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In July 2019 I was extremely pleased to be offered and accept the role of Assistant Commissioner Rural Fire Service. At the time I was the Assistant Commissioner for Far Northern Region and I saw this as an opportunity to work with QFES continue its journey as a multi-capability emergency service.

I began my fire service career with the Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MMFB) in 1984 where I spent an amazing 18 years. This was followed by a two-year period with Country Fire Authority.

The outback called as I joined the then Queensland Fire and Rescue Service in Mount Isa. Following seven years in ‘The Isa’ I left as Inspector / Area Director to take the role as Superintendent, Director of Regional Development in Central Region. I coordinated the Central Region Operations through the 2010-11 Fitzroy Basin and Rockhampton floods and several prolonged wildfire campaigns. I took a promotion to North Coast Region as Chief Superintendent, the 2013 Ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald devastation of the North Burnett and significant parts of Bundaberg presented a significant operational challenge. I enjoyed acting in the North Coast Region Assistant Commissioner role for an extended period.

In 2016 I was promoted to Assistant Commissioner in Far Northern Region. A highlight here was the opportunity to lead a contingent of 180 Australian firefighters in a multi service Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) deployment to British Columbia over the Canadian wildfire season in 2017.

As the Assistant Commissioner, my intention is to continue the Rural Fire Service (RFS) journey based on the genuine mutual respect between staff and volunteers. This journey will be based on our agreed Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) values of trust, respect, integrity, courage, and loyalty.

My vision for RFS is to create and open and engaged environment towards building Queensland’s volunteer-based organisation of choice. Gathering our QFES learnings from the Working for Queensland and Volunteer Satisfaction surveys, the departmental Strategy 2030, and Volunteerism Strategy, my vision is to focus on:

- Embracing: respecting, recognising and rewarding our people appropriately; utilising bought life experiences ensuring that the volunteer experience is enhanced, valued, and mutually beneficial.
- Empowering: working collaboratively to ensure that QFES and the communities of Queensland understand the work and value of volunteer roles to build stronger communities.
- Enhancing that a volunteer lens is applied to all QFES activities, ensuring that initiatives are appropriately resourced along with clear training platforms.
- Creating real opportunities for our RFS volunteers to excel by applying flexible volunteering options, building a culture of genuine engagement and a commitment to innovation and encouraging best practice.

I look forward to the opportunity to meet all of our volunteers in the coming years.

Fire Season 2019

The 2019 fire season is looking to once again bring significant fire risk state-wide. In late June, the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre in conjunction with QFES’s Predictive Services Unit released the Northern Australia Seasonal Bushfire Outlook.

Since 1990, Queensland has seen a trend of fire seasons starting earlier and persisting longer, and this year the outlook predicts an increased likelihood of warmer and drier conditions during this bushfire season. The report details, in particular, an above normal fire potential is expected in forests areas along the coast from Rockhampton through to the New South Wales border as well as in woodland and grass vegetation areas inland in the south of Queensland and a small area west of Mackay and in the south west of Cape York. While conditions are not predicted to be as extreme as the 2018-19 season, QFES are continuing to prepare for all eventualities.

I urge all of our volunteers to look out for each other as the fire season continues and we contribute to the protection and safety of Queensland communities, whether it be through responding to emergency situations, supporting crews on the ground or delivering community messaging.

I would also like to acknowledge the work that has been carried out throughout the 2019 Operation Cool Burn. This year, QFES has aimed to prioritise our hazard reduction activities to best reduce the risk to Queensland communities during the upcoming bushfire season.

John Bolger
Assistant Commissioner
Rural Fire Service State
In June 2019, the Rural Fire Service (RFS) said farewell to Assistant Commissioner Gary McCormack who headed north to take commence his new role as Assistant Commissioner North Coast Region.

Gary commenced his career with the Queensland Fire Service in 1994 as an auxiliary firefighter in North Coast Region, before joining Brisbane Region as a permanent firefighter in 1995. Gary served the department at both the state and regional level. During his time with the RFS, Gary has been employed as the State Manager Mitigation and Education, Regional Manager, Director Rural Operations and most recently as the Acting Assistant Commissioner.

In his operational and leadership capacity, Gary has participated in multiple interstate deployments to bushfire emergencies in New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia. In 2015, Gary performed the role of Taskforce Commander leading a team of 83 personnel as the inaugural Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) response into Western Australia. During the unprecedented bushfire period and North Queensland monsoonal flooding events on 2018-19, Gary took on the role of QFES Commander State Operations, providing emergency leadership capabilities.

Gary has a broad range of academic achievements that include a Graduate Certificate in Applied Management, Advanced Diploma in Public Safety, Archerfield Executive Leaders Program and Executive Masterclass Program, Australian and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG) Strategic Leaders Program, Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) Foundations of Directorship, Level 3 Incident Management Residential Program and Advanced Incident Leadership Residential Program.

Additionally, Gary has represented QFES on multiple boards and committees over many years at a departmental, state and national level. These include the National Fire Danger Ratings System Program Board, National Aerial Firefighting Council Board, National Information and Warnings Steering Committee, Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authority Council (AFAC) Senior Officers Cohort and chairperson of the State Interdepartmental Committee for Bushfires (SIDC).

The RFS would like to thank Assistant Commissioner McCormack for his commitment to the RFS and his passion for volunteerism. RFS wishes him every success with his future endeavours however looks forward to continuing to work with him as part of the QFES team.

2019 Queensland Volunteer of the Year

Lyn French of the Gilberton Rural Fire Brigade (RFB) in Far North Queensland was bestowed the 2019 Queensland Volunteer of the Year Award in May as part of National Volunteer Week celebrations. Lyn is not only a Rural Fire Service (RFS) volunteer, but also gives her time to The Royal Flying Doctor Service, Angel Flights and many more volunteer organisations. Notably, Lyn has spent years volunteering with remote education organisations before establishing Aussie Helpers Volunteers for Isolated Student Education.

She was congratulated during the selection process and at the award presentation for her lifetime of volunteerism.

“Thank you, Lyn for the extraordinary gift of service you so generously give to others. You are an example to fellow Queenslanders. Through your inspiring examples, I hope that others who are yet to experience the richness of volunteering will be motivated to give it a go.” – Volunteering Queensland CEO, Mara Basanovic

Lyn has been a member of the Gilberton RFB since 1990.

Lyn's tireless work volunteering across an array of organisations has proven her to be a worthy recipient of such an award.
From Small Seeds

Just over ten years ago an inspiration became a reality – the idea of creating a partnership: Rural Fire Service (RFS) and the Department Education and Training (DET) to deliver the Certificate II Public Safety Firefighting Operations Program. Caboolture Area Training and Support Officer (ATSO), Graham King looked at the goals of the organisations and believed he had a solution to increase young volunteers in the RFS. The program aims to invest in youth by building the next generation of Emergency Service volunteers and providing a way for DET to increase school leaver’s credits towards their Queensland Certificate of Education. As a result, the Certificate II Public Safety (Firefighting Operations) was introduced. This partnership has demonstrated its ability to be a long-term relationship through the years it has now been running.

2010 saw the first intake of volunteers from Kilcoy State High School (SHS). Each year, students are released from their studies to participate in the Certificate II Program. “The program goes from strength to strength. Word of mouth has students eagerly waiting for the following year’s intake,” said ATSO Graham King.

“Volunteers or students rigorously participate in both theoretical and practical aspects of the program. “Upon successful completion, participating students are awarded a nationally recognised PUA20713 Certificate II in Public Safety (Fire Fighting Operations).”

“The certificate involves completion of 11 units: four core units plus seven elective units. Young volunteers also join a Rural Fire Brigade and become an active fire fighter,” he said.

“Generally, a minimum of 17, six-hour days (over a school year) are required for the completion of the program.

“Students commit to additional training delivered at brigade level. Community activities such as under eights day, the local show, fetes, and ANZAC day events are part of this commitment. Opportunities have also arisen to participate in Police-Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYC) Cadet Games and ESCape Week.”

The program was rolled out across the state following the success of the Kilcoy pilot program. In 2011 Graham was awarded the Minister’s Award for Excellence in Community Safety – Certificate II Senior School Program.

As a member of the RFS, students have the opportunity to work as part of a team; developing skills but most importantly, making friends and networking within their community. This program enhances skills such as team building, following direction, decision making, working under pressure, and taking responsibility that will assist young volunteers in all walks of life. It also enhances the self-esteem of individuals. One volunteer wrote, “Volunteering has increased my experience and the pride I take in my work.” The focus on volunteering and working in the local and wider communities provides a spotlight on meeting the needs of others. Chris Tucker, Head of Department at Kilcoy SHS, has worked with RFS staff for ten years. “The program successfully develops skills and attitudes that are the foundation of successful careers. It is not about the piece of paper that is achieved that is important, it is all about recognising a sense of belonging.”

Local brigades, Villeneuve, Hazeldean, Belthorpe, Mount Kilcoy, Delaneys Creek, Wamuran, Stanmore and Kilcoy Auxiliaries provide support through mentoring and the provision of resources. At the end of the year many brigades take on the students as additional firefighters. Several of the volunteers from the first intakes are still active in their brigades and those who have moved believe the skills and teamwork gained from their participation has been most beneficial in their life endeavours. Young volunteers who have completed the program utilised the skills gained in their chosen career pathways including entry into Military Services, Auxiliary Firefighter and university studies. One parent wrote a letter of congratulations to the Caboolture Area Director stating, “I believe this course has given my son the courage to become a volunteer in the community now and into the future.”

The program has been marketed widely with Channel Nine coverage as well as a variety of magazines and newspapers that are distributed locally and nationally.

2019 marks 10 years since this beginning and planning is well underway for a reunion at Kilcoy SHS on Saturday 19 October from 12noon – 3pm. All past participants are invited to attend and take a walk down memory lane.

Graham King said he was very proud of all students and mentors and of the way they had committed to the outcomes of the program. “I am extremely pleased with the motivation and willingness of each group. “We will be relying on this generation to fill many of the volunteer positions and through their involvement in this program the young volunteers receive an excellent grounding in RFS and develop a taste for further opportunities,” he said.

An idea that began with small seeds of thought has sprouted and flourished.

Brenda King
Auxiliary Support Officer
Fire and Rescue Service
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) highly values the range of Australian honours available to our staff and volunteers and the department is committed to upholding the integrity of these awards. It is essential that nominees meet not only the service criteria for the National Medal, but that their conduct over the period is in alignment with QFES’ values.

As such, there are procedures in place to ensure all applications are accurate and complete. National Medal nominations are vetted by QFES Honours and Awards before being provided to the Commissioner QFES for endorsement. The nominations are then progressed to the Governor-General in Canberra in accordance with Section 16 of the National Medal Regulations 2011.

Where applicants seek to utilise service from agencies external to QFES toward their National Medal and/or clasp nomination, the applicant is required to seek formal confirmation from that agency that the service complies with all eligibility criteria.

A statement from the agency, must be provided with the nomination confirming:

- the start and end dates of eligible service
- the service meets the eligibility criteria in accordance with the National Medal Regulations 2011, including serving the organisation diligently as detailed in Section 17(4), and
- the agency supports the period of service being used towards a National Medal and/or clasp nomination.

Applicants using service with the Australia Defence Force will only require a Statement of Eligible Service to be submitted with their nomination. The statement can be obtained by emailing adm.ls@defence.gov.au.

For further information, please contact QFES Honours and Awards on 07 3635 2222 or via email at QFES.HonoursandAwards@qfes.qld.gov.au.
On Thursday 11 July 2019, a combined training exercise was held in Millstream that included the Ravenshoe auxiliaries, North Millstream, Tumoulin and Stony Batter Rural Fire Brigades.

The Millstream area incorporates farms and rural residential properties meaning Ravenshoe Auxiliaries and the local rural brigades often work closely together. The training exercise was organised to improve operational skills with a focus on safety at structure fires. The exercise allowed participants to familiarise themselves with the working practices and equipment on both Rural Fire Service (RFS) and Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) appliances to ensure a more complete approach during future incident response.

The scenario in play detailed that the brigades had turned out to a grass fire on a remote rural property. On arrival at the scene, the initially reported grass fire has enveloped a nearby structure with reports of an injured missing person. A Fire and Rescue appliance arrives. In the training, the brigades were trained to safely assist the auxiliary firefighters when dealing with a remote structure fire, including the associated dangers with structure fires such as smoke and the safe positioning of appliances. The brigades were also shown how they can assist in maintaining a water supply for fire suppression activities if a remote property does not have access to a reticulated water supply.

The Innisfail Area Office hope to run similar exercises again with other local brigades in the near future.

Chris Allman
Acting Brigade Training and Support Officer, Innisfail Area Rural Fire Service
Bushfire Risk Mitigation Plans

The Cairns Rural Fire Service (RFS) Area Office is proud to continue to develop important stakeholder relationships in support of local communities.

In July the Mapoon Fire Management Group met to consider a Bushfire Risk Mitigation Plan for 2019. An integral part of this group is the excellent working relationship between staff of the Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council and the Mapoon Land and Sea Ranger Group. The Fire Management Group endorsed the 2019 Bushfire Risk Mitigation Plan. It has since been forwarded to the Mapoon Local Disaster Management Group.

The Weipa Fire Management Group also met in July to consider a Bushfire Risk Mitigation Plan to cover the Weipa Town Authority (WTA) area. RFS Staff from Cairns worked through Operational Cool Burn concepts and reporting, with members of the WTA Management Executive, and acknowledge the ongoing hazard mitigation activities undertaken by staff from Rio Tinto. The Weipa Fire Management Group endorsed the 2019 Bushfire Risk Mitigation Plan; that has since been forwarded to the Weipa Local Disaster Management Group.

Peter Ruddick
Area Director, Cairns Area
Rural Fire Service

The Bunya Mountains have a long history as a meeting place for Indigenous Tribes living in the South East. The Bunya Mountains Rural Fire Brigade take great pride in assisting to protect this historic site, working in conjunction with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and the Murray Rangers to manage the risk of fire on this landscape.

On 17 July 2019, the brigade conducted a 25 hectare hazard reduction burn on the Bunya Mountains site to prepare for the upcoming bushfire season.

Martin Taylor
Area Director, Burnett Area
Rural Fire Service
Weipa Fire Management Group Meeting

The Weipa Fire Management Group met in July 2019 to consider a Bushfire Risk Mitigation Plan to cover the Weipa Town Authority (WTA) area in 2019. Rural Fire Service staff from Cairns worked through Operation Cool Burn concepts and reporting, with members of the WTA Management Executive, and acknowledged the ongoing hazard mitigation activities undertaken by staff from Rio Tinto. The Weipa Fire Management Group endorsed the 2019 Bushfire Risk Mitigation Plan; that has since been forwarded to the Weipa Local Disaster Management Group.

Peter Ruddick
Area Director, Cairns Area
Rural Fire Service

New Rural Fire Brigade at Mapoon

A visit to the small community of Mapoon in July has proven the catalyst to complete formalities for the establishment of the Mapoon Rural Fire Brigade (RFB), with official documentation now formally endorsed. The Mapoon RFB receives strong support from the Mapoon Aboriginal Council that has built a four bay storage building to act as an emergency services facility. The Rural Fire Service Cairns Area Office has moved to support the community with the provision of a Slip-On Unit followed by a further visit by training staff to deliver Firefighter Minimum Skills training for all members of the brigade. Congratulations Mapoon Rural Fire Brigade.

Peter Ruddick
Area Director, Cairns Area
Rural Fire Service

Tinbeerwah and District Rural Fire Brigade

The Tinbeerwah Rural Fire Brigade (RFB) formed in September 1980 to service the then sparsely populated area west of Noosa. With an old land rover as its only firefighting appliance, it served the community during the early years. A second, international truck was later purchased to support the brigade. In 1997 Tinbeerwah took possession of a new Isuzu medium appliance which resulted in the retirement of the old international truck. Since then the Tinbeerwah brigade has updated its fleet of vehicles to include a 65 - 4,000 litre heavy attack, a 41 - Nissan Patrol and a 51 - twin cab vehicle.

Tinbeerwah and District amalgamated with its neighbouring Cooroibah RFB in late 2018, due to falling numbers within the Cooroibah brigade. The amalgamation has substantially increased the service delivery to both the Tinbeerwah and Cooroibah areas. This amalgamation now sees the Tinbeerwah and District RFB with two stations for incident response and the responsibility for the education of residents and protection of property covering 12,000 hectares of rural land.

Following the amalgamation, the brigade now has a fleet of five vehicles. The newest addition to the fleet is the extra cab high pressure Ford Ranger 42, delivered in July 2019

The Tinbeerwah and District brigade trains twice a month. With 30 highly trained professional firefighters, the brigade is ready to defend the local and wider communities of the Sunshine Coast and other areas of Queensland when needed.

Ken Stockton
Second Officer
Tinbeerwah and District Rural

Members of the Mapoon RFB Management Committee discuss strategy ahead of a community meeting and recruitment drive.

Mapoon RFB First Officer Lee Ase addresses a community meeting in Mapoon as part of a membership drive for the newly formed brigade.
North Coast Emergency Services Community Expo

The North Coast Emergency Services Community Expo was held at the Sunshine Coast Stadium, Kawana on Sunday 19 May 2019. The aim of the expo was to encourage the people of the Sunshine Coast to become a more resilient, disaster prepared community and to showcase the organisations that work in the emergency services field in a fun and interactive way.

A diverse range of emergency service displays, simulations and demonstrations brought awareness and appreciation of the skills each of the services require every day to keep the community safe. Queensland Fire and Emergency Services was represented by all three streams, the Rural Fire Service (RFS), State Emergency Service and Fire and Rescue Service. The Queensland Police Service and Queensland Ambulance Service were also in attendance.

The demonstrations by RFS included a static display of appliances with a new Isuzu dual cab, an old Canter, and a retired 1942 Chevy blitz from the Landsborough Rural Fire Brigade (RFB). The Chevy was converted to a firefighting appliance in the early 90s and was in service until 2000. The Glass House Mountains RFB was also in attendance. As the first registered brigade in Queensland they attended with an historic display of newspaper articles outlining their history and showcased some of the firefighting equipment used in the early days of the brigade. RFS also provided demonstrations using the bushfire simulator and delivered community awareness with many brigade members from local brigades in attendance to answer questions and provide information to the public.

The highlight for the crowd was a Helitak demonstration assisted by the Caloundra Airbase Operators team. This was a training exercise for new members and skills maintenance for the more experienced volunteers. The Helicopter spent two hours at the site with water bombing simulations, taking water from a portable buoy well and doing two drops on the sports field upon arrival. It then landed and was available for the public to inspect. Upon departure, the helicopter performed two more water bombing displays before returning to the airbase.

The day was a great success with several thousand people in attendance.

Nigel Terrell
Acting Brigade Training and Support Officer
Caloundra Area, Rural Fire Service
Operation Cool Burn 2019

Operation Cool Burn (OCB) officially ended on 31 August 2019. There are still some final activity reports coming in however we do know that over 175 high risk locations were identified across the state through the use of Area Fire Management Groups. To reduce the risks at these sites, over 300 mitigation activities were planned, including hazard reduction burns, targeted education activities, and improvements to fire control lines. The delivery of these activities is a cooperative effort between Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) and our land management agency partners.

Queensland is a big state and in 2019, as with every year, not all activities could be completed. In some areas it rapidly became too dry to burn safely. In other areas, although precious few in 2019, it was too wet early on and then dried out rapidly giving a very short window of opportunity to complete Hazard Reduction Burns. Some of these remaining activities will now be completed before or during next year’s OCB.

What we can be sure of is that all of the completed activities assist in recuing risk for the 2019 bushfire season. I would like to thank all of the QFES team members who have contributed to OCB 2019 and also acknowledge the great work of our partners. This cooperation is building each year and is key to helping keep our communities safe.

This year there has been increased use of predictive tools to support burning operations. Hopefully many of you will have seen some of the great work that our Predictive Services Unit has done in preparing fire behaviour tools to support decision making in the field. These predictive tools are well known in the response phase of bushfire management but are also increasingly used in planning and implementing prescribed burns and I encourage everyone managing a burn to use them during both the planning and implementation process.

As we know, bushfire mitigation occurs throughout the year but regardless of whether the activities happened during OCB or at another time it is important to remember that these activities can reduce risk, but they don’t eliminate it. As we are now in bushfire season, it is critical that all QFES staff and volunteers, our partners and Queensland communities remain vigilant and prepared for the fires that the season may bring.

Thanks again for all your help during OCB. Let’s stay safe and look after each other and our communities during what is shaping up as another active bushfire season.

James Haig
Executive Manager Bushfire Mitigation
Rural Fire Service
The State Air Operations Unit (SAOU) has had an incredibly busy 12 months and would like to express its thanks to all the crews in Queensland for their continued support of aircraft not only during the 2018-19 fire season, but from years past. The SAOU had many firsts in the last 12 months, which put to the test the aviation capability of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES).

**Inter State Support**

The use of the Large Air Tankers (LATs) brought up from New South Wales provided many learning opportunities for the SAOU. The unit has since implemented a range of systems to ensure that we can appropriately support the LATs in the event this resource is again loaned to QFES. The LATs were an asset that was extensively utilised in Central and Brisbane Regions throughout the fire season. The supporting airports and drop coordination crews displayed their expertise in turning these large machines around to respond within 15 minutes. The SAOU welcomes any feedback regarding how these aircraft were perceived by the crews on the fire grounds.

Another first was the extensive use of Line-scanning aircraft, also borrowed from New South Wales. These aircraft provide a high altitude thermal “photocopy” of the ground which accurately locates the fire it is flying over, and the area of greatest intensity to assist the Predictive Services Unit in projecting a fire’s growth and movement. This information was available within 15 minutes of the fire being overflown. QFES had used this capability in previous years, however technological limitations meant the system integration was not fully available. We are now investigating current solutions across the country and will be attempting to utilise this capability in the future.

**National Aerial Firefighting Centre Contract Aircraft**

The SAOU has put further work into ensuring that the aircraft requirements for all QFES regions are pre-planned and available for response. For the purposes of regional planning and awareness, the SAOU will have contracted aircraft on standby at the following locations:

- **Toowoomba Regional Airport (QFES Hangar, B22, Spitfire Street, Wilsonton)**
  - Two Bell 214B Helitak Water Bombers (Rotary Wing, 2,650 litre capacity)
  - One Eurocopter AS355 “Twin” Squirrel (Rotary Wing, Air Attack Platform)
  - Two AirTractor AT-802 Water Bombers (Fixed Wing, 3,200 litre capacity)
  - One Aero Commander S500 (Fixed Wing, Air Attack Platform)

- **Bundaberg Airport (Monduran Building, Bundaberg Aero Club)**
  - One Bell 214B Helitak Water Bomber (Rotary Wing, 2,650 litre capacity)
  - One Eurocopter AS355 “Twin” Squirrel (Rotary Wing, Air Attack Platform)

QFES crews are also rostered on these aircraft to ensure fast service delivery. These aircraft will be available on rapid response for a 12 week period from mid-August or early September. We encourage their use and calling early has historically shown to be the most effective means of using these aircraft.

**Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems**

There have been many discussions regarding Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS), more commonly referred to as Drones. QFES is currently working towards an effective way of utilising this capability, however there are some issues that must first be addressed before they can legally be used. Before RPAS is incorporated into QFES’s standard functions, the department must become a certified aircraft company. RPAS are legally considered aircraft and are required to be operated under a commercial certificate according to federal legislation. Although a fire and emergency service agency, QFES does not have an exemption to this legislation. These legislative measures are being addressed and further advice will be provided when the operation of drones is permitted.

The SAOU would also like to request the assistance of regions to identify the illegal use of RPAS. There have been several occasions during the last two fire seasons where illegal drones were airborne at the same time as QFES aircraft. This presents a hazard to the manned aircraft and increases the risk of injury to ground and air crew if the RPAS were to be hit. If a drone is sighted at a QFES incident, immediately notify the Officer In Charge to ensure appropriate safety measures are maintained. QFES anticipates notification to all ground crews if a departmental drone is deployed.

Inspector Martin Gibson
Manager Air Operations
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

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**State Air Desk**

The State Air Desk contact number has been updated:

**STATE AIR DESK – (07) 3635 1400**

The updated number allows for a faster response from the State Air Desk.
The Kilcoy Showgrounds was a hive of activity on Saturday 20 July as firefighters from across the district took part in Operation Ice Breaker. This training exercise was planned months in advance, but the weather seemed to know what was happening with South East Queensland facing the biggest cold snap of the season.

Rural and auxiliary firefighters met prior to the commencement of the bush fire season to familiarise themselves with the other service's appliances, refresh their skills and drills and meet each other off the fireground. All firefighters have the same goal: to protect and preserve life, property and environment. Firefighters worked together demonstrating teamwork and productivity, an invaluable lesson should we encounter a severe bushfire season. This familiarisation of personnel with different appliances and equipment is vital to safety in the occurrence of a major incident or disaster. Efficiency and time management being critical factors in response to emergencies.

The exercise was organised by Area Training and Support Officer, Graham King supported by Caboolture Area Director, Konrad Sawczynski and the Rural Fire Service Stanley Rivers Group. Graham said he was exhilarated to see such wonderful camaraderie between the different brigades.

“One is hopeful that the bushfire season won't be severe, but, knowing the skills and teamwork that is evident here today, we are positive that we will be prepared for the season,” ATSO Graham King said. This training exercise brought together firefighters from Hazeldean, Villeneuve, Mount Kilcoy, Bellthorpe, Stoney Creek, Ten Mile, Delaneys Creek and Wamuran Rural Fire Brigades as well as the Kilcoy Auxiliaries. In a fun and educational manner crews were tasked with operating portable pumps, using multiple hoses to extinguish a fire, using fire extinguishers and Case 1/3. Teams of firefighters used ingenuity and creativity to problem solve, with firefighters managing to achieve the goals of the events with some light-hearted fun thrown in for good measure.

Councillors Deputy Mayor Dan Hall and Cheryl Gaedke attended the training day providing support and encouragement. The Somerset Council provided the venue free of charge.

The real aim of the exercise was to bring together firefighters, providing the opportunity to meet new people, experiencing unfamiliar equipment and work outside comfort zones – breaking ice!

Brenda King
Auxiliary Support Officer
Fire and Rescue Service

Appliance handover – Maryborough Area

On Tuesday 16 July, the Maryborough Fire and Rescue Service Station hosted an appliance handover. The Honourable Craig Crawford, Minister for Fire and Emergency Services and Gary McCormack, Assistant Commissioner North Coast Region proudly handed over the keys to three new Rural Fire Service light attack appliances to the River Heads Kingfisher, Takura, and Tiana Rural Fire Brigades. The new appliances provide high pressure water systems to support continued service to the communities.

Ross Stacey
Acting Area Director
Maryborough Area, Rural Fire Service

Brenda King
Auxiliary Support Officer
Fire and Rescue Service
Recognising Service

The Mackay Rural Fire Service (RFS) Area Office recently had the privilege of hosting three exciting events in support of ceremonies our local Rural Fire Brigades (RFBs).

The first event was held at the Seaforth Town Rural Fire Brigade Station where the brigade was recognised for giving over 140 years of combined service to the RFS and the Seaforth Community. Three new appliances were also officially handed over to the brigade.

The second event saw the opening of the new Calen and Camerons Pocket Rural Fire Brigade Station. Mackay Mayor Greg Williamson was in attendance and took the opportunity to thank volunteers for the great work they undertake on behalf of their community, making particular note of the dedication they demonstrated during the 2018 catastrophic fires.

The third event was held at the Dumbleton Rural Fire Brigade Station where 255 years of combined service was celebrated with the presentation of Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) medals and National Service Medals. The brigade also took possession of four new medium attack in an official handover. Julianne Gilbert MP thanked the collective volunteers for their endeavours and dedication in trying times and for the many years of service that have been quietly performed by volunteers in support of Queensland communities.

Glass House Mountains RFB, 70 years and going strong

2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the Rural Fire Service (RFS) in Queensland. As the first registered brigade in Queensland, Glass House Mountains also celebrated their 70th anniversary on the 30 June 2019. A celebration was held at the Glass House Mountains brigade station with a long list of dignitaries and invited guests.

The official ceremony included a brief history of the brigade, a cake cutting ceremony, medal presentations to local volunteers and some new appliance handovers. The cake was cut by the honourable Chris Whiting MP, who was ably assisted by two of the longest serving Glass House Mountains volunteers Charles Pike and David Gower.

Emanuel Bugenja, serving his community since 1975.

Combined 140 years of service to the Seaforth community.

Armies new Medium Attack appliance, one of seven appliances officially handed over during the ceremonies.

“Cuzzi” Joe Muscat is awarded the QFES medal.

Nigel Terrell
Acting Brigade Training and Support Officer
Caloundra Area, Rural Fire Service
North Coast Region Burning for Outcomes

In 2016 Rural Fire Service (RFS) North Coast Region conducted two ‘Burning for Outcomes’ (BFO) pilot workshops at Howard and Bungadoo, in partnership with the Burnett Mary Resource Group. These workshops were delivered by now Mackay Area Director, Andrew Houley.

Superintendent Hollier instigated the project to support continued knowledge on how to plan and conduct prescribed burning within the peri-urban zones and growing rural residential areas of the North Coast Region. The aim of the workshops was to provide brigade First Officers with tools to assist in decision making around prescription burning and an understanding of the application of the Burnett Mary Fire Management Guideline (FMG) as a tool to support RFBS, Fire Wardens and fire practitioners in this planning process. Feedback from the First Officers attending was extremely positive with strong endorsement for the program to be developed further and rolled out across the region.

Dave Morton, First Officer of the Bungadoo RFB, wrote an article titled ‘Helping Landowners Make Better Decisions’ which was published in the September 2018 edition of the Rural Fire Bulletin. In the article Dave described how Bungadoo RFB had applied the lessons and outlined a case study of working with a landowner in the North Coast Region. The aim of the workshops was to provide an appropriate fire management plan for the property.

**Project Development**

Following the initial workshops, Andrew Marnie was appointed as the Project Officer to develop the BFO Student Resource and two-day workshop under the guidance of Superintendent Peter Hollier.

The aims of the project were to develop:
- A short course targeting Queensland volunteers who have completed the Crew Leader Course, introducing them to the relevant Fire Management Guidelines as a tool to assist with the planning and conduct of a prescribed burn to achieve specific conservation, production and/or hazard reduction outcomes. It would also provide participants with an introduction to, and an understanding of a range of fire lighting patterns.
- A Student Learning Resource to support this course.

The BFO Project has delivered:
- Tools to assist with the planning and delivery of prescribed burns to deliver conservation, production, and hazard reduction outcomes.
- An awareness of the national, state and regional goals, principles, policy, strategy, and frameworks that impact on the planning and delivery of prescribed burning and bushfire management.
- An introduction to and understanding of how to use the relevant regional/catchment/species specific Fire Management Guidelines.
- An introduction to and understanding of, Australian Indigenous Cultural Burning Practice as well as an understanding of the protocols of engaging with Traditional Owners.
- An awareness of the partner agencies RFS volunteers are likely to work with, their roles and responsibilities relating to prescribed burning and bushfire management.
- An introduction to Queensland and Interstate Case Studies.
- Access to a range of on-line resources.
- A range of resource materials for future reading and guidance (take away USB).

**Bundaberg Pre-Season Workshop**

On the 27 and 28 July 2019, a session was held in Bundaberg as part of the area First Officers Pre-Season workshop. The Saturday afternoon session saw Andrew Marnie provide an overview of the project as well as how to use the Burnett Mary Fire Management Guidelines. Dave Morton, First Officer Bungadoo RFB, then explained how he had applied the Guidelines when engaging with landholders for a hazard reduction burn (HRB) and were now using the information to plan HRBs in their area for the next five to seven years. Dave’s presentation was well received and provide the link between the guidelines and their application on the ground.

On Sunday morning the participants were joined by Les Francis, North Coast Region Zone Officer, and visited three sites on Goodwood Road about 15 kilometres south of Bundaberg in melaleuca (paperbark) dominant bush:
- Site 1 – very hot bushfire eight weeks prior,
- Site 2 – very hot bushfire 16 months prior (dominant tree now eucalypt with little or no melaleuca regeneration), and
- Site 3 – no sign of recent (under 10 years) of bushfire activity (adjacent to site two)

At sites two and three, the impact of fire,

**Bundaberg Pre-Season Workshop**

Brigades discussing the planning of a conservation HRB changes in the vegetation structure and dominant species were discussed. Participants then split into two groups to develop prescription for a hazard mitigation HRB and an environmental management prescribed burn.

Feedback for the participants indicated strong support for the workshops and that they would now be using the guidelines when working with landholders to plan HRBs in their areas.

**The Future**

North Coast Region aim to deliver a series of workshops to the volunteers and staff in the region from the beginning of Operation Cool Burn in 2020.

Andrew Marnie
Bushfire Safety Officer (Projects)
North Coast Region, Rural Fire Service

A cool burn by Bungadoo RFB guide by the landscape specific Fire Management Guidelines
Mount Maurice – Looking to the Future

There’s something in the water at Mount Maurice. Since January 2019 the brigade has seen the number of active members rise by nearly 40 per cent, with 25 new members signing up. This is no mean feat, considering that only three years ago the brigade was on the verge of having to close its doors.

Long standing member and current brigade Chairperson Pieter Withoos explained that the brigade was essentially non-functional at one point, suffering from many of the same issues that brigades can face from time to time including low membership, poor motivation and no clear direction.

In 2016, the brigade was placed into administration, however with guidance by the local Rural Fire Service (RFS) Area Office, it has been able to establish a new management committee and set in motion a chain of events that has led to the revival of the brigade.

From then, Mount Maurice has gone forward in leaps and bounds. The brigade management committee, led by First Officer Peter Jackson, has set a clear purpose and direction for the brigade and its members. No longer would the brigade be scared of change, of learning, and of improvement. Feedback would be welcomed, and just as importantly, implemented. The creation of strong ties within the community, and strong communication channels at all levels have been hallmarks of this period of growth for the brigade.

The success of the recruitment of new volunteers can be attributed to several factors. Second Officer Ben McCarthy believes that this is due, most importantly, to the inclusive attitude that the brigade has wholly adopted - embracing the diversity and skillsets of each and every one of its members. This attitude is supported by their own brigade mission statement and core values that complement the Queensland Government Code of Conduct. Certainly, having a strong social media presence using targeted and timely messages which is led by the brigade secretary and social media guru Darren Oakey along with last years eventful fire season has also contributed.

The brigade is hoping to build a new purpose-built facility to replace the original station that was built in the 1970’s to house their growing membership and equipment to better serve their community.

What does the future hold for Mount Maurice Rural Fire Brigade and its dedicated volunteers? The possibilities are endless.

Sarah Toth
Brigade Training and Support Officer
Gladstone Area, Rural Fire Service

Bundaberg Area Medal Presentation and Appliance Handover

On Wednesday 17 July 2019, the Honourable Craig Crawford, Minister for Fire and Emergency Services attended a medal presentation and appliance handover at the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) complex in Bundaberg.

Eight Rural Fire Service (RFS) medium attack appliances were presented to the Calavos, Tirroan, Gregory River, South Kolan, Bithumba, Avondale, Moore Park and Wallaville Rural Fire Brigades. Several QFES Medals, National Medals and Clasps were also presented on the day to both RFS and Fire and Rescue personnel.

Bruce Thompson
Area Director Bundaberg
Rural Fire Service

Bundaberg Area First Officers Workshop

On Saturday 27 July 2019, 30 First Officers or nominated brigade representatives from the Bundaberg Area attended the First Officers Workshop. Ben Twomey from Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) Predictive Services Unit (PSU) shared his insight into the predictive modelling of fire behaviour and fire weather as well as highlighting tools available to brigades such as SABRE.

Firecom North Coast Manager Trish Whitehead and Supervisor Dan Sandeman explained their roles working at Firecom, the challenges of the job and how rural fire brigades can work together to ensure more effective communication.

Acting Regional Manager Kay Healing addressed some of the things happening at the regional level and answered questions, while Andrew Marnie and Dave Morton presented a Burning for Outcomes session that included a practical guide on how to tailor prescribed burns to the needs of the landowner and in keeping with best practice of the vegetation type.

Peter Carlsen
Brigade Training and Support Officer
Bundaberg Area, Rural Fire Service
The Rural Fire Service (RFS) was pleased to recognise and thank the valuable contribution made by all RFS volunteers, during RFS week, which ran from Sunday 1 September to Saturday 7 September 2019.

This year, RFS Week also gave us the opportunity to recognise our 70th anniversary, and celebrate those brigades celebrating 70 years of service to their communities.

On Monday 9 September, Rural Fire Service celebrated our volunteers and 70th Anniversary with a ceremony at the Emergency Services Complex at Kedron. Acting Deputy Commissioner John Bolger and Acting Assistant Commissioner Tony Johnstone presented plaques to representatives of the brigades celebrating 70 years in 2019. These brigades were:

- Glass House Mountains RFB
- Byfield RFB
- Gordonbrook RFB
- Kandanga RFB
- Lagoon Pocket RFB
- Thangool RFB.

The event also marked the presentation of the seven RFS Regional Volunteer of the Year Awards and the Assistant Commissioner RFS Volunteer of the Year, recognising volunteers who have demonstrated a special contribution to the service.

Congratulations to the following volunteers for their well-deserved recognition:

**South West Region and winner of the Assistant Commissioner RFS Volunteer of the Year Award**

**Cameron Young of Gladfield Maryvale RFB**

For outstanding commitment and diligence to the Rural Fire Service and the communities of Queensland, leading the members of the Gladfield Maryvale Rural Fire Brigade with composure, confidence, compassion and understanding.

**South East Region**

**David Stephens of the Coominya RFB**

For outstanding commitment to the Rural Fire Service in leading the Coominya Rural Fire Brigade as First Officer to protect the communities of Queensland’s South East Region.

**North Coast Region**

**Victor Cartwright of the Boolboonda RFB**

For outstanding commitment and service to the Boolboonda Rural Fire Brigade, providing support to the brigade and the community through fire operations, community education, and recruitment.

**Central Region**

**Alfred Young of Bondoola RFB**

For 16 years of dedicated service to the Bondoola Rural Fire Brigade, including a significant contribution as the treasurer to the Brigade.

**Northern Region**

**Paul Dunn of Black River RFB**

For excellence in operations, training and volunteer development within the Black River and Districts Rural Fire Brigade and the broader Townsville area.

**Brisbane Region**

**Noel Walker of Lamb Island RFB**

For enhancing the Lamb Island Rural Fire Brigade and supporting the Lamb Island community through collaboration with the Queensland Ambulance Service, implementation of disaster management protocols, involvement with community projects and increasing volunteer membership.

**Far Northern Region**

**John Lange of Wondecal RFB**

For outstanding commitment and service to the Boolboonda Rural Fire Brigade, providing support to the brigade and the community through fire operations, community education, and recruitment.

**Central Region**

**Alfred Young of Bondoola RFB**

For 16 years of dedicated service to the Bondoola Rural Fire Brigade, including a significant contribution as the treasurer to the Brigade.
Check your letterbox for blue card application forms

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) is a strong advocate for the protection of vulnerable people in our community, including children. Part of this advocacy means acting to ensure our department is doing all it can to help keep children safe.

Blue Cards are one of a range of measures in place to protect children, in addition to the Government’s “No Card, No Start” system, which goes live in early 2020. QFES has a legislative and shared responsibility to achieve the Government’s commitment.

There are over 30,000 QFES volunteers and staff who need to have a current blue card. This includes:
- All Rural Fire Service (RFS) volunteers, except members of Primary Producer Brigades and Fire Wardens who aren’t members of a Rural Fire Brigade
- All State Emergency Service (SES) volunteers
- All fire service officers engaged under the Fire and Emergency Service Act 1990 across the fire and rescue, communications, and scientific streams, and
- Some public service employees.

The roles requiring a blue card are continually assessed, and additional roles may require a blue card in the future.

What is the blue card check?

The blue card check involves an assessment of an individual’s eligibility to work with or around children or young people in our community, including children. The assessment will consider whether an individual is a risk to children and/or are unable to protect them if their past behaviour indicates that they could be.

The blue card check assesses:
- a risk to children and/or are unable to protect them if their past behaviour indicates that they could be
- are prevented from working with or around children

The roles requiring a blue card are continually assessed, and additional roles may require a blue card in the future.

What happens next?

Applications are received by the QFES Blue Card Hub, who are checking and processing applications through to Blue Card Services (Department of Justice and Attorney-General) as quickly as possible. Incorrect or incomplete applications will be returned to applicants to complete.

Blue Card Services will assess your eligibility to hold a blue card based on any known past police information. QFES does not receive any police information from Blue Card Services but will be notified of a negative notice outcome of your application or if your blue card is cancelled or suspended.

Blue Card Services will contact you directly on the outcome of your application. As a guide, you should allow at least 28 business days for applications to be processed through blue card screening.

Applications will take longer if forms are not completed correctly or if there is police information that must be retrieved and considered before Blue Card Services determines blue card eligibility.

The QFES Blue Card Hub can be reached at QFES.BlueCard@qfes.qld.gov.au if you have any further questions about the application process.

To apply:

1. Select and complete the relevant form:
   - Applying for a new blue card = Blue card application form; or
   - Current blue card holder = Link applicant/cardholder to this organisation form.

2. Ask a QFES colleague (volunteer or staff) to check and sign the Organisation Declaration.

3. Return your completed form before 1 December 2019 either via email to QFES.BlueCard@qfes.qld.gov.au, using the reply-paid envelope provided, or by addressing a letter to:

   QFES Blue Card Hub
   Human Capital Management
   Reply Paid 87663
   Brisbane QLD 4001
   (no stamps required to post within Australia).

If you receive the package but have already lodged your application, please disregard it, but for those who still need to apply, please complete it and post it back in the provided reply-paid envelope as soon as possible.

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   QFES Blue Card Hub
   Human Capital Management
   Reply Paid 87663
   Brisbane QLD 4001
   (no stamps required to post within Australia).

Please ensure forms are filled out correctly, as incorrect or incomplete forms will be returned.

One of the most common errors is the organisational declaration (Part F) being left unsigned – this can be signed by any current member of a Rural Fire Brigade or QFES and does not need to be a First Officer, Secretary, or staff member.

If you are also a SES volunteer, please include your SES membership number on the first page. This will enable the QFES Blue Card Hub to link your blue card to both RFS and SES.

Area Office staff will also be actively making sure that all applications are completed for their area to ensure everyone who needs a blue card has one by the cut-off.

This is important because all QFES volunteers and staff identified as requiring a blue card must be issued one to comply with the Queensland Government’s “No Card, No Start” system coming in early 2020.

Any QFES volunteer or staff member identified as requiring a blue card who does not have one by the introduction of the ‘No Card, No Start’ system will not be able to volunteer or work in certain positions within QFES.

What happens next?

Applications are received by the QFES Blue Card Hub, who are checking and processing applications through to Blue Card Services (Department of Justice and Attorney-General) as quickly as possible. Incorrect or incomplete applications will be returned to applicants to complete.

Blue Card Services will assess your eligibility to hold a blue card based on any known past police information. QFES does not receive any police information from Blue Card Services but will be notified of a negative notice outcome of your application or if your blue card is cancelled or suspended.

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The QFES Blue Card Hub can be reached at QFES.BlueCard@qfes.qld.gov.au if you have any further questions about the application process.

If you receive the package but have already lodged your application, please disregard it, but for those who still need to apply, please complete it and post it back in the provided reply-paid envelope as soon as possible.
**2019 Maryborough Pre-Fire Season Skills and Drills Day**

In preparation for the upcoming fire season, July saw the opportunity for Maryborough Area volunteers to attend a Skills and Drills Day held at the Curra Rural Fire Brigade (RFB) station. The aim of the event was to refresh skills and support volunteers before the upcoming fire season. The event was well attended with 67 volunteers from across 13 brigades.

The day was run holistically from an Incident Control Centre (ICC), requiring crews to arrive and provide a T-Card to staging. Attendees received Situation Mission Execution Administration/Logistics Command Signal (SMEACS) briefing and were divided into newly formed strike teams. This allowed volunteers from different brigades to mix and meet new faces while providing exposure to the functions relating to the sectorisation of a fireground.

The process displayed fireground command utilising sector commanders and the actions required whilst in charge of their allocated units, including information flow back to the ICC. Strike teams Romero 1, 2 and 3 Delta rotated throughout the three sectors attending the exercise stations and reporting back to ICC to simulate a fireground during an incident.

Sector Alpha comprised of pump and foam operations. This exercise provided the opportunity for volunteers to revisit and fine tune their pumping operations including exhibiting the capabilities of the new Medium Appliances. This also provided an opportunity to demonstrate the effective of foam branch expansions for fire operations.

Sector Bravo focused on strengthening awareness of inter-agency operations with fellow HQ Plantations and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) units. With representation from both agencies, topics included an introduction of their business focus (HQ Plantations pine production and QPWS conservation), fire season outlook, current operations, and fleet or equipment types. The station finished with intercommunication planning with both agencies through the use of the Government Wireless Network (GWN), Very High Frequency (VHF) (including QPWS and Forest Channels) and Ultra High Frequency (UHF) radio pathways.

Sector Charlie saw volunteers set up and use a radio repeater and Portable Automotive Weather Station (PAWS) to demonstrate how each piece of equipment can provide support to crews on the fireground. This included updated weather information directly accessible on the fireground with increasing communication platforms and the process of pushing this information out to incidents.

In addition, the Mount Kanigan Group 91 Support Vehicle showed the capability the vehicle now provides to the area. This was displayed through live map printing, connection of an Ipad, on-board printer and the extra equipment fitted to support volunteers with incident management.

The day concluded with a barbecue lunch and debrief. Feedback received from the volunteers in attendance has been positive and well received.

Brittany Lea-Hewson
Acting Brigade Training and Support Officer
Maryborough Area
Rural Fire Service

**Pump operations station demonstrating the capabilities of the new medium appliances and foam expansion branch.**

**Inter-agency operations / radio communications with local HQ Plantations and QPWS crew.**

**Local crews staging for briefing of Skills and Drills Day.**
On Friday 23 August 2019, the 2019 Volunteer Welfare and Efficiency Survey opened to all Australian fire service volunteers. Hosted by the Volunteers Fire Brigade Victoria (VFBV), the survey is designed to provide the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland Inc (RFBAQ) with feedback to focus attention on what is important to volunteers. The results of the survey will help identify areas of the volunteer service that are working well and areas that require further development. All survey responses are confidential.


Just before 1am on 9 July 2019, a fire broke out near the office and restaurant of the remote Adels Grove campsite located approximately 250 kilometres north-west of Mount Isa. The camping area was full with an estimated 400 campers on site. All campers were safely evacuated to the nearby airfield when the fire broke out.

Attending crews included Fire and Rescue unit 132 Alpha along with the Doomadgee, Lawn Hill and Burketown Rural Fire Brigades, Queensland Parks from Lawn Hill and Century Mine.

Despite the significant distance travelled by responding crews, the blaze was contained and the damage was limited. No injuries were reported. The campsite is still open for business.

“Many of the properties in our area at that time were mostly dairy farms. A lot of the farmers and their sons joined the brigade and formed the nucleus of the original Pimpama Rural Fire Brigade,” he said.

“When I got to a certain age, I just started going to the fires with dad.”

“You'd get a call to say there was a fire up the hill somewhere and we'd go - or dad would go and I'd milk the cows, or I would go and dad would stay home.”

Bevan says a lot has changed over the past 50 years, and since its’ inception, the brigade has overcome many challenges.

“I'm a great believer that there are fires within a community that define a brigade - they can show the community, we're ready for this,” he said.

“We had a fire in the year 2000 up in the hills which defined the Pimpama brigade. It went for 12 days... and the brigade really stood up.”

“It was that incident that just lifted the brigade in the eyes of the community and lifted the brigade within themselves.

When most people think of the Gold Coast, they imagine the sun, sand and salty sea breeze. But what about bushfire?

Ormeau Brigade’s Bevan Love has seen nearly 50 years’ worth of fires in the Gold Coast vicinity. And he’s watched the Rural Fire Service (RFS) evolve from humble beginnings into what it is now.

Bevan joined the Pimpama Rural Fire Brigade (now Ormeau RFB) at just 17 years old, following in the footsteps of his father, a farmer.

“All the training paid off - it was a huge fire, a lot of work. There was a wonderful community involvement, down to making sandwiches and looking after us and all things like that.”

Having experienced a number of bushfires over the years, Bevan says the job can be tough at times.

“There's dangers around the fire ground all the time. There's branches that could come down, and rocky parts where you could just lose your footing,” he said.

“It's not a glamorous place - a fire ground is a dangerous place.

“And the most important person on the whole fire ground is the guy standing next to you. You've got to look after his back and he'll look after yours.

“In the fire service, that's what we try and get across - look out for your mate.”

Although the journey has been challenging at times, Bevan says he is proud of his achievements in the RFS.

“The camaraderie and the friendships that I've made all through my career - it's been just great,” he said.

To anyone considering volunteering, Bevan believes it’s well worth the time.

“You never cease to be amazed by what a volunteer will do within the community.

“And you can't beat it - it's wonderfully fulfilling.”
Rural Fire Brigade Manual

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 Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) Policies and Procedures, State Standing Orders and Operations Doctrine.

An updated full version of the RFBM can be downloaded from the Gateway. We recommend 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 Gateway RFBM Updates page.

Minor Changes:
- A1.2 Hazard Reduction Programs
- A2.1 Operational Planning in the IZone
- B1.1 Deliver Community Education Presentations
- B1.1.1 Volunteer Community Educators
- C4.1 Delivery of Training
- C6.5 Newstart Allowance
- D3.4 Tax Deductible Donations
- D3.7 Brigade Grants
- D5.2.1 Volunteer Fleet Fuel and Maintenance

Archived:
- A3.1 QFES Doctrine Framework
- C5.1 Code of Conduct
- C6.3 Payroll Tax Exemptions for Employers of Volunteers
- D7.1 Rural Fire Bulletin

Forms:
- CSO 068 – Community Education Orders
- CSO 071 – VCE Community Education Booking Request (ARCHIVED)
- CSO 074 – Fire Danger Rating Roadside Signage Update and Maintenance Agreement
- OBM 053 – RFBS Change Proposal Checklist
- OBM 054 – Change Proposal Summary
- OBM 089 – RFS Assessment for Appliance Allocation
- OBM 086 – Queensland Rural Fire Brigades Volunteers Donations Fund Application Form

QFES Policy:
- 1.4. – Conflict of Interest
- 1.16. – Inclusion and Diversity
- 3.12. – Management of Complaints
- 4.3. – Information Asset Management
- 4.5. – Information Access and Use
- 6.9. – Procurement

QFES Procedures:
- PR2001.1.0 – Permits to Light Fire
- PR3013.1.1 – Cancellation of Honours and Awards
- PR2026.1.1 – Management of Complaints about Staff, Volunteers and Contractors
- S8001.1.0 – Classification of Fire Breaks and Fire Trail

Standing Orders:
- C1001.1.0 – Operation Redux
- SO-Q-OM-4.35 – RFS Tanker Appliance Response Protocols

Doctrine:
- Tactical Directive TacD 25.05.00 – Aircraft Ballistic Recovery System

Field Welfare Trailers

Providing welfare to crews operating in rural and remote locations across the state is an issue that many Incident Controllers are forced to navigate as part of operations. As an outcome of the 2018-19 fire season, two field catering trailers have been purchased and issued to the Clohesy Group and Tableland Lakes Group in Far Northern Region. The trailers are affectionately known as ‘Cookie Vans’ named after retired Group Officer Neil Cook who coined the idea number of years ago. While not designed to be a final catering solution the trailers are able to provide initial crew welfare until a more sustainable alternative can be organised.

Developed by a Queensland supplier, the field catering trailers are equipped with heavy-duty off-road tyres and suspension, drawer bar stone deflector, slide out barbeque, car fridge, esky, internal and external lighting and side awnings.

The units are fitted with solar panels as well as 240 volt inlet and smart charger to keep the on-board battery charged. There is a stainless-steel food preparation area, 70 litres of on-board water storage as well as a storage area for chairs and tables.

Designed with off road capabilities, the trailers can be used for all operational and training activities where crew welfare is required, including remote firefighting, search and rescue operations, as well as large protracted mitigation activities in remote locations.

Developed by a Queensland supplier, the field catering trailers are equipped with heavy-duty off-road tyres and suspension, drawer bar stone deflector, slide out barbeque, car fridge, esky, internal and external lighting and side awnings.
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<td>(07) 4232 5468</td>
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<td>(07) 4899 2200</td>
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<td>Caboolture Area Office</td>
<td>(07) 5420 3733</td>
<td><a href="mailto:RFSQ.Caboolture@qfes.qld.gov.au">RFSQ.Caboolture@qfes.qld.gov.au</a></td>
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