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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **TOP ROLE FOR BACCHUS MARSH FIRE FIGHTER**

Lisa Palmer started as a Bacchus Marsh volunteer fire fighter through a family tradition and a school youth program.

Fourteen years later she has taken on one of the most important volunteer roles in the district.

Ms Palmer has been elected District 15 Council president, a role she has aspired to for several years.

“It’s something I’d wanted to do for a while,” she said.

“It has been a succession planning process. I had been vice-president and learning from outgoing president Maurice Preston,” she said.

Ms Palmer started her volunteer CFA connection when she was still at school. “I started 14 years ago in a youth crew program when I was at high school,” she said.

The two-year program involved regular training stints at the Bacchus Marsh fire station but her love of fire-fighting volunteering was already ingrained.

“I’d had a family involvement for a number of years; dad was in the CFA for 20-odd years and his father was the captain of a couple of different brigades. Down the line it stayed in the family.”

Ms Palmer, who has undertaken a Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Certificate IV leadership scholarship, has been part of many significant community responses, ranging from a mulch fire in a coal mine to a major bushfire at Mount Beckworth.

Through the challenges she has always felt confident to work alongside her volunteer team.

“Knowing who’s with you and knowing that we all know what we’re doing makes it good,” she said.

Her role involves leading volunteer consultation and ensuring the forums, processes and opportunities exist for the volunteers in District 15 to have a strong voice, good representation and genuine input into all issues that affect them.

District 15 covers about 60 brigades. Bacchus Marsh is the eastern boundary of the district which also includes Daylesford, Creswick and Ballarat.

By day Ms Palmer is a council gardener based in Melton but she always looks forward to her time volunteering with the fire brigade.

“I enjoy the connections you make and the people you meet,” she said.

Former president, Maurice Preston, from Kingston, did not seek re-election after five years in the role.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria CEO Andrew Ford said volunteers are essential to public safety and provide a professional service that is effective and affordable.

“Our dedicated volunteers are continuing a great Australian tradition that is well respected in our communities,” Mr Ford said.

Mr Ford said volunteers are part of the fabric of society and contribute to community resilience.

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