



Joint Associations Report

YARRA AREA

20th July 2008

This report to the Joint Association contains many aspects of the end of financial year report (07/08) on the Area's performance which is submitted to the Chief Executive Officer.

State Government "Community Cabinet" – Warrandyte Fire Station

On Tuesday 15th July, as part of the State Government "Community Cabinet", CFA hosted an event at the Warrandyte Fire Station. Community Cabinets are held throughout the year in various locations and are targeted at bridging the gap between the Government and the people, making Government more accessible to local communities and their issues.

Parliamentary Secretary for Emergency Services, Danielle Green attended the Community Cabinet at Warrandyte Fire Station and officially launched the Yarra Area CFA's Helitak 13, an educational prop constructed for use at community events, shows, etc.

The development and construction of the Helitak (nicknamed "Little Lex") has been co-ordinated and achieved through the great work of Community Education Fire-Fighter Lynda Challands.

A class from the local Anderson Creek Primary school attended the event, trying out "Little Lex" and participating in an activity to conclude the Community Cabinet.



As well as the Parliamentary Secretary and primary school students, the Community Cabinet was attended by Community Fireguard residents, members of the Warrandyte Fire Brigade and representatives from the CFA Lower Yarra Group, local Brigade Captains and representatives from other local organisations.

1. Area Activities

The first part of this report focuses on activities undertaken, or being undertaken by the Area in line with the CFA Corporate Goals.

Reduce the impact of fires and emergencies in Victoria

- Total primary and support vehicle responses were 8867 for the 2007-2008 financial year.

Build and strengthen self-reliant, resilient communities

- Fire Ready Victoria activity for 2007/8 has concluded with 2416 residents participating in street corner or community meetings. This is almost half the number who attended last year. This decrease is attributed to the quiet fire season. The Area has delivered a total of 154 Fire Ready Victoria sessions
- A Fire Ready Victoria/Community Fireguard post season survey was conducted with all Community Safety staff, Brigades and CFG group leaders. These post season surveys and meetings show that Yarra Area's summer programs are valuable to both CFA and the community. Key recommendations arising from the survey that will be addressed before next summer include;
 - Investigation of direct marketing methods to residents, such as that provided by Australia Post, to reduce the workload of brigades who currently have to spend much time letterboxing residences in their brigade area.
 - Improve the effectiveness of roadside signs Yarra Area has recently purchased 100 new larger format signs in metal frames which can stand alone and will alleviate the issues raised regarding their visibility, readability and placement on trees and poles.
 - Explore the use of larger banners for advertising Public Meetings on major roads needs to be investigated with consideration given to funding these.
 - Make greater use of existing local newsletters, such as the local schools, and placement of notices in shops to promote the Fire Ready Victoria program
 - Revision of the administrative tools, in particular the documents and forms used by Region to communicate and liaise with brigades needs to be undertaken – these need to be clearer, simpler and easier to understand to further improve the communication and processes between region and brigades related to the organisation of summer programs.
 - Conduct training and information sessions with all brigades to further enhance brigade familiarity and understanding of both the FRV and CFG program. This would also enhance and build on the important role brigades have participating in community meetings and provide more understanding of the educational methods used in these programs to motivate behavioural change in residents.

- Develop strategies that strengthen existing CFG groups. In particular increasing the number of households actively involved in the group.
- Provide greater opportunities and strategies that enable CFG groups to better link in with their local brigades. Assisting brigades to have a Community Fireguard event at the start of each summer to which all CFG groups are invited is one possibility of achieving this.
- Enhancing networking between CFG groups is also an area Yarra needs to continue to work on. Promoting the benefits of this to CFG leaders, encouraging them to give permission to share contact details and organising local CFG events in addition to maintaining the CFG Forums is important.

Deliver quality services

- Following the submission of a business case, as part of the 08/09 Budget Bids, so as to establish ongoing executive and administrative support to the Region, the internal funding committee and CFA Board has endorsed the ongoing recurrent funding for the positions at Woori Yallock Service Centre and the Knoxfield Regional Office.

Improve the safety and capability of CFA

- The Capital Works (Land and Buildings) schedule is updated monthly and communicated throughout the Area and on Brigades On Line.
- PPC allocation under the new Regional Procedures has resulted in a significant increase in both wildfire & structural ensemble for members across the Area. This has impacted on the budget and an additional \$146K was provided to cover the over expenditure. This will ensure that allocations will continue as required. Again the Area/Region stresses that Brigade leaders must ensure that with the new policy comes the need to ensure that items of PPC no longer required are returned to Region.

Effective and practical governance systems

- The HR/Welfare subcommittee of the RPC was re-established by the General Manager in accordance with the current RPC constitution. The first meeting was held Thursday 19 June 2008.
- The General Manager, as of the 21 July 2008, will be located at the Knoxfield Office, to ease the crowded office accommodation at Lilydale. This will remain in place until a new Area Headquarters is established.
- Section 29 inspections for 2007-2008 are 100% complete.

2. Yarra Area Strategic Plan

The development of the Yarra Area Strategic Plan (2008-11) is continuing. Following consultation with the Strategic Planning Committee of the RPC and internal stakeholders a series of actions have now been developed. The proposed actions and issues have been prepared and consolidated within a Draft Plan. The Strategic Planning Committee met on Thursday 10 July 2008 to review the Plan and have recommended a number changes to the document.

It is anticipated the finalised plan will be submitted to the September meeting of the RPC for endorsement.

The aim of the plan is to enable:-

- The Provision of a detailed list of the Area's activities and resulting actions.
- Incorporate a list of outcomes and actions resulting from an Annual Planning Day
- Provide a mechanism for the review and amendment of the actions throughout the life of the strategy.
- Provide the basis for an Annual reporting tool to the RPC.
- Provide a mechanism for the review and amendment of the actions throughout the life of the strategy.

3. Prevention Activities

3.1 Prevention Activities

The Community Safety Directorate based in CFA Headquarters is considering a statewide project focusing on false alarm management for 2008/9. Findings from the successful Yarra Area pilot will be submitted in support of this wider project.

3.2 Fire Safety

In the 2007/8 financial year 600 Land Use Planning reports and 91 Structural Fires Protection Reports were completed. Most of this work is completed by one Fire Safety Officer. Strategies to relieve the work demands on the FSO continue to be developed with increased administrative support. Further options for an additional part time FSO are to be examined in the planning for the 2008/9 Community Safety budget.

The Shire of Yarra Ranges is considering an amendment to its Wildfire Management Overlay (WMO). Before this released for public comment by Council, CFA (through the Municipal Fire Prevention Committees) will provide considered advice on the impact of proposed changes. Through this process every Brigade in the Shire of Yarra Ranges has been formally requested to consider the impact of proposed changes in their response area.

4. Preparedness

4.1 Emergency Management Planning

Area staff continue to attend Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee meetings and Divisional Emergency Response Planning Committee meetings throughout the year.

In particular, there has been extensive input into the emergency management planning for response to incidents on the Eastlink Tollway. A response exercise involving MFB appliances and the Boronia Pumper was conducted on 28 May. Hot smoke simulation testing and Brigade communications testing have occurred during the April-May 2008, with further refinement occurring for the communications system. With Eastlink being opened for public use on Sunday 29 June 2008, advice was sent to all Brigades and Groups on a number of questions that were raised in regards to both response and day to day use of the Eastlink toll road by CFA Brigades:

- Toll Free Period
- Designated Primary Response Areas on Eastlink
- Response into Eastlink Tunnels
- Mobile Telephone Coverage
- Notification & Requirement of Regional Duty Officer to attend Eastlink incidents
- CFA & Brigade Owned vehicle use of Eastlink for authorised CFA activities (non-response)
- CFA member private vehicle use or hire vehicle use on Eastlink (non-response)
- MFB documents & guidelines for Brigade information & use - *Please see attachments*

4.2 Community Development Programs

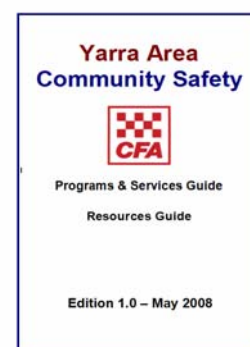
The Brigades in Schools program will be a focus between June and September. Three training workshops for presenters have been scheduled and 28 presenters from Brigades are to be trained. This will enable Brigades to deliver the BIS program locally.

During the 2007/8 financial year the following programs have been delivered:

- 39 Home Fire Safety workshops to 2,490 participants
- 21 Early Fire Safe sessions to 199 participants
- 154 Fire Ready Victoria meetings were delivered to 2,416 participants
- 129 Brigades in Schools sessions to 2,776 students
- 167 Mobile Education Unit sessions to 4,330 students
- 74 Industry Safety training sessions to 1,174 participants
- 115 displays/promotions have been facilitated.

4.3 Community Awareness/Liaison Activities

The Yarra Area Community Safety Programs and Services/Resources Guide has now been completed and has been distributed to Brigades and staff. It provides an overview of the Community Education and Fire safety programs managed by Community safety in conjunction with Brigades as well a comprehensive list of all resources available for loan to Brigades. As additional Community Education resources are acquired the Guide will be updated and reissued.



4.4 Operational Planning

An ongoing review of the Regional Operations Management Plan has been underway throughout the reporting period and will continue into 2007/08. Key seasonal components of the Plan were completed and distributed. This is a major body of work and requires extensive consultation with volunteer personnel and other emergency management agencies. The Specialist Response section of the ROMP is currently in first draft format and will be discussed at the upcoming Regional Planning Committee Operations Work Group meetings.

Work is ongoing with the strategic human resource plan. This strategy, which builds on the Regional Operational Management Plan, will review the incident management capacity of the Area from the fire ground through to the Regional Emergency Coordination Centre. The strategy will allow for the recognition of existing skills and the targeting of personnel for operational role skills and personal learning & development.

As part of the Yarra Area Strategic Plan, the RPC Operations Work Group has endorsed a revised Breathing Apparatus Allocation strategy and a revised Vehicle Dynamic Infrastructure Plan. These documents will be appended to the Area Strategic Plan and will be reviewed in line with the Strategic Plan review schedule

4.5 Learning & Development

Staff

The vacant instructor position is still unfilled. HQ has informed us that they are in contact with the union to resolve the matter, but there is no timeframe at this stage.

Fire-fighting Skills

The Wildfire Low Structure course has been moved to the Public Safety Training Package format. These courses are now being conducted by both volunteer and staff instructors, and have been well accepted by Brigades and Groups.

The Wildfire Fire-fighter course and assessment is under review by CFA Headquarters in an effort to make it workable for delivery in the field. In the meantime we will continue to deliver the course under the current system.

Crew Leadership

Discussions between the Operations and Training departments' have set priorities for this training for the next year. It will concentrate on completing the qualification for those who currently have only completed part of it.

The Chief Officer has signed off on the split of the current Crew Leader Wildfire qualification into three components:

- Wildfire Crew Leader
- Suppress Wildfire" and
- Level 1 Incident Controller.

All personnel who currently hold the Crew Leader Wildfire Qualification will be granted Level 1 Incident Controller.

The Level 1 Incident Controller course will be generic, neither Wildfire nor Structural, and will cover all risk environments.

Leadership

A Fireline Leadership course is scheduled to be conducted in September 2008. Nominations have been called for and returns are coming in.

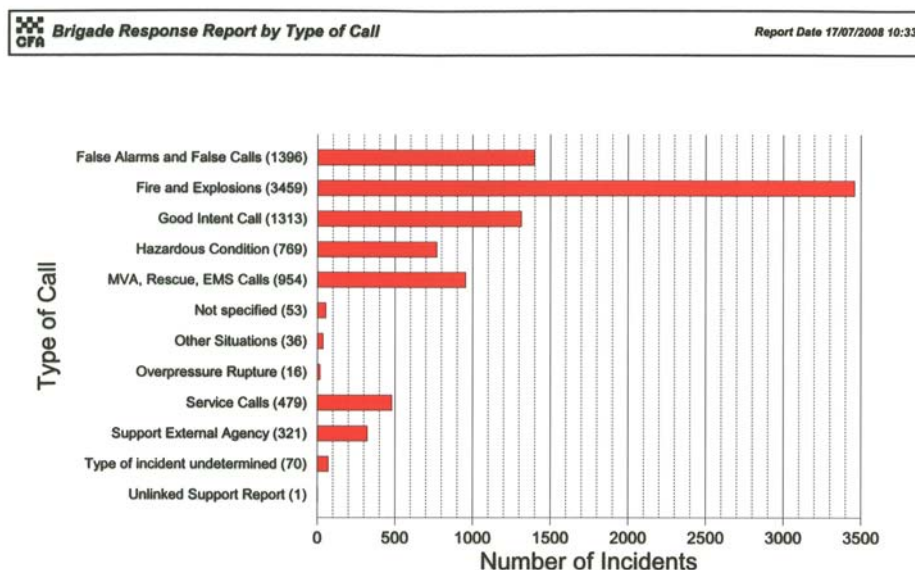
SETG

Learning & Develop have decided to re-activate the User Group Committee for the Bangholme campus of the Fire Services College (SETG). This will give the Area a voice in the management of the training ground once again.

5. Response

5.1 Emergency Response Activities/Performance

In the financial year ending 30/06/08, Brigades in the Yarra Area responded to 8867 (4737 incidents) of CFA's emergency response calls. This work load places a significant burden on the brigades and incident management personnel. In addition, the Region provides extensive support to other Regions during major fire operations.



Brigades are continuing to have a high level of incident response other than fire (including Hazmat and rope rescue) which impacts on time and resources of Brigades and personnel. Daytime response capacity continues to be monitored in the Area.

5.2 False Alarm Management

The Area continues to implement a broad range of measures to reduce responses to false alarms. This includes liaison directly with premises where false alarms are generated, provision of both general and specific advice to property owners, and the raising of charges for attendance by brigades.

6. Organisational Support

6.1 Customer Service

As reported earlier, the internal funding committee has endorsed the Area funding bid for the permanent creation of the administration support position at Woori Yallock and at the Knoxfield Office.

The Area is currently enhancing its part of Brigades on Line so as to make navigating the site easier.

6.2 People Management

6.2.1 Finance and Administration

Kate Davy	Currently assisting with the development of the Area Strategic Plan from the Knoxfield Office.
Michele Konheiser	Acting Finance Support Officer.
Kate Griffin	Leaving CFA on 1 August 2008. Recruitment for relieving Admin Support Officer, Woori Yallock underway.

6.2.2 Operations

Ross Sullivan	Commenced long term annual leave from 26 May until 25 July 2008. Fire Officer Mick Sporton will be acting Operations Officer Knox Catchment/OIC Boronia.
Chris Jacobsen	Commencing long term annual leave on 7 th July until 6 October 2008. Fire Officer Brian Wright will Acting Operations Officer Yarra Valley Catchment

Tony Bearzatto	Commencing 12 month appointment as Operations Manager (CFA Operations) from mid-August 2008. Recruitment for Maroondah Catchment Operations Officer is in progress.
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6.2.3 Training

Vacant Instructor Position	The Area is currently awaiting approval of the skillsets of the applicants so interviews can be conducted. There are sixteen applicants, with four of them having the potential to meet the necessary skills.
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6.2.4 Community Safety

Ali Martin	Seconded to HQ for 12 months until June 2009.
Wendy Cormack	Appointed as BASO in Yarra Valley Group vice Ali Martin until June 2009.
Diana Ferguson	Returned from maternity leave to Knox Group as part time BASO - Seconded to HQ for 12 months.
Simon Neill	Appointed as BASO in Yarra Valley Group until August 2008.
Geoff Deacon	Returned to Yarra Area as Community Education Coordinator from a HQ secondment.

6.3 Policies & Procedures

The Yarra Area Management Team (AMT) have instigated a review of all Area Policies. The review is being managed by the Finance & Administration Manager and will ensure all policies and procedures are current and maintained in one central place. Once the review is completed, all Yarra Area policies will be posted on Brigades Online.

7 Safety First Program (OH&S)

The Area OH&S Committee has met regularly under the chairmanship of Operations Officer Chris Jacobsen.

7.1 Safety First System Project

The Safety First Project Officer Samantha Ryan has been both introducing the Safety First Project and conducting "Safety Checks" across the Yarra & Westernport Areas.

Safety Check audits were conducted at the following Yarra sites:

Ferntree Gully 26.02.08	Monbulk 26.02.08
Belgrave 27.02.08	Eltham 04.03.08
Rowville 05.03.08	Seville 17.03.08
Lilydale 31.03.08	Yarra R/O 02.04.08
Coldstream 02.04.08	Boronia 16.04.08
Scoresby 16.04.08	South Warrandyte 17.04.08
Hurstbridge 14.05.08	(plus 14 visits to sites in Westernport)

While final reports are being compiled into a gap analysis for future OHS system requirements it should be noted that overall results reflect quite reasonable legislative compliance.

- There appears to be an overall positive culture of OHS in relation to the risks inherent with operational duties, however, some work needs to be done regarding communication of OHS information, documentation and record keeping.
- This recognition is balanced with the plea for keeping "paperwork" to a minimum. The latter issue will need to be addressed during the OHS procedure rollout phase by presenting brigades with a minimum of paperwork delivered through "Safety Essentials", which will be a one-page, laminated A4, abridged version of procedures for display on Safety Notice Boards.

Phase 1 of the OHS Procedure roll outs will commence mid-year and will be delivered through a series of packages, presentations and meetings. In Yarra, we will be making use of the Brigade OHS Facilitator role in ensuring that each procedure is rolled out at Brigade meetings.

- Where there is no Facilitator it will be expected to be rolled out by Captains/BMTs.
- Brigades and Facilitators will be provided with a briefing note, procedures in a "package" (which will include the full procedures, guidance notes, "frequently asked questions", "Safety Essentials" and PowerPoint presentations) and feedback sheets to confirm the target group has been reached.
- Phase 1 is to be completed by August 31st 2008 to provide a comprehensive review of the roll out prior to Phase 2.
- For staff delivery of the roll out will occur through a series of staff meetings.
- In an effort to keep things simple all each procedure presentation is designed to keep to about 15 minutes.

Key to the Area OHS communications will be the Brigade OHS Facilitators. Chris Jacobsen, Sam Ryan, John Felstead and Graeme Luke delivered a 4 hour Induction session for this group on May 18th 2008. Over forty members from Brigades attended the “pilot” held at Swinburne, Lilydale. The induction covered topics such as:

- the facilitator role
- the legislative framework
- the Safety First project
- hazard and incident reporting and recording
- OHS communications
- OHS culture change.

Feedback from the day was really positive, reflecting an enthusiasm by Facilitators to become engaged in OHS communication and on-going learning. Participants have asked for an email group to be established to promote the exchange of ideas and interaction. Association representatives are assisting Sam Ryan to compile a listing of email addresses. The induction group was also keen for their position within their brigade to take a higher profile to ensure recognition of their important role.

Other Safety First activities have included participation by Sam Ryan in the delivery of induction sessions for the Yarra brigades involved with the joint partnership with the Bendigo Bank and LESS energy to provide a changeover of incandescent to energy saving light globes. During March, April & May 10x1.5hr sessions were conducted across the Groups involved.

8. Service Delivery Planning and Strategy Development

8.1 Metropolitan Growth Strategy

On March 4 2008, Premier Brumby announced the fast-tracking of land release in the designated growth corridors as identified in ‘Melbourne 2030’. This will result in the early release of 90,000 new residential blocks by 2020. The areas most affected by the announcement are the municipalities of Casey, Hume, Melton, Cardinia, Whittlesea and Wyndham. All the land set for release is within CFA area.

Yarra Area/Region 13, although not compromising of any of the designated growth municipalities will be impacted by the growth in the greater metropolitan area.

A CFA strategy to meet the needs of Melbourne’s rapid growth is currently being developed and being managed by the three General Managers of the Metropolitan Areas – Westernport, Norwest (Melton) and Yarra Area.

8.2 CFA Metropolitan General Manager’s Working Group

The three metropolitan CFA General Manager’s, in conjunction with the Director of Strategic Planning & Area Coordination, formed a Metropolitan General Manager’s Group so as to be proactive in:

- Building relationships with organisations such as Growth Areas Authority, VicUrban etc
- Building relationships between the three Area Management Teams

On 9 May 2008, the management teams from the three metropolitan Areas of CFA held an inaugural Metropolitan Working Group meeting at VicUrban's offices in the Docklands.

The purpose of the day was to explore some of the key strategic issues affecting the three Areas, taking into account the Premier's recent land release announcement, and to discuss how CFA can ensure a combined approach to addressing these issues.

Representatives from VicUrban, Growth Area Authority and Department of Planning & Community Development also attended the Working Group and provided a high level run down on major initiatives and projects which they are undertaking and how it impacts on CFA service delivery planning for the Metropolitan Area.

On 20 May 2008, the three Metropolitan General Managers attended a meeting with Growth Areas Authority to consult on how CFA can assist the Growth Areas Authority with the new Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines.

The meeting was convened so as to give CFA and other Government Department representatives, information about the work being undertaken on the new Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines. There are 40 Precinct Structure Plans to be developed as part of the Growth Area's Authority work, and in particular, each will have a number of sub plans, including the work being undertaken on Infrastructure Investments Plans. These plans are significant to CFA as they are an opportunity for CFA to possibly gain significant resource funding/land banking.

As a result of the meeting, the General Manager has recommended the following so as to ensure ongoing involvement in the growth issues. These include : -

- Establishing a cross-functional group to provide feedback on the Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines works currently underway by Growth Areas Authority, beginning with feedback and input into the preliminary draft document.
- Establishing a cross-functional process to provide input into each of the Infrastructure Investment Plans.
- Finalise one Metro Strategy for CFA so as to ensure consistency in relationship management, planning and stakeholder engagement.
- Consideration to be given to commencing discussions now with VicSES on the possibility of working together on the Growth issues.
- Establish a governance process within CFA to ensure there is a clear understanding at the Executive Management Team and Area level as to who is responsible for what, etc, as we develop our needs further.

As a follow on from the May Metropolitan General Manager's Forum, a further meeting of the General Managers was held on June 26 2008, with representatives from Growth Areas Authority attending so that CFA can provide an overview of the CFA Capital Works Planning Processes. The next meeting of the Metropolitan General Managers will be held on 24 July 2008.

9. Equity & Diversity

In late 2007 the Area forwarded to all Brigades a co-joint signed letter from the General Manager, RPC Chairman and Volunteer Associations recommending and encouraging Brigades to book in for the Equity & Diversity Training Program which will be available to all Brigades over the next 12 month period.

Equity and diversity training has been arranged and delivered in a number of brigades with a further program offered in this reporting period. Support from the Chaplaincy Service and CIS Peers has also been extremely valuable in assisting brigade leaders to deal with these issues.

10. Financial Performance

10.1 Financial Report – Year-to-date June 2008

	Year End	Year End
INCOME / EXPENSES	Plan	Actual
Statutory & Miscellaneous Income	131,500	301,674
Net Sales Income	6,500	13,073
TOTAL NET INCOME	138,000	314,748
Employee Related	6,070,509	6,343,271
Employee Support	108,561	149,823
Asset Maint. & Operating	1,272,319	1,153,801
Telecommunication & Data Carrier	205,595	222,287
Volunteer & Brigade Support	353,600	374,654
General Expenses	385,014	372,832
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	8,257,598	8,302,351
OVER SPEND		44,753

Deficit for the 2007/08 year is \$44,753, which represents an overspend of 0.54% of budgeted expenditure. Management gave particular attention to upgrading the condition of fire station buildings and fittings, and ensuring that volunteers were provided with the appropriate level of protective clothing. During the year, over \$300K was spent on building maintenance and repairs, and over \$231K was spent on Volunteer PPC (compared to an initial budget of \$110K). Comparative figures for 2006/07 were \$227K for building maintenance and repairs, and \$170K for PPC.

Other areas of overspend included staff overtime, vehicle fuel and maintenance, and volunteer medical and general expenses.

Revenue from false alarms and HAZMAT incidences significantly exceeded that forecast, and reflects the increased attention given to recovering the costs of false alarms. This revenue enabled the area to minimise the overall deficit for the year, but allowed for the continued employment of an assistant stores person required to maintain an improved level of service to brigades and volunteers.

10.2 Area Finance Officer (Brigades) – Richard Tindall

Firstly, a very sincere “Thank You” to all brigades and groups in providing the bank account balance returns. We again had a 100% return from all brigades and groups across CFA.

The total overall amount of cash in the bank held by brigades will be presented in CFA’s annual report to the Victorian Parliament.

Following on from the cash account balances will be the requirement for brigades to submit an end of financial year summary to the Area by 1st August (each year). For a very large number of brigades this will not be a new process, it is a variation of Regulation 60.

The completion of changes to the CFA Regulations is still with the Victorian Parliamentary Council.

I have visited each brigade and group in Region 13, and re-visited those brigades with new Secretaries or Treasurers commencing as of 1st July 2008, to explain the changes to Brigade Financial Management. Including the Financial Inspection and Review process and requirements.

Financial Inspection and Reviews are expected to commence in August 2008. These inspections will be based on the end of financial year summary received by the Area office.

33 of the 46 brigades in Yarra Area separately registered for GST / ABN with the Australian Taxation Office have de-registered or relinquished their ABN.

11 brigades and one auxiliary remain separately registered for GST / ABN.

As I mentioned at a recent RPC meeting, the Brigade Financial Management Project is coming to a close. I would like to sincerely thank all those in Region 13 who I have met since starting work in the Area in late 2007. I have enjoyed meeting, working and entering into debate and discussion with many fantastic people.

The ongoing role of Area Finance Office (Brigades) has been advertised in CFA People Moves. I would sincerely like to continue working in Yarra Area and intend to apply for the position in Yarra.

11. Delivery of Capital Works Program for Area

It is pleasing to report that a number of Capital Works (Land & Building) Projects have, or are about to commence. These include:

- Belgrave Heights & South – Town Planning process being completed; currently awaiting an outcome of an appeal to VCAT
- Badger Creek – Construction commenced February 2008, completed July 2008.
- Christmas Hills – Construction to commenced March 2008, completed July 2008.
- Reefton – Opening occurred 29 June 2008
- Seville – extensions opening occurred 22 June 2008
- Warburton East – Town Planning process being completed.

In addition to the above projects, the Area is finalising concept plans/business cases for a number of Brigades. Full details can be seen on the Area's Capital Works (Land & Building) schedule which is updated and disseminated monthly throughout the Area and is on Brigades on Line. *A copy is attached for information.*

Building Maintenance Report

As well as the monthly Capital Works (Land & Building) schedule, the Area is now disseminating a monthly Building Maintenance Report, which can be view on Brigades on Line. This is a new initiative to continue the ongoing continuous improvement of communication throughout the Area. *A copy is attached for information.*

12. Knoxfield Office – Relocation of General Manager's Office

As previously reported, to ease the accommodation pressures at the Lilydale Headquarters, the office of the General Manager will be relocated, on a temporary basis, to the CFA Knoxfield office, which is located above the new State Logistics Centre at 6 Samantha Court, Knoxfield. In doing this, an additional area of space will be available during operations at the Lilydale Headquarters and create extra office space for the Community Safety and Operations departments.

It is anticipated that the move will occur on 21st July 2008.

It is my intention that these temporary accommodation arrangements remain in place until the new Area Headquarters is established.

13. Catchment Planning Tool - Proposed Trial

One of my first actions as the General Manager in Yarra Area was to put a stop on what was then known as the Brigade Planning Tool or the Service Delivery Planning Model (SDPM). This decision was based on the lack of efficiency and effectiveness of that tool and the time impost on volunteers and staff who needed to be involved in the process.

The Yarra AMT have subsequently been discussing a number of ways in which the capturing of Brigade information for planning purposes can be effectively achieved, with little time impost on Brigades and field based staff.

We have learnt that over the past year the North East Area have successfully been undertaking a trial to implement a new Catchment Planning tool. This tool has received positive feedback from volunteers and staff from that Area. The tool was recently reviewed by the Yarra AMT. It is a simpler, more flexible tool with little, if any 'widget' counting.

The AMT therefore plan to undertake a trial of this tool in the Dandenong Ranges Catchment, if agreed to by the Catchment Staff, the Dandenong Ranges Group and Brigades within the Group. The trial will be aimed at assessing the impact and value of the tool for Yarra Area.

In providing this advice, I wish to emphasise that the trial in the Dandenong Ranges Catchment is a **pilot** program. It is simply aimed at assessing the suitability of the model for the Area and to see if it will add value to the Areas overall planning process.

Any decision to expand the use of the tool across the Area will be based on the success in the Dandenong Ranges Catchment **pilot**.

A presentation of the tool will be provided at the next Dandenong Ranges Catchment team meeting. A decision will then be made as to whether to continue to the next stage, that being a presentation to the Dandenong Ranges Group and then with agreement, commencement of the **pilot** program.

14. 2008 CFA Member Survey

The CFA Board commissioned the undertaking of the 2008 CFA Member Survey to gain an insight into its members' views and perceptions as members of the CFA. I encourage all members to participate in the Member Survey.

The 2008 Member Survey will be available to all members from 1 to 31 August 2008 either on-line at www.cfamembersurvey.com or as a paper based survey contained as an insert in the winter edition of *Brigade*. An 1800 number (1800 302 428) will also be available for those who have not been able to access the survey either on-line or through *Brigade*. Please see attachments

Using the information gained from the Survey, CFA intends to build on and strengthen its relationship with its members, Volunteer Associations and Unions. CFA will use information gained from the Survey to further develop and improve policies and procedures that affect all members.

In developing the Survey, CFA have worked with the Australian Catholic University, Volunteer Associations and Unions. The Australian Catholic University will independently process and analyse all the information provided by CFA members upon completing the Survey.

The Australian Catholic University will prepare and present survey results, trends and recommendations to the CFA Board, Volunteer Associations and Unions. CFA will communicate to its members, Volunteer Associations and Unions the survey results, trends, recommendations with supporting actions plans following presentation of the Report to the CFA Board

15. New Structural PPC Ensemble

For information, please see attached CFA Fire Flyer which regarding the Rollout of new Structural PPC Ensemble.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lex de Man', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Lex de Man
General Manager
Yarra Area**

