

COMMISSIONER'S FOREWORD



Fire and Emergency Services
Commissioner
Darren Klemm AFSM

I am pleased to present the Department of Fire and Emergency Services' (DFES) 2017-18 Annual Report which details our performance and highlights our commitment to working to build a safer Western Australia.

The last 12 months have been busy with considerable change and opportunity for DFES which has largely been driven by Machinery of Government reform. Whilst this process has meant some uncertainty for staff due to a resulting organisational restructure, they have acted professionally and admirably continuing to build the resilience of the community and maintain a focus on the protection of life, property and the environment.

I am in fact, particularly proud of DFES' ability to adapt and evolve in response to the changing priorities of our many stakeholders.

Their dedication to serving the community and collaborating with other agencies is confirmed in this report through examples of saving lives, preparing and training for emergency and disaster events as well as implementing new technologies and equipment used to enhance our emergency communication and response capabilities.

An exciting outcome of the recent changes that have occurred within DFES has been the establishment of the Rural Fire Division. This new division meets the intention of the Waroona Bushfire Special Inquiry by bringing together the many aspects of rural fire management and creating a greater focus on the input of the State's volunteers and strengthening collaborative efforts.

A significant development under the Rural Fire Division will be the creation of a Bushfire Centre of Excellence. The centre will focus on best practice and develop bushfire policy in collaboration with volunteers and bushfire science researchers and practitioners. It will become a centre for volunteers and broader bushfire communities to learn from each other and from the science of bushfire management.

In addition, we have been working closely with the [Office of Emergency Management](#) (OEM), preparing for amalgamation effective from 1 July 2018. The integration of OEM into DFES will bring a greater depth and breadth of knowledge of the hazards that may impact the State and an enhanced capability to the State's emergency services. Our revised structure has accommodated for OEM and we look forward to welcoming them to the organisation and providing support to the State Emergency Management Committee.

With all the changes that have occurred, my priority over the last six months has been to communicate to staff, as well as put into place a greater emphasis on volunteer engagement.

In part, to achieve this the Minister for Emergency Services, Hon. Francis Logan and I have travelled across the State talking and listening to our volunteer and career workforce and regional communities. This has been a valuable experience for me to connect with people and better understand their concerns and priorities.

During 2017-18 we have been committed to inclusiveness and diversity as we continue to strive to reflect the communities we serve. We have commenced a review of our governance arrangements and developed strategies dedicated to enhancing our workplace culture. Our intent remains on improving our organisation and building a modern inclusive and future ready emergency management agency.

On a personal note, it has been a tremendous privilege to lead and represent so many outstanding people. In reflecting on the first nine months of my tenure as Commissioner, I would like to thank the Minister for Emergency Services, Hon. Francis Logan and his staff for their support.

I would also importantly like to acknowledge the efforts, diligence and commitment of the Corporate Leadership Team and hard work and dedication of all staff and volunteers who have contributed to the success of this year.

The future for DFES is bright, and I look forward to working together to make a safer State as we step into a new year.