

STATE ROAD CRASH RESCUE CHALLENGE

2-3 April, 2005

The second interagency Road Crash Rescue Challenge was staged at the Wayville Showgrounds on the first weekend in April.

This year SAMFS joined with the SES and CFS to create the first Tri-Service Challenge.

Eleven teams competed in Limited, Unlimited and Rapid Extrication exercises, with SES represented by Laura, Port Lincoln and South Coast; CFS by Burnside, Blackwood, Stirling and Mount Compass; SAMFS by Adelaide, Salisbury and a combined Riverland team. A visiting team from Werribee, Victoria CFA made up the final numbers.

The event was combined with the 2005 Adelaide Motor Show, which resulted in hundreds of members of the public being

able to view the teams in action. A brilliant commentary by Brenton Ragless over the weekend gave Show-goers a detailed explanation of how teams were assessing and tackling the various scenarios.

Thanks must go to the organizers of the Adelaide Motor Show, who generously donated most of the infrastructure for the event, as well as a number of sponsoring companies who supported the event with trade displays.

Laura SES team will now travel to Hamilton, New Zealand, with Adelaide SAMFS and Blackwood CFS teams, to compete in the Australasian Challenge in October.

LIMITED

1st	Laura SES
2nd	Salisbury SAMFS
3rd	Blackwood CFS

UNLIMITED

1st	Riverland SAMFS
2nd	Salisbury SAMFS
3rd	Blackwood CFS

RAPID

1st	Salisbury SAMFS
2nd	Blackwood CFS
3rd	Adelaide SAMFS

BEST TEAM LEADER Salisbury SAMFS

BEST MEDIC Salisbury SAMFS

BEST OVERALL Salisbury SAMFS



2006 AUSTRALASIAN RCR CHALLENGE

South Australian Emergency Services have accepted an invitation to host the 2006 Australasian Road Crash Rescue Challenge in Adelaide next July.

Adelaide will host teams from all other Australian States and New Zealand in the 4 day event, which will be staged in the Wayville and Ridley Pavilions at the Showgrounds.

Additional activities will include a Symposium, Swap Meet, formal dinner and side trips to wineries and other local areas of interest.

VOLUNTEER HELPERS NEEDED; COME & BE PART OF THE EVENT

The 2005 Challenge was an unqualified success, due largely to the support of teams of SES, CFS and MFS volunteer work crews. The Australasian Challenge will be

a much larger event, and the Committee is already seeking expressions of interest from volunteers from all 3 Services to assist with the running of both the State (April) and Australasian (July) Challenges next year, to undertake such duties as Pit Crew,

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Security, VIP Chaperones, Shuttle Bus drivers etc.

This will be a great opportunity to work with members of other Services, meet new people, exchange ideas and have a great time.

There is no requirement to be members of an RCR Brigade or Unit! If interested, please ring Augie Gray (SAFECOM Competitions Coordinator) on 8463 4042 or 0438 433 007, or Stuart Macleod on 8463 4174.







ANOTHER FIRST FOR HAWKER

The Hawker-based State Emergency Service crew looks after an area just shy of 40,000 square km.

This covers an area roughly the size of entire nations like Holland and Belgium. "It also implies that when a vehicle is involved in a crash on the roads somewhere between Blinman to Arkaroola, it may take some time before Hawker SES can get to the scene and get somebody out of that vehicle", as SES Volunteer Sindy McCourt told Flinders News recently.

"This is the reason why Hawker SES came to the realisation that something needed to be done to reduce our First Response time. Some two years ago - Warren Fargher and his family John, Richard and Barbara wanted to know what they could do, to render some initial assistance. Whilst we make every endeavour to get out to the more remote areas as quickly as possible, time delays are inevitable due to the vast area which our Unit covers", Sindy McCourt said. "Which is why we came up with the idea of setting up a so-named Community Response Team. Having received the relevant training, a trailer and equipment was sourced to be able to give the Farghers the equipment to be able to get into action and supply the urgent first response, which is often crucial when it concerns saving life". Hawker police officer Sean Evans also proved to be an early and enthusiastic advocate and supporter of the idea, as was SES North Regional Commander, Matt Maywald.

Hawker SES and SES State Headquarters, came up with a trailer, generators and RCR equipment to get the scheme on the road, and without the help of SGIC also pitching in with a \$5000 grant, it would have not been possible.

The entire concept is quite new to the SASES, so it took a huge effort to get to the stage where the first trailer was handed over to the Farghers. It is anticipated that the scheme will, before too much longer, be extended to Arkaroola, Angorichina Village and Parachilna.

All of this has required a lot of effort from the McCourts, who have now been SES volunteers for three generations. Beginning with Hawker SES Unit Manager Brian McCourt's mother and father Anne and Trav McCourt some two decade ago, Brian himself, who now also has some twenty years of service with the SES, Sindy McCourt and now the latest generation to join, Alicia Jolly and Thomas Thornton.

By Dick W. Speekman
Hawker



Members of the Hawker Unit with their trailer

"Whilst we make every endeavor to get out to the more remote areas as quickly as possible, time delays are inevitable due to the vast area which our Unit covers."



Monastery of The Holy Ghost

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Proudly supporting our local SES Volunteers in 2005



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BLACK TUESDAY

Being an SES volunteer for 24 years, I have seen and been involved with many combined emergency services incidents, including three large, major fires.

On “Black Tuesday”, like all volunteers in the service, I was going about my normal lifestyle. Having just finished my cleaning job, I first became aware of the fire by a cloud of smoke on the horizon. By the time I reached home (5 minutes away) the smoke, pushed by strong northerly winds, had blanketed the Pt Lincoln Township.

As a second response person, I offered the Unit my help. I hadn’t been involved with the callout to the fire the night before which many of our personnel had been at, where they were assisting the CFS with evacuations etc.

11am Tuesday I arrived at the Unit. SAPOL had asked for our assistance to warn householders on specific farms to prepare to evacuate.

The small township of Wanilla was in the path of the fire and was left with only a few houses standing after the front had been through.

The SES Units at Tumby Bay and Cummins were activated and issued their taskings. Pt Lincoln Police Station had been set up to accommodate an Emergency Operations Centre and needed scribes etc. along with the Divisional Headquarters, so the Eyre

Headquarters Unit were activated to assist with those tasks.

The fire was moving fast, leaving trees burnt on one side and burning indiscriminately parts of paddocks and houses. The fire was that hot that it melted the interior glass in ovens.

1230 hours Tuesday we received a call to rescue several people who had evacuated to the beach at North Shields. Our boat was launched for those retrievals.

The main highway had closed to all traffic other than emergency vehicles and water tankers between Tumby Bay and North Shields so roadblocks were set up. We were called to a vehicle accident in the area and a call came to help a lady trapped in her home in Louth Bay. This all happened in a short 10 minutes.

The EOC asked for help from Adelaide and Whyalla but the highway was closed for 12 hours and the Pt Lincoln airport closed for a few hours also.

Tumby Bay Unit was coping with large personnel welfare jobs, roadblocks and a vehicle accident and then had to start accommodating personnel and public who could not proceed with their journeys.

“The small township of Wanilla was in the path of the fire and was left with only a few houses standing after the front had been through.”



Normally, Tumby Bay, Cummins and Pt Lincoln Units would support each other in taskings, but with all roads between the three towns closed, it made it rather difficult.

Our Unit was tasked to supervise a house where a fatality had occurred; our boat bringing in evacuees from North Shields and our roadblocks at North Shields assisting people coming out of the smoke “like grey aliens”. Directing them to first aid posts that St John had set up and getting Ambulances to respond when applicable. The smoke was that thick that you were unable to see a few feet in front of you.

The roads finally opened but Bratten Way, the road between Tumby Bay and Cummins, remained closed so that the fire fighters could try to keep it contained there. It was 3 days later that the road was opened to service personnel only.

The Whyalla and Adelaide crews, who had travelled by road, arrived. They were given jobs by SAPOL to check burnt areas for possible missing people and do reconnaissance for estimated damage, dangerous trees or structures and approximate cost damage. This took them the best part of 4 days.

Nine people had lost their lives in the fire. It had filtered through to us in the radio room in the Unit that it was 2 at first, then 5 and then 9, the last figure. I was too busy to find out who they were. Many of our personnel attended the funerals later.

Welfare centres had been going at Cummins and Tumby Bay from the start. The local businesses and people were rallying together. The Salvation Army and Pt Lincoln Hospital provided meals at Pt Lincoln. Our Unit was utilised as transportation of

welfare to the field. Businesses were helpful with supplies. At first we were picking up the supplies at Coles and Woolworths but in the end they delivered it to us, as we were so busy. Ice was coming in from everywhere with the Grand Tasman Hotel supplying a large quantity. I’ve never seen so much bottled water in my life.

Tumby Bay needed 50 tents put up...could we help? Welfare drops were ongoing, roadblocks and lighting for fatality scenes and trees in danger of falling needed our attention. 12 weeks later, trees were still falling over.

“We were called to a vehicle accident in the area and a call came to help a lady trapped in her home in Louth Bay. This all happened in a short 10 minutes.”

People with hurt animals were given phone numbers where help could be obtained and evacuees were put onto appropriate help.

That was Tuesday.

The fire continued and was not totally controlled until Friday. All those jobs and others continued in that time. Working in the Pt

Lincoln Operations Room throughout the fire, I hope I have given you a picture from my point of view of “Black Tuesday” in Pt Lincoln where 87,000 hectares of scrub and farmland burnt and 94 houses and unfortunately 9 lives were lost.

I know some of those personnel from Adelaide and Whyalla Units have come back to help in the ongoing clean up of the fire. To anyone that helped Pt Lincoln, thank you and I’m sure Tumby Bay and Cummins also thank you.

SES is a family I’m proud to be a part of.

By Helen McCarthy