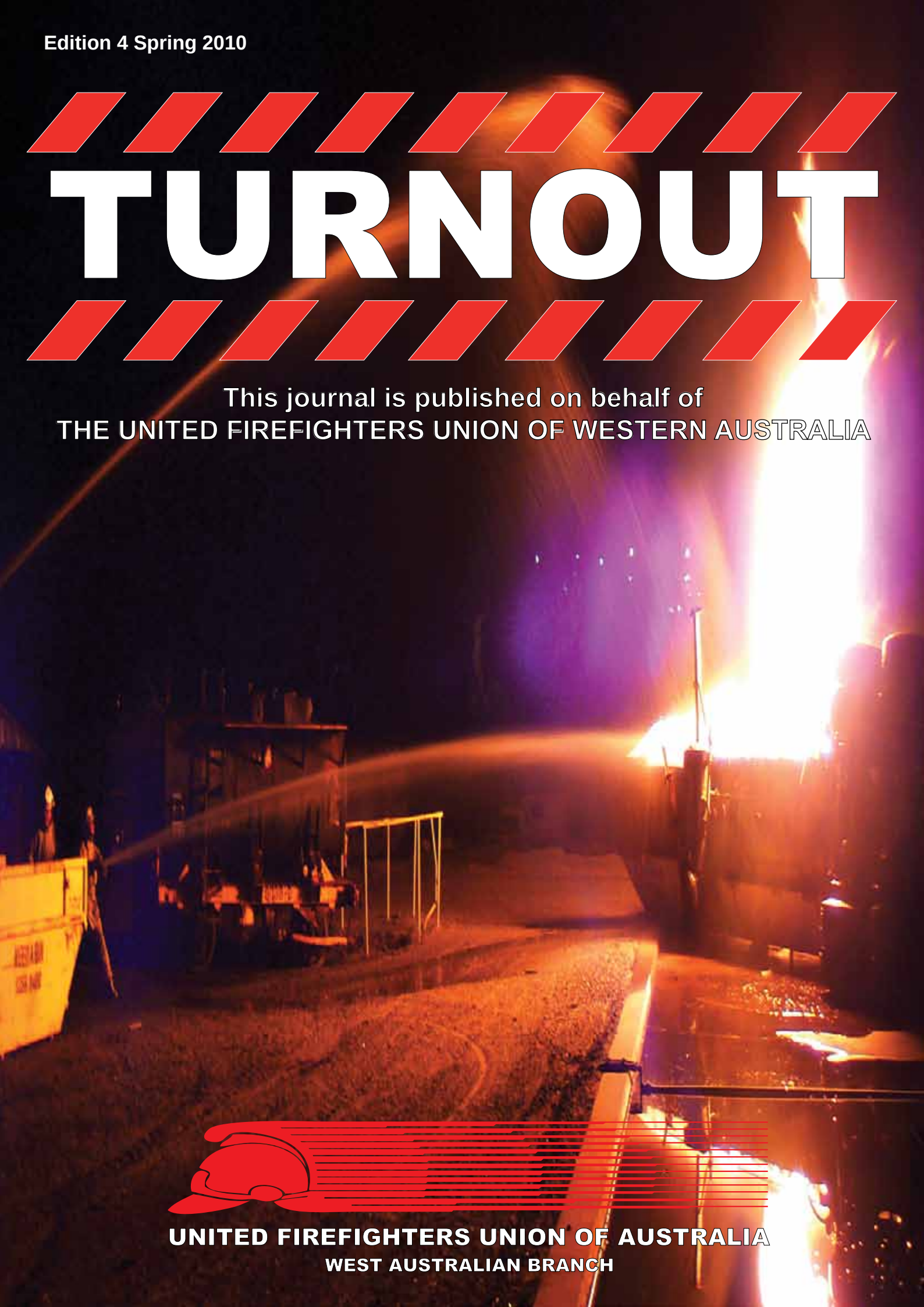
Edition 4 Spring 2010

TURNOUT

This journal is published on behalf of
THE UNITED FIREFIGHTERS UNION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



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This spring edition of Turnout marks a year for myself as Editor. The magazine is continually evolving and many of the articles you will read in this edition have been sent in from our members keen to share their thoughts, stories or ideas. While a lot of these articles discuss serious topics, it is important that we keep a sense of humour and remember how great our job is.

I have had a a great amount of feedback regarding the magazine - most positive and a small amount not so positive. I encourage all feedback, without it how can we improve.

Thanks to those members that have assisted with sponsorship. Magazines like this cost money to print. If you feel you might be able to help by placing an advertisement in Turnout, please consider it and email me at turnout@ufuofwa.net.au

Lastly, with summer just around the corner remember to take care and look after yourselves and your fellow firies...

IMPROVEMENTS

It's easy to become a little negative in our job. Decisions and suggestions which firefighters can make around the kitchen table over a cup of tea seem to be overlooked or not communicated correctly, causing frustration within the rank and file.

Having said this, great stuff is happening and we are moving in the right direction. Below is a list of things which, in my opinion, have improved our great job over the last 20 years...

PPE

When I joined the job we were given a black woolen tunic, a helmet, a pair of boots and a pair of gloves. At the time this was great stuff. We had no station boots and it was commonplace to have firefighters in the living quarters wearing level 2 boots. After a fire, station carpets resembled a giant 'Twister' mat.

No smoke filters meant that after every bushfire, firefighters would spend the next 3 days blowing black smoke particles out his/her nose.

We now have Level 1 attire, Level 2 attire, smoke filters, goggles, 2 pairs of operational boots and a pair of station boots, safety glasses and a kit bag to store all of the above. The Hazmat PPC that we have is also excellent. Throw away Tychem Suits and Gas Suits are far superior to the yellow PVC pants and jacket that we used to adorn.

Do we still have a way to go with our PPC? Yes. 2 sets of PPC is a must and is on the way. We must ensure that our new level 2 PPC also includes a moisture barrier. Helmet torches would also be a lot better than the brick type Dolphin torch for obvious reasons.

HEAVY PUMPS

The new Scania Series 3 Heavy Pump is a fantastic appliance. Capable of delivering 4800L/min, it is powered by a Scania 5 cylinder turbo charged 9 litre (310 HP) diesel motor.

The pumping system is very simple with A and B Class Foam being mixed outside of the pump through either an inline inductor (B Class) or direct injection system (A Class).

It holds 1400L of water, 240L of B Class Foam and 60L of A Class Foam (figures according to TRK). Foam tanks are easily filled using in-built pumps.

The ergonomics show that the end users have had a fair bit to do with the design. Each locker has ample room for it's contents and LED strip lighting makes after dark location of equipment easier and safer.

The cab interior is also well laid out with room for the SO to look at necessary paperwork relevant to our SOPs and incident management. Lighting is excellent with choices of general cab, direct 'spot' lighting to each seat and red after dark 'mood lighting' for general cruising.

I am sure all would agree that having a 12V fridge filled with clean, cold water bottles makes incident hydration more hygienic and pleasant - who would have thought!

MEDIUM PUMPS HEAVY RESCUE

The old Heavy Rescue Tender (HRT) that was stationed at Perth Fire Station before the introduction of the MPHRs was a capable machine, however, I doubt many would argue that it could compare to the MPHRs that we have in service today (well done Rik Lieftink, Frank Martinelli, Terry Dunlea, Garth Lawrence, Simon Harrison, Wayne Duyvestein, Rich Kaminski and any others I have forgotten) Apart from the trench rescue and tripod equipment that was stored on the HRT, the MPHRs have a much better capability to deal with rescues involving heavy machinery or vehicles.

They have also had flow on benefits which include a much better understanding of safe extraction techniques and better equipment on all appliances such as transfer boards, Holton foot, glass management kits, etc. These machines must be approaching their replacement date. Hopefully advice from the experts (operational firefighters and station officers) will be requested and implemented during the replacement process.

MOBILE PHONES

Yes... For years we asked to have a mobile phone installed in each pump (I can see our Gen Y firefighters laughing in disbelief). Then we got a phone that was attached by a curly cord to the dashboard. We weren't allowed to have a 'real' mobile because it was assumed by some that we would lose them, break them or abuse them.

Finally a couple of years ago we caught up with the rest of the population. Maybe one day we might even have a data terminal available in the pump that provides useful information to station officers and their crews!

AWARENESS OF OSH

Knowledge is power and this is evident when you speak to our OSH representatives. Many outcomes that we have tried to achieve for years have been made achievable through the OSH Act. One such example is our Bushfire Particulate Masks and I believe that through our OSH committee the way we store and transport our PPE will also change.

OSH should be about getting the safest equipment and procedures possible. It should not be about bending the rules because a problem is going to be difficult to solve or cost money. It's up to all of us to abide by OSH - it's not a one way street. If you have a spare couple of hours one day, look through section 19 and 20 of the OSH Act.

BREATHING APPARATUS

Our current Draeger PSS 7000 sets have incurred criticism from some mainly because of their simplicity, but this is their biggest attraction in my opinion. They are not the Porsche of Breathing Apparatus - more like an EH Holden (I guess that's why I like them!). Whilst a little sticky when donning and doffing, the swivel backplate connection at the waistbelt and the adjustable shoulder yolk make them extremely comfortable for all shapes and sizes once on.

BA resources available to us are also very good thanks to some dedicated BA Training and Development Officers. TRKs, Learners Manuals, Drill Books, etc are excellent examples of the tools operational crews have on hand if required.

Our fight is to ensure that management acknowledge how important quality training of BA is. Unfortunately before the last firefighter's school, management decided to drop one BA instructor from each rotation. The hole was filled by using the BA Training Officer. His position was not back-filled, and I suspect that spreading this one person between the two jobs 'watered down' the effectiveness of both roles.

Next time you are at Forrestfield Training Centre, have a look in the BA Servicing Area on the wall at the historical display of BA worn by past firefighters.

PROFESSIONALISM

Historically, firefighting was seen as a 'Blue Collar' job (workers who performed manual labour).

Our job has evolved and our skill set has developed to a point where it would be easy to argue that we fit somewhere between the Blue and White Collar worker - maybe a little closer to the 'White Collar' side?

The modern firefighter possesses manual/practical skills along with expertise and specialised knowledge. We are constantly presented with tasks that challenge our literacy, productivity, creativity and administrative capabilities. Other industries recognise this with former career staff from all ranks now working in private enterprise earning generous remuneration packages.

Firefighters are driven by high values - we work in the community and for the community. This is why we rank in the top 2 or 3 trusted professions every year.

Danny Mosconi
Editor

POLITICS

Quite often when I visit members the question inevitably comes up - “Why is the Union political?”

There is a simple answer to this - because we need to change our industry, the funding for fire and rescue services, the laws that govern industrial relations, worker’s compensation, occupational health and safety and superannuation.

The best way for the Union to bring about change -especially to laws that can protect the interests of Fire Fighters at work - is to work with all politicians and where it counts to support those politicians that support and look after us. We have appreciated the opportunities we have had to talk to Brendon Grylls from the National Party, and we look forward to meeting with the Premier Colin Barnett and a number of politicians in key marginal seats across WA.

The Union is affiliated with the ALP and as your Union leaders we have joined for one reason only - to represent your interests within the ALP. It does not stop us talking to other politicians and it does not stop us from providing hard and uncompromising advice to the ALP. Graeme Geer ensured that the ALP changed its policies and if they get re-elected they have a Party platform or policy to re-introduce a Commissioned Chief Officer for the Fire and Rescue Service.

After a fairly difficult relationship over the years with State ALP governments and past Ministers - we have forged a strong working relationship with Margaret Quirk and we appreciate that she listens to our issues, cares enough to research the facts and doggedly raises questions in the Parliament and beyond. Recently she was accused by the current Minister “of being the Union’s mouth-piece” because she objected to the highest levels of de-commissioning our Service has ever seen. Margaret Quirk had the facts and understood the impact on the communities we serve. Anyone who has lobbied Margaret Quirk or worked with her would know that she is no-one’s “mouth-piece”

Many of you would have seen Minister Rob Johnson’s comments to the Parliament about our Union on the Union’s website, and in particular the cheap shot he had at our Branch Secretary Graeme Geer. The current Minister reckons he likes Fire Fighters and values the work we do - well if he really meant that and knew about our issues, including de-commissioning, he would not separate Fire Fighters from their democratically elected industrial and representative voice. The shame of it is the current Minister seems only to consider the advice he receives from FESA and appears to be a captive of the bureaucrats he supposedly is in charge of..... There must be a better way to run the State’s Fire Services?

The Union welcomes the recent election of Tony Buti in the seat of Armadale where he replaces Allannah MacTiernan. Tony took the time to come and meet with the elected officials and he raised many issues of relevance to his electorate which is on the interface of the Darling escarpment and contains many hazardous areas.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Senator Chris Evans on his ascension into the new Gillard Cabinet as the Minister for Workplace Relations. As a previous WA Branch Secretary, Chris Evans worked with members in the late 1980’s and we are confident he will be receptive to the needs of Fire Fighters and keen to develop practical solutions to the issues we face across our nation. The UFU was an important part of Senator Chris Evan’s political career and we look forward to meeting with him as he settles into his new role.

The United Firefighters Union of Australia’s recent National Executive meeting, held concurrently with meetings of the Industrial Officers and OSH Co-ordinators was opened by Adam Bandt, the newly elected Greens Member of Parliament for the seat of Melbourne. Adam Bandt is a special friend to the WA Branch and we celebrated his election and welcome him in his new role as the Green’s National Spokesperson on Industrial Relations. Adam Bandt was the solicitor who took on our 2006 EBA campaign and prepared us for the significant win in the arbitrated allowances matter - he is a clear thinker with great communication skills and a huge capacity to work hard for social justice.

Together with the National Union, we look forward to working closely with Adam Bandt to bring the issues of Fire Fighters to the Nation’s attention.

The National Union is building on the new structures and framework that your union fees increase will help to fund. I appreciate your support for the increase and welcome the report that there was no opposition to the proposals put to the membership at the recent AGM/SGM. The National Union has just advertised throughout Australia for a new National Industrial Officer and the recent meeting of Branches has identified work arising from the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission Report and with a number of OSH issues - including exposure to Diesel fumes. The campaign on Presumptive Legislation will continue and will build on some powerful suggestions from our Branch. The only disappointing factor has been the non participation of the NSW Branch and I look forward to the NSW officials coming to their senses and returning to the fold - the interests of all rank and file firefighters should be paramount and we are moving forward to address these issues - it is time for the NSW officials to get on board and to concentrate on improving the industrial and occupational health and safety protections for all firefighters in Australia.

We are facing one of the worst fire seasons in WA’s recorded history - stay safe and be ever vigilant - look after yourselves and each other and remember there is Strength in Unity!

Kevin Jolly
President

BE PRO-ACTIVE

We have just finished our second driest winter on record. The chances that the up coming bush fire season will test Firefighters and resources is very high. That does not mean Firefighters' safety has to be compromised. Members have a responsibility to be proactive with safety and conditions at work.

At a recent Industrial Relations Operations meeting, the COO encouraged the Union to work with management in a "positive" and" proactive" manner to minimise issues that are likely to arise.

The Union is committed to being proactive and encourages all members to be proactive this summer. It is important to raise all the likely issues ahead of the bush fire season so that we get clear and practical instructions on how to prevent the mistakes from past bush fire seasons.

Every Bush Fire season the same issues flare up:
• firefighters spend too long on the fire ground and have inadequate facilities at the fire ground for cleaning up and resting during breaks
• poor communications systems and equipment for all personnel
• there are not enough career resources mobilised to fires, especially in the outer metropolitan areas
• poor command and control at multi agency incidents
• the inappropriate deployment of Career Firefighters as opposed to Volunteers (please note: the Union supports volunteers, they are essential and do a great job)
• the list goes on

This summer I encourage all members to be responsible when planning to reduce the problems we have faced in previous bushfire seasons before they turnout to emergencies.

The first issue that needs to be addressed is Fatigue Management. All members need to have a complete understanding of the Authority's Fatigue Management Policy as well as knowing how the practical application of the policy will be applied by all personnel.

It would be useful if there was such a policy on Fatigue Management but lets stay "positive".

All members should ask their Line Managers to explain in practical terms how to reduce the hazards that arise from being too long on the fire ground - and the following questions and comments should be addressed:
• how are management going to ensure proper rotation of Firefighters during emergencies?
• what should crews do if they believe they should be relieved at an emergency and no-one has organised that relief or rotation?
• what should crews do if reliefs are not forthcoming?
• are management going to provide healthy meals, and what permission does the Station Officer have to purchase food and refreshments at such incidents?
• what toilet facilities will be made available at prolonged incidents and how long does it take to mobilize reasonable toilet facilities?
• what facilities will be provided to wash and revive (or rest) at the fire ground so you don't eat with unclean hands and have to sit on the ground?
• how do we keep appliances clean from contaminants and can you launder your level one PPC after each job knowing the toxins and carcinogens from the Australian bush have been identified by CSRIO as some of the most potent in the world?
• what is a reasonable break between incidents and shifts? Can a guarantee be given on such reasonableness for those personnel on the 320/8?
• when will human resources finally provide the "legal advice" they have been promising on how overtime is calculated and paid for those on the 320/8 attending such incidents?
• what is the process to be followed for all personnel when the full break between shifts has not been taken?

All members should ask their Line Managers to explain in practical terms what has been done this year to fix communications:
• are there enough radios to stay in direct contact with all Firefighters at all times to provide some form of direct supervision at incidents?
• who controls the deployment of resources? The SOO, RCC , CFM, BFC or IMT? (Don't forget to mention Toodyay)
• have there been any changes to radio channel allocations, and when should which radio channels should be used?
• how do mobile phones fit in the communication network? how are the requests and or orders made by mobile phone recorded?

All members should ask their Line Managers to explain in practical terms how enough career resources will be deployed:
• how many extra Light Tankers will be manned and where will they be placed and when will they be available?
• will management ensure safe staffing profiles on all appliances, including the light tankers so we do not have inexperienced firefighters clustered together without adequate supervision?
• how many Medium Tankers will be available this fire season?
• how do we mobilise earthmoving equipment in a timely manner?
• is there a limit on resources (LT) the SO can call?
• how can a SO know the experience or competency of non FRS Firefighters sent to assist? (Don't rely on helmets)
• with new Firefighters, how can an SO maintain direct supervision of non-senior Firefighters as required under vocational training?

The point is the Authority needs to answer the genuine questions that are continually raised and actually do something to fix the problems. I encourage all member to raise your concerns early, loudly and repeatedly. It is through Unity and persistence we will maintain and improve our working conditions. And spare a thought for the District Officers - they are not well supported either by the organisation. And I note - it is not encouraging to have an administration that in the wake of the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission Report appoints a relieving Chief Operations Officer who did not possess a single Fire and Rescue Service competency..... time for a clean out and real leadership

Graeme Geer
Secretary

UNION STRENGTH

The Strength of the Union really shows when you need help. We are there when you need us the most!

Some of you would have heard discussions about whether or not it is worth being a member of a union - even in our Union we have members who raise this issue. Unusually, within the broader union movement, our Union represents members throughout the ranks - from graduate firefighters through to senior officers.

When there are problems between two or more members the Union's role is to ensure that due process is followed and natural justice is afforded to all parties involved. It is not the Union's role to take sides in such disputes. The Union is interested in making sure that all disputes are settled at the lowest possible level and that wherever possible common sense prevails.

We have only a handful of senior officers who are not Union members. It is not our job to offer our members who are senior officers advice on their managerial matters or conduct, they have a whole department funded by the taxpayer that fulfils this function.

On some occasions we are confronted by poor human resources practices and it is obvious that our members who are senior officers have been poorly advised. In these circumstances we do our best to protect all our members - we are professional in our approach but "we take no prisoners" as far as non members and civilian administrators are concerned, in particular where their attitudes, behaviours and actions are to the detriment of our members and affect our members' well being.

The Union advice is that when you are called to a meeting or asked for a discussion that could trigger industrial or disciplinary issues for you, then you should insist on being represented by the Union.

In recent times the Union has been disturbed about breaches of natural justice and the inappropriate pursuit of grievances and disciplinary matters. The Union has sought legal advice about the ramifications of some of the so called "investigations" because we believe that the process of enquiry and "investigation" has been compromised and further that it is not supported by any powers under the relevant legislation. We will pursue any actions we believe are illegal, corrupt or arise from processes where members are denied natural justice.

The Union is concerned that some members may not realise that they are entitled to request Union representation, and further that members can ask to defer the discussion or meeting until union representation can be organised.

If Management request a meeting with you - the following principles should apply:
1. Everyone has the fundamental right to representation at meetings with your employer if the meeting is to discuss any matter which may have an impact on your employment.

2. If the meeting is described to you as being "informal" but the nature of the meeting changes and you are uncomfortable, you have the right to request that the meeting is terminated until you can arrange union representation. The same principle applies if a formal meeting needs to be deferred until you can organise union representation.

3. If the meeting is formal, you have the right to know the purpose of the meeting and you should request that such notice is put to you in writing, at the very least in an email.

4. You have the right to know what you are suspected of doing or not doing.

5. Your have the right to take reasonable time to think about your response and this could be some time after the meeting. You do not have to answer all questions or complaints without being able to seek further advice and / or representation.

6. If you take a Delegate or co-worker as your representative, they have a right to speak and to ensure that you are being treated fairly and that your rights are being protected.

7. If you need to seek further advice from the Union Office, then you have the right to call an adjournment to the meeting and to seek that advice, or to ask that the meeting be deferred until you have organised representation from an Official or Officer from the Union.

Remember - the Union is there for the times you need us the most, make sure you are represented and if we are not immediately available then seek to have the meeting or discussion deferred until you have union support.

As one of our esteemed retired Chief Officers reminded me recently - good managers are not afraid of union representation and they have a duty to ensure that all workers have representation and protection, especially where the managers may invoke disciplinary actions or procedures. He learnt that lesson as a younger firefighter when he faced some unfairness in his career and it had an impact on his leadership until he retired.

Makes you wish for the old days!

Lea Anderson
Industrial Officer

2011 FIREFIGHTERS BALL

For the first time in over 25 years the Firefighters Ball was held on the 17th of July at the Astral Ballroom, Burswood.

Hosted by the Fire and Rescue Service Football Club the Ball was a huge success with well over 400 tickets sold, part proceeds of which went to the charity Beyond Blue.

Channel 9 News reader Greg Pearce was the MC for the event along with his more famous son in law Lee Walker who welcomed all the guests. Special guest speakers for the night where former West Coast great Glen Jakovich and now former Perth coach and Adelaide Crows legend Andrew Jarman. Other guests included members of the Firefighters Union Committee and a host of other football identities such as Troy Cook and Sandover Medallist Ross Young.

The Ballroom was setup spectacularly with the old Motor 28 taking the limelight as the main back drop. Special thanks goes to Bob Cook and all the guys at the vintage restoring for the use of the old girl.

As soon as the main meals where finished some brave souls headed to the dance floor and not before too long the long time Perth band, Darren Reid and the Soul City Groove, had all the floor filled which was to stay that way for the rest of the night. Darren was also good enough to let one of our Firefighters wives belt out a number, he was to go too far however when he let one of our own attempt a song!

The highlight of the night however was stolen by another Firefighter and current FRS footballer who shocked the crowd by proposing to his girlfriend, cunningly setup through her winning the last door prize which was announced as a mystery prize. She said yes!

From all reports coming back everyone had a great night and it will only get bigger and better. The FRS football club are hoping to now make this an annual event on the social calendar.

Of course a night like this can not be possible without the great efforts of many people. A big thank you goes to committee members Lee Walker, Rick Curtis, Steven Longo, Leon Berthelsen and Kelly Wyeth. Special mention to Lee who was responsible for a huge portion of the organizing.

The committee would like to extend their thanks also to all the sponsors for the generous gifts for door prizes and all the Firefighters who helped sell tickets.

We hope to see all of you and more again next year and make this a traditional night where all Firefighters can bring there partners and friends to say thank you for the support they provide us throughout our careers.

Leon Berthelsen

EDITOR'S NOTE: Below are posts from Kevin on the UFU Forum. I encourage all to log on and have a read.

Author Post
Kevin Holloway Posted: 05 August 2010, 15:26

Kevin Holloway 6441
School 13
12/10/1973 - 22/7/2010

The time has come for me to say farewell. I retired on the 29th July 2010.

School 13 was made up of 36 probationers. Sadly we lost one of us due to a fatal car crash, about a month or two into the school.
We were to come on to shift at N° 1 City Fire Station (the now Museum) around the 20th December. Bullshit Castle did not tell us what shifts we were going on, so none of us new if we had to work Christmas Day or not. (they obviously did not have FESA Values in those days. Haha) I took it upon myself to find out what shift we were all allocated and secretly told everyone. Unfortunately for me, some slimey, no good, dobbin' prick dobbed me in and I got hauled over the coals and severely reprimanded. From this point on I could see the value of the Union and have been a supporter and helper ever since.

I was 21 years old and started on "D" Shift. Coming from a Trades background, I felt like I had joined a Boys Club. Tennis, Table Tennis, Pool, Volley Ball, Water Throwing, Cards, Two Up, A few night caps to help you sleep and occasionally, visitors on station, Piss Ups, Weekends Away, Adventurers Club and lots of fun and laughs. It was so much fun that there was no way you would pull a sickie. Yes we did have Fires and Prangs, Chem Spills, etc, but it's the fun and laughter and mateship that you remember most. Now that I have been there and done that, I can sit back and reflect my 36 years in the job and see what was really important to me and it is not hard to realize that its you. It was your support, your backup, your humour, your laughter, your mateship that made it all worth while. Thanks for the memories (as the song goes) and the good times. Remember as this job progresses, that some traditions are worth keeping. Piss Ups and Cook Ups and Union get togethers. If I am not remembered for any earth shattering achievements, I'm sure I'll be remembered for my on shift Sunday Cook Ups. Ahhhh Yes!!!!!
Scones !
Roast Dinners !
Lamb Shanks !
It's not just the food in ya bellie that makes you feel good, it's the camaraderie and team spirit and laughter and doing things together.
All my best wishes go to you and I would just like to pass on a message to you that a retiring firee passed to me when I joined.
"The Job's F!@#$%" hahaha.
Have a great life.
Best Regards.
Kev
aka Halfway
aka Kimby
aka Lips Jaggar
aka Mick Jagger
aka Piano Mouth

Author Post
Kevin Holloway Posted: 07 August 2010, 14:53

Ramblings from Kevin Holloway.
When I joined the job in '73, we were governed by the W.A. Fire Brigades Board. Better known to us as "BULLSHIT CASTLE". No explanation needed.
The Firees were always Community minded and were always out there in the Community helping, supporting, saving and caring. WE save lives. We save property. We raise money for PMH, Fiona Stanley Burns Unit, Radio Lollypop. Etc, etc, etc. We are always in the top 5, if not first, most respected professions in the country.
I feel offended when "BULLSHIT CASTLE" send us Circulars to encourage us to be good to the Community and friendly to the Indigenous. We are the ones out there doing it every day and I am very proud to say that I was part of it for 36 years. I am always proud to say I am a Firee and very proud to be a Unionist.
We are all HEROs, in our own right. Just think about the lives that you have touched in the time that you have been a Firee. How many pats on the back and accolades have you had and how many times have you just shrugged it off and said. "Orrrr, it was nothing, or it's my job, or it's what I'm paid to do, etc.
Let me just say this. I think you are HEROs and the Community think you're HEROs,
So don't shrug that off.
One of the best things I found in the Fire Brigade, or FRS, was the Mateship and support that we give and receive both in close confines of our station or the broader spectrum of the Union. The support is always there. It is just a phone call or a Beer away.
United we stand.
Divided we fall.

I would just like to mention FESAs Mission Statement and FESA Values.
I do believe that FESA forget to look at it. They want us to study it and abide by it, but it's OK for them to ignore it. You only have to see how they crucified Peter Oliver to know that they forget to read it. On a personal note, I believe that you all know that I have retired because you read it in a Circular or on the Net or Arrivals and Departures. I have not seen anything in writing to say that I am going to retire or that I have retired. I received a phone call from Tracy on Tuesday 27th July to say that my WC payments will cease on Thursday 29th July. I said; does that mean that I retire on Thursday? She said, Yes. That's it. No Tea and Scones. No Musical Band. No Fan Fair. I had to ask if I was retired. Who is Tracy anyway? I guess my

36 year service isn't recognized or worthy of a visit from a District Manager or a Letter from Fesa to say, Thanks for Coming. It just goes to show that Fesa Values are just for us to follow, not them.
This makes it all the more important to stay United. Support each other and support your Union.

Kev

Author Post
Kevin Holloway Posted: 07 August 2010, 15:01

More Rambling from Kevin Holloway.
A couple of years ago I enjoyed a night at the Union Dinner for Retirees. It was the one when Ron Buckland retired. At the end of the formalities I went to Ron and congratulated him on his retirement and shared a beer. He said to me;
"Have a look around this room Kev. Half of the Firees in here are suffering from some sort of Traumatic Stress. The other half are on there way to it."
I was inclined to agree with him.
At another Send Off I spoke to an old retired Firee, who, when still in the job, was a self confident, loud, bombastic, competent, good Firee. He showed no signs of Stress. He had no idea that I was having problems when he told me that he was home one day sitting in his Recliner Rocker when a hot wave of intense fear embraced his whole body. He started to sweat and was unaware of what was happening to him or why he was so afraid. He sort help and is now aware that he suffers with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. He said that he would have been the first person to criticize any struggling Firee. He thought they were malingerers and just bullshitting. He then apologised for thinking that way and says he now understands.

I have told you these stories to help you understand that PTSD is a real thing and it can grab me, you or your mate standing next to you. If you feel that you're not coping, seek help. If you see a mate struggling, give him a hand. You never know, you might need a hand yourself one day.
When I started to suffer with PTSD I would not tell anybody. I felt like a failure a looser and every other horrible name I could call myself. This was very soul destroying and it wasn't until I put my hand out and asked for help that I started to climb up from the depths of depression.
If you are struggling, put out your hand and ask for help. You have to reach out.

You may remember that I answered a broadcast email about men's health. After I had written it, I found it very difficult to click SEND. I felt very exposed and was unsure if I was doing the right thing. I sent it anyway and was overwhelmed at the replies and response I received. All very positive. It took a lot of courage for some of the Firees to admit to me that they were struggling, but this is probably the first step. Some said, because of my email, they had gone and sort help and admitted that they had a problem. Other Firees did not reply on email, but saw me in person and said thanks a lot. You have helped me understand what I'm going through and that I'm not alone.
I have no doubt now that clicking that SEND button was the right thing to do. Thank you to everyone concerned and most importantly look after yourself and your mates.
It might be easy to call someone a grumpy old prick, or a sad sack, or give him a kick in the guts when he's down, but he may just need an arm around the shoulder and say, do you need a hand mate?
We are all mates. Let's look out for each other.
As Human Beings, I don't believe that we are designed to do what we do, see what we see and endure years of Trauma.
We don't do it for the money, because the money isn't really that good.
We do it because we care.
So care for yourself and care for your mate.

Have a great life. Have a great working life and stay United.

Kev

A SOLUTION TO DIESEL FUMES

Sick of exhaust fumes from our not so new diesel motors?
Getting dark looks from the light tanker crew on start up?

Manager won't come to the party with funds to supply an exhaust fume remover?

Well do we have a solution for you!!

SFF Cian Evans gives the thumbs up

Perfect solution working hard

It is the Kelly Ryobi successful fume sucking extractor!

It can be started by the light tanker crew and automatically comes away from the exhaust pipe when the pump is driven off … (most times)

Yes, this most capable design sucks your problems right out the door, with the added advantage of warming the environment and not the station.

Brilliantly designed by a firefighter on B platoon who is a wasted talent with us as demonstrated by his more than capable design ideas.

'A' Platoon test run the model and gave it two thumbs up, we were so impressed we nearly went out and bought the idea……

Parts are a breeze to order, extension leads and 60mm hose can be easily obtained from Mercury Firesafe and the key to the whole operation, the Ryobi blower vac is available at Bunnings. This versatile unit can also be used in the garden to remove dust and loose vegetation!

If you require any assistance please contact A or B Platoons at Success Fire Station on 000 and if we are not out saving life and property, or laughing too hard at the thought that some-one actually believed this - we will probably help you.

PREPARE YOUR KIT FOR THE BUSH FIRE SEASON

It's time again to prepare yourself for the up and coming bush fire season.

All fire fighters should now be using the particulate / organic formaldehyde filters on the bush fire mask. Have you checked yours? Is it serviceable and have you checked to make sure that all is in good condition?

The particulate / organic formaldehyde filters were implemented after research conducted by the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) and the University of WA (UWA) determined they were the best filter combination that would protect Fire Fighters from the products of combustion at a bush fire.

Testing was conducted at Forrestfield Training Center using an enclosed space and a ducted incinerator to burn samples of WA coastal heath. From these tests, the main components of bush fire smoke were identified and fire fighters trialed various filter combinations.

These trial results were validated at actual fires, fire fighters used three different types of filters in smoke produced at a CALM burn off in the Northern Suburbs.

The result was the recommendation of the combination P2 particulate filter and the organic vapor/formaldehyde filter to provide the fire fighter with the best protection from bush fire smoke.

During the trial it was noticed that a number of FFs had dirty marks either side of the nose after removing the mask, further investigations reveled that some FF were not able to achieve a proper face seal with their issued filter and were not aware of the requirement to conduct a fit test as per the 3m instructions. Others were able to achieve an appropriate fit but as soon as the goggles and helmet were fitted this interfered with the mask, resulting in smoke entering through the face seal. Dirty marks on the face within the area of face seal indicated that there was a significant amount of smoke bypassing the filters.

Presently FESA supply the 6000 series half face mask through Protector Allsafe in three sizes S, M &L. When conducting a fit test Fire Fighters should ensure that the harness is secure but not over tight and the goggles and helmet are worn. If you cannot achieve a tight fit report this to your Station Officer as you may need to use the 3M 7500 series half face mask (available from Protector Allsafe) which is similar to the 6000 series but it has a softer silicon face seal which can assist with creating a better seal.

We would encourage all FF's to conduct a fit test as per the 3M instructions and check the service life of your filters. It is also good practice to always carry a spare P2 particulate filter in your kit bag as this filter can block up quickly and put excessive strain on your breathing capacity.

John Chatfield

SHOCKING FACTS

Did you know

• Sudden Cardiac Arrest is one of the leading causes of death in Australia
• As we all get older our chance of suffering a sudden cardiac arrest increases
• The very nature of our job also increases our risk of suffering a sudden cardiac arrest due to factors such as the need to go from being at rest to carrying out activities at a job which involve heavy physical exertion, suffering heat stress and even exposure to noise!

It gets worse

• The chance of survival from an out of hospital cardiac arrest is poor with less than 10% of patients leaving hospital alive

It has been proven in numerous studies that a key factor that influences a patients chance of survival is timely Defibrillation with an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). In fact a patients chance of survival from a cardiac arrest decreases by 10% for every minute before defibrillation is commenced!

What is the response time for an ambulance?

AED's are a life saving piece of equipment and they have been designed to be used by people with no training, just turn them on and follow the voice prompts.

AED's are also designed to require virtually no maintenance. They conduct there own self tests. All you have to do is listen for when they beep to let you know something isn't right and requires attention.

Why don't have these machines on our appliances?

We are now one of the few brigades in Australia that don't have AED's on our machines, not to be first responders, but for the welfare of firefighters! The Tasmania Fire Service have had them for about 8 years!! Other brigades that have them are the NSW Fire Brigade, MFB, Metropolitan Fire Service South Australia, ACT Fire Brigade and Air Services Australia.

Having an AED on our appliances does not mean that we are First Responders. However it does mean that we are able to give the best possible treatment to each other should one of us suffer a sudden cardiac arrest.

You may also be interested to know that FESA house now has an AED. The Forrestfield Training Centre has 2. Shouldn't we all be entitled to have the same level of protection? At the end of the day it is all about us getting to go home to our loved ones.

Paul Armstrong

Brain Freeze

FROZEN COCKTAIL/SLUSHY MACHINES FOR HIRE

Let us help you take your function to the next level and make it the talk of the town with a frozen cocktail machine. For an all inclusive low cost we can provide your guests with the luscious taste sensation of frozen cocktails. Add that X factor to your function with a slushie for the kids and heavenly alcoholic ones for the adults. Choose from our delicious range of cocktails or feel free to come up with your own recipe.

Brain Freeze is owned and operated by Firefighters – Paul & Simone Paardekooper.

ASK FOR FIREFIGHTERS SPECIAL

For further information check out our website: www.brainfreeze.com.au or email us at info@brainfreeze.com.au

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- Equal Opportunity and Discrimination
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- Property
- Sports Law
- Migration Law

When you need a lawyer you need to know you're with lawyers who are genuinely interested - who are on your side.

Gibson & Gibson aim to give you professional advice, practical guidance and the benefit of their experience, without wasting time or money.

The team at Gibson & Gibson are committed to serving the members of The United Firefighters Union and look forward to working with you!

Workers' Compensation – The Process – Cost to Members NIL!

If you have been injured at work and you want to access workers' compensation entitlements you must complete a worker's compensation 2B claim form and obtain a First Workers' Compensation Medical Certificate and serve this on your employer. Your employer then has three days to forward this information to their workers' compensation insurer. We recommend you complete your 2B claim form and obtain a First Workers' Compensation Medical Certificate as soon as possible after your injury.

The workers' compensation insurer is required to contact you within 17 days to advise whether your claim has been accepted, declined or is pending. If your claim is pending we recommend you obtain legal advice as soon as possible as it can take the insurer some time to make a formal decision regarding your claim. We can assist with lodging an application at WorkCover to either obtain an interim order for weekly payments of compensation (for up to 12 weeks) or to have an order made about whether you are entitled to workers' compensation benefits.

There are also important time limits and procedures to follow if you are considering a negligence claim against your employer. You are required to obtain a report from an Approved Medical specialist identifying you have a minimum 15% whole person impairment and an election form must be lodged and registered at WorkCover within 12 months of the date you lodged your workers; compensation claim form. You are also required to demonstrate that your injury was caused through the fault of your employer. You are also required to commence proceedings in the District Court within 30 days of the Director giving you written notice that your election form has been registered. We strongly recommend you contact us as soon as possible so that we can provide you with advice regarding a potential negligence claim.

We are also able to provide specific advice regarding workers' compensation benefits and assist with negotiation a lump sum to finalize your workers' compensation claim.

WAFRS RUGBY - BALI BASH

The WAFRS Rugby Club made their first international tour in early October, travelling to Bali to compete in the Bali International 10's Rugby Tournament. Most of the 13 man team flew out on the 6th to ensure they had a few days to acclimatise and suitably hydrate themselves for the gruelling two day tournament. A special mention must be made of the splendid Bali Beale Moustaches grown by all touring members, we did get a few odd looks as it is not often you see such a large group of men travelling together with such resplendent Mo's (outside of Sydney that is). The touring committee determined that it must have been Kurtley Beale's (Wallaby) Mo that improved his performance of late so the team was to grow one to give us any edge we could get.

Day 1 – Before our Rugby commitments began the team made an official visit to the Denpasar #1 Fire Station where we met the Chief of Operations and a number of other senior staff. This visit was made possible by the fantastic support of ACOOM Lloyd Bailey who coordinated proceedings, arranged a translator and official FRS Plaque to commemorate the FRS Rugby Club visit.
During the formalities Tour Captain SFF Mike Parker (Pommie) presented the Bali Chief with our plaque and received one in return, we were then given a tour of the facility, shown over their appliances and equipment and discussed many aspects of the job in our respective countries. It was suggested that maybe on future visits we can assist the local service with some training in areas our service excels in, maybe even a Firefighter exchange!

Day 2 – with heavy heads many of the younger team members were a little worse for wear by the time they rose for today's beach session, but after a few Bintangs and some relaxing massages seemed to start hitting their straps. Tonight's session saw the official 'short buying' event. A favourite beach vendor, Suzie arrived with a wide range of brightly coloured board shorts and after much discussion by the very fashion conscious players a bright red pair was selected. Suzie promptly whisked off to get a variety of sizes. We were joined tonight by the touring Goats of the Curtin University Rugby Club. Following a very festive dinner we then moved on to one of the Mad Hatters (Hatty) favourite Bali venues, the Espresso Bar where on arrival he was presented with a Tamborine and then led the team fearlessly on the open mic.

Day 3 – Qualifying pool matches. Luckily for us the tournament organisers scheduled all of the Open Men's 10's matches for the afternoon, so those who saw sunrise had some time to recover before heading out to the Canggu Country Club for game 1 at 3pm. For some reason (probably influenced by the Goats) the FRS team was seeded 4th! We ended up in Pool B with the likes of Nedlands (Perth), Bush Turkeys (NT/NSW), Jakarta Dragons. We did manage to pull off what could have been the recruiting coo of the weekend by convincing Scott Staniforth (Aust Wallaby, Western Force Player) to don the Jersey, which he wore for the rest of the day, unfortunately due to contractual obligations he couldn't actually play. For full details read the tournament report from Pommie. Suffice to say we did end the day on a high under lights and notching up the team's first official win and securing 3rd place in the pool with two narrow losses and a 3 try win. This pitted us against the 2nd placed team from Pool A – Curtin (1 win, 1 draw, 1 loss) for Sundays third Quarter final.
With many stiff and sore bodies, and the challenge of getting a taxi back to Kuta most players got back to their hotel, tried to wash their kit and had an early night so we were well rested for finals day.

Day 4 – Finals. An early start was required today to ensure everyone made it to the ground on time. With our first game against Curtin, who had lent us a few players during the pool matches we were prepared to have a short bench as their true allegiances came through. The match kicked off at 9.30am with Curtin forming a tunnel for us to run on and us reciprocating, much to the delight of the crowd. A tough first half saw the scores level at half time. During the half time huddle, which included both teams, the Ref popped in and raised the point that in the finals there were no draws and extra time might be required. One of the senior Goats was then overheard offering the Ref a Curtin Jersey should the result go their way. In hindsight this was a very good play, as a number of dubious refereeing decisions put us out of reach eventually going down 3 tries to nil.
This result saw us drop into the Plate side of the competition with a Semi Final match scheduled against the host club Bali Rugby. In another match with a few questionable refereeing decisions we went down 5-7, thus bowing out of the competition. The up side of this is we were presented with 5 Heineken's each.
Everyone stayed around to watch the Cup final which saw Nedlands run over High School Old Boys (Christchurch NZ) and claim the title for 2010. A small presentation was held during which we asked Scott Staniforth to present the Chief Operations Officer Award to the WA FRS Rugby player of the tournament, the winner was young Brendan Ash (Bashy) who had an exceptional tour, straight out of the last recruit school and all.
A function later that evening was held at one of the Kuta bars and many of the team were seen later at the Bounty playing some live music for the crowd. A special mention must go to the Hatter and Mitzy (Tony Gaynor) who drew a massive crowd at 3am for the final open mic session of the night.

Day 5 – this was a well-deserved recovery day for the touring party, following a hectic weekend of activity many of the team spent the day around their pool getting a massage or two. The day concluded with another session at Jimmy's where many stories of what could have been were shared.

Day 6 – White water rafting day. Today saw the boys who were still in town venture into the wilds of Bali for a fun day of white water rafting. Smiffy handled the paddle very well considering he had a broken hand (to be discovered on return – he has since had a pin screwed in to hold the bone that was so badly broken).

In conclusion I would like to say thanks to the tour sponsors, Velocious, STAR International, KooGa and TS Marine for their fantastic support. Thanks also to all the families and friends who came along to cheer the team we look forward to seeing you all again next year. Also to the touring group themselves, who represented the WA FRS, and more specifically the WA FRS Rugby Club in a very professional manner. I was approached on Sunday night by Bali Rugby President Nick Mesritz who commended us on our attitude and approach to the tournament, and extended us an invitation to return in 2011.

Keep an eye out for details of upcoming WA FRS Rugby Club events on our Facebook page (http://www.facebook.com/pages/WA-Fire-Rescue-Service-Rugby-Union-Club/124461917606788?ref=sgm), or email Pommie at parkerm@iinet.net.au to be added to our mailing list, and start saving for next October.

Derrin Rodriguez

WA FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE FOOTBALL CLUB

Hi all,

The WAFRSFC has been working hard to establish itself off the field since last we spoke, our last game covered in Turnout was against the coppers back in February which was a great win.

Since then the footy club has been working behind the scenes to promote and run the “Firefighters Ball” which was held at the Astral Ballroom at Burswood Entertainment Complex on Saturday 17th July 2010. The event was a huge success with 415 people attending the black tie spectacular.
The event was run in conjunction with mens health charity “Beyond Blue”, both organisations were able to raise some valuable funds to develop their respective programmes. Choco is writing an article on the ball so I wont steal his thunder... Have a read and we hope to see you all there next year.

Our next game, the STAR International Cup against the Royal Australian Navy will probally have already been played by the time this article goes to print, we line up at Medibank Stadium “Leederville Oval” under lights on Friday 15th October 2010 at 7pm. Our hosts East Perth and Subiaco Football clubs have given us use of their fantastic facilities for the night. I thank in advance our very valued sponsors in STAR International, UFU of WA, FESA, WA Football Commission, East Perth FC and Subiaco FC.

The Navy after a fair touch up last year are strengthening their side with some Army and Air Force recruits, after last years game I recruited their captain Simon Horner to come and play for me down at Perth FC in the WAFL. As a 6ft5 full forward he is a valuable asset and has worked hard on his game. He has had a great season and played several league games. He will be in action again for the Navy so our defenders will have their work cut out for them. Hopefully he doesn’t have too good a night... It will be a great game to watch at a fantastic venue, watch this space for our next article in following editions, hopefully it will a celebratory one...

The football club has implemented a travel programme to play interstate brigades each year, on the 28th October 2010 we undertake our innaugurul road trip to NSW to play New South Wales Fire Brigade in Sydney. The player response has been amazing with 25 members travelling to Sydney for a 4 day venture to enjoy some great footy, great culture and some local delights. Not too mention building a network with our interstate brothers...

We will be staying on Darling Harbour, our intinnerary will be a full one with lots of local knowledge required from our would be opposition... The game will be an enjoyable social hit out that is more based on building interstate relationships than sheep stations. The hospitality already shown by NSWFB has been excellent and from our correspondence we will be very well looked after.

A full wrap up of the STAR International Cup and our NSW road trip will be covered in coming editions of Turnout.

I would take this opportunity to congratulate the hard working committee of the WAFRSFC, getting a club up and running to enable it to be financially and logistically self sustainable is no mean feat and one that reflects on the personnel involved. Well done to all.

Thank you to our supporters who come to our games and support our fundraising activities, and thank you to our player group for your committment and love of the game...

Cheers
Rick Curtis
Coach
WAFRSFC

WA FIRE BRIGADES GOLF CLUB

During our winter months, members were competing for the annual club championships, held over three rounds at Royal Fremantle, Sun City and Kwinana Golf Clubs. With horrendous conditions prevailing at the first round it was surprising to have 40 starters on the day, but those participating were treated to more favourable conditions in the other rounds although very tough course condition and pin placements were found as a real test of golf. Our 2010 Club Champion is Freo firie John Litterick, while the nett champion was retired Geraldton firie, John Lyons on a countback from Brano and the ''Hawbag". Other winners were;

A Grade; James (Frog) Ferguson, Darryl Hoad, Ken (Jaws) Bridges and Jimmy Bell.
B Grade; Ian (Brano) Bransby, Glyn Thomas, Peter Norman and Geoff (F**g) Millar.
C Grade; Todd (Hawbag) Hawes, Jeff Patience, Brad Jones and Rosco O'Neill.
Sponsors of our 3 rounds were; West Coast Hifi - Carousel and Midland, Muzz Buzz - Joondalup and Strategy Finance.

Following the Club champs as the weather and courses improved in toughness, those attending the Australasian Championships in New Plymouth (Nth Is), New Zealand in November were competing for places in the State team to defend our title obtained at Mandurah in 2009. Following the club championship rounds, players were ranked by selecting two best scores out of five other games dating back to the Police & Nurses Credit 'Winter Cup'. The successful team members selected were; Ian Bransby (virgin team member and top qualifier), Jimmy Bell (Team Captain and club Vice capt.), John Lyons (only survivor of 2009 team), Glyn Thomas and Ken Bridges. Team reserve is John Litterick. For those thinking of travelling next year to this event in Alice Springs the proposed dates are 16th - 21st October 2011, a couple of weeks earlier than usual at a course rated in the top 20 desert courses in the world. All new members welcome next year or come as a visitor to one of our remaining games for 2010.

Individual winners (NAGA's) and sponsors for those competitions are listed below;

2010 Police & Nurses Credit Society Winter Cup at Gosnell GC - Rob (Steelo) Steel.
Don Cruickshank / Brian Zanich trophies at Pinjarra GC - Adrian (Superman) Rutter. NAGA - Hawbag.
10 visitors from Mandurah Fire Stn made for a good day with BBQ lunch and a few ales later.
Port Quay Construction (Mandurah) trophies at Royal Perth - Jimmy Bell. NAGA - Rosco O'Neill.
Bosch Power Tools trophies at Meadow Springs - Mick Holister. NAGA - Tom Close.

Our annual Police Challenge was at Secret Harbour on 4 October, play again in strong winds and fine weather with the firies taking the chocolates. This was also a combined stableford day with partners from each club and once again Mick Holister backed up to win with his copper mate.

A couple of upcoming events that all are welcome to attend are our final whack for the year, a 4 ball Ambrose fun day where not a lot of skill but a lot of luck is required on Friday 10 December 2010 at Mosman Park GC followed by BBQ lunch and the AGM. The following week on Tuesday 14th December 2010 is a new addition to our calender in 2010, a mixed night for Xmas drinks, including the 100's Club draw at The Royal in East Perth. Contact James Ferguson on 'D shift' at Daglish FS for further info and RSVP on this one.

Good golfing, Minimal bushies, Merry Xmas and Happy New Year.

Peter Norman

WA CAREER FIREFIGHTERS FUND FOR CHILDREN

What are they?

Each week firefighters donate part of their wage (0.50c) to the WA Career Firefighters Fund for Children. This money is used to assist firefighters children and children in the wider community. Burn Out Grants are donations' given to children who have been affected by fire directly.

Burn Out Grants can either be given as a cheque or shopping vouchers from firefighters to the family and their children who have lost personal belongings, such as toys or school books, in a house fire. Once a crew attends a house fire and assess that a Burn Out Grant would be beneficial, the Station Officer can access a Burn Out Grant request form through the Union website, following the pathway shown below. The chaplain will ensure the form is processed.

http://www.ufuofwa.net.au/

WA FF Kids fund

CFFC Burn Out Grant Request Form FF Kids Fund

The fund encourages the crews who attended the incident to personally hand over the cheque or voucher to the family. As firefighters we know the benefits of assisting the community and maintaining good community relations. If you have any questions regarding Burn Out Grants please feel free to contact any of the WA Career Firefighters Fund for Children committee members as listed on the Union website.

PS There is an age limit of 15 years for Burn Out Grants.

SO Claire Finucane
President WA Career Firefighters Fund for Children

North Perth Volunteer Fire Brigade

Horses, hardship and heros. A prelude to View Street

At the turn of the 20th century, in 1902 as it happens, a group banded together at a public meeting and decided the growing suburb of North Perth should have a fire brigade[1]. Twelve months later a rudimentary brigade had been formed in conditions which were obviously far removed from those seen today. A quote from the time states:

> *Regular drills are held, and, with proper provision for the Brigade in the future, and extended treatment at the hands of the Metropolitan Waterworks Board in providing more streets with water mains, the people of the North Perth municipality will, doubtless, have reason, to congratulate themselves on the efficiency of the Brigade when its services are required to fight the' fire fiend.[1]'*

The streets were on the whole without reticulated supply, the pump was driven by the strength of men and the pump's horsepower was fuelled by hay. Tools were basic as was everything else. Buckets of sand and water put out many of the fires. These were the days before the fire brigades board was formed.

At this early stage the brigade was yet to have a home. Land had been acquired but what eventually transpired was that the council, in 1904, donated the first North Perth station to the brigade. It was on the corner of Fitzgerald and Forrest streets. Today there stands Stone's pizza and a Cafe. Consisting of lot 1 and later, purchased in 1912 for expansion, lot 2, the building was actually a house previously owned by a councillor. The councillor managed sell to the council for the price of £1 per foot for a total of £35. It sounds like he did well as I discovered from a description of it's age and poor condition.

> *It was a wood and iron structure which in those days was considered a very old building.... The building is fully 50 years old, decayed, dilapidated, and will hardly stand the paint used on it.[2]*

So, it was built in about 1854 and was to serve as the station until the opening of View Street in 1926. The building itself consisted of four small rooms and a large room with front double doors[2] over which the words Fire Station were written. Over the years there were additions by the men including a workshop, toilet and 3 small lean-to rooms. As well, the entire structure was lined with iron. Because of this "*in summer it becomes very hot and steamy*"[3]

Things were better where equipment was concerned as Superintendent Lapsley of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (now in the 'new' Murray Street) acceded to a request from the North Perth Volunteer Fire Brigade Board for appliances and equipment. They received a new reel, hose and other appliances (a general term at the time meaning any fire fighting equipment e.g. extinguishers) as well as a tour of Murray street where they were suitably impressed by the work carried out by firemen. This included making harnesses, boots, mats and all mechanical engineering as well as carrying out the 'wood blocking' of the yard[3]. Demarcation was a phrase yet to be invented it seems.

Initially as a volunteer brigade I found the following names associated: Superintendent - councillor Champ (was it his house?), Captain - Mr Bolton, Lieutenant - Mr Mallor and Apparatus Officer Mr Steenson.[3] Two of these names you should become familiar with as they both have very interesting stories which I intend to tell.

The first, Mr Frederick Mallor went on to become Captain. He was awarded a bravery award on the ninth of August 1907 for helping to rescue an elderly woman from the bottom of a 60ft well. At the time it was a big event. He was to be killed on the job attending a house fire on the corner of Charles Street and Wanneroo road less than 6 months later. To those who can make it happen, I believe his name should be on the fire fighter's memorial in King's Park. The second name of note is John Steenson. Great Great Grandfather of Adam Steenson he was the first Station keeper at 21 View Street and served an amazing 48 years in the brigade(s).

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1 The West Australian , Monday 13 July 1903, page 7

2 State Records Center, ITEM-1952/1044, Fire Brigade Station - North Perth - proposed new building, transferred to Boys Scouts Association, Correspondence from 1925-1948

3 The West Australian , Wednesday 11 February 1903, page 3

North Perth Volunteer Fire Brigade

The brigade was taken over by the newly formed WAFBB in 1910 as City of Perth councillor E G Gould writes in 1925:

> *In the year 1910 the Fire Brigade Board took control of North Perth, and made it one of the permanent stations, today under the platoon system. It has 4 men [of which one was Steenson] on the staff, also 5 auxiliary [partially paid] men who receive their periodical training at this station.*

In the decade to come changes were swift and included the phasing out of horses. North Perth received a new Napier pump some time before the 29th of June 1914 on which day a demonstration took place for the citizens of North Perth. Held at the Town Hall it drew a large crowd of children:

> *At 3.22 the Mayor (Mr. Waugh), with the aid of half a hundred children, applied a match to the kerosene soaked pile of timber on the Town Hall grounds, and gave the alarm a few minutes later. Within a few seconds the brigade's new motor hose tender, a Napier manned by six men, was on the spot. The demonstration which followed was designed to show that this new model of a fire-fighting appliance could cover 30 miles an hour fully manned and equipped, that it carried 200ft. of lined rubber hose, and 30 gallons of water to be used the moment the engine reached the outbreak and until the heavier gear was got into action, and that its 1,000ft. of 24in. Canvas hose, which was carried on a back drum, could be utilised in sections from every quarter in which a water supply could be obtained, the patent Simonis and London nozzle allowing for a direct play on the blazing structure or the formation of a water shield for the firemen.*

The manning had grown to 2 permanent and 4 auxiliaries with another 4 living within 100 yards of the station. This was to be a common occurrence for many years. The houses were wired with 'house bells' which could be rung from station to summon the firemen. True time off as we know it was virtually unheard of. The signal was carried on a pair of wires to each home. A book located in the museum has a hand drawn diagram showing each pair of wires and to whose house they belong. Progress appeared to keep pace on the equipment front, but by the time this article was written the rumblings for a new station were growing loud.

Calls for a new station came from all quarters but a damning letter, again from Councillor Gould must have prompted action.

> *Being situated in the most central part of our district it stands out as a monument to lethargy and torpidity.... One mentions the name of Fire Station with bowed head, feeling the shameful state of the building as a landmark far below our needs... The building inside is dreary and desolate and lends to anything but a spirit of comfort.*

This pressure must have led the board to act. On 20th July 1925 the secretary on behalf of the board enquired to the Perth Town Clerk:

> *I am directed by the board to enquire as to whether the land adjoining the North Perth Town Hall in View Street could be made available for a fire station site[2]"*

The reply came back that it was not available as it was required for recreation purposes! Shortly before this time on the 17th of June an article in The West Australian saw the board trying to deflect critisism for dragging it's feet by blaming the delay on the introduction of the platoon system:

> *It would have been constructed earlier but for delay caused by a dispute which had led to the introduction of the platoon system, under which firemen, except certain officers, lived away from, instead of at, the station[4].*

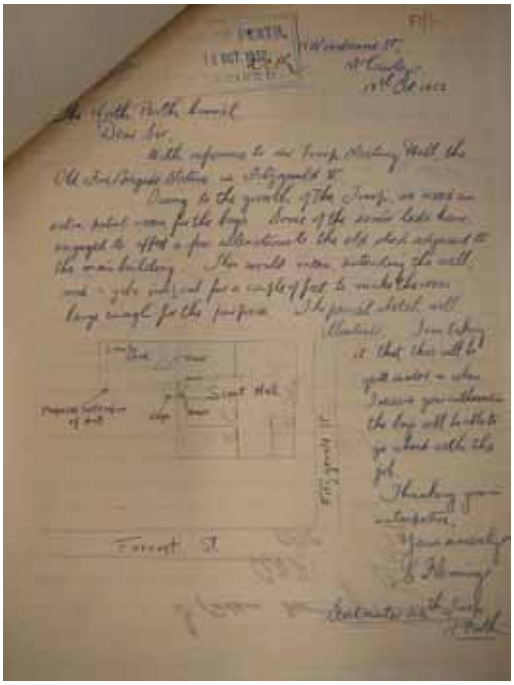
In 1925 architect KC Duncan finalised the plans for View Street and the contract was awarded to C. Grayson

4 The West Australian, Wednesday 17 June 1925, page 6

for £2572. The building permit was issued on the 1st of April and was completed on 11th October, 1926[5] There must have been a brief period of temporary lodgings because on the 27th of May, 1926 the fireman moved out of the old station and it reverted to the North Perth Council under section 26 of the Fire Brigades Act 1909[2]. They moved to View Street on 9 November and the building was open to much fanfare on the 16th of that month.

The old station was to become North Perth boy scout headquarters for 15 odd years until the building was demolished some time in the 1940's . The period of relative hardship was to be replaced by the luxurious accommodation that is now the UFU office. View street was now operational.

Andy Duckworth 11/10/2010



Hand Drawing of 1st North Perth FS

John Steenson 1887.Middle third from right.

5 Register of Heritage Places, Assessment document, North Perth Fire Station (fmr), 30/07/2004

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Can you guess who Shrek is?

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"Has anyone got a wide-angled lens?"
"The Coach's door is always open!"
Pete Daly - Midland FS

"A good coach is always prepared to take one for the team"
"Does my ass look big in these shorts?"
"Stand back boys! you'll get sunburnt....."
"Damn! I'll have to rethink my pre-game curry ritual"
"Opening the lunchbox in the TV room is anti-social enough....."
Stuart Parks - Midland FS

Ed Note - First comment deleted.
"While you Firies are cleaning the dunnies, see what you can do with this!''
"This is what I did to get made up, I thought it might get me a run on the ground.''
Richard Renton - Perth FS

All 3 Firefighters will receive a prize in the mail soon.

TRIO OF CARPACCIO

INGREDIENTS:
200G OF TENDERLOIN, SIRLOIN OR RUMP
200G OF TUNA
200G OF SALMON
BAG OF ROCKET LEAVES
1 TBSP OF CAPERS
BALSAMIC VINEGAR
SEA SALT FLAKES
SHAVED PARMESAN
EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL.
LEMON/LIME WEDGES

1. SLIGHTLY FREEZE MEAT AND FISH SO IT IS EASY TO SLICE INTO 1MM WIDE STRIPS
2. PUT SLICED MEAT ON CHOPPING BOARD, COVER WITH CLING FILM AND GENTLY FLATTEN WITH MEAT HAMMER OR BROAD KNIFE.
3. LAY OUT PLATTER AND SPREAD WITH ROCKET LEAVES AND SPRINKLE LEAVES WITH OLIVE OIL.
4. SCATTER MEAT OVER, THEN DRIZZLE WITH MORE OLIVE OIL, DROPS OF BALSAMIC VINEGAR, SALT FLAKES AND PARMESAN.
5. LAY ALTERNATE SLICES OF TUNA/SALMON TO COVER PLATTER AND ARRANGE CHOPPED ROCKET AROUND.
6. SCATTER WITH CHOPPED CAPERS, DRIZZLE WITH OLIVE OIL, FRESHLY CRACKED PEPPER/ SALT AND LIME WEDGE.
7. DIG IN WITH YOUR HANDS AND ENJOY WITH A COLD BEER OR NICE WHITE.

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