

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN FIRE AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMISSION
VOLUNTEER SERVICES BRANCH**

DATA REPORT JULY – DECEMBER 2017

FEBRUARY 2018



1. INTRODUCTION

The South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM), Volunteer Services Branch (VSB) is responsible for undertaking a bi-annual data report for the purpose of reviewing and analysing volunteer numbers for the Country Fire Service (CFS) and the State Emergency Service (SES). The information contained within this report is for the period 1 July – 31 December 2017.

The report is presented to the SAFECOM Board for review and approval to release to the emergency services sector.

1.1 Scope

The intention of this report is to provide an accurate count of volunteer numbers within the CFS and SES. This excludes paid staff within each organisation, unless they also undertake a volunteer role with a particular brigade or unit.

A volunteer's membership status must be 'current' to be incorporated within the figures in the report.

1.2 Methodology

The information presented within this report has been produced from data extracted from the Training and Administration System (TAS) on 2 January 2018 at 1630 hrs.

2. EMERGENCY SERVICES VOLUNTEERS – CFS & SES

The CFS and SES are volunteer based emergency service organisations dedicated to providing fire and emergency response to the South Australian community. Both organisations provide the opportunity for volunteers to undertake operational, non-operational or cadet based roles.¹

Table 1: Summary of Emergency Services Volunteers – CFS & SES

| Agency | Total Volunteers June 2017 | Fire Fighters and General Operations | Support Operations | Cadets | Total Volunteers December 2017 |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---------------|---|
| CFS | 13550 | 10194 | 2311 | 661 | 13166 |
| SES | 1501 | 957 | 544 | 39 | 1540 |
| TOTAL | 15051 | 11151 | 2855 | 700 | 14706 |

As depicted in Table 1, the total number of volunteers across the state has decreased by 345 members over the last six months (July – December 2017). Whilst the CFS has experienced a decrease of 384 members, the SES has seen an increase of 39 members over the same period.

2.1 CFS Volunteers

In reviewing CFS volunteer numbers by region and membership category for the period July – December 2017 in comparison to the previous six month period (January – June 2017), the following has been identified (refer to Table 2):

- All three membership categories experienced a reduction in members over the six month period.
- The total number of firefighters decreased by 282. Region 2 experienced a decrease of 95 firefighters.
- Region 1 experienced the largest decrease of CFS members across the membership categories (135 in total). Region 2 also had the highest percentage decrease of members (118 in total).
- The total number of cadets decreased by 52 across the CFS.
- There are currently 216 members who are counted twice in these figures. This consists of members who are CFS volunteers and Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) staff, or members of both a brigade and an operational support brigade.

It is important to note that whilst the CFS has experienced a reduction of members over the last six months (384); a mitigating factor that appears to have contributed to this recorded decline is the Annual Brigade Firefighter Audit process.² The provision of an annual audit and verification process contributes to maintaining accurate membership records and volunteer numbers.

¹ Within the CFS, cadets are between 11 and 18 years old. This is slightly different for the SES, where cadets are between 13 and 18 years old.

² Exit trends extracted from TAS for the reporting period (July – December 2017) indicate that 602 members exited the service through the BF AUDIT code.

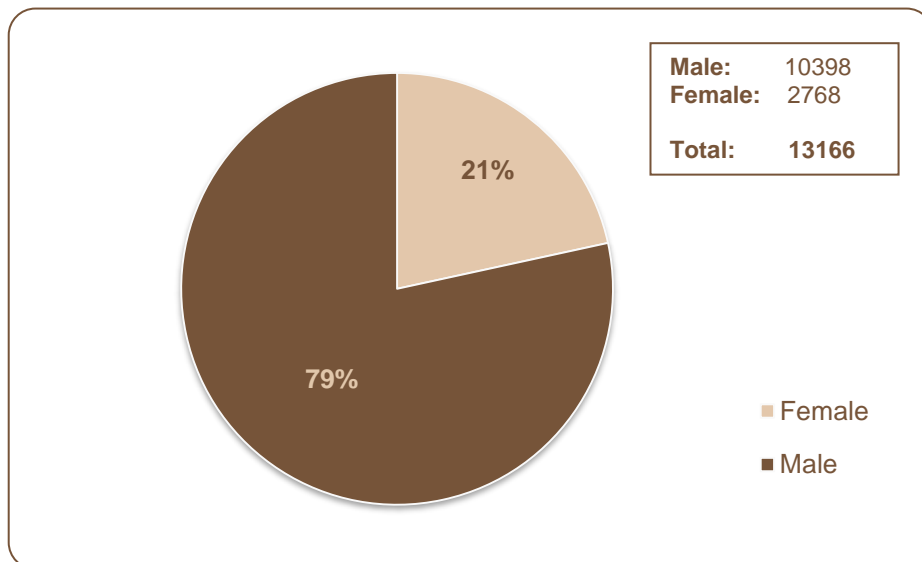
Table 2: CFS Volunteers by Region

| Region | Fire Fighters | | | | Operational Support | | | | Cadets | | | | Total | | | |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|---------------------|-------------|------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| | June - 17 | Dec - 17 | Net Change | % Change | Jun- 17 | Dec - 17 | Net Change | % Change | Jun - 17 | Dec - 17 | Net Change | % Change | Jun - 17 | Dec - 17 | Net Change | % Change |
| DEWNR | 357 | 351 | -6 | -1.68% | 167 | 190 | 23 | 13.77% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 524 | 541 | 17 | 3.24% |
| S/OPS | 18 | 18 | 0 | 0% | 1 | 2 | 1 | 100% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 19 | 20 | 1 | 5.26% |
| 1 | 2318 | 2257 | -61 | -2.63% | 759 | 702 | -57 | -7.50% | 211 | 194 | -17 | -8.05% | 3288 | 3153 | -135 | -4.10% |
| 2 | 2137 | 2042 | -95 | -4.44% | 410 | 418 | 8 | 1.95% | 240 | 209 | -31 | -12.91% | 2787 | 2669 | -118 | -4.23% |
| 3 | 1146 | 1097 | -49 | -4.27% | 192 | 187 | -5 | -2.60% | 51 | 50 | -1 | -1.96% | 1389 | 1334 | -55 | -3.95% |
| 4 | 1526 | 1498 | -28 | -1.83% | 282 | 288 | 6 | 2.12% | 133 | 128 | -5 | -3.75% | 1941 | 1914 | -27 | -1.39% |
| 5 | 1635 | 1606 | -29 | -1.77% | 274 | 257 | -17 | -6.20% | 37 | 41 | 4 | 10.81% | 1946 | 1904 | -42 | -2.15% |
| 6 | 1339 | 1325 | -14 | -1.04% | 276 | 267 | -9 | -3.26% | 41 | 39 | -2 | -4.87 | 1656 | 1631 | -25 | -1.51% |
| Total | 10476 | 10194 | -282 | -2.69% | 2361 | 2311 | -50 | -2.11% | 713 | 661 | -52 | -7.29% | 13550 | 13166 | -384 | -2.83% |

2.1.1 Gender Breakdown

A gender breakdown of the 13,166 current CFS volunteers indicates that 79% are male and 21% female (refer to Figure 1).

Figure 1: CFS Gender Breakdown



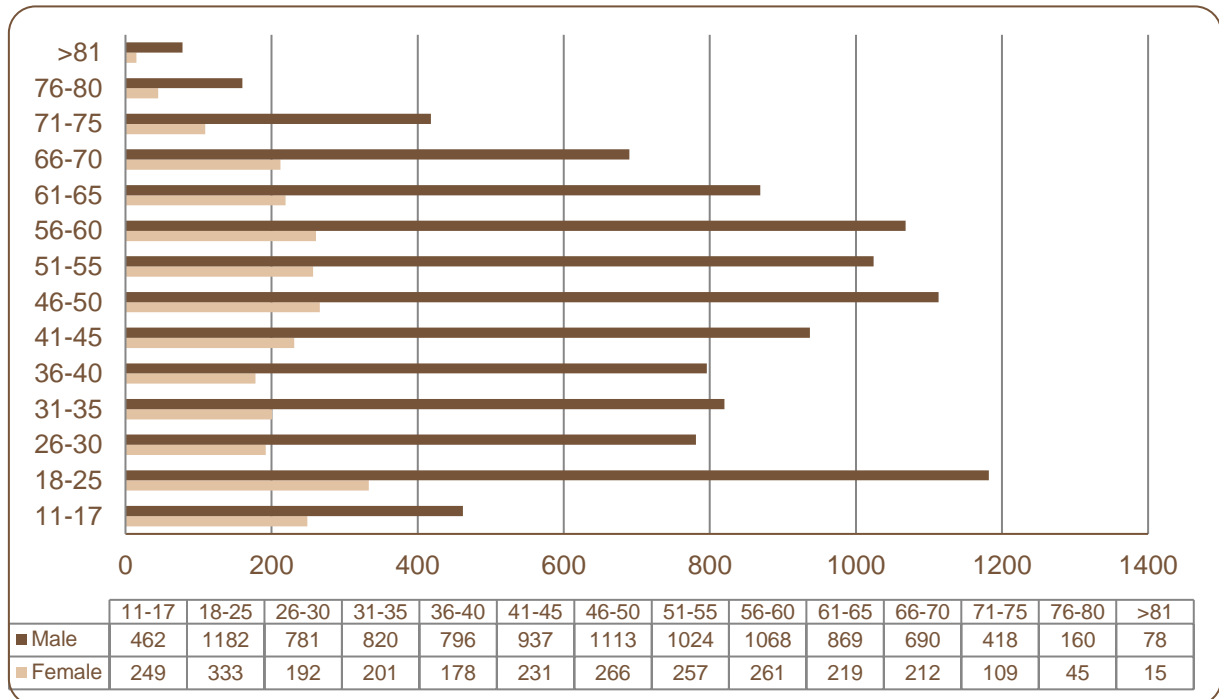
2.1.2 Age Gender Analysis

The average age of all current CFS volunteers is 45.14 years. This defers slightly for men (45.4 years) and women (44.0) years.

An age-gender analysis for all current CFS volunteers is illustrated in Figure 2. The following has been identified as points of interest:

- The 18-25 age group has the highest member numbers for both males (1,182) and females (333) and accounts for 11.3% of males and 12.0% of females within the CFS.
- 18.9% of all CFS members are aged 18 – 30 years.
- 41.2% of all CFS members are aged over 50 years.

Figure 2: CFS Age Gender Analysis



2.1.3 Gender Rank Comparison

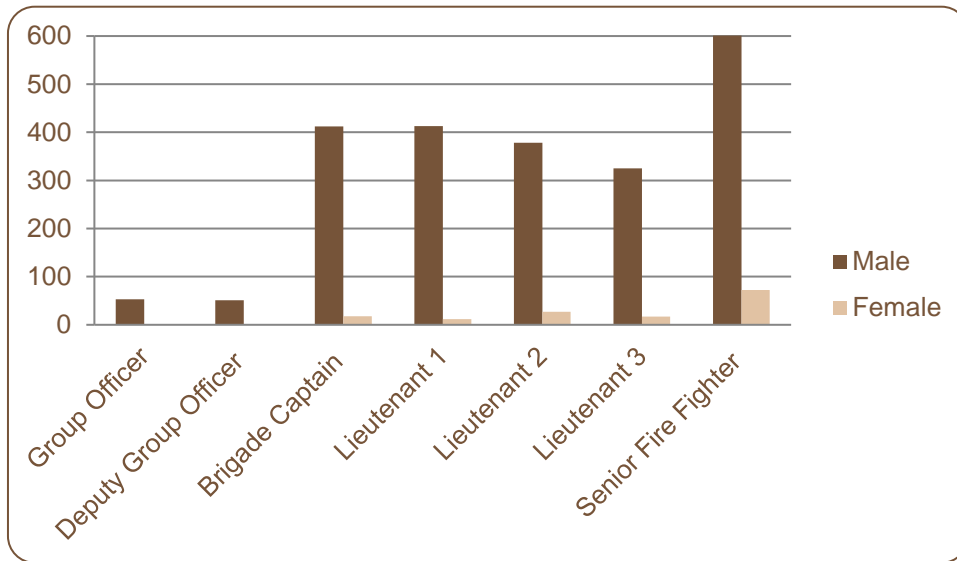
All volunteers that commence with the CFS can be elected to leadership positions within their brigade or group, if they meet required criteria. These leadership positions consist of Senior Firefighter, Lieutenant, Brigade Captain, Deputy Group Officer and Group Officer.

In comparing the current gender mix across the volunteer leadership positions within the CFS, the following has been identified (refer to Figure 3):³

- 146 women hold leadership roles within the CFS, which equates to 6.1% of the total number of leadership positions (2379).
- There is a significant disparity between males and females in leadership positions within the CFS. This is somewhat reflective of the overall disparity of male and female volunteers within the organisation.

³ Information presented on leadership positions is based on data extracted from TAS and is restricted to Lieutenant 3 for the Lieutenant rank and GDO1 for the Deputy Group Officer rank.

Figure 3: CFS Gender Rank Comparison



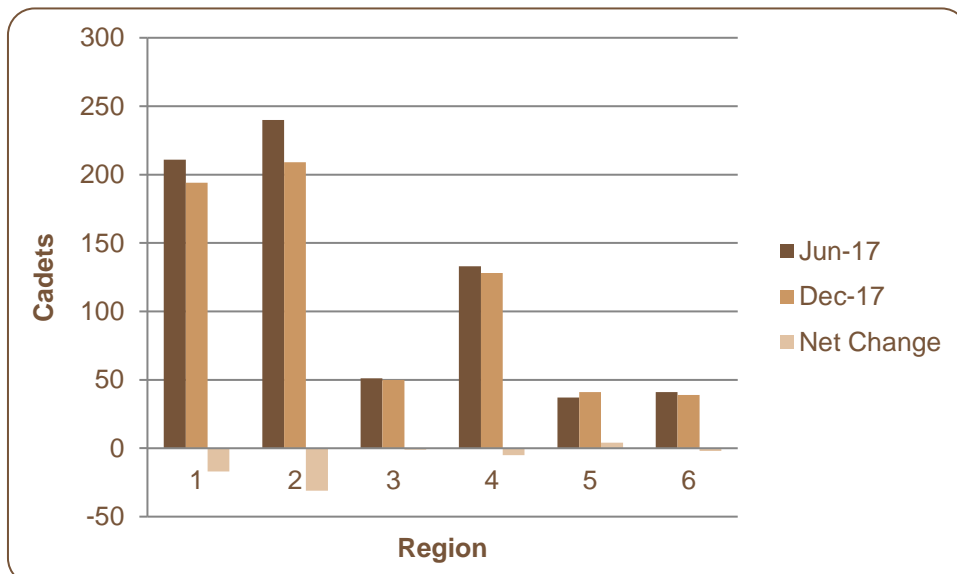
2.1.4 Cadet Analysis

The CFS accepts young men and women aged between 11-18 years to be cadets. The cadet program is about building a foundation for future membership in the CFS, as well as developing youth in the local community through skill and social development.

In reviewing CFS cadet numbers for the reporting period (July – December 2017) in comparison to the previous six month period (January – June 2017), the following has been identified (refer to Figure 4):

- The total number of cadets has reduced by 52 over the six month period. Region 2 experienced the biggest reduction in cadet numbers during the period (31), followed by Region 1 with a loss of 17 cadets.
- Region 2 has the highest numbers of cadets (209), which equates to 32% of the total number of cadets within the CFS. Region 1 follows closely behind with 194 cadets.

Figure 4: CFS Cadet Analysis



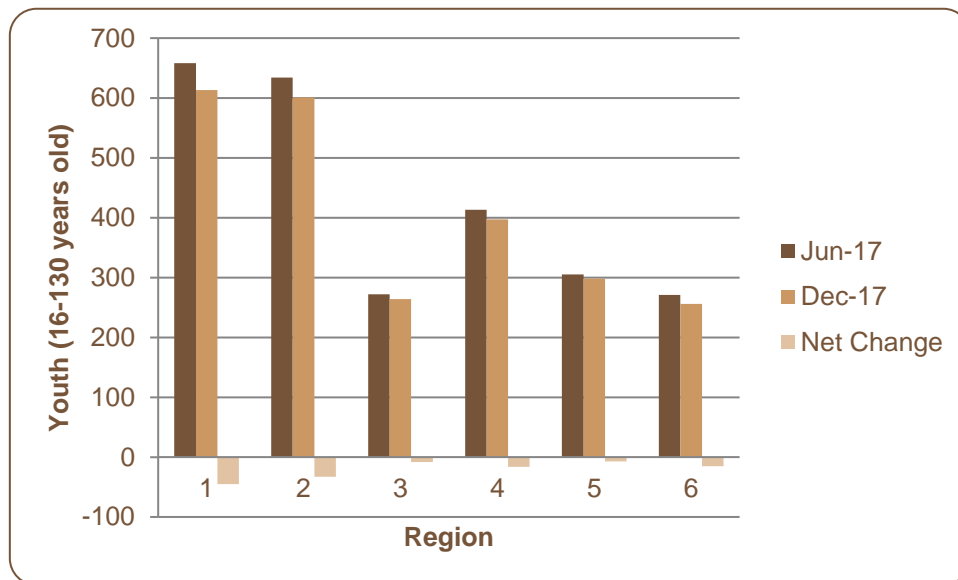
2.1.5 Youth Members

The CFS has a strong representation of youth volunteer members (16-30 year olds). Given that the current volunteer workforce is aging, retaining young people in the CFS is seen as an important factor in maintaining a sustainable volunteer workforce.

In reviewing CFS youth volunteer numbers (aged between 16–30 years)⁴ for the reporting period (July – December 2017) in comparison to the previous six month period (January – June 2017), the following has been identified (refer to Figure 5):

- The total number of youth volunteers (16-30 year olds) has decreased by 124 over the six month period. Region 1 experienced the biggest fluctuation in youth volunteers during the period, with a decrease of 45.
- Region 1 has the highest number of youth volunteers (613), which equates to 25% of the total number of youth volunteers within the CFS. Region 2 follows closely behind with 601 youth volunteers.

Figure 5: CFS Youth Volunteers (16-30 year olds) Analysis



2.2 SES Volunteers

In reviewing SES volunteer numbers by region and membership category for the period July – December 2017 in comparison to the previous six month period (January - June 2017), the following has been identified (refer to Table 3):

- SES member numbers increased by 39 over the reporting period (2.59%).
- The total number of SES volunteers decreased by 19 members in the North Region, whilst the South Region experienced an increase of 58 members overall.
- Of the three membership categories, both General Operations and Cadets decreased by 12 members each. In contrast, Support Operations increased by 63 members overall, due to a 31% increase in the South Region.

It is important to note that there are currently 25 members who are counted twice in these figures. This consists of members who undertake both General Operations and Support Operations roles.

⁴This excludes cadets and DEWNR members.

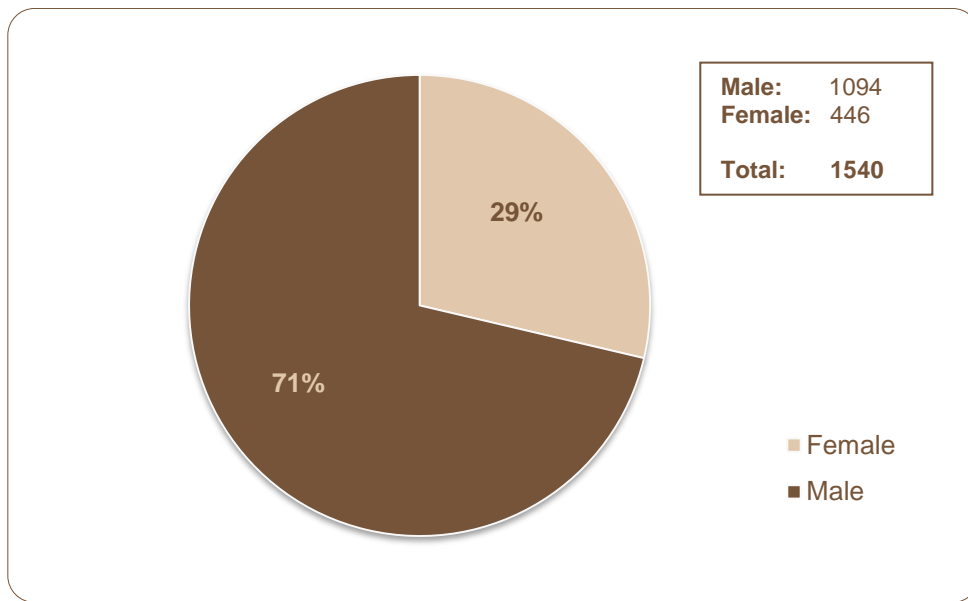
Table 3: SES Volunteers by Region

| Region | General Ops | | | | Support Ops | | | | Cadets | | | | Total | | | |
|--------|-------------|---------|------------|----------|-------------|---------|------------|----------|----------|---------|------------|----------|----------|---------|------------|----------|
| | Jun - 17 | Dec- 17 | Net Change | % Change | Jun - 17 | Dec- 17 | Net Change | % Change | Jun - 17 | Dec- 17 | Net Change | % Change | Jun - 17 | Dec- 17 | Net Change | % Change |
| North | 393 | 390 | -3 | -0.76% | 242 | 231 | -11 | -4.55% | 30 | 25 | -5 | -16.66 | 665 | 646 | -19 | -2.85% |
| South | 576 | 567 | -9 | -1.56% | 239 | 313 | 74 | 30.96% | 21 | 14 | -7 | -33.33 | 836 | 894 | 58 | 6.93% |
| Total | 969 | 957 | -12 | 1.23% | 481 | 544 | 63 | 13.09% | 51 | 39 | -12 | -23.52 | 1501 | 1540 | 39 | 2.59% |

2.2.1 Gender Breakdown

A gender breakdown of the 1,540 current SES volunteers indicates that 71% are male and 29% female (refer to Figure 6).

Figure 6: SES Gender Breakdown



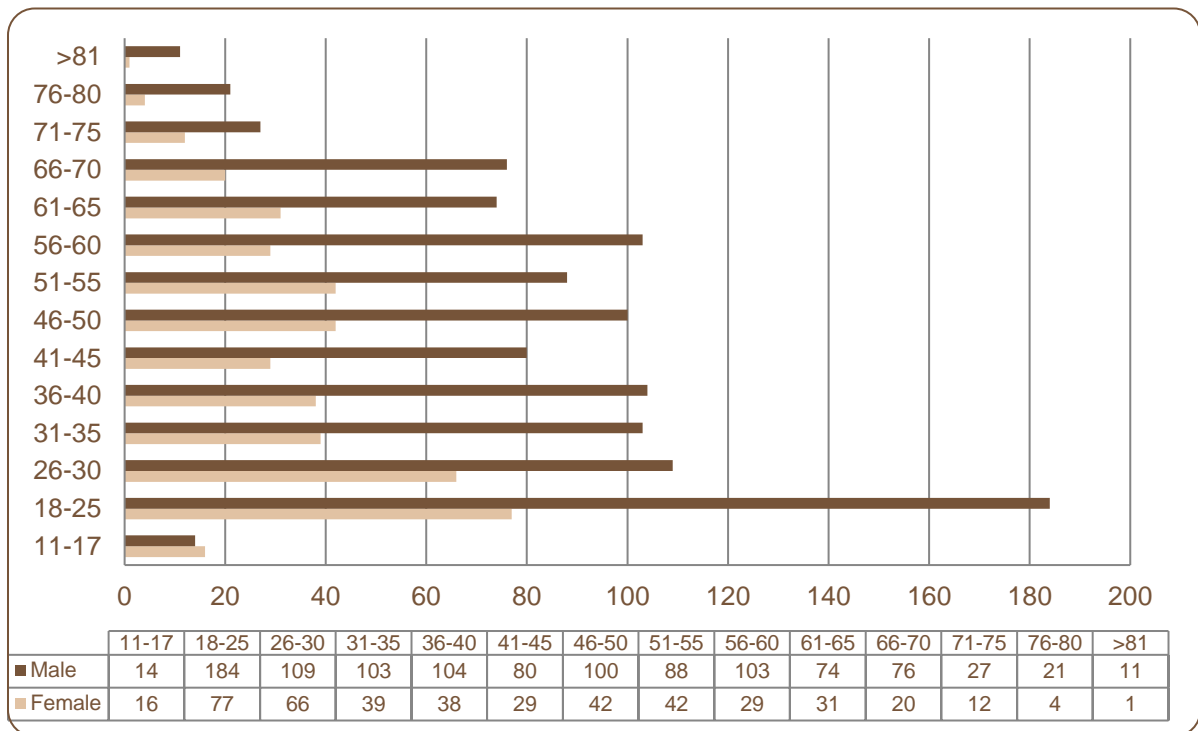
2.2.2 Age Gender Analysis

The average age of all current SES volunteers is 42.9 years. This defers slightly for men (43.7 years) and women (41.0) years.

An age-gender analysis for all current SES volunteers is illustrated below in Figure 7. The following has been identified as points of interest:

- The age group of 18-25 has the highest numbers of SES volunteers for both males (184) and females (77).
- The age group of 18-25 accounts for 17% of females within the SES.
- 35% of the total members are aged over 50 years.

Figure 7: SES Age Gender Analysis



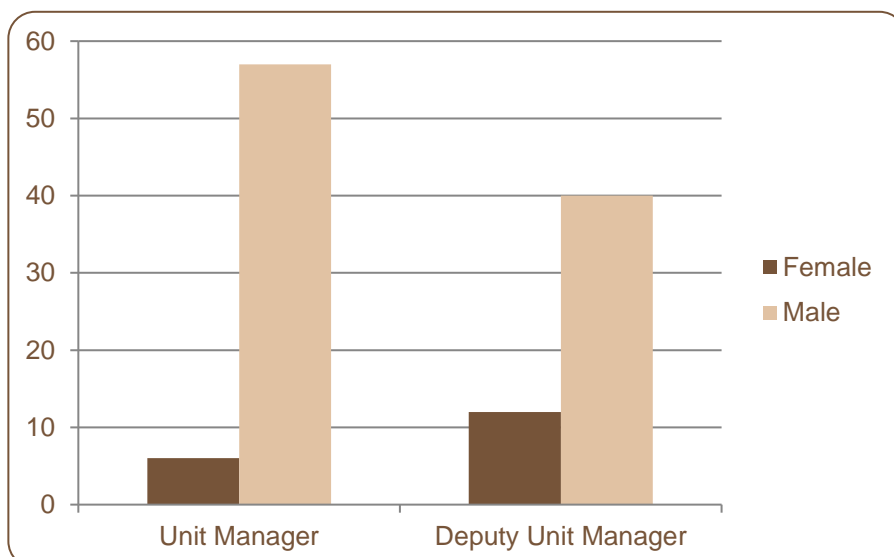
2.2.3 Gender Rank Comparison

All volunteers that commence with the SES can be elected to leadership positions within their unit, if they meet required criteria. These leadership positions consist of Unit Manager and Deputy Unit Manager.

In comparing the current gender mix across the volunteer leadership positions within the SES, the following has been identified (refer to Figure 8):

- 18 women hold leadership roles within the SES, which equates to 16% of the total number of leadership positions (115).
- In comparison to the previous period January - June 2017, the disparity between males and females in leadership positions within the SES has remained constant.

Figure 8: SES Gender Rank Comparison



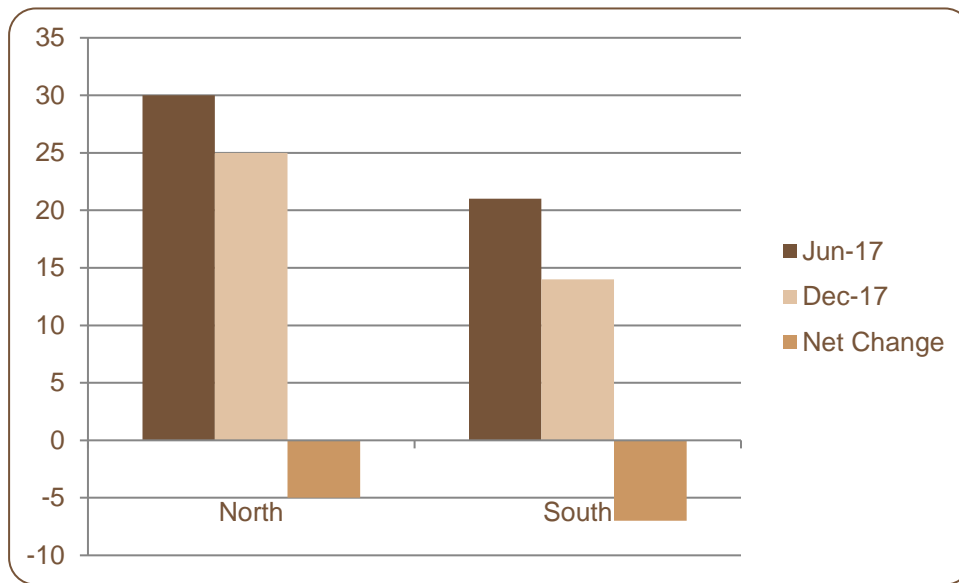
2.2.4 Cadet Analysis

The SES accepts young men and women aged between 13-18 years to be cadets. The SES cadet program offers young people the opportunity to develop skills, character and leadership qualities and meet other young people with common interests.

In reviewing SES cadet numbers for the reporting period (July – December 2017) in comparison to the previous six month period (January – June 2017), the following has been identified (refer to Figure 9):

- The number of SES cadets decreased by 12, with the North Region decreasing by 5 cadets and the South Region decreasing by 7.

Figure 9: SES Cadet Analysis



3. NEW VOLUNTEER ENQUIRIES – CFS & SES

Potential emergency services volunteers can enquire about membership through a number of different avenues including:

- a recruitment hotline
- using a web based enquiry form
- in person at the CFS and SES Headquarters
- directly to brigades and units.

Table 4: Recruitment Enquiries – CFS & SES

| Agency | 1300 Number | | Website | | Via HQ/In Person | | Total | |
|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------|----------|------------|------------|
| | Jun-17 | Dec-17 | Jun-17 | Dec-17 | Jun-17 | Dec-17 | Jun-17 | Dec-17 |
| CFS | 86 | 80 | 386 | 397 | 0 | 3 | 472 | 480 |
| SES | 44 | 28 | 243 | 245 | 0 | 0 | 287 | 273 |
| TOTAL | 130 | 108 | 629 | 642 | 0 | 3 | 759 | 753 |

As depicted in Table 4 for the six month period July – December 2017, a total of 753 CFS and SES recruitment enquiries were recorded with 64% of enquiries relating to the CFS and 36% relating to the SES.

In comparison to the previous six month period (January – June 2017), there was an overall decrease of 6 enquiries for the reporting period (<1% decrease). The CFS recorded an increase of 8 enquiries and the SES a decrease of 14.

In line with previous reporting periods, the majority of enquiries were received via the CFS and SES websites.

Table 5: Recruitment Enquiries by Region – CFS & SES

| CFS | | SES | |
|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| Region | Enquiries | Region | Enquiries |
| 1 | 234 | North | 10 |
| 2 | 142 | South | 263 |
| 3 | 13 | | |
| 4 | 11 | | |
| 5 | 10 | | |
| 6 | 2 | | |
| S/OPS | 68 | | |
| TOTAL | 480 | TOTAL | 273 |

A breakdown of recruitment enquiries by Region for the reporting period (July – December 2017) indicates that the majority of enquiries were directed towards Regions 1 and 2 for the CFS and the South Region for the SES (refer to Table 5).

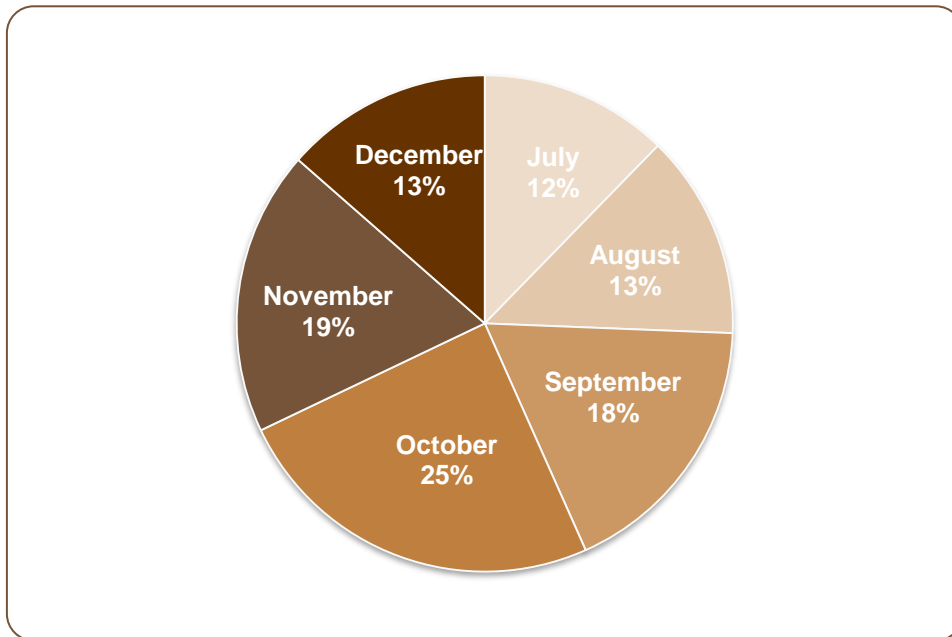
In relation to the CFS enquiries, Region 1 was responsible for 49% of the total number of CFS enquiries, followed by Region 2 with 30%. It is noted that 96% of the SES enquiries were directed to units in the South Region.

3.1 CFS Recruitment Enquiries

In reviewing CFS volunteer enquiries by month for the reporting period (July – December 2017) the following has been identified (refer to Figure 10):

- 118 enquiries for the CFS were received in October (25% of the overall total), followed by 89 enquiries in November (19% of the overall).
- The 2017-18 fire danger season commenced in November, which received media coverage. This may have contributed to maintaining a steady flow of recruitment enquiries during this particular month.
- Only 123 enquiries were received during the months of July and August (26% of overall enquiries). It is considered that these months are generally quieter in terms of recruitment enquiries due to there being less operational activity and media coverage of CFS incidents.

Figure 10: CFS Recruitment Enquiries by Month

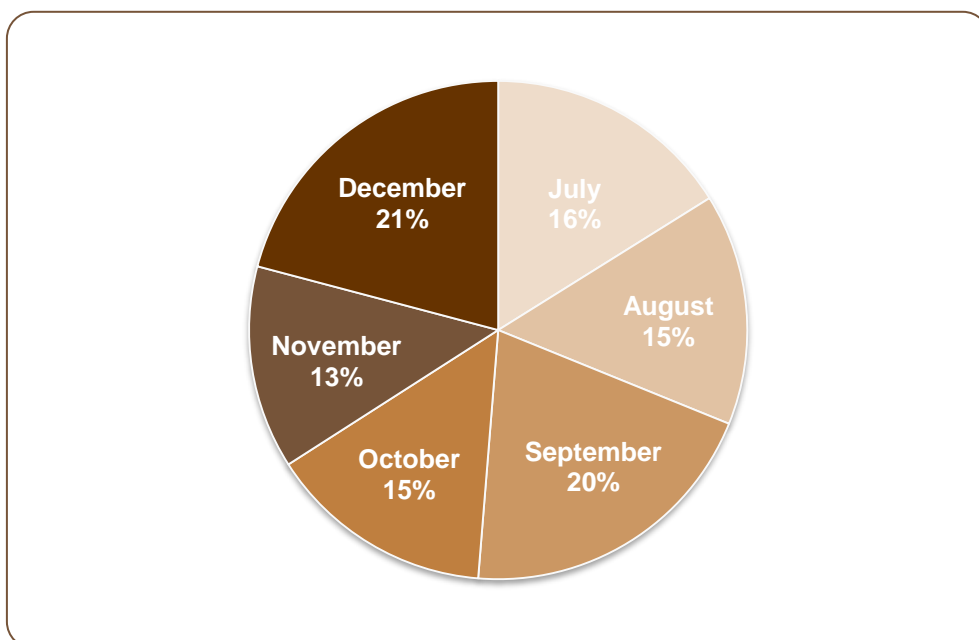


3.2 SES Recruitment Enquiries

In reviewing SES volunteer enquiries by month for the reporting period (July – December 2017) the following has been identified (refer to Figure 11):

- The months of December (57 enquiries) and September (55 enquiries) recorded the highest number of SES recruitment enquiries.
- The lowest number of recruitment enquiries occurred in the month of November, where there were 36 enquiries.

Figure 11: SES Recruitment Enquiries by Month



4. NATIONAL POLICE HISTORY CHECK

Before an applicant can be registered as a volunteer with the CFS or SES, they must consent to the release of their criminal history information. It is also a requirement that this process is undertaken before a member commences in the role of Cadet Leader or in a position with direct supervision or contact with children. Additionally, Cadet Leaders and Supervisors need to ensure they have a National Police History Check (NPHC) every three years.

VSB is responsible for coordinating and managing the NPHC process. This also includes undertaking checks on new or prospective employees of the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS), SAFECOM, DEWNR and Forestry brigades.

As articulated in Table 6, a total of 1033 NPHC's were conducted by VSB for the reporting period (July – December 2017), an increase of 274 in comparison to the previous six month period (January – June 2017).

Table 6: Number of NPHC's – Comparison

| Agency | Jun-17 | Dec-17 |
|--------------|------------|-------------|
| CFS | 508 | 709 |
| SES | 161 | 184 |
| DEWNR | 6 | 74 |
| MFS | 79 | 56 |
| SAFECOM | 5 | 9 |
| Forestry | 0 | 1 |
| TOTAL | 759 | 1033 |

4.1 NPHC Processing Times

It is the responsibility of VSB to coordinate and prepare correspondence to the applicant following the return of a NPHC outcome/result from the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC).

In the event that a NPHC is returned from ACIC with no disclosable court outcome (DCO), the applicant will be notified by VSB in writing that the process has successfully concluded. In the event that a NPHC provides a record of a DCO, an assessment process is undertaken to determine whether the applicant is cleared or not. Following this process, VSB will provide notice to the applicant in writing notifying them whether they have been cleared or rejected.

Table 7 provides a summary of the NPHC processing times from submission to final determination (notice being provided to applicant regarding NPHC outcome) during the reporting period.⁵

As depicted in the table, 67% of NPHC's submitted during the reporting period were provided with a final determination within five days. It is noted that of the 1033 NPHC's conducted by VSB during the reporting period, 164 returned a DCO (16%). This compares

⁵ It is noted that for the reporting period (July – December 2017), 41 NPHC's remain pending without a final determination.

with 136 NPHC's (18%) returning a DCO for the previous reporting period (January – June 2017).

It should be noted that those NPHC's that have taken more than ten days to process may be delayed for a number of reasons including a delay from ACIC, or awaiting responses to please explain processes.

Table 7: NPHC Processing Times – Submission to Final Determination

| Agency | Time Elapsed from Submission to Final Determination | | |
|-----------------|---|-----------|------------|
| | 0-5 Days | 6-10 Days | >10 Days |
| CFS | 461 | 42 | 168 |
| SES | 131 | 8 | 42 |
| DEWNR | 52 | 5 | 17 |
| MFS | 42 | 3 | 11 |
| SAFECOM | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| Forestry | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 692 | 60 | 240 |