



# SitRep

Olinda Rural Fire Brigade P.H 9751 1273



## Message from President Neil Grenfell

The challenge for me is where to begin when writing about your local fire brigade. Since the purchase of our community tanker in 2006 our tanker 3 has grown like topsy. An amazing and patient fit out program (not yet complete) has occurred on this Community funded fire appliance. Combined with the recent arrival of a new and up to date tanker, this will ensure your volunteers are very well equipped for the upcoming session. 2007 marked the 80th year of continuous service to our township and the wider community of Victoria.

To date in 2008 the brigade has elected a new captain (Steve Donner) Lieutenants and office bearers and an even closer linking of our operational and non operational membership. So from an organisational perspective we have never been stronger placed to assist our community when needed!

The challenge as always is what can you do to better prepare your home and family should a fire event happen to us all? We and the CFA are your resource for information so please read through this newsletter and keep it for a reference or come by on any Wednesday evening or if the station doors are open to have a one to one chat.

Can I mention the ABC (774 AM) this is the best media outlet to tune into for up-to-date information on any ongoing fires throughout the state. Finally, as president and a member for 20 plus years I have never been more confident in the preparation of the Olinda and our neighboring brigade volunteers to protect our communities!

## Message from the Captain Steve Donner

As the recently appointed Captain of the Olinda Rural Fire Brigade, I am delighted to have the opportunity to tell the Olinda and Mt Dandenong (Southern Aspect) Communities of our endeavor to prepare the Brigade operationally, in readiness of the 08/09 fire season.

Speaking on behalf of the Brigade, we encourage your synopsis of the approaching Summer period to be 'every fire season is a dangerous one', and we hope that you will join us with this consensus, and help us by helping yourselves with the cleaning up of your properties, of potential fire fuels, but in doing this, also consider the environment for which we choose to live, and lets not cut vegetation to their stumps or concrete the mountain, as it's the reduction in continuity of vegetation that fire can travel that I'm talking about, particularly where it exists from the bush to your backdoor, and where it is rubbing up against your house. Further, if you have concerns regarding a neighboring property, feel free to speak to them about your concerns first, or alternatively, contact one of the Shire of Yarra Ranges Fire Prevention Officers for advice and support.

As you may have read in the local paper, we took receipt of a 2350ltr Hino 4x4 Tanker, known as Olinda Tanker 2, that is packed with safety and technological features that will greatly assist us in our efforts to combat a bushfire (and other incidents) in our Community, and also in neighboring areas. Additionally, we have spend nearly \$60,000 of community funds on Tanker 3, a 2 wheel drive, 2000ltr Isuzu, that is packed with features including lighting, fire ground refreshment facilities, and a serious 800ltrs/minute pumping capacity. This vehicle was purposely designed and build for our area, and is a credit to the Brigade Truck Workgroup. This vehicle is money well spent, and is a substantial force in our fleet for primary area, and support calls to our neighbors, however we are still short funds for its completion.

Although having shiny new vehicles look great in the station, it is important to explain briefly that we have implemented a rigorous training regime to get all our operational members ready once again for a drought affected and potentially very dry and dangerous season, that exacerbates the likelihood of a bushfire and its ferocity, for which you will agree, will require particular attention and preparation at the fire front. Our Training Group, have put all our Operational members through a new vehicle driver and pump induction, and we are currently undertaking deliberate and targeted training from our pre-summer training strategy. We do our training mostly on Wednesday nights, and on some Sunday mornings, and it is very important so as to keep our Members safe whist trying to protect our Community, whether this be life, property or the environment.

Please feel free to contact me or a Brigade representative, via our Web site, or through the contact details provided below, and remember, your preparations will greatly assist and complement our Operations.

## Message From Non Operational Member Suzanne Millar

Better known as "The NOPS", was formed to support the Operational members of the Brigade.

"NOPS" fund raise, cater, clean and have lots of fun and laughs.

We welcome anyone who has some spare time to join us ,as many hands make light work.

We meet the first Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm.

**Did you know? (Strahan Research-Nov 2007)**

**Expectation of fire truck or fire fighting aircraft assisting in property protection**

- 56.6% of respondents said they thought it likely or very likely that a fire truck would come to protect their property in the event of a bushfire.
- 51.2% of respondents thought it likely or very likely that a fire fighting aircraft would come to their property to protect it if there was a bushfire.

CFA advises people that it cannot guarantee a fire truck at every house during a major bushfire. Similarly while fire fighting aircraft are frequently used to fight bushfires, they cannot be guaranteed to be able to protect all threatened properties. An expectation that the fire services are very likely, or likely to attend or provide protection to properties is unrealistic in many circumstances.

**News Flash**

When can I burn off before restrictions? You can burn off any day except Sundays between 8 am and 6 pm a fortnight before the restrictions come into force and a fortnight after they are lifted around

**01/12/2008 till 31/3/2009 (confirmed).**

Please check with the Shire of Yarra Ranges

**Community Fireguard:**

Is an initiative co-ordinated by the CFA locally managed out of Lilydale regional office and is focused on arranging likeminded near neighboring households getting together sharing and supporting each other. The contact is Helen Worsitzky and her contact number is 98739 1315

**Fuel Reduction**

The protection of your property can be greatly enhanced by the reduction or removal of fire hazards as follows:

- Reduce ground fuel that will ignite easily such as grass, weed, bark, leaves and twigs on your property including road reserves;
- Ensure all flammable materials, including firewood, are stored away from dwellings;
- Keep spouting, roof areas and valleys clean and free of leaves and twigs;
- Cover vents and areas under eaves with fine wire mesh to stop embers entering;
- Keep your grass mown before and during the fire season.

If you are unable to do this work yourself a list of Fire Hazard Clearance Contractors can be obtained from the Shire of Yarra Ranges

For regular updates visit us on the web

[www.olindacfa.info](http://www.olindacfa.info)

- Shire of Yarra Ranges web site  
<http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/>
- CFA  
<http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/>
- Department of Sustainability and Environment  
[www.dse.vic.gov.au](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au)

**Important Contact Numbers  
All Fire Calls 000**

- |                             |              |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| • Olinda Rural Fire Brigade | 9751 1273    |
| • CFA Region 13             | 8739 1300    |
| • Police                    | 000          |
| • Ambulance                 | 000          |
| • Shire of Yarra Ranges     | 1300 368 333 |
| • Electricity Faults        | 13 1799      |
| • Gas Faults                | 13 2771      |
| • Water Faults              | 13 WATER     |



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