

From The Chief Officer.....



Number 92

"Our mission is to protect lives and property"

24th September 2013

New firefighter cancer assessment panel and cancer compensation advisory service

Recently the Victorian Government announced the formation of a **Firefighters Assessment Panel** to help manage and assess career and volunteer firefighter cancer-related claims. The Firefighters Assessment Panel will be managed by WorkSafe with the support of CFA and comprises expert medical, technical and claims specialists to ensure prompt, compassionate and fair assessments for all firefighter cancer-related claims. This announcement, together with one from the State Government, promoting a centralised **Firefighter Advisory Service** that can answer enquiries and offer advice about work-related cancer claims, is important news for our past and present members. The health and safety of CFA members will always be our number one priority and I welcome any initiative that supports them. Together with WorkSafe, CFA has launched a toll-free Firefighter Advisory Service. Career and volunteer firefighters can contact the service by calling **1800 060 729** or via firefighterinfo@worksafe.vic.gov.au for career firefighters and firefighterinfo@cfa.vic.gov.au for volunteer firefighters. Past and present firefighters who contract cancer through firefighting are entitled to compensation, either through CFA (for volunteers) or WorkSafe Victoria (for career firefighters). Volunteer firefighters who would like information about making a claim can visit CFA's website. Career firefighters can access information further information through WorkSafe's website or via the link on the CFA website.

2013 Laurie Lavelle Award

CFA **Senior Station Officer Geoff Brown and the "A Shift" team of the Corio Fire Brigade** were awarded the prestigious 2013 **Laurie Lavelle Award** at the 2013 AFAC Conference in Melbourne. The award recognises the efforts of an individual who has undertaken a role within an AFAC member agency that contributed significantly to enhancing the knowledge, skills, operations, performance or public profile within the emergency services sector in Australasia. The award was made to Geoff for his exceptional leadership and management skills and to recognise his initiative and vision shown in working with the challenges associated with the Corio community, namely youth and people of a refugee background. Through Geoff's and his team's initiatives, many committees and partnerships have been set up within the Corio/Norlane area. The program that Geoff leads aims to develop an understanding of education and identify employment opportunities and pathways. **Congratulations Geoff and "A Platoon from Corio!"**

2012/13 Post Fire Season Review

The operational review of the 2012/13 fire season has now been finalised and is available from www.firecommissioner.vic.gov.au/our-work/review/post-season-operations-review-2012-13/. The primary purpose of the review was to identify and validate existing operational policy, processes and practices applied during the 2012/13 fire season and identify opportunities for continuous improvement. Whilst still focusing on prevention, response and recovery issues, the review also considered the pre-season briefing themes and presented, in some cases, the first real opportunity to test new initiatives introduced after the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission (VBRC). The information collected through the review process supports other evidence that significant improvements in a range of key areas associated with the management of bushfire have been and continue to be made in Victoria. The review has identified a number of opportunities for further improvement and in most cases activities have commenced to address these issues ahead of the 2013/14 FDP through targeted projects, briefings or exercises. Those not specifically addressed have been analysed and assigned to responsible parties for future consideration to build on the knowledge gained through the review process. I encourage you to read the report if you are yet to do so.

"Do not look where you fell, but where you slipped"

- African proverb