

Annual Report of the Overarching Body

For the year ended 30 June 2008



Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc.

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VFBV Board Members and Office Bearers 2007/2008

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2005/2008
Board Member
2006/2009
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Quentin Turner, AFSM
Board Member
2007/2010
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Mick Taylor, AFSM
Deputy Chairman 2005/2008
Board Member
2006/2009
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Rob Waterson, AFSM
Board Member
2005/2008
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Tom Brodie
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2005/2008
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Hans van Hamond, AFSM
Board Member
2005/2008
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Peter Downes
Board Member
2007/2009
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Peter Davis, AFSM
Joint Executive Officer
vufba@vfbv.com.au



Bruce Vine
Board Member
2007/2010



Bob MacDonald
Joint Executive Officer
vrfba@vfbv.com.au



Andrew Ford
Chief Executive Officer
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**CHAIRMAN'S
REPORT**
Gary Lyttle, AFSM

It gives me great pleasure to submit this report for the 2007/2008 year, challenges, frustrations and ultimately, real progress toward addressing some significant challenges. Despite a number of concerns in the first half of the year I am pleased to report that progress is being made toward ensuring a CFA focus and culture that will maintain and build an even more effective community and volunteer based CFA into the future.

At the start of this year, VFBV Board and our CEO Andrew Ford identified a number of key priorities. These included progressing the formation of a single and unified body to represent all CFA volunteers; strengthening the representation of volunteers in all volunteer matters affecting them; building the profile of VFBV and developing respect and relationships required to improve our ability to influence matters affecting volunteers; and improving our communication with grass roots volunteers.

As well as addressing many specific issues impacting on CFA volunteers during the year, I believe VFBV along with VUFBA and VRFBA has made significant progress in each of these areas. Although there is more to do, we are certainly in a far stronger position today than we have ever been in before. I would like to reflect on a few of the major highlights of the year and recommend you read the full report attached for detail on many other activities and achievements of VFBV during the year.

Coordination across VFBV, VUFBA and VRFBA was progressively strengthened throughout the year with many Regional councils meeting jointly or as one; joint meetings of the governing bodies of VRFBA and VUFBA at state level are now a regular occurrence; and close coordination of efforts on all issues of common concern. After many years, and a journey that started in 2002, the amalgamation reference team and VFBV CEO coordinated significant consultation to finalise a position paper, distributed in June 2008, outlining the proposed arrangements to bring VUFBA and VRFBA together as VFBV, a single unified body representing all CFA volunteers.

There is now strong support for the detailed arrangements set out in the position paper and in principle support from both Associations to work through a process to finalise a decision at the respective 2008 Annual General Meetings of VRFBA in August, VUFBA in September and VFBV in October. At the time of writing this report I can advise with confidence that I expect VFBV will be formally established as the single and unified body to represent CFA volunteers as of October 2008.

The profile and positioning of VFBV as a voice of influence at CFA Management, CFA Board and Government level has been raised significantly during the year.

Sadly I cannot ignore some low points during the year including a period midway through the year when our concerns resulted in the need for VFBV to send a strong message of dissatisfaction to CFA and Government. Concerns with CFA's decision making process on matters affecting volunteers; a perceived disregard for commitments made in the Volunteer Charter; and concerns about a lack of focus on preserving CFA's volunteer

based culture resulted in a concerted campaign by VFBV and formal approaches to CFA Board, Government and others to fix the problems and find a way forward. Much debate ensued and after numerous meetings with CFA CEO, CFA Board Members, Government officials and others I can report a significantly improved situation today.

Pleasingly I can also report that good progress has since been made to resolve many of our concerns and there seems to be genuine commitment from CFA and Government to work through our remaining concerns. There has been renewed acknowledgement of the value and fundamental importance of CFA's community and volunteer based foundations as the core of CFA's service philosophy.

VFBV and CFA Boards now hold bi-monthly joint meetings to progress a series of agreed improvements. One achievement is the development of a shared vision for volunteers and volunteerism in CFA. This vision will now be used to underpin CFA's overall planning; to shape CFA's culture and organisational focus and to guide all future CFA service planning. The two Boards have also commenced work to develop an improved approach to engagement and consultation with volunteers and the CFA Board has recognised the core role that volunteers and the Associations contribute to CFA leadership and management. The Boards have also started work on establishing tangible measures to strengthen the implementation of the Volunteer Charter.

There has been specific action to address many of VFBV's concerns and VFBV are now better informed and involved in decision making on matters affecting volunteers. Although not all issues have been resolved, a number of issues that were not

progressing to our satisfaction are now receiving better attention by CFA.

The achievements of VFBV during the past year are the result of combined efforts with both VUFBA and VRFBA and I would like to acknowledge the work and support of all involved with these two organisations. As we move forward as one unified voice representing all CFA volunteers, I am confident that the underpinning strengths of each of these proud organisations will be applied to drive even stronger success in representing you, our CFA volunteers.

I must take this opportunity to give special thanks to Peter Davis, who retires as VUFBA Secretary in July, for his outstanding effort and contribution to CFA. From all volunteers we wish you and your family well for the future. I would also like to pay tribute to our CEO Andrew Ford for his efforts during the year and also to Bob MacDonald and Jenni Laing. I also welcome the appointment of Allan Monti who will join our team early next year in place of Peter Davis.

Chief Executive Officer's Report Andrew Ford



It is 18 months since I joined VFBV in February 2007 and I have been fortunate enough to get around to almost every Regional Council since that time, with several visits to a number of Regions.

Regional Councils provide an opportunity to resolve many local issues and provide the basis for ensuring we as an Association are well connected with the views, needs and

concerns of brigades and volunteers on the ground. Whether it be in our dialogue with Government, CFA Board, CFA Management or other decision makers, our ability to demonstrate a strong connection with grass roots volunteers will lead to greater respect and attention to the views we express. Strong Regional Councils lead to better informed state level discussions, a more effective VFBV voice on behalf of volunteers and ultimately to an environment that ensures issues affecting the welfare and efficiency of CFA volunteers are dealt with quickly and effectively.

Effective Regional Councils require active participation by brigades and good two way communication to ensure brigades have input to the Regional Council discussion, and vice versa, to ensure the issues being considered at Regional Council filter back to brigades. On my travels to various Regional Council meetings I have observed some terrific discussion and active debate about key issues, particularly where brigade participation is strong. The role of brigade delegates in this process is vital and I encourage all brigades to be actively involved via their elected delegates.

In July 2007 VFBV released our Strategic Plan for 2007 – 2010. The plan set out our vision, mission and nine 'Key Result Areas' requiring priority attention. Our focus over the past year has been to address the immediate priorities outlined in the strategic plan and I believe we have made considerable progress.

We have made substantial progress toward formally establishing a single unified voice for CFA volunteers. We have devoted significant time to attending Regional Council meetings and holding other regionally based forums to enable face to face discussion of local concerns.

A new VFBV website, quarterly newsletters and information circulated

via the Fireman have provided regular updates on key issues for members.

VFBV's profile and influence within and external to CFA has been strengthened enabling us to have an early and more meaningful influence on many issues at the planning and preliminary phases rather than after the event. I and other Association representatives have regular meetings with the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Emergency Services Commissioner and other Government officials to discuss key issues of concern and to consider emerging strategic issues.

We have strengthened the coordination between VRFBA, VUFBA and VFBV to get the most value from our combined efforts. Many previously duplicated processes are now managed as one, getting better use from our limited resources.

Chairman Gary Lyttle has already mentioned the effort devoted to working with CFA Board, CFA management and others to ensure the value of CFA volunteers is understood and appreciated by people involved with decisions that affect the future of CFA volunteers. Engagement of volunteers in decision making on matters that affect them, and empowerment of volunteers to contribute to the leadership and future direction of CFA, is a vital to the future success of a volunteer based CFA. My efforts over the past year have been toward improving this engagement with volunteers and I will continue to drive this as a priority issue.

The VUFBA and VRFBA have continued to represent CFA volunteers extremely well and the results we have achieved over the past year reflect a combined contribution from VFBV. My thanks to all who have helped make this year a successful one, particularly Peter Davis who retired in July, you will be missed Peter.

Annual General Meeting October 2007

At the Annual General Meeting of VFBV on 26 October, 2007, the following appointments were made:

Chairman:

Gary Lyttle, AFSM

Deputy Chairman:

Mick Taylor, AFSM

Treasurer:

Jenni Laing

Public Officer:

Andrew Ford

Auditor:

Christopher Falkingham,
FCA, FCPA

Appointments to VFBV Board:

Annual appointments of VUFBA and VRFBA representatives to the Board were made in September and October. The VUFBA reappointed Quentin Turner. Peter Downes assumed the position of VRFBA President on the Board, whilst Bruce Vine filled his vacancy.

Regional Meetings

Delivering on a commitment to be closely linked with grass roots issues, VFBV Board held four of its monthly meetings in Regional areas. Meetings were conducted at Lilydale (Region 13), Sale (Region 10), Kerang (Region 20) and Benalla (Region 23).

Board meetings held at regional locations, provide an opportunity for brigade and group delegates to raise matters directly with VFBV Board members. Issues raised and discussed at these meetings included:

- VFBV's strategic priorities
- Progressing the unified body to represent all CFA volunteers
- Welfare Fund for all volunteers
- Road Closure Policy
- Fire Service Levy
- Involvement in DSE fires
- 40 kph speed limit at incidents
- Vehicles including 3.4C Tanker concerns

- Brigade administrative support and need for additional BASO's
- Training and Structural Training
- Operations Officers and Integrated Brigades
- Junior Members
- Privately Owned Equipment
- Fuel Reduction Program
- Fire Prevention Program
- Structural and wildfire PPC
- OH&S issues
- EEO/Harassment/Bullying Issues
- Communication
- Brigade ABN's
- Brigade Financial Audit
- Training grounds
- Single Stage Ladders.

In addition VFBV CEO, other Board Members and Association staff collectively attended Regional Council meetings in the majority of Regions.

Attendance at regional meetings provides an invaluable input to VFBV and will continue to be a high priority. The VFBV Board have committed to conduct at least two Regional Meetings per year in conjunction with a Regional Council meeting. VFBV CEO has also committed to a target of having a VFBV representative available to meet with each Regional Council at some time during every 12 – 18 month period.

Coordination between VFBV, VUFBA and VRFBA

Throughout the year VFBV, VUFBA and VRFBA coordinated efforts through collective representation on all Joint Consultative Committees and numerous project specific CFA Working Parties. VFBV worked closely with the Governing Bodies of VUFBA and VRFBA which met jointly throughout the year, providing direct input to VFBV on issues affecting all volunteers. Annual Reports of VUFBA and VRFBA should be referenced for further details of the collective achievements of the Associations.

VFBV Strategic Plan Progress Snapshot

In July 2007 we released our Strategic Plan for 2007 – 2010. In addition to many specific issues attended to by VFBV each year, the plan sets out our vision, mission and Key Result Areas requiring priority attention over the next three years. The following provides a snapshot of progress:

KRA 1: Achieve a unified voice

- Substantial consultation to gather Regional views and a Position Paper released outlining detailed future arrangements;
- New Constitution drafted and issued for consideration by members. Strong support from the majority of Regional Councils;
- Likelihood of support for a unified body to be formalised at VFBV October 2008 AGM.

KRA 2: Excellent communication, links between state and grass roots

- Four VFBV Board meetings held Regionally including open forum with local brigades;
- CEO and VFBV representatives have visited all except one Region in past 18 months;
- New web site provides improved online information and opportunity for input to key issues; Regional Council webpage pilots underway;
- Quarterly newsletters and regular information via Fireman;
- Board commitment to ongoing attendance at Regional Councils.

KRA 3: Legislated mandate for VFBV

- VUFBA and VRFBA formally acknowledge VFBV's role for issues impacting on all volunteers;
- Drafted 'Deed of Agreement' between VUFBA, VRFBA and VFBV, to formalise arrangements for VFBV to assume functions and role of VUFBA and VRFBA, ready for consideration at Annual General Meetings next year;
- Support received from Minister for Police and Emergency Services for the proposed unified body

arrangements pending formal VUFBA and VRFBA endorsement;

KRA 4: VFBV structure systems and resources to deliver role effectively

- Formal agreement with CFA to secure funding;
- Duplicate VFBV, VUFBA and VRFBA processes rationalised to streamline work and improve use of collective resources;
- Joint meetings of VUFBA and VRFBA Governing bodies and Executive Committees. Majority of Regional Councils meeting jointly;
- Additional project officer funding secured from Govt to develop web site and improve information flow;
- Established new VFBV office on formal lease basis from CFA;

KRA 5: CFA culture and decision making involves volunteers and honours Volunteer Charter

- CFA and Government reaffirm commitment to Charter. Legal Deed being negotiated with CFA to reinforce Charter implementation;
- CFA Board endorse Service Support Model focussed on building volunteer and community capability as highest priority;

KRA 6: Prominent leadership profile and proactive influence on issues

KRA 7: Positioning to improve input to decisions.

KRA 8: Strategic relationships to strengthen influence

- Profile of VFBV within CFA and externally raised considerably;
- Bi-monthly meetings with CFA Board and strong involvement in key CFA initiatives;
- Regular meetings with Minister, and other political representatives;
- Submissions to Govt reviews and inquiries (eg; Structural PPC)

KRA 9: The value of volunteers understood and recognised

- Lobbying Premier and Minister for extensive recognition campaign;
- Meetings with politicians and others to improve understanding
- Submission to the Govt. review project 'Strengthening Community Organisations'

Volunteer Welfare Fund

During the year VFBV successfully attracted Government support to establish a welfare fund for all CFA volunteers. A similar fund has been operated by VUFBA since 1913 but there has been no state level fund for CFA rural volunteers. VFBV has been examining the feasibility of establishing such a fund for several years now the announcement of Government funding is a significant achievement for VFBV.

A \$2,000,000 funding grant provided by Government will provide the foundation for this fund. Government support for this initiative is in response to many approaches from VFBV seeking government support for tangible and worthwhile recognition of the work of volunteers.

Subsequently the VUFBA and Regions 8, 12 and 14 have agreed to contribute the assets of their welfare funds to one fund that will be managed by VFBV.

VFBV has established the conditions governing the fund (which are based on the VUFBA model) and has proceeded to seek tax relief for the fund to prevent erosion of the income raised. For volunteers to be eligible to make claims on the fund their brigades will need to be affiliated with VFBV and will need pay a small annual contribution to the fund to ensure its ongoing viability.

Management of the fund is vested in a committee made up of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of VFBV two urban representatives, and two rural representatives. Further information can be obtained from the VFBV web site www.vfbv.com.au

Equal Opportunity and CFA Discipline Policy

Following some concerns about harassment and bullying being raised with the VFBV Board at a Regional

meeting, Board Member Quentin Turner undertook to make himself available as a contact point on behalf of VFBV for volunteers who had a grievance. Since that time Mr Turner has received contact from approximately twenty persons who have raised personal issues in regard to unsociable behaviour in fire brigades.

In an effort to improve processes, VFBV has worked with CFA to develop a streamlined generic process for administering the volunteer discipline policy and the equal opportunity policy. It has also been agreed that greater attempts should be made to resolve matters in an informal manner wherever possible before engaging in a formal process.

At the request of VFBV, CFA Board has agreed to give priority attention to EEO and discipline matters. An online survey being conducted by CFA contains questions seeking members' views on EEO issues. VFBV will use the results of this survey to inform future work on this important issue.

Joint VFBV and CFA Youth Strategy

Following the commitment made last year, VFBV is working in partnership with CFA to develop a Youth Strategy for CFA generally and also to develop a stronger focus and engagement with youth and youth issues within VFBV. The VFBV Board has been enthusiastic about understanding the needs and wishes of young people who join CFA and to this end has seen this work as a very high priority.

As a part of this strategy VFBV and CFA will hold a joint Youth Forum at Fiskville in August 2008. Representatives from CFA management and the Associations plus two young people aged between 18 and 24 from each region will be invited to the forum. The forum will provide an opportunity to identify some

specific actions and strategies to improve how CFA and VFBV engage with younger members and will be used by VFBV to develop a specific action plan to progress this endeavour.

Association and VFBV representatives in the working group are Geof Bassett (R11), Ron Schultz (R22), April Padbury (R24), Bill Rodda (R9), Andrew Ford and Bob MacDonald.

Review of Administrative Support to Brigades

VFBV have been involved with a CFA review of the administrative needs of brigades, an initiative started in the early part of 2007. The analysis and recommendations phase of this project was finalised in November 2007 year but not presented to CFA Board until May of this year.

VFBV and the Associations were represented on the working party by Bill Rodda, VUFBA Executive member and Bob MacDonald, VRFBA Executive Officer.

The project analysis phase delivered a number of recommendations including the adoption of principles for defining administrative support accountability. These principles recognise the need for all support to be focused on the utilisation of volunteer know-how and the ongoing development of brigade capability.

It was also agreed any administrative support treatments should be determined through an assessment risk on a case by case basis. The report advises that administrative support solutions must be brigade focused and be flexible; should be needs driven rather than by the size or location of the brigade; should be planned to ensure every brigade receives face to face contact/support on a regular basis at least twice each year on forecast brigade needs; and should be accessible and available to

all brigades. Supporting a view often raised by brigades, the report also confirms that brigade administrative burden could be reduced in some cases by removing unnecessary and inconsistent application of CFA administrative processes and requirements. VFBV will continue to push this issue during the coming year with particular attention to identifying simple measures that can help reduce unnecessary workload and improve brigade administrative support.

VFBV/CFA Drought Relief Fund

In December 2007 VFBV established a drought relief fund to provide an avenue for brigades and groups around the state to contribute towards assisting Victorian communities that are still suffering the ravages of drought.

Almost \$10,000 was provided to Region 17 for a programme to provide 500 families with packs consisting of items such as toothpaste, soap, toilet paper, shampoo, conditioner and deodorant.

The program has been most worthwhile and the response from recipients of the packs has been most gratifying. As there are still many families in the North West and other parts of the state in dire circumstances it is intended to continue the fund and brigades and groups are encouraged to contribute if they can. Contributors can do so in the knowledge that the programme is completely administered by volunteers who take their advice from local volunteers.

Peter Downes (President VRFBA), Jeff McEachern (VUFBA Executive Member) and Ian Walter (Vice President, VRFBA) comprise the Advisory Committee.

National Firefighter

Championship

Victoria hosted the third National Firefighter Championship at Lakes Entrance 19th-21st October 2007, providing the opportunity for friendly competition between members of the fire services across Australia and New Zealand.

Two years of preparation by the CFA, VFBV, VUFBA and the Lakes Entrance Brigade culminated in a hugely successful weekend. The overall management was undertaken by a Steering Committee, chaired by CFA Director Human Resources Barbara Lewis, which included CFA personnel, VFBV and VUFBA members and numerous members of the local committee. The local committee made up of members of the Lakes Entrance Brigade, local community and East Gippsland Shire was responsible for the extensive organising and planning.

The Championship, officially opened by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services Bob Cameron, had 28 teams competing from six Australian States, the Northern Territory and New Zealand. Entries from each State are limited, with the host State able to take up any vacancies, thus enabling 8 Victorian teams to compete.

Dandenong won the Championship by a clear margin with 134 points, from Melton 103.5 and Kelso (NSW) 100. Dandenong then went on to become the Champion Brigade for the second successive year at the 2008 VUFBA State Championships in March 2008.

From 2009 the Championship, conducted bi annually, will be known as the Australasian Firefighter Championship. In 2009 the event will be held at Rotorua, New Zealand in October.

Brigade Owned Vehicle Working Party

A working party established last year and comprising DCO Haynes and four volunteers appointed by VFBV and the Association, met twice over the 2007/08 year to collate accurate information and brainstorm options going forward. Each region was asked to update its typology as this is the primary planning tool for future vehicle allocations and Operation Managers identified their current and future requirements for pumpers, trailers, pumper tankers and slip-ons (including Brigade Owned Vehicles).

Operations Managers have been asked to confirm the status of brigade owned Field Command Vehicles (FCVs) to establish what exists already and whether existing vehicles meet the minimum standards.

Based on recommendation of the working party CFA has agreed to establish three layers of ownership of FCV in the future, these are:

1. CFA owned, brigade managed with red plates
2. Brigade owned and managed, similar to today, with CFA maintenance support
3. Non operationally justified vehicles at full brigade expense (eg FEM vehicles)

Discussion has also taken place on the principles of the availability of an FCV for each group and then the provision of other vehicles where operationally justified. It is likely 2008/09 will see a proposal prepared for CFA Board consideration.

CFA Brigade Financial Management Support Projects

Having commenced in 2005 this project has almost reached finality and the Committee is unlikely to meet again. Gary Lyttle, Mick Taylor, Peter Davis and Bob MacDonald represent VFBV on this Committee.

During its existence the Committee has overseen a range of financial matters that impact on brigades and groups. The three sub projects were:

- Single ABN for CFA and Brigades
- Brigade Financial Accountability
- Strategic Realignment of Fire Equipment Maintenance

During the year under review the single ABN issue continued to be a matter of debate between CFA and the Australian Tax Office. In particular the question of the status of CFA volunteer brigades in respect of taxation continues to be a debate with CFA's legal opinion being different from the view of ATO. Other than maintaining a position that brigades should have an ability to choose whether or not they retain their own ABN and GST registration, VFBV have supported CFA's overall objective of reducing potential legal exposure and reducing brigade workload as it relates to GST administration. There are some important unresolved issues relating to brigade tax status and VFBV will continue to pursue a satisfactory resolution of this matter.

The Brigade Financial Accountability project has been most worthwhile in that it has identified the brigades where financial accountability has been lacking and enabled steps to be put in place to redress the issue. Further, it has led to removal of the cost and inconvenience of annual audits for the majority of brigades.

To comply with the Auditor General's requirements for brigade assets to be reflected in the CFA annual accounts, it has been necessary to develop a process to consolidate all brigade bank balances and this has been done successfully.

Many brigades are now benefiting from having their funds invested in bank accounts offering attractive interest rates, which was another initiative of this project. Area Finance Officers have been appointed to

continue to assist to brigades with financial matters.

The FEM Re-alignment Project has seen the overwhelming majority of brigades using the CFA centralised accounts payable system which has led to better financial control of the FEM business of brigades.

Integrated Fire Management Planning (IFMP)

Although there have been concerns about slow progress of this CFA initiative, reasonable progress was made during the latter half of the reporting period, particularly following the appointment of CFA Project Officer Allan Rankin. VFBV is now actively represented and involved at the project reference group level, a senior team overseeing the progress of this initiative in CFA.

A large workshop was held 24th April 2008 with CFA HQ Operations and Community Safety Directorates senior management, Area General Managers and VFBV representatives in attendance. The workshop groups examined the following issues:

- Municipal Fire Management Plans
 - What should they contain?
 - Does the required info exist?
 - How to engage volunteers?
- Brigade input to Planning
 - Are the options appropriate, relevant and workable?
- Regional Strategic Fire Management Planning

Since the workshop a project implementation plan has been developed and this includes pilots to be carried out in approximately 15 municipalities in 2008/2009.

The team set up to implement the IFMP project includes Ian Nash (VRFBA) and Hans van Hamond, (VUFBA) as well as Bob MacDonald.

A number of reference groups have been set up to deal with specific issues including - Plan format and life cycle; Brigade involvement and engagement; and Communications and consultation strategy. Municipal pilots will use the NSW RFS Bushfire Fire Risk Management Planning Model which has already had successful application in NE Victoria.

VFBV Website

The VFBV Website, incorporating VUFBA and VRFBA web pages was launched in December providing better information on a range of topics and also an opportunity for volunteers to input their feedback on specific issues. A VFBV Regional Webpage facility is being piloted in three Regions and will be available for each Regional Council by December 2008 following completion of the pilots.

Volunteer free access to Victorias National Parks

Originally raised by brigades in Region 14 in 2006 the matter of free access to National Parks was firstly pursued with the State Government by VRFBA and then more recently by VFBV. After raising this issue on many occasions a result was finally achieved in May this year with the Government launch of the free pass scheme to all Victorian National Parks for CFA and SES volunteers.

All CFA volunteers should now have their complimentary pass and if not should contact their local CFA office.

Structural PPC

Following a protracted consultative process CFA Board finally announced a decision to offer all CFA firefighters a choice of two Structural PPC ensembles. As a result of concerns with the process, the Minister for Police and Emergency Services instigated a formal inquiry to identify

factors contributing to the delays. VFBV, on behalf of the Associations made a detailed submission outlining concerns with the process; barriers impeding CFA decision making ability; and our view of reasons underpinning the delays. At year end the findings of this review are yet to be released by Government.

Operational Catering Review

This project has proceeded in a most satisfactory manner and Board member, Tom Brodie, and VRFBA Executive Member, David Gibbs, continue to represent volunteers on the working party.

Guidelines have been drawn up for those who wish to cater at CFA activities whether operational or otherwise. The working party has also agreed on suitable contracts for outside caterers wishing to provide services during large or extended operations.

In each region a catering co-ordinator has been appointed to establish catering capability within the region. A number of regions have been selected to undertake pilots during 2008/2009.

VFBV Auxiliaries Working Party

VFBV has established a VFBV Auxiliaries Working Party to support the development of an improved forum for auxiliaries to discuss and resolve issues at state level. The working party, formed at the 4th Auxiliary Conference held in Mildura (August 2007) is chaired by VFBV Board member Hans van Hamond and includes representatives from a number of brigade auxiliaries. An Auxiliary page has been developed as part of the VFBV website to improve information flow; an auxiliary data base has been established; a survey conducted to identify key issues; and a question and answers guides provided to answer common questions.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc.

Financial Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2008

BOARD'S REPORT

Your committee members submit the financial report of the Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc. for the financial year ended 30 June 2008.

Board Members

The names of committee members throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

Gary Lyttle –Chairman	Hans van Hamond
Michael Taylor- Deputy Chairman	Peter Downes
Quentin Turner	Bruce Vine
Rob Waterson	Tom Brodie

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were to represent the interests of all CFA volunteers on matters which impact on them.

Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

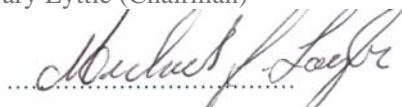
Operating Result

The profit (loss) from ordinary activities after providing for income tax amounted to \$88,187 (2007 - \$96,684)

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board Members.



Gary Lyttle (Chairman)



Michael Taylor (Deputy Chairman)

Dated this 25th August 2008

INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

	Note	2008 \$	2007 \$
INCOME			
CFA Funding Operations		373,686	366,000
CFA Travel Reimbursement (Agreed Meetings)		284,859	295,875
Association Contributions		120,000	120,000
Interest received		18,778	16,432
National Championship Reimbursement 05-07		124,763	0
TOTAL INCOME		922,085	798,307
EXPENDITURE			
Auditing		2,126	1,738
Advertising		315	4,838
Communications		11,509	9,024
Contract Labour		36,497	5,710
Depreciation		2,155	1,896
Miscellaneous		9,964	3,305
Conference and Registration		2,128	
Rent and outgoings		5,262	8,714
Stationery and Software		23,344	17,285
Employment costs		414,855	330,655
Bank Fees		40	0
Travel Reimbursement -CFA Approved Meetings		324,713	288,323
Equipment		990	0
National Championships			60,599
Volunteer First Project		0	162,904
TOTAL EXPENSES		833,898	894,991
Profit (Loss) before income tax		88,187	(96,684)
Income tax expense	2	0	0
Profits after income tax		88,187	(96,684)
RETAINED PROFITS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR		349,937	445,976
RETAINED PROFITS AT THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR		438,124	349,937

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2008

	Note	2008 \$	2007 \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	529,574	421,340
Trade and other receivables		6,123	0
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>535,693</u>	<u>421,340</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	4	3,122	3,719
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>3,122</u>	<u>3,719</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>538,815</u>	<u>506,092</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables		31,527	37,747
Employee entitlements		69,159	37,375
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>100,686</u>	<u>75,123</u>
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>94,691</u>	<u>75,123</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>438,130</u>	<u>349,937</u>
MEMBERS' FUNDS			
Retained profits		438,130	349,937
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS		<u>438,130</u>	<u>349,937</u>

CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008

	Note	2008 \$	2007 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts from customers		903,307	781,875
Payments to suppliers and employees		(798,502)	(818,089)
Interest received		18,778	16,432
Income tax paid		0	0
Net cash provided by operating activities	7	<u>104,805</u>	<u>(19,782)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		0	1,229
Purchase of office equipment		3,430	
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities		<u>(3,340)</u>	<u>1,229</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Proceeds from borrowings		0	0
Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Net increase (decrease) in cash held		<u>108,235</u>	<u>(21,011)</u>
Cash at beginning of year		421,340	442,351
Cash at end of year	3	<u>529,575</u>	<u>421,340</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008**NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act Victoria. The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act Victoria and the following Australian Accounting Standards:

AASB 112 Income Taxes

AASB 1031 Materiality

AASB 110 Events after the Balance Sheet Date

AASB 117 Leases

No other applicable Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues Group Interpretations or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following material accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

a. Income Tax

The charge for current income tax expenses is based on the profit for the year adjusted for any non-assessable or disallowed items. It is calculated using tax rates that have been enacted or are substantively enacted by the balance sheet date.

Deferred tax is accounted for using the balance sheet liability method in respect of temporary differences arising between the tax bases of assets and liabilities and their carrying amounts in the financial statements. No deferred income tax will be recognised from the initial recognition of an asset or liability, excluding a business combination, where there is no effect on accounting or taxable profit or loss.

Deferred tax is calculated at the tax rates that are expected to apply to the period when the asset is realised or liability is settled. Deferred tax is credited in the income statement except where it relates to items that may be credited directly to equity.

Deferred income tax assets are recognised to the extent that it is probable that future tax profits will be available against which deductible temporary differences can be utilised.

The amount of benefits brought to account or which may be realised in the future is based on the assumption that no adverse change will occur in income taxation legislation and the anticipation that the association will derive sufficient future assessable income to enable the benefit to be realised and comply with the conditions of deductibility imposed by the law.

b. Fixed Assets

Leasehold improvements and office equipment are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation. The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Leasehold improvements are amortised over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

c. Leases

Leases of fixed assets where substantially all the risk and benefits incidental to the ownership of the asset, but not the legal ownership are transferred to the association are classified as finance leases.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2008**NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

Finance leases are capitalised by recording an asset and a liability at the lower of the amounts equal to the fair value of the leased property or the present value of the minimum lease payments. Including any guaranteed residual values. Lease payments are allocated between the reduction of the lease liability and the lease interest expense for that period.

Leased assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the shorter of their estimated useful lives or the lease term.

Lease payments for operating leases, where substantially all the risks and benefits remain with the lessor, are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred.

Lease incentives under operating leases are recognised as a liability and amortised on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease term.

NOTE 2: INCOME TAX EXPENSE

The incorporation is exempt from income tax as it is a not-for-profit organisation.

NOTE 3: CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2008	2007
	\$	\$
General Cheque Account	286,149	158,130
Travel Reimbursement Account	93,426	113,210
Deposits at bank	150,000	150,000
TOTAL CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	529,575	441,340

NOTE 4: PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	2008	2007
	\$	\$
Property, plant and equipment at cost	14,680	13,123
Less accumulated depreciation	11,558	9,403
	3,212	3,741

NOTE 5: AUDITORS' REMUNERATION

	2008	2007
	\$	\$
Remuneration of the auditor of the parent entity for:		
— auditing or reviewing the financial report	2,126	1,738
— taxation services	0	0
— due diligence services	0	0
— taxation services provided by related practice of auditor	0	0

NOTE 6: RELATED PARTIES

Interest in Contracts

During the year ended 30 June 2008, Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc. did not enter into a contract with related parties.

NOTE 7: CASH FLOW INFORMATION	2008	2007
	\$	\$
Reconciliation of Cash Flow from Operations with Profit (Loss) from Ordinary Activities after Income Tax		
Profit (Loss) after income tax	44,624	(96,684)
Cash flows excluded from profit attributable to operating activities		
Non-cash flows in profit		
— Depreciation	2,155	1,896
— Purchase of property, plant and equipment	0	0
— (Increase)/decrease in trade and term debtors	53,974	60,000
— Decrease in prepayments	0	0
— (Increase)/decrease in inventories	0	0
— Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	(21,435)	(4,707)
— Increase/(decrease) in current tax liabilities	0	0
— Increase/(decrease) in employee benefits	25,487	19,713
	<u>104,805</u>	<u>(19,782)</u>

STATEMENT BY DIRECTORS OF THE BOARD

The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

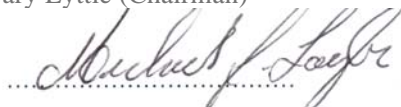
In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on pages 2 to 7:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc. as at 30 June 2008 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:



Gary Lyttle (Chairman)



Michael Taylor (Deputy Chairman)

Dated this 25th August 2008

**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADES VICTORIA INC.**

Scope

We have audited the financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc. for the year ended 30 June 2008 as set out on pages 2 to 7. The Committee is responsible for the financial report and has determined that the accounting policies used and described in Note 1 to the financial statements which form part of the financial report are appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act Victoria and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We have conducted an independent audit of this financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used are appropriate to the needs of the members.

The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act Victoria. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report and the evaluation of significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 so as to present a view which is consistent with our understanding of the Association's financial position, and performance as represented by the results of its operations and its cash flows. These policies do not require the application of all Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

In our opinion, the financial report of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc. presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc. as at 30 June 2008 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

The special purpose financial report and committee's responsibility

The special purpose financial report comprises the balance sheet, income statement, accompanying notes to the financial statements, and the statement by members of the committee for Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc. (the association), for the year ended 30 June 2008.

The committee of the association is responsible for the preparation and true and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies used and described in Note 1 to the financial statements which form part of the financial report are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act Victoria and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. This includes responsibility for the maintenance of adequate accounting records and internal controls that are designed to prevent and detect fraud and error, and for the accounting policies and accounting estimates inherent in the financial report.

The special purpose financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the committee's financial reporting requirements under the Associations Incorporation Act Victoria. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

Audit Approach

We conducted an independent audit in order to express an opinion to the members of the association. Our audit was conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, in order to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. The nature of an audit is influenced by factors such as the use of professional judgment, selective testing, the inherent limitations of internal control, and the availability of persuasive rather than conclusive evidence. Therefore, an audit cannot guarantee that all material misstatements have been detected.

We performed procedures to assess whether in all material respects the financial report presents fairly, in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1, so as to present a view which is consistent with our understanding of the association's financial position, and of its performance as represented by the results of its operations. These policies do not require the application of all Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used and described in Note 1, are appropriate for the needs of the members.

We formed our audit opinion on the basis of these procedures, which included:

- examining, on a test basis, information to provide evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial report, and
- assessing the appropriateness of the accounting policies and disclosures used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the committee.

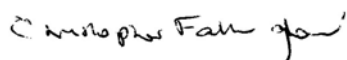
While we considered the effectiveness of management's internal controls over financial reporting when determining the nature and extent of our procedures, our audit was not designed to provide assurance on internal controls.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we followed applicable independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

Audit Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc. presents a true and fair view in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, of the financial position of Volunteer Fire Brigade Victoria Inc. as at 30 June 2008 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended.



Name of Christopher Falkingham FCA & FCPA

Date 9th September 2008

Address 144 Cochranes Road, Moorabbin Vic 3189