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from THE PRESIDENT - The Spirit of Emergency Services Volunteering

In every community, there exists a remarkable group of individuals whose courage, dedication, and selflessness form the backbone of our emergency response efforts.

These are the volunteers of the State Emergency Service (SES) — ordinary people who choose to step forward in extraordinary circumstances, risking their own safety to protect and defend their neighbours in times of crisis.

The spirit of emergency services volunteering is one of unwavering commitment and profound community connection. It is a spirit that transcends personal comfort and convenience, driven by a deep sense of duty and compassion. When disaster strikes — be it floods, storms, fires, or other emergencies — SES volunteers are among the first to respond, often arriving before professional services, ready to provide critical assistance.

What sets SES volunteers apart is not just their bravery, but their willingness to face uncertainty and danger without hesitation. They understand that emergencies do not wait for business hours or perfect conditions. They balance their everyday lives, jobs, and families with the call to serve, often working long hours in challenging environments. Their actions embody the true meaning of community spirit — putting others' safety and wellbeing above their own.

This spirit is nurtured by a shared belief in resilience and solidarity. SES volunteers know that their efforts can mean the difference between devastation and recovery for their communities. They bring hope and reassurance when it is needed most, offering practical help and emotional support to those affected by emergencies.

As the SES VA President, I am continually inspired by the dedication of our volunteers. Their courage and generosity remind us all of the power of community and the importance of standing together in the face of adversity. To every SES volunteer — thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and your unwavering spirit.

You are the heart of our organisation and the guardians of our communities.

Let us continue to honour and support these everyday orange heroes who choose to risk their lives in defence of the community. Their spirit of volunteering is not only a beacon of hope in emergencies but a testament to the strength and resilience of us all.

Our chance to pay respect and celebrate is WOW Day - Wear Orange Wednesday - a National Day of Recognition for the SES on 20 May 2026.

Stay safe and stay strong.

Greg Gook ESM, President



WOW DAY

Encourage your local school, workplace, Shire or community group to mark the date and show their support for your SES volunteers.

Wear Orange Wednesday!





**The *SES Volunteers Association* wishes all
SES Volunteers and families a
happy and incident-free Easter!**



ANNOUNCEMENT



Paul Carr ESM: A Distinguished Career in WA's Emergency Services Leading to Assistant Commissioner Appointment

Paul Carr ESM is the newly appointed Assistant Commissioner for WA Country with DFES.

Paul has built a notable career within WA's emergency services, marked by dedicated service across the State Emergency Service (SES), the Fire and Emergency Services Authority (FESA), and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES).

His journey in emergency services began when he joined the staff at the Belmont headquarters of the WASES more than 30 years ago. Through his work with SES in the Kimberley region and the Southwest, Paul developed a deep understanding of community needs and emergency response coordination in regional and rural areas.

Paul's roles with FESA led to his developing a broader understanding of volunteering and risk management. With the transition from FESA to DFES in 2012, Paul continued to play a vital role. His leadership and operational expertise were recognised at the state level.

Paul was awarded the Emergency Services Medal (ESM) in 2011. This prestigious honour acknowledged his outstanding service and dedication to emergency management in Western Australia.

In his new role as Assistant Commissioner WA Country, Paul Carr is tasked with overseeing emergency services delivery across the vast and diverse regional areas of Western Australia.

This position involves strategic leadership, coordination of resources, and engagement with local communities to enhance resilience and response capabilities.

His appointment reflects his longstanding commitment to protecting Western Australians and his ability to lead complex emergency operations.

Paul's career trajectory from a SES administrative role to volunteer support and volunteer management roles in the north and south of the state, to leading emergency management teams and managing major incidents has culminated in his taking on senior leadership roles within DFES. His experience and qualifications exemplify the dedication and expertise required to manage the challenges of emergency services in one of Australia's most expansive and varied jurisdictions.

As Assistant Commissioner WA Country, Paul Carr ESM is poised to continue making significant contributions to the safety and well-being of Western Australia's regional communities, ensuring that emergency services remain responsive, effective, and community-focused.

The SESVA is looking forward to a continuing respectful, trusting and professional relationship and congratulates Paul on his promotion to Assistant Commissioner.





Combined Emergency Services legislation - current status (latest position)

The DFES website [Legislation - Department of Fire and Emergency Services](#) contains the following information:

“The first phase of the legislation change involves developing the Emergency Services Consultation Exposure Draft Bill (known as the EDB).

The proposed legislation aims to lay a strong and integrated foundation for effective emergency services management in the future. It will also improve community safety and provide better support for emergency services workers.

To determine the scope of the new legislation, DFES conducted extensive consultation with State agencies, local government, volunteers and industry during a legislation review that resulted in over 5,000 comments submitted. These submissions assisted in developing drafting instructions, which Cabinet subsequently approved.

The drafting instructions have been provided to Parliamentary Counsel’s Office (PCO) to draft the EDB. During this phase of the project, there is extensive communication between DFES and PCO.

Once the EDB is released, an extensive public consultation period will be undertaken. Feedback from the consultation period will be considered and used to inform any necessary changes to the proposed legislation before submission to Parliament. Once submitted to Parliament, the Bill will be debated for Parliamentary approval (Royal Assent) to publish the Act.”

While drafting is underway, details of the Bill are confidential under Cabinet conventions, so very little is known about likely improvements and the impact on SES volunteers.

A detailed briefing has been requested by the SES Volunteers Advisory Committee (SES VAC) for its May meeting.

VAC Assessment of SES unit vehicles

SESVA is assisting the SES Volunteers Advisory Committee (VAC) with the distribution of a questionnaire for all SES units to complete to assess the current SES fleet. The SES fleet includes motor vehicles, trailers, vessels, ATUs, and any other vehicle.

This will equip the SES VAC with a clear understanding of current and future SES vehicle needs, allowing it to influence change management discussions with the FES Commissioner and the Minister for Emergency Services.

All individual Unit information will be treated as confidential with the results presented as a collective.

Contact Ross Jones, Deputy SES VAC Chairman, for more information vac@ses-wa.asn.au

WOW Day – Wednesday 20th May 2026

What the SES Volunteers Association of WA is doing

Your Association proposes:

- Advertising on its website and Facebook page.
- Liaising with DFES on alternative celebratory events and regional office support to units.
- Promoting SES unit WOW Day celebrations.
- Providing a WOW Day information package, WOW Day Poster and Orange WOW Day lapel ribbons.

Support for unit WOW Day celebrations

The SESVA is offering a WOW Day information package and poster plus WOW Day ribbons for SES units to assist with making WOW Day 2026 one that your fellow Volunteers and your community will embrace and celebrate with you.

The information package includes suggestions and tools that will assist units to develop a celebration that is equal with the value you contribute to the community.

Your Unit can use all or some of this material as you wish; to change and personalise as required. What you decide to do will be significantly influenced by your local circumstances.

Send a request

Request the information package, poster and lapel ribbons by 14 April. Email sesva.office@ses-wa.asn.au



Fit For Role (FFR) Program—Brief Update

SESVA Vice President Alan Hawke has followed up on the SESVA report published in the SESVA Summer 2025 newsletter on the progress of the SES Fit For Role (FFR) program.

Read on for some answers to these questions:

- What's changed?
- Are we closer to understanding what to do?
- Have our concerns been addressed?
- Should we be concerned?
- What will the SESVA be doing?

Recap

The FFR program was first initiated in 2014 by the Australian Council of State Emergency Services (ACSES). Research by Deakin University looked at the physiological effects of operational activities on emergency service workers.

In 2018 the scope of the research project was extended, to develop a series of physical fitness assessments to supporting operational activities undertaken by SES nationally.

The SES Fitness for Role Project subsequently established a series of validated, defensible, and practical physical fitness standards for the tasks commonly performed by SES volunteers. This framework offered a platform from which to objectively match SES volunteers' abilities to the roles that they undertake whilst assuring the safety of the individuals undertaking these tasks. FFR was intended to also support SES volunteers in making a self-assessment of their ability to undertake training along with performing roles within SES, including return to duty following injury.

This is a nationally agreed standard and has been approved in all States and territories, including DFES. Nevertheless, when FFR was announced in WA in early 2024, WA SES volunteers were cautious about the program and had no clear appetite for singling out volunteers based on fitness assessments where that standard is not required of staff or volunteers from the other DFES volunteer services.

Since then, much of the discussion has been around the implementation of a program that has narrowed its scope, requiring only SES volunteers who wish to deploy to incidents outside WA to demonstrate that they can complete nine (9) fitness assessments that are considered representative of the physical demands of SES operational roles.

What's changed?

Since we last reported four months ago, we find that implementation of the FFR program remains in DFES Wellness Branch. Whilst a Natural Hazards District Officer has only been engaged to advise on an implementation plan, volunteers are not likely to see any progress for another six months.

As we reported previously, the intent is that regional District Officers will play a key role in supporting SES volunteers. It appears that the responsibility for FFR will primarily fall to SES volunteer Unit Managers.

Are we closer to understanding what to do?

No! We still have no idea of what SES volunteers are supposed to do, or how to do it.

Have our concerns been addressed?

No! Volunteers and the SES Volunteers Association have not been invited to collaborate in the planning process. We still don't know if there will be:

- Consistent messaging and practical guidance at the local level.
- Clear top-down support and communication.
- Consistent application across regions.
- Defined responsibilities for implementation.
- Logistical and training support.

Should we be concerned?

Despite the implementation deadline of 1 July 2026, we are assured that we should not be concerned. The message we have is that if there is a call for SES volunteers from WA, DFES will respond, with or without FFR assessment.

What will the SESVA be doing?

SESVA will monitor the implementation of the FFR program and share any concerns with DFES as appropriate. The feedback of SES units is welcome at any time.

SESVA remains open to any invitation to collaborate on an implementation plan that works for both DFES and SES volunteers.

Stay tuned for more updates

Questions? Contact your DO for more information or email sesva.secretary@ses-wa.asn.au

ROSS RIVER VIRUS ALERT!

Detected in WA – Stay Mosquito Safe!

Recent Cases & RRV Found in the South West

Protect Yourself:






Wear Long Sleeves & Pants

Use Repellent with DEET, Picaridin, or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus

Remove Standing Water & Reduce Breeding Sites

Avoid Bites – Prevent the Spread!

Symptoms: Joint Pain • Fever • Fatigue

More Info: Read the [WA Health Fact Sheet](#) **PDF**

Ross River Virus –

A Timely Reminder for All Volunteers

We've been reminded by one of our SES volunteers that Ross River Virus (RRV) is very much still a risk in WA.

A recent case following travel to Walpole shows how seriously it can impact your health — symptoms can be painful, long lasting, and there's no specific treatment.

The virus remains the most common mosquito borne disease in WA. There have been 24 notifications of RRV reported in WA since July 2025, with six cases from the South West region.

Symptoms include painful or swollen joints, sore muscles, skin rashes, fever, fatigue, headaches and rash lasting for weeks to months. There is no vaccine or specific treatment, so prevention is vital.

How to Protect Yourself

WA Health recommends the following key steps to reduce your risk:

- **Cover up:** Wear long, loose-fitting, light-coloured clothing and ensure insect screens are in good condition.
- **Repel:** Apply effective mosquito repellent containing **DEET, picaridin, or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (PMD)** to all exposed skin. Follow instructions carefully.
- **Clean up:** Reduce mosquito breeding sites by keeping vegetation short and removing containers that hold water around your home or campsite.

Read the full WA Health information sheet on the [SESVA website](#).



afac

2026 National Memorial Service for fire and emergency service personnel

8 May 2026: 08.45 – 10.00

AFAC, the Australian and New Zealand National Council for fire and emergency services, will hold a memorial service honouring the courage and sacrifice of those who have died in the line of duty.

Watch the Memorial live on the AFAC [YouTube](#) page. <https://www.youtube.com/@afacnews7907/streams>



Fortem

Engagement Survey

Fortem Australia is seeking feedback on the programs, activities and support they provide to first responders, their families and former first responders.

Take a few minutes to give them your feedback here: [Fortem Engagement Survey](#).

FREE - SES Promotional Products and Equipment

Reminder to all Units – if you're hosting a community event, SESVA has **banners, flags and gazebos for loan** – and free promotional products for you to give away.



Email sesva.office@ses-wa.asn.au for an order form





Senior Community Citizen of the Year – Wendy Knox

Congratulations to Wendy Knox, Broome’s 2026 Senior Community Citizen of the Year.

Wendy continues her lifelong commitment to helping others through dedicated volunteer service with the State Emergency Service and the wider Broome community.

Working quietly behind the scenes, she plays a vital role in keeping SES operations running smoothly and supports countless community events with warmth and reliability.

Her calm leadership, professionalism and willingness to step up wherever needed make her a trusted and respected presence. **Thank you, Wendy, for strengthening Broome’s community spirit through your selfless service.**

Congratulations Lilika Allam — Final Nominee for the BGU/YES Cadet Award

A huge congratulations to our Deputy Local Manager, Lilika Allam, who has been named a final nominee for the BGU/YES Cadet Award.

This recognition is especially meaningful for our unit, as we do not have a formal cadet program — yet Lilika has grown through our ranks with exceptional dedication.

Lilika has been part of our unit since the age of 14, completing every course available to her and patiently waiting until she could become a full member at 18. Her commitment, perseverance, and passion for service have made her an outstanding representative of our little Nannup unit.

We are incredibly proud of her achievements and the way she showcases what our team can do. **Congratulations, Lilika — we’re all cheering for you!**

A heartfelt thank you also goes to DFES Youth for organising such a meaningful event for cadets across the region. Your ongoing support and efforts make a world of difference, and we are truly grateful.



Deputy Commissioner Strategy and Emergency Management, Mel Pexton (left) congratulates Lilika Allam on being named a final nominee.

Article submitted by Nannup SES Unit.



from THE ARCHIVE



16 Years Since Perth’s 2010 Hailstorm

22 March 2026 marked 16 years since Perth’s devastating hailstorm—the costliest natural disaster in WA’s history—resulting in more than \$1 billion in damage.

The storm brought golf-ball-sized hail and heavy rain causing widespread power outages affecting over 150,000 homes, severe flooding and a mudslide from Kings Park that inundated an apartment and car park below (pictured).

Striking with little warning, the sky turned dark in the afternoon as the storm caused major damage to buildings, cars, and infrastructure across the city keeping SES Volunteers busy for days.





2026 WAFES CONFERENCE

Nominate to attend!

As in previous years, all volunteers have the opportunity to nominate to attend the WAFES Conference. Volunteers may either self-nominate or be nominated by their Unit.

Nominations open Wednesday 1 April and close Friday 29 May via the WAFES Conference website.

Regional teams will work closely with volunteers and BGU leadership to select delegates for this year's event.

Preference will be given to volunteers who have not attended before, followed by those who have attended only a small number of times. This approach supports broader participation and encourages fresh perspectives within the volunteer community.

Reflecting this year's conference theme, DFES will also be looking to increase the participation of young people, recognising their vital contribution to the future of volunteering. Selection will also aim to ensure balanced representation across regions, services and genders.

Once selections are finalised, registration offers will be issued in two rounds. Successful volunteers will receive an email containing a link to complete their conference registration.

For more information on this year's conference and key dates, please visit the [WAFES Conference website](#).

DRAWN
29TH MAY 2026
WA & TAS Raffle #10

FIRST PRIZE
\$1,500*
COLES MYER GIFT CARD*

Support WA SES Volunteers
Buy your tickets on the [National SESVA website](#).
You've got to be in it to win it!

WAFES AWARDS

NOMINATIONS EXTENDED

Deadline
8 April 2026

Great news! You've got extra time to nominate an outstanding young person, individual or team for the 2026 WAFES Awards.

There are 15 categories celebrating volunteers and DFES staff who have shown outstanding dedication to emergency services over the past 12 months.

If you nominate a finalist, you will receive an invitation to the 2026 WAFES Awards gala dinner.

For award criteria, nomination tips and to make a submission, visit dfes.wa.gov.au/wafesawards.



Join the SESVA Content Creation Team



Are you passionate about storytelling, design, or sharing impactful content?

The SES Volunteers Association is seeking enthusiastic volunteers to join its Content Creation Team to help bring SES stories, news, and educational materials to life across social media, newsletters, and our website.

Who We're Looking For

Volunteers with experience using tools like: *Canva, CapCut, Adobe Express* or similar apps. If you enjoy creating engaging visuals, short videos, or informative posts, we'd love to hear from you!

What You'll Do

As part of the team, you'll collaborate online with other volunteers to produce monthly content featuring:

- SES news and updates
- Educational materials and training tips
- Volunteer stories and community impact

Flexible & Remote

You can be based anywhere in WA and work remotely with the team. This is a great opportunity to contribute creatively, build your portfolio, and connect with like-minded volunteers.

Interested?

Submit your expression of interest with **your name**, **your unit** and **your contact details** to Allen Gale:

Email sesva.secretary@ses-wa.asn.au

Mobile 0419 935 497



**Let's work together to showcase the incredible work
of SES volunteers across Western Australia!**

UPCOMING EVENTS & IMPORTANT DATES

Wed 08 Apr Nominations close WAFES Awards
Thu 09 Apr SESVA Management Committee mtg
Fri 10 Apr Youth Week
Thu 07 May VAC Meeting
Fri 08 May AFAC National Memorial Service
18—24 May National Volunteer Week
Wed 20 May WOW Day
Thu 28 May SESVA Management Committee mtg

Wed 10 Jun Thank a First Responder Day
Thu 23 July SESVA Management Committee mtg
Thu 30 July VAC Meeting
18—21 Aug AFAC2026 in Melbourne
04—05 Sep WAFES Conference & Awards
Thu 24 Sept SESVA Management Committee mtg
Thu 26 Nov SESVA Management Committee mtg
Sat 05 Dec International Volunteer Day

Help us promote YOUR achievements!



SESVA wants to celebrate the dedication, hard work and achievements of our member SES Units and Volunteers.

The Newsletter has a wide circulation that includes SES volunteers, politicians, interested Local Government Councillors and CEOs, DFES staff, other Emergency Service Associations and various community organisations.

Send your articles and great images to:
sesva.office@ses-wa.asn.au

Next deadline 21 April

NEW—SES Teddy Bear

- complete with soft helmet.

\$20 + p/p



Download the SESVA merchandise catalogue [here...](#)



The SES Volunteers Association of WA Inc.

acknowledges the funding from the

Department of Fire and Emergency Services of WA

USEFUL LINKS

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[NSESVA Yearbook 2025.pdf](#)

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