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the

Volunteer

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the Volunteer

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Thank you to our SES



It would be an understatement to say that NSW has had a tough few years, but few could appreciate just how tough it has been as much as our state's SES volunteers.

Amid the most extreme natural disasters NSW has ever faced, you have been there, on the front lines, saving lives and bringing help to people in their time of greatest need.

Words cannot express the depth of gratitude I feel, along with my colleagues in the NSW Government, and indeed, the people of NSW, for the work of SES volunteers, not only in response to the devastating floods, but through the pandemic, horrific bushfires, and in the unsung work you do every day to give friends and strangers a helping hand.

It takes courage, resilience, skill and tenacity to venture into harm's way. But above all, it takes a spirit of service and selflessness, to give of your time, talent and effort for the benefit of your fellow Australians.

This spirit of service is part of the fabric of Australia, lifting our state and nation to greater heights from generation to generation.

Your dedicated service, not only in the face of natural disasters, but every day, shows that same spirit is alive and well, and for that reason, we can be assured our nation's future will be brighter than ever.

On behalf of the NSW Government and the people of our State, please accept our thanks for your outstanding work, and be assured of our unwavering support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Dom - 14', written over a light blue grid background.

Dominic Perrottet
Premier of New South Wales



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*Federal Labor proudly supports SES Volunteers,
who this year served our communities with courage and compassion
through unprecedented flooding events across NSW.*

Thank you for keeping our communities safe.



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I truly hope you are able to spend some time with your families after sacrificing so much this year to help others.



THE HON STEPH COOKE MP
MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY
SERVICES AND RESILIENCE

I write to you as we approach the close of what has been an extraordinary year of weather extremes. It defies belief that every single day of 2022 the SES has been responding to flooding across NSW.

Most recently communities through inland NSW have borne the brunt of major and repeated flooding brought on by relentless rainfall as one wet weather system after another rolls through. It's seen many regional towns flooded more than once in a very short space of time. I visited Gunnedah recently where they've experienced 6 major floods in two months.

It's a similar story across much of the Central West, where areas like Forbes have been hit time and time again. I have been able to visit many of the communities affected but there are still more I need to get to.

What I am privileged to witness during my time across these communities is the unbreakable spirit of SES volunteers, who simply refuse to stop helping their communities, no matter the cost to their own lives.

During this current flood event which began on September 14 at the time of writing, our SES volunteers had received 17,259 requests for assistance and carried out 835 flood rescues. Through that time volunteers from across the State deployed to support their fellow members and communities in need.

I want to thank all of you for your efforts. You have continued to respond despite the seemingly never ending flooding emergency.

I want you to know that as your Minister I will never stop fighting for the needs of our emergency services, especially the SES during this time of unprecedented turmoil.



It gave me great comfort recently to welcome a team of rescue specialists from Singapore who arrived to help relieve our wonderful volunteers. That it was the first time in the SES's history that international assistance was requested, is a sign of just how challenging the flooding we have experienced has been.

While we're simultaneously in the response and recovery phases across the State, the NSW Government has continued to work closely with the Commonwealth Government so that we can provide a range of support, including financial assistance to individuals, families, farmers and business owners.

We are well aware that as Christmas beckons, the difficult times are likely far from over, with flooding expected to stretch into next year. I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for all the hard work you continue to do to keep communities safe. You are an inspiration to your communities and myself. I am immensely proud to be your Minister and I will continue to work every day to make sure you have the support you need to do your important work.

Stay safe and have a happy festive season. I truly hope you are able to spend some time with your families after sacrificing so much this year to help others.



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CARLENE YORK APM
NSW SES COMMISSIONER

As we approach the start to summer, I'd like to reflect on what has potentially been the largest statewide flood event, particularly for our zones west of the Great Dividing Range. During this operational event (99/2223), which commenced on 14 September 2022, we have assisted in nearly every corner of the State. Our members have been sandbagging, resupplying isolated communities with essential items, transporting medical personnel and assisting people, pets and livestock with evacuation. This event has showcased our new hazard warning system, and put a spotlight on new assets such as our High Clearance Vehicles, Cell on Wheels and the Mobile Incident Command Centre. It has been an incredible multi-agency effort on land, water and air, and I would like to thank members for every bit of effort you have contributed, and for working so well with other organisations and out-of-area members.

We know the cost of this flood will be significant, particularly to farmers, property owners and business owners. But this flood has also significantly affected our members, who were

out helping their community while their own homes and property were being affected. It is inspiring to see our members in orange leading their community with strength, kindness and resilience throughout such hardship. These stories will never be forgotten, I encourage you to reach out to our media team to share your experiences with the public.

As this is the last edition before the end of the year, I would like to wish you a happy festive season. I know most of us will continue with flood operations well into the next few months, as it won't ease any time soon. But I would like to remind you to take breaks and put your health and wellbeing first. I appreciate all availability that is offered, but it is important to give yourself the time to recuperate when you need it. The Bureau of Meteorology has indicated La Niña is likely to return to neutral conditions early next year, which is such a relief for our exhausted members and flood-affected communities who have faced La Niña three years in a row.

I look forward to further enhancements for our organisation that are currently underway, including

the Local Investment program for Facilities and Teams (LIFT). Thank you to everyone who provided feedback on the zone boundaries and titles. Our two new zones, North Eastern and North Western, will ensure greater local knowledge can be applied during an incident. There are 70+ new roles that we are encouraging anyone to apply for who is passionate about working with NSW SES so please keep an eye on mySES and I Work For NSW websites.

Lastly, I'd like to congratulate the many volunteers who have received NSW SES awards for their service to the community, including long service awards. I'd like to commend Ulladulla Unit Commander Tracy Provost also, for winning the national Rotary Emergency Services Community Award last month. Upon receiving the award, she paid tribute to every SES volunteer across the state and recognised the teamwork and mateship between members. We have an amazing group of people at NSW SES, who go above and beyond so they can help others, and I'd like to thank each and every one of you.

Stay safe.

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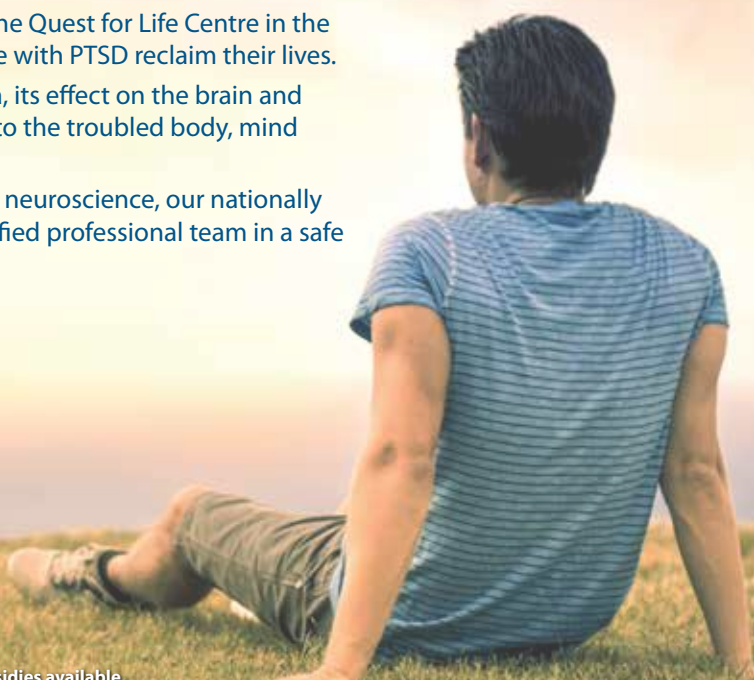
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Thank you to all NSW SES volunteers
for keeping us safe throughout the year.
Your continued dedication and sacrifice
does not go unnoticed and
is greatly appreciated.

I WISH ALL NSW SES VOLUNTEERS
AND THEIR FAMILIES

Seasons greetings & a Happy New Year!

Jihad Dib MP

Member for Lakemba
Shadow Minister for Emergency Services
Shadow Minister for Energy and Climate Change

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**"Thank you State
Emergency Service
volunteers for
supporting our local
communities in times
of need during 2022.
Wishing you and your
families the very best
for Christmas and a
brighter 2023."**



Janelle Saffin MP
MEMBER FOR LISMORE

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“
**These scenes are reminders of the
 tireless work of our SES volunteers
 who keep our communities safe.**
 ”



JIHAD DIB MP
SHADOW MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES
SHADOW MINISTER FOR ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

At the time of writing this report, there are 17 flood warnings issued for NSW. It seems that this year, each magazine edition brings with it another flood disaster to report on. The weather bureau has predicted that the Lachlan River could reach a record height of 10.8m during the current Forbes flooding. Everyone across NSW is thinking of the affected communities right across the flood region. Our thoughts are with the residents who must be feeling nervous and exhausted as the historic flood peak looms.

During these challenging times, NSW SES has been leading one of the largest rescue operations across NSW in its history. We are grateful to emergency services personnel who are doing what they can to assist residents.

In October, as Shadow Minister for Emergency Services, I had the pleasure of visiting the NSW SES Wyong Unit and NSW RFS Berkely Vale Unit with my colleagues, David Mehan, and David Harris. It gave me an opportunity to meet with SES volunteers, hear their stories of the La Nina season, and personally thank them for their important work.

At SES Wyong Unit I had the opportunity to learn of the new Community Action Teams being set up as well as a Sandbagging Workshop

event where members of the community can learn how to fill and lay sandbags to minimise floodwater entering their properties.

RFS Berkely Vale Unit gave us an insight into the state of their facilities and the desire to see further upgrades undertaken to the station.

During the La Nina season, we were confronted by the scenes of people stranded by floodwaters, towns underwater, and when a massive and sudden deluge of water struck. These scenes are reminders of the tireless work of our SES volunteers who keep our communities safe.

With the summer months upon us, we are bracing for a trying bushfire season, but we are confident that due to the ongoing preparation and support work by emergency services agencies across NSW, we can get through what nature throws at us.

We have all witnessed scenes of fire-ravaged towns and smoke-filled skies. We have seen footage of firefighters putting themselves in harm's way to keep our communities safe. These scenes remind us of the tireless work of our frontline responders and volunteers who respond to the call across NSW in times of need.

On 10 November I had the pleasure to attend the Parliamentary Friends

of Surf Life Saving event at Parliament House. They presented a showcase of the important work Surf Life Saving and their volunteers are doing to keep our beaches safe including programs for new migrants and people from non-English speaking backgrounds, for example, Swim Brothers a males-only learn to swim and ocean safety program.

I would like to congratulate them on their initiative to provide thousands of free life jackets to rock fishers and promote rock fishing safety.

In Parliament, we are currently reviewing legislation for a new reconstruction authority based on the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, which NSW Labor called for in the aftermath of the northern rivers flooding in March.

It is our hope that this body will provide some clarity for agencies around immediate response, clean up, and reconstruction, which is ultimately to the benefit of communities.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish NSW SES Volunteers and their families a safe and festive holiday season and a Happy New Year. All the best for the summer season ahead and we hope that you get time to spend with your loved ones when you are not on-call.

As the year comes to an end, we would like to say a big thankyou to all the volunteers for the amazing efforts you have put in all year round. It has been one disaster after another over the last few years and this year was certainly another filled with challenges for us all. Thankyou for the countless hours you dedicated to your communities- often spending days at a time away from your own families, for putting your own lives at risk to ensure the safety of others and for showing up each and every time the community has needed you!

The Volunteers Association provides welfare assistance & a number of member support services to the thousands of NSW SES Volunteers. We have continued to do this throughout the flood crisis we have faced this year & we wanted to reaffirm to our members that we are here for them & if anyone needs additional support, to please contact us.

No doubt by now you would've heard about the **First Responder Resilience Program (FRRP)** that is being developed specifically for our volunteers. The VA and the National Emergency Management Agency have partnered with Ordinary Courage to deliver a mental health and safety program targeted at local emergency service team leaders and deputy

leaders, called the **First Responder Resilience Program (FRRP)**.

The program will work with NSW SES volunteer team leaders and other local community leaders to build mental health leadership capability within NSW disaster affected communities. By taking part in FRRP, emergency and disaster team members will be encouraged to build curiosity, confidence, and connectedness across their network, using these leadership skills to

promote greater resilience and encourage effective conversations.

At the time of writing, we have just held our BBQ Event at the NSW SES Unit located at Katoomba. It was a great opportunity to share information about the program with volunteers and members of the community and answer questions & gain valuable feedback. We were fortunate to have great weather and a delicious lunch on the day and look forward to our next BBQ event at Batemans Bay on the 26th November 2022.



For more information on the FRRP program, please see an article from Ordinary Courage further in this magazine. » Page 44



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2023 CALENDAR

We received such a great response from our call for submissions for the 2023 VA Calendar! Images were uploaded onto our Facebook page where volunteers and members of the public were able to vote for their favourite photos. The images with the most votes were chosen to feature in the calendar. Calendars will be distributed free to the units and individuals who have placed their orders shortly & also available for purchase on our website for members of the public.

www.nswsesva.org.au/shop

To celebrate Christmas we have a special offer on all Eat Sleep Respond merchandise – Enjoy 25% off using the discount code **xmas22** at checkout.

VA RURAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT WINDELLAMA

It was great to see members taking the opportunity to enjoy our rural property over the last couple of months. While we still have a bit more work to be completed (which we will update you on as we proceed) volunteers are more than welcome to book the property to enjoy a day (or a few) with their family and friends to relax and unwind. Bookings can be made by emailing the office at office@nswsesva.org.au



A special shout out to all the businesses who supported the VA and the volunteers this year by offering great discounts to our members, by running fundraisers and generously donating proceeds and items for flood affected volunteers. Thankyou -your kindness & support is greatly appreciated!
Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and stay safe in your volunteering!

Carlee Maccoll





Koala Rescue

SES volunteers from Fairfield Unit assisted with the flood rescue of a Koala out at Narrandera.

The photos tell the story and it was wonderful to see the Koala back safely in a tree. Well done Peter and John. SES are there to help any creature big or small and humans too of course.



Operation Orange

Port Macquarie Hastings team set out on Friday to Operation Orange, high spirits and excitement on board the Fun Bus to Sydney for a weekend full of training, team building and competition.

We spent Saturday completing seven various training activities set out along the beautiful Sydney Harbourside in Woolwich. Our team embraced the Operation Orange theme of Alien Invasion. Our day included some added fun of a scavenger hunt in between, protecting our additional team member EggWardy and plenty of laughs were shared amongst our team.

Our first day was full of learning, self-reflection and for some of our team members the opportunity to try out new skills and techniques. We were able to set up the Vortex system and lower alien spacecraft to the ground meters below, rescue an unconscious alien from the flood boat and complete a land search for alien objects.

After our massive first day we were able to make our way via the flood boats to Cockatoo Island for the evening. This was a true highlight getting to meet fellow SES members.

Our second day was spent traversing Cockatoo Island to complete check point tasks and looking for aliens among us. This was another highlight as the public members that we met along the way enjoyed hearing about what all these orange clad SES members were doing racing around the island.

This was such an awesome weekend and far exceeded my own expectations, as is most of my time spent with the SES and getting out of my own comfort zone.

It was a pleasure to travel to Sydney with my team and get to know each of them better whilst refining and gaining skills. This was a great opportunity for all involved and would not have been possible without all the hard work and effort required to make this happen from so many volunteers.

Suzie Mayne

Port Macquarie Hastings SES Member





Australian Emergency Law

This issue we look at the rights and obligations of drivers if a vehicle or boat is damaged.

I'm particularly asked to consider this issue considering flood response and a) being deployed to flooded areas b) driving in flood to execute a rescue and c) knowingly entering flood water for no operational reason.

THE NEED FOR A LICENCE

First, it is important to bear in mind that even as an emergency service, important laws continue to apply. Most importantly, in context, is the need to be licensed and fit to operate the vehicle or boat. No doubt people are aware that r 306 of the Road Rules 2014 (NSW) exempts the driver of an emergency vehicle from various provisions in those rules. That exemption does not, however, extend to the need to hold the appropriate licence and the need to comply with drug and alcohol limits.

I will assume for the rest of the discussion that the driver/operator holds the appropriate licence. Given that assumption, the critical question is 'will a volunteer be liable for damage done to an SES vehicle or boat they are operating?'. The answer is almost certainly 'no'.

INSURANCE – THE NSW TREASURY MANAGED FUND

The NSW SES is not a separate legal entity – it is part of the government and is represented by the legal entity caught by the phrase 'the Crown' or more accurately 'the State of New South Wales'.

The State of New South Wales self insures. The Treasury Managed Fund (TMF):

... is a self-insurance scheme created by the NSW government to insure NSW government agency risk ...

The TMF was created so NSW Government agencies are fully covered when something goes wrong. It provides a level of cover that is not available in the commercial market at an affordable cost.

Cover includes cover for 'property (for repair or full replacement, and consequential loss)' and loss or damage to motor vehicles.

Cover under the TMF extends to an eligible state official. That includes 'a person who is a "member ..."

of the TMF Agency ...' The SES is a TMF agency and a volunteer is a member of the SES. What that means is that volunteers are also insured against potential liability by the same insurer that insures the vehicles and boats.

SUBROGATION

The NSW insurer is *Insurance and Care NSW*, known as icare. Icare, like any insurer, stands in the shoes of those it insures. That means an insurer, including icare, can bring legal proceedings in the name of the insured to recover money that they have paid out. In a simple example if there is a car accident involving an SES vehicle and another vehicle, and if icare thinks they can prove the other driver was at fault, then icare can sue that other driver to recover the value of the damages.

EXCLUSIONS

There are areas where icare does not provide relevant cover. In particular a driver is not covered if they were under the influence of any drug or alcohol, did not hold the relevant licence or they were disqualified from holding a licence or their

licence was suspended. Cover is also excluded for liability.

- a. Arising out of any illegal activity by the covered party, except where:...
 - » The activity was not a deliberate act of the covered party; and/or
 - » The covered party, acting reasonably, was not aware that the activity was illegal;
- b. Arising out of any fraudulent, dishonest or malicious conduct, act or omission by the covered party;...
- c. Arising from conduct involving a lack of good faith by the covered party.

Those exclusions would be relevant where the covered party is the volunteer SES member. What that says is that if the volunteer is engaged in deliberate conduct that they know is illegal, where they are acting fraudulently, dishonestly or maliciously or with an absence of good faith then they will not be covered by the TMF in which case it may be worthwhile seeking to recover funds.

We can give an example. Assume a unit commander dishonestly deals with a contractor so that the contractor suffers a loss. The contractor sues the SES and the insurer meets the liability. Then the insurer may decide to try and recover the money from the unit commander.

In the context of a motor vehicle accident if the driver is intoxicated, or deliberately drives the SES vehicle into flood waters with the intention of destroying the vehicle, then they are not covered by insurance or any good faith defence. In those circumstances the insurer may decide to try and recover its costs.

Even so recovering money from a volunteer would be difficult for the most common reason – they couldn't afford it. The only remedy courts can give is the payment of money so a wise litigator only sues someone with money. Second trying to sue a volunteer is likely to cost the SES its volunteer workforce and no doubt the SES and icare would be aware of that.

DAMAGED FLEET – LIABILITY OF THE VOLUNTEER

With that background we can begin to address the issue of whether a volunteer could be liable if they are driving a vehicle or navigating a boat and it is damaged.

First, the vehicle and boat are insured, so the SES is covered for the losses.

Second icare could not sue the volunteer to recover the damages

as icare also insures the volunteer. The fact that the volunteer may not have taken adequate or reasonable care does not defeat insurance. Insurance comes into effect when there is legal liability and legal liability arises when there is negligence. If insurers could avoid liability because the insured was negligent then the policy would be of no value. Icare covers the agency (the SES) and the member for their personal liability even when they are negligent. What follows is that if icare tried to recover the amount paid for damage to an SES vehicle or boat, it would be trying to recover the money from itself which is both circular and pointless.

Even if icare could sue the volunteer, the volunteer could point to s 25(1) of the *State Emergency Service Act 1989* (NSW) which says

**"A matter or thing done by--
(a) a member of the State
Emergency Service, including a
member of an SES unit, ...
Does not, if the matter or thing was
done in good faith for the purpose
of exercising the functions of or
assisting the State Emergency
Service or the Consultative Council,
subject the member, officer or
volunteer personally to any action,
liability, claim or demand."**

That protection would apply even if the party trying to make the claim was the SES itself. In short if somehow icare or the SES sought to make a volunteer liable for the damage to a vehicle or boat, the member is protected by s 25.

FLOOD RESPONSE

Let us then turn to the issues that were particularly raised – flood response.

The SES is established:

- » (aa) to protect persons from dangers to their safety and health, and to protect property from destruction or damage, arising from floods, storms and tsunamis,
- » (a) to act as the combat agency for dealing with floods (including the establishment of flood warning systems) and to co-ordinate the evacuation and welfare of affected communities...

Responding to floods is absolutely part and parcel of what the SES does so of course vehicles will be driven into areas that others are evacuating, and SES boats are there for the very purpose of putting them into floodwaters.

If a vehicle gets damaged in a flood that is par for the course and clearly insured.

Driving into flood waters to execute a flood rescue is dangerous and that danger is not mitigated by the purpose of the driver. If it's true that vehicles will float in very little flood water then that is true whether the vehicle is an SES vehicle or not. Damaged roads, hidden by flood waters, will damage an SES vehicle just like any other vehicle. But whether it is a reasonable response or not provided it is done in good faith – ie for the genuine purpose of a flood rescue – then any loss or damage would be covered by the government's self-insurance.

As for 'knowingly entering flood water for no operational reason' it's hard to imagine why that would happen. But accepting that it might, insurance does not cover illegal conduct and driving past a road closed sign may be illegal but even if it is, the loss of protection – the exclusion - does not automatically apply. It does not apply in circumstances where the driver 'acting reasonably, was not aware that the activity was illegal'. The driver of an emergency vehicle may think that the rule does not apply to them by virtue of the Road Rules 2014, the common law of necessity or due to the specific provisions of the State Emergency Service Act. If a driver finds themselves accidentally in flood water, whether they have driven past a road closed sign or not, provided they are not acting maliciously or, dishonestly they will still be insured, as will the SES.

CONCLUSION

Both the SES and the members of the SES are insured by the NSW Government under its self insurance arrangements. The insurer, icare, cannot seek to recover damages from an SES volunteer where it is icare that also indemnifies the volunteer.

Mistakes happen and sometimes damage occurs when there is no mistake or a calculated risk is taken. Insurance is there to cover those situations. There is no risk that volunteers will be liable for damage to vehicles or boats they operate except in circumstances that would surprise no-one – that is if the volunteer conduct is illegal and they know it; where they are motivated by malice, fraud or dishonesty.

Dr Michael Eburn

Proudly supporting our local SES Volunteers

We appreciate the ongoing sacrifices
of our SES Volunteers who often
miss out on family gatherings and
events to serve our communities.

Merry Christmas and best wishes
for the New Year

Sonia Hornery
State Member for Wallsend



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Smiles All Round at Inaugural Inverell Training Weekend

It's important for all expertise to be celebrated at the end of a training exercise, whether it's thinking outside the box or being the class clown.

These were just a few of the awards presented to Exercise Lusus participants after a fun-filled training weekend at the Inverell Emergency Services Facility (Inverell Headquarters) and Lake Inverell, on 1-2 October.

With its name inspired by the Latin term for "games", the inaugural event was a great opportunity for members to practise skills and have fun, along with building new friendships with members from other units.

Many of the 60 Northern and Western Zones participants, who came from as far as the Northern Rivers, Mid North Coast, Central Coast, Tamworth and Armidale, were relatively new to SES so it was the perfect opportunity to meet others.

Teams were mixed with members from different units working together

for the first time. They competed across seven skills stands, including flood rescue, first aid, incident management, map-reading, navigation, urban search and rescue and communications.

AWARD WINNERS:

- » **Safety award** - Willem Nillesen (Armidale Unit)
- » **Thinking outside the box** - Nick Cawley (Armidale Unit)
- » **Teaching a stand manager something new** – Brenton Fowler (Tweed Heads Unit)
- » **Team player** - Ashley Slapp (Woodburn Unit)
- » **Clown of the exercise** – Dean Girdler (Coutts Crossing/ Coffs Harbour)

After the COVID-19 pandemic and flood operations unfortunately caused delays in getting the exercise off its feet, it was great to finally kick it off.

Thanks and credit must go to the planning team comprising of the exercise directors, Tamworth members Victoria Walton and Ann Bartimote, along with support from Michael Davidson and the Exercise Capability team, and Jock Campbell from Armidale Unit for Media and Communications support.

We hope to continue running the exercise every second year and will be in touch prior to the next one.

Jock Campbell

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*To the valuable
SES Volunteers*

Thank You

**for your incredible dedication,
going above and beyond, to assist
our community during times
of difficult circumstances and
particularly, those who have been
impacted by floods and storm
damage throughout this year.**

**To you and your families, I wish
you a happy and holy Christmas
and a safe 2023.**



ALEX HAWKE MP
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR MITCHELL

📍 Suite 8, 23 Terminus Street, Castle Hill NSW 2154

☎ 9899 7211 📧 alex.hawke.mp@aph.gov.au

🌐 alexhawke.au 📘 AlexHawkeMPMitchell

Authorised by A. Hawke, Liberal Party of Australia, Suite 8, 23 Terminus St, Castle Hill NSW 2154.

Advertisement



On behalf of the people of Greenway,
**thank you to our
SES volunteers**

for looking after our community during
the numerous flooding events this year.

We couldn't have done it without you.

Michelle Rowland

Authorised by M Rowland MP, Australia, ALP Suite 101C, Level 1, 130 Main Street, Blacktown NSW 2148



Baptism of Fire

On the morning of Saturday 5th November I assessed four members from the Wollongong Unit in Vertical Rescue.

As we were chatting in the car park at Mt Keira Lookout after wrapping up a couple of Paramedics arrived. They said that they were there for someone who had suffered a fall near the start of the Dave Walsh track and hit their head.

The location was only a couple of hundred meters from the car park so we offered to guide them to the location and help if required, and I rang to the SOC to advise that we were self-activating for this. When we located the casualty a short time later it was clear that it was a little more serious as we were at the bottom of a 5m cliff.

One of our VR Operators who had our Light Rescue VR vehicle that weekend saw the Support job the SOC created and headed up to assist. Meanwhile we set up ropes for one of our new VR Operators and a Special Operations (SOT) Paramedic to access the casualty.

After assessing the casualty the SOT Paramedic advised that they would need to be extricated in a stretcher so we commenced setting up a twin rope system and our Arizona Vortex to do this. Our four new VR Operators



had done this in a controlled scenario barely an hour ago but now they were doing it for real.

With the assistance of the local RFS Brigade who provided some welcome additional manpower the casualty was extricated and carried to an Ambulance in the nearby car park around an hour later.

Our new VR Operators performed admirably on their first

job, particularly given there was only myself and one other experienced VR Operator with them. It certainly supported my decision as their Assessor to deem them competent that morning!

Steve Cliffe
Training Officer
Wollongong Unit

Port Macquarie SES Volunteers Visit Goodstart Early Learning Port Macquarie

On Monday 17 October three members of NSW SES Port Macquarie Unit had an entertaining couple of hours when they attended Goodstart Early Learning Port Macquarie to provide the children with an understand the important role SES play in the community, as well as the equipment used.

The morning was a great success with the children coming out in their various age groups, from babies through to pre-schoolers', with wide eyes and excited to see SES truck 48, with flashing lights, and interesting compartments containing curious tools and equipment. Volunteers, Debby Scarr, and Michael and Sereena Ward demonstrated and explained the use of various items of equipment. The children were then assisted to try on helmets, life jackets, safety glasses and earmuffs. Very busy little hands then spent time handling and passing around flotation torpedoes, ropes and helmets, and they were very intrigued with the emergency beacons which were activated numerous times.

To the delight of the Pre-schoolers', they were assisted to raise teacher Chloe in the stretcher – revealing that there may be some very strong volunteers heading SES way in the future!

Prior to our arrival the children were asked what they viewed was the role of SES in the community.

RESPONSES INCLUDED:

- » Save you in a flood
- » Help you if you are lost
- » When your mum can't see you and you're lost
- » When you get stuck in a tree
- » To protect people when they are lost
- » If your animals get lost, they can get them if they're stuck in the tree.

Overall, the visit and demonstrations were very well received and we are very grateful for the opportunity to enlighten, and entertain, our up and coming young 'citizens'.

Debby Scarr

Port Macquarie Unit





Preparation of Emergency Shelters

Emergencies do not make appointments. They can happen at any time and of several types.

Some that may occur where large numbers of displaced persons could be involved are,

- » Bush Fires
- » Floods
- » Tsunami
- » Train smash
- » Major wind storms
- » Hail Storms
- » Cyclones
- » Earthquakes
- » Pandemic

To name some of the emergencies where large numbers of persons may be involved.

Those displaced persons must be provided with shelter. The activation of such centres and staffing of these areas should be by persons that are trained in the management of such centres, and this will become a matter of urgency as people start coming from the affected area.

They will be looking for a number of services but the main things being

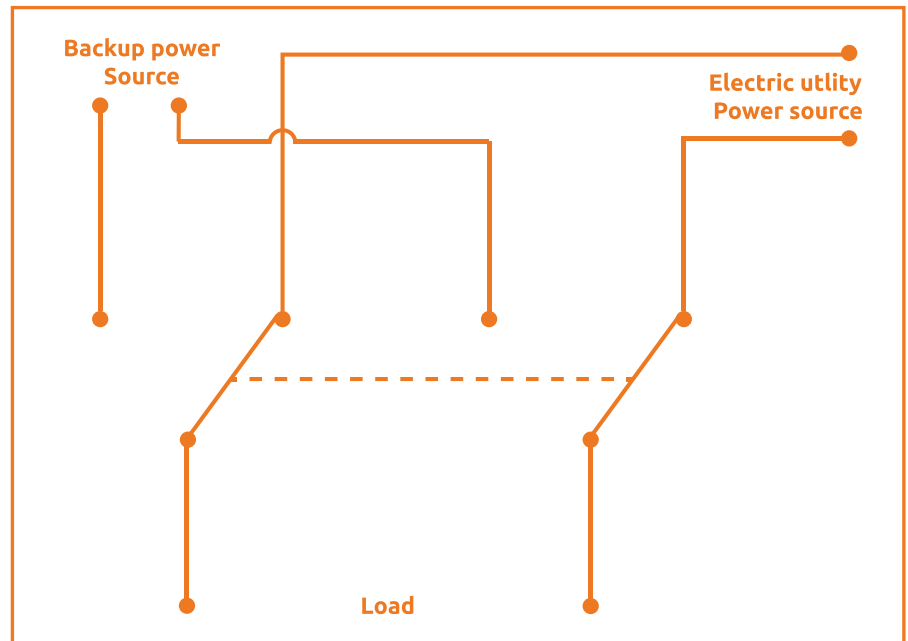
- » Food
- » Shelter – somewhere to sleep
- » Toilet Facilities
- » Washing Facilities (showers and laundry)
- » Medical Assistance

One thing to be determined is the length of the emergency and how long these people will have to be assisted before they can return home –

IF THEY STILL HAVE ONE.

Billeting out is one way to assist with temporary assistance but you are relying on the good nature of other people and takes time to organise.

One thing that is not considered in a lot of evacuations is the consideration that a lot of residence being displaced, have pets, and these will have to also be considered in the case of an emergency.



This is a single phase diagram

Emergency evacuation centres can be

- » School Halls or gyms
- » Church Halls
- » Community Centres
- » RSL and Service Clubs
- » Golf and bowls Clubs
- » Hotels

If there are no cooking facilities available then people can be fed elsewhere or emergency cooking equipment can be brought in, this can be in the way of BBQ's and portable cool rooms for food safety. The facility will require power and when the normal supply is interrupted then emergency generators will be required, and this also means fuel to keep them going. Service groups are also great to assist in times of need like Lions and Rotary.

It has been found that in an evacuation centre you require a certain amount of space per person.

The area required for a person is 2 square metres for short term evacuees, where for long term an area of 4

square metres should be provided if possible. For those with wheelchairs it is suggested that two person spaces are provided. (i.e. 4 & 8 sq.m)

Organisations that have experience in handling large numbers of personal in emergencies are organisation like

- » Red Cross
- » Salvation Army (Sallies)
- » Life Line
- » SES
- » RFS

There are also several church group organisations that have welfare groups as well, depending in what area you are in.

For where animal welfare requirements then organisations like the

- » RSPCA,
- » WIRES,
- » Animal Rescue
- » Local Council

These can be a local organisations and is best to be located by using the local directory.

POWER

With experience in the emergency operations side of things one problem is the loss of power.

There are people within the community that rely on electricity to survive. These people must register with their power providers so in the case of extended power outages, they can be assisted by supplying them with a generator or relocate them to a location with power.

One thing which has been evident in recent emergencies, and that is the loss of the mobile phone network and the internet. We have become so reliant on these services over the later years to keep in touch with friends and relatives. With the loss of these services it will be hard to let others know that you are ok and alive.

Buildings or complexes that are allocated for emergency evacuation centres ideally should be fitted with a backup generator system but this is not practical because of the cost.

Not many places will have gone to this extent. Hospitals usually have this equipment in place as well as telephone exchanges and could be the council offices and maybe clubs.

Where centres to be used do not have emergency power plant (Generator) in place then a system can be put in place so that in an emergency power unit can be connected to the building or complex.

This can be done with an external connection point to connect the generator to. **This should be done now, not when an emergency occurs.** Depending on the size of the complex or building depends on the complexity of the installation.

A change over switch is required to be installed at the switchboard that will isolate the installation from the supply mains and then connect the building to The generator.

Changes over switches usually have an off position between the mains and generator positions.

For three phase connection is a bit more complicated but the system is basically the same. The power must be disconnected from the mains otherwise you would be feeding back into the grid.

Where solar panels are installed at an installation, then additional switching may be required.

During the 1991 storms in Sydney's North shore people were getting generators for their personal home use and connecting them to their home. The amount of damage done was extensive and power restoration was taking from a couple of days to a couple of weeks depending on the area. What was found was that residences without mains power were connecting the generator to their home via an extension lead with 2 male plugs (a very dangerous practice) into a power point in their house. This is called in the trade as back feeding.

The Electricity Supply Company had been through the street where trees had brought down power lines and declared it safe and isolated and the trees could now be removed. Those doing the removal of the trees suddenly found they were receiving electric shocks.

It was found that power was being back fed into the street cables from the generators on these homes and the persons had not turned off their main switch allowing the power to back feed into the network of the street cabling.

Having these centres prepared before the emergency occurs is an essential part of preparation. Unfortunately, there are costs involved in getting this work done and in this day and age the question always comes up.

WHO IS GOING TO PAY FOR IT?

One thing to look at is government grants. These are given out to organisations and communities for worthwhile projects. With council owned buildings they might see the sense in having this work done as emergency preparation work as these centres might have been used before.

As for school assembly halls this is another area that could be looked at, but assistance from the P&C might be something worth looking at.

SELF-HELP

One thing to remember is self-help. Have you got an emergency grab bag for use in an emergency with things like a battery supply, torch, radio, food, water, ponchos (wet weather). There is a suggested list on the council web site for you to look at. Don't just look

at it, but do something about having an emergency plan. If you have a pet, make sure you include provisions for them as well in your emergency preparedness, as they are part of the family.

If it has been a storm where you have trees down and no power, people panic. Just remember most houses these days have another kitchen people forget about. The BBQ The big storm in 1991 created over 600,000 tons of vegetational debris on the northern suburbs of Sydney, saw real community spirit. Those who had gas hot water were allowing neighbours that they didn't even know before the storm, using the bathrooms to have showers. BBQ parties to use the food in the freezer before it went off. They pooled their resources and formed friendships that lasted for ever.

-----“-----
Prepare for the worst, and hope for the best.
 -----”-----

Remember the Scout motto, Be Prepared.

I hope this article is of some assistance and guidance for you.

Harry

Article: Extract from National Emergency Response
 Official Journal of the Australian Institute of Emergency Services
 Volume 23 No1 Summer 2009/2010

The article has been added to by Harry Cramer from his experience within the Emergency services.

H.D Cramer OAM MAIES

Member of the Australian Institute of Emergency Services
 Life Member of the NSW SES
 59 Years Service with the NSW SES

Land search

Billy (William) Dilworth had parked his car at Byrill Creek and was last seen 5.30pm on Wednesday, 12 October 2022.

The call came through to Murwillumbah SES & RFS on Friday the 14th at around 3pm. Our Unit commander Jack sent the call out and we commenced search efforts with the help of the Tweed Heads and Tweed Coast units. We searched until around 7.30pm that evening and all searches were requested back the next morning by 8am.

The next morning we all met at Murwillumbah unit and headed out again, this time a lot more members joined us from across all services. We searched for Billy the whole day but to no avail although it was eventful for me - I was chased by a pig then I had a big carpet snake glaring at me (my biggest fear in the world) then I'm pretty sure it was a rat on steroids in the bush! I was way out of my comfort zone but so determined to find Billy.

The bush is unforgiving here and you must always stay together or you could also end up getting lost. The day went on and no Billy, it was heart breaking to leave that night while he still hadn't been found.

The surprising news came through Sunday approx 2.15pm that Billy had been found and also alive and well! This was fantastic news for us all and the best outcome.

I learnt so much on the weekend and how strong a team is when all working together.

This was my first official search (had completed the land search training in August with Tom from Tweed Heads) It was also the first official search for Elizabeth (pictured) who had no previous training. We all learnt so much over the weekend and could not have hoped for a better outcome.

Kym Middle
Murwillumbah Unit

“
The bush is unforgiving here and you must always stay together or you could also end up getting lost.
”



From left to right - Elizabeth (Murwillumbah Unit) Kym Middle (Murwillumbah Unit) and Tom (Tweed Heads Unit)



Bankstown Unit's Participation In Navshield 2022

For two days and two nights, sixteen of our Bankstown members participated in the 2022 Navshield event held at Tarlo River National Park.

Four members undertook the 'gruelling' two day walk whilst the remainder completed the one day.

Attending the event gave a chance for previous navshielders to refresh their bush navigational skills and new participants to learn new skills such as map reading, compass use and pace counting.

Nothing says team building more than walking greater than 20kms a day, rock scrambling, battling 60km winds, steep slopes, freezing temperatures, and sitting around a campfire together.

It was a rewarding experience, and a great way for our members to come together.

Looking forward to the next one!

Ivy (Thu Ha Mai)
Bankstown Unit





Five new members of Canada Bay SES Unit sight the Award - with Canada Bay SES Training Coordinator "Inky" on right (12/10/2022).

Canada Bay SES Unit Receives Council's 2022 "Resilience Award"

The City of Canada Bay Council's Sustainability Awards Program was launched by Council in 2007, to recognise Community Organisations, Local Businesses, and Individuals in various categories of sustainability.

One such category is the "Resilience Category" which "recognises the initiatives of local businesses, community organisations or individuals that strengthened the local community during the COVID-19 pandemic".

The 2022 Award for "Resilience" was presented to Canada Bay SES Unit by the Mayor of the City of Canada Bay Angelo Tsirekas at a Gala Dinner at the Phoenix Restaurant in Rhodes on 10/10/2022.

The Resilience Category embodies the Resilient Sydney program which is built upon five pillars:

1. People-centred responses to COVID-19.
2. Live with our climate and show resilience.
3. Connect for strength through crises like the COVID-19 lockdown.
4. Get ready and stay prepared for shocks to our community.
5. One City — bringing about a more cohesive community.

Under the leadership of Unit Commander David Johnsun, and his two deputies, Simon McLeod and Bradley Davoren, Canada Bay SES Unit sustained its Volunteer response to unprecedented climate events, recognised and

responded to shocks that impacted on the community, disseminated information to sustain a more cohesive community, and maintained the safety of its team during the COVID-19 crisis.

Canada Bay SES Unit's Resilience was demonstrated by its uninterrupted response to local Requests For Assistance (RFAs) with 149 RFAs in the City of Canada Bay between 1/7/2021 and 30/6/2022.

The Unit's volunteers also attended multiple storm and flood RFAs in other Sydney LGA's (for example during a ten-day period in March 2022 Canada Bay SES sent teams to Hawkesbury,



New Members in Training.



City of Canada Bay Mayor Angelo Tsirekas with Canada Bay SES Volunteer Bill Hoyles who accepted the Award on behalf of Canada Bay SES Unit (10/10/2022). Photograph by photographer Nathanael Hughes supplied by City of Canada Bay Council.



The Award.

Liverpool, Kogarah, Marrickville, Bayside and Hurstville).

During the 2022 flood events, volunteers from the Unit conducted Rapid Damage Assessments during the Hawkesbury Floods; sent a Community Liaison Officer to the Northern Rivers Floods and deployed a volunteer in the March 2022, June 2022, and October 2022 flood events to be part of the Incident Management Team at Sydney Metro Zone Incident Control Centre in Rhodes - which is itself a suburb of the City of Canada Bay.

In addition, the Canada Bay SES Unit hosted a group of local Sea Scouts to

its Headquarters in Five Dock, provided guest speakers at one local Rotary Club and two Probus Clubs, set-up an information stall at the "Communities-for-Communities Charity" Family Fun Day in Drummoyne, established a flood-boat display at Ferragosto Italian Festival at Five Dock, and assisted with Santa Claus's two-day tour of the City of Canada Bay prior to Christmas 2021.

In spite of Covid, the Unit continuously welcomed and inducted new fully vaccinated Volunteers and continued training through online courses and via AVL. As Covid rules relaxed the Unit recommenced

selected face-to-face training of RAT negative members.

Throughout the year Canada Bay SES Volunteers implemented and adhered to NSW and SES Covid protocols – including 100% vaccination, hand sanitising, face masks, social distancing, and RAT testing.

Finally, after winning the Sydney Metro Rescue Competition in June 2021, Canada Bay SES Volunteers placed third in the 2022 NSW State Rescue Competition.

Bill Hoyles

Canada Bay SES Volunteer.



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to our community**



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Authorised by Ed Husic MP, ALP, Plumpton NSW



" On behalf of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party we would like to thank all the NSW SES Volunteers for their tireless efforts in supporting and protecting our community. We acknowledge their selfless dedication and commitment to people in our community who are most at need, especially in these difficult times. Stay safe! "

Robert Borsak & Mark Banasiak
Members of the NSW Legislative Council



Authorised by Robert Borsak MLC & Mark Banasiak MLC,
Parliament House Macquarie Street Sydney NSW 2000
Funded using Parliamentary entitlements



Menai Unit Blood Rally

Shout out to all the NSW SES Volunteers who generously gave blood on Saturday 15th October 2022.

KEITH BARNES

Senior Operator, Menai Unit

Coming from the UK I have not been able to donate blood or plasma due to mad cow disease, a disease that can incubate undetected in someone for many years. There's no screening test either.

I have always watched the members in our unit with admiration and respect over the years they have been rolling up their sleeves, so had often told them the minute the ban is over I would be with them - I think it was literally the minute the ban

was lifted Teddy Haryjanto send me a message! So folks, be careful what you say! No seriously, it was great to be a small part of a wonderful group of orange volunteers doing something in the community that really can save lives.



Thank you to our SES volunteers
for your amazing help in our
communities during these
difficult times



THE NATIONALS *for Regional Australia*
Senator Perin DAVEY

Deputy Leader of The Nationals
Shadow Minister for Water
Shadow Minister for Emergency Management
Senator for New South Wales

Authorised by Senator Perin Davey, National Party of Australia,
220 Cressy Street, PO Box 612, Deniliquin NSW 2710.

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Merry Christmas
AND

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Wishing you all a safe and
festive Holiday Season

Thank you for your ongoing
support throughout 2022



Edmond Atalla MP MEMBER FOR MOUNT DRUITT

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

Office: Suite 201, Westfield Shoppingtown, Carlisle Avenue, Mt Druitt

Authorised by Edmond Atalla MP, Suite 201 Westfield Shoppingtown, Mount Druitt funded using parliamentary entitlements.



*To all Upper Hunter
Electorate SES members,
thank you
for the dedication
and commitment
to your community.*

Dave Layzell MP
Member for Upper Hunter



Authorised by Dave Layzell MP, 20 Bridge Street Muswellbrook NSW 2333 - Funded using Parliamentary entitlements.

THE NATIONALS *for Regional Australia*
Mark COULTON
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR PARKES

*Thank you to all past and current serving
SES volunteers in the Parkes electorate
who have gone above and beyond to
assist our community during trying times*



Dubbo ☎ 02 6882 0999
Broken Hill ☎ 08 8087 7649
Moree ☎ 02 6751 1251

Authorised by Mark Coultou MP,
The Nationals, Shop 3, 153 Brisbane
St, Dubbo NSW 2830.



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Blacktown Unit Milestones

Shout out to 3 Members from the NSW SES Blacktown Unit who were presented with 3 major long service awards - totalling 125 years of service!

**Blacktown Unit Commander
Inspector Barry Wademan
45 years of service.**

Barry joined the SES in 1977 as a 13 year old Cadet.

**Senior Operator Drew Hall
40 Years service.**

Drew joined the SES in 1978 as a 16 year old cadet.

He had a 4 year break whilst in the Royal Australian Engineers Army Reserves & then returned to the SES. More recently Drew has become a joint member at the Kogarah Unit.

**Member James Stewart
40 Years service.**

Jimmy joined the SES in 1982.

The members of the Blacktown unit surprised Barry, Drew and Jimmy with their awards.

Congratulations for being recognised for your commitment, dedication and long service!



Volunteer Voice Survey 2022

The NSW SES will again launch its **Volunteer Voice Survey** providing members with an opportunity to have their say. The Volunteer Voice Survey is run yearly, this year the survey will be open from **Friday 11th November 2022 – Sunday the 4th December 2022.**



The survey is anonymous and asks our Volunteers to reflect on their experience as a member at their Unit and also asks them questions about their Zone teams, and the NSW SES. The questions will focus on their role and experience with the NSW SES, values and culture, communication, expectations and views about leadership. Based on previous feedback received, we have also included a free text box to encourage members to have their say about things that may not be directly covered by the survey.

Information packs will be sent to Unit, each pack contains some posters and postcard all with QR codes on them for easy access to the survey. These can be used around the Unit or in trucks. Also in the box is a kit-kat, encouraging members to “have a break, have a kit-kat”.

We want to target respondents from a broad range of geographical locations to have their say, as this year's survey results will turn into directorate specific action plans. These work plans will identify steps required to address issues, improve member experience and ensure accountability of actions.

If you have any questions about the Volunteer Voice Survey, please contact the Volunteer Strategy team at experience@ses.nsw.gov.au

#VOLUNTEERVOICE2022

#BETTHERTOGETHER

#VOLUNTEEREXPERIENCE



VOLUNTEER VOICE

Have your say & be heard

#VOLUNTEEREXPERIENCE



Scan QR Code with your mobile device to start

YOUR

VOICE

MATTERS

YOUR EXPERIENCE

Each volunteer's experience will be different, but a safe, inclusive work environment, access to training and equal opportunities should be consistent across the organisation. We want to know about your experience.

YOUR UNIT

What are your Unit membership strengths? Are there areas for improvement? How can we support your team?

YOUR ZONE

Are we meeting your expectations? Are you receiving the support you need? We want your feedback.

YOUR NSW SES

Trust, Accountability, Respect, Professionalism & Integrity, Safety & Service - we want to know from you - are we modeling our values?

For more information or to contact the Volunteer Strategy Team



02 4247 7471



experience@ses.nsw.gov.au



Diversity and Inclusion update

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COORDINATOR – NICHOLAS STEEPE

We are excited to introduce the new Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator, Nicholas Steepe, who commenced with NSW SES on 30th August 2022.

Nic is based in Southern Zone and will have responsibility for driving and progressing diversity and inclusion across the agency.

Nic, 28, has always lived in regional NSW and currently resides in Junee with his partner. He holds a Bachelor of Social Work, Postgrad-Certificate in Project Management and Master of Social Work (Advanced Practice with Distinction) from Charles Sturt University. Nic has a sustained passion and drive for social justice and intersectionality in the equity, diversity, and inclusion space, advocating and actively contributing to advancing inclusion in their spheres of influence.

Before joining us, Nic worked as a Youth Access and Awareness Work at headspace Dubbo from 2015-2018, and from 2018-2022, worked as an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisor at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga. Nic has received numerous accolades for his achievements, including the Out Role Model Award at the 2019 Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) Awards. Nic is authentic, empathetic, and committed to making a positive difference through their lived experience, demonstrated by various volunteer roles such as the National Regional Director at Out for Australia. Nic loves bowties, colour, reading and aerals.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION NETWORKS

The Diversity and Inclusion Steering Committee (DISC) was established in 2021 as a Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Governance strategic objective under the auspices of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Framework 2020-2025. The DISC is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of a



comprehensive diversity and inclusion roadmap for agency-wide support.

The D&I roadmap includes establishing several Networks to identify actions and initiatives that enhance the experience and opportunities of NSW SES members from diverse groups. During the Network EOI process, we were encouraged by the response from members who were interested in continuing to build an inclusive service, where everyone can feel safe whilst bringing their whole selves to work. Inaugural meetings have now been held for each of the following Networks;

- » Disability and Carers
- » Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- » Gender Equality
- » Life Cycle

A Network focused on multicultural/cultural diversity will be set up by the end of 2022. The NSW SES Pride Network continues to operate and are currently planning our participation in the 2023 Sydney World Pride Mardi Gras.

SBS CORE INCLUSION COURSE – FREE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The SBS Core Inclusion Course has been developed to build foundational skills



and knowledge of Diversity & Inclusion to help make the NSW SES a more inclusive agency, better reflecting the diverse communities we serve. This free interactive and self-paced course will help you understand the impact of the assumptions we all make, unconscious bias and encourage your curiosity.

With a focus on gender, age, disability, Indigenous, culture and LGBTQ+ communities, the course themes are:

- » The 'Why?' of inclusion
- » Unconscious bias
- » Discrimination and legislation
- » Building an inclusive organisation
- » Flexibility
- » Inclusive design

This professional development opportunity is available on aXcelerate, the new Training Management System. Feel free to contact diversityandinclusion.ses.nsw.gov.au should you have any questions about the course.



24/7 Peer & Chaplaincy Support

📞 1800 626 800

Member Assist Program

Converge provide counselling support for a range of issues. The service is available for all members, is free, confidential, and facilitated by professionals.

<https://convergeinternational.com.au/>

1300 687 327

Fortem Australia

Specialised counselling for SES Members and their families. A range of wellbeing activities throughout the year, and a variety of downloadable resources.

<https://fortemaustralia.org.au/>

1300 339 594

Service	Support Available	Contact
Triple Zero	Emergency Services for immediate danger	000
Lifeline	24/7 Counselling	13 11 14
Beyond Blue	24/7 Phone and Online Support	1300 224 636
Mensline AU	support, information and referrals for men	1300 789 978
1800Respect	national domestic, family and sexual violence counselling, information and support service	1800 737 732
Qlife	LGBTIQ peer support and referrals	1800 184 527
13YARN	24/7 crisis support for Indigenous Australians	13 92 76
SANE Australia	information, advice and referrals for people suffering mental illness or trauma	1800 187 263

Wellbeing program Update

It's been a huge year for everyone, including the NSW SES Wellbeing Program.

There is no doubt that 2022 has been another big and challenging year for everyone. The ever-present risk of COVID-19 and the return to our "new normal" life, and major weather events affecting most of our state throughout the year. Extended La Nina means continued stress from the effects of flooding, physical and mental exhaustion or simply feeling "blue" from not seeing enough of the sun.

Certainly, a lot to take on but at the same time, an opportunity to grow and build on our resilience. Amongst other things, NSW SES continued to be actively engaged in supporting our people through the implementation of the new **Wellbeing Program** and enhancement of the existing services. In this final update for the year, the Wellbeing Team would like to share key achievements, reflect on lessons learnt, and invite your thoughts on how we are doing so far.

THE WELLBEING PROGRAM

Between December 2021 and May 2022, we met with many of you in our discovery workshops, seeking your input into the design of the program, its purpose as well as core messaging. Thank you to those who participated and provided extremely valuable feedback that allowed us to create "Your Wishlist" for the program and cemented our program vision.

The key elements you would like are:

- » A wellbeing centred culture throughout the Agency
- » A program that understands and is driven by our members
- » Clarity around the available mental health and wellbeing support
- » More mental health and wellbeing education

- » Access to other health and wellbeing initiatives such as fitness, nutrition and financial
 - » Enhancement of our Peer Support and Chaplaincy programs
 - » Creation of a Wellbeing Network
- This "do to-do" list called for help and support from an experienced team. Since February, we welcomed a Manager Mental Health Services, two Senior Psychologists, two Occupational Psychologists, two Program Managers, and a Project Officer; and in September, we rounded the family off with a Wellbeing Coordinator. All these roles are critical in supporting the delivery of the Wellbeing Program.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING INITIATIVES

From July – September the Wellbeing team hosted a pilot program of "Wellbeing Wednesday" lunch and learn seminars for all members focusing on topics related to various dimensions of wellbeing. Your feedback to the series confirmed its popularity and allowed us to create a Summer Wellbeing Workshop Series focused on our volunteers. Keep an eye out for your invitation to join in.

MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

In July, NSW SES Occupational Psychologists developed and delivered bespoke training in mental health and wellbeing to Community Capability Officers (CCOs) to equip them to meet the unique challenges of their role. This training was well received, with positive feedback from participants and leadership.

In August and September, our Occupational Psychologists were invited to consult and collaborate on projects designed to enhance the wellbeing and performance of the State Command Centre

Capability (SCC) pre-formed teams and members within the State Operating Centre (SOC).



The SCC teams participated in workshops and several interviews and received recommendations for how to support the wellbeing of its members further. The SOC project is part of an ongoing partnership designed to meet the evolving needs of SOC members in the context of ongoing weather events and operational demands.

RU OK?

September also hosted "RU OK? Day". The Wellbeing Team supported units in running events in their musters to strengthen connections and cohesion among unit members. Unit Commanders were also provided resources and information about how to enhance the mental health of their members.

We received positive feedback about the impact of this initiative from Unit Commanders, who shared their stories of how their members came together and embraced the activity. A review of this project highlighted the importance of fostering unit relationships and cohesion and enhancing the

confidence of Unit Commanders to support the mental health of their members.

GUEST SPEAKER

In October, to celebrate and acknowledge Mental Health Month 2022, the Wellbeing Team organised a guest speaker to share his story about the mental health impacts of being a First Responder and the strategies that helped him cope. This talk was delivered online to ensure all members across NSW could attend and engage in the content.

PEER SUPPORT AND CHAPLAINCY

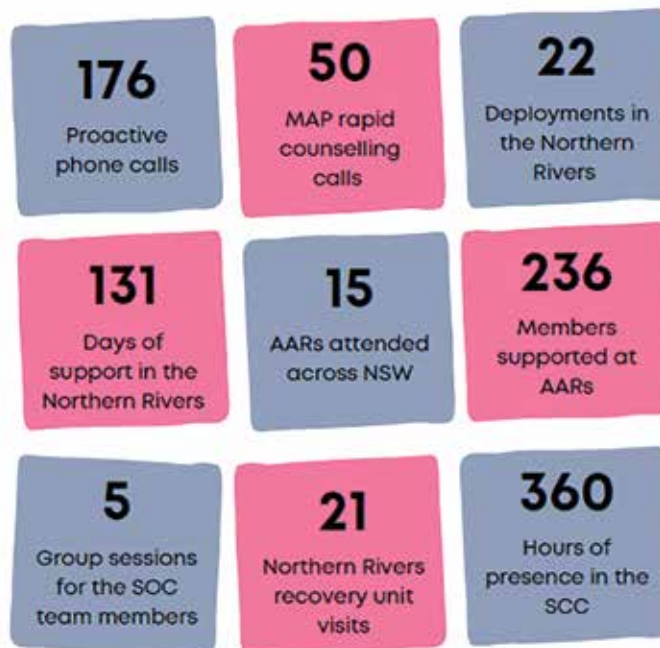
Due to severe weather and flooding we experienced in late February and early March, the teams have been busy providing ongoing support across the Northern Zone, as well as in the State Command Centre, and State Operations Centre.

As part of their contribution, in July, Peers and Chaplains conducted several proactive unit visits across the state, providing follow-up support to those members affected by the floods. They also participated in 7 After-Action Reviews, following Event 261. Findings from these reviews will be crucial in shaping our mental health response to future events. The additional focus has been on providing engagement and wellbeing education sessions for the units, such as the My5 training, which was updated in September and the pilot session completed in the Wollongong unit in October.

In June, forty-eight (48) of our volunteer Peers and Chaplains and ten (10) staff met in Sydney at our first conference in over two years. The event was opened by Deputy Commissioner, Damien Johnston who provided his vision and support for the mental health enhancement of NSW SES. Commissioner Carlene York also spoke at the conference to share her appreciation of the support provided by Peer Support Officers and Chaplains, especially with the mental health response provided to the Northern Rivers region from March.

The last quarter of the year was focused on recruiting and onboarding more Peer Support Officers and Peer Support Duty Officers. The team conducted interviews for potential new recruits. As a result, 18 new Peer

EVENT 261 SUPPORT



For those of us who love stats, here are a few from **Event 261**:

Support Officers attended induction training with the Mental Health Services team members and three (3) Peer Support Duty Officers at the State Headquarters on 28-29 October.

In addition, we continue to focus on developing and supporting our Peers and Chaplains. Peers and Chaplains participated in Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) training programs. Community of Practice was created for Peers and Chaplains, which included facilitated group sessions by a Senior Psychologist to embed PFA and TIC learnings to support our members.

We have a wonderfully dedicated team of Peer Support Officers and Chaplains – but we would love to have more across the state! We continue to seek expressions of interest for new Peer Support Officers across NSW and are currently planning to deliver another recruitment campaign and induction weekend in the first half of 2023. If you are interested, please email us at peer.support@ses.nsw.gov.au

MEMBER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (MAP)

In March, we introduced a new **Member Assistance Program (MAP)** and increased the offering of counselling support for our volunteer members. Volunteers can

now access 3 x 60min counselling sessions. Areas of support include any personal or work-related concerns. If you feel you need support, please contact MAP on **1300 687 327**

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES - OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

The Mental Health Services team facilitated discussions and provided psychoeducation to the officers within the State Operations Centre (SOC) as part of the AAR process. These discussions have focussed on mental health, self-care and the impacts of trauma, including ways to maintain psychological safety in a high-risk work environment.

Our Senior Psychologists continue to provide consultancy, and referral guidance and advice to NSW SES managers, staff, and volunteers to manage a variety of mental health issues ranging from personal relationship breakdown to bullying and harassment and to how best to support someone experiencing poor mental health. Alongside Peer Support Officers and Chaplains, the team has also been busy working on the Event 261 Recovery Plan which began in May and will conclude in March 2023. Support continues for our members through follow-up visits in the Northern Rivers.

THE WELLBEING NETWORK

The Wellbeing Program is designed for you and with your contribution. That's why we have created the Wellbeing Network.

What does the Wellbeing Network do?

Support planning, delivery and promotion of wellbeing initiatives
Seeks feedback about wellbeing initiatives from peer members and relays it back to the Wellbeing Program team.

...And lots more!

Who can join the Wellbeing Network?

- » Any volunteer or staff member of NSW SES

» "The more, the merrier" - we welcome a diversity of volunteer and staff roles and would like representation from all Zones and Directorates

To join the network, please contact **wellbeingandsupport@ses.nsw.gov.au** or **bit.ly/WellbeingNetworkRegistrationForm**

If you have any questions about the information provided in this article or would like to chat with us about your thoughts and ideas about the Wellbeing Program, please reach out to us at **wellbeingandsupport@ses.nsw.gov.au** or **02 4251 6669**

Your wellbeing is important. If you need to reach out, please connect with the options below which are free and confidential.

Peer Support Officers & Chaplains

1800 626 800 (our team is available 24/7 and this service is free and confidential)

Member Assistance Program

(MAP) Counselling – 1300 687 327
(Volunteers can access 3x 60mins counselling sessions which are free and confidential)

Lifeline – 13 11 14

Beyond Blue - 1300 224 636

Project LIFT Program

The Local Investment program for Facilities and Teams (LIFT) has commenced as a direct result of the \$132.7 million investment by the NSW Government. The addition of 70+ new roles to the agency creates an amazing and unique opportunity for all members.

The creation of two additional zones will ensure greater local knowledge can be applied during an incident. New zone headquarters have been confirmed for North Eastern Zone to be located in Lismore, or in close proximity, and in Tamworth for North Western Zone. All other headquarters remain the same.

RECRUITMENT AND STAFFING

As part of the transition to the seven operational zones, the NSW SES is creating and recruiting an additional 70+ roles across the state. By increasing the number of regional staff, the NSW SES will be able to provide more support to volunteers and communities at a local level.

Recruitment advertising for priority roles has commenced and will be phased across the coming months to minimise the amount of disruption to our members and community. The NSW SES encourages all its members to apply for opportunities of interest, by submitting an application via the **I Work For NSW** website. If members would like to know more about advertised roles and discuss

their interest, they are encouraged to reach out to the contact listed in the job advertisements.

The LIFT program has committed to supporting its members by facilitating recruitment focused training that is aimed at ensuring all internal candidates are best prepared for upcoming recruitment activities.

WRITING JOB APPLICATIONS AND INTERVIEW SKILLS

These virtual workshops have focused on providing participants with the knowledge and skills required to prepare a winning job application for a role within the NSW SES and broader NSW Public Sector. Practical techniques were explored on how to confidently present information about skills and experience in a written application and at interview for maximum impact.

Six sessions have been held through September and October, with forty-three members participating. Opportunities to attend upcoming additional workshops will be made available for all members, with details to be communicated once confirmed. Positive feedback has been received throughout these

sessions and noted the need to hold Writing Job Applications and Interview Skills workshops more regularly to continuously support members.

MERIT ASSESSMENTS FOR HIRING MANAGERS AND PANEL MEMBERS

In addition to the Writing Job Applications and Interview Skills workshops, the NSW SES has held three half day sessions on Merit Assessment for Hiring Managers and Panel Members. These virtual half day sessions focused on the selection processes for positions within the NSW Public Sector, delivering the knowledge and skills required to effectively participate as either a Convenor or member of a recruitment and selection panel, ensuring objective, transparent and equitable selection. This investment to the capability building of thirty-five Hiring Managers, will ensure that the upcoming volume in recruitment panels will produce fair and equitable outcomes.

Please do not hesitate to contact **hrsupport@ses.nsw.gov.au** if you require further information.



Training Never Stops at the Port Stephens Unit

Training never stops at the Port Stephens Unit, with continuous learning and skills development for everyone.

In a recent week, our members conducted a range of different training activities including:

MONDAY

Casualty Management In Remote Areas

A webinar session was held to cover planning, preparation, environmental factors, team management, casualty comfort, considerations and equipment involved in managing a casualty in a remote area.

This aids our members preparedness when we are called to a flood rescue, a land rescue or a land search in these challenging environments.

TUESDAY

Flood Boats

Our Floodboat Operators took the boats out for a session of professional development including simulations & drills, whilst the river is in flood.

This is a great opportunity for our operators to hone their techniques manoeuvring the boats, navigating the rivers and avoiding debris in the current fast flowing and elevated rivers.

Stabilisation & Lifting

Teams worked through a scenario where a casualty (mannequin) was trapped under a trailer.

This required the stabilisation and controlled lifting of the trailer off the casualty, using airbags and cribbing.

Knots & Ropes

Members refreshed their knot tying and rope skills. It is important our are proficient at tying the knots we use with our heights safety systems and boats to ensure safety while our responding to jobs. Knots include the clove hitch, alpine butterfly, figure eight, sheet bend, prusik and bowline.

Vehicles & Equipment

Some of our more experienced members went through equipment checks and maintenance activities with our newer members.

This included equipment such as working at heights kits, polesaws, drills and more.

Training Preparations

Over the next 2 months, we are running 4 training courses for our members, including:

- » Floodboat Operations
- » Storm & Water Damage Operations
- » Participate In A Rescue Operation
- » First Aid

A huge amount of preparation goes into these courses, including:

- » Course session breakdown including topics and timings
- » Scheduling of course dates
- » Arranging of trainers & assessors
- » Sending out course nominations to members

- » Finalising participant lists
- » Creation & dissemination of course joining instructions
- » Preparation of course materials such as Learner, Trainer and Assessor guides
- » Ensuring the training rooms are setup & ready to go

WEDNESDAY

Swim & Fitness Testing

Members completed their Swim + Fitness tests at Lakeside Leisure Centre (for the swim component) and our SES Unit (for the fitness component).

The swim test comprises of a timed swimming component, in addition to a treading water and floating on back component.

The fitness test then comprises of 9 separate activities designed to test strength, endurance, flexibility, movement and balance of members.

Rescue Training

Our Rescue Operators rotated through several different activities to retain their skills and refine their techniques, including:

- » Mass casualty incident response, involving rapid assessment, control of major bleeds, application of tourniquets, resuscitation skills and use of our medical equipment (including major trauma kits and oxygen resuscitation kits).
- » Recovery of casualty from heights or depths, involving setup of live load equipment, rope redirection, casualty handling and use of our patient transport equipment (including SKED stretchers, spine boards and stokes litter).
- » Ultra High Strength Steels (UHSS), Advanced High Strength Steels (AHSS) and boronised steels as well as advanced safety structures in newer vehicles.

It's remarkable what can be achieved with members that go above and beyond to support training and ongoing skills development

We are extremely lucky to have such an incredible team to deliver these activities for our members.

Shout out to the other Unit Training Teams!

The last few years have been some of the more challenging (thanks Covid..), but keep up the amazing work you do.





National Disaster Rescue Challenge

Port Macquarie unit was excited to be representing NSW SES at the National Disaster Rescue Challenge (NDRC) held in Perth, Western Australia this year.

The event was held over two days in October (22nd and 23rd October 2022). After being announced as the winners of the State Disaster Rescue Challenge (SDRC) in Sydney in May 2022. The Port Macquarie team geared up for the NDRC to take on seven other teams from around Australia. Each State and Territory had a team representing their home state to determine the best team in Australia.

Our story at NDRC WA starts three years early in May 2019 at the previous SDRC. Port Macquarie had a team compete at the challenge held in Sydney. Our team had a high percentage of female to male ratio, five to three respectively. I was the first aider and was also 9 weeks pregnant with our first baby (husband Wardy as team leader).

The Port Macquarie team was very excited and honoured to be selected as the team to represent NSW at the 2019 NDRC. With home ground advantage, as NSW was hosting, we were keen to take on teams from across Australia. Being heavily pregnant by then, I stepped aside as the first aider allowing another member to join the team.

Wild spread bushfires caused the postponement of NDRC in October 2019 to early 2020. The rapid spread

of Covid was responsible for cancelling the Challenge that was rescheduled for March 2020. We all were every disappointed to have missed the opportunity to represent our state at the national level.

The following year, 2021, Port Macquarie unit prepared another team to take on the state challenge again. This event had also been postponed twice from floods and covid restrictions at various times during 2021. In November 2021 Wardy and I welcomed our second baby into the family. The 2021 SDRC was rescheduled for May 2022 in Sydney. A spot became available for me in the team, so we took our two boys along with us to the challenge. Many of us in the team (and in the unit) have families with young children so we really appreciated the support from the team helping us with the kids. It was welcoming to see that one of the other teams competing had brought their young children too.

Stocked from the win and ecstatic to have the opportunity to travel to the western side of our massive country, eight team members (including the reserve and team manager) got ready to head over to Perth. Between us we took three children along for the trip, our two boys (1 and 3 years old) and Alfred brought is 6 year old son.

We had a last minute change in team members when one of our volunteers got accepted into the NSW Police force.

Over the weekend of the National challenge, we all put in our best efforts to showcase our skills, challenge ourselves, while always learning something new. As a unit we are very proud of our teams' achievements both at the challenge and back at home where there was a number of rescue and storm jobs. After two days of competing and giving and taking fun competitive rivalry with other teams. Port Macquarie team, as NSW SES representatives, took out second place overall. While we were disappointed to be pipped at the post by Queensland, we have got a lot of be proud of. Well done to all.

After three years, two children born, a number of challenges and a lot of postponement and cancellations, there is no doubt the last few years have been both very rewarding and challenging. As volunteers we often give our time away from home and work, it was great that some of us were able to take our families with us and to see others doing the same. Family is at the heart of what we do in and for our communities across Australia.





Community resilience at its finest

The community of Woodville came together to support each other after they were isolated by flood waters on the morning of Friday 8th July 2022, after their last access point at Taylor's Bridge was cut by rising waters.

The Woodville Store remained open during the areas isolation to service the community, proving essential food and supplies via their boat.

"The community stayed positive and worked together to get through this time."

**- Zoey Kirwan,
Owner of The Woodville Store**

A community member, Murray Hicks, started a thread in the communities Facebook group, to capture regular updates on locals roads from other residents in the area. This allowed everyone to stay across the ever changing road conditions as river levels increased.

"Most of us have been through this before and we always band together through these hard times. It's a great community and a very special place."

**- Murray Hicks,
Community Member**

Another community member used his personal photography equipment to capture area footage which he then shared with government agencies to provide up to date situational awareness of the area.

Adam Benson, a resident from the nearby suburb of Glen Oak, became aware of Woodvilles isolation and the need for a high clearance vehicle to deliver feed for livestock. Adam used his 6 wheeled 1964 Army Mac Truck to deliver essential fodder from Hicks Hay & Grain into areas that were unable to be accessed by cars.

"All of us are presented with opportunities in life to be a vehicle of God's love into another persons life, whether it be through a kind word or an act of charity. Adam Lindsay Gordon said 'Two things stand like stone, Kindness in another's trouble, Courage in your own'."

**- Adam Benson,
resident of Glen Oak**

Parts of Woodville became re-accessible on the morning of Wednesday 13th July, however some parts remained isolated around Paterson Road. The water is continuing to recede as it flows downstream and out to sea.

NSW SES Port Stephens crews brought out donated goods for community members in need. Many thanks to Raymond Terrace Salvation Army, FOOD WAR Inc, and Maitland Family Support for your donations to the community.

During Woodville's week long isolation, the NSW SES only received 2 calls for assistance, one for essential medication and the other for critical supplies.

The resilience of the Woodville community enabled NSW SES volunteers to perform flood rescues, medical evacuations, emergency supplies, critical transport, levee damage repairs,



area reconnaissance and public information across their Port Stephens area - whilst always being just a phone call away if needed.

"It is incredible how the community of Woodville come together to support each other during floods. Such a great example of true community resilience."

- Alysha Springett, NSW SES Port Stephens - Deputy Unit Commander

There were many acts of kindness, generosity and mateship throughout the local community, with people going above and beyond to support each one another.

"Our community banded together and did what we had to do for each other. We always have and we always will."

- Michael Kirwan, Owner of The Woodville Store

A massive well done to the Woodville community.



First Responders Resilience Program



Designed for emergency volunteer first responders

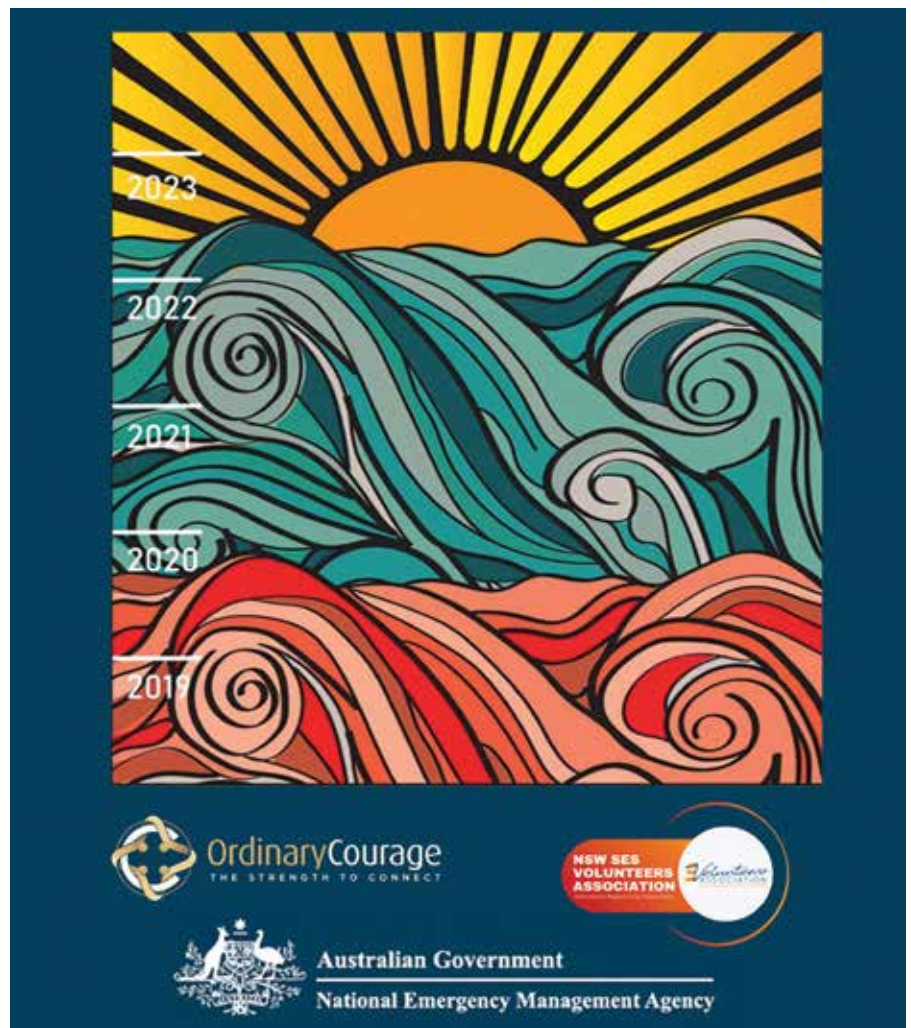
Over the past 4 years emergency workers, in particular volunteers, have experienced the combined challenges of bushfires, a pandemic and state-wide flooding.

The widespread devastation and prolonged duration of the Black Summer fires highlighted the extensive trauma volunteers also face, yet with limited access to targeted programs that build psychological resilience. The Black Summer fires revealed a gap in the way we help communities prepare and respond to natural disasters for both emergency service staff and our volunteers.

"Emergency workers fill a hugely important role in our society, but unfortunately the nature of their job means they are regularly exposed to different types of trauma, from witnessing distressing events to having their own lives in significant danger"
- Prof Sam Harvey¹

The SES Volunteer Association [SESVA] is delivering a brand-new mental health program for emergency workers. First Responder Resilience Program was created to boost sustainable mental health leadership capability within NSW disaster affected communities. The program will encourage leaders to improve their ability to build trust, respect, and mobilise morale in their teams, with the main goal of minimising the negative psychological impacts of major emergency and disaster events. The program will have many benefits for both the organisation and the people involved, and those who experience it will have the opportunity to develop invaluable life skills.

This program delivered by SESVA, NEMA and Ordinary Courage, is a program specifically designed for first responders, which is now being tailored specifically for SES volunteers. Former Deputy Commissioner of Fire and Rescue NSW, Jim Smith has called the FRRP program "the first of its kind, designed by emergency service personnel with specialist researchers for front-line volunteers".



The program will work with SESVA team leaders and other local community leaders to co design an approach to training and post training support. "We're making sure it fits well with our volunteers and their teams and enhances resilience and community engagement" - Shannon Crofton, SESVA Vice President

Later this year, the crafted professional program will be prototyped, and during the initial stages, volunteer participants and trainers will be asked for their input in ways to enhance the program and the

way it's delivered. We encourage you to get involved and add your valuable insights. Please use the QR code below to find out more.



1 <https://www.myvmc.com/news/emergency-service-workers-to-benefit-from-world-first-ptsd-treatment-guidelines/>



Australian Government

National Emergency Management Agency

“

Volunteers are regularly exposed to different types of trauma, from witnessing distressing events to having their own lives in significant danger.

2022 FLOODS

2021 FLOODS

2020 BUSHFIRES

2019 BUSHFIRES

Bull Rescue

Crews from NSW SES Port Stephens worked along side members from Queensland Fire Emergency Services to rescue a bull who had become trapped in flood waters on the Paterson River, HINTON.

NSW SES crews worked carefully around the In-Water Flood Technicians, to ensure their safety during the rescue operation and to ward off any large debris coming down the river near them.

The In-Water Flood Technicians used a mirage of techniques including use of slings, straps, coaxing and food to get the tired bull to safety. The bull was taken to the closest dry ground, at back of the The Victoria Hotel, Hinton.

Now affectionately known as "Sesil", this beautiful 1 tonne bull is now safe, and getting lots of love from the **#Hinton Community**



Dog Rescue

Crews from NSW SES Port Stephens have rescued 2 dogs that were being swept down the Hunter River.

Whilst performing emergency flood boat operations, SES boat crews found 2 dogs struggling in the middle of the Hunter River near Hinton.

The two 30kg+ dogs were pulled out of the water and into the SES boat, where crews then transported them to dry land until the owner/s could be located.

Absolutely exhausted from their ordeal, the two dogs (Savvy and Marley) were greeted with open arms by SES members and the local Hinton community who dried them off with towels, gave them food + water + doggie coats and lots of cuddles.

The owner was quickly located via a social media post. She was very concerned about her beautiful dogs after they went missing from her property. It appears Savvy & Marley had a misadventure whilst outside playing, after they jumped into the river and had gotten swept away.

SES boat crews transported Savvy & Marley to be reunited with their owner who lived on the other side of the river. She was extremely thankful they were safe and gave her appreciation to everyone involved in looking after the pups.

A very happy tail wagging ending.





Wellness Bingo

NSW SES VA was a proud sponsor of the initiative.

We all know how difficult it was to connect during COVID isolation and Wollongong found that when we did finally get to return to normal training and activities that it was a phased and tentative transition back to the regular routine. Not all members returned to face to face straight away, with a mix of online meetings, remote working and face to face activities making it difficult to reconnect.

Our unit was fractured in the aftermath of Covid so in October 2021 in an attempt to get members reengaged and reconnected we ran our first Wellness Bingo to line up with World Mental Health Awareness Day. We put together a calendar of activities that focussed on mental health and wellbeing, hoping that by participating members would take a little time out for themselves but at the same time share and connect with their peers. There were a variety of activities from starting or completing an art and craft or DIY project, listening to your favourite music, going for a walk, ride, run or

swim and reaching out to an SES buddy. Further activities included random acts of kindness, clean space, clear mind, sharing a goal or something you've learnt recently and sharing your happy place.

The whole thing was run through a post on teams so whether you were one of those people attending face to face or not, you were able to participate or follow along at home.

To incentivise members to participate we approached the volunteer association to offer some prizes to our participants who completed the most activities in the fastest amount of time. They happily come to the party to support the cause.

The first year we run this we had 11 members participate. We found members were positive and supportive of other members journeys and posts and had some great feedback at the end of it so of course we run it again. This year we opened it up as a cluster event, inviting Dapto and OSU to join us. We also invited along the peer support team from State Headquarters to present a MY5 session which lined

up nicely with the theme of the month and had a great attendance by the unit.

This being the second year of Wellness Bingo, we had 16 members participate and 194 replies or entries to the event, meaning there were multiple members finishing over two thirds of the month's activities. The volunteer association again sponsored the event with some prizes, but it was clear that those who were participating were more interested in inspiring other members to take time for wellness than they were about winning. They continued to post regardless of whether someone had already reached all tasks for the month.

There are many things that have brought us back to 'normal', for us Wellness Bingo was a small part of that journey but it has showcased so much of our community spirit through members support and encouragement of each other and has demonstrated why we call ourselves a family. We hope to continue to take time for Wellness and to inspire healthy habits and hope you do too.

Jessica Horwood

NIC Wellness Bingo October 2022

1 Relax Outdoors	2 Clean Space Clear Mind	3 GROUNDING TECHNIQUE 5 things you can see 4 things you can touch 3 things you can hear 2 things you can smell 1 thing you can taste	4 Listen to a podcast or watch a movie	5 Tip & Tricks Share something you've learnt recently	6 Share a sign or symptom of a mental health concern	7 List 5 reasons why you are awesome
8 Share 3 things you are grateful for	9 WOULD YOU RATHER RIDE SWIM OR RUN	10 COMPLETE OR START AN ART AND CRAFT OR DIY PROJECT	11 SHARE AN OLD PHOTO OF YOURSELF	12 Tick 2 things off your to do list	13 Reach out to a SES buddy	<p>Entries will only count if sufficient evidence is posted in direct reply to the original post in the NIC General Channel on MS Teams</p> <p>Sufficient evidence can be: - Videos - Photos - Links - Comments</p> <p>Winners will be the first 3 people to complete the most activities the fastest.</p>
14 Eat some fruit and vegetables	15 SHARE A HEALTH AND WELLBEING TIP	16 SHARE A POSITIVE QUOTE	17 Give someone a compliment today	18 SHARE A PHOTO OF A PET OR LOVED ONE	19 Take a dessert and share your recipe	
20 Share a Joke	21 OPERATION RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS	22 READ A BOOK	23 Draw, paint or colour in	24 Share 3 things about yourself	25 Listen to your favourite music	
26 Capture a sunrise or sunset	27 COMPLETE A PUZZLE OF ANY KIND	28 Make a homemade healthy lunch	29 Share a goal	30 PLAY A Game of any kind	31 WHERE IS YOUR HAPPY PLACE?	





World Rescue Challenge

From the 8th – 11th September 2022, NSW State Emergency Service was represented on the world stage by the very capable rescue operators from Port Stevens SES Unit at the World Rescue Challenge in Luxembourg.

Port Stevens is a busy volunteer based General Land Rescue Unit located north of Newcastle and encompasses large road and rail transport corridors along with substantial mining and manufacturing infrastructure.

The Port Stevens Unit was selected to attend the WRC following their success during the Virtual Challenge held during 2021 due to Covid. Training for the 2022 challenge commenced almost immediately and continued through the remainder of 2021 and into 2022, encompassing the NSW State Road Rescue Challenge and the 2022 Australasian Rescue Challenge hosted by ARRO.

The team comprised Jane Huebner, Steven Young, Tim Troon, Ken Hepplewhite, David Douglas, Ken Douglas and Tony Hine. The seven members brought a significant skill set across paramedicine and rescue operations. Steve and Tim competed in the medical challenge and formed the primary and secondary medic for the extrication challenges. Jane, David

and Ken H were the tool operators and Tony was team captain.

On arrival in Luxembourg we were met by Johnny, the Captain of a volunteer brigade who became our chaperone, tour guide, chauffeur, translator and just about everything else we needed. Over the 6 days the team spent in Luxembourg our hosts extended us every courtesy including visits to different stations to meet with crews and discuss the varying issues that both countries shared along with learning some surprising differences in response procedures and medical protocols.

The World Rescue Challenge uses three different "pits" or scenarios that are 10, 20 and 30 minutes in length. The 10-minute pit or Rapid Rescue is a single casualty with an immediately life threatening injury. Teams are to release and hand over the patient within the 10 minutes. The 20-minute pit or standard rescue is a single patient trapped with injuries that can be treated within the vehicle and the 30-minute pit or complex rescue is two patients trapped

in two different vehicles, one with immediately life-threatening injuries and one with injuries that can be treated within the vehicle.

Assessors for the World Rescue Challenge are selected from member nations with national level extrication challenges. Each assessor must have assessed at a national level for at least two years, nominated to the World Rescue Organisation with a portfolio and then undertake a mentorship to be accepted. Assessors for this year's challenge came from America, England, Ireland, Spain and Argentina.

Our first pit was the rapid pit with a patient trapped in a vehicle adjacent to a jersey barrier. We managed to treat the patient to a high degree with the extrication stabilising both vehicles and removing two doors and a b-pillar. Time was called as we prepared to get the patient onto a spine board but we left happy with our progress given the degree of entrapment.

Day two saw us compete in the complex pit with two patients trapped



in different vehicles, one on its side with a low acuity patient and one overturned with a critically ill patient. Most of our efforts were focused on the critical patient with a release and handover coming at the 15 minute mark. Efforts transitioned to the vehicle on its side, with a ram used to release an arm entrapment and progress towards a roof removal when time was called.

Day two also saw our paramedics compete in the complex medical pit with a burns scenario from an agricultural accident. One patient had superficial burns and another presented with significant airway burns. Both were treated to the high standard our Special Operations Paramedics work at.

Day three had us in the standard pit, with a patient trapped in the rear seat of a sedan, crushed under another vehicle and a motorbike. Rapid assessment and stabilisation work saw both vehicles stabilised and medical access gained within 90 seconds. The bike was removed from the roof and roof flap conducted before the patient was placed on a spine board and extricated at the 16 minute mark. A thorough secondary assessment and additional

treatment was conducted on the spine board before handover the 18 minute mark.

The afternoon our paramedics competed again in the medical challenge, confronting a gun shot victim following a fight. Both paramedics worked rapidly to assess and treat a patient with a gunshot wound a head injury that indicated the potential for a fractured skull. Both Steve and Tim worked hard to stabilise the patient, treat the gunshot wound to the chest and manage airway demands over the 10 minutes.

Overall Port Stevens and by extension NSW SES has gained valuable experience and insight out of the competition. At a Unit level it has increased the tempo and quality of the scenario-based learning including the push towards concurrent extrication activities and the drive to have the final plan match the patient needs.

It has highlighted what an advanced environment we work in and given us an appreciation of our skill level internationally. We learned that many medical systems don't have paramedics and overall, their clinical skill level is lower than that provided by NSW Ambulance. This is not a reflection on the skill or passion of the practitioners, but instead a

reflection of the European and American proximity to primary care facilities. Some assessors were a little stunned that travel times to and from a rescue could exceed 90 minutes each way.

From a technical rescue perspective, World Rescue Challenge does not use or endorse vehicle relocation or lifting via air bags or hydraulics during competition. This caused us to significantly alter our extrication approach and certainly reinforced that getting drawn away from the entrapment side and tunnelling to a patient increased extrication times.

Each of us would encourage SES Units to strongly consider entering a team in the NSW Challenge to be hosted in Coffs Harbour in 2023. The opportunity to increase your training and focus on the rarer incidents will benefit your local communities immensely. Meeting with likeminded volunteers and professionals who willing share their knowledge and explain their tactics was an immensely satisfying experience and its fair to say we each walked away having gained new knowledge.

Chief Inspector Tony Hine BM

Local Commander | Upper North Shore
Co-chair General Land Rescue Capability Development Group (GLRCDG)

Frank Wilson

Not a 'Friend' but a great Mate

Frank Wilson and I were not friends – we didn't know each other that well.

That said, I'm honoured to have had Frank as a mate. He really was a great mate.

We met through the NSW SES Volunteers Association – a group that with a bunch of other incredible people was started back in 1998.

Though a founding member, and the representative for Sydney Western, I missed a couple of years while Andrew Hall and Colin Fitton held that position.

Frank joined the NSW SES in 2003, was appointed Local Controller at Mathoura and subsequently elected to represent Murray Region while David Lane was President, as I recall and Charlie Moir was Secretary.

Frank was a man who liked to give proper consideration to each and every proposal regarding ways to benefit volunteers, the Service and the Association.

If I am remembering correctly, while David Lane was President, Frank was elected as Vice President and he was a voice of reason on many occasions in that role.

Frank and I did not always agree and he often said "...I need to think about that..." and sometimes he would later say "I had a think and you might be right. Let's give it a go..."

I like to think we worked well together on a great many things that the Association achieved, especially on behalf of NSW SES volunteers.

Working with Frank when I was Secretary included some great times – it was there that I think he taught me about "The Law of Unintended Consequences and Unforeseen Outcomes". "Look past now and into tomorrow" is another phrase that comes to mind. Frank taught patience, and what some these days might call "...due diligence..." long before they were in vogue.

Frank attended Council and later Board Meetings as well as AFAC Conferences and always contributed to the business at hand. He was diligent and a great credit to the Region members he represented, the Association and the Service.

On the SES side of his life, as well as being Controller and later Commander of his Unit, from the day he joined there were very few roles for which Frank hadn't qualified. I believe his SAP Member Report ran out to four pages.

We miss you, Frank.

Job well done.

R.I.P.

Peter Lalor ESM MAIES

Commander Metro Zone Awards and Ceremonial Unit

Graham Straker

11.03.44 - 2.10.22

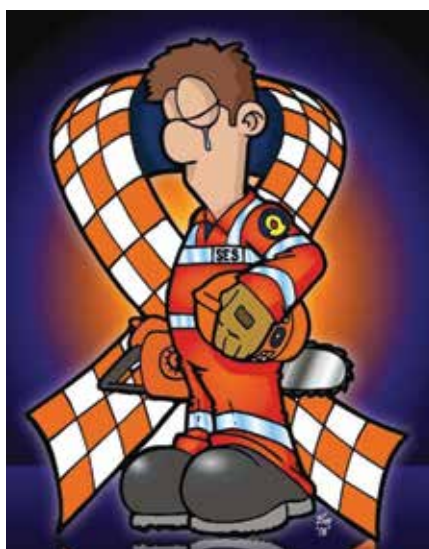
It is with deep sadness that I advise the passing of our long serving member Graham Straker. He has been a member for 36 years 1 month, with most of those years shared between the old Sydney Southern Unit and at Canterbury Unit. Graham had incredible knowledge and skills which he was always passing onto other members.

He will be sadly missed.

R.I.P.

Lenore Nelson

Inspector, Unit Commander
Canterbury



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