

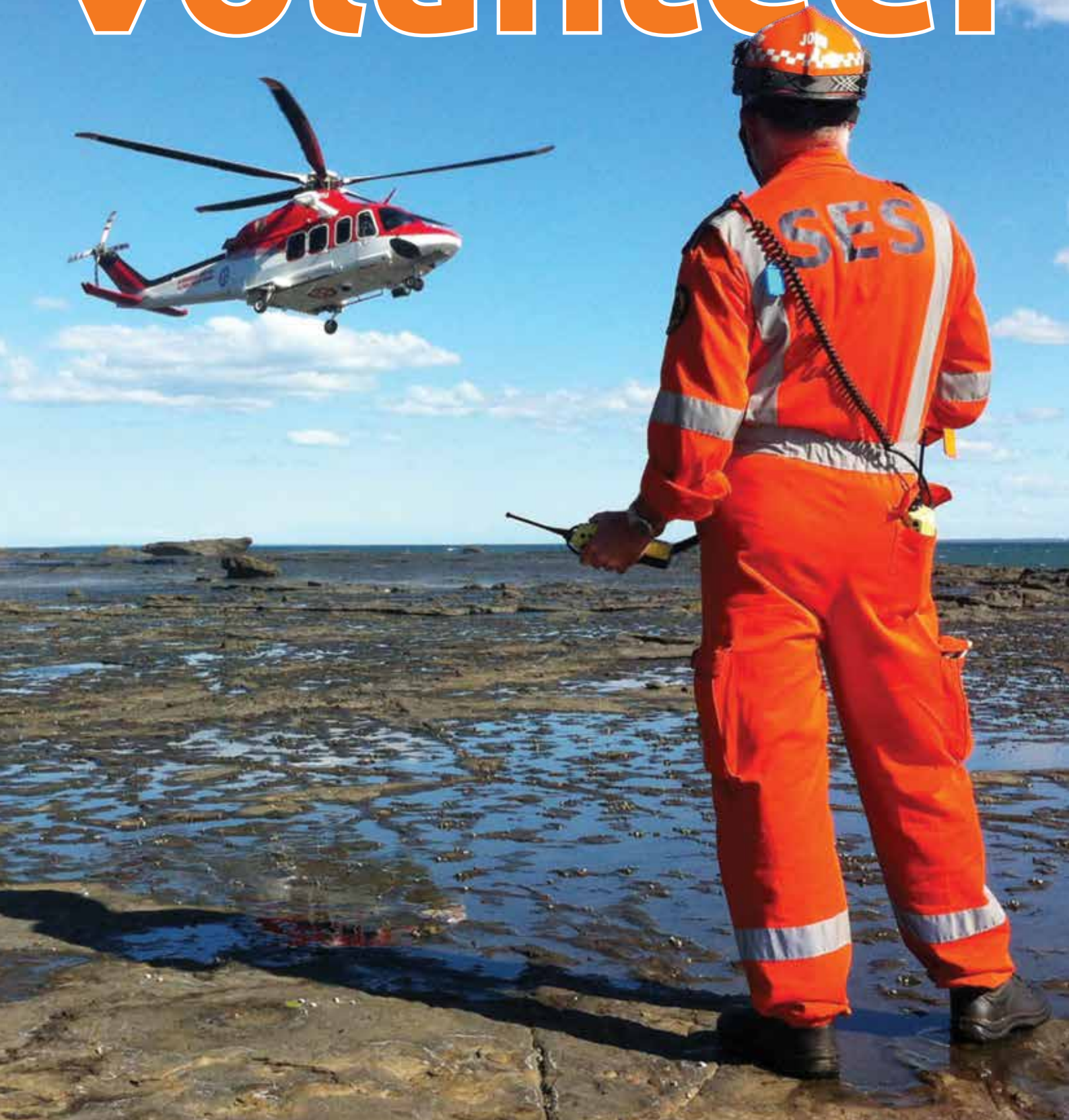
The official journal of the NSW SES Volunteers Association

the

# Volunteer

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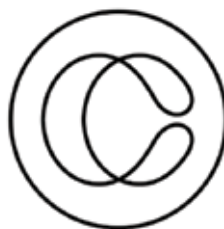


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**More and more we are hearing, from staff and volunteers alike, that the expectations of the Zones is increasing while the support network is decreasing.**



**KIM DAVIS ESM**  
PRESIDENT NSW SES  
VOLUNTEERS ASSOCIATION

I am hoping that by the time of printing, we will have received the announcement of a permanent Commissioner. While it has been beneficial having Acting Commissioner Stewart in the chair, the Service is in need of stability and a leader who, with the benefit of permanency, can make changes that the Service needs in order to thrive.

From the Association, we would like to see changes in the areas around grievance management, investigations and due process. We would also like to see some major cultural changes around the way these processes have been handled previously and bring equity into the management of volunteers and staff.

We would also like to see additional support implemented at a Zone level to facilitate greater training activities, and access to training. More and more we are hearing, from staff and

volunteers alike, that the expectations of the Zones is increasing while the support network is decreasing. This would be a topic we would like to have as one of our top three priorities to raise.

We have started a Member Benefits group on Facebook, and have a Member Benefits Coordinator on board to help with the new benefits program.

The group will publish available offers for members, and any T&Cs or promo codes as required to gain access to any offer.

As this is a brave new world for us in the approach to member benefits, we are asking for both your patience and your help.

If you are in a smaller community, and know of a business that may be happy to provide members with a benefit, please let us know and we can arrange the appropriate information

to be passed along, or we can provide it to you so you can make a personal approach.

This year we were again a Silver Sponsor of the Rotary Emergency Service Community Awards, and have continued our sponsorship of the State Disaster Rescue Competition, and the team for the National Disaster Rescue Competition.

We also had the pleasure of hosting the Women in Flood Rescue workshop in our office at Rockdale, and extend the offer for any other group that would like to book either a meeting space or the training room to contact us at [office@nswsesva.org.au](mailto:office@nswsesva.org.au) to discuss availability.

Our new Coordinators and Ambassadors have also been brought on board, and we look forward to working with them to deliver special projects and training to VA members.

Stay safe in your volunteering

The Association was lucky enough to have been successful in grant funding from Club Rivers in Riverwood.

The grant was presented on Thursday 22nd August, and the Association will be using it to provide Mental Health First Aid training for members in the club's catchment. A Club Rivers spokesperson said they "had the great pleasure and honour to present cheques to 27 Community organisations totalling \$190,811."

This will be the third MHFA course the Association has been



able to offer to its members. If you would like to know more about the Mental Health First Aid training, please contact the office on [office@nswsesva.org.au](mailto:office@nswsesva.org.au)





**THE HON DAVID ELLIOTT MP  
MINISTER FOR POLICE AND  
EMERGENCY SERVICES**

**S**ince I last had the opportunity to write to you all in June I have been on the road and around the state during the winter recess of Parliament. In doing so, I've greatly enjoyed the opportunity to both meet with local Units and talk about their day to day operations, but also visit and discuss some of the ground-breaking projects of the organisation.

In Dubbo I joined the 21 teams competing in the 2019 Australian Rescue Challenge (ARRO). Spirits were high as were the competitive tensions for teams to perform their best alongside their colleagues from the many agencies from Australia and abroad. While in Dubbo I also had the pleasure to officially open the new Dubbo SES and VRA new combined facility, a fantastic facility which will

be the base of operations for the busy Dubbo City Unit.

From my background in the military, having been deployed as a peacekeeper to Bougainville, I know how important communications are to successful operations. It is for this reason I was so impressed with the COW (Cell on Wheels) I was shown when I visited the SES Headquarters in Wollongong. The cell and power systems are transported by an Iveco Daily 4x4 2 seater Cab Chassis 5.5T GVM with 1650kg payload capacity. The vehicle is fitted with a heavy duty bulbar, 17000lb synthetic rope winch, long range fuel tank, Hiab Hi Duo 018 vehicle mounted crane, high intensity off-road lighting systems, Trojan Systems and storage lockers. It once again reiterates to me how SES are making strides in this

space and how proud I am to be able to support the agency as Minister for Emergency Services.

My military background also instilled in me a reverence for the fallen. While on duty with the SES volunteers can be faced with adverse situations, sometimes of a life threatening nature. While I was at the Headquarters I also paid my respects to the fallen men and women of the SES at the Memorial Garden. Their sacrifice will not be forgotten, and the State owes them and their families a great debt.

From the country to the city, can I once again thank all the fantastic SES volunteers and staff who work so hard to maintain their skills through training, respond to emergencies and most importantly who keep our communities safe.





----- “ -----

**Thank you to all our members for all your time and enthusiasm in putting into practice our mission of saving lives and protecting communities.**

----- ” -----



**KYLE STEWART APM**  
**ACTING COMMISSIONER**

**M**y appointment as the interim Commissioner of the NSW State Emergency Service is approaching the six-month mark. I count this opportunity as a career highlight which has afforded me the absolute privilege to represent an agency that is all about helping the community and that represents the very best in the world of volunteers. I am extremely hopeful that by the issue of the next VA Magazine the NSW SES will have a substantive Commissioner.

After almost 10 years as a staff member with the NSW SES, Deputy Commissioner Greg Newton has recently confirmed he will be leaving the Service later this year. Many would know that Greg's wife is currently posted to the Australian High Commission in Port Moresby, and this decision enables him to move to Port Moresby to support her during her time in New Guinea.

Greg's story is a significant one for the Service given that he is the first home-grown volunteer who ended up leading the agency as its Acting Commissioner and I look forward to celebrating his career in a more formal way in the months to come.

On behalf of the agency and the community it serves I would like to extend my gratitude to Deputy Commissioner Newton for the leadership he has provided and all that he has done over the years in support of the community.

That said, I suspect that the Greg Newton story within the NSW SES is far from over, given that rumour has it that he was recently seen talking with one of the volunteer recruitment officers in the Queanbeyan-Palarang Cluster about volunteering once again with the SES.

Whilst there has been a significant operational tempo over the past few months that has drawn an impressive response to a wide variety of calls for help from the community, that which has most impressed me is the commitment that so many of you make to our training, exercise and challenge programs.

It is without doubt that these training, exercise and challenge activities are at the very core of how we maintain our operational capability and why it is that the community trust us to be the ones to whom they turn when they are in need of help – keep up the fantastic work!

My thanks to those who took part in the Major Flood Exercise “Deerubbin” that tested the multi-agency response to a Hawksbury Nepean Valley Flood; to the 55 Units who took part in the 25th annual Wellington Wombats Caving Exercise; to the 300 SES volunteers who braved the cold for this year's NavShield BSAR Competition; and to the hundreds of volunteers who played a part or competed in this year's Australasian Rescue Challenge in Dubbo.

A special mention goes to the Nowra Unit who were the premier State Emergency Service team at NavShield and to the Port Macquarie Unit who, for a second year running, were awarded the ARRO Director's Shield for their efforts in Dubbo.

As an extension to our training, exercise and challenge programs, I'm very happy to announce that we have committed to sending approximately ten volunteers to this year's AFAC Conference in Melbourne and that we have also sponsored one of our volunteer members to attend and present

at the International Commission Alpine Rescue conference in Poland later this year.

The opportunity that these types of learning environments provide for our agency in enhancing our various capabilities should never be underestimated and I look forward to the feedback from the conference attendees.

During the last few months a number of significant awards that recognise service and achievement have rightly been received by a number of our members & staff. I'd like to congratulate Graeme Geyer, recipient of the Life Member Award for outstanding contribution to the NSW SES. The recipients of 2019 Queen's Birthday Awards included David Leigh (Kiama Unit) and Greg Cormack (Deputy Zone Commander Metro Zone) who were awarded the Emergency Services Medal (ESM), and Gerry De Vries (Wauchope Unit) and Robert Corbett (Hornsby Unit) who were honoured with the Order of Australia.

I'd also like to congratulate all the finalists and award recipients at the recent 2019 Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards, who you can read more about in this edition of the VA magazine. Thank you all for your long-serving commitment to the NSW SES and for sharing your vast knowledge and expertise with volunteers, staff and your communities.

Thank you to all our members for all your time and enthusiasm in putting into practice our mission of saving lives and protecting communities.

As the storm season approaches and your skills become increasingly relied upon by our community, please look out for one another and be safe.

## 2019 DOROTHY HENNESSY EMERGENCY SERVICES YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP

There must be something that these Manly SES volunteers are doing right, as it was the fourth consecutive year that one of their volunteers had been nominated as a finalist of one of Rotary's awards. Every year the Rotary Emergency Service Community Awards (RESCA)



recognise outstanding emergency service personnel who have gone above and beyond the call of duty.

The RESCA are community nominated awards, based on the reputation of the personnel from the viewpoint of their local communities. This year young volunteer **Fred Pollock** was nominated as a finalist for the 2019 Dorothy Hennessy Emergency Services Youth Scholarship.

*"Fred has impressed us since he first joined our unit with his dedication and ongoing Commitment"* said Mark Simpson, local controller of the Manly SES unit.

*"There has not been a single community engagement event that Fred*



*has missed since he joined He is one of our best SES ambassadors out there, always happy to share his experience as a volunteer with the public"* said Joerg Lindner, local SES media and community engagement officer.

Congratulations again to Fred - he has a bright future ahead and we are very proud of what he has accomplished already at such a young age well done!

## NSW SES VA continues to be a proud sponsor of the SES Cadet Program and the Rotary Young Leaders Awards in NSW



# Sponsorship Opportunity

**NSW SES Volunteers Association Fundraiser**

**Comedy For A Cause**

**Saturday, 26th October 2019**

For further information please contact  
**E: Carlee.Maccoll@nswsesva.org.au P: 02 8397 8293**

### We seek your help and support!

The NSW SES Volunteers Association is holding our charity fundraiser 'Comedy for a Cause' at Canterbury Leagues Club on Saturday, 26th October 2019. This year's fundraiser is aimed at raising funds which will then be used to fund programs and provide welfare support for our NSW State Emergency Service Volunteers.

Funds are used to provide the following to our Members:

- » Providing Welfare Grants to our members who are going through hardship
  - » Providing Unit Grants and Scholarships
  - » Representation and other support services to our members
- We ask if you are able to assist our cause with sponsorship of the fundraiser or donation of products / services, either large or small for our auction on the night. Any item that you can contribute would be a big help and be much appreciated.
- Your business will be acknowledged in our event materials including but not limited to our magazine,

*The Volunteer*, event advertisements and social media posts, company Logo displayed on our NSW SES VA website as well as receive publicity and exposure through our auction listings on the night.

If you know of a business or individual that would also be interested in getting involved please forward our details on.

For Further information or to discuss this great opportunity please contact:

**Carlee Maccoll**

**E:** Carlee.maccoll@nswsesva.org.au

**P:** 02 8397 8293

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**N**SW SES Volunteers Association was a Proud Sponsor of the 2019 Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards held on Friday, 2nd August 2019. The NSW SES VA President, Vice President and staff were all in attendance to congratulate the finalists and winner. It was a great evening amongst dedicated and passionate people from the various emergency service agencies to recognise and celebrate their selfless service to our community.

Congratulations to all of the finalists on the night and a special mention to the winner of the NSW State Emergency Service Officer of the Year Award, Peter Dadd.

Your outstanding contribution to the community is admirable and respected – well deserved!

**Carlee Maccoll**



### NSW STATE EMERGENCY OFFICER OF THE YEAR – PETER DADD

NSW SES Hunters Hill Deputy Unit Commander, Peter Dadd, is the 2019 NSW State Emergency Service Officer of the Year. Peter is a Police Officer and a 15-year veteran of the NSW State Emergency Service. He was deployed to Queensland during the floods of 2011 and helped to protect his community during the Hunter Storms of 2017.

As well as being a dedicated member of the NSW State Emergency Service, Peter was a retained firefighter from 2007 to 2012 with Fire & Rescue NSW as well as a rescue diver from 2004 to 2012. He has also volunteered with Scouts Australia and Rotary Youth Leadership.



## NSW STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE FINALISTS



**CECIL (JOE) BOND**  
Team Leader – Gundagai



**LEONIE ANNE COX**  
Unit Commander – Tingha



**DAVID JOHNSUN**  
Local Commander – Canada Bay





## Drought Support Update

**T**he Volunteers Association continues to support members effected by the drought in NSW. NSW Water Minister Melinda Pavey has declared we are in the 'worst drought on record'. Rainfall over autumn and winter did not eventuate and dams are at their lowest levels in two decades. There is no significant rainfall on the horizon and water restrictions are now in place in many areas.

Volunteers are not only affected in some areas by water restrictions and loss of pasture for their animals, the fire season has been brought forward with increased risk and fuel loads.

**The Volunteers Association has now added the availability of water for personal use to its list of supports for affected volunteers.**

If you require support, or know of a volunteer who does, please contact [shannon.crofton@nswsesva.org.au](mailto:shannon.crofton@nswsesva.org.au) for confidential support.



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## 2019 Australasian Road Rescue Challenge (ARC2019)

**T**he International, multi-agency Emergency Services Competition was held from July 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> at Dubbo Showgrounds.

21 Teams consisting of Emergency Service Personnel (including teams from NZ, Singapore and Hong Kong) took part in a learning symposium followed by three days of challenging rescue and medical scenarios. The teams were a mix of volunteers and staff and were made up of a Commander, a Medic and Technical team – with the teams assessed in each of these areas.

The Road Rescue Challenge provides a fantastic learning opportunity for SES volunteers who are then able to share this information and knowledge with other SES Road Rescue Units. The NSW SES was represented by teams from Port Macquarie, Snowy River and Hawkesbury along with other SES Units from Interstate.



Port Macquarie won the Director's Shield once again and were the highest achieving out of the 6 competing SES teams. The overall winner of the Event was a New Zealand Fire Service team from Wanaka who will now go on to compete in the World Road Rescue Challenge next year. Great effort by all who participated!

**The Volunteers Association was proud to support the NSW SES Team at this Competition.**









## Port Macquarie takes home the Directors Shield

Over the weekend of the 27<sup>th</sup> July 2019, Port Macquarie Unit attended the 2019 Australasian Road Rescue Challenge (ARC2019) hosted by ARRO, NSW SES and NSW Fire and Rescue. NSW SES was represented with teams from Port Macquarie, Snowy River and Hawkesbury. There were six SES teams from New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania and the team from Port Macquarie successfully returned with the Directors Shield for the best State Emergency Service Team at ARC.

The ARC experience is a great investment in SES Members and the exposure to the latest road rescue techniques and equipment greatly assists in our mission to save lives and protect our community. Port Macquarie SES Unit in addition to being the combat agency for floods, storms and tsunamis is the accredited primary rescue Unit for General Land Rescue including Road Crash Rescue, Vertical Rescue and Swift Water

**The ARC experience is a great investment in SES Members and the exposure to the latest road rescue techniques and equipment greatly assists in our mission to save lives and protect our community.**

Rescue in Port Macquarie City and the surrounding area. The Unit comprises of approximately 60 volunteers of which 20 are accredited Rescue Operators with the State Rescue Board of NSW.

Port Macquarie Unit is located in a busy section of the Mid North Coast of NSW. The Unit averages one request for assistance per day ranging

from routine property protection to complex and protracted rescue operations in multi-agency response situations. The Unit is the primary response Unit for a large section of the Pacific Highway (M1), the Port Macquarie Regional Airport, and provides rescue support to Lord Howe Island. Over recent times the Unit





ARC consisted of a full day's learning symposium including workshop on high performance CPR followed by three days of challenges consisting of three road rescue scenario's which included entrapped where the casualty was physically trapped by compression in the vehicle, time critical where the casualty has life threatening injuries that require management and a controlled stand where the focus is on the tool operators and techniques to extricate two casualties. Additionally there are two trauma (first aid) scenario's and a CPR stand where the entire team had to undertake 12 minutes of CPR on a training mannequin that measures the performance and reports a score out of 100.

The Port Macquarie Units commitment and professionalism has been recognised in the past having won the NSW SES State Disaster Rescue completion in 2013, 2017 and again in 2019 and the National Disaster Rescue competition in 2013 and 2017.

All members are provided a founding base in responding to Floods, Storms and Tsunami's. Members showing an aptitude and willingness to respond to rescue situations are then trained in roles such as Road Crash Rescue, General Land Rescue, Vertical Rescue and Flood Rescue. We train our members to save lives and protect their community not to collect certificates from Units of Competency. We find that by delivering the training that members need to fulfil their role the qualifications naturally follow.

As for the competitions, all members at the Unit train to become better operators, not for competitions – what we do on the road is what we do at competitions. We realise that it takes an effort of the entire Unit to send a team to a competition and recognise everyone's commitment to the success. Finally, we have fun and don't always take ourselves seriously!

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Michael Ward, Unit Commander – Port Macquarie Unit.

has undertaken simple and complex rescues involving single/multiple vehicles, heavy vehicles, and light aircraft incidents and a range of domestic rescue incidents including pets and large animals.

The Unit capitalises on its volunteer membership base with members of the ARRO Team bringing experience from a range of professions and life experiences. The team comprised Team Leader Michael Ward (Civil Engineer and Registered Land Surveyor). Medics Toby Messina (Doctor at Port Macquarie Hospital) and Michael Brumby (Electrical Engineer) and Tool Operators Kevin Sherwood (Financier),

Alfred Portenschlager (Corporate Process and Systems Trainer) and Katie Blake (TAFE trainer and Hospitality Manager). The diversity of the team is their strength, enhancing their capability and supporting their work to make the NSW SES the best Volunteer Emergency Service in Australia. Also in attendance at the ARC were Sereena Ward (Team Manager), Leonie Stevenson (Reserve), Scott Robinson and Eliza-Jane Page for their professional development as observers/participants in the learning symposium. These members range in membership from around 18 months to over 16 years.

**The Port Macquarie team  
was sponsored by the  
Volunteers Association.**



# Multi-unit Vertical Rescue Training

**Saturday June the 29<sup>th</sup> saw the Blue Mountains Unit host a Vertical Rescue personal development day at Blackheath Lookout.**









**T**his was a multi-unit exercise with members not just from the Blue Mountains host unit but from Ryde, Hornsby, Ku-Ring-Gai and Warringah-Pittwater all coming together to explore some vertical spaces not readily found in the units' local areas.

The exercise covered three scenarios spread across three stations.

The first scenario was focused on vertical mobility with participants abseiling over the edges using descent devices then performing an on rope change over to ascent devices and returning to the top. This was done with 100m rope bags weighting the main rope so participants could understand how the feel and responsiveness of how ascent/descent devices changes when there is tension on the rope below them.

The second scenario used half of a Vortex kit to create a sideways

A-frame that was utilised to provide edge clearance and redirection over the lookout safety railing. This was setup to allow the lowering and raising a responder through a vertical space.

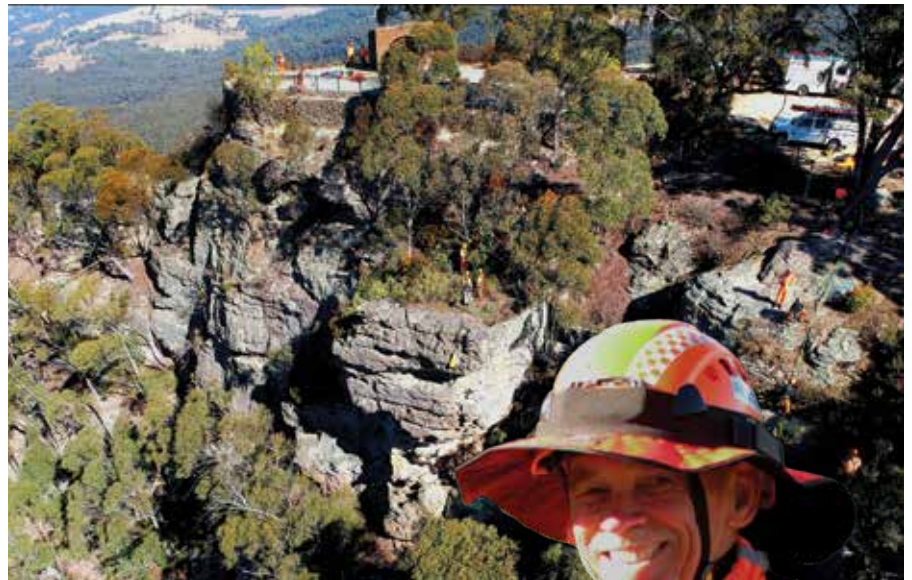
Finally, the third station used the remaining pole and head piece from the Vortex kit to create a gin pole setup, once again to provide edge clearance to give responders access to vertical spaces. In the last two scenarios the responder was lowered and raised by the rest of the top team, rather than abseiling/ascending under their own power. In a real response situation, the VR team's task may be to provide access for a paramedic or other non-climbing responder, thus in these two exercises participants were given the chance to feel what is like to be in a situation where all the control lies with the team up top.

Making these training days multi-unit exercises allows both great mentoring of the newer VR operators by the more experienced crews and a priceless cross transfer of knowledge amongst units. Those members who have been part of VR training will understand that in the VR realm there are many correct ways of doing things, and that where there is such a broad scope of skills, the only way to master them is to get out on these sort of days and exercise not just the physical skills but the mental and logical muscle required to create complex rescue solutions on the fly.

Huge thanks to Glen Thomson and the Blue Mountains unit for organising such a fantastic and worthwhile day.

**Matt McLarty**  
Ku-ring-gai Unit









# Women in Flood Rescue Program

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

The Women in Flood Rescue (WIFR) programme was established in May 2019 with support from the Organisational Performance and Engagement Directorate. The project is convened by the FORCDG Focus Group which includes a broad cross section of volunteer members representing 240 Units across NSW.



This experienced team of male and female consultants is focused on the benefits of engagement, participation and success of women in SES volunteer flood rescue occupations. The objectives of the programme are to:

- » Identify the barriers that influence the participation and success of women in flood rescue activities;

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

The WIFR team has commenced capturing qualitative and quantitative evidence of these “barriers”,

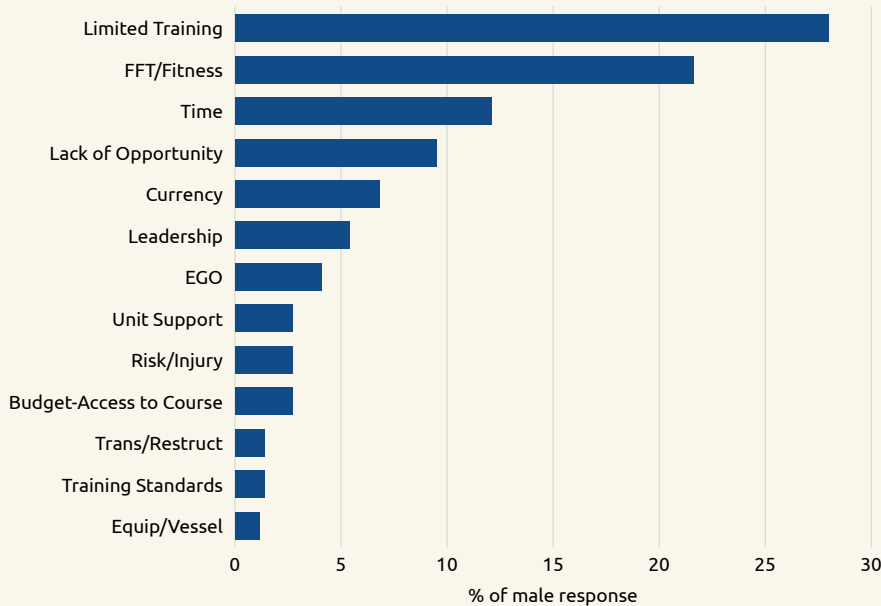


# SURVEY MONKEY PRELIMINARY RESULTS

## 6-14 AUGUST 2019

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

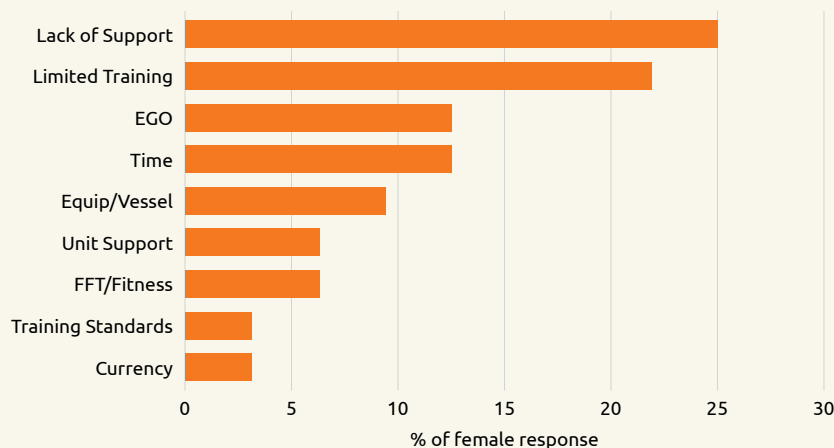
### MALE RESPONSES



### MALE ISSUES

Limited Training:	28.0%
FFT/Fitness:	21.6%
Time:	12.1%

### FEMALE RESPONSES



### FEMALE ISSUES

Lack of Support:	25.0%
Limited Training:	21.9%
EGO:	12.5%

including a series of surveys, which identify impacts to the engagement and success of participants in flood rescue. With this evidence the team will assemble a list of recommendations aimed at eliminating or reducing such barriers, and lead to improvements that make engagement in flood rescue more achievable,

safe and fulfilling for our members, and deliver improved flood protection for our communities.

We thank you for your continued support and valued participation through the recent survey from August 6th to 14th. The preliminary survey results (below) have indicated an interesting breakdown of observed

barriers to engagement and success in flood rescue. Over the coming months the WIFR team will continue to dive more deeply into these observations, to understand the true cause and effects of these impacts, prior to developing a detailed report incorporating recommendations to overcome these barriers.

# Focus on the NSW SES Sutton Unit

**A** massive congratulations to UNSW Canberra Climate Scientist Dr Sophie Lewis who has been named the 2019 ACT Scientist of the Year! Sophie is a member of the NSW SES Sutton Unit who are very proud of her amazing achievement!

Presented by the ACT Government, the award celebrates Canberra's emerging scientists and aims to inspire young people to consider a career in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Dr Lewis studies weather extremes and how climate change contributes to events such as bushfires and droughts.

"We know when it comes to how climate change is affecting extremes, like our heatwaves, it can be a really big issue in terms of human health or our natural ecosystems like the Great Barrier Reef," Dr Lewis said.

"The work that I'm planning on doing in the future is looking at how bad it could get, what is the worst that we should be preparing for and how can we be planning now so that we're most resilient and most adaptable in the future."



**2019 ACT Scientist of the Year, Dr Sophie Lewis.**


Dr Lewis is a member of the team that is producing the IPCC reports which serve as the internationally accepted framework for climate change action and are used to establish global targets, such as the Paris Agreement.


As ACT Scientist of the Year, Dr Lewis will become a science ambassador for

the territory and continue to motivate other young scientists.

The award has been running for five years and comes with a \$30,000 prize. Dr Lewis said she will use the prize to establish a youth climate network, providing young people with mentorship and access to scientific information.

## Have you joined our Facebook Page?





Once you have - Head over to our  
NSW SES Volunteers Association Member  
Benefits Group  
for great discounts and giveaways



## MORE ON THE SUTTON UNIT

The Sutton Unit not only has Dr Lewis to be proud of but they should all be proud of their own efforts and contribution in helping the community by getting involved and lending a helping hand down at G Spot Canberra and donating items to their initiative assisting local community pantries. A great cause to get behind and the Sutton Unit was glad to have the opportunity to help out. Fantastic community work – good on you Sutton!



## AWARDS

SES volunteers are the lifeblood of communities across NSW - their tireless work preparing and helping the community when an emergency strikes is appreciated and it is great to see Members recognised for their dedication and celebrated for their efforts. Our volunteers are men and women who put the community ahead of themselves and for that we thank you.

On Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019, NSW SES Commissioner Kyle Stewart presented a number of NSW SES members with very special awards at an Awards Ceremony in Goulburn.

### ANTHORR NOMCHONG Sutton Unit Commander

Recognised for his dedication and received a 10 Year Long Service Award Clasp



Congratulations also go to Volunteers Jennifer and Neil on achieving Long Service Awards with the NSW SES.

Neil also took home a Nation Service Medal - Congratulations!



## Would you like to have your NSW SES Unit featured and recognised for the great work they do?

Each edition of The Volunteer we will be featuring a NSW Unit and acknowledging the Volunteers for their amazing work and dedication.

To have your Unit included in our next edition please forward stories / pictures / award recipients / acknowledgements etc to [Editor@nswsesva.org.au](mailto:Editor@nswsesva.org.au)

If you have any questions about the VA Magazine and content submissions, please contact Carlee Maccoll at  
E: [carlee.maccoll@nswsesva.org.au](mailto:carlee.maccoll@nswsesva.org.au) P: 02 8397 8293

# NSW SES VA newly appointed Recognition Coordinator

**H**ello, my name is Anthorr Nomchong and I am the newly appointed NSW SESVA Recognition Coordinator, I am also the Unit Commander for Sutton and have been a member of the NSW SES for over 11 years.

As the 'VA Recognition Coordinator' is a new position in the VA my scope is quite broad, it covers being the first point of contact for any queries about recognition to the VA and working with the NSW SES regarding issues of recognition and awards for volunteers and looking at how the VA may access or navigate the national and state recognition programs in support of the volunteers.

So, a little about myself, I am currently the Commander of Sutton Unit which is located just outside the ACT as a part of South Eastern Zone. I have been the Commander here for the last two years and prior to that I was a member of Goulburn Unit and have served in operations in many positions including team

leader and Deputy Local Controller for about ten years. I've done numerous deployments out of area, including some notable ones as part of the Qld Cyclone Yasi task forces, 2011 Blue Mountains bushfires, 2013 east coast low in the Hunter Valley at Port Stephens and the 2019 task force into support the ACT SES. In my civilian life I have been a member of a federal law enforcement organisation for over 24 years, and recently was a shift manager at the Australian Government Crisis Coordination Centre which is a part of Emergency Management Australia. I am also ex-military and was a member of a cadet organisation for over 18 years.

I have been lucky enough to have had the opportunity to co-author the Australian Customs Service Awards and Recognition system and provide input on a number of recognition issues to federal and state politicians. And I have pre and post graduate qualifications in law and administration, public administration, quality management, project management and training.



**Anthorr Nomchong.**

I also manage and support the new VA representative on the NSW SES Awards and Recognition Committee. So I'd like to introduce Mark Elm as part of my team and a very experienced member in this space, he has been appointed to the Commissioners Awards and Recognition Committee as the VA representative.

I approached Mark to play an active part in ensuring our members are appropriately recognised for courage, service to the community. He will be ensuring that each nomination is carefully considered against a backdrop of Merit. Part of Mark's role as the SESVA rep is to provide feedback of statistical data back to me which I will be compiled as a regular report for the VA Board.

This information will enable us as your association to develop solutions and in turn provide a strong base for solid and measured recommendations back to the NSW SES Commissioner about how our members are nominated, including what needs to be included in a nomination for it to be fairly considered on its merits and alternative avenues for nominations for personal with disabilities or limitations.

Mark has been the recipient of numerous National, State and International Honours and Awards. He understands the importance of strong governance surrounding Awards regulations and the requirement of timely and accurate recognition as a way to honour service, but also as a mechanism to retain members. Timely and accurate recognition is an important part of organisational culture and renewal. It has an important part to play in the recruitment and retention of NSW SES members.



**Sutton Unit (Anthorr 3rd from left).**



# Mark Elm

## NSW SESVA Representative on the NSW SES Commissioners Awards Committee

Mark will also have the opportunity to recommend via our team changes and amendments to the internal awards themselves based on public safety agency best practice and to support wider changes to national recognition under the Australian Honours and Awards Framework. All of which will be a great step forward, thanks Mark.

I have also established a Facebook group called 'NSW SESVA Recognition – Working Group' and I am looking for SES members who have an interest in the subject of 'Recognition and Awards' and would be interested in working to develop some capabilities to support volunteers in navigating the nomination process. I am especially looking for members who have high level writing skills, graphic design / desktop publishing skills or are SME's on the subject. If you are interested in being involved please have a look for the group and submit a request to join and support the VA initiative.

And lastly, if you are interested in the progress of the VA in this area I will also be contributing articles to the VA web magazine and I aim to provide some advice and tips regarding how to navigate the nomination process and some common mistakes and hints. So thanks for listening and I hope your knowledge and use of Honours and Awards will be a great way to recognise our fine volunteers and their extraordinary efforts.

Kind Regards.

**Anthorr Nomchong**

Recognition Coordinator  
NSW SES Volunteers Association

**M**ark has both undergraduate and post graduate qualifications. He is a graduate of the highly regarded Public Sector Management Program. He is a qualified Trainer Assessor. He has proven not-for-profit Board of Management past and current experience with charities, ex-service organisations and welfare organisations and performs a variety of volunteer roles within NSW SES at Tweed Heads, Sutton and also service as an Advisor to the D&I Indigenous space and is an accredited NSW SES Assistant Protocol Officer. Mark has over 27 years service as an Emergency Service Officer under the SERM Act with L1 and L2 Incident Coordination experience. He is a former NSWPF Senior Sergeant of Police. He is a Returned Peacekeeping Veteran having seen 'warlike' Service in East Timor in 2003. He has also been deployed in the Disaster Management space to Houston Texas, and other deployments within NSW and QLD in IMT roles with Team Rubicon Australia.

Mark is well regarded in the Ceremonial, Protocol and Recognition circles within the Federal and NSW Public Safety space. He has sat on the NSWPF Commissioners Awards



**Mark Elm.**

Assessment Committee and sat on the AFP National Awards Recognition Committee.

He has previously served as a former Team Leader of Recognition in the AFP; was the Project Manager for the establishment of the AFP Ceremonial Mounted Cadre; was a project Officer on the National Police Memorial Dedication Project. Mark was Coordinator for the National Drill Instructors Workshop, the National Recognition Workshop, the Mounted Police Workshop amongst others. He has also been a visiting contributor to the AFP CAPO network future directions conference. He has formulated Commendation and Citation Regulations for the NSWPF.

Mark was previously a Field Protocol Officer with the NSWPF from 2005 until 2017. Mark was the NSW Police Academy Senior Protocol Officer between 2007 and 2012. He is also an accredited AFP Ceremonial and Protocol Officer and Drill Instructor. He has held various Ceremonial and Parade appointments both nationally and within NSW. He is a visiting instructor to the AFP Ceremonial and Protocol Officer Course from 2006 until present.



**Mark Elm (far right, front row).**



Volunteers Association Proudly Delivering

# Mental Health First Aid

## Moruya Unit

**M**oruya Unit on the south coast was host to the first Mental Health First Aid for volunteers outside of Metro Zone during June. Moruya Unit reached out to the NSWSES Volunteers Association following the Metro pilot and seeing the benefit of this training, particularly for its members involved in road crash rescue.

Consequently, a VA grant was approved and with the support of SES, and a pro-active leadership team at Moruya, plans for the course were put in place. Twenty members travelled from Ulladulla, Bega, Eden, Wingecarribee, Yass, Queanbeyan, Bungendore, Bermagui, Albion Park, Harden, Snowy

Mountains and Batemans Bay to participate in the course, whilst the trainers came from Marrickville.

Participants spent 12 hours over the weekend discussing a wide range of mental health issues and concerns, how we can respond in both supporting each other as volunteers and in assisting the community during times of high stress. Discussion between participants highlighted that despite differences in geography and unit demographics, concerns about mental health and the stigma that exists around it, was a common issue in all our communities. On completing the course, the overwhelming response



was positive, with one participant even reporting it was *"one of the best training courses I have done"* and many identifying the benefit not just to their SES role, but their professional and personal life. An added benefit of running this at zone level was the opportunity for members to catch up in person over a VA sponsored BBQ in the evening. Given the distance between some of these units, building these connections is also an extra layer to looking after our wellbeing!

The Volunteer's Association is already making plans to run MHFA across all zones in the coming future, and is always happy to hear from units that would be interested in being part of this. If your unit is interested in hosting or attending one of these weekends, please contact selina.thomas@member.ses.nsw.gov.au





# Operational Fleet and Equipment

**T**he Fleet Replacement Program (FRP) will ensure that our members have the resources to provide a reliable, prompt, safe and consistent response to their local communities in times of floods, storms and other emergencies.

In developing our operational capability, our approach is to work with our colleagues across NSW and interstate, ensuring that we leverage the latest thinking and technology, and the work of our partner agencies, to maximise the value that we can achieve with our limited resources.

In June 2018, the NSW Government announced \$56.4M over four years in funding to support the ongoing strategic replacement of the NSW SES fleet. The announcement provided much needed certainty for the SES in terms of the status of our operational fleet. The funding will enable the provision of critical vehicles, marine vessels and trailers.

The Fleet Replacement Program delivered Medium Rescue Vehicles to Wingecarribee, Port Stephens and Coffs Harbour Units and Command and General Purpose vehicles to St Georges Basin and Moss Vale Unit in FY2018/19.

The vehicle schedule will see 26 Generation 3 Light Storm Vehicles delivered to units between August and December with more to follow in 2020 and beyond. Five new snowmobiles are currently being fitted out for the Alpine Unit becoming operational this winter. Tenders established by

In addition to the delivery of the fleet vehicles, work has begun on defining capability requirements for Light Rescue Vehicles (Flood), Marine Vessels and Trailers.

We will be looking at how we can provide mid-life safety upgrades and equipment enhancements to ensure

**In June 2018, the NSW Government announced \$56.4M over four years in funding to support the ongoing strategic replacement of the NSW SES fleet.**

the FRP in FY2018/19 will allow for the purchase of 12 additional Light Storm Vehicles, 15 Medium Storm Vehicles, 10 Medium Rescue Vehicles, 45 General Purpose Vehicles, a 22 seat bus, 11 Command Vehicles and three additional Snowmobiles.

Work is underway to tender for build of Heavy Rescue Vehicles.

our fleet is maintained to a modern standard. The fleet will also be rotated between units to enable smarter management and allocation whilst ensuring the oldest vehicles in our fleet are retired.

Kind regards,

**Venetia**

## OH&S Good Safety Leadership is important

**L**eaders across the SES have a pivotal role in managing safety. When members know their supervisors place a high importance on working safely, they are more likely to be motivated to follow safety procedures and raise safety issues.

This October is National Safety Month with a theme of "Be a Safety Champion". We can all champion health and safety each and every day as a member of the NSW SES to support our communities. Being a leader for work health and safety and taking an active role in supporting a strong safety culture is something we all can do.

As a safety leader you can:

- » Promote and apply the NSW SES safety golden rules
- » If you see something say something
- » Actively promote safety
- » Report any incident and hazards

Together we can make a positive change and demonstrate we are the best volunteer emergency service in Australia.  
Stay Safe

**Gary Zuiderwyk**

Manager Safety Health and Wellbeing





# Bega and Eden Units Search and VR

**O**n 12 January 2019, members of the Sapphire Coast Cluster, South East Zone, assisted Police in a second search for a person reported missing from Eden who was last seen on 11 December 2018. This second search for the missing person targeted the coastline in an extensive search around the Eden headlands and also involved assistance from Surf Life Saving NSW and the Westpac Lifesaving helicopter.

The NSW State Emergency Service was tasked to provide vertical rescue operators to undertake a search of the cliff areas. We have attended vertical rescues around this area in the past and we knew that the terrain was steep, unstable in parts and visibility from the top of the cliffs to the bottom was difficult.

SES Members from Eden and Bega formed two teams consisting of a number of VR operators and support members. Members of the Tathra Surf Life Club used drones to scour the cliff areas and jet skis and IRBs to view the cliff faces from the water. Anything of interest was flagged and SES VR operators abseiled down to these areas for further investigation.

Unfortunately the search did not locate the missing person and a third, extensive two-day search was undertaken in March 2019 without result.

Not only did the VR support operation on 12 January 2019 strengthen our capability as a Cluster, it also provided our members with the training opportunity of working with our local SLS volunteers and being able to utilise their drone capability into the future will be invaluable, particularly along the vast coastline boundary of the Sapphire Coast Cluster.

This was another reward challenge for myself and team members in supporting our local community and working along side our local emergency services and volunteers.

**Rod Gould**  
Unit Commander, Bega







## FRESH OFFERS FOR SPRING

**Tynan Motors Fleet** is pleased to offer corporate rewards\* across our entire range of vehicles for SES Volunteers and SES Staff. If you are considering a new vehicle, we provide exceptional value and outstanding customer service



Not only do we offer Corporate Employee Pricing on all new vehicles and accessories, with this flyer you will secure a further reduced dealer delivery fee, priority vehicle order and allocation as well as any additional monthly incentives.

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Once you have determined the make and model required, you may contact Mark Vandy, Fleet Sales Manager and he will be sure to assist with any requirement you may have.



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# Not all heroes wear capes!

They wear jumpsuits, boots, protective gear, helmets and their hearts on their sleeves.

Your job is high risk. It's relentless, intense and dangerous. You are brave beyond measure and we are all grateful every day for your skill and kindness in the face of adversity.

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