



# NSW Rural Fire Service Blue Mountains Group Support Brigade September Newsletter 2024



## From the President

It is exciting to know that our grant application has been successful, and we will be customising our shed to better suit brigade needs and provide a space where we can truly call our space. Now we also have a room that we can use to store our records, with our own lockers and a new sign on our shed - Blue Mountains Group Support is finally on the District map!

From an administrative angle, life membership changes will need to be incorporated into a brigade rule, so more work still needs to be done.

Roza Sage  
President



Congratulations to Peter McMahon who had his National Medal Clasp presented to him at the August General Meeting.

## Captain's News

Congratulations to Robert Vinzenz on being offered the Blue Mountains District manager's role. Well-deserved and we look forward to working with him.

In this issue are outlines of the process for the upgrade of the GSB Shed. We received notice in recent weeks of having the full cost of our application being approved. Detail of the grant application can be found in the GSB members area in documents. Once we are advised of the procedure we need to follow, work will commence.

## General Meeting Dates

October 20, 2024

December 8, 2024

### 2025 Meetings

February 16, 2025

April 13, 2025

AGM June 15, 2025

August 17, 2025

October 19, 2025

December 14, 2025

## Executive Meeting Dates

September 5, 2024

November 7, 2024

January 23, 2025

March 6, 2025

May 1, 2025

1. GSB Newsletter Reports / Photos can be sent to the Secretary at [gbbbluemountains@gmail.com](mailto:gbbbluemountains@gmail.com)



ICC roster for OCTOBER is now online and as evidenced in recent HR crewing, we all need to freshen up our skills. So now is a good time. We will try and do Bravo days whenever we can and if you find the day you wish to do is full, let us know and we will try and fit in.

One thing we all need to get familiar with is the use of RFSActiv for noting call outs and your availability.

Ian Mann  
Captain

## \$50 000 Federal Grant Breakdown

Our grant application was successful and can be viewed on the Brigade website in Documents.

Tracking of fund expenditure will be managed by the State and our Treasurer.



**STEP 1:** will be to have the affected storage racks emptied (GSB task), professionally moved and securely reinstalled (company booked) and then repacked (GSB task).

EMPTY ➡ MOVE RACKS ➡ REINSTALL RACKS ➡ REPACK THE STORAGE RACKS

By doing this we will clear the space required for the construction of the floor to ceiling dividing wall.

**STEP 2:** Building firm, electrician for filtration system and the air conditioning company can all work on their sections of the project. GSB old cupboards need to have documents culled and some to go to the new Workspace in old Ops rooms. Cupboards then moved for wall construction (GSB task).

CUPBOARDS SORTED + NEW WALL INSTALLED + AIR FILTRATION SYSTEM INSTALLED  
+ AIR CONDITIONING SPLIT SYSTEMS INSTALLED

**STEP 3:** Interior shed improvements with a new modular sink and upright freezer being purchased and installed. New stackable chairs supplied.

CABINET DOUBLE SINK INSTALLED + UPRIGHT 3 DOOR FREEZER and CHAIRS PURCHASED

**STEP 4:** Financial accountability process will no doubt be required by the Federal Government.

## Join the Support Brigade Network of NSW

This is a network group for members from all Support, Catering, Logistics, Aviation and Communication brigades across NSW. It was formed following the Support Brigade Forum of 2023 and is starting to collect and share resources between brigades.

To join simply email Merv Lawrence or Paula Neill.

**Support Brigade Network Administrator** [mervynlawrence-vol@rfs.nsw.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mervynlawrence-vol@rfs.nsw.nsw.gov.au)

**Tech Manager** [Paulaneill-vol@rfs.nsw.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Paulaneill-vol@rfs.nsw.nsw.gov.au)

## New Group Support Brigade Room

The executive committee are asking members to work with us as we trial the following:

1. **Swipe card system** to get into our new brigade space:
  - All elected positions will come with a swipe card and alarm code
  - Supervisors have access already
  - Any additional swipe cards have been allocated based on operational activity needs
2. **Lockers** have been labelled based on operational positions:
  - Captain, SDC, DCs, Supervisors and 8 crew members
  - Eight crew member lockers are available for any member when they are working on site in any capacity
  - President locker has been included as a sign of respect for the role
3. **Cupboard storage** of documents is being allocated. Requests for storage have been:
  - Archival Matters
  - Brigade documents
  - Stationery
  - Training documents
  - Treasurer documents
  - Aviation equipment and documents
  - Catering documents and equipment
  - WHS documents
  - Community Engagement

Any further storage space requests should be passed on to the Captain or Senior Deputy Captain.

**Note: Requests and or changes to be considered** once we settle in and see how everything fits:

1. Two lounge style chairs and small coffee table
2. Taller cupboards if items in the shed fill up existing low cupboards
3. Ramona indicated the tall cupboard, by the entry, may become available

Additional Note: The sign on book in the room is to provide data on how members are using the space so please fill it in when you visit, have a meeting, use the computer terminal space with your laptop, train members on 365 on their device etc. Any activity recorded helps the Executive to evaluate the needs of our members.

## Bush Fire Information Line

Many of our members can fill this important role. Our ICC responsibilities would always come first but it is great experience manning the phones in the BFIL.

*“Memo from the Director State Operations – Assistant Commissioner Viki Campbell in reference to an Expression Of Interest (EOI) for interested members who may be available to assist with Bush Fire Information Line (BFIL) duties over the forthcoming fire season.*

*If interested and available, please submit your EOI via the online link contained in the memo by 17:00hrs, Monday 7 October 2024.”*

EOI via our online form <https://forms.office.com/r/Phhx62rC8T>

## Non-Fire Season Training 2024

### Recent Special Training Events:

- Advancing your Keyboard Skills with Peter Horn July 21st - 11 in attendance.
- Lighting and VMS Trailers with Patrick Leonard and John Brell August 3rd - 8 in attendance.



## Bravo Days and the Roster

Following a request from Blue Mountain Group Officers for Bravo channel use as a training opportunity, we grabbed and offered the three shifts we had up for July and August. The July was with only one week's notice to all brigades, so they unfortunately had no radio calls. They did train however on other Comms areas.

The August 10 Bravo Day was just as quiet, so we improved some training scenarios and practised some CAD tasks.

The August 25 Bravo Day had a scenario tasking from Katoomba/Leura and some call from trainees in South Katoomba. It was a good practice day for everyone who was involved.

Some September shifts may also be used to offer Bravo to the district.

Next year we could offer to provide a GSB Bravo crew in the ICC when Blue Mts training events require the presenters to work with the candidates on the use of radios. Courses such as BF and Crew Leader.

## Hazard Reductions are happening!

All districts are endeavouring to get in some HRs before the season becomes too busy. District staff have been requesting 2 x GSB members to support the events in the ICC. CAD operators and General operators are able to manage the workload required in a HR. We just need to link up 2 members who are comfortable to:

1. Switch across to the Bravo Channel (number 2 on the omnitratics)
2. Use CAD PRD to type in all radio conversations in the planned and created Incident Event.
3. Phone the OCC when fire is on the ground.

4. Add information into ICON. E.g. Record Situation Report (1000hr and 1600hrs as well as light up etc) the main aspects of the event. Attach any documents requested by staff (they can show you how to do this).
5. Record radio conversations into CAD as a SitRep so they automatically populate the set-up ICON.
6. Once the HR is underway the majority of work is hourly when a sitrep is provided.

**District creates events for HRs. If no event in CAD is coming up as the time draws near, ask the staff to make sure the scheduled event is activated for you.**

**ICON comes automatically with the CAD event.**

## July Newsletter error

Apologies to David for taking 10 years off his service in regard to his National Medal Clasp. I had 35 years of service, but it was 45 years. **Congratulations David for 45 years of outstanding service to NSW RFS.**

## Catering Components

Catering within Group Support has different jobs to be done to get a busy training weekend across the line. Members are able to roster into these spots.

**Shopping Job:** Coles at Katoomba and often a 2-trolley task. Return and store in GSB Shed. Often Thursday or Friday job.

**Receiving:** Receiving delivery and storing in GSB Shed. Mostly a Friday when truck delivery happens. Allow 2 hours.

**Packing:** 'Use by Date' labelling of all sandwiches and sorting into boxes for different training sites. Sorting fruit. Often on a Friday and at GSB Shed. Allow 2 hours plus.

**Delivery:** Driving to a training site and setting out food for selection. May be at a brigade shed or in the field. Trestle tables sometimes need to be set up. Best with 2 GSB members. Anywhere from 2hours up depending on distance to travel.

**BM Catering cooking:** Pack the truck with prepared /cut food items, BBQ the lunch, return and unpack, leave everything clean. Needs a Driver. Best with 3-4 members. 4-hour shift depending on location destination.

**District Office Cooking:** Preparing, cooking, heating, serving then cleaning up. More of a normal kitchen preparation load catering for anywhere from 10 – 40 people in a course. Likely 3-5 hours work.

Skill set needed:

- Be able to stand for a minimum of 2 hours at a task
- Minimum of being able to lift a trestle table or a box of sandwiches. Some heavier lifting often included.



- 'Silent as a mouse' – well maybe not that quiet but we work around courses/presenters and need to be close to invisible until the food is ready to disperse
- Take directions quickly and clean up well
- Some shifts require a member with a Food Supervisor qualification

Consider trying one of the catering tasks above, particularly in the non-fire training season when there are over 80 courses across the Blue Mountains for GSB to support with catering.

## State Championships 2024 – Albury 13-15<sup>th</sup> September



Well done to the Blue Mountains district team who took up the Eat Street Challenge at the 2024 State Championships. The weather was freezing but the Mexican menu they had to supply would have heated things up! There were 15 senior teams and 8 junior teams completing in the fire fighting challenges. Everyone was fed by the 5 catering teams from across the state.

Events and progress could be followed through Facebook. It looked like a great weekend.

Make sure you talk to Chris, Anne, Patrick, or even Noel from Faulconbridge brigade, for some great stories from this event.

