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# CFS Promotions Unit

A Volunteer organisation of the South Australian Country Fire Service and the South Australian Country Fire Service Volunteers Association

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## **CFS Promotions Unit Report 2021**

The CFS Promotions Unit continues into its 27th year of operation, and continues with its original charter of:

- Promote the volunteer nature, role and size of the CFS
- Support the members of the CFS
- Educate the public on
  - The operational activities of CFS members (Road Crash Rescue / Rural Fires / Structure Fires / Hazardous Materials Spills/ Natural Disasters)
  - The support roles of CFS HQ and volunteers (eg: Bushfire Prevention & Public Safety Education)
- Encourage new recruits to join the service
- Demonstrate the commitment of CFS volunteers to serving their community
- Gain public support for the CFS volunteers and organisation

## **Website and Facebook Page**

The site continues to hold the most up to date information about CFS appliances and brigades around the state, with continued feedback received from staff and volunteers, that the site is used as a reference point for information about appliances, stations, brigade contacts and details.

While the information is relatively up to date, we are always seeking input from brigades and groups to ensure it is correct as it can be. Thanks goes to those brigades and individuals who have provided photos and updates – no matter how small that update might be. It all goes towards keeping the site current.

As in previous years, several CFS, MFS and SES and DEW staff have been very helpful in providing photos and information to update the site - thanks to all those who have assisted.

We have been able to get out and about a bit more over the last 12 months, due to changes in our own employment, which has enabled us to get to more incidents and activities, and hence take photos of day-to-day fire service activities.

Having a dedicated vehicle has also assisted greatly in getting out & about. It has also meant we could get to larger incidents – such as the Cherry Gardens fire in January 2021, for the sole purpose of taking photos – and able to take many photos from across the whole area, rather than limited to what you can do as part of a crew on an appliance.

The number of Facebook page followers has increased over last year, with around 11,250 followers on our main page - around 850 more than this time last year. The number of Twitter followers has remained fairly steady since last year, with around 121, (three more than the same time last year).

Like many others, our Facebook page was caught up in the Facebook ban on 'news pages' – and was removed for a week. We tried various methods to have the page re-instated (including assistance offered by CFS HQ). We are not sure which method succeeded, but whatever it was, our page was re-instated.

## **Promotions Unit vehicle**

Our Promotions Car 1 – a Pajero, delivered to us in February 2020 is working well for us. It provides us the ability to get out & about to a range of activities. Being marked up, it also allows us (appropriate) access through roadblocks etc.

The one drawback is the lack of a VHF and UHF radio fitted to the vehicle. It has an official GRN radio fitted, but our request to have a VHF and UHF fitted (even at our own cost) was rejected by CFS HQ. The basis is that this vehicle fitted out as a support vehicle - and support vehicles only get a GRN radio.

It is disappointing as we do spend time on the fireground in this vehicle, and having all the radios fitted would allow us better communications with crews on the ground, as well as an increase in safety for those working in this vehicle.

Running costs / fuel / service / tyres for this vehicle are funded from the Promotions Unit budget – and while there are costs involved, we don't believe that it creates any issues for our budget.

## **History Project**

We continue to work on our appliance history, and adding information and photos on appliances, as we gain the information, and have the time to upload it. We have also been collating information on fire stations.

We are still making our way through the Betteridge / Jarman & Michael Edwards historical photo collections (around 4250 photos in all). All images have been digitised; however, we are still working our way through these photos, identifying appliance details and stations for uploading to our history page.

Over the last 12 months we have been able to upload around 250 new photos to our appliance history page. As time permits, we will continue to sort and upload photos. We have also uploaded hundreds of other current appliance photos to update existing images.

We continue to seek information and photographs from CFS members (past & present) as well as members of the public, who may be able to assist in adding to our collections.

Our Promotions Unit History Facebook Page now has around 2100 followers on the page (an increase of around 300 over last year). The History page, as the name suggests posts photos and information that is not current CFS activities / stations / appliances, which is opposite to our other Facebook page, which deals with the current.

## **Budget**

The Promotions Unit continues to receive a budget from CFS, through the CFSVA. While this budget has not increased for some time, the budget does adequately cover all of our expenses, and we are pleased that the funding has continued.

We expect our expenses over the coming year to include the following:

Recurrent expenditure:

- Internet access
- Website hosting
- Domain registration
- Fuel
- Insurance
- Vehicle service repairs / tyres
- Trailer Registration
- Stationery & consumables (eg camera memory cards, batteries, postage)
- Accommodation

We expect to purchase some new camera lenses this year, as the lenses we have had for several years are starting to show wear & tear, and we have been advised are not repairable. We have been trying to source some of these lenses, however, there has been a National shortage of these lenses, (28 to 300mm) due to covid overseas – we hope to get them in the next 12 months! (Note – this particular lens is not a common size, but it gives us an excellent mix of wide angle and an excellent zoom capacity.)

## **Conclusion**

The website continues to be an ever growing, and ever changing beast. As in previous years, there is rarely a day that goes by without at least something being updated on the website – some days only small updates, other days significant or large-scale changes.

Time to work on the site, attend incidents & activities to take photos , as well as our own paid work, looking after our two Junior members, and our own brigade responsibilities makes for a very busy time!. At times, it means that there is a delay in being able to sort, and upload photos we have taken, to the site, especially in a busy year, however, they eventually get there.

Thanks to all those who have contributed to the CFS Promotions Unit website – from the CFS VA, to those who regularly supply photos and information, and those who update their brigade information once a year, and to those who look at the site – without all of you, the site would not exist.

A special thanks to Braeden Gatt and Daniel Baldwin (from Emergency Services Adelaide Facebook page) and Steve Schueler for the many photos supplied to us, Peter “Peejay” Jarman for his continued supply of information regarding historical information.

Thanks to the staff from Infrastructure & Logistics (in particular Jason Kleemann, Josh Jeffree, Andrew Hogg & Dean Norman and Andrew Horwood) for appliance information and photographs.

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October 2021