

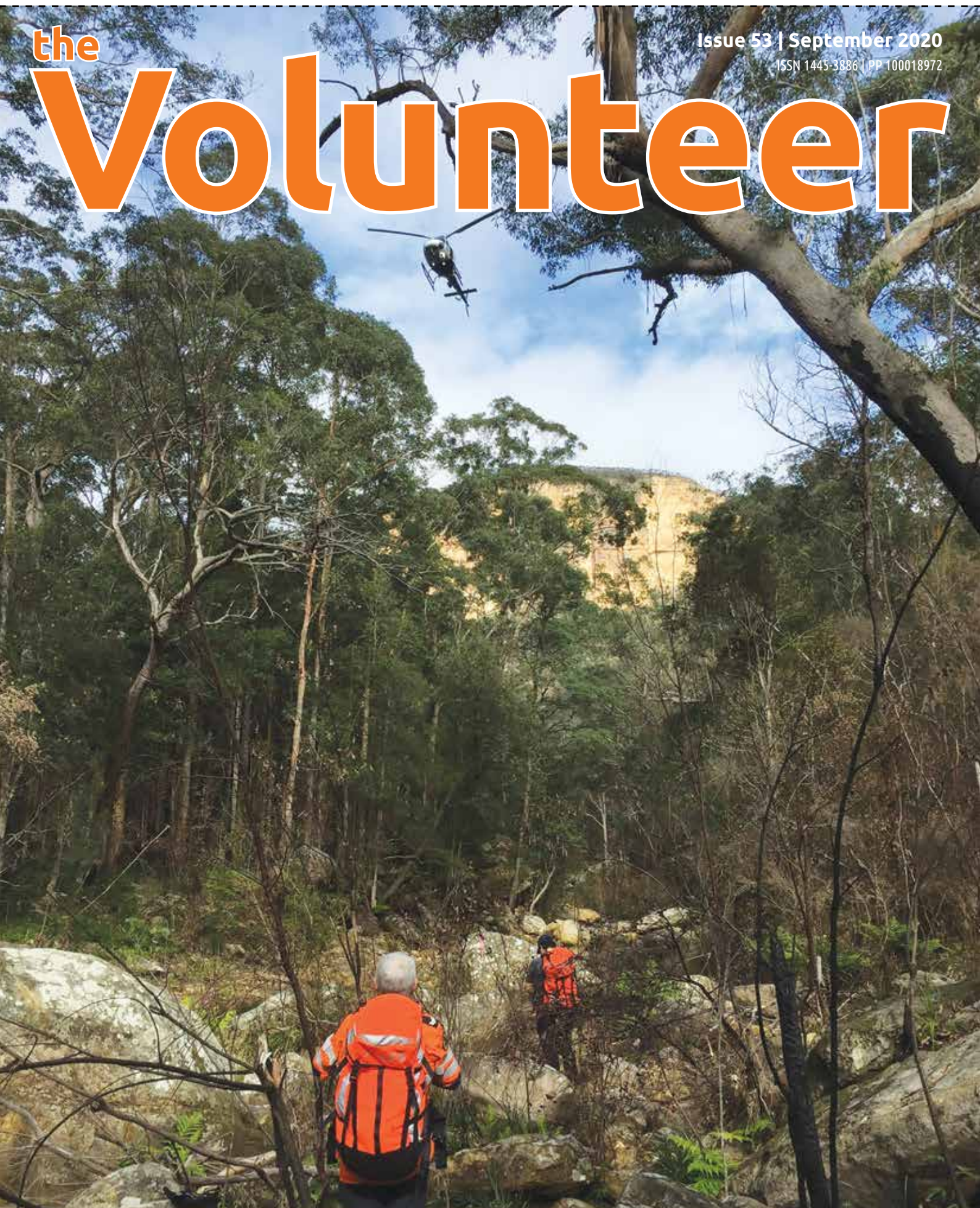
The official journal of the NSW SES Volunteers Association

the

# Volunteer

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# the Volunteer

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## Proudly supporting our local SES Volunteers

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

**Sonia Hornery**

State Member for Wallsend



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### On the cover:

Search for a missing bushwalker





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

**Stay safe out there and support each other, the fatigue in the current climate is real and remember, if you need some additional help, or just a friendly chat, give us a bell.**

**F**or a brief moment there it felt like we were going to see the back of COVID-19 and start to resume a sense of normalcy – something that has been missing since the fires started.

But again we saw case numbers increase and the renewed threat of lockdown and potentially transmission.

At the Association we have been busy with personal issue sanitiser and mask packs for VA members, these

are still available and just need to be requested through the office.

We have continued with our advocacy and welfare support, and have maintained contact with members who have self-identified as wanting a friendly check-in during what can potentially be a very lonely time.

There have been a number of exciting achievements for us as an Association during this time – online Mental Health First Aid courses, continued

issuing of grants and most exciting of all, we are very proud to announce we have secured a rural property to provide members with wellness, welfare and professional development opportunities. Check out our Facebook page for more information on the new retreat!

With this new property, comes a whole new exciting and challenging era for the Association – one we have been preparing for for a while. I'm incredibly happy that we have a Board who is willing to support and embrace what we know will be a wonderful place for our members to grow, relax and enhance their skills across a broad range of areas.

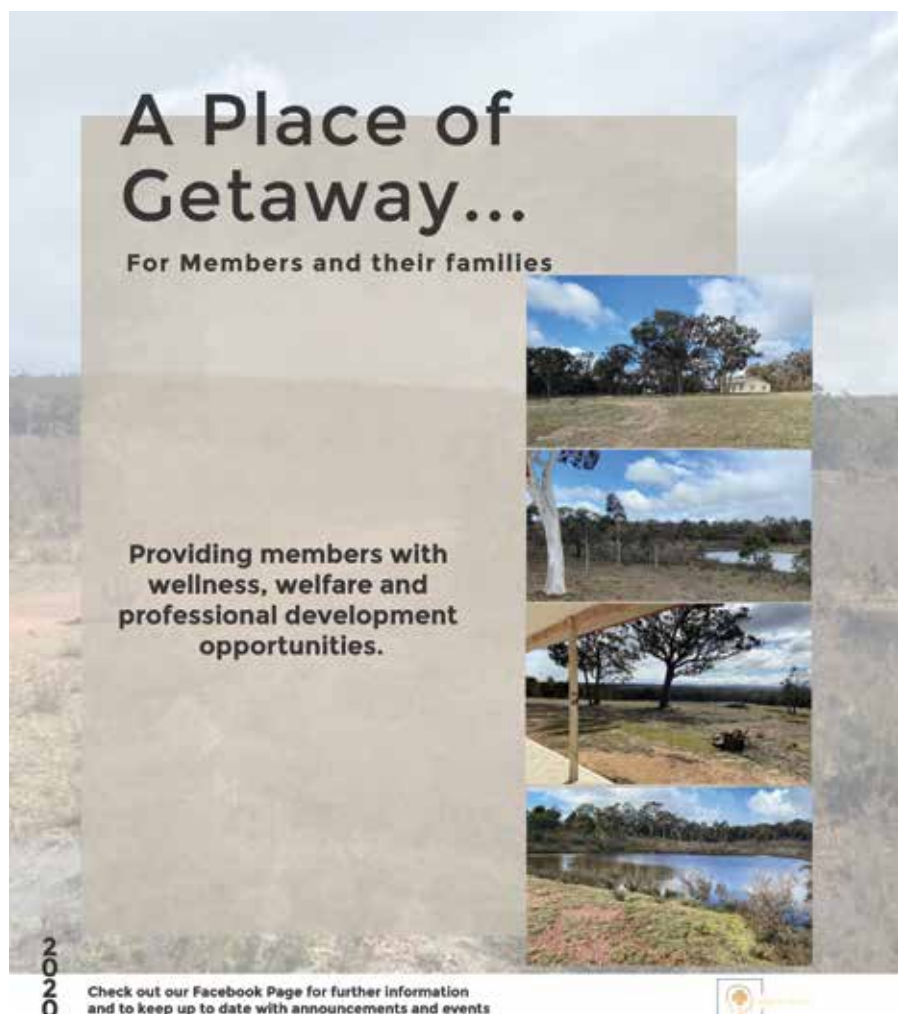
We're also expanding the Eat.Sleep.Respond brand to include some new products – they're on our shop and the Eat.Sleep.Respond Instagram page so head over and give them a like!

Over the next couple of months, our focus will be on providing more MHFA courses to members, looking for innovative grants\* to fund and making some well overdue changes to our Constitution.

Stay safe out there and support each other, the fatigue in the current climate is real and remember, if you need some additional help, or just a friendly chat, give us a bell.

The Welfare Fund remains available for members and we have the ability to put you in touch with professional mental health providers if needed.

Thanks for everything you continue to do!



\*grants for Cert IV Training and Assessment and upgrade and MR/HR licences are still not eligible due to advice from the NSW SES that they are available through Zone level.

**I am proud to say our community can trust the NSW SES to be there to assist in all manner of crisis, a fact that is of great comfort and relief to the people of our state.**



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

**T**his year has brought with it exceptional challenges, and an even more exceptional response from our NSW State Emergency Service (NSW SES) volunteers. As many of our communities continue to recover from last summer's devastating bushfires, they are now also dealing with the global pandemic as well as storms and floods. I am proud to say our community can trust the NSW SES to be there to assist in all manner of crisis, a fact that is of great comfort and relief to the people of our state.

Last month, the NSW South Coast suffered the worst flooding in nearly three decades and Sydney experienced heavy rain and damaging winds. Over the four day weather event, the NSW SES responded to 1,600 requests for assistance, almost half of which were for the South Coast, as well as undertook 40 flood rescues. I would like to recognise and thank you for your hard and tireless work, and commitment to assisting your communities in their time of need. One of the many inspiring stories from the event was that of the Kiama volunteers who paddled their boat for four kilometres in the middle of the night to rescue a couple who were stranded with five horses and two dogs. The volunteers managed to help the pair and their animals to safety before paddling all the way back to their vehicle. That story is just one of thousands where NSW SES volunteers went above and beyond to assist community members, proving time and time again, your dedication to the people of NSW.

As we trust in you to assist in our most challenging times, know



that the NSW Government supports you in your mission to keep our communities safe. In the time since I last wrote to you, I've had the pleasure of joining volunteers across the State to handover new vehicles and boats made possible by the Government's \$56.4 million investment into the NSW SES's fleet replacement program. Since April 2020, I have visited units in Rockdale, Taree, Forster Pacific Palms, Dungog, Sutherland, Hurstville, Penrith



and my very own Baulkham Hills Unit, and I would like to thank each of you for your gracious hospitality.

As we near the beginning of storm season, and deal with the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, your contribution to the community is irreplaceable. Please take care of yourselves and your loved ones in the days and months ahead.

Once again, thank you all for your tireless efforts in keeping NSW safe in these challenging times.





**CARLENE YORK APM**  
NSW SES COMMISSIONER

**W**e have now well and truly passed the halfway point of 2020 – a year which has seen us face many challenges and tested us in ways that we never have been before. I sincerely hope, amid the chaos of the past 12 months, you, your family, and your colleagues have stayed healthy and safe.

The last time I wrote to you all, I spoke about how my team and I are doing all we can to support you during the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, I mentioned the strategies we were putting in place to minimise the risks of COVID-19. This included introducing online training, and even conducting training via Microsoft Teams. I wholeheartedly appreciate how receptive you have been to these measures, and acknowledging their necessity to protect you, your families, and the very communities you so passionately serve.

Since 1 January, you have responded to nearly 40,000 requests for assistance, which is more than double the number of requests we received for the same time last year.

I have touched on this before, but I feel it is something that can't be said enough. You are all incredibly committed and passionate people, and these are qualities I find inspiring. But even more so than that, you are the very lifeblood of the NSW SES. That is why I feel it necessary to share with you the changes I am making to ensure you feel valued and part of one team. Now, volunteers coming into State Headquarters will no longer sign in as a 'visitor'. Instead, you will sign in – as it should have always been – as a 'member'. While this is a small measure, I hope it is one that will make volunteers and staff feel part of one organisation.

I have also started reviewing our Service's policies and procedures to ensure that they reflect who we are and what we do – a vital emergency service that is on the dedication and commitment of volunteers.

I am also reviewing these policies and procedures to make sure they align with the current world we are operating within.

Finally, I want to share my thanks for your work this year. It has been both extremely busy and challenging. Since 1 January, you have responded to nearly 40,000 requests for assistance, which is more than double the number of requests we received for the same time last year. This is tens of thousands of work hours you've spent away from your families and friends all for the benefit of your local community. Thank you on behalf of myself and the Executive Team.

Make sure that you keep up to date with the information that the Service is currently providing through Member Connect, Safety Bulletins and emails, and most importantly, stay safe.

**MATT LANDI**  
**Unburnt Place**

Matt Landi, a singer-songwriter from Sydney, has recently released a new song called "Unburnt Place".

The song was written during the 2020 Australian Bushfires - and it is about the families that were affected during this time.

To give back to the SES volunteers for their help during that summer, Matt is kindly donating the proceeds he makes from the song to the NSW SES VA

Check it out and have listen on youtube or you can stream/download the song at

<https://www.mattlandi.com>

**THE VOLUNTEER MAGAZINE**

We value your input and want to acknowledge and promote the amazing work you all do!

We encourage all the Units and Zones to contribute and be a part of our Magazine

If you have participated in any Training days / Operational activities / Community Events, would like to Shout out a Volunteer or acknowledge an award recipient etc we would love to hear about it!

To have your unit featured please send in your articles and images to [editor@nswsesva.org.au](mailto:editor@nswsesva.org.au)

**Volunteers ASSOCIATION**

NSW SES Volunteers Association [www.nswsesva.org.au](http://www.nswsesva.org.au)



“  
**The truth is our legacy has been built  
 by putting one foot in front of the  
 other and doing it year after year.**  
 ”



**STEVE HALL**  
 SENIOR CHAPLAIN

## One foot in front of the other

**R**emember the Cliff Young shuffle, the potato farmer who won the ultramarathon? He just kept putting one foot in front of the other and won the Sydney to Melbourne ultramarathon. It wasn't pretty but it got the job done. I think his example can teach us a lot – not the shuffle bit. Cliff understood that to get to the goal he had to just keep putting one foot in front of the other.

My feel is that this is how we must deal with our COVID ridden world. We must keep putting one foot in front of the other. And we are. The NSW SES has not dropped the ball in its service to the people of NSW. We even made the front page of the *Sydney Morning Herald* during the last storm event where we handled over 2,500 requests for assistance. Our reality is that we serve regardless of a disease.

It's also true for our history. We have much to be proud of in our 60 plus years of service. The truth is our legacy has been built by putting one foot in front of the other and doing it

year after year. We haven't suddenly woken up one morning with a brand-new shiny SES. COVID has reminded us that any initial threat sets us back for a bit. Then we regroup, put new plans in place and deal with the cards we have been dealt. That's at the heart of emergency management.

I am proud to wear orange and always have been. I started as a volunteer and like lots of us moved across to the paid workforce because I love the place. I have had the privilege of helping in lots of the challenge's nature has thrown at us and in the tough times when we have done it to ourselves. In all those events we confronted the threat, regrouped and put plans in place and got out and served the community. That's been happening for over 60 years and I am humbled at the service of so many of our members who make my 15 years of service look like a walk in the park.

I don't have any fancy answers to what comes next or how hard it will be. What I know is that I put

on orange to help and my job is to keep doing it by putting one foot in front of the other and dealing with each matter that comes my way. That's our lived history. That's the story of the NSW SES. Currently as an organization we are regrouping and that's not just COVID related. We have a new leadership team that is settling in and putting new plans in place to positively shape our future. We have a new Commissioner with steady hands. We have an impressive 60-year legacy to build on. And like Cliff Young, we will keep putting one foot in front of the other till we get to our goal.

Even as the Padre I can't predict the future. What I can do is actively work to build a future that honours our legacy, that reinvests in orange and continues to make me proud to belong to the SES. I choose to do that by saving lives, protecting property and putting one foot in front of the other to make the NSW SES the best emergency service it can be.





**W**hat a hectic year it has been – so far we have faced Drought, bushfires, a World-wide Pandemic and now more wild weather with intense Storms and floods throughout NSW and we are only ¾ through! With every event, It has been our incredible NSW SES Volunteers that have been there every step of the way, working tirelessly around the clock to help save lives and ensure communities are safe when disaster strikes. It is awesome to see the appreciation & acknowledgement of your hard

work and amazing achievements recognised by members of the community, the News & Media outlets & also Shout-outs from Celebrities! You should all be proud of what you do and what you have achieved as Volunteers and Local Heros.

This month the focus is again on Mental Health and we would like to remind those that are not doing well that the Volunteers Association is here to help and we can arrange private and confidential care for members across the state to access health professionals when requested.



**ARE THEY TRIPLE OK?**

We're always there to help. Let's make sure we help each other and ask R U OK?

**RUOK?**  
A conversation could change a life.

[ruok.org.au/triple-ok](http://ruok.org.au/triple-ok)

**RUOK?**  
Thursday, 10th of September is R U OK? Day and is our National day of action when we remind Australians that every day is the day to ask, "Are you OK?" If someone you know is struggling with life's ups and downs. **A Conversation can save a life.**

Lifeline: **131 114**  
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NSW SES Critical Incident Line: **1800 626 800**



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### NEW ONLINE BOOKING PORTAL

With restrictions easing, we are excited to return to face training and recommence our MHFA Seminars onsite at our Rockdale Training facility and at other venues throughout NSW. Our New online booking portal for our Mental Health First Aid courses and events website is up and running and can be found at [www.sesvaevents.com](http://www.sesvaevents.com). New course dates will be advised soon

### THE NSW SES VOLUNTEERS ASSOCIATION IS A PROUD SPONSOR OF RESCA

We are looking forward to attending the Rotary NSW Awards Presentation Dinner on Friday, 30th October 2020 . The Awards Presentation Dinner is an opportunity for Rotary, the Emergency Services and New South Wales to celebrate the outstanding community service of Emergency Services personnel across the state. We are proud Sponsors of the Awards Dinner and will be in attendance to congratulate the nominees and winners !



**A big thank you**  
to one of our  
members who  
sent in a picture  
of Paddy with  
a new edition  
to the family –  
super adorable!



## MERCHANDISE

We have had some great suggestions from members for new merchandise ideas and are excited about our new Eat Sleep Respond range available now on our online store [www.nswsesva.org.au/shop](http://www.nswsesva.org.au/shop) we have also been working on new designs for our apparel and will reveal them soon – watch this space!

Don't forget all our SES and SESVA Merchandise are also available on our online store - Check out our Instagram and Facebook pages to stay up to date on current deals and discounts for members and don't forget to tag us wearing your gear.

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\*No bulk orders

[WWW.NSWSESVA.ORG.AU](http://WWW.NSWSESVA.ORG.AU)

Thankyou to all the Units who contributed to this edition –once again we have another packed edition and it is all thanks to your input. If you have any ideas or feedback on what you would like to see more of in our magazine please let me know.

If you would like your unit featured in our December Edition please send in your articles and Images to [editor@nswsesva.org.au](mailto:editor@nswsesva.org.au) by the **20th of November 2020**.

Stay safe

Carlee Maccoll



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SOON!



## NSW SESVA 2021 Calendar



### Have your Unit Featured

We are seeking high resolution images for our  
NSW SESVA 2021 Calendar

If you have an image you would like to feature  
in the Calendar, please send it through to  
[office@nswsesva.org.au](mailto:office@nswsesva.org.au)

We are accepting submissions up until  
31st October 2020



NSW SESVA Volunteers Association  
P: 1300 073 782 E: [office@nswsesva.org.au](mailto:office@nswsesva.org.au)



# NSW SES LGBTIQ+ Allies Network

It's not all about what you identify as, it's about feeling supported and encouraged in bringing your whole self to the agency, because your whole self matters and adds value to the capability of the NSW SES.

## DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IN NSW SES

There has been a lot of talk lately about Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) within business, government and volunteer sectors. NSW SES recently launched the D&I Framework in March this year and more recently, the NSW SES ASPIRE Leadership Vision. There is a lot going on in this space within the sector and outside as well. These initiatives all support the integration of Diversity & Inclusion across the NSW SES and confirm that the health, strength and robustness of the NSW SES is reliant on reflecting and including people from all walks of life.

NSW SES established a range of diversity networks a few years back now, recognising the need to provide a space where service to the agency could be enhanced through recognising, supporting and valuing diverse elements within its membership. The need is also around ensuring that a range of viewpoints and voices can be heard to inform equitable decisions based on input and consideration from different perspectives. It is also proof of a relevant volunteer agency when its members reflect the communities it serves.

## THE LGBTIQ+ ALLIES NETWORK

The LGBTIQ+ Allies Network (now don't get too hung up on the letters, it is not about a label but about personal identity), is open to everyone who believes that your identity is a valuable part of who you are and needs to be included in all aspects of your life – work, family and volunteer. The Allies component is just as crucial in our membership – it makes the network inclusive for everyone. The Network



has consisted of Leads and Co-Leads, committee members and network members, who work together to achieve what we are about.

Basically, the LGBTIQ+ Allies Network is an information and support network aimed at furthering an inclusive service.

SUPPORT one another by providing safe networking and peer-support services.

EMPOWER the service as subject matter experts of LGBTIQ topics.

STRENGTHEN the NSW SES capability by supporting diversity and fostering LGBTIQ inclusion.

## EVENTS & ACTIVITIES FROM THE LGBTIQ+ ALLIES NETWORK

Here is what the LGBTIQ+ Allies Network and NSW SES Diversity & Inclusion Officer have accomplished so far and what we are planning moving forward:

- » Negotiated the NSW SES membership in Pride in Diversity which includes a range training and support (if you did not participate in the training session on Thursday 20th August, where you would have learnt about all the letters in the LGBTIQ+ acronym, then keep an eye out for future opportunities). Part of this membership includes measuring the NSW SES against a range of inclusive targets for the LGBTIQ+ Allies space over time
- » Became a member of the new Public Service Pride Network which is a collaboration of LGBTIQ Networks across the State Government Sector. You can also join this network. They have recently released the Rainbow Waratah as their official logo. The Network aims to provide sector-wide information, resources and support for the LGBTIQ+ members



NSW SES LGBTIQ+ and Allies Network

### Tips for creating an LGBTIQ inclusive workplace



- **Be informed** – Join our face book group **NSW SES LGBTIQ and Allies Network**. Access resources on EOS
- **Be mindful** – Inclusive language is powerful and creates a safe space
- **Be a visible ally** by displaying this Ally postcard
- **Be influential** – Call out commentary that may be offensive
- **Be involved** – Attend NSW SES events and promote your involvement
- **Be engaged** – Actively contribute to conversations, including facebook

### WHAT DRIVES ME TO PARTICIPATE

The best memory I have of participating with the LGBTIQ+ Allies Network and NSW SES is most definitely participating in Mardi Gras parades over the years, where each year I am floored and humbled by the diversity of representation that the NSW SES contributes in its entry. Our entry spans culture, age, gender, ability and identity and truly represents the diversity of our membership. To see that membership cheered by the audience for the contribution they make to their local communities and then to see the utter joy on our members faces is irreplaceable and this is the highlight I take from my contributions to the agency and broader inclusion growth across the agency, not only in the LGBTIQ+ Allies space but other areas as well. Come along and experience this with us in the Networks.

#### Dave Webber

Coordinator Community Capability  
Co-Lead NSW SES LGBTIQ+ Allies Network

Member of the Women's Network Committee

- » Recognition of important calendar events over the year including Wear it Purple Day (WIP), World AIDS Day, IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homo/Bi/Transphobia Day), Pride Month (which is June) and a range of other days in the LGBTIQ+ calendar
- » Supported local units in relation to LGBTIQ+ Allies events and activities including Fair Day, Broken Heel Festival, Wagga Mardi Gras and a range of other Pride events
- » Organised the NSW SES entry into the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras – if you haven't been, apply! It is one of the best experiences you can have with your SES family
- » Raised the Rainbow Flag at NSW SES SHQ for the first time ever and it will happen again this year
- » Working with the NSW SESVA focusing mental health first aid training for LGBTIQ+ members

- » Instigated a diversity mosaic of our members to reflect that even within the LGBTIQ+ Allies Network, there is diversity

The LGBTIQ+ Allies Network firmly believe that supporting NSW SES Diversity & Inclusion practices, Community Capability work, Volunteering Strategy initiatives and Operational functional areas is a dynamic purpose of the Network.

### SO, HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

Join the LGBTIQ+ Allies Facebook Group here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/709085262560341>

Send an email to the LGBTIQ+ Allies Network through the D&I email: [DiversityandInclusion@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:DiversityandInclusion@ses.nsw.gov.au)

Be part of the NSW SES Diversity Mosaic – contact [media@ses.nsw.gov.au](mailto:media@ses.nsw.gov.au)

Read Member Connect for information on upcoming events, training and other news



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# NSW Police Marine Command give RAM Trucks Australia the tick of approval



**NSW POLICE MARINE COMMAND HAS TAKEN DELIVERY OF ANOTHER FULL-SIZE RAM TRUCK TO TOW POLICE JET SKIS AND RIGID INFLATABLES TO LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE STATE.**

A 5.7-litre V8 Hemi 1500 Crew Cab has just clocked on for duty, following an evaluation of multiple RAM Trucks, including the 2500.

Based in Balmain, Sydney, the NSW Police Marine Area Command's (MAC) responsibility extends to all coastal areas of NSW and 200 nautical miles out to sea. The services provided by MAC are similar to those carried out by land-based police, including crime prevention and detection, search and rescue.

"These trucks go everywhere in NSW with the MAC enforcement team, from Tweed Heads down to the Murray," says NSW Police Marine Command Superintendent, Stephen Hegarty.

"The 4.5 tonne max brake towing is incredibly useful as it allows us to easily tow up to four jet skis at a time – or one of our bigger rigid inflatables – out to Dubbo, for example, for the Commissioner's Rise Up youth program, compliance around boat safety on the water, or the South Coast to assist in the recent bushfire evacuations."

RAM Trucks Australia began re-manufacturing left-hand full-size pickups into right-hand drive vehicles in late 2015, before they went on sale in early 2016. The volume selling 1500 model came on stream in June 2018, and the latest model, a 1500 Express Crew Cab was launched in late February 2020.

Each vehicle undergoes a thorough re-engineering process at RAM's Melbourne Manufacturing Facility, which designs and produces right-hand drive

trucks for Australia and New Zealand, including using 400 locally sourced re-manufactured parts.

And it was this local manufacturing angle that appealed to Superintendent Hegarty:

"That we're able to support local manufacturing is certainly a factor in our decision-making process," he says.

"The requirements we need to operate within means we have to be on top of our game when it comes to towing capacity and how we enforce the law – we can't be underweighted on tows, so the RAM 1500 fits the bill perfectly."

With an increasing amount of commercial shipping and significant expansion in the number and type of leisure craft on our waterways, the nation's water police are being called on more and more to drive down marine crime, underwater search and rescue, and safety and compliance reinforcement.

Thanks to the legendary 5.7-litre V8 Hemi engine punching out 291kW and a massive 556Nm of torque, it's no wonder the 1500 delivers best-in-class towing capabilities to assist the MAC in their operations.

Jeff Barber, RAM Trucks Australia National Manager, and Joe Ponzo, RAM Trucks Australia National Fleet Manager, have been working closely with NSW Marine Police Command to ensure they have fit-for-purpose vehicles on their fleet. This approach has now prompted additional conversations with other law enforcement agencies throughout

Australia for RAM Trucks.

"Is there a better fit-for-purpose vehicle out there?" says Barber.

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# More to say after RUOK

**R**UOK day is on the 10th September 2020. An annual event that encourages us to reach out to others and check in with how they are going. However, it's important that we make sure we ask this question throughout the year – and that we are prepared with how we will respond when someone says “No, I’m not...”

This is particularly important for NSWSES Volunteers. Why?

- » 1 in 5 Australians have experienced a mental health issue. **For First Responder Volunteers, it's 1 in 3.** For First Responder employees it's 1 in 2.5.
- » 6% of First Responder Volunteers (Australia wide) have experienced suicidal thoughts. The national average is 2%
- » 6% of SES Volunteers (Australia wide) meet the criteria for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. The national average is 4%
- » 46% of First Responder Employees and Volunteers felt they would not be accepted on their team if their colleagues knew they lived with depression and/or anxiety.

Remember that there is *more to say after RUOK*.

You can find advice about having these conversations at <https://www.ruok.org.au/how-to-ask>. Participating in a NSWSESVA Mental Health First Aid course will also assist you to develop these skills in more detail, and look after the mental health of yourself and your SES team mates.



If you'd like to know more about MHFA or have a Mental Health Coordinator drop in to your Unit meetings (We can go anywhere on Zoom or Teams!) to have a chat about Mental Health, please contact Selina at [MHCoordinator@nswsesva.org.au](mailto:MHCoordinator@nswsesva.org.au)

*Statistics sourced from: Beyond Blue Ltd. (2018). Answering the call national survey, National Mental Health and Wellbeing Study of Police and Emergency Services – Final report.*

## Mental Health First Aid Online

**P**rior to COVID-19 shutting down face to face training, we had been successful in receiving support from Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network to run Mental Health First Aid training for NSW SES volunteers in the Murrumbidgee area.

Fortunately, the planned training was still able to go ahead in June, with two courses moved to an online platform. Participants came from a range of communities where we previously haven't been able to run MHFA, representing the units of Tocomwal, The Rock, Temora, Albury and Cootamundra. With some technology learning curves and a few laughs, it was a great opportunity to ensure learning continues. We were also fortunate to have a second Mental Health First Aid trainer, Vic O'Driscoll from Marrickville Unit, assist with the delivery of this course.



We are looking forward to running one more online-MHFA course for Murrumbidgee members in the near future. We have also been successful in receiving support from the Hunter New England-Central Coast Primary Health Network to provide MHFA

training for volunteers in bushfire impacted areas - details about this round of courses will be announced soon!

As always, any questions please contact Selina at [MHCoordinator@nswsesva.org.au](mailto:MHCoordinator@nswsesva.org.au)



**If you're worried about someone  
start by asking "Are you OK?"**

**No, I'm not OK.**

**Dig a bit deeper:**

"What's been happening?"

"Have you been feeling  
this way for a while?"

"I'm ready to listen  
if you want to talk."

**Yes, I'm fine.**

**But your gut says they're not:**

"It's just that you don't seem to  
be your usual self lately."

"I'm always here if  
you want to chat."

"Is there someone else  
you'd rather talk to?"

**Listen with an open mind**

**Encourage action and offer support:**

"How can I help?"

"What would help take the pressure off?"

"What do you enjoy doing? Making time for that can really help."

"Have you thought about seeing your doctor?"

**Make time to check in:**

"Let's chat again next week."



# Grants Program

**D**o you have a new initiative that can be supported by an SESVA Grant? Why not apply? We can even assist you with your application.

Did you know the SESVA Grants have supported the newest cadet programs all the way up to a Deputy Commissioner? If you are somewhere in between and an SES volunteer why not apply for a grant for yourself, your unit or an initiative?

Our Grants Program continues to remain more available to volunteers than ever before. Our Grants program has kick started many a successful SES Campaign and training - Two largely successful grants that started a wave of change were our support for Flood Rescue Training and Large animal rescue training.

Grants are available:

- » To support purchases by Units for items not supplied by the NSW SES or local Government

- » To support volunteers in gaining skills through education to make a difference in the community
- » To support volunteers, participate in activities that add to their capacity as volunteers
- » To support worthwhile activities undertaken by volunteers

Grants are available for individual volunteers, groups of volunteers, NSW SES Units or groups of NSW SES Units.

Some of the grants we have recently approved are:

- » BART subscription
- » Lockers for volunteers
- » Mental Health First Aid Courses
- » MHFA elearning portal access
- » Immunisation nurses training
- » Video production and training videos
- » Cert 4 WHS
- » Wireless headsets
- » RPAS
- » Forklift training
- » Diploma Masters Health Care
- » Unit Social media promotion

- » TAE Upgrade
  - » Wellington Wombats sponsorship
  - » Equipment support for immunisation nurses
- \*Welfare support and member support is separate to grant applications.

We have changed the way we are approving grants and the Grants Committee now meet monthly to review and approve grants.

Applying for a grant is easy. There is a form on our website where you can enter all the details about your grant. Please visit <https://www.nswsesva.org.au/grants-program.html> for more information or to apply for a grant.

If you need help we are here to assist you. Please feel free to contact the office for further information:

**P:** 1300 073 782

**E:** [office@nswsesva.org.au](mailto:office@nswsesva.org.au)

**Please allow at least one month notice for application processing time.**

# SESVA supports life in lockdown

**I**n true Aussie spirit, a nationwide lockdown in March for a rampant virus was not going to stop Port Macquarie SES unit from continuing to meet, train and serve the local community. The directive to suspend face-to-face weekly meetings meant thinking outside the box to ensure we could continue to encourage, support, and build capability within our SES unit family.

Members from the unit including the management team were fortunate to have completed a Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) course in February this year following generous support from the SES Volunteers Association. We had

previously completed SES My5 training but still felt there was more we needed. We pursued the MHFA course to better equip ourselves to assist members of the public while attending callouts, but also have the skills to look after our members while 'off duty'. The SESVA met our need and enabled a specialist trainer to come to our unit and deliver the two-day MHFA training course.

Fast forward a month and the MHFA training made us acutely aware of potential impacts on our member's engagement, motivation, and self-esteem now we were unable to physically meet. In response to the March 20 Safety Bulletin prohibiting

face-to-face training our management team was unanimous in our vision to keep in regular contact with all our members and investigate how we could shift our weekly training into an on-line environment to keep our members engaged.

Within three weeks we had restructured our unit into four new teams, team leaders had called all their team members individually to check in, and we had established channels on the new MS Teams platform to collaborate and meet on a weekly basis. Our first on-line Unit Muster was held on 15th April with 38 members logging on to MS Teams. While it was a little



Jabra Pro Headsets at work, l-r: Michael Brumby, Michael Ward and Katie Blake.

different to gathering at the unit, all members responded how good it was to see each other on-line and send messages in the Chat page. It was great to see the unit camaraderie was still alive and well.

In the weeks that followed we used our channels within MS Teams to break into our new team groups for team specific training. One team comprised new recruits we had on-boarded just before lockdown and trainer Mark prepared awesome on-line video materials to guide them through 'Job-ready' skills and the Fundamentals Course (theory). Another team commenced Storm and Water training which included on-line materials for Asbestos Awareness, Solar Panel safety, and new videos/slideshows prepared by Katie and Scott. The remaining two teams comprised our qualified PIARO and GLR operators for whom we delivered and reviewed theoretical aspects of Industrial and Domestic Rescue, USAR Cat1 training, Drive Vehicles Operational, Vertical Rescue Operations, and Local Flood plan awareness and Community Engagement.

Delivering on-line was certainly a challenge as our trainers were accustomed to a face-to-face environment. We found there was more preparation required to run on-line sessions but true to form our trainers shared the load in building and delivering content each week. Their efforts have certainly been appreciated by all unit members as we consistently saw around 40 members log on for training and the weekly Kahoot challenges. Special thanks to

**We found there was more preparation required to run on-line sessions but true to form our trainers shared the load in building and delivering content each week.**

trainers Mark, Elaine, Katie, Scotty, Alfred, Toby, Serena, and Wardy.

At the start of lock-down we also recognised the need for good audio headsets and microphones to provide a consistent and enhanced on-line experience for our learners. When nothing seemed to be available from SES ICT, we again approached the SESVA who were happy to oblige with a grant of around \$1000 for three Jabra Pro wireless headsets for our lead trainers. These have been indispensable as we spend many hours each week in meetings, webinars, and leading on-line training sessions for our unit. These online meetings have included weekly Unit Commander Meetings, Fortnightly General Land Rescue Capability Development Group, the ASPIRE Leadership coaching sessions and preparation for remote incident management capabilities.

Now we have entered stage 2 restrictions, we have resumed weekly face-to-face training but have split

the unit in half to ensure business continuity for Rescue and Storm response. While one half trains at Unit Headquarters, the other half train off-site, alternating each week. The wireless headsets are now proving useful for our evening muster which we still do on-line using laptops and our local command vehicle. They have allowed us to continue to engage with members who have decided to self-isolate, or for those who are not able to make it to training. Facebook guru Elaine even joined our last Unit muster from London, such is the advantage of the technology we now have available at our fingertips and on our mobile devices.

Thanks again SESVA, your ongoing support is appreciated as we continually look for new ways of doing things differently.

**Michael Brumby**

Deputy Commander Rescue,  
Port Macquarie Unit





**A**n Alpine Search and Survival course was held over the weekend of 8-9 August 2020 in the Snowy Mountains.

The first day of the course was delivered online (due to COVID restrictions) with 3 SES and 3 Ambulance NSW paramedics as candidates with an SES trainer. The paramedics were asked to brief the group on hypothermia in particular and their procedures in general.

A few days earlier Bill Taylor from Snowy River SES set up a lost person: "Spalding St-John-Smythe" in the back country nears Dainers Gap. Spalding consisted of a hazmat suit, filled with snow, surgical gloves for hands and a Spalding basketball for a head. In consideration of the current situation Spalding had a picture of a coronavirus named Wilson on a laminated A4 sheet in the hazmat suit and the team were required to treat Spalding accordingly.

On the Sunday the team met at the Perisher Ambulance station for a



briefing and proceeded to Dainers Gap where they set out on snow shoes to search for Spalding.

The exercise gave participants practice in travelling by snow shoe, to cope in poor weather, erect a tent in the snow and create snow shelters.

With Spalding located the team returned to Perisher for a debrief where all participants agreed it was a

great opportunity to learn about each service's capabilities and expectations and to make personal contacts.

This is the second year the SES Alpine Unit and NSW Ambulance have undertaken joint training.

The assessment weekend for the course will be on the last weekend of August and will involve camping in the snow overnight.



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# Menai Unit



It has not really been too long since we last contributed, but so much has happened; from the advent of COVID-19, to back-to-back operational status over the last 2 weeks. Menai Unit continues to do what we do best; we look after the community and each other.

On the 12 March, we had our muster and training night, not knowing that it would be our last face-to-face muster training until 9 July. Two weeks from that day, we started our first virtual muster and training, where we tried to cover multiple topics from Height & Safety to Mental Health, First-Aid & Fundamentals.

We tried to lighten up the mood on every virtual muster, by adding a different theme every week; it could be anything from Funky, hat to dress up. At some point we all missed gearing up in orange, so we all had our PPE on for that purpose. During this period as well, our camaraderie was being tested.

Some communicated with each other more often by phone, text, email or even facebook messages. Some were able to offer others extra work, to help them financially. Some build lego and some stay busy, by

involving themselves with NSW SES Community Capability team. We even have a member down at his property in Victoria, unable to return due to the closing of the border.

While COVID-19 has created uncertainties and stressful situations, being in new and uncharted territory to all of us in the world, we are lucky

to have each other. Not everyone has a support team like NSW SES Menai.

News relating to our combat roles:

- » We have 20 new recruits, who have successfully gained Job Ready status.
- » The Shire Cluster Local Commander had the idea to create a Land Search working group. It is a group





own community. Between 7th and 11th August 2020, The Shire Cluster received 230 Requests for Assistance (RFAs). This brings our total RFAs (for 2020 to date) to over 2,100. This is in contrast to our 2019 annual total of around 1,200 RFAs ... a mammoth effort.

During that period, we had many Menai members active in the field and over 80 members from The Shire Cluster. We also received tremendous help from numerous SES units from within the Metro Area and numerous RFS and Fire and Rescue teams. This really demonstrates the strong "family" support existing within the NSW SES, both Shire Cluster and statewide.

For a young unit, we have been tested with a variety of challenges but we stand strong. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 we have not taken Paddy on holiday as much as we would have liked to, but once the border is opened, we will take him for well-deserved holiday again.

**Teddy Haryjanto**  
Senior Operator | Menai

dedicated to advancing themselves in readiness for support NSW Police Force when it comes to Land Search Operations. Several Menai members have joined in gaining additional skills that will be helpful within the Unit.

- » Membership has now reached 63.
- » Deployment of Strike Teams to support our extended orange family. During the recent East Coast

Low and other weather events, Menai members have been involved in supporting units in the South Eastern Region.

- » We are working together with NSW SES Community Capability team and RFS units in our catchment area to launch the second stage of Get Ready Survey.

Within the Sutherland Shire, we also have been busy protecting and helping our

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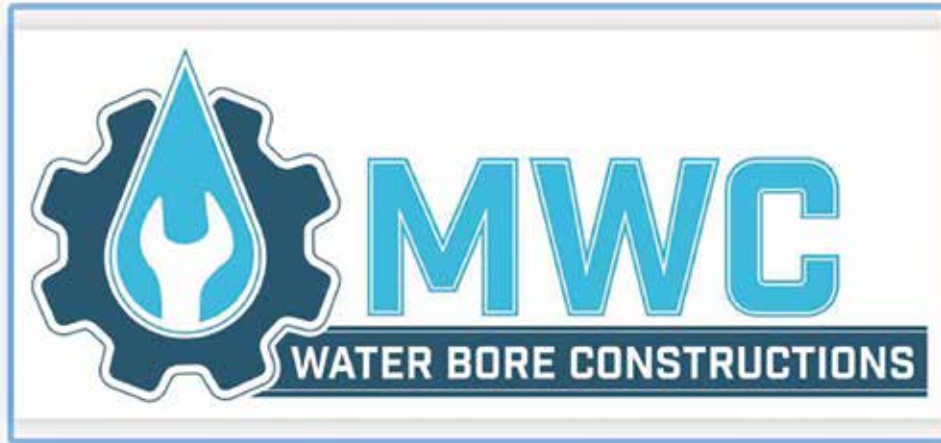
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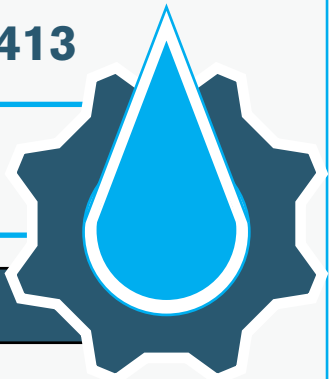
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Development of concrete slab at the Gooloogong site.

# Facilities Update

## Brand new NSW SES unit builds

**F**our major NSW SES Facility projects are presently under construction at Gooloogong, Goodooga, Gilgandra and Moree. The development of these brand new buildings will effectively enhance the capability of the NSW SES to support emergency response and recovery in local communities.

Gooloogong, in both the Cowra Shire and Forbes Shire, will see the first building construction of the example

design using the newly adopted NSW SES approach. Project works have already commenced with the concrete slab being laid.

The new Gooloogong site will see members of the Unit relocating out of the flood plain which will be a significant improvement on the Unit's existing facility.

NSW SES Goodooga Unit in the Brewarrina Shire is almost complete with only the installation of

communication equipment remaining.

Gilgandra Shire Council has contributed additional funding to ensure the NSW SES Gilgandra Unit project is a success. This project is currently out to tender and is scheduled for completion during this financial year.

The new NSW SES Moree Unit is well advanced (presently at lock-up stage) and is due for completion within the coming months.



Design of NSW SES Gooloogong Unit's brand new facility.





# Search for missing bushwalker

**Evans Lookout, Grose Valley, Blue Mountains  
24-30 May 2020**

A seven day land search at the end of May, in the rugged and remote terrain of the Grose Valley, Blue Mountains, drew upon the combined efforts of emergency services, with BSAR commanding the SES response and working closely with Police Rescue on search strategy and taskings.

It's a love of the natural environment that draws 4 million tourists every (normal) year to visit the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains. They visit the lookouts, admire the waterfalls, abseil the canyons and spend many hours or days hiking.

For us locals who call it home, we've been drawn here by the clean air, natural beauty and opportunity to live connected to this natural beauty, with a slower pace of life 2 hours from Sydney.

And like the core of SES jobs: storm; flood or rescue, it is this environment we love that proves itself to be more powerful and unpredictable than people often expect.

It's been a busy few months for us in BSAR (SES Bush Search and Rescue Unit), even though a glance at Beacon only reveals 3 jobs since February, it's when you drill down into the detail that the word 'busy' starts to make sense.

BSAR moved across to the SES in mid-2018 and were previously part of the VRA. A good way to think of us is a specialist 'plug-n-play' rugged and remote LandSAR unit, with 200 members spread across NSW, as a state-based capability. We can go anywhere in the state and see ourselves as a support to the Police and local SES units, for jobs that require very high levels of fitness and importantly, the experience and ability to search, move and live (up to





3 days self-sufficiently) within some of the most difficult terrain that NSW can throw at us.

The 200 metre vertical cliffs that surround the Grose Valley is just such terrain and brought together BSAR members from Newcastle, Greater Sydney and the South Coast, along with our members who are based in the Blue Mountains, to search for missing local man and keen bushwalker, David Bush.

The job was triggered when Blue Mountains Police Rescue contacted local BSAR Deputy Unit Commander, Caro Ryan, on Sunday afternoon. With cold winter temperatures and a short amount of daylight, Sergeant Dal Atkinson initially wanted a small, fast team of

3 BSAR members to do a track recce from the Horse Track to Govetts Leap.

John Hughes, Unit Commander, Blue Mountains SES, reflects on the job. "It was clear from the Police at the outset, that this search had a high degree of technical difficulty, as the missing person was an experienced bushwalker, known to go off-track. The Police were able to quickly respond BSAR who then deployed a rapid team to check the obvious tracks into the Grose Valley. This is a skill where members need to be fit and prepared for an overnight stay if they find the patient in a remote location."

Within just over an hour, 3 BSAR members set off for a 13 km route down into the valley, which has been

badly damaged and closed since the January bushfires. The obstacles from the fire appeared almost immediately and gave us some clues as to how difficult the search in this already tough environment, was to become. By 6.30 pm, the team arrived at Govetts Leap in darkness, ascending the 600 metre vertical climb out of the valley by headtorch. There was no sign of David.

It was clear this was not going to be an easy search and one that would demand additional resources. As a state-wide unit, BSAR can easily call on their members from across the state. It's a different way of working to traditional geographically based SES units - but it works well.





Sergeant Dal Atkinson, heads Police Rescue in the Blue Mountains. "The product SES BSAR delivers in the remote land search space is second to none. The effectiveness and efficiency experienced by Police Rescue when deploying BSAR teams into rugged and remote terrain provides the best chance of a successful outcome."

Over the course of the next 7 days, SES Members (including some additional members of local units from The Hills and Blue Mountains) contributed 188 search days, 15% of which were from the local Blue Mountains unit who provided excellent base support in the form of Beacon and radio operators, transport and

logistics along with the use of their command post caravan, as well as some BLU members (some are dual BSAR members) who are trained in remote search.

The command post was established in the car park at the popular tourist spot of Evans Lookout (David's last known point), where Police Rescue and SES BSAR Commanders (Paul Campbell-Allen and Caro Ryan) co-ordinated the operation with the support of NSW Ambulance Special Operations Team (SOT) RFS RAFT and PolAir.

BSAR Unit Commander, Paul Campbell-Allen says, 'The high level of inter-agency cooperation providing

expertise and support is of major benefit in this type of remote area land search operation. The mutual respect and willingness to assist each other is very evident and greatly enhances the effectiveness of the response.'

With all the tracks and access points to the valley covered early in the search, teams then started to operate in the BSAR sweet-spot - steep, scrambling, uneven and rugged off-track areas of spurs, ridges and cliff lines.

Police Rescue and the BSAR Commanders discussed countless scenarios of where the missing person might have gone, based upon David's high-level of bushwalking experience





from many years exploring off-the-track in the valley.

"An added challenge in thinking about where David may have gone was the impact of the fires which had changed the landscape, obliterating parts of the tracks, but also opening up previously overgrown and inaccessible areas. Little known old passes through the cliffs and caves became a consideration. Our widely experienced BSAR members were able to provide very useful intelligence on these possible destinations,' says Paul.

From these scenarios, meaningful, intelligence-based taskings were created for the teams, taking them into places that very few people (if any) get to see.

"Having the benefit and experience of members of the BSAR Unit now within NSW SES, has been a fantastic improvement to the service we can provide the NSW Police Force in these technical search operations." says, John Hughes.

The search concluded on day 7, as two BSAR teams were converging along steep, adjacent spur lines, heading towards a 150 metre high cliff. Polair spotted the missing person on a rock ledge above. He was later confirmed deceased.

The search tested the capabilities and reinforced the effectiveness of BSAR within its new home of the NSW SES. Still relatively new to the

organisation, the opportunity to present a united team of 'one SES' to the emergency services and the public, working seamlessly as a support to Police Rescue, shows the benefits of our integration.

So whilst there may only be one job in Beacon to show for it, there were over 1800 hours of injury-free, SES rugged and remote work and the continued building of close working relationships across all agencies.

**By Caro Ryan**

Search Commander and Deputy Commander, SES Bush Search and Rescue and DUAL Member with Blue Mountains SES



# South Coast Strike Teams



On 28th July 2020 members received a request for OAAA assistance for the South Coast to assist with storm/flood clean up.

Penrith deployed a team of four that departed Penrith at 7am on the 29th July for a two day deployment. On our team were two seasoned members who have attended numerous out of area assistance over the years, and two newer members that had never been out of area.

One of the beauties of OAAA is the ability to network, work as part of composite team, along with learning new skills and techniques from other units. It also gives you the ability to catch up with old friends from across the state.

Unfortunately this time round due to COVID we needed to consider much more than just the usual take 5. We also had to consider our social distancing, as well as restrictions in venues for eating.



Our team arrived boots on ground on the Wednesday morning, we received a brief at Nowra EOC before then heading for Sussex inlet. The township had been affected with a minor flood level with some homes inundated, along with numerous request for assistance for leaking roofs, and tree jobs.

As we arrived 1-2 days post event, as is often the case our team was tasked jobs that had either been completed by FRNSW or RFS,

completed by the home owner, or residents no longer required assistance.

This is our number 1 tip for OAAA. If allocated an area to attend and numerous jobs why not

1. Review each job in beacon see what is required.
2. Check to see if any additional notes have been made.
3. Check to see if the resident has been contacted today.

If not, call each job:





1. Introduce yourself.
  2. Ask if they still require assistance.
  3. If not complete job in beacon.
  4. If they do advise approx eta of job.
- We did this on both days and as a result managed to clear over 20 jobs. This can be a massive assistance to the IMT, and can save you a lot of wasted time and effort. By doing this we were then able to focus our efforts exactly where they were needed.

During our two days we also came across an elderly lady who had been

trapped in her home from a fallen tree for four days. She was partially blind, the tree had fallen on powerlines leaving her with no electricity. On the day we arrived she was frustrated by the lack of response from SES, and as a result declined any further assistance from SES. Initially SES attended but could not proceed due to powerlines down. The power company came and disconnected the power, but SES were unable to return till four days post event.

This serves as a timely reminder to us all, that if you get a job involving a tree down on powerlines and you can access the home, please call the home owner and check on their welfare. Make sure they are not frail or disabled, make sure they have some way of storing food safely in an esky, check to see if they have a carer or need to leave for medical reasons. Most importantly touch base, say hello, let them know that someone cares.

**Sally Suckling**





(L-r) Jane Busby, Michelle Beatty, Elias Habib, Garrie Herring.

**W**e met at Bankstown LHQ about 0630 then proceeded to check the truck that we were planning to take with us for our OOA journey. Once everything was squared away, we departed Bankstown at about 0730, destination, Nowra.

Once in Nowra we were briefed on the situation and found ourselves on the road again heading further south towards Ulladulla, arriving just in time for lunch, which was served at the unit by their very own masterchef Franco.

During the drive south the devastation from the fires was very apparent with burnt out trees and land as far as we could see, we couldn't help but appreciate and admire the

resilience and fight of all the locals, they had survived some of the worst bushfires this country has ever seen, only to have to face wash flooding and gale force winds all in less than a year.

After lunch we received the details of our tasks, which included both chainsaw and roof jobs. We got to work straight away helping local residents with temporary repairs to roofs and chain sawing trees. We were sent to schools, holiday homes and private houses. The first day we were sent to houses that had tiles and gutters blown off and other properties with trees blocking driveways.

We stayed the night in Mollymook, then were up bright and early the next day back at Ulladulla unit, where we were

ready to go out again and get stuck in. The second day we spent most of our time putting plastic over skylights and removing trees that were dangerously blocking driveways. Whilst we were there, driving from our first to second job, we came across a minor car accident where assisted with traffic control and even provided a much needed relief for one of the drivers involved our presence onsite further reinforced our duty to promote safety to the community.

During our trip we spoke to numerous residents who were extremely grateful for our work as volunteers.

**Michelle Beatty**

## Thankyou from a community member

Hi Guys,

Just wanted to say how awesome Michelle, Elias, Garrie, and Jane are and were. There was an accident outside our neighbours house on Village Drive, Ulladulla this morning, they had just finished their first job and were heading to their next one when they came across the accident. They stopped, put their flashing lights on, got to the job of directing traffic around the cars on the road and offered support to the little lass driver and the chap next door. We think they are LEGENDS and they swept the road and help load the girls things into her mothers car too. So Michelle, Elias, Garrie and Jane, thank you from someone

who grew up in Bass Hill and is now living down here. The guys here are terrific, don't get me wrong, but to me it was extra special because Michelle told me you guys are stationed around from where I lived on Chester Hill Rd and Buist Streets. So thank you for sending these guys down, it really warmed the heart of this old girl, and to the crew THANK YOU. It was a pleasure meeting you, wish it had been in better circumstances. Sincerely

**Toni Boyd (nee Furlong)**



# GLR – Horse rescued from sewage tank

**O**n the 9th of June at about 8:15am, Wingecarribee SES and NSW SES Kiama Unit were called to a General Land Rescue for a horse that had fallen and became trapped by confinement in a sewage tank.

'Flash' the horse had fallen through the roof of a non operational sewage tank which caused him to become stuck.

The Bundanoon Vets along with the NSW SES Volunteers from Wingecarribee and Kiama worked a technical rescue to free the horse by securing a sling around the horse and safely lifting the horse by a crane from the tank.

Not long after being freed, Flash was roaming and grazing in the surrounding paddock.

NSW SES are trained in Large Animal Rescue and have specialist equipment to perform such rescues. With the professional advice and medical action of the Bundanoon Vet and the skills developed by the SES crews, this was a safe and successful extrication.

We hope that Flash has speedy recovery!

#NSWSES #KIAMASES  
#LargeAnimalRescue #Rescue



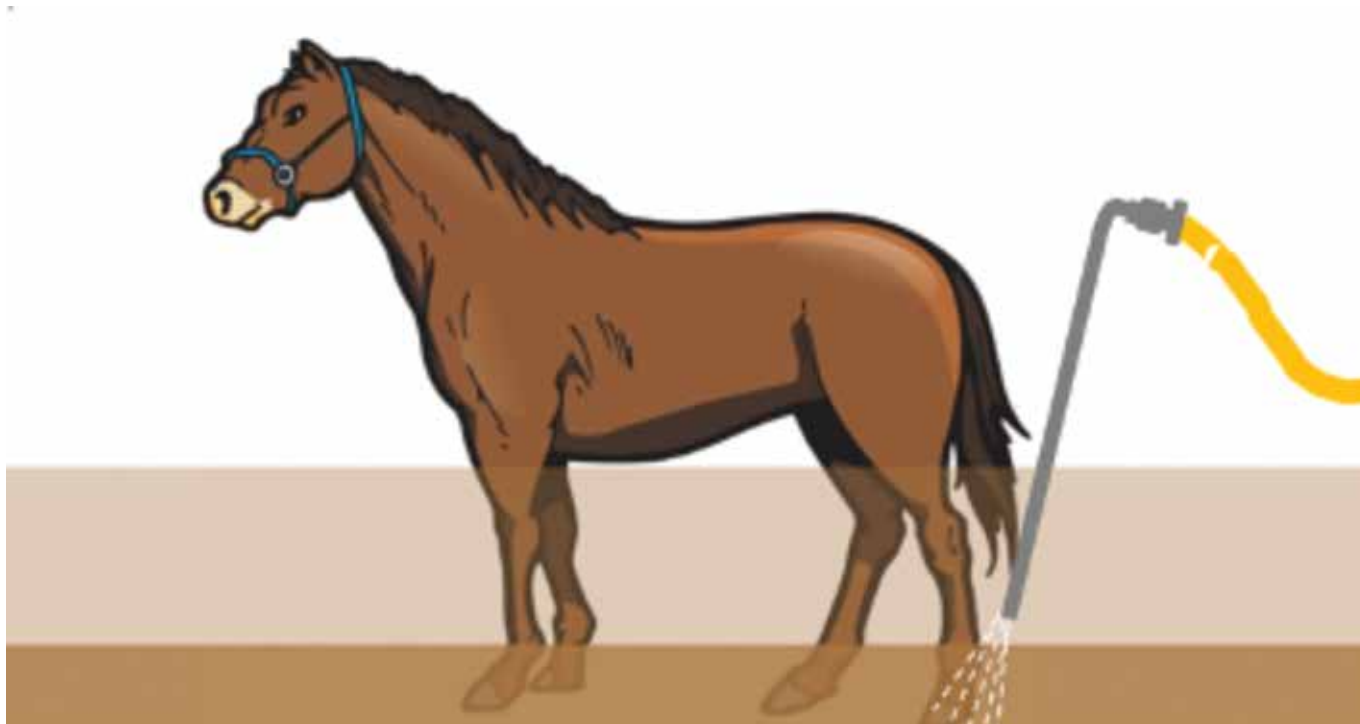
## Account of rescue from WCB Member Andrew James

This morning (June 9th) at 8:14am WCB was activated for a GLR in Exeter involving a horse stuck in a septic tank. Upon arriving at the scene to discover a horse in a septic tank. The tank lid consisted of 3 concrete parts that separate very easily under heavy weight. (Happen to me at work with a horse called molly lucky she was still on her side which made it easy to get her out). 2 parts of the lid had fallen in and the remaining piece was flipped upside down. With the horses front legs on that piece and the rest of the horse in the tank. The first issue was to get a sling over the horses back and through the front legs to spread the weight of the horse over the back and not on the legs. That idea didn't work in a lift as the strap was slipping. Luckily the vet arrived to sedate the horse as the

horse feeling very good and not injured. So for everyone's safety the horse was sedated, at this stage we tried to use a tractor to lift the horse but it was too small and not capable of the lift. With Kiama ses arriving with more equipment we setup a quick release bar that we secured to a local crane. With the addition of another sling at the rear of the animal to assist in the lift. Then the crane lifted the horse out safely and lowered it to the ground then we released the bar in case the horse took off suddenly and took the crane out of the scene. The horse sat up and started having a pick off grass then shoot straight up onto all 4 legs. Vet assessed the horse and was in great shape considering and should make a full recovery. Owner very pleased and emotional and so grateful.



# Make your own mud lance

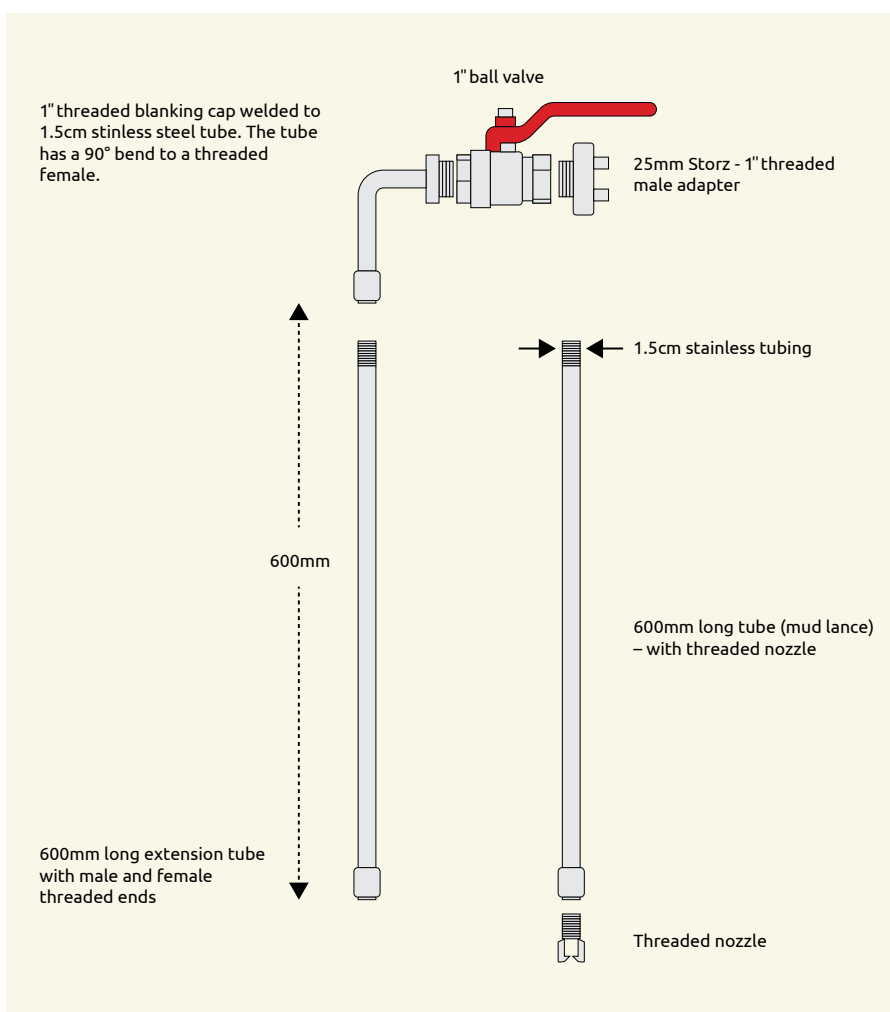


**H**heavy animals often get caught in mud, especially in farm dams, and are difficult to release due to the suction of the mud or clay around the limbs (often referred to as the gumboot effect). Trying to pull an animal out of the mud with a strong gumboot effect can cause limbs to fracture or dislocate.

The simplest solution to overcoming the gumboot effect is to force water (or even compressed air) down around each limb, before hauling or lifting, using a simple mud lance.

The mud lance is a long metal tube that can be connected to a high-pressure water supply and pushed down through the mud or clay to distribute water next to each limb – similar to an under-road boring machine. The mud lance creates a slurry which allows the limbs to be safely lifted up and out of the mud or clay.

Units can buy a mud lance or simply build one themselves using metal tubing, a ball valve and a 25mm Storz fitting to connect onto the live reel. The end of the tube can be squashed to make a jet or threaded and a nozzle made by drilling out a nut (see the diagram attached).





Getting the cow rigged ready to haul – but her back legs were caught in thick mud.

## Case study

Hawkesbury SES was called to rescue a heavily pregnant cow from a muddy dam at Oakville. The cow was very much trapped in thick mud and weeds.

Her back legs were down into the thick mud. So before pulling, each back leg needed to be freed up from the mud by digging and slurring up the mud using our 'mud lance' - injecting water down each limb from an RFS tanker parked nearby.

Once her back legs were freed from the mud, the cow was skidded around the edge of the dam on a Rescue Glide to a safe location; where she was manipulated onto her chest and given a treat of water + molasses and lucerne; and a good wash down.

Ten days later she gave birth to twins.



Freeing the cows legs using a mud lance connected to an rfs tanker.



Ready to be hauled out of the mud by SES and RFS members.

**David King**

NSWSES Hawkesbury Unit



# Sutton Unit



**T**he Sutton Unit and Yass Valley Council were forced to close many of our major roads around the Sutton and Gundaroo area, on 9 August, caused by a weekend of heavy rain and flooding across NSW. During this weekend, our unit rotated through teams, with property protection and flood safety our main concern. Roles included sandbagging, property protection and repairs, as well as scouting the region for potential dangers caused by the severe weather front. Gundaroo was hit the hardest with much of the damage caused due to the Yass River flooding, and Shingle Hill Way, one of the main roads connecting Gundaroo, was damaged severely by flood water.

Members of the Flood Rescue Team in the NSW SES Sutton Unit lead the rescue of two people trapped in a 4WD in the early hours of Sunday morning, 9 Aug. They were supported by ACT Fire and Rescue, NSW Ambulance, NSW Police Force and Yass Unit SES. A difficult rescue with cross-organisational and cross-border cooperation.

After spending the night assisting neighbouring Units with flood and

wind damage, the Sutton Unit received the 000 call at 0650 and were enroute to the rescue by 0700. Specific details of the rescue were limited, but after establishing communications with the Bungendore Unit it was understood there was one person trapped in a vehicle on Back Creek Road, an area renowned for the low level crossing flooding after decent rain. Unfortunately, our fastest route was also under minor water, but after

confirming the road was stable and safe, the team pursued the response.

The team arrived on site, established control and partnership arrangements with ACT Fire & Rescue. One member would maintain land command, and radio to flood desk, while another took water command and led the rescue. Initially, we looked to go direct. ACT Fire & Rescue set up as our downstream spotters, and we started to wade our way through, as the current did not





appear too fast from above. We loaded up and took only 4 metres of wading to decide that at 1.2 – 1.4 metres flood level, the under current was more than we had expected. A new plan was quickly devised, the in-water team would begin upstream, wade across the shallow, float down the fenceline, cross the 'road' to the vehicle, safely extricate from vehicle, rinse and return.

Right before the team headed off on their second voyage, the team decided

they needed an extra PFD for the rescue, albeit the original report was one pax. Sure enough, upon arriving closer to the scene, they could see a second person in the vehicle. The trapped persons had already smashed the back window and managed to open the downstream rear door so had clear access to the rear of the vehicle to self-extricate to the ute's tub and roof.

Once the team had safely reached the vehicle, the two were ready to jump

into the Ark, but thankfully listened to instructions and donned PFDs first. The rescue team guided them into the Ark and then waded via some farm gates against the current for about 500 metres before we decided to float back to shore. By this time, NSW Ambulance Service was on scene and prepping for some hypothermic patients, NSW Police Force had also arrived to support as well as another flood tech from Yass Unit, with the Local Commander for Hilltops Cluster, to check if the team needed support.

The pax were delivered safely to the ambulance for review, prior to their family arriving, relieved with the news they were safe and only a bit wet and cold. Thankfully, no transport to hospital was required that day. The team then completed their post-rescue debrief and returned to the unit to dry out. The rescue vehicle remained on site, as retrieval had become too dangerous by this time; a unmistakable reminder not to drive through flood water.

**Rhian Blackwell, David Bridgford and Joseph Barbara**

Sutton Unit Flood Rescue team





# Marrickville Unit

## – welcome Ben

**H**i, my name is Ben and I am a new member of the NSW State Emergency Service. I joined the SES because I wanted to help people in the local community. As I'm always looking to lend a hand wherever I can, I thought it would be a good idea to join the NSW SES at Marrickville. Another key inspiration was to see a photo of me when I was little.

One night, a huge storm swept through Sydney, and my house, unfortunately, was flooded in the morning. While there was not a lot of water inside my house, the driveway, however, was a different story. The floodwaters had filled the driveway up to ankle height, having nowhere to go due to blocked drains. I remember walking downstairs and looking out the window just to see grey waters filling the driveway. The SES was called to help out, and so I decided to join in on the operation. I remember trying to scrub down the driveway and clean all the debris left by the floodwaters.

As I said earlier, I joined the SES as I wanted to help the local community, but I also wanted to see what it would be like to be a part of an emergency service. I hope to gain lots of new experience, skills, and new friends. It is an absolute honor to be working for the NSW SES, and I can't wait to make new memories which I will keep forever.

**Ben Tomkins**



Young Ben Tomkins helping NSW SES volunteers with post storm clean-up in his driveway.



**Michael Johnsen MP**  
NATIONALS MEMBER FOR UPPER HUNTER

*"Thank you to all our dedicated SES volunteers in assisting our community in times of need throughout the year."*

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Authorised by Michael Johnsen MP,  
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**Thank you**  
for protecting our community through one of our toughest years. I am proud to support our SES volunteers.

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**FIONA PHILLIPS MP**  
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR GILMORE

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



# The Quiet Achiever

**W**hen many people think of the State Emergency Service, they imagine people with chainsaws, climbing on rooves and assisting with floods, however as we all know there is a lot more that goes on behind the scenes. There is the management of these incidents, the engagement with the community and media, and of course finance and administration. These are the quiet achievers, people who are often not seen by the public but are integral to ensuring that things run smoothly and here at Campbelltown Unit Kath Skaines was one of those members.

Many years ago, Kath's daughter joined the SES, at the same time Kath and her husband Richard were also looking to volunteer somewhere. They wanted to lend a helping hand to the community and so they decided Campbelltown SES was as good place as any to start.

That was over 33 years ago and Kath's commitment to the organisation has not missed a beat. She began working in the field, before moving on to managing the finances and administration. Kath was also very heavily involved in Road Crash Rescue (RCR), many years ago when that was one of our unit's responsibilities. Her excellent skills, eye for detail, and dedication to the organisation have been extraordinary.

When asked what she loved about SES, and if there was something she had done, that she never thought she would do, Kath responded with a



twinkle in her eye and a grin on her face "the companionship and climbing on rooves!" During her lengthy service she not only volunteered in Campbelltown but also shared her skills out of area, especially with the Newcastle Earthquake in 1989.

In February this year, the Campbelltown Unit celebrated her service, however it was tinged with sadness as Kath decided that after 33 years, it was time to call it a day and

hang up her orange. Her expertise will be sorely missed by the Unit, and the depth of gratitude for all that she has done is immeasurable.

And so we say thank you to Kath and also all the other quiet achievers in the SES, we may not say it enough but we really appreciate the work you do.

**Sandie O'Neill**

Community Engagement Officer,  
Campbelltown





# Local Rotary Award – Congratulations Tegan!

**T**egan first joined Sutherland in 2008, where she was involved in training, assessment and field response. In 2011 Tegan transferred to Bankstown Unit and continued her growth within the SES by expanding her skill sets to cover field operations, training management, social media, flood and situational awareness along with other community activities.

Tegan has completed Certificate 2 and 3 training in Public Safety, Trainer and Assessor as well as a Masters of Business Administration and has really proven herself as a valuable member. Tegan is well known for her enthusiasm, dedication and professionalism towards not only the SES but the wider community.

Tegan has been involved in many events including numerous flood and storm operations within Sydney such as the Kurnell Tornado, Fires and Georges River Floods.

Tegan was appointed to Deputy Team Leader in 2017 and has gone from strength to strength personally and professionally. In further recognition of her commitment she received the Bankstown SES Unit Volunteer of the Year award in 2018 for recruitment and retention programs and a Long Service Medal.

Recently after the bushfires, storms and floods in the local area she has stepped up into Deputy Incident Controller role leading a team covering Bankstown and part of Liverpool in difficult times whilst maintaining her professionalism and the willingness to help others. These qualities have assisted her well as she has recently been appointed as Deputy Unit Commander Operations and Capability in the Bankstown SES Unit.

She brings a level of knowledge and experience to the SES that clearly demonstrates why she is a suitable nominee.





# Goulburn Unit

**E**arlier this year members of the Goulburn Unit attended the Medi-sim course at Cootamundra. The course was held at the RFS unit in Cootamundra on Sunday the 23rd of February 2020.

We joined members of Cootamundra RFS and other out of area SES units to participate in the training of major trauma and how to prepare the patient to be extricated from an accident site or areas where they needed to be transported by Care Flight services. The course was a full on event and in that time we moved through different stages and various scenarios from car crash, amputation, crush injuries and many many more. The class was divided into 4 groups of 5 members and each person was assessed and trained in all areas which at times could be confronting. It also gave us all an insight on how the Care Flight teams worked and the way they transported and looked after the injured persons after we gave the hand over. If you ever get the chance to do it I would thoroughly recommend everyone do this course.

**Teena Pitt**  
Goulburn Unit







# Vertical Rescue doesn't stop for COVID

**W**ith its striking escarpment and bustling industrial precinct, the Wollongong area is a popular spot for both recreational and industrial activity, unfortunately with that, sometimes comes accidents. The Wollongong and Dapto Unit members have been kept very busy attending to Vertical Rescue jobs.

COVID has reduced everyone's outdoor activities, however it hasn't stopped the local SES vertical rescue members from attending a variety of jobs this year. In the past few weeks, we've had two serious vertical rescue callouts, one was a 12-hour long protracted body recovery involving SES teams from Wollongong, Dapto and Kiama Units assisting Police Rescue, while only last week, members from Wollongong and Dapto Units assisted NSW Ambulance on the rocks below the Wollongong Lighthouse with a woman who'd sustained potential spinal injuries.



Our work is wide and varying and never dull, we could be called to rescue a hang-glider, to assisting an injured bushwalker or attending an industrial accident in BHP. Being a Vertical Rescue operator is a very rewarding yet challenging SES skill, but it's not a skill for everyone. You can't be afraid

of heights; you have to trust your equipment and team-mates. As an operator we have to comply with strict SRB guidelines as well as additional SES Fit for Task activities, then there's the ongoing training to ensure our skills are ready for the next unknown rescue activation.





# Wingecarribee Flood Rescue

**D**uring a recent East Coast Low on the 27th July 2020, Wingecarribee SES were activated for an unusual Flood Rescue in Burradoo.

The Rescue Unit was activated to rescue four donkeys who had found themselves stranded on a water inundated island surrounded by swift flood water.

Seven rescue members with various levels of flood experience attended the rescue, and were met with paddocks submerged in flood waters and four very cold and wet, yet stubborn animals. All of which were seemingly unaware of their dire predicament.

Our level three flood technicians navigated their way through the floodwaters to the donkeys aide, only



to find that the term 'Stubborn as a mule' is in no way, shape or form an exaggeration!

The first donkey the team approached, chose to take one of our members on a scenic walk around the flooded island, before very reluctantly

being assisted across the floodwaters to a shallow area within the flooded paddock.

The next two were less keen to leave and also needed some firm guidance and encouragement to do so.

The last donkey, now standing belly deep in flood water let out a major objection and 'Hee Hawed' loudly, putting a smile on the rescue members faces, before reluctantly joining his fellow Equidae family safely on higher ground and the donkeys owners were very grateful to see their beloved animals safe from danger.

As we packed up our gear and in soggy clothing headed back to our vehicles, fellow member Dylan Whitelaw stated "Another happy ending!"





# VICSES support Victoria's biggest search and rescue operation

**T**he disappearance of non-verbal teenager William Callaghan sparked the biggest search operation in the state's history, and ultimately captured the attention of Australians, and the international community.

The 14 year-old was on a hike with his family at Mount Disappointment in Whittlesea, north of Melbourne, when he wandered ahead and became lost.

While conditions were a bit chilly, they were about to get dangerous as the teenager could not be found in the following hours or before sunset.

What came next was a swift, widespread and dedicated response from Victoria Police, VICSES, and various search and rescue teams from other organisations, as well as individuals from the public.

VICSES had approximately 80 members assisting Victoria Police in the successful search for Will Callaghan. This included highly trained volunteers and staff in areas such as search and rescue and media, and providing lighting and staging area support.

The large-scale operation also drew an enormous amount of media attention, with 176 million people viewing the amazing work of our involved members. This included VICSES representation across social media, print and online publications,



and interviews with VICSES staff and volunteers on breakfast shows *Today*, *Sunrise* and on the ABC.

William was ultimately found on the third day of the search by a volunteering member of the public. The boy had no socks on, but was fine despite 48+ hours in cold, difficult

conditions. Many described the result as a miracle, and delivered some much-needed happy news during a very tough year.

**By Kathleen Jessop**

Media Officer, Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES)



# Queensland SES

Queensland State Emergency Service continue to assist at Air and Land border check points keeping the community safe during the pandemic.

The Queensland State Emergency Service has been out across the state involved in community engagement and education, highlighting the work being done and preparing for the up and coming seasons.



Border Check Point Sunshine Coast Airport (Image from QLDSES Kawana)



Border Check Point M1 (Image from QLDSES Pimpama)



Display Day (Image from Nicole Dray, QLDSES Kenilworth Group)



Border Check Point Brisbane Airport (Image from QLDSES Northern Group)



# Not without my budgie!

In Hawaiian culture the word 'Ohana' captures family in a broad capacity, encompassing the bonds between relatives, friends, and neighbours. For the 63% of Australians who are animal owners, their family includes the myriad of animals that inhabit their homes and properties. However, in times of natural disaster, these beloved animals are often caught up in the chaos, sometimes resulting in fatal consequences for animals and their owners.

Recognising the need to engage animal owners to plan for their animals in emergencies, the NSW SES embarked on the *Ohana Project*, secured through a *Community Resilience Innovation Program* grant from the *NSW Office of Emergency Management*.

In true *Ohana* spirit, the project drew upon a family of over 30 stakeholders from the emergency services, State and Local government, academia, animal related industries and interest groups, educators and the community. Incorporating a co-design approach and behavioural insight principles, these stakeholders provided an understanding of motivators and barriers to keeping people and their animals safe in emergencies.

Vital to this holistic understanding, was the *Bush Fire Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre* work undertaken by Dr Mel Taylor, where insights from previous disasters assisted in focussing the project on four interconnected areas:

- » Review of Public Information messaging to ensure consistency of communications across agencies, to prevent confusion and increase understanding by animal owners;
- » Centralised, sustainable information through development of the Get Ready Animals (GRA) website as a single point of information and resources for planning, preparedness, response and recovery. The website

## Crate your mate to relocate

Safe and easy to transport in emergencies






**Take 5 minutes to make your plan**  
Go to [www.getreadyanimals.nsw.gov.au](http://www.getreadyanimals.nsw.gov.au)



GET READY

Animals

incorporates information from 10 websites and contains targeted resources developed through the project including *Animal Emergency Plan on a Page*, *Grab and Go Bag Poster*, fact sheets (like *How to Plan an Animals in Emergencies Display*), capacity building tips, and social media resources across PPRR;

- » Engagement of high-level animal related stakeholders to champion community planning and preparedness, including promoting the website, sharing resources, and proactively supporting animal emergency planning through protocols, training and member engagement;
- » Review of Evacuation Centre auditing processes to ensure inclusion of animals and proper resourcing to support animal owners

during operational response.

This approach improving awareness and increasing exposure across all agencies involved in planning, establishment and management of Evacuation Centres.

The 2019-2020 bushfire operations saw over 12,000 animals registered at evacuation centres or *animal safer places*, highlighting that planning for animals in emergencies is crucial. Community safety and expectations now demand that animals are managed effectively in an emergency response. We also know from experience that if families can survive with all their precious members, the road to recovery is less arduous.

Please explore the resources available at [www.getreadyanimals.nsw.gov.au](http://www.getreadyanimals.nsw.gov.au) and help share this important message to keep all our family safe.



# What I will do with my animals during an Emergency

Animals need to go with you if you have to evacuate your home. It is safer for them and for you.

Please take a few minutes to complete this plan.

For further information go to

[www.getreadyanimals.nsw.gov.au](http://www.getreadyanimals.nsw.gov.au)

## STEP 1 What I will take for my animal(s) if we have to leave

Decide the essential things your animal(s) needs for 3-7 days. You may not be able to get home for a while.

You can pack them into a *Grab and Go Bag*, so you are ready to leave quickly. Remember to take it with you wherever you go.

My Grab and Go Bag is located here:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food and Treats    | <input type="checkbox"/> Identification Tags                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bowls/Buckets/Tubs | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo with owner                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any medicines      | <input type="checkbox"/> Toileting requirements              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toys               | <input type="checkbox"/> Registration and vaccination papers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bedding            |  |

Microchipping your animal and registering them with the NSW Pet Registry at [www.petregistry.nsw.gov.au](http://www.petregistry.nsw.gov.au) will help reunite them with you if separated during an emergency.

## STEP 2 How I will contain and transport my animal(s)

Check you have enough crates, carriers, cages and leads. Also work out with your transport how many trips you will need to take.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crate/Carrier        | <input type="checkbox"/> Car/Float        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cage/Other container | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends Car      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lead/Harness         | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Transport |

Remember to secure/contain your animals asap, so they are safe while you get ready and close at hand so you can leave quickly.

## STEP 3 When and where I will go to be safe with my animal(s)

Leaving early and going to stay with family/friends is often most comfortable and convenient.

Evacuation centres may be opened and you can always take your animals along with you.

Stay informed by listening to ABC and local radio and going to the emergency service links provided below.

- ☐ I will be going to family/friends house with my animal(s). Their details are:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ If I am not home, our family/friend/neighbour knows what to do. Their details are:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ I will relocate my animal/livestock early to:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## STEP 4 This plan is on my fridge, in my phone and given to my family/friend/neighbour

Names: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thanks for making a plan. Stay safe, and remember to leave early if you need to evacuate**

For the latest information during emergencies go to:

NSW Department of Primary Industries [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au) [f](#) /NSWDPI

NSW State Emergency Service (floods, storms, tsunami) [www.ses.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ses.nsw.gov.au) [f](#) /NSW.SES

NSW Rural Fire Service (bushfires) [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au) [f](#) /nswrfs

Fire + Rescue NSW [www.fire.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fire.nsw.gov.au) [f](#) /frnsw

NSW Police [www.police.nsw.gov.au](http://www.police.nsw.gov.au) [f](#) /nswpoliceforce

For life threatening emergencies dial 000 (triple zero)

[www.getreadyanimals.nsw.gov.au](http://www.getreadyanimals.nsw.gov.au)



**GET READY**  
Animals



# EMERGENCY Grab & Go Bag FOR PETS

Being prepared so that you and your pets are ready for any emergency will ensure you can act quickly if you need to. An **Emergency Grab and Go Bag** should contain all the essential items your pets need to be cared for and comfortable.

**Crates, carriers, cages, or enclosures to contain and easily transport your pet:**



**Bowls, plus food and water for 3-7 days**



**Familiar items, i.e. favourite toys**



**Toileting requirements, including litter trays, bags, etc.**



**Bedding, heating pad for reptiles**



**Collar with ID tag, harness, or leash (include backups)**



**Important documents: registration & vaccination**



**Medicines, medical records and first aid kit**



**Current picture of you and your pet together**



**Take 5 minutes to make your plan**  
Go to [www.getreadyanimals.nsw.gov.au](http://www.getreadyanimals.nsw.gov.au)



**GET READY**  
Animals