

Fireground

summer 2004



▶ **NSW USAR
Exercise**

▶ **TFS
Turns 25!**

▶ **Opening of
Northern
Regional HQ
Youngtown**

SUMMER 2004

Official Journal of
The Tasmania Fire Service



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Fireground!

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4



12



16



24



27

Contents

From the Chief Officer	2
Official Opening of Northern Regional Headquarters	4
Introduction of the Fire Permit Period	6
Bushfire Season 2004 - 2005	7
Ray Martin Takes a Look at Smoke Alarms	8
Snug Fire Station Official Opening	9
Hazdent 2004	10
Howden Presentation	10
Manual Handling - A Statewide Issue	11
Firefighters Achieve National Pay Parity	12
Calling all Female Firefighters!	13
National Medal Presentations at Strahan	13
Snow Joking!	13
1966 Ford F-350 Hose Carriage - "Geeveston No 1"	14
11th Annual AFAC Conference & Inaugural Bushfire CRC Conference	15
Yigong Tsangpo Kayak Expedition Tibet, 2004	16
Mini Tornado in Hobart	18
Coleman Street Fire	18
The Huon Challenge	19
Are We Contributing to Plant Disease & Weed Spread?	20
TVFBA 14 Years as State President	22
Long Service Badges	22
Handover of Snorkel	22
TVFBA Annual General Meeting	23
Aurora assists Derwent Valley Fire Brigades	23
Multi-Agency Category 2 USAR Course	24
Farewell to Bruce, David, Steve, & David	26
Volunteer Regional Training Calendar	27
Lock Up Your Boss Day	27
Firefighter on Exchange	28
And a word from Stewart	28
MVA High Street Launceston	29

TFS Online for the "Hottest News in Town"	29
NSW USAR Exercise - Operation van Dieman	30
Library News	32
TasFire Equipment's New Youngtown Offices	34
Photo Competition Winners	35
Obituaries	36
Our Conferences - time for a change?	37
TFGA and TFS Join Forces	37
Training Services Cambridge	38
Greetings from the UK	39
Introducing Firecomm	39
New Policy Statement	40
Hawks Hill Fire	40
Firecomm Hints!	41
Calling all Volunteers!	41
Dunalley to Sweden and Back	42
On The Move	44
Group Officers 2004	45
ABC Giving Tree	45
Look Up Look Out	46
Photo Gallery	48
Capability Enhancement	50
Longford Fire Brigade	52
PWS Annual Conference	53
Well Done Justin!	53
Quamby Group Exercise	54
International Firefighters' Day 2005	56
History of St Patrick's Brigade	58
Wesley Vale Brigade	58
Farewell from Dave Tomkinson	59
Sandford Scout Group Visit	60
Franklin Fire Brigade	60
Excavator Fire on Bass Highway	61
17th Kmart Wishing Tree Appeal	62
Specialist Training	63

39



46



61

From the Chief Officer



The first of November 2004 was the 25th Anniversary of TFS. It probably goes without saying that those of us who were around in 1979 for the birth of TFS have witnessed huge changes. I thought therefore to write a few words on my thoughts on reflection.

Over the last 25 years TFS has matured into an effective and contemporary fire service, however, the journey has not

been easy. Even prior to the enactment of the Fire Service Act the idea of a single integrated statewide fire service was controversial and met with considerable opposition. Amalgamating urban and rural brigades seems very logical to most of us now but for a long time the two very different cultures persisted and almost worked against integration. It was only in the early 90's when the decision to abolish the separate urban and country management structures within TFS and adopt a single management model that the integration really progressed. Over the last 25 years a new fire service culture has developed. The tags of "country" and "urban" have all but disappeared. Emergency incidents are responded to with whatever resources are needed. At times crews and appliances are mobilised across the State to assist at major incidents. Volunteers and career firefighters work together closely and harmoniously regardless of the location and type of incident.

Since 1979 there have been great changes in technology and tactics that have changed the way emergency incidents are managed. A quick perusal of early 80's newspaper clippings reveals a much less subtle approach to firefighting. "Surround and drown" with two and half inch canvas hoses was often the tactic of choice for dealing with structural fires. Bushfires were fought with slip-on units and knapsacks. PPE


was seen as optional for all firefighting and probably a bit soft. Brigades were summoned with a town siren or for the fortunate few, by Mornington Alarms. Mobile phones were not available and helicopters had just started to be used. Computers were the size of shipping containers and not used by TFS. Your typing was done by typists in the typing pool and corrections were made with "whiteout". Smoking was an indoor activity when and where you wanted!

Clearly an era of huge amount of change in technology and the workplace has elapsed. With all that happening TFS was metamorphosing into a new modern organisation, structurally and culturally. But I am not saying that change in TFS has finished because whilst ever the world around us and society continues to change we must keep moving also. I do suspect that the last 25 years has been especially dynamic.


A search of our personnel database revealed that we still have some 480 volunteers and 66 employees who were TFS members in November 1979 (representing about 10% of our current volunteer membership and 15% of employees). I specially thank you for your contribution to the creation of the modern TFS. Many other people no longer members have contributed, along with those still with us who are contributing.

It's our people and their commitment who have been responsible for the successful development of TFS. I think we all can be justly proud of our achievement. Tasmania has an integrated state fire service providing emergency service management on a par with the best in the world.

Congratulations TFS!



I thank all TFS members for your significant contribution throughout the year and I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.



TFS Turns 25!



Northern Region staff celebrate 25 years as Acting Regional Officer Mike Brown cuts the cake



Official Opening of Northern Regional Headquarters

By Deputy Regional Officer North, Mike Brown

The Hon David Llewellyn MHA, Minister for Health and Human Services officially opened the Northern Regional Headquarters building at 339 Hobart Road Youngtown on Thursday 4th November 2004.

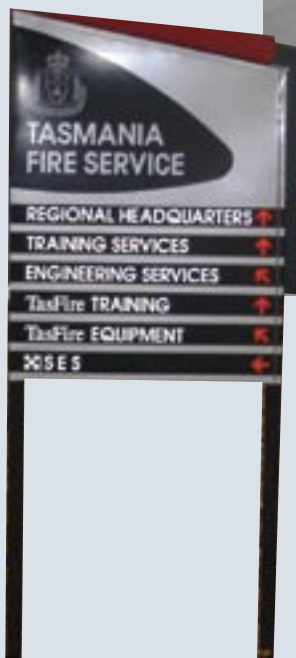
Mr Llewellyn said "The Tasmanian community benefits from a unique 'whole of Government' approach to emergency response that sees land management agencies, Fire, Ambulance, SES and Police operate together under co-operative arrangements.

Four weeks ago TFS and Tas Ambulance members attended a high level Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) course together at this complex.

The Labour Government fully supports its emergency service agencies and the proactive manner in which all agencies co-operate to make the best use of available resources. The Tasmania Fire Service is truly a leading organisation on the national fire scene and as a truly unified service, is the envy of all mainland fire services."

Since the amalgamation of Tasmania Fire Services in 1979, the Regional Headquarters operated from the makeshift premises of Cypress Street and then Brisbane Street in Launceston. Around twelve years ago regional and brigade management combined and the Headquarters was located at the old "Court House" hotel building next to the main fire station in Paterson Street.

Northern regional staff found that this property was available some eight years ago and made a submission to the State Fire Commission that this site would be suitable not only for a Regional Training



Centre, but as a Regional Complex to facilitate a headquarters complex inclusive of Engineering Services workshops, TasFire Equipment sales and service centre, Training Services for volunteer and staff training and TasFire Training, the service's commercial training facility.

The Northern Regional Centre for the State Emergency Service has also been situated here for several years. SES too is now enjoying updated facilities at Youngtown.

While the old headquarters in Launceston, the mechanical workshops at Rocherlea, and portable fire equipment centre at Kings Meadows served the TFS well over the years, the multi-function complex we see here today will clearly be seen as a watershed decision in efficient operations.

Mr Llewellyn went on to say "I congratulate the Architects, Artas, and the builders, Fairbrother and Meadson Constructions along with the project manager, Regional Officer Graham Otley. The design and workmanship of this modern complex will, I'm sure, stand the test of time."



Introduction of the Fire Permit Period

By District Officer Operations Support, Ken Burns

The introduction of the Fire Permit Period this year will see some changes introduced as a result of the on-going review into the Fire Permit System which many readers would be aware was initiated by the State Fire Management Council two years ago. These changes are outlined below:

Declaration

The declaration and revocation of the Fire Permit Period in recent years based on regional boundaries has not necessarily reflected the wide ranging variation of the Soil Dryness Index or Fire Danger across the region. As a result the timing of the declaration, in particular has been appropriate in some areas but not in others.

From now on it is our intention to introduce permits progressively as conditions dictate using municipal boundaries. Essentially we will take into consideration the degree of fuel dryness (as indicated by the Soil Dryness Index) and the probability of bad fire weather (based on historical records). In other words we intend to introduce fire permit periods once there is a significant potential for fires to be difficult to control and to cause damage.

Fire Permit Form

A new permit form has been introduced. A summary of the changes are outlined below:

- Provision for more detailed address information of both the Permit Holder and the location of the burn
- Provision for a date range
- One permit can be issued for multiple stubble fires
- Permits cannot be issued for domestic waste
- Permits cannot be issued for fires greater in size than 2 hectares unless the applicant prepares and has approved a Burning Plan (stubble burning is excluded from this provision)
- Permits must be signed by the applicant to acknowledge they understand and will comply with the permit conditions

Burning Plans

You will note from the above, any fire in excess of 2 hectares (excluding stubble) cannot be undertaken without the applicant preparing and having approved a Burning Plan.

Once approved, the plan then becomes the principal condition of the Fire Permit. This concept places responsibility upon the applicant to be able to demonstrate they have the appropriate knowledge, competence and resources to undertake the burn, rather than the permit officer determining the conditions.

Burning plans can be approved by Permit Officers who have been accredited with "Conduct Prescribed Burning" under the recognition of competence process conducted recently against the Public Safety Training Package.

Those Permit Officers not yet accredited may refer the plan

to their District Officer for approval. Similarly, accredited Permit Officers may choose to refer the plan to the District Officer if it is of a complex nature.

To assist applicants with their plan, we have prepared "Guidelines for Burning Vegetation" a copy of both the burning plan and the guidelines are available on the TFS website under Fire Permit Information.

Domestic Waste

Permits are not to be issued for other than the purpose of burning vegetation. Garden refuse in piles of less than 1 cubic metre are a prescribed class of fire and provided there is someone in attendance, a water supply, and the area is cleared around for three metres and clear of overhanging foliage it is permissible to burn it under the provisions of the Fire Service Act without a fire permit, however, Tasmania Fire Service discourages this type of backyard burning because of the air quality issues associated with it. Anyone seeking a permit for such a fire should be advised permits are not issued for such a fire and encouraged to dispose of it by other means. If people choose to proceed with this type of burning they should be advised to register their intent via the freecall number 1800 000 699 to avoid any unnecessary brigade response. Furthermore, as many local councils prohibit backyard type burning, people should also be advised to contact their local council to ascertain any local restrictions. Builders' waste and other refuse do not meet the legal requirements of a prescribed class of fire under the Fire Service Act and therefore cannot be burnt legally during a fire permit period unless enclosed in an incinerator.

Permits generally should not be issued in suburban residential areas. Typically a residential block of 750 square metres with a house on it would not have sufficient fuels to justify the need to reduce it by burning. Exceptions may be where homes are built on blocks in or adjoining bushlands and wherein developing or maintaining defendable space, litter and other fine fuels have been raked into piles which need to be disposed of through burning.

Summary

The changes outlined above are the result of extensive consultation with many stakeholders. We believe the changes will result in a number of efficiencies but like any changes we can anticipate that during the transition there may be some minor obstacles to overcome.

If you should be uncertain about any of the changes to the Fire Permit System, please seek clarification from your District Officer.



Bushfire Season 2004 - 2005

By Acting Manager Community Education, Chris Tomes

Over the summer months Community Education will be focusing on Bushfire Awareness.

Community Education will take steps through the media and other means to encourage householders to properly prepare their properties and themselves against the dangers of bushfire. Some of the messages in this campaign include: encouraging householders to create defensible space; encouraging able bodied people who have properly prepared their property to stay and defend; and letting the community know that a properly prepared home or shack is a safe place to be in a bushfire.

We are also encouraging affected members of the community, people living in or within 100 metres of the bush, to call the Tasmania Fire Service on freecall 1800 000 699 for a free brochure, 'Will You Survive', on what to do to prepare their home. We are also encouraging people to visit our web site, www.fire.tas.gov.au, where there is also detailed information about bushfire preparedness and a full range of TFS publications.

Advertising will occur statewide:

- Radio
- Print
- Television, Community Service Announcements
- Gallow Signs
- TFS Website
- Community Events
- Community Education Trailers

Bushfire Awareness advertising features were recently run in The Advocate, The Sunday Tasmanian and The Examiner. We have also advertised in the Spring Edition of the Tasmanian Farmer with a distribution of 24,000. An example of the ad we placed in these publications is above.

For further information or resources please feel free to contact me on 6230 8443.

DON'T GET BURNT

Prepare your home for the fire season.

Create a defensible space around your home by minimising flammable materials.

- Rake up leaves and other vegetation litter and trim branches well clear of the house.
- Keep your grass short and well watered.
- Clear the roof and gutters of leaves and twigs.
- Move other flammable materials, such as woodpiles, paints and fuels, well clear of your home.

For a free brochure on lowering your risks from bushfires call

1800 000 699

or visit www.fire.tas.gov.au



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Ray Martin Takes a Look at Smoke Alarms

By Director Community Fire Safety, Damien Killalea

Recently there has been some interest from the national media, including "A Current Affair", about the relative merits of different types of smoke alarms. Ray Martin's interest was aroused when members of the International Crusade against Fire Deaths arrived in Tasmania a few months ago to finish filming a documentary condemning the most popular type of domestic smoke alarm in the world - the ionisation alarm.

It is estimated that 90% of the smoke alarms in Australian homes are of the ionisation type.

Regrettably, some people based overseas have even called for ionisation smoke alarms to be outlawed, even though in Australia, Europe, North America and elsewhere, these types

of alarms are credited with savings tens of thousands of lives over the last forty years. These people want to see all ionisation smoke alarms replaced with photo-electric alarms because they believe they are more effective over a wider range of typical fires that occur in the home.

Not surprisingly, Australian fire services, including the TFS, do not support the view that ionisation smoke alarms should be removed from homes. Research conducted in North America and Europe supports the fact that ionisation smoke alarms and photo-electric smoke alarms have a role to play in protecting people from different types of fires in the home. A recent report from the US National Institute of Standards and Technology states that both types of alarm '... consistently provided time for occupants to escape from most residential fires ...'

TFS's main concern with the International Crusade's approach was that they would diminish people's faith in their smoke alarms, and may cause them to stop maintaining their alarms or remove them altogether. This would significantly increase their chances of dying in a house fire.

Through its educational material and website, TFS presents information about the relative merits of each type of smoke alarm so that people are able to make an informed choice about which type of alarm best suits their particular circumstances.



Ionisation alarms are more effective at detecting free-burning fires with flames, and are suitable for loungerooms and bedrooms, particularly if that is where fires are likely to start. If placed too close to kitchens or bathrooms, they may give false alarms caused by cooking and steam. Photo-electric alarms are more effective at detecting slow-burning and smouldering fires, and are suitable for hallways, bedrooms, living rooms, loungerooms, kitchens and small apartments.

The Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) has commenced informal discussions with the CSIRO with a view to conducting research into the types of fires that kill people in Australian homes, and the types of alarms that are likely to be the most effective in these fires.

In the meantime, our position is that the best protection offered by smoke alarms is if either ionisation or photo-electric alarms are installed in all main rooms and hallways in the home. Ideally, they should be hard-wired and inter-connected. When one alarm operates, all inter-connected alarms operate, alerting occupants throughout the house. To reduce false alarms, ionisation alarms should not be installed in or near the kitchen or bathroom.

Young children are likely to sleep through the sound of a smoke alarm, so parents must be prepared to alert them to a fire and help them escape to safety.

Snug Fire Station Official Opening

By District Officer South West, Hugh Jones

The official opening of the new Snug Fire Station took place on Saturday 14th August 2004.

The event was attended by brigade members, both past and present, and specially invited guests who have supported the brigade over the past 36 years.

Brigade Chief Barry Duggan bade everyone a warm welcome. This was significant in itself as we had experienced atrocious weather over the previous few days, with daytime temperatures hovering around the 8 degree mark together with driving rain, just to make it seem that little bit colder! Saturday was a vast improvement, with the temperature hovering around a balmy 10 degrees. But ... at least the sun was shining and the heaters were pumping warm air into the fire station.

Chief Officer John Gledhill performed the official opening, which was no mean feat as, earlier in the morning the plaque had fallen off the wall and had to be hastily reattached, albeit at a less than perfect angle! The curtain had to be pulled back with great finesse. The Chief was ably assisted in this by Barry Duggan (or did the Chief just want to share the blame if the plaque fell off again?).

Following the opening, the Chief Officer then presented National Medals to David Archer, Ian Kemp, Geoff Kemp, Ken Freeman, and Phillip Grimsey.

Later, Acting Regional Officer Tony Davidson presented Long Service Badges to Bill Holmes (35 years), Iain Freeman (35 years), David Archer (20 years), Ian Kemp (20 years), Geoff Kemp (20 years), Ken Freeman (20 years), Ralph Chintock (20 years), Phillip Grimsey (15 years), Glen Hughes (10 years) and Rodney Chadwick (10 years).

Although all of the recipients deserve high praise for their long



involvement with the Fire Service it is worth noting that Bill Holmes and Iain Freeman both received 35 year badges. Bill was the inaugural Deputy Captain in the North West Bay Brigade (later renamed Snug Brigade) back in 1968. Iain was appointed to the brigade a couple of months later. Both Bill and Iain have held the Brigade Chief's position for long periods of time, with Bill also becoming the Group Officer for a number of years. They are both held in very high esteem by their colleagues, and they are still active in the brigade even now. I suppose you could say

that they have reached the stage of being 'icons' within the brigade, although I'm sure both would be too modest to accept this tag. Certainly, their own personal high standards and work ethic has rubbed off on the other brigade members, so it was fitting that they should be singled out for the high praise that they deserve.

Overall, the day was enjoyed by all who attended and lots of 'war stories' were swapped when the official part of the event was completed.

Hazdent 2004

By District Officer Brigade Operations, Gavin Freeman

Hazdent 2004 was organised by the New Zealand branch of the Institution of Fire Engineers in Christchurch on 22 and 23 September 2004. I was very fortunate to be given the opportunity to attend representing the TFS. The theme of the conference was hazardous materials emergency management with a heavy emphasis on the consequence management of a terrorist event. The presenters were well credentialed, with guests from the United Kingdom, Tokyo and the United States in addition to local experts headed by Mr Mike Hall, National Commander, New Zealand Fire Service.

The following presenters were of particular interest:

Mr Mike Hall welcomed delegates and gave an insight into the New Zealand Fire Service and their approach to the changing risk. His presentation emphasised the commonalities between accidental and deliberate events and suggested that as an 'ordinary' HazMat incident has wide reaching implications across various organisations, our approach to these simply needs to be translated into the counter terrorist context. He also suggested that the current environment has reinforced the need for us all to strive towards combined emergency services.

Sarah Norman, recently of the British Home Office, and now with the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management, gave an overview of the approach to terrorist event consequence management in the United Kingdom. She also offered a useful definition of a major incident; that is...

"When a threat occurs to people, the environment etc. on such a scale that local authorities cannot deal with it as a part of day to day business"

In this instance the UK activate their Major Incident Coordinating Group (MICG) which is simply a larger version of our MAC group in Tasmania. This group ensures unified command and interagency co-operation and planning.

Jerry Wheeler, from the FBI, passed on lessons learned from the management of the Pentagon incident in 2001. His presentation

reinforced the importance of pre-existing relationships and not 're-inventing the wheel' in response to the terrorist threat, but utilising capabilities already in place. He believed that if the planning process achieves nothing more than forging relationships it will have been worthwhile. He too advocated unified command and offered a philosophy of Harry S Truman;

"It is amazing what you can accomplish if you don't care who gets the credit"

Jim Stefanak, from the FBI, also discussed unified command, or multi agency incident management and related how the NIIMS (read AIIMS) has been adopted as the command model across agencies in the US.

Katsumi Yamaguchi was a captain on one of the first responding HazMat units to the Tokyo Subway Sarin gas attack. The capability gaps Tokyo identified subsequent to this incident are similar if not identical to those we have identified in Australia. The interesting thing was despite not being prepared for this type of incident at the time, they did provide a response and did eventually achieve satisfactory outcomes. Furthermore, of the millions of people in the subway system at the time of the attack and the 5501 people injured only 12 died, which was not a disastrous result by any means, however, the relative success of this response could be attributed to 'weight of attack', they were able to respond 1364 firefighters in 340 units!

Key Points:

- Deliberate incidents are not vastly different from those incidents we traditionally regard as core business
- The approach we have taken to terrorist incidents in Australia is comparable to other countries
- A multi-agency approach and a common command system are essential
- This is only an outline of some of the presentations over the two days and many of the messages projected can be equally applied to any incident, not just terrorist events.

Howden Presentation

By Third Officer Howden Brigade, Kent Harbutt

On Saturday 30th October the Howden Brigade officers hosted a barbeque at their station to acknowledge family members prior to the impending fire season. Families of brigade members locally, and for that matter throughout the state, should be thanked for their support and understanding through what may be challenging times ahead.

The occasion provided us with the ideal

opportunity to recognise Nan Gear for her outstanding 20 year contribution to the Brigade. Nan is a great ambassador for the work and commitment carried on by volunteer brigade members anywhere in the country. Congratulations Nan.

Brigade Chief, Brian Spencer is pictured presenting twenty year badge to brigade member Nan Gear.



Manual Handling - A Statewide Issue

Article and photos by Co-ordinator Human Services, Andrew Newell

Manual handling continues to be the most frequently occurring accident and/or injury across our fire service. Since 2001 when we first started to capture this sort of data we have had 91 injuries, which equates to 22% of all injuries reported in this period. It is also almost double what the second most frequently occurring injury has had in the same period (slips, trips and falls).

The main reasons why people receive manual handling injuries are:

- Incorrect posture
- Over estimating your ability (including strength and stamina)
- Twisting
- Starting cold (no warm-up)
- Acceleration / deceleration (quick short, sharp movements or stops)

It should be noted that the TFS is not the only fire agency recording a significant number of manual handling injuries - the same situation can be found at all fire agencies across Australia. Nor, is this problem limited to fire agencies, manual handling scores heavily with regard to injury statistics right across all industries where some form of manual labour is required to do the job.

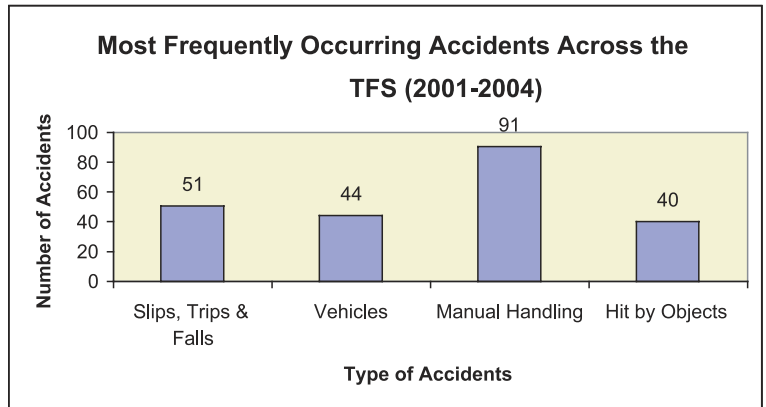
“So, what are we doing to try and reduce the likelihood of any one of our members suffering a manual handling injury”? As manual handling is not just confined to firefighting duties the strategies we have engaged needed to address the problem in a truly statewide manner ie across ALL areas. These strategies include:

Background:

In order to begin addressing the growing number of manual handling injuries the TFS organised for six firefighters and one mechanic to receive specialised external training in this arena. This external training has enabled the TFS to draw on internal expertise when developing its strategies. This core group has assisted in creating a Manual Handling Policy / Procedure. They have also been heavily involved in creating a three hour manual handling training session that meets the requirements of the Public Sector Training Package (PSTP).

So what does this mean for firefighters?

The New Year will see the start of Volunteer Training Instructors (VTI's) delivering to ALL volunteers a manual handling training session which will also include an OH&S update video. Prior to delivery the VTI's will be trained in manual handling techniques by representatives from the core group. As well as all current volunteer members receiving this training, all new members will also receive the training as a part of their induction to the service.



The graph displays a summary of the most frequently occurring accidents / injuries across the TFS since 2001

All career firefighters will receive a manual handling training session delivered by representatives from the core group. This training will form a necessary part of the PSTP which will therefore ensure that all new members will receive this training early on in their career.

Employee Safety Representatives (ESR's) will also be receiving training from the core group so that they are better equipped to address individual manual handling issues that crop-up in their workplaces.

Engineering Services will continue to seek input from representatives from the core group in relation to current and future vehicle designs. With so many appliances across our state it is important that we continue to factor manual handling concerns into vehicle alterations, or construction.

What training will divisional members receive?

All divisional members will receive manual handling training that is specific to their workplace. This training will become a part of induction for all new employees.

Divisional Employee Safety Representatives (ESR's) will also be receiving training from the core group so that they are better equipped to address individual manual handling issues that crop-up in their workplace.

When one of the above training courses heads your way - please get yourself along. Not only will the practical exercises be interesting as they will be relevant to your workplace, they may also assist in avoiding an injury down the track.

Firefighters Achieve National Pay Parity

By Deputy Chief Officer Peter Alexander

For a number of months this year the Tasmanian Government (through representatives from the Tasmania Fire Service) had been negotiating a new Enterprise Bargaining agreement. This agreement was between employees covered under the *Tasmanian Fire Fighting Industry Employees Award 2000* and the Minister administering the State Service Act 2000.

For those that may not have come across an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement through your own work, here is a little piece of background information on them:

- commonly known as an EB or an EBA
- employers and employees have the opportunity to examine, review and change existing workplace arrangements
- they are used for reaching agreement about wages or conditions of employment
- can be used to formalise existing informal arrangements
- employers and employees can negotiate directly with each other, however, union members may have their union (eg United Firefighters Union) represent them in their workplace negotiations

Some may say "Why not just stick with an award"? Primarily because an EB affords far greater flexibility to change any or all award conditions that would normally apply - AS LONG AS THE EMPLOYEE IS NOT DISADVANTAGED. The overriding intention is to create an agreement that contains conditions that benefit both employers and employees.

The main thrust of the UFU claim was to receive National Wage Parity ie raise Tasmanian Firefighters' wages in line with what is paid to their National counterparts. The Government accepted this claim and moved Tasmanian Firefighters' wages in line with the mainland states. This is not the first time the Government has raised wages for a particular industry in line with their mainland counterparts, the Police, Nurses and the Ambulance Service received similar "parity" offers in the last 12 months.

Some of the issues contained in the "Firefighter" EB included:

- Formalising fire investigator arrangements
- Remote Area Teams provisions
- Uniform and clothing
- Salary sacrifice
- Reasonable hours
- Professional development

The Australian Industrial Relations Commission needed to certify the agreement before it was classed as "approved" and "registered". This EB will be in existence from the 1st of July 2004 until the 30th of June 2007 - just prior to the end of this agreement negotiations will begin again on what issues may need to be included in the next EB.

Photos by Fire Investigator Mark Klop



The Hon Paul Lennon, Premier of Tasmania and United Firefighters Union Secretary, Richard Warwick formally signing the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement



Calling all Female Firefighters!

By Director Human Services Robyn Pearce

At the 2004 AFAC Conference a number of papers were delivered on research into women in fire services. These researchers would like to continue gathering information that helps fire services broaden their diversity. They have asked for female firefighters, whether career or volunteer, to help them continue their research by participating in a survey.

The following information outlines their request:

Did you work as a full time, casual or volunteer female firefighter at any time since 1994, or as a female field officer doing firefighting work as part of your duties?

We need your help!

We will be conducting a national web-based survey and we hope you will complete it. This web-survey will be the first of its kind in Australia. We hope it will help us understand the role and experiences of female firefighters in the fire services and firefighting rescue in Australia. The survey will be anonymous. The survey will go "live" on 1st December 2004.

www.firegirls.info

Please bookmark this site and send it to others!

firegirls.info is an initiative of the Diversity in Fire Services Research Program in the Centre for Learning and Social Transformation at the University of Western Sydney (www.uws.edu/clast).

For further information please contact Dr Merilyn Childs m.childs@uws.edu.au

firegirls.info forms part of an international research collaboration between Dr Merilyn Childs (UWS Australia), Dr Dave Baigent (Fire Services Research and Training Unit, APU England (www.apu.ac.uk/fireworks/); and Dr Sue Lewis (National Centre for Gender and Cultural Diversity, Swinburne University, Australia (www.swin.edu.au/corporate/ngcd/))

Snow Joking!

Article and photo by Station Officer Training Services, Brett Fazackerley

This was actually a driving course conducted on Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th September. Both days were lovely and warm even though a storm had passed north east of Launceston on Saturday night. Sunday morning dawned fresh and clear and we proceeded from Youngtown Training Services at 0900 dressed for what we expected to be warm conditions, however, not far east of Launceston heading to Scottsdale it soon became apparent that even though sunny it was going to be a bit chilly, we didn't need to contact the Department of Meteorology to confirm this, just the view of snow on every hill higher than a few metres was all the evidence we needed.

The day began to warm and the snow on the lower hills quickly melted, unless in shadow, but this photo was taken at midday and as can be clearly seen there was still plenty of the white fluffy stuff about. We stopped for lunch and had a BBQ, short sleeve shirts, blue sky, and snow underfoot, quite bizarre.

It's not every day that firefighters get to sign off 'driving on snow and ice' in their Skills Evidence Record Books.



Left to right the volunteers are Peter Davis, Josh Donohue, David Ryan (VTI), Kevin Medcraft, Dale Cleaver.

National Medal Presentations at Strahan

By Regional Officer North West, John Streets

A large gathering of family and friends attended the National Medal presentation night at Strahan on 18th October. National Medals were presented to Phillip Thompson, Mark McDermott, Jennifer Hamer and Elizabeth Hamer.

In addition TFS long service badges were presented to Guy Grining, Troy Grining, Harold Hulm, Scott Newett, Leigh Thompson, Allan Walker (10

years); Pam Hamer (15 years); Elizabeth Hamer, Mark Mc Dermott, Phillip Thompson (20 years) and Jennifer Hamer, Kerry Hamer (25 years).

The presentation night represented a significant amount of years of service which have been given to the TFS on the west coast. This group alone represents 185 years of service! The BBQ and supper provided was "fit for a king" !



Back row: John Streets, Phillip Thompson, Mark McDermott
Front row: Jennifer Hamer, Elizabeth Hamer

1966 Ford F-350 Hose Carriage - “Geeveston No 1”

Article and photo by Museum Brigade Member Brett Burgess

Most of us are aware of the ex-Somerset Ford that was refurbished and fitted out as a ceremony vehicle which now serves the TFS as a hearse and high profile show piece, but check this one out.

This 1966 F-350 Ford Hose Carriage is the pride of the Geeveston Fire Brigade as it spent all its time in our area and has been restored to original working condition by the brigade.

It is one of about ten such fire appliances built by Cramp Bros Bodyworks Hobart during the mid to late 1960s and became standard issue at that time to urban type brigades such as Queenstown, Somerset, Fern Tree, Scottsdale and Geeveston.

closed down or merged with other brigades. The truck was decommissioned, taken to Hobart and put up for tender in 1995 and was destined to become a “firewood truck”.

This idea was inconceivable to some members of the Geeveston Brigade who lobbied the State Fire Commission to allow us to take custody of the truck and restore it to original condition and thus use it as a show piece and parade vehicle. The Chief Officer of the time Gerry Lowe (somewhat reluctantly if my memory serves me correctly) granted permission with several conditions, and so, she returned to where she began her working life.

Although relatively free of rust, some body damage had occurred over the years and was unfortunately subjected to

vandalism whilst being housed in what we thought was a safe haven. All damage and bodywork has since been repaired, entire cab and rear body has been resprayed.

Many original parts which were removed and lost, including top beacon, chrome siren, ladder housing and rear seat have been located, repaired and reinstalled.

It is now housed at either my place or the South West District Headquarters where it was spotted by our previous manager of Engineering Services and fellow Museum Brigade member Eddie Wilson who suggested we display it at the upcoming Classic Ford Show. Although unfinished at the time both Eddie and I spent every spare minute working on the truck getting it to show condition, even including fitting the re-upholstered rear seat the night before - but we got it to the show on time.



Used to carry crew and equipment, it had no pump or water carrying capability as the pump was towed behind on a trailer. It was later fitted with a Coventry Climax pump, hose reel and water tank, located in the rear crew compartment where the seat was removed and plumbing installed.

It started its working life at Geeveston in 1967 where it replaced a 1938 (side valve) Ford and served the Geeveston community until transferred to Castle Forbes Bay in the late 1970s. As a result of rationalisation within the TFS many brigades including Castle Forbes Bay were either

It has since taken part in several Christmas parades and local shows and led the Torchlight Parade at the recently held Tasmanian Fire Brigades Competitions.

With a mere 5,700 miles on the clock it drives like a new car and the question I am always asked is, “What does she go like?” Answer - Like the clappers (or so I am told).

It remains the first and only new fire appliance to be allocated to the Geeveston Fire Brigade.

11th Annual AFAC Conference & Inaugural Bushfire CRC Conference

By District Officer Northern Region, Danny Richardson



One of the many great things about the organisation we are all part of is that every now and then an opportunity comes along to be able to participate in something a little bit different.

For me, one of these opportunities occurred when I was nominated as a TFS delegate and invited to attend the 11th Annual AFAC Conference and Inaugural Bushfire CRC Conference in Perth Western Australia from the 7th to the 9th of October 2004.

Sixteen delegates from Tassie made their way west representing a wide range of TFS personnel, from the Chief Officer and Commission members to career firefighters, volunteer Group Officers, Brigade Chiefs, Human Resource staff and other permanent and volunteer members.

Advertised as a Conference, I would describe it as a Fire Industry Expo. Just about everything you could think of that is fire related was represented here. Eighty industry exhibitors, eleven International and National keynote speakers and ninety two separate information presentations over two days provided a jam-packed program. We also had to fit in a welcoming reception evening, a gala dinner and a closing ceremony. It was a gruelling schedule for the first time delegate.

Apart from the opening address by AFAC representatives and special guests, each day began with a presentation by one of the keynote speakers. From Major General Duncan Lewis and his experiences on a global scale with Counter Terrorism as Director of Strategy and International Engagement for the Australian Defence Department, to the inspiration of Doctor Fiona Wood as the Director of the Western Australia Burns Service and her work with the development of "spray on skin", also her work with victims of the Bali bombings. Another emotional presentation from a keynote speaker was that of Mr Peter Hughes who was the human face we came to know as a Bali bombing survivor.

His recollection of the horror and his struggle to survive was another inspirational story.

Following the keynote speaker presentations each day it was pretty much up to the individual delegate to choose from the multitude of sessions that were on offer.

A few sessions that stood out for me were:

- Lessons from Fire Reviews by Commissioner Phil Koperberg of NSWRFSS
- Strategic Management and Decision Making by Brian Perry of MFESB
- Training and Development Systems by Peter Dunn of ACT ESA
- Structural and Chemical Fires by Tony Murphy of MFESB.

One topic of particular interest to the TFS delegates was a session on volunteerism chaired by our own Chief Officer. This session proved to be very interesting as the speakers were not only very passionate about the topic but in some cases quite controversial.

It was a full on two days. In between each session as well as over a cuppa or lunch, we all had the opportunity to view and discuss products and services presented by the exhibitors. It felt like school, one minute you were being bombarded with information and then at recess and lunchtime you could play in the toy shop! One product that impressed me was the Argus Fire Gun, supplied by the exhibitor with a free DVD demonstrating the equipment, I plan to travel the State endorsing the product. I think I may have the DRO/BC North almost convinced!

In closing, not only was the weekend a great learning opportunity, a wonderful way to meet old and new faces, enhance knowledge, plus have fun, it was- "a fantastic experience!"

Yigong Tsangpo Kayak Expedition Tibet, 2004



In May this year, Station Officer Craig Chivers from the Hobart Fire Brigade was a member of an international kayak expedition which did a first descent on a large river in north eastern Tibet.

The Yigong Tsangpo is a major tributary of the river that dissects the Himalayas and then flows into India where there it is called the Brahmaputra River.

The trip was organized by an ex pat Tasmanian, Chris Jones, who has been working as an instructor at Wind Horse Adventures in Tibet for several months each year, teaching their guides to steer rafts and paddle kayaks. One of the reasons for the expedition, apart from completing a first descent, was to investigate as many rivers as possible for their tourism potential, both for rafting trips and for organised kayak tours. Wind Horse Adventures, a trekking company in Tibet, supplied all the logistical support, including vehicles and a cook!

We all met in Kathmandu in Nepal in late April, where we saw old friends and made new ones with the other members of the group. After several days in Kathmandu, we started a three day drive north out of Nepal into Tibet, which is part of China. This involved driving over several passes that were over 5000 metres in altitude, which is quite hard on the body for someone who has spent most of their life near sea level! After 3 long days in a bus, we reached Lhasa, the capital city

of Tibet, where we were all totally exhausted and badly affected by the effects of the altitude, some 3700 metres.

In Lhasa, we did some more last minute organising, visited the Potala, which is the palace of the Dalai Lama, an amazing experience and then departed for two more days on the road to get to the river.

The next five days found us in an awesome river gorge, starting at an altitude of 4800 metres, surrounded by huge cliffs, spectacular scenery and at the bottom, a river with some of the best rapids any of us had paddled anywhere in the world. Following the river at the bottom of the gorge was a very rough road which our support crew carried all the equipment for the expedition in a very old two wheel drive truck and some 80 series landcruisers. This meant we didn't have to carry anything in our boats except for cameras and safety gear.

Day six found us having to make a decision, to continue on down another section of river without any support crew and on a rising river, or to backtrack up the river to our start point and then spend the next two weeks or so touring around paddling as many rivers as possible. In the end, the prospect of being stranded in the inaccessible lower gorge on a rapidly rising river ruled and we backtracked out of the gorge and spent the next two weeks or so paddling rivers in a less remote area, visiting monasteries and meeting some of the



local people. These other rivers were spectacular in their own right and in some of the valleys we visited we were the first ever westerners to go there, according to our interpreters.

All too soon, the expedition was over and this meant returning to Lhasa, civilisation and the inevitable hassles you get flying kayaks around the world for as little cost as possible.

Several members of the group stayed in Tibet for several months, training the Tibetan guides in kayaking and rafting as well as English. They also went to Mount Everest and paddled the river that flows off the Tibetan side of that mountain.

Thanks must go to District Officer Gavin Freeman and Senior Station Officer Mike Netherton for granting me the leave to be able to go at short notice, Chris Jones for the invitation, Wind Horse Adventures in Tibet for the organisation, Kokatat and Teva for the free gear, Wilderness Equipment, Werner Paddles, NFA and Hydraulics NZ for the cheap gear.

More photos of the expedition can be seen at www.homepage.mac.com/rafttibet



Mini Tornado in Hobart

By Senior Firefighter Hobart Fire Brigade, Darren Gye

On Tuesday the 14th of September C Shift Hobart and Clarence crews responded to an “explosion” near the Websters Building in Campbell Street.

What was later described as a mini tornado swept down Campbell Street blowing the roof off the Performance Autos Service Centre and also damage to Websters. Much of the debris landed in the Campbell Street area and one sheet of iron landed on a power line. Campbell Street was closed to traffic for about 35 minutes.

The sound of the roof coming off was loud enough for our Chief to come out on his balcony and suggest that the crew in the yard start their appliance. The Duty Office was also swamped by District Officers and the Brigade Chief. The snorkel was employed to remove debris and aid in temporary repairs to the roof.



Photos by Rachel Fanning of Webster Ltd



Photos by SFF Darren Gye



Coleman Street Fire

By Senior Firefighter Hobart Fire Brigade, Gary Loh

This was an abandoned house in Coleman Street Glenorchy. As you can see it was going well on arrival. We came from Hobart to back up Glenorchy and could see the fire from Friends School in Elizabeth Street North Hobart.

Photo by Senior Firefighter Kate Murphy



The Huon Challenge

Article and photos by Second Officer Mt Nelson Brigade, Stefan Littlejohn

The Huon Challenge is a multi-discipline event comprising a cross country run, road bike leg, kayak leg and a mountain bike leg. The Huon Challenge 2004 was held in and around Huonville, starting and finishing at the Homehill Vineyard in Ranelagh.

A team consisting of four Mt Nelson volunteer firefighters were as keen as mustard until closer to the day when the realisation that they may have got their ambitions and abilities mixed up really started to hit home! The team consisted of Marcus Hodgman, Chris Collins, Josh Hawkins and Mal van Munster.



On the morning of the event, a beautiful if somewhat chilly morning in August, it soon became apparent there were some very experienced and professional competitors in the event including dedicated TFS employees. Sean Mennitz was competing in the individuals event and Jim Stubbs was competing in the paddle stage for the Ray Appleby Team.

At this point the boys from Mount Nelson Brigade were really starting to wonder what they got themselves into.

Marcus Hodgman was fortunate enough to start the day with the run. It turned out to be a 13 kilometre cross country run that took him through farms and muddy paddocks. In the lead-up to the event Marcus was bragging about his ability to complete this stage with no real problems. As he approached the change over area it was obvious that he had changed his mind!

The next stage was the gruelling 35 kilometre road ride from Huonville to Cygnet and back. Chris Collins, the team's cycling



enthusiast, put his hand up for this stage. The remainder of the team tried to convince him to shave his legs but Chris would not even toy with the idea.

Chris claims that he overtook thousands but I am not sure that there were that many in the event?? On a serious note, he did manage to make up a few places and was able to set the team up comfortably for the next stage, the paddle.

The paddling stage was a 13 kilometre course. Mal van Munster drew the short straw and was forced to compete in this stage. He was the only person on the team who had ever had anything to do with a kayak. Mind you, his dealings were not quite as active as having to compete in a race!

In the lead up to this event Mal had a few technical problems. He lost the paddle out of the back of his ute. So, if you have seen a paddle lying on the side of the road we would appreciate it if you would let us know!

Mal managed to complete the stage without getting too wet and set Josh Hawkins off for the final stage on the Mountain Bike.

Josh was the only one out of the whole team who didn't seem to be too concerned by the whole thing. He had nerves of steel! This may have been due to the fact that he spends quite a bit of time on the mountain bike and he was in his comfort zone, unlike the other members of the team.

It was obvious that the mountain bike stage was muddy. At times it was difficult to distinguish the different colour of the jersey the riders wore. Finally we saw a familiar mud-covered face. Josh had completed the final stage in a blistering pace.

The results were posted. Out of 96 teams, Marcus had finished 40th in the run stage, Chris finished 18th in the cycle stage, Mal finished 48th in the paddle and finally Josh posted a blistering time to finish 3rd fastest in the mountain bike event. Overall the team finished 17th in the Open Mens' Team Event.

The other TFS contingency was also very successful. Sean Mennitz placed 17th out of the individual competitors in his class and Jim Stubbs was part of the winning team in the Open Mens' Team Event. Jim Stubbs was also the fastest in the paddle stage.

Overall, it was an excellent day and everyone enjoyed themselves. The team is already planning for up and coming events and looks forward to some healthy rivalry from other TFS brigades and members!



Are We Contributing to Plant Disease & Weed Spread?

By Second Officer Fern Tree Fire Brigade, Terry Gill

Are we contributing to plant disease and weed spread?" The answer is probably YES, albeit unintentionally.

Brigades are increasingly being called upon to respond to wildfires on controlled access land, managed by Forestry Tasmania, Parks and Wildlife Service, private timber companies, councils and private owners. While wildfire is seen as a destructive force, plant disease and weed infestation is much more insidious and in the long run, they are more difficult to manage and control.

When land is being managed for commercial plant production and conservation reasons, the introduction and spread of plant disease and weeds have an adverse economic and environmental impact upon agriculture, forestry and natural areas.

With the approaching summer wildfire season, we must be ready to play our part, as appliance crew members and incident managers, by not compounding the problem.

Land Management Protocols:

Managers of large areas of land that are used for plant and forest production, recreation and conservation purposes, are beginning to require that vehicle hygiene standards must be observed.

Local examples of this for my brigade and others operating in the Hobart Special Fire Area, are the Wellington Park and the Ridgeway Park. Managed by the Wellington Park Management Trust and the Hobart City Council respectively, both agencies have established, as part of their fire management plans, protocols that require TFS appliances to washdown.

In addition, co-operation between the Agricultural Contractors Association of Tasmania, Forestry Tasmania; and Nature Conservation Branch, Department of Primary Industry, Water and Environment, has recently seen the publication of *Tasmanian Washdown Guidelines for Weed and Disease Control - Machinery, Vehicles & Equipment* Edition 1 2004



Based on the content of the above publication, I pose the following questions and suggest some answers for consideration by us, as an organisation with a strong community service culture.

Why do we need to have a fire appliance hygiene procedure?

In day to day operations, our appliances pick up mud and other material on their under-bodies that is probably carrying:

- the fungal infection known as "root rot" or *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, which gives rise to die back in both native and exotic trees; and
- noxious weed seeds, that compete with and exclude crops and animal feed.

So what can we do as brigades to work around these problems?

- Dispose of this under body material as a routine part of appliance washing.
- Adopt a washdown procedure:
- after being in a known disease infected or weed infested area,
- before moving from your normal area of operation, into another area of operation,
- before moving to an island; and
- before entering an area with controlled access vehicle tacks, such as national parks, reserves, plantations, production logging areas and other natural areas.

Where should a washdown area be sited?

- at controlled area entry and exit points
- at known contaminated area exit points
- where drainage of contaminated wash water can be managed and kept out of water catchments

What equipment can be used to carry out an appliance washdown?

- the appliance pump and hose reel
- a temporary washdown facility, using a portable pump and hose, set up to service a wildfire operation by its incident controller or by an Incident Management Team
- a more permanent arrangement, such as that set up at Smithton for example, to washdown equipment moving into and out of a local forest production area

What else on a fire appliance could be a disease or weed contamination source?

- Sometimes of necessity we may have the re-fill our appliance water tanks with water of dubious quality, in which pathogens, like *Phytophthora* and weed seeds can survive
- As a result our tank water may need to be disinfected, using chlorine in the form of sodium hypochlorite (NaOCl), before using it on the fireground.

Does tank water disinfection mean a delay in appliance response?

- No. Dosing the tank, as you depart from your station for a wildfire, will give plenty of time for disinfection to be completed, during your journey to the fireground.

After using sodium hypochlorite disinfected appliance tank water, what would you need to do before returning the appliance to service and why?

- Flush tank and pump and re-fill with clean water.
- To remove the possibility of corrosion from the chlorine.

Which fire appliances are likely to need washdown and water treatment?

- Probably any appliance, but the most likely are those that are able to travel off road.

Are there any other vehicles that may require washdown as a result of their use in firefighting operations?

Yes, during wildfires in particular, the fire service or other firefighting agencies may order the use of earth moving contractors to undertake track and fire break work.

Their machinery has the potential to introduce plant disease organisms and weed seeds or to carry them away. Accordingly the machinery we order should be subjected to a washdown procedure.



To carry out fire appliance decontamination, to minimise the risk of plant disease and weed transmission, these are the areas to cover:

Cabin	Floor, mat and under seats
Engine	Radiator Engine bay and grill
Body	Hollow channels Inside bumper bars All crevices, steps and ledges Underside
Wheels	Inside and outside of all road wheels Spare wheel All mud flaps and wheel arches
Tray	Hollow channels Chassis Around pump
Hand tools	Under tray In lockers On tank tops
Tank Water	Use 0.05% Sodium Hypochlorite (NaOCl) solution (pool granules), at 6ml per 10l water
Important!	Flush tank and pump after NaOCl use

More on tank water disinfection

While chlorine, as sodium hypochlorite, is a widely available chemical used for the treatment of water in domestic swimming pools, it is mainly sold in the form of granules or a premixed liquid, which:

- need to be measured to achieve the correct dose above; and
- presents some risk of injury to those handling such products incorrectly, through skin contact or ingestion.

A solution to overcome these problems may be available, in the form of pool water treatment tablets. Currently the writer is researching this with those in the pool industry, to see if a suitable product can be sourced, hopefully to be able to treat appliance tank water in multiples of say 500 l.

So watch this space.

The content of the article in leaflet form, is available from ftfb@southcom.com.au

Tasmanian Volunteer Fire Brigades Association

14 Years as State President

By TVFBA State Secretary, Lyndy Smith

Don Mackrill began his career as a volunteer firefighter at the Temco Rural Fire Brigade in 1978. He was elected as State President of the Volunteer Firefighters Association in 1982, a position he held until standing down in 1994. In 2002 Don was re-elected for a two-year term which he has just completed. After 14 years as State President he has resigned from the position.

Don's greatest success in his role as State President was leading the charge in 1988 for a total review of fire service funding before both houses of Parliament. The TVFBA were successful after many months of lobbying to get an additional \$10.5 million in funding, which allowed the TFS to upgrade their motor vehicle fleet and provide brigades with much-needed station facilities.

Don has actively served on many TFS Committees. He was the TVFBA nominee on the State Fire Commission and the Minister's Advisory Council for 16 years. Prior to his retirement as State President Don represented volunteer firefighters on the Operational Resources and Services Committee, Volunteer State Consultative Committee, Recruitment Project, TFS and the Tasmanian Farmers & Graziers Association Working Party and the Volunteer Training Advisory Committee, a group that he will continue to be involved in.



Don has represented volunteer firefighters at several conferences of the Australasian Assembly of Volunteer Fire Brigade Associations. He has represented Australia at world conferences for volunteer firefighters in Bangkok in 1984 and Copenhagen in 1990.

Two highlights in his long career were being awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal in 1990 for distinguished service to the Volunteer Firefighters' Association and an Order of Australia Medal in 1994 for community commitment and involvement with emergency services.

Don will continue in his role as the Brigade Chief of the Bell Bay Fire Brigade and Group Officer of the Dalrymple Group.

When talking about his retirement Don said, "from that experience and my association with other State firefighter associations I believe the 4800 volunteer firefighters in Tasmania are very well organised, trained and equipped to do the daunting task that sometimes lies in front of them".

The TVFBA wish Don and Sue all the best for the future. The last that was seen of Don was the rear end of his camper van as he and Sue make their way to Queensland on an extended holiday.

Long Service Badges

By Manager TasFire Equipment, Nik Masters

Three members of TasFire Equipment recently received long service badges. The badges were presented by the Chief Officer during TasFire Equipment's statewide meeting at Bronte Park.

Fire Equipment Officers Phil Peppiat and John McDonald received 10 year badges. John has been with TFE for 10 years while Phil's contribution to the TFS includes time as a volunteer as well as with TFE.

Fire Equipment Officer Carlo Lanci was presented with a 15 year long service badge. Carlo has been with TFE for all of his 15 year service and is also an active member of Kingston Fire Brigade.

Handover of Snorkel

After much anticipation the new snorkel finally arrived in Launceston. The Snorkel was fitted with a new Scania chassis to replace the former 25 year old chassis. Launceston Brigade's aerial specialists lead by Senior Firefighter Michael Watkins received their introductory training from Ken Cook of GB Fire. The new aerial officially went into service and at 1300 on its first day was called upon to respond to a sawdust hopper fire at Mowbray. Launceston's firefighters are indeed proud of their new appliance.

Annual General Meeting

By TVFBA State Secretary, Lyndy Smith

The Tasmanian Volunteer Fire Brigades Association provides support for Volunteer Fire Brigade members in all aspects of firefighting and volunteerism in the State of Tasmania. The Association has representation on the State Fire Commission and all committees of the Tasmania Fire Service. The governing body is the State Council which is drawn from elected delegates from the three Regional Associations and represents all volunteer firefighters. Membership and General Meetings of the Regional Associations are open to all members. The Tasmanian Volunteer Fire Brigades Association is also a member of the Australian Assembly of Volunteer Fire Brigades Associations. The Association's AGM was held on Sunday 25th July 2004 at the Youngtown Training Complex.

Results of election:

President	Leon King
Vice President	John Brassington
Secretary	Lyndy Smith

The Association has representatives on TFS Consultative Committees. Paddy Buckley will be the Association's representative on the Central Health & Safety Committee which assists the Tasmania Fire Service in implementing and

maintaining a safe work environment. The objective of the Uniform Committee is to develop recommendations for the provision of uniforms for Tasmania Fire Service employees and we will be represented by Brian Rainbird.

Robert Atkins and John Brassington will participate in the Operational Resources & Services Committee with Ian Gabites, Frank Howe, Don Mackrill and Lyndy Smith providing representation on the Volunteer Training Advisory Committee.

The Tasmania Fire Service (TFS), Tasmanian Volunteer Fire Brigades Association (TVFBA) and Tasmanian Retained Volunteer Firefighters Association (TRVFA) will participate in a State Consultative Committee. The committee is known as the Volunteer State Consultative Committee. The Committee's objective is to discuss and resolve statewide volunteer issues in a consultative, collaborative and constructive way for mutual benefit of the Tasmania Fire Service, all volunteers and the community. The Association will be represented by Robert Atkins, Leon King and Brian Rainbird.

Chris Deegan remains the representative of volunteer firefighters on the State Fire Commission.

Aurora assists Derwent Valley Fire Brigades

By Lorrina Clarke, Aurora Energy

Aurora Energy's New Norfolk team has donated a total of \$1000 to four local fire brigades at Lachlan, Molesworth, Gretna and Magra.

Aurora's Acting Team Leader Jamie Hills made the donation to District Officer Bill Burke at a special presentation at the New Norfolk resource centre last week.

The donation was made possible under a company-wide scheme where resource centres around the State are given \$500 to \$1000 per year to donate to local community groups or charities of their choice.

Acting team leader Jamie Hills said the seven-member team's decision to donate to the fire brigades was unanimous. "The brigades do a fantastic job and can always use additional funds," he said. "It's very pleasing to know that our donation will help"

The Aurora team undertakes powerline maintenance and repairs in a huge area taking in Derwent Bridge, Tea Tree



and Interlaken. Mr Hills described the biggest challenges as 'fighting against the weather' and gaining access to isolated areas to carry out repair work.



Photos by Andrew Haag, Senior Rescue Instructor NSWFB

Multi-Agency Category 2 Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Course

By District Officer Development & Learning Northern Region, State USAR Coordinator, Mark Dobson



The Tasmania Fire Service recently embarked on a multi-agency Category 2 Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) course. The course represents two significant milestones for our organisation, it is the first course of its type to be conducted in Tasmania and it's also the first statewide course conducted centrally for career staff at the Youngtown Training Complex in Launceston. There were twenty TFS personnel and four Tasmanian Ambulance Service paramedics undertaking the training. Prior to this, TFS had only six personnel qualified at Cat 2 level.

USAR is aimed at providing the skills and knowledge required for operational staff at an incident involving a structural collapse and/or rescue situation. TFS is the lead combat authority for USAR in Tasmania. Recent world events such as September 11 and the Bali bombings have heightened the awareness of these types of incidents for emergency services worldwide. Events closer to home such as the Thredbo landslide have reinforced our commitment to more intensive training in this area.

The course was conducted over a three week period, the first two weeks consisting of theory and practical sessions involving the identification of structural collapse patterns, structural triage, shoring and tunnelling techniques, the operation of specialised cutting and breaching equipment and technical search equipment. The third week consisted of a "deployment" to Holsworthy Army Base in Sydney for a 48 hour continuous field exercise, facilitated by New South Wales Fire Brigades (NSWFB).

The course was managed by Station Officers Russell Kerr and Jeremy Smith. They were assisted by Senior Station Officer Gary Johnson and Leading Firefighter Andy Howe as instructors. Additionally, we were extremely fortunate in gaining the assistance of two NSWFB USAR instructors in Glenn Henry and Andy Haag for the duration of the course.

An added bonus for TFS came in the form of a deployment of an Incident Management Team (IMT) from our shores co-ordinated by District Officer Gavin Freeman and consisting of nine staff. This has effectively exposed some of our IMT personnel to a "type 2" incident vastly different from what we have become accustomed to, further enhancing our "multi-skilled" approach to incident management.

This course represents a significant commitment from TFS as an organisation and will allow us the capability to effectively manage small to medium structural collapses in Tasmania. This is particularly important given our unique island status and the inherent delays we would experience in receiving assistance from other States, in the event of a major building collapse.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all those who were involved in the course, managers, instructors and participants alike. The professionalism and camaraderie displayed was second to none. Additionally, we would not have been able to conduct such a successful course without the valued assistance provided by the NSWFB.



Farewell to Bruce, David, Steve & David

By Deputy Regional Officer North, Mike Brown

The Launceston Fire Brigade Social Club hosted a function to farewell four long serving staff who have decided over recent months that it was time to retire, or in the case of Steve Barnes, embark on a new career opportunity (or is it an example of a "sea change").

District Officer Bruce Dineen began his fire service life back in 1971 as a volunteer firefighter with the Lauderdale Rural Fire Brigade. This perhaps 'sparked' Bruce's interest in joining the full time ranks as he later joined Hobart Brigade as career firefighter in 1975. It was about this time that Bruce became involved in promoting the benefits of IFE membership to personnel across the organisation. I still recall Bruce signing me up for preliminary Certificate examinations.

Career prospects lead Bruce to take up a position in the Launceston Brigade in 1981. Later he took up positions in the Training Division often working up at Bell Bay at the Maritime College with both staff and volunteers from across the Northern Region.

Through the 90's Bruce's skills and ability in the area of computers was recognised by the organisation and Bruce was a key player in instigating many of the programs and databases we use in the organisation today. Being a sound operational officer and skilled in computer technology he was a great asset to the TFS and his work in this area will stay with us for a long time to come.

Following many stints of acting in a variety of positions (both at the brigade and in the Region) Bruce was promoted to District Officer in the North East. Bruce worked tirelessly in this district until he became ill while on task force in NSW in 2001. Bruce is now managing well and we all trust he and Julie enjoy their retirement with their newly acquired 4WD.

District Officer David Peck joined the career ranks some 27 years ago as a firefighter at Launceston. He rose through the ranks of Senior Firefighter in '82 then Station Officer in '84. From this point David developed an interest in Fire Safety and he joined Lance Carroll in a long partnership with the division in Launceston for several years. David then joined the Training Division and was promoted to Superintendent in 1995 where he headed up that Division for the Northern Region.

It was in 1996 that he transferred through to his District Officer position with the Launceston Brigade to manage the training, resources and volunteers of the Launceston District.

David will always be fondly remembered by all his colleagues at Launceston and across the organisation. I hear that he is taking golfing lessons, so perhaps David will soon be joining the fraternity of "golfing firies" on their monthly games. Unfortunately David was forced into early retirement due to ill health. To David and Sarah we wish you the very best in retirement and many happy days at the Swanick holiday home.



David Longstaff first slipped on his fire boots as a recruit in 1977 (he actually started work on the same day as David Peck). He attained Senior Firefighter rank some five years later, then later gained national AFC qualification to Certificate III in 1999.

Whilst he chose not to move on through the officer ranks, David was one of a band of senior serving experienced firefighters that lead and mentored many junior firefighters into and through their chosen profession. Always calm and cool in a crisis, he was often known to have a quiet word in a rookie's ear at the right time and as such was a valued and respected member of his team.

Outside of work, David is known for regularly moving from house to house or travelling across the country to see his somewhat scattered family. Originally from the UK, some colleagues might say that David has not always been easy to understand. With two exchange firefighters from the UK joining LFB soon we may need to call David back as an interpreter! From us all at work have a great retirement David.

Not retiring, but having the "sea change" is Station Officer Stephen Barnes. After a short career with the Education Department as a primary school teacher Stephen joined us a recruit firefighter in 1988. To his fellow recruits and later to the LFB Steve brought with him a new and refined vocabulary, teaching us all how to occasionally use the "vernacular" without being offensive. We are all going to miss Stephen's unique communication styles.

Steve served as a firefighter and later as a Station Officer at both Launceston and Devonport Brigades. At home he is (and remains) a member of the Kelso Brigade. He has been a member and occasionally an officer at Kelso since 1986. Earlier this year he attained AFC Certificate IV in Firefighting Operations.

For the past two years Steve worked as a Training Officer attached to the Northern Region. By now many volunteers have trained under Steve's careful guidance and instruction, and had the benefit of his experience and communication style.

Steve leaves us for a Fire Training position at the Australian Maritime College. Our loss is their gain.

Friends and colleagues at TFS wish Stephen well in his chosen career. Do keep in touch!

Volunteer Regional Training Calendar

By District Officer Training Services, Greg Butters

Over the last couple of years I guess you have all noticed that there have been a few "small" changes to our training courses and even the way in which we deliver them. The introduction of the Public Safety Training Package has contributed to the majority of these changes, so, to allow us to better plan and co-ordinate all the training activities we would like to develop a training calendar for each of the three regions. Once these have been completed it should assist you, and your brigade, to identify the courses that are available each year. The calendars can then be published and everyone should have a better idea of what is available and when. We will still need to maintain a bit of flexibility with our training to cover for any unforeseen circumstances.

Once each region has its training calendar you will be able to determine which location and/or date best suits your needs for attending a particular course. It will be necessary for you to consult with your brigade chief and ask to be nominated for the course that you would like to attend. Remember - you will still need to have all the pre-requisite course requirements prior to being eligible for attendance (this information can be found in our volunteer course guide).

The volunteer course guide also identifies the maximum number of participants we can accommodate for any given course. When decisions are made on who should attend a particular course preference needs to be given to people who don't currently have that particular competency (course), however, if there is a vacancy and you have expressed an interest in attending you may be invited along to that course, in which case it will be recorded as skills maintenance.

The final step in this process, and so we can further assist you with the courses we are conducting, is that a letter will be sent to you approximately four weeks prior to the course commencing confirming;

- What the course involves
- Any protective equipment requirements
- Course time/s
- Date/s, and
- Location

We appreciate the amount of time and effort needed when acquiring new knowledge and skills as volunteer firefighters. The TFS is very mindful of this and the development of this training calendar should make it a little easier when you need to juggle your home lives with the commitment you give to attending our training courses.

If you need further assistance with this process please give your Brigade Chief and/or District Officer a call.

On a different track, but still the training one, October saw a number of campaign bushfires burning around the State. This has been a gentle reminder, without stating the obvious, that we are definitely heading into the vegetation fire season. This type of activity provides the perfect opportunity for you to document evidence in a Skills Development Record Book of where you have applied your training. If you need any assistance with filling out your Skills Development Record Book please ask your Brigade Chief or contact your District Officer.

Lock Up Your Boss Day

By Clerk Northern Region, Natalie Rigby



On Monday 30 August 2004 we held the Lock up Your Boss Day. At 1500 hours Sheriff Natalie, with help from Jeff Harper, captured and handcuffed Office Supervisor Carol Davey. For weeks Carol has been trying to raise the \$500 bail that was needed to set her free. The money raised goes towards helping kids help line. The Northern Region held numerous fundraising events such as a sausage sizzle, wine and cheese afternoon and a gourmet hamper raffle to raise money. After much hassling of all regions by Sheriff Natalie (who said we would have raised more to keep Carol locked up) we raised \$540. Thanks to everyone who contributed or helped in some way to set Carol free.

TFBCA Competition Dates 2005

Round 1	5th February 2005	- Franklin
Round 2	6th February 2005	- Hobart
Open Championships	19th February 2005	- Devonport
Round 3	5th March 2005	- Ulverstone
State Championships	19th March 2005	- Burnie

TVFFA Competition Dates 2005

12th November 2005 - venue to be announced

Firefighter on Exchange

By Senior Firefighter Hobart Fire Brigade, Keven Lefebvre

The "Lefebvre's", arrived in Australia on 22nd August and after a bit of travelling, arrived in Hobart on 17th September. A firefighter exchange between Firefighter Stewart McKinlay, and Firefighter Keven Lefebvre was dreamt of in August 2003 and set to paper in June 2004.

After many, many emails between Stewart and myself, 30 hours of flight over 6 days (4 days in Singapore), 10 x 35 kg of luggage, and nearly 4 weeks on mainland Australia in a caravan, Keven, Sheila, Jeff, Jessa, and Jordan are now living in Stewart's house and vice versa. Over the past number of weeks, we have met many of you and hope to meet many more. Tasmania is a beautiful place and as some may have heard before, Hobart has many similarities to Victoria, British Columbia. Tasmanians are extremely friendly and many who we have met are becoming friends.

Every day that I work at the Hobart Fire station, I arrive a bit early, eager to see what the day (or night) holds. The most striking thing is how many similarities our two departments have, even given the different size of our cities and the distance between them. Edmonton has approximately 800,000 people and employs almost 800 full time firefighters. I am looking forward to learning all I can about some of



the differences between our two distinct Departments.

As we settle in to our new digs, we are starting to travel and have already cancelled plans to see more of the mainland in favour of learning and seeing more of "Tassie". A good bush walk, lunch at Sal's, or a drink after work with friends are among our favourite new hobbies.

As Christmas approaches, we are trying to get used to the fact that the temperature is most likely not

going to be -30c, we will not be "snowed in" and we definitely will have a "brown" Christmas. Although Stewart may be searching our house for extra mittens, I know he will return with many stories of his time in Canada, just as we will return to Canada with a lifetime worth of memories from Tasmania. Thank you all for this unbelievable opportunity.

Let me close with this, when asked how we were going to get along in Tasmania, I implored that the firefighters in Hobart would welcome us as "one of the family", and you have, that makes me proud to be a firefighter. I know for the many firefighters in Tasmania who are contemplating exchanges, that this would be the same anywhere in the world you choose to explore, and if you ever find yourself in Edmonton, look me up.

And a word from Stewart

I have finished my induction training and from what I have seen so far there are a lot of similarities with back home, only a few striking differences like the number of specialist stations. I am going to station 7 first up for three months which is one of the busiest stations. Next up I have been approved to go to station 3 which is the technical rescue station and apparently this is a very rare privilege for guys to go there let alone exchange firefighters so I will be making the most of that. The last three months I will spend at station 5, another specialist station dealing in water rescue, also a hard to get to station. They do things like swift water rescue, boat rescue (inflatable), jet boat and jet ski rescue, and ice rescue. I think I have been programmed in to do the ice rescue course which will be good experience. It's my understanding that because of my background in technical rescue and water rescue they have approved these stations. There are 23 stations in all and about 800,000 people in Edmonton city.

Have seen some photos of the fires that they have been going to in the winter. In one photo I saw the truck parked in

what looked like a frozen-over lake and the guys were saying how they had to get a steam machine in to melt the ice to get the truck out. I thought that's bad placement of the truck until the guys told me that it was a car park with no ice on it initially and that the water runoff from the hose lines had frozen before it got a chance to drain away. It's going to be a challenge working in this sort of cold.

Keven's house has lots of toys like a pool table, air hockey table, huge trampoline, hot tub and a room dedicated to a big TV and surround sound system. Once I get the hot tub sorted out it should be sweet.

The guys are all really friendly and have invited me to do every thing from snowboarding to hunting so I can't see any trouble having things to do during the days. I think I will be going to a football match this weekend, the Edmonton Eskimos are the local team so I guess that's the team I will adopt as mine while I am here.

Regards, Stewart

MVA High Street Launceston

Article and photos by Senior Firefighter Launceston Fire Brigade, Ben Wilson

At 2335 hours on Saturday 9th October 2004 Launceston Fire Brigade responded to a motor vehicle accident with a report of persons trapped.

Launceston 1-1 responded with the crew comprising of Senior Station Officer Neil McEachen, Senior Firefighter Ben Wilson, Firefighters Greg Pilkington and Simon Pilkington.

On arrival we found Police and Ambulance already in attendance. The vehicle involved had lost control after failing to negotiate a left hand sweeping bend. It then slid sideways into a parked Toyota Hilux turning the Hilux 180 degrees. The driver had been removed but the passenger was trapped by his leg.



After quickly making the scene safe from potential fire hazards, Ambulance requested we send our rescue truck. Leading Firefighter Shane Streets responded in Launceston 8-2. On his arrival we quickly set up our portable petrol over hydraulic pump with both cutters and spreaders. The Ambulance OIC was fantastic in directing us where and how he wanted cuts made. After about 20 minutes the patient was able to be removed from the vehicle. It was great to have this co-operation between the agencies working in such difficult circumstances. Unfortunately the patient died after arriving at hospital.

TFS Online for the “Hottest News in Town”

by Director Corporate Services, Mike Gallagher

Both the TFS Internet Website and the Intranet have had some changes made since the last Fireground edition.

Members would have noticed that the website now advertises that:

“There is a FIRE PERMIT PERIOD in most Municipalities”

Also a new menu item titled “Make a Wish Project” has been added. This area highlights the progress being made by volunteer members of the Fire Service and business in renovating a cottage in Sandy Bay. The cottage when completed will be auctioned and all profits donated to the Make a Wish Foundation.

A new Document Bookshelf is currently being tested and when commissioned will enable all State Fire Commission and Tasmania Fire Service policies, instructions and SOP's to be accessed by members through the TFS Intranet.

The transferring of existing reports onto the Intranet has

proved more difficult than first envisaged but recently we have had some fruitful discussions with two outside contractors, so hopefully we will be able to get moving on this.

A number of other exciting changes are in the melting pot and once these proposals have been scoped, costed and approved I will provide further details.

Many of you would have noticed that our website address www.fire.tas.gov.au and many of our fire safety messages are now being promoted throughout the media and on many of our fire appliances. This is a conscious decision to raise public awareness and promote our website and our fire safety messages.

If you would like access to the TFS Intranet or have ideas or suggestions please address your email to tfsonline@fire.tas.gov.au.

Get the “Hottest News in Town” from www.fire.tas.gov.au



NSW USAR Exercise - Operation van Dieman

By Office Supervisor State Headquarters, Linda Lacy

During October this year I was called upon to be part of an incident management team going to New South Wales. This was a new experience for the IMT as it was not a fire we were attending, but an urban search and rescue exercise conducted at Holsworthy Army Base.

Let me set the scene for the exercise we were all called in at 0745 hours on Tuesday the 19th October and advised that two hours previously there had been an earthquake measuring 8.4 on the Richter scale. The epicentre was near the town of Shelbeyville, which quickly absorbed available local resources. An aftershock affected the nearby town of Springfield. The TFS Taskforce was now being asked for help. It was ascertained that the buildings in question were a hospital, nursing home, church, school, drive-thru tavern, burger shop, convenience store and the Department of Motor Vehicles. They had collapsed and a number of personnel were missing, presumed trapped.

The taskforce was deployed from Tasmania and arrived at Springfield at 1000 hours ready to provide immediate

Photos by Leading Firefighter Mark O'Donnell



Photos by Andrew Haag, Senior Rescue Instructor NSWFB

assistance. Upon arrival at the scene, some of the injured were found wandering from the collapsed structures, many in need of medical care.

A team of twenty four search and rescue personnel worked around the clock tunnelling through tons of concrete in an effort to rescue the earthquake victims.

What really happened was a team of twenty Tasmania Fire Service and four Tasmanian Ambulance Service personnel had received two weeks USAR training at Youngtown and the team, together with an Incident Management Team went to Holsworthy Army base to put into place what they had learnt.

Planning Officer Andrew Skelly took me out onto the actual "earthquake" site midweek, and to be able to see what was actually happening, I had to climb into one of the rescue tunnels where all I could see was a pair of legs and boots belonging to paramedic Graham Jones. The hole from which Graham was protruding was tiny and the guys had been tunnelling their way through. It made me realise what





an incredible job they were doing, how they could put their lives at risk going through rubble and obstacles to rescue somebody they didn't even know. One such obstacle they faced was a rolled mattress - now what do you think you'd prefer to cut through if given the choice - a mattress or a slab of concrete. The boys said they'd choose the concrete any day! It took eight hours to cut through the innerspring mattress! Another obstacle they had to cut their way through was a fridge. Now both those jobs probably don't sound that bad - but remember the size of the hole they were working in, and how they would have to be passing back all the pieces so they weren't closing themselves in. It makes me feel

claustrophobic just thinking about it.

That night when I was tucked up in my sleeping bag, all cosy and warm, the rain was coming down so heavy, probably the heaviest I've heard in my life, all I could think about was those guys in the tunnel - rain coming in, and they were lying there in the mud and the cold trying to cut through some obstacle to make a rescue.

I've never been so proud to be part of a group - these guys were incredible! I'd like to thank everyone for letting me be part of the team, as long and tiring as the days were, I'd do it again tomorrow!



Library News

Weblinks

Tasmanian bushfires of 7th February 1967 and associated fire behaviour characteristics / A.G. McArthur.

Ever needed some facts and figures on the '67 bushfires quickly? This site hosted by the Australian National University provides a summary of a preliminary report prepared by A.G. McArthur and N.P. Cheney for the Forestry Commission of Tasmania, which was reproduced in the Report on the Bush Fire Disaster prepared by D.M. Chambers and C.G. Brettingham-Moore.

<http://sres.anu.edu.au/associated/fire/IUFRO/CONFLAG/HOBART67/HBT67.HTM> (overview)

<http://sres.anu.edu.au/associated/fire/IUFRO/CONFLAG/HOBART67/AlanMc67.HTM>

Physical health status of World Trade Center rescue and recovery workers and volunteers -- New York City, July 2002--August 2004

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5335a1.htm> (summary)

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm5335.pdf> (full report)

Mental health status of World Trade Center rescue and recovery workers and volunteers -- New York City, July 2002--August 2004

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5335a2.htm> (summary)

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm5335.pdf> (full report)

Injuries and illnesses among New York City Fire Department rescue workers after responding to the World Trade Center attacks

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm51SP.pdf>

Videos

The Bradford fire. Sydney, N.S.W. : FutureMedia, [199?]. (9 min.)

On Saturday May 11th 1985, 56 people died and 300 others were injured in a fire at the Bradford soccer stadium that was watched by millions on television. This video includes that footage followed by discussion questions.

Handling acetylene cylinders in fire situations. Chantilly, Va. : Compressed Gas Association, 1994. (16 min.)

Covers recommended industry procedures for safe handling of acetylene cylinders in fire situations. Includes construction of acetylene cylinders and pressure relief devices, parts of acetylene cylinders most likely to catch fire, how acetylene cylinders burn and removing a leaking or burning acetylene cylinder from a building.

Living with fire : bushfires and land management in Australia. Bendigo, Vic. : Video Education Australasia, 2002. (20 min.)

Every summer our television screens show emotional scenes of burning homes and heroic firefighters, and again questions are raised about the place of fire in the Australian environment. Far from being a total disaster for native Australian forests, we know that our indigenous flora can survive and even thrive in the aftermath of a fire. However, the overall effect of fire on Australian ecosystems is still a topic of intense study and debate.

Mapping series / Pierce, Barry. Hobart, Tas. : Tricom Audio Video, 1979. 1 videocassette (PAL) (60 min.)

Basic information on map reading is provided.

Contents: Ground rules -- Chart before course -- Lie of the land -- Points for survival -- Going bush.

Skid control / Metropolitan Fire Brigade (Melbourne, Vic.). Melbourne, Vic. : Media Production Services, MFESB, c2004. (9 min.)

Discusses the various types of skidding that can occur when driving and the corrective action to take to regain control of the vehicle.

Tasmania Fire Service : various footage from the 1970s.

[Hobart, Tas.] : [s.n.], [197-]. (60 min.)

A compilation of Tasmania Fire Service footage from the 1970s, dubbed from 16 mm film.

Contents: Bothwell School fire evacuation -- Flammable liquid training, June 1979 -- Rural Fires T.V. 1975 : fire permits, fire control -- Smoke signal -- Brigade review - Original competition, November 1975.

Terrorism : the first response team / Fire & Emergency

Training Network (US). Carrollton, Tex. : FETN, 2004. (62 min.)

Contents: News (4:52 min.) -- Oklahoma City, part one (11:26 min.) -- Oklahoma City, part two (7:00 min.) -- Anthrax scenario (10:13 min.) -- FF II Truck Co. ops. pt. III (28:59 min.).

Working safely at height. East Melbourne, Vic. : Vocam Video Training Productions, c2003. (17 min.)

Features safety issues and procedures for equipment used to work at height. Covers scaffolds, fall arrest systems, roof work, ladders and trestles and elevated work platforms.

New Books

Australia's worst disasters / Brown, Malcolm. South Melbourne : Lothian, 2002.

Contents: Mt Kembla, 1902 -- Royal Canberra Hospital, 1997 -- Ash Wednesday bushfires, 1983 -- HMAS Voyager, 1964 -- Erebus air crash, 1979 - Queensland Black Hawk collision, 1995 -- Granville train disaster, 1977 -- West Gate Bridge collapse, 1970 -- Newcastle earthquake, 1989 -- Thredbo Landslide, 1997 - The Maccabiah Bridge collapse, 1997 -- Cyclone Tracy, 1974 -- The Brisbane floods, 1974 -- Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race, 1998.

Dangerous goods : initial emergency response guide : Australian/New Zealand handbook (HB 76). Standards Association of Australia. [Homebush, N.S.W.] : Standards Australia ; Wellington, N.Z. : Standards New Zealand, 2004.

Electricity hazards & safety handbook : for emergency services personnel / Victoria Office of the Chief Electrical Inspector. [Melbourne, Vic.] : Sandcorp Pty Ltd., 2003.

Fire on the rim : a firefighter's season at the Grand Canyon / Pyne, Stephen. Seattle : University of Washington Press, 1995.

"In this lively account of one [fire] season, Pyne introduces us to the tightly knit world of a fire crew, to the complex geography of the North Rim, to the technique and changing philosophy of fire management."-Publishers Weekly

Fire protection guide to hazardous materials / Spencer, Amy Beasley. Quincy, Mass. : National Fire Protection Association, 2002.

Firefighter's handbook : essentials of firefighting and emergency response. 2nd ed. Clifton Park, NY : Thomson Delmar Learning, 2004.

Highlights all the critical details that apply to the job of today's firefighter, from the basic requirements of Firefighter I and II, to hazardous materials awareness and operations, to incidents involving terrorism, in one inclusive volume.

Firehouse / Halberstam, David. Sydney : Hodder, 2002.
On the morning of September 11, 2001, two firetrucks set out from the New York firehouse Engine 40, Ladder 35, located on the West Side of Manhattan. Thirteen men were aboard; only one survived. Looks at the firefighters, events and culture of the firehouse.

Forest safety code (Tasmania) / Workplace Standards Tasmania. [Hobart, Tas.] : Workplace Standards Tasmania, 2002.

Outlines safety in all forestry situations. Topics include visitor control, night work, use of brushcutters and other equipment, forest management, and fire.

Ghosts of the fireground : echoes of the great Pechtigo fire and the calling of a wildland firefighter / Leschak, Peter. San Francisco, Calif. : HarperSanFrancisco, c2002.

Hazardous materials incidents / Hawley, Chris. Clifton Park, NY : Thomson/Delmar Learning, c2004.

High angle rescue techniques / Vines, Tom. 3rd ed. St. Louis, MO : Mosby, 2004.

Field guide to accompany high angle rescue techniques / Vines, Tom. 3rd ed. St. Louis, MO : Mosby, 2004.

Thoughts on fire : life lessons of a volunteer firefighter / McCluskey, Frank. Lincoln, Neb. : iUniverse Inc., 2004.

What makes a good report : ten steps for writers and managers to produce convincing reports efficiently /

Colman, Adrian. Sandy Bay, Tas. : Word Wise, 2004.
Contact Enola or Rebecca in the Library during business hours for more information or to borrow these items.

Ph: 6230 8679 or 6230 8681

Email: library@fire.tas.gov.au

or drop into the State Headquarters building, Corner Argyle and Melville Streets, Hobart.

Can you help?

We'd like your help identifying the following photos. Do you recognise people, places, events?



TasFire Equipment's New Youngtown Offices

By Manager TasFire Equipment, Nik Masters

Staff from TasFire Equipment's Northern Region recently moved into new premises at the TFS Youngtown site. Following many years based at Kings Meadows the new building will provide an excellent opportunity for TasFire Equipment staff to develop closer ties with staff from other areas of the TFS. Similarly, as co-tenants with SES staff the new offices offer an opportunity to build relationships with members of another emergency service.

Featuring a dedicated shop front/reception, FEO offices and

a redesigned workshop and store area, the new premises are a huge improvement on the previous location. Offering far better access to clients "off the street" as well as improved workshop efficiency, the improvements at the Youngtown site are expected to enhance the business's client service in the region and is an exciting prospect for all TFE staff.

Special thanks to Deputy Regional Officer North, Mike Brown for all his patience and assistance during construction.



Extreme Parking

By Firefighter Launceston Fire Brigade, Jaron Oosterloo

This is some extreme parking that we came across in York Street, Launceston recently. It was a job that we discovered after returning from another call and thought we would stop and see if we could be of assistance. The young lady driver had actually come out of the car park up the road about 200 metres when her brakes failed, she travelled all the way down the footpath until she hit the parking meter that she is parked on. There was quite a bit of luck involved in this incident as there were no injuries to the driver as well as none to pedestrians.



Photo Competition Winners

When photos are received for Fireground, they are not necessarily submitted by the photographer. In these instances the names we have received will be published and the prize money will be split between the person submitting the photo and the actual photographer. Remember, please advise the name of the photographer for each photo submitted.

The winning photos from this edition are:

1st place



Photo submitted by
Firefighter Craig Yaxley, Ulverstone
Brigade
(\$100)

Photo submitted by
Senior Firefighter Gary Loh, HFB

Photo taken by
Senior Firefighter Kate Murphy, HFB

2nd place

(\$50)



How to enter:

Simply send your photo with details of the incident and name of photographer

Please ensure digital photos are of 3 megapixels and above, also ensure date stamp is off.

Photos may be of any TFS event or incident

May include TFS personnel in turnout gear or uniform

Any photo submitted to Fireground automatically becomes an entry to the competition

All photos become the property of the TFS and may be used in any publication or displays with acknowledgment made of the photographer

Post them in to:

Linda Lacy

Editor - Fireground

GPO Box 1526

HOBART TAS 7001

or email them to: fire@fire.tas.gov.au

Another fine example of extreme parking

This photo was taken by John Carter from D shift Launceston on a recent job. Another fine example of extreme parking and very lucky not to be an oriental kebab as it was one of our northern neighbours driving the vehicle at the time and they were having a little trouble with their map reading skills - Do we go left? Do we go right? Do we go straight?

Actually it was quite lucky that no one was hurt!



Obituaries

David Alan Muskett 1927 - 2004

Cradoc Fire Brigade



It is with much sadness that I report on the passing of David (Dave) Muskett on the 27th September 2004.

Dave was a much respected and valued member of the Cradoc Fire Brigade. Dave was a foundation member of the Woodstock Brigade in 1975 and when the amalgamation of Woodstock and

Cradoc Brigades took place in 1995, Dave continued his service with Cradoc, however, Dave's original date of joining a fire brigade was 1942, when he joined the Huonville Brigade as a raw 15 year old.

Dave was a quiet, retiring sort of bloke and he was very reluctant to make a big fuss about his length of service with the fire brigade as he pointed out that not all of his 62 years service was continuous. Dave had also spent some time in the Army, as well as taking "some time off to pursue other interests", which probably meant he was chasing after his wife, Thelma.

Dave was still a very active member of Cradoc Brigade up until last December, when he decided to step down from active service to look after Thelma, who was experiencing some health problems of her own. He originally wanted to retire completely, but his workmates in the Cradoc Brigade had other ideas and persuaded Dave to retain his membership, which he did.

Dave was an inspiration to everyone that knew him and his loss will be felt for a long time in the Cradoc area.

The Fire Service extends its sympathy to Thelma and family for their sad loss.

Brian Lewis (Bunny) Cartledge 1941 - 2004



It is tragedy that such an active person should be struck down with illness at a time when he deserved to be enjoying his retirement years with his wife Pat and family.

For the past three years Bunny lived with the knowledge that his illness was terminal, however, he continued to display the outstanding qualities which characterised his life.

Brian became a permanent fire fighter in 1971 stationed at Burnie. He then spent 17 years at Burnie on "C" shift before transferring to Launceston. After 4 years he returned to Burnie where he retired as a result of his dicky knees.

Brian was probably better known to the majority of people who knew him as Bunny, and was without doubt one of the finest all-round sporting champions that Tasmania has ever seen. He was a multi skilled, natural athlete. One of his personal highlights was selection to represent Tasmania in cricket against Pakistan, England, South Africa and the World Eleven, playing against idols such as Garfield Sobers, Tony Greig, Dennis Lillie, Sunil Gavaskar and Bishen Bede, he was regarded as one of the hardest hitting batsmen that the state has ever seen. As a footballer, Brian excelled; golf handicap of 11; he represented Tasmania at hockey; Brian also won the St Helens, Rosebery and the Tasmanian Thousands Consolation Gifts in sprinting.

On a personal note our sympathies go out to his family. Brian's fishing trips and friendship will long be remembered by all at Burnie.

A workmate and friend at peace

Peter Snell 1939 - 2004



Peter Snell joined the Hobart Fire Brigade in the early 70's straight from the United Kingdom where he was a police officer. Peter worked in the HFB watchroom as it was then known. With the amalgamation of the Southern Region and the Hobart Fire Brigade control rooms, Peter was involved in all the major transitional arrangements. He retired in October 1995 to

take up his passion of touring in his campervan with his wife Anne.

After a short illness Peter passed away on 9th September 2004. Peter will be remembered for his wry sense of humour and his no-fuss attitude even during the most serious of emergency incidents. He will be sadly missed by all his colleagues and friends.

Condolences to his wife Anne and family from all Hobart Fire Brigade members.

Our Conferences - an important forum but is it time for a change?

By Deputy Regional Officer North, Mike Brown

The concept and approach to our annual district conferences has changed little over the past twenty years.

The district conference has always been a great opportunity for all volunteers to hear from the organisation's managers and bosses, and for volunteers to have their questions answered and have input into the direction TFS takes.

Socially, volunteers and staff took the opportunity to meet and discuss issues. We have all got used to the district conferences; however, it may be time to ask "Is there a better way of doing business?"

While district conferences are beneficial for the reasons mentioned above I sometimes wonder about volunteers travelling for anything up to two hours for a two hour conference, and then driving home. It doesn't really seem like the best use of this valuable opportunity and time.

Also, aside from the socialising at the end, much of the conference appeared to be one way i.e. the bosses talking to the volunteers.

So what's the alternative?

On a number of occasions the Regional Officers have talked amongst themselves about the merits of a one day 'Regional Conference' that encompasses the good features of the current district conferences but has some additional features.

A proposal would see a single one day (say 1000 - 1500hrs

on a Saturday or Sunday) conference in each of the three regional centres.

Venues would need to be large for 200 - 300 people so that brigades can bring as many members as they want as is the case with the current district conferences.

Quality catering for morning / afternoon tea and lunch would be provided.

Lunch time may provide an opportunity for equipment displays and demonstrations outside.

The Regional Conference would provide an opportunity to have our regional managers for such areas as Police, Forestry Tasmania, Parks & Wildlife Service, Ambulance and so on, to present and answer questions.

Presentations from our specialists eg. Engineering Services, OH&S, and Training etc. would continue, however, they will be able to present far more detail than they have in the past at the district conferences because they'll have more time.

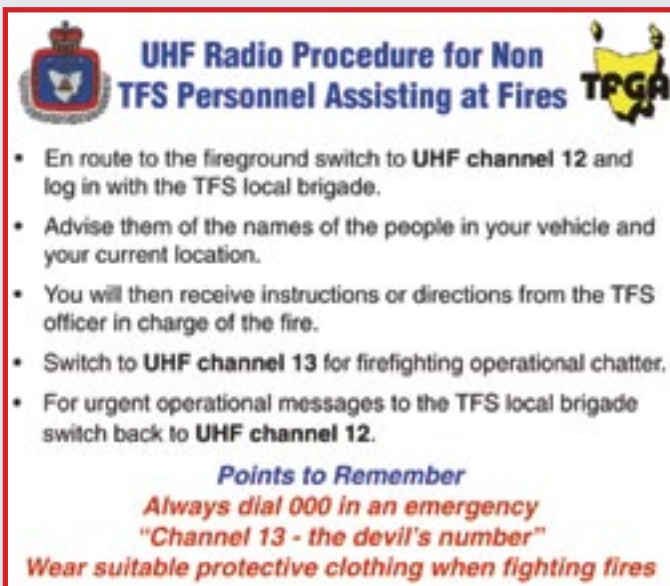
Regional Officers, with the support of the Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer are now keen to progress with a trial run of Regional Conferences. With this trial we shall also be deferring the State Conference for next year. All being well we'll run Regional Conferences as a trial in 2005 through the winter period.

We'll be keeping you posted as plans progress.

TFGA and TFS Join Forces

To overcome the problem with communication between landowners and local brigades, trials of UHF radios in brigade tanker appliances are underway in the Upper Derwent Valley and Northern Midlands to enable local landowners to contact TFS brigades when assisting at fires.

To facilitate this an aide memoire has been produced and is being distributed to the farming community and brigades. In addition fireground safety information bulletins have been developed in conjunction with the Tasmanian Farmers & Graziers Association in publications such as "Tas Country".



UHF Radio Procedure for Non TFS Personnel Assisting at Fires TFGA

- En route to the fireground switch to **UHF channel 12** and log in with the TFS local brigade.
- Advise them of the names of the people in your vehicle and your current location.
- You will then receive instructions or directions from the TFS officer in charge of the fire.
- Switch to **UHF channel 13** for firefighting operational chatter.
- For urgent operational messages to the TFS local brigade switch back to **UHF channel 12**.

Points to Remember
Always dial 000 in an emergency
"Channel 13 - the devil's number"
Wear suitable protective clothing when fighting fires

Training Services Cambridge - Still Open For Business

By District Officer Training Services, Paul Salter

Not falling apart, just rebuilding. Training Services at Cambridge may look like a building site, but we are still there and still open for business. Over the years as our training delivery has improved we have outgrown our current site at Cambridge and we are long overdue for a redesign. To ensure we are capable of delivering quality training to our firefighters in the future we are renovating the current structure into a purpose built training facility with greater comfort and flexibility of classrooms.

In brief the redevelopment of Cambridge will see the TasFire Training building and part of the area between the two buildings developed as office space for all training staff and administration. The old Training Services building will be revamped to include new classrooms designed to create an environment conducive to learning, East Coast District office and Cambridge Volunteer Brigade. Construction work is due to start in November and is expected to take five months.

Training conducted at Cambridge will be held in the old outside classroom until further notice. To locate the classroom, Training Services staff or East Coast District staff you will need to enter the Cambridge site through the Engineering Services gate located at 1020 Cambridge Road.

Take the first turn to the right, the car park is in front of the classroom and staff are located in the transportable offices.

Cambridge classroom on the right, front left office is the District Officer and administration staff, the second is for Training Officers, the third is the East Coast District Office and the kitchen.



Oop's ... the fire house

The fire training house at Cambridge had 23 years of active service with minor repairs conducted during that time. Last September the house was long overdue for extensive maintenance, we decided to replace the concrete ceiling slabs, however, once the roof was removed and the concrete slabs carefully lifted and put to the side, the brick walls let out a big sigh of relief and tried their hardest not to fall over. After consultation with the builders it was decided that in the interest of safety for all concerned the walls had to come down.

Do not despair, we are still open for business, live fire training is still being conducted at Cambridge in our shipping container props. We still have a range of containers designed for breathing apparatus and structural firefighting training. The fire house has been a valuable training tool for the TFS over the years and now is an appropriate time to plan for the future.

Currently we are evaluating the training needs for the TFS and reviewing the training props required to facilitate our desired training outcomes. This will involve revamping some of our current training props and the development of suitable

training props to appropriately prepare our firefighters into the future. We are also taking this opportunity to improve our environmental guidelines for burning and management of water runoff to enhance the sustainability of our training facility at Cambridge into the future. At this stage we anticipate building a new fire house on the same site next year.

RIP Fire House Cambridge September 2004.



Greetings from the UK

By Firefighter Launceston Fire Brigade, Rick Mahnken

Hello all or as they say in the UK "All right mate?"

I have just finished my first day on 'white watch' at the Exeter Fire Brigade. As in Tasmania there are four shifts/watches, white, red, blue and green. Once a round of shifts have been completed you have finished your tour; sounds a bit like you have just defended your country or something.

My first day has been quite hectic with a parade in full turnout gear initially (apparently only done on the first watch of every month) followed by a gear check and a topography lesson. The knowledge of streets is very impressive and from what I can gather is of high importance as topography is studied on each day/night of the shift.

Twenty-five minutes in and already I have my first shout/call under my belt - the first of three for the day. As the rest of the guys and one female were running for the stairs I was looking for the free beer! Not exactly a towering inferno but I have been promised a wide range of shouts from the typical structure fire to a river rescue of a cow.

Roughly about two hours are allocated for structured training in the morning but apparently because of the frequency of calls and other commitments this is commonly not achievable. The officer in charge who is an extremely nice guy is apparently a 'Training Animal' and gets very irritable

when training gets abandoned. I think his last name is O'Donnell.

The afternoon was spent on Community Fire Safety activities, which involved installing smoke alarms (with a 10 year battery life) in four residential dwellings. Community Fire Safety also appears to play a large part in daily activities so much so that after a recent structure fire the watch attending made up leaflets and did a letterbox drop in that area as the dwelling had a smoke alarm but with no battery installed. Sounds a bit familiar.

The rest of the day was filled with interviews and induction training. The firefighters seem like a great bunch and are very friendly, mixed in with a bit of banter especially about the English winning the rugby world cup. Conveniently they seem to forget about the other sports, especially the cricket.

Well that was my first day. Who knows what still lies ahead. I hope Dan enjoys his private room on night shift whilst I sleep in amongst all the other boys in a communal dormitory!!!! Let's just hope the showers aren't the same set up!

Cheers from the motherland, Rick

Rick is on exchange with Firefighter Daniel Searle from Essex Brigade (Ed)

Introducing Firecomm

Hi everyone, some of you may be wondering who the mystery voice belongs to on the radio at the moment. For those of you who have not met me yet, I am Emma McGrath, the latest (and youngest) addition to the Firecomm team.

I am here in Firecomm for the next few months. I was lucky enough to obtain a nine month contract, and have now been here since July.

I will give you all a little bit of a rundown on where I came from!

As a lot of you are probably aware, I am the youngest daughter of Leading Firefighter Frank McGrath of the Hobart Fire Brigade. I must admit, it is a very weird feeling speaking to him on the radio, and remaining professional at the same time - but I do think we are doing a pretty good job.

Before joining the Firecomm team, I was working for Centrelink in the Australian Passport Information Service Call Centre. I had been there for 2 1/2 years, and they have released me on nine months leave without pay, so I do have the option of going back at the end of my contract with TFS.

Before Centrelink I was at school, and had the usual kind



of casual jobs to get me by. I was educated at MacKillop College, and Guilford Young College. I left school in 2001.

I am the day worker at the moment, so more than likely over the summer months I will get to speak to all of you at some stage. If any of you are ever about - come and say hello, because I'd love to put faces to all of the names.

Work whilst Recovering from a Personal Injury and/ or Whilst on Workers Compensation

A new Policy Statement has been issued by the State Fire Commission, details as follows:

In the event that a Tasmania Fire Service member (volunteer or employee) sustains a personal injury, or is in receipt of Workers Compensation from the TFS or an external employer, that member is required to immediately advise his or her Brigade Chief/ Head of Division of the injury. Failing to do so will result in suspension and the Tasmania Fire Service not covering the member for the period of time of that injury.

Following advice of an injury the Brigade Chief/ Head of Division is to restrict the member to passive, clerical and/or non operational duties which will not aggravate the individual's injury.

If a Brigade Chief/ Head of Division has not been notified, but has good reason to believe that a member has suffered a personal injury or is in receipt of Workers Compensation from an external employer, the Brigade Chief/ Head of Division must discuss the matter with the member and shall restrict his or her duties until confirmation has been received that the member is fit to perform normal duties.

Members who are in receipt of workers compensation have a duty of care for their own safety (e.g. by avoiding activities

which may aggravate their injury) and for the health and safety of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

Unless medically fit for normal duties the Tasmania Fire Service does not allow any member to continue with normal Tasmania Fire Service duties while in receipt of workers compensation or other payments. Allowing this may prejudice that member's rights and/ or entitlements under the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988.

Prior to resuming full duties the member must supply evidence to the Brigade Chief/ Head of Division that the injury has healed and/ or the workers compensation claim is resolved. This may be in the form of a medical clearance from the employee's medical practitioner or from a Tasmania Fire Service Medical Adviser.

If further clarification is required with respect to specific cases John Thomson, Manager Administration, should be contacted on telephone 6230 8632 or Andrew Newell, Co-ordinator Human Services, on telephone 6230 8463.

Hawks Hill Fire

By Second Officer Eaglehawk Neck Brigade, Mark Linfoot

If you have 160 litres of petrol, 360 litres of LPG, three 9kg gas bottles, various pressure pak cans and then add fire, the result is devastating.

This is what Eaglehawk Neck and Dunalley fire crews faced on the 1st November 2004 near the top of Hawks Hill. Eaglehawk Neck 41 was first on scene from the lower side with Dunalley 31 and 51 arriving soon after on the top side. With gas bottles venting sideways 10 metres and up to 15,

directly under power lines the only course of action was to stand clear and let it burn down to a point when the gas had finished venting and things had stopped exploding. The fire was then put out with the initial attack by crews in B.A. The unit was an F100 with an 8 metre caravan attached by a turn table. The owner had noticed smoke coming from under the bonnet so he stopped and attempted to extinguish it with two dry powder extinguishers. Unfortunately he did not succeed and the unit was completely destroyed.



Firecomm Hints!

By Leading Communications Officer, Michael D'Alton

For this issue of Fireground we have decided to give you some tips that will make our job and your job easier!

Firstly, have you ever wondered why Firecomm sometimes doesn't answer the radio the first time you call on busy days?

Well here is a break down of a few things.

We monitor:

- 30 radio channels
- 9 "000" lines
- 19 phone lines and the potential up to 27 if we are busy.
- 1800 fire alarms

So we can only talk to one brigade on another frequency or a "000" caller at a time.

Remember when calling up on the radio you must establish communications first, here is an example "**Firecomm this is Grassy 3-1 over**" (only say Firecomm once), then wait for a reply. Give it 15 to 30 seconds and if you don't get an answer, call again. Firecomm will then answer "Grassy 3-1 this is Firecomm over" you can now send your message.

Please try to use your Fireground frequency on your radios wherever possible when on the Fireground.

Remember the vehicle movement prowords:

- Mobile (when calling mobile state the name of the officer in charge and crew size)
- Arrived
- In-service
- Returning
- Stationed

Remember to give regular Wordbacks and Situation Reports. The District Officers really do like to know what is going on so they can provide you with the support you need.

Hopefully Brigades have read the latest OH&S newsletter. Andrew has touched on Brigades attending large fires or

Free call 1800 300 017

IMT's. It is very important that you advise Firecomm that you are mobile to the incident, advise Firecomm you have arrived at the IMT staging area and then report to the IMT members.

When leaving the IMT, advise Firecomm you are returning to station and when you are stationed.

The TFS prints a radio handbook, ask your District Staff for a copy if you want one.

FIRM

FIRM is the computer aided dispatch program the TFS uses to dispatch Brigades and logs all incident information as well as permits. Brigades are also paged from this program.

If your Brigade attends an incident that could burn for several days or more it may be appropriate to have the incident placed into patrol mode once you have put a "Stop" on the incident. This allows for all vehicle movements to be recorded on the incident log in FIRM whenever you go out to check the incident. Remember you must tell Firecomm when all work has been completed on the incident and the incident can be closed.

For the volunteers:

Firecomm have just established a free call number for volunteers to contact us on, it is 1800 300 017. You cannot contact the Regional Offices via this number.

Just one last thing, please try to avoid calling Firecomm for personal phone numbers of TFS staff, with the privacy legislation we are not allowed to give out personal phone numbers. We would also prefer you do not call Firecomm to be transferred to other people's phones, most mobile phones have the facility to enter up to a hundred frequently called numbers. This is just another phone call we have to deal with that takes us away from our core function, (Emergency Call Taking and Dispatch), and can effect service delivery.

Well that's all, remember you are always welcome to visit Firecomm, bring your Brigade for a look and see what we do. Give us a ring and we will book you in for a coffee.

Have a safe summer and no doubt we will chat soon.

Calling all Volunteers!

By TVFBA State Secretary, Lyndy Smith

The Tasmanian Volunteer Fire Brigades Association is regularly asked by the Tasmania Fire Service to provide input into many areas that affect volunteers. Our aim is to consult as many volunteers as possible before providing a response. One of the easiest and most effective communication strategies is through direct contact either by email or

telephone. If you would like to have input or be kept up to date on projects that the TVFBA are involved in please provide us with your email address so that we can contact you directly. You can be included on the list by sending your name, brigade and email address to llsmith5@optusnet.com.au. The list is open to all volunteers regardless of rank.

Dunalley to Sweden and Back

By Firefighter Dunalley Brigade, Aaron Millar

In late 2003 I was lucky enough to be selected as one of five Tasmanians that would spend one month in Sweden and experience my vocational interests in that country. The lucky five came from all different backgrounds, police, medical science, traffic law, human resources and then there was me, Aaron Millar, a volunteer with the Dunalley Fire Brigade and designer of fire detection systems.

Our trip began on the 16th May 2004 when we caught a very cold 6am flight out of Launceston Airport. A quick stop in Melbourne and an overnight stop in Japan and we were soon jet lagged to the max and flying into Copenhagen. Our trip was organised as part of the Rotary "Group Study Exchange" program and included some time for me to visit fire brigades in Sweden.

We were only a day into our program and already my first brigade tour was due. I soon learnt that the rule was to multiply everything in Tasmania by 50 to get the Swedish equivalent. The first brigade I visited was located in a "small little country town" called Ljungby. When asked how many people lived in this "small little country town" I was amazed at the reply "oh around 200,000". Equal to the population of Hobart.

The southern part of Sweden is generally very flat and their roads are very good, with very few sharp turns. The average journey of 50 km would take no more than half an hour. Due to these conditions it is not uncommon for major city brigades to be 100 km apart with only one satellite volunteer brigade in the middle. The majority of incidents that were attended by the brigades were mva's and grass fires. It was the start of spring during our tour and there were a lot of green fields, needless to say that there weren't many grass fires at that time of the year, none on my shift anyhow.

The second brigade that I visited was Halmstad and it was here that I spent the majority of my time. I entertained the other firefighters with my stories of the big Tasmanian Devil and the Tasmanian Tiger. I suppose that they got some back on me too when they had been calling me the Tasmanian Devil in Swedish during our conversations.

My caretaker was a man called Magnus Ericson, who had a background in building fire detection and protection systems. I felt like I had gotten off very easy when he told me that he had to complete a 4 year fire protection engineering course to do his job. His course included intensive mechanical, hydraulics and chemistry training.

I attended the Halmstad call centre for emergency services. This is a Swedish government funded organisation called SOS. The organisation is now contracting out its services for monitoring security systems, with the expectation that their investment in advanced equipment will pay for itself over time. Each fire appliance is fitted with a GPS unit that reports back to the SOS organisation. On a computer screen the operator can see exactly where in the city the appliance is situated. In the future each appliance will be fitted with a mini computer and printer so that the details from the SOS computer system can be sent directly to each fire appliance and they will have a hard copy printout of the information prior to arriving on a site. This will also allow them to receive maps, building plans and other important information directly to each appliance.

Back at the Halmstad station there were more things of interest to be found. Because of the large distance between brigades, it had previously been difficult to provide facilities close to major grass fire incidents. To overcome this issue each brigade now has a transportable site office that they



can take with them. Each office is about the same size as a small shipping container, fitted with its own generator, communications systems and mess facilities. The unit is designed so that it could be loaded onto a truck in the same fashion as a skip bin, which overcomes the requirement for a dedicated vehicle to carry it around.

During my stay in Halmstad I also spent some time at the local domestic airport. The fire warden there was named Lars, and he was a keen fresh water fisherman. He said that he would like to come to Tasmania and catch himself a prize trout. Lars already knew about the Tasmanian Devil, but after some time we realised that the Tasmanian Devil to which he referred was the name of a fishing lure, and not the growling little fella we see in the bush.

Tanks on the airport utilities were fitted with an electric water heater, I couldn't help but ask the stupid question "how are you supposed to cool the fire if you're using hot water?" As it turned out the water heater was to stop the water in the tank freezing solid during the winter months when the temperature could get to below -15° celcius.

My time at Halmstad also involved some of the more simple tasks like washing and pressure testing the hoses, but even this provided some education. All Swedish brigades are now using a coupling referred to as a "Pressal Connection" (refer photo). The connection is very similar to a Storch Coupling, however, it has a tag on one side only and then a retainer on the other. I was impressed with a little locking pin on the connection that pushed up into the tag retainer while the connection was together. This limited the amount of twist in the connection and stopped it coming completely apart under vibration which can happen to a storch connection. A press of the little button on the side, and the Pressal Connection then came apart very easy.

The last brigade I visited was in Angleholm. Here I was taken on a tour of the local major hospital and was shown how they deal with smoke ventilation. Each area of the building is fitted with a duct system that runs outside to a manhole location.

The manholes must be of a certain diameter to suit the brigade equipment. During a fire event, pressurisation fans can be fitted onto the ducts and then the associated building area can either be pressurised or exhausted depending on the fan direction. Each truck has a set of plans for all the major city buildings so that they can report directly to the correct manhole on arrival.

The thing that struck me most during my time in Sweden was the amount of resources each fire station had available to them. Each station had a budget of 40 million Australian dollars per year and had around 12 major firefighting appliances at their disposal. When I considered this against our Tasmania Fire Service, I soon realised that the multiply by 50 rule was in effect again.

Our month in Sweden was well planned to fit in with the wedding of Mary Donaldson in Denmark, and before coming home we spent two day in Copenhagen and proudly wandered through the city streets with Tasmanian flags draped across our shoulders.

Whilst in Sweden I presented the Halmstad Chief with a plaque on behalf of the Tasmania Fire Service and told him of the recent celebrations for the 120 year anniversary of the Hobart Fire Brigade. It was ironic that the Halmstad Brigade had celebrated its 200 year anniversary in 2003. As a token of my visit the chief requested that I bring back a book which celebrated the history of the Halmstad Brigade. During a recent awards ceremony at the Dunalley Brigade, the book was presented to Acting Regional Officer Tony Davidson along with a couple of Swedish junior helmets which District Officer Gerard Crawford was quite happy to model for the cameras.

For a young fella from the Dunalley Fire Brigade my trip to Sweden certainly was an educational and exciting adventure and I can only hope that other firefighters might also get the opportunity to participate in this fantastic program. Thank you also to Gerard Crawford who provided some Tasmania Fire Service items for me to present to my host brigades in Sweden.



On The *Move*

A list of recent personnel changes within the Tasmania Fire Service

The following Career Personnel changes have been effected

Departures

South	Melanie Lord	Clerk, TasFire Training	20th August 2004
Launceston Fire Brigade	David Longstaff	Senior Firefighter	25th August 2004
Youngtown	Craig Smith	Senior Fire Equipment Officer	22nd September 2004
Hobart Fire Brigade	Doug Fife	Senior Firefighter	8th October 2004
Launceston Fire Brigade	Bruce Dineen	District Officer, Field	9th October 2004
North	David Peck	District Officer	29th October 2004

Elevations

Launceston Fire Brigade	Mark Dobson	District Officer Development & Learning	20th August 2004
Mersey	Paul Hill	District Officer	20th August 2004
South Esk	Craig Maxwell	District Officer	29th September 2004
South	Mark Klop	Fire Investigation Officer, South	4th October 2004
South	Mark Suhr	Training Officer	4th October 2004
South	Stacey Peters	Station Officer	4th October 2004
South	Steven Percival	Station Officer	4th October 2004

The following Volunteer Brigade Officers have been elected by their Brigades

BRIGADE	OFFICER	APPOINTMENT	BRIGADE	OFFICER	APPOINTMENT
Swansea	Ken Nichols	Brigade Chief	Ravenswood	Stan Jarman	First Officer
	Kelvin Jones	Second Officer		Anthony Beckett	Second Officer
	John Booth	Third Officer		Vikkii Rowe	Third Officer
Wesley Vale	Robert Atkins	Brigade Chief	Latrobe	Graeme Brown	Brigade Chief
	Stuart Hingston	Second Officer		Chris Hinds	Second Officer
	Kordel Dick	Third Officer		Michael Parker	Third Officer
	Ashley Dick	Fourth Officer		Dennis Michajlow	Fourth Officer
Devonport	Steven Fairfull	Fourth Officer	Currie	Jeff Barry	Third Officer
Penguin	Tony King	Brigade Chief		Peter Mueller	Fourth Officer
	Gordon Patchin	Second Officer	Dover	Gavin Wass	Second Officer
	Andrew Fuller	Third Officer		Glen Baker	Third Officer
	Brad Mears	Fourth Officer		Colin King	Fourth Officer
Snug	Dale Berry	Fourth Officer	Frankford	Shane Hall	Third Officer
Stowport/Natone	Fiona Tustian	Brigade Chief		Kevin Reynolds	Fourth Officer
	Ian Atkinson	Second Officer	Smithton	Trevor Kingston	Brigade Chief
	Stephen McLaren	Third Officer		Peter Turnbull	Second Officer
	Phil Tustian	Fourth Officer		Leo Berechree	Third Officer
Legana	Michael Clifford	Brigade Chief	Eaglehawk Neck	Paul Jaeger	Fourth Officer
	Paul Butterworth	Second Officer		James Mison	Brigade Chief
	Scott Hayes	Third Officer		Mark Linfoot	Second Officer
	Clinton Blackberry	Fourth Officer		Scott Johnston	Third Officer
Campbell Town	Gordon Maxfield	Brigade Chief	Yolla	Robert Clifford	Fourth Officer
	Rodney Brown	Second Officer		Russell Matthews	Brigade Chief
	Michael Liston	Third Officer		Darren Smart	Second Officer
	Andrew Gray	Fourth Officer		David Dunnings	Third Officer

Group Officers 2004

By Deputy Regional Officer North, Mike Brown

For the first time in several years, a statewide gathering of TFS Group Officers occurred at the new Youngtown Regional Complex in October.

The Chief Officer John Gledhill, arranged for the statewide meeting following on from similar forums held in each of the three regions to discuss the further roles and functions of Groups and Group Officers.

In recent years the Incident Control System (ICS) has been firmly established and accepted as the preferred system of Incident Management across Tasmania, in addition, the use of task forces and strike teams to respond across the state (and even interstate) is well understood. These and other changes have lead to the revision of Group Officers' roles and functions.

The Youngtown meeting assisted in identifying and clarifying the Group Officers' roles and functions. Supported at the meeting was that Group Officers require training and experience through workshops and mentoring to effectively identify when an IMT (basic level) needs to be introduced and how to assist in its provision.

It was agreed that the "role of the group is not to manage the incident but to ensure that the incident is managed".

In the near future the Chief will be developing a revised 'Role and Function of Group Officers' paper reflecting the outcomes of the meeting.



ABC Giving Tree

A number of years ago, former Premier the late Jim Bacon decided that instead of sending out Christmas Cards he would make a donation to charity so the less fortunate in our community could experience the joy of Christmas. The TFS embraced this initiative and since then we have continued to donate, those funds that would have been spent on purchasing and posting Christmas Cards, to the ABC Giving Tree. The TFS will again support the ABC Giving Tree by way of a donation with a cheque for \$1,100.



Look Up Look Out

By Acting Training Officer Training Services, Peter Tavaszi

Safety issues and considerations regarding Transend high voltage transmission lines will be added to some of our training package presentations in the near future.

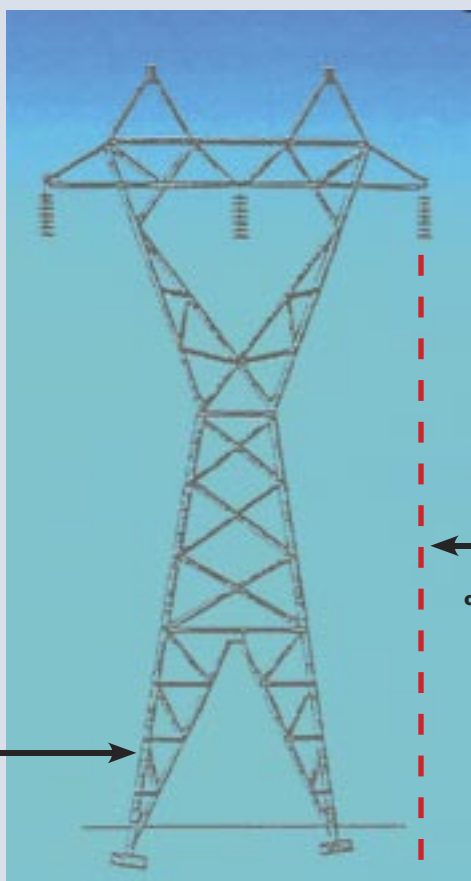
Considerations:

- Before proceeding to fire check local maps to identify high voltage transmission lines in area.
- Inform FireComm of Location, Tower ID and Tower Number as indicated on tower leg within close proximity of fire.
- When passing under high voltage transmission lines pass as near as practicable to a tower to avoid sagging lines mid Span. "LOOK UP, LOOK OUT" could save your life
- Treat any downed lines as live and consider wires in contact with metal or other conductive objects, can cause these objects to be live, eg. cars, pools of water, fences (fences may be live for many kilometres).
- Consider a safety observer when mobile plant and equipment is working in vicinity of or near high voltage transmission lines.

Safety Precautions:

- Always maintain safe working clearance of 10 metres out from the edge of the high voltage transmission lines.
- If you can't see the high voltage transmission lines through thick smoke, caution is needed due to possibility of electricity arching to earth.

REMEMBER SMOKE IS A CONDUCTOR OF ELECTRICITY



Transmission
Tower I.D
location

Safe working clearance

10 Metres
out from transmission lines.



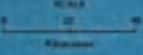


TRANSEND

Tasmania's Electricity Transmission System



Tasmania



LEGEND	
●	SUBSTATION (indicates location)
★	Power Station
— (purple)	220 kV TRANSMISSION ROUTE
— (orange)	110 kV TRANSMISSION ROUTE
— (black)	88 kV TRANSMISSION ROUTE

August 2004

Photo Gallery



Fire at Kyeema SeaFoods

Sent in by Station Officer Launceston Fire Brigade, Alisdair Williams

Photo taken by Senior Firefighter John Bolton

Note the sign - "Smoked Eel" - Senior Firefighter Tim Sutton said "it sure was!!"



Snorkelling by the light of the moon

By Firefighter, Devonport, Shirley Berger



Droughty Point

By Senior Firefighter Hobart Fire Brigade, Shaun Skelly

Photos taken at Droughty Point Road during a community service provided by Clarence B shift.

Photographers Andrew McGuinness, Frank McGrath, Lindsay Voss and Shaun Skelly

King Island Exercise

Photos by District Officer Craig Maxwell





Training Day at Dodges Ferry

By Field Officer East Coast District, Steve Walkley



Fire Ghost

By Senior Firefighter Hobart Fire Brigade, Shaun Skelly

Look closely at the photo and will see an image on the left that looks very much like a fire ghost



Warning for Homeowner

By Field Officer East Coast District, Steve Walkley

This photo shows where the sun's rays have been magnified through a fish bowl then burnt the side of a lounge. Luckily the lounge didn't catch alight!

Barn Fire

By Brigade Chief Gladstone, Rodney Moore

Photo of barn fire at Rushy Lagoon - January 2004.

Capability Enhancement

The TFS Continues to Stay at the Forefront of Technological Advancement

By Acting Regional Officer South, Tony Davidson



As our world changes our role changes with it, the TFS has undergone improvement in many areas, some not previously considered core business, the following article provides a brief overview;

All the examples below demonstrate how the TFS is taking great strides to introduce the latest technology in appliances, equipment and skills enhancement to ensure the TFS is operationally prepared and capable of responding to any emergency incident/s in Tasmania and beyond if called upon

Fire Appliances

The recent arrival of the LFB refurbished Snorkel coincided with the commissioning of the Scania 5 Series Heavy Pumpers into the Hobart and Launceston Brigades. The TFS now has two refurbished Snorkel appliances in service and a third is underway. The Scania pumpers are the latest in heavy pumper technology and complement the existing fleet of Scania and Freightliner pumpers in the major urban centres. The recent release of 14 Tanker Pumpers to both volunteer and career brigades provides us with a much greater flexibility in our response capability to both structural and vegetation fires. In addition the first of a fleet of 55 new generation light tankers has rolled off the assembly line from Engineering Services at Cambridge.

All of these appliances are state of the art in terms of their design and the use of technology. The input of the members of the Appliance User Groups has gone a long way in assisting the TFS to achieve the high standard of appliances, purpose built for Tasmanian conditions that are being placed into service today.

Chemical, Biological & Radiological

The roll out of the equipment made available through the Commonwealth Government's CBR enhancement program has resulted in an increase in our ability to manage the consequence of a multiple casualty event; importantly this equipment also complements our HazMat response capacity

- Increased number of Level C protective ensembles (chemical splash suits and respirators)
- More advanced monitoring equipment enabling a wider range of substances to be accurately identified.
- Greater decontamination capability which enables the treatment of high numbers of people while providing warm water, privacy and personnel tracking.



Urban Search and Rescue

The TFS has purchased specialist equipment to allow crews to undertake search and rescue in a structural collapse situation. This equipment includes:

- Concrete cutting and drilling equipment
- Specialist search cameras

Protective equipment

We have also developed a core group of specialist operators who will be supported by our firefighting crews and who can integrate into USAR Task Forces throughout Australia and Internationally.

The TFS is supplementing these areas further with training, the enhancement of operating procedures and the development of a modular system to create flexibility in the transport of new and existing equipment.

Firefighting Equipment

Thermal Imaging Cameras

TFS is committed to the development of our thermal imaging capability and the ability to be able to communicate effectively at incidents. Strategies are being developed to facilitate the funding of additional Thermal Imaging Cameras (TIC's). This will result in the provision of TIC's to the larger volunteer brigades through a flow on effect from career brigades.



Hoses and Couplings

Recent trials at the Hobart Fire Brigade, of medium weight extruded hoses, similar to Duraline, have proven to be successful and it has been recommended by ORSC that this type of hose be introduced statewide. This extruded hose will see a reduction in the time required by brigades to maintain hose as it can be restowed into appliances without the need to completely dry. It will also see a reduction in the need to store large quantities of replacement hoses at each brigade. It is also envisaged that a whole of region hose repair and maintenance system based on an exchange system will be implemented to ensure brigades have sufficient high quality hose available at all times



At the same time trials of alloy flat faced quarter turn couplings have also been trialled in Hobart and the North West Coast. These couplings are the same as those used by Parks and Forestry and a proposal has been put forward to systematically replace all 25 and 38 mm brass couplings across the service. As these couplings are introduced Brigades will be provided with a range of adaptors to enable them to use hoses coupled with either the new or the old couplings.



Breathing Apparatus

The TFS has continued its program of upgrading its complement of positive pressure breathing apparatus sets. 140 new PSS-100 BA sets have arrived from Drager and are being put into service in the four career centres. A further order of 100 sets (PSS-100) should arrive early December 2004. In addition 240 carbon fibre 6.8 litre 300 bar cylinders have been ordered.

Provision has been made in the 2004/2005 budget for the purchase of an additional 100 BA sets (PSS-100) and 100 carbon fibre cylinders, they will be put into service in the volunteer brigades in the Southern Region to replace the existing PA-80.

Additional purchases of sets and cylinders are planned to allow the PA-80 sets in the North and North West Regions to be upgraded

Pre Incident Planning

We are in the final stages of development of a comprehensive pre-incident planning system which will improve our incident preparedness. You will hear more about this in future editions.





Longford Fire Brigade Opens Doors to Public

By Secretary Longford Fire Brigade, Tania Evans

On the 9th September 2004, Longford Fire Brigade opened its doors to the public. The day was educational, interactive and enjoyable with there being a colouring competition and a guess the number of lollies in for the jar for the children, live fire demonstrations and a free sausage sizzle with the meat being donated by Lethborgs. We also had a walk down memory lane with a DVD produced by Mark Evans (a fire in the brigade). It contained scanned photos of fires that the Longford Fire Brigade have attended over the years and also special events that the Brigade have been involved in. This DVD was shown throughout the day to encourage people to join the Tasmania Fire Service and in particular the Longford Brigade.

The day was a fantastic success with approximately 100 people visiting the station. It was also interesting to find out that the general public believe the station is occupied by fires 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



PWS Annual Conference

Brigade Chief Pipers River, Andrew Frankcombe

Late in September I was invited to attend the Parks and Wildlife Service (P&WS) Conference at White Sands on the East Coast.

The purpose was to have a Volunteer Brigade Chief talk to conference delegates on the role and expectations of TFS Volunteers at fires on P&WS land tenures.

Following discussions with Acting Regional Officer Tony Davidson it was decided that some of the topics which should be discussed included:

- Building relationships between TFS volunteers and Parks personnel
- What currently works well, what doesn't and what cheeses volunteers off
- What are some of the peculiarities of volunteers
- How can we improve relationships

A/RO Davidson who also attended provided an overview of the Tasmania Fire Service and in particular the clear advantage that we have being "One Fire Service"

My aim was to put across the views of why volunteers join a Brigade and their expectations and limitations. Using my own Brigade (Pipers River) as a typical model provided the following reasons

- Offer a community service
- Personal development and potential career development
- To increase life skills
- Acquire additional knowledge
- To increase social standing within their communities
- Seek companionship and mateship (because it's certainly not the money)

So who are TFS Volunteers?

As explained they are farmers, engineers, takeaway shop owners, mechanics, smelter workers, teachers, self-employed tradespeople and yes, some are employees of the Tasmania Fire Service. I also suggested that I didn't think there wouldn't be a volunteer in the State who wouldn't jump on a truck and drive to the other end of the State to get stuck

into a big burn and even putting their hand up for mainland sorties if called upon.

Then it came to explaining what we don't like and these items included.

- Being told to "Hurry up and wait" at fires.
- Not being fed when others have been
- Working unreasonable hours (volunteers have jobs to go to the next day)
- Having to deal with a now out of control back burn that paid firefighters lit and then knocked off because of award constraints

What really opened some eyes were my comments on environmental views when extinguishing fires. I strongly suggested that volunteers are **NOT** rednecks or have the attitude "If it moves shoot it, if it doesn't chop it down" but as I explained if we could possibly see a way of bringing a fire under control by driving a D8 through some bush it's done, generally without much consideration of environmental values. It's not because we want to wreck the place but simply because we want to get the fire out, get home to our families and our own patch of dirt.

Other points that were well received were the family pressures TFS volunteers can face, particularly if it has been a long fire season. As we all know issues like

- Wife starts asking when is my backyard going to be cleaned up?
- Kids, "Daddy when are you going to come and play with me and not your Fire Truck!"
- Self employed people must also consider potential loss of income and clients

Of course much discussion took place over dinner and drinks that evening. It was certainly an enjoyable and enlightening couple of days.

In summary, I would like to thank Chief Officer John Gledhill, Acting Regional Officer Tony Davidson and Brigade Chief Leon King in their support of my attendance at the conference.

Well Done Justin!

In October 2004 Justin Plummer was selected in the Tasmanian Lawn Bowls Team to compete in the Triangular Statewide Pennant Association Games which is a lead-up to interstate games against Victoria in January 2005.

It is quite an achievement for Justin who has only been playing bowls since 1998.

Justin is very honoured and excited to be given the opportunity to compete at such an elite level and is hoping to give a good account of himself playing in the position of lead.

We wish Justin the very best on his inclusion in the Team and wish him every success in the future.





Quamby Group Exercise - 2nd October 2004

Second Officer Carrick Brigade, Greg Cain

Newly appointed Quamby Group Officer Rod Sweetnam convened a committee to organise a group exercise for Brigades in the Quamby group. The Four Springs Lake area was chosen as a suitable location for the exercise due to the numerous logging roads, sheltered barbeque area and facilities. Gunns Limited was more than happy to allow TFS access to the area for this training exercise.

Extensive planning saw the organisation of four separate exercises: relay pumping; first aid including chainsaw operations; vehicle fire with chemical spill and a "challenge" exercise. The location enabled the exercises to be placed some distance apart with maps provided to the participants thereby including practice at map reading skills.

Setting up began the day before with an old vehicle carted to the site and set up as though it had smashed into a trailer carrying drums of fuel and chemicals. Our patient for the first aid and chainsaw exercise was "Rusty," a 40kg dummy made of steel pipe with moving limbs - Kim Brundle-Lawrence had done a great job of making the bones sticking through his overalls in several places look very realistic.

The big day arrived and participants assembled at Four Springs Station and then proceeded in convoy to Four Springs where they were greeted with a cuppa by the organising committee. The crews were allocated and a briefing on the day's activities was given. The twenty participants from six brigades were divided into four crews. Each crew of five personnel was allocated a 3:1 and a 5:1 and issued with maps, sunscreen, drinking water and salt (for the leeches). Each crew was instructed to locate a particular exercise, complete the tasks required and then rotate to the next one at the given signal. Location of each exercise required crews to use their maps - this proved to

be a challenge for one group in particular who visited two exercises before finding the one they were supposed to be at! ("Just carrying out a familiarisation exercise" they claimed.)

Exercise 1 - HAZMAT - Crews were met by an agitated driver who had been towing some drums home on his trailer when a stolen vehicle had run into him. The vehicle's occupants had all "done a runner" but the stolen vehicle was on fire and there was a drum of spilt chemical. All groups made the same mistake - wanting to get to the fire and get it out - failing to notice the spilt chemical and taking appropriate care. One group lost the entire crew. As the first crew member rushed toward the burning vehicle he was told to "lay down - you're dead." The second crew member rushed to his aid - "Lay down" he was instructed, "you're dead too." The other three crew members, concerned for their fellow firies - rushed to assist their fallen comrades - sorry guys! Of course all crew members made a remarkable recovery and went on to identify the chemical (from a safe distance) finding the UN number, relaying the information through to "Firecomm" (in this instance Group Officer Rod Sweetnam) and were given the appropriate numbers back to mark on their HAZMAT Action Guides. They were then able to safely deal with the chemical spill before extinguishing the vehicle fire. It was a great exercise in awareness for all involved.

Exercise 2 - Relay Pumping - This exercise consisted of carrying portable dams, hoses and pumps from the lake edge through leech territory up hill through rocks and bush to a fire 300 metres away.

As each crew consisted of only five members, teamwork and good radio communication was required to ensure that the water flowed smoothly from the volume pump at the lake - to



the first portable dam, using a 5:1 to pump up to the second dam and a portable pump from the second dam to the fire. As hoses were rolled out and connected and dams put in place, others concentrated on starting the pumps. Several members of one crew ended up having a cold shower as they primed the volume pump while it was running - and could not get the plug back in before the water reached the pump! Unfortunately the second portable pump was playing up (as can happen in real situations) and one resourceful crew ended up extinguishing the fire by bucketing water from the second portable dam to the fire. Teamwork was then required to roll up the numerous hoses and take all the gear back to the starting point.

Exercise 3 - First Aid/Chainsaw - Crews arrived to find "Rusty" stuck under a fallen tree with broken limbs exposed through his clothes, blood everywhere. While the chainsaw operator donned the appropriate PPE and prepared the chainsaw under the watchful eyes of Dean Richardson, others went to work reassuring the patient and administering first aid. Rusty's condition deteriorated with him losing consciousness forcing crews to make rapid decisions about his treatment. Just when things started to look good they were told that the ambulance could not get into the area and Rusty had to be carried out of the bush. Resourceful crews tried to make a stretcher out of bush materials whilst others looked on their appliances - ladders and blankets were found to be the most appropriate form of stretcher.

Exercise 4 - The Challenge!!!! This event was planned to get crews to use some initiative and basic survival skills and to see what leadership skills could be drawn from the members participating. Crews arrived to find a fire burning on the southern side of a 50 metre ravine (the ravine being the actual road). They had no water on board and the only water supply was from the lake on the northern side of the ravine. They had to cross the ravine (without touching any part of the road) and carry a portable pump, suction hose and strainer (along with adequate 38mm canvas hose to reach back to the fire) to the lake's edge. While the pump was being sited and primed other crew members bowled out and connected the hoses, crossing the ravine and racing up the southern side to extinguish the fire.

Crossing the ravine proved to be the challenge with all crews resorting to using the ladder from their appliance. Crews who used their initiative and worked safely using hoses or ropes to lower the ladder over the ravine and securing the ladder were awarded extra points. Ideally organisers were looking for a really safety conscious crew to include a rope tied from one side of the ravine to the other to act as a hand rail.



Again, teamwork and communication was the key to seeing the fire successfully extinguished and all equipment made up and returned to the starting point. Each crew was timed and awarded points for their OH&S awareness, communication and their ability to work together.

Crews rotated around the four exercises completing three before they were able to relax and enjoy a barbeque lunch that was prepared by volunteers from the Hadspen Lions Club. Then it was on to complete the final exercise. Crews then returned to "base" where they were able to share their experiences and enjoy a laugh over the day's activities. The winning team for "The Challenge" was announced with all crew members of the winning team receiving a TFS t-shirt as their prize.

Thanks must go to those members who gave up their day for the exercise. The exercises offered participants a great opportunity to practice skills and many were able to use the experiences to add to their Skills Development Records.

Thanks also to the organising committee of Kevin Robertson, Rod Sweetnam, Gil Walker and Patrick Crimmins and the volunteers for supervising the exercises - Cliff Hume, Kim Brundle-Lawrence, Dean Richardson, Steve Bye and Allan Holmes.

International Firefighters' Day 2005

By Third Officer Rowella Volunteer Fire Brigade. Greg Barnett



International Fire Fighters Day for 2005 will be celebrated on Sunday the 1st May.

St Florian's Day is the 4th of May. The attached letter from Lt. JJ Edmondson of the CFA in Victoria explains how and why it has been created and the reason behind it.

Most countries try and hold a memorial day on the Sunday leading up to the 4th, this being so families and the community do not have to interrupt their work days. It also lets the occasion be more public and in a lot of ways better public relations can be formed and promoted. IFFD is not a day for only TFS personnel, but for all firefighters, full-time, retained, volunteer or work related. This year's IFFD (2004), was held by the Rowella Volunteer Fire Brigade, they gained sanctioning from TFS and the support of many brigades statewide.

The main aim for IFFD is remembrance for our fallen comrades, a day to show respect for what we do and in my opinion, pay tribute to our families and friends for the worry and concerns when we are away fighting fires.

On the day for the brigades or people interested in IFFD, there are many things that can be done. Every year at twelve noon, a 30 second sound-off of sirens followed by one minute's silence is observed in respect. This year our Chaplain, Clair Wherrett said a few words afterwards and the State President TVFBA, Don Mackrill gave a speech. BBQ and drinks followed. It does not need to be big, flashy or regulated day, the idea is to enjoy and respect.

A few other ideas:

- The sale of red and blue ribbons (Monies raised from this will go to the bereavement fund)
- TFS or other group parades and or appliance drive-thrus.
- Community social events.
- Fire safety exhibitions.
- Senior and junior displays.
- End of fire season get togethers. Why not combine the two?

International Firefighters Day would not have been possible except for the support of the brigades turning up, Lt. JJ Edmondson for the work that she has done in organizing such a world wide event and of course our families.

Hopefully IFFD 2005 will be bigger and better thanks to a whole lot more firies knowing about this important day.

We all, through our brigades, groups or work can as one, surely spare one minute of silence for lost comrades, work-mates or loved ones per year.

Please feel free to contact me for any further information relating to IFFD or visit <http://www.iffd.net/calendar/calendar.html>.

Ribbons will be available for sale from March 2005. Orders please by the end of January Ribbons are available from me. - phone 6394 7656 or email barnett5@iprimus.com.au

Dear Firefighters and Supporters

Let us hope that this year will be a prosperous and safe one for all. Last year we faced times of tragedy and triumph, arguments and lessons, reflection and celebrations. These varying in their impact and influence on each individual are now a part of our lives and in many cases cannot be easily dismissed.

One event that had such a major influence on myself was the loss of five fellow firefighters in early December 1998. I was always aware of the dangers of firefighting, I have had the safety and training drills ingrained into me over the years and have always been aware that my friendship with other firefighters could lead me to joy and the sense of being part of a greater family as well as to potential loss.

When Matt, Stuart, Jason, Garry and Chris of Geelong West lost their lives in the fire at Linton on December 2nd, 1998 all of this struck home hard. It didn't matter that these five were from a different brigade or in another region, they could have been from another state or country for all that mattered. What was important was that they were firefighters, who lost their lives doing something that we have all been trained and are proud to do - they died trying to save life and property.

As a mark of respect to the lost firefighters and support to their families, the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and the Victorian community adopted the wearing of a red ribbon. When I first mentioned this to the wider Internet community the response was loud, positive and immediate with crews as far away as the USA adopting to wear this symbol as well at that time.

This, and the letters of support and fellowship that flowed from the tragedy spurred me to set a New Year's resolution for 1999: to organise an internationally recognised symbol of support and respect for ALL firefighters and a date for which this could be co-ordinated world wide.

When I asked the national and international community for their comments and suggestions as to whether it should be done, what symbol to use and when we could do it, the response was overwhelmingly positive. For weeks discussions ensued as to the appropriate symbols and their associated meanings and also in regard to an appropriate date (which was more difficult due to the difference in timing of fire seasons worldwide).

Finally sifting through the responses which came from ALL over the world I was able to choose a symbol and date that appears to be acceptable to all: The choice of ribbons was finally linked to colours symbolic of the main elements we work with - red for fire and blue for water. These colours also are internationally recognised as representing emergency service.

The date was linked to the feast day of St Florian. St Florian (the patron saint of all firefighters) was the first known commander of one firefighting squad in the Roman Empire. He lost his life, as well as those of his colleagues, for protecting the same humane ideas which firefighters all over the world share even today.

Firefighters in most of the European countries celebrate their day on 4th of May as a 'Day of Fire Service' as well as St. Florian's Day. This date is also known as St Florian's Day worldwide and has been tradition for more than 150 years in Europe.

The above could only have been developed with the input from numerous people worldwide helping to ensure that this has been truly an international decision. Without their comments, suggestions and endorsements I could never have progressed to this stage. To all of you my sincere and complete thanks.

This dream can now become reality with your support. Please think of ways of promoting this day and adding it to your annual calendars. Memorial services, parades or even just the wearing and displaying of ribbons will assist in helping remember and thank the firefighters of your community.

With many thanks,

Lt JJ Edmondson

CFA Victoria "

History of the St Patrick's River Valley Country Fire Brigade - the first 35 years

11th November 1969 to 11th November 2004 - 35 years of diligent service

By Second Officer St Patrick's River Brigade, Richard Rees

This is part one of a series of articles on St Patrick's Brigade

The Beginnings

The St Patrick's River Valley Country Fire Brigade, (originally Launceston Group), was formed with a public meeting at the Myrtle Park Primary School, on Remembrance Day the 11th of November 1969. The Regional Chief Officer of the Country Fire Brigades chaired the meeting. In attendance were the District Officer (North - East), several Aldermen from the St Leonard's Town Council, Max Medcraft (a founding member of the Brigade, brother of Brian Medcraft Snr, a current member of the Brigade), Neville Calvert (a founding member of the Brigade, and still a Brigade member today), and many other interested local residents from the District. At the meeting, Wal Imlach (Brum) nominated Bevan Broadhurst for the inaugural position of Brigade Captain, which was by a unanimous vote and was a position, which he held until March 1977.

The Brigade was initially equipped with one Tanker Trailer with a 'Wankle Pump' and a few canvas hoses. The tanker trailer had a water capacity of 100 gallons. From 1969 until 1977, the Brigade battled along with very little equipment, but

collected a few hand tools, knapsacks and other pieces of equipment that were donated by the people from the district.

In 1977, Eric Gutwein took over as the Brigade Captain (father of Peter Gutwein, Launceston local MHA, and Tasmanian Liberal Shadow Police Minister). The tanker trailer was given a major overhaul, and moved to Nunamara where it was housed at the Brigade Captain's residence. It was about this time that members of the Brigade realised the amount of deterioration that occurred when equipment was stored outside, and felt it was unfair to expect a Brigade Captain to put his own valuable equipment outside in order to house the Brigade fire equipment.

It was thought what an advantage it would be to have an upgrade of modern equipment and a permanent home for the Brigade.

The Push For A First Fire Truck

In April 1979, Jim Imlach was promoted from Fourth Officer to Brigade Captain. Jim had been a National Serviceman who had served with the 1st Armoured Regiment in Vietnam for two years, where he had developed leadership abilities and man management skills. Jim was aptly assisted by Brenda, his wife, who also became the Brigade Secretary. Brenda

Wesley Vale Brigade Elections

By Firefighter Wesley Vale Brigade, Veronica Atkins

It was the year for elections, and those elected were:

Brigade Chief - Robert Atkins; Second Officer - Stuart Hingston; Third Officer - Kordel Dick; and Fourth Officer - Ashley Dick.

Long Service badges were presented to Robert and Veronica Atkins - Robert for 35 years service and Veronica for 20 years.

Life memberships were presented to Robert Atkins, Rodney Hingston and a posthumous award to the late Perry Dick which was accepted by his wife Suzanne. Perry's award was planned to be presented at the Christmas BBQ but he requested it not be done "so as not to spoil the fun".

Perry joined Wesley Vale Brigade in 1969 and was one of the founding members, being Second Officer, then Brigade Chief, and also a Permit Officer. He was involved in both Regional and State Competitions and was very active throughout his time with the Brigade.



Robert Atkins, Suzanne Dick and Rodney Hingston pictured with the Life Membership plaques.

Perry passed away suddenly on 27th February 2004 and is sadly missed by Brigade members and the Wesley Vale Community.

was promoted to Deputy Captain (Second Officer) in May 1982, during Jim's absences from the home, due to work. At the same time the tanker trailer moved to their residence at Myrtle Bank. By this time the Brigade members saw the limitations of a tanker trailer, and were calling for an up to date 4-wheel drive truck; a cause taken up enthusiastically by Jim and Brenda with the State Fire Commission.

After approaching the District Officer (North East), the Chief Regional Officer - North and the State Fire Commission, and explaining the inadequacies of the tanker trailer in such a large area of rural population and forestry operations; a new fire truck was finally received with much delight and relief to the Brigade and the District.

The St Patrick's River Brigade received a 1970 International C1310, 4-wheel drive, medium tanker truck, 4-1 appliance. This truck had a capacity for 500 gallons of water, and was originally the State Fire Commission's track maintenance vehicle. After major modifications to the vehicle it commenced operations with the Brigade in 1980.

In the early 80's, the Brigade received a lot of additional ancillary equipment and hoses, as well as a Coventry Climax 'Godiva trailer pump', a Mitsubishi portable petrol pump, and FM-VHF communications equipments. The Brigade also received new truck equipment, knapsacks and hand tools, which were a dramatic improvement from those early days of "beg, borrow and steal" from the District.

Competitions

In 1981, after lots of familiarisation and training with the new equipment, Jim Imlach entered the St Patrick's River Brigade in the 13th Annual State Fire Championships for Country Fire Brigades on Saturday the 7th of November.

This was held at Bridport Aerodrome, and was hosted by the Bridport Country Fire Brigade. The Brigade entered the light tanker, the five-man hose drill, the medium tanker, the G.P. pumper and the sealed event without any major success. It should also be known that Wal Imlach, Jim's father, was a judge in three of the seven events on the day. With more training throughout 1982, Jim entered the Brigade in the 14th Annual State Championships for Country Fire Brigades. That year it was held at Campbell Town on Saturday the 13th of November, and was hosted by the Competitions Committee. It was the Brigade's second time in competition, and this time entered a team in the medium tanker, five-man 38mm hose drill, and 38mm canvas hose, rake hoe/drip torch, and sealed knapsack and ladder events. After much fun and determination, they gained minor success winning the 1982 Bronze Award for third place in the sealed knapsack and ladder event. The Brigade again entered a team in 1984, and was awarded the Regional Chief Officer's Award for advancement and improvement over the preceding 12 months.

ADVANCEMENT

Throughout the 80's, and with the advent of the truck, coupled with an influx of new residents into the district, with many residing in fire prone bush areas, many residents took a lot of interest in the modern Brigade. Led by Jim and capably supported by Brenda, the Brigade had grown in strength and enthusiasm. Due to the dedication of Jim and the Brigade members at the time, additional equipment was purchased either directly by the Brigade or on a dollar for dollar basis with the Tasmanian State Government.

More next issue.

Farewell from Dave Tomkinson



As of 24th December 2004 I will be retiring from work with the TFS Communications Services Northern Region after 19 1/2 years service. Before starting with the TFS in July 1985

I worked for 17 years with Wormald International as a Service Technician. My work with TFS at first was with the Launceston Fire Brigade as general maintenance and electronics, two years later I was transferred to Communications and given all the North as far as the fire alarm receiving systems went. Over the years this system grew to twenty concentrators and 700 buildings and alarms connected to fire stations and Firecomm as far away as Queenstown on the West Coast and St Helens on the East Coast. In this time I have clocked up

nearly half a million kilometres in six or seven cars.

I also refurbished the Launceston Control Room three times, radio reprogramming and repairs to vehicle radios and auto electrical work, installation of phones and radios in Northern Region vehicles.

The latest challenge was the moving of all TFS facilities to Hobart Road Youngtown. All phones and computers were moved in stages. During my time with the TFS I have met and worked with many people and made lots of friends over the years. As I have many interests, photography; bushwalking; campervan; boating and family of two sons and a daughter plus five grandchildren, at 65 1/2 I think I will be kept very busy. So keep up the good work "all"

"SAM"

Dave Tomkinson

(Dave tells me that SAM is "Self Appointed Manager" - Ed)

Sandford Scout Group Visit

By Third Officer Rokeby Brigade, Hayden Williams

The Sandford Scout Group recently visited Rokeby Station for a look at the trucks and a tour of the fire station. Ten minutes into the visit, the Brigade was called away to a vehicle fire at Clarendon Vale, and the group were left in the good hands of Logistics Brigade who were also training at the station.

Upon return to the station, we had a barrage of questions asked about the vehicle fire. After using Breathing Apparatus at the fire it allowed us to show the scouts how Breathing Apparatus looked on a firefighter and how it worked, along with other specialised equipment such as the Thermal Imaging Camera.

With the assistance of the volunteers, the visit concluded with a go on the high pressure hose reels to knock balls off witches hats. The highlight of the night for them was being able to see first hand an appliance turn out from a station.



Franklin Fire Brigade Benefit From Aurora Safety Milestone

A first ever safety achievement for Aurora Energy from Aurora Energy's Huonville Response Centre employees has turned into a welcome helping hand to the Franklin Fire Brigade.

Aurora's Field Co-ordinator Howard Thurley presented Brigade Chief David Johns with a cheque for \$1500.

The donation is as a result of a significant safety milestone achieved by Aurora and is the first time in the Aurora / Hydro history that the company has reached four months without lost time due to injury. To celebrate the achievement, new Aurora CEO Dr Peter Davis asked all employees to help share the success with the community. Each of Aurora's seventeen worksites had been invited to select a local charity to receive a donation. In addition to this, the Huonville team had recently achieved a two year safety milestone, adding to the contribution.

Franklin Brigade congratulates the Huonville field crews on such a wonderful milestone and a big thank you for the help towards the purchase of training equipment. Without the generosity of the Huon Community and people like the Aurora employees, the Franklin Brigade would not be able to compete in the TFSCA.



Howard Thurley pictured presenting Brigade Chief David Johns with the donation. Franklin Juniors and Aurora's Huonville depot employees pictured in background

Excavator Fire on Bass Highway

By Firefighter Ulverstone Brigade, Craig Yaxley

On the 4th November 2004 we got called to a vehicle fire on the Bass Highway roadworks between Ulverstone and Penguin. The excavator was well alight and two firefighters wearing BA fought the fire with foam. We managed to save the grab head and saw which is said to be worth as much as the excavator itself - \$250,000. The Fire Investigator determined the cause to be a branch which had found its way through a small drain hole and had shorted out a wire on the starter motor. The operator jumped out and tried to use his extinguisher, but with no luck.



17th Kmart Wishing Tree Appeal

By Laura Clements, Performance PR

Kerry Hore, Melissa Carlton and Justin Plapp might be national or world champions in their respective sports, but they tested skills of a very different kind on Monday 8th November when they participated in the inaugural Kmart Wishing Tree Appeal Tree Decorating Challenge. They faced some stiff competition from local radio personalities and men in uniform. This year's winners were our own "men in uniform" - Bridgewater Station! Congratulations guys!

The challenge was to raise awareness of the Appeal in Tasmania and encourage people to place a wrapped gift under a Wishing Tree at the front of their local Kmart store at New Town, Eastlands, Launceston, Burnie or Devonport.

In the past 16 years, the Appeal has raised more than 2.5 million gifts for Australians in need. Last year, a record 6,535 gifts were donated in Tasmania and distributed statewide by the Salvation Army.

Each Challenge participant had just two minutes to decorate a small Christmas tree to reflect their personality and/or profession.

The results were judged by a panel including The Salvation Army's Divisional Public Relations Secretary, Stuart Foster, Kmart New Town Manager, Darron Maynard, and audience members.

The inaugural Kmart Wishing Tree Decorating Champion received a special 'crown', and had the honour of cutting the Wishing Tree cake, which was then distributed to participants and shoppers.

Officially launching the Appeal in Tasmania, Mr Foster thanked the decorators for their commitment to helping the less fortunate members of the community this Christmas. "Tasmanians are always very generous, and this is particularly noticeable at Christmas," Mr Foster said. "Last year we saw a 42 per cent increase in donations to the Appeal,



which demonstrates that even during difficult times, people like to help others where we can. I encourage Tasmanians to place a gift under a Kmart Wishing Tree between now and Christmas Eve."

This year the Appeal aims to raise at least 7,000 gifts in Tasmania. To make a donation simply place a wrapped gift under the Wishing Tree located in any of the five Kmart stores statewide. Take a gift tag from the tree that identifies the appropriate gender and age of a suitable recipient and place it with your gift. Gifts do not need to be purchased from Kmart. Stores simply act as a co-ordination point by bringing together community resources and welfare groups to distribute the gifts.



Specialist Training

By Group Officer North West Bay Group, Vern Richardson

Located at Lee Wave off the Huon Highway near to the Sandfly Fire Station is a busy airstrip that is fast becoming the 'second choice' of aviators as a base for their aircraft. Drastically increasing costs for air-movements and storage of aircraft at both Hobart and Cambridge airports has increased the popularity of the Lee Wave airstrip considerably over the past few years making it a significant asset (and risk!) in the Sandfly Fire Brigade area. Lee Wave is now home to over twenty light aircraft and a popular alternative to visiting intrastate and interstate aviators. Other threats on the site have also increased drastically to include a clubhouse, eight aircraft hangers and the bulk storage of avgas and aviation kerosene.

To provide for the ongoing risks associated with the increased activity at Lee Wave, Sandfly Fire Brigade attends the ARFF station at Hobart Airport on an annual basis to undertake specialist training in aviation firefighting. This training involves both classroom lectures on the various aspects of handling light aircraft and includes hot-fire training at the ARFF training area at Hobart Airport. The Hobart Airport firefighters have an excellent training facility which includes a mock-up of an



Sandfly 3-1 dwarfed by ARFF Tender No 1



Hot-fire training with AFFF at Hobart Airport



Sandfly 3-1 dwarfed by ARFF Tender No 3

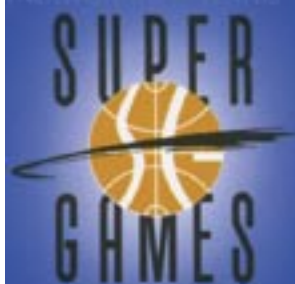


Sandfly Brigade members entering aircraft mock-up for familiarization

aircraft fuselage and a number of other training props. The hot-fire training can include both internal and external attacks and includes the extensive use of AFFF and BA. An added 'bonus' is also the opportunity to gain some 'hands-on' experience with the (impressive) Airport Fire 'Tenders'. The latest training exercise was carried out with the assistance of 'B' shift, ARFF at Hobart Airport on Sunday 7th November. The training given to Sandfly Fire Brigade is intensive, enjoyable and very professionally presented by the ARFF and is very much appreciated by the Brigade.



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