

The official journal of the NSW SES Volunteers Association

the

Volunteer

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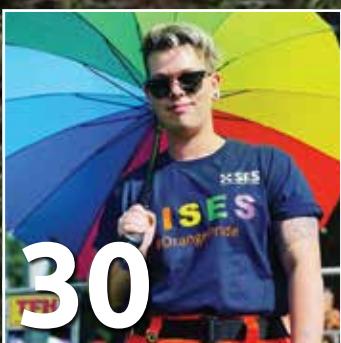
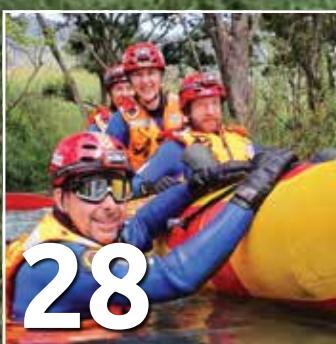
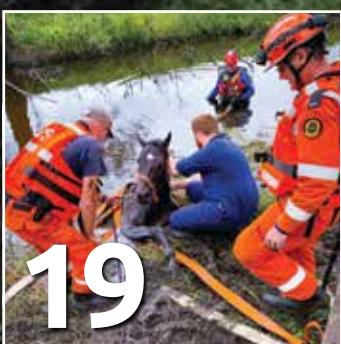
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**THE HON DAVID ELLIOTT MP
MINISTER FOR POLICE AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES**

Since I last wrote to you, NSW has been through one of its wettest summers on record. We have lived through storms and floods on a scale not seen in over a generation, with many communities now facing weeks and months of recovery stretching out before them.

The volunteers of the NSW State Emergency Service (NSW SES) have been on the frontline of these immense efforts, working tirelessly through the season to keep our State safe. It has been an immense and truly inspiring effort, one that has not gone unnoticed by the people of NSW.

In December I joined the Prime Minister and Premier in visiting flood affected areas at Lismore, including touring the operation centre. SES volunteers responded to more than 2,800 requests for assistance from communities in the region. It was encouraging to see members of the community calling on the SES to assist them in preparing for the predicted

flood events. Following on from those storms the NSW Government, in conjunction with the Australian Government announced disaster assistance for the area, so those communities have the support they need to recover.

The floods in Lismore were a sign of what was to come. In the past weeks, multiple regions across the state have been hit by severe storms and 1 in 100-year flood events. We've seen houses swept away by rising floodwaters, thousands of people evacuated and displaced, and a record number of rescues. We are still very much in the response phase with many of you currently operational, doing what you do best to keep communities safe. I have been privileged to have met many of you during these challenging times.

Prior to the recent weather events I was pleased to get out around the state handing over new vehicles. These vehicles have been delivered as part of the record \$200 million budget

for 2020-21 that will ensure you have the resources you need to manage flood and storm emergencies, road accident rescues, bush search and rescue, and other disasters. The Fleet Replacement Program has already delivered 132 brand new vehicles and vessels to NSW SES Units State-wide since the start of this year.

As Minister, nothing is more pleasing to me than seeing new state-of-the-art equipment being delivered and used to keep people out of harms way. Over the past few months, I have had the opportunity to inspect the new VaaN (Vehicle as a Node) prototype. The VaaN, like our CoWs (Cell on Wheels) will provide temporary network coverage during critical incidents and emergencies to areas needing extra network coverage or when existing towers suffer damage.

My thanks go to each and every one of you for choosing to dedicate your time to keeping your community safe. Have a safe and happy Easter!







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Together with our new three-year Strategic Plan, these powerful statements will help focus us on what matters: our people, our community, and our capability.
”



**CARLENE YORK APM
NSW SES COMMISSIONER**

With the year well underway, my team and I have not wasted any time getting things done. The first, which I am very pleased to share, is we have launched our new mission and vision, which have been refreshed as part of our strategic planning process. Our new mission (saving lives and creating safer communities) and vision (a trusted volunteer-based emergency service, working together to deliver excellence in community preparedness and emergency response) were reworked last year after a survey revealed the majority of you didn't like our vision statement and wanted it changed. Your input in this process was vital and the feedback we've received since making the change has been positive. Together with our new three-year Strategic Plan, these powerful statements will help focus us on what matters: our people, our community, and our capability. I'll share more on the Strategic Plan soon.

Moving onto the next bit of good news, the Unit Funds Committee – which was established last year to allow

Units better access to much-needed funds after the closure of their bank accounts - has approved more than \$35,000 worth of equipment for units since November. Among these items were lockers, fridges, a pallet jack, blinds, washing machines and dryers, tables for training rooms, ceremonial flags and even an upgrade to a unit's security system. Fixing this problem was one of my top priorities when I became Commissioner, and I'm so happy that the Committee is making your lives a little easier – as it should have always been. If your Unit needs something and you want to submit an application, please contact your Zone.

Speaking of Zones, our Metro Zone staff finally have a new home! I dropped into their office in Rhodes recently and I am really looking forward to seeing what it will look like when the renovations are finished. I especially enjoyed the fact that all their meeting and training rooms are named after rivers in the Greater Sydney area.

Going from Zones to fixing problems, we had an issue recently with some of the Generation 4 Medium Rescue and Light Storm Vehicles. They mysteriously self-activated their emergency warning lights when while parked. Although this didn't affect the operational capability of the new vehicles, a new software update is being installed that will fix the problem.

On a final note, I was delighted to receive a parcel at State Headquarters recently which contained a Special Commendation Award in the 2020 NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards. This award recognises the outstanding contributions of SES volunteers, particularly for their role in saving and supporting communities across the state last year. It speaks volumes about how much your community values and appreciates all that you do for them. It's not just the community either, I value your feedback and suggestions and am looking forward to a positive future.

Stay Safe

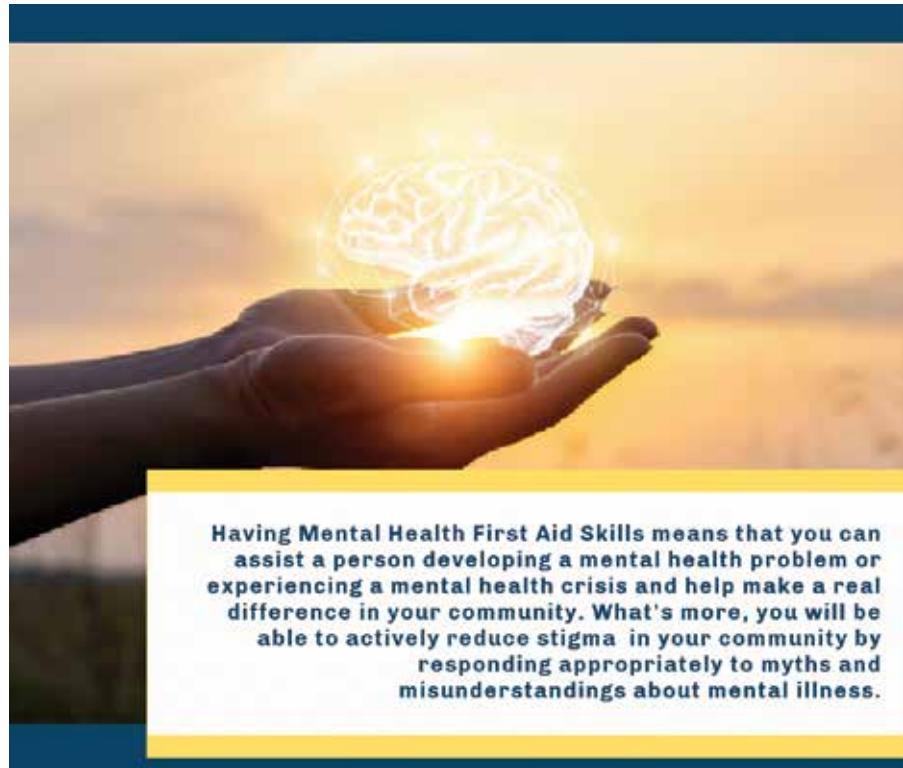
Welcome to all the new members who have joined us in the new year – it has been another busy start to 2021 for our volunteers and also our staff here at the VA. With Covid restrictions easing, we were able to commence face to face training & held our first Mental Health First Aid course at the end of January onsite at our Rockdale office. We now have 5 MHFA qualified instructors and look forward to running more courses for our members this year throughout NSW. Our new website is now live and you can view current & future courses available at www.sesvaevents.com – Registrations for NSW SESVA Members are free & \$220 for Non members.

We understand that the last 12 months have been difficult for many, not only financially but also has taken its toll on some mentally – the VA is here support our Volunteers in need and there are a number of support mechanisms we have to help our members such as access to our Welfare Fund, access to support packages, advocacy services & assistance with mental health services to name a few.. Contact the office if you would like more information – all enquiries & applications are purely confidential.

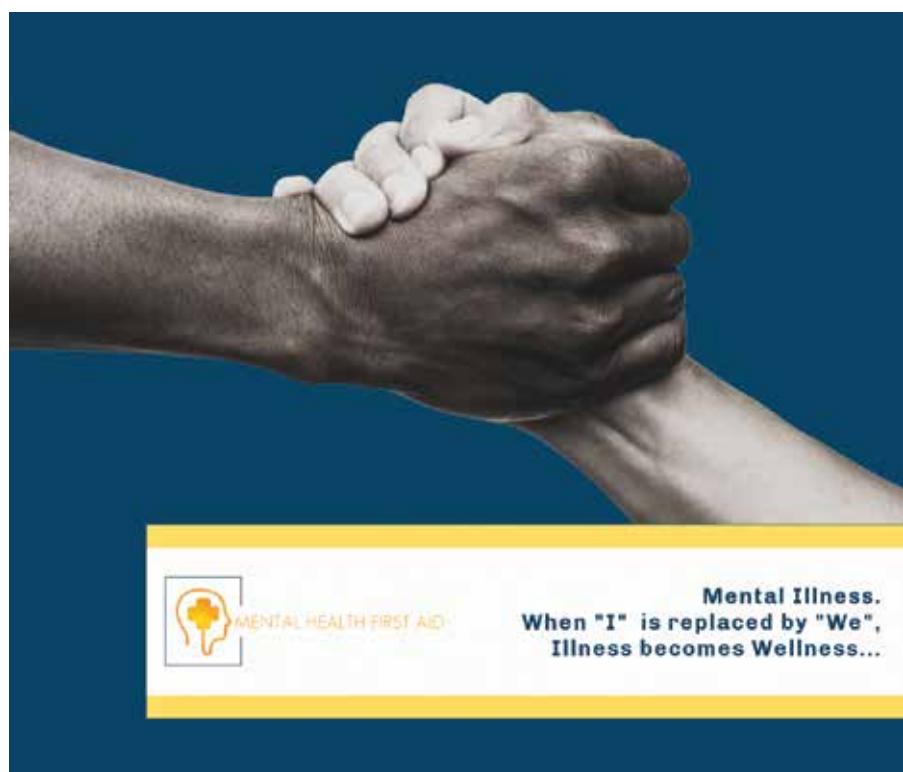
At the end of last year we held an Open day at our new rural property located at Windellama where we welcomed members and their families to come and experience it with us and provide feedback and their ideas for the future of the retreat. We are happy to announce the property is now available to our members to utilise. The property is still in its raw form until plans have been confirmed to commence building of the facilities but if you would like to book it for camping or to visit for the day please email office@nswsesva.org.au for more information and dates available.

We have had great feedback on our new Eat Sleep Respond Apparel and merchandise and have now added new editions to the range. We are looking to expand the designs and create an indigenous inspired design that we can also print .If you are an indigenous volunteer with art / design skills we would like to hear from you!

You can access all our merchandise online on our website www.nswsesva.org.au and also at www.eatsleeprespond.com.au



Having Mental Health First Aid Skills means that you can assist a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis and help make a real difference in your community. What's more, you will be able to actively reduce stigma in your community by responding appropriately to myths and misunderstandings about mental illness.



**Mental Illness.
When "I" is replaced by "We",
Illness becomes Wellness...**

We welcome Anthorr Nomchong from the Sutton Unit as the new VA Representative - NSW SES Awards Committee. Further in this edition you can read about Anthorrs' uniform donation to the National Museum of Australia – the first time in history an SES uniform has been added to the collection which is a great achievement for not only Anthorr, but for all SES volunteers.

Thankyou to all that contributed to this edition of the Magazine – if you would like to submit an article for the June Edition please email content through to editor@nswsesva.org.au by the 17th of May 2021.

Stay safe and look out for one another!

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JUNE EDITION
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NSW Storm & Flood Crisis

22nd March 2021

At the time of print, NSW is experiencing the worst storm and flood events in 50 years. Across large parts of the NSW's coast, towns, suburbs and properties are under water and there is still plenty more rain forecast for the coming days. The Bureau of Meteorology has described the weather lashing NSW as volatile & dangerous and evacuation warnings for large swathes of Sydney and regional areas are now in place.

Since Thursday the 18th of March there have been over 6700 calls for help made to the NSW SES and 617 flood rescues have been conducted. The NSW SES continues to be inundated with requests for assistance during the current crisis and we have a lot of work ahead - it will be a long process post floods, with clean up & repairs for our volunteers to go well into April. We have staff at the VA who have been deployed and are currently

operational assisting with flood rescues and evacuations.

Thankyou to all the SES Volunteers who have been working tirelessly around the clock during this crisis – putting your own lives at risk to save others and for that we are very proud of all of you!

If you have been affected by the storm and flood events and need assistance, please contact the VA on 1300 073 782.



KEY FACTS AS OF 22/3/21

- » Flooding in the Hawkesbury-Nepean River system through to Sydney's west has reached levels not seen since 1961
- » Widespread destruction - Homes and business have been destroyed (some even completely swept away)
- » People have been urged to stay home and 130 schools are closed throughout NSW
- » Evacuation orders have been issued in Western Sydney and the foot of the Blue Mountains, affecting suburbs around Penrith and downstream to North Richmond as the Hawkesbury-Nepean River peaks and a flood evacuation order has been issued for the Kempsey CBD
- » Since the heavy rain began, 450 gigalitres of water a day have been released from the Warragamba Dam — comparable to the contents of Sydney Harbour, which is about 500 gigalitres.
- » Approx 5,500 customers in NSW are without power, mainly in the Mid-North Coast around Port Macquarie, Taree and Kempsey areas.
- » NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian described the Mid-North Coast's flooding as "one-in-100-year event" and warned the next few days would be difficult for NSW















SSKO Q&A Sessions

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2021 calendar

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The Australasian Institute of Emergency Services, established in 1977 by a Constitution and Rules, invites officers and members of the Emergency Services and Affiliated agencies to become members of the Institute and participate in its activities.

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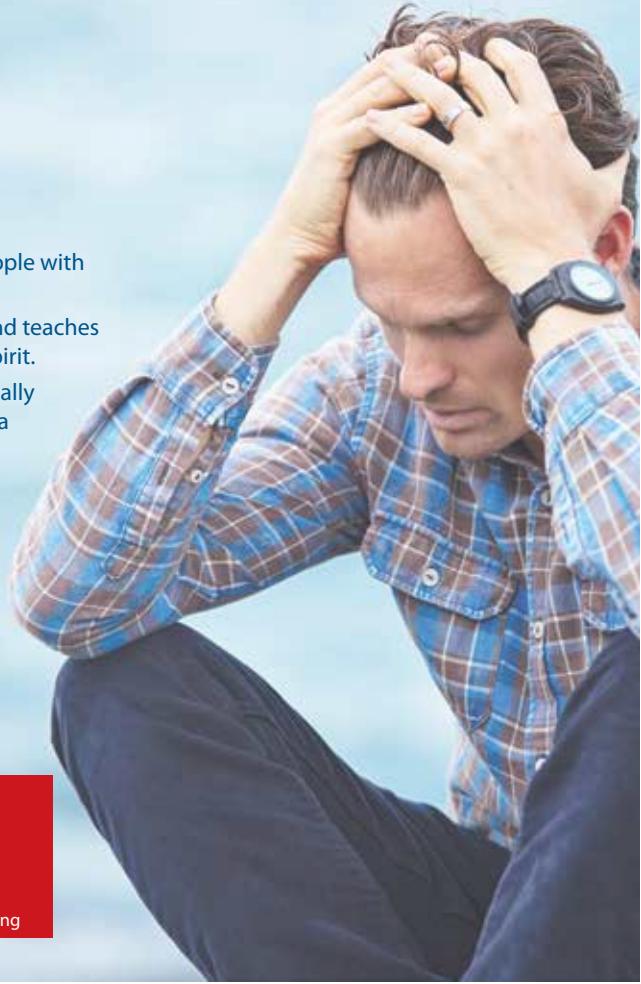
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Authorised by Michelle Rowland MP, Australian Labor Party, Suite 101C, Level 1, 130 Main Street, Blacktown NSW 2148

Port Stephens Animal Rescue

Port Stephens SES were tasked by NSW Police to attend a Large Animal Rescue at Millers Forest.

Our unit responded with 3 x Rescue vehicles and our Large Animal Rescue trailer. The trailer carries specialist equipment including large glides, lifting harnesses, specialist slings, cordage and animal safety equipment.

One of our specialist Swiftwater Rescue Technicians also responded to scene and was required to enter the water to assist in the placement of slings and webbing.

NSW SES & NSW Rural Fire Service crews used chainsaws to remove shrubs and trees to clear access to the site for equipment and vehicles.

Two of our SES Rescue Operators (Phil and Pete) are both experienced horse handlers. They worked with our other Rescue Operators, RFS firefighters and Morpeth Vet (Curtis), during the 3 hour prolonged extrication.

We are very glad to report that the lovely horse "Dippy" was safely rescued, and even shared a cuddle with the crews.

Alysha Springett
Deputy Unit Commander
Port Stephens Unit



Immunisation Program Update

Following a risk assessment by WHS access to the SES, the immunisation program has recommenced in limited locations. For further information please contact Patricia Johnson. Email: pat.johnson@one.ses.nsw.gov.au

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Appreciation Shout out

As a relatively new member of the SES, I often wonder how we have so many dedicated personnel able to show up to an emergency at a moment's notice. We all have jobs, and families, and interests outside our volunteering – so how do we do it?

We do it with the support of the people around us. We have spouses who are quick to pick up the trailing ends of our plans to cook dinner, pick up the children from school, or grab the groceries.

We have kids who excitedly give us a high five as we race out the door, knowing that we will be back soon enough, but that others out there need our help.

We have employers who not only let us run out of the office with a quick wave, vaguely indicating a call out, but who actively support our involvement in such a noble pursuit.

We even have friends who meet us with lunch, only to be left with a plate of half eaten food and the bill!

So today, we would like to thank our better halves, our children, our friends

and our employers, for encouraging us to train, for pushing us out the door on a call out whilst telling us they've got it covered.

At our Griffith and Leeton Units, we would like to personally mention some of the businesses that so willingly support us very day: The NSW Department of Education, The Jojoba Company, Griffith Telephone Services, Australian Unity, NSW Fire and Rescue and NuWave Carwash. Thank you for helping us to help our community.

Erin Sinclair

"I thank our SES Volunteers for their generosity and service to our community"

Edmond Atalla MP

MEMBER FOR MOUNT DRUITT

Phone: (02) 9625 6770 Email: mountdruitt@parliament.nsw.gov.au
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Thank you

for protecting our community through one of our toughest years. I am proud to support our SES volunteers.

4423 1782

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FIONA PHILLIPS MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR GILMORE

Authorised by Fiona Phillips, ALP, 3/59 Junction Street Nowra

Award Recipients

Congratulations to all the award recipients

Your awards are the result of your dedication, hard work and positive contribution to our communities!

Christine Speer

Volunteer of the Year Award – Lake Macquarie Unit

Mrs Christine Speer joined the NSW State Emergency Service in 1981 with her husband Mr Ken Speer ESM where she has dedicated over 40 years with the service as an active volunteer of the Lake Macquarie City unit.

Throughout her service as an active volunteer, Christine has been involved in many campaigns assisting the local and surrounding communities.

During 1994, she assisted with the major bushfires in the Lake Macquarie area, as well as the storm event that impacted Lake Macquarie and the greater Hunter region. In November 2002 Mrs Speer assisted with the Lake Macquarie Bushfires as part of the catering and radio operations & received an award for her efforts from Lake Macquarie City Council.

Christine progressed and took on the role of Operations Officer in October 2006 where she helped

develop and train incoming volunteers for the Lake Macquarie unit. In 2007 her skills were utilised during the June East Coast Low Storm Event where she was responsible for coordinating multiple out of area teams and strike teams committed through interagency efforts. Mrs Speer has also participated in many of the out of area campaigns assisting with the Goodooga Flood Event in 2011 as part of the Operations team and gained experience with the set-up of remote air base of operations, and assisted with communications. In 2013, Mrs Speer was promoted to the role of Deputy Unit Commander of the Lake Macquarie City Unit & received a Unit Citation from the NSW SES for her involvement with the recovery efforts during the April 2015 storm event in Lake Macquarie where she utilised her extensive experience in tasking, operations officer role and incident control over a four week period.



In 2016 Mrs Speer became an endorsed Trainer in Operating Communication Equipment and Beacon (Tasking System) and in August of 2016, she was promoted to the role of Unit Commander of the Lake Macquarie City Unit.

Since then she was involved in a number of major events such as the Lismore Flood Event in March 2017 and from October of 2019, Mrs Speer assisted as one of the NSW SES Liaison Officers during the 2019/20 Fire Campaign based at the East Maitland Fire Control. During the major storm event that impacted Lake Macquarie and Newcastle in November 2020, Mrs Speer was the Incident Controller for Lake Macquarie, whilst overseeing both Cooranbong and Swansea units and assisting the Newcastle unit once these areas were complete.

She has received a number of titles during her service such as the Beacon Master Trainer (and assists in the training of other volunteers throughout the Hunter region in this area) & in 2018, Mrs Speer officially became a dual member the NSW SES Aviation Team as a Radio Operator.

In 2020, Christine acted in the role



of Local Commander for the Lower Hunter Southern Cluster. During this year with the impacts caused by Covid-19, she focused on recruitment and retaining volunteers to ensure the ongoing growth and available resources for the local community. This has resulted in the Lake Macquarie City unit being able to reach its largest recruitment and retention numbers ever recorded.

Over the years of her service the Lake Macquarie unit becomes operational multiple times a year for days at a time. During these periods Mrs Speer acts as the Incident Controller overseeing public information, tasking and operational logistics to best service the local community with the resources available, and work closely with other emergency service agencies and council. Since holding the role of Unit Commander for the Lake Macquarie Unit she has focused on retention of unit members, updating vital skill gaps for the NSW SES to best service the local community and out of area requirements, has encouraged and ensured a high commitment and standard in training, fostered a culture of change and growth, empowered future leaders of the NSW SES, grown the unit with new members and overseeing the revitalization of the flood sector plans.

Ms Speer was recognised by the Lake Macquarie City Council as the 2021 Volunteer of the Year for her tireless efforts assisting the community during emergency event in the Lake Macquarie area and focus efforts on recruitment, training and ongoing support of members to ensure support for the community post 2019/20 Bushfires and COVID-19.

Mrs Speer has made a significant contribution to the NSW State Emergency Service and the local community for 40 years. She has been extremely active in the promotion of community awareness of storm and flooding, and has been an exceptional volunteer during this time. Her family have also been active members with her late husband being an active member and staff for over 30 years and her daughter being a member for 16 years, showing their commitment and passion for the NSW State Emergency Service.

Kevin Muffet

Citizen of the Year – Goulburn Mulwaree LGA

Amongst the various honours and recognitions that were awarded on Australia Day this year, the Goulburn Australia Day Committee were pleased to name Deputy Unit Commander, Kevin Muffet as "Citizen of the Year".

A strong contingent of members from both Windellama and Goulburn Units were in attendance to support him. The Award was presented in the presence of local Mayor Bob Kirk, Ambassador Glenn Turner, The Hon Rod Roberts MLC and The Hon Angus Taylor MP.

A crowd of perhaps 400-500 people heard about the work of SES and Kevin's remarkable achievements. As his name was announced, there was an explosion of applause, shouts and whistles from the crowd. It was certainly a popular choice, for a truly respected and very special SES Volunteer. His partner Margaret, even cried a couple of tears of joy.

Kevin, who was born in 1932 (yes – he is coming up for his 89th birthday!) is a highly active and effective member of the Windellama Unit. He is Team Leader of the Units Community First Responder (CFR) team. He quite literally still gets out



to attend motor vehicle accidents at 2am or 3am, or any other incident, from heart attacks and snake bites, through to anaphylaxis or tractor accidents. He can also be seen leading a chainsaw team and dragging trees of roads or roofs, or helping set up a height safety kit, in the aftermath of a storm. Next weekend he's given up a couple of days to man the Community Engagement stall at a local event!

With seemingly boundless energy and a truly inspiring commitment to his community, we can only wish Kevin many more years of active service.

Australia Day Award recipients

Name	Unit	Award
Justin Garlick	Young	Hilltops Council Young Citizen of the Year
Stuart Holm	Coraki	Richmond Valley Volunteer of the Year
Peter Mair	Byron Tweed Cluster	Byron Shire Volunteer of the Year
Maria Matthes	Broadwater	Ballina Shire Environmental Award
Trundle Unit Members	Trundle	Parkes Shire Council Australia Day Certificate of Appreciation
Wendy Mitchell	Hay	Hay Council Australia Day Special Achievement Award
David Crooks	Gundagai	Snowy Valley Council Citizen of the Year Achievement Award
Trevor Murphy	Broken Hill	Broken Hill City Council Australia Day Citizenship Award
Glenn Hinton	Rylstone	Emergency Services Medal



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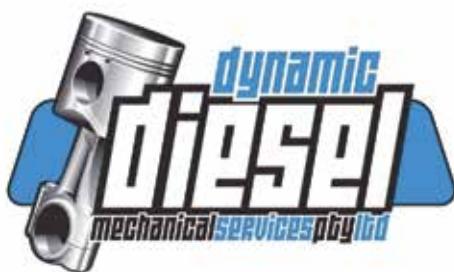


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ROY BUTLER MP
MEMBER FOR BARWON

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Authorised by Roy Butler MP 50 Maitland Street Narrabri NSW 2380. Paid for using Parliamentary Entitlements March 2021

Linda Burney MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR BARTON

*"In any given season,
we can always be assured
that our NSW SES volunteers
are there to keep us safe.
Thank You."*



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Bert Plenkovich OAM

Broadwater Unit

In 1955 Bert joined the then Civil Defence and State Emergency Services Organisation as a 19 year old and has been with the Broadwater since its inception. During his extensive service, Bert has been involved in many major events such as working with the police and army to respond to the great flood of 1954 on the Richmond River, taking food packages to people that were isolated in the area.

It wasn't until 1989 with the introduction of the SES Act that the core roles of the SES were established and Bert became the Rescue officer where he trained members from Broadwater, Evans Head, Woodburn and Coraki.

Boat crews would often go out and feed stranded stock, saving the lives of many. They rescued people from dangerous situations & over the years Bert and his team have taken part in many storm events and floods both locally and elsewhere in the region.

When Bert became the Unit Controller in 1971, he stored the

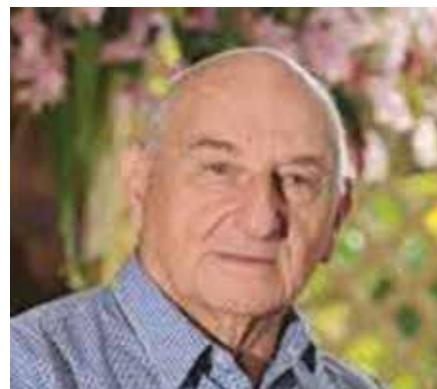
equipment that they did have at his farm on the northern bank of the Richmond River. Training was at the local community hall and in the shed at the farm. Eventually the council provided a tin shed next to Monti's Creek to house a single flood boat. Later the council supplied a vehicle with the assistance of a grant from NSW SES.

Like most SES units Broadwater operated under severe accommodation and equipment constraints for many years, but eventually a proper unit headquarters was constructed in Broadwater in 1995.

It was very hard to maintain the interest and enthusiasm of the members before they had a LHQ. Bert lobbied for this for a long time.

In 2010 Bert passed the Unit Controller role over to Kevin Boyd and continues to be a member.

Bert Plenkovich has received many awards for his services to the community.



- » OAM Queens Birthday honours 2013
- » Life Membership of the NSW SES
- » National Medal 15 years and clasp each additional 10 years
- » SES Service Medal 10 years and clasp each additional 10 years
- » NSW Community Service Award 2004
- » Carried the Olympic torch
- » An original pioneer of the service and has been a member since the birth of the now NSW SES in 1955. A total of 66 years.
- » Queens Birthday Honour – For service to the communities of Broadwater and the Lower Richmond River region, and to the sugar cane industry.

Matthew Chifley ESM

Queanbeyan Unit

Matthew Chifley, "Pockets" as he is known to many, is a member of the Queanbeyan Unit & was honoured with the Emergency Services Medal (ESM) in the 2021 Australia Day Honours list.

Matthew joined the NSW SES in 1988 and has since worked tirelessly to help protect the community during major events and emergencies such as floods, storms, fires, road crashes. He has held a number of positions – both volunteer and staff positions within the SES (Region Learning & Development Officer, Alpine Coordinator & Zone Training Advisor) & is a valued member of specialist NSW SES rescue teams such as road crash rescue and vertical rescue.

"There is unlikely to be a significant emergency event in the last 30 years

that 'Pockets' hasn't responded to," said NSW SES commissioner Carlene York. "Notably, the 1989 Newcastle Earthquake and the 1997 Thredbo Landslide. Two tragic events in our States history where he demonstrated determination, leadership, kindness and courage."

In the aftermath of the Newcastle earthquake Matthew helped save the lives of people trapped under collapsed street fronts, and in the two weeks following the Thredbo landslide he took on high-risk activities to divert water and helped ensure that the scene was preserved before the coroner's inquest. During the devastating 2019 – 2020 Bushfire crisis, Mathew spent countless hours supporting the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Mathew is a dedicated and committed volunteer and is always the



first to put his hand up to assist in an emergency and is seen as a mentor to his fellow Volunteers.

Police and emergency services minister David Elliott congratulated Matthew on his award.

"Over the past year we have seen exceptional heroism from our Police and Emergency Services who were on the frontline during the COVID-19 pandemic and the catastrophic bush fires," Mr Elliott said. "Matthew exemplifies the resilience and mateship that is integral to our community."



NSW SES Uniform Donation to the National Museum of Australia

On the 9th of December 2020, the importance of SES volunteers was recognised, with the National Museum of Australia accepting one of our uniforms into their collection for the first time. The SES uniform, gloves and helmet donated to the Museum were from Anthorr Nomchong, SES Unit Commander at Sutton who was in attendance for the ceremony and hand over.

The uniform was worn by Anthorr over the disastrous 2019-20 bushfire season. The helmet has his nickname, "Sparky", scrawled on it - the nickname started back when he was electrocuted while volunteering with the SES during Cyclone Yasi in northern Queensland in 2011.

Anthorr was very honoured to see his uniform go into the collection. He said it meant the museum recognised emergency services worked "hand-in-hand" in disasters.

"This is how Australia works, we help out our mates all the time," he said. "Whether you're wearing yellow or orange or blue, it doesn't really matter because when the need comes, there is someone there who can put their hand out and do something."

The uniform not only represents Anthorr's individual efforts but it also represents the 11,000 volunteers in the NSW SES and the 93,000 hours that they all contributed to the bushfire crisis. It's a uniform that represents volunteering across Australia.

Mr Nomchong has been a member of the SES for 12 years and is an inspector with the Australian Border Force when not volunteering. During the last bushfire season he volunteered for 50 days where he was seconded to three bushfire emergencies with the SES providing logistical and communications support - Glen Innes in northern NSW, Braidwood and Cooma

"It is a privilege to have donated

my NSW SES uniform to the National Museum of Australia. Being an NSW SES volunteer means helping people during the worst times of their lives, and the bushfires of last Summer definitely reflected that. This is a moment in time which needs to be recorded in Australian history," said Mr Nomchong.

"I'm a proud Australian and protecting the community is part of my ancestry, on one side of my family was a marine from the first fleet and on the other a Chinese merchant from the gold fields around Braidwood. I have had relatives that fought in both world wars and I like to think that in the finest traditions of the ANZACs as a NSW SES volunteer, I've been there for my mates in their time of need."

NSW SES Commissioner Carlene York expressed the importance of the NSW SES uniform being acquired by the National Museum of Australia. "Anthorr's donation of



Photos credit: National Museum of Australia



his orange uniform is a fine example of volunteerism. Giving and helping in times of need epitomises the volunteering spirit. "This is an exciting day for the NSW SES as Anthor's contribution is the first item to be acquired by the National Museum of Australia from any SES from across the country," said Commissioner York.

Museum curator Craig Middleton

said the acquisition of the SES uniform was a chance to recognise the men and women in orange.

"Last years bushfires have forever changed the way we think of the land in which we live, and we are so grateful for the role our NSW SES volunteers played and continue to play, in supporting all Australians in times of crisis," he said.

"We are so pleased to take the NSW SES uniform into the collection as a way of honouring the volunteers who gave so generously last summer and who will continue to be there for us in times of need in the future."

The uniform acquisition also coincided with the launch of a new museum website, Momentous, which invites Australians to share their stories and experiences of the bushfires and the coronavirus pandemic, to create an online record of a unique part of history.

"It's an exhibition for members of the public to send us their content," he said.

"We're asking people to reflect through video, image, sound and text, and we're creating this record of history in this moment in time and trying to capture that complexity.

"We want people to reflect on their own histories and own experiences rather than having someone else say what happened."



Mother Nature provides Swift-Water Training opportunity

It is essential that we maintain all our skills within the NSW SES and swift-water currency is one of the hardest to maintain as it often involves a trip to Sydney when PD workshops are scheduled. However, we also believe it is important to take advantage of opportunities that Mother Nature sends our way.

Most people would want to rest and recuperate after an operationally busy storm period over Christmas and New Year, however in-water flood rescue operators are a breed of their own! So instead of relaxing like most people, Port Macquarie's Swiftwater techs decided to scout out the local rivers and flooded causeways to see if they could find a new place to train. The prolonged heavy rainfall in the New Year meant the Hastings' catchment was very wet and the rivers upstream were flowing well and one of their members found a beautiful little training spot at Pappinbarra Junction.

An invitation to the cluster's in-water technicians was sent out, a training action plan and risk assessment was completed and that weekend they grabbed their swift-water gear, loaded up the Arc Angel and headed upriver to the perfect little spot where there was enough current to practice their in-water skills in a natural setting with a good level of flowing water.

The members established upstream spotters and deployed the inflatable hose as a great downstream safety system, then they jumped in the water and had some fun! They practiced the use of throw-ropes, ran through 'live bait' scenarios, practiced their defensive swimming skills, set up and used tensioned diagonals to cross the river, and deployed a floating mannequin downstream over some rapids. The dummy ended up getting stuck and made for a very interesting and realistic rescue scenario involving

some excellent problem solving. Members had to set-up another system and used the Arc Angel to extricate the mannequin – they couldn't have planned it any better and the scenario reminded everyone how powerful and unpredictable the water can be.

By taking advantage of the conditions mother nature provided, this swiftwater professional development day resulted in the unit's Flood Rescue Techs familiarizing themselves with natural river conditions, building comradery and mateship, maintaining their currency and building their capability. A week later and the rivers were back to normal and the causeways were no longer flooded and the unit's swiftwater techs were very pleased they had taken the opportunity to hone their skills and enjoy training in a natural setting.

Kathryn Blake
Port Macquarie Unit



#OrangePride RISES @ Mardi Gras 2021

Resilient Inclusive State Emergency Service (RISES)

What a way to celebrate! The NSW SES LGBTIQ+ Allies Network once again orchestrated the NSW SES entry into the 43rd Annual Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade at the Sydney Cricket ground and what a way to do it!







Worldwide, the impacts of COVID-19 on significant community cultural events has been huge. This year's Mardi Gras Festival and Parade was no exception, with many events on the festival schedule cancelled. The parade was internationally, the first major Gay and Lesbian cultural event to take place in over 12 months. We were incredibly lucky to have last year's parade just before the COVID restrictions took place in Australia and we were again incredibly fortunate to be able to showcase this event internationally on March 6th, 2021. The eyes of the world were on Sydney and how this mammoth task was managed by Mardi Gras. The theme was RISE and the parade certainly did this.

It was a different atmosphere

entirely, with restrictions in place for the marshalling area and entrants for the parade. We were penned into groups of separate staging areas of about 500 people and monitored for social distancing and wearing of facemasks. It is hard to dance about and gather breath while wearing a facemask! There was no sight-seeing amongst the other entries and there were no floats to admire, but the excitement and expectation for the parade was enough to make this time feel shorter. The line-up for the amenities was certainly shorter but the time it took to get food delivered was exceptionally long.

The marshalling was horrendous but understandable given the precautions. The parade however, was spectacular and the environment and excitement build from when we entered the tunnel

to go onto the Sydney Cricket Ground to feeling that wave of colour, sound and movement when we emerged onto the field, was palpable, tangible and intense - it was moving and joyous and accepting and many other feelings, thoughts and emotions we cannot put into words. Many in the crowd voiced their appreciation for the NSW SES and the cheers and whistles were deafening. It is a crazy experience but one we recommend everyone has. It will stay with you for a lifetime.

There is a preference for the grittiness and grassroots feel of the Oxford Street parade and the float statements, but just this once, it was phenomenal to feel like a performance instead of a parade. Let's hope, we can celebrate next year how Mardi Gras began many years ago, on the street,



with people, where we can actually embrace and engage everyone freely.

It was a mammoth task to ensure the NSW SES entry happened in these times. Without the participation of many people, across many areas, our entry would not be possible. To all the people behind the scenes, from logistics, to choreography, design to administration, every piece goes towards ensuring we look as FABULOUS as possible on the night and you all deserve recognition for this role. Thank you for your drive, commitment and spectacular talents.

To everyone in the parade, how good did we look! Thank you for your brave diversity. It is always one of the most amazing moments of Mardi Gras looking back at the NSW SES entry to see such a range of people in our service, representing the agency, coming

together at a significant event that shouts to the world, we are a Resilient, Inclusive, State Emergency Service (RISES).

Special thanks to Deputy Commissioner Daniel Austin, who represented Commissioner Carlene York and the Leadership of the NSW SES. This was Daniel's second time in the Mardi Gras Parade. It is vital to have visible and genuine support for inclusion of diversity in the NSW SES. I know the current leadership believe and actively seek this. It makes us stronger and reflects the diversity of the communities we serve.

What a privilege it is for us to lead this Network.

Dave Webber and Maggie Henderson
Co-Leads, NSW SES LGBTIQ+ Allies Network

The NSW SES LGBTIQ+ Allies Network is an advocacy, support and social platform for all members of the NSW SES, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Allies and all other gender and orientation identities.

GET IN CONTACT, GET INVOLVED, GET INCLUDED:

- » LGBTIQAllies@member.ses.nsw.gov.au
- » Search for the NSW SES LGBTIQ and Allies Network on Facebook



Traffic Safety practical

Cluster training at its best!

One weekend of training resulting in 125 qualifications being issued! - With the involvement of 6 units across our cluster - Now that is what I call collaboration and cluster training at its best!

The aim of the Generic Skills weekend was to enable smaller units from across our cluster to get together and enable them to have their new and existing members complete all the generic skills courses in one easy but comprehensive weekend. Over the 2 days 27-8 February the Port Macquarie Unit hosted members from Wauchope, Camden Haven, Gladstone, Nambucca Heads, Taree and Port Macquarie. We ran members through Fundamentals, Operate

Communication Equipment, Flood Rescue Awareness, Induction and Job Ready practical sessions and Traffic Safety.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions we divided the participants into smaller groups and ran simultaneous training in various areas within the unit, utilising all usable space including our operations room, the vehicle bay shed, and the EOC training room. This however meant running some courses multiple times, so my thanks goes out to all the trainers and assessors who ran their same course up to 4 times over the course of the weekend to ensure everyone was able to complete all their chosen courses. We had helpers from across the cluster and we also processed 9 x separate trainer/

assessor endorsements in the above qualifications.

Overall, the Generic Skills weekend was a great success with an overwhelming good response from all the attendees and participants, trainers, assessors and helpers.

Hopefully with the success of the generic skills weekend we can look forward to more coordinated cluster wide training in the coming months and rebuilding capabilities across the zone. We have already identified more combined cluster training opportunities for Flood boat, Landsearch, LARO and VR PD development days.

Kathryn Blake
Port Macquarie Unit



Traffic Safety Practice



Fundamentals classroom activity





Hurstville Unit Community Involvement

The week starting 22nd of February saw the beginning of the "Everyday Helpers" series on the ABC TV kids show 'Play School'.

Each day was devoted to an emergency service, one of which was the NSW SES, which aired on Thursday 25 February. The series aimed to share safety messages and help kids to feel safe and secure during an emergency.

Mara Greewood from the Waverley Woolahra SES Unit appeared on that episode and talked about the SES uniforms and some of the equipment we use.

On the back of that episode, four members – Nigel Amyes, Maro

Abdelmesih, Ben Mann and Karina Short – from the Hurstville SES Unit were asked to attend Jenny's Kindergarten Oatley. They brought with them a Storm Vehicle (HVL 31) to show the children some of the equipment found in our vehicles, as well as the uniforms we wear and why it's important to stay calm in an emergency.

The children enjoyed trying on helmets, gloves, safety glasses, life jackets and especially enjoyed being showed the Storm Vehicle with all its equipment. Of course, no visit is complete without flashing the red and blue lights along with a blast of

the siren, both of which were met with screams of excitement.

Parents were also given information on storm readiness and had the chance to purchase a Paddy Doll to show their support.

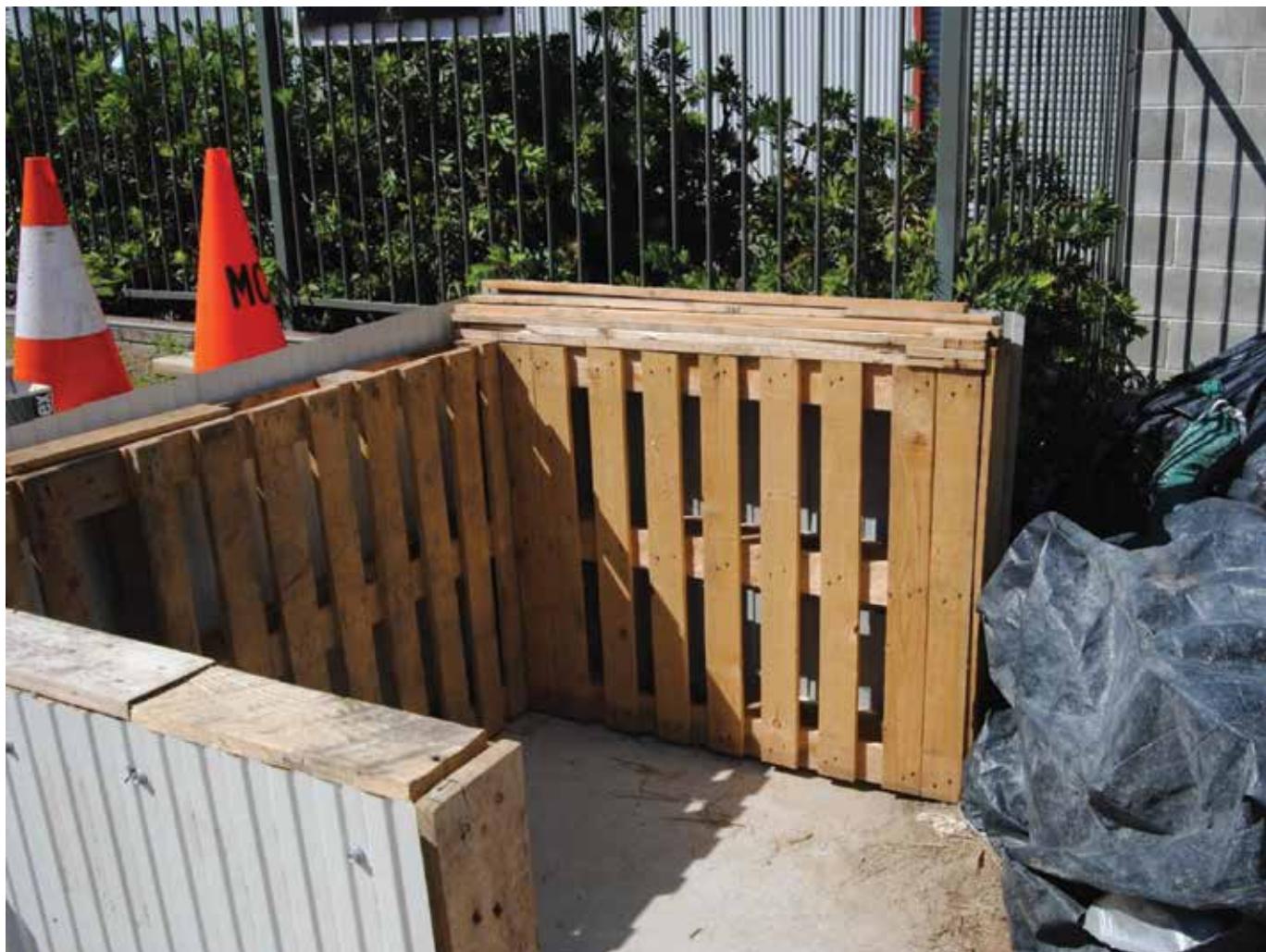
According to educators from the kindergarten, the children didn't stop talking about the "nee-nah" all day!

Hurstville SES Unit would like to thank Jenny's Kindergarten Oatley for the opportunity to share with the children and parents the things we do within and for the community.

Nigel Amyes

Volunteer, Hurstville Unit





Building a frame out of wooden pallets and roofing sheets

Marrickville Unit

Building a Sand Shed

We all work with them at some point in our SES career.

They protect homes, help us divert water, and a whole lot more. But when they're left outside for too long with no one putting them to good use, sandbags become dirty, mouldy and, eventually, unusable.

To make our sandbags last longer, a small but merry band of members of the Marrickville Unit decided to build these guys their very own home.

"Project Sand Shed" kicked off in October 2020.

It started with a (socially distanced) planning/brain-storming session. We talked through many different ideas around design, building materials, how to keep the bags nice and dry and, of course, where to build the shed. The wish list included things like

sliding doors and removable roofs but eventually (after lots of sketching on the white board) we settled on a design that was easy to assemble and most importantly, functional. We chose to build the sand shed near the garage doors so that it was both out of the way and easily accessible when we go operational.

We decided to use materials that were easily available at the Unit or things we could find for free on the streets. Once we had a rough plan, we were able to get free wooden pallets from a local warehouse and bargain-basement second-hand tin roofing from a nearby demo yard, supplemented by some street bounty trawling.

From there, we – the 'sand shedders' – got to work, meeting

at least once a week to keep up the momentum.

The first task was to clear the old sandbags and a soggy pile of sand away. And then construction started. We built the frame out of wooden pallets, installed battens to support the roof, cut sections of the tin roofing to size and screwed them to the sides, back and roof. Any holes were patched up using silicone. We also split lengths of old garden hose and used them to cover the cut edges of the tin sheets.

Some of our original plans changed as we put the shed together. The biggest change was to not build sliding doors (way too hard). Instead, we got an old canvas blind from The Bower (a recycling place in Marrickville) for next to nothing and crafted it into a flap



Testing the pitch of the roof to ensure that rain would drain into the garden next to the sand shed



We lined the edges using a garden hose and built a door out of canvas that can be folded up



We finished the project with some paint and moved the sand bags into the shed to keep them dry

We are pretty excited that the shed has now been completed. It's stocked with dry sand and ready-to-go sandbags that we've put on roll-in/roll-out bases for easy access.

For the front of the shed. This way, we could easily fold the door up to access the sandbags and quickly secure it back in place thanks to some well-placed hooks and elastic loops.

And last but not least, at the end of February, we beautified it with some paint we found.

We are pretty excited that the shed has now been completed. It's

stocked with dry sand and ready-to-go sandbags that we've put on roll-in/roll-out bases for easy access.

Working on the sand shed project was a great way for us to continue practicing some of our SES skills such as problem-solving, using hand tools and teamwork. It also tested us mentally. Many times we had to stop and come up with creative solutions to challenges that arose. We also really enjoyed being able to up-cycle materials that we found lying around into something useful for the Unit and the local community.

Well done to the sand shed team, great work!

Ben Tomkins

Edited by Hasmukh Chand and Julie Powell

NSW SES – The Strategic Refresh

Our New Vision and Mission

On 19th January 2021 we launched our new Vision and Mission. We developed this by listening to Members' feedback on what matters most to you (via surveys and working groups). We then tested and refined the Mission and Vision with members through working groups and workshops. Thank you to everyone who took the time to provide input into this process.

Our new mission and vision represents the organisation that we want to be, what we are to the community and what is important to us.

Our mission

Savings lives and creating safer communities

SAVING LIVES

There is nothing more important than the lives around us and saving those who require our assistance.

CREATING SAFER

Supporting communities in preparation for and during floods, storms and tsunamis will increase their safety and reduce the negative impact of events, both mentally and physically.

COMMUNITIES

The community is at the heart of everything we do. We want to work with communities so they can recognise their risks and build resilience.

Our vision

A trusted volunteer-based emergency service, working together to deliver excellence in community preparedness and emergency response

TRUSTED

We want to build upon the strong brand we already have and continue to be trusted by the community, our key partners and stakeholders.

VOLUNTEER-BASED

Without our volunteers, we would not be here. They are at the core of the SES and sacrifice their time to deliver an essential service to the community.

WORKING TOGETHER

We want greater collaboration both within and outside the SES. We want to work together wherever possible to ensure the community is receiving the best possible support.

DELIVER EXCELLENCE

It's about setting the bar high and striving to provide the best service and response we can. As an agency we are committed to driving continuous improvement and innovation.

PREPAREDNESS

Preparation is essential to minimising the impact of emergencies. We want communities to understand their risks and be able to mitigate, prepare for and deal with emergencies if and when they arise.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

We provide communities support and expert response capabilities, helping individuals during their time of need.

You can hear from some of our volunteers who shaped the new vision, mission and strategic plan below:



Chris Blogg

Hornsby Unit

"Fundamentally, I think this is a cultural shift. If we look at our vision and mission holistically, it's about leadership as an agency and it's about us all stepping up. I can see we are empowering our members more to be able to deliver what the community needs. I am not just talking about responding to life threatening situations, I'm talking about us responding to changes in circumstances (such as climate change) and preparing the community for these as well. We have real an opportunity here to develop pride of place of our members, to develop confidence by the community and empower our people."



Sam Colwell

Warringah-Pittwater Unit

"The change in the vision and mission is quite timely and it's important. The service has been through quite a difficult change process and there has been a drop in morale. In my opinion the service has now turned a corner and we are starting to stabilize - the executive are working better together and I can see we have a strategy to move forward and improve on things. This vision and mission update and strategy refresh is an opportunity for us all to reset, get focused again and remember what we are here for."



Sherryl Reddy

Multicultural Liaison Unit

"I like that we can clearly see a commitment to inclusion in the new vision. It is showing a greater focus on connecting with communities and building their preparedness. I can see we are genuinely striving to reflect the NSW community and connect effectively with them. I think it's a really empowering vision and mission and will bring about greater internal and external alignment, encouraging us to working together across the volunteer and staff teams and with other emergency service agencies."



Glenn Jones

Namoi Capability Unit

"As members, we need to know where the organisation is going. With this refresh, we now know what direction that is. I know from my work in the development on the strategic plan, we are touching on a lot of the areas which have historically been problematic and looking to implement improvements. From personal experience, I now know we are going forward in the right direction with a senior leadership team who acknowledges and respects us as volunteers."



Scan here to hear from our commissioner and more of our volunteers on why we have moved to a new vision and mission.

NSW SES – The Strategic Refresh

The engagement to develop the plan

Our Commissioner has been focused throughout this process on ensuring the new strategic plan is built using members feedback and in collaboration with different members.

We have been talking with our members and stakeholders, asking them to reflect on who we are, what we do, and where we want to be in the future. We have used these conversations to create our new Strategic Plan, which will guide us over the next three years and help us achieve our new Mission and Vision. Thank all to everyone who participated in this process. It is your input that makes me confident this plan is taking us in the right direction and is aligned with our collective vision for the NSW SES.

Our new Strategic Plan is built around the three things that are most important to us: Our People, Our Community and Our Capability.

For each of these priorities, we have identified goals we aim to achieve over the next three years. Together, these three priorities ensure the NSW SES remains focused on our Vision and delivering on our Mission of saving lives and creating safer communities.

Our Service is made up of thousands of dedicated Members who give their time to support our communities. We want Our People to feel safe, valued, empowered and engaged. By doing so, we will enable a diverse, trusted, and capable

A future-focused approach to building our capability will enable us to make informed decisions and remain a contemporary, agile and trusted leader in emergency management.



emergency service that can better support the people of NSW.

By working with Our Community we will ensure that they are prepared for and able to manage the impacts of emergencies. You'll notice there is renewed focus in our plan on community preparedness and resilience, as well as collaboration with

partners and stakeholders. This reflects our new Vision of being a trusted, volunteer-based emergency service, working together to deliver excellence in community preparedness and response.

In an increasingly complex and changing environment, continuous improvement in Our Capability is essential. A future-focused approach to building our capability will enable us to make informed decisions and remain a contemporary, agile and trusted leader in emergency management.

Through this plan, it is my hope that we build on the dedication of our membership and the achievements of the past to continue to grow and develop our Service to be ready for the future. I look forward to working together with you all to put this plan into action.

In September 2020, we embarked on a collaborative process to develop our new Strategic Plan. The key phases of our development process which have been complete or are in progress currently are shown above and outlined below:



LISTEN

- » We sought input from our Members through a survey, capturing their views about the future direction of the NSW SES and what matters most to them.
- » We conducted over 30 interviews with internal and external stakeholders and partners.

ANALYSE

- » We reviewed all Member and stakeholder feedback in detail to identify themes and insights.
- » We analysed our current environment to identify the internal and external forces impacting our agency.
- » We conducted extensive research and consultation with sector experts and our Senior Leadership Team.
- » We reviewed our previous Strategic Plan (2016-2021), identifying lessons learnt.
- » We identified the strategic drivers and trends that inform the new Strategic Plan.

COLLABORATE

- » Based on this feedback and analysis, our Senior Leadership Team was engaged through a series of workshops to agree on our Vision, Mission and Strategic Priorities.
- » Working groups made up of Members from across the Service were formed to collaboratively develop and refine the Strategic Plan.
- » The work was shared with leaders to obtain their feedback and input, and a draft plan was developed.

SEEK FEEDBACK

- » The draft Strategic Plan is currently being shared with our Members through zone cascades to ensure we are clear and aligned on our future direction.
- » We are currently seeking feedback from Members about our plan and how we will implement it.

NSW SES – The Strategic Refresh

Our Strategic Priorities

Below are our new three strategic priorities as an agency. We are currently developing detailed underpinning plans, in collaboration with members, to ensure our strategy is realistic and achievable. The plan will then be finalised and shared in full late June/early July, including highlighting further opportunities for volunteers to get involved to ensure your voice is being heard.



Our People

Our people are safe, valued, empowered and engaged to enable a diverse, trusted and capable emergency service. This will involve:

- » Embedding our safe, inclusive and ethical culture
- » Enhancing our own capabilities and behaviours
- » Promoting our volunteering ethos

SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED THROUGH:

- ✓ Increased Member Engagement and satisfaction
- ✓ Improvement in safety awareness and outcomes
- ✓ Targeted growth in our Member base that reflects changing community needs, risk and diversity

Our Community

Communities across NSW are prepared for and able to manage the impacts of emergencies. This will involve:

- » Building upon existing community resilience through targeted needs-based community engagement
- » Delivering a contemporary and collaborative approach to flood planning and preparedness
- » Raising the profile of NSW SES through effective public promotion and dissemination of information
- » Building effective partnerships and stakeholder engagement

SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED THROUGH:

- ✓ Increase in community members that understand and act on their flood, storm and tsunami risk
- ✓ Increased community and stakeholder recognition of the NSW SES as a trusted voice on flood, storm and tsunami
- ✓ Increased consideration of flood risk in strategic land use planning decisions
- ✓ Improved collaboration with partners and stakeholders outside the NSW SES

Our People

Continuous improvement in capability to provide recognised, contemporary, agile and trusted leadership in emergency management. This will involve:

- » Strengthening capability to remain ready and equipped to manage emergencies
- » Enhancing systems and processes so they are responsive, integrated and efficient
- » Putting data to work for an intelligence and knowledge led organisation
- » Ensuring our assets, facilities and resources are fit for purpose and future-ready to support our Communities

SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED THROUGH:

- ✓ Improved training availability and effectiveness
- ✓ Continual capability improvement in our Combat and supporting roles
- ✓ Improvement in integration and accessibility of business and operational systems
- ✓ Improved availability and quality of data and intelligence

Training Update

TRAINING AND EXERCISE DELIVERY TEAM UPDATE

Face to face training including close contact training is permitted in accordance with Training Bulletin 16/20, eLearning via SAP and the learning Hub as well as our webinar series will continue in support of face to face training.

WHO LET THE BOATS OUT

From Ballina to Bega, from Bankstown to Broken Hill, members from 41 Units took to the water in 61 flood boats at the same time on 30 January 2021 for the largest flood rescue boat exercise in NSW SES history, otherwise known as Exercise Who Let the Boats Out.

Roughly 200 members spent their Saturday morning doing flood rescue boat scenarios in their local waterways, keeping their skills sharp and having a ball while doing it.

The exercise was the brainchild of the Metro Zone Flood Rescue Capability Development Group and was brought to life with the support of the Exercise Capability Team. Daniel Kenner, Coordinator Exercise Capability, says that he's looking forward to more of these types of exercises in the future. "This exercise is another great example of volunteers delivering exercises for volunteers with the support of the exercise capability team," said Daniel.

UPCOMING EXERCISE CAPABILITY INITIATIVES

The NSW SES Exercise Capability Team are working to build the capability of the NSW SES through simulated activities. One of the ways we are looking at doing this is through supporting the innovation of volunteers to deliver exercise initiatives similar to Exercise Who Let The Boats Out later in 2021. In addition, the Exercise Capability Team is working with the Training Delivery and Training Development Teams and Bush Search and Rescue Unit to deliver a number of zone and state level exercises between March and November 2021. This includes two Search and Rescue Exercises, three Zone Disaster Rescue Challenges, the inaugural State Road Crash Rescue Challenge, Navshield, Exercise Thunderstruck 21 (State Disaster Rescue Challenge), two

Tsunami Exercises and two Incident Management exercises.

To further build the NSW SES capability to manage exercises and support external exercise, the Exercise Capability Team are developing an Exercise Management Framework and guidance materials, conducting a number of Moulage workshops and developing a number of Exercise Management Training Courses using flexible delivery.

ADVANCED RESUSCITATION TRAINING

The pilot program providing training in *Provide Advanced Resuscitation* to targeted GLR units will be complete by the end of February 2021. During this time more than 23 units and almost 200 members, have been trained in the administered of oxygen to an unconscious/conscious casualty. Shortly this training will be delivered to our up and coming flood rescue trainers and assessors to ensure the best safety possible for members undertaking these courses. Another program of training and re-accreditation for *Provide Advance Resuscitation* is being planned for the next financial year.

TRAINER AND ASSESSORS PROGRAMS

The Assessor Upgrade program has commenced and is being rolled out over the coming months. In addition to this the Training team is also engaging external providers to SES members with the opportunity to undertake Trainer courses who want to become trainers and in addition to this SES members will be given the opportunity to become SES Trainers and Assessors as part of a single course through external providers.

DRIVER LICENCE UPGRADE PROGRAM

The Training Delivery team in cooperation with the Operations team continue to give SES members the opportunity to upgrade their Drivers licences to meet the operational requirements of their units. This program allows units to engage with external providers to deliver the required training. This program will be managed at a Zone level to best meet local needs.

FLOOD RESCUE ACTIVITIES

Since October 2020 approximately 20 courses have been run, including On Land, In Water, Professional Development Workshops and In Water Trainer / Assessor Endorsement Workshops have been run. A total of approximately 245 SES members have attended these various courses. We are planning another 10 courses prior to the Flood Rescue season concluding. We would like to give a huge shoutout to the members who have given many, many, MANY hours of their time to deliver these workshops, it is a huge undertaking and we thank you for this.

We are currently working with the Rural Fire Service regarding opportunities to work with them as the recertify their helicopter down the wire operators, we will work with them ensuring a development opportunity for our members to operate boats around aircraft and build awareness of aviation safety for our operators.

COMMUNICATION FORUMS

Each Zone is conducting communication meetings with trainers and assessors across each zone. The intent of these meetings is to provide updates to training coordinators as to what training activities are occurring across the respective zones. These meetings are designed for members to discuss and share ideas on how to get the maximum benefit from undertaking training activities

INCIDENT CONTROL (IC2/IC3)

48 IC2 positions for predominately volunteers will be delivered by 30 June with an additional 10 IC3 positions planned within the same timeframe.

MULTI AGENCY AIIMS

We are working with both Resilience NSW and Infrastructure NSW to deliver AIIMS courses to their staff, while this is an additional undertaking by our members who facilitate these courses the benefits are already evident as externals working within our IMT's are not only trained but also have an increased understanding of the NSW SES

Public Access Defibrillation Programme – Being ‘Job Ready’ for the Gilgandra Unit

Late 2020 we saw the introduction into the NSW State Emergency Service the Public Access Defibrillation Programme (PAD).

The concept being that if we have an SES Unit in the area of where a call is received by the NSW Ambulance Service, to a suspected cardiac arrest, the SES unit can be responded with a cardiac defibrillator. The idea being that the successful reversal of a cardiac arrest, by the use of a cardiac defibrillator, is absolutely time critical. ***Survival rates are reduced by around 10% for each minute of delay in the application of a defibrillator.***

For our Gilgandra GLR Unit, being in a small country centre, the likelihood of a PAD response is high. ***Being ‘job ready’ for a timely and effective PAD response, presented a number of challenges for us –***

requiring some additional training and preparation.

Issues like:

- » Having members both confident and competent in the performance of a standard, planned approach to a cardiac arrest drill
- » Having the required PAD equipment in a cache ready for use
- » Having the members familiar with what to expect when working with the NSW Ambulance Service paramedics at the scene of a cardiac arrest

THE PAD CASE CONCEPT

It was decided that our PAD response vehicle would be our GP vehicle being somewhat more nimble and responsive than our 20 year old rescue truck. We already carried a defibrillator on the vehicle, along with a first aid kit and an oxygen resuscitation kit. We really

needed to have it all together. We felt the best approach was a ‘Pelican’ Space Case in which **all** the required equipment would be placed.

Placed against the rear door of the canopy on the vehicle, open the door and it is all there, in a clearly marked case.

The entire case can be left in place in the vehicle and contents removed or the case can be removed and taken closer to the patient (2 x person lift).

Stored close by in the vehicle are handheld GRN radios (one should **ALWAYS** be taken with you to the patient) and torches for night time responses.

THE PAD CASE CONTENTS

The pad case contains:

- » Cardiac defibrillator (incl. a spare set of pads and spare battery pack)



The PAD Case, stowed in the GP vehicle, ready for immediate access



The open PAD Case, showing the contents of the case

- » Oxy-Resus kit
- » First aid kit
- » PPE items (incl. gloves, safety glasses, P2 rated masks, disinfecting wipes & disposable coveralls)
- » PAD folder containing a laminated town map and laminated patient handover check list

Included is a laminated **Paramedic Handover Information** checklist. This checklist, placed onto a clip board, contains the 6 x key questions which we should be prepared to answer upon the arrival of the NSW Ambulance paramedics.

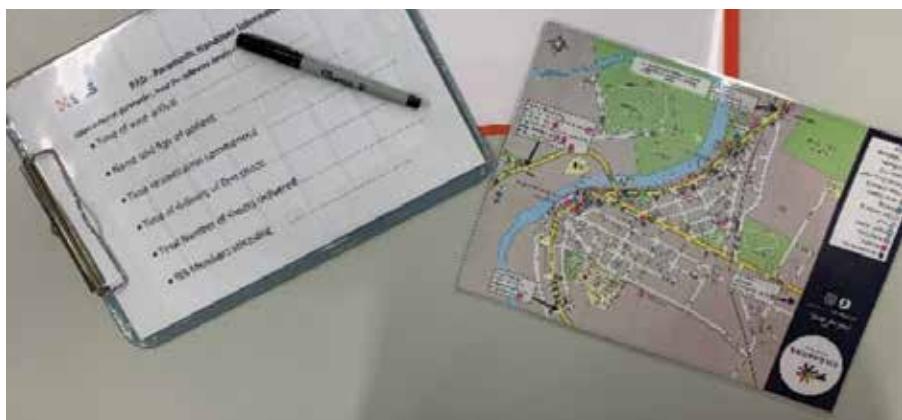
The checklist is laminated and a black 'Sharpie' marking pen is enclosed. This allows the information to be printed onto the checklist for ease of communication. The paramedics might choose to photograph this for later recording – knowing the many competing priorities that there will be at the scene on their arrival.

Once the details are communicated, the check list is wiped clean for reuse.

Sadly the first opportunity arose in early January 2021 for a PAD response but our Unit was 'off line', short term, due to member absences (annual leave and illness). We are 'job ready'.

Geoff Kiehne

Unit Commander Gilgandra GLR Unit



The laminated Paramedic Handover Information checklist

Gosford Unit

Time Capsule

5 years from now, 2020 will be remembered for many things. It will most likely be a staple in school curriculums, studied by teenagers who may have never heard the phrase 'social distancing'. Recognising this, an organisation in NSW, Central Coast Kids Day Out (CCKDO), put together a time capsule to remember the year that was 2020.

As part of this capsule, they asked NSW SES Gosford Unit to write an article about how COVID changed the way our volunteers responded to calls for help, and continued to serve the community despite COVID restrictions.

Community Engagement Officer Wendy Whitmore stepped up to the challenge, constructing an excellent account, complete with photographs and month by month breakdown of some of the things our SES volunteers encountered in 2020.

The organisers were blown away by her dedicated and detailed response, so much so they replied with a lovely email thanking some specific Gosford Unit volunteers, and all SES members that we would love to pass on;

Dear Wendy,

On behalf of the Central Coast Kids' Day Out Committee 2020, I would like to offer our most sincere thanks to you and Katrina for the care and consideration you have given to our Community Project, your contribution to our Time Capsule.

The Report / Recollection you have prepared is outstanding and we are so grateful for the contribution you have made to the collective memory of the Central Coast, its families and children.

Your relating of the activities of the Unit throughout 2020 has heightened significantly our awareness of the very important role you play in keeping the community safe. The community thanks you so much!

The additional input you have been able to contribute in personalising the S.E.S. officers and crew, gives names and faces to people we usually see climbing over roof tops, getting rid of fallen trees or putting their own lives at risk to save others - now we know some of the names and what is even more telling, we can recognise these people as neighbours and friends. Given the challenges of the past year, that familiarity and that understanding of just who comprises the S.E.S. and what they do to keep people safe, encourages the spirit and strengthens resolve. Thank you.

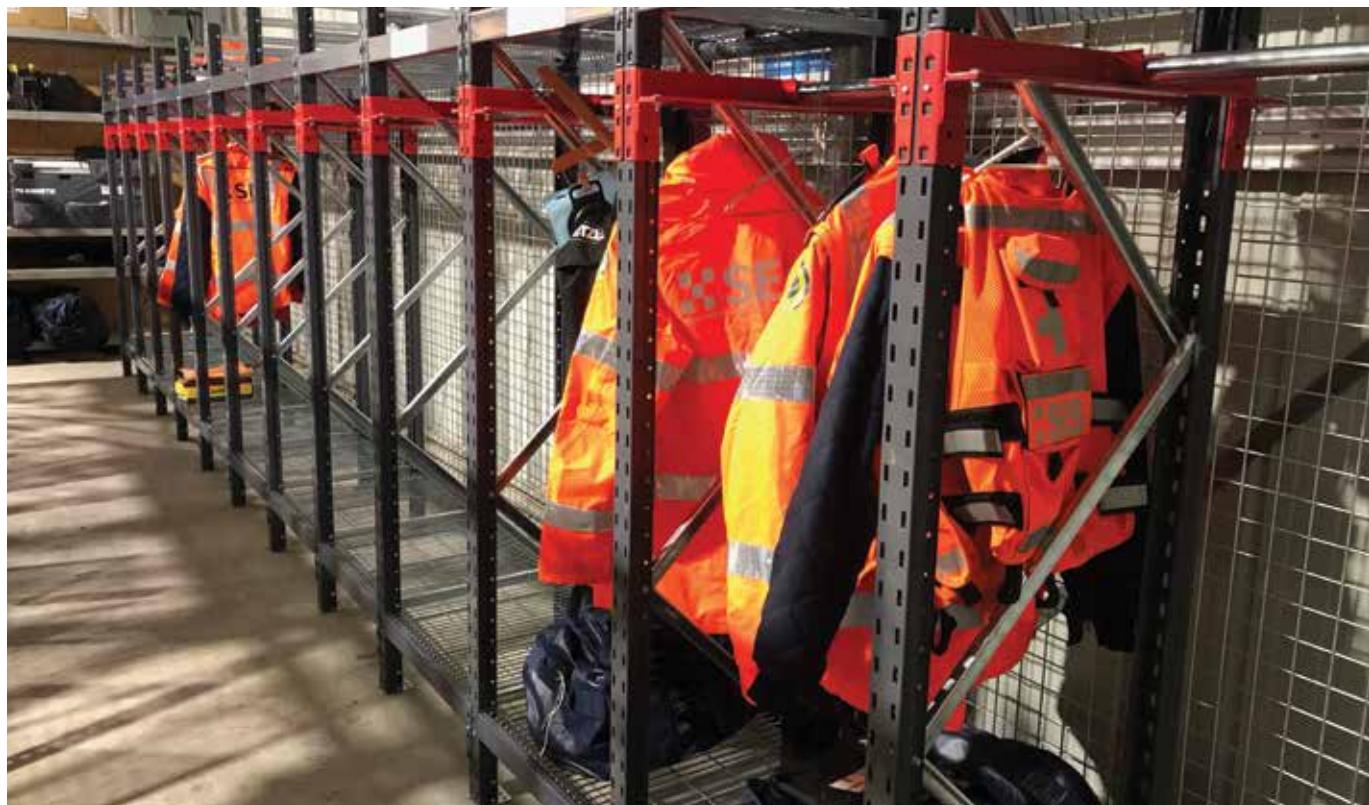
The crew members named below it seems to me are representative of the whole team, so would you extend to them our appreciation for their efforts in particular and of the many who are engaged in the same sort of activities in general and congratulate them on their efforts: To Werner Klumpp for his work with preschools, educating them about water safety and being part of our Website Interview, to Phil Shiels, going further afield and assisting out of area in Goodooga, to Shea Cullen, Gosford's first female in Water Flood Tech, to Luke Bartley who worked in a storm emergency in Newcastle, to Eleanor Whitmore, Velinda Lee, and Paula Jarman for their role in supervising the observation of COVID safety protocol and to the S.E.S. Mascot Paddy for developing the channels of communication between kids and adults in the area of being safe in times of an emergency!

Thank you all!

The report / contribution you composed and presented is a wonderful testimony to the spirit and commitment of your Unit.

Do accept the congratulations and gratitude of the C.C.K.D.O. for all your efforts,





NSW SESVA Grant

VA Grant and Unit Funds make this small Project a reality for our Volunteers.

Auburn was lucky enough to secure a VA grant to partially fund new lockers for our Volunteers. This together with Commissioner York making changes to the use of Funds within Unit banks accounts in late 2020, has allowed us to purchase and install 60 new lockers to be shared amongst the 100+ Volunteers at the Auburn Unit.

These lockers will not only allow our Volunteers to have quick access to their PPE/PPC at the unit, but to also have a change of Uniform there for when they come back from working out the rain. In addition to the 60 Lockers, our Volunteers are building a small Change/Dressing room to get a little privacy when getting dressed. Each locker will have a label with the Volunteers name on it, along with the VA and SES logo's in recognition

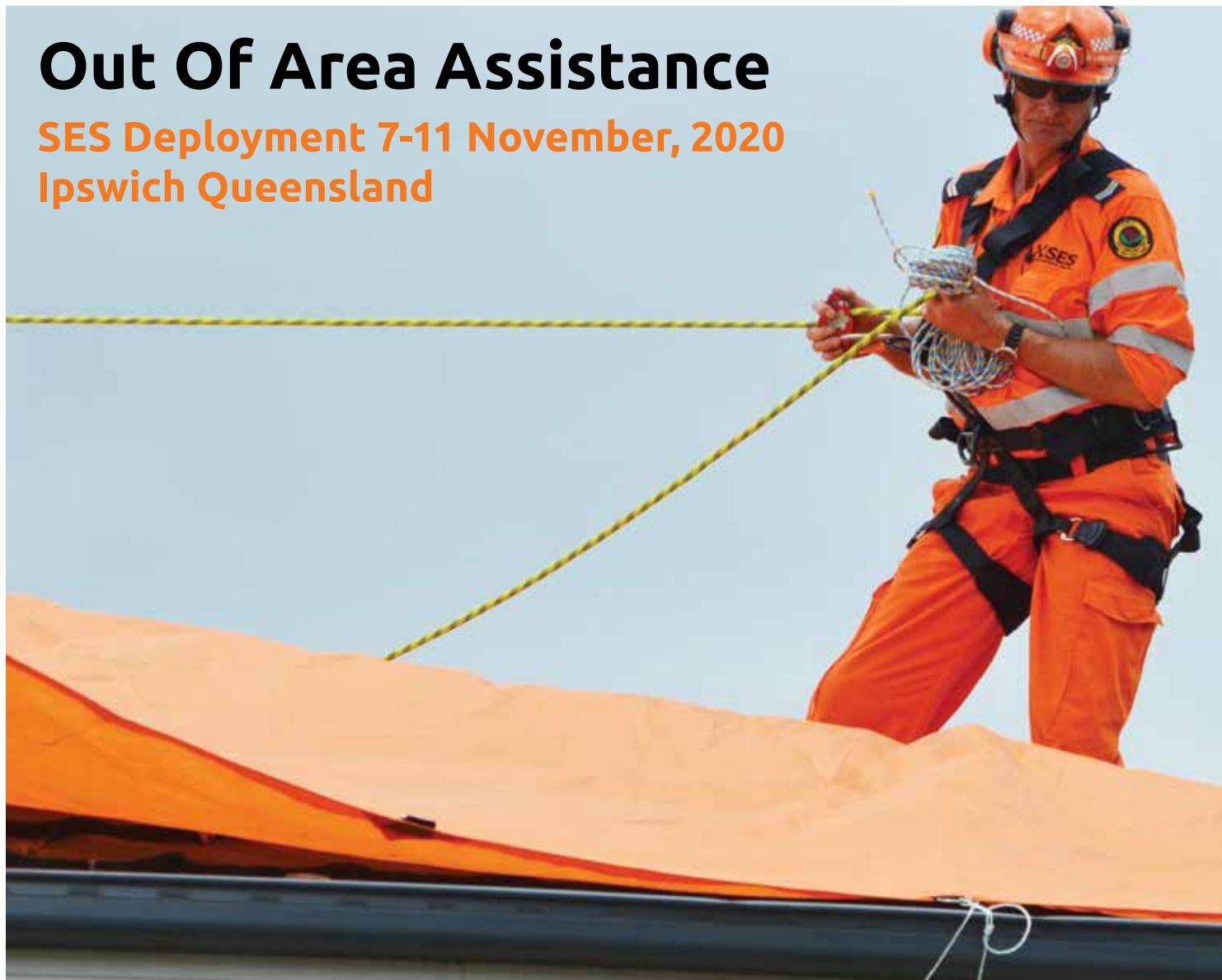
of the funding supplied to make this project happen.

These lockers are such a sturdy design they will last many, many years and be used by hundreds of Volunteers over that time. The old lockers these replaced, won't be scrapped, but shared across other neighbouring units for their Volunteers.

Jamie Newman
Unit Commander, Auburn Unit

Out Of Area Assistance

**SES Deployment 7-11 November, 2020
Ipswich Queensland**



As a result of Sydney being declared a Covid-19 hot spot, Wollongong and other units, attended the deployment call to Ipswich in Queensland from 7/11/20 to 11/11/20. From the Wollongong Unit, myself and one other SES member attended the call out.

Due to Covid-19 guidelines we were picked up from our homes and transported to Mascot Airport.

I recall the Qantas Terminal, at Sydney Airport being like a ghost town, deserted with only one Qantas departure flight to Brisbane that day. The flight was made up of SES members from other south coast units and general public.

Upon arrival at Brisbane airport we were transported to the arranged hotel in the Brisbane CBD, where at 15.00 hrs we had a meet and greet of all SES members on this deployment.

At 8.00am the next day, we travelled via coach to Ipswich LHQ for breakfast, briefing and jobs allocations.

The briefing included a recount of the storm event, damage, type of damage and number of calls, individual stories of locals faced and needed to deal with. At this briefing, all teams were allocated to a designated N.S.W. light storm vehicles, including Queensland portable radios. All teams were deployed to Springfield and surrounding suburbs, and operations were controlled from Ipswich LHQ.

The strike team BRAVO, consisted of approximately 30 NSW SES personnel. Each ready to face the remainder of the 1,500 request for assistance calls for hail damage caused by a severe hailstorm.

Hailstones were reported to be as big as 16cm in diameter. Several houses had been evacuated, with the mains power, solar power & gas turned off. Cars parked outdoors were hail damaged beyond repair with both front and rear screens extensively damaged.

The corrugated, colorbond, steel roof houses had not escaped damage; colorbond sheets had the top section of the corrugation pushed half way down, like it had been hit by the ball point of a hammer. Several street lights suffered the same damage.

Apparently, it was said that the hailstorm damaged at least 80% of the tiled roofs, of each individual house, penetrating through the tiled roof, gyproc ceiling and landing on the furniture, tables, beds, before melting. Solar panels mounted on



roofs were also extensively damaged beyond repair.

I recall a time where the 3 crews needed to abort their jobs due to, an emergency situation within the street. Once the all clear was declared, teams returned to their jobs & to complete the repairs. Several of the roof repairs were so extensive that it required two or even three teams to complete these tasks.

From one of the houses all you could see across the roof tops was a sea of houses covered in temporary orange and grey tarps.

The Ipswich SES Unit was very impressed with our fully equipped light storm vehicles they took a photo of one of the NSW vehicles and forwarded to the senior commander to order several vehicles.

» **continued on page 52**





» **continued from page 51**

On completion of all of tasks we returned to Ipswich LHQ for debrief and recognitions from the area commander for making the trip from NSW to assist them. Furthermore I would like to add that during this event, I celebrated my 74th birthday whilst helping with tarping roofs.

To commemorate this event all NSW attending SES members received a bronze medal from the Queensland State Emergency Services.

At the departure lounge at Brisbane the NSW, SES members were again thanked by two senior Queensland SES members, for assisting with this Queensland storm event.

Chris Barnett
Wollongong SES Unit



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