

# 5<sup>th</sup> Annual State Auxiliary Conference Dromana - 2008

Minutes of Conference held on  
Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2008  
Dromana Fire Station

*Conference Opened at 1000*

## **Apologies:**

Geoff Conway - CFA Deputy Chief Officer, Emergency Management; Gary Sanford - General Manager, Dromana Branch Bendigo Community Bank; Alexandra; Ararat; Bairnsdale; Beaufort; Casterton; Cohuna; Elmore; Irymple; Kyneton; Merbein; Newham; Warrnambool; Warragul & Werribee Auxiliaries.

## **Attendees:**

Ballarat; Ballarat City; Barongarook; Carrum Downs; Dromana, Frankston; Hallam; Hastings; Hoppers Crossing; Langwarrin; Mildura; Moorooduc; Mt Buninyong; Mt Martha; Murrabit; Pakenham; Point Cook; Red Hill; Rye; Sassafras/Ferny Creek; Swan Hill; Sebastopol; The Basin & Wendouree Auxiliaries.

## **Guest Speakers and Special Guests:**

Steven Warrington - CFA Deputy Chief Officer, Operations  
Gary Lyttle; AFSM - Chairman Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria  
Lieutenant Rob Waterson; AFSM - State President VUFBA  
Ex Capt. Hans van Hamond; AFSM - Chairman, VFBV Auxiliary Working Party  
Lieutenant Timothy Desmond; VUFBA Region 8  
Lieutenant Dean Anderson - Generation Y Project, Region 14  
Mrs Gill Mullenger - Former Chair, Teenage Road Accident Group (TRAG)  
Mrs Rowanne Wakefield-Payne - Community Member, Bendigo Bank (Dromana)  
Dr Beth Wilson - State Health Services Commissioner  
Ms Joanne Richards - CFA Catering Project Officer

## **Welcome:**

Auxiliary members, Guest Speakers, and other distinguished guests were welcomed to the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Auxiliary State Conference - Dromana 2008 by MC  
1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Timothy Desmond (Dromana).

## **Opening of Conference:**

MC invites Captain Ben Griffiths (Dromana) and Mrs Shirley Desmond, President Dromana Auxiliary to officially open the conference.

## **Minutes from the 2007 meeting adopted:**

Moved: Marlene Lawson (Murrabit)

Seconded: Tamara Ahern (The Basin)

## **Business arising from the 2007 minutes:**

Nil

## First Guest Speaker

CFA Deputy Chief Officer  
Steven Warrington

Where could CFA be in the future? Are we Brigades or stations? What role do you and I have within CFA? Ensure that we are Brigades now and into the future.

Steven Warrington takes us through a PowerPoint presentation of various pictures as pictures tell a thousand words.

- Photo of 9/11 disaster - America is one of the biggest countries in the world - 300 million people live in the USA; and 20 million people live in Australia. US Troops are currently in Iraq, Afghanistan, and in Georgia. They also build their own fire trucks. On 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001, the US lost 400+ fire-fighters. In NY they call fire stations 'fire houses' as it relates to the fact they live in their houses. On Steve's recent visit to the US, when talking to a US Fire Officer he said "I had a gun pulled on me 3 times throughout Cyclone Katrina not by looters but by other emergency services personnel. Why? Because we were told to search a building, and another agency was also searching the same building, and they said we couldn't share searching the same building".
- Photo of a Memorial service after 9/11 - US President George Bush attended the memorial service. Thousands of people turned up, in the US hundreds of fire-fighters die each year.
- Photo of a memorial plaque showing names of fire-fighters killed during 9/11 - In the US Fire Service, they have the best trucks and the best trained people, but so many fire-fighters die because they are trained to follow orders. Their answer to fire incidents is to put all their resources into the situation. In Australia, we have had fires that are just as big, but with no loss of life and less loss of property. The US Fire Service asks, 'how do we do it?'
- Photo of PIFSA (Pacific Islands Fire Services Australia) - MFB look after the Samoan Fire Services and CFA look after the Fijian. The current Chief Officer of Fiji is the former Regional Officer of CFA Region 11. Why do I put this picture up? I want to show the big fire stations in Fiji that are providing the service to the community.
- Photo of a Fijian ceremony - In Fiji they call it NFA - the National Fire Authority. CFA set up the Fijian fire service and this is why the uniforms look similar and have the same crest.
- Photo of Bus in Fiji full of people - I want to show you their way of life, it is a very simple society.
- Photo of Luvuka Fire Station, pre-2007 - This is a career integrated station (tin shed that looks like a CFA fire station in rural Victoria in the 1940's)
- Photo of Nadi Fire Station in 2008 - Nadi owned a little Japanese fire truck that, in the CFA, we could fit into a toilet here it was that small. This fire truck looked after all of Nadi. They all sleep and live in one room at the fire station.
- Photo of Singatoka Fire Station - In Fiji, they have nothing. We gave them some old CFA helmets. If you visit, you will still see 'Schlipalius' or 'Warrington' on their helmets!! They are very strong on family and community and still live in their village environment. They are very religious and church people. If we have a Tsunami event here, it ain't going to be the Dromana Fire Brigade or Police station it will be the community looking after themselves, they will survive by us empowering their community.
- Photo of a Boat with 120 people on it in Fiji.

- Photo of CFA fire events - Hallam Factory Fire - I've explained the US and Fijian Fire Services. CFA is in the middle of the two services. CFA is the fifth largest urban fire service in Australasia. The Hallam Factory Fire is the biggest fire Steven Warrington has ever been too. CFA looks after 60% of Victoria and Steve can't find a bigger emergency wildfire service in the world. A lot of brigades are currently buying defibrillators and becoming EMR (Emergency Medical Response) brigades such as Mornington, Edithvale, and Berwick. We are saving lives in different environments - CFA is involved in high angle rescue, low angle rescue, Coastguard, EMR, etc. In the old days, you would just get on a truck and go to fire calls and you would have fun doing it. Now we have so many opportunities to train for. We are Brigades and we represent our communities. Let's not lose the passion!
- Photos of food run to Gippsland farmers - In these stories there is nothing about fire; it's about the Brigades themselves. Two years ago on the food run during the Gippsland fires. Some of our key volunteers said that they were concerned about the volunteers in Gippsland. We decided to do a fundraiser - if every volunteer put in one can of food, we would donate it to this part of the state. Two big convoys left the Melbourne area to support the drought stricken farmers and other people that were doing it tough. These photos were about the people involved in the convoy. People donated fresh meat and we had to do special convoys to deliver the meat. I'm proud to be part of CFA! I've taken the opportunity recently to tour the State.
- Photo of an event, "Drought Buster Events - in Feb & March" - we provided services to drought stricken families. They identified that suicide rates had rising rapidly in this area. They ran these seminars which included motivational speakers. The first thing they did was invite the blokes along, but they wouldn't come. Then they invited the women which brought the men along. There was nothing about CFA recruitment or fire safety education and everyone wore casual clothes. We gave out free massages and health checks. These sessions were run at a number of fire stations around the State. We actively involve ourselves in the community.
- Photo of Kakoda trail trip - The Kakoda trail which CFA staff, people from the North East and volunteers attended. \$70K was raised for the Royal Children's Hospital. If you looked closely at CFA Brigade involvement, you would probably find they also raise money for their own local hospitals, not just Good Friday Appeal and the Royal Children's Hospital.
- Photo of CFA vehicle driving through flooded Paynesville - CFA are now also assisting with emergency management during floods. About a week ago, there was a house fire in Lang Lang. After the fire, a CFA volunteer took it on themselves to take the family into their own home that night after their house was burnt down. SES is a good organisation, every time there is a search and rescue - CFA will be standing beside them. CFA is always there!

What I want to empower here, is to recognise the important role that each and everyone plays. A fire station is the bricks and mortar, the brigade is the people and the community. If there was a large fire, the community know where to go. In country towns, it is either the footy ground or the local CFA fire station. The role the Auxiliaries play is significant. When you put a blue shirt on, you want to see the fire trucks. It is the people in the auxiliaries that pull us through. We need to make sure we hang onto it. We need to make sure that we are Brigades and not Stations. That's the message that I want to leave you with.

Some brigades are really struggling with 6-7 members, so we need to look at alternate ways to run our business. If you join our brigade you must be male, 6 foot tall, built like a station, have to come every week for training, complete minimum skills - at the end of the day they say they don't want to do the work! Some people just want to specialise in a particular skill e.g. EMR, or just get on the pumper or tanker and nothing else. At Mt Martha brigade they have the Brigade Support Team (BST), what they did is recruit from different environments e.g. Retirement homes, and encouraged them to do the catering for Brigade events. During the Gippsland fires, they wanted a role to do and they did the catering. They have a group of people just interested in doing that. We want to make CFA an organisation of choice. Ask yourselves - What are we looking for? What are all the things we can continue to do to support our service and take a holistic view to run the Brigade?

**Question:** Vicky (The Basin) - Has the authority considered Auxiliaries being registered members with voting on operational members. Can members be registered and not have voting powers?

**Response:** - If Auxiliary members join a brigade, there is conflict about them being able to vote. Steve's understanding is that you can. There is the opportunity to have the rule that certain people within the brigade can't vote. Steve believes that everyone has the right to vote. You can, but in his opinion, I don't want brigades within brigades. Don't want to have US and THEM. Steve ran for 10-12 years in a brigade. I've seen it in running teams as well. Yes you can, but personally try to stay away if you can.

**Question:** Vicky (The Basin) - Some brigades will only register 20 or 30 members.

**Response:** - Some brigades have a waiting list, especially in outer metro areas. Try and keep it at a healthy active number and change the dynamics of the brigade. I know when I was a member we wanted to vote to kick out the old guy, but we needed to say that you can't get on the trucks. You don't want to kick them out, but you don't want 70 people in the brigade. We need structure. I was brought up that you all get a uniform, and the rest are in reserve. Some blue shirts still see that is how to do business. Gary Lyttle (VBFV) says you can have your own brigade constitution. If there are 70 people in the Brigade - 10 people can do catering, 10 people can do EMR etc.

## **MORNING TEA:**

## Second Guest Speaker

Lieutenant Dean Anderson (Riddles Creek)  
“Generation Y - A Foundation for the Future”

Thank you for the opportunity to be able to talk this morning. Generation Y is the generation of young people - today's youth. About a year ago, in Region 14 we sat down with a group of our youth and asked them what they thought about CFA. From their answers we were able to come up with a report about what they enjoy and why are they involved.

### Session Objectives

- What is the Y Generation?
- The background of the OMNW Generation Y Project
- Key issues for young people
- How might we recruit and retain?
- How we see the future of CFA?

### What is the Y Generation?

- *Silent Generation* are born between 1925 - 1943
- *Baby Boomers* are born between 1943 – 1960
- **Generation X are born between 1960 - 1980**
- *Generation Y* are born between 1980 - 1995
- *Generation Z* are born between 1995 - 2008

### Our understanding...

- Love to network
- Rely more on electronic than personal communication skills
- Hence more 'electronic socialisation'
- Enjoy learning from older generations - (most of the time) Especially in a fire fighting sense
- We have a gap to fill – within the Y Generation, the ages of 15-30 year olds, they fill a small level of the population. As this age group grows up and other groups start to retire. As our fire brigades are aging, they are struggling to fill these gaps.

### The background of the Generation Y project

- Generation Y forum held April 2007
- Generation Y report launched July 2007 – from the report, we learnt more about how young people view the CFA.
- RPC Chairman's Forum held July 2007
- VRFBA and VUFBA Annual Meetings 2007
- CFA Board, March 2008



**State Youth Forum held Aug 2008**

## INSPECT model

Issues with...

- **N**ature
  - **S**ociety
  - **P**olitics
  - **E**conomy
  - **C**ulture
  - **T**echnology
- 
- Nature
    - Lack of water for fires and training
    - Inefficient energy Use – Going Green! Such as solar panels on the roof of the brigade, more windows to allow more light and energy efficient lighting. These were ideas suggested by the younger people.
  
  - Society
    - *Community / employer perceptions of CFA* – young people thought it would be great to change their perceptions. We do so much more than fight fires in our communities.
    - *Urbanisation* – We need a mass media campaign about volunteering and CFA.
    - *Becoming a very 'legislated' society* – more awareness that we've had to change.
    - *Diversity* – We see a lack of diversity across our Brigades compared to the schools that they attend. Our local fire brigade vs Our universities - Is your local fire brigade as culturally diverse as your university. We need to start and attract different cultures to join the organisation to better understand them and protect them.
  
  - Politics
    - We hope to improve staff and volunteer relationships – there is a distinction between staff and volunteers. The young people like to get together and work with one another and with other emergency services.
    - We would like to see closer relationships between Brigades and between other emergency services.
  
  - Economy
    - The cost of volunteering:
      - Petrol subsidy?
      - Vehicle registration subsidy?
      - Revised 'Member Benefits' program
  
  - Culture
    - Male domination
      - Media campaign for recruiting females
      - Child care schemes
    - Age gap between generations
    - Public (and inter-service) perception of CFA culture – are we seen to be proactive within the community?

- Technology
  - Technology not being embraced...
    - Training online
    - GPS
  - CFA not providing internet access
    - ADSL to all brigades
    - Members may start to use Brigades Online
    - Offer training for these services
  - Trucks are getting too BIG...
    - Opt for smaller appliances
    - Continue to involve volunteers in design and evaluation process
    - Less fuel requirements = lower greenhouse emissions
    - Less water carried = more emphasis on dry tactics.
  
- A few steps forward...
  - We see new material on Brigades Online
  - Cultural research project in volunteering for emergency services
  - New round of environmental grants
  - The revised "Member Benefits" program
  - Y Generation consulted on new Light tanker design
  - Recycled water tank for training @ fire stations
  - CFA / VBFV's current website project
  - We've broken barriers between age groups
  - Associations are getting on board with the Y Generation movement
  
- Issues for the future
  - How can we create a CFA that is attractive to young people?
  - Likewise, how could we appeal to young people to join Auxiliary groups?
  - How will we try to retain young people?
  
- A closing note...
  - We're looking forward to working together to shape CFA's future.
  - We assumed we'd see no action but it's great to see some progress already.

**Question:** Acting Director HR Paul Garvey (CFA HQ) - As a result of the work completed, between CFA and VFBV there was over 110 people that attended the Youth Forum, that is just one piece of work that we are currently doing around recruitment and retention. CFA are now working on an overall youth strategy, and we continue to develop the plan. We really want to hear people's views and thoughts on that.

## **Presenter 1**

**Mrs Gill Mullenger**

**Former Chair - Teenage Road Accident Group (TRAG)**

TRAG has been functioning on the Mornington Peninsula for the past 9 years, based on frustration and despair at the increasing number of road deaths involving young people on the Peninsula.

The former leader Captain of the Dromana Fire Brigade, Craig Solly, called a Community Meeting at the Dromana Fire Station in 1999. An open Forum was conducted on how we could make a difference to this increasing number of deaths. The meeting was attended by members of the local Fire Brigade, Police, Ambulance, Lions Club and Peninsula Road Safety Council representatives, along with young people and family members who had been directly affect by Road Trauma.

A TRAG presentation is a free service that runs for approx. 45 mins and is delivered to students in Years 11 & 12 at Secondary Schools on the Mornington Peninsula. A short video opens the presentation called 'Setting the Scene'. A representative from each Emergency Service (i.e. Police, Fire and Ambulance) then individually describes their roles at, and the affects of a serious Motor Vehicle Accident. Then victims or family members who have been affected by Road Trauma, describe their personal experiences. They describe their lives now, compared to their lives before, either being involved in a serious accident or losing a loved one, as a result of the serious accident.

Now in 2008, we are visiting over 20 schools at Year 12 level, VCAL students, Lord Somers Camp and Mal Noble and Terry Houses, giving individual presentations to Country Schools.

In Victoria alone, 99 young Victorians are killed on our roads every year. We urge you to take this idea back to your Brigade and local community and try, in your own way, to help make young people "be more responsible for their actions" when travelling the roads either as drivers or passengers".

Thank you and 'DRIVE FOR LIFE'!!!

For more details about the TRAG program visit:

[www.trag-vic.org](http://www.trag-vic.org) or if you would like to become involved, please call 0411 117 374

## Presenter 2

**Firefighter Rowanne Wakefield-Payne  
Community Member  
Bendigo Community Bank (Dromana Branch)**

Gary Sanford sends his apologies, but he is unable to attend. Rowanne Wakefield-Payne was on the steering committee of the Dromana Branch and will give a brief presentation.

A Community Bank gives money back to the community and it works on the 'franchise' of the bank. A steering committee of members is formed from within the community and they get together and decide if they would like to form a community bank. It is based on shareholders / members from within that specific branch, and you receive dividends if the business is successful.

The Dromana Brigade banks with the Bendigo bank, and we can request financial support from the bank if we need to. The Rye Branch has given back over \$1 million to the Rye community. Balnarring Branch has recently been formed, and Mt Eliza has started a steering committee. They are worthwhile in supporting and it's not hard to get money. Rye now has a youth centre. Schools, football clubs, Scout Halls and other community organisations on the Mornington Peninsula have received support. It's a great idea to support as it also supports the community and assists with funding.

## CFA Memberlink Program

**David & Irene**

CFA conducted a review of the Memberlink benefits program 12 months ago and received feedback about the program. They saw the program as key recognition of volunteers to the community. CFA has taken the feedback on board about members getting discounts. The program was relaunched in early 2008 with a new range of products. It's still seen as a work in progress with new ideas, products and businesses to join the program. Even as an Auxiliary member, you can get discounts to recognise the contributions that you make.

Before the relaunch, only 30 benefits were available, now over 250 different benefits are available. Benefits include: holiday accommodation, car rentals, movie tickets and giftcards. With the giftcards - people that use them properly can get 5% off petrol, liquor and groceries. If you purchase a card for \$100 it costs you \$95 with the 5% discount, but you can purchase \$100 worth of goods at participating stores. The card stays valid until you use the entire balance.

The reactions from people that are taking advantage is very positive. The giftcard process is a little involved, but does work to give you savings on everyday purchases. Member link display has been arranged in the lunch room, please come and see us and discuss the program further.

## **LUNCH** during the Lunch break **Lieutenant Rob Waterson; AFSM**

State President, Victorian Urban Fire Brigades Association, presented Mrs Gwynneth Loader with her 60 Year Auxiliary Jewel. *Gwynne is the only foundation member still serving the Auxiliary. She has been an Officer of the Auxiliary for 50 years, having held Secretary 1956-1959 and Treasurer 1961-2008. She is a Life Membership of both the Dromana Urban Fire Brigade & Dromana UFB Auxiliary.*

## Third Guest Speaker

**Dr Beth Wilson**

**State Health Services Commissioner**

Thanked the members of the Auxiliary for inviting Beth to speak, and congratulates Gwynne Loader on her award.

Complaints to the State Health Services Commissioner need to be in writing. Every hospital has a 'Complaints Liaison Officer' to read and act on hospital complaints.

Beth remembers a firefighter, when she worked on the Appeals Board. The fire fighter was knocked back on a workers compensation claim. Twenty years earlier, he was involved in a fire and stepped on a body during the clean up of the fire. Later with this case, he had a flash backs of this situation and required a compensation claim.

'Births Deaths & Marriages' have listened to customer feedback so that when a death certificate is posted to someone, it is posted with two envelopes. The outer envelope shows the address of the recipient, and when they open the envelope there is a letter and a warning sticker on the second envelope saying that it contains a death certificate and you may want to have someone present with you when reading. Beth was asked to work together with 'Births, Deaths & Marriages' to develop action from feedback received from its customers. Beth has since spoken to people who have received this new way of delivering death certificates, and they all say it is a better way, and the fact that they listened to what customers had to say was great!!!

What happens if the Viagra doesn't work? Nothing....

Beth's job as the State Health Services Commissioner is to receive complaints from people relating to health services. She can deal with any health service provider including medical, natural etc. We try to do our job by not setting people against each other. We do conciliation to talk to each other and resolve their issues and try and implement new techniques to stop these situations occurring again.

In some country areas, there is only one particular health provider which can be difficult if there has been a problem and you don't want to visit the only doctor in town. One lady, who suffered from chronic headaches, decided to start trying acupuncture. The acupuncturist did his thing with the needles, and put on a CD with some relaxing harp music. He then said just stay there and listen to this for the next 20 minutes and concentrate on your own breathing. After some time had passed, she had to go and pick up her kids from school, but when she called out, there was no response. No doctor, no receptionist, and the phone was on night switch. She was on the ground floor and flagged down a driver; he got the police and eventually was able to locate the doctor. The doctor had left the patient earlier and she was supposed to leave at 4.30, but no one came back to check that she had gone. This lady came to Beth and wanted assistance for quality improvement for future patients. The Dr in question was more than helpful. The quality improvements he put into place included stop watches and flashing lights to make sure this doesn't happen again The Dr gave the patient two free sessions as an apology. For Beth's office this was a great outcome.

Beth also works closely with the Medical Examinations Board (12 Boards in total) and Beth is one small part of the jigsaw puzzle.

Some kinds of complaints that are received can be kind of serious. Is anyone about to undergoing a hip replacement? 'Wrong side procedures' is when, for example, a right leg needs to be amputated, but they do the left instead. A complaint came when a right side hip replacement was required, but the left was done instead. Half way through the surgery the Dr realised this and thought that the patient was getting old and decided to do both hip replacements anyway. The patient then received the bill for BOTH surgeries. Her options were to go to court and sue for either negligence or battery. She couldn't sue for negligence, but could sue for battery but it would cost a lot more in lawyer's fees. The case was taken to Beth's office to negotiate the situation with the surgeon. After the discussion was held, the bill was re-issued (correctly) and they discussed what went wrong and how to prevent this from happening again.

Beth's office will also received other cases that are not about money, more on sensitivity issues. A baby died, and on the day of the funeral the bill arrived from the hospital addressed to "the Foetus family". A meeting was held, and the office in question apologised and started to use the baby's & family names. The office explained to the family what had been done to ensure that it wouldn't happen again, and the mother was able to get some closure.

Palliative care services – After a seminar, a lady came up and voiced that she wished that there was an office like this after her dad's funeral. Her mum got an invoice that said "dead" and she was so distraught for her mother and had no where to turn to for advise.

Kinds of complaints that are received include: wrong diagnoses, wrong treatments and failure of communication. If your sick, worried, out of your comfort zone, or don't understand the language used, you can seek advise from Beth's office.

A man was told he was going to die, and went straight into shock and couldn't see, hear or think. Beth would ask the patient, "what did the Dr tell you?" They would reply by saying, "all I can remember is hearing the word 'cancer' ". We have now introduced a tape, recording the diagnose to enhance the communication process, that way the patient can play it over again once the shock has settled.

All organisations have different kinds of language and jargon, and when this is used to communicate to the lay person, it can be very confusing i.e. communication failure. Some people can be very brave, even humorous when they are sick. Humour is very important in communicating to people. Even the processes of dying, can sometimes remind someone of a funny moment. Beth receives a phone call from Collarane (country town), advising that her mum's brother has had a brain haemorrhage playing pink pong. Mum and Beth go to the hospital and whilst there, they phone the rest of the family to say how he is doing. Beth thought that it would be more comforting for mum to talk to him than just stare at him in a hospital bed. Beth encouraged mum to talk to Uncle Bill, and was chatting away, when he responded saying that his name was Uncle Allen not Uncle Bill!!

Another role of Beth's job is to enforce the 'Health and Records Act'. The Government took the view that health information can sometimes be misused for other information. The Health and Records Act, states that anyone that collects health information, that it must be kept private & confidential and is not to be given to other organisations. This is extremely important with gyms and pharmacies etc. If the patient wants to see this information at any time, they can request to see it. Pharmacies are bound by confidentiality, but they are also shops.

**Question** - Do you get many complaints about lack of informed consent?

**Answer** - Unfortunately, I do. In hospitals, consent is a verb - have they been consented? Informed consent is a process not just a signature. Have used thumb prints as a signature as patients can't hold a pen successfully.

**Question** - You were talking before about giving recognition to people. My 17 year old son is a member of the SES and him and his friends acted at an incident near our house. When the ambulance arrived, they walked by this group of SES people with no thanks or appreciation. It didn't bother the kids, but it bothered me as they had gone out of their way to help and had no thanks for doing a good job.

**Answer** - The Health Services Commissioner is very proud of what they have done and has awarded there mum as stress ball.

**Question** - My 87 year-old Mum is in a nursing home, and has gotten ill and pressed the alarm, and she got taken to Morwell hospital in an ambulance. When she was discharged, there were no arrangements to get her home, and she was stranded at the hospital.

**Answer** - They should do discharge planning as part of the release. She should write to me so that the hospital can be approached and this issue can be worked on.

**Question** - Have Dr's got any compassion at all?

**Answer** - Most people that work in health services are under stressed and under resourced. Big communication issues within the Health Services sector.

**Question** - My mother in law was taken to a hospital in severe pain. Was then sent home after a shot of morphine, but ended up back in another hospital's emergency department later on. Then sent to another hospital for tests, and they could find nothing and wanted to send her home again. The family panicked as they knew she was not well, administration at the hospital told them to refuse to take her home. Later, she had emergency surgery for a bleeding ulcer. What are the legal ramifications?

**Answer** - Stick to your guns. Families shouldn't be put in that situation. Husband followed the Staffs orders. Hospital staff needs to learn efficient listening skills. People, who are busy running from emergency to emergency, need to learn to listen.

## Presenter 3

**Ex Capt. Hans van Hamond; AFSM  
Chairman  
VFBV Auxiliary Working Party**

At the 2007 conference, twelve people were elected for a working party and it was decided that the best way to get resolve of issues was through the VFBV website. The Working Party has met on four occasions (see blue sheets in your pack). The Working Party has been investigating to find out how many auxiliaries within CFA? There are lots of groups that we don't know about.

We started by contacted 1200+ brigades to identify how many auxiliary groups there are. This is not quite completed, but worthwhile as 161 Auxiliaries in the State have been identified. One brigade had only 6 members within the brigade and no auxiliary.

We also posted out questionnaires to Brigades to ask who has an active auxiliary. Who is the main Contact person? Is there any feedback on questions and issues within Auxiliaries? A big issue is the communication process between auxiliaries.

Flyers were sent to 1200 brigades from the mailing list on the VFBV website. Some brigades will not be able to get on the web and mailing will still be used as the key form of communication. From phone calls made to brigades, a lot of questions from auxiliaries exist and an important part of the website will be the communication of questions and answers – these are typical from lots of brigades.

The VFBV website ([www.vfbv.com.au](http://www.vfbv.com.au)) will include:

- Working Party members and their contact phone numbers.
- 'Issues of Interest' page – minutes from the 2008 Auxiliary Conference will be placed on the website.
- 'Contact Us' page is where you can make suggestions or ask questions. Questions and answers can then be posted on the website.

Chief Officer's Classification Paper - Each auxiliary within CFA is different. A number of auxiliaries want to become members of the brigade and some want to be just auxiliaries but separate from the brigade. This is up to each individual Brigade and auxiliary. Auxiliary members don't have to join the brigade, it is a choice.

In recent additions of 'Brigade' and 'Fireman' it stated that there in the 2008 budget there is a 'Welfare Fund'. This is available to help all volunteers that fall on hard times so they can get financial assistance. Urban association have had one for several years which looks after 250 brigades, not 1200 brigades. The budget received a one off payment of \$2 million. Auxiliaries that are registered with CFA are eligible to receive payments from that Welfare Fund. Also includes office staff, fire fighters and volunteers.

Auxiliary currently receive awards through the Urban & Rural Associations. When the two join together, a new award under VFBV will replace VUFBA & VRFBA awards for stand alone Auxiliaries. Auxiliaries that have become part of the brigade will receive the new CFA service award.

**Questions** - Can all auxiliary members be registered with the CFA as brigade members?

**Answers** - Some Brigade Captain's don't want auxiliaries' members under the Brigade as it out numbers voting at meetings. Ultimately, the Captain has the power.

**Question** - What are the advantages of being registered as a Brigade member as opposed to an auxiliary member?

**Answer** - Better insurance coverage and Welfare fund is made available.

**Question** - Can past auxiliary service be recorded on CFA's Resource Management System?

**Answer** - Photocopy of evidence that you attended a certain meeting and the date, duly signed by an authorised person (JP) and this is enough evidence to prove your service.

**Question** - Are auxiliaries required to close their bank account and have the funds in the Brigade account?

**Answer** - No, but the account must be under the umbrella of the Brigade.

**Question** - The apparent "phasing out" of Ladies Auxiliaries

**Answer** - Some auxiliaries have joined with Brigades and others have had men join and are just called 'Auxiliaries' not Ladies Auxiliaries.

**Question** - At the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual State Auxiliary Conference - Mildura 2007, a motion was passed to say that the 2009 conference would be held at Fiskville. We are still hoping that will happen, but it is proving to be quiet expensive as they still have to charge us for use of their facilities. We are hoping that CFA will see the Auxiliary body as an important part and will assist with financial assistance so that we can hold it at Fiskville.

**Question** - Is there an alternative location to Fiskville?

**Answer** - Not at the moment. Would someone like to volunteer their Brigade as a back up location for the 2009 Conference? Mildura last year was probably a bit far. Working party meets four times a year, next meeting is 11<sup>th</sup> October. (*Paul Garvey*) – Currently looking at getting specific details of what the costs would be, and what the arrangements would be. We will then take these details to the Working Group at the next meeting.

**Question** - Trevor Forest (Northern District) - Sent letter to Working Party reimbursement of funds for training.

**Answer** - Working Party has recognised how important auxiliaries are in catering. See next presenter.

**Question** - Gail Rochelmeyer (Mt Buninyong) - Would like to thank the Working Party on the report.

- The aim of the Working Party for the next 12 months include: those auxiliaries that are registered within the Brigades to get their history on CFA's Records Management System (RMS), we will be asking how many members each auxiliary has, and getting those details recorded on CFA records. We will also be asking existing auxiliaries if they mind having their Brigade name and a contact person & number on the VFBV website.

## Presenter 4

**Ms Joanne Richards** assisted by DCO Warrington  
**CFA Catering project Officer**

### CFA Catering Project - PowerPoint Presentation

There has been a variety of issues occurring with regards to catering, and Jo is attending today to help sort out these problems which includes a lack of communication from CFA to catering suppliers. CFA has to provide a certain level of catering at incidents.

- Why are we doing this?
  - Morwell
  - Delegate River - 46 down with gastro
  - Swifts Creek - 28 down with gastro
  - The risk of people contracting gastro and losing personnel in emergency situations whilst they are there to fight fires.
- Issues raised from review:
  - Need to communicate process and allocation of resources – local and regional etc.
  - Need to define policy between DSE and CFA for catering at a shared incident
  - Consider the impact and feasibility of using town resources for supply of catering in an emergency.
  - Evidence that some providers don't work well together.
- What are we proposing to do:
  - Catering manual
  - Guidance to all catering provides and CFA members involved in Catering provisions
  - Trial for this summer in nominated Regions.
- The catering manual
  - Will need to identify a range of the catering providers in the Region
  - Supply providers with CFA Catering Standards.
  - Give CFA explanation of how catering is activated and who are the preferred suppliers.
- Contents of catering manual
  - Expected response times for catering
  - Guidance around Food Donations from community members
  - Food quality, quantity and nutritional requirements
  - Transport arrangements
  - Packaging
  - Waste Disposal
  - Environmental Impacts
  - Activation process
- Why we need to change catering
  - Work alongside the Food Act
  - Care and risk involved with catering at an incident
  - More guidance for suppliers of catering and CFA members

- What does this mean for you?
  - CFA will be able to provide support, guidance and certainty for the Catering providers involved.
  - Catering providers to have a better understanding of what level of service and catering CFA expects at an incident.

**Question** - In an emergency situation, are we managed under the food act?

**Answer** - There are three levels of catering at an emergency incident in line with the ICS Framework: Level 1 Incident Brigade level; Level 2 & 3 Incident Regional Level. The levels determine the number of people involved and the type of incident.

**Question** - Unknown (Longwarry) - Are you having any dealings with Region 9? How do we get involved?

**Answer** - Region 9 is not a nominated Region. Get involved by speaking with your Operations Manager. I will take a note that you would like to be involved.

**Question** - Is a Food Handlers certificate required for catering at a training course held at the fire station? Or is it only for emergency situations?

**Answer** - Depends on whether it falls under the Food Act. If it does, you need the Food Handlers certificate. For fundraisers you require the certificate and can be trained through local Shire.

**Question** - Sharon (Unknown location) - Does everyone have to have a Food Handlers certificate to oversee everyone else?

**Answer** - If you don't have a Food Handlers certificate, all information will be included in the manual.

**Question** - Ann (Frankston) – Can we get copy of the Food Handlers manual?

**Answer** - Currently still in working draft form. As season continues and trial ends in 2009/2010 manual will be ready for distribution.

**Question** - Val (Dromana) - How often should the certificate be renewed?

**Answer** - Not required to be renewed once it's obtained.

**Question** - Marie (Carrum Downs) - We are holding a Food Handlers course on Sat 23<sup>rd</sup> August between 9 to 3 all are welcome.

**Question** - Vicki (The Basin) - Is there any consideration to use Auxiliaries? We are here to support and can be used as we know the jargon and use our legs. Have lost a lot of brigades with Red Cross coming in. Can we be used as a collective group? Red Cross take 4 hrs to get organised and we can be there in a flash.

**Answer** - Auxiliaries need to understand the standards that CFA are expecting.

**Question** - Vicki (The Basin) - We need to be asked to come along and are not used as a resource.

**Answer** - CFA is required to go through an external agency - Red Cross or Salvation Army in line with ICS principles – 1, 2, and 3. High level State arrangements are encouraged to use external agencies.

**Question** - Glenys Smith (Longwarry) - Is CFA prepared to pay for the course or to cover reimbursement for food handling course - \$50?

**Answer** - Don't know

**Question** - Jackie Whelan (Hastings) – Would it be cheaper for CFA to organise a Food Handlers course and pay for it?

**Answer** – Will investigate this for the future.

**Question** - Jan (Swan Hill) - Cost of food handling courses. Auxiliary has paid for some members at Swan Hill to do course, not everyone has to have the qualification.

## **AFTERNOON TEA**

MC thanked Dromana Auxiliary for providing all the food, Mt Martha Brigade Support Team (BST), Red Hill Auxiliary, Moorooduc Auxiliary and two members of Dromana Probud for serving the food to conference delegates and guests.

## **OPEN FORUM**

**Gary Lyttle; AFSM  
Chairman  
Volunteer Fire Brigade Victoria**

### **Spoke on the amalgamation of VUFBA & VRFBA and joining of two Associations**

A Working Group has been travelling around the State to encourage “one united voice for all volunteers”, visiting career staff at integrated fire stations - a number are on the Mornington Peninsula. Where it has worked well, is where the work has been done previously. Volunteers can't do it without staff, but staff can't do it without volunteers either.

The Rural Association, two days ago, went to a vote to see about handing over responsibilities to Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria - which was approved on the 14<sup>th</sup> August. The Urban Association is still has to meet and vote, by all accounts it looks as though it will be in the positive as well. On the 4<sup>th</sup> October, a joint meeting will be held to become one organisation. The Premier of Victoria, The Honourable John Brumby; MP will be attending to re-sign the Volunteer Charter.

A lot of work has been done by people around the State. Some Regions have not been as easily convinced; Region 24 and Region 10 were completely against it but have come around.

All members of the VFBV Auxiliary Working Party (8 members) have rung every brigade in the State (1228) to find out if they have an active Auxiliary.

**Question** - Bronwyn Tither (Point Cook) – Attended a CFA Fun Day where the Auxiliary supplied the catering and the Fire Brigade do their Fun days.

**Answer** - On website.

**Question** - Vicki (The Basin) - Any suggestions or ideas for next year's forum including guest speakers, format etc, and please advice the conference committee.

**Question** - Hans van Hammond – A suggested has been put forward to have Auxiliaries included in their Regional Contact Book.

**Answer** - Each Brigade / Auxiliary need to contact their own individual Region for addition into their contact book.

**Question** - Timothy Desmond (Dromana) - In Region 8, Tim has already spoken with Peter Schmidt, General Manager Region 8, and he is happy for Auxiliaries to be included in the Contact Book.

**Question** - Bette Jones (Moorooduc) is resigning from the Working Group due to transport issues.

**Answer** - When we voted in 2007, we decided to wait for 12 months before any additions to the Working Party.

**Question** - Melissa (Frankston) - What do other Brigades do to recruit new members?

**Answer** - Vicki (The Basin) Try doing social nights - dinner movies, weekends away. Rowanne (Dromana) - We had a fashion parade at Dromana and distributed a questionnaire to see if people would like to join or help with catering etc.

Paul Garvey (CFA HQ) - A good way to share information is through the Committee and the VFBV website.

**Question** – (Unknown) - What do brigades do to assist with fundraising?

**Answer** - Rowanne (Dromana) - Those brigades that have 'Ritchies IGA stores' in their community, there are 43 in the State, are supported by a 'Community Benefits Card'.

Timothy (Dromana) IGA has donated \$20 million in the last 12 years. This is a very beneficial organisation. Similar stores are available around the State, not just IGA. Contact local Real Estate Agents with a "Welcome to Your Township" pack which includes a 'Ritchies Community Benefit Card' already set up so that the fire brigade automatically receives the benefits, the pack may also include information about volunteering in the brigade and auxiliary.

Denise (Longwarry) - For fundraising, we do a monthly market and are currently in our 10<sup>th</sup> year. We started with a car boot sale and invited people to come along to sell goods and charged a \$5 entry fee. We now have stall holders that come to us! Currently 200 stall holders, and we have a waiting list. Catering facilities are also there. Its now so large, we have also asked other CFA Brigades to come and help with cleaning up etc and will give them \$300 for the day – we help support local stores including butchers, grocers etc.

Leigh (Pakenham) - We provide cleaning services to the local race track after the races. They pay us \$300 - \$500 to fold down tables, pack up chairs and pick up rubbish. It takes 5 people, 1 hour to complete.

The 2009 Auxiliary conference location and date and times TBA

Prior to MC officially closing the **5<sup>th</sup> Auxiliary State Conference - Dromana 2008** at 16:50 hours, he thanked everyone involved with the conference, delegates for travelling long distances and requested everyone have a safe journey home.