

## **Speech by Mayor Logan K Howlett, JP**

### **Cockburn State Emergency Service 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event and Awards Presentation**

**Saturday, 6 November 2021**

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Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen

My wife Patricia and I are delighted to join you tonight in celebration of your Unit's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and in the recognition of several Awards to be presented to Members.

I acknowledge the Whadjup people of the Nyungar Nation the traditional custodians of the land on which we are gathered tonight and I pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

I acknowledge:

- Mr David Skaife, MLA, the Member for Cockburn;
- Allison Lamb, Unit Manager, Cockburn SES and other Members of the Unit, both past and present;
- Life Members;
- Other invited guests;
- Ladies and gentlemen, one and all.

The distinctive colour orange is instantly recognisable when one is out & about in the community or during media coverage that involves the SES.

One will never forget the scenes that unfolded recently at the Carnarvon Blowholes – those SES volunteers in their distinctive orange uniforms working their way through the coastal dunes and bushland searching for missing Cleo Smith.

Their response was immediate, arriving on the scene at 9.30am and turning their training into practice, together with other first responders.

As representatives of our front line emergency services volunteers I commend each and every one of you for your contribution to our community and those further afield.

Whether it is responding to storm damage, land searches, vertical rescues, road crash rescues, missing person searches, medical evacuations and a myriad of other incidents that arise in our community we can always rely on great service and compassion from every SES Member.

I receive the SES Volunteer Association of WA newsletters on a regular basis and often reflect on the challenges SES Units face while carrying out their crucial role which often goes unnoticed across our communities.

When one reflects back forty years, noting that many of you were not born, life was somewhat different, less complicated in many respects and somewhat informal.

Today's demands across our community are significantly different requiring an investment by each volunteer to continuing professional development, sharing their knowledge and skills with newer members and being in immediate contact 24/7 to respond to 'call outs' amongst other things.

I quote from recent media coverage statements by Keith Drayton, a life member of the Cockburn SES which in my opinion personifies our SES Volunteers.

He said:

"To receive a hug from someone who is in tears and a big thank you just makes you feel good and that you are doing something worthwhile,"

"It is not just the joy of helping and having the ability and skills to help young and old alike when things go 'pear-shaped' but there is a personal sense of satisfaction in knowing you made a small difference in someone's life when things were tough.

"I think this keeps you in balance, focused beyond yourself and in a good place mentally."

“SES is like having a second family where we not only volunteer alongside others but support each other physically and emotionally and we have made some very close and lifelong friends through this association.”

“You can become very insular and isolated in the daily routine of your life, but serving with the SES helps to keep things in perspective and the focus is beyond yourself.

“Belonging to SES has given me the opportunity to learn new skills, become a trainer assessor, travel and pass on my skills and knowledge to new volunteers.”

What a great reflect on what it means to be a SES Volunteer.

Ladies and gentlemen, in recognition of your Unit’s contributions over the past 40 years I have great pleasure, on behalf of the City of Cockburn to call forward Allison Lamb, Keith Drayton and Drew Devereux to receive a plaque; it reads in part:

**“Presented to the Cockburn State Emergency Service on the occasion of their 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in recognition of members past and current for their contributions to the community in a time of need.”**

Congratulations to you all and may you continue your volunteering roles well into the future.

Stay safe.

Thank you.