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the

Volunteer

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the Volunteer

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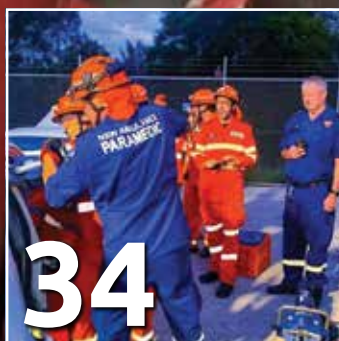
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On the cover:
Warwick Cary ESM



KIM DAVIS ESM
PRESIDENT NSW SES
VOLUNTEERS ASSOCIATION

It has been a frightfully busy year but now also a very sad one. The passing of our dear friend, Warwick Cary has left us remembering the significant work and commitment he made to the NSWSES and the Volunteers Association.

Warwick was a large part of our association and always placed volunteers, and their wellbeing, first. Most will be aware of his work in the protocol and awards space, spanning over 20 years, however most are unaware of his behind the scenes work with the SESVA Welfare Fund. Here, he and others quietly worked to support volunteers confidentially during their worst times. Warwick was a pillar of this group we are so proud of. The SESVA has been there to support volunteers for over 20 years now, and I am constantly humbled by the work and care that people like Warwick do, in the Volunteers Association, for others. You will be missed Warwick, but your legacy of protocol, leadership and friendship remains.

The SESVA understands that Warwick's funeral occurred during COVID restrictions, and therefore we will be printing a special booklet of messages received to give to his family and friends.

Warwick was always a driver to ensure the SESVA remained an independent body and voice for the volunteers. With this vision, he maintained that we were self sufficient and self funded to be able to deliver the welfare, support and services to our volunteers. We are proud to continue this vision, and this year especially has proven testament to our ability to fulfil the caring needs of our volunteers.

... remember to look after yourselves and each other, check on the vulnerable and reach out if you need a friendly voice at the end of the line.

Hopefully the emergency incidents are winding down, however our support is continuing, and actually ramping up. Our mental health courses which had to be momentarily suspended by the provider due to COVID have now been reinvigorated and made available remotely. This will further increase our mental health supports and reach. Another milestone for the SESVA we are proud of.

As we continue to provide these supports, we also continue to advocate as part of our Constitution. We are always open for feedback regarding our support and topics and also openly love to hear feedback or ideas about how the SESVA can remain contemporary.

As an Association we do what we can, however sometimes we are wrongly labelled a union. There are significant differences, but some of the main ones are that we, as an Association, do not charge membership fees, instead the SESVA raises money via the sales of raffle tickets by the National SESVA. Unions also have the right to enter a workplace, inspect it, its processes and any documents, such as relating to a possible award or WHS breach, our Association does not have this power. The PSA (Public Service Association) is the union that represents employees of the NSWSES.

From everyone here at the SESVA, I'd like to pass on our appreciation and thanks for the outstanding commitment to your communities over this past year. We have implemented a lot of new changes through the feedback of volunteers this year such as the Member Benefits Program, Fire and Flood Champions, increased

welfare and volunteer supports, and increased the access to volunteers with volunteers now 'owning' our annual calendar and a larger magazine. We will continue to grow the SESVA with your input and help.

Stay tuned for an exciting big announcement from the SESVA in the coming weeks!

This edition is jam-packed with what you have been up to during isolation – showing just how essential the volunteers of this Service are to their communities. When others have been doing their bit by staying at home, you have been willing to venture out into the community to help and to continue to respond to requests for assistance.

We are starting to see some things returning to 'normal', and more and more access opening up to the things we have been used to like sporting events, restaurants and going out. But what we want to remember is that even though these things are returning, there are some COVID-19 lessons that we should continue with us.

- » Be polite and respectful to everyone
- » Always practice good hand hygiene
- » Strive for a work/life balance that works for you
- » Respect your health, and be mindful of the vulnerable

It has been a challenging year for so many, and we are not through it all yet so remember to look after yourselves and each other, check on the vulnerable and reach out if you need a friendly voice at the end of the line.

Stay safe out there, enjoy returning to training and continue to let us know what you have been up to!

“

The NSW Government has invested \$56.4 million to provide the SES with 270 vehicles, 124 marine vessels and 95 storm trailers over four years ...

”



THE HON DAVID ELLIOTT MP
MINISTER FOR POLICE AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES

Last month we commemorated National Volunteers Week and asked the community to show their appreciation for our indefatigable volunteers on Wear Orange Wednesday. There has never been a more important time to be an SES volunteer and there has never been a more important time for the community to thank you for your ceaseless efforts. I want to pay a special mention to the extraordinary young people who were recently recognised as part of the 2020 Young People in Emergency Services Awards. NSW SES Cadet of the Year, Praveena Navaratnam and NSW SES Young Volunteer of the Year, Tanju Olcer, are exemplary young Australians and must be commended for devoting their time to help protect lives and communities.

The year commenced with close to 3,000 of you were involved during

the bushfire crisis contributing thousands of hours to support our firefighting agencies combat the worst bushfire season NSW has ever seen. In early February, many parts of NSW were hit hard with heavy and continuous rain, causing flooding in some parts and requiring many hours of service from all of you. Overall, the NSW SES have completed close to 30,000 jobs across NSW since the 1st January 2020.

The NSW Government has invested \$56.4 million to provide the SES with 270 vehicles, 124 marine vessels and 95 storm trailers over four years to support communities in times of crisis. You all play a crucial role in keeping the community safe and we have to make sure your vehicles are up-to-date with the latest technology to provide effective and efficient capability during emergencies.

Mid-May, I joined Assistant Commissioner Sean Kearns to announce an additional \$45,000 for 18 new defibrillators for the SES. This life-saving equipment will go to a number of regional units including Broken Hill, Port Stephens, Wellington and Goolgowi. SES volunteers are often on the frontline responding to emergencies and this additional funding will go a long way to better equip volunteers to handle any medical emergency they encounter.

As we enter the winter storm season and COVID-19 restrictions ease, I know you will all be busy preparing to respond when disaster strikes. Please take care of yourselves and loved ones during this time – your contributions will be invaluable. Thank you all for your continued dedication to keeping New South Wales a safe and resilient state.



CARLENE YORK APM
NSW SES COMMISSIONER

It has been a very busy period for our members since the last time I wrote to you and life as we know it has changed dramatically due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am very impressed with how the Service has adapted to the changes and have gotten on with our main role of protecting communities during flood, storms and other emergencies.

I've been delighted to see how quickly members have embraced training online and the creative ways in which training has been undertaken.

Seventy-nine highly skilled and passionate volunteer members responded to the Expression of Interest to help develop the learning content that is now being delivered online via videos, e-learning and webinars.

Our members did a wonderful job in preparing their local communities for the coming flood waters and responding to flood related RFAs.

So far over 20 training sessions have been delivered via webinars hosted in Microsoft Teams, with over 1900 members registering with more training sessions continuing. The 'Distance Delivery Training Hub' is now also available on EOS which has been developed as a one stop shop for members to access all online training tools, resources and materials in one spot.

I also want to acknowledge the efforts of the Western Zone and Units who responded to flooding in the Western part of the State over the last couple of months. Our members did a wonderful job in preparing their local communities for the coming flood waters and responding to flood related RFAs.

The NSW State Emergency Service has wrapped up a busy storm season, having received more than 37,600

storm jobs between 1 October 2019 and 31 March 2020. I want to thank all members who helped their communities over the busy storm season. As winter now falls upon us, it's important all Zones and Units are ready to respond to more severe weather which I am sure we will experience in the coming months.

Lastly, I take this opportunity to say thank you to all NSW SES volunteers as part of National Volunteer Week and WOW Day, which was celebrated last month in May.

This has certainly been a challenging year so far and I want to thank each of you who have given, and continue to give, your precious time away from family, friends and work to respond to these devastating emergencies across the State.

Submissions for the next edition of The Volunteer are due in by

Thursday, 20th August 2020

Please email Articles & images to editor@nswsesva.org.au

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Eukanuba

Thank You Eukanuba for supporting our NSW SES Volunteers who have been affected by the Drought and the Bushfires throughout NSW

Eukanuba

----- “ -----
When I am reminded of my own mortality, it helps me get perspective on a number of things that otherwise would annoy or anger me.
 ----- ” -----



STEVE HALL
 SENIOR CHAPLAIN

No Turning Back

The one thing I am absolutely confident in, as we stumble boldly into the future is that there is no turning back.

There are endless conversations about a new normal, my problem is that I never figured out what the old normal was. The truth is that I will live the rest of my life in the future. So, what am I learning?

I am learning that COVID is just another threat and that I have the skills and the training to deal with threats. All of my AIIMS training has equipped me to respond and deal with threats, so I need to trust my training. I see that being played out all around the state, as our members meet all our operational requests and adapt their own local environments and practices.

I am learning that the people around me are human. Using technology to connect each other, I have been given a rare privilege to see the more human side of those around me. Dogs barking, kids interrupting, tradesmen working, deliveries

being made. I have a far greater appreciation that everyone's world is far bigger and more complex than just the SES slice.

I am learning that most of us are more productive when you don't have chance corridor or across the desk meetings and you have to schedule all your digital meetings, you are more rigorous with your time management. Meetings must be purposeful and shorter to work effectively.

I am learning that digital communication, though useful, is a poor substitute for doing it face to face. We are social beings and as such need, or is it crave, that social interaction that comes from being near each other.

I am continuing to learn that intent helps me navigate the avalanche of information that is coming at me. Once the intent is clear to me, I am not overwhelmed by the myriad of conflicting ideas and data. That helps me remain calm in the middle of the storm.

I am learning that habits that get interrupted get replaced by new habits. Going to muster every week has been replaced by family and other activities. Despite our love for the service, it will be a challenge to go back to attend muster every week.

I am learning again the value of perspective. When I am reminded of my own mortality, it helps me get perspective on a number of things that otherwise would annoy or anger me. It helps me to be calm in the midst of the chaos. And it helps me to realise that some of the things that I am prone to rant about are not in the same league as facing a disease that can kill me.

What I am yet to learn is how to weave all of this into a way of living and working that brings greater value to me and all of those around me.

Once I learn something new there is no going back to not knowing. The new learning makes my life richer. My challenge is to pass that richness on to those around me.

It has definitely been a trying time for all of our communities during the Covid 19 Pandemic, but we have remained resilient and continued to adapt to change despite the obstacles we have faced and it is inspiring to see your commitment to Volunteering continue during this challenging period.

The NSW SESVA has continued business as usual and our Member Services team has been busy distributing welfare packages and getting essential items sent out to our Volunteers in need.

The VA is here to assist our Members who are facing hardship and if you or a fellow Volunteer are doing it tough please don't hesitate to contact the office in strict confidence for support.

We are excited to announce our Mental Health First Aid courses will be up and running online from June 2020. Please see our Mental Health Update for more information and keep an eye out on our website and social media pages for information and updates so you don't miss out.

We have had very positive feedback on the previous Mental Health First Aid Courses and are looking forward to being able to resume onsite Training at our Rockdale Head office and other locations throughout NSW once the Covid 19 restrictions are lifted and it is safe to do so.

May was a positive month where Australians were able to celebrate and thank the thousands of volunteers that enrich life in our communities



by supporting a diverse range of community organisations, programs & services during National Volunteer week. A special thanks to our NSW SES Volunteers who have faced not only a number of major disasters in the last twelve months but also a global pandemic – and have continued to rise to the challenge time & time again and continue to assist our Communities when needed. Thankyou for all that you do!

Celebrations were a bit different this year due to the restrictions but the appreciation and enthusiasm was still there all the same as we celebrated WOW Day on the 20th of May.

It was great to see everyone get into the spirit wearing their bright orange in support to our SES Volunteers who continue to work tirelessly all year round making a difference in our communities by keeping them safe and saving lives!

Now that the colder weather has kicked in, it is the perfect time to



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Thankyou to all who contributed to this edition of the Magazine – we encourage our Members to contribute and have as much input as possible in the Magazine so we can share your skills, training and experience with others and also so we can acknowledge & promote the amazing work you all do!

The Deadline for the Next magazine is the 20th August 2020 – send in your articles and images to **editor@nswsesva.org.au** All submissions are welcome.

Kind Regards

Carlee Maccoll



NSW SESVA 2021 Calendar

Have
Your Unit
Featured

We are seeking high resolution images
for our 2021 Calendar

If you have images you would like
featured in the Calendar
please send them through to
office@nswsesva.org.au

We are accepting submissions up until
31st October 2020

Just like last year, this calendar will be
created by the Volunteers - You will decide
which images get chosen



Dean Asher: A snapshot from a training video we have produced, guiding our volunteers on how to produce effective video content on mobile devices.

Distance Delivery Project

The Training and Delivery Team quickly identified that their workload was changing due to the COVID-19 and as a result the team rapidly evolved themselves to create the Distance Delivery Project Team. This meant that the Training Development could continue to focus on the development of Incident Management training to support our business as usual priorities while the project focused on adapting to a changing world to support our volunteers during this crisis, by providing online learning resources to meet some of their immediate training needs.

The project has four primary objectives:

- Support the maintenance of Operational Capability
- Maintain volunteer engagement in learning
- Progress members towards competency in a variety of courses
- Create products that will continue to be utilised following this specific situation, expanding our suite of learning products to include a range of distance options

All four objectives are of extreme importance, but it is point four that provides our team with the greatest incentive to deliver quality results for our members. Knowing that the work we undertake will have a positive effect now but also in the many years ahead as we challenge how training has been and will be delivered in the NSW SES.

This project has only been made possible due to the 80 volunteer members who put in an EOI to join the course teams. Their specialized skills and passion has enabled the project to continue to develop in an amazing short period of time.

There are three phases to the project which are all now happening concurrently with multiple streams within each phase.

Phase one is the rapid deployment of a webinar series which sees a minimum of four webinars a week over two subject areas. So far more than 2,800 members have participated in the webinars which have been held in Ms Teams.

The webinars so far have covered a range of theory content around core field skills such as Participate in a Rescue Operation, Land search and Chainsaw operations. Also less traditional topics, like how to use MS Teams, Training Calendars and running reports through our learning management system (SAP LSO). Members have also had the opportunity to learn how to use the Collector App and Mobile SES Assessment App, Portable Radios Familiarisation, and Incident Management Basics.

Phase two of the project is more complex with deliverables such as eLearning modules, video series and stay at home skills challenges. There are approximately 50 volunteers engaged in this phase and are working with our Team Leads and focusing on delivering content related to:

- Technology
- Participate in A Rescue Operation
- Storm & Water Damage Operations
- First Aid
- Road Crash Rescue

The third phase of our project revolves around user created content. This stage is absolutely only an option because we have 30 capable and committed volunteers who are identifying what content we require, creating a standardized framework for their peers to follow and then supporting the creation of user/volunteer generated content.

This will result in a large cache of short videos such as how to tie a bowline, put on a harness, climb a ladder or use a fire extinguisher. In addition to this the same team will be creating multiple online quizzes that can be used across the state for learning, engagement and enjoyment!

In support of phase three we have already developed 6 videos to support the creation of user generated videos, which has allowed us to ensure that content is effective and efficient.

It was exciting to hear that many Units and some clusters are already coming up with ideas on how they can continue training and staying connected.

They are embracing technology to conduct Virtual Skills sessions (i.e. Knot Tying) via our Facebook Training page and using KAHOOT for online quizzes, for their weekly training nights.

The training team have also developed the Distance Delivery Training Hub on EOS. The site has been released early to support ongoing member engagement while face to face training remains suspended, as a result there will be changes made to the site as well as additional content being regularly added. The site is marked as "Under construction" to make this clear.

The aim of the Hub is to be a one stop shop for members to access all the online training tools, resources and materials that we are developing now and in the future.

Currently the site contains the following information that will assist members to develop their skills and develop training materials for their Units:

- » Links to webinar recordings and PowerPoint Slide packs (if used)
- » Access to the NSW SES Moodle platform – not currently in use but new products will be added as they become available
- » Links to external learning options
- » 'How to' guides to support familiarisation with ICT platforms e.g. Accessing MS Teams, accessing member email etc.
- » Access to the NSW SES Kahoot site
- » A central point for members to submit ideas for inclusion into the

Distance Delivery Project

We encourage you to visit the site, utilise the resources available and provide feedback via the hubs Ideas Sharing page or to email training.delivery@ses.nsw.gov.au

I would like to recognise the work being done by the distance Delivery Project Team which includes the eighty or so volunteers working on this currently as well as our training delivery team. Your desire to deliver high level results for our members is an inspiration and it leaves me feeling great pride to be part of this amazing team.

Chief Inspector – Paul McQueen

Distance Delivery Project Sponsor & Acting Senior Manager Training Delivery



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Unit continuity during a pandemic

On the 12th December 2019 the first case of the mystery virus was identified in Wuhan, China. Wuhan, a city of 11 million people in Hubei province, is a major transport hub with global connections. A new type of viral pneumonia saw symptoms like high fever, coughing and difficulty breathing. Little did we know what impact this was going to have here in Australia.

On the 9th January 2020, the first death, of a 61-year-old man from Wuhan, is linked to the pneumonia-like illness. By the 14th January 2020 the World Health Organisation (WHO) stated that there may have been evidence to suggest limited human-to-human transmission of the coronavirus (in the 41 confirmed cases), mainly through family members, and that there was a risk of a possible wider outbreak.

On the 19th January 2020, a Chinese national flew into Melbourne on a flight from Guangzhou. Australia confirms its first case of the coronavirus. A total of 1,320 cases of the new coronavirus are reported globally; 41 people have died.

Some 12 days later, on the 31st January, the WHO declares the new coronavirus outbreak a global health emergency of international concern. It is just the sixth time such an international emergency has been declared, with past crises including Ebola and the Zika virus. Globally the death toll has jumped to 213, with more 9,692 people infected with the virus.

While this potential issue is brewing in the background, we are unaware of the consequences of this growing health issue and the impacts that this growing issue is going to have on the way we conduct our daily lives as families, employers, employees and volunteers.

On the 11th March 2020, the WHO has been assessing this now global



outbreak of what they call COVID 19, and the 'alarming levels of inaction' as a "pandemic... not a word to use lightly.

On the 15th March, The Australian Government advises against gatherings of more than 500 people urging them to be suspended from March 16 onwards. Australia also announces anyone arriving from overseas will be forced to self-isolate. International cruise ships will not be allowed to dock on Australian shores for 30 days, and "social distancing" is being encouraged, including no handshakes.

On the 20th March SES issues a directive to cease non-essential face to face training.

From an SES perspective, the Coronavirus led to rapid decisions having to be made to protect the

health and safety of our members, whilst ensuring that our core agency responsibilities would be delivered during an escalating crisis.

The Management Team at Liverpool Unit decided to cancel the following weeks muster in accordance with the directive so we could collect our thoughts and come up with a unit strategy moving forward that would provide updates on upcoming weather forecasts, zone updates, and a general update on what we are doing as an Agency.

The first item delivered on the 30th March was a weekly Monday night management team catch-up that started as a conference call. This has now moved weekly to 'Teams' videoconference. This enabled the senior management team to focus on weekly tasks that keep the unit running on a week to week basis and prepare for the whole unit briefing on a Tuesday night. The management team made decisions about social distancing that we were rolled out with immediate effect.

On Tuesday the 31st March, we commenced our first whole unit briefing on 'ZOOM'. We had 49 members attend. We had a discussion around what we knew about COVID 19 and the Heath directions around social





distancing. From this, we advised that crew numbers were to be reduced to 2 persons per light storm and 4 persons per medium storm vehicle. The unit would now take multiple vehicles to a job if required. At the same time, we advised that we had divided the unit into two teams (Red and Blue) and that these would be separated to avoid any cross contamination. This would permit us to still deliver our core role should we have a local outbreak. Members were also reminded of the online training modules that are available on SAP and the great opportunity to sit down and do these while people were in isolation.

The Unit Management Team decided that this COVID 19 pandemic was going to be around for an unknown period and that longer plans need to be put in to place. In order to maintain operational readiness, members were asked to provide availability to attend Tuesday nights as per our regular training schedule. Using the Red and Blue Teams scheme an alternate roster was developed in keeping with social distancing directions. In teams of 8 or less we have undertaken maintenance tasks such as:

- » Overhauling first aid kits
- » Truck readiness
- » Boat readiness
- » Hung lighting in the chainsaw bay
- » Installed tow dispensers
- » Install signage
- » Hung arc-angle from ceiling

With NSW SES rolling out Teams, we commenced our first Teams weekly briefing on the 15th of April. We rolled out a vehicle and radio decontamination process during

this online session. This had 25 participants. In order to maintain member engagement, we decided to run a series of online skills maintenance activities on this new Teams platform. Given the number of members now isolated due to movement restrictions the management team has arranged a series of sessions after the weekly Teams briefing. These include:

- » A Beacon Masterclass
- » A Trivia Night
- » Flood Rescue Desktop Exercise
- » First Aid and Note Taking
- » IMT and AIIMS

We have been aware of checking in on our members and it has been great to get members in to the unit to get maintenance activities done so we are ready to get into the field to undertake our core role in assisting the community.

While we have been quiet operationally (did I say that) during

this time, this has made it easier to be distant from my team. It has been really evident to me that the face to face interactions are really important and I look forward to us getting back to face to face training soon.

As Coronavirus has continued there have now been close to 5 million cases worldwide with 330 000 deaths. In NSW there has been approximately 3100 cases and 47 deaths. This significant event has changed NSW SES unit key operations, but as a unit we have implemented continuity strategies to maintain unit and operational readiness and training. It has meant we have used technology more, been a virtual community and worked as a team to deliver ongoing capability and support member wellbeing.

Anthony Carroll

Unit Commander - Liverpool





A first for the Bega Valley

Drive through meals ... drive through coffee ... drive through bottle shops ... drive through Flu Vaccinations?

Over the weekend of the 25 and 26 April 20, members from the Bega Unit assisted the Bega Valley Medical Practice with the very first drive through vaccination clinic for the shire. With the current pandemic and social distancing rules, it would have been very difficult for the practice to conduct it's normal regime of flu vaccinations at the clinic, so they improvised and came up with a unique way of delivering the vaccines as well as keeping themselves and their patients safe.

The Bega Showground was utilised, marquees set up, a traffic management plan put in place, a wait bay set up, and more than 500 patients vaccinated



all without even leaving their vehicle. From all accounts it was a very successful endeavour and a good trial for mass vaccinations should a COVID vaccine ever be developed.

We had such a great response from the public and medical staff as well as

our volunteers who were super keen to "get out" of lock down and assist on the day!

Michelle De Friskbom
Local Commander, Sapphire Coast

SES getting set to help **save even more lives!**

Our NSW SES Community First Responders (CFR) have long been at the front line, in the battle with heart disease. Our CFR members regularly attend heart attack casualties.

As an 'essential service' (even during this COVID-19 pandemic) our CFR members are still meeting and training directly with New South Wales Ambulance, to build their wide range of clinical skills. Perhaps the simplest and easiest of all the skills, is "how to use the automated external defibrillators (AED's)". As it says in the name, the machine is "automated!". With most models, all you need to do is open the lid, push "start/on" and follow the AED's spoken instructions - Just doing that, will **save lives!**

Did you know that coronary heart disease (CHD) is still the leading cause of death in Australia, for both males and females. 43% of CHD **deaths** (about 8,000 a year!!), **result from cardiac arrest** (heart attack). Certain types of cardiac arrest only respond effectively to defibrillation and, if this is delivered quickly, up to 75% of victims may survive.

NSW SES, (together with RFS and Fire & Rescue) have just signed Memorandums of Understanding with NSW Ambulance, to help develop the **NSW Public Access Defibrillator (PAD) program**. While the operationalisation of the programme is still a 'work in progress', this is a truly important step towards substantially improving cardiac patient outcomes, right across New South Wales. Without doubt, the effectiveness that our CFR volunteers have already shown, has been a significant contribution towards building our State Government's confidence in the program.

According to the Australian Resuscitation Council, only 2% of people who suffer sudden cardiac arrest in public, are treated with a defibrillator by a bystander. Widespread implementation across the New South



Did you know that coronary heart disease (CHD) is still the leading cause of death in Australia, for both males and females.

Wales rescuer community can greatly improve the odds of survival.

With little or no training, people can use an AED. They are designed so that just about anyone can take an AED off the shelf and use it! You will find them in many public places. Every CFR unit has access, they are on almost every NSW Rural Fire Brigade and NSW Fire & Rescue vehicles and many SES units already have them in storm trucks or at the SES Local and Zone headquarters. They are also being rolled out across to all SES Rescue Units.

If someone near you is unconscious following a heart attack, don't be

shy, grab the AED and just follow its instructions. In the current environment, it is probably wise to ensure that you have put on your gloves, mask and eye protection. New South Wales Ambulance officers also suggest that you put a mask on the patient too.

The Public Access Defibrillation Program is a great initiative and we encourage you to join in with your NSW SES Community First Responder colleagues and be a part of the program, as it is rolled out across the New South Wales SES.

Graham Kinder



Anzac Day 2020

Anzac Day 2020 was unlike any other. For the first time in a century the streets were empty; there were no suburban dawn services, mid-morning marches or afternoon two-up matches.

Instead Australians are were asked to unite and recognise past and current service personnel by standing in their driveways or living rooms at 6:00am for a dawn service. Thankyou to all the Volunteers who showed their respects by doing so, it was very humbling to see the Anzac spirit alive. **Lest we forget**



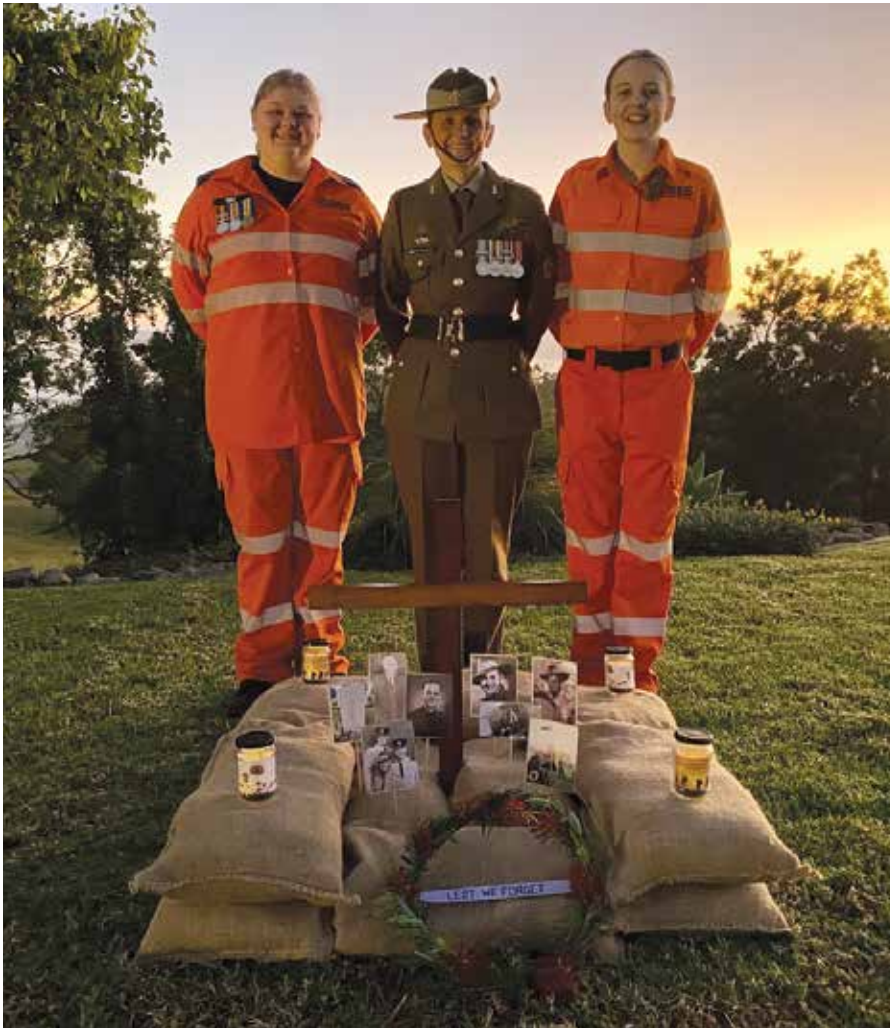
THE STREETS OF ANZAC

A virus came along and shut the world down
And people went crazy and emptied the town
Stay at home and survive the best that you can
Be a good citizen and respect fellow man
For this lonely old digger, it's always been the way
As he prepares to remember on ANZAC Day
Social Distancing in place and nothing new to him
And quietly chuckles at the fancy dressed ladies,
putting out the bins
He polishes his medals as he sits home alone
Cup of tea and the crossword and sits by the phone
For the calls that never come from mates long since passed
The platoon is all gone, and he is proudly the last
They told him Services and Marches are cancelled this year
No poppies, no badges, no two up or beer
Wondering will No one honour or even remember?

Till Remembrance Day, the 11th November
He hears a strange noise and gets to his feet
And with a tear in his eye as he looks up the street
The driveways of people with poppies and candles
Honouring the fallen is more then he can handle
They did all remember and they do really care
They wave and salute while he just stops and stares
Some children have handmade signs on his fence
and the lawn
"We honour your service at the rise of the Dawn"
The ANZAC Spirit lives on in the youth of today
With respect and honour as this is our way
The virus won't win, the futures not set
As we whisper the words, **Lest We forget... ♥**

Unknown





Across the Border

It was great to see the pride and honor Australia wide



WA

During the isolation period of Covid-19 2020, many SES Volunteers stood out the front of their houses to acknowledge the many brave men and women who fought in wars this country has been involved in.

This picture is of two Mandurah SES Volunteers who did their dawn service outside their house, with other past and present military personnel, in their street in Secret Harbour, Western Australia.

Gordon Hall

QLD



Anzac Day Light up the dawn – QLD SES VA Vice President.



Anzac Day Light up the dawn – QLD SES Gold Coast Unit.



Anzac Day Light up the dawn – QLD Brisbane City Unit.



Anzac Day Light up the dawn – QLD SES Rockhampton Unit (Left to Right Isabella Spowart, Rachel Honnery, Anzac Bear "Harry Mimi" named after a fallen Vietnam Veteran, Anita Threadgate, William Threadgate).

VICSES

– Mid West Grampians Region



The Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) acknowledges the importance of working together with other agencies and their neighbouring states and communities. Preparedness and response does not stop at the State border. With VICSES Units only being 2 hours from the NSW border and 30 mins from SA we experience a range of people travelling through our Grampians Region. The VICSES volunteer members on occasion are required to assist and support the NSWSES and SASES crews in an emergency response event. To attain the skills and expertise in search, flood/

water/storm, road crash and general rescue calls, the Volunteer members are required to participate in regular training opportunities across the state of Victoria.

In December 2019 Grampians Region conducted a Road Rescue Workshop at the Stawell SES Unit. This involved four training stands for participants to rotate through, including Glass Management & Stabilisation, Practical cutting techniques, Cross Ramming and the CRS Crash Recovery System. VICSES Grampians Region were well supported by Gerry Sheridan VICSES Operations

Officer and Rod Wells from PT Rescue a provider of crash recovery systems, packex and stabfast kits. The active participants were able to explore the cross ramming features with the use of Holmatro Battery Rescue Tools. At the Road Rescue Workshop there were 11 VICSES volunteers representing five different Units in the VICSES Grampians Region. The Workshop was a great success as VICSES volunteer members were able to learn and practice new skills, extend on their knowledge of extrication techniques with vehicles and their latest technology.

In early March 2020 before Victoria declared a State of Emergency for COVID19 pandemic, the volunteer members from Ballarat, Ararat, Horsham and Warracknabeal Units in the VICSES Grampians Region participated in the Wimmera Machinery Field Days 2020. This was part of the community engagement program for VICSES Grampians Region. There was diesel in the air, fragrance of fresh cut hay and cheers echoed across the Wimmera Events Centre in Longerenong, Victoria.

Good times for farming industry colleagues, friends and family catch up on a few yarns perhaps over a cuppa of tea, enjoying the delights of favourite baked goods or a light beverage or two.



During the three days from 3rd to 5th March 2020 the Wimmera Mallee region hosted the 58th Annual Wimmera Machinery Field Days.

During the Agricultural Expo the farming industry, local community groups, schools, service and sport clubs, from near and afar come together across the three days to explore innovative ideas, participate in regional competitions, the tractor pull, music and entertainment.

VICSES Grampians Region members undertook community engagement activities, engaging with the visitors at the static display in the Moore Exhibition Centre with other emergency service agencies and community organisations. VICSES members were engaging in conversations with local residents and visitors about being prepared before and during the impacts of flooding within the Wimmera River district.



We also took the opportunity to invite the public in the Join Us campaign while promoting the VICSES key flood and storm safety messages to all the visitors of the Wimmera Machinery Field Days.

A big thank you to the VICSES members Kieran Loughran – Horsham

Unit, Valarie Taylor and Trish Wilde – Warracknabeal Unit, William Maddern and Warren Pitt – Ararat Unit, Robyn Read – Ballarat Unit, the Regional staff from MidWest Clare Minterm and Belinda Marchant for helping this community engagement become a success.

Early March this year was a busy time for VICSES Grampians Region members.

At the Magdala Motor Lodge and Leisure centre in Stawell the VICSES Grampians Region held their Annual General Rescue Training Weekend (AGRTW).

The weekend was well supported with volunteer members from Bacchus Marsh, Ballarat, Hepburn Shire, Horsham, Warracknabeal and Dimboola, Edenhope and Hamilton Units.

The AGRTW involved 19 VICSES volunteers learning new skills and knowledge of general rescue response. The VICSES members across the weekend had opportunity to work



together as a team, build upon individual strengths and establish comradery amongst the VICSES community and to meet Tim Wiebusch the VICSES Chief Officer Operations.

Each year the VICSES Grampians Region staff present the Ian Maybery Award to a member who demonstrated

excellence in delivery of training. In 2020 this prestigious award was presented to Matt Viola from Hepburn Shire Unit.

Jane Patton
Community Resilience Coordinator
VICSES Grampians Region



WOW Day 2020

We had a member from the Moruya Community send in the following picture and Message for the NSW SES Volunteers.

Hi from The Stumpy Family at Moruya!
We are 4 old tree stumps situated on South Head Rd, Moruya Heads.

We are decorated to celebrate special days or events in our community and our "carers" have dressed us in orange scarves to recognise our SES volunteers this week. (We have a "Grinch" who doesn't like us dressed up so we constantly fight to prevent being naked!) But we have 490 followers in our FB family and many supporters who get very upset when we are stripped.

We were dressed to thank our firefighters early this year and just recently had masks on for COVID 19. But, our only aim is to make people smile and so many love us. We hope we have put a smile on our special SES volunteers after such a huge start to the year. So thank you from the Stumpy Family at Moruya !

I started dressing the tree stumps a year ago and the response from our community is so heart warming – It makes it worth all the effort – Smiles have been hard to find recently so it's only something small but I like to think it makes someone's day. I remain anonymous to keep the fun going.

Thanks for all you do.



Animal Rescues



Steve Wood, Megan Thompson and Doug Wiggins returning Matilda to her owners

‘Matilda’ rescued below the cliff on the Hawkesbury River

Matilda, a 4 year old German short hair pointer, went missing from Cliff Road at Freeman’s Reach. The next day residents that backed onto the cliff line, overlooking the Hawkesbury River, heard ‘Matilda’ yelping (or more like a mournful wail) and rang ‘000’.

One of our rescuers went down one of ladders that services the pumps on

the river but was quickly stopped by a tangle of vines and thick slippery mud from the recent flooding.

Another crew launched an Inflatable Rescue Boat (IRB) from a nearby laneway and made their way upstream.

They soon located the dog up on the muddy bank, over 600m upstream from her home, and carefully loaded

her into the boat. Luckily she had a tag on her collar with her name and a mobile phone number. The crew then took Matilda for a trip back down the river for a happy reunion with her owners.

David King

NSW State Emergency Service
– Hawkesbury Unit

Animal Rescues

Complex Multi-Stage Rescue of a Horse from a Concrete Pipe in a Ditch

9th March 2020 (09:13) NSWSES Hawkesbury Unit was called to "HORSE TRAPPED IN A CREEK – TRAPPED BETWEEN A TREE & PIPE, & IT'S HEAD IS GOING UNDER THE WATER".



Horses position on arrival

On arrival, David King (Deputy Unit Commander and NSWSES Large Animal Rescue trainer) and Kate Elston, found 'Tango', a 27 year old Arab Gelding (ex- endurance horse), down in a flowing ditch (near South Creek). The horse had its back legs inside a concrete pipe, its withers up against a Willow Tree; and his front legs against the sides of the ditch.

The horse still had his rug on.

"I gather the horse slipped into the ditch whilst walking over the pipe between two paddocks" described David King.

Tango's owner (Sally) was in the water supporting his head on a feed bucket

Ellie, a new veterinarian with Agnes Banks Equine Clinic, arrived and was provided a set of waders from our Large Animal Rescue Trailer. Ellie advised us that she had done a Large Animal Rescue course at Charles Sturt University (Wagga) with Dr Christine Smith and Anthony Hatch.

She entered the water and medically assessed 'Tango', before giving him a light sedation, whilst we figured out how we were going to get the horse out of this awkward position??

"This is probably one of the more complex horse rescues operations we have faced...and we have been doing this for nearly 35 years" said David King.

Kevin Jones (Hawkesbury Unit Commander). arrived with another SES 4WD and NSWSES Hawkesbury Unit's Large Animal Rescue Trailer.

Ellie and I discussed our limited options and the restricted space to safely work, the level of sedation required, the time it would likely take to extricate the horse; and came up with a basic plan.

Our rescue operators provided a floatation device to help keep the horses head out of the water, and a head stall (halter) and lead rope, whilst we cut away barbed wire fencing wire

to give us better access in and around the horse.

We had a conversation with Sally, the horse's owner, and she opted to stay with her horse (and yes, she put a helmet on for us).

Ellie applied bandages to the lower back legs to protect the tendons in





Pulling the sling under the horse using a shortened strop guide

preparation for the difficult rescue operation. We put on a hobble on the lower leg and maintained pressure whilst the bandage was being applied (just in case the horse kicked out).

We removed (cut the straps) on the rug.

PART 1 – ‘Tango’ was given a heavier sedation, so we could safely rig a sling around the horse (Forward Skid Technique). Using a shortened version of the Strop Guide, we were able to ‘just’ get the guide in and under the horse (just behind the withers) and pulled the 6m sling through.

The sling was connected it to an electric winch on the SES 4WD on the other side of the creek /swamp (after cutting through a boundary fence).

“We used a plastic soft protection sheet between the horse’s back and the tree” to protect the horse’s back whilst we winched him forward” described David. .

‘Tango’ was carefully pulled forward out of the pipe and away from the tree; and onto a heavy duty plastic sheet called a Rescue Glide.

PART 2 – The 4WD was repositioned onto our side of the creek. ‘Tango’ was then rotated ninety degrees (900), spinning him on the Rescue Glide. The horse was then carefully winched up and out of the creek and onto another Rescue Glide sheet (still using a Forward Skid Technique).

We placed a set of hobbles on the rear legs to help avoid a fence post.

PART 3 – We connected the winch to the Rescue Glide and transported ‘Tango’ and Ellie to a safer area to come



Pausing after PART 1 to relocate the 4WD and get ready to turn the horse 900



PART 2 - up and out of the creek



PART 3 - moving the horse and Vet to a safer location



out of the sedation (well away from the creek).

‘Tango’ was then rolled over and off the Glide to get his legs downhill and positioned him into Sternal position (onto his chest) (image below).

Sadly, Tango had aspirated a lot of water whilst thrashing in the ditch, and was euthanased.

David King

Deputy Unit Commander /
NSWSES Large Animal Rescue
Operations (LARO) trainer
NSWSES Hawkesbury Unit



Port Macquarie Unit

The challenge that wasn't...

NSWSES were preparing to host the National Disaster Rescue Challenge in Wollongong at the end of 2019 and State Emergency Service Champions Port Macquarie were ready to defend their title.

Unfortunately the extent of the bushfires within NSW resulted the Challenge being postponed to 2020. The challenge was rescheduled, joining instructions issues and teams preparing however COVID-19 intervened and the challenge had to be cancelled.

Teams from State Emergency Service units around Australia were ready to invade New South Wales for the first time in 14 years to battle it out in a series of rescue challenges to decide which state has the best SES crew in the country.

Nicknamed 'Exercise Thunder', the National Disaster Rescue Challenge was going to include a series of challenges, complete with live casualties and realistic injuries.

NSW SES Port Macquarie Unit

Commander and Team Leader Michael Ward says that having fun is part of his crew's recipe for success.

"We remind each other what we are here for – saving lives and protecting communities – but we have fun and don't always take ourselves seriously," said Michael. "Our Unit motto is 'train hard, rescue easy.'"

The team had to be changed from the State Disaster Rescue Challenge as Sereena and Michael welcomed their first son – Casper. Casper had his orange PPC ready to come along and support the team. Sereena's role had to change from Medic to logistical



support with Scott Witchard joining the team for the National Challenge.

Michael said that his Unit has had a busy six months and were looking forward to testing their skills against other SES teams from around Australia. The Volunteer Association has been great in providing us logistic equipment for the Challenge including branded shirts and bags and arrangements had been made to meet the team in Wollongong ready to go.

"We have been supporting the NSW Rural Fire Service on the Mid North Coast since September before responding to the recent storms and floods as well," said Michael. "We sent a strike team to help the people on Lord Howe Island after Ex-Tropical Cyclone Uesi, so it has been a busy six months."

We are now in COVID-19 lockdown and working on maintaining our training online via MS Teams and looking forward to spending time face to face with our orange family soon.

Shout out to three Volunteers from the Kempsey Unit

Kempsey Unit Helps boy with Cystic Fibrosis

Three members of the Kempsey unit recently assembled a swing set for a single Mum with three sons who had no friends or relatives living in Kempsey. Having no one to help assemble the swing set, the mother had gone to the police station and asked who might be able to help her.

They suggested to contact the NSW SES and once the call came through to our Unit Commander we were

more than happy to go out and assist the family in need. The youngest son Jackson has Cystic Fibrosis and John Hunter Hospital was kind enough to donate a swing set to the family to assist Jackson with doing exercises for his lungs.

Two of our members Barry and Joe worked together and assembled the swing set with the help of a third Member Kevin. The instructions on the box said it would take two people an

hour to assemble – After many hours of frustration they eventually had the swing set assembled and ready to go. Lisa, the boys mother was very grateful for everyone's help and Jackson was excited to be able to get on and start using it!

Thank you Barry, Joe and Kevin for volunteering to assist the family .

Greg Gill

Media Officer Kempsey SES

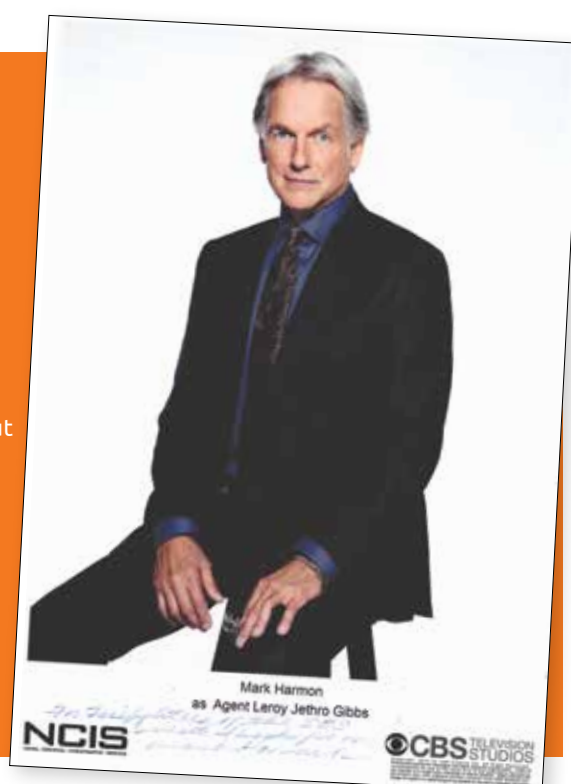


THANKYOU TO ALL THE NSW SES VOLUNTEERS WHO WORKED THROUGH THE 2019-2020 BUSHFIRE CRISIS

Mark Harmon

Actor from NCIS

Mark Harmon a leading actor in the Series NCIS has reached out and thanked all the NSW SES Volunteers who were involved in the 2019-2020 Bushfire Crisis. After being contacted by a fellow Volunteer from the Glen Innes Unit and informed of the size of the problem, the response to the fires by multiple agencies, and fallout in terms of mental and physical health as well as economic and social trauma, he was wanted to acknowledge the efforts of our Volunteers and encourage you all for your amazing work! Here is a signed picture that Mark has sent through and the Original Photograph will be on display at the NSW SESVA Office.



Hiccups and Progress – Mental Health First Aid Update

Like many things in 2020, Mental Health First Aid Training has not gone quite to plan, but we carry on anyway!

Port Macquarie Unit put their hand up to host the first Mental Health First Aid course for 2020, and the first MHFA for Northern Zone. With plans well in place for January 2020, the bushfires had other ideas, and the course was rescheduled for February. Not to be out done, February brought Cyclone Uesi and Port Macquarie members who were meant be joining the course ended up enroute to Lord Howe Island instead. Not wanting to delay the course again, Port Macquarie did an impressive whip around, and quickly filled the newly vacated spots alongside members from Pacific Palms and Urunga.

Meanwhile, Metro had one and a half courses delivered prior to COVID-19 suspending training. We were able to deliver a full weekend course for a group of Metro members at the VA headquarters, but unfortunately Metro members attending the course over 4 weeknights at Marrickville Unit had to be suspended at the half-way point. I had also been successful in obtaining a local grant to run the first courses in Southern Zone, with Parkes, Temora and Tumut on the itinerary, however these had to be put on hold.

However, to adapt, Mental Health First Aid Australia has just launched an e-version of this course. I'll be running the first of these for members in June, so watch this space! The



Port Mac MHFA storm photo: These Port Macquarie members impressively completed a full day of training, and then went directly to a storm job before showing up again the next day for more training...and took the trainer along for the ride.

development of an online version of MHFA may be an exciting training option for members across the state post COVID-19, so we look forward to member feedback on it.

Whilst it is easy to see these disruptions as frustrating, it actually speaks to how essential knowledge around Mental Health issues continues to be in our current climate. With the pressures of everyday life being increased by unexpected stressors – whether it is natural disaster, financial strain or the disruption in our day to day routine, having the skills to look after ourselves and check in with each other are increasingly important.

We have also received some fabulous feedback from members

in South Eastern Zone who attended our 2019 training in Moruya, and then experienced the impact of the bushfires. A number of members have sent updates on how Mental Health First Aid training helped them cope, and help them support members of their community during that difficult time. It is heartening to hear that members feel this training is helping them feel more equipped and confident in dealing with these challenges.

Please send any questions or expressions of interest for face to face or online training to **MHCoordinator@nswsesva.org.au** and you'll be kept updated on training developments in your area.



Member Vale

A loyal and proud member of the NSW State Emergency Service (SES) for the past 37 years, Warwick Cary ESM served the people of NSW in their time of need with both care and compassion.

Mr Cary joined the NSW State Emergency Service in 1982. He was appointed the role of Kogarah Local Controller in 2003, a position he held until late last year; and the Service's inaugural State Protocol Officer by the then NSW SES Director General, Major General B W Howard AO MC ESM in 2001. In this position, he was instrumental in the establishment of an Awards System to recognise outstanding service by NSW SES members.

Mr Cary's commitment to the community saw him awarded the Centenary Medal (2001), the NSW SES Director General's Commendation for Service (2004), a NSW SES Director General's Unit Citation (2006), a NSW SES Commissioner's Certificate of Appreciation (2016), Life Member Award (2019) and the Emergency Services Medal on Australia Day 2008. In addition, he was named the City of Kogarah's Citizen of the Year (2011) and presented with the Cook Community Medal by The Hon Scott Morrison MP (2016).

Mr Cary was also a founding member of the NSW SES Volunteers Association (1999) and was honoured with a NSW SES Volunteers Association Life Member (2007).

He was also an active member of the NSW SES VA Welfare Fund.

Over the years, Mr Cary led his unit through many local emergencies. He provided significant leadership in many major operations throughout the state including; the Northern Suburbs Storms (January 1991), Sydney and NSW bushfires (January 1994), Hunter storms (June 1996), Father's Day storms (September 1996), Thredbo landslide (July 1997), Sydney fires (December 1997), Nyngan floods (August 1990), Sydney hailstorm (April 1999), Sydney Olympics 2000, Dubbo storm (January 2001) and Sydney Christmas Fires (December 2001-January 2002).

Away from the NSW SES, Mr Cary was the owner of Medal Shop in Rockdale.

Our deepest and heartfelt condolences go to Mr Cary's two children, Esther and Matthew, two grandchildren, extended family, friends and colleagues.

He will be greatly missed.



HONOURING MR PROTOCOL

How do you honour Mr Protocol at his own funeral service? That was the question we had to deal with on Monday morning April the 27th as we laid Warwick Cary to rest at the South Chapel at Woronora. Working with the Cary family, the funeral director and the Woronora Cemetery Trust we were able to get permission to have an honour guard from the Kogarah unit that gave the salute as we slow marched the hearse in. We were then given permission to allow 2 members from the protocol team dress the coffin once it was in place in the chapel.

It seemed surreal to have only the family in the chapel as we celebrated the life and service of our beloved protocol guru Warwick. We remembered the family man, Dad, Grandpa, the friend and the valued team member. We reflected on his service to the NSW SES, to the public through the shop and to all that he came in contact with. We remembered his generosity of time and spirit. And we pondered his dedication to bring to life significant occasions through the use of protocol and ceremony.

The family have indicated that we will hold a memorial service when we are able to so that we can all come together and pay our respects. In the meantime, our living legacy to Warwick Cary is to live our lives by serving, by being generous and by our dedication.

Vale Warwick Cary.
Much grace & peace

Steve Hall
Senior Chaplain



Medium Rescue Vehicle (Generation 4)

The MRV is the standard vehicle for General Land Rescue Units and enables our GLR Units to respond to road crash Incidents, domestic animal incidents, domestic and industrial incidents, partial structural collapse, storm operations, flood rescue Incidents and to undertake vertical rescue operations (if accredited).

The Generation 4 Medium Rescue Vehicle (MRV) is built on an Isuzu NPS 4x4 Crew Cab chassis with:

- » 8,000 kg GVM (MRV can be driven with a Light Rigid (LR) Licence)
- » 5,560 kg tare weight
- » 5.2L 4 cylinder turbo charged diesel engine
- » Automated manual transmission (AMT)
- » 500mm wading depth
- » 7.75 m length
- » 2.85 m height
- » 2.80 m width (over mirrors)
- » 2.20 m width (over body)
- » 6 seats with lap sash belts on all seats

Whilst the Medium Rescue Vehicle is technically a 4WD vehicle, it **MUST NOT** be driven in rugged terrain or conditions that are beyond its physical/ structural capability in terms of height, weight and ground clearance. The 4WD capability has been provided to improve traction when the vehicle is operating on grounds such as grass, dirt, snow and ice.

VEHICLE EQUIPMENT LIST (VEL)

The General Land Rescue Capability Development Group (GLRCDG) has worked closely with Fleet to revise the equipment being carried on our rescue vehicles.

Our new MRV comes with:

- » Milwaukee M18 power tools and portable scene lighting and torches
- » Milwaukee M18 Chainsaw (as well as a Stihl MS362)



The new Generation 4 Medium Rescue Vehicle (MRV) is currently being built and delivered as part of the NSWSES Fleet Replacement Program (FRP).

- » Milwaukee Packout cases to securely stow all the power tools (Reciprocating saw, Angle grinder, 13mm Hammer drill, 1/4" hex impact driver, 1/2" hex impact driver and all the various accessories)
- » Milwaukee Packout case to securely stow the finger kit (including the Dremel and Inspection Camera)
- » Milwaukee Packout case to securely stow the Air Bag Kit (regulator / controls / and hoses)
- » Significant increase in cribbing located in two drawers at the rear of the vehicle.
- » Four (4) lengths of Oregon timber for shoring a partial structural collapse (instead of leaving behind your Acrow-Props). Or if you have one of 'those' jobs where you need lots of timber cribbing – simply cut up the lengths into 500mm blocks.
- » Two (2) sheets of Form Ply which can be used to stabilise a trench, or wall in a partial structural collapse, or cut up for airbag protection boards or gussets for shoring. They are also good to walk over when rescuing a cow or horse from mud.
- » One (1) Size 0 Acrow Prop, Two (2) Size 1 Acrow Props and one (1) Size 2 Acrow Prop
- » 136 piece combination tool kit
- » Tool sheet to set up your tool staging area
- » Extrication Tool Kit containing the most useful hand tools to support a road crash rescue operation (instead of getting the tools from the combination tool box each time you set up your tool dump)
- » Litter Kit containing blanket and body bag, litter tie down straps and 10m x 25mm tape to secure the casualty and casualty protection equipment (white Petzl helmet, goggles and ear muffs)
- » Lukas P600 eDraulic pump and Peddle cutter
- » 7 ½ tonne electric winch with 45m of Dyneema cable

MRV RESCUE BODY

The MRV body has been designed and built by Kuiper's Engineering in South Windsor and comes with some great innovations to support our rescue operations:



Locker 1 – with the Milwaukee packout cases



Locker 2 – Finger Kit

- » 240V electrical supply comes from deep cycle batteries and a 3kVA inverter. The MRV does not require an external generator to run the Teklite 6m remote operated LED light mast
- » The power supply system has an engine auto-start function to maintain power to the batteries as they start to get low (even when cabin is locked)
- » Shore power connection when the vehicle is housed at the unit maintains 240V power supply to the battery chargers; including the M18 and eDraulic batteries.
- » Ergonomic stowage and improved layout ensure better workflow to retrieve tools when undertaking a rescue operation
- » Cribbing drawers under locker 4 (rear compartment)
- » Rated live load anchor points at the front and rear
- » Centralised locking on all cabin and locker doors (with warning alarm sounding if the doors are not secure)
- » Onboard 30L water tank and soap dispenser for hand washing
- » 45L fridge on the near side (now under the awning)
- » Magnetic whiteboard for planning and briefing
- » Ropes stowed in a locker quarantined from fuels and oils
- » The MRV also has a dedicated locker for stowage of a deflated Ark Angel raft. Where a Unit doesn't have an Ark Angel raft this locker may be used to carry Unit specific equipment up to 80 kg this may include additional traffic cones or longer lengths of rope.



Locker 4 – The business end of the vehicle with new cribbing drawers and hydraulic tools

Our Rescue Vehicles and the equipment each vehicle carries evolve as our operational capability evolve to better meet community and emergency service (support) expectations.

These vehicles can support cross capabilities including storm damage operations & flood rescue response, as well as partial structural collapse, assisting ambulance paramedics to gain

emergency medical access or to load and move a patient.

The GLRCDDG is always open to new ideas, innovations or requests for change. Please contact your zone representatives with your thoughts.

David King

Co-chair General Land Rescue Capability Development Group

A Volunteer's perspective

Why do we do it? Why should we do it? Why don't we get paid? These are just a few of the many questions that we get posed with as an SES Volunteer.

Searches generally happen late afternoon / night when people realise they are in trouble and call for help. With fading daylight, panic generally sets in for the untrained bush walker. For what ever reason we are called in for - injured bush walker, lost bush walker, the SES is always there ready to help.

Why do we do it? Our members join the SES and share the common belief in helping, giving back to their community. There's a sense of pride, accomplishment and warmth one feels when volunteering.

Why should we do it? We have many skilled operators in lots of different fields and when we are brought together we make one hell of a team. Team leaders, experienced navigators, fitness freaks and just the common all rounder make up the members ready to jump into action to help.

The search at Box Vale walking track on 29/04/20 began at around 1815pm - dinner time. There was no hesitation by our dedicated search team members to get involved, when quite frankly it was a cold, wet, miserable night in the Southern Highlands and staying at home in the warmth was an option.

We met at the CP (Command Post) and were briefed by Police the husband of one of the walkers. You never know what to expect, how many are lost, if anyone is injured, or just how far into the bush they have gone.

Our training and experience allows us to follow processes to ascertain the known information, to get the search underway asap. Our initial team we send out become the first responders. Experienced, fit members that get the ball rolling.

The emergency plus app is vital for search and rescue teams to pin point missing bush walker's location. It wasn't long and with dwindling phone battery the walkers were able to get a signal, download the app, and get us the Lat / Long of their location.

There was a sense of relief at the



CP, as we could then concentrate on getting the search team to this location. There's always an un-spoken worry that the situation could always be worse than what is described by the walkers once they are located by the search team. In this case the walkers were in good health, tired, and maybe a few leeches but they were in safe hands.

After a long, slow walk back up the dreaded steps at 40 ft falls, the group of walkers and search team made their way back to the CP, and were met by waiting loved ones.

SES debrief after every job, What did we do, what did we do well, what can we do better for next time. It's an ever changing learning environment, and we maintain our skills, currency and mentoring of new members with this.

We maintain our professionalism and responsibilities as members of the SES. We don't take searches light

heartedly. Reasons being: The weather can change very quickly. The thought of an injured bush walker increases the need to find them quickly. The walkers are not where they think they are. The complexity that remote area searches can bring.

We have walked in all weather events, through the night and in the remote parts of the Southern Highlands to find missing people- why? It's a sense of duty when we put on that uniform.

A humble feeling to volunteer our time, when we have the skills and knowledge to do it. I'm not gonna lie, I personally grumble when its cold and wet, but I am human and those feelings are nothing when compared to finding someone. We do it for our community. It's the reason we wear orange.

Irene Fava
SES Unit Commander,
Moss Vale

Thankyou Letter received from the family that was rescued on the 29/04/20

I was one of three adults with 4 children (12,11,9,3) rescued late last night in the rain from the bush on the banks of the Napier River. I have written the following to especially thank all the emergency services that came out last night to our family in need.

'our adventure out of lock down'

On pondering this unexpected event on coming out of lock down ...slowly...I have one image that repeats itself in my minds replay. The light...The light of the Rescue Helicopter...what a reassurance for us and our lost children to be told by the line of light in the sky that they could see us waving our hands around. You had picked up the heat of our bodies from your infra red I was told...how incredibly amazing was that!

My daughter had somehow managed to send our Longitude and Latitude to you and I along with the children stood in awe at what was happening. The relief at the sight of that helicopter told us all we were safe... we had been pin pointed!

We were just off the track but with dark we could not risk another 'search out the lost track'. The sudden and final fall of light was a fearful and frightening experience for the children and this quick response gave us all great encouragement. As grandmother to 3 of the 4 children I express my everlasting Gratitude to you all and want to commend the work you do.

We were perched on a steep side embankment on the Napier River downstream from 40foot falls...what a walk!

The track from the incline to 40foot falls...the last hour of the walk as I understand it...is not well signposted with pink ribbons far between. The track is badly overgrown and should not be attempted unless by very experienced bush walkers with all day packs and emergency supplies including a real compass a grid map and light. Sadly we wrongly assumed the track would be similar to the Box Hill approach. We were caught totally unawares and were not equipped...lessons learned.

I am a 64 year old grandmother along with my daughter and her three children. We were accompanied by a very experienced bush walker and his 12 year old son. We were all healthy fit and well used to lots of outdoor activity. I have a bad back but swim a kilometre at least 5 times a week...(when aquatic centre open) and walk for therapy. The lock down was becoming a very real threat to my ability to move freely.

Our youngest turns 3 on the last day of Autumn. She was our trooper ...our warrior ...our blessing and our mascot. Her peace surrounded us. Her little legs took her far until her resolute mother hoisted her on her back for the most challenging last hour and a half...

or so we thought. We had an uphill climb and it began raining. We were drenched to the skin with the shivers coming and going through our little happy group of 7 wayfaring bush trackers.

What a memorable and wondrous day for us all to remember what a great country we live in; the bush and the super heroes of our SES volunteers and emergency workers.

How do I give you thanks for what you all did? You are our modern day ANZACS. The rescue effort you launched for us was nothing but the greatest in the world.

We have much to be grateful for and learn from our adventure last night.

As I sat in that Gully I said a Rosary of thanks for this outreach of good men and women whom I had overwhelming confidence to the depths of my soul that our children were safe and there was no need to fear. I knew we would all sleep dry and warm in the comfort of those we love that night. I experienced the magnitude of goodwill to all men last night.

You all saved us from a night of hell in a time of need. This incredible rescue was launched within minutes. It was the most amazing thing I've ever experienced and now I'm out of the shock of it I can more fully appreciate the magnitude and Goliath service we were given last night.

I personally oppose the 'wildlands' project of conspiracy agendas and believe an active debate on this matter should be had. We all love and cherish our environment here in the Highlands and given the super hot fuelled fires we recently experienced I want to close on a short comment about the tracks condition.

This bushtrack is part of one of the most popular walks in the district. Being in such close proximity to a metropolitan area I would respectfully ask that this section of the track be investigated for future walkers. The track needs some warning / distance and time indicator signs at the very least. I beg of you not to take this as any criticism as I have no knowledge of how the tracks are managed. I just want to somehow ensure I let you know there is a short section of the track that is in a very bad way.

The exit with our SES guides and lights was in much better condition so it was only a short section of this long and delightful loop that is very difficult and not to be approached by the unwary as we discovered to our horror.

***In all humility I give you my personal apologies for unexpectedly and unwittingly finding myself in need of your mercy and help...Thank you.
All of you...thank you.***

Port Stephens Unit

Port Stephens SES commenced operations as an integrated RESCUE unit initially in 1970 under Civil Defence.

In July 2020, Port Stephens SES will be 50 years old and continue to provide storm, flood and rescue services to Port Stephens and surrounding areas.

The unit's first response area included the Pacific Highway, mines and quarries, Stockton beach, heavy industrial area including aluminium smelter, chemical factories, large mining equipment repair facilities, tens of multi-million dollar manufacturing operations, Williamtown RAAF base and Newcastle airport.

Our 40 active members and 25 General Land Rescue Operators maintain 24 hour coverage 7 days per week crewing our 3 Rescue trucks (a Light Rescue, new Gen4 Medium Rescue and a Heavy Rescue Truck).

Our unit has also concentrated on developing and maintaining advanced medical skills working closely with our colleagues at NSW Ambulance and Fire Rescue NSW. We also have undertaken self-funded advanced resuscitation training, which has been delivered by NSW Ambulance Paramedics, and obtained oxygen resuscitation equipment for all of our vehicles.

The rescue operations, along with storm and tempest work, keep our unit busy with many serious Road Crash Rescue (RCR) jobs being undertaken throughout the year.

Our unit's RCR training also includes awareness sessions with NSW Ambulance Paramedics, to allow a shared understanding of patient centred rescue principles and equipment safety across our respective operations.

As an example on 8th March 2020, Port Stephens SES were activated by Police Radio to a multi-persons trapped motor vehicle accident on Tomago Road, Tomago.

Port Stephens SES Rescue responded both the Heavy Rescue and Medium Rescue with 6 accredited operators to what would unfold to be a complex rescue incident that required our operators to work closely with ASNSW Paramedics, Westpac Rescue Helicopter Doctor and Intensive Care specialists at the scene.

On scene, NSW SES Rescue Operators assisted NSW Ambulance Intensive Care Paramedics with patient stabilisation and worked alongside Paramedics to develop an extrication plan whilst enabling the provision of life support to the trapped patient.

Hydraulic tools including spreaders, cutters and rams were used on the vehicle to extricate the patient.

The patient was stabilised at the scene, and was then moved a significant distance by Ambulance NSW and SES Personnel to the Westpac Rescue Helicopter and then transported to John Hunter Hospital.





COOEE!

Hello from Gilgandra!!

IT IS OK TO ASK WHERE ON EARTH IS GILGANDRA?

Well, we are mid sized, rural community located at the intersection of the Newell, Castlereagh and Oxley Highways around 70kms to north of Dubbo. We are located on the banks of the Castlereagh River and we are predominately a community based around wheat growing, sheep and cattle grazing. The word *Gilgandra* is Aboriginal for 'long water hole' and we are the meeting place for the Aboriginal people of the Wiradjuri, Kamilaroi and Wailwan nations. Gilgandra has strong ties to Australian military history being the starting point for the original **1915 Cooe Recruitment March** in World War I.

The Gilgandra SES Unit commenced life as the Gilgandra Rescue Squad back in the 1970's. The Rescue Squad was raised to meet the rescue needs within the Gilgandra local government area being that we are on the main inland, Melbourne to Brisbane transport route. Our Newell Highway for example

has somewhere between 1.7 million and 2.0 million vehicle movements per year and one set of road safety figures cited, stated –

'almost 30% of all fatal crashes were head-on crashes (13 out of 38), with heavy vehicles being involved in 92% of these head-on crashes heavy vehicle involvement in four of the five head-on fatal crashes in 2006'

The **Consequence Management Guide** for the Gilgandra Local Emergency Management Committee has the rating of motor vehicle crash rated as HIGH.

So whilst the focus of the NSW SES is storm, flood and tsunami we also have as a focus the matter of transport crashes. We are an accredited **general land rescue** unit.

Risk is measured by considering both frequency and consequence. The numbers of crashes we attend is not large in volume (relatively low frequency of occurrence) but what we do attend can involve heavy vehicles and they result in major entrapment with serious injury or death occurring

(major consequence). Hence our risk is rated as high. This combined with our relative remoteness to backup and other services, means that we take our **RESCUE** capability, very serious.

Around 6 years ago, the Gilgandra community built an emergency aeromedical retrieval helipad at the local hospital. Funded and build entirely by the efforts of the community, this helipad has lighting and is used 24/7 for urgent medical transfers to larger centres. The Gilgandra SES Unit provides set up, security and emergency firefighting coverage when the helipad is in use.

The Gilgandra SES Unit volunteers are highly excited as the plans for our new purpose built, local unit HQ building has recently been put out to tender.

It will be so nice to have a modern, clean, tidy HQ space for training, meetings and response from. Hopefully it will be complete for handover, in the last quarter of 2020.

Geoff Kiehne ASM
Unit Commander | Gilgandra



A recent car and truck crash. The collision caused major damaged to the car with 1 x female occupant trapped. 'A' pillar, 'B' pillar and both drivers side doors removed.



A sedan rolled several times with a female occupant trapped. Vehicle stabilised and roof flap extrication performed.

A single car into tree. Male occupant serious injury and trapped for some hours. A-pillar along with driver's side door removed.



"Army truck on it's side in the middle of the highway and there are gas cylinders everywhere", came the call. An unusual event where an Army truck dislodged from the rear of a low loader whilst being transported on the highway. The truck was carrying a large quantity of LP gas cylinders and rolled onto it's side on coming off the truck. Phew, the cylinders were brand new and empty it turned out. Gilgandra SES provided traffic control and scene lighting for the salvage and clean up effort.

Gilgandra SES volunteers providing assistance at the hospital helipad. There we provide assistance with helipad security, pad preparedness, emergency firefighting coverage and assisting with the patient transfer. This requires around 4 to 6 responses per year.



Metro Western Capability Unit

The Metro Western Capability Unit (Formally Sydney Western Region Unit) is a small unit of 8 volunteer members based within the Blacktown SES LHQ. We are one of three capability units supporting the 44 units in Metro Zone.

As a Capability/Support unit, the unique thing we do is organise inter-agency visits where groups of NSW SES members can visit other emergency service agencies such as Aviation Fire Fighters, TOLL Ambulance Helicopters, POLAIR, Westpac Lifesaver helicopters, Transport NSW Rail operations Centre, TCM and other primary agencies to build relationships, learn how they operate during adverse weather conditions and obtain an understanding of how we might operate together during emergencies. In 2016, we expanded the invitation to units within our region and now the entire metro zone.

Some of the recent Inter Agency Events we have been involved in include:

- » Running a Nationally Recognised 'Work Safe Around Aviation' course with Westpac Lifesaver Helicopters where we also participated in their daily crew briefing and demonstrations.

We regularly visit TOLL Ambulance Helicopters and the Aeromedical Crewing Excellence (ACE) training centre where we look around the aircraft and operations room as well as observing training pool demonstrations and try our skills in the virtual reality flight simulator.

The highlight of the event calendar is a visit to the Aviation Rescue Fire Fighters at Sydney Airport. A typical visit involves a tour of one of the operational fire stations, a hands



on experience with the trucks and equipment, a guided walk through the dark and smokey fire training simulation chamber and the display of the water cannons on the trucks which we inevitably end up wet.



At the **Air Traffic Control** tower at Sydney airport, we discover how Sydney's air traffic is coordinated and personally experience the view from the flight deck whilst observing the communication between coordinators and the approaching and departing aircraft.

This is rare opportunity is truly a once in lifetime experience.

Rail Operations Centre at Transport NSW

Here we discovered how they manage the rail network. They can monitor the movements of every train on an almost 33m long, 4 metre high digital screen which is the biggest in the southern hemisphere. (Its even bigger than NASA's mission control) We also discuss how they respond to rail emergencies and how storms impact network operations.



At the **Aviation Support Branch (POLAIR)** we are given a tour of the base and a talk about all the modern technology on the aircraft such as the 'nite sun' searchlight (30million candle power), Forward Looking Infra Red (FLIR), rescue winches, high definition camera system with live video downlink and integrated touch screen digital glass cockpit.





At **Transport Management Centre**, we discuss the vital role the TMC play in ensuring commuters get around Sydney roads with minimal delay. Most commuters are completely oblivious to the impressive 'SCATS' system which links traffic lights together to form one large coordinated signaling network.

This system continually monitors traffic flow and automatically adjust signal phasing when it detects any irregularity

such as breakdowns, accidents, blackouts and congestion from storms.

Other places of interest have been:

- » Police Radio – VKG Sydney where we learn about how they handle Triple 0 calls and observe how the operators coordinate police response to emergencies.
- » Public Information Inquiry Centre (PIIC)
- » NSW Ambulance Service (fixed wing)



Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and social distancing restrictions this year we have had to place our planned onsite training and events on hold and are excited to resume activities once restrictions are lifted and it is safe to do so.

In the meantime one of the programs we have been involved in is running an Online course for the Local Scouts Club.

THE SCOUTS AUSTRALIA SES BADGE

The new State Emergency Service badge is now available and aims to give Scouts the understanding and practical skills to help build their disaster resilience. It's also been recognised as the national winner of the Resilient Australia Awards!

Scouts Earning SES Badge Online

The 2nd Baulkham Hills Cub Scout Pack are making the most of their time inside, earning their Scouts SES Badge through a four week program with the NSW SES Metro Western Unit.

Metro Western Unit Acting Commander Daniel McGovern said that the course will teach the kids about what the NSW SES does, storm readiness, preparing a home emergency kit and plan as well as learning how to tie new knots, puzzles and even creating a building project. "This is the first course that we have held for a Scouts group," said Daniel. "However, I'm already receiving enquiries from other Scout groups and NSW SES Units about the program."

Daniel has modified the program to allow for COVID-19 isolation requirements, including hosting ZOOM sessions with the kids and leaders.

"I've included some high-level information such as when to call Triple 0 and when to call the NSW SES as well as a brief history of our agency," said Daniel.

"There are some family-based activities, such as doing the emergency kit and plan, which gets the parents and older siblings involved. The kids learn how to tie three knots, which are assessed over ZOOM. We also provide coaching if they get stuck."

Daniel included safety instructions for the parents as

well as tasks that the kids can complete independently between ZOOM sessions.

"I have my working with children check and we require a parent to be present for the coaching sessions," said Daniel. "It's a good way of keeping the kids busy and it helps the Scout leaders as well."

The Scouts SES Badge course was originally developed in Western Australia and won the national Resilient Australia Award last year.

On completion of the online course, the students had achieved the following :

- » Demonstrated an understanding of what the NSW SES is and what we do for our communities through crosswords, find-a-words and knowledge check sheets.
- » Learned about the Emergency+ app.
- » Researched and reported on storm readiness for their homes.
- » Created an Emergency Plan for their home using the NSW SES online tool.
- » Constructed a home emergency kit.
- » Demonstrated skills using some hand tools by constructing a bird feeder, possum box or planter box.
- » Learnt three new knots.

Feedback received from the first course has all been very positive and a great indication for the success of future courses.

Daniel McGovern

Senior Group Officer | Acting Unit Commander | Metro West Unit
Deputy Unit Commander – Operations & Response | The Hills

Women in Flood Rescue Program

The capability of SES to protect our communities in flood situations is reflective of the ratio of our members who have the capacity and interest to engage in Flood Rescue and Operations training and operational activities (Flood Rescue). The FORCDG has identified an opportunity to increase the ratio of members capable of engaging in flood rescue and operations; particularly women who currently represent less than 28% of all members engaged in flood related activities.

The Women in Flood Rescue (WIFR) programme was established in May 2019 with support from the Organisational Performance and Engagement Directorate. The project is convened by the FORCDG Focus Group which includes a broad cross section of volunteer members representing 240 Units across NSW. This experienced team of male and female consultants is focused on the benefits of engagement, participation and success of women in SES volunteer flood rescue occupations. The objectives of the programme are to:

- » Identify the barriers that influence the participation and success of women in flood rescue activities;
- » Integrate recommendations into SES processes and policy which reduce these barriers; and
- » Provide a platform to promote and support the benefits of women in flood rescue.



The WIFR team has commenced capturing qualitative and quantitative evidence of these “barriers”, including a series of surveys, which identify impacts to the engagement and success of participants in flood rescue. With this evidence the team will assemble a list of recommendations aimed at eliminating or reducing such barriers, and lead to improvements that make engagement in flood rescue more achievable, safe and fulfilling for our members, and deliver improved flood protection for our communities.

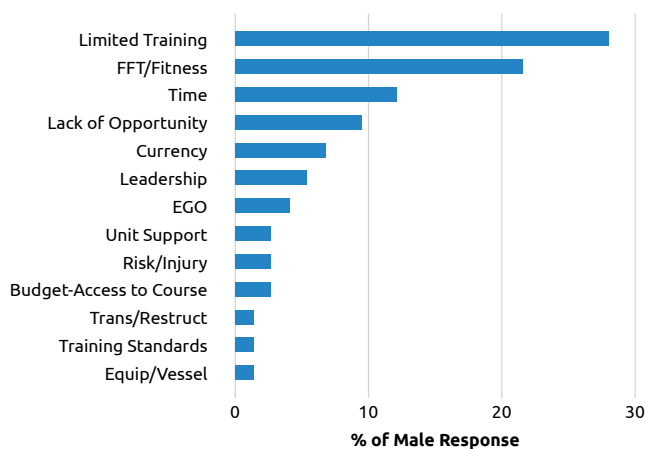
We thank you for your continued support and valued participation through the recent survey from August 6th to 14th. The preliminary survey results (below) have indicated an interesting breakdown of observed barriers to engagement and success in flood rescue. Over the coming months the WIFR team will continue to dive more deeply into these observations, to understand the true cause and effects of these impacts, prior to developing a detailed report incorporating recommendations to overcome these barriers.

Survey Monkey Preliminary Results

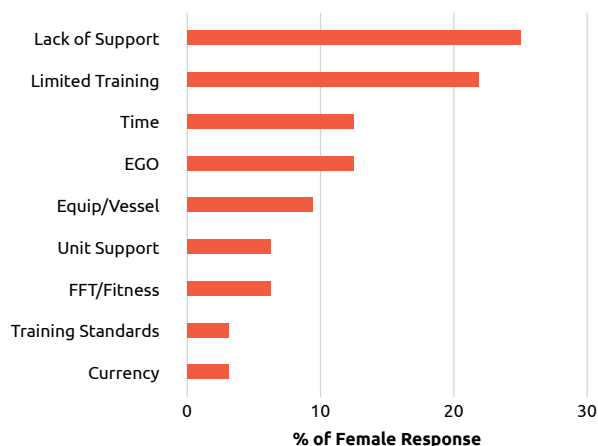
6th August to 14th August 2019

SES Members who participated in the survey
= 106 (74 male and 32 female)

MALES (N=74)



FEMALES (N=32)



Marrickville Unit:

Training online during a pandemic

An unprecedented global pandemic has forced many of us to spend more time indoors. In an effort to help 'flatten the curve', we have been advised to stay away from social gatherings until it is safe. As SES volunteers, we are trained to adapt to rapidly evolving and challenging situations. The challenges of Covid-19 are no different. As such, we decided to take the opportunity of social isolation to explore and upskill through online courses that will help expand our core competencies. Over the past few weeks, two volunteers from the NSW SES – Marrickville Unit (myself and Kelsie Navin) have been facilitating an external e-learning course (free) on disaster management. The Global Disaster Risk Reduction and Management course has been developed by the Humanitarian Leadership Academy and is offered through Kaya Connect, an e-learning portal. A total of 16 volunteers from Waverley-Woollahra and the City of Sydney Unit are taking part in the online course.

In recent years, there has been a shift towards planning, prevention, response and recovery (PPRR) within the emergency services around the world including within the NSW SES. This is largely due to the increase in the frequency and intensity of natural hazards such as floods, storms and to a lesser extent tsunamis. The central theme of the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management online course is that a hazard (such as a storm or flood) does not necessarily cause a disaster as long as the appropriate planning and mitigation measures are in place. It is only when people and property are vulnerable to a hazard that can turn an event into a disaster. People and property can be vulnerable for many different reasons including personal factors (such as age, mobility, disability), economic disadvantage, social marginalisation, institutional factors to do with government systems, as well as



Participants using Microsoft teams for their weekly online study sessions (Note; serious online concentration faces).

environmental factors. "While we can't prevent a hazard from occurring, we can use disaster risk reduction and management to understand risk and vulnerability, prevent a hazard from becoming a disaster, and mitigate its impact by making people more resilient." (From the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management website) For each module of the course, we have prepared written guides that detail the activities for the week, discuss questions and share additional learning materials in the form of websites, articles, videos and lectures. Once a week, we meet up in a virtual classroom using Microsoft Teams for an hour and share what we have learnt from the week's module.

The participants would like a mud-map feature to be added to the Beacon App for intelligence gathering purposes.

Detailed incident images like the one above may (or may not) assist IMT during large-scale operations (Note; diagram not to scale, not actual natural disaster).

One of my favourite parts of facilitating this

course has been exploring the different methods available for enhancing online teaching such as using the Microsoft teams whiteboard, using quizzes, discussion questions and having participants share screens, setting up panel discussions. We have also used the online tool to have guest speakers for our learning sessions.

As with most online tools, there have been some hic-ups along the way but that has been part of the learning process for us. We are all excited to share what they have learnt as part of the online Disaster Risk Reduction and Management course with our Units once it is safe to return to face to face training.

Words by **Leanne Grover**
Edited by **Hasmukh Chand**



The above case study was prepared to help facilitate group discussion.

Search & Rescue of Elderly Man



During early February the drought was finally broken and Sydney was hit hard by torrential rainfall that caused flash flooding & riverine flooding across Sydney. With many suburbs dramatically impacted.

On Sunday the 9th of February the Blacktown Flood Rescue teams were responded to 18+ flood rescues across the Sydney Metro Area. One particular rescue quite significant from the rest, and one our team will never forget.

At approximately 2100hrs the Blacktown Flood Rescue team arrived at Auld Ave, Milperra NSW. With no sight of the rain easing, the Blacktown Flood Rescue Coordinator, Matt Elliott was advised by the SES team on-site, that an elderly male was missing in the floodwaters after returning to his property to assist his livestock. The missing man's brother advised that he was last seen approximately 4hrs prior around 1700 hrs

Following this update, it was further reported that during the current search being undertaken from local SES units, had been going for 30 minutes. When one of the In-water operators had just been bitten by a snake.

Matt Elliott and Daniel Groom from the Blacktown FR Team proceeded into the water to assist the retrieval of this member so he could get urgent medical attention. Following news of the snake bite to one of the local SES team members, the mood of the balance of the team was less enthusiastic to continue the search due to safety concerns. Matt Elliott sensing the mood of the other teams and the time that had elapsed since the elderly male was last seen, quickly re-grouped the teams of in-water operators and formed a plan amongst the 2 teams to proceed from Henry Lawson Drive to a rural property on Auld Ave in the IRB approx. 700m in complete darkness.

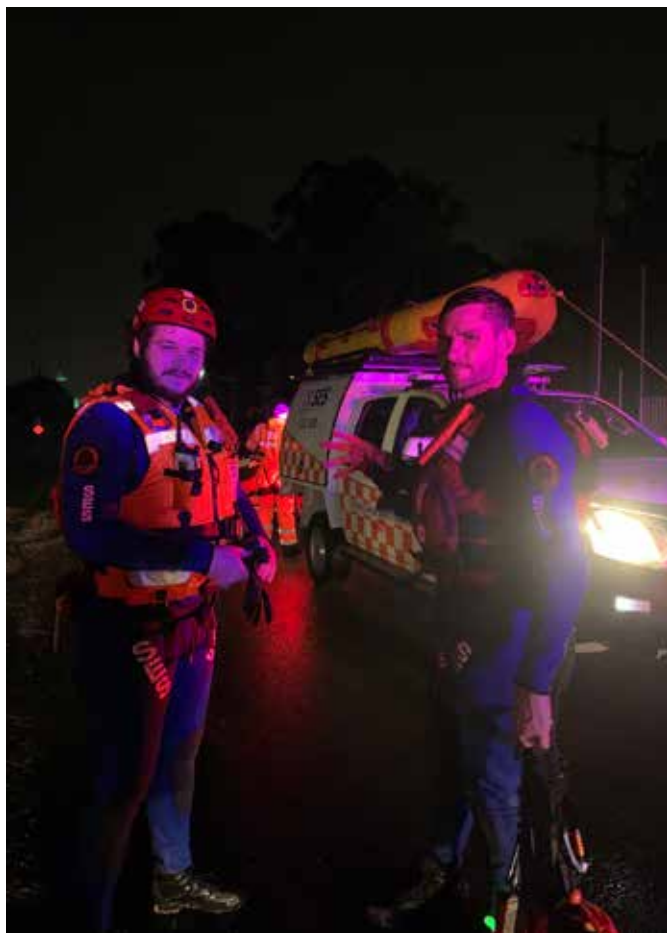
The Teams set off to the rural property on Auld Avenue noted that the water was more than roughly 3m in depth and that only a few small hills along with the house that were the only landmarks that had not been fully submerged yet.

Upon arrival Matt Elliott requested complete silence from both teams as he called out the elderly man's name, so both himself and the teams had an opportunity to hear any reply that may

be forthcoming. Almost Immediately Matt very faintly heard a noise in the distance what was estimated to be 200m away in complete darkness, beyond a tree line. He called again to confirm the noise was a response from someone and again heard it once more towards a rough location but after calling twice more there was no reply. At this point Matt was certain that was the sound of the missing elderly male. To complicate matters further, for the teams to investigate it was going to take a while to have the IRB make its way through all the debris and barbed wire fences.

Matt quickly summed up the situation and Coordinated his team to an in-water rescue with himself and two In-water operators Daniel Groom (BTN) & Adrian Phu (BKK) to proceed in water, to the last heard location of the response.

The obstacles for this in water search were numerous being (debris, floating cars, barbed wire fences & muddy terrain). After swimming approximately 200m through flood waters, the team located the missing elderly man on a small hill surrounded by water in a back paddock who was now in a foetal position as well as a



hypothermic state as his skin tone was pale white, shivering & unable to move.

Matt was then able to elicit short responses from the elderly man and kept him talking throughout this phase of the rescue period, whilst coordinating on/in-water operator Dugald Parker (BTN) in the IRB to their location and preparing an Ambulance to be on scene.

Once the IRB had arrived the crew of four lifted the elderly man into the IRB whilst trying to keep him warm and then successfully transported him through the mess back to Henry Lawson Drive safely to where the ambulance was situated.

From the events witnessed that night it is clear that if Matt had not decided to take control of the initial scene and re-group the flood teams to continue the search and rescue for the missing elderly man, there would have been a very different outcome that night. Matt's fast thinking and determination saved this man's life along with his team.

Prior to this search and flood rescue I (Aloka Holland) had been to numerous flood rescues that day with Matt Elliott

and Daniel Groom as part of one of the Blacktown Flood Rescue teams for this severe weather event. Together we responded to multiple flood rescues across the Sydney Metro Area, where Matt time after time took control of the scene and was able to conduct multiple flood rescues safely and efficiently that day. Not only working alongside his own flood rescue team, but working with multiple agencies and other SES units and their flood teams. His incredible ability to carry on and adapt from one situation to the next kept the team motivated and have that sense of trust in him.

Matthew certainly lived up to his role of 'Flood Rescue Coordinator' on this day, not only for the Blacktown unit, but all others he assisted during this entire event. He worked seamlessly amongst all emergency services that day to help those in desperate need. Matthew demonstrated his excellent leadership skills, bravery, determination and heroism throughout this severe weather event and especially at the flood rescue that took place at Auld Ave, Milperra on the 9th FEB 2020 at 2100hrs.

Being a member of his flood rescue team throughout this severe weather event, I couldn't be prouder of my team leader who not only supported us through this serious and highly stressful event, but also everyone he worked alongside with. Matthew's courage, extreme bravery, leadership skills, passion and dedication to everything he does, had saved another humans life that night.

Matthew puts in countless hours of his time every day to his voluntary role with the State Emergency Service, year in and year out, however this was no ordinary rescue for many reasons as articulated above.

I hope his efforts as a volunteer and as the 'Flood Rescue Coordinator' for the Blacktown Unit are recognised and this act of bravery gets rewarded and commemorated as it should, as I cannot stress enough how important Matthew's presence was this night. He is an incredible human being.

Aloka Holland

Blacktown Flood Rescue Team Member
/ Media Team Member.

Seventy five years ago

NSW had built an amazing civil defence organisation during the second world war called the National Emergency Service or NES. The NES recruited volunteers in each council area as wardens, stretcher parties, first aiders, drivers and heavy rescue and demolition workers.

The N.E.S. needed ambulance and lorry drivers and the women of N.S.W. came forward in their hundreds, soon becoming the backbone of the auxiliary transport capability during the war. The NRMA provided the training for N.E.S. women volunteers wishing to become lorry drivers.

By late 1944 the N.E.S. had over 115,000 members...that's 115,000 volunteers.

Seventy five years ago victory was declared in Europe and in September 1945 in the Pacific – war was over.

The leader of the Country Party (Lt Col. Bruxner) urged the Legislative Assembly (Labor Party) to continue the 'National Emergency Services' stating "The National Emergency Services has

been inaugurated not only as a means of providing protection for the civil population in the event of an enemy attack but also with a view to having in existence an efficient voluntary organisation capable of dealing with any major calamity which might overtake individual areas of the State

is a whole – for example outbreaks of bush fires, floods or epidemics".

Sadly, the Government decided on disbanding the NES.

Throughout the period 1945 through to 1955, Col. Bruxner kept urging the State government (Labor Party) to reform the NES.

It was only during the disastrous flood of 1955 that Lt. Col Bruxner convinced the State Government to "[re]establish an organisation similar to the wartime National Emergency Services to help people in flooded areas [Western Herald 8th April 1955]". "The N.E.S. had been discontinued after the war, unfortunately. It was a ready-made organisation that could have been continued, and could have been made an effective body to assist people in times of great national disaster, such as floods".

And so it was on the 26th April 1955 a cabinet submission recommended the formation of a "State Emergency Services" stating "It was contemplated that this overall organisation would be built up generally along the lines of the National Emergency Services which functioned so efficiently during World War".

David King

NSWSES – Hawkesbury Unit



Boy being lowered to the ground from a rooftop during an NES test (1942)

Retrieved from Argus Newspaper Collection of Photographs, State Library of Victoria



NES Stretcher Party and ambulance

Retrieved from Argus Newspaper Collection of Photographs, State Library of Victoria



NES Wardens

Retrieved from Argus Newspaper Collection of Photographs, State Library of Victoria



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