

# Fire & Rescue

October 2014

# News

## Operational Communications

Triple zero heroes

## FRNSW advisors support firefighting in the Solomons

## The Minister writes



Being appointed to the Police and Emergency Services portfolio has given me the opportunity to see the magnificent work done by all our emergency services and related agencies as they work tirelessly to protect the community of NSW.

The NSW Government is committed to ensuring our emergency services are well-resourced to meet the many challenges that they face. In the 2014/15 State Budget announced in June, the NSW Government provided \$665.5 million in funding for Fire & Rescue NSW. This included capital expenditure of \$70.6 million which includes \$17.7 million for the ongoing replacement of fire appliances, \$15.7 million for major works on new fire stations and upgrades to existing fire stations, and \$7.2 million for the structural firefighting helmet replacement program. On 9 July Commissioner Mullins and I visited the heritage-listed Pyrmont Fire Station to learn first hand about the planned major redevelopment of the station, and to meet with the firefighters on duty.

It has been very pleasing to see the concerted effort being put into by FRNSW and other emergency services into promoting prevention. The continuing downward trend in the number of house fires over the last five years is strong testament to the effectiveness of these programs. At FRNSW's 2014 Open Day on 17 May, I took the opportunity to visit Penrith Fire Station in my electorate and saw for myself the excellent work being done by firefighters in promoting fire safety messages to their community.

As one of the most trusted professions, I am sure firefighters will keep working hard to deliver timely effective emergency services to the people of NSW and to maintain the community's continued trust in them.

**Stuart Ayres MP**

Minister for Police and Emergency Services

## The Commissioner writes



In the 'What's new' section of the issue, we touch on the far-reaching changes in several key areas of what we do and how we operate.

The new Retained Award, which took effect in May, seeks to improve availability, increases pay and enables Retained Firefighters to achieve a better work/life balance than before. My thanks to everyone who played a part in bringing this to fruition, including the FBEU.

Last December we held a Rescue Summit to review FRNSW's rescue practices, resources and training. Following this summit, we initiated development of a rescue capability roadmap to ensure we continue to be a world class rescue service. This issue provides an update on this process and the expected timeframes.

This issue also contains a profile of Operational Communications and the superb work they do in handling emergency calls for the State and dispatching FRNSW resources. Our Comms Centre operators are well-trained and capable, efficiently and professionally handling hundreds of thousands of triple zero calls annually. The case studies in this profile are just two of a large number of incidents where the Comms Centres played a crucial part in saving lives.

Following several months of drier weather with above-average temperatures, there are strong indicators of a very challenging bushfire season ahead of us, and the first few days of August saw the first property losses – months earlier than we would expect. I take this opportunity to urge all stations to not only make sure your crews are ready for this bushfire season, but also to work hard at reminding your local communities of the critical importance of being prepared, particularly in areas of high bushfire risk.

**Greg Mullins AFSM**  
Commissioner

# In this issue



**23**

FRNSW in the media

**28**

Selling the safety message

**32**

Movement at the stations

**35**

This sporting life

**36**

Fundraising

## Other stories

The future of rescue	03
State Budget and highlights for FRNSW	03
New Retained Award introduced	04
Commissioner's Safety Awards established	05
Gas pipeline explosion	15
Survey on Victorian deployment	16
Tunnel exercise aims to prevent traffic woes	18
Regional Firefighter Championships	20
New guide makes talking to the media easier	23
Greenacre becomes Hollywood for a day	23
FRNSW featured in ABC Catalyst program	24
How to take a good photo or video	24
Live coverage – in high definition	26
2014 Open Day attracts record attendances	28
Firefighters enlist Aboriginal fire safety volunteers	31
Station centenaries celebrated with lion dances and historic fire engines	32
New station opened at Terrigal	32
Pymont Station redevelopment goes ahead after extensive consultation	32
Creative fire station noticeboards	33
Firefighter ironman breaks 9-hour barrier	35
'400 in 4' rides again	36
Runaway horses and rotary gongs	37
FRNSW staff awarded Queen's Birthday Honours	38
FRNSW 'Bravehearts' recognised on St Florian's Day	39
Other awards for FRNSW staff	41
Thank you from Victoria	42
Firefighters again voted as highly trusted	42
Japanese PM praises FRNSW	43
Social media says thank you	44
Deaths and retirements	45

## Incidents

7th Alarm fire in recycling plant at Somersby	06
5th Alarm factory fire and rescue at Alexandria	10
Firefighters use CPR and defibrillator to revive MVA victim	14
Cotton truck on fire at Mt Victoria	17
Rescuing a horse with an iPad	22
Highrise rescue of window cleaners in Sydney CBD	27
60 Avalon experiences 'that sinking feeling'!	34

## Send in your stories and photos

*Fire & Rescue News* is the internal news magazine of Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW). FRNSW Media & Communications Unit (MCU) wants to publicise the incidents your crew attended, and the achievements of your unit.

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### Fire & Rescue News

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## Follow FRNSW



The process of developing a Rescue Capability Roadmap for FRNSW has now entered the second of three major phases.

Following feedback from firefighters on issues relating to rescue capability, the Commissioner believed it was time to review FRNSW's rescue practices, resources and training, to ensure the organisation retains its standing as a world-class rescue service.

The first phase of the rescue review was the Rescue Summit held on 4 December 2013, followed by the publication of a report on the summit and gaining firefighter feedback on its key themes. This feedback, along with other feedback, has been analysed and will assist the next phase of the review.

The second phase of the rescue review process commenced in late July. Phase two includes the creation of a reference group who will provide assistance in developing the 2015 Rescue Roadmap for FRNSW.

The reference group is currently in the process of reviewing the outcomes of the summit, considering feedback received, identifying priorities and assisting Operational Capability to develop a draft Rescue Capability Roadmap due in October. Some of the priority projects include reviewing units of competency for general land rescue and vertical rescue, flood / swift water, confined space, road accident rescue and reptile handling.

The rescue reference groups consist of permanent and retained firefighter

# THE FUTURE OF

# RESCUE

representatives from all Area Commands, along with representatives from Education and Training, Logistics Support and Operational Capability.

The third phase of the rescue review process will include a formal launch of the 2015 Rescue Roadmap later this year along with an implementation plan that ensures we deliver on our priorities.

"We have now successfully completed Phase 1," said Superintendent Gary McKinnon, Capability Manager Rescue. "The Rescue Summit last December, which focused on the assessment of equipment, training and 'future-proofing', helped us to build a shared understanding of the role of FRNSW in rescue delivery, key issues for rescue, and potential actions to assist in developing our rescue capability into the future."

"We then produced a report, *Building a Rescue Capability Roadmap*, which presented the ideas and perspectives generated by participants at the summit. This report has been used to gain important feedback on FRNSW's rescue capability – an important input into the rescue reference group's task of building the Rescue Capability Roadmap."

"By the end of the process, from 2015 onward, we will have a clear vision of what FRNSW needs to do to maintain excellence in rescue service provision."

■ END

## STATE BUDGET & HIGHLIGHTS FOR FRNSW

On Tuesday 17 June the NSW Treasurer Andrew Constance handed down the NSW Government's 2014/15 budget. Highlights for FRNSW included:

.....  
**\$17.7 million** capital for the ongoing replacement of fire appliances – this includes purchase of 10 Class 3 pumpers with compressed air foam systems (CAFS), 13 Class 2 remounts onto Mercedes chassis, and seven new Class 1 tankers (prototype 9,000 litre CAFS tankers may also be purchased).  
.....

.....  
**\$15.7 million** capital for major works on new fire stations and upgrades to existing fire stations across the State including major renovations at Pyrmont and new stations at Picton, Port Macquarie, Rutherford and South Windsor.  
.....

.....  
**\$7.2 million** for the structural firefighting helmet replacement program carried forward from last year (delayed due to issues with the Australian Standard, but shortly to be resolved)  
.....

.....  
**\$3.4 million** additional capital for the Head Office relocation to Greenacre with works commencing this year and \$6.7 million approved carry forward from last year.  
.....

# NEW RETAINED AWARD INTRODUCED

On 9 May 2014 FRNSW and the Fire Brigade Employees' Union jointly announced that a new Retained Award had been made by agreement to operate from 30 May 2014 onward.



**T**he new award aims to improve efficiency, increase pay and enable Retained Firefighters to achieve a better work/life balance. Addressing availability and equity issues was a key goal of the parties to ensure the retained system is strong, fair and viable into the future.

The changes include pay increases for retainers and hourly rates, the realignment of rates to reflect appropriate relativities between the ranks of Retained Firefighters, and the creation of new retainer types that enable FRNSW to pay for hours of availability that match the hours of staff shortage at a particular station.

A new requirement is that Retained Firefighters must be available for 80% of the calls received by their station in a designated 24-hour period per week, that period being nominated by the individual Retained Firefighter in consultation with their colleagues and Captain.

The use of a customised IT solution will enable FRNSW and Retained Firefighters to see the staffing situation at their stations. New hourly rates now recognise Deputy Captains and new Recruits. Base retainers have also been streamlined so that availability is rewarded on a more equitable basis.

A new provision stipulates that Retained Firefighters working on Easter Sunday and other "additional" public holidays will be paid at overtime rates, reflecting a similar provision of the

Permanent Firefighter Award. Another provision enables Retained Firefighters to take three 'no medical certificate' sick leave days annually in specified circumstances.

Financial recognition is now given to Retained Firefighters who perform the 'community first responder' medical response role. The Retained Telephone Alerting System allowance is also included in the new award to compensate for use of the new IT solution.

**Other changes include:**

- a requirement that Retained Firefighters attend the station or incident within 30 minutes of an incident call to qualify for payment
- a reduced rate paid for relief duties for the first two hours but also a new 2-hour minimum payment
- a provision that limits attendance payments in situations where relief duties are being performed at the station
- a new 14km cap on 'incident kilometre' claims for the home-station-home journey
- a new limit on hourly rates payable for higher duties at incidents
- reduced timeframes involved in managing poor attendance.

A tracked-changes version of the award is available in the 'Awards and Agreements' toolkit on the FRNSW intranet. **END**



# COMMISSIONER'S SAFETY AWARDS ESTABLISHED

Safety in everything we do is an underlying principle within FRNSW, and the Commissioner wants to recognise, encourage and promote the actions of those who contribute to safer work practices.

**N**ominations for the inaugural Commissioner's Safety Awards were accepted until 1 September 2014. The awards program was developed to recognise FRNSW employees who demonstrate outstanding efforts to improve or promote workplace safety. It will culminate in a presentation ceremony in October to coincide with National Safe Work Australia Month.

According to Assistant Director Health & Safety, Alison Donohoe, the concept of an awards program was raised at the 2011 Safety Workshop, where participants were keen to commend and encourage good safety performance and initiatives across the organisation.

"The program seeks to recognise and reward a range of positive behaviours such as innovative thinking to reduce an incident-ground or station-based safety risk, taking initiative to improve health and safety at the workplace, or helping someone to get back to work after a workplace injury," said Ms Donohoe.

The awards are open to all FRNSW employees, with nominations received for the following categories:

- **Category 1:** Best solution to an identified workplace health and safety issue
- **Category 2:** Best individual contribution to workplace health and safety

- **Category 3:** Best group contribution to workplace health and safety
- **Category 4:** Best management of a workplace injury.

With nominations now closed, a judging panel is reviewing submissions and will recommend finalists to the Commissioner. All finalists will then be invited to attend the presentation ceremony, where the winners in each category will be announced. **END**

## Somersby recycling plant fire clean-up took five days

By DAN PROUDMAN July 1, 2014, 7:30 p.m.



Somersby recycling plant fire  
Pictures by RYAN OSLAND

# 7th Alarm fire in recycling plant at Somersby

27 JUN 19:53

**A**t 1953 hours on Friday 27 June, FRNSW and the NSWRFs were called to a fire in a recycling plant at Pile Road, Somersby near the M1 Freeway. The incident was protracted and lasted for five days, proving to be one of the largest non-bushfire incidents experienced in recent times on the Central Coast.

On the Friday night and on into the weekend, fire crews from the Central Coast, Sydney and Newcastle worked around the clock to battle the blaze.

The fire is believed to have started in a conveyor and spread from there into the roof area of the large 100m by 40m building. On the Saturday, 31 Busby's compressed air foam pumper went to work delivering foam via an aerial pumper. Its efforts proved critical in controlling this incident.

Once the main fire was out, crews were faced with 200 tonnes of smouldering plastic and paper in compacted bales. Over several days, backhoes were used to break

apart each bale and fire crews dampened down the materials to extinguish remaining pockets of fire. Each bale was then checked with a thermal imaging camera and loaded onto a truck for the 15-minute journey to Woy Woy tip, where additional FRNSW and RFS crews continued to wet down all materials. This process continued until Wednesday 2 July when the incident finally concluded. **END**





# OPERATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS TRIPLE ZERO HEROES

From watchrooms to cyberspace, FRNSW Operational Communications has come a long way. Today, FRNSW protects 7.3 million people living in NSW, an area covering 800,642 square kilometres. In 2012/13 there were hundreds of thousands of triple zero calls for help and around 137,000 responses. FRNSW Operational Communications operators handled those emergency calls and provided assistance and reassurance while dispatching appropriate FRNSW resources.

**D**uring major emergencies, Communication Centre (ComCen) operators can be inundated by more than three times the volume of calls normally received. For example, during the bushfire emergencies in September and October 2013, operators experienced one of the busiest periods on record as they processed all fire calls for the State for both FRNSW and RFS. "This wasn't just an emergency," said Acting Chief Superintendent Peter Levett, A/Assistant Director Operational Communications. "This was a disaster. At one stage, there were 200 homes on fire. Our operators were taking calls from these people and trying to talk them to safety. It was incredibly stressful, but the operators were able to deploy resources to where they were needed and played a huge part in saving the lives of those callers."



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**Technology providing crucial support**

Operational Communications manages the systems that assign FRNSW resources to incidents. The Emergency Services Computer Aided Dispatch (ESCAD) system is the primary tool used for this process.

ESCAD technology includes automatic call distribution, allowing real-time load sharing across the ComCens in Sydney and Newcastle. ESCAD also provides a platform for improving future operations including the recent introduction of automatic vehicle location, a new operational incident management system, improved incident management support and electronic inter-agency incident communications.

**Comms Operators and staff: making it all happen**

While technology plays a vital role in the ability to dispatch the appropriate equipment, appliances and personnel to incidents as quickly as possible, the skills of the staff members attached to the call centres are equally paramount. Fires, floods, storms, rescues, prank calls – ComCen operators never know what might be waiting on the other end of the line.

Operational Communications currently employs approximately 120 operational, technical and administrative support staff. Operators must hold the minimum rank of Qualified Firefighter and undergo a 6-week training course before commencing duties. They receive further on-the-job training and undertake a skills maintenance program. Operators work a standard shift roster and each shift has a Supervisor who is a qualified communications Station Officer.

There are two ComCens, one in Sydney and one in Newcastle. Collectively they operate as FRNSW FireCom and manage triple zero and automatic fire alarm calls across the two centres. Each site has the capability to run the State as an independent stand-alone centre if required. During large scale incidents, either site can manage full or partial call taking or radio dispatch roles with an operator assigned to each radio talkgroup.

A/Chief Superintendent Levett believes that operators from varying backgrounds and geographical areas bring a valuable perspective to the job. "They are trained to gather as much information as they can from callers," he said. "Operators need to identify the emergency as well as the correct location. Because of the geographical size of

NSW, locating specific rural addresses in remote areas may be difficult due to a lack of property numbers on roads. In those circumstances, it is often necessary to spend more time with a caller so that the incident location can be identified by using local landmarks."

"Operators also use resources such as the National Relay Service (106 for speech and hearing impaired callers) and the Federal translating and interpreting service for people from non-English speaking backgrounds," he said.

Despite the advances in communication technology, it is forecast that FRNSW will face even greater challenges in the future. Predictions for the State include longer, more intense fire seasons, more frequent and stronger storms and associated floods, as well as changing demographics including an ageing and more urbanised population.

A/Chief Superintendent Levett believes that whatever the future might hold, Operational Communications is more than capable of meeting the challenges. "By monitoring and using the rapid changes in IT, we will be prepared for any contingency and will continue to deliver the best possible service and response to emergency incidents," he said.

**END**

# QUICK THINKING BY NEWCASTLE COMCEN OPERATOR SAVES A LIFE

Shortly after 2000 hrs on 17 April Firefighter Anna Batterham, based at the Newcastle Communications Centre, received a call from a 15-year-old boy who was dangerously stuck in mud off Cookes Road in Armidale.

The boy was walking home along a track when he became stuck in a bog up to his knees. Given the dropping temperatures, he was at risk of developing hypothermia. He had also run out of credit on his phone and could only make emergency calls, so he dialled triple zero.

"It was a very poor line and he sounded really distressed," Firefighter Batterham said. "He couldn't tell me where he was. He couldn't give me a cross-street. We ended up tracking down a relative who was able to help us locate him."

Firefighter Batterham, who had finished her training eight weeks previously, kept the young boy on the phone. When the first call dropped out, she managed to get him back on the line and keep him talking while another firefighter, Adam Scott-Young, liaised with Armidale Captain Scott Norton about the youngster's position. Station

**"It was a very poor line and he sounded really distressed," Firefighter Batterham said. "He couldn't tell me where he was. He couldn't give me a cross-street. We ended up tracking down a relative who was able to help us locate him."**

Officer Grant Conrick contacted the NSW Police, the Ambulance Service of NSW and the NSW Rural Fire Service.

"He was petrified, the poor thing," Firefighter Batterham said. "I tried to get him to keep still and calm, and reassure him that we were coming."

When the first arriving crew drove past, the young boy started to panic and Firefighter Batterham managed to calm him and arranged for the Armidale crew to call him direct. We got them very close and then Captain Norton and his crew took over," she said.

Captain Norton said he and his crew drove up and down Cookes Road but couldn't see the boy, so they parked and searched on foot. After about 10 minutes, they located him by the

sound of his voice. "He was a little bit disorientated and cold when we three firefighters crawled out to him," Captain Norton said.

Alongside volunteers from the NSW State Emergency Service and NSWRF, FRNSW crews used a ladder and cordage gear to dig the young boy out. It was a complex rescue given the instability of the ground around the boy, the lack of light and the fact that the mud had created a suction effect, making it difficult to remove him.

He was taken by paramedics to hospital, where he was treated for shock and hypothermia. If it weren't for the great team effort by emergency service workers, the young man's fate may have been very different. ■■■ END

# SYDNEY COMCEN HELPS RESCUE STRANDED CLIMBER

At 1135 hours on 13 May, a Sydney ComCen operator answered a triple zero call from a young man who said he had slipped and fallen during a climb. He was clinging to a rock to prevent him falling a further 50 metres to the bottom of a gorge. Fortunately he had sustained only a minor injury.

The operator's first job was to determine the man's location. After asking innovative questions and using various mapping resources (including GIS), the caller's position was confirmed as the Lower Ballanjui Falls in the Lamington National Park – in Queensland!

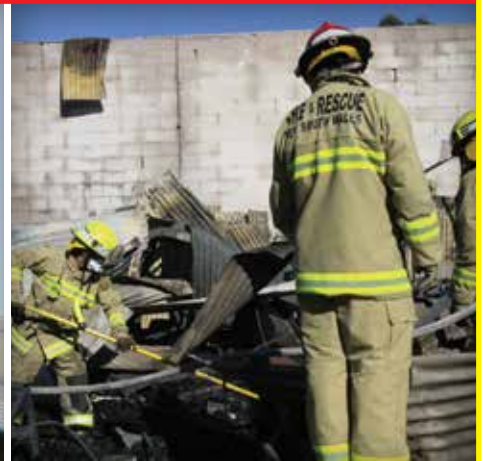
Throughout the 14-minute call, the operator monitored the caller's welfare and recorded all relevant information on the incident log. Further questioning revealed that the caller had parked his car at a nearby lodge and this vital location information was immediately passed to the Queensland Fire & Rescue Service. A multi-agency response, including the RACQ CareFlight helicopter, was then initiated by QFRS Comms. FRNSW ComCen contacted them several hours later for an update.

According to a *Gold Coast Bulletin* report published later that day, rescuers arrived at around 1430 hours

and the caller was lifted to safety via helicopter. All in a day's work, this incident highlights the excellent work of ComCen staff, particularly the operator who managed the call.

The ESCAD system incorporates GIS (mapping) information for up to 100 kilometres into Victoria, South Australia and Queensland and the entire ACT. This is used to manage cross-border responses. This interstate data was one of the tools used to assist locating the above triple zero call. ■■■ END

**FIRE  
INCIDENT**



# 5th Alarm factory fire and rescue at Alexandria

Around 0140 hours on Wednesday 2 July, crews from a number of inner city stations responded to reports of a building alight at Burrows Road, Alexandria.

02 JUL 01:40

**E**n route to the fire, the SO from 13 Alexandria reported seeing large volumes of smoke and called for additional resources. Once on scene, firefighters found a single storey warehouse, which was full of old motorbikes and other equipment, well alight with exposures under imminent threat. One person was rescued from an adjoining building and firefighters immediately got to work mounting a defensive attack.

At 0159 hours the incident was upgraded to a 5th Alarm as crews battled to try and stop the fierce blaze from spreading to the three involved buildings. While fighting the fire,

firefighters saw a group of 11 people emerge through the smoke from a driveway. The group, who were living in shipping containers, an old minibus and caravan, reported that four other people were in danger. Firefighters from 13 Station found four confused and frightened young foreign students and experienced great difficulty convincing them to leave the caravan. Radiant heat outside was intense, it melted plastic components on nearby vehicles, and the firefighters had to shield the young people from the flames as they led them to safety.

With everyone safely evacuated from the site, around 75 firefighters

battled to extinguish the fire. The fire was contained by 0415 hours after a concentrated aerial and ground attack, with crews remaining on site throughout the morning to extinguish hotspots. A total of 21 stations including two aerials were involved during the incident. Several structures were totally destroyed as well as caravans and vehicles.

The incident attracted widespread national and international media coverage highlighting major concerns about people illegally renting out substandard accommodation in such risky situations. **END**

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# FRNSW ADVISORS SUPPORT FIREFIGHTING IN THE SOLOMONS

For more than a decade, FRNSW has supported the Solomon Islands by helping to build the capability of the Pacific nation’s fire and rescue service. FRNSW’s engagement with the Solomons began at the end of 2003 when Superintendent Chris Jurgeit AFSM was asked to visit and evaluate the local fire service following a period of civil unrest.

“**M**ajor civil unrest had prevailed for a few years,” Supt Jurgeit told *Fire & Rescue News*. “There were murders, bashings and standover tactics that arose between two ethnic groups. Corruption was endemic. The country was bordering on anarchy.”

“In mid-2003 the Solomons Government asked Australia for help and a combined mission known as the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) was formed. This comprised police and armed services personnel, mostly Australians supported by other Pacific nations. Around 4,000 firearms were confiscated and later

destroyed, along with a large amount of ammunition. Law and order was restored fairly quickly with the ringleaders of the two opposing forces apprehended.”

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) were responsible for ensuring law and order, and part of their portfolio was fire. Supt Jurgeit was appointed to write a plan for rebuilding the fire service, including recommendations to carry it into the future.

“At the end of that initial two-week trip, I had found a lot of things that were critical,” Supt Jurgeit said. “The fire service had no uniforms, they had no discipline, they had hardly any equipment, and what equipment they had was broken – appliances with flat tyres, bald tyres,

tyres worn down to the canvas, airport fire tenders that had no fuel in them and engines that wouldn’t start – all that sort of stuff.”

“I had to try to link up the right people to get things just back on line. I couldn’t walk away from there just taking notes. I had to do something about it.”

Following his first visit, Supt Jurgeit returned to the Solomon Islands for five months to begin implementing the plan. This program included training; restoring effective operational response capability; purchasing new fire appliances and equipment; and reviewing legislation, community safety and building codes.



“Before I left Australia the second time, I obtained permission to buy six fire appliances with bronze pump impellers (because of the salt water), protective clothing, new boots, breathing apparatus, rescue equipment, hoses; everything I could think of that they didn’t have, which was virtually everything,” Supt Jurgeit said.

“While these things were being made or assembled, I went to the Solomons and it wasn’t until I was about two months into my second trip that all this equipment started to arrive. Mind you, when the fire appliances arrived on the docks in Honiara, a lot of the stuff in them had already been stolen.”

While waiting for the equipment, Supt Jurgeit began working on a range of issues such as the firefighters’ skills and morale, the fire service’s status in Solomon Islands’ society, and the government legislation that affected the service’s ability to perform at its best.

**“I started to talk with government officials about building code reform involving basic stuff like smoke alarms, egress out of buildings and things like that. I actually sourced a building code from East Timor which fitted perfectly into the Solomon Islands environment.”**

“I worked at every level – I’d typically work for half a day on manual labour and inventory management, and might then spend an afternoon liaising with senior government officials, such as the Police Minister, who dictated the policy and legislative direction of the fire service,” Supt Jurgeit said.

“I started to talk with government officials about building code reform involving basic stuff like smoke alarms, egress out of buildings and things like that. I actually sourced a building code from East Timor which fitted perfectly into the Solomon Islands environment.”



“One of the best things that ever happened was on Police Remembrance Day. All the police marched and the fireies said ‘We want to march too.’ However, as far as I knew at that time, they had no uniforms. Funnily enough, however, they found some uniforms at home, and they were really impressive dress uniforms. Each of the fireies had kept them at home, because if they were at the fire station, other people might have stolen them. So, all of a sudden on Police Remembrance Day, they all rocked up looking brilliant and marched together. They were just so proud of themselves.”

Since Supt Jurgeit’s deployment, six other FRNSW officers have served as advisors in the Solomon Islands. They are **Supt Darryl Dunbar** (for four months in 2004), **Chief Supt Tom Milburn AFSM** (2004–2006), **Insp Graeme Webb** (2006–2008), **Insp Gary White** (2008–2010),

**Supt Adam Dewberry** (2010–2013) and **Insp Nick Ferrante** (2014–present).

The wheels of progress move very slowly in the Solomons (some call it ‘Island time’ or ‘Soli time’), so many of the things Supt Jurgeit planned in his time were only properly taking effect during subsequent secondments.

Supt Dewberry made a significant contribution during his time in the Solomons. Building on the work of his predecessors, his achievements included:

- enhancing land based rescue capability including training
- establishing a partnership with FRNSW to provide and service heavy rescue equipment, air bags, spreaders, cutters etc
- introducing and implementing USAR Cat 1 capability, as the Solomons are located on a major fault line and experience earthquakes and associated tsunamis regularly

- securing funding for a new fire station in Honiara
- drafting the first ever Solomon Islands fire and rescue service legislation, which included responsibilities for fire prevention and fire safety, fire extinguishing, hazmat response, land based rescue, and ambulance and paramedic services
- securing funding and commencing the procurement process for a number of appliances and other vehicles
- purchasing thermal imaging cameras and atmospheric monitoring equipment.

Insp Ferrante recently began his two-year secondment to the Solomon Islands. His mandate is to build on Supt Dewberry’s legacy. **END**



## Firefighters use CPR and defibrillator to revive MVA victim

02 MAY 13:00

At around 1300 hours on Friday 2 May, D Platoon crew members from 15 Burwood were returning from a drill when they came across a road accident and noticed two people unconscious on the ground. The crew immediately stopped to assist.

**T**he first injured person, a woman, was already being treated by two people, one of whom was a trained nurse. She told the firefighters that the patient was breathing and stable.

The firefighters then turned their attention to the second injured person, a motorcyclist whose breathing appeared to have stopped. They took over administering CPR and attached

the defibrillator from their appliance to the patient's chest. The first time the defibrillator analysed the shockable heart rhythm, it indicated that the firefighters should continue CPR. The second time though, it gave the message to stand clear and deliver a shock.

Once this was done, the firefighters saw that the patient had started breathing and the defibrillator

recommended continuing CPR. As the breathing became stronger, the crew members eventually ceased CPR and monitored the patient for approximately 10 minutes until paramedics and a doctor arrived. The patient was later taken to Westmead Hospital for further treatment. Paramedics and doctors later thanked the Burwood crew, saying they had done a great job. **END**



# GAS PIPELINE EXPLOSION



Kaptein Commandment Jan Jorissen

When a high-pressure natural gas pipeline ruptured at Ghislenghien, Belgium, in July 2004, 24 people died and more than 122 were injured. This disaster was the first of its kind to claim lives, and due to ongoing legal proceedings in Belgium, many of the operational lessons had not been well circulated.

**A**ustralia, as a major producer of natural gas with many high pressure gas pipelines, had much to learn from this disaster. To enable this transfer of experience, in April 2014 AFAC brought Kaptein Commandment Jan Jorissen of the Lommel Fire Brigade in Belgium to Australia to present on the lessons learned from the gas pipeline explosion.

Jan's presentation provided many valuable insights into effective response to, and command and control of, natural gas incidents. Attendees also considered and discussed Australian practices that may need review based on lessons learned from Belgium.

FRNSW's Media and Communications Unit produced a video on Kaptein Commandment Jorissen's visit to allow his insights to be circulated even more widely. **END**

# SURVEY ON VICTORIAN DEPLOYMENT



Firefighters, Station Officers and Inspectors who were deployed to backfill CFA fire stations in Victoria earlier this year were invited to participate in an online survey conducted by our Operational Improvement section. A large number of responses were received, providing a good overview of the deployment. A summary version of results is available on the Intranet.



## Positive feedback was received on:

- Travel and accommodation
- Level of information prior to deployment and at briefings
- FRNSW training which prepared firefighters well for the deployment
- Ability of crews to effectively overcome any difficulties experienced in the field
- The positive way the CFA welcomed and accepted FRNSW.



## Areas where the respondents felt FRNSW could improve for future deployments included:

- Quality and timeliness of information provided to firefighters undertaking the deployment
- Briefings on differences in policies and procedures prior to deployment if possible
- Communication about the selection processes.



## The survey results also highlighted areas where the respondents felt FRNSW could learn from the CFA. These included:

- The CFA turnout system
- CFA equipment, uniform and station design
- CFA station management practices.

Thanks to all those who participated in the survey. If you have any questions or comments relating to the survey, please contact Operational Improvement at [operational\\_improvement@fire.nsw.gov.au](mailto:operational_improvement@fire.nsw.gov.au) **END**



# Cotton truck on fire at Mt Victoria

05 JUN 01:49

**VIEW VIDEO AT**  
[fire.nsw.gov.au/frnews](http://fire.nsw.gov.au/frnews)

**OR**

**SCAN CODE TO WATCH NOW**



**A**t 0149 hours on Thursday 5 June, FRNSW crews were called to reports of a truck fire on the Great Western Highway at Mt Victoria. 386 Mt Victoria arrived quickly on scene and were confronted with a large semi-trailer laden with cotton bales, overturned and well alight. Initially it was feared the driver may still be trapped inside but fortunately it was discovered he had been able to jump free of the cabin. The highway was closed in both directions and although the fire was rapidly contained, between 20 and 30 tonnes

of cotton bales continued to smoulder. Crews from 361 Leura, 343 Katoomba and 226 Blackheath were called in to assist in the lengthy operation. With traffic mounting in all directions, firefighters and other services performed a mammoth task to have the highway quickly re-opened by 1000 hrs. Backhoes and excavators were brought in to drag the smouldering bales into a side street and it took another eight hours to break them apart and extinguish the fire. **END**

# TUNNEL EXERCISE

## AIMS TO PREVENT TRAFFIC WOES





Photo courtesy of: John Roe

At 2300 hrs on Thursday 29 May, appliances from ME2 and ME1 rallied at the control centre of Sydney Harbour Tunnel Authority for an exercise involving a car fire in the tunnel. This annual exercise gives firefighters the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the firefighting and emergency operations systems engineered into the tunnel.

 **VIEW VIDEO AT**  
[fire.nsw.gov.au/fnews](http://fire.nsw.gov.au/fnews)

**OR**

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**A**s often happens, an incident in the Harbour Tunnel very quickly turns Sydney into gridlock with tens of thousands affected. However the disruption can be minimised by streamlining the emergency response to its most effective and most timely outcomes.

In this exercise, a car was set up on large metal plates to protect tunnel surfaces, positioned around crossover 11 in the southbound tunnel. The car was ignited using flammable gel and explosives set by specialist technicians from FRNSW's BA/hazmat unit. Two-metre flames and a thick black curtain of smoke resulted and were allowed to burn for a few minutes before tunnel defences were activated.

Darlinghurst firefighters staged at Woolloomooloo were responded, entering via the northbound tunnel which was then closed to all traffic by an automated electronic arm, swinging down after they passed. The closure procedure was being trialled for the first time that night and successfully used the flow of traffic

**“This exercise is vital for Sydney Harbour Tunnel operators as well as FRNSW local crews, giving them the chance to see how each other operates and can work in together to best effect.”**

to allow emergency vehicles to get into place. The tunnel deluge system dropped, and a targeted blanket of water hit the car, helping to extinguish the flame. The tunnel extraction fans also operated, completely clearing the smoke in a matter of minutes. By this time, fire crews had used the crossover passage to run a length of hose to the seat of the fire and went to work, fully extinguishing the car.

The exercise also afforded the opportunity to test FRNSW radio equipment in relation to tunnel boosters.

“This exercise is vital for Sydney Harbour Tunnel operators as well as FRNSW local crews, giving them the chance to see how each other operates and can work in together to best effect,” said Superintendent Kel McNamara, Zone Commander ME2. “This is the only tunnel in Australia and possibly in the world that will accommodate an actual car fire to test its emergency response protocols. As a result, it tends to generate a lot of interest and people come from far and wide in order to participate in this exercise.”

Firefighters from Crows Nest, Neutral Bay and Darlinghurst, BA/hazmat firefighters and Duty Commander Kim Simpson all benefited from their participation in the exercise. Other observers in attendance included Tunnel CEO Bob Allen, Tunnel Senior Operations Officer Gary Payseno, NSW Police Force, Sydney media and tunnel operators from all over Australia. **END**

# REGIONAL FIREFIGHTER CHAMPIONSHIPS

For full results and photo galleries of recent championships rounds, see the Firefighter Championships website at [www.firefighterchampionships.com.au](http://www.firefighterchampionships.com.au)



## Swansea, abuzz with firefighters

Pelicans flying high above Quinn Park, Swansea, kept a close eye on firefighters as they competed in the Regional Firefighter Championships over the weekend of 19–20 July.

Even as the sky dipped in and out from a deep dark rainy gray to brilliant sun-soaked blue, competitors from all around NSW and as far afield as Echuca in Victoria battled it out over two days of solid competition.

“It has been more than 10 years since Swansea registered a team to compete in a championship round,” said Deputy Captain Nathan Tallon from 447 Swansea. “Unfortunately the past decade has seen a number of retirements and a higher than usual staff turnover which has hampered efforts to build a competitive team.”

During competition on Saturday, the Swansea team answered a call to a single vehicle accident that closed the Swansea Bridge and posed a delicate challenge to remove the vehicle – which had compromised the safety railing, ending up partially over the bridge – and minimise the chance of a hazmat incident. Even a call to assist Ambulance paramedics later in the day on Saturday didn’t thwart the Swansea team’s effort to continue competing.

“Swansea has a strong team whose commitment to their local community and FRNSW is second to none. As you can imagine, there were some worried and nervous firefighters prior to our first run,” said Deputy Captain Tallon. “This quickly took second place to the excitement and camaraderie. Several of our team members have commented on how much the championships will benefit them personally as firefighters.”

The Country Fire Authority Echuca team – and self-proclaimed ‘honorary New South Welshmen’ – powered through the event card and were overall winners of the two-day event. Kelso kept the pressure on to come second; good practice for them as hosts of the State Championships (23, 24 and 25 October). The NSW RFS Kootingal team – and regular championship competitors – took third overall in a field of 21 highly motivated and competitive teams (which included several combined teams).

FRNSW Media also attended the event and captured the action, including the crash on the bridge, and live streamed an hour of the events on Saturday and then all day Sunday.

Firefighters are invited to submit an entry for a team in the State Championships, Kelso. The event is the final championship for the year and will be hosted over three days. For further information and details on how you can enter a team, visit: [www.firefighterchampionships.com.au](http://www.firefighterchampionships.com.au)

END

# WILD WEATHER DIDN'T DAMPEN ENTHUSIASM AT UNANDERRA



Crews from across NSW battled it out in front of crowds of spectators at the Firefighter Regional Championships at Unanderra over the weekend of 3-4 May 2014. Thirteen teams, including one from NSWRFSS, competed in 11 events, with the Dorrigo brigade claiming the championship over Tamworth who came second, and reigning state champions Kelso, who came third.

Acting Director of Championships, A/Assistant Commissioner Ken Murphy,

said the two-day event, officially opened by Commissioner Greg Mullins on Saturday, was a terrific opportunity to meet firefighters from across the State.

"The competition, intensity and camaraderie at the championship was of the usual high standard," A/Assistant Commissioner Murphy said. "This was despite wild weather on Saturday night damaging two of the championship tents, forcing firefighters to rush out to the grounds to 'batten down the hatches' to ensure Sunday's events could proceed."

"Unanderra Captain Paul Dawson and his crew did a great job and should be congratulated for conducting such a seamless and successful second round competition for this year's championships series. Congratulations also must go to the regional champions Dorrigo. The top few teams are really honing their skills for what will be a fiercely competitive State championship at Kelso later this year."

■ END



## Rescuing a horse with an iPad

19 MAR

When firefighters and an RSPCA inspector in regional Queensland attempted to assist a horse trapped in a well, they sought advice from a FRNSW expert in large animal rescue.

**G**riffith-based FRNSW Senior Instructor SF Anthony Hatch was travelling in his car in southern NSW when he took a call from an RSPCA inspector more than 1,600km away in Childers, Queensland. A 22-year-old Arabian gelding, Comet, was trapped in a disused well on a property outside town, bogged amid mud, water, brick and reinforced mesh. Childers' firefighters and Bundaberg's heavy

rescue team were on the scene, as well as RSPCA inspector Penny Flaherty. Ms Flaherty was aware of SF Hatch's expertise in large animal rescue which he developed from studying and training in procedures in the USA and United Kingdom through a Churchill Fellowship.

"They sent me a couple of photos of the horse and asked me for advice on how to set up the straps to get it out. I talked them through it and sent

some training photos and videos," SF Hatch said. "They carried out a number of procedures and eventually managed to get the horse out." Comet was immediately treated by a vet and, from all accounts, is since doing well.

"It was a great result for everyone involved," SF Hatch said, "accomplished from an iPad, iPhone and laptop perched on a car bonnet on the side of a country road in southern NSW."

END



# NEW GUIDE MAKES TALKING TO THE MEDIA EASIER

The FRNSW *Media Pocket Guide* is a credit card-sized booklet that provides key tips for station officers, captains, duty and zone commanders on how to communicate effectively with journalists at incidents.

The FRNSW media team recommends that a copy of the guide be kept in each appliance and at least one also be readily available at the station. With the guide at hand, handling media interviews at incidents becomes much easier.

For more information on interacting with your local media, the May 2014 issue of *Fire & Rescue News* contains a detailed article on how to build a mutually beneficial relationship with media outlets on a day-to-day basis. For advice on promoting your station's activities in the media, contact our media staff on (02) 9265 2907, email [media@fire.nsw.gov.au](mailto:media@fire.nsw.gov.au) or ring the on-call Media Officer on 0418 181 000.

■ END



# GREENACRE BECOMES HOLLYWOOD FOR A DAY

Recently ComSafe were asked to co-ordinate and provide resources to Redhart Productions who were filming a training video for the Commonwealth Bank of Australia to deliver fire safety instruction to their staff.

ComSafe Trainer SF Tracey Spindler brushed up on her acting skills and stood in as talent to demonstrate best practice in extinguishing fires. In her first on-screen foray she battled a computer fire, a toaster fire and a mealroom fire using a fire extinguisher and a fire blanket.

Taking advantage of location opportunities opened up by the relocation happening at FRNSW's Greenacre site and impending demolition of already emptied buildings, ComSafe were able to provide not only production assistance, script input and talent but

also the location, turning Greenacre into a Hollywood backlot of sorts for a day. A room in the old BA station was converted into a modern CBA office set and an old tearoom was dressed up as a modern corporate mealroom in which to simulate the fires.

Not stopping there, ComSafe had a hand in the pyrotechnics also, devising a system of smoke pellets placed on small metal disks to be positioned near or under the computer and toaster to simulate the fires, and producing a cigarette fire in a bin to catch alight spontaneously on the video.

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The video will be used throughout Australia to train CBA staff on extinguisher use. ■ END

# FRNSW featured in ABC Catalyst program



On Thursday 17 July, ABC1's *Catalyst* program aired a segment, *House on Fire*, which focused on the science behind a fire in the home – how a fire takes hold and how people react.

It also examined home fire safety and prevention. FRNSW's Community Safety Directorate and Media and Communications Unit worked with the program makers to develop the segment and the Fire Investigation and Research Unit facilitated a bedroom burn at the CSIRO's facility at North Ryde. The aim of the room burn was to highlight how quickly a fire can reach flashover and how much heat and smoke can be generated in just minutes.

The *Catalyst* segment demonstrated that working smoke alarms and a well thought out and rehearsed escape plan would greatly increase people's chances of survival in a residential fire. The segment, which featured an interview with Chief Superintendent Chris Lewis, was perfectly timed to support this year's Winter Fire Safety campaign. **END**



VIEW VIDEO AT  
[fire.nsw.gov.au/ftnews](http://fire.nsw.gov.au/ftnews)



OR  
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# HOW TO TAKE A GOOD PHOTO OR VIDEO

You're scanning through the paper or a news website – what are your eyes drawn to? A page full of printed words or a colourful picture? In a world full of information, the old adage that 'a picture is worth a thousand words' has never been more true.

So, how do you capture an image or footage that people will want to look at? You don't need to be a professional photographer with the latest and greatest camera equipment to capture a good image – all you need is your smartphone\*. Here are some tips from the FRNSW Media Team on how you can take a good photo and video footage.

## Taking a good photo



Pictures (i.e. still images) showcasing FRNSW firefighters and equipment at work are extremely popular with followers on social media. According to Twitter, a tweet (the most immediate and popular way that FRNSW communicates via social media) with a picture will receive a significantly higher chance of being retweeted (shared) or made a favourite. The nature of social media means that once one person shares, what they share is then passed on to their friends (followers) and so on. However DO NOT show accident or fire victims in photos of incidents.

Images taken on mobile devices can easily be uploaded to Twitter and Facebook and can also be used on the FRNSW intranet and in FRNSW publications. Media outlets may also reproduce the images and credit FRNSW as the source.

Here are a few simple tips for capturing a good image that the Media Team, and external media, can use.

### Tip 1: Make sure the image is in focus

What might look okay at the reduced screen size can be terrible when expanded e.g. full screen. Plant your feet firmly and stand as still as possible before you take the photo. On most smartphones, you can focus the shot by simply tapping the screen.

### Tip 2: Make it interesting

An image of firefighters and equipment at work is far more appealing than an image of people standing around, or an image of an obscure piece of equipment.

### Tip 3: Check the lighting

Too much or too little light can ruin the photo. Make sure there is enough light to capture the image clearly. Where necessary, use the flash option on your smartphone.

### Tip 4: Frame your photo

For best results and camera control, particularly if you are using an iPhone, landscape mode works best (especially for video). For the best results, make sure the camera is in the uppermost corner when you take the photo. Taking the photo with the camera in the incorrect position can result in upside down images when loaded to various programs and platforms.



Camera – phone in uppermost position.



Camera – phone in lowermost position.



FF Jeff Kryger with dog

During the October 2013 bushfires, this photo, taken by a FRNSW firefighter, was posted on Twitter and retweeted. The image reached 2.6 million Twitter followers

## Capturing good footage



Video is always a good way to communicate a story. You might have seen videos from FRNSW's fire investigation team on Facebook recently – these 30–60 second videos are a great way to show the impact of a fire and deliver a simple fire safety message.

Here are some tips for recording video footage.

### Tip 1: Keep it interesting

Grab some footage of the fire while it's active, but only when appropriate and safe to do so. Do not show fire or accident victims and do not compromise fire operations – your priority above all else. After the fire or incident, consider grabbing a quick interview with one of your crew or the incident controller, covering who, what, where and why.

### Tip 2: Keep it short

An adequate length clip should only run 15–30 seconds. Try not to exceed one minute.

### Tip 3: Make sure the device is in landscape mode

Tip 4: Keep it steady. Avoid using the zoom and, if you have to pan (move the camera left or right), make it slow and steady. Hold the shot still at the beginning and at the end.

### Tip 5: Be mindful of audio

If you speak, or someone is speaking nearby, be aware of background noise, including wind, coughing and interference with the microphone. If there is too much background noise, you will not be able to hear the audio.

When capturing both photos and video, always consider the following:

- **Operational requirements** – your duties as a firefighter must always take priority. Only take photos or videos if it does not interfere with operational duties.
- **Privacy** – do not show fire or accident victims.
- **Relevance** – how relevant will the end product be versus the effort, resources and time taken to produce it?
- **Timing** – posting photos or videos on personal social media sites during an incident may be perceived to be in poor taste or interfering with operational activities. Official photos and video posted to FRNSW social media, or distributed to the media, are cleared and authorised by FRNSW Media.
- Under the *State Rescue Policy*, all photographic images taken at a rescue incident are considered to be the property of the NSW Police Force in the first instance. **END**

## POLICIES

There are two existing policies governing the taking and use of photos and videos at incidents, which must be read in conjunction with these tips and guidelines:

- *Commissioner's Orders 2002/18: Photographs of dead or injured people*
- *Commissioner's Orders 2005/6: NSW State Rescue Board – State Rescue Policy: Taking of photographic images at and from a rescue incident.*

In summary:

- In most circumstances, there is no legitimate reason for a firefighter to take a photo of a dead or injured person at an incident, including at rescue incidents. There are a limited number of circumstances where it is appropriate:
  - fire investigators accredited by the Fire Investigation and Research Unit are permitted to take photographs or videos for the purpose of collecting evidence at a fire
  - the relevant Director may give permission for photographs or video footage to be taken at a major incident where there is an operational need.
- It is also not acceptable to publicly display any images of dead or injured people.
- All photographs and videos taken by FRNSW employees while on duty are the property of FRNSW.

# LIVE COVERAGE IN HIGH DEFINITION



High definition television production wasn't all that long ago considered something out of the reach of most television broadcasters let alone media departments. With enormous – and ongoing – changes in technology, television broadcasting has now been made possible from something as simple and accessible as an individual's smart phone.

**C**oupled with major advances in video streaming and the mobility of the technology needed to stream live pictures, companies and agencies around the world are maximising the ability to get their messages out to a global audience, internally and externally via cloud-based video and social media platforms.

"As an internal communications tool, the use of video is not new," said Assistant Director Media and Communications (MCU), Andrew Parsons. "Streaming is the 'norm' in most large agencies challenged by the tyranny of distance and for a time-poor workforce. In some environments, desktop streaming while you work is as commonplace as having a Word document open in the background while writing an email.

"Streaming cloud-based technology means that viewers don't need to be physically in front of their PCs; video and social media interactivity is all very much now a matter of having a capable smart phone and access to data."

As for TV broadcasters; the infrastructure needed to broadcast has significantly changed. The broadcast culture has also changed as media outlets seek more cost effective solutions to gather content. Media agencies and newsrooms openly welcome user-driven

content, e.g. members of the public sending in material; or, taking the 'broadcast-ready' material of government agencies and companies in the form of a video news release (where pictures and interviews are provided to media and they write/edit their own stories using that material).

FRNSW Media is currently trialling (over July, August and September) a state-of-the-art high definition video streaming capability with three specific applications in mind:

**1** Secure live streaming to the workforce (internally), and to mobile devices via your FRNSW log in to deliver important internal communications. In particular all staff messages from the executive, critical tactical messaging during a crisis (e.g. bushfire or other FRNSW campaign), critical announcements and information, and major incident updates – live and not made available to the public.

**2** Broadcasting key FRNSW activities to the community via our popular social media platforms, including graduation (for family and friends who can't make it), station openings and key events, and incident updates from the scene to keep the public updated – live.

**3** Delivering FRNSW spokespeople and media content (including vision) to mainstream television news, e.g. live interviews, ability to record interviews from the field and send to the media (from location), greater access to regional media, and incident updates – live.

"A key feature of the equipment FRNSW Media is testing is that each destination is selectable. This means we can securely deliver internal communications, or openly share material with the community, and ensure the FRNSW brand and spokespeople are available to the media when it counts and that our messages are heard and seen," said Andrew Parsons.

The cost for this capability and service has plummeted, making access to 'live' production extremely accessible to non-broadcasters with service fees based on data usage – just like a mobile phone.

Internal video and social media platforms including Yammer, Facebook, Youtube and Twitter, mean there's a greater level of audience interactivity. Staff can post a question and the speaker can answer in real-time from anywhere in the world. Graphics and other on-screen information can be more openly shared – perfect for a tactical briefing in a situation like bushfire operations and campaigns.

END



## Highrise rescue of window cleaners in Sydney CBD

30 MAY 10:21

Two window cleaners had a lucky escape thanks to the efforts of City of Sydney aerial ladder platform operators. At 1021 hrs on Friday 30 May, FRNSW received a triple zero call from two window cleaners trapped in their window cleaning platform near level five of a 30-storey building in Pitt Street in Sydney's CBD. A cable had snapped on their rig, preventing it from moving either up or down from its position 15 metres above the ground.

Fortunately the window cleaners were harnessed in and well rehearsed in dealing with highrise situations, and waited patiently for rescue to arrive. Police Rescue were also called to the scene but it was quickly evident that an aerial ladder platform was the most suitable method of rescue. City of Sydney ladder platform together with the crews from CoS Rescue Pumper and 3 The Rocks assisted in rescuing the window cleaners who were brought safely back down to ground without injury within about 40 minutes.

Police Rescue officers then used the ladder platform to secure the cleaning platform to the building to enable WorkCover to conduct an investigation.

Crews remained on scene into the afternoon until the cleaning platform was finally lowered to the ground. The incident attracted enormous public attention given the inner city location, and media reports throughout the day were full of praise for the professional efforts of rescue workers. **END**

# 2014

## OPEN DAY ATTRACTS RECORD ATTENDANCES

Here's a brief summary of how just a few stations experienced the day.



### 401 Narromine

Captain Ewen Jones at 401 Narromine reported that, for the fifth year, his station held a combined Open Day with the NSWRFSS. He also invited the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association along to cut up an old car.

"I was lucky to get on air with 2DU (Dubbo AM radio station) at around 0900 hours to promote not only Narromine but all FRNSW stations covered by 2DU (up to 200 kilometres around Dubbo)," Captain Jones said. "All activities were carried out behind 401 Station to ensure better safety for the public, especially the many children we had visit on the day. I estimate we had more than 150 visitors, the weather was great, and the day was a huge success!"

### 377 Minmi

Activities at 377 Minmi included a tug of war, an egg and spoon race, a colouring-in competition, prizes, giveaways, fire safety talks and equipment demonstrations. The station's Facebook page summarised how the day went.

"Another successful Open Day done and dusted! Big shout out to the Westpac

Rescue Helicopter Service who took the time to come along. Thank you to everyone who came down to say g'day. Your support and encouragement makes our job worthwhile. We are proud to serve such a wonderful community, and always will be."

### 86 Penrith

Firefighters at 86 Penrith welcomed the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Stuart Ayres, on Open Day. According to Station Officer Trevor Eastwood, Mr Ayres was very approachable and keen to see what the crews do at the station.

"We started off with a station tour which covered our response procedures and the area 86 Penrith covers with surrounding support, and a brief demonstration of aerial pump 86's capabilities and various uses," SO Eastwood said. "We then went on to a display of our uniforms, old and new, and the Minister watched as locals tried on the turnout gear. To conclude, we had a vintage fire truck on loan from the Museum of Fire, which he looked over and asked questions about, then a sausage

**With record crowds and more than 70 additional stations participating this year, Open Day on 17 May 2014 was enjoyable and educational for attendees and firefighters alike.**

sandwich and a few photos with the crew and local residents before departing."

### 80 Bundeena

80 Bundeena was visited by more than 150 people on Open Day, as they reported on their Facebook page.

"All visitors got to see the new combined FRNSW and Ambulance Station, meet the crew and see what we do. We cut up a car for a rescue demo and some of the visitors got to have a go of the shears, smoke alarm demos, a ladder slide rescue, CFU trailers, Community



First Response, fire extinguishers, hose demos, and thankfully the crew of the Ambulance Station were also available and helped out showing people around the station and through the ambulances.

"It was a great day and crews from both FRNSW and Ambulance worked tirelessly to keep things flowing smoothly. Also a big thanks to our Retired Captain Paul for coming down and helping out as well."

### 69 Dee Why

Senior Firefighter Sam Wall reported on Open Day at 69 Dee Why, which was visited by around 350 people.

"We had a great day with a local fire enthusiast bringing down his two antique fire trucks for the kids and parents to climb over. It's a great thing he does every year," SF Wall said. "We also had a retired Station Officer, Ted Goodman, who came in to man the barbecue in case of a callout."

### 68 Narrabeen

68 Narrabeen thanked locals for their support on Open Day via their Facebook site.

"Thank you to over 1,000 Northern Beaches locals who attended our Open

Day today. We had a great day showing you around our station and teaching you about what we do as firefighters on a day-to-day basis. Hopefully you will be back with your families next May."

### 56 Matraville/70 Maroubra

Station Officer Stephen Mcfadyen reported on 56 Matraville's and 70 Maroubra's combined Open Day.

"We had approximately 380 children attend our day (that's how many bags we gave out) So we probably had upwards of 500 people attend. There was a variety of activities for the guests, with three appliances to look over, including Maroubra's Varley, Matraville's Scania and the Air Services Australia Mk8 pumper. There were also Alexandria Heavy Hazmat demonstrations, a 20 Hurstville Heavy Rescue car rescue demonstration and a thermal imaging camera demonstration in a blacked-out room, as well as general talks about fire safety and evacuation procedures."

### 48 Mortdale

An estimated 1,000-plus visitors walked through the doors of at Mortdale Fire

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Station. By all accounts it was an extremely busy day.

"We ran out of fire safety information bags in the first hour (we had 280 of them)," said Retained Firefighter Paul Johnson. "Over 500 sausages were cooked and sold. Mortdale Fire Station attended two emergency calls during the day. Four kitchen fire simulations took place every hour. There were two fire trucks for mum, dad and the kids to jump in and have a look. Eight firefighters worked tirelessly to keep up with the demand for balloons during the day. And our barbecue fundraiser raised over \$1,500 for Westmead Children's Hospital's Burns Unit – fantastic!"



**25 Mosman**

According to Station Officer Peter Schydlo, 25 Mosman had more than 600 visitors on Open Day.

"We would have had control problems without the help of our local CFU volunteers and Joanna Lawry from Operational Staffing with her partner Tony," SO Schydlo said. "Many thanks to you all."

"We estimate over \$400 dollars in donations will be in the jars for Bear Cottage from 25 Mosman alone. Well done!

"With the beautiful weather the crowds came early, then a call to a motor vehicle accident with persons trapped added some reality to the day for our guests. On return to the station, the questions came thick and fast – we still get the odd 'I didn't know the brigade handled rescue' comment – and by 1330 hours we realised we hadn't had a lunch, so engaging were our visitors. From the big hose and SCBA airsets to the thermal imaging camera to the torches and trauma teddies, there was something for all ages."

**23 Gladesville**

Relieving Station Officer Matthew Bramall said Open Day was also a resounding success at 23 Gladesville.

"Around 500 people attended on a beautiful autumn day," SO Bramall said. "Many children were sporting fire helmets or dressed in full turnout gear. Families had picnics on the lawn area while enjoying a sausage sandwich. We ran out of information bags and community education material, and had to purchase more sausages halfway through the day."

The pumper was admired by parents and children alike. A static home fire safety display was set up, and talks were delivered discussing preparations for winter fire safety, fire extinguisher choice and usage, and the role of FRNSW in the community. A 38mm hose was also set up so the children could play 'firefighter' – a great photo opportunity for their proud mums and dads.

"Ryde Mayor Roy Maggio attended and did a great job assisting firefighters with the barbecue and interacting with the visitors throughout the day. It was the biggest turnout to an Open Day I have seen in my career, and neighbouring stations reported similar interest and support." **END**

**THE COMMUNITY SAYS THANKS**

The following comments are typical of the dozens of thank yous that FRNSW received from the public after Open Day.

*We had the greatest time at Kogarah Fire Station this afternoon. Your men and women are fantastic! They were out there amongst the crowd greeting both the little and big kids. Our children loved being involved, loved having their questions answered and we all had a better understanding and appreciation for Fire & Rescue NSW. THANK YOU!!!!*

*Silvana McCulloch*

*Big thankyou to the fireman at Wyoming Fire station, we took our 19 month old son and he loved it, one fireman scooped him up and sat in the truck driver's seat and let him do the sirens and lights and another went and got a small hose for him to have a turn, a great community day, thankyou!*

*Cassie Briggs*

*My three year old had the best day at Schofields fire station Open Day. Thank you for putting this event on!*

*Angela Barnes Newby*

*What a fantastic morning we had at Alexandria's training & fire station for the open day. Our 2&1/2 year old loved it! All the staff were so friendly & well organized, and a great opportunity for all the kids to sit on all the trucks and be able to use the fire house. Can't wait for next year thank you!! PS: Plus the sausage sizzle was awesome!*

*Lisa Metcalfe*

**CFU and GIO volunteers help out**

Special thanks goes to the many Community Fire Unit volunteers who helped out at a number of stations on the day. Volunteers from FRNSW's Principal Partner, GIO, also provided invaluable assistance to the firefighters running Open Day at 8 Liverpool and 93 Narellan.

**Incidents during Open Day**

Saturday 17 May was also a busy day for FRNSW in terms of incidents, to which all crews responded well despite their Open Day commitments. Between 1000 hours and 1400 hours on that day, crews responded to 89 calls across NSW. Metropolitan stations attended a total of 51 calls, with the busiest zone being Metro East with a total of 27 calls, including 14 for ME1, nine for ME2 and four for ME3. Regional stations also had a busy day with 38 calls during the same period.



# FIREFIGHTERS ENLIST ABORIGINAL FIRE SAFETY VOLUNTEERS



FRNSW is running fire prevention workshops at relevant fire stations for Aboriginal representatives who will then promote fire safety awareness and education to their communities. Current fire data indicates that Aboriginal communities are one of the at-risk groups with whom FRNSW needs to engage.

**A**ccording to Assistant Commissioner Mark Whybro AFSM, Director, Community Safety, the Aboriginal Community Fire Safety Volunteers program has been developed to improve home fire safety in both urban and regional Aboriginal communities.

“FRNSW firefighters of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island descent will play a vital role in liaising with local communities to select appropriate program participants and, after the workshops, will continue to support them in their efforts to promote fire safety awareness,” Assistant Commissioner Whybro said.

The workshops aim to reduce the impact of fire and other emergencies on urban and regional Aboriginal

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communities across NSW. They increase Aboriginal community members' knowledge about what to do in the event of an incident and help them develop key fire safety skills. The workshops also encourage Aboriginal community members' participation and ownership of the home fire safety program. In addition, they promote firefighting as an attractive career option to people in Aboriginal communities.

On 13 February, FRNSW retained firefighters held a workshop at 454 Tarro Fire Station that included the use and safe operation of fire extinguishers and a fire blanket. The simulated exercise enabled participants to experience what it's like to conduct a search and rescue in firefighters' protective gear and breathing apparatus and with obscured vision. This provided participants with first hand skills and gave them a better understanding of FRNSW's role as an emergency service. The Aboriginal community members who participated will increasingly become conduits for home fire safety education and advice in their communities and will help build resilience when incidents occur.

Firefighters from MS3 held a workshop at Liverpool Fire Station on Thursday 27 March for Aboriginal community members who are preparing to spread the word on home fire safety. Fifteen Aboriginal community members participated in the day, and the training workshop included the operation of fire extinguishers, fire blankets and a simulated self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) exercise so the participants could experience what it is like to wear SCBA in an emergency. The day was a fantastic success with strong relationships being established between Aboriginal firefighters stationed within MS3 and Aboriginal community members from within the zone. Ongoing training, fire education programs and workshops are being planned to be held within the zone throughout the remainder of the year.

Further workshops in this program have since being held in Coffs Harbour and Dubbo. **END**

# STATION CENTENARIES CELEBRATED with lion dances and historic fire engines



Eastwood



Eastwood



Marrickville

**O**n Friday 9 May Eastwood Fire Brigade celebrated its centenary. The station yard was packed with people as children from Eastwood Public School sang and danced. There was also a special blessing of the station with a Chinese lion dance – a great reflection of the cultural diversity of Eastwood, and an impromptu display of Shaolin Kung Fu by one of the lion dancers. Besides Commissioner Mullins and senior FRNSW officers, other

attendees included Epping MP Greg Smith, Ryde MP Victor Dominello, Federal Member for Bennelong John Alexander and Ryde Mayor Roy Maggio, as well as dozens of community members and past and serving firefighters from 59 Station.

On Saturday 14 June, Commissioner Mullins and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Stuart Ayres joined both serving and retired firefighters and members of the community to celebrate the centenary of Marrickville

Fire Station. The Marrickville area has had a fire brigade since 1886, but it was originally based in a fire station at the corner of Stanmore Road and Albert Street. As Marrickville grew and demands increased, a new station was built in Marrickville Road, opening in June 1914. The centenary was a colourful affair with a historical display of heritage vehicles taking everyone down memory lane and live entertainment from the FRNSW Band and Marching Team. **END**

## PYRMONT STATION redevelopment goes ahead after extensive consultation

**O**n Wednesday 25 June, FRNSW issued the tender for redevelopment of its historic Pyrmont Fire Station following extensive consultation with the Metro East Command which included Pyrmont firefighters. Once a builder has been selected, the Pyrmont crew and appliances will be temporarily relocated to City of Sydney Fire Station during the construction phase.

38 Pyrmont in Sydney's inner city is a heritage building built more than a century ago in 1906. Alongside the relocation of FRNSW staff from Head Office, Pyrmont Fire Station is being extensively redeveloped and the building modernised internally. The renovated premises will consist of the ground floor fire station, plus two floors above which will provide office accommodation for some short term contractors as well as temporary 'touchdown' facilities for staff based elsewhere who need to do business in the CBD.



FRNSW consulted with Pyrmont firefighters throughout the planning and design phases. A workplace engagement group was set up consisting of Area Commander Metro East Chief Superintendent Marcus Baker AFSM, Zone Commander ME1 Superintendent Peter Stathis AFSM, Station Officer Edward 'Bob' Caldwell B Platoon and the Pyrmont firefighters. The architects and engineers passed along ideas and options to the engagement group who reviewed these and fed back comments and concerns. A range of options were canvassed and assessed at different stages, with the extensive staff engagement process proving crucial in helping to refine the designs.

**END**

## NEW STATION OPENED AT TERRIGAL



**O**n Wednesday 14 June FRNSW officially opened the new Terrigal Fire Station on the Central Coast, a million-dollar investment in firefighting resources. The old fire station built in 1965 was demolished in 2013 to make way for a new bigger and better station. It has a twin engine bay, separate facilities for male and female firefighters, a large training room with kitchen facilities, a watchroom area and an office. Terrigal and the Central Coast continue to be among the fastest growing communities in NSW. The original fire bell, which was installed in 1947 to alert volunteers, now sits in pride of place at the front of the station. **END**

# Creative fire station noticeboards

Newtown firefighters have come up with a sure-fire way of getting the community's attention via the station noticeboard. Their innovative messages have been described as weird, wonderful, whacky and quirky, and have become not only a local, but a global talking point.



The clever messaging idea began with firefighters celebrating and supporting Mardi Gras diversity, “Fires don’t discriminate, neither do we”, was the first attention-grabbing announcement on the noticeboard. Inspired by Newtown, Maitland firefighters followed suit and were inundated with comments and support from 33,184 people who viewed their message on the *Maitland Mercury* Facebook page.

Earlier this year Newtown firies issued the dire caution: “Don’t drink and fry, grab a kebab”, followed by a magnanimous message to a newspaper thief who had been targeting the station: “Dear paper thief, we forgive you”.

These signs may have had the community taking notice, but the water

buffalo incident (when the animals escaped from a film shoot and ran rampant down the main street of Newtown until successfully wrangled by firefighters) attracted global media attention with the buffalo-related signs going viral on social media sites. “Give me a home where the buffalo roam” was followed by a countdown announcing: “Days without a buffalo incident: 6”.

Newtown Firefighter Ben Gaudin said the signs were the result of a team effort. The crew had wanted to come up with amusing signs to spread a safety message to the local community.

In urging the community to change their smoke alarm batteries, they came up with: “Fight local warming! Smoke alarm battery change April 6”, not to

be outdone by: “Your smoke detector... plastic guardian angel. Check its battery”.

Firefighter Samuel Monaghan admits there is fierce competition between shifts as to who can create a clever and relevant message. “They’re all great wordsmiths,” he lamented. “I’m still trying to come up with something!” Recent messages relate to mental health, with a State of Origin football flavour: “Feeling blue? At least you’re not marooned!”, with contact details for Beyondblue and Lifeline.

“This station is very community focussed,” said Firefighter Monaghan, “and each day brings something different. Right now, Coldplay is recording outside in the street. You just never know what will happen next. *Watch this space!*”

END

## FLOOD INCIDENT



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## 60 Avalon experiences 'that sinking feeling'!

13 MAY 04:13

On Tuesday 13 May, 60 Avalon was called out in the early hours of the morning to assist residents at The Serpentine Road at Bilgola where houses were being flooded as a result of a burst water main under the road surface. The Serpentine is a well-known landmark so named because it winds its way along a cliff face with many houses located above and below the roadway.

**A**s 60 Avalon crew proceeded slowly along the roadway, they felt as if they had hit a pothole followed by the appliance suddenly dipping to one side. Fortunately they were only moving slowly and were able to stop quickly and alight from the vehicle before it tilted dramatically to a 45° angle as the road surface suddenly caved in under them. On inspection they discovered that

tonnes of subsoil below the bitumen road surface had been washed away by the water gushing from the ruptured underground water main. The 14-tonne Varley Commander proved too much for the thin road surface to hold, and the vehicle became well and truly wedged in the sunken road surface.

The crew escaped safely despite their vehicle leaning heavily to one side. To their credit, after securing the vehicle to the best of their ability, they immediately set about assisting the many residents whose houses had become severely flooded.

Once Sydney Water emergency crews isolated the water main, the difficult task of retrieving the pumper began. There were very real fears that the soaked ground could subside further, which would cause the pumper to roll completely over and continue rolling onto houses located below the roadway level further down the cliff escarpment. It wasn't possible to drag the pumper from the hole as complications included another water main, gas main, communication cabling

and electrical mains, all of which could have been damaged if great care was not taken.

The vehicle was initially secured with a heavy towline from the heavy tow vehicle from Logistics Support. USAR and heavy rescue crews attached three Tirfor winches to the base of three large trees adjacent to the roadway and further secured the vehicle to prevent it toppling down the steep embankment. A large heavy duty crane was called to lift the rear of the vehicle clear of the sink hole as the winches were operated simultaneously to pull the vehicle sideways onto firmer ground. The delicate operation went like clockwork under the watchful eye of an enormous media pack assembled throughout the entire day-long retrieval operation.

FRNSW took the opportunity to invite the many media in attendance to inspect the rescue vehicles and equipment as they were given first hand demonstration of FRNSW's rescue and USAR capabilities for structural collapse and overseas deployments.

**END**

# FIREFIGHTER IRONMAN BREAKS 9-HOUR BARRIER



Senior Firefighter Aaron Richardson from 18 Glebe A Platoon is an elite age-group athlete and a proud member of the FRNSW Sports Association. Competing in Ironman Triathlons around the World, SF Richardson was ranked No. 1 in the world in his age group in 2012 and No. 2 in 2013. He has qualified and raced the Ironman World Championship in Hawaii four times.

**O**n 23 March 2014, he competed in the Ironman Asia Pacific Championships in Melbourne and achieved a lifelong goal of breaking the 9-hour barrier. For a 40-year-old, this is an amazing achievement and a world-class time. To provide some perspective, the winning time in the first Ironman World Championship in 1979 was 11 hours 46 minutes.

The Ironman Triathlon is a remarkable feat of athleticism and endurance. It comprises a 3.8 km swim and a 180 km bicycle ride followed by a marathon 42.2 km run, all within the mandatory cut-off times of 2 hours 20 minutes for the swim, 8 hours 10 minutes for the bike ride and 6 hours 30 minutes for the run.

"I started Ironman Triathlon way back in the nineties," said SF Richardson. "For 20 years, I have been driven to achieve the goal of the magical sub-9-hour race. Now, at the age of 40, and after more than 25 Ironman races, I have finally achieved that goal – finishing in 8 hours 53 minutes."

"I was not the fittest I've ever been... I just managed to get it right on that day. I had a race plan and I nailed it. To be able to run those last couple of kilometres knowing it was in the bag, and knowing that my family and friends were there, was something very special."

"The FRNSW Sports Association has assisted me in my journey over the past 10-plus years since I became a firefighter, so I would like to thank them and all Sports Association members. Thank you for helping me fulfil my dream of the sub-9!"

■ END



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# '400 IN 4' RIDES AGAIN



Participants in the 9th annual FRNSW '400 in 4' bike ride once again demonstrated their strength, stamina and heart to raise money for a charity close to all firefighters – the Westmead Children's Hospital Burns Unit.

**A** total of 26 riders, accompanied by three support crew members, set out from Wagga Wagga on the morning of Tuesday 25 March. After four days of riding through 400 km of picturesque NSW countryside and towns, they arrived at The Children's Hospital in Westmead on Friday 28 March.

Along the way, they raised money, and visited schools and local communities to promote fire safety and awareness, especially in relation to FRNSW's 'Change your clock, change your smoke alarm battery' campaign and the Winter Fire Safety campaign.

"The ride stopped in Gundagai, Gunning, Goulburn, Bowral and we then rode on to the hospital for a gala finish," said organiser Leading Firefighter Scott Hanley. "There was plenty going on with entertainment from country singer Dan

Murphy and the Symbio Wildlife Park, shows for the kids and a barbecue. We also had some of the local crews come up with their pumps for the kids in the unit to check out. It was a fantastic afternoon."

The Burns Unit at The Children's Hospital in Westmead is the referral unit for all major paediatric burns in New South Wales. It also cares for major plastic and general surgical patients. The hospital admits approximately 200–220 children with burns injuries each year, ranging from 0–6 years from all over NSW. The majority of burns patients admitted are aged between one and four years and have received scalds from tea/coffee/jugs or bath water, with older children having generally sustained burns from flammable fuel.

This year the '400 in 4' ride raised more than \$75,000, which brings total

funds raised since 2006 to just under \$350,000. The Burns Unit has used the money in the past to fund an Anaesthetist Fellow to help with the children's pain management and also the refurbishment of a burns theatre which has been named after the event.

A portion of this year's funds are being allocated to purchase two new dermatome machines worth \$17,500 each for use in operating theatres. A dermatome is a surgical instrument used to produce slices of skin of a specific thickness from a donor area for making skin grafts. One of its main applications is for reconstituting skin areas damaged by burns.

The Children's Hospital at Westmead also recently awarded the '400 in 4' ride with official benefactor status, which is only given to those who donate more than \$250,000. **END**



Chatswood Fire Brigade

# RUNAWAY HORSES AND ROTARY GONGS

Around mid-morning on 11 May 1897, the stable doors at North Sydney Fire Station swung open. The two horses 'Prince' and 'Rose' were led to the front of the manual engine.

The North Sydney crew were getting ready to attend drill. The harnesses, which hung from the ceiling, were snapped into position and the bridles fitted. The coachman mounted as fireman James Jones stood at the head of the horses to steady them. Foreman George Lang was about to give the order for the crew to mount when Rose suddenly reared up, knocking Jones to the floor. Prince and Rose bolted, pulling the reins from the coachman's hands as he tried desperately to gain control but he was too late.

Careering down to the bottom of Walker Street, the engine collided with a fence before finally coming to rest. Fortunately, both horses received only minor abrasions, while the driver got the fright of his life.

On the bright side... the North Sydney crew got out of going to drill!

After investigating the incident, William Bear (who was then Superintendent of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade) ruled that:

*"The mare in question was entirely responsible for the accident... [Rose] is at times very fractious and was very much so on that night."*

One can imagine the danger that an out-of-control fire engine (and two horses) would have posed to any unsuspecting civilians who found themselves in its path.

**"The mare in question was entirely responsible for the accident... [Rose] is at times very fractious and was very much so on that night."**

Back in 1897, the North Sydney engine would certainly have had a bell to warn locals of its hurried approach that day – providing the stressed-out coachman had the presence of mind to ring it.

It wasn't always so. In fact, it was only in late 1889 that gongs were first trialled on one of the steam fire engines. What happened before that? Well, Superintendent Bear gives us a clue. He wrote to the Fire Brigades Board saying that he hoped that the gongs might do away with the 'continual shouting of the men when going to fires'.

The gong was a loud foot-operated clanging rotary gong. It was usually operated by the coachman, or sometimes by one of the brakemen. Thus, from 1889, there was no mistaking the approach of galloping horses with a fire engine in tow – and the yelling stopped as well!

Even with a gong on board, however, the driver of a horse-drawn engine had to stay alert. Six months after the North Sydney incident, the George Street West brigade was returning from a fire call in Kent Street. Foreman John Ford reported that, as they travelled along George Street near Union Lane:

*"Mrs Symington (a visitor from Armidale), her two children and a lady friend were in the act of crossing the street to enter a Glebe Buss (sic). We saw them coming and I sounded the gong. Mrs Symington, her friend and one child ran across the Road leaving the other child... aged four years, on the other side of the Road. The child missed its mother and ran right in front of the horses striking him on the left foot as he fell. I sent the child to the Sydney Hospital where he was treated for a slight bruise on the foot and sent home... At the time of the accident the coachman... had his horses well in hand and pulled up immediately. We were travelling at the time between a walk and a trot."*

Third Class Fireman William Best (coachman) was cleared of any wrongdoing; and fortunately, the young boy wasn't badly injured. Notwithstanding, the Fire Brigades Board awarded Mrs Symington nine pounds to cover any expenses resulting from the accident. **END**

# FRNSW STAFF AWARDED QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS



Chief Superintendent Malcolm Connellan



Captain Michael Edwards



Chief Superintendent Craig Brierley

Six FRNSW employees were recognised in the 2014 Queen's Birthday Honours. Chief Superintendent Malcolm Connellan (30+ years service), Chief Superintendent Craig Brierley (nearly 30 years), Inspector Trevor Boshier (37+ years), Kempsey Captain Tony Hackenberg (30 years), and Hay Captain Mick Edwards (37 years) were awarded Australian Fire Service Medals. Each recipient has demonstrated exceptional levels of service and commitment to FRNSW and their local communities for many years. Their efforts have included contributing to improved fire safety, mentoring and supporting other firefighters, spearheading change in recruitment processes, and developing better and safer equipment and response capabilities.

**C**hief Superintendent Malcolm Connellan has been involved in developing several critical projects including the implementation of new firefighter payroll and rostering systems. He has held the position of Professional Standards and Conduct Officer and is currently the Commissioner's Chief of Staff. He is well respected and a mentor for firefighting staff.

Chief Superintendent Craig Brierley's roles have included firefighter, media spokesperson, Professional Standards and Conduct Officer and, currently, Assistant Director of Recruitment and Staffing. He is spearheading recruitment strategies to attract a more diverse workforce to the FRNSW.

Inspector Trevor Boshier has been a leading contributor in developing NSW's hazardous materials response capability.

For many years he has been responsible for the development, procurement, implementation, maintenance and review of all related policies, procedures and new advanced equipment required in the emergency response to hazmat incidents. He has worked hard developing multi-agency links, particularly with NSW Police.

Kempsey Captain Tony Hackenberg has worked tirelessly with many community groups and organisations, in particular the local Aboriginal community, to reduce the number of fire-related incidents. His efforts have reduced the number of incidents in the Kempsey community. He is widely respected within and outside FRNSW for his distinguished service.

Hay Fire Station Captain Michael Edwards has mentored his crew and gained the respect of emergency services workers throughout the region. He has

worked hard to improve the FRNSW Firefighter Championships, both as a competitor and as a member of the championships executive. He has actively encouraged regional crews across the State to participate in these events with the result of greatly improving their firefighting skills.

John Shenhstone from our Information Technology Directorate was awarded the Public Service Medal for his work in designing and implementing state-of-the-art radio and telecommunications systems and architecture over a period of nearly 30 years.

In addition, Retained Firefighter Kevin Gray, who recently retired after more than 50 years of service at Alstonville Fire Station, received the Order of Australia Medal for service to the community. **END**



# **FRNSW 'BRAVEHEARTS' recognised on St Florian's Day**



On 4 May 2014 FRNSW marked St Florian's Day or International Firefighters' Day by officially recognising the courage and commitment of firefighters and members of the public who risked their lives to help others during major emergencies.



Station Officer Ron Morasso



St Florian's Day award recipients

**A**t an awards ceremony at the State Training College on that day, Commissioner Mullins presented commendations to a number of firefighters and fire crews for their actions at several recent challenging incidents.

The FRNSW Medal for Conspicuous Bravery was presented to retired Alexandria Station Officer Ron Morasso who responded to a major fuel leak at the Caltex Banksmeadow Fuel Terminal on 12 July 2013. Ron displayed great courage when he volunteered to wade through knee-deep fuel to close a leaking valve on a 2 million litre fuel storage tank at the Banksmeadow incident, thus averting a potentially catastrophic explosion and fire. Commissioner's Individual Commendations for Courageous Action at the Caltex incident were also awarded to members of A Platoon from 70 Maroubra, 56 Matraville, 26 Mascot and 13 Alexandria.

Commissioner's Individual Commendations for Courageous Action or Meritorious Service were awarded

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to 12 firefighters who responded to a multi-storey unit fire at West Terrace, Bankstown on 6 September 2012.

A Commissioner's Individual Commendation for Courageous Action was awarded to Qualified Firefighter Lloyd Mulder for his actions at a petrol tanker fire on Mona Vale Rd, Warriewood on 1 October 2013.

Station Officer Bruce Fitzpatrick received a Commendation for Meritorious Service for his outstanding voluntary work in supporting firefighters as a member of FRNSW's Critical Incident Support Program. **END**

## AWARD RECIPIENTS

### **Caltex Banksmeadow Fuel Terminal major fuel leak** **12 July 2013**

**FRNSW Medal for Conspicuous Bravery**  
– Retired Station Officer Ron Morasso

- Individual Commendations for Courageous Action**
- Station Officer Max Metzker
  - Senior Firefighter Russell Vance
  - Senior Firefighter Rod Jackson
  - Firefighter Mark Blackmore
  - Station Officer Steve McFadyen
  - Senior Firefighter Don Giles
  - Firefighter Brendan Ebejer
  - Firefighter Kevin Blissett
  - Station Officer Craig Wearne
  - Senior Firefighter Mark Maguire
  - Firefighter Dominic Burke
  - Firefighter Ryan Hartup
  - Senior Firefighter Glenn Sprod
  - Senior Firefighter Erik Sullivan
  - Senior Firefighter Eddie Vaysback
  - Senior Firefighter Brett Martin
  - Senior Firefighter Nick Clarke
  - Inspector Jon Andrews
  - Inspector Scott Rainnie

### **Critical Incident Support Program**

**Commendation for Meritorious Service**  
– Station Officer Bruce Fitzpatrick

### **Multi-storey unit fire, West Terrace, Bankstown** **6 September 2012**

- Individual Commendations for Courageous Action**
- Senior Firefighter Greg Flynn
  - Senior Firefighter Mark Ettridge
  - Station Officer Dan Bourne
  - Senior Firefighter Kris Tuntevski
  - Qualified Firefighter Mitchell Parkes
  - Senior Firefighter Stuart McCorkell
  - Firefighter Peter Stibbard

- Individual Commendations for Meritorious Action**
- Station Officer Mark Franklin
  - Qualified Firefighter Todd Calderwood
  - Station Officer Ross Jones
  - Firefighter Leewarra Wright
  - Firefighter Cameron Brown

### **Mona Vale petrol tanker fire** **1 October 2013**

- Individual Commendations for Courageous Action**
- Firefighter Lloyd Mulder
  - Firefighter George Chee

### **Commissioner's Commendations**

- NSWRFs Warringah/Pittwater Senior Deputy Captain Joshua Sheedy
- Members of the public Andrew Cochran and Maria Tosone

# OTHER AWARDS FOR FRNSW STAFF



Firefighter Erin Pogmore



Alison Donohoe



Inspector Brendan Cox, Inspector Graham Jarrett, Commissioner Mullins, Jennifer Williamson and Inspector Mick Wren

**S**uperintendent Steve Davis and Inspectors Mick Wren, Graham Jarrett and Brendan Cox each received Commissioner's Commendations for Meritorious Service for their efforts in embedding and championing the facilitated conferencing process. FRNSW is using facilitated conferencing as a new approach to address workplace conflict by bringing together the community of people affected by the conflict with the aim of resolving their differences.

Firefighter Erin Pogmore from 10 Redfern, who is also an SES volunteer, won a prestigious Higgins and Langley Award for innovation and excellence in the development of swiftwater rescue techniques. The USA-based Higgins and Langley Foundation rarely grants such awards outside the country, and Erin joins a small elite group, including Senior Firefighter Shannon Crofton, who have been recognised in this way. The award recognised Erin's research into prevention of injuries through the application of soft tissue therapies.

Alison Donohoe, FRNSW's Assistant Director Health and Safety, was recently a finalist in the 2014 Institute of Public Administration Awards NSW. Alison was nominated for her collaboration across FRNSW to ensure that employees understand their role in safety and incorporate it into their daily work practices. Within FRNSW she leads a team of more than 40 professionals in the areas of injury management, safety and health promotion. Over the last five years, the work undertaken by her team collaboratively with operational commands has helped to achieve a 34% decrease in illness and injury suffered by firefighters at work. **END**

# THANK YOU FROM VICTORIA

Following are extracts from a letter that Commissioner Greg Mullins received from Country Fire Authority Chief Officer Euan Ferguson in recognition of FRNSW's assistance earlier this year.

Dear Greg,

*Thank you for supporting Victoria.*

The 2013/14 fire season proved to be long and arduous for Victorian fire agencies. In particular, the fire in the Hazelwood Open Cut Coal Mine tested the Victorian fire agencies and emergency management organisations in ways not seen for many years.

We, as CFA, and as part of the State's Emergency Management Framework, want to take this opportunity to offer our deep gratitude for your support to us in our time of need... you loaned us high technology and expensive 'state of the art' firefighting equipment and appliances.

There is no doubt that, without the assistance offered by your agency, and others like you, the extinguishment of these fires would have been longer, more drawn out and more hazardous... Please accept this letter as an expression of our deep and sincere thanks. Your people did us proud when called upon in our time of need.

**Euan Ferguson AFSM**  
Chief Officer

## FIREFIGHTERS AGAIN VOTED AS HIGHLY TRUSTED

In 2014 firefighters were voted the second most trusted occupation in Australia in the annual Reader's Digest 'Most Trusted Professions' survey.

Every day firefighters work on the frontline to save life, property and the environment through a range of prevention, preparation and response activities, and this community recognition is well deserved. Ambulance paramedics took out first place, and

rescue volunteers came in third. It is very pleasing to see the high esteem in which the community holds emergency service workers and the enormous trust that they place in them. **END**

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## **JAPANESE PM PRAISES FRNSW**

On Tuesday 8 July the Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, addressed the Australian Parliament.

He made special mention of the 52 FRNSW firefighters who responded as part of the Australian USAR Task Force to Minami Sanriku after the earthquake and tsunami in 2011, and paid tribute to Assistant Commissioner Rob McNeil AFSM, the Task Force Leader, who was in the public gallery to hear the Prime Minister's address. AC McNeil was asked to stand and received a standing ovation, which he accepted on behalf of the Task Force which was made up of FRNSW firefighters, Ambulance paramedics, trauma doctors, structural engineers and a NSW Police liaison officer. **END**

# SOCIAL MEDIA SAYS THANK YOU

## Jean McCartney

I guess this sort of thing happens all the time, but you never think it will happen to you. We just want to give a big rap and a thankyou to the boys at Regentville fire station in South Penrith.

Our little kitten became lodged in behind the dashboard of our car on Sunday. Exhausting every other avenue, we contacted the Regentville station to see if they could help. The guys arrived in no time, patiently dismantled part of the dashboard and gently removed our 'little girl'. These guys do a great job risking their life fighting fires every day, yet can still come to help out with these sorts of situations. Well done boys! It was much appreciated.

## Taila Brown

Biggest thank you to the two amazing fire men and one awesome fire lady from the Newtown station who came and helped me back into my apartment tonight. Who locks themselves out with the oven on? I do. You seriously saved me from a very lonely night of sleeping under a bridge somewhere and possibly a house fire (and some very burnt dinner).

## Justin Warn

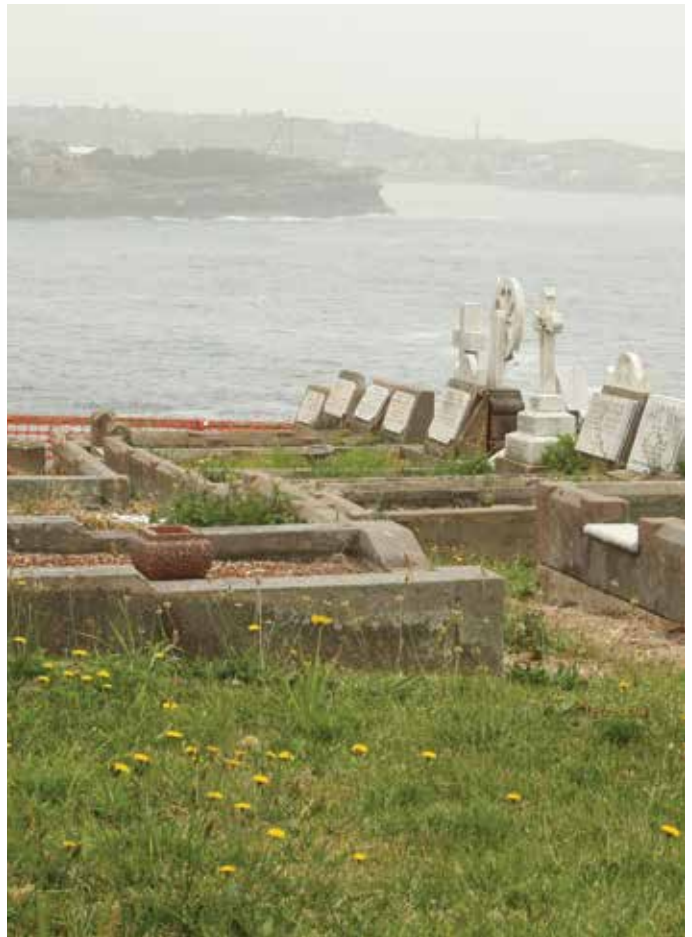
Thank you to the Rosemeadow station. We needed assistance removing a cat out of a drain and your response was fantastic. Thank you to the crew involved, we couldn't have done it without you

## Jenni Kane

I would like to say thanks to the firefighter at Wetherill park a couple of weeks ago, from the Smithfield fire station, who saw that my 2 year old son was super excited to see their fire truck and therefore stopped to have a chat with him, showed him the helmets and inside the truck. My little man has been talking about it ever since! So thoughtful of you. Thank you for the work that you do and for supporting the community.

## Penny Hides

Thankyou to the champions from Hills Rescue who helped save a 6 week old puppy today who got stuck in a drain. Yay you guys thankyou very very much.



## Death of retired Deputy Chief Officer Bob Norton

FRNSW regrets the passing of Bob Norton on 17 May 2014. Bob joined the NSWFB in April 1948. He served at Waterloo and Katoomba Fire Stations and in the Sydney Fire District. Thereafter he performed roles at Headquarters, in the Building Inspections and Fire Prevention sections, culminating in his appointment as Deputy Chief Officer in October 1980. He retired from the NSWFB in 1986 after 38 years of dedicated service.

## Death of retired Chief Officer Roy Ahern

Retired Chief Officer Roy Ahern passed away recently at the age of 88. Roy rose through the ranks to become Chief Officer from 1984–86 after joining the NSW Fire Brigades in 1947 at the young age of 21. He served in the Royal Australian Airforce during the Second World War and then followed his father Bill, a Station Officer, into a lifetime career in the NSWFB. Roy is remembered as the sort of person who made things happen, and who demonstrated determination and a tremendous work ethic. His contribution included reforms in the areas of building fire safety and in education and training. Roy's funeral was held 29 April at Cronulla with Commissioner Mullins delivering a eulogy outlining Roy's career and FRNSW providing pallbearers and an honour guard.

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# Deaths and retirements

## Vale: With gratitude for service to the people of NSW

Name	Station	Date
Retired SF Barry Coltman	Kogarah, Port Kembla and Wollongong	Jan 2014
Retired SO Warwick Dennewald	Communications and City of Sydney	25 Jan 2014
Retired RetF Bruce Hayes	Singleton	2 Feb 2014
Retired RetF Graham Scott	Wallsend	Feb 2014
Retired QF William (Andy) Polain	Campsie	11 Feb 2014
Retired Engine Keeper Malcolm Stanley	Corrimal	11 Feb 2014
Retired Volunteer Firefighter Tony Ivan	Wingham	11 Feb 2014
Retired Capt John (Jack) Snaddon	Kearsley	20 Feb 2014
Retired RetF Jeffrey Hall	Warren	16 Feb 2014
Retired Capt Donald Spence	Tingira Heights (Windale)	1 Mar 2014
Retired SF Alan Cansdale	Kogarah and Umina	11 Mar 2014
Retired RetF Robert Clarke	Bellingen	14 Mar 2014
Retired Volunteer Firefighter Thomas Soper	Penrith	29 Mar 2014
Retired FF Peter Kelly	Stanmore, Drummoyne and City of Sydney	5 Apr 2014
RetF Ambrose Crittenden	Jerilderie	6 Apr 2014
Retired SO George Lamond	Revesby, Campsie and City of Sydney	7 Apr 2014
Retired District Officer Herb Filla	Crows Nest	9 Apr 2014
Retired Chief Officer Roy Ahern	Headquarters	18 Apr 2014
Retired District Officer Robert Weekes	Fire Safety Division	26 Apr 2014
Retired RetF B Priddis	Gosford	28 Apr 2014
Retired SF Raymond Marshall	Busby, Cabramatta and Horningsea Park	5 May 2014
Retired SO Athol Waight	Glebe and Randwick	16 May 2014
Retired Deputy Chief Officer Bob Norton	Headquarters	17 May 2014
Retired Firefighter Francis Chute (Hunter)	Albury	25 May 2014

## Farewell and thanks to those retiring

Name	Station	Date retired
SF P Sutherland	Tweed Heads	5 Mar 2014
SO M Todd	Berkeley Vale	7 Mar 2014
SO R Marasso	Alexandria	7 Mar 2014
SF P Macnamara	Bathurst	7 Mar 2014
RetF K Keast	Orange	7 Mar 2014
RetF P East	Rhodes	15 Mar 2014
RetF O Benson	Bombala	20 Mar 2014
SF P Leary-Smith	Command Leadership Management	21 Mar 2014
Capt E Ranse AFSM	Katoomba	25 Mar 2014
Supt G Parkes	Command Leadership Management	28 Mar 2014
SF G Wettengel	Redfern	28 Mar 2014
RetF W De Venny	Tweed Heads	2 Apr 2014
Supt S Davis	MN1 Zone Office	4 Apr 2014
DCapt A Refalo	Albion Park Rail	4 Apr 2014
SF G Campbell	Balmain	14 Apr 2014
SF M Cox	Appliance Training Unit	18 Apr 2014
Insp S Rashleigh	ME2 Zone Office	18 Apr 2014
RetF I Firman	Lockhart	1 May 2014
SO L Ayoub	Tweed Heads	2 May 2014
SF P Stirling	Macquarie Fields	2 May 2014
RetF J King	Banora Point	15 May 2014
SO M Langdon	Katoomba	16 May 2014
EK T Eassie	Orange	16 May 2014
RetF N Simpson	Urunga	17 May 2014
RetF B Hamnett	Byron Bay	23 May 2014
SF R Johnson	Wollongong	23 May 2014
SF M Price	Newcastle Hazmat	23 May 2014
SF A Porter	Kogarah	30 May 2014
SF B Kilduff	Lismore	30 May 2014
Capt M Leahey	Tingira Heights	31 May 2014
RetF D Cook	Wauchope	6 Jun 2014
RetF P Sargent	Canowindra	12 Jun 2014
Capt S Farr	Ulladulla	23 Jun 2014
Capt K White	Grenfell	30 Jun 2014
RetF J Bosson	Kelso	30 Jun 2014
SF R Hinton	Tingira Heights	1 Jul 2014
Capt B Smith	Wauchope	1 Jul 2014
SF M Phelan	Bateau Bay	3 Jul 2014
SO A Brander	Mayfield West	3 Jul 2014
SO D Ross	Ryde	3 Jul 2014
RetF P Hyland	Maclean	4 Jul 2014
SO W Morris	Bondi	4 Jul 2014
SF D Woods	Gordon	4 Jul 2014
SF S Gilchrist	East Maitland	4 Jul 2014
SF M Durrant	COS	4 Jul 2014
SO P Newton	Holmesville	4 Jul 2014
SF P Knight	Springwood	4 Jul 2014
QF T Watkins	Rosemeadow	8 Jul 2014
SF I Hastie	Newcastle Hazmat	10 Jul 2014
SO G Watson AFSM	Equipment Logistics (Greenacre)	11 Jul 2014
SF M Goodenough	Belmont	11 Jul 2014

# GOOD LUCK

## TO ALL THOSE COMPETING IN THE 2014 STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Wednesday 22 October – Saturday 25 October

Learmonth Park, corner Gilmore Street and Dorman Place, Kelso, NSW



### YOU CAN SHOW YOUR SUPPORT BY

**ENTERING A TEAM** visit [www.firefighterchampionships.com.au](http://www.firefighterchampionships.com.au)

**CHEERING ON THE TEAMS** spectators most welcome

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