

# Fireground



summer 2008

- ▶ **Vertical Rescue Course**
- ▶ **Exercise Northern Exposure**
- ▶ **Future Firefighter Development Program**

SUMMER 2008

Official Journal of  
The Tasmania Fire Service



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Richard Bowden  
Leon Dewhurst  
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Bruce Corbett  
Jane Hyland  
Lyndsay Suhr

EDITOR  
Linda Lacy

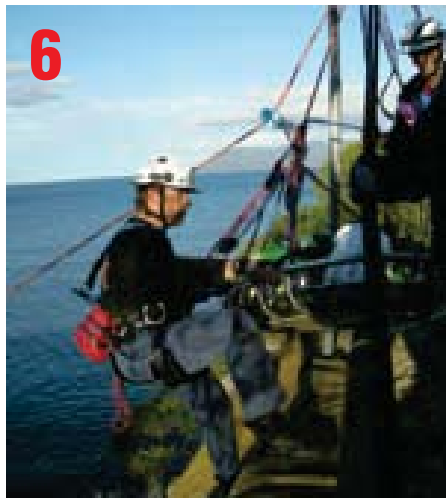
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FIREGROUND  
GPO Box 1526  
HOBART TAS 7001  
email: fireground@fire.tas.gov.au  
web: www.fire.tas.gov.au

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## Contents

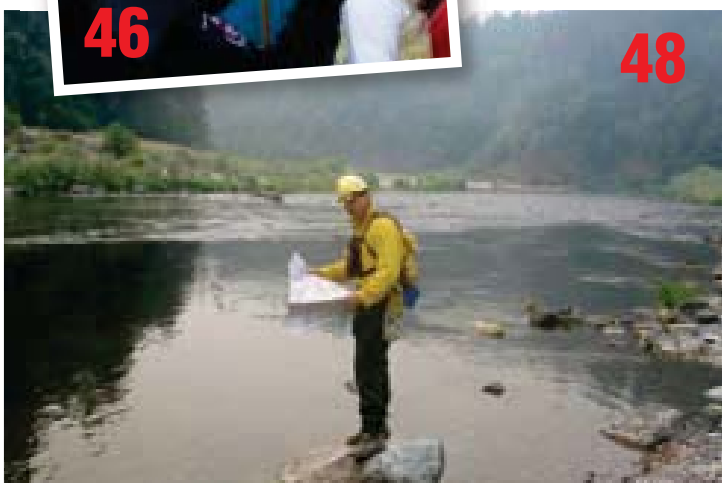
From the Acting Chief Officer	2
Revised advice on smoke alarm locations	3
Exercise Northern Exposure - 2008	4
Vertical Rescue Level 2 Course 2008	6
Aurora launches new campaign	10
Firies shine at the Freycinet Challenge	12
Middleton Brigade exercise	15
Future Firefighter Development Program	16
2008 Bushfire Research Conference	18
2008-2009 Bushfire Safety Campaign	19
Women's strength and vulnerability	20
NW Region's 38th annual competitions	22
Bushfire triage - green to go!	24
Fire Speak	25
New roadside fire permit signs	26
LFB'S annual reunion	27
Be Brave and Shave - 12-14 March 2009	27
IMT Information/Training Session	28
Former HFB personnel get together	28
Volunteer Training	29
State Fire Commission	29
Hobart District Light Tanker Competition	30
Branch operator	32
What is Brigade induction?	33
Photo Competition Winner	34



30



Fireground goes far and wide!	34
CISM Turns 20!	35
Library News	36
Introducing ...	38
On The Move	40
Awards	41
Feedback System Up and Running!	43
Bush Watch	43
Photo Gallery	44
Open Day at Kingston	46
Northern California fires	48
District Conferences	51
Obituary - Leslie James Whittle	51
Stacey's American Trip	52
Vehicle replacement for Flinders Island	55
TFS takes a step towards better health	56
Presentation night at Somerset	57
Busy Winter for Bruny Island brigades	58
Bushfire Safety and Survival	60
Ultra light tankers	61
Electricity Standards and Safety	63
Duracell bunny brings a smile!	63
Bottlemart Smiling for Smiddy Challenge	64
TFS helping train medical students	66
180 years in the making, hose coupling	68



# From the Acting Chief Officer



Over the past couple of months I have had the opportunity to speak with several hundred of our people at our district conferences, headquarters, regional centres and career stations about the risks associated with the summer season and our preparations.

There is no doubt the coming season has the potential to be challenging. Much of the Tasmanian landscape is in the state of severe or even record rainfall deficit and the outlook is showing little chance of rainfall relief and temperatures likely to be above average. As I write, the fire permit period has been declared for the Southern and Northern Regions along with the Bass Strait Islands.

Our summer season campaigns have begun and again feature the promotion of our highly successful and widely acclaimed "Bushfire - Prepare to Survive" DVD and householders checklist.



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## Editorial

By Editor Linda Lacy

This edition's centrefold, kindly provided by the Bushfire Co-operative Research Centre (CRC) is on Bushfire risk perception: Perspectives of children.

This issue includes articles on the Vertical Rescue Course, Exercise Northern Exposure, Future Firefighter Development Program and many more. There is also an article on LACES - what it means to you. I think it should be LACY - what it means to you - L - looking out for articles; A - always asking; C - constantly calling on the phone; Y - you will meet the deadline - hopefully!

Recently I have had a few requests: one was to do a brown and gold edition; another was to set the record straight regarding the BOB award (ARRC 2008 article page 32 - Fireground Spring 2008) apparently there

Briefings are occurring with our partner organisations; in particular Parks and Wildlife Service, Forestry Tasmania and Tasmania Police.

We have developed our bushfire triage policy that provides for the classification of structures according to their level of likely defendability. An article on this is featured in this edition and the policy is available through our website.

Speaking of the website, the team at State Operations together with the Information Services Branch have recently made some significant improvements to the "current bushfires and incidents" pages. You can now see information on all of our current incidents and the map features and site navigation have been improved and made easier to use. I'm confident that TFS has Australia's best fire website, particularly in regard to information on current incidents.

Our preparations and planning is in place and I'm seeing that our people are ready for the task. I personally thank all members for their hard work and commitment leading up to this summer period.

As we approach the festive season I ask that you all take care - especially at work and on the roads. Here's hoping that the latter weeks of December and through New Year we see an easing in fire conditions allowing us all to share that important time with our families.

Merry Christmas and a Happy (and fire free) New Year.

Mike Brown

Acting Chief Officer

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were two BOB awards - Simon was voted by the female flight attendants and Steve won the other.

Closing date for next edition will be 15th January 2009, however, please don't wait for the closing date - send your articles as the events occur - if they miss that edition, I'll carry them over to the next one!

Please send me your photos, they don't have to be for the competition or with an article - but tell me where they were taken and the event, I'll contact you if I need more information.

I'd also like your feedback on Fireground. Are we covering the topics you want to read? Do you have any special requests?

Please send your suggestions, comments, articles, photos, award details etc to:

Linda Lacy, Editor - Fireground

GPO Box 1526

HOBART TAS 7001

Phone: 6230 8633

Fax: 6234 6647

Email: [fireground@fire.tas.gov.au](mailto:fireground@fire.tas.gov.au)

# Important: Revised advice on smoke alarm locations

By Manager Community Education Sandra Barber and Consultant Chris Tomes

The Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC) Position on Smoke Alarms in Residential Accommodation [http://www.afac.com.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0015/2409/AFACSmokeAlarmposition1June2006.pdf](http://www.afac.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/2409/AFACSmokeAlarmposition1June2006.pdf) states:

“That smoke alarms in single dwellings (Class 1 buildings) be located in all sleeping areas and in all paths of travel between sleeping areas and exits to the open air.”

We are changing all references to “bedrooms” in our fire safety advice about smoke alarm locations to “places where people sleep”.

This recognises that rooms other than bedrooms are being used as sleeping areas. This revised wording is consistent with the AFAC position.

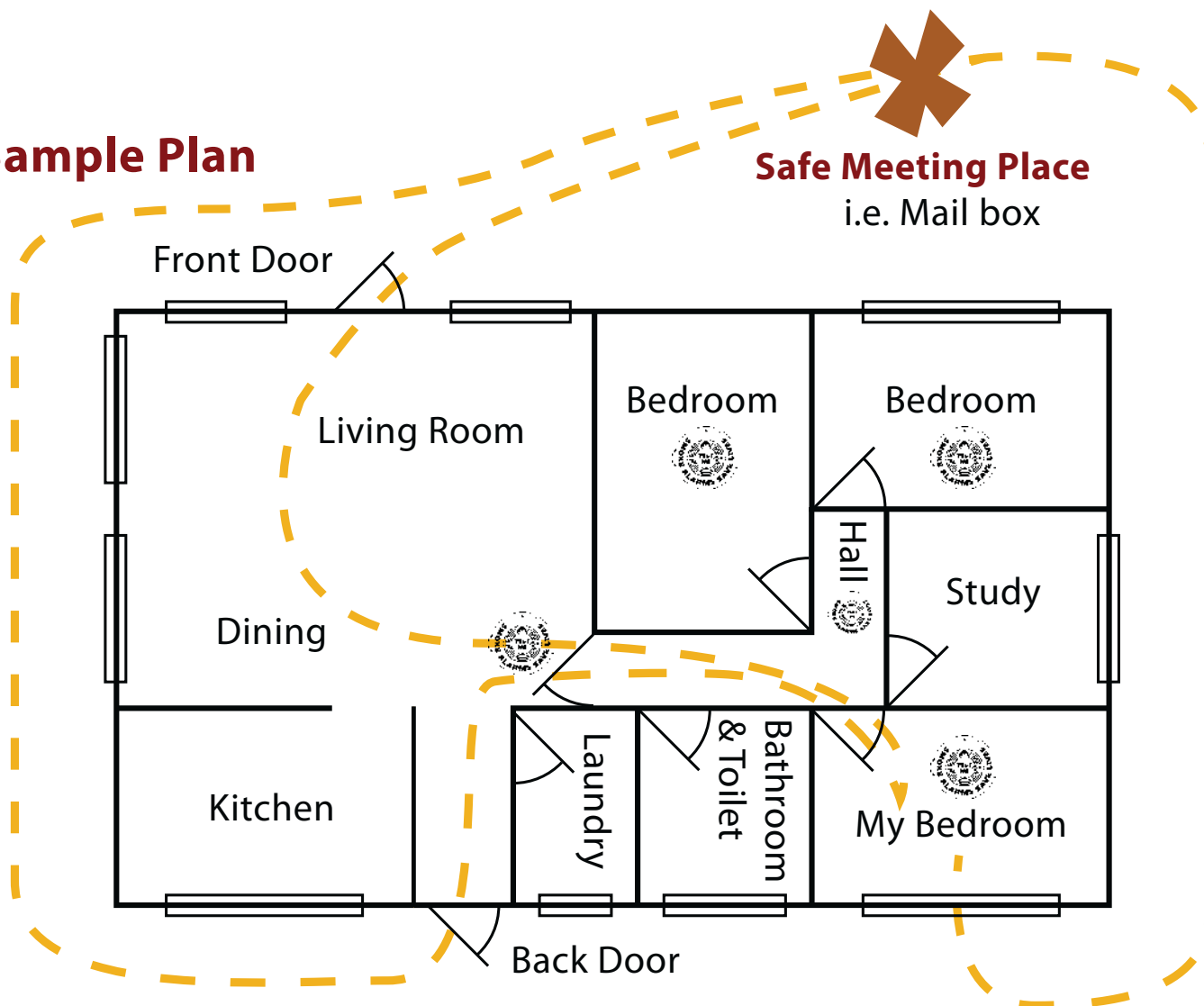
We are also advising that a smoke alarm be located in the living area to reflect that living areas are generally in the path of travel to an exit from sleeping areas. This revised wording is consistent with the AFAC position. (Please note the correct placement and use of a photoelectric smoke alarm in living areas will greatly reduce the chance of operation due to cooking, heating etc).

Over the coming months TFS fire safety booklets and brochures will be amended to refer to “places where people sleep” rather than to “bedrooms”.

For further advice and comment please feel free to contact Community Education on 6230 8485 or email [communityed@fire.tas.gov.au](mailto:communityed@fire.tas.gov.au)

## Sample Plan

**Safe Meeting Place**  
i.e. Mail box





# Exercise Northern Exposure - August 2008

By District Officer Operations, Danny Richardson

"Trapped"

The National Counter Terrorism Committee provided funds for a multi-agency emergency management exercise to be conducted in northern Tasmania, after a joint financial submission from the TFS and the Department of Health and Human Services was approved. A grant was administered through the Tasmania Police State Security Unit.

An exercise steering committee was convened in October 2007 which consisted of members representing all the participating agencies. These participants included TFS, Tasmania Police, Tasmanian Ambulance Service, Launceston General Hospital, State Emergency Service, Northern Regional Community Recovery Committee and the Launceston City Council. The committee was chaired by TFS member Danny Richardson and exercise executive director appointments were established from agencies representing Tasmania Police, TFS and Tasmanian Ambulance Service.

The initial duties of the steering committee were to establish an exercise management structure, delegate roles and responsibilities and develop a system to allow effective tracking of each agency's expenditure. Upon completion of these tasks, two sub-working groups were established. The sub-working groups were known as the Exercise Writing Team and the Logistics Group. The Writing Team was briefed by the steering committee and delegated the task of writing the exercise scenario and timeline. The scenario was based on each agency submitting their own exercise objectives. The Logistics Group was responsible for arranging a suitable site and setting up the exercise scenario.

Exercise Northern Exposure involved a simulated explosion within a simulated collapsed multi-storey building which included mass casualties requiring rescue, medical treatment and decontamination from an unknown substance at the



"All of this blood, sweat and tears can make you hungry"





time. With this type of deployment emergency response capabilities were able to be exercised in the specialist areas of urban search and rescue, hazardous materials, chemical, biological and radiological, mass casualty decontamination, medical care / patient triage and community recovery management. Forty role players were recruited from the UTAS School of nursing, Red Cross and TFS volunteers.

The venue was a large shed sub-leased by Roberts Pty Ltd at the Launceston Show Society, Forster Street Invermay. The Logistics Group arranged a team from TFS to construct the scenario prop to simulate a multi-storey collapse inside the shed. The prop was also constructed in a way that allowed all the agency objectives to be exercised but still maintained the safety of all participants as a priority.

Other aspects of the exercise were conducted at the Launceston General Hospital for the purpose of managing

self presenting patients that had been contaminated and a table top scenario at the Launceston City Council offices in conjunction with the Northern Regional Community Recovery Committee.

Exercise Northern Exposure was a long duration exercise that ran from 1000 hours until completion at 2000 hours plus pre and post exercise activities.

The scenario provided all participating agencies with complex challenges designed to test the objectives put forward by each agency. Inter-agency cooperation displayed on the day highlighted the importance of agency communications and incident management protocols. Without these types of exercises the assessment of emergency management for such events and agency response capabilities would be difficult to conduct in an effective manner.

Prop Construction Team" Dale Lapham, Tim Sutton and Darren Cook

"Nice office!"



# Vertical Rescue Level 2 Course 2008

By Course Coordinator, Stewart McKinlay

The TFS recently conducted a Level 2 Vertical Rescue course involving fifteen permanent firefighting personnel from around the state plus four permanent instructors. The course was held over an extremely intensive three week period and aimed to further develop level 1 vertical rescue operators in the discipline of rope rescue. The course objectives were to replicate the types of skills and environmental conditions that operators will be confronted with in real life situations.

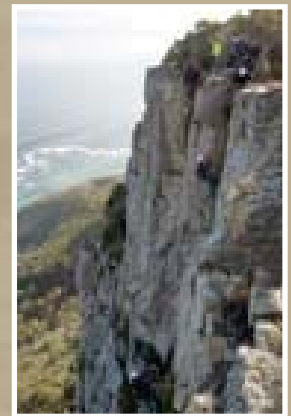
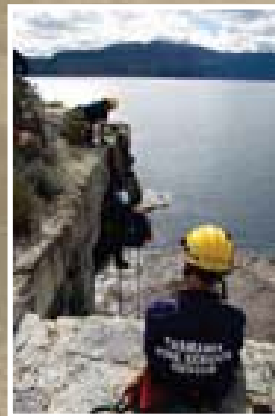
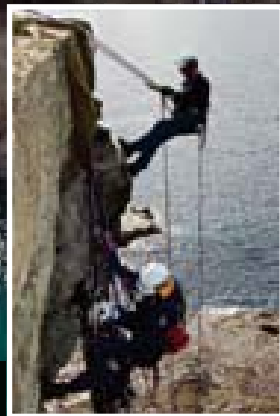
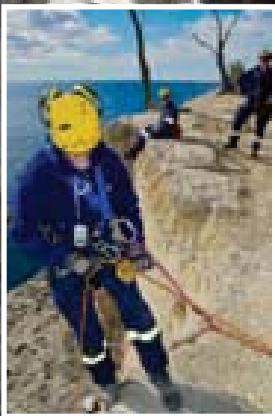
Over the last few years there have been a limited number of rescues solely involving vertical rescue (previously called high angle rescue) around the state, however, there is becoming an increasing reliance on ropes to perform rescues within all of the rescue disciplines including:

- USAR
- Embankment rescues at RAR incidents
- Confined space incidents
- Roof/height safety

This reliance on skilled vertical rescue operators means that the operator numbers need to be kept at minimum workable levels in order to provide this valuable resource when called upon. Vertical rescue operators also need to be able to facilitate training at a number of different levels within many of the varied rescue disciplines.

Vertical rescue is a constantly changing discipline as it continues to evolve and undergo many changes through the improvement in technology, techniques, safety and procedures. Over the years there have been many changes to the way we perform vertical rescue with the TFS being one of the leaders in the country when it comes to incorporating new ideas based on sound world wide research.

The TFS has tried to incorporate the “art of clean rigging” principles within vertical rescue’s scope of training, as



Photographer Warren Fry



this simplifies the exuberant amount of technical hardware that needs to be mastered and places more emphasis on good rigging principles along with improvisation skills. All participants can testify that even though the aim of the course was to keep the systems simple, there was nothing simple about this course. A four day theoretical phase formed the underpinning knowledge components of the course, followed by many practical activities to build on skills already possessed by the candidates. There were many long hours and intense sessions where we tried to adapt and develop these new skills.

The course incorporated many different practical venues around the southern end of the state including:

- Mornington cliffs
- Derwent Entertainment Centre
- Domain twin reservoirs
- Blackman's Bay cliffs
- Eaglehawk Neck
- Rocky Tom
- Orford weir
- Marine Board wharf crane
- Cape Raoul
- South Arm bluff

Photographer Stewart McKinlay



The idea behind the high number and variation of venues was to give all participants the maximum possible exposure to all the range of variables and conditions they may come across in the vertical rescue realm. Some of these venues also doubled as very spectacular places in their own right with regard to their scenery.

It was confirmed by the end of the course that the instructors had developed a cluster of tight, well versed individuals, with all candidates placing a high value on teamwork and the need to communicate clearly within all rescue environments. The TFS has a strong team which can be relied upon in a wide variety of vertical rescue situations.

**Course participants:**

**Hobart**

Simon Pilkington  
 Jason McSherry  
 Jason Johnson  
 Mathew Pope  
 Adam Salter  
 David Russell-Green  
 Tim Crellin

**Launceston**

Andrew Lowe  
 John Kroczewski  
 Adrian Adams  
 Daniel Redpath  
 David Ransome  
 Stuart Tuthill

**Devonport/Burnie**

Marc Herbert  
 Daniel Beamish

**Course instructors:**

Grant Joyce	Course Permanent Instructor
Warren Frey	Course Permanent Instructor
Brett Fazackerley	Course Permanent Instructor
Stewart McKinlay	Course Permanent Instructor
Adrian Petrie	Course Casual Instructor
Rob Ratcliffe	Course Casual Instructor
Ian Bounds	Course Casual Instructor

Photographer Stewart McKinlay



# Bushfire Risk Perception: Perspectives of Children

Briony Towers and Douglas Paton University of Tasmania Katharine Haynes Risk Frontiers, Macquarie University

Research on risk communication indicates the importance of tailoring messages to fit the perspectives and cognitive capabilities of recipients. This research is investigating children's perspectives on bushfire risk so that agencies can tailor the content of school based bushfire education programs to fit with children's cognitive capacities, promoting the development of accurate risk perceptions, and by extension, increasing opportunities for the adoption of protective behaviours.

## Assessing the risk

When assessing bushfire risk for their own homes, children focus their attention on two major categories:

1. Physical exposure factors: Combustibles on or around the house, e.g. leaves, wood, grass, plants, rubbish.

*"We have a big tree right next to the house and if it catches on fire it will land on the house and start a fire"*  
-7yrs, Warrandyte

2. Protective factors: Non-combustible physical barriers that would stop a fire reaching the house, e.g. rivers, bricks walls, roads.

*"If my house didn't have stone walls and rocks all around it, then yeah, it'd burn"*  
-7yrs, Warrandyte

*"Near my house, not that far away there's a small river going past and it would probably stop there if it came from that way"*  
-10yrs Warrandyte

## Implications for education

This disconnect has the potential to undermine the success of school based bushfire education. A major predictor of preparedness levels amongst adults is the expectation that preparing will effectively mitigate losses. Should the same apply to children, effective education programs will need to facilitate the development of connections between perceptions of exposure and protection and predictions about potential outcomes.

Ongoing research is exploring the conditions under which children are able to make these connections so that these can be applied in the design and delivery of better bushfire education.

## Preparing the home

Children propose numerous measures that could be undertaken to protect their homes from bushfires. Relating directly to their initial risk assessments, these measures focus on:

1. Reducing physical exposure through the removal of combustible fuels

*"I would clean up all the leaves, clean out the gutters, cut down a few trees that are close to the house and mow the lawn"*  
-8yrs, Warrandyte

2. Increasing protection through the building of non-combustible physical barriers such as brick houses, brick walls, metal fences, and waterholes.

*"Bricks can't burn so you could block it with bricks. You could make a wall out of bricks"*  
-6yrs, Warrandyte

*"Make a waterhole in front of your driveway. When the fire comes it should get sucked up into the waterhole and stop the fire"*  
-9yrs, Warrandyte

## Efficacy of preparing

When children make predictions about what would happen to their house if a bushfire actually passed over, they disregard the pre-existing physical exposure and protective factors and levels of preparedness and conclude that their house will inevitably be destroyed.

*"Even if you do all that stuff, the fire is powerful enough to absorb through the walls... And the fire's gonna be more powerful and burn the house down"*  
-8yrs Warrandyte

There seems to be a disconnect between children's understanding of exposure and protection on the one hand and consequences on the other. The only factor they consider when determining the consequences for the house is the presence or absence of fire alone. This type of thinking is characteristic of primary school aged children whose less sophisticated cognitive abilities prevent them from considering multiple variables when forming hypotheses.

# Aurora launches new campaign to raise awareness of bushfire risk

Aurora Energy has flagged its concerns over the fire danger this summer with the launch of a new television and press advertising campaign to highlight the potential risk when trees and vegetation come in contact with overhead powerlines.

Group Manager Local Asset Management, Michael Peters, said Aurora's campaign reminds the community that vegetation growing near powerlines posed a high fire risk in both semi-urban and rural communities.

"Bushfires have the potential to cause millions of dollars worth of damage to electricity infrastructure and to private property. They also have a severe impact on the reliability of our supply to customers," Mr Peters said. "That's why we're keen to do everything we can to ensure the safety of our customers and protect our assets from the bushfire menace."

Mr Peters said Aurora was stepping up its own vegetation management work in fire prone areas as well as raising community awareness of the issue. "We invest millions of dollars a year as part of our bushfire mitigation strategy to manage vegetation growing near our powerlines," he said. "Vegetation contractors are at work now right around the State cutting back trees growing too close to powerlines.

"We also encourage our customers to think carefully when planting vegetation on their property to ensure they select smaller species to maintain a safe distance from overhead powerlines," he said. "While Aurora and its contractors are responsible for cutting trees near Aurora powerlines, we are asking customers with privately-owned powerlines to check their assets to ensure they are clear of vegetation."

Mr Peters said the fires that swept through parts of Hobart and the East Coast of Tasmania in 2006 were still a vivid memory for Aurora and many of its customers. He said that while Aurora's assets did not cause any of those fires, the company had to replace more than 180 power poles and other valuable infrastructure, with the repair bill topping \$1 million.

Aurora's bushfire mitigation television campaign will run throughout the summer months, while supporting press advertisements will run in daily and regional papers throughout this period.

A brochure, Safe Growing Near Powerlines, also is available to help customers make responsible environmental choices when planting trees on rural and urban properties. Copies of the brochure are available by contacting Aurora on 13 2004.



Aurora's Group Manager Local Asset Management, Michael Peters and Acting Chief Officer Mike Brown, launch Aurora's new television campaign to raise awareness of bushfire risk.

# HELP REVERSE THE PICTURE

Photo: John Nairn, BoM.

05763 AuroraEnergyPty Ltd. ABN 85 082 464 622

Trees that touch powerlines can cause bushfires. You can prevent bushfire by maintaining trees and cleaning up around powerlines on your property. For help and information about vegetation management contact Aurora. And if you see trees growing too close to powerlines, call Aurora on **13 2004**, because nothing is more important than your safety.

[www.auroraenergy.com.au](http://www.auroraenergy.com.au)





# Firies shine at the Freycinet Challenge

By Senior Firefighter Hobart Brigade, Tim McKay

Again, the sleepy coastal hamlet of Coles Bay on Tasmania's east coast was transformed into a hive of activity for the 9th running of the annual Freycinet Lodge Challenge. Nearly 500 competitors, as well as thousands of spectators and media, descended to either compete in or witness two days of fierce competition.

For those who have been sleeping under a rock for the last decade, the Freycinet Lodge Challenge is a two day multi-sport event designed to test to the limit, those who are brave enough to tackle it. Here's the format:

Day 1	Day 2
15 km run	15 km kayak
75 km road cycle	35 km road cycle
15 km kayak	22 km mountain bike
22 km mountain bike	15 km run

Participants may choose to enter as a 2 or 4 man team, taking it in turns to complete each discipline, however, for the truly insane they may choose to do the whole lot themselves.

This year the Hobart Brigade had 19 competitors enter, comprising four teams of four, one team of two and a solo competitor.

Those lining up for two days of pain this year were: Justin Lownds, Tim Crellin, Craig Mackinnon and Warren Frey doing the run legs; Tim McKay, Greg Pollard, Jason Johnson and Nigel Hume on the road bikes; Mick Netherton, Chris Collins, Mark Bryant and Martin Grubb on the mountain bikes; paddlers were Jamie Stubbs, Adrian Petrie, Drew Wilkinson and Todd Sargison; also competing as a two man team were Steve Percival and Dave Russell-Green; and all on his own was the freaky Sean Mennitz.

The HFB competitors this year were the talk of the town for two reasons. Firstly their outstanding results, and secondly, with our new uniforms, we were by far the best dressed, most professional looking team at the event. To see 19 HFB firies standing together in team colours drew huge attention from competitors, spectators and not to mention the media, who paid special attention to us. As a result, instead of Greg Pollard and myself going out looking for corporate support, we now have sponsors ringing us, asking to get on board.

Of course I need to once again thank our corporate sponsors RBF, Brierley Hose, Bike Ride, Corporate Express and of course TFS, without whom we would not have had uniforms at all. Special mention also to Members Equity Bank (ME) since last edition we have been fortunate enough to secure them as a sponsor. Caron Hitchcock and her team at ME have been an absolute pleasure to deal with, they were happy to help out in any way they could, and when asked, couldn't wait to get on board and help out TFS firefighters.

All competitors were brilliant. A few, however, do deserve special mention. Most impressive of all would have to be Sean Mennitz who was the only competitor from HFB to complete the whole course as a solo participant. All of those who have competed at Freycinet will tell you how hard each individual leg is, so to do the whole thing on your own is indeed a super human effort.

Competing in a two man team and taking it in turns for each leg were Steve Percival and Dave Russell-Green. These two guys were amazing. Running, riding and paddling as hard as they could for two torturous days, and beating home many of the four person teams, just shows what great competitors they both are.

D Platoon's very own Greg Pollard lived up to his reputation as an awesome road cyclist and was the first HFB cyclist home, finishing well inside the top 10. Given that there are over 130 teams this was simply outstanding. Of course Jason Johnson and Nigel Hume weren't far behind him, with me just a little further back and looking to catch Polly in the next few years.

Jim Stubbs, needs no introduction, and we are all aware what an awesome ski paddler he is, but this year Jim was not alone when he hit the beaches. The gap, between him Adrian Petrie and Todd Sargison, is closing by the day, and next year promises to be a red hot battle between them for the honours. It is note worthy that on day two of the event, of the first 7 paddlers across the line, 4 were HFB furies, which drew huge applause from spectators. Even the on-course commentator couldn't believe the dominance of our guys.

I could go on and on, but suffice to say, all competitors were simply outstanding, and represented not only themselves, but the HFB and the TFS with class.

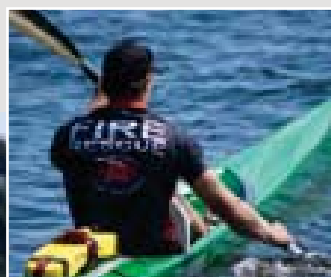
Perhaps the best part of the whole weekend was having the opportunity to sit down as a group at the end of the event and enjoy a few well earned coldies. We all spent a good few hours exchanging stories and enjoying each other's company.



Adrian Petrie chasing Jamie Stubbs



Adrian Petrie racing to the water after the change over from the road bike leg



Kyakers waiting for the road cyclists



Jason Johnson



Todd Sargison

Importantly the whole event was made more memorable by the presence of the unsung heroes, the support crew, consisting of competitor's wives and girlfriends (the WAGS), thank you for your support.

Thanks guys I had a blast, and I can't wait to see you all next year.



Martin Grubb having a good time after the mountain bike leg and finish of day one



Martin Grubb, Mick Netherton, Chris Collins and Mark Bryant Photographers Warren Frey and Felicity Poulter



Front: Greg Pollard, Mark Bryant, Martin Grubb, Nigel Hume, Craig Mackinnon, Drew Wilkinson, Justin Lownds, Warren Frey and Sean Mennitz  
Middle: Dave Russell-Green, Mick Netherton, Tim McKay, Adrian Petrie and Todd Sargison Back: Steve Percival and Chris Collins



# Middleton Brigade exercise

By Firefighter Middleton Brigade, Hank Koopman

During August Adam Meredith from South West District, Brigade Chief Middleton Ron McCauley and Second Officer Channel Brigade David Cooper organised a very worthwhile exercise for Channel and Middleton Brigades at Ted Domeney's old Cherry Orchard on the Channel Highway at Flowerpot. Ted's old family home was kindly made available for a full day's exercise in structural fire scenarios.

It was a very wet and muddy Sunday and our vehicles could not get down to the house, so each time another incident was thought up four lengths of hose had to be run out, down the slippery slope. The number one and two operators certainly had their work cut out for them on the day. There were two different exercises for each brigade, with the alternate brigade coming in as support. Overall it was good to be able to interact with our neighbouring colleagues and learn from them as well as getting to know them socially at the BBQ in Ted's shed.

Thirteen days later, fourteen members from Middleton Brigade assembled at the fire shed at 6:30 am (now that's dedication) to attend a training day at the Cambridge Training Facility. But there was also another reason to go on this day ... we were being allocated a "new" 3.1 tanker. The old International, which had seen service in the Middleton district for over ten years, was moving on. Kevin Lawler, one of our previous chiefs, was a little sad to see "Bertha" go, he had attended many fires with her. The rest of the crew were happy to at last get a more up-to-date vehicle with power steering and a five speed gearbox. I for one was now happy that all the vehicles at Middleton are now diesel. We now have an Isuzu with a diesel pump that is much more efficient than the old one.

Phil Smith and Adam Meredith greeted us at Cambridge and we set about transferring all the equipment off "Bertha" onto the new 3.1. We had a little reminder in the classroom about RECEO and then Phil and Adam set about devising several incidents which gave us an insight into the training procedures that the career brigades go through. We certainly had a very informative session, mistakes were made, but we all learned from those mistakes. It's better to stuff up at an exercise than at a real incident. It was also very beneficial to take a whole brigade to the training facility, so that each member could interact in a controlled scenario and get to know each other's capabilities. I captured the day on video, and made a copy for each brigade member to take home and study. This way we can relive each scenario and correct the errors in our own time.

Thanks Adam and Phil for giving so generously of your time (a full day) to help improve our brigade's capabilities.

It must be said that Middleton has gone through quite a metamorphosis over the last twelve months. We have several new members who have all eagerly attended courses to get them to the required status to attend call-outs in our area.

A full turnout at our station for the first aid and oxyviva course has shown a willingness to advance our knowledge to become an effective unit in the South Channel area.



Juniors Chris McCauley and Sam Lawler



Kevin Lawler, Rick Laffer and Nathan Brouwer



# Future Firefighter Development Program

By District Officer Mersey, Paul Hill

On the weekend of 27th and 28th of September the North West Region embarked on their annual Future Firefighter Development Program. Sixteen cadet firefighters from nine brigades along the North West Coast met at the TFS Training Complex, Burnie where they were faced with a variety of team work challenges including confined space rescue, erecting a decontamination shower, relay pumping, and crawling through a darkened maze within a shipping container to find clues to a code and relaying via radio to a team outside to decipher the code. Some of the more interesting challenges were using air bags to control a basketball on a trailer through a maze of foam drums and tying a basket ball, foam drum, fire extinguisher, axe and television and hoisting them to another level, fortunately only one of the televisions fell from a great height.

The young firefighters were then transported by four 4.1 units to the Heybridge Station where the Brigade had set up an interesting static display and provided a splendid feast for our hungry horde. After which the troops then visited Wings Wildlife Park at Gunns Plains where the cadets could, in some cases, get up close and personal with some of the wildlife they will be protecting in their future firefighting experiences.

From there it was on to Gowrie Park where cook extraordinaire Ivan Dolbey, assisted by Brigade Chief Callum Woodham had prepared a culinary feast of roast lamb, pork and chicken with vegies (donated by Simplot Australia) and apple crumble for desert. After dinner entertainment included

cooking damper and story telling around the camp fire until the rain put the fire out and forced everyone to cabins.

The next morning the cadets travelled to George Kelly's property at Claude Road. Here they were challenged to an orienteering course, which proved too much for some members who had to retire with blistered feet. Events after this challenge included a modified firefighter's football event and disc bowls. Once again cook Ivan delighted the taste buds with a BBQ cooked over an open fire.

To further prepare our future firefighters for their oncoming life in the TFS it was considered important to now start developing their operational on road driving skills, therefore it was decided that an hour at the go karts would be most beneficial. Some may argue that they were a faster than the "senior" members, however, there is no photographic evidence to prove this and the "seniors" declare themselves the winners of this event.

It is heartening to watch these young people assume leadership roles and approach the challenges in such a positive manner. I truly believe that the future of the TFS is in good hands. The parents, brigades and indeed their generation should be extremely proud of this very polite and enthusiastic team of young adults as I certainly am.

Many thanks to the organising committee of Andrea Stott, Shane Buchwald, Michelle Clarke, Gary Johnston, Ivan Dolby and the support staff on the weekend. This fantastic weekend will hold fond memories for all involved for a long time.





Rebekah Cohen of Ridgley and Jessica Smith of Somerset



Darcy Baldock of Sheffield and Daniel McCulloch of Somerset with Wally Wombat at Wings Wildlife Park



Angelene Astell - Ulverstone, Jessica Smith - Somerset, Rebekah Cohen - Ridgley and Lauren Maney - Sassafras



# 2008 Bushfire Research Conference Incorporating the 15th AFAC Conference

By Senior Firefighter Devonport Brigade, Stuart Bennell

The International Bushfire Research Conference and the 15th AFAC Conference were held in conjunction with each other on the 1-3 September 2008 in Adelaide. The subject of the conference was "Environment and Society from Research into Practice".

The conferences were held at the Adelaide Convention Centre with attendance by over 1200 emergency services' personnel from all over Australia as well as the Pacific Islands.

Over the three days there were information sessions presented by speakers from many fields of expertise from all over the world, both from research and emergency services.

There were sessions on bushfire and urban firefighting, environmental effects of fires and firefighting strategies and mediums, as well as effects on crews and the communities in which the incidents happen.

**Day 1 "Looking for Answers"** - covered research into different facets of firefighting, methods for controlling fires, effects that changes in our environment are having on fires, and the effects on the community.

**Day 2 "Applying the Research"** - preparing communities and its occupants for the onset of fire, and the impact of climate change on emergency services.

**Day 3 "Achieving Results"** - looked into several incidents including the Myer fire, and Dampier ship fire, the recovery of communities after an incident and the changes which are happening to emergency service organisations.

During the breaks between sessions there was an opportunity to drop into the main hall and look at the trade expo which had stalls from many industry suppliers from within Australia and overseas displaying new and improved products and clothing.

As always there were the evening functions to attend in the form of a welcoming cocktail function and a Gala dinner.



Photographer David Bruce, Bushfire CRC

# 2008-2009 Bushfire Safety Campaign

By Manager Community Education Sandra Barber and Consultant Chris Tomes

The statewide 2008-2009 bushfire safety campaign commenced in late October/early November. This campaign is the third and final year of the *Bushfire: prepare to survive* campaign which commenced in November 2006 with the release and distribution of the bushfire DVD. 39,000 DVDs were direct mailed to identified at-risk households (in or with 100 metres of the bush near high or very high flammable vegetation) during the 2006-2007 campaign, with 6,000 additional DVDs distributed since then.

In 2007-2008 a bushfire preparation checklist was developed and distributed to approximately 50,000 at-risk households to remind residents of the need to prepare their property for bushfire every year. The checklists will be distributed again as part of the 2008-2009 campaign.

## Key Advertising Messages

- The campaign focuses on the key bushfire safety message of “prepare, stay and defend or leave early”
- At-risk households will be encouraged to obtain or review their free copy of the DVD and other bushfire safety resources to assist them in their bushfire preparation and planning
- The timeframe for the campaign is October 2008 through to April 2009.

## Campaign Components

- Television, approximately 500 commercials November - February
- Radio, approximately 350 advertisements Sea FM and Heart 107 Hobart, 7LA Launceston, Sea FM Burnie, Sea FM Devonport, 7XS Queenstown, 7SD Scottsdale, ABC Radio free community service announcements
- Community information sessions - brigades are encouraged to conduct community information sessions around the state prior to bushfire season, as well as community liaison / public meetings during bushfire incidents. (The Community Education Unit can provide resources to assist you in providing information to the community.)
- Print advertising and editorial contribution in bushfire safety features in The Advocate, The Sunday Tasmanian, The Examiner, Tasmanian Country, RACT Motor News, Fireground and Tasmanian Farmers & Graziers magazine. (The Community Education Unit can provide media releases and articles for brigades to use in local newspapers.)
- A3 Posters direct mailed (October) to Councils, Tasmania Police, Service Tasmania, Libraries etc
- The mail out (November) of the Bushfire Checklist with magnetic strip, reaching approximately 50,000 identified at-risk households further supporting the broadcast communications components plus 10,000 for general handout and giveaways

- The mail out (October) of an information kit, to all volunteer and career brigades, with an example of campaign components, campaign overview etc.
- Website - continued promotion of DVD campaign on TFS website with links to request a copy of the DVD, download DVD, view campaign TV commercials, listen to campaign radio ad, request or view other bushfire safety material
- Mobile community education trailers - mobile resource based in the North and South for shows, displays, community activities
- Formal evaluation of the campaign has occurred in years 1 and 2. The 2008-2009 campaign will include the evaluation of the entire three-year DVD campaign.

For further information or resources for community fire safety activities please contact Community Education on 6230 8485, email [communityed@fire.tas.gov.au](mailto:communityed@fire.tas.gov.au) or visit [www.fire.tas.gov.au](http://www.fire.tas.gov.au)

Will you survive a bushfire?

Free DVD

An essential guide on DVD to preparing yourself and your property for bushfires.

For a copy of this DVD or the bushfire prepare to survive booklet please call or visit the website:  
1800 000 699 • [www.fire.tas.gov.au](http://www.fire.tas.gov.au)

Also available on loan from your local library.

Tasmania Fireground CGU Proud Sponsor

A Tasmania Fire Service Initiative

# Women's strength and vulnerability. Two sides of the one coin.

By Helen Goodman PhD, Bushfire CRC School of Global Studies

In my research role with the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre, based at RMIT University in Melbourne, I have had the privilege of carrying out our research in fire affected areas looking at community members' responses to fire and also at programs designed to assist community respond as safely as possible. While growing up in Gippsland in Victoria as a child, we were not directly affected, though I have had closer experience with fire with family members in this area in the 2006 fires. This exposure has still been minimal however, but enough to appreciate the importance and magnitude of the task of working toward safer communities in relation to the threat of fire.

I have been invited to provide some comment for Fireground readers, on the responses of women to the Eyre Peninsula (Wangary 2005) fire and what the implications are for firefighters. My comments are drawn from household interviews I carried out (together with Alan Rhodes, CFA and Mae Proudley, RMIT) and from other research with local people and service providers.

The Wangary fire took place predominantly on agricultural land. It was school holidays, a weekday, and most properties impacted after the fire broke containment lines were impacted from 10 am onwards. Our interviews were with households who were in the fireground area. About half were farmers and the other half "hobby farmers". Six households had school age or younger children. Half of the women were at home at the time of the arrival of the front, and half were away from the home. Some of the men had been out in their volunteer CFS role the night before and were at home asleep when the fire broke out again. There was little in the way of public warnings, given the speed at which the fire travelled. Of the nine deaths, three were women and four were children.

In the main, our research showed that the experience with fire tended to lie with the men rather than the women. A number of women sought advice from their husbands about what they should do. Those women we saw as being in the safest environments (this is a relative term, given the severe fire conditions), were where women were able to work alongside their partners at their properties, and able to take up roles which were sometimes set out clearly for them. This "partnership" approach was evident in several of the farming families, all of whom had fire experience and in about half of the hobby farming families, however, there



Helen Goodman, Researcher, and Therese Pedler, Country Fire Service Community Education Officer, talking with women at the "Continuing to Improve the Odds" workshop in Port Lincoln, Lower Eyre Peninsula, 2007. Photo: Department of Families and Communities, South Australia

were still examples in some of the farming and hobby farming households with fire experience, where the wives were either advised to leave, or left of their own accord, and in a few cases, (along with many others during that fire) had nearly fatal outcomes.

While for some men the default position was to "stay and defend", this had not always been discussed fully or in some cases at all, as a household. Some of the men we interviewed were visibly distressed that the actions their wives had taken to leave the home when the front was so close, had proved so nearly fatal. For some, it was not clear how they would inform themselves for a "next time", although most believed there would be a "next time".

One response to the expressed concerns of women that they were unprepared and unclear what to do (or would have been had their partners not been home) has been the designing and scheduling of specific workshops for women in basic fire knowledge and skills building. This work was carried out by the Country Fire Service and Rural Solutions, and was reported at this year's AFAC conference ("Fiery Women", Delaine, Probert and Pedler, AFAC website). Fifty one women attended these pilot workshops run in late March and early April 2008, and provided positive feedback about this opportunity. Another response has been for the Department of Families and Communities (SA) to continue to support women to have a yearly workshop called "Continuing to Improve the Odds". This annual meeting has grown out of the Recovery efforts which "Families and Communities" have been managing. It has provided some structure in which women can bring forward their views, and through which the women are provided with feedback about where their views have been taken and the ways in which they have influenced decisions in future recovery efforts in other parts of South Australia which have experienced disasters. An annual workshop is a step in the right direction toward including more diverse views in emergency management.

We can only speculate why women's roles in recovery are more easily recognised. One reason could be that a key component of "recovery" is clearly seen as a "care" function, something women are usually good at and sometimes even recognised for, however, this recognition is patchy, as Marilyn Waring's book about "women's work" suggests, in her title, "Counting for Nothing" (Waring, 1999.).

We all (citizens, policy people and practitioners, researchers, firefighters alike) need to work to join the dots between the important roles played by women at the community level, more obvious in recovery, and see these roles as resources which need recognition, harnessing, and ongoing support, to enable agencies and communities to address issues in the preparedness and planning phases of emergency management (and community strengthening in general). Women will know, when they turn their minds to the vulnerability of women in fires, what sorts of conversations need to be had with whom to address these issues. This would be one step toward turning the vulnerability shown in the fire fatality statistics in relation to women, into strengths, given the capacity of women to get information through to other women in their networks. Women often have good skills at relationships - building them, maintaining them, nurturing them. At the same time, report after report documents that women are not "at the table" when it comes to leadership roles, with Piterman, 2008, "The Leadership Challenge", being only the latest in this long line of reports. This has been a persistent problem but we can't wait til we see change in this area to act. We have to go and seek women's views in proactive ways, and then find ongoing, supported, structured means to maintain this input.

So I have two comments about implications for firefighters, but they are offered to you not when you are in your "yellows", (if that's what you call your PPE's in Tas) but when you are in your "civvies". They are about you in an "inquiry" role, not a role in which more "actions" are asked of you, but one in which you look around and see how others can help the cause you give so much of your time to.

Two issues for inquiry are: 1: where are the places for reflective conversation, and 2: where are the structures and processes for community groups to contribute to strengthening communities.

Firstly, the power of reflective conversation. I am sure community members put a lot on your shoulders already. You shouldn't have to have the answers to their questions, but it would seem reasonable for you to be able to suggest to people that they take the time to have what will be for some, difficult conversations within their own households and with immediate neighbours, about the possibility of fire. Questions you could ask community members who seek your advice: "Have you had a conversation as a household



Young family members at a roadside block, Wangary Fire, January 10, 2005, Lower Eyre Peninsula. Photo: Ivon Perrin, Photographer, Lower Eyre Peninsula.

about what you would do in a fire?" Our research points to what is already common knowledge in life in general - that members of households will have different priorities and that these need to be brought to the surface in order for others in the household to at least be aware of these differences. This is not an easy process, especially where the topic is as stressful as that of bushfire, and is as uncertain in the time and location of its occurrence. This fear, and the uncertainty of whether it will even occur, provides ample reasons for the topic to be avoided. People need support to be encouraged to continue a discussion sometimes where those they love the most do not hold the same level of concern. I think firefighters, in their roles as "neighbours" or "community members" can encourage others to have such reflective discussions.

Secondly, the resource inherent in existing community groups. Those of you who are also connected with already formed groups within your communities (not necessarily fire or emergency service related groups), can encourage these groups to talk more about these issues, and where possible, suggest that these groups see themselves as hosts to support and encourage discussion at a community level. I am sure many of you already do this. Community groups (kindergarten committees, after school committees, riding schools, sports clubs) can play important roles in building future capacity of their members for response to emergencies. I think you should ask of others - who else (other than me) in my community can host and facilitate these community based discussions. My sense from our research is that there is more willingness in communities than there is capacity in emergency services to facilitate this interest. Of course, then room needs to be found at the table for community members who may, through the community groups in which they are involved, want to play more of a role in community safety. Is it then a matter of finding room at the table, and/or of finding the table itself to have these more broadly based conversations.

Helen Goodman, Research Fellow, Bushfire CRC Evaluation Framework Project.

RMIT University, Melbourne

I would be happy to talk further to any reader on any of these ideas. [Helen.goodman@rmit.edu.au](mailto:Helen.goodman@rmit.edu.au); ph 03 99259883

# North West Region's 38th annual competitions

By Secretary Michelle Clarke

On Sunday 12th October North West Region held its 38th annual competitions at Goliath Park, Railton. Six senior and six junior brigades from across the North and North West Regions met early in the morning to commence a day of competitive honing of basic firefighting skills.

Kimberley and Railton Brigades worked tirelessly for the weeks before competition day to organise catering, a raffle and equipment for the day. Meanwhile the Competition Committee, consisting of Graeme Jones - President, Michelle Clarke - Secretary, Danial Johnson - Treasurer, Tony Perry, David Haigh, Andrea Stott and Robert Atkins, were also working to organise trophies, equipment, vehicles and competitors.

The day started out with Firefighters Football with one team requiring a re-run after a comic battle to stretch a hose to where it was needed to be (for info, that hose has now been condemned as they just don't stretch that far!)

We then continued with GP Pumper Relay and a Sealed Event. After three "practices" at the Sealed Event Ulverstone finally got the job right and won this event with the best time and 0 penalty points.

The lunch break saw the Under 10's competing in the Bucket Brigade and the official opening of the competitions by Mayor Don Thwaites and District Officer Paul Hill. Then it was back into competition mode with the Siamese Valve and Seniors Sealed Event.

Presentation of trophies was made to the following victorious brigades:

<b>Aggregate Winners Seniors:</b>	<b>Wesley Vale</b>
<b>Runners up Seniors:</b>	<b>Sassafras</b>
<b>Aggregate Winners Juniors:</b>	<b>Sassafras</b>
<b>Runners up Juniors:</b>	<b>Meander</b>
<b>Most Penalty Points (Seniors):</b>	<b>Moriarty</b>
<b>Firefighters of the Future (Juniors):</b>	<b>Sassafras</b>







Entertainment was provided throughout the day by Lucas Bryan and Richard Cohen of Ridgley Brigade who assisted with announcing of times and inventing some questions and games to keep everybody on their toes. It might be more challenging for spectators if we don't give out the answer to the questions when we ask them next year!

On behalf of the Competition Committee I would like to thank all competitors as without your support and good sportsmanship the day could not be run. I would also like to thank the Kentish Council and Railton Squash Committee for use of the grounds and facilities, Kimberley and Railton Brigades for catering, St John Ambulance for their services, SES for the use of their communications bus and committee members, TFS staff and helpers.

Also a huge thank you to all our sponsors Gunns Limited, Tasmanian Helicopters, Serv-Ag, Robert and Veronica Atkins, Graeme Jones, TFS - NW Region, Norma Jamieson MLC, Mayor Mike Gaffney, Burnie Brigade, Heather Butler MP, Chas Kelly Transport and John Munro.

If your brigade is interested in finding out more information regarding competitions, hosting or organising competitions please contact Robert Atkins on 0409 140 237.



# Bushfire triage for buildings - green to go!

By Deputy Regional Chief South, Chris Arnol

Where bushfires are concerned Triage means classifying buildings according to their likely defendability so firefighting resources can be deployed safely and in locations where they will be most effective.

In 2006 TFS hit the headlines with the fires it was fighting on Tasmania's east coast. Some of the national television footage featured fire officers explaining to crews that they would not be operating in areas where houses had been identified as too dangerous to defend.

At the same time, Stacey Peters (Field Officer - East Coast District) was working on the Weilangta fire, triaging structures

in Orford before the fire hit town. Although not everyone was home at the time, the residents Stacey spoke with were very responsive when they understood why he had classified their property as undefendable. They immediately began working around their properties so they were defendable, and Stacey was able to recategorise them when deficiencies were rectified.

Our Structural Triage Policy classifies structural defendability in three levels.



## 1. Undefendable (Red - no go)

The building does not have adequate defendable space, fire crew access or water supply or for any other reason the building is unlikely to survive a bushfire even if residents and/or firefighters stay to defend it.

## 2. Defendable with firefighter assistance (Orange - maybe)

The building has defendable space that can be accessed safely where residents may be absent, have advised that they will be absent, or residents intend to stay and defend their home but firefighters know they will need assistance.

Important note: If firefighting resources are not available these structures must be classified as "undefendable".

## 3. Defendable without firefighter assistance (Green - good to go)

Firefighters do not need to defend the building as it has defendable space and firefighters are confident that occupiers who are planning to stay have the necessary resources to defend it safely.

TFS has also amended its standard mapping symbols to account for this:



**A GREEN TICK indicates a property is DEFENDABLE BY RESIDENTS**



**An ORANGE CIRCLE O denotes DEFENDABLE BY FIREFIGHTERS (with or without residents)**



**A RED CROSS X signifies an UNDEFENDABLE property.**

This means that firefighters can also use either a colour, a symbol or ideally both to physically mark the entrance of a property to indicate whether it is defendable or not.

Bushfire triage is conducted in two situations:

- while firefighters are fighting bushfires; and
- to plan operations ahead of time, knowing bushfires may threaten communities in the future.

Triage aims to maximise use of available firefighting resources to protect life and as many significant buildings as possible. The focus is on homes and businesses, understanding that minor assets including some outbuildings may not be protected.

Triage is conducted in accordance with TFS Policy Statement Number 1/07 Bushfire Triage for Buildings and Guidelines for

# Fire Speak

By District Officer East Coast, Gavin Freeman

Development in Bushfire Prone Areas of Tasmania. To decide if a property is defendable or not, 5 basic elements come into play:

1. Access to and from the property
2. Water supplies
3. Defendable space
4. Residents capability
5. Fire crew availability

At the time of writing this article, a simple triage assessment tool is under development. We anticipate it will be distributed before summer.



What do you think; tick, cross or circle? Not that hard is it?



This is the result we are after.

We have had many great characters in the TFS over the years and the nature of our business means we often think and speak under pressure resulting in some wonderful quotable quotes. We would like to make this a regular section in Fireground so if you have any gems please send them to [g.freeman@fire.tas.gov.au](mailto:g.freeman@fire.tas.gov.au) Remember if you are adding the name of the person making the quote you need to have their permission.

An instruction to staff within TFS Headquarters:

*"Just a reminder that it is not TFS policy to send 'Trainees' to training courses"*

Response to SSO Andrew Skelly when he asked two firefighters about their progress in the early stages of the Myer fire:

*"Pretty good Skell, we should have this knocked over and be back at the station in an hour."*

A Third Officer's words of wisdom to the crew in the unit en route to fire caused by a downed power line:

*"Don't put any water on the fire until you arrive at the scene"*

Unknown, but timely:

*"You may know where you are and what you are doing..."*

*God may know where you are and what you are doing..."*

*But if Incident Management doesn't know where you are and what you are doing..."*

*You and God better have a very close relationship!"*

And to finish off, the firefighters law of response driving:

*The immutable laws of physics related to 15 tonnes of steel and 3 tonnes of water travelling at speed around corners do not change just because the red and blue lights are on!*

The second law of response driving: *"For every tank slosh there is an equal and opposite re-slosh"*

The third law of response driving: *"The shortest route between the station and the incident is always affected by roadworks"*



# New high visibility roadside fire permit signs

Acting Chief Officer Mike Brown has requested new Fire Permits Required roadside signs (previously known as gallow signs) for all districts statewide.

Please note the new roadside signs will be Fire Permits Required signs only.

These signs are for display during fire permit periods only, with the frames left empty at all other times i.e. no signs over winter.

## The design includes;

### Visual impact

The designs are simple and clear. The messages can be read from a distance or from a moving vehicle.

The choice of imagery/artwork is consistent with other TFS resources.

The use of 3M high visibility tape (lights up when light is applied) that will make the signs more visible at dawn, dusk, or night, in all weather conditions.

### Core message

Our core message is Fire Permits Now Required.

### Additional messages

We have included the TFS web address and free-call number.

By the way the word gallow means "a framework with a noose for hanging criminals" hence the changed reference to "roadside signs".

# FIRE PERMITS

## NOW REQUIRED

ph 1800 000 699  
[www.fire.tas.gov.au](http://www.fire.tas.gov.au)



# LFB'S annual reunion

By District Officer Launceston, Steven Richardson

Launceston Brigade held its annual reunion for past and present members on October 10th this year. It was pleasing to see so many past members come back and share their stories of "in my day" with the next generation of firefighters. We even had a couple of ex Regional Chiefs and I'm sure there were more than one or two firies who have waited a long time to finally outrank the infamous Graham Otley, and let him know it.

This was also an occasion to celebrate the achievements and retirement of two stalwarts of the TFS, Senior Firefighter David Newstead and Station Officer Mike Westacott.

Dave joined the LFB on 6th November 1967, almost 41 years of service with the Launceston Brigade. To put some perspective on this, when Dave started his career, around half of the current members in Launceston weren't even born yet, myself included. Quite an achievement for someone still so young, well done Dave.

Among Dave's achievements, he was awarded a TFS Certificate of Commendation as a consequence of action that he took on 5th December 1985, in rescuing a person from a smoke-filled home in Mayfield.

I think Dave says it best himself: "I have many fond memories of my time at LFB and have enjoyed working as a firefighter very much. I believe it is not only a great job but has been a very rewarding career and I have made life long friendships. A proud moment for me was when my son followed in my footsteps and became a firefighter in Launceston as well. I have seen many changes over the years with firefighting becoming very technical and requiring the need for firefighters to undertake specialist skills in a range of disciplines such



Gardia and Dave Newstead with Mike and Iris Westacott

as vertical rescue, road accident rescue, confined space and other specialist firefighting procedures. Also, community prevention activities have changed and firefighters have become more active in participating in these events.

Overall, I think that the TFS has been a really good organisation to work for and I would recommend this career to any young people who are interested."

Mike Westacott started his career in 1972 with the Hobart Brigade and worked his way through the ranks to be promoted to Station Officer in 1985. The LFB has only had the pleasure of working with Mike after he decided to make the move to the sunny north (sorry Hobart, couldn't help that one) in 2007 where he worked as a Station Officer on A Platoon.

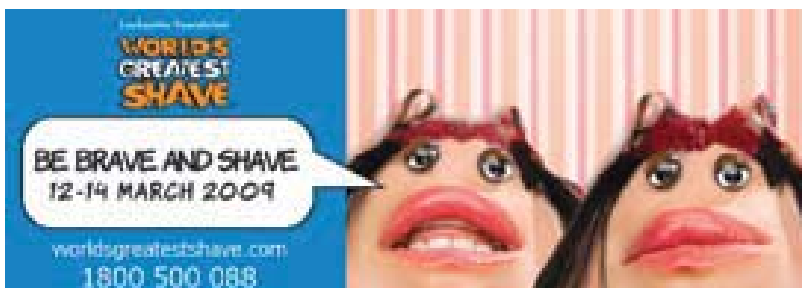
Mike describes his career with the TFS as thoroughly enjoyable and after 36 years he still loved the job, but not so much the night shifts, and found it challenging at times with the ever increasing complexity of responding to different incidents as a Station Officer.

I would like to congratulate both Dave and Mike on their retirement and wish them all the best on their new adventures outside of the TFS and we here at the Launceston Brigade look forward to sharing new stories at next year's reunion.

## Be Brave and Shave - 12- 14 March 2009

The World's Greatest Shave will be held from 12-14 March 2009 throughout Tasmania. The Leukaemia Foundation is encouraging people to shave of colour their hair. It is import to get behind this great event because every hour of every day at least one person is diagnosed with leukaemia, lymphomas or myeloma. Every two hours, someone loses their life to blood cancers. Currently 350 Tasmanians are diagnosed with blood cancers and only half the adults survive five years after a leukaemia diagnosis.

The money raised will directly support patients and their families when they need it most. Your fundraising will provide patients with free "home-away-from-home" accommodation near hospitals during treatment. The Leukaemia Foundation also provides patients and their families with practical assistance, emotional support and financial assistance free



of charge. The money raised will also go toward research into better treatments and cures. So be brave and shave and make an incredible difference for patients living with blood cancers.

Register now

Worldsgreatestshave.com

1800 500 088

# IMT Information/Training Session

By Clerk Engineering Services, Jodie Van Tienen

During August I was approached to put together information packages based around the Incident Resource Management System (IRMS) and Resourcing for support staff who had indicated that they wished to attend IMTs next fire season.

The packages were developed to give new staff an understanding of what an IMT was about, what their role might be and what was expected of them should they attend an incident, as well as a refresher for experienced staff.

The following presenters and packages were also delivered as part of the overall information package:

- Danny Reid was recruited to deliver, Introduction to ICS (Incident Control System), Fire Behaviour and Workload Management;
- Cecily Parker and Bruce Ludeke gave an overview of how to correctly complete Purchase Orders and delegation authority whilst on IMTs;
- Nigel Robertson discussed the IMT roster and availability and how this worked;
- Jeff Harper, Tony Davidson, Chris Arnol and John Streets discussed conduct and behaviour.

By Thursday 18 September the first package was delivered to the Northern Region with following sessions in the South on Tuesday 23 and Thursday 25 September, with the last session



Jodie Van Tienen, Karen Williams, Danny Reid, John Streets, Michelle Clarke and Carol Davey at IMT refresher training

conducted in the North West on Thursday 8 October 2008.

The morning session was a refresher on IMTs with the afternoon focused on IRMS and what roles and responsibilities the IRM's operator has as well as giving an overview of what roles and responsibilities the Resource Unit Leader has on IMTs with the final presentation being work load management and how to manage fatigue presented by Danny Reid.

Feedback from these sessions has been greatly appreciated as the IRMS and Resource Packages are "works in progress" with much valued additions to be included from staff who attended these information sessions. I am working on having the IRMS refresher and full training up and running in-house next year.

Thank you to staff who participated in the sessions and thank you to staff who contributed to the overall presentation on IMT's.

## Former HFB personnel get together

By "Retired Regional Chief South", Roland Hill

Former members of the Hobart Brigade meet on the first Thursday of the week every second month for lunch (commencing at 12.30 pm). This informal meeting of mostly retired operational people has become a tradition in recent years and represents an opportunity to catch up with former friends and work colleagues. The venues for the meeting are chosen by those in attendance and offer an opportunity to sample the delights of Hobart's many eating outlets.

The next opportunity to participate will be the December meeting which comprises a traditional Christmas Lunch at the

Hotel which was extensively damaged by fire a few years ago in Campbell Town. This is attended by retired personnel from Hobart, Launceston, Devonport and Burnie Brigades.

The 2009 meetings are as follows:

Crescent Hotel, North Hobart - Thursday 5 February 2009

Horseshoe Inn, Cambridge - Thursday 2 April 2009

Wagon and Horses Hotel, North Hobart - Thursday 4 June 2009

All former members welcome to attend.

# Volunteer Training - Brigades have their say!

By Manager Organisational Learning, Suzanne Bacon

Waratah Brigade was one of around 30 brigades that participated in a series of statewide focus groups in May, June and July that gave valuable feedback about volunteer training.

Participants were asked for their views about what worked well; what didn't work as well as it should; and for suggestions to improve delivery, assessment and administration.

The summary report will be tabled at the Volunteer Reference Group for comment and a copy sent to participating brigades. Thank you so much to all those members who contributed. The report will be the basis for our continuous improvement training plan for the next two years.

If you would like to provide any feedback (the good, the bad and the ugly) about your training experiences, please email [suzanne.bacon@fire.ta.gov.au](mailto:suzanne.bacon@fire.ta.gov.au). Your feedback will remain confidential.



Front: Allan Lello, Patrick Gill, Brigade Chief Judith Lello, Richard Rout and Jim Stefanoski of Waratah Brigade  
Back: Facilitator Suzanne Bacon, Manager Organisational Learning

## State Fire Commission

Many of you may not be aware of our peak governing and policy group, the State Fire Commission. The State Fire Commission is provided for in the Fire Service Act 1979. The commission consists of the Chief Officer (John Gledhill) and representatives from the UFU (Leon Dewhurst), Tasmanian Retained Firefighters Association (Bruce Corbett), Tasmanian Volunteer Fire Brigades Association (Lyndsay Suhr), Local Government Association of Tasmania (Richard Bowden and John LeFevre) and a person nominated by the Secretary of the responsible Department in relation to the Public Account Act 1986 (Jane Hyland).

Some of the functions and powers of the commission include:

- Formulation of policy in the administration and operations of the Fire Service;
- Development of effective fire prevention and protection measures throughout the state;
- The provision and standardisation of fire brigade equipment throughout the state;
- The establishment and maintenance training facilities for brigades;
- To advise the Minister on any issues as appropriate.



Back: Bruce Corbett, Lyndsay Suhr and John LeFevre  
Front: Jane Hyland, Chief Officer John Gledhill, Richard Bowden and Leon Dewhurst

Now when you see these people around the organisation, in your regions and at functions, please introduce yourself. This group plays a vital role in the overall running of our organisation.



# Hobart District Light Tanker Competition

By First Officer Mount Nelson Brigade, Andrew Johns

On Saturday 18th October, Mt Nelson Brigade hosted the Hobart District Light Tanker Competition in and around Mt Nelson. This was the 22nd anniversary of the competition that was first held on the Domain. In that year, Taroona won, on the basis they were the only team that could draft with a 7 metre lift.

The competition has changed over the years, and presently, it is hosted by the previous year's winning brigade. The competition is open to all volunteer brigades in the Hobart District (and a couple of ring-ins if they are available). Brigades are tested on basic knowledge, over a number of exercises or stands. It is a shot gun style start, and all competitors get to complete each stand.

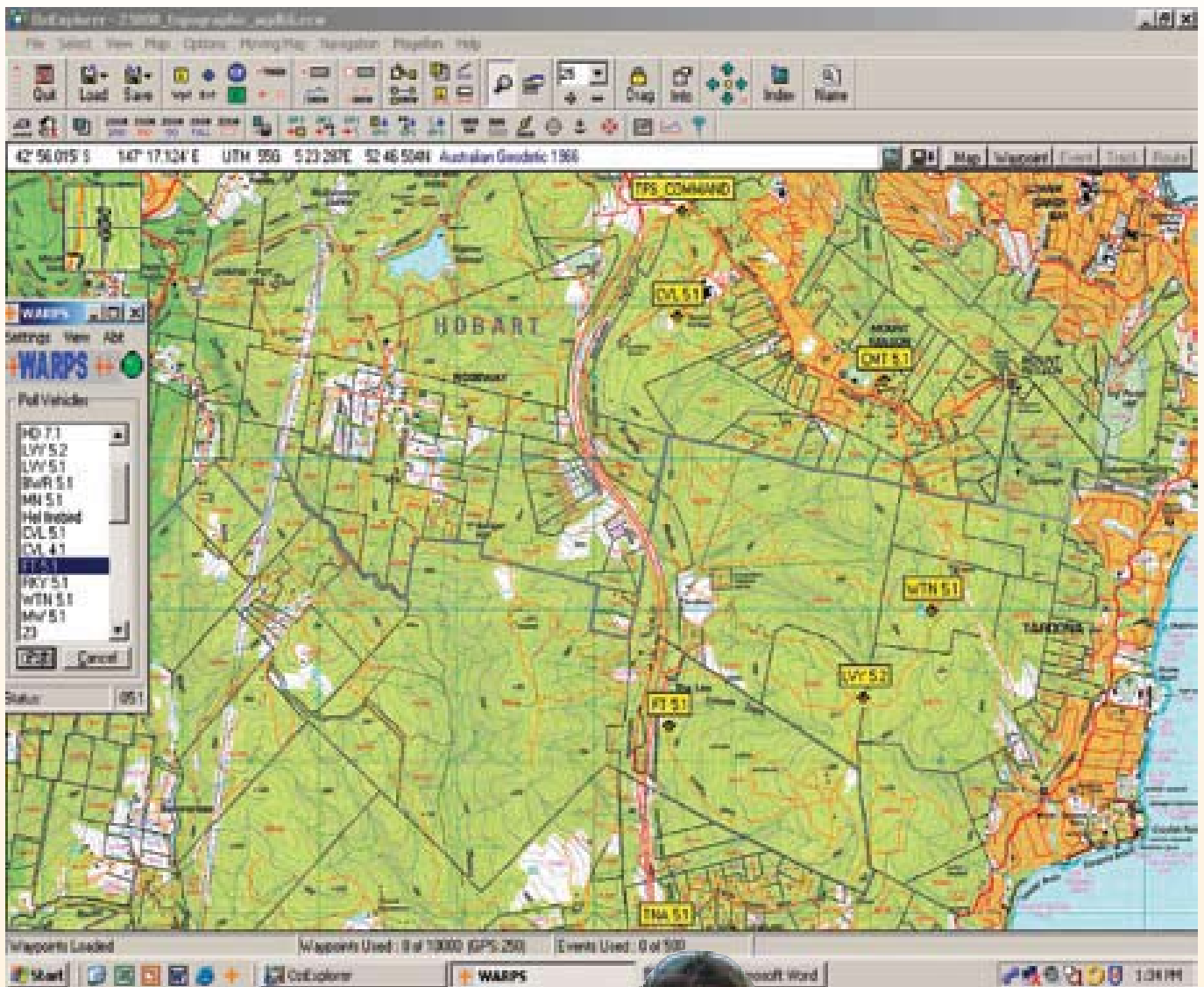
This year there were 12 stands, covering topics such as hose drills, relay pumping, draughting, navigation, and off road driving just to name a few.

The competition also saw the District in-vehicle GPS tracking system utilised, which while not required to find any lost brigades, proved to be very useful.

With the competition run and won, Fern Tree were awarded first place, and that is where it should have finished. But, like all competitions these days, it seems they are decided with some controversy. In an after-event drug test, the A and B sample for Fern Tree returned elevated levels of the "Wanting to Win" drug, and the "Trying too hard with only two crew" hormone and they were relegated to second.







Screen print of participating vehicle's location during the Hobart District event which shows the location of each unit at that time. The system updates each vehicles location on the transmission of radio messages from that unit or the command can poll each vehicle.

Seriously, there was an error in adding up the scores, and the eventual winner was Rokeby, with Fern Tree a very credible second, and Claremont third. Taroon, who were originally second, were relegated to the Wooden Spoon instead of Lenah Valley who accepted the award on the day.

All brigades and judges enjoyed both the competition on the day and the BBQ after. Special thanks to the district staff, including Hugh Jones and Michael Goldsmith for their support.

We all look forward to another great competition in October next year in and around the Rokeby area.



Winners - Rokeby Brigade members Josh Mulcahy, Jess Brown and David Shorhouse

# Branch operator - a job with responsibilities

District Officer Wayne Richards has adapted this from an article written by Greg Jakubowski, a Pennsylvania State Fire Instructor and published in Fire Rescue (November 2005).

The one task almost every firefighter wants: to work the branch on a "good job." As the branch operator, you fight the fire directly - you make a difference; you quell the "red steer." When we respond to a well involved structure fire, the branch operator is usually one of the most senior members of the crew. But the branch operator's job presents many challenges, and the job can create anxiety as well as excitement.

This article discusses some of the basic strategies behind fighting fire as a branch operator.

With any emergency response, the primary objective is protection of life, search and rescue. The firefighting effort is to support the rescue operation or suppress the fire to enable search operations to commence. Extinguishment of the fire is secondary to any rescue effort.

## Clear & present danger

The electricity might still be on in the building, especially if you're on the first arriving crew. It is essential that the Incident Controller ensures that the power supply has been isolated before crews enter the building.

Incident Controllers must consider the type of occupancy, and the various hazards associated with different types of construction and building use. In just about any type of occupancy, the potential exists for a fire involving LPG or natural gas.

The initial size-up to assess the scene and develop a tactical plan is critical for crew safety and for an effective suppression effort.

Access points and the need for forced entry must be determined and ventilation requirements (to keep the heat and smoke off victims or crews) should be considered at this time.

Selection of appropriate hose size is essential for effective combat. All too often, high pressure reels are used when fire size and intensity indicates larger delivery hose should be used. Big fires need more water to be applied for a heavier weight of attack.

Hoseline crews must be given clear directions and advised of any potential hazards.

## Charging the line

Firefighters must ensure there is enough line to advance through the building and reach the seat of the fire. Always charge the line prior to entering the fire building to ensure water is available when needed.

An effective branch operator requires good support. A trusted backup firefighter is needed to help advance the line, remove the kinks, manoeuvre around corners and avoid catching the hoseline on doors that can close on it.

## Focus on search and fire

The first, most important rule for any branch operator: put water on fire, not on smoke, which can be difficult if you're in an environment where you can't even see the branch, and the interior gets hotter and hotter. The temptation to open up the branch is great, but doing so might not have any impact on the fire and might worsen interior conditions and create significant water damage.

The branch operator must be able to make the decision whether to let the fire burn and search the area or attack the fire before continuing to search.

It is important to have a good knowledge of fire behaviour for safe operations.

Walls and ceilings need to be checked for fire extension.

Some brigades have a thermal image camera that can help the branch operator find the fire and apply water where needed.

Before the branch operator applies water, they must determine any potential hazards that could develop as a result of applying water to the structure.

Questions to consider before applying water:

Will you use a fog pattern or straight jet?

What are the consequences of the wrong stream?

## Effecting the rescue

Although most firefighters perform fire attacks with support from a backup crew, others may only have one crew available, or perhaps their backup crew is delayed.

In this case, the initial crew must operate alone at the scene for some time.

Some questions to consider:

What will you do when you find a victim?

Will you call for help, and wait with the victim, protecting them with the branch?

Will you leave the hoseline and rescue the victim from the building?

Do you have other options?

Are there other potential victims for whom you must continue to search?

## Effective firefighting

The Incident Controller should be planning and co-ordinating ventilation activities to remove heat, smoke and gases to improve conditions and assist the interior attack crew with fire suppression.

If hose lines have to be advanced up circular or spiraling staircases, use the open space in the centre of the staircase to reduce the distance lines must stretch, and minimise the amount of hoseline on the stairs, which can create difficulties for backup crews moving up the stairs.

When operating in multi-storey buildings with a fire-isolated stairway, hoselines should be extended from the floor below the fire, then stretch the line past the fire floor to the landing above the fire and then back down to the fire floor door. As crews enter the fire floor, the line will slide down the stairs behind them, easing the advance into the fire.

## Conclusion

We all want the branch at the fire, but no one should take it to be easy; being an effective branch operator takes some thinking and lots of training.

You must know your equipment and how it operates.

Do you know how to achieve and adjust spray patterns with the branches on your appliance?

You must be familiar with the types and lengths of hoseline on your appliance. You must be able to judge distances in buildings to pull the proper hoseline to reach the seat of the fire. You must know how to undertake an effective search in a smoke-logged environment.

You must be able to decide the best rescue method for a casualty.

And finally, you must be able to judge when to open the branch to ensure you're effectively extinguishing the red devil.

## The first, most important consideration for any branch operator: Put water on fire, not smoke.

Remember: Utility control is a critical task during any firefight.

# What is Brigade induction?

By District Officer Learning and Development, Steve Lowe

## What is Brigade induction? - I was "inducted" at school once and didn't like it!

We all struggle with the question on how to keep those new members who join off the street as a member of the brigade motivated whilst their application is processed, which can take up to 6 or more weeks. This initial contact with the TFS is an extremely critical time in determining whether a new member will feel part of the team and worthwhile - or simply drift away.

It is vitally important that all new members are introduced early to some meaningful development towards becoming an active firefighter, or other integral member of your brigade. New recruits should be interviewed by a senior member of your brigade who has the capacity to determine what expectations these new members may bring with them as well as clearly informing the new members what expectations your brigade may have of them. This should include what training they must undertake to ensure their safety and enable them to become an integral member of your team.

The concept of brigade induction was developed in part to enable brigades to introduce any new member to meaningful training that could be undertaken during the application process. There is no restriction on how each brigade delivers the learning at induction level, whether it is over regular training nights/days, conducted outside of these times, or group based is not critical. What is critical though is that each new member from your brigade understands when and how this induction will take place and that they have completed an induction prior to rolling up for a basic course.

The learning from the induction that you provide underpins additional development that your new brigade member will undertake during the basic course. Learning & Development have produced an induction manual to assist brigades in providing standard information and training at brigade induction.

If your brigade has not received an induction manual or requires some assistance to conduct induction training at your brigade please contact your District staff or Learning & Development in your region. The commitment from all our volunteers is extremely valued and we would like to ensure that what time can be committed is seen as worthwhile from you as well.

# Photo Competition Winner

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 photo from this edition is:

**1st place**



Lobster Creek house fire at west Ulverstone

Photographer Firefighter Paul Cason (\$50),  
submitted by Penguin Brigade (\$50)

## How to enter:

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

Please ensure digital photos are of 3 mega pixels and above, also ensure date stamp is off

If emailing photos, please don't reduce the size when Outlook asks you if you want to keep original size or send smaller, this affects the quality and therefore the size of the photo we can print

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: [fireground@fire.tas.gov.au](mailto:fireground@fire.tas.gov.au)

## Fireground goes far and wide!

Fireground has a mailing list which covers all states of Australia as well as overseas, however, did you realise it gets read in so many interesting places? If you can contribute some more interesting photos, please send them in to [fireground@fire.tas.gov.au](mailto:fireground@fire.tas.gov.au)

Evandale Firefighter Malcolm Deane "at work" in the cabin of the 40t crane onboard the MV Spirit of Esperance. Malcolm works as an Integrated Rating (seaman) and to get to the crane cabin he has to climb a 6 storey ladder, straight up! It's only another 2 storeys to the very top of the crane. Malcolm assures us that the ship is at anchor when this photo was taken.





District Officer Jeremy Smith on the way to work on the Klamath River (California's second largest river). This was part of the Siskiyou Fire Complex in northern California. Rafts were required to access and protect Native American burial sites. Photographer: Tim Rhodes from ACT Parks and Wildlife.



Two year old Cody McNeill, son of Leading Firefighter Doug McNeill of New Norfolk Brigade, liked the photo of what he called "Daddies fire truck" on the cover of last edition of Fireground.



District Officers Jeremy Smith and Paul Salter at the Siskiyou Complex fire in the Klamath National Forest in northern California.

# CISM Turns 20!

By Senior Firefighter Hobart Brigade / CISM Southern Liaison Officer, Darren Gye

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Tasmanian Emergency Services Critical Incident Stress Management Program.

Past management committee and program members were invited to share their early experiences of the program with the current team members at our May training day held at the Country Club Villas in Launceston.

In those early days, the program was unproven and often resources needed to be begged or borrowed. Indeed the program came close to being discontinued, however, due to the support of the management committee and the tireless and unpaid work of the then team members and psychologists the program continued and grew. Now our CISM Program is regarded as one of the most respected and successful of its kind in Australia.

Over the past 20 years CISM has offered support to the almost ten thousand emergency service workers, both permanent and volunteer, from every part of Tasmania. It has also conducted in excess of 420 education sessions from King Island to Dover, Strahan to St Marys and everywhere in between.

The foundation for this longevity and success was assured 20 years ago by the dedication of many team members from each organisation committed to providing support to their fellow work colleagues following their attendance at "Critical Incidents". Support for the program also came from the original management committee who had the foresight to see the advantages this program would provide to its employees and the emergency services generally.

Most importantly, though, it continues today due to the dedication and commitment of its current team members and the support it receives from the Tasmanian Emergency Services community.

**The CISM Program provides a variety of support to emergency service workers coping with "normal reactions to abnormal events". It also provides education sessions about Critical Incident Stress.**

**To organise an education session for your brigade please contact the CISM Manager, Charles Blizzard on 6230 2274.**

**To speak with a peer about a Critical Incident you have attended please call 0427 181 207.**

# Library News

## NEW BOOKS

### **The Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System:** aides memoir.

**Australasian Fire Authorities Council.** Melbourne, Vic.: AFAC, 2007.

**Chainsaw operator's manual:** the safe use of chainsaws / Bernard R. Kestel. Melbourne: CSIRO Publishing, 2005.

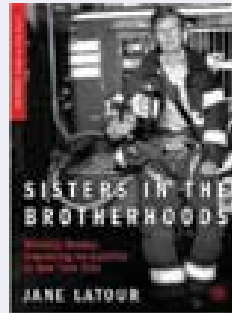
Contents: Level 1. Cross-cutting (basic competence for safe chainsaw operation - harvest trees manually) - professional attitude - workplace safety - dangerous trees - occupational hazards - personal protection equipment - basic safety - kick-back - safety warning signs used throughout the NSW timber industry - power head maintenance - the cutting attachment - sawchain - sawchain sharpening - cross-cutting sequence - butt trimming - level 2. Simple tree felling (intermediate competence of safe chainsaw operation - harvest trees manually) - theory of felling - preparation at each tree prior to felling - theory of simple tree felling - wedges - level 3. Problem tree felling (advanced competence of safe chainsaw operation - harvest trees manually) - problem tree felling techniques - double leader - felling 'dangerous' trees - removal of tree lying across road/track - machine assisted manual tree felling - pushing tree over with a crawler tractor - dozer blade - tree jacking.

**Essentials of firefighting and fire department operations** / International Fire Service Training Association. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice Hall, c2009. Firefighter orientation - firefighter safety and health - fire behaviour - building construction - firefighter personal protective equipment - portable fire extinguishers - ropes and knots - rescue and extrication - forcible entry - ground ladders - ventilation - water supply - fire hose - fire streams - fire control - fire detection, alarm, and suppression systems - loss control - protecting fire scene evidence - fire department communications - fire prevention and public education - basic prehospital emergency medical care for firefighters - introduction to hazardous materials - operations at hazmat incidents.

**Excel hacks, 2nd ed.** / David E. Hawley. Sebastopol ; Farnham : O'Reilly, 2007.  
Tips and tools for streamlining your spreadsheets.

**Firefighters' pocket book, revised edition** / New South Wales. Rural Fire Service. Sydney, NSW: NSWRF, 2008.

In the field there are a number of important things all firefighters need to know; from basic safety to vehicle and officer recognition. This pocketbook is designed to provide you with a fast, easy reference guide to these and other important facts you will need at your fingertips.



**Sisters in the brotherhoods: working women organizing for equality in New York City** / Jane LaTour. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

A study of women who have, against considerable odds, broken the gender barrier to blue-collar employment in various trades in New York City beginning in the 1970s. It is a story of the fight against deeply ingrained cultural assumptions about what constitutes women's work, the middle-class bias of feminism, the daily grinding sexism of male co-workers, and the institutionalised discrimination of employers and unions. It is also the story of some gutsy women who, seeking the material rewards and personal satisfactions of skilled manual labour, have struggled to make a place for themselves among New York City's construction workers, stationary engineers, firefighters, electronic technicians, plumbers, and transit workers.

### **Special operations: incidents involving hazardous materials/WMD, structural collapse, wildland, and managing large scale incidents using NIMS-ICS.**

**Book 2** / National Incident Management System Consortium Model Procedures Committee. [Stillwater, Okla.]: Fire Protection Publications, 2007.

This manual combines the information from three existing National Incident Management System Consortium (NIMSC) Model Procedures Guides, plus new information on managing large-scale incidents, into one comprehensive, NIMS-compliant book. As with all NIMSC model procedures, this information was developed and approved by a broad group of national experts on these topics. The manual includes basic information on NIMS ICS and then detailed information on how to apply it to wildland, hazardous materials, urban search and rescue structural collapse, and large-scale incidents of all types. This includes concepts such as unified command, area command, joint operations centres (JOC), multi-agency co-ordination centres (MACC) and much more. This is the definitive text on the application of NIMS ICS to common types of emergency incidents.

## DVDS / VIDEOS

**Behind the firefront AIMS ICS** / Victoria. Dept. of Sustainability and Environment. Melbourne, Vic.: DSE, c2004. 1 DVD (26 min.)

This presentation outlines the structure of the Australian Interservice Incident Management System - Incident Control System. The example in this film uses the backdrop of the 2003 bushfires, such a large scale event that all elements of the structure were brought into play - multiple fronts, interagency and even international cooperation.

**First aid 1 Basic life support** / Video Education Australasia. Bendigo, Vic.: Video Education Australasia, 2006. 1 DVD (24 min.)

First aid is the initial care of a suddenly sick or injured person. Would you know what to do in an emergency? This program details the essential aspects of first aid as required to assist someone in need of help. It focuses on how to respond to an emergency situation, primary and secondary surveys, cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and managing major external bleeding.

**First aid 2 Outdoor injuries** / Shannon Sleeth. Bendigo, Vic.: Video Education Australasia, 2006. 1 DVD (24 min.)  
Focuses on heat related injuries, near drowning, spinal injuries and venomous bites and stings.

**King's Cross beneath the flames** / Stephen Haggard. Frenchs Forest, NSW: BBC Active, 2006. 1 DVD (30 min.)  
Over thirty people died in the King's Cross underground fire which broke out as commuters headed home on November 18, 1987. Almost 15 years on, this program examines the sequence of events which lead to and followed this catastrophe, one of the most severe incidents on any underground transportation system in the world.

**Methods of structure fire attack** / Andrew A. Fredericks. Tulsa, OK: Fire Engineering ; Penwell, 2006, 1999. 1 DVD (25 min.)  
This film covers the three most widely recognised methods of structure fire attack - the indirect, direct and combination methods. This film has been transferred from the 1999 videotape version to DVD. PHOTO 043B.JPG

**Peaked roof ventilation** / Bob Pressler. Tulsa, OK: Fire Engineering, 2006. 1 DVD (17 min.)  
Lieutenant Bob Pressler discusses roof styles often encountered by fire personnel, equipment needs, roof access, and types of cuts required for successful ventilation. Fireground safety procedures are constantly addressed, along with proper tool use and roof movement. This training DVD has been transferred from the 1995 videotape version.

**Stretching the initial attack handline** / Andrew A. Fredericks. Tulsa, OK: Fire Engineering, c2006, 1998. 1 DVD (20 min.)  
This film identifies such important considerations as horizontal versus vertical stretches and load, a formula for estimating accurate hose lengths based on the building and stair configurations, and how they affect the stretch.

**Structural protection in the i-zone** / Queensland Fire and Rescue Service. [Brisbane]: Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, 2003. 1 videocassette (22 min)

**Using water & foam on the fireline** / Victoria. Dept. of Sustainability and Environment. Victoria: DSE, 2006. 1 DVD (28 min.)

This film focuses on the use of water and foam on the fireline, specifically: water sources, hoses and nozzles, additives, water use on the fireline, and foam application on the fireline.

## WEB LINKS

### **2008 AFAC and Bushfire CRC Conference, Adelaide.**

Audio, articles, photos, feedback and blog available.  
<http://www.abc.net.au/adelaide/features/bushfire/default.htm>

### **HealthInsite**

Through this site you will find a wide range of up-to-date and quality assessed information on important health topics such as diabetes, cancer, mental health and asthma.  
<http://www.healthinsite.gov.au/index.cfm>

### **Omgili**

Tap into people's personal and consumer experiences, solutions to problems, and ideas and opinions. Omgili is a specialised search engine that scans millions of online discussions worldwide in over 100,000 boards, forums and other discussion based resources.  
<http://www.omgili.com/>

### **Remembering the 1967 bushfires in southern Tasmania**

Retired firefighter Bill Burke is interviewed by ABC journalist Yvette Barry on his memories fighting the 1967 Tasmanian bushfires. Audio of the interview is accompanied with photos of the fires and the aftermath of the fires.  
<http://www.abc.net.au/local/photos/2008/10/08/2385051.htm?site=hobart>

### **Report on the impact of public land management practices on bushfires in Victoria, June 2008.**

<http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/enrc/inquiries/bushfires/Report/report.html>

### **Ropes that rescue**

American rope rescue site with various training information.  
<http://www.ropesthatrescue.com/>

### **Tasmanian State and Regional Indicators**

TSRI is released quarterly. Topics covered include labour force, wages and prices, tourism, finance, state accounts, population, household and family characteristics, education, health and environment.  
<http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.NSF/4a256353001af3ed4b2562bb00121564/30527a777dc5383dca2573e00016621e!OpenDocument>

## CONTACT US

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](mailto:library@fire.tas.gov.au)  
or drop into the State Headquarters building, Corner Argyle and Melville Streets, Hobart

# Introducing ...

Hello I'm **Lucas van Rijswijk**. Now my name might seem a bit of a mouthful but just say it as 'von race-wake' and everyone will think you speak Dutch.

I joined TFS in early October as Coordinator Volunteer Services. In this role I will help with volunteer workforce planning, management and support. The good news is that I have many years of experience with Australian Red Cross supporting team leaders working with volunteers.

My most recent position was with Education where I helped to set up three regional taskforces to support young people moving from school to work or further education. A highlight was helping to develop the policy and legislation needed to restructure post Year 10 education and training.

My partner and I are building a shack at Petchey's Bay which keeps us very busy. For me it is great to be able to return to the Huon Valley where I lived for more than twenty years.

When not working or building I like to get out and ride my bike, do a bit of bush walking and keep in touch with my grown-up children and first grandchild.

**John Clark**, Manager Infrastructure - Development comes to the TFS from home, where he does all sorts of renewable things down at Pelverata. Coming from a technology background John says the big attraction for him was to play with all the toys that farmers and people who have renewable energy systems get to play with, however, experience has proven that the most renewable thing on a farm is large amounts of poo.

Before playing with things around the farm John spent a lot of time playing with aeroplanes full of computers for the RAAF as a civilian and other Defence stuff that he likes to not tell people about. Having spent some time in the Army before all this computer stuff the TFS seemed like a good idea but soon found that people look at you strangely when you do "turns on the march" around the headquarters. He says he is still waiting to get to play with the fire trucks though, and he wants one of those nice blue jackets too!

On the serious side John is responsible for software development for the TFS and has spent 25 years in the IT Industry which means he now knows almost everything about nothing. John works with Chris Peters in the Information Systems Branch which explains the twisted sense of humour.

## Ty Mitchell

My name is Ty Mitchell and I started with TFS in August working on the helpdesk.

I first started my career repairing office equipment and cash registers where I completed a trade certificate in electronics over my 3 years in that role. From there I moved to a local company called Professional Computer Maintenance where



Lucas van Rijswijk

I spent 12 years and gained experience in the repair of pcs, laptops, printers, servers and a wide variety of IT equipment. I moved to TFS to gain experience in the management, maintenance, and user support of a large network environment which we use here.

I live locally in Battery Point where I enjoy inner city living. I enjoy mountain biking which keeps me fit, along with regularly going to the PCYC gym. I enjoy motorsport and motorcycling. I've restored a 1957 Chev in the past, owned a dozen different motorcycles and currently own a modified Datsun 1600 which I race in hill climbs. Last year I spent a month in Italy including a cruise through the Greek islands and a 7 day push bike tour through central Italy. I hope to do some more travelling once my partner finishes her degree in nursing.

I have really enjoyed my start at TFS and have found all the staff to be welcoming and friendly. I enjoy helping people in our role at the helpdesk so don't be shy in giving us a call. Chat soon : )



John Clark and Ty Mitchell



Hi, I'm **Gemma Locke** and I started work as the new Payroll Clerk in September. While I was completing my Bachelor of Business I worked front of house at a resort near where I live by the beach. When I (finally!) completed my studies I went "behind the scenes" and worked for two restaurants on the waterfront as their Payroll/Accounts Clerk.

This year my New Year's resolution was to try new activities and sports; so far I have "retired" from field hockey, learnt how to play tennis and my most recent one is surf boat rowing which I'm still getting used to and is a bit of a laugh.

I'm looking forward to meeting and getting to know everyone either in person or on the phone.



Gemma Locke

**Marc Sianski** has joined the TFS as a Clerk in Information and Records. He recently undertook a Certificate III in Business with the TFS as the host employer. Marc will be working in Information and Records, primarily concentrating on processing Building Safety documents, however, you will also see his smiling face on reception at lunch time as he fills in whilst Lyn is at lunch.

Prior to joining the TFS Marc attended Guilford Young College and was previously employed by Sanity Music Store in Hobart. Whilst not at work Marc enjoys attending live music events and festivals as well as collecting CDs and other various music memorabilia. Marc's other interests include skateboarding, supporting the Geelong Football Club and camping.



Mark Sianski

I'm **Lyn Rainbird** and I originally came to the TFS as a temp before obtaining a permanent position as Receptionist at headquarters in Hobart.

I am married and have four adult children and two grandchildren. My husband and I have lived in Kingston Beach all our married lives and just love it. We go to Melbourne as often as we can to see our daughter and grandchildren.

I'm seventh generation Tasmanian and my husband Tony and I are researching our genealogy and have found our family history to be extremely interesting. My ancestry goes back to the First Fleet and the Rainbird's to the early 1820's in Tasmania.

My interests are genealogy and painting. I paint landscapes and portraits in oils and flowers in watercolours. I also enjoy going for walks around the Kingston Beach area.

My career has been based at the University and I left there at the end of 2006, the last 11 years I was Executive Officer of one of the Schools at the Sandy Bay Campus.



Lyn Rainbird

# On The *Move*

A list of recent personnel changes within the TFS

## The following Career personnel changes have occurred

### Arrivals

Information Systems	Ty Mitchell	Computer Support Officer	25th August 2008
Finance	Gemma Locke	Clerk Payroll	11th September 2008
Human Services	Lucas van Rijswijk	Coordinator Volunteer Strategy	6th October 2008

### Elevations

Human Services	Debra White	Systems Coordinator Org. Learning	15th August 2008
Statewide	Andrew Smith	Coordinator Breathing Apparatus Services	15th September 2008
Northern Region	Steve Richardson	District Officer Planning & Capability	19th September 2008
South West District	Rod Sherrin	District Officer	19th September 2008
Southern Region	Claudio Muench	Station Officer	6th October 2008
Southern Region	Mark O'Donnell	Station Officer	6th October 2008

### Departures

Burnie Brigade	Leon Norton-Smith	Leading Firefighter	30th July 2008
Launceston Brigade	Mike Westacott	Station Officer	10th September 2008
Launceston Brigade	David Newstead	Senior Firefighter	1st October 2008



District Officers Gerald Crawford and Rod Sherrin, Field Officer Phil Smith, newly appointed Station Officer Claudio Muench, District Officer Jeremy Smith, Acting Regional Chief Chris Arnot, Acting Deputy Regional Chief Greg Butters, District Officers Hugh Jones and John Green



Acting Regional Chief Chris Arnot and Acting Deputy Regional Chief Greg Butters presenting newly appointed District Officer Rod Sherrin with his new epaulettes

## The following Volunteer Brigade Officers have been elected by their Brigades

BRIGADE	OFFICER	APPOINTMENT	BRIGADE	OFFICER	APPOINTMENT
Bicheno	Adam Gluth	Brigade Chief	Claude Road	Callum Woodham	Brigade Chief
Bushy Park	George Rumley	Brigade Chief		Jarrad Camm	Second Officer
	Justin Lazenby	Second Officer		Stephen Febey	Third Officer
	Justin Butler	Third Officer	Meander	Ian Payne	Third Officer
	Peter Butler	Fourth Officer	Somerset	Robert Dawes	Brigade Chief
Carrick	Gil Walker	Brigade Chief		Dale Atkinson	Second Officer
	Greg Cain	Second Officer		Craig Stirling	Third Officer
	Bill Hodgetts	Third Officer		Heyden Blizzard	Fourth Officer
	Peter Burr	Fourth Officer			

# Awards

A list of recent awards presented within the Tasmania Fire Service

LOCATION/ BRIGADE	NAME	AWARD	LOCATION/ BRIGADE	NAME	AWARD
Bagdad	Anthony Bantick	Long Service (30 years)	Old Beach	Philip Owen	Long Service (25 years)
	Allen Headlam	Long Service (15 years)		Peter Wylie	Long Service (15 years)
Channel	Mark Goodwin	Long Service (15 years)	Port Arthur	Athol Bloomfield	Long Service (25 years)
Claremont	Scott Munday	Long Service (20 years)	Port Sorell	Steven Brazendale	Long Service (20 years)
Collinsvale	Ian Wade	TFS Volunteer Medal		Roger Eadie	Long Service (20 years)
	Lee Anderson	Long Service (20 years)	Railton	Stephen Niaura	National Medal (15 years)
	Ian Gregory	Long Service (10 years)		Gerard Lowery	National Medal (15 years)
	Colin Wright	Long Service (10 years)		Michael Casey	Long Service (15 years)
Deep Bay	Joe Turnbull	Long Service (10 years)		Robin Hicks	Long Service (15 years)
Dunalley	Gerard Daly	Long Service (30 years)		Gerard Lowery	Long Service (15 years)
	Bernard Campbell	Long Service (30 years)		Stephen Niaura	Long Service (15 years)
	Paul Spaulding	Long Service (30 years)		Dwayne Jones	Long Service (10 years)
	Kevin Daly	Long Service (30 years)		Paul Murphy	Long Service (10 years)
	John Yaxley	Long Service (15 years)		John Richardson	Long Service (10 years)
	Paul Bird	Long Service (10 years)	Risdon Vale	Allan Broadhead	Long Service (10 years)
Geeveston	Brett Burgess	Long Service (30 years)	Somerset	Micheal Richards	TFS Volunteer Medal
	Carissa Payne	Long Service (10 years)		Stuart Braid	TFS Volunteer Medal
Gretna	Craig Cunningham	Long Service (10 years)		Robert Dawes	TFS Volunteer Medal
	Terrance Leeson	Long Service (10 years)		Micheal Richards	National Medal (15 years)
Kempton	Rodney Ratcliffe	Long Service (20 years)		Dean Stokes	National Medal (15 years)
Koonya	Charlie Kingston	Long Service (20 years)		Philip Wilkinson	Long Service (25 years)
Latrobe	Chris Hawkins	National Medal (15 years)		Scott Evans	Long Service (10 years)
	Graeme Brown	Long Service (35 years)	Tea Tree	Darren Norman	Long Service (10 years)
	David Fidler	Long Service (10 years)		Michael Smith	Long Service (10 years)
Magra	Brett Harrex	Long Service (10 years)	Wesley Vale	Robert Atkins	Long Service (40 years)
Nubeena	Rhett Cuthbertson	Long Service (10 years)		Veronica Atkins	Long Service (25 years)



Group Officer Lyndsay Suhr congratulating Brigade Chief Collinsvale Ian Wade and Secretary TRVFFA Mathew Philpott



John Streets, Dean Stokes, Mick Richards, Philip Wilkinson



Back: Stuart Braid, Sally Atkinson, Lindsay Shur, Robert Dawes, Mick Richards Front: Marilyn Dawes, Bruce Corbett, Sue Wilkinson



District Officer Gavin Freeman with Dunalley Brigade members Bernard Campbell, Paul Spaulding, Kevin Daly, Gerard Daly, Paul Bird and John Yaxley  
Dunalley Brigade celebrated the years of service that these members have provided to the brigade and to their local community. With 145 years of combined service, involving countless call-outs and interruptions to normal family life – especially in the height of summer – we felt it was worthy of celebrating. Many of the recipients had held some rank in the brigade, with Gerard and Kevin Daly holding the Brigade Chief position at different stages.



# Tasmania Fire Service

## TFS ONLINE ACCESSING INCIDENT LOGS



1. Login to TFS Online using your Username and Password
2. Click on the "My Records" link from menu on the left
3. Click on the "Incident Summary" link from menu on the left
4. Select your brigade name from the list
5. In the "Days" box type in a number
6. In the "Filter" box select All
7. Tick the box "Include Support Info"
8. Hit the Search Button
9. Click any of the incident numbers in blue to see the Incident log, which can be printed from your browser.

www.fire.tas.gov.au

# Feedback System Up and Running!

By Coordinator Human Services, Steve Willing

After years of consulting, trialling, evaluating and planning, the Workplace Feedback System is finally being rolled out to all employees in career brigades and divisions. The training is almost complete in the South and North and should be just about completed in the North West in by the time you read this.



meetings may feel “clunky”, but we’ll get smoother as we get more experience and confidence. The real learning will be in doing it, not sitting in the training room. Soon we’ll all be “old hands” at running summary meetings.

In each workplace there is a white “Feedback System Resource Kit” folder - if you can’t find it, ask your supervisor / manager. Keep your manual that you receive in the training. The information is also on the Intranet under “Info Centre / Workplace Instructions / Feedback System”.

Thanks to the trainers (especially Phil Douglas) for a huge effort in organising and presenting the training.

Once you and your supervisor have been trained, you can hold your first feedback summary meeting. It’s up to you to make it happen. We’d like everyone to start in the next few months - while it’s still fresh. Senior managers and some Hobart shifts began their summary meetings in September.

All supervisors, managers and senior managers will be surveyed regularly in the first year to track how much the system is being used. We’ll let you know what’s happening in each region.

The feedback trainers are also coaches and can help you to get the first few meetings right. As with any new skill, the first

A comprehensive evaluation will be conducted in 2 years to gauge how effective the system is, however, if you have any thoughts don’t wait for a survey - tell us!

## Bush Watch

By Senior Constable Russell Barratt, Tasmania Police

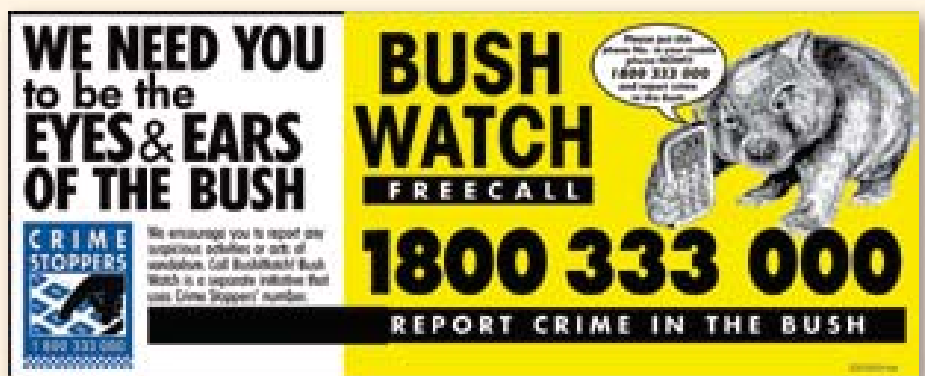
Bush Watch commenced in Tasmania in 1995 to support crime prevention and the detection of criminal and illegal activities in rural and bush areas.

The program targets a wide diversity of criminal and illegal activities including: theft of farm property; forestry equipment; flora and fauna; as well as the illegal dumping of vehicles and rubbish in bush areas; interference with bee hives and acts of vandalism in reserves and other bush areas.

One of the basic aims of Bush Watch is to increase public awareness of the Bush Watch program and to encourage individuals to co-operate and report suspicious activities using the Crime Stoppers number 1800 333 000.

Since its inception Bush Watch Committees around the State have held regular meetings attended by representatives from a wide range of organisations including Tasmanian Police, Inland Fisheries, Gunns Pty Ltd, Forestry Tasmania, TFS, Council members, Bee Keepers Association, Parks & Wildlife and other organisations.

Promotion of the program is considered an important aspect of the work done by the Committee. Besides the distribution of Bush Watch pamphlets and stickers through various tourist agencies and local activities, a tandem caravan has been equipped with display panels featuring various facets of the



problems often encountered by the Bush Watch Committee. The caravan has been used as an exhibitor at various shows and events throughout Tasmania and has on a number of occasions been used at Agfest.

Hopefully with assistance from general public, “we need you to be eyes and ears of the bush and put the Bush Watch number in your mobile phone” illegal practices can be detected and deterred.

Further details regarding Bush Watch activities may be obtained from:

**Senior Constable Russell Barratt**  
email - russell.barratt@police.gov.tas.au; or

**Sergeant Nigel Sheahen**  
email - nigel.sheahen@police.gov.tas.au

# Photo Gallery



Haglund from Perisher Valley ski resort heading out to a call at Charlottes Pass 8 km away - it can take 25 minutes to get there, so they send 2 firefighters on skidoos (5-10 min) for size-up and initial attack using cached gear (no BA). The Haglund rarely gets to Charlottes Pass before it has to turn around and come back - but it does the job around Perisher Valley. Firefighters rotate from NSW career brigades (1 month in 5) - there's a wait list! Hmm - I'll have to think of a winter project there. Submitted by Steve Willing, Human Services





Power pole fire in Barton Street, Mowbray.  
Submitted by Firefighter Launceston Brigade, David Ransome



New "paint job" for the Heli Resources TFS chopper!  
Submitted by Field Works Officer Stacey Peters



Owners cleared the block opposite Bennett's Furniture in Kingston and somebody lit the heap. The reflection on the windows in Bennett's gave the impression it was on fire.  
Photographer Second Officer Margate Brigade, Craig Woolford



Lobster Creek house fire at west Ulverstone - August 2008 - showing Penguin Brigade's Second Officer Gordon Patchin hosing hot spots.  
Photographer Firefighter Paul Caston and submitted by Penguin Brigade

# Open Day at Kingston

By Brigade Chief Kingston Brigade, Faron Wall

Kingston Brigade held an open day on Saturday 4 October. There were plenty of displays and activities for both adults and kids including a museum display with an old round-back Acco 1810; Australian Red Cross stall selling first aid kits etc; the Community Education trailer; TasFire Equipment selling extinguishers, smoke alarms and fire blankets; TasFire Training showing courses that they offer.

There were also plenty of give aways for the kids with approximately 200 show bags handed out; several live fire blanket demonstrations; plus the competition team running through some of the events that they will be competing in come November.

Many adults took the time to sit and watch the Black Tuesday DVD whilst Firefighter Kylie Harbottle was kept busy painting flames on kids' faces. The BBQ stall was kept busy serving up sausages, hamburgers and cold drinks.

Outside on display were all the Kingston appliances, the new K 3.1P was very popular, especially when a hose reel was run out for the kids to squirt some water around.

Overall all the day was a great success with approximately 100 adults and 200 kids turning up for the event. Not even an alarm call late morning could dampen the spirit, even though we had to move a dozen kids out of K2.1 and K4.1!



Firefighter Kylie Harbottle working on flames of a different kind!



... and the finished artwork!







# Northern California fires, fire camp and firefighting

By District Officer State Operations, Paul Salter

California experienced lightning storms that resulted in an unprecedented number of fires out of control and an early start to the Northern California fire season, resulting in the request for support from Australia. Jeremy Smith, Stacey Peters and myself were soon at the National Interagency Fire Centre in Boise, Idaho being briefed on the fire situation. Armed with our line bag and well rehearsed deployment of the fire shelter we were soon in Redding, California being deployed to fires.

My first assignment was on the SHU Complex in the Shasta Trinity National Forest, base camp was in Anderson with a capacity of 3,000 firefighters. On our second day there the camp was buzzing with the thought of President Bush and Governor Schwarzenegger visiting the camp, however, the closest they came was circling the camp three times in a helicopter and shouting as they flew away "I'll be back".

Firefighters in Anderson camp were from all over America

and included about 300 prisoners and the National Guard, however, I found it amusing to hear people say "we have firefighters from all over the world working on this fire, from Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania".

Language was somewhat difficult at times, despite two English speaking countries the terminology and interpretation could be confusing. For example crews were talking about snags and stubbies on the fireground which sounds like a BBQ, however, a snag being an old or damaged tree that may potentially fall and stubbies are an incendiary device.

The air operations was impressive, the first time I called for water bombing air support I nearly fell over when two type one helicopters and a Black Hawk came up over the hill, which is in contrast to the ground crews that seem to prefer dry firefighting.

Wildlife in another country is always amazing with squirrels and chipmunks running everywhere but my first encounter with a bear was a black bear cub just off the side of the road,



Base camp in Anderson northern California when we were working on the SHU Complex fire, 3000 firefighters in this camp



The closest I got to a bear, this black bear cub was at the SHU Complex, attempted to get closer but started looking over my shoulder for his mother



Crews moving down the cat line (dozer) for mop up operations, look closely there are 60 people there



SHU fire

however, my brave attempt to get a closer photo was soon overwhelmed by the neck bristling feeling of where was his mum.

Next deployment was to the Siskiyou Complex in the Klamath National Forest and Six Rivers National Forest, base camp was in Orleans, home of Big Foot. The area we were working in was very steep with continuous hills at an elevation between 4,000 and 6,000 feet, the vegetation consisted mostly of conifers, firs, cedars, mansanina, shamiese, chaparral and madrona which produces an erratic fire behaviour between "skunking around" on the ground and single to multiple tree torching. Mostly the elevation was too high for poison oak to grow ... good thing.

A lot of control line work is done by hand, however, when a dozer is used there is enough room to land a plane. The Hot Shot crews pride themselves on working hard for long hours in remote areas and all the other lesser skilled crews aspire to

be Hot Shots, although the Smoke Jumpers still believe they are the cream of firefighting.

Part of the area we were trying to protect from fire was Wilderness for the Karuk tribe (Native American land), one day I had to scout a possible hand line through a sacred site with two heritage consultants, one archaeologist, one biologist, two tribal representatives, two field observers and the crew leader from the crew that would be doing the hand line. The walk took seven hours, however, an agreement couldn't be reached, this seemed somewhat typical of the politics of the area.

While the Americans advocate a safety culture on the fireground the statistics in the area we were in would indicate otherwise with eleven fatalities in just over a week, one crushed by a tree, one caught in a burnover and nine in a helicopter crash. There is no joy in having a memorial service before the morning briefing in camp.



Smoke jumpers plane in Redding, California (smoke jumpers parachute into remote area fires and mostly use dry firefighting techniques)



US Forest Service Cobra at Redding air base fitted with FLIR (forward looking infrared)



Black Hawks fitted with belly tanks used at the SHU Complex fire, the fluoro paint is to enhance their visibility



Trying to find my bearings in the Six Rivers National Forest

Camp life starts with a bang somewhere after 0400 hours with the banging of portaloos doors, people trying to beat the morning rush as Orleans camp had now grown to 2,500. After a while you start to look forward to the first morning brew of luke-warm black coffee and a bowl of grits. For someone who likes to eat I did struggle a little with camp food. Some nights returning to camp there was hardly enough time to attend the 2100 briefing, wash up and eat with lights out at 2200 hours.

Overall the experience was extremely worthwhile and I did pick up some ideas useful for home but essentially we are on the right track in the way we manage fires.



Preparing a line prior to firing operations (back burning) with a CAFS unit (compressed air foam system)



Boise Hotshot crew preparing for firing operations (back burning)



Boise Hotshots conducting firing operations (back burning)



Rise and shine in Orleans camp



Morning briefing in Orleans, the flags were at half mast most of the time we were there



Crew camping in Orleans, this camp grew to 2500 firefighters



Scouting for Native American artefacts before back burning in the Kalamath National Forest Wilderness (Native American Land)

# District Conferences

Throughout September and October District Conferences were held in all Districts across the State. This year the agenda was kept simple with the forum essentially being a pre fire season briefing on operational matters such as the seasonal outlook; fire permit system; bushfire triage; new fire vehicle plans and equipment. The conferences also provided the opportunity for members to ask questions of the senior management of TFS.

The attendances and responses across the State was terrific with an estimated 600-700 making the effort to attend and contribute to the discussions.



Attending the Arthur District Conference held at Rocky Cape in October were Trevor Duniam, Alex Moore, Peter Moore, George Hoogendorp and Dean Watts



Fiona Tustian, Karen Williams, Leo Berechree and Darryl Hancock at the Arthur District Conference



## Obituary

### Leslie James Whittle

22 August 1929 - 20 August 2008



In 1950 the Launceston Fire Brigade Board engaged men on a permanent basis to begin shifts on a 40 hour week; four to a shift. Les was accepted and adapted to shift work which allowed him ample time as an amateur cyclist to perform his training sessions. The third officer at that time lived on the premises and was his Uncle Ossie (The Wizard) Whatley, whose son Jack Whatley was a fireman. Les' father Don Whittle served with another Uncle Aubrey Partridge as volunteers. The family connection continues today with Station Officer Roger Whittle and his brother-in-law Leading Firefighter Tony Johnson.

The first major fire that Les attended was Ludbrook's Department Store. Les received the Queen's Medal in 1971, the National Medal in 1989 as well as various medals and plaques for long service that are still proudly displayed. Les was a great competitor and he represented Tasmania in the Fire Brigade Golf Championships held in Victoria when he won nothing, but had a great time and was "poured off" the plane.

At the time of his retirement in 1987 Les had served for 37 years, rising through the ranks by study, courage and determination to the rank of Superintendent.

The friends and respected colleagues that Les made during his years of service have always been able to recall a joke or a breach of discipline even when contact has been on a casual basis over the years of his retirement the deep feeling of brotherhood and camaraderie has remained. Many "A" Platoon members will recall how "Old Sacchi" insisted on them rising early, but he treated them as individuals with respect and humour. He was a stickler for time and was rarely late for any appointment. The funeral service attendance and Guard of Honour provided by serving and previous members would have made him very proud.



Stacey on board a masticator (tree cutter) at the Iron Complex Shasta Trinity National Park



Forest Services IR Redding - Carlo Ciccino WA, Stacey Peters and Nathan Keoghan NZ

# Stacey's American Trip

By Field Officer East Coast, Stacey Peters

It is hard to try condensing forty very intense and exhaustive days away from home.

California experienced an unprecedented start to their fire season with multiple fires that stretched even their huge resources to the limit hence the request for an Australian/ New Zealand 2008 contingent. North America experienced fires throughout winter and some of the driest conditions in recorded history.

I met some fantastic people and had an experience of a lifetime that I hope will enhance my career and development. I will keep the article simple with some photos that I think epitomises a huge firefighting effort over one of their worst fire seasons on record.

After three days' notice and a very hurried preparation I, along with Paul Salter and Jeremy Smith set off to the USA. We landed in Los Angeles and after a short lay over flew, to Boise for our three days' induction training. This was very intense and included topics like fire weather, fire behaviour, fire survival etc.

I attended four complexes and travelled on the wrong side of the road for approximately 400 miles (thank god for my \$130 GPS). These were:

- Butte Lightning Complex (Calfire Fire)
- Rich Complex (Federal Fire Forestry)
- Canyon Complex (Federal Fire Forestry)
- Iron Complex (Federal Fire Forestry)

Butte Lightning Complex Calfire run approximately 55 thousand hectares -multiple structures lost and 1 life lost. My role here was assistant branch director. I then moved onto division supervisor.

Our days consisted generally of the following (Rich, Canyon Iron Complexes):

0530 brief (division supervisors)

0630 brief crews (everyone)

0700 brief division crews

Conduct day's operations

Conclude around 2000 hours

Return to camp, eat, shower and then into our camp beds



Sky crane filling out of Shasta River (1 of 4 type one helicopters operating on this day Iron Complex)



Keeping the Aussie tradition alive at the Iron Complex



Callfire Crew - Butte Lightning Complex (my first fire) - Magnuss Jonson centre Callfire legend



Type 3 crew (correctional crew) always overseen by CALFIRE Captain



Firing stubbie two's first day Butte Lightning fire during backburning operations



Butte Lightning fire between Quincy and Chico - aftermath of bad fire weather day

I kept a daily diary of my trip away notable experiences which included:

- Suffered jet lag badly which took 10 days to get over;
- Driving on the wrong side of the road for the first time (wasn't too bad and american drivers are quite courteous);
- When you walk into a camp for one complex and they talk about 2 thousand personnel you are a little overwhelmed;
- Bears are scary no matter what anyone tells you;
- Aussie food is good;
- Contours that look like flat country can be deceiving;
- Steep country is something we don't see much in Tassie compared with USA;
- The sun is on the wrong side of you (to the south). That was one of the hardest things to get used to - the compass copped a fair workout;
- Always check you are getting in the right side of the vehicle before you get too close;
- Car parks are the worst place to drive on the wrong side of the road;
- I lowered the kiwi flag after the win by Australia in the Tri Series and had it mentioned at the briefing;
- Fell for (but not in love with MRE's (meals ready to eat) ISHY rations were even better (much to the disgust of seasoned campaigners) much better than meat and cheese filled rolls;
- Mobile phone networks are really good in Australia;
- Pines burn very well and reburn if the tops aren't burnt out;
- I can go to sleep in Australian bush without fear of being eaten by a bear, mountain lion or cougar - it's quite amusing how Americans think we have bad critters in the bush - go figure!
- I savoured the simple things in life often, as a nice cup of coffee was hard to come by;
- I looked forward to enjoying simple food and no cheese;

The support of my family and friends whilst I was away at 2 days notice was inspirational and thank you to Sonya and Jess, Amy and Rhianna for holding the fort whilst I was away for 40 days and nights. To all the people who text or called me thanks for the support it was nice to hear from home.



# Vehicle replacement for Flinders Island

By District Officer North East, John Hazzlewood



All but two of the Flinders Island trucks with the new Whitemark truck centre rear and some of the volunteers

Recently Whitemark Brigade took delivery of a “new” 1997 diesel dual cab Isuzu 3.1. This unit was the last of the petrol engine appliances to be replaced on the island as a part of the TFS vehicle replacement program.

Those firefighters who assisted the Flinders Island brigades in 2003 would remember an “interesting” mix of rusty appliances.

Since those times the brigades have gone through a modernisation process, the appliances are an obvious sign, but underlying this is a desire to attend training and be involved in fire management planning.

The remote location requires reliable vehicles and the inability to get back up to the island means the fleet needs to be larger than would be the case on mainland Tasmania. The barge takes about 10 hours to do the trip and is also subject to tide for its departure from Bridport.



Cindy Pitchford, Tom Rhodes, Kerry (Donga) Jones and Judith Blundstone in front of the new Whitemark truck



Les Pitchford, Adrian Lees, Robin Walker, John Cooper and Kerry (Donga) Jones checking out the business end of the new Whitemark truck

Photographer Margaret Wheatley, Flinders Island

# TFS takes a step towards better health

By OH&S Officer, Gerald Kutzner

Demonstrating that when it comes to health and wellbeing, actions speak louder than words, TFS members at Three Mile Line, Youngtown and State Headquarters stepped out of their workplaces and went for a healthy walk in their local community during October.

Organised as one of the "Get walking TFS" Safety Week activities, the walks undertaken in each region were intended to involve members in a simple, healthy activity. Doing something practical was also seen as a way of reminding ourselves of the old adage that you either "use it or lose it".

Hopefully, going on a regular walk or taking up some other regular physical activity might, according to Acting Chief Officer Mike Brown, "catch on" amongst more and more TFS members who haven't taken that step in the past.

Brooke Teale and Simon Cocker from the Premier's Physical Activity Council helped launch this year's Safety Week at



State Headquarters and afterwards joined our enthusiastic walkers for a trek around Hobart.



## CONQUER the isle

Welcome to the second article leading up to the Australasian Police & Emergency Services Games to be held from 20-27 February 2010 in Hobart.

At the conclusion of the recent 2008 Games at Coffs Harbour, the Games Baton and associated responsibilities was passed to Tasmania for the hosting of the Games in 2010. For those of us who attended the Coffs Harbour Games, we had a great time however, it has created some anxiety and trepidation about the work and organisation that will need to be done to ensure our Games are a success.

As in all areas of government, one of the most significant issues in hosting these Games is the funding and the budget. With an event of this size being the largest multi sport event ever held in Tasmania there are numerous expenses that need to be met including promotion, advertising, registration, venue hire, medical assistance and sports officials to name just a few. An example of one cost is the purchase of the medals to be awarded that is in the vicinity of \$20,000. The hosting of the games is a significant financial expense.

The Games are self funded, and whilst we are grateful to our partners TFS, Police and SES for their in kind support, we will need to rely on corporate support for sponsorship, business partnerships and competition fees in order to make the Games a financial success. This doesn't mean making a profit just ensuring we don't have a loss

At the recent Games in Coffs Harbour, all competitors paid

# Presentation night at Somerset

By Senior Firefighter Somerset Brigade, Kate Wilkinson

Somerset recently held their annual presentation night which was full of good food and good company. It was also the right time to formally announce the hand over to the new Brigade Chief - Robert Dawes.

Thank you to all who cooked and contributed to the night - lucky for some they had their mums to help out! After socialising with friends it was time to move onto the formal part of the night.



Lindsay Shur, Rebecca Heald, Brayden Smith, Darren Smith, Kate Wilkinson

The presentations were opened by outgoing Brigade Chief Philip Wilkinson and started with long service awards, which were presented by Regional Chief John Streets. A large number of the Somerset volunteers are long serving firefighters and five were recognized on the night - Dean Stokes - National Medal; Michael Richards - National Medal and TVFFA Medal; Stuart Braid - TVFFA Medal; Robert Dawes - TVFFA Medal; and Philip Wilkinson - 25 year TFS long service badge.

Earlier in 2008 the Brigade's Junior Running Team travelled to Shepparton to compete in the Victorian Champions. Not only did the team proudly represent their brigade and state, they also proved that they can match it with their Victorian counterparts.

Awards were handed out for junior runners of the 2007-2008 season - for under 14's and under 17's. Whilst displaying outstanding commitment and dedication throughout the

season these recipients were also chosen based on composure, maturity and respect both towards team members, peers and coaches. These awards were presented by team coach Darren Smith and social club president Kate Wilkinson: Under 17's - Scott McGrail; Under 14's - Rebecca Heald and Brayden Smith

The last of the presentations, were the "Tasmanian Volunteer Firefighter Awards". These awards not only recognise outstanding work

and commitment made by volunteer firefighters, but also the partners of volunteers. Three women were presented this award on the night for their diligent commitment and support to their husbands, children and the Somerset Brigade. Without the continuous unsung support from these people many fire brigades would not be what they are today - certainly ours wouldn't. In saying that, the Somerset Brigade has recognised the following: Sue Wilkinson; Marilyn Dawes and Sally Atkinson

Lindsay Shur and Bruce Corbett made the presentations which were well deserved and received by the recipients.

The night was closed by incoming Chief Robert Dawes who formally recognised the efforts by all - hoping that such commitment and support shown in the brigade, and outside, continues well into the future.

an initial registration fee of \$70, and an additional sports fee dependent upon the sport they played. For example, the golfer's sports fee was \$180, track and field \$10 per event, netball \$30, lawn bowls \$25 to name just a few. It is the intention at the 2010 Games that our fees are no higher than those charged at Coffs Harbour.

In order to achieve this aim we have actively sought sponsorship dollars from businesses not only within Tasmania but from interstate. At this stage we have obtained a number of partners and sponsors including Events Tasmania, Wrest Point Casino, Metro Pty Ltd, Tas Vacations, Scody, T3, Bargain Car Rentals and the Tasmania Police Sports Federation. We are grateful to all those companies for their support.

Obtaining the sponsorship dollar has been one of the most challenging aspects of my task to date. Whilst we all have the belief that businesses will be clambering over each

other to support the emergency services, I can assure you this is not necessarily the case. In fact many would be most surprised to learn of those who purport to be supportive of our agencies and employees who have declined or refused to support the games, however, the team will continually strive to attract the sponsorship dollar and maintain a high level of fiscal management. This policy will ultimately allow all competitors from the Emergency Services areas to participate in the 2010 Games at a reasonable price and also have access to the best of venues and other facilities.

I look forward to keeping you involved in this positive and worthwhile event and will continue keep you updated so you to can "Conquer the Isle" at the 2010 Australasian Police & Emergency Services Games.

**Mark Beech-Jones**  
Games Director

# Busy Winter for Bruny Island brigades

By Brigade Chief South Bruny Brigade, Chris O'Meara

The months of July and August have been a busy time for the Bruny Island brigades but no so much with firefighting. For South Bruny, transitional changes, an intense program of training with eight new members, brigade officer elections and a retirement, have kept the team busy on all fronts. North Bruny has been coming to grips with the occupation of the brand new station with an official opening date to be announced shortly.

Longstanding South Bruny Brigade Chief Tony Wessing stepped aside from the position after 18 years at the helm. Thankfully, Tony has chosen to remain in the brigade and his experience and local knowledge has and always will be an asset to both the community and the brigade.

Our Third Officer Colin Kaden, has retired after 23 years of service for South Bruny. A seasoned campaigner, his no fuss attitude made him a welcome sight in the driver's seat of the tanker at jobs.

With nearly 55 years of experience between them, the brigade and the community recognise the time, dedication and effort of members like Colin and Tony and we wish to thank both men for their contributions in helping to keep our island a safer place to live. While Hugh Hanley remains as Second Officer, Caz Newitt has been elected to the position of Third Officer following the Colin's retirement.

During July, basic training and induction courses were held at the South Bruny Station for both North and South Brigades. Acting Field Officer for the South West, Adam Meredith, Station Officer Paul Coad and Volunteer Training Instructors Craig Woolford and Michael D'Alton all made the effort to come to the island and helped guide us through quite an informative learning phase. They managed to deliver the full course content to us in a way that sent none of us to sleep, regardless of the threats of "death by power point presentation".

Existing members and new recruits had the opportunity to learn new skills and tune up some old ones as the first of a total of nine days training over a three month period was undertaken. Tony Korab, Mark Brinckman, Anthony Wells, Mal Henricks, Kate Edwards, Kane McLeod, Dominic Neyland, Mal Kent, Allan Gibson, Damien Tunks and Jordan Brown all stepped up to the challenge of an intense few days initial training and were able to achieve all the competencies required enabling them to operate our delivery pumps, tankers, and TFS communications equipment with confidence.

The 8th, 9th and 10th August saw a total of 21 students undertake a fresh series of course challenges with a good mixture of classroom and practical learning provided.

Armfuls of personal protective clothing, helmets and boots were issued to the students on the Friday night and bets were already being taken on just how long they would stay in their pristine condition.



Two contenders for the smoke house



Students on the first day of practicals - note the clean turnout gear!



The scenario for the "stolen" car gets set up

Incident Control Systems, Respond to Wildfire, Drive Vehicles Under Operational Conditions and Operate Breathing Apparatus (BA) were some of the courses undertaken over the weekend and all students who took part, later admitted they learned a little bit more about themselves as well.



Vehicle approach technique on the "Mythbusters" special



Students feel the heat for the first time



Practical ventilation techniques



Patient care during a "man down" scenario

The "Smoke House" (a modified sea container) had been delivered to the station in preparation for the BA course. Those students who challenged themselves swiftly realised the commitment required to perform the task when the smoke and heat was introduced and the doors closed. It's fair to say that claustrophobia is an emotion that you should be comfortable with before attempting this course.

Those who undertook the operational driving component returned confident and with more of an insight into just what the tankers are, and more importantly, are not capable of.

The 19th, 20th and 21st September saw some of the island's used vehicle fleet come back into service for our training purposes. It didn't take long after the tow truck had suitably positioned them in the yard when "someone" had tagged them in a harmless graffiti style attack with the words "TFS Mythbusters" sprayed on the side. Whilst Mark Bryant (Training Services) and Mark Klop (Fire Investigation) assisted with further BA training, Dave McGuinness (Brigade Chief Old Beach) assessed 8 candidates for their medium rigid licence accreditation.

North and South Bruny Brigades had once again the opportunity to integrate with the mix of members responding in teams to numerous scenarios. These included everything from smoke alarm response, structure fire with confirmed persons trapped, mobile structure with LPG cylinders, to patient care and communications. As expected, all of our

actions were well scrutinised and at the debrief we were afforded the opportunity to suggest amongst ourselves what we did well and what we could do much better.

After mopping up and replenishing the trucks, Mark Klop delivered the "Protect and Preserve Incident Scene" module. Mark outlined what our responsibilities are and how important crime scene management and record keeping is to a successful investigation. After dinner that evening, a well polished yet "non compulsory" lecture in country music lyrics was conducted by Craig and Adam. Much to our surprise (and after a number of sherbets from the bar) it was quite entertaining with no noise complaints recorded. The last day of training began with even more intensive scenarios with an emphasis on the officers and their duties and responsibilities. Brigade members who took on this challenge responded admirably and for some, being their first time, notably walked a little taller in the afternoon. Certificates from the previous months of training as well as name badges were presented signalling the conclusion of the training to this stage.

Taking into consideration the logistical nightmare of getting 21 students to Cambridge for this amount of training, the luxury of having the "college come to us" has been an immense benefit.

Both North and South Bruny brigades wish to acknowledge the effort put in by all of the training officers and genuinely appreciate the passion and leadership shown to us and the opportunities that we had been afforded.

# Bushfire Safety and Survival - Firefighting Operations and Considerations

By District Officer, Learning & Development (NW), Wayne Richards

## LACES - what does it mean to you?

The term LACES, originated in the USA and Canada as a safety system that would significantly reduce the risk of wildfire fatalities. Many early safety regimes relied on survival programs, such as fire shelter deployments or vehicle design, but a safety regime such as LACES is designed to promote awareness to alert firefighters to the fire situation and how it may change, acting accordingly and thereby avoiding fire entrapment.

Back in the year 2000, the term LACES was introduced to TFS brigades to increase firefighter safety during wildfire operations by providing a simple way to help firefighters remember the key elements to survival.

The Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) supports a simplified memory aide for fire survival such as LACES and other proactive safety systems as the most effective method of reducing the injury to firefighters by avoiding entrapment.

I am sure the majority of active firefighters can quickly repeat the words.

**L**ookout  
**A**wareness  
**C**ommunication  
**E**scape Routes  
**S**afety Zones

## But what does this mean to each of us?

Simply being able to regurgitate an acronym or mnemonic will do very little for our safety and protection unless we have a sound understanding of what each letter stands for and how to apply the principles when we're out on the job.

LACES functions sequentially and is self-triggering.

**Lookouts** continually assess and maintain an **awareness** of the fire environment and **communicate** threats to safety. Firefighters use **escape routes** to **safety zones**.

All firefighters should be aware of changes in the fire environment and have authority to initiate communication.

During his CSIRO research in fire behaviour and firefighting, Phil Cheney suggested that the greater level of aggressive firefighting tactics used in the USA may inevitably lead to supervisors ignoring early warning signs and inadvertently placing firefighters in additional risk of entrapment. This is inherent with the promoting and reliance on reactive safety systems such as personal fire shelters ahead of proactive safety systems such as LACES.

Cheney suggested that our efforts should be to improve fire management and fire suppression training of crews to recognise potential changes in fire behaviour and to ensure that systematic and safe working practices are adopted at all times.

So we all need to learn what to do in regard to each word and become more practiced in applying LACES when we respond to a vegetation fire.

**LACES checklist** Brief all personnel before deployment  
Update crews as the situation changes

**LOOKOUT** Know where the fire is and what it's doing.

Safe vantage point.

Everybody is responsible for safety.

**AWARENESS** Terrain, weather, fire behaviour.

Do you know what other crews are doing?

Think about your actions - don't panic  
- make logical decisions.

Is everybody aware of the fire's current and anticipated behaviour and other hazards?

**COMMUNICATION** Map and radio - always stay in contact.

Do you understand your allocated task?

Ensure others understand your directions.

Everybody speaks up and everybody listens about what is happening and their concerns.

**ESCAPE ROUTES** Plan and check all escape routes.

Ensure they are known to everyone.

Build firelines from SAFE ANCHOR POINTS

**SAFETY ZONES** Planned:

suitably spaced

large enough

clear of hazards

The implementation of LACES by all active firefighters:

- Is a simple memory aide for the fire survival factors;
- Ensures an active management regime that avoids entrapment and provides firefighters with high levels of protection;
- Excludes other mechanical and engineering solutions to fire survival and fire safety in appliances, buildings and vehicles; It does not rely on other active fire safety and survival training and systems;

# Ultra light tankers

For years we have borrowed much from our friends at CFA. Now it seems that we lead the way. This article comes from a recent CFA "Fireman" journal.

## ULTRA LIGHT TANKERS WILL SOON BE HERE

The Slip-on has evolved and now CFA is about to introduce to its fleet an Ultra Light Tanker (ULT). CFA has just finalised its design based on a concept which was first seen when Tasmania Fire Service sent a strike team of these types of firefighting vehicles to help during the campaign fires of 2006/07.

CFA staff and volunteers who came into contact with these appliances were so impressed with the design that numerous requests were made to CFA to further investigate. This opinion was again reinforced by those who attended the Hobart AFAC Conference last year where the design was on display.

To better assess the design and evolve it further, Tasmania Fire Service generously loaned CFA a vehicle for a couple of months during last summer.

This was tested and assessed by selected CFA brigades. Feedback was analysed by a working party and a design established which is now being offered as an option in CSESP 3 Round 2. The design will also be used for the replacement of CFA owned slip-ons when they are retired.

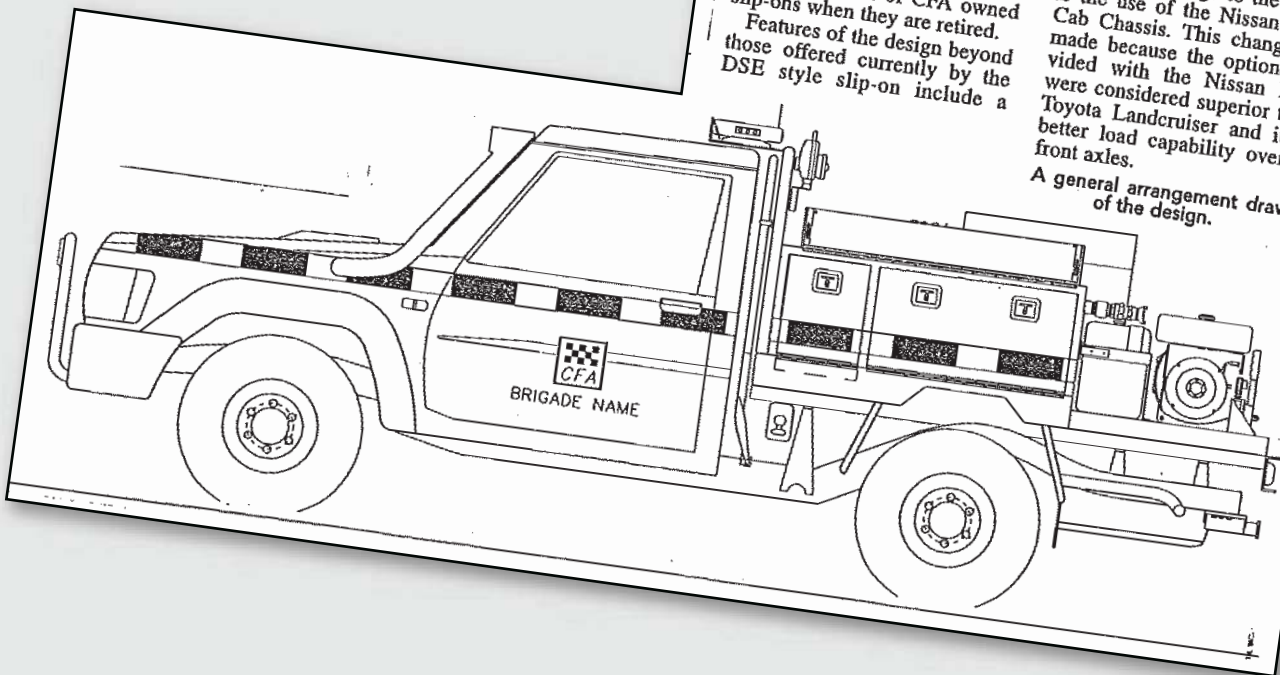
Features of the design beyond those offered currently by the DSE style slip-on include a

pump suitable for operation from mains supplies delivering 500 lt/min at 500KPa, four purpose designed lockers including a chainsaw locker complete with door which opens out as a maintenance table, and a aluminium baffled tank capable of holding 550 lt of water (DSE style slip-ons tanks are rated at 400 lt).

The unit will be fitted with a Quench Master Class A foam system and retain the 19mm x 30 metre live hose reel for mopping up. Like the slip-on, the ULT module is still designed to be easily lifted off and can be put on a new cab chassis using equipment readily available in DMO workshops.

Another change to the design is the use of the Nissan Patrol Cab Chassis. This change was made because the options provided with the Nissan Patrol were considered superior to the Toyota Landcruiser and it has better load capability over the front axles.

A general arrangement drawing of the design.



- Satisfies Cheney's recommendation that firefighters need to recognise potential changes in fire behaviour and ensure that safe working practices are adopted at all times;
- Meets AFAC's recommendation to adopt LACES as a standard guide for wildfire firefighters and supports its use across all Australasian fire agencies.

LACES is now in operation within USA, Canada, New Zealand, and most fire agencies across Australia.

### References:

Australasian Fire Authorities Council Discussion Paper - February 2008

LACES - Issue: To promote the fire survival memory aide LACES

Cheney, N.P. The applicability of personal fire shelters for wildfire fighters in Victoria. An occasional paper produced for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Fire Management Branch, CSIRO Division of Forestry.

# AFAC Unwanted False Alarm Reduction Committee

Working in partnership with Industry stakeholders, to create a culture focused on minimising Unwanted False Alarms through education and awareness of their impact on the community.

Fire services throughout Australia respond to over 100,000 unwanted alarms initiated from fire alarm systems each year.



prevention of  
**unwanted alarms**

## STRATEGIES FIRE SERVICES ARE WORKING ON

- Compiling statistical information in unwanted false alarms for benchmarking purposes - working towards using similar 700 AHS codes for the reporting of unwanted false alarms
- Charging for unwanted false alarms- an important false alarm strategy
- Working with owners/occupiers in partnership to address issues regarding unwanted alarms
- False Alarm Code of Practice a joint initiative with the FPAA
- Working with Private Security Companies to address issues regarding unwanted fire alarms
- Targeting top ten worst offenders/ problem building and then working in partnership to address unwanted alarm issues
- Implementing programs to address malicious false alarms from the 000 network and fire alarm systems
- Producing manuals and brochures on false alarm prevention
- Looking at ways technology in fire alarms/equipment can assist in minimising unwanted alarms
- Educating our officers and fire-fighters in false alarm prevention strategies and issues
- Targeting key industry groups and working in partnership to address issue and problems
- False alarm helpdesk and web-sites developed
- Encouraging a risk assessment approach for owners/occupiers to deal with unwanted alarm issues
- Ensuring new buildings are 'fit for purpose' before approval is given
- To adopt a 'Regional Fire Alarm Management Team' that addresses the 'Top 20' worst performing fire alarm systems
- Provide benchmarking by industry type for each owner/occupier to encourage/target improvement
- Develop national approaches for data collection and recording

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 1 Enhance Community Safety and Prevention Capability**  
To create a safer community able to recognise and manage the performance of fire alarm systems
- 2 Enhance operation Service Delivery**  
To improve the availability of fire crews to actual emergencies
- 3 Continuous Business Improvement**  
To promote a culture of continuous improvement of fire alarm systems performance
- 4 Contribution to National, State and local Policy agenda**  
To consistently apply agreed unwanted false alarm strategies across Australasia



Fire Services represented on committee:



This poster has been provided by Regional Chief John Streets who is our AFAC representative on the Unwanted False Alarm Reduction Committee, he is also Chair of the TFS Committee. John Streets has advised that the committee has been able to reduce alarms by 500 from the previous year, in addition they have had 50 new alarms connected. Reducing these alarms will save our brigades from attending unnecessarily.



# Electricity Standards and Safety Office passing on their skills

For those of you who have undertaken the Fire Investigation Course at Cambridge you should recognise Warren Crichton and Tony Millhouse from this photo taken in the old burn house.

Warren and Tony, both from the Department of Justice's Electricity Standards and Safety Office, have a long history working in the electrical industry and been involved with fire investigations for a number of years.

For over the past ten years both have assisted TasFire Training with the fire investigation course, providing electrical knowledge and passing on their investigation experiences with the trainees and with wiring the burn house.

Wiring the burn house gives Warren and Tony an opportunity to study the effect fire has on electrical appliances and electrical wiring, and the opportunity to create fires involving electrical appliances.

As part of the Fire Investigation Course, Warren delivers an electrical presentation that provides participants with a better understanding of electricity and how to identify damaged electrical equipment.

For the past twelve years, Tony has been involved with electrical appliance approvals and fires associated with electrical equipment. He is a member of a number



Warren Crichton and Tony Millhouse from this photo taken in the old burn house.

of Standards Australia committees that deal with the development of electrical equipment standards.

Being involved with electrical appliance fires enables Tony to provide feedback to the committee and his interstate colleagues that has resulted in the relevant electrical standard being amended and recall notices being published in newspapers.

## Duracell bunny brings a smile!

This is 5 year old Kayden Forbes. Kayden has leukaemia and has been having many visits to the Oncology Department at the Burnie Hospital.

District Officer Rob Deverell advised that nurses had said Kayden hadn't smiled for many months, so he contacted Station Officer Steve Townsend and arranged a fire truck and a visit to the Burnie Station. Steve and Rob picked up Kayden, his mother Kelly and his little sister Jazlyn while his father Corey drove the car with their new born from the hospital to the fire station.

The duty crew showed them all around and they had a great time but still no smile from Kayden.

On returning to the Hospital Rob handed over the bunny to Kayden and he could not believe his eyes - he had the biggest smile on his face for many months!

Thanks to Steve, "D" shift Burnie, Rob Deverell and Enola Johnson (for the bunny) you have made Kayden and his family very happy.



Kayden and Jazlyn Forbes with District Officer Rob Deverell and Station Officer Steve Townsend

# Bottlemart Smiling for Smiddy Challenge 2008

It can be a long slow trip travelling on a bus and this day started off no different, a couple of teachers and a few parents and approximately 26 screaming kids full of excitement and anticipation representing their school in the annual state cross country running at Symmonds Plains. Times like this you can learn a lot about people and so it was with teacher Tim Smith. Tim was telling me about this gruelling 1600 kilometre eight day bike ride he was about to do, to raise money for cancer, in memory of his best mate Adam Smiddy. I got to thinking somehow I wanted to be part of this, but there was no way I could ride 1600 kilometres, but I thought surely I could raise a few hundred dollars.

It didn't take long to gain organisational approval and with some fantastic help from Linda Lacy and Kylie Harbottle we soon had a raffle and some prizes kindly donated from the Lions Club of Hobart Town and Harvey Norman Glenorchy. Everyone who I spoke to about Smiddy was touched by his story and the response from TFS staff was enormous. The Blackman's Bay Primary School, where Tim is a teacher, wanted to be involved and sold many raffle books in the week before school holidays - well done kids and staff. The raffle was drawn at HFB headquarters by Darren Gray and Alison Wigston with the winners being:

---

**1st prize:** Margate Brigade

**2nd prize:** Nathan Douglas

**3rd prize:** Peter Goss

---

Most raffle books were sold was by Jock Crome and the winning ticket seller was Neil Brooksbank.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who supported the fundraiser and made it so successful. We presented a cheque for \$1,000 dollars to Tim at HFB with Jessica and Georgia Douglas representing the Blackman's Bay Primary School.

**Senior Station Officer Hobart Brigade, Phil Douglas**



Phil, Jessica and Georgia Douglas presenting rider Tim Smith with a cheque for \$1,000



Weary riders resting after 246 kms on their second day

The Smiling for Smiddy challenge was born after my good friend and training partner Adam Smiddy passed away from brief fight against a very aggressive melanoma in 2006. Adam's and my coach, Mark Smoothy, decided to organise a fundraising ride from our training base at the University of Queensland in Brisbane to Adam's parents house in Home Hill, south of Townsville, 1600kms in 8 days. This event was built around a crazy idea Adam previously had of putting a credit card in his riding top and doing the same ride to surprise his parents.

Well, I can say that now I have completed this amazing and inspirational event. I am truly privileged to have been a part of such a special event, Adam's story really does touch people all around the country and so many of us have seen complete strangers brought to tears when talking to them about Adam and why they should donate towards the ride. Please go to [www.smiddy.org.au](http://www.smiddy.org.au) if you would like to find out more.

It was physically challenging, but the mental and emotional aspects of the ride were what provided the real challenge. The 49 other riders were absolute legends and everyone was there for the same reasons and supported each other the entire way. The 13 support crew were amazing and this year included Adam's parents Maria and David Smiddy. The support crew washed the riding gear for all riders each night, had all our meals, drink breaks etc set up, helped with massage, clapped and cheered us all in and out at every stop point making us feel so special. They were the special ones and meant that all us riders had to do was ride, literally. We were very spoilt.

It truly was a team effort and is the perfect event to keep Adam's spirit alive, while also raising money to help find a cure for cancer. Thanks so much to everyone who donated or helped sell raffle tickets. Let's hope some of that money helps improve treatments for cancer or even better helps find a cure. Keep checking the website for the final fundraising amount which will be announced at a special dinner in Brisbane on 3rd November.

**By Tim Smith**



## TFS helping train medical students

On Saturday 27 September TFS volunteers from Smithton Brigade turned out as part of the response for an emergency skills training day for 18 medical students from the University of Tasmania Rural Clinical School.

The scenario was a simulated motor vehicle crash on a country road in which two vehicles had collided and caught fire. Fire, ambulance and SES units from Smithton responded and were tested to the limit as six seriously injured “patients” were rescued from a potentially hazardous situation. Light rain and muddy conditions added to the difficult conditions. Medical students, in conjunction with local doctors and ambulance personnel then had to stabilize patients at the scene and determine priority for transportation to the Smithton Hospital for further assessment and treatment. With available ambulance resources fully committed to the most serious cases, TFS was also called upon to transport one of

the “walking wounded” who inconveniently deteriorated en route thus requiring the firefighters to provide a higher level of first aid.

Head of the Rural Clinical School, Associate Professor Peter Arvier said “exercises such as this are an extremely valuable learning opportunity for medical students to appreciate the mechanisms of injury and levels of care required in the field. Importantly, to work alongside volunteers from the local community demonstrates to the students how different emergency services work together and the vitally important role of volunteers in rural Tasmania”. Dr Arvier also said “the medical students particularly wished to thank TFS for their significant contribution to the realism of the scenario and hoped the fire service would continue to be involved in student education in the future.”





# 180 years in the making, a new hose coupling for the TFS!

By Manager Engineering Services, Leon Smith



Rear view of a 2008 model pumper tanker incorporating Storz couplings



Cart - original fire appliance transported to Van Dieman's Land in 1827

Lengths of leather hose coupled with brass 5V couplings

On a warm summer's day on the 20th January 1827 the English trading vessel Sir Charles Forbes (a square rigger) docked in Sullivans Cove Hobart Town, Van Dieman's Land. Aboard the vessel was the first fire appliance, a "manual fire engine" for use in the colony, destined to be manned by convicts, protecting the good citizens of Hobart Town. This appliance directly imported from England, was fitted with what we know as 2 1/2 inch diameter 5V brass couplings for both the inlet and delivery, additional to the appliance were several leather buckets and a few lengths of leather delivery hose coupled with the same 5V couplings. Over the next few years the number of these appliances increased to a total of 5, strategically located around Hobart Town at colonial government institutions.

From around 1840 onwards, the private fire insurance companies took over the lead role for firefighting by establishing their own fire brigades. They continued on with the use of 5V hose couplings to retain compatibility with the colonial engines, which were used as back up.

On the establishment of the Hobart Fire Brigade Board in 1883, the appliances and hose were taken over from the insurance companies. The brass 2 1/2 inch 5V couplings were subsequently established as the standard hose coupling for Hobart Town.

As new fire brigade boards were established in southern Tasmania from the early 1900's onwards, they took their lead from the Hobart Board when equipping their brigades including hose types. The 2 1/2 inch, or what we now know as the 64mm 5V coupling was now firmly established as the standard from Oatlands south.

During the February 1967 bushfires in the south of the state resources were drawn from other centres to assist. It was during this time that it was realised that there was an issue

with compatibility of equipment due to the fact that the coupling of choice for the brigades north of Oatlands was a different thread, specifically "London round", highlighting the issue of interoperability and non compatibility on a statewide basis. Highlighted by the inquiries held and in their reports following the bushfire disaster, a decision was made to adopt the 2 1/2 inch 5V coupling statewide and the process of changeover was undertaken in the north of the state over a period of time, the 64mm 5V coupling now becoming established as the standard coupling for all urban fire brigade boards within the state of Tasmania. The same standard was adopted by the Rural Fires Board after its post 1967 reorganisation.

In more recent times, the increase in the frequency of interagency fires, as well as interstate deployments for brigades has raised the issue of compatibility (or lack of), due to the varying array of couplings utilised by brigades, prompting a National standard to be established.

A proposal paper was developed by a very passionate and enthusiastic Arthur Tindall of the CFS in South Australia and has since been endorsed as the AFAC position, specifically:

- The adoption of Storz or Forestry couplings or a combination of both be adopted as the AFAC standard for delivery hose couplings;
- Storz be adopted as the AFAC standard for suction hose couplings;
- Camlock be adopted as the AFAC standard for applications involving aircraft or fuel.

Note: The TFS has previously adopted the Forestry coupling for 25 and 38mm lay flat hose, in line with Forestry and Parks & Wildlife Service in Tasmania.



Male and female 64mm traditional hose tail set as well as the new Storz 2 1/2 inch coupling set



Manual engine outlet



Manual engine inlet

The Storz coupling is widely used by fire agencies worldwide, invented specifically for this purpose by Guido Storz in 1882. It is an internal lug quarter-turn coupling that is available in sizes ranging from 12mm to 250mm. A significant advantage of the Storz coupling is that it has the ability to be utilised for both delivery and suction, provided the appropriate washer is utilised. Storz couplings are used extensively throughout Europe, North America and Australia. During the 1990's AFAC informally adopted the Storz coupling as the standard, it was at this time that fire agencies such as Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria adopted the recommendation, "the TFS continuing to utilise the 64mm, brass 5V coupling at this time".

After participating as a member of the Common Coupling Working Group, the TFS was made aware of both the performance, as well as the economic benefits of changing over to the Storz couplings. From an operational perspective, there is benefit as far as reduced weight (manual handling), as well as the fact that the male no longer has to go to the fire (upon reflection, they would have been very handy on my recruit course, considering the amount of times I had to double back to plug the right end into the truck!)

From a durability perspective, the Storz couplings are not as prone to damage on the fireground in harsh environments and can be coupled by hand with no necessity for a hose key. From a financial perspective, the Storz coupling sets are considerably cheaper than the traditional brass 5V couplings (approximately 70% cheaper per hose tail set).

The TFS will undertake a "changeover" of couplings statewide over the next 12 months, both 64mm canvas lay flat and 64mm suction hose will be re-coupled by Engineering Services with the support of District staff.

From an appliance perspective, all 64mm inlets, deliveries and hose will be re-coupled (the brass will be removed and the Storz will be fitted). During the changeover process, adaptors will be provided on appliances, allowing the ability to interoperate with appliances with the existing configuration.

From a building fire protection perspective, the Building Code of Australia makes reference to the premises being fitted with a compatible coupling as utilised by the local fire agency, once again, adaptors will be provided to brigades, enabling water to be accessed from hydrants, as well as boosting of fixed systems to be undertaken. In time, installations will be retro fitted with Storz, in line with the "standard" TFS coupling.

Brigades that have received an appliance from the current build of Hino GT crew cab pumper tankers will already have been made familiar with the Storz 64mm coupling as they are standard fit to all new appliances from this point in time.

The upgrade of appliances will be undertaken by districts and brigades will be notified prior to it occurring. All couplings/adaptors and hose tails will be procured and fitted by Engineering Services ensuring the compliance to the relevant DIN standard.

Something to contemplate.

A statement made by FEMA (the US Federal Emergency Management Agency) after September 11:

"After a disaster, it became painfully clear that while emergency fire equipment from neighbouring geographic areas may have been compatible, there were grave incompatibilities hampering rescue and communications efforts when the equipment came from longer distances, as will happen during large-scale disasters."

# LETTERS



**Australian Government**  
**Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts**  
**Australian Antarctic Division**

17 July 2008

Virginia Mudie  
 Deputy Director  
 Australian Antarctic Division  
 Phone (03) 6232 3205  
 Mobile 0419 976 765  
 Fax (03) 6232 3273  
 v.mudie@antarc.gov.au

Mr Rod Vallance  
 TasFire Training  
 1040 Cambridge Road  
 CAMBRIDGE TAS 7170

Dear Mr Vallance, <sup>Rod</sup>

The Australian Antarctic Division wishes to sincerely acknowledge the ongoing assistance and commitment delivered by yourself and the training team at TasFire Training. During the development of each year's expeditioner training programme we are unavoidably needing to introduce new challenges for TasFire and, without exception, you and your staff have been able to offer diverse options that aid us in achieving our goals. We acknowledge that our demands often require people working weekends and reorganising their lives, and that commitment is sincerely appreciated.

The planning and coordination of the expeditioner training program is greatly enhanced by the cooperation and expertise offered by the TasFire Training Team.

We congratulate you and your team on the professional approach to your service delivery.

Best regards,

Virginia Mudie  
 Deputy Director  
 Australian Antarctic Division

Ganneston  
 Dover  
 Southport  
 Brigades  
 STEERED

*Thank you so much for your attendance to the fire that destroyed a house on our property. The situation could have been so much worse if the fire had not been contained to that one area. We are very blessed to have folk like you in our communities. Thank you again. Sincerely Terry and Joanne Seacrop*

To the Chief Officer TFS

**Re Shed Fire - Catamaran destroyed**

Due to the efforts of all the fire services not only on the 13th August but during the previous year, I feel compelled to place in writing my sincere gratitude to all the personnel involved in the delivery of the fire services through the Kingborough area. In particular I would like to thank:

- Craig Woolford and the Margate brigade
- Neil Brooks & Colin Febry - Fire watch
- Kingston brigade
- Sand fly Brigade
- Strag Brigade
- Fire investigation Team & in particular Claudio March

As you may be aware during 2007/08, the Margate brigade were responsible for conducting numerous burning off exercises to reduce the risk of a bush fire entering our boat shed. This work was conducted in a professional manner and I was pleased to see the level of planning and resources committed and the attention to detail during their operations.

The response on the 13th August from the staff at the call center at 000 through to the arrival of the first truck seemed like 20 minutes in my mind and would be acceptable even in the city area but in reality was actually only about 4 minutes. I realise I had some luck on my side as apparently there were some training exercises happening in the Margate area. This said, even the brigades from Kingston, Sand fly and Strag were on site in the preceding minutes. The response and level of team work once the crews were on the ground could only be achieved by a committed and well trained group of professionals.

I thank them all for their support and hope they all receive the respect and recognition they all deserve.

Yours sincerely

Tom Davison  
 CC Margate Fire Brigade



T and S. Davison  
28 Petterd Ave.  
Margate 7050  
Mob: 0417526619  
17th August 2008

STATE FIRE COMMISSION
25 AUG 08
1531
13646/08
A/CO

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I thank them all for their support and hope they all receive the respect and recognition they all deserve.

Yours sincerely

Tom Davison

CC Margate Fire Brigade

Many thanks to all the fire crews that attended the fire at the Marine Club on Mothers Day in May. There should be some people like you!

Your professionalism and cooperative effort that our son Patrick was safely rescued from the burning lift.

We appreciate all you did,  
Thankyou!

John and Steve Daniels



Kingston Campus  
123 Roslyn Ave  
KINGSTON BEACH  
Tasmania 7050  
Telephone: (03) 6229 8746  
Facsimile: (03) 6229 3245

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> August,

Dear Chief Officer,

On Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August, my Kindergarten class from St Aloysius College Kingston were warmly welcomed into the Cambridge Training Services Complex.

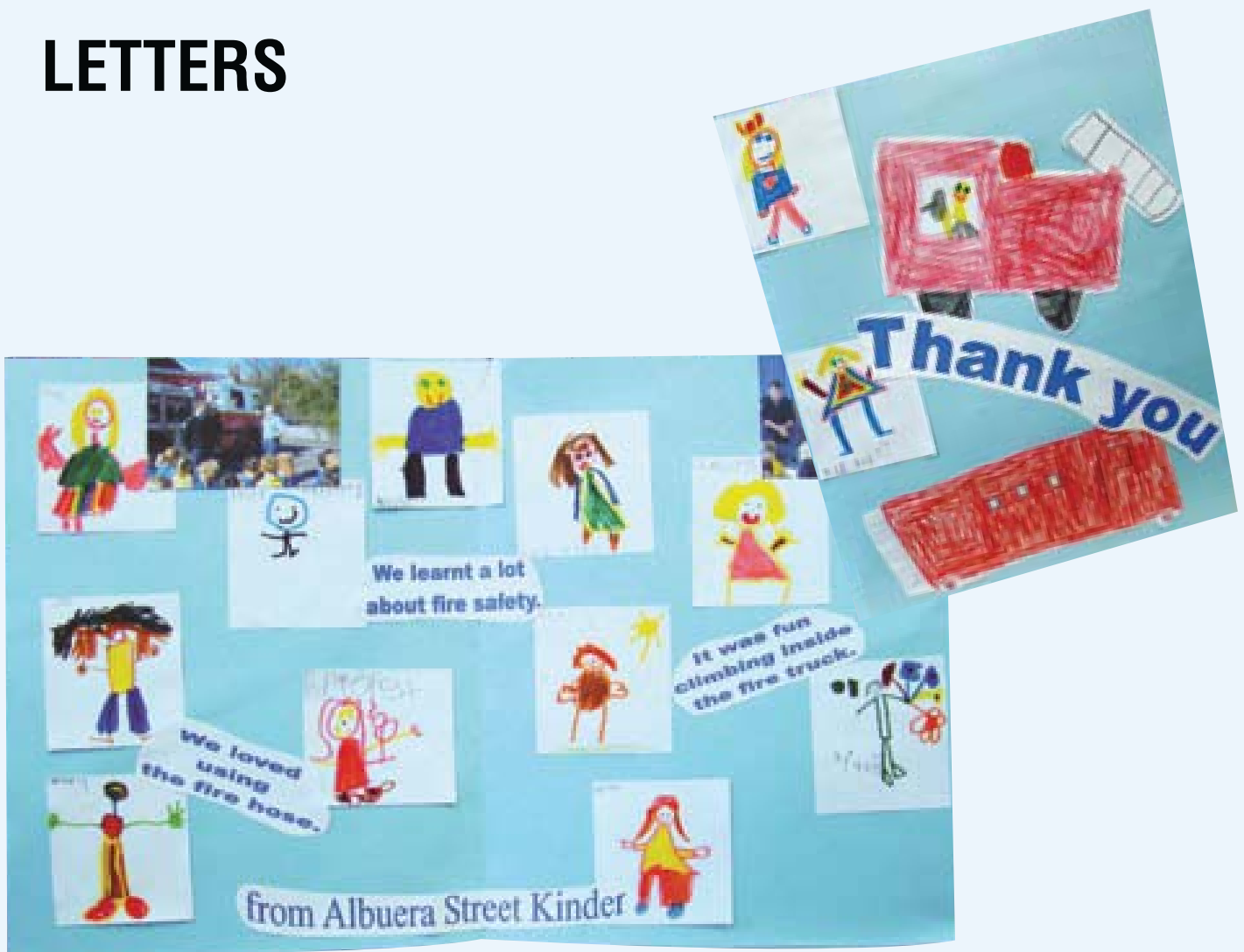
We were on an excursion and due to inclement weather we required somewhere warm and dry to eat our lunch. Would you please pass on my sincere appreciation to Rod Serrin and Paul Coad, who gave up their time to make us feel welcome and show us through an old fire-engine. The children had a wonderful time.

Regards,

Jacynth Cornish  
Kindergarten Teacher

Elaine Doran  
(Principal)

# LETTERS



**I'm a Firefighter**



I'm a firefighter my name is Bianca  
 I put my boots and helmet on  
 I hurry to the fire and give a shout!  
 With a burst of water  
 The fire is out

**I'm a Firefighter**



I'm a firefighter my name is Christian  
 I put my boots and helmet on  
 I hurry to the fire and give a shout!  
 With a burst of water  
 The fire is out!

Thank you all  
 so much for  
 taking your time  
 to show us the  
 fire trucks + all  
 of the equipment used  
 to put out fires!  
 ♡ The Raindrops  
 from Rainbow Child Care  
 Centre



Dear Fire fighters

Thank you for visiting  
 Rainbow and showing  
 us the fire truck!

From  
 The Toddler Room  
 ☺

As a courtesy Fireground now offers contact details for members' representative organisations.

**United Firefighters Union**  
 State Secretary -  
 Richard Warwick  
**Email:** ufutas@southcom.com.au  
**Address:**  
 PO Box 20,  
 North Hobart 7002  
**Phone:** 6234 9331  
**Website:** www.ufutas.asn.au

**Tasmanian Retained  
 Volunteer Firefighters  
 Association**  
 State Secretary -  
 Mathew Philpott  
**Email:** secretary@trvfa.org.au  
**Mobile:** 0417 499088  
**Website:** www.trvfa.org.au

**Tasmanian Volunteer Fire  
 Brigades Association**  
 State Secretary -  
 Lyndy Smith  
**Phone:** 6473 3169  
**Mobile :** 0408 577 576  
**Email :**  
 gerald.smith3@bigpond.com  
**Website :** www.tvfba.org.au

**CPSU (SPSFT) inc**  
 General Secretary -  
 Tom Lynch  
**Email:** cpsu@tas.cpsu.com.au  
**Address:**  
 GPO Box 54,  
 Hobart 7001  
**Phone:** 6234 1708  
**Website:** www.cpsu.com.au

