



DFES General Circular No: 214/2021

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SEASON'S GREETINGS

With the holiday season upon us, it's an opportunity to spend time with family, friends and loved ones, and reflect upon the year that was and perhaps make a resolution or two for 2022.

When we consider the multiple and collective challenges fire and emergency services have faced, you should all feel a great sense of pride in those achievements.

The year had barely begun when the Red Gully bushfire flared up near Gingin, placing a significant demand on our resources. Less than a month later, the devastation in Wooroloo captured the nation's attention, a challenge exacerbated by the fact that Western Australia was amid a COVID-19 lockdown.

Tropical Cyclone Seroja then swept through the Mid West, causing widespread damage to several towns and throwing the region into chaos. Severe weather continued to batter our communities throughout the winter months, causing flooding in the South West and Great Southern. The unusually long winter kept emergency services busy until, before we knew it, we were back in bushfire season.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges across Australia and around the world, but our Western Australian spirit has shone brightly through these dark times.

I am exceptionally proud of the conduct and professionalism that I've seen from each of you this year. The community's safety has been repeatedly under threat and you have all risen to the occasion. We have received overwhelming messages of public support after several major operations and that is a testament to the efforts of every individual.

For emergency services, however, the next challenge is never far away. Christmas is a time to enjoy ourselves, but we should also be cognisant of the vital role we play during summer. Fatigue can be an issue and we should ensure that we are using our downtime to recharge and look after our health and wellbeing.

I would like to remind our dedicated volunteers to get their first COVID-19 vaccination before the end of this month and ensure they are fully vaccinated by 31 January 2022. The Government has mandated vaccinations for emergency services staff and volunteers but it's also the best way to keep ourselves safe.



The borders will open from 5 February and a fully vaccinated population will ensure that Western Australia can safely re-open to the world.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity and thank you one and all for your dedication, ongoing support and professionalism over the past year, and for ensuring WA communities are well protected and safe.

Have a wonderful and well-deserved break. I look forward to building on the year that we've had and continuing to provide an exemplary service to the community in 2022.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

DARREN KLEMM AFSM
COMMISSIONER