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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **CFA VOLUNTEERS PRODUCE VIDEO TO AID INCIDENT CONTROL**

CFA volunteers have produced a video that will help crews to better handle the stresses of coordinating major incidents.

One of the volunteers behind the new video, Narre Warren North Fire Brigade member Linden Barry, said it shares an important message leading into what is predicted to be a busy summer.

CFA volunteers from the Casey and Cardinia groups are filmed in various role play roles in the video which is designed to improve understanding of incident management for a rapidly escalating bushfire.

Mr Barry, who recently received a CFA life membership and 35-year service medal, said the video was a great example of volunteers acting to improve safety and professionalism in fighting fires.

“It’s a classic example of volunteers getting together, seeing a problem and doing something about it. It’s problem solving from the grass roots level.”

Mr Barry said the video would help all firefighters to run a major incident.

“When it comes to incident management you need to get organised quickly or you’ll never have a good outcome.

“It’s a simple video with familiar local faces playing roles on how to manage a bushfire from fire truck, a field command vehicle and then on to a communications-enhanced field command vehicle or a field operations vehicle.

It highlights the importance of quickly getting strike team leaders, sector commanders and mentors to the brigade control point very early.

In 1979 Mr Barry joined the Keysborough brigade and has also been a volunteer with Berwick and Pakenham before joining Narre Warren North 14 years ago. He is now the second deputy group officer for the Casey group.

The video emerged from discussions among volunteer members of the district 8 operations sub-committee.

It is being distributed to brigades across the district as part of pre-summer briefings.

Mr Barry admits to being tough when it comes to volunteer training and safety.

“If you’re going to put on yellows and get on a fire truck you need to know your game and take it seriously and that’s what this is all about.”

Volunteer fire Brigades Victoria CEO Andrew Ford said this was an example of the strength of CFA volunteers in outer metro regions.

Mr Ford said the current fire services model recognises volunteers and paid staff working together as a united team but Government’s proposals would dismantle that for no reason and no benefit to service delivery.

“Everywhere else emergency services are talking about working as one team and yet the Government wants to further fragment the fire services in Victoria – it’s foolish.”

Mr Ford said the VFBV was concerned that the Government’s proposal to carve up the CFA would drive a huge reduction in volunteer numbers. “If this happens, Victoria will have lost forever the powerful volunteer surge capacity to tackle major fires that occur every summer and lost a community-based model that is regarded as one of the best in the world.”

“These changes would cost Victorians a great deal in increased Fire Service Levy, hand even more control of Victoria’s fires services to the union and there would be less flexibility and efficiency in how fire services deploy their firefighters.”

Narre Warren North is a 100 per cent volunteer brigade with 46 members responding to about 300 calls a year with a mixture of incidents reflecting its rural-urban interface.

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