

## **AAVFBA report for CFSVA AGM 2011**

### AAVFBA Business Planning Workshop

Last November Ken Schulz and Roger Flavell attended the planning workshop in Sydney along with the other delegates. The Executive director Russell Cook had been employed just before the 2010 AGM in late August, and with the help of Kevin Nuttall a strategic plan was developed for the Assembly.

One of the key parts of the plan was for Russell to win some corporate sponsorship to fund his position and hopefully build up a bit of a cash reserve for projects as necessary. Unfortunately this hasn't gone to plan and at this point the results are pretty disappointing.

Russell met with the Federal AG on 2 occasions late last year about the DGR and PBI status for volunteer emergency services. Other issues included in those discussions were the restoration of paid leave for public servants while attending emergencies with their brigades, rationalizing liability protection across states and territories and road safety issues relating to volunteering. There were a number of letters written and received about the issues mentioned above as well as the new WHS regulations, heavy vehicle fatigue legislation, and speed reduction past emergency workers.

The AGM of the assembly was held at Penrith on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> of August 2011 just prior to the AFAC conference.

The AGM was chaired by the outgoing president Alan Holley, and there were delegates from ACT Volunteer Brigades Association, Association of Volunteer Fire Brigades WA Inc, NSW Rural Fire Service Association, Queensland Auxillary Firefighter Association Inc, Rural Fire Brigades Association of Queensland, Tasmania Retained Volunteer Firefighters Association, Tasmania Volunteer Fire Brigades Association Inc, United Fire Brigades Association of NZ and the Country Fire Service Volunteer Association of SA.

### **11 CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION**

Moved by Bruce Corbett and seconded by Brian McKinlay

***“That the Constitution be changed as follows:***

#### **2.1 Aims**

***The aims of the Assembly will be to assist its member associations and foster the interests of volunteer fire fighters throughout Australia and New Zealand in accordance to the Constitution.***

## **2.2 Functions**

***The Assembly will work to create an environment where its members can benefit from the actions and decisions of the organisation, and will prepare, adopt and maintain a five year rolling Strategic Plan which sets targets and measures outcomes whilst maintaining the following core values and functions:***

- (a) Good Governance: have an open, accessible and accountable Board which is in touch with the existing and future needs of its members.***
- (b) Fairness and Responsiveness: ensure that all members are treated with dignity, respect and fairness.***
- (c) Staff: appointed staff are critical to the achievement of the goals of the Assembly and it is important to commit to their continued development within the organisation.***
- (d) Service and Improvement: strive to meet the needs of member organisations, and continually to look for ways to improve the service provided to enhance benefits to member associations.***
- (e) Communication and Engagement: deliver accurate, timely and relevant information, involving an open exchange of ideas and information with its members.***
- (f) Advocacy: act as an advocate for its members on issues that are best resolved at a national level either in Australia or New Zealand or both.***
- (g) Representation and Appointments: to make comments and representations to the Australian and New Zealand governments, their departments and agencies, as well as to industry and the media, on strategic issues affecting volunteer fire fighters in Australia and New Zealand, and to appoint delegates to any fora or conventions dealing with issues that may affect or benefit volunteer fire fighters.***
- (h) Property and Income: shall be applied solely to wards the promotion of the aim of the Assembly and no part of that property or income will be paid or otherwise distributed, directly or indirectly, to the members, except in good faith in the promotion of the Aims or in achieving targets listed in the Strategic Plan.”***

The new board was elected as follows.

President - Terry Hunter (WA), Vice – President Alan Holley (NSW), Dick Irwin, Bruce Corbett and Roger Flavell.

## **PROPOSED COMMONWEALTH VOLUNTEER RESPECT ACT**

Moved by Dick Irwin and Seconded by David Taaffe

***“That the proposed Commonwealth Volunteer Respect Act be approved in principle be accepted”***

The assembly agreed that the ED prepare a proposal seeking free immunization and related health examinations, as a way of the Government showing some appreciation for the time and effort put in by volunteers.

Other business from the AGM

The Assembly supported

1. Using GPS referencing from mobile phones that have dialed 000 for faster more accurate incident location.
2. Reducing the administration requirements for volunteer brigades to access DGR status.
3. Reducing the speed limit to 25 KPH past emergency worker in line with road workers, school buses etc.
4. Exempting volunteer fire brigade personnel from the driver fatigue legislation.
5. Developing planning procedures for catastrophic events.
6. Seeking organizational structures by associations that best protect and promote the interests of their volunteer fire brigade personnel, in particular the right of RFBSQ to seek a separate structure.

Since the AGM the following submission was made urging the Government to include volunteer firefighters in this amendment.

SUBMISSION TO SENATE INQUIRY CONSIDERING  
SAFETY, REHABILITATION AND COMPENSATION AMENDMENT  
(FAIR PROTECTION FOR FIREFIGHTERS) BILL 2011

A flyer is in the final stages of development to promote the assembly.

Russell along with Queensland and NSW are sorting out the financial details, relating to some of the expenses and the ED's wage.

Russell is struggling with how to raise funds for the Assembly and his continued employment.

Roger Flavell