



## Welcome to the SESVA's new Monthly Update

The monthly update will focus on the issues that are particularly relevant to SES Units and their operational activities. Our Newsletter Survey indicated our readers are interested in SES Unit news, activities and celebrations. (Survey results' summary on page 5.)

To help us make sure the Monthly Update reflects the newsletter survey results, we're calling on you to send in your photos together with a short article.

The Monthly Update is for distribution to SES member units, SES volunteers and SESVA committee members.

### Two young SES volunteers chosen to represent WA on May 1st in Canberra

2025 Bernie McNamara Young Emerging Leader's (YEL), Lilika Allum of Nannup SES, and Jack Watson of Tom Price SES, will travel to Canberra for the National Memorial Service on Thursday 1st May 2025.

Jack is the 2024 SES Young Achiever Award winner and is automatically chosen while Lilika is the successful applicant of the selection process managed by the SESVA WA. Eight applications were considered by the selection panel, which had a difficult task choosing the second Young Emerging Leader to represent WA.

The WA Young Emerging Leader's Program is aligned with the National SESVA YEL Program which aims to provide development opportunities for young SES volunteers. While in Canberra Jack and Lilika will join other young SES emerging leaders and meet the Governor-General and Commissioners from emergency services around the nation.



Lilika Allum (centre) & Nannup SES Volunteers    Jack Watson Tom Price SES

## REGULAR FEATURES

News and Announcements

Training information

Vehicle, Equipment and PPC issues

SES Volunteer Recognition

Opportunities for SES Volunteers

Safety Matters

Committee Updates

**Submit your articles, photos, feedback and suggestions to:**  
**[sesva.office@ses-wa.asn.au](mailto:sesva.office@ses-wa.asn.au)**

### Dear SES Member's

In welcoming you to the SESVA's new Monthly Update, I reflect on our recent deployments to Queensland and the Pilbara and the exceptional emergency response provided by the SES, with support from DFES. Our SES member's leadership, dedication and unwavering commitment made a significant impact on our operations and inspired others.

Following the WA State election, we now welcome our new Emergency Services Minister, Hon Paul Papalia. [Paul Papalia | Western Australian Government](#)

We will not forget the fine work completed by Hon Stephen Dawson, who now holds several ministerial portfolios including Regional Development. Thank you for your understanding and being approachable throughout your time as our Minister.

Kind Regards,

**Greg Cook, President WA SESVA**

Read Greg's full article via this [LINK](#)



### Deployments to Queensland and New South Wales continue

On 13th March Premier Roger Cook saw off WA's second team of emergency services personnel heading to Queensland to help with the recovery after ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred.

Premier Cook stated, "on behalf of the people of Western Australia, thank you for supporting our friends and family on the east coast – stay safe, and we look forward to welcoming you back home soon."

The Emergency Services Minister added, "this morning I joined the Premier to see off this second group of Western Australia's emergency services personnel heading to Queensland. We are grateful to them for supporting communities in need over east and wish them a safe trip."



Minister, Stephen Dawson; WA Premier, Roger Cook; and DFES Commissioner, Darren Klemm with the WA Deployment Team



President Greg Cook presents a SES cap to WA Premier Roger Cook

### To DEET or not to DEET with PPC?

On completing the online form for Operational Deployment, a volunteer was referred to DFES Directive 2-04 which states, "insect repellent is to be *non DEET*."

On querying this with DFES they were advised:

*"DEET is highly flammable and can negate the flame resistant properties of fire fighting clothing actually making the garment flammable. However, even though SES PPC is made of a somewhat fire-resistant material, it is not a certified fire garment sold by Stuart & Heaton."*

The conundrum raised being: whether to risk Murray Valley Encephalitis without DEET or increased flammability with it.

**Thanks to the volunteer for submitting this.**

### Compliments from Queensland

The SESVA Office received the following email from a Queensland resident.

*"This is the first time I have needed to seek assistance from SES. I was privileged to receive a response by a team from the Petrie Depot (including a Western Australian team, led by Greg Hewitt).*

*An amazing team of SES professionals responded to this request. This was a high performing team, who were professional, highly skilled and compassionate.*

*I am a health care worker, who leads an education team—where teamwork and communication are critical. I have been inspired by this SES team and am now thinking how I can apply my learnings (from observing the SES team) to our educational activities.*

*Thank you to this very generous group of SES professionals."*





### SESVA Visits Upper Great Southern SES Units:

SES VA Vice President, Alan Hawke visited the Narrogin SES Unit on 11th February and Pingelly SES unit on 19th March.

Narrogin SES unit has in recent months expanded from fewer than 20 members to more than 40 due to a concerted recruitment campaign lead by the unit's new local manager, Susan Wettenhall-Fischer, and the support of her dedicated and hard-working management team.

Alan was warmly welcomed and answered members' questions on the following topics:

- Consolidation of Emergency Services Legislation
- A new structure for SES with its own command
- Vehicle and other Capital grants
- Bernie McNamara Young Emerging Leaders Program
- Opportunities as SESVA regional committee member
- Fit for role and the opportunities for maintaining health and safety
- Training issues

The unit's recent successes are a reflection of the great support from SES District Officer, Lynda Elms and Superintendent Craig Smith.

Pingelly SES had a recent change in leadership, with Susan Wettenhall-Fischer taking the reins from SES stalwart, Bill Mulroneys ESM.

While the unit is small in numbers, it fills a big role in its community including road crash rescue, for which the unit has a purpose designed tender that is a marvel to behold. The Unit attends as many road crashes incidents as storm and search callouts.

Pingelly SES has well appointed facilities (pictured).



### Gaining a better understanding

The Upper Great Southern visit was an opportunity to gain a better understanding of individual SES unit circumstances and to exchange information on current and emerging issues.

SESVA continues to keep in contact with member units, both through regional committee members and directly with the SES VA Executive team.

### TRAINING MATTERS

*"If people are to perform their job to the highest possible standard, they must be effectively and efficiently trained"*

### SESVA Discussion Paper: the future of SES training in WA

Local Managers have until 13<sup>th</sup> April to provide their units' feedback about the training Discussion Paper sent to units in February .

The Paper presents opportunities for volunteers and DFES, as well as an option for how volunteers can be awarded nationally recognised training which delivers employability skills.

Feedback can be submitted using a short questionnaire that should only take about 2 minutes to complete.

[Questionnaire - Discussion Paper - SES training in WA](#)

If your Units' feedback has not yet been submitted, then please submit it by 13<sup>th</sup> April 2025.



SES Volunteers Association of WA Inc. acknowledges the funding from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services that support the operation of the Association.



### **SESVA Visits Pilbara SES Units: Issues raised by Local Managers**

SESVA President Greg Cook and Secretary Alan Hawke were joined by Management Committee Pilbara representative, Trevor Patton on a tour of SES Units including Port Hedland, Roebourne, Tom Price, Newman and Karratha.

Common topics of conversation included Fit for Role, Training, Local Government Grant Scheme, Recruitment, PPC and Uniforms, and Incident Management protocols. Comments included:

#### **LGGs:**

- Process is documented on the DFES website under LGGs Grants Manual of Operation Procedures.
- LGGs funding identified VFES units as having Natural Hazards role responses but many of these units don't have a lot of SES type training and have limited capabilities.

#### **PPC/Uniforms:**

- The lightweight uniform rollout has not been changed to suit women.
- Some female members are making their own dress trousers because of fitting issues. They have been advised to seek reimbursement through their DO.
- DFES has indicated a commitment to provision of suitable PPC for women however have provided no time frame.
- Issue of PPC should be specific to a region's climate conditions.

#### **Recruitment and Retention:**

- Building membership difficult due to transient nature of communities and prevalence of 12 hour shifts in the mining community.

#### **Training:**

- Lack of Trainer Assessors within unit membership. Interunit training problematic due to travel distances.
- Maintaining ongoing training therefore difficult.
- Currently no members trained in swift water rescues.
- National training no longer supported by DFES and not being recognised as RPL. DFES recognition of RPLs would go a long way to retain members.
- Continuation training is difficult for members to maintain the 90 day requirements where they have multiple skill sets.
- Regional Training Calendar is impacted by membership work rosters. More online training modules will be beneficial.
- It's important for units to ensure they promote training nominations else DFES will cancel training courses.
- Some employers don't release members for training courses.

#### **Fit for Role:**

- Some SES units will not accept FFR until more detailed information is provided and rolled out across all volunteer groups not just SES.
- New member application form now includes FFR assessment and if signed is a legally binding document that could be detrimental for future injury claims should previous injuries not be disclosed.
- Mental health needs to be considered as part of FFR assessment.



## NOMINATE NOW TO ATTEND

**2025 W-AFAC Conference is coming and it's shaping up to be an event you won't want to miss!**

The 2025 W-AFAC Conference is an incredible opportunity for volunteers around the State to be part of this three-day development program designed especially for volunteers.

From the evening of Tuesday, 26 August through to Friday, 29 August 2025 at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, volunteers will be treated to a comprehensive conference program featuring:

- **Exhibition opening and welcome (6pm to 8pm):** Opening of the exhibition hall with 200 exhibitors plus conference welcome and networking event.
- **AFAC Conference program:** Two days of engaging presentations, workshops, panel discussions and access to the exhibition hall with daily live demonstrations.
- **DFES Tours:** Exclusive tours of DFES facilities, a behind-the-scenes opportunity to meet the teams behind the operations.
- **WAFES Awards gala dinner:** An evening to celebrate the outstanding contributions of volunteers and fire and emergency services personnel across WA.

**VOLUNTEERS CAN NOMINATE TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE THROUGH THIS [LINK](#).**

**NOMINATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY FRIDAY 23 MAY**

BGU leaders have been invited to nominate volunteers from their Unit, so you can have a chat with your leader about being nominated to attend. Places are limited and those who have not had the opportunity to attend an AFAC or WAFES conference before will be given priority.

For further information visit the [Volunteer Hub](#).



National Memorial Service for fire and emergency service personnel

**National Memorial Service  
for fire and emergency service personnel**

**National Emergency Service Memorial,  
Canberra 8:45 AM, 1 May 2025**

AFAC will hold the 11th annual National Memorial Service to honour the courage and sacrifice of those who have died in the line of duty. During the service, an AFAC Memorial Medallion will be presented to families of those being commemorated, and the service will acknowledge names added to the memorial wall.

This is a free event in Canberra, open to the public. For information about attending in person, visit the [National Memorial Service event page](#). You can also access the livestream via YouTube.

**Watch the National Memorial Service online**

*The National Memorial Service livestream will begin at 6.45 am AWST Thursday 1 May.*



# MONTHLY UPDATE

APRIL 2025



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### NEWSLETTER SURVEY RESULTS

In response to your feedback in relation to Newsletter Frequency, the *Newsletter* will be changing to a season linked publication for distribution, to SES and non-SES subscribers. The *Monthly Update* will be distributed every month, except January, to SES member units, SES volunteers and SESVA committees.

Our SES readers indicated they were most interested in **SES Unit news and celebrations** more than any of the other topics. So, the Monthly Update will focus on:

- SESVA announcements, committee updates and news
- SES training and process updates
- State and National events information
- SES volunteer initiatives and opportunities
- Links to important information sites

With your input we'll continue to improve the quarterly Newsletter and Monthly Updates.

## SES MERCHANDISE

### AUTUMN SPECIALS



SCARF & BEANIE COMBO

Buy 1 Scarf & 1 Beanie for \$30.00

Place orders at [sesva.office@ses-wa.asn.au](mailto:sesva.office@ses-wa.asn.au)

## UNIT UPDATES

Let us know of changes  
to your SES Unit Leadership Team

**This month we welcome**  
**NANNUP SES Acting Local Manager,**  
**Brian Gatfield**

Get Ready for ....



## USEFUL LINKS

[SES Volunteer's Association of Western Australia Incorporated – One Association – Many Values](#)

[NSESVA Yearbook 2024.pdf](#)

[ACTSESVA | Proudly Supporting the ACT Community](#)

[NSWSESVA The Volunteer December 2024.pdf](#)

[QLDSESVA - The Volunteers Voice](#)

[SA SES Volunteers' Association](#)

[Tasmania State Emergency Service Volunteers Association](#)

<https://vicsesva.org.au/>

[Home | DFES Department of Fire and Emergency Services](#)

[State Emergency Management Committee](#)

[Home - Volunteering WA](#)



### Did you know? AMSA and SAR

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) provides search and rescue to any person in distress in the Australian search and rescue region.

AMSA uses advanced response and satellite technology, contracted equipment, an emergency towage vessel and four jet aircraft to respond to calls for help.

The Australian Search and Rescue (SAR) arrangements provide specialist search and rescue capability delivered by government, non-government and volunteer organisations in the largest search and rescue region in the world.

The design and provision of Australia's national SAR service has developed over time to meet the geographic and cultural needs of our nation.

Due to the challenges of a large land mass, small population and active lifestyle, Australia has established a cooperative SAR arrangement between AMSA, the state and territory police and the Australian Defence Force.

These three organisations make up our SAR authorities, with other organisations acting in support including volunteers.

The National Search and Rescue (NATSAR) Council is the national coordinating body for SAR response arrangements made up of the entities as shown in the NATSAR council logo (right).

This is the first of a series of articles we'll be publishing on AMSA & SAR



## UPCOMING EVENTS & IMPORTANT DATES

**Submit your articles, photos, feedback and suggestions to:**  
**[sesva.office@ses-wa.asn.au](mailto:sesva.office@ses-wa.asn.au)**

Mon 07 Apr SESVA Executive Council meeting  
Thu 17 Apr SESVA Management Committee meeting  
Thu 01 May AFAC National Memorial Service, Canberra  
Fri 02 May SESVA Monthly Update published  
Wed 21 May **Wear Orange Wednesday**  
Sat 24 May Metro SES Forum  
Tue 27 May Submissions due date - Winter Newsletter

Fri 06 Jun **Winter Newsletter** published  
Tue 15 Jul Management Committee nominations due  
Tue 26 Aug Submissions due date - Winter Newsletter  
Tue 26 Aug W-AFAC, Perth—until 29 Aug  
Fri 29 Aug **WAFES Awards and Gala Dinner**  
Fri 05 Sep **Spring Newsletter** published  
Sat 13 Sep SESVA Annual General Meeting, Belmont