

– continued from front page around the fire and dealing with dangerous burnt trees near roads and walking trails

The evening of 3 February was crucial in operations with the blaze threatening Walhalla and residents advised to activate plans at 1630 hours. Additional fire crews were brought in to assist with spot fires with major fire activity as the fire burnt over the ridge toward the township.

Fortunately a large amount of rain fell helping to quell the fire and although the fire continue for some days it had no active fire edge and did not substantially increase in size.

Crews worked throughout blacking out and strengthening control lines.

The *Thompson Jordan Divide* fire, located to the west of the Thomson Dam was declared as controlled on 18 February with the complete perimeter of the fire secured and no further spread expected.

The fire reached 6,311 hectares with a total perimeter of 146km.

As at 19 February crews

## Gippsland fires . . .

continued to work on the *Nunnett-Timbarra River* fire north of Buchan in East Gippsland. The focus of the crews and IMT was containing the fire using a combination of back burning and extinguishing hot spots.

A back burn was planned at this date to be undertaken to the west of the Butchers Ridge community to ensure the safety of the properties adjoining the fire.

The fire measures 21,023 hectares with a perimeter of 175 kilometres.

Says ACO South East Region **Trevor Owen**: "It's been a really challenging and long season so far, and we've got a great deal ahead of us. Our five South East Region Districts have been providing Strike Teams and IMT resources for many weeks and it shows a real commitment to the Victorian community. All our Districts have had significant bushfires within their districts at the same time, an indication of just how dry the forested area is at the

moment.

"The level of resourcing that has continued for the past 10 weeks demonstrates the real passion and commitment CFA people are willing to provide. We have experienced very few safety issues on the fire ground, despite the fatigue that some of our members will be feeling. A job very well done!

"I'm also really impressed with how our agencies have been working together at all levels of the response efforts. It shows a great level of maturity from all of our people and our Forest Fire Management Victoria counterparts. I want to thank our members for their patience, as much of the focus our staff resources has been dedicated to staffing our ICCs, DCCs, RCCs and the State Control Centre.

"Again, I sincerely thank you for everything that you do for CFA and your community and I urge you to take care of yourselves, particularly over coming weeks as we continue with operations."

# Gippsland fires update – 4 March 2019

Our CFA members have been extremely active fighting multiple fires throughout Victoria in recent weeks. From Rosedale and Grantville, to Hepburn and Walhalla, our people have followed strategic direction and acted in the best interests of the community, assets and fellow CFA members.

As you would be aware, we are still dealing with a very significant and serious fire threat in Gippsland, which has involved thousands of our staff and volunteers in operational and logistical support roles.

Large fires are spreading on a number of fronts, with ground crews and aircraft working tirelessly to contain these blazes and protect life and property.

In the State Control Centre (SCC), and on the ground, we have CFA volunteers and staff working alongside our colleagues at FFMV, DELWP and the MFB to deal with the threat, which is a pretty impressive effort and a great example of the emergency services sector coming

Comments by Chief Officer Steve Warrington

together at a time of need.

We haven't had this level of operational activity for a number of years and this situation is now moving into campaign mode, with a number of weeks ahead of us to contain, control, monitor and recover from these fires.

This means that we need to start planning and preparing for the impacts this will have on our people; addressing fatigue, monitoring wellbeing and ensuring we have sufficient resources in place to support the recovery effort.

I'd like to thank CFA personnel and our fellow emergency service workers who have been labouring through hot and difficult conditions to deal with unpredictable fire activity.

Despite some criticism in some sections of the media the support and appreciation our people have received from the community has been overwhelming.

We have made strategic decisions based on the overall picture, particularly in rela-



tion to the safety of people - that includes community members, houses and firefighters.

I'll support our people and the decisions made, which have been terrific ones to date. We're really proud of what we do and our people have put in a mighty fine effort.

There is still a long way to go and I want everyone to stay safe moving forward. Please look after yourselves and your colleagues as we continue to deal with these challenging fires.

## NOMINATIONS FOR 2020 AFSM

**Nominations are now open for the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) as part of the 2020 Australia Day Honours.**

Each year CFA coordinates award nominations on behalf of volunteers and staff.

Any CFA person can put forward a nomination for someone they know who deserves to be honoured.

Introduced in 1988, the medal is awarded twice a year in recognition of distinguished service by a member of an Australian fire service.

The prestigious award honours the exceptional contribution members of the fire service make to protecting lives and property; those who may have gone above and beyond their duties or achieved something remarkable in difficult or unusual circumstances.

Previous CFA recipients include Nicole Harvey, Allan Cracknell, Mark Gilmore, John William Atkins and Gwynne Brennan.

Nominations close 1 May 2019. All nominations are strictly confidential.

View the nomination form and supporting materials visit 'About the Awards' on Brigades Online.

To discuss your nomination email [cfa-awards@cfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:cfa-awards@cfa.vic.gov.au)



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Help us support and represent CFA's volunteers

## POSITION VACANT

# VFBV EXECUTIVE OFFICER

VFBV is seeking a talented and motivated person for the position of Executive Officer to work full-time based at our Burwood East office.

Reporting to the CEO, this senior position involves working in a team environment to address issues impacting on all volunteers and representing VFBV on committees and working parties. You will work actively with VFBV State Council and District Councils with an aim to ensure volunteers' views are understood and that issues of concern can either be resolved locally or escalated through appropriate channels.

The role has responsibility for the provision of expert technical, practical and strategic advice on matters affecting CFA volunteers. The role provides important leadership support to VFBV's network of consultative forums, committees and working parties, as well as providing senior level support to the CEO in developing and managing relationships and partnerships with key stakeholders.

We need a person who can effectively represent volunteers within CFA, to Government, to other organisations and the general public. The role involves considerable liaison with CFA at Executive and senior management levels; working closely with brigades and District Councils; and influencing external decision makers. Strong interpersonal, verbal and written communication skills is essential.

Applicants need to have an understanding and appreciation of issues relevant to CFA brigades and volunteerism in general. You need to be able to demonstrate an ability to establish productive relationships within our own membership base and also with people who influence decisions about matters affecting volunteers. It is important that you are a self starter and can demonstrate success while managing multiple concurrent issues and challenging work demands. You need to be a good communicator and someone who understands how to lead and influence others to achieve outcomes.

This is a permanent position, based at our Burwood office. Recognising that the position supports brigades across Victoria, the position involves considerable travel including weekend and evening work required to support our volunteer membership base.

All applications must include current resume and cover letter addressing key selection criteria outlined in the Position Description found on our website. Contact Cathie Smith for any queries by phone 03 9886 1141 or via email [c.smith@vfbv.com.au](mailto:c.smith@vfbv.com.au).

## INVITING APPLICANTS FOR CFA BOARD

The CFA legislation recognises that it is important that the CFA Board has strong volunteer expertise, knowledge and an understanding of CFA volunteers. To support this, CFA legislation provides for four of the CFA Board's Members to be appointed from a panel of names submitted by **Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria**, two being representatives from brigades predominantly serving urban communities and two being representatives from brigades predominantly serving rural communities.

The terms of CFA Board Members Hazel Clothier, Lynda Hamilton, Peter Shaw and Tim Young expire 19 July 2019, triggering the need for VFBV to seek applications for a panel of names to be nominated for the next term commencing 20 July 2019.

VFBV is seeking applications for volunteers interested in filling one of the four VFBV nominated positions on the CFA Board.

CFA volunteers who believe they have the skills, experience and capacity to make a contribution to the Board of the CFA, are invited to apply for nomination to the CFA Board. In addition to volunteer experience and knowledge, selection will have regard to any of the following: knowledge of, or experience in, commercial, technical, operational, legal or financial matters; or expertise in fire or emergency management, land management or any other field relevant to the performance of the functions of the CFA.

From applications received and following interviews, VFBV will submit a panel of names to the Minister for Police & Emergency Services.

The CFA Board meets on a monthly basis and also operates a committee system which could require a commitment of one half day per month. Attendance at official functions is also expected. The appointment to the CFA Board would be for a period of up to three years; the retiring members are eligible for re-appointment.

CFA Board Members current annual remuneration is \$58,598 (including Superannuation). A Role Statement is available on the VFBV website or available from the VFBV office. For other relevant information, interested volunteers should contact VFBV – contact details below.

Applications including a current resume must be emailed or faxed to VFBV by COB on Friday 24 May 2019 to:

Email: [j.laing@vfbv.com.au](mailto:j.laing@vfbv.com.au) or Fax 03 9886 1618

Please Note: There was an error in last month's Fire Wise advertisement that quoted the annual remuneration as circa \$17K pa. VFBV was advised after the advert had run that the annual remuneration had been increased to \$58,598. VFBV apologises for any confusion.