Assistant Commissioner’s Message

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Rural Fire Service (RFS) within Queensland and is celebrated with a special edition calendar that depicts past and present photos of a number of our brigades.

I had the privilege of launching this calendar with the Minister at the Glass House Mountains Rural Fire Brigade (RFB) in the North Coast Region in December. Glass House Mountains RFB was our first registered brigade and although they were formed in 1948, registration for this brigade occurred in 1949.

The past 60 years have seen the Rural Fire Services in Queensland evolve from neighbours jumping their fence to help neighbours, to brigades that respond outside of their area into other areas, regions or even interstate. Our brigades’ involvement has expanded beyond fighting bushfires to partnering with State Emergency Service during the recovery phases following storms, floods and cyclones. Our brigades have also worked under the direction of other Government agencies assisting with horse flu management and cane smut.

Over these 60 years, the Queensland Rural Fire Service has gone from a local gathering of neighbours to approximately 1500 Rural Fire Brigades and 35,000 members across the state. We have seen significant advancements in Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), appliances, equipment, training and changes in the way we support our firefighting operations.

To a great degree, our focus has been primarily on putting the ‘wet stuff on the red stuff’ whether it is through firefighting operations or our Fire Wardens working with our Rural Fire Brigades and Queensland landholders on fuel reduction campaigns.

Our volunteers and staff have been busy presenting community education programs such as Bushfire Prepared Communities and the Prepare Stay & Defend or Go Early campaign, both developed as a preventative approach and to help our communities stay safe in the event of bushfire. The most successful campaigns are those where community education occurs on the ground and has been delivered to the community by someone from the community.

With this in mind, and upon feedback from volunteers, Rural Operations has introduced a new volunteer category of ‘Community Educator’. Although there is still work to be done in its development (resourcing, training, promotion, etc), the new category will mean a new opportunity for our current volunteers and an enticing new position for others to join their local RFB. It is an opportunity to be involved without necessarily undertaking firefighting operations due to health or a limited desire to be on the fireground. More information on this and another new category of ‘Operational Support’ is provided in this edition.

The RFS is moving into a new era. We are looking at and making changes that will keep us up to date with brigade and community needs and expectations. It’s an exciting time to be a Rural Fire Service volunteer!

In closing, may I take this opportunity to congratulate the many volunteers and staff recognised through the Australia Day honours and awards and thank you for your contribution to both the organisation and your brigade.

Well done to you all and congratulations on 60 fine years of service.

Steve Rothwell AFSM
Assistant Commissioner Rural Operations
Queensland Fire and Rescue Service

Officer of Year Brian Dale

On 11 December 2008, Area Training Support Officer (ATSO), Brian Dale was presented with the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) Rural Operations Staff Officer of the year award by Assistant Commissioner Rural Operations, Steve Rothwell. Brian has been ATSO at Maryborough for the past 14 years and has been recognised for his commitment to training and supporting volunteers to a very high standard, along with his passion for Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) and promoting ZEROharm. Congratulations Brian for the great work you have contributed to the volunteers of the RFS over a long and very distinguished career.
60th Anniversary of the Rural Fire Service in Queensland

This year we celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Rural Fire Service in Queensland. This anniversary is about recognising the important role our 35,000 volunteers play in our communities.

It is about saying thank you for your invaluable contribution as volunteers, and thank you to the families of the volunteers who lend their community their fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, parents and children.

To recognise the importance of the families of our volunteers, and our RFS volunteer family itself, this year RFS volunteer calendar focuses on family groups in the RFS. It draws on the inspiration of our history, looking back over the past 60 years.

In December 2008, we officially launched this special edition of the RFS volunteer calendar at the Glass House Mountains RFB who, being our first brigade, was celebrating its 60th anniversary.

Charlie Pike, First Officer of the Glass House Mountains RFB proudly accepted a certificate commemorating 60 years of service by the brigade to the Glass House Mountains community. Assistant Commissioner Steve Rothwell and North Coast region staff proudly looked on as Minister Neil Roberts and Carolyn Male MP for Glass House Mountains presented the award.

To add further excitement to the day, a brand new Nissan Patrol 4x4 Light Attack vehicle was handed over to the Glass House Mountains brigade.

Members of the Glass House Mountains brigade at the launch event

Charlie Pike with members of Glass House RFB proudly showing off their certificate
What’s New

Continued from page 3

Minister for Emergency Services Neil Roberts, First Officer of Glass House Mountains RFB Charlie Pike, Member for Glass House Carolyn Male MP, Assistant Commissioner Rural Operations Steve Rothwell

The new Nissan Patrol Light Attack

Charlie Pike gives the new vehicle the once over
What’s New

Members of Glass House Mountains RFB with Rural Operations staff and Assistant Commissioner Steve Rothwell at the launch event

Continued on page 6
What’s New

Bigger, Better, More!

Two exciting new categories for our volunteers have been introduced and roles re-categorised in a review of the RFS volunteer roles.

There has always been a variety of roles in the RFS. Each of these roles requires different expertise and offers opportunities to develop new and existing skills. This list has just been expanded to offer even more opportunities for existing volunteers to try a new role, and to offer new volunteer opportunities to bring in a fresh skill set to share with your brigade.

There are now 5 categories you can volunteer within:
1. Operational Response
2. Operational Support
3. Organisational Support
4. Fire Warden
5. Community Educator

Within each of these categories there are a variety of roles to choose from. The table below lists the roles available and the category to which it belongs. The new categories are open to existing volunteers and new volunteers alike.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteer Roles</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Officer</td>
<td>Operational Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Officer</td>
<td>Operational Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Officer</td>
<td>Operational Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Officer</td>
<td>Operational Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Officer</td>
<td>Operational Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th Officer</td>
<td>Operational Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th Officer</td>
<td>Operational Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th Officer</td>
<td>Operational Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crew Leader</td>
<td>Operational Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Firefighter</td>
<td>Operational Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firefighter</td>
<td>Operational Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Officer</td>
<td>Operational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Group Officer</td>
<td>Operational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brigade Training Officer(BTO)</td>
<td>Operational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Trainer</td>
<td>Operational Support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To all of our volunteers, thank you. You provide a reassurance to your communities that in the event of fire there is a body of people trained and ready to act quickly and professionally to save lives and property. You have been involved in many challenging situations and have always exemplified the spirit of service and dedication the RFS is renowned for.

It is also important that in our celebration, we take the time to acknowledge the sacrifices in terms of lost income of volunteers who are self employed, and of employers who allow their staff time off to volunteer.

Congratulations to the following brigades on 60 years of dedication to the service:
- Glass House Mountains
- Lagoon Pocket
- Byfields
- Kandanga
- Thangool
- Lanshaw
- Gordonbrook.

The calendar is launched

Continued from page 5
What’s New

What are the new opportunities?

1. Operational Support
2. Community Educator

1. Operational Support

A number of roles have been redefined and are now listed under the new category of operational support. This does not change the role however, the category you are listed under may influence the training on offer, or qualifications required for your role.

2. Community Educator

This is a brand new formalised role. The Community Educators will form a network of volunteers to deliver community education messages to their local community. The aim is to educate and inform a wide audience on bushfire awareness, bushfire preparation and safety information to your local community.

Why the change?

The new roles and expanded categories have been developed after being raised by a number of volunteers. The Rural Fire Brigades Association of Queensland (RFBAQ) were also offered an invitation to comment. This approach represents a contemporary RFS and better reflects the role that you perform within your brigade. It also offers the opportunity to try new roles within your brigade and expands the options for new members to join your brigade.

Does this reshuffle affect my membership status?

No. Your membership status remains the same and is determined by such factors as age, brigade type and level of training. Role categories are an administrative grouping to assist Rural Operations in managing the training and support provided to RFS volunteers.

Can I be listed in more than one category?

Yes. As you can have a number of roles within your brigade, you might be included in two or more role categories.

Do I need to do anything if my role has moved from one category to another?

No. Your role category will be automatically updated.

### Volunteer Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Training Officer (GTO)</td>
<td>Operational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Area Training Officer Category A (VATO-A)</td>
<td>Operational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Area Training Officer Category B (VATO-B)</td>
<td>Operational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Area Training Officer Category C (VATO-C)</td>
<td>Operational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications Officer-Brigade</td>
<td>Operational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications Officer-Group</td>
<td>Operational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Officer-Brigade</td>
<td>Operational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Officer-Group</td>
<td>Operational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazard Reduction Officer</td>
<td>Operational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incident Team Member</td>
<td>Operational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brigade Member</td>
<td>Organisational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairman</td>
<td>Organisational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Organisational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Organisational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brigade Administration Officer</td>
<td>Organisational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Administration Officer</td>
<td>Organisational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditor</td>
<td>Organisational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catering Officer</td>
<td>Organisational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising Officer</td>
<td>Organisational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Officer</td>
<td>Organisational Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Warden</td>
<td>Firewarden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Fire Warden</td>
<td>Firewarden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporary Fire Warden</td>
<td>Firewarden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Fire Warden</td>
<td>Firewarden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Education Officer</td>
<td>Community Educator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reliance Petroleum Sponsorship Launch

The Reliance sponsorship, in partnership with BP has continued with the following exciting handovers occurring between November 2008 and February 2009:

- Isabella
- Barratts Lagoon
- Toobanna
- Canoona
- Hurdle Gully Bailey
- Edie
- Munburra
- Tingarra*

There are nine more slip on units to be handed over before the end of the financial year. Rural Operations will continue to sponsor the supply of speed loaders to accompany these slip on units.

The brigades receiving these slip on units have reportedly been putting them to good use and we look forward to reporting on the next round of handovers in the July edition of the Bulletin magazine.

Reliance Petroleum operates throughout rural and regional Australia and is Australia’s largest BP fuel and lubricant distributor, as well as a distributor of the full range of quality Castrol products.

*at the time of printing, this handover had not occurred.
What’s New

The handover at Canoona RFB, 27 November 2008

The handover at Toobanna RFB, 18 November 2008

The handover for Isabella and Barratts Lagoon RFB, 11 November 2008. Photo courtesy of Cooktown Local News
Appliance Safety Certificates

QFRS Rural Operations provides rural fire brigades with modern and reliable appliances which are engineered and designed to provide service delivery at various locations throughout the state over a wide range of terrain, road and climate conditions. These appliances are designed to meet Australian Design Rules and Queensland Transport and Workplace Health and Safety Regulations. At the time of delivery to brigades, these appliances have engineering approval. It is the responsibility of the brigade to ensure that the appliance is not modified in any way unless prior approval has been given by the Manager, Operational Support. Requests to modify an appliance should be forwarded to your Area Office for endorsement.

It is also the brigades responsibility to ensure their appliances are serviced by a qualified mechanic. Due to the nature of RFB operations throughout the state, some appliances only travel very short distances each year. Due to infrequent use and harsh operating conditions, appliance maintenance must be conducted at regular intervals.

Each brigade should establish a maintenance program based on usage and time rather than mileage. As part of this maintenance program, and to ensure that the appliance continues to meet Queensland Transport Regulations, annual Safety Inspections must be conducted by an authorised mechanic. The authorised mechanic will then issue a Certificate of Inspection or Safety Certificate. It is important that a copy of the certificate is sent to your local Area Office.

For more information see Business rule D8.7 from the RFB Manual.

Personal fire protection blankets

Previously, Rural Operations undertook to retrofit Nissan Patrols (Light appliances) with personal protection blankets. These blankets have been distributed by Area Offices to relevant brigades.

In line with our ongoing commitment to achieving a safe workplace, Rural Operations is now undertaking to retrofit each medium appliance built by Rural Operations prior to 2001 with three blankets. These appliances were not fitted with woollen personal protection blankets as standard equipment.

A review was completed by each Area Office to locate relevant vehicles. Blankets have been ordered for distribution in the coming weeks. Each Medium appliance will now carry three personal protection blankets. Contact your Area Office for more information.
Charter Towers Office has moved!

The Charters Towers Area Office has relocated to the “old school house” on the corner of Church and Aland Streets. The postal address, phone and fax numbers remain the same.

Uniform

Some time ago the Commissioner, QFRS granted permission for the QFRS uniform baseball caps to be issued to RFB members.

Both the QFRS baseball cap and green RFS t-shirt are part of the official uniform. This means that they may only be worn as part of the complete uniform at official functions or whilst on duty.

The baseball cap and RFS t-shirt cannot at any time be worn as part of civilian wear.

Contact your Area Office for more information about the wearing of the uniform.

Volunteer Kit Bags

A quantity of personal kit bags has been ordered and the first wave will shortly be distributed by area staff.

Constructed from fabric with PVC backing and with heavy weight zips, the new bags are designed to carry a change of gear. They are printed with the RFS logo on each end and have sufficient areas to separate wet and dry PPE.

Initially, these bags are being issued to volunteers who have been identified as:

- Registered for inter/intra state deployment
- Approved Brigade Training Officers
- First Officers.

It is hoped that a second wave of kit bags isn’t too far off and will be more widely distributed. Watch this space for updates on kit bags.
Project Vesta Validation Project

In August 2008, the Rural Operations research team held two workshops in conjunction with Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) researchers for a small group of fire managers and practitioners on how to use the new Vesta Fuel Assessment and Fire Behaviour Prediction methodology.

This was the second series of workshops around the country which, after completion in November, were held in all states and territories training more than 500 career, agency and volunteer personnel in the use of the Vesta Fire Behaviour Prediction System.

The Vesta research program has presented fire services and land management agencies with a lot of new knowledge on assessing fuel loads, fire behaviour and fire spread in dry eucalypt forests. These workshops have provided an important first step in assessing the suitability of this model for Queensland conditions.

We have now started the data collection phase of the Vesta Validation project. Over the next two fire seasons, a number of staff and volunteers will be assisting us by recording fire behaviour data at prescribed burns and wildfires.

Ideally, every time a participating staff member or volunteer takes part in a prescribed burn or responds to a wildfire we will get at least one completed data sheet to analyse. To make life easier for those who record the data and to ensure that we collect the same type of information, we have distributed two different types of data sheets. An easy to use form for fire crews to record basic information on fire behaviour and a second, more comprehensive form for fire planners and incident controllers.

The completed data sheets from around the state are sent back to the Rural Operations Research and Training unit where the data is entered into a national database. This will be analysed by both the Research and Training unit, and the Bushfire CRC, to ensure the suitability of the Vesta model is assessed sufficiently for Queensland conditions.

If you are interested in finding out more or to have a look at the new Vesta Fuel Assessment and Fire Behaviour Prediction methodology, talk to your local Area Training Support Officer.
Rural Research and Training

Rural Operations Helps Spread The Wildfire Message

QFRS Rural Operations has proudly been involved in the delivery of wildfire training for the QFRS Recruit Courses since 2002. Recruits spend 16 weeks training and practicing a wide range of basic skills prior to graduation as firefighters. As specialists in wildfire research and training, the staff of Rural Operations have made the most of this opportunity and in early 2007, a revised wildfire sub-program of three days duration was introduced to the recruits.

The three-day format includes theory and written assessment, simulated wildfires and controlled burning operations as well as a ‘live-fire’ component. Through this, recruits attain competency in PUAFIR204 – Respond to Wildfire, and are also introduced to concepts and terminology relevant to PUAFIR303 – Suppress Wildfire. They later complete this unit during professional development at their postings.

In addition, recruits work through Structural Protection in the iZone, supported with experiences from practised rural and urban officers. This is an opportunity for them to ask our staff questions relevant to Rural Operations, as many of the locations at which they will serve are neighboured by rural brigades.

A good relationship between QFRS and local authority Redlands City Council has enabled opportunities for recruits to put theory into practice. By assisting council’s environmental prescribed-burn programs, the Rural Operations training team have made the most of a high quality assessment opportunity. This adds validity to this particular program.

Rural Operations are delighted to be able to contribute to the development of QFRS recruits. Additionally, the opportunity to work with other training staff at the School of Fire and Rescue Service Training has provided QFRS operational training staff with additional opportunities to maintain their competence demonstrating a high standard of professionalism.
Flexible Learning for Volunteers

As part of the exciting new direction in learning and development, volunteers will soon have more options to choose from when undertaking training. These options will include a range of different learning objects for example podcasts, DVD’s and even online courses done through the computer, which all supplement face-to-face training. Having a range of options will allow volunteers to choose what best suits their lifestyle and learning styles and will be particularly beneficial for those volunteers that have found it difficult to dedicate large blocks of time to face-to-face training.

There will also be a significant increase in learning and development information available to volunteers through initiatives such as the new Volunteer Portal. The Training Toolbox within the Volunteer Portal for example will include a series of video clips or learning bytes as they are called on a range of topics such as equipment, fire behaviour and learning related topics for volunteers to access at their leisure. I would encourage you to explore the new range of training options as they become available and talk to your Brigade Training and Support Officer who can give you more information.

Climate Change

Climate Change and Bushfire Management

Source: Bushfire CRC Fire Note Issue 25

The report stated “The south-east region of Australia is particularly vulnerable to bushfire... and is one of the three most fire-prone areas of the world. It is therefore critical that we prepare for the potential of increased fire risk associated with the hotter and drier years we may experience in the future”.

The situation regarding future rainfall levels is less clear at present. Future fire regime scenarios that incorporate increased rainfall result in larger fires, mostly as a consequence of higher fuel load and fuel continuity, which increases fire spread (Cary 2002). Lightning strikes are also predicted to increase in frequency (Goldhamer and Price 1998) for tropical Australia, while the trend for southern Australia remains unclear.

While simulated climate futures vary considerably in their predictions of rainfall, even less can currently be predicted about how current levels of wind speeds, relative humidity and lightning activity may change. Nonetheless, it would seem prudent for relevant agencies to begin planning for a higher frequency of unplanned fires.
Volunteer Learning and Development Framework Update

Developmental progress is continuing in all areas of the Volunteer Learning and Development Framework (VLDF) and we are now close to the release of some of the new course structures. Once the content is complete, the program will move into the next stage where it will be developed into different flexible learning formats.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Approximate Release Date</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural Fire Service Awareness Program</td>
<td>March 2009</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crew Leader Program</td>
<td>May 2009</td>
<td>This will include the revised Incident Controller Level 1 Wildfire Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Officer Program</td>
<td>May 2009</td>
<td>Part of the Brigade Management Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firefighter Minimum Skills and Firefighter Advanced Skills</td>
<td>To be advised</td>
<td>These form the Firefighter Development Program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once completed, the VLDF will offer varied flexible methods of delivery to assist you, our volunteers, to achieve the required level of training to assist your brigades in your community.

Bushfire CRC Research

The Bushfire CRC is playing a key role in improving understanding of climate change and climate variability and is currently focussing on the following aspects:

- Weather and climate associated with past major fire events.
- Improved seasonal climate outlooks.
- Composition and health impacts of smoke.
- Links between climate, fuels and the carbon and water cycles, especially in alpine country.
- The impact of climate change for fire management and prescribed burning with more areas being burnt, more regularly.
- The nature and severity of bushfire weather in different regions of Australia under climate change projections.
- Quantifying the economic impact of fire in changing environments.

Several key research projects are looking at the broader long-term consequences of more bushfires under climate change. These include:

- The health and safety of communities and of firefighters in a world of more fire, more smoke and more risk to life and property.
- Educating communities to learn to better live with bushfire.
- Resourcing the increased firefighting effort by finding ways to attract and retain volunteer firefighters.

It is important that we keep in mind that a single major fire event, such as the Victorian fires in February 2009, can have far greater consequences than small changes in temperature or rainfall over a period of decades. Similarly, year-to-year and seasonal variations can be far greater than the small gradual changes of longterm climate change.
Brigades are reminded of the importance of having annual safety inspections conducted by a qualified mechanic on appliances and other vehicles. To assist with ensuring that vehicles are safe at all times, Rural Operations is developing a checklist, similar to the one used as part of the station review process. Rural Operations staff will be using this checklist over the next 12 months to provide valuable information on the state of vehicles in use by the service. This checklist is not designed to take the place of the annual safety inspection certificate but will serve as a tool to identify any broader issues – for example, it may help to identify any design issues in vehicles.

The aim of this checklist is to eventually be incorporated into the RFB manual as a self-check tool for brigades. An initial version is being trialled in a couple of regions at present.

A recent incident again highlighted the need for constant risk assessment and situational awareness. During management of a wildfire incident last year, an appliance was involved in indirect attack to suppress flare ups and prevent the fire from crossing the fire break. The appliance was working close to the fireline as you can see from photo one on page 17.

A brigade member was located outside the vehicle as branch operator and suffered a minor form of heat related illness from over exposure to radiant heat. The appliance also sustained significant damage to the plastic panels, spotlight, window and windscreen rubbers (photos two and three).

Thankfully, the brigade member was not seriously affected and after a period of rest and rehydration, was able to resume their duties. The appliance however was significantly affected and required repairs to bring it back to operational readiness.
The investigation revealed three key contributing factors:

- The type of fuel at the site
- A lack of recent fire activity
- A relatively inexperienced crew.

To minimise the risk of such an incident occurring again, the following measures were recommended:

- An update to the organisation’s training material to cover positioning of vehicles during incident management
- A de-brief with brigade to alert them to the potential injury risk.

This incident could be considered a near miss and again highlights the importance of reporting incidents when they occur.

We will bring you more lessons learnt in future editions of the Bulletin.

Remember – a near miss is a golden opportunity to address risks before they result in an injury.
A Sizzling Success

In November 2008 the Petrie Urban Fire Station (Caboolture Area) hosted a barbeque for the Narangba and Dayboro Rural Fire Brigades. The purpose of the barbeque was to say thank you for past assistance provided by the brigades during operational response duties. All members and their families were invited along for the day, which proved to be very successful in bringing the two sections of the QFRS closer together.

The concept for the day was the idea of Station Officer Wayne Parry and was enthusiastically endorsed by Area Director for North West Command, Superintendent Kevin Walsh. The crew from Petrie “C Shift”, iZone Officer Gary McCormack and ATSO Dick Lohse were also present on the day.

Apart from good food and conversation, entertainment was also provided in the form of tours through the “Community Safehome” by Station Officer Clinton Argent. The guys from Roma Street Fire Station also were on site with Aerial Appliance 502 India, giving a very excited First Officer from Narangba, Graham Smith, a lift into the clouds.

To conclude proceedings Superintendent Kevin Walsh presented both brigades with framed “Certificates of Appreciation” which cemented the positive theme of the day.

Everyone enjoyed the day immensely with future plans in place to make this a regular event.
Volunteer Honoured with Returned and Services League (RSL) Award

Congratulations to Don Duffus on receiving the Hervey Bay RSL Volunteer of the Year Award. Don is the Hervey Bay RFB Group Officer and 2nd Officer of Nikenbah RFB. Don also volunteers many hours of his time to help returned service personnel with welfare.

South East Award Ceremony

A recent presentation of awards in the South Eastern Region saw the following volunteers receive National Medals:

**Tallebudgera Rural Fire Brigade**
- Peter Biddle
- Rod Cox
- Col Faulks
- John Greenslade
- Kenneth Robbins
- Paul Trewartha
- Doug Cox
- Rudi van Wolferen

**Rocky Point Rural Fire Brigade**
- Lindsay Mischke
- Adrian Brumm

**Tamborine Mountain Rural Fire Brigade**
- Paul Beelaerts

First clasps to National Medals were also presented to Doug Cox and to Lee Zipf. Congratulations to all who have been recipients of National Medals and clasps.

Contact your Area Office for more information on nominating for these medals.

Poona RFB wins the day

Poona RFB hosted the Annual Challenge for The Golden Bell at the Poona Sports and Recreation Grounds on Sunday, November 30. Four brigades from the Maryborough area participated in the events using brigade equipment. Poona won the challenge for 2008.

Poona RFB and the local SES and Coast Guard provided the public with information on their respective organisations on the day as well as conducting fundraising activities.
Congratulations to the recipients of the 2009 Australia Day Achievement Awards. This year, 27 RFS volunteers were recognised across the state for going above and beyond the call of duty.

**North Coast Region**

**Australia Day Medallions were presented to:**
- Darryl Venz – The Palms Fire Warden District
- Maxwell Rogers – Wolvi RFB
- Kahu Helleur – Poona RFB
- Brendon Goldsmith – Nanango RFB Group
- Lennard Harper – Burnett Heads RFB
- Barry Bulluss – Burnett Heads RFB
- Jennifer Van Der Pols – Wallaville RFB
- Leonie Jamieson – Burnett Heads RFB

**Australia Day Appreciation Certificates were presented to:**
- Ian Hennig – Avondale RFB
- Shirley Oakman – Childers RFB
- Sue Johnston – Yandaran RFB

- Jenette Byrne – Gin Gin RFB
- Chubb Fire Safety Solutions, Bundaberg
- Bundaberg Electronics, Bundaberg
Our Volunteers Our Brigades

Northern Region
- Australia Day Awards were presented to:
  - Joshua Fleming – Mt Isa RFB
  - Peter Baron – Rollingstone RFB
- Australia Day Appreciation Certificates were presented to:
  - Carpentaria Shire Council
  - Diamantina Shire Council

Central region
- Australia Day Awards were presented to:
  - Tracey Charles – Gracemere RFB
  - Ivan Western – Cawarral RFB
  - Graham Luck – Turkey Beach RFB
  - Luanne Steward – Westowe RFB
  - Mike Sibley – Westowe RFB
  - Tom Murphy – Grosvenor Creek RFB
  - Dave Kretchmer – Benaraby RFB

Far Northern Region
- An Australia Day Award was presented to:
  - Steve de Prada – Speewah RFB

Continued on page 22
Continued from page 21

Brisbane Region

- An Australia Day Award was presented to:
  - Mike Gladwin – Brookfield RFB

South East

- Rita Cracknell – Chambers Flat RFB
- Simon Dawson – Grantham RFB
- Stuart Damrow – Grantham RFB
- Sue Ward – Mt Forbes RFB

South West

- Australia Day Medallions were presented to:
  - Fred Cormack – Gowrie Little Plain RFB
  - Adrian Chamberlin – Gowrie Little Plain RFB
  - Rod Petersen – Killarney District RFB
  - David Butler – Mount Binga RFB

- National Medals were presented to:
  - Adrian Chamberlin – Gowrie Little Plains RFB
  - Rodney Petersen – Killarney RFB

- National Medals and First Clasps were presented to:
  - David Butler – Mt Binga RFB
  - Frederick Cormack – Gowrie Little Plains RFB

Staff

- Kerrie Purcell – Central Office
- Amie Cawood – Central Office
- Sondra Lewis – Central Office
- Peter Hollier – North Coast Region
- Natalie Massicks – North Coast Region
- Ian Thomas – Far Northern Region
- Wayne Waltisbuhl – South West Region
- Annette Lamb – South West Region
Our Volunteers Our Brigades

L-R: Wayne Waltisbuhl, Fred Cormack, Adrian Chamberlin, Rod Petersen, David Butler, Brian Cook

L-R: Inspector Rob Walker, Stuart Damrow, Rita Cracknell, Peta Miller, Sue Ward, Simon Dawson, A/Superintendent Craig Smith
Brigade Wildfire Report South Burnett

Two suspicious scrub fires all within three hours destroyed 50 hectares of bushland near the Tarong power station last October.

It was on a cool Sunday morning in late October 2008, when Brigade Training and Support Officer (BTSO) Brendan Goldsmith and Radio Training Officer Peter Myers were on the second day of delivering an FM1 training course to 22 volunteers from six rural fire brigades at Maidenwell fire shed. At 9am, the volunteers were alerted to a scrub fire burning out of control 11 kilometres away, not far from the Tarong power station.

Within minutes, three appliances and their crews were on their way. After two hours, the fire was extinguished and the ground soaked, the crew returned to the course.

Around 12.30pm another fire, this time much bigger, was burning out of control in dense dry scrub, not far from the earlier fire.

After six hours of battling an unforgiving blaze, 46 firefighters from 12 brigades and the Kingaroy State Emergency Service (SES) breathed a sigh of relief as the last hot embers were extinguished.

Later that night, I went to get some photos of the blackened fireground. Logs glowed, crackled and exploded from the intense heat. Large dead, hollow trees, some 30 metres high, became howling chimneys of fire, spurring out sparks and embers hundreds of metres into the clear starry night sky.

It reminded me of a story I once heard many years ago from the Dreamtime, of how sparks from ancestral and ceremonial camp fires made the stars, and the smoke made the Milky Way. As we watched in awe of Mother Nature’s hot tongue devouring a big tree, it suddenly exploded and came crashing down in a sea of fire and brimstone. That night was nothing short of spectacular.

Three things stood out from these two wild fires:

- No injuries
- Rural fire experience
- Team work.

This incident proved that with proper training, our rural fire brigades are ready for any emergency situation. If you would like to obtain a copy of a CD of pictures from the incident, contact mao123@bigpond.com.

James Barclay
Maidenwell Rural Fire Brigade
Mount Kelly under 8s day

The sound of laughter and cheering, sirens and spraying water was all that could be heard at the under 8s Day at Airville School in the last school week for 2008.

Children from around the Burdekin area were invited to the school for a day of fun. Three members of Mount Kelly Rural Fire Brigade (Denise Pozzebon 1st Officer, Clifford Mann and Ian Sutcliff 3rd Officer) brought Mount Kelly 51 along for the children’s amusement and education.

The 80 children from the Burdekin area received show bags containing goodies and bushfire information and had the privilege of being able to operate the sirens and the branches of Mount Kelly 51. The targets that the children had to hit with the water spray were the “three little pigs” who were students of the Airville School. The three little pigs, just as the story goes, had the three traditional houses (one of straw, one of twigs, one of bricks) – however instead of the big bad wolf trying to eat the little pigs the children were saving them and their houses from burning down by spraying them with water.

A lot of fun was had by both the under 8’s Airville students, teachers and Mount Kelly volunteers.

National Medal Presentation

Congratulations to the following brigade members who received a National Medal or National Medal Clasp recently in the Bundaberg area:


Gillens Creek RFB: David Zunker.

This medal recognises duty above and beyond role expectations by members of recognised organisations that help the community during times of crisis. It is Australia’s most awarded civilian medal.

All information relating to the award of the National Medal can be found in the Brigade Manual.
Regional Updates

Brisbane Region Update

On behalf of the Regional and Area staff I thank you and your families for your continuing selfless contribution to community awareness and preparedness. 2009 will be an exciting year with many new opportunities to improve our capability, as individuals, as brigades and as a service. Brisbane Regional staff look forward to meeting with the brigades to discuss the future and mapping our way forward for 2009.

As predicted by the Bureau of Meteorology, a continuous pattern of seasonal storms and rains effectively dampened any “fire season events” across the south east. The weather pattern has once again shown that the mid-year long range predictions of “fire season” activity must be based on reliable and extensive information, advice and experience, to ensure the relevance of community notifications.

The return of the historical late afternoon thunderstorms in the south east provided another opportunity for Rural Fire Service volunteers to demonstrate their skills, providing much needed assistance to Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ). Brigades from the Brisbane, South East & North Coast Regions were rapidly mobilised after the severe storm that devastated the Gap and Keperra areas of Brisbane in late November. The rural fire brigades provided man power, chainsaw operators and damage assessment teams and attended numerous incidents of fallen power lines, isolating the danger until Energex crews could attend to the damage.

While the Regional Manager provided logistical support from the State Operations Co-ordination centre (SOCC), the Area Director, Inspector Peter Varley headed a combined rural/urban Incident Management Team that managed the operations of rural fire brigade volunteers, Federal Police Officers and Department of Natural Resources and Water staff assisting with the clean up.

The hard work and commitment of all volunteers involved resulted in damage assessments of the area being completed on the first day of deployment and access for State Emergency Service (SES) tarping crews established over the next two days. The professionalism and hard work of the Rural Fire Service volunteers was well received and drew praise from other agencies and the community. The storm damage recovery and power line hazard incidents demonstrated the benefits of a much needed joint agency approach to disaster management.

A new VHF radio repeater has been established at Brookfield. The establishment of this repeater station will greatly improve communications over a wide area of the Region and the Brisbane Region communications plan is being reviewed to reflect the new Channel 37 provided by the repeater. I would like to acknowledge the considerable contribution of Brookfield RFB in the planning of this repeater and the hard work to physically construct and install the infrastructure.

I look forward to meeting our volunteers throughout the year and working together to ensure safe and effective operations across the Region.

Bernard Trembath
Regional Manager Rural Operations
Brisbane Region

Advertise in Rural Fire Bulletin

the official magazine of the Queensland Rural Fire Service

With a distribution of over 11,000 to every brigade state-wide, area offices, training facilities, associated organisations, councils, universities and retired volunteers - the Bulletin will give you direct access to this specific audience.

Rural Fire Rate Card 2009 will provide a number of pricing options for the July and December editions.

Contact Christine Osborne on (07) 3247 8126 for the Rate Card or for further information.

Don’t forget to check out the Rural Fire Bulletin on www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au
Central Region Update

The 2008 fire season seemed to hang on relentlessly right up to Christmas and even into mid January, with significant fires popping up in the areas inland of the coast in Mackay and Rockhampton. The amount of fine fuel that has grown this season and the strong, drying winds has meant the season endures despite scattered rain.

Large fires have occurred in most of the ranges from Miriam Vale to Mackay and have tested the capacity of brigades to sustain long term suppression. The importance of a number of trained and experienced firefighters in a brigade becomes apparent when the appliance is on the line for a number of days and late into the night.

There has been an increase in the level of interest in FMS training in some areas, with a mammoth effort in Yeppoon in January where 48 volunteers attended the FMS course. The range of age, gender and experience evident on the day really defines the diversity of the RFS.

Central Region has been fortunate to have two new Brigade Training and Support Officer positions allocated in this financial year. Successful applicants for the new positions at Rockhampton and Barcaldine were announced in February.

In December, a large structural fire at St Brendan’s College in Yeppoon tested Central Region urban firefighters. The high temperatures and humidity was very demanding and seven rural brigades were responded to assist. This major incident involved all five local stations, seven rural brigades and the new Air Services Australia appliance from Rockhampton Airport. Rural crews assisted with a range of tasks including removing the College archival material from the ground floor and therefore saving the bulk of irreplaceable records and equipment. The incident was a great learning experience for all involved and once again highlights the capacity that rests in the trained, equipped and experienced volunteers we have in the RFS.

The major annual regional exercise “Capricornia 09” will be held in Yeppoon on the weekend of May 16 – 17. Keppel Group are organising the event and anticipate a strong turn out from rural fire brigades across Central Region. This exercise provides opportunities for volunteer firefighters to test a range of skills from communications and team skills to technical aspects of fire fighting.

Congratulations must go to our Regional winners of the Australia Day awards mentioned in this edition of the Bulletin. Well done to all and we hope to have more of our Regions volunteers on the list next year.

John Fisher
Regional Manager Rural Operations
Central Region
**Far Northern Region Update**

With high fuel loads and unseasonal dry conditions in some areas of the region, we recently welcomed the storm season and monsoonal rain bringing our fire season to a close. During the fire season, a number of our problem fires were deliberately lit however, brigades also responded to numerous escaped fires where landholders underestimated the local conditions when burning off. The effective role of our Fire Wardens in the community was again evident when additional permit restrictions were placed to reflect local fire weather conditions and reduce the impact of more escaped fires.

Brigades and property owners were kept busy with fires on the tablelands, and in the Cooktown area. Good cooperation was evident with volunteers, urban and rural staff working under adverse conditions to be successful in reducing property damage at numerous fire outbreaks. Again we rely on property owners to work together in remote areas using established breaks to contain fires and prevent pasture and infrastructure loss. A community meeting after the Marton fires helped improve communications in the brigades and the community and increase awareness of landholder responsibility in fire management. This year will see further community meetings and Bushfire Prepared Communities workshops delivered to high risk fire areas to increase fire awareness and the need for landholders to prepare their properties early for the fire season.

Planning has commenced for training delivery after the wet and harvest seasons to work in with the brigades. With changes to brigade classifications and new training packages becoming available the Cairns Peninsula, Area staff will be offering a series of information days at Mareeba, Cooktown, Gordonvale and Mossman to keep volunteers informed on the latest activities in Rural Operations. Innisfail area will continue with their planned trips into the western parts of the region to offer support and training locally.

Training is not just restricted to our volunteers. After 12 months external study, congratulations to three of our Regions Administrative Officers, Maria Parker, Kelly Gutter and Annette Eastwood on successfully completing Certificate IV in Government.

Last year saw a change in our Regions Rural Fire Brigades Association of Queensland (RFBAQ) district representatives. The Region welcomes two new RFBAQ volunteer representatives, John Thomson, Cairns Peninsula Area, and Brian Needham, Innisfail Area.

Finally with a strong focus on working safe, it was good to see that despite the level of fire activity, only a few minor injuries were reported. It was appreciated that all of the volunteers that gave up their time at recent fires, incidents and training activities were looking after themselves and their fellow firefighters to ensure that safety was the first priority.

Ian Thomas
Regional Manager Rural Operations
Far Northern Region

**North Coast Region Update**

In the North Coast Region, we are very proud of the work and dedication our volunteers demonstrate. We have the pleasure of announcing that North Coast Region had eleven volunteers and two staff awarded Australia Day Medallions for their ongoing commitment, dedication and efforts over the past twelve months. See the Australia Day Awards article in this edition of the Bulletin for the list of recipients for Australia Day 2009.

I congratulate each of these dedicated volunteers for their efforts, and encourage all North Coast volunteers to consider recommending your fellow volunteer for these awards in the future. See your Brigade Manual for a list of awards and how to nominate for each award.

Since the last Bulletin, a number of fires have occurred in the Region and a number of volunteers have been actively involved in the Incident Management Teams. It is always pleasing to hear that there have been no injuries and no loss of property during these incidents, and my congratulations to those volunteers and staff involved in the management of these jobs.

The last quarter of each calendar year is always a busy time in the North. 2008 was no exception with significant fire activity across the Region. Some of the more notable events occurred around Townsville and in the Hinchinbrook area, with a number of level 2 incidents being effectively managed by joint incident management teams in the field.

There were large fires in the Bowen River district over an extended period. Local land managers and members of the Primary Producer Brigade brought their resources to bring these fires under control. We don’t usually see fires in this area of this size however, last years good rains produced the perfect fuel conditions for big fires to occur.

A small deployment of two medium attack appliances from Townsville helped out at Biralee Station, thanks to the Rupertswood and Rangewood volunteers.

After all of this operational activity came the rain! Most of the northern region received one third of its average annual rainfall in the first three weeks of 2009 and parts of the north west received even more. With the rain and the warm tropical climate, vegetation is growing rapidly. We expect another very busy fire season for 2009 with increased activity in the west where this level of rainfall hasn’t been seen for years. Our year is going to be determined by future wet weather events, either continuing the growth cycle or drying the fuel early.
The success of the management of these incidents can be attributed to operational Incident Management exercises which have been run by Area staff across the Region. All reports have indicated that each of these exercises has been highly successful due to:

- The involvement of volunteers who have local knowledge of fire behaviour, fire suppression control points
- Input from respective agencies
- The involvement of Area staff.

I encourage all volunteer brigades to engage with your Area staff about these activities and take the opportunity to participate in activities. To the Area staff and numerous volunteers involved—my congratulations and encouragement to continue with the successful program.

Speaking of programs, I would also like to remind you of the rural recruitment program and offer you the support of the Area staff to assist brigades using this package to recruit volunteers. Take the time to work through the needs of your brigade with the Area staff and tailor the program to your own brigade.

In November 2008 I hosted the first North Coast Regional Rural Fire Brigade Association of Queensland (RFBAQ) Consultative Working Group to discuss regional issues. This working group was productive in identifying a number of issues that we actively worked on, progressing positive outcomes. This working group comprises of RFBAQ representatives from within the Region who are able to actively bring to the table a strategic view of the issues facing volunteerism in the RFS. A further meeting took place in February and we are progressing a number of issues.

With the conclusion of the fire season and moving into autumn and winter, I encourage all brigades to have a good look at the areas that burnt over the last fire season and those areas that didn't and review their hazard reduction plan with a view of targeting those areas that maybe a high risk next fire season. As you know we are moving into the burning period and every window of opportunity taken is a treatment of a possible risk, therefore reducing the likelihood of causing us problems next fire season. A little planning goes a long way!

Peter Hollier
Regional Manager Rural Operations
North Coast Region

Working with the community is an important part of managing fire and over the past three months, brigades and staff were involved in public relations and community education. They attended festivals and displays to spread the message of fire safety.

Community understanding of fire prevention and how to safely use fire goes a long way towards reducing the risk to the community. It is pleasing to see brigades take up the challenge of delivering these messages and taking the opportunity to raise their brigade’s profile within their community. Areas are always looking for volunteers interested in taking a lead role in community education. If you have the desire to help educate your community, or know someone who does, contact your Area Office for more information.

Charters Towers/Cloncurry staff members have been actively conducting the ‘office in the bush’ program over the last three months. Staff members regularly visit the north west and arrange to meet with representatives from brigades. By actively engaging brigades on a regular basis, we’ve provided great opportunities for volunteers to be involved with the organisation. To find out when the office in the bush is coming to your district contact the Charters Towers Area Office.

Whilst on the subject of the Charters Towers Office, I would like to advise that the office moved to another building in January. It is still in the courthouse precinct at Charters Towers, but is now on the corner of Church and Aland Streets. Also in Charters Towers we have a new Area Director for 2009. Lee Skinn will be away on leave until early 2010, and his position will be filled by Mat McFarlane. Mat is an experienced officer from the Mackay Area who brings a wealth of fire service and emergency management experience to the team. I am sure you will all make him feel welcome as he does his rounds of the brigades during the year.

January each year provides the opportunity to recognise our volunteers and support organisations for service above and beyond the call of duty. In the article in this edition of the Bulletin, you will see our proud recipients of the 2009 awards for Northern Region.

Once again I would like to thank all the volunteers of the Northern Region for their dedication and service during the 2008 fire season. Many hours of hard work were put into preparing for the season, both in community work, conducting hazard reduction and preparing equipment and people. The hard work paid off with effective response to outbreaks of fire during the fire season that saw minimal damage caused to property and not one injury was reported. The professional service you have provided to your communities is invaluable. Keep up the good work.

Ewan Cayzer
A/Regional Manager Rural Operations
Townsville Area
South East Region Update

As we enter 2009, congratulations must go to all our volunteer rural firefighters and their families, who continually accept the challenges of volunteering and adapt to varying tasks with a great deal of dedication, resourcefulness and enthusiasm.

2008 passed quickly and although we did not experience a significant fire season in the South East Region, all brigades were kept busy with a number of operational duties; hazard reduction burns; planning and preparation for the next fire season and supporting the safer communities concept.

Late last year some areas received significant rainfall causing rapid vegetation growth and increasing fuel for the next fire season and some of these areas are already being called to grass fires. This is a sure sign that fire activity will only increase unless considerable planning and mitigation is undertaken.

Risk assessments and the development of Local Action Plans (LAPs) have identified a number of rapidly increasing high risk and vulnerable areas. Mitigation strategies that can be applied to reduce the risk are being achieved through close co-operation with rural fire brigades, Rural Operations, iZone Officers, local governments, government agencies, developers and other community groups.

In November 2008, some of our brigades and staff were responded to assist in the Brisbane and Ipswich areas following severe storm activity. Thank you to those involved for an outstanding effort. The interaction with Local Disaster Management Groups, Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ), SES, Queensland Police Service, Department of Communities and QFRS Urban Operations was a highlight.

A key component in supporting safer communities is training. There are a number of training opportunities now available, contact the Ipswich Area Office for more information.

It is great to see the hard work of volunteers across the Region to recruit new brigade members. In the Boonah area, a training weekend for new members was held at Roadvale RFB recently for 21 trainee firefighters. Another new member training weekend also held at Logan Village RFB. These new members are now well on their way to achieving their core competencies. Congratulations to all brigades who have managed to recruit new members into their ranks. If your brigade needs support in recruiting new members, contact the Ipswich Area Office.

Planning is well underway for the South Eastern Regional Firefighter Championships which will be held on 20-21 June 2009 in Ipswich. I encourage all rural fire brigades to consider entering into these Championships. The criteria for participation is simply that you know how to have fun while testing your skills, you enjoy the company of other firefighters, and you are proud to represent your brigade at a regional event. Further planning is also in progress for the State Championships which will be held in Ipswich 6-8 August 2009. Another fantastic opportunity for our rural brigades to showcase their talents on a state-wide level.

The Ipswich Area Newsletter is now well established. The newsletter will be issued quarterly and is designed to create and increase awareness of local issues, and to provide basic information between brigade members and the Area Office. Copies of the current newsletter are available from the Ipswich Area Office.

I was delighted to be invited to attend a function recently where the Member for Ipswich West, Wayne Wendt MP, officially handed over the keys to new fire appliances for the Marburg and Mudapilly RFBs.

New appliances were also officially handed over to the Numinbah Valley, Coomera Valley, Guanaba and Currumbin Valley RFBs by the member for Burleigh, Christine Smith MP, at a presentation at the Tallebudgera Valley RFB on 20 February 2009.

Congratulations must go out to all those who received Australia Day Awards in recent ceremonies that recognise outstanding contributions to emergency services throughout the year. Volunteers and staff in the South Eastern Region can be proud of their valued commitment and achievements that are recognised through having these awards bestowed upon them. Congratulations on a fantastic effort.

I acknowledge the effort that all volunteers and staff in the Region have contributed towards a safer community, and our Region can look forward to more exciting achievements in 2009.

Craig Smith
A/Regional Manager Rural Operations
South Eastern Region
Regional Updates

South West Region Update

Operations

The fire season in South West fortunately was not to the extent forecast, however, the fuel loads created by summer and winter rainfall are high across the Region, particularly in grassland areas.

Early January did see brigades active at a number of wildfire outbreaks that were quickly brought under control. However, one fire at Wilkie Creek south of Dalby took 18 days to get control of. This incident involved many of the surrounding brigades on both day and night shifts, and was managed out of the Wilkie Creek Fire station. This was a joint operation involving Queensland Parks and Wildlife, Natural Resources – Forestry, Dalby Regional Council and QFRS rural and urban and Regional Air Operations.

Incident control was shared between staff and local First Officers. The size of the fire was approximately 2500ha. This was a frustrating job for all concerned due the amount of relights and suspicious outbreaks. Dalby Criminal Investigation Branch (CIB) are helping with the investigations.

To all involved a job well done and it was pleasing to see the rain arrive on day 19.

We are still anticipating a fire season through to March if we do not receive rainfall. There is rapid curing of grasslands occurring.

Air Operations

The Regional Air Operations team conducted a very successful exercise at Tara in November. We were assisted by the staff and pilots from Meandarra Air with two fixed wing 802 water bombers and a fixed wing spotter aircraft.

Our six Air Observers and three Air Attack Supervisors were able to do water bombing exercises at the Tara air strip to access the benefits of high-fast drops compared with low-slow drops, before doing some runs at two controlled burns conducted by the Tara group of brigades nearby.

The exercise also allowed us to set up and test our remote air base and communications.

Staffing

Welcome Shane Brumby to the Roma Area as the Area Director. Shane was the ATSO at Cloncurry and prior to that was with the Northern Territory Bushfire Council. Shane is moving around the Roma/Miles area getting to know his patch and meeting many of the brigades, volunteers and firewardens.

We also have to farewell two of our staff although neither is going too far. Firstly, Chris Artiemiew (Roma ATSO) is moving to Toowoomba as Area Director with Emergency Management Queensland and Tracey Gibson, Miles Administration Officer is moving to Dalby Urban Area Office.

We wish them both the best.

Wayne Waltisbuhl
Regional Manager Rural Operations
South West Region

INVITATION TO OFFER

SUPPLY OF HIRE – LIGHT FIXED WING AIRCRAFT FOR AERIAL INCENDIARY OPERATIONS (CAPE YORK AND GULF COUNTRY)

(ITO) NUMBER F-2236, STANDING OFFER ARRANGEMENT –

The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, Rural Operations of the Department of Emergency Services invites Offers to:

Standing Offer Arrangement – Supply of CAPE YORK AND GULF COUNTRY – HIRE OF A LIGHT FIXED WING AIRCRAFT FOR AERIAL INCENDIARY OPERATIONS FOR THE PERIOD OF MAY 2009 TO JULY 2009

To obtain a full copy of the invitation to offer and contract information please contact:

Air Operations Unit Rural Operations
Queensland Fire & Rescue Service
GPO Box 1425
Brisbane Qld 4001
Telephone 07 3109 7781 or Mobile 0429 498 716

Offers close at 2:00pm on 27 March 2009
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