

The official journal of the NSW SES Volunteers Association

the Volunteer

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the Volunteer

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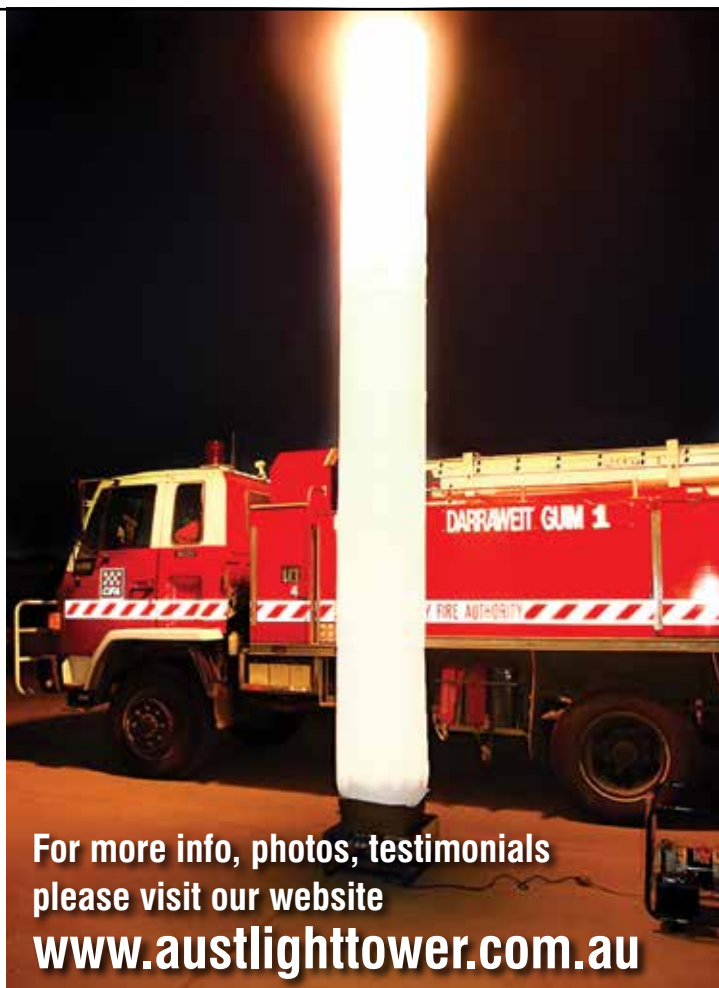
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If you are helping with bushfire support, live or work in an affected area or will be travelling through please stay safe and as always, thank you for your commitment to the community.



KIM DAVIS ESM
PRESIDENT NSW SES
VOLUNTEERS ASSOCIATION

We are under a blanket of smoke at the moment, with the largest scale bushfire support the volunteers of the NSW SES have ever been involved in.

Hundreds of hours have been committed so far, with little indication of this easing in the coming weeks and your contributions have been amazing.

But, as with emergencies, as our membership is drawn from the community, invariably there will be some of our own who are impacted by the event and this has been no different. Tragically we have had a number of volunteers who have lost

property, stock and grazing area in the fires and we haven't hit summer yet.

The Association has started a dedicated Bushfire Support Program - much like the Drought Support Program - that allows members of the community to donate funds directly to a specified cause. The support from the community is amazing and incredibly humbling and shows how much hyper contributions mean to them.

The Member Benefits Program has also been running full steam ahead under the coordination by Adam Jones (Marrickville Unit). He is meeting with

different organisations and working hard on building relationships that members can receive benefits through.

We have also had meetings with Commissioner York and the Minister for Volunteering, Gareth award and will have met with the Shadow Minister for Emergency Services by the time this magazine goes to print.

I hope you enjoy this edition, and thank you for your submissions.

If you are helping with bushfire support, live or work in an affected area or will be travelling through please stay safe and as always, thank you for your commitment to the community.

Have you joined our Facebook Page?



Once you have - head over to our Member Benefits Page for great discounts and giveaways!

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THE HON DAVID ELLIOTT MP MINISTER FOR POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Since I last wrote to you there have been significant activity involving the SES.

I was pleased to announce the appointment of Carlene York as your new Commissioner. Ms York has a decorated policing career that includes coordinating responses to storms, tornadoes and bushfires as well as heading the Strike Force which captured Australia's most wanted offender, Malcolm Naden. Her expertise will be of great benefit to in the SES.

It would be remiss of me not to again put on record my sincere thanks to Kyle Stewart who has been your Acting Commissioner in this interim period. Kyle's strong leadership, passion and good humour has seen our service strengthened. We also note the announced retirement of Deputy Commissioner Greg Newton. He too has served this organisation passionately and diligently.

Over the past few months it is becoming clear to me that we are entering what will no doubt be a record fire season in NSW. As I write to you, I write knowing that we've

Whether it's your first year or you fiftieth year thank you for another year of service. All year round you have protected our communities and made us proud. While the current threat of has not subsided, can I once again thank you for your work and ask you to pass on the State's gratitude to your families.



reached a series of heartbreaking milestone. Since September, we've had 6 lives tragically lost. Over 300 homes destroyed, and many more damaged. At their peak we saw 17 emergency alert level fires across the state, and close to 30 evacuation centres opened. A State of Emergency was declared and significant resources utilised from the NSW emergency services family, but also abroad, from interstate and overseas. We've had schools, bridges and even brigade stations burn down.

I pay tribute to the hundreds of NSW SES volunteers and staff who have assisted throughout this extended bushfire campaign. Whether

it has been on the frontlines evacuating people, or behind the scenes on IMT's coordinating the effort – thank you. It has not gone unnoticed. It's at times like these we showcase to our families, communities and the state what we train for. Your professionalism is writ large in the way we have responded to these fires.

What is also clear is the rewards of our State's investment into our frontline emergency services agencies. In 2019-20 the NSW Government will spend more than \$1.7 billion to combat emergencies and disasters, committing an unprecedented \$105 million in extra funding to enhance rescue capabilities across the State. We've already seen this investment used to build state-of-the-art facilities, introduce life-saving equipment and deliver world-class rescue vehicles. This is proof-positive in the \$56.4 million Government commitment to the Operational Fleet Replacement Program for the SES, funding which will provide 270 vehicles, 124 marine vessels and 95 trailers over the next three years.

In October I visited Almighty Industries in Orange who successfully bid to fit out 120 Isuzu D-MAXs with rear storage units during the next three years. The vehicles will truly be state of the art.

This investment coupled with your professionalism has prepared us to tackle these unprecedented challenges to our community safety.

Whether it's your first year or you fiftieth year thank you for another year of service. All year round you have protected our communities and made us proud. While the current threat of has not subsided, can I once again thank you for your work and ask you to pass on the State's gratitude to your families. Stay safe and Godspeed.



I want to emphasise the need for all our volunteers to remain vigilant, focused and disciplined when it comes to their own safety and wellbeing.



CARLENE YORK
COMMISSIONER

In 2010, as the NSW Police Force's Northern Region Commander, I was in charge of the emergency response to a tornado at Lennox Heads. I observed the amazing work of NSW SES volunteers and now, almost a decade later, I still remember their tireless work to assist the community.

It's a memory that underpins what an honour it has been to be appointed Commissioner of the NSW SES.

This is an organisation that performs vital work and I admire the courage and commitment that is regularly displayed by our members.

Our volunteers hail from a diverse background but share the willingness to commit their time, energy and knowledge to help others in times of need. I believe NSW SES volunteers also share the qualities of compassion, personal strength, selflessness and

bravery – attributes that make you the lifeblood of this widely respected emergency service that I am very proud to lead.

When our members are not on the frontline of emergency situations throughout the State, they can also be found supporting other agencies, as is often the case during bushfire response operations. As emergency personnel fight to save lives and properties from the flames, our volunteers clear fallen trees from roads, provide vital logistical support and assist in evacuation of imperiled communities.

I want to emphasise the need for all our volunteers to remain vigilant, focused and disciplined when it comes to their own safety and wellbeing. Our members are well trained and competent, but in demanding

conditions it is particularly important to follow operational procedures.

It is also vital to look after each other. I am an advocate for mental health and wellbeing for emergency services personnel, and understand that the jobs members attend can be challenging and confronting. I encourage all to check regularly on your fellow team members, manage your own fatigue, and don't hesitate to reach out to Peer Support or Chaplaincy on 1800 626 800, or the Employee Assistance Program on 0407 918 998.

Thank you again for your commitment and continuing to support communities across NSW. Have a safe and happy Christmas and I look forward to meeting many of you on my travels to Units and Zones in the new year.

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Volunteers affected by the devastating
bushfires

NSW SES Volunteers Association
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As 2019 draws to a close, it is a time to reflect on what has been a hectic and significant year for the Volunteers Association. Since coming on board in January, I have watched the association evolve and progress dramatically. We have created our new Association website that is modern and easy to navigate and updated regularly and our social media platforms are actively engaging members on a larger scale than ever before. We now have a Member Benefits group that is updated regularly with Member discounts and offers and has an active presence online thanks to the help of our new Member Benefits Coordinator that has come in guns blazing and is getting things happening. Check out our online shop – we have been updating our merchandise and have some great deals happening over summer! If you have any ideas and suggestions for the VA please contact the office to share them with us as we value your feedback. Our Training room and office facilities have been updated completed and workshops and seminars will be run from our facilities for our Volunteers.

Our 2020 NSW SESVA Calendar has been released thanks to the amazing efforts of our members that sent in their images and also to the ones that voted on which images to include in the calendar – the calendar was created by the Volunteers for the Volunteers.

Our Drought Support Program has helped numerous members who have been affected throughout the Drought – Our Member Service Manager has been out on the road travelling thousands of km's throughout NSW to deliver hay, fodder, food and care packages to our struggling members all year round. If you or any Volunteer are struggling or enduring hardship please contact the Association on 1300 073 782 confidentially or apply online for assistance at www.nswsesva.org.au

“
Our NSW SES Volunteers have been working alongside the RFS and other Emergency Services on the ground and also behind the scenes helping the communities affected. Your tireless dedication and hardwork is acknowledged and commended!
 ”

At the time this Magazine has been sent to print, the bushfires have been raging throughout NSW for weeks now and devastatingly hundreds have lost their homes and everything they own – tragically 6 have lost their lives so far. Our NSW SES Volunteers have been working alongside the RFS and other Emergency Services on the ground and also behind the scenes helping the communities affected. Your tireless dedication and hardwork is acknowledged and commended! Sadly a number of our SES Members have been victims of the bushfires and have lost their homes and been displaced. The NSW SES Volunteers Association has set up a Bushfire Support Program for those that have been affected by the NSW Bushfires and Members can contact the office to access assistance via email office@nswsesva.org.au or phone 1300 073 782.

I would like to take this time to congratulate you all on what you have achieved over the last 12 months. Your selfless dedication to Volunteering and your community is respected and appreciated. Here at the Association we like to shout out and promote the amazing work we are seeing from the Units and

zones and encourage our members to actively engage and promote their outstanding work to others by sharing their experiences & events and acknowledging their peers for their standout efforts in our Magazine.

If your Unit has been involved in any Community Events, Training exercises, Competitions, received awards or you want to acknowledge a stand out Member or simply post a Member Vale – all input is welcome. Send in your pictures and stories and Let us know so we can promote & share them with others.

A big thank you to all those that contributed to this edition of *The Volunteer* – it is only with your input that we can make it a great magazine!

Our office will be closed over the Christmas period from 23rd December 2019 and back in action on the 6th January 2020. I wish you all a safe and Happy Christmas and New year – I look forward to what exciting things 2020 has to bring for the Association and our Members.

Regards

Carlee Maccoll

Award Recipients

On the 29th of May 2019 a man had collapsed, unconscious and not breathing at Castle Towers Shopping Centre.

Off duty St John Ambulance officer Art Aquino stopped to assist and determined the man was in cardiac arrest.

Art (with the help of a passerby) immediately commenced cardio pulmonary resuscitation on the man for approx. ten minutes until the man started breathing again. After the arrival of the NSW Ambulance the man suffered a second cardiac episode and was once again delivered cardio pulmonary resuscitation and was stabilised and conveyed to hospital.



There is little doubt that this man would have passed away shortly after his collapse had it not been for the early intervention from Mr Aquino.

Art is a cherished team member of our Hills SES unit and was awarded for his brave actions and acknowledged for his life saving skills at the St John (NSW) Annual Awards earlier last month.

Well Done Art!

Colin Walsh



TREVOR MAYHEW OAM KSTJ

Trevor Mayhew has been a member of the NSW SES Kogarah Unit for nearly 15 years now and is involved in training and assessing First Aid – He is also a member of St John Ambulance.

On the 26th of October 2019 Trevor was awarded a *Commendation for 65 years Distinguished Membership* which was presented by the Governor of New South Wales Margaret Beazley AO DStJ QC. This award was to recognize Trevors' dedication, devotion to duty and diligent membership and service to St John Ambulance Australia and the Community for 65 years! Helping prevent and relieve sickness and injury and acting to enhance the health and wellbeing of people of all races and creeds.

Well done to both Award Recipients!

Storm and Water Damage Operations – Multi Unit Training

At the recent “Northern Zone Rescue Challenge”, a seemingly simple discussion between Sue Chapple, Local Commander Clarence Valley and Phil Whitmore, Deputy Commander Gosford Unit about the perennial problems we face to have all our people trained, set in motion a process that resulted in a substantial increase in the operational capacity of the Clarence Valley cluster.

The outcome of this discussion resulted in Phil Whitmore arranging two crews of trainers and assessors from Gosford to deliver training in “Storm and Water Damage Operations” to the cluster over two successive weekends in November. Sue Chapple arranged several members from the various units in the cluster to attend the training which was conducted at the Woolli/Yuraygir unit.

One Gosford training crew consisted of Bayard Atkinson, Peter Evans, Phil Sheils and Phil Whitmore who travelled to Woolli on 29th and 30th October to recon the training site, assess the training resources existing on site and those that would need to be brought in. This ensured that the training, when delivered over the weekend of November 2 & 3, went smoothly and efficiently. All candidates were required to undertake some pre-learning by completing online courses and a specifically designed workbook before attending the practical training on this weekend.

Training continued on Saturday November 9 and concluded with the assessment on Sunday November 10 which was conducted by a second Gosford team consisting of Steve Tobin and Werner Klumpp. Two additional assessors, Grant Cawley from Gosford and Sue Rogers from Ku-ring-gai unit planned to assist with the assessment, but unfortunately



were not able to get to Woolli due to the bushfires which closed the highway on the Friday.

Due to the dedication of the volunteer trainees to commit 10 hours of pre-learning, and two full weekends supported by the Gosford unit's trainers and assessors, the Clarence Valley cluster now has an additional 9 competent “Storm and Water Damage Operators” to enhance the cluster's operational capability.

None of this could have been achieved without the unstinting help from Bruce Bird, Unit Commander of Woolli/Yuraygir and his dedicated team of very able assistants Gyorgyi Bird, Rob and Ruth Armstrong, who fed and watered the teams and Peter Saunders who provided us with any logistical help required.



Last but not least, a big thank you must go to Sue Chapple for her vision and persistence to make this happen but also to arrange the necessary funding, so this course could go ahead.

Feedback received from a participants wife-

I would just like to thank the trainers that attended woolli over the weekend. Thank you for your time and expertise. As a fellow member and wife of a trainee, I have never seen him so keen or invested in being a member as he has been this weekend. thank you so much for your commitment to NSW SES. It is the trainers like yourself that keep the service alive, passionate and skilled.

Jodie

Ulmarra/Brushgrove

Bayard Atkinson

IT Coordinator | Gosford Unit

The NSW SESVA was a proud supporter of the Training event





Focus on The Sapphire Coast Cluster

The Sapphire Coast Cluster, located in the Bega Valley Shire, includes Eden, Bega and Bermagui Units, spans approximately 6300 square kilometres and covers terrain West from the coastline to the base of the Snowy Mountains and North from the Victorian border to the blue waters of Narooma.

Despite the best efforts of SHQ and organisational transformation, in the last 12 months we have managed to grow our membership across the cluster by close to 30%. Why? Here are some insights into our recent more notable Requests for Assistance (RFA's), Training and Community Engagement activities that kept us busy and saw new members walking in the door.

RFA'S

The Cluster has assisted NSW Police in a number of Land Searches including a search for a missing man at Gillards Beach, North of Tathra. This was a multi agency response including members from Marine Rescue, Surf Life Saving, Westpac Rescue Helicopter and Polair. Working with so many different agencies was a first for the majority of our members and proved to be an invaluable learning experience for all. Another search operation was conducted for a missing man in Towamba, South West of Eden. During this incident we worked alongside NSW RFS and NSW Police. The SES team was comprised of 28 members who assisted over two days in challenging and remote conditions, fortunately the missing man was located on the second day of the search.



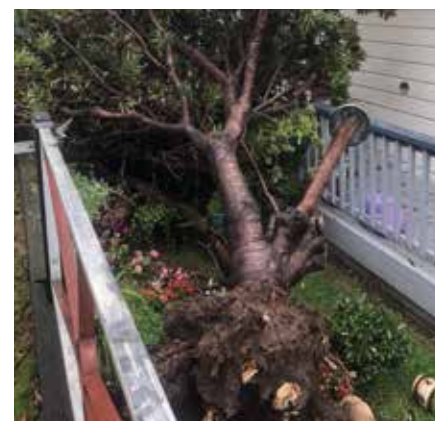
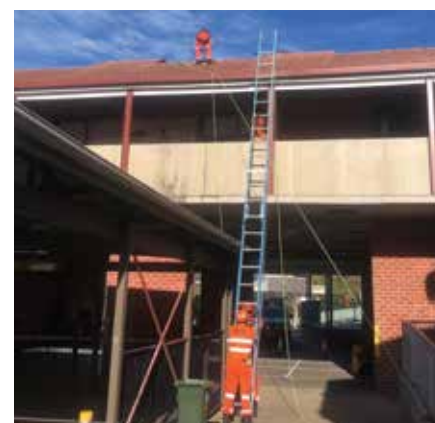
A very different set of skills were needed to "make safe" a building that had been impacted by a vehicle in Tura Beach. Our crews were able to apply techniques not often used within our Cluster, such as large scale shoring, to support an unstable wall and stabilise a suspended slab that was at risk of further collapse. Thankfully no one was at home when the accident occurred.



After hundreds of hours supporting Fire Operations last year, the Cluster was well poised to assist when called to support NSW Police and NSW RFS in the potential evacuation of Cobargo (located between Bega and Bermagui).

When a fast moving bushfire fanned by strong winds threatened the small town, Cluster strike teams from Bermagui and Bega were swiftly on scene and prepared to assist as needed.

Tree and storm damage comprises the majority of our RFAs and we continue to support our community within our combat roles. We have conducted temporary repairs to our local High School, removed trees (and trampolines) from houses, roads and driveways, tarped roofs and secured fly away sheds.



Training The Best PD Day Ever

From the crystal-clear waters of the Sapphire Coast to the icy cold Snowy Mountains, what a truly wonderful and diverse Zone we are privileged to live in. Three members from the Sapphire Coast Cluster headed to Jindabyne for a Flood Rescue (FR) Professional Development (PD) day on 19 October 2019. They had been warned it would be cold and to be perfectly honest, were all expecting to be defensive swimming with icebergs! The “natural environment” playground proved to be far more challenging than Penrith White Water Stadium as there were no perfectly formed and placed cement poles to anchor to or the ability to turn off the flow at the flick of a switch.

They couldn't possibly come all this way and not see snow, so, after completing the official FR PD, with Cool Runnings in the back of their mind, they headed up the mountain, Ark Angel on the roof and weather closing in! Feel the Rhythm, Feel the Rhyme, Get on up, it's bobsled time! And bobsled they did, fully kitted out in their In-water PPE until they couldn't feel their fingers anymore at which point they headed back to their “environmental capsules of warmth” (vehicles) to defrost. Continuing to learn is such an awesome achievement, overall it was such a great day, made special by all the members that participated and worked together.



Back in our own Cluster, we try and “train as we work” which means as much realistic hands on scenario based exercising as possible.

We are very lucky to have some very talented ‘moulage artists’ and actors who are always keen to put a touch of realism into our training activities whether it be Road Crash Rescue, Vertical Rescue, Flood Rescue, as well as Storm, PIARO, First Aid to name a few.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Our Cluster is always keen to participate where we can in Community Engagement Activities, whether it be to assist with an event, provide information to the community, showcase our local capabilities or have some fun, we are up to the task. Here's some of our more notable recent activities.



COLOUR FUN RUN IN BEGA

An explosion of colour filled the Bega Valley Public School and the Bega SES unit was right in the thick of all the action. Our crew were tasked to design a highly complex item known as a 'Mega Super Water Slide' for the students. We managed to find an area on school grounds on a small hill perfect for the water slide activity. We made sure it was safe for the students by aligning our trusty sandbags along the slide and once we had it operating... for the students of course, the experience was out of this world and of course the big SES kids got involved in the action too. We received lots of positive feedback from the teachers and the students who said our SES volunteers had made the day exciting and fun.



There was music and dancing (including our volunteers attempting to dance) but we left that to the young ones. Then, the all important colour run, with screaming students

and SES volunteers getting coloured powder thrown on them... there were pinks, purples and blues but the colour that stood out the most was ORANGE. It was truly amazing to see our SES Bega unit engaging with one of the local schools in the Bega Valley and we will continue building long lasting friendships within our community.

Story: Daniel Doody



EDEN UNIT HAVING A WHALE OF A TIME

Eden Unit took part in this year's festivities at the Eden Whale Festival. Thousands of people flocked to the small seaside town to experience an action packed three day event filled with entertainment and activities which included a street parade, a kite flying exhibition and a chainsaw sculpture demonstration. Our SES volunteers were in their bright orange uniforms providing a sense of enthusiasm during the event. Our crew conducted road crash rescue scenarios which involved cutting open a vehicle door using a special tool called an E-cutter and also engaged in fun community activities with the kids throughout the day. Our SES team had prime position setting up at the entrance of the festival, giving people no option but to drop by and say hello to our team – and they did.



We had a range of SES promotional items to give away such as our SES branded gutter cleaning gloves which proved to be the most popular item on the day. We also offered the throw-bag challenge with lots of young enthusiastic kids participating and showing off their throwing skills. Also making an appearance was our dear friend Paddy the Platypus – greeting and entertaining people with his silly waddle dance but he was very cautious

not to upstage Wendy the Whale as it was her event to shine. There was a positive atmosphere at the festival and community members were very interested in how we operate as a unit and we are hoping that we convinced a few more people to join the SES. All in all we had a great time or should we say we had a WHALEY great time!

Story: Daniel Doody

HALLOWEEN

SPOOKTACULAR

OPEN DAY

Bega Unit recently hosted a quirky Halloween open day with a focus on providing Get Ready information for the upcoming storm season.

After initial hesitation from some members and an extremely short acting class, we promoted the event with a spooktacular short video on social media. The afternoon was a huge success with plenty of local zombies, witches, monsters and creatures crawling through the horror gates of the Bega Unit.

There were tricks and treats, a haunted bathroom and many scary screams as well as plenty of discussions on how to better prepare homes for the storm season. It was such a successful event with close to 150 community members in attendance that we are already planning for next year!



WRAP UP

As the Local Commander of the Sapphire Coast Cluster, I am immensely proud of the continued enthusiasm and commitment all members display in preparing and helping our local community. I am very lucky to have an extremely supportive Deputy who works hard across all three units to build and sustain our Cluster operational capabilities and an open minded Cluster Command Team who work with us to ensure our Units and members are operationally ready to assist the community when required. I am surrounded by some of the most talented and experienced members of the NSW SES and am very grateful that I have the opportunity to work alongside them.

Michelle De Friskbom

Local Commander | Sapphire Coast Cluster

Have your Unit featured and acknowledge for the great work they do in our Magazine 'The Volunteer'



Send in submissions to editor@nswsesva.org.au



Convoy with multi agencies to assist NSW Police

Rappville Fires – Casino Unit

The 8th October will long be remembered as the day Mother Nature unleashed her fury on the small rural community of Rappville and the farming communities that surround it on the far north coast of NSW. That day started out like any other and no one could have predicted what was to come.



In the preceding days and weeks there had been a number of active fires throughout the region, the largest of them on Long Gully Road at Drake.

The majority of those fires were predominantly under control, until that Tuesday morning, when a new fire ignited near Busby's Flat, and being fuelled by strong winds, high

temperatures and very dry conditions, the fire soon became out of control and was heading straight for the small village of Rappville.

What our friends and comrades at RFS and FRNSW were faced with that day was something beyond words. Many have said they've never seen anything like it in all their years fighting fires – it had a mind of its own and nothing was going to slow it down or stop it. It was a firestorm fuelled with dry conditions with months of continuing drought.

Very quickly the NSW Rural Fire Service had declared a bush fire emergency under Section 44 of the Act (Section 44) and many other



emergency services and government / non-government agencies were activated.

While SES is the primary combat agency for Storm, Floods and Tsunamis, as many would know, we also provide support and assistance to the other emergency services and the bush fires were no different, as our members rallied to provide that to the NSW Rural Fire Service.

By 4pm Casino SES Unit were tasked to their first support role in helping to set up an evacuation centre in Casino. Many people were displaced by loss and damage to house and property. Roads were closed and power and communication lines were



down. Other agencies including FACS, Red Cross, DPI, Local Lands Services and Disaster Welfare were on hand at the evacuation centre to assist those affected with their immediate needs such as a roof over their heads, including their pets, and emotional support.

It was heart wrenching to witness first hand, families walk through the doors with just the clothes on their back, not knowing what to do or where to go. They had lost their home... they had lost livestock... they had just witnessed something you could only imagine you'd ever see in movies. Many people came in to ask about their family or friends that they weren't able to get in contact with.

What followed over the next couple of weeks and is still continuing, has been a massive operational and logistical exercise, undertaken by many agencies including RFS, FRNSW, FACS, Parks, Police, Essential Energy, Forestry and SES.

The work that the hundreds of firefighters, from all over the country has been doing is incredible. They deserve every bit of thanks and praise that can be bestowed upon them.

NSW SES has provided staff and volunteers to not only help out in the community, but also in the IMT (Incident Management Team) and EOC (Emergency Operations Centre).

It has been a great exercise in multiagency emergency management.

On a more local volunteer level, Casino Unit has been very active and busy in supporting the Rural Fire Service during this period. We have had just over 100 jobs tasked to our Unit and our 2 SES vehicles alone have travelled over 5500 kms since we were first activated on this event.

Our small unit of 15 has had nearly every member play a part in some way over the last couple of weeks. We have also had great support from other local SES Units including Tabulam, Kyogle, Lismore, Coraki and Ballina. Some of the tasks SES have been assigned include but are not limited to :

- » assisting NSW Police with lighting at an incident
- » doorknocking affected communities informing them of where to go to ask for further help, and informing them of health risks from contaminated tank water and asbestos concerns.



Lismore volunteers assisting

- » sending teams out to Rappville to deliver food, water and supplies, most of which were donated by the wider community.
- » delivering lunch and dinner meals to various staging areas for those out on the ground, sometimes being a 200-300 km plus round trip.
- » assisting with airport pick ups and drop offs of various personnel, pilots, IMT members and firefighters who have flown in from interstate to offer their help.



One of the multitude of aircraft operating out of Casino Fire Control Centre



- » Assisting with the transportation of various small fire vehicles to the field or to the fire control centre (FCC)
- » Picking up supplies and equipment and taking to where they are needed such as sleeping bags and hand sanitisers to Base Camps.
- » Admin tasks at the Fire Control Centre for the RFS
- » With NSW SES being able to help and contribute in these ways, it has freed up the time and expertise of those in the Rural Fire Service to focus on their main combat role of fighting fires. Our members at Casino Unit have forged strong relationships with Casino RFS over the course of this event. We are already talking of doing some training nights together in the future.

The Long Gully/ Busby Flat/ Rappville fires burnt over 74,000 hectares over 8

weeks. Sadly it claimed 2 lives and 44 houses and the Rappville Community Hall. It tried to take out the backbone of Rappville, the pub, three times but locals and the firefighters were able to save it with minimal damage.

Many livestock were lost and fences, machinery and sheds were destroyed. Many jobs are affected as the fire also claimed one of the villages biggest employers, TARMAC timber mill. But what it also did was bring out the best of small communities. Everyone looked out for everyone. Strangers became friends.

Donations of food, clothing and furniture inundated the makeshift recovery centre and continues to be donated.

Many clubs and organisations have hosted fundraising days to provide assistance to those affected.

It will take some time for normality to return to many in Rappville, with

most vowing to rebuild, but be assured Rappville will rise and grow and be as strong as ever.

It takes more than the fury of a horrendous firestorm to keep a great community down.

From all the members at Casino SES Unit, we say thank you to our other supporting SES Units.

We say thank you to our comrades at Casino RFS and in the Fire Control Centre. We say thank you to all other agencies, services and organisations that have played an integral part. And we say thank you to the community!

Donna Lamont

Deputy Unit Commander | Casino



Prime Minister Scott Morrison at the FCC Casino Unit Commander – the Deputy Zone Commander and other SES personnel



Multi agencies in multi roles



Lismore Rescue providing support



In the early days of restoring power and opening roads



Stroud Unit

The Stroud SES has had two separate incarnations, one as the civil defence organisation in the 1960s for the Stroud Shire (now the Great Lakes Shire) and the other as an SES unit since the late 1980s for the western part of the council area.

In between these times the unit did not exist. In its early life the organisation was known by the name of the shire at the time and the Stroud label was used again from the unit's rebirth in 1988. The unit covers approximately 2,000 square klms and 2 members that transferred from a metro unit commented that it seemed

strange to use cruise control to get to a job!

From 1997 to 2016 the name 'Karuah Valley' was adopted before reverting to "Stroud" to avoid confusion with the township of Karuah. Most of the township of Karuah lies outside the Stroud Unit area.

We are a "small unit with big hearts", recently several members were presented with a Commissioner's Unit Citation for "Outstanding efforts for the 2015 flood event in April 2015" we like to refer to it as "The Great Storm of 15".



The pictures were taken at The Stroud Brick Throwing. The Stroud Brick and Rolling Pin Throwing Contest is an annual event held in July between the four townships of Stroud in the world – Stroud in Gloucestershire, England; in Oklahoma, U.S.A.; in Ontario, Canada, and here in New South Wales, Australia.

The boat was made by the Stroud Mens Shed and we are slowly adding bits and pieces to authenticate it. There are several Community events we attend and it has already proven to be a wonderful drawcard.

Sandy Snape JP
Operations Officer | Stroud Unit



From all of us at the
NSW SES Volunteers Association
We wish you a
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Marrickville Unit

The Unit of Choice!

With contributions from Kelsie, Matt, Julie, Carol, Denise and Hasmukh

For the last few years, the NSW SES - Marrickville Unit has been embracing 'new ways of working' and in particular, identifying ways in which our volunteers can get involved in any aspect of the Unit's operations and functions, regardless of their experience or rank.

Within the Unit, this has really taken off when it comes to the delivery of training for volunteers and community

capability building. Much of this builds on the legacy left behind by the now retired Unit Commander, Michael Carney and driven by new Unit Commander, Daniel Walker and his leadership team.

Below are some examples of internal and external projects that have kept us busy at the NSW SES – Marrickville Unit for the last 12-24 months.

BUSHFIRE AWARENESS COURSE

At the time of writing, a catastrophic fire warning is in place for large parts of NSW and for the first time, the Sydney region. As bushfires become more frequent and intense, our Unit wanted to work out how they could be of assistance, despite the low likelihood of a large bushfire in Sydney's Inner West. As such, we have organised for the Rural Fire Service to run a Bushfire Awareness Course at the Marrickville Unit.

The course is a combination of theory and practicals including a visit from a Cat 1 fire truck. During the fire truck visit, volunteers were shown all the equipment on board as well as observe and take part in the 'burnover' drill. Afterwards, the volunteers had to undergo a burnover drill as part of completing the course. The feedback received from volunteers has been incredibly positive.



NSW SES volunteers learning speaking to members from NSW RFS – Illawong about fighting bushfires and the different types of equipment they carry on their trucks.

Clovelly Flood Rescue Personal Development

Our Unit continues to explore ways to bring in new training opportunities to the entire Metro zone. Volunteers from the Unit were heavily involved in the development of the Clovelly Flood Rescue training event.

The volunteers worked alongside other passionate, talented individuals and experts from across the greater Sydney area to develop this training event with the aim of delivering it to over 100 volunteers. It was amazing seeing all the support being provided by volunteers across the Service as well as external agencies such as Surf Life Saving NSW.

We planned for the training to take place in the evening at Clovelly Beach during midwinter and allow for the volunteers to get as close to a real flood rescue scenario as possible.

Unfortunately, on the morning of the event, it was called off as the organisers were advised that the conditions were unsafe.

This forced a radical last second change of plans and our Unit sprang into action (we are an 'emergency service' after all).

By the afternoon, a new, out-of-water training event was set up at our Unit to ensure that eager participants and skilled facilitators didn't miss out. The Clovelly Flood Rescue PD event will spring back into life next year and NSW SES – Marrickville is keen to make it happen.



Marrickville Unit volunteers taking part in the Flood Rescue Development Day at Manly Dam

Get Ready – two NRMA grants, six events, more on the way

2018 also saw our volunteers get out and about at three Get Ready street meets in local flood hot spots, and we also welcomed the community to the Marrickville Unit for a full-on Open Day experience.

The Get Ready street meets and the Unit Open Day were full of activities for kids and adults alike. We set-up z-rigs (the littlies enjoyed taking mum and dad for a ride), throw bag challenges (intergenerational competition was fierce), flood boat display, and crowd favourite Paddy also made an appearance. Through the street meets and the Open Day, we learnt the value of engaging our community through shared stories and experiences of local flood and storm events.

A year on, our 2019 Get Ready community campaign kicked off with us hosting two workshops where participants rotated in groups around four activities – preparing your home for storm, risk awareness/flood maps/emergency kits, safety around floods/sandbagging, and first aid/CPR).

1960's Motown tunes (think Get Ready by The Temptations) marked the end of each rotation and kept us moving along. The supper for each workshop was catered for by our local Country Women's Association.

At the end of the workshops, participants received 'Get Ready; certificates and 'thank-you' freebies to get their home emergency kits started.

We also received some really great feedback from participants – *'Thanks for a fantastic night. Excellent training, lovely to meet so many wonderful people, delightful scones and a great collection of things to take away'*. Our next Get Ready experience will be a bit different. Can't share right now but (fingers crossed) it's going to be good.



First Get Ready workshop at the NSW SES – Marrickville Unit. This first workshop was specifically targeted towards women and delivered by our wonderful female volunteers.

Incident Management Training

Our volunteers have also worked hard to develop inhouse resources to support our response capabilities during operations. For example, we have created our own, six-week long Incident Management training package. All field volunteers are encouraged to participate in this course which covers all aspects of incident management. Those who have completed the course have found it useful and have gained a better understanding of how

incidents are managed. The Unit also runs weekly IMT (beacon) training which now includes volunteers from our cluster Units as well as operational response training for when beacon is unavailable. Twice in the past year, our IMT has also organised a Unit wide exercise to test our response to a large number of mock RFAs and we are currently planning on including our cluster Units in training with us.



NSW SES – Marrickville Unit volunteers undergoing their weekly IMT training.

Warm and fuzzies

As Unit volunteers have stepped up and taken ownership of different aspects of operations or community engagement, they receive a loving reward in recognition of the contribution(s). It's an SES coloured beanie that has been handmade by one of our amazing volunteers - Denise Tolhurst. These are handed out in batches during muster meetings which allows for their effort to be applauded by other volunteers. Plus, the beanies are great for winter! (pattern for making your own SES beanie below)

These are some of the activities that have kept the many volunteers of the NSW SES – Marrickville Unit busy over the past 24 months. And as always, we are exploring new ways to build and innovate a culture that continues to value the many passions and skills our volunteers bring to the Unit and the Service.



Unit volunteers enjoying their warm, hand knitted beanies.

A great example of this has been participating in Wear it Purple Day at our Unit in celebration of the LGBTQI+ community.

The splashes of purple decorations and purple themed food on the night

was sensational. We hope that some of what we have been doing inspires other volunteers and Units to explore ways in which they can help benefit their volunteers, the Service and the local community.

Please email office@nswsesva.org.au for the beanie pattern / instructions

Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid courses continue to be planned for across the State as part of the Volunteer Associations mental health strategy. The most recent course in November was the first held in the new training space at the NSW SES Volunteers Association office in Rockdale, which is available for NSWSES volunteers to utilise for a variety of training activities.

The Mental Health First Aid course continues to be in high demand with over 70 applicants for 20 places in November. We were able to host members from 16 different Metro units - Parramatta, Menai, Cronulla, Marrickville, Kogarah, Ryde, Campbelltown, Ashfield-Leichhardt, Ku-ring-gai, Burwood, Blue Mountains, Penrith, Hurstville, Randwick, Heathcote and Fairfield. The courses continue to receive positive feedback with the next courses already



scheduled for Northern Zone in February and Metro Zone in March.

Any questions regarding nominations or running a course

in your area can be directed to the Volunteer Associations Mental Health Coordinator on selina.thomas@member.ses.nsw.gov.au.



Thankyou to the Randwick Unit

Members from Randwick SES Unit recently assisted the community with road closures and crowd marshalling at the Sydney Running Festival.

For each member that offered their time, a donation was made by the event organizers to the NSW SES Volunteers Association with over \$2000 being donated as a result of this high visibility community event!

A big thank you to the Randwick Unit!





Dawn Fraser Launches 2020 Australasian Police & Emergency Services Games

Australian swimming legend Dawn Fraser AC MBE was among a host of dignitaries to officially launch the 2020 Australasian Police and Emergency Services Games (AP&ES).

The launch was held on 17 October in Wollongong on the NSW South Coast, the venue of the 18th AP&ES Games which will be held on 17-24 October 2020.

The 2020 event will feature more sports than the Olympics and is expected to attract 5,000 competitors and an estimated 10,000 spectators from across Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific.

Ms Fraser, who is the official 2020 AP&ES Games Ambassador, joined former Australian rugby union player Simon Poidevin at the 17 October launch, arriving via a PolAir helicopter at WIN Stadium.

"Our emergency services are always there to give a helping hand. This is my way of giving back and supporting them," Ms Fraser said.

Also in attendance were commissioners and agency leads representing 18 emergency services organisations. The official theme of the Games is *Connected by Service, United by Sport*.

Australian rock band the Hoodoo Gurus were announced as the frontline act which will be attending the Games social evening, with lead singer Dave Faulkner confirming the news via video link.

The Games is a biennial competition held throughout Australasia and is open to all serving, retired and registered staff and volunteers of eligible law enforcement, defence and emergency service agencies. In 2020, eligibility has been extended to the nursing and midwifery profession.

AP&ES Chair NSW Police Force Deputy Commissioner Dave Hudson APM said that aside from the traditional Olympic events, the AP&ES Games will host a range of

competitions – 50 in all – that maximise inclusion and include darts, golf, squash, surfing, stand-up paddle boarding and crossfit.

Following the launch, NSW Ambulance Commissioner Dominic Morgan said the Games will promote positive mental health in the emergency services, with official Games charities Beyond Blue and RU OK?

Mr Morgan said Beyond Blue's 2018 survey *Answering the Call*, found that one in 2.5 emergency service employees and one in three volunteers have been diagnosed with a mental health condition in their life, compared to one in five of all adults in Australia.

"People working in the police and emergency services sector generally regard their roles as being meaningful and rewarding. But naturally it can also be extremely stressful and demanding, so it behoves us to look after the people who look after the community."

The *Beyond Blue* survey also found:

- » 39 per cent of employees (about 45,200 employees) and 33 per cent of volunteers (about 78,600 volunteers) reported having been diagnosed with a mental health condition in their life by a mental health professional, compared to 20 per cent of all adults in Australia.
- » 10 per cent of employees (11,800 employees) had probable PTSD.
- » PTSD rates ranged from 6 per cent in the state emergency services sector, to 8 per cent in ambulance, 9 per cent in fire and rescue, and 11 per cent in police.
- » Being verbally or physically assaulted in the line of duty was associated with higher levels of psychological distress – 25 per cent of police employees, 13 per cent of ambulance employees and 4 per cent of fire and rescue employees were physically attacked or assaulted.

» Corrective Services NSW Commissioner Peter Severin said the Games is a great opportunity for all emergency services to collaborate, compete and show camaraderie.

"We are encouraging all personnel, regardless of their skills and experience, to sign up for the Games and share our New South Wales' hospitality," he said.

Mr Hudson said that, as with all emergency responses, the 2020 Games is a demonstration of inter-agency cooperation, with delegates from each major agency represented on the organising committee, fulfilling roles including sponsorship, volunteers, media and marketing and entertainment. The NSW Police Force have also taken staff off line to work on the Games, with other agencies to follow.

NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association General Secretary Brett Holmes said it was an honour for nurses and midwives to be invited for the first time to participate.

"Nurses and midwives work closely with other emergency service personnel in their day-to-day working lives, so it's a great opportunity to develop those connections in a more relaxed environment and promote good health together," Mr Holmes said.

The Games were first held in 1984 as the Australian National Police Games. From 1999, all full-time emergency services personnel were also invited to compete.

The 2020 Games website can be accessed here: apandesgames.com.au/

Registrations for the Games is scheduled to open on 1 January 2020

For further information contact:
**AP&ES – Detective
 Superintendent Gavin
 Dengate: 0418 971 751**

NSW SES Participants

On Saturday 19th of October the NSW SES "Storm Troopers" Basketball team played in the Police and Emergency Services Games. We had nine players including one female who played in the men's competition, competing against teams from Police, Ambulance, Westmead emergency department and corrective services we did not make the finals but we certainly had lots of fun and plenty of laughs.

The team consisted of volunteers and staff from seven different locations, many of the team had never met before competing in six games together but everyone pulled together to show the same teamwork team spirit that we so often see on rooftops, in flood boats or within incident management teams across the state. Many of us would love to play again next time and we would love to get some more members involved.

Paul McQueen

(Acting) Senior Manager Training Delivery
NSW State Emergency Service – State Headquarters



The NSW SES Volunteers Association was a proud Sponsor of the *Storm Troopers* Basketball Team

Equestrian

Karen Apps from the Scone Unit and Ben and Kaliya Maxwell from the Muswellbrook unit made the journey to attend the Police and Emergency Services Games in Camden on the 27th and 28th October. In the equestrian section.



Together as a team they competed in every discipline of the games from dressage and jumping, to hacking, sporting, cross country and western events on the Sunday.

They as a team came home with an impressive medal haul of 21 medals and 2 broad sash ribbons! Ben took out best presented service attire and Kaliya coming home with Novice western horse and Supreme western horse and 3rd in combined training.

Karen was successful in bringing home 2 gold medals and placing in all her other western events. The team also came an impressive 2nd place overall out of 15 teams!

The team now have plans to attend the Australasian Police and Emergency services Games next year, in which we wish them all the best in their endeavours!

Karen would also very much like to thank the NSW SES Volunteer



Association for their help and sponsorship money for equipment to help her compete.

Karen Apps
Scone Unit

Congratulations to all the NSW SES Volunteers who participated – we look forward to the 2020 Games!

Information Communications Technology (ICT) Update



BEACON

Over the past six months, the Operational Systems team have made a series of enhancements to improve the operational reliability of Beacon. Recent stability issues were due to the influx of data into Beacon over time since its initial launch in 2014. The new improvements allow Beacon to meet the demands of our busiest periods and have proven successful during events over the last few months. The team will continue to monitor performance and now turn its focus to new functional enhancements.

FIXED PHONE REFRESH

The Communications team have been busy this year designing the new VoIP platform and implementation strategy, with an emphasis on an AIMS structure based design. With the Customnet telephony system coming to end of life, the priority has been to replace these services asap. Three pilot sites have been upgraded and we have begun rolling out our new Telstra (TCCCP) Cisco Voice over IP solution to Unit and Zone Headquarters with impending Customnet disconnection dates.



STAY SAFE & KEEP OPERATIONAL

The Stay Safe and Keep Operational program team are leading the development of mobile communications solutions to enable critical communications capability in black-spots throughout the state. Included in the program is development of 4 new Cell on Wheels, a Mobile Incident Command Center and an in vehicle radio solution that uses multiple communications bearers for critical communications.

FABS (Finance Asset and Business Services) Update

In the last twelve months the Finance Asset and Business Services team have been committed to improving the way we do business. We appreciate the support of volunteers working through this period of significant change. If you are experiencing business related issues, please reach out to your Zone team so we can provide assistance and help to resolve the issue quickly.

The Fleet Replacement Program (FRP) is a \$56.4m investment in the NSW SES to provide a high quality, fit for purpose, and capable fleet of vehicles, vessels and trailers. This will enable our members to provide a reliable, safe and prompt response during floods, storms and other emergencies to the communities that we support.

During 2019/20 the FRP will spend \$21m and deliver 140 new fleet assets across the state. By Christmas we will have delivered 35 new Command

Vehicles (CMD), General Purpose Vehicles (GPV) and Light Storm Vehicles (LSV) into service. The new vehicles are predominately replacing the oldest vehicles in the fleet with 10 for Western Zone, 9 for Northern Zone, 2 for South Eastern Zone, 2 for Southern Zone and 12 for Metro Zone. The LSV is built on a Mercedes Benz VS30 4x4 cab chassis making it a capable off-road vehicle. Operational equipment stowed on the vehicle includes a range of M18 Milwaukee battery-operated power tools and portable scene lighting. The stowage of the LSV has been ergonomically designed with consideration to items that are one-touch and items which are multi-touch on a job site. There are also a range of current vehicles that are within 5-8 years of age that will undergo a midlife safety and capability upgrade. These vehicles will have the latest markings, technology and equipment installed and will then be reallocated to Units.

By June next year the FRP will deliver the remaining 105 fleet assets for 2019/20; these include 5 snow mobiles currently being commissioned from the USA, a 22 seater bus due in January, 10 Medium Rescue Vehicles (MRV), 15 Medium Storm Vehicles (MSV), another 35 GPVs, as well as a Light Rescue Vehicle for Flood Rescue. The focus will then shift to the Vessel and Trailer Fleet with the first of the Light Storm Trailers (LST) and General Purpose Trailers (GPT) arriving mid-year.

The significant benefit offered by the FRP is that we are providing vehicles that are fully kitted out with new or re-purposed equipment, with only a small number of high value or specialist items that will need to be transferred from old vehicles. As far as possible the FRP aims to deliver new vehicles to the Unit HQ directly from the vehicle body builder.

Parkes Unit Open Day

Parkes State Emergency Service Unit invited residents to their Unit Open Day which was held on Saturday 2nd November 2019. The Open Day gave the Parkes SES Unit the chance to show the public up close the range of volunteer work they do and was a great opportunity for those considering joining the SES to find out more information.

Local Controller, Phil Snow said not many people realised what joining the SES does offer and how it caters to almost all ages and abilities.

"The NSW SES core role is to deal with storms and floods. The Parkes Unit also specialises in rescue work such as road crash, flood rescue, vertical rescue and large animal rescue. This Open Day is a great opportunity to see the other roles that the SES play in the community. Age isn't a factor as we have a wide range of age groups in our unit, with the oldest being 75 and the youngest 16, as well as a diverse set of backgrounds. This is a great opportunity to see firsthand what we do" he said.

The Open Day gave visitors the chance to talk to the local Parkes SES Unit Volunteers and see demonstrations on how to prepare your property for storm damage, flooding and general rescue work.



Coffs Harbour Unit Vertical Rescue

On Monday 26th August at around 23.09 hours, Coffs Harbour City SES Unit was activated for a Vertical Rescue at Bonville Headland, Sawtell, on the Mid North Coast of NSW. Initial information provided to SOC suggested a male casualty had fallen approximately 15m down the cliff at the headland, just south of Sawtell main beach.

CFS33 & CFS45 were initially responded with VR equipment and crew. Upon arrival at the scene, Ambulance NSW advised that there were in fact two persons at the foot of the cliff requiring extrication. Although the sky was clear on the night, it was particularly windy which caused difficulties with communicating to the foot of the cliff and resulted in sea spray being blown up to the working area.

Qualified VR operators from the unit established suitable anchors and an Arizona Vortex at the cliff edge with non-VR operators assisting with scene lighting, isolation of the working area and unpacking kit. Shortly after arrival, and in consultation with the local Ambulance Commander, an initial SES first responder was lowered down to the casualties to provide an updated sitrep.

The first responder identified that a female casualty had fallen off the cliff, with the second patient uninjured having entered the ocean nearby and had swam around the headland to reach the initial casualty.

A stretcher and stretcher attendant were lowered down to the foot of the cliff, and the injured casualty was packaged and hauled back up and handed to the waiting ambos. The second uninjured casualty was brought to the cliff top in a harness.

A few weeks later, members from the Coffs Harbour City & Dorrigo Units recreated the job - this time on a sunny weekend afternoon. Under exercise conditions, the VR crew made an addition to the rope system with the inclusion of a Track Line to assist with better control for recovery of the casualty and stretcher attendant.

A job well done by the unit in Coffs Harbour, which also provided a realistic training scenario to demonstrate skills to non-VR operatives and the public.

Alex Wilson

0450 129 616



Lake Macquarie Community Engagement – Lake Macquarie Paddle and Promenade Rogaine Event

The Lake Macquarie City unit was approached by Rogaining NSW to participate in the Lake Macquarie Paddle and Promenade Rogaine held on Saturday 3 November 2019.

The event was held between Fennel Bay and Bolton Point for a three hour orienteering competition.

The event was a great success as the first of it's kind to be held by the organisation. 96 people participated in the event including 18 doubles and 58 single competitors across 76 craft.

The event organisers requested the Lake Macquarie City unit assist by providing safety for the event.

The unit reviewed the proposal and saw this as a great opportunity to expand their community engagement plan whilst testing the unit's capabilities in the event of an operation. The unit provided 15 volunteers and 4 vessels to monitor the event from both on land and in the water. Following recent unit demonstrations from the Zone Communications Capability Team, the unit engaged the team to attend the event and utilise their communications repeater array. This enabled the Zone Communications Capability Team to test the repeater array over land and water, across distance and through obstacles both natural and man-made.



The Lake Macquarie City Unit also used the event as an opportunity to conduct water based search and rescue patterns over a coordinated grid sections, practicing communications and coordination, boat operations, and in-water flood rescue capabilities.

The event was considered to be an overall success and the unit is looking forward to participating in next year's Lake Macquarie Paddle and Promenade Rogaine.

Jamal Box

Deputy Unit Commander
Lake Macquarie City
NSW State Emergency Service – Northern





Wyong Unit Get Ready Deaf Workshop

The Wyong Unit with the help of their neighbouring Gosford Unit conducted our very first and extremely successful *"Get Ready Deaf Workshop"*.

This initiative was targeted to our local community on the Central Coast of NSW who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. The purpose of this workshop was to raise awareness in how important it is to have your houses ready and prepared in the event of Storms, Extreme Weather along with basic first aid and survival techniques. We offered lots of practical skills on the day, some of which included cleaning their gutters and securing items in their yards during severe winds and storms.

The day was a great success the 21 members of the public who attended having a great deal of fun while at the same time taking some awesome new skills and knowledge away to help them in future severe weather events. This was not only a day where our Deaf and Hard of Hearing were able to learn new skill sets but our unit members who attended were also able to take away new skills in how to deal with people who are deaf in an emergency situation.

This was an amazing and great day all round and we highly recommend other units in the State to give this a thought and create a day for your local community.







Mid North Coast Multi Agency Large Animal Rescue

In a joint initiative between Fire and Rescue New South Wales (FRNSW) and the NSW SES Mid North Coast Command in the Northern Zone – Large Animal Rescue Awareness Training was made available to all members of the Mid North Coast's Local Emergency Management Committees. The initiative arose after the updates of the Local Emergency Management Plans identified some opportunities to improve capability, response and multi-agency service delivery. They included –

- » A need to ensure emergency first responders are familiar with contemporary hazards, risks, equipment and techniques
- » Improved interoperability, cooperation and cohesion amongst emergency service personnel and functional support areas
- » Development of a Consequence Management Guide on stock transport incidents which in turn highlighted the prevalence of biohazards in the management and handling of stock and domestic animals to first responders

» Application of contemporary humane and best practice animal handling techniques

Four workshops were conducted in Port Macquarie, Wauchope, Macksville and Nabadac over four days with over 100 personnel participating. The training was designed to provide awareness for all emergency service personnel and functional support agencies on large animal handling, provide for a professional development activity for General Land Rescue Operators and to facilitate relationship building amongst participants including specialists such as Local Land Services, District Vets and industry representatives.

The training was professionally provided by David King from the NSW SES who stressed the importance of a multi-agency approach and commended the work undertaken by the NSW SES and FRNSW on the Mid North Coast in this regard. The District Vet for the Mid North Coast was impressed with the level of expertise, techniques and practices on display by the trainer David King and those in

attendance. The workshops attracted significant media attention and there was overwhelming positive feedback from all agencies in attendance.

FRNSW and NSW SES on the Mid Coast hope to continue this level of cooperation building on the cohesion and interoperability amongst the services in the acquisition and deployment of specialised large animal rescue equipment across the LEMC's which will be made available and utilised by all GLR Units and supported by the other services during rescue operations.

Both FRNSW and NSW SES Northern Zone would like to formally thank and acknowledge NSW SES Volunteer David King for his professionalism and commitment to emergency services personnel. His work, passion and subject matter knowledge was outstanding and very much appreciated.

Anthony Day

Northern Zone - Deputy Zone Commander
Mid North Coast

Port Stephens Animal Rescue

Port Stephens SES Rescue met Diesel the horse at Salt Ash, after Diesel got in a bit of a pickle in a flood drain after becoming a little too adventurous for his own good.

Diesel slid into the flood drain, which due to the high water table in the area, was full of water and up to the top of his neck leaving his head just out of the water.

His owner saw Diesel and quickly responded holding his head out of the water and keeping him calm. She realised that she needed help and called 000 requesting Police.

The rescue coordinator notified Port Stephens SES Rescue. Our friends at Fire Rescue Salamander Bay and RFS Salt Ash also came to the rescue of Diesel.

Port Stephens SES Rescue unit are the accredited General Land Rescue and are responsible for Large Animal Rescue in our response area.

Our Duty Officer was on scene within 6 minutes after the call and co-ordinated the response, liaising with the owners, incoming crews and State Operations Centre.

Our crew responded our specialist Large Animal Rescue unit which has all manner of specialised animal rescue kit (from Horses to Cows and everything in between) which along with our crewed medium rescue and heavy rescues units attended.

With specialist slings, use of the mud lance, large animal slide, brilliant support from FRNSW and RFS and a combined effort of all agencies Diesel was successfully rescued and is now back grazing.

Our Duty Officer visited Diesel yesterday and can happily report Diesel sustained no injuries and is happily back in his paddock.

Alysha Springett

Port Stephens Unit

NSW State Emergency Service - Hunter



Port Stephens SES Rescue unit are the accredited General Land Rescue and are responsible for Large Animal Rescue in our response area.





Wingecarribee adopts a long-term resilience plan through youth diversity

Within the SES, a young person is considered to be aged between 16 and 24 years of age. Over the last twelve months the Wingecarribee Unit has opened its doors to the younger members of the community, actively engaging with young people through youth open days and recruiting members as young as sixteen years of age.

Earlier this year the youth of Wingecarribee were invited to visit their local SES unit where existing members demonstrated key skills such as First-Aid, Vertical Rescue, Chainsaw demonstrations, throw bag competitions and a huge climbing wall, where the general public could try their hand at rock climbing!

The day benefitted not only the youth of the community but also

members of the unit, who not only had the opportunity to demonstrate their skills, but embrace their competitive side, enjoying tug of war and rock wall climbing competitions.

Given the success of the *'Youth Open Day'* Unit Commander Heather Rowe said "I strongly believe in holding ongoing events that engage our young people. They are our future, and we must invest in them"

Local Commander, Warren Turner added "The success of the inaugural youth open day cements in my mind the importance of young people and the contributions they can make to their community"

There are many benefits to inviting youth into your unit, not only does it teach the younger members of your community how to be more resilient

in times of need, it also gives them the skills and knowledge to assist their friends, families and neighbours to do the same, it builds community capability. Since introducing our long-term Resilience Plan for Youth Diversity, Wingecarribee has also lowered the average age of unit members from 48 down to 39.

Young people, guided by experienced members have the capability to become invaluable assets to their units, as they are extremely enthusiastic and quick to learn and retain what they have been taught.

Members of the community are always pleasantly surprised to see young people from their community turning out to attend Requests for Assurances (RFA's), seeing first-hand



how SES training up-skills our youth with abilities that most young people of today lack, including attention to detail and a commitment to learning.

Prior to engaging and introducing further youth into our unit, member numbers were struggling, attendance was poor and training nights were quiet. Now training nights within the unit have been given a new lease on life.

The atmosphere within the Wingecarribee unit has transformed exponentially, with most members now arriving at the shed almost an hour before muster, keen to not only catch up with their friends but engage in extra personal development before training commences, with many members not leaving the unit until long after training has finished and weekly musters are now full of energy and buzzing with laughter.

"Today's youth are the future of our unit" which is why the Commanders of Wingecarribee are committed toward building the youth programme into a long-term strategy in the future.

Heather Rowe

Unit Commander, Wingecarribee



OPERATIONAL SUPPORT UNIT (OSU)

In 2018 NSW SES established the Operational Support Unit- the OSU, as one of 4 State Capability Units. State Capability Units manage and maintain operational readiness of scarce specialist resources such as Alpine and Bush Search and Rescue, Aviation and specialist of communications and incident management assets using specialist personnel.

The Operational Support Unit (OSU) is led by the Commander, Sam Corby, enabled by a small cohort of members with a keen interest in operational communications. Operational Communications assets currently managed by the OSU include a satellite trailer, Command buses of various sizes and capabilities as well as the Cell on Wheels. Aligned with the delivery of additional Cell on Wheels capability we are looking to expand the OSU in early 2020 to manage and deploy strategically located state assets to develop our operational response capability.

We will be looking for a self-motivated, considered and disciplined people who are comfortable and confident in learning about and employing the skills we'll teach you to activate, initiate, manage and maintain a CoW and other OSU assets at those locations. Watch this space for further updates on how you could become a member of the OSU!

If you have any questions or feedback please contact the Capability coordinator at capability@ses.nsw.gov.au or the OSU Commander at osu.ops@ses.nsw.gov.au.

By David Bowring





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