



CFS FOUNDATION
Supporting Volunteer Firefighters

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025





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ABOUT US

The CFS Foundation provides financial relief to SA CFS volunteers and their families who have suffered tragedy through death, injury or significant loss of property whilst protecting their communities. There are over 13,500 CFS volunteers located in 425 brigades throughout South Australia.

Our purpose is to provide CFS volunteers the same unflinching support they give our entire community daily. Support from individuals and the community is vital to ensure we can continue to assist our volunteers now and into the future.

With a changing climate and forecasts of hotter conditions and more extreme weather events, the demand on volunteers is only likely to increase and the Foundation will be there to support them.

CFS volunteers give their time freely to protect our community and often suffer losses themselves. This is where the CFS Foundation steps in, with the invaluable help of partners, sponsors, community and industry, to provide support to them and their families.

*The CFS Foundation
supports those, who
volunteer to protect ...
YOU*



Letter from our Chairman

Dear CFS Foundation volunteers, partners, sponsors, and supporters,

Our CFS volunteers demonstrate extraordinary dedication and selflessness, responding to bushfires, floods, car accidents and other emergencies with efficiency, compassion, and courage. Supported by their families and employers, they give their time willingly, often at great personal sacrifice to keep our communities safe.

The CFS Foundation exists to support these volunteers when they face hardships, whether personal or property loss. While our assistance is small compared to their selfless acts, it is deeply meaningful and we are privileged to be part of their recovery journey. Beyond responding to incidents, volunteers invest time in training, maintaining skills, and building camaraderie - truly the ultimate team players.

Our work is only possible because of the generosity of our supporters. As a non-government-funded organisation - financial, product and in-kind contributions, advocacy and encouragement are essential. You are part of our extended team, standing alongside our volunteer family.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all supporters and invite you to continue this journey with us. We also thank our Patron, Vince Monterola AM, AFSM and our Ambassadors, Brenton Ragless and Nathan Van Berlo for their ongoing support. To our volunteers - your dedication is invaluable.

I also acknowledge our volunteer Board members - Karen Ross (Vice Chair), David Stobbe (Treasurer), Sue Renner, Anne Lucas, Rob Nelson, Andrew Lawson AFSM, CFS Chief Officer Brett Loughlin AFSM and Nathan Watts AFSM, whose commitment to strong governance ensures volunteers remain at the centre of every decision.

To our CEO, Gloria Berni and Administration Co-Ordinator, Alysha Baldock, thank you for your professionalism, humility, and humanity which drive the Foundation's success. This year, we achieved all objectives with a cost-to-revenue ratio of less than three cents in every dollar raised. Our residual funds, managed with care by Aaron Trombetta of William Buck, ensure ongoing support for volunteers during and after major events.



*It is an honour to serve as your Chairman.
Thank you for your support, and I look forward to continuing
our work together to achieve even greater impact in the years
ahead.*

John Lynch OAM
Chairman
Country Fire Service Foundation

CFS Foundation Board Members

We take this opportunity to acknowledge our dedicated CFS Foundation Board members who give their time, expertise, and passion to guide the CFS Foundation.

Each member of the Board serves in a volunteer capacity, driven by a shared commitment to strengthen and support our CFS volunteers. With diverse backgrounds in leadership, governance, finance, emergency services and community development, our Board plays a crucial role in guiding the Foundation's mission and ensuring funds raised go directly to those who need it most.

We thank our Board for their ongoing leadership and tireless efforts behind the scenes to support our brave CFS volunteers.



Pictured L-R – Andrew Lawson AFSM, Nathan Watts AFSM, Karen Ross (Vice Chair), David Stobbe (Treasurer), Sue Renner, John Lynch OAM (Chairman), Rob Nelson, Anne Lucas & Brett Loughlin AFSM (CFS Chief Officer)

A YEAR IN REVIEW

New Sponsor – Flinders Port Holdings

We are proud to announce our partnership with Flinders Port Holdings. Their sponsorship includes supplying the 300+ CFS Training Team with distinctive polo shirts providing well-deserved recognition for our CFS volunteer trainers as they deliver critical training to fellow brigade members.

The SA Country Fire Service (CFS) is South Australia's largest emergency services sector and one of the state's leading Registered Training Organisations, offering over 100 courses to equip members with the essential skills required to respond to approximately 8,000 incidents each year.

The launch was held at the Flinders Port Adelaide Container Terminal in Outer Harbor and the massive cargo ship loaded with over 2000 containers made an impressive background for the CFS truck and training team as they accepted their new training team polo shirts.

Thank you to Flinders Port Holdings for recognising the importance of the CFS volunteer Training Team. We look forward to strengthening our relationship in support of our dedicated CFS volunteers.

Pictured are various members of the CFS Training Team volunteers



Atmospheric monitor rollout – ElectraNet

Through our sponsorship with ElectraNet, the CFS Foundation has been able to purchase vital equipment for local SA Country Fire Service brigades over the years and now we are proud to be able to provide the very first atmospheric monitors to South Australian CFS brigades. These monitors are vital in ensuring the air is non-toxic before CFS volunteers enter burning buildings.

Pictured are members of the Morphett Vale CFS brigade who were thrilled to be the first brigade to receive the atmospheric monitors

We appreciate the ongoing support from ElectraNet.



A YEAR IN REVIEW

CFS Road Crash Rescue Training Trailer - RAA

Every second counts when it comes to road crash emergencies – and the CFS Road Crash Rescue Training program ensures our volunteers are ready to respond with skill, speed, and confidence.

Through the **RAA** sponsorship of the CFS Foundation, the SA CFS has produced a specialised Road Crash Rescue Training trailer fully equipped with the latest road crash rescue equipment which travels around the State training our CFS volunteers in road crash rescue techniques.

This specialised training equips CFS volunteers with the critical knowledge and hands-on experience needed to manage complex road crashes. From stabilising vehicles to safely extricating injured passengers using hydraulic rescue tools, CFS members are trained to handle some of the most high-pressure situations imaginable.

Held across the state, these training sessions replicate real-world crash scenarios, giving volunteers the chance to practice and refine their skills in controlled, but highly realistic environments.



The RAA support of this program aligns with their focus on road safety

Coffee Machine Giveaway - Police Credit Union

The CFS Foundation, in partnership with Police Credit Union, launched another opportunity for 20 CFS brigades to win a Nespresso Coffee Machine!

This is the 6th time this competition has been run - that's 120 machines and CFS brigades! A coffee machine might seem like a small gesture however, CFS volunteers can now enjoy a delicious coffee while attending training sessions, brigade meetings or after volunteering on the ground fighting fires.

A huge thank you to PCU for its generosity in supporting our CFS volunteers.



A YEAR IN REVIEW

CFS Wellbeing Officer

One of CFS Foundation's most significant initiatives has been the funding of a dedicated CFS Wellbeing Officer, Jana Wurriehausen. With the support of **SA Power Networks**, we identified and established a vital role aimed at proactively supporting the mental and emotional well-being of our CFS volunteers.

The project commenced in late 2022 as a two year contract, which has now been extended a further three years to ensure training and support can reach more CFS volunteers across the state. The enthusiasm shown by CFS volunteers to participate in the Mental Health First Aid workshops has been astounding.

Jana has embarked on extensive journeys across South Australia to ensure that the training reaches as many CFS volunteers as possible. We are proud to announce that Jana has successfully facilitated workshops in all 6 CFS regions.

We thank **SA Power Networks** for its ongoing support of this crucial program.



Parliamentary Morning Tea

The CFS Foundation, alongside South Australian Police Legacy and the Australian Police and Firefighters Foundation (APFF), recently joined forces to address Members of Parliament (MPs) at a special parliamentary morning tea. This combined event aimed to shine a spotlight on the vital work we as charities do to support South Australian emergency service workers and their families.

During the event, we outlined our mission and highlighted the challenges we face amid tough economic conditions. A key focus was the CFS Foundation's steadfast dedication to supporting CFS volunteers who selflessly put their lives on the line to protect their communities.

Kevin Maciunas from the Ironbank CFS Brigade shared his deeply personal story as he recounted his journey of recovery after sustaining severe injuries during the 2022 Coles (South East) bushfire. His testimony underscored the impact of the support provided by the CFS Foundation, which has played an important role in helping him and his family rebuild their lives.

This event offered MPs a valuable opportunity to gain a deeper appreciation for the essential services provided by our charities and also opened meaningful discussions on addressing the issues faced by emergency service personnel and their loved ones.

Pictured are Brett Loughlin AFSM (CFS Chief Officer), Alysha Baldock (CFS Foundation Administration Co-ordinator), Gloria Berni (CFS Foundation CEO) & Kevin Macinunas (CFS Group Officer)



A YEAR IN REVIEW

2024 CFS Foundation luncheon

The annual CFS Foundation luncheon is our key event for the year, providing a unique opportunity to recognise our sponsors and supporters and outline the initiatives we have delivered throughout the year. This luncheon was also an opportunity for us to acknowledge our Patron – Vince Monterola AM, AFSM.

Channel 9 Newsreader and CFS Foundation Ambassador and CFS volunteer, Brenton Ragless magnificently hosted the event as MC, bringing warmth and insight to the occasion. We were also privileged to have South Australian personality, Andrew 'Cosi' Costello, as guest speaker. Cosi entertained the audience by sharing personal reflections as a young CFS volunteer himself, and underscored the significance of community support for our emergency service workers.

The 2024 CFS Foundation lunch provided a chance for guests to come together and network along with an opportunity to express their appreciation for our CFS volunteers and the ongoing work of the Foundation.



Mitsubishi Triton

In 2025, the CFS Foundation secured the use of a Mitsubishi Triton for the use by CFS Foundation staff and Board members. Generously supplied by **Mitsubishi Australia**, the vehicle provides practical support for day-to-day operations, including travel to brigade visits, partner meetings and Foundation events across the State.

Mitsubishi Australia's support reflects its recognition of the vital role the CFS Foundation plays in supporting South Australian Country Fire Service volunteers and strengthening community safety. This in-kind partnership has enhanced the Foundation's operational capability while reducing administrative costs, allowing more funds to be directed toward frontline initiatives that directly benefit CFS volunteers.



FUNDRAISING

Triple O Charity Ball

The 2024 Triple O Charity Ball was held on Saturday 30 November at Adelaide Oval with over 650 guests enjoying a great night. The event was a huge success - raising over \$150,000 in support of four emergency service charities: the Australian Professional Firefighters Foundation, SA Police Legacy, the Stafford Wulff Paramedicine Scholarship and the CFS Foundation.

The success of the event was made possible through the generous support of sponsors and partners, and businesses that donated prizes for the live and silent auctions. Their contributions played a vital role in achieving a strong fundraising outcome and delivering a high-quality event.



CFS Softball Round

The CFS Foundation thanks the Hills Heat Softball Club for once again hosting the CFS Softball Round at Anembo Park as part of the Statewide CFS Softball initiative.

Now in its third year, the event continues to grow in size and impact, with the Hills Heat team showing incredible commitment to supporting our CFS volunteers through this fantastic fundraiser. CFS Foundation CEO Gloria Berni was joined on the night by CFS Chief Officer Brett Loughlin, Minister for Emergency Services Hon. Emily Bourke MLC, and Mt Barker Councillor Jess Szilassy for the VIP Hitout Competition, proudly sponsored by the Arkaba Hotel, which raised \$500.

It was a fun-filled evening for the whole family, featuring two great games of softball and a generous \$1,000 donation from the NFA Pirates Softball Club. A huge thank you goes out to Lyn and Jo for their tireless efforts behind the scenes, and to the wonderful Hills Heat families who volunteered on the BBQ across Friday night and Saturday.



FUNDRAISING

OTRGive

Through the OTRGive Program, volunteer firefighting associations around Australia benefit every time someone scans their **OTR App** when purchasing fuel or goods from an **OTR outlet**.

In South Australia, the CFS Foundation is proud to be the program's beneficiary and during the 2024–25 financial year, the program raised over \$19,000 for the Foundation.

The **OTRGive** program demonstrates how everyday actions, such as filling the car with fuel or buying groceries can make a meaningful difference.

The CFS Foundation thanks OTRGive and the South Australian community for their continued support.



Direct Collect Recycling

Direct Collect is an Adelaide based recycling business that enables the community to recycle cans and bottles and donate the proceeds to charities such as the CFS Foundation.

This initiative provides a simple way for individuals to support the CFS Foundation while making a positive environmental impact.

In the 2024–25 financial year - \$4,723 was raised through this partnership, contributing to the Foundation's work to support volunteer safety, training and essential equipment.

The CFS Foundation thanks Direct Collect and all community members who participated in this initiative.



A big thank you to all the businesses and community groups that supported the CSF Foundation with fundraising activities.

MAJOR SPONSORS



SUPPORTERS



PATRON & AMBASSADORS

Vince Monterola AM AFSM - CFS Foundation Patron



For more than **50** years, Vince has served in the EFS/CFS, as a fire-fighter, Station Officer, Brigade Captain, Group Officer, Deputy Board Chairman, Chief Executive and other roles. Over all that time, rather than becoming blasé about the service and commitment of our volunteers he has become increasingly impressed by their selflessness and their professionalism. He has seen the sacrifices they have made and the suffering they have endured; family, vocation, leisure time, have all been neglected at times because community demands for safety from fire and other emergencies were given priority. Because Vince holds our volunteers in such high regard and knows the dangers they often face he has been keen to support them through the Foundation since it began almost 20 years ago. “To have been invited to serve as Patron is a great honour and I look forward to further serving these worthy men and women” said Vince.



Brenton Ragless - Ambassador

Brenton’s interest in the CFS began at the age of five when he tagged along with his father to the Eden Hills Brigade, and on finishing school in 1993, followed in his footsteps to become an active volunteer firefighter. Over the years Brenton has also been a full-time CFS spokesman, supported many CFS Volunteers’ Association projects and joined the Cherry Gardens Brigade to provide ground support for air operations. Brenton said: “I am delighted and privileged to be a CFS Foundation Ambassador and hope that you’ll join me in supporting your local heroes”.



Nathan Van Berlo - Ambassador

We are proud to have Nathan Van Berlo as an Ambassador for the CFS Foundation. Nathan recognises the value CFS Volunteers provide to our communities and is excited to see how he can provide some positive assistance to the Foundation. Nathan said “It’s a great honour to be involved with such a wonderful and proud organisation and I encourage people to donate so we can provide support to CFS volunteers and their families when they most need it”.

BOARD MEMBERS



John Lynch OAM - Chairman

John retired as the Chief Executive Officer with the Royal Flying Doctor Service in 2018 and joined the Board of the CFS Foundation in 2019, bringing with him a wealth of leadership experience and strategic insight. He was elected Chairman in January 2020 and has since led the organisation through a series of impactful initiatives that continue to strengthen support for CFS volunteers across South Australia. In recognition of his outstanding service to the community through emergency response organisations, John was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in January 2020. He is also the Chairman of Foundation Broken Hill and Board Member of Pilatus Aircraft Australia.



Karen Ross - Vice Chair

Karen is currently the Group General Manager People and Culture at Flinders Port Holdings based in Port Adelaide. She has over 25 years experience in senior management roles in a diverse range of industries and is a subject matter expert in the field of industrial relations, organisational development and driving HR strategy to align with business outcomes. Karen was previously the General Manager, Innovation, Digital and Brand at Elders Ltd and prior to that held positions in financial services, airlines and utilities sectors as well as leading the integration of another agribusiness following an international merger. Her experience ranges from running large operational business units as well as corporate services.



David Stobbe - Treasurer

David has a Bachelor of Business (Accounting) and is a member of CPA Australia with over 15 years' finance experience gained in the private sector utility industry. David has a strong business acumen; sound accounting proficiency in the areas of management reporting, budgeting and forecasting and business partnering. Through his other board/ committee appointments he has extensive experience in governance, sponsorship and fundraising with a community focus.



Brett Loughlin AFSM GAICD - CFS Chief Officer

Brett started with the South Australian CFS in 2015, when he took up the post of Region 1 Commander. Since that time, Brett went on to perform the role of Director, Preparedness Operations and Director, Regional Operations, CFS Executive Director, Operations and was appointed CFS Chief Officer in September 2022. Prior to joining CFS, Brett served with NSW RFS for over 10 years, in that time he worked in the Northern NSW and led the Namoi/Gwydir (North West NSW encompassing Narrabri and Moree) and Mid North Coast (Coffs Harbour) Teams. These were demanding and dynamic roles in which Brett delivered strong support across regional farming areas, and managing issues associated with large population centres, both areas frequently dealt with significant complex incidents.



Andrew Lawson AFSM

Andrew is a strategic thinker, experienced in turning conceptual ideas into achievable policy and realistic outcomes. With ten years of executive level experience with the South Australian Country Fire Service (CFS) as Deputy Chief Officer and thirty years' experience in the South Australian Emergency Management sector Andrew understands effective emergency service delivery, from operational, preparedness, response and recovery perspectives. In his roles with CFS, Andrew worked closely with the South Australian State Emergency Service, ForestrySA, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Bureau of Meteorology at regional, State and national levels.

BOARD MEMBERS



Sue Renner

Sue has experience in legal, risk management and governance gained over a number of years and joined the CFS Foundation Board in 2019. Prior to her current role, Sue was Principal of Sue Renner Advisory and previous to this she was employed by ElectraNet fulfilling in-house legal roles where she was responsible for a range of functions including input into major transactions, contracting services, regulatory compliance and management of legal issues. Sue has extensive experience on Boards including in the not for profit sector.



Rob Nelson

Rob has more than 20 years of senior management experience and has been a leader of successful business and project teams across multiple business units, with extensive experience in the financial services and agricultural industries. He is currently the Commercial Manager at Tarac and joined the CFS Foundation Board in 2019. He is highly experienced in developing strategy and risk management programs, managing compliance and governance, and post-merger business integration. Rob is a Fellow of CPA Australia. He holds a Degree in Accounting from the University of SA and an MBA from the University of Adelaide.



Anne Lucas

Anne is a highly experienced communicator, marketer and change specialist with a background in journalism and public relations and is assistant Director Engagement for the Murray-Darling Basin Authority. She has more than 10 years of experience in senior positions in the financial services sector and has played a key role in delivering successful engagement communications and change projects, including national marketing campaigns. Anne has a track record of raising money for charity and experience on not-for-profit Boards and is in her second year on our Board. She holds a Master of Communication Management, Graduate Diploma in Marketing and Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from the University of South Australia.



Nathan Watts AFSM

Nathan is highly regarded as a strategic thinker, excellent communicator & incredibly motivated individual. Volunteering with the CFS since 1998, Nathan brings with him a wealth of operational knowledge & experience, along with additional insights as a significant contributor to a broad range of Committees & Working Parties across the Service. Witnessing the devastating impact of the 2019/20 Black Summer Bushfires birthed a keen interest in further supporting the work of the CFS Foundation & as a Board Member is eager to continue his ongoing advocacy & support for volunteers, who so willingly give of themselves to serve others.

STAFF MEMBERS

Gloria Berni - Chief Executive Officer



Gloria joined the CFS Foundation in 2018 and has over 30 years' experience in senior management roles across a diverse range of industries including 13 years managing the local television station in Port Lincoln between 2000 – 2013. During her time there, she experienced first hand the devastation bushfires can cause and how important CFS volunteers are to keeping the community safe. Since returning to Adelaide, Gloria has worked for a range of not-for-profit organisations in business development and general management before joining the CFS Foundation, initially as joint-CEO and then taking on the role full-time as Chief Executive Officer in January 2020 during the ravaging bushfires of that summer.

Alysha Baldock - Administration Co-Ordinator



Alysha joined the CFS Foundation in 2018 and manages the administration and social media platforms plus provides support to the Chief Executive Officer. Her extensive background in management and administration from varying industries has ensured she brings a multitude of skills to this small team including marketing, promotion and events. Over the years, Alysha has developed a strong passion for assisting CFS volunteers and values their important roles in keeping regional communities and Adelaide fringe areas safe and continually seeks ways the CFS Foundation can improve their volunteering experience.

Stacey Childs - Administration Officer



Stacey brings a wealth of administrative experience to the CFS Foundation, having previously worked in Local Government in the Corporate and Community Services Departments. Prior to this Stacey worked in the media and marketing industry. Stacey feels proud to be part of a great team at the CFS Foundation and looks forward to continuing to assist the foundation with the amazing work they do for our CFS volunteers.