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Eulo Brigade Celebrates Hand-Over of Rural Fire Trailer

The Eulo Rural Fire Brigade celebrated the hand-over of a new firefighting trailer to support the community and strengthen the capability of the brigade within this remote area.

This purpose built Quick Corp trailer adds further value, as it will allow the Brigade to provide protection to the immediate community, while the trailer can be quickly deployed out of town to combat fast running grass fire.

Like other brigades, the focus has been on preparation for the upcoming bushfire season and being prepared for the unexpected. The hand-over was further supported the following weekend with pump operations training by the area training team.

Inspector Goetz Graf
Area Director Roma
Rural Fire Service
Operational Cool Burn

With Operation Coolburn recently coming to an end, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers and staff for their tireless efforts during this extremely busy, yet important time.

Of the 447 mitigation activities identified statewide this year, I am extremely pleased to say that 45% of those were completed, which is a significant increase on the year before. The activities undertaken have included community education, hazard reduction burns, fire line maintenance, slashing and track development.

I believe the key to our success this year has been our ability to work in partnership with key stakeholders and to undertake essential local engagement. Local communities and our partners have a strong understanding of the importance of Operation Cool Burn and support the work we do to prepare for the upcoming bushfire season.

While a number of factors have impacted our ability to undertake some of the identified activities, our proficiency in preparing for bushfire season increases with each Cool Burn season, as does our ability to support resilient Queensland communities.

Operation Thum Nhoom (Fire Season)

With Operation Thum Nhoom underway the focus for the department has moved from planning, to preparedness, response and recovery. Last bushfire season was unusually long, and extended right through February and this season looks to be another busy one for parts of the state.

Coastal areas south of Rockhampton down to the New South Wales (NSW) border including Gladstone, Biloela, all of North Coast Region including Maryborough, Kingaroy and Month, South West Region including Chinchilla, Toowoomba and Inglewood, and the South East of the state can expect above average fire seasons with the onset of dry and windy weather.

2016 was one of the hottest years on record, and this past July was the hottest ever recorded in both Queensland and Australia. This trend of above average temperatures is very likely to continue well into our fire season. Rainfall has been average across much of the state and this trend is also likely to persist. The primary driver this year is therefore likely to be increased fuel loads.

With what is expected to be a significant fire season ahead, can I urge you all to take care, be prepared and watch out for your colleagues, family and friends.

QFES Governance

As you are all aware, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) continues the process of developing as a standalone department. A number of changes have now been finalised which you will begin to see. As outlined in this edition of the Bulletin, the new QFES Policy Framework was released, and this will have an impact on the documentation viewed by volunteers, as Business Rules have been replaced by Procedures and Work Instructions.

In addition to this, we are currently in the process of re-writing the Terms of Reference for the Rural Fire Service (RFS) Strategic Working Groups to ensure they align to the new Governance Framework. As always these groups, which are made of up staff, volunteers and Rural Fire Brigade Association Queensland (RFBAQ) representatives, will be an essential link from our volunteers into the department. More information on the Strategic Working Groups and how to make submissions or suggestions to the representatives will be made available on the RFS Volunteer Portal shortly.

Once again I would like to thank you all for your commitment to QFES, RFS and mostly, your local communities.

Tom Dawson
Assistant Commissioner
Rural Fire Service
140 volunteers and staff came together at Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy (QCESA) on Saturday 15 July for a community engagement workshop.

Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Service (SES) volunteers from the Brisbane, South East, South West and North Coast Regions enjoyed a day of honing their skills, learning new techniques and networking. The focus of the workshop was Prepare, Prevent, Respond and Recover. Participants were broken up into four streams: Virtual Reality, Live Fire, a door knock scenario and Rediportal awareness. Two Queensland Police Service (QPS) representatives were also in attendance to provide details on their techniques and perspective.

The day was opened by Deputy Commissioner, Mike Wassing, who delivered a very inspirational speech about collaborating together as one QFES and with other agencies to support the communities of Queensland.

Feedback from the event has been extremely positive and we look forward to holding another event in 2018. A very big thank you to Chief Superintendent Mike Dwyer and all the QCESA staff for supporting this event.

Liane Henderson, Bushfire Safety Officer, Brisbane Region Rural Fire Service
QFES Regional Challenge

Let’s get behind this very worthwhile cause.

With almost 48,000 people in the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) community, together we really can make a difference.

We are raising funds for life support machines called Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) Pumps. This lightweight equipment is used to provide temporary heart and lung support and helps transport critically ill children from regional Queensland to Lady Cilento Children’s Hospital.

Each machine is $132,000 and the hospital needs four ... so let’s see how far we can take this!

You can take up the QFES Regional Challenge from now to the end of October. There will be special acknowledgement of the QFES commitment at the Channel Nine Telethon in November.

What to do:

• Create a QFES fundraising team.
• FUN-raise to your heart’s content until Tuesday, 31 October 2017.
• Direct deposit funds into Children’s Hospital Foundation account using your regional reference code.
• Encourage your region to donate via your Regional Challenge page.
• Read about Clara and find your regional page and fundraising details: http://qfes-challenge.everydayhero.do/
• Make your QFES Peeps team and send in a picture: https://impact-board.cdn.prismic.io/impact-board%2Fdc2176a3-8732-48e3-aa3e-03ed01212b11_qfes+peeps_template+final.pdf

Leah Hornibrook
Sponsorship Manager
Volunteer Capability and Coordination
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

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THE QFES POLICY FRAMEWORK

What does it mean for RFS Volunteers

In January 2017 Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) released the new QFES Policy Framework. The Framework takes on a whole-of-QFES approach to provide the governance and management context for the department’s policies, procedures and supporting documentation.

The Framework ensures the QFES Workforce, both paid and volunteer, are provided with relevant information in relation to policies, related standards, procedures, work instructions and supporting tools.

What does this mean for Rural Fire Service volunteers?

Rural Fire Service (RFS) currently provides a level of governance to both staff and volunteers through the provision of Business Rules. These Business Rules make up the Rural Fire Brigade Manual, which was re-released in early 2017, with updates available for download from the Volunteer Portal quarterly.

The biggest change for RFS as result of the release of the QFES Policy Framework is the move away from Business Rules. Under the new QFES Policy Framework there will be four levels of documentation:

- **Policy**
  A directive statement or set of statements which clearly defines the QFES position on the achievement of strategic objectives or the implementation of legislation according to QFES legislated role and functions.

- **Standard**
  A document which directs consistent practice across a particular business or operational process, providing minimum mandatory requirements to be achieved. Responsibility for ensuring correct application of the standard is clearly set with an accountable owner.

- **Procedure**
  A document which outlines the minimum set of actions necessary to comply with a policy or standard.

- **Work Instruction**
  Supports a procedure and details the exact steps required at a local level to implement the procedural requirements.

This means that as of the September 2017 update of the Manual, all Business Rules will have been re-named procedures.

How are Procedures different from Business Rules?

Initially, the change from a Business Rule to a Procedure will be in template only. The only difference you will see in September is a change to the name of the document, from Business Rule to Procedure.

Once the name change has taken place, RFS will work with the QFES Knowledge Management Unit to review all documentation, determine if it is a Procedure or Work Instruction, and go through the process of re-writing our documents to ensure they adhere to the new Policy Framework.

What happens next?

Over the next six to twelve months it is important you keep your copy of the Rural Fire Brigade Manual Updated (by downloading it quarterly from the Volunteer Portal) as there will be ongoing changes to our documentation. While there may not be significant content changes to the documentations, all documents will be re-written into the new format.

This is an extremely large body of work across the whole department and we appreciate your understanding while we undertake this significant and important change.

More information on the QFES Policy Framework can be found on the RFS Volunteer Portal.
With each edition of the Bulletin we provide you with a summary of changes made to the Rural Fire Brigade Manual (RFBM) and any new, updated or deleted State Standing Orders and Operations Doctrine.

An updated full version of the RFBM can be downloaded from the Volunteer Portal. We recommend wherever possible brigades download the updated version each quarter onto their brigade manual USB. This is the best way to ensure you always have the most current version. Any urgent changes made to procedures and forms are noted on the Volunteer Portal.

New Procedures:
- A2.2 Pre Fire Season Checklist

Major Changes:
- C6.5 Newstart Allowance
- D5.2 Appliances

Minor Changes:
- A3.1 QFES Doctrine Framework
- B1.1.1 Volunteer Community Educators (Appendix E)
- D1.5 Incident Reporting (Appendix C)

Forms:
- CSO 068 VCE Community Education Order Form
- CSO 075 Volunteer Reimbursement Form
- OBM 082 RFS Additional Incident Information
- OBM 084 RFS Assessment of Appliance Allocation
- OBM 085 Appliance Acceptance Agreement
- OM 139 Uniform Order Form
- OM 182 Pre Fire Season Preparedness Checklist (NEW)
- PD 072 Volunteer Application Form

**Standing Orders:**
- NEW SO-Q-OM-3.66 Operation Thum Nhoom 2017
- NEW SO-Q-BM-3.39 Perfluoroalkyl Substances Testing
- NEW SO-Q-OM-4.33 Trial Operations of Remotely Piloted Aircraft System

**Operations Doctrine**

Communications Directives:
- CmdD 01.01.00 Establishing Command - Authority, Accountability and Responsibility
- CmdD 01.03.00 Command Protocols - Fire and Rescue, Rural Fire Service
- CmdD 02.01.00 Command - Fire and Rescue
- CmdD 02.02.00 Command - Rural Fire Service
- CmdD 02.05.00 Commander - State Operations
- CmdD 02.06.00 Commander - Regional Operations

Tactical Directives:
- TacD 02.08.00 Air Operations - Communications Systems
- TacD 19.01.00 Incident Ground Support - FESSN - Critical Incident Response Management - Activation
- TacD 05.07.00 Communications - Privately Owned Mobile Telephones / Pagers / Devices
In line with Queensland Fire and Emergency Services’ (QFES) commitment to create safer and more resilient communities the Predictive Services Unit (PSU) has partnered with several agencies to improve the knowledge and science of grass fires behaviour.

For the past three years the PSU has been involved in a commonwealth funded research project to better understand how curing and fuel load effects grass fire behaviour, particularly in relation to rates of spread. The Country Fire Authority (CFA) in Victoria led the work done on curing with experimental fires conducted at Ballarat, Wangaratta, Tamworth, Braidwood and Toowoomba. Curing is the proportion of the grass sward that is dead. If the grass is 100% cured it is all completely dead. All grasses go through a curing cycle whether they are annual or perennial. Grass fires have caused more firefighter deaths and injuries than forest fires. They also have significant economic impacts for grazing and agriculture. Unchecked they generally become forest fires and grass is the dominant vegetation type in both Queensland and Australia.

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) worked with the CFA project that included in kind support from the New South Wales (NSW) Rural Fire Service (RFS) and QFES. The curing project directly led to changes to grass fire danger rating calculations, with the finding that fires spread more readily in partially cured grasses. Since this work was completed, QFES has funded research through the PSU to extend this study to include higher grass fuel loads. The CSIRO has co-funded the research.

Over the past three years extensive work has been undertaken to secure a suitable site. The PSU has strong relationships with many external partners including Spotless and through them, the Department of Defence. A suitable site has been prepared over the past 12 months on Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) land at the Amberley base. Surveying, fuel load assessment through destructive sampling, analysis of local weather conditions and particularly wind direction, slashing, herbicide application, fuel reduction burns in adjacent areas as well as significant effort to ensure procedures and processes are in place have all been completed.

We are now at the stage where we are working very closely with the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) so that we are ready to conduct the experimental burns at the first suitable weather window after August 27 when the herbicide spray will have the grass fully cured.

CSIRO will be the lead for the burns with support from local RFS brigades for suppression and containment, and interstate fire agencies. Once the data captured from these high fuel load fires has been analysed the CSIRO will develop a new formula for grass fire danger calculation. How higher grass fuel loads effect fire behaviour has been the source of much debate for many years and this work will inform the science, not just for Queensland firefighters and communities, but both nationally and very likely internationally.

Andrew Sturgess
Manager Predictive Services Unit
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
In Far North Queensland, the month of June saw Cooktown host the annual Discovery Festival, a celebration of the cultures and communities in Queensland. Hundreds of visitors gather for festival events including the Captain Cook Landing re-enactment and his first meeting with the Guugu Yimidhirr Indigenous people. Amongst the celebrations, our very own mascot Bushy put in an appearance.

Rural volunteers spent the festival weekend promoting the Rural Fire Service and fire safety and awareness to the various visitors as well as participating in the Discovery Parade. Bushy spent the weekend making friends with children and families alike.

Yvonne Thomson
Volunteer Community Educator
Speewah Rural Fire Brigade
This year’s Bushfire Safety advertising campaign is working alongside Operation Cool Burn to target high risk localities around Queensland.

Each year the QFES Bushfire Safety campaign conducts state-wide advertising to raise awareness of bushfire safety. For the first time, this year’s campaign uses social media geographic targeting to promote bushfire safety messages to people living in the high risk localities identified through Operation Cool Burn.

In addition to social media, advertising on radio, online and search engines will point audiences to the Bushfire Safety pages on the RFS website. The pages align with the printed Bushfire Survival Guide booklet, and include sections on preparing for bushfire season, leaving early, staying, tuning into warnings, knowing your risk, and creating your Bushfire Survival Plan.

Running until October, the campaign’s tagline 'bushfire could be closer than you think' reminds people that bushfire can happen at any time and encourages them to complete their Bushfire Survival Plan before it strikes. The targeted social media ads provide more detail and outline some of the actions that need to be taken.

There are campaign tools and resources available for staff and volunteers to access to complement existing bushfire safety awareness activities, including posters, online graphics, recorded 30 second ads, news articles and social media posts.

For more information, to access resources, or provide feedback, contact the campaign team via email corporate.comms@qfes.qld.gov.au or speak with QFES ad campaign coordinator Senior Communications Officer Ashleigh Bond on: 3635 3314.
RFS Central Region Leadership Team Meeting

The Leadership Team for Rural Fire Service (RFS) Central Region ventured to the Blackdown Tablelands National Park for their Annual Leadership Meeting.

The Regional Manager, Area Directors, Area Training and Support Officers and the Bushfire Safety Officer used this opportunity to discuss regional business planning and fire season preparations along with many other agenda items.

With the meeting being held in a national park it means that RFS staff where required to sleep in swags and prepare and cook all meals at the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) Barracks. The remoteness of Blackdown Tablelands National Park provided an opportunity for uninterrupted discussion and planning. Acting Regional Manager Craig Magick also facilitated a presentation on Leadership and identifying challenges at both brigade and an organisational level.

A key aspect of the meeting was having the opportunity to include some basic fire in the landscape, which included the assessment of good and bad fire management. Discussions were also held around underlying geology, soils and vegetation within the challenging terrain of the National Park. With a number of the current staff previously employed with Parks and Forestry, it provided an exceptional opportunity to get an understanding of the different forest and fire management strategies that are employed, including witnessing and discussing examples of thickening and thinning edge effects.

A QPWS representative also explained the history of the traditional owners of the land and how they plan to incorporate that history into the future. RFS Mackay Area Director Andrew Houley also provided a great insight into the practices of the traditional owners and the meanings behind indigenous artwork and what they symbolise.

Daniel Schneider
Area Training and Support Officer
Gladstone Area
Rural Fire Service
It was 1957 when Allan Weiss first joined his local Rural Fire Brigade. As a farmer in the area, it was in his best interests to look out for rural properties and help serve the brigade that had come close to disbanding. Looking forward 60 years, the brigade has faced challenges and prosperities, and Allan has been there to see it all.

Allan’s initial role began working as a firefighter for a number of years before moving his way up the ranks to become First Officer in February 1999.

“We had this building built and that’s when the fire brigade went ahead in leaps and bounds,” he said.

“We had a very good committee of very responsible guys and we had a membership of 50-something firefighters at that stage. I don’t take responsibility for the fire brigade being what it is; I did all I could but we had a lot of other guys in this fire brigade doing a very good job also - it came in leaps and bounds and we can see what we’ve got here today.”

Over the years Allan and the Brookfield brigade have navigated their way through managing fires in the hilly region in Brisbane’s west.

“We used to do a lot of training like riding the trucks around the hills and the foam – that sort of thing. Then we got a lot of fires and things like that and I just felt so confident in the guys that they all knew what they had to do. I was told once I don’t use my authority enough, but we go and look at a fire, we know what’s got to be done – ‘You do this, you do that’ and they do it.”

There are two particular fires that stand out in Allan’s 60 years of service and it is not difficult to understand why.

“The most violent fire I ever went to was just up Savages Road here. It chased us across a hill and we had to run through a barbed-wire fence. Another guy, myself and my brother were there and he crashed through the fence below us and luckily it snapped between us and him or we would have been tangled up in barbed wire with a roaring fire coming towards us. That fire came down across a flat, to an old dairy farm which was neglected with long grass and it was a westerly wind just like today. That fire was 30-metre high flames and it went so fast through the tree tops it nearly went out into space.”

His second most memorable fire lasted a week before the Brookfield brigade was able to stop the blaze. Back in 1968, a lack of technology and equipment made work more difficult for the crews working endlessly to extinguish the flames.

“We had no radios; by the time you came back late at night to knock off for the night we wouldn’t know what another group of men were doing and another group wouldn’t know what we’re doing. We worked long hours from 6 o’clock in the morning to midnight.”

Allan’s experiences with fire span back to when he was only a child in the 1930’s, visiting fires with his uncle in bare feet and armed with a knapsack spray. His years spent learning about the craft of firefighting have been invaluable to younger members of the brigade. Allan has learnt not only how to negate the challenges of an unforgiving fire, but how to inspire new volunteers to make the most of the job.

Joel Gordon, QFES Acting Inspector and alumni of the Brookfield brigade says Allan’s experience and passion has been invaluable.

“I joined the brigade as a new member to the district,” says Joel, who worked alongside Allan for a number of years.

“Having Allan as our first officer, but also having Allan as our mentor and a person to support and guide me, certainly had a huge impact on my understanding of fire and my ability to not only fight a bushfire but engage with the community and understand all the different elements of fighting fires. I think I’ve spent hours and hours sitting in the truck with Allan, getting his understanding of fire behaviour in the district and where things
happen and where things won’t happen. I think we’re forever grateful and indebted to Allan for his wisdom and the experience that he’s given to us.”

Allan’s advice for leading a team of volunteers is fairly simple: “The best way to get on with people is to treat them as your equal and your friend,” he said.

“They’re your mates and your friends, as well as your work mates. I’ve lived on my farm all my life, farming by myself and it was a good experience for me to go out with all these guys.”

Members of the Brookfield Fire Station will attest that joining the brigade has not been all work and no play. Long days fighting fires were accompanied by friendly, albeit competitive, cricket matches – another passion of Allan’s.

“I did play cricket down here at Brookfield. As a matter of fact, that’s how I got mixed up with all the guys and realise how many different personalities there are in a world. I did the cricket pitch for 40 years – rolled it and looked after it – and never got a penny for doing it. I just did it because I liked doing it and that’s the way that the fire brigade is.”

It is the perfect analogy for a man who has spent 60 years dedicating his time and efforts to others. Allan insists that a good group of volunteers is the secret to the success of the Brookfield brigade.

“I do things because I like doing it and I like the people I’m working with. They’re a great bunch of people and they’re doing a very worthwhile job. That’s the way the fire brigade is; how I see it. You’re working for your friends, neighbours and the district. And I hate to see bad damage to the bush. It’s enjoyable to have good company, good workmates with you; it’s a great atmosphere knowing you’re with great people and trying your hardest. They all work well together.”

A large majority of Allan’s life has been spent giving his time to the brigade and working to protect his community.

“Some of the best mates I’ve got are from the fire brigade over the years. The thing with being the head of a fire brigade is you never stop learning; you learn from a little mistake here and there. In my years in the fire brigade, when I look back on it, I just think that Brookfield’s been very lucky. It’s in the interest of locals to be in the fire brigade and look after your own district.”

With the time and dedication he has contributed to his community, it inspires others knowing that Allan believes the work has been worth it. He insists he has reaped the rewards of camaraderie, bravery and hard work.

“You go and help tired men who have been there for hours and just all those sorts of things are rewarding. It’s very rewarding to go to a big fire and see that you’ve got it out and saved people a lot of worry.”

Now a full time carer for his sick wife, Allan still tries to help out the station as much as possible, remaining a friendly face at the humble station on top of the hill.

“I’m not going to resign from the fire brigade,” he says. “I’ve been there from 1957 and I’m still a member.”

Emily Halverson
QFES Media Unit

Below: Allan Weiss with Acting Inspector Joel Gordon
Mr Craig Crawford MP, Member for Barron River representing the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services the Honourable Mark Ryan MP, officially opened the new Bilyana Rural Fire Brigade Station at Bluff Road, Bilyana on Saturday 1 July 2017.

Following the official station opening by Mr Crawford with the cutting of the ribbon and unveiling of the plaque, the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) Diligent and Ethical Service Medals were awarded. Rural Fire Service (RFS) Assistant Commissioner Tom Dawson presented medals to the following recipients:

- First Officer Michael Ottone, Bilyana Rural Fire Brigade – 31 years – Original First Officer
- Second Officer Peter Ottone, Bilyana Rural Fire Brigade – 31 years – Original Second Officer
- Past Fire Warden Bilyana Fire Warden District Joe Ottone – 20 years

Mr Crawford and AC Dawson also presented a new Slip-On Fire Fighting Unit to the Bilyana Rural Fire Brigade and a new Area Fire Trailer Unit for the three neighbouring brigades, Bilyana, Murray Upper and the Kennedy Valley Rural Fire Brigade.

Thank you to the following organisations for their contributions to the new facility:
- the Gaming Community Benefit Fund - $35,000 and
- QFES - $25,000.

In addition to these contributions the Bilyana Rural Fire Brigade raised $20,000 through donations, fundraising and levy contributions.

Many thanks are extended to the Bilyana community for their support, RFS Innisfail Area Office, members of the Bilyana Brigade and particularly to Secretary Pat McCool for overseeing the project.

Diane Edwards,
Administration Officer, Innisfail Area Rural Fire Service

Above: Slip-on Presentation. Mr Craig Crawford MP, First Officer Michael Ottone and Assistant Commissioner Tom Dawson.

Top Right: Medal Presentation. MR Craig Crawford MP, First Officer Michael Ottone, Retired Fire Warden Joe Ottone, Second Officer Peter Ottone, Assistant Commissioner Tom Dawson.

Right: Plaque commemorating the opening of the Bilyana Rural Fire Station.
At the July meeting of the Rural Fire Service (RFS) Operational Strategic Working Group, representatives discussed the topic of Biosecurity and the role that RFS and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), can play in assisting landowners to protect their agricultural assets and comply with legislation.

Nearly 10% of Queensland’s weed species are declared ‘pest plants’, which means that landowners have a general biosecurity obligation to manage them on their properties.

However, given the source of their introduction and their ability to spread, the problem is not just one for landowners. Under the Queensland Biosecurity Act 2016, all persons have a general biosecurity obligation not to spread pests and diseases. This includes both plant and animal material which may pose a risk by transporting viable reproductive pathogens or the original host to another location.

Fighting this threat requires a collaborative approach across a range of government, landowners, environmental groups, utility companies (who regularly enter land) and the community.

All visitors, including fire service personnel need to be aware of the economic, environmental, community, health and lifestyle implications and should adopt a culture of mutual support through consultation with the land owner.

Although brigades may be familiar with local biosecurity issues and aware of landowner restrictions, other support brigades or deployment teams may be unaware of the situation and need to quickly adapt to the prevailing strategies.

Thought should be given to training at brigade level to familiarise members with recognition of local invasive weed species and how to avoid being the agent that spreads them.

Further information on biosecurity can be found at: https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/biosecurity

Rob Walker
Manager Operational Support
Rural Fire Service
A combined Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) stand was set up with the local Fire and Rescue (F&R), Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Service (SES) employees at the Innisfail show in July.

Acting Brigade Training and Support Officer Zodie Green, and the students from the Innisfail State High School Fire Management Cert II Program attended the show along with Bushy the Bushfire Wallaby.

Bushy became an instant hit and did many rounds of the show circuit spreading the bushfire safety message everywhere, from the kid’s entertainment tent, to the dodgem cars, to Showtime Alley.

Throughout the day the students, F&R, SES and RFS staff spoke to and distributed over 200 messages to show attendees covering Fire Safety First, Prepare your Home, Are you bushfire prepared and Fire Awareness.

A fun was day had by all.

Diane Edwards
Administration Officer
Innisfail Area
Rural Fire Service
The Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation (OLGR) Community Benefit Funds Unit (CBFU) distributes revenue from gaming taxes to various not-for-profit community groups throughout Queensland. Grants up to the value of $35,000 are available and Rural Fire Brigades (RFB) are eligible to apply for funding. The grants are run four times throughout the year. Round 92 of this grant has recently been completed with the following brigades successfully receiving funding:

Round 92
- Tumoulin RFB- $35,000.00
- Ingberry RFB- $3,996.00
- Alpha Station RFB- $15,696.68
- Irvinebank RFB- $22,300.00
- Wellshot Portland RFB- $3,996.00
- Cramsie No. 1 RFB- $15,999.00
- Kybong RFB- $15,000.00
- Little Mulgrave RFB- $35,000.00
- Westwood RFB- $15,000.00

Should you wish to investigate your Brigade’s eligibility for the next round of QLGR grants, contact RuralOperations.Finance@psba.qld.gov.au

Deborah Baumann
Finance Officer (Rural Fire Service)
Public Safety Business Agency

The Rural Fire Service (RFS) has received advice from the ATO that we have multiple outstanding brigade BAS returns. Please check your records for any outstanding returns and submit all returns to ATO to avoid penalties.

To check if your brigade is registered for GST log into the Australian Business Number (ABN) website and key in your ABN. Visit: http://www.abr.business.gov.au/

Should you wish to investigate your brigade’s outstanding returns please contact: deborah.baumann@psba.qld.gov.au.

Deborah Baumann,
Finance Officer (Rural Fire Service)
Public Safety Business Agency
YOWAH OPAL FIELD DAY

Once a year the Yowah Opal field days creates hustle and bustle in the small opal mining community in the far corner of South West Region (SWR). Seasoned travellers make the journey from far places for this particular event. The Salvation Army were called in with a 12 piece brass band in support of rural and remote communities along with live music, bon fires and rural dances in the evening. The community puts on the most amazing market day with a variety of stalls. A wide range of opals, glittering stones in all colours of the rainbow are also on display and available for sale.

Bushy was invited to support this exciting event. It was a vibrant atmosphere and Bushy made friends of all ages.

Mark the Yowah Opal Field days in your rural fire calendar for the second weekend of July next year. See you in Yowah 2018!

Inspector Goetz Graf
Area Director Roma
Rural Fire Service
The Rural Fire Service (RFS) has completed the 2016-2017 annual audit of the Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade Donation Fund (QVRFBDF). The outcome of this audit recognised that several brigades are depositing funds into the Central Donation Account without issuing tax deductible receipts (blue bound receipt book).

Only donations that require a tax deductible receipt are to be banked directly into the central account, all other donations that do not require a taxable receipt can be banked into the brigades bank account.

Reconciliation of the Central Account has found there have been several deposits made into the Central Bank Account where the Brigade’s identified number has not been listed during the deposit at the bank or post office. This means the funds are unable to be returned to the brigade as the brigade cannot be identified.

Please check your bank account statements for any deposits made into the Central Bank Account that you still have not received and contact your Area Office if there is any anomalies between your receipt book and your bank statement.

Brigades can join the QVRFBDF Account at any time by filling in the OBM 086 form. This will enable the brigade to supply donors with tax deductible receipts.

For further information please refer to the Rural Fire Brigade Manual Procedure D3.4 Tax Deductible Donation and the application form OBM 086.

Deborah Baumann
Finance Officer (Rural Fire Service)
Public Safety Business Officer
The 2018 Commonwealth Games (GC2018) are being hosted on the Gold Coast from 4-15 April 2018, and will be the largest sporting event ever held in Queensland.

GC2018 will welcome almost 7000 athletes and officials from 70 nations, competing in 18 sports and seven para-sports. It will have a global audience of 1.5 billion and it is expected there will be up to 700,000 extra visitors to the Gold Coast during this time.

The integrated Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) deployment for GC2018 plays a crucial role in supporting the community and ensuring the safety of athletes, spectators, visitors and local residents.

Rural Fire Service (RFS) volunteers have a great opportunity to participate in this unique and exciting event. They will play a vital role in the QFES deployment, showcasing QFES as an integrated organisation with many services and many capabilities.

Due to transport and accommodation restrictions, recruitment will focus on volunteers in the South Eastern Region in the first instance and expand to Brisbane Region if required.

If you are based in the South Eastern Region, there are a range of roles available to suit a variety of skills and experience.

If you want to be right in the middle of the action, there are roles available working with on-course staff at the marathon, road cycling and the mountain bike events to assist with course safety. Organisers will also be needed for Volunteer Mobilisation Centres to manage the deployment of QFES event-based volunteers.

For those interested in incident management, roles are available in the QFES Event Coordination Centre assisting with the coordination of the entire QFES operation. There are also roles available providing logistics support in the QFES Staging Area.

Recruitment for volunteer positions began in August 2017, so keep an eye out for information and nomination forms at your RFS Area Office, on the Volunteer Portal, and through your Regional Office.

Ayla Curtis
Project Manager Volunteering and Emergency Management
Commonwealth Games Office

Gold Coast 2018
A combined Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) team of Fire and Rescue, Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Service (SES) staff and volunteers manned a stall at the Tully Show on 28 July 2017.

Bushy again was a big hit with a stream of children following him around all day spreading the fire awareness message. Recruitment was a popular topic with many potential volunteer enquiries received. It was a busy and successful day that facilitated great service engagement with the local community.

Diane Edwards
Administration Officer Innisfail Area
Rural Fire Service
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) Volunteerism Strategy Discussion Paper workshops are continuing around the state, providing volunteers and staff with an opportunity to have their say on how QFES will work with and support its volunteer workforce in the future.

The strategy will help shape the department to better meet the challenges facing its volunteer workforce as well as those facing volunteering organisations in general. This will allow QFES to better meet its challenges of the future and, in turn, the needs of the community.

Further workshops were held in August in:
- Beenleigh for South East Regional staff
- Cairns for Far North Regional staff
- Cairns for Far North Regional volunteers
- Caboolture for Brisbane Regional volunteers
- Roma for South West Regional staff
- Wallumbilla for South West Regional volunteers
- Mount Isa for Northern Regional staff and volunteers
- Toowoomba for South West Regional staff
- Warwick for South West Regional volunteers

Notifications will be provided for other sessions as they are confirmed. Please contact your area office if you would like to attend a session and we thank everyone for their participation.

Troy Davies
Director, Volunteer Capability and Coordination
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

Congratulations to Michael Quinn, Sue Mills, and Lloyd Mills, volunteers with the Gilston Advancetown Rural Fire Brigade who have been awarded with a Wright Community Contribution Award in honour of their service to the community.

The Wright Community Contribution Awards were established to recognize the amazing work done by local residents in a variety of ways including with local charities, sporting clubs, service organisations, community groups and other voluntary activities. The Awards are about shining a light on the unsung heroes of our community who volunteer their time for the benefit of others and make our region a wonderful place to live. It’s important to recognise the hard work and dedication of our local volunteers, without them many of our local services would cease to exist. Once again, congratulations on this well deserved recognition.
Hungerford is a town and locality in outback South West Queensland, immediately north of the border with New South Wales and the Dingo fence. In the 2016 census, Hungerford and the surrounding area of Queensland had a population of 23. The locality is split between the Shire of Bulloo (western part) and the Shire of Paroo (eastern part).

In early June, the first South West Region Primary Producer Brigade (PPB) field day was held at Hungerford. These days are an opportunity for relevant service providers to engage with our primary producer brigade volunteers.

The day was well attended with visitors from right across the border. The Rural Fire Service (RFS) stall was well supported with Assistant Commissioner Tom Dawson and Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland (RFBAQ) president Jon Bundy in attendance, and enjoying the opportunity to connect with our more remote volunteers.

Inspector Goetz Graf
Area Director Roma
Rural Fire Service
### AREA OFFICE CONTACTS

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