



The Country Fire Service Volunteers Association

"Representing the interests of CFS Members"

Presidents Report 2016 AGM

I have been in this role for some 12 months now and I am getting my head around all the aspects of the job. Attending the AFAC conference on a yearly basis, participation with our national body CAFVA, and involvement with COAC, RVMC, my brigade and group has provided me with a sound basis for my involvement with the CFSVA and helps me understand the interests and concerns of CFS volunteers and the political climate in which the emergency services operate.

The CFSVA has had a torrid time over the last few years as we have had to deal with one politically driven agenda after another, and although this has been challenging at times, the CFSVA is the first association in Australia to successfully securing presumptive legislation for all CFS volunteers; has secured the 25km/hr speed limit past emergencies legislation; and is currently working to advance other matters that have the potential to impact on volunteers, their safety and their future.

The CFSVA, however, is about so much more than just responding to political issues, it's also about positioning, and by that I mean setting ourselves up in the strongest possible place so as to minimize future challenges to our organization and culture. A lot of our strength comes from our community based membership, to make best use of that strength we must improve the connection with our members, to lift our profile. We need to make the VA more relevant, of greater value to members. As we all know, there is no one simple way to communicate and connect with our members, we are currently in the process of finalising a strategic plan for the next 5 to 10 years, which the management committee and I are currently working on. This will set in place a number of strategies to significantly reduce the impact of any future attack on the culture of our volunteer fire service, as well as provide a range of improved services and opportunities for our volunteers.

To put things into perspective from time to time is important, to measure success or failure we need a benchmark to compare to. On a national level, as a volunteer fire service, we are considered one of the best organized, trained, equipped and supported in the country. We are in pretty good shape at the moment. The CFSVA has managed to overcome much of the adversity our interstate counterparts are currently working under, and is highly respected.

It is my view that any organization that does not have a constant improvement process in place will eventually fail and disappear into the night and therefore it is vital that the CFSVA maintains a proactive approach, clear future direction and defined outcomes.

I believe my job as President is not yet finished, and therefore seek the support of delegates so that I may lead our association for another 2 years and taking it to the strongest possible position to ensure that best interests and welfare of our members are promoted and advanced

In closing I would like to thank Sonia, Kirsti and the Management committee for all their work, support and encouragement over the past year. It has been a privilege to work with this team.

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