

A Message from the Commissioner

Another year has come to an end and as we sit back and reflect on the past 12 months, we can each give ourselves a pat on the back for a job well done.

2008 can be looked on as an year of milestones in nearly every area of our business - our staff, volunteers, future directions, interactions with the community, inter-governmental relations and the building of mutually beneficial partnerships.

Business needs and the focus of government in ensuring the safety of the South Australian community has been the catalyst for taking a new look at the way we do business and our organisational structures. This led to the appointment of three new Directors to better align our business activities with our core business.

The operation of Shared Services has seen the movement of staff from the Finance and Human Resources function. The smoothness with which we have made this transition is proof of the efficiency of our systems and particularly, our people.

We can have the best equipment and facilities, but if they are not matched by a skilled and committed team, their use and effectiveness are severely diminished. I am continually reminded and appreciative of the willingness of staff to get behind the sector and support our community. Both the executive team and I felt that this loyalty should be recognised through the SAFECOM Employee Recognition Awards.

As an organisation we now have one shared vision and a goal that is supported by the development and adoption of the Statement of Strategic Direction signed in August this year. The priorities identified in this Statement will provide a clear focus for the way forward for the next six years, keeping uppermost what is most important to us all - the safety of the community.

The signing of our Volunteer Charter in June reiterated our commitment to our volunteers demonstrating that we are serious about consulting with, and considering, the views of our volunteers on any matters that affect them.

The establishment of our Volunteer and Employer Recognition Support Program enabled us to thank the many employers of our volunteers without whose support our volunteers would not be able to keep their communities safe.

Our relationships with local government have been strengthened through the Local Government Forums we initiated and the signature of Memoranda of Understanding with several Councils.

In December this year, SAFECOM assumed the lead responsibility for co-ordination of the State Logistics function - again demonstrating our keenness to work together across government to help respond to emergencies and facilitate recovery from disasters.

A significant amount of work has been carried out across the sector to implement the 34 recommendations of the Wangary Review. A majority of these have required tremendous efforts from the CFS and as I write this, 24 of the recommendations have been deemed complete, with most of the remaining implementation to take place in the next few months.

The legislative review of the Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005 is now complete. This Review provided an opportunity to revisit and refine our approach to emergency management.

Here again through the robust consultative process we have demonstrated and ensured that the input of key stakeholders has been sought and considered in the recommendations that have been made.

The discussions we have undertaken with relevant key stakeholders including the volunteer associations, the Chiefs of the services and the Firefighters Union ensures that we can confidently chart a way forward. A path that ensures that the views of all parties are considered in ensuring the continuing safety of the South Australian community.

Yes, this year has been one of phenomenal milestones indicating that we are ready to welcome and embrace change to deliver what is expected and I look forward to the challenges that the new year will bring.

As always, have a safe and restful holiday season and enjoy much deserved time with friends and family.

Seasons greetings and a Happy New Year.



From the Board

Update from the Board meetings held in November and December 2008.

Budget bi-lateral bid proposals

The Board considered submissions from individual agencies for funding of new initiatives in the 2009/10 budget. The submissions will now be reviewed by the Chief Officers and will be re-submitted for the Board's approval in January 2009.

CORPORATE SERVICES

Finance

The SAFECOM Corporate Services team briefed the Board on the following financial activities for October:

- Reports from the agencies reviewing the capital expenditure program that maximised the resources available from the capital budget, given the current financial crisis, and
- A report on the leave entitlement liabilities for the sector with the agencies agreeing to implement appropriate actions to manage and reduce this liability.

FBT Review

The Board noted the update on the FBT review and the following recommendations were endorsed:

- The assessment of the FBT liability with respect to private use of government vehicles be based on the above advice and arrears be calculated accordingly
- As a strategy to manage risk, a private tax ruling be sought from the Commissioner of ATO to confirm this approach, and
- A process of education be undertaken across the sector, supported by revised policies, procedures and logbooks.

The Board also advised that this issue is now an operational matter and will only require an update if any industrial issues arise which should be reported in the Human Services Directorate report.

Building Replacement Review – Stages 1 & 2

The Board was presented with a copy of the final report by GHD on the Emergency Services Building Replacement Review. This report had previously been considered in September this year at which time the Board requested additional consultation with Volunteer Focus Groups.

The Board were advised that the consultation with the SES and CFS volunteer focus groups has been finalised and the relevant feedback has been incorporated in GHD's final report.

The Board endorsed the final report with the recommendation that an Implementation Plan be developed by relevant agency representatives with periodic progress reports for the Board.

A report on stage three of the Review has been drafted and is currently with the agency stakeholders and Chief Officers for consultation. The key issues of this Report will be presented to the Board at the January meeting with a final decision to be made in February.

WorkCover mid-term report

The Board noted an update on the mid-term review of the WorkCover evaluation conducted between September and December 2007.

They noted the effort and work from all agencies to confirm specific requirements with WorkCover and acknowledged the challenges when dealing with volunteers and formulating WorkCover policies within the service.

STRATEGIC SERVICES

The Director, Strategic Services provided the Board with an update on the governance structure for the sector. This included an update on the progress of strategic planning within the sector and the review of the committees currently operating. A reporting and project management system is being explored for application in SAFECOM in the first instance.

The Board also endorsed the three-year internal audit plan. The plan will be submitted to the Justice Portfolio Leadership Council for noting.

Volunteer Referral and Consultation Policy

The Board noted that the policy had been reissued to include comment and feedback from consultations with the State Emergency Service Volunteer Association.

The Board endorsed the Volunteer Referral and Consultation Policy.

Interim Governance Policy

The Board noted that the Governance Policy had previously been approved by the Board. Due to work currently being done to finalise the governance structure, an interim policy is required to adhere to audit requirements. The Board agreed that the Interim Policy will be reviewed in six months (June 2009) to also allow for any amendments to legislated responsibilities arising from the implementation of the recommendations from the review of the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005*. It was also noted that section 4.1 (Commission Charter) be updated to remove reference to the attachment.

The Board also discussed the attached Charter and agreed that this needs to be updated and reviewed in June 2009.

The Director, Strategic Services also advised that a policy register will be developed to manage and track the approval and review of SAFECOM Policies.

Risk and Resource modelling

The Board endorsed the concept of developing Emergency Services Delivery Standards.

SAFECOM Board meeting schedule to June 2009

Date	Location	Papers due
28 January	Adelaide	19 January
26 February	Metro-east	16 February
26 March	Adelaide	16 March
30 April	Adelaide	20 April
28 and 29 May	Kingston SE	18 May
25 June	Adelaide	15 June

Helping communities to recover

Logistics Functional Service

The Logistics Functional Service (LFS) is an integral part of South Australia's emergency management arrangements that contributes towards the recovery of a community from major incidents, emergencies or disasters by supporting emergency service operations.

From 1 December this year SAFECOM assumed responsibility for provision of the LFS. In the event of a declaration of an identified incident, major emergency or disaster, SAFECOM will:

- coordinate the acquisition and delivery of goods and services as requested by other functional services eg. the fire services, SES, Community Services, Agriculture and Animal Services etc.
- in a collaborative partnership with the Salvation Army Emergency Services mobilise and coordinate catering services to support affected community members and emergency service personnel in the field, and
- coordinate the provision of bulk supplies of food and other goods to emergency relief and recovery centres.

Throughout November over 60 personnel from a range of agencies (SAFECOM, DCS, SAPOL, AGD, CAA and LSC) have been trained to fulfil a range of roles within the LFS.



David Norton, Director Corporate Services has been appointed to the role of Logistics State Controller, with Brenton Keen, Trevor Pearce and Mike Pearce appointed as Deputy State Controllers. They, with a core group of other SAFECOM personnel will staff 365-day-a-year rosters for On-call State Controller and On-call Functional Service Liaison Officer (FSLO) respectively.

Rosters to staff both the State Emergency Centre (SEC) and the Logistics State Control Centre (to be located in the Level 6 Meeting Room, 60 Waymouth Street) will be established from the larger team, when required.

In addition, LFS team members will be deployed forward, eg. to Regional Coordination Centres, Zone Emergency Centres, as required.

LFS Standard Operating Procedures and other supporting documents are in the final draft stage.



For any further information about the LFS please contact Brenton Keen on 8463 4117



Brenton Keen is meeting with other Functional Services through this month and January 2009 to ensure the LFS understands their expectations, and to inform them of LFS capabilities.



Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department
Emergency Management Australia

National Emergency Volunteer Support Fund

There is general acceptance that climate change is likely to result in an increased frequency and severity of emergencies including heatwave, severe storms, floods, tropical cyclones and, indirectly, serious bushfire. These events have significant economic consequences but also impact adversely on the lives of individuals, families and communities, particularly the vulnerable members of our communities.

Of vital importance in protecting communities from the effects of emergencies is our national pool of volunteers who represent a critical element of Australia's national emergency management capability. Those volunteers play a significant role in assisting communities in responding to and recovering from the impact of emergencies. Some 500,000 people in Australia volunteer their services in some emergency management capacity and 350,000 of those are directly involved in emergency first response, principally through the various rural fire services and the State Emergency Services.

To ensure ongoing protection of communities it is critical that all volunteer agencies maintain their current levels of staffing and training.

The Australian Government is offering funding in 2009/10 through the National Emergency Volunteer Support Fund for projects which specifically address the recruitment, retention and training of

volunteers. The Fund is managed by Emergency Management Australia (EMA), a Division within the Attorney-General's Department.

The Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, will soon be seeking grant applications from eligible organisations.

How to Apply

Applications will be invited from late November 2008. Guidelines, application forms and details on how to apply will be available on the EMA website or by contacting the Community Engagement team at EMA after that date.

Email: cd@ema.gov.au

Phone: 02 6256 4608

Fax: 02 6256 4653

Website: www.ema.gov.au/communityengagement

The closing date for applications is Friday 6 March 2009.



EMA

'safer sustainable communities'

Volunteers

Volunteer & employer recognition



The final series of presentations in the Volunteer and Employer Recognition and Support Program (VERSP) was held on Thursday 27 November at Murray Bridge as part of the SAFECOM November Board meeting.

Twenty-five employers and self-employed volunteers were recognised for their support and contribution to the fire and emergency services sector.



The event was attended by over 60 guests and several prominent community members including Mayors Alan Arbon from the Rural City of Murray Bridge and Ian Mann from the Mid Murray Council, who also acknowledged the work of volunteers in their region.



Official proceedings included a presentation by Commissioner of Fire and Emergencies, David Place to regional stakeholders and volunteers on the SA Fire and Emergency Services Strategic Direction, specifically focussing on issues within the Murray Bridge Region.

Sixty years of assisting the Stirling community

Turning 60, whether as an individual or an organisation is memorable and, a cause for celebration. When this milestone marks 60 years of dedication and service to the community - it takes on an even greater significance.

On Sunday 23 November the Stirling CFS Brigade celebrated its 60 birthday with a fitting event attended by the Minister for Emergency Services Michael Wright, members of parliament, local council members, past and current members of the Brigade, their colleagues from SAFECOM, the MFS, SES and SAPOL, families and well wishers from the community.

The day's celebrations commenced with a Bushfire Readiness Workshop conducted by the Community Education Branch and included a sausage sizzle, emergency rescue demonstrations and station tours.

The Stirling Emergency Fire Service was formed in May 1948 and was the first to be registered in the district. It is recognised as being one of the top ten stations in South Australia. From defending the community during the horrific bushfire of 1939, traveling over the border to help the Wimmalee community in New South Wales in 1994, to transporting water around the town during times of drought, the Brigade has demonstrated the true spirit of community.

The Brigade provides specialist roles in Road Crash Rescue and Hazmat across the Mt Lofty CFS Group and into neighbouring Groups.

With 42 active fire fighters, all of whom are volunteers, the Brigade responds to around 350 calls a year as well as training and general public relations activities. There are 22 Life Members of the Brigade.

Chief Officer CFS, Mr Euan Ferguson presented a plaque to the Stirling CFS to mark the special occasion.



Brigade members demonstrate what they do so well



Well wishers and members of the community help celebrate the Brigade's birthday

Our Staff - recognising excellence

SA Emergency Service Medals and Ministerial Commendations

SA Emergency Service Medals and Ministerial Commendations were awarded to members of emergency services organisations in recognition of their outstanding contributions to emergency services in South Australia.

The Awards are part of the Australian system of honours and awards to recognise diligent and outstanding service in the organisations that protect life and property at personal risk. This is the seventh year of these Awards and it is the State's way of recognising and rewarding the tireless and extraordinary work of those who contribute to community safety through the operational emergency service organisations and associated agencies.

The Emergency Services Medal recognises 'distinguished and/or meritorious services of the highest order' and are presented in recognition of the significant contribution to emergency services in South Australia. Ministerial commendations recognise significant effort, bravery or service and meritorious or courageous action in emergency services.

Emergency Services Medals

Wayne Atkins	CFS
Ian Taverner	CFS
Richard Mould	CFS
Michael Scott	MFS
Ramon Kruger	MFS
Dean James	MFS
Alex Prodanovski	MFS
Jennifer Vincent	SES

Ministerial commendations

Mark Hewitson	CFS	Shane Leedham	SES
Quentin Russ	CFS	John Edge	SES
Andrew Lawson	CFS	Lynette Little	SES
Lee Watson	CFS		
Shaun Ruxton	MFS		
John McNaughton	MFS		
Trevor Pearce	SAFECOM		
Peter Nygaard	SAFCEOM		

SAFECOM Employee Recognition Awards

One of the most fundamental and important common threads across our sector is the reliance on our people.

As a sector we are not only tasked with keeping our communities safe, but as a state government agency, we are also expected to meet the demands this puts on us. The success with which we meet these challenges is proof of the level of commitment and the level of excellence that exists within our staff. These instances also serve as reminders of the willingness of our staff to get behind the sector and support both the organisation and the community.

In recognition of this excellence and level of commitment, SAFECOM announced the Employee Recognition Awards to recognise and reward the excellence of its staff.

Congratulations to:

- **Val Johns** who received an **Outstanding recognition award** for going above and beyond the call of duty
- **David Papagni** who received an **Achiever award** for outstanding results in challenging circumstances
- **Martin Smith** who received an **Innovator award** for his ability to look outside the square and achieve innovative improvements to services/operations.
- **Julie Frittum** who received the **Team work award** for her contribution to promoting a positive office environment.

Martin was unable to receive his Award in person due to his absence for illness and we wish him well.

Award recipients were nominated by their peers and assessed by a panel comprising Directors and nominated representatives of staff.



Community Engagement

Exercise 'Buried Fox'

Often, a sad consequence of bushfire is the loss of livestock. Ineffectual disposal of the carcasses poses a threat to the health of a community and its environment.

How prepared are our rural communities to be able to deal with the impacts, threats and consequences of bushfires especially relating to the disposal of dead livestock?

This was the subject of the Department of Primary Industries and Resources South Australia's (PIRSA) exercise 'Buried Fox' - a staged scenario focussing on the impact of fire on chicken and pig farms.

The aim of the exercise was to validate planning arrangements within the chicken and pig farm industries with respect to the threats, impacts and consequences arising from bushfires. Growers within these two industries contributed to what proved to be a most useful and robust discussion. A major portion of the exercise was devoted to exploring issues relating to the disposal of large numbers of carcasses.

Representatives from SAFECOM's Emergency Management Services joined members of the rural farming community and other government agencies to explore the preparedness of these communities when faced with this risk.

The exercise, conducted at the SARDI Lenswood facility, took a hypothetical discussion format and identified the planning processes needed to prepare for the onset of bushfire attack as well as business continuity arrangements required for the aftermath of major fires at large chicken and pig farms.

The disposal of chicken carcasses proves a more difficult exercise because despite their relatively small size, dead chickens contain a high water content which causes the carcasses to quickly turn to a putrid "mush" and hence their physical removal is not simple, particularly when the task involves clearing sheds, each of which holds 50,000 birds.



Pictured at Exercise "Buried Fox", Left to Right: Snr. Sgt. Russell Dippy (SAPOL Emergency and Major Events Section), Tony McLoughlin (SA Water/State Recovery Office), Dr. Heather Smith (Senior Veterinary Officer, PIRSA), Philip Schmidt (Chair, South Australian Farmers' Federation, Chicken Meat Section), Brian Holecek (CFS), Allan McDougall (SES, Exercise Facilitator)

Building partnerships

Enhancing the capacity and capability of others

Natural disasters do not conform to jurisdictional boundaries and, in this environment of fast climate change, there is strong recognition of the need to support emergency management capability at all levels of government throughout Australia.

Being key players at a community level, local councils play an important role in the response to and recovery from an emergency or disaster event. In addition to supporting its community to recover from emergencies, local government have an important role in planning and preparing for emergencies and in undertaking activities to mitigate the effects of emergencies.



Pictured at the training course, from left to right: Mike Thomas, Department Manager, Development and Environmental Services ACC, Anita Benovic, Team Leader, Environmental Health Services, ACC, Allan McDougall, SES, Course Instructor, Louis Palumbo, Team Leader, Development Services, ACC

The training modules *Introduction to Emergency Management* and *Introduction to Emergency Risk Management* conducted by SAFECOM's Emergency Management Services are aimed specifically at building the capacity and capability of local government councils in the event of a major disaster or emergency.

Recently, staff from the Adelaide City Council, joined staff from other agencies including the Red Cross, the State Recovery Office, the SES, DECS, SAPOL, DFEEST and the Flinders Medical Centre at a training day in emergency management held at the State Emergency Centre.

The demand for these two multi-agency courses has been such that they have been repeated almost monthly during the past year.

Keeping our communities safe

Language poses no barrier for safety education

A group of newly arrived migrants from East Turkistan were recently given an overview on home fire safety.

The South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS), Community Safety Department was part of a 'Safer Communities Day' at the Wandana Community Centre.

Community Safety Officer Ted Templer and colleagues from the Oakden Fire Station joined representatives from SAPOL, DECS, Worksafe SA, and other groups to help the newly arrived families understand how they can help in making their homes and communities safer.

The event was organised by the Centre's co-ordinator Ms Eugenia Torrealba who did a tremendous job of organising and assisting all groups that attended.

The firefighters from Oakden ran two sessions explaining their roles and the equipment on the fire appliance.

A visual display and various handout material on home fire safety and smoke alarm information was set up and CSO Templer ran several small group sessions on basic home fire safety. Whilst the families were slow to come forward at first, with a bit of coercing and prodding by Ms Torrealba they soon joined in.

Although language posed a barrier at the start and made the delivery of information a bit difficult at times, patience and goodwill on both sides prevailed and it was not long before everyone was joining in - especially the children who showed a keen interest in the big red fire truck.

'It was gratifying to be a part of this day', CSO Templer said, 'it is never too early to learn about safety in the home and we look forward to being a part of next year's Safer Communities Day'.

Ms Torrealba expressed the sentiments of the day best when she said, 'It appeared that both the MFS staff and the families learnt a lot from each other today'.

SA Safer Community Awards - Virginia Safety in Emergencies project



The South Australian Dept of Families and Communities emergency risk project based in Virginia was awarded a high commendation in the prestigious national Safer Community Awards last month.

The Safer Communities awards are sponsored by Emergency Management Australia to recognise best practice and innovation by organisations and individuals in building safer communities across Australia.

Sixteen Australian Safer Communities Awards, promoted by Emergency Management Australia were presented by the Australian Attorney-General Robert McClelland.

The *Virginia Safety in Emergencies* project was born out of the November 2005 floods. Through much community collaboration, especially with the CFS, SES, the local Vietnamese Farmers' Association and Red Cross, a program of increased hazard awareness has successfully enhanced the capacity of the Virginia community - increasing their capability to respond to future disasters.

The project was recognised for its significance and appeal in identifying innovative ways of helping individuals and communities during challenging emergencies