



FROM THE PRESIDENT

The month of August flew very quickly and during this time the dedicated SES Volunteers did an amazing job in response to requests for assistance by community members due to storm damage.

The storms were far and wide and, by the emails and calls the Association received, the community members are very grateful for the Volunteers from the State Emergency Service.

The SES Volunteers have also been included in a number of searches over the past month.

There are some interesting numbers for searches last year – with the SES Volunteers being involved in around 55 searches and providing **nearly 10 000 hours of unpaid labour – fantastic.**

Interestingly the SES Volunteers place the response data in WebEOC, and are now being chastised in some regions for not also going to another system and putting the exact same data in again.

The increase in administration expected of the SES Volunteers has dramatically risen over the past few years, and it is starting to take its toll.

Even an application to join or doing the paper work for a transfer, is at least 10 pages long, with at least four places where you have to print your name again.

Some regions are demanding that photocopies of photo id and credit cards are sent to them to verify an applicant to join is who he/she is – interesting as accredited SES Volunteers sign off the NPC application verifying the ID of applicant.

It is questionable if this forwarding of photocopies of photo id and credit card details to the Regional office is compliant with the Australian Privacy Principles.

The SES Volunteers Association has formed a **“Save the State Emergency Service”** sub committee to plan and implement a campaign to save the SES – see the next column on their report.

It is vital that the SES in WA has a similar concept to the other state jurisdictions to ensure we get consistency in training, effective and safe across border deployment and understanding by the community, no matter where they come from or what they do.

This includes congruency of message and consistency in delivery of service, no matter whether you are a local, a tourist, a grey nomad, a FIFO or a DIDO.

Gordon Hall ESM
President

SAVE THE STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE REPORT

A registered letter was sent to the Minister and the Commissioner on 22 August rejecting the Commissioner’s letter denying the SES a Chief Officer and the associated structure.

The Save the SES Committee has planned a campaign which has now been implemented.

The information below concerning roles of the SES was tabled in parliament on 16 May and is short on fact.

SES are not mentioned as doing Vehicle Recovery, Vertical Rescue, Road Crash Rescue etc.

The term “Natural Hazards” does not describe the five HMA roles that the SES train and respond to.

The report to parliament talks about VFES units and how SES and BFB can join together and become one of these.

Is this the end of the SES as we know it?

Response Functions	Career and Volunteer Fire and Rescue Brigades	Bush Fire Brigades	State Emergency Service Units	Volunteer Fire and Emergency Services	Volunteer Marine Rescue Groups
Bushfire	X	X	◆	X (if authorised)	◆
Structural Fire	X	X (defensive)	◆	X (if authorised)	◆
HAZMAT	X	◆	◆	X (if authorised)	◆
Rescue (includes road crash rescue)	X	◆	◆	X (if authorised)	◆
Natural Hazards	◆	◆	X	X (if authorised)	◆
Search and Rescue	◆	◆	X	X (if authorised)	◆
Marine Search and Rescue	◆	◆	◆	X (if authorised)	X
Assistance Operations	◆	◆	X	X (if authorised)	X

If you want to be involved in the campaign then the first action is to write to your members of parliament – in all houses.

Email office@ses-wa.asn.au to obtain the MPs for your area. Copies of any emails or letters can also be sent to that address.

A SAMPLE ISSUE

Every week we are advised by SES Volunteers that they have been given information by DFES that is incorrect, or been refused assistance by DFES.

Last week it was details of another request (many requests over many years) for Cold Climate Equipment for the rescuers in the Stirling ranges – a very cold area and snow falls at times.

The DFES front-line staff do the best they can, but there is no understanding or empathy of the SES and their role further up the DFES line.

Here is the answer the President received on requesting assistance on this matter

“Dear Mr Hall,
Thank you for raising these concerns on behalf of your members. The issue raised has Health and safety concerns, I will be contacting the local Manager Gary Logan for any Health and Safety reports that have been raised and the post incident analysis (PIA) of the incidents. Any capability and functionality gaps that have been identified will be reviewed.
Regards,”

This person has no understanding of the situation in a number of areas.

Gary Logan has not been the Local Manager for at least 15 years, DFES do not do PIAs on all operations (especially SES), and it is not an H&S matter, it is standard business.

DFES is negligent in not providing the appropriate equipment for the task.

NATIONAL SES VOLUNTEERS ASSOCIATION

The Chairman of the NSESVA, Charlie Moir ESM, resigned on 15 August and at a Board of Directors meeting on 18 August Gordon Hall was elected as the new Chair of that Board.

Due to work load considerations, Gordon has stepped down from his Deputy role in the Rockingham-Kwinana SES and joined another SES unit in a non-leadership role.

TRAINING MATTERS

1. Training is no longer competency based.
It is now WA based workplace training.
2. Training is no longer aligned with other Australian States
3. There is no facility for RPL to be obtained in a timely manner.
4. Some courses are not using SES equipment - eg SES volunteers having to use fire trucks on off road driving courses.
5. Leadership course is only a basic fundamentals course and does not provide practical experience in the field (We have heard there has been a total refusal to reinstate Lead Manage and Develop Teams or even Generic Leadership to provide practical leadership training)
6. The TRK scheduled bi-annual updates are not being done for SES TRKs
7. Outdated courses such as Working in an Emergency Operations centre do not include WebEOC and other current systems
8. Courses are not reflecting the Modus Operandi of the SES
9. Courses are being continually cancelled due to a lack of instructors (DFES had an instructor cleansing a couple years ago)
10. Many volunteers qualifications are not listed accurately in the current database
11. There used to be three dedicated staff for SES training - now there is one doing SES and VMRS training
12. No collaboration with other states and territories on training for consistency - may affect interstate deployment of SES members
13. No longer actively involved in the SES national training committees.

HOW TO KEEP INFORMED

Don't forget we have a website which keeps you informed of what is happening across the state in SES land.

We also have "the App".

And also, if you would like our newsletters, other relevant information etc forwarded direct to your email, just contact the SESVA office (sesva.office@ses-wa.asn.au), and advise your details.

From your SESVA team