

AFAC

The Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) is the peak industry body for government fire, land management and emergency service agencies in Australia and New Zealand.



AFAC was established by its members in 1993 to collaborate on matters of international, national and regional importance. By sharing each others extensive capabilities, experience and knowledge AFAC members expect communities to benefit from the economies of scale, reduction in the duplication of effort, and strengthening of industry capability.

The AFAC Council is made up of the most senior representative of member agencies and meets twice a year to provide strategic direction. Governance oversight is provided by the Committee of Management, which is elected by Council and meets bi-monthly.

The work of AFAC is usually conducted through the use of a Group structure and cross functional project teams. Senior representatives of member agencies participate in these Groups and their work includes shaping research and policy, developing national or regional positions and assisting each other with solutions to issues that cannot be individually solved.

Through the work of its Groups, AFAC produces guidelines and positions for adoption by Council. This approach assists agencies work to achieve better levels of interoperability and greater community safety outcomes. The work of AFAC also includes special research projects of regional significance, development of training and learning resources, facilitation of collaborative purchasing and the creation and sharing of new knowledge.

Committee of Management

President Euan Ferguson AFSM, Chief Executive Officer, Country Fire Service South Australia,

Deputy President Lee Johnson AFSM, Commissioner, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service,

Treasurer Neil Bibby AFSM, Chief Executive Officer, Country Fire Authority Victoria,

Greg Mullins AFSM, Commissioner, New South Wales Fire Brigade

Tony Blanks, Manager of Fire Management, Forestry Tasmania

Phillip McNamara EFSM, Director General, New South Wales Fire Brigade (stepped down September 2008)

Marry Barry, CEO, Victoria State Emergency Service (elected October 2008)

Mike Hall, Chief Executive Officer, New Zealand Fire Service (stepped down February 2009)

Jo Harrison-ward, CEO, Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia (elected April 2009)

AFAC Staff

Naomi Brown

Chief Executive Officer

Sandra Lunardi

Manager, Learning and Development

Jill Edwards

Manager, Strategy and Knowledge

Trevor Essex

Manager, Finance

Jay Gleeson

Manager, Communications

Russell Shepard

Manager, Standards

Rob Llewellyn

Manager, Community Safety

Judy Gouldbourn

Manager, Volunteer and Employee Management

Gary Featherston

Manager, Rural and Land Management

Rhys Maggs

Manager, SES

Colin May (2008)

Rob Prime (2009)

Manager, Urban Operations

Lynette White

Executive Assistant

Mel Bedggood

Online Services Coordinator

Corrine Taton

Group Administration Officer

Ben Smith

Administration Officer

Elysha Cummins

Receptionist/Administration Assistant

Tesha Piccini (until December

2008), Senior Learning and Development Consultant

Nancy Morghem (until April 2009),

Project Officer Strategy and Knowledge

AFAC Members

Full Members

Australian Capital Territory

- ACT Emergency Services Agency (ACTESA)
- ACT Parks Conservation and Land (ACT PCL)

New South Wales

- New South Wales Fire Brigades (NSWFB)
- New South Wales Rural Fire Service (NSWRFS)
- Forests NSW
- Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water, NSW (DECCW NSW)

Northern Territory

- Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service (NTFRS)
- Bushfire Council of Northern Territory (Bushfires NT)

New Zealand

- New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)
- New Zealand National Rural Fire Authority (NZNRFA)

Queensland

- Department of Community Safety Queensland Government Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS)
- Forestry Plantations Queensland
- Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS)

South Australia

- South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service (SAMFS)
- South Australia Country Fire Service (SACFS)
- Department for Environment and Heritage, South Australia (DEH SA)
- Forestry SA

Tasmania

- Tasmania Fire Service (TFS)
- Forestry Tasmania
- Parks and Wildlife, Tasmania

Victoria

- Country Fire Authority, Victoria (CFA)
- Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria (DSE)
- Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board Melbourne (MFB)
- Parks Victoria

Western Australia

- Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia (FESA)
- Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia (DEC WA)

National

- Australian Council of State Emergency Services (ACSES)
- National Security Capability Development Division, Attorney-Generals Department (AG)
- AirServices Australia

Affiliate Members

- Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)
- CSIRO Forestry and Forest Products
- Hong Kong Fire Services Department
- Melbourne Water
- Pacific Islands Fire Service Association (PIFSA)
- Papua New Guinea Fire Service
- Australasian Road Rescue Organisation (ARRO)
- South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM)
- New Zealand Department of Conservation (NZDC)

From the CEO

This year has been a particularly busy one for AFAC with the Victorian fires of 7 February and their aftermath dominating much of the work and resources of the office and the membership.

AFAC members express their sorrow at the tragic loss of life and damage caused during this event.

The announcement of a Royal Commission to examine the fires and specifically the 'Prepare stay and defend or go early' position, meant the very core of how AFAC members work with communities was under scrutiny. AFAC sought leave and was granted permission to appear before the Commission to give evidence on 'Prepare stay and defend or go early', warning systems and building in bushfire prone areas.

Integral to AFAC's ability to present in the Commission was the use of the research of the Bushfire CRC. This allowed AFAC's evidence to be underpinned by the latest research and I believe this was instrumental in establishing AFAC's credibility at the Commission.

The creation of the Knowledge Web gave AFAC an unprecedented ability to communicate with the wider industry and the adoption of the AFAC *Approach to Knowledge Creation* has established the ground work for future research adoption and knowledge transfer. The Knowledge Web is still in its infancy and will be supported to change and grow to meet members' needs.

The development and endorsement of the *Approach to Knowledge Creation* was a milestone in achieving the AFAC Goal 4 'A culture that supports knowledge creation'. This will lead to a systematic take up of research from the Bushfire CRC and other sources through planned events.

A significant piece of work undertaken in the last 12 months was the development of a new seven year research agenda for a proposed new Cooperative Research Centre (CRC). While the bid for the new CRC ultimately proved to be unsuccessful it is pleasing that the Bushfire CRC has been funded to continue until 2013.

The development and publication of two major learning resources – Suppress Urban Fire and Respond to Urban Fire added to the already impressive list of training resources available to members. Both were a huge job and congratulations to all involved.

In a year where AFAC has found itself operating in unprecedented territory, the staff at AFAC has risen to the challenge. Working at times to very tight deadlines and carrying heavy workloads staff continually delivered the quality work needed to achieve successful outcomes.



This effort has been matched by many Group members who have worked tirelessly to achieve a national approach to matters of significance.

This commitment has been a major factor in the results achieved by AFAC in the last financial year and I thank them all for it.

Naomi Brown
AFAC CEO

From the President

The last year has been a testing time for agencies right across Australia, with many AFAC members managing the effects of fires, floods and storms that have fallen into the worst categories.

The effects of these events, and in particular those of Black Saturday, will mean that all agencies across Australia will be examining the way they do business and making changes to support the new climatic environment we find ourselves working in.

Importantly, none of us needs to achieve this on our own, and the strength of collaboration that AFAC is based on has never been stronger than has been shown over the last 12 months.

Having a robust and united peak body to represent the industry in the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission has been crucial. The fundamental bedrock of how we do business is being tested and we have been able to stand united and say we know where we need to improve and that we are capable of moving forward as one.

The decision to establish a Cooperative Research Centre in 2003, to move our industry towards evidence based decision making, has proved to be one of the best decisions ever taken by AFAC and its members. The ability of AFAC to be able to draw on research to support its positions on community bushfire safety, prepare stay and defend or go early, building standards and community warnings has given the organisation great credibility when it was most needed and has allowed AFAC to rapidly respond to the current Royal Commission.

There is no doubt that the collective product of our wisdom, knowledge and experience has positioned us well to tackle future challenges. We have taken some great strides forward as an industry and AFAC is much stronger for it.

I reflect on the unique role that AFAC plays and the growing respect and status AFAC holds in governments, the community and the media. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, AFAC represents the interests of 29 member agencies, each of which has specific responsibilities and authority in fire and emergency management. AFAC's influence, then, is informed via its member agency CEO's, Commissioners, Chief Officers and Directors. Secondly, AFAC is able to harness the best, most focussed, well trained and experienced fire and emergency managers in the land. The AFAC strategy groups continue to provide a proven way of getting expert advice of substance and meaning that then informs those decision makers in a national context.

I would like to acknowledge the support I have received in my time as President from the AFAC Committee of Management and in particular Neil Bibby ASFM, Chief Executive Officer CFA. During his time with AFAC, Neil was a leading proponent of evidence based decision making and a strong supporter of the establishment of a Cooperative Research Centre for the industry. I thank him for his work as AFAC Treasurer and wish him well in future endeavours.



To all those who are part of AFAC, in particular to the talented and hardworking staff – Thank you. You do great work. I would particularly like to recognise CEO Naomi Brown. Her drive, energy and passion is infectious, her leadership and management skills excel. As I prepare to finish my time as President of AFAC I salute you all for your fantastic effort and teamwork and your support for me in this role. Keep up the good work! The future is bright because of you!

Euan Ferguson ASFM
AFAC President

Financials

The 2008/09 financial year has been a successful one with the company recording a surplus of \$326,645. After adjusting for the one off effect of the \$300,000 Knowledge Web contribution by the Bushfire CRC the result is a surplus of \$26,645 against a budgeted loss of \$23,000.

This financial year saw the first full year of the AFAC online shop in operation. The shop has proved to be highly successful in promoting and increasing the awareness of the AFAC brand and its products around the world. It has also resulted in streamlining and increased efficiencies within the AFAC office.

AFAC recently entered into a commercial agreement with CSIRO Publishing to sell bushfire related publications through the shop. The shop has also commenced selling a number of Bushfire CRC publications. The increased product range will continue to increase the visibility of the AFAC brand as well as generate increased revenues.

This year's conference was held in Adelaide. Congratulations to all involved as the Conference was

once again a highly successful event raising in excess of \$285,000.

The Dulux Bunnings summer paint campaign was held for the final time this year. AFAC received \$100,000 from the campaign, which once again funded the running of the AFAC AIPM Volunteer Leadership Program in Manly NSW. Since 2006 Dulux have contributed over \$750,000 to AFAC and the Volunteer Leadership Program. This has been an outstanding effort, which has seen many member agencies across the nation benefit from Dulux and Bunnings generosity.

The AFAC balance sheet remains in a strong position with total assets of approximately \$6.4 million funded by 25 percent member's equity and 75 percent debt

AFAC Ltd

Statement of financial performance for the year ended 30th June 2009

REVENUE	2009	2008
	\$	\$
Members Subscriptions	1,425,935	1,400,472
Gross Margin From Trading Activities	575,917	593,909
CRC Knowledge Web Contribution	300,000	0
Other Revenue	593,614	516,598
Total Revenue	2,895,466	2,510,979
EXPENSES		
Salaries & Related Expenses	1,546,101	1,386,896
Travel & Meeting Expenses	153,294	193,681
Office Expenses	481,624	454,821
Other Expenses	387,802	274,845
Total Expenses	2,568,821	2,310,243
Surplus/(Deficit)	326,645	200,736

Statement of financial position as at 30th June 2009

CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash & Debtors	5,730,842	5,549,630
Others	245,869	289,157
Total Current Assets	5,976,711	5,838,787
NON CURRENT ASSETS		
IT & Office Equipment	426,926	382,764
Total Assets	6,403,637	6,221,551
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade Creditors	2,518,462	2,303,653
Revenue in Advance	1,740,209	2,091,064
Special Project Funding	433,073	432,064
Total Current Liabilities	4,691,744	4,826,781
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Deferred Revenue	58,164	77,552
Others	68,036	58,170
Total Non Current Liabilities	126,200	135,722
NET EQUITY	1,585,693	1,259,048

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

The AFAC Strategic Plan 2008-2015 details the five key goals that will guide AFAC for the next seven years. These goals are high level statements of the outcomes AFAC wishes to achieve. Each goal is underpinned by a number of objectives, and each objective will be achieved through the implementation of strategies to be worked on by AFAC Groups.



AFAC's five strategic goals 2008-2015

Leadership and advocacy.

A sector with high levels of visibility, credibility and influence which impacts on policy development, strengthens relationships and partnerships, reduces barriers and facilitates access to funding.

Effective land and environment management.

Creating an environment where land owners, managers and communities understand and accept the need to coexist with fire as part of the natural landscape.

Consistent and effective approach to the provision of services.

An approach to services where integrated planning is risk based and adaptable in all operating environments and where systems and practices are interoperable.

A culture that nurtures and supports knowledge creation and evidence based decision making.

Easy access to quality information, with high levels of agency interaction and where networks allow the development of shared understanding, creating an environment where there is access to the accumulated knowledge of the sector.

A fire and emergency services sector with capability and capacity.

Consistency in ensuring volunteers, staff and contractors are safe, skilled, capable and resourced and providing the business management and infrastructure necessary to support service provision to the community.

To track AFAC performance against the Strategic Plan, the activities of the last financial year are reported against the strategic goals.

GOAL 1

Leadership and advocacy

A sector with high levels of visibility, credibility and influence which impacts on policy development, strengthens relationships and partnerships, reduces barriers and facilitates access to funding.

Leadership

Victorian fires

The Victorian fires of 7 February had a major impact on the work of AFAC in 2009. Immediately following the fires, AFAC provided support to the Bushfire CRC in establishing a task force to go out to the fire ground to investigate the events of that day.

In the weeks following Black Saturday, AFAC spoke to a wide variety of state, national and international TV, radio and print journalists. AFAC fielded close to 100 media inquiries following the fires. AFAC spoke for the industry on issues related to the AFAC position on bushfires and community safety, particularly the "Prepare stay and defend or go early position" and building in bushfire prone areas (AS:3959). AFAC also made comment on the use of fire shelters and bunkers, which has been a topic of wide discussion since the fires.

The events of 7 February and the subsequent Royal Commission substantially increased AFAC's profile and AFAC continued to respond to media interviews on issues arising from the Victorian fires throughout the year. AFAC also provided regular reporting

to members on events at the Royal Commission through email bulletins and the Knowledge Web.

Bid for a new Cooperative Research Centre, Fire: Environment and Society

AFAC submitted an application for funding for a new Cooperative Research Centre, "Fire - environment and society".

The bid's research program addressed the key industry drivers of climate change and drought, demographic changes, workplace health and safety, changing technologies, legislation and policy. The new CRC also assembled a larger stakeholder group than in the current Bushfire CRC. The bid successfully made it to the second stage of the review process but was not funded for the full amount requested. The Bushfire CRC has been allocated \$15 million over three years to undertake research into issues arising from the 2009 Victorian fires and so will continue in a form similar to its current operation. AFAC, in conjunction with industry stakeholders, has begun the process of establishing an alternative means to maintain the industry's research capacity.

Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission

The 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission was established on 16 February to investigate the causes and responses to the bushfires which swept through parts of Victoria in late January and February 2009. AFAC was granted limited leave to appear in the Commission on the following topics:

- Warnings
- Prepare, stay and defend or leave early position
- Evacuation
- Refuges and bunkers
- Building and planning in bushfire prone areas.

AFAC was summonsed to provide a series of documents on the above matters.

With the assistance of legal council, AFAC prepared witness statements and submissions for the Commission. Naomi Brown, AFAC CEO, John Gledhill, TFS Chief Officer, Jill Edwards, AFAC Manager Strategy and Knowledge, Andrew Lawson, CFS Deputy Chief Officer and Mark Chladil, TFS Fire Management Planning Officer gave evidence at the Commission on behalf of AFAC.

Productivity Commission

AFAC and ACSES continued to advocate on behalf of the fire services and the State and Territory Emergency Services at the Emergency Management Working Group of the Productivity Commission and the Emergency Management Information Development Plan. AFAC collected and collated fire and SES data for the Productivity Commission.

Award Modernization

AFAC facilitated a collaborative submission to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (now Fair Work Australia). Fair Work Australia is reviewing all industry awards and will review the firefighting services industry in August 2009. The submission, sponsored by MFB, was lodged with the Commission representing most large fire services with paid fire fighters.

National Employment Standards – Emergency Services Leave

AFAC sought an interpretation from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations on the application of Emergency Services Leave. Response has enabled the industry to better understand the obligations of employers in relation to releasing employees to attend emergencies.

National Emergency Coordination Framework

The National Emergency Coordination Framework developed by the AIIMS Steering Committee was completed and tabled for consideration at the Australian Emergency Management Committee (AEMC) meeting held in April 09.

The document establishes a national emergency management cooperation and coordination framework that supports the Council of Australian Governments endorsed Model Arrangements for Leadership during Emergencies of National Consequence, which sets out the strategic coordination of assistance and resources in the event of a major emergency or catastrophic disaster. The

Framework is to support and progress further discussion aimed at achieving agreement on a common national incident management system.

The AEMC endorsed a 12 month trial of the National Emergency Coordination Framework to determine how it can integrate with and complement existing state, territory, federal and agency emergency management arrangements.

Representation

AFAC represents its members' interests on a range of national and international committees, boards and forums. These include:

- Emergency Management Working Group of the Productivity Commission
- Government Skills Australia
- Australian Institute of Police Management
- Australian Emergency Management Volunteer Forum
- National Spatial Information Management Committee
- Standards Australia
- International Standards Organisation

National Standards for Volunteering

AFAC participated in the phase one review of the National Standards for Involving Volunteers in Not for Profit Organisations, an initiative of Volunteering Australia. The review involved a collective response to a comprehensive survey questionnaire.

Volunteering Australia regularly participate in meetings of the AFAC Volunteer Management Sub Group.

Emergency Management Volunteer Forum

AFAC continued to represent volunteer member agencies on the Australian Emergency Management Volunteer Forum. This forum is sponsored by the Attorney General's Department and provides direct consultation between government departments such as the department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and the Attorney General's Department and emergency management volunteer agencies.

National Spatial Information Management Committee

AFAC accepted an invitation to provide representation on the National Spatial Information Management (NSIM) Committee. Jill Edwards, Manager Strategy and Knowledge Management officially joined the NSIM Committee in March 2008.

Standards, Codes and Specifications

Standards Representatives

AFAC currently has 55 representatives on 64 Australian Standards Committees; this is broken up into two categories, 37 main committees and 27 sub-committees. A considerable number of these 64 committees are not currently active. AFAC also has representation on three International Standards Organisation (ISO) Committees, two of these committees have one representative on each and the other is currently vacant.

Changes to the business model used by Standards Australia will mean the number of Standards being developed in the future

AFAC provided further comment on the *National Construction Code Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement*

AFAC will continue to work with the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research and Australian Building Codes Board during the 2009 – 2010 year in the development of these very important documents.

Fleet Forum

The AFAC Fleet Forum, which comprises AFAC agency representatives typically responsible for the planning, design, acquisition and maintenance of fire appliances and other fleet related equipment, has completed and signed off on two major AFAC National Specifications: medium tanker chassis and heavy tanker chassis. While they are minimum specifications they are the first agreed national specifications for vehicles.

Memoranda of Understanding

Inherent in the work of AFAC, is the forging of close relationships with a variety of national and international organisations. AFAC has currently entered into Memoranda of Understanding with:

- Pacific Islands Fire Services Association
- Australasian Assembly of Volunteer Fire Brigade Associations
- Standards Australia
- Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre (new)
- Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre

- Fire Protection Association Australia

Support

Pacific Islands Fire Services Association

The Pacific Islands Fire Services Association (PIFSA) Constitution was approved at its annual general meeting in September 2008. Elections were also conducted for executive positions, with those elected immediately taking their place in the PIFSA executive. AFAC, in its secretariat support role assisted with the achievement of both milestones.

AFAC, with the assistance of CFA, developed a draft business case and capacity development model on behalf of PIFSA, which will be presented to and discussed at the PIFSA annual general meeting in September 2009. The strategic intent is to secure long-term funding so PIFSA can continue into the future and play an important role in the capacity and capability development in the Pacific region.

Communications and Marketing

Fire Australia Magazine

AFAC has continued to co-publish Fire Australia with the Bushfire CRC and Fire Protection Association Australia. The quarterly publication has continued to highlight research, news, opinion and technical information with the magazine distributed to approximately 5000 readers.

Conference presentations

AFAC CEO Naomi Brown has continued to represent AFAC and advocate on industry issues at a range of conferences throughout the last year. Ms Brown was keynote speaker at the International Wildfire Management Conference and the APCO Conference. She opened the AIPM Executive Leadership Program in Manly and was a guest speaker at the Women in Business Events for International Women's Day and at the 2009 State School Teachers' Union Women's Conference.

Awards

2008 Laurie Lavelle Award

Chief Superintendent Jim Smith, NSW Fire Brigades was presented with the Laurie Lavelle Award at the 2008 AFAC Bushfire CRC Conference for his work to make self-extinguishing cigarettes mandatory. He pioneered the idea that reduced fire risk cigarettes are an effective fire prevention and safety measure and can save lives and property.

The Laurie Lavelle Award is presented to a staff member or volunteer who has undertaken a role within an AFAC member agency and has contributed significantly to enhancing the knowledge or skills, operations, performance or public profile of the fire and emergency services in Australasia.

Glenda Ramage from the Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service received a Special Recognition Award as the runner up for the Laurie Lavelle Award for her Smart Sparx community education program.

GOAL 3

Consistent and effective approach to the provision of services

An approach to services where integrated planning is risk based and adaptable in all operating environments and where systems and practices are interoperable.

AFAC Position on Bushfires and Community Safety

Two workshops were held to review the AFAC position *Bushfires and Community Safety* as part of the Bushfire CRC research transfer process. The workshops considered the latest CRC research, the events of the 2009 Victorian fires and lines of inquiry from the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission.

The output of this workshop was four draft discussion papers: *A National Systems Approach to Community Warnings; Bushfire Bunkers for Residential Homes; Prepare, leave early or stay and defend; and Habitable Buildings in Bushfire Prone Areas*. These four papers formed a core part of AFAC's evidence to the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission and will underpin a new Bushfires and Community Safety Position to be finalized in the next year.

Information Flow in Multi-agency Incident Management Teams

The AIIIMS Steering Committee supported research being undertaken by Dr Christine Owen, as part of the Bushfire CRC 'Enhancing Information flow and collaboration in multi-agency incident management teams' project.

The committee participated in the new AIIIMS survey, piloting it within their agencies to ensure active engagement by their personnel in the completion of the national online survey. The survey contained items from the original AFAC AIIIMS survey used in 2003 along with new items on teamwork and communication practices to identify possible areas for development in the future, particularly identification of strategies to enhance teamwork effectiveness and system coordination.

The data from this survey provides the research team with an opportunity to undertake a comparison of the baseline measures collected in 2003.



Bushfire Information Sharing Initiative

BISI continued to provide information on available agency resources to AFAC members during the fire season. The on-line BISI reporting system drew reports from an agency, state and national level and could be easily updated by agencies without the need to go through AFAC.

Flood Planning

Work has been completed on the long overdue review of the SES national flood planning and response manuals. The Attorney General will launch the new manuals in the near future.

Fire Weather Products

Software that provides more advanced fire weather forecasts was trialled by the Bureau of Meteorology during the 2008/09 fire season in Victoria. After promising results, AFAC established a group of interested and experienced fire managers to consider a national set of fire weather products for when the software is rolled out in other states. The tool offers the chance

Goal 4

A culture that nurtures and supports knowledge creation and evidence based decision-making

Easy access to quality information, with high levels of agency interaction and where networks allow the development of shared understanding, creating an environment where there is access to the accumulated knowledge of the sector.

AFAC Knowledge Web

The AFAC Knowledge Web was launched at the AFAC Bushfire CRC Conference in September 2008 providing an opportunity for each AFAC member agency and their staff to widen their knowledge and take part as a contributor. The Knowledge Web has the potential to be the first place to share, learn, interact and come to decisions on issues facing the emergency sector as a whole.

Since its launch the AFAC Knowledge Web has had almost 30,000 people visiting from 155 different countries. The current registered membership base of the Knowledge Web stands at approximately 1600 individuals. These members are a mixture of career fire fighters, volunteers and researchers, from different backgrounds and experience across Australia and New Zealand.

The Knowledge Web has been important in the communication

of information on AFAC's involvement in the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission and has been used to provide updates of the pertinent issues, key submissions, evidence and proceedings. Many AFAC members subscribed to these regular updates and will continue to receive these on future proceedings.

2008 AFAC/Bushfire CRC Conference

The 2008 AFAC Bushfire CRC Conference in Adelaide was a great success with approximately 1100 delegates and 100 trade exhibitors attending the four day workshop and seminar program. The theme of the conference was Fire: environment and society and included the Bushfire CRC's International Research Conference.

The program featured a wide range of international, Australasian and local speakers who presented on issues that



stimulated, informed and entertained. The Conference also included a series of interactive workshops that provided delegates an opportunity to participate in open forums on a range of topics.

The conference received wide coverage from state and national ABC radio including coverage on a dedicated ABC website.

Landscape Fire Performance Measures

The project to establish and report on performance measures for landscape fires has made substantial progress towards providing a data dictionary and a set of business rules. These will allow relevant agencies to collect, store data and report on the measures in a consistent and comparable manner. Agencies that manage landscape fires are being assessed for their capacity to collect the required



data. Wherever possible, data collection will be integrated with existing processes to reduce costs and to get data collection into operation more rapidly.

Safe Behaviour and Decision Making

The Bushfire CRC produced a number of research results relating to the decision making processes undertaken by firefighters and the methodologies available to capture the required information. The strategies for adoption of these findings were developed at a workshop in May. AFAC Groups and AFAC /Bushfire CRC events will be used to facilitate this knowledge transfer.

AFAC Approach to Knowledge Creation

AFAC Council endorsed the *AFAC Approach to Knowledge Creation* and implementation plan developed by the

Knowledge Management Group. Implementation of the Approach has commenced with activities closely aligned with the *Bushfire CRC Research Adoption Strategy*. Various activities, programs and initiatives have been conducted in support of member agency plans for embedding research outcomes into their organizations.

The *AFAC Approach to Knowledge Creation* will strengthen the industry into the future and support the ever increasing and complex demands required to continually equip people with the knowledge they need to make the right decisions.

Fire and Emergency Management Data

The Data Management Group commenced a comprehensive program of reviewing the Australian Incident Reporting System (AIRS) data standard. A review of all the codes used to determine the incident type, referred to as 'block A23' was completed. The work involved a comparison across all fire agencies and made adjustments where necessary. The aim is to ensure the AIRS standard is nationally consistent to improve the quality and comparability of national industry data. Each and every data set is programmed for review and agencies commenced sharing information about various approaches, processes and guidelines.

SES Performance Indicators

The State and Territory Emergency Services (S/TES) have commenced preliminary collection of data for S/TES after agreement was reached on

standard terminology and data to be collected. The indicators will be used to highlight the cost effective contribution that S/TES volunteers make to communities. The indicators provide a consistent framework and reporting mechanism that can be fed into the Report on Government Services.

Safety Alert Network

AFAC has established a facility for agencies to share Safety Alert notices via the Knowledge Web. This service will allow agencies to send and receive safety alerts on issues pertaining to emergency service operations.

Absentee Benchmarking

A framework has been agreed for collecting human resources statistics, such as absence figures and injury management. This will enable agencies to benchmark and assess performance based on industry comparisons.

Worcester Polytechnic Institute Student Projects

AFAC hosted three teams of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Boston who were undertaking research projects for AFAC, FPAA and MFB. The students' research covered three topics, effectiveness of smoke alarms and smoke alarm legislation, fire safety in international student housing and fire dangers from hoarders. The students completed their research over a three month period and presented their results to the three sponsoring organisations.

CRC Research Adoption

The past year has seen a substantial increase in the uptake of Bushfire CRC research into AFAC and agency activities. Through the AFAC Group structure, CRC researchers have been able to transfer the accumulated knowledge of their respective programs into the current work of AFAC and its members.

This reservoir of new knowledge created by the Bushfire CRC has been an invaluable resource for the industry at a time when many of Australia's firefighting and community safety strategies are being reviewed.

The research conducted as part of **Program C – Community Self Sufficiency for Fire Safety** has been critical to AFAC's review of its *Community and Bushfire Safety position*. The work on community perceptions of bushfire risk, community understanding of "prepare stay and defend or go early", challenges with community safety education and structural safety of buildings in fires have underpinned the current review of the position. Much of this work has also been considered by the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission.

Outcomes of **Program D – Protection of people and property** is feeding new knowledge into the decision making and collaboration processes in Incident Management Teams (IMT). It is also providing new research on the decision making processes used in IMTs and by firefighters on the ground. This work will allow agencies to review and refine the decision making processes and structures they

use. Work from Program D has also lead to changes in protective equipment and other occupational health and safety issues particularly issues pertaining to air toxics and respiratory health. A *Field Guide for Smoke Exposure Management* has also been produced for agencies

The research of the Bushfire CRC has lead to the development of a range of products that are currently beginning to find their way into general agency use. This includes new forecasting tools that provide more detailed localized fire weather forecasts, including hourly estimates of Fire Danger Indices (FDI) as well as the currently available maximum FDI. New smoke modelling tools, that allow fire managers to plot the course of smoke generated from fires, have also been developed and are increasingly being used by agencies, particularly for prescribed burns.

Project Vesta, the fire behaviour computer simulator developed as part of **Program A – Safe Prevention, Preparedness and Suppression**, has continued to make good progress. Data continues to be collected to verify the Vesta forecasts and work continues on the

development of a National Fire Behaviour Prediction System for dry eucalypt forest.

The Bushfire CRC **Program B – Management of Prescribed and Wild Fires in the Landscape** has produced field guides for burning in young eucalypt forests and finalized a range of research on effects of prescribed fire, fire and ecosystems and sustainable landscape management practices that are being used in the decision making of fire agencies and land managers around the country.

The work of the Bushfire CRC and Bureau of Meteorology on seasonal forecasting continues to provide agencies with long range weather forecasting for seasonal fire management. Similarly, work on possible effects of climate change and the impact this will have on the number of extreme fire days has enabled agencies to begin planning for some of these potential future impacts now.

AFAC will continue to work closely with the Bushfire CRC during the next 12 month research adoption period. While the Bushfire CRC in its current form will wind up next year, new funding and a new organisational structure will mean it will continue to produce research for the industry for a further three years.

Goal 5

A fire and emergency services sector with capability and capacity

Consistency in ensuring volunteers, staff and contractors are safe, skilled, capable and resourced and providing the business management and infrastructure necessary to support service provision to the community.

Review of the Public Safety Training Package

The following qualifications were developed over the 2008/09 period based on gaps identified in the *AFAC Report: Research and Analysis Phase One*, November 2006.

The PUA00 Public Safety Training Package Version 7, including the Advanced Diploma of Public Safety (Fire Investigation) was endorsed by the National Quality Council (NQC) in March 2009. A total of 41 fire investigators from within fire and police were involved in the project and the qualification is now being used by fire agencies in Australia and New Zealand and arson investigators within the police jurisdictions.

The Certificate III in Public Safety (Emergency Communications) and the Certificate IV in Public Safety (Emergency Communications) are completed. It is anticipated that both qualifications will be submitted for endorsement in October 09. Both of the qualifications are based on a comprehensive training needs assessment undertaken prior to confirming competency requirements.

The Certificate III in Public Safety (Emergency Communications) is designed for personnel who perform the operator role within an Emergency Communications centre and are required to process emergency incident calls and enquiries, dispatch resources from within an emergency communications centre, operate and control radio networks, operate computer aided dispatch system and operate telephony systems.

The Certificate IV in Public Safety (Emergency Communications) builds on the earlier qualification and includes activities such as coordination of emergency communications centre operations and maintaining standards of emergency service delivery.

The *AFAC Report: Research and Analysis Phase One* also identified that there is a gap in the competencies required for personnel who are required to interpret, analyse and produce mapping information for Incident Management Teams in both the structural and wildfire environments.

The Emergency Management Spatial Information Network of Australia (EMSINA) has been the technical reference group



for this project and a series of competencies required for the role of the Mapping Assistant, Mapping Member and Mapping Leader have been identified and agreed. These units will be integrated into the fire qualifications and will form the basis of training resource kits to be developed by the AFAC Operations Groups.

Review of Hazmat Competencies

In phase one of the review of PUA00 PSTP, the Hazardous Materials Working Group identified the need to progress the development of two draft competencies. The draft units will replace the existing PUA units PUAFIR306A Render Hazardous Materials Incidents Safe and PUAFIR307A Monitor Hazardous Atmospheres.

Training Product Development

Over the last financial year AFAC Learning and Development completed three training resource kits (TRK) which are available for agencies.

The Respond to Urban Fire TRK was completed to support entry level firefighter training. The learner resource comprises a number of topics including: an introduction to the principles of fire behaviour, types and products of combustion, fires in compartments, firefighting strategies and tactics, actions to take while fighting the fire, and salvage and overhaul. The learner resource introduces the concepts of fires in compartments and compartment fire models and supports the work of the AFAC Compartment Fire Behaviour Training (CFBT) Group.

The Suppress Urban Fire TRK builds and expands on the principles of compartment fire behaviour introduced in the TRK Respond to Urban Fire and is designed to support the integration of compartment fire behaviour training within agencies. The learner resource is divided into three parts:

- Part A: Fire science fundamentals and firefighting
- Part B: Firefighting in a structural environment
- Part C: Fire safety systems, buildings and fire.

The introduction of compartment fire behaviour into Respond to Urban Fire and Suppress Urban Fire supports the key deliverables of the AFAC CFBT Working Group; that is "to ensure that the national firefighter training material

supports current practice in this field". In addition, the inclusion of material on fire safety systems, buildings and firefighting in different structures, provides learners with an opportunity to expand their knowledge of firefighting and the fire safety systems potentially available in the different classes of building.

Manage Organisational Communication Strategies learner resource describes how to develop, implement and evaluate organisational communication strategies. Organisational communication comprises the messages sent and received between formal and informal groups within an organisation or between different organisations.

Simulation Training

Over the 2008/09 period, the Australasian VectorCommand Users completed the development of two new scenarios designed to exercise the incident management skills of Level 1 Incident Controllers. The two new scenarios developed, expand on an existing suite of products and increase the number of tactical scenarios available for exercising Level 1 Incident Controllers. Both scenarios require the Incident Controller to undertake a scene assessment, develop an Incident Action Plan, implement the plan and conclude operations. The scenarios developed and released in April 09 were Residential Garage Scenario and the Industrial Bin Scenario.

In addition to the two new scenarios developed, all of the other scenarios within the Industrial and Residential suite of products have been

reviewed and improved to ensure they continue to remain operationally current and incorporate technological improvements made to the more recent scenarios produced by VectorCommand.

AFAC/AIPM Leadership and Management Programs

Subscription to the AFAC programs continues to be strong and attendance rates for the leadership and management programs remain high. The 2009 AFAC Visiting Fellow, Assistant Director Capability and Development, Rick Griffiths, NSWFB, is maintaining the tradition of representing AFAC members well at the Institute and in contributing to maintaining the high quality of the programs. Mr Griffiths took over from Chief Superintendent Phil Langdon, NSWRFBS who completed his tenure at the end of 2008. The ongoing commitment of the academic staff has ensured that the quality of the programs remains very high

The two five-day programs, the Developing Future Leaders Program (DFL) and the Volunteer Leaders Program (VLP), continue to attract strong interest from fire and non-fire agencies. Nine of the 29 participants who completed the DFL course represented land management agencies, and another ten of the 43 VLP participants came from the various SES and ambulance services.

Fifteen people from fire agencies attended the most senior course offered, the 12 month

long Executive Leadership Program (ELP.) The remaining officers came from police jurisdictions; both of the Executive Development Program (EDP) courses were oversubscribed with a total of 47 enrolled in the two six-month courses. Both senior programs continue to enjoy strong interest from overseas with three participants being drawn from Pacific Island nations, and five from Hong Kong.

Completion rates remain high with every student enrolled in the ELP and DFL successfully completing the course, 98 percent completing the VLP, and 93 percent completing the EDP.

AIPM Leadership Capability Framework

A working party, comprising representatives from AFAC and the AIPM Board of Studies, developed a consistent definition of industry-agreed outputs from which the leadership and management programs delivered by the Institute could be referenced.

A report detailing industry leadership requirements was produced comprising learnings from the Victorian Police Leadership Framework, the AFAC Leadership Capability Framework, those developed in other police jurisdictions and public sector models. The outcome was a detailed analysis of industry requirements and the final report was forwarded to the full AIPM Board of Studies for decision and then on to the AIPM Board of Control.

Through the AIPM Board of Studies the report provides direction to ensure that AIPM programs align to current and future

leadership and management development needs of police and other associated public safety organisations. However, it does not seek to determine how such a leadership capability framework is to be incorporated and implemented into AIPM programs.

Attraction, Support and Retention of Emergency Management Volunteers

The Ministerial Council for Police and Emergency Management assigned to the Australian Emergency Management Committee the task of developing a position on the "Attraction, Support and Retention of Emergency Management Volunteers". AFAC was consulted via its membership on the Australian Emergency Management Volunteer Forum. AFAC is now a key stakeholder for consultation on the "National Action Plan for the Attraction, Support and Retention of Emergency Management Volunteers" developed from the original report.

SES Fitness Standards

A project has commenced to identify and implement suitable fitness standards for SES volunteers undertaking operational duties. This will assist Incident Controllers and SES management to identify and select those volunteers physically capable of undertaking various operational tasks.

Collaborative Purchasing Initiative

The Collaborative Purchasing Initiative (CPI) has now been established for three years. Over that time it has generated direct savings in excess of \$2.5 million. Member agencies and the industries that serve them are now well aware of the project, which is currently moving to its next phase.

A working relationship has been established with the Australian Procurement and Construction Council, the peak body for state and territory government procurement along with the various state government procurement departments. All of the meetings with these representatives have been extremely positive and supportive of the initiative. The project managers have continued to actively promote the project to agencies, suppliers and government at every available opportunity.

The Knowledge Web is being used to provide access to agency specifications and contracts. Approximately 200 agency specific specifications have now been loaded onto the site.

The group is in the process of identifying key opportunities for further collaboration. Almost all of the tenders being released by agencies now have the AFAC access clause as a key requirement of the tender document. Manufacturers and suppliers are also now embracing the initiative and providing pricing based on the price break model to allow agencies to receive savings gained when collaborating with larger quantities of goods.

Cohort Health Study

Fourteen member agencies participated in a project with Monash University's Centre for Occupational and Environmental Health to establish the feasibility of conducting a cohort health study of Australasian firefighters, particularly in relation to cancer incidence. Guided by an Advisory Committee (with representatives from AFAC, agencies, Monash University, industrial bodies, volunteer associations and an epidemiologist), Monash worked to understand the industry and collect information required to develop a proposal for the cohort health study.

Community Services Training

AFAC commenced work in partnership with the MFB on a national project to deliver fire safety information to people aged 65 years and over.

Through the development of fire safety training across the 40 qualifications in the Community Services Training Packages, care workers who provide in home support to older people will be able to deliver fire safety information to older people.

The Community Services Training Packages are the national qualifications framework for this sector and includes people working in disability, children and youth services, mental health, alcohol and drugs, social housing and community development.

The outcome of this work has been the inclusion of basic home fire safety in nine units of competency in the new CHC08

Community Services Training Package, which were formally adopted on 12 December 2008. The CHC08 Community Services Training Package was launched in March 2009.



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