



CFS FOUNDATION
Supporting Volunteer Firefighters

NEWSLETTER | DECEMBER 2024

A Message from the CEO

As we approach the upcoming bushfire season, our dedicated CFS volunteers have been hard at work preparing for the challenges ahead. In addition to their tireless efforts, the CFS has expanded its fleet with the addition of five new aircraft, bringing the total number of water bombers to 31. This significant increase in aerial resources will greatly enhance our state's ability to respond to bushfires during what is expected to be a hot, dry summer.

The Bureau of Meteorology has issued warnings for a scorcher of a summer, making it even more critical for everyone to review or create their Bushfire Survival Plans and ensure their properties are prepared.

To help keep the community informed and safe, the SA Fire & Emergency Commission (SAFECOM) has launched the ALERT SA app. This essential tool provides real-time updates on fires, floods, severe weather, heatwaves, and other emergencies across South Australia.

Stay safe, stay informed, and be prepared as we enter Fire Danger Season.

Gloria Berni

Chief Executive Officer

Thank you to our sponsors



Flinders Port Training Team Polo Shirt Launch

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

The SA CFS is SA'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 Ports for recognising the importance of our CFS volunteer training team. We look forward to strengthening our relationship moving forward to continue our support to our dedicated CFS volunteers.

Pictured (above): Karen Ross from Flinders Port with CFS training team volunteers Andrew Aldridge & Hayley Slater with other members of the CFS training team in the background at the Outer Harbor Wharf.



Donate now to support our brave CFS volunteers

Support the CFS Foundation to continue it's vital work in supporting our SA CFS volunteers. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

Your support is greatly appreciated



Parliamentary Morning Tea

The CFS Foundation, alongside SA 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 SA 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.

The Parliamentary Morning Tea reinforced the vital importance of ongoing support for our CFS volunteers who stand on the frontlines to keep our communities safe.

Pictured (above): CFS Chief Officer, Brett Loughlin, Alysha Baldock, Gloria Berni, CFS Foundation CEO & Kevin Maciunas – CFS volunteer, Ironbank brigade.



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CFS Foundation Lunch

The annual CFS Foundation Luncheon is our key event for the year, providing a unique opportunity to honour the dedication of CFS volunteers and express our gratitude to the businesses and organisations that support our work. This luncheon not only raises awareness about the vital role of the CFS but also highlights the importance of standing by those who serve on the front lines of emergency response.

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

The 2024 CFS Foundation Lunch provided a chance for guests to come together, express their appreciation for first responders, and contribute to the ongoing work of the Foundation. It also provides a way the Foundation can extend our thanks to our Sponsors and supporters who make our work possible.

Pictured (above): Brenton Ragless, CFS Ambassador, Alysha Baldock, John Lynch OAM, CFS Foundation Chairman, Gloria Berni, Andrew (Cosi) Costello & Nathan Van Berlo (CFS Foundation ambassador).

Vince Monterola AM AFSM, Patron of the CFS Foundation

For more than 60 years, Vince Monterola AM, AFSM has served in EFS/CFS – as a Firefighter, Station Officer, Brigade Captain, Group Officer, Deputy Board Chairman, Chief Executive and other roles.

As the Chief Officer of the SA CFS, he played a pivotal role in modernising the organisation. Under his guidance, the CFS expanded its capabilities and strengthened its community engagement, solidifying its position as a cornerstone of SA's emergency response framework.

During his tenure, he strived to improve safety outcomes, foster collaboration among stakeholders, and champion innovation in emergency response practices. Vince's strategic foresight and commitment to continuous improvement ensured that the CFS was not only prepared to tackle immediate challenges but also equipped to cope with future challenges.

Vince's extraordinary contributions have been recognised at the highest levels. He was awarded the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM), a prestigious award that honours distinguished service by members of fire services across Australia and his appointment as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) further highlight the outstanding impact he has had in serving the community and the emergency services sector.

We are proud to have Vince as the Patron of the CFS Foundation, and his leadership and contribution to the Foundation and 60 years to the CFS was recognised at the CFS Foundation luncheon.

Holistic Support for CFS Volunteers

The wellbeing of SA's CFS volunteers is a top priority, and the CFS Foundation is proud to sponsor the role of CFS Wellbeing Officer, Jana Wurriehausen with the support of SA Power Networks. This critical position is dedicated to supporting the mental, emotional, and physical health of those who serve as a CFS volunteer

One of the key responsibilities of the Wellbeing Officer is delivering Mental Health First Aid training to CFS volunteers across the state. Given the traumatic and often high-stress nature of their work, volunteers can experience significant mental health challenges. The Mental Health First Aid training equips them with the tools and knowledge needed to recognise signs of distress in themselves and others, providing effective support in times of crisis.

By empowering volunteers with the skills to look after their own mental well-being and support their peers, the Wellbeing Officer plays an essential role in ensuring that CFS members remain resilient and capable of performing their critical duties.

This initiative highlights the Foundation's ongoing commitment to the holistic support of CFS volunteers.

CFS Group Officers Seminar

CFS Foundation CEO, Gloria Berni, was recently invited to attend the CFS Group Officers Seminar in Murray Bridge, where she had the opportunity to address a dedicated group of CFS volunteers and staff to highlight the important role of the CFS Foundation in supporting SA's CFS volunteers

During her address, Gloria spoke about the Foundation's ongoing initiatives and the vital services it provides to CFS volunteers, including mental health support, financial assistance, and wellbeing programs. Her presentation emphasised the importance of continued collaboration between the CFS Foundation and frontline personnel to ensure that volunteers have the resources and support they need to perform their critical roles.

The seminar was made even more special thanks to the generous contributions of the PCU, who provided gift bags for each attendee. Additionally, a lucky CFS volunteer won a Nespresso Coffee machine, adding an exciting element to the event.

The CFS Group Officers Seminar was a valuable opportunity for CFS leadership and volunteers to come together, exchange ideas, and reinforce the strong sense of community that makes the CFS such a vital force in SA.

Leave a lasting gift in your Will

Leaving a bequest to the CFS Foundation can make a real difference to the CFS volunteers and their families who have suffered death, injury, loss or property damage while in the line of service.



For more information contact CFS Foundation on 1300 270 278 for a confidential discussion.