

The official journal of the NSW SES Volunteers Association

the

Volunteer

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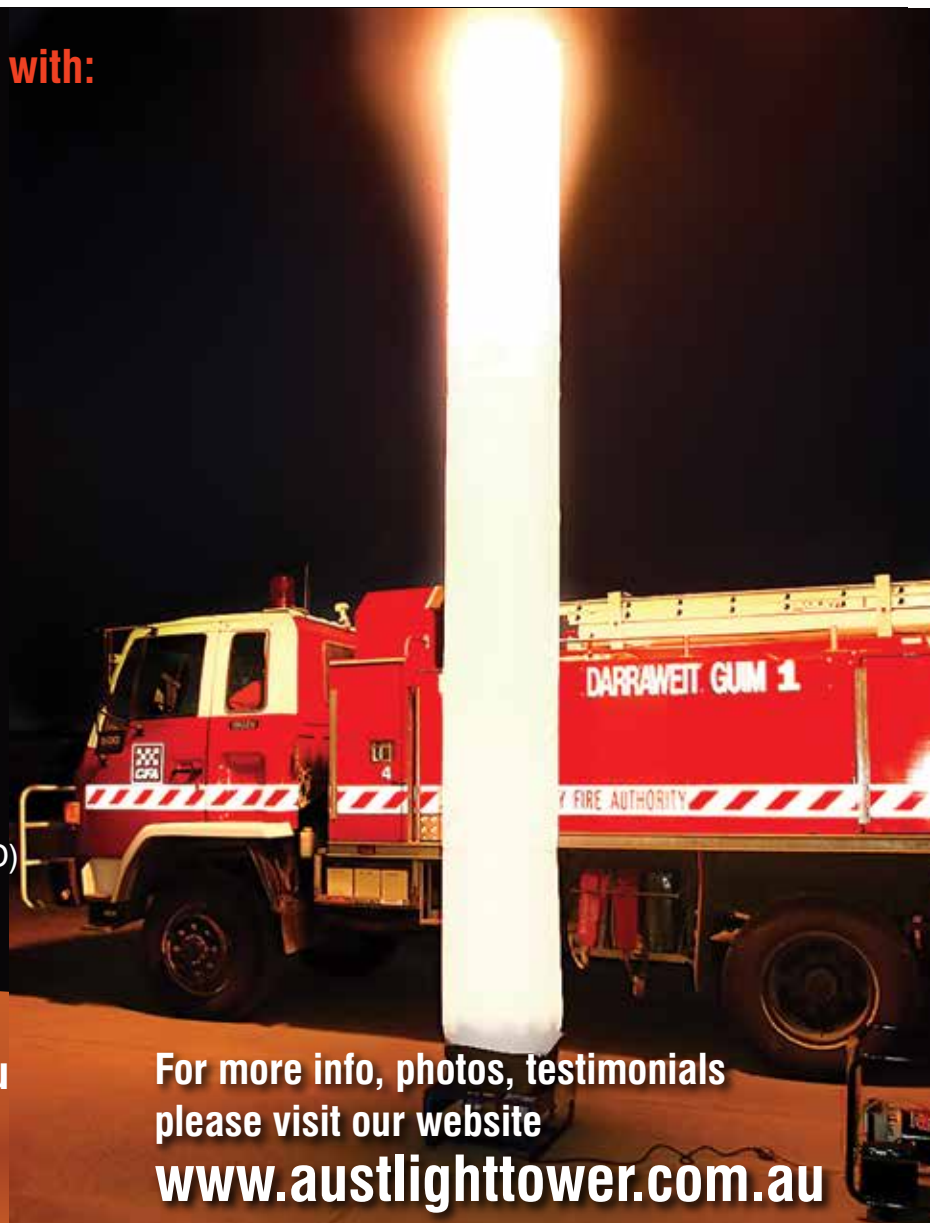
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the Volunteer

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Proudly supporting our local SES Volunteers

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



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Proudly Supporting our Local SES Volunteers

"To all our amazing SES Volunteers
I sincerely thank you for always being there for
our communities, at every time of need.
We couldn't be more proud and grateful of our heroes
in orange suits. Your efforts don't go unnoticed.
It is your willingness to step up during our times of
greatest need and your dedication to our communities
that brings us together, makes our State stronger,
and gets us through any challenges we face."

Jihad Dib MP

Member for Lakemba
Shadow Minister for Emergency Services
Shadow Minister for Energy and Climate Change

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Authorised by Jihad Dib MP.
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September 2021



“

Please remember to check on those who are vulnerable, you haven't heard from in a while or who have restricted support networks and as always, the Association remains open to help.

”



KIM DAVIS ESM
PRESIDENT NSW SES
VOLUNTEERS ASSOCIATION

Let's start with the good news! Congratulations to all of the Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards finalists, and a very special congratulations to Tony McPhail who took out the SES category!

The Association has been a proud sponsor of these awards since their inception and it is lovely to see so many people nominated each year!

The tougher issue is lockdown. As we go to print, all of NSW has been put into a lockdown and there are still multiple LGAs in red zones.

This will again prove to be difficult for some, and isolation and anxiety are real concerns. The Association's office is located in a red zone and as such, we have reduced in-office staffing to one person, once a week only. We have a business COVID-19 safe plan and

disinfection guidelines are always employed but we are not offering and click and collect or onsite people as a result.

You can still contact us through phone and email and welfare, support, advocacy and grant services remain available.

We will also be rolling out some additional training to keep people engaged during lockdown. In July alone we made Mental Health First Aid Training available to over 120 members. We will be looking at some Nationally Accredited courses next – information will be through our Facebook, website and booking platform – www.sesevents.com

Work continues at the VA property, and we are very fortunate to have the assistance of two emergency

management greats, Warwick Kidd and John Denny, with managing a couple of really exciting projects. Fingers crossed that by the time we get out of lockdown, we will have something pretty special to share! Our primary focus at the moment is getting the property bushfire ready – for those of you who attended the Open Day, you will know this is no small feat!

For those of you who are responding within the community, please look after yourselves and your teammates and thank you for your ongoing commitment.

Please remember to check on those who are vulnerable, you haven't heard from in a while or who have restricted support networks and as always, the Association remains open to help.





THE HON DAVID ELLIOTT MP
MINISTER FOR POLICE AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES

Last time I wrote, the NSW State Emergency Service was responding to widespread storm and flood events. As the combat agency responsible for these events, you were front and centre working to rescue people across the impacted areas. Through the devastating floods in May, teams worked together to assist communities, then help to restore some sense of normality, after such devastating event. Thank you again, every one of you, who responded to the call for help.

In July, I was proud to farewell three SES members deployed to Canada as part of a 53-strong team comprising firefighters and emergency services personnel to support their current wildfire emergency. These logistics specialists headed to Vancouver and have been working hard to support the affected communities there. It's a privilege that we are able to repay a favour by sending our experienced members to North America to help, as the Canadians have helped the people of New South Wales so many times over the years in our times of crisis.

The deployment to Canada is also a great learning opportunity for these three members who are working alongside the Mounties, as well as other emergency service personnel from across Canada, Mexico, USA and Australia. I look forward to welcoming them arrive home safe and well in the coming weeks.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to overshadow much of our day-to-day activities across NSW, members of the SES have once again stepped up by assisting agencies performing frontline duties. Members have provided logistical assistance to



NSW Health at a number of sites across Sydney, assisting in the establishment and facilitation of pop-up COVID testing sites including one at Orange in the state's Central West, as well as assisting in the delivery of supplies to isolated and/or vulnerable people.

The Region Emergency Operations Centre (REOC) is being run from the Bass Hill SES HQ, where SES personnel are working alongside their counterparts from NSW Health, NSW Police, NSW Ambulance, and Resilience NSW.

Over the coming weeks, the SES will continue to provide volunteer members to deliver ongoing logistical and administrative assistance at centres across Sydney. Like all frontline workers, your contribution is invaluable and is a demonstration of our emergency services working together to help their community when in crisis.

With the storm season fast approaching, I thank you for the advice and practical assistance you will be performing in the coming months within your communities, demonstrating how to prepare themselves, their properties and their

pets and animals. I understand you are all working even harder this year to think outside the box to develop ways to do this in a COVID-safe, socially-distanced way. I am inspired to see so many teams utilising social media platforms online to ensure such important messaging is shared as widely as possible.

The NSW Government will continue to support you and the hard work you do in preparation for and response to storm and flood emergencies as we push towards October.

I'd also like to take the opportunity to personally recognise Paul Burg, Nicola McDonald, Tony McPhail and Sandra Zigra. These highly-respected members are finalists for the 2021 Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards, and have been nominated for many reasons but also because they embody the dedication of an SES member.

It is essential we recognise the ongoing hard work and selflessness of SES members, and I extend my sincere thanks to all of you for the work you continue to do to protect communities across New South Wales.



Please take care of your mental health and wellbeing in the months ahead. This time will bring different challenges for all of us, but maintaining contact with your family, friends and fellow members will help more than you realise.



CARLENE YORK APM
NSW SES COMMISSIONER

With COVID consuming much of our attention over the past few months I wanted to thank you all again for your efforts – it never ceases to impress me how you continue to go about serving your communities, even in the midst of all this upheaval.

Restrictions have touched most parts of the state this year, even in rural and remote parts of NSW. The COVID vaccine rollout has been in the news constantly, and you've probably read a great deal about it. Although not mandatory, I strongly encourage everyone who hasn't received their shot yet to go and get it. By now, all Units should have received information on their local vaccination hub and how to register. If you haven't, please email whs@ses.nsw.gov.au as soon as possible. I know that I say this regularly, but I'm going to say it again – your health and wellbeing should be your number one priority. Your safety is paramount and being vaccinated against COVID is part of protecting

yourself, your family, and your community.

Moving on from COVID, the 2021/22 State Budget was handed down recently, bringing with it increased funding for the NSW SES. This includes \$1.2 million to gather flood intelligence and analysis (with the aim of minimising the impacts of flooding on the community), \$29.6 million to safely maintain existing agency front-line communications while the Government Radio Network is being delivered, \$35.3 million to support the Emergency and Rescue Workers Compensation Fund, as well as \$2 million to support our new mental health and wellbeing program. These are just a few examples of initiatives that I'm hoping will have a direct and meaningful impact on your work, making it easier for us to work together to keep the community safe.

Speaking of working together, our strategic plan was launched during a live Teams event recently. Called 'Building Our Future,' this plan will help guide and shape our decisions over the next

three years. We will be focusing on three core areas – Our People, Our Community, and Our Capability. The Training Improvement Program, Leader and Commander Development, and the Fleet Replacement Program are just some of the initiatives included in this plan. I want you to familiarise yourself with what the next three years will look like and hold my team and I accountable for what we have promised to deliver.

Last but not least, please take care of your mental health and wellbeing in the months ahead. This time will bring different challenges for all of us, but maintaining contact with your family, friends and fellow members will help more than you realise. I also encourage you to do one of the Mental Health First Aid courses available through the VA. These workshops are excellent if you want to learn how to spot the signs of mental distress in those around you, and what you can do to help. If you're unsure when the next course is, please get in touch with the VA directly.

Stay safe



At the time this magazine has gone to print, NSW has gone into complete lockdown - during this period, the NSW SES Volunteers Association will continue to operate remotely and all merchandise orders and welfare packs will be sent out every Monday until we are able to return to our work places regularly. The VA continues to assist our members during this period and would like to highlight that anyone struggling financially can apply for assistance through our welfare fund – this application is made online on our website at www.nswsesva.org.au. Please also see our Covid support plan update which features in this magazine for more information on what the VA has been doing to support our members during these difficult times.

We have approved a number of grants over the last few months such as equipment and facilities for units, short courses, (two have been mentioned further in this magazine) and have also supported events by providing prizes and giveaways such as for the NSW SES trivia night, the upcoming Lulus exercise and the Canterbury Bulldogs Appreciation Event (Marquee giveaways).

Thankyou to the prize winners that sent in images wearing our ESR Apparel- especially the ones that were creative utilizing the Eat Sleep Respond genres!

To find out more information on Grants and how to apply, please visit our website.



MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID COURSES

We had such a huge response to our Mental Health First Aid courses, that we decided to run them four weeks straight during July (morning and evening sessions) to cater for all those that were eager to participate and complete the course. Those that participated now have the skills to identify and assist others that are struggling with poor mental health and the knowledge to help them find the right support services. The more people we have that learn these skills, can only better our communities especially during times of lockdown where we have seen an increase in mental health issues within our communities.

We have received great feedback from everyone who completed the courses and we look forward to commencing more at a later date. Check out our Events booking website www.sesvaevents.com to keep up to date on the latest courses on offer.



EAT SLEEP RESPOND

We have updated our Eat Sleep Respond apparel and our new hoodies and face masks have been flying out the door. If you have any feedback and ideas on what you would like to see created next, please let us know as we are always open to suggestions. We have also restocked a number of our SES Branded merchandise such as bags, jumpers and umbrellas and added additional payment options to our online shopping portals such as Paypal and Afterpay. These can all be found on our website www.nswsesva.org.au/shop & www.eatsleeprespond.com.au



RESCA

NSW SES Volunteers Association has been a proud sponsor of the Rotary Emergency Services Community Awards since its inception and continued to sponsor and support this years event which was held on Saturday, 14th of August 2021.

This year due to restrictions the event was held completely online and we were happy to see Unit Commander Anthony (Tony) McPhail from The Rock Unit awarded the 2021 RESCA winner for NSW SES – Congratulations Tony! Your outstanding contribution to the community is admirable and respected – well deserved!

Tony McPhail's exposure to the role of emergency services came years ago when his brother was involved in a bus crash. He joined the NSW SES and the VRA soon after, became a road crash rescue operator and moved on from that to other rescues and support, such as post-traumatic stress, where he has helped rescue workers through some of their darkest moments. Now Unit Commander of The Rock SES unit in southern NSW, and a Rural Fire Service volunteer, Tony has led teams in support of bushfires and this year led a team to Bourke in the state's far west to deal with serious flooding problems. Tony is a recipient of the NSW SES 5, 10 & 15 Year Long Service Awards, National Medal and the NSW Premier's Bushfire Emergency Citation.

RESCA is a fantastic opportunity to acknowledge the dedicated and passionate people from the various emergency service agencies and to recognise and celebrate their selfless service to our community. Congratulations to all of the finalists on the night!



Anthony (Tony) McPhail, Unit Commander, The Rock Unit



**Nicola (Nicky) McDonald
Deputy Commander
Dorriggo Unit, Tyningham**



**Paul Burg
Local Commander,
Port Macquarie**



**Sandra Zigra
Operations Officer,
St Georges Basin**

If you would like to contribute content in our December edition of The Volunteer magazine, please send in content by the 14th of November 2021 to editor@nswsesva.org.au. Don't forget we are still receiving images for our 2022 calendar (which is distributed Free to all NSW SESVA Members), so if you have any good quality pictures of your unit, yourself &/or other volunteers operational and training etc, please send them through via email to office@nswsesva.org.au.

Stay safe!

Carlee Maccoll





Canterbury Bulldogs

NSW SES Appreciation Event

On the 14th of June (Queens Birthday long weekend) Canterbury Bulldogs held a NSW SES Appreciation event at Stadium Australia at the Bulldogs vs St George Dragons NRL Game. This event was to promote the amazing work you all do for our community and to say Thankyou to the Volunteers especially for your hard work during the Flood period earlier this year.

NSW SES volunteers were given free entry to the game and also three additional tickets each for their friends/ family member to also attend on the

day. Canterbury Bulldogs also provided 10 Exclusive Game Day experiences for our lucky winners to participate in a prematch function, the opportunity to run out with the Guard of Honour and upgraded corporate seating. They were also in attendance at half time with the Commissioner when the Canterbury Unit was granted \$10000 for their unit.

It was a great day for everyone especially for families with children as the kids had a load of fun within the activation zone where there were jumping castles/ kids inflatables, free fairy floss for all and a chance to visit

the NSW SES Marquee to learn about the service, see a NSW SES Vehicle and also take home a goodie from the stand. The NSW SESVA was happy to provide Paddy Dolls, Battery operated toy chainsaws, Magazines and other giveaways on the day. The Bulldogs finished the day off with a win and we were all in high spirits!

Thankyou to Canterbury Bulldogs for all your support and for giving us all the opportunity to attend this special day. We look forward post lockdown to being able to get back to attending games and supporting our NRL teams.





Inaugural NSW State Road Crash Rescue Championships

Recently an amazing team of Road Crash Rescue Operators from Port Stephens NSW SES and NSW Ambulance Rescue competed in the inaugural NSW State Road Crash Rescue Championships in Mogo, on the south coast.

The event comprised of a series of small challenges including road crash rescue scenarios, trauma scenarios and CPR challenges.

The Port Stephens team was successful in winning 7 of the 9 awards and declared the overall winner.

Port Stephens SES have been responding to Road Crash Rescue across Port Stephens, areas of the Mid Coast and Dungog shires since 1970. Today, they have 24 accredited RCR operators that provide 24/7 coverage using 3 Rescue trucks, 365 days per year.

The Port Stephens volunteers train every week and frequently respond with Rescue Paramedics from our neighbouring Ambulance Rescue Units at Singleton and Maitland to

RCR's, Industrial and Vertical Rescue incidents.

It's safe to say, their ongoing training, continuous improvement and volunteers commitment have meant that the Port Stephens and Lower Hunter communities are in good hands.

PORT STEPHENS TEAM

- » Trauma challenge winner
- » CPR challenge winner
- » Entrapped Rescue winner
- » Controlled Rescue winner
- » Best Medical Team winner
- » Best Technical Team winner
- » Overall SES winner

HAWKESBURY TEAM

- » Best Team Leader

EDEN TEAM

- » Spirit Of The Challenge

Alysha Springett

Deputy Unit Commander
& Training Coordinator
Port Stephens Unit







Georges River Community Flood Awareness and Preparedness

The Georges River in Sydney is a highly urbanised river, with a long history of flooding. Units across the Georges River catchment have worked for a long time with their local communities to raise awareness of flooding risk, increase resilience and support communities to be prepared.

NEW GEORGES RIVER CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED IN JUNE

Recently, we launched a new Georges River community flood awareness campaign "The Georges River has flooded before, it will happen again" which ran throughout June and July. The aim of the campaign was to increase awareness of floods and share steps people can take to prepare. The campaign reached out to focus communities in Canterbury-Bankstown, Liverpool and Fairfield Local Government Areas.

LOCAL VIDEOS

A series of new videos featuring local volunteers and community members were developed to engage with the broader community, with support from Principal Partner NRMA Insurance. These video shared experiences of

floods, and emphasized the need to be understand flood risk and to prepare. Special thanks goes out to Michael, Washington, Nancy, Peter and all the team filming at Chipping Norton, Hiendat, Leena, Jeff, Criss, Ahmed, David, Michelle, Annie (Nutan), Neil,



Grahame, Monique, Katie, Dot and Jenny from Four Little Foxes Café, for all the work you put into making these videos a reality. You can see the videos now featured on the NSW SES website at www.ses.nsw.gov.au/georgesriver

LOCALISED COMMUNICATIONS

Through the campaign we've delivered a suite of resources including a new website with an interactive map showing the impact of a Probable

Maximum Flood in the target areas, and localised information. The campaign also included local newspaper features and digital advertising, billboards, and ads on bus stops and railway corridors and a social media campaign to help community members understand flood risk, and gain useful tips for before, during and after floods.

THANKS TO ALL THE MEMBERS INVOLVED

Many thanks goes out to all of the people who have been involved in the creation and delivery of the Campaign, as well as the enthusiasm and dedication everyone has brought to the project.

If you would like to find out more, or have any questions, comments or ideas, feel free to reach out to mtz.cco@ses.nsw.gov.au

Rebecca Teale-Sinclair
Metro Community Capability Team

Note: Filming the videos and other activities were held before restrictions came in across Sydney, with follow on digital and print media campaign materials distributed once restrictions were in place.





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Edmond Atalla MP
MEMBER FOR MOUNT DRUITT

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Linda Burney MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR BARTON

**"In any given season,
we can always be assured
that our NSW SES volunteers
are there to keep us safe.
Thank You."**



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through one of our toughest
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our SES volunteers.

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FIONA PHILLIPS MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR GILMORE

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Please send content to editor@nswsesva.org.au
If you have any questions or would like further information on the
Magazine and submissions, please contact NSW SESVA
Carlee Maccoll P: 1300 073 782 E: carlee.maccoll@nswsesva.org.au

2022 AUSTRALASIAN POLICE & EMERGENCY SERVICES GAMES

ROTORUA – NEW ZEALAND



Registrations for the 2022 Australasian Police and Emergency Services Games opened on 1 July and we are pleased to say that entries are flowing in.

One month on, we have 770 people entered into 865 events which is fantastic. Notably, 34% of our entries are from across the ditch which is very encouraging - well done Australia! Bring on the Covid-19 vaccinations and open borders. In conjunction with our fabulous games sponsors, we have come up with some amazing milestone prizes for significant registration entries. Our first registered competitor took less than 4 minutes to enter and in recognition for her speedy work, Ellen Emery, a Probation Officer from Rotorua has won herself a very cool hot tub

experience for 6 people at Secret Spot in Rotorua valued at \$210. Nice work Ellen and good luck with your chosen discipline, CrossFit. We also celebrate our first Volunteer to register, Karleigh-Jayne Jones from Tauranga who has for herself a Waimangu Volcanic Valley experience thanks to their wonderful team. We have prizes for every 100th volunteer and every 500th competitor to register so you never know when you may receive a call from the team to say you have won an amazing tourism activity. The vouchers will be current until after the games and will be presented to anyone who registers

no matter where you live. A huge thank you goes out to all our tourism sponsors for their donation of these great prizes.

For more information and to keep up to date on the 2022 APES Games please visit www.apes2022.co.nz

IMPORTANT DATES

- **1 July 2021**
Registrations **OPEN** with 20% early-bird discount!
- **22 August 2021**
Registration changes to 10% discount
- **September 2021**
Social Event Calendar released
- **November 2021**
Volunteer training
- **15 November 2021**
Registration now full price
- **12 February 2022**
Registrations **CLOSE**
- **4 March 2022**
Games Opening Ceremony
- **11 March 2022**
Games Closing Ceremony





Heavy Rescue Vehicle (HRV) Generation 2

The new Generation 2 Heavy Rescue Vehicle (HRV) are currently being built and delivered as part of the NSW SES Fleet Replacement Program (FRP).

The new Gen 2 HRV has been designed and equipped to enable an effective response capability for General Land Rescue (GLR), including road crash rescue, agricultural, animal, domestic and industrial, USAR cat 1, Flood Rescue, Storm Operations and Vertical Rescue (if accredited). The vehicle provides a full complement of specialised equipment required for complex rescue incidents.

The allocation of a HRV is assessed and defined based on a combination of factors including; capability need, risk profile and demonstrated frequent occurrences of complex rescue incidents.

The Gen 2 HRV is built on an **Isuzu FRR 4x2 Single or Crew Cab** with:

- » GVM: 11,000 kg
- » Tare Mass: 6,900 kg
- » Available payload: 4,100 kg (occupants and equipment)
- » 4x2 drive type
- » 7.8L 6 cylinder turbo diesel engine
- » Automatic transmission
- » 300mm wading depth

- » 9.20m length
- » 2.98m height
- » 2.76m width (over mirrors)
- » 2.28m (over the body)
- » 2-6 seats (depending if single cab or crew cab) with lap-sash belts on all seats

HRV RESCUE BODY

The HRV body has been designed and built by Kuiper's Engineering in South Windsor and comes with some great innovations to support our rescue operations, including:

- » A 3kVA inverter providing a 240V electrical supply and deep cycle batteries. The HRV does not require an external generator to run the Teklite 6m remote-operated LED light mast.
- » The power supply system has an engine auto-start function to maintain power to the batteries as they start to get low (even when the cabin is locked).
- » Shore power connection when the vehicle is housed at the Unit

maintains 240V power supply to the battery chargers, including the M18 and eDraulic batteries.

- » Ergonomic stowage and improved layout ensures better workflow to retrieve tools when undertaking a rescue operation
- » Cribbing drawers under the rear locker (rear compartment).
- » Rated live load anchor points at the front and rear.
- » Centralised locking on all cabin and locker doors (with warning alarm sounding if the doors are not secure).
- » Onboard water tank and soap dispenser for hand washing.
- » Crew welfare area under an awning (including fridge and Jetboil).
- » Roof-mounted ladder loader with an 8.8 m extension ladder.

VEHICLE EQUIPMENT LIST (VEL)

The General Land Rescue Capability Development Group (GLRCDG) has worked closely with Fleet to revise the equipment being carried on our HRVs.



- Our new HRV comes with:
- » Tool sheet to set up your tool staging area.
 - » Extrication tool kit containing the most useful hand tools to support a road crash rescue operation (instead of getting the tools from the combination toolbox each time you set up your tool dump).
 - » Lucas rescue platform for safe elevated work on complex transport incidents (trucks, trains and aircraft).
 - » Stabfast Stabilisation Systems (including Stabfast XL for heavy vehicles).
 - » 58 cribbing block (100x100) cribbing blocks for enhanced stabilisation and lifting operations.
 - » Conventional hydraulic tools; including spreader, cutter, combi tool, two x telescopic rams and pedal cutter.
 - » Stowage for an eDraulic combi tool and cutter.
 - » 20 and 40 tonne airbags with vehicle supplied air, as well as two (2) air cylinders and an airbag Kit (regulator/controls / and hoses) stowed in a Milwaukee Packout case.
 - » Milwaukee M18 power tools (reciprocating saw, angle grinder, 13mm hammer drill, 1/4" hex impact driver, 1/2" hex impact driver and all the various accessories) all securely stowed in Milwaukee Packout cases.
 - » Milwaukee M18 chainsaw (as well as a 2-stroke Stihl MS362 chainsaw).
 - » Finger kit (including Dremel, Shinano air hacksaw and inspection camera) stowed in a Milwaukee Packout case.
 - » Milwaukee M18 demolition hammer for breaking through concrete or masonry or digging down through hard ground.
 - » Milwaukee M18 portable scene lighting and torches.
 - » Four (4) x 3m lengths of Oregon timber for shoring a partial structural collapse (instead of leaving behind your acrow-props), Or if you have one of 'those' jobs where you need lots of timber cribbing – simply cut up the lengths into 500mm blocks.
 - » Two (2) sheets of form ply which can be used to stabilise a trench or wall in a partial structural collapse or cut up for airbag protection boards or gussets for shoring. They are also good to walk over when rescuing a cow or horse from mud.
 - » Four (4) size 1 acrow props and four (4) size 2 acrow props for partial structural collapse operations.
 - » Milwaukee M18 nail gun for partial structural collapse operations.
 - » Stihl TS-420 Cutquik 350mm rotary saw with metal, masonry and diamond discs and water cooling hose.
 - » Litter kit containing blanket and body bag, litter tie-down straps and 10m x 25mm tape to secure the casualty and casualty protection equipment (white Petzl helmet, goggles and earmuffs).
 - » Terra Tamer trail wheel for casualty handling in remote and rugged terrain.
 - » Supplementary Oxygen Kits (SOK) for resuscitation and oxygen therapy.
 - » Automated External Defibrillator (AED).
- The HRV also has a spare 100kg stowage locker suitable for a deflated Ark Angel raft or other items the Unit wishes to carry to suit their operational needs (such as a 10-tonne hand hydraulic kit, additional traffic cones or longer lengths of rope)



Shitbox Rally

Being part of the SES can often feel like you are part of an extended family and recently I took part in an event that further demonstrated this. Myself and my deputy unit commander, Daryl Brett, entered into the Shitbox rally.

Shitbox Rally was founded by James Freeman after he lost both of his parents to cancer 12 months apart.

Shitbox Rally has always been about having fun, and not taking the serious task of raising money for cancer research too seriously. He spent months working out how the rally would work, and how to make the experience a real challenge for participants. He knew he'd need support to grow awareness of and participation in the rally organically... The more ridiculous the concept was, the better.

Shitbox Rally has grown to a total of 250 teams, plus support teams, so 550 people.

The rally itself is only part of the project with teams working for many months on their fund-raising efforts. Their hard work is rewarded by the rally itself.

The camaraderie and mate ship that is built over the 7 days of the rally surprises everyone that takes part. Special shout out Peter Verwey, an SES volunteer that has done the rally before. As soon as Peter discovered that we were participating in the rally, through one of the SES Facebook pages, he reached out to us and offered advice and support.

The record breaking amount of funds raised, the positive impact we have on local remote communities and the overall experiences of the rally teams themselves combine to become a hugely rewarding experience for all involved.

To date Shitbox rally has raised over \$25 million for Cancer Council Australia

Shitbox Rally 2021 Autumn was held May 22nd too May 28th, travelling with half of the teams from Alice Springs to Gold Coast via the Gulf of Carpentaria. Then a week later from 5th June to 11th June with the other half of the teams returning from Gold Coast to Alice Springs via the Gulf of Carpentaria. 80% of the route is unsealed roads in parts of Australia that see very little human contact.

For Daryl and I we wanted to not only represent the rally but also represent another really important part of our lives, the SES. We are both really proud to wear the orange and we wanted the connection to shine through our journey. Both of us wore the VA t-shirts and the SES blue t-shirts throughout the rally which helped



Keith Barnes

generate some great conversations with future recruits!

The vehicle we chose was not the bravest we could have been, we managed to find a 2002 Holden Rodeo with 350000km on the clock. We paid \$500 for her and she needed a lot of love to get her back to life. Lucky for me Daryl is a natural mechanic and nothing was too big a challenge for him. Once back to life though the Rodeo did us proud, dealing with everything we threw at her with ease, even the large boulder Daryl managed to hit!

And most importantly we raised some money. We started with a target of \$5000 and with the wonderful support from friends, family and a few sponsors we raised \$12000. The total rally broke all rally records for raising money with the autumn event now raising over \$2.5 million.



Daryl Brett

Gilgandra Unit

July saw Gilgandra Unit have a recruitment information night where the unit gained membership of 10 new members who are currently in training for General Land Rescue.

The evening was followed closely by a Job Ready Induction Workshop which was attended by Gilgandra and Coonamble Units. Gilgandra Unit had an interagency Road Crash training evening with ASNSW organised by Gilgandra Unit Commander, giving new paramedics exposure to working at a road crash rescue scene and Rescue operators practice working alongside Paramedics. Coonamble and Walgett Units met in Walgett to do joint unit RCR training which was a good success.



August brought Gilgandra Unit 3 new flag poles which are a great addition to the new HQ, the Unit also was joined by the Gilgandra clinical nurse educator to carry out PAD training. It will see 20 volunteers from across Gilgandra, Coonamble, Lightning Ridge and Orange City Units trained in PIARO which is being run by Castlereagh Cluster with the instructing being done by trainers from Forbes, Cootamundra, Burruga and Gilgandra.

These efforts of our volunteers across Castlereagh Cluster Units have been nothing short of amazing and it is great to see our new members coming to help their communities and learn new skills.

Lane Lewis

Training Coordinator, Castlereagh Cluster



Blood Donations

In the time of the pandemic, donating blood is more essential than ever. Unlike toilet paper, we cannot buy a lot of it and save it for later. Red Cross needs to have a regular, fresh supply for patients who need it.

At this time, less people are donating blood than usual, which is understandable, however blood donations are an essential health service, even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On July 31st 2021, 17 members of The Shire Cluster went to the Miranda blood centre to roll up their sleeves and donate whole blood and plasma, which was also in line with the Emergency Blood Challenge.

It was conducted safely, in accordance with NSW Health and Red Cross safety regulations. Donor centres have implemented new measures to ensure the safety of staff, donors and patients receiving transfusions during this time.

Red Cross currently need blood and plasma products to support cancer patients, new mums and babies, people with immune deficiencies, people who need surgery and people who have suffered trauma.

Unfortunately, the number of appointments have decreased, up to 900 appointments cancelled each day.



Generally, people between 18 to 75 that weigh over 50kg, healthy and well are eligible to donate, however, Red Cross will also conduct screening processes on the day to make sure they check all the boxes.

As donating blood is essential, travelling to and from the Blood Centre is also allowed.

If you would like to make an appointment or to check if you are eligible to donate, please contact 13 14 95.

Kempsey Shire SES

Kempsey Shire SES recently held a 4 day floodboat exercise with 7 units including Tabulam in the north to Stroud in the south units participating. 35 members from Tabulam, Nambucca Heads, Kempsey, Wauchope, Port Macquarie, Taree, Camden Haven and Stroud successfully passed and were deemed confident. At the conclusion of the course all enjoyed a meal at the Kempsey Macleay RSL.





Wingecarribee Unit Land Search

On the 13th June 2021 at 17:47, the Wingecarribee Unit was activated for a land search at the Boxvale Walking Track, Woodlands, for 2 missing persons. The job listed the Command Post to be located at the entry to the Boxvale Walking Track, a common place for the Command Post to be when people are lost in that area.

Whilst our rescue crews were on-route to the Land Search, our phones were activated again for a second land search on Clemens Road Woodlands, for 4 missing persons.

Our rescue teams were quick to get on the radio, in order to confirm that there were definitely two land searches for two missing groups in the same vicinity at the same time. There was.

All members of the Wingecarribee were then activated by the Duty Officer, in order to increase our Search capabilities and both Kiama and Wollongong Unit were also put on standby incase further members were required. A Command post was set up

at the entry of the Boxvale track and Police and Ambulance soon joined us on scene, followed by Police Rescue and Pol Air.

Wingecarribee had 19 members turn out to the land search, and knowing the area well, and the fact that the Boxvale Walking Tracks are 'loop tracks', two teams were formed and sent into the bush to locate the missing persons, accompanied by several Police. It was then decided that considering we still had extra members of our own, that Kiama and Wollongong wouldn't be required and they were thanked and stood down. The remaining Wingecarribee members were kept at the Command Post, on standby, incase further teams were required. This also meant that our rescue crew was still available for Rescue if any other emergencies arose.

All was going well, with the first team making verbal contact with their missing persons, when our phones were activated yet again for

a Road Crash Rescue on the Old Hume Highway in Berrima, for a four wheel drive that had run off the road, driver still in the vehicle. Wingecarribee's Heavy rescue vehicle, WCB48 was rolled and a team headed for the accident. Whilst on-route, a member who was on her way to assist at the land search came across the accident and confirmed that the driver was no longer in the vehicle and that we could stand down from the road crash, so WCB48 stood down and returned to the Command Post.

At 22:17 the first group of lost bush walkers, 3 females and 1 male, were located and were escorted back to a fire trail, where they were met by vehicles, and driven back to the Command Post. They were all cold and damp and well underdressed for the Southern Highland weather. After being assessed by the Paramedics on scene, they were cleared and sent home.

The second group of Bush walkers, two young males, were located by



Pol Air in a more remote area of the bush, which was harder to access by land, given the thick bushland and steep rugged terrain. They were located by the second SES team at 22:53, cold, wet and tired. The Team assessed their condition, concerned that one of the males was showing signs of hypothermia and exposure,

they soon began to make their way back out of the bush. The bushwalker who was not in the best condition was complaining of being tired, lethargic and his legs were cramping and this slowed their return to the Command Post considerably.

The track they were on is known locally as the 'Cable Track' or 'Incline',

where a long section of the track is so steep, that there is a cable running alongside and you need to pull yourself up the cable in order to ascend up the steep track.

What should have been a two hour walk, soon exceeded that, and a Third team was sent in, to assist the second with walking the lost males out of the bush, given the Command Posts growing concern about the time it was taking for the Second team to return and the condition of the weaker male.

At just after 02:00, the teams and the lost bushwalkers returned to the Command Post, where the males were assessed by Paramedics and eventually sent home.

Wingecarribee members debriefed and headed home, most arriving home just before 3am, for what had turned out to be a very long, but successful night.

When turning out to Land Searches such as these, our members make a point of asking for any lost bushwalkers to install the 'Emergency Plus' app on their mobile phones if possible and advise them to 'Stay Put' once they have given us their co-ordinates. This makes the task of locating them quicker and easier for our teams and improves the outcomes for the lost bushwalkers.

Heather Rowe

Unit Commander Wingecarribee



Condobolin and Lake Cargelligo Units combine for a Better Together Event

NSW SES launched an initiative earlier this year inviting units across the State to host an event to celebrate the commitment and contribution to the SES within their communities.

On Monday 21st June 15 members from Lake Cargelligo and Condobolin SES Units met at the Condobolin RSL Club for a "Better Together" event aimed at promoting teamwork and friendship between Units and their members.

Lake and Condo have been training together since February and have been working on increasing skills needed for road crash rescues as the Lake Cargelligo team, whilst not an official road crash rescue response team, are keen to assist Condobolin Unit when required.

The most recent joint training night was a crashed car with a trapped

driver scenario requiring the team to work out how to free the victim from the overturned vehicle using the jaws of life and other available equipment. After great team work the crew were able to remove the driver (our dummy Wally) through the floor of the car and place him in the care of the ambulance paramedics who were on scene to assist.

Joint training nights are opportunities for all emergency services personnel to work together building rapport and an understanding of each Service's role at an accident. More training is planned and requests from other agencies to join in have been received.

Unit Commander, Susan Bennett, said "joint training gives all services an opportunity to familiarise themselves

with our equipment and greater understanding of our capability in rescue situations. Getting to know each service and its members builds rapport and confidence when faced with some of the extreme conditions we work in. Team safety is paramount and when everyone is on the same page we are more effective and our ability to respond safely and successfully is increased."

Our night out at the Condobolin RSL was an opportunity to get together informally to share information and ideas and build on the already solid foundation we have when working together.

We are looking forward to Condobolin travelling to Lake Cargelligo to undertake other training when the warmer weather arrives.



Ballina Unit

On the 1st June 2021 Members of the Ballina Unit participated in a Ballina / Byron Gateway Airport Exercise. This was a major exercise involving State Emergency Service, Federal Aviation Fire Service, NSW Fire and Rescue, NSW Police Force, NSW Ambulance, NSW Bush Fire Service, Red Cross, Avisure and Airlines Ground Crew. Special affect makeup was applied to make the exercise look very realistic and all members played their roles very seriously.

All of our members survived the Exercise.

Chris Leddy





NSW SES members celebrating Wear It Purple Day on the last Friday of every August.

Wear Purple this August to fight depression and anxiety

This article focuses on the wellbeing and inclusion of our NSW SES members, aged between 16 and 24 who make up around 20% of our membership.

Because 75% of LGBTIQ+ youth in Australia will be bullied because of their identity, they're up to 12 times more likely to experience depression and up to 5 times more likely to experience anxiety.

Wear It Purple Day, the last Friday of August, is the annual day of awareness to encourage supportive, safe, empowering, and inclusive environments for rainbow young people.

Twenty percent (20%) of NSW SES members are aged between 16 and 24. Regardless of their gender, sexuality, culture, or religion, all of them have the right to be proud of who they are. That's why the agency has been actively raising awareness of Wear It Purple Day since 2016.

Commissioner York says that the rainbow flag is raised out front of State Headquarters every year.

"Members also make pledges to our rainbow youth displayed on the diversity and inclusion wall," says Commissioner York.

"We have had purple morning teas and joined with other emergency services to show our support."

To show support of your rainbow peers this Wear it Purple Day, wear purple, start a conversation and join the NSW SES LGBTIQ+ & Allies Facebook group for current information.

WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION

- » www.wearitpurple.org
- » Facebook – NSW SES LGBTIQ and Allies Network
- » Employee assistance program

WEAR IT PURPLE

2021

27 AUGUST

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND US TODAY AND WHY IS WIP IMPORTANT?

- » 75% of LGBTIQ+ youth in Australia will be bullied because of their identity.
- » 80% will experience it at school.
- » Because of this, LGBTIQ+ youth are up to 12 times more likely to experience depression and up to 5 times more likely to experience anxiety.



Port Stephens Rescue Event

On the 4th of July at approximately 1:30pm, Port Stephens SES were paged to a General Land Rescue (GLR) at HAWKS NEST, after a person fell from the cliffs at Dark Point Headland.

5 x accredited SES Rescue Operators and 2 X 4WD Rescue vehicles attended and made their way out to the headland.

SES worked alongside NSW Ambulance, NSW Police and Westpac Rescue Helicopter crew to provide first aid on the casualty and move him to a safer location in preparation for a winch recovery from the rocks.

The rescue operation concluded 3 hours later at around 4:30pm, when the casualty was safely winched into the rescue helicopter and transported to hospital for further treatment.

We are hoping they make a full recovery.



JULY 2021

COVID SUPPORT PLAN UPDATE

**NSW SES VOLUNTEERS
ASSOCIATION**

U1, 2-6 Lindsay Street
Rockdale NSW 2216

P: 1300 073 782

E: office @nswsesva.org.au

W: www.nswsesva.org.au



The COVID pandemic continues to create a fluid & changing environment for the 10,000 members of the NSWSES.

The SESVA is dedicating further support to members during this time. These include;

- Increased Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training courses
- Access to blended (online) MHFA courses
- Additional courses and training for
 - Mental Health First Aid for Non Suicidal Self Injury (NSSI)
 - Conversations About Suicide
- Ongoing access to mental health professionals (unlimited)
- Support for transport and/or accommodation to professional mental health care
- Funding for a number of nationally compliant short courses online including:
 - Managing Risk
 - Leadership and Management
 - Manage Small Business Finances
 - Basic WHS and Environmentally Sustainable Work Practises
 - Communicating in the Workplace
 - Project Co-Ordination Career Core
 - Team Leader
 - Work Health and Safety Basics
 - WHS for supervisors
 - Training and Assessment upgrades
- Increased care and support packages to members
- Additional masks and sanitisers access
- Increased access to welfare and support funds
- Heightened communication of support packages and member information to;
 - The Hon David Elliott, Minister for Emergency Services - baulkhamhills@parliament.nsw.gov.au
 - The Hon Mr John Barilaro, Deputy Premier, and Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade - monaro@parliament.nsw.gov.au
 - Ms Trish Doyle, Shadow Minister for Emergency Services - bluemountains@parliament.nsw.gov.au
 - The Hon Gareth Ward MP, Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Disability Services - kiama@parliament.nsw.gov.au
- Access to Emergency Support Volunteering - Support people impacted by emergencies - Emergency volunteering
- Continue to liaise with NSW SES and Health NSW regarding support mechanisms for members and access to updated information and advice.

Work continues at the NSW SES VA Wellness and Training centre at

- Windellema, NSW within COVID restrictions. Current work includes;
 - Improved site access for members and disabled personnel
 - Concreting and shedding for storage of maintenance and activity equipment
 - Site safety plans, bushfire safety planning and establishment of farm fire unit.



MHFA Feedback

The SESVA is an accredited provider of MHFA courses. When participants undertake the course they are required to provide feedback directly to MHFA Australia after the course.

MHFA Australia has now provided the feedback they have received from participants. This feedback is included for transparency and is also located on the MHFA site;

Feedback for the Instructors

- Great training
- Overall a great course. :)
- Excellent instructor. Erin was obviously very knowledgeable about the content of this course & this was demonstrated in her teaching. It was also obvious Erin was passionate about the content of the course & genuinely wanting participants to learn mental health first aid knowing how important it is to self and others.
- Erin and Shannon did an excellent job of presenting confronting material.
- Excellent, engaging instructor.
- Excellent instructor
- If we are talking about Shannon as main instructor - his presentation style was awesome - very engaging and expressive.
- Trustworthy and non-judgemental
- The instructor for this course gave a thorough presentation with plenty of opportunity for us to be involved. It was presented in an easy to understand manner
- Excellent presentation from the presenter who has an outstanding knowledge of the subject matter Made to feel comfortable & able to discuss any issues - made the whole group feel this way. Very open.
- Great, really enjoyed
- Thank you so much. It was awesome.
- One of the best courses I have ever attended. It was presented very clearly. I would recommend attending this course if offered, as I personally feel I understand so much more and a great learning curve. Thank you all so much for the opportunity to attend.

Some tips on Mindfulness for our Members Wellbeing

The past few months have put unprecedented pressure on everyone. The current lockdown and more recently, the spread of the virus to regional areas is certainly the plot twist we didn't want (or need) to experience in 2021. Covid-19 has brought uncertainty and challenges we've never faced before. During this difficult time for our community, it is important to manage our thoughts and emotions to ensure we are coping through this ever-changing pandemic in a mentally health way.

Stress is a common response to tough situations, and there is no doubt that the current pandemic is placing many of us under a lot of strain.

So, it is important that during these worrying and uncertain times, managing your stress and taking care of yourself, should be a priority.

Mindfulness has been practiced for centuries, originating in Eastern Buddhist philosophy. In more recent times, Western science has proven its benefits in supporting psychological wellbeing. Mindfulness is about being present and aware of what is happening on a moment-by-moment basis, while not making judgements about the thoughts and feelings we experience in those moments (www.blackdoginstitute.org.au). Mindfulness fosters the ability to increase focus and concentrate on the task at hand. It also improves self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and consequently improves our communication with those around us – friends, family, and colleagues. Research shows that with time and practice mindfulness also plays a big part in reducing our stress levels.

Three important points about mindfulness:

1. It is an **awareness** process. It involves paying attention to your experience in the moment as opposed to being 'caught up' in your thoughts
2. Mindfulness involves **openness and curiosity** – even if it is unpleasant
3. It involves **flexibility** of attention: the ability to consciously direct, broaden, or focus attention on different aspects of your experience

Other benefits from practicing mindfulness techniques include:

1. Improved self-regulation
2. Being less reactive and therefore being calmer and more considered
3. Promotes personal resilience
4. Enhances well-being & satisfaction – especially in the workplace
5. Enhances the ability to be present and listen more attentively

THE FIVE SENSES EXERCISE:

You can practice mindfulness anywhere, and as often as you like! The most practical option is to focus on each of the five senses: **hearing, smelling, seeing, tasting and touching**. Attend to each sense for about half a minute. All up the exercise will take 3 minutes. In this brief time, try and notice as many experiences as possible.

Try Mindful walking: From point A to point B observe what you can see, notice sounds and smells, notice how your feet move and how the arms swing.

Try Mindful eating: While having morning tea or taking a lunch break notice the colour and texture of your food and drink, its temperature, the aromas and flavours, the sensations of touching your food and utensils.

Try Mindful tasking: Try incorporating mindfulness practice in between tasks, stop for a moment to observe your surroundings, listen to the sounds and noticing your body sensation. If any thoughts pass through the mind notice them and return to what you were doing. If you are constantly getting swept away by your thoughts or emotions, bring yourself back to the present by doing the following exercise:

- » Find a clock and read the time (e.g., "It's 9:30am")
- » Ask yourself: "What am I doing now" and "What do I have to do next?"

CREATE SOME GROUNDING IN YOUR DAY

Research indicates that mindful breathing for at least one to two minutes is effective in reducing physical activation & tension, anxiety, anger, and better regulates emotional responses. This allows us to return to the

present moment and focus, increasing calmness and promoting self-control – grounding yourself in what is happening right now.

THE TRIANGLE METHOD:

- » Inhale your breath for 3 seconds
- » Hold the breath for 3 seconds
- » Exhale for 3 seconds

It does not matter if you breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth – do what is comfortable and natural for you, but ensure you are breathing from your diaphragm. Whilst breathing calmly, notice the following:

- » What emotions am I currently experiencing?
- » What do I notice about myself physically? Am I experiencing any physical tension?
- » Ask yourself – what do I need to do now to navigate these thoughts/emotions to help me cope with the current situation and move forward calmly and productively?

Try to include grounding into your day regularly and consistently – at breakfast, mid-morning, lunch time, mid-afternoon, dinner time and before bed. Engaging in mindfulness and grounding exercises allows us to manage our emotions and minimise opportunities for stress, overwhelm and anxiety to escalate.

It is important to stay calm and follow official advice, particularly around observing good hygiene, and looking after your mental health.

NSW SES has the following support services available to support your mental health wellbeing:

- » EAP Counselling is available for all members and accessible via the calling the following numbers:
 - » Staff: 0407 111 003
 - » Volunteers: 0459 448 668
- » Peer Support and Chaplaincy services are available via calling 1800 626 800

Elizabeth Gould

NSW SES Senior Manager Wellbeing Services and Support

Overcoming Lockdown

Getting 100 people together in a room is something that seems to be out of reach for a long time yet. But that didn't stop the Central Coast Cluster from getting more than 100 people together on an MS Teams meeting for the first of many Online Lockdown Training Sessions in mid July.

A joint training effort saw members from NSW SES Gosford, Swansea, and Wyong units joining with local VRA volunteers to form a group of over 100 dedicated volunteers in a single MS Teams meeting for Flood Rescue Training.

NSW SES Wyong and Gosford Commanders Matt le Clercq and Phil Whitmore sat down virtually with Central Coast Rescue Squad/VRA Unit Commanders and a group of passionate SES volunteers multiple times in the lead up to the large online event. They trialed and discussed details, roles, technical applications, and worked out the best way to present complex information to a large group that previously, had only occurred face to face.

The challenge of how to keep members interested and up to date with their training during lockdown is a big one. Training like this ensures volunteers are still thinking critically and analysing situations, still keeping their skills fresh, sharing knowledge and ideas, and, very importantly during lockdown, it keeps volunteers connected.

The training covered the basics of Flood Rescue techniques, with current In-Water Flood Rescue Operators directing breakout groups of about 10 volunteers each. These breakout groups were used to discuss ideas and talk through scenarios. This created an interactive environment and made this Online Training a lot more valuable for participants. As we've all experienced, it can be easy to zone out in a meeting where someone talks at you through a screen, but the hard work by the



joint Commanders really paid off with an interactive, entertaining, and informative session.

Central Coast Rescue Squad Deputy Commander Adam Hart found the evening very beneficial "It was a really great night. It introduced our volunteers with SES volunteers which really builds that trust on a scene. We know what the SES teams want from us when we turn up to assist, and building on that regularly is so important" Hart said.

The SES Commanders agreed with the Central Coast Rescue Squad, "part of the aim is to work collaboratively with other Emergency and rescue units, COVID has made that harder, but not impossible" Gosford SES's Whitmore said of the evening. The dedication of the volunteers was obvious, with such a large attendance for the duration of the training, an online meeting that breached the two hour mark, with volunteers staying on after to ask extra questions and



congratulate the joint commanders on a job well done. "It was great to develop our inter-agency response to flood rescues across the Central Coast" organiser and lead presenter Matt le Clercq said, "I'm really proud of what we achieved, our aim was to create something informative and engaging, which is a challenge online, but the feedback from volunteers has been very positive."

COVID may be throwing curve balls, but as emergency volunteers we are used to handling whatever is put in front of us. The world may be a lot different, but that hasn't changed the dedication, professionalism, and passion of volunteers on the Central Coast, who are still willing to give their time and effort to ensuring they are prepared, and their community is well looked after, even during lockdown.

Katrina Fowler

Volunteer / Media Liaison
Gosford Unit

Casino Unit Member Profile

Venus Chardon

Casino member Venus Chardon joined NSW SES in May of 2018. A young single mum of four kids, Venus had only recently moved to the Far North Coast, and was wanting to do something different that she'd never done before, that would allow her to help others and meet new people. This led her to the SES.

Devastatingly only a couple of weeks after signing up, her home burnt down, losing everything inside. Her and her kids were safe, but left with literally the clothes on their backs. I still recall the phone call Venus made to the Unit Commander the day after the fire. She was feeling bad that she wasn't going to be able to attend training for a few weeks, and thought she was letting the unit down as she had only just joined. She was just that committed to wanting to help others, and it was hard for her to put her hand up and say 'I need some help'. Even though she was a relative newcomer to the town, the community of Casino, including her new SES family, rallied behind Venus and her kids and supported them, getting them back on their feet and settled into a new home within 2 months.

"That motivated me even more to do my best and give back to the small-town community I had started living in" – Venus

From this shaky start to today, Venus has become one of our most competent field members. She's a gun up on the roof, a natural on the chainsaw and a very respected team leader. She's also our queen of deployment, having been on 3 deployments in the last 6 months, 2 of those out of state.

We recently spoke with Venus about her experiences and goals with SES.



Is the NSW SES anything like you imagined it would be?

SES is not what I imagined. It's turned out to be so much better! The experience I have gained, fears that I have overcome, the great friendships that I have made, and the places I have been have all been worthwhile and unforgettable.

What has been one of your most significant or proudest achievements in NSW SES?

Unexpectedly receiving the NSW Premier's bushfire Emergency Citation, after the 2019 bushfires. I spent quite a few weeks helping my Unit, mostly with delivering meals out to the RFS crews on the fire-field. One night was extra special as I got to assist with the rescuing a young joey kangaroo who had been seeking refuge from the fires in a dam. Nursing that Joey wrapped in a blanket, who was cold and scared and so vulnerable was something I'll never forget. Truly I never thought that I would be thanked by the State for the contributions I have made with SES.

Another proud moment would have to be when my Unit Commander tells me of the emails and messages she has received about me from SES members and leaders of other units.

A glimpse of what some of them emails have said, "Her leadership,



guidance and direction of her team was exemplary", "You're a lucky Unit Commander with members of this calibre", and "What stood out to me about Venus was her friendliness, her application, her professionalism and her work effort. Venus displayed great leadership qualities, leading by example."

It makes me feel proud that I have come so far in such a short time, and that others think so too.

What is one of your goals within NSW SES?

To keep learning as much as I can and to continue to gain more experience so I can further better myself in helping people and communities that are in need. And then to also bring those experiences back to my unit and help guide and lead the newer members.

Who has been the biggest influence on you while you were here?

Wow! This is a hard one. Everyone has been amazing, and friendly and supportive, however I would say there are four people in my unit that have greatly influenced me. Karen (UC), Donna (DUC), and Sonya have had the most belief in me when so often I couldn't see it in myself. Having these ladies believe in me, and their support and encouragement has made me achieve so much more than I ever expected.



Then there's Eathan whom I truly believe has guided me to become a confident team leader and Operator. When I first joined the Casino Unit, one thing I noticed Eathan do was always go around and check in on everyone that they were okay and weren't struggling with task at hand on training nights, especially with setting up a roof kit. As a new member, that was so reassuring and settled a lot of nerves and anxiousness. Observing how he teaches and how he shares his knowledge has been a great influence on how I try and do the same, both at training and out on the field.

What was your first call out?

Oh my gosh.. I actually cannot remember.

Do you have a favourite piece of equipment that you have used or favourite type of job you like doing?

I don't think I have a favourite piece of equipment as such, but I do love getting up on roofs. The view from the top can be absolutely amazing.

You have been on quite a number of deployments recently. What attracts you to put your hand up?

Besides the fact of helping out others when it is needed, I enjoy the experience and knowledge that I gain from other members and leaders. After my first deployment to Ipswich QLD in November 2020, the confidence I gained within myself was phenomenal and many of my local Unit members could see a difference in me. That was a huge eye opener. I'll never stop learning, there's always room for improvement and always lots more to learn, but I now have the confidence to tackle tasks head on, not just within SES but in my personal life as well.

Another great thing about deployments is meeting so many new people and making great friendships and of course being able to see new places in this great country.

Is there a favourite deployment you've had?

My most recent one to WA in April this year after Cyclone Seroja, would

probably be my favourite deployment. I've always wanted to go to WA since I was young. Even though it wasn't in the best circumstances and we certainly weren't there for a holiday, I still feel lucky that I was able to go and help out and managed to see some amazing sights and scenery in WA. Also, having the opportunity to go with a number of different agencies and work together as one, was really an honour and a great experience.

What's the one piece of advice that you would give someone who is thinking of joining?

Do it! If you have spare time and love helping others, want to gain awesome experiences and make new like-minded friendships then join NSW SES. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Written by Donna Lamont

Deputy Unit Commander
Casino Unit

Coffs Harbour City

The VA is very proud to support our SES members and provide the jerseys for those who will be participating in the NSW Police Domestic Violence initiative, Emergency Service v Emergency Service basketball tournament later this year. The event has now been postponed until the 21st November 2021.

"When we have the chance to train for the event COVID safely, I will get some team photos in the jerseys."

Thank you so very much for the approval of the attached jerseys!

Thanks again for the outstanding support."

Brodie Cowling
Coffs Harbour City



EMERGENCY SERVICES PREPARE FOR 'BALL AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE' EVENT

Proceeds from the event will go to the Warrina Domestic and Family Violence Specialist Services.

Warrina Domestic and Family Violence Specialist Services will be the beneficiaries of an exciting sports initiative being brought to the Coffs Coast by a group of community organisations

The inaugural 'Ball Against Domestic Violence' Emergency Services 3x3 Tournament will be held at Sportz Central in Bray Street later this year, with all proceeds going to Warrina.

The tournament will be a 3x3 Street Hustle basketball competition and is being organised by local basketball legend Robert Linton who is the coach and head of North Coast Basketball.

Robert described the competition as being, "Very fast with teams of four and three players from each team playing in the half court, with each game lasting ten minutes and each team attempting to be the first to get to 21 points or more."

There will be two Open Mixed Divisions, D1 for all emergency services and first responders, with each team having at least three staff from the entering agency and all teams must have a minimum one female player.



D2 will be the Open division for teams from the public and must also have a minimum one female in the team.

All players will need to have a valid Hustle Pass which costs \$10 and is valid for 12 months.

Deputy Mayor Cr George Cecato was present at the announcement of the tournament and said, "I'm very proud to represent Council and

affirm our commitment to addressing domestic and family violence issues in our community."

The role of emergency services includes supporting people who are subject to domestic and family violence (DFV).

Organisers of the event stressed that DFV is a community issue, and that everyone needs to get involved in overcoming it.

Grafton Unit

Grafton City SES Unit would like to thank the NSW SESVA for their continued sponsorship of the BART Solutions Emergency App. This valuable software enables the response teams to have a faster turnout, communicates to the After Hours Duty Officer who is available to respond, and helps the team to work safer within their community.

Recently this unit was officially handed over the new Grafton 45 Rescue Truck by Hon. David Elliott, Minister for Police and Emergency Services. The Road Crash Rescue Teams and Storm Teams are on the BART profile and can easily indicate availability to the AHDO.

The BART – Broadcast, Alert, Respond, Turnout – App is a very useful, cloud-based software suite.



Bradley Tweedie proudly stands beside the new rescue vehicle.



Denise Anderson, current member of the Road Crash Rescue team with the Hon. David Elliott.

NSW SES Gilgandra Unit
July 10 · 🌐

The Gilgandra SES Unit recently received grant funding from the NSW SES Volunteer Association for the supply and installation of a commercial grade ice making machine at our HQ.

This unit is capable of making 20kgs of filtered, food grade ice, each 24 hours.

This is a great resource is keeping our volunteers safe and comfortable in our hot summertime environment.

Thank you to the NSW SES Volunteer Association.






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Nicholas Hanrahan

Mr Nicholas Hanrahan joined the New South Wales State Emergency Services Wyong Unit on the 13.08.2012 fresh out of high school and saw an article online when searching volunteering opportunities within New South Wales and thought it was worthwhile opportunity applying with the service.

Once Mr Hanrahan was qualified in Storm and Water Damage Operations he became part of the unit's storm field teams.

Throughout his career, Mr Hanrahan has helped assist with out of area requests for assistance with storm events at the Central Coast, Sydney, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Cessnock.

In April 2015, Mr Hanrahan assisted with the Super Storm event that hit New South Wales. During this storm it took less than 24 hours for the 135 kilometre winds and record torrential rainfall to leave a trail of destruction worth more than \$800 million.

As recognition for his assistance during this event Mr Hanrahan was awarded a Certificate of appreciation from the Local Member and a NSW SES Commissioner Certificate of Appreciation for the efforts during the storm event.

In September 2015, Mr Hanrahan assisted in the field to the 100's of requests from the Bateau Bay/ Wyong area as it was hit by a storm event leaving a thick blanket of hail. In some areas within the Central Coast was about 4 inches thick which formed problems with the heavy rain as it blocks the gutters and stormwater drains causing water back up very quickly.

During 2016, Mr Hanrahan took on additional personal responsibility within the Wyong unit by ensuring that all unit vehicles were operationally ready (4 vehicles, 3 trailers) as well as assisting in all areas including training, operations and administration becoming an internal leader with his fellow members.

As a result, Mr Hanrahan was awarded at the Wyong Unit as their Volunteer of the year acknowledging this dedication and commitment.



In addition, the local Rotary Club branch on the Central Coast recognised Mr Hanrahan that same year with a Rotary NSW Serving the Community Award for his dedication and service to serving the community.

In February 2017 Mr Hanrahan became Deputy Rescue Officer with the Wyong Unit while also performing the responsibilities of one of their Duty Officers.

During November 2017, Toukley experienced a mini tornado which cut through the area which resulted in snapping off trees, ripping off roofs and tossing sheet metal into power lines. Mr Hanrahan assisted as part of the field crews out attending to uprooted trees, damaged buildings and leaking roofs as a result of the brief but fierce storm.

In August 2018 Mr Hanrahan was promoted to the role of Deputy Unit Commander of the Wyong Unit.

In December of 2018 The suburbs of Ettalong, Saratoga, Wamberal, Erina, Gosford and beyond including Sydney experienced a Super Cell storm that resulted with golf ball sized hail. Mr Hanrahan assisted as part one of the many field teams responding to the 200 plus calls for help were placed on the southern end of the Central Coast.

In February 2019 year Mr Hanrahan accepted the opportunity of becoming the inaugural Unit Commander of the newly formed Swansea Unit located in the Lower Hunter Southern Cluster.

To list some of the challenges Mr Hanrahan faced as the initial Unit Commander involved setting up the facilities to comply with New South Wales State Emergency Service standard while liaising with Zone, State and Local Council. One of the first obstacles Mr Hanrahan



had to face was having to learn a whole new operational area and understanding the unique characteristics including flooding impacts, the community involvement and risks. Mr Hanrahan then pushed massive social media and traditional media campaign for recruitment whilst also targeting a younger membership base as part of the inaugural membership. Another key aspect to the success has been the building of the unit's capability and professionalism forging new emerging leaders of teams and the provision of training opportunities. This could only be done by defining new relationships within the local unit cluster and surrounding units. The extended relations have also been made through the Local Emergency Management Committee and by Mr Hanrahan also organising activities with other

emergency agencies including Fire and Rescue New South Wales, Marine Rescue and Westpac Helicopter Service.

During August of that year, the official opening ceremony of the Swansea Unit Mr Hanrahan was issued a Commissioners Certificate of Appreciation for the establishment of the Unit.

In February 2019 Mr Hanrahan was deployed out of area to assist in Lismore from ex tropical cyclone Oma. Mr Hanrahan provided community liaison work by door knocking homes within the low-lying areas along the coastal strip due to the possibilities of inundation from sea surges from ocean wave height resulting from very strong winds from the ex-tropical cyclone. Mr Hanrahan also provided intelligence gathering of coastal erosion and impacted properties.

During the 2019/20 fire campaign, Mr Hanrahan as one of the New South Wales State Emergency Service Liaison Officers based at the Charmhaven Fire Control Centre assisting with the fire fronts at Gaspers Mountain and Wyee. During the several days assisting, Mr Hanrahan helped coordinate New South Wales State Emergency Service support for the affected areas. Mr Hanrahan also assisted in various other roles, including logistics, transport driver and the roadblocks.

For his assistance during that period, Mr Hanrahan was awarded the New South Wales Premier Citation for the 2019/20 bushfires.

In November 2020, Mr Hanrahan assisted with the Newcastle wind storm by coordinating teams from the Swansea Unit to be sent to the

» continued on page 40



» continued from page 39

Newcastle area to assist with the influx of request for assistance from the community. Mr Hanrahan was also on hand within one of the storm teams sent providing storm, chainsaw and resonance skillsets.

During July 2020 the Central Coast area was the subject of a flooding event that caused isolation and flooding of properties around Tuggerah Lake, Wyong River, and Yarramalong. Mr Hanrahan worked in both field and operations which consisted of storm repairs, flood rescue, tasking operator and Operations Officer role.

In March 2021, New South Wales was hit with record deluge of rain resulting in a 1 in 50-year event causing widespread flooding, isolation to communities on the north coast and massive storm related damage.

Mr Hanrahan helped coordinate members from the Swansea Unit and also proceeded to work in the field attending to the 98 requests for assistance in the Swansea area. Mr Hanrahan then provided additional support to the surrounding units to help complete the great numbers of requests in the Lake Macquarie City and Wyong unit areas. Once there was no further requirements for his assistance in the field, Mr Hanrahan was redeployed back to the Zone Incident Command Centre located at Metford where he assisted and supported the role of the Operations Officer and also at the Operations team based at the Wyong Unit.

As his time as Unit Commander, Mr Hanrahan ongoing focus has been on the retention of all the new unit members by providing a fun, safe and inclusive environment for members

which has formed a tightknit family environment. This also includes updating vital skill gaps of members for the New South Wales State Emergency Service increasing capability to best serve the local community and out of area requirements. This included the upgrade of the initial fleet issued to the Swansea Unit to new state of the art vehicles. Mr Hanrahan growth as a leader by stepping into unknown challenges has produced a resolve by the members of his unit membership has encouraged and ensured a high commitment to the standard of training, fostering a culture of growth and empowerment. Mr Hanrahan has also overseen the revitalisation of flood sector plans for the Swansea area and increased member opportunities liaising with internal stakeholders with other local units and the New South Wales State Emergency Service.

Congratulations Susan Chapple

Awarded Life Membership of the NSW SES

Susan Chapple has been an active member of the NSW SES for over 23 years – having joined the SES in 1997. Almost all of that service has been in a leadership role. Susan has dedicated her time to the service of communities predominantly in the Clarence Valley being a member of the Grafton City Unit, Clarence Nambucca Region and most recently as the Local Commander for the Clarence Valley Cluster in the Northern Zone. During her time with the NSW SES Susan has occupied leadership positions in training, Unit management and Operations management. She has obtained a vast array of skills, qualifications and experience across the full ambit of NSW SES roles including general land rescue, flood rescue and incident management (see attached member report). Susans skills and experience have not only seen her lead major operations in the Clarence Valley but also participate in multiple out of area deployments across New South Wales as a confident and proficient Incident Controller, Liaison Officer and mentor.

Susans professional manner coupled with her extensive experience has seen her earn the respect of the emergency services community and her peers across the Zone. She is held in the highest regard and often sought out for sage advice, direction and leadership in times of crisis. She is an integral member of the Clarence Valley LEMC and has built strong relationships with functional support areas and community leaders to the great credit and benefit of the NSW SES and ultimately to the communities she serves.

The Clarence Valley and in particular Grafton City is one of the highest flood risks in NSW. Grafton City is an extreme risk location with over 3000 people isolated and at risk



in a low flood island environment that will require mass evacuation – often at short notice. During her service as a SES leader for over 20 years Susan has built up an expert knowledge of the flood hazard and risk across the entire Clarence Valley including the city of Grafton. She has collaboratively developed systems to manage this risk to deliver timely and informed responses. She has built networks of individuals to build preparedness, planning and capability and led numerous community engagement and preparedness exercises – she is sought out for her expert opinion and has worked tirelessly to share this knowledge, building resilience and improving operational readiness and response across the Cluster.

Susan has managed and controlled major incidents in the Clarence Valley as Incident Controller, Operations Commander, Division Commander and Team Leader on numerous occasions for over 20 years. She has been complimented for her calm and controlled manner in successfully managing operations in what is a very complex and dynamic operating environment. In addition Susan has been a trainer across many key



units of competence on the training schedule. She is a GLR operator and mentor and maintains an active interest in supporting GLR operations. In her role as Local Commander she is responsible for nine Units providing support, guidance and counsel for Unit Commanders, their management teams and Unit members. She worked tirelessly during the 2019-2020 Fires and is a strong advocate and role model for women in leadership. She enjoys the full support of her peers and colleagues and is often sought out for advice and counsel.

Whilst Susan has had a focus in her SES career on her natural ability to lead and command – she is also a very competent field operator and has attained and maintained many qualifications including storm water damage, chainsaw, boat operator, land search, GLR – just to name a few. She has worked in numerous operations in the field leading from the front and working with her teams in the field responding to calls for assistance. Susan has also contributed more broadly to NSW SES working as a judge in Local and State Rescue competitions and as a member of the NSW SES Awards Committee.



Ballarat Unit member taking a photo of a stream gauge board during Flood Observer training.

Ballarat Unit are Snap Send Solve ready for flooding!

Responding to flooding in a timely manner is extremely critical to VICSES during flood events, especially when large flood events occur. Snap Send Solve is an app that is used to share flood photos via an administration portal, Emergency Management Common Operating Picture (EM-COP). The Snap Send Solve tool is used to substantially improving the efficiency and effectiveness of VICSES acquiring flood intelligence, and significantly improves VICSES's capability of managing flood emergencies.

The Ballarat Unit are aware of Ballarat's significant flood risk, over 50% of Ballarat's urban area is prone to flooding. When impacted by a significant flood event, more than 684 buildings will be flooded above floor

level and more than 8,751 properties will be impacted.

Given there is a lack of stream gauge monitoring in Ballarat, VICSES is reliant on evidence, such as flood photos before a community flood warning can be published. This makes the use of Snap Send Solve critical to warning the Ballarat community of flood risk.

Craig West gained a lot of experience using Snap Send Solve during the October 2020 Port Fairy flood event. He assisted to provide real time on ground flood intelligence to the Warrnambool Incident Control Centre, providing a clear picture of flood impacts quickly and efficiently. He saw how useful Snap Send Solve was and wanted to share his knowledge with his unit.

Given the recent rainfall and the saturation levels of the catchment, the Ballarat Unit felt it was important to be proactive and undertake a Snap Send Solve training exercise with their unit. Craig West and Cameron Maher led a training exercise with the Ballarat Unit a few weeks ago to enable their 26 members who have completed Snap Send Solve training to put their knowledge into practice. Periodic Snap Send Solve training exercises throughout the year will enable our Ballarat members to be confident in using Snap Send Solve when flood events occur.

For further information regarding Snap Send Solve, refer to the Hub>My State> EM Planning> Flood> Floodplain Management

Mt Arapiles Rock Climber invaluable to the Mid West Technical Rescue Team!

Kieran Loughran's extensive rock climbing skills and experience is evident when he responds to rescues at Mt Arapiles or the Grampians. VICSES are very lucky to have such a highly skilled steep angle operator and technical rescue instructor to assist with responding to rescues that regularly occur at Mt Arapiles and the Grampians. Outside of VICSES Kieran's steep angle rescue skills are renowned across Victoria within the Victoria Police Rescue Coordination Centre and the CFA. While being a member of the Horsham Unit since 2008, Kieran has undertaken more than 50 rescues.

Kieran said he's "always had a passion for rock climbing, which started when I was 17". He has been climbing for almost 50 years. Kieran has extensive rock climbing experience across the world, including in Europe, America and New Zealand. One of the reasons why his family decided to move to Natimuk was to be closer to Mt Arapiles and the Grampians due to his passion for rock climbing.

Kieran was inspired get involved with VICSES when he saw a series of bad accidents in the 80's and 90's which resulted in several fatalities. While he also responds to road crash accidents, more than 75% of rescue jobs he's involved with are high angle rescues either in the Grampians or Mt Arapiles. Every year Kieran may respond to several high angle rescues within the Mid West Region as well as assisting Ambulance Victoria with other climbing accidents. Last February Kieran was involved with a rescue at Mt Arapiles, a person fell and was suspended 60 m off the ground with serious injuries. This rescue also involved assisting three other climbers that needed help to get off the mountain. Kieran said that "... accidents we respond to encompass the full range of climber skill level from novice to expert climbers". Mt Arapiles is world renowned for having climbs that cater to a very broad range of skill levels. When climbers push themselves beyond their capability they sometimes get into trouble.

Kieran said "we are lucky to have 12 high angle accredited responders within



Kieran Loughran assisting with repairing roof damage to buildings in Horsham as a result of the December 2020 Horsham Tornado.



VICSES and CFA members undertaking Steep angle training at Mt Arapiles.



VICSES and CFA member undertaking Steep angle training at Mt Arapiles.

SES and CFA in the Natimuk and Horsham area. However at any given time if we have less than 6 members available for a rescue we heavily rely on surrounding units that have high angle accredited responders from Stawell, Ararat, Hamilton, Ballarat and Warrnambool". We regularly undertake multi agency high angle training with our local high angle operators to maintain our skills and continue to build relationships with CFA. Refer to the photos below of VICSES and CFA members undertaking multi-agency exercises at Mt Arapiles with High and Steep Angle operators from Horsham and Stawell VICSES Units and Natimuk and Mitre CFA Brigades.

Kieran is constantly trying to recruit new members with high angle accreditation. More members would go a long way towards taking the pressure their small group of high angle operators and would enable them to rely less on surrounding Units that are a long distance from Mt Arapiles. Waiting for surrounding Units to respond does result in very long response times for casualties with serious time critical injuries.

Kieran is also hopeful that one day a joint VICSES and CFA building can be built at Natimuk. Currently VICSES and CFA members work out of separate buildings that are old, run down and don't have enough space for their vehicles.

Thankyou from Glendenning

We would like to say thank you to all the NSW SES Volunteers for all your work and dedication towards ensuring our community is safe and providing your support to all those who require help. We would like to highlight that we extremely appreciated you all during the flood period. Here is a colouring in sheet that has been coloured in by the children here at COSHC St Francis of Assisi, Glendenning.

We hope you are all staying safe and well.

Kind regards,

Kay Drury/Anna Belobrajdic

COSHC St Francis of Assisi
Glendenning NSW



Mental Health First Aid Training

BECOME A MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDER

To support friends, family members, colleagues & others

About 1 in 5 Australian adults experience a common mental illness each year. Mental Health First Aid training will teach you practical skills to support someone with a mental health problem. Make a real difference to people in your community.

MHFA TRAINING BENEFITS

- Knowledge**
Improves knowledge of mental illnesses, treatments and first aid actions
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Increases confidence in providing first aid
- De-stigmatising**
Decreases stigmatising attitudes
- Support**
Increases the support provided to others

LEARN PRACTICAL FIRST AID SKILLS

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- Seek appropriate professional help, &
- Respond in a crisis situation

For more information, visit www.sesvolunteers.com P: 1300 073 782

Mental Illness.
When "I" is replaced by "We".
Elizabeth Kooma-Walton...

Each year 1 in 5 Australian adults will experience a Mental Illness. Many people are not knowledgeable or confident to offer assistance. Physical first aid is accepted & widespread in our community, however most do not cover mental health problems. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) teaches people the skills to help someone who they are concerned about.

Having Mental Health First Aid skills means that you can assist a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis and help make a real difference in your community. What's more, you will be able to actively reduce stigma in your community by responding appropriately to myths and misunderstandings about mental illness.



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