and awareness along the way.

Try telling that to the men and women who pounded the 796 kilometres of bitumen from Melbourne Town Hall to the steps of Parliament House in Canberra. Or to the people who planned for CFA pumpers and platforms to be on the streets with a convoy of runners, buses and ambulances. Or the unlucky 'A-shifters' from Traralgon brigade who gave up their beds for weary participants.

Cranbourne Qualified Firefighter and memorial runner Tim Lancaster could hardly believe the regional support. "It was simply astounding," he said. "Here we were running through Sale at 2:00am and it's like minus two degrees. It's recorded as the coldest April day Sale has had in 50 years, and out comes Sale brigade cheering us on and presenting the team with cheques. Now that's support."

This was a tribute put together by the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services

Board (MFB), ACT Fire Brigade and CFA. Firefighters – joined by David's widow Celia Balfour – ran the distance to bring donations raised by numerous fundraisers back home to David's family in Canberra.

The group left Melbourne Town Hall on Wednesday 29 April. Four CFA career firefighters were a part of the team to run the whole distance. Qualified Firefighters Daniel Tawse (Dandenong) and Michael Jones (Frankston) and Leading Firefighter Simon Hrabe (Eltham) joined Tim to make up the CFA quartet. They joined 22 runners from the ACT, and five from MFB.

There were three teams of 10 running in six hour shifts, each runner doing two to three kilometres at a time. Tim's team ran the night shift, from midnight. "When your team's run started was luck of the draw. Unfortunately, we were 'lucky' enough to run the Snowy Mountain Highway up the Brown Mountain in the dead of the night."

"In every fire district, whether it was CFA, NSW or ACT, regardless of the time of day, there were always fully equipped appliances cheering the runners on."

Patterson River Leading Firefighter James Wong ran from Springvale through to Beaconsfield as a part of a relief team to give the main running group a break.

"Those involved from CFA didn't have a lot

of time to prepare, but that didn't stop people wanting to be a part of the event," he said. "From the beginning of the run to the edge of Victoria, a CFA appliance was there to accompany the runners all the way."

The streets of Regions 8 and 9 were filled with enthusiastic supporters and CFA vehicles. Drouin brigade prepared meals for the crews, Lakes Entrance brigade put on a barbecue spread and opened its station to all the runners. So did Traralgon brigade, which showed the participants around its newly opened fire station and offered up its beds.

All three running teams completed the last leg together, arriving at Parliament House at midday on Saturday 2 May. Celia Balfour and her children Alison, Daniel and Frances led the runners up to Parliament House where they were welcomed by ACT Labor Senator Kate Lundy. Celia was presented with a purple ribbon lapel pin given to Prime Minister Kevin Rudd from American President Barack Obama, as part of an American tradition for families who have lost loved ones in the line of duty.

That night at the Hellenic Club in Canberra, Prime Minister Rudd presented those firefighters involved with a purple ribbon lapel as a gesture of thanks.

More than \$250,000 has been raised for the Balfour Family Trust. ■



CFA runners (l to r) QFF Mick Jones, QFF Tim Lancaster, LFF Simon Hrabe, QFF Daniel Tawse

The running team heads up toward the steps of Parliament House in Canberra

Photo: Tim Lancaster

Photos: Keith Pakenham and Robert Stevens



Lewis Hamilton on board the Moorooduc tanker



Jensen Button on the Yea tanker



CFA tankers on the grid lines

CFA takes pole position

Ever taken a ride around a Formula 1 racing track? Ridden shotgun with star driver Lewis Hamilton? Moorooduc brigade volunteer Martin King has.



Martin was one of many CFA members given the opportunity to ride around Albert Park with the world's best F1 drivers earlier this year at the 2009 Formula 1 ING Australian Grand Prix.

For Martin, chosen to represent his brigade because of an outstanding turnout record, just to be involved in the 2009 Formula 1 Drivers Parade was a huge thrill. To ride in the same vehicle as current F1 world champion Lewis Hamilton was something truly special.

"Early on in the day there was a bit of banter among the brigades because nobody knew which driver would be paired up with which truck," Martin said. "You can imagine our reaction when we saw the name 'Hamilton' pressed up against our truck's front window."

Martin says it was a once in a lifetime experience riding around a race track with one of the best racers in the world. Luckily for him, the pace of a firetruck was a little easier to take than an F1 race car.

"The crowd was just sensational. The sound of people clapping, cars and air horns tooting, people were just so proud of the red trucks in front of them."

"I thought we were supposed to be the star struck ones, but there was Lewis Hamilton taking a photo of us and our firetruck with his name on it!"

The Formula 1 star chatted with those on board, and noted how impressed he was at the cleanliness of the firetruck.

"After the lap was completed, marshals were calling for him to get off the truck. But he stuck around and signed a couple of pieces of memorabilia, including brand new CFA turnout gear which we're having framed and put up at the fire station.

Martin then helped Lewis get off the back of the firetruck, and presented him with a Moorooduc brigade t-shirt to say thank you.

And Martin wasn't the only one who got to experience a taste of Formula 1. Representatives from all agencies and services involved with the recent fires were included in the annual Formula 1 Drivers Photograph.

Thousands of members of emergency services had the chance to enjoy the Grand Prix up close, with tickets distributed by the Victorian Government in recognition of their efforts in the recent Victorian Bushfire disaster.

CFA Chief Officer Russell Rees said being paid tribute to on such a grand stage was a huge honour for CFA.

"We are honoured that the Confederation of Australian Motorsport (CAMS) and the Australian Grand Prix Corporation invited CFA, and other agencies, to be involved with on-track activities in the lead-up to the Grand Prix," Russell said. ■



Juniors take FLIGHT

When CFA's Youth Unit put out a call for Juniors to travel to NSW and compete in the 2009 Australian National Fire Cadet Championships, it was swamped with replies. Young members wrote heartfelt letters pleading their cases backed up by letters of recommendation from brigade Captains. Eventually, 20 Juniors were chosen to represent their brigades, regions and CFA, travelling with eight Junior Leaders and Sherri McKerley and Roz Long of the Youth Unit.

None of the young people had met before except on *Facebook*, some had never travelled outside Victoria, and some had never been on a





plane, but all of them recognised that it was a privilege to be chosen.

CFA Deputy Chief Officer Greg Esnouf was at the airport on April 13 to see the group off and give the SMEACS briefing. He declared their mission was to “have fun, have new experiences, make new friends, have a go and lights out at 2300!”

WHY GO?

“The trip was a great promotion of Juniors statewide,” Sherri explains, “because a young person was chosen from every CFA region. Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria helped us select the kids and they really liked the youth development initiative. Each of the kids met the Operations Manager of their region to be presented with their uniform. That’s not a person they’d usually have contact with.

“We also wanted to show that you can do some really cool stuff in the

Juniors. The kids are ambassadors for what we do and we’re currently looking into other ways they can represent us and our values of enthusiasm, involvement and volunteerism.”

“Each Junior had the chance to do local media and quite a few of them were in their local papers after being interviewed. That was quite a bit deal. The news angle the papers seemed most interested in was the fact that this Junior won the ‘Golden Ticket’: of all the young people who applied, one of our locals was chosen. It really profiled the Juniors program statewide and was good for morale, especially for smaller community brigades. It’s a good news story among some of the gloom.”

JOHN MCLEOD

Boronia Brigade

John McLeod was one of the Juniors’ leaders. “This trip was a great way of developing leaders in our own field. It’s important for CFA to keep young people interested and I believe the championships help make good firefighters. I was proud to see the way the young people adapted. I’m sure they’ve come away learning something.”

SYDNEY HIGHLIGHTS

The first day was a tourism extravaganza. Sydney turned on a perfect day for the group’s Sydney Harbour Bridge climb with all Juniors and adults walking up some 1400 steps to reach the 134 metre high summit. That afternoon was spent at Taronga Zoo with an evening visit to the Opera House and Darling Harbour. One of the biggest eye-openers was how much the other patrons at an all-you-can-eat buffet overloaded their plates with seafood!

The following day the NSW Water Police welcomed the group on board their 32-metre beast *Nemesis*, used for ocean rescues, surveillance and pursuit. The group was





suitably impressed with the boat and the sergeant giving the tour was, in turn, mightily impressed with the Juniors, praising the intelligence of their questions, their obvious level of interest and their manners.

“It was like that everywhere we went,” Sherri says. “Everyone kept complimenting the kids, saying how polite, well behaved and friendly they were. We visited the NSW Rural Fire Service and they said the same thing. We were flexible on our rules because the kids were so cooperative, engaging, warm, helpful and enthusiastic. If these are the kids CFA is developing then we’re doing a sensational job.”

“One evening we walked into a fast food place with all the kids in their uniforms and the crowd all gave them a clap. Obviously they recognised the CFA name. The kids were amazed. It really showed them what a high profile CFA has and how respected it is.”

BRYONY HARRINGTON

Bryony Harrington, 15, represented Region 24’s Bouman-Murrungee Brigade.

“I’m doing Minimum Skills with my class at Myrtleford P-12 and we’ve also got about 20 Juniors in our brigade. Mum told me to apply [for the trip]. I couldn’t believe that someone like me from such a small brigade got picked. Meeting up on *Facebook* first really helped; you felt like you knew

who the others were. You just lived in each other’s pockets for a week and you know what girls are like: we’d be up talking ‘til 3am.

“There was a lot of team-building in the comps. Because we hadn’t met before it was a bit hard to train. We just went out there and laughed and laughed and did our best. The leaders were so much fun. They ran around with us.

“Climbing the Harbour Bridge was a big one. I conquered my fears and the time went so fast; it felt like we were only up there for a few minutes. I learnt how to meet people differently. Don’t close yourself down, just listen. Never knock anything back. Give everything a go.

“There were lots of tears when we said goodbye at the airport but they weren’t sad tears. I’ve heard rumours there might be a reunion soon.”

KALE BARKER

For Kale Barker, 15, from Ouyen brigade, there was no single highlight of the trip. “It was just meeting new people and going with everyone. The championships were pretty different but they told us just to have fun and we did. It felt like you were good friends by the time we competed. Hopefully we’ll all meet up with each other at other comps.”

Kale’s parents flew up to watch the events. “There’s nothing I could fault,” Kale’s mum Noela says. “Roz and Sherri had everything

detailed down to the last bit. The kids really took up the challenge and made a team. The leaders fitted in with the kids and the kids fitted in with them. It was all positive.”

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL FIRE CADET CHAMPIONSHIPS 2009

The championships are organised by volunteers with the event taking place in 2009 for only the second time. The event was generously funded by the NSW Rural Fire Service and the NSW Rural Fire Service Association. A national event is tricky to organise because there is no national standard.

Nadine Blyth from Region 7’s Connewarre brigade was another of the Juniors’ leaders. “Learning the events was more of a challenge than I anticipated. They were more complicated compared to the events we run in the rural championships. To their advantage, they closely mimicked what we do on the fireground. We were fortunate to have a NSW brigade take us under their wing.

“Our Juniors performed well. They were always in the correct uniform and always punctual. Our best events were the bucket brigade and the knapsack relay. The team challenge was a lot of fun. The judge was very complimentary on their teamwork and was amazed they hadn’t known each other for years.

“It was wonderful to see about 300 cadets from around Australia proudly representing their states in friendly competition. At the presentation dinner, we cheered our new-found friends and each received a medal for participation.” ■



Branching out for RECOVERY

BY DANIEL CONNELL

There are many roads to recovery; some well worn, others less travelled. Following this year's fires, Diamond Creek brigade member Cliff Overton walked a path many would never have considered on his own healing journey; a road lined with stainless steel leaves.

Cliff has become part of The Tree Project, an initiative of the Australian Blacksmiths Association. The project has seen blacksmiths from around the world forge stainless steel branches, gum nuts, leaves and the trunk of a gumtree. The tree will stand in a Black Saturday memorial garden in Strathewen, a community severely affected by the Kinglake East - Murrindindi Complex fire.

"Artists have a huge role to play in recovery," Cliff says. "This was a very

rewarding experience and really helped me take a big step in my own recovery."

Remarkably, this was the first time Cliff had tried his hand at the art of blacksmithing. After hearing about the project, he visited a blacksmith and received a crash course in the trade. Cliff's leaf will be one of more than 2000 from around the world.

"I'd recommend it to anyone," Cliff says. "Sometimes the best way to move forward is to try something you've never done before. It has certainly helped me."

For more information on the Tree Project and details of how to sponsor a leaf, visit: www.treeproject.abavic.org.au ■



Photos courtesy of The Tree Project



Cliff forging a leaf at the Whittlesea Bushfire Rebuilding Expo

FIRE SEASON 2009

This is a selection of shots from the 2009 fire season that we were unable to publish in the autumn 2009 edition of Brigade. Thanks to the contributors for sending them in.



Photo: George Krommhoek



Photo: Denise Reed



Photo: Graeme Crawford



Photo: Graeme Crawford

1. Callignee, Churchill - Jeerlang fire
2. Longwarry, Bunyip fire
3. Koornalla, Churchill - Jeerlang fire
4. Koornalla, Churchill - Jeerlang fire



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Details of the offers can be found in the Emergency Memberlink Guide which is sent out with all new Memberlink Cards and on the Memberlink website www.emergencymemberlink.com.au Be sure to visit the website regularly to keep up to date.

There are a number of ways you can access your Memberlink Benefits. These include:

- Show your card and save – discounts and benefits available upon presentation of your Memberlink Card at businesses throughout Victoria, and some nationally.
- Online Shopping – goods below RRP delivered state-wide.
- Purchase Cards – Safeway/Caltex and Coles Gift Cards available through your Memberlink team at 5% discount and include free registered post.
- Discount Vouchers – time limited, special offers updated regularly. Members can download these vouchers from the Memberlink website or call the Memberlink Team.

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To purchase your Gift Cards visit www.emergencymemberlink.com.au or call your Memberlink Team on 1800 820 037.

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Mount Buninyong Rural Fire Brigade members accept the Ed Berry Memorial Trophy



Competitors in action in the wet events



(L to R) Chairman Kerry Murphy, Governor David de Kretser, VFBV Chairman Gary Lyttle, Premier John Brumby, Minister Bob Cameron, VFBV State Vice President (Rural) Peter Downes

Records tumble at Swan Hill

BY BOB MACDONALD, VFBV

The State Championships held under rural rules at Swan Hill on the weekend of 4 and 5 April received critical acclaim by competitors and spectators alike.

Held at the Swan Hill Showgrounds, the weather and the well grassed running surface combined to make conditions ideal for the event.

The entries were unexpectedly higher than the previous year with 69 senior teams and 80 junior teams entering. This was helped by Napoleons/Enfield, Trafalgar and Underbool brigades making a welcome return to the senior ranks after a period of absence.

Three new records were set at this year's Championships with Hurstbridge A setting a new standard in the Seniors Wet Hydrant & Tanker event. Napoleons/Enfield broke the old time in the Tanker drawing Water from a Tank. Dunrobin/Nangeela brigade capped off a fine weekend in both seniors and juniors by setting a record in the Tanker drawing Water from a Tank 11-15 years. ■

State Rural Championship Results

Seniors Aggregates

- | | | |
|------------|---|---------------------|
| Division A | 1 | Hurstbridge A |
| | 2 | Napoleons/Enfield A |
| | 3 | Mannerim A |

- | | | |
|------------|---|--------------|
| Division B | 1 | Connewarre B |
| | 2 | Millbrook B |
| | 3 | Trafalgar A |

- | | | |
|------------|---|---------------------|
| Division C | 1 | Dunrobin/Nangeela B |
| | 2 | Eldorado A |
| | 3 | Mt Buninyong B |

Junior Aggregates

- | | | |
|-------------|---|---------------------|
| 11-13 years | 1 | Moyhu A |
| | 2 | Hurstbridge A |
| | 3 | Dunrobin/Nangeela A |

- | | | |
|-------------|----|---------------------|
| 11-15 years | 1 | Mt Buninyong A |
| | 2 | Dunrobin/Nangeela A |
| | =3 | Eldorado A |
| | =3 | Mannerim A |

Champion Junior Brigade: Dunrobin/Nangeela



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| | =3 | Mannerim A |

Champion Junior Brigade: Dunrobin/Nangeela

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Division A	1	Hurstbridge A
	2	Napoleons/Enfield A
	3	Mannerim A

Division B	1	Connewarre B
	2	Millbrook B
	3	Trafalgar A

Division C	1	Dunrobin/Nangeela B
	2	Eldorado A
	3	Mt Buninyong B

Junior Aggregates

11-13 years	1	Moyhu A
	2	Hurstbridge A
	3	Dunrobin/Nangeela A

11-15 years	1	Mt Buninyong A
	2	Dunrobin/Nangeela A
	=3	Eldorado A
	=3	Mannerim A

Champion Junior Brigade: Dunrobin/Nangeela

Photo: Patti Valance



Minister for Police and Emergency Services Bob Cameron studies the Championship schedule

Photos: Les Lockland



Wendouree brigade competing



CFA Chief Officer Russell Rees leads the march

Warrnambool welcomes back champs

BY DANIEL CONNELL

Victorian Premier John Brumby officially opened the State Urban Fire Brigades Championships in Warrnambool in March.

Around 700 firefighters visited Warrnambool. Along with Victorian competitors, representatives from Western Australia and New South Wales comprised the 76 teams taking part.

Warrnambool, hosting the championships for the first time since 1990, was flooded with support. An estimated 2000 people lined the streets to welcome the firefighters for the three-day event.

The LaTrobe Valley firefighters team won the Championship's grand aggregate, 16 points ahead of runner-up Dandenong.

Melton Brigade was presented the Chubb Fire Safety Shield for earning the highest points in the Discipline Contest and the Torchlight Procession.

Maryvale coach Shane Flowers was crowned the competition's champion fireman.

After the final event, the Victoria/Western Australia Challenge – the Champion Fours – took place. Western Australia took home the honours. ■

State Urban Championship Results

2009 Champion Brigade: Maryvale
Coach: Shane Flowers

Team:

Bryan Fromberg
Peter Johnson
Robert Johnson
Daryl Flowers
Colin Flowers
Brad Miller
Aaron Winkler
Joshua King
Nick Cullis
Christopher Johnson
Dallas Flowers
Joe Makowski
Sam Frankland
Domic Keating



Juniors write messages of support to CFA members and bushfire victims



Pyramid Hill Juniors competing in the dry events

State Urban Juniors thrive at Hamilton

BY DANIEL CONNELL

The 2009 Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV) State Urban Junior Championship were conducted in Hamilton in February earlier this year.

Minister for Police and Emergency Services Bob Cameron officially opened the ceremony, the first State Championships held since the rural and urban associations merged to form VFBV in October last year.

The juniors thrived in the competitive environment, which included the Under 14 and Under 17 age groups. It was attended by 59 fire brigades, including some from Western Australia and Tasmania.

Prior to the event Rev. Peter Cook of the Uniting Church conducted a Memorial Service to honour the efforts of Victoria's emergency services in response to the Black Saturday fires. The juniors fully embraced the service, and were given the opportunity to write messages of support to bushfire victims.

The organisational committee received a Silver Waste Wise accreditation for its environmentally friendly planning, which included implementing water recycling, waste management and carbon emissions offsets. ■

State Urban Junior Championship Results

2009 Champion - MAFFRA A
Coach: Robert Clark
Assistant Coach: Peter Hargreaves

Team Members:

UNDER 14 YEARS

Toby Robinson
Lily Bailey
Mark Trewin
Tom Clark

UNDER 17 YEARS

Matt Trewin
Ricky Trewin
Ellen Ribolli
Kyle Hargreaves

Friday on their minds

BY DANIEL CONNELL

Romsey Fire Brigade Captain Robert Smith had accepted that in the aftermath of the 2009 fire season, fundraising for the Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal might be down this year.

He need not have worried.

"It's been very surprising and pleasing that people are still willing to give so generously after having already given so much to various bushfire relief funds. It shows how strong the bond between CFA and the community is, and more importantly in this case, how well regarded the Royal Children's Hospital is," Robert said.

For years, Romsey and Lancefield brigades have combined their Good Friday Appeal collections and delivered them to the Royal Children's Hospital as one. After a former member of the Lancefield brigade joined Romsey, a friendly rivalry began to develop and they started going head-to-head in a battle of the brigades.

Romsey and Lancefield's Good Friday story is just one of the many that merged together at Etihad Stadium in April earlier this year.

Almost 200 volunteers from brigades across Victoria banded together to deliver all the funds raised by CFA in the past year to the Good Friday Appeal Headquarters.

So what secret does Romsey brigade have that could help others come up with new fundraising ideas? Robert says it's quite simple really.

"We pride ourselves on our efforts to get out in the community. Face-to-face contact with the people. We have both brigades travel door-to-door on our trucks in full CFA uniform, and the community just responds to us so well."

For the record, Romsey brigade came out on top, just beating Lancefield by raising more than \$4,000.

A record \$13,862,734 was raised for the 2009 Good Friday Appeal. ■



Narre Warren runs for the kids

By Lieutenant Damien Baker, Narre Warren Fire Brigade

On Sunday 5 April members of Narre Warren brigade (above) joined 30,000 others in the 2009 Run for the Kids.

It was the second time the brigade has participated in this event but the first time it had a group entered in the 5.7km walk.

We placed 25th out of the 57 community teams with firefighter Peter "The Green Machine" Green leading the group of 13 to complete the 14.1kms in 1h:03m:08s.

In the 5.7km walk category, Team Narre Warren CFA placed 40th out of the 52 teams.

Most importantly, the team managed to raise over \$3200 for the Good Friday Appeal with an online sponsorship through Run for the Kids.

The members of both groups looked fantastic in their matching t-shirts and they were proudly transported to the event compliments of Ventura buses.

The brigade would like to throw out the challenge to other CFA groups for the 2010 Run for the Kids. It's a great team-building event that raises funds for the Good Friday Appeal. ■

Photo: Blair Delleijn



**BY HELEN GODDARD,
MANAGER GOVERNMENT
RELATIONS**

Photo: AusPic



Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd presents the turn-out gear

SUPPORT IN THE USA

Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd recently visited the USA. During his visit he met with US firefighters and expressed his thanks to those who helped in the recent fires, noting that President Obama was among the first leaders to call him, expressing sympathy and offering practical assistance.

In particular, Mr Rudd expressed Australia's (and Victoria's) thanks to Eric Bush, Tony Johnson and Bodie Shaw from the National Interagency Fire Centre in Boise, Idaho – as representatives of the 73 Americans who assisted.

“I say a very deep personal thank you mate,” he said.

“I spent a lot of time in these fire affected communities. These are tough people, they are good people. But they themselves, and I know I speak on behalf of them, feel so much by way of gratitude to you our friends in America for what you did,” he added. ■



Photos: Peter Bongiorno

Members from Kinglake and Flowerdale brigades with Prime Minister Somare

International friends

The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea Sir Michael Somare visited Kinglake, Kinglake West and Flowerdale to meet CFA members in April.

Prime Minister Somare's program was only meant to include an hour for the visit. He stayed just on two, just so he could meet with CFA members and hear first-hand experiences of the recent fires.

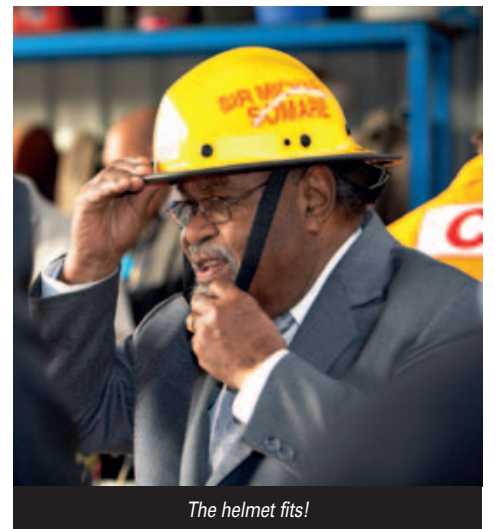
Sir Michael was escorted on a tour of the Pine Ridge Road area by Yarra General Manager Lex de Man.

At Kinglake National Park he met volunteers from Kinglake and Kinglake West brigades and received a briefing from Operations Officer Jason Lawrence. At Flowerdale, Sir Michael and his party spent time with volunteers from Kinglake and Flowerdale.

Sir Michael said he was very sad to see the results of the tragedy and he likened his sadness to that of visiting his own village when it was decimated by tsunamis. He added that he felt sure some good would happen in bringing communities together.

Flowerdale brigade Captain Glenn Woods presented Sir Michael with a CFA helmet and jacket. The helmet had been personalised for the Prime Minister.

CFA Chairman Kerry Murphy presented a



The helmet fits!

plaque on behalf of the Board and CFA to the Prime Minister. In making the presentation the Chairman spoke at length about the spirit of mates helping each other – which he stressed was not just at a local, community level, but also across the seas in the international environment.

Earlier in the day the Prime Minister undertook a tour of the Integrated Emergency Coordination Centre and Acting Deputy Chief Officer Peter Baker was there to brief him with colleagues from the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

Sir Michael's visit to fire affected areas was the first by a Head of State since the fires. ■

IN BRIEF by Daniel Connell

Springvale Fire Brigade celebrates Chinese New Year

Springvale Fire Brigade took part in Chinese New Year celebrations at Springvale earlier this year. With around 80,000 people attending the carnival, it was a great chance to teach the local community about home fire safety.

Springvale brigade staff and volunteers spent much of the day engaging with the local crowd, interacting with children and showing parents the best ways to ensure safety was a priority at home.

A Chinese interpreter was on hand to help CFA Community Education Coordinators Steve Corrigan and Chris Barber communicate with locals. As always Captain Koala was a huge hit with the crowd - even taking home a prize on the clown game.

The day was organised by CFA HQ in conjunction with Westernport Area Community Safety team and Springvale Fire Brigade. ■

UnitingCare Pancake Day

Minister for Police and Emergency Services Bob Cameron helped launch UnitingCare Australia's national fundraiser, Pancake Day, earlier this year.

A team from CFA tossed pancakes in a frying pan while racing against teams from Ambulance Victoria, Victoria Police, Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFB), Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) and the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE).

CFA was represented by a team from HQ consisting of Kay Hawkins, Alison Breed, David Garnock, Joanne Richards, Ingrid Farrugia and Kristy Platten.

Minister Cameron presented the Golden Frying Pan to the winning team, catering company Chefs on the Run.

"Our emergency services already do a fantastic job helping to keep Victorians safe and I applaud them for giving up their valuable time to further assist those in need," Minister Cameron said. ■



Photo: Martin Anderson

(L to R) Region 14 Operations Officer Justin Dally gives Ford President and CEO Martin Burela and CFA Chairman Kerry Murphy a tour of the fire ground near Kilmore

FORD digs deep

BY DANIEL CONNELL

Ford President and CEO Marin Burela was at Kilmore Fire Station in May to officially present CFA with the keys to four brand new Ford Rangers.

Craigieburn and Tallangatta brigades will each receive one of the diesel four-wheel-drive vehicles. The Yarra and Westernport areas were the other beneficiaries of Ford's generosity.

The vehicles are valued at more than \$155,000.

CFA Chairman Kerry Murphy praised Ford for its show of support in the face of adversity, and

welcomed its generosity of behalf of CFA.

"I am proud to be chairman of CFA, and part of my pride comes from the knowledge that the ethos of our organisation is based on mateship – friends helping friends, communities helping communities and private and public sectors helping each other," he said.

"Ford's assistance is very much appreciated."

Craigieburn's brigade car was destroyed on February 7 while members were helping residents and protecting assets in Humevale and Kinglake West.

Ford offered to replace the car and donate three others as well. Several representatives from Ford were at the truck handover, as well as Ford employees who fought as volunteers during the bushfires. ■

Thanks Fonterra!

BY MATT GAGE, CFA PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIGITAL MEDIA

Region 9 Operations Manager Dave Sherry, along with members from West Gippsland Group, accepted a cheque for \$30,000 in May from dairy company Fonterra.

Fonterra Darnum Operations staff members were happy to contribute to CFA after the effects of the recent bushfires came close to home. They spoke of the many people in their operations whom the bushfires had affected including staff and farmers, as well as the smoke damage caused to the operations plant itself.

Fonterra was proud to be associated with CFA and held a thank you lunch after formal presentations. ■



New hope for refugees

BY ADAM SHEARER,
GEELONG CITY FIRE BRIGADE

Geelong City Fire Brigade went camping earlier this year, taking some time away to teach Sudanese and Karen (Burmese) refugees about fire safety.

Joined by Region 7 Community Safety's Alexis Vorvis, members of Geelong City brigade went from swimming to hiking in just three days, all in the aim of introducing safety messages to their fellow campers.

The camp began at Eastern Beach in Geelong, where the 30 participants were given a talk on home fire safety by 'A shift' firefighters from Geelong City. They were then given a tour of a firetruck, which included a refreshing spray from the firehose – something the guys were very appreciative of as temperatures neared 35 degrees.

Despite the heat, everyone had a great time, and learnt a thing or two about home fire safety. Leading Firefighter Adam Shearer joined Alexis in keeping all the kids involved, even helping out the Lifesaving Victoria instructors with aqua education.

The camp then moved to the bush, the group travelling up to the Brisbane Ranges, near Geelong. Although there were some initial language barriers to overcome, the young refugees were able to retain most of the safety messages.

All in all it was a productive and enjoyable three days as the kids began to learn about other cultures and different facets of the Australian way of life. The difference in their confidence levels from the beginning to the end of the camp was extraordinary.

Geelong City brigade is extremely proud to have participated in such a worthy event.

The camp was run by the New Hope Foundation, which provides services to newly arrived refugees in the Wyndham area. Also contributing to the camp were the City of Wyndham Youth Services, Victoria Police, and SpiritWest Services from the Western Bulldogs Football Club. ■



Geelong City brigade with the kids at Eastern Beach, Geelong



Community engagement touch footy style

BY KRIS PERKOVIC
OUTER METRO NORWEST AREA

In an epic clash (not!), a scratch CFA team took to the footy field at Hoppers Crossing recently for a game of Touch AFL against the Mambourin Tigers, a local footy club made up of intellectually disabled players.

In a close contest, the CFA blokes and ladies put up a brave effort but fitness (or lack thereof) and some dubious umpiring (read: umpire was club president) got the home team just over the line.

The exhibition match was organised at the request of the Mambourin Tigers, an affiliate of Mambourin Enterprises, which supports people with disabilities through promoting independent living by offering employment, education and training services.

The game served several purposes: for Mambourin, it was an opportunity for its members to compete and socialise and learn more about CFA. For CFA, it was a chance to engage with the local community—and in the long-term build trust and relationships, with the view to communicating the fire safety message.

On the day, both teams got to know each other very well! Despite it being a touch AFL game, it was a willing contest, with the Tigers throwing themselves at the ball and the CFA team (made up of vols and career fireys from Werribee and Point Cook) giving their all.

So successful was the day, and so much fun was had by all, that another game is being considered for later in the Winter. ■

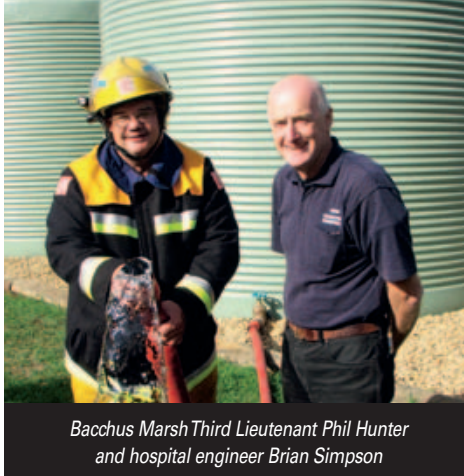
Bacchus Marsh saves water

BY KRIS PERKOVIC
OUTER METRO NORWEST AREA

Bacchus Marsh brigade is at the forefront of an innovative water project that will help save the brigade up to three million litres of water per year.

The brigade has partnered with the Bacchus Marsh and Melton Regional hospital. The joint project involves piping in recycled, sterilised water from the hospital to the nearby station. The water is stored in two massive water tanks with a total holding capacity of 100,000 litres (2 x 50,000 litres).

The project is funded by a grant of \$126,000 by the Smart Water Fund—a joint initiative of the Victorian Government and the water retailers that supports innovative development of water, biosolids recycling and water saving projects within the community.



Bacchus Marsh Third Lieutenant Phil Hunter and hospital engineer Brian Simpson

Bacchus Marsh Third Lieutenant Phil Hunter said the idea for the project came after discussions with Hospital management and engineer Brian Simpson.

“Brian has devised a system that can recycle water from two steam sterilisation units at the Hospital, which in itself is unique. This system can save a minimum of 2.5 million litres of water per year, most of which the hospital wasn’t using.

“The brigade saw an opportunity and approached the hospital with the idea of using a gravity-feed system to pipe the recycled water direct to holding tanks at the station.

“For the first time in six years, the brigade is using water for firefighter training and its tankers will now be replenished from the holding tanks and not the mains water supply, with estimated

further savings of 3 million litres per year.

“We’ve had the water tested and it’s purer than A-class recycled water; in fact, it’s just about drinkable so our firefighters know their health and safety is not being compromised,” he said.

Phil said there was now enough water to supply neighbouring rural brigades at Balliang, Coimadai, Myrning, Parwan and Rowsley—and to supply community reserves and ovals.

“What we’re looking to do is have tanks installed at these brigades and then cart the water across. There is also the option of brigades topping up their tankers by directly accessing the Hospital’s water supply.

“From a community perspective, there is opportunity to top up tanks at Maddingley Park (Football, Cricket), Darley Park (Football and Cricket) and Masons Lane (Little Athletics, Baseball and Cricket).

“In the end, though, the whole purpose of the project is to enhance the operational readiness of brigades by making available additional water supplies.

Phil praised the efforts of the Hospital and the brigade in the project collaboration, saying it could be used as a template for other similar projects across the state.

“As far as we know, there is no other collaboration of this sort in the state. It’s a great example of what can be achieved with a little ingenuity and local know-how,” he said. ■

CFA gets Waste Wise

BY DANIEL CONNELL

CFA Headquarters’ improved waste management practices have been recognised with a Silver Waste Wise Certificate awarded by the Metropolitan Waste Management Group (MWMG).

CFA Green Office Project Manager Darlene Pentland said CFA Headquarters received the award for implementing a range of actions to reduce waste and minimise the environmental impacts of business activities.



Metropolitan Waste Management Group's Zandy Tibballs and CEO Robert Millard present Darlene with the award

Through Green Office initiatives, CFA employs environmentally responsible purchasing practices and has commenced several recycling programs; for example: batteries, paper/cardboard, printer cartridges, co-mingled mobile phones.

“The Green Office program has really helped everyone get on board,” Darlene said.

“This Waste Wise accreditation recognises CFA’s ongoing commitment to a sustainable future and identifies us as an environmental leader.”

CFA Green Teams participated in the Waste Wise Business Efficiency program to receive this accreditation. The program, jointly funded by MWMG and the Department of Industry, Innovation and Regional Development, involved a series of workshops, site visits, case studies and workplace waste assessments.

This is not the first time CFA has received an award recognising effective waste management practices. CFA Championships have been certified Waste Wise events since 2008. Championship committees aim to reduce waste going to landfill by promoting ‘reduce and recycle’ practices to competitors, spectators and suppliers.

Waste Wise is Sustainability Victoria’s leading community and organisational environmental change program. CFA has joined a growing number of schools, local governments, businesses and other organisations that recognise the importance of becoming more environmentally sustainable. ■

East Gippsland trials IFMP

BY SOPHIE JACKSON

East Gippsland Shire has seen its fair share of fire over the last decade. So it makes sense that the region was chosen as a trial municipality for Integrated Fire Management Planning (IFMP).

The local council, fire agencies, water authorities and Victoria Police came together in a working group to identify assets at risk from bushfire and trial the Victorian Fire Risk Register (VFRR).

Together, they were able to identify a wide variety of assets at risk, including human settlement, cultural assets such as historic cattleman's huts and water catchments and infrastructure.

"We've been able to sit at the table with a range of people and identify assets that one organisation alone would be unlikely to," David Johnson, IFMP Network Manager for the Gippsland Region, said.

"For example, representatives from East Gippsland Water were able to tell us where their water pumping stations and treatment plants were, and how critical they are, something the others wouldn't necessarily have known.

The trial brings together information from a range of agencies and it is anticipated the information will be used by the Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee to inform the municipal fire management plan.

The plan will outline a multi-agency approach to fire prevention, preparedness, response and recovery and reflect the community's needs and expectations.

Mark Potter, CFA Manager Community Safety in Gippsland, has been heavily involved with the trial.

"The trial in Gippsland will help to manage fire across boundaries and there's no doubt the community will benefit. It will also help

CFA's own planning and make sure it is in line with other agencies," Mark said.

At its meeting on 7 May, the East Gippsland Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee formally endorsed a Municipal Fire Management Planning sub-committee to begin the work, establishing committee members, terms of reference and strategies for plan development. ■

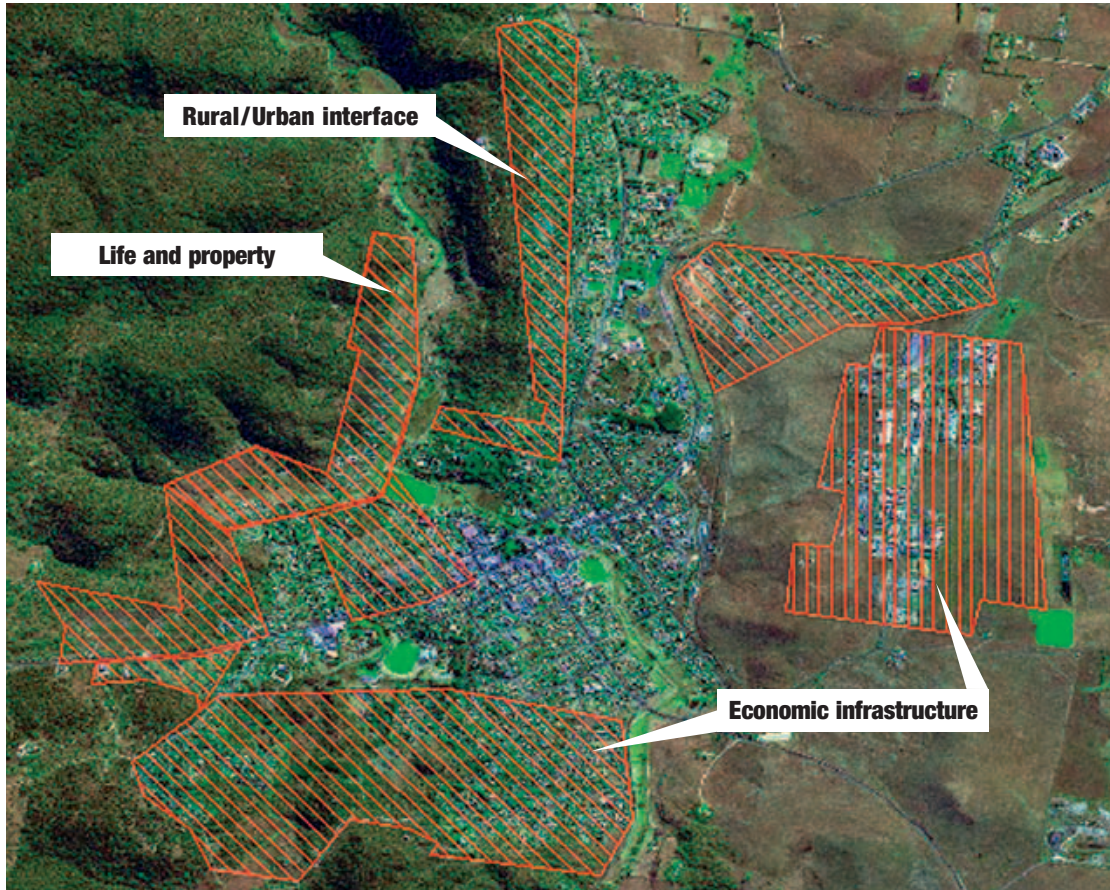
For more information on IFMP visit: www.ifmp.vic.gov.au

What is the VFRR?

The Victorian Fire Risk Register is a tool being developed by CFA and trialled for IFMP to inform the risk assessment approach.

Once the process of identifying assets is complete, the tool assesses the level of risk and provides a range of treatments to reduce them. These treatments include fuel reduction, community education programs and safety audits.

The risks and treatments are then outlined on an easy-to-read set of maps.



The VFRR will produce a series of maps highlighting assets at risk from wildfire and provide a list of treatments for them. This map is an example only.



CFA volunteers leading the way

BY JAY GLEESON, AFAC MANAGER COMMUNICATIONS

CFA volunteers Kristian Grupetta (Mt Evelyn) and Robert Moon (Pyramid Hill) recently completed a National Volunteer Leaders Program at the Australian Institute of Police Management (AIPM) in Manly NSW.

The Volunteer Leaders Program is a five-day intensive program developed by the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC). It focuses on developing leadership capabilities, extending industry knowledge and forming strategic alliances. Both Australian and New Zealand fire and land management agencies and Australian State Emergency Services representatives take part.

Through a range of activities, including team building exercises, role plays, class room exercises and practical examples, participants learn not just how to be more effective leaders

but how to be better team members.

When asked about what he thought about his time at the AIPM Kristian said: "This course was inspiring. It encouraged me to be more aware of the current and possible issues across all areas and how to address them. It has also given me the ability to guide others."

Likewise, Robert commented that the course had been great. "As a volunteer you are involved to serve and be interested in your community. Without leadership and direction nothing happens. With no structure people become bored and disinterested and leave," he said.

Robert and Kristian's positions in the program were sponsored by funds raised by the Dulux and Bunnings paint promotion that runs in Bunnings stores nationally through January and February. ■

Kristian Grupetta joined CFA as a volunteer member of the Mt Evelyn Fire Brigade in 1995, and was elected as 4th Lieutenant in 2007. During the most recent elections, Kristian was elected 1st Lt, and will take over that role in June.

Along with numerous local incidents, Kristian has attended many major fires on strike teams, including Sydney in 2002, and acted as a supervised Strike Team Leader during the 2003 fires in Bright.

During the 2009 fires in the Murrindindi Complex, Kristian was crew leader on many occasions, including fires in and around the Yarra Glen/Steels Creek region on Black Saturday. In 2008, Kristian took leadership of a major 12-week fundraising program named *Ban The Bulb*, in which \$17,000 was raised for the brigade to purchase a new 4x4 Slip-on vehicle.

Robert Moon joined CFA as a volunteer member of the Loddon Vale Rural Fire Brigade in 1979 and also the Pyramid Hill Urban Fire Brigade in 1980. He was promoted to Lieutenant in 1981 and to Captain of the Loddon Vale Rural Fire Brigade in 1990 until 2009. He was also appointed as a Deputy Group Officer in 2002.

Along with many local fires he has attended a number of the major fires either as Crew Leader or Strike Team Leader including Sydney in 1994, the North East fire complex in 2003, Grampians in 2006, Mansfield 2007 and Bendigo, Kilmore and Daylesford in 2009. Robert also has a continuing involvement with CFA competition teams, competing for the last 28 years.

For more information on the Leadership program contact Jay Gleeson, AFAC Manager Communications.
T: 03 9419 2388 E: jay.gleeson@afac.com.au



Hopkins Curdies - communications pioneers

Located northeast of Warrnambool, the Hopkins Curdies Group communications HQ could be found in Helen and Alan Chislett's garden for 20 years. This year, the hut was moved alongside Naringal Station so the Chisletts can enjoy a quiet retirement without interruptions.

Alan remembers asking who was taking over group comms in 1990 and being told, "You are!" "Before Vic Fire," Helen recalls, "every caller, morning, noon and night, went through that hut. The radio would scream from the passage and we'd be out there at 2am. We've loved every minute of it."

While Alan has been in CFA since 1953 serving as both DGO and Captain, Helen signed up in 1990. Both were delighted to be awarded Honorary Life Membership and are proud their son Ian has served as Naringal Captain.

Another long-time group member is Group Officer Kelvin Boyle of Mepunga brigade. As he

joins the conversation, talk turns inevitably to Ash Wednesday. Perhaps the most treasured memory is waking the next morning to find feed dropped off for their surviving cattle. They never found out who it came from.

Hopkins Curdies Group sent about 15 members on strike team duty to February's Churchill fire.

GARVOC BRIGADE

In 2008, Garvoc was down to just 10 active members but a friendly doorknock doubled that number.

"There was a group of young fellas around 19/20 years old," says Captain Ricky McDowell. "We arranged two nights at the hall and had drinks. From there we went to Nullawarre for the practical side and now all 11 of them are through their Minimum Skills. The regional HQ was supportive and we're feeling optimistic." ■

Juniors join up at Jung

It takes keen and committed brigade members to run the Juniors and that's just what they have in Jung, northeast of Horsham, population 104. Grandparents David and Lorraine Arnott and parent Margie Ellis realised there were enough young people to sign up in 2008 with no competing clubs in the township. "The brigade has to be it," Lorraine says.

The local students bus to school in Murtoa and the Juniors has taken that existing friendship group and given them new skills. "We meet once a month," David explains, "and we've been through everything on the truck. They've learnt communications and map reading. We've also come to an agreement to use the facilities in Horsham where there's an active Juniors." (David and Lorraine also volunteer at Horsham



headquarters brigade.)

The brigade currently has 11 Juniors, and four have already moved over to the senior brigade of 39 members. "It's about being able to participate as a group with their friends," David says. "It's preparing them for future life in the brigade when they'll be able to get on a truck and work together."

The highlight so far has been a group camping trip to Mt Arapiles including a fire tower visit. The two days were taken up with hiking and basic climbing with the young people doing all

the cooking and cleaning up. "They might seem quiet," Lorraine says, "but they're very good at talking in the middle of the night!" The next goal is saving for a fun trip to Melbourne with Laser Force and go-karting planned.

Region 17 Operations Manager Dale Russell is enthusiastic about the developments. "Jung has been very pro-active in harnessing youth into the brigade and giving them structured activities and outings to look forward to. Hopefully we can retain many of them as senior brigade members." ■

Smeaton's recruiting bonanza

Last November some Smeaton brigade members tinkering at the shed noticed activity on the nearby basketball court. While they knew they were looking at the Filipinos recruited to work at the town's oat mill, what they actually saw were six fit and healthy young men with time on their hands outside shift-work hours. New recruits!

"We went straight down and asked them to join, then gave them ten minutes to think about it," Secretary Ron Cosgrave says. "They met us down at the creek and we showed them how to draught water. They had a go and got it right first time."

And so Edwin Mendoza, Evar Anglo, Diosdado Rivera, Elmer Acebo, Randy Bonus and Gilbert Abadilla began Minimum Skills.

Perhaps their knack for all things practical can be explained by their professional background as



engineers, mechanics and electronics specialists. The men are now half way through their two-year work visas, and Ron hopes the brigade activities can help fill the hole left by absent families.

"They'll get a lot of experience next season and build up friendships," Captain David Toose says. "It's great to have younger ones coming through to take the workload off the old reliables and back up the members away on strike teams. We'd fully support them if they want to migrate."

Ron agrees. "We're pretty thankful they

said yes. There's a bit of mentoring going on and now we have a good mix of youth and experience. We can get two trucks and a quick fill on the road straight away."

The dynamic brigade in the Creswick Group has approximately 60 members. Nineteen of them gave more than 600 member hours over the last fire season with a focus on the Daylesford fire. David singles out Operations Officer Bernie Fradd from Ballarat as a great support who's made "a big difference." ■

Traralgon South gets the job done

The Traralgon South Fire Brigade was formed as a bush fire brigade in 1926. In 1979-80, the township of Traralgon South moved seven kilometres to make way for Loy Yang power station and mine. The CFA station now fronts a subdivision and is surrounded by farmland, plantations and a 1400-hectare reserve where CFA works closely with DSE. The brigade also trains several times a year with the 15 non-CFA career fire fighters stationed at the power plant.

"We take a lot of pride in our training because it's your life in their hands," said Captain Pieter van der Leest in late 2008. That training was severely tested in the devastating Callignee fires of February 2009 that went around but not through the township of Traralgon South.

The brigade was dispatched to the plantation where the fire started but found it was already out of control and being pushed by powerful winds directly towards the Traralgon South township. The brigade was immediately redeployed, staying in the town until it was recognised to be relatively safe. Two members lost their homes and several others suffered property damage.

Redeployment then took the brigade to Loy Yang power station where the fire was heading. The local area suffered almost a week without electricity, but if the power station was damaged much of the state could have been without power for months to come.



Communities in the area are now busy with the relief effort, hosting barbecues most nights for local and interstate volunteers who are replacing thousands of kilometres of fencing. Several of these volunteers are brigade members.

The Traralgon South brigade was also one of the first responders to September's Hazelwood coalmine fire (see report in *Brigade*, spring 2008). Another source of pride is the two volunteers who have clocked up 43 years of service. ■

CFA Member Survey Results

The CFA member Survey was conducted in 2008 to find out what you think about CFA. The 2008/09 fire season delayed publication of the results, which were due out earlier this year.

The key findings have now been put together and are being presented to key stakeholders in late May and during June to determine what actions would be taken to address the key findings. This edition of *Brigade* was put together before these meetings took place so the key findings and actions will be published in the spring 2009 edition, due out in September. ■

THANK YOU LOCH SPORT

BY BRUCE COX, LOCH SPORT BRIGADE

Loch Sport brigade wishes to thank the Loch Sport community for its generous donations towards the Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund. Loch Sport brigade made an original donation of \$5000, however with the proceeds of two Sunday Garage Sales, and support from Alan and Jill Hall at the Marina Hotel and the hard working Red Cross group who ran the sausage sizzle at the CFA Garage Sale, the final total reached \$6357.35.

Loch Sport brigade was directly involved with fighting the fires at Boolarra, Yinnar, Mirboo and Jeeralang and several crews saw first hand the horrific results these fires have left and were eager to help out in any way possible. ■

New challenges in Fire Equipment Maintenance (FEM)

BY LEITH HILLARD

A number of Fire Equipment Maintenance (FEM) brigades have been affected by the February fires. CFA management has been working closely with volunteers to ensure fire equipment maintenance carries on.

Bill McIntosh, CFA FEM Team Leader, explains. "Our three Community Safety officers (CSO) based in the FEM Client Services centres in Bendigo and Ballarat have responded by helping out some brigades that needed assistance with managing their FEM workload. The support varies from brigade to brigade depending on their circumstances. The CSOs have done this on top of their usual work and shown great flexibility and teamwork. The good news is that CFA has been able to respond quickly and help brigades out."

Allan Monti of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria says the assistance has been appreciated by volunteers. "CFA has ramped up its support in these areas, which is great. For many brigades it's a great way to raise funds where they may not have any other income. They can use the money to support brigade operations.

"You can imagine the workload: under normal circumstances it's manageable, but for brigades involved in recovery it's been impossible to do it all, but the FEM work is important and can't be neglected." ■

Erickson Air-Cranes

This is a very rare sight anywhere in the world; Six Erickson Air-Cranes all in the one place at the one time.

Pictured here lined up at Essendon airport in Melbourne, all six Air-Cranes are being prepped for shipping to the northern hemisphere. Four went to Europe via Greece, one back home to the United States and the other remaining in Melbourne. ■



Photo: Gordon Reid, airport refueller at Essendon Airport



(L to R) Terrianne Whittington riding 'Roundhill Razzle Dazzle', Dean Johnston, Amanda Pendergast, Barbara Oliver, Yvonne Dinnage

RIDING HIGH

CFA equestrian riders performed well at the Police & Emergency Service Games at Peppercorn Equestrian Park - Oaklands Junction in March.

RESULTS

Barbara Oliver- REGION 11 Headquarters

- GOLD - Dressage 1.1
- GOLD - Combined Training - Starters
- GOLD - Show Jumping AM7 - Starters
- GOLD - HickStead - Starters
- SILVER - Rescue Relay - Starter/Novice
- Best Performed Show Jumper in Starters Section

Terrianne Whittington- REGION 11 - Benambra brigade

- GOLD - HickStead - Novice
- GOLD - Show Jumping AM7 - Novice
- SILVER - Combined Training - Novice
- SILVER - Rescue Relay - Novice/Open

Amanda Pendergast- REGION 11 - Benambra brigade

- SILVER - Combined Training - Open
- SILVER - Show Jump AM7 - Open
- SILVER - HickStead - Open
- SILVER - Rescue Relay - Novice/Open

Dean Johnson - REGION 13 - Wattle Glenn brigade

- BRONZE - Rescue Relay - Starters/Novice

Yvonne Dinnage - REGION 14 Yarrambat brigade

- BRONZE - Dressage - Novice 2.3
- BRONZE - Dressage - Novice 2.4
- BRONZE - Dressage - Elementary 3.1

Amber Smeenk - Region 14 - Woodend brigade

- BRONZE - Dressage 1.3

Debbie Ross - Region 15 - Greendale brigade

- GOLD - Show Jumping AM7 - Open
- GOLD - HickStead - Open
- BRONZE - Rescue Relay - Novice/Open
- Best Performed Showjumper in Open Section

Hawaiian iron

BY AMBER FLETCHER

Google the name Mark Bellew and you'll find lots of references to cycling and a few mentions of Ironman competitions. You won't find a reference to Corio Fire Station, but that's where I am headed to talk to Mark about his qualification to compete in the Ironman World Championships in Hawaii later this year.

Driving down the Geelong Road I don't really know what to expect. Would Mark be this big burley bloke like those I had seen on TV?

"Hi, you must be Amber," a young, fit-looking guy says when I arrive. "We've just got back from the shops, come through." This is Mark, I learn, as he leads me out to the barbie where some salmon and squid sizzle away.

"So, are you in training at the moment?" I ask as he flips the seafood.

"I'm actually having a break but I'll start training again this week." Mark goes through his training regime in detail, talking also about wife Lydia "who started with a half marathon and eventually went on to her first Ironman." Fit family.

"Should I tell you about his beer and fish and chips diet?" Fire Officer Barry Thomas asks as we sit down to lunch.

"Racing is intense," Mark says of his rise through the competitive ranks. "When I first started triathlons I thought I was going to die. Then an hour later I thought, 'Wow, I've actually done that!' My first Ironman Competition in 2006 was totally about finishing."

Mark is now preparing for the Hawaiian Ironman, and says "there is no greater challenge."

"The shift work with CFA really helps and the skills I have learnt have definitely rolled over into my career. I recently used project management skills from my training to obtain a Leading Firefighter position."

As we head outside for a photo, our discussion turns to the costs of competing at the highest level. "Some people buy a fishing boat, we save to buy a new bike," Mark says casually as he wheels his impressive two-wheeler towards the gym. "Welcome to my second home," he laughs, pointing to the treadmill.

Looking around the drab, grey room I can't help but admire his dedication. We're a long way from Hawaii, but you get the feeling

Mark's commitment could take him just about anywhere.

Mark will compete in the Ironman World Championship in Hawaii in October 2009. ■



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CFA Volunteer/Staff Number: 123456

First Name: John
Last Name: Smith
Username: johnsmith

Please use the email address registered with CFA Online. Want to make sure? jn.smith@cfa.vic.gov.au

E-mail:
Password:
Verify Password:

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Freely chat to fellow CFA members on a range of general topics. Feel free to start threads here (optional)

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Reference Publications to Online	A place to post threads on CFA-related publications, whether hard-copy or online. Share them with other CFA Connect members and join in the discussion.	2 / 8
IT, Web, Newspapers & Designers	Tech savvy, code savvy, design savvy, web savvy? This is the place for you. Share your ideas, vision and knowledge with other IT and Web personnel across the CFA and elsewhere.	2 / 11
History	Any and all aspects of CFA's history, whether past incidents, historical equipment, advancements, ex-members, etc. can be discussed here.	0 / 0
College / Suggestions	Post your suggestions for main forum categories here. Note:	1 / 20

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Pick a smiley



BLOGS

In the *CFA Connect* 'Blogosphere' you can treat your entries like a journal, talking about life as a CFA member, or chronicling the life and times of your brigade perhaps.

The best part? People can subscribe to your blogs. So build your own fan base of readers, which includes the general public!



ONGOING DEVELOPMENT

CFA Connect is still in its early days and we have designed the site so that it can constantly grow and improve. We want to know what you think of it, how we could make it better and how you're using it to stay in touch.

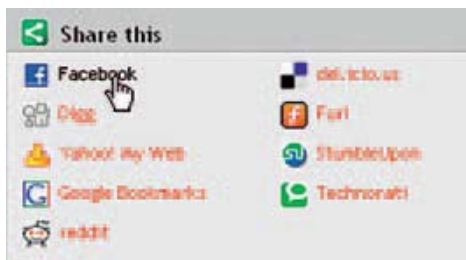
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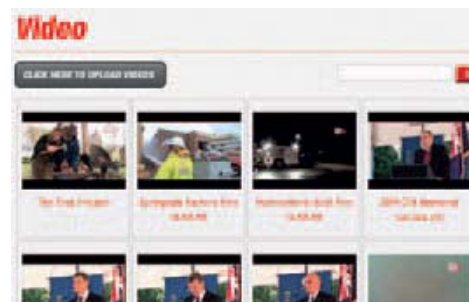
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BRIGADE MAGAZINE ON CFA CONNECT

Brigade magazine is now available online. You can also have your say about what you'd like to see in the magazine. Just visit *CFA Connect* to check it out! ■





CONNECT

News · Multimedia · Chat

After twelve months of intense development and many months of testing, CFA has launched its exciting new 'News, Multimedia, Chat' website for its 60,000 members.

www.cfaconnect.net.au



CFA's news, which was previously distributed across the CFA website, CFA Online and *Fire Flyer*, can now be found in one central location at www.cfaconnect.net.au. *CFA Connect* is a site built for CFA members and is founded on user-generated – your – content. Anyone can sign up and contribute!

After going live on 11 May, the site was immediately embraced by the CFA community. With nearly 1400 member registrations in its first month and 90 news articles published from around the state, *CFA Connect* is already

providing CFA members with a voice they have never had before. The forums are also running hot with discussion on topics affecting the whole gamut of CFA life.

For the first time, CFA members can write about the goings-on in Shepparton and have it read by members in Bairnsdale the very same day. Members in Wodonga can chat in the forums with members in Wonthaggi. Members in Bendigo can upload a photo gallery and have it seen by members in Swan Hill. Through *CFA Connect*, every region can be showcased, every issued can be raised.

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CFA Volunteer/Staff Number: 123456

First Name: John
Last Name: Smith
Username: johnysmith

Please use the email address registered with CFA Online. Want to make sure? (Check my Brigades online email address: jn.smith@cfa.vic.gov.au)

E-mail: [input field]

Password: [input field]
Verify Password: [input field]

I have read and agree with the Terms and Conditions for the CFA Connect

Send Registration

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When you submit a news article, you can attach photos or just start typing. You don't need to be a journalist, so don't be shy! All news is categorised by region, so you can browse stories from your own area or anywhere across the state.

News / Add Content

INCLUDE PHOTOS OR VIDEO FILES

OR UPLOAD FROM OTHER

OR UPLOAD EXISTING PUBLICATION

WRITE ONLY

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Friday, 15 May 2009
Find out how to follow CFA Connect on a range of general topics. Feel free to contact the team (anytime).

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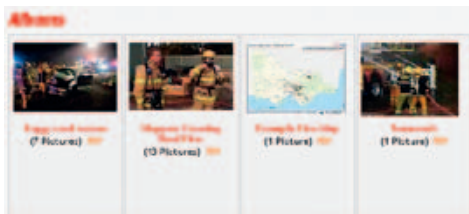


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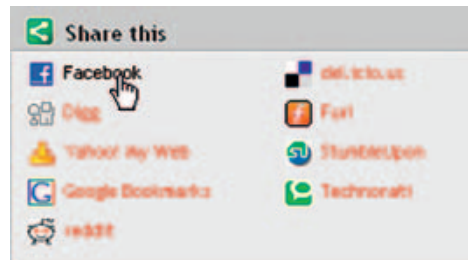
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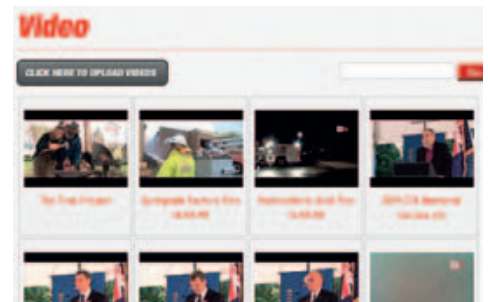
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Through

The Eyes

RED CLIFFS

A PHOTOGRAPHIC DIARY OF A CFA FIRE STATION



Compiled by Keith Pakenham



Apply for Challenge 2010 Today!

Challenge is an annual, 12-day leadership development program open to all CFA members aged 16 and above.

The program aims to identify potential future leaders and present challenges and experiences that will uncover and enhance their leadership abilities. The first three days of the program are conducted at CFA Training College Fiskville, where participants explore their values and goals, and gain a greater understanding of their own motivators and personal interactions. These concepts are then put into practice as participants spend seven days in the bush, led by

Outward Bound Australia, working to break down their own boundaries, overcome fears and test their teamwork and leadership abilities.

While participants are undertaking activities like hiking, caving, rock climbing, abseiling or canoeing, they are also discovering more about themselves, developing self-reliance, and improving their teamwork and leadership skills.

Past participants consistently describe Challenge as a 'life changing experience'. It has become a highly regarded and sought-after development opportunity for which participants are selected on merit,

enthusiasm and leadership potential.

To apply, you need to obtain a copy of the Application Guidelines and relevant application form from your regional training department or from the 'Challenge' page on CFA Online.

Applications must be completed and submitted to your Captain by Friday 31 July.

Challenge 2010 will run from Saturday 9 January to Wednesday 20 January 2010.



If undeliverable
please return to:
Printelligence
11 O'Hara Street
Blackburn
Victoria 3130

If your details are incorrect, please call 9262 8248 or change them at addresschange@cfa.vic.gov.au

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