



**Country Fire Service
Volunteers Association**
"Representing the Interests of CFS Members"

PRESIDENTS REPORT AGM OCTOBER 2024.

The CFSVA continues to position itself across all areas of CFS with inclusion on all working groups and committees. In addition, the CFSVA has retained its position on interview panels for Director and Executive Director roles.

We welcome new Presidents to the team representing the Yorke Peninsula, Greg Stone, Riverland, Todd Filmer and the Lower North, Sam Koerner. I consider this fresh set of eyes will be able to bring new concepts and ideas to the table.

It is essential that all of us including the volunteers are on the same page, especially when engaging with Government Officials. The message needs to be clear; **we need to be seen as a Fire and Rescue Service, not just a Public Service Department.**

Funding is still a critical area that we need to address, as CFS is still falling well short of delivering the required support for volunteers, in particular, in the area of training. As examples, Directors are compiling business cases and vying for the illusive dollar in support for the "Leadership" and "Urban Uplift" training. So, in essence this training is subject to the CFS Executive allocating funds for their continuance. As you would agree, we see this as core business and should simply be provided.

Recent announcements from the Chief Officer have been welcomed by the CFSVA and volunteers in relation to reviewing the current structure of the agency and possible changes enabling a better focus on supporting operations.

From the CFSVA perspective, significant wins and benefits have been achieved over the last twelve months for our membership, these being:

- \$817,000 for the audit of 425 CFS Stations across the state
- SAFECOM review of the Return-to-Work process expediting claims
- CFSVA Governance training for Presidents and members
- Government approval and inclusion of three (3) female cancers added to the Presumptive Legislation
- Blue Light Discount Card
- Major sponsor for the CFS State Cadet Championships
- Review and crafting of the new Disciplinary Policy

We need to continue to raise the profile of the CFSVA and attract more members to the branch meetings. The soon to be released CFSVA promotional video should go a long way in aiding in that area. I would like to thank Phil Richards for the idea and the significant time committed to the project. I have received very positive feedback in relation to the integration of the CFSVA back into the CFS ranks, with the introduction of the CFSVA epaulettes. I have also been advised that the CFSVA is now mentioned more at brigade level than previously, so well-done team and keep up this promotion.

One of the main considerations for the CFSVA going forward is the workload on volunteers, they are everything to everyone. We are supporting every Emergency Agency across the state, and we need to question if these out-of-scope responses are sustainable in the long term.

Continuity has been maintained with meetings with the Ministers Office and the CFS Executive on a monthly basis. Maintaining a working relationship with the CFS Executive and Government is paramount, and whilst we may have varying points of view, we have managed to respectfully maintain accountability from both to the benefit of our members.

The last year has been a year of achievement for the Association, not saying we are on top of everything yet, but we are certainly heading in the right direction. Communications to the Presidents and members has significantly improved and I believe there is a rising element of pride and purpose from the entire CFSVA team.

I would like to acknowledge and thank everyone, this has been a collaborative approach, and you should all be proud of your work and achievements as you represent the largest and most respected Emergency Service workforce in the state.

Yours in service,

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