

MEDIA STATEMENT



Murray Cowper MLA

Shadow Minister for Employment Protection;
Emergency Services
Member for Murray

6 May 2008

Rescue Volunteers Praised During National Volunteer Week

Murray Cowper MLA recently congratulated North Dandalup Bush Fire Brigade Volunteers for their commitment to their community with their involvement in the local bush fire brigade. Mr Cowper has sent Certificates of Appreciation to all Bush Fire, Emergency Service and Volunteer Fire Rescue volunteers, and other volunteer groups in the region such as K9 Dog Rescue for the much-needed work they contribute to the community free of charge.

Mr Cowper said that some volunteers committed and risked their lives and some in country areas were still unaware that volunteers looked after the fire trucks and ambulance services.

“Active volunteers are completely stretched to the limit, they usually need to negotiate with employers for time off in emergency situations, and some may even go without pay due to their commitment to emergency services,” he said.

Mr Cowper continues to argue for the rights of volunteer emergency services, pressing the State Government for more funding for training, equipment, recruitment and retention of volunteers.

However Mr Cowper is concerned with dwindling numbers as current volunteers move towards retirement.

He says that many young people are unaware of the great training benefits and opportunities to contribute to the community through being part of a volunteer emergency services team.

“If I can encourage just one young volunteer to sign up to an emergency service team during National Volunteer Week, I will be extremely grateful.”

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Photo : Murray Cowper with Bush Fire Brigade Volunteers (L –R) : Coolup volunteer Jim Neumann, North Dandalup Volunteers Peter and Julie Thurkle, and Deputy Murray Shire President and West Murray Volunteer Chris Thompson.

