

# Colinton Courier

Newsletter of the Colinton Rural Fire Brigade \* No 155\* October 2014



**Bravo** attends a safe landing at Baroona Road (note damage to rudder, cockpit and wing)

## **Committee 2014-2015:**

**Fire Captain:** Graham Povey  
**Senior Deputy:** Nick Goldie  
**Deputies:** Bob Morison, Jeremy Mears, Michael Burton, Barry Woolacott  
**President:** Michael Burton  
**Secretary:** Sandra Lauer  
**Treasurer:** Bob Morison  
**Training Officer:** Jeremy Mears  
**Equipment Officers:** Michael Burton, Karl Higgins  
**Community Awareness:** Nick Goldie  
**Fundraising:** Gill Robinson  
**Permits:** Graham Povey

**NSW RFSA Delegate:** Jeremy Mears

## **Call out:**

On the evening of *Saturday 20 September*, bird-watchers Sandra and Jeremy were investigating a sighting of herons on Baroona Dam, when a light plane flew over, apparently attempted to

land on the grass airstrip beside the Highway, clipped the overhead power lines, and managed to get to the ground safely. The broken power lines ignited a small grass fire, but fortunately the paddock was recently ploughed and there was little fuel. *Bravo* (Graham) and *Alpha* (Nick) were quickly on scene, with Sandra, Jeremy and Michael already there.

The pilot, not a local, was shaken but unharmed, and extremely lucky: impact with the power line had stripped the cockpit from the fuselage and damaged one wing and the rudder. As well as the two Colinton trucks, the incident was attended by two ambulances and two police cars. The area to the west of the Highway suffered a power black-out for some hours.

At around 2100 on *Tuesday 31 September*, there was a pager call for a structural fire – a barbecue igniting a

house wall, near Colinton . *Bravo* was quickly on scene, and Graham was able to use the new infra-red camera to determine that the fire had been extinguished. *Alpha* (Jeremy, Nick) was en route, but was stood down before leaving Baroona Road.

Brigade members have been involved in a number of agricultural (love-grass) burns in the past month. 

### **Drones and RPAs:**

CASA, the Civil Aviation Safety Authority has enough to worry about without an infestation of drones, otherwise known as RPAs – Remotely Piloted Aircraft. If it's a recreational flying machine, it's simply a model aircraft. If it used for commercial or scientific purposes, it becomes an RPA, and these are becoming quite common. CASA has issued a leaflet with the title DON'T GO THERE, warning operators of RPAs, drones, and anything else that is remotely controlled to stay away from bushfires. Even a toy multi-rotor could be a threat to a low-flying fire-fighting aircraft. Don't go there. 

### **Motor Vehicle Accidents and Police:**

NSW Police have released new (15 October) guidelines in a flyer "*What to Do After a Car Crash*". It is in the form of a flow-chart, with a series of yes/no questions and answers. The preamble says: *To help reduce danger to road users and manage crashes more efficiently, you may no longer have to wait for police at a crash site in NSW.*

You are advised to call Triple Zero (000) if someone is trapped or injured, if police are needed to deal with traffic or hazards, if alcohol or drugs are involved, or if a truck or bus needs to be towed.

For details see:

[http://www.police.nsw.gov.au/community\\_issues/road\\_safety/crash\\_reporting\\_faqs3](http://www.police.nsw.gov.au/community_issues/road_safety/crash_reporting_faqs3) 

### **Colinton Driver Reviver:**

*In 2014 it was decided that the Colinton Driver Reviver would be staffed entirely by volunteers from the Colinton Rural Fire Brigade. Brigade President Michael sent us this report:*

"The October long weekend saw the close of the winter season and so the Driver Reviver at the Colinton rest area ended for another year.

"It was another successful year with some 2300 cups of tea, coffee or hot chocolate being served from the Easter weekend until the close and I'm sure more people stopped at the rest area and didn't accept the invitation of a cuppa. The Brigade is very appreciative of the kind donations and these will go to some worthwhile items.



*Driver Reviver: Andrew and Eliška*

"Volunteers reported a high percentage of visitors to the Driver Reviver shed were from interstate (even Perth and the Gold Coast) and mainly consisted of young couples and families who had never seen

snow before, but there was a sprinkling of regular visitors.

“One visitor told a story to the volunteers of wanting to hike to Mt Kosciusko and when they asked for snow shoes (very large cane looking planks attached to your boots) at Perisher Valley, they were provided with rubber boots.

“Many of the interstate visitors remarked how far away the snow fields are from Sydney and that this rest stop was in the perfect location and that the volunteers were always friendly and helpful.

“A very big thank you to all the volunteers for your time this year. If it wasn't for you this important event wouldn't proceed.”

### **Fire fighters and the law:**

*(adapted from The Age)*

The Victorian Country Fire Authority is facing a landmark lawsuit over operational failures at the height of the Black Saturday bushfires, with a severely traumatised firefighter launching a civil claim for damages.

The former firefighter has been battling post-traumatic stress, leaving him "totally incapacitated", after his crew was sent into a bushfire deathtrap in Kinglake West with no forewarning from CFA controllers about the fast-approaching firestorm.

On the afternoon of Australia's worst-ever bushfire emergency on February 7, 2009, local CFA members were directed to respond to smoke sighted on Coombs Road, Kinglake West - a rugged, no-through road that was soon engulfed by the deadliest Black Saturday blaze.

The Kilmore-to-Kinglake fire killed 119 people and destroyed 1242 homes. Six people died on Coombs Road alone.

The firefighters became trapped on the road, lost their water supply and were

forced to bunker down in a house when the fire tore through.

Once fighting the spot-fires, the crews experienced radio congestion and radio failure, virtually losing all communications links, and did not receive a "red flag" warning of an impending wind change, according to the CFA's report.

The CFA is also accused of failing to provide adequate communications equipment despite prior complaints by crew members.

"There was no information whatsoever. We only knew what we could ascertain from the CFA website and ABC Radio," said a crew member.

Kinglake crews had repeatedly raised the issue of the radio black spots in the area to management, but a CFA operations officer said the CFA was "not prepared to spend any further money on the existing communications infrastructure" ahead of the transition to a digital network. But the estimated timeframe for the digital switch was more than five years.

### **Membership:**

Membership: please pay by cash at training, or cheque to The Treasurer, Colinton Rural Fire Brigade, PO Box 4829, Kingston ACT 2604.

Membership fees: \$20.00 for adults, \$5.00 for juniors. Donations are always welcome. Please provide a return address so a receipt can be mailed to you.

### **Training:**

The Colinton Brigade conducts training every month on the second Saturday, at 2 pm at the Station at Colinton. Everyone is welcome.

***If possible, crews are asked to arrive at 1330 (1.30 pm) to check the trucks before training.***



Items for **The Colinton Courier** to Nick Goldie at  
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 necessarily those of the editor, the Brigade, or the  
 RFS.



Your Local Painter

**Bob Davis**

0408 697 070

Have Brush will Travel



***The Bushfire Danger  
 Season  
 started on***

***Wednesday 1  
 October.***

***NO FIRES***

***may be lit without a  
 permit.***

***All permits are  
 revoked  
 on days when  
 there is a***

***Total Fire Ban.***



***Essential numbers  
 Emergency 000***

***Fire:  
 Cooma Monaro Fire Control  
 (24 hrs)  
 1 300 722 164  
 02-6455 0455***

***Fire:  
 Captain and Permit Officer:  
 Graham Povey  
 02-6454 4150  
 0419 406 908***

