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MEDIA RELEASE

COLAC PREPARES FOR EARLY SEASON FIRES

Education is always to the fore at the Colac Fire Brigade and the latest volunteer recruits will continue that trend.

The brigade's ranks have been boosted by two 17-year-old students and a school teacher who have joined as preparations heat up for the summer fire season.

Volunteer captain Scott Peschel said the brigade was well placed for what is tipped to be a hot summer.

"We've been doing the usual pre-summer preparations with safety and survival drills," Captain Peschel said.

"We have about 40 active members on the books and we seem to pick up new members from time-to-time," he said.

"We're getting people from all different walks of life who make it a dynamic group with different perspectives."

The brigade responds to about 250 calls each year, often supporting brigades across the region and contributing to the CFA's volunteer surge capacity.

"Probably half of our calls are supporting other brigades in the group," Captain Peschel said.

"We travel 70-80 kilometres away to places like Lavers Hill or Beech Forest. We're fairly busy and get a variety of jobs, including structure fires and helping at motor vehicle accidents."

The volunteer brigade has been undertaking regular summer pre-training and is encouraging property owners to prepare for the season.

"The main message is to do preparations well and truly before fire season hits," Captain Peschel said.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria CEO Andrew Ford said volunteers like those at Colac 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.

“The Colac volunteers also make a big contribution to the CFA’s surge capacity,” he added.

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