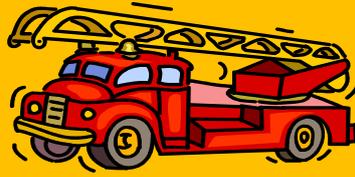


~THE BRIGADE BULLETIN~

No. 10, 30 September, 2014

An occasional newsletter from the Michelago Rural Fire Brigade



ACE report, September training, next training, thanks to Anna, welcome to new members, seasonal bushfire outlook, Xmas bbq and T-Tree fire, Bunnings bbq success, Executive highlights

ACE – Aviation, Communication, Evaluation

Photos: Brent Wallis



A firebomber drops red gel fire-retardant, used for making containment lines in the bush. Pilot skill determines that it's dropped in a straight line. Planes are firebombers. Helicopters are firebirds.

ACE workshop report

Captain Brent Wallis and Deputy Captain Derek Gucci had a full-on learning experience at the recent one-day ACE workshop near Mogo (not Moruya and Wagga, as stated in the last *Bulletin* – there was actually one course, run four times for different participants each time). Brent said it was ‘a blast’ and would like more crews to go to workshops like this one.

In summary, they learnt to use aircraft more effectively in fire-fighting. This includes knowing about the different types of aircraft, assessing the need for them, the specific language or jargon used between ground and air crews, types of retardants, coverage of retardants on different types of ground cover, and how to direct pilots to drop lines of retardants.

Getting the timing right when directing firebomber pilots where to drop lines of retardant was particularly challenging, given the speed of the planes and the 3-second time lag on the radio.



Left: a Firebird 264 drops fire-retardant white gel as directed by Derek.

White gel is dropped directly on a fire, while the red gel is for containment lines (see photo on page 1), although which gel is used can depend on different levels of cover and types of grass.

Below: Derek assesses the firebird foam-drop he directed.



Left: it's a bird, it's a plane ... it's a fixed-wing firebomber doing a dummy run for trainees to judge the timing.



There are now over 900 ACE-trained firefighters in NSW.

Right: a real run, with the foam being dropped in the required straight line.

The red hats are captains, the orange are group captains, and the white could be either.

Below: misting from the white gel on the grass and the red gel through the bush, both after the drops from the aircraft.



September training

Photos: Kat Stone

The exercise: an MVA into a farm shed; the shed has asbestos in it; the shed's alight. We covered firefighter issues (like high air-release, wind direction), equipment, initial procedures (e.g. assess structure, inform emergency agencies, request NSWFB HAZMAT Appliance, wear P2-level mask, close truck), establishing a decontamination area (away from hot area and upwind of incident), post-procedures (on-site and off-site, including advising DTZ of contaminated clothing), the decontamination process (e.g. establish a wash-down area, dry off with paper towel, bag waste clothing), and moving to a safe area. First priority: decontamination of firefighters. Second priority: decontamination of equipment.





Next training

October training will be at 11 am on Sunday 12th, the second weekend of the month because the first weekend is a long one with the Labour Day Monday. Aldo will be away, so Brent will take training.

Thank you, Anna



Our super secretary, Anna Bunston, has found she must resign from the position because of the demands of all her commitments. As well as managing her young family and working, she is President of the Michelago School's P&C. We deeply appreciate all her hard work, her positive attitude and her good cheer. Thanks, Anna!

Anna, pictured here taking the minutes at a Brigade Executive Committee meeting, has given sterling volunteer service for two and a half years. She hopes to still be available to help out from time to time.

If any of our members feel they could nominate for the position of secretary at the next AGM, please contact Brent or Leanne.

Have you paid your \$5 June 2014—June 2015 membership of the Michelago Brigade? If not, please leave it at the shop in an envelope marked with your name, phone and address, and addressed to The Treasurer, MRFB. We'll get a receipt to you.

Hello to new RFS members!

A big welcome to **Kat Stone**, **Natarsha Carney** and **Matthew Shipman**, all of whom already have a presence at training.



You can view the *Brigade Bulletins* # 1—7 on the Michelago Fire Brigade link at www.michelagoregion.org.au

Changed any of your contact details?

If you're on a callout list, please tell Bronwyn: 0407 943 245 / bronnygatts@bigpond.com.au
Please also tell the Vice President of phone, email or address changes: LPatt@internode.on.net

Heads-up for Christmas BBQ

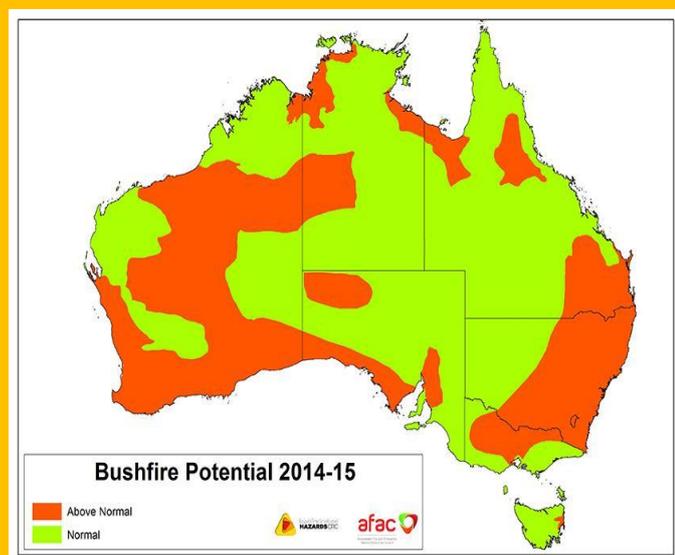
The Executive is planning to have the family Christmas BBQ in early December and to invite brigades with whom Michelago worked on the Ti-Tree Fire in 2009. Michelago will supply the food. More details later.

Seasonal Bushfire Outlook 2014—2015

The \$130 million Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (BNHCRC) draws together all of Australia and New Zealand's fire and emergency service authorities with leading experts across a range of scientific fields to explore the causes, consequences and mitigation of natural disasters.

Its research 'is used by fire authorities to make strategic decisions on resource planning and prescribed fire management for the upcoming fire season'.

Bearing in mind that the concept of a 'normal' or 'average' fire season 'becomes less meaningful as historical long-term averages are surpassed by fire seasons that are regularly above average in duration, area burnt or in the total number of fires', the BNHCRC expects the coming season to have 'above normal' bushfire risk.



Read all about it – right-click on this web address, then left-click 'open hyperlink', or copy and paste it into your browser address window:

www.bnhcrc.com.au

Once there, click on 'Southern Australia Seasonal Bushfire Outlook 2014—2015'.

The link covers the forecasting factors in some detail and has regional summaries.

The material in this item has been copied from the BNHCRC website. *Thanks to Aldo for information about it.*

Fund-raising ideas? If you have any practical ones, apart from BBQs, email it to Leanne (address at end).

Bunnings fundraising BBQ on 12/9 a success

It was an excellent day for weather and for lots of hungry Bunnings shoppers to buy our food. We made just over \$2,000.00 profit. The preparation and all-day hard work of the catering crew, with some rostered helpers, ensured an efficient operation. Thank you also to Secretary Anna for organising it with Bunnings and to Treasurer Brien for the prompt financial report. Some photos of the day should be in the next *Bulletin*.

Executive highlights

Three items from the 5 September Executive Committee meeting:

1. The RFS has developed a long-sleeved, yellow, cotton drill shirt. It's 'breathable', so is good for wearing under PPE. Chris Allen says that because of local budget considerations the Monaro RFS will prioritise supply to field officers and new members until the budget is exhausted. A list is being created at Cooma FCC for any person who wishes to obtain a shirt. This process will be carried out over a number of years until the Monaro team meets requirements. So, although Brent and the rest of the Committee would like the Brigade to get the shirts for other active members, availability is uncertain at the moment. More news when we have it.
2. Some of you have wondered why there was none of the 'real fire' promised for the Captain's Run training and no gas-bottle demo at the Mayfair. There are new regulations. We hope to clarify them with Tim Ingram and bring you details in the next issue.
3. The catering officers will purchase some tools to assist with cooking and cleaning up after using the barbeque and with storage: an urn for hot water, a wash tub, some new utensils and a rodent-proof cupboard. One of the barbeque burners needs to be repaired.
4. Abby McPherson agreed to be co-opted to the EC. Thank you, Abby.

The 2014—2015 Committee

Captain: Brent Wallis (0418 680 205) **Senior Deputy Captain:** Duncan McNeill
Deputy Captains: Derek Gucci, James Byrne, Keith Howker, Alex Milovanovic
Callout Officers: Bronwyn Gattringer, Abby McPherson
Equipment Officers: Derek Gucci, William Stone
Catering Officers: Lauren Wallis, Abby McPherson, Bronwyn Gattringer, Alex Milovanovic
RFSA Rep: William Stone **Training Officers:** Aldo Gucci, Duncan McNeill
Equipment Officers: Derek Gucci, William Stone, Tim Haines
Engine Keepers: Steve Haines, Tim Haines
Safety Officer: Richard Stone
Permit Officers: Brent Wallis, Duncan McNeill
Treasurer: Brien Hallett
President: David Gattringer
Vice President/Acting Secretary: Leanne Pattison
Co-opted Executive Committee member 5/9/2014: Abby McPherson
Auditor: Dave Bunston

Executive Committee Officer positions: Captain, Snr Deputy Captain, President, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President

From the editor Do you have any newsletter feedback, news items and/or photos? Please email them: LPatt@internode.on.net

Disclaimer: views expressed or implied in this bulletin are not necessarily those of the MRFB Committee, wider Brigade membership or the RFS.

Fire Cooma Monaro Fire Control (24 hrs) 1300 722 164 / 02 6455 0455 Emergency 000

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