

THE Volunteer

Issue 1

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20 YEARS SUPPORTING OUR VOLUNTEERS



Design a Logo and Slogan for the SESVA

The SESVA needs your help to design a Logo and a Slogan for our Association. The Logo needs to be simple and easily recognised and should include the letters SESVA. The Slogan should be short, snappy and easy to remember. It should include the words 'SESVA' and 'Volunteers'.

How can I become a Member of the SESVA?

Enrolled with this association is a membership card for the SESVA. This card is valid for one year. To become a member, you need to pay the annual fee of \$10.00. You can also become a life member for \$1000.00. For more information, contact the Secretary.

Keep a look out for the next SESVA Newsletter which will arrive with the Director General's Newsletter in June!

We need more members! Join and support your SESVA today!

ALL CONTROLLERS PLEASE NOTE
Make sure that this Newsletter is passed around to all members of your Unit to read.

SESVA NEWSLETTER
Number 1 - March 1999

From the President

Members of the SESVA are a very special group of people. They are the backbone of our Association and without them we would not be able to do what we do. I am proud to be your President and I look forward to working with you all over the next year.

SESVA State Council holds its second meeting

The SESVA State Council held its second meeting on 10 April 1999. The meeting was held at the SESVA State Council premises in Brisbane. The meeting was attended by representatives from all SESVA Units and the SESVA State Council. The meeting was a success and all business was dealt with.



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NSW SES VOLUNTEERS ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President of the Board of Directors

Kim Davis ESM (Captains Flat)
kim.davis@nswsesva.org.au

Vice President

Shannon Crofton ESM (Sydney Southern HQ)
shannon.crofton@nswsesva.org.au

Managing Director

Erin Pogmore
erin.pogmore@nswsesva.org.au

Secretary

Patricia Orchard (Nyngan)
patricia.orchard@nswsesva.org.au

Director

Kim Edwards (Waverley/Woolhara)
kim.edwards@nswsesva.org.au

Director

Megan Hamblin (Wellington)
megan.hamblin@nswsesva.org.au

NSW SES VOLUNTEERS ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVES

Graham Kinder (Manly)
sydneynorthern@nswsesva.org.au

Dennis Buck ESM
namoi@nswsesva.org.au

Pat Johnson ESM (Sydney Southern Unit)
sydneyssouthern@nswsesva.org.au

Mark Elsley (Muswellbrook)
hunter@nswsesva.org.au

Kurt Andrew (Dubbo)
macquarie@nswsesva.org.au

Patricia Maxwell (Queanbeyan)
southernhighlands@nswsesva.org.au

Ray Faggotter (Coffs Harbour)
clarencenambucca@nswsesva.org.au

Paul Kaye (Broken Hill)
farwest@nswsesva.org.au

Lisa Williams (Eden)
illawarrasouthcoast@nswsesva.org.au

Kristine McDonald (Tweed Heads)
richmondweed@nswsesva.org.au

Susan Leckie (Murray HQ)
murray@nswsesva.org.au

CRITICAL INCIDENT SUPPORT PROGRAM 1800 626 800

CONTRIBUTIONS



Volunteers Association

Please send all content to:

The Volunteer Editor:

Pat Johnson

Unit 1, 2-6 Lindsay Street, Rockdale NSW 2216

Phone: 1300 0 SES VA

Mobile: 0408 161 018

Email: editor@nswsesva.org.au

Content for *The Volunteer*

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Ph: (03) 9937 0200 Fax: (03) 9937 0201

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On the cover:
The cover reflects some of our first magazines. Created by Rob Stevens



KIM DAVIS ESM
PRESIDENT NSW SES
VOLUNTEERS ASSOCIATION

Volunteering with the NSW SES can be a real yin and yang sometimes. The unhappiness of some of the jobs we go too, but also the satisfaction of having the skills and ability to help those in need.

Most of you join for good reason and put your skills and energy into the right areas. You support your team even when losing or not playing well.

Currently it is a very busy time for the Volunteers Association. We are going about business as usual which includes volunteer representation, volunteer supports and our welfare support. We meet with the Minister and Shadow Minister and other MP's and proudly keep them up to date on what the volunteers do for their communities and the issues they are facing. We are also moving into our second stage of Mental Health training.

On top of this we have been supporting our own during this current drought. We have been quietly supporting this drought for a long time now, however since the mainstream media has started reporting on this

event, we now have extended our program significantly.

I have enjoyed and been humbled by the feedback we receive by those receiving this support as well as those stepping up and doing the work.

Recently there has been comment on social media regarding the association and those who volunteer on top of their volunteering. These are those Volunteers Association members who deliver the hay, meet with members, provide advice and representation, meet with SES, work to raise funds, pack care packages, organise medical appointments and professional mental health care and do all non glamorous side of helping our volunteers when they have need.

This vocal minority, often behind keyboards, use incorrect information or choose not to do their research before commenting.

The names I see making the comments are not the names I see whom go out and help volunteers.

The SESVA is not about publicising the plight of our volunteers in need.

We have been quietly supporting this drought for a long time now, however since the mainstream media has started reporting on this event, we now have extended our program significantly.

When representing the views of volunteers we will do it in a respectful and professional way through the appropriate channels.

It is a new Volunteers Association. Things are changing. Just because we or the SES have 'always done it that way' doesn't mean it is the right or best way.

We are reviewing our structure and we are looking for the right people to do the right roles, where, when and how the changing needs of our volunteers are.

Keyboard warriors and those whom chose to personally criticise our volunteers need not apply. Attitudes like this are not welcome in our volunteer culture.

To all the others, thank you for what you do and we are proud that you respect our volunteers privacy. Thank you for your ongoing feedback and for being a part of a team looking for a solution to any issue that may arise. Keep it up.

As always, we are always contactable via social media, email and phone.

NSW Volunteers Association Members Database

If you need to update your details please contact the office at office@nswsesva.org.au or call on **1300 073 782**.

“
We’ve achieved great things together including the recent \$56.4 million investment into your fleet and I know we can do more between now and March next year.
 ”



TROY GRANT MP
MINISTER FOR
EMERGENCY SERVICES

Since my last update I have announced I will not contest the 2019 state election. Although I have made the difficult decision to leave politics I assure you I’m committed to representing you in the NSW Cabinet right up until March 2019. It’s an incredible privilege to be your voice and it’s an honour to meet with volunteers from every corner of the state and hear first-hand of the work being done on the ground to prepare and respond to all manner of emergencies in our towns and suburbs. We’ve achieved great things together including the recent \$56.4 million investment into your fleet and I know we can do more between now and March next year.

I recently joined Deputy Commissioner Newtown and the team at the North Sydney unit to celebrate the completion of the SES Operational Communication Equipment and Systems Project. I know this \$53.5 million NSW Government investment has made a real difference, including by reducing communication

blackspots in the south west. In a state the size of NSW, technology can reduce the tyranny of distance and as better technology becomes available we need to continue to invest to ensure volunteers stay connected. The project has delivered more than 5,000 new radios and seen 131 SES vehicles fitted with automatic vehicle location devices to enable timelier tasking in emergencies and improved volunteer safety. The project has also delivered modern printers and plotters and vital network and portable repeater upgrades.

I also recently had the privilege to join the Alpine Capability Unit at Perisher for their training. It was a fantastic experience to join the team and Commissioner Smethurst for this training exercise and see first-hand the harsh alpine conditions the unit face. It was such a great experience to join with them and head out on the snow mobiles for training myself. I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend with this dedicated team and I know their training will ensure this unit is prepared

to the highest standards for the risks faced on the mountains. While I was in Jindabyne I also was able to hand over 20 new Avalanche Transceivers to the Alpine Capability Unit. This investment into avalanche beacons is another example we are making to provide volunteers with better technology to enhance safety.

I also wish to extend my appreciation for the work undertaken by the NSW SES Volunteers Association to help those doing it tough with the current drought conditions. I know the association has been working hard to raise money and provide support to members, who are often themselves not the first in the community to put up their hand up, to get through these unforgiving conditions. It’s this compassion that makes me proud to work with you and represent you in the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government.

Once again, I thank you for your unwavering dedication to your communities and I look forward to meeting you soon when I’m out visiting units in the months ahead.

CRITICAL INCIDENT SUPPORT PROGRAM

1800 626 800



MARK SMETHURST DSC, AM
COMMISSIONER

Dear All,
In the last three months the Service has been busy improving operational capability and streamlining processes at the Directorate, Zone and Unit level to help us transition successfully into the new structure in October 2018. While our operational activity has been relatively low due to dry weather conditions, there have been many significant enhancements in all areas of the organisation developed and implemented to help us in our journey. I have been extremely pleased by the passion and desire of all members to help us move forward in important changes to our Service, this journey will be so much more successful with our combined efforts and support.

Within the Planning and Preparedness Directorate, we have developed State Capability Units providing specialists in the areas of Bush Search and Rescue, Operational Support Unit including operation of the enhanced mobile incident command vehicles and communications platforms, Aviation Management Unit and Alpine Unit. We have further progressed our Incident Management framework and development strategy to include provision of various training packages. Currently we are conducting a pilot of the Public Information Officer package, which is being rolled out using a modern methodology that incorporates on-line, face-to-face and mentoring arrangements to better meet the needs of our volunteer members. I would also like to note that volunteer member Glenn Jones

has achieved accreditation as a Level 3 Incident Controller through the AFAC Emergency Management Professionalisation Scheme (EMPS).

The Community Engagement Team has successfully completed Project U-Turn and the NSW SES Warnings Project, and received a National Disaster Resilience Program Grant to the value of \$165,000 to undertake a project focused on engaging pet owners in the Illawarra to plan and prepare for disasters. We are also working in partnership with Infrastructure NSW and key stakeholders to develop the Get Ready campaign to raise community awareness of risk and develop resilience related to the Hawkesbury Nepean Strategy.

The Training Directorate has been busy trialing the Mobile Assessment App. These trials will ensure we are maximising functionality and suitability for use in the field. A staged implementation plan commences in late September and includes training and communications for all users, with the objective to incorporate all courses for training and assessment into the App by December 2018. This App will provide enormous savings in time and effort for all our dedicated volunteer trainers and assessors. As we extend our use of technology, the Training team recently held a 'virtual' Assessor Skype Professional Development session facilitated by Region Learning and Development Officers (RLDOs). This followed a similar successful 'virtual' flood rescue training session in July, and is setting

the scene for more of this style of training in the future. We have also commenced the enrolment of our first group of volunteers in the Certificate IV upgrade through TAFE Digital to support the professional development of trainers and assessors.

Our Organisational Transformation continues to build a contemporary, agile and adaptive workforce designed to provide more effective outcomes for communities. We have been actively leading and supporting the new Zones, holding five inaugural Zone Transition Workshops. These events attracted over 600 people, and provided opportunities for conversations from volunteers on what they think the benefits, risks and key enablers are regarding Unit support under the new model. The Organisational Performance and Engagement team has also been developing communication strategies to support volunteers and staff transition to a new structure, and managing the organisational structure transition to coordinate all streams of work in all Directorates. Furthermore, we rolled out an initial culture design artwork to support Organisational Transformation and the process of refreshing of our organisational values, which included the delivery of 265 support packs to all Regions and Units. In the past six weeks, we have seen a review of the lessons learnt through the first nine months of Volunteering Reimagined with a focus on Community Action Teams. An updated, streamlined establishment process will be released shortly along with an equipment

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Our Organisational Transformation continues to build a contemporary, agile and adaptive workforce designed to provide more effective outcomes for communities.
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catalogue and doctrinal enhancement. Combined with enhancements to SAP scheduled for October, this will make it easier for communities to work together and make themselves more resilient in the face of floods and storms.

We continue to ensure our transition to the new structure supports continued management of all operations. The Operational Response Directorate has been conducting fortnightly operational workshops, focused on structural changes to the way we conduct operations. After the conclusion of the five Zone workshops, the movement of our Units into Clusters, as well as the migration from Unit/Local Controller to Unit/Local Commander roles has commenced. The work on the matrix design of our volunteer Units will also commence later this year, once we settle into our new design.

ICT have started the rollout of 900 workstations and 250 laptops to Units across the state following a successful installation pilot. Fixed Network upgrades continue across the State ensuring our primary locations are equipped with the connectivity and data speeds needed to support effective operations. Early measures are improving speed up to tenfold, which ensures we achieve the best outcomes in conjunction with systems, infrastructure and hardware. The Records and Information Management (RIM) Program has delivered the first stage of the data warehouse, which is building the agency's business intelligence capability that brings data from multiple sources into a platform that can then be disseminated in a range of formats. The RIM program has also commenced the development of strategy and new Electronic Document & Records Management System (EDRMS) that will enhance the agency's management of records and support compliance with the NSW State Records Act. In support of Organisational Transformation, the ICT team with support from FRNSW have developed and are now testing the new organisation structure in SAP to reflecting the Zone changes in all downstream systems such as beacon.

The OCES program is now finishing up the final stages of radio terminal roll-out, which has been a significant investment that has delivered state-of-the-art technology that is enhancing our capability as well as safety of our volunteers through GPS tracking and duress functionality. The ICT team are also supporting the NSW Telco Authority in the Government Radio Network (GRN) program, which has now commenced the build across our Northern Zone. Both

range of new and revised policies have been developed that focus on a clear, consistent and compliant approach in order to streamline our processes. We have been listening to your feedback on delays through TAMstore, and in most cases, members are reporting a consistent improvement. On the purchasing side, we are now approving purchase orders via mobile devices, which is helping to simplify our transactions and approvals.

I would also like to note that volunteer member Glenn Jones has achieved accreditation as a Level 3 Incident Controller through the AFAC Emergency Management Professionalisation Scheme (EMPS).

agencies collaboratively developed the first tactical Cell on Wheels (CoW) which will be located on the Northern Zone with 4 more to be built over this financial year and distributed across the state as required. The CoW is an emergency communications capability designed to support all agencies when the GRN has been disrupted, coverage is poor and/or non-existent.

In the last quarter, we have also focused on simplifying the way we do business. The Finance Assets and Business Services (FABS) team facilitated a faster turnaround of volunteer reimbursements, as we have now centralised them. I am pleased to report that since July, 80% of correctly submitted reimbursement claims are being processed within one business day of receipt of the claim, and 100% are being processed within three business days. We encourage members to familiarise themselves with the new member reimbursement policy, though we would prefer volunteers not to be out of pocket in the first instance. A

The recently announced Fleet Program funding is in full swing and we are planning for the replacement of a range of vehicles. We have seen a dip in keeping up the maintenance of our current vehicles, and the Fleet Team will be communicating some new options to make servicing easier at units, including mobile servicing. A concrete slab has just been laid in readiness for construction of a new unit facility at Yamba, one of a number of improvements to our facilities.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the SES Volunteers Association on their 20th Anniversary. You have represented and supported the volunteer members of the NSW State Emergency Service over two decades, working closely with the NSW SES with professionalism and dedication. I wish all of the Volunteer Association members the best, and I hope to achieve together many more common goals to represent the best interests of its NSW SES members and to provide the assistance they need and deserve.

Best wishes to all, Mark

From the Editor



PAT JOHNSON ESM
EDITOR

First, "Happy 20th Anniversary to the NSW SES Volunteers Association."

I am amazed that 20 years have passed since that first meeting in 1998. Looking back over the years I have seen the Association grow from its early beginnings with our first lot of meetings in the old State Headquarters building in Regent Street Wollongong with a budget of \$5000 to what it is today. I remember fighting to get the first scholarship approved. (you will find the photo of Nell our first recipient in the early history in the middle of this magazine.) I am proud of what the association has achieved over these 20 years with scholarships, unit grants, the raffle, our Welfare fund, and many more achievements.

Over the years the Association has grown from a Registered Association through to a limited liability company with Deductable Gift Recipient status for the Welfare Fund.

We have seen the introduction of amber lights for NSW SES vehicle, red lights for vehicles, red and blue lights and sirens as 'emergency vehicles' under NSW legislation – a status not held by all our interstate colleagues.

The Association was able to assist in obtaining increased government budget for NSW SES.

We influenced the introduction of Volunteer Impact Statements, the establishment of the Uniform Committee (since disbanded), the appointment of the State Protocol Officer, a change from red and white Leadership Insignia to the current, more-readily identifiable insignia.

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We saw the introduction of Regional Consultative Committees (since disbanded); the inclusion of volunteers on SES Working Groups (now Capability Development Groups); the introduction of the NSW SES Long Service Medal, and the introduction of Life Membership and a range of other recognition awards.

Two (or was it three) SES VA Conferences were held and we conducted, in cooperation with the SES, The Road show.

Other notable initiatives include:

- » Provided input to the Emergency Services Review
- » Provided all our members with a Member Advantage Benefits Card
- » Provided funding for Scholarships to assist members in personal and professional development such as emergency management courses, Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment
- » Sponsorships to assist members individually or in groups to improve skills and abilities such as Operation Orange – a joint training activity held annually, members attendance at Women's Leadership Conferences, Emergency Management Conferences and Volunteer Management Conferences
- » Special Projects undertaken as required but including sponsorship and financial contribution for volunteers to participate in and attend activities such as the NSW SES State Disaster Rescue Challenge, Wellington Wombats, Sydney Southern Flood Rescue

Challenge and the NSW SES 60th Anniversary Controllers Conference.

- » Unit Grants purchase equipment not normally supplied by government such as lighting towers, rescue mannequins (persons and animals) and air conditioning.

We have been an ongoing sponsor of the Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards held in Sydney each year and have been a sponsor of youth leadership through the Young Endeavour, Rotary Youth Leadership and Cadet of the Year Awards

Through efforts of our representative on the Australian Emergency Management Volunteers Forum, we helped form an association to represent SES volunteers at a national level

The latest and definitely one of our best recent initiatives is in helping our rural members with drought relief.

I took over from our first editor Craig Ronan in 2003 (issue number 04.) so this makes it my 16th year of magazine editing. I have been around for eight presidents and now I am working with my ninth. I would like to thank our cartoonist Rob Stevens who has contributed since my first magazine with cartoons and some of our covers and Peter Lalor for proof reading each magazine.

I hope you have benefitted from what the Association has achieved to date and that you will continue to benefit far into the future and lastly, I hope you have enjoyed our magazine.

Pat

NSW SES - Marrickville Unit Media Release - Unit Open Day 2018



NSW SES - Marrickville Unit Volunteers Adam Jones and Hasmukh Chand chatting with locals about the flood boat and flood operations.



Emergency evacuation kit for pets.



NSW SES - Marrickville Unit Local Controller Michael Carney and Carol Deans meeting with Australian Federal Police Officer Steve Smith and puppy Nash from the Federal Police K9 Unit.



Harriette Cudmore, Lucy Nestel and Zara Nestel trying out the mini SES vehicle.

- » NSW SES - Marrickville Unit hosted an Open Day on 1 July
- » NSW SES - Marrickville Unit Local Controller Michael Carney would like to thank the 180 members of the public who attended the Open Day
- » He said that "the Open Day was a great opportunity for people to come meet our volunteers and learn first hand what the SES does". I would also like to thank Inner West Councillors Mark Drury and Victor Macri for coming along"
- » Open Day was the culmination of three street meets over the past few months as part of the 'Get Ready' campaign
- » On the day, members of the public were invited to chat with volunteers about flooding in the local area
- » The feedback provided by local residents will assist the Unit in responding to floods in the area
- » Community Engagement Coordinator, Julie Powell said that "It's great to see the community taking such interest in ways to prepare their home, family and pets for floods and storms. These include cleaning gutters and drains,

checking that your roof is in good condition, trimming overhanging branches, and having home and pet emergency kits packed and ready to go."

- » There were lots of activities to keep the kids entertained, as well as workshops on ladder safety, knots, and sandbagging. Visitors could also take part in the throwbag challenge, check out the SES flood boat and truck, and explore inside the Unit.
- » Paddy the Platypus and two doggy superstars from the Australian Federal Police K9 unit stole the show.



Photo Credit: Printed Post (Hay). Jo.



Cody.

Presentation of Awards to members Hay SES Unit

EXTRACT FROM A HAY LOCAL NEWSPAPER

Tonight is about recognising the service and contribution that the Hay SES members have given to the communities of NSW and more specifically the Hay Local Government area.

Your community and the NSW SES owes each and every one of you here tonight an enormous debt of gratitude for your contribution to the NSW SES and the community. We must also acknowledge and thank your families, whose support has enabled you to be involved in this service to NSW and your local communities.

Numerous awards were presented including:

NSW STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE COMMISSIONERS COMMENDATION

This is awarded to members who have given outstanding or exemplary

service in relation to Emergency Service duties.

THIS HAS BEEN AWARDED TO GRAHAM MATTHEWS

Graham joined the NSW State Emergency Service on 31 August 1989 with the Hay SES Unit

In 1994 he was appointed as the Unit Training Officer.

In March 2004, Graham was appointed "acting" Local Controller and was officially appointed as Hay Local Controller on 15 July 2005, a role he held until 31 March 2008 when after 18 years with the Hay unit, family and work commitments saw him to resign from the position and service.

Graham returned to the Unit and the service in October 2013 and immediately commenced upgrading his skills, knowledge and accreditations. He worked enthusiastically with the

Region Learning and Development Officer to ensure both he and his team members were current in their qualifications and skills to cover the wide roles that a small country SES unit offers their local communities.

Graham is a worthy recipient of a Commissioners Commendation for Service for his distinguished commitment to the NSW State Emergency Service, the Community of NSW and the Hay local Unit and community.

THE NATIONAL MEDAL

The National Medal recognises 15 years diligent service in organisations that protect life and property at some risk to their members. A Clasp is awarded for each additional 10 year period of service.

Barry Scott has been awarded a Clasp to the National Medal recognising



Graham, Bernard Kayes & Wendy.



Wendy.

his 25 years of service to the NSW community. Barry joined the service on 07 June 1984 and held the role of Deputy Controller for many years before being appointed as the Local Controller on 21 November 2000. Barry stood down from this role and the SES in March 2004. Barry re-joined the service in 2013 to assist with the rebuild of the unit and their capability in general land rescue, road cash and storm and water.

Wendy Mitchell, the current Local Controller of the Hay Unit has been awarded the National Medal having joined the service on 13 September 2001. Wendy was appointed as the Local Controller on 02 June 2008 and has a long list of qualifications and skills. Wendy has been willing to travel to out of area operations to work in Incident Management teams in other regions. Wendy is a true leader, working with her team members through the 2010, 2012 and 2016 flood event and encouraging her members to undertake training and learn new skills.

NSW SES LONG SERVICE MEDAL

The NSW SES Long Service Medal is awarded to volunteers and staff of the NSW SES who have achieved a period of diligent service of 10 years. Additional awards of clasps and ribbon bar emblems are awarded at the completion of each further period of 10 year's accumulated service.

- » 25 year Long Service certificate is awarded to Barry Scott.

Your community and the NSW SES owes each and every one of you here tonight an enormous debt of gratitude for your contribution to the NSW SES and the community.

- » 20 year Long Service certificate and Clasp 1 set to Graham Matthews.
- » 15 year Long Service certificate is awarded to Wendy Mitchell.
- » 10 year Long Service Medal and certificate is awarded to Philip Plant.

5 YEAR LONG SERVICE CERTIFICATE AND PINS

The following members are being recognised for 5 years of service to the NSW SES and the Hay community and Unit.

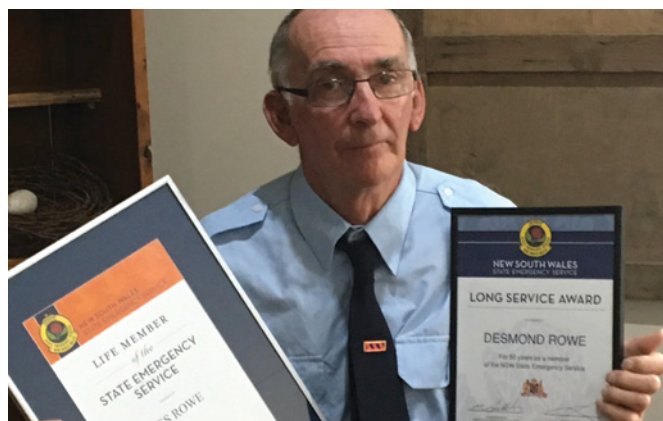
Jo-Ann Davies – She was a qualified General Land Rescue operator encompassing road crash and urban search & rescue and has skills and qualifications in storm and water damage, team safety, chainsaw operation and first aid.

Cody Paterson – Cody has worked hard during his 5 years to obtain skills, training and knowledge in the many aspects of SES combat roles. Cody is a qualified General land rescue operator encompassing road crash and urban search & rescue and has qualifications in storm and water damage and team safety.

Nerida and Neville Reid – Nerida and Neville – the husband and wife team of the Unit - joined the Hay unit in March 2012. They qualified as General Land Rescue operators, encompassing road crash and urban search & rescue and have qualifications in storm and water damage, team safety and flood rescue awareness.

Thank you and congratulations to you all on your achievements.

Des Rowe Cootamundra SES unit



For over 50 years, Des Rowe has been a volunteer and integral member of the Cootamundra SES unit. To honour this commitment and service, Des has been made a Life Member of the NSW SES.

Des has been an active member of the NSW State Emergency Service Cootamundra Unit for the past 50 years and is widely recognised as the face of the NSW State Emergency Service in Cootamundra.

Des has held the role of Local and Unit Controller of the Cootamundra Unit for a number of periods over this time including acting Local Controller during 23 May 1972 to 31 December 1972 local Controller from 1st January 1973 to 17th September 1993 as and more recently returning to the Acting Unit Controller role from 30th January 2015.

Des has made himself available for Out Of Area Activities, attending the 2007 Hunter Storm event and was awarded a State Medal. He was on the initial deployment to assist after Cyclone Yasi in 2011 working out logistics and returned on a second deployment focusing in recovery work. He has advocated and participated in the Driver Reviver program almost since the inception of this initiative within the Cootamundra LGA.

Des has committed many many hours to improving the Cootamundra Unit Headquarters. As an experienced tradesman, Des has knocked walls down, built the deck at the rear of the unit, hung doors, painted interior walls and is the general handyman/Mr Fixit at the unit.

Des continues to attend callouts locally and most recently was very



active supporting the many out of area flood rescue technicians and storm operators who assisted the Cootamundra Unit during the 2016 flood event.

At a recent SES Southern Zone Conference, Commissioner Mark Smethurst presented Des with both his NSW State Emergency Service Life Membership and his NSW State Emergency Service 50 year Long Service Award. A local get together was held 11 August 2018 for Des in his community of Cootamundra in front of family, friends and colleagues with the award being presented by Ms Steph Cooke, MP, Local Member for Cootamundra.

Whilst we have your attention, we would also like to report on a couple of other awards.

Carla Lebreton - Carla was recognised with a 25 yr National Medal Clasp 1 and 25 year SES Long Service Certificate.

The National Medal was established on 14 February 1975 as one of the

original elements of the distinctive Australian Honours and Awards system. The Medal recognises 15 years diligent service in organisations that protect life and property at some risk to their members. A Clasp is awarded for each additional 10 year period of service.

Carla has been with the Cootamundra Unit since 05 February 1991. She is experienced in Storm and Water activities assisting when her work allows and was able to assist the unit during the recent flood & storm event of 2016 and 2017. Carla has previously been awarded a National Medal, and SES Long Service Medal.

Finally, Christopher Laurence - 5 year Long Service Certificate and Pin.

Christopher joined the unit in August 2011, and during this time he has undertaken a number of training activities to become an experienced storm and water and rescue operator. We congratulate Christopher on his 5 year award.

Rotary Club of Bathurst Inc holds Emergency Services Awards Dinner



(Pictured left to right) Jessie Davidson, Unit Controller for the Bathurst Unit, Assistant Commissioner Stephen McRobert and Chris Abbott, Team Leader at the Bathurst Unit.



(Pictured left to right) Krishna Burns, Sarah Cole, Judith Dalitz, Mathew Cole, Natalie Cole, Michael Cole, Rebecca Cole, Assistant Commissioner Stephen McRobert and Kevin Eyles from the Sofala Unit



(Pictured left to right) Marion Murray, Ron Murray, Volunteer Chaplain for Central West Region and Assistant Commissioner Stephen McRobert.

On Saturday night, 28 July 2018, the Rotary Club of Bathurst Inc. held its second annual Emergency Services Dinner at Bathurst Panthers in Bathurst to honour local members from the NSW State Emergency Service, NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW Police Force, NSW Ambulance and NSW Fire & Rescue for the outstanding work they carry out in the community.

A number of awards were presented to volunteers from the Bathurst and Sofala Units NSW SES as well as the volunteer Chaplain from Central West Region.

Members from Central West Region Headquarters along with members from the Bathurst and Sofala Units attended the Dinner, with Assistant Commissioner, Stephen McRobert representing the NSW SES Commissioner, Mark Smethurst.

Members from the NSW SES who received awards were;

- » Jameson Edwards – Outstanding Commitment Award,
- » Gavan Ellis – Leadership Award,
- » Ron Murray – Vocational Excellence Award,
- » The Sofala Unit NSW SES –

Community Service Award, and
» Chris Abbott - NSW SES Officer of the Year.

Congratulations to all the award winners.

Over the years The NSW SESVA has supported the Rotary NSW Emergency Services Awards annually.

Craig Ronan
Central West Region Controller

*The Salvation Army
proudly supports the NSW
Volunteers Association*



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Proud to support our SES Volunteers in saving lives and serving the community

The State Emergency Service Volunteers Association: Formation and Early Years

The SES Volunteers Association, known in the State Emergency Service as the SESVA (or more simply the VA), turned 20 this year. It gives us a moment to reflect on how and why the Association began and to consider what it has achieved. Here the focus is on its founding and its early years.

The origins of the VA are a little surprising. When Greg Perry, in 1998 the volunteer Division (Region) Controller for the then Lower Hunter Division, was asked who he thought was most responsible for its founding, he thought for a moment before replying that it was probably the then Director General (now Commissioner) of the SES, Major-General Hori Howard. Howard, Perry thought, had planted the seed, mentioning the idea to his Director of Operations, Dieter Gescke, who then sought Perry out for a discussion on how such an organisation might be formed and what it could seek to do. Perry was a gregarious and well-connected character with a long volunteer history in the SES, and Gescke and Howard evidently thought he would be the right sort of person to get it started.

Howard, the SES's leader since 1989, had noticed that there was an association of the volunteers of the NSW Rural Fire Service and that some of the other Australian states had SES volunteers' associations, and he saw that a similar association of SES volunteers in New South Wales could do useful things by way of helping to lobby for what the organisation needed. After Gescke had made contact, Perry travelled to State Headquarters in Wollongong for a brainstorming meeting at which some of the people who might be able to contribute ideas were identified. The list they came up with included Craig Ronan, the Division Controller Central West, Warwick Cary of the Kogarah SES

----- “
‘To improve the SES for the SES’ became something of a motto in the early days of the Volunteers Association.
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Unit, Mark Darling of Sydney Northern, Paul Maher of Illawarra South Coast, Steve King of the Gunnedah SES Unit, Peter Jhonston of the Murray Division, Peter Lalor of Mt Druitt, Gary Jones of Sydney Southern and Pat Wilder of the Lake Macquarie SES. Some of these people had been volunteer members of the SES since the 1960s.

An interim VA Council of eight members was soon formed, with Perry the inaugural President, Wilder the Secretary and Jhonston the Treasurer. Other people became involved not long after, including future presidents David Lane of Lightning Ridge and Ken Speer of Lake Macquarie.

The Director General provided some seed funding to help with transport to meetings, accommodation and secretarial expenses, and Gescke and Terry Aspinall (the Manager Finance and Administration) were made available to act as technical advisers to the Association and conduits between it and the Director General. The Council then nussed out some goals, which led to the creation of a Constitution, a Newsletter was put together (the first issue being published in March, 1999) and the hard work of getting members to join up (at a small subscription of \$2 per annum in the first instance) was begun. Before long a website had been created.

Perry recalls travelling the state, trying to drum up interest. It was not easy to begin with: the initiative had not originated from the grass

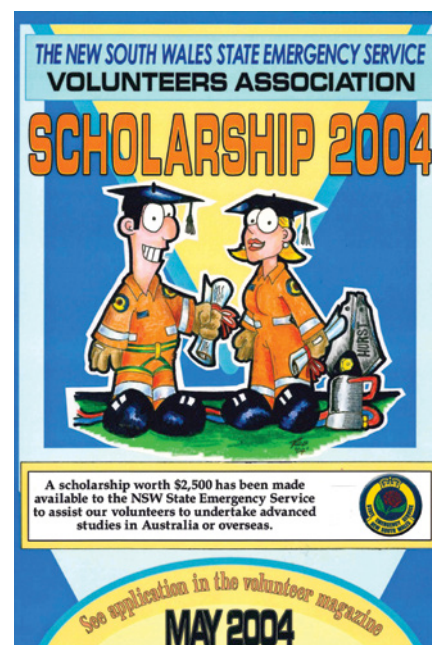
roots of the SES and not everybody in the Units was enthusiastic. In particular people did not want to join a union, and the Council was at pains to point out that no union-like organisation was intended. What was sought was an association that could represent the volunteers in the goal of improving the SES, which would in itself contribute to the creation of a better environment for volunteer members. The aim was an Association which could help the Director General and State Headquarters, if necessary by 'getting political' and taking issues to the Minister or Shadow Minister. 'To improve the SES for the SES' became something of a motto in the early days of the Volunteers Association.

Pat Johnson was another who worked hard behind the scenes in the early days to promote the VA to the volunteers of the SES. She was also involved in the establishment of the VA's Welfare Fund and in obtaining tax-deductibility status for it: this applies to donations made to the Fund. Dieter Gescke's role in getting the Association going in the first place is worthy of note as well.

Gradually, the association took up matters of concern to members. They showed an interest in equipment and clothing (including dress uniforms), set up a Uniform and Protocol Committee, worked to create improved rank insignia for the volunteers in the units and took up the matter of lights and sirens on SES vehicles. In the 1990s



Nell Teasdale our first scholarship recipient.



the SES was not permitted to display red lights, and when red and blue lights became standard emergency service issue for vehicles late in the decade the State Rescue Committee did not initially allow them except on the vehicles of accredited rescue units. Most SES Units had no sirens and only orange lights. Eventually, a change was agreed and SES vehicles were permitted to carry the same lights and sirens as the vehicles of the Police, the fire organisations and the Ambulance Service.

One galvanising issue in the first few months of the VA's existence was the great hailstorm which on 14 April 1999 struck a broad area from the Sutherland Shire to Sydney's northern beaches. The eastern suburbs of Sydney were especially hard hit. In all, more than 20,000 dwellings had their roofs damaged along with many commercial, industrial and community buildings and a massive response operation (one of the largest and longest-running in the SES's history) was mounted. Before long Howard as the Director General came under fire in the media for allegedly not being sufficiently energetic in his co-ordination of the response. Alan Jones of 2UE was particularly scathing in his criticism. Members knew, from their own involvement, that the SES had responded quickly and strongly and that many volunteers from every region of the state were working long hours to get the many thousands of

The biggest development, though, came in 2011 with the establishment of a major support fund for volunteers who needed financial help...

damaged roofs covered with tarpaulins in advance of permanent repairs being instigated. There had been no under-response, and no lack of involvement of other services.

Perry and others on the Council spent much time convincing SES members to put into words their concerns about Jones' criticisms of Howard and fax them off to the radio station and the Minister. The then Leader of the Opposition in NSW, the Liberal Party's Kerry Chikarovski, was also the subject of angry faxes sent by volunteers when she backed Jones' unwarranted criticisms of Howard's leadership. Perry himself sent off hundreds of faxes, and the total number sent to 2UE alone from SES Local Units around the state might have got into the thousands. There was no doubt that the volunteers of the NSW SES supported their leader.

In its first year the VA's the membership was small, perhaps reaching 300, but gradually the VA became better recognised amongst

the volunteers of the SES. The initial membership fee was eventually waived and on joining up a volunteer had the option of opting in or out of the VA. Over time, more of them decided to join. The Association probably helped sway some by going in to bat for volunteers who were not being paid by their employees when they were absent from work because of emergency responses. Craig Ronan recalls writing to the then Prime Minister (John Howard) on this matter, seeking relief payments to such volunteers via Centrelink.

Perry stepped down from the presidency after about a year, to be followed in the role firstly by Jhonston and later Ronan. These three were all eventually appointed as paid SES Division Controllers and thus became ineligible to belong to the volunteer organisation. Warwick Cary, Paul Maher and Ken Speer each had a period in the leader's role before David Lane took over as President in 2005. With good political and organising skills from his



An "early year" project (2011) of the VA. Project working party Rebecca Ellison, Rob Stevens (the artwork) and Pat Johnson. The large signs were use on billboards at railway stations and the smaller one was seen on over the street signs in many areas for quite a few years.



time as a councillor in Walgett, Lane proved a highly effective leader for several years. He campaigned hard for a better SES budget, which had been a significant problem in earlier times, by writing to all NSW MPs and lobbying both the government and the opposition. He also took a strong hand in raising funds for the VA itself, mainly via regular large-scale raffles which greatly improved the VA's finances. There were many of these, usually with Toyota vehicles as prizes, and it raised funds which allowed the Volunteer Association to step its initiatives up into areas that required substantial funding inputs.

This was used for many purposes including grants to Units and to pay for volunteers' attendance at conferences and training activities. The VA also funded scholarships for members for relevant advanced study either in Australia or overseas.

One of the biggest developments, though, came in 2011 with the establishment of a major support fund for volunteers who needed financial help — for example to pay for funerals or handle power and rates bills when they had been injured on SES duty or were undergoing treatment for cancer and were unable to work as a result.

The Volunteers Association administers these payments through its Welfare Fund. People like Howard, his successor as Director General Phil McNamara, Perry, Darling, Cary, Maher, Lane, Jenny Slater (the widow of former Deputy Director General Greg

Along the way the VA has become an incorporated body and a registered charity.

Slater), John Heath (a former Manager Finance and Administration), Steve Hall (the Senior Chaplain) and Steve Pearce (a Deputy Commissioner) were all involved at various times. Financial hardship underlies the decisions the Council makes and the money which is distributed which amounts to about \$100,000 in most years. The Fund has become a very important Volunteers Association initiative.

Along the way the VA has become an incorporated body and a registered charity and has a formal existence referred to in the NSW State Emergency Service Act 1989. Nowadays it is run by a Board of Directors.

Meanwhile Howard, a strong proponent of volunteerism in the emergency services sector, went on after his retirement from the position of SES Director General to become the chair of the Australian Emergency Management Volunteers Forum (AEMVF). During Howard's time in that role Peter Lalor became a member of the AEMVF as well.

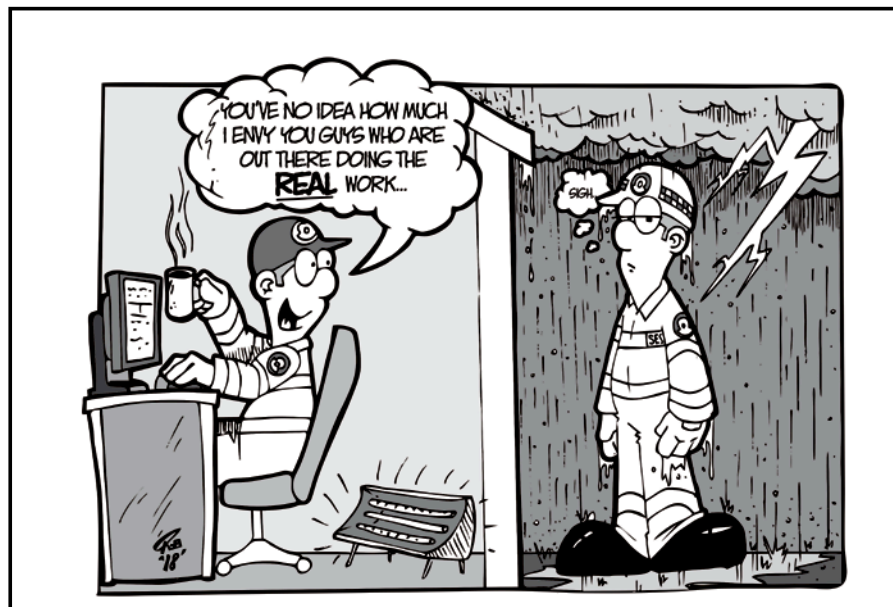
The NSW SESVA began as a very small organisation, at the outset. Moreover it had very little in the way of capital to call

upon. But over time it established itself, formulated worthwhile goals put towards its objectives. It became a lobbying force on behalf of the NSW SES Volunteers as well as a supporter of volunteers in terms of their professional development and in providing financial help to those in need of it. The Volunteers Association became very much a source of good in the NSW State Emergency Service.

Chas Keys is a former Deputy Director General of the NSW State Emergency Service. Since his retirement he has written histories of the NSW SES (in 2005), its units (his book, *Born of Need*, was published by the Volunteers Association in 2006) and the Blacktown SES Unit (in 2008), and he has contributed frequent pieces to *The Volunteer* on significant individuals and operations in the SES's story. He gratefully acknowledges input to this article from Greg Perry, Craig Ronan, David Lane, Peter Lalor, Dieter Gescke, Mark Darling and Pat Johnson.

Early Cartoons by Rob Stevens

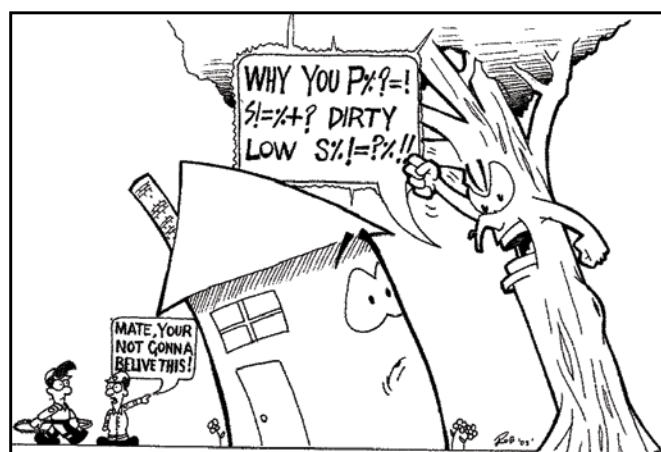
Orange SES



Explaining the Daily Brief



Roo Run.



Tree threatening a house.

NSW SES Volunteers Association – The recent years

Many volunteers of the NSW SES have been a part of the Volunteers Association since day one, some 20 years ago. Volunteers like Shannon Crofton who still remembers having to pay \$2 membership to join the Association.

In 2014, in the wake of an ICAC investigation and much turmoil within the NSW SES, Shannon Crofton and Erin Pogmore came together and devised the 'Roadshow'. Erin brought extensive media experience and knowledge to the project.

The Roadshow, originally termed 'Rebuild Roadshow' was devised as a way to speak directly to volunteers and listen to their concerns. The resulting roadshow saw 17 regional, three metro and one online visit to allow volunteers the ability to feedback directly and have their voice heard. A number of individual unit visits were also scheduled in along the way for units who were unable to leave their response area due to GLR requirements.

It was during this time that many volunteers, and staff, came to the Association for support. The Volunteers Association formalised a Member Services area as a direct result of the Roadshow and the types of feedback that was being received. Here volunteers could seek private and confidential support in all matter of issues and areas. These ranged from welfare, assistance with applications, mental health care and support and advice and support during any complaint or investigation process.

Over the next few years well over a hundred matters were formally handled by this area. The rise in issues saw the Association work closely with changes to the SES in the areas of Professional Standards and Human Resources. Just this area alone saw an increase in formalisation and governance with how volunteers are handled and treated during these times.

Little did the Association know that this period of time and the professional handling of issues and complaints



would form the basis of topics referred to by a Parliamentary Inquiry into the Emergency Services in years to come.

During 2014 one of the directors of the NSW SES Volunteers Association worked hard to create and form a National Volunteers Association. This Association was formed in 2015 with the NSW Board of Directors informed of changes to raffle structure and incomes in 2016. This change meant that raffles were now run and managed by the National Association on behalf of the state and territories involved.

A NEW PRESIDENT, A NEW ASSOCIATION.

2017 saw some of the most significant changes in the NSW SES Volunteers Association.

Kim Davis ESM was elected President in late 2017, and this saw the start of widespread changes and improvements to the Association. Kim is the first female President in the 20 year history of the Association.

This period also saw newly elected Directors, Shannon Crofton and Megan Hamblin, added to the Board.

Internally, the new board quickly moved to bring improvements to accounting and governance. Patricia Orchard as Secretary and Kim Edwards, with a legal background worked with the Directors to establish major changes to the running of the Association.

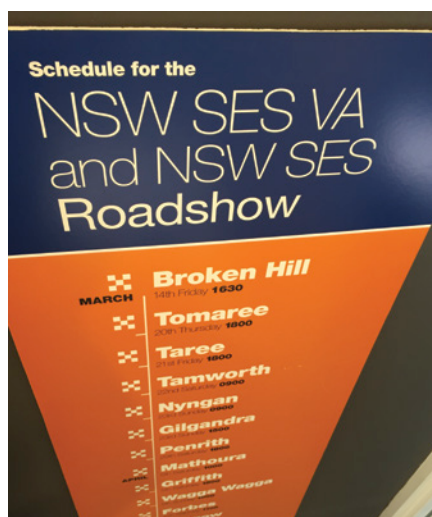
Changes to the Welfare Fund were undertaken to improve its reach and to ensure its availability to more volunteers. This fund continues to grow and is now managed to ensure it can support the needs of the future 20,000 volunteers of the NSW SES.

During 2017 and 2018, the NSWSES Volunteers Association was asked to participate in the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into bullying and harassment in the emergency services. At the request of government the association provided significant information regarding these topics. During questioning time of the hearing by the Parliamentary Committee, Shannon Crofton requested on behalf of the association that an independent area be established for volunteers to appeal to, outside of the NSWSES. The recent release of the Parliamentary Committee findings supported this recommendation.

In late 2017, Erin Pogmore was brought in to manage the financial management of the Association along with establishing a Deputy Managing Director role.

With a new Board, President Kim Davis reviewed all current business, support and operating management. A review found a decrease in income even though the Association sold off assets in the years previous.

It was the start of a very difficult time, with a new Board. In February 2018, the NSW SES VA enacted its



Emergency Plan. This Emplan was created and undertaken to manage the current state of affairs within the Association. It involved hard decisions and a focus on placing volunteers first with all decisions.

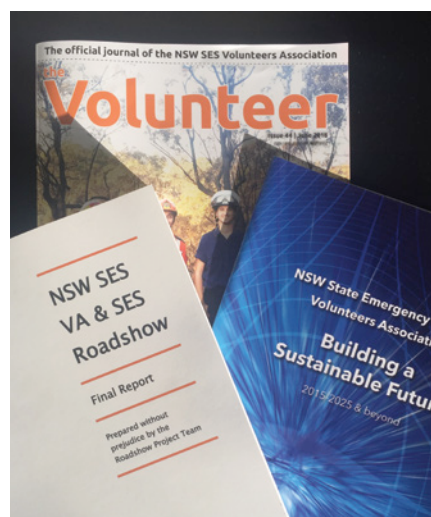
This Emplan formed a new business governance foundation for the Association.

With strict management, and changes to activities, this Emplan was carried through until a new budget by the now A/Managing Director Erin Pogmore was established. This new budget, brought in new structure and was devised with collaboration and consultation with NSW SES VA auditor. By end of 2017/18 financial year the Board had worked to re-establish control of finances and had management items in place to move into the future.

This work occurred whilst simultaneously increasing support to volunteers experiencing drought in NSW. Although not in mainstream media at this point, the Association provided support to volunteers. By the new financial year 2018, the SES VA established a formal Drought Support Program which has grown to the largest single support program in the Association's 20 year history.

The Board signed off on the presented BURST Plan in June 2018. This plan, a Business Recovery Strategic Plan overtly places volunteers first, with even stricter governance surrounding management and accountabilities of the Association.

During this period changes were made to the Grants Program. Previously, grants were only available to volunteers once a year. Changes have been made to



make them 'live' and available constantly and issues each month. Applicants can now receive assistance with their applications and the association works closely with the SES to ensure there is no crossover or wastage of funds. Megan Hamblin, as chair of the Grants Committee is proud of the improved access to grants from volunteers.

The Volunteers Association has supported many new areas of the SES and its volunteers. Grants and support have gone to many areas in their infancy and development such as alpine, large animal rescue, flood rescue including the first flood rescue vehicle, aviation and canine. Many grants have been to ensure a heightened level of volunteer safety such as HUET training.

The Association sponsored the State Rescue Competition and other professional development opportunities such as QWERTY.

The Association has worked to preserve the rich history of the NSW SES and its volunteers. "Big Red", an old Ford F150 4X4 rescue vehicle has been obtained and preserved and will be the first NSW SES vehicle in a museum. The Association is proud to work to ensure the history of the NSW SES and its volunteers will be on show for years to come.

The Association has recently worked to develop support for volunteers in the mental health area. Not only is this area covered by Member Services, recent workings and partnerships with government and private agencies have allowed the association to deliver mental health training to both staff and volunteers of the NSW SES. This training has been delivered to national competency standard.

The Volunteer Representatives of the Association came together in mid 2018 to provide feedback on the constitutional changes they voted in, back in November 2017. Here these representatives were asked to look toward the future and the changing SES in which they work. This feedback, coupled with a survey to gather feedback from all SES VA members will provide the Board of Directors information necessary to continually ensure the association remains contemporary and meet the changing supporting needs of the volunteers.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Today the Board of Directors of the SES Volunteer's Association consists of five females and one male.

- » Kim Davis ESM President
- » Shannon Crofton ESM Vice President
- » Patricia Orchard ESM Secretary
- » Erin Pogmore Managing Director
- » Kim Edwards Director
- » Megan Hamlin Director

In the coming months, the Board of Directors will be again planning forward and seeking to engage people whom wish to be a part of this changing Association. Like the NSW SES, the Association is looking to have 'Representatives without Boundaries' where volunteers can support any volunteer, regardless of geography.

Newer robust relationships have been formed with not only the NSW SES, but the Minister, Shadow Minister and Premier's Office. Partnerships have been formed with community focussed businesses such as Bendigo Bank and Tynan's Motor Group. These relationships provide benefits to volunteers and often, the Association ensures that these benefits are made available to all members of the NSWSES.

The Volunteers Association is moving in a changing environment. Volunteers, support, attendance and the face of volunteering are changing and the Association is ensuring that it is meeting these changes. The raffle and charitable environment has changed along with requirements of formal compliance along with moral and ethical obligations. The Association welcomes any member of the NSW SES to become an active participant to move forward with this NSW SES VA during this time.

Shannon Crofton

NSW SES Volunteers Association Grants

Eden Unit Grant Report

In January Eden Unit applied for a grant to purchase a gazebo and two sets of Maxtracks.

We were successful in both applications-thanks!

The Maxtracks have already come in very handy helping a fellow emergency service vehicle out of a tight spot whilst attending a road accident near the Victorian border. The many dirt roads and bush tracks in this area plus our kilometres of beach tracks make these an invaluable asset to our equipment pool.

The gazebo will be proudly used at all of our community engagement events, including our main event, Eden Whale Festival. This attracts thousands of visitors to Eden.

We will also use this in times of assisting police with securing scenes and to support other agencies.

Eden is a VR and RCR Unit and as such trains a lot outdoors. This gazebo



L- R: Neville Cowgill, Bradley Chalker, Darren Telford, Mark Lawerance, June Daly, Brian Dixon. Front row: Pam Cocks, David Stevens, Glen Kelly and John Wentworth.

will be of tremendous use to help our volunteers have a base and also shade on these training days.

Thank you to the NSW SES Volunteer Association for assisting

us in our endeavours to aid our community.

Lisa Williams

Snowy Monaro ARRO

This year Cooma and Snowy River combined to send a team to this year's Australasian Road Rescue Organisation (ARRO) rescue competition run in July at Warrigals Lardner Park Victoria. We joined teams from all around Australia and New Zealand and even one team from Hong Kong.

ARRO <http://www.arro.org.au> is a road rescue peak body formed to promote, research and educate rescue

organisations on best practice rescue techniques, vehicle design and driver safety amongst other things.

Each year ARRO hosts a rescue competition designed to test teams of rescuers and medics to the limit of their ability. The organisers put together a series of rescue and medical trauma challenges using real life situations as their inspiration. Teams enter to find a heavily entrapped

patient and are given 30 minutes to stabilize and extricate that patient.

Whilst the competition was the goal in attending ARRO the real value is in teams gain from networking with teams from around the region learning from each other, sharing techniques and practicing skills in as close to real life as you can get without real blood. (But don't worry the patient does scream at you ☺)



Snowy Monaro ARRO 2018 team.



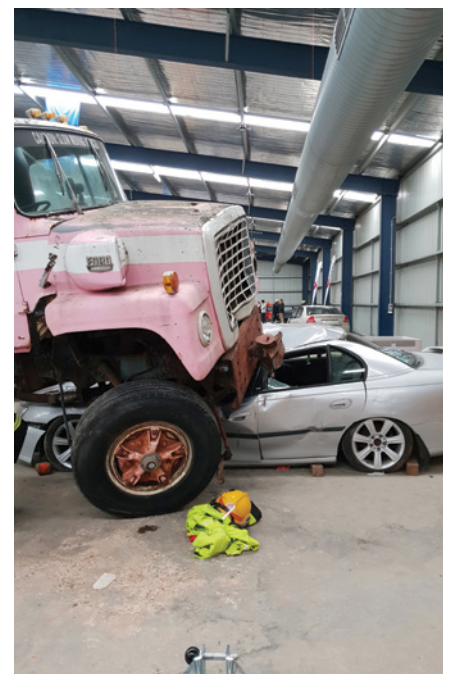
Hong Kong Fire Service ARRO team.



Scott Newman & Adolf Franco Snow River SES with their Holmatro bags.



ARRO competition action shot.



ARRO truck v Car.

Prior to the start of the competition ARRO provides a one day learning symposium including case studies and practical sessions. One of the more spectacular sessions was learning how to lift a truck off a car.

The combined Cooma Snowy SES team started training for ARRO in early April. Supporting the team was a whole group of training officers who set up some very interesting scenarios designed to push the guys as hard as they could. At one stage we were able to combine training with the Army who were also training in the area. Doing a rescue under armed guard was certainly different.

I reached out to the NSW SES Volunteers Association to assist with

funding some equipment to help with our ARRO challenge. The unit attended a training day with Hawkesbury and Port Macquarie SES at the Hawkesbury Unit and one of the feedback points was personal kits for the tool operators to carry all those little items that are easily misplaced in the heat of action but make a big difference to the ease of the rescue plan.

The VA was very supportive and came on board very quickly. They liked the idea that two units would benefit after the competition and gave each unit two pouches for their rescue trucks and came on board very quickly. It was a bit of a mad rush to put the proposal together in time for the kits to be shipped out before the competition

started but with a lot of hard work by the VA we got over the line and four brand new Holmatro rescue bags arrived stocked and ready to go.

I would really like to thank everyone from the VA who stepped up to assist us. Not only did it help us in competition but these bags will be invaluable assisting our communities whenever they call upon us in their time of need.

Next year's ARRO is being held at Dubbo and I would encourage anyone who has an interest in RCR to get there and see what it is all about.

Rob Wiggins
Snowy Monaro ARRO Team



NSW SES at 2018 City2Surf

Each year a mass of over 80 000 people descends on Bondi Beach traveling from Hyde Park for the Sun-Herald City2Surf. From the early hours of the morning over 110 SES volunteers help manage crowd and traffic controls for this massive event. The City2Surf on Sunday August 12 was the culmination of months of preparation from the NSW Government, event coordinators, police and SES. An almost ritual process is undertaken by Waverley-Woollahra Unit every year to coordinate the participation of SES volunteers.

Planning for the City2Surf begins almost as soon as the previous year's race has concluded. Waverley-Woollahra is responsible for collecting the After Action Reviews of volunteers from various units so the lessons learned can be presented for the coordinators next year's event. This information is then used to refine and improve the SES involvement.

SES volunteer representatives attend many meetings with Fairfax and the other agencies involved in the months leading up to the big day. Traffic plans, traffic control points,

emergency management plans, to name a few, are all reviewed and modified to iron out problems from past years and help make each year just that bit better for the participants and those involved in managing the day.

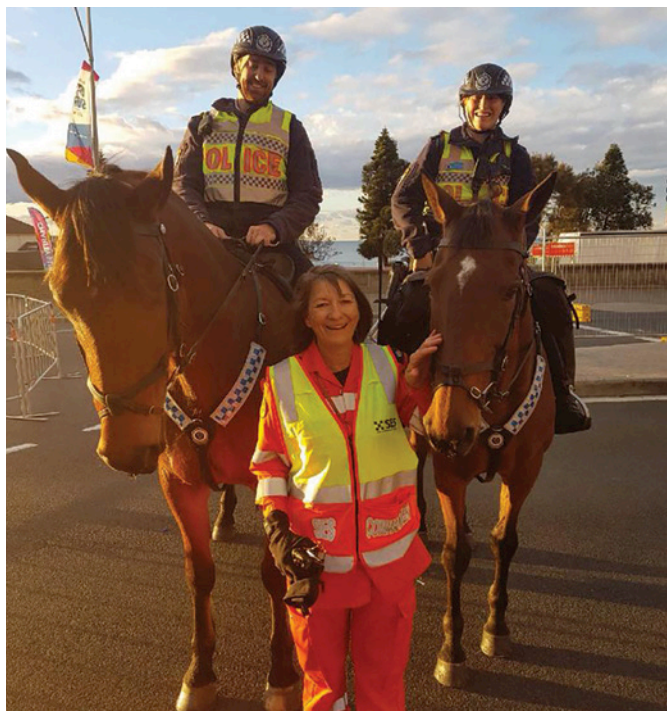
Waverley-Woollahra volunteers devoted many hours of work, above and beyond Tuesday training, into organising communications across the Sydney Zone for volunteers to join the contingent of local SES members helping on the day. The entire process of coordinating volunteers for the day involved communicating to units the request for volunteer assistance and then collating the names of people joining into their respective teams for the day. This year, the introduction of an innovative online joining portal, leveraging off SES social media groups, proved a useful resource, with volunteer names being available as soon as applications were completed.

After all the names were in, Sector leaders, Team leaders, IMT positions, including a Liaison Officer for the Government Control Centre were allocated and the volunteers were assigned to teams and given their own

specific traffic control point or crowd management location. Further hours were spent drafting and distributing the joining instructions, briefing packs and team lists for every volunteer who joined the event. While this was all occurring, logistics was organising radios for every volunteer on the day to be bussed in from State Headquarters in Wollongong with Waverley-Woollahra volunteers giving up their day at work to drive to Wollongong to collect them.

This mammoth task of planning and logistics before the main event cannot be understated. Volunteers put hours of effort and stress into ensuring the SES had enough members available to manage all the control points from the top of Military Road to the finish line and beyond. By the time the day begins many members already feel they have run a marathon just to have the day organised.

In reality, the day begins on the Saturday before the City2Surf. The afternoon was spent preparing catering, radios and other resources for the forward operations centre that is run out of Bondi Beach Public School.



Photos by many of the unit members.



The massive amount of food and catering that is prepared fills nearly 3 vehicles and a trailer to be transported from the Waverley-Woollahra Local Headquarters in Bondi Junction to the school at Bondi Beach. Catering for over 110 SES volunteers is a logistical challenge, but is pulled off successfully year after year. All Waverley-Woollahra members know that there are no parties on the Saturday before City2Surf, as many of us will be awake before the crack of dawn to get ready for the big day.

The first members arrive before 4am to put in place the final preparations for the mass movement of SES volunteers to descend on the area. Members traveling as far as Penrith, Mt Druitt, Hornsby, Fairfield, Manly and further afield have to wake even earlier in the morning to join the Waverley team at Bondi. By 4:30am there is a consistent flow of vehicles and members traveling from across Sydney on empty roads, arriving eagerly to a warm breakfast and their briefings from team leaders for the day.

SES members supporting police at traffic control points on Military Road were in place by 6am, and were the first to see the lead runners make their way down to the beach following the struggle of Heartbreak Hill. Other members posted along Campbell Parade and the finish line help manage

Volunteers put hours of effort and stress into ensuring the SES had enough members available to manage all the control points...

crowd control and cheer on the runners as they passed on the final stretch before finish line. Even after finishing the race, competitors are assisted through the complex maze of bus lines and transport options out of the Bondi Basin by SES volunteers. The logistical process of moving 80,000 exhausted runners and their cheer squads from Bondi Beach back to the city and various transport areas is another mammoth task which often requires SES members to remain on the control points late into the afternoon.

At the day's end volunteers with sore feet and tired eyes felt reassured that this was one of the most successful City2Surf races run for nearly a decade. Members from all sectors across Bondi remarked that it was one of the smoothest run City2Surf in years with relatively few first aid events on the day and cooler weather keeping runners refreshed after their long race.

A special thank you is extended to Kim Edwards, Pat Moore, Suzy

Domingues, Denise McKeon and Richard Dunn who put in many hours developing the online joining tool and organizing volunteers for the day. Thanks is also extended to Michael Neumann and Kate Helsham who assisted with catering on the day, and Michael Horn and Colin McQueen who assisted transporting radios, vehicles and other resources from State Headquarters. Of course each and every volunteer who gives up the day to assist with the City2Surf deserves the thanks of so many people- whether you were involved on the road watching the race go by, or worked in the back end of the operation, supporting teams. Special thank you is also extended to all team leaders who managed teams on the day. Finally a massive thank you to Kim Edwards, Local Controller of Waverley-Woollahra SES who commits hours of work in meetings and coordination to help the whole day get off the ground.

Patrick Moore

NSW Drought Support

As many of you are aware, NSW is experiencing one of its worst droughts in history. Farmers and those who live or work on the land are facing significant hardships because of this.

The volunteers of the NSW SES come from all over NSW. Many live or work on rural properties and are farmers themselves.

These volunteers play a vital role as members of their local SES. These response units of the SES can undertake roles such as road crash rescue, community first response, rescues from heights and depths, alpine, flood, land search and storm response.

Often these rural units are small and rely on a small number of dedicated volunteers to respond to these emergencies. The role these

members play in their local community is admirable and extremely important.

We have seen how the drought is making life very difficult. Water is low and scarce, feed and crops are struggling and plagues of kangaroos abound. Vital rain needed for crops, feed and water has not come, or has been in amounts too little to ease conditions.

This extra stress and workload can take away the time that volunteers normally use to train and respond to emergencies. Some farmers are having to take up work and find off farm income. At times, this means travelling away from their families.

It's not only income that is strained. Relationships within the family unit may struggle and farmers may not have time nor money to enjoy normal social activities. The added financial stress, and the emotional rollercoaster

of stock and crop losses can create the perfect storm for emotional overload.

This drought has been a long time in the making, but it has only been in recent months that it has hit mainstream media within the large cities of NSW.

The people have responded generously and governments have moved to ease some of the burden and red tape associated with these families making it through this period. However, as SES volunteers know, there is no quick solution and a sudden heavy rain may produce a result more harmful than good.

With the drought being brought into the mainstream televisions and social media of all of Australia, it is a time to help, but also a time to admire the resilience and dedication of our rural SES volunteers.



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NSW SES VOLUNTEERS ASSOCIATION DROUGHT SUPPORT FUND

The SES Volunteers Associations has provided support to SES Volunteers for over 20 years. This support can be in many forms but one major method is the NSW SES Volunteers Association Welfare Fund.

This fund provides financial support to volunteers in times of need and is managed by an independent committee.

The Volunteers Association responded to requests from other volunteers to have a drought type fund. This was able to be established

overnight by utilising the structure, governance and legal compliance of the current Welfare Fund. Basically, a check box was added to the donation page to specify if the donor would like to have their donation used by the Welfare Committee or drought support.

Like the Welfare Fund, any donation of \$2 or more to the drought support program is tax deductible.

The Welfare Fund of the Association (including drought support) is independently audited yearly for compliance under ACNC and ASIC requirements.

'VOLUNTEERS SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS'

Although a motto of the Association, and the constitutional structure of the Association, we should think about changing this to 'members supporting members during the drought'.

Managing Director of the NSW SES Volunteers Association, Ms Erin Pogmore set up the fund and quickly ensured its compliance and fiduciary obligations.

"Our Welfare Fund has been supporting volunteers during this drought period for many, many months now, however there was an appetite to formally establish and manage a specific area of the fund for drought support. We were able to do this within a few hours."

"We have executed many changes to the management of the Association in recent months. One of these is a major reduction in costs. The Drought Support Program was only advertised through established social media channels and internally at the request of our volunteers, and to keep administrative costs to the bare minimum."

Erin outlined that a good number of both staff and volunteers made donations online to the support fund.

President Kim Davis watched as a hat was passed around at the recent



South Eastern Zone Transformation Workshop.

"We have had urban units such as the Manly Unit walk in with donations to help their fellow volunteers and many staff members have quietly donated. Recently the staff of the State Operations Centre presented the Association with a donation that they had been collecting through chocolate sales".

"It really is bringing the Service together, and while it isn't the normal type of weather that the SES volunteers are active in, there is definitely the same feel of mateship and comradery out there that you see in a large scale operation", Erin said.

SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS

"I just wish I could pass on the emotion and heartfelt thanks that volunteers are expressing when I see them with a load of hay" Shannon Crofton, Vice President of the Volunteers Association said.

"Although we have been supporting the effects of this specific drought event for over a year now, rebranding and allowing donors to opt for specific drought usage of their money has seen more funds arrive for distribution."

At the start the Volunteers Association was working with other established charities in this space along with the normal support agencies the Association works alongside.

This later progressed to lobbying local and state governments to listen to the requests of farmers. Items like being able to carry hay on trailers designed for machinery appears such a simple thing but farmers were getting fined.

Luckily, items such as this were listened to, and with the assistance of major media outlets, the government has eased restrictions during the drought period.





"Much of the work the Volunteers Association undertakes is behind the scenes and kept private" Shannon said. "Most members who receive support do not wish to be named or photographed, it is a very private thing and we need to respect this."

However, being a small Association has allowed the SESVA to move swiftly. Money from donations is used the next day and hay, feed and support is generally delivered within 48 hours, depending on availability of hay.

The Association has worked smarter to ensure funds are not used on overpriced feed hay or extravagant transport charges.

"We have done many a hay run to the south of the state at 2am to be first to get in the hay line and make sure it is of good quality."

Currently, every dollar is going into helping the volunteers who need it. The Association is not paying for trucks to haul the hay after they were quoted over \$6,000 to bring up \$1500 worth of hay.

"We understand the sacrifice that people are making with their donation, so we will ensure that it is not wasted."

NOT JUST HAY ON THE WAY.

"Initially it was just hay that people needed, now it's much more than that", Shannon said reflecting on the requests for assistance.

The Association daily surveys markets for availability, quality and best priced hay. However, support has become more than just bales of hay.

The Volunteers Association now supports volunteers with hay (sheep, cattle and horse), along with water

supplies, dog food, baby lamb jackets and sheep,,,,,um,,,,,'nuts'.

"I thought I was getting taken for a ride when there was a request to bring bags of sheep nuts." Shannon said.

Sheep nuts are a bagged food source that is often used during drought and supplies the required minerals and vitamins for the animals.

Dog food has been another request.

"We often forget in the city that farm dogs are another hard working part of the farm."

Dogs are often close family members and social part of the farm too, and it must be remembered that they require special energy enriched foods formulated for working dogs.

A DIFFERENCE MADE SO FAR

Australians are a proud lot, and sometimes this means not putting your hand up when you need it.

"I've had more than one volunteer say that there are others worse off than them, or they try and get you to give it to someone else" Shannon Crofton said.

In the last month Shannon has travelled over 4000kms to support volunteers.

On one farm over half of the 200 baby lambs had succumbed to the drought. Mothers just walk away from their babies during these times. As a result the family, all in a small rural SES unit, was hand feeding 40 baby lambs as a result a number of times each day. They had not had time to do anything else but attempt to save their animals.

On another farm, key breeding cows had to be sold off as their health was unable to be supported.

"Watching livelihoods like this be taken away is devastating to these families."

In another area, children are showering at the local school because farms are relying on bore water which is not very pleasant to shower or wash with.

"Children are growing up beyond their years because of this drought" Shannon said. "They are talking about finances, weather, dying animals and how a parent is off-farm to seek income."

It was visiting a volunteer and helping them pick up the dead animals in the paddock that really hit home.

"They had to be picked up each day and buried to ensure the vermin was not attracted to them" Shannon said. "I've been in SES for over 30 years, and have been to my fair share of rescues, but it's the emotional toll this is having on our mates that is difficult to watch."

The NSW SES VA along with NSW SES CISP and Chaplains are available 24hrs to support any member of the SES who would like support or wishes to talk.

Now is the time to ask RUOK? to our SES family, along with letting them know support is available.

All support from the SES Volunteers Association is strictly confidential.

Contact Shannon Crofton on 0414 825 640 to discuss any matters or support, or the SES VA office on 1300 0 SESVA.

The Welfare Fund and Drought Support Program remain open and tax-deductable donations can be made at;

<https://www.nswsesva.org.au/donate-now.html>

Thank you to all those who have donated.

Another first for NSW SES Volunteers

Many of you will know Glenn Jones as having been an NSW SES member for 29 years. During Glenn's years of service he has held various leadership positions including the Namoi Region Volunteer Deputy Region Controller, Deputy Chair of the Incident Management Capability Development Group (IMCDG) and most recently a member of the Incident Management Project Team.

Throughout his time with the NSW SES Glenn has worked tirelessly giving thousands of volunteer hours to projects not limited to his own Region but also sharing his expertise in training and incident management and has made a significant contribution to NSW SES operational capability.

July of this year marked a milestone for NSW SES and specifically for its volunteers when Glenn Jones became the first volunteer and the first NSW SES member to be nationally certified as an Incident Controller via the Australian Fire and Emergency Services Council (AFAC) Emergency Management Professionalisation Scheme (EMPS). This is a significant accolade for Glenn himself and also for the NSW SES.

The emergency management professionalisation scheme began in 2015 when AFAC launched the scheme with the aim of creating national professional standards for emergency managers in Australia and New Zealand.

The scheme provides two pathways, Certified and Registered Practitioners. Certified Practitioner is the highest level and Certified Incident Controller is aligned to Level 3 incidents.

"I felt it important to really present that volunteers are capable of undertaking and achieving certification" said Glenn. "As part of the Incident Management Project, we have been working hard to develop our incident management capability and to ensure training and deployment opportunities are there for volunteers. There is still more work to be done in



establishing professional pathways for both staff and volunteers but there is commitment to this philosophy in many quarters in the Service so its not if but when" Glenn added.

Glenn has also been involved in many major operational responses as an Incident Controller or Planning Officer and also deployed to Queensland as a part of Taskforce Foxtrot to Cyclone Yasi in 2011. For those interested in seeking certification Glenn outlined the steps required to gain certification.

"The steps are the same for all application. First, get your qualification as an incident controller level 3. To do this you will need to have gained and be tasked as a level 2 incident controller. That course is now available within NSW SES and many volunteers have already led incidents at this level. To gain experience as a level 3 incident controller, you need to get out there and sell your capability. Get involved in issues or projects in incident management and push for deployments as a Deputy so people get to see your skills and capability. Lastly keep records. Copies of logbooks, emails and any other proof of your deployments" It takes time to get the experience and to build relationships

where you are seen as competent, capable and ready to be deployed as an Incident Controller" Glenn outlined.

The application process is through and by recommendation by the Service. You will need to provide a portfolio of evidence, complete the application form and then attend an interview. When asked about the interview process Glenn was very positive of the process. "The interview is the culmination and the panel are made up of Deputy Commissioners from around Australia. That might sound intimidating but they were very welcoming and were focused on helping candidates demonstrate they had the requirements for certification".

So, what was the best part of the process? "The comradery from the other applicants within NSW SES, and Gina Jones who facilitated the process for NSW SES. Everyone was keen to share and help each other. We all know we rely on each other and may have to hand over an incident to each other in the future".

The NSWSESVA President and Glenn have maintained close communications to ensure opportunities for volunteers has been included in course development and participation in incident management teams.

Jamern Emmett

Goodbye to Jamern "Jimmy", "Cricket", Emmett.

Cricket was a long time member of NSW SES recently recognised by being awarded life membership for his commitment to NSW SES.

Cricket was a NSW Ambulance Officer, he served in the Vietnam War, and he was a NSW SES member.

Cricket was a friend to all members who met him, a mentor and trainer to many of us, and a lovely guy.

All of us at Albury SES express our deepest sympathies to his wife Lynette who is also a member of our unit.

Jamern Emmett, may you rest in peace. You set the standard for those that follow. You will be sadly missed.

Rest in peace.



Colin James Thompson

(NSW SES Life Member) 3 July 1924 – 19 July 2018

It is with deep sorrow that we write this tribute to a man who has served his community for more years than we can remember. Colin James Thompson known to many of the members as the "Godfather" has steered the ship in the Clarence Nambucca Region (CNR) since nearly its Foundation.

Colin joined the NSW State Emergency Service in 1974 and was an active member of the Clarence Nambucca Region Headquarters with over 44 years of continuous service supporting the local community in times of need.

Early in Colin's career he was the flood intelligence officer who was paramount in establishing and maintaining the manual rain and river gauge readers throughout the region. Colin had a wealth of knowledge in the farming region, as he was an Inspector for the Department of Agriculture for most of his working life. He used his contacts to gain confidence in the NSW SES and its systems to ensure an early warning system was established to protect the residences on the lower reaches of the Clarence Valley. Colin was also the right hand man to Ori Pastega (Local Hydrologist) who worked closely with him undertaking hydrological analysis on river flow times to commence predictions on when peak flood heights would affect the towns. This work was completed well before the Bureau of Meteorology was involved.

Colin held many senior positions within the NSW SES over the years and was appointed to the position of Deputy Division Controller in 1989 and then Deputy Region Controller (volunteer) a position he held until 2010. He also acted as Region Controller on many occasions when the position was a volunteer one.

Colin was involved in over 26 flood operation events in the Clarence Nambucca Region as well as 12 storm operations and 2 cyclone events at Junction Hill and Tucabia.

In the 1996 and 2001 floods on the Clarence Valley Colin at the tender age of 70 and 75 respectively, worked 9 days

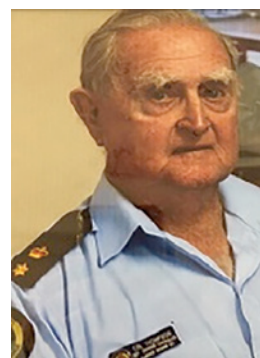
straight on shifts from 0500hrs to 2100hrs as the Operation Centre Manager (now known as Deputy IC). He controlled the day to day operations of activities using his management skills from his previous employment to have his members attending to all requests.

His vast knowledge and the experience he gained over the years assisted him in staying one step in front of the flood effects ensuring a smooth operation was rolling on. Every member in the Clarence Valley sought advice from him on what the next flood effects were going to happen and he would recollect previous events like it was yesterday with so much confidence. This represented his love of the NSW SES and his dedication to assisting the community. Colin continued to attend operations in 2009, 2011 and 2013 where he would sit in the operations room and provide a vast amount of intelligence to assist members carrying out IMT roles on likelihood of the consequences and local contact arrangements in place.

In addition to NSW SES service in his spare time through his 60's to 80's he would also volunteer to drive for Meals on Wheels delivering lunches for the old people he would comment with a smirk.

Colin continued to turn up to SES training every fortnight at the Region Headquarters until his sickness prevented him from playing an active role only 6 months before his passing at a tender age of 94. It is this dedication that showed Colin exemplifies what type of character he was, always wanting to help people. Colin placed his family second on many occasions to respond to the Service and his wife Gwen joined also to support him and is still a current member. It is a very sad time for the Clarence Nambucca Region to lose such a stalwart to the area.

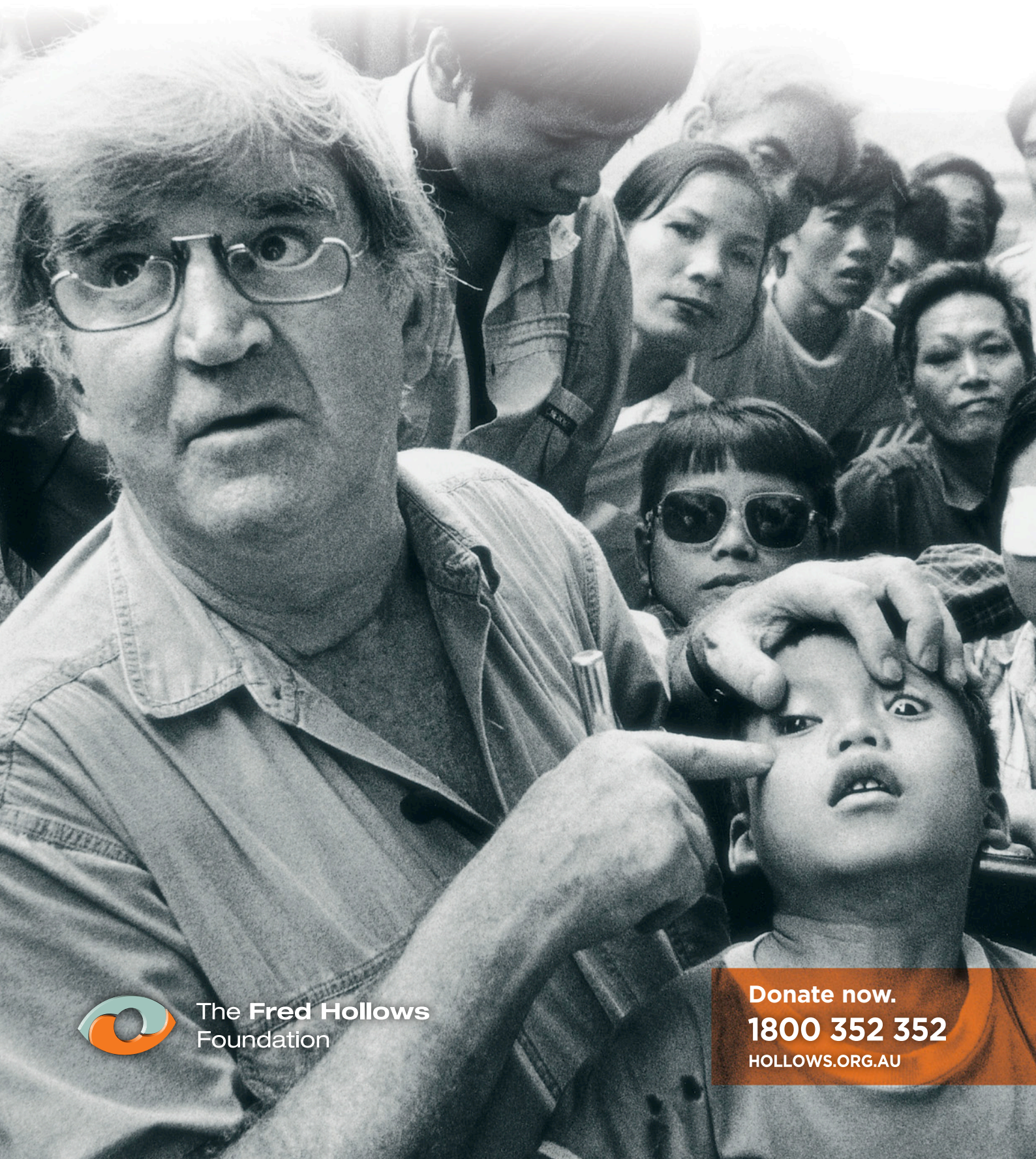
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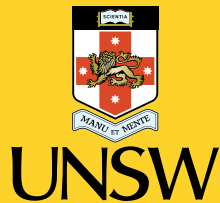
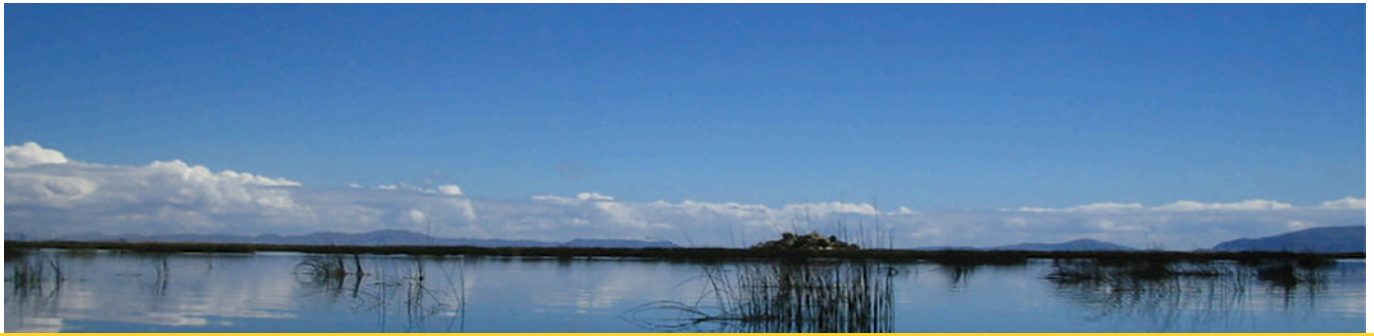


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