



Bush Fires

The press and T.V have already covered most of what I might have written from the seminar weekend I organised elsewhere. Having been at Kieran Walshe's outstanding address at our seminar dinner we went to the Healesville Fire Station on the Sunday morning.

The Healesville C.F.A. Brigade Captain Graeme Bates warmly welcomed us. We used their facilities for a presentation by The C.F.A. Operations Manager Malcolm Fallon. Mal had given up his Sunday to drive from his home in Colac to speak to us for an hour. Realising that Kieran had given us such a professional overview and great deal of detail, much of which is slowly becoming published Mal dispensed with his planned presentation and spoke from the heart.

He told us:

- On the hottest day on record the fire fighters still had to wear their protective clothing goggles and gloves
- The C.F.A. has 1211 Fire Stations throughout the State with 58,362 volunteers and 13,000 staff. It is divided into 23 Regions.
- Some Stations get called out up to 4,000 times a year. Healesville gets 250 calls a year.
- The volunteer not only does not get paid, he has to fund raise for additional equipment and more particularly when called out he loses money. Many are tradies and get called off the job so they are not earning.
- On the way to fight a fire threatening say 19 houses they might and do drive past the burning house of a mate. There is a need to prioritise.
- If their homes are threatened their wives/partners have to make the decisions.
- They keep their vehicles and stations immaculate. When they are not fighting fires they go down to the station on a Sunday clean everything and mow the lawns so the women might have to mow the lawns at home.
- They are not allowed on a fire truck unless they are trained and qualified.
- Mal told us that on the day he left his air conditioned office and went down to stand on the road, feel the heat and try to imagine what the fire fighters had to cope with.

Hero is a much-overused word. These people on the coalface are true heroes

Board Meeting

The May board Meeting is to be held tonight (Tuesday 19.05.2009) in President David's office INNLEN Sydney Road, Coburg.

President Elect Dean Kennedy will announce the board for the year 2009/10 at the meeting and also at the Thursday lunch meeting.

Programme

Tuesday 19 th May 2009	Board Meeting 6 pm	At President David's office INNLEN, Sydney Road, Coburg
Thursday 21 st May 2009	Lunchtime meeting 12.45 pm for 1 pm	Bridie O'Reillys Guest Speaker t.b.a.
Sunday 31 st May 2009	District Assembly	Wilson Hall, Melbourne University
Thursday 4 th June 2009	Real Industry Job Interview Program	Moreland Council Offices, Urquhart St., Moreland 9.30 am to 3 pm
Thursday 4 th June 2009	Evening Meeting 6 pm for 6.30 pm	Bridie O'Reillys Fellowship. Approve 2009/10 Board
Saturday 27 th June 2009	District Governor's Changeover	Melbourne Park Functions Centre
Saturday 4 th July 2009	Changeover	t.b.a.

