



Thursday, 4 February 2010

LETTER TO THE EDITOR – BLACK SATURDAY ANNIVERSARY

Dear Editor

On the anniversary of Black Saturday, CFA Volunteers share the community's deep sense of loss and tragedy. We also remember Victoria's spirit and determination not to be beaten by those events.

Victorians responded with comfort and help for devastated families and communities.

Our 60,000 CFA volunteers were proud to play their part, and remain dedicated to protecting Victoria.

In their thousands, volunteers from rural districts, regional cities and Melbourne's suburbs turned out to combat those tragic fires. Thousands more were on standby to protect their local communities.

Other volunteers were working at the phones and radios, and in the control centres.

In our thoughts are communities, families and volunteers who suffered personal loss – their lives, the lives of family members or friends, or their homes and livelihoods.

VFBV thanks the volunteers' employers and we especially thank the families of volunteers, who provide vital support.

Without community based, trained and experienced volunteers, Victoria could not afford day to day emergency response, let alone the capacity to fight bushfires. There is no other viable way of protecting Victoria.

The volunteer base of the CFA is the tried and true part of emergency response that works well. To deal with growing risks we must maintain and build on that.

Like other Victorians, CFA Volunteers will never forget Black Saturday. We reaffirm our commitment to serve our community now, and in the future.

Andrew Ford
Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria
Representing Victoria's 60,000 CFA volunteers