

From the Board...

With this Newsletter also comes the new position descriptions for roles within the Association.

In November 2017, the Representatives and Board of the day voted in changes to the Constitution with regard to the structure of the Association.

It came off the back of comments that the new model and structure of the NSW SES would no longer be in alignment and we needed to change as a result.

Following discussions with members, representatives and based on other feedback mechanisms, we decided to look at ways that would enable better communication with members and access to information.

We also looked at existing roles, how we could improve processes and ways we could provide members with non-operational

roles that still help fellow volunteers as well as roles that could provide experience and exposure to potential study or career options.

As a result, there are a number of 'Coordinator' roles for specific program areas and 'Ambassador' roles for unit level representation.

We have moved away from the term 'Representative' because the role is primarily to be the conduit of information and provide members with methods for accessing information, programs and services within the Association. We also have the capacity for there to be Ambassadors at each unit, so if you have ever wanted more information on anything VA related, the Ambassador role might be just what you have been looking for!

*Enjoy & stay safe
in your volunteering!*

What's been happening in the Volunteers Association?

Annual General Meeting

The AGM for the Association took place at 7pm on the 26th November, 2018. No major changes were made to the Constitution at this meeting.

In the Office

Carlee Maccoll has joined us in the office and is looking after all of the Administration tasks. Carlee was the successful candidate from over 300 applications to the advertisement.

Carlee comes with a wealth of experience in Association's as well as customer service and has been fitting in with the team beautifully!

She works Monday, Tuesday and Thursdays and can be reached at Carlee.maccoll@nswsesva.org.au

We have also started using a call message service to capture any enquiries. This system allows us to access your calls while we are on the road or out of the office.

For any urgent issues, you can still contact the Board members on their mobiles.

Feedback on Certificate IV

There have traditionally been a number of grants awarded each year for members to gain a Cert IV in Training and Assessment.

With the changes to the qualification, and the need for anyone holding the old qualification to upgrade by April 1st, 2019 to maintain that qualification, we have seen a number of grant applications coming in.

Member Services has been liaising with the Training Director for the SES, Joan Lynch, to establish how the SES has been managing and will continue to manage the upgrade process.

The Association has liaised with the SES on this topic for the past months and because of feedback received during the zone conferences. We are awaiting feedback from the SES.

Grant Deadlines

We have worked extensively on our Grants program over the past year. The association has increased the availability and frequency of the grants for volunteers. We have also had this process refined to ensure it meets government requirements for handing out of funds.

The grants process still requires a committee to review the grant request and also make a recommendation to the Board of Directors. These directors take financial responsibility for the use of these funds.

In past weeks, the office has received requests for grants that have very short lead times. One, a major SES support and another a request for printed items within 5 days.

The association meets with the SES and each EOFY ask what the requests are for the upcoming year. This allows the association to plan ahead financially.

If you are planning in submitting a grant please ensure they are submitted fully through the correct channel to avoid delays. Grant requests do not go to a person, they are submitted online via our website where they are centrally captured.

Also, please allow us enough time to undertake the required governance procedures along with time to have any orders filled.

Drought Support Program - SOCK it to the Drought

Orders close on the 22nd March, 2019!

You may have noticed the State Operations Centre (SOC) running various fundraising programs to assist the Drought Support Program.

To date, they have raised thousands of dollars which tops up the funds raised by the Volunteers Association. These funds have been used to provide feed and fodder for stock, dog food (in excess of what has been donated by Eukanuba), household essentials as well as access to additional support services. The Association is able to add benefit from its charity status and in kind support. Support is also given in many other ways through our links to other charities.

The SES SOC have been running programs where members can support fellow members through the purchase of goods. This is not a donation, nor is it about separating administration costs from the 'donated' amount.

This is a transaction where an item has been procured, for a discounted price, branding has been applied and then sold with the profits being donated to the Drought Support Program. The dollar value going to the Program is the cost of the item, less the procurement and postage costs.

Some of the discussion around the program has been disappointing. Like any other transaction where you purchase a product, it is entirely at the discretion of the buyer if they would like to purchase that item.

The team in the SOC have been working hard to find items that serve a dual purpose - one that members will like and wear with pride, and one that will present value for money and give back

Please remember this when making comments. If you would like to donate instead, where you don't receive goods and the whole dollar value

goes to the program, you can do this direct through our website www.nswsesva.org.au/donate

Please continue to educate those around us about these so our supporters are commented on in the appropriate way.

Welfare Fund

The Welfare Fund process has been changed.

Applications still go through online https://www.nswsesva.org.au/files/20160601_welfare_application_form_v4_1.pdf but the process for providing support is different.

Cash payments are no longer provided to applicants. After discussions with other welfare provision organisations and discussions with our Auditor and Accountant, reimbursement of outstanding bills to provide immediate relief from financial hardship is offered.

The aim of the Welfare Fund is to provide short term relief for volunteers in need. We have worked with other charities and their learnings regarding the correct and appropriate support which also abides by government requirements. This means some changes to our business and also how we can help our members rather than a one-off provision.

As a charity, we are constantly assessing our practices and ensuring that they are not only in line with best practice, but also ensuring they are sustainable and able to keep supporting our members into the future.

Magazine

We are now compiling submissions for the April edition of the magazine.

Please email all submissions to editor@nswsesva.org.au before 22nd March, 2019.

Member Achievements

We are proud to again recognise the valuable work our volunteers do for their communities.

The President of the SESVA sent out a personal letter acknowledging the work of our volunteers. The NSW SES is unable to provide us with the addresses of the volunteers so we send this out electronically. If you know of a recipient of an Australia Day award, please let us know and we will continue to acknowledge them.

2019 Australia Day Award Recipients:

- *Glenn Jones ESM*
- *John Hughes OAM*
- *Ian Dear OAM*
- *Carolyn McMahon OAM*
- *Grigory Rogojkin 2019 Fairfield Citizen of the Year Award*
- *Sonya Moulang Campbelltown Citizen of the Year Award*
- *Richard Shoemark Campbelltown Citizen of the Year Award*
- *Hannah Evers Broken Hill Young Citizen of the Year Award*
- *Stuart McIntosh Menindee Citizen of the Year Award*
- *Neal O'Reilly Emergency Services Volunteer of the Year Award*
- *Kurt Bailey Yass Community Service Award*
- *Sharleen Bailey Yass Community Service Award*
- *Gary Poile Upper Lachlan Citizen of the Year Award*
- *Tyrone Kiernan Wellington Citizen of the Year Award*