

RESPONSE

QUEENSLAND'S OFFICIAL FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES MAGAZINE

EDITION 7



COOL BURN

BUSHFIRE SEASON PREPARATION IN FULL SWING

TAKE OFF:

QFES ADDS AVIATION FIREFIGHTING TO TRAINING

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FOREWORDS



Katarina Carroll

Commissioner

QUEENSLAND FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

There is so much work happening across QFES as we work towards transforming into the modern and mature department we aim to be.

Every business unit is actively chipping away at projects, initiatives and events.

One of the recent achievements was the first of two Rural Fire Service Volunteer Summits which took place in Townsville. The event was very beneficial and well organised and my thanks go to those who contributed to making the event such a success.

In my speech at the summit, I covered a number of important topics and provided commitments regarding volunteers, and you can read more about this on page 8.

In terms of epic events, I must also congratulate the Bike 4 Burns team. There was an astounding effort from 60 QFES personnel as well as 40 of our southern colleagues from Fire and Rescue NSW who completed 1000km in nine days from Berowra to Brisbane.

This is commendable in itself, but the team also raised more than \$43,000 along the way for young burns victims.

Looking forward to the second half of 2016, the events only get bigger.

In August, the AFAC16 conference will take place at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre and QFES is very proud to be able to have this event in Queensland.

I am honoured to be speaking at the conference and I am even more honoured to be able to showcase what our department is achieving to some of our most important stakeholders.

In addition, October will see the Australasian Police and Emergency Services Games take place on the Sunshine Coast. This is the first time in 15 years the event has been held in Queensland and we can't wait to see what the games will bring.

As always, I thank you for your continued efforts in supporting QFES.



Mike Wassing

Deputy Commissioner

EMERGENCY SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Firstly, I would like to thank everyone who participated in celebrating, recognising and valuing all volunteers during National Volunteer Week.

As an organisation with more than 40,000 dedicated volunteers, we know that many of our volunteers and staff also volunteer their time in a variety of ways across a number of other organisations to support local causes and community needs.

I also would like to acknowledge everyone who participated in Wear Orange Wednesday (WOW) on 11 May, showing support for the incredible efforts of State Emergency Service (SES) volunteers.

During National Volunteer Week, Rural Fire Service held the first of its two Volunteer Summits in Townsville from 13 to 15 May. The summit was an opportunity for volunteers to come together and discuss current issues, visit trade displays and benefit from meeting other volunteers from the north of the state. The second Volunteer Summit will be held on the Gold Coast from 24 to 26 June.

Aside from the Summits and operational planning that has been occurring across the state in preparation for 2016-17, Operation Cool Burn has been running since 1 April.

This year we have a new standing order from the Commissioner and a new focus on high risk areas, using the full kit of tools to mitigate the risk including targeted education and fire break preparation as well as burning. Consultation with our key land management partners has been extensive and cooperation on burns has been very good.

I would like to thank the regional RFS and Fire and Rescue staff who have been working hard on planning Operation Cool Burn, particularly the Bushfire Safety and iZone Officers, and especially thank all volunteers in the brigades who have been responsible for implementing many of the burns and education activities.

There has been a lot achieved already to improve support and services for our frontline volunteers, however we recognise some work and activities are taking time to deliver.

As such, I have established a taskforce to provide immediate and short term deliverables that have tangible benefits to assist frontline QFES volunteers (RFS and SES) in creating safe and resilient communities.

The taskforce led by Assistant Commissioner Tom Dawson has begun implementing established priority outcomes with visibility to frontline volunteers and key stakeholders.

Continued engagement with volunteers including the QSESVA and RFBAQ will form an important part of the taskforce initiation and reporting.



2016 Volunteer Survey opens 11 July

Volunteers are an important part of QFES.

A key objective for the department is to empower volunteerism by recognising, respecting and valuing volunteers, and by listening to feedback to inform the future.

To do this, QFES is undertaking the 2016 Volunteer Survey to assess volunteer satisfaction and particularly seek feedback on culture and communication.

Running from Monday 11 July through to Monday 1 August 2016, the survey is open to all QFES volunteers.

While it's not compulsory to complete, your views from the survey will be used to better support volunteers making this a great opportunity to actively get involved, for your ideas to be noted and your voices heard.

The survey will be undertaken on behalf of QFES by TNS, an independent market research company with all responses remaining completely anonymous.

To access the survey online, volunteers who have provided email addresses will be sent an email directly from TNS. If you

require a paper-based survey, you'll be able to request this via the website when the survey opens.

Be sure to keep an eye out for your email from TNS and further details on the survey closer to its launch on Monday 11 July.

If you have any questions or require further information on the survey please contact Joanne Robinson, Principal Advisor, QFES on (07) 3635 1643 or email JoanneM.Robinson@qfes.qld.gov.au.



Response magazine turns one

Queensland's official fire and emergency services magazine has now been in print for a year, and we want to hear what you think.

From the first edition in June 2015, *Response* magazine has covered some big events that are shaping QFES from symposiums and summits to reviews and recruitment.

To ensure we are curating the best content for you, we have opened the *Response* magazine reader feedback survey.

The short survey asks if *Response* is getting the balance right in what you want to read about and see in your magazine.

The results will help us to determine where we can improve to ensure your magazine is truly representative of what you want to know.



➤ To complete the survey, visit <http://svy.mk/1Tj4Jpx>

THE SURVEY
WILL CLOSE ON
12 AUGUST.



Statement of Cultural Intent outlines expectations



The QFES Statement of Cultural Intent has been released to ensure the department’s future viability with a diverse and inclusive workforce.

As a department, it is a priority to transform our culture to be more diverse, inclusive and respectful.

It’s also imperative that QFES is representative of the communities it serves and understands its service delivery requirements.

Commissioner Katarina Carroll said the statement outlines what to expect as a department in our dealings with each other and those in our communities.

“It ensures we align our actions and behaviours with our core values and that we work as one department respecting

and embracing differences in thought, background, skills, expertise, experience and perspectives, to deliver safe and resilient communities,” she said.

“Strengthened diversity and inclusion within the workforce is an expectation of the Australian Government and part of all Directors’ General performance agreements across government.

“In conjunction with the release of the Statement of Cultural Intent, we are developing a number of policies and strategies that will help us achieve the desired outcomes.

“At the highest level, this includes a Cultural Transformation Strategy, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Workforce Engagement and Communication Strategy which promote and support a safe workplace.

“By championing a culture of inclusion and welcoming a diversity of opinion and perspective, we will ensure we are sustainable into the future and prosper as a department.”

To view the whole document, visit www.qfes.qld.gov.au/cultural-intent.asp

The following are statements of intent, based on the QFES core values that all personnel should embrace and champion:

We will endeavour to provide the best services possible to create enhanced public value and ensure our communities are safe and resilient.

We will recognise and value differences in thought, background, experience and perspectives.

We will be inclusive and respect all people.

We believe in ethical behaviour and demonstrating honesty, fairness, equality, dignity and respect for individual rights.

We will not tolerate any form of violence, harassment or bullying and will openly challenge those who do.

We believe in the safety of our people and the people we serve; physical, emotional and psychological.

We believe our workplaces will be improved through the inclusion of a diverse range of people. Through increased diversity our workplaces will be more representative of our communities, new ideas and ways of thinking will be introduced and we will be more sustainable into the future.

Volunteer Summit converges on Townsville

The first of two Rural Fire Service Volunteer Summits took place in Townsville in May, bringing together volunteers from Central, Northern and Far Northern Regions.

With a focus on consultation and conversation, this is the first year the summit has been split into two events in Townsville and Gold Coast to be able to reach more people.

About 230 attendees including QFES staff and volunteers from Central Region, Northern Region and Far Northern Region participated in the two-day event.

Topics covered at the summit included fire in Indigenous ecosystems, building brigade culture and capability, low intensity burning and volunteer training, among others.

Commissioner Katarina Carroll opened the program with a presentation on the direction of QFES and made some important announcements on key outcomes for volunteers and brigades.

“In the 2015/16 and 2016/17 budget cycles you will see 116 vehicles, or 10 per cent, of the Rural Fire Service fleet replaced,” she said. “This is an unprecedented number of new vehicles.

“Additionally, the 2016/17 budget cycle will include new funding for fuel and maintenance on a needs basis for the Rural Fire Service.

“It will not fund maintenance of firefighting equipment on trucks. This funding will enhance existing funding from any other source and we will cover yellow trucks and white trucks owned by the brigades or the state. This will not include private vehicles used for fire response.

“This will ensure vehicles are safe and roadworthy and enable the Rural Fire Service to maintain operational effectiveness.”

Ms Carroll also discussed ways in which volunteers would become more connected with the department.



“As part of my commitment to provide volunteers with better connectivity with QFES, all active volunteers will have a personal QFES email address up and running by storm season,” she said.

“As part of this you will have access to Office 365 in the cloud through a personalised login, which will provide you with corporate email access (including calendar and contacts), instant messaging, online meetings and meeting broadcasts along with online applications such as Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

“You will have access to the human capital management system. Through a simple logon you will be able to access your information, make changes and connect with the department.

“Providing this infrastructure for our volunteers is about enabling people to be better connected within QFES. We will be able to better communicate and engage with the entire department.”

Deputy Commissioner Emergency Service Volunteers Mike Wassing also unveiled the new Rural Fire Service uniform at the event.

The summit also included plenty of opportunities for networking among attendees and hosted a trade show.

Warren Kelly of Black River Rural Fire Brigade was in attendance and said he was glad to see the volunteer summits evolving over the years.

“The summit has matured into a platform for strategic consultation and education second to none in the world of emergency service volunteers,” he said.

“This is something for the organisers to be proud of and an opportunity to strive to an ever-evolving Rural Fire Service.”

The second summit is planned for the Gold Coast from 24 to 26 June.



“The summit has matured into a platform for strategic consultation and education second to none in the world of emergency service volunteers”



QFES achieves CASA accreditation

CASA has accredited QFES with the capability to offer aviation-specific fire and rescue training.



“ we are thrilled to now have this capability ”



QFES has become only the third Australian organisation able to deliver aviation fire and rescue training.

Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) representatives observed QFES' proposed training package and practical exercises over a two-day assessment process at QCESA in May and recommended QFES qualify as a training provider in this area.

Previously, training for the CASA-accredited Respond to Aviation Incident (Specialist) competency has only been provided to non-Defence personnel by Air Services Australia.

This means not only will aviation firefighting be built into training for current and new QFES firefighters,

including auxiliary firefighters, but the academy will be able to provide Aviation Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) training to industry in a commercial market as well.

QFES volunteers will also be included through the development and roll-out of an ARFF awareness package.

Training and Emergency Management (TEM) Executive Manager Robin Boniwell said the accreditation was a significant achievement for QFES.

"After almost three years of consultation, collaboration and negotiation with various stakeholders and a vigorous two-day assessment process, we are thrilled to now have this capability," he said.

"As the Executive Manager of TEM, I am particularly proud of this achievement but it would not have been possible without the vision and technical expertise of Ron Watkins, the ARFF Project Manager and Adam Elms, lead instructor and subject matter expert.

"Considering the potential expansion of the aviation industry in Queensland, this enhanced QFES response capability is timely, mitigating risk to our operational personnel."





Photo entries flood in

We put the call out last edition for creative and interesting photos to be sent in from the field and you responded.

Photo entries came in from all corners of the state and covered air operations training, sand driving, gas fires, fire investigation, community education and lots of parts of QFES' business that can often be unseen.

Thanks to Mark Dorman, Dale Wheeler and Ashley Page for submitting the entries featured below.

We will continue to take photo submissions for consideration and feature the best photos in forthcoming editions.

As before, submit entries via the QFES Gateway Snapshot feature or by emailing magazine.editor@qfes.qld.gov.au



Auxiliary firefighters in Chinchilla conducting training on the Condamine River. Thanks to Dale Wheeler.



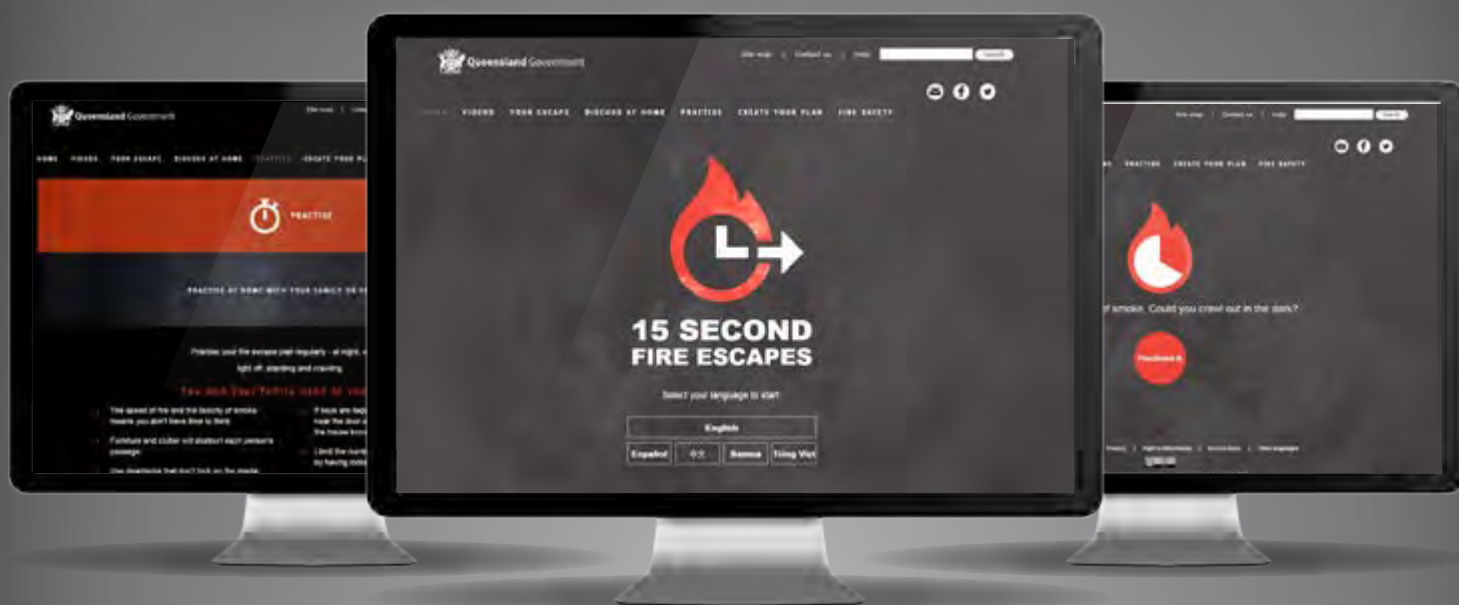
Nambour senior firefighter Rick Scott in action at a tractor fire in a Bli Bli cane field. Thanks to Ashley Page



Rural crews and air operations pictured taking part in a joint bushfire training exercise. Thanks to Mark Dorman.



Just 15 seconds could save Queenslanders' lives



A new QFES campaign asks people to take 15 seconds to consider their fire escape plans this winter.

A \$400,000 advertising campaign will run until August using radio and online media to urge people to complete simple tasks and get them started on their fire escape plan.

A study based on last year's campaign showed that most people saw value in the importance of discussing or agreeing on a plan but when it came down to documenting the plan, only half took any action.

This year's campaign uses a series of 15 second challenges to help motivate people to take the next step and

draw up a household plan, rather than brushing it aside into the 'too hard' basket.

Tasks like deciding on a safe meeting place for the household in case of a fire, or checking that there is a key handy by all doors and windows can take less than 15 seconds and could mean the difference between life and death.

At the launch of the campaign, Commissioner Katarina Carroll told media people were more likely to panic during a house fire if they hadn't prepared.

"A fire escape plan can reduce stress and avoid panic. It is imperative that residents know what a smoke alarm sounds like and that everyone in the family knows what to do if a fire occurs in the home," she said.

"The message is simple. What we are asking residents to do is simple. Please play your part and keep yourselves and your loved ones safe this winter and year-round."

➤ To see the fire escape plan campaign website visit www.qfes.qld.gov.au/firescape



QFES uniforms rolling out

Uniforms are progressing for both the paid and volunteer workforce.



Currently, the new-style uniforms have been provided to 5000 paid QFES staff and Phase II of the rollout is now in progress and is expected to be complete (including all exchanges) by mid-2017.

Since Phase I, the Capability Resource Unit (CRU) has developed a case management model to assist in a more accurate process of getting the correct uniforms to the correct people in a timely manner.

CRU conducted regional face-to-face meetings to discuss the need for staff to have correct details in OMS and other issues that may have delayed delivery in Phase I.

Polo shirts have also been ordered for QFES administration officers.

The new SES and RFS shoulder badges are in the final stages of design and the finished product will be presented in the near future.

An implementation plan is also in progress to support the rollout of the light-blue shirts as part of the interim uniform wear to SES staff and RFS staff and volunteers in the coming months.

RFS staff and volunteers along with SES staff will start receiving the agreed light-blue shirts in July.

Department of Premier and Cabinet has now approved new artwork for all services (above) and QFES will finalise how these will be used in future uniforms.

Consultation and work on the SES volunteer uniform wear items continues, with the finalisation of the design expected to be completed by the middle of this year with the rollout to follow.

Once these rollouts are complete, eight different official uniforms will be worn, including QFES executive, RFS staff, RFS volunteers, SES staff, SES volunteers, Fire and Rescue staff, Emergency Management staff, and Communications staff.

These different uniforms allow personnel to identify with QFES as a department as well as recognising the diversity among the streams.

Huge effort so far in Operation Cool Burn

Now at the midway point of Operation Cool Burn for 2016, preparation for bushfire season is in full swing.



While Operation Cool Burn has run for a number of years, the 2016 operation has a renewed focus on prioritising areas at highest risk and working closer than ever with stakeholders.

The standing order from the Commissioner on the operation expressed the importance of working cooperatively to undertake mitigation activities at sites that provided maximum benefit in protecting communities.

Area Fire Management Groups (AFMG) made up of partners including QFES, large land management agencies and local government have been meeting and reviewing potential high risk areas and using the new redi-portal mapping tool.

The redi-portal contains information on community assets which may be potentially at risk and is available to QFES and AFMG partners to assist in making decisions, in conjunction with local knowledge, about which sites are of greatest concern this year and address the risks accordingly.

Executive Manager Bushfire Mitigation James Haig said while protecting communities had remained the priority,

activities outside of mitigation burning had also been taking place to reduce risk, including targeted education in the most at-risk areas as well as improving fire breaks.

“The education component is particularly important as we know that homes which are better prepared are less likely to have severe consequences if a bushfire does occur,” he said.

“This also means that at sites where we have a risk but can’t burn, perhaps because the breaks are not in place or because the fuel is already too dry to burn safely, we can still do things to improve community safety.

“These are substantial changes and we will not get everything right, but we will review this year’s Cool Burn and learn from it.

“Like all of our business, it will require continuous improvement, but these have been some major changes and it does show we are on an exciting and challenging journey.”



One in three lack quality sleep

Adequate, restful sleep is just as vital for your health as a proper diet, regular water intake and physical activity.



Taking into account shift work, irregular hours, travelling and other lifestyle conditions, getting the required six to eight hours of sleep a night is harder than it sounds.

Sleep deprivation is estimated to affect more than a third of people and is a leading contributor to road accidents and workplace injuries.

During sleep, your body is busy regulating chemicals and hormones in your body, archiving memories and repairing muscles.

Without proper sleep these functions can't be fully realised and over time, continued lack of sleep can have serious health consequences.

Not sleeping for 24 hours leads to reduced hand-eye coordination that is similar to having a blood alcohol reading twice the legal limit.

Getting into a sleeping routine is the best way to ensure you are tired at the right times to get the most out of sleep.

By completing the same tasks in the same order before bed, your body will begin to understand you are preparing

for sleep – including having a bath or shower, reading a book or even meditating.

Remove distractions from your sleeping environment including turning down your phone volume, turning the clock to avoid 'clock-watching' and, for shift workers especially, letting your friends and family know you are trying to sleep.

The use of substances can also inhibit your ability to get quality sleep. These could include caffeine, alcohol, nicotine and long-term use of sleeping pills.

Tips for a better night's sleep

AIM FOR
6-8
HOURS OF
SLEEP
PER NIGHT

ELIMINATE
SOUND
& **LIGHT**
FROM YOUR
SLEEPING
AREA

TRY TO
KEEP THE
SAME
SLEEPING
ROUTINE

- AVOID -
EATING
LATE AT
NIGHT

ENSURE YOUR
SLEEPING
POSITION
ISN'T CAUSING YOU
PAIN



Commissioner's Commendation for GWN team

As the Government Wireless Network (GWN) south-east Queensland rollout is now completed, the QFES GWN unit and supporting teams behind its smooth delivery has been recognised.

The Commissioner presented 23 Commendations for Notable Action to the members of these teams.

GWN has been successfully implemented across south-east Queensland with more than 17,500 frontline emergency services personnel from Tweed Heads in the south, to Oakey in the west and as far north as Gympie, using the GWN.

Commissioner Katarina Carroll said the successful rollout of the project was an important milestone for QFES.

"To ensure the new government network met QFES operational requirements, a dedicated team has been working with the GWN Implementation Program since 2013," she said.

"This significant project will provide far-reaching and long lasting benefits for community safety and connectivity across south-east Queensland.

"The award recipients provided outstanding leadership, technical knowledge and support during the delivery of the network and the transition of QFES services and capabilities from analogue radio to the new digital technology.

"It is not often that we have the opportunity in our day-to-day work to be involved in a project that delivers such substantial and historic change to the way we do business."

Honour roll:

Adam Nicholas	Mary Devitt
Aerron Patterson	Natalie Hansen
Bevan Moore	Nesha Wandler
Cameron Spalding	Nigel Hogan
Carolyn Mair	Paul Smeath
Craig Stolte	Peter Draper
Darren McCulloch	Peter Hughes
Jennifer Stein	Russell Phipps
Jessica Blamires	Sean Armstrong
Kathryn Thomas	Tarni Fry
Lee-Anne Chamberlin	Wayne Bates
Lisa Maughan	Wayne Ford



Road crash rescue teams off to Victoria

Two teams will represent QFES at the 2016 Australasian Rescue Challenge (ARC16) to be held in Victoria in July.

Eight teams nominated for the challenge, with one Cairns and one Brisbane team selected to compete.

Deputy Commissioner Mark Roche said he was sure the teams would represent QFES to the best of their ability.

“The teams chosen have extensive experience with training in the science of road crash rescue,” he said.

“These two teams are regular providers of RCR training within their respective stations and they have team members that are regular instructors to the QFES training academy sharing their knowledge with new recruits.”

QFES Brisbane’s team is made up of team leader Ian Ames, as well as Luke Kennedy, Richard Bertossi, Simon Johnstone, Geoff Dixon and QAS paramedic Mark Whitby.

Mr Ames said the team had been competing in road crash rescue competitions since 2007 and placed third overall in the 2014 competition.

“As was the case in 2014, the team will gain a great deal of experience from working on the new Holden vehicles during the three competition scenarios and the practical training scenarios,” he said.

“This experience can be passed on to both recruits and Brisbane region personnel during the regular RCR practical competency maintenance sessions held at QCESA.”

QFES Cairns brings together the talent of team leader Ian Fulton, as well as Ian Lawless, Darcy Magee, Shane Given, Michael Balmer and QAS paramedic Gareth Colman.

Mr Fulton said the team had put in many hours of training in simulated scenarios to develop the team work needed to complete the time critical tasks of the event.

“All members of the Cairns team are current road crash rescue instructors so when we attend the Australasian Rescue

Challenge, we are exposed to new vehicle technology and new techniques at the learning symposiums,” he said.

“Collectively we will bring this new information back with us and share it with our peers.”

A third team from QFES, Redland Bay, will also make their way to ARC16 with a private sponsorship.

ARC16 will be conducted at Lardner Park, near Warragul in eastern Victoria, from 21 to 24 July and the attending teams will participate in the six-person Extrication Challenge, which consists of three different 30-minute rescue scenarios.

A firefighter and paramedic from each team will also compete in the Trauma Challenge, which involved two 15-minute scenarios.

Attendees will also get to take part in the learning symposium, which will include a blend of practical learning experiences and information sessions.

QFES Brisbane team



QFES Cairns team



Further information is available on the Australasian Road Rescue Organisation website at www.arro.org.au.

Top honours for EVP project

PSBA's Emergency Vehicle Priority (EVP) project took the top honours at the Australian Road Safety Awards.

The innovative system that gives green lights to emergency vehicles took out two awards at the national road safety awards evening.

The EVP project won the State Government Initiatives category, which recognises the most effective road safety initiatives and programs undertaken by governments around the country.

It also claimed the prestigious Founder's Award for Outstanding Achievement.

The Founder's Award cannot be nominated for and was awarded by the judging panel.

EVP project manager Justin White said the project was a great example of where collaboration and innovation intersected to deliver real community value.

"EVP has been developed in collaboration with the Department of Transport and Main Roads and the joint

project team has been previously recognised across a number of disciplines nationally and internationally for their efforts," he said.

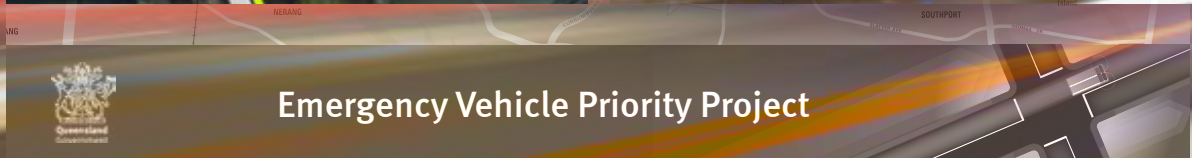
"With 300 emergency vehicles and 1000 locations throughout the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Brisbane, Bundaberg and Townsville now using EVP technology, Toowoomba and Mackay are next in line to receive this impressive technology.

"By June 2019 all ambulances and fire appliances in major centres throughout Queensland will have EVP in place.

"Last month, 10 police cars on the Gold Coast were EVP enabled on a trial basis to highlight the benefits of EVP to Queensland Police Service."

Since the initial pilot program was undertaken on the Gold Coast in 2012, the EVP project has been recognised with a number of awards.

Find out more at <https://youtu.be/XZqpBxwG3LE>





CELEBRATE



Far Northern SES gets boost from Ergon and Powerlink

SES volunteers in far north Queensland have received \$60,000 in funding to help them purchase vital new equipment, including generators, lighting equipment, chainsaws and polesaws.

SES Regional Director Wayne Coutts said the new tools would be put to good use.

“Our SES volunteers are often on the frontline working with Ergon and Powerlink during severe weather events, so this support will enhance an already strong relationship,” Mr Coutts said.

“Their financial support means our SES volunteers in the region will be better equipped to serve their community and deal with emergency situations.”

Powerlink Chief Executive Merryn York said Powerlink staff saw firsthand the vital work of SES volunteers during severe weather events, particularly in the far north.

“The work these volunteers do to help keep communities safe during these times is invaluable, so we are pleased to be able to assist them through this partnership.”

Ergon’s Chief Executive Roslyn Baker said many Ergon staff were SES volunteers.

“We are very happy to be able to help provide this financial assistance to support the purchase of new equipment, which will help local SES branches provide valuable assistance during disaster response,” Ms Baker said.



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Brisbane Region

The long-awaited construction of the new Petrie Fire and Rescue Station is now well underway.

There have been delays due to issues with the foundations which have now been resolved.

The station is being rebuilt in the same location and will also house the Area and Zone offices with a significant amount of extra vehicle and equipment storage.

Completion is expected within the next few months.



Army Emergency Responders (AER) from the Enoggera based 2nd Combat Engineer Regiment and Enoggera Fire and Rescue staff conducted some inter-agency training in vertical rescue at Murphy's Crossing.

Training began with revision and was followed by practical training over a 10m drop and a post-training debrief and discussion at Enoggera Fire and Rescue Station.

The following day the AER observed QFES' road crash rescue training.

Further inter-agency training is anticipated with the hope of establishing and maintaining a close working relationship.



The Brisbane Emergency Services Expo was held on Sunday 1 May at Teralba Park, Everton Park.

The themes of the expo were disaster resilience and Plan, Prepare, Respond and Recover.

SES hosted the event which showcased demonstrations and static displays by all emergency services stakeholders.

Crews from Chermside and Arana Hills represented Fire and Rescue and the kitchen fire simulator was a focal point at the event.

These events are a great opportunity for QFES to build stronger working relationships with other emergency services and the local community.



South Eastern Region



Energex has come to the aid of rural firefighters from the South Coast Area, supplying them with more than \$16,000 in equipment.

RFS brigades from across 14 areas received portable pumps, flare kits, generators, navigation tools, reversing cameras and more at an official handover at Beechmont.

The new equipment was purchased under Energex's \$75,000 Rural Fire Service Equipment Program, which aims to ensure rural firefighters have the tools they need to prepare for and respond to fires and emergencies.

Deputy Commissioner Emergency Services Volunteers Mike Wassing thanked Energex for its ongoing financial commitment to the RFS.



In April, the South Eastern Region fleet service and maintenance workshop in Yatala was officially opened by Deputy Commissioner Capability and Performance Doug Smith.

The Yatala workshop, delivered by QFES and the Public Safety Business Agency, is the most modern and fit-for-purpose QFES maintenance facility in the state.

At the Yatala workshop alone, QFES fleet technicians are responsible for the operational readiness of more than 70 appliances and other equipment.

"Ensuring the QFES vehicle fleet is serviced to the highest standard is critical for delivering rapid and reliable emergency response and would not be possible without the specialist skills and expertise of QFES fleet technicians throughout Queensland," Mr Smith said.



For almost 23 years, Des Sardie balanced his full-time job as a fire officer with his part-time role at Harrisville's auxiliary fire service.

His dedication to firefighting was recognised when he was named the Ipswich District's 2015 QFES officer of the year.

Mr Sardie was one of a number of emergency personnel recognised at the annual awards hosted by the Rotary Club of Ipswich North.

"I was very humbled... and very proud too," he said.

Mr Sardie said he had been nominated for his overall work during 2015, including work on the 150th anniversary of the Ipswich Fire Brigade.

Last year he celebrated more than 22 years with the Harrisville auxiliary, but has had to retire from that part-time role this year. He has been a full-time officer with the QFES for more than 18 years.



South Western Region

Recently a series of South Western Region Management Team meetings were held in Toowoomba.

The Fire and Rescue Management Team met on 9 and 10 May to discuss specific service issues and plan for the future.

Immediately following this on 11 and 12 May, the South Western Regional Management Team that includes all senior personnel from Fire and Rescue, Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Service gathered.

The two days were a combination of professional development and regional business.

Specifically, the team underwent team

management profiling and a team development workshop facilitated by Dr Tim Baker.

The group then went on to workshop operational plans, individual service updates and presentations from QFES Doctrine, rediportal, Ethical Standards Unit, QSuper and Emergency Management to name a few.

The time strengthened the common understanding and collaboration across all QFES services.

These meetings will be a quarterly occurrence and will continue to support the development and effectiveness of the South Western Region to operate as one with respect and without boundaries.



Toowoomba SES volunteers, firefighters and community engagement officers have been engaging with the culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) community to deliver important safety information.

QFES personnel spoke with staff, students and children at the Toowoomba Refugee and Migrant Support Group (TRAMS).

The talk covered fire safety in the home, preparing for storm season and how emergency services staff and volunteers can help people in need.

The group was shown what a Fire and Rescue uniform looks like with breathing apparatus on and how they search a burning building to find trapped people.

About 80 English as Second Language students also gathered at the Toowoomba TAFE Campus auditorium to see a slide presentation and ask questions.



Afterwards they had the chance to interact with emergency personnel and inspect vehicles.

The purpose of these opportunities was to get people comfortable with the emergency services uniforms and to share safety messages.

Both opportunities were well-received and will be repeated in future.

Members from Origin's Talinga Emergency Response Team (ERT) were invited to the Chinchilla Fire and Rescue Station to familiarise themselves with QFES equipment and identify interoperability opportunities.

Auxiliary Lieutenant Dale Wheeler and firefighters Hayley Wheeler and Glen Mason put the Talinga ERT through their paces and conducted some exercises.

The exercise included identifying and shipping a standpipe from an underground residential hydrant, basic hose drills, 5-person fire attack and collecting water from an external source.

The opportunity to attend the station allowed the ERT to practise skills not necessarily available onsite.



Far Northern Region



Representatives from Cairns emergency services have joined forces again this year to organise the FNQ Emergency Services Charity Ball.

This year the event will be held in conjunction with a Cairns Barrier Reef Lions fundraising gala event supporting charities including Make-A-Wish Australia and Lions International.

Organisers of the FNQ Emergency Services Charity Ball hope this annual event will become a permanent fixture on the Cairns social calendar, after last year's event raised about \$24,000 to help support victims of the Ravenshoe tragedy.

This gathering of regional emergency service representatives, including QPS, QAS, QFES and Aviation Rescue and Firefighting personnel, aims to keep the camaraderie going between the emergency services while supporting the community.

The 6 August event will be held at the Tanks Arts Centre.



Queensland Rail hosted an exercise to test regional capabilities of Far North Queensland emergency services with Exercise Scenic Route.

The scenario was based on a previous incident which occurred at a level crossing and involved more than 100 personnel.

In the scenario, a train collided with a truck and chemicals were spilled. A number of passengers received injuries.

SES volunteers, firefighters and QFES regional staff worked alongside Police, Ambulance and Queensland Rail personnel to 'rescue' the people involved and clean-up a chemical spill.

Following the exercise, all personnel involved took part in a debrief to analyse the response and identify any aspects that could be improved.



Northern Region

There are, at times, those jobs that no one wants, but somebody just has to do them.

That was the case when Townsville SES was called on to assist police in a forensic search at the Thuringowa dump.

Townsville, Thuringowa, and Bluewater members braved the smell and the flies in the important task of searching for evidence of a crime.

More than 60 volunteers completed nine days of forensic searching, at an average of about 12 tonnes of rubbish searched per day.

Police thanked the SES for their time. The investigation is ongoing.



Inspector Dave Rutter continued a trend in Northern Region recently when he was promoted to Inspector by Assistant Commissioner Steve Barber.

Dave joined a select group of Northern Region Senior Officers, including Chief Superintendent Michael O’Neil, Superintendent Kevin Anderson and Inspector Ken Johnson, who have all climbed the ranks after initially beginning their careers as auxiliary firefighters.

Dave commenced as an auxiliary on Magnetic Island in June 1993 and started his recruit course in February 2005.

Dave progressed through the ranks and is now Area Commander for the Northern Command.



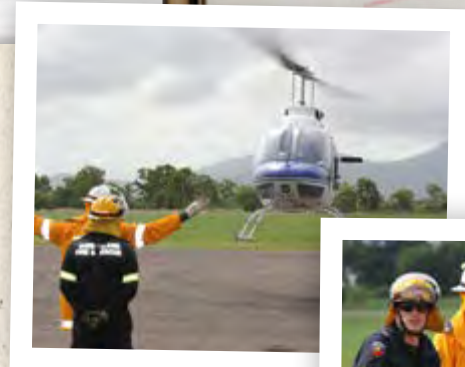
Fifteen RFS members from the Northern and Far Northern Regions attend the new Air Base Operator training programme at the Ingham Airport.

The weekend was facilitated by Townsville and Charters Towers area staff, with two lead trainers from State Air Operations in Brisbane.

The training was a test of the new Air Base Operator programme and a refresher for members who had previously undertaken the Air Base Operator training.

The members practised marshalling both fixed wing bombers and rotary wing transport aircraft as well as passenger loading of the helicopter and filling the firefighting bomber.

Liddles Air Service from Ingham provided a fixed wing bomber and helicopter for the course and their pilots provided an aircraft briefing to all participants.



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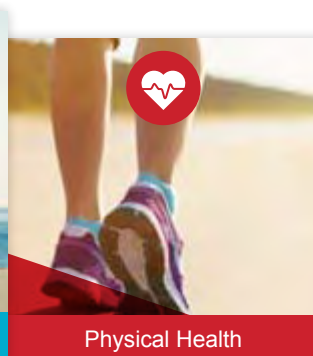
Nutritional Health



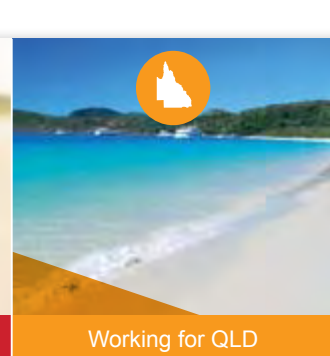
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Central Region

The Petroleum and Gas Inspectorate delivered two presentations to Rockhampton Fire and Rescue station officers and auxiliary firefighters.

The presentations were intended to update personnel on the roles and responsibilities of the Inspectorate and the assistance a Gas Examiner can provide to crews at gas-related incidents.

It followed a spate of gas incidents in the region.

Forensic and Scene of Crime police officers also attended the presentations.

Plans are in place to roll these presentations out to other Central Region commands due to the success of the Rockhampton presentations.



A One Government Information, Service and Careers Roadshow was held at Barcaldine.

There were more than 10 government departments attending the roadshow and five other organisations attending the information day to network with the local schools and community.

More than 250 students from six schools throughout the Central West region attended the Roadshow on Friday.

Students participated and engaged with different agencies, including QFES, to gain information on career paths and what each service had to offer.

The careers roadshow was a great success with an anticipated bigger and better show next year.



Central Region conducted flood boat courses for SES volunteers on two weekends in April and May in Clermont.

This course included participants from Banana SES Unit, Central Highlands Regional SES Unit and the Isaac SES Unit.

Thanks to the ongoing dedication and commitment from both paid and volunteer staff, Central Region has been able to increase its response capability in this area.

SES Capricornia Area Controller Patrick Downing thanked trainers John Harrison, Alex McPhee, Leon Burt, Craig Harris and trainee trainer Matthew Scotney as well as safety officers Yvonne Scotney and Elizabeth Slattery.

All gave up their time to ensure volunteers' safety on and off the water.



North Coast Region



Duty crews and professional development officers from Nambour, Maroochydore and Kunda Park attended the Nambour railway station's QRail Safety Awareness Training.

QRail's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Liam Bruce conducted the training which included overhead service hazards, commuter train access points, exits and cabin safety procedures and a tour of an electric train.

Training partnerships have been formed between QRail and North Coast Region Professional Development Command to coordinate further sessions across shifts and stations along the rail corridor.



SES members and PCYC Emergency Service Cadets from across the region attended the SES Skills and Drills Day at Aldershot Scout Grounds.

Skill activities were conducted over six sessions, including height safety procedures, operating communications equipment, map reading, compass work and navigation, command post set-up and operation and land search operations.

The day was a great lead up to the North Coast Region SES Rescue Challenge coming up in July.

North Coast Region SES sincerely thank all attendees, especially the SES volunteers and police staff who facilitated the day, as well as the SES catering team who worked tirelessly to feed everyone on the day.



Five RFS personnel from North Coast Region were invited to participate in a pilot Defensive Structural Firefighting Program at Whyte Island.

The training familiarises RFS personnel with what to expect if they are first on-scene at a structural fire and how they may be able to assist Fire and Rescue personnel without putting themselves at risk.

The program covered fire science, situational awareness, the use of self-contained breathing apparatus and a number of fire simulations. The training session included a simulated house fire in a shipping container where participants were fitted in urban firefighter PPE to cope with extreme temperatures, which reached 700°C near the roof.

The program demonstrated how quickly a structural fire develops to extreme temperatures which require firefighters to use BA and different levels of PPE.

Emergency Management

The Disaster Management (DM) Portal project, will be the new online hub for guidelines, policies, doctrine and tools for DM stakeholders across Queensland.

Led by the Disaster Management Branch (DMB), the portal will provide new functionality to connect and communicate innovative ideas, information and promote disaster management calendar events in local areas.

Just like the old DM Portal, the new DM Portal will host resources that users can upload themselves and share with all DM stakeholders.

The new DM portal will also have the ability to host Emergency Alert pre-populated messages and shape files of geographic location warning area maps.

The new portal is for all DM stakeholders across Queensland and each user will have a customised view tailored to their organisation, role and location.

Phase one of the portal will go live by 30 June 2016 and training videos will be produced to guide new users through the features.



The Watch Desk provides a critical capability in assessing, mitigating and addressing any potential or real threats that could impact Queensland, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Located within the State Disaster Coordination Centre at Kedron, Watch Desk staff are responsible for the initial assessment of potential threats to people, infrastructure and the environment as well as any potential economic impacts across Queensland.

A Senior Meteorologist from the Bureau of Meteorology also works with the Watch Desk to provide critical weather briefings on emerging weather conditions and future weather predictions for operational seasons.

On receipt of credible warnings, the Watch Desk can rapidly disseminate the information and assessment both within QFES and to other agencies through the Event Management System (EMS), via SMS and email to hundreds of users within minutes.

The Watch Desk provides an important role in coordinating Emergency Alert (EA) campaigns and tasking SES operations across the state.

As the eyes and ears for Queensland, the Watch Desk provides information, advice and briefings to a range of organisations within federal, state and local government departments and agencies.



“People hear our voice but they don’t see our faces”

Working in Firecom for 26 years, Lyn Webb reflects on the how the role of a fire communications officer has changed since the 90s. – *By Stephanie Masters*



When Lyn Webb saw an ad in the paper calling for fire communications officers in 1990, she thought her Navy communications background could be put to good use. A quarter-century later and she has never looked back.

Being a “Cairns girl” Lyn relished the opportunity to work in her home town and since 28 May 1990 has become a central part of the QFES family.

“Going from the Navy to the fire service, I suppose the operations were very similar to Defence so it felt familiar,” she said.

“Once I joined, the team welcomed me and the rest of the fire service had a family atmosphere and because I had that experience in communications already, it really made me comfortable and I enjoyed the work.”

Now as Manager Regional Communications, Lyn said for the most part it was the QFES family that had remained constant in her time, while almost everything else about the role of Firecom had changed.

“The major changes have certainly been the technology,” she said.





“ We tell firefighters where to go
– but very nicely. ”

“When I first started we had one computer and one big, red telephone for emergency calls.

“Now on the console we look at five computer screens each.

“Also when I joined, we were actually moving from the individual fire boards to the fire service becoming a state organisation.

“The role of a communications officer was, to me, looked at as an administration role and over the time that I’ve been here it has definitely developed into a skill-based role and it’s now recognised as an operational part of QFES.”

While fire communications officers are the first point of contact for people in an emergency situation, Lyn said not many people outside the organisation understood the importance of the role.

“We’re in the background a lot in Firecom, people hear our voice but they don’t see our faces,” she said.

“When I get asked what I do, and I say I’m with the fire service, the immediate reaction is they believe I’m a firefighter and when I say I’m in communications, I say ‘we tell firefighters where to go – but very nicely.’”

In her time, Lyn has seen the impact that being the first point of contact for often scared and panicked members of the public can have on officers, and said a supportive environment was vital to the success of a fire communications team.

“I feel one of the most important roles as a manager is ensuring your team and your clients are supported to the best of your ability; and by clients I include QFES and the general public who are calling us and asking for our help,” she said.

“When people are in distress or have an emergency, we’re the first people they speak to, so we need to have a professional attitude and we need to react to each individual case as best we can.

“There is recognition that even on the communications side of the operations, you can get affected by the job, and the support is there with Firecare.

“I have found when you get into communications, you seem to stay in communications because the positive atmosphere and the team involvement has an effect on you.”





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AFAC16 program finalised

As final preparations are completed for AFAC16, the events of the three-day conference have been finalised.

Under the theme of *Getting the Balance Right: Mitigation – Response – Recovery*, AFAC16 will bring more than 90 Australian and international speakers to Queensland to stimulate innovative discussions in the emergency management sector.

Following the discussions on diversity and inclusion that began at last year's conference, AFAC16 will again have a focus on integration, diversity and inclusion and will partner with the Women

and Firefighting Australasia (WAF) conference, under their theme *Stepping Up and Standing Out*.

Beginning on Tuesday 30 August, the program was co-produced with the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC and will feature a research forum, 89 concurrent sessions and four interactive panels.

The program will be complemented with social functions to allow delegates from all visiting agencies to make the most of the networking opportunity.

The AFAC16 powered by INTERSCHUTZ exhibition will also run over two and a half days, with an engaging floor

show showcasing the world's leading emergency services equipment suppliers and manufacturers, an expo stage and live demonstrations.

The knowledge lounge will also be open to gain insight from selected leading research material and meet some of the conference's speakers.

A series of post-conference development sessions have also been arranged for Friday 2 September, some of which include tours of QFES facilities.

The conference will be held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Register online at www.afaconference.com.au/register



Scholarships available to volunteers

New funding will equip emergency management volunteers to better prepare and respond to a range of disasters and build national resilience.

A new million-dollar national volunteer program to boost educational opportunities for emergency management volunteers has been announced.

The program is to be delivered by the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience and will commence in the 2016-17 financial year.

The program is open to Australian citizens and permanent residents who volunteer with an emergency management agency.

Candidates must be enrolled in and successfully attain accredited emergency management vocational education or higher education qualifications, and be supported by their agency to undertake this education.

More than half the scholarships will be reserved for volunteers living in regional and remote areas, female volunteers and volunteers who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

The scholarships will be funded by the Australian Government and recognise the significance of ongoing development of the emergency management volunteer sector for strengthening national resilience.

Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience



For more information, visit www.aidr.org.au



Wear Orange Wednesday (WOW) took place on 11 May during National Volunteer Week with supporters of the SES donning bright orange for the day.



The first of two 2016 Rural Fire Service Volunteer Summits took place in May at Townsville, bringing together hundreds of QFES personnel from Central, Northern and Far Northern Region.



QFES personnel around the state turned out to pay their respects at Anzac services and marches on 25 April.



A multi-agency training exercise took place in Kenilworth where rural firefighters from Kenilworth and Belli Park, along with auxiliaries from Imbil, dealt with a simulated car accident in order to get hands-on in a controlled environment.



QFES pulled up at the Gympie Show to share valuable safety messaging. Furies also set up shop on the grounds to show attendees what happens when water is used to put out an oil fire.



The Brisbane Emergency Services Expo was held on 1 May at Teralba Park featuring stalls and demonstrations by all emergency services providers including QFES, police, ambulance, marine rescue, RSPCA, Lifeline, Red Cross and more.






The RFS Warwick Group conducted a cross-border exercise with the Liston NSWRFs brigade at Dalveen, revising skills to get ready for the upcoming bushfire season.



The 2016 Bike 4 Burns charity ride was completed on 17 May. Around 60 QFES riders and 40 Fire and Rescue NSW riders finished the 1000km ride at the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital. More than \$43,000 was raised for young burns victims.

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Book documents history of *Rockhampton fire service*

The Central Queensland Family History Association (CQFHA) has compiled a book detailing the first 100 years of a fire service in Rockhampton.

The CQFHA will launch *Rockhampton Fire Brigade: Their Fiery Past* at the Get Ready CQ Emergency Services Day in July.

The book documents the humble beginnings of a brigade in 1862 and how it evolved until 1962.

Marion Hall, president of the CQFHA, said she had always had a personal interest in fire service history thanks to her husband Russell 'Rusty' Hall's firefighting career.

"My husband had been a firefighter since 1960...so all of that time I've had an interest in the fire brigade, and along the way I've collected stories and articles and photographs," she said.

"When I joined the family history association, I decided it was a good time to do something about it and share what I have.

"I find it very interesting to know about how the brigade began and how's it evolved during the early years, and I'm sure a lot of fires in the area are interested in that sort of thing too."

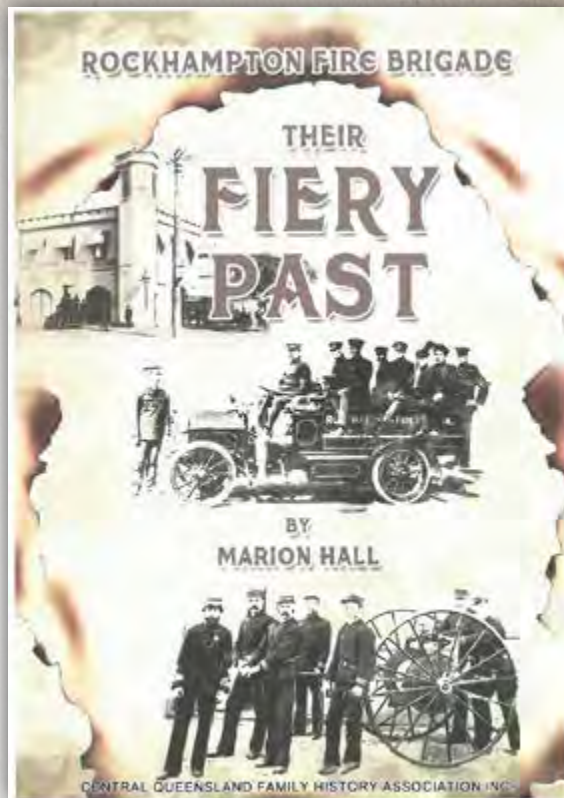
Much of the information in the book came from Rockhampton Fire Brigade minute books, daily occurrence books and newspaper records accessed through archives.

The book details the first volunteer fire brigade, which was led by the first Chief Officer Andrew Bertram with little more than buckets to fight fires, through to becoming a permanent brigade in 1912 and beyond.

In her searches for relevant material, Mrs Hall came across a series of images of brigade members in the CQUniversity collections and would like to be able to name the photographed people (below right).

The image is believed to be taken in the early 1900s outside the Central Fire Station when the chief was William Stanley.

Anyone with information on the pictured people, or anyone interested in attending the launch event can email marioncqfha@bigpond.com.au



What: *Rockhampton Fire Brigade: Their Fiery Past* book launch

Where: Charles St Fire Station Museum, Rockhampton Heritage Village, 296 Boundary Rd, Rockhampton

When: Sunday 31 July 2016, 12pm

More info: marioncqfha@bigpond.com.au

Photos courtesy of the Capricornia CQ Collection, CQUniversity Library.





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