



SESVA

from the Presidents desk...

Gordon Hall
SES Volunteers Association



September 2017

Overview

We have all had a very busy couple of months. With conferences, AVL and LGGS issues, and working with other organisations to have the SES brand returned as a service within DFES. This has taken a lot of time and effort by committee members.

The AGM for 2017 went well and was an update for the 90 members who attended.

The AGM was followed by presentations to two long serving members of the Association who were standing down - John Capes OAM and Phillip Petersen ESM.

A new constitution for the SESVA, in compliance with the new act, was approved by members attending a special meeting on 8 September.

NEW FES Commissioner

On 15 September there was a transfer of Command Ceremony conducted at the FES Academy. Commissioner Gregson handed over the baton to the incoming Commissioner Darren Klemm. Darren comes with a Fire and Rescue background. The SESVA looks forward to working with Commissioner Klemm as DFES moves into implementing a number of recommendations from the Ferguson Inquiry.

Future Structure of DFES

The SESVA has been involved with an alliance which includes the WA Farmers, PGA, and the ESVA. A number of other organisations have a watching brief.

This alliance has a future concept that is being discussed with the Minister's office, Department of Premier and Cabinet as well as others. It is centred on separation of the services, to improve the delivery of service to the community. It also includes the reinstatement of the SES brand within DFES, joining ACSES as well as maintaining the SES brand throughout the community.

Rest assured that the SESVA is working closely with DPC and the Minister on these matters.

Changes to the FES Act

DFES advised this Association on Thursday 14 September that a new Part has been inserted into

the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1998* (the FES Act).

There are two main features of this new Part of the FES Act;

- a simpler claims process for emergency services volunteers who develop a prescribed cancer as a result of exposure to hazardous fires in the course of their duties; and
- consistent insurance coverage for all volunteers operating under the emergency services Acts.

The SESVA have been involved in these matters for a number of years.

Detailed information is available on the volunteer portal outlining the changes, however DFES advise that for volunteers who don't currently have the opportunity, or are having difficulty accessing the Volunteer Portal, they can contact their local DFES Manager, who can access documents for download, which can be distributed to them in hardcopy or via email.

It is to be noted that DFES are promoting to emergency services volunteers, the benefit of reporting their attendance at all incidents.

DFES staff involved in this ground breaking legislation are to be applauded for their efforts.

NDRC Update

The team is training well. Unfortunately the Team Coach, James Hines, has had to step aside due to personal commitments. James has put a tremendous amount of effort and work into getting the team rolling, and is to be commended for his dedication. Mark Geary (Gosnells) has agreed to take the role on as Team Coach. Mark's background includes participation twelve years ago in a national competition and with his other background he will be an asset to the team.

Conferences 2017

Both the AFAC 2017 conference and the WAFES 2017 conference were a great success. This Association has received a lot of positive feedback from attendees on the makeup of the WAFES conference.



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The most popular sessions were by Bob Cooper on survival, Dr Catherine Ball on Drones and Robyn Moore on the power of the word.

The challenge will be bettering these sessions next year.

It was great to see the Minister for Emergency Services spend the whole weekend at the conference communicating with Volunteers and staff.

Conferences 2018

The WAFES conference will be back to back with AFAC18 in Perth. The opportunities of the back to back conferences will include a larger range of speakers for the organisers to choose from. We will keep you posted.

SES 2017 Awards night

The awards night was attended by 250 Volunteers, Minister Logan, Commissioner Gregson and others. Karen Tighe was the MC for the night. Once again the award finalists were of a very high standard and the gap between them was very small.

Congratulations to;

Robert Palmer (Mundaring) who received the Peter Keilor award (SES Volunteer of the year);

The SES Esperance Team for the Team Award and Brayden Dilley (Kalamunda), Youth Achievement Award.

Well done by all nominees and awards finalists.

Unit Constitutions

The feedback we have been receiving from the workshops has been very positive.

Those units who follow the SESVA model have been doing well with their compliance with the Associations Incorporation act 2015 and the model constitution.

It is also prudent to remind everyone that no other persons or the department can have any influence on the set up of the constitution for your unit.

If you find some pressure from outsiders don't hesitate to discuss further with this Association.

We are considering running another Constitution workshop in the metropolitan area in November.

Please email sesva.office@ses-wa.asn.au if you would like to participate.

Emergency Beacons - SES Vehicles (Red and Red/Blue Lights)

A number of SES Units were advised by DoT in 2015 that their vehicles were non-compliant with the act due to the emergency beacons and therefore could not be licensed as they were.

This Association took the matter up with DoT and DFES.

It took more than twenty months to have DFES accept this and DoT then changed the regulations to make it legal for SES vehicles.

Many of the issues we take up with DFES take many months or years to have resolved!

DFES Communication

Communication by some areas of DFES is very effective, however some areas are very poor and it takes a long time to reach the first responders/SES Volunteers.

In many instances, the SES Volunteers are unaware of what is going on or happening.

Many circulars never get to the SES Units or their notice boards.

This Association is concerned about SES Volunteers not receiving all circulars and safety notices in a timely manner.

This Association will be discussing these matters at the next meeting with the Minister as well as the new Commissioner.

Cheers

Gordon Hall

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