

VOLUNTEER FIRE and RESCUE SERVICES ASSOCIATION of WA (Inc)



Representing Fire and Rescue Service Volunteers since 1898

2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 127th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (Captain's Meeting) of the Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services Association of WA (Inc) was conducted on Wednesday 27th August at the Avon Room, Adina Hotel and Apartments commencing at 6:00pm.

MINUTES

1. Welcome by VFRSAWA President Tony Dodd AFSM

2. Roll call, apologies, and advice of proxies. (Tim Sonsee)

Present:

Albany	Armadale	Augusta	Broome
Brunswick Junction	Bunbury	Busselton	Carnarvon
Collie	Coolgardie	Cue	Dalwalinu
Dampier	Denmark	Dongara/Denison	Eaton/Australind
Esperance	Geraldton	Gingin	Harvey
Jurien Bay	Kalamunda	Kalgoorlie	Kambalda
Karratha	Kulin	Kwinana	Laverton
Mandurah	Manjimup	Merredin	Metropolitan
Newman	Northam	Northampton	Northcliffe
Pinjarra	Port Hedland	Ravensthorpe	Rockingham
Roebourne	Roleystone	South Hedland	Toodyay
Wagin	Wickham	Wundowie	Yanchep

Proxies:

Denham/ Shark Bay	Leonora	Mullewa	Pemberton
Southern Cross			

3. Address by DFES Deputy Commissioners Craig Waters.

DC Craig Waters acknowledged the fantastic work our volunteers do across the state. It is a significant service we provide. Recently in Port Hedland, we spoke about the feeling of family and community within the brigade. It's humbling and overwhelming

seeing multiple generations involved in volunteer brigades. 91% response around the state is carried out by volunteers, both in community, intrastate and interstate as well as internationally. It would be remiss not to mention WAFES, kudos to those nominated it is a fantastic achievement. Thank you, I look forward to seeing you Friday night, thank you again for the service you provide.

4. Presidents Address – Tony Dodd AFSM

The Association has been busy over the last 12 months. Major areas include Presumptive legislation, working with other volunteer associations to present a united front. The Association have presented criteria to the minister as requested. The Minister has tasked DFES and insurance commission to come up with a better system, hopefully coming soon. The Association will be asking the Minister for a full review as we are having members having issues accessing the program. Tim will be taking information regarding presumptive cancer coverage around the world to CAVFA in hopes of pushing for national coverage.

Chief supers- not very active this year. This is a method of escalating issues such as the Heat fatigue with level 2 PPC, pushing for protocols and/or procedures for the safety of volunteers.

Denmark 3.4 incident- has raised issues with newer model, likely due to higher centre of gravity. Investigation has been completed, just awaiting the results. Will continue to advocate for driver training. Please submit fault

Issues re standby appliances and the readiness/ state of them. If you receive a vehicle that is not fit for purpose do not accept the vehicle, keep your current.

Heavy rescue- inland highway advocating for those brigades to have capability. Merredin having issues as well, experiencing long waits. The Association is pushing DFES for a Heavy Rescue strategy.

Deployments- equipment, accommodation, notification of deployment (lack of) were all issues of concern. Pushing for better planning by incident controller.

Communication- phasing out of 3G, Cellfire not working as well as a result. Some brigades are purchasing Starlink, the Association stance is that brigades should not be having to pay, it should be covered by DFES.

Radios- 1 per seat. The Association continues to advocate.

Risk capability- not a lot of consultation, brigades are often told what they are getting, the Association is asking for more consultation.

Asset management- station replacement, 10 stations needing replacement, 54 over 10 years old. Some Brigades have appliances that don't fit into stations. Pushing for more funding- we need to be resourced appropriately

Revolving door of AOs/DOs. This affects the relationships between DFES and brigades. Understand DFES is having trouble recruiting people to those areas, but Volunteers shouldn't be penalised.

Training- number of courses available (lack of), multiple ways to escalate this. Association is pushing for more flexibility, block training, weekday and weekend availability. Some brigades have stopped recruiting due to inability to get probationary members onto courses.

BA refreshers- spoken to Chief Supers and Acting Commissioners. These will likely be impacted by action by the United Firefighters Union and their overtime ban. Tim has met with the AC Training. Frustrating for volunteers having courses cancelled.

OEP- overhaul of system- Other vol associations wanting same remuneration as VFRSA. The Association have told DFES we will not endorse anything that leaves our brigades worse off. A report has been compiled, awaiting the results.

Thanks to Tim and Caitlin for getting sponsorship, particularly the car with, saving us money.

Previous two years we have operated at a loss; this year we will likely be able to build up the asset reserve

Achievements

Captain's Development Forum- want it expanded to other officers to allow for succession planning. VFRS are not invited this year; it is only other associations.

Height safety rolling out this year, pending industrial action. Both online and practical modules. Certainly improve our operations.

Representation on PATs- not happy with representation on PATs currently.

Female Firefighters Group- raising issues they've had, pregnancy policy- mainly developed for careers rather than vols. Really positive thing.

On behalf of the Association thank you for the service you give, you put a lot of work in. Our job is to support you in your operations; your communities are very lucky to have you.

5. (a) Adoption of the MINUTES of the 2024 Association Annual General Meeting (conducted on 08 September 2024).

Moved: Busselton

Seconded: Augusta

Carried.

5. (b). Motion to adopt recommendation of Association Executive to appoint PKF Perth as auditors for 2025-2026 Financial year.

Moved: Augusta

Seconded: Geraldton

Carried.

Tony Dodd- Over the years Rob has been a vice president, thank you for the work you've done not only with the financials but with all the other behind the scenes aspects, it is much appreciated.

Financial Presentation: (Robert Papalia AFSM)

Key Financial Results:

Surplus of \$51,538 (2024: deficit of \$15,437)

Stable DFES grant funding & increased donations.

New 3-year DFES funding agreement (\$236,000 p.a., CPI indexed, 2026 \$243,080)

Total Revenue:	2025 \$349,431	vs	2024 \$300,308
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Total Expenses:	2025 \$297,893	vs	2024 \$315,745
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Surplus/(Deficit):	2025 \$51,538	vs	2024 \$(15,437)
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Net Assets:	2025 \$292,380	vs	2024 \$240,842
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Cash Reserves:	2025 \$240,949	vs	2024 \$278,909
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Revenue Breakdown:

DFES Grant :	\$236,000	(67%)
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Donations:	\$64,498	(18%)
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Merchandise Sales:	\$19,331	(6%)
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Affiliation Fees:	\$19,400	(6%)
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Other Income:	\$10,202	(3%)
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Expense Breakdown:

Employee Benefits:	\$150,912	(51%)
Executive Meetings Expenses:	\$32,837	(11%)
Merchandise Costs:	\$12,088	(4%)
Easter & Junior Championships:	\$5,800	(2%)
Motor Vehicle Costs:	\$9,415	(3%)
Depreciation:	\$2,042	(1%)
Other Admin & Program Costs:	\$85,000	(24.5%)
Audit Fees:	\$10,350	(3.5%)

Forecast Budget 2025-2026

Total Revenue:	\$287,880
Donations:	Unknown
Total Expenses:	(\$276,229)
Financial position:	\$11,651

6. Adoption of the BALANCE SHEET, STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS and AUDITOR'S REPORT for financial year ending 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2025
(circulated as part of the Annual report).

Moved: Manjimup

Seconded: Brunswick Junction

Carried.

Any financial questions please email Tim.

7. Declaration of Elections of Zone Delegates to the Executive Committee (For the period 2025 – 2027). Tim Sonsee

Elected in 2025 for a period of 2 years were:

- Central Wheatbelt Zone – Paul du Boulay
- Goldfields Zone – Trevor Jones
- Great Southern Zone – Rod Diery
- Metropolitan Zone – Tony Moiler AFSM
- North West Zone – Vaughan Price
- Northern Zone – Fran McAllen
- South West Zone – Tony Dodd AFSM

8. 2026 Championships/ Championships Update: (Paul Munro)

- Juniors for 2024 Mandurah as GF works not completed- Winners were Kambalda.
- Easter 2025 held in Bunbury, Kwinana and Oakford joined. Overall winners Harvey
- AGM- changes in committees, sent via email. Future of comp and review of the rules discussed.
- Multiple surveys, going out regarding the future of the competition. Hoping to have DFES send this directly to volunteers so it doesn't get stuck in brigade emails. Please encourage brigade members to fill out these surveys.

- Understand there are certain constraints, but training can occur at your usual training sessions without extra equipment.
- Holding off 2027 locations due to uncertainty of the works at Gilbert Fraser
- Juniors this year will be held at Mandurah.

9. Notices of Motion

Update the 2023 VFRSAWA Constitution:

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES ASSOCIATION OF WA (INC) 2023, 89. P.15 reads: Members who constitute at least fifty per cent (50%) of all voting members shall constitute a quorum for all Annual General Meetings and Special General Meetings be changed to:

Members who constitute at least 25% of all voting members shall constitute a quorum for all Annual General Meetings and Special General Meetings.

Rationale provided in notice of motion.

Moved: Brunswick
 Seconded: Laverton
 In favour: 46
 Carried.

10. Agenda Items – Raised by Brigades

Nil

11. VFRS Volunteer Advisory Committee (VAC)

Update provided by Amelia Fitzgerald (Chair of VFRS VAC)

Firstly, I'd like to acknowledge VAC members here this evening and thank them for their ongoing contribution to this committee. As Chair of the VAC I am privileged to lead a ministerial appointed group of dedicated volunteers who provide strategic, evidence-based advice to the Minister and the Commissioner. Our role is to represent the voices of our volunteers across WA, identify emerging challenges and influence decisions that strengthen emergency services volunteering. The VAC has had a slower start to 2025, primarily due to the state election and the constraints of caretaker mode and a couple of other issues that prevented us from formally meeting. Despite this, we've used the time to undertake consultation within the vac using our members extensive networks and knowledge to identify focus areas that will continue to informally support the direction of the committee further I've continued to meet with a range of volunteers and regularly touch base with Tony & Tim. Weve just been invited to participate in consultation sessions for the development of DFES Strategy 2025+, ensuring the volunteer perspective is well represented in that process. Our work continues to be driven by feedback from volunteers, and a key priority is re-engaging directly with brigades over the coming months. contacts for all vac members are available on the hub and will be circulated through the associations newsletter.

12. Executive Officer Update Tim Sonsee

- The Strategic Plan is available on the website. It looks at how do we continue to serve you as member brigades.
- Scholarships- WRO, allowed us to offer 7x \$1500 HR scholarships. This helps build capacity but also positively impacts the volunteers personal life and employability. AFAC scholarships. Engaging our youth and getting them inspired. Average age of volunteers is 48 across the state, oldest active member is 94. We received this sponsorship because we were able to show that we can get youth engaged in volunteering- it was a partnering in values.
- Wounded Heroes- provided initial and ongoing funding. Great opportunity to be a part of.
- Big focus presumptive coverage, how we support volunteers experiencing this and how we can make the process easier for volunteers. Health system is daunting enough without adding in the insurance system. Ensuring we have system coverage, so not specific bodily organ as cancer can occur anywhere.
- Thanks to Caitlin for her efforts over the last 12 months.

13. AGM Meeting closed at 1852.

14. General Business/Questions without Notice (not necessarily being answered on the day).

Denmark: Denmark incident; recent circular from DFES- safety/ fault reporting doesn't let you continue unless you submit a full safety report. Hoping the Association can liaise with DFES to change the process so we can give feedback without the prolonged process of lodging a full report. TS- have spoken with Ryan and they will be visiting brigades with this model of 3.4 so issues can be identified. Association is happy to be at those meetings just let us know.

DOs not being within regions- have been told to buy batteries from Coles and will be reimbursed but if no DO in the office who will approve. PPE orders aren't being approved because there's no one in the office.

PM- stationery and consumables can create a Coles account so it doesn't need approval by DO, just need to know your cost centre number (station number)

Busselton- concerns with EV, there are a lot on the road. The time we will spend and the resources we will need to control these fires is a lot and will be tying up the brigades. TD- will take to chief supers, Dave Gill is aware, unfortunately no quick processes.

Geraldton- Courses are being cancelled after being booked 4-6 months in advance due to trainer availability- TD happening in all zones, will likely get worse due to United Firefighters Union industrial action. We will continue to encourage brigades to get members trained as trainer/ assessors, but the Association will continue to push this.

Augusta- Specialty courses being cancelled, limiting brigade capabilities.

Northam- suggests to DFES to use QR codes to record defects like for they do for the Volvos.

Denmark- is there any possibility that if DFES can't provide the training can we source it privately e.g. RAC. TD- will take that up to chief supers.

TD- DFES need to provide the services that volunteers need to do the job.