

*Whats happening...*

As we draw close to May and the warmer months, we are also hearing that COVID-19 restrictions are going to be easing. With the cold weather closing in, we are encouraging everyone to be extra vigilant with their health and always n=mindful of social distancing requirements. Even with restrictions easing, the cold and flu season is starting.

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 – While hospital visits are still suspended, flower orders are back up and running. Cards remain available from the SESVA at any time to be sent to any members requiring them. We will continue to monitor the advice provided by medical experts.

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**

The next edition of the magazine will be published in the next couple of weeks. We are still running with a digital only copy- particularly as not all units have a presence at the moment.

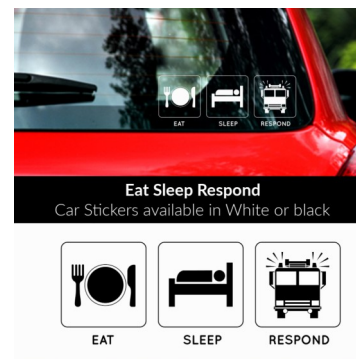
Submissions to the magazine can be sent through to the office at any time.

**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, hoodies and beanies. Make sure you order soon to get yours in time for the cold weather!

The beanies are a woolen outer with a fleece lining- so cozy! And the hoodies are a thick fleece.

We also have bumper stickers in stock- the varieties are white or black print on a transparent back- available in our store now.



**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.

The two courses booked in for south west NSW are being transferred across to online courses so we can continue to develop our capacity within our members.

We have also been busy bees developing our online booking portal for the MHFA courses. As soon as it is ready to launch, we will be advertising through our website and socials.

All mental health training enquiries should be sent through to [mhcoordinator@nswsesva.org.au](mailto:mhcoordinator@nswsesva.org.au)

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

