

RESPONSE

QUEENSLAND'S OFFICIAL FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES MAGAZINE

EDITION 9



LEADING AUSTRALIA

NEW SMOKE ALARM LEGISLATION FOR QUEENSLAND

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

QFES LEARNING CACHE LAUNCHED

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DELIVERING OUR NEW HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT SOLUTION

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New smoke alarm legislation makes Queensland homes the safest in the country in relation to fire safety.

RESPONSE is a bi-monthly magazine produced by the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services' Media, Communication and Engagement Unit. Contributions and feedback are welcome. The Editor reserves the right to edit submissions for brevity and clarity.

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FOREWORDS



Katarina Carroll

Commissioner

QUEENSLAND FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

As we head towards the end of the year, which is traditionally a busy period for QFES, I would like to acknowledge the enormous amount of work being undertaken across the department.

Recently, new smoke alarm legislation was passed by the Queensland Parliament that will require every Queensland residence to have interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms in all bedrooms, in hallways where bedrooms are connected and on every level. QFES has long recommended this as a minimum requirement in homes, and I applaud the decision to bring this into law in Queensland.

Another key area of focus has been the AFAC16 and WAFAC16 conferences hosted in Queensland at the end of August. I was proud to see QFES well-represented at both conferences with key speakers from the department showcasing the important work we do. Thank you to everyone who invested their time and efforts to represent QFES and for contributing to these significant forums for our sector.

We are well into spring with the warmer weather bringing with it the start of storm season and the potential for events where our communities are challenged and our support and services are vital. For QFES' many services, capabilities and partners this means a shift in focus to preparedness and ensuring Queenslanders are taking steps to enhance their resilience and increase their ability to respond to and recover from events or disasters should they occur.

In saying this, the wetter conditions experienced over large areas of Queensland during the winter months and in recent times have also meant that extended bushfire mitigation activities as part of Operation Cool Burn have overlapped this year with the commencement of the operational bushfire season, Operation Unified.

This reinforces the need for QFES to remain flexible in our planning from one year to the next, to anticipate change and also be ready to adapt our efforts whatever the coming season brings.

Thank you to all of the QFES workforce, both paid and volunteer, for your continued commitment to working with our partners to deliver emergency management capabilities across prevention, preparedness, response and recovery activities throughout the state and in doing so, helping communities each and every day.



Doug Smith

Deputy Commissioner

CAPABILITY AND PERFORMANCE DIVISION

Following the outstanding success of both the recent AFAC and WAFAC conferences, I would like to acknowledge all staff involved in the organisation and delivery of these events. Both conferences were a wonderful reflection of QFES and there has been a great deal of positive feedback from attendees.

I am pleased to advise that the Capability and Performance Division are currently working on a One QFES Policy Framework that will position the department for ongoing independent operation with respect to policies, standards and procedures, yet be flexible enough to consider the specific requirements of each service area and region.

The One QFES Policy Framework works directly to consider activities such as disaster and emergency management, the delivery of services to the community and internal requirements in line with our mission of *One QFES, many services, many capabilities, many partners*.

This is a collaborative project across the Strategy Systems Standards and Performance (SSSP) Directorate and the Executive, Ministerial and Corporate Services (EMCS) Directorate. Any queries can be directed to Executive Director SSSP Russell Neuendorf.

Further to this, EMCS recently initiated a project that will design corporate governance arrangements for QFES. The establishment of these arrangements will support leadership, stewardship, accountability, transparency and integrity across the department. It is a significant body of work that will initially define corporate governance and guiding principles, determine what good governance looks like and design a QFES-wide governance framework. Governance goes beyond management and we will all have a role to play.

Work is ongoing to finalise the new QFES structure through a process of review and alignment, and by bringing together the many and varied capabilities that define QFES. The capability needs of our department are what determine the shape of QFES and our final structure should be based on these principles. Our structure also needs to maintain alignment with not only our strategic partners but also our legislative parameters, in particular those that relate to the three main services of QFES — the Rural Fire Service, the State Emergency Service and the Fire and Rescue Service.

I look forward to providing you all with further updates on these important pieces of work as they progress.

Changes to Queensland's smoke alarm legislation

On Wednesday 31 August 2016, Queensland Parliament passed new smoke alarm legislation making Queensland households the safest in Australia in relation to fire safety.



This legislation was developed following recommendations handed down after the 2011 Slacks Creek fatal house fire which claimed 11 lives. In the years since, lives have continued to be lost in house fires in Queensland. This new legislation will save lives.

It specifies that every Queensland residence will have interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms in all bedrooms of the home, in hallways where bedrooms are connected and on every level.

Photoelectric smoke alarms can also be known as optical or photo optical smoke alarms.

Interconnected means if one smoke alarm sounds all other smoke alarms in a premises will sound; so it won't matter what part of the house the fire starts in, the alarm closest to you will quickly alert you to a fire danger. Photoelectric smoke alarms are more likely to alert occupants to a broader range of fires in time to escape safely.

Every home should also have a clearly defined and well-practised fire escape plan. By having a well-practised fire escape plan you'll stand a better chance of avoiding panic and getting everyone out safely during a house fire.

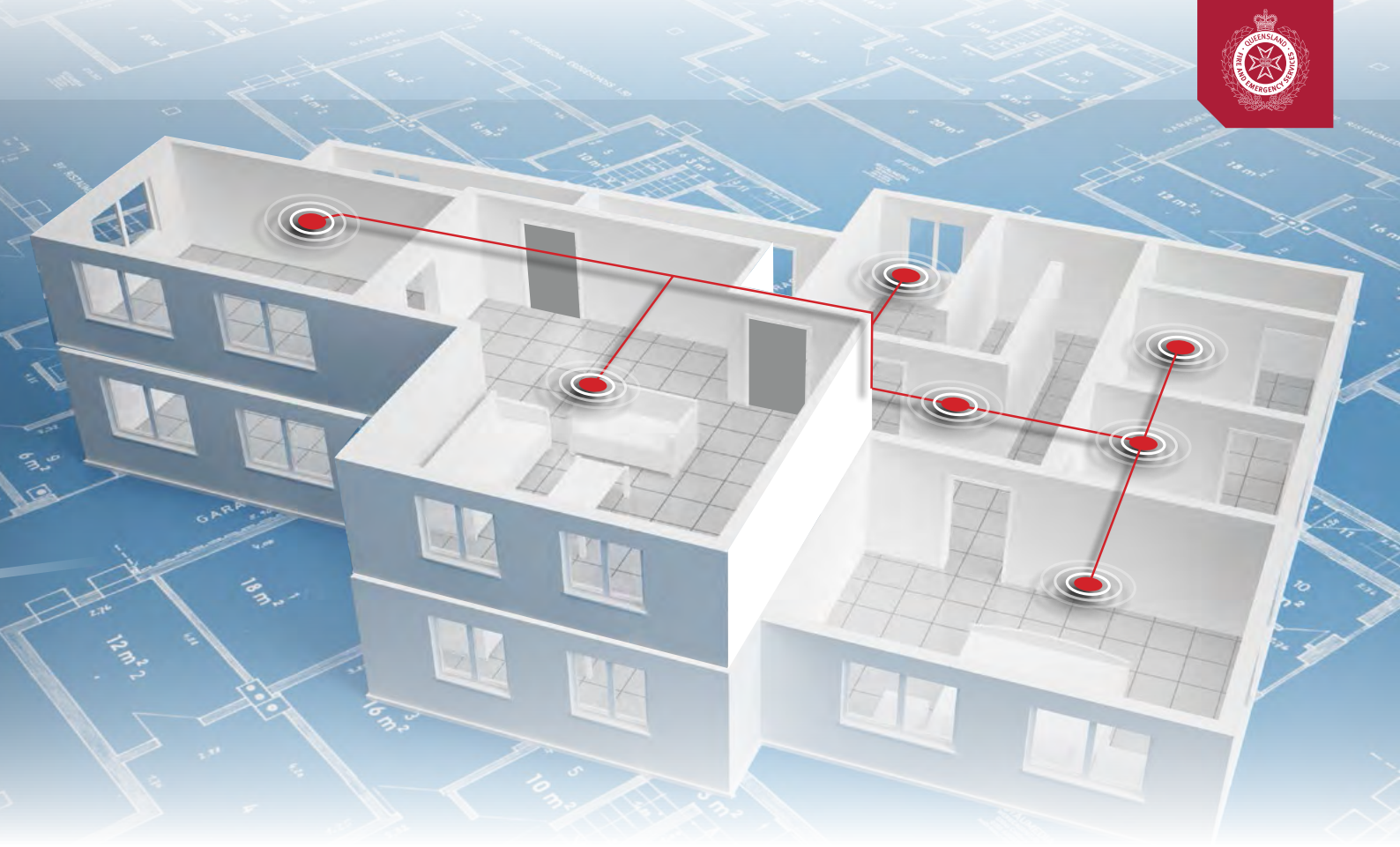
What is changing?

All Queensland dwellings will be required to have interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms in all bedrooms, in hallways that connect bedrooms with the rest of the dwelling and on every level.

When is this happening?

There is a 10-year phased roll-out of interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms in Queensland that will happen over three specific periods starting from 1 January 2017. This means interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms are required for compliance:

- From 1 January 2017: in **all new dwellings and substantially renovated dwellings** (this applies to building applications submitted from 1 January 2017).
- From 1 January 2022: in all domestic dwellings **leased and sold**.
- From 1 January 2027: in **all other domestic dwellings**.



What about new or replacing existing smoke alarms?

Any new smoke alarm being installed or existing smoke alarm being replaced from 1 January 2017 must also be a photoelectric-type alarm which complies with Australian Standard 3786.

If your smoke alarm is more than 10 years old it must be replaced with a photoelectric smoke alarm. A smoke alarm which is hard wired to the domestic power supply must be replaced with a hard wired photoelectric smoke alarm. Be sure to check your alarm's date of manufacture (which should be stamped on it). Any smoke alarms that do not operate when tested must also be replaced immediately.

How do you know if a smoke alarm is photoelectric?

To tell if you have a photoelectric-type smoke alarm look on the front, back or inside of the smoke alarm unit for the word 'photoelectric', 'optical', 'photo optical' or the symbol 'P'. If it does not contain these words or symbols your alarm should be replaced.

What type of photoelectric smoke alarm systems are there?

Queenslanders who own existing homes can either have their smoke alarms hardwired into their home's electrical wiring or have their smoke alarms powered by a tamper proof, 10-year battery or a combination of both, subject to existing building approvals. All smoke alarm systems must be interconnected to comply with the new laws. Hardwired and battery operated smoke alarms can be interconnected by wiring or by wireless radio technology. Remember the packaging must state that the alarm complies with Australian Standard 3786.

Can I have both hardwired and wireless smoke alarm systems in my home?

The new legislation does allow for a combination of hardwired and wireless smoke alarm systems subject to them meeting the criteria of interconnectivity. You would need to check with the smoke alarm manufacturer or distributor or your electrical contractor to see if the smoke alarms chosen are compatible for interconnection.

Where will smoke alarms need to be installed?

The new legislation means that interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms will need to be installed on each storey and:

- in each bedroom
- in hallways that connect bedrooms and the rest of the dwelling
- if there is no hallway, between the bedroom and other parts of the storey
- if there are no bedrooms on a storey, at least one smoke alarm must be installed in the most likely path of travel to exit the dwelling.

Need more information?

Be sure to also read our information sheet on these changes for more information, available at www.qfes.qld.gov.au/communitysafety/smokealarms/default.asp

If you have any questions or queries please email the QFES Community Engagement Branch at SmokeAlarms@qfes.qld.gov.au



An update from AFAC16

Australasia's largest emergency services and public safety conference is over for another year.

The 2016 Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council conference (AFAC16) brought together local and international emergency and disaster management experts and professionals for three days of discussions around key issues, ideas and developments within the sector.

Under the conference theme of **Mitigation, Response, Recovery: Getting the balance right**, the event — held this year at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre — focused on the ways fire and emergency services agencies are working to find new and innovative ways to mitigate and respond to disasters around the state, nation and globe.

Opening the program, the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC Research Forum provided attendees with the opportunity to gain insight from more than 30 presentations showcasing the latest research in areas including community

preparedness and resilience, natural hazards, bushfire, land management and severe weather events.

The full-day agenda revealed the breadth of research being undertaken by scientists and industry experts around the world in support of frontline emergency management and creating safer and more resilient communities.

Commissioner Katarina Carroll opened the main AFAC16 conference on day two, speaking about leadership challenges and opportunities in building a modern, inclusive and progressive fire and emergency services agency. This was followed by an address by Katherine Jones, Deputy Secretary National Security and Emergency Management Group in the Attorney-General's Department, outlining the Australian Government's disaster resilience agenda.

The conference itself saw more than 70 presentations delivered over two days with sessions exploring topics including improving fire management, the value

of mitigation, diversity and inclusion, community-led resilience, Indigenous knowledge, partnerships and strategic leadership.

In addition, around 120 Australian and international exhibitors were on hand in the Exhibition Hall showcasing the latest advancements in emergency service equipment and technology at trade stands and through live displays. This included a road crash rescue demonstration organised by the Australasian Road Rescue Organisation and conducted by QFES firefighters and QAS paramedics.

After the conference closed, delegates had the chance to attend one of seven post-conference development sessions — day-long, hands-on workshops and field trips to explore areas of particular interest in more detail — including a visit to the QFES School of Fire and Emergency Services Training and a trip to the Lockyer Valley in a case-study examining the 2011 floods.

Planning for AFAC17 is already underway, with the conference to be held in Sydney.



Photos courtesy of AFAC.

Role call

QFES' AFAC16 presenters

QFES speakers from a number of capability areas represented the department at AFAC16, delivering key presentations across a range of subjects.



Clockwise from top left: Deputy Commissioner Mike Wassing, Ben Twomey, Commissioner Katarina Carroll, Matt Rigby, AFAC16 audience, Geoffrey Richardson and Peta Miller-Rose. Photos courtesy of AFAC.

Peta Miller-Rose AFSM, Manager Bushfire Safety RFS & Geoffrey Richardson AFSM, VCE Area Coordinator, Tambourine Rural Fire Brigade: Are we as emergency services hampering community resilience?

Craig Lashman, Area Commander Gold Coast South Command: One airport, two states, three fire services: let's get coordinated (with Peter Franks, Aviation Rescue Fire Fighting & Gary White, Fire and Rescue NSW).

David Sealy, iZone Officer Central Region: Recovering from Cyclone Marcia: a work in progress (with John Atkinson, Scott Brook, & Michelle Brook, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service).

Ben Twomey, SABRE Fire Project Team & Andrew Sturgess, Manager Predictive Services Unit: SABRE Fire: operational stochastic fire spread decision support capability in QFES.

Troy Davies and Matt Rigby, Director Media and Corporate Communications: QFES' 'If it's flooded, forget it' advertising campaign.

Philip Austin, SES Operations Unit: Leadership learning in emergency service volunteers as a transformational process (with Kate Hitzke, Human Service Consultants & James Douglas, The Long Gallery Psychologists).



QFES recognised at AFAC16



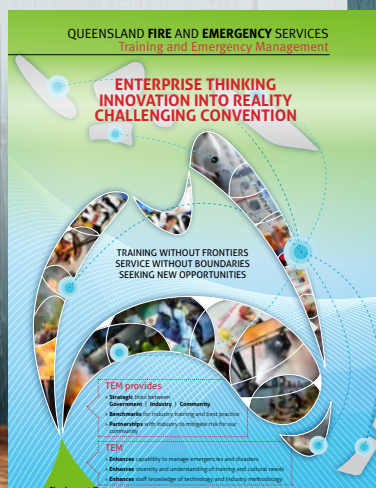
AFAC16 poster competition

Each year at AFAC participating emergency and disaster management agencies are invited to submit research and case study posters for display during the event. More than 140 posters were selected for exhibition in the AFAC16 Knowledge Lounge, before being further shortlisted for the People's Choice and Best of Conference poster awards.

This year, QFES teams won both categories. Training and Emergency Management (TEM) was presented with the People's Choice Award. The Best of Conference AFAC16 Award, voted by an independent panel of judges, was awarded to Volunteer Emergency Services Training Command (VESTC). Congratulations to Rob Boniwell and the TEM team, and John Moy and the team at VESTC.



Best of Conference AFAC16 – VESTC



People's Choice Award 2016 – TEM

QFES innovation awarded

QFES Online Channel Manager Rose Kapaith was this year's winner of the AFAC Motorola Knowledge Innovation Individual Award.

Rose was recognised for the design and deployment of a virtual Easter egg hunt to enhance engagement in the new QFES Gateway intranet site launched earlier this year.

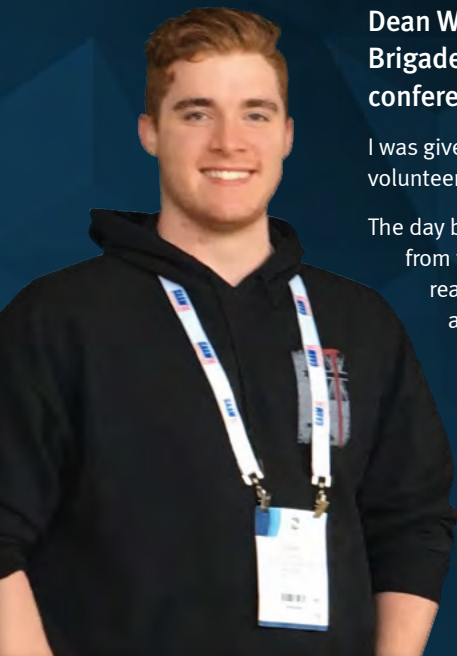


The project's aim was to familiarise staff with the new site, build greater awareness of where to find important information and encourage user feedback to optimise QFES' internal and external websites.

Congratulations Rose!



On the ground at AFAC16



Dean Williams from Belmont Rural Fire Brigade shares his experience at this year's conference.

I was given the opportunity as a Rural Fire Service volunteer to attend AFAC16 in Brisbane.

The day before the conference, four other volunteers from the Central Region and I arrived in Brisbane ready to take in a full three-day program of events at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre.

Day one of the conference was the Research Forum, and I enjoyed listening to industry professionals including scientists, firefighters and senior officers share their experience and expertise across a variety of subjects such as community resilience, mitigation burns and the science of fire.

Day two was one to remember: my day started off with keynote addresses from speakers including QFES Commissioner Katarina Carroll followed by demonstrations of new technology, products and firefighting practices throughout the Exhibition Hall. The night concluded with AFAC16 attendees enjoying a gala dinner where we could socialise and engage with emergency service counterparts from around the country.

Day three was again spent listening to speakers and in the Exhibition Hall where there was still so much to learn.

I had an amazing experience and even introduced myself to Commissioner Carroll. I will never forget my time in Brisbane and look forward to taking what I have learned and putting it into practice.

Thank you RFBAQ for this valuable opportunity.



WAFA Conference 2016

celebrating women in fire and emergency services

The Women and Firefighting Australasia (WAFA) Conference 2016 was held in Brisbane in August and proudly hosted by QFES.

Under the theme of **Stepping Up and Standing Out** the sixth biennial WAFA conference saw representatives from fire and emergency services from across Australia as well as New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the USA and the UK come together over three days to discuss challenges and opportunities for women in the industry.

Commissioner Katarina Carroll opened the conference and recognised the event was a chance to acknowledge, highlight and celebrate the contribution of women within the fire and emergency services in both paid and volunteer roles.

“QFES has long understood the value of diversity and inclusion. With women making up only four per cent of career firefighters on average worldwide, events like this give us the opportunity to bring women in fire and emergency services to the forefront of the sector,” Ms Carroll said.

“This conference gives us all the chance to learn and to then take these learnings back to our organisations and communities to help champion and initiate change.”

Running from 30 August – 1 September, day one saw delegates attend the QFES School of Fire and Emergency Services Training for a full day of hands-on training sessions including live fire, road crash rescue techniques, manual handling and lifting, vertical rescue and urban search and rescue.

A gala dinner was held that evening with the presentation of the inaugural WAFA Awards and a keynote address by former Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick, who is 2016 New South Wales Australian of the Year for her work promoting social change and gender equality.

Over the following two days attendees had the chance to hear international and local presenters speak on topics including fire investigation, leadership, volunteering and recruitment, as well gender and sexual diversity, and empowering women to create a positive legacy for future generations of women in fire and emergency services.

This year also saw the WAFA conference held, for the first time, in conjunction with AFAC16 giving delegates access to the AFAC16 speakers program, trade exhibitions and post-conference development sessions.





QFES Learning Cache goes live

The QFES workforce now has an exciting new site where they can access online learning 24/7 on any device.



Officially launched on 30 August by Assistant Commissioner Human Capital Management Andrew Short, the QFES Learning Cache provides a modern, user-friendly online training environment for QFES' paid and volunteer workforce.

The platform is externally administered by Queensland-based workplace training startup GO1 and features custom content provided through GO1 and Skillsoft Australasia. Topics covered include HR,

workplace health and safety, leadership and management, business, personal development, communication, cultural change and many more.

Assistant Commissioner Short said the centralised online learning management system was an efficient and practical way for QFES staff to gain new skills.

"QFES is pleased to offer this valuable avenue for professional development to our people," Mr Short said.

"The QFES Learning Cache provides the tools for staff to take charge of their professional development with access to a comprehensive list of online courses varying in length from one to four modules.

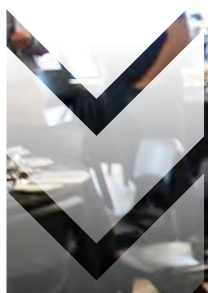
"Through the Cache, there is access to a range of learning resources available as well as the ability to collaborate online with colleagues across the state," Mr Short said.

➤ The QFES Learning Cache can be accessed using Google Chrome at www.learningcache.com.au

Volunteer Survey the numbers are in

Thank you to all of the QFES volunteers who took the time to participate in our 2016 QFES Volunteer Survey. Undertaken in July–August, the survey provided an opportunity for all QFES volunteers to share their opinions and feedback. We received more than 5200 responses to the survey which was a great result and we look forward to using this feedback to inform our future and contribute to our decision-making.





Inspiration and self-motivation on the menu at Sunshine Coast breakfast

North Coast Region had the chance to receive valuable insight from some of Queensland's finest ambassadors for diversity, leadership and sport at a breakfast at Mountain Creek.

The morning's program opened with a discussion facilitated by leadership and resilience coach Kim Adams about being your own leader and having the willingness to take action in your life, one step at a time.

"Self-leadership is having the self-awareness to intentionally manage your mindset, feelings and behaviours so you live purposively and lead others with integrity and compassion," Ms Adams said.

Leading the speakers session, Commissioner Katarina Carroll spoke about her early career with QPS and navigating key appointments to the roles of G20 Operations Commander and QFES Commissioner, and gave advice to attendees to be focused but to remain open to possibilities.

"Planning and preparation is important but so is the need to be flexible and able to adapt to a new direction if and when needed," Ms Carroll said.

"Set goals but be willing to change those goals if opportunities arise."

These thoughts were echoed by Dr Gayle Mayes, lecturer in tourism and marketing

at the University of the Sunshine Coast and 15-time world champion in various paddle sports.

Dr Mayes also coaches female athletes over the age of 60 and people with physical disabilities — 'adaptive paddlers'— and is the founding member, chair and coach of the current world champion adaptive paddlers teams, whose motto is: Dare to dream, dare to believe, dare to achieve.

"Be open to seeing opportunities, then back yourself and go for it," Dr Mayes said.

Sunshine Coast TAFE student and three-time Swedish vaulting champion Ellie Harkonen continued the presentation with inspirational messages about personal resilience and self-belief after having overcome a major neck injury and having to learn to walk again.

Australian Federal Police State Manager Queensland Commander Sharon Cowden concluded the program and spoke about personal strength and how to face and overcome challenges.

"Reflection and self-awareness are important. Take the time to review your decisions, know your 'why', and

understand what is important to you and where you need to improve and develop," Ms Cowden said.

A wide variety of topics were covered and all speakers explored overcoming challenges, managing personal mindsets and demonstrating persistence and resilience in achieving goals.

The event, jointly hosted by the 2016 Australasian Police and Emergency Services Games Committee and QFES, raised \$730 for the Children's Hospital Foundation for vital emergency, burns and trauma research.

Guests included representatives from event partners including Sunshine Coast City Council, Tafe Queensland, QBank, Win Network, Hot FM, Mantra, Stay Oz, Queensland Police Sports Association, QPS and QFES.

Pictured top (L-R): Speakers Ellie Harkonen, Dr Gayle Mayes, Commissioner Katarina Carroll and Commander Sharon Cowen. Pictured bottom (L-R): Sergeant Mark Wright, Inspector Cameron Herbert and Station Officer Richard Sheehy.

Thanks to Leah Hornibrook





10 October Firefighters' Remembrance Day

Honouring those who have lost their lives in the line of duty.



Firefighters' Remembrance Day is held each year on 10 October. It's a day for Queenslanders to come together to acknowledge and pay tribute to those who have died protecting others against one of nature's most dangerous and menacing forces.

This year, in honour of the 51 Queensland firefighters who have lost their lives in the line of duty since 1877, flags were flown at half-mast at fire stations around the state and a number of Commemorative Services were held.

Commissioner Katarina Carroll said it was a special and significant day for the QFES community.

"On this day, Firefighters' Remembrance Day, we pause to remember our predecessors, our colleagues, our family members and our friends who have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving the people of Queensland," Ms Carroll said.

"Every person who becomes a firefighter makes an admirable and brave commitment to protect us, our families and our communities against the fierce threat of fires.

"Without the courage, hard work, dedication and skill of our firefighters, it is hard to imagine how much more destruction and loss fires would cause in Queensland and the impacts this would have on our community.

"Queensland firefighters have saved countless homes, neighbourhoods, livelihoods and most importantly, precious loved ones of many.

"For those firefighters who have lost their lives in doing this, we honour their memory and the sacrifice they made to protect us. On behalf of every Queenslander we say thank you."



Partnership for fire-safe homes

QFES is working with the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS) to deliver a state-wide program that will help foster carers develop fire safety awareness and ensure their homes meet fire safety standards.

Following a pilot project in North Coast Region, the new partnership will see QFES work alongside Child Safety Services to ensure prospective foster carers throughout



Queensland have a fire safety assessment conducted on their homes as part of the carer approval process.

QFES will also provide fire safety information and support throughout the recruitment and assessment process for new carers including advice about setting up and practising evacuation plans for emergencies and correct placement of smoke alarms. It is anticipated as part of our broader emergency management role that this will be an opportunity to discuss with prospective carers how to be prepared for natural disasters such as storms and flooding.

QFES firefighters will provide this service as an extension of the standard SafeHome initiative. Inspections of applicants' homes will enable potential hazards to be

identified and eliminated. If any applicant's home needs modification, they will have the opportunity to make any changes before a final decision is made by the DCCSDS.

As part of the project, QFES will also present safety information sessions on fire and general disaster preparedness to Child Safety Services staff and at regular training events which are attended by existing foster carers.

This partnership will increase the safety of some of Queensland's most vulnerable children and provide support to the valued foster carers who open their hearts and homes to them.

Pictured left: The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services and QFES North Coast Region SafeHome pilot project team.

Safer together in Queensland

QFES' Training and Emergency Management (TEM) team and Tactical Training Unit (TTU) are working with Queensland's natural gas exploration and production sector to develop a training program for a safer industry.

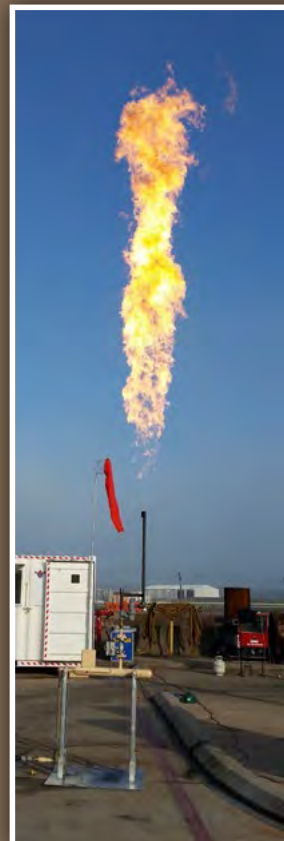
The Major Accident Hazard Awareness Training program will be delivered by QFES' TEM South Queensland Unit and Tactical Training Unit, in collaboration with Gasworks, for the Queensland Natural Gas Exploration and Production Industry Safety Forum known as 'Safer Together'.

The training will educate people working in the gas industry about major accident hazard events and how they can be prevented.

The three-hour site-based training course includes interactive technical demonstrations to expose participants to a range

of situations such as flash fires, boiling liquid expanding vapour explosions and pressure relief valve release.

A customised mobile gas-fired training prop and associated training equipment has been designed and built by Gasworks, with TTU and Gasworks to manage training and accreditation of mobile prop operators and instructors. TEM South will deliver on-site training to Safer Together member companies' workforces throughout Queensland.





One QFES — one approach to our human capital management

QFES is developing a solution to better understand and support our workforce now and into the future.

As QFES moves forward as one department, it's important we understand who it is that makes up our workforce. QFES has recognised the need to develop a central system that holds up-to-date information for our entire workforce that also ensures paid and volunteer staff have the information needed to do their jobs to their fullest potential and meet community expectations.

It sounds like a simple solution — keeping all staff information in one place — but this has been, and will continue to be, a challenge for the department.

To meet this challenge, QFES is implementing the Human Capital Management (HCM) tool — a human resources solution that leading businesses around the world are using. Before we talk about the system itself, it's important to look at what human capital is — it is widely defined as *'...the skills, knowledge, and experience possessed by an individual or population, viewed in terms of their value or cost to an organisation or country.'*

Our Future Direction states QFES needs to be integrated and interoperable on every level — this

begins with our behind-the-scenes systems, including human capital management. The new streamlined system will include a suite of integrated modules including: Performance and Goal Management, Succession and Development, Learning Management, Recruitment, Onboarding, Workforce Planning, Workplace Health and Safety, and the Volunteer Portal.

It will also enable us to better-conduct analysis for future planning and workforce modelling, improving our ability to deliver on QFES' departmental priorities.

Consultation across QFES and around the state

More than 200 stakeholders across QFES have been invited to participate in around 150 workshops to ensure the HCM tool is meaningful and supports our business activities.

Members of the HCM project team recently visited a number of regional towns, engaging with staff to gain a deeper understanding of regional processes and issues to inform planning and deployment of the new system.

The first trip took the team to Charleville where they met with SES, FRS and RFS members. Project Director Superintendent Paul Smeath gave an overview

of the HCM home page and the various functions included in the system with discussions focusing on how it may impact the region's workforce, processes and area office responsibilities. The prospect of reduced paperwork was met with enthusiasm and information shared was invaluable for project planning.

The team then headed to Wyandra to meet with RFS and SES representatives. Located half way between Charleville and Cunnamulla, Wyandra has a population of 42 and the combined RFS and SES unit has four members. It quickly became clear that their needs were different to that of their counterparts in larger towns.

It was then on to Mount Isa and a meeting with the FRS nightshift crew and RFS representatives from Charters Towers. Attendees provided feedback on proposed naming conventions and various features of the tool, giving yet another perspective.

Finally, the HCM project team drove out to Camooweal to meet with local RFS brigade representatives. A remote town close to the Northern Territory border, Camooweal also has a combined RFS and SES unit. The next stop for the team will be Cape York and Torres Strait where they will meet with local brigades and liaison officers.



For more information on the HCM project please email the HCM project team at QFES.HRIS@qfes.qld.gov.au

Your photos in print



Once again we received some great readers' photos for this edition – thank you to all those who sent their entries in. Keep them coming!

The photos featured below each depict a different aspect of QFES' commitment to ensuring community safety: incident response, operational training and community engagement.

RFS appliances parade for audiences at the Ekka show in the photo supplied by firefighter Andrew Weston.

Firefighter Dan Ogilvie's photo shows third-class firefighter Morgan Reid making the most of some

impromptu training while on shift, under the experienced guidance of Station Officer Peter Lund.

Finally, the striking image of a firefighter on the job needs no explanation. It was submitted by firefighter Brian Ranse.

Submit your photo entries via QFES Gateway Snapshot or by emailing magazine.editor@qfes.qld.gov.au



THANKS TO ANDREW WESTON



THANKS TO DAN OGILVIE



THANKS TO MICHELLE RANSE



Celebrating Queensland's diversity with pride

QFES joined members of Queensland's LGBTI community, their friends, families and supporters in this year's Brisbane Pride March on Saturday 17 September.

A central feature of the Brisbane Pride Festival, the Brisbane Pride March began in Brunswick Street in Fortitude Valley with supporters walking to New Farm Park where the march culminated in an afternoon of live music, market stalls, food and celebration.

QFES personnel marched alongside partners from the QAS and QPS in the spirit of inclusion, diversity and respect for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people, their families and friends.

Commissioner Katarina Carroll said the Brisbane Pride March was an important event for the LGBTI community and one that QFES was proud to support.

"QFES is a community-focused department and we serve all Queenslanders. It is important that we reflect and support the diversity of the communities we serve, including diversity in sexuality and gender," Ms Carroll said.

"In participating in this year's Brisbane Pride March and marching in our QFES uniforms, we are not only acknowledging the diversity of the wider community but that of our own QFES community; we are championing a culture that promotes inclusion and equality in our workplaces."

Deputy Commissioner Mark Roche took part in the march and said it was about putting words into action.

"QFES is committed to ensuring all of our staff feel valued, included and respected for who they are when they come to work. I was proud to support my LGBTI colleagues and I was also proud to lead this department in the march," Mr Roche said.

"By supporting equality and respect for the LGBTI community we are supporting equality and respect across all sections of the community."



AP&ES Games begin

At time of print, the 16th Australasian Police and Emergency Services Games will have officially opened on the Sunshine Coast.

More than 150 Team QFES members are among the 2500 participants from Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Islands competing in more than 50 sports over one action-packed week.

QFES entrants will be representing the department and the state as Queensland

hosts the event for the third time in the Games' history, and for the first time in 15 years.

Commissioner Katarina Carroll said she was pleased with the enthusiasm QFES members had shown in registering for the Games, and wished our team well.

"I am proud to say that Team QFES is a force to be reckoned with at the 2016 Games," Ms Carroll said.

"I know that each and every QFES member will represent the department to the highest standard, and I am looking forward to watching the Games play out."

Assistant Games Manager, Acting Senior Sergeant Greg Croft said the Games were on track to being one of the best ever.

"The Games are shaping up to be an outstanding success," A/Snr Sgt Croft said.

"With the number of competitors registered and the program of events we have, I think we can expect the largest AP&ES Games in recent history."

The 16th Australasian Police and Emergency Services Games run from 8–15 October 2016 with events being held at various locations on the Sunshine Coast. For more information visit www.apandesgames.com.au





Queensland Police no match for QFES

QFES takes home the trophy in the annual 9/11 memorial rugby league clash against QPS.

The annual Queensland Firefighters v Queensland Police 9/11 Memorial Challenge was played this year on 18 August at Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane.

The teams took to the field in the curtain raiser for the Brisbane Broncos vs Canterbury Bulldogs match with the firefighters ahead at the end of play, defeating QPS with a score of 18-0.

Firefighters Dean Sheppard, Ben Wieczorek and Tom Eyles from Brisbane Region and Troy Theuerkauf from South Eastern Region each scored a try, with a conversion from Brisbane Region's Trent

Leis completing the tally. Man of the match went to team captain Tom Eyles.

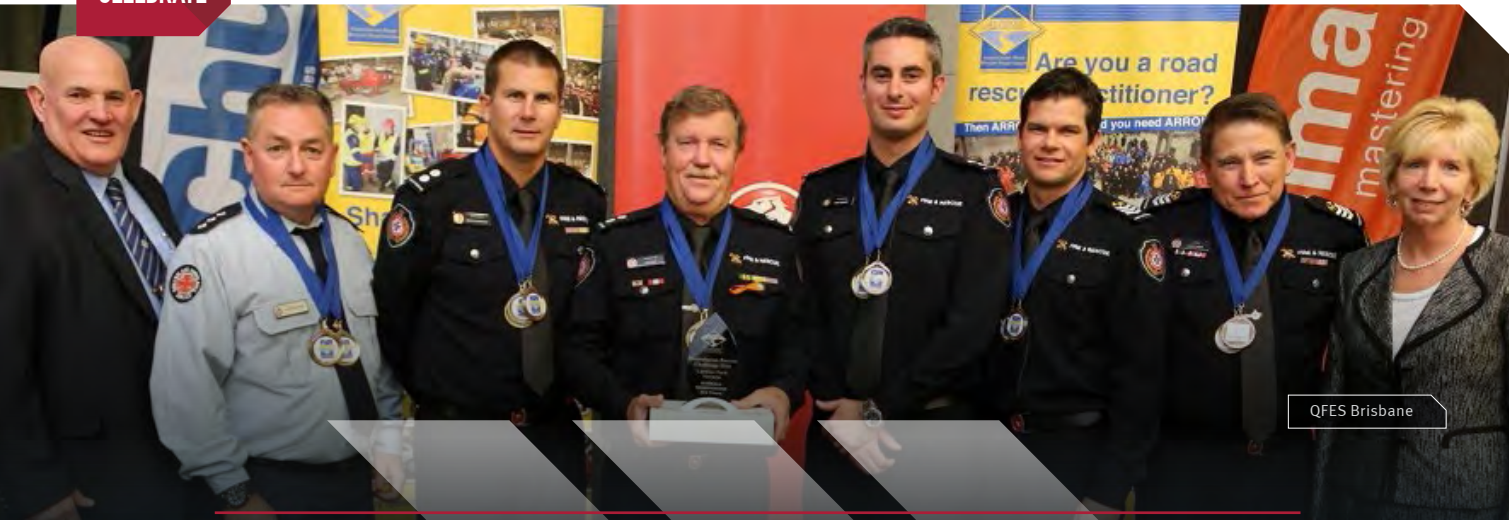
Now in its fifth year, the game is played to commemorate the terror attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001 and honour the memory of the people who lost their lives that day, including more than 400 firefighters and police officers.

The win sees the Queensland Firefighters Rugby League side edge ahead of QPS in the series, which now stands at 3-2.

Photographs courtesy of Brian Ranse.

QFES representatives taking part in this year's 9/11 memorial march in New York presented the New York Fire Department with a Queensland Firefighters Rugby League jersey worn during the commemorative match against QPS in a show of solidarity.





QFES Brisbane

QFES wins at ARC16

Road crash rescue teams from Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong battled it out over three days at the 2016 Australasian Rescue Challenge (ARC16), with QFES taking home top honours in several categories.

The annual skills challenge is hosted by the Australasian Road Rescue Organisation (ARRO), the region’s peak body for the advancement of road crash rescue and extrication techniques.

This year saw 17 teams comprising 117 rescuers compete in events across a range of categories including time critical, controlled and entrapment scenarios.

Among the participants were three teams representing QFES — from Brisbane, Cairns and Redland Bay.

QFES Cairns placed second overall behind ARC16 winners New Zealand Fire Services’ Geraldine team after winning two of the four challenge categories — entrapment and time critical — and best technical team.

QFES Brisbane won the controlled rescue challenge, was awarded best medical team and placed third overall.

Deputy Commissioner Operations and Emergency Management Mark Roche and President of ARRO said the event is a valuable opportunity for rescue organisations to share knowledge and learn from each other.

“Road crash rescue is a difficult and demanding job, and it is critical that agencies continue to develop their capability to achieve the best possible outcomes in this area when lives are on the line,” Mr Roche said.

“ARC provides a platform for agencies involved in road rescue around the Australasian region to come together and test their abilities, learn new techniques and gain vital new skills.”

Before the challenge, participants were also invited to attend the ARRO Learning Symposium which attracted 200 rescuers who took part in a full program of information sessions and hands-on, practical workshops.



QFES Cairns

South Western Region

In September, SES, RFS and FRS personnel from Stanthorpe and Warwick took part in Southern Downs Steam Railway's exercise 'Puffing Billy' alongside the Queensland Ambulance Service and Queensland Rail.

The exercise involved a simulated train accident located in a remote area with several injured passengers. QFES teams played an integral part in the simulation, conducting the search and rescue, assisting with entrapments and removing casualties. The SES established triage shelters for paramedics and assisted with first aid, as well as conducted land searches to locate missing passengers. RFS and FRS personnel assisted with preparing and transporting patients and carried out sweeps of the area to practice monitoring for wildfires that have the potential to be sparked during crashes.

Joint exercises such as this are a valuable opportunity to reinforce relationships and strengthen interoperability both between QFES services and with emergency service partners across the region.



QFES, QPS and the Department of Transport and Main Roads joined forces in August to hold a community engagement and information day in Toowoomba as part of 2016 Queensland Road Safety Week.

Members of the community were invited to view a number of static and dynamic displays from each agency to raise awareness and generate conversations around safety on our roads. The event demonstrated increasing collaboration between emergency service agencies in an effort to bring about sustained behavioural change to reduce road traffic crashes and the trauma associated with them.

A key part of the day was the launch the South Western Region Road Attitudes and Action Planning (RAAP) program for 2016. More than 20 secondary schools across the region are currently engaged in the 2016 RAAP program, with more than 2500 students involved.



South Western Region welcomed 14 new auxiliary firefighters in September, following their successful completion of initial training to become operational FRS crew members.

The eight-day training held in Toowoomba covers the training components of the Auxiliary Recruitment Training and Education Program (ARTEP) preoperational training, qualifying participants to respond to emergency incidents under supervision. Over the next 12 months the recruits will undertake further instruction to complete ARTEP operational consolidation training to receive a Certificate II in Public Safety (Firefighting and Emergency Operations).



Recently, LifeFlight conducted swiftwater training at Cooby Dam, north of Toowoomba to enhance the skills of level two rescue technicians in the South Western Region.

QFES and LifeFlight rescue staff underwent the training which focused on water rescue in both remote and populated areas. Crews used a rescue basket to winch down and effect rescues in floodwater and swiftwater rescue scenarios, ensuring a safer method of operating and giving the agencies increased options for rescue and a faster response time.

A strong relationship has been developed between QFES and LifeFlight which will ensure future training, communication and response capabilities are as good as they possibly can be to meet and exceed community expectations in times of emergency.





Far Northern Region

Deputy Commissioner Emergency Service Volunteers Mike Wassing arrived in Far Northern Region a few days ahead of the Executive Leadership Team meeting held in Cairns in August, taking the opportunity to take part in a SES training weekend.

During the training, Deputy Commissioner Wassing volunteered as a stretcher patient for SES members undertaking a vertical rescue course before spending an afternoon with map and navigation course participants.

Auxiliary officers from Thursday Island, Cooktown, Kuranda, Mossman, Port Douglas, Cairns and Gordonvale came together for a two-day workshop in early September.

Acting Assistant Commissioner John Bolger and Chief Superintendent Adam Gwin welcomed the officers and opened the workshop with a discussion about the QFES Future Direction plan. Officers were invited to share a snapshot of their stations, demonstrating the uniqueness of both locations and teams within the region. FNR regional office staff were also available to provide an insight into the different business units that operate to support the region.

As part of the Cairns Road Safety Expo during Road Safety Week in August, a team of QFES FRS personnel demonstrated road crash rescue extrications for school students and members of the public.

During the demonstrations, commentary was provided by QFES road crash rescue technicians and QAS paramedics describing the actions of crews rescuing mannequins from the mock-up vehicle crash site.

This year's expo showcased all agencies that play a key role in both road safety and road crash response.

In readiness for the upcoming bushfire and storm season, QFES Far Northern Region launched Exercise Ignite, a major joint exercise delivering an all-hazards approach to test crews' preparation and response to a bushfire scenario.

The combined resources of RFS, SES, FRS and Emergency Management operated through Forward Control Points at Millstream into Incident Control Centres (ICCs) at Mareeba and Ravenshoe to the Regional Coordination Centre in Cairns.

In addition to practical components of the exercise, table top discussions were also undertaken to strengthen partnerships at the local government level.

The exercise was supported by the QFES Incident Management Development Unit, Strategic Training Command.

Northern Region

Townsville Mayor Jenny Hill recently presented Townsville City SES Group's Stan Parsons with the QFES Assistant Commissioner's Certificate of Appreciation for 44 years of dedicated service to the SES.

Stan began his emergency service volunteer career with the Civil Defence Organisation in 1972, which became the State Emergency Service in 1975.

During the presentation Cr Hill noted that what Stan doesn't know about the SES would fit on the back of a postage stamp, and thanked him for his lifelong commitment and dedication to the Townsville community.



Congratulations to Inspector Phill Faint and Station Officer Trevor Doyle who recently graduated from the University of Queensland School of Engineering Science and Information Technology.

Both officers completed a Graduate Certificate in Fire Safety, which covers subjects including fire dynamics, fire protection systems and prescriptive and performance-based solutions in fire safety.

Phill and Trevor both achieved very high results with Trevor graduating with six high distinctions. Completion of the course sees Trevor fully qualified as a Building Approvals Officer and complements Phill's role as Manager of Community Safety for the Northern Region.



In September, Northern Region's Townsville Office received a visit by Australian Army Trooper Samuel McIver and Warrant Officer 2nd Class 'Courage' the wedge tailed eagle, Regimental Mascot of the 2nd Cavalry Regiment.

Warrant Officer Courage has been with the unit since 1987 and, at 29 years old, is the oldest mascot in the Australian Army. He and his handler were in the city raising money for Soldier On, supporting returned Defence Force personnel living with physical and psychological injuries sustained during service.

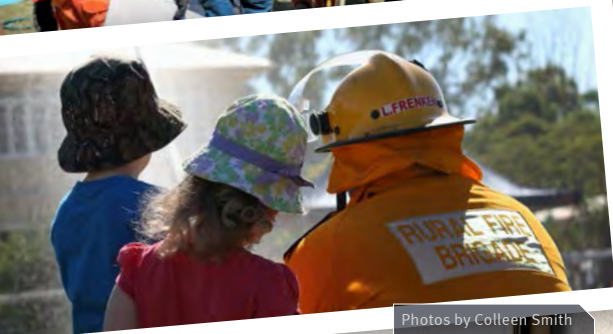


Rupertswood Rural Fire Brigade recently hosted members from the Rangewood, Black River and Rollingstone Rural Fire Brigades for a road crash rescue (RCR) awareness course.

The course included a practical session with firefighters from Woodlands Fire and Rescue Station who gave the RFS members the chance to get hands-on with tools and learn more about what's involved in a RCR response.



Central Region



Photos by Colleen Smith

The ninth annual 2016 Rockhampton Emergency Services Day saw 6500 people turn out to learn about how to keep themselves, their homes and their families safe.

Approximately 50 disaster management organisations were on hand with around 70 exhibits communicating potential risks faced by Central Region residents. The day encouraged people to recognise how they could be affected, identify what actions to take before, during and after an event, and be proactive in protecting themselves.

The day was a huge success, not only for community engagement but for cross-agency partnership building. This facilitates interoperability during times of activation and aids the development and implementation of further collaborative community engagement projects.



In August, Acting Inspector Kevin Cook hosted a Fire and Emergency Services Support Network (FESSN) information night for family members of Gladstone staff.

Central Region Psychologist Helen Madell and Superintendent Col May travelled down from Rockhampton to support the evening.

The event offered a relaxed forum for all attendees to voice queries and concerns regarding potential impacts of the job on families and loved ones of QFES personnel. It also allowed attendees to form a rapport with Central Region's FESSN representative and managerial staff, and learn about the FESSN services available to QFES staff and their families.



Proserpine Fire and Rescue Station recently held a joint training day involving local FRS, SES and QAS members to enhance skills and interoperability during road crash rescues.

The event provided an opportunity for attendees to build a clear picture of the skills each organisation contributes in road crash situations and to improve team work.

QAS Officer-in-Charge Gavin Cousens presented a session on patient care in road crash incidents, followed by new car technologies by QFES Lieutenant Brian Little. SES Local Controller Mark Connors provided insight into what resources and assistance the SES can provide. In mixed groups, the attendees then moved through a number of work stations covering activities like stabilisation, glass management and disentanglement. The day concluded with a multi crash/casualty exercise allowing skills to be put to the test.

Thanks to all involved and in particular to Lieutenant Brian Little who was the driving force behind the day.



North Coast Region

In August, a QFES combined exercise was conducted at the Kybong aerodrome 10km south of Gympie.

The training day focused on air operations, in particular the use of an 11,000 litre collapsible collar tank and a Bell helicopter currently contracted to QFES through McDermott's Aviation.

The exercise brought together local FRS crews, RFS brigades and the RFS Air Operations Unit from Bundaberg, with the State Air Desk delivering a presentation prior to the practical component of the day. The exercise saw the locating and filling of the collar tank by FRS appliance Gympie 451E with three RFS brigades working to maintain water supply using a portable pump on a local dam 300 metres away. The Bell helicopter, capable of loading 2700 litres of water in approximately 40 seconds, conducted a number of load drops on a simulated fire within the aerodrome.



A QFES mobile gas fire training module was recently transported to Torquay, enabling permanent and auxiliary crews from Maryborough, Craginsh and Torquay, as well as the latest intake of auxiliary recruits, to train with fire in a controlled environment.

For some this was their first experience of live fire and for others it was their first opportunity to train with this prop for some years. A total of 70 staff were trained or underwent a refresher in the techniques required to combat a gas fire in different scenarios.

Thank you to all the staff who helped to facilitate this training including the instructors, coordinators and senior officers.



On a cold evening in August, at the back of Caloundra Fire and Rescue Station, QFES personnel participated in a joint training exercise which drew on the range of skills and abilities of local SES Groups and FRS crews.

The scenario involved a simulated traffic accident between a car and a bus, with some participants filling roles as casualties on the bus, while mannequins were used to simulate trapped occupants in the car and under the bus. Caloundra Auxiliary Captain Phil Butler and crew dealt with the trapped casualties in the car, while SES members from Caloundra and Maroochydore Groups attended to the casualties on the bus and set up a triage area under the guidance of SES Deputy Local Controller Brendan Casement. Maroochydore Station Officer Scott Daly had a number of FRS and SES members assisting with the operation of low pressure air bags to raise the bus in order to extricate the trapped casualty.

The night's activities were thoroughly enjoyed by all participants and an important example of interoperability across QFES services.





NEVER DRIVE THROUGH FLOODWATER

IF IT'S FLOODED,
FORGET IT.



Summer in Queensland means storms. Sometimes that means flooded roads.

No matter who you are, how late you are, or what vehicle you're driving, it's never safe to enter floodwater.

Even if it looks calm, no one can predict what flowing water will do or what's happened underneath.

The road might have dropped or washed away. The floodwater may be deeper or faster moving than it appears.

What looks safe can quickly escalate into dangerous conditions. Even shallow water can be powerful enough to catch your tyres and sweep you away in a matter of seconds.

Start preparing your Plan B now at www.qld.gov.au/floodwatersafety



www.qld.gov.au/floodwatersafety



Brisbane Region

The annual Bridge to Brisbane was held this year on 28 August with more than 30,000 participants taking part to raise money for charity.

Among them, 25 QFES firefighters completed the 5km course in full turnout gear and breathing apparatus — an extra 18kg of weight — to raise money and awareness for burns victims and research at the Lady Cilento Children’s Hospital. Special thanks to firefighter Catherine Duchock for her hard work coordinating the team and making sure everyone was fully kitted and at the start line.

A team of Brisbane SES Unit volunteers also participated in the 5km run, carrying a stretcher the length of the course. The Brisbane SES Unit were a key partner in the safe running of the 2016 Bridge to Brisbane, with more than 50 members of the Unit assisting in route control for both the 10km and 5km legs of the event.



In August, three Brisbane Region SES teams competed in the 2016 Regional Rescue Competition at Old Petrie Town.

Each team was required to perform three separate rescues: land search and sick person; rescue from heights and sick person; and flood boat rescue and injured person. Teams were judged on their rescue skills, knowledge and techniques as well as safety, leadership, teamwork, initiative, communications and casualty management.

Scoring was close, but in the end Redlands SES Unit team ‘Redlands Red ResQ’ took the top spot. The team will now go on to represent Brisbane Region in the SES State Rescue Competition in 2017 — well done!

Congratulations to all participating teams and a big thank you to all event staff and members who helped bring the day together. Thank you also to the Local Controllers for the provision of equipment and resources to make the competition possible.



The annual Rotary Club of South Brisbane’s Essential Services Awards were held in September, with nine QFES members honoured on the night.

The awards recognise officers from essential services including the QPS, QFES and QAS for dedicated service and contribution to the community over and above their normal duties.

Congratulations to station officers Owen George (Durack Fire and Rescue Station), Shane Gilchrist (Cleveland Fire and Rescue Station), Adrian Pilkington (Capalaba Fire and Rescue Station) and Graham Wells (iZone Officer, Cleveland Area Office), and to Brisbane City SES Unit’s Eastern Group members Daniel Hunt, Scott Grant, Debbie Deidrichs, Deni Keesham and James Wall.



South Eastern Region

South Eastern Region had 12 candidates participate in the August ARTEP course held at Beaudesert Fire and Rescue Station.

This was a collaborative approach in the delivery of training to auxiliary firefighters from South Eastern, South Western and Brisbane Regions. There were six recruit auxiliary firefighters from South Eastern Region, five from Brisbane Region and one from South Western Region. Candidates completed an eight-day pre-operational training course that included a day of live fire training at the Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy.

Recruit instructors were from South Eastern and Brisbane Regions with resources from both regions being used throughout the course.



In September, the Beechmont Rural Fire Brigade held a community education day to share important safety information with local residents.

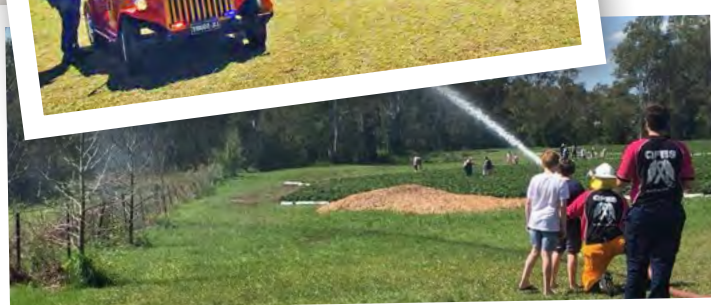
This included tips on how to prepare homes and families for bushfire season and ways to develop and draft a fire escape plan.

SES members were also on hand to provide vital information about storm safety and preparation. Throughout the day attendees were invited to participate in some fun activities – target hosing and hose bowling were especially popular.



RFS volunteers from Chambers Flat Rural Fire Brigade spent a Sunday in September at the local strawberry farm in an effort to spread bushfire safety messages.

They chatted with locals and provided important fire safety advice while making sure there was plenty of entertainment for the kids. Lil Squirt, the QFES mini-fire truck, was a big hit on the day with local children having a chance to have a ride. Residents also had the opportunity to test some of the equipment firefighters use.

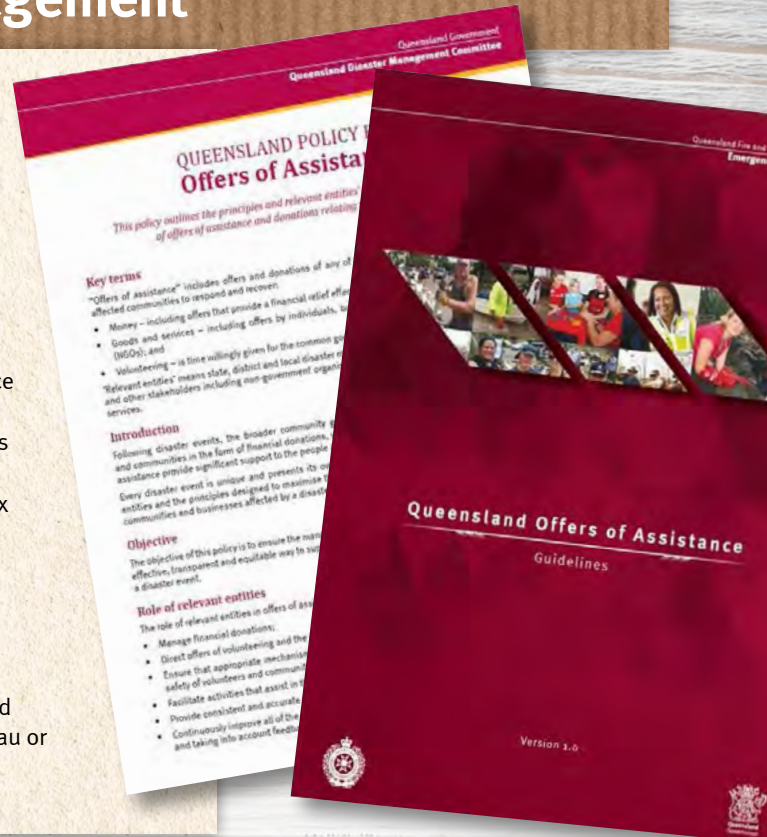


Emergency Management

The Disaster Management Branch has reviewed the *Queensland Offers of Assistance Policy and Guidelines*, which have been designed to directly support stakeholders and communities, as well as provide avenues for offering and managing offers of assistance, during times of disaster.

Individuals, groups, businesses or corporations can provide assistance in the form of financial donations, volunteer work and offers of goods and services. During the 2011 disaster events, there was a momentous display of generosity when \$216 million was raised through the Queensland Premier's Disaster Relief Appeal. An unprecedented influx of volunteers during the event highlighted the need for systems to engage and manage spontaneous volunteerism. Thanks to input from Volunteering Queensland regarding best practice, the guidelines now provide some considerations for emergency management agencies to effectively manage offers of assistance.

Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk has endorsed the updated policy and guidelines and they are available at www.disaster.qld.gov.au or on the Disaster Management Portal.



The Systems Development and Support Branch is a small team of four that has managed the implementation and development of the Event Management System (EMS) project over the past two years, along with several other projects associated with the Information Exchange Platform.

The State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC) EMS was an initiative to replace several different and incompatible operating systems with a single platform to undertake reporting, logistics requests, planning, tasking, intelligence gathering, communications and logging required of the SDCC. The EMS is the single point of truth for all disaster-related information and reporting used by the SDCC, which were previously managed by Outlook, an SMS system, two SharePoint portals and several spreadsheets.

The EMS was successfully implemented in stages throughout 2014 and 2015, and faced its first real test during Tropical Cyclone Marcia in February 2015 with some amazing statistics recorded. The volume of information captured at the time and communications into and out of the SDCC was far beyond what was thought the system would ever do.

Since its implementation, the system has been further developed to integrate state agency reporting, which has been well received by the 37 agencies that attend or support the SDCC when activated. This reporting feature has been further adapted to incorporate the National Impact Assessment Model which assists the state with its National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements claims.

If any QFES staff would like to understand more about the EMS, the team at the Systems Development and Support Branch would be happy to provide an overview. Email the team at EMSAdmin@qfes.qld.gov.au

	Emails received	Emails sent	SMS Messages sent	Logged Entries	Reports lodged	Tasks
July	2,654	22,180	1,985	993	323	94
August	2,796	26,694	3,977	944	343	85
September	2,819	18,097	3,444	1,130	356	75
October	3,883	29,553	9,315	1,543	429	97
November	15,798	49,732	22,011	1,670	583	1,30
December	4,055	43,497	11,978	1,812	555	1,22
January	3,679	46,763	12,938	1,660	629	1,28
February	4,092	50,197	13,133	1,876	723	1,71
March	3,198	35,021	6,389	1,678	504	1,15
April	2,458	18,482	859	1,476	312	73
May	2,466	21,829	1,040	1,280	314	86
June	4,916	33,869	7,451	1,592	570	1,05
TOTAL	52,814	395,914	94,520	17,654	5,641	12,9

EMS Figures July 2015 to June 2016

“Volunteer work is the best thing you can do”

Volunteering with the emergency services has been a mainstay in SES Local Controller Don Wheeler’s life for more than 40 years. Driven by an enduring passion for helping others, Don can think of nothing he’d rather do.
—By Saskia Tigchelaar

Born in the small outback Queensland town of Blackall in the 1940s and raised in the even smaller town of Isisford 120km to the west, Don Wheeler has always had a strong sense of community.

In 1975, when Don was in his mid-thirties, he signed up to volunteer with the local ambulance service, fire brigade and the SES — all on the same day.

Nearly 41 years on, Don is still with the SES as a Local Controller with the Blackall SES Group, and says his motivation is pretty simple.

“For me, I get a lot of self-satisfaction from being able to help people when they need it,” he said.

“I’m in a position where I can help, so I do. That’s it.”

Over the years, Don has met and worked alongside many like-minded people, something that he values enormously.

There is another side to life; not everyone has it as good as others, so if you can get out and give people a hand, good on you.



“I have worked with a lot of good people. There is a real feeling of camaraderie and mateship in the emergency services — it gets in your system.”

“People do come and go, but a lot of us have been around for a long time and we’re still going.

“Three of us — Ian Murray, Greg Tierney and I — all signed up for the SES on the same day, on 26 November 1975, and we’re all still here in the Blackall Group.

Don has been involved in countless incidents throughout his career as an emergency service volunteer, including Blackall’s biggest flood in recorded history in 1990, in which 27 homes were inundated, and the Tattersalls Hotel fire in 1994.

But it isn’t always the biggest events that have the most impact.

“I’ve been to a lot of call-outs; a lot of them were road accidents,” he said.

“Living in a small community, everybody knows everybody; it hurts. That’s the down side.

“But you just try to think of the good times, when people ask for your help and you can give it — that keeps you going.”

Another thing that has kept Don going is family — he and his wife raised five children together, though none of them have ever joined the SES.

“They probably thought one was enough! But they have always been very supportive — I couldn’t have done this for so long without the love and support of my family,” he said.

“It can be very taxing on families, especially when you have young kids.

“You get a call and you go — you have a fair idea of what you’re in for but your family has no idea.

“There is a lot of time away from home. I don’t notice the hours though, you just have to get the job done.”

After more than half a lifetime volunteering with the SES, Don laughs as he admits that someday soon he may have to call it a day.

“I’m getting on now — everything has its limits and mine’s just about reached I think,” he said.

“But I’ll hang in there for as long as I can, until I become a burden on the other boys!”

To younger colleagues and anybody thinking about becoming an emergency service volunteer, Don says: go for it.

“Volunteer work is the best thing you can do; it makes you a better person,” he said.

“There is another side to life; not everyone has it as good as others, so if you can get out and give people a hand, good on you.”





Energex funding a boost to SES in south-east Queensland



More lifesaving equipment has been put in the hands of SES volunteers after Energex provided more than \$31,000 to 12 SES Groups operating in the Brisbane and South Eastern Regions.

The equipment, including a pole saw, chainsaw, inverter generators, scene lighting equipment, basket stretchers and an ICS TAC Pack was officially handed over in August and September at separate ceremonies in Caboolture and Logan.

Gold Coast, Logan City and Scenic Rim Regional SES Groups in Runaway Bay, Beenleigh, Logan Central, Logan East, Logan Village, Beaudesert, Boonah and Harrisville received a total of \$15,200 to purchase the new tools. Brisbane Region's North Eastern, Bribie Island, Caboolture and Redland Bay SES received more than \$16,300.

The funding is part of an ongoing initiative that will see more than \$200,000 provided to Queensland SES Groups this year through the Energex, Ergon and Powerlink SES Equipment Program.

SES Assistant Commissioner Peter Jeffrey said the equipment would go a long way toward ensuring the SES could continue to provide critical support to local communities.

"This equipment will make it easier for SES members to get out during emergency events and provide the help people need in these difficult and often dangerous times," Mr Jeffrey said.

"The continued financial support provided through the Energex, Ergon and Powerlink SES Equipment Program means SES Groups around Queensland are better equipped to serve their communities and deal with these situations."

Energex Acting Executive Group Manager Customer and Corporate Relations, Carly Irving said for decades Energex crews have stood shoulder-to-shoulder with SES volunteers during Queensland's natural disasters.

"We share a common interest in providing a high quality service to the community while ensuring the public remains safe when events turn dangerous," Ms Irving said.

"This equipment is a show of Energex's appreciation for those who volunteer their time to support those in need."





»» Central Region SES better equipped for storm season thanks to Ergon ««

SES Groups in Central Region will be able to better support their communities during emergencies after receiving more than \$14,200 worth of vital emergency equipment from Ergon Energy.

The equipment, which includes a chainsaw, pole saw, inverter generator, scene lighting equipment, ICS TAC Pack and basket stretcher, was officially presented at an event in August.

SES Local Controller for Rockhampton and Livingstone SES Units Eddie Cowie said the equipment will form a critical part in their future responses to emergencies and disasters.

"The equipment has already been put to good use in recent training courses as we prepare for the upcoming storm season," Mr Cowie said.

"Last year's season with Cyclone Marcia saw thousands of requests for assistance and this equipment will allow us to better service the community during any future events."

Police, Fire and Emergency Services Minister Bill Byrne, Ergon representatives and QFES staff came together for the event and to celebrate the strong partnership between the SES and Ergon.

SES Assistant Commissioner Peter Jeffrey said the equipment would be a welcome boost to SES Groups in Rockhampton, Gladstone, Mount Morgan and Muttaborra.

"These SES Groups will be able to use this equipment to help their communities when they're needed most," Mr Jeffrey said.

"They are now better-equipped to respond to emergencies and help local residents recover from difficult and challenging events."

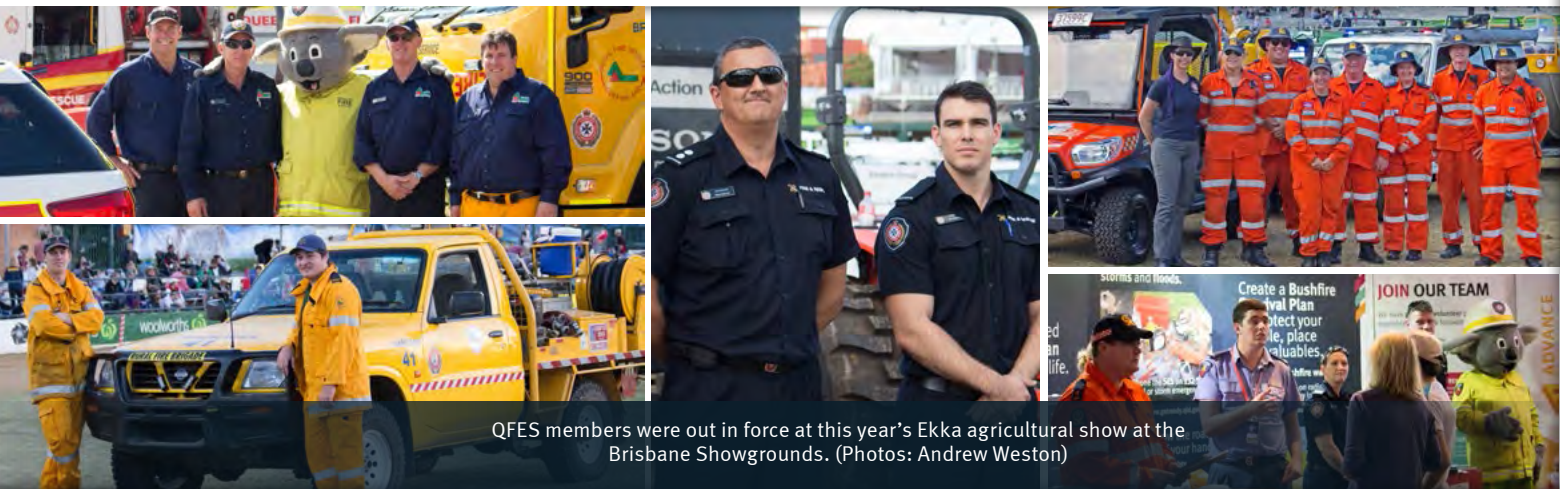
Ergon Energy Chief Executive Roslyn Baker said Ergon employees and SES volunteers often worked side-by-side when responding to emergencies.

"Many Ergon staff in regional Queensland are SES volunteers as well, and we are thrilled to be able to help SES Groups provide critical assistance to their communities by providing this valuable equipment."

The equipment was provided as part of the Energex, Ergon and Powerlink SES Equipment Program which will deliver \$200,000 in support to SES Groups around Queensland this year.



Multi-agency exercise, Exercise Nautilus, took place at Redcliffe Aerodrome in August involving firefighters, SES members, QAS officers and Moreton Bay Council airport workers practicing a response to a single engine aircraft crash scenario.



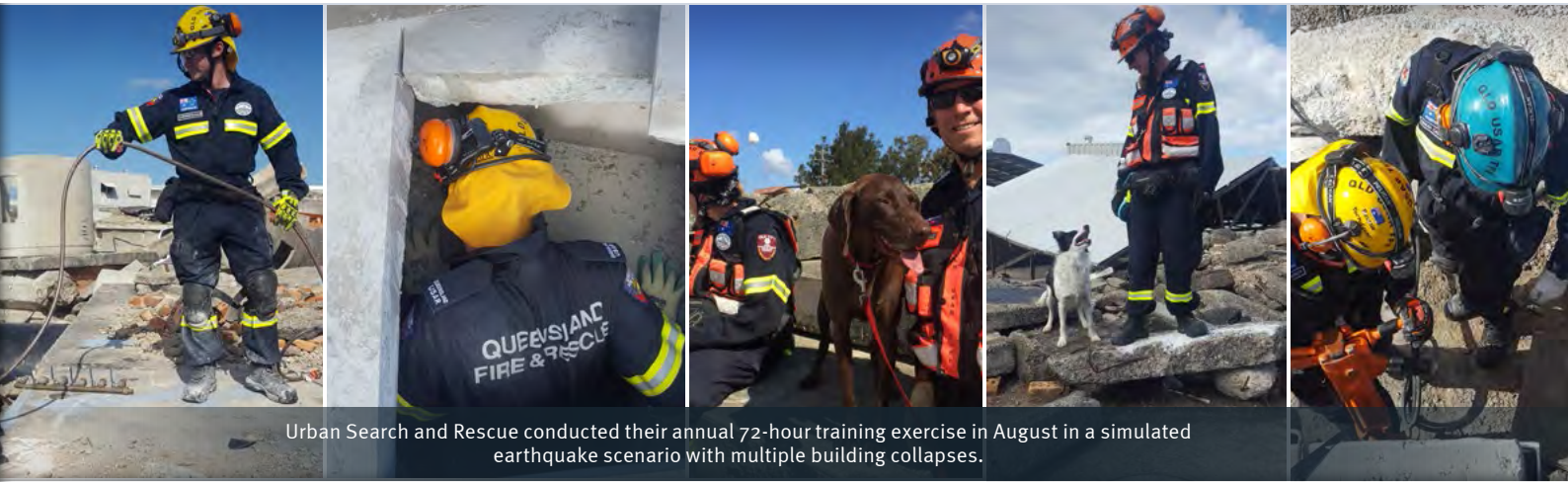
QFES members were out in force at this year's Ekka agricultural show at the Brisbane Showgrounds. (Photos: Andrew Weston)



Around 25 PCYC Emergency Services Cadets from St Laurence's College visited Kedron Emergency Services Complex in August and were given a tour of the SDCC, SOC and Firecom as well as a hands-on look at one of our technical rescue vehicles.



QFES were on hand to help the Gympie Muster celebrate 35 years in August, and share vital safety information with attendees. (Photos: Andrew Weston)



Urban Search and Rescue conducted their annual 72-hour training exercise in August in a simulated earthquake scenario with multiple building collapses.



Members of Ormeau Rural Fire Brigade honed their extinguisher skills and techniques during a controlled training exercise in September.






Level two vertical rescue technicians in Brisbane took part in an intensive training session at Mt Coot-tha to perfect skills in rescuing casualties with spinal injuries.



The 2016 Rockhampton Emergency Services Day saw more than 50 emergency service agencies and related organisations engage with 6500 members of the community. (Photos: Andrew Weston)

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Long-serving RFS member *turns 100*

Julatten Rural Fire Brigade founding member Keith Brown has celebrated his 100th birthday with friends, family and fellow RFS members.

In 1963, a few mates who had recognised a need for more organised fire management activities in their far north Queensland community got together and formed the Julatten Rural Fire Brigade.

Now, more than half a century later, the brigade is 40 members strong and the tight-knit group came together in August to celebrate the 100th birthday of one of those founding members, Keith Brown.

A father of eight, Keith has spent his life keeping busy and working outdoors, cutting cane during the season and later — when harvesting machines took over the job — as part of the main roads survey crew.

Keith said he was proud to serve his community as a RFS volunteer.

“What I enjoyed most was being out with the blokes fighting fires and helping people,” Keith said.

“We were lucky most of the time; around our area we never had too much trouble.”

Around 50 volunteers, staff and community members turned out to help Keith mark this incredible milestone, including Deputy Commissioner Emergency Service Volunteers Mike Wassing and Acting Assistant Commissioner Far Northern Region John Bolger.

Deputy Commissioner Wassing said he was honoured to attend the event and have the opportunity to chat with Keith over a cup of tea and a piece of cake.

“Keith has been a valued member of the Julatten Rural Fire Brigade for more than 50 years and it was a privilege to be able to celebrate his 100th birthday with him and the brigade,” Mr Wassing said.

For Keith, being back at the fire shed was bittersweet.

“It was a wonderful party, I had a good day,” Keith said.

“There are a lot of faces missing though now, so there was a lot of sadness too — it was a real mixture of emotions.”

QFES would like to thank Keith for his service to the RFS and acknowledge the outstanding contribution this exceptional centenarian has made to the community over the years.





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PREPARE.ACT.SURVIVE.



Prepare to take the heat out of bushfire season

Queenslanders know all about floods and storms, but what about bushfire?

Bushfires can affect anyone in Queensland and with bushfire season underway, it's important to prepare now to protect yourself, your family and property against bushfire.

You don't have to live in the bush to be threatened by bushfire – just close enough to be affected by burning material, embers and smoke.

It's too late to start planning as the fire is approaching. So here are some things you can do now so you're better prepared this bushfire season.

Act, so your family and property are safe

Preparation is vital when it comes to reducing the threat and severity of a bushfire. An unprepared property is not only at risk itself, but may also present an increased danger for neighbours.

Look at the simple things you can do, like mowing the lawn regularly and removing combustible materials like dry leaves and branches in gutters and yards to reduce your risks.

Create your Bushfire Survival Plan today

Having a Bushfire Survival Plan in place, just in case, is one way you can protect your family and home well in advance.

Your plan outlines if you will leave early or stay, lets you know what you'll need in an emergency kit or evacuation kit, and the actions you will take.

To find out more about preparing for bushfire season and to prepare your Bushfire Survival Plan visit

www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au

