



Help us support and represent CFA's volunteers POSITION VACANT VFBV EXECUTIVE OFFICER

VFBV is seeking a talented and motivated person for the position of Executive Officer to work full-time based at our Burwood East office.

Reporting to the CEO, this senior position involves working in a team environment to address issues impacting on all volunteers and representing VFBV on committees and working parties. You will work actively with VFBV State Council and District Councils with an aim to ensure volunteers' views are understood and that issues of concern can either be resolved locally or escalated through appropriate channels.

The role has responsibility for the provision of expert technical, practical and strategic advice on matters affecting CFA volunteers. The role provides important leadership support to VFBV's network of consultative forums, committees and working parties, as well as providing senior level support to the CEO in developing and managing relationships and partnerships with key stakeholders.

We need a person who can effectively represent volunteers within CFA, to Government, to other organisations and the general public. The role involves considerable liaison with CFA at Executive and senior management levels; working closely with brigades and District Councils; and influencing external decision makers. Strong interpersonal, verbal and written communication skills is essential.

Applicants need to have an understanding and appreciation of issues relevant to CFA brigades and volunteerism in general. You need to be able to demonstrate an ability to establish productive relationships within our own membership base and also with people who influence decisions about matters affecting volunteers. It is important that you are a self starter and can demonstrate success while managing multiple concurrent issues and challenging work demands. You need to be a good communicator and someone who understands how to lead and influence others to achieve outcomes.

This is a permanent position, based at our Burwood office. Recognising that the position supports brigades across Victoria, the position involves considerable travel including weekend and evening work required to support our volunteer membership base.

All applications must include current resume and cover letter addressing key selection criteria outlined in the Position Description found on our website. Contact Cathie Smith for any queries by phone 03 9886 1141 or via email c.smith@vfbv.com.au.

Building Capability in Community Engagement training

In 2017 a survey was conducted of CFA's Brigade Community Safety Coordinators. One of the main findings was the desire for more training opportunities in community engagement.

The second phase of "Building Capability in Community Engagement" training for CFA members, developed under the Victorian Government's Safer Together program, is currently hitting CFA members in a number of locations.

The sessions take place right across the state, in Geelong, Knox, Camperdown, Boronia, Horscham, Cragieburn, Ballarat, Mildura, Shepparton, Lilydale, Sale, Bairnsdale, Wodonga, Benalla and Eltham.

Together with DELWP, CFA is giving Community Engagement training to staff and volunteers who will benefit from it most: people who are at the frontline, interacting and engaging with communities.

There are currently three levels of Community Engagement training available, to both staff and volunteers:

Level One - Basic Community Engagement – Engaging through Practice (one day workshop)

A one day session designed to give a foundation in from which to build skills in community engagement.

This is a highly interactive and practical workshop, with opportunities to share knowledge and ideas with other participants from other agencies. Suitable for those with little experience in community engagement.

Level Two - Community Development – Engaging through Relationships (one day workshop)

Ideally this training is for members who actively work with communities to support and develop their capability, capacity and resilience.

Like Level One, this session is a one day workshop that is interactive and participatory, with a number of practical activities. The workshop will focus topics such as understanding community dynamics, community-based emergency management and asset based approaches to community development.

Level Three - Creative Facilitation – Engaging through Facilitation (two day workshop)

This sessions suits experienced facilitators and engagement specialists looking to enhance their existing facilitation and engagement skills.

Focusing on community conversations, developing effective facilitation skills, and preparing and strength based questioning with supporting evidence and emergent outcomes are some of the topics covered in this two day workshop. If you regularly interact and engage with communities and want to build skills and confidence in engaging, this training is for you.

These training sessions are open to all CFA staff and volunteers.

INVITING APPLICANTS FOR CFA BOARD



The CFA legislation recognises that it is important that the CFA Board has strong volunteer expertise, knowledge and an understanding of CFA volunteers. To support this, CFA legislation provides for four of the CFA Board's Members to be appointed from a panel of names submitted by Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria, two being representatives from brigades predominantly serving urban communities and two being representatives from brigades predominantly serving rural communities.

The terms of CFA Board Members Hazel Clothier, Lynda Hamilton, Peter Shaw and Tim Young expire 19 July 2019, triggering the need for VFBV to seek applications for a panel of names to be nominated for the next term commencing 20 July 2019.

VFBV is seeking applications for volunteers interested in filling one of the four VFBV nominated positions on the CFA Board.

CFA volunteers who believe they have the skills, experience and capacity to make a contribution to the Board of the CFA, are invited to apply for nomination to the CFA Board. In addition to volunteer experience and knowledge, selection will have regard to any of the following: knowledge of, or experience in, commercial, technical, operational, legal or financial matters; or expertise in fire or emergency management, land management or any other field relevant to the performance of the functions of the CFA.

From applications received and following interviews, VFBV will submit a panel of names to the Minister for Police & Emergency Services.

The CFA Board meets on a monthly basis and also operates a committee system which could require a commitment of one half day per month. Attendance at official functions is also expected.

The appointment to the CFA Board would be for a period of up to three years; the retiring members are eligible for re-appointment.

CFA Board Members current annual remuneration is \$58,598 (including Superannuation).

A Role Statement is available on the VFBV website or available from the VFBV office. For other relevant information, interested volunteers should contact VFBV – contact details below.

Applications including a current resume must be emailed or faxed to VFBV by COB on Friday 24 May 2019 to:

Email: j.laing@vfbv.com.au or Fax 03 9886 1618

Crews continue to respond quickly and efficiently

Over the next 10 weeks I'll be stepping into the role of Chief Officer while Steve Warrington takes a well-earned rest.

I started as a firefighter 34 years ago with the Tasmania Fire Service and worked my way up through the organisation finishing my time with TFS as Chief Officer in 2015/16 before joining CFA as Deputy Chief Officer – Urban.

It's a privilege to lead CFA, if only for the short term. Our organisation has a long history of great leaders, all with the same common goal: to protect lives and property in Victoria. This too, will be my focus over the next 10 weeks.

While we're coming out of fire season, we're certainly not there just yet.

Our firefighters continue to do a remarkable job in responding quickly and efficiently, as evidenced by blazes in Bunkers Hill and Mount Mercer recently. While it's late in the season, I urge you all to remain vigilant to the possibility of fires, wherever you may be.

While fires are our focus, there are a number of exciting things coming up on the horizon for our organisation. We

Comments by Acting Chief Officer Gavin Freeman

had the State Rural Championships take place in Bendigo on the weekend, which completes the Championships for 2019. We have the Rural and Urban Championships to run concurrently in Mooropna in 2020, which will be a highlight on the Victorian firefighting calendar next year.

There are a number of updates in the training area, Low Voltage Fuse Removal (LVFR) and Safe Working from Heights training is in full swing. Currently, 66 brigades have received the LVFR training, with another 32 to go in this phase of the roll-out. Safe Working from Heights training will be delivered to volunteers in the not too distant future, and career firefighters can expect to receive the training at the VEMTC training base, if they haven't already.

This training is another measure to increase the safety of CFA staff and volunteers, which is a priority at all times. The new General Firefighters program too, which is replacing Minimum Skills, will be hitting brigades soon, and more information will be made available on this shortly.

All of us at CFA can help



the environment. Pagers are essential to us but they consume around 230,000 AA batteries per year, which can potentially lead to a large landfill burden. ALDI supermarkets have a free battery recycling program at each of its stores in Australia, and CFA members have access to this without needing to be a customer.

I would encourage all of you to collect your used pager batteries and drop them off at an ALDI supermarket when you have the chance.

Over the next 10 weeks you'll be able to find me on the Chief Officer Facebook page, where I'll be providing weekly updates.

Thanks, and stay safe.

TEAM EFFORT EVIDENT AS FIRES CHALLENGE US

by Commissioner Andrew Crisp,
Emergency Management Victoria

Over the last few weeks and months we've had a number of serious and significant fires in Victoria.

It's been fantastic to see first-hand how well people have been working on the ground, at incident, region and at state. Managing these fires has been difficult and what I've seen has been truly a team effort.

For the most part, the fires that have challenged us have been in the north east and south east of the state. We knew ahead of summer that East Gippsland would be a focus following two years of drought. Adding to that, is the complexity around the terrain, as some of the larger fires are in very difficult to reach places.

I want to reinforce how much work goes into every aspect of managing significant bushfires, from those on the frontline, to the hundreds of highly skilled and committed people who work tirelessly to support the efforts of our crews on the ground and in the air.

Aircraft, firefighters, incident management teams, both Victorian and from interstate, and all our emergency management personnel have been working as one. Together with our firefighters from CFA, FFMVic and MFB we've had taskforces from other jurisdictions as well as New Zealand assisting us. The national part-

nership in emergencies is so important. As well as strike teams, all states and territories with the exception of Tasmania due to their fires, have provided a range of functions including air operations, logistics and fire behaviour roles.

Over the season more than 200,000 hectares was burnt. We have committed significant resources on these fires, as well as night firebombing operations for the first time. Thankfully we've had no loss of life, but we have seen some devastating losses.

At Bunyip alone, Rapid Impact Assessment Teams inspected 447 properties, of which 274 of those properties had houses on them and a total of 243 of those houses have been saved. That is an enormous effort and one we must not lose sight of.

However, 29 houses were destroyed, two houses damaged and 67 outbuildings destroyed or damaged. At Yinnar South, two houses were destroyed, one at Wallahalla and stock. My thoughts are, and have been, with those families and communities who have lost homes in these areas.

These communities have a long recovery ahead of them, and this will be different for everyone. We will continue to talk, work with and support both local councils and families to help them through this.

I want to acknowledge the

incredible work that all our emergency management agencies, our firefighters and incident management personnel have been doing and the work that is still to do to keep our communities safe.

My message to communities is that while summer may be over, that doesn't mean the fire risk is behind us. 2018-19 was the hottest summer on record for Victoria. Autumn is expected to be warmer and potentially drier than average, and we welcomed March with hot weather across much of the state. Fire restrictions are still in place in many areas across the state.

The landscape is still extremely dry and we are expecting more unconventional weather to come. We all need to stay mindful of the conditions.

As we saw last year in the south west of Victoria, there can still be significant fire risk into March, and we saw this play out. From 1 March to 5 March, we experienced 380 fires, with the majority resulting from lightning strikes.

Our current fires highlight the challenges we are facing this fire season and serve as a reminder about what we can expect from future seasons.

It will be more important than ever that the emergency management sector continues to work in partnership with communities. Thank you to everyone for their efforts so far, and the effort still to come.



The night shift strike team at the Bunyip fire being briefed at Nar Nar Goon staging area on 4 March before heading out to the fireground.