



SESVA

from the Presidents desk...

Gordon Hall
SES Volunteers Association



August 2014

Here we are into August and the planning for the DFES Volunteers Conference is well advanced.

We have also seen some storms during July which resulted in SES Volunteers being activated to damage spots in a number of areas.

It was noted in my June newsletter that there was very little media by DFES in regards to storm and we have now noticed that most media in this area was generated by SES Volunteers and Western Power.

The committee has been working hard in a number of areas negotiating for buses, trying to get DFES to move towards a more effective training process as well as a number of other issues within DFES.

The Operational Chiefs

The Association is happy to report that the Chiefs, Robert, Gary and Steve, are working closely with the SESVA on strategic matters and a number of other issues. They have been very helpful and it is pleasing that they are embracing the SES culture.

Some of the issues they have been working on include resolving a Road Crash Rescue role allocation issue in Ravensthorpe, procuring funds from the LGGS to repair the Gnowangerup SES building and an assessment of the differences between the trucks in the Pilbara and Kimberley (Karratha and Kununurra). These matters have progressed in a positive way.

The Chiefs are also working with mapping groups to see what can be sourced for the SES Volunteers for search. There are a number of issues on this however they will keep the Association updated.

There is a new SES Uniforms Sizing Chart which is being sourced and will be circulated as soon as DFES can procure it.

Air Observer and Bike Squad Uniforms

A new and professional looking uniform for the Air Observers has been progressed and awaiting sign off.

A uniform for the Bike Squads is being worked through and is still in the early stages. DFES advise that a number of considerations in the short and long term need to be assessed before final sign off. We will update when more information comes to hand.

The Combined Legislation Concept Paper

The SESVA Executive Team and others have met and been through the Concept paper.

A twenty page submission by the SESVA has been delivered to DFES. In the introduction the Association had four main points;

1. The SES Volunteers want to retain their identity as part of the National Brand, the SES, a uniformed emergency response service for the five (WA) HMA roles and the agreed combat and support roles,



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2. Retain the current FES Act Part 3A, 18a – 18e in any new legislation,
3. The SES be a separate entity with their own leader,
4. The SES Volunteers do not want to come under the direct control of DFES, but they want to retain their independence in working with DFES, local government and their community. This is due to past and recent history where there has not been a great deal of support for the SES and its traditions and culture.

This has been an interesting exercise and copies of other submissions forwarded to the SESVA by SES Unit/Volunteers were similar in concept.

The Buses

The SESVA now has the first instalment from BHP-Billiton ready for placing a deposit on the eight buses.

John Capes and I have met with Toyota Australia and on Tuesday 29 July they placed an order for 8 buses for the September production in Japan. These are expected to arrive in November. We can then commence their fit-out.

Meanwhile the Association will be providing the appropriate administration feedback for the sponsor and working through the livery design and fit out.

The ATUs

Some ATUs are currently being licensed with others held up by local governments.

It is expected that they will all be delivered by the end of September.

Funding for Albany's ATU has been sourced and a time for delivery has not been finalised

Training

Lin Booth and I met with the three Chiefs and Brad Delavale (DFES Academy acting Assistant Commissioner) to discuss the progress, effectiveness and issues of training for SES Volunteers.

The Chiefs are learning about the issues that SES Volunteers face in the training area and have been supportive in the SESVA meeting with DFES Training Academy.

Vertical Rescue

Vertical Rescue Team Leader training has been cancelled. DFES Training Academy will not support any endorsement or validation of VR people to be team leaders as there is no approved course. The SESVA were very vocal about the requirement for VR Team Leaders, however DFES Training Academy would offer no alternative. This Association believes that SES Volunteer's lives and community members are at risk without this validation/endorsement for VR Team Leaders. The Training Academy would not move, even though this process for endorsement/validation has been in place for over twenty years and poses no risk.



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First Aid Training

The much awaited state contract for the five different levels could be more than six months away and not expected to be in place until sometime in 2015.

The Chiefs stated that, in the absence of this contract, the SES Volunteers need to carry on with SJA Senior First Aid and the costs will come out of the LGGS (ESL) funding via local government. Any issues please seek assistance from your regional Office.

General rescue

Advance and intermediate levels are being considered for the future

Certificate II

The SESVA advised that feedback received from SES Volunteers is that they want to do Cert II as well as Cert III. This fits with training on progressive levels in the TAFE and Industrial areas. The SESVA requested that Cert II be included in the SES Training Pathways before any further consultation.

SES Training Pathways

The SESVA have expressed disappointment that the diagram was not supplied for the latest issue of the SESVA Journal, as this was expected to be the best form of consultation with the Volunteers. DFES Training Academy now say they will go to a number of locations around the state to present this. The SESVA also have this listed as a session by DFES at the Volunteers Conference in October.

Table of TRKs, Finished, in Progress and to be Reviewed

In past years FESA used to issue a table of the completed, being worked on and up for review TRKs. This was excellent for all Trainers and Assessors. There is a reluctance to issue this by DFES although they may issue a part list. Only time will tell.

TRKs Being Issued after a Trainer has done his First Course.

DFES Training Academy advised the SESVA that this is incorrect and all Trainers to be assessed should have their TRK in advance. Any issues on this please contact you regional office for them to resolve.

Trainer/Assessors

We tried to find out what was happening on this matter, however insufficient information has been made available on where it is at and where it is going.

The SESVA advised the DFES Training Academy that some SES Units are talking to other RTOs with a view to working under their status instead of DFES.



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Peer Support Team

Graham Fixter has advised the Association that the Peer Support Group has collapsed and no one is interested in being an office holder. They have had issues in their relationships with DFES over the past years. There appears to be a gap between the expectation of SES Volunteers in their Peer Support role and what DFES are telling them they will do.

The DFES Volunteers Conference

The draft program has now been released and the SESVA has emailed this to SES Units.

Once again this year there are registration issues and this Association has had a person full time calling units and assisting them to register.

Some of the known issues with the system include timing out if you take too long and being locked out if you crash during the registration phase.

SES Volunteer Advisory Committee

DFES are providing some administration support for this committee and induction of Volunteer members will take place during the Volunteers Conference on the 3rd and 4th of October.

Details are yet to be finalised

Cheers

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