



**Annual Report
2007/08**



State Fire Commission



Statement of Compliance

Honourable J Cox MP

Minister for Police and Emergency Management

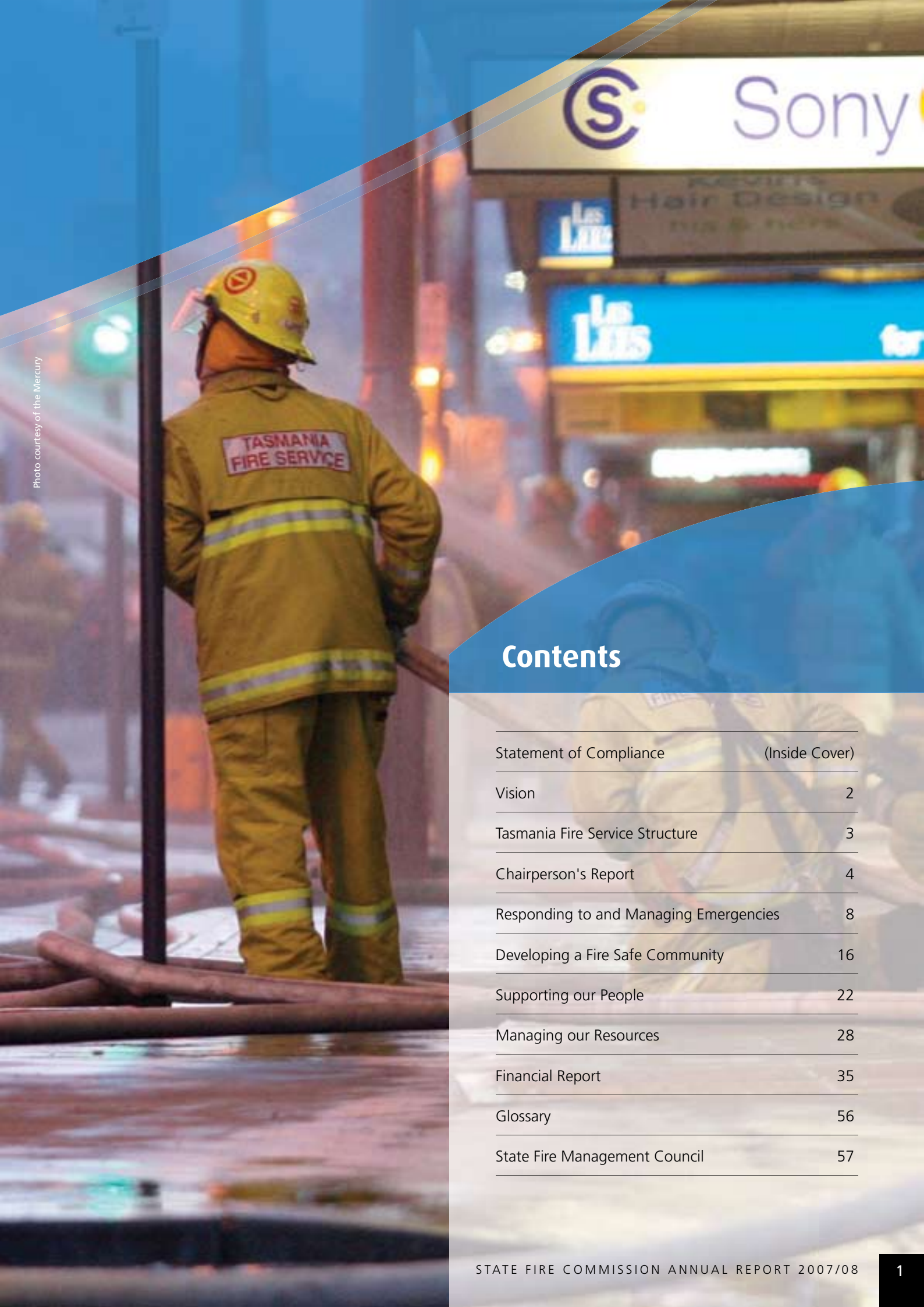
Dear Minister

In accordance with Section 107(g) of the *Fire Service Act 1979*, we hereby submit for your information and presentation to Parliament the Report of the State Fire Commission for the year ending 30 June 2008.

The Report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Fire Service Act 1979*.

J P Hyland BE
ACTING CHAIR
3 October 2008

L P Dewhurst AFSM
COMMISSION MEMBER



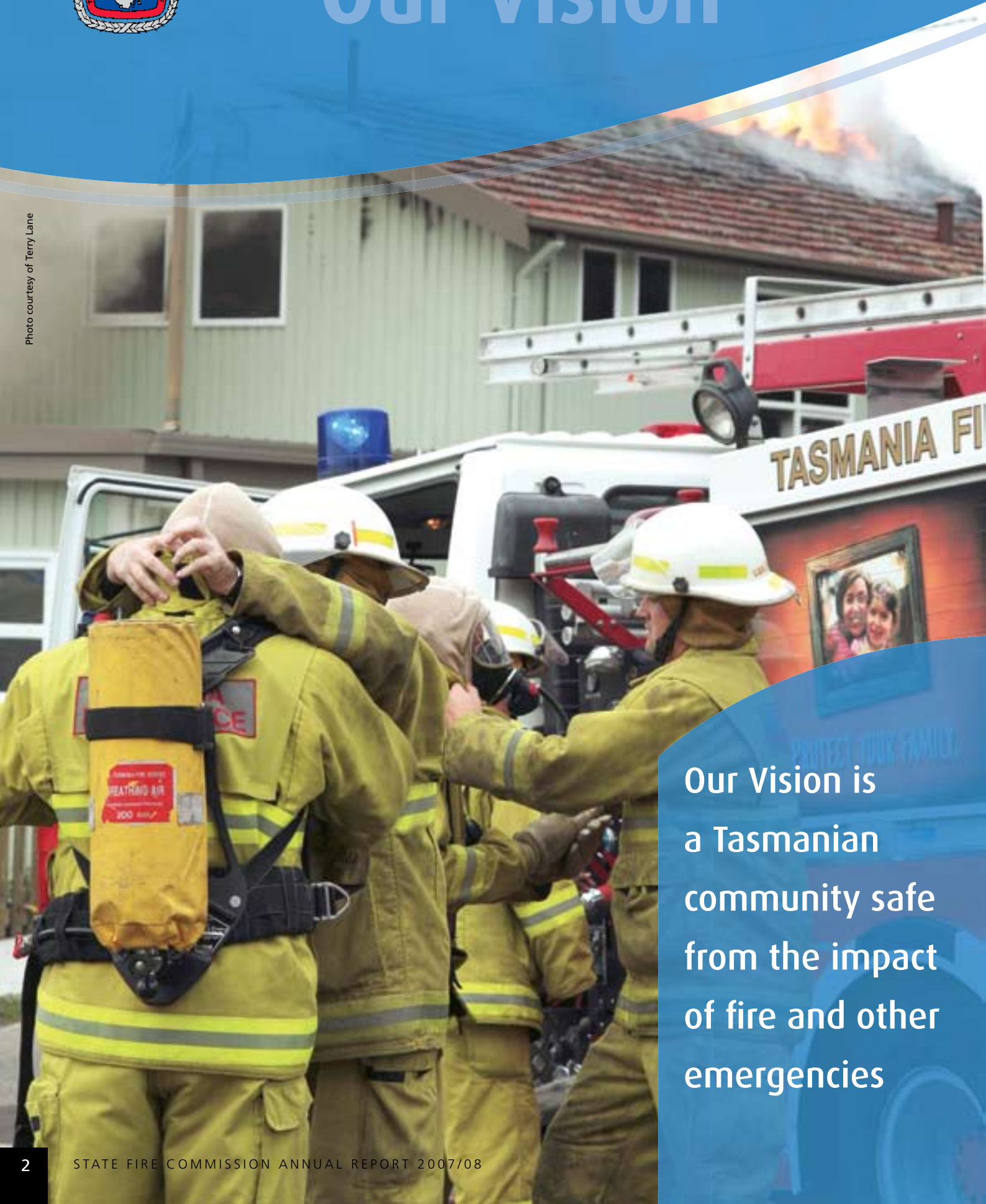
Contents

Statement of Compliance	(Inside Cover)
Vision	2
Tasmania Fire Service Structure	3
Chairperson's Report	4
Responding to and Managing Emergencies	8
Developing a Fire Safe Community	16
Supporting our People	22
Managing our Resources	28
Financial Report	35
Glossary	56
State Fire Management Council	57



Tasmania Fire Service Our Vision

Photo courtesy of Terry Lane



Our Vision is
a Tasmanian
community safe
from the impact
of fire and other
emergencies

PROFILE

Tasmanian firefighters have served the Tasmanian community since the early 1800s and have had a legislated responsibility since 1883. The current Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) is established by the *Fire Service Act 1979*.

Today TFS is an innovative and efficient statewide service that takes pride in its long history and strives for continuous improvement. TFS provides its services from 224 brigades throughout Tasmania. These services include rapid and effective response to fires and emergencies including rescue and hazardous materials, as well as fire prevention and fire safety education.

Our 5,372 volunteers and career staff work together as an integrated team committed to achieving our strategic goals for a safe Tasmania.

OUR ROLE

The role of the State Fire Commission (SFC) is to protect life, property and the environment from the impact of fire and other emergencies.

The Commission delivers all of its services through its operational arm, TFS. We measure our success by:

- Comparing performance with industry benchmarks
- Achieving our periodic goals and objectives
- Maintaining financial strength and viability.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

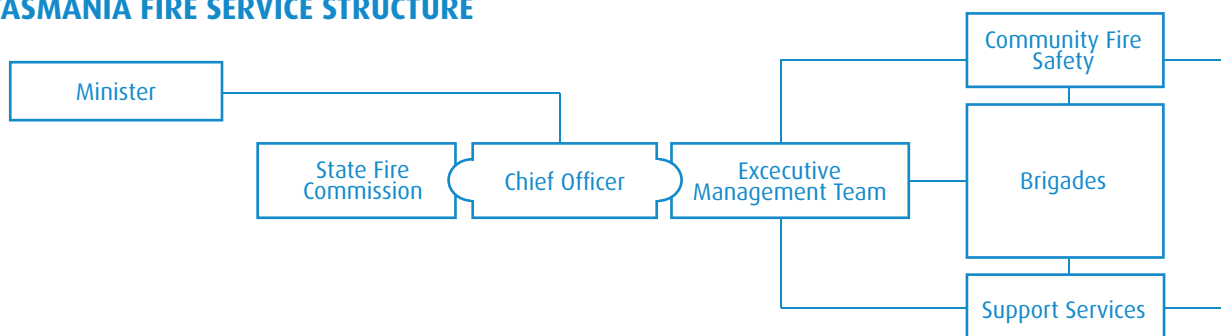
In carrying out this role we will demonstrate a commitment to the following key principles:

- Operate in a consistent and fair manner
- Keep in touch with stakeholder expectations
- Provide development opportunities for all members
- Display strength and unity in membership.

MAJOR GOALS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

GOAL:	Delivery of an effective and efficient fire service.
OUTCOME:	A rapid response to fires and other emergencies that minimises the social, economic and environmental cost to the community.
GOAL:	Promotion, coordination and delivery of effective fire prevention and safety education and training to the community.
OUTCOME:	Fewer unwanted fires in a community that is willing and able to respond appropriately when threatened by fire.
GOAL:	Supporting our people.
OUTCOME:	An increase in skill levels, job satisfaction, workplace safety, reduced absenteeism together with a fair harassment-free workplace.
GOAL:	Managing our resources.
OUTCOME:	The provision of adequate and sustainable resources to enable the Commission to discharge its duties under the <i>Fire Service Act 1979</i> .

TASMANIA FIRE SERVICE STRUCTURE





State Fire Commission Chairperson's Report 2007/08

Continuing drought, particularly in the east and midlands, once again created unusually early high bushfire potential in the spring. Lack of spring rainfall further increased the fire risk and by early summer the whole state had become subject to critical fire danger. A number of significant fires around the State occurred but most were in fairly remote areas, meaning that property losses were lower than what they could have been had they occurred in the urban interface. The total number of bushfires attended by brigades was only marginally less than the previous and very active year, but damage was considerably less this year. In many instances the lack of damage was clearly an outcome of aggressive and efficient attack by brigades which kept fires small and controlled quickly. TFS brigades have a considerable capability to deal with fires by rapid attack, but it should be acknowledged that despite our best efforts Tasmania will experience severe conditions from time to time which will create difficult and damaging fire events.

The most high profile incident for the year was the fire on 22 September 2007 which destroyed the Myer Liverpool Street store. The direct and indirect losses are believed to be well in excess of \$50 million making it one of the most costly fires in Tasmanian history. Fortunately there were no lives lost or injuries. The fire is subject to a coronial reporting. Despite the huge loss, the TFS response and management of the incident was outstanding in essentially containing the fire to the building and preventing it from spreading, potentially much further into the Hobart CBD.

Through much of the year, TFS endured a protracted period of industrial action and unrest during the renegotiation of the enterprise agreement for career firefighters. The impasse in negotiations was finally overcome, however the enterprise bargaining process had some effect on organisational harmony and workplace relations. I am pleased to report that in tandem with the enterprise bargaining negotiations, a way forward was achieved to deal with the United Firefighters Union (UFU) concerns over superannuation arrangements.



With a significant fall in insurance revenue in 2006/07 and increased firefighter wages the Commission had no option but to significantly increase the Fire Service Contribution to cover these two unavoidable costs. The 10 per cent increase in the Fire Service Contribution for 2007/08 in addition to a 12.5 per cent increase in the previous year was for many councils, unpalatable and their adverse reaction attracted some media attention. The increases however enabled the Commission to continue with its fire appliance and station build programs both of which rely heavily on capital funding. I am pleased to report that after a very difficult year in 2006/07, the Insurance Fire Levy rose above the budget for 2007/08 by \$1.2M or 8.8 per cent. The Commission has been required in recent times to rely heavily on its bank overdraft facilities to pay its creditors and so the additional revenue assisted the Commission in this regard.

I take this opportunity to recognise the outstanding performance of all our TFS staff and volunteers who provide safety and protection through a range of services for the Tasmanian community. I thank the members of the SFC for their assistance and commitment throughout the year.

John Gledhill AFSM BSc FIFireE
Chairperson

State Fire Commission Members



L to R

Bruce Corbett AFSM
Jane Hyland BE
Lyndsay Suhr AFSM
John Gledhill AFSM BSc FIFireE
John LeFevre
Richard Bowden
Leon Dewhurst AFSM

John Gledhill AFSM BSc FIFireE

Chairperson of the State Fire Commission and TFS Chief Officer. Former Deputy Chief Officer and Regional Officer of TFS with 33 years experience. A member of the State Fire Management Council, Director on the Board of the National Aerial Firefighting Centre and Director on the Bushfire CRC Governing Board.

Richard Bowden

Local Government Association of Tasmania representative on the State Fire Commission since June 1993. Former Warden of the Bothwell Municipality and currently Deputy Warden of the Central Highlands Council. Member of the Forestry Committee for the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association since its inception.

Bruce Corbett AFSM

Tasmanian Retained Firefighters Association representative on the State Fire Commission since November 2006. Commenced with the Wynyard Brigade in 1977 and has held various positions including that of Brigade Chief of the Wynyard Brigade. Awarded life membership in December 1997.

Lyndsay Suhr AFSM

Tasmanian Volunteer Fire Brigades Association representative on the State Fire Commission since July 2007. Commenced with the Glenorchy Central Brigade (now Wellington Brigade) in 1977 and has held various positions including that of Brigade Chief. Mr Suhr is currently a member of the Wellington Brigade and a group officer of the Derwent group.

Leon Dewhurst AFSM

United Firefighters Union (UFU) Tasmania Branch representative on the State Fire Commission since June 1993. Career fire officer with 31 years experience with the Hobart Brigade. Past President of the UFU.

Jane Hyland BE

Department of Treasury and Finance representative on the State Fire Commission since January 2007. Ms Hyland is currently Director, Office of the Tasmanian Energy Regulator.

John LeFevre

Local Government Association of Tasmania representative on the State Fire Commission since July 2006. Currently a Councillor with the Break O'Day Council. Mr LeFevre has been a volunteer firefighter for over thirty years and a volunteer ambulance officer for over twenty years.



Tasmania Fire Service Performance

Executive Management Team Members

Back L to R
 Andrew Comer,
 Christopher Arnol,
 Tony Davidson,
 Ken Burns,
 John Streets,
 Michael Gallagher

Front L to R
 Damien Killalea,
 Mike Brown,
 John Gledhill,
 Robyn Pearce



John Bryan Gledhill AFSM, BSc, FIFireE
 Chief Officer

Director - National Aerial Firefighting Centre Ltd
 Director - Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre
 Council Member - Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council
 Chair - State Fire Commission
 Chair - TFS Executive Management Team
 Chair - Learning and Development Policy Group
 Member - State Emergency Management Committee
 Member - State Fire Management Committee

Michael Wayne Brown AFSM, BSocSc, MIFireE, EFO
 Deputy Chief Officer

Director - National Aerial Firefighting Centre
 Chair - Operational Managers Group
 Chair - Volunteer State Consultative Committee
 Chair - Central OH&S Committee
 Chair - Operational Learning & Development Strategy Group
 Member - State Road Rescue Committee
 Member - State Fire Management Committee

Michael William Gallagher B.Bus(Acc) RFD
 Director Corporate Services

Member - Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Council Collaborative Purchasing Group
 Chair - Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council Business Management Group
 Chair - Strategic Information Management Committee

Damien John Killalea AFSM, BBus, GIFireE
 Director Community Fire Safety

User Leader - Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre Program C
 Member - Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council Community Safety Group
 Member - Natural Disaster Mitigation Program (Tas) Assessment Panel

Robyn Elizabeth Pearce Grad Cert App Mgt, MAHRI
 Director Human Services

Member - Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council Volunteer & Employee Management Group
 Chair - Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council Occupational Health and Safety Subgroup
 Member - Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council Employee Management Subgroup

Thomas Anthony (Tony) Davidson AFSM, MIFireE
 Regional Chief South

Member - Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council Urban Strategy Group
 Member - Multi Agency Coordination Group
 Chair - Tasmanian Hazardous Material CBRN Advisory Group
 Chair - Operational Resources and Service Committee
 Member - Southern Region Emergency Management Committee

Andrew Charles Comer Grad. Dip. Exec. Ldr, B.Bus, MIFireE
 Regional Chief North

Member - Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council Environmental Management Working Group
 Chair - Learning and Development Reference Group (Career)
 Member - Northern Region Emergency Management Committee

Daryl (John) Streets AFSM, BM
 Regional Chief North West

Member - Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council False Alarm Committee
 Chair - Alarm Working Group
 Chair - Operational Uniform Committee
 Chair - Volunteer Learning & Development Reference Group

Christopher James Arnol MPM, Grad Cert App Mgt, MIFireE
 Deputy Regional Chief South

Churchill Fellow 2007
 Member - Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council Knowledge Management Group
 Member - Biosecurity Emergency Preparedness Steering Committee
 Member - Interdepartmental Natural Disaster Relief & Mitigation Planning Working Group

Kenneth Burns
 Deputy Regional Chief North

Member - National Aerial Firefighting Centre
 Member - Wildfire Aviation Technical Group
 Member - Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council Volunteer Management Sub Group
 Member - Bushfire CRC Users Group Program A Safe Prevention, Preparation and Suppression

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance Targets	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2009/10 Target
OPERATIONAL					
Number of incidents	11,731		11,985		
Number of fires	4,577		3,990		
Number of preventable house fires per 100,000 households	173 ¹	<185	160	152	145
Number of false alarms (DBA)	3,566	<3,700	3,053	<3,000	<3,000
Percentage of fires of undetermined cause	18%	<15%	22%	<16%	<15%
Percentage of fires in structures confined to room of origin	76%	>80%	74.3%	>79%	>80%
FINANCIAL					
Operating surplus after abnormal items	(\$1.2M)	(\$0.1M)	\$4.4M	(\$0.1M)	(\$0.4M)
Return on assets	(0.9%)	0.4%	5.0%	0.4%	0.0%
Return on equity	(1.6%)	(0.1%)	5.8%	(0.1%)	(0.5%)
Debt to equity	6.4%	6.6%	6.0%	6.4%	6.5%
Current ratio	43.2%	54.7%	72.0%	46.3%	44.5%
HUMAN RESOURCES					
Staff turnover	4.2%	<4.5%	3.4%	<6.0%	<6.0%
Average sick days per employee	4.8	<4.9%	4.7%	4.7%	4.6%
Workers compensation claims	69	<50	74	<50	<50

¹ Household figures from Australian Bureau of Statistics



Responding to and Managing Emergencies

GOAL STATEMENT

To respond to fire and other emergencies in the most efficient and effective manner.

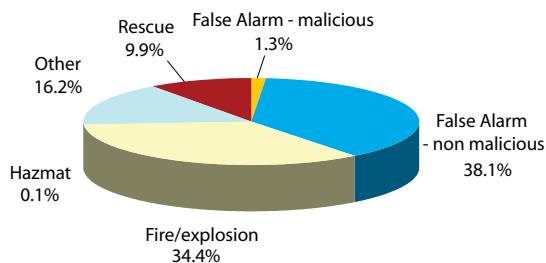
OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure that appropriately resourced brigade(s) arrive at an incident in the shortest possible response time.

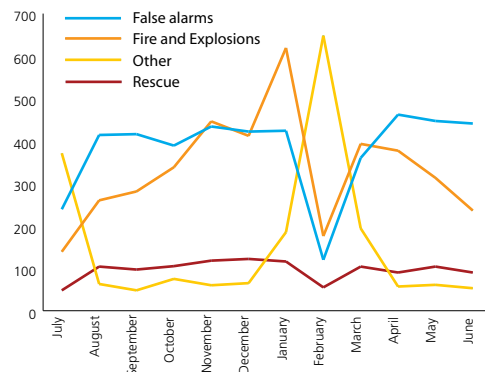
2. Ensure the capacity of brigades to appropriately manage the risks associated with their respective response area.

3. To foster the establishment and maintenance of emergency management arrangements between TFS, other organisations and the community.

Type of incidents attended 2007/08

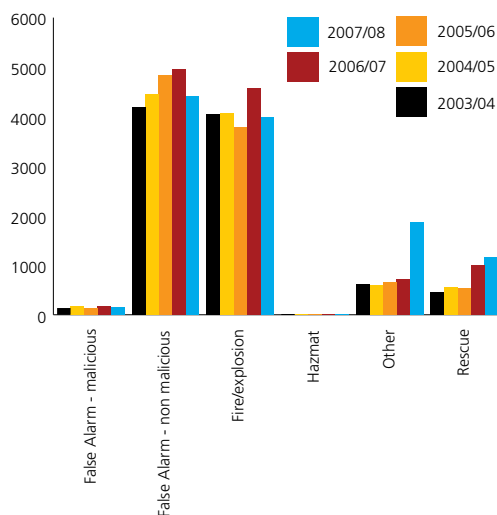


Total incidents by month 2007/08

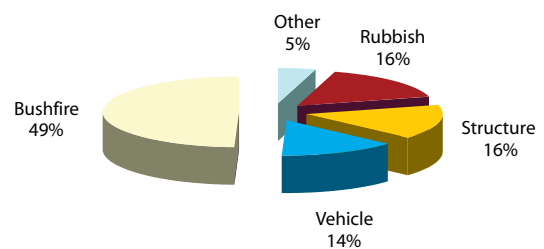


Note: The period of January and February coincides with Industrial Action by UFU and reflects the lack of information in relation to incident type.

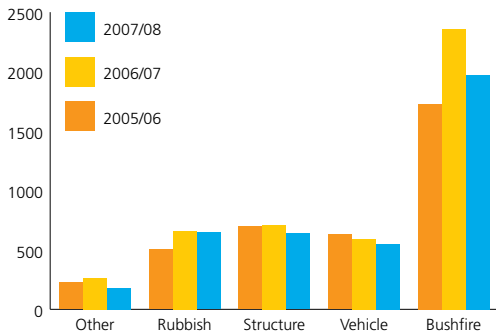
Type of incidents attended 2003/04 - 2007/08



Type of fires attended 2007/08



Type of fires attended 2005/06 -2007/08



OBJECTIVE 1

To ensure that the appropriately resourced brigade(s) arrive at an incident in the shortest possible response time.

RESPONSE TIMES

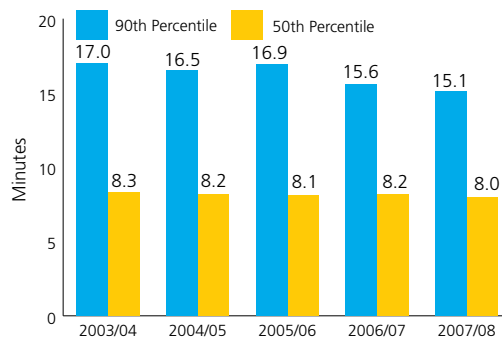
Monitoring of response times and adjustments of response protocols has ensured the best equipped and most readily available brigade is responded. Brigade Chiefs and District Staff continue to refine assignment arrangements on a case by case basis across the state. This consultative process and the cooperation of the brigades involved have led to improved and more efficient mobilisation times.

The well establish strategy of 'hot day response' to vegetation fires and early deployment of helicopters for reconnaissance and water bombing, have been effective in the containment and extinguishment of fires in their initial stages. The establishment of predetermined 'Strike Teams' and Incident management teams (IMT), which are available

to be rapidly mobilised at short notice, on days of high fire danger has improved the capability and effectiveness of initial attack and incident management at critical times.

The fire appliance build program continues to increase the number of fit for purpose fire appliances across the state. These fire appliances are strategically placed to manage the risks within a brigade area. The flow on effect of appliances from the higher use brigades, who receive new appliances, to the less active brigades and the subsequent disposal of the older appliances has improved the reliability and effectiveness of responses in all areas.

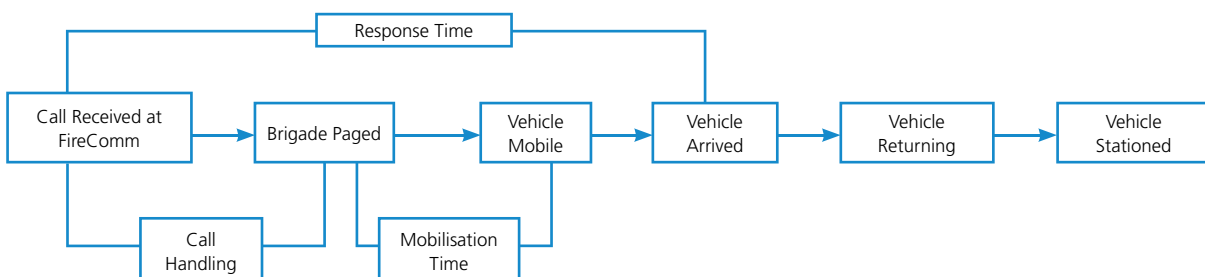
Response times (structural fires) 2003/04 - 2007/08



Note: Indicated response times are inclusive of all call handling, brigade mobilisation and vehicle travel times to all structure fires statewide.

PROPERTY FIRES

The total number of structure fires over the last financial year decreased from 707 in 2006/07 to 639 in 2007/08. Within these the number of residential fires decreased from 431 in 2006/07 to 387 in 2007/08. The total value of property loss from fire in 2007/08 was approximately \$109 million, a marked increase from the previous period.





Responding to and Managing Emergencies

Photographer: Warren Frey

This is largely attributed to the Myer and Bridgewater High School fires which had a combined damage bill of more than \$80 million.

The Myer Liverpool Street store fire, the most significant in the Hobart CBD in recent history, occurred on 22 September. The fire which totally destroyed the four storey Myer Liverpool Street building was confined within the boundary of the building but many adjacent buildings suffered smoke and water damage. The total cost of the fire, in terms of property damage and loss of trade, may be in excess of \$100 million.

The entire resources of the Hobart Fire Brigade were deployed to the fire and off duty personnel were recalled to assist in the firefighting effort. A number of volunteer brigades were also responded to the fire.

The fire, which was visible for many kilometres from Hobart, was the subject of significant media interest. An IMT was established after the initial response phase of the fire and all emergency services, Hobart City Council and Aurora were involved for an extended period.

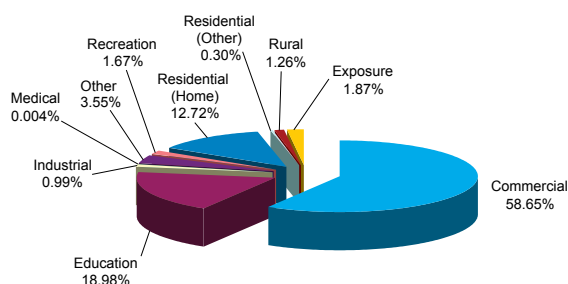
The fire resulted in major disruption to trading in the Hobart CBD. Liverpool Street was closed for three days and adjoining business in the area of the Cat and Fiddle Arcade were without power.

The investigation into the cause of the fire was complicated due to the instability of the perimeter walls, including the decorative front façade, and the presence of materials containing asbestos. The entire building was progressively demolished in consultation with the Regional Fire Investigator, engineers and the construction company responsible for the demolition. The cause of the fire is still under investigation and a report is currently being finalised for the Coroner.

While there was only one reported injury during the fire a member of the Hobart fire Brigade was awarded the Chief

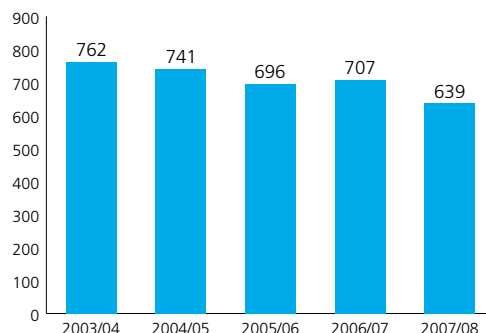
Officers commendation for "Exceptional Performance" for rescuing two of his colleagues who had become disorientated in smoke during the early stages of the fire.

Dollar loss by property type 2007/08



Note: The structure property loss due to bushfires is not captured through the current data analysis process.

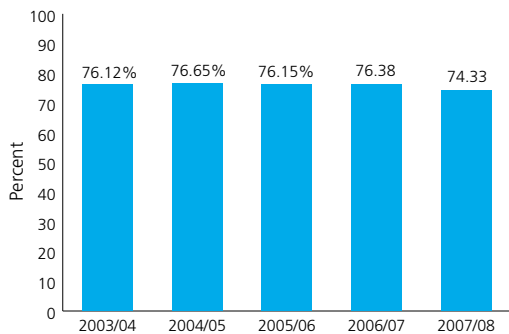
Total structure fires 2003/04 - 2007/08



EXTENT OF DAMAGE

Confining a fire in a building to the room of its origin is a key objective for responding brigades. The proportion of all structure fires that are confined to the room of origin provides a measure of brigade effectiveness. Fire spread before brigade intervention is influenced by many factors including burning time before detection and response/travel time to the fire. Early detection by smoke alarms greatly assists in rapid brigade intervention as well as their primary role of providing early warning to residents.

**Structure fires confined to the room of origin
2003/04 - 2007/08**

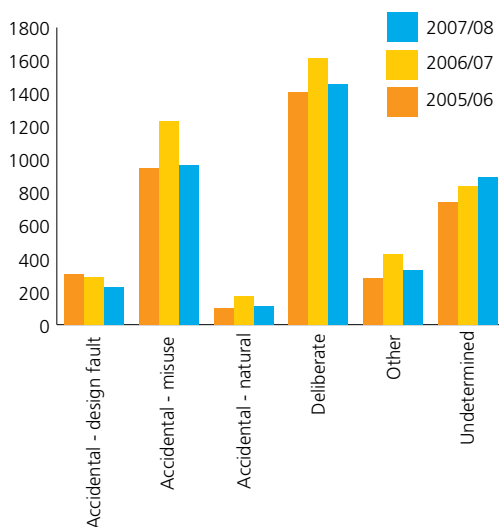


FIRE CAUSE

TFS aims to determine the cause of every fire. Where possible a cause is established by the attending brigade. Where a cause is not able to be determined easily it is usually passed to one of the two TFS full-time Fire Investigation Officers. Fires determined to be of a deliberate nature are passed to Tasmania Police (TasPol) to identify those responsible. In such cases there is close collaboration between TFS and TasPol. The continued increase in the number of investigations where the cause has been determined, up 1 percent on the last reporting period, has been offset by an increase in the number of fires for which the cause was not determined. This may be attributed to the lack of information provided in fire reports during industrial action.

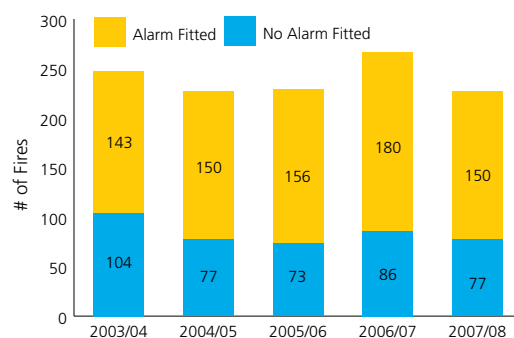
TFS has established an Alarms Working Group to develop strategies to try to reduce false alarms. The strategies implemented by the committee, including contacting the top 25 multiple false alarm premises on a personal basis,

Cause of fires attended 2005/06 - 2007/08

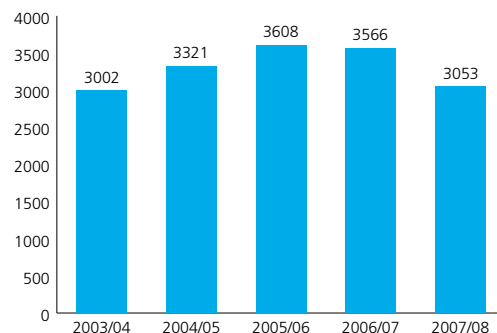


have proved successful. This is reflected in the reduction in the number of false alarms during the reporting period. TFS is also represented on the Australian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC) False Alarm Committee which is proactive in taking a national approach to reduce false alarm calls.

**Domestic property fires - smoke alarm installed
2003/04 - 2007/08**



False alarms (direct brigade alarms) 2003/04 - 2007/08



FIRECOMM

FireComm receives emergency calls and dispatches brigades and resources to emergency incidents and then monitors and records incident information until the incident concludes. FireComm also receives and records all bushfires on land managed by Forestry Tasmania (FT) and Parks & Wildlife Service (PWS) as well as managing the dispatch of State Emergency Service (SES) units to Road Accident Rescue (RAR) and Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) incidents.

A total of 12,075 emergency incidents were processed by FireComm in the 2007/08 reporting period. The 11,985 incidents managed and resourced by TFS was slightly up on 2006/07. The 74 bushfire incidents that were the responsibility of FT and PWS in 2007/08 were down on the same period in 2006/07.

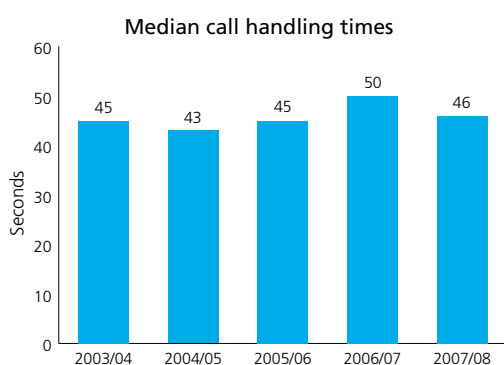


Responding to and Managing Emergencies

Photo courtesy of the Advocate

TFS continues to upgrade software for the computer aided dispatch system in FireComm. New technologies are explored to assist with the rapid location of fires and the dispatch of the appropriate brigades. Improvements provide efficiencies in call handling, dispatch, incident resourcing and incident management.

The TFS aims to handle individual calls in less than 105 seconds. The median call handling time for the reporting period was 46 seconds, which is down on the time for the corresponding period in 2006/07. The four second decrease in call handling time for 2007/08 reflects a return to the five year average.



OBJECTIVE 2

Ensure the capacity of brigades to appropriately manage the risks associated with their respective response area.

The focus on officer training and development continues to improve the capacity of brigades to manage and develop their members. Firefighters trained and skilled in the appropriate areas are able to respond to incidents in a safe and effective manner. Appliances and equipment are matched to the risks likely to be encountered in brigade response areas.

TFS and land management agencies are utilising the Bushfire Mitigation Program funding for the establishment and

maintenance of fire trails for access for both firefighting and fuel management. Brigades are encouraged to undertake pre-incident planning to identify risks within their area and to prepare plans to manage those risks.

OBJECTIVE 3

To foster the establishment and maintenance of emergency management arrangements between TFS, other organisations and the community.

The long-standing inter-agency cooperation between TFS, PWS and FT has been enhanced through collaborative training and joint fuel reduction programs.

Ongoing joint operations with counter terrorism and Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear (CBRN) incidents as well as the review of the State Hazardous Materials Management Plan, have refined interoperability arrangements with other agencies such as TasPol, Tasmania Ambulance Service (TAS), SES, Workplace Standards Tasmania (WST) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The amalgamation of the Tasmanian Hazardous Materials Management Committee and the Tasmanian CBRN Working Group, both chaired by TFS, to form the Tasmanian Hazardous Materials and CBRN Advisory Group is a further example of the progress for streamlining and enhancing interoperability in Tasmania.

RAR is now a significant emergency response activity undertaken in the major metropolitan areas and at Triabunna on the East Coast. Collaborative RAR arrangements with SES, TasPol and TAS through the State Road Rescue Committee (SRRC) established by the State Government continue to monitor RAR activities across the state.

Multi-agency collaboration has been enhanced through counter-terrorism training and joint exercises. The Myer Fire presented an excellent opportunity to put into practice

many of the interoperability practices which have been the subject of workshops and working groups. The staging of the Incident Control Centre, utilising the "Western Shelter Tent" in the Elizabeth Street Mall was highly successful and well received by all participating emergency services and supporting agencies and authorities.

BUSHFIRE SEASON

1. SEASONAL OVERVIEW

The 2007/08 fire weather season was similar in many ways to the 2006/07 season, which was the most severe in the last fifteen years and arguably one of the worst on record. Fire Danger Index's (FDI) showed a greater percentage of 'Very High' or 'Extreme' ratings than in most previous years. There were 42 days on which Fire Weather Warnings were required, the second highest number since district based verification was introduced in 2002/03, and five days of Total Fire Ban were declared.

Following an exceptionally dry year across the whole of Tasmania in 2006, with some sites reporting their driest year for 100 years and many sites along the north coast and in the southeast having their driest year on record, the pattern of dry months continued through much of summer, autumn and winter of 2007. By the end of August, most of the state had a twelve month rainfall deficit of 100-200 mm, rising to 200-400 mm about much of the north.

Most of western Tasmania recorded average rainfall over spring, but it remained dry over the eastern half of the state with some sites recording their lowest spring total for the last 26 years, and some their lowest on record. Maximum temperatures over spring were about a degree above average in most areas and even higher through the Midlands and near the Derwent Valley.

Fire Weather Warnings were issued on seven days in spring, with two days in November featuring in the worst fire weather days of the season. Significant fires occurred in the southwest around Packers Spur (started by lightning), Dark Road (near Luncheon Hill), Tunbridge Tiers, at Strahan and on the Jane River near Frenchman's Cap.

A warm period over December and January was offset a little by an extended period of cooler weather in February. Significant fires occurred over summer near Geeveston, Rocherlea, Acton, Conningham, Rosebery, Blue Hill near

Bothwell, Strahan, Goshen, Pipers Brook/Weymouth and around the Tarraleah/Lake Catagunya area.

An extended period of warm weather in March saw temperatures at a number of sites reach the mid thirties on four days, and despite some cooler days, most parts of the state were about two degrees above average. Little rain fell during the warm spell, and these conditions saw eight days in March requiring Fire Weather Warnings. In fact four of the ten worst fire weather days of the season occurred in March, including the worst day (14 March) when 32 stations recorded Very High or Extreme Fire Dangers, and Bushy Park and Hobart Airport FDI exceeded 100.

April was another drier than average month for much of the state, particularly the East Coast, however a return to temperatures close to average saw only one day requiring a Fire Weather Warning, due to very windy conditions produced by an intense low. Significant fires occurred in spring at Glenmark Road/Alma Tier, Savage River and Montumana.



Photo courtesy of the Mercury

Responding to and Managing Emergencies

Photographer: Ken Burns

The medium water bombing helicopter, partially funded by the Federal Government through the National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC), was contracted again and commenced on the first week of December for a period of twelve weeks based in Hobart. A contract standby helicopter was also engaged in the north of the state for the first time. An additional medium helicopter was contracted from Canberra through the NAFC Supplementary Shared Resources (SSR) program which was also based in Launceston for a two week period.

The trial of a multi agency 'Air Desk' for the resourcing and allocation of helicopters was conducted over the peak fire season period. TFS, PWS and FT met with helicopter companies to review the use of aircraft and the use of new procedures during the fire season. It was agreed to continue the trial on a tri-agency roster.

TFS continues to foster and participate in the working group with FT and PWS to review the efficiency and effectiveness of current practices with helicopter use in Tasmania.

The cooperative arrangements between FT, PWS and TFS for bushfire management have once again proven to be an effective strategy in ensuring the best possible protection for the Tasmanian community. The mutual agreements established with private forest companies to further enhance collaborative arrangements in managing bushfires have been reviewed and amended following the fire season. Continued cooperation and support from TasPol, SES and TAS has assisted TFS in meeting the needs of the community during bushfires. The ongoing practice of public meetings and forums to share information about fires and how they are being managed is being well received.

The development of the TFS website is a vital medium in providing up-to-date information on the fire situation to land managers, the media and the general public. Ongoing refinements to the 'Bushfire' area of the site have resulted in greater ease of use as well as providing additional information. Further upgrades are planned prior to the next bushfire season.

Fuel management is a fundamental responsibility of all land owners/managers, and fuel reduction burning, particularly in dry forest country, is an important component of responsible land management. Over the past twelve months a number of burns were conducted by FT, PWS and TFS as part of the cooperative broad area fuel reduction burning program on both public and private land through the State Government funded fuel reduction burning program. PWS has also employed additional staff in Fire Management Planning and Operations to support the program. The Federal Government continues its support for the Bushfire Mitigation Program with \$20 million over three years. This program supports fire trail development and maintenance and bushfire mitigation strategies on a dollar-for-dollar basis with state and local government.

Reference: Fire Season Report 2007/08 Tasmania Regional Office, Bureau of Meteorology.



Photo courtesy of the Examiner

Number of fire permits issued

Region	Number of fire permits issued				
	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
North West	1003	990	454	704	512
Northern	786	1211	415	700	580
Southern	1397	1464	558	1139	722
Total for state	3186	3665	1427	2543	1814

Major fires for TFS and land management agencies occurred at:

NAME	LOCATION	AREA BURNT (hectares)	START DATE	DURATION
Emita		150	31/08/2007	7 days (07/09/2007)
Pioneer		135	24/10/2007	3 days (27/10/2007)
Middlesex Plains	Cradle Mountain	235	09/11/2007	12 days (21/11/2007)
Tunbridge		566	15/11/2007	29 days (14/12/2007)
Packers Spur	Maydena	4,531	17/11/2007	150 days (15/04/2008)
Glendevie		150	06/01/2008	32 days (07/02/2008)
Blue Hill	North of Bothwell	363	11/01/2008	26 days (06/02/2008)
Rocherlea		361	11/01/2008	20 days (31/01/2008)
Snug		843	11/01/2008	27 days (07/02/2008)
Acton Park		230	11/01/2008	16 days (27/01/2008)
Goshen		1,115	13/01/2008	8 days (21/01/2008)
Bridport		337	13/01/2008	9 days (22/01/2008)
Bellingham		2,594	16/01/2008	21 days (06/02/2008)
Longford		300	27/01/2008	3 days (30/01/2008)
Wayatinah		687	27/01/2008	38 days (05/03/2008)
Pipers River		190	27/02/2008	13 days (11/03/2008)
Heemskirk		18,477	16/03/2008	113 days (07/07/2008)
Montumana		338	18/03/2008	36 days (23/04/2008)



Developing A Fire Safe Community

Photo courtesy of the Mercury

GOAL STATEMENT

To have the Tasmanian community manage fire risks and respond safely to fire.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assist the community minimise fire risks and act safely when fire occurs in the home and in the workplace.

2. To assist the community minimise bushfire risks and act safely when bushfires occur.

3. To have the business community take responsibility for its fire safety obligations.

4. To participate in the development of national strategies to improve community safety.

General

TFS delivers a broad range of programs to improve the safety of people in the community, with a focus on those most at risk from fire. These programs aim to prevent fires and minimise the impact of any fires that occur. The Community Fire Safety Division focuses on delivering programs that improve fire safety in the home and in places where people reside temporarily, in healthcare facilities and schools, and in workplaces. The Division, in partnership with the State Operations Unit also delivers programs to address bushfire risks.

OBJECTIVE 1

To assist the community minimise fire risks and act safely when fire occurs in the home and in the workplace.

IMPROVING FIRE SAFETY IN OUR HOMES

There are some groups in the community that have a higher risk of experiencing a fire and suffering injury from fire in the home. These include children, elderly people, people with disabilities and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. In 2007/08 to minimise the social impact of fire, TFS focused its community education strategies on these groups.

For children

The School Fire Education Program reached 18,665 primary school children in 92 schools in 2007/08. Children learned about fire safety in and around the home, prepared a home evacuation plan and learned what to do if a fire occurs.

The Juvenile Fire Lighter Intervention Program (JFLIP) provides a behaviour change program for young children who engage in unsafe fire-lighting behaviour. During 2007/08, 27 cases were registered. Sixteen smoke alarms were installed in the homes of families participating in JFLIP.

JFLIP practitioners have also received training to participate in diversionary processes for young people who have committed fire-related offences. In 2007/08, practitioners represented the TFS at 13 community conferences and formal cautions.

For elderly people and people with disabilities

Project Wake Up! aims to improve fire safety for people with disabilities and elderly people living independently in the community. The program offers free home fire safety checks, and in the homes of many participants, smoke alarms and batteries are installed free of charge.

In 2007/08, 179 community organisations working in the aged and disability care field referred clients to the program. Career and volunteer brigades conducted the home fire safety checks and this year 114 brigades visited 594 households. This brings the total number of households participating in the program since its inception in 1999 to 3,096. During 2007/08, 440 smoke alarms were installed, and 396 batteries were replaced.

Older people living independently in the community (often supported by community and health services) are a growing risk group for home fires and fire-related morbidity and mortality. Tasmania's ageing population, combined with deinstitutionalisation, shorter hospital stays and increased demand for the provision of care to people in their own homes makes this issue of particular importance to TFS. A review of Project Wake Up! commenced in 2007/08. All career firefighters statewide were consulted regarding the program, and feedback from volunteers was sought at TFS's three regional conferences. Data collection will continue in 2007/08, including consultation with community care providers.

Reaching the families of young children

The promotion of home fire safety messages has continued in the winters of 2007 and 2008. The 2008 campaign was launched in May, with a collaborative project with Kidsafe Tasmania targeting new parents. This strategy aims to increase their awareness of fire safety issues in the home and encourage them to take an active role in the development of awareness and fire-safe behaviour in their children.

This includes the distribution of home fire safety packs to all new parents of babies born this winter. Other elements of the campaign include television, radio and print advertisements.

Reaching out to new communities in Tasmania

In 2007/08, firefighters delivered home fire safety information sessions to newly resettled individuals and communities in the north of the State. This was in partnership with:

- TAFE Tasmania Languages North & North West;
- The Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS); and
- The Bi-Cultural Community Health Program (BCHP), under the auspices of the Australian Red Cross.



Photo courtesy of the Examiner



Developing A Fire Safe Community

This was part of a project called *Getting to Know Good Health*, which aims to increase the health literacy of newly resettled individuals and communities. TFS was invited to be involved because the issue of home fire safety is an important health and safety concern for recently arrived communities. Many of these communities have experienced considerable hardship and trauma before coming to Australia, often living in very basic conditions in refugee camps for extended periods. Cooking, heating and housing arrangements in Australia are often very different to their previous experiences, and this places them at increased risk of home fires.

The students' previous experiences of the police and military have often left them with a well-founded fear of people in uniform when they arrive in Australia. It is very important for their health and safety that these communities get to know TFS and other uniformed personnel as service providers who are there to assist them. Sessions were evaluated by the project manager from DHHS and judged to be a great success. Students have retained and applied their new fire safety knowledge and they now see firefighters as trusted helpers.

Other home fire safety activities

TasFire Equipment continues to offer smoke alarms, fire extinguishers and fire blankets for sale to the community through outlets in Hobart, Launceston, Burnie and Devonport. An estimated 84% of Tasmanian homes have a working smoke alarm.

TFS and Duracell again teamed up to run a campaign to urge all Tasmanians to *Change Your Clock, Change Your Smoke Alarm Battery* on Sunday 6 April 2008. This campaign links the practice of changing your clock at the end of daylight savings with replacing the batteries in smoke alarms to help keep them in working order.

Numerous fire safety information sessions were conducted throughout the State by TFS personnel, engaging more

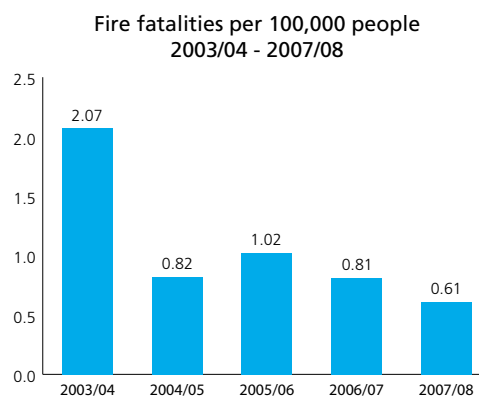
than 1,000 community members. Participating community groups included those representing youth, the elderly and people with disabilities. Additional home fire safety information is communicated through brochures distributed widely throughout the community, as well as on the TFS website. TFS also maintains a free-call service for general fire safety enquiries.

Two mobile community education display trailers promoting fire safety were used extensively by fire brigades in their local communities during 2007/08.

Fatalities as a result of fire

Fire fatalities from accidental causes (fire-related suicides and homicides are excluded) in Tasmania over the last ten years have varied from a high of twelve in 1998/99 to a low of two in 2001/02 and in 2006/07. Three fire-related deaths from accidental causes occurred in 2007/08.

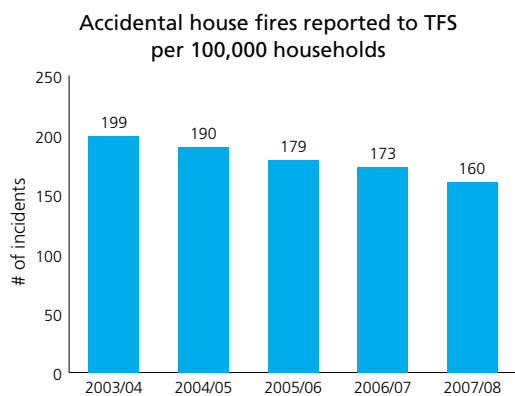
The chart below shows the fire fatalities per 100,000 Tasmanians. This provides a statistic that can be compared with other jurisdictions. The Tasmanian fire death rate in 2007/08 was 0.61 people per 100,000 people in the population, comparable to the Australian rate of 0.65. Unlike the Australian rate, there is great variability in the Tasmanian rate due to our relatively small population.



The house fire rate

The accidental house fire rate (arson-related fires are excluded) in Tasmania has declined steadily for more than a decade, dropping by some 40% in the last ten years. The chart below shows the rate of accidental house fires attended by TFS brigades per 100,000 households over the last five years, based on Census data for Tasmanian households.

While the house fire rate has trended downwards over the period, the fire fatality rate has remained essentially unchanged.



IMPROVING FIRE SAFETY IN OUR WORKPLACES

Education

A revised TFS *Guide to the Selection and Location of Portable Fire Extinguishers and Fire Blankets* was produced during the year for fire protection practitioners and others installing this equipment. The guide, originally developed to help simplify and interpret *Australian Standards (AS) 2444 and AS 1851.1 - 1995*, has been amended to include the latest requirements of *AS 1851.15 - 2005*.

Industry training

TFS's TasFire Training unit delivers training in 12 nationally accredited units of competency to improve safety in workplaces across Tasmania. Course participants are trained in the prevention and management of fires and other workplace emergencies. OH&S related training includes safe working in confined spaces and the use of breathing apparatus. TasFire Training also conducts a specialised fire investigation course which attracts participants from throughout Australasia.

The completion of a new live-fire training house in August 2007 has provided improved training facilities at the Cambridge training complex. This facility is used to demonstrate fire and smoke travel and is used to train participants in firefighting and search and rescue inside a smoke-filled building.

TasFire Training launched its new website in January 2008. This provides client access to information regarding services offered as well as an online booking system for training courses.

During 2007/08, a total of 835 courses were conducted for 8,519 employees from workplaces across Tasmania. Increasing levels of fire safety awareness and emergency response skills in the workplace means that the households of these employees are also becoming increasingly safe.

Fire equipment maintenance

TFS's TasFire Equipment unit employs 23 staff who service fire protection equipment in approximately 7,400 workplaces across Tasmania. These Fire Equipment Officers are trained to inspect, install and maintain a broad range of equipment including fire hoses and reels, fire blankets, fire hydrants, fire extinguishers, fire and smoke doors and smoke alarms, and sell these and many other items. The unit operates workshops in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie where extinguishers are pressure-tested and recharged, hose is coupled and repaired and other maintenance is performed. TasFire Equipment's workshop in the north-west was relocated from Devonport to the Three Mile Line complex in Burnie during the year to allow for more efficient and central operation.

During 2007/08 TasFire Equipment serviced some 13,500 sites across the State including sites on King and Flinders Islands. Demand for TasFire Equipment services is increasing as business owners become more aware of their obligations under the *Building Regulations 2004* to ensure their fire protection equipment is maintained.

OBJECTIVE 2

To assist the community minimise bushfire risks and act safely when bushfires occur.

TFS has a statutory responsibility to manage bushfire risks in Tasmania, and has developed and implemented an effective



Developing A Fire Safe Community

Photo courtesy of the Mercury

range of strategies for this purpose over many years. A number of measures have been undertaken during 2007/08 to minimise the impact of bushfires on the community:

Taking the message to those at risk: 'Bushfire: prepare to survive'.

The three year bushfire safety campaign focussing on the Bushfire: prepare to survive DVD continued in 2007/08. The DVD provides those at risk from bushfire with information about how to prepare for and respond to bushfires that threaten their homes. Since the launch of the DVD in November 2006, over 50,000 copies of the DVD have been direct-mailed to households in bushfire-prone areas, mailed out on request or distributed by brigades.

The 2007/08 campaign also included television, radio and print advertising. In November 2007 a bushfire preparation checklist with a magnet on the back was mailed to 50,000 households in bushfire-prone rural areas and on the rural-urban interface. This checklist acted as a prompt for householders to ensure that their properties were properly prepared and directed them to the DVD and other resources for assistance.

The effectiveness of the 2007/08 campaign was independently evaluated, and found to be very successful. For the second year of the DVD campaign, the researchers concluded that "...not only has a very high proportion of the target group retained the DVD but that the percentage that have watched and used the DVD has remained high." The research also found that households which made use of the checklist said that it was very useful either in the case of reinforcing what they already knew (usually those with the DVD) or in providing them with information they were not aware of (often those who had not received the DVD).

Keeping the community informed during bushfires

During the 2006/07 bushfires, TFS trialled a new approach to engaging and informing at-risk communities about local bushfires. TFS has always had appropriate fire officers provide comment to the media during bushfire incidents. In 2007/08 this role was supplemented by nominated media and community liaison officers appointed to key fires. At large bushfires burning on the east coast, TFS was assisted by TasPol's professional media liaison officer.

Effective liaison with both major media outlets and local media played an important role in ensuring that communities received accurate and timely information about the bushfire threat and what they could do to prepare.

During major bushfires, community meetings were conducted by TFS and other agencies involved in managing the fires. These meetings were attended by hundreds of community members, and provided an opportunity to obtain up-to-date information about current and predicted fire behaviour, weather, areas burnt and under threat, and preparations householders could make. Copies of the bushfire DVD and other information resources were distributed at these meetings.

TFS has continued to enhance information on its website, which provides accurate and timely information to the community and the media on fire activity across the State. The website has also been a valuable tool to provide information to people about how to prepare for and defend their homes against bushfires.

Analysis of houses burnt during the St Marys/Scamander fire along with continuing Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre (BCRC) research supports the TFS strategy of encouraging householders to 'prepare, stay and defend or leave early' when fires threaten.

OBJECTIVE 3

To have the business community take responsibility for its fire safety obligations.

Focus on high life-risk buildings

The primary focus this year was to build on previous work done to improve fire safety in high life-risk occupancies. With the majority of hotels with accommodation identified and inspected for fire safety compliance the spotlight shifted to budget accommodation buildings and buildings that house people with disabilities.

Inspections to measure the degree to which fire safety features and measures installed in buildings comply with the requirements of the *General Fire Regulations 2000* are now underway in those buildings which are known to the TFS. Work is also being done to identify the remaining buildings used for these purposes.

The most common problem found during inspections continues to be the lack of adequate evacuation plans, but the frequency in these cases continues to decline. This can be attributed to the earlier efforts to advise building owners, building surveyors and other stakeholders about the need for adequate emergency procedures.

The approval of evacuation procedures for all schools in Tasmania is now complete. However, efforts to ensure these plans are maintained in the interests of public safety will continue.

Information about the fire safety obligations of building owners and occupiers arising from the *General Fire Regulations 2000* continues to be distributed through TFS offices, in correspondence and on the TFS website.

Maintenance of fire protection equipment

TFS audits a wide range of buildings to ensure owners and occupiers maintain the fire protection equipment installed in their buildings to a standard equivalent to or greater than that which the manufacturer prescribes. These audits also enable the TFS to assess the performance of service providers undertaking fire protection equipment maintenance.

While many problems are found during audits, most are minor in nature and are addressed through consultation with the owner or occupier.

OBJECTIVE 4

To participate in the development of national strategies to improve community safety.

Community Fire Safety Division staff participate in a number of national forums to influence the development of legislation, codes, standards and strategies impacting on community safety.

Staff represent TFS on AFAC committees influencing fire safety in both the built environment and in the bush.

Staff represent AFAC on Australian Standards committees addressing the design, installation, commissioning, testing and maintenance of fire detection and alarm systems and emergency communications systems. Staff also represent AFAC on joint working parties with a number of research institutions to further develop knowledge and inform decision-making about future directions for fire safety in the built environment.

Research to address gaps in our understanding of bushfire risk and people's response to it is addressed largely through TFS participation in the BCRC's research program C: Community Self-Sufficiency for Fire Safety. In his role as national user-leader for Program C, TFS's Director Community Fire Safety helps coordinate user-researcher networks across Australia to maximise research outputs and adoption. These outputs inform fire agency efforts to engage with people in bushfire-prone areas and have them take responsibility for managing their own bushfire risk.

PLANNED OUTCOMES / ACHIEVEMENTS 2008/09

- Increase vulnerable people's participation in relevant fire safety programs
 - Increase brigades' participation in the delivery of selected fire safety programs
 - Improve the capacity of people to prepare for and respond safely to house-fires, bushfires and workplace emergencies
 - Improve fire safety features and measures in housing provided for people with disabilities
 - Influence the development of national positions, codes and standards impacting on fire safety.
-



Supporting Our People

GOAL STATEMENT

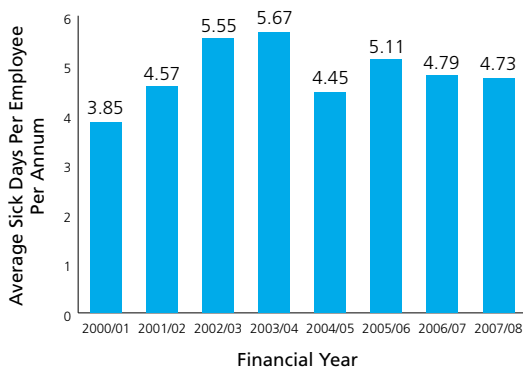
To support our people in a fair, productive and safe work environment.

OBJECTIVES

1. To attract the right people.
2. To have systems and strategies that enable our people to be productive in the workplace.
3. To have a working environment that supports our people and the delivery of our services.
4. To participate in the development of national strategies to improve human resource management in the fire industry.

Photo courtesy of the Mercury

Average sick days per employee



OBJECTIVE 1

To attract the right people.

RECRUITING AND RETAINING OUR PEOPLE

The volunteer workforce in TFS is ageing in line with the general Tasmanian population. One strategy taken by TFS to minimise the impact of the ageing workforce has been the establishment of a consistent framework and program to help volunteer brigades manage juniors and cadets. Implementation of the new program, developed with funding from the Commonwealth Government's National Emergency Volunteers Support Fund, commenced in

2007/08. The program will ensure that brigades are well equipped to provide juniors and cadets with a fun, safe environment that develops not only firefighting skills, but also personal and team capabilities.

TFS also provided volunteer brigades with new tools to assist with the recruitment of local volunteer members. New banners, posters, brochures and contact cards have been disseminated to regions for brigade use. In 2008/09, a new toolkit will also be given to brigades to help with the management of the recruitment process. This kit and the materials have also been developed with funding from the Commonwealth Government's National Emergency Volunteers Support Fund.

OBJECTIVE 2

To have systems and strategies that enable our people to be productive in the workplace.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Learning and Development Strategic Direction

The implementation of the new learning and development direction is shaping the way in which TFS manages the achievement of learning and development outcomes.

Learning and development policy and strategy groups are now operating and have contributed to the achievement of TFS corporate goals through effective planning of learning and development.

A major project was instigated to devolve responsibility for learning and development to the regions with Regional Chiefs becoming accountable for the management of training in their areas, the implementation of learning and development agreed strategic plans, and the achievement of planned corporate outcomes. Key learning and development processes have been mapped, reviewed, simplified and improved in consultation with stakeholders. Training in new and revised processes was conducted with regional administration staff and learning and development officers. Data entry of volunteer training and assessment is now occurring in the regions with the full migration of all data entry and information management scheduled to be completed in the next financial year.

District Officers for Learning and Development, reporting to their respective Regional Chiefs, have been assigned to each region with a responsibility for local implementation of both career and volunteer operational learning and development. This has resulted in a more strategic overview of operational learning for TFS and has increased efficiencies in the usage of resources.

New user reference groups for volunteer firefighters, career firefighters and divisional staff have been established. It is expected that through these groups, feedback to and from learning and assessment participants will increase and will be able to be used to continuously improve learning and development for our people.

Learning from Our Experiences

In line with *Lessons Learnt: A Review of the 2006/07 Bushfire Season* recommendations, there was an increased emphasis on joint interagency training initiatives this year which included Sector Commander training and the provision of training for non-operational members. Joint interagency training over the past year has improved relationships and will continue to contribute to improved emergency management at incidents.

Non-operational members have been trained in fireground safety and bushfire awareness, internet updating and telephone procedures to provide more accurate and

timely information to the public and media, and Incident Management Team support roles.

Personal Development Planning

A key achievement this year was the broader implementation of Personal Development Plans (PDPs) as part of the Workplace Feedback System that have agreed goals, linked to TFS needs, with appropriate resourcing and learning support. Broad implementation of PDPs across the TFS will ensure the efficient rollout of common learning needs and assist in the achievement of learning and development business plans.

Leadership

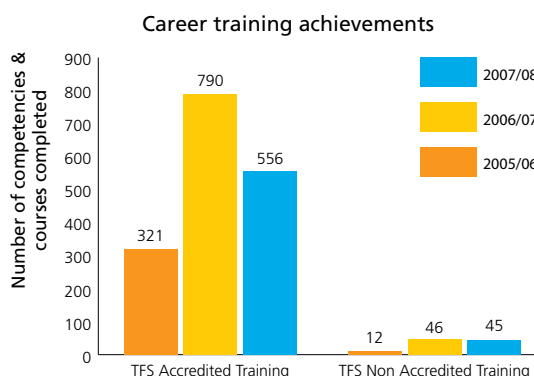
TFS career and volunteer members again participated in leadership programs developed by AFAC in partnership with the Australian Institute of Police Management. Career members attended a variety of short leadership courses and conferences, while both career and volunteer members attained nationally accredited leadership competencies.

Training Resources

The development of the Cambridge complex continued with the upgrading of training resources in the backyard including a new four wheel driving training track, new technical rescue props, and the Cambridge burn house opening in August 2007. A new training facility was opened at Three Mile Line in Burnie. At the Youngtown facility in the North, the structural training prop has been upgraded and new facilities for compartment fire behaviour training are being developed.

Statistics

Career Learning and Development

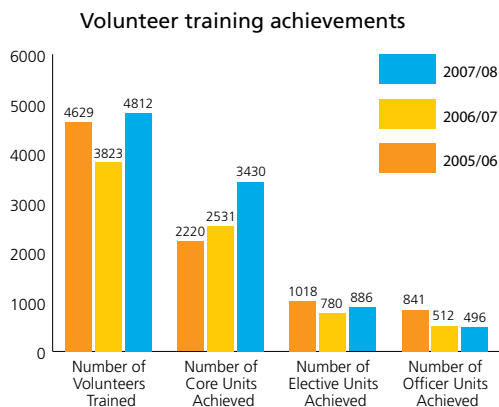




Supporting Our People

Photo courtesy of the Examiner

Volunteer Learning and Development



WORKPLACE FEEDBACK AND RECOGNITION

Workplace Feedback Systems

The Workplace Feedback System aims to encourage open and skilful communication about issues and performance, and to enable planned development for all members.

TFS has been developing its workplace feedback system for a number of years, which has included the running of a 12 month trial of the proposed system. In 2007/08 a training course, materials, DVD and a pool of internal trainer/coaches were created to implement the system. At 30 June 2008, approximately 50% of career members had been trained in the use of the system. Training was interrupted by industrial action relating to wages negotiations. Some groups have commenced using the system. Trainers will provide ongoing coaching and support in each workplace. Implementation will be completed in 2008/09.

The Workplace Feedback System is the first of its kind in Australasian fire agencies. A presentation at the 2007 AFAC/BCRC conference in Hobart generated a large amount of interest from other agencies.

OBJECTIVE 3

To have a working environment that supports our people and the delivery of our services.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

A twofold approach has been taken to improving safety in the TFS in 2007/08. Firstly, significant time and resources have been applied to bedding down existing procedures whilst the ongoing research into new or emerging issues and the implementation of strategies to minimise risks have further assisted in making TFS a safer place. Some of the initiatives undertaken in this period include:

- Implementation of divisional and regional reporting. On a quarterly basis TFS now receives a range of safety statistics from organisational work areas. In time the statistics will assist with the identification of trends ensuring TFS will be able to introduce corrective actions with greater confidence that risks will be minimised.
- Development of a procedure to ensure members' next of kin are notified in an appropriate manner in the unfortunate situation that one of our members has a serious injury or fatality.
- Ongoing education through the 'Safety Week' program in 2007. This year topics ranged from mental health, and safe driving lessons to nutrition and fitness seminars.
- Development of an Infectious Diseases procedure. This procedure provides information for all members on the management of exposures to infectious diseases including the TFS inoculation program for hepatitis and influenza.

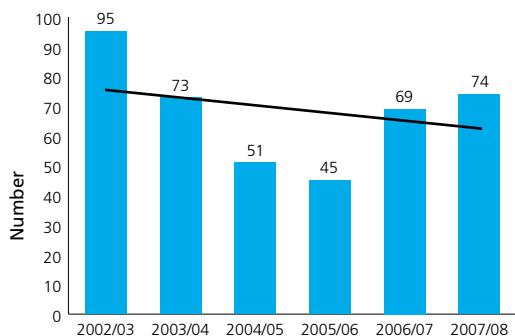
Statistics

Workers Compensation

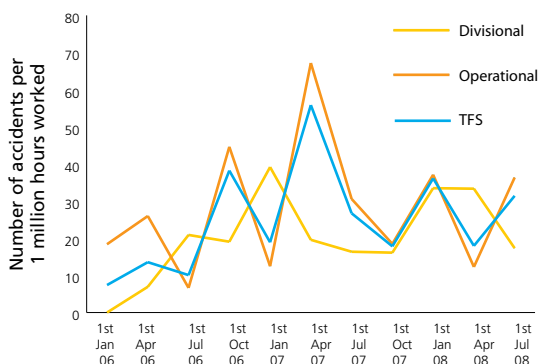
In 2007/08, 74 TFS members were injured and needed some form of medical attention. Although it is disappointing to see any member injured, statistics show that the trend line

has continued to decline gradually over the past 6 years. This year the vast majority of the injuries were of a minor nature with only a small number requiring ongoing treatment.

Workers compensation claims 2002/03 - 2007/08



Lost time injury frequency rate



MANAGING DIVERSITY

The Chief Officer has approved the TFS Workplace Diversity Plan which was developed in accordance with *Commissioner's Direction 3; Managing Diversity*. This plan incorporates many of the diversity activities already encompassed in the SFC Corporate Plan.

In a joint program with the United Firefighters Union, a campaign against bullying and harassment amongst career members was commenced. The campaign included a survey of career members undertaken by University of Tasmania, as well as the distribution of posters and leaflets. Training of career members in managing diversity has also been undertaken in 2007/08 with over 70% of career members having completed the training.

In November 2007, Victoria hosted the inaugural national Diversity in Emergency Services Conference. Eight members of TFS attended the conference and gained a greater insight into strategies for managing diversity from a wide range of

speakers from the United States of America, England and Australia.

During 2007/08, two claims for harassment or discrimination were lodged with the Office of the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner. One claim has been dismissed, however one is still pending resolution by the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal. A further three complaints were made to the Office of the Ombudsman. One complaint was dismissed. The remaining two are being reviewed by the Ombudsman.

OBJECTIVE 4

To participate in the development of national strategies to improve human resource management in the fire industry.

TFS has continued to be an active participant in the research and development of national human resource management strategies in the fire industry. In 2007/08, TFS has:

- Commenced research through the BCRC into:
 - the leadership needs of volunteer fire brigades; and
 - the physical demands of tanker-based firefighting for volunteer firefighters.
- Enhanced national discussion and understanding of people management issues by providing for a stream of national and international speakers on "Managing People" at the joint Conference of AFAC and BCRC in September 2007.
- Participated in national meetings identifying trends and issues in managing people in the fire industry to enable agencies to identify strategies to address emerging issues.

TFS REGIONAL CONFERENCES

TFS Regional Conferences were held in various locations around the State in June (North West), July (South) and August (North). The theme for the 2007 conferences was "Lessons Learnt". Tasmania had just come through a demanding bushfire season and TFS took the opportunity to explore opportunities for improvement.

The conferences included a range of topics such as overviews and lessons learnt from the past fire season; updates on new initiatives in community fire safety, learning and development, road accident rescue, appliances, and workplace behaviour.

Supporting Our People

TASSIE FIRE CONFERENCE

In September 2007 Tasmania hosted the joint Conference of AFAC and BCRC at Hobart's Hotel Grand Chancellor. The Conference attracted just over 900 delegates and a trade exhibition displaying the merchandise from over 71 companies.

The conference was organised by a committee consisting of representatives from TFS, PWS, FT, AFAC, BCRC and local professional conference organisers.

The Conference was officially opened by His Excellency Sir William Cox Governor of Tasmania and ran successfully for two days with a program of 60 international and local speakers.

COMPETITIONS

The Tasmanian Volunteer Fire Brigades Association 38th annual competitions hosted by New Norfolk Fire Brigade were held at New Norfolk. 18 senior and 12 junior brigades set out to compete for the honour of being State Champions for 2007. Kingston and Richmond Brigade tied for the senior event with Gretna successful in the juniors.

2008 has been a historic year for competitions in the TFS. The competitions' associations, in conjunction with the TFS, have undertaken an extensive review of the fire brigade competitions and have arrived at a new strategic direction to maximise these events for both the community and the brigades.

A new constitution has been drawn up and endorsed and an executive committee has been elected. The Tasmanian Fire Brigades Competition Association (TFBCA) executive is now one body responsible for all fire service competitions in Tasmania. One main Tasmanian Fire Brigades Competition will be conducted for the State per year. This will be open to all 224 brigades across the State with a view to inviting other States to participate after 2008. It is envisaged that not only will there be a common type of competition where



Photo courtesy of the Mercury

Chris Arnol, 2007 Churchill Fellow

all brigades can foster camaraderie hone and demonstrate their skills in a friendly rivalry, but this as an opportunity to showcase other areas of the TFS within local communities. It is intended to have community safety displays, volunteerism information, recruitment, special operations, trade and a range of other displays and information booths. Emphasis will continue to be placed on junior participation.

PLANNED OUTCOMES / ACHIEVEMENTS 2008/09

- Develop leadership programs for career and volunteer members
- Continue the review of learning resources to support public safety training package competencies
- Improve OH&S reporting through the implementation of a new database
- Review and improvement of recruitment, selection and promotion strategies and procedures
- Complete the implementation of the Workplace Feedback System and personal development plans for career members
- Complete the implementation of the TFS values workshops for career members.

Awards and Medals

Australian Fire Service Medal

Michael Frederick Munnings

Michael Munnings joined the Colebrook Brigade as a volunteer firefighter in 1973. In 1979 he was elected to the position as Brigade Chief, a position of leadership he continues to hold through to the present (almost 30 years). Michael has also been a keen participant in volunteer fire training as a Volunteer Training Instructor since 1999. Michael has been actively involved in his brigade and his local area. As a Brigade Chief his commitment has been exemplary. For the last 15 years he has been a Fire Permit Officer.

He was awarded the National Medal 1988 and the Clasp in 1998.

Anthony Gee

Tony Gee joined the Avoca Brigade as a volunteer in 1968. He was Brigade Chief from 1968 to 1993, Second Officer from 1993 to 1996 and Group Officer from 1999 to 2005. Tony remains an active member today as at the rank of Firefighter.

Tony has been actively involved in his brigade and also the Golden Gate Group. As a Group Officer he has provided exemplary leadership in both fire operations and through his chairmanship of the Golden Gate Fire Management Area Committee.

For the last 15 years he has been a Fire Permit Officer for his local area and has participated in the TFS fire brigade competitions as a judge.

He was awarded the National Medal 1983, 1st Clasp in 1993 and 2nd Clasp in 2003.

Gerald Thomas Crawford

Gerald Crawford commenced employment with the Rural Fires Board of Tasmania as a Bushfire Firefighter in 1972. Since then he has worked in the TFS in a number of fire management positions in all parts of Southern Tasmania.

From 1981 to 1985 he worked in the TFS Training Division as an instructor before being promoted to Deputy Chief Training Officer. In 1987 he returned to regional fire management after promotion to his current rank of District Officer.

Gerald throughout his career has been a great supporter of volunteers and is held in the highest regard by volunteer brigades. Similarly he is widely respected by his career



colleagues where he frequently mentors developing officers, particularly because of his bushfire management expertise.

Gerald was awarded the National Medal in 1985 and the clasp to the National Medal in 1995 and 2005.

National Medals

The National Medal recognises diligent long service for members who protect life and property.

National Medals

- awarded for 15 years service - 130 recipients

1st Clasp

- awarded for additional 10 years service - 76 recipients

2nd Clasp

- awarded for further 10 years service - 16 recipients

3rd Clasp

- awarded for a further 10 years service - 3 recipients

Chief Officer's Commendation

Hobart Fire Brigade Senior Firefighter Scott Vinen was presented with a Chief Officer's Commendation.

This commendation was in recognition of his exceptional performance during the Myer fire which occurred on Saturday 22 September 2007 when Scott, of his own initiative and disregard for his personal safety, responded to an emergency call for assistance from his fellow crew members.

Churchill Fellowship Award

Last year Chris Arnol became the first Tasmanian firefighter to be awarded a Churchill Fellowship. He was awarded the Lord Mayors Bushfire Appeal Churchill Fellowship.

Chris examined firefighting operations on the urban interface in the USA, Spain, Portugal, France, Italy and Greece; countries that, like Australia, have the worst bushfire conditions on the planet.

Since returning he has developed the operational principles and tactical guidelines emergency services need for defensive firefighting.



Managing Our Resources

GOAL STATEMENT

To manage our financial, information and physical resources efficiently and effectively.

OBJECTIVES

1. Provide a flexible communications system that meets the needs of our end users.

2. Provide adequate maintenance and protection for our resources.

3. Effectively manage major assets.

4. Provide adequate funding to ensure the SFC is able to achieve its corporate objectives.

5. To participate in the development of national strategies to improve fire service business practices.

OBJECTIVE 1

Provide a flexible communications system that meets the needs of our end users.

Rapid technological changes in the area of communication systems have enabled the implementation of systems that are easier to use and have better state-wide coverage. Improved digital mobile communications have been the greatest change to our communications systems this year.

Telstra's 3G wireless rollout has greatly improved our ability to provide mobile data communications with high bandwidth and useability to a large proportion of the State. Where the TFS terrestrial data network is not available for incident management, the NextG network is our data communications method of choice. Our increasingly mobile workforce use NextG extensively for both voice and data communications while out of the office.

Broadband satellite data communications was trialled this year for TFS incident management teams where the NextG network was not available. The satellite data network provides high bandwidth and has a good footprint over Tasmania, which will also enable TFS to provide voice services via Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP).

A new remote access system that allows staff to access TFS corporate applications securely across the Internet from any web browser was implemented this year. This allows greater flexibility in working away from the office for management of emergency incidents or day to day activities.

TFS Online, our Internet web site, received considerable accolades from the media and public this year. Whilst critical for keeping the public and media informed during fires by providing current and meaningful bushfire information, TFS Online also provides fire preparedness and fire safety information. Crucial information is also available to volunteer firefighters and officers via a secure login area. The secure area contains up to the minute information for staff on incidents attended, training undertaken, standard operating procedures, with additional facilities for brigade chiefs to assist in the management and training of brigade members.

The TFS Online area for mobile devices is designed to allow the public to get the most up to date bushfire, permit and bushfire map information from their mobile phone (or other mobile device). This is a big step forward in providing the public with the latest bushfire information. If there is concern about a fire or smoke, the location and status of the fire can easily be found. Property owners and those on

the move who are away from their computers now have a very good alternative for accessing this information.

Google Maps display of bushfire information on both mobile devices and computers also allows the public to use a popular product making information access easier.

OBJECTIVE 2

Provide adequate maintenance and protection for our resources.

The Commission continued with its building, vehicles and equipment maintenance programs in 2007/08 with \$1.4 million dollars being spent on these programs. Motor vehicle and fire appliance expenditure of \$0.7 million was the largest item of expenditure followed by \$0.5 million for land and buildings with \$0.2 million being spent on communication expenses. The communications network comprises of over 6000 items of serviceable equipment and this year Communications Services staff completed over 350 site visits to brigades, radio sites and regional offices for inspection and maintenance visits. The Communications workshop in Hobart processed 900 items sent in for service. The Commission has approximately 240 buildings state-wide, of which 98% are regarded as fire stations. Regular inspections and maintenance of buildings is carried out by TFS maintenance staff. Adequate physical protection for its assets as well as insurance cover was also provided.

OBJECTIVE 3

Effectively manage major assets.

The management of the Commission's major assets was again effectively achieved through its repairs and maintenance programs, user training courses, risk assessments of new and/or modified assets as well as the timely disposal and replacement of its assets. Communications Services commissioned an engineering report on several key communication towers to assist in the development of an ongoing maintenance program. Risk assessments are carried out annually on all Commission buildings by TFS staff to ensure compliance with the 2004 Building Regulations and also to maintain easy accessible facilities. The SFC allocated \$5.2 million for its capital program for the 2007/08 financial year. The allocation

included \$3.9 million for fire appliances and vehicles, \$0.6 million for land and buildings and \$0.7 million for plant and equipment.

OBJECTIVE 4

Provide adequate funding to ensure the SFC is able to achieve its corporate objectives.

The budget for 2007/08 provided adequate funding to enable the Commission to achieve its corporate objectives. The Commission was required to increase the Fire Service Contribution paid by land owners by 10 per cent or \$2.5 million to \$27.1 million. The additional revenue assisted the Commission to cover increases in wages costs and to cover a significant shortfall in Commercial Insurance Fire Levy Revenue for 2006/07. The increase also allowed for some additional community fire safety programs to be conducted and assisted in funding the fire appliance replacement and fire station building programs.

OBJECTIVE 5

To participate in the development of national strategies to improve fire service business practices.

Active participation by the TFS staff in the AFAC's Business Management Group has assisted the development of national strategies that have assisted in improvements in fire service business practices. Current topics include changes to funding arrangements for Commonwealth properties, Report on Government Services by the Productivity Commission, Total Cost of Fire and Cross Border Deployments and Collaborative Purchasing Arrangements. The Business Management Group meets biannually and has representatives from each State and Territory.

Managing Our Resources



Photo courtesy of the Mercury

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The Net Surplus for the SFC for 2007/08 was \$4.4 million, compared to a deficit of \$1.2 million for 2006/07, an increase of \$5.6 million.

Income for the twelve months to June 2008 was \$60.2 million compared favourably with \$56.5 million for the same period last financial year. The major positive variations related to the Fire Service Contribution, the Insurance Fire Levy and Commonwealth Contribution which increased by \$2.5, \$1.9 and \$0.8 million respectively. State Government wildfire reimbursements reduced by \$1.3 million in 2007/08 due to a quieter bushfire season. A decline in Sundry Revenue of \$0.2 million was also recorded.

Expenses from Ordinary Activities for the twelve months to June 2008 were \$55.9 million compared to \$57.7 million for the same period last financial year. The major variation related to Employee Related Expenses which increased by \$0.7 million as a result of enterprise bargaining agreements. Depreciation Expenses, Financial and Other Expenses each increased by \$0.2 million. Operations Expenses declined by \$2.1 million in 2007/08 due to bushfire fighting costs being significantly less than the previous year. It should be noted that the level of bushfire activity for a year has a direct impact on bushfire fighting costs.

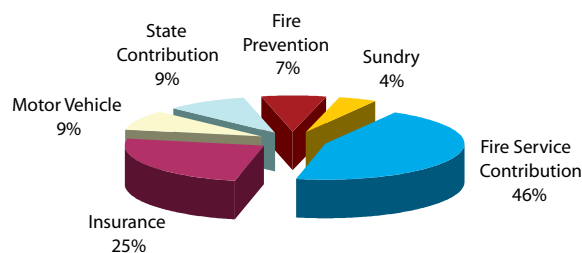
Net Assets for 2007/08 totalled \$77.8 million as compared to \$73.5 million for 2006/07, an increase of \$4.3 million.

An overview of the major revenue sources is detailed to the right.

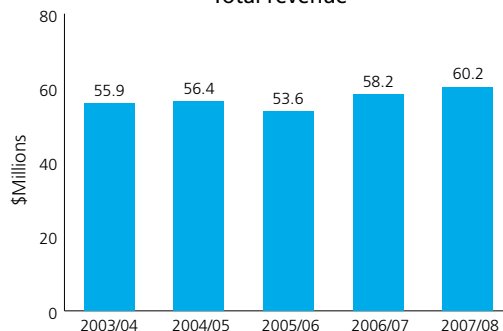
State Government Contribution

The Treasurer must pay to the SFC, out of money appropriated by the Parliament for the purpose, such amount as the Treasurer determines is appropriate towards defraying the operating costs of the Commission. The contribution in 2007/08 was \$5.6 million and represented nine per cent of the total revenue of the Service for 2007/08.

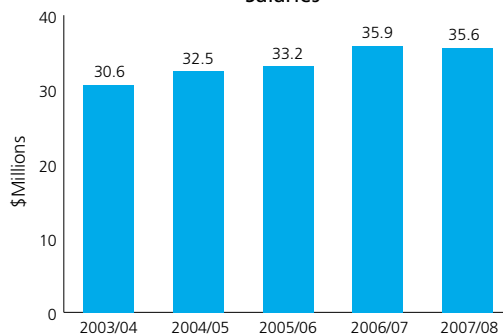
Revenue 2007/08 (\$60.2 Million)



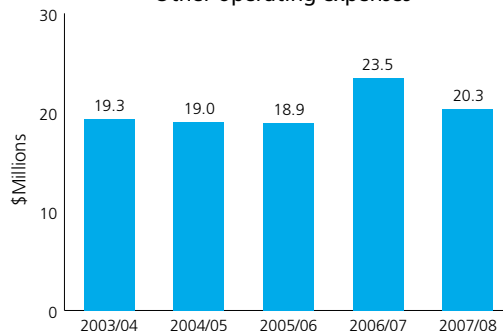
Total revenue



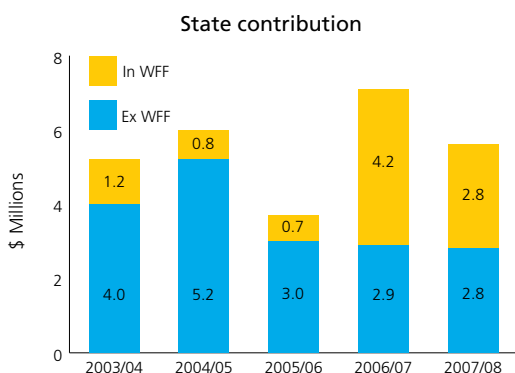
Salaries



Other operating expenses



The cost of fighting bushfires is mostly reimbursed by the State Government. From 1 July 1987, these costs have been reimbursed by the State Government in the same year in which the expenditure was incurred. By arrangement with the Department of Treasury and Finance, the Commission is required to meet the first \$35,000 for bushfire fighting costs and the State Government meets the remainder. In 2007/08, the State Government reimbursed the Commission \$2.8 million and this amount is included as part of the total State Government Contribution of \$5.6 million.

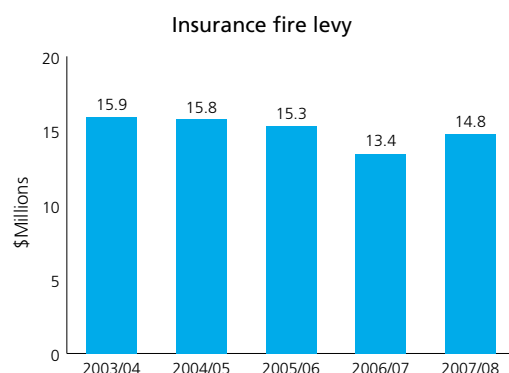


Commonwealth Government Contribution

The total Commonwealth Government Contribution of \$1.3 million comprised two per cent of the total revenue received by the Commission. A general contribution of \$139,000 was provided. The major purpose of the general contribution is to meet the costs associated with providing fire prevention and protection to Commonwealth Government properties in Tasmania. As part of the National Aerial Firefighting strategy Tasmania also received \$329,000 from the Commonwealth (DOTARS) through the National Aerial Firefighting Centre towards the standing charges of a medium capacity helicopter assigned to Tasmania during January and February. USAR funding for capital equipment of \$752,000 was also provided along with a grant of \$38,000 for the establishment of a volunteer recruitment program.

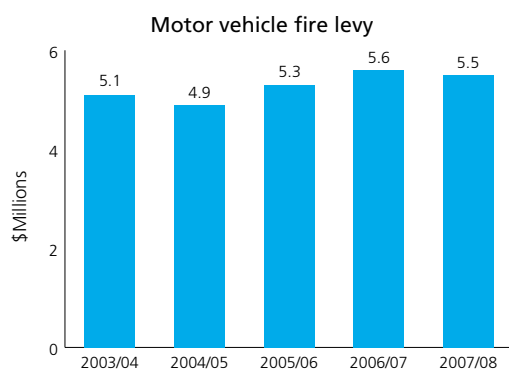
Insurance Fire Levy

Insurance companies are responsible for the collection of the Insurance Fire Levy. Collections for 2007/08 were \$14.8 million which equated to 25 per cent of total revenue. The contribution rate is an amount equal to two per cent of gross premium income on marine cargo insurance, 14 per cent on aviation hull insurance and 28 per cent of gross premium income on all other prescribed classes of insurance.



Motor Vehicle Fire Levy

The motor vehicle levy contribution of \$5.5 million collected by the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources represents nine per cent of total revenue. The general levy for motor vehicles was \$14, effective from 1 July 2006 and for pensioners \$9 per vehicle, effective from 1 July 2004. Motor cycles are excluded.



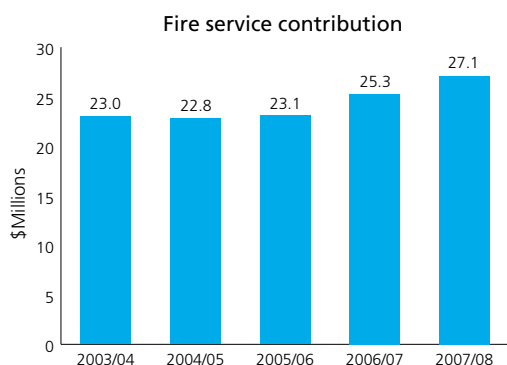


Managing Our Resources

Photographer Claudio Muench

Fire Service Contribution

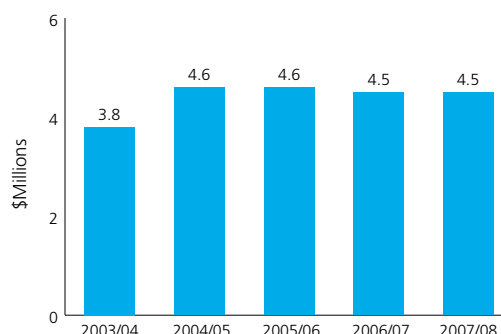
The Fire Service Contribution is collected by local councils on behalf of the SFC. Fire service contributions on properties for 2007/08 amounted to \$27.1 million and represented 45 per cent of total revenue. The levels of contribution payable by ratepayers vary throughout the State according to whether ratepayers are in urban or country areas. The objective of the demand on ratepayers is to ensure equitable contributions are applied to ratepayers, based on the assessed annual values of their respective urban or country properties and the level of fire protection provided. Local authorities are paid a four per cent collection fee by the SFC and this amounted to \$1.1 million in 2007/08.



Fire Prevention Charges

The SFC generates revenue through its community fire safety activities including the sale and servicing of fire safety equipment, commercial training, alarm rentals, inspection fees and avoidable false alarm fees. Revenue raised in 2007/08 was \$4.5 million or seven per cent of total revenue.

Fire prevention charges



Sundry Income

Sundry income is derived from a number of sources including profit on sale of non-current assets, donations, interest received, reimbursement of occupancy costs from co-located emergency services and other sundry sources. Revenue raised in 2007/08 was \$1.5 million or two per cent of total revenue.

PHYSICAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Building Program

2007/08 saw the opening of the Kempton, Campania & North Bruny Fire Stations, using external contractors for the building component and TFS staff for the internal fit-out. This construction method is proving to be cost beneficial as well as achieving completion within designated time frames.

A further \$0.6 million has been allocated for the construction of the George Town, \$0.1 million for Runnymede, \$0.1 million for Molesworth and \$0.1 million for Judbury fire stations.

Tender processes were undertaken in this financial year for the St Marys Fire and Emergency Services Station and the Gravelly Beach Fire Station. This resulted in a contract being awarded to supply and construct the St Marys Fire and Emergency Services Station and the renovations to the Gravelly Beach Fire Station to be undertaken by TFS building/maintenance staff.

ENGINEERING SERVICES

Appliance Replacement Program

2007/08 was the fourth year of the initial five year firefighting appliance replacement program with the fabrication of 15 Pumper Tanker (3-1P) appliances scheduled. During this period, the 14 remaining appliances from the 2006/07 build were completed, along with major components for the 15 Tanker Pumper appliances in the 2007/08 financial year. The timeframe for completion of the first 15 appliances included the manufacture of the prototype, as well as jigs and templates for use in the next build, enabling significant reduction in timeframes for completion, as well as uniformity of components. The project timeframe is running to schedule. Significant jobs also completed during the year include the fit out of a new Scania Pumper for Launceston Fire Brigade, two regional special operations appliances, the remounting of Isuzu three point tray mounts on heavy tankers and replacement of corroded manifolds and associated components on tankers.

The remaining twelve months (5th year) of the program will see the design, fabrication and commissioning of a further 30 Medium Tanker appliances, leading to the decommissioning of all petrol single cab appliances from service.

COMMUNICATIONS

Vehicle Location Trial

The "vehicle location trial" project continued and thirty fire tankers have now been fitted in the greater Hobart area. The system was trialed at several training exercises and proved beneficial, but as there were no significant fire incidents in the greater Hobart area over the summer. The trial will continue in 2008/09.

Fire Alarms over Internet Protocol Trial

With the proposed disconnection of all point to point two wire lines that connect building fire alarm systems to the TFS in December 2009 by Telstra, TFS has been working on a cost effective solution for customers. With 18 months to design, test and install an alternate system the TFS has progressed to the point where it can offer building owners and the fire protection industry a wireless solution. This is an Internet Protocol based solution. TFS has recently installed equipment to allow connection of new fire alarm services. A program to convert the existing service to the new wireless system will commence in 2008/09.



Photographer Frank Howe



Managing Our Resources

Photo courtesy of the Examiner

Systems upgrades

Minor upgrades and changes to operational systems throughout the year included the upgrade of power systems at several radio sites, battery replacement program for solar sites including additional wind generator installations. Continued replacement program for both mobile and handheld radios across the State as required.

INFORMATION SERVICES

This year ISB made significant changes including the replacement of head office network infrastructure and critical areas such as FireComm have had their network redundancy significantly improved by these changes. A new multi-tiered backup and recovery solution was implemented across all TFS's servers.

Corporate application upgrades included new versions of the Exchange mail server, Active Directory authentication services, MS SQL database server, RightFax and the SharePoint intranet product. Considerable changes to our Internet facing infrastructure have also occurred this year to support new systems, improve business continuity and to maintain best practice in security.

These infrastructure and application changes, including the new backup and recovery solution and the implementation of VMware have required a considerable increase in training for Information Services Branch staff. The successful implementation of these wide ranging changes was due to the skill, hard work and planning of the staff involved.

Difficulty with filling key positions with suitably qualified staff has continued to be a major problem this year and has caused significant delays with implementing new initiatives.

PLANNED OUTCOMES/ ACHIEVEMENTS 2008/09

- Review planned annual maintenance programs for TFS buildings
 - Continue to develop and implement a business continuity plan
 - Continue to develop a risk management framework and register
 - Update five year capital rolling build programs for fire appliances and buildings
 - Enhance Intranet and Internet services.
-



STATE FIRE COMMISSION FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2007/08

The accompanying financial statements, including notes to accounts, are provided to disclose activities funded both within and outside the Public Account. These statements have been prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with the *Fire Service Act 1979*.

CERTIFICATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	35
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	35
INCOME STATEMENT	38
STATEMENT OF RECOGNISED INCOME AND EXPENSE	38
BALANCE SHEET	39
CASH FLOW STATEMENT	40
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS	41

STATE FIRE COMMISSION CERTIFICATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The accompanying financial statements of the State Fire Commission have been prepared in compliance with the provisions of the *Fire Service Act 1979* from proper accounts and records.

In the opinion of the Commissioners of the State Fire Commission:

- the financial statements are drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the results and cash flows for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 and the statement of affairs at 30 June 2008 of the State Fire Commission;
- the accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Fire Service Act 1979*; and
- at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Commission will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

At the date of signing we are not aware of any circumstances which would render the particulars in the financial statements misleading or inaccurate.



J P Hyland BE
ACTING CHAIR

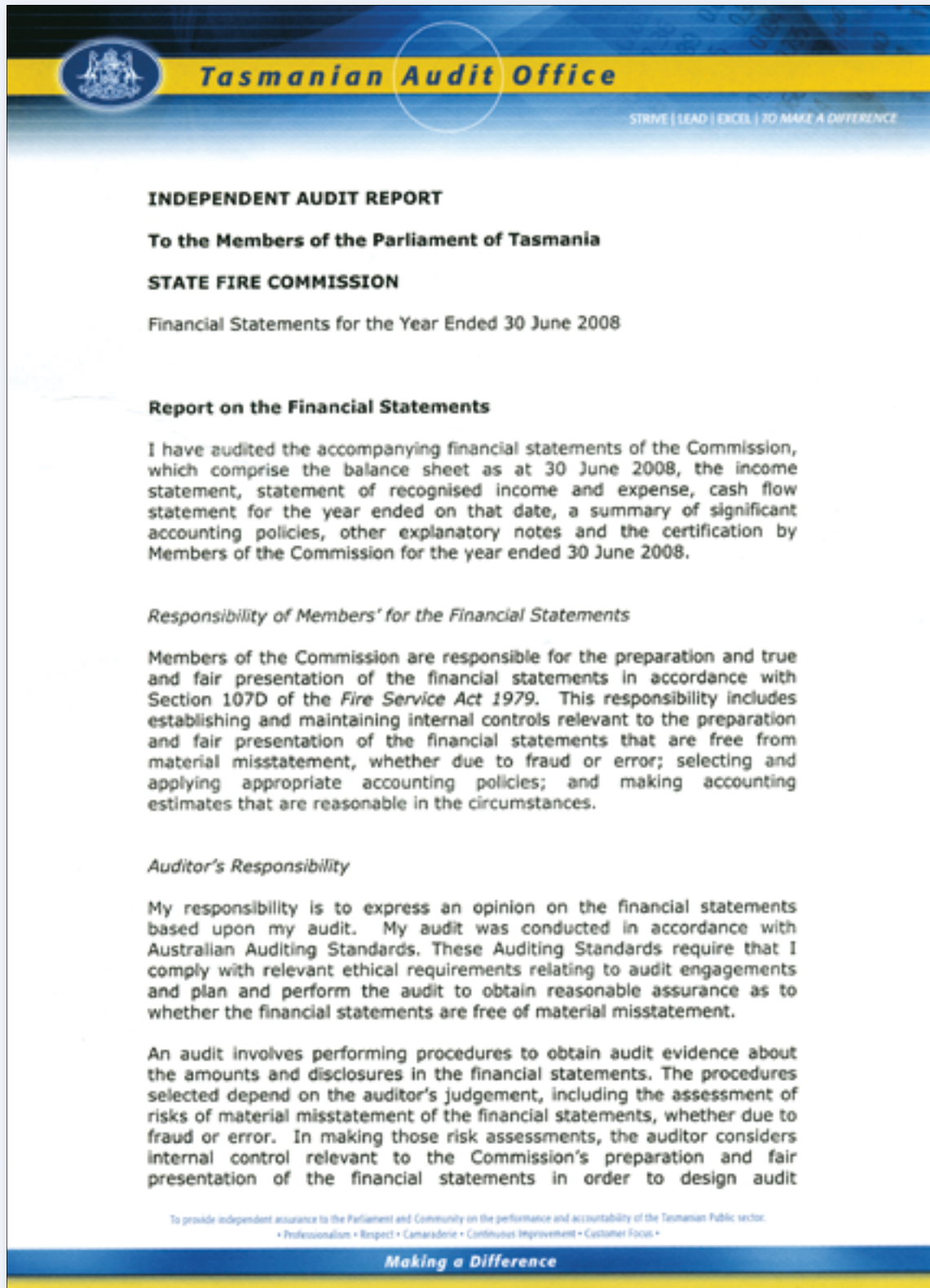


L P Dewhurst AFSM
COMMISSION MEMBER

19 September 2008



Financial Report 2007/08



procedures that are appropriate to the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Commission's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by those charged with governance, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting my audit, I have met applicable independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion the financial statements of the State Fire Commission

- a) Presents fairly the financial position of the State Fire Commission as at 30 June 2008, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended; and
- b) Is in accordance with the *Fire Service Act 1979* and applicable Accounting Standards (including Australian Accounting Interpretations).

TASMANIAN AUDIT OFFICE



J J Tongs
MANAGER – FINANCIAL AUDITS

Delegate of the Auditor-General

HOBART
19 September 2008



Financial Report 2007/08

INCOME STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

	Note	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
INCOME			
Fire Service Contribution	1(q)	27,080	24,617
Insurance Fire Levy	1(p)	14,793	12,942
State Government Contribution	11	5,600	6,932
Motor Vehicle Fire Levy	1(r)	5,544	5,403
Fire Prevention Charges	12	4,492	4,406
Sundry Income	13	1,480	1,712
Commonwealth Government Contribution	11	1,258	500
Total Income		60,247	56,512
EXPENSES			
Employee Related Expenses	1(j),(k), 14	35,633	34,938
Public Relations, Subscriptions and Consultants	15	942	1,147
Learning and Development		476	650
Operations Expenses	16	6,787	8,898
Protective Clothing and Uniforms	17	657	766
Depreciation	7	4,803	4,632
Financial and Other Expenses	18	3,368	3,213
Insurance		670	822
Borrowing Costs	19	397	396
Repairs and Maintenance	20	1,454	1,441
Minor Equipment	21	706	764
Total Expenses		55,893	57,668
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	22	4,354	(1,156)

STATEMENT OF RECOGNISED INCOME AND EXPENSE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

	Note	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
Income and Expenses Recognised Directly in Equity			
Gain/(Loss) on movement in SFC Super Scheme obligation	9, 22	(6,397)	4,022
Increase/(Decrease) in Asset Revaluation Reserve	23	6,292	373
Net Income Recognised Directly in Equity		(105)	4,394
Net Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	22	4,354	(1,156)
Total Recognised Income/(Expense) for the Year	24	4,249	3,238

The Financial Statements are to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes to the accounts.

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 30 JUNE 2008

	Note	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	1(n),2,10,27(a)	6,846	912
Receivables	1(e),3,10	1,042	1,020
Inventories	1(d)	1,360	1,310
Other Current Assets	4	1,610	2,021
Total Current Assets		10,859	5,263
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Work in Progress	1(f)	6,331	3,654
Property, Plant and Equipment	1(g),(h),(i), 7	81,266	76,504
SFC Superannuation Fund Net Asset	1(k), 9	-	5,050
Total Non-Current Assets		87,597	85,208
TOTAL ASSETS		98,456	90,472
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Payables	1(o), 8,10	5,016	2,645
Provision for Employee Related Expenses	1(j), 9	8,556	8,165
Interest Bearing Liabilities	1(m), 10	1,500	1,368
Total Current Liabilities		15,072	12,178
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Provision for Employee Related Expenses	1(j), 9	1,075	1,448
Interest Bearing Liabilities	1(m), 10	3,198	3,330
SFC Superannuation Fund Net Liability	1(k), 9	1,347	-
Total Non-Current Liabilities		5,619	4,778
TOTAL LIABILITIES		20,691	16,956
NET ASSETS		77,765	73,515
EQUITY			
Retained Operating Surpluses	22	67,443	69,486
Reserves	23	10,321	4,029
TOTAL EQUITY	24	77,765	73,515

The Financial Statements are to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes to the accounts.



Financial Report 2007/08

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

	Note	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
Cash Flows from Operating Activities			
Cash Receipts from Operating Activities		59,320	55,230
Cash Payments from Operating Activities		(47,027)	(50,194)
Interest Paid		(397)	(396)
Interest Received		57	48
Net Cash provided by Operating Activities	27(b)	11,954	4,688
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
Proceeds from Sale of Equipment		140	712
Payments for Property, Plant and Equipment		(6,159)	(6,604)
Net Cash used in Investing Activities		(6,019)	(5,892)
Cash Flows from Financing Activities			
Repayment of loan		(1,368)	(1,830)
Proceeds from loan		1,368	1,830
Net Cash used in Financing Activities		-	-
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents		5,935	(1,203)
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the Beginning of the Financial Period		912	2,115
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the End of the Financial Period	27(a)	6,846	912

The Financial Statements are to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes to the accounts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

1. Statement of Accounting Policies

(a) Business Details of the State Fire Commission

The State Fire Commission (the Commission) is a Statutory Corporation created under Section 7 of the *Fire Service Act 1979* (the Act) of Tasmania, Australia. The Tasmania Fire Service was created under Section 6 of the Act and is under the control of the Commission.

The role of the Commission is to protect life, property and the environment from the impact of fire and other emergencies. It delivers all of its services through its operational arm, the Tasmania Fire Service, which also operates under the business names of TasFire Equipment and TasFire Training. Its principal activities are emergency response (fire, vehicle accidents, biological and chemical hazards, etc.), preventative fire safety through community education and training, sales and servicing of fire protection equipment and administration of the *General Fire Regulations* including such activities as approving building plans in relation to fire safety and issuing various permits.

The Australian Business Number for the Commission and its operating entities is 68 039 681 690. The Head Office of the Commission is on the Corner of Melville and Argyle Streets, Hobart, Tasmania.

At 30 June the Commission had 458.7 employees (full time equivalents). Last year it had 462.3 employees.

(b) Basis of Financial Statements

The financial report is a general purpose financial report which has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, Interpretations, and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board. It has been prepared on the basis of historical costs except for the revaluation of land and buildings, and does not take into account changing money values. Accounting policies used are consistent with those of the prior year unless otherwise stated.

Australian Accounting Standards include Australian Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards (AEIFRS). Compliance with AEIFRS may not result in compliance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), as AEIFRS includes requirements and options available to not-for-profit organisations that are inconsistent with IFRS. The Commission is considered to be not-for-profit and has adopted some accounting policies under AEIFRS that do not comply with IFRS.

(c) System of Accounting

The accompanying financial statements are prepared in accordance with the accrual basis of accounting that

brings to account known assets and liabilities at balance date. All amounts shown in the financial statements are in thousands of dollars unless otherwise stated. The system of accounting complies with the requirements of the *Fire Service Act 1979*.

(d) Inventories

Consumable stores are expensed at the time of purchase. Stock on hand is valued at average cost.

(e) Receivables

Trade receivables are carried at amounts due. The collectability of debts is assessed at year-end and a specific provision is made for any impairment. The carrying amount of trade receivables approximates net fair value.

(f) Work in Progress

Capital Work in Progress is valued at the cost of material, labour and labour oncosts for work to date.

(g) Plant, Property and Equipment

Asset Revaluation

On revaluation, the Provision for Depreciation accounts are transferred to the related asset accounts. The assets are then depreciated over their estimated remaining useful lives using their revalued amount as the base.

When a class of assets is revalued upwards, that part of the revaluation increment that reverses previously expensed revaluation decrements for that class of assets is treated as revenue, and any excess is credited to the Asset Revaluation Reserve.

When a class of assets is revalued downwards, that part of the revaluation decrement that reverses a credit balance in the Asset Revaluation Reserve relating to that class of assets is debited to the Reserve, and any excess decrement is expensed.

Land and Buildings

Freehold land and buildings are valued at fair value. Cost is considered to be the best measure of fair value for recently purchased property. Where available, in years subsequent to acquisition, the Valuer-General's valuation or a commercial valuation is used. The Valuer-General progressively revalues land and buildings in a systematic manner, which is both independent and consistent.

During the year ended 30 June 2008, Land was revalued upwards by \$3,503,014 and Buildings were revalued upwards by \$2,789,263. These revaluation increments were credited to the Asset Revaluation Reserve.



Financial Report 2007/08

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

Fire Appliances, Passenger Vehicles and Plant and Equipment

Internal expenses incurred in the fabrication of Fire Appliances and the construction of Radio and Communications Equipment are capitalised.

Passenger vehicles are valued at cost.

Plant and Equipment is at cost and is comprised of Fire Fighting Equipment, Workshop and Other Equipment, Radio and Communications Equipment, Office Furniture and Equipment and Computer Equipment.

Items of Plant and Equipment with a purchase price of less than \$2,000 are expensed at the time of purchase. Items of Plant and Equipment with a cost of \$2,000 or more are shown at cost less depreciation and are written off over their expected useful life to the Commission on a straight line basis. Equipment is not depreciated until full operational status is attained.

Costs incurred in relation to plant and equipment subsequent to initial acquisitions are capitalised when it is probable that future economic benefits, in excess of the originally assessed performance of the assets will flow to the Commission in future years. Where these costs represent separate components they are accounted for as separate assets and are separately depreciated over their useful lives.

Provision for Depreciation

Items of Property, Plant and Equipment, including buildings, are depreciated over their estimated useful lives.

Assets are depreciated from the date of acquisition or, in respect of internally constructed assets, from the time an asset is completed and held ready for use. All items are depreciated using the straight line method of depreciation at the following range of rates:

Asset Class	Range of Rates
Buildings	1% to 3.3%
Motor Vehicles	4% to 20%
Fire Appliances	4% to 5%
Plant and Equipment	6.6% to 33.3%

(h) Impaired Assets

Assets are reviewed at balance date for impairment using a range of impairment indicators. Where an asset is deemed to be impaired, its recoverable amount is estimated, and if materially lower than its carrying amount, the carrying amount is reduced to its recoverable amount. Any resulting impairment loss

(or gain) is recognised in the Income Statement in *Financial and Other Expenses (or Sundry Revenue)* unless the asset has previously been revalued upwards, in which case it is recognised as a reversal up to the amount of the previous revaluation and any excess is recognised through profit or loss.

(i) Assets Held for Sale

In accordance with *AASB 5 Non-current Assets held for Sale and Discontinued Operations*, Non-Current Assets are reclassified as held for sale if their carrying amount will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through continuing use. They are stated at the lower of carrying value and fair (net recoverable) value less disposal costs. Provision for Depreciation accounts are transferred to the related asset accounts and the assets are then revalued to their estimated net recoverable value with any resulting impairment gains or losses disclosed in the Income Statement. Non-Current Assets held for sale are transferred to Current Assets and are not depreciated. Assets held for sale are sold in accordance with the Commission's policy in relation to the useful life of assets. It is expected that assets held for sale will be sold within twelve months. Motor vehicles and Fire Appliances are disposed of at auction or other public sale. (Note 5)

(j) Provision for Employee Related Expenses

No cash reserve has been set aside to meet commitments from the Provision for Employee Related Expenses and commitments will be met as they fall due. The Provision is comprised of Provisions for Long Service Leave, Annual Leave, Superannuation and Payroll Tax.

Provision for Long Service Leave is made for all employees. The liability is the sum of the existing entitlements and an estimate of future entitlements expected to arise from service completed at 30 June.

In determining the liability for expected future entitlements, consideration has been given to known future increases in wage and salary rates, and experiences with staff separations. Estimated future accrued leave has been discounted using the rates applied to national government securities at balance date, which best match the terms of maturity of the related liabilities.

The current provision is the sum of the present entitlements to leave (i.e. the liability relating to employees with 10 or more years' service) and the balance of the provision is treated as the non-current provision.

The **Provision for Annual Leave** represents employee entitlements due and accrued as at 30 June. The provision has been calculated using the remuneration rates the Commission expects to pay when the obligations are settled.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

Superannuation and Payroll Tax Provisions are calculated by applying the appropriate superannuation and payroll tax rates to the liabilities calculated for Long Service Leave and Annual Leave.

Sick Leave. The Commission does not provide for sick leave. All of the Commission's sick leave is non-vesting, and it is thus inappropriate to make provision for future sick leave.

(k) Superannuation

The Commission up until 30 April 2006, by virtue of the *State Fire Commission Superannuation Scheme Act 1994*, operated the State Fire Commission Superannuation Scheme for employees of the State Fire Commission classified under the *Tasmanian Fire Fighting Industry Employees Award*. This scheme was closed to new members on 30 June 2005. Effective 1 May 2006 the *State Fire Commission Superannuation Scheme Act 1994* was repealed by the *Retirement Benefits (State Fire Commission Superannuation Scheme) Act 2005*. The Scheme is now administered by the Retirement Benefits Fund Board and the defined benefits component of the Scheme is now a subfund of the Retirement Benefits Fund. The accumulation benefits component was transferred to the Tasmanian Accumulation Scheme and forms part of the Retirement Benefits Fund. The Commission remains responsible for ensuring adequate funding of the defined benefits component of the Scheme. The Commission's net obligation in relation to the Scheme is recorded in the SFC Superannuation Fund Net Liability if it is a liability or in SFC Superannuation Fund Net Asset if it is an asset and net movement in the obligation is recorded in the Statement of Recognised Income and Expense. Actuarial gains and losses in relation to this fund are recognised in the year they are incurred. (Note 9)

The Commission also makes employer superannuation contributions based as a minimum on the Commonwealth's Superannuation Guarantee rate for State Award employees. These employees may elect to have their contributions forwarded to any complying superannuation scheme.

Prior to 1 July 1986 the State Fire Commission maintained its own fully funded superannuation scheme for Commission employees who contributed to the Retirement Benefits Fund. As at 30 June 1986 the provision had accumulated to \$2,447,447 and this amount was recorded in the Commission's accounts. As at 1 July 1986 accounting for Retirement Benefits Fund Superannuation entitlements was transferred to the State Treasury. A payment representing the provision as at 30 June 1986 of \$2,447,447 was made to the State Treasury on the condition that the Government would fund the existing and future superannuation liability of Commission employees.

(l) Investments

The Commission conducts its investment and loan programmes with the Tasmanian Public Finance Corporation (Tascorp) and private investment managers.

Investments are carried at fair (face) value. Interest revenue is accrued at the market or contractual rate.

(m) Interest Bearing Liabilities

Loans and bank overdrafts are carried at fair (face) value. Where appropriate, interest expense is accrued at the contractual rate and included in Accrued Expenses.

(n) Cash and Short Term Deposits

All cash transactions are recorded through the Commission's bank account.

Cash and short-term deposits are carried at fair (face) value. Interest revenue is accrued at the market or contractual rate.

(o) Payables, Accrued Expenses and Commitments

Liabilities are recognised for amounts to be paid for goods and services received, whether or not billed to the Commission. Payables, accrued expenses and commitments are carried at fair value.

(p) Insurance Fire Levy

Contributions are received from insurance companies in respect of premium income on certain prescribed classes of insurance where the risks insured are situated in Tasmania. Contributions are received monthly with an approved lodgement return. The current insurance fire levy is 2% on marine cargo insurance, 14% on aviation hull insurance, and 28% on other classes of insurance. The first two rates were established in November 1986 and the last was increased from 14% in October 1990.

(q) Fire Service Contribution

Contributions are received from Local Councils through a fire service contribution raised on properties. A minimum contribution was initially implemented in 1991 to provide additional funds to re-equip volunteer brigades. The minimum contribution was \$31 for the year ended 30 June 2007 and this was increased from \$30 on 1 July 2007.

(r) Motor Vehicle Fire Levy

The State Fire Commission receives income raised through a fire levy applied to all registered vehicles. This is collected by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles via the vehicle registration fee and forwarded to the State Fire Commission. The current fire levy raised through vehicle registration is \$14 per vehicle and this was last increased from \$13 in July 2006.



Financial Report 2007/08

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

(s) Changes in Accounting Policies

The State Fire Commission has adopted all of the new and revised accounting standards and interpretations issued by the Accounting Standards Board that are relevant to its operations and are effective for the current annual reporting period. The adoption of new and revised accounting standards has had no material financial impact on the financial statements of the Commission.

The accounting standards adopted this year are:

- AASB 7 *Financial Instruments: Disclosures* replaces the presentation requirements of financial instruments in AASB 132 and introduces new financial instrument disclosure requirements.
- AASB 2007-4 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from Exposure Draft 151 and Other Amendments and Erratum: Proportionate Consolidation*. AASB 2007-4 makes amendments to a number of Australian Accounting Standards to introduce various accounting policy options, delete various disclosures presently required, and to make a number of editorial amendments.
- AASB 2007-5 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standard – Inventories Held for Distribution by Not-for-Profit Entities* amends AASB 102 *Inventories* to require inventories held for distribution by not-for-profit entities to be measured at cost, adjusted when applicable for any loss of service potential.
- AASB 2007-7 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards* makes editorial amendments to six Standards. The key change removes the encouragement in AASB 107 *Cash Flow Statements* to adopt a particular format for the cash flow statement.

The following new standards have been issued by the AASB and are yet to be applied:

- AASB 2007-8 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards Arising from AASB 101* - revised standard to be applied in reporting periods on or after 1 January 2009. The Standard will not have a financial impact on the financial statements but will require a number of changes in disclosures.

- AASB Interpretation 14 AASB 119 – *the Limit on a Defined Benefit Asset, Minimum Funding Requirements and their Interaction* – this Interpretation is applicable to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2008. The interpretation clarifies when refunds or reductions in future contributions in relation to defined benefit assets should be regarded as available and provides guidance on the impact of minimum funding requirements (MFR) on such assets. It also gives guidance on when a MFR might give rise to a liability. The Commission has not yet determined the potential effect of the interpretation.

(t) Judgements and Assumptions

In the application of Australian Accounting Standards, the Commission is required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances, the results of which form the basis of making the judgements. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

Judgements made by the Commission that have significant effects on the financial statements are disclosed in the relevant notes to the financial statements. The Commission has made no assumptions concerning the future that may cause a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
2. Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Cash on Hand	9	8
Cash at Bank	6,838	903
Total	6,846	912
3. Receivables		
Trade Debtors	1,052	1,030
Less Provision for Impairment	(10)	(10)
Total	1,042	1,020
4. Other Current Assets		
Accrued Revenue	901	1,286
Prepayments	710	736
Total	1,610	2,021
5. Assets Held for Sale		
Assets held for sale at year end were not material.		
6. Capital Commitments		
Capital Work in Progress excludes certain commitments for outstanding purchase orders and unperformed work under existing contracts.		
Capital expenditure contracted but not provided in the accounts, and payable within one year:	471	167
Total	471	167
7. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Land		
At Fair Value at 30 June	11,718	8,213
Total	11,718	8,213
Buildings		
At Fair Value at 30 June	40,372	37,670
Accumulated Depreciation	(3,728)	(3,601)
Written Down Value	36,644	34,069
Motor Vehicles		
At Cost	5,591	5,284
Accumulated Depreciation	(2,809)	(2,193)
Written Down Value	2,782	3,091
Fire Appliances		
At Cost	46,513	45,834
Accumulated Depreciation	(20,911)	(19,616)
Written Down Value	25,602	26,219
Plant and Equipment		
At Cost	21,643	20,595
Accumulated Depreciation	(17,123)	(15,683)
Written Down Value	4,520	4,912
Total Property, Plant and Equipment		
Total Gross Value	125,838	117,596
Accumulated Depreciation	(44,571)	(41,093)
Written Down Value	81,266	76,504



Financial Report 2007/08

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

7. Property, Plant and Equipment (Continued)

Reconciliation of Property, Plant and Equipment as at 30 June 2008

	Land \$'000	Buildings \$'000	Motor Vehicles \$'000	Fire Appliances \$'000	Plant and Equipment \$'000	Total \$'000
Carrying Amount 30 June 07	8,213	34,069	3,091	26,219	4,912	76,504
Additions	2	640	485	1,290	1,054	3,472
Revaluations	3,503	2,789	-	-	-	6,292
Depreciation Expense	-	(854)	(662)	(1,844)	(1,444)	(4,803)
Disposals	-	-	(132)	(65)	(2)	(198)
Carrying Amount 30 June 08	11,717	36,644	2,783	25,601	4,520	81,266

Reconciliation of Property, Plant and Equipment as at 30 June 2007

	Land \$'000	Buildings \$'000	Motor Vehicles \$'000	Fire Appliances \$'000	Plant and Equipment \$'000	Total \$'000
Carrying Amount 30 June 06	7,997	33,792	1,415	26,694	5,402	75,300
Transfer between Asset Classes	-	-	1,937	(1,937)	-	-
Additions	70	879	1,076	3,329	879	6,234
Revaluations	146	227	-	-	-	373
Depreciation Expense	-	(781)	(690)	(1,793)	(1,367)	(4,632)
Disposals	-	(48)	(647)	(74)	(2)	(771)
Carrying Amount 30 June 07	8,213	34,069	3,091	26,219	4,912	76,504

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
8. Payables		
Accrued Expenses	1,378	451
Trade Creditors	3,596	2,141
Capital Works Payables	43	53
Total	5,016	2,645

9. Provision for Employee Related Expenses

Current Provisions

Provision for Long Service Leave	4,783	4,169
Provision for Annual Leave	2,323	2,615
Provision for Superannuation (1)	958	912
Provision for Payroll Tax (1)	492	469
Total	8,556	8,165

Non-Current Provisions

Provision for Long Service Leave	894	1,205
Provision for Superannuation (1)	119	160
Provision for Payroll Tax (1)	62	83
Total	1,075	1,448

(1) Provisions for Superannuation and Payroll Tax represent superannuation and payroll tax payable in relation to the Provisions for Long Service Leave and Annual Leave.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

9. Provision for Employee Related Expenses (continued)

The following information relates to the State Fire Commission Superannuation Scheme net liability. It only relates to the defined benefits parts of the scheme and excludes any other liabilities or assets in relation to the scheme. The scheme is managed by the Retirement Benefits Fund.

	2008	2007
Number of defined benefit members at 30 June	300	305
	\$'000	\$'000
Total Annual Salaries	\$19,151	\$18,229
Total Accumulation Accounts	(\$702)	(\$738)

Assumptions

The following actuarial assumptions have been used in calculating the assets and liabilities associated with the State Fire Commission Superannuation Fund.

	2008	2007
<i>Discount rate p.a.</i>		
Gross of Tax	6.40%	6.25%
Net of Tax	5.40%	5.30%
<i>Salary increases p.a.</i>		
2007/08 and after	4.5%	4.5%
<i>Crediting interest rate</i>	Equal to discount rate	Equal to discount rate
<i>Return on investments p.a.</i>	7.5%	7.5%
Tax on investment income	15%	15%
(adjustment to discount rate)		
Tax on employer contributions	15%	15%
<i>Member movements</i>	As per actuarial review at 30 June 2003	As per actuarial review at 30 June 2003

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
Assets and Liabilities Recognised		
Present value of defined benefit obligation at end of year	(63,670)	(59,126)
Fair value of plan assets at end of year	62,323	64,176
Net Asset/(Liability) Recognised	(1,347)	5,050

Income/Expense Recognised

Current service cost	1,052	848
Interest cost	3,032	2,630
Expected return on plan assets (2)	(4,899)	(4,233)
Net Actuarial (gains)/losses	9,925	(1,204)
Net (Income)/Expense Recognised	9,110	(1,959)

Note (2) The expected return on plan assets is determined by weighting the expected long term return for each asset class by the expected long term allocation of assets to each asset class. Returns are net of investment tax and investment fees.

Reconciliation of Income/Expense Recognised

Gain/(Loss) on movement in SFC Super Scheme obligation (Disclosed in Statement of Recognised Income and Expense)	(6,397)	4,022
Employer Contributions (Defined Benefit) (Disclosed in Employee Related Expenses)	(2,713)	(2,063)
Net Income/(Expense) Recognised	(9,110)	1,959



Financial Report 2007/08

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

9. Provision for Employee Related Expenses (continued)

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
Movement in Recognised Liability/(Asset)		
Superannuation Liability/(Asset) at Beginning of Year	(5,050)	(1,029)
Recognised in Statement of Recognised Income and Expense	6,397	(4,022)
Superannuation Liability/(Asset) at Year-end	1,347	(5,050)

Asset allocation

The table below shows the benchmark (target) asset allocation of the Scheme assets as at 30 June 2008.

Strategic Asset Allocation

	Scheme Benchmark 30 June 2008	Scheme Benchmark 30 June 2007
Australian shares	30%	30%
International shares	25%	25%
Property	15%	15%
Alternative Investments	10%	10%
Fixed Interest (Australian and International)	10%	10%
Cash	10%	10%
Total	100%	100%

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
Reconciliation of the Present Value of the Defined Benefit Obligation		
Present value of defined benefit obligation at start of year	59,126	55,435
Current service cost	1,052	847
Interest cost	3,032	2,630
Member contributions and transfers from other funds	888	917
Actuarial (gains)/losses	880	2,328
Benefits and tax paid	(1,309)	(3,031)
Present value of defined benefit obligation at end of year	63,669	59,126

Reconciliation of the Fair Value of Plan Assets

Fair value of plan assets at start of year	64,177	56,464
Expected return on plan assets	4,899	4,233
Actuarial gains/(losses)	(9,045)	3,532
Employer contributions	2,713	2,062
Member contributions and transfers from other funds	888	917
Benefits and tax paid	(1,309)	(3,031)
Fair value of plan assets at end of year	62,323	64,177

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

9. Provision for Employee Related Expenses (continued)

General plan information

The Scheme was closed to new members on 30 June 2005.

Members of the Scheme are entitled to receive lump sum benefits on leaving service due to retirement, death, total and permanent disablement and resignation. An actuarial investigation into the Scheme was performed as at 30 June 2003 by David Quinn-Watson BSc(Hons) FIAA for Financial Synergy Actuarial Pty Ltd. The investigation showed the following figures determined in accordance with AAS 25 *Financial Reporting by Superannuation Plans*:

	\$'000
Defined Benefits	\$51,977
Accumulation Benefits	\$574
Total Accrued Benefits	\$52,551

The actuary recommended that the Employer contribute at the following rates:

- 14% of salaries, being 11% of salaries towards the defined benefits and 3% of salaries to an accumulation account in each member's name, in accordance with the relevant award(s), plus
- Additional contributions to improve the financial position of the Scheme.

The funding method used to make the contribution recommendation was the "entry age normal method".

The economic assumptions used in the investigation were:

Rate of investment return	7.0% p.a.
Rate of inflationary salary increases	4.0% p.a.

Historical information	2008	2007
	\$'000	\$'000
Present value of defined benefit obligation at end of year	63,670	59,126
Fair value of plan assets at end of year	(62,323)	(64,177)
(Surplus)/Deficit in plan	1,347	(5,050)
Experience adjustments - plan liabilities	(1,143)	(2,977)
Experience adjustments - plan assets	(9,045)	3,532
Actual return on Scheme assets	(4,146)	7,765

Expected Contributions

The expected contributions to the Scheme for the year ending 30 June 2008 are as follows.

	\$'000
Expected employer contributions	\$2,537
Expected member contributions (including deemed member contributions)	\$1,096

In-house Assets

The fair value of Scheme assets does not include any of the Employer's financial instruments, property occupied by the Employer or other assets used by the Employer.

Effect of Curtailments and Settlements

No material curtailments or settlements occurred during the year.

A *curtailment* is an event that significantly reduces the expected years of future service of present employees or reduces the accrual of defined benefits for a significant number of employees for some or all of their future services. A curtailment will occur when there is a significant reduction in the number of employees covered by the plan or where the plan is amended resulting in a reduction of benefits associated with the future service of current employees. Events causing a curtailment may include the termination or suspension of a plan.

A *settlement* occurs when an entity sponsoring a superannuation plan enters into an irrevocable transaction that eliminates all further legal or constructive obligation for all or a significant part of the benefits provided under the plan. Examples include the purchase of non-participating annuities for members or the payment of a lump sum payment to, or on behalf of, members in exchange for their right to receive benefits specified under the plan.



Financial Report 2007/08

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

10. Financial Instruments Disclosures

The Commission's exposure to interest rate risk and the effective weighted average interest rate for classes of financial assets and liabilities for 2007/08 are detailed below:

	Weighted Average Interest Rate	Non Interest Bearing \$'000	Floating Interest Rate \$'000	Fixed Interest 1 year or less \$'000	Maturing Over 1 year to 5 years \$'000	Total \$'000	Market Value \$'000
Financial Assets							
Cash	7.42%	9	6,838	-	-	6,846	6,846
Receivables		1,042	-	-	-	1,042	1,042
		1,051	6,838	-	-	7,889	7,889
Financial Liabilities							
Interest Bearing Liabilities	7.08%	-	-	1,500	3,198	4,698	4,677
Payables		5,016	-	-	-	5,016	5,016
		5,016	-	1,500	3,198	9,714	9,693

Comparative figures for 2006-07 are detailed below:

	Weighted Average Interest Rate	Non Interest Bearing \$'000	Floating Interest Rate \$'000	Fixed Interest 1 year or less \$'000	Maturing Over 1 year to 5 years \$'000	Total \$'000	Market Value \$'000
Financial Assets							
Cash	6.28%	8	903	-	-	912	912
Receivables		1,020	-	-	-	1,020	1,020
		1,028	903	-	-	1,932	1,932
Financial Liabilities							
Interest Bearing Liabilities	6.54%	-	-	1,368	3,330	4,698	4,673
Payables		2,645	-	-	-	2,645	2,645
		2,645	-	1,368	3,330	7,343	7,318

Financial Risk management

The activities of the State Fire Commission are exposed to the following financial risks:

Credit Risk

The largest exposure to credit risk to the financial assets of the Commission relates to Trade Debtors. This exposure relates to the risk of financial loss due to debtors failing to discharge their financial obligations. This risk is significantly mitigated by the nature of the Commission's revenue, most revenue is collected by the Commission or other Government agencies as a legislative requirement and has virtually no credit risk. Sales to the public which carry credit risk are a small part of the Commission's revenue and bad debts have been immaterial in the past. The maximum credit risk exposure in relation to Trade Debtors is the carrying amount less the provision for doubtful debts (Notes 1(e), 3). The Commission is not materially exposed to any individual or group. Trading terms for the Commission's Trade Debtors is 30 days.

Interest Rate Risk

The Commission's exposure to interest rate risk, and the effective weighted average interest rate by class of asset or liability is set out in the table above. Exposure arises predominantly from assets and liabilities bearing variable interest rates as the Commission intends to hold fixed rate assets and liabilities to maturity.

Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Commission will not be able to meet its financial obligations as they become due. The cash inflow stream of the Commission is very consistent with some seasonality relating to quarterly collections. The major cash outflow is salaries which is also consistent. The Commission's approach to managing liquidity is to ensure it will always have sufficient liquidity. It monitors its cash flows and utilises an overdraft when needed.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

10. Financial Instruments Disclosures (Continued)

Other Price Risk

The only sensitivity analysis performed on financial assets and liabilities is interest rate risk. Other price risks are not considered material.

Interest Rate Risk Sensitivity Analysis for 2007/08:

	Carrying Amount \$'000	Interest Rate Risk			
		-1%		+1%	
		Impact on Operating Result \$'000	Impact on Equity \$'000	Impact on Operating Result \$'000	Impact on Equity \$'000
<i>30 June 2008</i>					
Financial Assets					
Cash	6,838	(68)	(68)	68	68
Trade Debtors	1,042	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Financial Assets	7,889	(68)	(68)	68	68
Financial Liabilities					
Interest Bearing Liabilities	4,698	47	47	(47)	(47)
Receivables	5,014	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Financial Liabilities	9,712	47	47	(47)	(47)

Comparative figures for 2006-07 are detailed below:

	Carrying Amount \$'000	Interest Rate Risk			
		-1%		+1%	
		Impact on Operating Result \$'000	Impact on Equity \$'000	Impact on Operating Result \$'000	Impact on Equity \$'000
<i>30 June 2007</i>					
Financial Assets					
Cash	903	(9)	(9)	9	9
Trade Debtors	1,020	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Financial Assets	1,923	(9)	(9)	9	9
Financial Liabilities					
Interest Bearing Liabilities	4,698	47	47	(47)	(47)
Receivables	2,645	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Financial Liabilities	7,343	47	47	(47)	(47)

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
Bank Overdraft Facility		
Total Facility (unsecured and subject to an annual review)	3,000	2,000
Unused Facility	3,000	2,000
Credit Card Facility		
Total Facility	400	300
Allocated Facility	255	290
Facility Available	145	10

Loans

Since 1986, all loan raising has been arranged through the Tasmanian Public Finance Corporation. All loans are recorded in Australian dollars and are unsecured. The loan amount in current liabilities comprises the portions of the loans payable within one year. The non-current loan balance represents the portion of the loans due later than one year.



Financial Report 2007/08

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

11. Contributions from State and Commonwealth Governments

Under section 101 of the *Fire Service Act 1979* the Treasurer must pay out of monies appropriated by Parliament, such amounts as the Treasurer determines appropriate towards the operating costs of the Commission. The Commonwealth Government pays the Commission an annual contribution towards the operating cost of brigades.

Funds provided to the Commission are detailed below:-

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
State Government Contributions		
General Contribution	2,810	2,810
Wildfire Fighting Reimbursements	2,790	4,122
Total	5,600	6,932
Commonwealth Government Contributions		
General Contribution	139	139
Helicopter Hire	329	150
Urban Search and Rescue	752	58
EMA (Volunteer Recruitment Program)	38	-
Southern Impact Exercise	-	81
Bushfire Mitigation Programme	-	72
Total	1,258	500

12. Fire Prevention Charges

Income is earned by the Commission's Service Divisions through the sale, inspection and maintenance of fire safety equipment, training and provision of other fire prevention services throughout the State. Income is recorded when the goods or services are provided.

Fire Prevention Charges comprise:-

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
Sale of Fire Safety Services and Equipment	1,569	1,540
Alarm Rental	774	699
Avoidable False Alarms	89	111
Commercial Training	1,039	1,054
Inspection Fees - TasFire Equipment	856	844
Inspection Fees - Building Safety	165	159
Total	4,492	4,406

13. Sundry Income

Reimbursement by Tasmanian Ambulance Service (1)	181	177
Road Accident Rescue	256	190
Interest Received	58	49
Insurance Recoveries	47	16
Rent	29	32
Wildfire Fighting Reimbursements (2)	311	638
Worker's Compensation Refunds	87	62
Other	511	547
Total	1,480	1,712

(1) Contribution for shared facilities and reimbursement for costs incurred in upgrading and maintaining the Tasmanian Ambulance Service radio network and communication centre. (Note 21)

(2) Reimbursement from Forestry Tasmania and the Parks and Wildlife Service for wildfire fighting.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
14. Employee Related Expenses		
Salaries, Wages and Allowances	25,956	25,190
Payroll Tax	2,028	1,982
Annual Leave	3,118	3,296
Long Service Leave	942	1,017
Superannuation (1)	3,589	3,454
Total	35,633	34,938
(1) Superannuation Contributions:		
State Fire Commission Superannuation Scheme	2,713	2,591
Retirement Benefits Fund	808	703
Other Funds	63	38
Superannuation related to movement in provisions for Long Service Leave and Annual Leave	5	122
Total Superannuation Expense	3,589	3,454
15. Public Relations, Subscriptions and Consultants		
Advertising	512	668
Functions	51	37
Grants and Donations	27	35
Other	48	40
Professional Fees	164	120
Subscriptions	139	245
Total	942	1,147
16. Operations Expenses		
Communication Expenses	1,239	1,281
Computer Expenses	581	600
Consumables	331	421
Electricity	436	427
Fire Suppression & Control	175	362
Hire of Equipment	33	38
Motor Vehicle Expenses	1,177	1,208
Municipal Rates	333	337
Office Cleaning	132	127
Other	269	204
Printing and Stationery	167	229
Removal Expenses	3	48
Rental of Premises	14	18
Travel Expenses	312	665
Wildfire Fighting Equipment Hire	1,585	2,932
Total	6,787	8,898
17. Protective Clothing and Uniforms		
Protective Clothing	351	536
Uniforms	306	231
Total	657	766



Financial Report 2007/08

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

	2008 \$,000	2007 \$,000
18. Financial and Other Expenses		
Audit Fees	32	30
Cost of Goods Sold re: Sale of Fire Safety Services and Equipment	841	804
Fringe Benefits Tax	102	103
Local Government Collection Fees	1,075	995
Loss on Sale of Assets	59	83
Pensioner Rebates (Municipal)	780	699
Pensioner Rebates (Transport)	419	415
Stock Expenses and Write Offs	30	38
Other	30	45
Total	3,368	3,213
19. Borrowing Costs		
Interest on Bank Overdraft	91	103
Interest on Interest Bearing Liabilities	306	294
Total	397	396
20. Repairs and Maintenance		
Communication Expenses	161	126
Computer Equipment	13	18
Fire Fighting Equipment	85	103
Land and Buildings	477	434
Motor Vehicles	668	717
Office Furniture	9	8
Workshop Equipment	40	35
Total	1,454	1,441
21. Minor Equipment		
Communication Expenses	38	96
Computer Equipment	33	98
Fire Fighting Equipment	279	217
Office Furniture and Related Equipment	141	103
Tasmanian Ambulance Service Communications Equipment (Note 13)	76	78
Workshop Equipment	78	75
Other	62	97
Total	706	764
22. Retained Operating Surpluses		
Accumulated Surplus/(Deficit) at the beginning of the year	69,486	66,621
Net Surplus/(Deficit) for year	4,354	(1,156)
Other movements in Retained Operating Surpluses reported in the Statement of Recognised Income and Expense	(6,397)	4,022
Retained Operating Surpluses at year end	67,443	69,486
23. Reserves		
Asset Revaluation Reserve		
Accumulated Balance at beginning of year	4,029	3,657
(Less)/Add Net Revaluation of Assets	6,292	373
Asset Revaluation Reserve at year end	10,321	4,029

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

24. Reconciliation of Total Equity

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
Total Equity at the beginning of the year	73,515	70,277
Total changes in equity reported in the Statement of Recognised Income and Expense	4,249	3,238
Total Equity at year end	77,765	73,515

25. Remuneration of Commissioners

There are seven Commissioners and two of these are State Servants. Commissioners not employed under the *Tasmanian State Service Act 2001* are remunerated on an annual basis and superannuation is also paid to these commissioners in accordance with the superannuation guarantee legislation. All Commissioners are reimbursed for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.

Commissioners were paid the following remuneration:		
	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
Annual Remuneration	26	22
Superannuation	2	1
Total Remuneration	28	23

26. Remuneration of Auditors

The Tasmanian Audit Office audits the accounts for the State Fire Commission. The total remuneration to the Tasmanian Audit Office exclusive of GST was \$31,850 in 2008 and \$30,064 in 2007.

27. Notes to the Cash Flow Statement

(a) Reconciliation of Cash and Cash Equivalents

For the purpose of the Cash Flow Statement, cash includes cash on hand and at bank.

Cash at the end of the financial year shown in the Cash Flow Statement is reconciled to the related items in the Balance Sheet as follows.

	2008 \$'000	2007 \$'000
Bank Account	1,538	103
11am Call Account	5,300	800
On hand	9	8
Cash and Cash Equivalents in the Balance Sheet and Cash Flow Statement	6,846	912

(b) Reconciliation of Net Surplus to Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities

Net Surplus	4,354	(1,156)
Add (Less) Non-Cash Items:		
Depreciation	4,803	4,632
(Profit)/Loss on disposal of assets	59	83
Net cash used in operating activities before change in assets and liabilities	9,216	3,559
Changes in Assets and Liabilities during the financial period		
(Increase)/Decrease in receivables	(22)	(129)
(Increase)/Decrease in accrued revenue	385	18
(Increase)/Decrease in inventory	(50)	(168)
(Increase)/Decrease in prepayments	26	18
Increase/(Decrease) in payables/accruals	2,382	245
Increase/(Decrease) in provisions	17	1,145
Net Cash from Operating activities	11,954	4,688



Financial Report 2007/08

GLOSSARY

AFAC	Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council
BCRC	Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre
CBRN	Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DOTARS	Department of Transport and Regional Services
FDI	Fire Danger Index
FireComm	TFS call receipt and dispatch centre
FT	Forestry Tasmania
IMT	Incident Management Team
MVA	Motor Vehicle Accident
NAFC	National Aerial Firefighting Centre
PWS	Parks and Wildlife Service
RAR	Road Accident Rescue
SES	State Emergency Service
SFC	State Fire Commission
SRRC	State Road Rescue Committee
TAS	Tasmanian Ambulance Service
TasPol	Tasmania Police
TFBCA	Tasmanian Fire Brigades Competitions Association
TFS	Tasmania Fire Service
UFU	United Firefighters Union
WST	Workplace Standards Tasmania

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

The data used for reporting operational activities was derived from TFS incident reporting system which conforms to AFAC Standard for Fire Reporting System. All TFS brigades contribute data to the reporting system. Incident reports are compiled from observations made at the scene by responding officers and fire investigators. Of the 11,990 incidents attended by TFS, 96.67% had incident reports completed by brigades. All graphs and tables are based on completed incident reports.

STATE FIRE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

The State Fire Management Council is established under Section 14 of the *Fire Service Act 1979*. The Council's primary role is to develop a State Vegetation Fire Management Policy to be used as the basis for all fire management planning. The Council comprises:

Council Members:

- Chairperson nominated by the Minister (Stephen Geard)
- Chief Officer of the Tasmania Fire Service (John Gledhill)
- Chief Executive Officer of the Forestry Corporation (Bob Gordon)
- General Manager of National Parks and Wildlife (Peter Mooney)
- Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (Tony Gee)
- Forest Industries Association of Tasmania (Greg Hickey)
- Local Government Association of Tasmania (Rod Sweetnam)

Nominees:

- Nominee of the Chief Officer, Tasmania Fire Service (Mike Brown)
- Nominee of the Chief Executive Officer of the Forestry Corporation (Tony Blanks)
- Nominee of the Director of National Parks and Wildlife (Adrian Pyrke)

2007/08 Chairperson's Annual Report

As Chairman of the State Fire Management Council I am pleased to report on the activities of the Council, which met four times in the year ended 30 June 2008.

Through the year, the Council continued to have discussions with the Forest Practices Authority regarding their interpretation of inappropriate burning.

The Council gave advice on the implementation of the Statewide Strategic Fuel Reduction Burning (FRB) program, and as required in the FRB Implementation plan, approved the burn program for the forthcoming burning season.



S D Geard

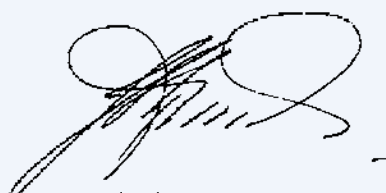
CHAIRPERSON

17 September 2008

Compliance and Certification – Superannuation

Superannuation Declaration

I, Jane Hyland, Acting Chair, State Fire Commission, hereby certify that the State Fire Commission has met its obligations under the *Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992* of the Commonwealth in respect of any employee who is a member of a complying superannuation scheme to which the State Fire Commission contributes.



J P Hyland BE

ACTING CHAIR

19 September 2008



L P Dewhurst AFSM

COMMISSION MEMBER



HEAD OFFICE OF THE
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