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Volunteer

Issue 37 | September 2016



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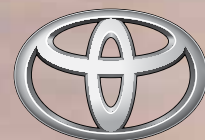
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Oh what a feeling!

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On The cover:
Large Animal Rescue
Awareness Course.
Photo by David King.



CHARLIE MOIR ESM
PRESIDENT NSW SES VA

“
**The members who are embracing
the new changes are bringing new
attitudes and skills to the Service ...**
”

As we draw closer to summer we can feel the temperature and weather change. Mornings are warmer and the frosts are becoming less. Whether you're a winter person or a summer person, the change is coming to head us into another season.

Change is not something everyone likes. Leo Tolstoy, one of the greatest writers of all time said 'Everybody wants to change the world, but nobody thinks of changing himself'.

And so to make ourselves better, to make our Service and our Association better, we must be open to change.

Whether that change is something significant such as a Policy or Procedure, or something as simple as our attitude, if we don't move with this changing world we will no longer be the best we can be.

The Directors of the Association and local representatives have been visiting units this year. They get to meet and listen to the volunteers and discuss all things important at the local and Service level. With these visits we are seeing first-hand the changes that are occurring in the SES and the

impacts they are having on volunteers. The members who are embracing the new changes are bringing new attitudes and skills to the Service, which in turn provide a better service to our communities.

This year we will be hosting our biennial SESVA conference. We have changed the format so that it is a pure volunteer's conference. The speakers will be your peers - respected fellow volunteers who will be talking about the issues we face and experiences they have been through. I am proud to see many volunteers step up to promote the fine work they do in their units and communities and it is looking like being a wonderful conference.

In the Volunteers Association we have also been changing to develop our own leaders for tomorrow. Our Executive Director, Andrew Edwards and the other Directors, have been taking volunteers through an Emerging Leaders Development Program. This program aims to give the skills and experience needed to be competent and confident in our ever-

changing Association. Volunteers from around the state regularly get together in some form to learn what is required of our leaders for tomorrow.

Many of our Emerging Leaders, Directors and representatives have also had the opportunity to complete Values Based Leadership workshops. These workshops, presented by Dr Attracta Lagan, have given insightful input for our members about the requirements for upholding the values of an association.

Our recent Volunteers Council meeting has concluded with awarding a record number of Scholarships and Grants to individuals and units throughout the state. It is reassuring to see that the stability the Volunteers Association has been able to flow through to forwarding a constant increase in member benefits back to the volunteers.

In all, another busy period, both with the volunteers and behind the scene for the Volunteers Association. Let's embrace change, ensure we are making decisions based on the right values, and enjoy the new season.

One of my favourite things to do as Minister is to get out of the office and visit NSW State Emergency Service units across the state to meet volunteers and listen to their stories.

In the past 12 months, I have visited units in Ku-Ring-Gai, the Hunter, Wollongong, and The Rock just to a few and handed out a total of \$45,100 in discretionary grants to help improve training facilities for volunteers.

Discretionary grants are just one way that I help to show the gratitude of the NSW Government and the community and ensure volunteers are prepared for the tremendous work that they do.

I recently had the pleasure of visiting the NSW SES Parramatta Unit with local MP Geoff Lee to provide a

\$5,000 discretionary grant for better training facilities.

Whether it's responding to floods, storms or any other emergency, the community can be assured that their NSW SES volunteers are well trained and equipped and ready to help them in times of crisis.

The funds will allow for improvements of the Parramatta unit's facilities, which will help them to train more effectively. Training is essential in preparing our volunteers for severe weather and their role in helping the community.

In 2016-17, NSW SES budgeted operating expenses will be \$109.3 million. This is the highest budgeted total expenses in the history of the NSW SES.



DAVID ELLIOTT MP
MINISTER FOR
EMERGENCY SERVICES

It ensures over 8,600 NSW SES volunteers are trained and equipped to the highest standards, to provide a timely response to requests for assistance from our communities.

FROM THE ACTING COMMISSIONER

“
A goal without a plan is just a wish.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

”

We all have wishes for this organisation, whether we are in a Unit, Region or in State Headquarters. We want to be more innovative, better resourced, professionally developed and much more.

But none of these things come from wishing, or even having a clear set of goals. It takes planning to get us there.

I am proud to say that the *NSW SES Strategic Plan for 2016-2021* is now in place. This Plan is a foundation for our organisation to continue to grow and develop into the future and meet the environmental, social and political challenges that we will undoubtedly face. It is essentially a roadmap with clear strategies and actions that will direct us to achieving our goals.

The beauty of this Plan is that it has been developed holistically, encompassing lengthy collaboration and input sourced from across the

Service, including with the *NSW SES Volunteers Association*.

The Plan is based around our vision of *'Community based volunteers at the forefront of a safe and resilient NSW'* and has 3 fundamental driving anchors:

- » **Volunteer Experience** > positive, empowering and fulfilling;
- » **Capability** > People, tools, knowledge, systems and skills;
- » **Community** > Supported, engaged and connected

While we are preparing for our longer term organisational future, we also need to be thinking short term about our operational posturing, particularly in the coming few months. The Bureau of Meteorology has produced their 3-month seasonal outlook, and with catchments already primed, more rain could lead to widespread flooding and protracted flood operations.

So, are we ready?

In SHQ and the Regions, we have recognised that we need to boost



GREG NEWTON
ACTING COMMISSIONER

our Incident Management Team (IMT) capability to support operations in State and Region operations centres. We need to ensure that we have a depth of resources we can draw from. That requires us to identify the gaps, train up people accordingly and ensure that our processes are in order and communicated.

Importantly, we need to plan to look after ourselves and manage fatigue across the Service before this operational activity begins.

To finish with another quote, *"Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now"* (Alan Lakein)

So what's your team's plan for the coming months?

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From the Editor

PAT JOHNSON ESM
EDITOR

I would like to take the time in this issue to congratulate our Young Volunteer of the Year Sam Corby from Sutherland unit. Sam has also just been appointed a Deputy Controller at Sutherland, one of the youngest I think in the service.

I would also like to congratulate our two young members Tessa Wicks from Manly and Matthew Kertson from Armidale-Dumaresq who have been picked to go on the Young Endeavour along with twenty one other young people from all over Australia, for a spectacular twelve day adventure sailing from Darwin along the Kimberley Coast to Broome. Tessa and Matt will have a report and photos for the next issue.

Once again I would like to thank all the members who contribute to this issue.

Sam Corby Young Volunteer of the Year.



Tessa Wicks

I am very excited to go on such an amazing adventure and share skills and experiences with other young people.



Matthew Kertson

I applied for the scholarship to the Young endeavour Scheme because I thought it would be a fantastic opportunity to challenge and push myself. Also I want to bring the skills and knowledge gained through this experience back into the community.

The things that I am looking forward to the most are learning new skills while also developing and improving my confidence and leadership ability.



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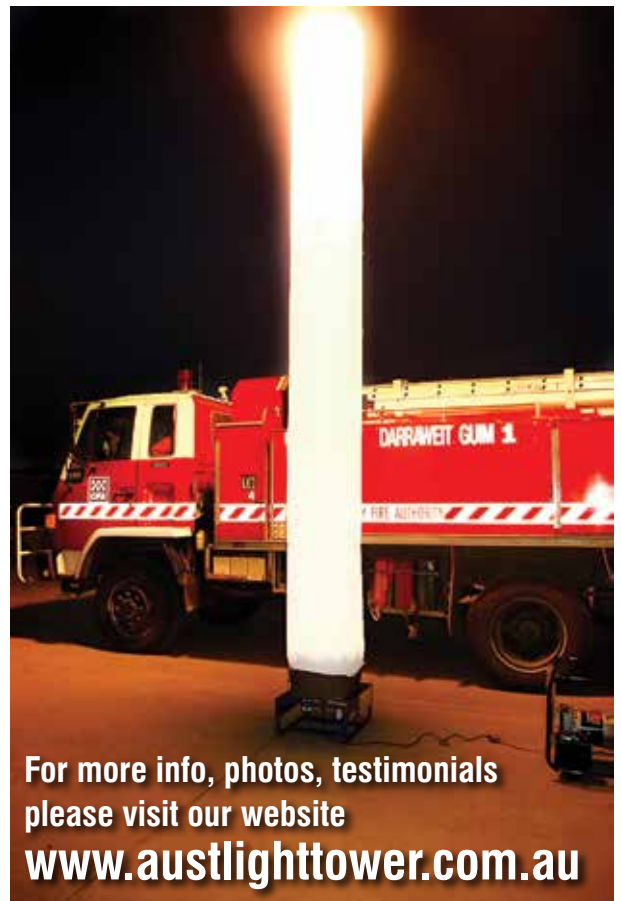
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Chris Chapman (centre) with Craig Ronan, Central West Region Controller, Kerrie Pearce, Business Manager for Central West Region, Louise Humphries, Business Services Officer for Central West Region and Reg Rendall, Local Controller for the Blayney Unit NSW SES.

Chris Chapman awarded Life Membership

On Wednesday, June 1, 2016, Chris Chapman, a volunteer member from the Blayney SES Unit, was presented with Life Membership of the NSW State Emergency Service (NSW SES)

at Central West Region Headquarters in Bathurst.

Chris originally joined the NSW SES on April 30, 1986, and up until recently held the position of Deputy Local Controller for the Blayney

Unit NSW SES. Chris is also an active member of the SIMS Project Team in Central West Region.

Well done Chris! You are an inspiration to all other volunteer members of the NSW SES.

Emerging Leaders Development Program

An expression of interest was sought from members to participate in a new program within the Volunteers Association.

The program has been developed for participants to develop their skills and experience within the Not-for-Profit sector. The program will continue to run until July 2017, where each participant will be provided with valuable knowledge, practical skills, mentoring, the opportunity to observe and present at Board meetings and deliver a project of interest for both the participant and the Volunteers Association.

At the completion of the program members will have gained a unique understanding of the operation of the Volunteers Association and will have the skills to become a Not-for-Profit Board member.

Expectations of the participants:

- » Required to work one on one with a current Board member;



- » Attend various training courses including those run by the Australian Institute of Company Directors;
- » Attend some Board meetings, President's Workshops and other activities during the period of the program;
- » Undertake and deliver a project of interest to the Volunteers Association working with its assigned Board member; and
- » Deliver a presentation on a contemporary volunteering issue to the Board.

Each of our Emerging Leaders has nominated a project that they would like to be involved in, with areas covered across technology innovations, mental health and wellbeing, training and development and a national body for the Volunteers Association all being worked on.

Workshops have also been attended around Values-based Leadership and Initial Contact Training as well as the participants being observers in a Volunteers Council Meeting.



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 on a job well done.

Contact Centres Australia in partnership with the NSW SES VA

Contact Centres Australia has proudly represented the NSW SES VA since 2009, conducting large scale calling to fundraise for the Association and its volunteers. CCA use a well-established database of regular supporters and the general public to raise funds for this great organisation.

Over 5 million calls have been made since the partnership began, with the assurance that each and every single call upholds the high standards of the Association. CCA's team reach out to supporters in rural and metropolitan NSW, raising awareness for the Association.



The dedicated team of agents enjoys raising funds for the Association, stating that it is one of its favourite organisations to call for – some have even become volunteers themselves!



If you'd like to take part in the raffle and give yourself a chance to win one of the great prizes, please visit

www.sesvaraffle.com.au or call 1300 707 344. You could win yourself a new car or a holiday valued at \$20,000!

Raffle Schedule

Raffle	SESVA48	SESVA49	SESVA50	SESVA51	SESVA52
Start Calling:	29 Jul 16	23 Sep 16	18 Nov 16	13 Jan 17	10 Mar 17
Finish Calling:	23 Sep 16	18 Nov 16	13 Jan 17	10 Mar 17	5 May 17
Draw Date:	18 Nov 16	13 Jan 17	10 Mar 17	5 May 17	30 Jun 17

Helo multi agency activity

Photo by Chris Abbott, Bathurst Unit.





IM Project

Since the last edition of *The Volunteer*, the NSW SES Incident Management Policy has been released. Please ensure you are familiar with this policy and your associated responsibilities. To support the implementation and understanding of this policy reference materials have been made available at all NSW SES Headquarters and including the AFAC AIDES Memoire iPhone App, AIIMS-4 iBook, posters and the hard copy AFAC AIIMS-4 Manuals, at all NSW SES Headquarters.

NSW SES INCIDENT MANAGEMENT POLICY

The policy outlines how the NSW State Emergency Service (NSW SES) will deliver its Command and Control responsibilities under the State Emergency Services (SES) Act 1989 and the State Emergency and Rescue Management (SERM) Act 1989.

This policy replaces the chapter in the NSW SES Operations Manual.

AFAC AIDES MEMOIRE APP

The AIDES Memoire App was sent out to all NSW SES iPhones on Friday, August 12, 2016.

The AFAC AIDES Memoire App is an essential guide for all those involved in managing incidents and emergencies. The App covers all the AIIMS roles, their functions and handy checklists to prompt thinking and help remember all aspects when under pressure.

AIIMS-4 IBOOK

The AIIMS-4 iBook was pushed to all NSW SES issued iPads as an iBook during July/August 2016.

This iBook in addition to the hard copy AFAC AIIMS-4 Manuals already provided to Regions and Units is available to members as a reference during operations and for use in training and exercising activities.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT POSTERS

Incident Management posters will be distributed to all NSW SES Headquarters for display in your Incident Control Centre.

They are an excellent visual tool for quick and easy reference to AIIMS and Incident Management terminology, definitions and structure.



INCIDENT MANAGEMENT POLICY - SUPPORT TOOLS

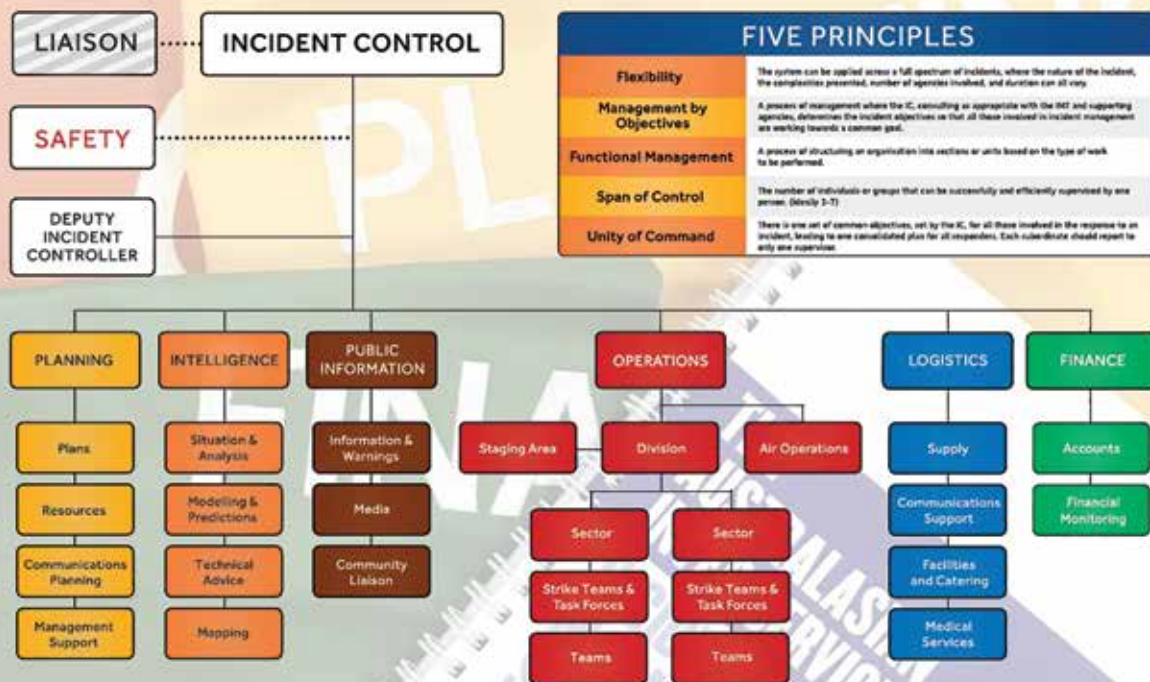
To support the implementation and understanding of the Incident Management Policy several tools have been developed and are available via EOS, or by contacting improject@ses.nsw.gov.au

They include:

- » NSW SES YouTube *Incident Management Project Overview – Webinar Recording*
- » PowerPoint and
- » A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document.

If you have any questions in relation to the Incident Management Project, please contact improject@ses.nsw.gov.au

EXPANDED AIIMS STRUCTURE


www.ses.nsw.gov.au

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT
TERMS AND ACRONYMS

ESO	Emergency Service Organisation
FRNSW	Fire and Rescue NSW
NSW RFS	NSW Rural Fire Service
NSWA	NSW Ambulance
NSWPF	NSW Police Force
"All Hazards - All Agencies" Approach	Using the same set of concepts, emergency management arrangements, principles and systems to manage all types of emergencies.
Command	The internal direction of members and resources within an agency.
Control	The overall direction of all emergency management activities in an incident.
Coordination	The bringing together of organisations and other resources to support an emergency management response.
Interoperability	The ability of diverse systems, agencies and organisations to work together (inter-operate).
Operations Commander	An operational management role that provides strategic advice and support to the Incident Controller when required. The Operations Commander may be appointed to the role of Incident Controller if, and when, the level of incident is escalated.



BOM	Bureau of Meteorology
IMT	Incident Management Team
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
IAP	Incident Action Plan
IC	Incident Controller
ICC/SOC	Incident Control Centre / State Operations Centre
LEM/REM/SEM	Local / Regional / State Emergency Management Committee
LEMO/REMO	Local / Regional Emergency Management Officer
LEOCON/RECON/SEOCON	Local / Regional / State Emergency Operations Controller
LO	Liaison Officer
PPC&E	Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment
RFA	Request for Assistance
SDOC	State Duty Operations Controller
SITREP	Situation Report
SMEACS	Strategic, Mission, Execution, Administration, Command and Communications, Safety (sometimes Q is included for - Questions)

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Ordinary people doing extraordinary things

What lay ahead stopped us in our tracks.

A once old, proud pine tree was now resting across a four-wheel drive, the reach of its branches so wide that it obscured the second storey of the building behind, even felled, as it had been, by the sheer force of nature.

It filled the night air with the scent of freshly crushed pine. The siren of emergency vehicles in the distance hinted that something had gone wrong. We stood before the pine tree, dwarfed by the devastation wreaked by the super low-pressure system that had carved its way along the coast of NSW in June this year. This year's devastating 'stormageddon'.

"Put your chaps on and get the pole-saw ready" my team leader told me, shaking us back into action.

I went over a mental checklist as I slowly walked to the truck. From the corner of my eye, I saw the familiar orange jackets of my team members as they assessed the task at hand. There was no doubt in my mind that they were doing a 'take five'. Even with nearly five years' experience working with the NSW State Emergency Service, I never ceased to be amazed by the hardworking, humble volunteers. They are just ordinary people who do extraordinary things.

I often wondered why they were willing to be brave the winter cold and the rain, the summer fires and blistering heat and the fast flowing flood waters to help the thousands of Australians who find themselves at the mercy of nature's extreme forces. Year in and year out. Of course, it's a question I also needed to ask myself. When I first joined the NSW SES - Marrickville Unit, my greatest motivation was to get out of my comfort zone.

For 15-year-veteran of the NSW SES Marrickville Unit, Adam Jones, the SES is about "helping the community and



NSW SES - Marrickville Unit volunteer Peter McIntosh attending to a large branch that fell during the June east-coast low.

forging a team. It is like team sports. The difference is that this team plays many different sports."

Since the 1950s, that is exactly what the NSW SES has been doing. Initially, the SES started off as a response to the threat of a nuclear arms race. These days the service and its 10,000 volunteers focus on protecting the community from different threats.

As the SES motto goes "the worst in nature, the best in us."

Time and time again the best of the State Emergency Services has been on display. SES volunteers responded to nearly 40,000 requests for assistance during the 1999 hailstorm in NSW. In 2001, they tackled the Black Christmas bushfires. In 2011, the NSW State Emergency Services volunteers went to QLD to assist with the post Cyclone Yasi cleanup.

The June 'stormageddon' was no exception. Fifty volunteers from my Unit had worked in rotation for five days straight and completed 120 requests for assistance from the local community. Even then, they had the energy and commitment to assist neighbouring Units.

That night, it was our turn to help the Randwick community and the NSW

SES - Waverley Woollahra Unit. I was unafraid as I carried the heavy pole-saw back to my team-mates. My adrenaline rush had vanished as we discussed the risks and hazards of the task before us. The service had taught me early on to trust those in the familiar orange of the SES uniforms and the many training hours they had behind that prepared them to tackle the 'worst in nature'.

As Adam said "the SES is like family. A rich diversity of friends you are unlikely to acquire in other professions". Indeed, my team on that night was made up of a nurse, an architect and an academic. Each person has something to contribute to the service and in turn, they learn new skills and gain new experiences.

Learning new skills and gaining new experiences have been another key motivator for me. In my five years, the NSW SES - Marrickville Unit have given me the opportunity to complete various nationally accredited courses.

From senior first aid to land search to storm damage response, our regular Tuesday night trainings have prepared me to respond to most emergency situations. I have also had the opportunity to participate in courses outside of the SES, such as



NSW SES - Marrickville Unit Volunteers 2016.

the intensive leadership program at the Australian Institute for Police Management as well as short writing workshops with the Australian Centre for Independent Journalism.

For the past 25 years, the opportunity to up-skill has also been driving Debbie Burns. Since signing up in 1991, she has gone on to become the longest serving volunteer with the NSW SES - Marrickville Unit. In that time, she has seen the Unit evolve from a small shed, to a Scout's Hall to its new and well equipped home at Sydenham Green.

One of the key characteristics of an NSW SES volunteer is their resilience. These ordinary men and women do extraordinary things because they are able to adapt in the face of adversity. Sometimes, nature provided these challenges. Other times, it was challenges imposed by society. For Debbie Burns, her early years with the NSW SES was about breaking the glass ceiling.

"I was the first female in the Unit to be qualified to use a chain-saw", she said with some relish.

For Adam Jones, it's about conquering his fear of heights whenever he steps onto a roof. I also have the same fear whenever I put on a height safety harness. However, these are not barriers that prevent us from helping the community, just personal challenges to overcome.

When asked what motivates her, Debbie's response was instant.

"I bleed orange."

The statement encapsulated the essence of the service. This year, Debbie accumulated over a thousand volunteer hours with the NSW SES - Marrickville Unit. If this was not impressive enough, she also regularly volunteers to feed the homeless at Martin Place.

"Lots of people sit at home and do nothing. I would rather do something constructive and help the community."

That night was no different.

The pole-saw was heavy and exhausting, but under the guidance of my team leader, the pine tree was cut slowly and methodically. To prevent damage to the four-wheel drive, we used ropes to guide where the branches fell. By the time we were done, the scent of fresh pine



Fulfilling my role as the Public Information Officer.

wood had blossomed with all the fresh saw-dust, throwing an unexpectedly mood over the scene of destruction.

The resident thanked us for coming out in the evening to help her.

The best part of the night was when she (like most members of the public) found out that we were volunteers. One of the most common questions we get from the public is "are you getting paid for this?". This used to irritate me because I thought it showed a lack of understanding of the work of the NSW SES. Now, I take it as a compliment, a testament to professionalism with which the NSW SES volunteers help their community.

In our SES truck we completed our after action review - a process in which we evaluate how we dealt with the situation. As we drove back to

Sydenham Green we passed many other emergency vehicles racing past. Their sirens and flashing lights reminded us of the devastation right across Sydney, and up and down the NSW coast, and that cleanup and recovery would be ongoing for some time.

As always, and despite our exhaustion, there was a sense of accomplishment within the team. This feeling is my prime motivator and no doubt, that of my peers. A sincere and heartfelt thanks that validates the sacrifices we make over the years. The hundreds of hours these we spend training and preparing ourselves. The pride and sense of identity that comes with the orange uniform and being part of such an esteemed family.

As Winston Churchill so astutely observed; "we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give".

By Hasmukh Chand

A BIG THANK YOU

I would like to thank the NSW SES Volunteers Association for providing me with the grants that made it possible for me to complete my writing courses at the University of Technology's Australian Center for Independent Journalism. I would also like to thank Louise Williams, for being a great course teacher and encouraging us to explore our creative writing skills and for her time and effort in helping proof read this article. A huge thanks to Debbie Burns and Adam Jones from NSW SES - Marrickville Unit for giving up their time to share their stories with me. And finally, to the ordinary men and women of the NSW SES who do extraordinary things for their community in times of great adversity.



Presentation by Dr Berryman.

Hacking up a storm in Wollongong

Unlike the usual tempest events creating devastation on our shores, this storm brought with it a huge wave of innovative ideas.

The first ever NSW SES Hackathon was held in June this year on the same weekend as the recent catastrophic weather event that brought havoc to the entire south coast of NSW.

Volunteers, staff and community members from across NSW came together to develop technology solutions to enhance our operational capability and business. The group consisting of developers, designers, programmers and innovative thinkers pitched their ideas on the first day. This included speeches

from Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra Gareth Ward MP, Assistant Commissioner Scott Hanckel and a presentation on live flood mapping in Jakarta by Dr Matthew Berryman from the University of Wollongong.

Day two saw participants form teams to collaborate, design and build prototypes of their proposed initiatives, in a room designed to replicate an incubator in Silicon Valley. Each team presented its ideas on the Sunday afternoon to a panel of judges (ICT Director Charles Emer, NSW SES volunteer Daniel Pridham and Dr Stephen Smith from Macquarie University Department of Computing).

Prizes were awarded to 'best team' Neil Burmester, Ross Wallace and Shinoy Jacob, 'Best individual'



Hackathon participants and IT support staff.



Event organiser Andrew McCullough.



Jason Roache and Director ICT Charles Emer.



Zander Newcombe and Director ICT Charles Emer.

Jason Roache first place and 16 year old Zander Newcombe second place.

Due to operational activity, a number of participants had to leave early so the people's choice award has been deferred to a later date.

WHAT HAPPENS TO ALL THESE GREAT IDEAS?

Every initiative will be presented to the Senior Leadership Team for consideration of further sponsorship, investigation and design.

If you would like more information or wish to be involved in future discussions of any of these ideas, visit our Facebook page and search [Hackers & Innovators @ NSW SES] or email Andrew McCullough andrew.mccullough1@ses.nsw.gov.au or David Leffley david.leffley@ses.nsw.gov.au.

INITIATIVES

QualiT	A web based app providing easy access to a member's training and education profile
Logi	A vehicle inventory app for mobile devices to keep track of ropes, rescue equipment and log vehicle kilometres
Member email	A subscription based system for managing emails to members
SES help	An online portal for the community to request NSW SES assistance
Take5	A mobile app for non-operational activity hazard/risk assessment
Data analysis	A visual tool to predict the incoming call rate and areas most likely to be affected by a flood or storm using historical RFA data.
MySES	An app to track the availability of members using GPS and provide easy access to training records.
SUSI	A universal sign in system to track attendance of members which can be taken into the field Fixed/mobile Member sign on system using Member ID card
Lighthouse RFA	An addition to the Lighthouse Chrome plugin which allows members of the public to submit requests for assistance online through a website.



Director ICT Charles Emer, Neil Burmester, Ross Wallace and Shinoy Jacob.



Scott Colefax (National Parks & Wildlife) and Mark Sellars (Sutherland Unit).

The Howard Years

1989-2001



THE SES IN 1989

Major General Brian Howard, known universally as 'Hori', took the reins of the SES late in 1989 at the end of a long army career. He arrived at a difficult moment in the organisation's history, State Headquarters having been lambasted in a report by the Office of Public Management for having mismanaged its development. For nearly a decade the SES had been run more or less as a department within the Police Force, an arrangement that was never well accepted by the volunteers because it involved a loss of organisational independence. In truth this was a flawed model. Worse yet, senior and long-standing volunteers had become disenchanted by the directions that were being followed by the leadership. The SES was at a low ebb.

There was a strong sense that the organisation was getting little leadership from State Headquarters: the local units were making do without much policy direction and with even less in the way of financial support. The SES's budget was tiny – less than \$5 million at the end of the 1980s – and almost none of that money seemed to find its way to the grass roots. And there was a feeling, which was captured in the OPM report, that State Headquarters had become divorced from the volunteer organisation and was operating as a self-serving bureaucracy. As a result its very relevance was in question. There was a need for radical change if the SES was to prosper and to play its full part in the NSW emergency management system.

HOWARD'S APPRAISAL AND APPROACH

Howard's previous position had been as Director of the Natural Disasters Organisation (later Emergency Management Australia), the Commonwealth reference point for the State and Territory Emergency Services. In that role he had made it his business to get to know the S/TESs around the nation and to come to grips with their problems and their needs, and he thus had some sense of what he was facing as the

the way of an administrative structure to support them or indeed the units. The organisation was in a parlous state, greatly in need of restructuring and reorientation, and State Headquarters needed to develop a leadership role if the volunteer units were to be appropriately nurtured. Otherwise they would stumble on by themselves, largely separate organisations charting their own paths rather than as integral elements of a larger entity with a clear mission and the means of pursuing it.

Lacking leadership from above,

----- “ -----

Howard's response to the SES's problems was to establish a simple two-part structure at State Headquarters, one to deal with Operations ... and the other to manage Corporate Services ...

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incoming Director of the NSWSES. But on taking up his position in the Sydney headquarters he found that he had underestimated the breadth and seriousness of the problems. "Everywhere I looked", he said years later, "there was nothing". Structures and systems were lacking in terms of operationally-oriented functions like training, equipment, communications and planning, and there was little in

the units were managing their own activities in their own ways. They were performing impressively in operations, as Howard noted when he examined the units which had dealt with the two serious bus crashes on the north coast just before his arrival – between them these had cost more than 50 lives – and he also noted the effectiveness of SES volunteers in the response to the Newcastle earthquake



RCR Competition at Wodonga 1997. Horrie challenged Reece Mags (DG from Vic SES) to an RCR duel. This then became the annual Directors Challenge incorporated into the ARRO challenge.

which struck only days after he had taken up his commission. Units were accustomed to rallying to each other's needs when additional resources were required, as the Newcastle response in particular indicated, and their basic rescue training, provided by volunteer trainers and based on the 'Red Book' (the Commonwealth Disaster Rescue Book) fitted them well for the varied responses they had to undertake.

There was, Howard, concluded, real strength at the grass roots of the organisation. But that strength could not be augmented, and the SES could not evolve, without programmes which gave real support to the volunteers and their units and ensured that they were better led.

Howard's response to the SES's problems was to establish a simple two-part structure at State Headquarters, one to deal with Operations (including operational support functions) and the other to manage Corporate Services such as finance, procurement and personnel. His treatment of communications matters was indicative of his approach: before his arrival the communications area had been confined largely to the repair of radios from the various largely incompatible radio systems that had been acquired (often on a hand-me-down basis from other organisations) over the years. There was no state programme to respond to the equipment needs of the units. Howard appointed an Equipment Officer with responsibility for floodboats, rescue equipment and protective clothing, and he disbanded the radio repair section and signed up to

the Government Radio Network (GRN). Moreover he obtained the Minister's support for state funding of the equipment function, which meant that a tap was turned on in relation to the resourcing of the units.

The changed approach to equipment and communications was important. In effect it began the process of freeing the volunteer units from the need to raise funds locally and to beg and borrow for what they needed to operate. Too much of the organisation's functioning in the past had been based on hand-me-downs (for example from the police and the army), local fund raising and charitable donations of equipment.

Another area which attracted Howard's attention was the accommodation of the units. The provision of headquarters facilities was a legislated council responsibility, but the Commonwealth subsidies were derisory and a common council approach was to give the local unit space that was surplus to council's requirements rather than creating something that was appropriate to the operation of an emergency service organisation. Many units, as a result, were functioning in totally inadequate facilities that were old, cramped and inappropriate in design. To say the least, some of the headquarters were of a shameful quality. They were certainly not helpful in attracting volunteers who needed to be able to have a sense of pride in the buildings from which they operated.

Over a period Howard codified the requirements for unit headquarters

and negotiated increased Commonwealth subsidies. Gradually, inroads were made in reducing the numbers of units which were operating from sub-standard facilities.

He also placed an emphasis on the units' vehicles. Many of these were old and of dubious worth – in 1997, when the first SES Task Force set off to contribute to the response to the Thredbo landslide, Sydney Southern Regional Controller John Jeppesen remarked with only a little exaggeration that "Ten years ago half those trucks wouldn't have made the first corner". Within a decade of Howard's arrival the units all had vehicles which were on their councils' fleets and serviced by the councils.

Howard's focus on equipment, accommodation and vehicles produced a new sense of optimism at the grass roots of the organisation. It also cemented the Director's standing with the volunteers.

Howard also focused on the way the SES functioned in its core operational business. Standing operating procedures (SOPs) were developed to create consistency in operational responses, and a strengthened approach to planning was instituted. The NSWSES of the 1970s and 1980s had had a major responsibility for emergency planning on behalf of the departments of the government (like Community Services in the context of the disaster welfare function), but the organisation had never been well resourced for the task: for all of that time there was never more than a

» continued on page 20

» continued from page 19

single designated planning officer in State Headquarters and people with little knowledge of planning principles or methods were pressed into the task. Worse yet the planning for floods, part of the SES's core business, was lacking and to a degree ignored. Apart from a few local controllers who had seen a need to plan (for example, to evacuate people), the plans that existed were confined to documents outlining the procedures for developing and promulgating flood warnings.

Evacuation as a function was largely ignored and as a result some dangerous situations had been allowed to persist in which it would not have been possible to evacuate some flood-labile communities in the time available before they were overwhelmed by flooding. The evacuation problem in severely flood-labile areas like the Hawkesbury and Tweed valleys was poorly understood and responses to it were therefore not well thought out. A repeat of the flood of record on the Hawkesbury River could have seen very large numbers of people, tens of thousands of them, left unevacuated by the time their escape routes had been cut. In the most difficult cases many of these people would have been at serious risk of dying when severe floods struck their communities. Clearly, there were inadequacies in the SES's conceptualisation of its task.

Howard appointed professional planners and gave the flood planning task a high priority. The flood plans that evolved in his time were wide-ranging, focusing on the formalising of the responsibilities of agencies and on the 'how' of warning, property-protection, rescue, evacuation, public education and other tasks. Moreover the plans sought to define and describe, in each council area, the nature of the flood problem that would have to be faced in floods up to the most severe possible, and steps were taken to improve the quality and the quantity of the flood intelligence available for operational decision making. Strong links were created, too, between the SES and the councils and government agencies which were responsible for flood forecasting and flood mitigation activity: these brought the SES



within the wider flood management endeavour and created opportunities for staff and volunteers to learn about flood management.

OPERATIONS

In his eleven and a half years at the top of the NSWSES, Howard presided over many emergency operations. There were very big storm response operations to be undertaken in Sydney's west and north in 1990 and 1991 respectively, and in 1999 the most damaging hailstorm ever experienced in Australia struck the eastern suburbs: more than 20,000 dwellings were damaged. All these events created lessons for the SES to learn, the last of them in particular showing how inadequate some of the Unit Headquarters were for managing storm damage responses. There were also major storm damage operations during Howard's time outside Sydney, in country towns like Armidale, Singleton, Lismore, Dubbo and Newcastle amongst others.

Among the first flood operations Howard managed was at Nyngan in April 1990, when a record flood saw the virtually complete inundation of the town and an evacuation of almost all of its 2500 residents by helicopter

and bus to Dubbo. This event brought home a number of lessons – the need for all floodplain towns to have an SES presence, for example (Nyngan had none at the time, but a unit was quickly established afterwards), and the need to seek to undertake major evacuation operations in advance of inundation (the people of Nyngan were trapped, their houses uninhabitable and no way of escape except by helicopter). Later floods were to see substantial evacuation operations mounted in Windsor, Warren, Bathurst, Lismore, Grafton, Ulmarra and Kempsey. There were difficult-to-manage flash floods in Coffs Harbour and Wollongong as well.

Beyond floods and storms, the SES's core business, the organisation was involved in many other emergencies in support of other agencies. The response to the Newcastle earthquake was the first of these in Howard's time, and another of great significance was the response to the landslide at Thredbo in 1997. This latter event saw the NSWSES provide more responders than any of the many other agencies involved. Both Newcastle and Thredbo saw the SES prove its versatility as a general-purpose, multi-skilled emergency service organisation able to adapt to the challenges that were thrown in its path.

THE HOWARD LEGACY

There can be no doubt that Hori Howard left the SES in a stronger position than he found it. He quickly assessed the organisation's problems and devised solutions for them, and under his stewardship the organisation made substantial progress on several fronts. By 2001 the volunteers were better housed and clothed, and had better equipment and vehicles, than they had had a decade earlier, and the basis had been laid for performing the flood and storm management roles more effectively. Leadership had been provided, the parlous state of the SES in the late 1980s had been corrected and many improvements had been made to the way the organisation functioned. Howard's time in charge was a good one for the SES.

Chas Keys was the Deputy Director General of the NSWSES from 1997 to 2004.



Smartphones dial up NSW SES response

More than 700 NSW State Emergency Service (NSW SES) volunteers and staff received new smartphones to enable instant access to critical flood and storm data, up-to-date weather information and access to corporate systems.

The \$2.2 million investment over two years delivered smartphones into the hands of all Local and Unit Controllers as well as after-hours duty officers.

We've witnessed the devastation the severe weather caused but our volunteers have been working tirelessly to make sure their community is kept safe. These new smartphones will ensure they can carry on with that important work.

The capability will complement the

This technology gives our volunteers the ability to have instant access to information which helps us better serve the community in our response to emergencies.

780 tablets already in use by NSW SES teams in the field.

"This technology gives our volunteers the ability to have instant access to information which helps us better serve the community in our response to emergencies,"

Acting Commissioner Newton said.

The vision of the NSW SES is to be the world's best at mitigating the risk and consequences of emergencies on communities; the new ICT vision is for a modern and transformative ICT for a more effective NSW SES.

Another unusual task for the NSW SES



Members of NSW SES are called to do many different types of jobs that are a little different to our normal tasking and at times this takes some thinking outside the box.

The Tabulam Unit was called to a fatal plane crash in the Clarence River to assist in the recovery of the occupants. Two days later they were requested to assist in the recovery of the plane which lay upside down in around 3m of water, only the wheels were shown above the water. Our task would be to transport the plane some 3km up stream to a point where it could be loaded onto a truck. As this would entail moving over a shallow section of water we requested a flood boat crew from the City of Lismore unit together with their punt. All crews meet at Clevelands Crossing at 09.00hrs.



Police Rescue members from Lismore and Police Divers from Sydney were also in attendance, plus a crew of aircraft technicians who were there to pull the wings off the plane once it was on the bank for ease of transport.

The divers placed air bags under the plane and rolled it over whilst raising it. It was then winched to the shore where the technicians removed the wings and the fuselage was man handled onto the Lismore punt for transport upstream, a wing was transported on the Tabulam inflatable together with some of the divers equipment. After a couple of trips up and back the job was complete at 1730hrs, just on dark.

By Neville O'Malley



Left to right: Mark Murphy, RFS – Willow Tree; AG David Ford standing in for David Cotsios, VRA - Batlow – Winner in Volunteer capacity; Danielle Osborne, SES – Lightning Ridge; Minister for Emergency Services, The Hon David Elliott MP; DG Stephen Humphreys D9675; Grant Prendergast, Ambulance – Murwillumbah; Dr Peter Taylor, MR – Shoalhaven; Graham Parks, Fire and Rescue – Leeton – Winner in Paid Capacity.

Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards

On July 23, 2016, emergency services personnel, the Minister for Emergency Services, The Hon David Elliott MP, their Commissioners, Commissioners Representative, family, friends and colleagues joined with Rotarians from all Districts in NSW to celebrate this year's 24 finalists from Fire & Rescue NSW; Ambulance NSW; Rural Fire Service NSW; State Emergency Service NSW; Volunteer Rescue Association NSW and Marine Rescue NSW.

This, the second year for the event to be held state-wide, was again supported by the Platinum Partner NRMA Insurance, together with Gold Partner, Remondis, supported by Silver and Bronze Partners and organisations supporting the celebration which was held in the Dockside Pavilion, Darling Harbour.

Guests were met on arrival by Rotarians and Commissioner's Emergency Services – ES -

representatives from the Steering Committee who work tirelessly together from January to August each year.

Nominations were received from all parts of the State and were judged by panels of Rotarians in five Rotary Districts. Each panel carefully considers the nominations for evidence of 'Service Above Self', what the officer does over and above his/her normal role, ranks the finalists, returns the decision for probity checking by each of the Emergency Service agencies for approval to proceed. Four from each Agency were invited to accept the nomination and confirm their willingness to proceed. The nominations of the six who are ranked as the winners of each of the six Agencies are then forwarded to the District Governor who convenes a panel of DG's across the State to put forward their final two winners – an officer in a paid capacity and the other a volunteer.

This year, of the 24 finalists, 17 are from 100km outside of Sydney; from all parts of the State.

Each finalist and his/her partner joined with more than 350 guests for the dinner; with overnight accommodation in Sydney provided through the generosity of Gold Partner – Bankstown Sports Club and the RC of Sydney Cove. The ES Agency assisted with travel where necessary.

The overall two winners are:

- » **Captain Graham Parks**, Fire and Rescue NSW - Leeton
- » **Deputy Captain David Cotsios**, Volunteer Rescue Association – Batlow

Supported by the following Officers representing their Agencies:

- » **Grant Prendergast**, Manager, Ambulance NSW – Murwillumbah
- » **Dr Peter Taylor**, Regional First Aid Trainer, Marine Rescue NSW – Shoalhaven



- » **Mark Murphy**, Operations Response and Coordination, Rural Fire Service, Willow Tree
- » **Daniele Osborne**, General Land Rescue Volunteer, State Emergency Service – Lightning Ridge

Each of the finalist has committed to visit their local Rotary Clubs to share their story. Their information can be gained from their District Representative on the Project Steering Committee or through Dot Hennessy, Chair, 0412 120 314 – dothennessy@gmail.com

Through social media, the awards attained a reach of 116,063 between July 20 and 26 on Facebook. The event Manager Rotarian Carole Johnston is the dedicated guru on social media with feeding on FB every day after the announcement of the finalists, including an individual profile about each of the 24 finalists in the last week, congratulating all four from each ES Agency.

In 2015, funds raised from the project were committed to the first of three

years of an Australian Rotary Health PhD research scholarship for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder – PTSD for officers in these agencies. This is the first of its kind for ES personnel. We are looking forward to the scholar being announced and introduced in the not too distance future.

Ms Jacki Johnson, Group Executive for People Performance and Reputation, in her presentation on behalf of the Principal Partner, NRMA, expressed her appreciation and honour to be able to attend to be involved in the Awards, congratulated and thanked all the finalists for their dedication, their families, those present and especially spoke in support for the PTSD Scholarship and the importance of this initiative.

During the 2016-2017 Rotary Year, the ESA team will be visiting and attending District Conferences and District Assemblies, where possible, throughout NSW, to promote the project whilst encouraging Rotary Clubs to identify and nominate their own local heroes.

July 22, 2017 is the date set for the 3rd annual Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards - RESCA. Visit the website www.rotaryESCawards.org.au for progressive updates and information.

Rotary Clubs are encouraged to organise their own local awards as a Vocational Service Project and membership initiative, to highlight, publicly recognise and thank all emergency services personnel whilst promoting Rotary, Rotary Projects and their own Rotary Club. Those recognised at this level can be moved forward to nominate at the State event.

These Awards are held in the first half of each year and complement the Police Awards to be held on November 4, in the second half of the year.

For further information, contact Dot Hennessy, above mentioned for RESCA and John Given, jgiven@zions.com.au/ phone 0414 188 711.

By Dot Hennessy

Muswellbrook SES has official opening

For 33 years the Muswellbrook SES unit was housed underneath the local council library building in 150m² area. When Muswellbrook Council received a multimillion dollar grant to refurbish the library site, Muswellbrook unit and volunteers had to find a new home. For two and a half years the units' equipment was stored in a temporary facility of shipping containers, which caused problems for the unit. Half of membership was lost, and the RCR accreditation was lost as the experienced members left. However, on June 27, 2012, the Muswellbrook Unit started to rebuild itself, when it moved to its new home.

A property of approximately 13,300m² was purchased by Muswellbrook Shire Council in early 2012. The site was first identified by the Local Controller (Mark Elsley OAM) as a possible site and discussions were held with Council's General Manager Mr Stephen McDonald who then brought it to the attention of Muswellbrook Council. Mark had extensive knowledge of the property as it had been his professional workplace when he moved to Muswellbrook in April 1980. At the time it was the Hunter Valley headquarters for the River Improvement Branch of the NSW Water Resources Commission (WRC), later it was the headquarters of ResCo (an engineering organisation).

The site consisted of a number of sheds and an administration building. On purchase of the property by Muswellbrook Council, the SES sought to have access to three of the buildings which were known to Mark as the administration building, workshop, and spare parts store.

The shed where the vehicles, boats and trailers are now housed, was a workshop with lathe, shaping machine, welding bay and other equipment for the fabrication of parts and the repair of earthmoving machinery such as bulldozers, tractors and trucks.



The shed (above) and the property (below).



During ResCo's occupation of the site they closed in a section of the old workshop and it became the Boardroom. The Boardroom is now used as the Units training room.

SES was interested in the old spare parts store which had been set up as office space by ResCo and seemed to be suitable as an operations room. It had a small kitchenette and separate room suitable for liaison officers from supporting organisations. When considering future directions of Council it was determined by Council that it would be the future Emergency

Operations Centre (EOC) for the Shire. At the time Council also identified it as being available to the SES as training space. Council is establishing the property as the Emergency Services Centre for the Shire. The RFS Edinglassie Brigade occupies the top end of the block with a brand new headquarters.

The eastern end of the main administration building needed no reconfiguration to suit the needs of the SES, however the western end needed major renovations including the removal of four internal walls.



Muswellbrook Unit training room (above), previously the ResCo boardroom.

Old kitchen (below), renovated kitchen (right).



Extensive cabling and furniture was ordered by SES Hunter Regional HQ and the Operations room was established to fit the AIMS structure. The design was developed by former Regional Controller Greg Perry.

The office accommodation was basic and new phone lines had to be run from the junction box towards the bottom end of the street to accommodate the SES needs. The downstairs kitchen was not what you would call a kitchen. It was a water testing laboratory established by WRC and consisted of a now water

affected bench and a sink. The entire room was gutted and a new kit kitchen established. Adjacent to the kitchen is a small room that was perfect as a rest area for operational people wanting a break from the ops room.

Upstairs a larger area was fitted to become the new operations room for large events.

Key to the continued operation of the SES at the location was the purchase of an emergency generator. This was ordered by the Hunter Regional Headquarters but paid for out of the funds raised by the Muswellbrook Unit.



Eastern End that is now administration (above) and the boardroom (below).



The 45kVa generator has been very useful during power outages.

In addition to the funds spent by Council and the SES in the revamp of the site, members of the SES Muswellbrook Unit made approaches to businesses and community groups for funding to assist with the fit out of the buildings. They also participated in community activities receiving donations for assisting them. Taking all into consideration, the Unit raised around \$130,000.

» **continued on page 28**



Operations room (left) and resting area (above).



Cutting the cake.

» continued from page 27

Equipment purchased for the headquarters came from the following donations which either covered the costs or went a long way to covering the purchase:

- » Bengalla Mining Company – \$16,000 towards the cost of the generator (\$18,500);
- » Muswellbrook Workers Club – \$12,000 furniture;
- » Muswellbrook RSL Club – \$10,000 towards the cost of the kitchen (\$14,000)

- » Muswellbrook Auxiliary Bowling Club - \$4,500 the cost of audio visual aids; and

- » Muswellbrook Lions Club – Purchase of televisions in Administration, Kitchen, and Operations Room.

Tiger Teams were established by former Hunter Region Controller Amanda Williamson for addressing the accumulation of items at Unit HQ's. The members at Muswellbrook Unit held their own 'Tiger Team' cleanup and through it identified a number of stocktake items that were not

working or surplus to requirements and notified Hunter Region who removed them from the stocktake list. On completion of the cleanup, five large trailer loads had been taken to the tip for waste disposal or recycling through normal means or e-waste.

As part of the refurbishment of the headquarters many volunteer hours were spent sanding, filling holes and painting.

In addition to the development of a new kitchen in the administration building, a new kitchenette was



Members of the Muswellbrook SES Unit.



Revealing the plaque.

installed which replaced a 1990's shocker. SES replaced two air-conditioners and installed another three after Council removed the central air-conditioner. There is still one air-conditioner to be replaced, and that is in the Controller's office.

The outside of buildings and grounds were addressed as well, with decking being cleaned down and re-oiled. The garden was weeded, retaining walls repaired, garden borders re-established, plants installed and approx. 10m³ of wood chip spread as well. Drains were

cleared, and surfaces cleaned of mud from an adjacent construction site.

On Saturday, July 16, the official opening was held at Muswellbrook Headquarters. Many of the organisations that had contributed financially to the SES were in attendance to receive recognition certificates. It was also an opportunity for members of those organisations to see first-hand where their funds were spent. There were many comments that their money had been well spent. Of particular interest was the positive response from the Shire Councillors

who were present representing three Local Government Areas.

What was a run-down over grown property and buildings is now a fully functional headquarters. The operations room is one of the most functional in country NSW, and storage facilities enable the Muswellbrook Unit to hold additional tarps, ropes and sand bags that in emergencies can re-supply other Units in the area. The end result also reflects positively on the dedication of the volunteers.

By Mark Elsely and Kaliya Maxwell

Rave reviews for new NSW SES Youth Program in Richmond Tweed

A group of specially trained volunteers from Ballina and Tweed Heads Units recently conducted a pilot program aimed at engaging with local youth. The program was initiated by Ballina Unit Controller, Gerry Burnage who was inspired by the success of the Secondary School Cadet programs in his area. With the help of Janet Pettit from the Region Office and volunteers from the local units, a program of activities was developed and conducted at the unit headquarters on one weeknight each week for 10 weeks. The groups met on a different night to the usual training night for volunteers and many young volunteers from the both units got involved in the training and mentoring.

The programs attracted a total of just over 30 local high school students from year 9 and 10. The groups had a mix of males and females who all combined together to learn about effective communication, workplace health and safety and how to work in a team. Each group had a graduation night that was attended by Parents, Teachers and community leaders. The NSW SES Coordinator of Youth Engagement, Todd Burns attended the Ballina graduation and spoke directly with the leaders, participants, parents and school teachers.

"This is a great youth and community engagement program that was initiated by volunteers and enthusiastically supported by volunteers. At the graduation, I had 5 participants tell me they were going to join the Ballina unit. There was a positive vibe at the graduation and both Units have already been asked if they could conduct more of these



programs," said Todd.

The NSW SES program partner for youth programs, Origin Energy, provided the sponsorship funds for all of the equipment required and Morgan Lander from the Office of the Children's Guardian

provided specialised and training and information on child protection.

Knowledge and Lessons Management are currently conducting a review of the program to see if the initiative can be offered to other regions across NSW in the future.



Fleet Project Deliveries for financial year 2016-17

The 2016/2017 Financial Year will see the Fleet Project Team deliver Light Storm, Medium Storm, Medium Rescue and Heavy Rescue Vehicles.

This will be the busiest year to date which for the Team will endeavour to have these vehicles delivered on time and to the highest safety standard that everyone has come to expect and appreciate.

The first Light Storm Vehicle has been delivered to Fairfield Unit. The following 29 Light Storm Vehicles will be delivered in the coming months.

The Fairfield Unit Light Storm Vehicle has achieved compliments and big smiles from volunteers and although there was a delay

in delivery of this vehicle, it was well worth the wait.

The Fleet Project Team has also ordered ten ISUZU N-Series Chassis, which will form the basis of 6 Medium Storm Vehicles and 4 Medium Rescue Vehicles.

Work has already commenced on the service bodies for the Medium Storm Vehicles which are expected to be delivered progressively by May 2017. The sub frame and body structure are under way with electricals to commence work shortly.

The Team has also now ordered one (1) ISUZU F-Series Chassis, which will form the basis of a Heavy Rescue Vehicle. The Vehicle Design Group is working together with the Fleet

Project Team to ensure quality and safety design features.

One Fleet Project Member and two volunteers travelled to Melbourne last week to inspect the VIC SES Heavy Rescue Vehicle. This was a great opportunity to look at the VIC SES vehicle's design and features, so that they can be incorporated into our vehicle.

The Fleet Project Team is always looking to improve on each build and is very appreciative of suggestions, feedback and compliments from volunteers.

For further information, please don't hesitate to contact the Fleet Project Team by emailing: Fleet.Project@ses.nsw.gov.au

Get Ready public safety campaign

The NSW SES and NRMA Insurance teams have worked together to finalise support for this year's public safety campaign (Oct16-Mar17). The partnership will support the NSW SES 'Get Ready' campaign featuring the never enter floodwater and home preparedness messaging.

The Get Ready campaign will be launched at the Penrith White water Stadium on September 23 where we will create a simulation focused around the dangers of driving into floodwater. The Minister for Emergency services and other senior stakeholders such as the Bureau of Meteorology will be in attendance.

Promotional material to support NSW SES messaging is being repurposed utilising existing imagery (2015-16 campaign) and video content from the NSW SES Storm Season TV series to develop an enhanced campaign in terms of awareness raising, attitude and behaviour change for the 2016-17 campaign across NSW. This video content is available via the NSW SES Flickr site.

the agency campaign where they can, with a consistent approach to imagery and messaging. Resources have and will continue to be produced for everyone to use. All promotional resources will be made available onbrand online under the tab Get Ready 2016

- » A3 Printable posters to use at local community engagement events, provide to councils and local businesses. Static versions in low and hi res as well as editable versions for customisation with local suburb, town or event information
- » Facebook tiles and banners, these can be launched on September 23 and interchanged throughout storm season
- » Radio Ad pushing the Never Enter Floodwater message which can be supplied to local radio stations with the request for support and airtime
- » Media Releases for members to use with their local media relationships
- » Generic Press Advertisements for local newspapers and more ...

encouraged to check out the resources and start to make plans for how they can be used as engagement tools at events, speak to local businesses, work with media outlets and work with local community groups. The Community Engagement team has been visiting regions and units to speak about these strategies and activities to inspire local communities and engage with them on how to get involved and what to do to Get Ready.

The partnership with NRMA Insurance will deliver above the line media buying occurring from October through to March utilising the below channels:

- » **Social media** – pre-storm/flood prevention messages as well as safety steps during a storm
- » **Radio prevention messaging** to be used on the approach of a storm
- » **Digital web and mobile advertising** including advertising via the BOM website
- » **Paid search** (i.e. driving traffic to stormsafes.com.au)
- » **Public relations support** around key preparedness messages across metro and regional areas including an agile approach to leveraging stories and statistics for journalists and bloggers etc.

More information will come via our traditional communication channels so please keep an eye out for updates. It is time to start promoting Get Ready 2016.

Member Enquiries can be made to the following areas for additional support:

- » Branding, promotional items and NRMA Partnership questions to phil.schafer@ses.nsw.gov.au
- » Media and public relations enquiries to becky.gollings@ses.nsw.gov.au
- » Community Engagement and local event questions to rosanna.goodchild@ses.nsw.gov.au

Members are encouraged to check out the resources and start to make plans for how they can be used as engagement tools at events, speak to local businesses, work with media outlets and work with local community groups.

The core media channels will again be social media, radio and digital display (i.e. mobile). The tone of voice will be positive/ can do attitude without underplaying the risk. All members are requested to support

Some of the resources are available there now but there are still flood safety posters, animated gifs and social media tiles in development, due to be released in the coming weeks. Ongoing updates will be provided. Members are

Get Ready for storm season together



Help someone clean their gutters

Putting on the gardening gloves to clean gutters is one way to help prepare your home.



GET READY

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Larnook Flood Rescue

At 3.45pm Wednesday August 24, 2016, Lismore City SES along with Kyogle SES were activated for a Flood Rescue at Larnook.

At about 3.35pm a 72 years old male was driving his series 2 Landrover across a flooded creek when his vehicle has been swept off the bridge. The male has managed to climb out of the window of the vehicle and then clung on to a tree. He only managed to hold onto the tree for about four minutes before letting go and trying to grab another branch. The male has then been sucked under the water and could be seen being swept away downstream. Several members of the Billen Cliff community have tried to rescue him but their ropes were too short. The Larnook community has one road leading to the Billen Cliffs community and it is a road that becomes flooded quite regularly.

Lismore City SES on arrival with Lismore Police Rescue squad have launched a boat downstream and begun a search in the flooded creek. Soon after Kyogle SES joined the search along with Westpac Helicopter. Two Floodboat crews with two swiftwater technicians on board searched aimlessly with no avail.

The search continued until about 5.45pm when heavy rain and bad light caused the search to be called off. All members who assisted in the search on Wednesday Night showed courage and expertise in entering the flooded creek.

At 6am Thursday, August 25, Lismore City SES along with Kyogle SES, NSW Police Rescue Squad and Westpac Helicopter resumed a search of the flooded creek. Also at the search was the community of Billen Cliffs. Billen Cliffs is a small tightknit community who were there to render assistance



where needed. Due to the tragedy, the media had also arrived by 6:30am, with news helicopters arriving and satellites being set up to provide live feeds from the search.

This search involved swiftwater technicians from Lismore City SES, Floodboat operators and Level 1 accredited operatives. A coordinated search commenced under the control of NSW Police Landsar. The search involved Swiftwater Technicians utilising the new 'Ark Angels' that have been brought into service. These Ark Angels were ideal for the situation allowing swiftwater technicians to

move downstream from the missing persons last known position. Crews battled strainers and rapids in the search for the missing person. The Ark Angels allowed crews to search slowly and thoroughly.

The search was suspended late in the afternoon and recommenced on Friday, August 26, at 8am again with the assistance of 8 swiftwater technicians and several other Level 1 & 2 Floodboat operators and crewmembers. Crews worked tirelessly searching the banks, water surface and in the water trying to locate the missing persons. Again the search was



The circumstances surrounding this tragedy could have been prevented but it must be noted that all NSW SES Members conducted themselves professionally and respectfully.

unsuccessful and it had to be called off Friday afternoon.

On Saturday, August 27, 2016, the search recommenced involving NSW Police Rescue Squad, NSW SES and NSW Police Divers.

At 9.30am two swiftwater technicians and a Level 2 Floodboat operator located the body of the missing person after moving downstream in an Ark Angel approximately 250 metres from where his vehicle was located.

NSW Police Divers assisted in recovering the body with NSW SES.

The circumstances surrounding this tragedy could have been prevented

but it must be noted that all NSW SES Members conducted themselves professionally and respectfully. The family, media and community were there by the banks the entire time watching everything as it unfolded putting pressure on those searching.

Something that came out of the search was the fact that the training NSW SES receives at Penrith Water Stadium is outstanding and vital in the training of members in Flood Rescue, our primary role.

This event was a tragedy but if anything good is to come from this is educating the community of Larnook.

Lismore City SES has already arranged to run a Flood Awareness Day with the Larnook community (Billen Cliffs) where they will be taught how to use throwbags, driving through flood water and having PFDs in their vehicles. This is due to be run after the funeral. The Billen Cliffs community has thanked all involved in the search for Derek and they appreciated everything the NSW SES did to try and locate him.

The search involved members from Lismore City SES, Ballina SES, Kyogle SES, Tweed SES, Tabulam SES, Murwillumbah SES, Mullumbimby SES and Richmond Tweed SES.

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