This year’s fire season activity has the potential to be the worst in 40 years. Over the last two years we have seen record rainfall and widespread flooding, which has led to ideal conditions for grass to grow.

Most grassland areas, in particular those that have remained untouched by fire or grazing over the past two years, are now carrying an extremely high, continuous fuel load which consists of this year’s growth, in the form of standing grass, and a thick thatch layer of dead grass underneath. As a result we can expect high intensity, fast running grass fires even under moderate fire danger conditions.

Woodlands with a grassy understorey may exhibit similar fire behaviour; although rates of spread may be slightly less than those experienced in open grasslands. Forest fires with a moderate intensity are expected early in the bushfire season with fire intensity likely to increase during the latter part of the season as a result of a drying soil moisture profile, an increasing forest fine fuel layer, the influence of warmer temperatures and dry north-west to south-westerly winds.

The areas assessed as being of above average fire risk are the grasslands and pastures of south western Queensland, which incorporates the area from Stanthorpe and the Granite Belt district, north to Toowoomba, Dalby, Miles and Taroom, west to the South Australian border, and south to the New South Wales border. Low stocking levels and above average fuel loads have the potential to significantly increase fire activity in these areas. All other areas are considered an average fire risk.

Locations that were impacted by cyclones last year may have a much higher level of dead fuel due to the amount of fallen timber and leaf litter. We are also finding in some locations that creeks that previously may have acted as a natural fire break are now full of dead flood material. This burns well if dry and means that there can be very large areas of unbroken fuel load.

I urge all volunteers to work safely this fire season. Keep well hydrated and look out for others. I especially urge all firefighters working near roads to exercise special caution. Already we have seen several crashes occur where smoke has obscured the vision of motorists. Wherever possible, keep our vehicles and personnel off roadways, particularly main roads when smoke reduces visibility.
Our Focus

At the 2012 RFS Volunteer Summit I launched a document titled Our Focus. Our Focus outlines the direction of the Rural Fire Service and Rural Operations for the 2012-13 year. This document shows how we will focus on front line service delivery; strengthen community capability and resilience; support our volunteers and staff; and build organisation capability and sustainability.

FOCUS ON FRONT LINE SERVICE DELIVERY
MANAGING OPERATIONS
• Operate as one integrated fire service
• Improve the efficient use of Air Operations
• Continuously review appropriate response policies
• Increase the number of Volunteers and staff appropriately trained in operational capabilities
• Promote the ‘All Hazards’ concept

STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY CAPABILITY AND RESILIENCE
WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY
• Increase the number of Volunteer Community Educators (VCE’s)
• Deliver improved support to Fire Wardens
• Develop additional community awareness strategies to better prepare communities to withstand bushfires and other disasters
• Support hazard reduction activities
• Continue to build bushfire investigation capability

SUPPORT OUR VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF
SUPPORTING OUR PEOPLE
• Continue to support the Volunteer Community Educator (VCE) network and increase the capability of VCEs
• Give members of the community reasons to join a Brigade and Volunteers reasons to stay
• Provide appropriate training for Volunteers and Staff to undertake their role
• Increase youth recruitment and retention
• Promote ZEROharm as an integral part of all our activities

BUILD ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY - CONDUCTING BUSINESS
• Continue to build the capacity of Groups to support Brigades
• Simplify governance requirements to reduce red-tape
• Support Brigades’ transition to new taxation requirements (deductible gift recipient status)
• Engage Volunteers as active partners in developing strategic direction, policy and procedures
• In partnership with Volunteers, improve data capture to enhance support to brigades

Review of Rural Operations

As you may know, the Honourable Jack Dempsey, Minister for Police & Community Safety, announced on 20 September 2012 that the Newman Government and the Rural Fire Brigades Association of Queensland (RFBAQ) have agreed on initiatives to ensure rural volunteer firefighters are empowered and equipped to protect their communities into the future.

Consultation between RFBAQ and Minister Dempsey resulted in an agreement that Government efficiencies for Rural Fire would be achieved by the use of saving measures and a revised staffing level. Under this new model, there will be no closure of any Rural Operations Area Offices.

Member for Mirani, Mr Ted Malone, will head up a special Ministerial review into the RFS. The investigation seeks to develop a new model with more autonomy, efficiency and less red tape. The review aims to boost cooperation between urban and rural crews and the SES at the local level.

The review will be completed by end of February 2013, and no changes to the Rural Operations structure are planned until the review is completed. This also gives stability during the current fire season.

Neil Gallant AFSM MIFireE BTeach
Assistant Commissioner Rural Operations
Queensland Fire and Rescue Service
The 2012 fire season, code named Operation Yaamba, is on track to be the busiest and potentially most dangerous for our volunteer firefighters for many years.

The number of fires is likely to increase, but more importantly the intensity of the fires due to the drier conditions and the fuel load will be much greater. The number of hazard reduction burns that have crossed control lines already is a clear reminder of the challenges we face this fire season.

At the time of writing this article we are only seven weeks into operation Yaamba and already there have been 21 reported incidents or injuries. The usual injury mechanisms of smoke inhalation; heat stress/exhaustion; slips, trips, and falls; and sprains/strains, are again leading the way. There have also been volunteers suffering from burns, including one instance where the volunteer was not wearing any PPE. These types of incidents occur every fire season and are preventable. However, the number of these incidents continues to increase.

Remember our situational awareness -

- Always wear full PPE
- Don’t stay in close proximity to the heat and flames for too long (PPE does not make you bullet proof)
- Drink water regularly and take regular rest breaks
- Don’t rush
- Maintain vigilance
- Look out for your mates

We have also had two incidents where an appliance has been involved in a collision with another vehicle. These types of incidents are a major concern as they not only have the potential for personal injury, but the damage to the appliance can put it out of service for an extended period. This could leave a brigade without an appliance during the most vulnerable period for the community.

One collision occurred during firefighting operations on a two lane bitumen road. A member of the public collided with the rear of the appliance during a period of heavy smoke and very poor visibility. The appliance, with the warning lights activated, was stopped in the left lane when the smoke reduced visibility to almost zero. The warning lights on the appliance do not make us infallible. The only other control measures in place at the time of the incident were the placement of signs advising of the smoke hazard. Under slightly different circumstances one of the firefighters on foot and operating the hoses could have been at the rear of the appliance at the time of the impact.

During the risk analysis process and the planning of an activity it is important to measure the risks involved. In this case the question to be asked should be, “is the risk associated with fighting the fire greater than the risk the fire poses to life or property, if monitored and left to burn out to the edge of the bitumen?” Or put more simply, is the task so important that we put ourselves in danger?

Unfortunately, in this instance the driver of the vehicle advised they were aware of the risk and was “hoping a vehicle did not run into them.” This has now become a tough lesson learned. The placement of “Smoke Hazard Signs” and hoping or assuming other road users will stop or drive more vigilantly during poor visibility is not a sufficient control measure as it is not something you can control. More stringent and visible control measures should be implemented, including road closure by police until the task has been completed safely.

Cyrel Wright
Senior Workplace Health and Safety Officer
Queensland Fire & Rescue Service

Workplace Health & Safety:
Lessons Learnt
Review of Brigade Manuals

Rural Operations is continuing work on reviewing the Rural Fire Brigade Manual (RFBM) to ensure that the information Brigades require is accurate and up-to-date.

Our key focus is on reducing red tape and streamlining processes so that Business Rules are a quick, easy reference for volunteers and staff alike.

A key aspect of this review is the consideration of input and feedback provided by volunteers and staff.

The Primary Producer Brigade Manual (PPBM) is being updated to reflect the RFBM. The PPBM is an abridged version of the RFBM which only contains the Business Rules applicable to Primary Producer Brigades.

The Rural Operations Area Guide (ROAG) which is used by Area staff will also undergo a review over the next 12 months to ensure that information matches that provided in the Brigade Manuals.

The latest version of both Brigade Manuals are available on the Volunteer Portal.

Tell us what you think

To make sure that the Manuals are easy to use and contain current information, Rural Operations relies on your feedback to prompt potential changes and updates that may be required.

Rural Operations’ staff also rely on your feedback about other issues so they can continue to make improvements and provide a high level of support to Rural Fire Brigades.

All volunteers and staff can submit feedback at any time using the Rural Feedback Form (located on the Volunteer Portal and included in this edition of the Bulletin).

All feedback received will be registered and given to the appropriate Rural Operations staff member/s, who will consider and act upon the feedback wherever possible, including reviewing and updating Business Rules where required.

Whilst all feedback will be carefully considered, it may not always be possible or timely to implement new ideas or feedback. Legislative requirements, budget implications and other impacts may impede the ability to progress your good ideas. As a feedback provider, you will be kept informed to ensure you are aware of what actions are taking place in response to your feedback, and the timeframes involved.

Sharon Davis
A/Brigade Compliance Officer
Rural Operations
Queensland Fire & Rescue Service

STOP - LOOK - DECIDE - ACT

Remember – to enable us to protect the community we must first protect ourselves.

**STOP** – take a moment to think of what could possibly go wrong with an activity. Think Safety First.

**LOOK** – for hazards and consider potential risks and consequences.

**DECIDE** – what controls do I need to put in place?

**ACT** – perform the activity and remain vigilant to new and known hazards.
A structure of three Strategic Working Groups and a Strategy and Governance Steering Committee has been established to ensure the issues and concerns of volunteers and the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland Inc (RFBAQ) can be raised and addressed in an open and transparent process.

Each Working Group and the Steering Committee involve representation from the RFBAQ, Rural Fire Service (RFS) volunteers, and Rural Operations staff. The representatives of each group are listed to the right.

Red tape reduction is to be a key consideration in discussions, outcomes and recommendations of the Steering Committee and Working Groups. The areas of focus for each group are outlined below.

The Working Groups will be addressing state-wide issues affecting all brigades and volunteers. Rural Operations encourages all brigades and volunteers to firstly raise any issues or concerns locally with their Area Office. Where issues are found to be of concern to all volunteers, they will be raised with the appropriate working group.

Outcomes and recommendations reached by the working groups will be jointly released by Rural Operations and the RFBAQ through the RFS Volunteer Portal and the RFBAQ website. Significant outcomes will also feature in the Bulletin.

The Rural Operations Strategy and Governance Steering Committee members are:

- Neil Gallant: Assistant Commissioner Rural Operations (Chair)
- Madonna Day: Executive Manager, Rural Volunteering and Support
- Peter Varley: A/Director Rural Operations
- Craig Smith: Executive Manager Rural Research and Training
- Mike Garrahy: President RFBAQ
- Jon Bundy: Vice President RFBAQ
- George Ganzenmuller: Rural Fire Service Volunteer, Ipswich
- Colin Weeks: Rural Fire Service Volunteer, Rockhampton

The Steering Committee will serve to empower each working group to make its own decisions, and will be provided direction by the working groups. They will also:

- Review and provide advice on relevant policies and processes to ensure, wherever possible, they meet national, state, agency and volunteer requirements.
- Consider matters of strategic significance that impact on RFS volunteers.
- Review and provide advice on the recommendations of the strategic working groups.
The Volunteering and Support Strategic Working Group members are:

- Madonna Day: Executive Manager, Rural Volunteering and Support (Chair)
- Ken Beasley: Regional Manager Rural Operations, Northern Region
- Tony Johnstone: Area Director Rural Operations, Bundaberg
- Christine Osborne: A/Manager Recruitment, Promotions and Marketing
- Kay Krinke: A/Manager Volunteer Support Services
- Gary McCormack: Bushfire Education Officer, Brisbane Region
- Cyrel Wright: Senior Workplace Health and Safety Officer
- Nellie Barron: RFBAQ representative, Charters Towers
- Warren Kelly: RFBAQ representative, Townsville
- Helen Jakeman: Rural Fire Service Volunteer, Caloundra
- Darren Tisher: Rural Fire Service Volunteer, Townsville

The Volunteering and Support Strategic Working Group will review and provide advice on:

- relevant policies and processes relating to the support of the RFS volunteer to ensure, wherever possible, they meet national, state, agency and volunteer requirements
- relevant initiatives or developments taking place in other volunteer agencies
- grant and sponsorship arrangements and opportunities
- the administrative procedures and support to the RFS
- support mechanisms such as the RFS Volunteer Portal, communications, the Brigade Manual and others used within the RFS
- recruitment and retention programs for volunteers.

The Operations Strategic Working Group members are:

- Peter Varley: A/Director Rural Operations (Chair)
- Rob Walker: Manager Operational Support
- Ian Thomas: Regional Manager Rural Operations, Far Northern Region
- Tony Hazell: Area Director Rural Operations, Townsville
- Cyrel Wright: Senior Workplace Health and Safety Officer
- Ian Baker: QFRS Engineering Services Representative
- Steve Sparks: QFRS Operations Directorate Representative
- Brian Needham: RFBAQ representative, Innisfail
- Ian Pike: RFBAQ representative, Caloundra
- Fabian Stangerlin: Rural Fire Service Volunteer, Ipswich
- Paul James: Rural Fire Service Volunteer, Barcaldine/Emerald

The Operations Strategic Working Group will review and provide advice on:

- relevant policies and processes relating to the operational management (Research and Risk Modification, Readiness, Response and Recovery) of the RFS to ensure, wherever possible, they meet national, state, agency and volunteer requirements.
- relevant initiatives or developments taking place in the areas of firefighting appliances and equipment
- the design and development of RFS Appliances.
- the use and requirement of equipment used within the RFS.

The Research and Training Strategic Working Group members are:

- Craig Smith: Executive Manager Rural Research and Training (Chair)
- Andrew Hopkins: Manager Rural Training, Product Development
- Bruno Greimel: Manager Environmental Fire Research and Training
- Peter Hollier: Regional Manager Rural Operations, North Coast Region
- Gary Seaman: Area Director Rural Operations, Caloundra
- Michael Patch: Area Training and Support Officer, Toowoomba
- Nigel Higgs: Area Training and Support Officer, Caloundra
- Marilyn King: RFBAQ representative, Bundaberg
- Tony Marks: RFBAQ representative, Caboolture
- Peter Baron: Rural Fire Service Volunteer, Townsville
- Geoff Wrigley: Rural Fire Service Volunteer, Toowoomba

The Research and Training Strategic Working Group will review and provide advice on:

- relevant policies and processes relating to training within the RFS to ensure, wherever possible, they meet national, state, agency and volunteer requirements.
- training programs and initiatives being undertaken in other volunteer and fire agencies.
- development of training programs for delivery to RFS volunteers.
- the delivery and review of training programs, including e-learning programs, developed for the RFS.
- the documentation outlining and promoting Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) training opportunities to RFS volunteers.
- current research (Bushfire CRC, interstate agencies etc.) and consider relevance to the Queensland RFS and options for embedding into organisational processes, policies and training.

Pam Trevorrow
A/ Executive Officer
Rural Operations
Summit wrap up

The Rural Fire Service (RFS) Volunteer Summit was held at Twin Waters on the Sunshine Coast from 13 to 15 July 2012. Feedback from the 220 volunteer attendees reported the weekend to be a resounding success.

The biennial event brought together volunteers from around Queensland with trade displays, workshops and presentations to keep everyone entertained.

Jack Dempsey, Hon Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services was in attendance on the morning of Saturday 14 July to sign the new Volunteer Charter along with the Director General for the Department of Community Safety, Kelvin Anderson; Commissioner Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, Lee Johnson; President Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland, Mike Garrahy and the Assistant Commissioner Rural Operations, Neil Gallant.

A formal dinner was held on Saturday 14 July, with prized Queensland and Australian Rugby League footballer Shane Webcke in attendance along with his friend and fellow Rugby League sportsman Andrew Gee. Shane delivered a powerful speech to all attendees and was a highlight of the weekend for many.

Presentations given throughout the weekend are available to download on the Volunteer Portal. Presentations included:

- **Another Step in Community Education for our Volunteers**
  By Peta Miller-Rose, Bushfire Safety Officer (BSO formerly MEO) & Stephen Gardiner, Volunteer Community Educator

- **Implementation of the Fire Warden Review**
  By Liane Henderson, Samsonvale RFB

- **Working on Flood Response and Recovery Operations**
  By Steve Smith, Manager Technical Rescue Unit, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service

- **Brigade Reporting**
  By Madonna Day, A/Director Volunteering and Support & Shane Brumby, Area Director Rural Operations Roma

- **Communication Planning for Command and Control**
  By Wayne Waltisbuhl, Rural Operations Regional Manager, South West Region

- **The Littabella Incident**
  By Peter Leeson, Principal Conservation Officer, Fire Management, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

- **Urban and Rural iZone Mapping**
  By George Ganzenmuller and Jim Runham, Ripley Valley RFB

- **Brigade Mapping Toolset: Integration of Mapping Technologies for Brigades**
  By Mark Wallace, Manager Geographic Information Systems, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service

- **Current Programs and Future Trends in Flexible Learning**
  By Nigel Hogan, Principal Project Officer Learning and Development, Rural Operations

- **Taking a Proactive Approach to Safety and Wellness**
  By Cyrel Wright, Senior Workplace Health and Safety Officer & Brad McGregor

- **The Volunteer Experience**
  By Rhonda Paroz, Greenbank RFB; Owen Buckle, Alton Downs RFB; Lenny Toscano, Toobanna RFB & Vince Balanzategui, Stone River RFB

- **Social Media and Volunteering**
  By Peter Callaghan, Senior Digital Media Officer, Media and Corporate Communications & Christine Osborne, A/Manager Rural Recruitment, Promotions and Marketing

- **The Burning Question**
  By Bernie Trembath, Regional Manager Rural Operations, Brisbane Region

- **Tools to Assist your Brigade**
  By Madonna Day, A/Director Rural Volunteering and Support & William Norfold, Executive Manager Finance, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service

We would like to thank all the volunteers for taking the time to attend; it was a great success thanks to you!

Thank you for your feedback

Feedback submitted at the 2012 RFS Volunteer Summit in July has been collated and provided to the relevant staff for consideration and possible implementation.

This feedback is a valuable tool for us to gauge both the success of the Summit, and to highlight any issues raised during the Summit that require further investigation and follow-up.

Christine Osborne
A/Manager, Rural Recruitment, Promotions & Marketing
Rural Operations
Queensland Fire & Rescue Service
Young Leaders in Emergency Management event

We were pleased to send two young leaders to the Young Leaders in Emergency Management Event held in Stanwell Tops, New South Wales in August. Myles Kalendra, Bonogin Valley Rural Fire Brigade and Jasmine Cassell, Samsonvale Rural Fire Brigade, represented the Queensland Rural Fire Service (RFS) at the two day event.

A number of youth representatives from across Australia were invited to participate and work through challenges in engaging young people in emergency management volunteering, as well as identifying practical solutions for these challenges.

Myles is keen to share what he learnt over the weekend and has reported:

- As a whole, all agencies agreed that the youth are our future. Once they have accepted this, they were keen to let the younger personnel take over and the older generation would pass their knowledge on.
- A great discussion topic was, “do we volunteer for recognition or to help our community?” But it’s not a bad thing to be recognised for the RIGHT reasons.
- We would like to see more streamlined training (more hands on, more interesting things, less “whiteboard training”)
- There was emphasis on promoting all emergency services in the media and what the RFS can do, and not what we can’t do (for example, not – “don’t expect a fire truck in your driveway when there’s a fire”).
- A good quote, “Unpaid or paid, it’s still a career”
- Should the RFS think about a “volunteers to careers” program? It would be good to get more recognition when applying for a paid role.
- Yearly awards and recognitions - we want to be told what and when we are eligible for an award.

- Formal and informal recognition. Personally I feel informal recognition works well - a simple handshake and “well done” or “good effort” goes a long way.
- A point was brought up about getting some younger RFI’s in the system (younger people tend to bore out when older people start muffling on)
- Rural recruitment - start getting out there more to University Orientation weeks. Target the age bracket between school and full time work.
- Social media is an opportunity to engage with our community one on one and to promote the efforts of all our volunteers.
- I got the task of 3 things I wanted to achieve after this forum:
  » Try and promote our own youth leaders forum/council
  » A strategy for retaining/recruiting young volunteers
  » Put the theory I learnt into practice

So far I’ve put the third point into practice, and I am really pleased with all our younger members and how I’ve helped them stay enthused to hang around.

All in all it was a great weekend, I took a lot in and am trying to pass on as much as I can and work with my area on the younger half of our service. I think a youth “council” would work in the service, even if it’s just all training together or even a casual get together.

Myles Kalendra, Bonogin Valley RFB
UPDATE:
Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status

What is the current situation regarding DGR status?

Of the 1,447 active Rural Fire Brigades (RFBs) in Queensland, 521 were registered with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) as a Public Benevolent Institution (PBI), which conferred charitable institution tax concessions and deductible gift recipient status.

As you know, the ATO no longer considers the services provided by Australian volunteer fire brigades (VFBs) satisfy its definition of a PBI. It will therefore revoke the PBI registration of all VFBs from 1 January 2013.

The Commonwealth enacted amendments to the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 in December 2010 providing three new DGR categories, to enable VFB access to DGR status after 31 December 2012. DGR status will be provided for:

- state and territory government entities that have statutory responsibility for coordinating VFBs or State Emergency Services;
- public funds established and maintained by these entities solely to support volunteer emergency and fire-related services; and
- public funds established and maintained by not-for-profit, or government entities that principally provide volunteer-based emergency services including fire-related services.

What does my RFB need to do?

After 31 December 2012, Queensland RFBs that fund raise from donors who require income tax deductibility for their donations will need to either:

- establish a public fund and have it approved by the ATO, or
- formally advise QFRS Rural Operations that they wish to participate in the Queensland Volunteer Rural Fire Brigades Donations Fund (Central Fund).

If your RFB proposes to participate in the Central Fund from 1 January 2013 and you have not already formally advised Rural Operations of this intention, you will need to:

- formally advise of your intention to participate by email to RuralOperations.Finance@dcs.qld.gov.au before 27 November 2012; and
- provide banking details for the account to which you want the central fund to return your tax deductible donations, i.e. BSB number, Account number and Account name.

Does your RFB need DGR status?

While your RFB may receive contributions from organisations or individuals that assist with funding your operating costs, or expenditure for sheds, vehicles or equipment, these may not be tax deductible for the donor as donations. Income tax deductible gifts or donations have the following characteristics:

- there is a transfer of money, or property;
- the transfer is made voluntarily;
- the transfer arises by way of benefaction;
- the transfer proceeds from detached and disinterested generosity;
- NO material benefit or advantage is received by the donor; and
- they cannot add to, or create a tax loss for the donor, but a donor may spread deductions for certain gifts over up to five years.

As well, only certain types of gifts are tax deductible for a donor, they are:

- money of $2 or more;
- property valued by the ATO at more than $5,000;
- property purchased during the 12 months before the gift was made;
- listed shares valued a $5,000 or less and acquired 12 months or more before the gift was made; or
- trading stock disposed of outside the ordinary course of business.

Many contributions received by RFBs, while not tax deductible donations, will still be tax deductible for the person or organisation making the contribution. When an income tax payable person or
organisation receives a service from an RFB and makes a contribution for or as a result of receiving that service, the contribution made, or effectively the expense incurred by the person, or organisation is an expense of earning income and therefore tax deductible.

Many RFBs provide services such as fuel reduction burns, bushfire suppression, car parking, gate keeping, or crowd marshalling services. Contributions RFBs receive from these persons, or organisations are not tax deductible donations, but are still tax deductible as expenses incurred in the process of earning income. Voluntary contributions by property owners and annual subscriptions, or RFB membership fees will similarly be tax deductible, although they are not tax deductible donations.

RFBs which receive these types of contributions from persons, or organisations, may not require DGR status in the future, whether or not they were registered as PBIs and had DGR status previously.

What about the other tax concessions available to RFBs?

RFBs formerly registered as PBIs also had access to these tax concessions:

- exemption from income tax;
- goods and services tax (GST) concessions;
- refunds of franking credits; and
- a fringe benefits tax (FBT) exemption.

Before 31 December 2012 the ATO will write advising all RFBs, which have been PBI registered that they are endorsed ‘automatically’ as tax concession charities. They will not need to apply for this. As a tax concession charity they will qualify for:

- exemption from income tax;
- GST concessions;
- refunds of franking credits; and
- an FBT rebate (instead of an FBT exemption).

RFBs not previously registered as PBIs, or as tax concession charities (TCCs) may be unable to access these tax concessions. This could present an issue for RFBs which receive income as they may not be exempt from income tax.

Non-profit endorsement may also be a requirement to continue to access fuel tax credits for fuels used in the delivery of emergency services, where an RFB has met the eligibility criteria for claiming fuel tax credits.

On 1 October 2012, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) commenced operations and became responsible for the endorsement and reporting obligations of charities and not-for-profit entities. However, the ATO will continue to administer the applicable tax concessions. If an RFB wishes to formalise its taxation status after 1 October 2012, it will need to apply to the ACNC for endorsement as a charity. Once ACNC endorsement has been achieved, tax concession status will automatically follow.

Under the ACNC legislation and requirements, all organisations endorsed as a charity or not-for-profit entity will be required to provide a annual financial report to the ACNC. This obligation may extend to all formerly PBI endorsed RFBs which have become TCCs.

William Norfolk
Executive Manager Finance
Queensland Fire and Rescue Service
& Emergency Management Queensland

organisation receives a service from an RFB and makes a contribution for or as a result of receiving that service, the contribution made, or effectively the expense incurred by the person, or organisation is an expense of earning income and therefore tax deductible.

What is the central fund and how will it operate?

The central fund will operate as a trust under Queensland law. It will have up to seven trustees, representing RFBs generally (up to two), representing the RFBAQ (up to three) and representing the Queensland government (up to two).

It will:

- establish and manage a public fund using the simplest possible financial and administrative arrangements;
- operate a single Commonwealth Bank account as a clearing account, whereby tax deductible donations received by participating brigades, whether received as cash, cash-equivalents, or electronic funds transfer, via a BPay facility, will be transferred back in full to the participating brigade’s nominated bank account within two weeks.

The central fund will not receive RFB deposits of funds that are not tax deductible donations, nor will it incur expenses on behalf of RFBs which operate fund raising schemes that may generate tax deductible donations. RFBs operating these types of fund raising schemes will need to establish and register their own public fund.

Aside from any bank charges an RFB may incur in making a deposit to the central fund’s bank account, such as a coin counting fee, which will be borne by that RFB, the Government will contribute the annual operating expenses of the central fund and provide the resources necessary for its administration.

Every Queensland RFB is eligible to participate in the central fund at any time in the future as long as it meets the conditions necessary for participation (see box). The intention to participate in the central fund can be advised at any time in the future.

Once an RFB has formally advised its intention to participate in the central fund and provided the necessary banking details, it will be issued with central fund receipt books for receipts to be issued recognising tax deductible donations by persons, or organisations and a brigade-specific Commonwealth Bank deposit book.
CONDITIONS FOR USING THE QUEENSLAND VOLUNTEER RURAL FIRE BRIGADES DONATIONS FUND

This document sets out the conditions under which a Brigade may use the Queensland Rural Fire Brigades Central Public Fund (‘the Fund’) to collect income tax deductible gifts and contributions from the public (‘Donations’).

By using the Fund the Brigade agrees with the Trustees of the Fund (‘Trustees’) to comply with these conditions.

Collection and receipt of Donations

1. For every Donation the Brigade received as cash or in a cash-equivalent form during a financial year, the Brigade must promptly issue the donor a receipt from the Fund’s official receipt book for that financial year and retain a copy of the receipt.

2. Where the Brigade receives a Donation via an electronic funds transfer (EFT) direct to the Fund’s nominated bank account, using the Fund’s BPay facility during a financial year, the Brigade must promptly issue the donor a receipt from the Fund’s official receipt book for that financial year and retain a copy of the receipt. The Brigade will need to make arrangements for EFT donors to advise details of Donations made to enable the issue of official receipts.

3. The Brigade is solely responsible for:
   a) any person collecting a Donation for the Brigade; and
   b) any fundraising event it organises, or participates in.

Banking and use of Donations

4. Every Donation received as cash, or in a cash-equivalent form must be deposited into the Fund’s nominated bank account within a reasonable period after the day the Donation is received using the bank deposit book provided by the Trustees.

5. The Brigade must pay any bank fees or charges charged by the Fund’s bank in respect of the form of the deposit, for example, any coin counting fees.

6. The Trustees will endeavour to transfer the deposited Donation in full to the Brigade’s nominated bank account within two weeks after the Brigade makes the deposit into the Fund’s bank account, or within two weeks of the receipt of an electronic funds transfer direct to the Fund’s nominated bank account. The Brigade acknowledges that a transfer may be delayed due to reasons beyond the Trustees’ control. The Trustees will not be liable for any loss or damage suffered by the Brigade as a result of such a delay.

7. The Brigade may change its nominated bank account by giving a written notice to the Trustees of the change which is signed by two authorised officers of the Brigade.

8. The Brigade must only use a Donation for the purposes of supporting the volunteer based emergency service activities of the Brigade.

Records, access etc

9. The Brigade must complete a declaration each financial year signed by two officers of the Brigade stating that all Donations received by it during the financial year have, or will be used for the purposes for which they were given.

10. The Brigade must allow the Trustees’ representatives and auditors to inspect and copy records kept by the Brigade in connection with use of the Fund.

11. The Brigade must immediately notify the Trustees on becoming aware of any discrepancies between amounts collected, receipted and deposited.

General

12. The Brigade must comply with all reasonable directions given by the Trustees in relation to the use of the Fund.

13. These terms do not create a partnership, agency or employment relationship between the parties.

14. Either party may end the Brigade’s use of the Fund by notice in writing to the other party.

15. The arrangement will end immediately if the Commissioner of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service cancels the registration of the Brigade.

16. If this arrangement is ended, the Brigade must immediately return all official receipt and bank deposit books to the Trustees and comply with the Trustees’ directions about the payment or application of any unspent Donations held by the Brigade.

17. The Trustees may add to or change these terms and procedures from time to time, by notice in writing to the Brigade. Notice may be given by email.

18. These terms will be construed according to the law of Queensland and the parties agree to submit to the jurisdiction of the courts of Queensland.
Ashley Adams has been balancing the life of a Queensland Primary Producer, countryman and a fifth time Paralympic Shooter, having just returned from the London 2012 Paralympic Games. Ashley has done his country proud again after coming 10th and 15th in the Men’s 50m Rifle 3 Position and 10m Air Rifle competition respectively. Ashley also came 20th and 16th in the Mixed 50m Free Rifle Prone and 10m Air Rifle Prone respectively, another remarkable accomplishment to add to Ashley’s long list of achievements since he started competing professionally in 1992.

At the age of 26, Ashley injured himself in a local motorbike competition in Blackall, breaking his back and becoming a paraplegic instantly. After picking up a gun shortly after the incident, Ashley has never looked back, with some of Ashley’s achievements including:

- World Record at the English Match 1998
- World No.1 Shooter, Swiss Open 2002/2003
- Silver (50m Air Rifle Prone) and Bronze (Air Rifle Standing) medal, Athens 2004 Paralympics
- Gold (Air Rifle Prone – Mixed) and Bronze (Air Rifle Standing – Men), Korean Cup 2007
- Australian able-bodied Open Prone Champion 2007
- Fourth place, Beijing 2008 Paralympics
- Silver (50m Air Rifle Prone) medal, World Championships in Croatia 2010
- Gold (50m Air Rifle Prone) medal, World Cup in Spain 2011

With a grandfather that was an elite level boxer, Ashley believes he has inherited an “incredible reflex action” that has significantly aided his shooting performances. Ashley works as a primary producer and owns three cattle studs in country Queensland. He is well-known in both the beef community as an industry leader in genetic cattle breeding through his trademark TendaBeef product. He unsurprisingly lists his favourite foods as corned beef and potatoes and also enjoys a Bundy and Coke in his free time.

On behalf of Rural Operations and the Rural Fire Service, congratulations Ashley, you’ve done your country and state proud!

Jade Keogh
A/Administration Officer
(Rural Recruitment, Promotions & Marketing)
Rural Operations
Queensland Fire & Rescue Service
Southern Australia
Seasonal Bushfire Outlook 2012-13

The Southern Australia Seasonal Bushfire Outlook is a collaborative effort between the Bushfire CRC, the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC), the Bureau of Meteorology and Australia’s Fire and Land Management Agencies.

Each year, representatives from each agency meet to evaluate the upcoming fire season for the southern part of Australia. The proceedings include discussions on the climate outlook and the fuel state for the imminent fire season and aims to assist fire authorities on strategic issues, such as resource planning, prescribed fire management and reducing the negative impacts of bushfires.

Bushfire potential

To assess bushfire potential a variety of variables, such as the climate outlook for the next few months, are considered. This involves examining the major climate drivers for Queensland, which includes the future tendencies of the Pacific sea surface temperature, the La Nina / El Niño pattern, the Southern Oscillation Index, the Madden Julian Oscillation, and the Indian Ocean Dipole. Other variables examined in the assessment process include the overall fuel state and fuel availability and other, less quantifiable factors, such as the distribution and readiness of firefighting resources.

This year, and similar to last year, workshop participants unanimously agreed that, despite some extensive grassfires in southern Australia over the past 12 months, large areas extending from the east coast to the west coast of the country will face an above average grassfire potential for the 2012-13 fire season.

The strong La Nina pattern that has influenced Australia’s weather over the past two years has caused widespread record rainfalls, which in turn has provided the ideal conditions for abundant grass growth. Most grassland areas, in particular those that have remained untouched by fire or grazing over the past two years, are now carrying an extremely high, continuous fuel load which consists of this year’s growth in the form of standing grass and a thick thatch layer of dead grass underneath. As a result, we can expect high intensity, fast running grass fires even under low to moderate fire danger conditions.

Definition:

Fire potential: The chance of a fire or number of fires occurring of such size, complexity or other impact which requires resources (from both a pre-emptive management and suppression capability) beyond the area in which it or they originate. Fire potential depends on many factors including weather and climate, fuel abundance and availability, recent fire history and firefighting resources available in an area.
Queensland fire season outlook

Current grass fuel levels throughout Queensland are considered abundant and continuous. Although Queensland has experienced slightly wetter than normal early winter conditions, August and September have seen below average rainfall cooler temperatures with extensive frosts, especially in the western and central western parts of Queensland. This contributed to a rapid increase in grassland curing, and general vegetation conditions in the south west of the state and indicated an early start to the bushfire season over a wide area.

Fast running, high intensity grass fires can be expected over most of the state. There are particular concerns for large grass fires in southern and western Queensland. Woodlands with a grassy understorey may exhibit similar fire behaviour; although rates of spread may be slightly less than those experienced in open grasslands. Forest fires with a moderate intensity are expected early in the bushfire season with fire intensity likely to increase during the later part of the season as a result of a drying soil moisture profile, an increasing forest fine fuel layer, the influence of warmer temperatures and dry north-west to south-westerly winds.

The areas assessed as being of above average fire risk are the grasslands and pastures of south western Queensland, which incorporates the area from Stanthorpe and the Granite Belt district, north to Toowoomba, Dalby, Miles and Taroom, west to the South Australian border and south to the New South Wales border. Low stocking levels and above average fuel loads have the potential to significantly increase fire activity in these areas. All other areas are considered an average fire risk.

For more information visit the website of the Bushfire CRC at http://www.bushfirecrc.com/ or look for Fire Note 93 – the northern bushfire outlook and Fire Note 95 – the southern bushfire outlook on the Volunteer Portal.

Inspector Bruno Greimel
Manager, Environmental Fire Research & Training
Rural Operations, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service
What is backburning?

Over time, the true meanings of a number of fire related terms have become blurred with a tendency to confuse the proper meaning and purpose of particular functions with other fire related tasks.

Backburning is a specific term that fits into this category, as it has also been used to describe other functions such as prescribed burning, controlled burning and even hazard reduction burning. Any planned pre-fire burning activities should never be confused with backburning.

The Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC) glossary of bushfire terms defines backburning in Australia as being “a fire started intentionally along the inner edge of a fireline during indirect attack operations to consume fuel in the path of a bushfire”. That is, a backburn is a deliberately lit fire used to remove fuel in front of an existing and advancing vegetation fire to increase fire control opportunities.

Backburning can be a dangerous option unless it is conducted by experienced firefighters who understand the risks involved and the impact of weather and terrain on the backburn. It must also be a well planned, well communicated and well executed strategy that meets the objective of strengthening control lines by removing fire fuel in the path of the advancing fire.

Backburning is not the only method to improve fire control opportunities, but it is an effective and practical means if conducted appropriately as it can extend burnt areas to allow for fire control and to improve personnel safety, but comes with the added risk of potentially becoming uncontrollable and creating additional fire activity.

Backburning varies from prescribed burning, which is a general term indicating the planned application of fire to achieve specific land management objectives. Generally, from a Rural Fire Brigade involvement, prescribed burning is usually undertaken to support landowners to reduce fire fuel to minimise the intensity of any subsequent vegetation fire, or to mitigate the potential for fire to impact on people and assets.

Prescribed burning is a newer term that describes all pre-planned fire activities that occur before uncontrolled fires occur, such as hazard reduction burning and controlled burning.

For further information on backburning techniques and applications, or to find a glossary of fire related terms, refer to the Volunteer Learning and Development Framework training programs available online or through your Area Office.

Craig Smith
Executive Manager Rural Research and Training
Rural Operations, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service
Learning and development opportunities for volunteers

Training and development is a learning process that involves the acquisition of knowledge, and the sharpening of skills, concepts or practises to enhance performance and productivity. It can help us to achieve a suitable or improved volunteer/home life balance by allowing us to operate in a more efficient manner.

As policy, procedure or accepted practises change as a result of research, innovation or legislation, we have a personal and professional responsibility to ensure our skills and knowledge remain current and contemporary.

Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) is well versed in volunteer training, and the need to harmonise the educational needs of our people with the busy lifestyles of the modern volunteer.

The core training programs included within the Volunteer Learning and Development Framework (VLDF) are aimed at developing the individual skills and knowledge for the specific roles that we perform, and then if relevant, we will also be awarded nationally accredited units of competency to allow portability of the skills and knowledge gained. That is, training competencies acquired through QFRS can be used in other fields of employment and can assist volunteers outside of their brigade work.

Access to the programs within the VLDF can be acquired by contacting your local Rural Operations Area Office, through your brigade First Officer.

Currently, Rural Research and Training staff are working with volunteer representatives, along with Area and Regional staff, to enhance the flexibility of our training programs and condense materials and delivery formats into an appealing and appropriate format, so a greater number of people can gain recognition of their skills with a minimal impact on lifestyle choices, and within a simplified process.

We are also working on development programs for staff members who support the delivery of volunteer training as part of a process to improve the quality of training provided to volunteers. Another aspect of this process is the empowering of brigades to have a greater participation in training and assessment of common programs within the VLDF at the brigade level.

In addition to the programs offered through the VLDF, there are several stand-alone programs which are available to further enhance the skills and knowledge of our volunteers.

AFAC Volunteer Leaders Program

The Volunteer Leaders Program is a five day residential program conducted at the Australian Institute of Police Management (AIPM) in Sydney, and is available to volunteers who have the capacity to develop further in a leadership role. The program develops the leadership potential of personnel within volunteer services and focuses on developing leadership capabilities, extending industry knowledge and forming strategic alliances.

These aims are achieved by:
- Examining leadership issues
- Exploring corporate governance roles and responsibilities
- Recognising different leadership styles and behaviours

The next program in this field is scheduled for May 2013 and although opportunities to attend this outstanding program can be very limited, further information should be sought through your Rural Operations Area Office.

Australian Emergency Management Volunteers Forum Volunteer Leadership Program

This program, conducted in partnership between the Australian Emergency Management Volunteers Forum (AEMVF) and the Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI), provides students with the knowledge and skills to enhance the practice of leadership in their organisation.

Today’s volunteer leaders must negotiate a maze of relationships, networks and expectations in order to effectively lead in the volunteer environment. Leadership demands innovation, creativity, negotiation, improvisation and strategic vision. This program provides the basis for volunteers who are already in or who seek to undertake a leadership role within the organisation.

Access to any of the stand-alone programs offered by external agencies is by nomination, which must be endorsed by your Area Director in the first instance. Places can be limited, but you should seek further information on these programs, including the nomination process, from the Volunteer Portal or from your local Rural Operations Area Office.

Craig Smith
Executive Manager Rural Research and Training
Rural Operations, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service
Burnt Area Mapping

QFRS can now visualise the history of fire activity across the state with thanks to the Fire Scar data product generated by the Queensland Remote Sensing Centre. Acquired by the QFRS GIS Unit, fire scar data is now available for mapping products generated by the GIS Unit.

What is fire scar and how is it detected? Fire scar is an area of “burnt” or “fire affected” vegetation and is detected by the observance of change in Landsat satellite imagery relative to prior or subsequent Landsat satellite data for a given area.

What is the available date range? Fire scar is currently available for 2000 to 2011, and is supplied separately for each year. It is anticipated that by project end, the time series will extend from the mid 1980’s to present with biannual to annual updates.

What is its accuracy? The fire scar data is currently split into two separate products – unchecked and checked.

Unchecked fire scar data is approximately 65% accurate and is a direct output of automated computations. This data is available for the whole state and may be useful as an indication of fire activity. The process of checking this data continues and is due for completion within the next 12 months.

Checked fire scar data is approximately 85% - 90% accurate and has undergone further cleansing and edits.

What is the resolution? The fire scar data has been derived from Landsat satellite imagery with a 30m resolution on the ground which when compared to the previous best available data sourced from the MODIS satellite with a resolution of 250m, it is a massive improvement.

What is the coverage? How does a brigade or fire warden access this mapping? Use the same process as for all hardcopy and digital mapping products. Put a request through your relevant area office.
stating your requirements, such as map size, map extent, quantity, type of map e.g. topographic, aerial, administrative, format of map e.g. hardcopy, digital (ecw, jpg, tif or pdf) and any other special requirements such as whether you want a hardcopy map laminated. If you are not sure of what is available, please drop us a quick email to qfrsgisunit@dcs.qld.gov.au with your questions.

Don’t forget to include your best contact details should the QFRS GIS Unit need to contact you to clarify any of your requirements.

Mark Wallace
Manager - GIS Unit
Queensland fire & Rescue Service

It also necessitates that we, as an organisation that undertakes high risk activities, have processes and procedures in place to protect our volunteers and staff from legal liability and the potential threat of litigation should things go wrong on the fireground.

Although there is no evidence in Australia of extensive post-fire litigation, where fire agencies or individual firefighters were held liable for actions taken during firefighting operations, there has been an increase in legal liability and compensation claims arising from prescribed burning operations and bushfires over the past few years. Examples of these include the class actions arising from last year’s Western Australian bushfires, which were the result of an escaped prescribed burn; winegrowers in Victoria seeking damages from smoke tainted grapes, caused by bushfires and prescribed burning; and other lengthy post event proceedings, such as Royal Commissions and coronial inquiries. This trend is not only an issue that concerns fire managers, it also may affect the ability of volunteer firefighters to effectively perform their tasks as there is no guarantee that an individual would not be made personally liable for actions undertaken in good faith.

The QFRS Prescribed Burn Plan

The majority of prescribed burning carried out by rural fire brigades in Queensland are prescribed burns conducted on behalf of a landholder. This requires the Landholders to obtain a ‘Permit to Light Fire’ from their Fire Warden, which contains a number of conditions on how the burn is to be carried out. Burning can only be carried out by the landowner or by another party with the landowner’s consent. If the burn is conducted by a rural fire brigade, the landholder and the person in charge of the burn are to sign an ‘Authorisation of Conduct Prescribed Burn’. To assist your brigade in this process, we have developed the QFRS Prescribed Burn Plan which replaces the QFRS Authorisation to Conduct Prescribed Burn Form.

The Prescribed Burn Plan is a basic document to assist in planning and conducting a prescribed burn on behalf of a landholder. It has been designed so that all the relevant information (such as permit information and conditions, the landholder’s authorisation, relevant fuel and weather data, strategies and risk assessment) are included in one document. The document can be found in the ‘Forms’ section on the Volunteer Portal and there are also a set of guidelines that may help in completing the burn plan form. An updated, more interactive version of the form is currently being considered.

The burn plan provides brigades with a consistent tool set to undertake routine activities. It also provides a state-wide, transparent and consistent approach to using fire as a management tool and allows us to implement best practice management when carrying out prescribed burning on behalf of the landholder.

Resources

- Brigade Manual and Primary Producer Brigade Manual - A1.2 Prescribed burning programs
- Area Reference Manual - Business Rule: A2.5 Manage Area Hazard Reduction Programs
- QFRS Prescribed Burn Plan and the Guidelines for completing the QFRS Prescribed Burn Plan (Volunteer Portal (Forms) or your local area office)
- Field Incident Guide (FIG)

Inspector Bruno Greimel
Manager, Environmental Fire Research & Training
Rural Operations, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service

Have you applied for a grant or subsidy?

There are a number of grants and subsidy schemes around to help volunteer groups purchase the required resources to assist with their volunteer roles and response capacity.

**Station grants**

Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) may provide financial assistance to construct, modify or refurbish a station through a Fire Station Construction Grant. Brigades are able to access a grant of up to $10,000 for such projects.

To access a grant of up to $10,000, a Fire Station Construction Grant Application Form will need to be filled out and handed to your Area Director, giving maximum advance notice of the grant request.

More information can be found in the Brigade Manual: D3.7.2 Station Grants.

**Gambling Community Benefit Fund**

The Gambling Community Benefit Fund (GCBF) was established to develop, strengthen and enhance the capacity of non-government organisations to provide community services and activities through the provision of financial assistance.

Solar sport and community group grants are available to eligible organisations through the GCBF. Eligible organisations can submit applications for both a solar sport and community group grant and a separate GCBF grant per funding round.

**Who Can Apply?**

- Applications must be from Queensland-based organisations and as such, all Brigades are eligible to apply to the GCBF.
- Each application, once received by the GCBF, is valid for six (6) months. If not successful in the first round of considerations, then the application is automatically considered in the next funding round.
- **Note:** A Brigade is only permitted to have one (1) GCBF and one (1) solar sport and community group grant application current at any time and does not permit a successful Brigade to reapply until a reasonable period (usually twelve (12) months) has elapsed.

**How Much Can We Apply For?**

- One-off grants of up to $35,000 are allocated to approved not-for-profit organisations to help them provide community services or activities that benefit the community. Allocations are made to successful organisations approximately twelve (12) weeks after the funding round closing date.

**Jupiters Casino Community Benefit Fund**

- The Jupiters Casino Community Benefit Fund (JCCBF) is established under the provision of Section 52 of the Casino Control Act 1982. It is administered by the Jupiters Casino Community Benefit Fund Trust.

**Who Can Apply?**

- Applications must be from Queensland-based organisations, located within the geographical jurisdiction from the Queensland and New South Wales border, to the northern boundaries of Boulia, Winton, Barcaldine and Isaac.
- **Note:** The JCCBF permits a brigade to have only one (1) application current at any time and a successful Brigade can only reapply after a reasonable period (usually 12 months) has elapsed.

**How Much Can We Apply For?**

- One-off grants of up to $150,000 (average of $11,000) are allocated to approved not-for-profit organisations to help them provide community services or activities that benefit the community.
- Allocations are made to successful organisations approximately twelve (12) weeks after the funding round closing date.

**How and when do I apply?**

- There are four (4) funding rounds per year. The closing dates for applications are 28 February, 31 May, 31 August and 30 November.
- Please ensure that your application is forwarded to the Rural Operations Area Office at least four (4) weeks before the closing dates above (to allow for review, endorsement and submission of the application on your Brigade’s behalf).
- Application forms must be completed and downloaded from the website: www.olgr.qld.gov.au/grants/index.shtml
- **Note:** There is a new application form released for each funding round (therefore, old/previous forms cannot be used).

More information on the GCBF and JCBF can be found in the Brigade Manual – D3.7 Brigade Grants.

Deborah Baumann
Finance Officer
Queensland Fire and Rescue Service Rural Operations
Volunteers onLine is an online learning platform where you can work through your courses at your own pace, whenever and wherever you like.

To access Volunteers onLine, log into the Volunteer Portal and click on the link in the Learning Centre.

Note that you may be required to re-type your Volunteer Portal login details (username and password). If you are a first time user you will need to register for the Volunteer Portal in order to access Volunteers onLine. This will give you your username and password.

Accessing the RFS Volunteer Portal

First time users will need their volunteer ID number to register.

Visit the RFS website at www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au and click on the “Connect to the Volunteer Portal” link at the bottom of the home page, then select the “New User” button which will take you to the registration page:

- Enter your details into the fields provided (ensure you use your full first and last name, as initials and nicknames cannot be used, and the first letter of each name must be a capital).
- You will then be asked for your membership number, which is your volunteer ID number.
- Create and confirm your password and select a secret question and answer.

You only need to register once. From then on when you go to the site, you will simply need to enter your username and password into the fields provided, hit “Submit” and wait for the welcome screen to load, then click the “Visit RFS” link.

If you have any difficulties accessing the Volunteer Portal, contact the ICS Service Centre on (07) 3247 8555 between 7.30am and 6pm Monday to Friday.
It is amazing to think that it’s almost three years since the inception of the Volunteer Community Educator (VCE) position within the Rural Fire Service (RFS). The VCE role is now firmly entrenched into the fabric of rural fire brigades right across the state with Queensland communities being the main beneficiaries.

The level of community education activities being delivered by our skilled, enthusiastic, and proud VCE network is of the highest quality, and thousands of Queenslanders are now better informed of the correct measures to PREPARE.ACT.SURVIVE a bushfire event.

The program has continued to evolve and our VCEs are not only educating communities on how to reduce their level of risk to bushfire, but are also actively informing people across a wide range of safety messages including ‘all hazard’ emergencies and home fire safety. Many VCEs also visit schools on a regular basis to educate kids on bushfire and home safety information.

VCEs continue to be trained and supported by the QFRS Rural Operations Bushfire Safety Officers (BSO) formerly known as Mitigation Education Officers (MEO). VCEs are better resourced than ever with access to a large range of electronic equipment, marquees, educational tools, and promotional materials to support their endeavours in educating Queenslanders.

The success of the VCE program has already been highlighted in receiving two prestigious awards:

- 2011 Ministers Award for Excellence in Community Safety
- 2011 Australian Safer Communities Award

It must be remembered that this program would not have achieved these impressive results without the tireless dedication of our incredible VCE network, support of the BSOs and strategic vision of the program developers. Thanks to the efforts of all involved our VCEs will continue to increase the resilience of Queensland communities through quality education.

Inspector Gary McCormack
Bushfire Safety Officer
Rural Operations, Queensland Fire & Rescue Service
On instructions from Simon Dawson, Incident Controller, we visited two properties on Lamington National Park Road and 27 properties on Cain Babel Road, Kerry, to advise them of the current situation and that crews were in the area. I provided Simon with a list of all properties visited, contact names and phone numbers for residents. When no one was home I left my business card in the letterbox with a brief note. Out of the 29 properties, 13 home owners were home. All were very pleased to be informed of what activity was happening in the area. Naturally they were reminded to phone triple 0 if they had any concerns. Grant & I then returned to the Incident Control point where we assisted motorists who had to wait to be escorted along Lamington National Park Road due to low visibility on one of the switchbacks. We kept motorists informed as to what was happening and the process we would be employing. We also passed out bottles of water if they did not have any fluids with them. Children were given Blazer Bear activity packs to amuse them during the long delay.

We found that both residents and motorists were all happy with the situation and I feel this is a direct result of providing them with information. One group of motorists all got out of their cars and joined us at the control point while they waited. A mum put a rug on the ground and we had about six children sitting doing the activity packs. The motorists were all cheerful and chatting to each other. There we were surrounded by smoke and it was more like a party going on with this particular group. I think that is something that will stick in my mind for ages. We did not come across one disgruntled motorist – all were patient and understanding of the situation.

Debbie Flessor
Volunteer Community Educator
Clagiraba RFB

Lamington National Park Rd incident
25 September, 2012 0900 – 1500hrs

Energex sponsorship success
After announcing the renewed sponsorship agreement in the July Bulletin we were overwhelmed with nominations for equipment.

On offer to brigades in the Energex coverage area – Rural Operations areas of Caboolture, Caloundra and Ipswich – was the choice of a Portable Pump; Generator; Lighting Plant; Chainsaw; and a GPS and Kestrel Weather Meter Kit.

A panel of representatives from Energex and Rural Operations Area and Regional offices considered each of the nominations on their merits. Assistant Commissioner Rural Operations Neil Gallant is extremely pleased to announce 56 brigades were successful in receiving at least one of the items they nominated for.

This $75,000 sponsorship will provide:
• 12 Portable Pumps
• 13 Generators
• 12 Lighting Plants
• 17 Chainsaws
• 18 GPS and Kestrel Weather Meter Kits

Over the coming months equipment will be handed to brigades in official ceremonies.

Congratulations to the successful brigades.

Christine Osborne
A/Manager, Rural Recruitment, Promotions & Marketing
Rural Operations, Queensland Fire & Rescue Service

www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au

Rural Fire Bulletin  November 2012  23
In the aftermath of the major bushfires, often characterised by inquiries and commissions, responding to an understandable but misguided desire to apportion responsibility and blame, the debate around burning regimes and management creates emotional extremes of opinion.

On one hand there is the opinion that fire is not applied widely or often enough to the hazardous bushland areas. At the other extreme is the idea that the application of fire for whatever purpose is unnatural and damaging to the environment and promotes the incidence and intensity of fires.

As with many polarised discussions neither is completely right nor completely wrong.

This discussion requires that the reader accept two basic premises:

1. Fire is an integral part of the natural Australian environment and, along with the climate has played a significant part in the evolution of the Australian flora and fauna. Not only are many species fire adapted but some are considered fire dependant. Some of the fire dependent species have characteristics which promotes the development and spread of high intensity fire.

2. The arrival of Europeans in Australia had significant effects on native vegetation. The fire regimes of many, if not all of the forest ecosystems have been altered dramatically and the European used fire differently to the aboriginal. David Bowman describes these as three phases: wild, tamed, and feral fire.

It is difficult to imagine that Gondwana land; the ancient continent that produced the land masses in the Southern hemisphere, including Australia was a green and wet place.

Gondwana land was dominated by Gymnosperms i.e. Araucaria forests (Hoop Pine) and Podocarps (Kauri Pine) as the continent we know today as Australia, began to move northward, the climate change and rising sea levels had a large impact on the plants that lacked the genetic ability to change. As a result the Gymnosperms retreated and the Angiosperms (flowering plants) became dominant.

The northward drift of the continent into the temperate and eventually tropical areas brought with it increasing aridity and gave rise to Scleromorphs, a family of plants adapted to the extreme seasonal patterns. The word comes from a Greek term and means “hard-leaved”. Sclerophyllous plants occur in all parts of the world but are most typical of Australia, examples include the Proteaceae (grevilleas, banksias and proteas), tea-trees, acacias, boronias, and the most dominant, the eucalypts.

Around 80,000 years ago the depletion of soil nutrients, increasing aridity, and the atmospheric changes were the reasons behind the almost total dominance of the Scleromorphs across Australia. The drying landscape, combined with the right mix of atmospheric gases and the incidence of lightning, created ideal conditions for ignition and support of large fires. The Scleromorphs were not only resilient to fire, by the nature of their bark, foliage and growth habit, they were promoters of fires. Most importantly the Scleromorphs and particularly the eucalypts, define the role of fire in the Australian landscape.

The fire regimes that developed played a critical role in developing the diversity of the Australian landscape. Where a single species dominates the landscape the varying intensity and timing of fires, or fire regimes, dictated the nature of the forests and supported wide variations evident in the range of eucalypts and associated species from alpine Australia to wet tropics and arid inland areas.

Increasing scientific evidence supports the idea that the role of fire in the developing and maintaining the landscape was well established long before the arrival of the original settlers of this land. The natural or “wild fires” had created a broad landscape fire mosaic of varying intervals (Fig 1 plate 1).
When the aboriginal arrived some 40 000 years ago, he saw a land already shaped by fire. As a nomadic hunter gatherer, aboriginal survival depended on the ability to nurture and support the natural environment. The broad mosaic established by natural regimes was much too broad for small nomadic groups with a range limited by physical and territorial constraints. In a relatively short time the aboriginal learned to apply fire management at a local level.

The careful application of fire management not only provided for his needs but also increased the productivity of the bush. David Bowman refers to this stewardship as “Igniculture” comparing the fire to a plough. So as the aboriginal moved about his territory or “farm”, differing parts were in different stages of production. Some were actively growing, some were being harvested, and some were fallow in line with good land husbandry. This management style ensured a productive, sustainable, and diverse landscape. At the arrival of the European the aboriginal had changed the original broad mosaic into a very fine grained mosaic although the total area of varying intervals appears to have remained similar (Fig.1. Plate 2). The aboriginal had “tamed” the wildfire.

The destruction of the mosaic and the increase of short term burnt country have resulted in the loss of biodiversity in the species composition and the structure of the vegetation. Because of the changes, fires that do occur are of a catastrophic nature (Victoria 2009, the Alpine fires and Canberra 2002/3) Since these catastrophic events have begun (1851 Black Thursday) the ability of land managers to use fire for the promotion and maintenance of biodiversity and the reduction in the occurrence of destructive wildfire has been incrementally decreased. In many areas a culture of fire exclusion has developed.

Ecologically, scientists have recognised that “disturbance” of ecosystems by various means, and that definition includes fire, is necessary to maintain the health and dynamic of that system. It is according to Aber and Melillo, “an intrinsic and necessary part of the function of most terrestrial ecosystems, a mechanism for reversing declining rates of nutrient cycling and relieving stand stagnation.”

David Bowman says that while a return to the Aboriginal burning management is unrealistic and unworkable, that should not prevent Australians working toward the attainment of sustainable fire regimes. Those regimes should be applied on a landscape basis to achieve the best possible outcomes. Small, localised, and ecologically specific programmes will not address the landscape problem. In some areas the primary objectives will change depending on the context i.e fire management in and about the rural urban interface as opposed to management of National Parks and State Forests. No matter what management we apply, the outcomes will always be better than the destruction and economic loss caused by ‘mega fires.’

Loucks in his hypothesis said, “the elimination of disturbance by modern humans will be the greatest upset of all time… it is an upset which is moving us unalterably toward decreased diversity and decreased productivity at a time when we can least afford it.” This was a result of research published in 1970. The situation has only declined since that time and as yet we have not yet tackled the application and management of fire to address the problem.

The issues are succinctly summed up by Andrew Campbell who asks, “when are we going to learn to live like Australians? When are we going to learn as if we are living in Australia and intend to stay? When are we going to start managing, no longer like colonists, but like people who actually want to go on living here?”

Superintendent Bernard Trembath
Regional Manager, Brisbane Region
Rural Operations, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service
As part of the Samford Rural Fire Brigade’s (RFB) 60th Anniversary Celebrations held on the 8th September, the brigade also carried out the ceremonial handing-over to Commissioner Lee Johnson the keys to a new 4WD Heavy Tanker/Pumper Fire Appliance that had been designed and built by the brigade.

Samford RFB has always endeavoured to be proactive and innovative, and in 1994 the brigade introduced into service its first Dual Cab 4x4 Village Fire Fighting Tanker. Complete with Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus, the appliance proved its worth at all types of incidents from grass fires, motor vehicle crashes, and structural fires, both in Samford and deployments further afield. After seventeen years of service, the brigade sought approval from Rural Operations to upgrade the appliance, and in the process introduce new technology and safety features into the fleet.

In order for this to occur, the ‘old’ Samford 61 appliance was reassigned to Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, Training and Emergency Management, for use in their fire mitigation activities around the state. The brigade formed an appliance committee and embarked on the project of bringing a new replacement Samford 61 to fruition.

The ‘new’ Samford 61 appliance is the result of over 1400 hours of time, and the collective technical input from a dedicated team of volunteers who have brought it all together over the past 18 months.

The appliance has been designed to perform the roles of a self-sufficient bushfire fighting appliance - a tanker to support smaller appliances operating on a fire-ground, and to provide support to QFRS urban at road traffic crashes and structural fires.

When deciding what platform to build this appliance on, the brigade focused on technology and crew safety, and ultimately selected a MAN Dual Cab 4WD chassis - Model TGM 15.290. The Euro 5 compliant, twin turbocharged and intercooled six cylinder diesel engine develops 290hp / 213kW and is coupled to an automated constant mesh gearbox with manual over-ride using fingertip control. The gearbox has 12 forward speeds and two reverse speeds.

The features of this vehicle that significantly influenced the ultimate decision were:

- Euro 5 compliance is achieved by Exhaust Gas Recirculation (EGR) technology, eliminating the issues associated with Diesel Particulate Diffusion and the dumping of superheated particulates under the vehicle.
- The vehicle was four wheel drive with front and rear hub reduction axles, and front and rear differential locks.
- Disc brakes front and rear
- Electronic Brake System (EBS) and Anti-Lock Brake System (ABS)
Air Suspension on the rear axle.

Seating for six crew with full Lap Sash Seat Belts for all crew.

Past experience in designing and constructing Samford’s Medium 51 appliance back in 2002, and the fact that the old Samford 61 had performed so well over the years, gave the design team a good head start when it came to designing the layout of the new appliance.

Many hours were spent at the station working out a life-size plan of the layout using masking tape stuck to the carpet on the floor. From this, the design team could get a feel for issues such as safe access onto the deck of the appliance and the appropriate sizes for lockers etc.

The team incorporated into the design pneumatic actuation of valves on the plumbing system and the new technology of Digital Control for the electrical operation of all switching and lighting. LED Lighting is used throughout the appliance, and for crew safety at night, a series of LED lights were installed under the perimeter of the appliance to illuminate the ground and allow the crew safe transit around the appliance.

A dual battery auxiliary electrical system was installed to power all ancillary equipment thus reducing the load on the main vehicle batteries during long duration incidents.

With a Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) of 15 tonne to work with, the aim of the design team was to achieve an operating weight of the appliance that was well under this GVM. With the aid of local contractors Gibson Tru-Body (Motor Body Builder) and Kedron Car Electrics (Auto Electrician) who were engaged to construct the appliance, a final fully loaded and fully crewed weight of 13.8 tonne was achieved.

From a firefighting perspective, Samford 61 carries 4000 litres of water and is fitted with a GAAM MK 300 – two stage centrifugal pump powered by a three cylinder Hatz Diesel Motor.

Water is delivered to the fireground through two 19mm live hose reels, three 38mm Storz outlets and two 64mm QRT outlets.

The appliance carries 30 litres of Drip Torch fuel and 80 litres of ‘A’ Class Bushfire Fighting Foam.

Additional equipment such as a chainsaw, fire extinguishers, extension ladder, traffic cones, brooms, shovels, crow bars, bolt cutters, axe, and a stretcher are also carried on the appliance.

The new Samford 61 officially entered into service on 8 September, and Samford RFB is proud of its achievement in being able to make this appliance a reality for the Rural Fire Service. The brigade is also proud of the fact that it was able to fund 85% of the cost of this appliance.

Neil Kelso
Area Director Rural Operations Caboolture
Queensland Fire and Rescue Service
Appliance Fleet Colours: have your say

The rural fire appliance fleet colour has long been a topic of discussion, with some volunteers suggesting that the savings made by keeping the cabin white (instead of painting the cabin yellow) could provide additional funding towards the fleet.

Currently the cost of painting appliance cabins in Spectrum Yellow is:
- Light $2,073
- Medium single cab $2,650
- Medium crew cab $2,950

The savings across an average annual build of 20 medium appliances would be approximately $56,000, which roughly equates to the cost of another medium cab chassis.

Although other comments in support of the white cab have claimed a better resale value and improved visibility, the main focus seems to be on cost savings.

However there are also members who would like to retain the yellow colour as an icon of the rural fire brigades tradition and disagree with changing the colour to white.

In this forum we hope to get feedback from Brigade members who would like to express their view by either electing to support the appliance fleet’s current yellow colour or to support a change to a white colour with yellow livery.

Please note that there are no current plans to change the colour of the rural appliance fleet from yellow to white however this will provide the opportunity for members to have their say in future appliance builds.

Q. Do you prefer to keep the rural appliance cabins painted yellow? - Yes/No

Q. Do you prefer to have the rural appliance cabins white with yellow livery? - Yes/No

Burnover Procedure

At this stage of the fire season volunteers should be familiar with the actions to take in the event of a burn-over situation and how to avoid this situation occurring.

Please take the time to look at the Burnover Procedure, Incident Directive 27.3 for advice on the safest way to prevent exposure to a burnover, as well as the safest options to take if caught in a burnover. You can download this from the Volunteer Portal.

I also recommend viewing the Burn Over Safety and Survival video clip and DUCOT available in the Volunteer Portal Training Toolbox as they provide essential information regarding survival during Bushfire burn over events.

Please consult with other Brigade members and decide what the consensus of opinion is and forward your feedback to:

Manager Rural Operational Support.
GPO Box 1425
Brisbane Q 4001

OR: rural.operations@dcs.qld.gov.au

An online poll is also available on the Volunteer Portal.

Robert Walker
Manager, Rural Operational Support
Rural Operations, Queensland Fire & Rescue Service
New Heavy Tankers

The four new 4x4 rural heavy tankers have been delivered to their new locations at the North Coast, South West, Central, and Northern regions.

Students become fire aware

In conjunction with the Certificate II in Public Safety Fire Fighting Operations, a Kitchen Fire Safety initiative was developed by Brisbane Region Volunteer Community Educator Angie King. The aim is to educate Hospitality and Home-Economic students, and the first presentation was recently delivered to local high schools by Caboolture Area staff and volunteers. Under the guidance of Brigade Training and Support Officer, Graham King, Volunteer Community Educators Angela King, Lianne Henderson, Jasmine Cassell, and Roger Daly demonstrated the importance of fire safety in a simulated kitchen situation.

The Caboolture Area Office recently purchased a portable kitchen fire simulator which provides for easier transportation to and from community education events. The students watched as a pot of oil was heated to the point of combustion and a demonstration on the correct extinguishment of such a fire followed. Students witnessed firsthand the disastrous effects of putting water on an oil fire, and learned that extinguishment is best conducted by taking away the oxygen and smothering the flames. This can be achieved with a fire blanket, or if the flames are small, a lid can be placed on the pot.

Unattended stoves are the primary cause of kitchen fires, so the message is to stay at the stove and not leave. Graham told the students, “it is amazing how many people say they have been distracted and called away from the kitchen only to return to an emergency situation with a kitchen fire.”

His message to students: **DO NOT PUT WATER ON AN OIL or FAT FIRE!** This cannot be stressed enough. Pouring water on burning fat or oil will not extinguish the fire. It will only cause the burning oil to splash, spreading the fire around. **DO NOT TRY TO CARRY THE FIRE OUTSIDE!**

Unattended stoves are the primary cause of kitchen fires, so the message is to stay at the stove and not leave. Graham told the students, “it is amazing how many people say they have been distracted and called away from the kitchen only to return to an emergency situation with a kitchen fire.”

His message to students: **DO NOT PUT WATER ON AN OIL or FAT FIRE!** This cannot be stressed enough. Pouring water on burning fat or oil will not extinguish the fire. It will only cause the burning oil to splash, spreading the fire around. **DO NOT TRY TO CARRY THE FIRE OUTSIDE!**

Statistics show one in every four house fires reported have started with a kitchen fire.

Manual Arts students at Kilcoy State High School also attended fire training and learned how to use a fire extinguisher. Obviously, the primary purpose is to extinguish a fire, but it is important to know what type of extinguisher to use and how to use it. Graham advised the students, that before you grab an extinguisher and rush to a fire there are a number of questions you need to be asking yourself. Your own safety is the most important, no property is important enough to risk your own life. Students learned about the different classes of fires and the different extinguishers. They were able to handle the extinguishers and use them in a safe manner under supervision. This practical exercise enabled the students to receive competencies in their Vocational and Education Training Certificates.

The Rural Fire Service is proactive in providing education programs to the community. Knowledge of strategies and procedures may assist in controlling a small uncomplicated fire and reduce the risk of greater problems.

Neil Kelso
Area Director Rural Operations Caboolture Queensland Fire and Rescue Service

The tankers are built on an Isuzu FTS800 4x4 single cab chassis with a SITEC 220 Euro 3 engine developing 220 HP @ 2400 RPM and a MZW-6P 6 speed manual transmission.

They feature a 4,500 litre water tank with a GAAM Mk 300 two stage pump driven by a Hatz Diesel 3L41C silent pack motor which provides pressures up to 1580 kPa and flow rates up to 1400l/min.

Other features of the tanker include full time 4x4 drive with electronic differential lock and a body design which provides a 25 degree approach and departure angle. The tankers are provided with portable lighting plant, portable dam, relocatable relay pump and a supply of consumables to support other fire appliances undertaking operational activities.
Rural Brigades from the local areas of Villeneuve, Hazeldean, Mt Kilcoy, Stanmore, Samsonvale, Delaneys Creek, Stoney Creek, and Kilcoy Auxiliary Brigade, assisted with the exercise on the day. The Air Operations support team disseminated information and deployed the aircraft in the water bombing activities.

This practical exercise gave the students and their brigade mentors opportunities to experience the various forms of lighting techniques, extinguishment and containment of fires.

At the conclusion of the day there were many weary young (and experienced) firefighters. The students commented on the wonderful experiences they had encountered. They were totally overwhelmed by the water dropping capacity of helitack, with one of the students commenting, “the capacity of this great bird is truly amazing!”

Neil Kelso
Area Director Rural Operations Caboolture
Queensland Fire and Rescue Service

RFB Manual Changes

With each edition of the Bulletin we will provide you with a summary of updates and changes made to Rural Fire Brigade Manual Business Rules.

MAJOR CHANGES

A new business rule has been released and is included in this edition of the Bulletin for you to add to your Brigade Manual. This business rule is:

- **A3.9 – Participation in Inter-State and Intra-State Task Forces.** Requirement for CHC’s pre-deployment within Queensland removed, reducing red tape and streamlining the deployment process. Business Rule content reviewed and combined with Business Rule A3.9.1 – Registering for Deployment, thereby reducing duplication. NB: A3.9.1 now superseded by A3.9 (remove A3.9.1 from Brigade Manual binders).

MINOR CHANGES

The Business Rules listed below have been uploaded on to the Volunteer Portal.

- **A3.4 – Providing Information about an Incident to the Public** – DCS Media Contact Number updated.
- **A1.3 – Manage Road and Rail Corridor Fire Risk** – reflection of position title change from Mitigation Education Officer to Bushfire Safety Officer.
- **B1.1.2 – Volunteer Community Educators** – updated application forms, Role Description and reference to Bushfire Safety Officers.
- **C1.2.1 – Criminal History Checks** – updated references to CHC provisions for deployment.
- **C1.2.2 – Volunteers Under 18 Years of Age** – updated references to CHC provisions for deployment.
Bushfire CRC Update

Bushfire research is taking a major step forward with a series of new projects investigating fire behaviour, fire weather, smoke emissions, and fire ecology to be undertaken by the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre (CRC).

The Victorian State Government through the Department of Sustainability and Environment is providing a $6.45 million package to the Bushfire CRC over the next three to four years to complement the CRC’s current national research program that is funded by the Australian Government and state and territory partners.

In a media release, the Victorian State government reiterated their commitment to enhance the effectiveness of bushfire management and to improve fire management practices to protect our communities and the environment.

Since its establishment about 10 years ago, the Bushfire CRC has built up the capacity to research key issues arising from major fire events and their potential impacts, and provide fire and emergency services with tangible outcomes to improve firefighter safety and operational capability. The new research contracts, while clearly aimed at Victoria’s requirements, will flow on to benefit all CRC partner agencies, which include 15 universities, the Bureau of Meteorology, Geoscience Australia, CSIRO, and Australia’s fire and emergency services.

The projects proposed under the new agreement include:

- **Bushfire climatology** - Explaining past bushfire weather and climate and how these may vary under climate change projections to build a better risk map for Victoria.
- **Severe fire behaviour characterisation** - Better describe the spread of bushfires and the effect of land use planning responses in reducing bushfire risk.
- **2009 Black Saturday and other large fires** - Model the state of landscape dryness based on fuel moistures of live and dead fuel components in the dry, damp, and wet forests on Black Saturday.
- **Landscape moisture modelling** - Develop models to predict the flammability of forest fuels in the Victorian landscape as a result of changes in fuel moisture content through the drying and wetting of fuels underexposure to the weather and sun.
- **Fire severity rating** - Assess the current bushfire hazard mapping practices and explore the relationship between fire behaviour indices of fire damage potential and community loss.
- **Fire transitions across urban boundaries** – Identify, from analysis of historical fire events, the modes by which fires in particular fuel types transition into urban fires that then directly impact houses, structures, and people.
- **Probability of fire ignition and escalation** - Establish a conceptual framework and models to predict bushfire ignitions and escalation for strategic and tactical bushfire management planning.
- **Smoke impacts on community health and social perceptions** – Identify the human health responses to smoke exposure through determining population groups most likely to be vulnerable to impact, and establishing trigger levels for impact in terms of changes to ambient air quality. Also identifying the relationship between real and perceived levels of risk to human health through smoke exposure.
- **Smoke transportation and emissions modelling** - Improve the capability to model and predict the spread and accumulation or dissipation of smoke for planned and unplanned fires through improved smoke trajectory and accumulation or dissipation modelling.
- **Managing scale and uncertainty in fire management planning** - Develop models to describe the links between fire science and ecological knowledge, and model the relationships between fire severity and fuel and habitat structures in Victorian foothill forests.
- **Growth stage and habitat analysis** - Model the relationships between flora, fauna, habitat attributes and vegetation growth stages in Victorian foothill forests, and use these models to refine the ecosystem resilience inputs into adaptive fire management.

We will keep you updated with these projects through future editions of the Bulletin and on the Volunteer Portal.

Inspector Bruno Greimel
Manager, Environmental Fire Research & Training
Rural Operations, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service

---

**Are you our Facebook friend?**

Like us on Facebook to stay up to date with important public safety information from 7am until 9pm, seven days a week. **On scene in conjunction with council resources to monitor the fire and conduct backburning operations. No homes are currently under threat, if residents feel their home is under threat, or if they notice trees...**
The Rural Fire Service Volunteer Charter

In consultation with the Rural Fire Brigades Association of Queensland, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, and the Department of Community Safety, the Volunteer Charter was updated and signed at the 2012 Rural Fire Service Volunteer Summit on 14 July 2012.

The President, RFBAQ; Commissioner, QFRS; Director-General, DCS; and the Honourable Minister for Police and Community Safety, all signed the Charter “Agreeing to commit themselves to use and to apply the Charter in a spirit of mutual respect and goodwill, and to work together in that spirit to resolve any disputes that may arise in accordance with those key principles set down herein.”

The Charter, as signed on 14 July 2012, is reproduced below.

Preamble

Through over 1,400 Rural Fire Brigades, protecting communities in over 93% of Queensland (Qld), 34,000 Rural Fire Brigade volunteers provide a response and recovery service which allows for diverse community needs to be met by the dedicated men and women who comprise the Qld Rural Fire Service (RFS).

Rural Fire Brigade (RFB) volunteers are fundamental to effective fire management, mitigation and emergency response in Qld. This response and recovery covers the diverse range of community needs encompassing flood, cyclone, storm, structural fire, road accident rescue and support, search and swift water awareness. RFBs and volunteers are recognised for their expertise and knowledge in their local communities by the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) and as equal partners in response and recovery activities alongside full time and Auxiliary firefighters.

This volunteer charter is to be read in conjunction with the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990, related legislation, relevant Department of Community Safety (DCS) and QFRS policies and procedures, the Qld Public Service Code of Conduct and the Rural Fire Brigade Manual. It is an agreement between QFRS and the RFS volunteers and their representatives. The volunteers of the RFS are fundamental to effective fire management and emergency response in Qld. The safety of volunteers is, and will always be, paramount to the QFRS. Their contribution and value in this role is acknowledged.

The volunteers’ commitment to the protection of the Qld community remains the core strength of the RFS. Meeting the individual and collective interests and needs of volunteers supports the safe and effective delivery of their services to the Qld community. Consultation and engagement with them on issues that affect them as volunteers is an integral element of the relationship between the QFRS, the brigade and the volunteer.

The RFS Volunteer Charter

The Charter provides the framework for the relationship between the parties. The relationship is informed by the following principles:

• Decision making is to be in the best interest of the safety of Qld communities;
• Procedures are to be both practical and sustainable with a focus on reducing red tape;
• Decision making is to be founded on a fair, just and reasonable process and will include consultation and engagement from brigades and volunteers; and
• Decision making will not inappropriately discriminate against volunteers.

This is an enduring agreement to which all parties are committed. The Charter shall be reviewed by agreement of the parties or at the end of four years from its date of commencement.

The RFS Volunteers

The volunteers selflessly gift their time and life skills and even their own equipment to protect life and property and to prevent and suppress fire across Qld. They also actively promote fire prevention strategies and provide fire management and emergency response. They are drawn from communities throughout Qld and participate...
in a practical partnership based on mutual respect for each other, QFRS Rural Operations and for the community in order to promote community safety to the best of their collective abilities. They are further supported by their families, their employers and the communities they serve. They are motivated to serve by the results of their contribution, personal achievements and development, and the camaraderie of service.

The RFS Brigades and Volunteers’ Commitment to its Partners

The brigades and volunteers will provide their services while maintaining a respectful and active partnership with DCS and QFRS staff and the community. They will operate safely and undertake appropriate training and planning to ensure their personal safety and enhance the delivery of services in creating a safer community. They will exercise the powers vested in them by the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990 and associated regulations in the best interests of the community.

They will engage with QFRS Rural Operations both individually and through their representatives who form the Rural Fire Brigades Association of Qld Inc. (RFBAQ) as appropriate and will support the consultative mechanisms as agreed between the RFBAQ and the QFRS. They are committed to working respectfully with their partners and will seek to resolve differences of opinion through internal departmental channels wherever reasonable and practicable to do so.

The QFRS Commitment to its Volunteers

The QFRS will recognise, respect, value, promote and affirm RFS brigades and volunteers as core partners in the delivery of effective fire management and emergency response to Qld. The QFRS will take into consideration in its processes the diverse people who comprise its volunteers and the widely divergent characteristics, needs and communities from which they come.

The QFRS acknowledges and affirms its:

- Commitment to provide administrative, operational and infrastructure support to enable volunteers to perform their roles safely and effectively within available resources;
- Commitment, in partnership with the community, to provide the necessary resources to enable brigades and volunteers in the RFS to deliver agreed services;
- Commitment to nurture and encourage volunteers while developing their skills and competencies;
- Commitment to securing optimal advantage from the valued time gifted to the RFS by its volunteers;
- Commitment to the development of policy and implementation of change that supports and facilitates the volunteers’ contribution, within the context of the character of the local brigade;
- Commitment to work in a timely way and in a collaborative manner with the brigade and volunteers’ representatives on matters which affect brigades and volunteers;
- Commitment to consider fairly the views of volunteers before adopting any new or changed policies, procedures or approaches which adversely impact on its volunteers; and
- Commitment, in partnership with the community, to provide the resources necessary to enable new or changed policies, procedures or approaches which impact on brigades and volunteers to be implemented efficiently and effectively.

Non Operational Support Services for RFS Volunteers

QFRS recognises and respects the needs of brigades and volunteers which derive from their service. Support services include but are not limited to:

- Legal assistance including protection against the financial consequences of extended litigation and legal representation following the delivery of volunteer services in good faith on behalf of the department;
- Procedures to address issues of discrimination in a fair, just and timely manner;
- Counselling and welfare support;
- Training;
- Support and assistance for volunteers who wish to pursue employment as QFRS Rural Operations employees;
- Compensation for accidents, injuries and losses; and
- Insurance coverage for damage or loss to private equipment used in registered response and recovery activities.

The Department of Community Safety Commitment to RFS Volunteers

The Qld Government will:

- Recognise, respect, value, promote and affirm RFS brigades and volunteers, their families and their employers as core partners in the delivery of effective fire and emergency services to Qld;
- Ensure that QFRS legislation recognises the needs and interests of brigades and volunteers in the delivery of services and protects volunteers, who provide their services in good faith, and their dependants from consequential financial losses and other liabilities;
- Consult with representatives of the RFBAQ on matters that may impact upon volunteers, including proposed legislation and the adequacy of resources and support, to enable brigades and volunteers in the RFS to deliver the agreed services; and
- Reduce red tape and unnecessary administration wherever possible whilst maintaining legislative requirements and without diminishing the health, wellbeing and safety of brigades and volunteers.
Hydration strategies for bushfire season

Bushfire season presents Rural Fire Service (RFS) staff with a number of unique physiological challenges that are summarised in the below graphic.

When we consider these factors in isolation they present some challenge to the maintenance of homeostasis (the body’s state of balance), however when we consider the fact that these may occur simultaneously, that risk is elevated significantly. For the purposes of this article, I will focus on the all-important issue of hydration.

In itself, hydration is a somewhat controversial topic with recent evidence suggesting that companies, such as Gatorade, have misrepresented the level and type of fluid intake required to maintain levels of performance. Prominent researcher Dr Tim Noakes has published a number of papers looking at the prevalence of hyponatremia (electrolyte imbalance in which there is too little sodium relative to water) that is caused in many cases by over-consumption of fluids. This can have dire consequences resulting from an increase in fluid pressure on the brain. For further information, you can read the article in the British Medical Journal - http://www.bmj.com/content/345/bmj.e4171.

On the other side of the coin, we need to acknowledge the equally as important effects of dehydration and fatigue that present through the following commonly occurring symptoms:

- headache
- thirst
- dizziness
- nausea
- cramp
- dry skin
- impaired balance
- impaired decision-making.

A firefighter in full turnout gear can lose 1 L of fluid in 20 mins of strenuous firefighting.

So how do we strike the delicate balance between dehydration and over-hydration? Let’s take a look at a few evidence-based strategies to guide us.

Pre-hydration

Ideally, the consumption of somewhere between 250 and 750ml of fluid within a 1-4 hour timeframe before physical activity will ensure that the firefighter begins work with a normal body water content (1). This is also in line with Sports Medicine Australia guidelines which are 500mls (2-3 glasses) before activity (2).
Of course it is acknowledged that emergency situations may not allow for this degree of diligence, however even consuming some fluid on the way to a callout is better than nothing. It should be remembered that urine colour offers a simple tool by which we can gauge the degree of hydration.

Hydration during firefighting

Sports Medicine Australia advocate drinking 200mls (1-2 glasses) every 15 minutes during activity (2). Concurrently, the Missoula Technology and Development Centre (2004) suggest consumption of 1L per hour of wildland firefighting (3).

The evidence suggests that ingesting “well over 1 litre per hour can lead to hyponatremia” (1). It is noted that the risk is elevated if this degree of water consumption occurs in the absence of additional food and/or sports drink intake (1).

When determining exactly how much to drink, consideration must be given to the:
- duration and intensity of physical activity;
- exposure to environmental conditions (i.e. proximity to fire); and
- climatic conditions (i.e. ambient temperature and humidity).

Post hydration

In determining the volume and type of fluid replacement post-activity, due consideration must be given to the available window for recovery. That is, when is the firefighter expected to return to the fire line?

Sports Medicine Australia suggest drinking beyond the cessation of thirst, at least 500mls. In situations where the firefighter isn’t expected to return to duty until the following day, consumption of approximately 1.5 litres for every kilogram of body weight lost within a 2-4 hour window of completing the activity is recommended (4).

Casa and Clarkson (2005) note that large volumes of fluid should not be consumed immediately after completing exercise, as this will increase urine production (5). The same authors found that consuming 2 litres of fluid every 30 minutes was a more effective rehydration strategy compared to 2 litres in a single dose.

Beware the energy drink

An unfortunate societal trend has seen the increase in consumption of energy drinks. While these beverages may result in a short-term increase in alertness and arousal levels, it needs to be pointed out that there are a number of serious side-effects, particularly in cases of over-consumption.

The resultant ‘overstimulation’ takes the form of an increased heart rate, which when combined with physical activity, hot and humid climatic conditions and environmental heat, poses a serious risk to heat dissipation and fatigue. In addition, energy drinks contain caffeine which has a pronounced diuretic effect affecting the body’s ability to remain hydrated.

Summary

In summary, the following hydration guidelines are recommended to assist in maintaining the delicate balance between dehydration and over hydration.

1. Before activity consume approximately 500 mls (2-3 glasses) of water
2. During firefighting consume approximately 1 litre of water per hour.
3. Where practicable, allow regular breaks for food and electrolyte intake.
4. After activity consume 1.5 litres for every kilogram of fluid lost. This intake should be spaced out over time rather than in one dose.
5. Avoid the consumption of energy drinks.

References


Appendix A. The importance of hydration.
RFBAQ donates 15,000+ Water Markers to Rural Fire Brigades

The RFBAQ has made these water markers available free of charge to Rural Fire Brigades.

To request water markers, brigades are encouraged to contact their local Rural Operations Area Office.

Each marker measures 100mm x 100mm and is on an aluminum plate.

This initiative is another way that the RFBAQ can actively support volunteer Rural Fire Brigades across Queensland.

The RFBAQ would like to thank Rural Operations in facilitating the distribution of these water markers throughout the state.

Justin Choveaux
A/CEO - Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland Inc.

Are you a blogger?

Rural Operations is currently working with the Departments’ Media and Corporate Communication team to develop a blog.

The blog will be used to:

1. Showcase Rural Fire Service (RFS) youth ambassadors and their stories
2. Push out messages such as new features on the Volunteer Portal
3. Promote events such as where Volunteer Community Educators will be presenting community education sessions; Brigade open days; Brigade recruitment drives and associated appearances
4. Promote other activities occuring on the Queensland Fire & Rescue Service Facebook page.

In order to make this a valuable communication and promotion tool, we need your help!

We are looking for volunteers aged 16 to 25 to take on a youth ambassador role, and contribute to blog content around the topic of ‘a day in the life of an RFS volunteer’.

We also want to know what your brigade is doing – do you have any events coming up? Will you be holding an open day at your station? Are you going to have a stand at the local fete?

If so, and you would like us to help you promote your event or you would like to get involved with the blog as a youth ambassador, please send an email to rural_operations@dcs.qld.gov.au

Christine Osborne
A/ Manager, Rural Recruitment, Promotions and Marketing
Rural Operations, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service

We love to see your photos!

We love to see what your brigade gets up to.

If you’re a keen photographer, or just the occasional snapper, contact us at rural_operations@dcs.qld.gov.au.

Send in your photos and yours might make the next Bulletin cover shot!
Honours and awards
do you know what you’re eligible for?

The Commissioner supports and promotes the appropriate recognition of fire officers, public servants, and volunteer members, for their bravery, dedication, and outstanding service, above and beyond what is expected.

The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) Honours and Awards Booklet, updated in September, outlines the types of honours and awards that may be received. You can download this booklet from the Volunteer Portal.

We recommend your brigade reads this booklet to see what you may be eligible for. Examples of awards Rural Fire Service volunteers may be eligible for include:

- **Australian Honours Bravery Awards**
  - Cross of Valour
  - Star of Courage
  - Bravery Medal
  - Commendation for Brave Conduct
  - Group Bravery Citation
  - Other Bravery Awards
  - Royal Humane Society of Australasia Awards

- **Australian Honours**
  - Order of Australia
  - Australian Fire Service Medal
  - National Emergency Medal
  - National Medal

- **Queensland Fire & Rescue Service Honours and Awards**
  - Unit Citation
    - Commissioner’s Unit Citation
  - Unit Commendations
    - Commissioner’s Unit Commendation
    - Deputy Commissioner’s Unit Commendation
    - Assistant Commissioner’s Unit Commendation
  - Bravery Awards
    - Commissioner’s Medal for Valour
    - Commissioner’s Commendation for Bravery Award
    - Commissioner’s Commendation of Notable Action
  - Exemplary Service Awards
    - Commissioner’s Distinguished Service Medal
    - Commissioner’s Meritorious Service Award
    - Diligent and Ethical Service Medal
  - Commendations
    - Commissioner’s Certificate of Commendation
    - Deputy Commissioner’s Certificate of Commendation
    - Assistant Commissioner’s Certificate of Commendation
  - Certificates of Appreciation
    - Commissioner’s Certificate of Appreciation
    - Deputy Commissioner’s Certificate of Appreciation
    - Assistant Commissioner’s Certificate of Appreciation
    - Rural Operations Certificate of Appreciation

For more information, or help with nominating someone, consult the QFRS Honours and Awards Booklet, or contact your Area Office.

---

**National Emergency Medal**

The National Emergency Medal has been developed to recognise emergency services staff and volunteers who have undertaken sustained or significant service during nationally significant emergencies, such as floods, cyclones and bushfires.

The Australian Government National Emergency Medal fact sheet states:

The National Emergency Medal is awarded to members of identified organisations or individuals who rendered a minimum duration of service during specified dates in specified places in response to nationally significant emergencies within Australia (sustained service); or to persons who rendered extraordinary service in response to such emergencies (significant service), that did not satisfy the minimum duration of service required to constitute sustained service.

The Commonwealth Government Honours and Awards Secretariat in Canberra administers this new medal, and as many of you will no doubt be aware, has declared the Queensland Floods and Tropical Cyclone Yasi as a combined nationally significant emergency, to be recognised as “Qld 2010-11”.

The Sustained Service category recognises 28 days of paid service or 14 days of unpaid service, between the dates of 21 December 2010 and 14 February 2011 for the Queensland Floods 2010-11 and Cyclone Yasi. A qualifying period of 28 January 2009 to 5 March 2009 is also recognised for the Victorian Bushfires in 2009.

The Significant Service category was developed to recognise staff or volunteers who have not met the Sustained Service criteria, but who may have performed an extraordinary service in the protection of lives and property during the emergency response.

The eligibility criteria and nomination form for the medal are available to download from the Volunteer Portal.
What is it?
The Queensland Rural Fire Service (RFS) Day is a state-wide open day that gives your brigade an opportunity to meet with your community.

The RFS Day aims to increase community awareness of the role of the Queensland RFS. You can use the day to provide fire education, recruit new members, fundraise, and/or show the diversity of roles your brigade takes on. The choice is yours.

While there are many advantages to participating in this state-wide event, participation is not compulsory.

When is it?
The RFS day will be held annually on the first Saturday in June, with the inaugural day being 1 June 2013.

Why should we participate?
Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (QFRS) Rural Operations will organise free local and state-wide advertising and promotion of your brigade and the state-wide event.

An interactive map, showing locations of participating brigades, will be available on the RFS website (www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au). It will display the address, times and date (if you decide to hold your event on the weekend before or after 1 June 2013).

What could we do?
The state-wide RFS day is an ideal opportunity for a range of activities. For example:

- Community education
- Awareness
- Recruitment
- Fundraising

Think of ways to attract your community to your event. A lot of the time ways to attract people to your event double as fundraising opportunities. Consider:

- A sausage sizzle
- A trash and treasure / garage sale
- A raffle
- A bake sale
- Face painting for the kids

How do we do it?
Firstly, register your interest with your Area Office. You can do this by calling, emailing, faxing, or filling out the registration form on the RFS Volunteer Portal. You will need to advise the location of the event.

Once registered, you will receive a community education order form. Fill this out and return it by 1 March 2013. These items will be delivered approximately two to four weeks prior to 1 June 2013.

Now spread the word! Invitation postcards are listed on the order form and will be delivered six to eight weeks prior to the event. Drop these in letterboxes, leave it at your local shops, and send one to your local Member!

Contact us
If you would like more information on the inaugural state-wide RFS day contact your Area Office.
Current Bushfire Incidents Map

An outcome and recommendation of the Victorian Royal Commission into the Victorian bushfires identified that Queensland could improve its communication and delivery of bushfire incident information to the public.

One method of communicating this information is through an interactive online map showing the location of incidents, including basic details of the incident and warning advice as per the national PREPARE.ACT.SURVIVE. campaign.

This map was launched on to the Rural Fire Service website in 2011 and can be accessed through the top navigation, by clicking on ‘Current Incidents’.

By default the map displays current incidents in Queensland with a colour coded symbols. Current QFRS Permitted Burns can be turned on or off.

Below the legend you will find a text version of the map, with all incidents listed. The date and time first reported, location, incident type, and status is listed for each incident.

This information is extracted from the Queensland Emergency Services Computer Aided Dispatch (ESCAD) database. It is not ‘real time’ information, but is provided as a general indication of current activity. Incident information is updated every 30 minutes, with Emergency Warning or Watch and Act messages updated every 10 minutes. The symbols represent the general area of the fire, not its current location or spread.

Although every care is taken to ensure that all information on this web site is accurate and up to date, QFRS cannot accept any responsibility for mistakes or omissions.

During outages of the QFRS Bushfire Incident Website, members of the public should refer to their ABC Local Radio station for bushfire information and updates.
## Contact details for area offices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Fax</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Coast Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bundaberg Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 4153 3244</td>
<td>(07) 4151 2166</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.Bundaberg@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.Bundaberg@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryborough Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 4190 4839</td>
<td>(07) 4190 4853</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.Maryborough@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.Maryborough@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caloundra Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 5420 7517</td>
<td>(07) 5420 7521</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.Caloundra@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.Caloundra@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South West Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toowoomba Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 4616 1945</td>
<td>(07) 4616 1939</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.Toowoomba@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.Toowoomba@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roma Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 4622 2074</td>
<td>(07) 4622 1451</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.Roma@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.Roma@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South East Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipswich Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 3381 7122</td>
<td>(07) 3381 7116</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.Ipswich@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.Ipswich@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brisbane Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caboolture Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 5420 1333</td>
<td>(07) 5420 1339</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.Caboolture@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.Caboolture@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Far Northern Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairns Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 4042 5468</td>
<td>(07) 4039 8647</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.Cairns@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.Cairns@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innisfail Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 4061 0650</td>
<td>(07) 4061 0651</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.Innisfail@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.Innisfail@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northern Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townsville Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 4796 9082</td>
<td>(07) 4799 7184</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.Townsville@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.Townsville@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charters Towers/Cloncurry Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 4761 5130</td>
<td>(07) 4787 4708</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.ChartersTowers@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.ChartersTowers@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mackay Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 4965 6641</td>
<td>(07) 4965 6640</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.Mackay@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.Mackay@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barcaldine Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 4651 1190</td>
<td>(07) 4651 1803</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.Barcaldine@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.Barcaldine@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerald Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 4982 0001</td>
<td>(07) 4651 1803</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.Emerald@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.Emerald@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockhampton Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 4938 4736</td>
<td>(07) 4922 2768</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RuralOps.Rockhampton@dcs.qld.gov.au">RuralOps.Rockhampton@dcs.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>