



*NSW Rural
Fire Service
Awards
Ceremony
2006*

The NSW Rural Fire Service Awards

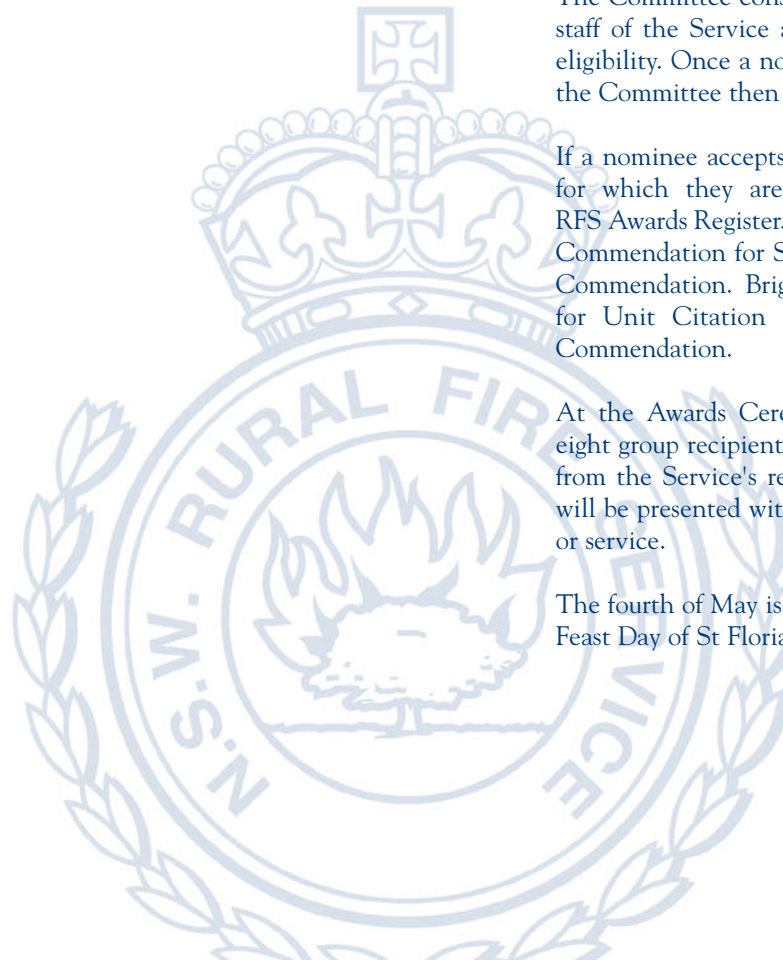
The Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service, in recognition of service and acts of bravery, has established an internal Awards System. The Awards were instituted on 1 February, 1999. The establishment of an internal Awards System is authorised under the *Rural Fires Act 1997* and accompanying Regulation. Eligibility for these Awards is extended to all members of the Service.

Nominations for Awards are sent to the Awards Assessment Committee. The Committee consists of representatives from the volunteers and salaried staff of the Service and is required to fully examine each nomination for eligibility. Once a nomination has been assessed and deemed to be eligible, the Committee then makes a formal recommendation to the Commissioner.

If a nominee accepts the nomination, full details of the incident or action for which they are being recognised are then officially listed in the RFS Awards Register. Individuals may be nominated for the Medal of Valour, Commendation for Service or Bravery or the Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation. Brigades or formally comprised units may be nominated for Unit Citation for either Bravery or Service, or a Certificate of Commendation.

At the Awards Ceremony on 4 May 2006, eight individual and twenty eight group recipients are to be acknowledged by the Commissioner. Drawn from the Service's regions and head office of the Service, these recipients will be presented with Awards in recognition of outstanding valour, bravery or service.

The fourth of May is chosen each year for the Awards Ceremony as it is the Feast Day of St Florian, Patron Saint of Firefighters.





The Order of Proceedings

Welcome to Guests

Commissioner Phil Koperberg AO AFSM BEM

Prayer

Senior Chaplain Ron Anderson AFSM

Presentation of Awards

Address

Commissioner Phil Koperberg

Recipients and their guests are invited to join the
Commissioner for a light lunch

*Official photographs of each recipient will be taken during
the presentation. Unit recipients can be photographed following
the conclusion of proceedings. Every recipient will receive a
complimentary photograph.*



The Commissioner's Commendation for Service

For service of a meritorious nature, or outstanding actions in relation to fire service duties, administrative leadership, or exemplary performance of a specific difficult project or task, not involving bravery.

Patrick Quinn

Ganmain RFB

On Saturday 5 November 2005 Senior Deputy Captain Patrick Quinn responded to a reported unit fire in Ganmain. Travelling to the Brigade Station he observed his sister's car parked outside the burning unit. Knowing that his sister was probably inside the unit Senior Deputy Captain Quinn conducted himself in an exemplary manner given the incredibly demanding circumstances. He put the interests of the community and his role as a firefighter ahead of his own. Following the suppression of the fire the bodies of two females were found inside the unit, one of whom was Senior Deputy Captain Quinn's sister. Through his selfless and professional actions Senior Deputy Captain Quinn brought great credit upon himself and the Service.

Graham Forward

Mountain Lagoon RFB

On Wednesday 11 January 2006 reports of an explosion and smoke in the vicinity of Mountain Lagoon Road were received by Brigade Captain Johnson who, after activating his Brigade and notifying the Fire Control Centre, together with Firefighter Graham Forward, went to investigate. They found an elderly lady collapsed on the road and not breathing. They began mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and brought the lady back to consciousness. Firefighter Forward remained with the lady providing comfort and shelter until the arrival of an ambulance fifty minutes later. The actions of Firefighter Forward contributed to the survival of the lady involved and brought great credit upon himself and the Service.

Barry Harvey

Group Officer Wollondilly

Barry Harvey joined the Cawdor Rural Fire Brigade in 1970. He successively held the positions of Deputy Captain, Senior Deputy Captain and Captain followed by Deputy Group Captain in 1991 and Group Captain in 2000, a position he held until retirement in April 2005. Apart from being available for local and out of area commitments, Barry's dedication and professionalism are evident in his continual involvement in other Service activities, such as the formation of the Rural Fire Service Association in the District, training the local teams for the State and Regional Field Days and in his membership of the Training Committee, Firefighter Health and Safety Committee and the Senior Management Team. Group Officer Harvey has shown outstanding involvement, dedication and leadership in the Wollondilly Rural Fire District.

Kenneth Lucas

HQ Fire Investigation Unit

Inspector Kenneth Lucas has been involved in the Service's fire investigation field since the mid 1990s and was instrumental in establishing the Central Region Fire Investigation role during his time as Deputy Fire Control Officer in Dubbo. Inspector Lucas attended numerous bush fires and completed investigations with little supportive framework. In 2004, he was appointed Fire Investigation Coordinator in Region West and since then he has devoted countless hours to Fire Investigation, not only in Region West, but throughout the State. Inspector Lucas has demonstrated exceptional service to Fire Investigation and he remains committed to furthering the role of Fire Investigation across the State.



The Commissioner's Certificate for Commendation

For service or outstanding actions in relation to fire service duties, administrative leadership, or exemplary performance of a specific difficult project or task.

Robert Vinzenz Glenbrook/Lapstone RFB

Inspector Robert Vinzenz joined the Service as a volunteer in May 1985. He has held numerous volunteer and staff positions within Glenbrook / Lapstone Rural Fire Brigade, Headquarters and the Blue Mountains District Office where he currently holds the position of Learning and Development Officer. Throughout his career he has consistently demonstrated an exemplary work ethic while also setting and achieving very high personal standards of behaviour and output. He is highly regarded throughout the Service for his commitment to his role and his desire to see the Service as a world-class fire service. His commitment to the Service is far beyond the normal expectations of his position.

Leigh Pinington HQ Committees and Awards Section

Leigh Pinington joined the Service in 1998 and for the past seven years has provided a high level of administrative support to the Bush Fire Coordinating Committee, Rural Fire Service Advisory Council, Fire Services Joint Standing Committee, Corporate Executive Group, Rural Fire Service and Local Government Liaison Committee, Rural Fire Service Awards Committee and to the Executive Officer. Leigh brings great credit upon herself and to the Service in the manner in which she carries out her duties and in doing so continually demonstrates her leadership, management and administrative skills as well as her considerable potential.

Olivia Carter Hornsby RFB

Olivia Carter was the Captain of Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai Catering Brigade from 2000-2005 and was the driving force behind the replacement of the catering unit. During her tenure as Captain, Olivia strongly influenced Brigade directions with regard to the type and quality of food provided and increased the focus on providing food which sustains energy and the ability to concentrate on tasks. The functional capacity of the Brigade has strengthened under her leadership. Captain Carter was the driving force behind the development of a new vehicle to ensure a higher standard of food safety and this is testament to her commitment not only to the Hornsby/Ku-ring-gai Catering Brigade but also to the Service.

Barry Whalan Eulomogo RFB

Barry Whalan has been a member of the Service since 1975 and for the past seven years has devoted a significant amount of time to organising the Community Education and Information display at the Dubbo Show. Firefighter Whalan has a reputation in the District for his specially built exhibitions that he uses for promotion and display. Firefighter Whalan is a qualified instructor and has been active in many facets of training within the District. He is a man who is passionate about the Service and his service to the community. Firefighter Whalan is a well respected member of the Service within the District and his devotion and support within the Eulomogo Rural Fire Brigade serves as a fine example to other Brigade and Service members.



The Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation

For service or outstanding actions in relation to fire service duties, administrative leadership, or exemplary performance of a specific difficult project or task.

Gosford Rural Fire District

Gosford HQ

Gosford Fire Control Centre

Narara RFB

Mooney Mooney RFB

Matcham/Holgate RFB

Mangrove Mountain RFB

MacMasters Beach RFB

Killcare/Wagstaff RFB

Kendall RFB

Kariong RFB

Communications Brigade

Copacabana RFB

Calga/Mt White RFB

Brisbane Waters RFB

Bar Point RFB

Avoca Beach RFB

Gosford Rural Fire District (continued)

Wendoree RFB

Wamberal RFB

The Bays RFB

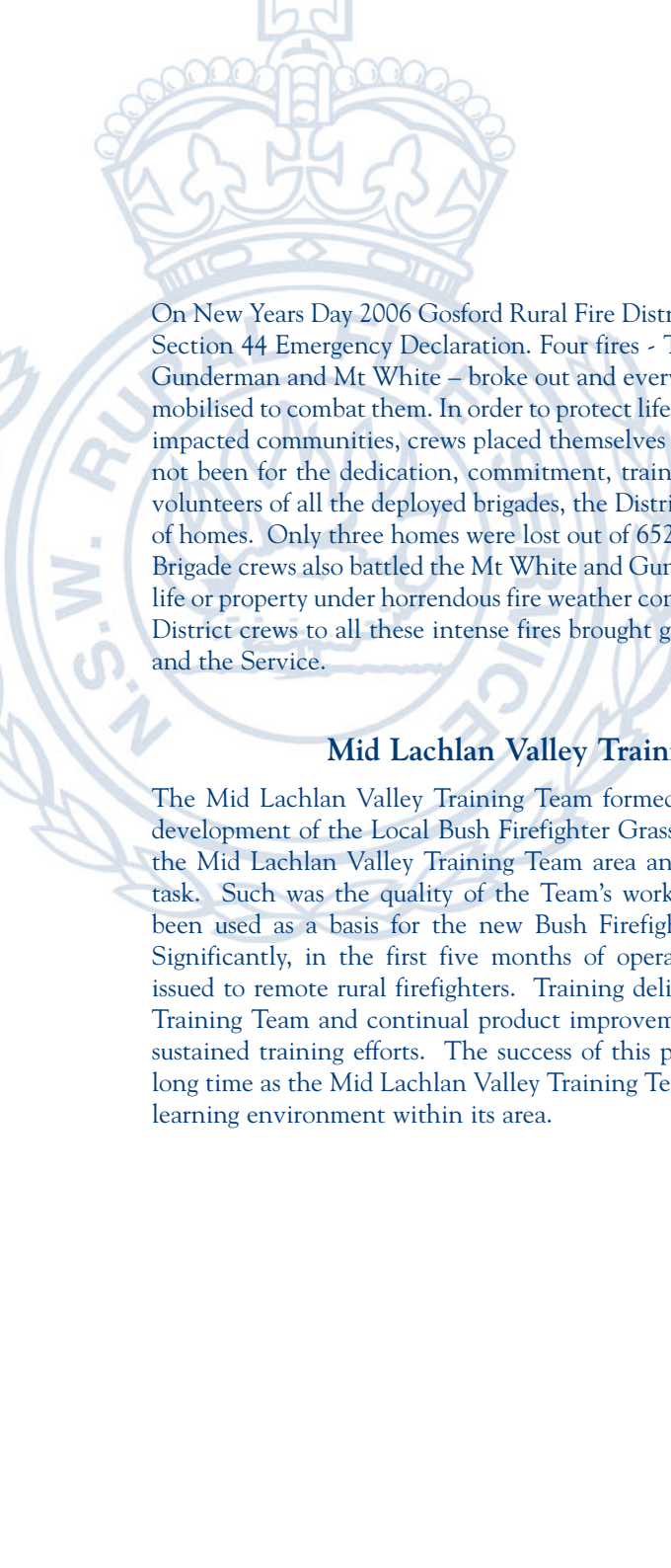
Spencer RFB

Somersby RFB

Pearl Beach RFB

Patonga Beach RFB

Empire Bay RFB



On New Years Day 2006 Gosford Rural Fire District was under a pre-emptive Section 44 Emergency Declaration. Four fires - The Quarry, Alison Point 2, Gunderman and Mt White – broke out and every brigade in the District was mobilised to combat them. In order to protect life and property within the fire impacted communities, crews placed themselves at considerable risk. Had it not been for the dedication, commitment, training and self sacrifice of the volunteers of all the deployed brigades, the District could have lost hundreds of homes. Only three homes were lost out of 652 that were impacted by fire. Brigade crews also battled the Mt White and Gunderman fires without loss of life or property under horrendous fire weather conditions. The response of all District crews to all these intense fires brought great credit upon themselves and the Service.

Mid Lachlan Valley Training Team

The Mid Lachlan Valley Training Team formed the working group in the development of the Local Bush Firefighter Grassland package in use within the Mid Lachlan Valley Training Team area and devoted many hours this task. Such was the quality of the Team's work much of this package has been used as a basis for the new Bush Firefighter Grasslands Workbook. Significantly, in the first five months of operation, 170 certificates were issued to remote rural firefighters. Training delivery was carried out by the Training Team and continual product improvement has resulted from their sustained training efforts. The success of this project will be evident for a long time as the Mid Lachlan Valley Training Team continues to change the learning environment within its area.



The Commissioner's Unit Citation for Service

For crews, brigades, groups or organised Units to recognise outstanding service of a meritorious nature, such as group actions in relation to fire service duties, group work performance, or other outstanding or meritorious service not involving bravery.

Coonabarabran Fringe Rural Fire Brigade Castlereagh Zone:

**Paul Devinish
Stuart Green
Bob Lines
David McWhirter
Nathan Beer**

On Saturday 19 April 2003 Coonabarabran Fringe Rural Fire Brigade was responded to assist the NSW Fire Brigades with a structure fire at Brains Ford Dealership. After being tasked by the NSW Fire Brigades, within minutes the crew noticed that four gas bottles attached to the panel beating spray booth were being impinged upon by fire and the decision was taken to remove them. Only one member of the crew was trained as a village firefighter and he gave a quick briefing to his colleagues on what to do. The gas bottles were removed without incident or injury as were three vehicles, despite a series of minor explosions emanating from the building. The crew displayed extraordinary effort and commitment in fighting a fire of such magnitude and displayed a truly professional manner while facing great danger, fear and emotion.



Nominations

Nominations must be lodged on the prescribed nomination forms. Nomination forms are available from Fire Control Centres, Regional Offices and the Headquarters of the NSW Rural Fire Service.

The nomination sequence encompasses all levels of management or command. For example in the case of a nomination being generated by a brigade, the captain of the brigade must endorse the nomination form. The nomination must be forwarded to the next level of command, being the Zone/Team/District Manager who must also endorse the nomination and then forward it to the Regional Manager. This final nomination endorsement allows the form to be sent to the Awards Committee for evaluation and recommendation to the Commissioner. If a nomination is not endorsed full details are forwarded to the Assessment Committee by the officer responsible.

All nominations are held in strict confidence. Nominees are advised once a nomination has been approved, though at no time is the nominee advised of the origin of this recommendation

St Florian's Feast Day, the Fourth of May

Firefighters in most European countries celebrate 4 May as St Florian's Feast Day as well as International Fire Service Day. This has been a tradition in central Europe for more than 150 years.

Born about 250AD in Cetium (now in Austria), Florian joined the Roman army and angered the Emperor Diocletian when he refused to persecute Christians in the area. Florian gave himself up to the soldiers of Aquilinus, the governor, when they were rounding up the Christians. He was twice scourged, half-flayed alive and sentenced to be burnt alive. While being set on fire he challenged the Roman soldiers to light the fire, saying "If you do, I will climb to heaven on the flames". As the soldiers were apprehensive, they took another path and threw Florian into the river Enns with a stone around his neck.

About 600 years later, in approximately 900-950AD a monastery was built near Florian's tomb, and the village of St Florian grew around it. St Florian was adopted as the Patron Saint of Poland, following an incident when a person was saved from a fire by invoking St Florian's name. Since then, Florian has been invoked against fire and has been generally regarded in most countries as the Patron Saint of Firefighters.

St Florian's Day
4 May 2006
Headquarters, NSW Rural Fire Service
15 Carter Street, Homebush Bay