

The official journal of the NSW SES Volunteers Association

the

Volunteer

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Saving family home and business contents from flood disasters.

The new content protective bags in three sizes offer a solution to protect home and business contents in the event of flooding.



Krisis Protection Australia is a startup company at the forefront of flood disaster protection. The brainchild of Steve Harris, Founder & CEO, and Bill Pollock after investing five years researching and designing a watertight bag that saves home and business contents from flood waters. He has successfully secured investment with Drake International to make his dream come to life as he launches Krisis Bags to Australians and the USA market.

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Krisis Flood Bags is a brand for the people; we care about the life you have built and want to help you protect it. Our vision is to ensure all Australian families and businesses have a better future by reducing the risk to their contents from natural flood disasters. We value this opportunity to partner with the SES Volunteers as the authority in disaster mitigation.



Steve Harris
CEO

"People now do not have to endure or suffer the financial and emotional heartache caused by being unprepared."





We have a solution for a better future to ensure you protect your possessions.

For example, Krisis Protection has installed Krisis Flood Bags in the most frequently flooded homes of Queensland and New South Wales with incredibly positive feedback."

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Please share your story of flooding and be part of this fantastic friends & family community success.

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the Volunteer

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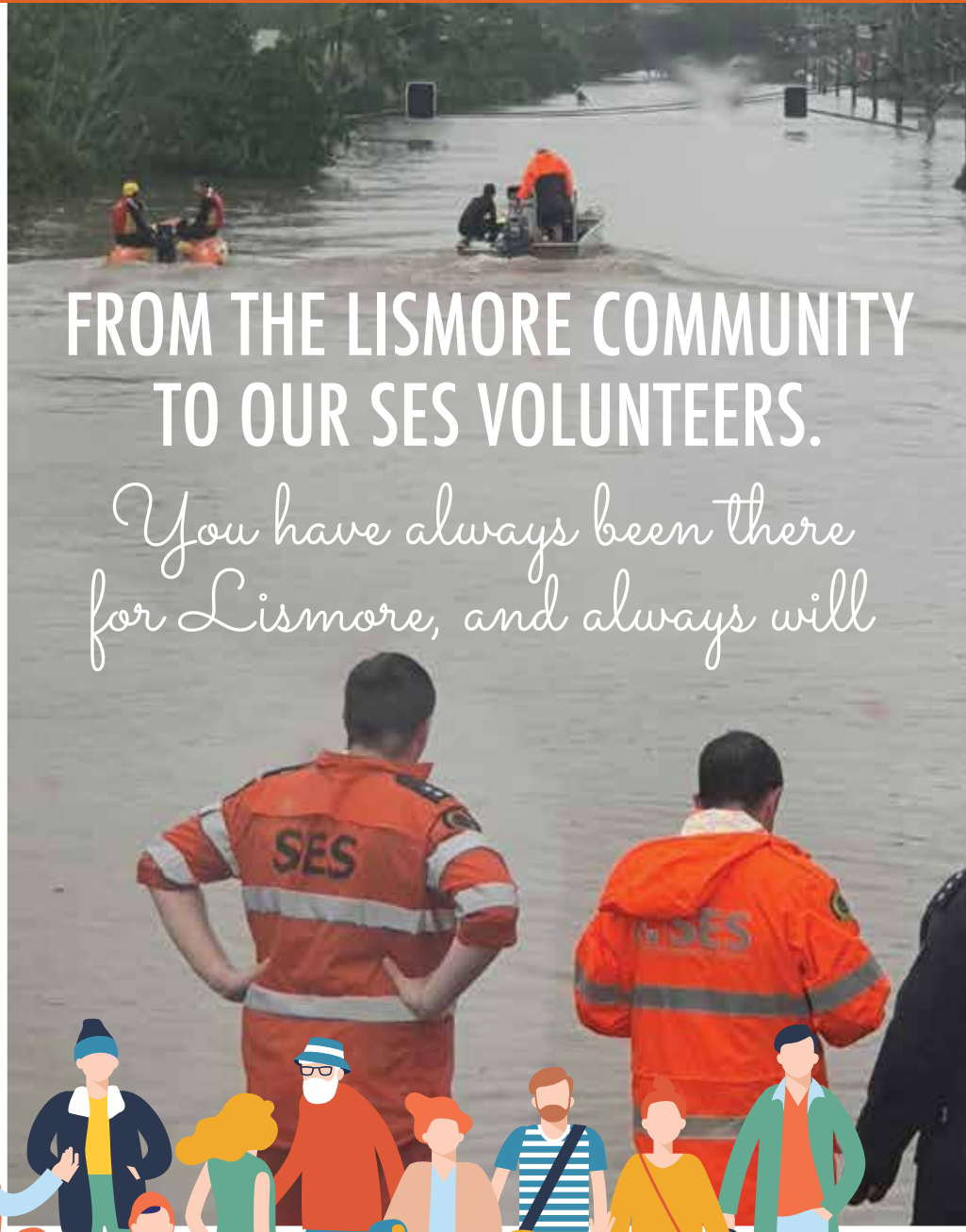


Photo: Leanne Gibson

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Mayoral message

Councillor Tony Bleasdale OAM
Mayor Blacktown City

On behalf of Blacktown City, I extend a huge thank you to all SES volunteers for their tireless efforts during the second major flooding event to hit our City in a matter of months.

Our local Blacktown and Mount Druitt SES crews have been required to work around the clock, as well as SES crews from other areas, RFS, Australian Defence Force personnel, surf lifesavers, and Fire and Rescue crews to come together in this time of crisis.

My heart goes out to those people who have been affected, especially those who have experienced their third major flood in 18 months.

Flood fatigue is real. It is having a devastating effect on the health and financial wellbeing of far too many residents, businesses and our volunteers.

Your amazing efforts are recognised and appreciated by everyone at Blacktown City Council.



KIM DAVIS ESM
PRESIDENT NSW SES
VOLUNTEERS ASSOCIATION

At the time of writing this, the Independent Flood Inquiry had just been released. The findings and recommendations are confronting for some, but we see this as an opportunity to grow.

The Association will be meeting with the SES to discuss the Service's plans for implementing

the recommendations, and how this will impact on our members. We will keep you up to date on these discussions.

Last magazine we also had the pleasure of publishing an article by Dr Micheal Eburn, as well as running a webinar on the topic of Volunteer Rights. You will find in this article

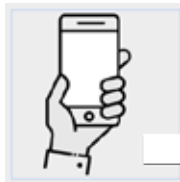
Dr Eburn has covered off on The Role of the Unit Commander and we will advertise the webinar to go with it - keep an eye on our socials and website for registration details.

We are going through a period of much needed change, look after each other, reach out if you need support and stay safe out in the field.



SES NSW Making it safe

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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.



THE HON STEPH COOKE MP
MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY
SERVICES AND RESILIENCE

It seems every time I write to you there has been yet another major flood emergency. Most recently communities on the South Coast, in the Illawarra, across Greater Sydney, the Central Coast, the Hunter and along the Murrumbidgee River bore the brunt of relentless rainfall and the devastating flooding that often comes with it. For some residents in the Hawkesbury-Nepean, it was their fourth flood in 18 months.

July had its highest monthly rainfall total on record. Just recently the Bureau of Meteorology confirmed a third La Nina is likely to impact NSW this summer, which undoubtedly will mean more NSW State Emergency Service volunteers will be called upon once again to keep communities safe.

During the June-July flood event, the SES received 10,324 requests for assistance and carried out 485 flood rescues. Maitland City was the busiest SES unit, responding to a staggering 969 requests for assistance. I want to thank all of you for your efforts. You kept calm and continued to respond despite the evolving situation. It is a testament to your efforts that not a single life was lost during this life-threatening flood event.

I visited communities in Camden and Windsor as the flood waters receded, and had the opportunity to meet some of you alongside the Premier and Prime Minister. The recovery phase got underway immediately thanks to the efforts of SES volunteers undertaking rapid damage assessments of flood-affected homes and businesses. This meant the multi-agency clean-up effort was able to begin quickly and proceed smoothly.



In the two months since, NSW 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 know there could be more difficult times ahead before the year is out. 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.

Until the next time I have the chance to write to you, stay safe and thank you.



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CARLENE YORK APM
NSW SES COMMISSIONER

What an intense start to the second half of 2022. It seems each magazine edition brings with it another large flood to report on. NSW SES received more than 10,000 requests for assistance and 485 flood rescue activations during the latest Event 440/2122 Floods, affecting the Greater Sydney, Hunter, Central Coast and Illawarra. I'd like to say how proud I am of the incredible work we have done for our communities, with more than 40,000 volunteers hours recorded for this event.

Many of you will be aware of the welcome \$132.7 million boost to our Service, announced in the NSW Government budget. This investment enhances our support of our greatest asset – you, our volunteers. This is a significant and exciting step in addressing recommendations made in the AFAC Peer Review of the 2021 floods, and likely to be shared with the 2022 NSW Flood Inquiry findings. With this in mind, the next few years will be an exciting period of growth. I am working with our senior leadership team to engage and consult with our membership as we put all the outcomes into practice. And as part of our commitment of transparency, it was great to answer questions about some of the changes in the recent all-member briefing about our strategic plan. We look forward to sharing regular updates and I urge you to get involved.

Moving into the world of awards, it was my honour to attend the Queen's Birthday Parade, the Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards and cluster ceremonies. I'd like to acknowledge all our members who have received an award. And these aren't the only medals our members

I'd like to say how proud I am of the incredible work we have done for our communities, with more than 40,000 volunteers hours recorded for this event.



have received. Our Service has been part of organising and participating in many exciting interagency competitions lately. These included the State and Australasian Rescue Challenges, where our members sharpened their skills in road crash rescue. It was also a pleasure to see members use navigation skills in the cold temperatures of the Navshield Competition. Despite the attention on floods, it is important to participate in enjoyable competitions that acknowledge our many capabilities.

Due to the floods, we were unfortunately unable to hold a NAIDOC Week panel discussion in our Western Zone as planned. However, we progressed with an important achievement in the installation of the Indigenous artwork, "Journey After the Storm", by Lani Balzan. The artwork hangs in State Headquarters



and is now proudly displayed on a selection of our vehicles, including a High Clearance Vehicle (HCV) and the first fully-electric cars in our fleet. Speaking of HCVs, it was a pleasure to join the official handover of the first of our UNIMOG fleet with Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience Steph Cooke. It is fabulous to have these vehicles officially ready for deployment.

It is timely our Service's assets are growing, as the wet forecast is not ceasing anytime soon. With the Bureau of Meteorology forecasting more rain throughout the year, please take breaks and ensure you access mental health support. Our Wellbeing Team has recently started "Wellbeing Wednesday" virtual sessions, which is a good way to have important conversations about this topic.

Stay safe.

Living with PTSD? We Can Help



Moving Beyond Trauma is a residential program at the Quest for Life Centre in the Southern Highlands, NSW designed to assist people with PTSD reclaim their lives.

The program draws on an understanding of trauma, its effect on the brain and teaches practical skills and tools which bring relief to the troubled body, mind and spirit.

Based on the latest research on health, healing and neuroscience, our nationally acclaimed programs are delivered by a highly qualified professional team in a safe and confidential environment.

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7-11 November 5-9 December

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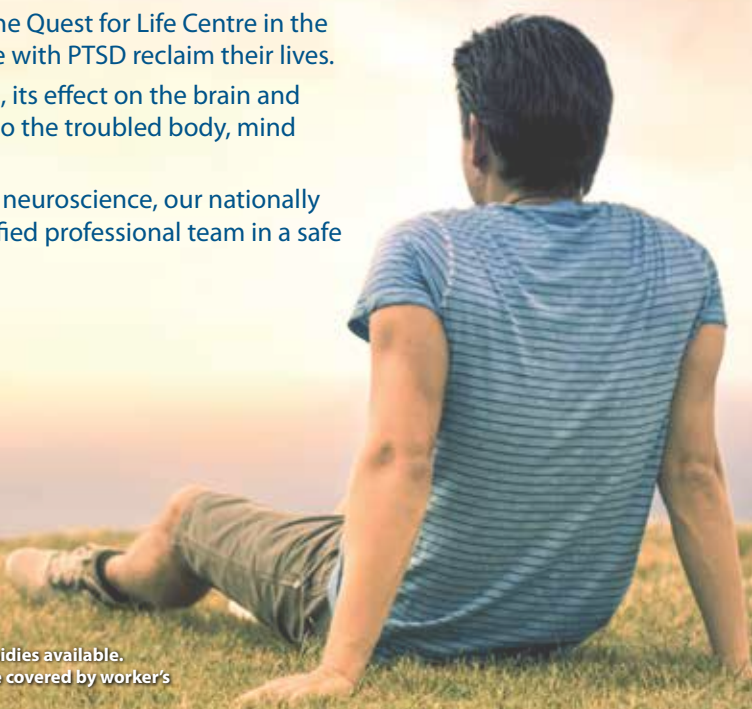
or visit questforlife.org.au

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'The Volunteer Magazine' when booking

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Speak to us if you're covered by worker's compensation.



"Thank you SES Volunteers!

My heartfelt thanks to NSW SES volunteers who freely give their time to help the community during every major disaster.

You are always there for our communities through the tough times and we've certainly had our share recently.

We honour your work all year round and, especially during the recent floods that devastated a large part of our state; I thank you for saving lives and protecting our communities."

Jihad Dib MP

Member for Lakemba

Shadow Minister for Emergency Services

Shadow Minister for Energy and Climate Change

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Authorised by Jihad Dib MP.
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Thank you!

Thank you to local SES volunteer members as well as all emergency service organisations.

Since 2019 our community has been challenged in unprecedented ways - from **bush fires**, to significant **flooding and natural disasters** over three consecutive years.

Along with the rest of the world, we have also faced the challenges associated with **COVID-19**.

Throughout these extraordinary times, our community has been lifted by you - our City's many volunteers.

You choose to give your time to help, over and over again, and we say 'thank you'.

Council is a proud supporter of the New South Wales State Emergency Service Volunteers Association, and all emergency service agencies.



Council is providing local information on weather warnings, emergency contacts and road closures via the Emergency Dashboard. emergency.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/

There are lessons to learn out of every disaster and it makes me proud to see the continuous improvements made by emergency services agencies, enabling the SES to better conduct their work.

**JIHAD DIB MP**

SHADOW MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES
SHADOW MINISTER FOR ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Confronting new challenges one incident at a time

With torrential rain once again causing extensive flooding across NSW, the SES have been called on to support our community, often in dangerous conditions. Since January, the tempo of 2022 has been very much about rescue and support at unprecedented levels. The challenges remain; however, our spirits are buoyed by our emergency services response.

Flood rescues during a pandemic is like nothing that the SES have ever had to deal with before. While the weather continued to test the resolve of people who have struggled through the floods in March, the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) had the difficult task of coordinating the flood response.

As the SEOC issued evacuation orders, many of us watched the flood waters rise from the safety of our homes. Seeing the orange jackets on the ground offered some consolation that communities were taken care of.

During July I had the pleasure of being invited by Minister Steph Cooke to the SEOC in Homebush. It was an important opportunity to see 'the full picture' and to meet and thank all

the agencies involved in the flood response, rescue and recovery phase. The Minister and I may represent different political parties, and we may disagree from time to time, but we remain unified on working together to support communities, especially during their most trying times.

Later that month I made my fifth trip to the northern rivers. This time I was accompanied by Human Appeal Australia, Good360 Australia and leaders in my community with a \$5,000 donation to Resilient Lismore and over \$40,000 worth of whitegoods and essentials distributed through the Mullumbimby & District Neighbourhood Centre Inc. It is so inspiring to see community support one another, even though they have never met, and I am so proud of their efforts. The mantra for both charity groups, *"On the road to goodness"* and *"Circle of goodness"* was on full display. It was also a great way to connect these two beautiful communities.

There are lessons to learn out of every disaster and it makes me proud to see the continuous improvements made by emergency services agencies,

enabling the SES to better conduct their work. SES members in NSW continue to adapt to meet the challenges these unfolding disasters present. Even the best laid plans can, in an emergency response, be thwarted by unforeseen circumstances, as we have seen time and again over the past two years.

At the time of writing, there is still some uncertainty about the outcomes of an Independent Inquiry into the Flood Response. I appreciate that some of the reporting has created consternation in the absence of the report being released. My NSW Opposition colleagues, and I, have called for its release in the interests of transparency and I hope that by the time of publication the report will be published. I am committed to working through the recommendations constructively with the government to ensure the best interests of NSW and our emergency services personnel are advanced.

For everything you do to serve the community and the countless sacrifices made by your families, we thank you. We remain forever grateful for your continued commitment to our safety.

It has been another hectic quarter for NSW SES Volunteers, & we have another packed edition to showcase the remarkable & selfless work you have all been involved in.

We had another intense period of flooding throughout NSW this quarter & once again it was our fellow volunteers in orange who were out in force, saving lives & keeping our communities safe! Thankyou to all the volunteers who have been operational during this period & also welcome to all the new volunteers who were inspired by our local heroes & have joined the NSW SES and the VA during the last three months.

After a long period of Covid restrictions, it is great to see large events & competitions return this year. You will read further in this magazine of the participation of a number of the units at various events this quarter and we wanted to say a special shout out to the Port Macquarie Unit who received the SES Directors Shield for the highest placed SES team competing at ARRO 2022. Congratulations for also being awarded the Safety Shield & the Overall Win - with team Leader Michael Ward being awarded the Best Team Leader at the 2022 NSW SES State Disaster Rescue Challenge. What great achievements!

RURAL RETREAT

Work and renovations have progressed nicely down at our rural property and we can't wait for you all to see the results! If you are looking to book a visit over the next couple of months – get in quick, as we have been receiving quite a lot of interest & bookings. Email the VA to check availability and book your stay.
E: office@nswsesva.org.au

2023 CALENDAR

Once again the VA will be producing a yearly calendar which will be distributed free to our members. We are seeking high quality images to feature in our 2023 Calendar & encourage you all to contribute. All the images we receive will then be uploaded online for everyone to vote on their favourites. The pictures that receive the most likes will be selected for the calendar. Please send your images via email to: office@nswsesva.org.au by the 10th November 2022.



RESCA 2022

On another high note, we were present at the Rotary NSW Emergency Services Community Awards on the 13th of August & were there to congratulate Tracy Provost, the Ulladulla Unit Commander on being awarded the RESCA 2022 winner for NSW State Emergency Service & also awarded the Overall officer of the year NSW - serving in a volunteer capacity. Such an amazing achievement & well deserved – congratulations again Tracy!

Tracy was recognised for a number of achievements including her 48 years of service in the NSW SES, doubling the number of volunteers at her unit and her role in the Black Summer bushfires which saw the Ulladulla SES Unit operational for 67 consecutive days.

Congratulations to all the finalists on being recognised for your outstanding work.

Thankyou to all those that contributed to this edition – it is thanks to you, that we are able to create our magazine and acknowledge the inspiring work you all do!

If you would like to feature in our December edition, please send in content by the 11th of November 2022 to editor@nswsesva.org.au.

Stay safe in your volunteering!

Carlee Maccoll

MEMBER BENEFITS

Thankyou to Oricom who have joined our member benefits program this quarter and are offering SES Volunteers a generous discount of 20% off RRP (including free delivery) *excludes promotional items on all Oricom UHF CB radios and accessories. We will also have access to monthly online deals, competitions and prizes.

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FUNDRAISER

COFFS KTM RALLIES BEHIND EVERYDAY HEROES

The Coffs KTM team have upgraded a brand-new GASGAS MC450F to their ultimate standard all in the name of charity.

After the devastating floods throughout the region, with a strong connection to their community, the Coffs KTM crew worked on a plan to help out the best way they knew how... with two wheels.

The locally owned dirt-bike shop has kitted out a brand-new GASGAS MC450F with over \$3000 worth of extras and are raffling it off to one lucky winner. To top it all off the bike has been signed by Redbull Athlete and GASGAS Factory Racing Rally teammate Daniel 'Chucky' Sanders with all proceeds being donated to the NSW SES Volunteers Association.

The MX community is tightknit, which was something that resonated with staff as they watched the community spirit rally as the region came together to protect the people, homes, and businesses.

"We watched the events play out so close to home" said Ashley Beaton – Dealer Principal and CKTM owner.

"Many of the volunteers with the SES were affected themselves, yet put their service to the community first. Helping out was never really a question for us (Coffs KTM) it was more a matter of how we could make the biggest difference"

Coffs KTM will be attending a series of events across the Mid North Coast in coming months with a focus on selling tickets to raise as much money as they can for NSW SES Volunteers Association including the Coffs Coast Festival of Motorsport held from 5th November – 27th November.

Tickets are also available online and instore, with the raffle including a long list of additional prizes that will also be drawn in-store on November 26, the major prizes include:

- » **1st PRIZE** GASGAS MC450F with over \$3000 worth of extras – signed by Daniel 'Chucky' Sanders
- » **2nd PRIZE** Alpinestar SM10 Carbon Helmet and Tech 7 Boots. Plus GASGAS T-shirt signed by Daniel 'Chucky' Sanders
- » **3rd PRIZE** FOX Legion Gear Seat and Gear Bag. Plus GASGAS cap signed by Daniel 'Chucky' Sanders

<https://coffs-ktm.myshopify.com/products/gas-gas-bike-raffle>

Proudly supporting our local SES Volunteers

This year, more than any,
I want to say a special thanks to
our SES Volunteers who give so
tirelessly to our local community
in times of disaster.



Sonia Hornery
State Member for Wallsend

67 Nelson Street,
Wallsend NSW 2287
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The Unit and Local Commander Role

I have no training or support in Incident Management, how responsible am I when things go wrong?

This is a particularly telling question given criticism of recent responses to flood activities.

The function of the SES includes to act as the combat agency for dealing with floods and damage control due to storms (*State Emergency Service Act 1989* (NSW) s 8). For the sake of keeping the discussion manageable, this discussion will be limited to flood response.

The NSW State Flood Plan says that the SES will perform many functions when it comes to preparing for floods including ensuring that 'the community are prepared and familiar with the strategies and arrangements within the Flood Emergency Sub Plan and supporting documents' ([4.5.1]). For incident management ([5.2.2]):

- a. The NSW SES use the Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS) to manage the flood response;
- b. Control of flood response will be at the lowest effective level and may be scaled to suit the incident;
- c. The NSW SES State Controller (or delegate) will appoint Incident Controllers and establish Incident Control Centres;
- d. ...
- e. The Incident Controller, in consultation with participating supporting emergency services and Functional Areas will determine appropriate breakdown of an Area of Operations into Divisions and/or Sectors in accordance with the principles of AIIMS.

A cornerstone of AIIMS is that there is to be only one incident controller so it begs the question of 'what is the incident?' Is a flood that affects a number of towns a single incident with an incident controller at regional headquarters and each unit

commander the sector commander? Or is it three incidents and each unit commander is the incident controller for 'their' incident? That is a matter for the Commissioner to determine both as a matter of doctrine and as a determination in each particular case.

Either way it may be that the Unit Commander is vested with extensive responsibility to 'control' the flood response and coordinate with other agencies to manage that response. This can be an awesome responsibility for a person who is a part time volunteer and who may be asked to coordinate the resources of council, Fire and Rescue NSW, police and other full time, professional staff.

The question of commander competence and experience was raised during an inquest into floods at Dungog in 2015 (*Inquest into the death of Robin MacDonald, Colin Webb and Brian Wilson (Dungog Floods)* (29 September 2017). The Coroner noted (at [31]-[32]) that:

As at 20 April 2015 [the Unit/Local Controller] had not received:

- i. a formal handover briefing;
- ii. training in the role of Local Controller and/or the Unit Controller;
- iii. training in relation to the Dungog Shire Local Flood Plan 2011;
- iv. any specific training in the Dungog SES Unit Flood Action Cards regarding responses to flooding in the Paterson and Williams Rivers; or
- v. any AIIMS training, including training to perform the AIIMS Incident Management Role of "Incident Controller".

As at 20 April 2015 the SES did not offer:

- i. a system for conducting a handover briefing for in-coming

and outgoing Local Controllers and/or Unit Controllers; or

- ii. routine provision of AIIMS training, in particular for the role of the AIIMS Incident Management Role of "Incident Controller".

Further (at [37]), the Deputy Local Controller (who was for part of the relevant time acting as the incident controller):

... had not been provided with training as the SES Dungog Deputy Local Controller and/or Deputy Unit Controller; or with AIIMS training, including training in relation to the performance of the AIIMS Incident Management Role of "Incident Controller".

The Coroner did not address those issues beyond identifying them. She did not suggest that any of those failings contributed to the deaths so there was no suggestion that the unit controller (now unit commander) was in any way responsible for the deaths, and of course they were not responsible for the failings of the SES to provide appropriate training.

Fast forward to 2022 when the NSW Parliament's *Select Committee on the Response to Major Flooding across New South Wales* found:

- » That the NSW State Emergency Service and Resilience NSW failed as lead agencies to provide adequate leadership and effective coordination during the major flooding of February-March 2022 (Finding 1);
- » That NSW Government agencies lacked coordination, created confusion and responded poorly in the February-March 2022 floods, resulting in the North Coast community being let down in their

» continued on page 16

» continued from page 15

- greatest time of need (Finding 2);
- » That demarcation disputes and a lack of integration between NSW Government agencies slowed the roll-out of support and assistance to those affected by the February-March 2022 floods (Finding 3); and
- » That the centralisation of the NSW State Emergency Service and a shortage of volunteers significantly hindered the ability of the agency to lead the response to the major flooding of February-March 2022 (Finding 5).

During that inquiry concerns were raised (at [2.33]) about:

... reduced support for volunteers and local volunteer units including insufficient training and resources, increased administrative requests from headquarters, poor communication during the February-March 2022 floods with some smaller units left to manage alone, and a lack of coordination or understanding of what happens at the unit or region level for the community

The Fire Brigade Employee's Union submitted (at [2.41]) that:

... there was 'no clear command structure' in the response to the February-March 2022 floods, arguing that 'training in incident management and provisions were completely lacking in the SES volunteers who were placed in charge of this event'.

(Interestingly the Police Association of NSW argued that there should be 'one agency always responsible for the control and coordination of emergency response operations' and in their view 'the NSW Police Force is best placed to be in this role' ([2.43]). At the same time the Fire Brigade Employee's union argued 'that the community of New South Wales should not, in 2022 ... need to rely on a volunteer workforce as their lead emergency response' and 'that Fire and Rescue NSW should be designated the lead combat agency for future flood, storm and major events' ([2.39]-[2.40])). Putting aside what may be political self-interest, the criticism of the Fire Brigade Employee's Union, if correct, that "training in incident management ... [was] completely lacking' is consistent with the premise

of the question asked at the start of this paper and more worryingly is consistent with the Coroner's findings in 2017 and may indicate that lessons are not being learned from one event to the next.

What should be reassuring for unit and local commanders, however, is that in no case has anyone indicated that the unit or local commander (or controller as they used to be) is in any way responsible for the failure of the organisation to properly plan for and manage the response and ensure that volunteers are adequately trained and supported.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY ACT 2011 (NSW)

Many are worried about the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW) and the inclusion of 'volunteers' in the definition of worker. A volunteer is required (ss 28 and 34) to

- a. take reasonable care for his or her own health and safety, and
- b. take reasonable care that his or her acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons, and
- c. comply, so far as the worker is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the person conducting the business or undertaking to allow the person to comply with this Act, and
- d. co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the person conducting the business or undertaking relating to health or safety at the workplace that has been notified to workers.

The fear is that a unit or local commander, acting as incident controller, may be in breach of s 28(b) (above) if there is a failure to ensure the health and safety of other volunteers or those who require assistance.

That fear (if it exists) is misplaced. A unit or local commander can only work with the resources and training that they have. Neither they, nor the SES, are required to guarantee safety but to take steps to minimise risks as far as reasonably practicable. Much of that is done well before the event when the SES issues training documents and policies and makes choices about equipment.

I am only aware of one case where

incident controllers have been subject legal implications for their decisions. In the United Kingdom three incident controllers were charged with manslaughter over the deaths of four firefighters but all were acquitted.

On the other hand, in Scotland, the death of a Scottish firefighter in 2009 led to criminal charges being brought against the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, not the relevant incident controller or commander. In *Inspector Mayo-Ramsay (WorkCover Authority of NSW) v The Crown in the Right of the State of New South Wales (NSW Fire Brigades)* [2006] NSWIRComm 356 it was NSW Fire Brigades (now Fire and Rescue NSW), not the incident controller or commander, that was prosecuted for failing to ensure that the firefighters had adequate training to deal with a fire in a grain silo. Following the 2003 Canberra bushfires there was civil litigation that alleged the IC controller had been negligent. The trial judge did find that some of her decisions failed to meet the standard expected of a reasonable controller. But there was no suggestion at any time that she could be or would be personally liable. It was Victoria SES that was criminally liable when a volunteer was killed during training.

There are obligations upon 'officers' under the Work Health and Safety Act (see s 27). A unit or local commander, even when acting as Incident Controller will not be an officer within the meaning of the Act (see s 4, definition of 'officer').

CONCLUSION

The question asked was 'The Unit and Local Commander Role- I have no training or support in Incident Management, how responsible am I when things go wrong?' The answer is that you can only be responsible for your own actions and decisions within the scope of training and experience. Whilst one can expect to be responsible for failing to apply that training, an unit or local commander will not be responsible if they are put into a position that they are not adequately trained or prepared for or where they are let down by the organisation they volunteer or work for.

In inquiries, reports and both civil and criminal litigation it is recognised

that those in the position of Incident Controller are part of the organisation, and the organisation is responsible for their performance. This is not a licence to be careless but it is recognition that anyone in those positions has to rely on the organisation to ensure that they have the necessary training and support. The ultimate responsibility on the unit or local commander will be to know their own limitations and to say to senior officers – 'I cannot, or have not been trained, to do this' and pass responsibility up the chain of command.

Dr Michael Eburn

FURTHER READING/ REFERENCES

- » 'Changes to occupational health and safety laws and the impact on volunteers in the emergency services' (2011) 26(4) *Australian Journal of Emergency Management* 43-47 available at <https://ajem.infoservices.com.au/items/AJEM-26-04-10>
- » 'Emergency services and health and safety' (2012) Vol 8 Issue 1 *Crisis Response* 10-13 available at <https://emergencylaw.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/eburn-crisis-response-journal-8-1.pdf>
- » 'Enforcing Safety with Law – Implications for Incident Controllers and Fire Agencies'. Paper presented at the *International Association of Wildland Fire (IAWF) Safety Summit*, Sydney, 2012 and available at http://www.iawfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Final_12th_Safety_Summit_Proceedings.pdf
- » *Inquest into the death of Robin MacDonald, Colin Webb and Brian Wilson (Dungog Floods)* (29 September 2017) available at <https://coroners.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/dcj/ctsd/coronerscourt/documents/findings/2017/Final%20Findings%20Dungog%20Floods%2029%20September%202017.pdf>
- » *Legal issues for an incident controller* (November 7, 2018) available at <https://australianemergencylaw.com/2018/11/07/legal-issues-for-an-incident-controller/>
- » NSW Legislative Council, Select Committee on the Response to Major Flooding Across New South Wales In 2022, *Response to major flooding across New South Wales in 2022: Report 1* (August 2022) available at <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2866/Report%20No%201%20-%20Response%20to%20major%20flooding%20across%20New%20South%20Wales%20in%202022.pdf>
- » *Prosecution Result Summaries: Victorian State Emergency Service Authority* (19 May 2017) available at <https://www1.worksafe.vic.gov.au/vwa/vwa097-002.nsf/content/LSID161018>
- » *Scottish Fire Service to be prosecuted over fire fighter's death* (April 22, 2013) available at <https://australianemergencylaw.com/2013/04/22/scottish-fire-service-to-be-prosecuted-over-fire-fighters-death/>
- » *UK Incident controllers charged with manslaughter* (December 7, 2011) available at <https://australianemergencylaw.com/2011/12/07/uk-incident-controllers-charged-with-manslaughter/>
- » *UK Incident controllers cleared of manslaughter* (May 31, 2012) available at <https://australianemergencylaw.com/2012/05/31/uk-incident-controllers-cleared-of-manslaughter/>
- » *Victoria SES fined over volunteer's death* (November 30, 2009) available at <https://australianemergencylaw.com/2009/11/30/victoria-ses-fined-over-volunteer%E2%80%99s-death/>

Thank you local SES Volunteers

On behalf of the City of Parramatta, thank you to all SES Volunteers for your ongoing commitment to keeping our City and the people that live, work and visit Parramatta safe.



Cr Donna Davis
Lord Mayor
City of Parramatta



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PARRAMATTA**

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EAT SLEEP RESPOND

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Thredbo

11:40pm, 30th of July, 25 years on

“Reaching out to rescue one another under ANY condition is an eternal measure of love”

- Ronald A Rasband

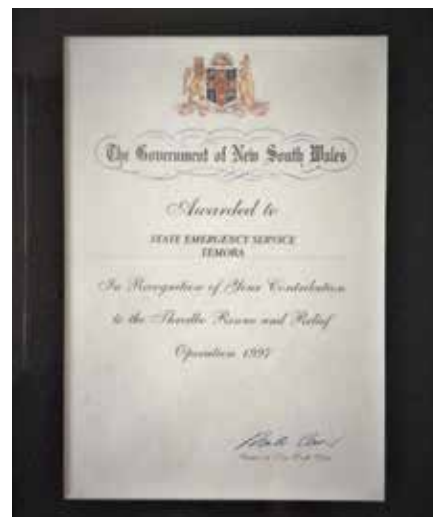
As I sit down to begin writing this article, reflecting upon half a lifetime of memories and many more cherished ones which preceded (and thus add to) them, I feel the above quote speaks volumes when it comes to capturing the essence of that which so many individuals in almost countless services and agencies around the world dedicate their time and energies towards. Those who do so as Volunteers, regardless of the colour of the uniform they wear ... well, it's a fair call to recognise that no person should ever underestimate the depth to which a heart that gives of itself purely because that's what it does will go to, in order to make a positive difference to another's life.

And so, the following is a personal account of a journey that transpired through the night of the 30th of July this year by four volunteer rescue operators and one other newer volunteer member who is well on track towards achieving his goal as a Bush Search and Rescue operator (his wisdom and character runs far beyond that of his 23 years – just sayin'). In many ways this serves in unison with our expedition on behalf of the SESVA, as a tribute to the hundreds of personal who came from all directions and all agencies within hours of one of the most significant disasters in Australian history occurring.

As the crystal clear blue sky of Saturday 30th of July this year softened to dusk, I found myself as I had often that day, pausing with eyes transfixed upon the pristine beauty of the snow-capped western face of the main range of the Snowy Mountains – such is the splendourous view that that graces those who stand outside the south-facing roller doors of Tumbarumba SES Unit HQ in winter.

In those silent moments of reflection, I drew down upon the lifetimes of memories, lived experiences and learnings, both gained and imparted, that my family and I have amassed over the last few generations of living, working, and playing in the high country – all shared in and with the good company of a wide variety of stoic mountain personalities that could not help but become our extended family due to the common affinity that we all have for our mountain home.

It is indeed a sweet affinity, and one that provided me immense solace as I read the weather, noting the amount of birds that had been gathering food throughout the day as equally as the amount of black birds flying en masse overhead, and calmly breathed through final preparations ahead of embarking upon a much-anticipated journey that evening – that being to lead a convoy of SES volunteers along the western side of the main range of the Snowies, from Tumbarumba up over to Thredbo Village via the Alpine Way, in order for us to pay our respects by attending the candlelight memorial service commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Thredbo Landslide of 1997.



Further, we were to place a wreath of flowers at the site on behalf of the NSW SES Volunteers Association – before then retracing our route safely back to Tumbarumba by daylight.

Originally, some months earlier, I had my diary planned out – with that weekend being set aside for a trip back up to the mountains in order to attend the candlelight memorial service. As the time grew closer, I felt it only right to extend an invitation to my Unit Commander at Temora, Jodie Osborne, to join me. I did so as when I first joined Temora SES Unit a few years ago I noticed a framed document upon the wall that The Government of New South Wales awarded to State Emergency Service Temora, “In Recognition Of Your Contribution to the Thredbo Rescue and Relief Operation 1997”. I had since come to learn that the Unit Controller at the time, Merv Brill, had responded to the call – just as hundreds of NSW SES Volunteers did.



As it eventuated, plans for the weekend again adapted, in order to accommodate the advent of a Leadership Fundamentals course being facilitated at Tumbarumba SES Unit HQ over that same weekend, and which both Jodie and I would be attending along with other Volunteers from around Southern Zone. Fittingly, Jodie made it known to all those attending the course that we would be undertaking the journey to Thredbo on Saturday evening, and invited them to join us. Having more than one vehicle in convoy was only ever going to be safer, and wiser – especially given the terrain, time of day, and possible encounters with wildlife along the route. Not to mention the potential for adverse weather conditions, including rain, black ice and snow.

Yep, it's funny how things work out – and hence it struck me as no small irony that upon our arrival in Tumbarumba the previous evening (Friday 29th of July), we were warmly welcomed by the Unit Commander of Tumbarumba Unit, John (Patrick) Mansfield, and the Deputy Unit Commander of Tumbarumba Unit, Tim Kennewell, who were also enrolled in the course.

Both of these blokes went up and beyond the call to assist in ensuring that the vehicles and personnel had all possible equipment and resources that may be required readily available and packed in order to successfully carry out the journey. From Satellite phones to extra food provisions, chains for the vehicles, warm clothing for those who required additional layers, an extra sleeping bag, you name it they made sure of it. Nice one, fellas.

Such added to preparations that myself and my Unit Commander of Temora Unit, Jodie Osborne, had already made and loaded in to Temora 57 prior to us departing Temora Unit HQ for the weekend – including flares,

rations, harnesses, ropes, compasses and a full 4wd recovery kit (and then some!). There was absolutely no way whatsoever that any of us were going in to this unprepared, let alone haphazardly. The Snowies can change their tune in the blink of an eye.

And so, as daylight faded, a well-planned endeavour prepared 100% by volunteers was coming to light. Checklists were double-checked before we left Tumbarumba Unit HQ to head down to our respective accommodation to shower and refresh ourselves, ahead of a collective dinner together.

As we sat down to order dinner, the checklists were again run through. We all then enjoyed a good meal together. Sadly, Jodie and another few that had originally intended to make the trip were caused to withdraw due to concerns of how the cold mountain air may affect their breathing. In the end, Temora 57 was set to roll with myself and Matt Cramp on board, with Heath Richardson, Rebecca Bradshaw and Brooke Martin accompanying us in Leeton 57. We rolled out from Tumbarumba along Tooma Rd around 8:30pm with the heaters in the vehicles keeping the outside temperature of -5 degrees celsius at bay. It was only going to get colder, and well on track towards the forecast of double figures below zero.

We made a brief stop en route at Khancoban SES Unit HQ at 9:30pm to pick up another set of snow chains, before continuing on our way along the Alpine Way in what was remarkably clear weather and good driving conditions. It would not be until Pilots Lookout that we first sighted snow upon the side of the road – the first time at least one of those in convoy had sighted snow in their life!

We exited the Alpine Way at 11:10pm, and slowly descended into Thredbo Village via Banjo Drive.

Driving the lead vehicle, I opted to hook left rather than turn right to enter Bobuck Lane, for good reason – firstly, I felt it only right to do a full lap of Thredbo Village beforehand; and secondly (and pretty much mostly), whilst I had returned to Thredbo many times over the quarter of a century, I had never once driven down Bobuck Lane in that time. (For those who do not know, it traverses the site of the landslide itself, between the original locations of the two lodges that were swept away 25 years ago).

I make no secret that my seeing the street sign for Bobuck Lane with eyes that had been scanning the mountain roads ahead and to the side of us for the last two hours brought sound enough cause for me to now look for the next available roadside space upon Diggers Terrance that could accommodate two vehicles so as we could pull over for a few minutes.

It did us all wonders to stretch our legs, have a yarn etc, before continuing on to circumnavigate the village. While at that pit stop, we exchanged conversations with visitors to Thredbo as they ambled on by us upon their merry way to enjoy the nightlife of a Saturday night in the Village, including an American lass who asked us what "SES" stood for. Upon hearing us expand upon the three letters, she jokingly asked if there was an emergency ... if we required her services ... touting her own skills and attributes with smiling jest. Whether it was the schnapps or the Glühwein that she and her friends had likely partaken in throughout their evening festivities that was doing the talking for her remains a 50/50 odds on bet ... either way, together we all chuckled at the potential enlistment of spontaneous international volunteer as

» continued on page 20

» continued from page 19

she and her pals walked onwards to their next drinking establishment as straight as a one-winged duck flies south. All the while, quietly inside, within that brief exchange of comedic repartee, I saw parallel reminders of how those visiting Thredbo from afar and staying overnight on that particular night back in '97 were also some of the first to band together and render whatever assistance they were able. After all these years, in many ways (especially for Thredbo Village) it is refreshing to see that some things never change. I was particularly grateful for the short break and shared humour, as it provided me with some time to get my head and heart around the concept of turning right in to Bobuck Lane shortly after again taking the turn on to Banjo Drive off the Alpine Way and down in to the Village.

Temora 57 and Leeton 57 entered Bobuck Lane just on 11:30pm, passing slowly and quietly over the landslide site a couple of minutes later, before pulling up to park both vehicles at the service station on the valley floor with enough time to take a photo of the wreath next to our vehicles at precisely 11:40pm – which is noted as being the time that the landslide occurred back in 1997.

Together, the five of us stood in silent reflection for a short time before walking together, single file, up one of the many narrow “goat tracks” that lead up the significantly steep slope, emerging on Bobuck Lane just uphill (to the west) of the actual site. We then proceeded down Bobuck Lane to the entrance way to the deck that has been built just to the side of the road, and silently walked down the first flight of steps.

A significant collective of the close-knit Thredbo Village community and fellow mountain people, past and present, were gathered upon the deck below the next flight of stairs, in loving memory of 18 friends who will never be forgotten. White tea light candles softly flickered in glass jars placed around the perimeter of the deck.

With my four fellow volunteers remaining at the landing between the two flights of stairs leading to the deck respectfully of their own accord (notably exemplifying their collective personal character), I made my way down the second flight with the wreath to join those gathered. I gently placed



the wreath upon the hand railing, and together with those gathered I placed 18 orange tea-light candles within it. Tears, memories, handshakes and hugs were shared upon common ground – such is the strength of the timeless bonds of friendship kindled, forged and nurtured in the Snowy Mountains.

Our crew stayed there for some time after the gathering. I myself required a few deeper than usual breathes of the mountain air to reflect in silence. Heath came down to stand by my side for some time, before we all headed back up to Bobuck Lane to retrace our steps, all the way back down to Tumbarumba through the night – with an additional 70km loop from Thredbo to a 24 hour service station in Jindabyne and back to Thredbo, so as to ensure Leeton 57 had sufficient alpine diesel in its tank in order to make it all the way back to Tumba'. (*the brief stop in Jindabyne also yielded service station toilets that were presently 'out of order'. Subsequently, our convoy wasted no time in conducting a quick recon of Jindy, – successfully locating a secondary option of public facilities within minutes. Win!).

No different to our journey on the way up, we navigated the roads with the lead vehicle (this time with Matt as the driver – champion effort brotherman, thanks again!) remaining in constant sight of the headlights of the vehicle behind us, and in communication with each other via Simplex. We pulled over for a brief rest stop halfway back, before Temora 57 and Leeton 57 arrived safely back at our accommodation in Tumbarumba without any accident or incident at 5:30am.

To Matt, Heath, Rebecca and Brooke: I cannot thank you enough for accompanying me in making this voyage through the night, and the respectful space, support and comfort that you each afforded me throughout. Moreover, I cannot speak highly enough of each of you, and the graceful, deeply empathetic manner with which you each carried yourselves throughout. No surprises there, whatsoever. For the five of us to hear directly from those gathered at the candlelight memorial service that it was the first time the SES was represented in uniformed attendance at the candlelight memorial service in the 25 years they have been holding it, well, that in itself is quite something.

In truth, I still do not quite know how I feel about that fact, but I most certainly do know how I feel about the hundreds of SES Volunteers and members of other agencies that rushed through the night and days that followed July 30 1997, in order to do all that they possibly could to save the lives of what I dare say were complete strangers to the majority of them. They were far from strangers to me, my brother Johnno, and all those who have gathered at the candlelight memorial service at the site every year since.

I pause here as I recall how the media somehow managed to arrive ahead of many first responder crews, bar the local ones, and also how nothing outran a certain 1982 model 4x4 F100 Custom with J TJ painted upon its doors and bonnet. (Johnno knew all too well what to expect, following having 18 tonne of rock come down upon him and his mates in a mine collapse in Western



Australia in 1982). Those first few hours immediately following the slide, and some of the mindful actions that were taken carefully, safely and skilfully by many of those within the mountain community until additional help arrived – well I reckon therein lays the value of everyday local knowledge and experience, and potential benefits and importance of recognising/identifying and utilising such throughout a rescue/recovery operation, 'nough said.

(Fortunately, such realisations along with many more learnings came to be as a result of this particular disaster – and yet, there is also much room for the same to be acknowledged and enacted in modern day responses).

To Tim and John – well lads, fact is the very same gratitude is extended to you with all my heart. You're welcome at my campfire anytime, and the trust and respect I hold for both you, not to mention the appreciation I have for your skills, experience and wisdom, is absolute.

To Jodie, Jessie Macpherson and Rebecca Schmetzer – I extend my sincerest appreciation to each of you for making the time to subtly and intuitively check in on me throughout the weekend, since, and always. Simple graces go a long way, to be sure.

Collectively, those mentioned above that attended our weekend Leadership Fundamentals course – well, every single one of you define the spirit of what it means to do what we do as Volunteers, just by being who each of you are. Additionally, if that is any such indication of the quality of leadership and consummate professionalism that the NSW SES has to look forward to from its next generation of Volunteer leaders,

then the community we serve together can rest assured they are in the best and safest hands to lead, guide and mentor their Volunteer crews in the processes of regular Unit training as well as carrying out the missions tasked to them in either their local RFA's or those Out Of Area. I am proud to stand among you, fortunate to keep your company as trusted friends whether in uniform or not, and will gratefully and readily work alongside you any given day or night.

To Carlee Maccoll, Shannon Crofton, Erin Pogmore, and all at the NSW SES Volunteers Association headquarters – it was our honour to deliver the wreath of flowers on behalf of the NSW SES Volunteers Association. We Volunteers thank you for looking out for the rights of all NSW SES volunteers, constant consideration of their lived-experiences and well-being, all with the empathy that the NSW SESVA is renowned for.

Lastly, to Tim Miller, Keith Dawe and Anthony Hatch – what is understood need not be discussed. All same, I cannot sign off without making mention of how significant it is to me to have met, worked and trained with and alongside you three – not to mention to enjoy sharing some meals, laughs and good humoured banter with as well! – all within the few short years of my time in orange. I understand there are many other longstanding, and clearly dedicated Volunteer members of the NSW SES that responded to Thredbo without any hesitation or delay 25 years ago as you three did, and I sure look forward to making their acquaintance and shaking their hands, in quiet acknowledgement of their every effort over the years

– particularly those carried out in Kosciuszko National Park.

In closing, I would like to share with every single NSW SES Volunteer an assurance that was put forth to me at the candlelight memorial service:

~ You could walk anywhere in that uniform in this village tonight and you'd be warmly welcomed ~

May we all continue to support each other as equally as we do the communities we all signed up to serve together as one.

Pete Gare

Rescue Operator, Temora SES Unit



In memory of all those people named below who now rest peacefully and forever free, with sincerest respect and condolences to their loved ones:

Di Ainsworth
John Cameron
Barry Decker
Sally Diver
Diane Hoffman
Werner Jecklin
Oskar Luhn
Andrew McArthur
Steve Moss
Wendy O'Donohue
Mary Phillips
Aino Senbruns
Mike Sodergren
Min Sodergren
Steven Urosevic
Col Warren
David Watson
Tony Weaver

Thank you, SES volunteers

**“On behalf of my community,
I want to say thank you for saving lives
and protecting our most vulnerable.”**

**I’m grateful for your generosity,
in giving us your time to help our
community through flood and storm
emergencies.”**

Dai Le MP

Federal Member for Fowler

dai.le.mp@aph.gov.au

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Level 2, 24-32 Hughes St Cabramatta NSW 2166

Authorized by Dai Le MP, Level 2 24-32 Hughes Street Cabramatta NSW 2166



**As Mayor of Hornsby Shire Council, it is my great pleasure to pay tribute
to, and thank the men and women of the NSW State Emergency Service.**



Mayor Ruddock witnessing the NSW SES response, Wisemans Ferry, July 2022.

This year’s two extraordinary weather events have been extremely challenging for many of us in Hornsby Shire, resulting in flooding in our rural areas and widespread damage.

The community at Wisemans Ferry was devastated by the first damaging floods in March. Then were in disbelief in July as the Hawkesbury River rose again to even greater heights, once again flooding homes, the Men’s Shed, and the bowling club. Our heart goes out to all those affected.

Across the Shire, roads were blocked, and power was lost due to fallen trees, causing stress and disruption.

We all owe a great debt of thanks to the NSW State Emergency Service for your incredible efforts during these terrible flood events, knowing many of you

experienced flooding or damage to your own properties. The effects of these severe weather events and the recovery from them lasts for months. However, as we are all acutely aware, it’s been non-stop for two years for volunteers who have also supported the community through bushfires and storms.

We are incredibly grateful for all that you do for us. The NSW SES is a steady hand and trusted friend in times of emergency, swift to respond and slow to complain.

On behalf of the people of Hornsby Shire, I salute you all and acknowledge the significant contribution you make to our community.

**The Hon Philip Ruddock AO
Mayor**



Kirsten Yeats

Ballina Unit is super proud to have its first female In Water Flood Rescue Operator.

Kirsten joined the SES in 2020 wanting to learn new practical skills that she could apply within the community.

Being a volunteer of Marine Rescue and Surf Life Saving NSW, Kirsten was keen to join the SES flood rescue team. She obtained her boat licence shortly after joining, and qualified as an SES Boat Operator just last week.

When she's not at the shed, Kirsten enjoys camping, motorbike riding, scuba diving and going to the gym.

Volunteering with the SES has equipped Kirsten with a broad range of new skills, from radio communications and tools, to storm water damage, boat and rescue operations.

During the recent floods, she was able to put some of these new-found skills into practice, assisting with evacuations in the local area.



"There's something for everyone in the SES, it really is what you make it. I joined with practically no experience in the field. Since then I've gained so many skills, as

well as confidence in my capability. I'm constantly learning from the incredible operators I work alongside, and there are never-ending opportunities to challenge myself further."

Kirsten has recently completed her training qualification and hopes to provide others with the same quality training and support she has received within the SES.

"There are so many things I love about volunteering with the SES, but if I had to pick my favourite, it would have to be the people. Our unit is made up of so many talented, knowledgeable and supportive members, it's genuinely like a second family."

Kirsten is looking forward to continuing her training and applying those skills in the field to assist her team and the community.



Port Macquarie Team ARRO members following successful extrication in the Time Critical Pit. Back L-R. Alfred Portenschlager (Tools), Scott Witchard (Tools), Michael Ward (T/L), Katie Blake (Medic 2), Front L-R. Kevin Sherwood (Tools), Michael Brumby (Medic)
Absent: Sereena Ward (Team Reserve)

Port Macquarie retains Directors Shield at ARRO 2022

The NSW city of Tamworth was the host to a long-awaited return of the Australasian Road Rescue challenge.

The event had been in recess for two years during the Covid pandemic which made this year's event even more memorable and rewarding for the teams and spectators attending. Hosted by NSWFR and NSW SES the event drew competing teams from most states of Australia and from Huntley Fire Service in New Zealand. Port Macquarie were again proud to represent the NSW SES at the competition and were thrilled at receiving the SES Directors Shield for the highest placed team

from the five SES teams competing at the competition. Overall winners for this year's competition were South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service closely followed by FRNSW Wollongong, and Tas Fire service in third place.

The Australasian Road Rescue Organisation (ARRO) are the peak body in Australasia for the development and exchange of information, knowledge and skills in road and trauma rescue. The challenge provides a unique experience for attendees to not

only compete in realistic road crash scenarios but also participate in a learning symposium to learn and grow as rescue operators from industry professionals from across Australasia. Presentations included updates on electric vehicle battery technology and the hazards to emergency personnel when these vehicles are involved in accidents. Also of interest was the NZ emergency response to the White Island volcanic eruption and NSWFR response to a tricky leg impalement on a school fence.



Supporters were never far away.



Trialling the Air and Hydraulic Shores for stabilising and lifting truck tray in the workshop.



Working to treat and release the driver in the Controlled Pit.



'A' Pillar cut before removing the roof in Time Critical pit.

Workshop sessions allowed teams access to trial new tools such as air shores for heavy vehicle stabilisation, and to trial various tools for extrication of impaled patients as presented in the earlier lecture. This year also included a focus on the medical care of infants and young children involved in road crash incidents. Practical sessions on infant resuscitation were timely in our preparation for the competition challenges over the next few days.

Our first challenge was in the Controlled Rescue pit where we were confronted with an over-turned car with a trapped driver and unconscious infant inverted in their car seat in the back of the vehicle. After surveying the scene and stabilising the vehicle, access was quickly gained through the rear window of the vehicle and the infant released for further care assessment from Katie our team second medic. Efforts were then concentrated on releasing the driver from a right arm entrapment between the 'A' pillar and dashboard. After releasing the entrapment, creating an extrication path, and placing the patient on a rescue board we found ourselves 30seconds short

of completion when the 30min whistle blew signalling the end of the scenario.

Over the next three days the team competed in a CPR challenge, two medical trauma challenges, and further two road rescue challenges. Most memorable was the Time Critical challenge where the team relocated a vehicle on its side, treated the critically ill patient, removed the roof and extricated the patient in around 25minutes. It felt awesome to achieve scenario completion, handover the patient, and get a good cheer from all the spectators watching on. The spirit of encouragement from other teams watching on makes this a special experience and more than just a competition. There is a great sense of camaraderie, no matter which service you represent. Following each challenge, the ARRO judges sit down with the team and review our performance with respect to leadership, teamwork, tool use, and medical treatment. Feedback from the assessors is always welcomed as this enables us to reflect and grow as better Road Rescue operators.

Aside from the competition scenarios there were further

workshops enabling teams to review techniques and trial new tools on significantly damaged vehicles. Workshops were also a good time to share knowledge, techniques, and ideas with teams from other services. Event sponsors FRSA, PT Rescue, Pacfire, and Milwaukee also had product stands showcasing the latest in emerging tools for rescue, safety, and patient care that were well patronised by teams and spectators.

Port Macquarie team was blessed to have some extended families also attend the event to support and encourage the team at this year's event. We could not compete without the support of our families and the rest of the unit back at Port Macquarie who ably dealt with a simultaneous flood rescue and medical gain entry callout while we were competing. The team are now keen to bring the learnings from this year's competition back to our region and share the knowledge and new skills.

Michael Brumby

Deputy Unit Commander,
Port Macquarie NSW SES



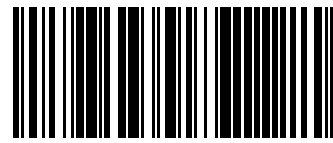
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THANK YOU

On behalf of our residents,
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themselves during the devastating
floods of February and March.

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Evacuation Management Course

I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to partake in the Evacuation Management course run by Resilience NSW. This was facilitated by Michael Hodsdon, South West Metro Regional Emergency Management Officer (REMO). Michael was extremely knowledgeable and engagingly presented the course.

It was great to see multiple members from across the NSW State Emergency Service Metro Zone in attendance. Emergency Management training and capability development are essential in our ability to contribute to the incident management space effectively.

The highlight of the course was multi-agency representation. The multi-agency representation allowed for a more real-life approach when we conducted our evacuation management simulations over the two days. It was good to learn about the concepts of evacuation management and the level of responsibility that comes with managing and organising evacuations. We also learnt risk treatment strategies which will enable us to contribute to the selection, planning, implementation, and management of evacuations in a community experiencing one or more disasters.

A shout out to the staff and volunteers from the Manly unit, Windellama unit, Liverpool unit, The Hills unit, Mt Druitt unit and South Easter Zone office. Fantastic to see SES involvement in external training.

In the evening and early hours of the fourth of July into the fifth, I was able to put into practice the skills I had learnt from the evacuation management course. Assisting in the coordination and control of the MGraths Hill evacuation. We had over 20 SES and 5 RFS teams & we were able to issue evacuation notices and evacuate people willing to evacuate in the space of 3 hours. This was a phenomenal effort will all parties involved.

Edward Orrego Ruiz

Group Officer
Planning & Operations Coordinator
Auburn Unit





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On behalf of Liverpool

Thank you

We are truly grateful for all the
NSW SES heroes who helped us
through the floods.



Mayor Ned Mannoun

**LIVERPOOL
CITY
COUNCIL**

Isn't he cute!

Meet "Tadpole" our rescue task on 7th July (name suggestion from Greg our Deputy Commander).

Unfortunately at three days old this little guy has had a rocky start to life. Sadly mum passed away last night and Tadpole needed rescuing from the water, cold and rain in order to survive. Our thanks to Claire (resident and now new member) who helped us with the rounding up and his boat ride. He looked so pleased to be on dry land and have a much needed feed. It was a great outcome!



Kevin Muffet

The Windellama SES celebrated the 90th Birthday of our Deputy Unit Commander Kevin Muffet. The night was well attended including members from the SES South Eastern Zone Headquarters, the Garden Club, and his many friends.

Kevin was humbled by the occasion and talked about his early childhood, being born in Goulburn where his father worked on farms which he added meant they never went hungry. Kevin was obviously able to turn a hand to any work with his career including working on Taranville Station, at Farmers and Graziers, Engine Rebuilders, Repco and City of Goulburn Gas and Coke Co. Kevin retired from full time work at the age of 55 but continued casual employment until 70.

Kevin has also volunteered with the Emergency Services serving with the Rural Fire since the mid 1960's

and the SES since 2004. Kevin was one of the original team of Community First Responders in Windellama and in fact the first unit in the state. Kevin continues to respond to SES call outs including CFR calls day and night. Kevin was acknowledged for his work in the Community being awarded Goulburn Citizen of the Year in 2021.

If you ever want to hear a yarn or have a chat Kevin is a wealth of knowledge about the local area and history.

We would like to congratulate Kevin on his 90th and wish him many more "Happy Birthdays"

The Windellama SES



Penrith

Thank you

Penrith City Council, and everyone in the Penrith community, extends their deepest gratitude for the outstanding work you do in our community.

You are our unassuming heroes who play an incredible and critical role in our community often in challenging circumstances and difficult times.

Thank you!

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FEDERAL MEMBER FOR GILMORE

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



Thank you...

To all Newcastle SES volunteers for keeping the community safe during times of emergency including storm, flood, and rescue operations.

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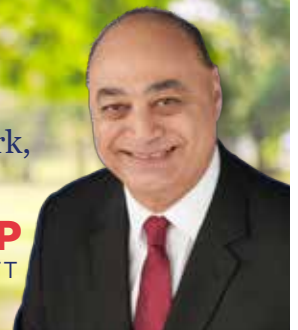
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Thank you to our SES
workers for your hard work,
care and dedication.

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MEMBER FOR MOUNT DRUITT

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Thank you SES Volunteers

You are our heroes!

With gratitude,
The Northern Beaches community



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NSW SES embraces a new era of flood warnings

Recent flooding events across NSW have highlighted the importance of early warnings – enabling people living in flood affected areas to make safe decisions and act early.

Across Australia, each emergency service organisation and jurisdiction has typically used different language and systems to warn communities of a possible threat. This can lead to confusion amongst the community who may not identify and act upon hazards.

From 30 September 2022, the NSW SES will transition to the Australian Warning System (AWS), a nationally consistent, three-tiered approach designed to make warnings clearer and lead people to take action ahead of severe weather events. The warning system comprises warning levels, action statements, hazard icons, colours and shapes. The AWS is currently being rolled out across the country.

There are three levels within the AWS - *Advice, Watch & Act* and Emergency Warning. For each level, there are a series of clear action statements to guide positive action by the community. These include 'stay informed', 'prepare to evacuate' and 'move to higher ground'.

As part of the transition to the AWS, the NSW SES will have greater flexibility to issue more localised warnings at a community level, enabling greater clarity and more targeted, relevant information for impacted areas.

Assistant Commissioner Nicole Hogan said the new approach to warnings will enable the Service to provide communities with greater clarity.

"We know that early warnings save lives. Our new warnings include very clear action statements to encourage to community to make safe decisions" Assistant Commissioner Hogan said.

The NSW SES will continue to work closely with the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) to develop flood warnings. The products issued by the BOM won't change. NSW SES will use the BOM



forecast and warning products, and add in additional information including the expected consequences based on flood plans, historical impact data and community sourced input to determine the types of warnings issued.

Impacted communities will continue to receive flood warnings through the NSW SES website, NSW SES social media channels and by listening to local ABC radio stations. In addition, the NSW SES has partnered with the NSW Department of Customer Service to develop HazardWatch, a new online warnings platform and smartphone app to launch later in the year.

Assistant Commissioner Hogan encouraged members to prepare for the change by learning and understanding the new warnings framework.

"The new framework is clear and simple – and I encourage all members

to understand what this means for your unit and your community. Together we can better support the community to prepare for severe weather events" Ms Hogan added.

The NSW SES has launched a significant public engagement campaign to build community awareness. This campaign runs for several months across radio, outdoor displays, online advertising and across social media. The project team have also made available a series of resources for Units to support promotion of the new warnings framework.

The new warnings will launch on 30 September 2022. Visit the Warnings Capability site on MySES for more details, videos and resources. If you have any questions, please contact the project team at warnings.capability@ses.nsw.gov.au.

Saving Lives Through Early Warnings

NSW SES Warnings Framework

Early warnings enable and empower residents of flood prone communities to take action ahead of severe weather events, saving lives and building stronger, more resilient communities.

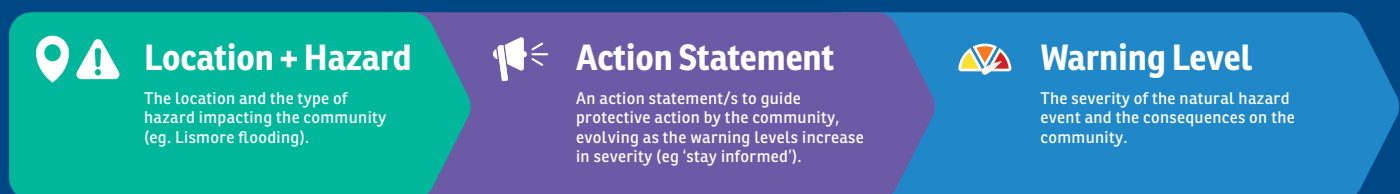
The NSW SES is transitioning to the Australian Warning System (AWS) - a national, multi-hazard, three-tiered approach to warning communities likely to be impacted by severe weather events. Our new warnings have clear action statements which will better support communities to take action and make safe decisions.

We have partnered with NSW Department of Customer Service to develop a multi-hazard warning platform, HazardWatch. It provides a comprehensive view of all NSW SES flood warnings on a map, with many more features coming soon.

A multi-hazard, three-tiered warning system



Three Warning Components



FOR EXAMPLE:

Smithtown East Flooding - Prepare to Evacuate - Watch and Act
Arkville North Flooding - Evacuate Now - Emergency Warning

For more details, visit:
ses.nsw.gov.au/warnings
or scan QR Code



Saving Lives Through Early Warnings

NSW SES Warnings Framework

Easier access to warning information on your device

Our new multi-hazards warning platform HazardWatch is an interactive platform which shows NSW SES flood warnings in either a map or list view. Each warning on HazardWatch includes a clear action statement and further information about how to stay safe in severe weather.

Many more features are coming soon including a smartphone app and the ability to create watch zones to receive alerts when warnings are issued in your area. Learn more and get started at hazardwatch.gov.au



Local warnings for your community

The NSW SES utilises a range of sources to build detailed flood intelligence within local communities – including information from flood studies and historical flood data.

As part of the transition to the Australian Warning System, the NSW SES has increased flexibility to tailor warnings at the community level, based on the expected consequences of severe weather events.



The NSW SES acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands and waters of NSW. As part of our commitment as an inclusive and diverse emergency service, all NSW SES flood warnings will include indigenous place names.

For more details, visit:
ses.nsw.gov.au/warnings
or scan QR Code





NSW SES State Disaster Rescue Challenge

Over the weekend of the 28th and 29th of May I had the privilege of attending the NSW state disaster rescue challenge also known as Exercise Thunderstruck as part of the Port Macquarie team.

As a newer member of the unit, (16 months in) I was not quite sure what to expect, so as we headed to the Fire Rescue training facility in Orchard Hills, Sydney, it was rather over-whelming seeing all the orange in one place. When I first heard about the possible opportunity to join the team and attend the SDRC I was assured the learning opportunities would be massive, and to “get there” if I had the chance. This was certainly the case when we saw what we were facing.

The scene was set by Daniel Kenner (exercise director) for the seven teams competing. A large earthquake has hit the area and we had been deployed to assist where we were needed, and in a variety of situations over the coming two days.

Both days consisted of being challenged with several different scenarios from a collapsed train station and carpark with multiple casualties, a train that had run into the end of the platform, again with multiple casualties, and even a person trapped under a pile of pallets they had been stacking when the earthquake hit.

Daniel and his team, along with all the volunteers that were the casualties over the weekend made for such real-life scenarios. The use of moulage to enhance the look and feel was something most units couldn't replicate on that scale, hence increasing the pressure and realism, and in turn enhancing the learning outcomes.

Working in the different environments that the facility offered, from a break and enter house, a multiple level live fire building, through to a collapsed building, helped expose us to a great variety of situations we might come across as SES members in the real world.

The practical experience's we encountered over the weekend has made me much more confident when attending call outs. Dealing with casualties, and thinking under pressure were a couple of the many skills I got to work on and improve over the weekend.

The event was an amazing learning experience and I'd like to encourage anybody that is given the opportunity to attend a future event to go along and get involved.



Congratulations must go out to Daniel Kenner and his team for running such a successful event considering how many times it was delayed due to Covid.

I'd also like to congratulate all teams that were involved, special mention to Port Stephens for winning the spirit of the challenge award along with the Queanbeyan unit for second place, and Canada Bay for coming in third.

Of course, there must be a winner and I was lucky enough to be part of the Port Macquarie team which took out the safety shield, and the overall win, with our team leader Michael Ward being awarded best team leader.

As a team we are honoured to be representing the NSW SES at the National Disaster Rescue Challenge in Perth in October.

I must also thank all the members of the Port Macquarie unit. If they weren't staying in town looking out for the community, we wouldn't be able to represent them at events like this.

Brendon Field

Port Macquarie SES





Floods attract new members

Its been over 6 months now since the Northern Rivers was struck by two consecutive floods, one in February and the second in March, the first being an all-time record breaker.

In the rural township of Casino, a town that 'never floods', for the first time ever we seen inundation into the CBD from the Richmond River when it broke its banks. This coupled with stormwater drains that couldn't cope with the massive amounts of rainfall, led to hundreds of flood evacuations and rescues within the town. A high portion of these evacuations were of elderly community members in aged care units who were stranded in their little homes with water over their beds in some instances. It was a massive effort from the small handful of Casino SES volunteers.

What these floods have done though is made the community aware, that firstly we are all volunteers, and that a small unit of about 15 active members, with just 3 Flood Rescue qualified is not enough to serve a town of approximately 11,000 people. Thankfully we did also have the assistance of crews from Fire & Rescue NSW, and community members themselves played a massive part in rescuing and evacuating many residents.



Within one month after that second flood in March, Casino Unit had 4 new members sign up and commence their SES journey at Casino Unit. By the end of May, we had another 4, and at the time of writing this in early August, we've had another 3 recently join us.

So Casino Unit has nearly doubled in size since the floods. We are so happy and excited to have increased our membership which in turn will increase our capability and availability to better help our community in need.



After a tough couple of years with COVID and lockdowns, and many operational events, its great that we are also able to get back into training and courses.

Most of the new members have already completed a couple of courses including Job Ready, Swim Test and Operate Communications Equipment. Some have also just completed their Storm & Water Damage Operations course. A couple also helped out at Community events such as Beef Week in



Casino and the Lantern Parade in Lismore and they were also a part of the winning team for WOW DAY UNIT DECORATING!

When we asked the new members "why did you decide to join the NSW SES?" some answers included:

Bron – "because I seen the guys n gals in orange working so hard to help others, and I wanted to be a part of it."

Bec – "I could see the need for more volunteers after the flood."

Mal – "after being a member in Qld and then moving to the Northern Rivers last

year, I wasn't sure if I wanted to do it again. Then experiencing the floods and seeing the SES display at beef week, I knew I still wanted to be a part of a very special group of people at the Casino Unit."

Caitlin – "I joined for many reasons, but 2 of the biggest reasons would be to make a difference within the community and be part of something bigger."

Courtney – "during and after the floods, my friend started talking about wanting to join but wanted more info. We then heard Casino SES were having

an information / sign up day so we both went along to listen and then we joined up right away."

The new members all come from varying backgrounds, experiences and ages. They include a father/son duo, two best friends, a single mum, a grandmother, a retiree and a student. They are all so proud to put on their oranges and be a strong part of the service and of Casino Unit.

Casino Unit Commander, Karen Rea says "I am so pleased to have our membership nearly double. This will take a lot of pressure off the core members needing to be always available and allow us to spread the love as such. Our experienced members are so keen to mentor and support the new recruits in training and share their knowledge and skills on the field. Its so exciting to watch everyone grow and develop, face fears, challenge themselves and work so well together."

Donna Lamont

Deputy Unit Commander, Casino



Interagency Training is finally back and better than ever!

When the following email hit my inbox, I was intrigued and interested to find out more... "Interprofessional Simulation Event - involving NSW SES Road Rescue Operators and CSU Undergraduate Paramedic and Nursing Students!" Upon reading further an interagency event was being planned, simulating a high-fidelity multi-trauma scenario that would involve the extrication and management of 4 casualties, and cover the full journey for the casualties, from the roadside to admission and treatment at the hospital.

When speaking with Rob Bear from the School of Nursing, Paramedicine & Healthcare Sciences at Charles Sturt University, he mentioned that this interagency training opportunity was even more valuable as one of their 'CSU Honours research students was looking at this interprofessional simulation with the hope of proving more of this style of training is a good option for emergency service disciplines rather than predominately training in our own



silos'. As firm believers in interagency cooperation and building professional relationships with other emergency service providers, The Port Macquarie SES Unit was keen to participate.

We called in some favours and found a couple of cars to set up a realistic T-Bone rescue scenario. The plan was for SES to arrive on scene, stabilise the vehicles, then work

alongside CSU Paramedic students to provide their medics quick access to the casualties - so they could determine the level of injuries, and then together we developed and executed suitable extrication plans and pathways for the casualty, who was then transported back to CSU for ongoing treatment. The Honours student was able to observe the event and then held a focus group with the paramedic students back at their campus to investigate their thoughts and perceptions of the event. Mr Bear confirmed that this training event was the **'perfect impetus for inter-professional communication and teamwork, which is exactly what the rationale is that we are looking to create and research'**.

The feedback from students from this interagency training activity was very positive. All of the CSU students who participated were excited about the learning experience and want more of these events so they can learn to work together with other emergency



services. Our Road Crash operators were able to maintain their Road Crash Rescue currency and worked well alongside the paramedic students in a realistic scenario, and the CSU PHD student was able to collect important data for her Honour's project.

Pre-covid the Port Macquarie SES unit had set up similar RCR training scenarios for CSU final year paramedics, providing them opportunities to discover what it is like to have a vehicle cut up around them, whilst treating patients inside, and learning how we can create space, and help them extricate casualties from smashed up vehicles. CSU reciprocated and provided our members access to their paramedic training rooms and put together simulated casualty scenarios to help us improve our first aid skills and increase our CPR efficiency. I am very happy to confirm that **'Interagency Training is finally back and better than ever!'** Interagency co-operation and training have been reinstated and we are looking forward to even more exciting opportunities to train and work alongside CSU and other emergency services into the future.

Kathryn Blake





Liverpool Plains Shire SES Update

The Liverpool Plains Shire SES unit have been busy the last few months training alongside Tambar Springs and Gunnedah SES units with three members qualifying as storm and water damage operators, two as ground and height and one as ground operator.

The small unit has also seen members become qualified as Beacon IMT and Field operators which will allow further support for the unit and future out of area deployments.

The unit also enjoyed running and participating in a small land search exercise with surrounding units and the local VRA.

The unit will be participating in the PIARO course within the coming months alongside Tambar Springs and Gunnedah SES units who have been

helpful in providing more training opportunities for the small unit.

Their community engagement has expanded over the year and continues to expand with future community events planned. The Liverpool Plains Shire SES unit has been working closely with community groups, organisations and events which has strengthen their presence within the community.

Carissa Ryan

Liverpool Plains Shire SES community Engagement Officer.







Ben and Pip in front of the Opera House for WoW day.

Mother and Son at NSW SES - Marrickville Unit

What's better than one Tomkins at Marrickville? How about two of them?

Ben Tomkins, a volunteer with the NSW SES - Marrickville Unit, has convinced his mother to join as well. In the two years that Ben has been a member, his mum Pip has either been in the background of the online musters, or has been there to drop him off and pick him up from the unit on Tuesday nights. Always being around, but never a part of the action, Pip has now decided to join in on the fun.

The concept of family at the NSW SES is one that is seen every day. Not necessarily by blood, but by the unification of all members focusing on one goal - helping the community in times of need.

"I never really grasped the concept of 'SES families' because I always felt that my team and colleagues were like my extended family, but then I started hearing stories of other people who

had relatives at other Units, or seeing whole families at one unit in other parts of NSW. It inspired me to get my mum involved," Ben said.

Pip was sceptical at first and she didn't know what role would be best for her. Ben told Pip that there were roles for people who didn't want to go out into the field or get up on a roof and, due to physical limitations, Pip didn't think she *could* do it either.

"I kept saying to her, 'there are roles for people who don't want to go into the field, it's not all about getting up on a roof', and it really isn't. The diversity of the organisation and what we do is something, in my opinion, that can suit just about anyone".

When first signing up, Pip continued to be unsure. Entering uncharted territory, having never done something quite like this before. "I always said to

Ben 'it's your thing mate, I don't want to encroach on that'," Pip said. Ben was still keen for her to join.

"Pip works a typical 9 to 5 desk job and we don't really do much outside of her work and me attending school so I thought it was the perfect opportunity to be more involved in the community" Ben said.

Pip agreed to sign up and began getting excited to begin her adventure with the SES, but their plans were quickly thwarted. Upon the horizon crept a new challenge - the covid Delta variant. It put a major spanner in the works, and it wasn't until a whole year after she initially applied that she was able to at least have an interview.

Thankfully with the help of the Membership team at NSW SES - Marrickville Unit, it made joining



Ben and Pip outside Qudos Bank Arena for the Bstreetsmart event.

the service possible for Pip in a covid-safe way.

Although her intake started online she has already had a lot of fun and made new life-long friends. "I think one of the best things is that she's finally had the opportunity to meet the people who I've spoken about and who are my friends, but also make some of her own. I really like that they've been so accepting of both me and Pip at the Unit. It's definitely been a lot of fun," Ben said.

Pip's first official SES event was none other than Wear Orange to Work Day (WoW Day), where she met the new Premier of NSW Dominic Perrottet, the NSW SES Commissioner Carlene York, and the Minister for Emergency Services the Hon Steph Cooke.

While she has already successfully completed the Storm and Water Damage Operations course, Pip doesn't plan to be up on a roof anytime soon, as she will soon begin her journey in the People, Admin and Logistics department as Marrickville's new Community Resilience Coordinator.

Welcome to the service Pip!



Pip preparing to get up on a roof during her Storm and Water Damage Operations course.

Port Stephens

Members from Port Stephens competed in the 2022 State Road Crash Rescue Challenge held in Dubbo, as part of a multi-agency team.

The only team of its kind, members from NSW SES (Port Stephens Unit), NSW Ambulance (Singleton Station) and VRA Rescue NSW (Central Coast Squad), came together to form the "Hunter Valley Rescue Team".

The Hunter Valley Rescue team was awarded:

- » **1st place** - Overall SES
- » **1st place** - Industrial / Domestic Rescue
- » **1st place** - CPR Challenge
- » **2nd place** - Overall Combined
- » **3rd place** - Entrapped Rescue

For those not familiar with the event, the NSW Road Crash Rescue Challenge is an annual event which consists of multiple challenges to test members skills in team work, leadership, technical skills and casualty care.

The event was a fantastic opportunity to build and develop critical rescue and advanced medical skills alongside partner emergency service agencies.

Teams competed in the following challenges:

ROAD CRASH RESCUE ENTRAPMENT CHALLENGE

Aim: To demonstrate primary hydraulic rescue tool use for access, release, and removal of a physically trapped casualty.

Scenario: A mannequin (simulated live) was entrapped by vehicle/prop and/or injury.

Time to complete: 30 minutes.

ROAD CRASH RESCUE TIME CRITICAL/CONTROLLED CHALLENGE

Aim: To demonstrate the access, release and removal of a casualty/s trapped by injury entrapment and / or limb entrapment.

Scenario: Two casualties, either mannequin and / or live, both treated as conscious and confined to vehicle or immediate impact area. Some injuries treatable at scene. Single or multiple vehicles plus props.

Time to complete: 30 minutes.



INDUSTRIAL DOMESTIC RESCUE CHALLENGE

Aim: To demonstrate response and management of a casualty/s involved in an industrial or domestic incident.

Scenario: Casualty/s (live) will be simulated to have been involved in an industrial or domestic incident. Teams must respond to the incident and assist the casualty. Some injuries may be treatable at scene.

Time to complete: 15 minutes.

TRAUMA CHALLENGE

Aim: To demonstrate response and management of a casualty/s involved in a trauma incident.

Scenario: Casualty/s (live) will be simulated to have been involved in a trauma incident. Teams must respond to the incident and assist the casualty.

Some injuries may be treatable at scene.

Time to complete: 30 minutes.

CPR CHALLENGE

Aim: Teams will be judged on how well they administer CPR to a mannequin. Scoring will be through an electronic device attached to the mannequin, which measures multiple key factors for successful CPR, such as pace, depth, hand placement, ventilation and chest recoil.

Scenario: A mannequin is placed on the ground, and all members of the team must successfully demonstrate CPR, whilst following the DRSABCD framework.

Time to complete: 15 minutes.

A massive well done to all involved in this amazing event



Road Crash Rescue – Tea Gardens

During May, NSW SES - Port Stephens Unit were activated by Police to assist Fire Rescue NSW Tea Gardens at a car on its side, with multiple persons trapped in Tea Gardens.

Our unit responded the Medium Rescue Vehicle & the Rapid Intervention Vehicle along with seven accredited Rescue Operators to the scene, leaving the Heavy Rescue Vehicle and 6 Rescue Operators on call for Port Stephens area coverage.

On scene, crews found a vehicle that had left the road, travelled across a ditch, impacted with a tree and flipped onto its side. The 2 occupants in the vehicle were trapped by confinement and compression.

After stabilising the vehicle to ensure it would not move during the rescue process, a chainsaw was used to remove part of the impacted tree to allow for further access to the vehicle.

NSW Ambulance paramedics worked to treat the casualties, as a roof removal was then performed using hydraulic tools, as rescue crews worked to release the casualties from the vehicle.

A ladder platform was created on the ground, allowing for the casualties on the stretchers to be carefully moved from one side of the ditch across to additional awaiting NSW Ambulance Paramedics.

After this almost 4 hour extrication, both patients were transported to a trauma centre for further treatment, and emergency crews held a debrief onscene (pictured top right).

Another excellent example of multiple services (Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW SES, NSW Ambulance, NSW Police Force and NSW Rural Fire Service) all working together in a patient centred response.

Our thoughts are with those involved, and we are hoping they make a full recovery.

WESTPAC RESCUE HELICOPTER WORKSHOP

During May, NSW SES Port Stephens Unit hosted the very first Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service for NSW SES, where we were also joined by members

from both Newcastle and Tomaree Units.

Although the Westpac Rescue Helicopter is quite often involved in major road crash and general land rescue jobs we attend, to facilitate treatment and transport (particularly for trauma patients), they also respond to flood rescues, land searches and other medical related incidents.

The workshop covered many intricacies of not only the Rescue Helicopter, it's crew, it's equipment and capabilities - but also how we can collaborate efficiently at incident scenes.

This included key points such as communications, landing site selection, landing site preparation (such as clearing and debris checks), safety around helicopters, medical crew assistance and scene support.

A fantastic workshop to further knowledge and collaborate with one of our emergency service partner agencies.

Alysha Springett

Deputy Unit Commander & Training Coordinator, Port Stephens

Another 24 Hours

I have debated writing an account of the March Floods from my perspective for a while however didn't want to write something that seemed too self-promoting. Following the release of the enquiries I felt it important to share what it was like on the ground in the initial phases of the devastating flooding earlier this year. Mark and myself ended up at the right location at the right time through no planning of our own and owe a debt of gratitude to the Mullumbimby community and members that welcomed us and looked after us during our stay.

It was a mid-Sunday afternoon (27th February) and I was quietly working in the yard trying to tidy up before the working week when, as Unit Commander, I received a call from Paula Kircher who was chasing a Flood Rescue Crew (2xL3 Techs with vehicle and Arc Angle) to be deployed immediately to Macksville to cover the area for the high tide and expected flooding on the Monday morning.

Whilst Port Macquarie has a number of Flood Technicians we all work full time Monday to Friday and it is often problematic having people commit to the typical 1-3-1 deployment requirements. Knowing that this was a significant gap in coverage that needed to be filled I send messages to all of our technicians to see if anyone was available. Mark Anderson was on paternity leave and



able to be available for 24 hours, and at the time I was undertaking project work remotely and (knowing that we had coverage in town) also agreed to cover this immediate need for 24 hours. Both Mark and myself have young children and our wives agreed that they could survive without us till Monday evening.

We grabbed a change of clothes, packed up our rescue equipment and left town – next stop Macksville where we introduced ourselves to the unit, took a drive around town to familiarise ourselves with the town and the river,

then settled in for an early night in preparation for the potential flooding on Monday morning.

Monday morning came and went and the high tide came and went. Fortunately for Macksville and Nambucca the rain had eased enough to avoid (just) flooding of the lower parts of the township. Whilst out on our final resonance run prior to returning to Port Macquarie we started to hear on the radio the number of flood rescues that were occurring further north around the Lismore area and flood technicians



requesting urgent additional resources. Knowing that a plan would be in place to move resources to the area (however recognising that this takes time to arrange) we looked at each other, called our families, and agreed that if required we would head north for another 24 hours to cover the immediate need – at that stage we were only a couple of hours away. We spoke to Paula who tasked us to head north to Ballina to the staging area with further details to follow. We turned north little knowing what the future held for us.

Upon getting close to Ballina I followed up where we were to be staged from and after a few conversations we were sent to Mullumbimby. There are multiple routes into Mullumbimby and we obviously tried the closest one – flooded. Tried the next one north – also flooded. Continued north – flooded before finally trying the northern most access and actually getting through. We arrived at Mullumbimby HQ to be met by a relieved Unit Commander Tracey and her crew who had been working tirelessly saving lives and protecting their community.

The next 12 hours are a blur as we went from flood rescue to flood rescue. We commandeered what I can only assume was an ex-army truck with high clearance and the truck owners were fantastic being able to take us through the floodwaters in town and out to the hinterland to evacuate several people and determine if/how we could get further up the catchment where there were known land slips and houses destroyed. On dusk we travelled as far along Wilson Creek Road as we could – stopped by a downed tree, an abandoned ambulance, and half the road washed away. We cleared the tree, took note of the ambulance details and returned to town with a load of relieved residents on the back.

Upon returning to the unit we hitched up an IRB and travelled to Ocean Shores and started rescuing people from flooded houses. It was a surreal experience driving around in the dark on a public road in an IRB following the marker posts to ensure we stayed on the road and not in the surrounding drainage swales and creeks. We finished the night with a full boat load of people to be taken to the evacuation centre. Little did we know that on our return trip we would be flagged down by a couple of extra passengers seeking evacuation. Mark and myself promptly gave up our seats and proceeded to wade the boat the rest of the way back to the vehicle before loading up and transferring the residents to the evacuation centre.

We packed up for the evening at around 4am which was hard for us to do as we knew there were many more people isolated, however it was unsafe for us to continue due to exhaustion. Luckily for us Kath from the unit had a couple of spare beds and agreed to accommodate Mark and myself and thus avoiding the need to travel out of town. That said, we would have both probably fallen asleep at Mullumbimby HQ if required.

On Tuesday morning after probably not enough hours sleep we got up and were excited to see that there was some sunshine and we headed into HQ to see what had happened during the night. At this stage there was no mobile communication and

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very sporadic internet and no way to contact the outside world to let people know we were OK. We figured we could work till after lunch enabling us to return home that evening. We returned to Upper Wilsons Creek to check on the Ambulance and determine if we could proceed further in the daylight.

We eventually tracked the Ambulance Crew down – they had stayed with a resident that had been caught in a land slide through their house and were waiting for Westpac to land and transport the resident to hospital. Westpac Helicopter took the injured party to hospital and we transported their partner back to town. We returned to bid farewell to the SES crew and headed for home, or so we thought.

Our travels were going well and we were looking forward to getting home and having a shower and seeing our family. We made it as far as Broadwater and realised we needed a bigger boat! The Highway was now a waterway and we were on the other side to Port Macquarie. We looked at each other and figured we were stuck here so we might as well make the most of it and returned to Mullumbimby, rolled up our sleeves, went to Woolworths to buy some fresh jocks and socks and got back to work.

We returned to town, let Tracey know what happened, and got back to work. At this stage there was no phone coverage, no internet, and no connection to the outside world. Listening into the rescue channel on the GRN I heard Port Macquarie had been activated on a rescue and obtained permission to talk to PMH43 directly. After letting them know we were still alive and requested they pass on this information to our wives I had them deliver a portable radio to Roger (one of our members) and requested a back channel from SOC. This then gave us limited access to the outside world and the opportunity to confirm Beacon tasking and details.

I stayed at HQ to assist Tracey and Mark continued to work in the field with the Mullumbimby members. Everyone got on with what needed to be done with the equipment and resources that we had. Fortunately I had the benefit of experiencing something similar the year before that impacted Port Macquarie



and was able to share what I had learnt during that time. The community banded together and the Civic Centre became a hive of activity as people donated supplies and equipment, people sorted donated supplies into categories and coordinated how to get it to isolated community members. We were able to utilise this community resource to deliver (via SES and Marine Rescue members) the first round of ration packs to the isolated communities before handing this responsibility over to the community to manage moving forward.

A member of the public setup a Starlink at the Civic Centre and this finally gave people the chance to get in contact with the outside world. Tracey was able to download the outstanding Beacon jobs and as they were completed we were able to radio through the details to Roger who could then close the jobs in Beacon remotely.

I still remember heading down after another long day to call home and let them know we were still flooded in and didn't know when we would be home. I watched Mark find a children's book (that had been donated) that



he also had at home and saw him sit down on a video call with his son and read the book along together. After a brief moment of connection with our families, we then rushed to an urgent job to respond to a member of the public who had activated a personal medi-alert device, with the knowledge that the local ambulance had been sent out of town to support Ballina.

The days continued, the highway remained closed, and the Mullumbimby members relentlessly continued to get on with the job. Finally on Thursday afternoon we received word that we

could return home via a series of back roads to Grafton and then back down the highway. Twenty four hours had turned into five days and we and our families were grateful that we could return safely back to Port Macquarie.

Throughout the time we spent there I was impressed by the professionalism shown by the Mullumbimby members from Tracey down. Their headquarters lost power (was running on a generator for most of the time), lost mobile phone coverage, lost internet connection and was shut off from town water. The

team just kept on with the mission of Saving Lives and Creating Safer Communities. They are a credit to their community and were welcoming of a couple of random blokes from Port Macquarie who happened to end up where we needed to be when we needed to be, and we had the longest "twenty four hour deployment" either of us have ever experienced.

Michael Ward

Flood Rescue Technician and Unit Commander
Port Macquarie SES.



Wyong Unit

During the month of July from 01/07/22 to 17/07/2022 the NSW East Coast was smashed by an East Coast Low and as a result the NSW Central Coast was effected like we have never seen before.

The Tuggerah Lake peaked at 1.72m which as a result created evacuation orders for all suburbs surrounding the lake. The Wyong River also peaked at record heights and in turn cut off all access to Yarramalong and other townships within the Wyong Valley.

Our community was so lucky to have not only had our amazing team of Orange out and about to assist but other agencies working hand in hand with us. This included RFS, SLSNSW, Police Rescue, Fire & Rescue, VRA along with many other local community groups wanting to help in any way they could.

A brief summary of the event for our Wyong Unit includes:

- » 682 Requests for Assistance with over 2700 RFA's for the Central Coast Cluster.



- » 3059 Rapid Damage Assessments.
- » Over 200 tonnes of sand was bagged with approx. 100 tonnes being bagged at the unit.
- » 50 Flood Rescues.

As a Unit we were lucky enough to have 56 Members, who took time away from their own families and homes to support our community. Every task they undertook was vital in ensuring our community were safe during the floods.



Like previous events our community has bounced back stronger than ever and have all gone above and beyond to ensure they helped not only themselves but friends, neighbours and less fortunate people in need.

James Flanagan

Community Engagement Officer
Wyong Unit



Why let the facts get in the way of a good story?

PREAMBLE

I admit to being “old and withered” and lacking the “deep roots” of rescue and/or flood boat training that are needed to be physically active in and around floodwaters. Which is why I volunteered for two further shifts as Sydney Metro Zone Media Officer at Sydney Metro Zone Incident Control Centre in the second major 2022 flood response (July 2022). As always, part of the brief was to keep our State Headquarters Media Team in the loop for any stories that had the potential to be significantly newsworthy, such as the following two “life-threatening emergencies” that occurred on my watch.

In such situations – timely and accurate reporting are the keys to good practice.

1. GLITTERING GOLD

Story 1.1

Relaxing in the comfort of the Public Information pod at Sydney Metro HQ in Rhodes, I was doing routine media stuff when I overheard a request that came flying out of the Flood Desk room to the Air Wing pod. There was a flood rescue in progress of approximately ten adults and ten children who were reported to be up to their knees in flood water on the second storey of a house on the Hawkesbury River. Inaccessible by road, SES flood boats were responding and could the Air Wing get a Helo up just-in-case. Clearly a “glittering gold life-threatening flood rescue story” worthy of a Heads-Up to SHQ Media.

Story 1.2

Report received that the first SES flood boat is approaching the site but there is an “issue” (details not

for publication, but please put a hold on any media coverage for now).

News has also been received that I think says that the group are now walking out to an extraction point for collection by the flood boat. Okay - so it seems to be less a gold “life-threatening flood rescue” and more a silver “urgent flood evacuation” (and the Helo is told to stand down). Even so I believe that (issue aside) it may still be newsworthy with ten kids involved, while the amateur reporter in me thinks “Maybe they will also have a cute fur-ball kitten in tow for a heart-warming photo-op”. Anyway, it requires a follow-up to SHQ Media that the Heads-Up has changed, it still may be a story, but hold off on any external action due to the “issue” that I mentioned (*which is definitely not for publication*).

Story 1.3

Chasing a follow-up, I think that I am told that the group have been safely evacuated by the SES flood boat and have been dropped off at a road access point on the banks of the river. There a bus has been organised to collect them and transfer them to an evacuation centre. I think “job well done” and so give SHQ Media an update that it’s probably not particularly newsworthy after all.

Story 1.4

Oops. Updated too soon. Seems that the group have not yet left the flooded house! The SES flood boat crew has arrived on-site and is currently helping them to pack up their essentials prior to evacuating them to a road access point on the banks of the river etc.

Appears that it never was the “glittering gold life-threatening emergency” I first described – not even a “silver urgent evac” but at best a “a bronze conversation piece” for *The Volunteer Magazine*!

I must say, to their credit, that SHQ Media took my “factual” back-flips pretty well – but it still left me feeling like a dill (not that I have anything against that particular herb!) But hey – everyone was safe, which is all that really matters, right?

2. WANDERING OFF

Story 2.1

Relaxing once again in the comfort of the Public Information Pod I was doing more routine media stuff when another report comes through that I think says: “A couple have been reported missing in the flooded Hawkesbury River – last seen not wearing lifejackets. An SES flood boat has been deployed, and police liaison have been informed (as combat agency for missing persons)”. Again, I give a Heads-up to SHQ Media, conscious of the fact that if, by some miracle, the couple are found and rescued from the swollen river it would reflect well on the professionalism of our Volunteers.

Story 2.2

Oops – did I do it again? Clarification that the couple were last seen walking by the side of the flooded Hawkesbury River. They were not wearing life jackets and have not been seen since. (At least I got that last bit right!) The SES flood boat is continuing to search just in case they ended up in the flood water. Update to SHQ Media – but still only a Heads-Up at this stage.



Story 2.3

SHOTS FIRED! SHOTS FIRED!

A new twist in the tale. The sound of gunshots has been heard in the search area and an SES flood boat is reported to be heading towards the shots fired location. The police liaison officer at Metro Zone ICC has been informed, and local police are responding. Meanwhile, back at Sydney Metro Zone HQ, those with local knowledge speculate that it could be a farmer culling flood-impacted animals, or perhaps someone activating a distress flare to attract attention. There is also a full and frank discussion (*expletives deleted*) about the wisdom of an SES flood-boat “heading towards” a “possible active shooter location” – if indeed that is the case – which seems unlikely. I provide a further Heads-Up to SHQ Media about the report of “shots fired”, just in case they hear it from other sources.

Story 2.4

Yep - it's another fizzer – literally! The “active shooter” has been identified as kids letting-off fireworks, and the “couple in the river” have been located safe and well at someone's house. Final update to SHQ Media that they can put down the starter's gun on any media release – by which time I figure that my credibility with SHQ Media has probably reached a frosty “Minus 273 Celsius”.

CONCLUSION

Looking back on these two past experiences, I could not help but draw a comparison with the words of J.R.R Tolkien in Book One of his Trilogy “Lord of the Rings”:

**“All that is gold does not glitter,
Not all those who wander are lost”**
But then, as a self-confessed dill looking forward, I reflected on the words of Boris Pasternak in “Doctor Zhivago”:
**“And remember: you must never,
under any circumstances, despair.
To hope and to act, these are our
duties in misfortune”.**

SUMMARY

In the two 12-hour day shifts that I spent in early July 2022 relaxing at Metro Zone ICC, I responded to multiple media requests, including from Channel 10 Morning Show, Channel 9 Today Show, ABC Radio, an “Independent National Journalist”, SBS News, Channel 7; ABC (Four Corners); Radio 2GB; and staffers of various VIP's at both National and State levels.

Requests included “need general information and statistics”, “need to get a radio news team on a flood boat”, “need specific information for a particular location and date range”, “must get VIP's videographers on a flood boat”, “where is the best place to see flood boats in operation”, “have to get on a resupply boat”, “want to visit an active SES Unit – preferably with lunch provided”, “must get on a rescue boat”, “need to walk through a flood area with some SES Volunteers for a photo op” “desperate to get on a flood boat” etc.

AFTERTHOUGHT

Not every call from the media is a media call.

I recall during one deployment to the Northern Rivers as Media Officer in 2011, in the aftermath of Cyclone Yasi, that I had a media call put through to me at RHQ Lismore from a foreign TV crew filming a European version of “I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here” asking if they should self-evacuate from their bush-camp. Being a Sydneysider I knew nothing about their location and its potential to flood so sought local knowledge to give them an answer. However, when I queried internally why the call had been transferred to me, the answer was simple, “it was the media calling”.

Fast forward to July 2022 one concerned television reporter, who had kept my mobile number from earlier in the day, called me to report that she was “standing by the river with a man who was desperately trying to get an oxygen tank to a stranded, disabled person whose machine was blinking red, and could I get someone to assist him with an urgent boat ride?” After clarifying, through her passing her phone to the man, that “blinking red” wasn't a Triple Zero emergency, the resupply was quickly facilitated through the flood desk.

Bill Hoyles
Canada Bay SES



Reconnecting to nature

There is nothing like a refreshing dip in the ocean or a picnic in the park with friends to make you feel good, and the science agrees!

There are many reasons to join NSW SES, whether it's camaraderie, making a difference, supporting your local community, or to be active and get outside. Whatever the reason, your role at NSW SES takes you into the natural environment. In everyday life however, it is easy to get stuck indoors. Then add lockdown, working from home and family commitments, and you can end up spending all day inside or online. However, there is a growing body of research that indicates spending time in nature is central to human health and wellbeing.

Bushfires, floods, and other natural disasters can take their toll on our mental health and wellbeing. In the wake of unprecedented and ongoing weather events over the past four years, it is more important than ever to build positive mental health and reclaim a sense of wellbeing. Re-

connecting to the natural landscape – be it the bush, a community garden, or a local river – is an accessible and sometimes surprisingly powerful way of boosting wellbeing and supporting the recovery process.

Witnessing the destruction of the natural environment, such as burnt bushland or landslips, can heighten feelings of distress and grief. This experience is known as 'solastalgia' and speaks to the strong connection humans feel to the natural world (Eisenman et al., 2015). NSW SES acknowledges that First Nations Australians have a unique relationship and connection with the land. The impact of natural disasters on First Nations communities is felt deeply (Williamson, Markham & Weir, 2020).

"Like you, I've watched in anguish and horror as fire lays waste to precious Yuin land, taking everything with it – lives, homes,

animals, trees – but for First Nations people it is also burning up our memories, our sacred places, all the things which make us who we are."

Gamilaraay and Yawalaraay journalist, Lorena Allam from Williamson, Markham & Weir, 2020

Reconnecting with the natural landscape, especially seeing regrowth and restoration, can be a crucial part of the recovery process for disaster-impacted individuals and communities. In a report on the findings from the 10-year anniversary of the 2009 Victorian bushfires, those impacted by the fires identified regeneration and regrowth of the natural environment as a key sign of hope and healing (Gibbs, L. et al., 2020).

"Another big deal around here, and for us in particular, is to have been able to observe the way that nature has recovered...you start to see a

developed a strong attachment to the natural environment had lower levels of psychological distress, lower rates of depression and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, as well as higher levels of resilience and post-traumatic growth and life satisfaction (Gibbs, L. et al., 2020).

The findings of the Beyond Bushfires study are consistent with a growing body of research that suggests that engaging with the natural world is a powerful way to improve overall physical, mental, and psychological wellbeing, and protect against mental health struggles (Bratman et. al. 2019). The benefits of spending time in the natural world are diverse and far reaching, including:

Improving mood

Spending time in nature can boost feelings of happiness, awe, and creativity. Spending time in nature can also help people focus less on negative thoughts and reduce negative emotions, such as anxiety and overthinking (Bratman, G. et al. 2015).

Feeling calm

The sounds, sights and smells of the natural world can also reduce stress in the body. Combining being in nature with physical movement such as walking can further enhance feelings of calm and relaxation (Lee, J. et al 2014).

Increasing clarity

Spending time in natural environments can enhance mental clarity and build focus. With fewer distractions and demands placed on us when we are outdoors, the mind can relax and recover, resulting in greater mental capacity (Aspinall P. et al, 2015). As our society evolves, we are spending more time inside and online. It can be challenging to carve out time to enjoy the outdoors and reap the benefits of the natural world. The good news is that spending time in nature can be simple and accessible.

Stuck for ideas? Here are some simple activities to get you started:

1. Leave the unit/office and have lunch in a park
2. Plant some herbs in your garden
3. Take your shoes off and feel the grass or sand underneath your feet
4. Gaze out the window at night and notice the stars
5. Put some low maintenance plants in your workspace.

The strong connection humans feel with the natural environment can be a powerful and accessible source of positivity, calm and hope. For those individuals from disaster affected areas, reconnecting with the natural landscape is particularly important. Watching the natural landscape come back to life can provide solace and support the recovery process.

little green leaf pop out somewhere from a black trunk... you'd find the grass trees starting to sprout and the ferns, the tree ferns, the shoots unrolling... We used some photos of the tree ferns in our Christmas card that year – a symbol of hope and renewal”

Research participant from Block, K. et al, 2019

The Beyond Bushfires study found that five years after the 2009 bushfire event, those who had

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The Warrumbungle's Calling

The Warrumbungle Ranges in the central west of NSW is hardly a location people flock to on a cold, winter weekend in July. The members of the Gilgandra SES Unit did precisely that, all in the name of support to a community event.

The event was the **56th Tom Quilty Gold Cup**, a National level horse endurance ride covering a 160km, cross country track, over 24 hours. Around 200 riders participating in this - the 'Bathurst 1000' of horse endurance rides. Riders came from various Australian States and Territories and several overseas locations.

The location of the ride HQ was in the village of Tooraweenah (population of around 250) located in the Gilgandra Shire in the foothills of the Warrumbungle Range – home of the Warrumbungle National Park and famous Siding Springs Observatory. The ride brought around 1 000 additional people to town for a period of around 4 x days – a massive commitment to manage for a small, hard working committee.

The community has no permanent emergency medical services or hospital – these services usually coming from nearby communities of either Gilgandra or Coonabarabran.

The Gilgandra Unit volunteer had several roles with the ride –

- » Assistance and advice with emergency planning for the event
- » Provision of first aid and casualty care training for the checkpoint marshals
- » Provision of communications equipment and training for the checkpoint marshals
- » First response in case of a fallen rider and assistance with patient retrieval
- » Assistance with logging progress of the riders

The assistance began around 1 month prior to the event, where the Unit members delivered a half day training



session in first aid and general casualty care to the ride committee and volunteers. This covered areas such as –

- » care of the unconscious casualty
- » airway management
- » haemorrhage control
- » assisting with safe lifting and moving a casualty
- » stretcher/stokes litter handling

» calling for assistance
Training was also provided on the use of radio communications equipment, GPS and the *Emergency Plus* mobile phone app

A specific form was developed to aid the checkpoint marshals to deliver the appropriate details back to the ride HQ for assistance to be dispatched.



The rugged Warrumbungle Range on the horizon, gives an indication as to the terrain of the ride. Steep, hard, rocky terrain.



SES members busy recording progress of the horses on one section of the tally boards.

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| ✓ 2:10 | 2:30 | 2:50 | 3:10 | 3:30 | 3:50 | 4:10 | 4:30 | 4:50 | 5:10 | 5:30 | 5:50 | 6:10 | 6:30 |
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| ✓ 5:30 | 5:50 | 6:10 | 6:30 | 6:50 | 7:10 | 7:30 | 7:50 | 8:10 | 8:30 | 8:50 | 9:10 | 9:30 | 9:50 |
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| ✓ 5:55 | 6:15 | 6:35 | 6:55 | 7:15 | 7:35 | 7:55 | 8:15 | 8:35 | 8:55 | 9:15 | 9:35 | 9:55 | 10:15 |
| ✓ 6:00 | 6:20 | 6:40 | 7:00 | 7:20 | 7:40 | 8:00 | 8:20 | 8:40 | 9:00 | 9:20 | 9:40 | 10:00 | 10:20 |
| ✓ 6:05 | 6:25 | 6:45 | 7:05 | 7:25 | 7:45 | 8:05 | 8:25 | 8:45 | 9:05 | 9:25 | 9:45 | 10:05 | 10:25 |
| ✓ 6:10 | 6:30 | 6:50 | 7:10 | 7:30 | 7:50 | 8:10 | 8:30 | 8:50 | 9:10 | 9:30 | 9:50 | 10:10 | 10:30 |
| ✓ 6:15 | 6:35 | 6:55 | 7:15 | 7:35 | 7:55 | 8:15 | 8:35 | 8:55 | 9:15 | 9:35 | 9:55 | 10:15 | 10:35 |
| ✓ 6:20 | 6:40 | 7:00 | 7:20 | 7:40 | 8:00 | 8:20 | 8:40 | 9:00 | 9:20 | 9:40 | 10:00 | 10:20 | 10:40 |
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| ✓ 6:40 | 7:00 | 7:20 | 7:40 | 8:00 | 8:20 | 8:40 | 9:00 | 9:20 | 9:40 | 10:00 | 10:20 | 10:40 | 11:00 |
| ✓ 6:45 | 7:05 | 7:25 | 7:45 | 8:05 | 8:25 | 8:45 | 9:05 | 9:25 | 9:45 | 10:05 | 10:25 | 10:45 | 11:05 |
| ✓ 6:50 | 7:10 | 7:30 | 7:50 | 8:10 | 8:30 | 8:50 | 9:10 | 9:30 | 9:50 | 10:10 | 10:30 | 10:50 | 11:10 |
| ✓ 6:55 | 7:15 | 7:35 | 7:55 | 8:15 | 8:35 | 8:55 | 9:15 | 9:35 | 9:55 | 10:15 | 10:35 | 10:55 | 11:15 |
| ✓ 7:00 | 7:20 | 7:40 | 8:00 | 8:20 | 8:40 | 9:00 | 9:20 | 9:40 | 10:00 | 10:20 | 10:40 | 11:00 | 11:20 |
| ✓ 7:05 | 7:25 | 7:45 | 8:05 | 8:25 | 8:45 | 9:05 | 9:25 | 9:45 | 10:05 | 10:25 | 10:45 | 11:05 | 11:25 |
| ✓ 7:10 | 7:30 | 7:50 | 8:10 | 8:30 | 8:50 | 9:10 | 9:30 | 9:50 | 10:10 | 10:30 | 10:50 | 11:10 | 11:30 |
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| ✓ 7:25 | 7:45 | 8:05 | 8:25 | 8:45 | 9:05 | 9:25 | 9:45 | 10:05 | 10:25 | 10:45 | 11:05 | 11:25 | 11:45 |
| ✓ 7:30 | 7:50 | 8:10 | 8:30 | 8:50 | 9:10 | 9:30 | 9:50 | 10:10 | 10:30 | 10:50 | 11:10 | 11:30 | 11:50 |
| ✓ 7:35 | 7:55 | 8:15 | 8:35 | 8:55 | 9:15 | 9:35 | 9:55 | 10:15 | 10:35 | 10:55 | 11:15 | 11:35 | 11:55 |
| ✓ 7:40 | 8:00 | 8:20 | 8:40 | 9:00 | 9:20 | 9:40 | 10:00 | 10:20 | 10:40 | 11:00 | 11:20 | 11:40 | 12:00 |
| ✓ 7:45 | 8:05 | 8:25 | 8:45 | 9:05 | 9:25 | 9:45 | 10:05 | 10:25 | 10:45 | 11:05 | 11:25 | 11:45 | 12:05 |
| ✓ 7:50 | 8:10 | 8:30 | 8:50 | 9:10 | 9:30 | 9:50 | 10:10 | 10:30 | 10:50 | 11:10 | 11:30 | 11:50 | 12:10 |
| ✓ 7:55 | 8:15 | 8:35 | 8:55 | 9:15 | 9:35 | 9:55 | 10:15 | 10:35 | 10:55 | 11:15 | 11:35 | 11:55 | 12:15 |
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| ✓ 8:15 | 8:35 | 8:55 | 9:15 | 9:35 | 9:55 | 10:15 | 10:35 | 10:55 | 11:15 | 11:35 | 11:55 | 12:15 | 12:35 |
| ✓ 8:20 | 8:40 | 9:00 | 9:20 | 9:40 | 10:00 | 10:20 | 10:40 | 11:00 | 11:20 | 11:40 | 12:00 | 12:20 | 12:40 |
| ✓ 8:25 | 8:45 | 9:05 | 9:25 | 9:45 | 10:05 | 10:25 | 10:45 | 11:05 | 11:25 | 11:45 | 12:05 | 12:25 | 12:45 |
| ✓ 8:30 | 8:50 | 9:10 | 9:30 | 9:50 | 10:10 | 10:30 | 10:50 | 11:10 | 11:30 | 11:50 | 12:10 | 12:30 | 12:50 |
| ✓ 8:35 | 8:55 | 9:15 | 9:35 | 9:55 | 10:15 | 10:35 | 10:55 | 11:15 | 11:35 | 11:55 | 12:15 | 12:35 | 12:55 |
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NavShield 2022

After a 2-year hiatus, the 32nd NavShield run by our colleagues from the NSW SES BSAR (Bush Search and Rescue) Unit, was held on the 16th-17th July.

This year's event was held at freezing Tarlo River National Park, about 20km North of Goulburn on the traditional lands of the Gundungurra Aboriginal groups. This rarely visited park was generously opened to us thanks to NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and the local landholders.

Our crew from sunny Port Macquarie travelled 6 hours South, to camp the night and join over 200 teams representing various emergency service agencies including, NSW SES, NSW Police Force, NSW Ambulance, NSW Rural Fire Service, ADF personnel and many bushwalking and rogaining groups. After the Saturday morning brief, we were all set loose on 100 square kilometre of wilderness terrain, with one goal: - Attempt to gain as many points as possible, by navigating to checkpoints spread throughout the National Park, using only a map and a



compass. Like the rest of the teams, our navigational skills, remote area skills, teamwork and fitness levels were all tested, whilst we competed in unfamiliar terrain, as a completely self-sufficient group. The skills practiced during NavShield are key to many of

the search and rescue roles provided by emergency services involved, and this event is a great way to test and practice skills in real life conditions. It is also an excellent team building event, allowing participants to develop stronger relationships within their teams, both



during the event and whilst sitting round the campfire sharing stories with other teams. Land Search operations are not uncommon at Port Macquarie, so it is important to us that our search skills stay sharp. Less than two weeks after our return from NavShield, we had a job come through for a missing person. Along with regular training, participating in competitions such as NavShield, help us to improve our skills and therefore help us keep our community safe. We encourage as many units around NSW to learn these important skills and participate at NavShield, as this may one day make a difference and help save a life! A big thank you to NSW SES BSAR unit for organising the event and to the NPWS and landholders for allowing it to take place on their land.

Jared Bradley

NSW SES Port Macquarie Unit



Training Improvement Program

During the launch of the NSW SES strategic plan, 'Building our Future – 2021-2024', the Training Improvement Program (TI Program) was launched as a part of 'Our Capability' goal.

As communicated over the past months with our members, the Training Improvement Program is well underway. This update provides you with details of progress so far, and some upcoming changes coming in the training space to help you get ready.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

The Training Improvement Program is a multi-year program aimed to comprehensively enhance all aspects of NSW SES training. It includes identifying and implementing improvements in our training materials, systems, processes, policies, and procedures.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

Training is the essential aspect in preparing members for their diverse roles in the NSW SES. To effectively prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies, quality training is critical for providing the skills needed to keep our members and the community safe.

We need to enhance the training experience for members, and ensure training is current and consistent to meet the diverse needs of communities across the state.

To improve, we are working to provide training in a more flexible, streamlined, and user-friendly way with tools and processes that are fit for purpose.

As we aim as a Service to be leaders in the emergency services training space, NSW SES is committed to providing quality training that meets

industry standards of an Enterprise Registered Training Organisation (RTO), and in developing members to fulfil their diverse roles in emergency management and rescue capabilities

HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE THIS?

Align and Update:

We are updating our training materials to keep them current, mapped to Units of Competencies, and aligned to the new Training Pathways. We are currently scheduling conversion workshops for the updated courses as they are released. These Workshops will be run online via webinars over the next few months. Training Bulletins will be emailed to members before each webinar with a summary of changes and conversion workshops/webinar dates.

As part of the broader Training Improvement Program, we have released and revised Field Operator and Incident Management Training Pathways.

The updated Pathways aim to ensure that our training best meets agency needs and obligations, with a key focus on getting the most effective and time-efficient outcomes for volunteers. *Thank you to all members that have been part of the review and consultation process.*

Work has commenced aligning systems, updating training materials and supporting Trainers and Assessors. By mid-2023, there will be complete alignment to the revised Pathways across all core capability areas.

Build & Bolster:

We want to better invest in our Trainers and Assessors and provide professional development pathways, supporting them to continue delivering high-quality training to our members. We also want to better attract and support new Trainers and Assessors on their development journey.

The Training Improvement Program will introduce a professional development pathway for our Trainers and Assessors, along with a new supervision program to provide opportunities for regular feedback, engagement and mentoring with Lead Trainers and other SES Trainers.

Digital Certificates are a recent enhancement from the Program and are now available to download from SAP LSO. You can either download your digital copy or print it to attach to your resume. Course certificates can be printed by an individual participant or the unit management team.

A new Training Management System (TMS) has been selected to replace our current online and associated applications. The system is called aXcelerate and is widely used by other RTOs including emergency service agencies. aXcelerate will supersede current training systems: SAP Learning Solution Online (LSO), SES Assess (mobile assessment app), and Moodle, as a single all-purpose TMS. This 'single-source-of-truth' objective aims to make the learning experience easier and more effective for Members, Trainers & Assessors, and support staff alike.

aXcelerate will be the central NSW SES training system for:

- » Course management
- » Course bookings
- » Training resources
- » Course assessments
- » Online learning
- » Member training records
- » Trainer and Assessor records

Project planning is underway for an effective transition to the new TMS in November.

Training of the new system will be rolled out in the coming months in the form of training webinars, 'How to' quick reference guides, and instructional videos. Training will be conducted relevant to your roles and responsibilities from October.

The Trainer & Assessor Qualification, Endorsement & Supervision Procedure has been reviewed, updated, and now it is out to you for consultation. This procedure aims to ensure a clearer, more consistent and user-friendly approach to how we induct, endorse, develop and deactivate Instructors, Trainers and Assessors in the NSW SES.

Grow and Mature:

A core focus of the Program and its 14 project areas is to lift the training experience for our Members as a once-off objective and to ensure all improvements are embedded, maintained and enhanced. Following the agency's RTO registration renewal in November, the Training Improvement Program will continue to evolve how we develop, manage, facilitate, and quality assure our training. The Program will further improve the user experience, develop quality resources, and engage with you to find out more ways we can continually enhance training for members.

MORE INFORMATION, FEEDBACK AND GETTING INVOLVED

For more information check out the Training Improvement Program mySES page via scanning the QR code below.



If you have further questions, feedback, please contact training.improvement@ses.nsw.gov.au



TRAINING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

WHAT TO EXPECT



Align & Update

We are updating our training materials, policies and procedures to keep them relevant, consistent, and aligned to the new Training Pathways.

Build & Bolster

In 2022 we will launch Digital Certificates, and a NEW Training Management Solution (replacing SAP LSO) for online learning and student management.



Invest in our people

A Trainer and Assessor Development Program will commence in 2022. It will provide a well supported and clear development pathway for Trainers and Assessors, and strengthen resourcing, recognition and information sharing across all levels of the organisation.



Grow & Mature

The Training Improvement Program will continue to advance how we develop, manage, and facilitate our training. Continued updates and investment into materials, systems and training resources will improve the overall member experience into the future.



THE CHANGE YOU HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR.



Leadership

 Field Operator

 Field Training

Required for above pathway:



Be a Field Operator



Leadership Fundamentals

Technical


Storm
Heights
Operator


Storm
Heights
Course


Chainsaw
Operator
Level 2


Chainsaw
Intermediate
Felling Course


Flood Rescue
In-Water
Operator

 
Flood Rescue
In-Water Course


Flood Rescue
On-Water
Operator

 
Flood Boat
Operations
Course


General Land
Rescue Operator


Industrial
and
Domestic Rescue
Course


Storm
Ground
Operator


Storm
Ground
Course


Chainsaw
Operator
Level 1


Chainsaw
Cross Cut
Course


Storm Ground
Course
Or PIARO
Or
Land Search
Course


Flood Rescue
Land Based Operator

 
Flood Rescue
Land-Based
Course


Large Animal
Rescue
Operator


Large Animal
Rescue Course


Road Crash
Rescue
Operator


Road Crash
Rescue
Operations
Course


Participate In A Rescue Operation
(PIARO) Course

Storm

Flood Rescue

Land Rescue

Foundation

Required for all
pathways above:



First Aid



Operate Communications
Equipment



Beacon Field



(Included Beacon Familiarisation, Code of Conduct, Jo



Key:

- Role
- Course
- Fit For Task Assessment

Id Team Leader

Team Leader Course

s Course

Diversity and Inclusion Course

Emergency Management Program



scue

Intro to AIIMS

Field Core Skills
(N/A Community Engagement)

Tsunami Awareness
(Recommended)

Job Ready

Job Ready Induction, Flood Rescue Awareness, Job Ready Workshop)

Version 1: Release May 2022

Looking after your emotional wellbeing as a First Responder

Emotional wellness is defined as the **ability to effectively handle life's stresses, adjust to difficult periods and thrive.**

Emotional well-being as a first responder is very important as it can affect how you function, your ability to not only carry out everyday tasks, but also how you cope in stressful situations and during difficult periods. Having challenges and problems during your life is normal, however, it's all about how you deal or cope during those challenges that determines your emotional wellness. It's also about accepting all the goodness in your life and looking at your glass as half-full rather than half-empty. Being emotionally well leads to a happier and more enjoyable life, and also allows you the opportunity to reach your full potential.

The National Centre for Emotional Wellness defines emotional wellness as *"an awareness, understanding and acceptance of our feelings, and our ability to manage effectively through challenges and change."*

The work of First Responders although highly rewarding, is also extremely challenging & stressful. Being in the front line, responding to the immediate needs that may include life and death situations can take its toll on individuals. They are more often than not, placed in stressful and challenging situations while operational, so it is vital to be emotionally well to be able to carry out your tasks effectively and safely to ensure a positive outcome for all involved.

While health is an everyday topic of conversation for most, we seem to forget that health is more than just good nutrition and physical exercise – to be completely healthy,

we must also look after our emotional wellbeing & mental health to be able to live a long, happy life.

IMPACT OF POOR EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

If you are unable to deal with your own emotions well and have difficulty dealing with challenges and road blocks in your life, this will also impact the way that you interact and deal with others whether it be in a personal or professional capacity. If you struggle to deal with your own emotions, you will find it difficult to relate to what others are experiencing and have difficulty supporting people. To be able to connect and relate to others, the more emotionally healthy we are, the more care and support we can offer others.

How you handle situations as they arise throughout your life is vital to your success. Acknowledging how you feel, dealing with your emotions, and being able to move forward after facing difficulties with a positive mindset, all lead to better outcomes in your personal and professional life.

Here are a few more ways poor emotional wellbeing can impact your life

- » Stress = Lower immunity
- » Increased illness – physical and mental illness
- » Relationship issues
- » Difficulties at work
- » Poor concentration
- » Hypertension

BENEFITS OF STRONG EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

Having strong emotional wellness can help you thrive in life. Here are some of the benefits of having strong emotional wellness:

- » Having a happy outlook on life = better mental health

- » Having the resilience and confidence to accept what life throws at you
- » Happier people take part in more selfless activities and volunteering
- » Positive personal and professional relationships
- » Reducing stress reduces illness and increases immunity
- » Positivity promotes productivity

TIPS ON HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Positivity promotes productivity

The more positive you are, the more you'll be surrounded by positive people. This is because positive people tend to be happier, healthier and more successful in their careers & volunteering. And this cycle continues on as a positive person attracts similar types of people into their lives—and these new relationships keep your positivity cycle going strong!

Your attitude can also have a big impact on your performance. If you approach every task with a negative attitude, it will show through in how much effort you put into your work / volunteering duties. People notice when someone isn't giving their best effort or seems unhappy—and even if they don't say anything about it out loud, that negativity has an impact on how others view their team mates abilities (or lack thereof).

On the flipside: When someone has an upbeat attitude about everything from day-to-day tasks all the way up to larger projects and goals for the department / unit as whole, it's infectious! The same way that being around happy people makes us feel better about ourselves too...

There are many challenges that we all face at work and while volunteering.

Common struggles include staying focused, being productive and overcoming procrastination. In order to be successful you need to have a positive attitude, be happy and healthy, have a creative mind and be motivated by your goals.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us. When we're mindful, we reduce stress, enhance performance, gain insight and awareness through observing our own mind, and increase our attention to others well-being.

Staying in the present moment may help people become more aware of everything going on internally and in their surroundings and release thoughts or worries. To practice mindfulness, individuals can:

- » **Breathe deeply:** Inhale through the nose for four counts, hold for 1 second, then exhale through the mouth for 5. Repeat when necessary.
- » **Take a walk:** While walking, pay attention to breathing and engage the senses to take in the surroundings. Notice any thoughts or worries that come into the mind, but then bring awareness back to the present moment.
- » **Eat mindfully:** Take time to smell and taste food thoroughly, notice the textures and flavours with each mouthful. Pay attention to when the body feels hungry or full.
- » **Body scan:** Mentally scan through the body from head to toe and bring awareness to how each part of the body feels.

Connect and Communicate With Others

Find Connections. Social connections and friends have a strong impact on your emotional state. Strengthen your circle by keeping in touch both in person and online. Grow your circle by joining a new exercise group, volunteering in your community, or starting a new hobby. Healthy social connections may help improve emotional, physical, and mental well-being. Ensure you have a positive support group.

To create a positive support system, people can try:

- » joining a group that focuses on an enjoyable hobby or activity
- » creating positive relationships with their children, family, or friends
- » asking for help from others
- » trying a new class to learn something new
- » volunteering with a cause they care about (which majority of our readers already do)
- » traveling to new places or meeting people from different backgrounds

Manage Stress

Stress is a normal part of life, but it's important to have a way to deal with the stress when it becomes too much. Those who are emotionally stable have their own ways of dealing with the stress in their lives - whether it be going for a run, jumping in the car and going for a long drive with the music blaring, taking a bath or just participating in any other activity that you enjoy to shake the stress from your mind.

Take Care of Your Physical Wellbeing

Our physical and emotional wellbeing go hand in hand - by improving your physical wellness, you'll see benefits emotionally, too.

Work - Life balance

In order to be at your best emotionally, you'll want to develop a balance between work and leisure and this also includes volunteering. Having too much to do can cause stress and anxiety and have a negative impact on yourself and your relationships. By having boundaries around work / volunteering hours and setting aside time for 'life,' will ensure you don't neglect what's important which is you and your wellbeing and the relationships with your loved ones and friends.

Have a positive outlook

Appreciate the little things in life and focus on the special moments you have with family and friends. Remember to smile and also give credit to yourself for the good things you accomplish.

- » Recognise good deeds you have done for others
- » Don't be so hard on yourself & forgive mistakes
- » Writing down what you are grateful for each day

- » Surround yourself with positive people
- » Focus on beliefs and values that feel important & let them guide life decisions

Make sure you get enough Sleep

The better you sleep, the better your chances are of feeling good when you are awake.

Quality sleep is vital to both your physical and mental health.

A workplace wellness program

is any strategy used by an employer or organization to promote employee health and well-being by offering services such as on-site medical clinics or gyms; providing resources such as healthy eating plans; encouraging employees to participate in activities during work hours; tracking chronic disease rates; providing incentives for participating in wellness activities; etc - Any activities or information sessions where individuals learn how they can take better care of themselves while they're at work / volunteering & at home.

When you start taking care of yourself at work and outside of work by implementing these tips into your daily routine, everyone benefits!

If you find you are struggling to manage your emotional wellness alone, consider speaking with a professional such as a counsellor or healthcare professional.

By making small changes in your life and focusing on improving your emotional wellbeing, you will soon notice big improvements. Our emotional wellness is important to leading a healthy life, creating and nurturing healthy relationships and building the resilience and confidence you need to be a successful first responder and the ability to support others around you.

In need of some time out? Our rural retreat is the perfect destination to get away from the hustle and bustle of life and unwind in the countryside. Spend quality time with family and friends and exploring the land, relaxing over the bonfire of an evening and create great memories to take home. Our rural retreat is located at Windellema NSW and is available for all NSW SESVA Members to enjoy. Contact the VA for more information and to book your getaway.

Carlee Maccoll

What's new in the NSW SES Wellbeing Program

The NSW SES continues to be actively engaged in supporting the implementation of the new Wellbeing Program – a strategic initiative supporting Our People and Building our Future: 2021-2024. The quarterly updates in the VA Magazine are a great way for the Wellbeing Team to share and celebrate the program milestones, so please make yourself comfortable, grab a cuppa and continue reading.

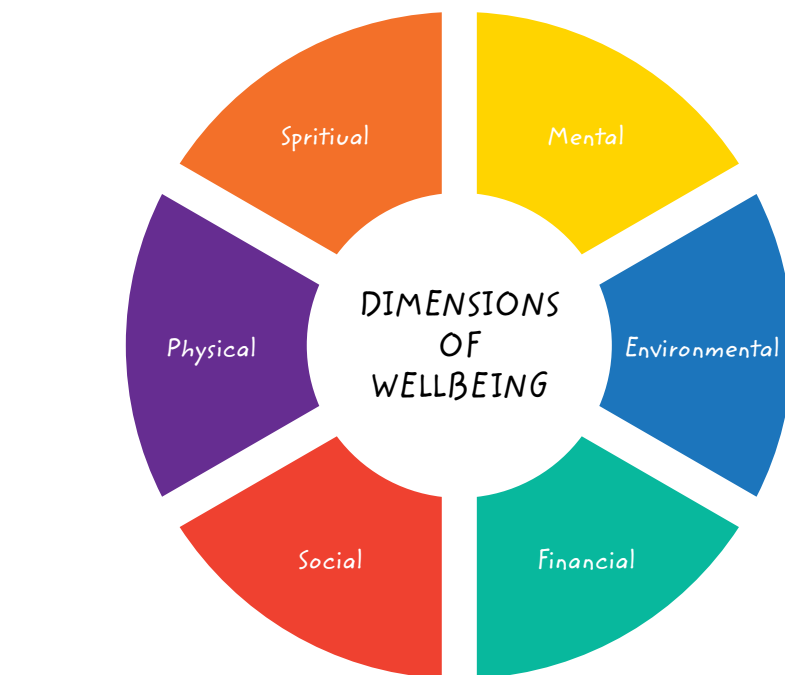
THE WELLBEING PROGRAM

First and foremost, the recruitment of the Wellbeing Team members is almost complete! In the past 3 months, we have welcomed two Senior Psychologists, two Occupational Psychologists, two Program Managers, a Project Officer, and a Wellbeing Coordinator. We will soon also welcome the Wellbeing Officer, completing our team.

These roles will be critical in supporting the delivery of the Wellbeing Program. The Senior Psychologists will focus on working with our Peer Support Officers and Chaplains in continuing their amazing work supporting our Members' wellbeing. The role of the Occupational Psychologists will be crucial in delivering ongoing mental health education and will drive the change in creating a "culture of wellbeing" at the NSW SES.

The Wellbeing Coordinator and Wellbeing Officer will be responsible for health and wellbeing initiatives relating to all dimensions of wellbeing that contribute positively to mental health. With the introduction of these roles, all Members can look forward to initiatives supporting aspects of wellbeing such as physical, financial, spiritual, environmental and social.

In July the Wellbeing Team kick started a pilot program of "Wellbeing Wednesday" lunch and learn seminars for all Members focusing on various topics related to our wellbeing. The popularity of these bite-size sessions continues to increase with more and more Members joining every week. The sessions will continue throughout September and October. If you would like to join future sessions, or watch the recordings



of the past sessions, please visit the registration site Wellbeing Wednesday.

Also in September we are marking a very important date in the mental health calendar – RU OK? Day. If you're keen to get involved, please contact us at wellbeingandsupport@ses.nsw.gov.au

PEER SUPPORT AND CHAPLAINCY

In June, forty-eight (48) of our volunteer Peers and Chaplains and ten (10) staff got together in Sydney at our first conference in over two years. The event was opened by the Deputy Commissioner Damien Johnston who provided his vision and support for the mental health enhancement of the NSW SES. Commissioner Carlene York also attended 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 (and which is currently ongoing in the recovery phase). The conference was an opportunity to make new connections and to rekindle old ones. It also provided everyone with up-to date information about what is happening in the Wellbeing Program, an opportunity to meet the new staff team members, and to hear from guest speakers and experts in the area of Mental Health for Emergency Service Organisations.

In the past few months, our Peer Support team has also been very closely engaged with the Northern Rivers Recovery project. As part of their contribution, in July they conducted sixteen (16) proactive unit visits across the state providing follow up support to those

Members affected by the floods earlier this year. Additional Northern Rivers unit visits have also taken place in August.

Peer Support and Chaplains have also participated in a number of After-Action Reviews, following the Event 261 earlier this year. Findings from these reviews will be crucial in shaping our mental health response to future events.

We have a wonderfully dedicated team of Peer Support Officers and Chaplains – but we would love to have more across the state! We are currently seeking expressions of interest for new Peer Support Officers across NSW. If you are interested, please email us at peer.support@ses.nsw.gov.au

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Mental Health Services team facilitated supported discussions and psycho-education to the Officers within the State Operations Centre (SOC), in particular those Officers who were on shift during the first weeks of the Northern Rivers flood Event. These discussions have focussed around mental health, self-care and the impacts of trauma including ways to maintain psychological safety in a high risk work environment.

We have also continued with the enhancement of our Peer Support

Service with the introduction of reflective practice discussions for our Peer Support Duty Officers. The Duty Officers are our experienced and highly trained Peer Support Officers, who answer our Peer Support Line (1800 626 800) which is available to all volunteers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They listen and support all of our Members, so we have commenced a model of care that supports their mental health wellbeing too.

Our Psychologists have continued with consultancy, guidance and advice that has been regularly extended to the NSW SES managers, staff, and volunteers on 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.

The team has also been busy working on the Event 261 Recovery Plan which began in May and will conclude in March 2023. Our Peer Support Officers, Chaplains and Psychologists continue to support our Members in their follow up visits in the Northern Rivers. They have also participated in and supported fifteen (15) After-Action Reviews following the Event 261, often referring Members to

additional supports including Member Assistance Program (MAP; available to all NSW SES by calling 1300 687 325. This is a free and confidential service).

Additionally, we are continuing our work on the NSW SES Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy. In June a number of our Members participated in focus groups to gain input to the design of the strategy, and to explore factors at work or volunteering places, that both help and hinder mental wellbeing. Members were also invited to complete a wellbeing survey. The update on the strategy will be available in the December edition.

Your wellbeing is important. If you need to reach out, we are here to support. Please connect in 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 3 x 60mins counselling sessions which are free and confidential)

Lifeline – 13 11 14

Beyond Blue – 1300 224 636

Find what you're looking for NSW SES Policies and Procedures

NSW SES has commenced the Policy Modernisation Program. The aim is to bring more structure to our policy documents and make it easier to find information on what you need, when you need it.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

NSW SES has many policy documents – this includes Policies, Frameworks, Procedures, Guidelines, Instructions, and other supporting documents (FAQs, Quick Guides, checklists, forms, etc).

These documents are important. They document what we do, and how we do it. They support training and the building of capability – enabling our members to undertake their roles safely and effectively. They assist the NSW SES to respond to the needs of communities and ensure compliance. Whether that compliance is with the

State Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN), State Rescue Policy, Heavy Vehicle Regulations, Audit, Work Health and Safety or Finance, we need to ensure our policy documents reflect the requirements.

The current suite of documents has grown organically over the years and a broad review has commenced to ensure we are aligning to AFAC's *Fundamentals of Doctrine: Best Practice Creation* (AFAC, v2.0, 2016).

As we progress, we will be simplifying the structure and content as we review and update documents

to ensure they reflect our current operating arrangements. To be useful, these documents need to be logically structured, monitored, reviewed regularly, and updated.

NEXT STEPS

Further information will be provided in future communications.

Your thoughts and experience with accessing and using NSW SES policy documents are incredibly valuable to this process. If you would like to share your experience, please contact policy@ses.nsw.gov.au

Vale

Warwick John Simpson

4th June 1949 – 30th July 2022

Warwick started volunteering in what was then the Civil Defence Force which then morphed into the SES as we know it now.

Warwick was the Dept Unit Commander for the Grenfell SES Unit for many years, a position which he still currently held

Warwick was the longest serving member in the Grenfell SES Unit, and I think he would have to be one of the longest if not the longest serving SES member in the State, if not Australia.

Over the years Warwick has received many awards for his Service with the SES

Including Long Service Awards starting with his first for 5 Years in the

SES which he received in 1974, to his last and most impressive in December 2019, when he was awarded his Long Service award for 50 Years of Service to the SES an achievement, he was very proud of.

In that time he also was awarded the National Medal in 1993 and National Medal Clasps in 1993, 2007, 2014

In 2007 Warwick was also awarded Honorary Life Membership of the SES for his services in the SES

Warwick was an instructor and Assessor in many skills

Warwick was a valuable member of the Grenfell SES Unit and he will be sadly missed.





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Volunteers
ASSOCIATION
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Over \$3,000
worth of extras

2nd Prize

Alpinestar SM10 Carbon Helmet
+ Tech 7 boots + GAS GAS team
shirt signed by
"Chucky"

3rd Prize

FOX Legion Gear Set +
Gear Bag + GAS GAS hat
signed by
"Chucky"

