



# The Country Fire Service Volunteers Association

*"Representing the interests of CFS Members"*



## Presidents Report AGM October 2014

While we may have thought the previous twelve months was busy, that has proved to be nothing compared to what has happened this past year.

The executive continued to put pressure on the government over the presumptive legislation up to and during the election, to a point where we were called into the Premiers office to get a lecture about continually kicking them. We did get a commitment eventually to have a review of the legislation if they won the election, while the liberals promised all CFS members would be included. Given the government was returned, they have kept their promise to review the legislation and we are currently going through the process.

Most will remember the amount of work everybody put in before the election developing the policies and the policy book, which was very well received by all it was to whom it was presented. Unfortunately we struggled to make any significant gains from it but it is still a valuable resource that we can use over the next few years.

During the election period, Ernst and Young were called in to provide the government with a report on the sector and to assess if there was anywhere money could be saved, and we did have some discussion with them. The EY report is up on the SAFECOM website if you want a bit of bedtime reading.

Since the election the Government indicated that they wanted to look at ways to create savings across the emergency services, and too this point we have participated in a number of meetings with the Minister, two roundtable discussions with various parties of the emergency services, plus some individual meetings with other personal involved.

We also between the executive attended all of the regional visits the Minister made, some 13 or 14 places, which has been good in many ways, as it has allowed us to discuss issues with personal across the State, however it has taken up a lot of time.

Sonia has been on trips to WA, Victoria and Queensland with the Minister recently to assess how their Emergency Sectors are run.

Emergency Services Levy increases have certainly, put a lot of people off side in the last few weeks, and is another issue we have had to become involved in, as it threatens to cause massive disruption to the service as volunteers and farmers direct their frustration towards the government.

Minister Piccolo's statement at most of the Sector Reform meetings across the state of "we can't afford to lose one volunteer" seems to be a rather forlorn wish now, and the government have shot themselves in the foot by being too greedy, some smaller more appropriate steps possibly would have avoided the mess they now find themselves in. Another statement by the minister as he traversed the state was that with the 50% remission removed, the levy would increase by approximately 100%, which I think most people had accepted would be reasonable, however we now know in many cases it was 100% times by a fair amount.

The issues of ESL increases, and Sector Reform have united volunteers across the state, and the government I believe has made a mess of what they were trying to achieve.

To the good outcomes

25 km/h past emergency vehicles and personal working on roads is finally being practiced on the highway, it has only taken some 9 years to bring it to fruition, however it proves if we are willing to hang in there the

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wheel will turn. Well done to all who had an involvement in that process over the years, I guess the most disappointing part was, there were all and sundry at the launch but somehow we got left of the invitation list, even though we had spent so much effort and time getting it up and running.

The CFSVA card is starting to roll out, and Jeff has been with Mogas to several brigades distributing cards and signing up more businesses. While we would have liked it to be further advanced than what it is, I think that as your executive we have prioritised the issues that are most important for all our members.

There has been many other issues that have been dealt with over the past twelve months on a day to day or weekly basis, and the phone calls between the executive I am confident has kept more than one phone company in business over the last year.

In this position your appreciation for those around you grows enormously as it is almost difficult to keep an eye on all that is going on, and to that end I appreciate the massive effort that has been put in by all of you this past year, but more importantly Sonia and Kirsti for the effort they put in week after week, and Andy and Jeff for the time and thought and effort that they have brought to their positions in the CFSVA.

I keep telling Sonia that she has to have her leave, and she does, however she looks at me shrugs her shoulders and says when?? And that has been a bit how this year has been, while it is comforting to know we have staff that are extremely dedicated to their positions, we don't want them burning themselves out. Sonia you have to take some leave!

Andy I think it probably would be more effective use of your time if we brought you a berth at a marina along the coast of Adelaide here, where you could moor the yacht probably have more time to go for a sail, and be ready for a meeting whenever the Minister decided he wanted one. We certainly appreciate the amount of time you have spent getting from KI to Adelaide and other places, and we value very much your input.

Jeff should have brought a yearly ticket for the train in from Gawler, as he was close to their most frequent customer this year, besides the thousands of Km's he ran up in his own vehicle attending meetings across the state, which I think he used as an excuse to Leanne so he was able to buy his new vehicle. Jeff as with Andy, I and everybody here certainly appreciate the effort and the way you have thrown yourself into the role. We will get to have that quiet beer someday, but it will probably be when we have handed this all on to our successors and we have a little time to sit down and reflect.

To the Management committee and the other delegates we always appreciate your valuable contributions.

To Russell Branson who has stood down as the Eyre Peninsula branch president and has been involved with the Volunteer association for many many years, thank you for your enormous contribution.

To John Warren from the Yorke Peninsula Branch who also has been involved for many years.

To Trevor Rainey who stepped in a branch president of Mt Lofty for the last couple of years.

Thank you for all for your contribution to the association.

To Neil and John who have recently taken on roles as branch presidents, welcome to the Management committee, and those who have taken on delegate roles to this association welcome.

We look forward to another interesting year unfolding.

Roger Flavell

President Country Fire Service Volunteers Association

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