



WAFES Conference 2026

Over 100 SES volunteers from across Western Australia came together at the WAFES Conference to share knowledge, strengthen networks and celebrate the dedication of volunteers supporting communities statewide. Read more on pages 4 and 5.



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from THE PRESIDENT

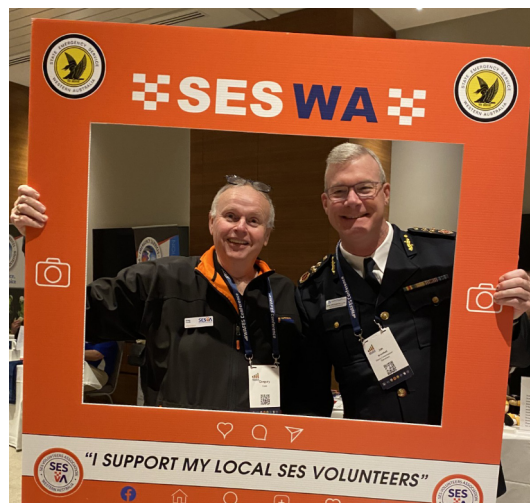


Spring has arrived across Western Australia, and with it the familiar shift in the work our SES volunteers are asked to do. From the Kimberley to the Great Southern, units have been answering calls for storm damage, flood support, land search, road-crash rescue assistance, and community preparedness — often at short notice, and always on top of work, family, and study.

To every volunteer who turned out this month: **thank you**. The strength of the SES is not a single large incident. It is the steady, local response — tarping a roof before the next front, searching through the night, standing by for a partner agency, or spending a Saturday in a shed so the next callout is safer and better led. That work rarely makes headlines. It still matters.

October is also when we look ahead. Southern regions are moving into a higher bushfire-risk period, and many of our members will support DFES and local partners as that season builds. In the north, units are using the shoulder season to refresh flood, storm, and remote-response skills before the wet arrives. Across the state, training nights, driver and rescue courses, and leadership development remain the foundation of a capable service. If your unit has places on a course, please put your name forward. Skills maintained in quiet months are what carry us through busy ones.

Welfare sits alongside capability. Long shifts, uncertain outcomes, and time away from home take a toll. Please use your unit support networks, peer support, and the services available through DFES. Looking after each other is part of the job, not an optional extra. A particular thank you to families, partners, and employers who make volunteer availability possible. Your flexibility is a quiet but essential part of community safety.



Greg Cook and DC OPS John Broomhall



From L to R: President Greg Cook, Assistant Commissioner Peter Sutton, Assistant Commissioner Danny Mosconi, Executive Director Murray Carter and FES Commissioner Darren Klemm

The Association's role is to represent you — on training, equipment, recognition, and the practical conditions of volunteering. If something in your unit is working well, tell us. If something is getting in the way of safe, sustainable service, tell us that too. We are strongest when local experience shapes the conversations we have on your behalf.

As we head toward summer, the ask is simple: stay current, look after your crew, and keep inviting new people in. Communities notice when SES volunteers show up. They also notice when we make room for the next generation.

Stay safe and thank you for your service.

Greg Cook
President, WA SES Volunteers Association



The SES Volunteers Association of WA Inc.
acknowledges the funding from the
Department of Fire & Emergency Services of WA



SESVA Management Committee - Update Summary



At its meeting held on 24 September 2026, the SESVA Management Committee discussed a range of matters affecting SES volunteers across Western Australia. Key outcomes included:

Advocacy & Representation

- Meeting scheduled with the new Emergency Services Minister, Hon. Reece Whitby MLA, on 1 October.
- SESVA to seek involvement in the Local Government Grants Scheme Review.
- Continued advocacy on outstanding volunteer leadership and workplace concerns raised with DFES.
- Support confirmed for pursuing recognition of volunteers involved in the Tropical Cyclone Seroja response.

Volunteer Support & Capability

- Ongoing work on volunteer skills recognition and recognition of prior learning.
- Continued advocacy for simplified SES training pathways.
- Concerns raised regarding Search Team Leader training prerequisites and the need for improved traffic management training.

Communications & Website

- Progress continues on the SESVA Social Media Strategy and communication improvements.
- Website redevelopment planning remains underway, subject to funding.
- Committee noted the need to improve the flow of information from Local Managers to unit members.

Equipment & Fleet

- Strong participation in the SES Volunteer Advisory Committee (SES VAC) vehicle assessment survey, with responses received from 55 of 64 units.
- Ongoing discussions with DFES regarding fleet improvements, trailer design issues and volunteer consultation.

Recognition

- Congratulations to Greg Cook ESM on being awarded the Emergency Services Medal (ESM).
- Congratulations to Albany SES for representing Western Australia at the National Disaster Rescue Challenge.
- Appreciation was extended to Leonie Briggs for her contribution to SESVA as she approaches retirement from Association responsibilities.

Unit Engagement

- Regional Leaders Forums, WAFES Conference and WAFES Awards provided valuable opportunities to engage with volunteers.
- Committee Members continue to maintain regular contact with units across the State.
- Opportunities for future Unit Managers were identified in several areas.

Governance & Administration

- The postponed AGM will be rescheduled as soon as the Association audit is received.
- Delegates will be asked to reconfirm attendance.

Next Meeting: 26 November 2026 via Microsoft Teams.

SESVA remains committed to advocating for volunteers, improving communication, and working with government and DFES stakeholders on matters that affect SES units and members throughout Western Australia.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



SAVE THE DATE

Units will receive a new
NOTICE OF AGM via email
to confirm the **NEW DATE**

Saturday 21 November

(subject to receipt of the Auditor's Report).



Make a difference. Be our Secretary.

Help support and strengthen
our SES volunteer community.



Support

Play a key role in keeping
our Committee organised
and informed.



Contribute

Help shape decisions that
benefit SES volunteers
across WA.



Make an impact

Your time and skills
can make a real
difference.



We need you!

Step up. Get involved. Support your SES community.

VOLUNTEER TODAY.

To apply:

Submit a brief Expression of Interest outlining
your skills and motivation.

Enquiries:

Greg Cook 0418 403 960
sesva.president@ses-wa.asn.au

Nail Gun Update – Have You Checked Yours?

A reminder to all SES volunteers to review Equipment Recall and Prohibition Circular 03/2026, which outlines the latest requirements for nail guns used in SES operations.

If your unit already has a nail gun, it may continue to be used until the end of its service life provided it:

- Was purchased within the last two years; and
- Is a sequential-firing, non-gas model.

The Makita battery-operated sequential-firing nail gun is now the only approved model for future SES purchases and replacements.

Please take a few moments to check your unit's equipment and refer to Circular 03/2026 for the full requirements and approved models. Safety and compliance are everyone's responsibility.



WA Fire and Emergency Services (WAFES) Conference

More than 600 volunteers attended this year's WAFES Conference and Awards, including in excess of 100 SES volunteers from across the State.

It was a busy two days filled with tours and workshops, plus a sundowner, two fascinating keynote presentations, a diverse range of afternoon sessions and the prestigious WAFES Awards ceremony where finalists were celebrated and winners announced.

SES Volunteer Association Stand



The queue was out of the door at morning tea as SES volunteers came to collect their gift bags, including a specially designed T-Shirt. It was a great atmosphere and a good opportunity for volunteers to meet SESVA representatives.

Hot Tip for next year: Pick up your bag in the afternoon!



Conference Presentations

Missed the conference or want to share your learnings with your BGU?

Access the PowerPoint presentations from the afternoon stream sessions online via the links below or the DFES Volunteer Hub [2026 WAFES Conference and Awards wrap up](#) | [DFES Department of Fire and Emergency Services](#)

Session Presentations

- [Interstate deployments – lessons from the Victoria fire response](#)
- [Improving flood intelligence in WA – insights, tools and your role](#)
- [Fake news in the field: How to spot it in a crisis and what to do about it](#)
- [El Niño and other global circulations – what they mean for WA](#)
- [The power of storytelling – from a grassroots movement to a global symbol of hope](#)
- [Vertical rescue across diverse terrain – insights from the Pilbara and Great Southern](#)
- [Marina boat fires – understanding the joint emergency response](#)
- [Behind the scenes of the Appelbee rescue](#)
- [Managing and responding to lithium-ion incidents](#)
- [Engaging your local community through Social Media](#)
- [Contemporary Rescue – bringing together changes to equipment, space creation and extrication](#)



Keynote speaker, Scott Millar



Babara Keilor and Allen Gale



Unit representatives joined the SESVA table

WA Fire and Emergency Services (WAFES) Awards 2026

Winners of the 2026 WA Fire and Emergency Service Awards were announced at the gala dinner on Saturday, 05 September at Crown Burswood.

Congratulations to all finalists and winners across the 17 award categories.

The awards honour and acknowledge the achievements of volunteers, career firefighters and DFES staff throughout WA who have shown exceptional dedication to duty over the 12 months leading up to the judging of the awards in early 2026.

2026 SES award winners



Peter Keillor Award

Ben Whittle, Albany SES



SES Young Person of the Year

Zach Hill, Karratha SES



SES Team Achievement Award

Exmouth SES and Karratha SES



The 2026 WAFES Awards finalists are joined onstage by His Excellency the Honourable Chris Dawson AC APM Governor of Western Australia (front row centre) and Hon. Reece Whitby MLA Minister for Emergency Services with Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner Darren Klemm AFSM.

SES-ATAG Focuses on Training Improvements

New Training Initiatives

The SES Association Training Advisory Group (ATAG) met on 19 September at the Forrestfield Academy to discuss training product development and member feedback. Recent progress includes the release of the Logistics Course, planning for a Traffic Access Management Officer (TAMO) pilot workshop in October, and the appointment of a Skills Recognition Officer commencing in November.

Member Feedback Driving Change

Group members raised concerns about how training updates are communicated, the level of detail available through the IIR Dashboard, and proposed changes to Land Search Team Leader course prerequisites. ATAG has assigned actions to improve communication, provide clearer information, and review consultation undertaken on course changes.

Strengthening Training Governance

The meeting also considered the role of Association Training Advisory Group (ATAG), DFES Volunteer Training Advisory Group (VTAG) and Product Advisory Teams (PATs). New PATs for Flood Rescue Boat and Communications Training are currently being established, while information explaining member representation and committee roles will be developed.

Ongoing Improvements

Discussion highlighted continued efforts to improve training pathways, reporting processes, and access to courses across the State.

A special thank you was also extended to DFES Training staff for their ongoing work to improve SES training products, pathways and feedback processes.

Questions and feedback

Members with questions or feedback are encouraged to raise them through the Association representatives or group members.

SES-ATAG member list as at 19 September 2026

Robbie Palmer	SES VA representative
Ross Jones	Mid West Gascoyne
Lilian Oh	Belmont SES and SES CSU
Barb Jenkins	Canning-South Perth SES
Paul Hashman	Lower South West
Renske Velt	Great Southern
Tex McPherson	Metro NE and North Coastal
Warren Taylor	Kalamunda SES

Natural Hazards Fleet PAT – Expressions of Interest

Want to help shape the future of SES fleet capability?

DFES is seeking Expressions of Interest from SES volunteers to join the Natural Hazards Fleet PAT.

This is a unique opportunity to provide frontline volunteer input into the development and review of SES vehicles, trailers, equipment and future fleet capabilities. Your operational experience and local knowledge can help ensure fleet solutions meet the needs of volunteers across Western Australia.

Whether your interest is in vehicles, trailers, operational equipment or capability development, your contribution can help influence future decisions that support SES operations.

Volunteers from all regions are encouraged to apply.

To express your interest or obtain further information, contact:

Jon Kirk, Manager Fleet Development
Email: Jon.Kirk@dfes.wa.gov.au





Major Training Projects Underway for SES Volunteers

Update provided by David MacLean, District Officer TDSC SES and Marine Rescue.

Significant work is underway to modernise and strengthen several key SES training programs, with three major training projects currently being developed by dedicated Project Advisory Teams (PATs).

Communications Training Review

A comprehensive review of SES communications training is now underway. The project will examine everything from Basic WAERN through to Net Control Station qualifications, with a focus on ensuring communications practices remain safe, effective and fit for purpose during operational responses.

Land Search Team Member Course Refresh

Work is also progressing on a redesigned Land Search Team Member course. The aim is to create a flexible training product that supports both trainer-led delivery and self-paced learning. While no new content is being added, the revised format will make training more accessible and easier to deliver across the State. Once a draft product is available, volunteers and trainers will be invited to assist with testing and refinement.

Flood Boat Operator Course Changes

The Flood Boat Operator course is also undergoing substantial redevelopment to align with Exemption 24 requirements. PAT members are currently reviewing national standards to ensure the updated course meets contemporary operational and compliance expectations.

Looking Ahead

All three projects represent significant pieces of work and demonstrate the ongoing commitment to providing volunteers with modern, practical and effective training that supports safe and efficient operations.

General Rescue Training Gets a Refresh

A number of updates have been made to the General Rescue Training Package, helping ensure our training remains aligned with current operational practices, recent Incident Investigation Reports (IIRs), and updated nail gun safety requirements.

What's New?

- Updated guidance on the approved Makita Battery Operated Nail Gun, including strengthened safety requirements.
- Removal of the Paslode nail gun from training materials following the transition to Makita battery-operated units.
- Improved rescue training content, including updates to stretcher loading procedures and rescue terminology.
- Additional safety messaging covering nail gun use and correct reeving of the D4 descender.
- Refined assessment resources with clearer instructions and improved practical assessment guidance.
- New theory content covering mass calculations and the relationship between BGR, GR and USAR capabilities.

Available Now

The updated Trainer, Student and Assessment Resources are now available in the Trainer Assessor Resources section of eAcademy.

If you're involved in General Rescue training or assessment, now is a great time to review the updated materials and ensure your local training reflects the latest requirements.

For further information, send an email to David.Maclean@dfes.wa.gov.au.



Flood boat training update 7 September 2026

SES Volunteers Association (SESVA) President Greg Cook and Vice President Alan Hawke met with the DFES Assistant Director, Marine Services, Mark Eatts for an update on implementation of proposed new training requirements for SES flood rescue boat operators and crew.



Background

SESVA recently circulated a Position Paper to affected SES units summarising SES unit feedback on proposed changes to flood rescue boat (FRB) operator training and certification requirements arising from Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) regulatory changes.

Flood boat rescue is a specialist capability conducted by 16 of WA's 64 SES units and relies heavily on skilled volunteers. While SES flood boat operators currently undertake extensive training, competency maintenance, and operational currency requirements through DFES, recent changes to the National Law governing domestic commercial vessels have introduced additional qualification and compliance obligations.

The Position Paper includes 26 concerns that affected SES units had about the national standards and how DFES might implement any changes affecting SES volunteers.

If you want to read the Position Paper, It's available on the SESVA [website](#).

Scope

The scope of the consultations is limited to SES FRB operations. It does not include swift water rescue operations.

Why is Marine Rescue Service involved?

When DFES became aware of the changes to national standards, the Manager Marine Services was approached for guidance.

SESVA has been assured that changes to SES FRB training competencies is not about a take-over of SES FRB operations by Marine Rescue Service. There are however some overlap of Marine Rescue and SES training packages. Competency requirements and synergies with training expertise and skills make for Marine Rescue Service to facilitate consultations.

What has changed

New Safety Management System

The changes to national standards allow scope for exemptions that relieve much of the onerous national requirements until 2030. In the meantime, SES FRB must additionally implement a Safety Management System for FRB operations.

To assist affected SES units, DFES has prepared a draft template Safety Management System for affected SES units. The template is the basis for SES units to build their own Safety Management System. The template is not a directive. SES units need to tailor the template to meet local operational circumstances.

If there are any affected SES units that have not yet implemented a Safety Management Plan, SESVA recommends you contact their regional natural hazards district officer.

National Training Standards for Trainer Assessors

The sting in the tail on current training exemption requirements affecting SES FRB training is that Trainer Assessors (TAs) are now required to have a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAE40110/116/122). DFES TAs are not certified in that national qualification.

SESVA is advised that Certificate IV in Training and Assessment is open to volunteer trainers. However, there are significant financial and time difficulties for volunteers to be accredited. DFES is not accredited to deliver that training, so it will have to be obtained from an outside training provider. One idea being floated is that District Officers be accredited and supervise and or assess training delivered by DFES endorsed FRB volunteer trainers. Also, there are existing volunteers with Cert IV accreditation.

Conclusion

For the time being SESVA is monitoring the situation and open to facilitating communications with affected SES units wherever possible.

SESVA has asked for a written response to all concerns raised by affected SES units.

SESVA welcomes DFES providing a management plan on the implementation of national standards for SES FRB operations that covers all DFES commands including an appropriate single senior coordinating officer.

Alan Hawke
Vice President

Invitation: Dementia Training for First Responders

– Free Masterclass, Tuesday 24 November 2026

Each year, police, paramedics, emergency staff and volunteers are called on to support people living with dementia at some of their most distressing moments – a wandering incident, a critical behavioural escalation, or a transfer of care. The right approach in the *first few minutes* can make all the difference to the person's safety and dignity, and to yours.

Dementia Training Australia (DTA) is inviting you to attend a pilot of our new face-to-face masterclass for first responders – a practical, train-the-trainer session for anyone with an interest in building dementia capability within their organisation, whether that's part of your formal role or something you've taken on informally as a workplace champion.

Feedback from our 2025 national consultation was clear, people in first responder roles need practical strategies they can put into action. This masterclass was built in direct response to that gap. Your participation in this pilot masterclass will directly shape refinements before its national rollout.

During the masterclass work through:

- The MESSAGE communication framework and the ABCDE approach to behaviour support
- Recognising the arousal/escalation cycle and responding safely to a critical incident
- A practical, scenario-based case study to apply what you've learned; and
- How to use DTA supporting resources to confidently deliver this content within your own organisation.

At the end of the session, you'll take home a bundle of useful resources, including a printed facilitator guide, workbooks, fact sheets, posters, and communication tips lanyard cards.

Event details

- Cost: Free
- Date: Tuesday 24 November 2026
- Time: 9:00am – 12:00pm (morning tea included)
- Location: Seminar Room 2, Bentley Technology Park
- Venue: Bentley Technology Park.

Reserve your place

Places are limited — please **RSVP by Tuesday 3 November to Rachael.morcombe@uwa.edu.au** noting any dietary or accessibility requirements.

NOTE:

Before attending you would be required to complete DTA's free online course, Dementia Training for First Responders, prior to the session.

It takes around 1 hour, is self-paced, and provides CPD points plus a certificate of completion: <https://dta.com.au/courses/dementia-training-for-first-responders>.

This gives everyone a shared foundation, so we can use our time together to focus on applying the concepts.



Dementia Training for First Responders
Practical skills. Safer outcomes. Stronger communities.

FREE Face-to-Face Masterclass
For emergency services personnel and first responders

People First Always

Be part of the change
This pilot workshop will help shape a future national rollout of the program — a valuable opportunity for volunteers interested in training, welfare or community engagement.

Safer people. Stronger communities.

Effective communication techniques | Behaviour support strategies | De-escalation approaches | Practical exercises and scenario-based learning | Resources to use within your own organisation

Albany SES Volunteers Represent WA at National Rescue Challenge

Flying the Flag for Western Australia

Western Australia was proudly represented at the **2026 National Disaster Rescue Challenge (NDRC)** by volunteers from **Albany SES**.

Hosted by the Queensland SES on the picturesque Atherton Tablelands in Far North Queensland, the challenge brought together more than 300 SES volunteers and staff from across Australia to test their skills, share knowledge and build connections across jurisdictions.

Joining the WA contingent as observers were **National Board Chair Greg Cook ESM** and **DFES Assistant Commissioner Paul Carr ESM**, providing an opportunity to witness first-hand the outstanding capability and professionalism of SES volunteers from around the nation.

Realistic Rescue Scenarios, Real-World Skills

The challenge featured eight demanding scenarios designed to replicate the types of emergencies SES volunteers face in their communities every day. Teams tackled a diverse range of incidents including:

- Mass casualty and USAR operations involving a hot air balloon emergency.
- Boat rescue scenarios with multiple casualties.
- Navigation and search tasks.
- High ropes rescues.
- Storm damage incidents involving leaking fertiliser tanks.
- Casualty rescues from mountain bike accidents and other complex environments.

Every scenario tested leadership, communication, technical rescue skills and teamwork under pressure, providing valuable learning opportunities for all.

More Than a Competition

While the rescue scenarios were a highlight, the NDRC offered much more than practical skills training. Learning stands at Lake Tinaroo Hall showcased Indigenous culture, traditional dance and cultural burning practices, giving participants a deeper appreciation of Australia's rich heritage and the role of traditional land management in disaster resilience.



*Albany SES team members at the NDRC.
From L to R: Kate Pritchett, Ben Whittle, Nigel De Snoo, Gavin Murdock, Paul Bloffwitch, Kathy Way and Jessica Rouse. Photo by Kevin Madden*

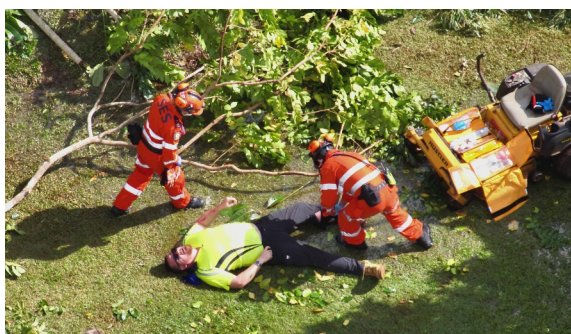
Congratulations to **Gold Coast City SES Unit** for taking out the overall championship. **New South Wales** finished second, with **Victoria** claiming third place.

Special recognition also goes to **Tasmania**, which was awarded the prestigious **Hori Howard Spirit of the Challenge Award**, celebrating teamwork, camaraderie and commitment to the values of the National Disaster Rescue Challenge. For the Albany SES volunteers who attended, the NDRC was a unique opportunity to test their skills alongside some of the best SES operators in Australia, share knowledge with fellow volunteers, and bring home new ideas and techniques that can benefit communities across WA.

Looking Ahead

If this year's challenge is anything to go by, the **2028 National Disaster Rescue Challenge in South Australia** will be an event not to miss.

To the Albany SES volunteers, ably supported by DO Kevin Madden, thank you for proudly representing Western Australia and demonstrating the professionalism, dedication and community spirit that make the SES such a respected organisation nationwide. Well done!



Nominate a Volunteer for the 2027 Australia Day Honours

Don't miss your opportunity to recognise a fellow volunteer through the Australian Honours system. Nominations are open for the Emergency Services Medal (ESM), Australian Bravery Decorations (ABD) and the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM).

Behind every emergency response, community initiative and successful outcome is someone whose dedication helps make it happen. While remarkable acts of bravery and commitment can leave a lasting impression, many deserving stories remain untold unless someone takes the time to nominate them.

Emergency Services Medal (ESM)

The Emergency Services Medal (ESM) recognises distinguished service by paid and volunteer members of emergency services across Australia, and people who are involved in emergency management, training or education.

This award acknowledges distinguished service by members of:

- State Emergency Service organisations
- Volunteer emergency organisations.

Support and assistance

For help with a nomination, contact the Honours and Awards team by email or find out more on the [Australian Honours Service Medals page](#). Email: rewards@dfes.wa.gov.au

Bravery Decorations

The Australian Bravery Decorations recognise acts of bravery by members of the community who selflessly put themselves in jeopardy to protect the lives or property of others.

Nominations may be made for a brave act by an Australian citizen in Australia or overseas, or for a citizen of another country carrying out a brave act in the interest of Australia. Australian Bravery Decorations may be made posthumously.

How to nominate

Submit your nomination [online](#) by Friday 16 October 2026 to be considered for the King's Birthday 2027 Honours List or September 2027 Bravery List.

Any nominations received after this date will be considered for future lists.

Nominations are also open for the [Public Service Medal](#) and [Order of Australia](#).

See article on page 12 to see if you qualify.

Recognition of Tropical Cyclone Seroja Responders Feedback Received... But We Need to Hear from More Units

Thank you to the SES Units and members who have already responded to the Association's request for feedback on recognition for those involved in the Tropical Cyclone Seroja response. We have received a number of thoughtful and constructive suggestions, demonstrating the strong commitment across the SES to ensuring the contribution of volunteers is appropriately acknowledged.

The feedback received so far has been valuable and has identified several possible avenues that could be explored. However, SESVA does not want to proceed based on the views of only a small number of members or Units.

If your Unit has not yet responded, now is the time to have your say.

The response to Tropical Cyclone Seroja involved thousands of hours of service by volunteers, emergency services personnel and support agencies under exceptionally challenging circumstances.

SESVA acknowledges and thanks DFES for its support in pursuing National Emergency Medal recognition. In particular, DFES prepared and submitted a comprehensive application to the Commonwealth Government seeking recognition of TC Seroja as a nationally significant emergency event.

Unfortunately, the National Committee did not approve the declaration, meaning the National Emergency Medal cannot be awarded for this event.

SESVA also submitted a proposal seeking a WA Premier's Citation; however, this was not supported by either DFES or the Western Australian Government.

While previous efforts to secure recognition through a National Emergency Medal and a WA Premier's Citation were unsuccessful, SESVA remains willing to advocate on behalf of members if there is broad support to do so.

Whether you believe further action should be pursued, or whether you consider the matter closed, SESVA wants to hear from you.

The Association's next steps will be guided by the level of interest and support received from WA SES Units. If only limited feedback is received, SESVA may conclude that there is insufficient support to pursue the matter further. Conversely, strong feedback and clear direction from Units will help shape any future advocacy efforts.

Those who have already responded are thanked for their input. For everyone else, please take a few minutes to tell us what you think. If recognition for Seroja volunteers remains important to your Unit, we need to hear from you.

Do You Qualify for the National Emergency Medal?

The National Emergency Medal (NEM) recognises Australians who have provided significant or sustained service in response to a declared nationally significant emergency. Eligibility is determined separately for each declared event, with specific criteria relating to dates, locations, duration of service and the nature of the role performed.

For many emergency service volunteers, including SES members, the first step is to consider whether they were involved in one of the declared emergencies and whether their service occurred during the official response phase. Service does not need to have been performed on the frontline. Operational support, communications, intelligence, logistics, evacuation centre operations and other roles that directly facilitated the emergency response may also be eligible.

There are two pathways to recognition:

Sustained Service

Awarded to those who served for a minimum period during a declared emergency. The required duration varies for each event and must fall within the specified dates of the declaration.

Significant Service

Awarded for extraordinary service that goes above and beyond normal expectations. Nominees under this category do not need to meet the minimum service duration requirements and are assessed individually by the National Emergency Medal Committee.

The nationally significant emergencies declared to date include:

- Victorian Bushfires 2009
- Queensland Floods 2010-11 and Cyclone Yasi
- Tropical Cyclone Debbie 2017
- North Queensland Floods 2019
- Bushfires 2019-20
- Floods February 2022
- Floods November 2022

Check Your Eligibility

Ask yourself:

- Did I serve during one of the declared emergencies?
- Was my service performed during the response phase?
- Did I meet the minimum duration requirements for that event?
- Did my role directly support or facilitate the emergency response?
- Have my deployment or service records been captured by my organisation?

If you answered yes to these questions, you may be eligible for the National Emergency Medal.



For SES volunteers, this is an excellent opportunity to review your service history and ensure your organisation has accurate records of your deployments and support activities. Recognition through the National Emergency Medal acknowledges the commitment, sacrifice and professionalism demonstrated during Australia's most significant emergencies.

For more information, visit the Governor-General's National Emergency Medal pages and review the criteria for the specific emergency in which you served.

<https://www.gg.gov.au/australian-honours-and-awards/national-emergency-medal>

RAFFLE #12
DRAWN: 27TH NOVEMBER 2026

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

WA & TAS Raffle Support SES Volunteers and buy your tickets HERE!



IMPORTANT NOTICE



The Bernie McNamara SES Young Emerging Leaders (YEL) Program

Applications Now Open for SES volunteers aged 18 to 30 years

- apply by 30 November 2026.

The **Bernie McNamara SES Young Emerging Leaders (YEL) Program** provides a valuable leadership development opportunity for young SES volunteers in Western Australia. Aligned with the **National SESVA Young Emerging Leaders Program**, the initiative enables two WA volunteers to participate in the annual National Memorial Service and associated leadership activities in Canberra.

One position is automatically awarded to the winner of the **SES Young Person of the Year Award**, while the second participant is selected through a competitive application process managed by the **WA SES Volunteers Association (SESVA)**.

Program Activities

While the program schedule may vary each year, participants can typically expect to:

- Attend the **AFAC National Memorial Service** in Canberra.
- Meet senior leaders from across Australia, including the **Governor-General** and Commissioners of emergency services agencies.
- Visit key national institutions such as **Parliament House**, **Geoscience Australia**, and the **National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)**.
- Share their experience with the wider SES community by contributing an article to the **SESVA Newsletter** following their return to Western Australia.

Eligibility and Application Requirements

To be eligible for consideration, applicants must:

- Be a registered WA SES volunteer aged between **18 and 30 years** as at **30 November 2026**.
- Obtain a written reference from the **Local Manager** of their SES Unit.
- Submit a completed [application form](#) to the **WA SESVA Secretary** at sesva.office@ses-wa.asn.au.

The application form requires applicants to provide information about:

- Their SES, community and leadership involvement.
- Leadership aspirations and future goals.
- How they see themselves developing as a leader over the next five years.



Download the Application form here.

Selection Process

Selection is based on demonstrated achievement, leadership potential and commitment to the SES. Applications will be assessed by an independent selection panel chaired by a member of the SESVA Management Committee.

Key Dates

30 November 2026	Applications close
14 December 2026	Successful applicant(s) announced
Late April 2027	Participation in the Memorial Service and leadership program in Canberra (dates to be confirmed)

Help Us Promote This Opportunity -

Share this information with all your Unit members - they may be a deserving volunteer or know of one who would benefit from this unique leadership development opportunity and represent Western Australia at the national level.



DID YOU KNOW?

SESVA Facebook Group – current and new members

The SESVA Facebook Group is a closed group for SES Volunteers across Western Australia to connect, share information, recognise achievements and support one another.

Members of the public who are interested in the SES can also apply to join the Group. The Group exists to promote positive communication between SES volunteers and interested public, share news and updates, celebrate successes, and strengthen the SES community.

By participating in this group, members are expected to:

- ✓ Treat others with respect and courtesy
- ✓ Keep discussions relevant to SES Volunteers and SESVA activities
- ✓ Share information responsibly and accurately
- ✓ Protect privacy and confidentiality
- ✓ Contribute positively and constructively to discussions

Members are asked not to post:

- ✗ Personal attacks, bullying or harassment
- ✗ Political campaigning or partisan content
- ✗ Confidential, private or sensitive operational information
- ✗ Unverified rumours, allegations or misinformation
- ✗ Commercial advertising or spam

- ⚠ Operational matters should be managed through approved DFES and SES operational channels, not through this Facebook Group.
- ⚠ Contentious matters must not be posted through this Facebook Group, rather they can be raised with Administrators by email or mobile on the SESVA website.

Not a member yet?

Join the SESVA Facebook Group today (you must answer all qualifying questions for consideration by the administrators to be admitted to the group) : [SES Volunteers Association of WA | Facebook](#)



Inform • Connect • Support •

**Be respectful.
Be supportive.
Protect privacy.
Share responsibly.**

RECOGNISING YOUR EXISTING SKILLS

DFES acknowledges volunteers bring a wide range of skills, knowledge, and experience to their volunteering.

Recognition of Current Competency (RCC) means

- Recognition for skills and knowledge gained through your work and life experience.
- Your required training would be significantly reduced, even if there are gaps.
- Fast-tracking through your training program.

Want to know more?

Scan the QR Code below, or follow the breadcrumbs at the base of this poster



VOLUNTEER HUB: Home > Support > Training and Opportunities > Recognising your Existing Skills



SES Alerts Just now
Thanks for subscribing to the SES VA Newsletter!
You'll now receive the latest updates and safety information straight to your phone.
Reply STOP to opt out.



**Keep up to date with news straight to your phone.
Sign up to receive SMS messages from SESVA.**

We promise only to send alerts for the monthly newsletter and important announcements.
A maximum of four messages a month.

UPCOMING EVENTS & IMPORTANT DATES

Thu 29 Oct	SES VAC meeting
Tue 20 Oct	November Update submission deadline
Sat 24 Oct	Metro Pre-Season Forum
Thu 29 Oct	Mandurah SES 50th Anniversary function
Mon 2 Nov	International Volunteer Manager's Day
Sat 07 Nov	Broome Volunteer Leader Forum
Tue 17 Nov	Summer Newsletter submission deadline

Sat 21 Nov	SESVA AGM (date to be confirmed)
Thu 26 Nov	SESVA Management Committee mtg
Mon 30 Nov	YEL Applications Close
Thu 03 Dec	Volunteering WA Garden Party
Sat 05 Dec	International Volunteer Day
Thu 10 Dec	SES VAC meeting

Volunteering WA's Annual Garden Party

Save the date | Thursday 3 December 2026

Each year, on the Thursday closest to International Volunteer Day, Volunteering WA hosts the annual Volunteer Garden Party in the stunning gardens of Government House.



The International Volunteer Day Garden Party is a favourite on the Volunteering WA calendar. It's an event that allows volunteers to connect with each other, and different organisations, while celebrating the power of volunteering.

The Garden Party features speeches, live entertainment, canapes and lawn games. We invite organisations to bring their volunteers to the event as a way of thanking them for their efforts.

Ticket sales close on Thursday 12 November (or once sold out). [BUY ONLINE:](#) [International Volunteer Day Garden Party | Volunteering WA](#)

Responding with resilience.



Fortem Wellbeing Activities - October & November 2026

Exciting news! Fortem has added some amazing new wellbeing activities to the 2026 calendar, including activities perfect for the school holidays such as the Retro Gaming Museum, Ten-Pin Bowling & Pizza and Flip Out Trampolining activities.

Perfect your swing at our Golf Driving Range session in North Lake or SupaGolf in the Swan Valley. Enjoy the warmer weather and get your surf on at our Beginner Surf lessons in Trigg. Get active with Mixed Martial Arts in Bibra Lake or GymFit classes in Jandakot. Perhaps after a fun family activity? Enjoy a day at Caversham Wildlife Park!

Check out the Calendar here: [Wellbeing activities calendar - Fortem Australia](#)



The SES Volunteers Association of WA Inc. acknowledges the funding from the Department of Fire & Emergency Services of WA

USEFUL LINKS

[SES Volunteers Association of WA \(WA SESVA\)](#)
[WA SESVA Facebook page](#)
[Buy tickets in the WA / TAS SESVA Raffle](#)
[DFES Volunteer Hub](#)
[State Emergency Management Committee](#)
[Volunteering WA](#)
[Fortem Australia Wellbeing Hub](#)

