

## Whats happening...

COVID-19 is continuing to impact our lives and lifestyles. We know many of the 10,000 members of the SES will struggle during this time and the Volunteers Association continues to work to support each of you where we can.

COVID 19 has changed the way we as volunteers prepare and respond to emergencies, and, as we said in March, everyone at the Volunteers Association cannot be more proud, of the way that you all continually step up when our communities need you the most.

The COVID 19 environment is changing daily and it is important to keep up to date with the most current information from the correct sources. Please also keep an eye out for the Volunteers Association Facebook, email, social media, magazine and newsletter as these are the ways we communicate with you regarding our constantly updated support mechanisms.

Our best wishes to all of you and please keep yourselves, your colleagues and your families safe.

### COVID 19 Support

Since the start of the COVID 19 pandemic the Volunteers Association has continued and implemented the following support mechanisms which remain in place;

**Welfare Fund Support** – Applications to the SES Volunteers Association Welfare Fund can be made 24/7 online or contact the SESVA for assistance

**Care Packages** – The Volunteers Association care packages of essential food etc were a massive success during the drought and bushfires. We continue to make these available to members who request them

**Drought and Fire Support Packages** – Although most feel the drought has passed, the ongoing effects remain for many of our rural members. These packages remain available, please contact us for assistance.

**Hygiene Packs** – The public rush for these products left many members, and SES Units/vehicles without sanitary and hygiene products. The SES Volunteers Association has sent out a huge amount of product but, like all of Australia, experiences difficulty obtaining resupply. **These items have been prioritised and rationed to frontline response units first and then to personal members and their families after this.** The SESVA prepares as much as it can for these instances and at time of writing we still have supplies.

**Masks/Toilet Paper/Hand Towel** etc – We have received a lot of requests for these items and much the same as the sanitary items, we still have supplies but demand is exceeding our ability to restock. If you need some please contact us ASAP.

**Advocacy** – We have advocated and made representation for a unit regarding possible risk due to substantial toilet facilities. We will continue to advocate and represent any unit or member who identifies risk associated with COVID 19 and place these items as the highest priority.

**Hospital Visits** – It is with regret that hospital visits and flower deliveries have been suspended during the COVID 19 pandemic. This decision has been made with advice received to ensure the safety of everyone. Cards remain available from the SESVA at any time to be sent to any members requiring them.

**Mental Health Support** – Private and confidential care is arranged for members across the state to access health professionals when requested. Please contact us for further details.

For any other support you may require please contact us immediately.

*Stay safe in  
your volunteering!*

### Business As Usual

The SESVA, its Board of Directors and Office remain available for your support. Plans have been put into place with best practises regarding how our services can remain available whilst keeping everyone safe.

We have stopped any face-to-face pickups from the office, and instead will provide a contactless pick-up option. Delivery remains available however Australia Post have advised they are experiencing significant delays for parcels so please keep this in mind when ordering.

### The Volunteer Magazine

This past month we have received lots of submissions for the magazine which has bolstered its pages like never before. Thank you to all of you who have sent in submissions and pictures. Please continue to send them in and tell everyone what is occurring in your local area.



### Operational Activity

With training being suspended and additional precautions on place for any calls out, we want to remind you that the Association remains operational and available to support you where needed. As they say, we are all in this together, so lets keep safe and see each other on the other side of COVID-19.

### Eat Sleep Respond

Our ESL products are still going gangbusters. We have seen them in different states and even on cruise ships! We have had so much great feedback regarding the t-shirts that we have now released hoodies and beanies to the range. These will compliment the shirts and hats etc. Please get in early because thousands have gone our and the sizes deplete quickly.

### Mental Health First Aid

The Volunteers Association MHFA courses have been huge success. We have received so much great feedback, and further requests for these courses than we even thought. What started as a course for each Zones has grown to many more.

Unfortunately COVID 19 has taken its toll in this area as well. MHFA is a course run through MHFA Australia and the SESVA purchase these courses to be delivered to members of the SES. MHFA has ceased the ability for these courses to be run as they require face to face training.

The two courses booked in for south west NSW have had to be postponed as well as the courses planned for other areas of the state. We acknowledge the disappointment and importance of this training and we are looking at different ways and models we can have this training delivered to members.

If you know of any courses in the mental health space that can be delivered remotely please contact us. Watch this space.

